



HOWDY is the Official HoustonRodeo logo. The Rodeo opened March 4 and runs thru March 23. See Story Below.

NORTH CHANNEL ★ STAR

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Serving all of the North Shore -- Channelview, Cloverleaf, Sheldon, Galena Park, Jacinto City
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North Shore Rotary FISH FRY tickets now available

By Gilbert Hoffman
Publisher, Rotarian

CHANNELVIEW – The much anticipated, and much enjoyable 50th Annual Catfish Fry/Crawfish Boil is set for Saturday, April 26th, and members of the Rotary Club of North Shore are busy with preparations.

Rotarians will sell about 1500 of the \$100 raffle tickets, giving someone favorable odds to win the top prize, a new 2025 Toyota pickup or SUV from Community Toyota. In addition, there are about 20 other prizes worth more

than the cost of the ticket, plus buyers get two meals. Others can purchase only the fish fry meal, for \$15. Food will be served from 11:00am to 3:00pm, or until food runs out. You might want to come early to be sure to get your choice of a great meal, and have more time to bid on auction items.

The North Shore club has almost 100 members, headed by president Dana Nino. Fish Fry chairperson is Mini Izaguirre, and the whole club participate to make this a successful event.

Attendees can also enjoy

a delicious meal of catfish or crawfish while they bid on their favorite item in the live or silent auctions. The Auctions are known for their exotic or special items, available only once a year at this event.

Proceeds from the Fish Fry are used for projects in the community, scholarships, and also global environmental initiatives. The club has a sister-club in Mexico, where they help support a medical clinic.

If you need a ticket (or two), get in touch with any Rotarian, or call 713-410-5352 for information on the nearest availability.



Rotarians Ready to Sell You a ticket, at their Kick-off Meeting

CHANNEL CURRENTS

NC Area Chamber of Commerce Luncheon March 7



Speaker: Margaret Ford Fisher, Ed.D. HCC Cancellor

North Channel Area Chamber of Commerce CO-HOSTED BY: Houston Community College will hold its **March Luncheon** on Friday, March 7, 2025.

The event will be held at the HCC Northeast Campus Learning Hub (building with the clock), Multi-Purpose Room 555 Community College Dr. Houston, TX 77013.

Program: HCC's Future Forward Mindset.

Sponsor: San Jacinto Cemetery-Funeral Home & Cremation Services

Rep. Sylvia Garcia Leads 200 Colleagues in Reintroducing the American Dream & Promise Act

By Allan Jamail

February 26, 2025 – Congressional District 29 Representative Sylvia Garcia has announced the reintroduction of the American Dream and Promise Act, which would provide a pathway to citizenship for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders, and people with Deferred Enforced Departure (DED).

Amid President Donald Trump administrations mass deportation schemes, congressional Democrats have reintroduced legislation to create a pathway to citizenship for millions of immigrants under threat.

If passed, the legislation would impact an estimated 5 million people around the US.

"These Dreamers were brought to this country as chil-



Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia

dren in their heart and the soul and their mind, they contribute to our community and make our country the great nation it is," Garcia said during a Wednesday press conference.

The American Dream and Promise Act would create a "conditional permanent resident" status for Dreamers, valid for up to 10 years, as well as open path-

ways to lawful permanent residence.

TPS holders and people with DED would also be able to adjust to lawful permanent residence status under certain conditions.

The bill's reintroduction comes as the second Trump administration ramps up attacks on immigrant communities, escalating mass deportations and threatening the lawful status of hundreds of thousands of TPS holders.

Immigrants' rights advocates applaud reintroduction.

"Standing up for the opportunities and futures of Dreamers, TPS holders, farm workers, and families is essential and a rare point of consensus on immigration among the American majority," Executive Director of America's Voice Vanessa Cárdenas said in a statement.

"The Dream and Promise Act is an important step forward

that not only would offer stability and a pathway to legal status for many of these deeply rooted immigrants to fully participate in this nation, but also offer critical protections at a moment the Trump Administration is seeking to enact an indiscriminate mass purge of immigrants, including those eligible for the legal pathways created in this legislation."

Democratic Whip Katherine Clark (MA-5) joined Rep. Sylvia Garcia (TX-29) and Members of the House Democratic Caucus to reintroduce the American Dream and Promise Act, a bill that will provide a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, TPS (Temporary Protected Status) recipients, and DED (Deferred Enforced Departure) beneficiaries. Below is a transcript of her remarks:

"I am so proud to be here with all of you today to celebrate [the] refilling of this critical bill for our country and for its future. "Standing up for the opportunities and futures of Dreamers, TPS holders, farm workers, and families is essential and a rare point of consensus on immigration among the American majority," Executive Director of America's Voice Vanessa Cárdenas said in a statement.

"The Dream and Promise Act is an important step forward that not only would offer stability and a pathway to legal status for many of these deeply rooted immigrants to fully participate in this nation, but also offer critical protections at a moment the Trump Administration is seeking to enact an indiscriminate mass purge of immigrants, including those eligible for the legal pathways created in this legislation."

Garcia shared that she has nearly 200 members of Congress supporting the reintroduced bill.

Women's History Month Honoree - (1st of a series) Texan Justice Sandra Day O'Connor

By Allan Jamail

March 2, 2025 ~ Texan Sandra Day O'Connor was an American attorney, politician, and jurist who served as an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1981 to 2006. Nominated by President Ronald Reagan, O'Connor was the first woman to serve as a U.S. Supreme Court justice.

Sandra Day was born on March 26, 1930, in El Paso, Texas, the daughter of Harry Alfred Day, a rancher, and Ada Mae (Wilkey). She grew up on a 198,000-acre family cattle ranch near Duncan, Arizona and in El Paso, where she attended school. Her home was nine miles from the nearest paved road,



Supreme Court Judge Sandra Day O'Connor (March 26, 1930 – December 1, 2023)

Continued. See WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH, PAGE 5

House Fires Plague Jacinto City

By Allan Jamail

February 22 & 26, 2025 ~ Jacinto City was plagued recently with two separate fires which totally destroyed both homes within a three day span.

The first of the two fires happened at 11:30 pm Saturday of February 22nd in the 10500 block of Oswego Street. This is the home of long time residents of 38 years Roy and Beatrice Stubblefield.

Continued. See HOUSE FIRES, PAGE 5



11500 Tilla St. Jacinto City, Home of Allen & Vicki Lee. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

Trail Riders head to the Houston Rodeo

Northeast trail riders continue legacy

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

HARRIS COUNTY – The Northeastern Trail Rider's Association rode through the area last week on the way to the parade and HoustonRodeo. Established in 1982, the association ride continues in the face of dwindling numbers, but Trail Boss Anthony Bruno is hell-bent on preserving their history.

The Northeastern Trail Ride is one of the smaller groups to make their way to



After spending the night camped out in Memorial Park, the Trail Riders move into downtown Houston to participate in the HoustonRodeo parade.



Dr. Perry's wagon was decorated with the US and Texas flags and decked out in preparation for the Saturday Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo parade. See Story for the history of the Perry family and the Northeastern Trail Riders.

the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, but a proud one with a rich history and tradition. The group travels approximately 111 miles from Cheek, Texas near Beaumont to Memorial Park every year for the annual HLSR Parade.

Whether it's the clippity clop sound struck by the hoofs of a horse trotting on pavement, or the rolling sound of the wagon wheels traversing down the highway, the allure of even a modern trail ride is too much to miss for more than 3,000-plus riders who converge on Bayou City for the

Continued. See TRAIL RIDERS, PAGE 5

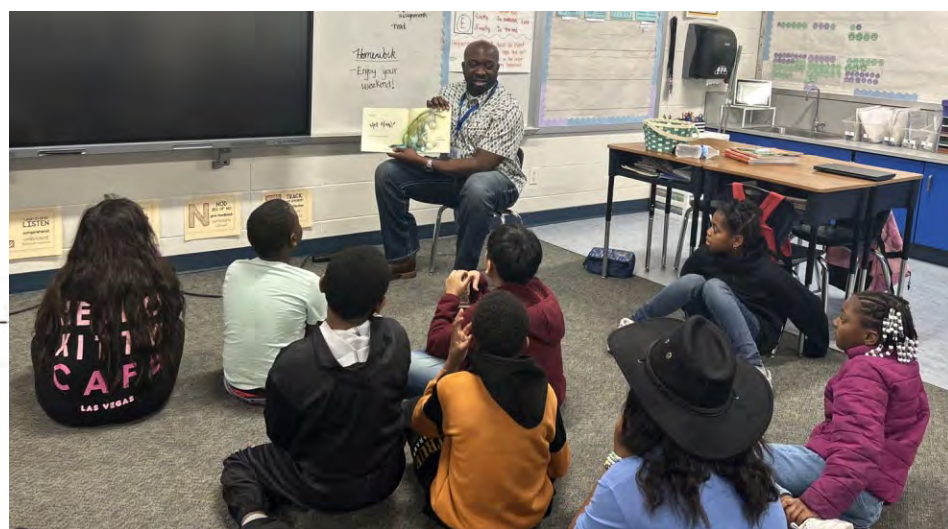
SHELDON ISD NEWS

Sheldon ISD District Spelling Bee



The district Spelling Bee competition took place on February 6. Middle school and elementary school campuses held their own competitions and sent their top two campus winners to the district level. First place was won by Melissa Jimenez from C.E. King Middle school. Second place was Dru Barrett from Royalwood Elementary school and third place went to Kendyl Gorman from C.E. King Middle school. Congratulations to the winners of the district Spelling Bee 2025!

150+ Participate in District's first Read Across Sheldon Event



On February 28, Sheldon ISD hosted its second annual Read Across Sheldon event at the Early Learning Center, two early childhood academies and 6 elementary schools. With a hope to inspire students to love reading one page at a time, Read Across Sheldon is an opportunity for business partners, staff, community leaders and families to sign up to read in one of the prekindergarten through 5th grade classrooms. We are so thankful for our volunteers for spending the morning reading to our students.

Garrett Elementary and Null Middle School hosts Ribbon-Cutting for RAK Multi-Purpose Room



Houston Random Acts of Kindness (HRAK), with the generous support of NBA star James Harden, surprised students with a grand opening of the new RAK Multi-Purpose Room at Null Middle School and Garrett Elementary. This transformative space is designed to motivate, inspire, and support students in achieving their goals.

The RAK Multi-Purpose Room is more than just a rewards center—it's a hub for student growth, development, and encourage-

ment. Students will have the opportunity to earn and redeem incentives for academic achievement, good behavior, attendance, and community service. The space will also host mentorship programs, tutoring sessions, career exploration workshops, and social-emotional learning activities, ensuring students have access to the resources and support they need to thrive. Stocked with essential school supplies, hygiene products, and engaging materials, the room will serve as a place of opportunity and

empowerment for Houston's youth.

This initiative is made possible through the collective generosity of partners including the Sheldon ISD Education Foundation, Walmart, Sam's Club, and XOXO Tracy Cosmetics, whose contributions have helped equip the RAK Multi-Purpose Room with essential supplies and incentives that will benefit students for years to come.

This is Sheldon ISD's third RAK Multi-Purpose Room. King Middle School unveiled their room in May 2023.

Sheldon ISD Announces Teachers of the Year



Sheldon ISD is proud to announce our 2024-25 Teachers of the Year:

- Octavia Gilshenan - King High School
- Ivan Muller Sierra - Early College High School
- Donald Sanders - King 9th Grade Campus
- Tammy Baty-Rice - King Middle School
- Destiny Barr - Null Middle School
- Renita Toney - Carroll Elementary
- Lafredrick Smith - Garrett Elementary
- Denissia James - Monahan Elementary
- Romeo Ramirez III - Royalwood Elementary
- Luz Cruz - Sheldon Elementary
- Claudia Bueno - Sheldon Lake Elementary
- Teheerah Shannon - Sheldon Early Childhood Academy
- Isylee Sanchez - Cravens Early Childhood Academy
- Mesha Weston - KASE Academy

Honorees will be recognized at the annual Sheldon Star Awards on May 1 where the district's Elementary and Secondary Teacher of the Year will be announced.

KHS Administrators Surprise Class of 2025



On February 24, administrators at C.E. King High School visited the homes and classrooms of their top graduates of the Class of 2025. Dr. Jillian Howard, principal of KHS, along with members of her administrative team brought yard signs for students to proudly display in their homes. Graduation will be held Sunday, June 1.

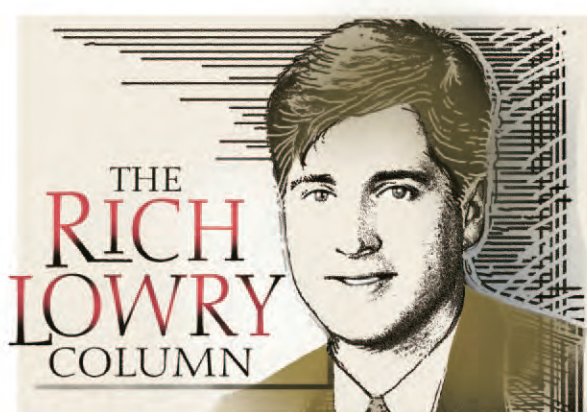
Softball senior signs NCAA Letter of Intent



Sophia Martinez
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

King High School senior Sophia Martinez has signed her Letter of Intent to continue her softball journey at the University of Texas at Dallas. This marks eight athletes sign for various sports at colleges during the 2024-25 school year.

OPINION PAGE



Ukraine never should have made the mistake of getting invaded

Ukraine never should have made the mistake of getting invaded

Ukraine got invaded by Russia. According to President Trump, it should never make that mistake again.

Miffed that Ukraine is miffed that it has been excluded from the early stages of negotiations over the war, Trump has blasted the embattled country for sticking up for its interests after being brutalized by Vladimir Putin for three years.

'Today I heard, 'Oh, well, we weren't invited.' Well, you've been there for three years,' Trump said the other day. 'You should have ended it — three years. You should have never started it. You could have made a deal.'

This would be a fair charge to lodge against Ukraine if it had attempted to seize by force Russia's Rostov and Belgorod Oblasts and gotten bogged down in a costly war of attrition with no clear exit plan.

In reality, as we all know, Russia first invaded Ukraine in 2014 (after the Maidan Revolution toppled a pro-Putin president) and then followed up in 2022 with a more far-reaching attempt to decapitate Ukraine and render it a Russian satellite state.

Ukraine's offense is to have been victimized by an expansionist Russia, a quality it has historically in common with Poland, Finland and the Baltic states, among others.

If Ukraine had shown better judgment than to be located next door to a much larger, perpetually aggrieved and autocratic neighbor, with which it shares a complicated history, perhaps this never would have happened.

Skeptics of the Ukraine war want to say that Russia was provoked into invading Ukraine — missing its cities, blowing up its hospitals, destroying its electricity grid — by NATO's assurances that Ukraine was on the path to joining the alliance.

This wasn't in the offing anytime in the foreseeable future, though, and even if it had eventually happened, the idea that NATO would have used Ukraine as a launching pad for an invasion of Russia is phantasmagoric.

Vladimir Putin has set out his views on Ukraine at length, and they amount to the belief that Ukraine doesn't have a legitimate national identity separate from Russia. This is at the bottom of the conflict, as well as Putin's coveting of Ukrainian land and resources and his fear of a successful Slavic democracy next door giving his own people ideas.

When Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy clapped back at Trump, the U.S. president responded with a contemptuous salvo on Truth Social. Trump deemed him a "moderately successful comedian" (Zelenskyy used to have a career in entertainment) and, more significantly, a "Dictator without Elections."

It is true that Ukraine has been under martial law since it (foolishly) got invaded by Russia. Yet, Zelenskyy's popularity has held up, and he has much more democratic credibility than his adversary Vladimir Putin, who poisons and imprisons his political opponents.

Another Trump count against Zelenskyy is that he talked us into supporting Ukraine in the war. If it hadn't been for this scam artist, Trump implies, a bipartisan majority in the U.S. — and our European allies — wouldn't have believed we should stop a nation hostile to the West from installing a puppet government in a neighboring, sovereign state.

All that said, Ukraine isn't going to succeed in reestablishing its pre-2014 or even pre-2022 borders, and any plausible cessation of hostilities will involve painful concessions by Kiev.

This doesn't justify adopting an ahistorical perspective on the war and blaming Ukraine for its plight. Realpolitik is one thing; needlessly insulting an ally and condemning it in perversely moralizing terms is another.

Perhaps Trump's blunderbuss attacks on Ukraine will soften it up to accept an unsatisfactory but unavoidable deal. Still, the Kremlin is surely taking note that the president of the United States can't disguise his bitterness toward the weaker, hard-pressed country that Putin wants to humiliate and dismember.

It used to be said that a liberal is too broad-minded to take his own side in a fight. Trump is too consumed with pursuing a deal to acknowledge Ukraine is on our side.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



House Unveils its Voucher Version

Texas House members filed a bevy of education bills last week, including a proposed \$8 billion investment in public education and a voucher bill that ties the amount of money spent for private schooling to the dollar amount provided to public schools. The Austin American-Statesman reported the bill, filed by Rep. Brad Buckley, R-Salado, would increase the base level of per-student funding by \$220 — from \$6,160 to \$6,380. Additional funds would be provided for special education, bilingual education, transportation and to rural school districts.

The House voucher proposal differs from the version already passed by the Texas Senate in that it sets out a tiered system depending on a family's income and prioritizes children with special education needs.

"We want kids in Texas to do better," Buckley said. "That's what it's about."

At least two Democratic legislators have pushed back. Rep. Gina Hinojosa, D-Austin, said she was "disappointed" by the proposed increase in per-student funding. The \$220 proposed increase does not cover increased costs due to inflation.

"Our neighborhood schools are desperate for the funding they need to keep their best teachers in the classroom," Hinojosa said. Rep. James Talarico, D-Round Rock, cast skepticism on Republicans' claim they have enough votes in the House to pass a voucher program.

"Voucher proponents have a habit of declaring victory prematurely," Talarico said.

SENATE BILL WOULD CRIMINALIZE HEMP PRODUCTS WITH THC

A bill filed in the Texas Senate would ban all products containing THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana, The Dallas Morning News reported. Thousands of retailers across the state are selling CBD products derived from legally grown hemp but often containing THC. The ban would not affect the sale of nonintoxicating products that contain CBD.

The ban is a priority of Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, the Senate's presiding officer.

"We must take bold action to keep dangerous drugs away



from our communities and out of our schools, and SB 3 is a critical step in protecting Texas families from unregulated and mislabeled intoxicating products," Patrick said in December.

Advocates for consumable hemp — gummies, vapes, drinks and other types of products — are advocating a more measured approach that would include limiting the strength, increasing oversight, and banning sales to minors. The proposed ban would not affect the state's medical marijuana program.

Even if passed, the proposed ban faces an uncertain fate in the House, where no companion legislation has been filed.

AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER WANTS STATE FLUORIDE BAN

Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller is urging state officials to ban adding fluoride to public water systems, The News reported. Miller said he was swayed by U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., a longtime opponent of fluoridation.

"I don't want big brother telling me what to do," Miller. "Government has forced this on us for too long."

Across Texas, more than 100 public water systems serving nearly 10 million people add fluoride to water. According to the American Dental Association, fluoridation reduces cavities by about 25% in both children and adults. However, critics say the practice is no longer needed because fluoride is already found in toothpaste and other dental products.

MEASLES OUTBREAK SPREADING IN SOUTH PLAINS REGION

The number of people identified as having contracted

measles has risen to 90 since late January, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. Of that number, 16 have been hospitalized.

"Due to the highly contagious nature of this disease, additional cases are likely to occur in the outbreak area and the surrounding communities," a DSHS news release stated.

Gaines County, between Lubbock and Midland, has reported the largest number of cases: 57 as of last Friday. Five of the people contracting measles said they had been vaccinated against the virus.

Most of the cases have been reported in children from infancy to age 17. DSHS said the best way to prevent getting sick is to be immunized with two doses of the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine.

A COOLER, WETTER JANUARY REPORTED

Texas weather was wetter and cooler in January than in past years, resulting in a slight drop in the percentage of the state in drought, now at 42%, according to Dr. Mark Wentzel, hydrologist with the Texas Water Development Board.

Wentzel said he expects drought conditions to expand modestly in the next few months.

"A big factor in this outlook is an ongoing La Niña event, cooler-than-normal sea surface temperatures in the eastern Equatorial Pacific, that typically bring warmer and drier conditions to the southern U.S., including Texas, during the winter," he wrote. "Farther out, we're still hopeful for more drought relief."

La Niña is expected to be less of a factor after April, meaning that May — historically the wettest month in Texas — could bring added drought relief.

COALITION PRESSING TRANSPARENCY LEGISLATION THIS SESSION

The Texas Sunshine Coalition, which consists of 16 organizations (including Texas Press Association, the Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas and the Texas Association of Broadcasters), is working to pass legislation to improve citizens' access to public information.

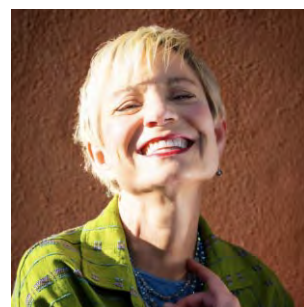
Seven measures have already been introduced, including a bill that would require governments to produce public records in their original format instead of converting them into PDF images that are impossible to search and sort.

Other proposals would require governments to respond to Public Information Act requests. The bills resulted from complaints that some government officials simply ignore requests in spite of state laws. The legislation provides for a complaint process when officials fail to respond. Other measures call for resuming access to dates of birth in public records to ensure accuracy when reporting on people with common names; requiring an open government hotline in the Texas Attorney General's office; and establishing a complaint process when public information is withheld.

More transparency bills are expected to be filed soon.

THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

Thinking About My Hair



I saw a photo of an author I admire recently, and she had no hair. I worried she was ill, so I immediately investigated. She was not ill. She had cut off all her hair and had done it for good reasons, she said. She had done a lot of thinking about her hair—a lot more than I had.

First of all, she said, she was not blond. "No one is blond," she added, or almost no one.

Less than 1% of the population is blond, and she implied she felt dishonest pretending she was blond when she wasn't. She went on to say that she had spent thousands of dollars and untold time on her hair. She sounded a little angry about the whole thing—the money spent, the dishonesty of it all.

I admit, I felt a little defensive because I am not blond either. I have never been blond. But I had never considered that I was part of some massive blond conspiracy, posing as blond to dupe the unsuspecting. I just assumed that everyone knew I was not blond. So for the record: I am not blond.

I am just not good at growing hair. I used to feel the need to apologize to my hairstylists. "I'm good at doing some things," I would insist. "Growing hair just isn't one of them!"

The hairstylist would work away for long minutes, and at the end, I would get up from the chair and there was no hair to see on the floor. It was as if the entire thing had been a pantomime involving scissors.

So now, my husband, Peter, cuts my hair. He finishes in less than five minutes and, given how little he has to work with, does a very fine job.

And, once every four months, I buy a box of hair dye and bleach my hair screaming blond. (I'm not sure if that's what the color is actually called, but it should be.) I figure, maybe if I'm blond, people won't notice that I don't have a lot of hair and that, what little there is, sticks up in odd directions.

But now I wonder how I'd feel if I cut off all my hair.

Peter would not like it, I know. When I still had other people cut my hair, I used to go to a haircutting school, and so I had very little say in how it was cut. Since there were so few options, this did not bother me. But one time, the teacher cut most of it off. Peter was shocked when I came home—which surprised me, since I had so little to start out with. Peter wants me to keep what little hair I have on my head, so for his sake, I do that.

But I don't think I would want to cut off all my hair anyway.

The feeling I had, reading what this author said, was that being a fake blond was evidence that I was not a very serious person. As I thought about it, I had to agree this was probably true. I am not very serious about my hair, at any rate.

I'm happy with my phony screaming blond hair. My "hairstyling routine" consists of the two seconds I spend every morning checking to see if I have snarls in my hair or if it's standing on end. After that, I can go for the rest of the day without thinking once about my hair.

And that's the way I like it.

Till next time, Carrie

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

Jacinto City twin fires: Hero saves family, Councilman's home destroyed,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



10500 Oswego St. Jacinto City, Home of Roy & Beatrice Stubblefield.

The Stubblefield's had fell asleep near midnight in their front living room watching TV. Roy said "We lost everything, appliances, furniture, antiques, tools and personal mementos. But the main thing is we're fortunate to be alive thanks to a man called Gilberto," Roy said.

Preliminary investigations seem to indicate the fire started near the hot water heater. Their home didn't have smoke or fire alarms.

Upon my investigation I discovered that Gilberto is Gilberto Espinoza.

Gilberto Espinoza and his wife Carla own the Refresqueria La Curvita at 1215 Mercury Drive. They are citizens of the city and have been acquiring old houses and rebuilding them into nice looking houses.

I also learned within a short period of time after the fire, looters came and stole things from the ruins. As a former state certified Crime Prevention Specialist I advised Roy to put up barrier DO NOT CROSS tape and NO TRESPASSING SIGNS. See photo.

Chief Joe Ayala has had extra patrolling at the two house fire locations.

Roy said, "I credit Gilberto for saving our lives. If it hadn't been for the quick action of Gilberto and his wife who called 911 my wife and I would have died in the fire he tearfully said."

According to Gilberto he said, "I was driving down Oswego while checking on a house we bought that we're rebuilding. All of a sudden I saw smoke coming from a house. I told Carla to call 911 and I began honking the horn in an attempt to arouse the occupants."

"I pulled my vehicle as close as possible to the burning house and kept honking the horn until I saw lights come on and the occupants safely came out. To make sure the fire department got the 911 call, we made a second call, we were assured the fire department was on the way, he said."

Espinoza said, "I'm just glad we were able to help save their lives."

The Bible speaks of a Good Samaritan in the Book of Luke; the Espinoza's are for sure Good Samaritans.

The second fire happened on February 26th at about 6:25 am Wednesday

morning. It was the home of 29 year resident's Allen and Vicki Lee in the 11500 block of Tilla Street.

Allen is a Jacinto City Councilman and the minister of the Calvary Missionary Baptist Church in Jacinto City.

Allen said they were awakened by their smoke alarm going off in his study room. Within seconds the entire wall was ablaze and we had to evacuate immediately. Allen said the fire started from an electrical spark.

Vicki called 911, fire department personal came to extinguish the blaze, but in the end it was totally destroyed.

Allen said, "The fire moved so quickly. You cannot imagine the helplessness and fear unless you have experienced it."

Allen said his Sunday sermon would be from the book of Philippians, 4th chapter.

This chapter encourages believers to give their worries to God through prayer. You can ask Him for help and thank Him for all He's done for you. And believe you can do all things through Christ who'll strengthen you.

Trail Riders Head to Rodeo,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

annual Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Parade.

At least 55-plus of them come from Cheek, Texas, an unincorporated community, southwest of Beaumont in central Jefferson County. Every year, the small community established in 1906 becomes the central gathering place of cowboys and cowgirls from around the area known as the Northeast Trail Riders Association.

"It's about a 108-mile trek from Cheek into Memorial Park in Houston," said Derrick Daniels, a scout for the trail ride.

Daniels rides lead for the trail ride and is the first person seen beside the police escorts that accompany the riders as they move from county to county.

"We all work together as a team, talking back and forth to keep traffic moving," he said as they mostly take up at least one lane of traffic on the highway as they head for Houston.

"We use walkie talkies to check on each other, keeping an eye on the health of the animals, and there are no issues with the wagons. My head is always on a swivel the whole ride to make sure we keep our riders safe and the public safe," he said.

They rolled into Crosby, Texas on Thursday about 5:30 p.m., a little bit later than they normally do.

"We encountered a lot of construction and had to make several detours so the traffic behind us could clear too," Daniels said.

They also take breaks to feed and water the animals and take human bathroom breaks, too.

"It's conditioning. We condition the animals year-round, so they are able to make a trip of 108 miles and we break it up into about eight to 10 miles per day," he said.

The trail ride got off to a rough start with a delay. Normally, they pull out on Sunday but there was a lot of



Keeping up a tradition are some of the Northeast Trail Riders. The Perry boys from left Taylor, grandpa Dr. Charles Perry, friend Joshua Joe, Derrick Daniels, and Caleb Perry.

lightning, the only thing that will slow them down.

"We don't ride our animals in lightning," he said. "If it is raining, we ride. Cold weather? We ride. Lightning will stop us so we can be safe."

Instead, they woke up at an early 5 a.m. call and readied themselves and pulled out of Cheek, Texas at 8 a.m.

Trail boss Anthony Bruno says the group plans for this the whole year.

"We have meetings throughout the year and we're always planning, fundraising, and training," he said.

During the day, Daniels said they are constantly replenishing themselves with a lot of fruits, water (especially in the heat), and even more so for the animals.

When it's time to settle in for the night, there's not a lot of microwave dinners or fast food, but plenty of barbecue and all the trimmings to feed the soul.

Throughout the ride the numbers grow and fall off as those who can't always take a full week's vacation join them when they can.

As the riders get into Houston, the excitement and danger increase.

"When we hit Memorial Park, it's a major reunion because you have all the other 12 associations gathering there at the same time. It's a big party on Friday night and

everyone is tasting each other's food and hanging out," he said.

Along the way, there's a lot of storytelling and the word spoken by most on the ride is tradition.

"I have my daughter, my grandsons, my in-laws, and my daughters-in-law with me this year," he said saying it's all about passing on the tradition to future generations.

For 78-year-old Dr. Charles Perry, it's a blessing to have his son and grandsons join him on the ride.

"We come from Arcola and meet up with them out in Cheek to ride in," the wagon boss said.

Don't think his age is slowing him down.

"I get geared up for it because I've been doing it for so long," he said. He's been riding on trail rides for 70 years this year, spending his early years with his grandfather and uncles.

"I enjoy it to my bones," Perry laughed.

One grandson is an assistant wagon boss and the other is learning the ropes with aspirations to take Bruno's spot as trail boss.

"It's important for us to have our kids and grandkids with us to experience this and burn into their hearts a desire to continue the tradition," Bruno said.

Galena Park ISD Names Elementary and Secondary Assistant Principal of the Year



By Dr. Tommie L. Smith

Congratulations to Sandra Rendon and Sarah Castillo for being named Galena Park ISD 2025 Elementary and Secondary Assistant Principal of the Year! Sandra Rendon has served as the assistant principal of MacArthur Elementary School for two years, and Sarah Castillo has served as associate principal of Galena Park High School for six years. Congratulations to Sandra Rendon and Sarah Castillo, and thank you for your hard work and dedication.

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New Proposal to Revive AstroDome

HOUSTON – The Houston Astrodome has been in limbo, waiting for its chance at a second life since being shuttered more than 15 years ago.

It was a technological marvel when it opened in 1965. But its heyday has long passed and it hasn't been home to a sports team since the Astros left in 1999 and it was closed to all events a decade later.

Over the years, ideas for its redevelopment and rebirth have been plentiful, everything from turning it into an indoor water park to flooding its sunken floor in order to reenact naval battle scenes. But none of these plans garnered enough public support or financing.

The latest proposal to refurbish the Astrodome was unveiled on Wednesday by a nonprofit focused on saving the beloved domed stadium. The group, the Astrodome Conservancy, proposes redeveloping the inside of the structure to create new areas for restaurants, retail, office and cultural spaces. But like the others before it, this plan could face a similar fate, with a \$1 billion price tag and an initial lack of support from local entities that would need to give their OK for the project to go forward.

Beth Wiedower Jackson, the conservancy's executive director, said that

unlike previous proposals, her organization believes theirs is backed by data and would be economically viable in part because there would be enough private investment to support it.

"This is a big, big, bold vision. And those previous plans, even admitted by Harris County officials, were a first step towards a future Astrodome. And this is the full swing of the bat. And this gives people something to be excited about," Jackson said.

The plan, Vision: Astrodome, proposes the construction of four state-of-the-art buildings inside the stadium that would offer spaces for restaurants, stores and offices. Similar spaces for shopping and eating would also be located around the Astrodome and connected to other facilities around the stadium. The Astrodome is at NRG Park, a 350-acre complex that includes NRG Stadium, located right next to the Astrodome and home to the NFL's Houston Texans, as well as an arena and exhibition halls.

"The Astrodome is ready now for its next chapter, redevelopment," said Phoebe Tudor, the conservancy's chairman. "It is time for all of us in Houston to come together and do something hard, working together to repurpose the Astrodome."



Cutaway View showing some of the possible uses for the renovated Astrodome.

Nicknamed "the Eighth Wonder of the World," the Astrodome ushered in a change in how people attended sporting events. It also hosted various cultural events, including concerts by Elvis and Tejano music star Selena as well as the "Battle of the Sexes" tennis match between Bobby Riggs and Billie Jean King in 1973.

Some people have called for its demolition. But a 2017 designation by the Texas Historical Commission as a state antiquities landmark essentially protects it from wholesale destruction. The stadium also maintains a strong foothold in the memories of many people both in and outside of Houston.

Rafi Kohan, whose 2017 book "The Arena" explores the place sports



Interior View shows multi-use possibilities

stadiums hold in American culture, said the Astrodome's construction came at a time of incredible technological innovation in the United States, and it helped transform Houston from what some saw as a "backwoods cow town" into a leader in technology. Houston became the home of the space program with the opening of Johnson Space Center in 1964.

"There was and contin-

ues to be a lot of civic pride around the Astrodome, what it represented, the sort of space age feat, you know, in stadium form," Kohan said.

But whether there continues to be enough support in Houston to refurbish and save the Astrodome remains to be seen. It costs between \$100,000 and \$200,000 a year to maintain the stadium.

The Astrodome is

owned by Harris County and managed by the Harris County Sports & Convention Corporation.

The office of Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo, the county's top elected official, declined to comment on the conservancy's proposal.

James Dixon, the sports and convention corporation's chairman, said in a statement that he respects the conservancy's efforts but "over the last few years, we have seen several concepts that, while thought-provoking, haven't resulted in viable funding and maintenance solutions."

Dixon said his organization and the county are working with other stakeholders on a plan for the future of NRG Park and "the solution for the Astrodome must be decided within that context."

One of those stakeholders, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, which holds its annual event at NRG Park and would have a say on what to do with the Astrodome, was not on board with the conservancy's proposal.

"The proposed plan by the Astrodome Conservancy does not align with the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo's strategic vision and operational requirements," Chris Boleman, the group's president and CEO, said in a statement.

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From Left, Hugh Grant, Sophie Thatcher & Chloe East star in "Heretic."

"Heretic"

"The 97th Academy Awards" (TV-14) — Hosted by former late-night talk show host Conan O'Brien, this year's Oscars ceremony is out now to stream after its live broadcast on ABC on March 2. In keeping with other awards shows this season, the musical film "Emilia Perez" received the most nominations (13), followed by "The Brutalist" and "Wicked" with 10 each. The Best Actor award will be an interesting category to watch after Adrien Brody landed the Golden Globe and Timothee Chalamet received the SAG. Zoe Saldana, Demi Moore and Kieran Culkin are the frontrunners for the other acting categories, while the Best Picture category is stacked with great films from 2024 like "Anora," "Conclave," and "The Substance." (Hulu) — "Heretic" (R) —

Hugh Grant ("Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy") leads this chilling horror film from A24, co-starring Sophie Thatcher ("Companion") and Chloe East ("The Fablemans"). Thatcher and East star as two Mormon missionaries who visit the home of Mr. Reed (Grant) to spread information about their church. Mr. Reed invites the girls into his home and welcomes a discussion about religion, but as the discussion carries on, the atmosphere becomes uncomfortable and intense. The girls soon realize that they're stuck inside the house with no phone signal and no way out, leaving Mr. Reed to commence his own sadistic lesson about the nature of belief and faith. Premieres March 7. (Max) — "With Love, Meghan" (TV-PG) — Meghan, Duchess of Sus-

sex, is finally premiering her lifestyle show on March 4 after the series was postponed back in January due to the Southern California wildfires. The show will consist of eight 33-minute episodes filmed at a farmhouse near Meghan and Harry's home in Montecito, California. Throughout the episodes, Meghan will showcase her personal "tips and tricks" in the kitchen, garden and more. Notable guests on the show include actress Mindy Kaling, actress Abigail Spencer, and chefs Roy Choi and Alice Water. Oh, and Prince Harry, of course! (Netflix)

In Case You Missed It "Yellowjackets" (TV-MA) — This thriller-drama series just had its season three premiere back in February, but it's not too late to binge the series and catch up in time for its season three finale in April. "Yellowjackets" follows a high school soccer team whose plane crashes on the way to a tournament in 1996, leaving them stranded in the wilderness for a year and a half. Bouncing between the events in 1996 and the girls' current lives in 2021, viewers get to see firsthand the trauma that the teenagers experienced and how the crash remains a part of them as they navigate the world as adults. The show features an incredibly talented ensemble cast that includes Sophie Thatcher (yes, the same one from "Heretic"), Christina Ricci, Juliette Lewis and Samantha Hanratty. Go stream season one, season two, and the first four episodes of season three! (Paramount+) (c) 2025 King Features Synd., Inc.



Q:I'm so happy to see so many cast members on Reba McEntire's new sitcom. Are there any other cast members from the original "Reba" series set to appear in the future? — M.W.

A: Christopher Rich, who starred on the WB sitcom "Reba" from 2001-2007, recently guest-starred on McEntire's new NBC sitcom "Happy's Place." Rich suffered a stroke in 2018 and was thrilled to reunite with his former co-stars in an episode where he plays a tattoo artist who was also dealing with the residual effects of a stroke. He was eager to incorporate this experience into the character and hopes to return for another guest spot next season.

JoAnna Garcia Swisher, who played Cheyenne on "Reba" and currently stars in the Netflix series "Sweet Magnolias," told People magazine that she would 100% guest-star on "Happy's Place" if and when she's asked. ***

Q: Did the actress who played Eve on the Apple TV+ series "Bad Monkey" appear on a soap opera when she was younger? She looks like the actress who played Lizzie on "Guiding Light." — U.B.

A: If you're thinking of Emme Rylan, who played Lizzie Spaulding on "Guiding Light" from 2006-2009, she does resemble her, but it's not the same actress. Meredith Hagner, who recently starred opposite Vince Vaughn in "Bad Monkey," did get her start on a CBS soap around the same time as Rylan. She was cast as young Liberty Ciccone on "As the World Turns" and was nominated for a Daytime Emmy award before the long-running soap was canceled in 2010.

Hagner most recently played one of the double-booked brides in the Amazon comedy film "You're Cordially Invited," opposite Reese Witherspoon and Will Ferrell. Off-screen, she's married to actor Wyatt Russell ("Under the Banner of Heaven"), son of Kurt Russell and Goldie Hawn.

"Bad Monkey," which was filmed on location in Florida, will move its production to the West Coast next season after receiving a \$20 million tax credit from the state of California. According to Colleen Bell, director of the California Film



Reba McEntire and Christopher Rich star in "Happy Place."

Commission, these incentives help encourage jobs in the state and drive economic growth. Bell stated, "The impact goes beyond the entertainment industry — it supports families, local businesses and communities statewide." ***

Q: Is it true that Kate Hudson was originally offered Anne Hathaway's role in the movie "The Devil Wears Prada"? — K.W.

A: Yes, Kate Hudson was offered the role of Andy Sachs in the 2006 hit movie "The Devil Wears Prada" (based on the best-selling novel of the same name), but she turned it down. The film's director David Frankel told Entertainment Weekly that several big-name actresses were in the running for Hathaway's role, including Rachel McAdams, Scarlett Johansson and Natalie Portman. Hudson says that the timing wasn't right for her to do the role, but she regrets her decision after seeing the movie.

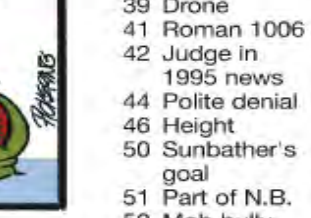
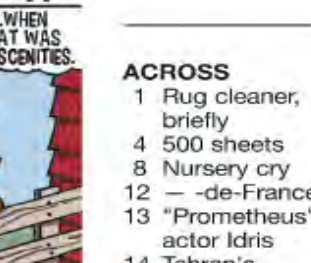
Next up, Hudson stars in the sports-comedy series "Running Point," which was co-created by Mindy Kaling for Netflix.

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com, or write me at KFWS, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



by Dave T. Phipps



by Bud Blake



by Jeff Pickering



March 3, 2025 Posting Date

King Crossword

- ACROSS
1 Rug cleaner, briefly
4 500 sheets
8 Nursery cry
12 -de-France
13 "Prometheus" actor Idris
14 Tehran's country
15 Pottery
17 Dweeb
18 Ecol. watchdog
19 Church meet-ups
21 Mellow yellows
24 Calendar abbr.
25 Train unit
26 Actress Cattrall
28 Rural buildings
32 Pharmaceutical
34 Crosses (out)
36 Cranny
37 "The Stranger" author
39 Drone
41 Roman 1006
42 Judge in 1995 news
44 Polite denial
46 Height
50 Sunbather's goal
51 Part of N.B.
52 Mob bully

Grid for King Crossword with numbers 1-61 indicating starting positions for words.

- DOWN
1 London's Old
2 Pub serving
3 Part of the brain
4 Comment show
5 Inventor Whitney
6 Grade-school basics
7 Brick worker
8 SUV's kin
9 Location
10 Crumbly earth
11 Common conjunctions
16 Mimic
20 Male swan
21 Outlet letters
22 Actress Kate
23 Half dozen
27 "Whatever"
29 Lothario
30 PBS science show
31 Nonfat

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Weekly SUDOKU puzzle grid and instructions. Includes difficulty level: Moderate, Challenging, HOO BOY!

HOCUS-FOCUS puzzle by Henry Boltinoff. Two panels of a man at a counter with instructions to find at least six differences.

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez. 10 questions on literature, television, U.S. presidents, comics, ad slogans, history, inventions, movies, measurements, and geography.

Answers for King Crossword and Trivia test. Includes solution time: 25 mins.

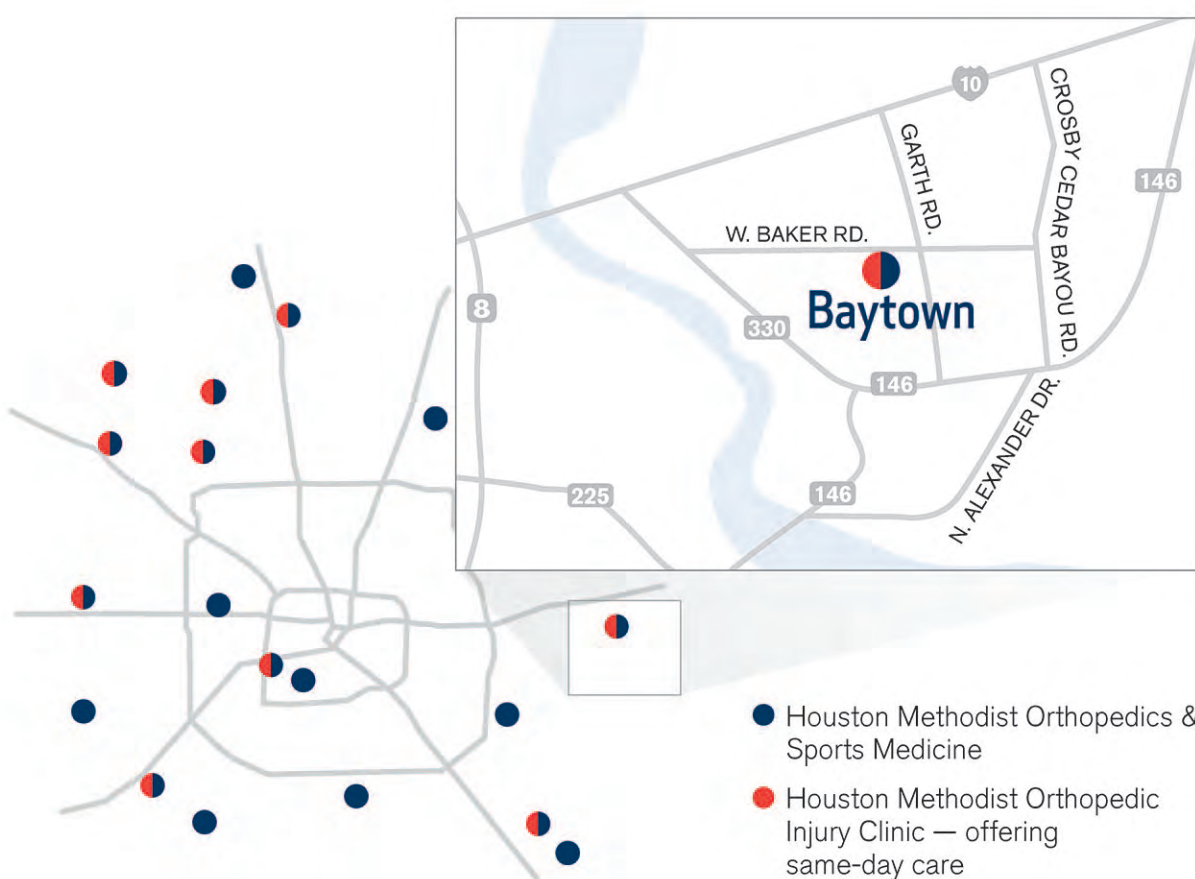
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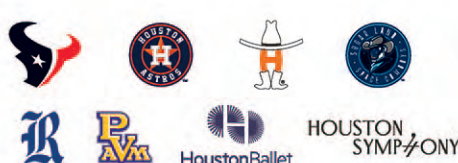
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