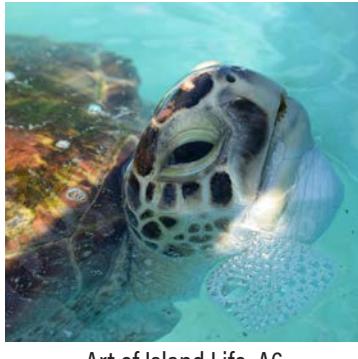




Nature Notes A5



Backwater Adventures B1



Art of Island Life A6



Beachcombing Report A5



On the Rocks B1

Issue 1137

The

27° 37' 0.5952" N | 97° 13' 21.4068" W

Island Moon

The voice of The Island since 1996

January 29, 2026

www.islandmoon.com

Full Color Version Available Online!

Weekly
FREE

Sunrise with a Great Blue Heron By Michelle Walters



**DON'T FORGET ISLAND
MOON RADIO ON
THURSDAY'S FROM 7-9
ON 105.9 AND 103.3
GET THE
RETRORADIOCC APP,
OR WATCH US ON
YOUTUBE AT**



By Dale Rankin

It was the time of turtles shivering in their shells, skinny water, and dog sweaters *Around The Island* this week as locals dug out their heavy coats and Winter Texans donned sweatshirts and short pants and the morning blast of duck shooters has faded into the silent future. Things are settling down on our little sandbar this week as we put our brass monkeys back outside and settle in for whatever comes next.

Beach fire ban

Word came mid-week that Nueces County has put a burn ban in effect for the next sixty days for all unincorporated areas across the county and it includes beach fires. What is important to note is that even though the ban is issued by Nueces County it applies to the six miles of beach in Kleberg County that is owned by Nueces County. Regular readers know that Nueces County bought 3680 acres of land in Kleberg County in 2014 which is managed by the Nueces County Coastal Parks Board. Nueces County Office of Emergency Management official Dee Hawkins said the burn ban *does* apply to those beaches. The Nueces County Precinct 4 Constable's Office patrols the beaches there and will be in charge of enforcement of the beach fire ban which runs through March 28 and includes Spring Break 2026. The ban does *not* include beaches inside of the Corpus Christi City Limits where a separate ban by city officials would be required. That means that pending city action beach fires, including cooking fires, will be allowed at the Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade on Saturday, February 28 so let the boudin burn!

Barefootin'

Barefoot Mardi Gras kicks off Friday, January 30, at Doc's Seafood & Steaks but tickets are rare as

A new main street for Padre Island!

City Council vote clears the way for \$17 million in improvements for the SPID corridor

By Dale Rankin

More than three decades after its first draft the Padre/Mustang Island Mobility Plan was approved by the Corpus Christi City Council on Tuesday freeing up \$17.9 million in federal funds for transportation improvements to the South Padre Island Drive corridor from Whitecap Blvd. north.

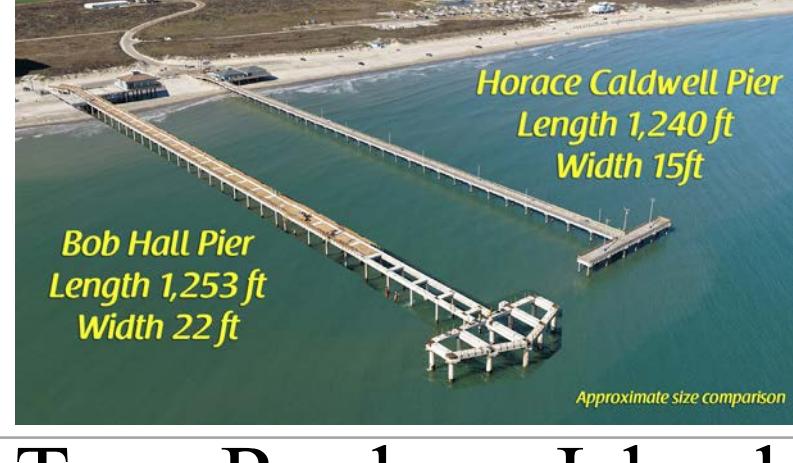
The federal money required a vote by the council which had been



Looking north on Park Road 22 this week.

Mobility cont. on page A8

Pier Pressure



This digital comparison of the two piers shows the approximate size difference between the two structures. Both are double stilt piers, with end structures and concession, restroom, and restaurant areas.

The new building at Bob Hall and the interior improvements should be in place by late 2026 with the opening of the new restaurant facility by the end of the year or early 2027.

Tern Rookery Island Protection Project Beginning February

Located near the bottleneck of the Central Flyway, the Upper Laguna Madre serves as a vital stopover and nesting area for colonial waterbirds, such as pelicans, herons, terns, and skimmers. As habitat loss associated with coastal erosion and increased development continues to impact coastal ecosystems, protecting remaining rookery islands has become a top conservation priority.

Tern cont. on page A6

**A little Island history**

Life on The Island in 1925

Schools of redfish a mile long

Editor's note: This is the second in a series of stories from the autobiography of Louis Rawalt who moved to The Island in 1925 after doctors gave him six months to live due to the effects of a mustard gas attack in WWI. He lived with his wife in cabins he built out of driftwood for almost forty years. He left behind this typewritten account of his time on The Island

and we run it here without editing. He called it Island of Reprieve.

Island of Reprieve (part II)

By Louis Rawalt

Once in Kingsville, we lost no time in assembling our equipment. I bought a Model-T Ford for a nominal sum of money. Into the back of it went a small tent, two army cots,

a gasoline camp stove and a lantern. We took plenty of blankets and the necessary clothing and cooking utensils. When I say the necessary, I mean just that – tin plates and cups, a skillet, a stew kettle and some knives and forks.

We took a month's supply of food, mostly staples and canned stuff;

History cont. on A7

A statue for Farrah!

Friends of Corpus Christi native Farrah Fawcett push for a local statue in her honor



The famous photo that inspired the statue

By Dale Rankin

Before Selena there was Farrah Fawcett. From the mid-1970s until her death in 2009 at 62 Fawcett was arguably the city's most famous native. From her iconic poster which adorned the walls of twelve million love struck teenagers in the 1970s through her stint on the top-rated television series Charlie's Angels to a career in films, her mane of blonde hair made her the sex symbol of a generation.

But throughout her life art was her first love and she left behind an extensive set of her original paintings and the Farrah Fawcett Foundation in March will celebrate fifty years since the release of her poster as

*Farrah cont. on page A7***By the numbers**

Padre Isles Property Owners Association
Editor's note: The following numbers were released on the PIPOA agenda for their January, 2026 meeting.

Violations of deed covenants in 2025

419	total cases
319	cases resolved
<u>Types of complaints</u>	
146	Weeds – 108 resolved
138	Traffic and parking – 94 resolved
99	Lawn care/high grass - 88 resolved
20	Advertising/signs - 19 resolved
8	Exterior fixtures – 4 resolved
<u>Bulkhead work December 2025</u>	
(partial)	
\$42,606	in work done
\$95,205	budgeted
\$43,750	bulkheads built
\$22,449	bulkhead caps repair
\$10,247	bulkhead material
\$8,845	bulkhead/manga ray installs
\$8,443	bulkhead foam

Around cont. on A6

ARK, Sealife Center, and Texas State Aquarium step in for Sea Turtles

This week's freezing weather left hundreds of sea turtles cold-stunned, and volunteers from the ARK, The Texas State Aquarium, and Texas Sealife Center came to the rescue.



**RESIDENTIAL
MAINTENANCE SERVICES**
Reliable. Professional. Insured.
Tree Trimming
Painting & Drywall
Power Washing
Provided by Padre Escapes
Fully Insured
Jason: 361-834-7630
Ryan: 361-774-6965

NEW CONSTRUCTION • RENOVATIONS • ADDITIONS

BUILDING DREAMS WITH PRECISION:

IN-HOUSE EXPERTISE, TRANSPARENT PRICING,
& A FLAWLESS PRE-CONSTRUCTION PROCESS



INNOVO
Residential

361.589.9877 • INNOVORESIDENTIAL.COM

Buenas Noches Cockroaches!

Pest Patrol

Locally owned and operated



(361) 852-4002

www.pestpatrolcc.com

SCAN TO DONATE!



— MICHAEL — HALL



for Nueces County Commissioner - Precinct 4

- ★ Professional Engineer
- ★ Local Island Resident
- ★ Fiscally Conservative

VOTE!

- ⌚ Early Voting:
February 17th - 27th
- ⌚ Election Day:
Tuesday, March 3rd





Letters to the Editor

I AM WHEEL. HEAR ME SQUEAK.



Lexington Museum

The USS Lexington Museum is bringing back its popular Throwback Pricing Weekend, presented by First Community Bank, in celebration of the ship's 83rd anniversary of commissioning. The limited-time promotion will take place Friday, February 20, through Sunday, February 22, 2026, offering visitors museum admission at 1992 prices, the year USS Lexington (CV-16) opened as a museum in Corpus Christi.

First launched in November 2022 to mark the museum's 30th anniversary, Throwback Pricing Weekend is now in its fifth year. As an independent nonprofit organization, the USS Lexington Museum is honored to partner with First Community Bank to make this program available for general admission, ensuring a discounted historic experience for all guests, including families, educators, veterans, military service members, and first-time visitors.

During the promotion, tickets may be purchased on the day of the visit directly on the ship at the following throwback rates:

Special Admission Pricing

Adult (18+): \$7.00

Military/Senior (with ID): \$5.00

Child (4-17): \$3.75

Child (0-3): Free

Construction

Recently we welcomed new neighbors who planned to be winter Texans. They described upgrades that were planned for their back yard. Nothing sounded strange but unfortunately all the rules seemed to have been ignored. On top of a 7 foot fence a deck is being built that goes to the property line and will be roofed, essentially creating a 10 foot plus wall. Having built a number of homes on the island we are familiar with the 5 foot from the property line construction rule so we contacted the POA requesting to see the plans and what was approved by architectural control committee. The committee that is supposed to protect all of our properties. The POA told us the plans were "confidential" and refused to get involved. How can outside plans that affect our property be confidential? We contacted the city code office and were told that an inspector would be sent but there is no indication that one has come. The 5 foot from the property line dock was built to the property line, the covered deck will loom over us and blocks the afternoon sun, sunsets, and privacy. Is this to be the future of construction on the island?

Dianne Crouch

Editor's note: We reached out to the PIPOA for comment. The response from Executive Director Rick McGinley reads as follows: I have our compliance guy looking at this and talking to the owner doing the work on his property. Their plans were approved by the ACC based on the actual property lines. We're still verifying details.

Island Obituary

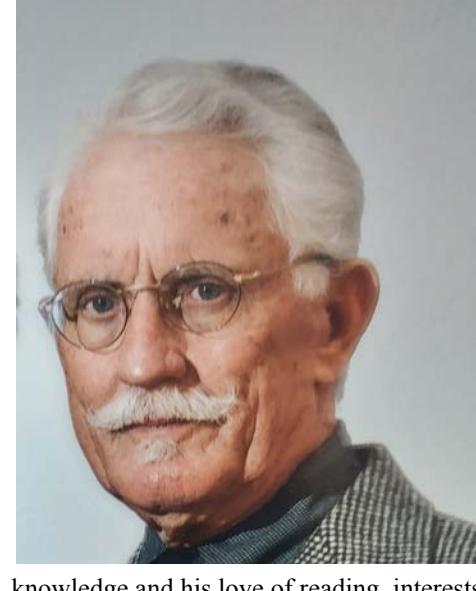
HAROLD MERN JEFFERSON

WILLIAMS, JR.

April 17, 1942 - January 3, 2026

Mern Williams, age 83, passed away from a variety of medical complications at his home in North Padre Island, Corpus Christi, Texas. Mern was a graduate of Elderton Joint High School, Elderton PA, class of 1960. Following graduation and marriage to Barbara Smay in September 1962, he proudly served his country in the United States Army, dedicating six years of service and acquiring the rank of Staff Sergeant (E-6). Upon departing the Army, Mern studied Electrical Engineering and received a Bachelor of Science degree in 1968 from University of Texas-El Paso. He went on to build a successful career with El Paso Energy Company, where he worked as Director of Communications Department until his retirement. Following his retirement in 2000, he and his wife relocated to North Padre Island where they enjoyed a well-earned and active retirement boating aboard *September Song* as an active member of the Padre Island Yacht Club since 2001. Also, in 2009, they began RVing and traveled all over the United States and Canada for many years.

For several years Mern played drums as a member of various bands around the Kittanning/Ford City PA area and in El Paso TX. An avid outdoorsman, he found great joy in fishing, hunting, archery and biking and he treasured returning to PA to spend time with his family. He was known for his thirst for

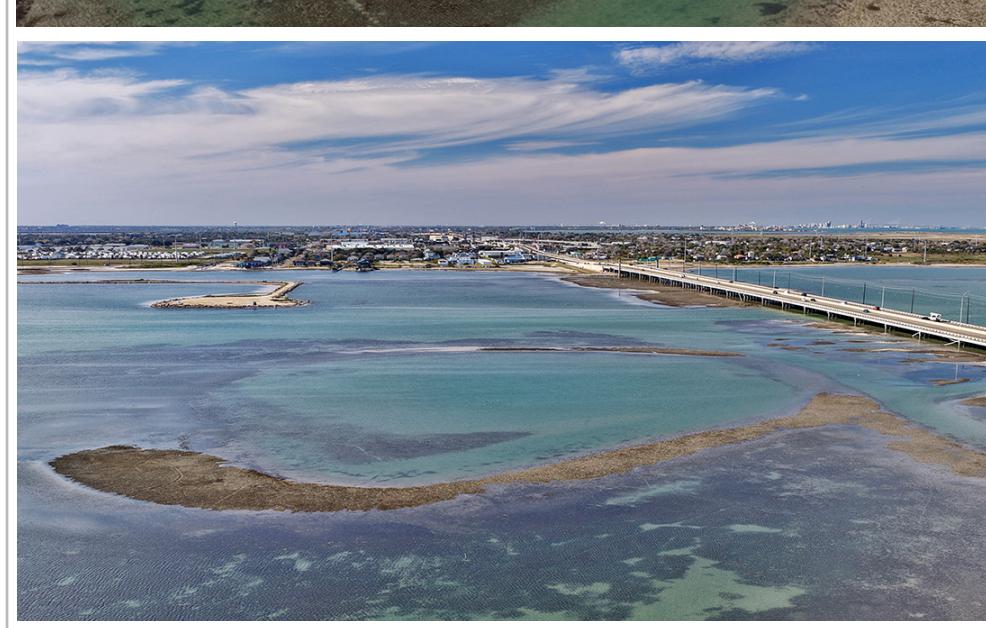


knowledge and his love of reading, interests that stayed with him throughout his life.

Mern is survived by his devoted wife of 63 years, Barbara (Smay) Williams, siblings Phyllis Vallies, James, Michael and Randall Williams, and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents Mern Sr. and Phyllis Williams, siblings Barbara Brewer, Fred Williams, and Betty Delissio. Mern will be remembered for his dedication to family, service to his country, love of music and world history, and appreciation for the outdoors. His legacy lives on in the many lives he touched.

The Hole Truth

A disaster from the 1940's still viewable at low tides



In the past few days, maybe you have noticed the symmetrical hole on the south side of the north end of the JFK Causeway. The crater from a \$1 million gas well blowout in the Laguna Madre in 1940 is now visible with the low tides. The well burned for several days and according to witnesses at the time the rig fell into the crater and was never recovered.

**SNAPPER TRIPS
FROM
NORTH PADRE!**
\$140
361-742-3195
BuccaneerCruises.com

Moon Monkeys

Mike Ellis, Founder



Editor/Publisher

Dale Rankin

Co-Publisher, Business Ops

Jan Park Rankin

Design and Production

Jacob Augs

Business and Feature Writers

Joey Farah

Emily Gaines

Jay Gardner

Todd Hunter

Dotson Lewis

Dr. Mario Martinez

Melissa Mitchell

Ronnie Narmour

Dr. Ed Proffitt

Reverend Dr. Ken Ritchie

Gene Saegert

Celeste Silling

Jace Tunnell

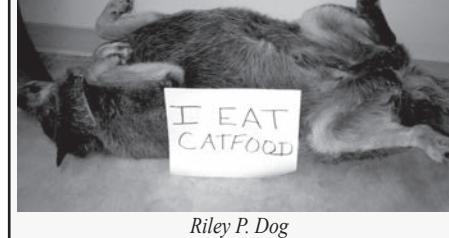
Photographers

Miles Merwin (Emeritus)

Debbie Noble

Evelyn Pless-Schuberth

Office Security/Spillage Control (Emeritus)



Riley P. Dog

About the Island Moon

The Island Moon is published every Thursday, Dale Rankin, Editor / Publisher.

Total circulation is 10,000 copies. Free distribution of 6,000 copies in over 50 Padre Island businesses and condos, as well as 600 copies distributed in Flour Bluff, 1,400 copies on Mustang Island and Port Aransas businesses.

News articles, photos, display ads, classified ads, payments, etc. may be left at the Moon Office.

The Island Moon Newspaper

14646 Compass, Suite 4

Corpus Christi, TX 78418

361-949-7700

editor@islandmoon.com

Facebook: *The Island Moon Newspaper*

Where to Find The Island Moon

Port Aransas

North Padre

Pioneer RV

All Stripes Stores

Stripes on 1A

Black Sheep/Barrel

Kody's

CVS

Coffee Waves

Dollar General

Moby Dicks

Doc's Restaurant

IGA

Hometown Seafood

Treasure Island

Snoopy's Pier

Wash Tub

Isle Mail N More

Shorty's Place

Island Italian

Gratitude

Ace Hardware

The Gaff

Texas Star (Shell)

Red's Riviera

Spanky's

Sounds Good BBQ

Subway

Spanky's Liquor

Island Tire

Beach Lodge

Padre Pizzeria

Ellis Memorial Library

And all Moon retail advertisers

Bernie's Beach House

WB Liquor

Flour Bluff

Island IGA

H.E.B.

Island Fitness

Ethyl Everly

Ridleys

Senior Center

My Coastal Home



Stuff I Heard on the Island



By Dale Rankin

One score and five years ago I found myself working at the CBS station in Tulsa as the weekend Assignment Editor and the recent cold snap reminded me of a few things that happened then.

My job was to show up at seven and get the crews out of the door and answer the newsroom phone where all the calls into the station were routed on the weekend. Between seven and nine myself and an engineer in Master Control were the only two people in the building and he had a habit of falling asleep in his chair back there in the engine room and when we cut to a commercial break the screen would go to bars and tone and I would call him and wake him up.

For some reason CBS Sunday Morning in those days fed early and was taped for replay on two one-hour tapes. But when the Master of Control fell asleep he failed to roll the second tape and when the last piece of the show was to air instead viewers got a replay of the first hour even after new stories had been teased. This happened more than once, in fact it happened several weeks in a row and each time the newsroom phone would light up with irate viewers informing me of my stupidity in spite of the fact that I had nothing to do with recording the show while the guy whose job it was slumped in his chair in peaceful engineer slumber. This was a reiteration of The First Rule of Television which states "Engineers get you last" (cleaned up for a family newspaper).

After several weeks of answering irate phone calls from frustrated viewers and complaining to the hibernating Master of Control I switched to guerilla tactics. I started forwarding the calls to Master Control and as television engineers do he forwarded them right back to the newsroom so I got to talk to each angry viewer twice and by the second time they were convinced they were getting the run around which they were. So I went nuclear. I forwarded the calls to the voice mail of the Chief Engineer who came into work to find his mailbox full of angry viewers and, as television engineers do, the next week he blocked incoming calls to his voice mail leaving me to fade the engineering heat (see The First Rule of Television). I went to DEFCON FIVE. I forwarded the calls to the General Manager's phone and the next thing you know the Master of Control was suddenly caffeinated to the point of frenzy and the tapes got rolled from then on.

The flying homeless guy

The station shared a parking lot with the bus station which on cold days became a sanctuary for homeless citizens. Aside from a phone, the assignments desk came equipped with a buzzer connected to a button at the front door, which was locked on weekends. One blustery day a persistent man with all his worldly belongings in a couple of trash bags kept leaning on the buzzer and when I talked to him through the squawk box he informed me he wanted to come in to use the restroom. I directed him to the fine facilities at the bus station but he said it was too slick to walk there.

The front porch of the station had about six steps up from the sidewalk and after about an hour of this tete-a-tete I finally said. "I'll let you in if you do a backflip off the porch" which on this icy slick morning would be a kamikaze move and I thought would end the conversation. But to my alarm I could see him in the camera as he started to set down his bags in preparation for going airborne!

I could see him swinging his arms to get momentum and I ran out the back door and slip slid my way around the icy sidewalk and by the time I arrived he was sprawled out on the sidewalk on his back. After my phone call stunt now I was going to have to explain to the General Manager how it came to be that a homeless guy was hauled off in an ambulance. As it turned out he didn't attempt a backflip but slipped off the steps during his windup and was unhurt. The only other person in the building who could hear the conversation on the squawk box was the engineer in Master Control (see The First Rule of Television). I got the homeless guy into the lunch room and gave him coffee then slipped into Master Control to access the damage and there sat the Master of Control sound asleep. He stayed awake long enough to roll the tapes then went back to sleep! At least he was constant as television engineers often are.

A dark and stormy night...

I was living about seventy miles south of Tulsa on Lake Eufaula and I awoke after a dark and stormy night that had covered the roads with a layer of deadly ice and snow. I set out in the dark up Highway 69 white-knuckling it trying to figure out where the road was and barely able to see past my front bumper due to the heavy snowfall which had already dropped eight inches of snow on a bed of black ice. I made the west turn in Muskogee onto the Broken Arrow Expressway and was the only vehicle there. It was a white snowy river framed only by the Jersey barriers on each side with no lanes visible as the snow continued to come in sideways. As I crept along at fifteen miles per hour I saw in my rearview three snowplows making good time coming up fast and as they approached they split and went around me on both sides slinging snow up in the air as they passed. Suddenly I couldn't see anything as my windows and windshield were covered in a blanket of opaque snow.

I had a sense of swirling but had no visible point of reference and turning the steering wheel produced no discernable effect. I was a figure skater blindfolded in mid leap. After what seemed like an eternity I felt a bump and the snow fell away revealing my swervy path. When the snow plows went around me they left snow in my lane which showed two ground loops as I came to rest with my front bumper against the cement barrier. I was all alone and I slid my way back onto the roadway and into downtown Tulsa to the station where I had been instructed to do a live cut in. I powered up the studio camera and informed viewers to stay off the roads! Do not drive in these conditions! The irony was not lost... I drove seventy miles through the snow to tell people not to drive through the snow!

A while later the phones in the newsroom lit up and I looked up at the monitors to see us flying bars and tone where CBS Sunday Morning should have been. I ran back to Master Control to find an empty chair where the Master of Control would normally have been sleeping. I called his cell to wake him up and found him already up.

"Where are you?"

"I'm at home," he said. "I saw your cut-in and you said to stay off the road so I stayed home."

Refer to The First Rule of Television.

The Future of Island Mobility

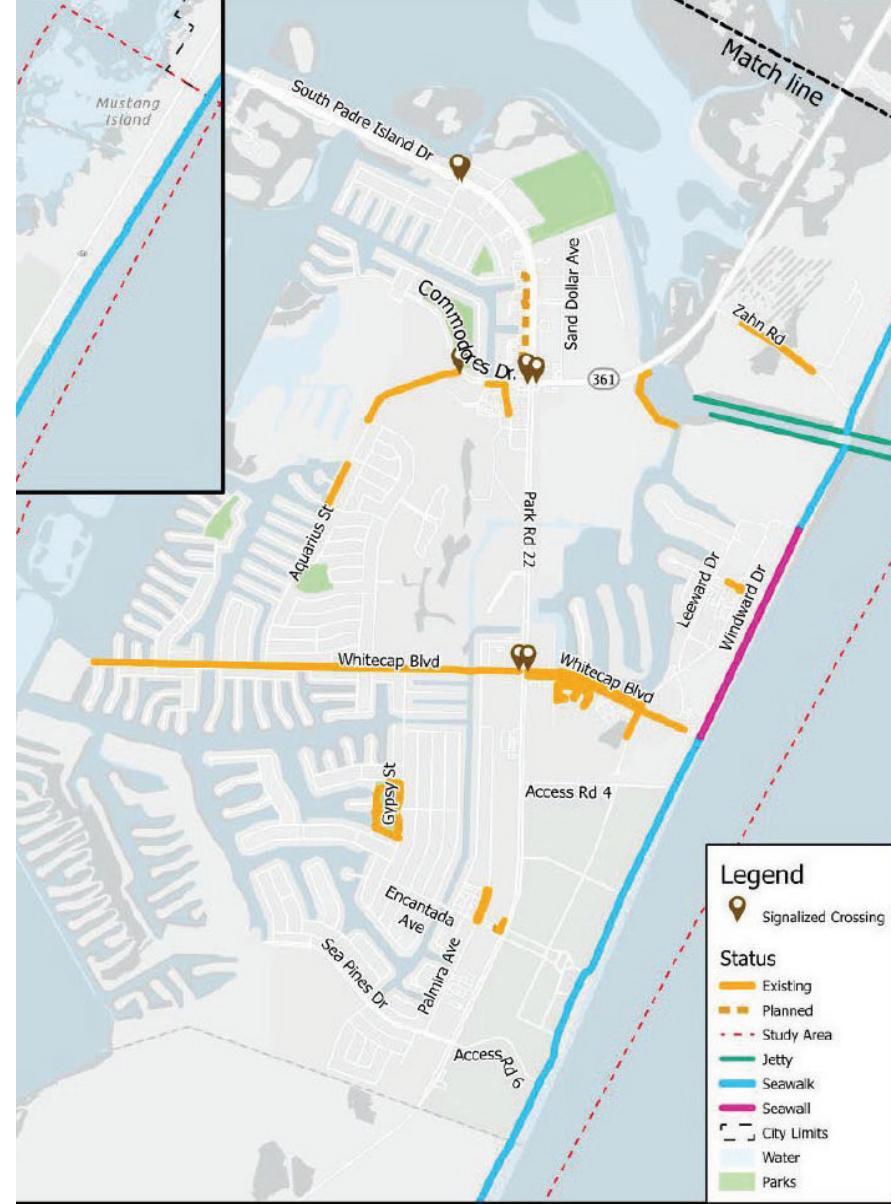
Here are a few of the Island Mobility Infrastructure plans



Potential Golf Cart Infrastructure



Roadway Infrastructure



Pedestrian Infrastructure

Island Moon Live

Our Thursday radio show is now streamed live on YouTube and Facebook! We have an enormous amount of different friends and guests, telling stories about how the Island used to be, and where we are heading. All of the videos are free to watch, and can be found on YouTube at Island Moon Live, on Facebook, or via these links. We record the show on Thursdays live at Doc's from 7 to 9 am.



Live Streams



Special Videos



Nature Notes

The Ivory-billed Woodpecker

By Celeste Silling



An Ivory-billed Woodpecker pair outside their nesting cavity.

Arthur A. Allen, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

In 2005, the Secretary of the Interior made the announcement that an Ivory-billed Woodpecker, *Campephilus principalis*, had been seen in eastern Arkansas. This announcement thrilled the birding community, leading to numerous studies, excursions, dubious sightings, and articles all centered around it. Why? Because the Ivory-billed Woodpecker had been "extinct" for the past 60 years.

The Ivory-billed Woodpecker was the largest woodpecker in North America, larger even than the Pileated Woodpeckers we see here on the Upper Texas Coast. The Ivory-bills lived in old-growth forests in the American South and in Cuba. Unfortunately, widespread destruction and degradation of these forests began to directly affect the birds in the 1800s, with only a small portion of the population surviving into the 1900s. Those dwindling numbers disappeared entirely in the 1940s and the species went entirely unseen until the early 2000s.

The 2005 rediscovery announcement led researchers to wonder if the species had managed to survive in areas outside of Arkansas as well. In Texas, the corridors of the Trinity, Neches, and Sabine Rivers were all suitable habitat for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker and were within its historic range. Gulf Coast Bird Observatory decided to investigate this possibility, devoting two years to the study beginning in 2007.

I didn't work at Gulf Coast Bird Observatory in 2007, but I do now, and it is clear in our documentation that this research was truly exciting. "Rediscovering" an extinct species would be a huge boon for the area and for the field of wildlife conservation in general. John Arvin, GCBO's Research Coordinator at the time, wrote in his proposal, "Discovery of a relict population of *Campephilus principalis* within its historic range in southeastern Texas will have a profound impact on the management of the bottomland forests of southeastern Texas. Collateral positive economic impacts will also accrue to the region, much of which is economically depressed."

GCBO's search for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker consisted of ground-search teams going out into randomly chosen habitats within the bird's historic range. The teams walked, drove, and kayaked 500 acre "patches" within the range, each repeated at least three times. During these surveys, they played Ivory-billed Woodpecker calls, which had been recorded before the extinction, to lure out any remaining birds. They also placed video and audio recording devices in areas of interest, such as tree cavities. In total, the team surveyed 36 patches along the Neches Corridor, and 38 along the

Trinity corridor.

During the surveys, there were several heartening instances of black and white woodpeckers spotted from afar, or distant loud knocks on trees. But each of these was either proven to be a Pileated Woodpecker or unproven to be an Ivory-billed. In his final report, Arvin wrote, "Our failure to find other suggestive evidence that Ivory-billed Woodpeckers exist in the areas searched leads us to conclude that there probably is not a remnant population of the species in southeastern Texas."

John Arvin passed away in 2023. The memorial plaque at GCBO recalls him as a great friend and a passionate birder, and specifically mentions his work on the Texas Ivory-billed Woodpecker project.

Now, despite many extensive searches and studies, the Ivory-billed Woodpecker has not been reliably documented since that announcement in 2005. The IUCN lists it as Critically Endangered and the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service lists it as Federally Endangered. In my opinion, Cornell's *All About Birds* website sums it up perfectly as "probably extinct."

The Ivory-billed Woodpecker has made its mark on birders and conservationists. The widespread search to rediscover the species shows how deeply we wanted this bird to be alive and how much the world can miss a single species. If nothing else, the Ivory-billed Woodpecker serves as a reminder that each animal is precious and every habitat needs to be protected.



Photo courtesy of animalia-life.club



PADRE
DERMATOLOGY
& Skin Cancer Center

Island Owned and operated
Physician staffed office
Fellowship trained Mohs surgeon
Double Board Certified
in Dermatology and
Mohs Micrographic Surgery

14650 Compass St Ste 1
Corpus Christi, TX 78418
361-867-1032
www.padrederm.com

Accepts Medicare United, Humana, BCBS, WellMed
Reasonable Cash Pay and Out of Network rates

New and Existing patients call to schedule
Existing patients, we still have all old records available.

Beachcombing Report

By Jace Tunnell

A Mop Full of Squid



Jace holding a squid egg mass

While conducting my weekly beachcombing survey by e-bike this week, I came across one of the more unusual and fascinating finds the Gulf has to offer — a large squid egg mass washed up along the shoreline. At first glance, it looked like a soggy mop made of clear jelly. But a closer look revealed something incredible, thousands of tiny baby squid wiggling inside.

What I found were squid egg capsules. Each long, gelatinous strand holds dozens of developing squid embryos, all bundled together into a single mass. Female squid can lay hundreds to thousands of eggs at once, and the bumpy texture visible along each strand comes from individual embryos growing inside their clear capsules.

Squid lay these eggs underwater in shallow coastal waters, often attaching them to sand, shells, seagrass, or reef structures in nearshore Gulf waters. After strong winds, rough surf, storms, or cold fronts, egg masses like this can become dislodged and wash onto Texas beaches. Typically, once they reach the beach, they are no longer viable.

Under normal conditions, squid eggs hatch in about two to four weeks, depending on water temperature. Warmer water speeds up development, while cooler water slows it down. When they hatch, baby squid, called paralarvae, emerge fully formed, miniature versions of adults. They can swim, hunt, and even change color almost immediately, receiving no parental care once the eggs are laid.

Squid play a critical role in ocean food webs, serving as a key food source for fish, seabirds, dolphins, and whales. I returned the egg mass to the water in hopes it could still contribute to the next generation. Jace Tunnell is the Director of Community Engagement for the Harte Research Institute at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. His Beachcombing series appears on YouTube and you can follow Jace at [harteresearch.org](https://www.youtube.com/harteresearch), or Facebook ([facebook.com/harteresearch](https://www.facebook.com/harteresearch)), Instagram (@harteresearch) and X (@HarteResearch) (the platform formerly known as Twitter).



Upclose of baby squid mass



Squid eggs on the beach

The Art of Island Life

When Cold Weather Reaches The Coast our turtle friends need a helping hand

By Melissa Mitchell



Cold stunned turtles being transported for treatment

While much of the country is busy navigating icy roads, frozen pipes, and snow-covered mornings, here on the Island we prepare a little differently. We stock up, tuck in early, and keep an eye on the weather—mindful of the brief freeze, grateful for the warmth, and never quite taking it for granted.

At the same time, my heart is very much inland. Parts of my family—and one of my businesses—in Northeast Texas are right in the middle of it. Thick layers of ice beneath blankets of snow. Power outages. Long, quiet nights where even the best preparation gets tested. Watching it all unfold from a distance has a way of sharpening your perspective.

It makes you think about what it means to be warm. To be sheltered. To have a door to close and a blanket to pull tight.

And during these colder stretches, my thoughts always drift beyond our own homes—to the small, silent lives outdoors. The birds I watch each morning, the little ones I scatter seed and set fresh water out for, and the wildlife that simply has to endure whatever the weather brings.

And then there are the lives we don't always see as easily, beneath the surface of the water.

Especially our sea turtles.

A Hidden Winter Risk Along the Coast

When temperatures dip below about 50-degrees, sea turtles face a serious and often invisible danger known as cold-stunning. Because turtles are cold-blooded, sudden drops in water temperature can leave them lethargic, disoriented, and unable to swim or dive properly. In severe cases, they may float at the surface or wash ashore, overwhelmed by the cold.

What many people don't realize is that cold-stunned turtles can appear lifeless at first glance—when in reality, many can recover with timely rescue and proper care. Here along the Texas coast, cold-stunning events are not uncommon. They're sobering moments, but they're also powerful reminders that awareness, calm action, and community support can truly make a difference.

What To Do If You Find a Sea Turtle

Sea turtles are resilient, ancient, and essential to healthy marine ecosystems—but they're also vulnerable. So while we sip something warm and wait out the cold, let's remember to keep watch for those who can't. If you come across a sea turtle that appears stranded or cold-stunned, the most important thing to remember is this:

Do NOT attempt to transport or treat the turtle yourself.

Do not put the turtle back in the water.

Cold water can be fatal, even if your instinct is to help it return to the sea. Instead, make the call and trained responders will guide you on next steps and ensure the turtle gets the care it needs.

• Texas Sea Turtle Info Line: 1-866-TURTLE-5 (887-8535)

• Texas Sealife Center: 361-589-4023

Those calls matter. They activate a network of trained professionals who know how to

respond safely—for both people and turtles. Because sometimes, the most important acts of care happen when no one is looking—and when a simple phone call can mean the difference between loss and recovery.

How You Can Truly Help Right Now

During cold-stunning events, it's natural to want to jump in and help hands-on. But these rescues require specific training, and for the safety of both turtles and people, only certified responders are able to assist directly during these events.

What does make a meaningful impact right now is financial support.

Organizations like the **Texas Sealife Center** rely on donations to provide emergency medical care, supplies, transport, and around-the-clock monitoring during these events.

If you're able, donations can be made easily from links on their website.

• **Donate directly** (www.texassealifecenter.org)

(*Donations can also be set up as monthly recurring gifts, which are especially helpful during unpredictable winter weather.*)

• **Support through their Amazon Wish List**

Every contribution—large or small—helps ensure these gentle creatures have a fighting chance.

Cold weather reminds us how connected we all are—to each other and to the wildlife that share the Island with us. From loved ones navigating snow and ice miles away to sea turtles struggling silently beneath cold waters, these moments invite us to slow down and pay attention.

For our sea turtles, cold snaps bring a very real risk. As the team at the Texas Sealife Center explains, cold-stunned turtles usually don't come in on the Gulf beach side. They're more often found in the Laguna Madre, where shallow water cools much faster.

During these events, rescue teams are focused on immediate care. *"We do not usually have teams that patrol because we are triaging the turtles that come into our care,"* they shared. It's all hands on deck behind the scenes, tending to the turtles already rescued and working to stabilize them.

Helping doesn't always have to be loud or dramatic. It can be as simple as knowing when to make a call, giving quietly, or caring enough to notice.

And that, too, is part of the art of island life. *The Art of Island Life will return next week with more stories and coastal reflections.*

Have a story to share or a cause close to your heart? I'd love to hear from you at contact@melissamitchellart.com



Support the Sealife Center here

Around cont. from A1

shrimpers teeth. The parade will once again run in front of the Michael J. Ellis Seawall and will be broadcast live on *Island Moon Live* on YouTube and on theislandmoon-newspaper Facebook page. Our regular weekly radio show Island Moon Radio which airs on the stations listed above will also be broadcast live on theislandmoon-newspaper Facebook page starting this Thursday and each Thursday following. We concentrate on all things Island and try to stay away from desalinization, Mars landings, and Washington politics. Tune in and check it out.

Our friend Dotson

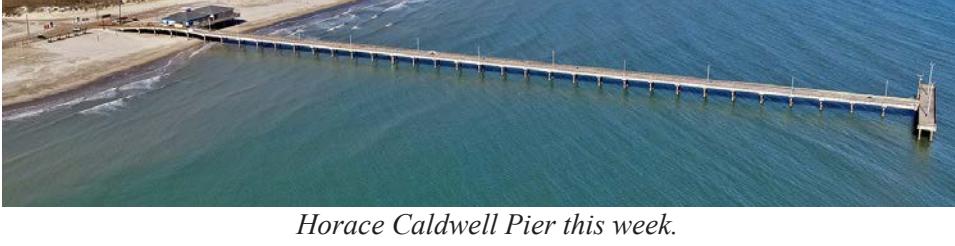
We feature a story in this week's edition by our friend and long-time columnist Dotson Lewis about the Chosin Reservoir Campaign during the Korean War. What Dotson didn't put in the story is that he was there in Korea for that fight and ended up with a case of frostbite and some shrapnel to boot. He was captured by Chinese soldiers and made good his escape but not before losing some teeth to the butt of a Chinese rifle. By the time you read this there will be a couple

of scholarships established in Dotson's name at Del Mar College (which he is not supposed to know about yet) where he teaches classes. At 97 Dotson hosts two veterans events and a radio show, writes two columns for the Island Moon, and teaches two classes at Del Mar. Other than that he mostly just stands around.

Not a real photograph

In anticipation of Letters to the Editor we must state that the graphic of two piers on this page do *not* mean that two piers have been built next to each other. This is the magic of editing to make a comparison but if plans to build a second pier next to the new Bob Hall Pier surface we will let you know.

That's all for now everybody, let's call these the Dog Days *Around The Island* because if you are an Island dog this is good dog weather – even if your humans make you wear a stupid sweater. So take your little yapper or your friendly Lab to the Riley P. Dog Park and say hello if you see us *Around The Island*.



Horace Caldwell Pier this week.

Tern cont. from A1

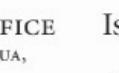


In February 2026, construction will begin on a restoration project designed to protect and restore Tern Island, a highly productive rookery island located in the Upper Laguna Madre just north of the JFK Causeway between Flour Bluff and North Padre Island. Over time, Tern Island has been steadily eroding due to wind and wave action, threatening its ability to support nesting birds. Despite its small footprint, Tern Island plays a sizeable role in supporting colonial waterbirds. Unlike many low-lying islands in the region, it has sufficient elevation to sustain a healthy shrub community, providing critical nesting habitat for a wide variety of bird species.

The restoration of Tern Island is the result of extensive collaboration among multiple organizations and years of permitting, design, and planning. The island is owned by the Texas General Land Office (TGLO), leased to Audubon Texas for the protection and management of colonial nesting waterbirds, and managed annually by the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program (CBBEP) Coastal Bird Program. Project design and pre-construction monitoring were completed by HDR Engineering, and CBBEP will continue to monitor and manage the site following construction to ensure long-term success.

This project represents a significant step toward preserving one of the Upper Laguna Madre's most valuable natural resources and ensuring that future generations of birds, and people, can continue to benefit from this unique coastal ecosystem.

THOMAS & JENSEN, PLLC
CPA FIRM
info@thomasjensencpa.com
thomasjensencpa.com



UPTOWN OFFICE
711 N. CARANCAHUA,
SUITE 1818
CORPUS CHRISTI, TX 78401
TEL: (361) 884-6346
FAX: (361) 887-1931

ISLAND OFFICE
14633 S.P.I.D.,
CORPUS CHRISTI, TX
78418
TEL: (361) 949-7890
FAX: (361) 887-1931



History Cont. from A1

and a saw, hammer and nails. Viola stored her lovely china and linen a little grudgingly, but she glowed with a spirit of adventure that was good to see.

We left Kingsville on a sunny September morning. Behind me were the years of war, the hospital corridors, the waiting rooms, and the operating tables. I kept the doctor's grim predictions from my mind as much as possible.

Keeping the wheels of the Model-T on the parallel planks of the causeway demanded all my attention, but every few moments Viola would cry out over some strange bird flying over the Laguna Madre. There were white pelicans by the thousands, snowy egrets, roseate spoonbills, herons, ducks and gulls and terns. Mullet leaped and played in the water, shining like silver in the bright, morning sun.

We left the causeway and followed a winding path through the dunes to the Gulf side of Padre. At the beach, we turned left, and drove along the surf to Corpus Christi Pass where we set up camp. The pass was open then, and the islands of Padre and Mustang were divided. I don't know what time we reached the pass; we took no clock with us. I didn't want time measured out in minutes and hours.

We gathered lumber the rest of the day to build a floor for the tent. Viola did most of the labor, for there was little strength left in my body. When the sun was high in the heavens, we stopped long enough to eat the lunch Mother had packed for us. It had been many months since the food tasted so good, and if the fried chicken was seasoned with a little Padre Island sand, neither of us noticed – or cared.

By nightfall we were snug and secure. We ate a supper of bacon and pork and beans by the glow of our Coleman lantern. Viola had made a table from a small hatch cover the tide had carried in; our chairs were two nail kegs. She stacked some apple boxes, one above the other to make a cupboard for our supplies. The cots were set up, side by side, at one end of the tent. We turned out the lantern, brushed some of the sand from our bare feet and crawled between the covers.

"I love that lantern," Viola said sleepily, "It gives you time to get in bed before it goes out."

I listened to the pound of the surf a moment before sleep overtook me. From the dunes behind us coyotes howled.

I awoke that first morning feeling refreshed and eager to face the day. I raised the flap of the tent to see the splendor of early morning on the Gulf. Nature was outdoing herself in artistry. The sky, the water, and the clouds along the horizon were all tinted with color – mauve, rose and copper seeping through the gray. As I watched the sun break through to make a golden path across the water, Viola came softly on bare feet to stand beside me. I had everything. But for a limited time only.

The day and the ones following it flowed by; the hours came and went like the waves that broke against the sand, unmeasured and unrecorded. We ate when we were hungry. When we were tired we rested; and when the time came for sleep, we slept like exhausted children. For the most part, Viola busied herself about the camp, but sometimes she came and dropped down beside the camp chair where I sat for hours at a time fishing with my cane pole.

Gradually, the sun and the salt air worked their healing magic, and before many weeks passed, I felt the beginnings of strength returning to my body. The aches and pains lessened. The shadow of death lingered, but grew fainter.

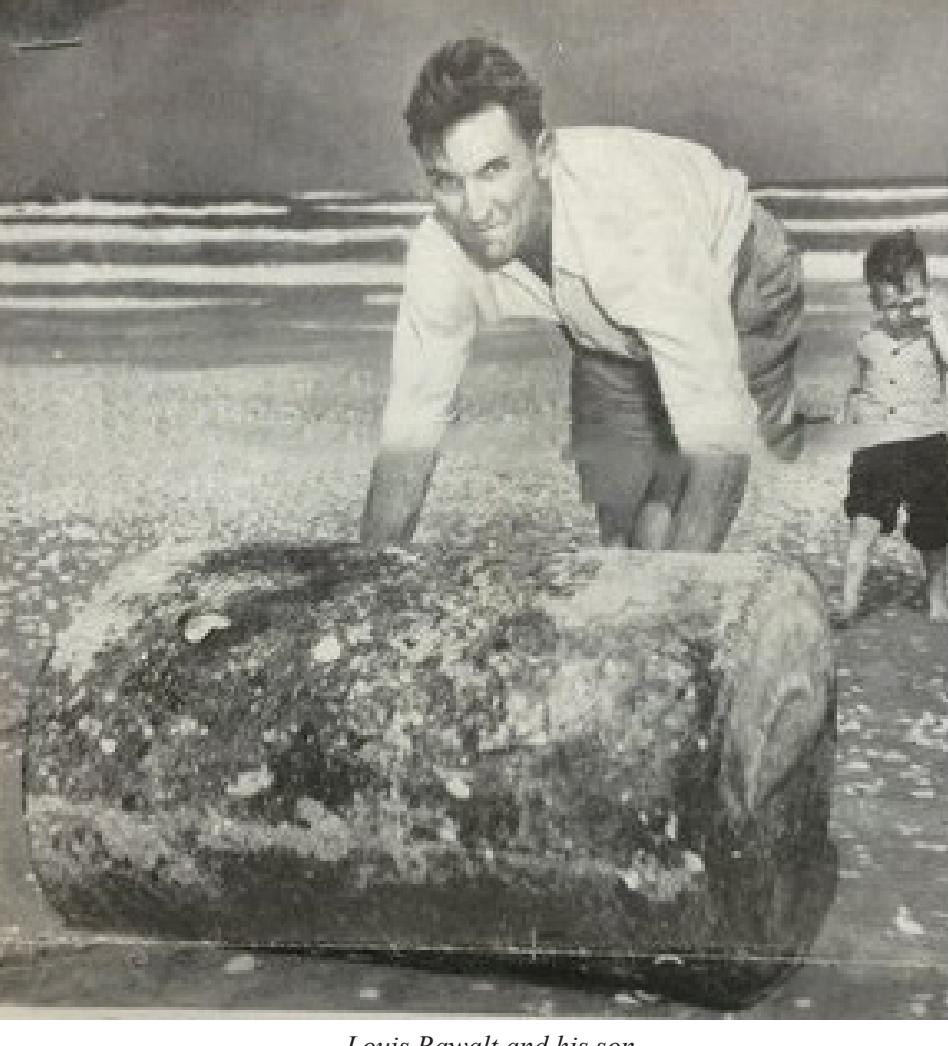
Our appetites were enormous. In spite of all the fish we ate, our supplies disappeared rapidly. Neither of us looked forward to the trip to town after more. Fish were plentiful in those days and would strike at anything – even a bar hook. I saw schools of redfish a mile long, their color like a river flowing through the Gulf. There were many other species of fish, and I think I caught some of them all. There were redfish, trout, drum, pompano, pike mackerel, golden croaker, whiting and many less important fishes. The bottom of the lagoon was thick with flounder which we gigged at night by lantern.

One cool night in October I caught five hundred pounds of redfish on my trotlines. Early morning found us chugging across the causeway with our load. The fish sold for twenty-five dollars; then we bought supplies and more line and hooks and hurried back to our island as fast as the Ford would take us. After that, I fished commercially.

When the first norther' whistled down across the dunes, we realized that we would have to have a stove to keep the tent warm. So the next trip to town we bought some stove pipe, a chisel and some hinges. I took an oil drum and chiseled out a door on one side and hinged it on. For the pipe, I cut criss-crosses and flanged them out to fit snugly. We filled the drum about a fourth of the way up with sand for insulation on the bottom, ran the pipe up through a hole in the tent, and there was our stove. Wood was no problem. The tide took care of that, but cutting it became my chore. Viola tried it once, but swore off tearfully after a stick of wood flew up and hit her in the eye.

Winter passed. A short spring merged into a long summer. By the next October, I realized that I had borrowed six months over my allotted time to live, and by leave of the Almighty I meant to borrow as many more as I could. I was strong again and seldom felt the touch of pain. Fishing was good, and if the proceeds in those days were not astounding, there was always enough for the things we really needed. Island living agreed with Viola. She was brown and healthy and as active as a ground squirrel.

Next time: The Rawalts move to Big Shell.



Louis Rawalt and his son

Mobility Cont. from A1

pending for more than a year after approval by the Island Strategic Action Committee in May 2025 until it was discovered by city officials two weeks ago that a city vote was required by August 2026 to keep from losing use of the federal funds.

The \$17.9 million in funding came from the U.S. Department of Transportation through the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization but required a local project sponsor and small city funding match. The vote by the council on Tuesday means the federal funds will now be available to move the corridor improvements project forward.

The Texas Department of Transportation held a series of public hearings on Padre Island in 2023-2024 to get public input for the final mobility plan which resulted in the plan approved Tuesday which includes cart paths and sidewalks along both sides of the SPID corridor as well as paths connecting the new development on the west side of the SPID corridor to the Don Patricio Bridge and eastward to the gulf beaches. See the diagrams in this issue of the Island Moon.

The first draft of the plan was begun in 1993 when the owners of property on both sides of the SPID roadway initiated plans to install underground water exchange culverts at the site of what is now the Don Patricio Bridge. That plan was later updated to include cart paths when voters in 2004 approved bonds to replace the planned culverts with a bridge. The design of the

Farrah Cont. from A1

part of it Stand Up to Cancer campaign. In 2017 her art was shown at the Umlauf Sculpture Garden and Museum in Austin in the exhibit *Mentoring a Muse*. Her love of art has led a group of her friends to band together to place a seven-foot tall sculpture of her in her hometown of Corpus Christi.

"This is our way of celebrating the life of our friend," said former University of Texas football star Tom Campbell who attended school with Fawcett. "We have a design and we have the funds we just need a location in Corpus Christi to place it."

Campbell said that renowned sculptor and former art professor at the University of Texas David L. Deming has designed the work which is now ready to be cast in bronze once a location is set.

"We aren't asking for money," Campbell said this week. "All we need is a location."

He said discussions have been underway with the City of Corpus Christi, the Port of Corpus Christi, the Corpus Christi Museum of Art, and the South Texas Museum of Art to determine the best location.

"We would also like to have an exhibit of her paintings in Corpus Christi to coincide with the placing of the statue," he said. "We think that she needs to be remembered in her hometown and letting people see her art is a good way to help do that."

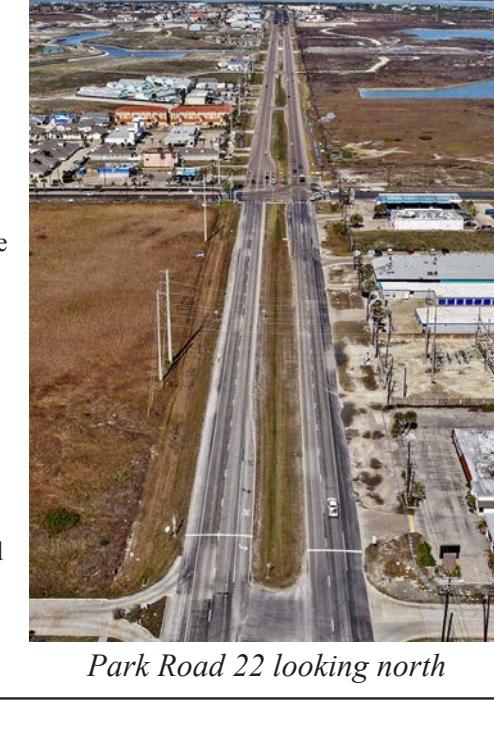
Fawcett's father James William Fawcett was an oilfield contractor in Corpus Christi and her family attended St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church. She graduated from W. B. Ray High School in Corpus Christi, where she was voted "most beautiful" by her classmates in her freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior years of high school.

She then attended the University of Texas at Austin and during her sophomore year she appeared in a photo of the "Ten Most Beautiful Coeds" from the university, which ran in *Cashbox* magazine. A Hollywood publicist saw the photo and

Don Patricio Bridge includes passages for cart and pedestrian paths on both sides of the waterway under the bridge; the approval of the mobility plan means the design for connecting pathways can move toward finalization.

The stated goal of the mobility plan is to allow cart and pedestrian passage to all points on Padre Island with minimal use of streets and roadways.

No timeline for the start of construction has been set.



Park Road 22 looking north

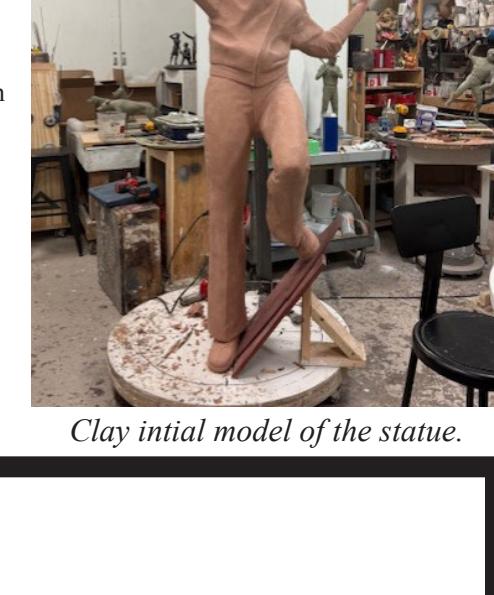
called Fawcett over the course of the next year urging her to move to Los Angeles, which she did the summer following her junior year to "try her luck" in Hollywood, which turned out to be very good luck and she never again called Texas home.

Campbell said several possible locations for the sculpture have been discussed including land owned by the Port of Corpus Christi.

"They told us to place it there it would have to fit with a nautical theme so the artist designed a new statue with her as a mermaid," Campbell said.

He said city officials suggested Swantner Park, however, some residents there expressed opposition. A site near the Harbor Playhouse in keeping with Fawcett's acting career is also under consideration.

"We hope to find a location in the next few months and move forward with placing the statue and an exhibition of her art," Campbell said. "We are ready to go once we have a location set."



Clay initial model of the statue.

COMPLETE FOUNDATION REPAIRS
UNMATCHED EXPERIENCE UNMATCHED RESULTS
Formerly Uretek

BULKHEAD REPAIR
BULKHEAD REHABILITATION

- CONCRETE LEVELED
- SOIL EROSION Voids FILLED
- SWIMMING POOL CRACKS SEALED
- SWIMMING POOL DECKING LEVELED
- CONCRETE FOUNDATION LEVELING
- PIER AND BEAM FOUNDATION WORK

361-885-7901
COMPLETEFOUNDATIONREPAIRS.COM



Islander Emily Clark wed Will Coleman on January 18th. The new Mr. and Mrs. William Capus Coleman V traveled to St. Vincent and the Grenadines with the Island Moon in tow for their honeymoon.



Liverpool Legends were playing Beatles Songs last Night at Selena Auditorium. So much Fun!!! Got a Photo with the Musicians and The Island Moon on my Telephone. Evelyn Pless-Schuberth



In extreme low tide conditions, the original Don Patricio Causeway supports return to the surface.



The Don Patricio Causeway. The only road to The Island in 1925.

RE-ELECT
BRENT CHESNEY
NUECES COUNTY COMMISSIONER
PRECINCT 4

EARLY VOTING | ELECTION DAY
FEBRUARY 17 TO FEBRUARY 27 | MARCH 3

- ★ SECURED FUNDING TO REBUILD BOB HALL PIER
- ★ SECURED FUNDING TO REFURBISH BRISCOE KING PAVILION & BUILD A BRAND NEW FACILITY WITH NO INCREASE IN PROPERTY TAXES
- ★ LED FUNDING EFFORTS AT ISLAND TIRZ FOR AN ISLAND SKATEPARK
- ★ PROVIDED THOUSANDS OF FREE PHYSICALS & HEALTH SCREENINGS FOR THE ISLAND & PRECINCT 4
- ★ DELIVERED MILLIONS MORE DOLLARS IN ISLAND PROJECTS & THROUGHOUT PRECINCT 4
- ★ ISLAND BUSINESS & PROPERTY OWNER

FOR MY COMPLETE RECORD, PLEASE VISIT BRENTCHESNEYFORNUECESCOUNTY.COM

POL. ADV PAID FOR BY BRENT CHESNEY CAMPAIGN, ASHLEY CHESNEY TREASURER

Are You Ready
For The Next Hurricane?

Storm?
Freeze?
Tornado?
Grid Failure?

Call Us
361-782-6329

Generator Supercenter

GENERAC

GeneratorSupercenterOfCorpusChristi.com

We Treat Your Pets **LIKE FAMILY!**
Keepin' Dogs on the Beach!

Island Animal Clinic
Bill McGehee, DVM & Associates

- Medicine • Surgery
- Diagnostics • Radiology
- Pharmacy • & More!

Mon-Fri by Appointment

319 Beach St.
next to The Crazy Cajun Restaurant

NOW OPEN

361-749-4134

Island Outdoors

On the Rocks

By Jay Gardner



Well, most of us survived Winter Storm Fern with minimal damage, although I'm seeing a lot of dying plumeria around on the Island. If you didn't pull your plants up, the last-ditch effort is to cut it off at the ground and hope that the necrosis that is developing doesn't transfer from the top part all the way down to the root ball and completely kill the plant. There's a good chance that it will come back up from underground. While the weather is nice as I'm typing this, by the time the paper comes out, we'll be at the edge of the timberline again towards the weekend with temperatures in the mid 30's. Not quite time to pull the plants out and planting seeds.

Speaking of freezing temperatures, I'd like to give a big kudos to all the folks and organizations that helped with the sea turtle stranding efforts during this past week. I talked to Ashley out at the CCA/Marine Development Center the other day, and even her TPWD folks were rescuing and transporting turtles. The efforts were herculean, and there are too many facilities, groups, and individuals to list. Dr. Tissot was correct when he predicted that this cold stunning event would be in the "hundreds of turtles, not thousands" like we have seen in the past. Due to the upcoming weather this weekend, many releases into the warmer gulf waters have been postponed for another week, but those are always crowd pleasers for everyone involved.

City Council and Capital Improvements

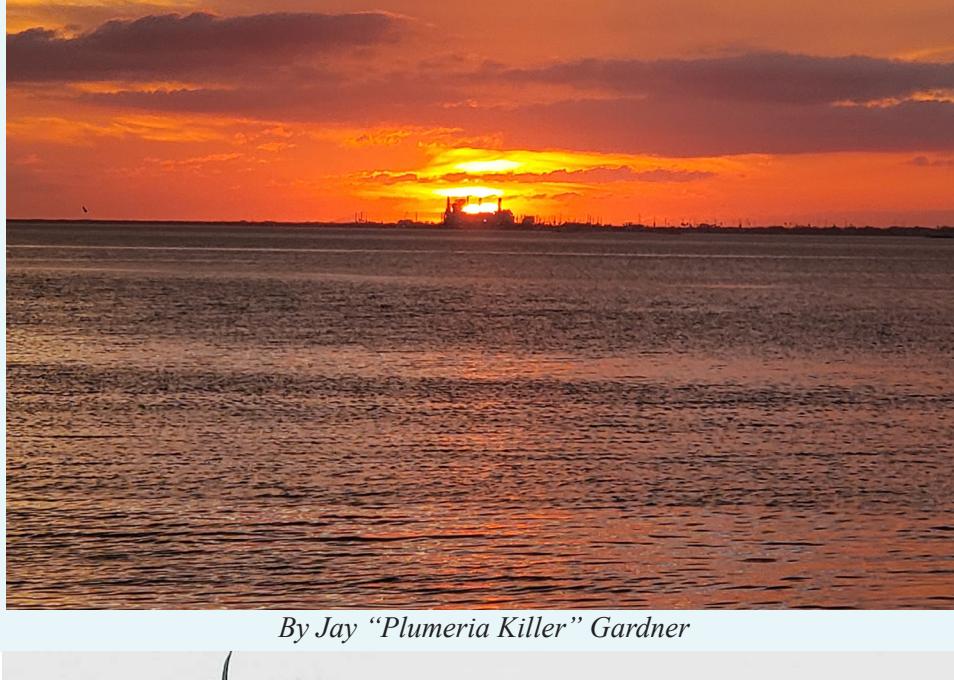
The dust is still settling from this past city council meeting, but they did get the Island Mobility Plan on the agenda and approved. The Island Strategic Action (ISAC) and Planning and Zoning Committees both passed the plan last summer, and it finally made its way through the last hurdle. This will allow the projects to be prioritized

by the Area Development Plan subcommittee, back through ISAC, and then back down the path towards city hall to make their way into the Capital Improvement Plan. Yes, these things take some time, but going through the proper channels provides the necessary steps for implementation, and most importantly, funding. City staff deserves some kudos for bringing the MPO funding to the forefront and getting the coordination with TxDoT going. This is just fresh out of the gate, and there is much more to go, so stay tuned.

Paper streets and real money

Speaking of ISAC, that meeting is scheduled to be held next Tuesday the lovely Gulfstream Condos on the seawall (appreciate them hosting the meeting!) There will be some discussions regarding what transpired at the last TIRZ #2 meeting, where staff recommended using money that was in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) from 5 other projects to fund the seawall repairs. Some of the money was savings from other projects, however the two "paper streets" of Sand dollar and Crow's Nest were stripped of construction funds. Engineering and permitting is still progressing, but we may have to come up with some money to actually get them built. Money is tight all over and stay tuned for more information as the city proceeds with juggling all these plates.

Well folks, I managed to not talk about water, wastewater re-use, desal, or the far field modeling study for the Inner Harbor. The Big News Outlets are welcome to cover that. We're in an election season, and all the seats are available, so this is going to be a wild ride. As Dale has quoted Hunter S. Thompson in the past, "when the going gets tough, the weird turn pro." Be careful on the streets, drop me a line at jaygardner1032@gmail.com and we'll see you next week On the Rocks.



By Jay "Plumeria Killer" Gardner



Love & Tenderness By Riekie Roncinske

WADE IN THE WATER
POOL & SPA SERVICES

Wade in the Water Pool Services LLC
361-658-8581
www.WadeInTheWaterPools.com

WEEKLY MAINTENANCE · EQUIPMENT INSTALLATION · REPAIRS · REMODELS
15715 S. Padre Island Dr. #101
FREE Water Testing!



By Joey Farah

The Best of Winter Fishing!

We finally got a good swift swoop of winter temperatures! This combined with the low tides threw bait and gamefish into deep water. Much of the flats were so shallow that fish couldn't swim there, and cold nights cooled off the other shallow areas. Anglers have taken advantage of this and have scored with some great winter fishing. This pattern will continue for the next few weeks as we should be getting a few more cold events. Expect a rapid warm up and increase in tide to move fish and bait out into the flats pretty quickly, but they won't move far away from the safety of deep water retreat.

Each season we see the pivot of seasons in our bay fishing marked by the time when the cold finally pushes deep into the deepest holes. Deep water will still harbor safety from the coldest of times, but life will quickly run towards the shallows to warm up in the sun. Not only direct sunlight but as shallow flats warm in the sun follow that flow into the drop offs along those mid depth zones. Like smoke over landscape water flows over the bottom of the sea, following contours, funneling warm temperatures and fish together. Just a small move of a few feet can mean the difference in a half or full degree of water temperatures, enough for fish to move into comfort. This is why the larger, smarter gamefish push the smaller fish out of the way and creep up into the best shallow areas to hunt and warm.

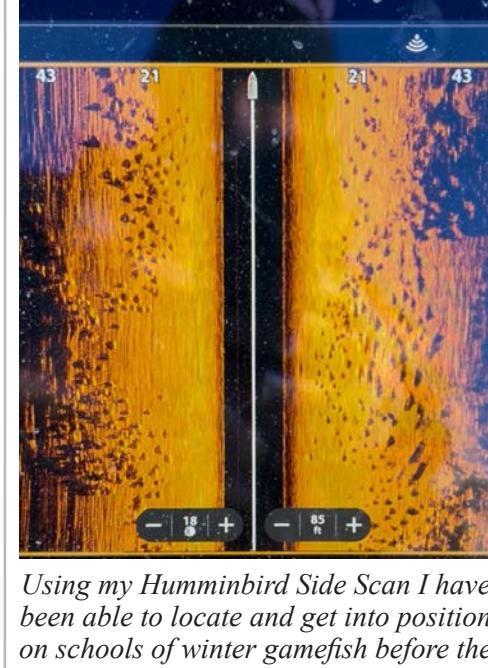
This is the best time to get hooked up on winter fishing here on Padre Island! The Beach fishing is excellent with pompano, drum, reds, small sharks, and whiting all thick in the first two guts during high tide and calm conditions. After the fronts flatten the surf head toward the surf with small hooks, light tackle baited with shrimp and fish bites. THE BLACK DRUM ARE ON FREAK SHOW RIGHT NOW! We have had no problem finding herds of black drum and filling the box with great eating fish.



Cold temperatures sent mature trout deep during our last blast! This beautiful 7lb trout was caught by one of my friends at the Bait Shop at Marker 37 Marina, on a slow sinking Corky Lure while

Gather your crew and give me a call for a meat haul trip! Lots of fun for young and old, even when the weather is far from perfect. Our drift fishing and tactical boat fishing with soft plastics is at a high point during the next three months. Finding the level of depth that fish are using is key, then target scattered sand pockets with accurate casts with soft plastics. Water quality is great with lots of clear green water, we are SIGHT FISHING! This is peering into perfect hiding places I, watching bait and expecting a strike. When your bait falls just out of sight and you see a dark shadow come up and a flash of silver hail your bait your heart will bolt! Those giant MUSTARD MOUTH TROUT are exciting jumps head thrashing, and speed runs are what keeps us casting all day.

The colder days I'm fishing deeper water with 1/8-1/4oz jig heads dancing DOWN SOUTH LURES SUPER MODELS, and the DOWN SOUTH LURES BURNER SHAD when they want a smaller target. My go to winter colors are Purple Reign, Bone DIMOND, and Plum/chartreuse. Seems the colder days they like the Bone, and a little more color and flash when they are worn. The first two weeks of February are going to be some of the most intense fishing of the season. Our Trout are their heaviest and become predictable as they moderate their body temperatures. The Lunar periods are strong, and I have some of the most prime days open, call me and I can promise a great day and a discount on a trip those first two weeks of February. FOLLOW ALL OF OUR CATCHES ON FACEBOOK AT JOEY FARAH'S BACKWATER FISHING! 361-442-8145



Using my Humminbird Side Scan I have been able to locate and get into position on schools of winter gamefish before the first cast! Winter fishing is so much fun!

NOW SELLING


ARTIST'S CONCEPTUAL RENDERING

WHITECAP
NORTH PADRE ISLAND

DISCOVER A NEW WAY TO
LIVE ON THE ISLAND
TOUR PHASE 1 TODAY!
VISIT THE SALES CENTER
14353 Commodores Drive,
Corpus Christi TX 78418

©2025 Diamond Beach Holdings, LLC. All information and services are subject to change. Availability, prices, materials, and options may vary. All photographs, renderings, and other depictions are for the sole purpose of illustration and are subject to change. Imagery is representative and does not depict specific buildings, views or future architecture, community, amenities or other details. Architect: PLACE Design, Inc., Landscape Architects: Cadence, Marketing & Sales by Strategist LLC.

WhitecapLivingNPI.com



The Reds are THICK! With winter low tides, redfish have followed the water off of the shallow flats and into small depressions. This client caught his three redfish on four casts this week.



Ponies and Dumplings

By Chris Jordan

This last cold snap wasn't on par with the one we had in mid-February of 2021, but it got me thinking about cold-weather food nonetheless.

In the summer of 1976, my father was still driving his old Plymouth Valiant and Mom had just gotten a slightly-used-but-newish Thunderbird. We really needed something like a station wagon or a Suburban, being a family of four with young kids. So one Saturday, Dad set out for San Antonio to trade in his yellow relic from the last decade.



The family with the yellow Valiant in the background.

Mom, my sister Claudia, and I were gripped with anticipation all day. When would he be home? What kind of vehicle would he be driving? Late in the afternoon, a racing-red Toyota Celica pulled into the driveway and we all wondered who it was and what they wanted.

It was my dad — and let me tell you, Mom was pissed. Mind you, the Celica was a sports car in its first iteration: a crouched fastback with a long hood and American muscle aesthetics. They called it a mini Mustang or sometimes a "pony car." It did not have the horsepower to back up the looks, but from what I could tell, it was fun to drive. And maybe that's all my dad wanted — because come fall, we were to move into our extended family's shared vacation house on Canyon Lake while our New Braunfels home was being worked on.



Toyota Celica mid-1970s.

The lake "house" was really more of a cabin with no central AC or heat. It was on stilts, of course, due to its proximity to the lake. That winter it got really cold. We stayed warm the best we could with space heaters, hot tea, and pots of stew. Dad would take us to school and Mom would pick us up. The only path available at the time was a 30-mile drive each way.

A scalding antifreeze shower

One particularly cold school morning, my sister and I huddled up with Dad in the front seat of the Celica. Our route took us through Gruene and we were almost there when disaster struck: without warming, my sister and I were sprayed with scalding hot antifreeze. Turns out a mid-70s-era Toyota Celica has hoses under the dash that carry pressurized coolant from the radiator to the cabin for heat. We were warm, alright — for a minute.

The car was obviously inoperable. Someone finally stopped to offer assistance. They gave us a ride to my grandparents' house. Dad borrowed my grandmother's '66 Impala to drive to work, my grandfather took us kids back to the lake house in his old pickup, and the Celica was towed to the shop. I wondered what my overprotective Mom might say.

Back at the lake house, Claudia and I were on best behavior, being fully aware we were in the running for a day without school. Our heartfelt plea was grounded in the assertion that — in addition to our emotional distress — our tragically scalded flesh was too bad for school but not bad enough for the hospital. Daddo, our grandfather, didn't need much convincing. I guess he wanted to play hooky too — but from what? Nothin'. He just loved us with all his heart, that's all.

Daddo got us two kids cleaned up and into dry clothes. We'd had some instant oatmeal for breakfast, but that nourishment was long gone. Daddo could scramble some eggs or make a sandwich, but that was the extent of his cooking ability. Luckily for him, Mom had left the scant leftovers from a pot of chicken and dumplings on the stove from dinner the night before. The stove wasn't on, mind you. It was so cold in the house, the inside of the refrigerator was a relatively warm place. There wasn't much, but we ate all the chicken and all the dumplings, just leaving some gravy in the pot. With all three of us slightly energized, we decided to bundle up, go outside, and subject wildlife and inanimate objects alike to some small arms fire.

Ancient Age and a Colt .45

Ancient Age is an easy-drinkin' Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey aged thirty-six months. It's been made at The George T. Stagg Distillery since 1904, though the place is now known as Buffalo Trace Distillery. It's good for mixing, and that's what Daddo did — albeit only with a little water. After we'd shot at and missed a few things with a .22 rifle, Daddo went to his old truck to fetch two things he always had within easy reach: a flask of Ancient Age and his Colt .45.

The whiskey was to calm the mild benign tremors Daddo had in his hands. This was his M.O. whether he was woodworking, playing banjo, or hunting. The .45 was just along for the ride and whatever comfort it provided. Daddo put the .22 away in the cabin, brought out his over-and-under 12-gauge and handed me a .410. Claudia protested not having a gun just the right amount for a little girl who didn't really want one anyway. We sat outside the cabin and chatted about Santa Claus as quietly as we could so as not to spook any potential gamebirds.

My grandmother, Mum, kept a bird feeder at the lake house. This was good for our bird hunting aspirations, but very bad for half a dozen doves on this particular day. We cleaned the birds and trudged up the cabin stairs. Daddo warmed up the leftover gravy and mixed up some Bisquick dough to drop in there with the dove breasts. We were happy as clams.

Dad eventually made it home from work; Mom arrived shortly thereafter — and man was she pissed. None of us ever saw that Toyota Celica again.



Marine Masters Mobile Marine Service

Certified Technicians

- Yamaha • Honda
- Suzuki • Mercury
- Evinrude • Mariner
- Johnson • Volvo

We've been providing quality marine repairs at your place since 2001.
Operator Owner
Jon Reynolds

361-949-7570 361-728-1745
marinemasters@hotmail.com

361-949-7570 361-728-1745
marinemasters@hotmail.com

Sports

Sports Talk Special to The Island Moon



Dotson's Note: America's figure skating team is primed to medal in Milan with one of its strongest contingents in years. The Milan-Cortina Olympics are only a few weeks away, and the United States has formalized its 2026 figure skating team. Comprising both star power and technical mastery, the 2026 team stands an excellent chance of medaling across multiple events. Thanks to Jay Busbee, Stephanie Scarbrough, Jeff Roberson and the Associated Press for the facts and photos contained in this report.

The US Women

While United States skaters are the reigning gold medalists in the men's competition and bronze in ice dance, Americans have suffered through long stretches of medal-free games in the women's (2006) and pairs (1988) competitions. That could well change this year in northern Italy, particularly in the women's event. The United States will send 16 skaters to Milan: three women's individual competitors, three men's individual competitors, two pairs, and three ice dance teams. Skaters have been judged on the totality of their performance from the start of 2025 through this week's U.S. championships. The Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics begin on Feb. 6th. Figure skating begins that day with the opening installments of the team events of pairs, ice dancing and women's short program. The first medals will be awarded on Feb. 8 in the overall team event. The members of figure skating's Team USA for the Milan Olympics:

Amber Glenn: At 26, the elder stateswoman of America's Big Three. An absolutely magnificent performance this month at the U.S. championships confirms she'll be one of the skaters to watch in individual competition in Milan. Alysa Liu: A member of the 2022 Olympic team in Beijing, Liu took two years off from skating but returned as dominant as ever. She'll be one of the most famous faces on all of Team USA in Milan. Isabeau Levito: The quietest member of the Big Three Team USA women, but equally qualified and ready to meet the challenge of Milan. She claimed the bronze medal in the women's individual division of the U.S. championships.



Ilia Malinin will be heading to Milan for his first Olympics.

The US Men

Ilia Malinin: One of the finest skaters in the world today, the "Quad God" heads to Milan with an excellent chance to medal. Narrowly missed the 2022 team. Andrew Torgashev: A strong performance in the free skate segment of this month's championships vaulted him from fifth place to second ... and a spot on the Olympic roster. Maxim Baumov: The most heartbreaking and heartwarming story of this month's championships. Baumov lost both parents in the tragic plane crash that claimed so many lives in the skating community last January, but rallied to post a third-place finish at this month's championships.

The US Pairs

Ellie Kam / Danny O'Shea: Finished in the runner-up spot at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships that week. Emily Chan / Spencer Howe: Rode a massive comeback in the free skate of their championships skate to surge from 8th to 3rd ... and from there, onto the Olympic team. Alisa Efimova and Misha Mitrofanov would have been locks for this event, having won the pairs championship this month, but Efimova's ongoing citizenship battle prevented the duo from being named to the team under International Olympic Committee rules.



Madison Chock and Evan Bates will be on their fourth Olympic team.

U.S. Ice dance

Madison Chock/Evan Bates: We'd say

they're on a Tom Brady/Michael Jordan-esque run, but not even Brady or Jordan won seven national championships in a row. This will mark their fourth Olympic Games, and they are still seeking a medal. Emile Zingas / Vadym Kolesnik: Their first Olympics together, this selection finishes off a spectacular season for the duo, including a silver medal at this month's championships. Christina Carreira / Anthony Ponomarenko: The bronze medalists at the championships this month in St. Louis round out the Team USA ice dance contingent.

Countdown to the Winter Olympics



Gold medalist Amber Glenn poses with a flag after the women's free skating competition at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships, Friday, Jan. 9, 2026, in St. Louis.



Amber Glenn skates during the "Making Team USA" performance at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships, Sunday, Jan. 11, 2026, in St. Louis.



Jason Brown competes during the men's free skate competition at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships, Saturday, Jan. 10, 2026, in St. Louis.

Dotson's Other Note: The moment Amber Glenn stepped onto the ice at figure skating's world championships held in Boston in 2025, fans began to wave American flags, from the lowest rows inside TD Garden to the highest rafters, where the jerseys of Boston's sporting greats hang in honor. It seemed a fitting backdrop to her program: Glenn is the three-time reigning U.S. champion, one of the current faces of figure skating, and as the daughter of a police officer and a proud native Texan, patriotism flows through her as thick as oil.

Yet the stars-and-stripes weren't the only flags flying high that night.

Scattered throughout the sellout crowd at the last worlds before the Milan Cortina Olympics were the equally conspicuous rainbow flags that for nearly 50 years have signified pride within the LGBTQ+ community. They started popping up at Glenn's competitions a year earlier, when she carried one across her shoulders in celebration of her national championship.

"I saw them," Glenn acknowledged later, long after her performance, "and I was proud to see both of those flags flying."



Gene's Corner

A Surreal Beginning

By Gene Saegert

It began innocently enough as just one of those weird surreal days that started out with the bed covers all torn up. I made the bed look like a bad dream or maybe a night of pure ecstasy. I guess I need to put a sign on the ceiling that I can see when I first look up that says "Ecstasy completely ruled out at your age but bad dreams and nightmares are likely culprits."

Then it began, without warning, a surprise cold rain shower. There was thunder and lightning and the thunder was very weird, not unlike the sound in a play where they are rattling a large piece of tin behind the curtain and the lights were being quickly turned off and on to simulate lightning. Also the rain sounded like one of those gourd things filled with bb pellets and rolled back and forth to simulate rain. Wait! What is happening! Am I in a play in some other dimension? I hope not because I am terrible at memorizing lines!

But thinking back, it all started yesterday. *I went to the county fair and the chickens and the cattle were there.....* Oh no that is just a terrible misquote by my brain from a nursery rhyme. Time to get back to reality. Ok, I actually did go to the San Patricio County fair yesterday and what was weird about it is this. I usually wear a western hat everywhere that I go, like Walmart, HEB and such and sometimes I see others wearing a western hat also. It is the exception rather than the rule and it is few and far between. However at the county fair I was just one western hat wearer losing my identity in a sea of many and I liked it! Makes me proud

of Texas! Ok, now something thrown in that is completely irrelevant. A text from a friend interrupted my line of thought while I was writing, but it was good timing, as I was getting thoughtless... The friend's flight was canceled and she had to book a room for the night at a hotel which she described as beautiful. Now comes the fun part. The name of the hotel was called the Wyn. I am so sorry, but I just couldn't help myself and I told her it sounded like a win Wyn situation, the temptation was just too much to resist. I hope we will remain friends but luckily she knows that this is just my very nature. You just have to use the occasion when it presents itself.

Well back to work. I was going to go to the grocery store but got sidetracked by an idea. That happens a lot, it is not always a good thing, but hey, an idea is an idea and some time I just have to settle and run with it. I told myself, hey it is Saturday and so I decided to take a little break from writing and hit a couple of garage sales. Unfortunately about that time I realized that it was 46 degrees outside and raining. Not really good garage sale weather and also pretty much rules out fishing or pickleball. About that time my brain wakes up and sez' a good choice would be some hot chocolate and one of those awesome apple fritters from the donut shop!" Then my body sez, thank you brain, I like that choice lets run with it, figuratively speaking." Ok, I am out of here.

Thought for the day... Your stomach thinks all potatoes are mashed.

Low tides show a sad truth

Extreme low tides reveal the numerous prop scars adjacent to Doc's and the JFK Causeway



ServiceMASTER
24 Hour
Emergency Service

Carpet Cleaning
Air Duct Cleaning
Upholstery Cleaning

Call for our Daily Specials
361-993-9300

book online at www.servicemaster-tx.com

Thoughts from Reverend Ken

By Rev. Dr. Ken

Growing up in Tucson, Arizona I had occasion to go trout fishing with my uncle in the summers in Flagstaff. My uncle was a great fisherman. Me, not so much. I enjoyed being with him. I especially anticipated plugging the juke box afterwards in the backwoods tavern!

I have fished a bit as an adult. However, it has been quite a few years. My success rate is no better than when I was a kid. Maybe it was the choice of bait.

There is a notable exception. While shark fishing off the southern California coast with my wife's family I was the only one on the boat to catch a shark. Of course, I caught it after getting sick over the side of the boat. I guess it is a matter of what is used for bait.

The first disciples of Jesus were fishermen. I suppose that is why Jesus used the metaphor of fishing for people when he called them to follow him. It helped them to understand what it means to share good news with others. The choice of bait is still important.

Good news means there must be bad news. We see the bad news very clearly every day. It greets us on our feeds and dominates our screens. Bad news overwhelms, discourages, frustrates, angers, and frightens.

We long for good news, good news that goes beyond that which is simply trite. We yearn for the good news that lifts up, energizes, and renews. We crave the good news that offers hope and deliverance. We hunger for the good news that overcomes all the bad news.

Jesus proclaimed the good news that the realm of God was at hand. He lived his life exhibiting evidence that this new day was dawning. The bad news of sin, evil, and death were on their way out. The good news of things on earth as they are in heaven were breaking into our everyday lives. In these days when so much looks empty and lost there still is the good news of God's love that sustains and enables courageous hope, even in all the places where bad news seems to reign unchecked.

The choice of bait matters.

Christians don't follow Jesus in the abstract. Being a Christian is not just about attending

a church and being a good citizen. It's not being moved by a faith concert, listening to a TED-like talk, or being absorbed into our echo chambers of like-minded people who champion our politics and beliefs.

To follow Jesus is to do so in the highly specific particulars of our lives, communities, culture, families, and vocations. God prizes our intellect, our background, our education, our skills, and our passion. To follow Jesus is to lead with love. This love is a love that is nonviolent and courageous. It is a love that is fueled by compassion and empathy. It is love informed by truth and justice.

In these days of bad news, it would be easy for us to submit to the false power of chaos and terror. Intimidation seeks to lure us towards hatred, retreat or division. However, this leads us to surrender to the forces that undermine our sacred connections, that all people are created in the image of God.

The choice of love matters.

Westminster Presbyterian Church is located in the center of Minneapolis. They are at ground zero of the chaos and terror in that city. In their faithful speaking of truth to unjust power, they identify the bait of love that is good news.

When we fish with love we will listen to the stories of those most vulnerable. We will use our energy, intelligence, imagination, love, and resources to enact change. We will counter the rhetoric of hatred and fear. We will engage honestly with those who hold different points of view by working to seek common ground. We will do so with mercy, kindness, and humility. We will choose welcome over suspicion, truth over secrecy, and hope over fear.

Each Sunday a bunch of humans gather to worship God in community at Island Presbyterian Church, giving thanks for grace, love, healing, and hope, working for peace, justice, and reconciliation. There is always room at the table for you! Join us on Sundays at 10 a.m., 14030 Fortuna Bay Drive, or on our Facebook page.

Choose kindness, compassion, and love; do justice and make peace; welcome the stranger. pastor@islandpresby.com

Since 1991



www.atlantiscorpus.com

Atlantis
Pool and Spa
Quality you can swim in!
(361) 563-7665 or (361) 949-8899
RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL
Weekly Pool & Spa Maintenance * Repairs & Renovations
Island Resident
Shouldn't you be saying, "It's time to relax. My pool is ready."
Call Atlantis For All Your Pool Needs



10% Discount for Island Homes!

Red's
AIR CONDITIONING
SINCE 1986

Prompt Professional 24 Hour Service
No Overtime Charges

- All Makes and Models
- Commercial & Residential
- 10 Year Part & Labor Warranties on ALL New Equipment
- Financing available

(361) 949-9545

Serving Padre Island & Flour Bluff Since 1986



TACLB013184C



Senior Moments Special to the Island Moon

Battle of Chosin Reservoir-Part 1



By Dotson Lewis

Dotson's Note: The Battle of Chosin Reservoir, also known as the Chosin Reservoir Campaign or the Battle of Lake Changjin (Korean: ; Hanja: ; RR: *Jangjinho jeontu*; MR: *Changjinho chōnt'u*), was a battle in the Korean War. The name "Chosin" is derived from the Japanese pronunciation "Chōshin", instead of the Korean pronunciation.

The battle took place about a month after the People's Republic of China entered the conflict and sent the 9th Corps of the People's Volunteer Army (PVA) to infiltrate the northeastern part of North Korea. On 27 November 1950, the Chinese force surprised the US X Corps commanded by Major General Edward Almond in the Chosin Reservoir area. A 17-day battle in freezing weather soon followed. Between 27 November and 13 December, 30,000 United Nations Command troops, later nicknamed "The Chosin Few", under the field command of Major General Oliver P. Smith were encircled and attacked by about 120,000 Chinese troops under the command of Song Shilun, who had been ordered by Mao Zedong to destroy the UN forces. Thanks to my Squad Members in the 1st Cavalry Division and my friends in the 1st Marine Division for the facts contained in the report and to Eight Army for the photos.

The UN forces were able to break out of the encirclement and withdraw to the port of Hungnam in what U.S. historians described as the "greatest evacuation movement by sea in U.S. military history". Both sides suffered severe casualties, with battle casualties and non-battle casualties caused by the frigid weather. The withdrawal of the US Eighth Army from northwest Korea and its recovery by Chinese forces in the aftermath of the Battle of the Ch'ongch'on River and the evacuation of the X Corps from the port of Hungnam in northeast Korea marked the withdrawal of UN troops from North Korea.



A map of UN advances toward the Yalu River

By mid-October 1950, after the successful landing at Inchon by the US X Corps, the Eighth Army breakout from the Pusan Perimeter and the subsequent pursuit and destruction of the Korean People's Army (KPA), the Korean War appeared to be all but over. United Nations (UN) forces advanced rapidly into North Korea with the intention of reuniting North and South Korea before the end of 1950. North Korea is divided down the middle by the impassable Taebaek Mountains, which separated the UN forces into two groups. The US Eighth Army advanced north through the western coast of the Korean Peninsula, while the Republic of Korea (ROK) I Corps and the US X Corps advanced north on the eastern coast.



Major General Oliver P. Smith

At the same time the People's Republic of China entered the conflict after issuing several warnings to the United Nations. On 19 October 1950, large formations of Chinese troops, dubbed the People's Volunteer Army (PVA), secretly crossed the border and into North Korea. One of the first Chinese units to reach the Chosin Reservoir area was the PVA 42nd Army, which was to stop the eastern UN advances. On 25 October, the advancing ROK I Corps made contact with the Chinese and halted at

Funchilin Pass (40.204°N 127.3°E), south of the Chosin Reservoir.

After the landing at Wonsan, the US 1st Marine Division of X Corps engaged the defending PVA 124th Division on 2 November; the battle causing severe casualties to the Chinese. On 6 November, the PVA 42nd Corps ordered a retreat to the north with the intention of luring the UN forces to the Chosin Reservoir. By 24 November, the 1st Marine Division occupied both Sinhung-ni (40.557°N 127.27°E) on the eastern side of the reservoir and Yudami-ni (40.48°N 127.112°E) on the west side.

Faced with the sudden attacks by Chinese forces in the Eighth Army sector, General Douglas MacArthur ordered the Eighth Army to launch the Home-by-Christmas Offensive. To support the offensive, MacArthur ordered X Corps to attack west from the Chosin Reservoir and to cut the vital Manpojin—Kanggye—Huichon supply line. Major General Edward M. Almond, commander of the US X Corps, formulated a plan on 21 November. It called for the US 1st Marine Division to advance west through Yudami-ni, while the US 7th Infantry Division would provide a regimental combat team to protect the right flank at Sinhung-ni. The US 3rd Infantry Division would also protect the left flank, while providing security in the rear area. By then the X Corps was stretched thin along a 400 mi (640 km) front.

Surprised by the Marine landing at Wonsan, Chinese Communist Party chairman Mao Zedong called for the immediate destruction of the ROK Capital Division, ROK 3rd Infantry Division, US 1st Marine Division, and US 7th Infantry Division in a telegram to Commander Song Shilun of the 9th Corps, PVA, on 31 October. Under Mao's urgent orders, the 9th Corps was rushed into North Korea on 10 November. Undetected by UN intelligence, it entered the Chosin Reservoir area on 17 November, with the 20th Army of the 9th Corps relieving the 42nd Army near Yudami-ni.

Chosin Reservoir is a man-made lake located in the northeast of the Korean peninsula. The name Chosin is the Japanese pronunciation of the Korean place name Changjin, and the name stuck due to the outdated Japanese maps used by UN forces. The battle's main focus was around the 78-mile-long (126 km) road that connects Hungnam and Chosin Reservoir, which served as the only retreat route for the UN forces. Through these roads, Yudami-ni and Sinhung-ni, located at the west and east side of the reservoir respectively, are connected at Hagaru-ri (now Changjin-ri) (40.3838°N 127.249°E). From there, the road passes through Koto-ri (40.284°N 127.3°E) and eventually leads to the port of Hungnam. The area around the Chosin Reservoir was sparsely populated. The battle was fought over some of the roughest terrain during some of the harshest winter weather conditions of the Korean War. The road was created by cutting through the hilly terrain of Korea, with steep climbs and drops. Dominant peaks, such as the Funchilin Pass and the Toktong Pass (40.3938°N 127.161°E), overlook the entire length of the road. The road's quality was poor, and in some places it was reduced to a one-lane gravel trail. On 14 November 1950, a cold front from Siberia descended over the Chosin Reservoir, and the temperature plunged, according to estimates, to as low as -36°F (-38°C). The cold weather created considerable danger of frostbite casualties and was accompanied by frozen ground, icy roads, and weapon malfunctions. Medical supplies froze; morphine syringes had to be defrosted in a medic's mouth before they could be injected; blood plasma was frozen and useless on the battlefield. Even cutting off clothing to deal with a wound risked gangrene and frostbite. Batteries used for the Jeeps and radios did not function properly in the temperature and quickly ran down. The lubrication in the guns gelled and rendered them useless in battle. Likewise, the springs on the firing pins would not strike hard enough to fire the round, or would jam.

To Be Continued

Don't forget the Veterans Round Table on Thursdays 9-11 AM at the Del Mar College Center for Economic Development, 3209 S. Staples

Researchers Expand Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring to Protect Human Health and the Oyster Industry

FlowCytobots enter the fight

For many years, Texans learned about impending harmful algal blooms or HABs after negative impacts were already observed, such as fish kills.

Now, researchers at the Harte Research Institute at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi are expanding a network of automated HAB detection sensors, known as Imaging FlowCytobots or IFCBs, to improve our ability to provide early warning of blooms so that state agencies responsible for protecting wildlife and humans can have ample time to respond.

Harmful algal blooms or HABs are a result of an overgrowth of algal species that can cause die-offs of coastal wildlife and habitat and can pose a threat to humans through toxin production.

"Red tide" is a HAB that most Texans are familiar with. Devastating impacts to coastal tourism-based economies from HABs have been observed in the Gulf and elsewhere, and in Texas, HABs have potential to threaten our growing oyster farming industry. This technology can save millions of dollars for coastal businesses, reduce potential health risks, and bridge data gaps on HABs that can inform future management measures.

"Both toxic and non-toxic HAB species occur along the Texas coast, and changing environmental conditions can create conditions more conducive for some HAB species," said Dr. Laura Beecraft, an assistant research scientist at the Harte Research Institute. "Continuous monitoring can help us avoid human illness and economic losses from toxic blooms and understand environmental conditions that lead to HABs."

IFCBs are deployed at strategic locations on the Texas coast, where they analyze

water samples about every 30 minutes for HABs. Each water sample is run through an internal microscope that takes images of algae and uses artificial intelligence (AI) to identify the harmful species present in the water.

Currently, HRI manages IFCBs deployed at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department facility in Port O'Connor and the Texas State Aquarium in Corpus Christi. Additional instruments are planned for deployment in 2026 at the Key Allegro Oyster Farm in Fulton along Aransas Bay and at the Texas AgriLife/TPWD Hatchery in Flour Bluff in the Upper Laguna Madre, expanding researchers' ability to see and potentially predict HABs. When toxic species are detected, the information is sent to an email list coordinated by TPWD.

"Early detection of HABs helps state agencies by giving them the time and information needed to collect additional water samples to determine toxin levels and assess risk," Beecraft said. "This means timely information to protect human health from direct exposure and consumption of contaminated seafood, as well as protect coastal businesses, for example, by avoiding harvesting during a bloom."

HRI researchers, including in the institute's Coastal and Marine Geospatial Sciences lab, are currently working on creating automated warnings that could be sent to agencies, including TPWD's Spills and Kills Team and the Texas Department of State Health Services.

The deployment of IFCBs has opened new worlds in terms of studying HABs by giving researchers, resource managers, and governmental agencies the ability to spot early warning signs and act before small changes become big problems.



Red tides devastate Gulf waters. This is a massive algal bloom of the coast of Florida. Photo from nationalgeographic.com



Brief Description:

The Imaging FlowCytobot (IFCB) is an in-situ automated submersible imaging flow cytometer that generates images of particles in-flow taken from the aquatic environment.

The IFCB uses a combination of flow cytometric and video technology to capture high resolution images of suspended particles. Laser-induced fluorescence and light scattering from individual particles are measured and used to trigger targeted image acquisition; the optical and image data are then transmitted to shore in real time. Collected images during continuous monitoring can be processed externally with automated image classification software. Images can be classified to the genus or even species level with demonstrated accuracy comparable to that of human experts.

IFCB generates high resolution (~2.7 pixels/micron) images of suspended particles in the size range <10 to $150\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ (such as diatoms and dinoflagellates). The instrument continuously samples at a rate of 15ml of sea water per hour. Depending on the target population the IFCB can generate on the order of 30,000 high resolution images per hour. Description and photo courtesy of mclanelabs.com

Sudoku

Sudoku answers are not available.
Play at your own risk!

Going Easy On You...

4	6		9		5	3
3	7				6	
1		5	3		4	
	4		2		3	
6		5			4	
5		9		7		
1		4	8		2	
8				1	9	
5	4	9		6	8	

Knuckle-Cracker

5	1		2	8		
9	3	1	7			6
2			4	8	5	9
9				7		
3	5	7	8		2	
9			5	1	4	2
	9	4		7	8	

Mind-Numbing Frustration

5	9				4	
3		7		9		
9		8			7	
			3	2	6	
1	5	2	8			
4	6	8				
6		3			2	
3		5	4			
4		7	1			

Brain-Buster

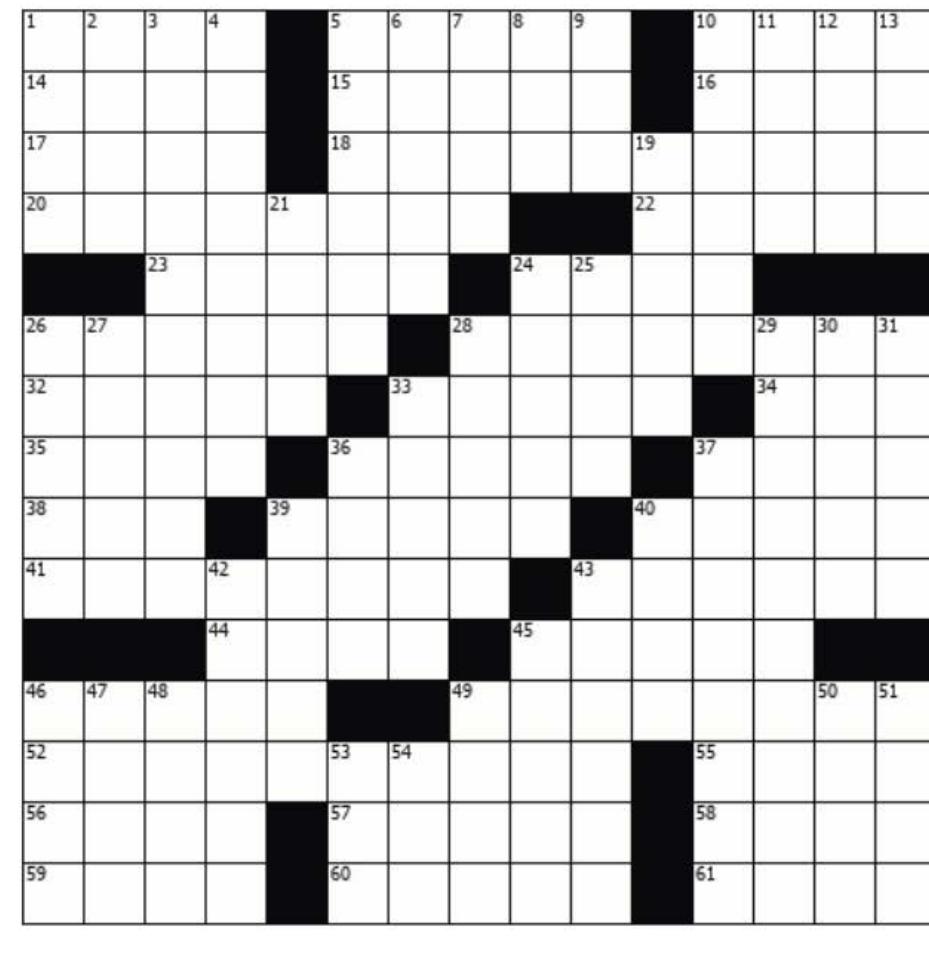
	1		3			
6		4		1	8	
5	3		6			
	3			4		
3	8			7	6	
5		9				
	2		9	7		
9	5		4		2	
2	7					

Island Crossword

Crossword Solution on classifieds page

Across

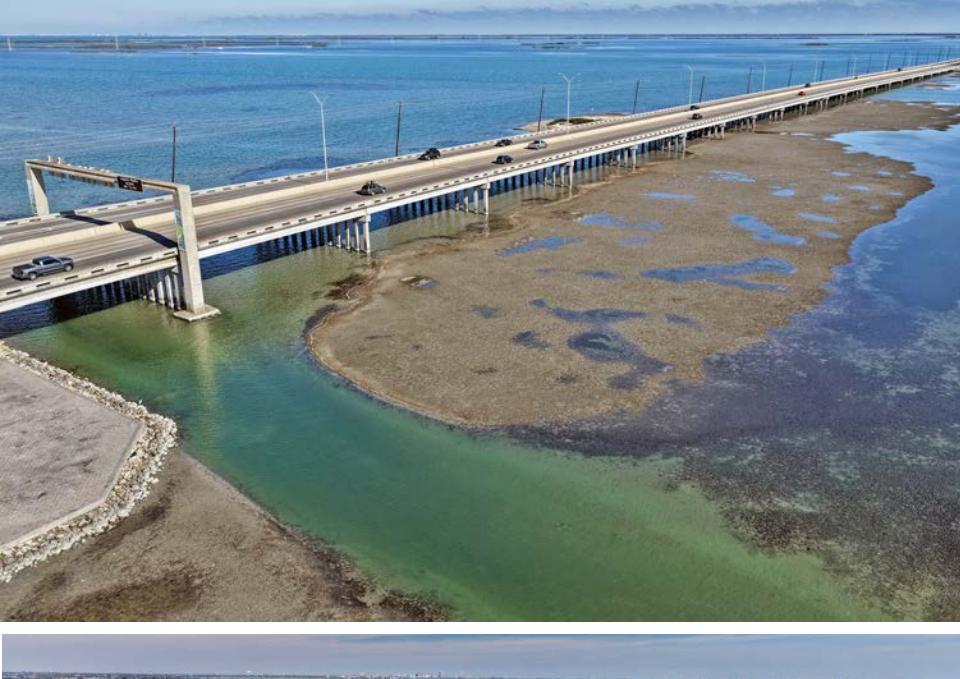
- Shares
- Homer king until '98
- Bit of bickering
- Yearn
- Get up
- Rossini song
- Flutter
- Used
- Walkman plug-in
- Dishwasher cycle
- Ross of Motown
- Gondola, e.g.
- Tranquilizers' opposite
- Lopez or Grey
- Org. founded on Lincoln's birthday
- Duck sound
- Long-term investment
- Preserve, as meat
- Bizarre
- Kind of poker
- Abbr. on a key
- Double agents
- Jackson or James
- Shuttle cargoes
- Gridiron specialist
- Building extensions
- Doctor in the service
- Put on a show
- Rescinder
- Farms
- The Jewel of the East
- Augury
- Japanese immigrant
- Exam for would-be atty.
- Await action
- Hearing shower
- Salinger girl



Down

1. Bistro	19. Swallowed	39. Shoe bottoms
2. Basketball power under John Wooden	21. Instrument for a Marx Brother	40. New Testament book
3. Arbitrator	24. Chicago eleven	42. Map table
4. Part of stage scenery	25. A single time	43. Stomach enzyme
5. Bricklayers	26. Remove the lid	45. Euripides tragedy
6. Hippodrome	27. Prentiss or Poundstone	46. Hit the mall
7. Sake base	28. Isle of Wight settlers	47. Big reference volume
8. Bar opening	29. Top of the line	48. Congregation affirmation
9. D.C. VIP	30. Rub out	49. File
10. Gauguin's island	31. More crude	50. Jack of Westerns
11. Place avoided by Rushdie	33. British moola	51. Ceremony
12. Fifties auto feature	36. Scorpio stone	53. Spasm
13. Go dim	37. Open to dispute	54. Suffix with lion

Low water and restricted flow on the JFK Causeway



Augs Services got some drone shots of the low water showing the areas along the JFK Causeway where tidal flow is impeded. The low tide revealed the normally submerged sandbars, and the existing channels on the southside of the causeway.

Moon Classifieds #1137

Here's how to place a Classified Ad	
To place an ad call: 361-949-7700 or Email your ads to: editor@islandmoon.com	
No texts please	
Costs start at \$15 for 25 words 25 cents a word after that Pictures or art additional \$5.00 Small charge for larger ads Ads with payment can be taken to our office at:	
14646 Compass St., Suite 4 Deadline for classified ads is no later than NOON on Tuesday	
PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BEFORE PUBLICATION	
We accept: American Express, Visa, MasterCard	
Al-Anon & AA Meetings	
Alcoholics Anonymous Sunset 7 AA Group Meets four times per week on North Padre Island Monday, Wednesday & Friday 7 pm at Island Presbyterian Church, 14030 Fortuna Bay Dr. Sunday 8 am at Padre Balli RV Park Open Pavilion 15820 Park Rd 22. (In bad weather, the Sunday meetings will be indoors at IPC)	
Is alcohol causing a problem in your family? Try Al-Anon	
Al-Anon meets at 7:00 pm Sundays at Padre Island Baptist Church	

Services	
Appliance Repair	
	
-N- House Appliance Repair	
Most major brands & appliances	
Also offering complete dryer vent clean outs along with pool cleaning services	
Mention this ad for discount on repairs	
361-960-0911	
BBQ Cleaning	
CALL	
	
Because YOU don't want to do it!	
Frank 361-813-1929 cell	
361-99-GRILL (994-7455)	
CoastalBendGrillCleaning.com	

The Tree Guy	
Trimming, cleaning, brush removal	
Islander owned, Free estimates	
Sean Thomas 361-426-2823	

Services	
Junk Removal	
	
Save Our Shores Junk Removal	
Veteran Owned & Operated	
Furniture Removal & House Clean Outs	
Construction Debris Removal	
Light Demolition	
Bulk Item Pickups	
Hot Tub Removals	
Fence Removal	
Dumpster Rentals AND MORE!	
Owner: Nate Epling 361-941-3041	
Decks/Docks/Boat Lifts	
Artistic Construction	
Boat Lifts, Decks, Docks, Etc.	
Licensed & Insured	
Member of Padre Island Business Association	
361-444-4702	
Sunniepadreisland@yahoo.com	

Hi Tech Plastering, Inc.	
Stucco, Eifs Coatings, Patch Jobs	
Crack Repair, Spalling Concrete Repair	
Wood Replacement, Facia, etc.	
Artisan – Joe Cantu	
Phone/Fax 361-814-5605	
htplastering@aol.com	
Rene's Plumbing	
For all your plumbing needs. Gas lines, sewer, drain cleaning, water lines, water lines, water heaters, faucets and garbage disposals. "Licensed and Insured" Since 1970 Call 361-215-7943	

Services	
Pool & Spa Service	
ATLANTIS POOL AND SPA SERVICE	
Weekly Pool Maintenance – Repairs	
Renovations - Chemicals – Supplies	
Residential – Commercial	
25 Years Experience – Insured	
Free Delivery! Free Estimates!	
Island Resident Owned	
Call 361-949-8899	
Wade In The Water Pool Services	
Cleaning • Repairs • Remodels	
Hot Tubs • Warranty Station	
Don't go OTB for pool & spa chemicals!	
15715 SPID #101	
Monday-Friday 9am-5pm	
FREE WATER TESTING	
Locally owned and operated since 2010	
Call 361-658-8581	
Outdoor Services	
Lawn & Tree Trimming	

GOT CRACKS?
CALL THE STUCCO PROS
AT 361-949-2100
Roofing
Wolfe Construction, Inc.

- Insurance Restoration Specialists
- Roofing
- Residential & Commercial

Bryan Wolfe

361-949-1180

15809 El Socorro Loop

Corpus Christi TX 78418

ROOFING PROS!

Custom Home Exteriors, Inc.

Tom Sheehan 361-949-2100

Engineer Inspected/Windstorm Certified

Quality "Owens Corning" Shingles

Island Homeowner

Roofing Padre Island

Since 1985!

Thuron Home improvement services

Appliances – fixtures exchange

Drywall repair and painting

Doors, windows, or cabinet repairing

Electrical or plumbing problem

Assembling new things and much more

Please contact us at 512-779-7494

Seniors – single mom's savings available

FOR RENT

CHURCH BUILDING

Sanctuary & Dining

App. 2,000 sq. ft.

5 DAYS of WEEK & PRICE NEGOTIABLE

546 Caribbean Dr. (Flour Bluff)

Call Luis 361-777-8844



OUR SERVICES

BOOK NOW

- Eye Exams
- Glasses & Contact Lenses
- Urgent Eye Care
- Diabetic Eye Exams
- Children's Eye Exams

CALL OR TEXT: (361) 529-7570

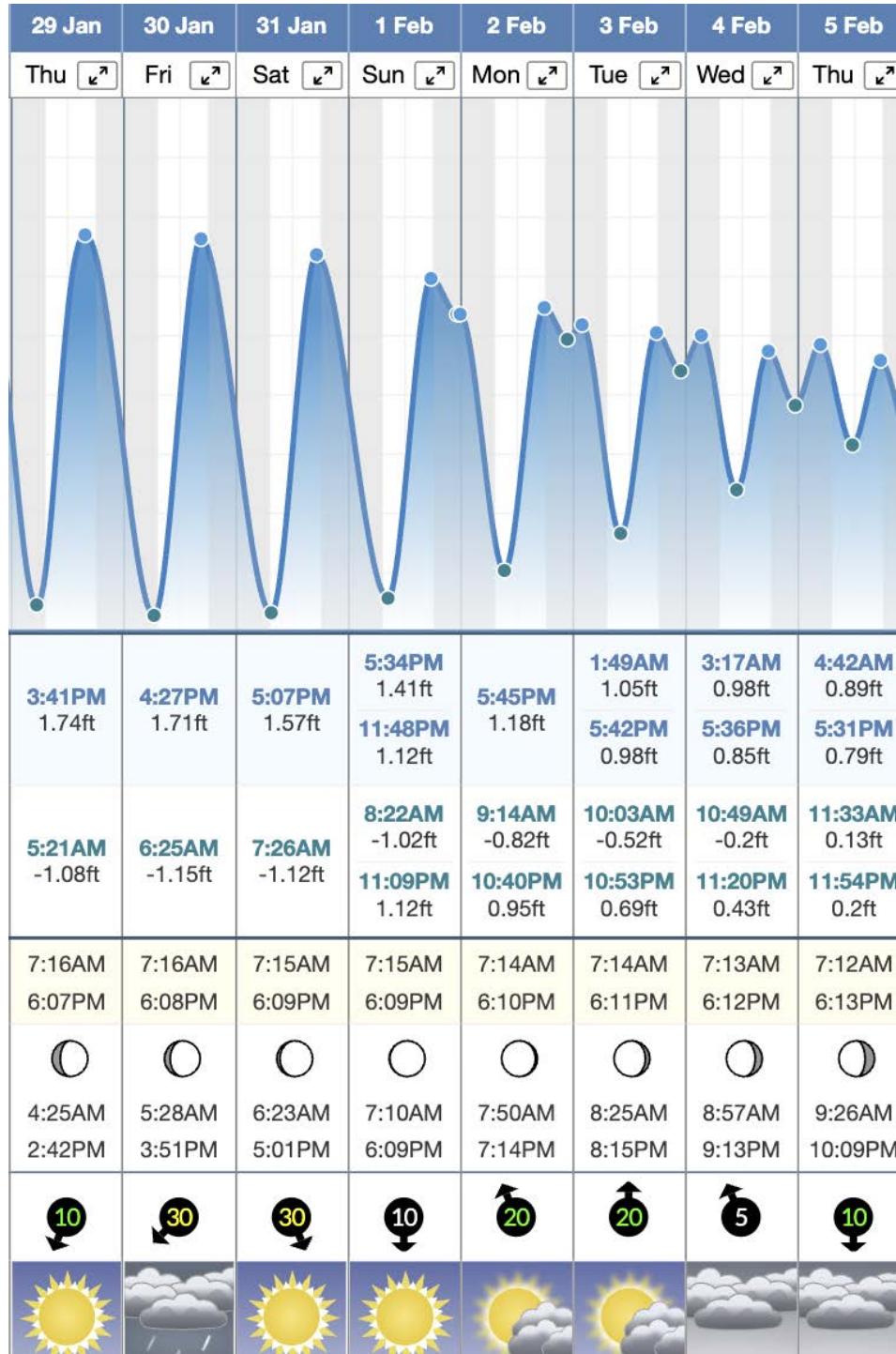
14650 Compass St Ste 2

Lauren Jensen, OD

Your one-stop shop for eyecare on the island!

www.islandfamilyeyecare.com

Tides of the Week



State News

Property Taxes – what are the new laws?

On Nov. 4, 2025, Texas voters approved the following property tax-related amendments to the Texas Constitution:

- A property tax exemption on animal feed held by the owner for sale at retail.
- A property tax exemption on the residence homestead of the surviving spouse of a veteran who died because of a condition or disease presumed under federal law to have been service connected.
- A property tax exemption of \$125,000 on tangible personal property held or used for income production.
- A temporary property tax exemption on the appraised value of an improvement to a residence homestead that is completely destroyed by a fire.

Know where to go

Corpus Christi Beach Parking Areas



Island Real Estate Roundup

Padre Island Real Estate Kicks Off the New Year

Apryl Nolles

The New Year is barely underway, yet the Padre Island real estate market is already showing encouraging momentum.

In just the first month of the year, we've seen a noticeable increase in homes going under contract or into pending status, nearly matching the number of new listings entering the market. This balance between supply and demand is a positive signal for both buyers and sellers, especially so early in the year.

Inventory has increased modestly, with new listings up approximately 15%, giving buyers more options without overwhelming the market. Meanwhile, median home prices have remained stable, reinforcing the

strength and resilience of the Padre Island market despite broader economic conversations.

This early activity suggests buyers are motivated and confident, while sellers are pricing strategically and seeing results. If this pace continues, Padre Island is positioned for a healthy and active year ahead.

As always, local market conditions matter—and early indicators show that Padre Island real estate is off to a strong, steady start in 2026.

Texas Master Naturalist



Now is your
chance to apply
Scan now for more!
www.tmm.org/st

Connect with nature,
volunteer with us!

T E X A S



South Texas Chapter

Learn • Explore • Serve



Island Real Estate Roundup

Padre Island Real Estate Kicks Off the New Year

Apryl Nolles

The New Year is barely underway, yet the Padre Island real estate market is already showing encouraging momentum.

In just the first month of the year, we've seen a noticeable increase in homes going under contract or into pending status, nearly matching the number of new listings entering the market. This balance between supply and demand is a positive signal for both buyers and sellers, especially so early in the year.

Inventory has increased modestly, with new listings up approximately 15%, giving buyers more options without overwhelming the market. Meanwhile, median home prices have remained stable, reinforcing the

Padre Landscapes

Commercial & Residential Services

Nursery & Organics

WINNER OF THE STATE OF TEXAS
SMALL BUSINESS AWARD

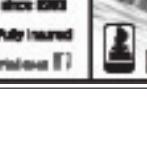
PadreLandscapes.com

(361) 949-6999

pedrelandscape@live.com

Nursery - 15606 SPID, Ste. B

On The Island

Owned & Operated
by an Insider
since 2003

Fully Insured

Reviews

Learn • Explore • Serve

CALLING ALL
Winter Texans!
Condo Tours & Open House Fun

Guided Resort Tours & Socializing
Door Prizes & Free Food!

All Resorts Offer:

Organized Winter Texan Activities
Relaxing Hot Tubs & Resort Amenities

Beachfront Locations

Private Boardwalks

FEB.
11th

Gulf Shores Condominiums

6021 State HWY 361

10 AM - NOON

FEB.
12th

Sea Gull Condominiums

6649 Seacomber Dr.

10 AM - NOON

FEB.
13th

Casa Condominiums

4903 State HWY 361

10 AM - NOON

FEB.
18th

Sandpiper Condominiums

6745 Seacomber Dr.

10 AM - NOON

FEB.
19th

Sandcastle Condominiums

800 Sandcastle Dr.

10 AM - NOON

FEB.
24th

La Mirage Resort Condominiums

5973 State HWY 361

10 AM - NOON



A FAMILY BUSINESS, SINCE 1987

SAFE GUARD
STORAGE

Contact Us

- ✓ Personal Storage
- ✓ Office Space
- ✓ Boat & RV Storage
- ✓ Climate-Controlled Storage
- ✓ Reliable Storage Units in Corpus Christi, TX

Our Contact

Phone Number:
(361) 937-8673

Visit Us In Person

10514 S.P.I.D

Corpus Christi, TX



Three Chords and the Truth

By Ronnie Narmour
ronnienarmour@gmail.com

Note from RN: It's literally freezing in Port A right now and the music scene is clinging to life. Except for Shorty's and the Gaff, I don't have much to report. So here's another blast from the past going back to 2009 when I was living in my van on the beach. Enjoy!

Gone fishing..



My first residence in Port A. 2009

My beach bum guru, James, has been determined to teach me how to fish, lately. Mind you, I'm not adverse to this notion, but not enthusiastic either. I've done it before, many times in fact. I've stood out there with a line in the water for hours upon hours not catching anything with the best of them. I have just never had any luck catching a fish. It's become a joke among my friends whenever I even mention that I'm going to go fishing. They don't even rib me anymore. I have honestly tried to catch fish in lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, oceans and every body of water short of a puddle. Nada. Zip. Nothing. I even paid big money one time to go out on a little boat in Mexico not to catch a fish. We were out in the Pacific all day and my buddy brought in a couple of big sailfish. But, not me. When I lived in Kerrville on the Guadalupe River and fished for bass with my pals, they'd bring in stringers of two and three pounders frequently. Not me. I lived on Lake Travis, Lake Austin and Lake L.B.J. at different times in my life and tried to fish all of those fish worthy lakes NEVER to any avail. When I was a kid, my Grandfather would take me fishing in Lake Amistad, he'd bring in catfish all day long while I stood there holding my pole and wondering what I was doing wrong. My Grandpa's pat answer was that I wasn't holding my mouth right. That screwed me up for a long time.

Ain't gonna happen...



My Beach Bum Guru teaching me to fish in 2009.

I came to think I was working off some really bad karma from another life where I had probably wiped out an entire species of fish and the gods were never to allow me to ever retrieve another fish from its natural environment. Now here's some irony. I used to own a couple of seafood markets in Austin in the late seventy's. My partner and I would come to the coast every week and buy seafood, then take them back and sell them. I was surrounded in dead fish all day long. I smelled like dead fish all day long. My world was consumed in dead fish. You'd think I worked off enough karma in that chapter of my life, but no. In my previous incarnation, I must have done an atrocity so demented that the likeliness of me ever catching a fish, in this life, was that of Hitler being invited to a bar mitzvah. I tried to explain all of this to James, but

I don't think he understood the celestial weight I had on my shoulder. So I dug out my fishing pole and went off with him to watch him catch fish. "You're gonna catch fish today, Ronyea. I guarantee it." And we loaded down the van with enough bait and fishing poles to clear the Gulf of the entire fish population then headed to the jetty. While walking out on the jetty I could see Spanish Mackerel literally jumping out of the water. I saw people who had been fishing before we arrived with buckets completely full of fish they'd caught. I thought, today's the day. I will finally catch a fish today. My destiny has changed...nope. Didn't happen. Not even a nibble.

It's a curse...



Another pushy pelican.

So the next day James insisted that we go over to Charlie's Pasture and give it a try. He had some theory about the wind direction and the tides coming or going and some other reasons why the bay side was the ticket, today. I knew that this was bigger than both of us, but I went along with it. He had poles rigged with various baits and poles to fish the waters deep, shallow and in between. We had dead shrimp, live shrimp, rubber shrimp and even cooked shrimp for bait. We had big hooks, little hooks, spinning hooks and glow in the dark hooks. After an hour or so of trying everything James knew and still no fish, I retreated to my van to make a phone call. While I was consumed in this conversation, I heard James yell, "YOU CAUGHT A FISH!!!" Yeah right, I'm in the van on the phone and I caught a fish. I glanced out the window and he was holding up a baby fish about the size of his hand. I heard him mumble something about cutting it up for bait and I finished up my call. When I emerged from the van to view my bounty, I was just in time to witness a pelican popping it down its gullet like an appetizer at happy hour. The pelican then gave me a look like, "Check it out oh evil one...you must suffer further" and then waddled off. I accept this curse but it's not going to keep me from still trying. The day will come when I will catch a fish, my bull tenacity will prevail...or not

Coming this week...



Art Barrera will play Shorty's this Friday.

On Thursday we have the **Johnson All Starz** playing their Thursday night residency at Shorty's. On Friday our Cajun pals, **Boudreux and Pousson**, will play the **Gaff**, Art Barrera will bring his *One Man Show* to Shorty's plus the *House of Rock* will have a great show with **John Cortez** and **Chris Duarte**. Both Cortez and Duarte are bonafied monsters. On Saturday Cortez will play Shorty's and the **Coastal Cowboys** will play the **VFW**. Check out the **LIVE MUSIC TONIGHT** box for more upcoming shows.

♪♪♪ And, that's the truth ♪♪♪



**BELT SANDER RACES
EVERY 2ND & 4TH SATURDAY**

COLD BEER

THE GAFF

OPEN DAILY AT 11 AM



John Cortez will play Shorty's on Saturday.



Boudreux and Pousson will play the Gaff on Friday.

LIVE MUSIC TONIGHT

Thursday,

January 29

Johnson All Starz @ Shortys

Clark Bros @ Salty Dog

Michael Burts @ The Slip

Watched You Die, Silent Haven, No Jest @ House of Rock

Jim Dugan @ Brewster Island

Nathan Allen @ Brewster Southside

Bellamy Bros @ Brewster Downtown

Flashback @ Executive Surf Club

Scarecrow People @ Executive Surf Club

Meza @ Brewster Southside

Sploinky Rave @ Brewster Downtown

Orlando Band @ South Texas Ice House

BOO & POO

JAN 30

JIM DUGAN

JAN 31

YAPPY HOUR (3-5)

FEB 1

JIM BUSH

FEB 5



THE GAFF
BELTSANDER RACES EVERY 2ND & 4TH SAT
OPEN MIC EVERY WED WITH BRAD E.

Sunday,

February 1

Jim Dugan, Ty Dietz @ Shorty's

Yappy Hour 3-5 @ Gaff

Clark Bros @ Salty Dog

Riptide Cowboy Open Mic @ Mikel May's Too

Kash'd Out, Jayton Lening @ House of Rock

SHORTY'S

JIM DUGAN & TY DIETZ EVERY SUN

THE ALL STARS EVERY THUR 8-12

ART BARRERA

JAN 30

JOHN CORTEZ

JAN 31

BOONE HOLDING

FEB 6

CATHOUSE

FEB 7

BRAD ETHEridge

FEB 13

Treasure Island

**Busted Bicycle
Craft Cocktails
Tues- Sunday
Open at 5:00**

Saturday,

January 31

2026 PORT A HOME TOUR

John Cortez @ Shorty's

Jim Dugan @ Gaff
Coastal Cowboys @ VFW

Aaron Jacob @

Brewster Southside

Meza @ Brewster Island

Seattle Rising, Xcess, Heavy Soul @ House of Rock

David Martinez, Juan Deers @ Executive Surf Club

ZRZ @ South Texas

Ice House

National Nobodyz @ Sugar Shack

Sip Yard
PORT ARANSAS, TEXAS

CLOSED FOR SEASON

WILL REOPEN

March 6th



**Live music
WILL Return
On March 6th**

Thursday,

February 5

Johnson All Starz @ Shorty's

Clark Bros @ Salty Dog

Smile Empty Soul,

Primer 55 @ House of Rock

Billy Snipes @ Doc's Ejey 'Eddie Alaniz' @ Pelican Lounge

Friday,

February 6

Boone Holding @ Shorty's

Dreaming in Color @ Pelican Lounge

Friday, February 6

Boone Holding @ Shorty's

Dreaming in Color @ Pelican Lounge

Saturday,

February 7

Cathouse @ Shorty's

Diamond's Edge @ Pelican Lounge

Boudreux & Pousson @ Bay Area Brew RP

Whiskey Down @ Surf Club

Nik Parr @ House of Rock

National Nobodyz @ Boneshakers

Paradise Computer Services

-Established, Local, Trusted-

HELP

Since 2004

Sales & Service

409 wave G (Cut-off) 749-4960

Port Aransas



Hair by Heidi

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

call or text 512.914.8846

