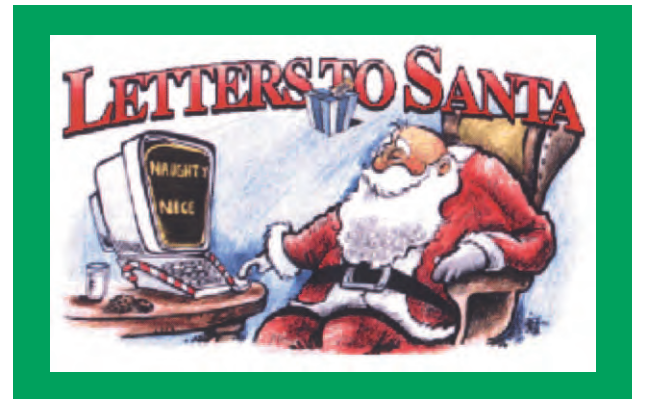




NORTH CHANNEL STAR

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 VOLUME 12, NO. 49 (#548) THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2024 www.northchannelstar.com

CHANNEL CURRENTS

Holiday Events

Saturday, DEC. 21 Channelview FD Christmas Parade
 Dec. 21st 6 PM
Parade Route: 16550 Wallisville Rd. (Harvey Brown Elementary) west to Dell Dale, then south to Woodforest Blvd, then east to Sheldon Rd, then north to Bill Neal Center parking lot.
Parade Participants: Anyone wishing to participate in the parade line-up with a group, vehicle or float, please email publicrelations@channelviewfire.com
Parade Line-up: Harvey Brown Elementary Parking Lot at 5 PM - 16550 Wallisville Rd, Houston, TX 77049

EPA meeting on Waste Pits Tuesday Jan. 7
 The EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) has scheduled a public meeting to update persons on the status of the remedial work at the Superfund Site. Meeting is Tuesday, Jan. 7 from 6:00pm to 7:45pm at the Highlands Community Center, 604 Highland Woods Drive, Highlndns 77562. More information on Page 5.

North Channel Chamber 48th Annual Gala
 North Channel Area Chamber of Commerce presents its 48th Annual Gala on Friday, January 31, 2025 6:30pm Reception, 7:00pm Dinner. Attire: Cocktail Masquerade.
 Awards and Installation Gala Banquet, at the Hyatt Regency Baytown Houston Hotel. Tickets \$100. RSVP 713-450-3600 or yesenia@ncachamber.com.

Channelview Firefighters & Partners bring Holiday cheer to Families

11th Annual Toy Drive with help from CV Ministry and CV ISD

By David Taylor
 Managing Editor

Every time there's a tone out, Channelview firefighters rush to the truck, loading up, and responding to the call knowing there's someone in need on the other end of the 9-1-1 phone call.

Almost 11 years ago, firefighters heard a call of a different kind and have come to the rescue of several thousand children over the last decade to offer help.

Julio Flores, spokesperson for the fire department, said they have been doing some kind of toy drive since he's been there since 2009.

"We really kicked it into gear when we became a commissioned department



Channelview Fire Department firefighters were at Channelview High School collecting toys the Saturday after Thanksgiving for their annual toy drive.

about 11 years ago," he said.

Previously, the department was a combination volunteer and partly paid group. Now they are a fully paid fire department since Channelview has grown immensely over the

last decade and the number of calls has increased enormously.

Flores became really involved in the toy drive two years ago.

"We don't do this alone. We partner with the Channelview Ministry team and the Channelview Independent School District," he said.

"They help with toy drives, and the

school also collects toys," he said.

Counselors at each of the school's nominate students they identify as needy and give that list to the school administrators.

"They sort the toys at a local church, and then fill the bags according to the student's needs," he said.

For Flores, it's kind of personal.

"You see some of the kids on the scenes we make, and you see how they're living and what they're going through, and you want to help," he said.

Most of the team were born and raised in Channelview and they work in the district or fire department and committed.

"Their heart is in it because this is their hometown," he said.

Flores estimated they assist between 180-200 students every year. They try hard each year to provide between four to five toys for each student. That amounts to almost 1,000 toys to collect each year.

"For some of the students, it's the only gifts they will get on Christmas. The fami

Continued. See CV FIREFIGHTERS TOY DRIVE, Page 3

North Shore Falls to Westlake 35 -10, Ending State Championship Run

By Allan Jamail

Katy, TX. ~ Saturday December 14, 2024 at the Legacy Stadium the old phrase, "all good things must come to an end" proved to be true for the North Shore Mustangs varsity football team. The Mustangs one of the state's most winnable teams in high school 6A history lost in a lopsided game to the Austin Westlake Chaparrals (Chaps) 35 - 10.

Westlake didn't allow history to repeat itself in the 6A Division I semifinals. The Mustangs had taken out the Chaparrals in the semifinals the past two seasons, but behind a tremendous defensive effort and four touchdowns by quarterback Rees Wise, the Chaps earned the program's 12th all-time berth in the finals.

"We knew we were this good, it was just a matter of winning this game," Chaps Head Coach Tony Salazar



#9 Westlake quarterback Rees Wise runs past Mustangs defense for a TD. He passed for 4 TD's. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

said. "It's been a thorn in our sides the past couple of years, but our guys didn't run from the challenge. They went head first, full speed."

"It was personal after the last two years. We told the boys, the captains. We're

not going out like that again. And we knew they were looking over us," said Chaps senior linebacker Elliot Schaper. "So we gotta come out fast and hit them in the mouth. And that's what we did. They were not expecting that."

"We're a physical team. We're a more physical team than anybody we play," said Chaps junior QB Rees Wise. "And that's what we put our offense on. And that's what we did, that's why we have that score up there."

The Eastside Boys only led for a brief period once in the entire game after a 3 point field goal early in the first quarter. Soon thereafter the Chaps went ahead 7 - 3 with 5 minutes remaining in the first quarter and never gave up the lead. After the first quarter they led 14 - 3.

The Chaps defense held the high scoring Mustangs to only one touchdown that was made when QB Bailey hit receiver Quanell Farrakhan Jr. on a 9 yd pass with 11 seconds before the half-time's closing; score of 21 - 10.

Westlake sacked Bailey numerous times and kept him running so he couldn't pass accurately. When

Bailey did have an open receiver with good pass protection for some unknown reason his usual accurate passes were not on target. Kaleb Bailey stats- 95 yards on 19 carries... 12 for 23 passing for 153 yards.

The Chaps shut down the offense running and passing game, Nshore's normal tough defense couldn't do the same, the Chaps scored a TD in all four quarters, something no opponent has done this season. Chaps made five TD's, Junior QB Rees Wise ran for a TD and passed for four, he wasn't sacked and had time to pass.

They were relentless on defense and playing with urgency and swarming to the football. They were strong at the point of attack in the trenches and tight in coverage on the backend.

Continued. See WESTLAKE ENDS MUSTANGS'S STATE RUN, Page 5

North Channel Chamber 2024 Holiday Open House



On December 10th, the Chamber had their annual open house for the holidays; members and guests enjoyed delicious foods and refreshments. Chamber Pres. & CEO Margie Buentello greeted everyone and wished them the best of the holiday season.

Photo by Allan Jamail

To learn how the chamber can help your business and or individuals visit: www.northchannelarea.com / (713) 450-3600

HCDE & Bates Surprise Family with New Car, Gifts for Christmas



Octavia Lafayette and her son Trayvon are all smiles after getting into her Nissan Versa sedan, gifted to her by Bates Collision Centers in Channelview.

By David Taylor
 Managing Editor

For more than two decades, Lee and Leila Bates have given from their heart and wallet a refurbished car to a deserving family at Christmas time. The auto collision repair company based originally in Channelview

and expanded now into Baytown, has worked with the Harris County Department Education Head Start program for most of those years

Continued. See COUNTY PASSES FAMILY ASSISTANCE PLAN, Page 7

 Letters to Santa 

Dear Santa,
This year I have been good. I have been good to my friends at school. And I get 100 and A+ on my spelling test on Friday. For this Christmas, I would like to have cinamoroll stuff and stich. I would be happy if you gave me a toy. Thank you,
Dalila Silveyra
Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa,
This year I have been good in my hous. I been trying my best. This year I want a PS5. If you bring me my present I will be happy if you don't it will be fine. Sincerely,
Derek Salazar
Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa:
May I have a Cougar toy, a bulls toy, bear toy, a puppy, a kitten, a seal toy and a train set and animal kingdom toys, all of them.
Benjamin, 10 yr.

Dear Santa:
For Christmas I want a meta guest 3 to play with, but my little brother is Mannix , a dark off brand VR headset. Mason 8 yr.

Dear Santa,
This year I have been good in my hous. I been trying my best. This year I want a PS5. If you bring me my present I will be happy if you don't it will be fine. Sincerely,
Derek Salazar
Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa:
This year I have been good. I would like for you to bring a cute bingbag, and a lotto paper to drew and cinamoroll stuff, and can I have a stickers and two 100 Roux, and peachy babies slimes, Auora jell cube, Kawaii space bear, Axolot ice slime. Andrea, 8 yr.

Dear Santa:
For Christmas this year I have been very good. •Lego friends set •Coloring book •board games • mini versa dry erase markers jewelry Sophia, 8 yr.

 Letters to Santa 

Dear Santa:
I really want a VR headset or a Zodiad sigh book and I want medicine for me and my family and dots I want these things because these are the first things I could think of that I can share. Juan, 9yr.

Dear Santa,
This year I have been good in school. I always help my family. I wish to have a teddy bear to hug and a doll to play with my sister. Thank you for my gifts
Stephanie
Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa:
May I get a google and Nerfgun, the mini gun that is a Nerf gun and a lava lamp. Damon, 9 yr.

Dear Santa,
I have been good at home. I lisen to my parents tell me to do it. What I want for chrimas a toy car and slime and a VR. I have been a little bad and I chat a lot and have good grades.
Julio Muro
Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa:
I have been a very good student. I do my homework every day and I made good grades. I try my best to do good in school. I have a very nice teacher whose name is Ms. Coopers. She makes learning fun. I am proud to be a tiger at Jacinto City Elementary. Angelica, 8 yr.

Dear Santa:
May I get a google and Nerfgun, the mini gun that is a Nerf gun and a lava lamp. Damon, 9 yr.

Dear Santa:
I don't want much this year, all I want is to get a phone and switch. But the most I want is a good family. Jonathan, 9 yr.

Dear Santa:
For Christmas I want a kids 3d pen art supplies, and pet bunny, a big kitchen play set for my sister, and my wish is every one should always be happy and grateful. Lisa, 8 yr.



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Joe Stephens and family

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Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!**

**State Representative
Ana Hernandez**



**Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year**



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Join us as we welcome special musical guests!



CHARLOTTE'S WEB
By Charlotte Jackson



Being Prepared

As children, we often hear about being prepared. It is a strong message for recruitment for Scouting. As teenagers, we hear about being prepared for college and a potential career. As we start dating, we are told to prepare for a lifelong commitment to a marriage partner. As we begin our careers, we are told to prepare for longevity in the job as well as preparing for retirement. Living in the Houston the Houston area, we are told to prepare for hurricane season and as we learned in 2021, to be prepared for freezing temperatures.

It is hard to know what changes life will bring you. Over the past few generations, we have realized the need for financial literacy classes as well as the need for pre-marital counseling. There are classes to help with so many areas of our lives that it is important to stay informed. In a time when we have more connectivity option, we often find neighbors who are new to the community, and they want to know more. They want to know the history the area as well as how to get involved.

One of the first areas where people can connect is church. Another opportunity if they have children, they can get involved with the PTA at the school or about learning what volunteer opportunities there are available. Fortunately, there are non-profit organizations such as East Harris County Empowerment Council (EHCEC), where they can not only volunteer, as well as receive assistance in many areas, but there are learning opportunities.

It was the Leadership Development program that kept many of us connected during the COVID nightmare. We continued to meet virtually for almost a year and learned how to connect with various agencies as well as elected leaders. That program has been modified to the Community Builders Academy. Classes will start soon, so take the time to visit their website and learn how to enroll. These programs as well as all services from EHCEC are open to residents who live in Channelview ISD, Crosby ISD, Galena Park ISD as well as Sheldon ISD. (At the time the organization was founded, these four areas were selected due to the many needs left unmet by services provided to residents.) In addition, they now offer classes for those wanting to make a difference with environmental issues. This program is the Community Organizing Academy, and they also offer the Community Entrepreneurship Academy.

Not only as the community members learn how to make a difference, but they allow opportunities for class members to build relationships. The programs bring about comradery which overflows into various other opportunities. From one of the programs, there is a network of neighbors who volunteer for projects and are exposed to so many free services available in the Harris County Area.

As you wind down 2024, be sure to visit the website, learn more about the learning opportunities as well as upcoming volunteer events. And if you are looking to make a donation to a non-profit to have a tax break, please consider this organization.

CV Firefighters Answer the Call with Annual Toy Drive,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

lies are struggling just to make ends meet," he said. "It's stressful. Our team knows there's a lot on us to help meet the need." They don't always make that goal.

"The last few years, the number of toys we collect isn't enough to cover for the students. So, on Dec. 18 or so, we go to Walmart and shop for the remainder," he said, "and it usually takes us four hours."

The money to buy the remaining gifts comes from area companies who donate, and individuals, or organizations who make donations.

If that still doesn't cover it all, the fire department steps in with some funds to complete the task.

"The toys are delivered to the schools this year on the 19th and the parents pick up the toys from the



Firemen place collected toys into large bins at the entrance of Channelview High School as residents come by and drop off toys to give for needy children.

schools. The kids don't see us giving the toys to them and the parents can wrap the gifts and put that they're from mom or dad," he said.

Flores said they take money up until December 16.

"Donations after that

are still appreciated because throughout the year, we always find students who need toys especially after a scene," he said.

For more information, please call Channelview Fire Department at 281-452-5782.

ASK DIAMOND JIM



Diamond Jim: "A Diamond's Value & the 4 C's... Carat weight"

The world is your oyster

When it comes to buying an engagement ring, diamond price is determined by the quality of the 4 C's combined, and not the least of these is Carat weight. What is a "carat" anyway? Why not measure a diamond's weight in grams or another better-known unit of measure? Those are good questions.

In the jewelry industry, a carat is "one metric carat" and is referred to as 1.00ct (ct is the abbreviation for carat). One carat is equal to 100 points or 200 milligrams (0.2 grams). In basic terms, a 1 carat diamond weighs about the same as one half of a small paper clip.

Many people wonder why a diamond's weight is measured in terms of carats. The use of grams, kilograms, or other commonly known units of measure might be more familiar to most people. The carat has a very interesting and unique history. The word carat actually originated from the word carob which refers to a locust tree that produces edible pods. Carob seeds, being even in weight, were used as weighing references by traders in the olden days, going back as far as the Roman Empire.



Without electronic scales, seeds were used as measurements

As recently as the 1890s, if you bought a "one-carat" diamond, the weight could actually vary anywhere between 0.94 to 1.06 metric carats! Standardization of measurement has been something of a challenge over the centuries. That's a huge amount of uncertainty considering the big sums of money paid for a single stone. Much has changed since ancient times and the old days. While highly sensitive electronic weighing equipment has replaced the carob seeds, the industry stuck with the terminology of using carats to describe the weight of a diamond.

If you read our past 'Ask Diamond Jim' column on Cut, you'll remember that an "ideal cut" allows the best return of light in a diamond. The ideal cut also helps to ensure the relatively consistent size of a diamond. A one carat shallow cut diamond may appear bigger than one carat ideal cut; however, it will not return the light properly. A one carat diamond cut too deep will appear smaller and it too will likely disappoint the owner with a lack of fire and scintillation.

No matter what size diamond you're interested in owning, take the time to consider all of the 4 C's....Cut, Color, Clarity, and finally...Carat Weight.

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.

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.

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YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND
San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site Community Meeting
The Highland Community Center
January 7, 2025
6:00 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), Federal, State and Harris County agencies, local officials, and industry, invite you to attend the Community Meeting for the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund site. The meeting will be held:

Date: Tuesday, January 7, 2025
Time: 6:00 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.
Location: The Highland Community Center
604 Highland Woods Drive
Highland, Texas 77562

During the meeting, an update will be provided on current site activities and next steps. Following the updates, a question-and-answer session will be open to the public. The presentation slides will be posted online on the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site at <https://www.epa.gov/tx/sjrwp>.

The meeting is being held in a fully accessible facility. Should you have any specific needs or questions about the facility, please contact EPA Senior Community Involvement Coordinator, Janetta Coats, at 214-665-7308 or 1-800-533-3508 (toll-free) no later than January 2, 2025.

On November 25, 2024, the EPA received the Respondents' Revised 100% Remedial Design (RD) - Northern Impoundment deliverable for the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site. The Respondents' Revised 100% RD will be available online on the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site:

<https://www.epa.gov/tx/sjrwp>.

Updates on the status of this meeting, if needed, will be posted online on the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site at <https://www.epa.gov/tx/sjrwp>. Copies of fact sheets, information bulletins, the administrative record, and other information are also available at this site.

Para información en español, comuníquese con la Agencia de Protección Ambiental de los Estados Unidos (la EPA) a 1-800-533-3508 (llamada gratis).

OPINION PAGE

The Christmas Story
Luke 2:1-20,
King James Version

1: And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.
2: (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)
3: And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.
4: And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders



Phelan drops bid for speaker:
No clear winner yet

House Speaker Dade Phelan withdrew last week from seeking another term leading that chamber. After three rounds of voting on Saturday, state Rep. David Cook, R-Mansfield emerged as the preference of most House Republicans. However, his opponent, state Rep. Dustin Burrows, R-Lubbock, claims to have enough support from both Republicans and Democrats to clear the 76-vote threshold.

The Dallas Morning News reported that Cook acknowledged the race for speaker wasn't yet over.

"I'll continue working between now and Jan. 14 to earn [the vote] of every member of the Texas Republican caucus — as well as any Democrat," Cook said.

Phelan, R-Beaumont, narrowly won re-election to his seat in the May primary, needing to prevail in a runoff to return to Austin. He was opposed by fellow Republicans who blamed him for the failure of several priorities in the last session, including the push to institute school vouchers.

Among Phelan's opponents were Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, who was impeached by the House but survived a conviction trial in the Senate. Paxton blasted Burrows, who voted to impeach him, as "Dade 2.0"

"Supporting Burrows is a betrayal of the conservative movement," Paxton said Friday. "Voters will remember."

VOUCHER PUSH SPURS CALL FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Education savings accounts, popularly known as school vouchers, are again a top priority for Gov. Greg Abbott in the upcoming session after a similar push failed in 2023. This time, however, the primary loss of several voucher opponents last March has even those opposing vouchers conceding passage of a measure is likely.

That means lawmakers will pass a bill to send public tax dollars to private schools, according to the Texas Standard.

At a recent visit to the private religious school Kingdom Life Academy in Tyler, Abbott said, "We are assuring that students who may have fallen through the cracks in their public school, they're going to have a new chance, a new opportunity to be able to, to learn, to achieve, to succeed."

Dallas school board member Dan Micciche recently said that since vouchers are a likely possibility, it is vital that private and home schools that receive taxpayer money be held to the same ac-

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION
STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders



countability standards as public schools, including STAAR testing. "Any school or educational entity that receives public funds should be held to the same accountability standards for student outcomes, fiscal performance, open records and meetings act, and student services," he said.

Public school administrators are also pushing for teacher pay raises, something that fell by the wayside in the last session when a voucher bill failed to pass.

LAWMAKERS MULL SOCIAL MEDIA BAN FOR TEENS

Texas lawmakers could consider banning social media from minors in the upcoming session, The Texas Tribune reported. A bill filed by state Rep. Jared Patterson, R-Frisco, would prohibit minors from creating accounts on social media sites and add age verification for new users.

Other online measures would attack use of artificial intelligence to make pornographic images using people's likenesses and would boost funding for internet crime units in law enforcement agencies.

"Social media is the most dangerous thing our kids have legal access to in Texas," Patterson said.

A number of national organizations, including the American Federation of Teachers and the American Psychological Association, have criticized social media companies for being a "root cause" of the nationwide youth mental health crisis. Studies indicate 95% of youth ages 13 to 17 use social media, with more than a third saying they use it "almost constantly."

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton sued TikTok in October, saying the company allows its algorithms to affect minors. That suit is set to go to court in coming months.

HIGHER RISK OF ANOTHER DEEP FREEZE IN TEXAS

The top meteorologist for the Electric Reliability Council of Texas said the coming winter could bring a higher risk of extreme cold temperature than experienced during the February 2021 storm.

Chris Coleman with ERCOT said a bevy of weather variables such as ocean currents, atmospheric patterns and soil moisture appear very similar to the 2021 conditions that spawned Winter Storm URI, the Houston Chronicle reported.

"The more I look at this winter, the more cold potential I see," Coleman said. "This is like a tornado watch. Doesn't mean a tornado is going to happen. It means conditions are there."

ERCOT is emphasizing that any potential rotating outages because of winter storms would be only hours long rather than multiple days because of improvements to the Texas grid, such as weatherproofing of power plants and more backup power sources.

"I always point to the weatherization program as probably being one of the most statistically significant changes that have been made, that has markedly changed the risk profile of the ERCOT grid, in particular during the winter seasons," ERCOT CEO Pablo Vegas told the board Tuesday.

TEA INVESTIGATING 100 TEACHERS IN CHEATING SCHEME

More than 100 Texas teachers are being investigated by the Texas Education Agency in connection with a teaching certification cheating scheme. The vast majority of teachers on a list released last week by TEA are employed by North Texas or Houston-area school districts.

Five people have been charged with felonies in connection with the scheme, allegedly organized by a Houston-area basketball coach, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

School districts have had a difficult time filling teacher vacancies since the pandemic, and the number of uncertified teachers hired has risen considerably. Statewide, 34.6% of teachers hired during the 2023-24 school year didn't have a teaching certificate, nearly three times the rate in 2019-20.

PATRICK VOWS TO GO AFTER THC PRODUCTS SOLD BY DISPENSARIES

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick said banning THC products will be a top priority next session, threatening the livelihood of dozens of stores across the state selling products with higher levels of the main compound in cannabis, the Chronicle reported.

Hemp was legalized in Texas in 2019. That has led to a proliferation of products containing higher levels of THC, which produces a high similar to cannabis, which is still illegal in Texas.

"Retailers exploited the agriculture law to sell life-threatening, unregulated forms of THC to the public and made them easily accessible," Patrick said.

Hemp producers are regulated by the Texas Department of State Health Services, and industry groups say there are far too few producers for the booming market.

"Such a ban would hand this multi-billion-dollar industry over to the illicit market, abnormally all opportunity to properly regulate the industry," said Heather Fazio, co-founder of Texans for Responsible Marijuana Policy.

Holiday Fireworks legal in Harris County
Still Banned in Cities

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

After a sweltering summer where Harris County Commissioners took the advice of the Fire Marshal and restricted certain fireworks, the recent rains meant the cancellation of the burn ban and county residents only are free to shoot fireworks without abandon this New Year's.

Sue Davis, spokesperson for Top Dog Fireworks, said "We're expecting a robust season for Christmas and New Year's. The weather looks to be perfect with comfortable temperatures and just enough rain to keep things from drying out."

While the restrictions of the burn ban this summer have been lifted, Davis warns that residents should be certain they live in an area that allows fireworks to be used.

"Please be sure that you are shooting fireworks in locations where it is legal and that you follow the basic, common sense safety rules," she asked.

No cities in Harris County allow fireworks, only areas that are in the county only.

Davis has seen numerous stories in the media where fireworks have caused a house or garage or both to be burned to the ground. "Be careful how you dispose of hot fireworks. Douse them with water before you put them in a trash can but don't put the can in your garage or up against your house," she advised.

"Roll it down the driveway until you are sure the fireworks are cool." Top Dog Fireworks has 14 locations in the greater Houston area. The locations can be found on their website at 222.topdogfireworks.com.

The company also shares its profits with organizations including bands, choirs, etc. who earn money as their students and parent organizations staff the warehouses.

"As always, Top Dog is proud to support our local community by working with organizations to manage our stores," she said. Area schools participating include North Shore High School Band Boosters, Crosby High School Band Boosters, and the Huffman-Hargrave Project Graduation. The students learn skills working in a retail atmosphere and gain confidence in learning about their products and services.

The fireworks season begins on Dec. 20 and runs thru Jan. 1 at midnight.

"Everything is on sale," Davis said. "We are offering 25 percent off the entire purchase Dec. 20 thru Dec. 27."

A quick perusal through the store and there are deals to find like the \$89/99 cakes are by one, get one free. Also, roman candles, swords, and light sabers are also buy one, get one free

For every \$250 in purchases, customers receive one free cake. "We're giving away a large assortment of fireworks. Register in store, or online at HYPERLINK "http://www.topdogfireworks.com," she said.

Davis offered a number of safety rules when using fireworks.

Fireworks Safety Rules

—Always read and follow label directions.

—Have an adult present. Never give fireworks to small children—fireworks are not toys!

—Always shoot fireworks on level ground away from buildings and vegetation.

—Always have water handy (a garden hose or a bucket).

—Never try to re-light a "dud" firework. (Wait 15-20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water.)

—Light only one firework at a time.

—Never throw or point fireworks at other people.

—The shooter should wear eye protection. Never have any part of your body over the firework.

—Dispose of fireworks properly by soaking them in water and then disposing of them in your trash can. Do not put fireworks that are still hot in the trash can—this can lead to house fires. Place your garbage can away from your home and garage.

—If necessary to store fireworks, keep them in a cool, dry place.

TOP Ten

Most Popular Christmas Movies of All Time

- 1. The Santa Clause 2 (2002)
2. The Nutcracker and the Four Realms (2018)
3. The Santa Clause (1994)
4. The Holiday (2006)
5. Elf (2003)
6. The Polar Express (2004)
7. A Christmas Carol (2009)
8. How the Grinch Stole Christmas (2000)
9. Home Alone (1990)
10. The Grinch (2018)

Source: ScreenCrush

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FOOTBALL SEASON WEEK 16:

Texas hosts Clemson in 1st round of CFP: Texans visit KC on Saturday looking for upset

The 12-team College Football Playoff (CFP) field is set and it has a strong Big 10 and SEC presence.

The two best conferences during the 2024 season were richly rewarded with the Big 10 leading the way with four teams as Oregon (No. 1), Ohio State (No. 5), Penn State (No. 6) and Indiana (No. 10) will represent the Big 10. The SEC landed three spots with Georgia (No. 2), Texas (No. 5) and Tennessee (No. 9) getting into the field. will represent the SEC. The ACC earned two spots with No. 11 SMU and No. 12 Clemson, while the Mountain West earned one spot with No. 3 Boise State, the Big 12 earned one spot with No. 4 Arizona State and Notre Dame (No. 7) earned a berth as an independent.

The top four seeds, Oregon, Georgia, Boise State and Arizona State earned first round byes. The other four teams will play first-round games the weekend of Dec. 20-21 with the higher seeded team hosting a game at their respective campuses.

On Friday, Dec. 20, Notre Dame (11-1) will host Indiana (11-1) at 7 p.m.. On Saturday, Dec. 21, Penn State (11-2) will host SMU (11-2) at 11 a.m., followed by Clemson (10-3) a Texas (11-2) at 3 p.m. and Ohio State (10-2) will host Tennessee (10-2) at 7 p.m. in the nightcap.

Weather could play a factor in three of the four first-round games. The 10-day forecast calls for temperatures in the low 30s in South Bend, State College and Columbus, while the Clemson-Texas game should be played in perfect football weather as the forecast calls for a high in the 60s.

The winner of the Clemson-Texas game will face Arizona State, while the winner of the Tennessee-Ohio State game will face Oregon. The winner of the Indiana-ND game will take on Georgia and the winner of the SMU-Penn State game will take on Boise State. The second-round games will be played in the Peach Bowl, the Rose Bowl, the Fiesta Bowl and the Sugar Bowl. The two semifinal games will be played in the Orange Bowl and Cotton Bowl. The CFP Championship game will be played on Monday, Jan. 20 at Mercedes Benz Stadium in Atlanta. The games will be televised on ABC, ESPN and TNT.

Of course, there is a bit of controversy with the field, mainly that Alabama was excluded for SMU. The Crimson Tide finished 9-3 on the year but owned a win over No. 2-ranked Georgia. SMU's best win came against Duke. Granted, Bama played in a much tougher conference, but its 24-3 loss against a .500 Oklahoma team on national TV might have been their undoing. SMU's rally in the ACC title game probably put them over the top. The Ponies trailed Clemson 24-7 at halftime but tied the game in the second half and lost on a last-second 56-yard field goal.

This should be an exciting four weeks as college football fans will be on the edge of their seats to see what two teams will play for it all in Atlanta on Jan. 20. It should be a fun ride.

In the NFL, the Texans head to Kansas City on Saturday to take on the Chiefs. Houston had its bye week in Week 14 and that might help DeMeco Ryan's team be rested and ready for the final stretch run of the season. The Chiefs clinched another AFC West title two weeks ago with a 19-17 win over the Chargers. KC has struggled this year and could be ripe for an upset on Saturday.

Week 16 starts with a good one



for Thursday Night Football as Denver visits the Chargers in a key contest for both team's playoff chances.

Also on Saturday, the Steelers visit the Ravens in an important AFC North contest. On Sunday, the Eagles visit the Commanders, while Minnesota head to the Pacific Northwest to take on the Seahawks. The Cowboys host Tampa Bay on Sunday Night Football and Week 16 concludes on Monday Night Football with the Saints, who could be without starting QB Derek Carr (fractured hand) paying a visit to Lambeau Field to take on the Packers.

Before we take a look at this weekend's busy schedule, let's review last week's record. A 4-3 week brought the season record to 105-46 (70%).

Now, onto this weekend's game.

CFP FIRST ROUND

Indiana at Notre Dame - Weather should not be a factor for either of these two teams that play in the state of Indiana. The Hoosiers were one of the surprise teams this season as first-year head coach Curt Cignetti has done an amazing job leading his team to 11 wins, but he faces a Notre Dame team that is as hot as any team still playing at this juncture of the season. The Hoosiers will face a ND defense that allows just 13 points per game. Indiana QB Kurtis Rourke (2,827 yards, 27 TDs), running back Justice Ellison (811 yards, 10 TDs) and wide receiver Elijah Sarrat (49 receptions, 890 yards, 8 TDs) will face their toughest test of the season. The Irish aren't explosive on offense, but are steady behind dual-threat QB Riley Leonard (2,092 passing yards, 16 TDs/721 rushing yards, 16 TDs) and burly running back Jeremiyah Love (949 yards, 15 TDs). Look for the Irish to use their running game to wear down the Hoosier defense and then turn Marcus Freeman's defense loose against Rourke. My pick, Notre Dame 31, Indiana 14

SMU at Penn State - The surprising SMU Mustangs booked their trip to the CFP with an 11-win season, but they face a daunting task against a Penn State team that is tough to beat in State College. The Ponies are led by QB Kevin Jennings (3,050 passing yards, 22 TDs/379 rushing yards, 5 TDs), running back Brashard Smith (1,270 yards, 14 TDs) and wideout Roderick Daniels, Jr. (38 receptions, 599 yards, 3 TDs). The Nittany Lions don't do anything fancy, they like to run the ball with its two-headed running game of Nicholas Singleton (838 yards, 7 TDs) and Kaytron Allen (822 yards, 7 TDs). Look for those two to soften up the SMU defense, which should open up the passing game for QB Drew Aller (2,894 yards, 21 TDs) to make plays to big-play tight end Tyler Warren (53 receptions, 1,062 yards, 6 TDs). My pick, Penn State 26, SMU 20

Clemson at Texas - Texas had a chance to earn a first-round bye, but could not beat Georgia's backup QB in the SEC title game. Longhorn fans had better hope Steve Sarkisian's team learned a big lesson from that game, or it could be one and out for UT. Once again, UT QB Quinn Ewers (2,665 yards, 25 TDs) failed to make the

big play when it mattered, and it could have cost UT against Georgia. Sarkisian and the team have probably put that game behind them and are looking ahead to the post season. Look for Ewers to rebound against a 3-loss Clemson team, whose QB, Cade Klubnik (3,303 yards, 33 TDs/459 rushing yards, 7 TDs) will be returning to Austin where he played at Austin Westlake High School. The Texas defense, which is one of the top units in the country, will look to take Klubnik out of his comfort zone, then turn things over to Ewers, running back Quintrevion Wisner (863 yards, 3 TDs), wide receiver Matthew Golden (47 receptions, 738 yards, 8 TDs) and tight end Gunnar Helm (49 receptions, 611 yards, 5 TDs) to make plays all over Royal-Memorial Stadium. Texas has a nice path to reach the semifinals, but the 'Horns must take advantage of the home field on Saturday afternoon. It says here they will. My pick, Texas 33, Clemson 20

Tennessee at Ohio State - The first round concludes on Saturday night in Columbus as the Vols of the SEC take on the Buckeyes of the Big 10. The winner won't only move on to the second round, but will have bragging rights for its respective conference. OSU ended the season on a disappointing note by losing to a five-loss Michigan team at home on Nov. 30. The offensive play calling was widely criticized as QB Will Howard (2,860 yards, 27 TDs) had his game restricted by offensive coordinator Chip Kelly. Kelly better have a better game plan against a Vols team that has a very good front seven and is tough to run against. The Buckeyes will need big games from running back Quinshon Judkins (805 yards, 9 TDs) and TreVeyon Henderson (751 yards, 6 TDs) and wideouts Jeremiah Smith (57 receptions, 934 yards, 10 TDs) and Emeka Egbuka (60 receptions, 743 yards, 9 TDs) if they hope to defeat the Vols. Look for Tennessee to give the OSU defense a steady dose of big-play running back Dylan Sampson (1,457 yards, 22 TDs), which should open up the passing lanes for QB Nico Iamalova (2,500 yards, 10 TDs) and wide receiver Dont'e Thompson (25 receptions, 647 yards, 6 TDs). I think the Vols give the Buckeyes a game, but I also think that late-season loss at home to Michigan will serve as a motivating factor for Ohio State. My pick, Ohio State 26, Tennessee 23

NFL
Denver at Los Angeles Chargers - Week 16 begins with a good one for the Thursday Night Football crew as the Broncos visit the Chargers. The winner of this one enhances their AFC Wild Card hopes (the Chiefs wrapped up the West two weeks ago with a win over the Chargers), while the loser will need help down the stretch. It will be interesting to see how Denver rookie QB Bo Nix (2,842 passing yards, 17 TDs/304 rushing yards, 4 TDs) handles the pressure of playing for a playoff spot this late in the season. LA's defense is tough and will go after Nix hoping to force a mistake or two. The Chargers will look for a big night from QB Justin Herbert (2,764 yards, 14 TDs). Herbert hopes he has rookie wideout Ladd

McConkey (55 receptions, 815 yards, 4 TDs) back for this one. Look for LA to protect the home field on Thursday night. My pick, Los Angeles Chargers 23, Denver 20

Houston at Kansas City - The Texans and Chiefs meet on Saturday in KC in what's a big game for both teams. The Texans would like to pull off one of the biggest upsets in their history, while the Chiefs will look to protect the No. 1 seed in the AFC. The Texans' bye week came at a perfect time. Let's hope QB C.J. Stroud (3,117 yards, 15 TDs), running back Joe Mixon (887 yards, 13 total TDs) and wideouts Nico Collins (49 receptions, 832 yards, 4 TDs) and Tank Del (43 receptions, 543 yards, 2 TDs) are ready to take on a very good KC defense. The Houston defense will need to pressure KC QB Patrick Mahomes (3,189 yards, 20 TDs/11 interceptions) into some mistakes. The KC offense isn't as potent as it has been in the past, but don't ever bet against Mahomes, tight end Travis Kelce (80 receptions, 682 yards, 2 TDs) and newcomers Xavier Worthy (38 receptions, 448 yards, 5 TDs) and former Texans De'Andre Hopkins (30 receptions, 357 yards, 4 TDs) at this time of year. My pick, Kansas City 24, Houston 20

Pittsburgh at Baltimore - Another good one on Saturday has the Steelers, leaders of the AFC North, battling division foe and heated rival Baltimore. These two met on Nov. 17 with the Steelers earning a hard-fought 18-16 win. I expect more offense in this one as Steeler QB Russell Wilson (1,784 yards, 14 TDs) and Ravens' QB Lamar Jackson (3,290 yards, 29 TDs/678 rushing yards, 3 TDs) do battle against one another. Baltimore will also need a big day from running back Derrick Henry (1,407 yards, 15 total TDs). Pittsburgh needs its running back Najee Harris (877 yards, 5 TDs) to

step up his game as well. Both teams had big-play wideouts in Pittsburgh's George Pickens (who missed the Cleveland game two weeks ago with a hamstring injury), (55 receptions, 850 yards, 3 TDs) and Baltimore's Zay Flowers (60 receptions, 863 yards, 4 TDs). Look for Jackson to outduel Wilson as the Ravens extract revenge from that Nov. 17 loss. My pick, Baltimore 30, Pittsburgh 26

Philadelphia at Washington - A big one in the NFC East as the Eagles head to Landover, MD to take on the surprising Commanders on Sunday afternoon. Two weeks ago, Philly struggled at home but pulled out a 22-16 win over Carolina as QB Jalen Hurts (2,602 passing yards, 16 TDs/544 rushing yards, 13 TDs) struggled throwing the ball, which was not lost on star wideout A.J. Brown (48 receptions, 836 yards, 4 TDs), who was critical of Hurts and the passing offense after the game. Look for running back Saquon Barkley (1,623 yards, 13 total TDs) to be the difference maker in this one, but Washington rookie QB Jayden Daniels (2,819 passing yards, 15 TDs/590 rushing yards, 6 TDs), running back Brian Robinson (646 yards, 8 TDs) and wide receiver Terry McLaurin (61 receptions, 896 yards, 9 TDs) will make it close. My pick, Philadelphia 26, Washington 23

Minnesota at Seattle - A big game for both teams as the Vikings look to protect their NFC playoff spot, while the Seahawks will look to hold onto their lead in the NFC West. Two weeks ago, Minnesota QB Sam Darnold (3,299 yards, 28 TDs) tossed five TD passes in a 42-21 win over Atlanta. He has two big-play wideouts in Justin Jefferson (75 receptions, 1,170 yards, 7 TDs) and Jordan Addison (44 receptions, 708 yards, 7 TDs) to makes plays to. Seattle will look to QB Geno Smith (3,374 yards, 14 TDs) to make plays to

Jaxon Smith-Njigba (75 receptions, 911 yards, 5 TDs) and DK Metcalf. Seattle is tough to beat at home, which Minnesota will discover come Sunday. My pick, Seattle 31, Minnesota 27

Tampa Bay at Dallas - The Buccaneers visit the Cowboys on Sunday Night Football looking to keep its hold on the top spot in the NFC South. TB QB Baker Mayfield (3,329 yards, 28 TDs) is having another solid season, and he has a two-headed running game with Bucky Irving (735 yards, 6 TDs) and Rachaad White (509 yards, 4 total TDs) to attack a suspect Dallas rush defense. When Mayfield decides to throw, he has a big-play target in Mike Evans (43 receptions, 590 yards, 7 TDs) to turn to. Dallas will need a big night from backup QB Cooper Rush (1,191 yards, 7 TDs), running back Rico Dowdle (731 yards, 2 total TDs) and wideout CeeDee Lamb (85 receptions, 973 yards, 5 TDs). Look for the Bucs offense to be too much for a porous Dallas defense come Sunday night. My pick, Tampa Bay 33, Dallas 23

New Orleans at Green Bay - Week 16 concludes with the banged-up Saints visiting the playoff-minded Packers on Monday Night Football. New Orleans will be without starting QB Derek Carr, who sustained a fractured hand in NO's 14-11 win over the Giants two weeks ago. Look for the Saints to give the GB defense a steady diet of running back Alvin Kamara (938 rushing yards, 6 TDs/64 receptions, 485 yards, 1 TD), but that won't be enough to hold off the Packers potent offense led by QB Jordan Love (2,724 yards, 21 TDs), running back Josh Jacobs (1,053 yards, 12 total TDs) and wide receiver Jayden Reed (44 receptions, 693 yards, 6 TDs). The Packers know they have little room for error if they hope to earn a Wild Card berth. My pick, Green Bay 31, New Orleans 16

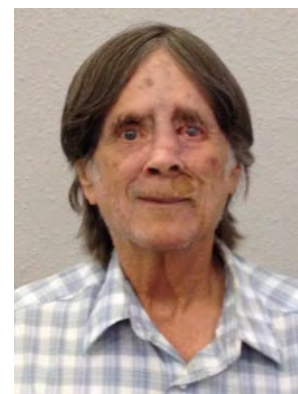

OBITUARY

GARY DEAN CLARK

Gary Dean Clark, born on March 15, 1954, in Houston, Texas, passed away peacefully on December 10, 2024, in Houston, Texas at the home of his sister.

Gary was preceded in death by his parents, W.B. and Charlene (Cooksey) Clark, and his sister, Judy Gail Spinks. He is survived by his sister, Gaye Franks and husband Daren; his partner of over 40 years, Paige Oliphant, whom he loved dearly; along with two nephews, two nieces, and numerous other family members and friends who will miss him greatly.

Gary was a member of Watters Road Church of Christ in Pasadena, Texas and attended when his health allowed. As his health declined over the past year his persistence and desire to be at church was an inspiration to many.



One of Gary's last statements before leaving the hospital was "I just want to go to church" and he was able to listen to service online the Sunday before his passing.

Gary had a passion for collecting antiques. He loved going to estate sales, antique auctions, and garage sales looking for items of interest. He was also an avid sports fan, with a love for professional football and basketball.

While Gary faced various health challeng-

es daily, his life was a testament to his desire and determination to live an independent, content and simple life. His memory will live on in the hearts of those who were fortunate enough to know him and will be cherished forever.

The family held a visitation at Carter-Conley Funeral Home on Monday, December 16, 2024 from 11:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. Graveside services followed at San Jacinto Memorial Park Cemetery at 1:00 P.M. at the South Pavilion under the direction of Carter-Conley Funeral Home.


CARTER ★ CONLEY FUNERAL HOME
13701 CORPUS CHRISTI STREET
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77015
(713) 455-5100
WWW.CARTERCONLEYFH.COM

NS Mustangs lose, Chaparrals head to state,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Sometimes coaches will say they never look ahead no further than their next opponent, Coach Gaston said this just last week after defeating Atascocita. Well it was obvious Austin's Coach Tony Salazar didn't take that same approach before the semi-final game with the Mustangs. He knew weeks ago the road to the state championship had to go through North Shore.

Salazar's team was well prepared and coached so nothing Nshore tried on offense was successful. No team could do to the state's number 2 ranked Mustang's without looking well ahead scouting and watching game videos. They knocked out and hammered a team who just last week garnered 600 yards on offense and has scored 6 to 7 TD's each game.

NS BIG GAMBLE FAILED
NShore's decision to gamble on 4th down on their

end of the field beginning their third quarter drive was a mistake. "That one TD early in the third quarter was huge because it goes from an 11-point game to an 18-point game like that," said Salazar, snapping his finger. "Obviously, a big play from our defense, but it was capitalized by our offense. That's what we talk about — backing each other up. Great offense, great defense, great special teams, and we did that more times than them."

"We just worked and worked. And I think you saw our offense had a heck of a game plan tonight," said head football coach Tony Salazar. "Made some big-time plays in the passing game. We ran the football against a run-heavy stout defense. And our kids made big plays. I mean fourth down stops. When we had to make the big plays, they made them tonight. A com-



#9 Quanel Farrakhan Jr. makes the only TD for the Mustangs. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

plete team victory." Some NShore fans criticized the Mustangs saying, "they didn't show up for this game." Well that's not giving any credit to the Chaps good playing. Sometimes we

must give credit where credit is due; in this case I say the Chaps outplayed the Mustangs in all aspect of the game. "We really couldn't get on schedule offensively," Gas-



Nshore Team Captains: L-R: #19-Cedric Henderson, #21-Morris Taylor, #62-Jordan Fields and #8-Cameron Smith. (Photo by Linda Jamail)

ton said. "Once you get off schedule you get predictable, you let them be able to blitz you. That was the biggest thing — just getting off schedule and not staying ahead of the chains. I've got to do a better job in the play calling and try to keep things like that from happening."

Last season Gaston said after losing the state championship game he had to both coach and call offense plays... unlike former Coach Kay he said who only had to coach while Kay had him call the offense plays. Maybe it's time Gaston re-

linquishes the play calling to another coach.

#3 State ranked North Shore (14-1) failed to reach the state championship game for the first time since Westlake ousted the Mustangs in the 2020 semifinals, played in January 2021. Since 2018, North Shore has qualified for state five times. Reaching that stage has become an annual expectation. Duncanville's #1 state ranked team was beaten Saturday too.

Linda Jamail, statistician/photographer.

Dear Santa,
This year I have been good at my house. I love my family. Can you bring me a doll and a Barbie? One last thing can you bring me a teddy I will be so happy. Sincerely, Melanie Martinez Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa,
This year been good. I been trying my best in school. Clod you bring me a doren, a mini phone, a cndrft, and pokemon cards. Love, Rolando Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa,
This year I have bee good at my hose to my big sister and for christmas I want a toy camera and a bubble blaster ad bracelets that you cany make. Miranda Jacinto City Elementary School

*Dear Santa,
This year I have bee good in school. In school I have good grades. For Christmas I want an apple pen and a computer. Last thing I want a tama kuishi. Thank you so much. Sincerely, Ivana Rodriguez Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa,
This year I have been good at school. I help someone. I want you to bring me a Nezako phone. Also a Nezuko bed shet's. And...imakup pallet! I will give you a candy cane. I actually really difrint. I wear always a skirt. Sincerely, Brittany Cavazos Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa,
This year I listen my mom and dad. I want light chopticks and Minecraft game on Nintendo switch. One more thing is. I want a charzard pokimon card. Sincerely, Eddy Treviño Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa,
I've been very good this year. I help my friends when their absent at school. And I can't wait for Christmas. My Favorite reindeer is Rudolph. I wish it can snow this year. I want to make snow angels, Snow man, and throw snowballs at my brothers. Merry Christmas! Love, Victoria Aguilar 8 Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa:
I want a VR and a PS5 and a bed and I want a big pillow. Steven, 9 yr. ☺

Dear Santa:
May I get a google and Nerfgun, the mini gun that is a Nerf gun and a lava lamp. Damon, 9 yr.

Dear Santa:
My name is Xavier. Thanks for last year present. This year I want to have Led lights, and a X box. Xavier, 10 yr.

Dear Santa,
This is things I want for Christmas: a weenie dog puppy, new iphone, Hello Kitty mirror, Hello Kitty merch, desk that's pink, Apple pen, new tv for my room. Avarie Chavez, 8 Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa,
I wish for a desktop pc, studio series devastator transformor and 2 plushies gelatin jelly amp and transformers toys a cat, and to get my VR fixed. And vinyl figures and BFDI plushies. No name given Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa,
This year I have been a good girl at school a been a chattet bot. I will want you to give me a dress. I want a toy horse. I want a bag of stikers. I want m.s Faleta and m.s Perez to have a treat day. Thank you Santa. Love, Linda Rodrigez Rojas Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa:
This year I have been good. I would like for you to bring a cute bingbag, and a lotto paper to drew and cinamoroll stuff, and can I have a stickers and two 100 Roux, and peachy babies slimes, Auora jell cube, Kawaii space bear, Axolot ice slime. Andrea, 8 yr.

Dear Santa:
I don't want much this year, all I want is to get a phone and switch. But the most I want is a good family. Jonathan, 9 yr.

Dear Santa:
May I have a Cougar toy, a bulls toy, bear toy, a puppy, a kitten, a seal toy and a train set and animal kingdom toys, all of them. Benjamin, 10 yr.

Dear Santa:
For Christmas this year I have been very good. Lego friends set Coloring book board games mini verse dry erase markers jewelry Sophia, 8 yr.

Dear Santa:
For Christmas I want a kids 3d pen art supplies, and pet bunny, a big kitchen play set for my sister, and my wish is every one should always be happy and grateful. Lisa, 8 yr.

RFP NOTICE **RFP NOTICE** **RFP NOTICE**

**ADMINISTRATION/PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
City of Jacinto City**

The City of Jacinto City plans to apply for the upcoming Disaster Recovery Reallocation Program of the Texas General Land Office (GLO). These services are being solicited to assist the City of Jacinto City in its application and administration of the DRRP contract, if awarded, to support eligible activities associated with the program in the City of Jacinto City. Accordingly, the City of Jacinto City is seeking to contract with a qualified Professional Administrator or Service Provider (individual/firm) to prepare the application and/or administer the awarded contract. Please submit 2 paper copies, plus 1 paper original, plus 1 electronic copy via thumb drive, of your proposal of services and a statement of qualifications for the proposed services to the following address: Attn: Christal Rodriguez, 1301 Mercury Dr. Jacinto City, TX 77029. Proposals must be received by the City of Jacinto City, no later than 5:00pm Central Time Zone on Wednesday, January 8, 2025, to be considered. The City of Jacinto City reserves the right to negotiate with any and all individuals or firms that submit proposals, as per the Texas Professional Services Procurement Act and the Uniform Grant and Contract Management Standards. Section 3 Residents and Business Concerns, Minority Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises and Women Business Enterprises are encouraged to submit proposals. The City of Jacinto City is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Servicios de traducción están disponibles por petición.

RFP NOTICE **RFP NOTICE** **RFP NOTICE**

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
City of Jacinto City**

The City of Jacinto City plans to apply for the upcoming Disaster Recovery Reallocation Program of the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Accordingly, the City of Jacinto City is seeking to contract with a qualified Engineering/Architectural Firm (individual/firm). These services are being solicited to assist the Entity in its application preparation and project implementation of a DRRP contract(s), if awarded, to support eligible activities in the City of Jacinto City. Please submit 2 paper copies, plus 1 paper original, plus 1 electronic copy via thumb drive, of your statements of qualifications to the following address: Attn: Christal Rodriguez, 1301 Mercury Dr. Jacinto City, TX 77029. Statements of Qualifications must be received by the City of Jacinto City no later than 5:00pm Central Time Zone on Wednesday, January 8, 2025, to be considered. The City of Jacinto City reserves the right to negotiate with any and all individuals or firms that submit proposals. Section 3 Residents and Business Concerns, Minority Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises and Women Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Vendors are encouraged to submit proposals. The City of Jacinto City is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Servicios de traducción están disponibles por petición.

EMPLOYMENT **EMPLOYMENT** **EMPLOYMENT**

OFFICE MANAGER

Full Time Office Manager needed for an Established Real Estate Company in Crosby

- Minimum High School Diploma
- At Least two Years experience in Payroll, Bookkeeping and Office Management.
- Proficiency with Accounting Software (Sage 50, QuickBooks) and all Microsoft Office Products.
- Prepare Monthly Property Financial Reports.
- Manage and Lease Self Storage Units
- Show and Lease Self Storage units to Tenants.
- Salary: Negotiable – based on Experience
- Benefits: PTO and Holiday Pay

Email Resume to: ramsey.chehayeb@gmail.com
Or Drop Off Resume at Office Address:
Crosby Boat, RV & Mini Storage: 15118 FM 2100, Crosby, TX 77532
Monday – Friday: 9 AM to 6 PM



Bates Collision Gives Hope to Deserving Moms for Christmas,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and the program continues to expand.

"It's been such a good partnership," Leila said, "in that they help provide us with nominations that meet our criteria and then help us coordinate this event."

For Octavia Lafayette, a single mom of three children, it was a blessing. She received a silver Nissan Versa at the revealing party.

For the Bates family and committee who helps make the decisions on the parents to receive the gift, it doesn't come easy.

"It's a hard choice to pick just two families each year," Leila said, "but the car plays an instrumental part in that we're looking for hard working families and parents that are engaged and doing good things with their family."

It was the 47th car to give away and Bates said she was proud of her team of workers at the shop who contributed to the project.

"They're in a daily grind putting cars back together and on the road again when they are interrupted with this project," she said. "This is changing lives and helping families get further down the road to independence."

There are a couple of major criteria that the Bates committee is seeking.

"This is truly a program that is a helping hand up. It is not, it is not a handout, because

parenting, honestly, is the most important work that we will ever have in our life. It's the most important job that we will ever have in our life. It's the thing that can change the world," Leila said.

They sought parents who were grinding in spite of their circumstances and definitely without transportation.

Lafayette has three children: Trayvon the youngest who is in HeadStart, Olivia, and Strada. Lafayette works



Octavia Lafayette holds up the keys to a vehicle given to her by Lee and Leila Bates, left, of Bates collision Centers in Channelview. Lafayette is joined by her oldest son Strada, daughter Olivia, and baby Trayvon.

nights at the airport parking facility and was juggling rides for herself and her son to get to football games during the past season. She was fortunate to have help from her mother to use her car to get the kids to school and to their daily activities.

"What touched us about Octavia is that not only is she figuring out how to make it work right now, she has goals, work ethic, independence, determination and with this car, she'll be able to get her CDL license and training and achieve a better job," Leila said.

Lafayette not only received the keys to a new car but six months of insurance coverage donated to her by AMI Insurance.

After being gifted with her 2024 Responsible Parenting Award, Lafayette was given the keys to her new vehicle parked in the lot just outside the Bates Collision Center buildings.

The car was wrapped in Christmas paper and outside Lee Bates was happy to thank a few more partners for their help.

"The Channelview High School baseball team also helps in collecting toys and loading the car with presents," he said.

After all the thank yous, it was time for the family to unwrap their big present.

There were lots of smiles and tears of gratitude as they unveiled their Nissan Versa four-door sedan loaded with presents in the front and back seats, and another surprise—the trunk was also full of presents.

"I just thank everybody that's here to celebrate. I had a birthday on the 29th and my son had a birthday on Monday. This makes me feel so good and so happy," Lafayette said.

Lafayette learned about the program at HeadStart and filled out the paperwork not knowing whether she had a chance or not.

"I didn't have a lot or anything and just made do with what I had and trusted God that it would work out for me some day," she said, "and it did."

The Smiley High School graduate has a sophomore at Humble High School who is awesome on the basketball team and now she'll be able to watch him play.

Lafayette was having to get up at 4 a.m. to be able to juggle transportation and get the kids to school by 8 a.m. Now she'll have the chance to get some more sleep after working a late-night shift to get her children to school.

"It has been a struggle, but somehow, god made it work," she said.



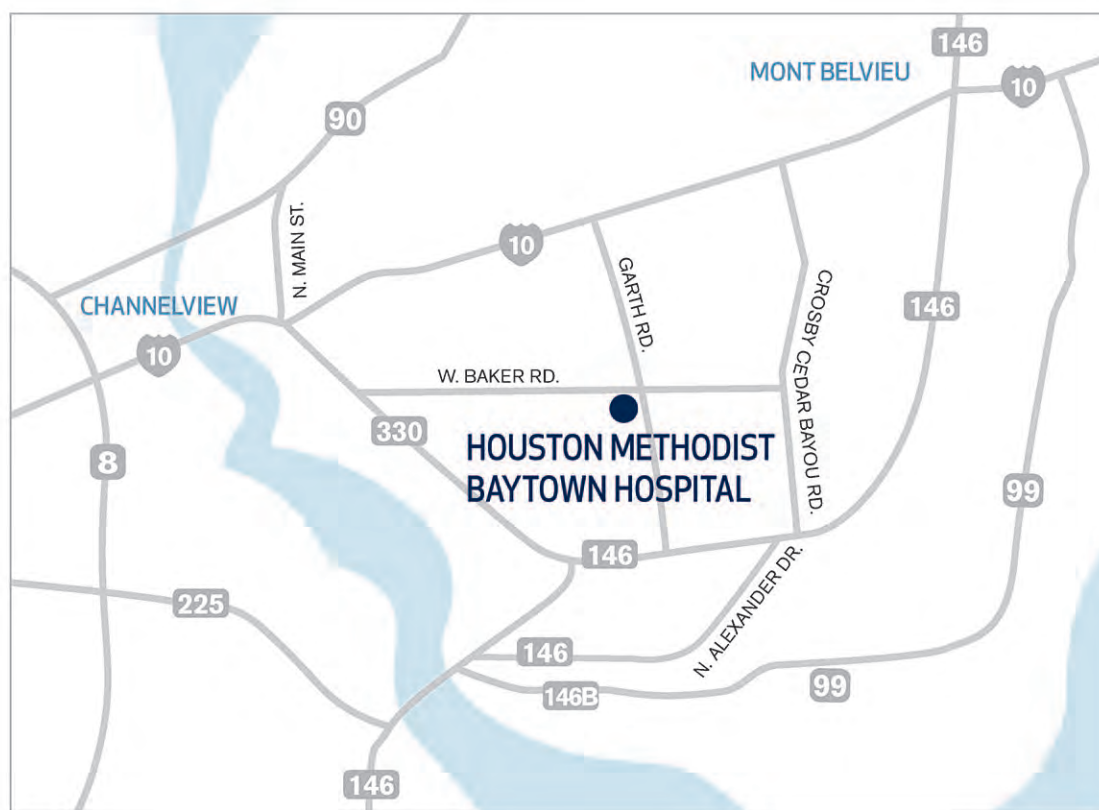
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SEASON'S GREETINGS
 Wishing you all Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!
From the
Rotary 
 Club of North Shore
 Celebrating 66 years of serving the North Channel Community
 Save the date for our 50th Annual Catfish Fry and Crawfish Boil
 Saturday April 26th, 2025

Dear Santa,
 This year I have been a good girl at school a been a chattet bot. I will want you to give me a dress. I want a toy horse. I want a bag of stikers. I want m.s Faleta and m.s Perez to have a treat day.
 Thank you Santa. Love,
 Linda Rodrigez Rojas
 Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa,
 This year I have been vere good. I help mom clin hose. I won't a calculro and xbox. I hop your sla dus not kras. Sa hi to ms. Clos. Luv,
 Santiago Salinas
 Jacinto City Elementary School

* Dear Santa,
 For Christmas I want Infinite pomegranate and Middle School Get Me Out Of Here books also some chapter books also some chapter some chapter books and a new ps5 controller pro please and a big big big house like a mansion with a pool a hot tub and every single ice cream flavor with me at all times and I pass every xtramath lesson and the best Christmas every!
 Julian Garcia, 8
 Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa,
 This year I have been good. I have been good to my friends at school. And I get 100 and A+ on my spellgin test on Fiday. For this Chrismas, I would like to have cinamaroll stuff and stich. I would be happy if you gave me a toy. Thank you,
 Dalila Silveyra
 Jacinto City Elementary School

* Dear Santa:
 For Christmas I would like a nerf grenade and a x-shot insanity motorized rage fire here gun. I know you are busy making toys but these are the only two things I have on my wish list this year. Camedeh, 8yr.

 Dear Santa,
 I wish for a desktop pc, studio series devastator transformer and 2 plushies gelatin jelly amp and transformers toys a cat, and to get my VR fixed. And vinyl figures and BFDI plushies.
 No name given
 Jacinto City Elementary School

Dear Santa,
 This year I been good at school. I learned a lot. What I want for Christmas an adventure calendar of hello kitty. A kuromi plushie and that is all. Thank you for those presents.
 Merry Christmas!
 Sicerely,
 Andrea Guerrero
 Jacinto City Elementary School

* Dear Santa,
 This year I have been good at school. I help someone. I want you to bring me a Nezako phone. Also a Nezuko bed shet's. And...imakup pallet! I will give you a candy cane. I actually really difrint. I wear always a skirt. Sincerely,
 Brittany Cavazos
 Jacinto City Elementary School

 Dear Santa,
 I would like a turtle, one duck, one maine coon cat, black boots, nickeys, laptop, iphone 14 case, giraffe plush, can you pls at least get me some of it. Tysm merry Christmas have a great holiday.
 Ysabel, 8
 Jacinto City Elementary School

happy holidays 

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