

County Record

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National company building \$6 million in new houses



Acreage has been cleared and concrete streets installed for a large new subdivision area of the Mallard Lake development along Allie Payne Road in Orange and in the Little Cypress-Mauriceville school district. The city of Orange in December issued construction permits for 25 new houses there valued at about \$6 million.

MARGARET TOAL For The Record

More than \$6 million in new houses in Orange's Reserve at Mallard Lake subdivision are in the construction phase, according to city building permits.

In December, the city issued 25 permits to D.R. Horton, a national homebuilding and developing corporation based in Arlington, Texas. The new houses are being built in a newly-developed area off Allie Payne Road in the Little Cypress-Mauriceville school district.

The permits show the houses will be 1,400 to 1,800 square feet and will sell for prices in the "mid \$200,000," calculating to about a total of \$6 million.

Also, Barchett Investments based in Beaumont received four permits for new houses on Old Timers Road in Orange.

Mallard Lakes was first developed by the late Tony Houseman of Orange in the early 1990s with several brick houses built along Allie Payne Road with a lake in back.

A big reason for the latest development in housing is the city of Orange extending water and sewer services to the area using Economic Development Corporation grants from a special city sales tax approved by voters in 1992.

D.R. Horton began building houses in the subdivision in 2021, constructing

NEW HOMES Page 3A



The Stark Foundation announces the culmination of a phenomenal holiday season at the Stark Cultural Venues in Orange. The Lutchter Theater led the initiative to spread warmth to those in need with a pajama and blanket drive. With the help of Shangri La Botanical Gardens, a total of 60 new pajamas and 178 blankets were collected that benefitted Salvation Army of Orange.

PHOTO: Stark Foundation employees donate pajamas and blankets to the Salvation Army of Orange.

SEE ARTICLE PAGE 5A

Former OC football star named to hall of fame

MARGARET TOAL For The Record

Former West Orange-Stark Mustang Kevin Smith, who went on to star for Texas A&M and the Dallas Cowboys was named Monday to the 2024 College Football Hall of Fame.

The College Football Hall of Fame has a museum in Atlanta, Georgia. The inductees announced Monday include 19 players who earned first team All-American honors, along with three college coaches. They will be honored at an awards banquet set for Las Vegas in December this year.

He is also in the Texas A&M 12th Man Hall of Fame and the Museum of the Gulf Coast Hall of Fame.

Smith, who is now 53, played under Mustang coaches Dan Hooks and



Former West Orange-Stark Mustang Kevin Smith, who went on to star for Texas A&M and the Dallas Cowboys was named Monday to the 2024 College Football Hall of Fame.

Cornell Thompson on the 1986 and 1987 teams that won back-to-back state championships. He played

offense and defense in high school and his senior year, made the All-State team on both.

While at WOS, he also lettered in baseball, basketball, plus track and field.

He was a top college recruit and chose to become an Aggie under Coach R.C. Slocum, who is also from Orange and was a graduate of the old Lutchter Stark High. Slocum was named to the College Football Hall of Fame in 2012.

Smith's years at A&M were when the university was still part of the Southwest Conference and as a defensive back, he helped the Aggies win conference titles in 1991-92. He was named to the All-Southwest Conference team for three years and was a first team All-American his senior year.

KEVIN SMITH Page 3A

New BC city manager is Gulf Coast native

MARGARET TOAL For The Record

Bridge City has a new city manager and he's guaranteed to stay at least two years.

Last week, the Bridge City City Council voted unanimously to hire Christopher Baker, who grew up in the Mobile Bay, Alabama, area as the city manager. He has a master's de-



Baker

grees in business administration along with another master's in city and regional planning. "We're very pleased with our selection. We think he's a great fit for us," Mayor David Rutledge said.

The city went nearly a

year without a city manager after the previous one, Brent Walker, resigned after a working a year and six days in the position. "We kind of got left out to dry," Mayor Rutledge said.

The council wanted a two-year contract this time to guarantee the manager would stay and not use the position as a quick career stepping stone.

Previous city managers

had year-to-year contracts, as did Baker. The city manager before Baker was Jerry Jones, who was in the position for 15 years and was the city's public works director for the 11 years before that.

Baker most recently served as developmental services director in Good-year, Arizona, which has a population of 112,000 and is in the Phoenix metropol-

itan area. He is a member of the American Institute of Public Planners and holds a master's degree in city and regional planning from the University of Texas at Arlington.

He also holds a master's of business administration from Auburn University in Alabama. His bachelor's of science degree is from Spring Hill College, which is a Jesuit Catholic College

in Mobile, Alabama.

His resume includes working as city planner for North Richland Hills in North Texas, director of planning with Thompson Engineering of Mobile, Alabama, and director of planning with Hutchison, Moore & Rauch, an engineering firm serving the

BRIDGE CITY Page 3A

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TEXAS STATE NEWS

Texas ballots set for March 5 primary elections

CARLA ASTUDILLO
The Texas Tribune

Texas will hold its 2024 primary elections on March 5. Here are all of the candidates who have filed for the Democratic and Republican primary elections, according to the Secretary of State. Voters in each primary will choose their candidates for U.S. president, U.S. Senate, congressional and legislative offices, the State Board of Education, the Railroad Commission and judicial seats.

Early voting begins Feb. 20. If no candidate receives a majority of the vote in the primary, the top two vote-getters will compete in a runoff on May 28. Texas is an open-primary state, meaning voters can decide every two years whether to pick Republican or Democratic nominees (or hold out and go to third-party conventions).

Of note: whichever primary you decide to vote in, you can vote only in that same party's runoff. You can, however, vote for either party's candidates in the general election.

Elections in Texas are run by 254 different counties, and each county determines the order of candidate names on the ballots printed there. To see each county's ballot order for the primary, visit the Texas Secretary of State's site.

President

Texas will hold its primary on Super Tuesday and will be an important state for both Republican and Democratic presidential candidates in 2024. There are 161 Republican and 244 Democratic delegates up for grabs which can be awarded proportionally, meaning more than one candidate can secure some of them. President Joe Biden is seeking reelection and has no serious competition in the Democratic primary. Meanwhile, former President Donald Trump has a commanding lead among Republican candidates.

At least some of the candidates on the ballot will



Dade Phelan

likely drop out by primary election day, however. Texas follows Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada and South Carolina on the primary calendar.

U.S. Senate

U.S. Senator Ted Cruz is seeking a third term and faces two other candidates in the Republican primary. Meanwhile, the Democratic primary has nine candidates including U.S. Rep. Colin Allred, who is leading in fundraising. Other Democrats in the race include state Sen. Roland Gutierrez and state Rep. Carl Sherman.

U.S. House

Texas has 38 congressional seats, and all up for election this year, with most incumbents running again. There are three open seats. Republicans are vying to replace U.S. Rep. Kay Granger in District 12 and U.S. Rep. Michael Burgess in District 26, both of whom are not seeking reelection. Meanwhile, Democrats are competing to succeed U.S. Rep. Colin Allred, who is running for U.S. Senate, in District 32.

Railroad Commissioner

In Texas, the Railroad Commission regulates the oil and gas industry. Members of the three-person board are elected statewide. One seat is up for election in 2024.

Texas Supreme Court

The Texas Supreme Court, the state's highest civil court, has nine justices. Three of the nine



David Covey

seats on the Supreme Court are up for election in 2024. Justices are elected statewide, and Republicans currently hold all the seats.

Texas Court Of Criminal Appeals

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals is the state's highest criminal



Alicia Davis

court. The nine members are elected statewide and are currently all Republicans. Attorney General Ken Paxton is working to unseat the three Republican judges up for reelection this year. This is in response to a 2021 ruling by the court that struck down Paxton's

ability to unilaterally prosecute voter fraud.

State Board Of Education

There are 15 districts within the State Board of Education, which sets curriculum and chooses textbooks for Texas public schools. Only 7 are up for election this year. Only one incumbent, Melissa Ortega in District 1, decided not to seek reelection.

Texas Senate

In the 31-member Texas Senate, only 15 seats are up for election in 2024.

Texas House

There are 150 members of the Texas House. Each state representative serves a two-year term.

This election year, Attorney General Ken Paxton is seeking revenge against Republicans who voted to impeach him by endorsing their primary challengers. Meanwhile, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott is also working to unseat the House Republicans who voted against school vouchers, one of Abbott's top legislative priorities in 2023.

In Texas House District 21, of importance to Orange County voters, candidates include incumbent Dade Phelan, former Orange County GOP chairman, David Covey, and Alicia Davis of Jasper.

For a detailed list of candidates for each position visit The Texas Tribune website.

Pickleball Tournament Sat. at Orange Rec Center

Put your pickleball skills to the test. On Saturday, January 20th the Orange Recreation Center is hosting a Pickleball Tournament. Registration is free, and individuals can sign up for Beginner, Intermediate, or Advanced levels of competition.

Call the Rec at 409-883-1072 or send an email to rec-center@orangetexas.gov to sign up today and reserve your spot. *Register by Friday, January 12, 2024

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of Orange County, Texas

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Flu and COVID on the rise, less severe cases

Pien Huang
NPR News

In most U.S. states, respiratory illness levels are currently “high” or “very high,” according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released Friday.

“After the holidays, after we’ve traveled and gathered, we are seeing what is pretty typical of this time of year, which is a lot of respiratory viruses,” says Dr. Mandi Cohen, director of the CDC.

A few viruses have been driving the upward trend, including flu which is very high and respiratory syncytial virus or RSV which appears to have peaked around Thanksgiving.

COVID-19 levels have climbed higher than last season’s peak. Still, they remain far below where they were at the height of the pandemic — as do levels of severe disease.

“We are still very far below the levels that we were seeing with the omicron peak [in the 2021-2022 virus season],” says Amy Kirby, who leads the CDC’s National Wastewater Surveillance System. “We’re not looking at that really massive wave of infections. This is much more on par with what we saw [in the 2022-2023 season].”

And while COVID levels are still higher than they were last season, other COVID metrics including emergency room visits, hospitalization rates and deaths are lower now than previous seasons, indicating that “COVID-19 infections are causing severe disease less frequently than earlier in the pandemic,” according to the CDC.

Staggered start for viruses this season
Respiratory viruses are hitting the southeast especially hard, said the CDC’s Cohen, “but no part of the country is spared.”

Flu levels are especially concerning. “The influenza virus is the thing that’s really skyrocketing right now,” says Dr. Steven Stack, public health commissioner for the state of Kentucky and president of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials. “Influenza is sharply escalating and driving more hospitalizations.”

The flu is coming in later this season, compared with the 2022-2023 season, when “RSV and flu really took off right at the same time along with COVID,” says Marlene Wolfe, assistant professor of environmental health at Emory Uni-



versity and a program director at WastewaterScan. “All three of those together were pretty nasty. This year, there’s more of an offset.”

That has been good news so far for hospital capacity, which has remained stable this season, meaning that people who are quite ill and need medical care are generally able to get it.

Some hospitals in different parts of the country — from Massachusetts to Illinois to California — are starting to require masks for staff again and in some cases for patients and visitors.

Vaccines can still help
Health officials say that getting the latest flu and COVID-19 vaccines now can still protect people this season. While Stack, with Kentucky’s Department for Public Health, encourages seasonal preventive shots for everyone 6 months and older, he says it’s particularly important for “everybody who is elderly — and not even old elderly — like young elderly, 60 and older,” since they are more likely to get very sick from these viruses.

CDC data shows that fewer than half of U.S. adults have gotten a flu shot this fall and winter. That’s still better than the vaccination rate for this season’s COVID-19 booster, which fewer than 20% of U.S. adults have gotten, even though COVID-19 remains the bigger danger.

“The thing that is putting folks into the hospital and unfortunately taking their lives — the virus that is still the most severe [at the moment] — is the COVID virus,” says the CDC’s Cohen.

Beyond vaccines, health officials say there’s still a place for masking as a preventive measure.

Early testing can aid treatment
Those who are sick should stay home and watch their symptoms. If they progress beyond a runny nose and a light cough “to body aches, fevers, difficulty

moving through your day, a heavier runny nose, a worsening cough ... [those more severe symptoms] should trigger you to go get tested,” says Cohen.

Getting tested and diagnosed early, with COVID-19 or the flu, can help those at risk of serious illness get access to prescription pills that can reduce their chances of ending up in the hospital.

Flu and COVID-19 vaccines, tests and treatments should be covered by health insurance.

For those who are uninsured, the government is also offering a program called Test to Treat that offers free tests, free telehealth appointments and free treatments at home.

Cohen says people can protect them-

selves over the next few weeks by staying aware of what’s happening in the community and their individual circumstances.

“You want to know what’s happening in your community,” she says. “Is there a lot of virus circulating? And then, what are the tools that I could layer on to protect myself, depending on who I am, my age, my risk, as well as who I’m around?”

The CDC has maps of COVID-19 hospitalizations down to the county level on its website, and it provides weekly updates on respiratory viruses nationwide. Cohen says there are many tools — including vaccines, masks, rapid tests and treatments — available to help people reduce their risks this season.

Bridge City band members earn All-State honors



Three Bridge City Cardinal Band members have earned 5A All-State Band honors, putting them in the top 1 percent of UIL band members in the state. They are Tyler Anderson on trombone, Ian Roberts on trumpet, and Mikail Molley on bass trombone. They will perform with the All-State Band in February in San Antonio during the annual concert.

Bridge City From Page 1

Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida Gulf Coasts.

Mayor Rutledge said Baker told the council Bridge City was closer to his home and family on the Alabama coast. The new city manager described his hometown of Fairhope, Alabama, on Mobile Bay as similar to Bridge City being on Sabine Lake, which is also a bay off the Gulf of Mexico.

“He has a significant understanding of the issues facing coastal communities and we look forward to forward to working with him and getting to work on ad-

ressing the problems and getting to work on addressing the priorities of the community,” the mayor said.

The city advertised for the position through the Texas Municipal League and hired Slavin Management Consultants of Norcross, Georgia, to help with the search. After reviewing 24 applicants, four finalists were chosen with Baker getting selected.

The council will hold a reception on Tuesday, January 16, in the council chambers at 6 p.m. for the public to meet the new city manager.

Kevin Smith From Page 1

He set a Southwest Conference record with 20 interceptions and still holds the Texas A&M record for those interceptions.

During the 1992 NFL draft, he was chosen in the first round by the Dallas Cowboys, going as the 17th that year in the total draft.

While playing for the Cowboys, the team won three Super Bowl championships in 1992, 1993, and 1995. His first years as a Cowboy were played under

Coach Jimmy Johnson, a Port Arthur native.

He earned a position on the Cowboys starting roster after 10 games into the 1992 season and was the team’s youngest starter that year at the age of 21.

He earned All-Pro honors with the Cowboys, where he played for nine years, suffering several injuries beginning in the 1995 season. His last season was in 2000.

New Homes From Page 1

several “spec” houses in the modern farmhouse style along Allie Payne.

The new development goes into acreage off Allie Payne with new concrete streets built by the company. A few of the home sites will be along the side of the lake.

They aren’t the only new houses going up in new developments. The Little Cypress Grove subdivision, also in the Orange city limits, has three new houses under construction with a couple completed. The subdivision is off Martin Luther King Jr. Drive west of Little Cypress Junior High. The subdivision is on 28 acres and is planned to eventually have 187 single-family homes.

In addition, DSLD Homes has begun building streets and houses in Orange Gardens, a 14.5 acre development off FM 105 east of the intersection with Highway 62. The subdivision will be in the Bridge City school district and outside of city limits.


Orange Gardens is planned to have 150 home sites with 75 in the first phase.


The Barchett Investment houses are at 310, 312, 318, and 320 Old Timers Road off Tulane Road. The company’s website says the two and three bedroom houses will be rented.

DSLD, with sites also in Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi, also developed Marsh Estates in Bridge City and Cypresswood Village off Highway 87 in Orange, across from the new Chevron Phillips chemical plant. Both those developments are in the Bridge City school district.

The days of local builders and developers like Houseman, Dal Sasso, Zeto-Lakin, and Sid Johnson have passed in Orange County. D.R. Horton is a national corporation with shares traded on the New York Stock Exchange. It is listed as No. 194 of the Fortune 500 largest U.S. corporations based on revenue.

Local homebuilder David Huerta, who was a graduate of LC-M High School, passed away in December. Huerta Homes, based in Pinehurst, had constructed a number of new houses in the county.





REPUBLICAN
TEXAS RANGER MAJOR (RET.)
BOBBY SMITH
FOR ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF

Bobby Smith, a seasoned law enforcement veteran with an impressive 29-year track record in criminal and traffic law, proudly presents himself as the Republican candidate for Orange County Sheriff. Bobby firmly believes that there is no greater responsibility than safeguarding the cherished citizens of Orange County. In an ever-evolving landscape of threats, both traditional and new, he is unwavering in his commitment to protect Orange County with the highest levels of competence and integrity.

Make no mistake, Bobby retired from the Texas Rangers to be your next Sheriff in Orange County. His loyalty is to the Constitution and the citizens of Orange County. He understands what that means and will protect and defend your rights. Bobby and his wife, Brandy Musgrove Smith, have four children and four grandchildren who all reside in Orange County. He wants to make Orange County a better place not only for them, but for all of you. Thank you for your overwhelming support and we humbly ask you for your vote to elect Bobby Smith as the next Sheriff of Orange County.

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From the Creaux's Nest

DEMOCRACY ON NOVEMBER 2024 BALLOT

The nation faces an unprecedented threat to our democracy that thousands of young men and women gave their lives to protect. Former president **Donald J. Trump**, a pathological liar is actively plotting to overthrow American democracy. He makes no secret of it and his desire to be a dictator. He calls the free press the **“enemy of the people.”** He advocates discarding lawful ballots. Remember **Hitler** did not come to power in a coup. Remember **Trump** will do any thing to win in 2024. We learned just last week foreign countries had been filling **Trump’s** pockets with rubles and that’s just two of the four years investigated. The charlatan is not subtle about his plans. The only question is whether enough people will ignore the lies, insults, conspiracy theories and the disgusting snarly sneers and leering innuendoes spewed 24-7 on **Fox News** and all the other alt-right broadcast and social media sites and seek out the truth and the facts. **Trump** constantly threatens his enemies and inspires his supporters to harass his foes. We must be as **aggressive in defending free and fair elections** as he is in undermining them. We need to think imaginatively and creatively to combat misinformation, voter suppression, and election subversion. No gesture is too large. We must all pitch in. What we must do is guard our democracy from this serious threat to the foundation of our freedoms that so many have died to protect. We need rational, moderate conservative **Republicans** to grow a spine and stand up to the bully and his goons. **Please come along, I promise it won’t do you no harm.**

TURNING BACK THE HANDS OF TIME

10 Years Ago-2014

Orange County is where the **‘Sun Rises on Texas and the Stars Shine First.’** One of our early stars once carried a shoeshine box, where he shined shoes in Orange and Bridge City. He still has that box on display in his office. Former Stark High star, **R.C. Slocum**, went on to be the winnest football coach in **Texas A&M** history. Next week, Jan. 14, **Slocum** will be honored with the **Alonzo Stagg award**, presented by the coaches association.****On Jan. 1, 1948, **Ronnie Shugart** was the first born baby of the year. That was **66 years ago**. Not only did his family get a fine baby boy, they received other prizes from merchants.****Justice of the Peace **Judge David Peck** held 1455 arraignments, set bonds, signed felony warrants and held 36 inquest and dozens of trials.******LBJ’s** war on poverty speech was 50 years ago, Jan. 8, 1964. From it came **Medicare** and **Medicaid**. Some folks have been trying to do away with it ever since.******Judge Buddie Hahn’s** hometown of Sanderson is a fading West Texas town. The Ford dealership shut down, the football team went to six-men and Kerr Mercantile called it quits. The landmark 19th century Southern Pacific train depot **Hahn** remembers as a boy is no more. The **Terrell County News Leader** shut down in July, leaving only a public bulletin board for local news. It was more than some people could tolerate. A group of citizens rolled up their sleeves and created a newspaper with feel good stories. The **Terrell County Sun** hit the streets in December with a four page paper. **County Commissioner Kenn Norris** said, “You don’t miss it until you don’t have it, it created some buzz in town.” Today, the paper is up to six pages and printing 500 copies. The town, founded in 1882 as a switching station, before **Hahn** was born, was once an important center for wool and mohair production. I bet **Buddie** knows a little about sheep and goats. All but a few sheep remain and **Buddie** is long gone, off to make his mark in the world a long way from the West Texas town, 67 miles north of Fort Stockton. **Buddie** looks the part of a tall West Texan. He has those cool, handsome West Texas look, however, as long as I’ve known him he has never acted the part. I think he would look great, with his silver hair, in a white **Stetson**. He has never dressed western, boots, ect. He must have left Stockton before he got to be a horse-riding cowboy. I’d like to hear the rest of the story. I have wanted to visit with **Buddie** but can’t get **Bearden** to set it up.

20 Years Ago-2004

Orange County didn’t get snow for Christmas but **Albino squirrels** are adding a white attraction to various areas. Several residents report seeing entire families of the unique white squirrels. **John Wayne** and **Janette Clark**, of Pinehurst, report having several in their neighborhood. **Jeannette** says the fluffy, snow white squirrel, with pink eyes, showed up after the big ice storm a few years ago. **Eunice Blankenstein**, director of the **Nelda C. and H.J. Lutchter Stark Foundation**, said that **Lutchter** bought the original albino squirrels and some black squirrels from a dealer in Central Texas and set them loose in **Shangri La**. He started with a pair of each and they have since multiplied and spread throughout the

area.****On Sunday, Jan. 4, **Renis Trahan**, 81, formerly of Bridge City, died. A native of Maurice, LA., he lived in Mauriceville. He was the father of **Shirley Walker, Tony Houseman’s “Girl Friday.”********Willie Nelson** to release anti-war ballad, **“Whatever Happened to Peace on Earth.”** One line in the song asked “How much oil is a human life worth.”******GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN: Seth Allan Boullion**, 22, of Bridge City, died Dec. 30.*****Walter E. Snelgrade, Jr.**, 45, of Orange, died Dec. 31.*****Charles “Jiggy” Adams**, 63, of Orange, died Jan. 1.*****Harry Elmo Davis**, 82, died Jan. 3.*****Betty June Landry**, 57, died Jan. 3.*****Linda Bailey**, 37, of Orange, died Jan. 3.*****Bob F. Crow**, 83, died Jan. 4.****The first baby born in Orange for the New Year is **Dwight James Davis**. (Editor’s note: For sometimes now babies are no longer born in Orange County. Native children, but not native born.******George Navarro**, Bridge City councilman, challenges **John Ford**, 33-year constable of Pct. 3. He is the first opponent **Ford** has had in 12 years. **Johnny Welch** and **Larry Granger** ran against him in 1988. **Ford** got 2,888 votes, **Welch** 1,198, and **Granger** 1,089. **Ford** won two races in 1984. He had three opponents, **Bobby Lawrence, John Tarver** and **Leon Leonard**. **Tarver** made the runoff with 1,866 votes to **Ford’s** 2,317. In the runoff **Ford** won a tight race with 2,332 votes to **Tarver’s** 2,092. (Editor’s note: **Ford** was re-elected in the race against **Navarro**. When **Ford** retired, **Mark Philpott** was elected to replace him and is the present constable in Pct. 3.

45 Years Ago-1979

Bill, Bill and Bill are the leaders of our state. **Clements, Governor, Hobby, Lt. Governor, Clayton, Speaker of the House.****** Former judge **Grover Halliburton** receives invitation to **Gov. Bill Clements** inauguration. That had a bunch of **Democrats** wondering.******Bill Townes** named general manager of **Howard Morse’s** operations consisting of several convenience stores, **Howard’s Superettes** and **Howard’s Big Red Pantry** in Bridge City.******Bum Phillips**, coach of the Houston Oilers, subscribes to the **Dunn** family owned **Opportunity Valley Newspaper**. **Dunn** said in his note that **Bum** said he wanted to keep up with what is going on in Orange County. (Editor’s note: **The OVN** was a very popular weekly paper that the **Dunns** sold to **Cox Enterprise** in 1979).**** Bridge City boxers win in Lake Charles. **Jamie, Jimmy** and **Johnny Brooks** were all winners. Also winners were **Bubba Thurman, Shawn O’Dell** and **Bubba Ritter**.

A FEW HAPPENINGS

Twelfth Night has passed and **Mardi Gras season**, along with king cake has arrived. The gold, purple, and green colors are already out decorating houses and businesses as Orange gets ready for its **20th Mardi Gras parade** and celebration. Hard to believe that much time has passed since **Melvin Hogan** and his late wife, **Carolyn**, organized the first local parade with local krewes. Who could have guessed the event, now sponsored by the **Greater Orange Area Chamber of Commerce** and the **City of Orange Convention and Visitors Bureau** would have grown so much. The **Orange Mardi Gras parade** this year will be on Saturday, February 3, because Easter is early this year. **Mardi Gras** literal translation is **‘Fat Tuesday’** for the feasting day before the Lenten season. Orange scheduled its parade 10 days earlier so it would not interfere with the weekend festivities of an established parade in Port Arthur the weekend before **Fat Tuesday**. **Betty Harmon**, who was director of the Orange chamber 20 years ago, helped establish the local parade. **Melvin** and **Carolyn Hogan** served as king and queen of the ball and parade the first year, and **Betty**, along with her late husband, **Corky**, were queen and king the next year. The ball this year will be on January 20. The **United Way** and **Dow Chemical** will have another free **Together Thursday** at 6:30 p.m. February 1, bringing back the popular New Orleans rock group **Bag of Donuts** to the **Riverfront Pavilion** in Orange. Bring your lawn chairs to enjoy the music. On Friday, February 2, the gates at the **Orange Boat Ramp** and the **Riverside Pavilion** will open at 5 p.m. with the chamber and city sponsoring a free concert by singer **Chris Ardoin** from 7 to 9 p.m. On Saturday, February 3, a kids zone play area will be open at the **Boat Ramp** with a **Munchkin Parade** for kids decorated bikes, trikes, and wagons at 1 p.m. Vendors and food trucks will be set up. The main **Mardi Gras parade** will start at 6 p.m. on Front Street at First, and then head through downtown to Fifth, then Division, then Tenth, and finally Green Avenue, where it will end on Simmons Drive at the **Boat Ramp** area. The **Orange parade**, with elaborate locally-made floats with costumed krewes has gained a reputation for tossing tons of colorful beads for the crowds to catch. As a celebration of the 20th anniversary, **Heritage House Museum** is having a special display of local costumes from past **Mardi Gras** royalty and memorabilia from parades.****Partying and traveling seems to have taken a break this past week as people are recovering from the holidays. However, you know **Jack Ishmael** had to go to Houston to cheer on his **Texans**. The break won’t last long. The **MLK Gala** will be this Saturday at the **Expo Center** with the **Mardi Gras ball** the next Saturday. Soon, there will be a cascade of events.

BREAUX BIRTHDAYS

A few folks we know having birthdays in the next few days. **Jan. 10: Collin Gros, Sandy Uzzle, Brittaney Ramos, Scott Gerrald, Emily Breaux.****** **Jan. 11:** Today is **Harry and Margie Stephens 37th wedding anniversary**. Congrats to two swell folks. Happy Birthday to **Olivia Trahan, Ashley Rion, Fermin Brown, Grant Gilson, John Kraus, Madeline Dawn Evan, Teresa Franklin.********Jan. 12:** **Jill Sherrod, Beth Linder, Donald Edgerton, Bill Braus, Dana Sandlin, David Pendergast, Lynnette Lothman, Susan LeBlanc.********Jan. 13:** **Commissioner Robert Viator, Lyndia Permenter, Rodney Townsend, Kent Hannegan, Ashton Simmons, JoLynn Sholmire,**

Mandy Jaarah, Patricia Coppage.******Jan. 14:** **Stephanie Hurst, Chris Williams, Robert Simon-ton, Brittany Trantham, Mel Campbell, Rob Fisher, Tommy Thompson.********Jan. 15:** **Martin Luther King day** is celebrated the third week in January. This year the celebration falls of **MLK’s** birthday. He was one of the most prominent leaders in the **Civil Rights** movement. Celebrating birthdays are **Paige Prejean, Bill Pryor, Don Thompson, LaDonna Bell, Brennan Broussard, Carson Peet, Joy Hughes, Margaret Cavanaugh, Tyler Reves, Dee Culpepper.********Jan. 16:** **Kaitlyn Potter, Jon Mott, Gary Dearing, Clayton Gearhart, Joel Meyers, Jerry Ashby, John Green III, Matthew Lee.****** Birthdays this past week included **Bobby Bernard** turning 90. Others celebrating included **Barbara Dardeau, Mindy Currie, Bonnie Backer, Melissa Hattman, Jason Laughlin, Dustin DuCharme, Clint Reeves, Jeff Looper, Chari Clifton, Pat Butler Dyson, Joy Reeves, Erin Beard, Isaac Brown, Wendy Durham, Blinn College freshman softball player T’Era Garrett, Carolyn Martin, and Stephanie Blanda.********Mike and Kitty Mazzola** marked their 52nd wedding anniversary this week. Other anniversaries included **Rodney and Dr. Amy Townsend, Marty and Charlie Wade**, plus **Elvis and Melissa Anne Rushing**, who also have a new grandbaby.

CAJUN STORY OF THE WEEK

Brother Gaspard, Sugar Bea’s cousin, is da preacher where she attends church, her. The **Rev. Gaspard** him, told his wife **Agnes** dat he was frustrated, dat he was failing to reach da young people and had decided with spring coming soon dat he would give a sermon on water skiing first ting Sunday morning.

Agnes agreed and said, “Honey, dat a great idea, da teenagers dem would relate to da sports reference.”

Wen Sunday morning came, **Preacher Gaspard** looked around da church. Since dere wasn’t enough youngsters in attendance, he changed his mind and decided to change da topic to sex, a sermon he had previously prepared.

He gave a brilliant sermon at the 8 a.m. service. **Agnes** didn’t attend da early service. Wen she arrived for da 11 a.m. service, members stopped her to compliment her husband on da best sermon since dey arrived at da church.

Agnes said, “Why tank you so much, I can’t believe he sounded like such an expert, him. He only tried it twice and he fell off once, lost his breath wen he was short-stroking and it made him sick both times.”

ROY HOME FROM HOSPITAL AGAIN

Roy came out of the hospital for the second time over the weekend and had lost track of happenings so we will bring him up to date. His communication skills are not good yet. He says **Rodney**, running for judge, did it the right way. He came out with two guns blazing, invited all comers to be sure to bring their purses. They would be playing catch up. Thanks, but no thanks. **Townsend** will be a good judge. He’s from good people. **Troy Johnson** is a excellent judge that **Rodney** will replace. We are fortunate to have good judges, **Courtney, Steve, Rex** and **Mary White-Rodgers**. Over the years, we have always had great judges.****The race is on for sheriff, and also constable in precinct 2 and 4. Usually pistol races bring out the voters.******Mark** and **Ethel** came down for his parents 69th anniversary but stayed an extra week to help care for his dad. They returned to **Amber’s** in Vero Beach, Florida, where they watch over the three boys ages 7, 5 and 3. They take them to school etc. **Mark**, since age 14, has been working for the paper, laying it out plus making ads. He does good work. Thanks to the internet he is able to work from Florida and still be a good granddad.****January 10 is a special day for **Roy**. His grandson **Collin “Billy Jack” Gros** will celebrate his 29th birthday. It seems like yesterday **Roy** took him to **Sam Moore’s** for baseball lessons. That’s been 12 years ago.******Janelle** has kept a list of those who have called inquiring about **Roy’s** health. She informs **Phyl** and she passes the names on. **Janelle** says **Judge Gothia** has called often, as well as **Judge Pat.******Happy Birthday to a special friend on January 17th. **Attorney John Cash Smith** or **“Jack”** turns 85. **Roy** says, **“Jack** and I have gone to court several times, mostly over hurricane issues. We won every time.” **Jack** is smart, also a good actor. He acts like he’s so damn mad that he will blow up. It works.****We need a few more local advertisers. Citizens are demanding more papers. We run out at all locations so we are hoping to increase circulation by 1000. No other publication reaches as many Orange County voters. Read the candidates statements and messages in this paper.******Roy** got to watch some football and a little CNN etc. He says he heard **Trump** say something amazing, “Mexicans are rapist.” Well, I know a gringo who is also.****When candidates run for office they promise to work on both sides of the isle to get things accomplished. Now some hard-line **Republicans**, called **“Trumpers”** I guess, want to blame **Speaker Phalan** for working with **Democrats**. Go figure. The **Speaker** is good for our little part of Texas.******Roy** says as soon as he can he would like to speak with his friends **Kenny Pigg, Mayor David Rutledge** and **Bear**, and know about **Quincy Procell** and **Sharon Bearden’s** health. He also wants a good, deep talk with **Judge Buddie Hahn** that has been put off too long.****I must shut it down for now. Thanks again for your time and loyalty. **Take care and God bless.**



Stark Cultural Venues makes holiday impact

Staff Report - -For The Record

ORANGE, TX) – The Stark Foundation announces the culmination of a phenomenal holiday season at the Stark Cultural Venues in Orange.

As part of their commitment to spread the joy of the season to the community, the Lutch Theater, Shangri La Botanical Gardens & Nature Center and The W.H. Stark House hosted food drives and pajama collections during their holiday events. The Stark Museum of Art also provided merriment to budding artists in the community through their distribution of various art projects.

The Lutch Theater initiative to spread warmth to those in need with a pajama and blanket drive. With the help of Shangri La Botanical Gardens, a total of 60 new pajamas and 178 blankets were collected that benefitted Salvation Army of Orange. In conjunction with performances of STOMP, the Lutch also initiated a STOMP Out

Hunger campaign, involving Free State Cellars, First Financial Bank and Dow as community partners. More than 550 pounds of non-perishable food items were collected to benefit Orange Christian Services. From the Lutch Incredible Kids Events to their Christmas a cappella performance, the Lutch welcomed 7,333 patrons during the holiday season. During this time, a total of 952 volunteer hours were served by the Lutch Theater Service Guild members.

In all, 543 hours of service were committed by Shangri La volunteers and other corporate partners to facilitate a successful, record-breaking season of Christmas Strolls. Shangri La Botanical Gardens brought joy to 51,850 visitors during their annual Strolls in December. Thanks to the altruism of these visitors, 10,404 pounds of non-perishable food items and a generous amount of monetary donations were collected to benefit Orange Christian Services. Further community impact from

Strolls includes the efforts of Orange Lions Club. The organization sold more than 6,000 cups of hot cocoa and 3,000 cookies throughout Strolls. The funds generated by Orange Lions Club will be used to support community projects.

The W.H. Stark House hosted 830 visitors throughout December. The home served as a focal point of holiday festivities during the community-centered Christmas Downtown event. This Christmas Open House event experienced record-breaking visitation, with 629 visitors to the home. Additionally, 202 individuals enjoyed guided tours of The W.H. Stark House throughout December. During the Stark Family Christmas events, more than 100 non-perishable food items were collected to support the Salvation Army of Orange.

The Stark Museum of Art joined The

W.H. Stark House in the Christmas Downtown festivities by distributing 178 kits that provided holiday art-making opportunities for area youth. The museum staff lent their efforts throughout the holiday tours and programming offered at The W.H. Stark House. In November, the Stark Museum of Art team was especially busy distributing 3,910 art kits to Orange County schools for their virtual field trip offerings.

“The Stark Foundation would like to express our deepest gratitude to the community for such a remarkable response to our holiday programming and charitable initiatives. We are incredibly thankful for our wonderful community that lends its tremendous support to continuously go above and beyond to exceed our expectations. We appreciate the efforts of all who have helped us make a meaningful impact this holiday season,” said Clyde “Tad” McKee, president and chief executive officer of the Stark Foundation.

Deaths & Memorials

Alexine Adams, 97, Orange

A life-long resident of Orange, Alexine B. Adams passed away on Sunday, January 7, 2024.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11:00 a.m., Saturday, January 13, 2024, at St. Mary Catholic Church in Orange. Officiating will be Reverend Antony Paulose. Burial will follow at St. Mary Catholic Cemetery.

Visitation will be from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with a Rosary to follow at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, January 11, 2024, at Claybar Funeral Home in Orange.

Alexine Adams truly lived. Her approval is a reward you can keep. Her friendship was a treasure that lifted your spirit.

Her community of former students spans four decades and often includes multiple generations within families. Her early students, their children, and grandchildren share in her memory and continue her commitment to encouragement, respect, good will, and high expectations.

To the St. Mary’s Catholic Church Parish family that she loved her whole life, take strength through her faith in you. She knew you to be good, compassionate, generous, and wanting to do right.

To the Shangri La Botanical Gardens volunteers, staff, and visitors she enjoyed, thank you for sharing in her retirement. You made her happy.

Her home was a safe haven. We know of many that she quietly assisted along their path and suspect that there are others of which we are not aware. We encourage you to share your stories.

In the early 1940s, she was a proud member of the Stark High Bengal Guards. Years later she was coordinator of the Bengal Guard memorial on West Orange Stark campus and curator of Bengal Guard memorabilia collection donated to the Heritage House.

Her list of accomplishments is longer than your attention span. She never sought the spotlight, but it seemed to chase her. Alexine Adams’ accomplishments include:

High school and college transcripts of all A’s, along with one B, finishing just short of a PhD,

Taught at Galveston Elementary, Curtis School, Carr Jr. High, and then North Jr. High at beginning of integration in Orange, then at Little Cypress-Mauriceville High School as an English teacher



Alexine Adams

then guidance counselor, Inspired by the Bengal Guards, she founded St. Mary’s Belles and the Little Cypress-Mauriceville Honey Bears, Recipient of Athena Leadership Award, Recognized leadership and talent in other women and nominated multiple candidates for Athena Leadership Award who became recipients,

At St. Mary Catholic Church, she served on the Parish Council, Finance Committee, as a lector, and eucharistic minister, a member of the Catholic Daughters, and on St. Mary’s School Board. In 1980, she was a member of the group that wrote the 100-year history of St. Mary’s Church.

She played a significant role in establishing the St Mary School Foundation,

Served as Principal at St. Mary Catholic School,

Served as President of for Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department Accreditation Committee,

Served on The Malloy Foundation,

She was a beneficiary of Mr. Starks generosity and as a volunteer docent at Shangri-La she loved sharing her personal knowledge of Mr. Stark’s legacy as Orange’s patron, and

On top of that, she raised three daughters that still love her back. Her three sons love her, too.

Alexine was the daughter of Arthur and Mathilde Boudreaux, born on February 18, 1926. She was the last surviving sibling of five. She was preceded in death by her first husband, Bowman Hughes, her husband of 54 years Richard (Dick) Adams, and her son Quincy Adams. She is survived by her children William (Bill) Adams and wife Gail, Joan Smith and Don Ballinger, Richard Adams Jr, and fiancé Rhonda Fontenot Hohmann, Ann Moon and husband Larry, Amy Simmons and husband Art, and special daughter Kathy Valka. She was blessed by 11 grandchildren, 5 great grandchildren, and 1 great great grandchild.

We encourage you to share your memories of her with each other. It will make our hometown a better place.

Rather than flowers, the family suggest supporting one of Adams’ favorite local charities, such as St. Mary School Foundation or the Southeast Texas Food Bank.

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Patricia Ann Hudson, 87, Orange

Patricia Ann Hudson passed away peacefully at her home in Orange on December 23, 2023. She was born on December 30, 1935, to parents Leander Chauffepied and Grace Miller Linder. Patricia led a fulfilling life dedicated to her family and community. In addition to being a devoted mother and homemaker, she also ran a daycare and worked for her church for many years. She was a very charitable person who donated to several charities.

Patricia is preceded in death by her parents, Leander Chauffepied and Grace Linder, her son, Kenneth Ray Britnell, her daughters, Dena Kay and Sherry Lynn, her brother, Louis Linder, and her husband, Claude Dean Britnell.

Patricia is survived by her children: Ricky Dean Britnell and his wife Sherry, Randy Glenn Britnell and his wife Linda Gail, Barry Nolan Britnell, and Rocky Dean Hudson and his wife Brena. She



Patricia Ann Hudson

also leaves behind her adoring grandchildren: Autumn Hudson, Kennedy, Clarissa Isaacs, and Seth Slawson; great grandchildren: Talon, Traxton, Acen, and Crew. Patricia’s sister Cheryl Johnson, former husband Dean Hudson – who remained a dear friend – along with numerous other loving family members and friends who mourn the loss of this remarkable woman.

To honor Patricia’s life, visitation services will be held at Claybar Funeral Home in Bridge City on January 6th, 2024, from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM. A memorial service will follow at Claybar Funeral Home in Bridge City at 2:00 PM.

Patricia Ann Hudson will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved her.

The family would like to extend a special thank you to Sherry Britnell for her dedicated care for Patsy in her last days on earth.

THE RECORD

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BURIAL PLOT

Cemetery Plots for Sale, Hillcrest Memorial Gardens Bridge City Tx. Lot 200, Blk B, Space 3-4, Last Supper Garden, 2-spaces \$5,500.00. Please call 281-806-1832

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The two properties, the first commonly known as 5615 Tyler St., Vidor, TX 77662 and the second commonly known as 1520 Buckhorn St., Vidor, TX 77662 are scheduled to be sold at public foreclosure auction on 02/06/2024 at 01:00 PM or no later than 3 hours thereafter at the back door of the Courthouse in Orange County, Texas. If the preceding area is no longer the designated area, the sale will be held at the area most recently designated by the Orange County commissioner's court. The Substitute Trustee will be Margie Allen, Angie Brooks, Kyle Barclay, Tommy Jackson, Keata Smith, Stephanie Hernandez, Selim Taherzadeh, or Michael Linke, any to act. The winning bidder buys "as is" and must pay at the auction with certified funds.

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- Face shape
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- "At ____ soldier"
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DOWN

- *Atlas page
- Speedy steed

GRANT SERVICES PUBLIC NOTICE RFP-2024-01-TWDB-FIF

The Orange County Drainage District intends to participate in the Flood Infrastructure Fund grant program with funding from the Texas Water Development Board. We are soliciting proposals to provide grant application and administrative/project delivery services related to this program. Accordingly, the Orange County Drainage District seeks to contract with a qualified service provider for pre-award and post-award management of FIF project(s). Interested Respondents may find copies of RFP-2024-01-TWDB-FIF ("RFP") on the District's website at: <https://www.ocddtx.com/purchasing/> (search under "Current Procurement Opportunities") and at <https://www.civcastusa.com> (search for "Orange County Drainage District"). Please submit (5) physical copies of your proposal of services to Mr. Joe Escobedo, District Purchaser, at the Orange County Drainage District located at 8081 Old Highway 90, Orange, TX 77630 ("District Office"). To be eligible for consideration, the District must receive the proposals no later than 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 25, 2024, at the District Office. The District will publicly open the timely submitted proposals at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 25, 2024, at the District Office. The District reserves the right to negotiate with all Respondents submitting eligible proposals. Minority Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises, Women Business Enterprises, and labor surplus firms are encouraged to submit proposals. The Orange County Drainage District is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Servicios de traducción están disponibles por petición.

REQUEST FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES PUBLIC NOTICE RFQ-2024-02-TWDB-FIF

The Orange County Drainage District intends to participate in the Texas Flood Infrastructure Fund ("FIF") program with funding from the Texas Water Development Board. We are soliciting statements of qualifications from Texas-registered engineers to provide engineering services related to this program. Accordingly, the Orange County Drainage District seeks to contract with a qualified service provider(s) for pre-award and post-award engineering services for "FIF" project(s). Interested Respondents may find copies of RFQ-2024-02-TWDB-FIF ("RFQ") on the District's website at: <https://www.ocddtx.com/purchasing/> (search under "Current Procurement Opportunities") and at <https://www.civcastusa.com> (search for "Orange County Drainage District"). Please submit (5) physical copies of your proposal of services and statement of qualifications ("SOQs") to Mr. Joe Escobedo, District Purchaser, at the Orange County Drainage District located at 8081 Old Highway 90, Orange, TX 77630 ("District Office"). To be eligible for consideration, the District must receive SOQs no later than 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 25, 2024, at the District Office. The District will publicly open the timely submitted SOQs at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 25, 2024, at the District Office. The District reserves the right to negotiate with all Respondents submitting eligible SOQs. Minority Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises, Women Business Enterprises, and labor surplus firms are encouraged to submit proposals. The Orange County Drainage District is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Servicios de traducción están disponibles por petición.

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Mustangs, Bobcats undefeated in district

DAN PERRINE
Orange County Sports
For The Record

District basketball is underway for the local teams in Orange County. Three teams Bridge City, Little Cypress Mauriceville, and West Orange-Stark compete in Class 4A while Orangefield plays in the regional Class 3A district.

The Bridge City Cardinals won big in their only district game during the first week of the New Year. The Cardinals beat their rival the Little Cypress Mauriceville Bears 69-49 at Bridge City on January 2.

The game did not start like it was going to be a good night for Bridge City. The Bears actually led 10-9 after the first quarter. The momentum changed in favor of the Cardinals in the next eight minutes as they outscored LCM 25-9 to open a fifteen point advantage 34-19 at the half.

The ball continued to roll with the Cardinals in the third quarter. Bridge City took a 56-35 lead into the final period. The difference reached as much as 28 points before the Bears were able to trim it back to twenty points at the final buzzer.

Senior guard Aiden Gutierrez had a wonderful



Aiden Gutierrez led Bridge City with 26 points in the Cardinals' district win over LCM the first Tuesday of the New Year.

RECORD PHOTO

game with 26 points while making multiple defensive steals for the Cardinals. Gutierrez was followed by Aaden Bush who scored 18 points including a pair of three pointers in the second half. Lincoln Breaux and Stephen Stone both contributed 9 points for Bridge City.

The win improved the Cardinals' District 19-4A record to 1-1 with the earlier loss coming at the hands of state ranked Silsbee. Little Cypress Mauriceville was 0-1 in district after the loss to Bridge City.

Cardinal Coach Randall Robertson was excited about the win for Bridge City. "That's a big one. Every single one for us is huge, but we circle LCM at home because it is a rival-



Braylen Solomon was the highest scoring Mustang in their 100 point game against Jasper last week.

RECORD PHOTO

ry game. Our kids wanted that one. We had to start off on the right foot and they got it done tonight," Robertson exclaimed.

The Bears rebounded from their loss to Bridge



Jaden Scales scored 26 points against Hardin and Kane Smith tossed in 21 points versus Warren as Orangefield moved to 3-0 in district with the two victories.

RECORD PHOTO: Dan Perrine

DISTRICT Page 3B

OC's girls basketball start 2024 with wins



Kennedy Campbell sank two clutch free throws late in the game to give the Lady Cardinals a one point win over LCM.

RECORD PHOTOS



Keylie Washburn performed a double double with 15 points and 14 rebounds in the Lady Bears win over Vidor.

DAN PERRINE
Orange County Sports
For The Record

The second Friday of January marks the halfway point of the district games for all four local girls basketball teams in Bridge City, Little Cypress Mauriceville, West Orange-Stark and Orangefield. Several key contests were played the first week of the New Year.

The Bridge City Lady Cardinals only played one ball game that week but they won it over arguably their biggest rivals. On Tuesday, January 2, Bridge City defeated Little Cypress Mauriceville 30-29 on the Lady Bears' home court.

LCM actually led after the first quarter 9-5 before the Lady Cardinals turned the momentum in their favor winning the second period 10-3 to grab a three point lead 15-12 at half time. Missed free throws by Bridge City prevented a wider margin as the Lady Cardinals only made 2 of 10 shots from the free throw line in the first two quarters.

The game got closer in

the third despite two three pointers from Kennedy Campbell of the Lady Cardinals. The Lady Bears pulled to within a point 24-23 with a quarter to play.


The eventual outcome was decided in the final seconds as Little Cypress Mauriceville had retaken the lead by one point. A foul by the Lady Bears sent Campbell to the free throw line where she sank both shots to give Bridge City the victory by one point despite a vocal partisan LCM crowd trying to mess with her concentration.

Campbell was the high scorer for the Lady Cardinals with 14 points. Kennedy also led Bridge City with 5 rebounds. Whitney Cunningham contributed 7 points to the win. Nicole Sasser was a defensive standout for the Lady Cardinals with 6 steals and was second to Campbell with 4 rebounds while also scoring 4 points.

The win puts Bridge City at 3-1 in District 19-4A trailing only Silsbee which handed the Lady

GIRLS Page 4B

Lets Keep Orange County
Moving Forward



RE-ELECT
JIMMY LANE
MOONEY
FOR SHERIFF
#4 ON THE BALLOT

ELECTION DATES
FEBRUARY 5: LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE
FEBRUARY 24: FIRST DAY OF EARLY VOTING
MARCH 1: LAST DAY OF EARLY VOTING
MARCH 5: PRIMARY ELECTION DAY

Political Adv. Paid for by Restoring American Values

OUTDOORS

Waterfowl hunters head for home stretch



Being mobile and willing to scout has been the key for late season successs for most local waterfowl anglers.
Record Photo: Capt. Chuck Uzzle

OUTDOORS
Capt. Chuck Uzzle
For The Record



Chuck Uzzle

Just like the old saying “all good things must come to an end” the 2023-2024 waterfowl season is almost over. Texas hunters will have until January 28th to get it done while the folks across the river in Louisiana will finish up on January 21st.

For plenty of local hunters it feels like the season already ended as this crazy weather pattern has made staying on the birds a challenge. Hunters who have been willing to put in the scouting time and be flexible are still shooting their birds but they are certainly working for them.

Without a doubt the hunters who are locked in on a freshwater pattern are having the most success. After the last round of thunderstorms and rain the saltwater marshes seemed to just empty out as the birds headed for the prairies and other areas that were holding fresh water.

One of the best bets has been along river bottoms where water levels took a much needed jump after the rains. The freshly flooded areas have been magnets for good concentrations of mallards, gadwall and of course wood ducks. Finding an area that’s holding these concentrations is like finding a gold mine and it certainly takes some effort so don’t think it will be easy. Use all the resources available like satellite photos, other maps, and good old fashioned burning gas and covering ground.

Closer to home it almost seems like September as the numbers of teal in the area have helped fill straps for many hunters. Throughout the season there have been waves of teal come into the area for a few days and then seemingly over night vanish. This last big influx of green winged teal that showed up has almost taken up residence they’ve been here so long. With the major cold conditions in the immediate forecast the teal may not hang around for much longer but hopefully they stay until the season ends.

With the final few days staring hunters squarely in the eye now may be the time to make that hunt or try something different you have been putting off all season. Put standard decoy spreads and techniques aside and try something new like using fewer decoys. A simple spread of just a few decoys often will produce some amazing results, especially during the last weeks of the season when the birds get extremely skittish. Going easy on the calling also helps out as well.

Limit yourself to soft calls or whistles and leave the aggressive hail calls alone. Also think about not even calling at all when birds are headed towards your decoy spread, if they want in there leave them alone, no extra calling necessary. If the ducks pass you by then give them a call, that’s a much more natural presentation.

As we count down the days until the season officially ends it’s hard to believe how fast it’s gone by. Every year is remembered for something and this one will certainly be no different. Hopefully the final days of the regular season will help us to remember that this season was a good one. Take advantage of the final week because it will seem like a lifetime until teal season rolls back around.

Gulf Coast Fishing Reports

This week’s Texas Gulf Coast Fishing Reports was compiled by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

• Sabine Lake

GOOD. 58 degrees. Sabine Lake is good for redfish drifting tight along the bank keying on mullet in 2-4 feet of water on points, drops and bayous with 3.5 inch soft plastics with a 1/4 ounce jig heads. Trout are in the winter pattern and can be caught drifting with submerged baits in 2-6 feet of water off the bottom with 1/8 or 1/4 ounce jigs on 3.5 or 5.5 inch plastics.

Big bull redfish continue to school under the birds. Trout and redfish are biting near Coffee Ground Cove in 2-4 feet of water drifting over shells with live shrimp under a popping cork or plastics. Bessie Heights Marsh produces limits of sheephead and drum, a few flounder and slot redfish with Carolina rigs with live shrimp in 6-8 feet of water in the cuts. Sheephead drum and redfish are good in the Neches River rock piles, points and buoys with Carolina rig or popping cork with live shrimp.

Report by Captain Randy Foreman, Captain Randy’s Guide Service Sabine Lake.

• Bolivar

GOOD. 60-65 degrees. Goat Island drains water runoff into the open water, holding redfish and trout on topwaters early and late, soft plastics later. Fish cuts through the inter-coastal waterway from goat Island to rollover. Ytes Bayou drains holding redfish on soft plastics and live shrimp under popping cork. Report by Captain Raymond Wheatley, Tail Spotter Guide Service.

• Trinity Bay

GOOD. 57 degrees. HL&P Spillway producing scattered catches of speckled trout and the occasional redfish. Exxon F-Lease gas wells producing fair numbers of speckled trout for those drifting with soft plastics or live shrimp under corks. Waders are still catching some decent trout from Double Bayou, north towards the Anahuac Pocket. Report by Captain David Dillman, Galveston Bay Charter Fishing. The fish group up



Trout and redfish are biting near Coffee Ground Cove in 2-4 feet of water drifting over shells with live shrimp under a popping cork or plastics.

off main channels when the tides are low and can be caught on swimbaits. The bite seems to slow after water returns when the wind shifts. Redfish will follow a similar pattern but being more durable, bounce back quickly being caught on curly tail gulp and swimbaits. Sheephead are holding tight to structure eating barnacles being caught on live shrimp and gulp baits with drum mixed in. Watch for birds, bait and blow ups. Once you see 2-3 of these you know you are in the right spot. Happy new year! Report by Captain Zackary Scott, Zack Attack Fishing.

• East Galveston Bay

FAIR. 56-60 degrees. Best bite has been in the back of east Galveston bay for speckled trout and redfish. Anglers wading near bayous are doing well on soft plastics and those fishing deeper bayous from the boat are having the same results. Report by Captain David Dillman, Galveston Bay Charter. Surface water temperature is back up to 60 degrees and the overall water clarity is good. North winds and low outgoing tides have forced us to adjust our tactics, so we have concentrated back in the

marsh and bayou areas where we can get some protection from the wind and wave action, as well as find enough water to fish effectively. The redfish bite has been good around areas where good current flow has bait up against the shorelines and grass lines in 1-2 feet of water on shrimp imitation lures under Fish Smack popping corks with an 18 inch leader, as well as 1/2 ounce jig heads with Glow or Chartrouse Deadly Dudley Rat Tails. Our best solid trout bite this week has been fishing deeper pockets with shell, close to mud flats, triggering the most strikes. Report by Captain Jeff Brandon, Get the Net Guide Services, LLC. Smith Point shoreline still holding redfish and trout on artificial twitch baits and soft plastic or shrimp under a popping cork. Sea-Wolf Park holding bull redfish and black drum on the pier. Trout on shrimp under popping cork at the concrete wall. Report by Captain Raymond Wheatley, Tail Spotter Guide Service.

• Galveston Bay

FAIR. 56 degrees. Shorelines around Eagle Point are beginning to see better numbers of sheephead on live shrimp. A few black drum and redfish from the

same area. Clear Lake has been good at times for speckled trout on soft plastic lures and live shrimp. Bull redfish continue to roam the open bay, off the west shoreline of Eagle Point to the Clear Lake Bridge. A few black drums and sheephead being caught in the gas wells when winds are light. Best on live shrimp. Report by Captain David Dillman, Galveston Bay Charter Fishing. The jetties holding sheephead and speckled trout with shrimp under a popping cork or free line shrimp near the rocks. Trout fishing near drop off or deeper water. Swan Lake rock shoals holding sheephead on popping cork with shrimp, trout with live shrimp or paddle tails. Report by Captain Raymond Wheatley, Tail Spotter Guide Service.

• West Galveston Bay

FAIR. 58 degrees. Drift fishing the dirty streaks around Greens and North Deer Island has produced scattered catches of speckled trout using live shrimp under popping corks and soft plastics. Still some nice fish coming out of Chocolate Bayou and Bay. Report by Captain David Dillman, Galveston Bay Charter Fishing. Carancahua Lake and Green’s Lake are holding redfish and black drum on shrimp at the grass lines. And some redfish and trout inside on soft plastic. Watch the tides. South of cold pass waders still getting trout and redfish in deeper waters. Jones bay holding a few fish early on soft plastic. Report by Captain Raymond Wheatley, Tail Spotter Guide Service.

• Texas City

FAIR. 58 degrees. A few oversized black drums are showing up, along with the occasional bull redfish for those fishing off the end of the dike. Best bait has been cut mullet or halved crab. Same results off the Galveston jetties. Better numbers of sheephead are being caught on live shrimp fished tight to the rocks. Report by Captain David Dillman, Galveston Bay Charter Fishing. The rock shoals near Dollar Reef are holding trout and redfish on soft plastics and shrimp. The rocks just across Texas city channel are holding nice trout on split tail soft plastic.



I humbly solicit your support and vote March 5

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Today, I humbly solicit your support and vote for Constable Precinct 2.

I am a lifelong resident of Orange County. My wife and I have five grandchildren. I am also a proud Little Cypress-Mauriceville graduate.

Currently I serve as District 1 Orange City Councilman. While I have very much enjoyed serving the citizens of Orange, Law Enforcement is where my heart has always been. Serving as a public official is a calling not a job. You have to have the passion and desire to serve because with all the good you get there are also things that are not. I have served in every position in law enforcement; from a corrections officer to a patrol deputy to a criminal investigator. I have held positions of supervision from sergeant to chief deputy. I hold a current peace officers license, an advanced peace officer license and an advanced corrections officer license.

When elected I intend to be very involved in the Mauriceville schools at every level. I will immediately open and utilize the office in Mauriceville and be actively involved in all aspects of the community.

VOTE

DAVID BAILEY

FOR CONSTABLE PCT. 2

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REPUBLICAN

Political advertisement paid for by Campaign to Elect David Bailey, Constable Precinct 2

Judge issues arrest warrant for man accused of killing thousands of bald eagles

Natalie Neysa Alund
USA TODAY

A federal judge issued a arrest warrant this week for a man who court records show failed to appear for a court appearance on charges he and a co-defendant slaughtered more than 3,600 protected birds, including bald eagles, and sold them on the black market.

Simon Paul, 42, and Travis John Branson, 48, are accused of killing the birds on the Flathead Indian Reservation in western Montana and elsewhere, court documents filed last month in U.S. District Court in Missoula show. Killing the protected wildlife is a violation of the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

Magistrate Judge Kathleen L. DeSoto issued a warrant for Paul, of St. Ignatius, Montana, after he failed to appear for arraignment on Monday, court records obtained by USA TODAY show.

Online records also show Branson, of Cusick, Washington, pleaded not guilty to his respective charges in connection to the case.

Branson was released by the judge, online records show, on conditions including he reappear for his next court hearing and not commit any further crimes.

A six-year killing period

According to an indictment filed on Dec. 7, the hunters illegally shot the

birds and sold parts or all of the eagles between January 2015 and March 2021.

Paul and Branson are charged with violating the Lacey Act, a law that bans trafficking of illegally taken wildlife, fish or plants. The men also face more than a dozen counts of trafficking bald and golden eagles, and one count of conspiracy, court records show.

A Golden Eagle tail, a PayPal purchase and a shipment

According to court papers, in December 2020, Branson sent a text with a picture of a golden eagle tail set to a purchaser and got a PayPal purchase that same day. Two days later, he shipped the set to Tex-



The national emblem of the United States since 1782, the bald eagle was an endangered species until 2007 after the bird's population began to recover.

as, and a couple of days later, he received a PayPal payment for it.

Prosecutors said Branson and Paul also allegedly used a dead deer to bait eagles so they could shoot them.

Court papers say Branson also reportedly bragged about going “on a killing spree” and about the “significant sums of cash” the pair made from the sale of the slaughtered birds.

America's national emblem

The national emblem of the United States since 1782, the bald eagle was an endangered species until 2007 after the bird's population began to recover.

Under the Bald Eagle Protection Act, killing the iconic bird is prohibited. The law enacted in 1940 makes it a criminal offense to “take” any part of a bald eagle, which includes killing one.

District basketball

City with a win over another county rival the Vidor Pirates. Little Cypress Mauriceville survived a furious Vidor comeback bid late in the game to secure its first district victory 48-45 at home on Friday, January 5 to even its district record at 1-1.

Alantheon Winn was the leading scorer for the Bears with 23 points. Coach Brad Jeffcoat praised Jonah Fuller for his fantastic defensive play all night and for scoring 9 points for LCM.

The West Orange-Stark Mustangs are undefeated through their first three district games. Two wins last week has the Mustangs tied for first place with the Silsbee Tigers both with perfect 3-0 records.

An important road victory was achieved by the Mustangs on Tuesday, January 2, at Lumberton. West Orange-Stark prevailed 57-52 over the Raiders.



Jonah Fuller was recognized for his defense and the 9 points he scored in the LCM victory over Vidor.

had six different players nail an incredible total of fifteen shots from beyond the arc. Ten of the twelve Mustangs scored points in the blowout.

Leading the scoring parade was Braylen Solomon with 20 points all coming in the first three quarters. Andrew Cooper was right behind Solomon with 18 points. Also scoring in double figures were Geramichah Davis with 14

From Page 1B

and Ja'Vaughnte Richard who tallied 11 points.

Coach Chris Castille is excited about how the Mustangs are playing as a team. “We're focused and we're sticking to the game plan and it's turning out that the proof is in the pudding. We've been working on our shooting, we've worked on passing to hit the open man, and it's paying off. Defense is our bread and butter plus our identity is to play defense,” Castille confirmed.

Bridge City played at Vidor on Tuesday, January 9, before returning home this Friday against Lumberton. Little Cypress Mauriceville played at Lumberton on Tuesday and are at home versus Jasper on Friday of this week. West Orange-Stark had its bye on Tuesday and will travel to Silsbee on Friday with first place on the line between the top two teams in District 19-4A.

The Orangefield Bobcats play in District 22-3A and started district action with three wins. The Bobcats won their second district victory in a 79-28 blowout at home against the Hardin Hornets on January 2.

The rout got started early with Orangefield scoring the first nine points of the game. Jaden Scales of the Bobcats hit a trio of threes and had eleven points in the first quarter helping Orangefield to a 24-10 lead after one period.

The game was pretty much over by the half with the Bobcats leading 49-18. Kane Smith played the whole game despite coming off a groin injury from the previous week and made numerous steals while scoring seven first half points.

The Bobcat bench got to see more time on the court in the final sixteen minutes. Garrett Rawls came in to make several rebounds and nailed a three pointer in the final minute

of the game. Starting post Kadyn Rucker had a special moment in the final quarter with a beautiful dunk.

Scales almost single

handily matched the total from Hardin with his 26 points. Smith and Rawls both finished with 13

BOYS Page 5B



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Long range shooting by the Mustangs was outstanding all night as they

Astros to host Winter Invitational at Minute Maid

Staff Report For The Record

HOUSTON, TX - The Houston Astros will host the 12th annual Houston Winter Invitational at Minute Maid Park next month, from Feb. 2-4. The tournament will feature six NCAA Division II universities, squaring off in nine games across the three days. Tickets for the tournament are now available for purchase at Astros.com/Winter-Invitational.

The tournament field features the University of Central Missouri, which co-hosts the event each year with the Astros, Arkansas Tech, Millersville (PA), Southern New Hampshire, St. Cloud State (MN) and the University of Tampa. Four of the participating teams finished within the top 15 teams in the 2023 Collegiate Baseball Magazine final rankings, with South-

ern New Hampshire (#4) leading Millersville (#6), Tampa (#9) and Central Missouri (#14).

Central Missouri is the alma-mater of Astros Owner and Chairman Jim Crane, who was a standout right-handed pitcher in his college career. He pitched for the Mules from 1973-76, posting a 21-8 record with a career 2.42 ERA. Crane still ranks atop the Central Missouri career leaderboards in complete games (23) and shutouts (7) and ranks fifth in strikeouts (215). He still holds the Mules single-game strikeout record of 18, which at the time, set a DII College World Series record. Crane was inducted into the University of Central Missouri Athletic Hall of Fame in 1997, and earned an induction into the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame in 2020.

Crane contributes to Central Missouri annually to provide athletic scholarships for Mules



The Houston Astros will host the 12th annual Houston Winter Invitational at Minute Maid Park next month, from Feb. 2-4.

baseball. Additionally, Crane was the primary underwriter of a \$1.2 million renovation in 1998 of the old Mules Field on the University of Central Missouri campus, which has since been renamed the James R. Crane Stadium. In 2016, Crane and the UCM Foundation upgraded the

university's baseball facility with a new synthetic turf playing surface. In 2021, a lead gift from Crane paved the way for the new Mules Baseball Clubhouse which features an MLB-style layout for the baseball program.

2024 Houston Winter Invitational Schedule (times subject to

change) (home teams listed second)

Friday, Feb. 2

10 a.m. St. Cloud State vs. Southern New Hampshire
1:30 p.m. Tampa vs. Arkansas Tech
5 p.m. Millersville vs. Central Missouri

Saturday, Feb. 3

10 a.m. Millersville vs. Tampa
1:30 p.m. Central Missouri vs. Southern New Hampshire
5 p.m. Arkansas Tech vs. St. Cloud State

Sunday, Feb. 4

10 a.m. St. Cloud State vs. Millersville
1:30 p.m. Tampa vs. Central Missouri
5 p.m. Arkansas Tech vs. Southern New Hampshire

Girls basketball From Page 3B

Cardinals their only district loss the week before the Christmas break. Little Cypress Mauriceville dropped to 1-2 in district after Tuesday's loss.

The Lady Bears bounced back three days later on Friday. LCM went to Vidor and beat the Lady Pirates 55-52 to even its district record.

Junior Keylie Washburn pulled off a double double scoring 15 points and grabbing 14 rebounds. Coach Eddie Michalko was also proud of freshman Kendall Jones the high scorer for the Lady Bears with 16 points, and sophomore Eden Frenzel who totaled 13 points during the important victory.

The West Orange-Stark Lady Mustangs gained their first district win of the season on Friday, January 5. The Lady Mustangs won at Jasper 68-15 to improve to 1-4 in district action. They lost earlier in the week on Tuesday at home 54-45 to the Lumberton Lady Raiders.

West Orange-Stark had its first half bye on Tuesday of this week and returns to the court on Friday at home against the first place and undefeated in district Silsbee Lady Tigers. Bridge City had its bye last week on Friday before playing Tuesday of this week at home versus



Mikayla Locke of Orangefield was the leading scorer for the Lady Bobcats in both their wins the first week of the New Year

Vidor and goes to Lumberton this Friday. Little Cypress Mauriceville played at home with Lumberton on Tuesday, and its next game is Friday at Jasper.

The Orangefield Lady Bobcats won a district game at home on January 2 against the Hardin Lady Hornets. Orangefield played a solid second half to win 60-52 after trailing at halftime.

The Lady Bobcats enjoyed a slim 8-7 advantage in the first quarter after scoring the first eight points of the game. Two three point baskets from Mikayla Locke and a field goal from Olivia Smith who was called up from the junior varsity which did not play that day gave Orangefield the initial momentum.



Angel Cooper of the Lady Mustangs had a big hand in their first district win of the season at Jasper last week.

Hardin rallied scoring 26 of the next forty points to go ahead 26-22 at the end of the second quarter. The Lady Bobcats started the third quarter with a basket from Greenlea Oldham followed by the fifth three of the game from Locke to regain the lead 27-26 for the Lady Bobcats. Mikayla had a huge third period scoring 13 points that helped Orangefield build a 44-39 lead with eight minutes to play in the game.

The fourth quarter saw the Lady Bobcats secure the victory thanks to Steeley Franklin who came off the bench with seven points in the final eight minutes. Oldham added six more points as well.

Locke finished the night with 28 points that includ-

ed six buckets from beyond the three point arc. She made 6 rebounds and 3 steals as well.

Oldham pulled off a double double with 13 points, 10 rebounds, and had a team high 5 steals for the Lady Bobcats. Franklin scored 10 points, made 2 steals, and had 2 assists. Smith grabbed 8 rebounds to go with her early bucket, and Rebecca Durbin pulled down 5 rebounds plus scored 2 points. Kaylea Gravett hit a three pointer in the third quarter while assisting on three baskets by her teammates.

Coach Eric Girola of Or-

angefield said the Lady Bobcats played a good game to make the comeback and get the win. "The second half when we were down four we came out, and I looked up a short time later to see us leading 35 to 28 as we really jumped out in the second half. That was huge because I think after that we never trailed again," Girola recalled.

The Lady Bobcats then battled Warren on Friday night. Orangefield won 40-26 over the Lady Warriors.

Freshman Mikayla Locke had another big game for the Lady Bobcats scoring 18 points, hauling in 5 re-

bounds, and making 4 steals. Steeley Franklin contributed 6 points, 3 steals, and 2 rebounds. Greenlea Oldham tallied 4 points, grabbed 4 rebounds, and had 3 steals. Kaylea Gravett made 3 points, 3 rebounds, and 2 assists. Other contributors to the Orangefield victory were Olivia Smith with 5 rebounds and 4 steals while Paisley Reeves had 5 rebounds.

Orangefield was 4-1 in district before playing at home on Tuesday, January 9, against East Chambers. The Lady Bobcats next game is Friday at Anahuac.

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Do Well Be Well with Diabetes classes

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension of Orange County will hold free Do Well Be Well with Diabetes classes. Join them in learning how to prevent and control your type 2 diabetes, eat healthily, and much more to control your diabetes.

The series will last for 5 classes on January 11, 18, 25, and February 1 and 8, 2024, and will be from 2-4 PM. They will be held at the Neighborhood Facility Building at 303 N. 8th St. in Orange.

To get the full educational benefit, you must attend all 5 classes if possible. Call the Extension Office at 409-882-7010 to sign up for this series.

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Rock'n in the New Year

TOMMY MANN JR.
ENTERTAINMENT COLUMNIST
For The Record

The final week of 2023 has arrived and what a year it has been, but there have been several announcements already for summer of 2024 and it is shaping up to be a big year featuring numerous headlining artists around the region. Recently announced events include Def Leppard and Journey, Styx and Foreigner, Creed and 3 Doors Down, Limp Bizkit and so many others. Check out the listings here and visit www.therecordlive.com for the full schedule that is currently available for the New Year.

- **Dec. 28**
Mannheim Steamroller, Smart Financial Center, Sugar Land
- **Dec. 29**
Toadies, House of Blues, Houston
- **Dec. 30**
Monica, NRG Arena, Houston
- **Jan. 12**
Mr. Big, Warehouse Live Midtown, Houston
- **Jan. 12**
Little River Band, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La.
- **Jan. 13**
Keith Sweat, Dru Hill, Johnny Gill, Levelle, Smart Financial Centre, Sugar Land
- **Jan. 17**
Elvis Costello and the Imposters, House of Blues, Houston
- **Jan. 20**
The Oak Ridge Boys, Grand Opera House, Galveston
- **Jan. 21**
The Oak Ridge Boys, Grand Opera House, Galveston
- **Jan. 24**
Peezy, The Bronze Peacock Room, House of Blues, Houston
- **Jan. 26**
Bret Michaels, Jefferson Starship, Frank Ray, Ford Park Arena, Beaumont
Ludacris, Smart Financial Center, Sugar Land, Dale Watson, Scout Bar, Houston
- **Jan. 27**
TobyMac, Cory Asbury, Mac Powell, Tasha Layton, Jon Reddick, Terrian, Ford Park Arena, Beaumont
- **Jan. 27**
Frank Foster, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La.
- **Feb. 2**
Aaron Lewis, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La.
- **Feb. 9**
Randy Rogers Band, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La.
- **Feb. 16**
Eagles, Steely Dan, Toyota Center, Houston
- **Feb. 16**
Gladys Knight, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La.
- **Feb. 16**
Cold War Kids, House of Blues, Houston
- **Feb. 17**
Collective Soul, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La.
- **Feb. 19**
Machine Head, Fear Factory, Orbit Culture, House of Blues, Houston
- **Feb. 20**
Extreme, Living Colour, House of Blues, Houston
- **Feb. 23**
Los Lonely Boys, House of Blues, Houston
- **Feb. 24**



Rock group Mr. Big will perform at the Warehouse Live Midtown location in Houston on Friday, Jan. 12, 2024. The band will perform its sophomore album, "Lean Into It," in its entirety as well.
RECORD PHOTO: Tommy Mann Jr.

- Shane Smith and the Saints, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La.
- **Feb. 2**
Godsmack, L'Auberge Casino Resort, Lake Charles, La.
- **Feb. 25**
Govt. Mule, Bayou Music Center, Houston
- **Feb. 27**
Crosses, House of Blues, Houston
- **Feb. 27**
Olivia Rodrigo, Toyota Center, Houston
- **Feb. 28**
Alkaline Trio, Drug Church, House of Blues, Houston
- **Feb. 29**
Blake Shelton, Dustin Lynch, Emily Ann Roberts, Cajundome, Lafayette, La.
- **March 2**
Los Lonely Boys, L'Auberge Casino Resort, Lake Charles, La.
- **March 2**
The Union Underground, Soil, Ra, Flaw, Scout Bar, Houston
- **March 2**
Blue October, 713 Music Hall, Houston
- **March 7**
Early Eyes, Trash Panda, White Oak Music Hall, Houston
- **March 7**
The Kills, House of Blues, Houston
- **March 14**
Sasha Colby, House of Blues, Houston
- **March 15**
Geoff Tate, Vandenberg, House of Blues, Houston
- **March 16**
Brian Stokes Mitchell, Grand Opera House, Galveston
- **March 19**
Circle Jerks, Descendents, House of Blues, Houston
- **March 23**
Los Lobos, L'Auberge Casino Resort, Lake Charles, La.
- **March 28**
Madonna, Toyota Center, Houston
- **March 28**
Busta Rhymes, Spliff Star, DJ Scratchator, 713 Music Hall, Houston
- **March 29**
Madonna, Toyota Center, Houston
- **March 29**
Ministry, House of Blues, Houston
- **March 30**
Waterparks, Loveless, House of Blues, Houston
- **April 5**
Home Free, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La.
- **April 6**
Eric Johnson, House of Blues, Houston
- **April 9**
Starset, House of Blues, Houston
- **April 12**
Parker McCollum, Corey Kent, Lake Charles Civic Center, Lake Charles, La.
- **April 13**
Primus, A Perfect Circle, Puscifer, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, The Woodlands
- **April 19**
Melissa Etheridge, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La.
- **April 20**
Adam Ant, The English Beat, Bayou Music Center, Houston
- **April 26**
Great White, Slaughter, Quiet Riot, Liliac, Rise Rooftop, Houston
- **April 27**
Set It Off, Crown the Empire, Caskets, House of Blues, Houston
- **April 27**

- Kane Brown, Toyota Center, Houston
- **April 30**
Bad Bunny, Toyota Center, Houston
- **May 1**
Bad Bunny, Toyota Center, Houston
- **May 2**
Ashley McBryde, Bella White, House of Blues, Houston
- **May 4**
Flatland Cavalry, White Oak Music Hall, Houston
- **May 5**
Motionless in White, White Oak Music Hall, Houston
- **May 5**
Joe Satriani, Steve Vai, 713 Music Hall, Houston
- **May 6**
The Teskey Brothers, Bayou Music Center, Houston
- **May 7**
Canaan Cox, White Oak Music Hall, Houston
- **May 9**
Blackberry Smoke, 713 Music Hall, Houston
- **May 15**
Armored Saint, Scout Bar, Houston
- **June 13**
Noah Khan, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, The Woodlands
- **June 16**
Alanis Morissette, Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, The Woodlands
- **June 22**
Styx, Foreigner, John Waite, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, The Woodlands
- **July 13**
New Kids on the Block, Paula Abdul, DJ Jazzy Jeff, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, The Woodlands
- **July 27**
Zach Bryan, Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit, Levi Turner, NRG Stadium, Houston
- **Aug. 9**
Luke Combs, NRG Stadium, Houston
- **Aug. 10**
Luke Combs, NRG Stadium, Houston
- **Aug. 11**
Limp Bizkit, Bones, N8NOFACE, Corey Feldman, Cynthia Woods Mitchell

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Boys basketball

From Page 3B

points while Griffin Thomas also was in double figures with 11 points. Orangefield gave a great team effort to beat the Warren Warriors 70-23 on Friday. The Bobcats improved to 21-3 on their season and 3-0 in district. Kane Smith was the leader for the Bobcats with 21 points, 5 assists, and 5 steals. Griffin Thomas scored 18 points and grabbed 4 rebounds. With the holiday break over all the games now will have added significance because the contests will be district games. Bobcat Coach Bryan Whitmire elaborated, "Every game

from here on out is the biggest game of the year for us. That's how we're trying to approach it, and I thought we did a good job of coming in today focused after a long break, but it allowed us to be fresh, I thought we came into this game pretty sharp, and the kids executed well, so I was proud of them." Orangefield completed the third of three district home games on Tuesday of this week against the East Chambers Buccaneers. The Bobcats play the Anahuac Panthers on the road this Friday before traveling on Tuesday, January 16, to Kountze.

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Exhort one another . . . that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. (Hebrews 3:13)

I longed to appear brave, mature, and full of faith in front of my revered mother-in-law, Anne Ortlund. But I couldn't control the tears any longer. Her godly son, Ray, who happened to be my magnificent husband, was at yet another meeting with church leaders who were making it clear that he would soon be removed from his ministry as lead pastor at a church we dearly loved. For various reasons (from "we can't explain why, but we just think this is for the best" to "his face is too Nordic-looking"), they were not only planning to let Ray go, but were also hinting that he should leave gospel ministry entirely.

We felt as if we had been run over by a big bus and were left lying on the pavement while life went on for everyone else. This trial was vastly different from any of the difficulties we had dealt with in our 36 years of ministry to that point. We were confused and scared. Mom Ortlund already knew some of the story. And on this visit with us from her home in California, she tried to listen to me patiently.

As she listened, however, she saw something in me that I had overlooked. And with the firm love of a faithful woman, she responded



in a way I never expected — but so desperately needed.

‘Jani, Stop It’

Between sobs, I poured out my soul-crushing fears: “O Mom, I’m so afraid. What if they hammer Ray with more vague allegations? What if they keep insinuating that he should leave the ministry? You know how he has always lived in submission to his elders, but this is crazy. And I’m terrified. I never dreamed we’d be in this awful situation at age 58. Ray is even waking up with nightmares. I don’t know how to love him through this, how to be his helper. I’m just so scared.” I started sobbing even more uncontrollably. Then, as I started my next sentence, “What if . . .” Mom interrupted me.

I’ll never forget what she said. She was calm, but she was firm: “Jani, stop it.” She didn’t raise her voice. She

didn’t sigh in exasperation. And when her startled daughter-in-law caught her breath and looked up from her tissue-covered eyes, Mom just earnestly repeated herself. “Stop it, dear Jani.”

As you can imagine, Mom’s comment shocked me. I caught my breath. I was barely able to blurt out, “What do you mean?” I had been hoping for affirmation, sympathy, and even a bit of righteous anger. But what I received was a strong, brief exhortation from a saintly woman I deeply trusted. Mom went on to tell me that no one would be helped by my all-consuming panic. There were no answers to my “What if . . .” questions. And the best way I could help my dear Ray was to stop wallowing in my fears.

“Did you know, Jani, that ‘fear not’ is the most repeated command in the Bible?

We are told over 365 times to ‘fear not.’ That’s at least one ‘fear not’ for every day of the year.” Maybe everyone else knows that about the Bible, but I didn’t. It was a new thought, and I needed it.

Escaping the Snare

Notice what my mother-in-law was wisely doing. She didn’t join my fear-fest, but stayed deeply rooted in her Lord and his word — and she helped me get there too. She lovingly exhorted me, “with complete patience and teaching” (2 Timothy 4:2), to stop letting my fears be my king, reigning over my broken heart and confused mind. She challenged me to ask myself why I was bowing to my fears and allowing them to rule me at that moment.

Mom’s faithful and firm exhortation helped free me from the strong trap of fear. How did it help me? Mom understood in that moment that I needed more than sympathy. Fear’s deceitful entanglement was holding me captive, and I needed someone not merely to commiserate with me, but to help me escape fear’s grip.

Mom faced an emotionally hard choice as I stood there crying. She could either coddle my fears or confront them. If she had coddled my fears out of fear of my disapproval, she would have become ensnared by “the fear of man.” Coddling me might have initially felt kind, but ultimately it would have proven cruel

because her “kindness” would have left me trapped by fear. Instead, Mom chose the difficult path of confrontation.

only kind sympathy but firm love.

Blessed Exhortation


My mother-in-law proved to be a faithful sister to me that night, leading me to our wise King. While she cared deeply for her suffering son, she knew that succumbing to fear would only make the situation worse. As believers, we do not fight fear by trying to drum up enough courage. We fight fear by faith — faith in the God who invites us to bring our fears to him and let his peace, which passes all understanding, guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6–7).

Only one fear should capture our hearts: the fear of the Lord. As Psalm 112 tells us, “Blessed is the man who fears the Lord. . . . He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the Lord. His heart is steady; he will not be afraid” (verses 1, 7–8).


I’m deeply grateful for my mother-in-law’s wise and loving exhortation that night. It was a turning point in my life. What if she had feared speaking into my fears? I would not have been able to clothe myself with “strength and dignity” (Proverbs 31:25) as Ray and I walked through those dark days together — and far beyond. I would not have been a good helper for my beloved husband. And I would not have experienced the peace and strength that come from turning to Christ, for “whoever trusts in the Lord is safe” (Proverbs 29:25).

I’m so glad she pointed me to him. What a blessed exhortation!


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