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GP Native Jason Adams Takes Helm of Police Department

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

GALENA PARK, Texas — Newly appointed Galena Park Police Chief Jason Adams says his first priority is rebuilding trust — inside the department and across the community he has called home for most of his life.

“I was born and raised in Galena Park,” Adams said in an interview with the North Channel Star.

“I was born in 1973 and I’ve lived here basically my whole life.”

Mayor Oscar Mireles appointed Adams in his first week in office, elevating a hometown officer with more than two decades in the department after years of turnover in the city’s top police post. The appointment drew loud applause from a packed council chamber at a special meeting, reflecting what appeared to be strong public support for a leader with deep local roots.



Jason Adams, a longtime Galena Park resident and 22-year veteran of the police department, has been named interim police chief under Mayor Oscar Mireles’ new administration. Adams said he hopes to strengthen the department and improve communication with the community. (Photo by David Taylor)

Adams said his connection to the city is personal as well as professional. He attended Galena Park schools before graduating from Mayde Creek High School in Katy, later studying at Houston Community College and earning his peace officer license. He joined the department full-time in October 2003.

“I never left,” Adams said. Now leading the department, Adams said he wants to move away from what he described as an era of micromanagement and limited openness.

“This administration moving forward, we’re going to be very transparent,” he said. “We’re going to be open to the public. We’re going to talk to the

people.”

That outreach has already started, he said, pointing to a recent community gathering at Dairy Queen where residents raised concerns about speeding, junk vehicles and neighborhood issues. Adams said visibility and communication will be central to his approach.

“I have highly encouraged the officers to — if it’s not late at night, they’re not busy — go inside,” Adams said of local businesses. “Be seen inside the businesses. Make yourself known. Make the community know, ‘Hey, there’s actually officers that care.’”

Adams also outlined steps the department is taking to improve safety in public spaces, including parks that have drawn concern after past violence. He said the department is enforcing a nighttime curfew and responding when an outside security company alerts dispatch to after-hours activity.

“The first part of it is to set a curfew, which we have,” Adams said.

He added that officers are also conducting routine zone and business checks throughout the city. Adams pushed back on perceptions that crime is spiraling, saying Galena Park remains relatively safe.

“To be honest, crime here is not that bad,” he said. “It’s really not. Our statistics are fairly low.” While the city in recent years has not published or submitted crime statistics online or to the Texas Department of Public Safety Uniform Crime Reporting System, historical FBI Unified Crime Reporting (UCR) and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) trends show manageable levels of both violent and property crime. NIBRS and UCR metrics indicate property-related

Continued. See NEW CHIEF VOWS TRANSPARENCY, Page 2

Jacinto City Says ‘Data Center’ Buzz is False Alarm



The location of the former glass company that provided beer bottles for Faust for a number of years

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

A wave of concern over a rumored data center in Jacinto City appears to be based on marketing materials, not reality.

Jacinto City City Manager Lon Squyres said the industrial property at the former glass plant on Fidelity Street is not being

pursued by any known data center operator, despite recent reporting and online marketing materials that suggested otherwise. Instead, he said, another company is now the likely tenant, and it is “not a data center.”

“The facility created a marketing brochure marking it as a potential host for a data center,” Squyres

said. “It’s our understanding that there are other candidates for the site. We’ve met with one in particular three times now, one on site. We just met the other day with one that’s the likely candidate and it’s not a data center.”

The site, the former An

Continued. See ANOTHER TENANT EMERGES, Page 5

Channelview ISD Dr. Tory C. Hill Named Regional Finalist for Texas Superintendent of The Year

Channelview ISD is proud to announce that Superintendent Dr. Tory C. Hill has been selected as a regional finalist for the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) 2026 Superintendent of the Year Award, one of the highest honors bestowed upon public school leaders in Texas.

Established in 1984, the TASB Superintendent of the Year program recognizes exemplary and visionary leadership in public education. The award honors superintendents who demonstrate a strong commitment to improving student performance, advancing educational opportunities, engaging their communities, and leading their dis-



Dr. Tory C. Hill
Channelview ISD Superintendent

Continued. See REGIONAL FINALIST RECOGNITION HIGHLIGHTS, Page 2

Mireles’ First 30 days Focused on Water, Audits and Restoring Order

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

GALENA PARK, Texas — In his first 30 days in office, Galena Park Mayor Oscar Mireles says his administration has been consumed by one mission: stabilizing a city government he says is facing financial strain, infrastructure problems and long-delayed administrative cleanup.

At the center of that effort is the city’s troubled water system, which Mireles described as both a financial and operational challenge. The new mayor said the city has been losing money on water service, forcing his administration to prepare residents for likely rate increases while also trying to address leaks, aging equipment and long-postponed repairs.



New Galena Park Mayor Oscar Mireles is working to right the ship in city government and bring stability. That includes stopping the bleeding in the water department that has been losing approximately \$100,000 per month.

“Right now, we’re concentrating on the water bill,” Mireles said in an interview. “We need to raise prices in order to not be in the hole every month. Our infrastructure is getting bad. We have leaks. This last week we had two. So we need equipment. We need better pipes.”

Mireles said the administration plans an aggressive public information campaign to explain why increases may be necessary and to soften what he called the “sticker shock” for residents. Officials are also developing a calculator that would allow residents to estimate how proposed changes could affect their bills.

For years, the city has only charged residents \$14 per month for water, while the city of Houston charges the city approximately \$28 per month. It’s a defi-

cit the city cannot afford.

The mayor said the city is also trying to identify waste in the system itself. That includes investigating unusually high consumption at some homes receiving senior discounts and checking whether leaks on private property may be contributing to soaring usage.

“We’re going to start with the 600 houses that have senior discounts,” Mireles said. “There’s a lot of houses that are using 10,000, 15,000 gallons a month with a senior discount. I mean, we’re losing money by the drop.”

At the same time, the administration is working to move forward on infrastructure grants that Mireles said have been in the pipeline for years. Those projects include replacing a water tank and reservoir near the fire de-

partment, upgrading pumps and replacing some water lines.

“We do have that grant,” Mireles said. “They’re going to replace the water tank, the reservoir next to the fire department, and some of the pumps there.”

Beyond water infrastructure, Mireles said one of the most serious inherited problems has been the city’s long-delayed audit process. He said the city had fallen years behind and is now working to bring financial records up to date.

“I think the last one they were working on was 2020,” he said. “Yesterday, she told me they are up into ’24. I think they’ve finally gotten kind of finalized. But they’re working. ... It’s a process.”

Continued. See GP MAYOR FOCUSED ON WATER, Page 5

Family, Community Remembers Life of Beloved Louis Erebia

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

More than 1,000 mourners filled The River Church in Channelview last Saturday to celebrate the life of Louis Erebia, a man whose death has shaken the North Channel community and whose life, family members said, was defined by faith, generosity and an uncommon gift for making people feel seen.

Erebia, 56, was remembered not only for the tragic circumstances of his death but for the joyful rhythm of the life he built around the people he loved. Friends, relatives, church members and Little League families packed the sanctuary, a visible reflection of the reach of a man described again and again as a helper, encourager and protector.

The service's most emotional moments came when his wife and children stepped to the microphone, not to list accomplishments, but to describe the small, ordinary acts that made Louis unforgettable: goofy dances in the kitchen, early-morning breakfasts, rides to practices and games, Sunday Tejano music, and a habit of turning strangers into friends before an errand was over.

His oldest daughter, Brandy, said her father's kindness was the lesson that will outlive him. Remembering the "dorky faces" and "silly dances" that once seemed endless, she told mourners that even her own children already understand what Louis taught by example: "To be kind to others." She promised that his light would continue through his children and grandchildren.

Austin, his oldest son, spoke with the weight of sudden responsibility and deep gratitude.

"My dad was the best man around," he said. "He helped anyone and everyone and never complained once." Austin vowed to carry forward the example his father set, telling his family, "I promise to take care of mom and my siblings. I'm honored to be able to say you were my dad."

For Logan, whose stolen truck his father was trying to recover before he was killed, grief came



Louis Erebia's two sons, Austin and Logan, carry their father's casket out of the church following a soul-stirring and emotional service remembering their dad.

wrapped in memory: baseball games, late-night talks and hard-won time together.

"He would always forgive. Never hated. He always loved," Logan said, recalling a father who showed up for every game and every conversation that mattered.

Brooklyn described the father she knew at home as the loud morning person who filled the house with music, made breakfast, watched movies and turned interruptions into affection. He was, she said, the kind of dad who "could light up an entire room" and who "never missed a game."

Addison remembered a father who made even ordinary outings feel special and treated her friends like family.

"He taught me to always be kind to others, work hard and love everyone," she said. "He taught me everything, just not how to live without him."

His wife, Amanda, offered the story of a marriage built over 26 years from persistence, partnership and laughter. She remembered the man who asked her to lunch every Friday until she finally said yes, the husband who could be disorganized and stubborn, but who loved loudly and showed up un-failingly for his family, church and friends.

"Because Louis was my partner," she said, explaining how she managed the demands of work, church and community life. "We made an incredible team."

Those tributes matched the broader picture

sketched by relatives and friends: a Houston native who spent 32 years at American Packing and Gasket, loved coaching baseball, served at The River Church, volunteered in the community and never seemed to run out of energy for people who needed him. He was the neighbor who helped, the church member who served, the parent in the stands and the grandfather known as "Pops."

Family members said his generosity did not announce itself with grand gestures so much as with steady presence — a ride offered without hesitation, a phone call returned, a prayer spoken on the spot, a meal shared, a burden quietly carried. In a world that often feels rushed and transactional, Louis made people feel they mattered.

Again and again, the people who loved him returned to the same truth: Louis Erebia's life was not defined by what happened in his final moments, but by the way he lived every day before them. He fed people, teased people, prayed with people, cheered for people and, in the end, protected people. In a sanctuary overflowing with grief, that legacy stood taller than sorrow.

As Amanda told the crowd, her husband "spent his life loving people well." For a family now learning to live without him, and for a community still trying to absorb the loss, that may be the clearest measure of the man they came to honor: a life measured not in years alone, but in the love he gave away.

Regional finalist recognition highlights Dr. Tory C. Hill's leadership,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



tracts with excellence and integrity.

The Superintendent of the Year selection process begins with nominations from local school boards across Texas. Nominees are reviewed and interviewed by regional selection committees, with one finalist advancing from each participating Education Service Center region. Regional finalists then move forward for consideration by the state selection committee, which will ultimately select five state finalists before naming the Texas Superintendent of the Year this fall at txED-CON, the state's premier public education conference.

"I am truly honored and humbled to be recognized as a regional finalist for

this prestigious award," said Dr. Tory C. Hill. "This recognition reflects the incredible work happening across Channelview ISD every day. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve this district and proud of what we have accomplished together."

Under Dr. Tory C. Hill's leadership, Channelview ISD has remained focused on student achievement, innovative educational opportunities, staff development, and building strong partnerships with families and the community. His commitment to excellence has helped position the district for continued growth and success.

Channelview ISD Board President Alex Ybarra praised the recognition and the superintendent's

leadership.

"On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to congratulate Dr. Hill on this well-deserved honor," said CISD School Board President Ybarra. "His leadership, vision, and unwavering commitment to our students have made a tremendous impact on Channelview ISD."

The TASB Superintendent of the Year recipient will be announced later this year during txED-CON. The Superintendent of the Year receives a \$5,000 award and a commemorative ring provided by Balfour, while the districts of the four state finalists receive \$1,000 each. (Source Sheldon ISD website)

New chief vows transparency and community focus,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

offenses (such as vehicle theft or minor vandalism) and make up the bulk of incidents in the city aligning with typical trends for small-to-moderate Houston-area suburbs. Adams also said there were occasional jugging incidents at the bank ATMs, not necessarily stemming from local residents, but others who follow residents back into the city. Adams said response time remains one of the department's strengths.

"Most everybody will tell you, 'We love the service the police department's giving us' because we can be there within, you know, 20 seconds or 5-10 minutes."

He also touts MOU's (memorandums of understanding) with Jacinto City Police Chief Joe Ayala and Pct. 2 Constable Jerry Garcia who also aid in coverage when called upon. Pct. 2 SROs (school resource officers) during the summer extend their

coverage outside of the schools and into the community, he said.

He also mentioned police tactics used during night patrol to actively catch criminals, but didn't elaborate to protect officers cover.

Still, Adams said the department is working through operational and administrative hurdles left behind during the city's transition. He cited problems with equipment, billing, access to systems and other infrastructure.

"We've got a lot to sift through," Adams said. "It's going to take some time. People want miracles to happen immediately. It's not going to happen."

Among his goals are rebuilding specialty programs and staffing up. Adams said the city is preparing to post a civil service exam in July as part of an effort to hire more officers, and he said the department is also exploring ways to strengthen traffic

enforcement and long-term public safety funding.

For Adams, the job is not only about strategy or structure, it is also about serving a city that shaped him and his family for generations.

That legacy, Adams suggested, remains central to how he sees the work today: local, practical and rooted in service.

"Our number one goal here is — like I'm telling everybody — if you see something, say something," Adams said. "Let us come investigate."

061526 GPPoliceChief 01 – Jason Adams, a longtime Galena Park resident and 22-year veteran of the police department, has been named interim police chief under Mayor Oscar Mireles' new administration. Adams said he hopes to strengthen the department and improve communication with the community.

Judge Lina Hidalgo Welcomes Curaçao to Harris County For Historic World Cup Debut

HARRIS COUNTY, TX - Judge Lina Hidalgo welcomed the Curaçao community to Harris County as the first World Cup match in Houston kicks off with Curaçao playing Germany today. Judge Hidalgo celebrated Curaçao's historic Guinness World Record as the smallest nation ever to qualify for the World Cup, and she recognized Curaçao's status as a growing economic hub during a reception with international business leaders on Friday.

"We're so proud to welcome Curaçao to Harris County and be a part of World Cup history together! The World Cup is a huge opportunity for both our communities. For Harris County, it's our chance to show nations large and small that we are their gateway to the United States. There are so many areas for Harris County and Curaçao to partner on, and I look forward to continuing to build our relationship. I can't wait to cheer on Curaçao today at the first World Cup match in Harris County!" said Judge Hidalgo.

During the Guinness World Record Ceremony today, Judge Hidalgo joined Curaçao Prime



Judge Hidalgo presents a proclamation in honor of Curaçao breaking the world record as the smallest nation to qualify for the World Cup to Curaçao Prime Minister Gilmar Pisas.

Minister Gilmar Pisas and Dr. Roderick Middelhof, Curaçao's Minister for Economic Development to recognize the historic moment.

Earlier in the week, Judge Hidalgo had the opportunity to meet with the Curaçao business community and government leaders. Additionally, she met with dignitaries including Netherlands Consul General Lisette den Breems and Curaçao Minister of Economic Development Roderick Middelhof, as well as business leaders from

major business organizations including CINEX and the Curaçao Hospitality & Tourism Association.

Curaçao's historic qualification for the FIFA World Cup has created a unique opportunity to showcase not only the island's culture and national pride, but also its growing role as a strategic hub for international business, logistics, energy transition, and regional investment. (Source Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo)

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CHARLOTTE'S WEB

By Charlotte Jackson



Waiting on the Rainbow

In the past two weeks, I have learned of at least twelve deaths and after each one there is an emotional roller coaster. Some were friends of mine from elementary school, some were former coworkers, some were neighbors, some were closer than others yet with each one, there is a series of emotions, events and questions. Yet one thing I learned through the years, is that we cannot let emotions linger. Untreated, life can lead to bitterness, anger, depression or any one of another situations

Some of the most helpful words I have ever taken to heart were shared from Pastor John A. Brady, Sr. He would remind his congregation at Woodforest Baptist as well as many other individuals that when life happens, we have two choices. We can react to what has happened and become bitter; or we can react to God and become better.

Before any of us get angry and make choices that we will regret later, I believe we need to stop and pray. For those impacted by the senseless murder of someone, often we want to demand justice. Yes, laws often need to be changed, and perhaps better choices of elected leaders are needed or some sort of accountability on the part of the legal system. But as we all know, in the past several decades, there has been a shift in our nation where respect for one another is not what it was. It is seen daily in the news about the increase in deaths, robberies, drunk drivers, homes broken into and much more. We have seen a lack of respect for our elders, or children, for law enforcement, for authority and for much more. It is hard to respect someone who represents values that are not the same that you live with.

It is easy to get upset about the growing number of individuals who are homeless, the amount of disparity among sentences that are handed down, the lack of voters who exercise their rights, the lack of funding for certain projects and the disproportionate funding for some programs. But what are YOU going to do?

I invite you to get a blank sheet of paper. Make a list of what is good in your life. Write down what needs improvement. Decide what area of your life you are willing to work on. And then make a list of what you can do to improve the community. Are there pleasures you can postpone so that you can donate those funds to help improve in the community? Maybe you want to donate money or time to a cause that was important to one of those causes in our area that needs your time and talent. Maybe you want to reach out to the grieving families, both those of the deceased as well as the families impacted by a crime committed by someone, they love. Perhaps you realize that mental health is often in the news. Attend a free workshop and learn more about what those diagnosed with an illness and their families live with. Perhaps you can invite those who lost a loved one to dinner, or maybe just mail them a note letting them know your care. Let's choose to be better.



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ASK DIAMOND JIM



Diamond Jim: “What is the birthstone for July?”

JULY's BIRTHSTONE IS RUBY

There's no better way to demonstrate your love than by giving a ruby in celebration of a July birthday. Rubies arouse the senses, stir the imagination, and are said to guarantee health, wisdom, wealth and success in love. Fine-quality ruby is extremely rare, and the color of the gem is most important to its value. The most prized color is a medium or medium-dark vivid red or slightly purplish red. If the gem is too light or has too much purple or orange, it will be called a fancy-color sapphire.



A ruby is a pink to blood-red colored gemstone, a variety of the mineral corundum (aluminium oxide). The red color is caused mainly by the presence of the element chromium. Its name comes from ruber, Latin for red. Other varieties of gem-quality corundum are called sapphires. Ruby is considered one of the four precious stones, together with sapphire, emerald and diamond.

Prices of rubies are primarily determined by color. The brightest and most valuable “red” called blood-red or “pigeon blood”, commands a large premium over other rubies of similar quality. After color follows clarity: similar to diamonds, a clear stone will command a premium, but a ruby without any needle-like rutile inclusions may indicate that the stone has been treated. Cut and carat (weight) are also an important factor in determining the price. The world's most expensive ruby is the Sunrise Ruby. Rubies have a hardness of 9.0 on the Mohs scale of mineral hardness. Among the natural gems only moissanite and diamond are harder, with diamond having a Mohs hardness of 10.0 and moissanite falling somewhere in between corundum (ruby) and diamond in hardness.

All natural rubies have imperfections in them, including color impurities and inclusions of rutile needles known as “silk”. Gemologists use these needle inclusions found in natural rubies to distinguish them from synthetics, simulants, or substitutes. Usually the rough stone is heated before cutting. Almost all rubies today are treated in some form, with heat treatment being the most common practice. However, rubies that are completely untreated but still of excellent quality command a large premium.

Some rubies show a three-point or six-point asterism or “star”. These rubies are cut into cabochons to display the effect properly. Asterisms are best visible with a single-light source and move across the stone as the light moves or the stone is rotated. Such effects occur when light is reflected off the “silk” (the structurally oriented rutile needle inclusions) in a certain way.

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Monahan Elementary Lunch:
June 1- July 2 Monday-Friday
Served Daily from 7:30-8:15 AM

Null Middle School
June 1- July 2 Monday-Thursday
Served Daily from 7:30-8:15 AM

C.E. King Middle School:
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Served Daily from 7:30-8:00 AM

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June 1- July 30 Monday-Thursday
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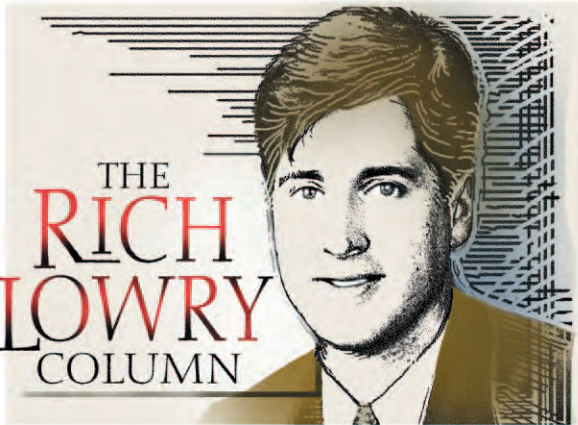
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OPINION PAGE

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How to Kill the Supreme Court in One Easy Step

In 2016, the conservative writer Mike Anton made a galvanizing case for Donald Trump in his famous “Flight 93” essay, arguing that the stakes in the contest between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton were existential.

His contention that a Clinton win would cement Democratic electoral dominance forever, such that Republicans needed to charge the cockpit or die, was implausible at the time and seems more so in retrospect.

If Hillary had won in 2016, in all likelihood, she would have been gone in 2020, washed away by the pandemic just like Trump was.

This time, though, really might be different. Democrats are now seriously contemplating measures that wouldn’t have occurred to Hillary Clinton circa 2016. Endorsing some version of court-packing, or “court reform,” as Democrats insist on calling it, is becoming orthodoxy among mainstream Democrats.

Several weeks ago, James Carville said that Democrats should pack the Court and add the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico as states in 2028 if they get unified control of Washington.

The immediate past Democratic presidential nominee, who has some chance of winning the 2028 Democratic nomination, Kamala Harris, associated herself with the same ideas. She added abolishing the Electoral College to the list.

House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, who easily could be the Speaker of the House next year, has said: “In the new Congress, we’re going to have to do something about this Supreme Court, and let me be very clear: Everything is on the table.”

The top Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, Jamie Raskin, has fashioned a reason why the Supreme Court needs to be expanded by four justices (supposedly, the number of justices should match the number of federal circuits at 13).

If all these ideas were to become consensus Democratic agenda items in 2028, they would constitute one of the most radical political platforms of a major political party in American history.

Court-packing alone would be a seismic, system-changing event, as would abolishing the Electoral College, which has been foundational to our presidential elections from the beginning.

The common theme of all of this would be guaranteeing outcomes — four new progressive justices, four new Democratic senators — in blatant power grabs undermining the legitimacy of the institutions in question.

What would a world look like where a substantial portion of the country thinks the Supreme Court is a sham, and not because the court is issuing unwelcome opinions, but because the court has been arbitrarily changed to produce a predetermined ideological result through a grotesque end-run around the rules?

Democrats will say Republicans have already done this, even though the GOP operated within standard procedures to forge the current conservative majority. Did Republicans play hardball? Sure. But their influence on the composition of the court depended on winning presidential and senate elections, and taking advantage of fortuitous timing to confirm justices the way they’ve always been confirmed.

Manufacturing new seats out of nothing, or forcing the retirements of conservative justices by fiat, would be a blatant rigging of the court. If a portion of the country thinks that it no longer needs to abide by the Court’s decisions, that obviously creates the predicate for serious civil strife. The same is true if Congress is no longer seen as legitimate after it is packed with newly minted Democratic senators.

Democrats feel justified in embracing any means to match and exceed Trump’s comprehensive aggressiveness. Trump’s provocations — the lawfare, the executive overreach, the wars without congressional authorization, the gerrymandering — all have ample precedent among prior Democratic presidents. Democrats, of course, don’t see it that way, and they fear and loathe Donald Trump more than they have any other Republican president.

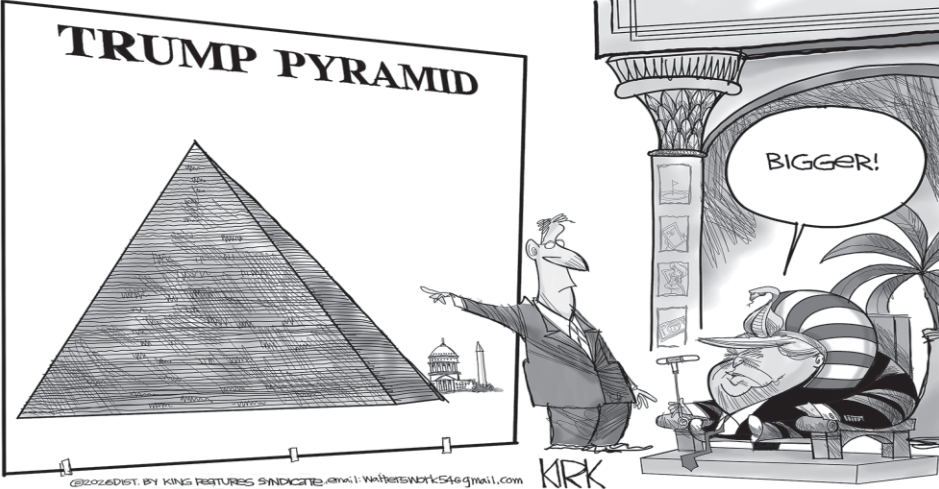
In reaction, should they sweep in 2028, they may try to push the American constitutional order past an event horizon from which it will never return. In other words, 12 years after the GOP was told to charge the cockpit or die, the stakes for our system really could be existential.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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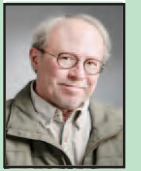
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SELF - AGGRANDIZEMENT TAKEN TO ITS ULTIMATE CONCLUSION...



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



First Case in 2026 of West Nile Virus Reported

The year’s first case of West Nile virus has been reported in a Harris County resident, the Texas Department of State Health Services reported. The virus is transmitted through the bite of infected mosquitoes, though 80% of people infected with West Nile never experience symptoms.

“West Nile and other mosquito-borne illnesses are a fact of life in Texas in the warmer months, and all Texans should take precautions against mosquito bites to stay safe and healthy,” said DSHS Commissioner Jennifer A. Shuford. She advised removing standing water from homes and yards, such as in buckets, old tires and other items.

The symptoms experienced by the unlucky 20% include fever, headache, nausea, muscle and joint aches, and fatigue. Though rare, West Nile virus can be fatal.

In the past five years, there have been 976 cases of West Nile in Texas, according to DSHS, with 106 deaths during that period.

STATE’S WIND PROJECTS AT A STANDSTILL

Dozens of Texas wind projects have been halted because the Department of Defense has not approved the federal permits required for them to move forward, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

Data from the American Clean Power Association indicate that the state has 54 wind projects stalled as part of a nationwide delay affecting 165 onshore wind projects.

President Donald Trump has long opposed wind power. Energy experts such as Environmental Texas Executive Director Luke Metzger say the administration is using the regulations, such as ensuring a wind project would not affect military airspace, as an attack on renewable power.

“It’s hard to see this as anything other than an effort to slow or stop wind power regardless of the consequences for consumers, the environment and grid reliability,” Metzger said.

In a statement, a defense department official said DOD is still evaluating the projects.

The department’s evaluation of wind turbines “is inher-



ently complex and time-consuming because it involves balancing two critical, and sometimes competing, interests: developing energy sources while ensuring military operations and readiness are not degraded or impaired to the extent an unacceptable risk to national security is created,” the official said.

R&D PLAYS VITAL ROLE IN STATE’S ECONOMY

Texas is one of the top five states contributing to research and development, according to a recent report from the state comptroller’s office.

The federal Bureau of Economic Analysis estimates R&D’s contribution to gross domestic product, “after accounting for the resources used to produce goods and services, employment and compensation from 2012 to 2023.”

The R&D value added by Texas businesses reached \$29.2 billion in 2023, a 131% increase from 2012. Further, R&D in the state supplied nearly 195,000 jobs and \$30.1 billion in wages, salaries and benefits in 2023.

Texas has 15 Tier 1 colleges and universities, the most in any state. In 2024, more than 11,800 patents were issued in Texas, the second highest in the country, after California.

“When investments are made in research, the returns multiply — strengthening our competitiveness, securing our future and improving the lives of all Texans,” said Fernanda Leite, interim vice president for research at UT-Austin.

FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS STATE PARK GROWS BY 1,000 ACRES

Franklin Mountains State Park, 15 minutes from El Paso, is now 1,054 acres larger to the east as the result of a new land acquisition, the Texas Parks and Wildlife

Department reported.

“I am excited about this acquisition,” said Superintendent Cesar Mendez, “which extends the buffer zone all the way to Martin Luther King Boulevard, adding some lower elevation and flatter land to Franklin Mountains State Park and securing access points (trailheads).”

With 28,000 acres — or 43 square miles — the park is one of the largest urban wilderness parks in the world. It has more than 120 miles of trail and is a popular site with birders.

The acquisition helps safeguard the main mountain area of desert bighorn sheep habitat.

FEDERAL AID FOR PANHANDLE WILDFIRE VICTIMS

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has approved a request for grant funds to assist victims of the Hungate Fire in Randall County, which has merged with the Chocolate Chip Fire, burning an estimated 14,000 acres and threatening more than 1,245 homes. Aid has also been granted for the Sinky Fire in Potter County, which has burned more than 2,500 acres and prompted evacuation of more than 500 acres.

“Texas has secured federal resources to further guard against wildfire threats in the Panhandle,” said Gov. Greg Abbott. “With this grant approval, Texas has additional tools to help Texans remain safe from wildfire danger.”

The approval of a Fire Management Assistance Grant makes the state eligible for 75% reimbursement from the federal government for eligible costs associated with wildfire suppression. These grants are available to states, counties and cities to support the mitigation, management, and control of fires that threaten to become major disasters.

BROKER IMPOSTER SCAMS BEING REPORTED

Several attempted broker-imposter scams over the past few months have prompted the Texas Department of Banking to warn that such ruses could pose a significant threat to financial institutions and consumers.

According to a TDB news release, “consumers are targeted after conducting searches for high-rate investment opportunities. Individuals contacted by the fraudsters are often not existing bank customers and are located across the United States.”

Some red flags to look for are cold calls, an incorrect or bogus email address, low-risk/high-reward offers, and unusual funding procedures.

Anyone who is targeted by a broker imposter is encouraged to contact the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority at finra.org.

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

Email: gborders@texaspress.com



The Bells



“What’s up with the bells?” I asked someone who looked as if he might know something.

I live near a cathedral. I can’t hear the cathedral bells from our apartment, but I walk past the church coming and going on my walk every day and, when I got back from Mexico this spring, I discovered that one of the bells had stopped ringing.

I am sure you have heard bells like these. Sometimes the bells are now recorded, but these are the real thing. There is a short melody at a quarter past the hour and a longer one that plays at half past. At a quarter to the hour, almost the complete melody plays, but it stops early on a different note. Then, on the hour, the full melody plays. It is very satisfying.

To prevent the nearest neighbors from waking every quarter hour, the bells do not ring at night. But they ring all day long, and now one of the bells is missing. I can’t imagine how the folks in the immediate neighborhood can stand it.

“What’s up with the bells?” I asked some people who looked as if they had just come out of church on Sunday. They looked at me as if I was not speaking a language they knew. “There’s one that’s not ringing. How long has that been going on?”

No idea. I asked several people, and I started to feel sorry for whichever priest had been preaching that day. If these people hadn’t even noticed the missing bell, I found it hard to believe they had absorbed a word of his sermon.

On a weekday, I was passing by the rectory. I didn’t know what a rectory was until I googled it and learned this was where the priests lived. A man in his thirties came out the door. He was not wearing a clerical collar, but I figured if he lived in the rectory, he would have to know what was going on. So I pounced.

“What’s up with the bells?” The man looked genuinely afraid of me, and I started to wonder what it was about me that was so alarming. But that did not mean I was giving up my quest.

“The bells,” I continued. “There’s one missing. It isn’t ringing. This has been going on for weeks. I wondered if it was going to be fixed.”

The man had not stopped walking the whole while I talked.

“Um ... yes. I think there are some people fixing it,” he said, scurrying away. “They came from France.”

Then he darted off into the parking lot as if he couldn’t get away from me fast enough. I was genuinely puzzled. And I wondered if, living under the bells as they did, they no longer heard them. And, if so, this did not seem like a good thing.

Because those bells are beautiful. I hear them every day, and I think of what a wonderful thing that must have been on Easter Sunday, 1915, when the cathedral was officially opened and the bells rang. I think of how proud and excited everyone must have been, and how helpful it must have been, before everyone had a phone or even a time-piece, to always know where they were in their day in such a musical way.

I’m going to take a few days off from my inquiry. There’s a chance I might be getting a reputation. But I love the bells, and I am not giving up. Those folks from France sound like they could use a little encouragement.

Till next time,
Carrie

New Air Monitors Help Channelview Track Barge Pollution

By Paola Hoffman,

CHANNELVIEW TX- On a Tuesday morning in April, Carolyn Stone stood at the base of a grassy hill at her local park, counting barges in the San Jacinto river.

Since Stone moved to Channelview in 1981, she said she's watched the number of barges in the river grow.

"It didn't used to be that way," Stone said. "This is just a tiny tip of what's in our river, surrounding our homes and our community."

As the barge industry expands, Channelview residents like Stone say the authorities haven't responded properly to their concerns about air pollution.

Now, the Channelview Fire Department and a Houston nonprofit are collaborating to install air monitors that could address barge emissions.

The barges, transporting tanks of oil and petrochemicals, float less than 500 feet from the nearest residential streets.

Stone said you don't need to live down the block to smell their emissions. At times, the smells travel much farther.

On an afternoon in March around 4 p.m., Stone came inside from her backyard with a headache. Shortly after, a smell reached her house.

"I walked in the living room and it about knocked me down," Stone said.

Stone said the smell was somewhat onion-like. She said her husband described it like fuel. And they weren't the only ones who noticed.

Stone said her phone began to buzz with neighbors calling. And the callers, other Channelview residents, weren't only reaching out to her.

They were calling the Channelview Fire Department, Pollution Control, the National Response Center, and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), to report high levels of volatile organic compounds, or VOCs, in the air.

The spike in pollution was significant enough that Stone said callers were reporting physical symptoms.

But she said that most of the smells in her neighborhood are treated as commonplace.

"We're a community that's acclimated to odors," Stone said. "A lot of people who come to Channelview [are] like, do you smell that? We're not smelling it, because it's not strong enough – it's our everyday air."

In terms of pollution, however, it's been hard for residents to be certain of what their "everyday air" consists of.

Understanding Their Air Quality

According to an [investigation by Public Health Watch](#), barges aren't required to obtain air permits.

Salina Arredondo reported the story. She said she spoke to different regulatory agencies dozens of times in her attempt to track existing policies.

"Neither the TCEQ or the EPA have really any policies directed strictly towards barge emissions," Arredondo said.



A Kunak air monitor measures air quality outside a Channelview home. The monitor was the first of the new monitors being installed in Channelview, and is capable of detecting particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, ozone pollution, carbon monoxide, and volatile organic compounds. Photo provided by Carolyn Stone.

Though the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality publishes a triennial emissions inventory, Public Health Watch's investigation found gaps in the data of the 2023 report.

The investigation states that the numbers were pulled from industrial sites on land, which self-report the emissions released during the loading and unloading of barges.

But Arredondo said that once the barges are on the water, that reporting stops.

"Because they operate on this very unique setting of on the water, but catering to land and crossing lots of jurisdictions, sometimes dozens of times in a day, there's no easy remedy and there's no direct monitoring happening for how barge operations go," she said.

Jimmy Sumbera, the administrator of the Channelview Fire Department, said that while multiple agencies are involved in barge operations, key parts are left under-regulated.

"Army Corps of Engineers, they approve the pylons for them to tie off to," he said. "But nobody regulates the actual barges. The Port Authority, they lease the submerged land, but nobody cares about what's in the barges."

He said this is where frustrations and worries arise in the community.

"When you talk to congressional offices, which I have, when you talk to different agencies, when you talk to the county, [...] when you go north of the Houston Ship Channel into the San Jacinto River, nobody regulates that," Sumbera said.

"It's a no man's zone, and so that's concerning."

Anthony D'Souza, the Community Air Monitoring

Program Manager at Air Alliance Houston, said that Channelview residents are specifically concerned about the emission of VOCs.

He said VOC emissions can have short and long term effects.

The short term effects include nausea, headaches, and dizziness, which callers were reporting to Stone in March. But with more time, D'Souza said the impacts intensify.

"That's when you get the more serious health effects like cancers and asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart disease," D'Souza said. "When chemicals have time to build up in your body, that's when you see more serious effects."

Air Alliance Houston is a nonprofit that has been working to [set up air monitors](#) in the Greater Houston and Harris County areas.

The organization first installed monitors for particulate matter in Channelview in mid 2024. Now, they're installing more advanced monitors that are capable of detecting VOCs.

Stone said the upgrades could help address a pattern that the old monitors had discovered.

"The decision was made that we were in dire need of more sophisticated monitors to document what's occurring in our neighborhood because we had our Purple Air monitors and they were picking up patterns, as Air Alliance Houston puts it, unique to Channelview," Stone said.

"Whereas emissions and stuff in most areas go down at night, ours spiked at night."

She said the source is seemingly barges.

Storage tanks on barges sometimes need to be vented to prevent pressure building up. Sumbera said that this of-

ten happens at night.

"Three o'clock in the morning, dark outside, wind moving at about 10 to 15 miles per hour in the southeast coming across the barges," Sumbera said. "There's hundreds of them."

"If somebody wanted to clean a barge up, somebody wanted to open the hatch and release the chemicals and not do it the proper way, when are they gonna do it?"

Sumbera said he doesn't believe the whole industry is engaging in this behavior.

"I'm in no way beating up on industry," he said. "Matter of fact, I think a majority of industry is responsible."

"But I do think there are bad players out there. And the bad players probably emit a majority of the odors and the pollution that we're smelling."

When there is a high emission event, Channelview residents call for support from government agencies, like they did in March.

Two main issues arise in those moments. The first, Sumbera said, is that of logistics.

"From a fire department's perspective, from Houston, from Pollution Control, from TCEQ, any of these agencies, go identify that one barge out of all of those that are releasing that at 3 a.m. in the morning," Sumbera said.

"You can't see a cloud. You can't identify anything."

And if no agency can track down the source, Sumbera said, then no polluter can get fined.

He said the second issue is that non-local agencies can take hours to arrive.

"Well, I promise you by that point, everything's gone. Everything's dissipated," Sumbera said.

And Stone said that some-



Carolyn Stone, founder of the Channelview Health and Improvement Coalition, looks out at barges on the San Jacinto River. Earlier this year, the Channelview Fire Department began working with Air Alliance Houston to install upgraded air monitors in the neighborhood capable of tracking specific barge emissions. Photo by Paola Hoffman, Houston Newsroom.



A pusher tug used to move barges navigates the San Jacinto River. According to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's inventory, the loading and unloading of barges and other small vessels released 5.1 million pounds of volatile organic compounds into Harris County in 2023, but the number didn't account for emissions once they're out on the water. Photo by Paola Hoffman, Houston Newsroom.

nelview Fire Department, the agencies the communities call don't arrive at all.

A Combined Response Stone, founder of the Channelview Health and Improvement Coalition, or C.H.I.C., said the group was formed following an after hours non-response by Pollution Control, EPA, and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality in August 2019.

"It was the first time, at least I had ever been told positively, we are not coming. Deal with it yourself, we aren't coming," Stone said.

During the VOC emission spike in March, Stone said there was similarly no response from these agencies.

"The only entities we are aware of that have taken any action are the Channelview Fire Dept and Air Alliance Houston," she wrote in an email to the community on the behalf of C.H.I.C.

This is where Stone said the new air monitors come into the picture.

The monitors are being provided to Air Alliance Houston by the Fire Department, then hosted at the houses of Channelview residents.

Air Alliance Houston's relationship with the Channelview Fire Department is new, D'Souza said, but has already demonstrated the capacity for results.

One of the new monitors is what picked up the spike in VOCs on that afternoon in March and spikes in days following. D'Souza said the data told a clear story.

"We could exactly see the specific time that it spiked and the specific direction in which the wind was coming. And it was almost directly over the stretch of the river where a lot of chemical barges are parked," he said.

"And so that kind of just speaks to the value of community air monitoring in that it's able to pinpoint the source of the pollution, show you just how bad it is."

With wind direction data from monitors during VOC spikes, Sumbera said the Fire Department might have more success responding and locating polluting barges during the emission events.

The network of monitors will be faster than waiting for the residents to call, and faster, he said, than waiting for Pollution Control.

"So the district chief, the fire chief out on the road with the crews, he can pull [the data] up on his computer, say, hey, I got wind this direction, and here are three monitors, and these two monitors don't have any VOCs and this one over here spiked," Sumbera said.

"And then everything from that wind direction, we start tracking. I think that is how you start identifying and localizing."

Still, he said he thinks it will take some time to fully put it all together.

The Fire Department has requested training from Air Alliance Houston to learn how to most effectively use the monitors. Stone said she plans to sit in.

She said that with the new monitors and the training sessions, her eyes are on three goals.

First, the community will be able to have real time information for them to make the appropriate health decisions for them as to what they need to do," she said.

Her second goal is about immediate response, giving the Fire Department and other entities the ability to take action.

Stone's third goal looks towards larger change.

"The ultimate goal is to have our representatives of all levels aware of the information and to change the laws and the procedures that they're now doing," she said.

D'Souza said that community data can be very effective for this.

"It just creates a repository of data, of community collected data, that they can use when they go to their elected officials to ask for stronger regulations, or when they approach the industries to ask for better transparency and better communication. Or if they want to file lawsuits," D'Souza said.

"Every community has its own different action plan that they want to take. And so that record of data over many months and years informs those actions."

Stone said the data was necessary, not just to make a plan, but to be believed in the first place.

"It had to be documented," she said. "It had to be so we could share it and make people aware of it. And so that we could have something to actually dispel the notion that we are making this up, that we're just complaining."

"We want to live in a healthy environment. And we deserve to. But we have to have the information to know what steps we need to make and we have to have the information to fight against it."

Another Tenant emerges for Fidelity site in Jacinto City,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

chor Glass property, has long been zoned for heavy industrial use. Squyres said the city's only involvement was confirming that a data center could fit the zoning classification — not that one was planned.

"They called up and said, 'Does that fit the zoning?' Is it heavy industry?" Squyres said. "And our answer had to be absolutely."

That zoning confirmation, he said, appears to have been stretched into a much bigger story.

"Based on that, they published a brochure online," Squyres said. "And then this article comes out ... and it made it seem like we're definitely going to get one."

According to Squyres,

no company has approached the city with plans to develop a data center at the site.

"To this day, nobody has actually expressed an interest in putting a data center there other than, 'Is it zoned for it where we can put a brochure out?' That's it," he said.

The speculative article by the Houston Chronicle triggered a sharp public response, including angry calls and emails from residents worried about noise, water use and power demand often associated with large-scale data centers.

"Dozens of emails, dozens, you know, phone calls threatening us," Squyres said. "It's just people par-



City Manager Lon Squyres, City of Jacinto City

rotating what they hear."

While city officials began researching how data centers operate after seeing the marketing brochure, Squyres said those efforts were precautionary and not tied to any live proposal.

"We still haven't heard anything about anybody wanting a data center," he said. "They think they're really close to signing a lease for somebody and it has nothing to do with the data center. Absolutely nothing to do with the data center. It's a non-issue to begin with."

Squyres also criticized the reporting that fueled the controversy, saying no one contacted city officials before suggesting a data

center was on the way.

"The Chronicle never approached us," he said. "They never said, 'Is there actually going to be a data center in Jacinto City?'"

For now, city leaders say the message is simple: the property may have been marketed broadly, but there is no confirmed data center project in Jacinto City.

"We haven't been approached by any company that wants to put a data center there," Squyres said. "We have no indication of data centers coming in. If any user similar to a data center wants to come in, we will make it known publicly. Jacinto City is going to be very transparent."

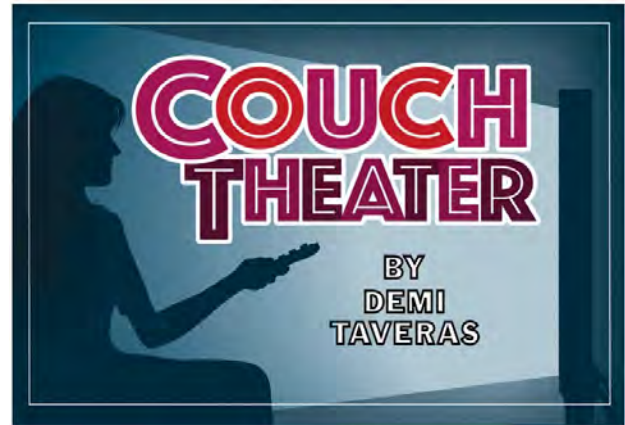
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“How to Make a Killing”

“How to Make a Killing” (R) — Glen Powell (“The Running Man”) leads this black-comedy thriller that also stars Margaret Qualley (“The Substance”), Tophér Grace (“Flight Risk”), and Ed Harris (“Love Lies Bleeding”). It follows Becket Redfellow (Powell), who was born to an affluent family but was shunned due to his mother being a teenager when she had him. Stuck on the idea that he still deserves the life that his family has, Becket learns that he’s still in line for the family fortune due to a loophole. So, he nefariously decides to murder the remaining living Redfellows so that he can claim the \$28 billion jackpot. The film barely made up its budget in

theaters and didn't generate much buzz from audiences, which could be because it leans into "American Psycho" territory without the actual allure of the film. Premieres June 19. (HBO Max)

"Voicemails for Isabelle" (PG-13) — Netflix refuses to slow down on its genre of rom-coms. How are we supposed to keep up with the films that they keep cranking out when they all have the same poster, vibe, and type of actors? No offense to Zoey Deutch ("Anniversary") and Nick Robinson ("Love, Simon"), but what do they give that Jennifer Lopez and Brett Goldstein didn't in "Office Romance" or Rosamund Pike and Sacha Baron Cohen in "Ladies

First"? (Both were just released on the platform earlier this year.) Deutch plays Jill, who recently lost her sister, Isabelle, and continues to send voicemails to her phone as a form of comfort. Little does she know that Wes (Robinson), a real estate agent from across the country, was assigned Isabelle's old number, and he's been listening to every confession Jill's been making. Premieres June 19. (Netflix)

In Case You Missed It "Love Island USA: Season 8" (TV-MA) — It's almost unbelievable to think that it's already been a year since the hot mess that was season 7 of "Love Island USA." This time around, we've got a new batch of (somewhat) normal contestants, as opposed to the influencer-heavy group we had last year. For example, Beatriz Hatz from San Diego, California, is a Paralympic athlete looking to find a man who matches her spiciness. Of course, there are a handful of models, and digital creator Zach Georgiou is the brother of Charlie from last season. (Hopefully, he has better luck!) But overall, "Love Island USA" is back to its usual fashion of stirring up crazy amounts of drama with regular folks like the ones who are watching at home. Almost a dozen episodes are out now to watch, but you'll have to catch up quickly so that you don't miss out on the finale! (Peacock)

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HOLLYWOOD

by Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD — “Paddington in Peru” grossed \$211 million in 2024 (while all three “Paddington” films have grossed about \$700 million combined). “Paddington 4” is now in preproduction. Hugh Bonneville, Emily Mortimer, Julie Walters and Jim Broadbent are expected to return, as is Ben Whishaw as the voice of Paddington.

Robert Pattinson has to be one of the busiest actors in films today. As he awaits the release of “The Odyssey” on July 17, he’s also waiting for “Dune: Part Three” to hit screens on Dec. 18. He’ll follow these up with Netflix’s “Here Comes the Flood,” co-starring Denzel Washington and Daisy Edgar-Jones.

As if this wasn’t enough, he’s currently in preproduction for “The Batman: Part II.” Jeffrey Wright, Andy Serkis, Colin Farrell, Barry Keoghan and Charles Dance are returning, while Sebastian Stan, Scarlett Johansson, and Brian Tyree Henry are joining the cast. It started shooting this month for an October 2027 opening.

Julia Roberts will produce and star in “Home Economics,” which is based on the forthcoming novel by Katy Hays. But before this, we’ll see her thriller “Panic Carefully” with Eddie Redmayne and Brian Tyree Henry in February 2027. Redmayne can still be seen in Peacock’s series “The Day of the Jackal.”

Also due in February 2027 is “Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew,” starring Meryl Streep, Carey Mulligan and Daniel Craig. It wrapped filming this past January and is due to drop on Netflix after its theatrical run on April 2, 2027.

In 1958, “The Horror of Dracula,” starring Christopher Lee, ran into problems with sensors because of sexually explicit scenes that they had to cut out. Sixty-eight years later, Warner Bros. has restored the film in an uncut 4K version, which they’ll release around Halloween this year.

They went back to the long-forgotten Warner Bros. film vaults and uncovered the original too-hot-for-their-time scenes and also how Dracula dies in the end. In



1958, it cost \$278,000 and grossed \$3.5 million. (Big money then!)

Pedro Pascal scored big with “The Mandalorian and Grogu,” which grossed \$167.1 million during its first week. He’s completed his role in “Avengers: Doomsday” as Reed Richard/Myster Fantastic, and it’ll open on Dec. 18. He also completed “Behemoth!” with Will Arnett, Olivia Wilde and Matthew Lillard. We can only assume that it’s about yet another prehistoric creature on the loose.

Pascal is currently shooting the romantic drama “De Noche,” opposite love interest Danny Ramirez, who was the Falcon in Marvel’s “Captain America: Brave New World” (2025) and the Disney+ series “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” (2021). In addition, he starred in “Top Gun: Maverick” and the HBO series “The Last of Us,” which also starred Pascal.

Pascal is 51, while Ramirez is 33, and Ramirez looks like he could be Pascal’s son. And you thought Pascal exploring space was the only daring thing that he did!

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU

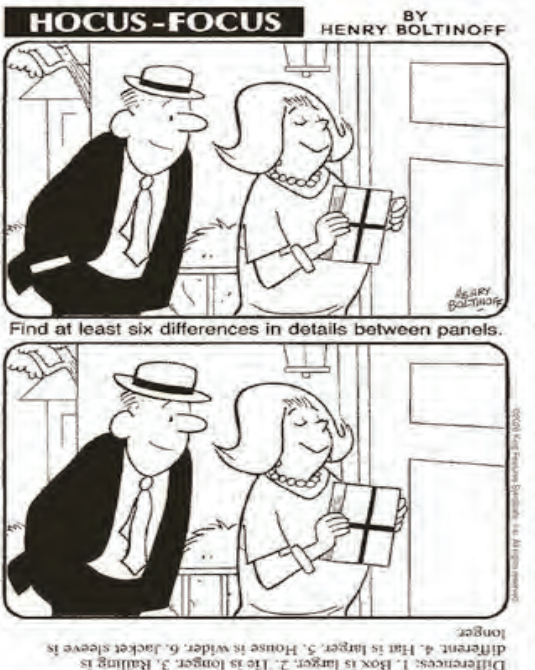
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DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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June 15, 2026 Posting Date

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Mule, for one
5 Unruly group
8 Bygone
fliers
12 Lawman
Wyatt
13 Stop — dime
14 Ornamental
jug
15 Heart charts
16 Business card
no.
17 Calf-length
18 Stop
20 Son of Erik
the Red
22 "War and
Peace" author
25 Violin stroke
29 Cyclades
island

30 British verb
ending
31 Subject, usu-
ally
32 Fellow
33 Healthy
34 Internet
address
35 Continent
north of Afr.
36 Disinfectant
brand
37 Oscar-
winning
actress in
"The Fighter"
40 Arizona tribe
41 Prisoner
45 Conspiracy
47 Corn core

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45	46				47	48			49				
50					51				52				
53					54				55				

49 Big-screen
format
50 — song
(cheaply)
51 Lincoln nick-
name
52 Zilch
53 Swindles
54 Dogpatch
adjective
55 Musician's
jobs

DOWN

1 Future flower
2 Cod cousin
3 PTA and NEA,
e.g.
4 Delta follower
5 Slogan
6 Count starter
7 Inflated party
prop
8 Big rigs
9 Fans of pop
icon Taylor
10 — Talks
(online lecture
series)
11 Lanka lead-in
19 Stitch
21 Golf's Ernie
23 Pageant
crown
24 City on a fjord
25 Holler
26 "E Pluribus
—"
27 Skin opening
28 Megaphone's
kin

32 "Suffs" or
"Rent," e.g.
33 Cheyenne's
state
35 Mentalist's gift
36 Cariof of
"Blue Bloods"
38 Smidgens
39 Slander in
print
42 Mine, in
Marseille
43 Tart flavor
44 Alimony recip-
ients
45 USMC rank
46 Privy
48 Japanese
sash

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[illegible]

Trivia

test

by Fifi
Rodriguez

1. U.S. STATES: Which state has the most national parks?
2. ANATOMY: Which blood type is considered to be a universal donor?
3. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: Which three signs of the Zodiac are considered to be Earth signs?
4. ROYALS: What was Queen Elizabeth's favorite dog breed?
5. GEOGRAPHY: Which continent has a mountain range called The Great Rift Valley?
6. MONEY: What is the basic currency of Russia?
7. TELEVISION: Which long-running TV sitcom features a dog named Comet?
8. MUSIC: How many strings does a standard violin have?
9. GAMES: How many title deeds does the Monopoly game have?
10. SCIENCE: What is the main cause of ocean tides?

Screwworm Detection Prompts Disaster Declaration

By Gary Borders,

TEXAS - Gov. Greg Abbott issued a state-wide disaster declaration late last week after the New World screwworm was found in two calves in South Texas, according to The Dallas Morning News.

Two cases have been identified in newborn calves in Zavala County, about 5.6 miles apart. The U.S. Department of Agriculture said a strike team was on site and that restrictions were in place to prevent the movement of cattle.

“We have, in the past, prevented as well as eradicated this pest, and we can do it again,” Abbott said.

The New World screwworm is a parasitic fly that lays eggs in open wounds, nearly always in cattle. In the past, sterile male flies have proven effective in eradicating screwworm infes-



tations. The federal government is building a \$750 million facility to produce sterilized flies, but it won't be complete until November 2027.

In the meantime, the government is purchasing sterile flies from a facility in Panama and using federal funds to revamp another facility in Mexico. However, total fly production from those two plants accounts for

only 40% of what is needed, The News reported.

State officials have stressed that the New World screwworm does not pose a food or disease risk to humans. A widespread infestation could further drive up beef prices, already elevated by a ban on importing Mexican cattle and a drop in domestic production.

Abbott Orders Texas Regulators to Keep Data Center Costs Off Ratepayers

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

Gov. Greg Abbott has ordered Texas utility regulators to move quickly to prevent the cost of expanding data center infrastructure from being shifted onto households and small businesses, saying the state must not allow its fast-growing digital economy to raise electric bills for ordinary Texans.

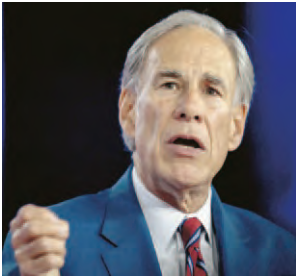
In a June 10 letter to Public Utility Commission Chairman Thomas Gleeson and ERCOT President and CEO Pablo Vegas, Abbott said the “rapid scale of data center development requires oversight” to ensure Texans are not left paying for the infrastructure needed to support the industry’s growth. He directed the PUC to require data centers to “pay for all of their electric infrastructure costs to ensure that no residential ratepayer is burdened by those costs.”

Abbott also ordered the PUC to take action so that data center interconnections “will result in reduced residential electrical bills,” and told the PUC and ERCOT to review what steps they can already take under existing law “to safeguard Texans, their property, and resources.”

The governor set two near-term deadlines. He instructed the PUC and ERCOT to submit a joint memorandum to his office by July 17, 2026, outlining



Picture of a the Data center facility



actions they can take now, any statutory limits they face, and any legislative proposals needed to strengthen protections. He also ordered the PUC to “initiate action to reduce residential ratepayer transmission costs by July 31, 2026.”

Abbott framed the move as an effort to manage the side effects of Texas’ economic success, which has drawn a wave of data center development to the state. In the letter, he wrote that Texas has become “a magnet for business development, including data centers,” but said growth must not come “at the cost of Texans and our local communities.”

Beyond electricity costs, Abbott signaled a broader regulatory push next legislative session. He pledged to work with lawmakers to require new data centers to use “water-efficient technologies such as closed-loop cooling systems,” to mandate annual reporting of electricity and water use, and to repeal “sales tax exemptions and other outdated or unnecessary incentives for data centers.” He also said he wants operators to reduce neighborhood impacts through “best practices such as setbacks, noise-reduction technology, and other measures that take into account the concerns of neighbors.”

In the letter’s closing, Abbott said Texas should continue to welcome “innovation and investment,” but added that growth must “strengthen our people and their quality of life without placing undue burdens on Texans and local communities.”

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The Bitter and Sweet of Life

By Mei Hoffman

Last Friday should have been a very big day for our household. First, my husband [Gil Hoffman, publisher of this newspaper] was scheduled to have a surgery on his spine, because of serious pain that he has been experiencing for many weeks. Second, I was supposed to attend the opening night of a new exhibit at the **Pearl Fincher Museum of Art**, because one of my paintings had been chosen for the collection. I was so honored and excited!

Unfortunately, we ended up with double disappointment instead.

After a long day of pre-surgery preparation, the procedure ended up getting delayed. This made Gil feel pretty discouraged and concerned, and as his partner, I felt it too. I didn't want to leave him alone in that vulnerable state, so I stayed by his side, skipping out on the opening night.

I think it was the right decision, but the timing was such bad luck. This was my first time to be invited to participate in an exhibit, and it had come out of the blue, just because someone from a museum happened to see and like my work. Receiving the invitation email months ago had been an incredible, happy surprise, and gave me validation as an artist. So I was really looking forward to being part of this celebration. I wanted to meet the other artists and ask them about their work. I would have loved to see people's reactions to my painting.

But life is like that sometimes. The bitter comes with the sweet.

What matters most is that Gil receives good care, and even though I missed the opening night, I can still be proud that my work is on display in such a wonderful museum.

MORE ABOUT THE EXHIBIT

Pearl Fincher Museum of Art
6815 Cypresswood Drive, Spring, TX 77379
Hours: 10 AM - 5 PM Tuesday through Saturday

Chromatica: A World in Color
June 13 - September 5

Chromatica: A World in Color explores the universal language of color. Drawing from multiple artists and loaned collections from Museum of the Red River and the Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art, this group exhibition brings together artworks and culturally significant objects that highlight how color conveys symbolism, identity, and emotion across different societies and periods.

By presenting color as both a visual element and a cultural lens, Chromatica invites viewers to consider how pigments, materials, and meanings have circulated through time, revealing unexpected connections between art, history, and human creativity.

Featured Artists:

Jeremy Biggers - Dallas, TX
Bette Ridgeway - Santa Fe, NM
Diane Gelman - Houston, TX
Garrett Griffin - Houston, TX
Jamie Robertson - Virginia Beach, VA
Sajeela Siddiq - Houston, TX
April DeConick - Houston, TX
Adrienne Simmons - Houston, TX
Mei Hoffman - Houston, TX
Dan Lam - Austin, TX
Lauren Kelly (Citizen Potawatomi) - Norman, Oklahoma
Dixie Friend Gay - Houston, TX
Janice Freeman - Houston, TX
Calder Kamin - Austin, TX
Ken Pridgeon - Houston, TX
Celeste Reiter - Cincinnati, OH
Vicente Hernandez Vasquez - Oaxaca Mexico
Elsie John (Coushatta/Koasati) - Louisiana
Marcelino Vicente - Ocumicho, Michoacán, Mexico
Rosendo Carillo de la Rosa (Wixáritari) - Jalisco, Mexico
Dorleen Gashweseoma (Hopi) - Hotevilla-Bacavi, Arizona
O. Golubev - Village: Palekh, Russia
G. Brown
Robert "Robbie" McCurtry - Oklahoma
Dennis Belindo (Kiowa-Diné) - Oklahoma
Sam Lao - Dallas, TX

