



NFL Season starts this week See Page 5 for Special Profile on Hurts

# NORTH CHANNEL STAR

Your News, Your Newspaper

Serving all of the North Shore -- Channelview, Cloverleaf, Sheldon, Galena Park, Jacinto City  
VOLUME 13, NO. 35 (#583) THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2025 www.northchannelstar.com

## Two New Fire Trucks and New Fire Chief Arrive at ESD-12 with "Push-In" ceremony

By David Taylor  
Managing Editor

Harris County, TX – The Harris County Emergency Services District 12 (ESD-12) has recently welcomed a new fire chief, Marshall Hutton, and celebrated the arrival of two new pumper fire trucks, marking a significant milestone for the department.

Marshall Hutton, who has a long and distinguished career in firefighting, was officially named the fire chief at the ESD-12 board meeting on July 10, 2025. Hutton, who previously worked full-time for the Baytown Fire Department from 1994 until his retirement in 2023, had



Firefighters and commissioners incorporated an old tradition by celebrating the arrival of the new trucks with a "push-in" ceremony. The ceremony is a ritual that dates back to the days of horse-drawn fire apparatus.

been serving as the acting fire chief since June 30, 2025, following the retirement of the former chief. Hutton had been with ESD-12 since January

2019, initially working around his Baytown schedule as the training chief.

Reflecting on his appointment, Hutton said, "While I thought I might

become the chief at some point, it was a little sudden and unexpected that it came so quickly. Chief Russell still had some time left on his contract, but he

had some family stuff come up and he made the decision to go ahead and leave. The board was happy with me as their new chief and wanted to move forward."

In addition to the new leadership, ESD-12 has also enhanced its firefighting capabilities with the acquisition of two new pumper fire trucks. These trucks, which were ordered about two years ago, arrived recently and were purchased for a total of \$1.4 million.

"If you order those trucks now, they're about \$1.2 million apiece," Hutton noted, highlighting the fortunate timing of the purchase.

The arrival of the new trucks was celebrated with a traditional "push-in" ceremony, a ritual dating

Continued. See HARRIS COUNTY ESD-12 WELCOMES NEW, Page 6

### CHANNEL CURRENTS

#### Chamber Monthly Luncheon Sept. 5

Join the North Channel Chamber of Commerce for the monthly Luncheon.

Friday, September 5 from 11:30 to 1:00pm at the San Jacinto College North Monument Room.

Program is Port Overview and Channel Development, with Project Manager Amanda Hamrick, Port Houston.

Members \$25, Non-members \$35. RSVP to info@NCAChamber.com or 713-450-3600.

#### Chamber Golf Tournament 10/8

Join the North Channel Chamber of Commerce for the 2025 Dr. Gerald Cobb Golf Tournament, Wednesday October 8 at Tour 18. Shotgun Start 8am.

Platinum Sponsor Bestway Oilfield. Helicopter Ball Drop for cash prizes.

RSVP to info@ncachamber.com or 713-450-3600.

## Congresswoman Garcia's Redistricting Town Halls

### Lawsuits filed against new redistricting maps

By Allan Jamail

August 27, 2025 ~ At the San Jacinto College North Campus US Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia of the 29th Congressional District held one of her two town hall meetings in order to inform citizens of the pending Republican's new redistricting maps.

The "Premature" drawing of the maps was done in order for Texas Governor Abbott and the GOP majority in the Texas Legislature to appease the request of President Donald Trump. Some sources said these new Texas maps were drawn in Washington; however that's not confirmed yet.

The scheme of President Trump was done in order to get five more seats to help Trump shore up Republicans' narrow US House majority. Trump wanted these five new



Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia explains details to town hall attendees of new GOP redistricting maps. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

GOP seats because the current maps nationally put Democrats within three seats of retaking the House majority — with only several dozen competitive districts across 435 total seats.

Abbott wasted no time getting Trump's new maps sent to committee where they were approved by the GOP. Governor Abbott was

not going to disappoint his close ally even though doing so was a premature-decade action made five years before the normal every ten years following a census.

Abbott was able to get the new maps approved during a second Special Legislative Session he called which will favor Republicans in the upcoming

2026 election. The same new maps were on the Regular Legislative Agenda to be voted on but Democrats didn't show up thus causing a lack of a required quorum for conducting business. Upon their return the maps have been approved and signed by Governor Abbott.

Abbott's action on the getting the new maps has

set off a national redistricting battle, most prominently with California Gov. Gavin Newsom vowing to retaliate against Texas Republicans by extracting an equal number of Democratic-leaning districts from California's congressional map. Trump

Continued. See GARCIA'S TOWN HALLS, Page 7

## Channelview ISD Earns a "B" Rating, Celebrates Districtwide Growth

August 15, 2025 — Channelview ISD is celebrating a major milestone: the district has earned an overall "B" rating from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the 2024–2025 school year.

This marks a significant improvement from the district's score of 76 in 2022–2023, to holding steady at 76 last year, and now rising to 80 this year.

This achievement is especially noteworthy because, in 2022–2023, TEA implemented a tougher grading system statewide, making it more challenging for districts to earn higher ratings. Even with these changes, Channelview ISD has continued to improve—and this year's "B" is the result of hard work from students, teachers, staff, and families across the district.

"We are incredibly proud of the progress our

district has made," said Superintendent Dr. Tory C. Hill. "Earning a 'B' is a testament to the dedication and teamwork of our students, staff, and families. We're proving that every step forward matters—and we're committed to living to our mission of empowering students to thrive."

Channelview ISD remains focused on continuous improvement, with the goal of ensuring that every student is prepared for success in school and beyond.

Two campuses earned the title of **Channelview ISD Growth Trailblazers** for their exceptional improvement:

- **De Zavala Elementary** — 19-point increase

- **Harvey Brown Elementary** — 14-point increase

TEA awards Distinction Designations to schools

that demonstrate exceptional achievement compared to similar campuses across the state. For 2025, Channelview ISD campuses earned the following:

- **Postsecondary Readiness:** Channelview High School, Hamblen Elementary, Harvey Brown Elementary

- **Top 25% Comparative Academic Growth:** De Zavala Elementary, Harvey Brown Elementary

- **Academic Achievement in Math:** Harvey Brown Elementary

- **Academic Achievement in Science:** McGhee Elementary

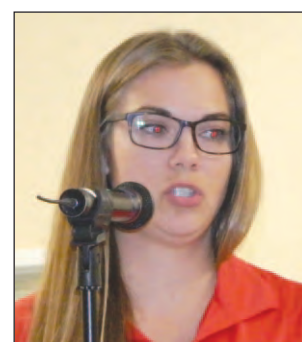
Channelview IS recognized these campuses at the board meeting on Tuesday, August 19, 2025.

—By Lila Hollin

## THEA presses EPA for Action on Waste Pits

Letter to EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin stresses that the cleanup was required by the first Trump Administration but has faced continual delays. According to THEA, the latest cleanup plan from the companies responsible for the pollution fails to meet the EPA and community's requirements for a complete and effective cleanup of the Houston-area Superfund Site.

Citing statements by EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin that his priority is to clean up up the backlog of Superfund Sites, Texas Health and Environment Alliance (THEA) is urging him to order the companies responsible for the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site to remove the dioxin and other contaminated material from the site now.



JACKIE MEDCALF, THEA



LEE ZELDIN, EPA

"Enough time has been wasted and enough lives have been put at risk by delays in cleaning up this site," said THEA CEO and Founder Jackie Medcalf, "It is long past time for the EPA to require the companies to remove the threat to the community, the river and Galveston Bay."

In a letter to Administrator Zeldin, THEA points out that the Responsible Parties for the Site, Waste

Management subsidiary McGinnis Industrial Maintenance Co. and International Paper, have requested and been granted 565 days worth of delays in coming up with a final plan. The companies have also sent the agency plan after plan that do not meet the EPA's requirements for full removal of

Continued. See EPA PRESSED TO ORDER FULL CLEANUP, Page 3

# GALENA PARK LIBRARY SEPTEMBER EVENTS

Galena Park Library featured the following monthly programs:

- 1. Spanish Tech Help**—Spanish tech help will be offered on September 5th and 19th from 1-2 p.m. These 30-minute slots allow adults to get assistance with any basic technology questions, from email to creating a birthday invitation. Registration is required.
- 2. Creativity Corner**—This is a fun after-school program for elementary school children. We'll have special programs, arts and crafts, and creative play. It will be held every Monday and Wednesday at 3:15 p.m., starting September 8th.
- 3. Chismeando en inglés**—Conversation practice for adult English language learners. It will be held every Saturday at 1 p.m., starting September 13th.
- 4. ESL Read Aloud** - Practice English pronunciation with group reading. It will be held every Wednesday at 11:30 am, starting September 10th.

**Special programs:**

- 1. Stay & Play** — Workshops promoting early childhood development for ages 1-3. Every Monday at 12 p.m., registration is required.
- 2. Butterfly Buddies**- September 10th at 3:30pm
- 3. Be Nice presented by Crime Stoppers of Houston**- September 15th at 3:30pm
- 4. Folk Crafting**- September 15th at 5:30pm
- 5. Mini Mum Decorating**- September 16th at 3pm
- 6. Sing, Move, Play- Music of Mexico**- September 17th at 3:30pm
- 7. Faithful Paws**- September 20th at 2pm
- 8. Bullying Prevention presented by Crime Stoppers of Houston**- September 22nd at 4pm
- 9. Career Day**- September 23rd at 4pm
- 10. Frida Kahlo Art Class**- September 24th at 3:30pm



We're excited to invite you to our next Friends of the Galena Park Branch Library meeting on Tuesday, September 9th, at 10 a.m. in the meeting room! Join us and discover how you can make a difference and support this vital community organization. Your participation matters! We can't wait to see you there!

If you are interested in participating in Career Day call us at 832-927-5470 | or Email us at [sisi.medina@hcpl.net](mailto:sisi.medina@hcpl.net). Book Buddies will be starting September 11th from 4:30-5:15pm. This FREE literacy program that brings children and teens together to share the joy of

Sisi Medina, MLIS  
Branch Manager  
Galena Park Branch  
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1500 Keene Street  
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\*Hablo español

# Galena Park ISD Thanks Norma Hernandez for Service as Board President

Story By Dr. Tommie L. Smith

At the August 11<sup>th</sup> Board of Trustees Meeting, Galena Park ISD extended sincere gratitude to Mrs. Norma Hernandez for her exemplary service as its Board President throughout the 2024-2025 school year. Since 2019, she has been a beacon of leadership and dedication, enriching our students' and community's educational experiences.

A retired educator with 38 years in Galena Park ISD, Mrs. Hernandez holds a Bachelor's in Business Education from the University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley and a Master of Education from Texas Southern University. Her personal connection to the district is deep, with both daughters graduating from Galena Park ISD.

As Board President, her visionary leadership and advocacy paved the way for initiatives promoting excellence and inclusivity. We are grateful for her ser-



GPISD Superintendent Dr. John Moore congratulates retiring Board President Norma Hernandez

vice and look forward to her continued involvement as Board Trustee.

Thank you, Mrs. Hernandez, for your remarkable dedication and leadership!

Photo Credit: Jerome Delafosse II

# GPISD Stadium Spectator Information & Rules

Dear Galena Park ISD Parents and Students,

As part of our larger commitment to excellence and education, Galena Park ISD is dedicated to achieving excellence in all our athletic programs. Participation in athletics encourages the development of positive character traits, which contribute to students' personal growth and success in life. These traits include the drive to take one's talents to the highest level of performance, embracing the discipline needed to reach high standards, learning to work with others as a team in pursuit of a common goal, and adherence to codes of fairness and respect. We are committed to the physical and emotional well-being of student athletes and to the social development of the whole child. We recognize that great demands are placed on students who participate in athletics.

However, Galena Park ISD athletes are expected to adhere to a level of conduct that brings credit to themselves, their school, and the community. Galena Park ISD is a member in good standing with the University Interscholastic League (UIL). As such, there are rules and regulations to which our athletic programs are required to adhere. These rules also include our spectators. Athletics play a crucial role in fostering a sense of community. However, there have been occasions where less-than-desirable situations have taken place, which did not reflect well on our fans or our district. There were incidents of negative/derogatory/threatening remarks made toward officials, coaches, students, players, and opponents. There were instances involving the use of profanity and vulgarity. Please do not be the person in the stands who de-

tracts from the teachings of fairness and respect for our athletes. We expect to fill our stands only with fans that support our students and coaches and contribute to the positive environment they deserve. Please be aware that anyone who violates the UIL sportsmanship regulations will be immediately removed from the event and may be banned from future attendance for up to one year. We appreciate your support of our student athletes and coaching staff. Please know it is up to each of us to model high expectations for our youth, especially as we prepare them to one day be the leaders of our community. If you have any questions, feel free to call me at 832-386-4330. Again, thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Sincerely,  
Vivian Dancy, Director of Athletics

# Havard Elementary School Receives Generous \$5,000 Donation from New Burlington Store

Houston, TX – August 29, 2025 - Galena Park Independent School District is thrilled to announce a generous \$5,000 donation from Burlington Stores, the national discount retailer known for offering everyday low prices on brand-name merchandise for the entire family and home. This donation celebrates the grand opening of Burlington's newest store in Houston at The Shops at Stone Park, located at 6022 East Sam Houston Parkway.

Through Burlington's partnership with the national nonprofit AdoptAClassroom.org, these funds will be dedicated to purchasing essential classroom supplies that will directly benefit students and teachers at Ha-

vard Elementary School. The donation will provide vital learning materials and tools designed to enhance student success both now and in the future. A representative from AdoptAClassroom.org worked closely with district and school administrators to secure this generous support for Havard Elementary. The donation will assist multiple classrooms, enabling teachers to acquire much-needed supplies and other classroom essentials.

"On behalf of Galena Park ISD, we warmly welcome Burlington's newest Houston location and sincerely thank them for their generous support through AdoptAClassroom.org," said Dr. Lisa Hamblen,

Principal of Havard Elementary School. "Our teachers are excited to use these funds to enrich their classrooms and provide our students with the additional tools they need for a successful school year. We are truly grateful for this partnership and the positive impact it will have on our school community." This donation highlights the power of community partnerships in supporting education and underscores Galena Park ISD's commitment to providing quality learning environments for all students.

For more information, please contact the Galena Park ISD Communications Department at [communications@galenaparksd.com](mailto:communications@galenaparksd.com).

# Channelview ISD CLEAR BAG PROCEDURES

- Stadium Rules**  
Prohibited Items & Activities
- No outside food or drinks
  - No firearms or weapons
  - No drugs or alcohol
  - No tobacco or vapes
  - No backpacks or oversized bags
  - No coolers or umbrellas
  - No horns, or whistles
  - No balls, frisbees, or balloons
  - No animals (except service animals)

- Student & Spectator Expectations**
- Elementary & Middle School Students must be accompanied by a supervising adult and remain seated with them at all times.
  - High School students must sit in the designated student section unless accompanied by a parent.

- Safety & Conduct**
- Metal detectors may be used at all stadium entrances.
  - Inappropriate language, disruptive behavior, or derogatory remarks will not be tolerated.
  - No standing or sitting along the rails.
  - No loitering under the stands.
  - Field and press box access is limited to authorized personnel only.

**APPROVED**

- CLEAR TOTE BAG** (12" x 12" x 6")
- PLASTIC STORAGE BAG** (CLEAR, RESEALABLE, 1 GALLON)
- SMALL CLUTCH BAG** (NON-CLEAR SMALL CLUTCH BAGS ARE ALLOWED, BUT CANNOT EXCEED 8.5" X 8.5")
- DIAPER BAG**
- EXCEPTIONS**

**PROHIBITED**

- BACKPACKS**
- LARGE PURSE**
- DRAWSTRING BAG**
- CAMERA BAGS**

**ALL BAGS ARE SUBJECT TO INSPECTION PRIOR TO ENTRY, REGARDLESS OF SIZE OR TYPE.**



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## CHARLOTTE'S WEB

By Charlotte Jackson



### Friends Matter

No matter how long it has been since you have seen some people, when you see them, it seems like just hours ago. In January, I bought a plane ticket to travel to Oklahoma City to visit my friends, Jim and Geneva. I planned to travel on Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend. Then life happened. The trip was postponed for February.

In February, I served in my first official role as a newly appointed Texas Silver-Haired Legislature and was required to be in Austin for several days. I came home and was attempting to plan a trip in March to see them. By late February I received an invitation for a trip from Congressman Sylvester Turner to attend an advocacy event in early March in Washington D.C., so I decided to put off the Oklahoma trip until Easter.

In preparing for the trip to DC, my closest friend Marc, who had retired from professional football due to repeated concussions, told me he wanted to attend as well. I told him that I was not traveling alone with any man unless we were married. So once again he joked that we could get married either before or in Washington. I reminded him that as much as I loved him, I knew that until God told me to marry him, we were better off as friends. As I continued to plan for the trip, imagine the horror when he had a massive heart attack and passed away on March 2? I was hurting and so sad. I thought about canceling the trip to DC, when the world suffered a bigger blow—Congressman Turner passed away just days later. So now, I was faced with traveling just days later for this amazing event to help with advocating for cancer research. I wanted to cancel the trip and yet, I kept hearing previous conversations with Marc. Over the past 11 years, he would remind me daily “Charlotte, you are a victor, not a victim of whatever circumstances that God allows you to experience.”

I made the trip even though my heart was sad and it was what I needed to spend time with God getting ready for what He had planned for me in the coming days. One evening while I walked to the Arlington National Cemetery, I clearly heard God’s voice reminding me that while marriage is great, having friends that you love unconditionally and that you can share God with along the journey called life, it much more fulfilling for some people. I was able to stay strong as I returned home and attended Marc’s funeral on that Saturday. It was emotional, but I survived and rather than attending the Congressman’s funeral the following week, I was blessed to have my Seniors keeping me busy.

Again, I scheduled my trip to Oklahoma City for Easter. My best friend Diane suffered the loss of her first-born grandson on April 3. My son Daniel experienced a stroke the next week, while incarcerated (which TDCJ did not confirm until late May.) Then on April 14, I experienced my second episode of syncope, which led to a ride to the emergency room complete with five metal staples to my head. Needless to say, my trip for Easter was reset again. I spent the next six weeks seeing every type of doctor you can imagine, trying to find out why I was experiencing syncope.

On May 23, I was cleared to travel. So, I chose to visit my son instead of the trip to Oklahoma. I cannot explain the horror of seeing Daniel in a wheelchair. I was heartbroken, upset and angry, but I kept hearing “you are a victor, not a victim”. On my second trip to see him, I had a car accident, which insurance later deemed my car totaled. I had to spend time purchasing a new vehicle, with the help of many friends.

I had a commitment to be in Austin with the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature in July, and August is always crammed full of commitments, so I moved forward to focusing on traveling for Labor Day weekend. (To read the rest, be sure to read on September 11th column.)

## Americanisms



“The greatest moments in life are not concerned with selfish achievements, but rather in the things we do for people.”  
— Walt Disney

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## ASK DIAMOND JIM



### Diamond Jim: “What is the Birthstone for September?”

#### The world is your oyster

The September birthstone is sapphire – a gem that’s been cherished for thousands of years. Although the term sapphire usually refers to the blue variety of corundum (ruby is the red variety), this birthstone comes in a rainbow of other colors. Sapphires have been long associated with royalty and romance and are also said to symbolize fidelity and the soul. “Sapphire” comes from the Greek word sappheiros and blue sapphire is one of the most popular colored stones. Read on to learn more about the September birthstone, specifically its history and where it can be found.

In addition to being the September birthstone, sapphire is also the gem commemorating the 5th and 45th wedding anniversaries.

The famed Rockefeller Sapphire weighs 62.02 ct. Here it is flanked by two cut-cornered triangular cut diamonds, mounted in a platinum ring signed Tiffany & Co. Courtesy: Christie’s Images Ltd., 2015

The September birthstone has traditionally symbolized sincerity, truth, faithfulness and nobility. For countless centuries, sapphire has adorned royalty and the robes of the clergy. The elite of ancient Greece and Rome believed that blue sapphires protected their owners from harm and envy. Clerics of the Middle Ages wore sapphires because they symbolized Heaven. Ancient Persians believed the earth actually rested on a giant sapphire, which made the sky blue.

The September birthstone was reputed to have healing powers as well. Medieval Europeans believed that sapphire cured plague boils and diseases of the eye. The sapphire birthstone was also thought to be an antidote to poison.

Famous sapphires include the Rockefeller Sapphire, a 62.02 carat (ct) rectangular step cut stone that was unearthed in Myanmar (Burma). Acquired in 1934 by financier and philanthropist John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (1874–1960) from an Indian maharaja, the gem was recut and remounted over the years. The sapphire was first set as a brooch and later as a ring featuring two cut-cornered triangular diamond side stones. Perhaps the best-known sapphire in recent years is the 12 ct blue gem surrounded by diamonds in the sapphire engagement ring first worn by Princess Diana and then given by her son to Kate Middleton, now Duchess of Cambridge.

#### Where Is Sapphire Found?

Kashmir, Myanmar (formerly Burma) and Sri Lanka are three historically important sources for the September birthstone. Significant quantities of the September birthstone have also been found in Australia, Thailand, Cambodia, Madagascar and the United States (Montana), among other countries in Asia and Africa.

#### Sapphire Birthstone Care & Cleaning

The September birthstone is relatively hard, ranking 9 on the Mohs scale. It has excellent toughness and no cleavage, which is a tendency to break when struck. This makes it a great choice for rings and other mountings subject to daily wear. Note, though, that sapphires are often treated to improve their color or clarity. Heat treatment is common – and the results permanent – so it is well accepted in the trade. Less common treatments such as lattice diffusion, fracture filling and dyeing may require special care. In some cases, the color induced by lattice diffusion is so shallow it could be removed if the stone was chipped or had to be recut. Fracture-filled and dyed sapphires can be damaged by even mild acids like lemon juice. Before you buy a sapphire, always ask if it is treated and by what method. Warm, soapy water is always a safe choice for cleaning the September birthstone. Ultrasonic and steam cleaners are usually safe for untreated, heat-treated and lattice diffusion-treated stones. Fracture-filled or dyed material should only be cleaned with a damp cloth.

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

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

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

## top ten

### Most Streamed Shows on NETFLIX

1. Wednesday: Season 1
2. Stranger Things 4
3. Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story
4. Bridgerton: Season 1
5. The Queen’s Gambit: Limited Series
6. Bridgerton: Season 3
7. The Night Agent: Season 1
8. Fool Me Once: Limited Series
9. Stranger Things 3
10. Bridgerton: Season 2

Source: Netflix

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## EPA pressed for Action on Waste Pits,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

contaminated material and rigorous testing of the site to make sure it is safe. Each time the EPA reviews a plan, comments on its deficiencies and requests an updated plan, months are lost to delay.

As Medcalf points out in the letter, “The EPA ordered the responsible parties to remediate the site under the first Trump Administration. I stood with then Administrator Pruitt while he surveyed the damage after Hurricane Harvey, which caused unmeasurable amounts of dioxin to escape from the Northern Waste Pit. The working class residents who make up our community had great hopes for a timely remediation process. Eight years later, they are still waiting.”

The letter stresses that, in addition to the health risks of delay, the failure to clean up the site has threatened the local economy, wasted EPA funds on endless reviews and doubled the cost of the eventual cleanup. This goes against Administrator Zeldin’s stated goal that “if a dollar is spent, that the dollar is spent on directly remediating the environmental issue.”

As background, the Responsible Parties have had three chances to submit a so-called 100% design plan for the site’s Northern Pit, the final plan before the work starts. The EPA rejected the first two and has been reviewing the third one for three months. THEA’s analysis has identified a number of problems with the latest plan.

According to THEA, “The responsible parties’ latest 100% design plan, like the ones before it, falls short and is unacceptable to the community. The right decision is to move the site to Remedial Action by requiring the parties to follow the EPA’s design or by taking over the remediation directly. The wrong decision would be to repeat the cycle of comments and revisions. This cleanup was ordered during the first Trump Administration. It is time now to finish the job.”

## Serve Your Community, Shape Our Future

Applications are being accepted through **Friday, September 26** to fill **Position 5** on the **San Jacinto College Board of Trustees**.



APPLY NOW!

Scan the QR code to apply or call 281-998-6100.

SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

An Equal Opportunity Institution [sanjac.edu/accreditation](http://sanjac.edu/accreditation)

## You're staring at me again!



I love it when you do that!



Diamond Jim's Pineforest Jewelry Experience

OPINION PAGE

OPINION By State Representative ARMANDO WALLE

We Democrats were right to flee Texas. And the redistricting fight isn't over

When Gov. Greg Abbott surrendered Texas to President Donald Trump's demand to redraw Texas congressional districts and replace five seats held by Democrats with Republicans, we knew dramatic action would be necessary. But Democrats are the minority party in the Texas Legislature, and our options were few.

We knew we could not defeat Trump's plan on our own. Texas Republicans have the votes and their fear of Trump far exceeds their loyalty to Texas. They weren't open to negotiations. However, a strong national effort involving Democratic allies in other states could hold the line against Trump's effort to rig the 2026 election and avoid the wrath of American voters.

So that's what we set out to accomplish. If we could break the necessary House quorum long enough to light signal fires across the nation, we could engage blue state governors like California's Gavin Newsom in our effort to protect the integrity of the 2026 election. If Trump wanted five more Republican seats from Texas, we could get more Democratic seats from California.

The personal and political risks were great, but in the end our decision was the right one, morally, politically, strategically. To begin with, Trump's plan as accepted by Abbott and the Republican leadership was a racially charged assault on minority voting rights. There was no ambiguity. Minority voters were to be stuffed into districts where their voices would be silenced.

Now, most of us would like to take district map drawing out of the hands of state legislators and give it to independent citizen commissions. Even though the conservative majority on the U.S. Supreme Court has not intervened in cases of partisan gerrymandering, most Americans rightly reject it. Were we willing to engage in a partisan effort to neutralize Trump's racially divisive plan? Yes, we were.

Should Republicans maintain their House majority in 2026, Trump would have open road to continue his assault on our lives, liberties and the possibilities for our children and grandchildren's future happiness. Trump's policies are wildly unpopular because they are wildly destructive. His unpopularity is the reason he's trying to rig next year's election. He knows he's in trouble.

Furthermore, a failure to defeat Trump's election rigging scheme would delay and probably doom forever any chance of ending partisan gerrymandering. It is worth pointing out that Republicans defeated national Democrats' proposed 2020 Freedom to Vote Act, which prohibited a state from drawing Congressional district lines "with the intent or has the effect of materially favoring or disfavoring any political party."

The day my Democratic colleagues and I returned to Texas and restored the quorum necessary to conduct business in the Texas House, Trump announced his intention to further rig the 2026 election in his favor. He said he would try to prohibit popular vote-by-mail programs across the country. He even said something about prohibiting voting machines, whatever that means.

Additionally, many people believe his experiments with sending the military into the streets of Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., foreshadow his plans to use similar tactics to intimidate voters next year. It is not hard to see that the future of free and fair elections is in jeopardy.

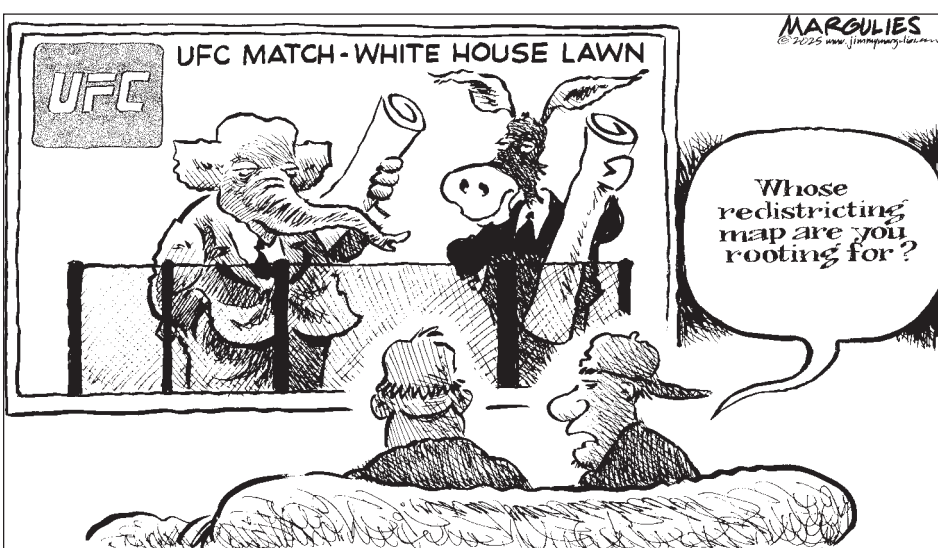
California Gov. Gavin Newsom, responding to our calls to action, took the right approach. California had already moved to an independent redistricting commission. If new district lines were to be drawn now, a temporary approach had to be made. If the California Legislature approves a new map, the map will have to be approved by a majority of the state's voters. The California process would be done out in the open, and voters would make the ultimate decision.

Also, California will revert to the use of its independent commission in the next scheduled redistricting effort after the 2030 census. We believe other blue state governors will choose similar paths, especially if Trump follows through and takes his Texas efforts to other states controlled by Republicans.

In the end, our efforts are aligned with our long-term commitment to open, free and fair elections. That also means the pursuit of a national prohibition of partisan gerrymandering just as we proposed in the Freedom to Vote Act. Stopping Trump now is imperative if we are to succeed in those efforts.

Texas Rep. Armando Walle represents District 140 in Houston.

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

Redistricting bill sent to Abbott, lawsuit challenges it

The Texas Senate approved the new congressional map and sent the bill to Gov. Greg Abbott. A lawsuit challenging the redrawn districts as being racially discriminatory was filed before Abbott could sign the bill, which he has promised to do soon. The Texas Tribune reported that the redrawn map, which could give Republicans five additional congressional seats in 2026, has been challenged by two law firms filing on behalf of 13 Texas residents collectively called "the Gonzales plaintiffs."

In addition, the NAACP, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund and Mexican American Legislative Caucus have joined LULAC in two additional suits against Abbott that call the maps unconstitutional and "intentionally discriminatory."

Abbott's office defended the maps. Andrew Mahaleris, the governor's press secretary, said they allow "more Texans to vote for the candidate of their choice," noting that Hispanic Texans are increasingly moving away from Democrats.

A 2021 suit filed by LULAC over the maps drawn after the 2020 census is still pending in court.

HOUSE PASSES BILL REQUIRING SIRENS IN SOME FLOOD-PRONE AREAS

Flood sirens will be required in areas identified by the Texas Water Development Board under a Senate bill approved by the House last week. Under the measure, TWDB would have to identify areas that have a history of severe flooding. In those areas, either the county or city would be required to install and regularly test warning sirens, The Dallas Morning News reported.

SB3 allocates \$50 million over the next two years to help cities and counties pay for the sirens, but they must submit a proposal to receive funding. The move comes after the July 4 Hill Country floods killed at least 137 people, including 27 campers and staff members at Camp Mystic along the Guadalupe River.

"We must rely on proven technology like outdoor warning systems," said state Rep. Terry Wilson, R-Georgetown.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

CERTAIN FOREIGN NATIONALS NOW BANNED FROM BUYING LAND IN TEXAS

As of Sept. 1, people with ties to China, Iran, North Korea or Russia have been banned from buying most Texas property, including farmland, homes and commercial property, the Texas Standard reported. People in the state on student or work visas from those countries may buy a single home to live in but are barred from purchasing additional properties.

Sen. Lois Kolkhorst, R-Brenham, authored the bill and called it "the strongest protection national security bill of any state passed."

If a person violates the law, they could face a state jail felony and fines.

Two Chinese nationals living in Texas filed suit in July, arguing the ban violates constitutional protections.

"It's discriminating against Chinese people, it's discriminating against immigrants," said Justin Sadowsky, legal director at the Chinese American Legal Defense Alliance and attorney for the plaintiffs.

The suit was dismissed by a federal judge in August, but the plaintiffs have taken the case to the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

NEW PROPOSED BAN ON THC HAS STALLED

A bill to ban hemp-derived THC products in the state has stalled with the state's top two officials at loggerheads over the issue. The Houston Chronicle reported that Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick is still pushing a ban after Abbott vetoed a similar bill in the regular session. Abbott called the first special session after vetoing

the THC ban, arguing instead for a more regulated approach.

"The regulated market would be very comprehensive," Abbott said. "It would regulate it at the farming-based level, the wholesale level, the distributor and the retailer."

A total ban would affect more than 8,500 businesses across the state that sell hemp-derived products, some of which contain amounts of THC, the psychoactive ingredient in cannabis.

While Patrick and Abbott have largely agreed in the past on major issues, that is not the case with the THC ban. Patrick said this is "probably the biggest one we've ever disagreed on, particularly openly."

EAST TEXAS WATER EXPORT DELAYED BY STUDY

An attempt by a Dallas investor to export East Texas groundwater likely will be delayed at least two years after lawmakers approved a water development board study of the plan's effects. The Chronicle reported state Rep. Cody Harris, R-Palestine, authored the bill after investor Kyle Bass applied for exploratory permits for wells that could pump more groundwater in Anderson and Henderson counties than was now available.

The Carrizo-Wilcox aquifer spans East Texas from Louisiana to Mexico, supplying many towns in that region with groundwater. The bill requires TWDB to determine how much groundwater can be pumped "in perpetuity" without affecting the local groundwater district's 50-year plan.

Harris has also filed legislation to overturn the rule of capture. That rule has historically allowed landowners to pump however much groundwater is below their property, even if it negatively affects their neighbors. He said he intends to address the rule of capture during the 2027 session.

"We really do need to take the interim and the full session to have those hard debates that are going to come," he said.

HOUSE OKS MAKING IVERMECTIN AVAILABLE WITHOUT PRESCRIPTION

The House last week passed a bill that would make ivermectin, used primarily to treat livestock for parasites but sometimes prescribed to humans, available to Texans without a prescription. The Tribune reported the vote came after a lively debate along party lines. Its sponsor, state Rep. Joanne Shofner, R-Nacogdoches, argued her bill championed medical freedom.

The drug gained popularity during the pandemic as a treatment for COVID-19 before a vaccine was available. Prior to the pandemic, it had been used as a treatment for humans carrying certain tropical or subtropical parasites.

If signed into law, ivermectin would not be on the counter but could be dispensed without a prescription at pharmacies, similarly to how cold and cough medicines like pseudoephedrine are given.

THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

Memories of Horseradish



Yesterday, I saw a bunch of cousins.

I have a lot of cousins. A few have died by now, but I started out with 36 cousins, and only two were on my father's side.

My mother came from a large farm family, and her brothers and sisters had a lot of children, and so I got to have a lot of cousins while I was growing up. I thought it was normal, having this second layer of siblings that I would see up at the farm. We ate sitting on the stairs, because there were many more people than chairs. We picked eggs and played in the haymow together.

Because there were so many cousins, we grouped together by age, hanging out only with those cousins a year older or younger. Most of my cousins were older than me. They were cool and listened to rock music behind closed bedroom doors and brought boyfriends to the farm and paid no attention to me whatsoever. The cousins younger than me were small and annoying and not able to keep up. You can afford to be selective when you have so many cousins to choose from.

After I got older, I didn't see my cousins as often. While they were raising families and busy with their jobs and moving to different parts of the country, I only kept in touch with one or two cousins, and eventually I didn't even hear from them too often.

But now everyone is getting older and, particularly since a few cousins have died and so many of our parents have passed, it seems like the cousins are making more of an effort to stay connected. I love this.

Because coming from a large family, I feel as if I only hold one tiny piece of my family history. My cousins remind me of all the things I have forgotten and tell me things I never knew.

"I remember horseradish at the farm," I told my cousin, Tim. "But I don't remember what we ate it with."

"Grandma grew it," Tim confirmed. "And Grandpa ate it on his eggs."

"On his eggs!" This was news to me. I love horseradish, and now I'm going to try it on my eggs.

We don't spend all our time reminiscing about horseradish. The years between the older, cool cousins and the younger, annoying ones have disappeared, and we talk about leaving jobs and downsizing homes and watching the nieces and nephews do interesting things. These cousins all look a lot like me. Many of them have the same blue eyes of our Swedish grandparents, and we grew up eating the same vegetables grown in an oversized garden and lots of eggs (with or without horseradish).

Now I see us all growing older in the same ways and feel as if I'm part of a sample group, selected at birth, chosen to go through life together. We convene at irregular intervals from birth until death to compare our experiences and our shared memories of horseradish. The whole thing seems tenuous. And a little magical. And every year, more important.

We said our goodbyes and promised to get together again soon. Next year, we're planning to have a cousin reunion in Colorado, and I think that will be a lot of fun.

I don't know how long the ties of cousins will hold. Every gathering feels as if it might be the last. But my mother just saw her 90-year-old cousin last week, and they had a nice visit. I'm sure they still have a lot to talk about.

Till next time, Carrie

Star Courier advertisement with contact information for various departments and subscription rates.

## FOOTBALL SEASON WEEK 2:

### SB champ Eagles host Cowboys to open NFL season: Texans open Ryans' third season on road against Rams

While the official start to the college football season dominated the headlines over Labor Day Weekend, the first week of September ushers in the start of the NFL season and what a first-week schedule Roger Goodell and Co. have provided us.

The league's 106th season begins Thursday in prime time when the defending Super Bowl champions host NFC East rival Dallas on NBC at 7:20 p.m. local time.

The Eagles are once again loaded and are the odds on favorite to represent the NFC in a second straight Super Bowl. The Cowboys enter the season with a new head coach in Brian Schottenheimer, who served as Dallas' offensive coordinator last season. The newest Dallas head coach will welcome back Dak Prescott at quarterback, who played just eight games a year ago after sustaining a hamstring injury against Atlanta in Week 9. Owner/GM Jerry Jones helped Prescott in the offseason by acquiring Steelers WR George Pickens, which will pair him with All Pro wideout CeedDee Lamb.

The biggest question mark in Dallas is whether star edge rusher Micah Parsons (12 sacks in 2024) will be on the field for the opener against the explosive Philly offense. Parsons and Jones have been embroiled in a nasty contract dispute, and as of this writing, neither side has budged. The Cowboys do have Parsons under control for this season and can franchise him in 2026, so the former oil barron does have a lot of leverage.

While Dallas and Philly open the season on Thursday night, the Chiefs and Chargers will open their seasons on Friday night in Brazil. LA could very well challenge Kansas City for the AFC West title this year under second-year head coach Jim Harbaugh, who led LA to the playoffs in his first season.

On Sunday, the Texans begin head coach DeMeco Ryans' third season as the two-time AFC South champs head out west to face the Los Angeles Rams at 3:25 p.m. Third-year QB C.J. Stroud will look to bounce back after a mediocre second year, and he has two new weapons in rookie wideouts Jaylin Noel and Jayden Higgins (6-4, 225 pounds) to pair with star wide receiver Nico Collins. Houston could have a top five defense this season and that unit will get a good test against the Rams and veteran QB Matthew Stafford.

The Sunday Night opener on NBC is a good one as Baltimore visits Buffalo in a rematch of last year's Divisional playoff game, which was won by the Bills, 27-25. The Monday Night Football opener features a good NFC North contest as the Vikings visit the up-and-coming Bears in Chicago.

The college schedule is a bit watered down after last weekend's big games. The two best games feature Kansas and Missouri and No. 14 Michigan visiting No. 18 Oklahoma.

So, let's take a look at this weekend's games.

#### NCAA

**Kansas at Missouri** - These two former Big 8 and Big 12 rivals meet on Saturday in Columbia, MO. Kansas is still in the Big 12, while Mizzou now resides in the SEC. The Jayhawks opened the season two weeks ago with a dominating 31-7 win over Fresno State in their \$405 million newly-renovated stadium. KU returns one of the top dual-threat QBs in the country in Jalon Daniels, (2,454 passing yards, 14 TDs/439 rushing yards, 6 TDs). In the season opener, Daniels passed for 176 yards and three TDs, while running back Leshon Williams picked up 57 yards on six carries and scored a touchdown. As a team, the Jayhawks rushed for 207 yards. The Tigers finished 10-3 a year ago, but lost a load of talent, most notably veteran QB Brady Cook and star wideout Luther Burden III, who was a second-round draft pick of the Bears. Missouri head coach Elijah Drinkwitz will choose between Beau Pribular and Sam Horn to handle the QB position and will look for running back Ahmad Hardy (1,351 yards, 13 TDs), a transfer from Louisiana-Monroe, to handle the ground game. Look for Daniels experience to be the difference maker in this one as the Jayhawks pick up a big road win. My pick, Kansas 26, Missouri 23.

**Michigan at Oklahoma** - No. 14 Michigan travels to Norman to take on No. 18 OU on Saturday in prime time on ABC (6:30 p.m.). This game features two head coaches who need big seasons, or their seats may get hot as the season progresses. UM's Sherrone



Moore is entering his second season as the Wolverine's head coach. He finished 8-5 a year ago, but did beat bitter rival Ohio State and upset Alabama in the Quest Bowl. This could be a key season for OU head coach Brent Venables, who in his first three years has only forged a 22-17 record (including two 6-7 seasons). Sooner fans are optimistic this year, mainly because of Washington State transfer QB John Mateer (3,139 yards, 29 TDs). OU will look for a big year from running back Taylor Tatum (278 yards, 3 TDs). Michigan has turned to redshirt freshman Bryce Undersoon (6-4, 228 yards) to run the offense. Underwood was the No. 1-rated QB coming out of high school in 2023. Michigan will be breaking in two new running backs in Justice Haynes and Jordan Marshall (130 yards as a reserve in '24). Look for the Sooners to pick up the win on Saturday night thanks to a raucous home crowd and Mateer. My pick, Oklahoma 24, Michigan 21

#### NFL

**Dallas at Philadelphia** - The 2025 season kicks off on Thursday night when the defending Super Bowl champion Philadelphia Eagles host bitter division rival Dallas on NBC. The Eagles finished 18-3 a year ago and cruised to the Lombardi, dominating Kansas City 40-22 in New Orleans. Philly returns a solid core from that title team, led by dual-threat QB Jalen Hurts (a Channelview native), who passed for 2,093 yards and 18 TDs and rushed for 630 yards and 14 scores. Also back is star running back Saquon Barkley (2,005 yards, 13 TDs/33 receptions, 278 yards, 22 TDs). Barkley may not produce those same numbers in '25, but he will once again be running behind the best offensive line in the NFL. Also back are wideouts A.J. Brown (67 receptions, 1,079 yards, 7 TDs) and DeVonta Smith (68 receptions, 833 yards, 8 TDs). Philly did suffer some key losses on the defensive line and in the secondary, but General Manager Howie Roseman filled those spots adequately. The Cowboys are coming off a 7-10 year, and hopefully will have a healthy Dak Prescott (1,978 yards, 11 TDs in eight games) back for the entire season. Prescott will once again have stud wideout CeedDee Lamb (101 receptions, 1,194 yards, 6 TDs) and another weapon in wide receiver George Pickens (63 receptions, 1,140 yards, 5 TDs), who the Cowboys acquired from the Steelers. If Dallas is to turn things around this year, they must run the ball better than they did a year ago, when the team combined for a woeful 6 total rushing TDs. Dallas brought in former Denver back Javonte Williams (513 yards, 4 TDs) to help turn things around. It remains to be seen if star edge rusher Micah Parsons (12 sacks) will play in the Philly game. He and owner Jerry Jones have spent training camp and the preseason locked in a contentious contract dispute. Parsons is under team control this year, so odds are he will be on the field come Thursday night. Even if Parsons does play, the Eagles will have too much offense for Dallas with which to deal and will open defense of their SB title with a nice opening-season win. My pick, Philadelphia 26, Dallas 23

**Kansas City vs. Los Angeles Chargers** - The Chiefs and Chargers open their seasons on Friday night in Brazil in an early-season AFC West division tilt. The Chiefs had all offseason to stew after their blowout loss in the Super Bowl, and you can bet that QB Patrick Mahomes (3,928 yards, 26 TDs/11 interceptions) and head coach Andy Reid focused on righting the ship this season. KC returns a strong nucleus with Mahomes, tight end Travis Kelce (97 receptions, 823 yards, 2 TDs) and speedy wideout Xavier Worthy (58 receptions, 638 yards, 6 TDs). The Chargers enter Jim Harbaugh's second year as head coach with their sights set on unseating KC atop the AFC West. They have the tools in place in QB Justin Herbert (3,870 yards, 23 TDs), wideouts Ladd McConkey (82 receptions, 1,149 yards, 7 TDs) and Quentin Johnson (55 receptions, 711 yards, 9 TDs). Their running game is improved with former Steeler Najee Harris (1,043 yards, 6 TDs) and rookie

Omar Hampton (1,660 rushing yards, 15 TDs/38 receptions, 373 yards, 2 TDs at North Carolina). This should be an entertaining game, but look for Mahomes to work his magic late to lead KC to a season-opening win. My pick, Kansas City 27, Los Angeles Chargers 23

#### Houston at Los Angeles Rams

- The Texans head to LaLa Land to open the '25 season against the Rams in a meeting of playoff teams from 2024. The Texans finished 11-8 a year ago and will be led by third-year QB C.J. Stroud (3,727 yards, 20 TDs) and wideout Nico Collins (68 receptions, 1,006 yards, 7 TDs in 12 games). General Manager Nick Caserio provided Stroud with some extra receiving help in the draft by acquiring the Iowa State duo of Jaylin Noel and Jayden Higgins (6-4, 225 pounds). Houston will be without starting running back Joe Mixon (1,016 yards, 11 TDs/36 receptions, 309 yards, 1 TD) for at least the first four games. Houston added former Browns RB Nick Chubb in the offseason with hopes he regains his Pro Bowl form after dealing with leg injuries the last two years. The Texans might have a top five defense led by edge rushers Danielle Hunter (12 sacks) and Will Anderson (11 sacks) and All-Pro cornerback Derek Stingley Jr. (5 interceptions). That unit will get a stern test from LA QB Matthew Stafford (3,762 yards, 20 TDs), running back Kyren Williams (1,297 yards, 14 TDs) and wideout Puka Nacua (79 receptions, 990 yards, 3 TDs). Stafford missed most of camp dealing with back issues. Look for the Houston defense to get after him early and often as the Texans open the season with a big road win. My pick, Houston 23, Los Angeles Rams 20

**Baltimore at Buffalo** - This is probably the Game of the Week in Week 1 as the Ravens and Bills meet on Sunday Night Football on NBC. The Bills, who will be playing their final season in Ralph Wilson Stadium, defeated the Ravens 27-25 in the Division round last year. This game features two MVP QBs in Baltimore's Lamar Jackson (4,172 passing yards, 41 TDs/915 rushing yards, 4 TDs) and Buffalo's Josh Allen (3,731 yards, 28 TDs/531 rushing yards, 12 TDs). Both teams have solid running backs in Derrick Henry (1,921 yards, 18 total TDs) and James Cook (1,009 yards, 16 TDs/32 receptions, 258 yards, 2 TDs). This should be a high-scoring game and will come down to which team makes a play or two on defense. I'm going with the Buffalo defense to be the difference maker in this game, but don't be surprised if these two teams meet once again in the playoffs come January. My pick, Buffalo 31, Baltimore 29

#### Minnesota at Chicago

Week one concludes with Monday Night Football with an NFC North contest between the Vikings and Bears in the Windy City. The Vikes will be breaking in a new QB in second-year man J.J. McCarthy, who missed his rookie season with a knee injury. McCarthy is an unknown, but has plenty of weapons to turn to in wide receiver Justin Jefferson (103 receptions, 1,533 yards, 10 TDs) and running back Aaron Jones (1,138 rushing yards, 5 TDs/51 receptions, 408 yards, 2 TDs). McCarthy won't have big-play wideout Jordan Addison for the first three games of the season because he's been suspended by the league for violating its personal conduct policy. Optimism is running high in Chicago over new head coach Ben Johnson, the former offensive coordinator for Detroit. Johnson was hired to get the most out of second-year QB Caleb Williams (3,541 yards, 20 TDs). Williams should benefit from Johnson's tutelage and could be in for a huge year, which should make Bears fans excited. Williams has weapons to turn to in running back D'Andre Swift (959 rushing yards, 6 TDs/43 receptions, 384 yards) and talented wideouts D.J. Moore (98 receptions, 966 yards, 6 TDs) and second-year man Rome Odunze (54 receptions, 734 yards, 3 TDs). Look for Odunze to have a breakout year in '25 and look for Williams to put on a show in prime time on Monday night. My pick, Chicago 30, Minnesota 27

# Hometown Hero: JALEN HURTS

## Jalen Hurts' Journey from College Backup to Super Bowl MVP Deserves a Deep Dive

Article by Jaron Holzer  
Guest Essay



Jalen Hurts' path to becoming a Super Bowl MVP encapsulates what it means to be a winner. Before hoisting the Lombardi Trophy following a 40-22 victory over the Kansas City Chiefs in Super Bowl LIX, Hurts overcame several unique challenges throughout his college and professional football careers.

Hurts began playing college football at the University of Alabama, where, in his freshman season, he accounted for over 3,700 total yards and 36 total touchdowns while leading the Crimson Tide to the National Championship Game. Hurts struggled to throw the ball effectively in the title game, however, and the Tide fell 35-31 to the Clemson Tigers.

The following year, Hurts led the Tide to another National Championship Game, during which he was benched for then Freshman quarterback Tua Tagovailoa after Hurts completed only three passes for 21 yards in the first half. Tagovailoa engineered a 13-point comeback, and Alabama defeated the Georgia Bulldogs 26-23 in an overtime thriller. Tagovailoa's title game heroics helped him earn the starting quarterback job the following season, which meant Hurts would serve as his backup.

With Tagovailoa at the helm, the Crimson Tide had yet another successful season and earned a spot in the 2018 SEC Championship Game. After Tagovailoa went down with an ankle injury early in the fourth quarter of that game, Hurts led the Crimson Tide to a miraculous comeback victory in a role reversal from the National Championship Game nearly eleven months prior.

Following his masterful completion of this full circle moment, Hurts transferred to Oklahoma for the 2019 season to play for Head Coach and offensive guru Lincoln Riley. That

year, Hurts had an extremely successful campaign that culminated in him finishing second in Heisman Trophy voting behind LSU Quarterback and future number one overall draft pick Joe Burrow.

Hurts was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles in the second round of the 2020 NFL Draft. He served as their backup quarterback for the majority of his rookie year, and Hurts was named the team's full-time starter prior to entering his second season in the NFL.

After leading the Eagles to the Wild Card Round of the NFL Playoffs in his first year at the helm, Hurts powered his team to Super Bowl LVII in his second season as the starter. He had a monster Super Bowl performance, which included 374 total yards and 4 total touchdowns, but Hurts and the Eagles ultimately fell short to Patrick Mahomes and the Chiefs 38-35.

Coming off their tight Super Bowl loss, the Eagles started the 2023 NFL season a scorching hot 10-1 before losing 5 of their last 6 games and being bounced in the Wild Card Round yet again. The Eagles' late-season struggles prompted backlash toward Jalen Hurts and Head Coach Nick Sirianni from fans and analysts alike,

who questioned whether Hurts and Sirianni could win the Eagles a Super Bowl.

With the addition of Pro Bowl running back Saquon Barkley to their backfield, Hurts and the 2024 Eagles posted a remarkable 14-3 regular season record. The Eagles then cruised through the playoffs and found themselves facing a familiar foe, the Kansas City Chiefs, in Super Bowl LIX. Hurts was masterful in that game, totaling 293 yards and 3 touchdowns while leading the Eagles to a 40-22 victory and winning Super Bowl MVP.

Jalen Hurts' journey from being benched at halftime of a college football national championship game to winning Super Bowl MVP is a story of hardship and triumph, as well as a clear demonstration of Hurts' relentless competitive grit. Despite the extraordinary success Hurts has achieved so far, there's no doubt that the 26-year-old quarterback is motivated to win more Super Bowls in the years to come.

*Jaron Holzer is a Management Student in the Hough Graduate School of Business at the University of Florida. He enjoys watching and writing about football, as well as playing softball and basketball recreationally.*

## HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL SCORES/SCHEDULES

#### LAST WEEK'S SCORES

Thursday, Aug. 28  
C. E. King 32, Spring Westfield 14  
New Caney Porter 44, Galena Park 20

#### Friday, Aug. 29

Pasadena Memorial 22, Channelview 19  
Dallas South Oak Cliff 41, North Shore 31

#### THIS WEEK'S GAMES

Thursday, Sept. 4  
SEP 4 Galena Park at Baytown Sterling at 7 p.m., at Stallworth Stadium in Baytown

#### Friday, Sept. 5

SEP 5 C. E. King at Dickinson at 7 p.m., at Sam Vitanza Stadium in Dickinson  
SEP 5 Channelview vs Aldine MacArthur at 7 p.m., at Ray Maddry Stadium  
SEP 5 North Shore vs. Crowley at 7 p.m., at Galena Park ISD Stadium

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**Public Service Announcement: Fair Housing, It's the Law**

To promote fair housing practices, the City of Jacinto City encourages potential homeowners and renters to be aware of their rights under the National Fair Housing Law. Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended, prohibits discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status or national origin in the sale or rental of units in the housing market. For more information on fair housing or to report possible fair housing discrimination, call the Texas Workforce Commission at (888) 452-4778 or (512) 463-2642 TTY: 512-371-7473.

**Policy of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability**

The City of Jacinto City does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or employment in, its federally assisted programs or activities. The Mayor has been designated to coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements contained in the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) regulations implementing Section 504 (24 CFR Part 8).

**Citizen Participation & Grievance Procedures Notice**

The City of Jacinto City has adopted complaint and grievance procedures regarding its Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR). Citizens may obtain a copy of these written procedures at 1301 Mercury Dr Jacinto City, TX, 77029-2538 during regular business hours. Citizens may also request the procedures be mailed to them by calling the Mayor Civil Rights Officer at (713) 674-8424. These procedures outline the steps for a citizen to follow if s/he wishes to file a complaint or grievance about CDBG-DR activities. A person who has a complaint or grievance about any services or activities with respect to the CDBG-DR project, may during regular business hours submit such complaint or grievance, in writing to the City Manager, at 1301 Mercury Dr, Jacinto City TX 77029-2538 or may call (713) 674-8424. The City of Jacinto City will make every effort to respond fully to such complaints within fifteen (15) working days where practicable.

**Equal Employment Opportunity Statement**

The City of Jacinto City does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin.

**Notice to Section 3 Residents and Business Interests**

The City of Jacinto City has received Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding for a construction project. The City of Jacinto City invites individuals and businesses to certify themselves as Section 3 eligible by registering with the Mayor, the Section 3 Coordinator. Section 3 Residents must reside in a Public Housing unit, or be a low or very-low income person residing in the area of CDBG-DR funded project and be interested in seeking employment on CDBG-DR funded projects. Businesses may be designated as Section 3 eligible if 51% or more of the business is owned by Section 3 Residents, at least 30% of permanent, full-time employees are or have been Section 3 Residents in the past 3 years, or if business commits to subcontract in excess of 25% of dollar award of all subcontracts to Section 3 business concern. The City of Jacinto City shall notify registered Section 3 Residents and Business Interests of employment and contracting opportunities related to the CDBG-DR funded projects. Registration and information is available at the City of Jacinto City, 1301 Mercury Dr, Jacinto City, TX 77029-2538 or by calling (713) 674-8424.

**Aviso Publico Vivienda Justa; Es la Ley**

Para promover prácticas de equidad de vivienda, La Ciudad de Jacinto City anima a los propietarios e inquilinos potenciales a ser conscientes de sus derechos bajo las leyes nacionales de Vivienda Justa. Título VIII de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1968, como enmendada, prohíbe la discriminación contra cualquier persona por motivos de raza, color, religión, sexo, discapacidad, estado familiar o origen nacional en la venta o renta de unidades en el mercado de la vivienda. Para obtener más información sobre la equidad de vivienda o para informar sobre una posible discriminación de vivienda justa, llame a la Comisión Laboral de Texas al (888) 452-4778 o (512) 463-2642 TTY: 512-371-7473.

**Politica de No Discriminar a Base de Estado de Discapacidad**

La Ciudad de Jacinto City no discrimina por motivos de discapacidad en la admisión o acceso a, o empleo, en sus programas o actividades que reciben ayuda federal. Mayor ha sido designado para coordinar el cumplimiento de los requisitos de no discriminación contenidos en el Departamento de Vivienda (HUD) y reglamentos de Desarrollo Urbano de aplicación de la Sección 504 (24 CFR Parte 8).

**Participación Ciudadana y Procedimientos de Quejas Aviso**

La Ciudad de Jacinto City ha adoptado procedimientos para quejas y denuncias con respecto al programa de recuperación de desastres en asignaciones en bloques de desarrollo comunitario (CDBG-DR). Los ciudadanos pueden obtener una copia de estos procedimientos escritos en 1301 Mercury Dr, Jacinto City, TX, 77029-2538 durante las horas regulares. Los ciudadanos también pueden solicitar los procedimientos por correo al llamar a Mayor, Oficial de Derechos Civiles, en (713) 674-8424. Estos procedimientos describen los pasos que se deben seguir para que un ciudadano pueda, si desea, presentar una queja o reclamo acerca de las actividades del programa CDBG-DR. Una persona que tiene una queja o reclamación sobre cualquiera de los servicios o actividades en relación con el programa CDBG-DR, lo pueden hacer durante las horas regulares por escrito a la City Manager, a 1301 Mercury Dr, Jacinto City, TX, 77029-2538 o pueden llamar a (713) 674-8424. La Ciudad de Jacinto City hará todo lo posible para responder con plenitud las quejas dentro de los quince (15) días hábiles cuando sea posible.

**Declaración de Igualdad de Oportunidades de Empleo**

La Ciudad de Jacinto City no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, religión, sexo, orientación sexual, identidad de género u origen nacional.

**Aviso a Residentes de Sección 3 e Intereses Comerciales**

La Ciudad de Jacinto City ha recibido fondos de recuperación de desastres en asignaciones en bloques de desarrollo comunitario (CDBG-DR) para un proyecto de construcción. La Ciudad de Jacinto City invita a individuos y empresas a certificarse como elegibles para la Sección 3 registrándose con Mayor, el Coordinador de la Sección 3. Los residentes de Sección 3 deben residir en una unidad de vivienda pública, o ser una persona de ingresos bajos o muy bajos que residan en el área del proyecto financiado por CDBG-DR y estar interesados en buscar empleo en proyectos financiados por CDBG-DR. Las empresas pueden ser designadas como elegibles para la Sección 3 si el 51% o más del negocio es propiedad de Residentes de Sección 3, al menos 30% de los empleados permanentes a tiempo completo son o han sido Residentes de Sección 3 en los últimos 3 años, o si la empresa se compromete a subcontratar más del 25% de la adjudicación en dólares de todos los subcontratos a la preocupación comercial de la Sección 3. La Ciudad de Jacinto City notificará a los residentes registrados de la Sección 3 e intereses comerciales sobre las oportunidades de empleo y contratación relacionadas con los proyectos financiados por CDBG-DR. El registro y la información están disponibles en la Ciudad de Jacinto City, 1301 Mercury Dr, Jacinto City, TX 77029-2538 o llamando al (713) 674-8424.

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# Harris County ESD 12 welcomes new fire chief Marshall Hutton, adds two pumper trucks

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



The fire crew, commissioners, and guests with the new pumper trucks that are now in service.

back to the days of horse-drawn fire apparatus. “A horse can’t go backwards with it being hooked up, so when the farmer would return from a call, they would disconnect the horses, clean them up, and then push the wagons back into the station,” Commissioner Bryan Clements explained. “The push-in ceremony is symbolic of pushing the fire truck into the station to put it in service, meaning it’s ready to respond.”

The new trucks are a significant addition to ESD-12’s fleet, which includes two stations, two engines, and a ladder truck. The department, which covers an area of 9.75 square miles with a population of about 60,000 people, is known for its high level of preparedness and quick response times. “We have a full box

alarm on scene within 8 minutes 90 percent of the time,” Hutton said.

ESD-12 has been a fully paid department since 2018, with no volunteers or part-time staff. The department achieved an ISO Class 1 rating in 2022, a testament to its high standards in equipment, training, and response capabilities. The ISO Class 1 rating places the department in the top 1 percent of fire departments across the United States. Just over 400 departments out of more than 40,000 have achieved that distinction and only 74 in Texas.

“We have great water supply systems in our area, and we do a minimum of two hours of training per day,” Clements added.

Looking ahead, Hutton has ambitious plans for the department, including ex-



ESD-12 has enhanced its firefighting capabilities with the acquisition of two new pumper fire trucks. These trucks, which were ordered about two years ago, arrived recently and were purchased for a total of \$1.4 million.

panding the existing shop, building a new shop, and separating administration from the fire station.

“I want to get my staffing full and fill all the trucks up completely,” he said. “We’re concentrating on getting firefighters hired, trained up well, and being well-versed in their

roles.” The ESD-12 board has been extremely supportive of these initiatives. Commissioner Clements emphasized the board’s commitment to fiscal responsibility and the importance of being good stewards of taxpayer mon-

ey. “We have \$0 debt, and the ladder truck and two pumpers we just bought have all been paid for without entering into any debt,” Clements said.

ESD-12 receives one-cent on sales tax and 5 cents on every \$100 ad valorem taxes to support

their efforts in firefighting. The district serves over 65,000 residents.

For more information, please contact the Harris County ESD-12 Fire Department on their website at <https://hcesd12.net/> or on their non-emergency number at 713-453-1811.

# Congresswoman Garcia’s Redistricting Town Halls,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

has also been pushing to take his redistricting plan to other Republican-led states, like Indiana and Missouri.

California unveiled a new congressional map Friday that would give Democrats up to five new U.S. House seats, which state voters, would have to adopt in a November special election.

The new extreme GOP gerrymandered district maps will move Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia into a new area with hardly any of her current constituents she been representing. Congressman Al Green will also have a complete new makeover of constituents, there’s 3 more Democrat congressional representatives being drastically changed.

Most all polls are leaning Democrat because of the high inflation from Trump’s tariffs and tough immigration policies of deporting immigrants who’s been here for years without serious criminal issues.

At the town hall citizens were allowed to ask questions and to make a comment and every speaker expressed their dissatisfaction with having new maps. Mostly were upset because the new maps will remove them from their lifelong congressional district and placed them in another new district with the possibility of a different representative than they now have.

Congresswoman Garcia spoke at length about how she felt the new maps were unfair to citizens, especially minority citizens. She stated the White House is trying to dictate who voters get to vote for.

Garcia said, “TX-29 was created as a Latino-majority opportunity district following the 1990 Census, and it has remained one for more than 30 years. The new maps divide those Latino communities for one reason: power. Repub-



Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia giving a Univision interview at her Town Hall, August 27th. (Photo by Allan Jamail)



145th District State Rep. Christina Morales making remarks concerning GOP redistricting maps at Rep. Sylvia Garcia’s town hall meeting 8-27-25 (Photo by Allan Jamail)

licans know their ideas are unpopular, so they resort to cheating and threats. They targeted urban minority districts dismantling our District 29 into 4 different districts. I trust the courts will see through this. Just like in 2003, I believe there’s a real possibility some of these newly-drawn districts will be struck down by the courts for violating Section 2(b) of the Voting Rights Act. The best thing people can do now is get informed and refuse to stay silent.”

Annette Ramirez, Harris County’s Tax Assessor-Collector & Voter Registrar was present at the non-partisan meeting to answer questions that was pertaining to her office. Many attendees wanted to know how and when they would be able to tell what congressional district they’d be in if the maps were approved by the courts.

Ramirez said, “Our office is monitoring the legislature and the courts while preparing to carry out redistricting duties as required under the law. Barring any directive from the courts or other delays, the new maps should take effect in 2026 with voters receiving their updated voter registration certificates in early 2026.

Voters’ first opportunity to vote in their new congressional district will be in the 2026 primaries.”

Christina Morales, 145th District State Rep. was in attendance, she said, “These new maps tear apart our historic neighborhoods and weaken the voices of Black and Brown Texans. Communities that have stood together for generations are being split up for partisan gain, silencing the people who built this city. Redistricting should be about fair representation, not political manipulation. While they are busy drawing their lines, we have the true power to draw our future—by turning out to vote and making our voices heard.”

Morales said in order to split-up minorities these new maps even broke-up voters into different congressional districts (CD’s) who reside in the same voting precincts. She said some of the new CD’s was so skillfully done to make them appear like the minorities had a majority. One CD showing minority voters had a slim 50.9% edge. But she said they took minorities who has a low expectancy of voting and put them in a CD to pad the minority totals.

Carol Alvarado, Texas Senator District 6 was

available via virtually since the senate was in session. She said the required public hearing was not conducted in public but by virtual attendance. “Democrats wanted public in-person hearings,” she said. “Donald Trump is afraid to have public hearings so citizens could attend to witness the shame maps.”

She said after the Senate Republicans voted the sham maps out of committee on the first vote. Later she said they revised the maps which were just approved and changed them without any kind of a public hearing on the new changes.

Alvarado’s Senate District 6 of Houston’s East End and East Houston said, “These new sham maps pairs the communities in the East End with Liberty County communities where they’ll be not much interaction with each of these communities.”

Jon Eric Rosenthal, State Representative of the 135th District was present virtually. He’s the Democrat’s Vice-Chair on the Redistricting Committee. He said, “It’s very obvious those who drew the new maps were going after communities of color so they could dilute their voting strength.”

Rosenthal said, “This is

not the end of the fight. These maps are a racist assault on fair representation and on democracy itself.”

Law suits have been filed against Gov. Abbott & Texas regarding the new maps of House Bill 4. A hearing is scheduled to begin on October 1, 2025 thru the 10th in the U. S. District Court for the Western District of Texas, El Paso Division to address the state’s congressional redistricting plan. The 3-judge panel has set a preliminary injunction hearing on requests to block the new congressional map

The League of United Latin American Citizens, (LULAC) a group of 13 Texas voters – filed suit within hours of the redistricting bill’s passage. The map “viscerates minorities’ opportunity to elect their candidates of choice in four key areas of the state”, the filing states.

“NAACP sues Abbott & Texas over congressional redistricting, saying it strips Black voters of political power. The organization’s suit also says that the redrawn Texas maps violate section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, accusing the state of committing a racial gerrymander with its maps that strip Black voters of their political power.

“The state of Texas is only 40% white, but white voters control over 73% of the state’s congressional seats,” said Derrick Johnson, president and CEO of the NAACP. “It’s quite obvious that Texas’s effort to redistrict mid-decade, before next year’s midterm elections, is racially motivated. The state’s intent here is to reduce the members of Congress who represent Black communities, and that, in and of itself, is unconstitutional.”

The lawsuit, joined by the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, names Texas’s Republican governor, Greg Abbott, and secretary of

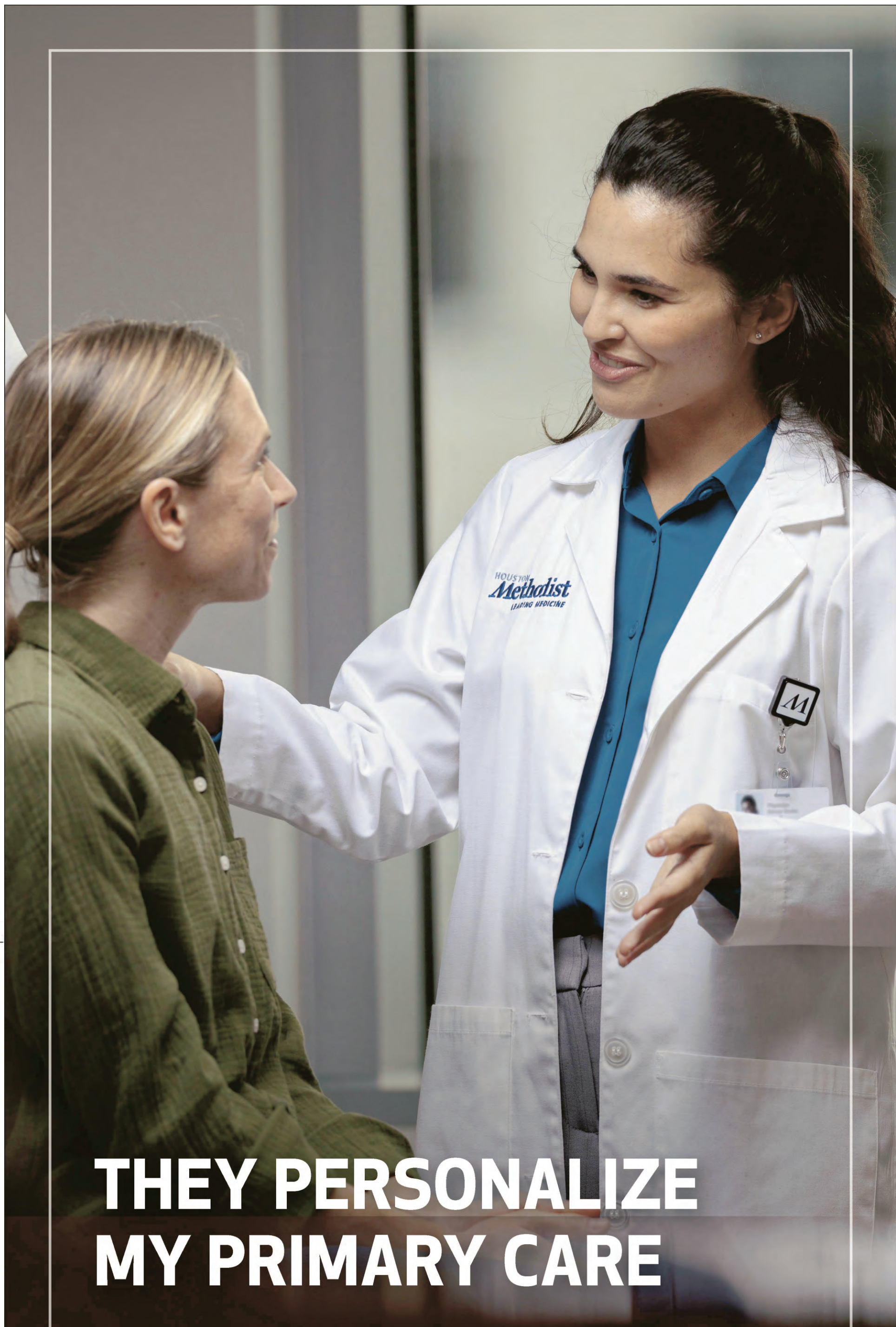
state, Jane Nelson, as defendants. It asks a federal judge for a preliminary injunction preventing the use of the redrawn maps, arguing that the redistricting violates the US constitution by improperly reducing the power of voters of color. It also argues that the maps violate section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

“We now see just how far extremist leaders are willing to go to push African Americans back toward a time when we were denied full personhood and equal rights,” the president of the Texas NAACP, Gary Bledsoe, said in a statement. “We call on Texans of every background to recognize the dangers of this moment. Our democracy depends on ensuring that every person is counted fully, valued equally and represented fairly. We are prepared to fight this injustice at every level. Our future depends on it.”

In a sharp break against longstanding progressive efforts to turn redistricting over to neutral commissions, the NAACP said today that it “is urging California, New York and all other states to act immediately by redistricting and passing new, lawful and constitutional electoral maps” to counter expected efforts in Texas and other states to redraw maps for midterm advantage.

Congresswoman Garcia had most of her staff there to assist the attendees, on hand were, Chris McCarthy, Chief of Staff, Gloria E. Moreno, District Director, Joseph Guzman, Press Secretary, Frank Gonzalez, Director of Special Projects, Angie Rodriguez, Constituent Services, Marissa Rendon, Staff Assistant, & Karime Ramos, Communications Assistant.

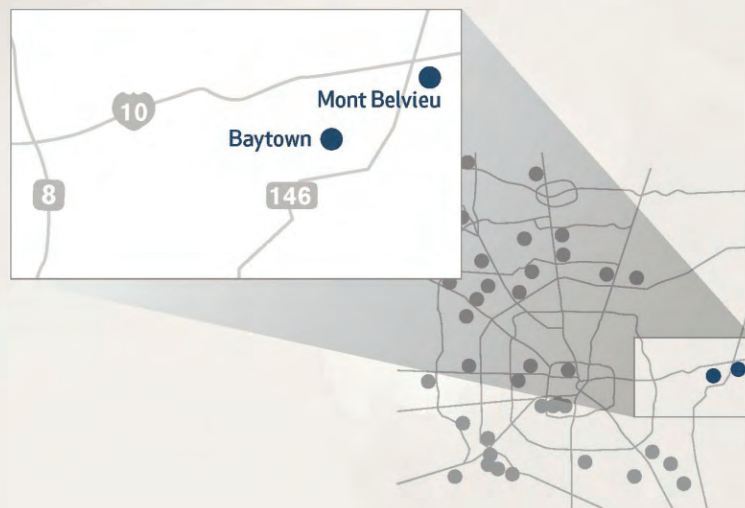
This issue is very fluid changing everyday; I hope to keep you informed with a weekly update.



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