



Crawfish Season is underway, according to Dan Meaux of Crawfish Shack in Crosby, but they are in short supply due to a drought. See Story Below.

# NORTH CHANNEL STAR

Your News, Your Newspaper

Serving all of the North Shore -- Channelview, Cloverleaf, Sheldon, Galena Park, Jacinto City  
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## CHANNEL CURRENTS

### North Shore Rotary FISH FRY Saturday April 20

North Shore Rotary will hold its 49th Annual Catfish Fry, Shrimp and Crawfish Boil. Serving from 11:00am to 3:00pm, at the Rotary Pavilion on Wallisville Road behind the Courthouse. Also a Live and Silent Auction, and a Raffle to award a lucky ticket holder a new Toyota Tundra Pickup truck, or a Toyota Rav4 SUV, from Community Toyota\*Honda\*Kia. Raffle tickets \$100, Food Tickets \$15, available from all North Shore Rotarians.

### Pilot Club Puzzle Competition Sunday April 21

The public is invited to the San Jacinto Pilot Club Puzzle Competition, Sunday April 21 from 3pm to 5pm at the Hampton Inn, 14120 Karissa Court, Houston 77049. \$25 per person includes beverages and snacks. Tickets from any club member, or 281-701-9993 or 281-221-1616.

### GP/JC Rotary Baked Potato Lunch and Cake Auction Apr. 4

Annual Baked Potato Luncheon and Live Cake Auction, and Community Awards. Tickets \$15, call 713-539-8021. Proceeds benefit International water project, and local scholarships.

## Primary Election: Ogg out; Teare, Lee, Gonzalez in

HARRIS COUNTY – Former prosecutor Sean Teare ousted Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg from the November ballot Tuesday following a bruising Democratic primary campaign that saw progressive county and city officials back the challenger.

In his bid for re-election to the Harris County Department of Education board, East Aldine District's Richard Cantu won by getting 64% of the vote.

In other races of interest, for Sheriff incumbent Ed Gonzalez won with 67% of the vote; in Constable races Al Rosen won 75% of the vote in Precinct 1; Jer-



DA Kim Off loses, Sean Teare won, Sheila Jackson Lee won, Ed Gonzalez won in the Primary Election.

ry Garcia won 76% in Precinct 2; and Sherman Eagleton won 82% of the vote in Precinct 3. For County Attorney incumbent Christian Menefee received 70% of the vote.

Running unopposed were Judge Joe Stephens, and State Representatives Armando Walle, Senfronia

Thompson and Ana Hernandez. State Senator Carol Alvarado ran unopposed, as did Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia. Some of these democrats will face opponents in the November general election, though.

On the Republican ticket, Briscoe Cain beat chal-

lenger Bianca Gracia for Texas House District 128.

Aiming for a third term, Ogg conceded the race shortly before 9 p.m., before any Election Day votes had been tallied. She only received 25% of the vote, to Teare's 75%.

In her speech, Ogg touted her record as district

attorney and argued financial support from outside of Houston as the reason Teare prevailed.

"I have made some powerful enemies for all the right reasons," Ogg said.

The early voting and absentee ballot returns staked Teare to a 50 percentage point lead that proved impossible for Ogg to overcome.

Teare, who resigned from a leadership position in the district attorney's office to run against Ogg last year, now has to win the November general election against former

Continued. See PRIMARY ELECTION RESULTS, Page 2

## Women's History Month Honoree - (2nd of a series) Celebrating Marilyn Monroe

By Allan Jamail

March 13, 2024 ~ Women's History Month is from March 1st. through March 31st. Marilyn Monroe deserves this week's recognition for her contributions to the motion picture and modeling industry.

She was born Norma Jeane Mortenson; June 1, 1926 at the Los Angeles General Hospital in Los Angeles, California. She's known for playing comic "blonde bombshell" characters, she became one of the most popular sex symbols of the 1950s and early 1960s, as well as an emblem of the era's sexual revolution. She was a top-billed actress for a decade, and her films grossed \$200 million (equivalent to \$2 billion in 2022) by the time of her death. Long after her death at age 36, Monroe remains a pop culture icon. In 1999, the American Film Institute ranked her as the sixth-greatest female screen legend from the Golden Age of Hollywood.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Monroe spent most of her childhood in a total of 12 foster homes and an orphanage before marrying James Dougherty at age sixteen. She was working in a factory during World War II when she met a photographer from the First Motion Picture Unit and began a successful pin-



Marilyn Monroe Born, June 1, 1926 - Died, August 4, 1962

up modeling career, which led to short-lived film contracts with 20th Century Fox and Columbia Pictures. After a series of minor film roles, she signed a new contract with Fox in late 1950. Over the next two years, she became a popular actress with roles in several comedies, including As Young as You Feel and Monkey Business, and in the dramas Clash by Night and Don't Bother to Knock. Monroe faced a scandal when it was revealed that she had posed for nude photographs prior to becoming a star, but the story did not damage her career and instead resulted in increased interest in her films.

By 1953, Monroe was one of the most marketable Hollywood stars. She had leading roles in the film noir Niagara, which overtly relied on her sex

Continued. See Woman's History Month, Page 6

## North Channel Chamber Celebrating March of Dimes



The March luncheon of the North Channel Area Chamber of Commerce focused on the March of Dimes. From left, Chamber Chairman Bill Palko; Toni Walton, director of corporate community engagement for the March of Dimes; Yasmene McDaniel, CEO of HCA Houston Healthcare Southeast; and Margie Buentello, president and CEO of the North Channel Area Chamber of Commerce. (David Taylor photo)

### Chamber director shares compelling March of Dimes story

By David Taylor Managing Editor

Most chamber of commerce luncheons don't provoke tears, but some were shed as Margie Buentello, president and CEO of the North Channel Area Chamber of Commerce, shared her personal story of losing a baby.

"As a young bride, one of the main things that I wanted in life was to be a mother," she shared with chamber members.

Within a year of marriage, she discovered she was pregnant.

"I was so excited," she said. "I was one of the lucky brides. I had great medical care, insurance, and my pregnancy was a breeze."

In the seventh month of her pregnancy, however, things changed. She began experiencing some bad back pain.

Continued. See NC CHAMBER LUNCHEON, Page 3

## NS Mustang's College Signing



The GPISD North Shore Mustangs had a letter of intent college signing day with the graduates and their colleges. L - R: Christopher Barnes / college Washington State, Terrance Guillory / college Air Force & #89 Kaleb Thomas / college University of Houston. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

## Crawfish Shack managing shortage of "Mud Bugs"

By David Taylor Managing Editor

The phone was ringing off the wall at Crawfish Shack in Crosby on Sunday and the conversation for each was the same—"We're not selling bags, only boiled crawfish through the drive-through," owner Dan Meaux replied. He could hardly leave the building to take his mobile point-of-sale system tablet with him out to the line of cars to help take orders without stopping for another call.

The sales and calls were a welcome relief to Meaux and other restaurant owners who are riding a two-month delay because of the much smaller-sized mudbugs, a direct result of the summer drought last year.

"It's unreal how bad it

Continued. See CRAWFISH SHACK, Page 7



Dan Meaux interviewed by Chris Shepherd on KPRC's food program.



Cars are lined up through the parking lot and out onto FM 2100 at the Crawfish Shack in hopes of being able to get some delectable crawfish. The summer drought of 2023 has caused an unusual shortage.

# SHELDON ISD NEWS

## Sheldon ISD Celebrates Historic Victory: King High School Girls Basketball Team Crowned 6A Distric Champion



Sheldon ISD is proud of our boys and girls basketball teams at King High School as they finished their seasons. The girls team made history for KHS for the first time as 6A District Champions. Excellent work, Panthers!

## Sheldon ISD Names New Director of Child Nutrition

Sheldon ISD is pleased to announce Ms. Barbara Vasser-Baldwin has been promoted to the district's new Director of Child Nutrition. She has currently been serving as the Assistant Child Nutrition Director. She brings with her five years of experience as a director of child nutrition and 12 years of



catering experience and management. She received her Bachelor of Science in Culinary Arts from Mississippi University for Women. She looks forward to working alongside the current chef in menu development for new ideas and recipes for the upcoming year.

## Sheldon ISD's Kelechi Bradley Receives State Recognition



Kelechi Bradley, Sheldon ISD's Director of Research Assessment and Data, was recently recognized through the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) as a RISE recipient. The RISE Award recognizes a person whose early accomplishments within their career and TASBO distinguish them as future leaders in the profession. She was honored at the TASBO Engage Conference Awards Luncheon in February.

## NMS Student Wins District Spelling Bee

On February 22, 13 students representing elementary and middle school campuses from across the district competed in the district spelling bee. Middle school and elementary school campuses held their own competitions and sent their top two campus winners to the district level. The contest set a district record of 28 rounds, lasting two hours. Congratulations to Jonhatan from Null Middle School for being named the winner of the district Spelling Bee.



## 225+ participate in district's first Read Across Sheldon event

On March 1, Sheldon ISD hosted its first Read Across Sheldon event at the Early Learning Center, two early childhood academies and 6 elementary schools. With a hope to inspire students to love reading one page at a time, Read Across Sheldon is an opportunity for business partners, staff, community leaders and families to sign up to read in one of the prekindergarten through 5th grade classrooms. More than 225 individuals attended the district's first Read Across Sheldon.



# GALENA PARK ISD NEWS

## Guillory Named HAABSE Secondary Teacher of the Year

By Dr. Tommie L. Smith

On February 8, 2024, Ms. LaTisha Guillory, an English Teacher at North Shore Senior High 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Center, was named the 2023 Houston Area Alliance Black School Educator (HAABSE) Outstanding Secondary Teacher of the Year for the entire Houston area.

The purpose of the Outstanding Teacher Awards is to say "thank you" to teachers for the outstanding job they do in working with children. The HAABSE Retired Educator's Committee reviewed applications, determined and interviewed finalists, and



Photo Credit: Christopher Gause

then selected the Teacher of the Year recipients. The recipients are also eligible for monetary awards ranging up to \$1,000. This year's award theme was: "Celebrating Excellence," and Galena Park ISD is proud to celebrate Ms. LaTisha Guillory's commitment to excellence!

## A Second Year of Superstars

Clear your calendar for Thursday, February 29, 2024; Galena Park ISD's (GPISD) second annual

Super Star Buddy Relays, hosted by GPISD's Student Support Services and the Special Education Departments. The event will be held at the GPISD Stadium (15025 Wallisville Rd., Houston, TX 77049).

The Super Star Buddy Relays is a specially designed event to create a barrier-free day of fun for students with special needs. The event's goal is to facilitate a supportive environment where everyone is a star athlete for a day. Witness a powerful collaboration of special-needs students and non-disabled students from across GPISD, showcasing good sportsmanship and teamwork. When we all play - We all win!

The relays will begin around 9:15 a.m., and we look forward to seeing you then! Check-in with Amy Cole at the Media Entrance, near Wallisville & Evanston. Last year's event was featured in Texas School Business' Bragging Rights Issue. You can read all about it at

[https://issuu.com/tasanet/docs/tsb\\_br\\_2023-24\\_final?fr=xKAE9\\_zU1NQ](https://issuu.com/tasanet/docs/tsb_br_2023-24_final?fr=xKAE9_zU1NQ)



**CHARLOTTE'S WEB**

By Charlotte Jackson



**It Hurts Everyone**

Last week our community suffered at least two losses. Two young males, ages twelve and eighteen lost their lives to tragic violence. I say, at least, because we do not know if there were others and certainly there were other losses of other nature that have touched those of us who call North Channel our home.

On Monday, March 4, our community woke to the news of the death of twelve year old Carlos Hernandez. As he slept in the same room with his two younger sisters, shots were fired through the window which struck and killed this young boy. Immediately neighbors began to reach out and check on others and school employees began to put plans into place to be there not just for the family but for his fellow students. As the week went on, the suspect was named. And on Monday, the suspect's mother was charged with aiding him to escape capture.

On Sunday, March 10, our community again woke to news of a promising young life being cut short due to a drive-by shooting of eighteen year old Jarvon Coles. He was not only a member of the North Shore Mustang football team, but due to graduate in just a few months with his future looking bright. He was leaving a party with others on Saturday night, when suddenly his life was ended by someone who drove by the party and opened fire. Coles had grown up playing youth football with many of the young men on our community.

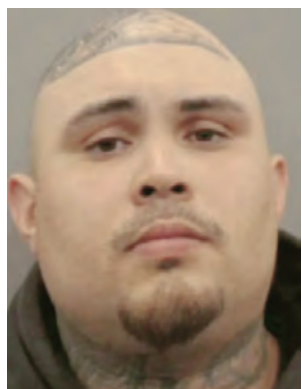
While you may have never met these two young guys, their deaths affect you. You may not realize it but their deaths impact the first responders, the teachers, the classmates, the neighbors and many more. There may be a house for sale on your street, and suddenly, the agent cannot find a buyer as the community's crime rate has gone up. The apartments where Carlos lived have been partnering with a local non-profit to provide after-school activities for their resident children, yet how many other apartments to not offer activities like this? Perhaps there are local churches or service organizations that will decide to fund these types of activities. Perhaps more neighbors will donate to support the work of the YMCA.

I heard others ask questions about the party that the teenagers attending. To be honest, teenagers have been attending house parties for decades, it is just that the circumstances have changed. Questions are being asked about who rented the house for the party, was alcohol involved, was the party advertised on social media, and were there any older adults at the party. While these are important questions, what truly matters is that a life was lost and many more changed forever from his death. Again, what other activities are being offered to high school aged students.

Now that the grieving is real, where do people turn? There are several places to receive free or low cost counseling, there are support groups offered through non-profits and sadly, there are many parents in our community who have already lost children. Please reach out and check on our neighbors and friends. See how you can find help and offer help.

**Suspect in shooting of 12 year old arrested at border**

HARRIS COUNTY, Texas — Authorities at the U.S.-Mexico border detained the man whom Harris County deputies accused of killing his ex-girlfriend's 12-year-old son in the middle of the night.



TERRY BRYAN RIVERA

Terry Bryan Rivera, 27, spent a week on the run after Carlos Fernandez was shot to death inside his family's Cloverleaf-area apartment on March 4th. Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez confirmed the arrest on Monday evening.

"Outstanding work by all. May 12-year-old Carlos Fernandez rest in peace," Gonzalez posted on X, formerly known as Twitter, hours after Carlos was laid to rest.

Gonzalez added that Rivera was detained at the Brownsville point of entry and was being held in Cameron County.

Word of the arrest also came hours after Rivera's mother, 51-year-old Alva Cornejo, appeared before a judge after her arrested on a hindering apprehension or prosecution charge.

Dressed in a T-shirt and jeans, Cornejo faced a Harris County judge for the first time early Mon-

day morning.

She said just a few words, all in Spanish. It was revealed she is not a U.S. citizen and is from El Salvador. She currently has an ICE immigration hold.

Rivera is charged with capital murder in Carlos' shooting death. He's accused of coming into the family's Cloverleaf apartment through an open window before opening fire.

The boy's mother, Ashley Rostro - who is also Rivera's ex-girlfriend - said that Carlos was trying to protect his mother and younger siblings when he was shot four times.

Rostro said she begged authorities to protect her

**NCA Chamber Luncheon**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Her doctor advised her to come in for an examination.

"When he returned to the room, I could tell from the look on his face, the news wasn't good," she explained. Her doctor informed her she was already in labor. At that time, there was nothing available to stop the labor.

"He told me to go home, put my feet up and drink a glass of wine," she recalled. She did that, but within a day, the pain was unbearable.

"I called him again and he said to meet him at the hospital," she said.

In the middle of the night on November 11, Veterans Day, she gave birth to a beautiful baby girl.

The last thing to develop in a baby is their lungs, she told the crowd. They rushed her baby to Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, but she didn't survive.

"Thanks to the March of Dimes, babies like her are now being saved," a tearful Buentello said.

"People no longer need to feel that pain that I had."

Within a few years after the death of her first baby, drugs were discovered that can now slow the labor or even stop it completely giving the baby a chance for survival.

"They realized once a woman started preterm labor, they could give her a steroid injection which strengthens the lungs.

Buentello credits the March of Dimes for the research that now treats the respiratory distress syndrome in preterm babies.

"In the end, I was blessed with three full-term healthy children. She will forever be in my heart," she said.

Yasmene McDaniel, CEO of HCA Houston Healthcare Southeast, has been named the chair for 2024 Houston Marh for Babies: A Mother of a Movement™ and invited chamber members to get involved in fundraising efforts for the Houston community.

"I'm from Dime Box, Texas which is literally in the middle of nowhere," she smiled. "My hometown is in what we call a maternal desert."

McDaniel said living in that area meant a typical drive through two counties to reach a birthing center.

"Not just 20 years ago, or 50 years ago, within the past six months," she said shockingly to the chamber. "I know people who are near and dear to me who have had babies in their car, who have had babies, that did not have any sort of prenatal care, just because they didn't have access to it. That's not okay," she said.

from her abusive ex, but she feels like that didn't happen. She says Rivera killed her son with a gun he stole from her home when he broke in and threatened her just days before.

According to new details revealed in court, Cornejo met with her son just hours after the boy's murder. She reportedly told officers that she told her son to turn himself in, but instead, he jumped out of a car and ran away. She claims she hasn't heard from him since.

However, during the investigation, officers reportedly found contradicting evidence while searching her cellphone.

Officers reportedly obtained images of Cornejo's car going north on Highway 59 in Montgomery County at 11 a.m. She told officers she was upset about her son and decided to go to the casino to



Margie Buentello, president and CEO of the North Channel Area Chamber of Commerce, shared her personal story of losing a baby.



Yasmene McDaniel, CEO of HCA Houston Healthcare Southeast, has been named the chair for 2024 Houston Marh for Babies: A Mother of a Movement™ and invited chamber members to get involved in fundraising efforts for the Houston community.

She pointed to Houston as one of the most populous cities in the country with the Texas Medical Center, the largest in the world, and yet prenatal healthcare is graded low.

"We're doing our part, but it really takes everybody in the community," she urged.

The March of Dimes has been around for 85 years, since 1938.

"I remember receiving the little slips and we went around to collect dimes for each one of those," she recalled.

While the organization no longer marches 21 miles like earlier days, they do still march three miles to fundraise.

Toni Walton, director of corporate community engagement for the March of Dimes organization, said Buentello's story is one of thousands of women who have suffered some sort of loss. Walton has also felt the sting of the loss of a child and can relate to the need for better research and advances in the medical field to prevent childbirth tragedies.

To that end, the fundraiser is set for 8 a.m. on Sunday, May 5, at the University of Houston TDECU Football Stadium. Visit [marchforbabies.org](https://marchforbabies.org) for more information on how to donate and start or join a team. Those looking to volunteer for the event can register at [HYPERLINK "https://getinvolved.marchofdimes.org" https://getinvolved.marchofdimes.org](https://getinvolved.marchofdimes.org).

gamble, but then turned around and came back when she realized she didn't have any money.

At 12:21 p.m. that same day, Cornejo reportedly texted someone else, asking them to pick Rivera up.

Investigators also reportedly found an Internet search of "How to travel to the border of Mexico" from 5 p.m. that same day on her phone.

The judge set her bond at \$25,000.

In 2014, Rivera was charged with strangling a female family member but pleaded down to a lesser offense. The victim obtained an emergency protective order. In 2015, he was charged with shooting a gun out of a moving vehicle. In 2023, he was arrested for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon but, again, pleaded guilty to a lesser offense.

**ASK DIAMOND JIM**

**Diamond Jim: "What are Ethical Diamonds?"**



Diamonds have been a symbol of love, commitment, and wealth for centuries, but not all diamonds are created equal. Ethical diamonds, also known as "conflict-free" or "fair trade" diamonds, have been mined, cut, and processed in a socially and environmentally responsible way. These diamonds are a responsible and sustainable alternative to traditional diamonds that are often associated with human rights abuses and environmental destruction.



**What makes a diamond ethical?**

An ethical diamond is one that has been mined, cut, and processed in a way that supports fair labor practices and responsible environmental management, and that does not contribute to human rights abuses. This includes ensuring that the diamond is not a product of conflict, or "blood diamond," and that the diamond trade does not support illegal or unethical practices.

**Conflict-free diamonds**

Conflict diamonds, also known as "blood diamonds," are diamonds that are mined in war zones and sold to finance armed conflict against governments. These diamonds have been responsible for fueling brutal wars in Africa and other parts of the world, causing widespread human suffering and environmental destruction. By choosing ethical diamonds, you can be sure that the diamond you purchase is not a product of conflict and does not contribute to human rights abuses.

**Responsible environmental management**

Diamond mining can have a significant impact on the environment, especially in fragile ecosystems like the rainforest. Ethical diamonds are sourced from mines that adhere to strict environmental standards and practices to minimize their environmental impact. This includes responsible waste management, reforestation, and habitat restoration programs.

**Fair labor practices**

The diamond industry has a long history of exploitation and abuse of workers, particularly in developing countries. Ethical diamonds are sourced from mines that support fair labor practices and adhere to strict health and safety standards. What are ethical diamond mining practices? When workers are paid a fair wage and have access to safe working conditions and benefits.

**Due diligence**

Pineforest Jewelry always has and always will go to great lengths to ensure that our diamond suppliers are in full compliance with the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) or the Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC). These organizations have strict standards for ethical diamond production, including conflict-free certification, environmental responsibility, and fair labor practices.

**Conclusion**

What are ethical diamonds? Ethical diamonds offer consumers a responsible and sustainable alternative to traditional diamonds. By choosing ethical diamonds, you can be sure that the diamond you purchase is not a product of conflict, does not contribute to human rights abuses, and is mined, cut, and processed in a way that supports responsible environmental management and fair labor practices. If you are committed to ensuring that your diamonds are ethically and responsibly sourced, then you're in the right place. [Shop our diamonds or jewelry pieces](#) today!

Credit to K. Rosengart for this article <https://www.krosengart.com>

Thank you for reading the "Ask Diamond Jim" column and for supporting the North Channel Star Newspaper!

Diamond Jim is a master jeweler, diamond dealer and precious metals broker. Pineforest Jewelry has been a proud member of the Independent Jewelers Organization (IJO) and the Retail Jewelers Organization (RJO) for many years. See more at: [www.pineforestjewelry.com](http://www.pineforestjewelry.com).

If you have questions pertaining to jewelry, watches, diamonds, precious stones, precious metals, and other questions related to the jewelry industry, email [jmills@pineforestjewelry.com](mailto:jmills@pineforestjewelry.com).

**Ear's to St. Paddy's day**



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OPINION PAGE

LETTERS To The Editor

Harris County Attorney Christian D. Menefee Statement on SB4 Ruling

Houston, Texas – A United States federal court has issued a preliminary injunction that temporarily blocks the implementation of Senate Bill 4 (SB 4), a harsh anti-immigration law that would have allowed state law enforcement officials to arrest anyone suspected of crossing the border without documentation.

Harris County Attorney Christian D. Menefee gave the following statement in response:

“This is an important win for all Harris County communities. Immigrant populations should be welcomed as valued members of our society, not subjected to policies that cause them to live in a constant state of fear. The court confirmed that Republicans in Texas are once again overstepping their authority.

It shouldn't be lost on us that this decision came just a few days after a local megachurch pastor disparaged immigrants and spewed hatred to thousands of people. Mothers seeking a safe life for their children are not “garbage.” Kids who just need a fair shot at life to succeed are not “undesirables.” Texans are better than this rhetoric. The court's decision today shows that.”

Judge Lina Hidalgo Statement in Response to SB 4 Federal Court Ruling

Harris County, TX, February 29, 2024, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo issued the following statement in response to the federal court ruling today:

“I am in full support of this ruling. SB 4 is nothing more than a political stunt that dehumanizes immigrants and creates a culture of racial profiling and police mistrust in communities across Texas, especially within our Hispanic communities. Our immigration system's challenges urgently need a solution and we need more efficient, fairer and clearer policies. But SB 4 is not that solution. Instead of using immigrants as political tools, let's work toward bipartisan immigration policy that keeps us safe and targets bad actors like human smugglers, while allowing sufficient paths for legal immigration and a sustainable workforce,” said Judge Lina Hidalgo.

Governor Abbott Statement On Preliminary Injunction Against SB 4

AUSTIN - Governor Greg Abbott today issued a statement on Texas' constitutional right to defend itself following a federal judge granting the Biden Administration's motion for a preliminary injunction against Senate Bill 4, signed into law by the Governor in December 2023:

“Texas will immediately appeal this decision, and we will not back down in our fight to protect our state—and our nation—from President Biden's border crisis. The President of the United States has a constitutional duty to enforce federal laws protecting States, including laws already on the books that mandate the detention of illegal immigrants. Texas has the right to defend itself because of President Biden's ongoing failure to fulfill his duty to protect our state from the invasion at our southern border. Even from the bench, this District Judge acknowledged that this case will ultimately be decided by the U.S. Supreme Court.”

LETTERS To The Editor

Reader comments on “Buckner FHC to relocate to new campus”

I'm sorry to see an organization such as this leave our East Aldine community. However, I can sincerely say that since Sylvia Bolling, the founder of the original organization known as Aldine Y.O.U.T.H. (now known as Buckner) left, it's never been the same.

Sylvia was a dear friend to many and strong advocate for people of all ages living in East Aldine. She has been sorely missed.

--Marina Flores Sugg, resident of East Aldine since 1975, and former President of the Aldine YOUTH board of directors.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Opinions expressed here are not necessarily that of this newspaper or its staff. YOUR OPINION is welcome. Send a letter for possible publication to Grafikpress Newspapers, 5906 Star Lane, Houston TX 77057 or an email to GRAFIKSTAR@aol.com. Please limit your words to about 200. Letters will be subject to editing. Thank you.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders



Largest Wildfire in State History Still Raging

A wildfire in the Texas Panhandle has consumed more than 1 million acres and as of Sunday was just 15% contained, according to the Texas A&M Forest Service. It is the largest wildfire in Texas history.

The Smokehouse Creek Fire is by far the most extensive of several blazes, which also include the Grape Vine Creek Fire in Gray County, covering 30,000 acres and 60% contained, and the Windy Deuce Fire in Moore County, which covers 142,000 acres and was 60% contained.

Two deaths have been reported thus far, with hundreds of homes and other structures destroyed and thousands of cattle likely killed, according to Sid Miller, the state's agriculture commissioner. Gov. Greg Abbott issued a disaster declaration for 60 counties, and fire-fighting crews from across the state have arrived to assist.

The causes of the fires have not been determined, though the Panhandle has been experiencing exceptionally dry and windy weather. The forest service is advising residents and motorists traveling through the Panhandle to be cautious and not aggravate fire conditions.

“A lot of our fires start from the roadside,” Meghan Mahurin, public information officer, said. “Dragging chains, throwing cigarettes, and pulling trucks off into a bar ditch where a hot exhaust can hit tall grass can cause one.”

At least one lawsuit has already been filed, blaming downed power lines owned by Xcel Energy for starting a blaze, the Texas Tribune reported.

DPS DIRECTOR TESTIFIES BEFORE UVALDE GRAND JURY

A Uvalde grand jury considering bringing possible charges against law enforcement officers for the flawed response to the Robb Elementary school shooting heard testimony behind closed doors last week from Texas Department of Public Safety Director Col. Steve McCraw.

The Austin American-Statesman reported McCraw flew from Austin on a state plane and was driven to the



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

Uvalde County Fairplex, where the grand jury is meeting. He made no public comments.

The Statesman has previously reported that multiple law enforcement officers have been ordered to appear before the grand jury, including from DPS. The responding officers have come under harsh criticism for not confronting the shooter more quickly. He murdered 19 students and two teachers before being killed.

McGraw's agency thus far has refused to release investigative information in the case, despite rulings to do so from a judge in lawsuit brought by the Statesman and multiple media outlets. The agency said it is doing so at the request of the Uvalde County District Attorney to protect the grand jury proceedings.

SUPREME COURT CONSIDERS STATES' SOCIAL MEDIA LAWS

Laws passed in Texas and Florida to regulate the authority of social media companies over content moderation have been challenged and are now before the U.S. Supreme Court, the Statesman reported.

Trade groups representing Facebook, YouTube, X and Instagram have been joined by the U.S. Justice Department in suing the two states, arguing the laws infringe on the companies' First Amendment right to free speech.

House Bill 20 in Texas passed in 2021. It required social media companies to publicly disclose their content moderation processes and provide recourse for Texans whose posts or accounts are removed or suspended.

The bill's sponsor, state Sen. Bryan Hughes, R-Mineo-

la, held a news conference after the high court hearing laws week.

“They control the new town square,” he said of the social media companies. “Everybody understands that that's where people go to hash it out, to exercise their First Amendment rights, to have a discussion.”

JUDGE PAUSES SURVEY OF TEXAS BITCOIN MINERS

A federal judge has temporarily halted an effort by the Department of Energy to collect electricity consumption data from cryptocurrency miners, the Houston Chronicle reported. Texas bitcoin miners claimed the mandatory survey was a “politically motivated attack on the industry.”

The suit was filed by the Texas Blockchain Council and Riot Platforms in Rockdale, the most power-intensive bitcoin mine in the United States. They claimed the DOE sent out the mandatory survey without a public notice and comment period.

Cryptocurrency miners use huge arrays of computers to process data that unlocks cryptocurrency. They consume huge amounts of energy. One estimate claims a single bitcoin transaction uses as much power as the average U.S. household consumes in 37 days.

POSTPARTUM COVERAGE EXTENDED FOR MEDICAID, CHIP RECIPIENTS.

The state is extending postpartum health coverage from two to 12 months for eligible Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) recipients, Gov. Greg Abbott announced.

“By extending postpartum Medicaid and CHIP coverage, we will help ensure new mothers and the most vulnerable young Texans receive critical healthcare resources they need to care for their families and thrive,” Abbott said.

The change was effective March 1.

MITIGATING IMPACTS OF INVASIVE SPECIES IN TEXAS

The Texas A&M Forest Service is trying to raise awareness of the damaging effects of invasive species, from displacement of native trees to potentially wiping out entire species.

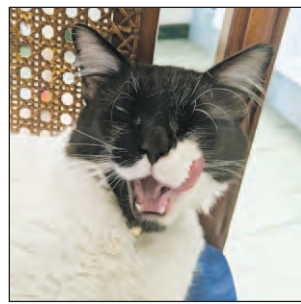
“Invasive species produce a measurable impact,” said Demian Gomez, with the service. “If left unchecked, invasives can threaten native species, biodiversity, ecosystem services, water resources, agricultural and forest production, economies and property values.”

Among the invasive species affecting Texas are the emerald ash borer, oak wilt, the Brazilian peppertree and the red bay ambrosia beetle.

“Early detection, rapid assessment and rapid response (EDRR) provides the greatest opportunity for eradication and cost-effective management of invasive species. The EDRR program, a network of traps targeting exotic bark and ambrosia beetles, increases the likelihood that invasive species will be found, contained and eradicated before they become widely established,” the news release said.

THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

What Cats Like



“I've been reading about cats,” my husband, Peter, tells me. Peter has never had a cat before.

“Oh, yeah?” “Salt is not good for their kidneys. We have to give Felix unsalted fish.”

Felix is our adopted street cat here in Mexico. He is coming back to the U.S. with us in a fancy backpack carrier I found online. It has mesh on either side, with one big plexiglass bubble in the back, so Felix can watch his fellow passengers in comfort. He hasn't flown yet, but our trips to and from the veterinarian were uneventful, so I think he will adapt to it rather well.

Felix is adapting to everything rather well, especially considering he is not the five-month-old kitten we thought he was, but fully two years old. I learned this at the vet when he got his first vaccination.

“I don't know how old he is,” I told them, explaining that he was a rescued street cat.

The vet tech was nonchalant. She peeled back Felix's lips and examined his teeth. “One or two years,” she declared.

“Really?” “I think so.”

Then a second veterinarian's assistant came in. “How old is he?” she asked.

I told her again that I didn't know. (I figured it was good to get a second opinion.) Felix suffered the indignity of having his lips peeled back a second time in five minutes.

“At least two years old,” she said.

“Two years?” I asked—for clarification. (I have misunderstood numbers in Spanish more often than I care to admit.)

“Yes,” the vet tech said with certainty. “He is at least two years old.” They recorded his date of birth as 2022, and Felix suddenly went from being a scrappy kitten to a remarkably playful and adaptable adult cat.

But he is very thin, and unlike a lot of rescued animals, he does not seem to be especially interested in food. The woman who fostered him said she had dry cat food available for him all the time, so that's what we did as well. But Felix was not eating much.

I bought an overpriced package of soft chicken cat food. It smelled awful. Felix tried it. He was unimpressed. The food hardened in his bowl, and he was still not putting on any weight.

“Maybe he'd like a scrambled egg,” Peter suggested. “Do cats like eggs?”

I've had several cats but, as far as I can remember, I had never made breakfast for any of them. Peter scrambled up an egg and gave Felix part of it. Felix loved the scrambled egg. Then Peter got reading up on what else cats like.

“They can have fish, but they should eat all the bones for better nutrition,” Peter informed me. I believed him. Peter brought home a can of mackerel. The mackerel was a huge hit. Peter kept reading.

“It says here that cats like peas. Maybe we could give him some garbanzo beans.”

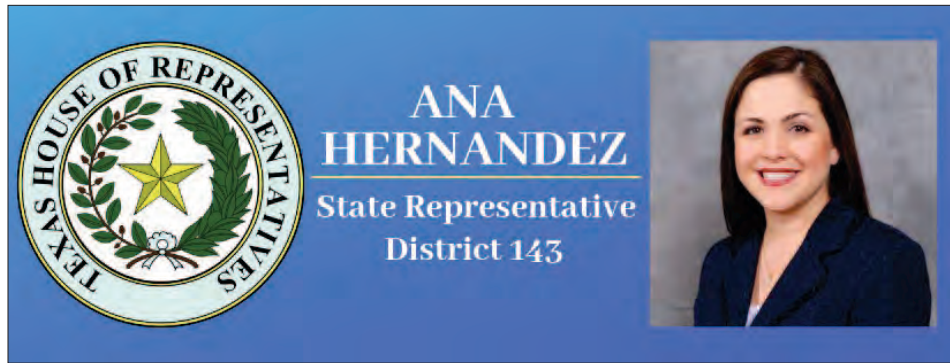
At this point, Peter was miles ahead of me in his study of cat nutrition. We gave Felix three garbanzo beans. Felix ate them immediately and demanded more.

Now Peter is looking for canned fish—whole fish—complete with bones that we can give Felix for a bedtime snack. “I can get a case of salt-free canned sardines for a good price!” he announced. “Do you think Felix would like sardines?”

I looked at Felix lying contentedly in his furry bed. I don't know nearly as much about cats as I thought I did. But I'm willing to bet Felix will like sardines very much indeed.

Till next time, Carrie

Advertisement for Star Courier newspaper, including contact information and subscription rates.



Dear Friend,

2024 is an exciting time as both Leap Day and the Presidential Election happen this year! This coincidence occurs once every four years, and it gives us a bonus day and an opportunity to cast our vote for the leader of our country. In this newsletter you will find voting information on the 2024 Primary Election, highlights from events around the district, details about upcoming events, and more. As always, my staff and I remain at your service. If you have any questions about activities at the Capitol, or if you would like assistance with an issue, please do not hesitate to contact us at either (713)675-8596 or (512)463-0614.

Kind regards,  
Ana Hernandez

## Texas Legislative Delegation Visit to the UK



I was honored and thankful for the invitation by the British Consulate to join several of my #txlege colleagues in learning more about the breadth and impact of the important trade and economic relationship between the United Kingdom and Texas. The total value of trade between Texas and the UK is over \$20 billion annually. Texas and the UK are strong trade partners. I appreciate this opportunity to discuss trade and economic development and work on strengthening relationships that will bring greater benefit to both sides of the Atlantic.

## 17th Annual District 143 Seniors Valentine's Dance



We had an incredible time celebrating with 300 seniors at our 17th Annual District 143 Seniors Valentine's Dance! There was delicious food, cake, door prizes, and lots of dancing. Thank you to my staff, former staff, family, volunteers, and sponsors for helping make this wonderful event possible. There was definitely lots of LOVE and HAPPINESS in the air!

### GoFundMe Benefit for Greg Moss

**C.H.I.C.**  
Channelview Health & Improvement Coalition  
A voice for Channelview  
Contact us at [C.H.I.C.77530@gmail.com](mailto:C.H.I.C.77530@gmail.com)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/892294181644780>

**Please help Greg recover from losing his home to a fire. The fire destroyed everything.**

Please consider donating any amount to help Greg and his dog rebuild their home and sense of normalcy. A GoFundMe account has been set up so that we may help Greg recover.

[https://www.gofundme.com/help-greg-recover-from-losing-his-home-to-a-fire?utm\\_campaign=p\\_lico+share-sheet-first-launch&utm\\_medium=copy\\_link&utm\\_source=customer](https://www.gofundme.com/help-greg-recover-from-losing-his-home-to-a-fire?utm_campaign=p_lico+share-sheet-first-launch&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_source=customer)



Saturday March 2nd one of our longest and most supportive members of C.H.I.C. and the Channelview community lost his home to a fire. Greg and his rescue dog "Dog" lives and has his boat repair business in an area near the San Jacinto River and had raised his home 17 feet to safeguard against flooding, but lost everything to a fire. Instead, Greg could use your support as he rebuilds.

Greg is a veteran and many of you may know Greg through the many things he does to help the Channelview community; his advocacy for the San Jacinto River Waste Pits clean up and the river itself, his advocacy for a better and safer Channelview, seen him on the holidays delivering meals or he may have repaired your boat or golf cart. If you have attended the boat races at Good Times Marina, Greg officiates at them. Greg is an excellent photographer so you may have enjoyed his pictures and videos of our area's wildlife, especially the eagles, and other activities on the San Jacinto River that he posts on several Channelview, Highlands and Baytown Facebook pages. If you have ever attended a C.H.I.C. meeting or visited the C.H.I.C. Facebook page you have met Greg. I don't believe Greg has missed a single C.H.I.C. meeting since we held our first community meeting in 2019 and he manages our Facebook page. Greg does so much for us.

Thank you in advance for any support you may be able to provide.

## Primary Election Results,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

prosecutor Dan Simons to take charge of his former workplace.

Meanwhile, longtime U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee swatted away a spirited challenge by attorney and former Jackson Lee intern Amanda Edwards.

After a crushing loss in the Houston mayoral runoff in December, Jackson Lee was seen as vulnerable by Edwards, who argued Congressional District 18 voters are ready for a fresh face.

In full but unofficial vote tallies reported late Wednesday morning, other primary upsets emerged, including six incumbent state district judges who lost their benches to challengers.

The elections are part of 241 Democratic and Republican primary races across Harris County, according to County Clerk Teneshia Hudspeth, along with thousands more across Texas and 14 other states holding primaries or caucuses on Super Tuesday.

Other Harris County results include:

Harris County District Attorney Teare resigned from his leadership post in Ogg's office last year and announced his election bid with hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign funds and the backing of Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo, Precinct 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis and other Houston-area Democrats.

Ogg, who first was elected in 2016, cruised to victory in her last Democratic Primary in 2020. In the four years since, however, a series of high-profile case losses, a lingering backlog of criminal cases and public feuds with Commissioners Court left Ogg abandoned by the left flank of her party.

Teare claimed Ogg weaponized her office against political opponents and ran as a self-professed progressive who will bring criminal justice reform to bear in the county.

Ogg said she had taken steps to reform the county's criminal justice system already and the political process was being weaponized against her for simply following the law.

Teare vastly outraised Ogg to jump-start his campaign. Ogg criticized Teare for his high-dollar donors, including nearly \$700,000 from billionaire George Soros' Texas Justice and Safety PAC.

Congressional District 2 U.S. Rep. Dan Crenshaw defeated far-right challenger Jameson Ellis by a comfortable margin in the Republican primary.

Crenshaw, a former Navy SEAL, has held the seat since 2018, and was initially a Republican darling after receiving national attention when a Saturday Night Live skit made fun of the eye patch he wears to cover a wound received while in service.

Since then, Republicans have soured on Crenshaw.

Congressional District 18 Jackson Lee declared victory Tuesday evening at a watch party prior to most Election Day results being reported.

Edwards, in a speech around the same time, said she was waiting for more results to be reported. With final results released Wednesday, Jackson Lee's lead remained largely unchanged.

Jackson Lee jumped straight from a bruising campaign for Houston mayor to the strongest challenge of her incumbency throughout her nearly 30 years in office. She ended up having an easier time defeating Edwards, a former Houston city council member, than a University of Houston Hobby School of Public Affairs poll last month had suggested. That survey had the well-funded Edwards within 5 percentage points of the incumbent.

The congresswoman and 42-year-old Edwards largely agree on policy, but Edwards said the district is ready for a change after decades of representation by Jackson Lee.

Texas House District 128 GOP state Rep. Briscoe Cain defeated community activist Bianca Gracia by a wide margin in the safely Republican district.

Gracia challenged Cain with the backing of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, who Cain voted to impeach last year. Paxton has funded primary challengers to supporters of his impeachment across Texas.

Harris County Attorney First-term Harris County Attorney Christian Menefee easily bested civil rights attorney Umeka "UA" Lewis in the Democratic primary.

Lewis brought a higher name ID to the race because of a false arrest lawsuit she filed and won against the city in 2019, but fell far behind Menefee in early returns.

Harris County Sheriff Sheriff Ed Gonzalez easily defeated three Democratic Primary challengers, well above the 50 percent threshold needed to avoid a runoff.

On the Republican side, former At-Large Houston City Council Member Mike Knox bested three others for the opportunity to face Gonzalez in the November.

U.S. Senate U.S. Rep. Colin Allred, D-Dallas, won the Democratic Primary for U.S. Senate, setting up a November race against Sen. Ted Cruz. State Sen. Rolad Gutierrez, D-San Antonio, came in a distant second.

Cruz easily defeated his two primary challengers.

U.S. President President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump continued their march to their parties' nominations for the second presidential election cycle in a row.

Both men easily won their primaries in Texas easily, with Trump brushing aside former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley and Biden not facing any serious challenger.

--With Ed Cagley  
Houston Landing

## ROTARY CLUB NEWS

**Rotary Club of North Shore**  
September 7

What an amazing way to kick off our September luncheons!

Today we presented club donations to two incredible community partners, Sheldon ISD Education Foundation and Youth-Reach Houston. Thank you both for the difference you make in our community!

Special thanks to AG Edie Holden for visiting our club! Shout out to Ryan Dagley for sharing his story on the impact Rotary has had on his son. We appreciated hearing from you both.

To learn more about the Sheldon ISD Education Foundation, please visit: <https://www.sheldonisd.com>

To learn more about Youth-Reach Houston, please visit: <http://www.youth-reach.org>



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# Celebrating Marilyn Monroe

Women's History Month - (2ND of a series)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

appeal, and the comedies *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, which established her star image as a "dumb blonde". The same year, her nude images were used as the centerfold and cover of the first issue of *Playboy*. Monroe played a significant role in the creation and management of her public image throughout her career, but felt disappointed when typecast and underpaid by the studio. She was briefly suspended in early 1954 for refusing a film project but returned to star in *The Seven Year Itch* (1955), one of the biggest box office successes of her career which led to her and Joe DiMaggio's divorce. (see paragraph 6)



he saw her dress blow up over her head in the movie *The Seven Year Itch*. Director Billy Wilder said, "Joe had the look of death" when he saw the cameras click away at his wife's dress going up showing her panties.

When the studio was still reluctant to change Monroe's contract, she founded her own film production company in 1954. She dedicated 1955 to building the company and began studying method acting under Lee Strasberg at the Actors Studio. Later that year, Fox awarded her a new contract, which gave her more control and a larger salary. Her subsequent roles included a critically acclaimed performance in *Bus Stop* (1956) and her first independent production in *The Prince and the Showgirl* (1957). She won a Golden Globe for Best Actress for her role in *Some Like It Hot* (1959), a critical and commercial success. Her last completed film was the drama *The Misfits* (1961). Monroe's troubled private life received much attention as she struggled with addiction and mood disorders.

She died from an overdose of barbiturates at her Los Angeles home. Her death was ruled a probable suicide. Joe directed her funeral services and he placed over 18,000 flowers on Marilyn's grave twice a week for over twenty years. His last words before he died were, "I'll finally get to see Marilyn."

During her final months, Monroe lived at 12305 Fifth Helena Drive in the Brentwood neighborhood of Los Angeles. Her housekeeper Eunice Murray was staying overnight at the home on the evening of August 4, 1962. Murray woke at 3:00 a.m. on August 5 and sensed that something was wrong. She saw light from under Monroe's bedroom door but was unable to get a response and found the door locked. Murray then called Monroe's psychiatrist, Ralph Gerson, who arrived at the house shortly after and broke into the bedroom through a window to find Monroe dead in her bed. Monroe's physician, Hyman Engelberg, arrived at around 3:50

a.m. and pronounced her dead. At 4:25 a.m., the Los Angeles Police Department was notified.

Monroe died between 8:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. on August 4; the toxicology report showed that the cause of death was acute barbiturate poisoning. She had 8 mg% (milligrams per 100 milliliters of solution) chloral hydrate and 4.5 mg% of pentobarbital (Nembutal) in her blood, and 13 mg% of pentobarbital in her liver. Empty medicine bottles were found next to her bed. The possibility that Monroe had accidentally overdosed was ruled out because the dosages found in her body were several times the lethal limit.

Monroe won, or was nominated for, several awards during her career. Those she won included the Henrietta Award for Best Young Box Office Personality (1951) and World Film Favorite (1953), and a Crystal Star Award and David di Donatello Award for *The Prince and the Showgirl* (1958). She was inducted to the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 1960, and a Golden Palm Star was dedicated at the Palm Springs Walk of Stars in 1995. In the 1999 American Film Institute's list of AFI's 100 Years...100 Stars, she was ranked as the sixth greatest film actress; three of the films in which she appeared—*Some Like It Hot*, *All About Eve*, and *The Asphalt Jungle*—have been added to the Library of Congress's National Film Registry, and the former earned her a Golden Globe for Best Actress. She continues to be considered a major icon in American popular culture in the decades following her death.

# NS Football Player Coles victim of Shooting



JARVON COLES, IN A RECENT INTERVIEW; AND IN UNIFORM ON THE NORTH SHORE MUSTANGS FOOTBALL VARSITY TEAM. COLES WAS A 4.1 HONOR STUDENT, PLANNING ON ATTENDING LAMAR UNIVERSITY IN THE FALL.

HARRIS COUNTY — The North Shore community is mourning the loss of one of their senior football players, who was killed over the weekend at a house party.

Jarvon Coles, who played linebacker, was set to graduate from North Shore High School in May and was planning to attend Lamar University, according to his family.

Coles was at a house party on Saturday night on Fieldwick Lane in a remote area of Humble.

The Harris County Sheriff's Office said deputies received a call for a welfare check at the home because of underage drinking. Shortly af-

ter, they received another call saying someone was unresponsive.

When paramedics found Coles, they administered CPR and discovered he had been shot.

"We believe at some point during the party there was a car occupied by multiple people that drove by the location and fired several shots, striking our victim," HCSO Sgt. Sidney Miller said.

Investigators returned to the scene on Sunday and canvassed the area for a video that they hope will provide leads on who opened fire.

The home where the party happened is a short-term rental. The owner of the house on

Fieldwick Lane told ABC13 over the phone that the residence was rented by a mother who said she wanted to have a party for her son. The owner, who said she never expected this would happen at her rental, said she will have to be more cautious about who she rents to in the future.

Family and friends will gather for a balloon release in Coles' honor on Wednesday at 4 p.m. at the Galena Park ISD football stadium.

Anyone with information about the investigation is urged to call the Harris County Sheriff's Office at 713-274-9100.

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BID NOTICE	LEGAL NOTICE	SERVICES	SERVICES
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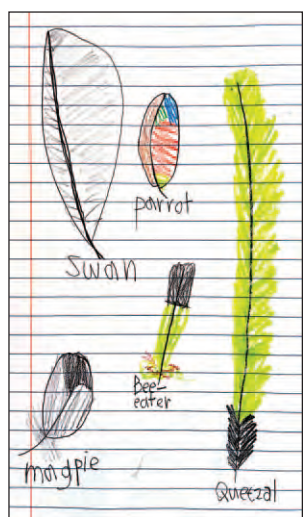
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*Kids Korner: The New Generation*

A note from Kristan Hoffman, daughter of publisher Gilbert Hoffman:

30 years ago, before the digital age had fully taken hold, and this newspaper was still laid out on giant paste-up boards each week, my dad marked off a small section on one of the interior pages and gifted it to me. We named it "Kids Korner," and every week I did my best to fill it with fun features like jokes, drawings, and best of all, my own writing. What a cool job for a kid! What an honor.

Now my young daughter would like a chance to follow in those footsteps. I guess newspaper ink must run in our bloodline. Anyway, I hope you will indulge and enjoy this new generation's fresh energy, creativity, and humor, just like you always did for me.



The Columnist's notes in preparation for the column.

# KIDS KORNER: The New Generation

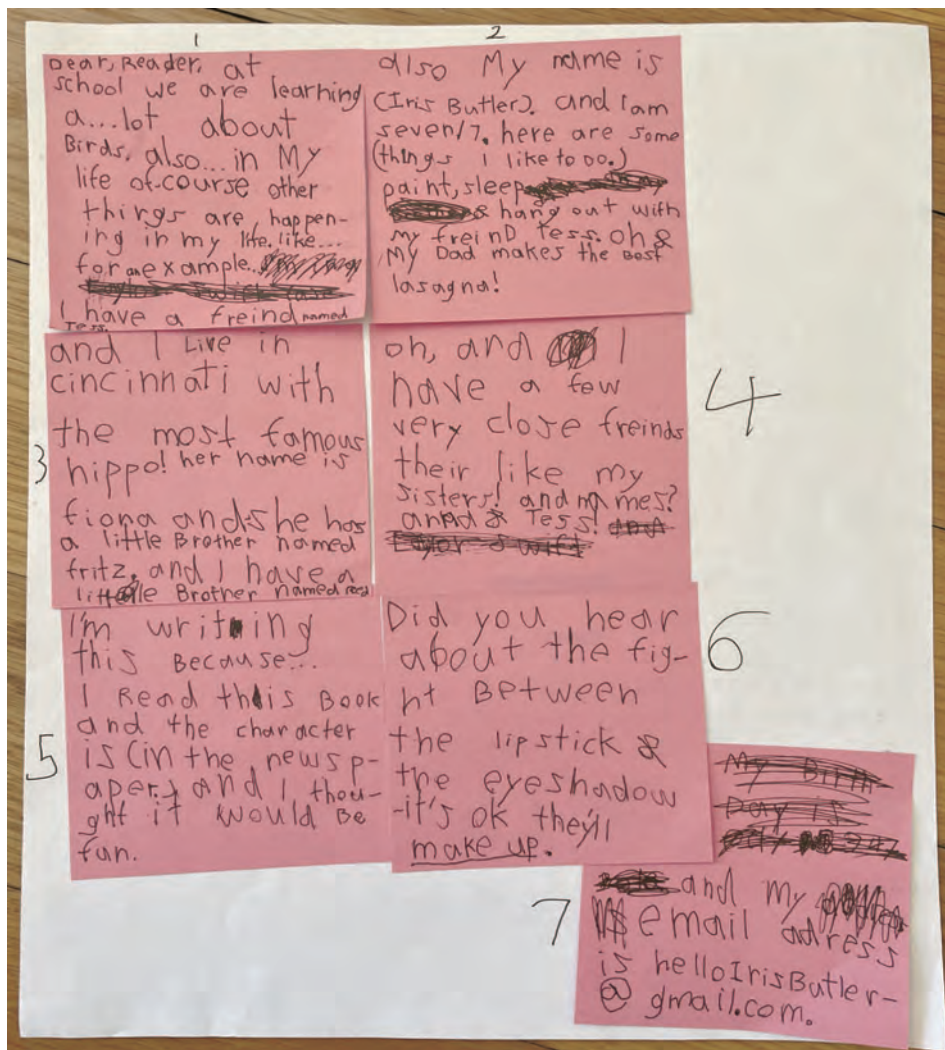
By Iris Butler



Columnist Iris Butler readings one of her books.



The Columnist's Family: Andy, Kristan, Iris, Reed



The Handwritten manuscript of the Kids Korner column.

Dear Reader,

My name is Iris Butler, and I am 7 years old. I live in Cincinnati with the most famous hippo! Her name is Fiona, and she has a little brother named Fritz. I have a little brother too, named Reed. My mom is a writer, and my dad works at a company called P&G. Oh and my dad makes the best lasagna!

I am writing this column because I read a book where the main character writes a column for her local newspaper, and I thought it would be fun. The book is from the Front Desk series by Kelly Yang.

Here are some things I like to do: paint, swim, and hang out with my friends. I have a few very close friends. Two of them are like my sisters. Their names are Tess and Anna. We call ourselves the Three Musketeers. We are in the same first grade class, and

we play soccer together.

At school we are learning a lot about birds. My teacher used to work with birds at the Cincinnati Zoo. There is a kind of feather called semiplume, and I like it because it is fuzzy. I also like scarlet macaws, because they are red, green, and blue, from top to bottom.

I hope you liked my first column! If you would like to write me a message, my email address is [helloirisbutler@gmail.com](mailto:helloirisbutler@gmail.com). Take care!

Jokes:

1. Did you hear about the fight between the lipstick and the eye shadow? Don't worry, they'll make up.
2. What do you call a fish without eyes? FSH!
3. What do you call a cow that plays the flute? A moo-sician.

## Crawfish Shack managing shortage of Mud Bugs,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

is," Meaux said. "The supply is down about 80 to 90 percent."

They opened on Friday and sold out in a few hours. The same was true for Saturday and Sunday.

"We're getting multiple trucks each day. It's just that they have so few bags on them," he lamented.

Wholesalers are not making any money either, he said.

"They still have all the same overhead but with fewer bags to sell. Everybody's losing—farmers, restaurants, wholesalers," he said.

Meaux is still optimistic that the season can be salvaged.

"March looks like it's going to be much better."

Marshal Tobey works on the crew at the purging table and has been working at the restaurant for two years. It's the worst he's ever seen.

"We're sorting through the bags we get here on the table taking out the dead and the small crawfish. We're also removing grass, leeches, and other stuff and trashing it," he said. "We'll take the best quality crawfish and rebag them to cook up for our customers here at the Shack."

Tobey said the first bags of the crustaceans they received a few weeks back were horrible, but have since gone through several molts, have grown, and are looking much better.

Right now, they are getting approximately three deliveries per day and only 35 to 45 sacks.

"That's not normal for us whatsoever," he said. "We typically average in the hundreds of sacks daily."

Meaux said he needs at least 150 sacks per day before he can open dine-in.

"We really need closer to 200-250 sacks on the weekends," he said. They're not selling any bags for customers to boil themselves.

Meaux said the shortage can be blamed on the drought last summer when there was no rain at all in Louisiana where the ponds are during August, September, and October.

"A lot of the crawfish just burned up. They would bury themselves deeper and deeper and then just died because it was so dry and hot. Now, when the crawfish did come up this year, they came up two months later than they normally do at the beginning of October when the females release their eggs into the water," he explained.

They didn't come up until December which has put the season two months behind.

"We're having to cull out so much with each bag because there's so much small and dead that it's cutting out all our profit," Meaux said.

They're not alone. Every part of the industry is suffering while trying to keep prices low for customers. High demand with low yield will elevate the price...Economics 101.

"We're hoping to make it up by going deeper into the season this year. Normally we close at the beginning of June. We're going to try and go all the way through June. I think the quality will withstand later in the year," he said.

The ponds also froze earlier in the year causing some damage then too, but the drought was a major interruption in the industry.

"If you talk to any of these farmers, they'll tell you this is the worst crawfish season ever," he said.



A Delectable Crawfish Dinner, with Mud Bugs, corn, and potatoes is extremely popular in Houston. PHOTOS BY DAVID TAYLOR, and KPRC



Casen McMullen oversees the boil room where the crawfish are boiled. It can get pretty hot as the season warms up.



Marshel Tobey gets some help on the purging table from Seth Martinez, Josh Garrett, and Zach O'Brien.



Dan Meaux removes two bags from the aerator tank, a sort of jacuzzi for the crawfish that stays in the tub up to an hour to remove any remaining dirt and sand from the mudbugs before they head to the boil room. Only about 10 percent of restaurants across Houston have the equipment which makes them extremely clean before boiling.

Meaux explained there's 250,000 acres of farmland that are fished for crawfish in Louisiana that are farm raised and 80,000 of those acres were lost to the drought.

"Anything on the south near the coast is all wiped out," Meaux said.

Meaux opened Crawfish Shack for two weekends in January and sold everything else on his menu except for crawfish, but they just weren't busy enough to remain open.

In 21 years of business, most of them at their present location, Meaux has never had a losing season in business except during COVID and this year.

"We started here in 2007 at this location and we were the only crawfish business in town. We had 10 tables and now we have 58 picnic tables and seat about 350 in our dining room," he said. On a good day, he'll sell close to 100 sacks of live crawfish and boil another 160-plus sacks for the restaurant and drive-thru.

"We have an incredible to-go business. On a good Saturday, we're boiling 6000lbs, which is more than any place in Louisiana or Texas for one location," he said.

He now has four competitors in Crosby and said about 400-plus businesses now sell the mudbugs across the Houston/Harris County area.

It's a family affair with his co-owner wife Jennifer, daughters and in-laws, and a few others that make up the 97 employees when the season is in full swing.

"When we open dine-in, we'll need busboys, hostesses, servers, and much more support staff to add to the 35 to 40 who are working right now," he said.

Crawfish Shack is one of the largest employers in the area and donates back to the community in numerous fundraisers and serving on boards.

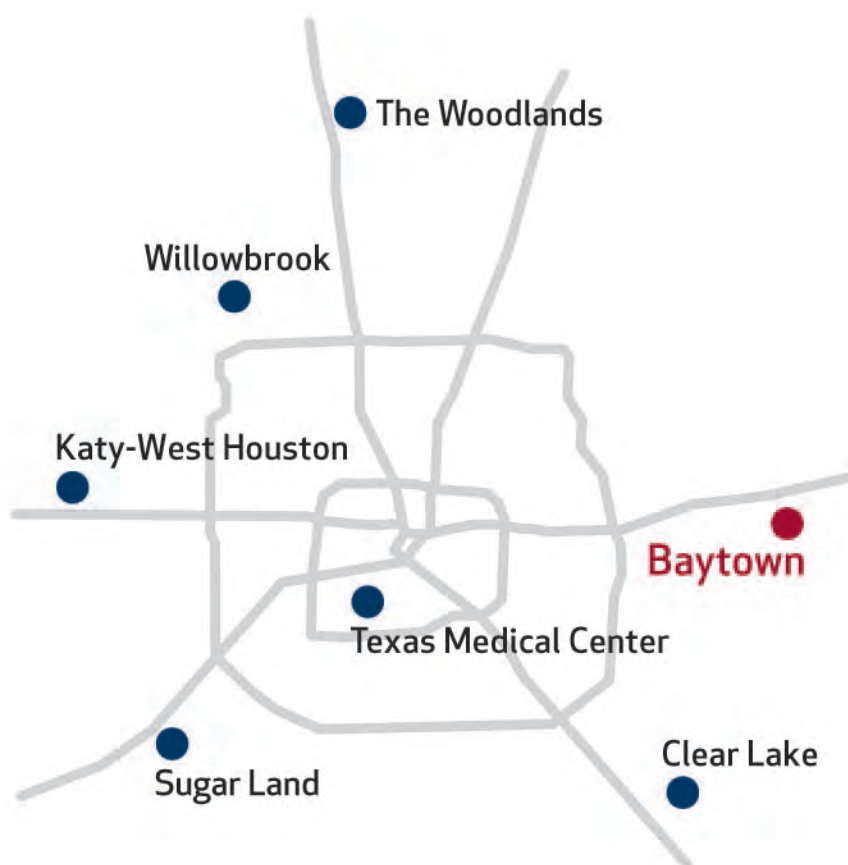
Current pricing is \$12.95 per pound, or 10 pounds or more is \$11.95 per pound, but Meaux wants that price to go down as quick as possible.



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