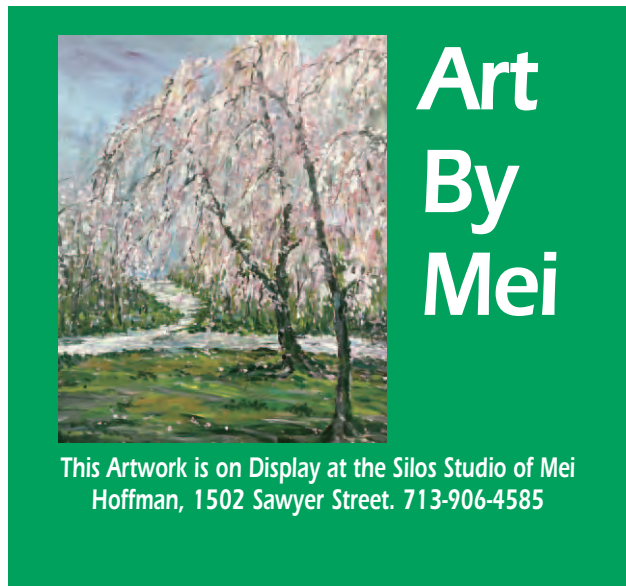


# NORTH CHANNEL ★ STAR Your News, Your Newspaper



Serving all of the North Shore -- Channelview, Cloverleaf, Sheldon, Galena Park, Jacinto City  
VOLUME 14, NO. 19 (#615) THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2026 www.northchannelstar.com

## EPA Orders Long-delayed Cleanup of San Jacinto River Waste Pits

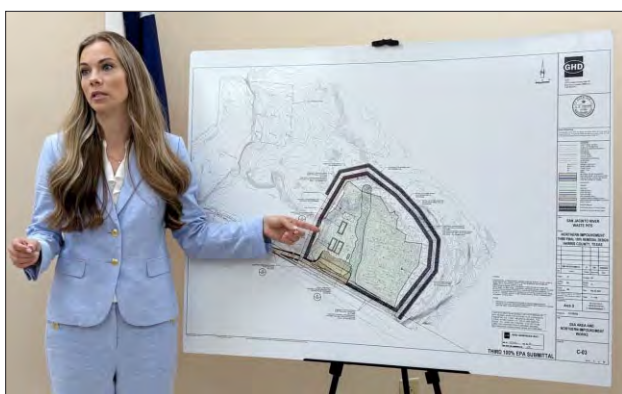
By David Taylor  
Managing Editor

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has issued a sweeping enforcement order requiring the cleanup of the long-contaminated San Jacinto River Waste Pits, formally moving the Superfund site into the remedial action phase after years of delay. The decision compels the companies responsible to begin removing toxic waste from the river environment and surrounding areas, a step advocates and local officials say is overdue.

On April 28, 2026, EPA Region 6 Administrator Scott Mason signed a Unilateral Administrative Order legally requiring International Paper Company and Waste Management subsidiary McGinnes Industrial Maintenance Corporation

to carry out the cleanup of the Northern Impoundment and nearby areas. The order mandates the removal of an estimated 230,000 cubic yards of contaminated material and requires the companies to meet strict cleanup standards that were first established nearly a decade ago to protect nearby communities and Galveston Bay.

For residents along the San Jacinto River, the ruling represents a major milestone following years of community organizing and concern about prolonged exposure risks caused by repeated delays in remediation. The waste pits, designated a Superfund site in 2008, contain highly toxic substances, primarily dioxins and furans, linked to severe health and environmental harm. Remediation was first ordered in 2018, but



Jackie Medcalf, Founder, CEO, & Executive Director of THEA

progress stalled amid disputes over cleanup methods and costs.

Environmental advocate Jackie Medcalf, founder, CEO, and executive director of the Texas Health and Environment Alliance, said the EPA's action is a critical step forward but emphasized that it follows years of unnecessary delay. She noted that the responsible companies had pushed for a

cleanup approach based on modeling rather than direct field verification, an argument the EPA ultimately rejected.

"After 3,121 days since the Record of Decision was signed, the EPA has finally ordered the cleanup of the San Jacinto River Waste Pits, moving the site into the remedial action phase where the work can begin," Medcalf said. She praised the agency for requiring postexcavation

testing, independent oversight, and stronger community involvement, but cautioned that continued public engagement will be essential to ensure the cleanup is "thorough, transparent, and complete."

Local officials also welcomed the enforcement action. Jonathan Fombonne, Harris County Attorney, issued a statement applauding the EPA for putting "real enforcement" behind the approved remedial design and making clear that further delays will not be tolerated.

"For far too long, the people living along the San Jacinto River have waited for remediation work to begin," Fombonne said. He added that the order establishes firm expectations and accountability, requires regular reporting to the EPA, and ensures the public will be kept informed about cleanup

timelines and progress.

The EPA's decision follows an updated explanation of significant differences from the original 2017 cleanup plan. While the basic remedy—excavation and offsite disposal of contaminated soil and sediment—remains unchanged, the estimated cost for cleaning the northern impoundments has more than doubled due to refinements made during the remedial design process. EPA officials have indicated that any future modifications to excavation plans will be formally documented and must still meet protective cleanup goals.

Site documents related to the cleanup are available to the public through local libraries and online repositories, allowing residents to track the progress of a remediation effort that many hope will finally turn years of promises into action.

## LaTaza Corazón, Channelview's First Coffee Shop

By Allan Jamail

Channelview, TX. ~ On Saturday, May 9, 2026 at 527 Sheldon Rd. the North Channel Area Chamber of Commerce had a ribbon cutting ceremony at the grand opening of the LaTaza Corazón (The Heart Cup) Coffee Shop.

The Chamber was represented by Margie Buentello, President & CEO, Yesenia Jimenez, Membership Director, Trustee Kristina Zatopek, other trustees and members.

Linda Jamail, Community Liaison for State Rep. Ana Hernandez presented a certificate to the owners, Ramiro & Marvella Granados, congratulating them on their grand opening. Luz Maria Lopez Community Liaison for Pct. 2 Adrian Garcia made a welcoming



Linda Jamail (center) presents Ramiro & Marvella Granados a certificate from State Rep. Ana Hernandez. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

statement.

Ramiro & Marvella Granados the husband and wife owners said they were proud and excited to bring Channelview its first coffee

shop.

The Granados said from the very beginning, this

Continued. See CHANNELVIEW WELCOMES LATAZA, Page 3

## Ana Hernandez Updates on State Affairs Interim Hearings



TEXAS - During the legislative interim, the Texas House Committee on State Affairs has been actively engaged in addressing critical issues that will shape the state's future. Recent hearings have concentrated on the surge in data centers, highlighting their significant impact on energy and water systems. The committee is also examining broader grid reliability

challenges, driven by population growth and economic expansion.

Discussions have delved into the implementation of Senate Bill 6, focusing on the integration of large energy users into the grid, the role of battery storage, and safety considerations as Texas expands its energy capacity.

The committee was set to continue its work with a

hearing on Wednesday, May 6th, at 10 a.m. The agenda included an exploration of micro grids and distributed energy resources, aiming to enhance reliability, reduce costs, and bolster grid resilience. Additionally, the session addressed public-private partnerships and their importance in delivering infrastructure projects effectively and transparently.

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# North Shore Senior High Celebrates Sports Signing Day



North Shore Senior High School celebrated a proud milestone as senior student-athletes participated in Sports Signing Day, officially committing to compete at the collegiate level. With family members, coaches, teachers, and teammates in attendance, each student signed a letter of intent marking the next chapter of their academic and athletic journeys.

From the pool to the track, the court to the field, these Mustangs represented a wide range of sports and demonstrated the discipline and resilience required to balance rigorous academics with competitive athletics. Their success reflects years of dedication and the guidance of strong campus programs that prioritize both achievement and character.

North Shore Senior High School commends these student-athletes for their hard work and determination and looks forward to seeing them continue to excel as they represent their school and community at colleges and universities across the nation.

### North Shore Senior High School Signees

- Boys Basketball
  - Joshua Richardson — Southwestern University
- Boys Track & Field
  - Phoenix Chavez — Texas Southern University
  - Elija Brown — Texas Southern University
- Football
  - Omari Demerson — Schreiner University
  - Jacob Ardoin — Texas Wesleyan University
  - Daveion Jones — Cisco College
  - Hezekiah Johnson — Nebraska Wesleyan University
- Girls Basketball
  - Khrystin Davis — Kansas City Kansas Community College
  - Tieyuanna Bass — Bryant & Stratton College
  - Kobe Johnson — University of Texas at El Paso
- Girls Soccer
  - Yarisah Perez — University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley
  - Chloe Rosales — Texas A&M—Commerce
- Girls Track & Field
  - Divine McFarland — Texas Southern University
  - Alanna Samuel — University of New Orleans
  - Chloe Hubley — Texas Southern University
- Softball
  - Nayelli Cabello — Oklahoma Wesleyan University
  - Gabby Napolitano — Principia College
- Swimming
  - Jeremiah Logan — University of St. Thomas

# GPISD CLC: A Year of Impact, A Future of Promise

Galena Park ISD wrapped up its final Community Leadership Council (CLC) meeting of the year with a shared focus on collaboration, reflection, and student success. District leaders and community partners came together to celebrate the accomplishments of the year and look ahead with purpose.

A meaningful highlight of the meeting was hearing

from graduating seniors representing each GPISD high school: Sofia Santos Carrillo of the Accelerated Center for Education, Elias Hernandez of CTE Early College High School, Olivia Boddien Mbengono of Galena Park High School, and Mariah Majors of North Shore Senior High School. Each student shared personal experiences that shaped their path

to graduation, emphasizing the support of educators, families, and community partners.

Their stories reinforced the power of strong partnerships and the lasting impact of investing in students. As the school year concludes, Galena Park ISD proudly celebrates the community that helps make student success possible.




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# Abbott Opens First New Texas State Park In Nearly Two Decades



AUSTIN — Governor Greg Abbott today celebrated the grand opening of Palo Pinto Mountains State Park, the first new state park to open in nearly two decades. Located between Abilene and Dallas-Fort Worth, the new park offers more than 4,800 acres of land for Texans to explore and enjoy.

“The Palo Pinto Mountains State Park is one of the most majestic of them all,” said Governor Abbott. “Preserving our lands is crucial. It allows communities to reconnect with the land that made Texas, Texas. We are going to live up to our commitment to preserve our state parks so that future generations have access to the beauty of Texas that was originally seen by Sam Houston and Davy Crockett.”

During the ribbon cutting ceremony, Governor Abbott reflected on his childhood experiences ex-

ploring the outdoors and traveling to state parks with his Boy Scout Troop. He noted the importance of preserving Texas’ natural landscapes and beautiful wildlife for future generations of Texans. The Governor also emphasized that state parks not only protect the land and wildlife that define Texas, but also serve as powerful economic engines that support a thriving tourism industry in local communities and allow Texans and out-of-state visitors to experience the majesty of Texas’ beautiful landscapes.

Palo Pinto Mountains State Park is expected to draw visitors from across the state and nation to one of the fastest-growing regions in the country. The new park offers Texans expanded opportunities for camping, fishing, and exploring the natural beauty of Texas.

The opening of Palo Pin-

to Mountains State Park builds on Texas’ historic investment in outdoor recreation. In 2023, the Legislature passed and voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition 14, creating the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund, which appropriated \$1 billion to expand and improve state parks statewide.

**Editor’s Note: State Representative Armando Walle spearheaded the legislation that created the Park Fund.**

The Governor was joined at the grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony by Secretary of State Jane Nelson, Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPW) Commission Chairman Emeritus Lee Bass, Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation Chairman Michael Greene, TPWD Executive Director David Yoskowitz, and other state and local officials and outdoorsmen.



Governor Abbott speaks at the Park dedication, with a view of the park behind him.



## CHARLOTTE'S WEB

By Charlotte Jackson



### May Flowers & Sunshine

During our busy schedules, how often do we stop and smell the flowers? Or how often do we appreciate the sunshine? I know as a child, I loved to see the flowers in full bloom and as a teenager, I loved to spend time in the sunshine. Too often as an adult, I have been too busy to appreciate the gift of nature. Perhaps it is because my oldest granddaughter is preparing for high school graduation planning her move to college, but I find myself looking around and paying more attention to our surroundings. I have been noticing how much our community has changed and yet, I have taken the time to look at the natural beauty all around us.

There are some of our streets that are lined with old trees with huge branches, surrounded by flowers which have been planted and maintained over the decades.

Commissioner Garcia has been busy beautifying community with funding for everything from sidewalks to park beautification and a massive force of volunteers who regularly donate hours of time with the area Adopt-A-Mile projects. It makes me so happy to hear community members share about how they love the new street signs as well as the additional lighting in our area.

This Saturday there is an opportunity for everyone to come out and visit a staple in our community, the W.D. Ley Family YMCA presented by Cognitive Justice and Eastside Youth Basketball Organization, the event will provide resources, information and opportunities to get involved.

P.O.P. U.P. stands for Protecting Our People and Uplifting Peace. Yet the story cannot be told without seeing the presence of committed and caring community members who will be present from 10:30 – 2 p.m. featuring employment services, games and activities for the children and youth, special guest speakers, free food, free haircuts and much more. Previous Peace POP Ups have drawn hundreds of indivisibles who have been able to find resources they truly needed as well as provided networking opportunities and led to great partnerships.

This event will lovingly be held in memory of Mr. Braxton Coles, beloved grandfather of a young man killed by gun violence. Mr Coles founded Crash Our for a Cause and was strong proponent of keeping our youth busy, so they did not have time for trouble. The organization provided many sports scholarships and mentoring to youth. Unfortunately, in the early planning stages of our event, he passed away, yet we will not let his vision be forgotten.

Another family who lost a recent graduate who was headed for success have founded Jaydens Pathway to Purpose. They are raising funds to not only provide forty youth with summer memberships to the YMCA, but to provide a structured six-week program for the youth.

One father who has worked for years with youth in the area, Coach Chris Butler, will also be on site to register youth for Pipeline Hoops All Work No Whistle Youth Hoop Camp. His legacy of working with young people is well known and appreciated in the area. In addition, there will be vendors including information on Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking, Voter Registration and summer programs.

Please come out and enjoy the day, meet your neighbors and get involved,

## Community Events

**Thursday, May 14**  
Gospel Night at Flukinger Center  
6 - 8 p.m.

**Saturday, May 16**  
Community Peace Pop Up  
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
YMCA outdoor

**Third Saturday**  
Community Meal  
11 - 1 p.m.  
Channelview First Assembly of God, Sheldon Road (just behind Mc Donald's)

**Sunday, May 17**  
12 - 2 p.m.  
W.D. Ley Family YMCA Food Distribution form  
Second Blessings

**Monday, May 18 - Friday, May 22**  
7 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Early Voting for Primary Run-Offs

**Tuesday, May 19**  
Sheldon ISD Board Meeting  
7 p.m.

**Wednesday, May 20**  
11:30 - 1 p.m.  
Seniors Bible Study  
Next Generation Church

## Save the Dates

### Sheldon Road Clean-Up

**When:** Saturday, May 16, 7-11 a.m.

**Where:** Meet in the parking lot next to Wells Fargo

**Details:** Adults and responsible, safety-oriented teenagers are welcome to help clean up Sheldon Road.

### C.H.I.C. Monthly Meeting

**When:** Thursday, May 28, 6:30 p.m.

**Where:** Channelview Fire Station No. 3, 1210 Dell Dale, Channelview, TX 77530

**Details:** Monthly meeting of C.H.I.C. Open to the community.

## ASK DIAMOND JIM



### Diamond Jim: "How old are natural mined diamonds?"

Most mined diamonds are formed at high temperature and pressure at depths of 140 to 190 kilometers (87 to 118 mi) in the Earth's mantle. Carbon-containing minerals provide the carbon source, and the growth occurs over periods from 1 billion to 3.3 billion years (25% to 75% of the age of the Earth). Diamonds are brought close to the Earth's surface through deep volcanic eruptions by magma, which cools into igneous rocks known as kimberlites and lamproites.



Diamonds have been treasured as gemstones since their use as religious icons in ancient India. Their usage in engraving tools also dates to early human history. The popularity of diamonds has risen since the 19th century because of increased supply, improved cutting and polishing techniques, growth in the world economy, and innovative and successful advertising campaigns.

The most familiar uses of diamonds today are as gemstones used for adornment, a use which dates back into antiquity, and as industrial abrasives for cutting hard materials. The dispersion of white light into spectral colors is the primary gemological characteristic of gem diamonds. In the 20th century, experts in gemology developed methods of grading diamonds and other gemstones based on the characteristics most important to their value as a gem. Four characteristics, known informally as the four Cs, are now commonly used as the basic descriptors of diamonds: these are carat (its weight), cut (quality of the cut is graded according to proportions, symmetry and polish), color (how close to white or colorless; for fancy diamonds how intense is its hue), and clarity (how free is it from inclusions). A large, flawless diamond is known as a paragon.

Not all diamonds found on Earth originated on Earth. Primitive interstellar meteorites were found to contain carbon possibly in the form of diamond. A type of diamond called carbonado that is found in South America and Africa may have been deposited there via an asteroid impact (not formed from the impact) about 3 billion years ago. These diamonds may have formed in the intrastellar environment, but as of 2008, there was no scientific consensus on how carbonado diamonds originated.

#### Misconception about diamonds forming from compressed coal

Few diamonds are formed from highly compressed coal. More than 99% of diamonds ever mined have formed in the conditions of extreme heat and pressure about 90 miles (140 km) below the Earth's surface. Coal is formed from prehistoric plants buried much closer to the surface and is unlikely to migrate below 2 miles (3.2 km) through common geological processes. Most diamonds that have been dated are older than the first land plants and are therefore older than coal. It is possible that diamonds can form from coal in subduction zones and in meteoroid impacts, but diamonds formed in this way are rare, and the carbon source is more likely carbonate rocks and organic carbon in sediments, rather than coal. To learn even more about diamonds, come see the incredible selection of loose diamonds and diamond jewelry at Pineforest Jewelry.

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

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

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

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## Channelview welcomes LaTaza Corazon Coffee Shop with community celebration and ribbon cutting,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

space was never intended to be just another business in the community. Their vision was always to create something with purpose — a place that truly belongs to Channelview.

They said for a long time, their community lacked a welcoming space where people could come together, slow down, be creative, study, meet with friends, or simply enjoy a good cup of coffee without feeling rushed or treated like just another transaction. They wanted to change that.

"La Taza Corazón (The Heart Cup) was built with the idea that coffee can bring people together. This shop is not just my wife's and mine — it is the community's coffee shop. Every detail of the space was created with intention, warmth, and community in mind," Ramiro said.

He continued, "As a proud member of the Channelview ISD Board of Trustees, supporting our students, staff, and families has always been deeply important to me. Because of that, we made it a priority to involve local talent and create opportunities for students to showcase their creativity."

One of the most meaningful parts of the shop is the beautiful mural created by Belica Medina (@Muralswith\_Beli), a senior from Channelview



The North Channel Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting ceremony at the grand opening of the LaTaza Corazón (The Heart Cup) Coffee Shop. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

ISD. Ramiro challenged her to design something that truly represented the heart and spirit of the community. He said, "She exceeded every expectation. Her artwork brought the entire space to life and became a reminder of the incredible talent we have right here in Channelview," he concluded.

The Granados said their hope is that La Taza Corazón (The Heart Cup) becomes more than just a coffee shop. They hope it becomes a place where memories are made, conversations are shared, creativity is encouraged, and people feel at home.

"We are incredibly grateful for the support the community has already shown us and excited for everything that is still to come. This is only the beginning, and we cannot wait to con-

tinue growing alongside the community that helped inspire it all", Ramiro & Marvella concluded.

Una Taza Mil Memorias / A cup and a thousand memories" is one of their mottos.

One of the highlights was the music provided by the Channelview High School Mariachi Band. The band under the direction of Director Ramon Garcia has been recognized and awarded by the Texas University Interscholastic League (UIL) as one of the best high school Mariachi Bands in the state.

Hundreds from the community came; many vendors were there offering arts & crafts, food & refreshments. Fresh Mother's Day flowers were a big hit provided by owner Diana Evette (@blooms by evette).



LaTaza Corazón coffee shop owners Ramiro & Marvella Granados at the mural painted by Belica Medina (@Muralswith\_Beli), a senior from Channelview ISD. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

OPINION PAGE

OPINION

By BILL KING

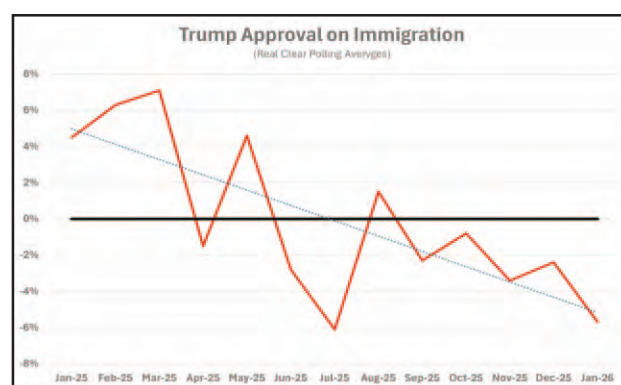


Trump has Blown his Immigratiion Advantage

Exit polling from the 2024 election showed that voters were most drawn to Trump for his promises to lower prices and control immigration.

But by late spring, Americans' mood began to change as Trump's immigration policies evolved from controlling the border to making good on his promise of mass deportations.

The reality of mass deportations and the ham-handed way in which ICE has conducted them has steadily taken a toll on Trump's approval rating on the issue, dropping 13% from March 2025 to last month (+7%-6%).



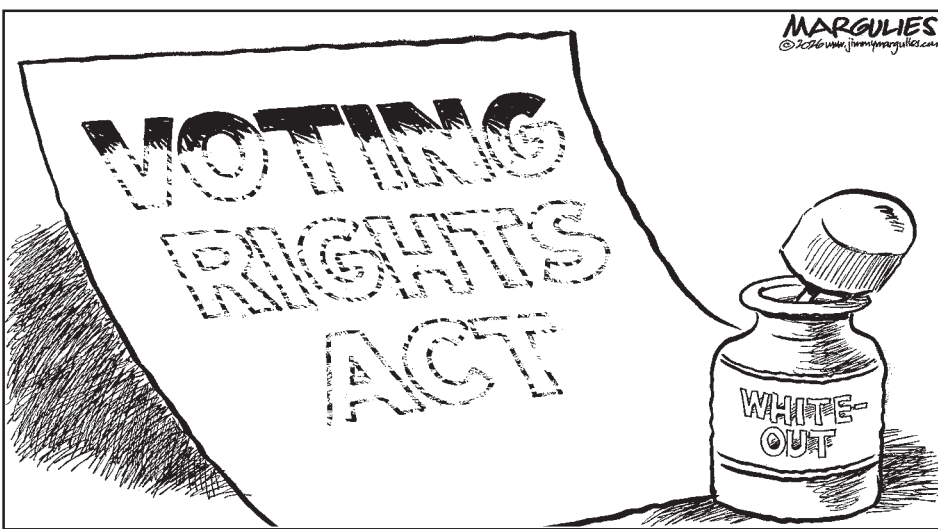
The drop-off is most dramatic with independents. According to polling by The Economist & YouGov, Trump's approval rating today on immigration among independents has fallen 40 points since March 2025 (+15%-25%).

Americans have always had complicated views on immigration. Generally, they understandably recoil from people coming here illegally. However, few understand the complicated nuances of our immigration system, and when asked about specific situations, their views often soften.

Trump could have been, and indeed could still be, "Nixon going to China" on immigration. Because of his strong views on immigration enforcement, he could forge a compromise on a rational immigration system that strictly controls who is allowed into the country but deals humanely with the millions enticed here by the American dream during a time when our immigration system was hopelessly broken.

Note 1 - There is an anomaly in the polling. Morning Consult has consistently found Trump's immigration rating significantly more positive than those of the other pollsters over the last year.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Opinions expressed here are not necessarily that of this newspaper or its staff. YOUR OPINION is welcome. Send a letter for possible publication to Grafikpress Newspapers, 5832 Star Lane, Houston TX 77057 or an email to GRAFIKSTAR@aol.com.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Talarico Leads Cornyn, Paxton in Latest Polls

A poll shows Democrat James Talarico leading both the Republicans who are locked in a fierce runoff to determine who will face him in November, the Houston Chronicle reported.

"While the Democratic candidate leading two established Republicans in these matchups is sure to raise some eyebrows," the pollsters wrote, the results "reveal a Republican electorate still registering the effects of the months-long, bruising, negative campaigning by Paxton and Cornyn, and the GOP divisions the race has exacerbated."

Paxton and Cornyn face each other in a May 26 runoff because neither secured a majority in the March primary. Early voting runs from May 18 to May 22. Voters who cast ballots in the Democratic primary cannot vote in the GOP runoff.

CAMP MYSTIC WILL NOT REOPEN THIS SUMMER

Camp Mystic announced last week that it had withdrawn its application for a camp license for this summer, according to the Austin American-Statesman. The decision followed a week of hearings before a joint Senate-House committee, which heard testimony from the loved ones of last summer's flood victims.

"No administrative process or summer season



should move forward while families continue to grieve, while investigations continue, and while so many Texans still carry the pain of last July's tragedy," the camp wrote in a statement.

The Texas Department of State Health Services, which is responsible for issuing camp licenses, conducted investigations. The camp has been planning to reopen its Cypress Lake campus, which was not damaged by the flash floods.

Camp Mystic said it would continue to "fully cooperate with all ongoing investigations."

\$56 MILLION IN FED FUNDING FOR RURAL HEALTH CARE

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission is making \$56 million in federal funding available to rural health care providers. The "Infrastructure and Capital Investments for Rural Texas" initiative will support modernization of rural health care delivery by funding new equipment and minor facility renovations.

Health care providers can use the funds to "update lab, CT scan, ultrasound, or mammography equipment; stretchers, wheelchairs, patient beds, telemetry units, nurse call systems, generators, defibrillators, crash carts, medication dispensing units, sleep labs,

vital sign monitors, oxygen tanks, and other allowable equipment," according to the HHSC news release.

The state is expected to receive about \$1.4 billion in federal funding over the next five years through the program supporting rural health care.

PATRICK AIMS TO CLOSE LOOPHOLE FOR PREDICTION MARKETS

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick has directed state senators to explore ways to close gambling loopholes that allow online prediction markets to operate in Texas, according to The Tribune. He is concerned that state elections and sporting events could be manipulated for profit.

Prediction markets allow users to bet on outcomes of everything from sporting events to election winners, and even the weather. The Trump administration has blocked attempts by other states to regulate the prediction markets, such as Kalshi, claiming oversight belongs to federal agencies, not the states.

"We are regulated at the federal level, but of course, given now the popularity of prediction markets, we are doing a lot of educating on the state level," said Sara Slane of Kalshi. "That's the dialogue that we'll envision having, certainly, in the state of Texas."

While 39 state attorneys general signed on to a legal brief arguing the Commodity Futures Trading Commission doesn't have sole authority to regulate the prediction markets, Paxton declined to do so.

TEXAS CITIES DOMINATE ANOTHER 'BEST' LIST

Several Texas cities dominated the top spots in Livability's new ranking of the most affordable, desirable cities to live in the U.S., according to the Statesman. The list includes only cities with populations between 75,000 and 500,000 and median home values of \$500,000 or less.

Factors considered included economy and housing; amenities and environment; safety, health and education; and transportation.

Texas cities in the top 10 were Sugar Land at No. 3; Plano at No. 5; Round Rock at No. 9; and New Braunfels at No. 10.

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@texapress.com

THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

Cause for Celebration



Last week, we went out to celebrate with my oldest and most curmudgeonly friend, Andrew.

Andrew is a tax preparer, so even if I hadn't been in Mexico for the last three months, I still would not have seen much of him. He makes a good living by working insanely hard during the tax season and then teaching and taking a few classes the rest of the year.

We had a lot to celebrate. Andrew had made it through another tax season. I had just signed the contract for "The Turnip House," and "Loon Point" was doing well.

"Who-hoo!" the loon said. "That is so great," I told Peter. "This will be my emotional support loon!"

"You are going to have to write more books," Andrew said, cleaning his plate, "so we can do this more often."

Peter and I used to have a neighbor, Joe, who made fun of us. "You two are always celebrating something!" Joe would say, and I knew he thought we were a little ridiculous.

But I think it's important to celebrate the milestones in life. I don't think a celebration needs to involve buying anything larger than a loon plush toy or anything fancier than a plate of spaghetti with an old friend, but I think it's important.

Peter and I married late. Peter is 10 years older than me, and even though he solemnly promised when we married to live to be 105, we know that time is uncertain, and we can never know how much of it we will have together. We've now been married 11 years, and we have found things to celebrate throughout the year, every year. No matter what Joe thinks about it, we will continue to look for reasons to celebrate.

Andrew's mother died right at the start of the tax season. I wrote to him and asked if it made it easier or harder for him, being so busy after such a big loss. He said it was good to be busy, but when a client came in who had just lost someone close to them, he said he would tell them about his own loss, and that was hard.

But most of Andrew's clients have been coming to him for years. Doing their taxes, as he does, Andrew knows a lot about their lives and the changes that have happened over the years. Sharing his own loss with these people who trust him with their finances seems appropriate—even if it is hard.

Next week, I will go to a celebration of life for Andrew's mother. It will be another celebration—if a sad one. She lived to be 94, and she had become more infirm in the last year. She had talked with Andrew about dying, and she knew the time was getting near.

We will get together and hear stories about her life from the people who cared about her. It will be a small affair, Andrew says, and nothing fancy. Andrew is bringing the food.

But I will be there for Andrew because he has been there for me. What Joe doesn't understand is that we celebrate everything—the good and the bad and the unusual, and the inevitable. We celebrate because, even if we live to be 105, life is short, and it is cause for celebration.

Till next time, Carrie

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

# Two Arrested in Connection to Fatal Galena Park Basketball Court Shooting



Angel Mendiola Ramirez (L) and Kevin Jaimes (R)

GALENA PARK – Local authorities have made significant progress in the investigation of a deadly shooting that rocked the community at a Galena Park basketball court, announcing the arrest and charging of two individuals allegedly involved in the incident.

Angel Mendiola Ramirez, 18, is charged with the murder 19-year-old Mario Sosa Ruiz, and Kevin Jaimes, 18, is charged with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.

### Keene Street shooting

The arrests mark a critical development in the case, which sent shock-

waves through the neighborhood after the violence erupted on the court. Law enforcement officials confirmed that both suspects are now in custody facing serious charges related to the fatal shooting.

Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez reports a call went out around 9:45 p.m. on March 29 about a shooting near Keene Street and 14th Street at Galena Park.

According to detectives, two groups of males had agreed to meet at the park and while there, Ramirez started shooting and hit Ruiz. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Officials previously said a group of males were play-

ing at the basketball court at the time.

Two other men in their early 20s were also shot and survived their injuries.

Multiple Houston-area agencies assisted with the shooting, including Galena Park PD, Harris County Precinct 3, and Jacinto City PD also on scene.

Community leaders and residents have expressed a mix of relief and continued grief as they await further updates. The incident has sparked renewed conversations about safety in local recreational spaces, with calls for increased community support and resources to prevent future tragedies.

# Chaos Erupts in Galena Park after Contentious Mayoral Election



Oscar Mireles (pictured left) narrowly beat incumbent Esmeralda Moya (pictured right) to serve as the next mayor of Galena Park, Texas by just 132 votes.

GALENA PARK - The City of Galena Park has been thrown into chaos following a contentious mayoral election, with some claiming it remains unclear who is now in charge.

Oscar Mireles narrowly beat incumbent Esmeralda Moya to serve as the next mayor of Galena Park by just 132 votes on Saturday.

But when Mireles went to city hall on Monday to discuss the next steps, he said he learned that the city secretary abruptly resigned after serving more than two decades in the city of about 10,000 people, **Click 2 Houston reports.**

She had earlier sent Mireles an email stating that the election cannot be officially canvassed until all provisional ballots and other outstanding ballots are received, as required under Texas law.

Her sudden resignation has now left Mireles uncertain of how the process to take over as mayor will proceed, he said.

'We're just stuck,' he said. 'We're waiting on the state to tell us what we need to do next.'

Tensions then escalated even further when Mireles posted a live video to Facebook showing the mayor and her ex-husband taking bags of items from city hall and loading them into a black pickup truck.

'I saw them take out one computer tower,' Mireles claimed. 'My wife saw that they had a bag with documents in it.'

Galena Park police officers responded to the scene on May 5, the video shows, but one officer could be heard telling Mireles he

could not intervene because they could be just taking personal items from City Hall.

Mireles now says he is not accusing anyone of any wrongdoing, but said the lack of communication surrounding the city's transition has raised concerns among residents.

'I understand you have personal belongings, I don't have a problem with that,' Mireles said. 'But it's just a lack of communication.'

Some residents have even asked state officials to intervene, **Fox 26 reports.**

But Moya, who has served as the city's mayor since 2014, has denied that her administration has engaged in any wrongdoing.

'There has been a great deal of false and misleading information circulating about me and others connected to the City of Galena Park,' she said in a statement to Fox 26.

'Over the past several days, certain media outlets and individuals on social media have continued to spread one-sided stories, rumors and accusations without presenting the full truth,' the outgoing mayor continued. 'Hearing only one side of a story does not make it factual.'

Moya then went on to hit out at Mireles for making what she described as fake accusations, including that documents are being destroyed, city property is being seized and that 'no one is currently in charge of the city.'

'This is also untrue, as I remain in office and continue serving as Mayor until the Mayor-Elect is officially sworn in next Wednes-

day,' Moya said.

She further said that the city secretary is still employed with the city, but her final day of employment will be Friday.

'Her decision to leave was personal and based on the ongoing treatment, bullying and disrespect she has experienced over the past three years from the Mayor-Elect,' Moya said, adding that 'other city employees have also chosen to leave for similar reasons.'

Despite the public accusations being made against her, there have also been communications asking her to remain and continue working for the incoming administration,' the outgoing mayor claimed. 'This directly contradicts many of the public claims and rumors currently being spread online.'

She also argued that 'allegations that the Mayor has abandoned the city or engaged in illegal activity are false and irresponsible.'

'Public officials and media outlets have a responsibility to report accurate information, not rumors designed to create division and confusion within the community,' Moya concluded.

'We encourage the public to seek facts directly from the individuals being unfairly accused, rather than relying solely on social media speculation.'

'At this time, we ask for fairness, honesty and respect for all individuals involved,' Moya said, noting: 'False accusations can seriously damage reputations, families and the trust within our community.'



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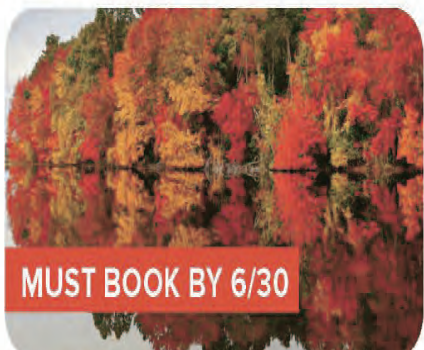
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RFPs will be received until 4:00 p.m., Thursday, June 11, 2026 through the Electronic Bidding Website at <https://cvisd.ionwave.net>. All necessary information may be obtained by calling the Business Office at (281) 452-8003, or the district website [www.cvisd.org](http://www.cvisd.org), under Departments → Business Office → Purchasing. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

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## Houston-based doctor says Hantavirus isn't very transmissible despite Hantavirus cruise outbreak

HOUSTON - Top health officials said they're not worried about the outbreak, which has so far killed three people.

A flight carrying U.S. citizens from the luxury cruise ship arrived early Monday morning.

Sixteen people were taken to a facility in Nebraska. Officials said one person has tested positive. Two others were taken to a hospital in Atlanta.

ABC News is reporting the number of likely cases of the Hantavirus is now confirmed at 11 worldwide, including one American.

Houston-based Doctor Peter Hotez, one of the prominent epidemiological voices during COVID, said it's believed a couple originally became infected on the southern coast of Argentina after exposure to rodent droppings or urine.

He said that after they became infected, the couple went on a cruise ship, and a few other people were infected as well.

"It wouldn't surprise me that this week, we see a couple more. I don't see many more cases beyond that, and here's why: the incubation period is a time



frame. You're first exposed to the virus to the time you show symptoms can go up to six weeks," Dr. Hotez said.

Hotez said this outbreak has been ongoing since early April and added that in past outbreaks, the incubation period has been around three weeks.

Health experts said the Hantavirus isn't very transmissible from person to person, but it can occur, like we're currently seeing.

"It's not nearly as transmissible as COVID-19. We could get surprised. We

don't have a lot of experience with Hantavirus, but it's not impossible that this becomes a bigger epidemic. The fact that it's been going on for six weeks and we have nine cases is a positive sign," Hotez said.

The Texas Department of State and Health Services told ABC13 it is monitoring the two people from Texas who were exposed. The department said the two Texans are not sick following their exposure and said they don't pose a risk to other people living in Texas.



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Lewis Pullman, left, and Sally Field star in "Remarkably Bright Creatures."

"Remarkably Bright Creatures"

"Ready or Not 2" (R) — The sequel to "Ready or Not" (2019), a comedy-horror film that catapulted Samara Weaving ("Borderline") into "scream queen" territory, is out now to rent after pulling in three times its budget in theaters. (Not bad!) Weaving reprises her role as Grace MacCaullay, and the sequel picks up moments after the events of the last film. Grace has just survived the ritual where she was supposed to meet her end and reunites with her younger sister, Faith (Kathryn Newton), while she recovers in the hospital. However, a council including six elite families hears wind of Grace's successful escape and manages to kidnap both Grace and her sister for another round of games. Sarah Michelle Gellar ("I Know What You Did Last Summer") and

Elijah Wood ("Yellowjackets") joined the cast this time around. (Apple TV+) "Remarkably Bright Creatures" (PG-13) — This film, led by Sally Field ("80 for Brady") and Lewis Pullman ("Wishful Thinking"), is based on the novel of the same name by Shelby Van Pelt. Although it's dubbed a "mystery drama," there's a heartwarming human element to the film due to Field's and Pullman's endearing performances, as well as the subject matter at hand. Field plays Tova, an elderly widow who works the night shift at her local aquarium. When a young man named Cameron (Pullman) begins working alongside her, they form an unlikely bond as she helps him to find his father. Colm Meaney ("The Panic") and Alfred Molina ("Harold and the Purple Crayon") co-star in the

film, which is out now to stream. (Netflix)

"Lurker" (R) — We have a bit of horror this week, and now we have this arthouse film starring Theodore Pellerin ("Beau Is Afraid") and Archie Madekwe ("Saltburn"). "Lurker" follows retail worker Matthew (Pellerin), who's working at a clothing store in Los Angeles when a popular musician named Oliver (Madekwe) wanders in. The two hit it off and become fast friends (not unlike the beginning of "A Star Is Born"), to the point that Oliver offers a spot to Matthew in his entourage as a documentarian. Infatuated with the idea of being adjacent to a celebrity, Matthew accepts, only to begin spiraling as Oliver's infatuation with him loses steam just as quickly as it started. Premieres May 15. (HBO Max)

"Tucci in Italy: Season 2" (PG) — Back for another season is this National Geographic series hosted by Stanley Tucci, which is perfect timing considering that Tucci is currently on a roll with a bunch of press for "The Devil Wears Prada 2." In this season, the 65-year-old actor explores five new regions in the country that his family has descended from, including Naples and Campania, Sicily, Le Marche, Sardinia, and Veneto. Tucci also visits the world's smallest kingdom on Tavolara Island, whose king owns a seafood restaurant called Da Tonino. Tucci told People magazine, "In Italy, food is never just food. It's memory, identity and, sometimes, a full-blown argument." All episodes are available to stream on May 12. (Disney+)

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Q: When is the "Yellowstone" sequel series starting, and will it be on regular cable or just streaming? — A.M.

A: The wait is over! There have been prequels and spin-offs of the smash hit series "Yellowstone," but the love story of Beth and Rip continues in the form of the new series "Dutton Ranch" on May 15. The two-episode premiere and remainder of the first season will air on both the traditional Paramount cable channel as well as the Paramount+ streaming package. The short season of just nine episodes will conclude with a season finale on July 3.

In the new series, Rip (Cole Hauser) and Beth (Kelly Reilly) relocate to South Texas, where they feud with a rival ranch owner played by Annette Bening ("Apples Never Fall"). According to Deadline, Ed Harris ("Westworld") will also star as "a weathered veteran and veterinarian who treats animals with compassion and understanding and possesses a good sense of humor."

Country/rock singer-songwriter Morgan Wade will play a bartender at a local watering hole, "described as a character who 'sees all.'" Wade follows in the footsteps of other singers like Lainey Wilson and Ryan Bingham who appeared on "Yellowstone."

Q: I just saw a headline about Denzel Washington and Ellen Pompeo arguing on the set of "Grey's Anatomy." I don't recall him being on the show, and he's one of my favorite actors. — G.I.

A: Denzel Washington didn't play a character on the long-running ABC series but instead directed an episode. It was a pivotal one during season 12 titled "The Sound of Silence," where Pompeo's character, Dr. Meredith Grey, was viciously attacked by a patient. On her podcast "Tell Me with Ellen Pompeo," Washington scolded her after she improvised a line that wasn't in the script. Her hackles were raised, and she yelled back, "Listen, [expletive], this is my show. This is my set. Who are you telling?"

When asked by Variety about the incident, Washington said, "It's all good," but he hasn't been back to direct another ep-



Annette Bening as Beulah Jackson in "Dutton Ranch"

isode. It wasn't his first time directing — he had previously directed two feature films and would go on to direct two more: "Fences" and "A Journal for Jordan."

Washington got his start by playing a physician on one of the greatest medical dramas of all time — the multiple Emmy-Award-winning "St. Elsewhere." Meanwhile, "Grey's" has been renewed for its 23rd season on ABC.

Q: I read that there's going to be a new sports-themed version of "Jeopardy!" Will it be syndicated on regular TV like the original? — D.L.

A: "ESPN Jeopardy!" will be hosted by sports commentator Joe Buck sometime this summer on streamers Hulu and Disney+. An exact premiere date hasn't been announced. According to Deadline, the contestants will consist of "ESPN talent ... representing charities of their choice ... as they compete for a \$500,000 prize." Another spin-off "Pop Culture Jeopardy!" with host Colin Jost moves to Netflix for its second season, beginning May 11.

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

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