

Heart Screening Saves Crosby Athlete, Page 2

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Elderly Crosby Resident has Special Wish Granted

NORTH CHANNEL STAR

Your News, Your Newspaper



Bernadine Bushnell enjoying her dinner at Brennan's, with Snoop Dog and daughter. See story on page 2

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Jacinto City & Galena Park Celebrate 4th of July

By Allan Jamail

Galena Park – Jacinto City, TX. - On the 4th of July, 2025 the two neighboring cities of Galena Park and Jacinto City came together to provide their annual aerial fireworks show to the thousands of onlookers who came to see it.

Normally fire fighters have a concern with the fireworks starting a fire in the dry grass and weeds in the vacant levy shooting area between the two cities. But because of several days of rain in the past two weeks it lessened the chance a fire to the delight of the firemen on stand-by.

North Channel Star writer and former Jacinto City Mayor Allan Jamail said, "Each year the firework show has gotten larger and lasted longer than it did when he was mayor 40 years ago in 1985. This year the crowd of citizens of Galena Park and Jacinto City who came was pleased to see the longer display, but of course the longer the display the more it cost."



An aerial cluster firework explode high into the sky as thousands of 4th of July celebrators gathered in Galena Park & Jacinto City to recognize the Nation's Birthday & Independence Day. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

According to Lon Squyres, Jacinto City's City Manager this year each city's cost was \$12,500, the \$25,000 display lasted about 30 minutes.



A beautiful firework is seen exploding thousands of feet over the horizon, above the High Road between Jacinto City and Galena Park. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

CHANNEL CURRENTS

NCAC Chamber Coffee Networking Thursday July 24

Join Chamber members and guests at a morning Coffee Networking, Thursday July 24 from 9:00am to 10:30am at the LaQuinta Inn Beltway 8, 5520 East Sam Houston Pkwy North, Houston 7015.

Everyone welcome. RSVP to Yesenia@NCACChamber.com.

NCAC Chamber August Luncheon Friday August 1.

The North Channel Chamber will hold its monthly luncheon Friday August 1 at the Jacinto City Town Center, 1025 Oates Road, Jacinto City. 11:30 to 1:00 pm. Program: A Guide to Smarter Cooking with Chef Shonah Jefferson.

Everyone Welcome. Call 713-450-3600 for tickets, \$25 members, \$35 non-members.

Galena Park ISD Board of Trustees Named Region 4 "School Board of the Year"

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

The Galena Park Independent School District (ISD) Board of Trustees has been recognized as the Region 4 School Board of the Year, earning top honors among 47 Houston-area school districts and 43 charter school boards. The award, announced this week by the Region 4 Education Service Center, celebrates the board's leadership, innovative initiatives, and consistent commitment to student success.

"This is a prestigious recognition," said Dr. Rodney Watson, Executive Director of Region 4 Education Service Center. "To be recognized by their peers and by other leaders as a board that has distinguished themselves around key areas of leadership, commitment to student success, community investment, and innovation goes a long way in setting them



GPISD Board President Ramon Garza displays the Region 4 Award, beside Superintendent Dr. John Moore and several other board members. See Full Board photo and list on Page 5.

apart."

The Galena Park ISD Board will now represent Region 4 as its nominee for the coveted Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) Outstanding School Board Award, which will be announced during the state education conference in Houston this September.

"We're extremely happy that they were selected and believe they'll be a great representative for us at the state level," Dr. Watson said.

The Board's theme of "Building on a Legacy" is more than a motto—it's reflected in their deep-rooted dedication to the district. Many trustees are Galena

Park ISD graduates or have children who attended district schools, a fact highlighted by Superintendent Dr. John Moore.

"The Galena Park ISD Board of Trustees embodies a spirit of unity, service, and vision," Moore said. "They are tireless champions for our students, staff, and commu-

nity, and their dedication ensures our district continues to thrive today and for generations to come."

The Board's influence can be seen in steady improvements in student performance and the launch of innovative programs like the expansion of dual credit options—allowing students to earn college credits or industry certifications before graduation. The Board has also bolstered college readiness through initiatives such as the districtwide ACT School Day, ensuring every student has access to crucial assessments.

In addition to academic programs, trustees have prioritized health and wellness. This includes expanded school-based health services, employee assistance initiatives, and

Continued. See GP ISD BOARD NAMED REGION 4'S BEST, Page 5

Galena Park 9 Year-old Girl Dies When Left in Hot Car all Day

GALENA PARK – A mother allegedly left her 9-year-old daughter in a hot car with some water and windows partially down while she was at work, officials say, resulting in the girl's death.

The girl's 36-year-old mother left the child unattended in a white Toyota Camry last Tuesday from approximately 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. while she worked at a manufacturing plant in Galena Park, the sheriff's office said during a press conference.

The mother left the child with some water, partially rolled down the

windows of the vehicle and then "proceeded to go to work for the day," Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said.

"There's never an excuse to leave a child unattended," Gonzalez emphasized during the press conference.

Upon returning to the vehicle later in the afternoon when her shift ended, the mother found her daughter unresponsive. Law enforcement was contacted at approximately 2:06 p.m. and they detained the mother. Temperatures in the Houston area reached around 93 degrees Fahrenheit on Tuesday, ac-

ording to the National Weather Service.

The child was transported to a local hospital, where she was pronounced dead, officials said.

Detectives continue to speak with the mother to gain more insight on why the child was kept in the car and the exact timeline of how long she was alone in the vehicle, the sheriff said. Officials are also waiting to receive the child's autopsy results before deciding whether to press any charges.

On Thursday, officials said the mother is no longer under detainment



9 year old child died in the white car with black roof, and reflective shade in windshield. Parking lot is next to Mother's work site.

as the autopsy results are still pending and the District Attorney's Office will decide on any charge.

Gonzalez said the incident, "which could have

been prevented," is a "unique" situation, since most hot car deaths are typically an accident.

"Maybe she has to make ends meet and keep

food on the table and work. But the risk of death or harm — there's just no reconciling that in my mind. You got to make other arrangements. It's not worth it to put a child at risk like this, for any particular reason," Gonzalez said.

This tragedy marks the third hot car death to occur in Texas in the last four days and at least the 13th child to die in a hot car nationwide this year, according to Kids and Car Safety, an organization focused on "saving the lives of children and pets in and around vehicles."

Young Athlete's Life Takes a Turn with Heart Condition Diagnosis



Jullian Pereida (JuJu) has had a life-saving procedure and is ready to continue on with life. His interests have had to change since he can no longer play football.



Jullian's mom Julia has been by his side since they discovered he had a heart issue. They are grateful to Crosby ISD for having a policy requiring the heart checkup with athletic physicals.

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

For more than a decade, Scott Stephens has fought to make sure another Crosby parent doesn't suffer the same outcome as his family when his son died of sudden cardiac arrest at the untimely age of 18 years old.

Stephens has appeared before the UIL Medical Advisory Committee, the Legislative Council, and 50 to 60 trips to Austin to make his plea to the legislature. Cody's Law was finally passed and signed by Gov. Greg Abbott on Father's Day weekend in 2019.

Stephens and the

Cody Stephen's Go Big or Go Home Memorial Foundation has continued its quest for screening athletes across the state of Texas at a feverish pace. That includes Cody's home district where another life was recently saved.

"He was a student at Channelview High School and North Shore Rotary bought them a machine to screen students," Stephens said. As far as he knew, they were supposed to be screening athletes.

It's not the experience one mom had with her son.

Crosby ISD has a strict policy on screening athletes and Julia Pereida and her husband

Rogelio had no idea how their life was about to change.

For Jullian Pereida, a young football player, life took an unexpected turn when he discovered he had hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM), a serious heart condition. The diagnosis came after Jullian's family moved to Crosby, where heart screening for athletes is mandatory.

Jullian, who had been playing football in Channelview, never had an ECG screening there, despite the school having the necessary equipment. It wasn't until the family relocated to Crosby that Jullian underwent the mandatory heart screening, which

revealed the abnormality.

The diagnosis was a shock to Jullian and his family.

"He has hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, HCM," said Scott Stephens, a heart health advocate whose son died with a similar diagnosis. The condition means that Juju's heart muscle is abnormally thick, which can lead to serious complications.

Jullian's mother, Julia Pereida, expressed her gratitude for the mandatory screening in Crosby.

"I never thought to do it either, which I kicked myself in the butt for," she said. The diagnosis has altered Jullian's life

significantly. He may never play football again, but the screening likely saved his life.

The Pereida family has faced numerous hospital stays and adjustments to their daily lives.

His cardiologist told him that if he hadn't received the ECG within six months, they would be having a totally different conversation.

Jullian now has a loop recorder implanted under his skin to monitor his heart. Despite the challenges, the family is grateful for the early detection and the care they have received.

Jullian's story highlights the importance of mandatory heart screen-

ings for young athletes. "Heart screening saves lives. I see evidence every day," said Stephens. The Pereida family hopes that more schools will adopt similar policies to prevent other families from facing the same ordeal.

As Jullian navigates his new reality, he remains hopeful. While he may grieve the loss of his football career, he has a chance at a future he might not have had without the screening. His story is a testament to the life-saving power of early detection and the importance of advocating for mandatory heart screenings in schools.

Elderly Area Resident Has Special Wish Granted!

Crosby, Texas – Bernadine Bushnell, a resident of Crosby, Texas, had her wish to take a carriage ride and have dinner in downtown Houston granted, thanks to the Houston chapter of national nonprofit Twilight Wish Foundation. Bushnell is 76 and has courageously battled both breast and liver cancer. She lived in New Orleans for years and always wanted to ride in a horse-drawn carriage there but never had the opportunity. Bushnell's wish was granted on June 21, 2025 when she and her daughter, Stephanie Jones, enjoyed a lovely dinner at world-famous New Orleans restaurant Bren-



Bernadine Bushnell enjoying her dinner at Brennan's



Bernadine Bushnell and daughter Stephanie Jones ready for their carriage ride

nan's of Houston and then took a carriage ride through downtown Houston.


In addition, Bushnell is a huge Snoop Dogg fan


and wished to meet him. Although the Houston chapter was not able to arrange that, a life-size cardboard cutout of Snoop Dogg joined them for dinner! A huge thank

you to Brennan's of Houston for donating the dinner and to Hurn Alison of Houston Carriage for donating the carriage ride. Thank you also to Belmont Village, A Sacred

Choice Funeral Home and Senior Living Specialists – Houston for funding the cost of transportation and gratuities for this special wish.

Twilight Wish Foundation is a nonprofit charitable organization whose mission is to honor and enrich the lives of seniors through intergenerational Twilight Wish celebrations. Since its founding in 2003, Twilight Wish has granted over 7,100 individual wishes to seniors throughout the U.S. Twilight Wish grants wishes to seniors who are 65 and older or a permanent resident of a nursing home and earn less than 200% of poverty level. If you would like to nominate a deserving senior or get involved with Twilight Wish, please visit the website at www.twilightwish.org or call 215-230-8777 ext. 104.


PET MATTERS
In Memory of
Susan Hoffman



Pet Safety in Hot Weather

As temperatures begin to increase this summer, we would like to share some heat tips to keep your pets happy and healthy. Pets are part of our family so let's make sure to keep them safe and look out for any signs of heat stroke.

If you suspect your pet is having a heat stroke:

1. Get your dog out of direct heat.
2. Check for shock. Signs include, collapse, body temperature 104° F+, bloody diarrhea or vomit, depression stupor, seizures or coma, excessive panting or difficulty breathing, increased heart rate, salivation.
3. Take your dog's temperature.

4. Spray your dog with cool water then retake temperature.

5. Place water-soaked towels on the dog's head, neck feet, chest and abdomen, turn on a fan and point it in your dog's direction, rub Isopropyl alcohol (70%) on the dog's foot pads to help cool him but don't use large quantities.

6. Take your dog to the nearest veterinary hospital.

During a heat crisis, the goal is always to decrease the dog's body temperature to 103° F in the first 10-15 minutes. Once 103° F is reached, you must stop the cooling process because the body temperature will continue

to decrease and can plummet dangerously low if you continue to cool the dog for too long.

Even if you successfully cool your pet down to 103° F in the first 10-15 minutes, you must take the dog to a veterinarian as soon as possible because consequences of heat stroke will not show up for hours or even days. Potential problems include abnormal heart rhythms, kidney failure, neurological problems, and respiratory arrest.

It is important to know if your pet is predisposed to dog heat stroke, which is true of dogs with short snouts such as bulldogs, pugs and many other breeds. Other common

causes of heat stroke include: a previous episode of heat stroke, leaving a dog in a parked car, excessive exercise in hot, humid weather (this may be exercise that your dog can usually handle but not in warmer weather), lack of appropriate shelter outdoors, thicker-coated dogs in warm weather and underlying disease such as upper airway, heart of lung disease.

Never leave your pet in the car

In nice weather you may be tempted to take your pet with you in the car while you travel or do errands. But during warm weather, the inside of your car can reach 120 degrees in a matter of min-

utes, even if you're parked in the shade. This can mean real trouble for your companion animals left in the car.

If you do happen to see a pet alone in a car during hot weather, alert the management of the store where the car is parked. If the owner does not return promptly, call local animal control or the police department immediately.

Keep your pets safe and healthy year-round

Make sure your pet is always wearing a collar and identification tag. If you are separated from your pet, an ID tag may very well be his or her ticket home.

Check with your veterinarian to see if your pets should be taking heartworm prevention medication. Heartworm disease, which is transmitted by mosquitoes, can be fatal in both dogs and cats. Another warm weather threat is fleas and ticks. Use only flea and tick treatments recommended by your veterinarian. Some over-the-counter flea and tick products can be toxic, even when used according to instructions.

Download the Pets First Aid App! This will provide critical first aid information for your pet at your fingertips. Find it in the Apple App Store, Google Play, or Amazon Marketplace

CHARLOTTE'S WEB

By Charlotte Jackson



Stop the Bitterness

What causes bitterness? What causes it to continue? As we look around the world, there is a dark cloud looming above many people's lives. Let's look a little closer. We have family, friends, coworkers and neighbors who walk around with frowns on their faces and bitterness in their hearts. Many do not even know why they are upset and bitter. It seems to just come natural to them. On the other hand, there are others who are always smiling, always offering an encouraging word and ready to tackle a project to make life better. Not just for themselves but for others.

In the past few weeks, I have met with other Precinct Chairs within the area working on several projects. We are not only scheduling Voter Registration Drives but working on an upcoming scholarship fundraiser as well as meeting with candidates who were running for a Congressional District Chairmanship position. As we have worked together, it has been apparent that we have differences yet at the end of the day, we want to be sure to have an engaged community of voters.

There is also a group of approximately twenty Harris County Residents who have been meeting monthly to work on a United Way Council introducing others to various needs in the community as well as providing information on lesser-known non-profits that are already in existence. We are learning about tools offered by United Way that will help our communities find the resources that are often needed. We came together as strangers with diverse backgrounds and have grown to learn from each other as well as to work on solutions for the needs in the area.

I had the pleasure of attending the 150th Anniversary program for Barrett Station two weeks ago. The love and pride felt at the event was real. So many individuals were recognized for the many contributions in the community. No doubt over the years, there were some disagreements and perhaps some different ideas of how to accomplish goals, but by everyone keeping an open mind and keeping concern for others in their hearts, progress has been made, and love abounds. There are generations of family and friends who are always ready to welcome a newcomer into the community. It comes from remembering the past and learning from the disagreements.

In a time where the enemy wants to see division and bitterness, let's do our part to make an impact. Monthly, there are opportunities to get involved. The Chamber of Commerce is a great way for businesses as well as individuals who want to make a difference to get active. The Channelview Health Improvement Coalition, better known as C.H.I.C., invites you to learn about the environmental concerns that affect us all. They also do a clean-up along Sheldon Road each month.

Channelview Ministry Team meets monthly and is open to anyone who has a heart to love and serve the Channelview Community by showing the love of Christ. Throughout the year, there are various projects and events that you are welcome to participate in. Let's work together to stop the bitterness and make a positive impact.

Macaria Cuevas ToY: A Double Dose of Red Apple Recognition!



Yes, Macaria Cuevas, the beloved teacher at North Shore Senior High School, was honored with January 2025's Randalls Red Apple Award. But the excitement didn't stop there! On the bright mid-morning of May 16th, Cuevas was once again in the spotlight, as she was crowned with the prestigious Red Apple Award Teacher of the Year!

The atmosphere was electric as colleagues and students alike speculated about the Debra Duncan of KHOU 11's second surprise appearance. A silent yet crowded march through the hallway was followed by cheers for Cuevas, known for her infectious enthusiasm and

dedication to her students. Her beaming smile said it all—she is truly a star in the classroom and beyond!

This recognition is a testament to Cuevas's unwavering commitment to inspiring and nurturing her students. Her creative teaching methods and genuine care for her students in her Spanish classes have made a lasting impact on countless young minds. As she stood proudly holding her award, it was clear that Cuevas's passion for education continues to shine brightly, making her a true beacon of excellence at North Shore Senior High School. Congratulations, Macaria Cuevas, on this well-deserved honor!

Channelview ISD Announces the first day of School Monday, August 11



We can't wait to welcome our students back for a new year full of learning, growth, and exciting opportunities! Let's make 2025-2026 the best school year yet!

ASK DIAMOND JIM



Diamond Jim: "The costs of doing business"

When you see small businesses raising their prices, still today, it's not being done to make more money. It's being done to stay open, keep their employees working, and to continue to serve their customers and their communities.

When you consider that, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), approximately 20% of new businesses fail within their first two years, 45% within their first five years, and 65% within their first 10 years, it's a wonder that small businesses survive at all considering our current economic climate. Only 25% of new businesses survive for 15 years or more. Pineforest Jewelry has been here serving you for nearly 40 years.

Please, continue to shop local and support small businesses. Although prices for some items are getting better, other items are still seeing an increase in the price. We humbly appreciate every customer who walks through the doors at Pineforest Jewelry. YOU are the reason we are here and in business. YOU are the reason that our employees have a career. And, YOU are the reason we are able to help the local economy and our local communities. For every visit that you make to our store, I say "Thank You So Very Much".

From: Diamond Jim Mills

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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OPINION PAGE

OPINION

The government passed a Controversial Budget Bill last week. Here are some opinions on this legislation:

PRO: By Congressman Brian Babin

Washington, D.C. - Today, U.S. Congressman Brian Babin (TX-36) voted in favor of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, landmark legislation that advances President Trump's America First agenda, delivers historic economic relief to American families, and puts an end to some of Washington's most reckless and radical policies.

The legislation stops taxpayer funding of the abortion industry, prevents the largest tax hike in American history, and shields small businesses from the crushing weight of federal overreach. It unleashes domestic energy production, restores law and order at the southern border, and reins in out-of-control government spending.

"This bill puts America First in every sense," said Rep. Babin. "It means bigger paychecks, lower taxes, secure borders, and strong national defense. It ends the Biden-era madness and delivers exactly what the American people have been asking for — common sense and accountability. With this vote, we're protecting our children, defending our sovereignty, and restoring the American Dream for working families. I was proud to cast my vote for this historic bill, and I look forward to seeing it signed into law by President Trump."

Key provisions of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act include:

- Delivering the largest tax cut in U.S. history for middle- and working-class Americans
--Eliminating taxes on tips, overtime, and tax breaks for seniors
--Stopping taxpayer funding of the abortion industry
--Unleashing domestic oil, gas, and nuclear energy
--Permanently funding mass deportations and codifying Trump's border security policies
--Hiring 10,000 ICE agents, 5,000 Customs officers, and 3,000 Border Patrol agents
--Restoring fiscal sanity and slashing the deficit by \$2 trillion
--Funding for the Golden Dome Missile Defense System to confront 21st-century threats
--Modernizing our air traffic control system
--Banning taxpayer-funded sex changes for minors

This is a defining moment for our country — a bill that keeps our promises, secures our future, and puts American families back in control.

CON: By Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia The Fight Continues After Passage of the "Big Ugly Bill"

Earlier this week, my Democratic colleagues and I fought hard all night and into the morning to stop the Republican budget from passing.

Unfortunately, despite our efforts, Republicans passed the legislation, and it's now headed to the President's desk.

This bill is terrible for Texas and for our nation. Here's why:

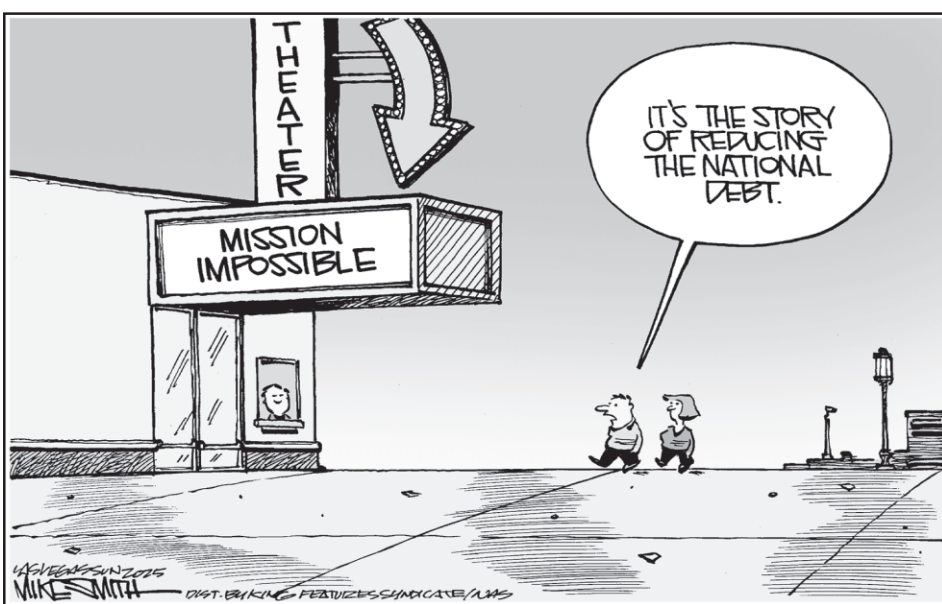
- Health Care: 1.6 million Texans, and 17 million people nationwide, could lose health care coverage due to deep cuts to Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act.
--Hunger: It makes the biggest cuts ever to SNAP food assistance, putting children, seniors, and families at risk of going hungry.
--Debt & Giveaways: It adds \$4 trillion to the national debt — all to fund tax breaks for billionaires, while leaving working families behind.

This bill is cruel and reckless. But let me be clear: the fight is not over. I'll keep standing up for Texas families every single day and my office is always here to help you with questions or assistance you might need. We'll get through this together.

CON: By Ruben Salazar Shame

Middle and working class families are so screwed with the passage of this "Big Beautiful Bill". Gutting Medicaid, SNAP, and other essential lifeline services for American citizens should NEVER be on the table. Shame!

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.



THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

Planned Forgetfulness



I do a funny thing in the middle of June. I try to celebrate the summer solstice.

I don't do anything particularly romantic. If you have visions of me leaping over bonfire flames or dancing around a maypole wearing a flower crown or attempting to contact my inner goddess, you would be disappointed.

All I do is try to remember some of what I've forgotten.

I've always thought the winter solstice was the proper ending to the year, rather than New Year's Eve. New Year's Eve is a date on the calendar, and it feels a bit arbitrary. New Year's Eve has acquired a reputation for being a night when people drink too much and make promises they fully intend to break. None of this sounds like a great way to end a year.

There is nothing arbitrary about the winter solstice. It is the shortest and darkest day of the year, the true beginning and end of a cycle. I do not find it surprising that my ancient ancestors spent as much time as they did precisely calculating when the sun was going to return as they watched it get farther and farther away until, in northern climates, it barely reached the horizon before beginning its descent again. I'd be worried, too.

But there is another day on the other side of the year, when the sun is up longer than any other day, before those days begin to grow shorter. The warmest weather is still ahead, but the days will, imperceptibly at first, shrink. And that is the summer solstice. I think it's good for me to take notice—even if I don't dress in flowing robes while doing it.

It's good to remember that the days are growing shorter. It's good to remember all the things I said I'd like to do this year and know that the time to do them is half gone. It's good to appreciate the fact that every day the sun rises in the sky is precious and that things do not always remain as they are.

This all sounds rather highfalutin. What I do in actual practice is this: I take a longer than usual walk and I start a new journal. I start a new journal on each of the solstices. But before I start a new one, I read the previous journal. This is not always entirely pleasant.

"Ooh. Did I really say that?" I read about all of my intentions—those realized and those abandoned.

"Oops. I completely forgot about that."

I am struck by how little changes from day to day and how much can be altered in six months' time. It makes me humble and grateful and embarrassed and pleased all in one sitting. And, at the end of it, I take a long walk. I can usually walk later at night on the summer solstice, and walking in all that extra light is fun.

"OK, so, what's next?"

Sometimes I come up with a motto for the next six months, which I never remember. Sometimes I come up with a list of lofty goals, which I promptly forget. I know I will forget them. But even if I plan to forget, for one day in the middle of the year, I remember—all I have to be thankful for—my frustrations and my triumphs and all the things I was desperately worried about and scarcely remember today.

Once every six months I am reminded of how incredibly short my attention span is—and how many wonderful things I forget.

Till next time, Carrie

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders



Vouchers could change homeschooling

The passage of the state's first voucher program means homeschool families in Texas will soon be eligible for up to \$2,000 to use toward educational costs such as tutoring or curriculum. From 500,000 to 600,000 Texas children are being homeschooled — between 8% and 10% of all school-aged children, the Houston Chronicle reported.

Homeschooling in Texas is largely unregulated, with no requirement for parents to submit curriculum for review. Students are also not required to take the standardized tests given in public schools.

Any family that is currently homeschooling its children can apply for the \$2,000, with priority given to children with disabilities or those in low-income households. Homeschoolers who want to switch to a private school can get up to \$10,000 a year to help pay for tuition.

If there are more applicants than can be handled by the \$1 billion allocated, the state will hold a drawing to determine who gets into the program. The Legislative Budget Board has predicted that about 270,000 homeschoolers will apply in the first year.

GROUPS FIGHT REPEAL OF TEXAS DREAM ACT

Several civil rights groups have joined Austin Community College trustees in suing to protect the Texas Dream Act, which allowed college students without legal status to obtain in-state tuition, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

The U.S. Department of Justice sued to outlaw the 2001 Texas Dream Act, and state Attorney General Ken Paxton declined to defend the state against the lawsuit. Joining ACC's suit against the repeal are the American Civil Liberties Union, the Texas Civil Rights Project, Democracy Forward and the National Immigration Law Center, as well as a private law firm in Dallas.

The plaintiffs requested



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

an "emergency ruling" allowing them to intervene as defendants in place of the state, arguing that ending the act would cause "irreparable harm" to both students and higher-education institutions, which stand to lose millions in tuition funds.

"This is a fight to protect access to higher education for all Texans, but also a fight to uphold one of the basic tenets of our democracy," Efrén C. Olivares of the National Immigration Center said in a news release.

Ending the Texas Dream Act would affect more than 20,000 students.

TEXAS LOTTERY COMMISSION TO BE DISBANDED

While the sales of lottery tickets will continue, the commission charged with its oversight is being disbanded after stories broke of lottery couriers buying millions of tickets in order to virtually guarantee winning a \$95 million Lotto Texas prize. The Texas Tribune reported the lottery will be run, starting in September, by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation.

Recent legislation signed into law by Gov. Greg Abbott also prohibits online ticket sales. Players can purchase up to 100 tickets in person at lottery retailers only during store hours.

The lottery raises \$2 billion annually for the state.

EX-PAXTON AIDES ALLEGE WITNESS TAMPERING DURING IMPEACHMENT TRIAL

Legal filings in a federal

suit from top aides to Paxton claim his right-hand deputy threatened to fire employees if they gave unfavorable testimony about Paxton during his 2023 impeachment trial, the Chronicle reported. Paxton was acquitted by the Texas Senate after that trial.

He has since launched a bid to unseat U.S. Sen. John Cornyn in the 2026 Republican primary.

The allegations are detailed in a suit filed last week by former Solicitor General Judd Stone and Chris Hilton, the former chief of the general litigation division. They claim that current First Assistant Attorney General Brent Webster made the threats. Webster has not commented on the allegations.

NEW SEXUAL CONSENT LAW TAKES EFFECT THIS FALL

The Legislature has overhauled the state's sexual consent laws, through what is known as "the Summer Willis Act," the Statesman reported. It is named after a former University of Texas student-athlete who was drugged and sexually assaulted in 2014 at a fraternity party. The case could not be prosecuted because of loopholes in the Texas law that did not clearly define consent in cases involving intoxication or impairment. The bill passed by a wide bipartisan margin in both chambers.

"The loophole my rape fell under was because I voluntarily accepted a drink from one person and another person raped me," Willis said in a PBS interview.

The Summer Willis Act provides a clearer definition of consent, including an affirmative definition of consent, the withdrawal of consent, and incapacitation due to substance use.

ABBOTT ORDERS ESTABLISHMENT OF SCREWORM RESPONSE TEAM

Abbott last week directed the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Animal Health Commission to create a joint Texas New World Screwworm Response Team. That's in response to the recent northward spread of the screwworm.

"The mission for the Response Team is clear: to lead Texas' prevention and response efforts and ensure that Texas remains informed, prepared, and aligned to prevent the re-emergence of this destructive parasite," Abbott's news release said. "We stand ready to protect our land, livestock, and wildlife."

Animal imports at the southern border have been halted due to growing outbreaks in Mexico. Previous outbreaks in the 1950s and 1960s were largely halted by breeding sterile flies, and a similar effort is underway. The New World screwworm is a parasitic fly whose larvae feed on livestock, wildlife, and in rare cases, humans.

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

GP ISD Board now competing for statewide honors in school governance,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

new stipends for counselors who complete advanced mental health certifications.

“Our work reflects a deep personal investment in this community,” said Board President Ramon Garza. “We’re proud to serve a district that values every child, and we remain committed to creating opportunities for all students.”

The Board of Trustees includes President Ramon Garza, Vice President Linda Clark Sherrard, Secretary Jose Jimenez, and Trustees Adrian Stephens, Noe Esparza, Norma Hernandez, and Amanda Erebia. Superintendent Dr. John Moore serves as secretary to the board.

Each year, the regional service centers across Texas invite boards to apply for recognition, as required by the Texas Association of School Administrators. According to Watson, it’s a highly competitive process involving superintendents from large and mid-sized districts who evaluate nominee boards based on set criteria.

“There are some phenomenal things happening across the region in various districts, and so the competition is always very stiff,” Watson noted. “As many as a dozen or more districts compete depending on what’s going on within that particular board and how well they’re meeting the criteria.”

Once a regional winner is named, that board competes at the state level against 19 other region winners. The top five will be announced before the



The Galena Park ISD Board of Trustees has been recognized as the Board of the Year by Region IV. They now have the opportunity to advance to state competition in September. Members are from left front, Jose Jimenez, board secretary; Ramon Garza, board president; and Linda Clark Sherrard, board vice president. Second row, from left, Noe Esparza, trustee; Amanda Erebia, trustee; Dr. John Moore, superintendent of schools; Norma Hernandez, trustee; and Adrian Stephens, trustee.

state conference, where the overall winner will be revealed.

Region 4 is one of 20 education service centers established by the Texas Legislature in 1967 to improve student performance and district efficiency. The center serves more than 1.25 million students, 111,000 educators, and 1,500 campuses across eight counties in southeast Texas.

“Region 4 is proud to recognize the Galena Park ISD Board of Trustees for their outstanding leadership and commitment to excellence in education,” Watson added. “Their work reflects the very best of public education governance.”

Superintendent Dr. Moore praised the Board’s far-reaching impact.

“The Galena Park ISD community is truly fortunate to have seven dedicat-

ed trustees who consistently prioritize the best interests of our children. Their leadership and commitment play a vital role in shaping a brighter future for our students.”

For the trustees, the recognition is not just an award but an affirmation of their ongoing mission.

“Galena Park has done quite well in terms of student achievement and consistently meeting the needs of all kids,” Watson said. “Their innovation and consistency year after year really set them apart.”

As the Board prepares to compete for statewide recognition, its members remain focused on their core goal: ensuring every student in Galena Park ISD has access to the best educational opportunities possible.

GPISD Student is Selected as a National Gold Medalist



Galena Park ISD recognized Alma Villegas, a Galena Park High School junior, for earning a national Gold Medal in the 2024-2025 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for her artwork, entitled *Saddled Up*.

Presented by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, the Scholastic Awards are the longest-running and most prestigious recognition program for creative teens in the United States. More than 110,000 teens across the United States and Canada entered more than 340,000 original works in 28 different categories of art and writing. Alma earned a Gold Key at the regional level of adjudication, and her artwork advanced to the national level of adjudication, where it earned a Gold Medal, the highest distinction. National Medalists, like Alma, are considered for national exhibition, publication, and scholarship opportunities. Alma has also been invited to the National Ceremony in New York City at Carnegie Hall on June 11, 2025.


A certificate and medal were presented to Alma Villegas on behalf of the Board of Trustees and Dr. John Moore, Superintendent of Schools.


CISD Board President Ybarra recognized with Leadership TASB Graduates

CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Alex Ybarra

Channelview ISD Board President





Leadership TASB

CLASS OF **2025**

We’re proud to share that Channelview ISD Board President Alex Ybarra is one of them! Mr. Ybarra recently completed the year-long Leadership TASB program, earning the prestigious title of Master Trustee. This program brings together board members from across Texas to strengthen leadership, governance, and advocacy in support of public education. Thank you, Mr. Ybarra, for representing Channelview ISD with passion and purpose.



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Twenty-Four GPISD Math Stand-Outs



Galena Park ISD proudly recognized twenty-four second graders who scored in the 98th percentile or higher on the quantitative section of the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), placing them in the top 2% nationwide. Also recognized by National Math Stars, each student has been awarded a medal and given the chance to apply for an enrichment program designed to enhance their mathematical skills. The young scholars were:

Cimarron Elementary School:
*Mario Murcia
Cloverleaf Elementary School:
*Liam Alfaro Guzman

*Alejandro Rivera Gonzalez
Galena Park Elementary School:
*Luis Badillo
*Jacob Bendorf
*Mikaela Trevino
Havard Elementary School:
*Joylon Faleiro
*Cristian Olivares
*Diego Ramos
*Robert Rodriguez
MacArthur Elementary School:
*Alejandro Aguilar
*Jonathan De Los Santos
Normandy Crossing Elementary School:
*Darickson Corona Noy
*Eduardo Rodriguez Gonzalez

North Shore Elementary School:
*Jacob Duran
Purple Sage Elementary School:
*Alan Lazalde
Pyburn Elementary School:
*Aniyah Romero
Sam Houston Elementary School:
*Abraham Montes
*Ezequiel Rangel
*Jose Saavedra Castro
*Elena Vega
Williamson Elementary School:
*Luka Robles Pena
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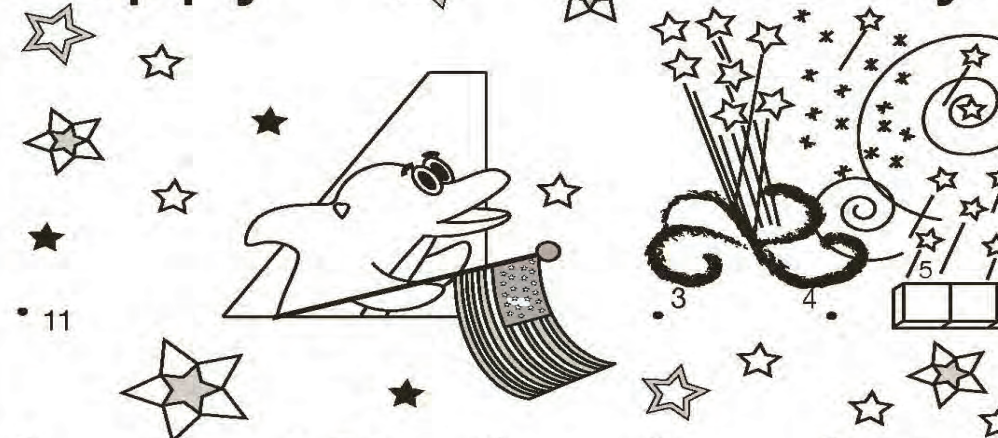
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We are having a family barbecue...  ...and then watching fantastic fireworks!  Kids: color stuff in! 

Newspaper Fun!

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Happy 12th of July!



The Declaration of Independence is the document that told the world that the 13 colonies were united as one country - the United States of America. It told that all ties to England were broken. The people wished to have a voice in their own government.

Follow this color key to see how many stars are in our nation's flag:

• = Blue + = Red

+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
+	•	•	•	+	•	•	+
+	•	+	+	+	•	•	+
+	•	•	•	+	•	•	+
+	+	+	•	+	+	+	+
+	•	•	•	+	•	•	+

I love to wave my flag at parades and at the fireworks. I'm very proud of my country. Do you know how many stars are on our nation's flag? There is one for each state in the union. **Color in the squares.**

Answer the six questions below and fill in the puzzle.

1. What was rung to call people to the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence?

2. In what city was the Declaration of Independence signed?

3. A painting was done for America's 100th birthday. It shows a boy, a father and a grandfather marching off to war to fight for freedom. What is the painting called?

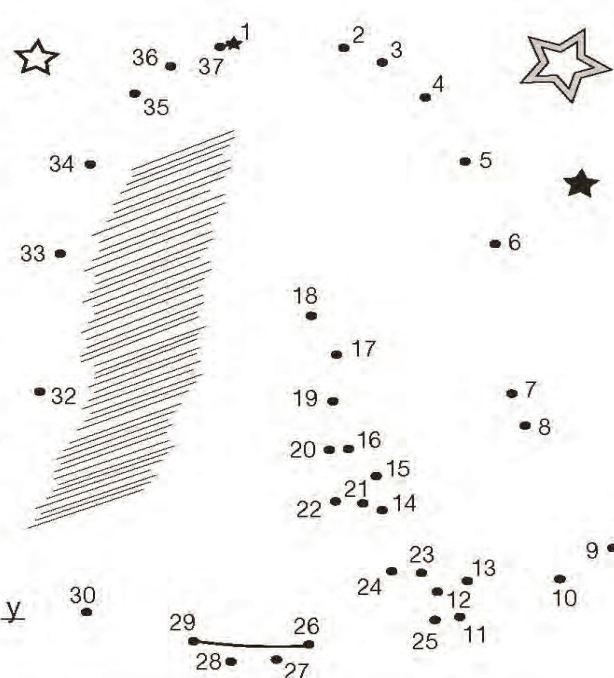
4. Upon what date was the Declaration of Independence adopted?

5. What is the name of the holiday celebrating our nation's birthday?

6. What is the name of the General who became our first President?

All Told!

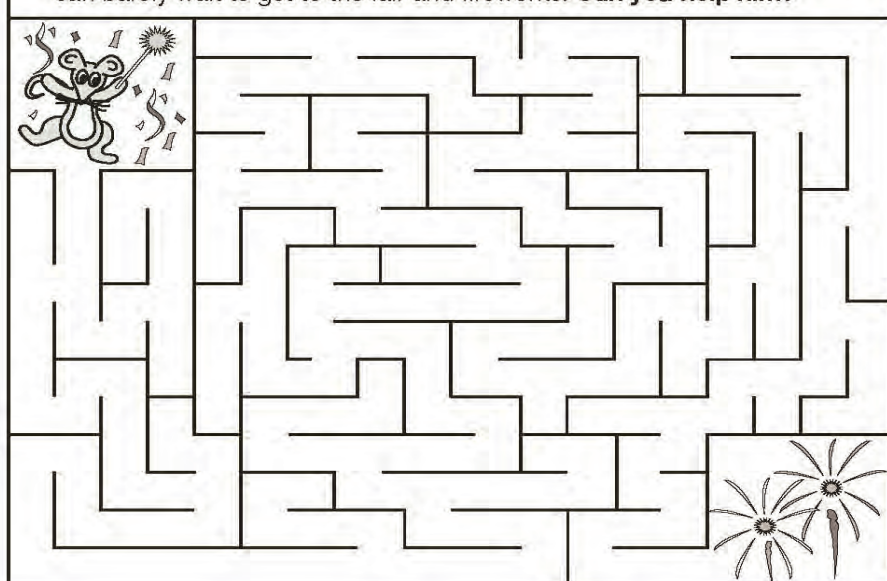
I am a symbol of freedom. I called people to meetings that rang of liberty. I announced the first time that the Declaration of Independence would be read to the crowds on July 8, 1776. **Can you follow the dots to see me?** Put my name on the blanks:



— i _ e _ _ y _
_ e _ _

Fireworks Fun!

Little Mouse is jumping for joy! He can barely wait to get to the fair and fireworks. **Can you help him?**



Fun at the Fireworks!

Don't you love going to the fireworks at night? It's a great way to join in the fun on Independence Day. You experience fireworks with all of your senses. **Can you fill in the blanks with what you might see, hear, taste, smell and feel during the celebration?**

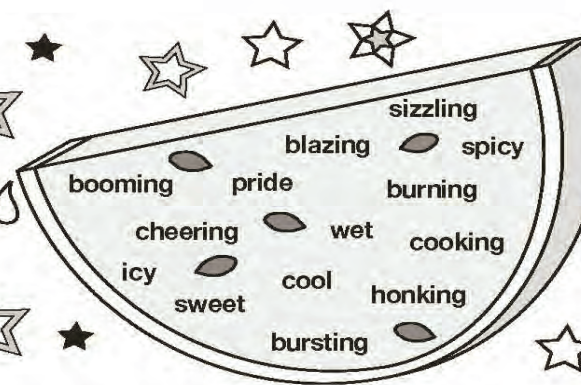
I can **see** colors _____ in the sky and bonfires _____.

I can **hear** fireworks _____ and car horns _____ and people _____.

I can **taste** watermelon _____ and a hotdog, _____ and _____.

I can **smell** sulfur _____ and food _____.

I can **feel** the _____, _____ grass under my feet and _____ for my country in my heart!



ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves

HEY MOM, AS YOU KNOW, MY BIRTHDAY IS COMING UP, SO I MADE OUT A WISH LIST.

I'LL GIVE THIS TO YOU TO LOOK OVER. FEEL FREE TO CROSS OUT STUFF YOU ALREADY GOT.

JUST REMEMBER, "IT'S ALWAYS BETTER TO GIVE THAN RECEIVE."

UH, YEAH, ... I JUST GAVE YOU MY WISH LIST. NOW I WAIT FOR MY BIRTHDAY TO RECEIVE.

TIGER

I LIKE THIS TOWN, IT'S FRIENDLY...

THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING TO DO

HI, BONNIE. BUS OFF NOW, HUGO

NOT NOW, HUGO. I GOTTA FINISH THIS

LATER, HUGO, I'M BUSY WITH THIS KIT

HIM, SUZY. MEET SOMEONE, HUGO

I'M EATING NOW, HUGO. I'LL SEE YA

BUT NOT ALWAYS SOMEBODY TO DO IT WITH

The Spats

I'M GOING TO THE BEAUTY SHOP

GREAT!!

...PICK ME UP A COUPLE OF BEAUTIES!!

Weekly SUDOKU

5		8					9
1	9		7				
2	4	7			6		8
	8	5				6	
		1	3	8			
7	2		4	6			
	9	2		1	8	4	7
		4	2	3			1
1	7	8		5	4		2

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Foot is moved. 2. Tree is moved. 3. Rocks is different. 4. Mountain is different. 5. Ear is larger. 6. Fingers are different.

July 7, 2025 Posting Date King Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
18					19			20	21			
			22			23				24	25	
26	27	28				29				30		
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			40					41		42	43	44
45	46					47	48			49		
50						51				52		
53						54				55		

ACROSS

1 Bump into
5 Small batteries
8 Gush
12 Jai
13 Wall St. deal
14 Abhor
15 Fish story
16 X, at times
17 " — the picture!"
18 Chevy model
20 Rhine feeder
22 Kindergarten follower
26 Defy authority
29 Make lace
30 PBS funder
31 Grand Ole —
32 Doubtfire or Miniver
33 Dele undoer
34 Corp. boss
35 "Give — break!"
36 Main ideas
37 Renewed energy
40 "Trust Exercise" author Susan
41 Verdi works
45 Tactic
47 Coffee vessel
49 Crimson Tide, briefly
50 Anger
51 French pronoun
52 Mellowed

DOWN

1 Polite query
2 Biblical kingdom
3 Lawman Wyatt
4 "30 Rock" creator
5 Wedding setting
6 Prez on a penny
7 Piano compositions
8 Bake eggs
9 Christmas shows
10 Arles summer
11 Drenched
19 Like Abner
21 Literary rep
23 Milkshake insert
24 Bug spray ingredient
25 Diner grub
26 Mythical birds
27 Duel tool
28 Veggie with florets
32 T-shirt sizes
33 Courtroom huddle
35 6 on a phone
36 Econ. measure
38 "But of course!"
39 Ancient Greek region
42 Sitarist's music
43 From the U.S.
44 "Maureen" singer
45 Expert
46 Ad- — (improvise)
48 Shad product

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1. A doe or nanny; 2. Stars Hollow; 3. 14; 4. Joan Cusack; 5. Acute gastroenteritis; 6. Collagen; 7. Six; 8. "Red Dragon" by Thomas Harris; 9. Exoplanets; 10. Aretha Franklin

King Crossword — Answers — Solution time: 25 mins. © 2025 King Features Synd., Inc.

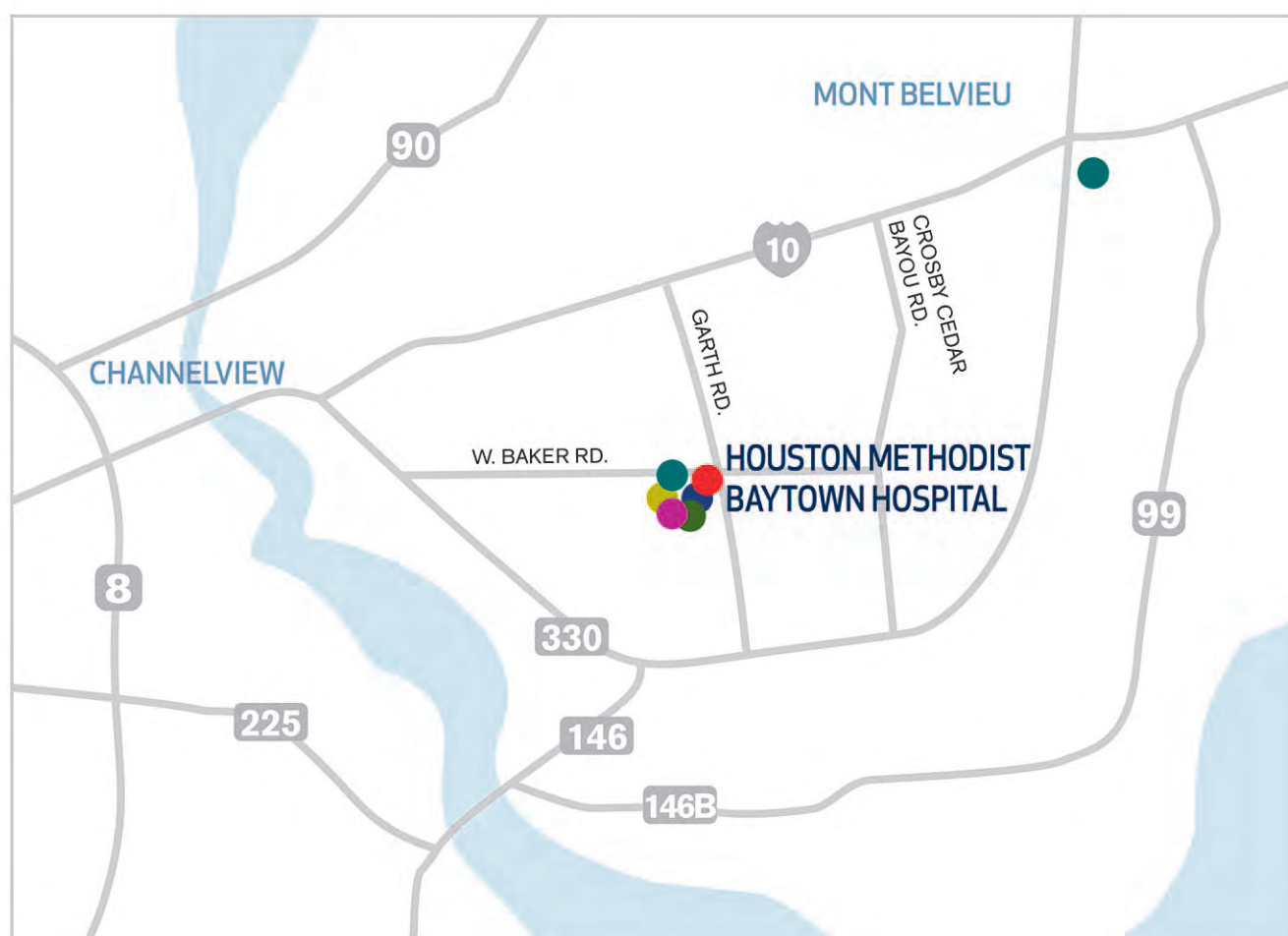


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