



Mourners file past Sheila Jackson Lee's casket, which lies in State at Houston City Hall. (Allan Jamail Photo)

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CHANNEL CURRENTS

North Channel Chamber Luncheon Friday Aug. 2

Monthly luncheon, at Jacinto City Town Center, 1025 Oates Road. 11:30 to 1:00pm. Speaker: Dave Brady. \$25 members, RSVP yesenia@ncachamber.com

North Channel Chamber Magic Casino Night Aug. 9

Plan for the Magic of the Chamber Casino Fundraiser, Friday August 9th from 7pm to 11pm at the Jacinto City Town Center, 1025 Oates Road, Jacinto City. Sponsorships now available, from \$200 to \$1800, proceeds to NCAF scholarships. Call 713-450-3600.

Back2School Sales Tax Holiday Aug. 9 thru Aug. 11

(AUSTIN) — Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar is reminding shoppers they can save money on clothes and school supplies during the state's sales tax holiday on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 9-11. This will be the 25th year of Texas' oldest sales tax holiday.

State law exempts sales tax on qualified items — such as clothing, footwear, school supplies and backpacks — priced below \$100, saving shoppers about \$8 on every \$100 they spend. The dates of the sales tax holiday and list of tax-exempt items are set by the Texas Legislature.

Continued. See SALES TAX HOLIDAY, Page 5

New Strategy Expands Cody Stephens Foundation reach for heart screenings

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

Following the devastating effects of the COVID pandemic, the Cody Stephens Foundation found themselves with a dwindling staff and volunteers. It forced the Crosby-based 501(c)(3) charity to pivot with a new strategy for their mission that now seems to be producing exponential results for reaching students across Texas with life-saving screenings.

"It's heartbreaking when you lose one," Scott Stephens told a KHOU 11 reporter when a Katy ISD cheerleader, Katie Marie Mitchell, 16, suffered a cardiac arrest while at a cheer camp at Texas A&M and died.



Scott Stephens, left, demonstrates one of the AEDs to the parents of Callie Donahue, who died from sudden cardiac arrest at a cheer camp at Texas A&M. Scott and Michelle Donahue are proponents of students getting tested for heart issues before participating in athletics and were instrumental in getting the program passed at Katy ISD.

It hasn't been for a lack of trying.

"We went to Katy ISD 10 years ago and thought we had them, but their doctor spoke out against it, and they voted it down," he said disappointed.

That doctor has since died, and Callie will never see graduation either.

At 6-foot 9-inches and 289 pounds, Cody Stephens was every line coach's dream. The mountain of a young man was daunting for opposing teams and his future was bright with a scholarship offer to play football at Tarleton State University.

His life was cut short with sudden cardiac arrest

Continued. See CODY STEPHENS FOUNDATION, Page 5

Dr. Carla Wyatt Makes History as First African-American Treasurer for Harris County

By Allan Jamail

July 1, 2024 ~ Recently, Dr. Carla L. Wyatt made history by becoming Harris County Treasurer, making her the first African American elected to the position. As Treasurer, she strives to use the many relationships she built during the span of her career to serve the people of Harris County with the professional and responsible accountability we all deserve.

"When I first interviewed Dr. Wyatt for this article I had no idea just how much she and I had in common. Plus we share so many mutual friends together; it was an amazing discovery for both of us.

As voters we always want to elect those who have earned their stripes. You know, those having come up from the bottom of the ranks within their career path. Dr. Wyatt meets that criterion hands down."

Wyatt's always been one of those you never see or hear from publicly because

they're a behind the scenes persons, but they're the ones making things happen. This lady has been a mover and shaker working for many of our successful office holders for years."

Dr. Wyatt commented, "My election has been an emotional experience for me. It's an honor and a privilege to stand on the shoulders of my ancestors and the people who have come before me to take on this challenge. This historical achievement also reminds the Houston native of a potentially discouraging discussion that could have kept her from her college dreams."

"One of my high school counselors told me college wasn't for everyone. She told him you're absolutely right, and then I graduated three times. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Biology. I have a Master's Degree in Biology with a minor in Chemistry. I have a PhD in Environmental Toxicology," Wyatt explained. Her college education was at; Tex-



Dr. Carla L. Wyatt, Harris County's First African-American Treasurer

as Southern University, Missouri State University and Houston Community College.

She's now out of the shadows, front and center no

longer working behind the scenes, she's an elected official and taking on one of the county's most valuable positions as WATCH DOG over public funds and many

of the county's budgets."

A county Treasurer is the bookkeeper who keeps track of all the money coming in and going out of the county's treasury. Whether it's vehicle tags, property taxes or whether it's payroll funds, we track all monies. Whether the county owes someone money or someone owes the county money. The Treasurer is the person who's responsible for tracking the money flow in and out, keeping the books.

Wyatt stated, "One of my goals is to paint a better picture of understanding of where your taxpayer dollars are going, bringing information technology and finance together. It's a priority for me... for instance, for people like my family, my neighbors and my friends at times they want to know what the county's project is going on in their neighborhood. I'd like to have those answers available to everybody in Harris County."

Here are some of the

Continued. See First African American Treasurer, Page 2

Sheila Jackson Lee Honored, Lies in State in City Hall Rotunda

By Allan Jamail

Houston, TX. ~ Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ As the sun came up early Monday morning the late Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee's (S JL) mourners began making their way to Houston's City Hall Rotunda where they'd show their respect to her and members of her family. Jackson Lee is only the second person to lie in state in City Hall in Houston's history. She was 74 when she died on July 19 after being treated for pancreatic cancer.

Husband Elwyn Lee, daughter Erica and son Jason could be seen next to her casket accepting condolences from hundreds of Shelia's friends and constituents. After the public's

viewing of her flag draped casket the line of people signed a guest attendance book before exiting city hall.

The best way I can describe the death of "THE CONGRESSWOMAN" as she's been referred to by most everyone is her passing has shocked millions, locally and across the nation. She's one of those people you'd never expect to not often see or hear or read about on some news media outlet of accomplishing some benefits for people in need. She gave so much of herself to others it makes me wonder if this led to her not being able to take the amount of time needed to look after her own health.

SJL was no ordinary elected official, so it's fit-



Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee

ting and deserving her goodbye ceremonies will not be normal either. They'll be four days of separate ceremonies honoring the late U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee.

"I attended the first of four, the kick-off ceremony today Monday morning (7-29-24) and took her casket photo for this article for the North Channel Star newspaper and its other papers

(Crosby Star Courier, Northeast News)." With the heat-index over 107 degrees thousands lined up in the sweltering heat to say goodbye to their beloved congresswoman.

The former municipal judge, City Council member and longtime Democratic member of Congress

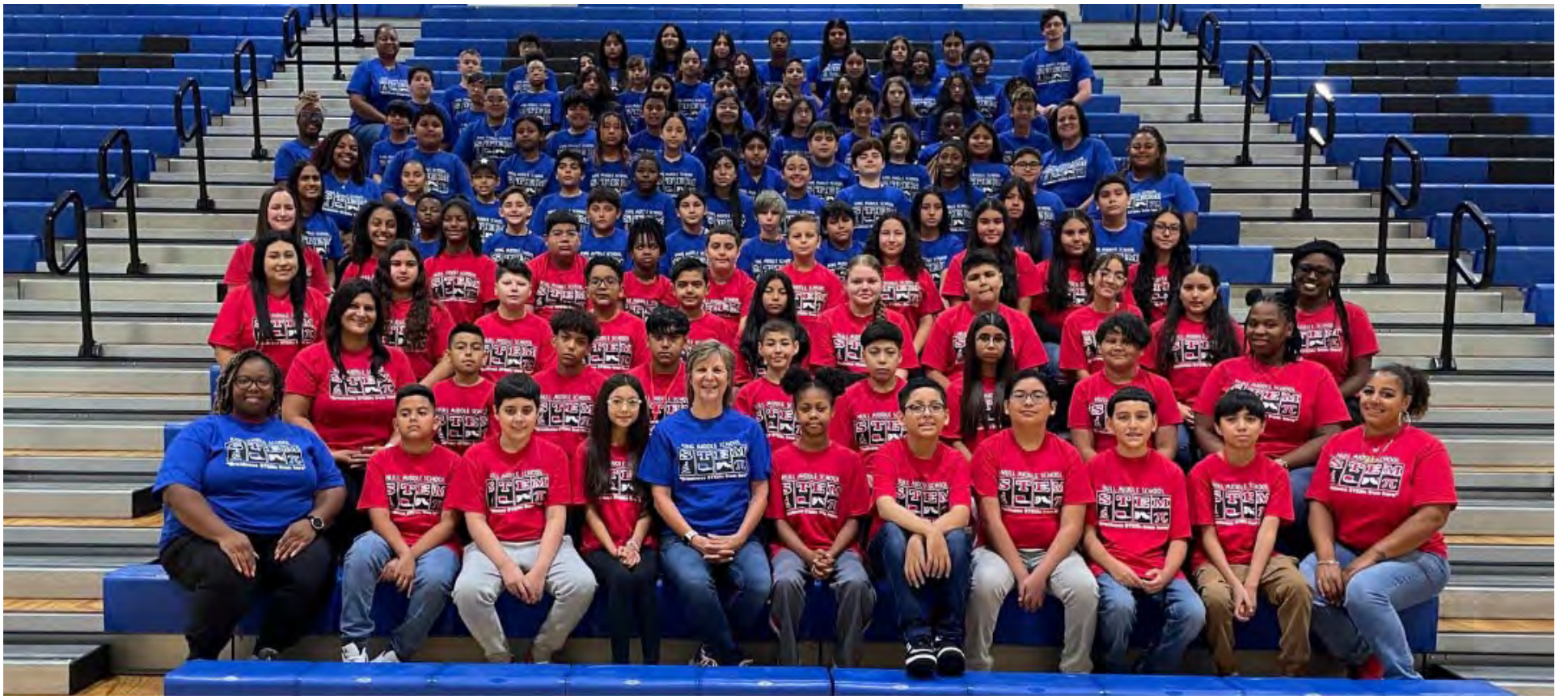
Continued. See Sheila Jackson Lee Honored, Page 5



Sheila Jackson Lee's casket lies in honor at the Houston City Hall Rotunda. (Exclusive photo by Allan Jamail)

SHELDON ISD NEWS

Sheldon ISD Middle Schools Welcome 100 New STEM Students



STEM CAMP 2024

Last week, 100 rising 6th grade students and 15 teachers from both King and Null Middle Schools attended a two-day STEM Camp to prepare for the 2024-2025 school year. Students arrived eager to meet

their new teachers, peers and engage in some STEMtastic fun. Drones were flown, Lego ziplines were constructed, coding relay challenges ran, and a spin around the technology playground. Students

were even able to take on the roles of engineers to invent amusement park rides.

Sheldon ISD's STEM program is nationally recognized. Last school year was the first year for the P-TECH Designation

for the King High School STEM Academy. The high school STEM program became the STEM/P-TECH Academy (Pathways in Technology Early College High School) with 392

students grades 9-12. This state designation provides students the opportunity to earn college credit and receive industry certifications at no cost. In partnership with San Jacinto

Community College, students have the potential to earn more than 60 college credit hours towards a STEM-related associate degree.

Sheldon's Taylor Brock Selected as a Region 4 Teacher of the Year Finalist

Sheldon ISD's Elementary Teacher of the Year Ms. Taylor Brock has been selected as a Region 4 Teacher of the Year Finalist. Ms. Brock was named the Elementary Teacher of the Year for Sheldon ISD at the May Sheldon Stars celebration. She will be recognized at the Region 4 luncheon in August where the announcement of the Teacher of the Year winners will be made. Congratulations, Ms. Brock.



TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST



Sheldon ISD Prepares for First Day of School

Sheldon ISD teams work hard to prepare for the first day of school throughout the summer. The first day of school is Monday, August 12. The 2024-25 school calendar is located at www.sheldonisd.com/calendar. Find more back to school information at www.sheldonisd.com.

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CHARLOTTE'S WEB
By Charlotte Jackson



Dr. Carla L. Wyatt Elected as Harris County's First Black Treasurer

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Truly Living with Passion

Over the years, I have heard that tragedies bring out the worst in people. I have chosen to believe that it brings out the best in people. When the recent hurricane left trees and other debris in so many houses, strangers appeared to help remove the mess, offer warm blankets, provide meals. In addition, hope and hugs were common throughout the community.

This is what East Harris County looks like. As another rainy Saturday rolled along, five individuals made the trip to northwest Houston to south a three-hour workshop provided by Harris County Public Health Department. While working in small groups, our East Harris County group was invited to interact with a group of individuals from various communities considered to be "south/southwest" and they were amazed that the five of us were from the same area. We discussed how we learned of this class and how we each learned about the community organization that connected us in the first place. As we shared about the various programs that East Harris County Empowerment Council offers and the contributions we have made to our community, they were suddenly interested in learning more.

They kept asking which government agencies were the most effective in helping others. They wanted to know how our local school districts run so much smoother than others. They asked questions about how, after sixty years, there was so much pride in an area. We agreed that it is because when there has been a need, we have not waited for others to get started and do something, but instead we have worked together and continue to advocate for the needs. We have worked together to bring resources to the area. We still check on neighbors and welcome new residents to the area.

One of the members of our group explained that while she had lived in the area for many years, it was not until her son lost his father that at the funeral a stranger to her approached her son to express her condolences for his loss. The mother learned that while he was working at a local family-owned restaurant, he came to know this single mother and her three children. His mother was impressed that this patron would take off work and show up at the funeral. His mother wanted to be that committed to others. As only God would orchestrate the future, eventually the two mothers met, and their friendship has grown over the years. It has grown to a place where there are multiple interactions weekly. His mom now is energized to reach multiple people who the first mom has never met. Together they work to make everyone feel welcome to get involved.

To me, the love felt in our east Harris County communities are examples of the quote that John Maxwell shared years ago, "Until people know that you care, they do not care what you know." I genuinely want everyone in our area to know they matter. If it means enrolling in a class to learn basic conversational Spanish or giving up watching the Olympics to learn how to help others in a more effective way, that is where I want to be.

county budgets she is involved with. Harris County and H.C. Flood Control District, Port of Houston Authority, Harris County Hospital District, Harris County Housing Authority, Harris County Toll Road Authority, Metropolitan Transit Authority and Houston Sports Authority.

Wyatt received her bachelor's degree in Science, Master of Science in Biology, and Ph.D. in Environmental Toxicology right here in Houston from Texas Southern University. Her extensive professional biography began at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality where she worked as an investigator in the air program for several years before being hired as the TreeScape Coordinator for The Park People, Trees for Houston, and Scenic Houston.

After leaving her position at TreeScape, Dr. Wyatt was hired as a Professional Development Trainee and Projects Coordinator by the Harris County Public Infrastructure Department. Over the next 20 years, she established herself as a dedicated public servant in several capacities within Harris County including working in the Harris County Budget Office, Harris County Universal Services, Harris County Constable Precinct 3, and stepping up to run emergency communications during Hurricane Harvey.

During that time, Dr. Wyatt cultivated her passion for community service by proudly serving numerous community-based organizations such as the Houston Art Foundation Board, Scenic Houston Board, Houston Spark Park School Park Program Board, and the Clean Houston Commission. A few of her non-professional affiliations are with the illustrious Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated and Texas Southern University Alumni Association.

Treasurer Wyatt said, "I'm grateful to Harris County residents for their vote of confidence in electing me. I've dedicated over two decades of my career to public service for Harris County and Texas, and I am committed to continuing that work as Treasurer. I look forward to working with county officials to make our county a great place to live and raise a family."

Wyatt is also a youth group volunteer and as Harris County's first Black Treasurer she hopes to inspire youngsters to accomplish their dreams. "People can make a judgment about you just by looking at you, but you have to decide what you'd like to do and who you'd like to be and if you fall it's ok just get up and try again," Wyatt said.

"Every program that I've worked in Harris County I've created an internship program because I came in as an intern. I started out as an intern in the El Franco Lee internship program via Sylvia Garcia. Sylvia got my resume, and she gave it to El Franco Lee and I became an El Franco Lee intern in the Public Infrastructure Department."

"Both of my parents are proud of me and continue to support me daily. I have one brother, a half-brother and a half-sister. I believe that we always knew that I would run for some office, we just didn't know which office. The office of Harris County Treasurer came into my view, and I decided to run for it. At the time I was working for Harris County Constable Sherman Eagleton of Precinct 3, my supervisor was sup-

portive so, I started putting in the work towards the office and the people of Harris County helped me win. Constable Sherman Eagleton is a fantastic person, and I'm indebted to him for teaching me the things he's taught me," said Dr. Wyatt.

On a personal note about Dr. Wyatt: in high school she ran track and was in the band as the dance team - Flag Corp Captain. Her hobbies are, gardening, singing and cooking. Her favorite movies and movie stars are, A Few Good Men (1992) - Jack Nicholson and White House Down (2013) - Jamie Foxx. She enjoys all music along with Gospel and Neo Soul.

Wyatt's favorite female and male singers are, Fantasia - Female Singer - When I See You

John P. Kee - Male Singer - Jesus Is Real - Ricky Dillard - Male Singer - Do Not Pass Me By. Her favorite food to cook and eat is spaghetti and chicken. Her favorite sports teams are the Houston Texans, Houston Astros and all the sports at Texas Southern University.

She's traveled to South Africa, Bahamas and Ghana. The Bible is her most favorite book to read. "She said, "The most exciting thing that I've done recently was winning my election and attend the Texas Democratic State Convention in El Paso, Texas."

My mother was the biggest influence in my life, she spent many years working hard to help my brother and I understand that we can accomplish anything we set our minds to. With hard work and dedication, she said we can be successful.

Elected officials complimenting on Dr. Wyatt's election: Harris County Attorney Christian D. Meneff stated, "I'm excited about the vision and experience Dr. Wyatt is bringing to the Treasurer's office. As our county gets more and more diverse, we're seeing a breakthrough, and public officials are looking more diverse like the communities they serve. Groups that had traditionally been excluded from real opportunities to run for elected office are getting a fairer shake at public service. I am excited that Dr. Wyatt is joining us in county leadership, and I look forward to serving the people of Harris County together with her."

Harris County Clerk Teneshia Hudspeth stated, "I congratulate Dr. Carla Wyatt for this historic accomplishment. She has served Harris County in other roles for many years and I have confidence that she will work hard as County Treasurer."

Harris County Precinct 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis stated, "I'm incredibly proud of County Treasurer-elect Dr. Carla Wyatt and proud of the voters for electing people who truly represent the most diverse county in America. I'm excited about the future and ready to work with our newly-elected officials."

Harris County Precinct 3 Constable Sherman Eagleton stated, "Dr. Wyatt is a go-getter and has been a great asset to my office. She's a trusted leader, and I know she's going to do a fantastic job as Harris County Treasurer. I'm proud of her amazing achievement"

Harris County Treasurer's Office; Dr. Carla L. Wyatt; 1001 Preston Suite 652 Houston, TX 77002; phone 832-927-6865; E m a i l : truinfo@harriscountytx.gov

ASK DIAMOND JIM



Diamond Jim: "What is A Bail-in and can I avoid it?"

The world is your oyster

You must understand the relationship you have with your bank in order to protect your assets.

What is a "bail-in"? How can a "bail-in" affect your rights as a depositor?

A legal fact is that the money you have deposited into your bank is a loan you have made to your bank, for which you earn interest. The bank takes your money and loans it to others and makes money based upon the differential in interest rates as well as fees. **If the bank is on shaky financial ground and your money is sitting in bad loans, this ultimately becomes the problem of the creditor, i.e. you, the individual.** Shockingly, the percentage of the public that truly understands this legal reality is still relatively insignificant.

So, what is a "bail-in"? And how does it affect your rights as a depositor?

A "bail-in" is another form "financial rescue" where banks and financial institutions are rescued where the financial responsibility is transferred from taxpayers (in the case of a bail-out) to depositors, which is you in this case. It was first introduced in 2010 via an executive bill signed by President Obama as a direct result of "bailing out" the 2008 "Too Big To Fail" banks and financial institutions.

In other words, "bail-in" will not add to the government's deficit and it will allow banks and financial institutions at risk of failing to take some of your deposits to bail themselves out.

Will a "bail-in" likely happen? With our economy heading towards a possible recession, inflation at an all-time high and the housing market in a bubble, financial uncertainties are looming over the heads of Americans.

Will banks be able to willingly hold your money if another 2008 scenario crash were to take place? What has happened in the recent years in Canada, Greece, Cyprus, and Venezuela suggests that it's not only possible, but likely. In fact, Lebanese banks have seized millions of accounts during the past two years placing the depositors on a financial lockdown.

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Credit to allegiancegold.com for much of the content in this article

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

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OPINION PAGE

TRIBUTES To Sheila Jackson Lee



State Representative Armando Walle:

I'm heartbroken at the passing of my former boss & mentor @JacksonLeeTX18. In 2001, I was young & didn't know much about politics as her staff. SJL quickly taught me about being relentless for your constituents.

Harris County Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia:

Words cannot fully express the impact of Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. The word 'tireless' gets thrown around in politics, but there's no one I've ever met with that kind of work ethic who could compare Congresswoman Jackson Lee.

Former Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner:

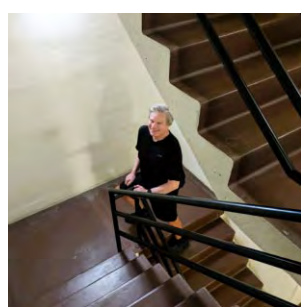
I am deeply saddened by the death of my dear friend and colleague, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. From City Hall to the Halls of Congress, Sheila Jackson Lee has served her constituents well.

When she was elected to the United States House of Representatives she stood in the shadow of Barbara Jordan, Mickey Leland and Craig Washington. Without question, she rose to the occasion and served with great distinction.

Americanisms
Sheila Jackson Lee
'Her strength and stamina were truly never-ending and her determination to rally a chorus to the fuse of justice was unwavering.'
---Tribute from Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo

THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

Climbing the Stairs



I told my husband, Peter, when he first announced the idea, that I thought it was dumb.

I probably didn't say 'dumb,' because I try to be nicer than that. But I let him know that I thought his idea of getting exercise by climbing stairs in the stairwell was, well, kind of dumb.

'Find out if I can access the stairs in the stairwell!' he told me, after we had purchased this condo, sight unseen, during the pandemic.

I'm going to tell you honestly, it was not impressive.

The condo had been occupied by the woman who bought it when the building was built in the 1980s. She died right there at home, and things had gone downhill toward the end.

It was, I reported. But I couldn't imagine how that would be any fun at all.

When Peter finally moved in to the condo, he started climbing the steps in the stairwell—12 rounds a day. The building is 20 stories high, and the top 17 are accessible, which means he climbs 238 stories every day.

That works out to 2,856 stairs, if you are interested in doing the math.

While I walked the neighborhood and admired the old mansions and the manicured gardens and the friendly dogs, Peter climbed the stairs every day, seven days a week.

If this wasn't dumb, it certainly seemed a little crazy to me.

But the thing I didn't count on is that Peter didn't go down the stairs. That would be hard on his knees, he explained. He took the elevator down to the third floor and then climbed up those 17 stories. Then he did it again. And every time he took the elevator down, he had a conversation with a different person in our building.

And Peter became kind of famous.

He started carrying business cards with our name and picture on them and handed them out when he met new people. 'You're the wife of the guy who does the stairs!' strangers said to me.

So when there was a vacancy on the condo board, it should have come as no surprise that Peter was asked to fill it. Campaigning for a seat on the board was about the last thing Peter would ever do, but everyone on the board knew him by now, and he seemed like a smart choice.

Of course he was. Now Peter spends a lot of time reading documents and attending meetings for his new duties as board member.

Eventually, after the weather warmed, he bought a bike, and he started riding around town. I have to believe this is more enjoyable. But if there is rain in the forecast, Peter doesn't hesitate. He climbs the stairs.

And when the weather is fine, I'm sure everyone in the elevator misses him.

Till next time, Carrie

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

PUC Outlines Consumer Protection Rules

As the dog days of August approach and electric bills soar, the Public Utility Commission is reminding consumers of rules in place to protect them from having their power disconnected due to financial difficulties, especially during extreme heat.

'Ensuring the power stays on for all Texans, regardless of their financial situation, is a top priority for all of us at the PUCT,' Executive Director Connie Corona said.

Several utilities have suspended disconnections to allow customers to recover from Hurricane Beryl, which caused widespread outages, particularly in the Houston area.

Consumer protection rules require electric providers to offer bill payment assistance programs, though electric cooperatives and municipally owned utilities in Texas are not subject to this rule; however, most offer some form of bill assistance. Options include a payment arrangement or a deferred payment plan.

Customers seeking assistance should start by contacting their electric provider. They can also learn what assistance programs are available in their area by dialing 211.

MIGRANT APPREHENSIONS DROP TO 2021 LEVELS

The number of migrants apprehended by federal officers in June was at its lowest level in more than three years, according to figures released by the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol and reported by The Texas Tribune. Border Patrol agents apprehended 83,356 migrants in June across the southern border, down from 117,901 in May and the lowest since January 2021, the month President Joe Biden took office.

'Recent border security measures have made a meaningful impact on our ability to impose consequences for those crossing unlawfully,' acting CBP Commissioner Troy A. Miller said in a statement. 'We are continuing to work with international partners to go after transnational criminal organizations that traffic in chaos and prioritize profit over human lives.'

Biden issued an executive order, effective June 5, that es-



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

entially ended granting asylum to migrants.

Gov. Greg Abbott in previous statements has credited the state's multibillion-dollar mission, Operation Lone Star, for the decline in migrant apprehensions, The Tribune reported.

TEXAS SECOND-WORST STATE FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH OUTCOMES

A new report from a national women's health nonprofit concludes Texas is among the lowest performing states for women's health outcomes, Texas Public Radio reported.

Only Mississippi ranked worse in the study by the Commonwealth Fund, which analyzed data on maternal mortality, insurance access and other factors in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

One major issue is the lack of maternity care centers or obstetricians in many rural Texas counties, with 46% defined as 'maternity care deserts.' The state also ranked last in the country for health care access and affordability.

'It means that women enter their pregnancy having had less access to health care, particularly if they're poor or low income, and in a poorer health situation than they would have been in had they had health insurance coverage,' said Sara Collins of the Commonwealth Fund.

FEDS OK SNAP HOT-FOOD PURCHASES IN BERYL-AFFECTED COUNTIES

Federal food assistance recipients in 36 counties affected by Hurricane Beryl can use their benefits to buy hot foods and ready-to-eat meals, the

Texas Health and Human Services Commission announced last week.

The approval from the U.S. Department of Agriculture applies to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients in Angelina, Austin, Brazoria, Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Grimes, Hardin, Harris, Houston, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Lavaca, Liberty, Madison, Matagorda, Montgomery, Nacogdoches, Newton, Orange, Polk, Rusk, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, Shelby, Trinity, Tyler, Victoria, Walker, Waller, and Wharton counties.

'The ability to purchase hot food is a necessity for SNAP recipients who are still recovering from the effects of Hurricane Beryl,' said HHSC Deputy Executive Commissioner of Access and Eligibility Services Molly Regan. 'Many families still cannot prepare meals due to power outages.'

No action is required of SNAP recipients to receive this additional benefit. To find local resources, such as food and shelter, dial 211 and select Option 1.

EXPERTS: POWER OUTAGES LIKELY TO CONTINUE

Experts say widespread outages such as that caused in July by Hurricane Beryl, and in recent years by other weather-related events, are likely to continue in the future because the state's massive power grid is unprepared for severe weather events, The Tribune reported.

The state had 210 weather-related power outages from 2000 to 2023, according to data from the U.S. Department of Energy — more than any other state. In July, Beryl knocked out power to 2.6 million customers in Southeast Texas. That came on the heels of a mid-May windstorm, known as a derecho, that hit the Houston area with 100-mile-per-hour winds and knocked out power to 1 million customers.

'It's like the big, bad wolf: huff and puff and blow the house down,' said Michael Webber, an energy resources professor at the University of Texas at Austin. 'And I don't think any utility or city designs for weather like that, at least not weather that frequent.'

The state's stand-alone power grid will need decades of public investment in order to make it more resilient against storms, which down poles and power lines across Texas.

'The current distribution infrastructure isn't adequate apparently for the job at hand,' Michael Skelly, CEO of Grid United, said. 'What level of reliability do we want to try to get to and what are we prepared to invest?'

Both CenterPoint and Oncor have proposed investing billions to strengthen poles and wires, and install underground wires, but that will likely come at a cost to consumers.

'Ultimately, the bill is going to get loaded onto the backs of the customers, whether or not they were pleased with how [the power outage] was handled,' Sandra Haverlah, president of the Texas Consumer Association, said.

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FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers now Open for help

Harris County, TX, July 18, 2024, The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has opened five Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) locations in Harris County for residents seeking federal aid after the recent disasters in Harris County, including Hurricane Beryl.

“There is so much need in Harris County after Hurricane Beryl and the other two disasters we’ve been through recently, but the good news is that help is here. I’m so glad that our community is already applying for this assistance that does not have to be repaid, and we are working hard to spread the word. Thank you to President Biden and FEMA for helping us get these crucial recovery resources out into the community as quickly as possible. Right now our community needs all the help we can get, and so I also encourage anyone who is able to help out their neighbors by volunteering,” said Judge Lina Hidalgo.

FEMA has already received more than 315,000 applications for Individual Assistance for Harris County residents affected by Hurricane Beryl.

How to Apply for FEMA Aid (Individual Assistance):

Residents affected by Hurricane Beryl, the derecho and/or the San Jacinto River flooding can apply for direct financial assistance from the federal government under FEMA’s Individual Assistance (IA) program to cover the cost of support like home repair and temporary housing at any of the DRC locations. People who have damage from more than one of the recent disasters will need to submit a separate application for each disaster.

People can visit any of the Disaster Recovery Center locations below to apply for direct FEMA aid:

-Acres Homes Multi-Service Center: 6719 W Montgomery Rd, Houston, TX, 77091

-Thomas A. Glazier Senior Education Center: 16600 Pine Forest Lane, Houston, TX, 77084

-Denver Harbor Multi-Service Center: 6402 Market St, Houston, TX 77020

-Spring Spirit: 8526 Pitner Rd, Houston, TX 77080

-Leon Z Grayson Community Center: 13828 Corpus Christi St, Houston, TX 77015

People can also apply for aid by visiting www.disasterassistance.gov, calling 800-621-FEMA or by downloading the FEMA app. Anyone can find the

closest DRC location to them using gfema.gov/drc.

How to Apply for SBA Low-Interest Disaster Loans:

The Small Business Administration has also opened two Business Recovery Center (BRC) locations in Harris County for businesses seeking low-interest disaster loans, which are designed to help cover the cost of economic loss during a disaster. Businesses can visit any of the Business Recovery Center locations below to apply:

-Trini Mendenhall Community Center: 1414 Wirt Rd, Houston, TX 77055

-University of Houston-Downtown (UHD): Room B106, 1st Floor, 320 North Main St, Houston, TX 77002

People can also apply for SBA loans online at www.sba.gov/disaster or calling 800-659-2955.

Please visit www.readyharris.org for more information on hours and parking at DRC and BRC locations. Additionally, people who need more information about DRCs or people who are interested in volunteering to help those affected by Hurricane Beryl can call 2-1-1.

Precinct. 2 crews busy removing Storm Debris



Wednesday, 7/24/2024 - Harris County picking up vegetative debris in a Precinct 2 neighborhood in Aldine. Not everyone has their debris separated into types of debris—vegetative (trees, shrubs, etc.), construction (fences, shingles, etc.), or other debris. If your vegetative debris is mixed with other types of debris, it’s possible the county will not pick it up. (Photo by Marina Sugg)

Sheila Jackson Lee Honored,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Mourners line up to honor Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee at the Houston City Hall Rotunda. At right, husband Elwin Lee greets wellwishers and thanks them for their presence. (Photo by Allan Jamail).

lay in state in the City Hall rotunda all day today (Monday). Jackson Lee’s more than 30 years as an elected representative from Houston warranted Mayor John Whitmire bestowing her with the highest honor he possibly could, he said.

“This is a celebration,” Whitmire said. “God does not allow us to choose when we lose a loved one, or friend, or colleague, but he does allow us to celebrate their lives, and pay our respects, and honor them.”

Whitmire opened the proceedings Monday morning outside the City Hall steps alongside Jackson Lee’s family and other elected officials. The group then ushered into the rotunda, where they quietly stood in front of Jackson Lee’s casket as a Houston Symphony string quartet played “Amazing Grace and Ave Maria.”

“Her honorable reputation far exceeded the boundaries of the 18th Congressional District in Houston. She had no boundaries when it came to helping someone. “We loved her because we trusted her to look out for those of us in need of help. She was instrumental in getting Harris County’s residents some of the nation’s first COVID virus testing performed, myself included. She fought for those who needed someone to defend them or to get them their fair share of services to improve their lives. She was a voice for those who are voiceless.” She was the congresswoman, who helped lead federal efforts to protect women from domestic violence and recognize Juneteenth as a national holiday will never be forgotten.

President Joe Biden came this afternoon, he

placed his hand on her casket and said goodbye to her. He also visited with her family and offered his condolences to them.

The words that Biden wrote in the guest book, after he placed a bouquet of flowers near her flag draped casket & bowed his head in prayer and then signed the guest book with these words; “FEARLESS, PROUD, AND BOLD. MAY GOD BLESS A DEAR FRIEND AND GREAT AMERICAN. MAY GOD BLESS YOU, SHEILA JACKSON LEE.”

“No matter the issue — from delivering racial justice to building an economy for working people — she was unrelenting in her leadership,” Biden said.

I’ll be attending her final funeral ceremony on August 1st at the Fallbrook North Church. Look for next week’s newspaper for my photos and article.

Sales Tax Holiday,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“For a quarter of a century, Texans have saved more than \$1.8 billion on everything from blue jeans to ballpoint pens in preparation for the back-to-school bell,” said Hegar of the sales tax holiday weekend, an annual event since 1999. “As the father of three, I know firsthand how these expenses add up over the years, and this weekend is the perfect time for folks to save some of their hard-earned cash on items they need.”

The Comptroller’s office estimates that shoppers will save \$143.4 million in state and local sales tax during this year’s sales tax holiday.

Apparel and school supplies that may be purchased tax free are listed on the Comptroller’s website at TexasTaxHoliday.org.

During the annual sales tax holiday, qualifying items can be purchased tax free in person or by

any other means including over the internet, by telephone, or by mail. Purchases are exempt when either:

- the item is both delivered to, and paid for by, the customer during the exemption period; or
- the customer orders and pays for the item, and the seller accepts the order during the exemption period for immediate shipment, even if delivery is made after the exemption period ends.

Cody Stephens Foundation Expands Cardiac Screenings Across Texas Schools,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

at 18. He never saw graduation or collected his promised football scholarship. Now his father spends countless hours speaking anywhere he’s invited to warn parents of the impending danger.

“When Callie passed away, her mom was an assistant principal at one of the Katy schools and her dad was head of security,” Stephens said. Their connections helped force a revisit of the program in front of another set of school board members who recently voted positively for the program.

“They bought the machines and placed them in the schools and are now offering screening to students, teachers, and even parents,” he said. Stephens has a cardiologist that reads them and sends them the results.

Yes, bought machines. It’s the new strategy that has made life a little easier on the smaller staff.

“It’s the model we’ve kind of gone too. Texas is so big it’s hard to set up screenings with our staff all over the state,” he said.

Now they offer the machines at a discount to the schools, teach the nurses and coaches how to do the ECGs, they email them back to Stephens staff in Houston, the cardiologist

reads them and sends them the results.

“After Katy ISD joined, Lamar Consolidated ISD in Fort Bend also joined up,” he said. Goose Creek Consolidated has also bought machines and will begin screening this fall.

Large districts reach a much larger population of students and that sits well with Stephens.

“These machines are user friendly and have the most recent criteria already built into the software,” he said. They purchase the machines from CardiaScreen in Dublin, Ohio and it includes a laptop and hard carrying case for storage.

The turnaround of the results from the cardiologist is typically within 72 hours.

“We plan on using our machines to screen our fall athletes in the spring, and our spring athletes in the fall,” said Lee Martinez, athletic director for Goose Creek Consolidated ISD in Baytown.

“We’re going to make it part of our culture with athletics, fine arts and any others that want it here in our district,” Martinez said.

More than 200 turned out for their first event and he said they are planning more.

Martinez said he was excited to be able to save kids’ lives.

“We now have the means to do it,” he said.

For Stephens, they will continue to be hands on with full screening events.

“We still do full screenings from about Waco south to the coast,” he said, “but we’ve found that this is a much easier solution and allows us to expand our reach. We can reach Texas if we get the machines in the hands of the schools,” he said.

Stephens said one of the objections he had faced was when a student did have a follow-up echocardiogram that shows a picture of the health of the heart, it was expensive for parents.

“We now have access to an echo that’s very reasonably priced,” he said.

Since 2012, Stephens has continued to fight to save the lives of Texas children and spare other parents the heartache and pain he and his family experienced with the loss of their son.

To learn more about the Cody Stephens Foundation or to make a donation, please visit their website at <https://www.codystephensfoundation.org>

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LEGAL NOTICE

HARRIS COUNTY WATER CONTROL AND IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 21

NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF RULES

Notice is hereby given that the Board of the Directors of Harris County Water Control and Improvement District No. 21 at a meeting held on the 1st day of July, 2024 adopted an Ordinance Adopting Amended Rates and Fees for Services and Rules and Regulations Establishing Certain Other Policies and Providing Penalties and Violations Thereof. A copy of the Ordinance is on file at the principal office of the District, 15808 Avenue C, Channelview, Texas 77530-3702, where it may be read in full.


 President, Board of Directors

28-2T

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PET MATTERS
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Houston BARC receives \$25,000 grant to support lifesaving work

HOUSTON – BARC, the City of Houston’s Animal Shelter and Adoption Center, is set to receive a \$25,000 grant investment from national nonprofit Petco Love in support of their lifesaving work for animals in Houston.

Petco Love is a national nonprofit leading change for pets by harnessing the power of love to make communities and pet families closer, stronger, and healthier. Since its founding in 1999, Petco Love has invested nearly \$400 million in adoption and other lifesaving efforts. And Petco Love helps find loving homes for pets in partnership with Petco and more than 4,000 organizations — like ours — across North America, with 6.8 million pets adopted and counting.

During Hurricane Beryl, BARC faced significant challenges, including power outages and generator failures, resulting in the loss of refrigerated medication and a temporary halt in adoptions. The shelter also received damage to outdoor horse stalls and fences. Staff worked tirelessly through the storm to ensure the safety of the animals while intake continued, and this grant will help restore essential vaccines, repair damaged property, and support ongoing lifesaving efforts.

“In times of a disaster like Hurricane Beryl, we know animal shelter staff are strained as they work tirelessly to keep pets in their care safe while also facing hurdles brought on by the severe weather emergency,” said Susanne Kogut, president of Petco Love. “We are proud to support our partner organization, BARC, to ensure their shelter pets get the best possible care after the storm and before they are adopted into loving homes.”

“We are deeply thankful to Petco Love for their generous grant, which comes at a critical time for BARC as we recover

from the impacts of Hurricane Beryl,” said Jarrad Mears, BARC’s Shelter Director. “This lifesaving investment will enable us to not only restore vital vaccinations lost during the storm’s power outages and repair damaged property but also to strengthen our efforts in saving more lives. Their partnership allows us to continue providing the highest standard of care to our pets and serve our community with resilience and compassion.”



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BARC takes in more than 20,000 pets annually regardless of behavior, breed, or medical condition. BARC works each day to improve Houstonians and their pets’ health and safety by pioneering programs such as low-cost and no-cost spay/neuter services, mobile adoptions, transfer/rescue partnerships, and pet registration and microchipping. BARC is also committed to public safety through animal enforcement, which answers calls for service from the community and investigates cases of animal cruelty.

For more information about BARC Animal Shelter, visit www.HoustonBARC.com. Learn more about Petco Love here: petcolove.org.



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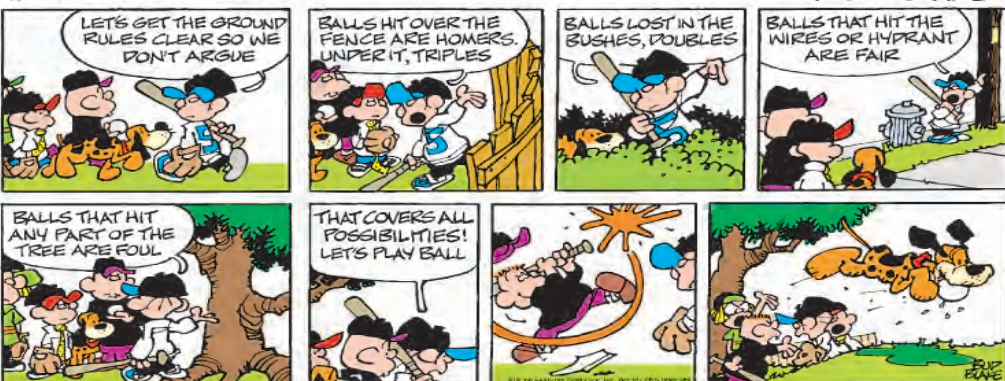
ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



by Dave T. Phipps

TIGER



by BUD BLAKE

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by Jeff Pickering

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging ♦♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

July 29, 2024 Posting Date

King Crossword

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ACROSS

- Swear
- Understood
- Six-pack units
- Slightly
- French assent
- October birthstone
- Sultry Horne
- Annoying
- Michelangelo works
- Pumped (up)
- Medit. nation
- “Blue?”
- Cook in the oven
- Sun spot
- Take courses?
- Pie — mode
- Felon’s flight
- Fake ally
- Cavorts
- Mel of baseball
- UFO crew
- Top floor
- Cargo
- First-termers
- Contrite one
- Staffer
- Brit. record label
- Actress Fisher
- Colonial flag maker
- “Norma —”
- Harbor arrival
- Docile
- Chicago winter hrs.
- Alter in the sky
- Ump
- Rowing need
- Packed away
- Aviate
- Carrier to Amsterdam
- Napkin’s place
- Ambulance initials
- Invoice fig.
- Loud sounds
- Engrave
- GPS suggestion
- Egyptian deity
- Golfer Els
- Miles away
- Half a sextet
- Turner and Danson
- Disaster aid org.
- Get overemotional
- Prefix with pad or port
- Snare
- Mal de —

DOWN

- Baby elephant
- Cab alternative
- Trig function
- Equilibrium
- Really dig
- Belonging to us
- Dead heat
- Universal
- Per person
- Handle
- Santa’s ride

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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- TELEVISION: What was SpongeBob SquarePants’ original name when the story was pitched?
- MOVIES: Which famous horror film was set at Crystal Lake, New Jersey?
- LANGUAGE: In Great Britain, what are stabilisers?
- MUSIC: Which band had a hit with the 1961 “The Lion Sleeps Tonight”?
- GEOGRAPHY: How many U.S. states have a border with Mexico?
- MATH: How many sides does a hectogon have?
- INVENTIONS: In what year were flat-screen TVs first sold?
- FOOD & DRINK: What kind of cheese is used in a caprese salad?
- U.S. STATES: Which state’s nickname is “The Land of Enchantment”?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: What kind of dog is Scooby-Doo in the animated cartoons?

Solution time: 23 mins.

Answers

King Crossword

1. SpongeBoy. 2. “Friday the 13th.” 3. Training Wheels. 4. The Tokens. 5. Four: California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. 6. 100. 7. 1997. 8. Fresh mozzarella. 9. New Mexico. 10. A Great Dane.



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