



Three Chords and the Truth B8



Nature Notes A5



On the Rocks B1



Backwater Adventures B1



The Art of Island Life A6

Issue 1139

The

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February 12, 2026

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Roseate Spoonbill By Lu Ann Kingsbury



ISLAND MOON LIVE
THURSDAY'S FROM 11-1
ON YOUTUBE AT ISLAND
MOON LIVE AND ON
FACEBOOK AT THE ISLAND
MOON NEWSPAPER



By Dale Rankin

It's been a calm week here on our little sandbar with Superbowl Weekend behind us but Spring Break 2026 is lurking just three weeks away when the Life Cycle begins anew *Around The Island*. The big weekend for Spring Break 2026 will be March 14-15 when the break for Texas A&M University and the University of Texas overlap. It will be a No Left Turn weekend from the Port Aransas ferries to the JFK Bridge.

Speedy Stop

The owners of the long-planned Speedy Stop next door to American Bank on The Island said this week the project has gone out to bids and construction is almost ready to begin. The land work at the site has been in place for a while and in 2025 the owners obtained the right of way for an entrance onto State Highway 361.

Plans include retail, food, and abundant gasoline pumps.

PIPOA elections

The deadline for candidates to register to run for the four open seats on the Padre Isles Property Owners Board of Directors is February 15 and so far four candidates have expressed interest. They are: Terry Brown, Mark Dick, Ross Garcia, and Jim McFadden. The question again this year is whether a quorum of 502 members will cast ballots through the ManageCASA website where voting is conducted. In 2025 a lack of a quorum

Bob Hall Pier Opening set for February 24



Bob Hall Pier this week

By Dale Rankin

The new \$22.7 million Bob Hall Pier will open to the public with a ribbon cutting at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, February 24 and will be free for the first ninety days.

The return of the pier comes almost six years after it was demolished by Hurricane Hanna in 2020 and marks its fourth reconstruction after being damaged or destroyed by hurricanes since its original construction in 1950 at 300 feet. The new pier is of steel construction and designed to withstand a 100-year storm.

Bob Hall cont. on page A3

Beachcombing Report

Octopus Rescue on Padre Island

Beachcombing after a strong winter cold front can be equal parts fascinating and sobering. This week was no exception along the Texas coast. With water temperatures dropping quickly over the last several days, a number of unusual strandings have been reported, including several dead common octopus washing ashore on North Padre Island.



Jace with an Octopus

While walking the beach a couple miles south of Bob Hall Pier, I came across something I never expected to see alive on the sand - a common octopus - stranded but still moving. Given the rapid temperature drop associated with the recent cold front, it was clear the animal was likely cold-stunned, a condition where sudden cold water slows metab-

Beachcombing cont. on page A5

Groundwater for Billish Park

The Padre Isles Property Owners Association has completed the drilling of four wells in Billish Park to provide groundwater for irrigation.

A storage tank has also been installed but activation power to pump the water to fill the tank is still a work in progress due to a prior lightning strike on the existing meter circuit which was installed in 2018 when the PIPOA took over maintenance at the park under an



Groundwater wells and reservoir

Billish cont. on page A3

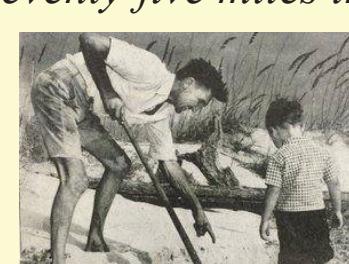
A little Island history

Surviving the 1933 Hurricane

A place of darkness and fury

Walking seventy-five miles in 24 hours

Editor's note: This is the latest installment of the memoirs of Louis Rawalt who along with his wife Viola lived at various locations on Padre Island after being given six months to live due to injuries sustained in World War I. He lived on The Island for more than 40 years.



Louis with his son Charlie on Padre Island.

In the last issue Rawalt had been harvesting gunnysacks of Old Hospitality Bourbon whiskey which had been thrown overboard by the captain of the I'm Alone smuggling ship in the Sigsbee's Deep where the ship was shot full of holes and sunk by the Coast Guard.

History cont. on A7

It's time to Vote!

Early voting starts Tuesday, February 17

Early Voting in the March 3 Party Primaries begins on Tuesday February 17 and runs through February 27.

Voters on Padre Island (Precincts 40 and 81) will chose a new U.S. Congress member in the newly redrawn District 34 where several candidates who have withdrawn from the race remain on the ballot. Port Aransas voters remain in District 27 where incumbent Michael Cloud is running against Chris Hatley in the Republican Primary. Under Texas law voters do not register by party and any registered voter can vote in either primary, however, a voter who casts a ballot in a party primary may not switch to vote in any runoff race in the other party's primary race. As of November, 2025, Padre Island had 8649 registered voters.

Early Voting sites (Partial list)

Island Presbyterian Church 14030 Fortuna Bay Dr.

Ethel Eyerly Senior Center 654 Graham Rd. Flour Bluff

Ellis Memorial Library 700 W. Ave. A Port Aransas

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Center 5151 McArdle Rd.

Polling times

8 a.m.-5 p.m. February 17-20

7 a.m.-7 p.m. February 21

Noon-6 p.m. February 22 (Court-house only)

7 a.m. - 7 p.m. February 23-27

2026

Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade route changes from previous years





Male Tri colored Heron gathering twigs for the nest. By Lu Ann Kingsbury



Reddish Egret Packery Channel Padre Island By Laura Bennett



Black Necked Stilt. Finally captured a hint of red eyes. Indian Point.
By Nil Heard

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

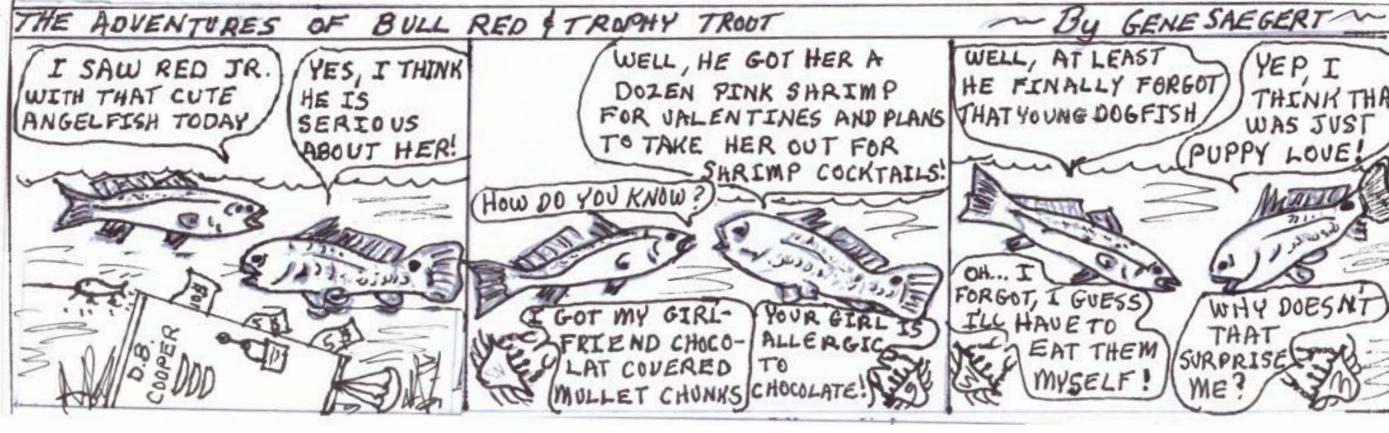
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- ★ Local Island Resident
- ★ Fiscally Conservative



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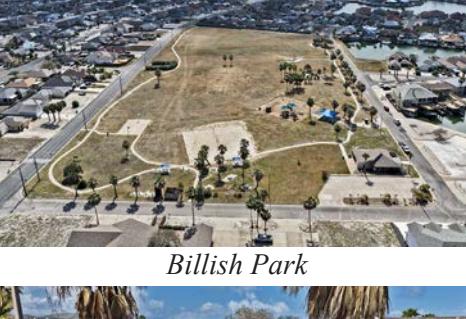
Billish cont. from A1

agreement with the City of Corpus Christi. Under that agreement the city provided water for irrigation however, watering has not been allowed since the city began water restrictions due to the drought. The ground-water wells and tank are designed to provide a steady stream of water for irrigation as ammunition in the ongoing battle with sandbars.

Like most of the Padre Island water suitable for irrigation is available in Billish Park just below the surface.



Billish Park



Billish Park Wells

Bob Hall cont. from A1

The process to select new operator for Bob Hall Pier restaurant scheduled to launch with requests for proposals from business owners expected to begin in May. Submission of proposals from business owners interested in operating the new 5000-square foot restaurant space, Chairman of the Nueces County Coastal Parks Board Troy Adler said in late January.

The design of the new restaurant space on the pier is complete and calls for the removal of the current structure atop the cement pilings left from the old pier and a new building constructed that will encapsulate the entire new business in one contiguous space put in place. LMC Construction has been selected to build the new \$5 million restaurant facility with work expected to begin in February and take about six months, Adler said.

The process for selecting a new restaurant operator will begin with a list of criteria created by the parks board subcommittee and

My Dad's Commercial Fishing Adventure

Acie "Ace" Kimbrell

By Bobbie Kimbrell

In the late 1930s my Dad built a lot of concrete small bridges and culverts for new roads in Texas and he spent most of his time off from working fishing with a rod and reel, cane pole cane sometimes a trotline. It was up to me and my brother to catch grasshoppers to bait the trotlines.

In about 1942, after finishing all of the cement work on the construction of the Naval Air Station my Dad's last job there was running a power saw to cut up large timbers for the construction of housing on the base, which were hurricane proof. Skill saws had not come into use yet. After the base, (NAS), was finished Dad went to work helping build military boats for the Navy at Rockport. That job ended before World War II and was over so Dad tried some commercial fishing in Aransas Pass and not having much luck fishing he moved to Flour Bluff because he knew more fish were caught there. He caught enough fish to get by on using trotlines and his rod and reel, but after winter set in the fishing got so slow he nearly starved to death.

Other fishermen helped him the hang of fishing and Dad eventually went fishing on a motorboat in the lower end, (south) of the Laguna Madre and they caught a lot of drum which turned him into a successful fisherman. There was a demand for fish since all meats were rationed out for the World War II war effort. On one trip they caught 2000 pounds of drum in two nights using gill nets. I think the game warden cut the fishermen a lot of slack because fish substituted for other meats. Although Dad caught enough fish to make a good living, he never quit rod and reel fishing and did some of that fishing nearly every day as if he was addicted to it. He got better at it as

rated by category. That criteria is expected to be ready to share with interested potential operators in early May followed by a window of 30 to 60 days when proposals will be submitted and evaluated by category.

The final agreement for operation of the new facility will be between the Nueces County Coastal Parks Board and the operator. The previous agreement with the operator, Mikel May's Beach Bar & Grill, called for a revenue split between the operator and the parks' board, however, whether the new agreement will be the same is subject to negotiation. Adler said the new building 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.

Bob Hall Pier costs

The following numbers come from the firm of Lockwood, Andres and Newnam (LAN) who were hired by Nueces County

the years went by and pretty much mastered it like where to go on certain days and what type of bait to use, the time of day and so forth.

Later Dad and another fisherman and the Justice of the Peace from Flour Bluff opened one of the first bait stands on the JFK Causeway, the Red Dot Bait Stand. It was a forty-foot barge and was located about 50 yards south of the Intracoastal Bridge. Eventually they built a bigger bait stand on the bank of the canal and Dad hired other people to help him in the bait stand, which gave him time to fish if the weather was right, and he could actually see schools of redfish as they migrated from the flats into the canal from near a quarter-of-a-mile away. In the winter months he knew how and where to catch a lot of big trout. Some of his customers were always inviting him to go fishing with them but he wouldn't go unless the conditions were right. On quite a few occasions Dad would catch nearly a tub of trout in about an hour and then give them to the customers. When the spinning reels first came into use he bought one and used it a lot catching trout from the Red Dot Pier and he showed customers how to use the spinning reels. The first spinning reels did not have a bail, you just used your finger to put the line on the winding spool.

Tommy Lee Jones, the movie star and his uncle, wanted Dad to go with them fishing but he wouldn't go because the weather and the conditions weren't right. The Duke of Duval County used to land a helicopter near the bait stand and buy some live bait and always gave Dad a generous tip.

Most of Dad's customers depended on Dad's advice as to where to go fishing on a certain day. It took many years for Dad to master fishing with a rod and reel but he did it just like the fish guides of today have.

to review the numbers for the Bob Hall Pier reconstruction project.

\$28,330,187 Commissioners Court approved budget

\$2,691,151 Spent on demolition

\$2,851,221 Committed to professions services

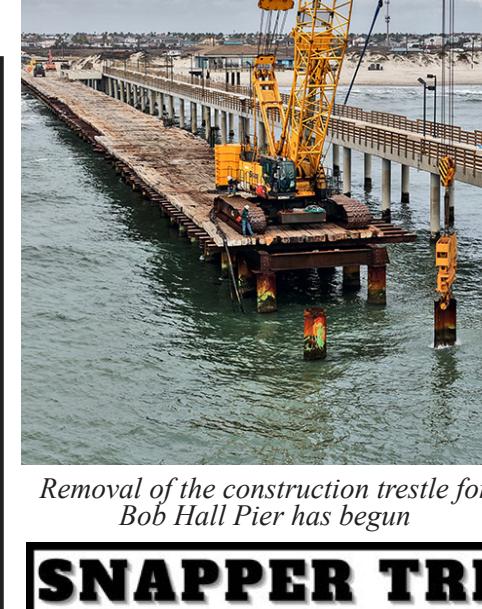
\$22,787,815 remaining for construction

Dimensions

1253 feet long

18.5 feet above the water

20 feet wide



Removal of the construction trestle for Bob Hall Pier has begun

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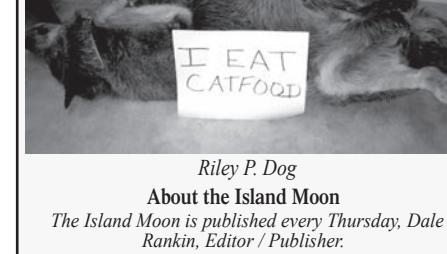
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Office Security/Spillage Control (Emeritus)



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

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Facebook: The Island Moon Newspaper

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Stuff I Heard on the Island



By Dale Rankin

Each week I take a trip down memory lane for the regular feature in the Island Moon to see what was in the news in years past. Sometimes it's ten years and sometimes, like this week it was fifteen...all the way back to 2011 right after Al Gore invented the internet.

We were living in a house on Cartagena Court when the lights went out over almost all The Island. We were rolling along through February with temperature in the 70s getting ready for a big weekend when before we knew it a cold front came rolling from OTB that dropped the temperatures into the 20s in twenty four hours. It was a wet front that came with rain and as was almost always the case in those days when ice built up on Island power lines, with or without wind, the Island went dark. Most of the houses south of Whitecap where we were lost power and in the days before Generac that meant that things got chilly in a hurry. It was later found by the Weather Service that those three days were the 24th coldest in the history of Corpus Christi.

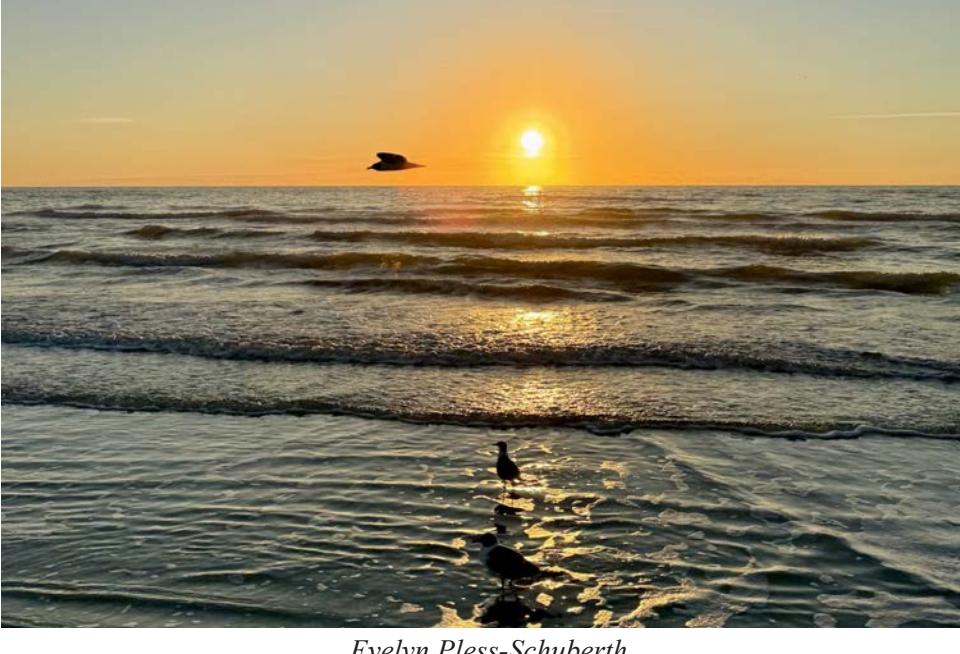
We were lucky to have a fireplace and the previous residents had left behind a cache of firewood and we had just recently moved in so we had a pile of cardboard boxes for kindling and before we knew it we had a houseful of people and turned the fireplace into a cooking spot and things were fairly cozy. I took the time to drive around and get photos for the next issue of the Moon which in those days had just gone color and still came out every other week as a fortnightly and Facebook was not yet a thing. Cell service went down and the only way to find out what was going on was to get out and drive.

As is often the case when we have outages on The Island it was a neighborhood by neighborhood hodgepodge of who had power and who did not. Flash forward ten years and by February 2021 when SNOVID hit we had moved into our current house on Gunwale Drive and we were without power for less than a couple of hours while the houses across the canal were dark for days. It was a random walk through darkness – or something like that.

We have reported here in the past that Padre Island is on a series of circuits that operate independently and since 2011 and 2021 American Electric Power (AEP) has done much improvement to the island grid and the frequency and duration of power outages on The Island is much improved. One thing you will notice is that while feeder lines are mostly above ground on fingertip streets like ours the lines are buried. When The Island was annexed into the City of Corpus Christi it was suggested that all power lines would be buried but it was not required. For many years fire department crews could be seen spraying Island power lines to wash away accumulated salt buildup which added weight to the lines and when the wind blew barely over twenty miles per hour the lines would sway and short circuit and we would lose power. Think of the power going out every time the wind picks up around here and you get the picture. So when the power went out Islanders adjusted fairly quickly and life went on – in the summer just go to the beach until the power returns, in the winter a few people had generators and welcomed visitors.

Off to the races

In those years before the arrival of the Schlitterbahn waterpark the clubhouse at the old Padre Isles Country Club was the Island gathering place and on this cold night in 2011 as it happened the power there stayed on and there was a Night at the Races fundraiser going on and the place was packed. As I was driving around taking pictures as the sun went down I noticed the lights still on and I could see the parking lot full of cars so I made a note to come back and get pictures inside.



Evelyn Pless-Schuberth

Now, the way the fundraiser worked, and maybe readers who were involved can fill me in on the details, was that you bought betting money with real money and you bet on races that were taped from someplace else in the world and at the end of the night you used the funny money to buy stuff you didn't really need or want but it seemed free since you weren't using real money to buy it. The Island was a different place in those days as we had only a small handful of places to hang out and we had a lot of retired folks looking for something to do on a cold night and they were taking the betting rather seriously – not so much to win the free stuff that was just a little good to throw away like ashtrays and beach balls, and tee-shirts (lots of tee-shirts) and the occasional bottle of booze which drew the most lively bidding; the winning of funny money was more about bragging rights than merchandise and by the end of the night the bidding would get active as the trash talk escalated.

Suspicious nature

There were a total of about fifteen races I think and just as I made my way back to the country club and was pulling into the parking lot boom! Out went the lights. I made my way in and there was a bit of moonlight coming in through the floor to ceiling windows in the old building and there were plenty of cigarette lighters produced from pockets but generally speaking the place was dark and in turmoil.

Such was the state of affairs on The Island in those days that residents were so used to getting no help on much of anything from OTB that there was a certain suspicious nature that Islanders had developed – maybe even cynicism – that was well earned and permeated the Island state of mind.

I had been to other events like this one and the betting on races got bigger with each race and by the time they got to the last race the crowd was lubricated and the funny money was up and the crowd was screaming as if the horse long back in the paddock in some faraway place could actually hear them. But on this night things were different. As the horses rounded the turn and headed for home in the final race it was right when the lights went out and the timing combined with the Island's suspicious nature quickly led to rampant suspicion that somehow the fix was in!

Now the absurdity of this premise was not hard to spot since when the lights went out at the country club they went out in all the surrounding neighborhoods as well so in order to fix a race in which the prizes were barely worth winning someone would have had to jump the fence at the power station and throw the switch on a signal from someone in the race crowd at just the right time. On top of that it was wholly unclear how stopping the race in the middle would win the culprit any money since there would be no winner. As I mentioned there was a suspiciousness loose on The Island in those days. Soon enough cooler heads prevailed, smokers moved out into the cold, a plan to pool the funny money in the last race and donate it to the charity was born and the crowd wandered out into the cold night.

As I look back I think the suspicious nature of The Island has mellowed some. Since 2011 things have been rolling our way around here and that has tamped down our collective cynicism somewhat. Keyboard warriors tap out anonymous conspiracies and theories based on misunderstood or made up facts but that isn't Islandcentric. Our Island and Islanders have changed since 2011 as things have progressed and improved.

How much? Ask me when the lights go out.

Yard of the Month



This month's Island Gardeners "Yard of the Month" is the home of Jeff and Kallie Freibert and their dog, Annie. They moved here in July 2022 and their yard is a testament to what you can grow in just a few years. They are at 10 palm varieties and counting, including the difficult to maintain and transplant Golden Cane which they brought with them. The palms by the porch also provide protection for the plumeria from harsh weather.

This is a very whimsical and welcoming yard. In addition to the lush environment created by the palms, native plants provide ground cover. The varied plants give different areas of the yard a different feel.

Just look for the "Yard of the Month" sign on Coquina Bay between Pirata Dr and El Socorro Loop.



Larry and Cindy Atteberry took the Moon to Seattle Washington, Vancouver Canada, Victoria Canada, and Granville Island Canada.

Around cont. from A1

turned the election into a non-binding referendum and board members were appointed rather than elected. The voting will start on February 25 and continue through March 24 with the results announced at the annual members meeting on March 28. No voting will be conducted at the meeting, members must vote by March 24 prior to the meeting. PIPOA officials said this week they are exploring legal options for the conducting of the election if no more candidates register to run since, with four seats open and four candidates currently running the outcome of the voting would be preordained.

They also said they are consulting the PIPOA attorney regarding how to proceed if more candidates register and a lack of voting members cast ballots to reach a quorum.

Commodores Park



By the time you read this ground will have been broken, speeches made and work on Phase I of improvements at Commodores Park will be underway. It will mark the first time there have been tennis courts *Around The Island* in several years and the first time for public pickleball courts.

Island Radio Show

The time of the weekly Island Moon Radio Show has moved to 11 a.m.-1 p.m. each Thursday and will continue at the same location at Doc's Seafood & Steaks. It can be viewed live on YouTube at Island Moon Live and starting next week can be heard live on local radio (station to be announced). If you are looking for a good place to have lunch stop by Doc's on Thursday and say hello. Island Moon Live will also broadcast the Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade live on Saturday, February 28.

Valentine's Day

Unless you want to get massacred, don't forget that Saturday is Valentine's Day and what better way to show some love than adopting a dog or cat friend from Corpus Christi Animal Care Services which is offering a reduced adoption fee of \$14. All animals available for adoption are spayed or neutered, vaccinated according to their age, and microchipped in case they are a runner. It is located at 2626 Holly Road. The dogs are depending on us.

That's all for now

everybody, it's a good time to be here on our little sandbar, we'll see you at the belt sander races and in the meantime say hello if you see us *Around The Island*.

Nature Notes

Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly

By Hannah Beckett

"Deck the halls with boughs of holly." When we think of holly, we often think about the decorations used at Christmas. The dark green leaves and bright red berries are an iconic look of the season. But, there is much more to hollies than simple Christmas decorations.

Outside of the symbolic and religious reasons, the attractive red berries on a background of dark green brings a beautiful contrast of colors and a natural ambiance to our Christmas décor. In fact, did you know you can grow hollies as a natural outdoor decoration? Two native holly shrubs grow readily in Texas and can provide year-round decoration. The Audubon society specifically includes hollies such as the Yaupon and Possumhaw. Both hollies are among their recommendations for bird-safe outdoor holiday decorations.

Our most notable native holly is the Yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*). Like most hollies, it is an evergreen shrub that keeps its dark green, oval leaves all year. The leaves have a thick leathery appearance and a slight serration on the leaf margins that easily distinguish this species. It makes an excellent hedge plant, and when trimmed correctly, produces a thick screen of vegetative material. Its dense coverage provides excellent shelter for wildlife, especially in winter after most plants have dropped their leaves.

The plants are dioecious, meaning that male and female flowers will grow on separate plants. Female Yaupon hollies will bear numerous small, bright red berries. The berries will form in dense clusters throughout the plant. In the winter, the red berries provide a festive touch and are an important winter food source for a variety of bird species and small mammals. However, these berries are toxic to humans and pets, causing nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. It is a hardy little plant found capable of adapting to a wide variety of soils textures, but it does especially well in sandy soils along the coastal plains.



Possumhaw Holly

Credit: Jeff McMillian @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

The other native holly found in Texas is the Possumhaw holly (*Ilex decidua*). Also known as deciduous holly, this shrub is a true holly, but one that loses its leaves in the winter. The leafless limbs of the female possumhaw are covered with hundreds of small orange or red berries during the cold months. In many places, possumhaws are the only bright spots in a winter landscape. Its fruits serve as a source of food for songbirds, game birds, and small mammals during the cold winter months. Possumhaw prefers a wet soil and grows best in floodplains and along bodies of water.

Whether you are looking to bring some nature inside or decorate with natives outside, you can't go wrong with hollies. Its classic Christmas look is universal and keeping native hollies around your house benefits both you and the wildlife. Excellent for year round color.

Knights of Columbus Padre Balli Gears Up for Annual Lenten Fish Fry Fridays

The Knights of Columbus Padre Balli Council #10677 at St. Andrew By the Sea Catholic Church has you covered for a delicious meal on Friday evenings.

Come join us for a tasty and affordable plate of fish with sides, held every Friday during Lent at the Family Life Center on the grounds of St. Andrew by the Sea located at 14238 Encantada Ave. from 5-7pm. The first Fish Fry this year is February 20 and every Friday ending on March 27.

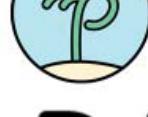
For only \$10.00, enjoy a plate of Fried fish, French fries, green beans, coleslaw. Iced

Tea also included. For an extra \$1, patrons can enjoy a delectable pastry for dessert provided by St. Martha's Ministry, a women's group at St. Andrew's Church. Both dine-in and carry-out options are available.

For only \$10.00 a ticket or three tickets for \$25.00 you can enter in a chance to win prizes. All proceeds benefit charities the Knights of Columbus Padre Balli Council support. For more information: please contact Grand Knight Ramon Presas III at <https://kofcpadreballi.org>.



Walk like an egyptian. Whoppers By Keith Turpin



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Existing patients, we still have all old records available.

Beachcombing cont. from A1



Octopus in a container

olism and muscle function, leaving marine life unable to swim or seek shelter.

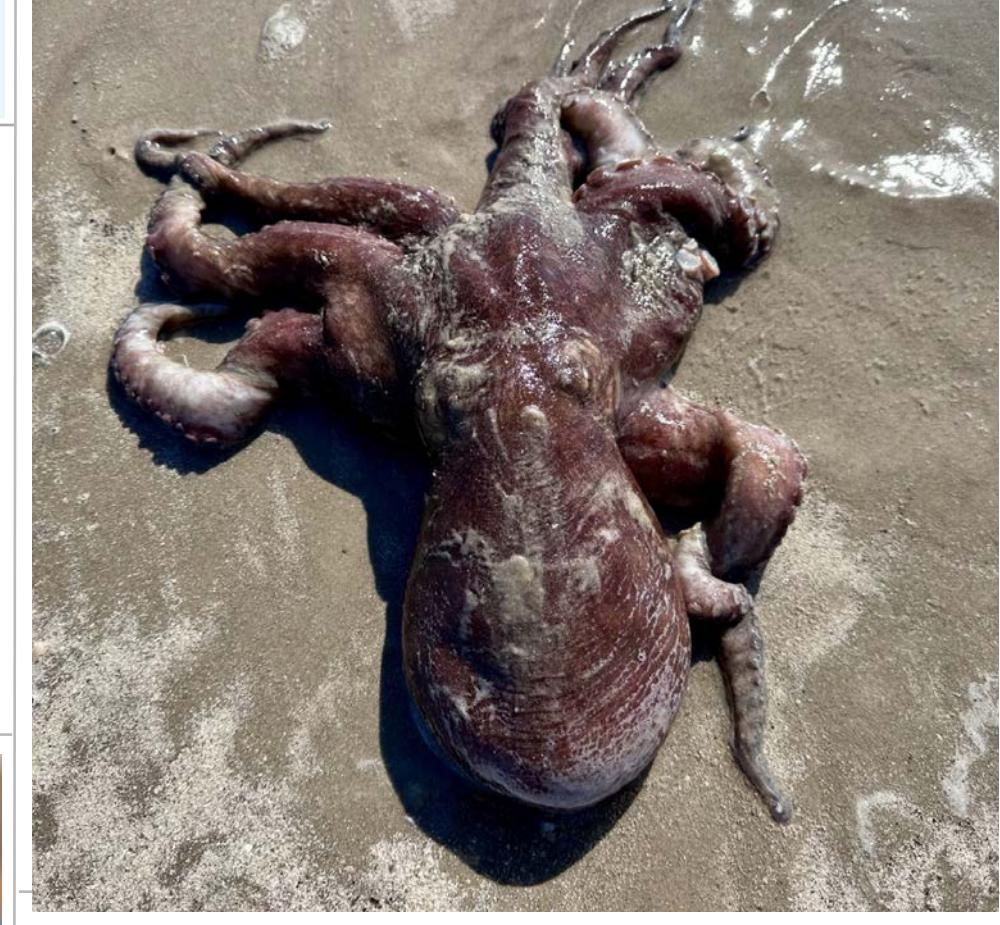
I carefully placed the octopus into a bucket of seawater and took it home for a brief observation period, about 30 minutes, to see if warming it slightly could help. At my house, I transferred it into a small, clear tub and placed it in the sun for roughly five minutes. The goal wasn't to dramatically change conditions, but simply to raise the temperature a couple of degrees.

After a few minutes, the octopus began to show more movement, a promising sign. At that point, I immediately returned it to the water and released it along the south Packery Channel Jetty, placing it gently among the rocks. The octopus quickly crawled into a crevice, disappearing from view, hopefully into a sheltered spot where it can ride out the rest of the winter.

Octopus facts

Some quick common octopus facts: they have three hearts, blue blood, more than 2,000 suckers on their eight arms, females can lay up to 500,000 eggs, they can change color instantly, they can ink their predators, and they are incredibly intelligent. Sometimes beachcombing is about collecting shells or observing patterns, but every once in a while, it offers a chance to help a remarkable animal get a second shot beneath the waves.

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, or Facebook (facebook.com/harteresearch), Instagram (@harteresearch) and X (@HarteResearch) (the platform formerly known as Twitter).



Octopus found on the beach

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The Art of Island Life

Mardi Gras Maskerade at Evoke

By Melissa Mitchell

Celebrating Young Artists

Melissa Mitchell
Evoke Studio & Gifts
The Art of Island Life

If you remember last year's Mardi Gras Maskerade, you know the kind of energy—the excitement, the pride, and the way the young artists stood just a little taller beside their work. It was one of those moments that lingered—long after the masks came down and the glitter had finally settled. (Well... mostly settled. We all know glitter has a way of sticking around.)

This year, we're thrilled to bring that feeling back once again with our Second Annual Mardi Gras Maskerade, proudly hosted and sponsored by Evoke in collaboration with the talented students of Seashore Learning Academy and Seashore Middle Academy.

A Tradition That Begins With Creativity

Mardi Gras masks have long been part of the tradition—originally worn to blur social lines and invite everyone to take part in the celebration. Today, they remain symbols of celebration, self-expression, and storytelling—allowing the wearer to step into a moment of imagination and tradition all at once. This year, our Mardi Gras Maskerade continues that legacy through the hands of young artists who have spent weeks designing, painting, and building masks that are as individual as they are expressive.

Each student approaches their mask differently. Some focus on intricate details and careful patterns, while others embrace bold color, texture, and movement. Feathers, paint, beads, and layered materials come together in ways that feel joyful, thoughtful, and unmistakably personal. These masks aren't just decorative—they're reflections of curiosity, confidence, and creative voice taking shape.



More Than an Art Show

What makes this event especially meaningful is not just the finished work, but the process behind it. Creating these masks encourages students to take creative risks, solve problems, and trust their instincts. It's the kind of hands-on experience that builds confidence—one decision, one brushstroke, one idea at a time.

For many of these students, this is their first time having artwork displayed in a gallery setting. Seeing their creations hung, lit, and celebrated reinforces an important message: their creativity matters, and their voices deserve to be seen. The Maskerade is more than a gallery show—it's a celebration of young artists and the community that surrounds them.

This year's Maskerade will once again be a judged event, with awards for first, second, and third place.

This year, the prize bundles are being



generously sponsored by local businesses who believe in supporting creativity from the ground up—including Evoke (*People's Choice Award*), Cabana Pantry, Texas Sea-life Center, and Karissa Herman, K Realty. Their involvement adds another layer of encouragement for these young artists and underscores the value our community places on the arts. That collaboration—between schools, local businesses, and the gallery—is at the heart of what makes this event so special.

From the Gallery to the Parade

Some of these very masks won't just hang in the gallery for the show—they'll head out into the sunshine, proudly worn by their creators at the Barefoot Mardi Gras parade on February 28, carrying that same spirit of imagination straight into the heart of the Island's celebration.

That's one of my favorite parts—watching art move beyond the space where it was created and into the life of the community. The Maskerade Exhibit will be on display February 19–23 at Evoke, and we invite you to stop in, take your time, and really look. Vote for your favorites. Encourage these young artists. Let them know their work made you smile.

Because when we support creativity early—when we make space for imagination, expression, and pride—we're doing more than hosting an event. We're nurturing the next generation of artists, thinkers, and makers. 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

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It's time to Whoop it up in Port Aransas



Whooping Cranes

For twenty nine years people have flocked to Port Aransas to celebrate the annual return of the Whooping Cranes to their wintering habitat at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge. The Texas Coastal Bend is the only place where you can see the world's last naturally population of Whooping Cranes. The four day event which takes place from February 19th through February 22nd features birding trips, boating trips, nature tours, photography workshops, a trade show and lectures by renowned speakers. The Whooping Crane is going paperless this year so there is no need to print out a ticket for the event that you selected to attend. Instead, bring the ID of the purchaser to your event location, and your name will be checked off of a manifest. The new system is to demonstrate the commitment to sustainability and the future of the environment the birds need. The University Marine Science Institute will be open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday to make purchases of any experiences that still have availability, but there will be no packet pickup.

The endangered Whooping Crane is the rarest of all cranes and among the oldest living bird species on earth. The recovery and conservation effort to protect and save whooping cranes from extinction has, and continues to be a phenomenal story involving many partners around the world. Join us at this educational and enjoyable festival to learn more about the ongoing efforts to protect and conserve this rarest of species.

Proceeds from the Whooping Crane Festival benefit the conservation of whooping cranes through The International Crane Foundation. For a list of events and to purchase tickets go to www.portaransas.org/whooping-crane-festival/the-2026-festival/buy-tickets/



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So, the days flowed into weeks, and the weeks became months and years. I had grown steadily stronger, and seldom gave a thought to the fact that I wasn't even supposed to be alive. I could walk for miles without tiring, and many nights I slept on the sand with only a piece of tarpaulin around me when I was fishing away from the camp. It was one of the times when I had gone alone to a spot thirty-five miles below our shack that the car stalled. No amount of coaxing or tinkering could get a sound out of it. There was nothing to do but start walking. It was seventy miles to Corpus Christi Pass where someone lived who had a car. The tide was exceptionally high, and I had little hope that any fishermen would be venturing down the beach that day.

It was early morning when I started out. A little before sunset I reached our shack. Viola was visiting my people in Kingsville at the time, so the place was still and empty feeling. I ate, drank coffee, and rested for a few moments before starting again. The tide was rising rapidly. It looked as though a storm might be brewing in the Gulf. If I didn't get the car up out of reach of the water, I wouldn't have a car. This thought kept my bare feet plodding through the sand all night. It was dark as pitch. Sudden squalls blew in keeping me drenched most of the time. But with the first gray light of morning, I could see by the familiar outlines of the dunes I was only a few miles from the pass.

Bill White, another fisherman, was cooking breakfast in his tarpaper shack when I knocked at his door. I was too tired to eat, but as I gulped down scalding cups of coffee, I couldn't help crowing over the fact that four years before I had been doomed. In the last twenty-four hours, I had walked seventy-five miles!

During the next year I acquired a fishing partner. We called him "Shorty", and if he had any other name we never knew it. He was a good man on the end of a net. It relieved Viola from some pretty hard work too. She had found a bale of cotton washed up on the beach and subsequently launched into a quilting project. Shorty set up his tent a little beyond our shack, and until the hurricane that year (1933), we had a pleasant and profitable partnership.

That was the year the Gulf staged a real shin-dig. We had several scares that September. Viola kept most of our valued and important possessions packed in boxes against the time we might have to evacuate. The Friday before the storm hit on Monday was one of the most perfect of island days. The water was flat and blue. The skies clear and the southwest wind, warm and gentle. Shorty was expecting weekend guests, and Viola, thinking they would perhaps visit us too, had unpacked the boxes and made the house cozy and neat.

I was fishing early Saturday morning when I noticed that the swells were coming over the beach in an erratic rhythm. Far out over the water, the sky had an ominous look; wildlife had deserted the beach. A squall hit with sudden intensity. I pulled in my line and went into the shack. Viola was still sleeping. I wakened her and told her to get ready to go to town, that I thought there was a storm on the way. Sleepily, she started pulling on her jeans and shirt, mumbling about repacking everything. I walked to the porch and looked out. The tide had risen so fast that it was already hazardous to travel the beach.

"You won't have time for that," I told her. "We'll have to go now, or not at all." Shorty came in then. He had seen the signs. There was no need of telling him. Another squall hit as we were getting into the pickup where we squeezed up together in the seat. The beach was almost impassable where the long sweeps crowded us up into the soft sand and shell. But the Model-A came through, and in the late afternoon, we reached the house of some friends in Corpus Christi.

I checked with the weather bureau and found that there was, indeed, a storm in the Gulf. It was one of exceptional force and was headed straight toward the Texas Coast. They expected the storm to hit Monday. After getting Viola more or less safely settled, Shorty and I began to talk about returning to the island and going down the beach on low tide that night to get some of our equipment. We decided to go, and over Viola's protests, we refueled the Ford, and drove back over the causeway to Padre.

The island was a place of darkness and fury that night. It rained incessantly and the wind blew in gusts that threatened to blow the pickup over. We had only gone a mile or two down the beach when we both had to admit that it was hopeless to try to go further until daylight. So we drove the Ford up into the edge of the dunes and sat there all night trying to sleep, our legs cramping and the water reaching nearer with every heave of the Gulf.

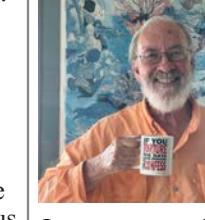
When morning came, the rain let up a little. We shovelled and shoveled our way through the dunes and to the grasslands in the center of the island. It took all day to reach the shack driving over the rough terrain and through the pools of water left by the night's deluge. It still rained and the wind blew.

We left the truck behind the dunes and walked over to the house. The water was running under it so deep it was over our knees as we waded up to the steps. We estimated that the tide was four or five feet above normal. I knew that unless some miracle happened, the shack was not going to stand much longer. I went inside, and dumping a pillow out of its case, started grabbing some valuables and putting them into it. I tossed in a box containing several old coins I had found around the wreckage of an old ship, a rust-encrusted lavaliere I had picked up at the site of the Balli mission-ranch. Then there were stem-wind gold watches I had found in a wooden box on the beach and my collection of arrowheads and spear points.

I was looking around at all the rest of our furnishings and equipment, wondering how much to take, when a giant roller hit the shack with terrifying force. I felt the floor sway and buckle under my feet. The water was running up through the cracks when I went out the back door with the pillow case in one hand. The steps had washed away. As I jumped off the porch into the water that was now over waist-deep, I caught sight of a can of gasoline that I was counting on to use for the return trip to town. I caught the can as it floated by me and waded out of the melee. Shorty, having finished collecting his belongings from the tent, was waiting for me in the truck.

I put the gasoline in, and looked back at the house. It had toppled and was being beaten to pieces by the waves. When I started to place the pillow on the seat, I discovered that I had grabbed the wrong one – had salvaged only a pillow and a can of gasoline which might not even be enough to get us back to town. Darkness was coming down fast. The storm grew in intensity. We would be lucky if we got out of it with our lives.

Next issue: The sea takes away and the sea gives back.



By Ed Proffitt

In my quest to listen to as much wild as possible I went in search of an old friend, Mr. Bill Scoop, a brown pelican who's lived as he says "in these parts for nearly 20 years." Mr. Scoop seemed uncharacteristically a bit down when I found him sitting on a railing near the base of the JFK Bridge. I asked him what the problem was and he replied weather and people. He elaborated that he lost many friends during the hail-storm last November that killed thousands of pelicans as well as many wading birds. He allowed how he was lucky being down south a bit trying to charm a few lady pelicans before nesting season. I commiserated over his lost friends, but then wondered, but Bill, how about people that you also mentioned. What's the problem with people, I asked, interested in his perspective since I'm a member of that apparently offensive group.

He cast a longing eye at a couple of fishermen nearby and began with a grunt. "Well, I like many well enough. Fishermen and women are clearly the epitome of human evolution as many are willing to share catches with me and other feathered buddies. You, yourself, aren't so bad because you have a love of wild things and places --- but on the other hand you've never given me a fish." I told him it was on my to-do list.

Mr. Scoop launched into an explanation of some of his issues with many (other) people. I'll try to capture as much of that as I could follow given the language barrier and his tendency to grunt excessively while talking. He says people are starting to put more and more pressure on wild places and species through excessive (his term) replacement of wild lands with parking lots and buildings which are only useful by gulls and grackles and a few other very opportunistic and hopeful species. Mostly they find fresh water in puddles and potato chips and French fries left in parking lots or along side a road. More majestic species (like, ahem, brown pelicans and his buddies in the heron and egret groups) seldom frequent such paved surface areas...they burn his toes for one thing he notes. Furthermore, some people, Bill notes, are in denial about climate change which in his view is clearly a problem --- especially in hot, dry summers, occasional polar outbreaks caused by a destabilized polar vortex, and accelerated

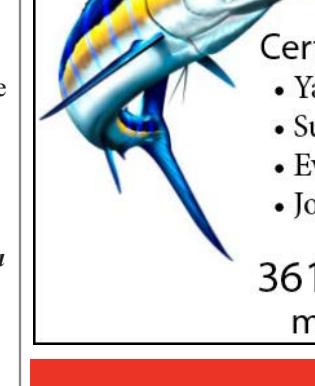
sea level rise that's eroding shoreline habitats. I asked him how he, a bird, learned of polar outbreaks and he said listening to fishermen talk and sometimes to their radios and TVs after the 2021 hard freeze. Mr. Scoop elaborated that people, who think that they're tops at everything in the world, should listen to science and not deny the obvious. I told him a lot of us do...he eyeballed me as if I was an idiot, and retorted that these days many if not most do not. Or, that at least they seem willing to "go with the flow" (a favorite term of nautical animals) and let clear consequences to our habitat and quality of life as well as his ride out for another day.

The two main issues, he pointed out, form a bit of a feedback loop (maybe, I thought, some engineers or mathematicians have been fishing in the area). Climate change erodes our shores with sea level rise and water supplies with drought, while humans just keep on building more structures on or near the coast, scooping sand from dunes to replace beach losses, sinking more wells to tap the meager below ground water resources on the barrier islands, and constructing more and more chemical plants who's discharges has already harmed marine species and habitats, and increases in such development will simply add to that. The "feedback" of human-caused habitat loss and pollution exacerbates (a pretty big word for a pelican, I thought) the adverse effects of the continuous problems of climate change.

I thanked Bill Scoop for his insight and opinions and made my escape before he could go in to microplastics, desalination, or a development-promoting new bridge to the island. Listening to the Wild can be informative and is something we all should do more of --- but Bill can drone on occasionally. As an FYI for you to use to impress your friends at parties, the red mangrove has a yellow albino propagule!



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Island Outdoors

On the Rocks



By Jay Gardner

Yes folks, the water is low. And no, I can't remember the last time it was this low, but I have noticed that the old piling from the original Don Patricio Causeway seems to be sinking lower into the depths of Davy Jones locker. There are areas of seagrass that expanded over the past couple of years into shallower water than they should have, which will translate into some nice sandy areas to walk when the tide does finally come back up.

So, this is a great time to expand a little bit on a term that I've mentioned before, which is "forcing," which is scientifically the transfer of wind into the water. Sounds complicated, right? So when we get the north and northwest winds in the winter, it literally pushes the water away from the shore. Now, I'm not going to get into the Coriolis effect or Ekman spiral, you loyal readers will have to dive off into those terms yourself. But the water is pushed out of the bays and offshore and through the Yucatan straits, through the Caribbean proper, and down towards South America. The same thing happens when we have strong southeast winds and the water sloshes out of the laguna and across the bay and into Redfish Bay. But the only thing you need to know is that the water is low and you'd better get one of the boaters recovery plans if you're going to cruise the flats in your skiff these days.

The Island Mobility Plan was passed, yet again, the other day at city council. Yes, I'm still writing about this, but this is important because if we don't pay attention, we won't have nice things. A lot of water has passed under the bridge since it was passed the first through third times last summer, but none the less, here we are again. Ernie De La Garza, Public Works Director for the city, wrote a great support letter that was passed on to TxDOT regarding the PR 22 Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) project the other day. He absolutely nailed it; stay with me.

While the MPO plan was approved for "access management improvements without adding capacity," Ernie's letter asked for some specific things, including 1) roadway widening (with additional lane capacity), 2) raised median, 3) upgraded lighting, 4) signage and signal timing, 5) shared use path, and 6) drainage enhancement. Everything that we need! These improvements will include better turning lanes (like there are in front of Subway/Packery Channel Park) and "loops", which will help people make better turns, especially if you're towing a boat.

The stats of wrecks and fatalities can be found on the MPO website <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/db81222278854a8d9b4323b3ae7b50f9> because everyone loves looking at statistics, especially when it involves car wrecks. The idea though folks, is that if we can get some actual construction completed to improve our roadways, then it will cut down on funerals. That's why I've been pushing these things. And we need to get serious about dropping the speed limit from 55 to 45 mph between Commodores and Whitecap, but that's a discussion for another day.



Traffic Stats on the Island

Due to the magic of deadlines, I had to turn this in before the groundbreaking at Commodores Park Thursday at 10am. I will continue to give city parks staff credit for getting the project moved forward, but I will also poke a few holes in the design of the project. Yes, I like all the components, from the basketball court, to the obvious pickleball, playground, parking area, and yes, the walking trail. That last part is what is sticking me though; the trail isn't connected to the rest of the Island. It's not even connected to the parking lot! There needs to be a connection to the linear park and trail along Aquarius so folks can get around and access the park. You'll see.

Well loyal readers, Zep and Rachel got married this past weekend up on the Guadalupe River. It was a long time coming, but it was a lovely ceremony. I fell into the river after the ceremony trying to land a ginormous catfish. Par for the course. It's time to get out and do some fishing. Drop me a line at jaygardner1032@gmail.com and we'll see you next week On the Rocks.



A hard earned catfish.



Backwater Adventures

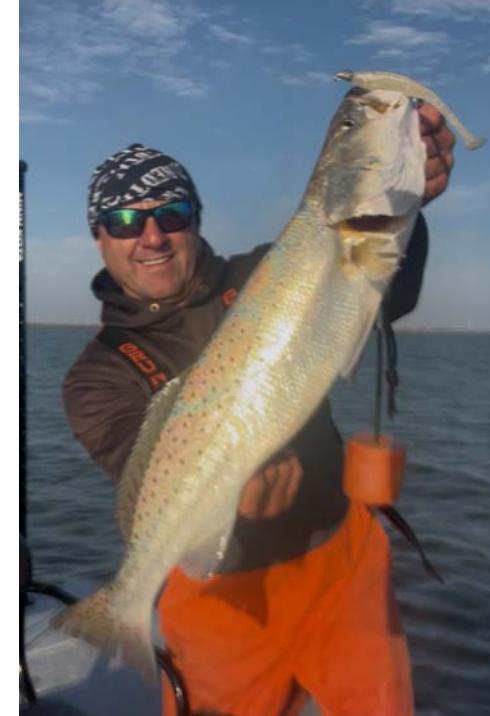
By Joey Farah



Ken and Sheila have escaped many winter storms by migrating south to Padre Island over the years and have always HOOKED UP on some great fishing with me while they are here. With that we have built a great friendship that will last forever, BATTING MONSTER BLACK DRUM makes that easier! Farah



Mr Savahoe hunted big trout in ultra shallow water for two days with me landing over 50 trout himself including this magnificent Trophy on the second morning. We were drift fishing in only 2' of water with soft plastics. Farah



One of four trout over 5lbs I landed on one morning this week! Spring is here and both bait and mature gamefish are hunting the shallows! Tides are on their way up!

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By Chris Jordan

A Long, Strange Trip

The summer of '87 was a banger. My friends Stacy and Aimee joined me on quite a few camping and tubing adventures. Stacy was just out of high school, Aimee would be a senior in the fall, and I had a year of adulting under my belt. We were inseparable and wildly enthusiastic in our pursuit of a good time. It was the kind of summer that could never be topped. As fall grew closer, summer's end hung over us like a pending death in the family.

Goodbyes were said and tears were shed. Aimee went back to her last year at John Marshall High School and Stacy was off to the esteemed Mount Holyoke College in Western Massachusetts. I would be taking my job as a waiter at The Grey Moss Inn a little more seriously. Up until that June, I'd been the assistant to San Antonio's preeminent advertising photographer. Unfortunately, that gig was in conflict with this particular summer's lifestyle, resulting in my being fired.

As the season began to change, I missed those girls — mostly Stacy whom I'd become quite fond of — and that's really a euphemism: I had the hots for her. And even that's a euphemism. She and I spoke on the phone a couple of times and hatched a plan that could only be described as a completely irresponsible continuance of our freewheeling summer.

I was to sell my current ride — a 1978 Dodge Ram Charger 4X4 — to fund the purchase of a VW van which I would drive up to Massachusetts. I was to be there by Thanksgiving. I figured my Dodge could fetch \$2,500 or so: it had a lift kit, big-ass knobby tires, and I'd just done a top-end rebuild on the 360 cubic inch V8. My near-monster truck smelled like beer and adolescence. The day the ad came out, the first person to respond came to look at it and asked me point-blank what was wrong with it. Nuthin', I told him. I guess I had it priced a little too low, 'cause that dude handed me the cash without a haggle, and drove off in my truck.

I figured my budget for the VW van was \$1,000. Finding one in running condition wasn't that easy after all — especially considering the strict particulars I had assigned to this procurement. It had to be a pop-top camper and it had to be a model year before '72: that's when they went to the Type IV motor, and it was not as easy to work on or find parts for. To my delight, I ended up finding the ideal van: a 1971 Westfalia Campmobile for only \$400. It was in a storage lot in Universal City and the engine was sitting inside the cabin where the little folding breakfast table was supposed to be, but I was undeterred. I just had to get the motor situation rectified.

Fortunately, our tiny town of Grey Forest had its very own guru-esque air-cooled Volkswagen mechanic. David pulled up to my house in a 1960 two-tone, blue and white, VW bus with the safari windshield open. And I thought my bus was cool. David reeked of weed and axle grease. I was due to leave in a week and hoped he could get my

bus's engine rebuilt in time and for \$600. Nope. But boy, did he have a deal for me.

David lived on a few acres not too far from my folks' place. He towed my van with his and we parked both under a shade tree in a clearing on his property. He gave me a ride back home and told me to sit tight until I heard from him. After lunch, I heard the unmistakable "beep-beep" of a VW horn outside and there was David driving up in my van. He'd pulled the engine out of his, put it in mine, and I owed him 600 bucks.

It was the Sunday before Thanksgiving. I barely had time to make the drive to Massachusetts. The Campmobile was running, but it was not roadworthy. I spent Monday repairing the brakes, getting all the lights to work, and putting new tires on. I loaded the van with tools, a voltage inverter, my home stereo, an ice chest, some grub, and an electric blanket. After what sleep I could muster and consoling my mom over an early breakfast, I hit the road.

I wasn't a Dead Head by any means, but I had bought The Grateful Dead's latest CD, *In the Dark*, earlier that summer. I figured it would be a pretty good soundtrack for driving a VW bus halfway across the country. I drove all day Tuesday and through the night without sleep. Wednesday was a long day. I was just a few hours from my destination when I had to crash. A truck stop in West Virginia seemed as good a place as any. The last few miles were brutal. I was stuck in traffic. Every mofo in New England was on their way to grandma's house and it was COLD. That old bus was drafty as a hay barn. I plugged the electric blanket into the voltage inverter to stay warm enough to keep driving.

I parked my bus in the student parking area of Mount Holyoke College in the early evening of Thursday, November 26th, 1987. The campus was abandoned for the holiday except for my Stacy. We drove around looking for someplace — any place — to have Thanksgiving dinner. There was plenty of snow on the ground. The snowplow operators were still working and most definitely deserved a medal. We pulled into the parking lot of a pizza parlor that looked open. Thankfully, it was and we enjoyed some underage beer drinking, pizza, and televised hockey.

Stacy and I went back to her dorm where we made plans to get up early the next day and drive to Manhattan for Black Friday. And that's where I'll pick this story up next week.



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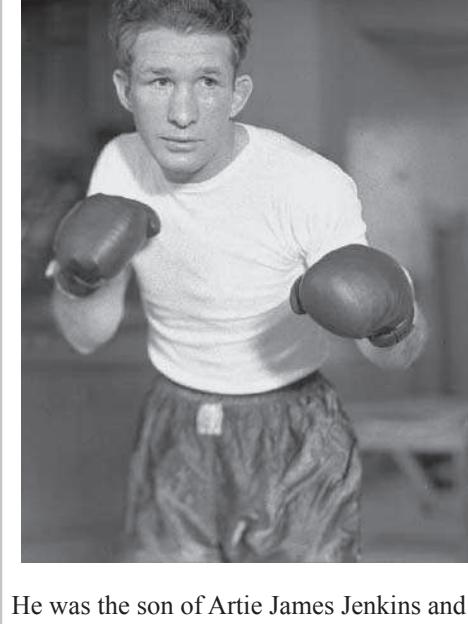
Sports

Sports Talk Special to The Island Moon

Lew Jenkins-Professional Boxer and Army Sergeant



Dotson's Note: Texas boxer Lew Jenkins won the Lightweight Title in a bout versus Lou Ambers at Madison Square Garden in New York City in 1940. Lew Jenkins, professional boxer and army sergeant, was born Verlin Elmer Jenkins near Milburn, McCullough County, Texas, on December 4, 1916. He was the third of seven children and grew up impoverished during the Great Depression and Dust Bowl. Thanks to Bill Morgan, Gene Pantalone and Wikipedia for the facts and photos, contained in this report.



He was the son of Artie James Jenkins and Minnie Lee (White) Jenkins. While he was still a child, his parents moved to Sweetwater, Texas, where he worked in the fields and picked cotton to help his family make a living. According to his record in the 1940 census, Jenkins only attended school through the seventh grade. It was from his hometown that he drew one of his many boxing monikers, the "Sweetwater Swatter."

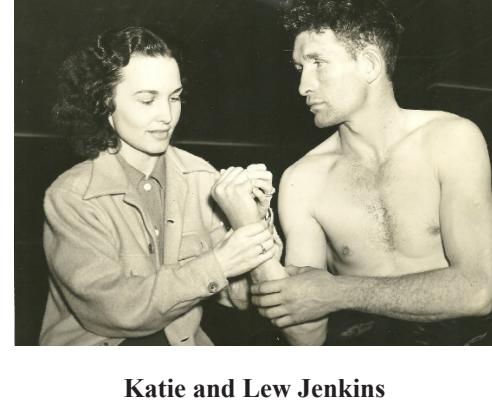
At age sixteen and following the death of his father, Jenkins joined T. J. Tidwell's traveling carnival in order to bring in money to support his family. He fought up to four times daily against challengers who sometimes outweighed him by more than a hundred pounds. Tidwell often gambled his entire carnival that Lew could knock out any man who stepped into the ring with him. This stint in the carnival was one of his first forays into the ring. In 1936 when he was nineteen, Jenkins joined the U.S. Army and was placed in the Eighth Cavalry Division at Fort Bliss, where he worked as a blacksmith and drew a monthly salary of twenty-one dollars, of which he sent ten dollars to his mother. Though he had a small-framed wiry build, he was known for his extremely powerful punches, especially his right-hand punch, and won the welterweight championship of Fort Bliss.

During a furlough from the army, Jenkins went to Dallas, Texas, to continue fighting professionally. He met Fred Browning, a wealthy sportsman, Dallas sports promoter, and businessman who owned a ranch, racing stable, and the Top O'Hill Terrace Casino. Excited by the talent he saw in Jenkins, Browning purchased the fighter's discharge from the military and became his manager. Jenkins began using the nickname of "Lew" based on the suggestion of promoter Dick Griffin who was financed by Browning. Jenkins fought several matches at the famed Sportatorium. At around the same time that Jenkins met Browning, he met a feisty midget car racer — Katie Lucile Jenkins (same last name but no relation) — the woman who would become his wife.

Three years before they met, Katie was the girlfriend of the notorious outlaw Raymond Hamilton, who was a member of the Bonnie and Clyde gang. After a brief courtship, Lew and Katie married on May 4, 1938, in Durant, Oklahoma. Soon after their marriage, Katie became involved in managing his boxing career, which consisted largely of fighting as often as possible to meet living expenses. They traveled to matches in Houston, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, St. Angelo, Pecos, Los Angeles, Indianapolis, Mexico, and New York City.

From 1939 to 1940 Jenkins's career ramped up to its highest point. Browning still owned his contract, but he hired Frank Bachman and "Howling" Hymie Caplin as managers in New York City, while Willie Ketchum trained Jenkins. As a result, Lew won thirteen fights in a row as an underdog, including his first-round knockout of Tippy Larkin at Madison Square Garden in New York City, which earned him a shot at

the title. The lightweight title fight against Lou Ambers on May 10, 1940, was a short one with Jenkins scoring a third-round knockout; it was the first time the rugged, two-time champion Ambers had even been knocked out. Jenkins held the title for nineteen months despite losing and drawing some non-title fights, which included three fights against the heavier welterweight champions Henry Armstrong, Fritz Zivic, and Freddie Cochrane.



Katie and Lew Jenkins

Jenkins lost his title in a bout against Sammy Angott on December 19, 1941, while fighting with a fractured neck from a motorcycle crash. He said that every time he threw a punch he nearly blacked out. His many defeats during this time can be chalked up to heavy drinking and partying. His misadventures included car and motorcycle crashes which caused him to fight with injuries. The once supportive fans booed him, and sportswriters wrote derisively about him because of his lackluster efforts in the ring. He and Katie divorced in 1942, and Katie later became the first woman to hold a boxing manager license in New York. Jenkins married Lupie Marie Galarza in Reno, Nevada, on March 2, 1947. They had one son, Lew. Jenkins continued fighting until his retirement from boxing in 1950. He fought his last bout in a televised event on April 14, 1950, against another former lightweight champion Beau Jack; Jenkins lost due to a painful low blow. His official professional boxing record was 73-41-5 with 51 wins by knockout. Jenkins contended that he fought more than his record indicated.



Lew Jenkins in Korea

Lew Jenkins was a great boxer, but his more important achievements came on the battlefield. In 1942 he enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard. His unit was responsible for putting troops ashore at Tunisia, Gela, Calcutta, Palermo, Burma, Salerno, Sicily, and at Normandy on D-Day. He later commented on his frustrations at watching men die upon entering combat but not being able to join the fight himself. Jenkins abstained from alcohol after World War II. He attempted a final comeback in the ring, but never matched his previous heights. Following his retirement from professional boxing, Jenkins re-enlisted in the army and served in the Second Infantry Division during the Korean War. He served as a first sergeant and was awarded a Silver Star for leading a squad that held off an entire North Korean battalion while a trapped American battalion escaped. Medal of Honor recipient Ronald E. Rosser recounted that Jenkins, under intense enemy fire, completed several dangerous trips to an ammunition dump during the engagement.

TO BE CONTINUED



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Send photos and letters to editor@IslandMoon.com

Island Real Estate Roundup



Apryl Nolles

2026 Making Bold Statement

The New Year is making a bold statement on Padre Island real estate. January 2026 brought a significant jump in median home prices, rising to \$492,450, which reflects a remarkable 69.8% increase compared to January 2025. That's a strong indicator of the value and demand for island property. Inventory remains steady, with 316 active listings, down slightly by 0.9% from this time last year. However, closed sales dipped 20%, with 12 homes closing in January. While sales volume slowed, pricing strength tells a different story — buyers are still active, but they're being selective.

Homes are moving faster overall. The average total time on market is 119 days, which is 60 days quicker than January

2025. That's a notable improvement in absorption speed. Months of inventory sits at 12.2 months, slightly higher than 11.1 months this time last year, indicating we're still in a more balanced-to-buyer-leaning market. Most sales activity fell between the \$300,000–\$749,000 range, showing that mid-range island homes are leading the momentum.

Overall, January shows rising values, improved days on market, and steady inventory — a strong and healthy start to 2026 for Padre Island. If you're thinking about buying, selling, or investing on the island, now is a great time to evaluate your options and strategy.

Hard Hat work leads to Barefoot times



Sand is being moved to ensure there is plenty of beach for the Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade on the 28th



Bollards stand in the way of the parade route for now, but with beach renourishment planned for the near future, the beach will be able to be opened for the parade. Aerials by Augs

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Thoughts from Reverend Ken

By Rev. Dr. Ken

It has a very distinctive sound. The shofar is an ancient instrument made from a ram's horn. In ancient Israel it was used, among other things, to call the people to repentance. Check out YouTube to hear a shofar.

The intent of the shofar is to shake people from complacency. There is a sense of urgency to its distinguishing call. This makes the shofar an appropriate instrument for Ash Wednesday. This year Ash Wednesday is February 18, the beginning of the spiritual season of Lent.

Many understand Lent to be a time to give up something until Easter. For those who give up chocolate, at least Valentine's Day is before Ash Wednesday this year! Christians fast from something earthly so that we can focus on God and God's ways. We die to self as we journey to the cross with Jesus. As such, it is a season of repentance.

We need Lent. We need the shofar to blow.

The national prayer breakfast in Washington D.C. was held a few days ago. As with so much today, controversy was involved.

Several years ago, a Republican senator addressed the breakfast,

We sit here today as the wealthy and the powerful. Let us not forget that those who follow Christ will more often find themselves not with comfortable majorities but with miserable minorities. Today our prayers must begin with repentance. Individually we must seek repentance for the exile of love from our hearts. Corporately we must turn in repentance from sin that has scarred our national soul.

Can you imagine a national leader offering these words today? Yet, they must be spoken, perhaps with a shofar.

The late Sen Mark Hatfield R-OR offered these thoughts forty years ago!

Hatfield also talked about lives that when lived under the lordship of Christ may well put us at odds with the values of our society, abuses of political power, and the cultural conformity of Christians. He called for Christians to seek to honor the claims of their discipleship. It is still a relevant message.

Ash Wednesday is a somber day because it is about the darkness of our world. Injustices and violence abound. Power and greed are on full display. Christian nationalism is breeding racism and xenophobia and poisoning the message of God's love. There is darkness within our own hearts — the secret pains, the silent regrets, the enduring sense of anxiety and fear.

Ashes are a sign that call us to let go of that which drags us down and makes us unholy. It is to hear the call to return to the Lord with our hearts, souls, minds, and strength.

Yet, as Christians receive the ashes on their foreheads this Wednesday, they will receive it in the sign of the cross of Christ. It is the sign that the abyss of nothingness, sin, evil, and death between God and us has been overcome. It is the sign of grace, love, and hope. It is the sign that repentance and renewal are possible. The mud of life can be wiped off our lenses. We can hit the reset button.

We need Lent. We need the shofar to blow. In our lives. In our communities. In our nation. In our world.

Island Presbyterian Church will be offering an Ash Wednesday worship service, at 6 pm, at the church. Everyone is welcomed as we enter the holy season of Lent in community.

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



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The Corpus Christi Songwriters Festival kicks off this weekend in downtown Corpus Christi. The festival which runs Feb. 13th through Feb. 15th features nearly forty international, national, and regional songwriters together for a weekend focused on the art of songwriting. There will be live shows, hands on workshops, conferences and awards. To view the lineup or register for one of the events check out visitcorpuschristi.com

Senior Moments Special to the Island Moon

The Andrews Sisters



By Dotson Lewis

Dotson's Note: The Andrews Sisters were an American close harmony singing group of the swing and boogie-woogie eras. The group consisted of three sisters: contralto LaVerne Sophia Andrews (1911–1967), soprano Maxene Anglyn Andrews (1916–1995), and mezzo-soprano Patricia Marie Andrews (1918–2013). The sisters have sold an estimated 80 million records. Their 1941 hit «Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy» can be considered an early example of jump blues. Other songs closely associated with the Andrews Sisters include their first major hit, «Bei Mir Bist Du Schön (Means That You're Grand)» (1937), «Beer Barrel Polka (Roll Out the Barrel)» (1939), «Beat Me Daddy, Eight to the Bar» (1940), «Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree (with Anyone Else but Me)» (1942), and «Rum and Coca-Cola» (1945), which helped introduce American audiences to calypso. Thanks to Lew Jenkins and Wikipedia for the facts and photos contained in the report



Maxene (top left), LaVerne (top right), and Patty (center) in October 1943

The Andrews Sisters' harmonies and songs are still influential today and have been copied and recorded by entertainers such as Patti Page, Bette Midler, Christina Aguilera, The Pointer Sisters, Pentatonix, and others. The group was among the inaugural inductees to the Vocal Group Hall of Fame upon its opening in 1998. Writing for *Bloomberg*, Mark Schoifet said the sisters became the most popular female vocal group of the first half of the 20th century. They are still widely acclaimed today for their famous close harmonies. They were inducted into the Minnesota Rock/Country Hall of Fame in May 2006.

Early life

The sisters were born to Olga Bergliot "Ollie" (née Sollie; 1886–1948) and Peter Andreas. Peter Andreas (later "Andrews"), (1890–1949) was Greek and his wife Olga Andrews was of Norwegian ancestry raised in the Lutheran faith. The Sollie family disapproved of Olga's marriage, but the relationship was repaired once their first child, LaVerne, was born July 6, 1911. Their second daughter, Anglyn, died at eight months of age on March 16, 1914. Maxene arrived on January 3, 1916, and Patty was born February 16, 1918.

Patty, the lead singer of the group, was 7 when the trio was formed, and 12 when they won first prize at a talent contest at the local Orpheum Theatre in Minneapolis, where LaVerne played piano accompaniment for the silent film showings in exchange for dancing lessons for her and her sisters. Following the collapse of their father's Minneapolis restaurant, the sisters went on the road to support the family. All three attended Franklin Junior High School and North High School, both in Minneapolis.

They started their career as imitators of an earlier successful singing group, the Boswell Sisters, who had been popular until their breakup in 1936. After singing with various dance bands and touring in vaudeville with Leon Belasco (and his orchestra) and comic bandleader Larry Rich, they first came to national attention with their recordings and radio broadcasts in 1937, most notably via their major Decca record hit, «Bei Mir Bist Du Schön» (translation: "To Me, You Are Beautiful"), originally a Yiddish tune, the lyrics of which Sammy Cahn had translated to English and «which the girls harmonized

to perfection.» They followed this success with a string of best-selling records over the next two years and, by the 1940s, had become a household name.

Instrumental to the sisters' success over the years were their parents, Olga and Peter, their orchestra leader and musical arranger, Vic Schoen (1916–2000), and Jack and David Kapp, who founded Decca Records.

World War II



The Andrews Sisters singing 'Don't Sit Under The Apple Tree (With Anyone Else But Me)' in the 1942 film *Private Buckaroo*

In the years just before and during World War II, the Andrews Sisters were at the height of their popularity, and the group still tends to be associated in the public's mind with the war years. They had numerous hit records during these years, both on their own and in collaboration with fellow Decca Records artist Bing Crosby. Some of these hits had service or military related themes, including "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy", "Three Little Sisters", "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree (with Anyone Else but Me)", "A Hot Time In the Town of Berlin" and "Rum and Coca-Cola". The sisters performed their hits in service comedy films, such as *Buck Privates* and *Private Buckaroo*.

During the war, they entertained the Allied forces extensively in Africa and Italy, as well as in the U.S., visiting Army, Navy, Marine, and Coast Guard bases, war zones, hospitals, and munitions factories. They encouraged U.S. citizens to purchase war bonds with their rendition of Irving Berlin's song "Any Bonds Today?". They also helped actress Bette Davis and actor John Garfield found California's famous Hollywood Canteen, a welcome retreat for servicemen where the trio often performed, volunteering their personal time to sing and dance for the soldiers, sailors, and Marines (they did the same at New York City's Stage Door Canteen during the war).

While touring, they often treated three random servicemen to dinner when they were dining out. They recorded a series of Victory Discs (V-Discs) for distribution to Allied fighting forces only, again volunteering their time for studio sessions for the Music Branch, Special Service Division, of the Army Service Forces, and they were dubbed the «Sweethearts of the Armed Forces Radio Service» for their many appearances on shows such as *Command Performance*, *Mail Call*, and *G.I. Journal*.

The sisters' 1945 hit "Rum and Coca-Cola" became one of their most popular and best-known recordings, but also inspired some controversy. Some radio stations were reluctant to play the record because it mentioned a commercial product by name, and because the lyrics were subtly suggestive of local women prostituting themselves to U.S. servicemen serving at the naval base on Trinidad. The song was based on a Trinidadian calypso, and a dispute over its provenance led to a well-publicized court case. The sisters later told biographers that they were asked to record the tune at short notice and were unaware either of the copyright issue or of the implications of the lyrics.

TO BE CONTINUED

State News

Remember The Alamo!

The Alamo Announce Events To Commemorate 190 Years Since The World-Famous Battle

Colonel William Barret Travis' legendary "Victory or Death" letter. The ceremony will begin with the reading of Travis' iconic letter, symbolizing the enduring call for unity and support in safeguarding Texas' most historic site.

Location: Alamo Plaza, 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Texas Independence Day Celebration (Free Event) - March 2 Did you know that Texas was its own country for almost ten years? Come celebrate Texas Independence, declared on March 2, 1836, at the Alamo, with the Alamo Mission Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.

Location: Alamo Plaza, 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Dawn at the Alamo (Free Event) - March 6

Join us for a solemn tribute to the Alamo Defenders. This ceremony, complete with readings, music, and a musket volley, honors their ultimate sacrifice. The 190th Commemoration will feature a special donation from David Crockett Birthplace State Park in Limestone, Tennessee.

Location: Alamo Plaza, 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.

Fandango at the Alamo (Free Event) - February 22

The night before the siege began - and not knowing the gravity of the 13 days that would soon unfold - the townspeople held a "fandango" dance party. Enjoy live music, dancing, and family activities.

Location: Plaza de Valero, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Victory Or Death (Free Event) - February 24

The Alamo will commemorate the 190th anniversary of Lieutenant-

Saturday, February 14

Corpus Christi Litter Critter Event Scheduled for Flour Bluff High School

Event to Offer Cardboard Box Recycling Drop-Off

The City's next Litter Critter community cleanup event will be held on Saturday, February 14, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Flour Bluff High School, 2505 Waldron Road. The Litter Critter initiative provides residents with a convenient way to dispose of unwanted items outside of scheduled pickup dates.

Organizers are excited to announce that cardboard recycling will be offered again at this Litter Critter event. Please bring clean, empty, flattened cardboard boxes, free of any Styrofoam or packing materials. Residents should prepare to offload their items; commercial hauling is not permitted.

Items accepted include:

- Heavy brush
- Bulky items
- Household trash
- Up to 4 standard tires
- Metal items and household appliances

Items NOT accepted include:

- Hazardous waste
- Asbestos, antifreeze, brake and transmission fluid, batteries, cleaning solvents
- Concrete

Please take these items directly to: J.C. Elliott Transfer Station 7001 Ayers Street Corpus Christi, Texas 78415 Open Monday through Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Clint Rogers caught this beauty this week.

Sudoku

Sudoku answers are not available.
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5	3	8	1		4
8	9	3		7	
		9	2		3 8
	4				
9	2	6	4	7	8 1
				6	
9	4		8	2	
	5		3	9	7
7		5	9	8	3

Knuckle-Cracker

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

Mind-Numbing Frustration

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

Brain-Buster

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

Fifteen Years Ago in the Island Moon

Mike Ellis



Dale and Mike with the first color edition of the Island Moon.



This week in 2011 a memorial was held for Island Moon Founder Mike Ellis at the old Holiday Inn Sun Spree hotel on Padre Island. The ceremony was attended by members of the Corpus Christi City Council and it was there that the effort began to rename the Island seawall in his honor.



The JFK Bridge was closed due to ice. Photo by Dale Rankin



The Island was covered in ice, and many lost power



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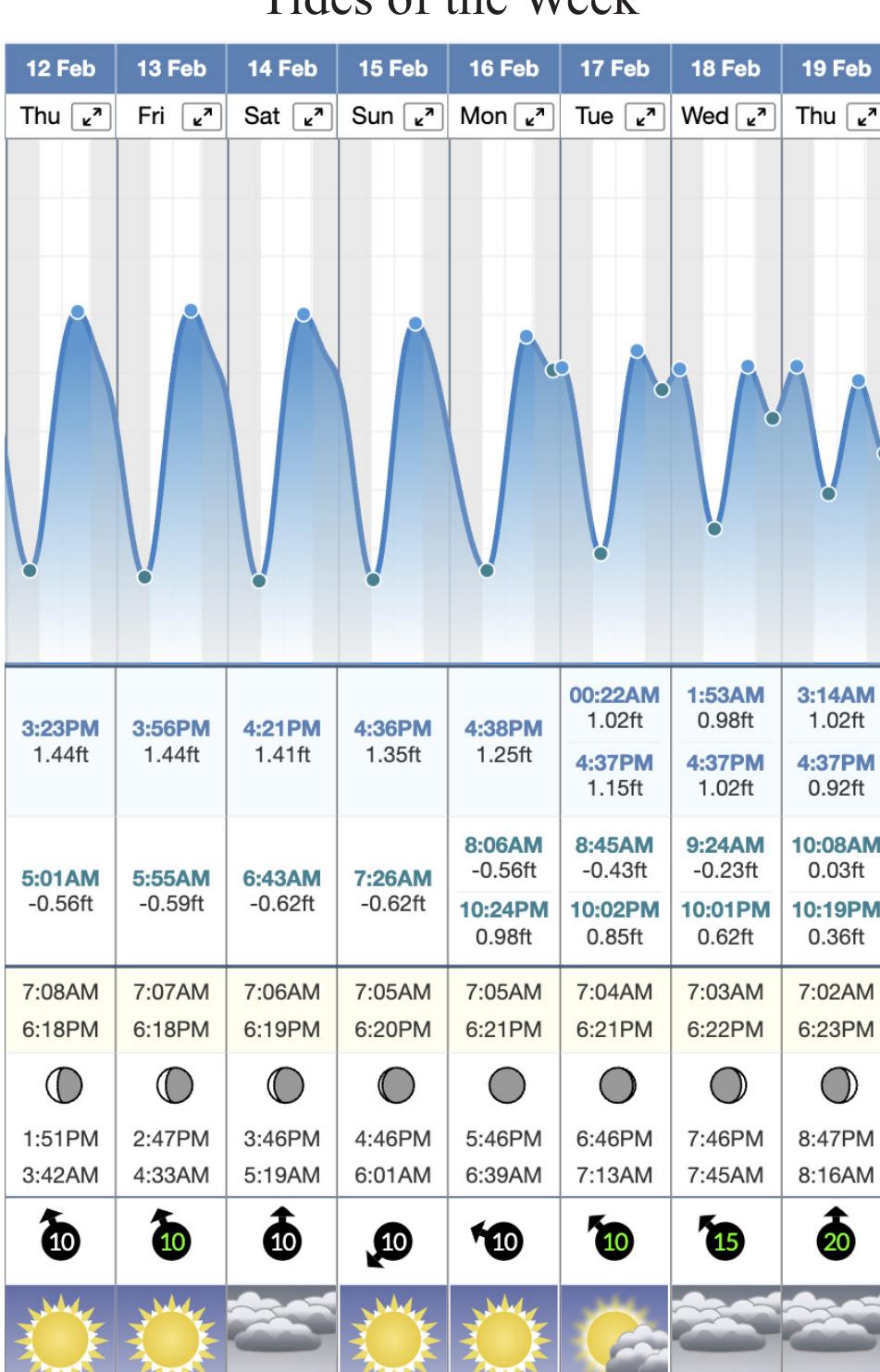
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Lauren Jensen, OD

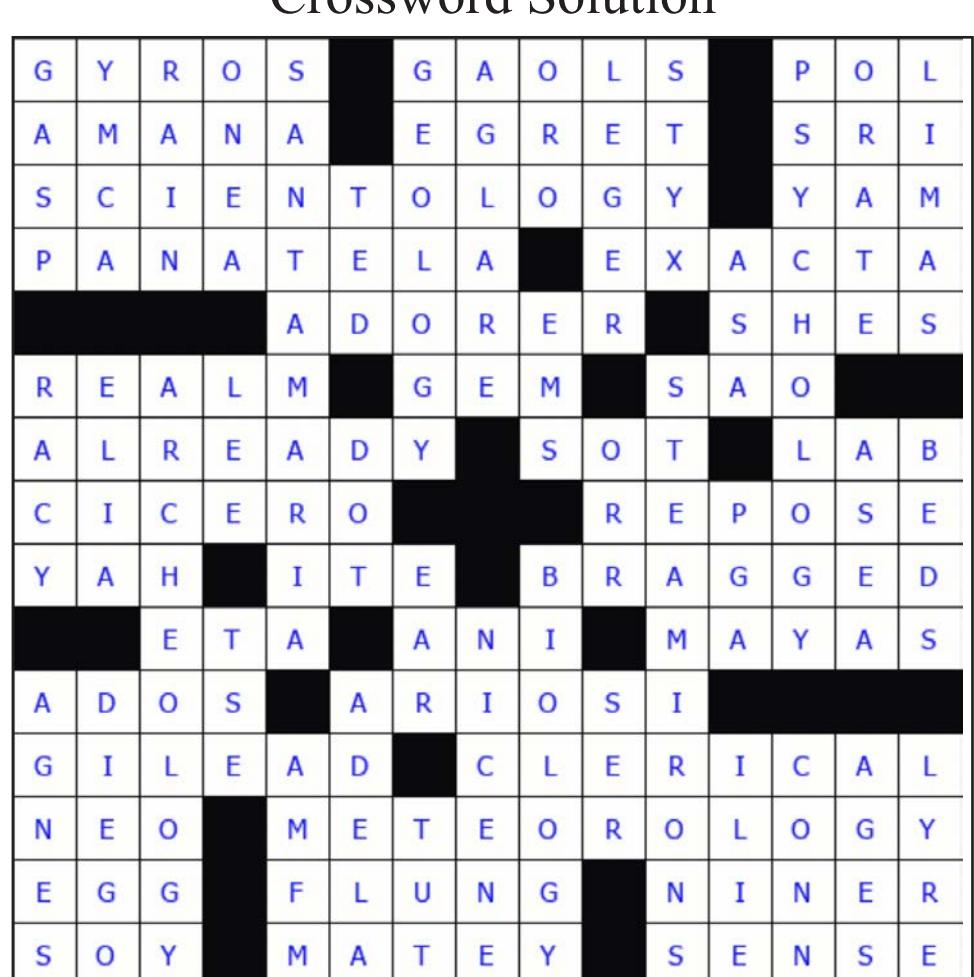
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Tides of the Week



Crossword Solution





Whooping Cranes By Keith Turpin

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Evelyn Pless-Schuberth



Riekie Roncinske

Birds are my People

Brown Pelicans do not have teeth, but they have a hook at the beak's tip and its edges are sharp and could give you a small "paper" cut. Riekie Roncinske

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 You Tube 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.



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10 AM - NOON 

FEB. 18th Sandpiper Condominiums
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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 



By Ronnie Narmour
ronnienarmour@gmail.com

Time to Mardi gras yall...



Janet Planet started the Port A Mardi Gras Parade 30 years ago.

Laissez les bon temps roulez! Let the good times roll. Hey, this is big stuff so pay attention here...we are coming up on my all time favorite holiday of the year. Happy Mardi Gras everybody! Mardi Gras literally means "Fat Tuesday" and has become known as the time between the Epiphany or Twelfth Night and Ash Wednesday, which is the beginning of Lent. Mardi Gras is typically celebrated by over indulgence, wild parties and colorful parades in the name of decadence before abstinence, in many places around the globe. It's time to party down, eat some mudbugs, put some extra hot sauce in your gumbo and load up on beads...got to have lots of beads. And where do you get these beads? At the parades of course...the Port Aransas parade, which is celebrating its 30th year, is the vision of one of the island's colorful characters **Janet Planet Calvert**, who lives in Hawaii now. On Fat Tuesday proper, February 17 a fleet of golf carts decorated to the nines will fill our street throwing out candy and Mardi Gras beads to awaiting revelers on every street along the route.

Its GINORMOUS...



Ronnie and his Mermaid Gal at the Port A Mardi Gras Parade last year. This tradition is ginormous especially in such places as New Orleans and Rio de Janeiro. So get ready folks, you don't want to miss this. Decorated "floats" will start lining up in front of the *Gaff* around 4:00. In years past I've seen the waiting line go from the *Gaff* all the way down the beach. The route will be to depart the *Gaff* then makes a big circle from Station to C to Alister to Cotter then Station and back to the *Gaff* where our coon ass pals, **Boudreux and Pousson** will be cranking out Cajun and zydeco tunes all night long. Also, *Shorty's* will have the **John Elijah Band** performing and the *VFW* will have **Brad Ethridge**. And you can best believe that me and my **Mermaid Gal** will be first in line behind the *Gaff*'s pirate boat that leads all out parades. Another given is always **Miss Sally** with her pink *Gratitude* car with big eye lashes going in front of the pirate boat. Plus, the folks on Padre will have their amazing *Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade* on the 28th. **Rankin** will have all that covered I'm sure.

Scattered shots...



Cathouse played Shorty's last Saturday



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

COLD BEER

THE GAFF

OPEN DAILY AT 11 AM



Chadwick Lee Hunter will play the Gaff this Thursday.



Edwin Meyers will be cooking up some delicious gumbo for the Paw di Gras Gumbo Cookoff at Shorty's on Feb 14.

LIVE MUSIC TONIGHT

Thursday,

February 12

Johnson All Starz
feat Mike O'Neil @
Shortys

Chadwick Lee Hunter
@ Gaff

Clark Bros @ Salty

Dog

Ruben Limas @
Blackbeard's Too

Brad Brown @
Blackbeard's on the

Beach

Aaron Jacob @
Brewster Southside

Jim Dugan @
Brewster Island

Lucy Morrison @
Executive Surf Club

Michael Perez @
Cassidy's Irish Pub

Coast Bend Music &

Film Symposium @
House of Rock

Friday

February 13

RED WHITE &
BLUES FEST @
Harbor Tent Fulton

Brad Ethridge @
Shorty's

Boudreux & Pousson
@ Gaff

Jim Dugan @ VFW

Port A

Dickie Delight @
Salty Dog

Jerry Ward & the
Dirty Birds @ Pelican

Lounge

Lucky Dogz @
Headliners Bar

Cruise Control @

Executive Surf Club

Carson Miller @

Rockit's

Emma James @
Brewster Southside

Scarecrow People @
@ Brewster Island

Spazmatics @
Brewster Downtown

Oloe @ Cassidy's

Irish Pub

Valentine's Day,

February 14

PAW DI GRAS
GUMBO COOKOFF
@ Shorty's

BELT SANDER

RACES @ The Gaff

SALTWATER

MARDI GRAS @

Conn Brown Harbor

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