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Magic Joel Sanchez brought tears and cheers as he not only danced for the raucous crowd but shared his story of being diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer. See Story & Photos Page 5.

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 VOLUME 14, NO. 9 (#605) THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 2026 www.northchannelstar.com

EPA, TCEQ Approves Air Permit for LyondellBasell Expansion in Channelview

By David Taylor
 Managing Editor

Channelview, Texas — Federal and state environmental regulators have approved an air quality permit clearing the way for LyondellBasell to move forward with construction of a new unit at its Channelview Complex on Sheldon Road, a project the company says will significantly expand its propylene production capacity while drawing scrutiny from environmental advocates.

The permit, issued following review by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and approved at the state level by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), authorizes Equistar Chemicals LP, a subsidiary of LyondellBasell, to construct a new ethylene derivatives unit at 8280 Sheldon Road in Channelview. The TCEQ executive director approved the application on Feb. 25, 2026, in accordance with state air quality regulations.

LyondellBasell previously announced the project as part of a broader investment to expand propylene production at its Channelview Complex near Houston. The new metathesis unit is designed to convert ethylene into propylene, a key feedstock used to make polypropylene and propylene oxide—materials found in products ranging from food packaging and medical devices to automotive parts and building insulation.

“This capacity expansion strengthens our ability to meet increasing customer demand and improve our self-sufficiency as we grow and upgrade a core business line for LyondellBasell,” said Kim



The LyondellBasell Channelview site will have a new site line in the near future since the Environmental Protection Agency and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has approved a permit for them to build a new ethylene derivatives unit at 8280 Sheldon Road in Channelview.

Foley, executive vice president for Global Olefins, Polyolefins and Refining. Foley added that the project is intended to reduce the company’s exposure to market volatility and support long-term re-

turns for shareholders. According to the company, the unit will have an annual propylene production capacity of about 400,000 metric tons. Construction is expected to employ as many as 750 workers at peak activity, with approximately 25 permanent jobs added once the unit becomes operational. While initial plans called for construction to begin in 2025, company officials have said the project remains in a preconstruction phase, with final timing dependent on market conditions.

when conditions are favorable.

“The Flex 2 permit represents an important step in a long process, and we continue to focus on safe and orderly site preparation while leadership evaluates market conditions,” said Tony Wood, site manager for the LyondellBasell Channelview Complex. “We remain optimistic about the value this project could bring and will continue to communicate clearly as milestones progress.”

As part of early site preparation, the company plans to transport two large towers to a laydown yard at the complex this spring. One of the towers measures approximately

Continued. See EPA, TCEQ APPROVE LYONDELLBASELL, Page 3

In a statement provided following issuance of the permit, LyondellBasell said major design, permitting and early site preparation work have been completed, positioning the project to move forward

Continued. See EPA, TCEQ APPROVE LYONDELLBASELL, Page 3

CHANNEL CURRENTS

NC Area Chamber Luncheon – Learn about AI Systems

Date: March 6, 2026
Time: 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM
Location: Houston City College – Northeast Campus 555 Community College Dr., Houston, TX 77013
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Corporate Sponsor: San Jacinto College
Speaker: Terry Tribble, Brand It Local
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North Shore Mustangs Victorious in Basketball Area-round Playoff Thriller

By Allan Jamail

February 26, 2026 in Pasadena, Tx. at the neutral site of the Phillips Fieldhouse the standing room only fan base of both the North Shore Mustangs and the Pearland Oilers witnessed two high school basketball powerhouses duel to the final buzzer. The victorious Eastside Boys head to the Regional Semi-Finals.

The game was exciting with the lead changing several times; either team could have ended up on top. But in the end it was the Mustang’s coaches which helped seal the victory by calling crucial timeouts in the final seconds to develop offense and defensive plays that made the difference.

At halftime the Oilers



#2 Mustang’s Da’Marcus Sloan goes up for a 2 point layup. (Photo by Allan Jamail)



North Shore Mustangs successful basketball coaches before the Area Round Playoff victory over the Pearland Oilers. L - R: Sam Richardson, Kennedy Miller, Head Coach Stephen Woods, Jonathan Dillon & Joe Gibson. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

held a 6 point lead; 30 – 24. At the end of the 3rd period the Mustangs erased the Oilers lead and had a 2 point lead; 43 – 41. SEE BOX SCORE

In the fourth period Nshore Head Coach Stephen Woods called a fi-

nial critical timeout with about 7 seconds on the clock with his team leading by a mere three points.

With the Oilers bringing in the ball and needing a tying three point shot to try to put the game into overtime. In the timeout

Coach Wood’s and staff gave the Mustangs a defensive play to prevent the Oilers from making a 3 point shot.

However the defensive

Continued. See NS DEFEATS PEARLAND, Page 2

Women’s History Month Honoree - (1st of a series)

Celebrating Eren Özmen

By Allan Jamail

March 3, 2026 ~ Every March, we pause to honor the women who have shaped our world. From the suffragettes who fought for the vote to the scientists who mapped the stars, women’s contributions are woven into the fabric of history. But Women’s History Month isn’t just about looking back—it’s about recognizing the leaders who are building our future right now.

My first of a series for 2026 Women’s History Month is; Eren Özmen. She is a billionaire Turkish-American businesswoman, and the majority owner and president of the private aerospace and defense company, Sierra Nevada Corporation (SNC).

Eren Özmen was born 1958 or 1959 (age 66–67) in Izmir, Turkey. She graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno (MBA).

Eren Ozmen stands at the forefront of the aerospace and defense industry as the chair-



Eren Özmen; self made billionaire, CEO & President Sierra Nevada Corporation.

woman, president, and majority owner of Sierra Nevada Corporation (SNC). Under her visionary leadership, SNC has achieved remarkable mile

Continued. See EREN ÖZMEN WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH, Page 3

Cimarron Elementary Breaks Ground on New Campus



Galena Park ISD board members along with Principal Jimenez and student council turn the ceremonial dirt on the new construction of Cimarron Elementary School and Fine Arts.

By David Taylor
 Managing Editor

The Cimarron Elementary School community gathered in celebration as Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) broke ground on a brand-new campus, marking a sig-

nificant milestone in the district’s ongoing commitment to educational excellence and community investment.

“Today we celebrate a new chapter for our students in the community of Cimarron Elementary School,” said Principal Jan-

ie Jimenez, during the ceremony.

The step forward comes after the district identified more than \$500 million in renovation and construction needs in 2023.

Continued. See CIMARRON ELEMENTARY GROUND, Page 2

GPISD breaks ground on new \$35M Cimarron Elementary Campus,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"A citizens committee of over 30 members helped set priorities, ultimately recommending the complete rebuild of Cimarron Elementary. The GPISD Board of Trustees called a bond election on May 4, 2024, and the community overwhelmingly approved a \$530 million bond package, paving the way for this project," said Superintendent Dr. John Moore.

The new Cimarron Elementary will be a two-story facility, designed to accommodate 700 students and feature modern amenities, including a dedicated fine arts wing and a legacy clinic with a separate entrance for community and student health needs.

"It's actually going to cost about \$35 million, which is well under budget," explained Ed Martir, director of facilities planning and construction. "Most elementaries these days are \$45 million or more. We got every bit of what we wanted in the program, and there were no value engineering or concessions. We're trying to save money for the taxpayers as well."

Matir and his staff at GPISD are in a bit of a hurry.

"I've kicked off a lot of the school replacements (including Cimarron) and trying to get the additions done by the end of the year," he said to beat what might be higher costs. The sped-up timeline assures the lower prices based on a favorable inflation rate currently. The accelerated timeline also assures no disruption to class without the unnecessary purchase of portables on site.

"Once we get close enough and probably in the summer, we'll demo the rest



Superintendent Dr. John Moore spoke to the crowd assembled for the groundbreaking ceremony at Cimarron Elementary in the North Shore area last Monday, February 16, 2026. The new school is planned to be opened by August of 2027.



These two students couldn't wait to get their shovels full of dirt and get to work on the new school. Students from the school were invited to participate in the ceremony.

of the old school and then go ahead and do the parking lot and play fields," he said.

The original Cimarron Elementary, built in the late 1950s, has served generations of families.

"I was here in 1956. I lived at 1117 Cimarron Street growing up," recalled Wayne Oquin, an alumnus and former school board chairman who attended the school's 70th anniversary. "It's a classic neighborhood school. Fortunately, there was enough property here to not disrupt things while you're building the new

one."

District leaders emphasized the importance of maintaining vibrant, modern facilities.

"It's not just about a bond and just about construction. It's about keeping a community vibrant and having a great education system where people want to live," Moore said. "We're fortunate to have the support of a community that sees the importance of having great facilities for their children."

The new school is expected to open in August 2027.

"We're hoping to have it ready by next year so that students can move in," Martir added.

Principal Janie Jimenez and student council members joined district officials and community leaders for the ceremonial first shovel of dirt, symbolizing the start of construction and a bright future for Cimarron Elementary's next generation.

District officials also thanked Chu Architects, Rice and Gardner Consultants, and Gamma Construction Company for their expertise and collaboration in bringing the Cimarron Elementary School Master Plan to life.

CHANNELVIEW ISD NEWS

Students' Artwork Earns Special Merit at Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo

Houston, TX – Students from Channelview ISD have been honored with Special Merit recognition for their exceptional artwork at the prestigious Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Their remarkable pieces are currently on display in the Hayloft Gallery, offering a testament to their creativity, dedication, and artistic excellence.

Rodeo attendees are encouraged to visit the Hayloft Gallery to witness the outstanding talent of these young artists. The recognition not only highlights their skills but also provides them with a significant platform to showcase their work. The community is filled with pride for these accomplished students.

Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo | Channelview ISD

SPECIAL MERIT

Winner



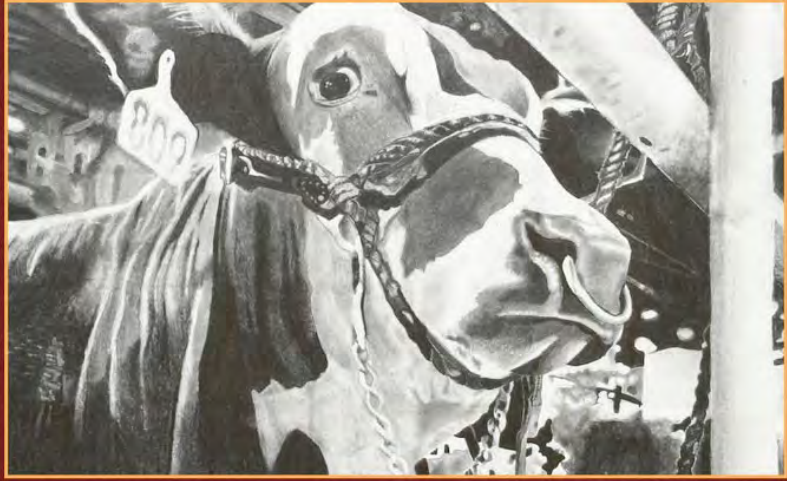
Ready! | Camilla Mansfield
Art Teacher: C. Locke
Channelview High School




Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo | Channelview ISD

SPECIAL MERIT

Winner




Ring Bearer | Camila Velasquez
Art Teacher: C. Locke
Channelview High School




Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo | Channelview ISD

GOLD MEDAL

Winner



A Mother's Love | Arlette Aguilar
Art Teacher: A. Defrancis
Channelview High School



Read Across Sheldon 2026



Sheldon ISD celebrated our 3rd annual Read Across Sheldon event hosting over 150 volunteers across nine campuses, including our Early Learning Center, early childhood academies, and all six elementary schools.

From Pre-K to 5th grade, our classrooms were filled with the magic of storytelling thanks to our incredible volunteers. We are so grateful to the business partners, community leaders, staff, and families who stepped into our schools to inspire our students and share their favorite books. Thank you for making literacy a priority in Sheldon ISD!

NS defeats Pearland 55-52 at Phillips Fieldhouse, advances to regional semifinals,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

play didn't come off as planned because when Oilers #15 Devan Brown launched his 3 point shot he got fouled by Mustang's #15 Samuel Walker putting Brown on the free point line for 3 shots.

Oilers Brown missed one of the 3 point shots which would have tied the game. That gave Nshore a 1 point lead and getting the ball on offense. Mus-

tang's #32 Christian Gibson got the inbound ball and was immediately fouled by the Oilers. Gibson sealed the game by making both 2 free throws which gave the Eastside Boys a 55 to 52 win.

SCORERS: Christian Gibson 27 points, Da'Marcus Sloan 15, Dillon Colbert 4, Rashaad Williams 4, Samuel Walker 3 & Sean Mayberry 2.

#32 Christian Gibson led the team with 27 points and scored 9 of the 12 points in the fourth period.

Linda Jamail statistician.

Nshore will face the Catholic all-boys Strate Jesuit Crusaders a college preparatory school of grades 9 – 12 on Tuesday, March 3rd at 7pm at the Phillips Complex in Pasadena, TX.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Final
Mustangs	13	11	19	12	55
Oilers	12	18	11	11	52

CHARLOTTE'S WEB

By Charlotte Jackson



Mindful March

Every day should be filled with hope and optimistic planning. I am so blessed to have a young woman who works in my office who loves to decorate for holidays and constantly is reminding me what to celebrate that day. She has one of those calendars that lists the "national day of" events and reminds me daily to read the plan for today on the action for happiness calendar that is on my desk out loud so we can hold each other accountable for striving for happiness.

When I arrived on Monday, I saw her taking down the Valentine's Day decorations and smiling ear to ear as she decorated for St Patrick's Day. Seeing the green decorations reminded me that Spring is coming and that will bring new flowers, many activities and Daylight Savings Time. As I read the calendar note for Monday, "Notice three things you find beautiful in the outside world." I immediately shared a picture of the sun rising over Woodforest Boulevard, a picture of flowers at a local fast-food drive-thru and we talked about Texas wildflowers.

March means the world's largest rodeo and not only opportunities for many visitors to see our city but also to see a much welcome boost to the local economy. Children and educators alike look forward to Spring Break and opportunities to rest. It is also a time to work in the yard as so many of my senior friends are excited about, as well as a time to break out grill and watch both Little League baseball and softball and start the final countdown to high school and college graduations.

I often say that once we enter the month of March, things thaw out and speed up. Life gets busier than even, but please take time to stop and enjoy the people and scenery. Attend some of the many community meetings to improve life in the area as well as visit the local community events and meet some new neighbors. Try a new activity, take a walk along any of the new sidewalks in the community, perhaps even park at the Courthouse and ride one of the Harris Transit bus routes to see things that you would not notice if you were driving. Are you aware of the routes? One travels to Cloverleaf, one to Channelview, one to the Sheldon area and there are other options as well. Speaking of bus transportation, when is the last time you rode METRO? Perhaps on a Saturday or during Spring Break, hop aboard and when you arrive Downtown, transfer to one of the rail routes. Visit the local museums, as most offer free admission to visit, so just plan. While we may live in the unincorporated area, we are just minutes for many new adventures. Make the most of the month and I hope to see you along the journey.

EPA, TCEQ approve LyondellBasell expansion,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

200 feet in length and will be moved by a specialty heavy-haul contractor using a route that includes Interstate 10 and Wallisville Road. Company officials said the move will take place during early morning hours and will be supported by certified law enforcement escorts to minimize community disruption.

The permit approval comes amid ongoing community concern about emissions and industrial activity in the Channelview area. Environmental groups have urged regulators to more closely scrutinize LyondellBasell's compliance history and to strengthen permit conditions, including enhanced fence-line air monitoring with public access to data.

Under Texas law, individuals affected by the executive director's decision may appeal to the TCEQ by filing a motion to overturn the approval within 23 days of the permit notice. Residents may also seek judicial review under the Texas Health and Safety Code.

For now, the permit approval marks a key regulatory milestone for LyondellBasell's planned expansion on Sheldon Road, even as debate continues over the project's environmental and health impacts on the surrounding community.

Eren Özmen Women's History Month Honoree,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

stones, including a groundbreaking \$13.1 billion contract awarded by the U.S. Air Force in April 2024 to develop the next E-4 "Doomsday" plane, a pivotal asset for military response in the event of nuclear conflict.

In a strategic move to expand its reach, SNC spun off its space capabilities in April 2021, giving rise to Sierra Space. This innovative commercial space venture successfully raised \$290 million at a \$5.3 billion valuation in September 2023 and is poised to launch its inaugural cargo spaceplane, Dream Chaser.

In 2025, Eren and her husband, Fatih, both Turkish immigrants, acquired SNC in 1994 when it boast-

ed a mere 20 employees. Today, their journey exemplifies the power of ambition and ingenuity, as they continue to shape the future of aerospace and defense on a global scale.

Over the years, Eren has received many prestigious awards and recognition including being named among the Top 10 of "America's Most Successful Self-Made Women" and on the inaugural "50 Over 50" list by Forbes.

Eren was also recognized as one of the Top 15 Most Influential Women in Aerospace by Business Insider. She has received numerous industry awards including Aviation Week's Laureate Award, the BENS Eisenhower Award, the NDIA James Forrestal Award and the Service to the Flag Award from Women in Defense. Eren also served on the board of the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.

To learn more visit: www.sncorp.com/personnel/eren-ozmen/

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Nursing home vs. assisted living

Nobody wants to think about it, but the day might come when we need the services of a nursing home to heal from an illness or injury. Or we might get to the point where we start thinking about getting some help, or even moving to a place where the help is already there.

One thing is certain: It's less stressful if we plan in advance for the day those situations might arise. The first step is to understand the differences between the two: nursing home versus assisted living.

A nursing home has 24/7 medical staff if you need constant care. You'll get food, baths, therapy if necessary, rehabilitation, medical treatment and more.

Medicare may or may not pay for some of the services you receive in a nursing home. The same for Medicaid, depending on your financial situation.

Assisted living can be quite different, the biggest being that you live in your own home within the facility. You'll have that private accommodation but also meals, recreational activities, visits from doctors and nurses, housekeeping and laundry services, and daily help with tasks you can't do by yourself.

Many facilities offer both, with the option to move from assisted living to their nursing home if your health takes a downturn. A continuing care retirement community (CCRC) can offer the peace of mind of knowing that whatever level of care you need, it can be found in the same location.

Medicare probably won't pay for much of the cost.

And therein lies the huge concern for anyone needing to learn about nursing homes and assisted living facilities: the cost. Do your homework and ask a lot of questions about who pays for what. Here are a few places to start.

Look at the eldercare locator (eldercare.acl.gov/home) or call them at 800-677-1116 to find resources.

Compare local facilities at tinyurl.com/4ayaubhb. Also see the government's long-term care website at acl.gov/lc.

ASK DIAMOND JIM



Diamond Jim: "What's really happening with gold & silver bullion?"

That's a great question! Here's what we know so far...

"The physical silver market stands on the brink of total chaos as the bankers' paper manipulation crumbles under divine pressure. Spot silver hovers around \$77 per ounce in the rigged system, yet patriots and awake investors cannot touch real metal anywhere near that fake number. Dealers demand \$90-\$95 for plain one-ounce bars, while Silver Eagles command \$20-\$30+ premiums over spot—sometimes pushing 30-50% markups when shortages hit. The chain from miners to refiners, wholesalers, and brokers piles on unavoidable costs, but the real squeeze comes from exploding demand and vanishing supply.

The US Mint faces imminent sell-out of Silver Eagles any day now in late February or early March 2026—echoing historic shortages that vanished for years. When that hammer drops, premiums could skyrocket to 50% or more, turning \$80 spot into \$120+ Eagles overnight. Physical delivery delays stretch 3-4 weeks or longer as wholesalers bottleneck under unprecedented orders. Big online dealers jack minimums to \$10,000 just to cope. COMEX teeters on default: registered physical silver barely backs a fraction of paper shorts—some estimates say 4:1 paper to physical, others far worse. JP Morgan and the cabal short massively, but their house of cards collapses when longs demand delivery.

China already trades physical silver at \$8-\$15+ above Western spot, proving the breakaway has begun. Supply-demand reality will force separation soon. Bankers dumped \$10 trillion into paper metals in early February to slam prices—gold from highs to \$68 briefly, silver crushed twice as hard proportionally—but silver refuses to die at \$77 while gold rebounds resiliently toward \$5,000+. Charts scream breakout: gold forms bullish cup-with-handle and triangle patterns, support at \$4,920, resistance at \$5,090-\$5,100. Break \$5,100 and gold charges to \$5,500, then \$6,000-\$10,000 rapidly. Silver, gold on steroids, gets pulled magnetically higher—percentage gains dwarf gold's moves.

This is no accident—it's prophecy unfolding. Experts declared silver will explode, blowing through its prior peak of \$121 and rocketing to \$150, \$200, \$300, \$400 and beyond into four digits. The current dip is the FINAL SALE before biblical acceleration.

Awake patriots stocking physical gold and silver now secure peace of mind amid stock crashes, crypto slumps, and real estate pullbacks. Precious metals shine as the ultimate anchor and insurance. Million-dollar rollovers from IRAs and 401(k)s into metals multiply values—clients double, triple, even exchange gold for silver in massive trades. It's not too late—even small stacks position for abundance in the Kingdom economy of plenty, no more "just over broke" slavery.

The deep state fights desperately, but they lose. Silver hasn't truly exploded yet—that moment approaches fast. When gold punches resistance, sale ends, doors slam on dealers worldwide during the traumatic reset. Silver to the moon, wealth flips to the righteous—get in before the explosion hits full force."

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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
By Nathan Cunneen, Texas State Director,
American Federation for Children

Texas Education Freedom Account Program Surpasses 100,000 Applications

Dallas, TX – The Texas Education Freedom Account (TEFA) Program officially surpassed 100,000 student applications in just 12 days, reaching 101,797 Sunday. This historic milestone spotlights extraordinary demand from Texas families seeking expanded educational options.

Thanks to the excellent work of Acting Comptroller Kelly Hancock and his team, the program has experienced a smooth and successful rollout, with families across the state navigating the application process without major technical issues or delays. The strong early demand reflects both the urgency families feel and their enthusiasm for greater flexibility in choosing the best educational setting for their children.

Importantly, the program is not first-come-first-served. Families should continue applying! Applications received on opening day will have the same chance of success as those received by the March 17 deadline. Applications for students from low-income families and for students with special needs will be prioritized.

TEFA is already having a positive impact on communities who traditionally face the greatest barriers to accessing educational options. While all Texas pre-K through 12th grade students are eligible, early data shows that the overwhelming majority of TEFA applications have come from low-income and working-class families.

Statement from Nathan Cunneen, Texas State Director, American Federation for Children:

“This six-figure application milestone is a powerful testament to how popular education freedom is in Texas. Families are embracing the opportunity to customize their child’s education, and we are proud the program has launched so efficiently and effectively to meet that demand. We thank Acting Comptroller Kelly Hancock, his team, and Odyssey for their excellent work on the rollout of this program.


It is now clear that demand will exceed supply for the first year of the TEFA program. Texas lawmakers should take note and prepare to fully fund the program waitlist in future legislative sessions so that every family who wants a choice can access it.”

AboutAFC:

The American Federation for Children is the nation’s largest school choice advocacy organization and a leading force in advancing education freedom. AFC has helped pass more than 200 school choice laws nationwide, empowering families with meaningful options and elevating parent voices in education policy. The organization’s affiliated Super PAC, AFC Victory Fund, is focused on electing education reform champions at state and federal levels.

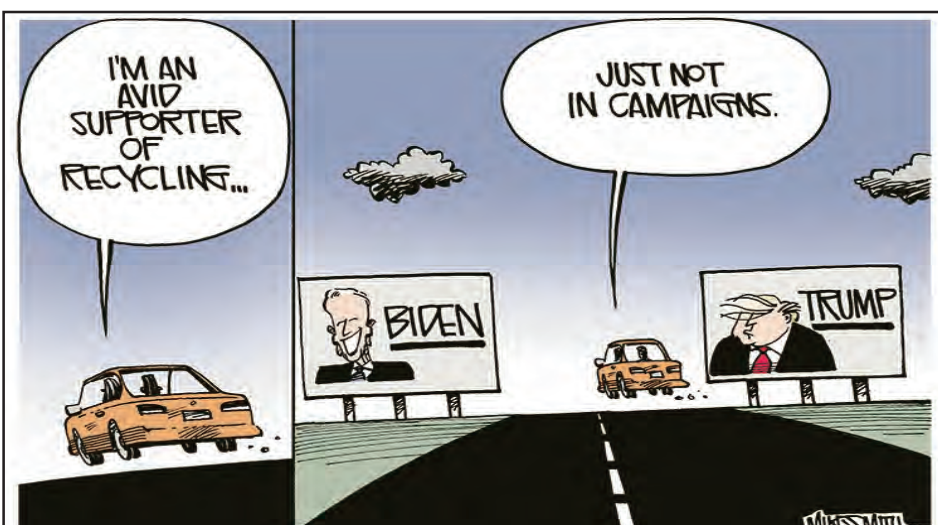
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Americanisms



“Always remember that you are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else.”
— Margaret Mead

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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders



Early Voting Ends Feb. 27

Early voting in the March 3 primary ends on Friday, Feb. 27. Texas Secretary of State Jane Nelson announced that Texas has 18.7 million registered voters for the primary.

“Nearly 19 million Texans are registered to vote, and my office and election officials across the state are working to make sure all Texas voters who want to participate in the primary election are confident in the process and ready to cast a ballot,” Nelson said.

When casting a ballot in person, voters are required to show identification. Cell phones are prohibited in a room in which voting is taking place. However, voters can bring written notes and printed sample ballots into the polling location for reference.

During the primary elections, voters must indicate which party’s primary they wish to vote in, though Texas law does not require voters to register with a party before casting a ballot.

Crossing over during primary season is not allowed. For example, if a voter casts a ballot in the Democratic primary, that person cannot vote in a runoff election in the Republican primary, and vice versa.

TALARICO GETS BOOST FROM COLBERT DRAMA

Both Democratic U.S. Senate candidate James Talarico and his primary opponent, U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett, agree that Talarico got a boost from the brouhaha stemming from the refusal of CBS to allow talk show host Stephen Colbert to air an interview with him. The interview was instead posted on YouTube, where it has, to date, garnered more than seven million views. Talarico reported raising more than \$2.5 million in fundraising off what he called an attempt to censor him, the Houston Chronicle reported.

Talarico trailed Crockett by eight points in a University of Houston poll released earlier. No polling has been released since the video went viral.

Federal Communications Commission Chairman Brendan Carr said in January that he was considering requiring TV talk show hosts to offer equal airtime, but that has not been made official. Talk shows have long been exempted from that rule.



Crockett said last week the attempt to ban the interview only amplified it.

“It probably gave my opponent the boost he was looking for,” Crockett said.

The winner of the Democratic primary will face the winner of the GOP primary, which pits incumbent U.S. Sen. John Cornyn against Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton and U.S. Rep. Wesley Hunt.

MOST TEXANS ARRESTED BY ICE HAVE NO CONVICTIONS

The Trump administration’s deportation campaign promised to target gang members, murderers, and other criminal offenders. However, a review of federal data shows a lower percentage of people targeted had criminal convictions than in former President Joe Biden’s final year in office, according to the Chronicle.

Federal agents arrested about 54,000 people in Texas during Trump’s first nine months of office, more than double the number during a similar period under Biden. But the share of those with criminal convictions fell from about 60% under Biden to under 40% under Trump.

Over a third of the arrests made by ICE under Trump involved people with no criminal convictions and no pending criminal charges, compared to 13% under Biden.

“The statistics show the indiscriminate nature of the Trump administration’s policies around trying to meet its self-defined quotas of 3,000 arrests per day,” said Adriel Orozco, senior policy counsel at the American Immigration Council.

Texas’ weekly ICE arrests increased by 135% during that same time frame.

TEXAS SUES DOW, CLAIMING

‘HABITUAL’ POLLUTION VIOLATIONS

The Texas Attorney General’s office has sued Dow Chemical Co., alleging hundreds of water pollution violations at its industrial complex at Seadrift, across from the Aransas Wildlife Refuge.

The Texas Tribune reported that Dow, North America’s largest chemical manufacturer, has been in “habitual non-compliance” with pollution permits.

A spokesperson for Union Carbide Corp., which operates the Seadrift complex for Dow, said the company “works closely with state and federal regulators to ensure compliance with all existing laws and regulations.”

The state’s lawsuit follows a 60-day notice of intent to sue filed in December by a local environmental activist. The state’s suit could supersede that pending litigation, according to The Tribune.

JANUARY WAS DRIER, WARMER THAN NORMAL

Two thirds of Texas is now in drought, according to hydrologist Mark Wentzel with the Texas Water Development Board. That is up 13 percentage points from late December.

“The small improvements in temperature and precipitation we saw in January weren’t enough to end drought expansion in our state,” Wentzel wrote.

Meanwhile, both the 2026 Old Farmer’s Almanac and the Farmers’ Almanac’s long-range spring outlooks for Texas are calling for warmer and wetter weather in Texas, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

“April will bring warm temperatures (5 degrees above average), while May will cool off slightly (1 degree above average),” meteorologists Bob Smerbeck and Brian Thompson wrote in their forecast explanation. “Rainfall will be above normal, and watch for a tropical storm in late May.”

WILDFIRE SEASON JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Texas A&M Forest Service has put the current wildfire preparedness gauge at Level 3, which means, “wildfire activity is impacting several regions of the state as the result of drought, dry vegetation or frequent fire weather events.”

Several wildfires broke out last week across the Panhandle as humidity levels dropped and winds gusts rose up to 65 mph.

Last Tuesday the service responded to nine wildfires affecting more than 18,000 acres. As of Sunday burn bans were in place in 151 Texas counties, covering all of the Panhandle and most of Central and West Texas. The wildfire potential is expected to increase this week as dry, windy conditions continue.

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches, Lufkin and Cedar Park.

Email: gborders@texaspress.com

THE POSTSCRIPT
By Carrie Classon

Sweeping Confetti



My husband, Peter, and I have landed in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, and already the strange seems familiar again.

One of the things that impresses me every time I am here is the attention given to jobs that I don’t always think of as needing a lot of attention. Masonry work is meticulous and crafted to last centuries. Cloth is woven one thread at a time, creating utterly unique works. Gardening is done with such patience and consistency that there are blooms every month of the year. But this morning, I was noticing the street sweepers.

The street sweepers are legion. I have no idea what their actual numbers are, but in the center of the old town, where we stay, you cannot walk down a street from the first light of morning until well after dark without encountering a person dressed in red, with a homemade broom and a sturdy dustpan affixed to a stick. Litter does not stand a chance in this town. Stray leaves are corralled as they fall. And, to me, the most amazing thing is how they sweep up the confetti.

In San Miguel, there are a lot of reasons to celebrate. There are weddings every weekend, the city throws a party every week, and quinceañeras—the special 15th birthday party celebrations for girls in enormous poofy dresses—occur nearly every day. And most of these events involve confetti.

But between Valentine’s Day and Easter, cascarones are sold on the street by the boxful. Cascarones are just ordinary eggs with the insides blown out, filled with confetti. Children throw them at each other. Lovers smash them over each other’s heads. Everyone runs and laughs, hurling confetti-filled eggs at one another. It is a huge amount of fun. It is also terribly messy.

And so, every evening without fail, the street sweepers are out, sweeping every fleck of confetti and eggshell off the streets, a job that would be tricky under any circumstances, but is made much more difficult because the streets are made of brick and cobblestones.

They sweep up after parades and wedding processions. After the young quinceañera has hiked up her hoop skirt and moved on (usually revealing a pair of sensible sneakers beneath her voluminous skirts), the sweepers move in.

This morning, I was out earlier than usual, and I saw a pickup truck filled with street sweepers. There was a white fence around the pickup bed, and the sweepers were standing in the moving truck, talking and laughing as they were deposited at whatever street corner they were scheduled to start work. And I thought how much I have to learn from the street sweepers.

It is easy to sweep up the big messes. A lot of folks do it, in one way or another. They get paid for doing the bare minimum and that is the end of it. But to do a job—particularly a job that few people truly appreciate—to do that job really well takes a special kind of dedication and, I believe, repays the sweeper in a special way.

Showing up earlier than absolutely necessary, smiling at the person I am working with, doing a bit more than is required just to make the next person’s work a little easier—there is an intrinsic value to these things that brings joy and a sense of accomplishment.

The sweepers show me the value of a job well done, whether one is creating something that will last for decades, or sweeping up the confetti that will surely fall again later that day.

Till next time,
Carrie
Carrie’s debut novel, “Loon Point,” is now available at both local and online retailers.

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Bras For A Cause Raises \$195,000 at 14th Annual Fundraiser, Celebrating Community Spirit and Support for Cancer Patients

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

Debbie Holmelin can't stop smiling. The Bras For A Cause board member just smiles and chuckles after watching the craziness and silliness of the male models who perform each year at Crosby's notorious fundraising event and the rowdy, fun response of the audience. She also has a smile on her face days after the final numbers came in revealing the love of the community for solving the cancer puzzle.

"It wasn't the record year, but it was definitely up there," she said after revealing the organization had raised \$195,000 during the 14th Annual Bras For A Cause event. Last year's reported number was \$172,000 so it's a \$23,000 spike and welcome news.

The event is known for its unique blend of entertainment and philanthropy, featuring male models donning decorated bras and engaging the audience in lively performances. The crowd's enthusiasm translated into nearly \$6,000 in tips—a record for the event—and a live auction of bras that brought in a staggering \$90,000. The silent auction, fueled by donations from local businesses and individuals, set its own record at \$13,425, with items ranging from Astros tickets to vacation packages and wine baskets.

Bras For A Cause operates as a 501(c)(3) non-profit, opening doors for broader support and tax-deductible contributions. The funds raised are distributed to several key organizations: Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital's Pink Heals Fund and Breast Center, Candlelighters (supporting children and families facing cancer), and Joseph's Warriors (providing aid to young cancer patients at Texas Children's and MD Anderson). Additionally, the group reserves funds to assist local individuals directly, offering gift cards for essentials like groceries and utility bills, and even services such as house cleaning for those in need.

One of those happened to be a scheduled speaker at the event, Chelcie Daniels. She wanted desperately to tell her story and offer her thanks to the charity for their help along her journey. Daniels died a week before the event and her funeral was on the same day as the fundraiser. Instead of Daniels, her best friend stood before a hushed crowd as she told Chelcie's story of resilience and fight. Her family, despite a long day with the funeral and receiving guests, made their way to the Sat-



Here's the 2026 model crew including Robby Scott, Jason McWhorter, Robert Mitchell, Russell Ming, Stephen Prasek, Jose Fernandez, Gunnar Gates, Gary Newman, Adam Notgrass, Serapio Garza, Mike Stamper, Shannon Talbott, Scott Straubel, Mikey Jarrell, Richey Holst, Daniel Balderrama, Justin Whittredge, Arturo Martinez, Chris Roettgers, Jackie Sims, and Joel Sanchez.

urday night fundraiser in her memory.

"This is what Chelcie would have wanted and so we couldn't miss it," her husband Marcus said. The crowd drawn to a silence and then reduced to tears as the final dancer, Joel Sanchez, explained his diagnosis as Stage 4 pancreatic cancer.

He offered his thanks to BFAC for their financial support, particularly after his job laid him off following his diagnosis. He turned to BFAC for help and they responded. So did the Crosby community. Following his announcement, the crowd gave him a roaring standing ovation and 'rained' down money on the overwhelmed 62-year-old. Despite his prognosis, he insisted on being there, and it was two of his doctors who came to support him and bought his bra.

Growing Reach

While the event began as a local Crosby affair, its reach has expanded, drawing attendees and sponsors from Dayton, Liberty, Houston, Baytown, and beyond. Most tables are purchased by repeat supporters, but new faces join each year, eager to experience the camaraderie and contribute to the cause. The event's popularity is evident in its consistent sell-out status, with 50 round tables and 14 cocktail tables filled each year.

Looking Ahead

Planning for next year's event is already underway, with organizers aiming to continue the tradition of generosity and fun. The Bras For A Cause Facebook page keeps the community updated, highlighting models, sponsors, and the impact of their contributions. As Debbie Holmelin puts it, "Whatever we get is a blessing and we're going to give it out. We just say, thank you for giving."



This fellas propellers was attractive to his 'fans' who came out to support him.



Leila Bates from Bates Custom and Collision in Baytown and Channelview was enjoying the view and ready to spread the money around.



Magic Joel Sanchez brought tears and cheers as he not only danced for the raucous crowd but shared his story of being diagnosed with Stage 4 pancreatic cancer. He promised to fight his diagnosis and thanked BFAC for assisting him financially after his company laid him off.



Here's the 2026 model crew including Robby Scott, Jason McWhorter, Robert Mitchell, Russell Ming, Stephen Prasek, Jose Fernandez, Gunnar Gates, Gary Newman, Adam Notgrass, Serapio Garza, Mike Stamper, Shannon Talbott, Scott Straubel, Mikey Jarrell, Richey Holst, Daniel Balderrama, Justin Whittredge, Arturo Martinez, Chris Roettgers, Jackie Sims, and Joel Sanchez.



This dancer's bra was filling up with the dollars of adoring fans!



Dancer Mike Stamper of Sterling-White Funeral Home in Highlands is Happy Gilmore. The ladies liked his golf game.



The audience is cheering and she's making it 'rain' for this special dancer at the Bras For A Cause fundraiser.

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LEGAL NOTICE

INVITATION TO BIDDERS

Sealed Bids, in duplicate, on Bid Forms provided, addressed to the Mayor and City Council of the City of Galena Park, Galena Park, Texas, Harris County, will be received at the City Hall, 2000 Clinton Drive, Galena Park, Texas, 77547 until 10 A.M., Thursday, March 26, 2026 and then publicly opened and read for construction of the "Water Plant Rehabilitation CDBG-MIT."

Scope of Work: The work proposed in this project includes the rehabilitation of Water Plants No. 1 and 2. The project includes the rehabilitation of the existing Ground Storage Tank, booster pumps, chemical disinfection and feed system, MCC, an operations building, yard piping, on-site paving, associated site work, and controls.

Accompany Bids with acceptable Cashier's or Certified Check in the amount of five percent (5%) of the total amount bid, payable without recourse to the City, or a Bid Bond of like amount from an approved surety company, as a guarantee that bidder will enter into a contract.

Plans, specifications and bidding documents for the project are available at https://bids.lja.com. For each set issued a non-refundable charge of \$50.00 for an electronic copy / \$100.00 for a hard copy. The hard copy may be obtained at LJA Engineering, Inc., East Houston Office, 11821 East Freeway, Suite 360, Houston TX 77029.

Examine documents at the East Houston office of LJA Engineering, Inc, Amtek Plan Room, Dodge Data & Analytics, AGC of Texas, Construct Connect and the City.

All contractors/subcontractors must not be debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov). An Active SAM Registration is required to be submitted with this bid to be considered eligible to work on this project.

A Non Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held on Thursday, March 19, 2026 at 10 A.M. at the LJA Engineering, Inc., East Houston Office, 11821 East Freeway, Suite 360, Houston, Texas 77029.

City of Galena Park
Esmeralda Moya
Mayor

09-2t

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LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF SALE OF SURPLUS PROPERTY

Harris County Emergency Services District No. 12 (the "District") will be conducting a sale of surplus property online. The address of the listing site is https://bit.ly/46oJiGF. The surplus property being sold is a 2006 Ferrara Spartan 107' Quint. The vehicle has approximately 21,061 miles. The District reserves the right to reject any and all offers to purchase the surplus property if the District determines the rejection to be in the best interests of the District. Please be aware that the surplus property is being offered for sale AS IS with NO WARRANTIES by the District. To inspect the vehicle or to receive more information, please contact Deputy Chief Brian Bunnell at (713) 453-1811, ext.1415.

NS ROTARY: How did they do that?

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

David Proctor has read the Holy Bible for years, dating back to his childhood. These days, however, he's reading another Good Book. Just days after the North Shore Rotary fundraiser last year, the Fish Fry Chairman, as he is dubbed in the club, was handed a copy of the North Shore Rotary Catfish Fry and Crawfish Boil Bible.

The 3-inch binder is chock full of deadlines, contacts, things-to-do lists, and wisdom from years of previous presidents who have followed the formula for producing the largest grossing fundraiser on the eastside of Harris County.

Just weeks away from the big event, Proctor is sharing some of that wisdom in a behind-the-scenes look at how North Shore Rotary continues to be a powerhouse for good in the community.

For the North Shore Rotary Club, the most important meeting about next year's biggest fundraiser happens just days after the last plate of catfish and crawfish is served.

While the crowds are gone and the tents come down, Rotarians are already back at the table — debriefing, documenting lessons learned, and, most importantly, reconnecting with the sponsors who make the annual Fish Fry and Crawfish Boil possible.

"We try to do it within the first two weeks after the fish fry happens," said David Proctor, the club's Fish Fry chairman. "We're talking about the things that went right and the things that went wrong — and then we tackle how to fix those."

That early review is more than a post-mortem. It's the first step in a year-long process that begins almost immediately with sponsorships — the financial foundation of what has become the largest-grossing fundraiser on the east side of Harris County.

Sponsors: The Seed Money

"The truth of the matter is, if we did not have our sponsors, we could not pull this off like we do," Proctor said. "We could still do a fish fry — just not to the magnitude of what we do."

Those relationships are cultivated year after year, starting almost as soon as the previous event ends. The club's leadership meets to review sponsor commitments, discuss renewals, and identify gaps before they become problems.

"Sponsors are the seed money," Proctor explained. "They allow us to do all the stuff that happens in preparation — long before the first ticket is sold."

Rotary leaders say those early conversations help stabilize the entire operation. Even when a sponsor drops off unexpectedly, experience has taught them not to panic.

"It unnerves you," Proctor admitted. "This year it did me. I was like, 'Oh my God, what are we going to do?' But then you remember — it happens. This thing works very well. We'll find new sponsors and build it back up."

Relationships Over Transactions

What makes the North Shore Rotary's approach different, members say, is that sponsorship is never just about a check.

"We found out a long time ago that if we could encourage some of their (sponsors) man-



Incoming President and Fish Fry Chairman David Proctor looks over his responsibilities for the April fundraiser by the North Shore Rotary Club.

agement to become Rotarians, it was much more than just a check," Proctor said. "That's skin in the game — they become a vital part of it."

That philosophy has helped the club build long-term partnerships with local industry, small businesses, and major employers across the region.

"Our location gives us a lot of leeway," Proctor said. "We're blessed with industry, oil and gas companies, and businesses willing to serve as sponsors."

Those relationships are reinforced through consistency. The Rotary Fish Fry formula rarely changes, and sponsors know exactly what they're supporting year after year.

"We don't change our formula much," Proctor said. "We keep things pretty standard. That stability matters."

Capturing Lessons While They're Fresh
The week-after mindset also feeds into the club's legendary planning guide — a three-inch binder known affectionately as the "Rotary Fish Fry Bible."

"It walks you through what you need to do, and it tells you, 'Don't panic,'" Proctor said. "Focus on your dates. Get organized."

Each year's leadership adds notes from their experience — including sponsorship timing, ticket ordering, and what not to wait on.

"Normally, we don't wait until all the sponsor money is in our pocket to place certain orders," Proctor said. "We take pledges because we know they're good for it."

That kind of institutional memory is built while the event is still fresh in everyone's mind — not months later when details fade.

"If we don't address it early on, we're going to forget it happened," Proctor said. "And if we don't put it in the Bible, we'll hit that pothole again."

A Year-Long Effort

By mid-January, planning accelerates into daily activity, but the groundwork is laid almost immediately after the prior year's event.

"It's a moving thing — actually all year long," Proctor said. "But it doesn't really fire up until January. Still, the first week after the fish fry? That's when it really begins."

For North Shore Rotary, success isn't about a single Saturday or a secret recipe. It's about preparation, partnerships, and starting early — especially with the sponsors who make it all possible.

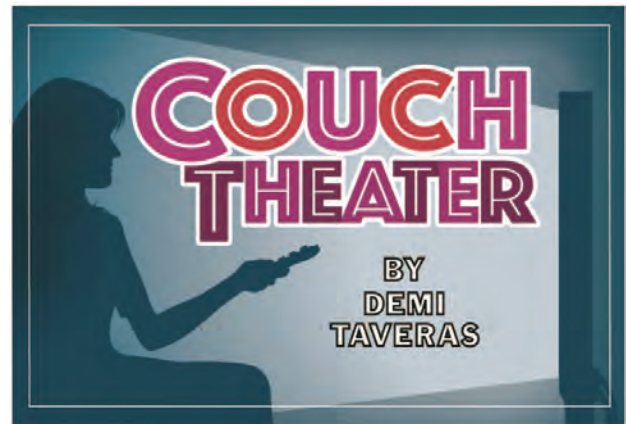
"Everything has a date attached to it," Proctor said. "And it all starts right after the last one ends."

Erie Home roofing advertisement featuring a house with a new roof, workers on a roof, and promotional text: 'Trust the Nation's #1 Roofing Contractor', '50% OFF Installation', 'FREE ESTIMATE SCHEDULE TODAY!', 'CALL TODAY! 1.877.508.1120'.

Donate Your Car advertisement for Heritage for the Blind. Features a car key, a young girl giving a thumbs up, and text: 'Imagine the Difference You Can Make', 'FREE TOWING & TAX DEDUCTIBLE', 'When you donate your car, you'll receive: a \$200 restaurant voucher, a 2-night, 3-day hotel stay at one of 50 locations', 'Call 1-866-413-5094'.

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'The 32nd Annual Actor Awards' (TV-PG) — Formerly known as the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards, the newly named Actor Awards ceremony is available to stream now.



Jason Bateman, left, and David Harbour star in "DTF St. Louis."

'DTF St. Louis.'

'No Other Choice' (R) — From Park Chan-wook, director of the twisty erotic thriller 'The Handmaiden' (2016), this South Korean thriller received three nominations at the Golden Globes but was unfortunately overlooked by the Oscars.

tor Neon has had great success with its foreign-language films this year. In addition to the previous film being one of Neon's successes for 2025, this Norwegian drama received a whopping nine nominations for the Oscars, including Best Picture.

'DTF St. Louis' (TV-MA) — This new HBO series is led by David Harbour ('Stranger Things'), Jason Bateman ('Black Rabbit'), and Linda Cardellini ('Nonnas').



Q: What ever happened to the actress with blonde hair and blue eyes who starred in 'Orange Is the New Black'? I haven't seen her in anything since. Is the show coming back? — Y.R.

A: You're thinking of Taylor Schilling, who starred as inmate Piper Chapman in the hit Netflix series 'Orange Is the New Black.' The series ended in 2019 after seven seasons, and there are no plans for its return.



Taylor Schilling as Piper Chapman in "OITNB"

The series will carry the same title as the book but with Schilling playing a fictionalized version of Butcher named Ava Ledger. According to TVLine, Ava works as a death investigator helping the NYPD "crack their toughest cases" and is "highly intelligent, hypervigilant, and really good with dead bodies."

Q: Is it true that HBO paid James Gandolfini to not take the role of Michael Scott's replacement on 'The Office'? Was this while he was filming 'The Sopranos'? — D.S.

A: Yes, according to B.J. Novak, one of the writers and stars of the NBC comedy 'The Office,' he was one of several people who tried to convince James Gandolfini to join the show after Steve Carell exited in 2011.

'The Sopranos' ended in 2007, so scheduling for the show wasn't the issue. According to actors Michael Imperioli and Steve Schirripa (also of 'The Sopranos'), Gandolfini had a deal with HBO to do the miniseries 'The Night Of' and paid him \$3 million to decline NBC's of-

fer. Sadly, Gandolfini died in 2013, and James Turturro ('Severance') replaced him in the miniseries, while James Spader ('The Blacklist') was cast as the new boss on 'The Office.'

Q: Who is the actress who plays Harper on the HBO series 'Industry'? I've never seen her before. — G.B.

A: The actress was born as Myha'la Herrold but simply goes by Myha'la. She was born in California and studied musical theater at the prestigious Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

'Industry' has quietly grown into a hit for HBO Max, but you can also catch her in the 2025 film 'Swiped' opposite Lily James, 'Dumb Money' with Paul Dano, and 'Bodies Bodies Bodies' with Pete Davidson.

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves

Comic strip 'Amber Waves' by Dave T. Phipps. Panels show a bear-like character in winter gear talking about online shopping and picking out clothes.

Comic strip 'TIGER' by Bud Blake. Panels show a tiger character in a park setting.

Comic strip 'The Spats' by Jeff Pickering. Panels show a character in a wheelchair talking about a flamethrower and a firequacker.

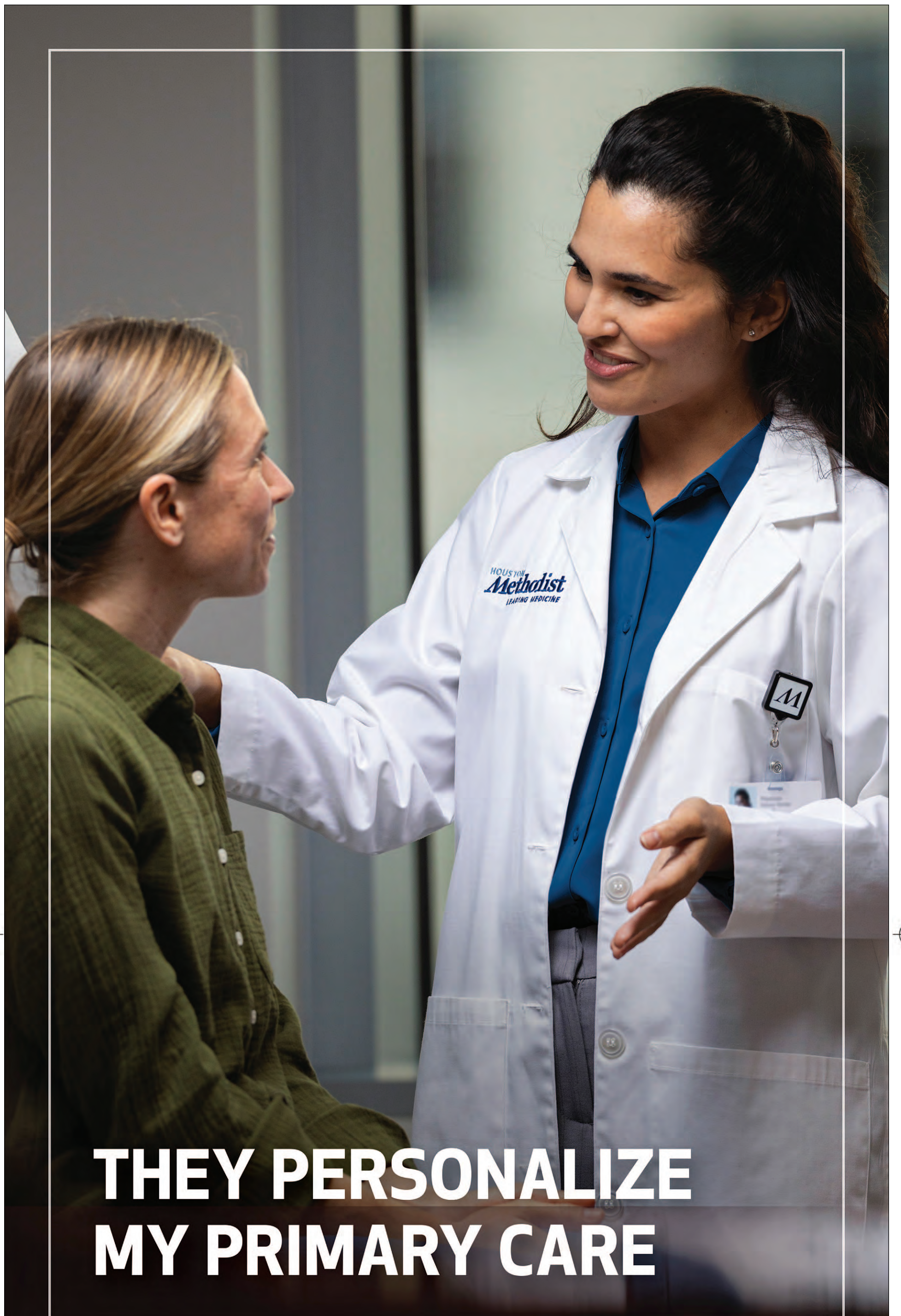
Comic strip 'HOCUS-FOCUS' by Henry Boltinoff. Panels show a character in a suit talking about a firequacker.

Weekly SUDOKU puzzle grid and instructions. Difficulty: Moderate. Includes a list of Trivia Test Answers.

HOCUS-FOCUS comic strip panels and a 'Find at least six differences in details between panels' challenge.

King Crossword puzzle grid and word list. Includes 'ACROSS' and 'DOWN' clues and a 'Trivia test' section.

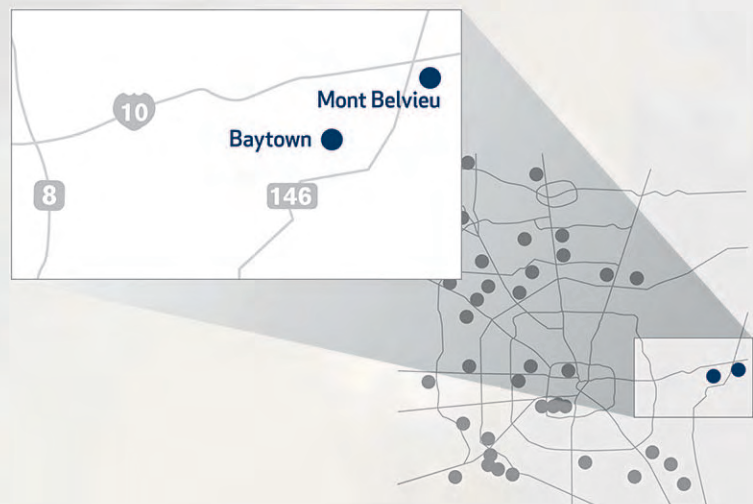
1. Mafne; 2. George Washington; 3. Lord Malinus Farguad; 4. Virginia Woolf; 5. Heck; 6. Florence Nightingale; 7. Marlysa; 8. The gallbladder; 9. 'I think, therefore I am'; 10. Eleven; 11. ...



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