

# County Record

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Week of Wednesday, July 28, 2021

## County vax rate among nation's lowest

DAVE ROGERS  
For The Record

When it comes to COVID-19 vaccines, Orange County, Texas, has one of the lowest rates of vaccinated residents in one of the least vaccinated states in the nation.

In the last week, active cases in the county have more than doubled from 141 to 315, county officials revealed at Tuesday's Commissioners Court meeting.

Tuesday's was the first public update since the county's Emergency Management Office last posted figures, along with a breakdown by age groups and genders, on June 8.

Last week, The Record Newspapers reported that there had been 98 new cases in the two weeks preceding July 20 and that the county had 141 active cases, according to interviews with EMO officials.

There was no age and gender update available either Tuesday or on July 20.

"The numbers [of COVID-19 cases] got so low, nobody was interested in them," Joel Ardoin, county emergency management coordinator, said when asked Tuesday afternoon why the updates had

disappeared after being a regular feature for more than a year on the EMO's Facebook page.

"I'm sure we'll start reporting them again, especially if the numbers keep going up." With 315 active cases Tuesday, that's the highest number reported for Orange County since 427 on May 16, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services.

DSHS has reported only one COVID-caused death in Orange County in the month of July, 156 since March 2020.

Texas was among three states singled out by the White House last week - Florida and Missouri were the others - for being home to 40% of the nation's recent coronavirus cases.

According to the Dallas Morning News, Texas added 25,026 new coronavirus cases last week. That made up 8.9% of the new cases for the U.S.

Texas residents make up 8.7% of the U.S. population.

Texas ranks 38th of the 50 states for fully vaccinated people with 52.2% of residents 12 and over fully vaccinated.

Orange County ranks

COUNTY VAX Page 3A



Deputy Chris Arriola, left, and his K-9 partner Rudy join with Deputy Brandon Mojica and K-9 partner Phoenix as Orange County's newest crime fighters. RECORD PHOTO: Dave Rogers

## Sheriff welcomes new K-9 crime dogs

DAVE ROGERS  
For The Record

You could call Orange County Sheriff Deputies Brandon Mojica and Chris Arriola dog lovers.

Their 3-year-old Belgian Malinois Shepherds definitely - to quote McGruff - take a bite out of crime.

Bad guys won't want to see their dogs up close.

"Having them makes people second-guess whether they want to run from us," Mojica said.

"They can see and sense and smell a lot more than me and my partner," Arriola said.

Orange County had deployed dogs on patrol in the past, but when Lane Mooney took over as Sheriff a year ago, there was no active K-9 unit.

Both Mooney and his Patrol Captain, Chris Frederick, are both former K-9 handlers and they wasted little time in reactivating the K-9 unit to assist with narcotics and weapons searches, fugitive tracking and suspect apprehension.

The Sheriff's Office used asset forfeiture funds to buy the dogs from a Louisiana trainer for \$10,000 each. Then the two deputies spent a month training with the dogs last spring before they moved them to Texas.

"These dogs are from overseas," Arriola said. "They start training them when they're puppies in basic obedience."

"I think they can work until they're 10 or 11," Mojica said.

Mojica's background includes three years at the Groves Police Department while Arriola spent five years working for Hardin County law enforcement.

They each have been with the OCSO for about a year.

Neither one had been a K-9 handler before.

"I brought it up to my supervisors," Arriola said. "I wanted to put my name in to work with the unit."

Mojica, who owns two dogs of his own, wasted no time applying for K-9 duty.

"I heard they were bringing in dogs, and I jumped at

K9 CRIME DOGS Page 3A

## Beauty Academy Lifelong Dream Come True



The Greater Orange Area Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting ceremony for The Orange Academy of Beauty recently. Wendy Solomon the proud local owner was born and raised right here in Orange. According to a release from the GOACC, Solomon was a working mother who had to drive to 2 different counties to finish and obtain her Cosmetology License. Wendy has a passion for changing lives and knows that it starts right here at "home." She has been in the beauty industry for 30 plus years and she has been an educator for over 6 of those years. Orange Academy of Beauty is a beauty school that has programs for students that want to get their cosmetology operator license or become a cosmetology instructor. Orange Academy of Beauty at 802 West Park Avenue, Orange. Clients can call for appointments for a variety of services for hair, nails, and facials. Solomon and her team are committed to the success of every student. Students will be able to serve clients in January 2022.

## Orange County thespians to grace PALT's stage in "Grease"

PENNY LELEUX  
For The Record

Several members of the Orange County community will take the stage at Port Arthur Little Theater's (PALT) production of Grease which starts July 30 and runs for three weeks. Director for the production, Debbie Pletcher, had so many people interested in the production, she was able to have two casts, one primarily teen, the other primarily adults. The two casts will alternate beginning with the teen cast on opening night.

Andy McCall, one of the staff members at Orange's Lutchter Theater is the only cast member to play the same roles in both casts. He snagged the roles Teen Angle/Vince Fontaine.

Brother and sister, Danny Swarers and Kamri Swarers-Howeth of Little Cypress will be in the teen cast playing Roger and Betty Rizzo respectively.

Kamri was excited being cast as Rizzo. "That's the role I really wanted. That's the role I definitely rehearsed for before we started audition-



Pictured in the red dress in the center of the cast of "Grease" is Orange's own Kiera Howington cast as Cha-Cha DiGregorio. "Grease" begins its three week run at Port Arthur Little Theater Friday night at 7:30. RECORD PHOTO: Penny LeLeux

ing. When I got it, I just had a lot of fun with it. She has my favorite lines and my favorite songs."

This is Kamri's second role at PALT. In 2018, she played Penny in "Hairspray."

Why PALT?

"I love 'Grease.' It's iconic. I had nothing else to do this summer," said Kamri. "I just

had a baby, I don't have college, because it's summer semester, my husband was shipping off to the Army, so I just wanted something to pass the time and get some 'Me' time."

Her favorite thing about the production has been the dancing. "It's definitely not my strong suit, but dancing

with all my friends, because we're supposed to be having fun during the dance competition scene. Honestly you don't even have to try, because you're doing it with some of your favorite people."

John Gray, also of Orange,

OC THESPIANS Page 3A

## Entergy announcement deemed favorable

DAVE ROGERS  
For The Record

Business looks to be booming in Orange County.

Entergy Texas has chosen a site near the company's Bridge City plant as the finalist for a new \$1 billion power plant, County Judge John Gothia said.

An announcement of the power company's plan to begin the permitting for the plant could come as early as Wednesday, he said.

Also, Orange County is set to hear an Aug. 24 tax abatement request concerning the new Eagle Point medical complex which hopefully could provide details about



Gothia

the much-wanted project. And the City of Orange's Economic Development held a public hearing Tuesday afternoon regarding a \$300,000 grant to a new Little Cypress housing development that could translate to 182 new homes.

Orange County Commissioner Johnny Trahan posted a photo Tuesday evening on Facebook of he and Gothia at a 2018 groundbreaking ceremony for Entergy's \$1 billion plant that opened in Willis, north of Conroe, in January,

2021. "Glad we made it to the Ribbon Cutting for the Montgomery Power Station! Looking forward to the Ribbon Cutting for the Orange County Power Station! Power for future development."

Earlier Tuesday, Gothia said he knew nothing about the details of a tax abatement deal being negotiated with NXO JV, LLC, the new group formed by the doctors and developers "considering an estimated \$24,370,000 investment."

The medical center and healthcare complex will be located on land donated by the Houseman Companies near the intersection of Interstate 10 and Highway 62.

Previously, the city has pledged a \$1.4 expenditure for a roadway and granted a 10-year decreasing tax abatement starting at 100% the first two years and stair-stepping down to 20% for Year 10.

The targeted completion date was pushed back to 2023 in the city's latest contract with NXO JV.

"I don't know what the next move is. They have not given it to us," Gothia said.

"Apparently the group is getting pretty close to where they need to be in putting this thing together. I think we're all very excited that at one point it's going to happen. We need it."

# “Shhh” wins Best Soundtrack, Female Director awards in Nashville

LARRY JOHNSON  
For The Record

Tuesday, at a red-carpet gala awards ceremony in Nashville, Tenn. the short film “Shhh” was awarded Best Female Director and Best Soundtrack in the shorts categories at the Music City Film Festival hosted at the Twelve Thirty Club, Justin Timberlake’s new upscale dinner club.

“I’m so excited to be hosting the Music City Film Festival,” said Jenny G. Jackson, festival director. “The magic of movies is where music meets film.”

This was the inaugural event for the film festival and one of the first events to be held at the new venue.

“This year we are focused on building strong relationships that will be able to grow with us as we continue to scale in years to come,” said Jackson.

“Shhh” writer/director/producer Penny LeLeux, composer Reggie Rogers Jr. and lead bad guy John Frederick Jr. were in attendance to accept the awards.

“I couldn’t wait to tell Reggie about the soundtrack win,” said LeLeux. “I’m honored to get my first director’s award, but honestly, I’m more stoked about the soundtrack win...in Nashville of all places! How cool is that!”

Rogers and been a symphonic composer and a high school band director for many years, but this was his first time to write a score for a film. When LeLeux contacted him about writing the score, it was fulfillment of a lifelong dream.

LeLeux told a stunned Rogers about the win when they were stopped at a McDonald’s while headed to



Orange County film “Shhh” was recognized at the Music City Film Festival for Best Female Director of a short and Best Soundtrack. Enjoying a drink at a gathering of filmmakers at Music City Film Festival in Nashville. (L to R: Reggie Rogers II, Penny LeLeux, John Frederick)  
RECORD PHOTO: Christian Griggs

Nashville. First, his head hung in disbelief, then he hugged her.

“I couldn’t be happier. Oh my gosh, this is fantastic! I’m a little speechless because I’ve had like four hours sleep,” said Rogers. The trip to Nashville was an immediate turnaround from a trip to San Antonio for a band directors conference. “Thank you, it’s going to take a bit to process all of this.”

The film also contains original songs from local or native singer/songwriters Mike Magnuson, Rick Tiger and Robert Watts which also share in the soundtrack award. An earlier version of the film also contained and instrumental piece, by Bob Manning, but it was removed and replaced with the original score, which was created to better fit the opening scenes of the film.

Two years ago next month, “Shhh” started shooting in

Orange and Bridge City. Trying to shoot 18 pages in two days in four distinct locations is mad by anyone’s standards in the film world, but it was done.

Almost all the cast and crew were from Southeast Texas, with a vast majority coming from Orange County.

The film was the brainchild of LeLeux of Orangefield. She wrote the script as part of the NYC Midnight screenwriting challenge where she was given three parameters and eight days to write a maximum of 12 pages. “Shhh” was born in April 2019.

The film’s logline reads: When a pharmaceutical spy ducks into a library to avoid capture he encounters a potential partner/love interest in a librarian looking for adventure and a new job.

“As soon as I finished the script, I realized we could

produce it ourselves and use it to promote the talent and locations in our area,” said LeLeux.

She contacted an actor friend originally from Bridge City, Woody Almazan, to play the male lead and contacted a producer friend in Nederland, Doug Underwood, of Fresh Productions.

Next was a trip to the Orange City Council for permission to shoot in the Orange Public Library and outdoor scenes in downtown Orange.

With the city’s blessing, they moved forward in pre-production with casting, crewing up and securing other locations. The Rustic Saloon in Bridge City and International Apartments in Orange also agreed to let filming take place on their property.

She contacted several singer/songwriters she knew, because she also wanted to

showcase local musical talent in the film as well.

Magnuson and Tiger gave her their entire catalog to choose from. Two songs, “Dig a Lotta Dirt” and “Fall-in” were selected for the bar scene.

“I don’t know why these songs haven’t been playing on jukeboxes in bars already, they are amazing, and I am so honored to have them in the film,” said LeLeux.

The pandemic shut down caused most film festivals to go virtual or cancel altogether last year. Even so, the original 20 min. film screened at festivals in San Francisco, Huntsville, was nominated in New York, made the quarterfinals at Stage 32 and won 2nd place in Sulphur at the

Calcasieu Parish Short Film Fest. It was also screened at an outdoor drive-in event at Beaumont Community Players in February.

“After initial feedback and judges’ comments, it seemed we might be riding the bubble on acceptance at some festivals and I felt we needed to shorten it a bit for time and cut a little bit of the cheese. I love cheese but knew there was too much. A bit of re-editing was needed.”

She also contacted Rogers to see if he would be interested in creating an original score for the film.

Rogers was a classmate of LeLeux’s children, so she had been aware of his talent and thought he would be up to

“SHHH” Page 3A

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CMYK

## OC thespians From Page 1A

is the choreographer for the production.

This was Danny's first time in a PALT production. "My sister told me it would be a fun experience."

When school starts, Danny will be a junior at Little Cypress-Mauriceville High School.

"I've done a few high school plays," said Danny. "Blue Stockings" was one of those performances.

His favorite thing about this experience is the cast. "They're all funny people," he said. "They are a lot more laid back than school theater."

McCall piped in that during a backstage discussion, Danny disclosed he hadn't realized he could sing so well.

"I've had no prior choir experience except for half a year," said Danny. He said his favorite song in the production is 'Mooning'. It happens to be his shining moment where at the end, he moons the crowd at the park. It is

one song, that is not in the film and the scene is portrayed differently from the movie.

McCall said he was part of the production of "Grease" when they did it 10 years ago. He couldn't audition back then, because he had no voice, due to laryngitis.

"I called Debbie up and she said it's ok, I know what you can do, so just show up at the auditions," said McCall. He showed up, with no voice, and she cast him as Teen Angel. He wound up not being in the start of the production, because a dinner theater needed a lead character and the show was running concurrently with the first part of "Grease's" run. Pletcher gave him her blessing to do the dinner show, "It was a Casablanca spoof and I'm a huge Humphrey Bogart fan." He then returned to the "Grease" cast and finished the run.

"It's a fun role," said McCall of playing Teen Angel. "It's got that one song, 'Beau-

ty School Drop-out'...it's a potential showstopper song because you belt it out and it's got cool dancing behind you. I remember family laughing when I did it last time."

"I'm Vince Fontane and Teen Angel this time," said McCall. "It's been fun to do the whole process of the show this time as opposed to the last time. Then, I showed up on tech week, just to learn where I was supposed to be, so I wasn't part of the whole 'Grease' rehearsal process last time."

McCall has been part of over two dozen shows locally, through the years. "It can get kind of tiring during the rehearsals, but once you get the crowd in here, clapping, laughing and cheering, it makes it worth it."

Mother/ daughter duo of Becca and Kiera Howington of Orange are split between the casts. Becca is cast as the adult Marty and Kiera is the teen Cha-Cha DiGregorio. Becca has been in three

## "SHHH" Penny Leleux From Page 2A

the challenge. She never forgot the first time she heard one of his concert pieces premiered by the high school band.

"I remember thinking, that sounds like it should be in a movie," said Leleux.

"I was delighted," said Rogers. "It had been a lifelong dream of mine."

"I really like the music," said Travis Myers, cinematographer/editor for the film. "I feel like it's a whole new short."

The film still needs some minor additional sound production and effects, but Leleux didn't feel it was enough to keep from submitting to a few festivals whose deadlines were coming up.

Leleux wasn't aware of the Music City Film Festival until she received a personal invitation to submit from Jackson. She had met Jackson earlier in the year at the Prison City Film Festival in

Huntsville.

"The film 'Shhh' and it's talented cast caught my eye from the very beginning with it's well choreographed, suspenseful action all the way to the very end," said Jackson. "And I particularly like the scene where the director, Penny, had her cute cameo. It was from that moment I knew I had to meet her."

"In the past one might think that everyone in the entertainment industry would generally know one another in music and film, and while that is true in many cases, having festivals like the Music City Film Festival provides a platform for inspiring new projects and creating fun, future work opportunities for creative people in Nashville and around the world," said Jackson.

"We are so excited for the future of the new version. To win right out of the gate in

the first festival it was submitted to is very encouraging," said Leleux.

"It is such an honor to be able to bring cool people together to do cool things," said Jackson. "I can't wait to see what greatness the future has in store for everyone who is joining us here today at the Music City Film Festival!"

While driving to Nashville, Leleux received notification that the film is selected to be part of the Cannes Short Film Festival. With travel restriction still in place in France, the festival will be online once again this year.

"C'est la vie," said Leleux about missing a chance to go to France. Maybe next time. "But hey, that's only the second notification we've received on the new version and they've both been yes. Things are looking pretty bright for film in Southeast Texas and that was the goal."

## K6 crime dogs From Page 1A

it," he said.

Mojica's dog is a female named Phoenix. Rudy, a male, is Arriola's patrol partner.

The dogs resemble a German Shepherd, which is a distant cousin. The Malinois' breed of medium-sized herding dog is also often called a Belgian Sheepdog.

The dogs live with their handlers.

"I already had a Golden Retriever and a second mixed dog at home, and I love all three of them," Mojica said.

"But I have to keep her [Phoenix] away from the others. She looks like she wants to love them, but I don't know ..."

"We're lucky to have Sheriff Mooney and Captain Frederick to ask when we have questions about the dogs."

When traveling, the dogs ride in air-conditioned ken-

nels in the back of their handlers' county-issued Chevy Tahoes.

"We're their owners," Arriola said. "We keep them, feed them and care for them. The cars are outfitted for the dogs."

In their training, Arriola and Mojica took their turns posing as bad guys, each wearing the thick "bite suit" while the other learned the chase bad guys.

PALT productions previously, including "Tom Sawyer," before being cast in "Grease."

Kiera started at PALT last summer for "Singer and the Star Catcher."

"We've been here ever since," said Becca. "Almost every show, we've been a part of since last summer."

Kiera had done a few shows at Orange Community Players, Inc. in Orange, before the theater was forced to close in 2017 after damage from tropical storm Harvey flooding the building. Becca said she had participated in OCP's summer camps years ago when she was a kid.

"I stopped. I never intended to start back up," said Becca. "But then I came here with her and I got the nudge. Somehow, I keep getting nudged. I love it and I like to help."

Kiera said she prefers comedies over musicals but wanted to be part of a big production musical like

"Grease." She didn't try out specifically for Cha-Cha and was willing to do any role she fit.

"I'm really happy I got Cha-Cha. I'm really enjoying the role," she said. "My favorite number is 'Born to Hand Jive' because that's when her and Danny win the dance competition. The actor who plays Danny in the teen cast is a really cool person and is really fun to dance with."

Her mom's favorite scene is the Marty bedroom scene. "That's where I get to sing my solo," said Becca. "I've learned to push my boundaries and sing louder than I would in front of people instead of in my car."

Although the stage production has many variances from the movie, there are still many of your favorite songs including: "Summer Nights," "Greased Lightening," "Hopelessly devoted to You," "Look at Me, I'm Sandra Dee," "Born to Hand-

Jive," "Beauty School Dropout," "Sandy," and "You're the One That I Want."

They have some great voices cast.

"Our Danny and Sandy in both casts are blowing me away," said McCall. "It's really coming together."

The teen cast will perform July 30, Aug. 1,7,13 & 15. The adult cast will perform July 31, Aug. 6,8 & 14. Friday and Saturday performances are 7:30 p.m., Sunday performances are matinees at 2:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$13 for senior citizens, teachers and active-duty military and \$11 for students. They can be purchased online at palt.org or reserved by calling 409-727-PALT. Reserved tickets are held until 15 minutes prior to opening curtain.

The theater is located at 4701 Jimmy Johnson Blvd., Port Arthur.

## County vax among lowest From Page 1A

241st among Texas' 254 counties with 28.9% of its residents 12 and over fully vaccinated.

Jasper County, which borders Orange County to the northeast, is one of the state's bottom 13, with only 20.1% of its residents 12 and over fully vaccinated.

Orange County is offering free vaccines on at its Expo Center Tuesday and Thursday afternoons but County Judge John Gothia admitted Tuesday that few citizens were taking that offer.

"But you can get one [COVID vaccine] anywhere now - if you want one," he said.

Commissioner Johnny Trahan reminded the Center for Disease Control had reported earlier this month that more than 99% of the people who've died from COVID in the past six months were those who had not been vaccinated.

"People are saying, 'You've got to do more for vaccines,'" Trahan said. "Well, we're doing it. People just don't want

to take it." The statistics of COVID are hard to pin down, due to a lack of universal reporting standards. Because of time lags between testing and reporting the data, tracking positive cases, hospitalizations and deaths due to COVID-19 have been tough from the start.

But the playbook for this one-of-a-kind pandemic is still in the making and concerns about COVID variants have those who are vaccinated wondering if they need a booster.

"We all know people who have gotten COVID twice," Commissioner Robert Viator said, and Gothia said he knew three.

While the CDC is now saying even the vaccinated should wear masks indoors and federal health officials are urging schools to require masks and/or vaccinations for students and employees, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has outlawed mask requirements and vows he won't allow any

more shutdowns.

"The only ones I look at, really, are the hospitalizations and the deaths," Trahan said.

"That's what they told us in the CDC call last week," Gothia said. "Just pay attention to your hospitalization numbers."

The County Judge said he checks SETRAC's website every afternoon.

The Southeast Texas Regional Advisory Council includes three of the state's so-called Trauma Service Areas, including TSA "R" which includes Orange and eight other Gulf Coast counties. Those include Galveston County but not Harris County, home to the state's largest city, Houston.

TSA "R" includes 1.3 million residents and has an inventory of 1,600 hospital beds, 90% currently full. COVID-19 patients make up 20% of those hospitalized, SETRAC's website indicates.

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## From The Creaux's Nest

### IT'S GOING TO GET WORSE—FAR WORSE

I have real concern about what the **Delta Variant**, blending with **COVID-19**, will look like come mid to late September and possibly spiking in October. Last week our reporter **Dave Rodgers** wrote about the first **Delta** case in the county being in Vidor. We are getting little to no information about how rapid that first case has spread. We don't have information as to how many virus cases are now spreading through the county. We know that hospital cases are growing but nothing about those who don't go to hospital. So far, **51.2 percent of Texans** has been vaccinated and it's very discouraging that only **29 percent of Orange County** has been vaccinated, less than **one third of our citizens**. Our neighboring states, **Louisiana** and **Arkansas**, are running ramped with the pandemic. With many of our citizens going in and out of these states, it's impossible to prevent it from spreading to our people who are not vaccinated. **Seventy percent** of our citizens will be the spreaders. My take is by November we will see **200,000 daily cases in the country**. If there is ever going to be a good outcome, the real heroes will be the folks who rolled up their sleeve and took the shot. **That shot guarantees against sickness and death of others**. We take a flu and shingles shot but not a shot that takes in ingredients from both vaccines. Locally, public officers, doctors, etc. need to speak out more forcefully. Athletic AD's and coaches need to encourage their high school athletes to get vaccinated. Here is what you can almost predict, an athletic will bring the virus to the locker room and most, if not all, the team will end up in quarantine, right in the middle of the season. **It's going to get worse, far worse**, if we don't get at least 15 percent more of our citizens to realize the jeopardy they are putting everyone in, young and old alike. There is absolutely no good reason not to step up and do the right thing. I know you can lead a horse to the trough but you can't make him drink. Even four of my own relatives are not vaccinated. They are youngsters who are listening to the **propaganda on Facebook or other social media outlets**. There are thousands of cases where people wish now they would not have listened to the falsehoods and had gotten a shot and saved family members or friends. **I must move on. Please come along, I promise it won't do you no harm.**

### JANUARY 6 HEARING BEGINS "NO LOVE FEST"

A **House select committee** examining the events of Jan. 6 opened its investigation Tuesday with vivid, visceral testimony from four law enforcement officers who were savagely attacked as they defended the U.S. Capitol from armed supporters of **President Donald Trump**, delivering an emotional portrait of the insurrection's lasting toll more than six months later. **Republican leaders** have boycotted the investigation and sought to blame **House Speaker Nancy Pelosi** for the casualties as a way of deflecting scrutiny away from **Trump**, who was impeached earlier this year on charges he incited the violent bid to prevent lawmakers from certifying **Electoral College** results and declaring **Joe Biden** the next president. When **Rep. Liz Cheney** asked how it made him feel to know that **Trump** had described the rioters as a "HYPERLINK" <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/07/21/trump-interview-i-alone-can-fix-it/> "t blank" loving crowd," **Gonell's** residual anger was palpable. "It's upsetting. It's a pathetic excuse for his behavior, for something that he himself helped to create. HYPERLINK" [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/capitol-riot-police-injuries-trauma/2021/07/23/e008f0f0-d8d8-11eb-9bbb-37c30dcf9363\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/capitol-riot-police-injuries-trauma/2021/07/23/e008f0f0-d8d8-11eb-9bbb-37c30dcf9363_story.html) "t blank" Some are still suffering: Months after Capitol riot, police who fought the mob contend with physical, psychological pain. At one point in his testimony, **D.C. police officer Michael Fanone**, who suffered a heart attack, a traumatic brain injury, and said he heard rioters threaten to "kill him with his own gun" — banged his fist on the witness table to accentuate how "disgraceful" it was that some **Republican lawmakers** were trying to make light of what he endured defending the Capitol. Their expressions of emotion were at times infectious. At several points throughout the hearing, observers and even some lawmakers dabbed at their eyes. **Rep. Adam Kinzinger**, stifling back tears. "For all the overheated rhetoric surrounding this committee, our mission is very simple: it's to find the truth and to ensure accountability." "Honorable men and women have an obligation to step forward," **Cheney** said in her opening remarks. "If those responsible are not held accountable, and if Congress does not act responsibly, this will remain a cancer on our constitutional republic." **Kinzinger** asked all four officers how it made them feel when people said it was "time to move on" from Jan. 6. "Does this feel like old history and time to move on?" **Each responded no**. When it came his turn, **Hodges** thought for a moment and added: "there can be no moving on without accountability."

### TURNING BACK THE HANDS OF TIME 10 Years Ago-2011

Well, at least we will get to watch some football now that

the NFL and players have settled their differences. One of our **Orange County** boys in the NFL, **Earl Thomas**, has signed a contract with the Seahawks. However, as of Tuesday morning, Atlanta hasn't resigned **Orange County's Matt Bryant**. Surely they won't let one of the best kickers in the league get away. **Believe it or not we're still in a drought and need more heavy rainfall**. Some people have received good amounts but other areas very little. **All of Texas is burning up** far worse than what we're experiencing. **Congrats to Gene Smith**, new **Veteran's Service Officer**. We have known **Gene** a long time and think he is a good choice. He is married to the former **Marilyn Vaughn** who was legal secretary for **Wayne Peveto**. The couple cares for people and has always been ready to help. **Gene** is very knowledgeable and wants to do a good job. **On Aug. 1, Russell Dillow** will mark his first year anniversary as owner of the **Orange Sears** store. The time has flown by. **Special folks celebrating their special day this week**. Our buddy **Blaze Montagne** turns 12 on July 28. Over the years **Blaze** has furnished us with deer meat, including the back strap, from deer he killed himself. Sometimes his grandfather **Johnny's** deer meat gift is short the back strap. Last week he provided us with flounder that he personally caught. **Blaze** is an exceptional young man. His beautiful mother is **Heather**, the State Farm agent. **Happy birthday Blaze**. **A longtime friend, going back 50 years, is Dr. Joe Majors**. He and wife **Mary** raised their tribe in **Bridge City** where he was a longtime dentist and community volunteer. He served on charter organizations including the formation of **Little League** in the early 1960s. We are proud to call him friend. **Happy birthday Doc** on July 29. **The "Lion" himself, Stump Weatherford**, marks another birthday Aug. 2. Everyday that he's married to **Dayle** is a special gift. He doesn't need much more. **Facebook friends** celebrating birthdays. On July 22, **Ty Manuel** will be a year older; July 28 **Irma Dimas**; July 30, **Brandi Barlow**; July 31, **Colby Perrodin** and Aug. 2, **Jean Lapeyrolie**. **On July 23, Amy Winehouse**, 27, joined other entertainers who met their death at a young age. **Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin** and **Kirt Colbane** were also all 27 years old when they died. **Hank Williams** was only 29, **Elvis** was 41 years old. **Amy** was born Sept. 14, 1933. In most cases, if not all, the above folks threw their lives away. **Hundreds of "Same Sex" couples** wed Sunday, the first legal day to do so in **New York**. Other states that legalized same sex marriages are **Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire**. I just heard Grandpa shout from the grave, "Say What!"

### GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN Obituaries 10 Years Ago-2011

**Ray "PaPa" Donnaud**, 86, died July 22. Ray was an Orange native, a WWII vet, a great guy and one heck of a barbecue cook. "PaPa" was a fun guy who had a great family and was a Jack-of-all-trades. He was a giver who loved his family, friends and homeland. He and Sue were married 64 years. **Tony Cuccio**, 86, passed away Thursday, July 21. Services were held Monday, July 25. A World War II veteran, he was married 65 years to Ms. Gladys. Tony was a native of Crowley, LA, and had been a resident of Orange County since 1946. He retired from the Orange Navy Base. **Bernard White**, 71, of Orange, died Saturday, July 23, at his home. Funeral services will be Wednesday, July 27. He served in the United States Marines and worked as a mechanic until his retirement from DuPont. He was a member of the American Legion. Bernard is survived by his ex-wife and best friend, Mary Jo White; daughters, Sydney Moreau and Mandy White-Rogers; son, Kevin B. White; seven grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. **Richard "Rick" Leonard Livingston**, 53, of Bridge City, died Wednesday, July 20, in Orange. Memorial Services were held on Monday, July 25. Rick is survived by his mother, Jimmie Livingston; son Jonathan Livingston; grandchildren, Easton and Lynleigh Livingston. **Sue Winn DeVille**, 79, of Orange, died Thursday, July 21. A Graveside Service was held Saturday, July 23. She was a nurse and received her LVN from Lamar State College - Orange. Sue is survived by her son John Winn, Jr.; daughter Jamie Massa; son Steve Winn; She is also survived by four grandchildren, six great-grandchildren.

### 22 Years Ago-1999

**H.K. "Knox" Clark** is recovering from prostrate surgery. He's doing well and coming home over the weekend. **Jenna Dunn** arrives from Boston for her summer vacation. She was vacationing at **Cape Cod** when **JFK Jr.'s plane went down**. The 14 years old is helping at the family newspaper. Her sister **Amber** works at the **Louis Dugas law firm**. (Law office work wasn't her cup of tea. She went into medicine after leaving **Dugas** and is now an MD.) **Doug Harrington** and family return from their home in the **Woodlands, Colorado**. Before they returned **Dow Gene** and **Charlotte Anderson**, great friends, had mowed and cleaned up the **Harrington** place, which had grown up while they were away. **Orange County** grants tax abatement for **Firestone** expansion project.

### 42 Years Ago-1979

**Gary Worster**, 21 years old son of **R.B. and Louise**, brother of **Steve Worster** and father of one son, **Jacob**, lost his life in a motorcycle/auto accident Thursday August 3. **Gary** was a former **Bridge City** and **Lamar football star**. **Joe Kazmar** makes a 200 yard hole-in-one at the **DERA** par 3 17th hole, with a #5 wood. **Vickie Drake** is engaged to marry **Frank Brown**, son of **Edgar** and **Betty Brown**. **Dr. Brown** is teaching at U.T. The couple plans a December wedding. **Vickie** is the daughter of **Betty** and **Earl Drake**. **Frank Manchac, Jr.** will wed **Laura Ann Pachar** on August 18. Her uncle, **Neal Miller**, will give the bride in marriage. **Karen Leslie Smith** becomes the bride of **Mark Hryhorchuk**. Both attended **Texas A&M**. **Doug Ballard** is home from the hospital after being treated for Spinal Meningitis. **Lou** and **Arval Hebert** are the proud parents of twins, **Michael** and **Anna. Manson Hebert, Sr.** is the proud grandpaw.

### 47 Years Ago-1974

**Suds Package Store**, on Hwy. 87, is now owned by **Ed Bacon** who bought it from previous owner **Roy Dunn**. **Clester Andrews** is the Honda and UniRoyal tire dealer at 2900 MacArthur Dr. **Rebecca Duhon** is the bride-elect of **Stephen Wolfe**. **Al Zeno** had open-heart surgery in Houston.

### 72 Years Ago-1949

**Tom Butts** buys the **Yellow Cab Company** from the

**Bass Brothers. Butts** will own 33 of the 37 cars that operate in Orange. (Editor's note: Can you believe 37 cabs, now not a one. Times change.) **J. B. Peddy** names five life-guards for Orange's new swimming pool. They are **T.J. Ryan, James Wilkinson, Don Leroy Young, Vaughn McCollum** and **Charles H. Schnatter**.

### 77 Years Ago-1934

**Julius David**, 15, makes hole-in-one using a 5-iron. **A \$5,000 reward** is issued for the arrest of **John Dillinger's** five mad dogs. They are **John Hamilton, Charles Floyd, "Baby Face" Nelson, Homer VanMeter and Richard "Tall Man" Galatas**. **Funeral services** were held for **Arthur S. Bancroft**, 82, Orange County pioneer.

### A FEW HAPPENINGS

Our own **Penny LeLeux**, local composer **Reggie Rogers Jr.** and lead bad guy **John Frederick Jr.** were in Nashville, Tennessee this week for the **Music City Film Festival**. They traveled to be awarded for the **Short Film, "Shhh"** that was shot in Orange and Bridge City. The film was the brainchild of **LeLeux** of Orangefield. **Penny** tells us she even dug out some 30 year old fabric and made her dress for the black tie event. While enroute to Nashville, **LeLeux** learned that the film had been selected to be part of the **Cannes Short Film Festival** in France. **Kudos to Penny**. **Congrats to Wendell Tilley** named **INVISTA** Orange site manager. **Tilley** has been with **INVISTA** for 29 years. **We are enjoying the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo** but were disappointed **Simone Biles** didn't compete in team competition sighting mental hang-ups. Team USA received the silver medal. **All Orange County constables** attended classes in **College Station** last week. No one got in trouble. The new breed of constables are a far cry from those who attended these classes years ago. There was always tales from those boys. **Claybar, Gunner, Frye and Ortego** are low-key guys, however, **Brad** sometimes gets a little excited. I hear that former **Pct. 1** constable **Chuck Humble** is serving as a deputy for **Lannie Claybar**. **Our prayers go out to our dear friend Cherry Stout** who is due to have open heart surgery at **St. E.** in a few days. We wish her the best. Daughter **Darlene Montagne** will be looking after her dad, 99-year-old **Pearl Harbor** vet, **Cedric Stout**, during **Cherry's** recovery. **A few folks we know celebrating birthdays. July 29: Lisa Faulk, Johnathan Snipe, Hannah Clayton, celebrate today. July 30: Keith Gross, Daniel Faircloth and Chris Lopez** celebrate. **Danny Stevens** turns 72 on this date. Also, **Liam Greeson** turns 3-years-old. He's one of **Mark's** five grandsons. He's the son of **Clay** and **Amber Greeson**, both doctors in Florida, who tell us the number of **COVID** patients at the hospital they work at is higher than at its peak in 2020. **Liam** has two brothers **Luke**, age 4 and **Rowan**, age 1. **July 31: Our buddy Stump Weatherford** celebrates today. Also **Dr. Amber Weidner, Laci Braus and Debbie Moerbe**. **Aug. 1: Happy Birthday to Vickie Arkeen, Megan Vogt, Terri Romero, Missy Pillsbury, Tana Thompson** and our friend **Judge Joy Dubose Simonton**. **Aug. 2: Our buddy Judge Roy Derry Dunn** celebrates today as does **Sherri Vincent and Chloe Halliburton**. **Aug. 3: Happy Birthday to Kaylon Brack, Bob Gephart, Lacey Monceaux and Joe Elam**. **The Lunch Bunch** gathering last week was very interesting. **Round Robin style**, folks relayed personal stories. One thing I learned is even though Orange city councilman **David Bailey** isn't very old he knows a lot about the old folks of **Orange County's** past. He also is very astute at to what is happening around the community today. **David** gets around. **The Lunch Bunch** gathers every Wednesday, 12 Noon, at **Robert's Restaurant**. Everyone is welcome. We miss seeing some of our old friends who haven't returned to the gathering yet. **We hope to see them soon**. **My thoughts as I watched the Capitol police officers testify in the Jan. 6 hearings** Tuesday is that every law enforcement office in the country should be irate at how the officers were treated and disrespected with over **140 injured**. Throughout life many of my friends have been in law enforcement. The cult that attacked them at the **Capitol** was mostly white, middle-age men, 30 to 60 years old. **No Blacks, few women or young people**.

### CAJUN STORY OF THE WEEK

**Sostan Comeaux** and **Elray Thibodeaux** had jus left da hamburger place and was standing at da corner waiting for da red light to change when a big flatbed truck went by loaded with rolls of St. Augustine turf. **Comeaux** said, "Tib, I'm going to do dat me wen I win da lotary, be rich and become a Republican."

Somewhat puzzled **Thibodeaux** axe, "Sostan, wat you mean about dat hanh?"

Well Tib, look at dat truck, me too I'm gonna send my grass off to get cut."

### C'EST TOUT

### Paxton endorsed by Trump in Texas AG race

On Monday, former President **Donald Trump** endorsed Texas Attorney General **Ken Paxton** as he seeks his third term. That also stymies one of **Paxton's** primary opponents, Land Commissioner **George P. Bush**, the only prominent member of his family to back **Trump** in the 2016 election. **Bush** had sought the former president's endorsement. Two months ago, **Trump** announced he'd support one of the two, saying, "I like them both very much." **Trump's** endorsement came on the six-year anniversary of **Paxton's** indictment for securities fraud, for which he is out on bond and awaiting trial with no date set. **Paxton** also faces an FBI investigation into allegations by his former top aides that he accepted bribes and used his office to benefit a friend and campaign donor. Former Democratic primary field has also begun to take shape, including lawyer and former Galveston mayor **Joe Jaworski** and Dallas mayor and civil rights lawyer **Lee Merrin**. After the 2020 election, **Trump** and his allies filed dozens of unsuccessful lawsuits in various states challenging results. It was **Paxton's** lawsuit that **Trump** appeared to pin his hopes on, referring to the case as "The Big One." The court declined to consider the lawsuit. **Paxton's** own "Election Fraud Unit" has yet to discover widespread fraud on the scale alleged by **Trump**. **George P. Bush** said in an interview with the **Texas Tribune** that he does not believe there was enough fraud in the 2020 election to validate **Trump's** claims that the election was stolen. **George P.** should have known **Trump** would throw him under the bus. I suspect his dad **Jeb** and uncle **George W.** told him as much. No doubt **Paxton** doesn't deserve a third term, he forfeited that right. Prison might be his future. **That's all for today. Take care, stay safe and God bless.**

# Speaker Dade Phelan signs civil arrest warrant for Texas House Democrat who returned to Washington

CASSANDRA POLLOCK  
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Texas House Speaker Dade Phelan, R-Beaumont, signed a civil warrant for the arrest of state Rep. Philip Cortez, a San Antonio Democrat who rejoined his colleagues in Washington, D.C., on Sunday to help prevent the passage of a GOP-backed election bill.

The warrant is not likely to have impact since Texas law enforcement lacks jurisdiction outside the state. It is the first one signed by the speaker since more than 50 House Democrats left the state to block Republicans from having the quorum needed to pass legislation during the special legislative session that began earlier this month.

Last week, Cortez returned to Austin from Washington in what he said was an attempt to engage in "good faith dialogue" about House Bill 3, the election legislation. Other Democrats criticized Cortez's move, saying the lawmaker did not first consult with them before returning to Austin.

By Sunday though, Cortez was back in Washington, saying in a statement that talks with lawmakers in Austin on negotiating the legislation "have not produced progress."

In a statement Monday, Phelan said that Cortez "has irrevocably broken my trust and the trust of this chamber" after the lawmaker "represented to me and his fellow members



Speaker Dade Phelan presides over the Texas House of Representatives. PHOTO CREDIT: Jordan Vonderhaar for The Texas Tribune

that he wanted to work on policy and find solutions to bring his colleagues back to Texas."

"As a condition of being granted permission to temporarily leave the House floor, Rep. Cortez promised his House colleagues

that he would return," the speaker said. "Instead, he fled the state."

Cortez, who chairs the House Urban Affairs Committee, did not directly address the warrant in a statement Monday that said he

owes "a duty to my constituents to do everything I can to stop this harmful legislation." "I will continue fighting for my constituents to ensure fair and full access to the ballot box," he said. "All Texans deserve nothing less."

Later Monday, during a virtual meeting with reporters, state Rep. Jim Murphy, a Houston Republican who chairs the House GOP Caucus, did not express any frustration with Cortez returning to Washington and said he hoped the lawmaker would return to Austin again. Other Republicans applauded Phelan for signing the warrant, including state Rep. Jeff Leach of Plano, who had questioned the night before why Cortez wasn't arrested before leaving the state.

After Democrats left the state, the House voted overwhelmingly to issue what's known as a "call of the House" in an effort to regain quorum. Part of that effort included sending law enforcement after those Democrats, though Republicans acknowledged that state authorities couldn't force lawmakers back to the Texas Capitol so long as they remained out of state.

The current special session is slated to end Aug. 6, and Democrats have said they do not plan to return to the state before then. Gov. Greg Abbott has said he plans to call additional special sessions to get his priority legislation passed.

## Deaths & Memorials

### Patsy Kibbe Gifford, 89, Bridge City

Patsy Kibbe Gifford, 89, of Bridge City, passed away on July 21, at her home. Funeral services were held at 11:00 a.m., Monday, July 26, at Circle Drive Baptist Church in Bridge City.

Officiating was Pastor Jack Comer, services were concluded at the church and Patsy's final resting place was at Hillcrest Memorial Gardens.

Visitation was Monday, July 26, at Circle Drive Baptist Church, in Bridge City.

Born in San Augustine County, Texas, on November 14, 1931, she was the daughter of Thomas M. Wade and Annie Marie (Hunt) Wade.

Patsy lived a life full of faith, ambition, and a love for her family. She worked for Firestone/Bridgestone for 30 years before retiring, was the owner of Kibbe's emporium, and a councilwoman in Bridge City, as well as a member of the Bridge City Chamber of Commerce.

She was a student of the Bible and her faith was incredibly important to her, she was a member of St. Paul United Methodist Church before becoming a member of the Circle Drive Baptist Church for six years. Patsy was very social, she was a woman that had never met a stranger and she was active member of the community.

The one thing that Patsy held closest to her heart was her family, from her children to all



Patsy Kibbe Gifford

the grandchildren, great-grandchildren that called her "Ma-Maw Pat", there was not a day without laughter and joy when Patsy was spending time with her family. All the lives she touched and those that knew her will miss her dearly.

She is preceded in death by her first husband, Robert L. Kibbe, Jr.; second husband,

John E. Gifford; children, Robert L. Kibbe III, Elizabeth Ann Kibbe; granddaughter, Courtney Hodge; and great-grandson, Jack Holdridge. Patsy is survived in memory by children, Robert L. Kibbe, IV and wife Kay of Alaska, Martha Garrett and husband Billy of Bridge City; grandchildren, Ginni Wendt and husband Jason, Josh Kibbe, Fara Grounds and husband Ryan, Derek Holdridge and wife Amanda, Shawn Garrett and wife Kaylia, Tory Garrett, Brady Garrett and wife Ashley; great-grandchildren Justin Wendt, Jordan Wendt, Abby Holdridge, Taylor Holdridge, Jacob Holdridge, Kash Holdridge, Eavan Garrett, Zennetta Garrett, and Jameson Garrett.

There was an open house on Sunday, July 25 at Martha's home on 155 Roberts Avenue, for family and friends.

### Free Backpacks at FBC

First Saturday at First Baptist Church of Bridge City will be giving away free backpacks, Bibles, tracts and candy the first Sat-

urday of August in the church parking lot located at 200 @ Roundbunch Rd in Bridge City. Upon request, prayer will also be offered for anyone facing difficult times. Look for the blue canopy and balloons August 7th from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

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### OC Historical Society to tour Cormier Museum Aug. 3

The Orange County Historical Society will tour the Cormier Museum in Orangefield on August 3 beginning at 6:30 PM. The museum consist of two large prefab buildings full of relics going back over 100 years. There are walk in replicas of buildings that existed in the community of Orangefield during the local oil boom. The many photographs give a good depiction of the early history of the oil

field. Paul Cormier also collected toys and his museum has a large collection. The discovery of oil put Orange County "on the map" and the museum captures the event. This museum is "a must see" so mark your calendar. The public is welcome. The Board or Directors will have a short meeting in the museum starting at 6:00.

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ORANGE COUNTY CHURCH DIRECTORY

# The Bright Side of Futility

**Joe Rigney**  
Teacher,  
desiringGod.org

**futility:** (n) the quality or state of being futile; uselessness or pointlessness

All of us, on occasion or often, have felt a sense of futility descend upon us like a fog. Perhaps we find ourselves overwhelmed by the evil and apparent absurdity in the world, or the tragedies and hardships in our own lives. Sickness, suffering, death, and even at times trivial inconveniences like rush-hour traffic can lead us to speak into the ether, "What even is the point of anything?"

Sometimes, this sense of futility passes quickly. Other times, it lingers and haunts our consciousness like a dripping faucet. Even when our attention is elsewhere, that steady sense of futility presses upon us and clouds our minds and chastens our affections. Many of us know the frustration of futility. With the help of C.S. Lewis, I'd like to explore the less-traveled road of the bright side of futility.

**More Than Matter**

As a defender of the Christian faith, Lewis was known especially for his clear and compelling use of arguments from reason, morality, and desire. He deployed these arguments primarily as a way of refuting naturalism or materialism, the view that nature or matter is all there is.

**REASON**

The argument from reason runs something like this: Human thought cannot merely be a fact about ourselves, but must instead, in principle, be capable of giving us real insight into reality. Lewis frequently quoted Professor J.D.S. Haldane to the effect that "If my mental processes are determined wholly by the motions of atoms in my brain, I have no reason to suppose that my beliefs are true, and hence I



have no reason for supposing my brain to be composed of atoms."

In other words, all knowledge depends on the validity of logic, and therefore logic must in principle be more than a subjective phenomenon but instead a "real insight into the way in which real things have to exist" ("De Futilitate," 63). If this is so, then human reason testifies to the existence of a cosmic or super-cosmic Reason in which the universe is saturated. While this argument doesn't get you the whole way to Christian theism, it does seem to effectively refute strict materialism.

**MORALITY**

The argument from morality is similar: Human beings make moral judgments. We call certain things good and certain things evil, certain things right and certain things wrong. In doing so, we appeal to an objective standard of behavior that is outside of us. Whether we are judging our neighbors or the Nazis, the very fact of our judgment testifies to our belief in a real objective Good that stands over us and to which we ought to conform. There is a real moral law that is constantly pressing upon us.

Again, this argument doesn't get us the whole way to Christianity, but the existence of a universal moral law does seem to imply a Lawgiver, and thus open the way for further discussion of what this Lawgiver might be like.

**DESIRE**

Finally, I'll let Lewis express the argument from desire in his own words:

The Christian says, "Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists. A baby feels hunger: well, there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim: well, there is such a thing as water. Men feel sexual desire: well, there is such a thing as sex. If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world." (Mere Christianity, 136-37)

**Bright Side of Futility**

At least two common threads run through each of these arguments. First, the existence of the defect testifies to the existence of the perfect. A belief in the existence of error entails belief in the existence of truth. A belief in the existence of evil entails belief in the existence of good. A belief in the existence of emptiness entails belief in the existence of fullness. Thus, instead of the argument from reason, we might equally speak of the argument from error. Instead of the argument from morality, we might speak of the argument from evil. In-

stead of the argument from desire, we might speak of the argument from emptiness.

Second, such beliefs are, outside of insane asylums, indelible and ineradicable. Whatever theories people may have, whatever philosophies people may invent, we all are going to go on identifying errors, making moral judgments, and pursuing satisfaction in something. And significantly, such indelible phenomena cry out for an explanation.

Which brings us back to that nagging sense of futility. In light of Lewis's arguments, we are now in a position to see the bright side of futility. Our sense of futility itself, like our belief in error, evil, and emptiness, testifies to some notion of utility or purpose or meaning that we desire and yet sometimes lack. As Lewis says, "Our very condemnation of reality carries in its heart an unconscious act of allegiance to that same reality as the source of our moral standards." Or again, "Unless we allow ultimate reality to be moral, we cannot morally condemn it. The more seriously we take our own charge of futility the more we are committed to the implication that reality in the last resort is not futile at all" ("De Futilitate," 70).

**Relentless Hunter**

Now again, Lewis recognized the limitations of such arguments. In themselves, they do not lead necessarily to the full truth of Christianity. For that, they must be combined with other historical, theological, and philosophical arguments. But as Christians who have already embraced the truths of the gospel, these arguments can have an additional stabiliz-

ing and edifying effect.

When we recognize the implications of our indelible belief in error and truth, in evil and good, in desire and fullness, in futility and purpose, we can see in such simple everyday phenomena a witness to God's reality. As Paul says, "He is actually not far from each one of us" (Acts 17:27). In a sense, we might say that God is as near to you as your thinking, your judging, and your desiring.

No matter what we think, in thinking we evidence a belief in inference, in logic, in error, and therefore in truth. And he is the Truth. In evaluating and judging, in condemning and approving, in accusing and commending, we evidence our belief in morality, in standards, in evil, and therefore in the good. And he is the Good. In desiring and pursuing satisfaction, in longing and in aching, in hoping and in feeling futility, we evidence our belief in meaning, in purpose, in fullness and in life. And he is the Life.

**Stubborn Reality**

Of course, we can, if we choose, suppress these truths. We can invent philo-

sophies that deny (however incoherently) the reality of truth, goodness, and beauty. But reality is a stubborn thing. Or better, God is a relentless hunter. He really does search and know us. He really does hem us in, behind and before (Psalm 139:5). We cannot successfully flee from him. If we ascend to the heavens, he is there. If we descend to the depths, he is there. If we travel across the sea, or to the farthest reaches of the galaxies, even there he is present and active and pursuing.

And so, rather than run from him out of a sense of futility, perhaps we might see in that sense of futility an invitation to come home. Perhaps our sense of futility is simply one more manifestation that God has indeed made us for himself, and that our hearts are restless until they rest in him.

*Joe Rigney (@joe\_rigney) is president of Bethlehem College & Seminary and a teacher for desiringGod.org. He is a husband, father of three, and pastor at Cities Church. His most recent book is More Than a Battle: How to Experience Victory, Freedom, and Healing from Lust.*

**'Walking His Way' Walking Club**

Walking His Way Walking Club will meet on Mondays & Thursdays from 8:00 am-10:00 am at First Baptist Church FLC located at 200 W. Roundbunch in Bridge City. There will be no mosquitoes, no heat and in the A/C. Fast Lane and slow lane available. Any questions call Julia Morris at 409-735-4951 or Brenda Woodall 409-670-3361.

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# O.C.A.R.C. Tournament time is here

**FISHING**  
**CAPT. DICKIE COLBURN**  
**For The Record**



Dickie Colburn

"We kinda found the fish by mistake," said Jason Bell. Ronnie Tate and I were burning up and ready to call it a day when we had to run to the back of a cut in Cow Bayou to hide from a thunderstorm headed our way."

The lightning laced storm mercifully skirted their hiding place and they resumed fishing under a more user-friendly cloudy sky. "A tide change probably helped us, but Jason caught two keepers right off the bat on a grape Wacky worm. When we figured out that the bass were hanging on the color change we really started catching them." Arming yourself with quality tackle and an assortment of lures aids the cause, but expanding on a pattern you just stumbled up on is always a difference maker.

If you fish even twice a month, more than once you have unexpectedly found fish with a lure, technique or in a location that wasn't part of the original game plan! Color choice can be iffy, but figuring out why a certain pattern is productive lasts a lifetime. "Back in the day" we elevated our fish catching with live bait simply by anchoring above a spot rather than below it.

Fishing with lures can be even more subtle. Even Ronnie and Jason had a little different perspective as to where to aim their casts. Ronnie felt like the bass were holding in the dingier side of the color change and Jason was convinced that they were in the clearer side. That is a minor difference in perspectives, but it can make a difference with the tide moving your lure across the color change. In either case, it paid off for the duo and they finished the day with two limits and released twice that many more bass.

"We only had three bass that weighed two pounds," said Jason, "but, more importantly, we found bass in other places fishing the color change." I don't know that it will win you any money in this weekend's OCARC tournament, but I would give their finding a try. Jason also added that they were using a five inch finesse worm and that can make a difference as well. Neither angler felt like they were divulging any secrets as they were only fishing the bayou because they couldn't get out in the lake.

They are both flounder enthusiasts and have been doing exceptionally well all summer. Both young men have caught at least one flounder over the five-pound mark and limiting out has not been a problem! Steve Simmons reported that Justin Clark won the monthly S.A.L.T. Club flounder tourna-

COLBURN Page 2B

# Football arrives amid excitement and controversy

**KAZ'S KORNER**  
**Joe Kazmar**  
**For The Record**



Joe Kazmar

Besides unbearably hot weather, the month of August also means football is here—NFL teams are starting their training camps while colleges and high schools are passing out equipment to get ready for the grueling practice sessions three or four weeks before their first game.

Most of the players in the above-mentioned categories are eagerly looking forward to the first REAL game of their respective seasons and even the scrimmages and exhibition games that will soon begin.

Many high school players will be awakening at the crack of dawn to practice before the real hot weather begins that day and then will meet in the afternoon for "skull sessions" with the coaching staffs.

But on the college scene, most of the teams and players are interested in the Texas Longhorns and Oklahoma Sooners and their pursuit to leave the Big 12 Conference and join the Southeastern Conference to become its 15th and 16th members.

Last week the talk of the moves by the two teams was regarded as "unfounded rumors" but lately the SEC hierarchy and officials of the Big 12 are speculating how to handle this transfer.

The Houston Chronicle first broke the story of Texas and Oklahoma wanting to join the SEC. Further reporting from Sports Illustrated indicated that both schools have delivered an "exit strategy" to the Big 12 and SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey refused to comment on this "speculation."

Additionally, WFAA's Jason Whitley in Dallas reports that both Oklahoma and Texas will send letters declining to renew their TV contracts with the Big 12, which are set to expire in 2025. This would be the first step in



Our Houston Texans quarterback Deshaun Watson showed up at NRG Stadium Sunday dressed out and ready to work out with the quarterbacks and rookies but still said he wants to be traded.

potentially petitioning the SEC to join the elite conference.

As the news began to filter through college athletics and gain even more momentum, the Big 12 held a meeting between the other member schools about plans if Oklahoma and Texas left the conference, a conversation that neither school was part of.

However, many things have to happen for this expansion to become a reality, starting with a ¾ vote from the current 14 SEC schools about allowing Oklahoma and Texas into the conference.

Texas A&M athletic director Ross Bjork last week spoke publicly on the potential addition of the two programs. "We want to be the only SEC

program in the state of Texas." Bjork first told reporters.

But after realizing that with these two highly-regarded football schools joining the SEC would mean much more money for the conference schools, Bjork did a complete turnaround and said he was ready for Texas and Oklahoma to do what the Aggies did ten years ago—leave the Big 12 for greener (like in money) pastures.

And with the future of the NCAA up in the air, the potential addition of Oklahoma and Texas could create the first "super-conference" in college athletics.

KAZ'S KORNER Page 3B



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# Gulf Coast Fishing Report . . .

This week's Gulf Coast fishing report was compiled by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

## • Sabine Lake

Overall conditions: GOOD. 85 degrees. The ship channel or the Neches River is a great spot for speckled trout. Fish the shelf in 2-4 feet of water with minnow. Fish the river on points and drops to 20ft of water keying on shad.

## • Bolivar

GOOD. 85 Degrees. Speckled trout have been fair near the north jetty as well along the shoreline on live shrimp. Redfish have been good along the shoreline and are best caught on shrimp, soft plastics or topwaters early. Black drum are good around vegetation or structure on crab or shrimp. Flounder are fair around the jetty on shrimp.

## • Trinity Bay

GOOD. 85 degrees. Look for the birds, the fish will typically be under them. Fishing the flats remains to be the best method to fish for both redfish and speckled trout. The northwestern and eastern sides of the bay are still solid. Flounder are fair around rocks using mullet or minnow.

## • East Galveston Bay

GOOD. 85 degrees. Redfish and speckled trout are still along the shorelines and near the jetties. You can also find them in the deep water around structures like reefs. Soft plastics or shrimp are great. Sheepshead are good and will be found primarily around rocks on minnow.

## • West Galveston Bay

GOOD. 85 degrees. Fishing deep water and structures will be the key element to success. The reefs and other structures located around the ship channel will be good areas to find speckled trout and redfish. Fishing the many gaswells and reefs extending from the lower ship channel all the way up to lower Trinity Bay is going to be a good pattern for the speckled trout. Use soft plastics like Bass Assassins, Norton Sand Eels or topwaters for that midday bite.

## • Texas City

GOOD. 85 degrees. Redfish and speckled trout are best along the shoreline on live bait or soft plastics. Flounder are good on live bait around the jetties and wherever there are rocks or structures. Black drum are good on shrimp around vegetation or structure. Sheepshead are fair around the dike on mullet or minnows.



Redfish and trout alike stay on the prowl for their next meal making live bait a great option.

## • Freeport

GOOD. 85 degrees. Redfish and speckled trout will be found in the back bay around shell and marsh and are good on shrimp. Sheepshead will be found around the oyster reefs and rocks and are good on live bait. Flounder are good around the rocks on mullet. Black drum are fair on blue crab, slow bouncing off the bottom over grass.

## • East Matagorda Bay

GOOD. 85 degrees. Redfish and flounder are good at the Oyster Farm and at Three Mile Reef bass assassins or live bait. The shallow shoreline south of the reef can be good for gigging flounder. Look for speckled trout and redfish where the reef drops off into deeper water. Look for bait activity as a clue as to where the fish will be.

## • West Matagorda Bay

GOOD. 85 degrees. Wading remains to be the best method to beat the heat. Sand and grassy shorelines along this side of the bay have held scattered catches of speckled trout on topwaters and soft plastics or shrimp. Black drum are fair on blue crab above grass. Redfish are good on live bait and will be around reefs. Flounder are good on shrimp around the rocks.

## • Port O'Connor

GOOD. 85 degrees. Speckled trout are over mid-bay struc-

ture and also along the shorelines. The fishing pier is great for redfish, speckled trout, and flounder on shrimp. Back Lakes have been solid for Redfish using shrimp.

## • Rockport

GOOD. 85 degrees. Redfish are good using topwaters in black or white/red color in the bay. Speckled Trout are good on shrimp under a popping cork and are being found along the shoreline or around structure. Flounder have been good on minnow around the piers. Black drum are fair above the grass on crab.

## • Port Aransas

GOOD. 84 degrees. The jetty and pier have been great spots all around. Redfish are good on shrimp under a popping cork which will stimulate fish activity or soft plastics. Speckled Trout are good on shrimp, KWigglers ball tail, and top waters. Black drum are fair on shrimp or crab and will most likely be in the deep water transitions.

## • Corpus Christi

GOOD. 84 degrees. Speckled trout is plentiful in the surf or the flats and best on shrimp. Bob Hall Pier is a great spot for redfish, trout, black drum, and flounder. If the surf is green, try live shrimp under a float. In stained water use shrimp for black drum and redfish.

## • Baffin Bay

VERY GOOD. 88 degrees. North of the causeway has been busy with trout using croaker. Redfish have been great on cut mullet. White Bluff is a tride and true spot. The northern end of Mother Lagoon in the shallow water is a great spot. The darker colors will perform best when the water is dirty. Flounder are good on live bait or artificials around the rocks.

## • Port Mansfield

GOOD. 86 degrees. Trout are showing on the flats with grass in the deeper water throwing kwiggler ball tail, and top water. Reds are shallow and are hitting gold spoons, kwiggler paddle tail and top water. Red snapper good when you can get out.

## • South Padre

GOOD. 80 degrees. Speckled trout are plentiful near the surf on spoons, MirrOlures, topwater plugs and soft-plastic tails work best in the clear/green water. Holly Beach and the jetties are great locations to fish for redfish or black drum using live shrimp.

## Colburn: Fishing From Page 1B

ment last weekend with a 2.31-pound fish. He was also quick to remind me that their KID's tournament is set for August 21<sup>st</sup>. I will get you all the details later, but this is a fun event that is far more than just a family get together for some lucky youngsters. Basically anything they catch, including a crab, makes them eligible to not only win a cash prize, but one of two lifetime fishing licenses as well. The license winners will come from a random drawing of every youngster that weighed in anything.

The local Cowboy circuit fished the Neches last weekend and the team of Travis Snell and Chris Trest won first place with a 12.77-pound stringer. Robert Royal and Garret Smith finished second and took home the big bass pot with a 4.57-pound fish. Callie Derouen caught a redfish Sunday afternoon that some lucky fisherman would like to have in this weekend's OCARC tournament. Callie's 24-inch redfish had twenty-six spots which would make it hard to beat in the Apaloosa red category. "It was the only fish we caught," she added and we caught it on a big piece of crab!"

The O.C.A.R.C. 33<sup>rd</sup> annual tournament weigh-in will kick off at 5:00 p.m. Saturday afternoon at the Riverside Pavilion. The two day event is a family event that raises money to support the special clients at the Center. Entry fees are only \$30 and there is \$4000 in cash up for grabs for the winners in twelve different categories.

Don't plan on cooking supper as links, chips and drinks will be available all afternoon. For more information or an entry form you can stop by the center at 905 W. Park or call 409-886-1363. See ya there!

## DAR meets 3rd Tuesday in Bridge City

The Daughters of the American Revolution William Diamond Chapter of Orange County meets the third Tuesday of the month at St. Paul Methodist Church in Bridge City at 1:00 p.m. To become a member, a woman must be 18 years or older who can prove lineal, bloodline descent from an ancestor who aided in achieving American Independence. She must provide documentation, as well as the Revolutionary War service of her Patriot ancestor.

DAR promotes Patriotism, Historical Preservation, Educa-

tional, Veterans and Women's issues. For additional information contact Bertie Herman, Regent, at 409-735-5253.

## Dementia Care Givers' Support Group

The Dementia Care Givers' Support Group meets at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, Canticle Building, 4300 Meeks Drive in Orange on the following days and times:

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# As Texas population grows, UIL may add Class 7A

Larry Johnson  
For The Record

As the population of Texas grows so do the chances of the UIL adding another conference has become a more likely possibility.

With a number of schools opening in urban areas, an expansion could happen as soon as the 2024-2025 reclassification and realignment.

"As schools keep opening and we keep adding to what starts off as a pool of 500 schools and that pool becomes 510, 520, 550," said Jamey Harrison, the UIL's deputy director. "You either have to keep pushing some of them down — just do the math — 32 districts of 320 would be 10 teams per district and it won't fall where there are 10 teams in those districts, it just doesn't. You just can't go much above 500 for 5A and 6A. So as those schools keep adding, I think



"As schools keep opening and we keep adding to what starts off as a pool of 500 schools and that pool becomes 510, 520, 550," said Jamey Harrison, the UIL's deputy director.

7A becomes a more realistic conversation."

Harrison and Susan Elza, the UIL's director of athletics, discussed a range of topics at the UIL's annual coaching school press conference earlier this month at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio.

Harrison explained as larger schools open and begin competition the dispari-

ty in enrollment in Classes 4A and 3A grows.

"We just don't have many 500 to 1,000 (student) schools," he said. "We have some in the middle that are experiencing populations that are drifting toward those bottom conferences. So 3A and especially 4A, it just becomes more problematic. We just don't have enough of them to make a

conference without having to drive forever to be in districts."

Harrison and Elza are looking for schools to return to a more normal schedule after dealing with restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We do not currently have any UIL related protocols that schools are required to follow," Harrison said. "Those are all local decisions and we're hoping for what we all know as a normal year as possible."

The UIL is also keeping an eye on the recent Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) rule changes adapted by the NCAA, and a recent bill dealing with NIL passed by Texas legislators.

"As soon as we have a better understanding of that, then we will be releasing information on how that comes to bear on UIL eligibility," Harrison said. "Changes in NCAA rules don't necessari-

ly impact our rules, but we are aware of them. The first question is what if anything will be allowed under the new state law that just passed."

The UIL is also dealing with a new legislation that allows homeschool students to participate in extracurricular activities for UIL schools in their attendance zone.

"There are definitely some schools considering it," Harrison said. "Most of the school districts will not opt in to allow that. It's really hard for us because it's brand new."

Harrison said UIL schools will have to make a decision on whether to opt in by Aug. 1. He also said varsity homeschool athletes will be factored into the 2022-2023 realignment.

Harrison and Elza also touched on other topics:

The UIL will look into the number of schools opting up a division in Class 5A, which

has created difficulties in aligning districts. Elza said Class 5A schools have the option to eliminate divisions if they desire.

There has been no push for home-field advantage in the first round of the playoffs for the top seeds in Class 4A and below.

Water polo will become a UIL sport in the 2022-2023 school year.

Baseball practices will start a week earlier in the 2022-2023 school year.

The coaches and players box in football will go from the 20 to the 20-yard line.

Teams going to overtime in football will have the option of going for one or two points on conversion attempts in the first overtime. Teams will have to go for two points in the second overtime. If a game goes to three overtimes, teams will have one play from the 3-yard line and the format will continue until a winner is determined.

## Kaz's Korner From Page 1B

There has been much speculation about how a 16-team conference would work, from two eight-team leagues with Texas remaining in the Western Division and Oklahoma joining the East to four geographic "pods". But long-standing rivalries like Florida and Georgia, Tennessee and Vanderbilt plus Alabama and Auburn need to remain (like Texas A&M-Texas didn't).

Last week the SEC Network released an idea on how incorporating Texas and Oklahoma in the SEC would look.

- LSU, Mississippi State, Ole Miss and Texas A&M
- Florida, Georgia, Kentucky and South Carolina
- Alabama, Auburn, Tennessee and Vanderbilt
- Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas

The network's proposed theory is that each team would play the other three in their own "pod" every year and two games against each of the other pods that would switch off year-to-year. It would make for a total of nine conference games.

This would reincarnate the Texas-Texas A&M rivalry every other year, which is better than it is now.

### KWICKIES...

Five team members have left the Southland Conference this season for the Western Athletic Conference including Lamar, Sam Houston State, Stephen F. Austin and Abilene Christian while Central Arkansas will join the ASUN. That leaves six football-playing schools (McNeese, Southeastern Louisiana, Northwestern State, Nicholls, Incarnate Word and Houston Baptist) out of the eight remaining teams (two don't have a football program).

The NFL has really cracked down on the players getting their vaccinations, but are leaving that matter up to the players and their teams. If an NFL game is forfeited due to the pandemic, players on the team causing the forfeit will not receive a paycheck for that game while the other team will be paid. We'll see if that old saying "money talks" is true.

Our Houston Astros are sitting pretty atop the AL West Division with a 5 ½

game lead over the Oakland A's, who lost three in a row to Seattle last weekend while the Astros swept a three-game series from the hapless Texas Rangers, who have lost 12 straight games, tying a franchise record set in 1982. The Astros began an eight-game road trip Monday at Seattle and then will move on to San Francisco and the Los Angeles Dodgers.

The San Diego Padres on Monday acquired second baseman Adam Frazier from the Pittsburgh Pirates for three minor league pitchers plus \$1.4 million in cash. Frazier leads the majors with 125 hits and was the National League's All-Star starting second baseman.

The Native Americans finally put enough pressure on Cleveland to change their mascot from the Indians (which they've had since 1925) to the Guardians. Wonder if they will pressure Atlanta to drop the Braves mascot for something like the Salamanders or Tasmanian Devils?

Bill O'Brien, fired last year by the Houston Texans, will be the new offensive coordinator for the Alabama Crimson Tide. Coach Nick Saban is no idiot and knows a good football mind when he sees one.

### JUST BETWEEN US...

Another football scenario that has the attention of the sports world pertains to our Houston Texans and their unhappy quarterback Deshaun Watson, who vowed after the final game of the 2020 NFL season that he would NEVER play another down for the Texans. The league said that no-shows would be fined \$50,000 for every day of training camp missed with no reprieves from their team. Miraculously, Watson showed up at NRG Stadium Sunday dressed out and ready to work out with the quarterbacks and rookies but still said he wants to be traded. The team wants to get rid of him and his 22 lawsuits, but those lawsuits are what's keeping all the NFL teams away. Houston wants a mixture of five high draft picks or starting players for Watson, according to ESPN Monday. The entire team practices today.

## Avoid 'shocking' sea creatures on Texas coast

Staff Report  
For The Record

PADRE ISLAND, Texas — Do you shuffle your feet when you head into the water along the Texas coast? If not, you should, according to officials with Padre Island National Seashore.

If you've been to a beach along the Gulf of Mexico - from Texas to Florida - you've likely heard you need to shuffle your feet to help avoid getting stung by a stingray in a move dubbed the "stingray shuffle."

The shuffle might also help protect against the lesser electric ray - a species of numbfish that lives in the Gulf.

Gulf Coast officials recently posted a photo of a lesser electric ray taken along



the park's beach and noted that while the shock of a ray should be avoided, it doesn't exceed 14-37 volts.

"That is enough to give someone a jolting surprise, but not an injury," officials said in a Facebook post.

You've done the Stingray Shuffle, but what about the Electric Slide? Lesser electric rays are a species of numbfish...

Posted by Padre Island Na-

tional Seashore on Tuesday, July 13, 2021

For a time, the lesser electric ray was actually considered one of the most endangered marine fish on Earth based on a 2005 article that didn't take into account certain survey factors.

Lesser electric rays were actually added to the IUCN Red List as critically endangered before the data from the 2005 article was reana-

lyzed and found "they are fairly abundant in specific habitats while consistently absent from others," according to SouthernFriedScience.com. The publication found that rumors of the ray's impending extinction had been "greatly exaggerated."

The IUCN Red List now shows that the lesser electric ray is a species of least concern.

So it would seem the stingray shuffle is indeed still recommended for avoiding these marine animals along the Texas coast.

"Lesser electric rays normally lie buried in the sand of the surf zone and shallow Gulf," according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. "Accidentally stepping on one can be a shocking experience."

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# Prospecting with a purpose

**OUTDOORS**  
**Captain Chuck Uzzle**  
**For The Record**

As I ease the truck forward out of the launch I can already see the blur of motion in the rear view mirror, a cat squirrel with Costa Del Mar sunglasses disguised as a fisherman has begun to clean and straighten up what little mess that has been made in the 5 whole minutes he has been on board. I patiently wait at the dock until the deck of his ultra cool Hell's Bay Waterman is exactly as he likes it and ready for my arrival. My partner for the day and the one responsible for the immaculate appearance of the boat is none other than my good friend Captain James Trimble, or as most folks know him "Capn Trim". Trim has been bitten by the shallow water bug and it has infected his entire world to say the least. The guy is an



extremely talented and accomplished fisherman in just about any depth of water or under any set of circumstances but the chasing fish in the skinny stuff is a new and challenging concept that he has fallen in love with. His enthusiasm for the sport and this style of fishing is how we became friends and it's what makes those days on the water fishing together that much better.

Our trip goal was to find fish for an upcoming tournament that Trim and his partner were entered in. First order of business was to formulate a game plan based on a few factors. First were weather conditions, especially wind. Since we were in Trim's skiff the thought of tackling Sabine lake open water in high winds was not anywhere on the "to do" list. Calm mornings meant running as far south as possible and fishing our way back in order to have the wind and seas in our favor. I know each of us has a go to weather source either on the web, tv or radio, mine is [www.weatherunderground.com](http://www.weatherunderground.com) and I

live and die with their wind forecast. According to the website the wind was due to kick up strong around noon so we opted for a big run at daylight which worked out perfectly.

Our first stretch of water found us trying to locate fish with lures that allowed us to cover large amounts water. Topwater plugs, spoons, and spinnerbaits are perfect for this task. Once a fish or two was caught then a more refined approach begins. Figuring out the pattern and then establishing which lure offers up the best odds of consistently catching those fish was the next goal. I have to admit that I am guilty of not changing from topwater plugs to other offerings that may catch more fish due to the fact that the surface strikes are just way more fun. I know I could catch more fish on a weightless soft plastic or a spoon but it just doesn't do it for me sometimes. Guilty as charged.

The first redfish of the day took a mighty swipe at the She Pup I was throwing and missed the first time only to



come back and finish the job. It was not long before we had another solid tournament class fish inhale the same plug. Both fish were solid 7 pounders and that proved to be a great start. A short trip down the same shoreline produced another quality fish from almost the same type structure, a pattern was starting to form. After a few pictures and a nice release of that fish it was my turn to push the boat and let Trim fish. Spending a day on the water with another guide is a really nice change of pace, a type of "holiday" that only comes around every now and again. It's always enjoyable to share a boat with another person who has the same in-

terests as you do, makes the day that much better.

It wasn't long before Trim had his first redfish on and doing it's best to test his drag. At this point we decided we had found a viable pattern and area that would give them a good starting point so we were now free to explore some other options. Now is when we were glad that we had run so far south early that morning because the wind was beginning to howl from the southeast. The small skiff hugged the bank and we remained surprisingly dry all the way to the next stop. It was here that we began to cull out bad water for later scouting trips that week. Finding and eliminating bad areas are just as much of the scouting plan as finding fish. By being able to concentrate on good water and not wondering about some place else an angler can relax and fish an area more thorough and with more confidence. By having a good game plan and sticking to it a team maximizes their fishing time in a given day. Time spent running and looking on tournament day translates into failure most of the time. There will always be

that time someone stumbles up on some fish that they had not seen or found previously but those cases are rare. The anglers that scout with a purpose and are well prepared will usually come out on top in the long run.

After probing a few more locations we were basically at the mercy of the wind and decided to look at one more place that was as out of the wind as we could find. We turned the skiff and allowed the wind to push us along as we made long casts along a shallow flat. It didn't take long for an oversized redfish to punish Trim's plug and head out for parts unknown. The healthy 10 pound fish finally came to the boat after an extended battle. All we could do was laugh as we looked at how far down in the fish's throat the topwater plug was, it was absolutely inhaled. Fortunately enough we were able to free the plug and release the fish unharmed to fight another day. A fitting way to end an exceptional day on the water. Hopefully the lessons learned on this scout mission will translate into a big check for Capn Trim and his partner come tournament time.

# University of Texas officially asks to join the SEC

**HEIDI PÉREZ-MORENO**  
**The Texas Tribune**

After a week of speculation, the University of Texas at Austin announced Tuesday that, alongside the University of Oklahoma, it has asked to join the Southeastern Conference starting July 1, 2025.

The news came a day after both schools announced they would not renew their media rights contracts with the Big 12 in 2025. If the two schools were to join the SEC, they would join the likes of top football schools such as the University of Florida, Louisiana State University and the University of Alabama.

"We believe that there would be mutual benefit to the Universities on the one hand, and the SEC on the other hand, for the Universities to become members of the SEC," UT President Jay Hartzell and OU President Joseph Harroz Jr. said in a joint letter to SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey.

Sankey said in a statement that while the SEC hasn't actively pursued new members, it will welcome change when there is consensus among members.

"We will pursue significant change when there is a clear consensus among our members that such actions will further enrich the experiences of our student-athletes and lead to greater academic and athletic achievement across our campuses," Sankey said.

The move leaves the rest of the Big 12 conference, which includes Texas Tech University, Baylor University and Texas Christian University, in a state of uncertainty. On Monday afternoon, Big 12 Commissioner Bob Bowlsby said in a statement that the remaining eight institutions will work together to ensure future success.

"Although our eight members are disappointed with the decisions of these two institutions, we recognize that intercollegiate athletics is experiencing rapid change and will most likely look much different in 2025 than it does currently," Bowlsby said. "The Big 12 Conference will continue to support our member institutions' efforts to graduate student-athletes, and compete for Big 12 and NCAA championships."

The departures of UT and OU could have major financial ramifications on the Big 12 and its remaining schools. UT and OU are the conference's most prominent football programs, and the conference could stand to lose significant revenue from a



The University of Texas football team celebrates after defeating the Utah Utes at the Valero Alamo Bowl at the Alamodome in San Antonio. PHOTO CREDIT: Erich Schlegel via USA TODAY Sports

television contract without them.

TCU spokesperson Holly Ellman said in a statement Monday afternoon that the school will continue to make decisions that best serve its student athletes, its commu-

nity and the long-term success of its athletic programs.

"We have nothing to announce at this time but have been engaged in deliberations with our conference colleagues and others and continue to support the Big

12 and its members," the statement said.

Membership in a "power" athletics conference is a major driver of revenue and attention for universities. Texas Tech athletics made \$90.4 million in athletics revenue

during the 2020 fiscal year. Revenue earned from the Big 12 accounted for more than one-third of those earnings. Losing UT and OU could put the Big 12's status as such a conference in question.

This isn't the first time UT has weighed leaving the Big 12. It happened 11 years ago when the university considered joining the Pac-12 conference alongside Texas A&M, but it eventually opted to stay put. A&M ended up leaving for the SEC, and its leaders have since made it clear they want to be the only Texas school that is part of that league.

"A&M is a flagship university, and with the size and scale of our place, we should have our own stand-alone identity in our own conference," A&M athletic director Ross Bjork said last week.

A&M's board of regents will continue discussions on the topic during a special meeting at 4 p.m. Wednesday. They began conversations Monday but stayed in closed session for the entirety of the conversation.

The move has also generated pushback from lawmakers, with Republican Lt. Gov Dan Patrick saying on social media that he wanted to form a legislative committee to study the athletic and economic impact of UT's exit on other Texas schools and communities. State Sen. Jane Nelson, R-Flower Mound, was asked to chair the committee.

"We are going to have a fair, unbiased hearing to delve into how the changing landscape in college sports might impact our economy here in Texas," she said.

State Rep. Dustin Burrows, R-Lubbock, also attempted legislative action. He filed a bill Friday that would prohibit Texas public colleges and universities from switching their affiliations with collegiate athletic conferences without a vote from the Legislature, but the move is purely symbolic.

The legislation is not on Gov. Greg Abbott's special session agenda, meaning lawmakers cannot take it up.

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# Seeking 'holy grail' of tomatoes

**Paul Schattenberg**  
Texas A&M AgriLife

A proposed project involving the characterization of a new breeding line of tomatoes developed by the Texas A&M AgriLife breeding program at Weslaco could further enhance Texas' reputation for growing exceptional produce, according to Texas A&M AgriLife Research scientists.

The development of flavorful, nutritious and firm tomatoes with a long shelf life, good appearance and high yield is the "holy grail" of tomato improvement, said Carlos Avila, Ph.D., AgriLife Research vegetable breeder based at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Weslaco and principal investigator for the project.

Co-principal investigators are Kevin Crosby, Ph.D., AgriLife Research vegetable breeder at Texas A&M University, Bryan-College Station, and Vijay Joshi, Ph.D., AgriLife Research vegetable system physiologist at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Uvalde.

## New line developed from lessons learned

Avila said tomato genes such as colorless non-ripening, NOR, and ripening inhibitor, RIN, have been used successfully in modulating fruit firmness and extending the shelf life of commercially available tomatoes, but have fallen short in other areas.

"Unfortunately, besides the beneficial effect on delaying softening, these genes negatively affect fruit color, flavor and nutritional value," Avila explained. "As a result, there is a general concern that most modern tomato cultivars have lost their flavor. This affects both consumption and supermarket sales."

He also noted most commercial cultivars are susceptible to tomato yellow shoulder, a disorder characterized by discolored regions under the fruit's skin that reduce its quality and negatively impact consumer acceptance.

"The disorder can range from very mild with some internal spotting to quite severe with large areas that are hardened and yellow to white," Avila noted.

The team's goal is to produce a long-shelf-life tomato with all the positive traits and characteristics both the produce industry and consumers desire without negatively impacting taste and color.

He said the new year-long project is a continuation of the 2019 project "Novel Tomato Fruit Firmness Trait: Breeding for Long Shelf Life While Conserving Flavor Is Now Possible."



Texas A&M AgriLife Research breeders are working toward developing the "holy grail" of tomatoes. The new TAM-SP18-157 line should benefit Texas producers in a similar way as other Texas A&M AgriLife-led vegetable improvements. (Texas A&M AgriLife photo)

"For the first year of this project, we evaluated and characterized fruit firmness for trait stability in three locations — Weslaco, Uvalde and Bryan-College Station," Avila said. "We also developed F1 hybrids, evaluated their shelf life at different storage conditions and developed F2 mapping populations. Our successful accomplishment of these objectives and the very promising data we obtained directed us toward additional lines of investigation in this new project."

Avila said the firmness trait in the newly developed TAM-SP18-157 line is different from NOR- and RIN-gene-carrying commercial tomato cultivars in that it produces extraordinarily firm tomatoes while conserving both flavor and color.

"It does this because the ripening process is not inhibited," Avila said. "When used as a parental line, the resulting F1 hybrids have shown improved firmness, enhanced sugar and acid content, and higher amounts of dry matter and fruit yield."

The new line produces a firm tomato that does not "leak" when sliced or diced and has a uniformly red color — traits highly desired by both the industry and consumers, he said.

"This second-year project will focus on production and multi-location testing, along with trait characterization for marker-assisted breeding and registration of the TAM-SP18-157," Avila said.

## Initial field testing yields promising results

Field trials at Weslaco and Uvalde during the 2019 spring season demonstrated TAM-SP18-157 has an excellent combining ability when used as a parent for hybrid cultivar development.

"When crossed as a male pollen donor with soft tomato lines, the resulting F1 hybrids increased fruit firmness in 30% of the tomatoes, dry matter in 15%, sugar content in 11%, and acidity in 10%, as compared to the soft

tomato parents," Avila said. "Additionally, F1 hybrids showed a 67% increase in the yield, indicating TAM-SP18-157 can be used as a parent to improve both tomato quality and yield."

Joshi said one of the aspects of his work on the new project will be to analyze and quantify the amount of glutamic and aspartic acids in the new tomato line.

"We have already harvested some of the tomatoes grown here at the Uvalde center for testing and will be checking them for these two aroma-active amino acids that are integral to tomato flavor," he said.

The fruit firmness in the TAM-SP18-157 breeding line is superior to what was expected. The tomatoes' average compression peak indicates a fruit 70% firmer compared to the average firmness in the Texas A&M tomato breeding population.

"This additional firmness provides for a longer shelf life, even when the tomato is harvested when completely ripe," Avila said. "This allows the tomatoes to fully develop their flavor and nutritional content while staying fresh for a longer period."

Initial testing also showed TAM-SP18-157 is highly resistant to tomato yellow shoulder disorder.

"Yellow shoulder is not a delayed ripening, but an actual disorder of the affected tissue in which green chlorophyll in these regions fails to develop red pigment," Avila explained. "In this instance, the practice of letting the fruit remain on the vine longer so it can 'color up' does not work. Neither does increasing the quantity of po-

tassium fertilizer once there is abundant fruit hanging due to the disorder showing up very shortly after fruit set."

Crosby said he will continue his first phase research by addressing flavor and heat stress aspects of tomato development as well as disease resistance.

He said the initial research indicated early potassium applications can reduce symptoms of the yellow shoulder disorder, though it is necessary to apply a larger amount than what would normally sustain yield, which would increase production costs.

"In this new project, fruit from 400 individual F2 plants will be collected to evaluate firmness and yellow-shoulder-resistance-traits inheritance using probability tests," Crosby said.

## Improved tomatoes should benefit Texas producers

The valuable traits of TAM-SP18-157 can be used to substantially improve fruit firmness and resistance to yellow shoulder while also retaining flavor and improving dry matter, sugar content, acidity, shelf life and yield in fresh and specialty high-value heirloom tomato cultivars.

"But to introduce these novel traits for continuous cultivar development, the genetic bases need to be understood and molecular markers linked to the trait need to be developed," Avila explained.

He said trait characterization will be performed on TAM-SP18-157, F1 hybrids and the developed F2 population to determine genetic versus environmental com-

ponents and develop molecular markers linked to the traits.

Juan Landivar, Ph.D., director of the Texas A&M AgriLife center in Weslaco, said the successful characterization and introduction of these traits into commercial cultivars has the potential to revolutionize fresh tomato consumption in a similar way as the Texas A&M mild jalapeño and sweet 1015 onion traits did for their respective commodities.

"These peppers and onions that were developed previously brought a lot of atten-

tion and consumer interest, which translated to improved sales and greater awareness of Texas as an innovator in the development of new lines of produce," Landivar said. "We expect the new tomato improvements will do much the same."

More important, he said, the development of flavorful and nutritious tomatoes with a long shelf life, good appearance and high yield would lead to healthy lives and livelihoods improved through ensuring an abundant supply of nutritious foods.

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**Garage Sale** this Saturday, July 31st from 7 am to 1 pm in Dugas Addition neighborhood in Bridge City starting at Sharp St. Come stroll through the neighborhood & check out the sales.

**Garage Sale** this Saturday only, July 31st from 7 am to 1 pm. at 6764 Guy Lane, Orange. No early birds. Clothes, kitchen items, household items, furniture, toys, decor, holiday decor and more.

**Multi-Family Garage Sale** this Saturday, July 31st from 7 am to 2 pm at 780 Jones St. in Bridge City. Lots of womans, mens, & kids clothes, home décor, furniture. You don't want to miss this.

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**Cemetery Plot** at Hillcrest Gardens in Bridge City. Please call 409-313-4404.

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### Legal Notice

**Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Mixed Beverage Restaurant Permit with FB by Jason Paul LLC DBA Burger Town, to be located at 6223 W. Roundbunch Orange, Orange, Texas. Owners of said corporation are Thomas Siau, Owner and Jason Montagne, Owner.**

### CITATION BY PUBLICATION

The State of Texas  
To any and all Unknown Heirs and all Persons Interested in the Estate of

**JARED LEE BEHAN, Deceased**  
Cause No. P19129  
in County Court at Law, Orange County, Texas

The alleged heir(s) at law in the above numbered and entitled estate filed AN APPLICATION TO DETERMINE HEIRSHIP AND INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION AND LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION in this estate on JULY 8, 2021, requesting that the Court determine who are the heirs and only heirs of Jared Lee Behan, Deceased, and their respective shares and interests in such estate.

The court may act on this application at any call of the docket on or after 10:00 a.m. on the Monday next after the expiration of 10 days from the date of publication of this citation, at the County Courthouse, 801 W. Division., Orange, Texas 77630.

All persons interested in this case are cited to appear before this Honorable Court by filing a written contest or answer to this Application should they desire to do so. To ensure its consideration, you or your attorney must file any objection, intervention or response in writing with the County Clerk of Orange County, Texas. Given under my hand and the seal of the County Court at Law, Orange County, Texas at the office of the Orange County Clerk in Orange, Texas on July 8, 2021.

**BRANDY ROBERTSON,**  
County Clerk, Orange County, Texas

By: Samantha McInnis, Deputy  
Samantha McInnis

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### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of **JOHN DIORES GALLET**, Deceased, were issued on **July 22, 2021**, in Cause No. **P19109**, pending in the County Court at Law of Orange County, Texas, to: **Emmit Valentine Strain, Jr.**

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

**Emmit Valentine Strain, Jr.**  
c/o: **Stephen C. Howard**  
Attorney at Law  
903 W. Green Avenue  
Orange, Texas 77630

DATED the 21st day of July, 2021.

Stephen Howard  
Stephen Howard  
Attorney for:  
**Emmit Valentine Strain, Jr.**  
State Bar No.:10079400  
903 W. Green Avenue  
Orange, TX 77630  
Phone: (409)883-0202  
Fax: (409)883-0209  
Email: steve@stevhoward.lawyer

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of **WILLIAM E. DENMAN, JR.**, Deceased, were issued on the **July 21, 2021**, in Cause No. **P19122**, pending in the County Court at Law of Orange County, Texas, to: **Paje M. Denman.**

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

c/o: **Tommy Gunn**  
Attorney at Law  
202 S. Border Street  
Orange, TX 77630

Dated the 26th day of July, 2021.

Tommy Gunn  
Tommy Gunn  
Attorney for:  
**Paje M. Denman**  
State Bar No.:  
08623700 202  
S. Border Street  
Orange, TX 77630  
Phone: (409)882-9990  
Fax: (409)882-0613  
Email:tommy@gunnlaw.org

### HAPPY HOUR

ACROSS

- Sail support
- \*Percentage of alcohol, acr.
- Cheesy sandwich
- Oil, in Italy
- What refugees do
- Noble one
- \*Moscow
- Wrinkly fruit
- Cereal killer
- \*Non-alcoholic cocktail
- Elementary particle
- Old and feeble
- American cuckoo
- \_\_\_\_\_ tunnel
- Create a misnomer
- \*Tap choice
- Tooth cover
- A wedge in golf, e.g.
- Wesley Snipes' 1998 movie
- Notable time
- Fancy neckwear
- \*It's Always \_\_\_\_\_ in Philadelphia"
- Wooden pegs
- \*Margarita garnish
- Lend a hand
- \*Not sweet

### NOTICE OF EXPIRATION FOR MARKS AND BRANDS

In accordance with Article 144.044 of the Agriculture Code, the marks and brands that have been previously recorded will expire on August 30, 2021. The owners of the marks and brands will have from August 31, 2021 until February 28, 2022 to renew them. On March 1, 2022, all marks and brands that have not been renewed will have no force or effect and will be available for use on a "first-come" basis.

Renewals can be filed with the Orange County Clerk, Monday - Tuesday and Thursday - Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and Wednesday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Our physical address is 801 W. Division, Orange, Texas 77630. The recording fee for a mark or brand is \$26.00 each.

Please call the County Clerk's Office at 409-882-7055 if you have any questions.

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43. Particular marking on a butterfly

44. Sun rising direction

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- Homecoming guest
- Farmer's storage type
- Steel on a work boot
- Relating to aquarium scum
- Misrepresent
- Bride screen
- \*Often served dirty, pl.
- Cogito \_\_\_\_\_ sum
- Rumpelstiltskin's weaver
- \*Half whiskey, half absinthe cocktail
- Pointless
- Chili con

41. Knights' breastplates

42. Dorothy's sleeping aid

43. Conifer attribute

44. Deep sleep

45. Lament for the dead

46. \_\_\_\_\_ hub food takeout service

47. Solitary

48. Hawk or peddle

49. Toreador Song from "Carmen," e.g.

50. River obstructions

51. Geological Society of America

52. Thus far

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