



Members of the Channelview FFA Parade color guard march proudly down the roadway carrying the United States and Texas flags. See Story below & on Page 6.

NORTH CHANNEL STAR

Your News, Your Newspaper

Serving all of the North Shore -- Channelview, Cloverleaf, Sheldon, Galena Park, Jacinto City
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CHANNEL CURRENTS

Safety Measure: Parks to Close Overnight in Galena Park

GALENA PARK, TX — City officials in Galena Park have announced new safety measures following a deadly shooting Sunday night that left one man dead and two others critically injured at a neighborhood park. Effective immediately, all city parks will close daily from 9:30 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. until further notice. Continued. See story on, Page 3

San Jacinto Pilot Club to Host Bunco Fundraiser April 24

The San Jacinto Pilot Club will host a Bunco Fundraiser on Friday, April 24, 2026, at the Hampton Inn & Suites Houston East Beltway 8. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m., with games beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Location:
14120 KARISSA COURT
HOUSTON, TX 77049

Tickets are \$35 per person in advance or \$40 at the door. A table for 12 is available for \$500, which includes wine, a server, and additional special items.

For tickets or more information, contact any San Jacinto Pilot Club member or email SanJacintoPilotClub@gmail.com.

Mustangs Celebrate 2025 State Championship with Banquet Honoring Perseverance and Brotherhood

By Allan Jamail

Baytown, TX. ~ March 30, 2026 at the Hyatt Regency Convention Center the North Shore High School football team celebrated their State Championship with a banquet and awards ceremony which was a fabulous event fittingly for a Dynasty.

Dynasty nowadays is commonly referred to a group of leaders, players and or rulers producing consistent successful accomplishments. GPISD's North Shore Mustang's are just that, a Dynasty.

Having won football state championships of; 2003, 2015, 2018, 2019, 2021 & 2025 clearly makes the Mustangs a legitimate Dynasty.

And while doing this under different head coaches of David Aymond,



Dr. John Moore, Superintendent. First speaker at the banquet.(Photo by Allan Jamail)



Kae Walker, Deputy Director of Athletics & Master of Ceremonies. Second speaker at the banquet.(Photo by Allan Jamail)



Willie Gaston, Head Coach North Shore Mustangs Third speaker at the banquet.(Photo by Allan Jamail)



Judge Joe Stephens. Keynote speaker at the banquet.(Photo by Allan Jamail)

Jon Kay and Willie Gaston, different trustees, different superintendents and different athletic directors says it's not just about anyone individual. It's about the winning culture which exists in the Eastside Community.

The banquet room was filled with players, their families, school officials and the North Shore Mustang Nation's fan base.

The dinner was deliciously prepared... a garden salad, braised chicken over creamy mash potatoes, topped with brown gravy, steamed cauliflower, broccoli and garnished with sautéed kale. Chocolate cake topped with toasted pecans and lemon squares with powdered sugar, rolls, tea, coffee and

Continued. See MUSTANG'S DYNASTY LIVES ON!, Page 2

Planning and Tradition behind Rotary Fish Fry, set for April 25th

By David Taylor
Managing editor

For decades, the North Shore Rotary Club has relied on powerful rallying cries to fuel its largest fundraiser of the year: "Remember Rotary," "Stay the course," and "All in for Rotary." As April approaches, those calls to action are once again bringing members together to support a fundraiser that sends hundreds of thousands of dollars back into the community.

The groundwork for the fundraiser begins long before the first ticket is sold. According to former North Shore Rotary president Cary Stephens, everything starts with securing corporate sponsors.

"The sponsors provide the seed money to get



In last year's Raffle, Nicolas Izaguirre won the top prize, an SUV or truck from Community Toyota, in the annual North Shore Rotary Catfish Fry and Crawfish Boil fundraiser. Rotarian Mini Izaguirre sold the winning ticket.

things started and rolling," Stephens said.

That early funding allows the club to cover up-front costs such as advertising, marketing, posters, and tickets without dipping into other Rotary funds. Stephens credited former Rotarian

and banker Mark Mulloy with introducing the corporate sponsorship model that transformed the fundraiser's potential.

"He developed the idea for corporate sponsors, and his year was the first and he raised somewhere around \$100,000,"

Stephens said. "The money was used as seed money to invest in the start of the fundraiser."

Once sponsorships are secured, the club traditionally kicks off the public phase of the fundraiser with a banquet designed to energize members and officially launch ticket sales. These kickoff banquets have become memorable events in their own right, often built around creative themes.

One of the most iconic banquets was hosted by former club president Jim Gilbert, who drew inspiration from Texas history.

The Remember Rotary battle cry was taken from 'Remember the Alamo. He hosted the banquet at the San Jacinto Monument, where Rotarians were welcomed by period-dressed

Texian Army soldiers and cannons.

Stephens utilized a poker-themed banquet during his presidency.

"When the nolim hold 'em card game was the rage, my theme was 'All in for Rotary,'" Stephens said.

At each kickoff banquet, members receive their assignments—meal tickets, raffle tickets, and promotional materials—and are encouraged to begin selling immediately. Now the club has streamlined some costs by allowing members to print materials themselves, the sense of shared responsibility remains unchanged.

The fundraiser itself is a multiweek effort, com

Continued. See ROTARY FISH FRY SET FOR APRIL 25TH!, Page 3

Channelview FFA Parade Caps Off 63rd Annual Livestock Show

By David Taylor
Managing editor

Strike up the band and roll out the floats — the 63rd annual Channelview FFA Livestock Show came to a festive close Saturday, March 28, 2026, with one of the largest parades in recent years.

This year's parade honored Grand Marshal Mia Young, the retired CISD Career Technical Education Director. Young served 15 years in that role, along with five years as Channelview High School's Dean of Instruction and three years as assistant principal, marking a 30-year career in education.

Parade entries lined up at the former Schochler Primary campus on Deer Pass, following this year's theme, "Best Day Ever."



Continued. See CHANNELVIEW FFA PARADE CAPS OFF, Page 6

Mustangs celebrate 2025 state championship with banquet honoring perseverance and brotherhood: Dynasty Lives On!,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

water. Dr. John Moore Superintendent began the 6:30 pm event welcoming everyone. He recognized each GPISD trustee by name, and then he thanked the sponsors, whose names were on two giant screens during the event.

SPONSORS: The Galena Park ISD Education Foundation, Satterfield & Pontikes Construction, Rice & Gardner Consultants, United Community Credit Union, VLK Architects, PBK Architects, Joe Stephens Law Firm, KNCS Services - Kenneth Wimbley and PFluger Architects.

Dr. Moore said the team's season started with some unfortunate adversity. He said when he saw the team getting off the bus to play their first game out of town he could tell they were still dealing with the adversity of the passing of one of their star players. Even though they lost the game it seemed something positive came from it, they began to come together like a brotherhood.

The team overcame that hardship and displayed perseverance and resilience the rest of the season.

Dr. Moore said, "even though they lost that first game it was maybe a good thing, sometimes losing can ignite a spark and a fire in you that you never knew you had. The team went on to bring home the state championship."

Master of Ceremonies Kae Walker, who's Deputy Director of Athletics gave his welcoming remarks and thanked everyone from the trustees, the administration, the players and the player's parents for their contributions for helping to win the championship.

He thank Supt. Dr. Moore, and former Coach David Aymond for participating in the video presentation and the GPISD Communications Video



Vivian Dancy, Athletic Director. Fifth speaker at the banquet (Photo by Allan Jamail)



David Pierson, NSSHS Principal. Sixth speaker at the banquet (Photo by Allan Jamail)

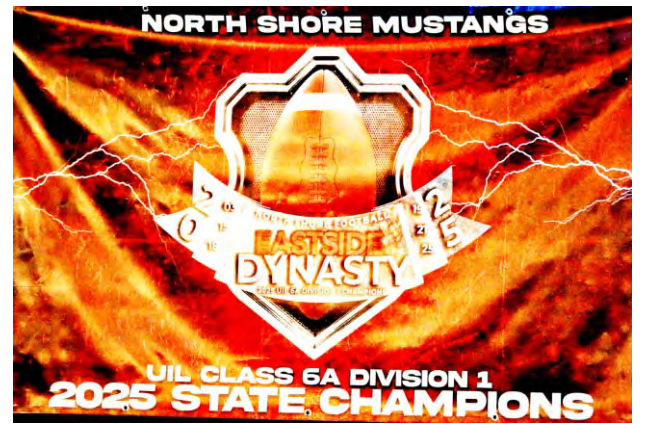


Photo of a graphic taken at the event. By Allan Jamail

Team and the North Shore High School Media Team for all of tonight's great videos and photos.

Walker said after last year's 2024 championship loss rumors circulated that North Shore's football dynasty is over. Then he emphasized that those naysayers are wrong, and with a loud exclamatory voice said, "We have just begun".

Walker concluded in saying the Mustangs were winners because they had a bunch of DAWGS. The word Dawgs when used in football is players with immense grit, relentless competitiveness, and with a high effort to play.

Mustang's junior Kaden Brandley blessed the food so attendees could eat while watching the videos of the season's highlights. At the end of the ceremony he also gave the closing prayer.

Judge Joe Stephens was the Keynote Speaker, others speakers were, Supt. Dr. John Moore, Kae Walker, Coach Willie Gaston, Athletic Director Vivian Dancy, NSSHS Principal David Pierson and Assist. Superintendent Dr. Mechelle Epps.

Speakers during the banquet on numerous occasions used the words, perseverance, brotherhood and dynasty when describing the team.

Keynote Speaker Judge Joe Stephens gave some of his life's personal experiences. He said he was

raised in the eastside and played for North Shore. He said hard work and perseverance to succeed is what helped him to achieve the satisfaction of playing on the Houston Rockets and reaching other goals.

Stephens said to the Mustangs ask yourself... why not me, why not me to become a lawyer, or a doctor or a successful political leader. He said to them set your goals high, shoot for the stars, even if you miss you'll still be up with the stars.

Judge Stephens said when the Friday night stadium lights come on in the eastside community and when the Mustangs take the field the community becomes one in support of the team. Folks put their differences aside and root for their Mustangs.

Mr. Walker said, "Ladies and gentlemen, it's my honor to introduce the leader of this state championship football team. He is also an Eastside kid who graduated from North Shore High School. He played college football at the University of Houston and spent time in the NFL with the Baltimore Ravens. In the book called It's My Life, Matt Malatesta stated "Willie is tough as a 10-day-old toast." Well that toughness carried over to his players this season. Please give it up for our Head Coach, Willie Gaston!"

Coach Gaston received a standing ovation when he

was introduced to speak. He emphasized there were lots of people deserving recognition for their successful title run.

Gaston said their season's path to the title started with some adverse conditions, but the players persevered.

The title run was awesomely demanding, he particularly praised his coaching staff which he said sacrificed being away from their family many long nights during the week and weekends.

He thanked the trustees, the administration and the athletic department and said they gave the team the support and opportunity to compete in the championship game.

Gaston said because of athletic director Ms. Dancy's support the team was able to bring home the state title.

Gaston stressed he and the coaches were not only about teaching players football but teaching them how to succeed in a career after football.

Coach Gaston is a former Mustangs football player, he's made his way back to become the Mustangs first African American head coach to win a state championship.

Walker then said he wanted to introduce his boss, the Godmother of Athletics, our Athletic Director, Ms. Vivian Dancy.

Thank You, Mr. Walker. As many of you know, I'm a woman of few words, so

I'll keep this brief.

First, I want to thank our Board of Trustees and Dr. John Moore for the incredible support you provide to all students across the district.

I also want to recognize our amazing athletic staff: Rosemary Garcia - Athletic Secretary,

Xenia Flores - Secretary, Allison Campbell - Campus Athletic Coordinator, Willie Gaston - Campus Athletic Coordinator and Kae Walker, Deputy Director of Athletics.

Director Dancy said winning a championship is costly; she said there are lots of expenses involved, lots of hard work by her athletic department's personnel. Your dedication makes everything we do possible.

I'd like to congratulate Coach Willie Gaston, his coaching staff, and all of our football players for an outstanding season and for becoming the 2025 6A Division I State Champions. What a remarkable achievement!

Dancy concluded in saying, "tonight you heard the word persevere several times, so what I want you to do after tonight is every time you hear the word persevere think about the 2025 Mustangs."

Principal David Pierson said, "As I have listened to all the wonderful things said about this championship team all season long and here this evening, I

have become increasingly humbled to have played a small part in their young lives. I can truthfully say that these young men, these state champions, are admired and looked up to as leaders on our campus."

"There is not a young man on this team who does not take their leadership role seriously because they know the impact of their attitude, drive, and purpose on others. We admire you for the perseverance you have shown in pursuing your goal - this championship."

Pierson concluded, "But, I think the highest honor I can pay you all this evening is to say, your actions on the field, from here to Dallas, and in the halls of North Shore, have changed the lives of countless others. And, I am one of them! Thank you, 2025 6A Football State Champions- North Shore Senior High Mustangs! As former Principal Joe Coleman would say,

You definitely whooped up on 'em!"

Dr. Mechelle Epps, Assist. Supt. for Student Support Services and Dr. Sherrhonda Hunter, Executive Director for School and Community Relations organized the awards presentation to the players, coaches, trainers and ball boys. As these two ladies always do they made the presentations flawless.

Dr. Epps thanked all her staff for their work in preparing and putting together the banquet.

CHANNELVIEW ISD NEWS

Spotlight on Mrs. Peña Lopez: A Pillar of Support at New Horizons Fine Arts Magnet



As National Assistant Principal Week continues, we honor Mrs. Peña Lopez from New Horizons Fine Arts Magnet for her unwavering dedication to student support and campus success. Her commitment to fostering a thriving educational environment has made a significant impact, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude for her invaluable contributions.

Mrs. Harris Honored During National Assistant Principal Week



In celebration of National Assistant Principal Week, De Zavala Elementary is proud to recognize Mrs. Harris for her exceptional dedication, leadership, and unwavering commitment to supporting both students and staff. Her efforts have significantly contributed to making the campus an outstanding environment for learning and personal growth. The school community extends its heartfelt gratitude to Mrs. Harris for her invaluable contributions.

District Unites in Support of Military-Connected Students on April 10

In a show of solidarity and appreciation, the district is calling on all residents to wear purple on April 10 in support of military-connected students. Purple, representing all branches of the military, serves as a powerful symbol to honor the strength, sacrifice, and resilience of these children and their families.

By donning purple attire, the community aims to come together and express gratitude for the contributions of military families who serve the nation in numerous ways. This initiative seeks to foster a sense of unity and support for those who often face unique challenges due to their military connections.

The district extends its heartfelt thanks to everyone who participates in this meaningful event, encouraging a collective effort to recognize and celebrate the dedication of military-connected students and their families.

PURPLE UP! DAY

TOGETHER WE STAND. TOGETHER WE SUPPORT.

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT BY WEARING PURPLE

APRIL 10

WHY IT MATTERS

- ★ RECOGNIZES THE SACRIFICES OF MILITARY FAMILIES
- ★ CELEBRATES THE COURAGE OF STUDENTS WITH LOVED ONES SERVING

MESSAGE TO OUR MILITARY FAMILIES:

WE SEE YOU. WE APPRECIATE YOU. WE SUPPORT YOU. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE, STRENGTH, AND DEDICATION.

PURPLE UP!

CHARLOTTE'S WEB

By Charlotte Jackson



Personal Responsibility

When did we refuse to accept personal responsibility? It seems as if every day we are seeing reports of senseless deaths, injuries, and heartaches. We see the news on television, online or hear it on the radio. Rarely does a week go by that we are not hearing about a death or injury caused by an intoxicated driver, an unsecured gun or uncontrolled anger. At some point in the past sixty years or so, we decided we could do what we wanted and we did not have to accept responsibility when we failed. This is not working.

Repeatedly, I have seen friends, family and strangers make a mistake and then blame it on everyone else. I know a mother who walked in as her young daughter was about to be raped. Her words to her daughter, in front of the animal who was about to take away her daughter's virginity was "Put your clothes on. We will never talk about this." Research has shown that when a young child is being groomed, molested, and damaged, they usually take on one of three options. Either they will shut down and withdraw in a state of depression, become promiscuous, or run to relationships with others of the same sex. Another friend shared about the night he was beaten by his father for smoking marijuana after a friend's parent found evidence that he and her son had been smoking at her home. Many adults will attest that they too ventured into the use of drugs and alcohol to numb the pain they were dealing with and did not feel as though they could talk to their parents. What would cause a child not to be comfortable talking with their parents? Too often the parents had unresolved trauma in their lives.

Why this trainwreck? For many years, families relied on God and His teaching. Families did not have distractions from television, cell phones, computers, social media, such a wide variety of extracurricular activities and so many options to spend their time and their money. If you have read any of my columns over the years, you have noticed that fact that my faith is in God. It is not in a religion, but in a relationship. People will fail us every time. Religions will fail us. Pastors, parents, employers, siblings, spouses, children, and friends will fail us. Yet when we have a relationship with God, we learn that it is more important to worship Him for all He has done for us. It is through our obedience to Him that we are blessed.

I have gone through many trials and many challenges that others could not understand much less survive, but with God, I have hope and so many promises. I have learned to accept responsibility for my mistakes, repent, ask for forgiveness where necessary and to thank God for loving me. I wake up thanking Him. Praying for the many needs in our world which include my family, coworkers, neighbors and all the way out to the people I may never meet that are facing the same challenges or more. It starts with loving God and accepting personal responsibility

Community Events

51st Annual Catfish Fry, Crawfish Boil, Live Auction, Silent Auction and Reverse Ticket Draw is Saturday, April 25. Serving line starts at 11 a.m. and the fun continues until 3 p.m. If you are new to the community—this is a MUST ATTEND event to see service in action.

North Shore Exes Monthly Luncheon will be held on **Friday, April 10** at 11 a.m. at the Good Times Marina, located at 11906 71/2 Street, Houston 77044.

East Houston Democrats will host a Meet & Greet with Harris County Commissioner Adrian Garcia on **Thursday, April 9** at 6:30 p.m. The event will be held at the Pine Trails Community Improvement Association located at 6003 Woodbend. Come out and hear directly about what is happening in our community from public safety to infrastructure and everything in between.

Free Hot Meal served at **Fellowship of the Nations**, 13305 Woodforest Blvd, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 5 p.m. All are welcome.

Please join us for a **Ladies Royal-Tea** on Sunday, April 19 at 12 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of **Fellowship of the Nations**. Join us for brunch and a special guest speaker.

Senior Adult Bible Study held each Wednesday at **Next Generation Church**, located at 13817 Force Street, Houston 77015 at 11:30 a.m.

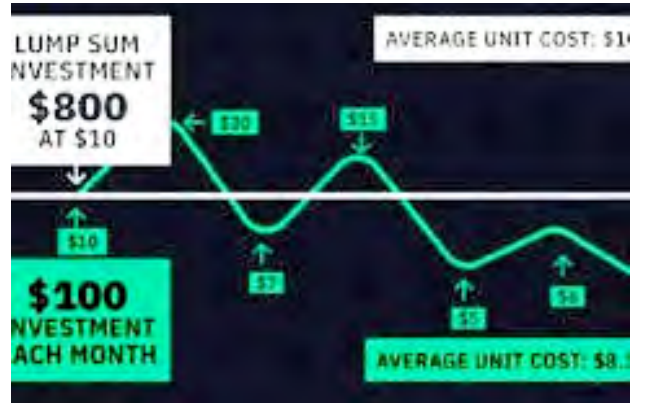
The Annual North Shore Alumni Picnic is coming soon. It will be on Saturday, May 2 at Deussen Park from 12 - 6 p.m. Time to call our classmates, former teachers and join the fun. T-shirt orders are due SOON Please visit Facebook Group "The Alumni of the Sho "NSSH" for all of the information.

ASK DIAMOND JIM



Diamond Jim: "I'm ready to invest in silver & gold. How do I begin?"

I'm sure you've heard the expression, "Buy low and sell high".



The truth is...it doesn't always work that way. You can increase your level of success by buying or investing on a regular basis regardless of whether the price is up or down. This type of disciplined investing is also known as "Dollar Cost Averaging". Look, everyone would love to buy low every time and sell high every time. That's simply not possible unless you have a crystal ball.

Many investors will buy, let's say, stock in a big company like General Motors hoping that after they invest the value of their investment will go up. When it starts going down right away, a lot of these investors panic and will sell their shares of that stock and take a loss. My question is...,"Why"? Why sell when the stock is going down? Wouldn't it be better to buy more stock at the lower price? Doing so is a great example of "dollar cost averaging". You take the 100 shares you bought at say \$100 per share and then the 100 shares you bought at \$70 per share and average the two purchases. In this case, the 200 shares you purchased cost you an average \$85 per share (the average between \$100 and \$70).

Dollar cost averaging (DCA) in gold and silver involves investing a fixed dollar amount at regular intervals (e.g., monthly), regardless of the price, to reduce the impact of volatility and average out the purchase price over time. This strategy is ideal for long-term investors aiming to mitigate the risks of buying at a high price per ounce.

Mechanism: When prices are high, your money buys fewer ounces; when low, it buys more, naturally lowering your average cost.

Benefits: Reduces emotional decision-making, lowers volatility risk, and promotes disciplined saving.

Best for: Investors with long-term horizons, those with lower risk tolerance, and consistent investors, such as those using automated platforms.

Performance: While it can outperform lump-sum purchases during volatile markets, it may underperform in a strong, sustained upward market (bull market).

I'm Diamond Jim and I'm a precious metals bullion dealer (dealer in gold and silver bullion) with nearly 40 years of solid experience. Although I do not offer investment advice, I will answer your questions honestly and factually. Stop by and see either Diamond Jim or Jim C and begin securing your future today at **Diamond Jim's PINEFOREST JEWELRY Experience!**

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

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

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

Your bunny loves carats



Frequent feedings advised.




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Rotary Fish Fry set for April 25th,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

plete with weekly ticket turns that give leadership a realtime pulse on progress. Friendly competition is a hallmark of the process, with team captains motivating their groups and prizes awarded to top sellers.

"It's kind of a pride thing of, you know, whose team won," Stephens said, noting that North Shore Rotary "loves a good competition."

The scale of the fundraiser underscores its importance. In a typical year, the event grosses around \$500,000 and nets approximately \$300,000 after expenses such as food, prizes, and vehicles.

"Every penny of the fundraiser goes back into our community, less the expenses to put on the event," Stephens said.

Those funds support scholarships, senior assistance programs, youth sports, and other local

needs—making the fundraiser the primary financial engine behind the club's charitable work. Even during the challenges of COVID19, the club found ways to continue, including hosting a virtual version when inperson gatherings were not possible.

Beyond fundraising, members say the event is also an opportunity to introduce Rotary to new faces.

"If things like this interest you and you would like to know more about how to join Rotary and help your community, come to the Fish Fry and ask," Stephens urged the public.

As April's fundraiser draws near, the message remains clear: success comes from teamwork, tradition, and a willingness to go 'all in' and 'stay the course' for Rotary and for the community it serves.

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Exercising to Avoid Falls

If your weather is anything like mine right now, the promised end of winter hasn't happened yet, with storms continuing to roll in every few days right on schedule. The things that have not gone away yet, however, are Covid, flu and RSV.

Which means that getting outside on a schedule for exercise isn't possible, and neither is working out on the machines at the rec center among lots of other people.

Still, getting some kind of exercise is important. They say we need 150 minutes of exercise per week (aerobic and strength training combined), as well as balance exercise. And all of those things can be done at home.

The benefits certainly make it worthwhile: maintain muscle mass, improve our sleep, stay mobile, improve mental health, stay independent, reduce risk of high blood pressure.

And avoid falls. This may well be at the top of the list of reasons to exercise. A bad fall can lead to hospitalization, a need for surgery, loss of independence — all those things we want to avoid.

All it takes is doing a few exercises to build our leg strength, tighten our core and improve our balance.

Here are a few places online to get more information about exercising for seniors:

Go to the Johns Hopkins website (www.hopkinsmedicine.org) and search for "Balance and Strength Exercises for Older Adults," which includes two exercise videos that can be done at home.

Check the Mayo Clinic website (mayoclinic.org). Search for balance exercises.

Go to the CDC website (cdc.gov) and search for "What Counts as Physical Activity for Older Adults."

Click the link to their free publication "Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans" and scroll to Chapter 5, Active Older Adults. The 118-page publication is very well done.

As always, check in with your health care provider to ask about any new exercise before you start.

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Parks to Close Overnight Following Fatal Shooting in Galena Park

The city of Galena Park also plans to implement 24-hour security monitoring stations to increase safety and provide faster response times in emergency situations.

In a public statement, city leaders said the new measures are intended to provide a strong and visible security presence and ensure direct communication with emergency dispatchers. Officials emphasized that the rules will be strictly enforced and that compliance is mandatory.



According to Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez, the shooting occurred at a basketball court near Keene Street and 14th

Street, where a group of men had gathered to play basketball. Authorities believe a fight broke out between two groups before

multiple shots were fired.

One victim was pronounced dead at the scene. Two additional men attempted to flee but were found a short distance away suffering from gunshot wounds. Both were transported to a nearby hospital in critical condition.

City officials said the new restrictions reflect their commitment to protecting residents and maintaining peace in the community as the investigation continues.

In North Shore, nearly everyone reads the NORTH CHANNEL STAR. Your Hometown Newspaper.

★ OPINION PAGE ★

OPINION

By **BILL KING**

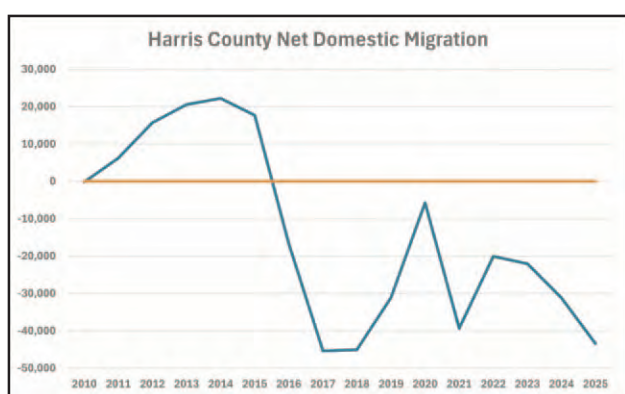


Immigration Crackdown Takes Toll on Harris County Growth

According to the US Census Bureau's estimates released yesterday, Harris County grew last year by just under 50,000, about half of what it grew in 2024. International immigration, which has fueled the County's growth for most of the last decade, fell from 101,000 to 57,000. Nonetheless, it still accounted for all of the County's growth. Without international immigration, the County population would have declined by about 10,000.

It should be noted that Harris County is overwhelmingly the preferred destination for international migration within Texas. Last year, while Harris County accounted for only 16% of the state's population, 34% of international immigrants settled here.

The number of people moving out of the County destined to somewhere else in the US (domestic migration) grew from 31,000 to 43,000. The County has not had positive domestic immigration since 2015. In the last ten years, about 300,000 have left the County for other places in the US.



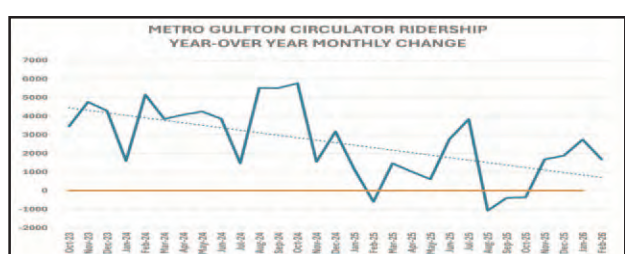
The number of births and deaths in Harris County held steady at about 67,000 and 31,000, respectively, resulting in natural growth of 35,000. Because of the relatively young median age in Harris County, it will likely sustain a small natural increase for some time. However, this will inevitably slowly fall as the County ages.

It is important to understand that the Census

Harris County Population Growth 2025		
Natural Growth (Births - Deaths)	34,861	72%
Domestic Immigration	(43,377)	-89%
International Immigration	57,225	117%
Total	48,709	100%

Bureau's estimates are as of July 1 each year. So, the estimate released yesterday was as of July 1, 2025. This means that the range covered by this estimate would have about seven months of the Biden administration and about five months of the Trump administration. Therefore, it is likely that most of the international immigration into Harris County occurred earlier in the year and has slowed significantly since then.

It is noteworthy, however, that this estimate does not indicate a mass exodus of immigrants, as DHS claims. At Baker, we have been looking at other data that might indicate a significant outflow of immigrants, and so far, we are not finding much. For example, we have been tracking the ridership on Metro's Gulfton circulator route. Gulfton is essentially Houston's Ellis Island, with many immigrants making their home in that area when they first arrive. Metro operates two bus lines that circle the area. It is used by many immigrants for routine trips and to connect to other lines to large employment centers. Ridership on those lines steadily increased in the last two years of the Biden administration, but has shown some deterioration since Trump was elected.



Taken together, the Census data and the local data we have been tracking appear to indicate a significant decline in international immigration – probably close to zero, but not that there has been a mass exodus of immigrants from the County.

The bottom line is that Harris County has effectively become dependent on international immigration for population growth. Without it, stagnation or decline is the baseline. Therefore, future federal immigration policy will probably have no more impact on Harris County than any other place in the state, and possibly the entire country.

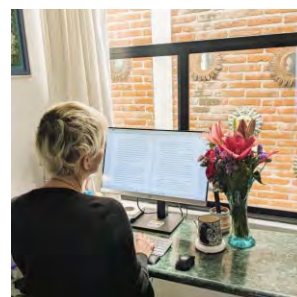
Author's note: The numbers for the Houston region show better population growth. More on that next time.

Hopping mad about gas prices...



THE POSTSCRIPT
By **Carrie Classon**

400 Square Feet



Last week, we thought we would leave our little place in Casa de los Soles.

If you've read my column, you know about this place my husband, Peter, and I stay in while in Mexico. The interior of our apartment will set you right back to the 1980s. The Formica countertop has seen better days. I write in a corner of the living room and have exactly 6 inches between the back of my office chair and the end of the couch. Peter measured our apartment, and it is 400 square feet—and that includes a rather large bedroom.

So, last week, we decided to look around for a place with a little more space. We told our landlord, Jorge, we were thinking about doing this, and he said he understood, and we went looking at apartments.

We did not make it easy on ourselves. In addition to loving this particular place, we love the neighborhood it is in, and the street it is on, so our circle of investigation was small. When we heard of an apartment for rent just a block away and on the same street, we were very excited.

The apartment was much bigger. It had a fireplace and a rooftop terrace. It had two bedrooms and a full dining room. It would need a little work, but we were very excited. We met with the landlord two days later.

But later that night, I started to think about what we would have to do to live in that apartment. There was nothing on the walls. There was not a lot of furniture. The couch looked a little worse for wear. The furniture on the roof needed replacement. None of it was big stuff, but it added up.

We'd have to pay an electric bill. If we wanted house-keeping, we'd have to figure that out and pay for it. We'd have to get our water and our gas delivered. We'd have to get the garbage out on the curb on the right days at the right time—which, in the center of an old town with cobblestone, one-way streets, is not as easy as it sounds.

I lay in bed that night and thought of all the things I don't have to worry about now, like having regular internet and a front desk that will accept our deliveries and someone on staff if we ever have a medical emergency.

Then I thought about the things that give me such joy here: the lively restaurant below, which will deliver lunch right to our door. The staff that will store my computer monitor and my clothes and take them out again when we arrive. The bouquet of flowers that is always waiting for me when we check in. The going-away party that the entire staff throws for Peter and me when we leave at the end of the season. And the kindness of Jorge, our landlord who, whenever we have a request, no matter how unusual, will say, "Certainly!"

I thought of how very easy my life was in 400 square feet, how free of worries, and of how much writing I had accomplished sitting at my little green Formica desk with the fresh flowers in front of me.

I talked to Jorge the next day. "We love this place too much to leave!" I told him. And I felt tearful.

Then I looked with fresh eyes at my 400 square feet and realized there was a lot I could do in this space. Because right now, 400 square feet is more than enough.

Till next time,
Carrie

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By **Gary Borders**



Texas Poised to Lead Nation in Data Centers

Texas is poised to lead the nation by 2030 in the number of data centers, the Austin American-Statesman reported, surpassing Virginia. The state currently has 6.5 gigawatts of data center capacity under construction, accounting for 20% of the capacity added to the U.S. pipeline last year. One gigawatt can power about 750,000 homes on average. Data centers provide the infrastructure to support both crypto currency facilities and the growth of artificial intelligence. The centers require huge amounts of power and water to operate. The Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which operates most of the state's power grid, said the continuing growth in data centers will increase Texas energy demand by 71% in the next five years. Central Texas has become the top data center market in the country. The American-Statesman identified at least 55 completed or planned projects between Temple and San Antonio in 2025.

PAXTON CALLS FOR HANCOCK'S REMOVAL

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton called for Gov. Greg Abbott to remove acting state comptroller Kelly Hancock, calling him an "incompetent loser." The Dallas Morning News reported. Paxton said the governor should replace him with Don Huffines, who defeated Hancock in the GOP primary race for the post earlier this month. "Kelly Hancock was rejected by Texans because he failed to do his job. He failed to take me down during impeachment, and his career is over," Paxton wrote on X. "It's time for him to be fired." Before his appointment as acting comptroller, Hancock served in the Texas Senate and was one of two Republican state senators who voted to convict Paxton in his impeachment trial. Paxton was acquitted. The latest dispute comes after Hancock sent a letter to Paxton and to federal officials, calling for stripping the Houston Quran Academy of its charter because of alleged ties to CAIR, the nation's largest Muslim civil rights advocacy organization. Abbott has designated that group a foreign terrorist organization. The academy is suing to overturn the designation.



\$116 MILLION IN FIFA SAFETY GRANTS ANNOUNCED

The city of Houston and the North Central Texas Council of Governments, areas that are both hosting FIFA World Cup events, will receive \$116 million in grants to provide for safety personnel, equipment and other public safety needs, the governor's office has announced. "The FIFA World Cup coming to Texas gives our state a premier opportunity to showcase all it has to offer," Abbott said in a news release. "These public safety grants will help ensure that travelers visiting and traveling throughout Texas can enjoy our great state safely, will bolster Texas' efforts to combat crime, and help prevent potential acts of violence." The money is coming from the federal government under the omnibus budget bill passed last year. The budget provides \$625 million in federal funding to host cities across America. The funds are allocated for recipients to provide extensive security to protect venues, players, staff and attendees against potential terrorist attacks.

LICENSE SEEKERS WILL HAVE TO PROVE THEY'RE IN COUNTRY LEGALLY

Anyone seeking a professional license in Texas, from barbers to dog breeders, will have to prove they are in the country legally after May 1, The Texas Tribune reported. The state's Commission on Licensing and Regulation last week adopted a new rule that could affect thousands of workers. A hearing line of speakers at a hearing urged the commission not to adopt the rule, arguing it will hamper the state's economy and push people to work without a license. The commission oversees the Texas Depart-

ment of Licensing and Regulation. "TDLR has long been evaluating verification of license eligibility in line with federal law. With the transfer of the Texas Lottery to TDLR, the recent launch of our licensing system modernization project, and increased focus on combating human trafficking, the department is moving forward with lawful presence verification," Caroline M. Espinosa, a TDLR spokesperson, said. TDLR attorney Derek Burkhalter told commissioners that some non-citizens will still be able to get licenses if they are here legally; for example, if they were granted asylum or admitted as a refugee. "The proposed rules do not impose a citizenship requirement," Burkhalter said. "Individuals who are not U.S. citizens may still be eligible for licensure if they meet the eligibility criteria."

PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLIST FATALITIES CONTINUE TO INCREASE

With spring and warmer weather here, there are more pedestrians and cyclists out on the road. More than 20% of all Texas traffic fatalities involve either pedestrians or cyclists, according to the Texas Department of Transportation, which is urging drivers to know and follow the rules for sharing the road. In 2024, 852 cyclists and pedestrians were killed in crashes on Texas roads. There were 6,095 crashes involving pedestrians and 2,761 crashes involving bicyclists. In 2025, there were 1,372 traffic crashes involving pedestrians in Texas and 527 traffic crashes involving bicyclists. In these crashes, 186 people were killed. "All of us share a responsibility to watch out for each other, but people on foot or riding a bike are most at risk for serious injury or worse in a crash with a car, which means drivers must be extra vigilant," TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams said.

SLIGHTLY LESS ACTIVE HURRICANE SEASON PREDICTED

Hurricane season is a little more than two months away, and weather media outlet AccuWeather is predicting a slightly less active season this year than in 2025, the Houston Chronicle reported. However, Texas and the Gulf Coast are still at risk of being hit. AccuWeather is forecasting 11 to 16 named storms, including four to eight hurricanes. Of those, one to three are expected to become Category 3 or strong hurricanes, with winds of at least 111 mph. Three to six storms could directly hit the United States, including one to three along the Gulf Coast, putting Texas and neighboring states at risk. Last year was the first since 2015 without a hurricane making a direct U.S. landfall. Hurricane season runs from June 1 to Nov. 30.

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.
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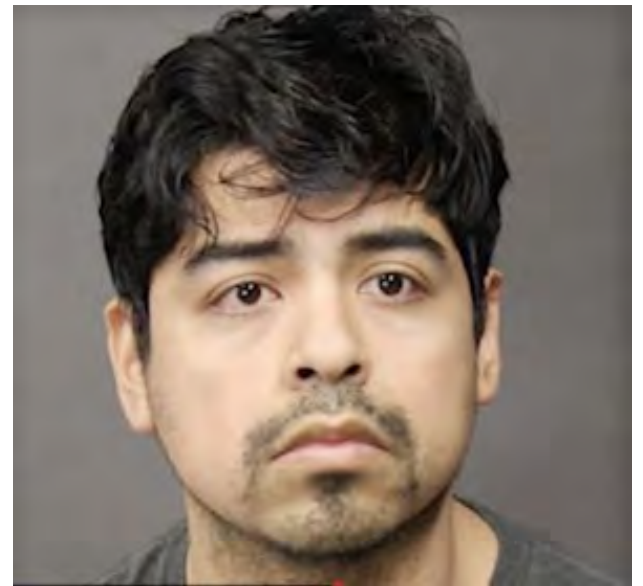
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Baytown Debate Coach Charged in AI Deepfake Case

Baytown, Texas – Rigoberto “Rigo” Ruiz, a respected debate coach at Lee College, is facing criminal charges after allegedly creating a sexually explicit AI-generated deepfake video using the image of a woman known to both him and his then-girlfriend. Ruiz has been charged with unlawful production of sexually explicit media, a case that may set a precedent for Texas laws concerning AI-generated content.



Rigoberto Ruiz, Debate Coach at Lee College

The incident came to light when Ruiz’s then-girlfriend discovered the video on his phone and promptly alerted the authorities. Investigators reported that the video depicted the complainant in a sexual scenario that never occurred, using artificial intelligence to manipulate a photo of the woman. Court documents indicate that the video was made with the intent to deceive, portraying a real person in an act that did not take place.

Legal experts, including defense attorney Neal Davis, have noted the rarity of such charges, highlighting the rapid evolution of technology and its intersection with existing legal frameworks. Davis, who reviewed the court documents, mentioned that while explicit material cases are common, they typically involve real people and recordings. The current case, he said, underscores the novelty of laws targeting AI-generated deepfakes, particularly in Texas.

“This was discovered on his phone, and the defendant allegedly confessed,” Davis stated. “The complainant was contacted and said she did not consent to this.” Ruiz’s attorney has declined to comment, and a court hearing is scheduled for later this week. The outcome of this case could have significant implications for the future of AI-related offenses in Texas.

In response to the charges, Lee College has placed Ruiz on leave. Ruiz has not made any public statements regarding the

Man Charged After Toddler Shooting in Channelview



CHANNELVIEW, TX - A 2-year-old was flown to the hospital, and a 25-year-old man is in jail after an accidental shooting in the Channelview area, according to the Harris County Sheriff’s Office.

The sheriff’s office said the family called them shortly after noon, and the child was flown to a nearby hospital, where he was rushed into surgery and was in critical condition.

friend who was visiting the family from out of town and added that he was booked in the Harris County Jail.

Deputies said the incident took place at a home on Onaleigh Drive on Friday afternoon.

Juan said the gun belonged to his son’s friend and claimed it was stored high up in a closet. Investigators couldn’t tell yet where the gun was kept, but said it was unsecured and accessible to the children.

“It’s always important to secure the firearm for anyone who is thinking about buying a firearm that does not have one. If you have children or children might visit your home, they are spontaneous, they are curious. So if you do not have enough money to buy a safe or anything to secure the handgun or any firearm, then you should not buy it,” Harris County Sheriff’s Major Ben Katrib said.

The victim’s grandfather said the family was at his home, having lunch and spending time in the living room, when they heard a gunshot. They ran into the bedroom and found the child had been shot in the head.

In an update on Friday night April 3, Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said Santiago Daniel Canet was criminally charged with making a firearm accessible to a minor. Gonzalez also said that Canet was a

After the shooting, the sheriff’s office said the family put the gun in a car. Investigators said everyone stayed at the scene and cooperated with the investigation.

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Channelview FFA Parade caps off 63rd annual livestock show,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Floats were encouraged to highlight life's joyful moments as the procession traveled down Deer Pass to Woodforest Boulevard, drawing enthusiastic crowds along the route. The parade then turned north onto Sheldon Road, passed the district administration building and concluded at the new William Jennings Athletic Complex.

With numerous entries, the parade stood out for its size and energy, especially with the participation of the band and drill team, whose performances helped energize spectators throughout the route.

Organizers adjusted the timing of both the parade and the week-long livestock show this year to avoid overlapping with the Easter holiday.

"We had to move away from Holy Week," said Wesley Hutchins, director of the CVHS FFA. "We just couldn't have our show finishing out on the day before Easter and interrupting Good Friday. That's a big family day."

Hutchins said the show and parade are expected to return to their traditional schedule next year. "We'll be back to the first Saturday in April," he said, adding that the organization appreciates the continued support from the Channelview community.



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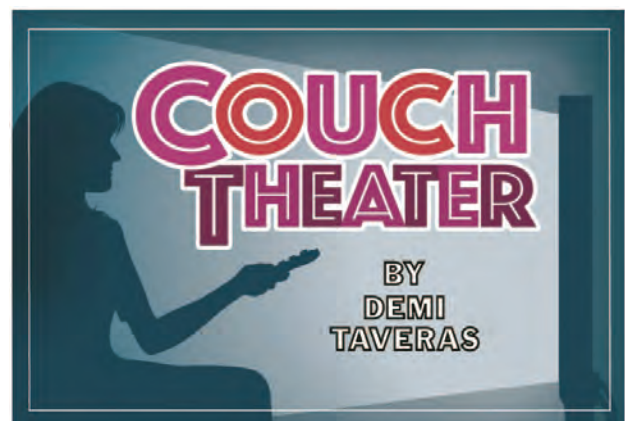
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Margot Robbie, left and Jacob Elordi star in "Wuthering Heights."

"Wuthering Heights."

"Avatar: Fire and Ash" (PG-13) — After an incredible run at the box office that earned 20th Century Studios \$1.487 billion, the third "Avatar" installment is out now to rent on video on demand.

Pandora is still as immersive and vibrant as ever! (YouTube) "The Bride" (R) — Director Maggie Gyllenhaal ("The Lost Daughter") and Oscar winner Jessie Buckley ("Hamnet") teamed up for the second time for this Gothic romance film about the Bride of Frankenstein.

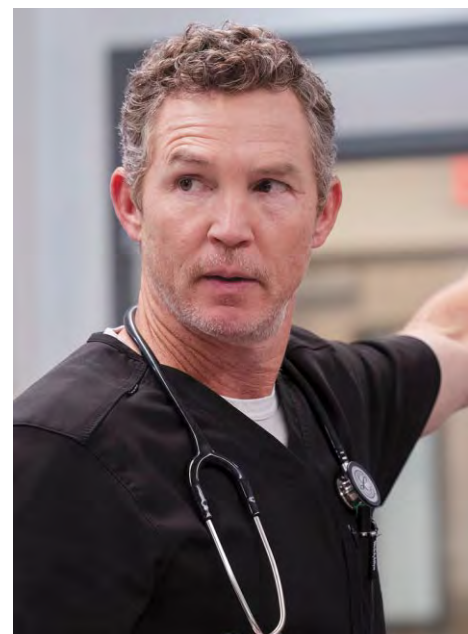
tant, Myrna (Penelope Cruz), hot on their tails! Available on April 7 to rent. (Amazon Prime Video) "Wuthering Heights" (R) — This week brings us a ton of new movies that were awaiting their video-on-demand release dates!



Q: I never watched "ER" when it was on, but I started watching it on HBO Max. I read that the actor who plays Dr. Abbot on "The Pitt" was also on an episode of "ER." Which season was it? — W.P.

A: Spanning 15 seasons long, "ER" was such a long-running show that there are actually several actors who've appeared on both shows. Shawn Hatosy, who has already won an Emmy for playing Dr. Jack Abbot on "The Pitt," guest-starred on "ER" 20 years ago.

The episode, which was directed by John Wells, one of the executive producers of "The Pitt," led to future collaborations between the two. Hatosy told TVLine, "That one role ... changed everything," leading to parts on other Wells' productions like "Animal Kingdom" and "Southland."



Shawn Hatosy as Dr. Jack Abbot in "The Pitt"

on." David Coreswett will reprise his role of "Superman" in what is said to be a "big brother" capacity, and none other than Jason Momoa will star as intergalactic bounty hunter Lobo.

Q: Why is "Paradise" coming back for just one more season? Isn't it really popular? — G.D.

A: Yes, "Paradise" is a big hit for Hulu and for star Sterling K. Brown, but the creative minds behind the series are firm in their decision that it should end sooner rather than later.

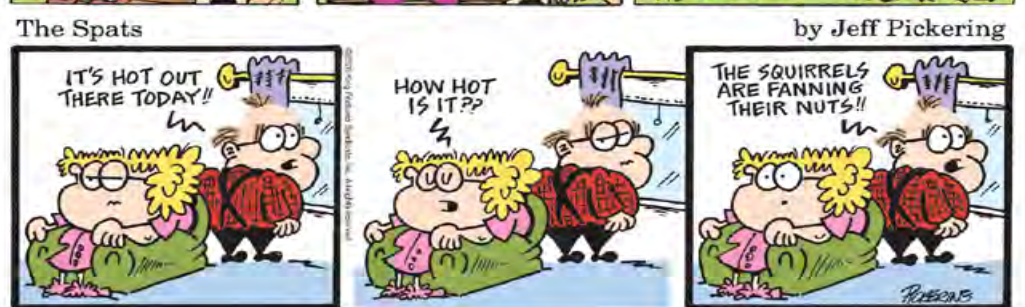
He also acknowledges that the show has shifted from a "postapocalyptic survival drama" into a "sci-fi story." But he's also stated that he actually views the show as more of a Western and that Brown's character is a "Western hero" with an "uncompromising goal."

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com. (c) 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

ENTERTAINMENT

April 6, 2026 Posting Date

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU grid and difficulty challenge (Moderate, Hoo Boy!)

HOCUS-FOCUS comic strip with puzzle instructions: Find at least six differences in details between panels.

King Crossword

Crossword grid with clues: ACROSS 1 - Ark, 6 Con games, 11 French novelist, 12 Heckler's weapon, 14 "Delta Wedding" author Welty, 15 Defeated in a footrace, 16 Govt. stipend, 17 Roly-poly, 19 Roast VIPs, 20 Golf pegs, 22 Docs' org., 23 Lap dog, for short, 24 Former First Daughter, 26 Most sore, 28 401(k) alternative, 30 Med. plan, 31 Popeye's veggie, 35 Muslim legal expert, 39 Centers, 40 Possesses, 42 Uttered, 43 Before, 44 "Graceland" singer Paul, 46 The Browns, on scoreboards, 47 Chew out, 49 Tex-Mex treat, 51 "I, Robot" author, 52 Leg joints, 53 Hosiery shade, 54 Repaired shoes, 8 Invoice fig., 9 "Little Women" matriarch, 10 Pancake toppers, 11 Defeats, 13 Start, 18 Hollywood's Thurman, 21 Tibia settings, 23 Reverent, 25 Altar in the sky, 27 "Let me think ...", 29 Reach, 31 Biblical realm, 32 Least spoiled, 33 Portugal's place, 34 Sandwich meat, 36 Glib, 37 Inclined, 38 Concepts, 41 Remote locations?, 44 Halt, 45 iPod model, 48 Asia's - Darya river, 50 Keypad trio

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez: 1. GEOGRAPHY: The famous Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, are believed to have been in what modern-day country? 2. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the name of the six-point blue star on emergency medical vehicles? 3. MOVIES: What is the nickname of the "vicious" dog in "The Sandlot"? 4. HISTORY: What was the name of the United States' first space shuttle? 5. LITERATURE: In what language was "The Odyssey" originally written? 6. TELEVISION: Where is the 1990s sitcom "Northern Exposure" set? 7. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a group of kangaroos called? 8. SCIENCE: What is the process called when a lizard loses and regenerates a tail? 9. U.S. STATES: Which state borders two oceans? 10. MUSIC: What was Taylor Swift's first song to make Billboard's Hot 100?

King Crossword solution time: 21 mins. Answers: 1. Irag, 2. The Star of Life, 3. "The Beast" to the kids and Hercules to his owner; 4. Columbia; 5. Homeric Greek; 6. Cicely; 7. A mob; 8. Autotomy; 9. Alaska; Pacific and Arctic Oceans; 10. "Tim McGraw"



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