



Nature Notes A5



The Art of Island Life A6



Beachcombing Report A5



Backwater Adventures B1



Three Chords and the Truth B8

Issue 1141

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The Island Moon

The voice of The Island since 1996

February 26, 2026

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Boots was relocated to a sanctuary this week. Photo By Lu Ann Kingsbury

Around The Island

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Island Moon Live

By Dale Rankin

What a week it has been *Around The Island* with two elections underway, a brand new Bob Hall Pier, Barefoot Mardi Gras set for Saturday, and a fire that broke out at Marker 37 early Monday.

Barefoot Mardi Gras

If you are one of the thousands of spectators who plan to attend the Barefoot Mardi Gras parade on Saturday take a look at the parade map in this issue because it has changed since last year. It will start this year at Padre Balli Park near the new Bob Hall Pier and move north along the Michael J. Ellis Seawall where the judges' stand, a live band, will be located near the seawall parking lot. That is also where Island Moon Live will live stream the parade on YouTube with a broadcast sponsored by Visit Corpus Christi who we thank for helping us make the live broadcast happen.

Look for the float with the *Krewe of Topsy Tails* and the Island Moon krewe towing a wayward sand surfer and watch out for the flash mob! It's going to be a Big One folks so get there early.

Water car



A car which may or may not have been on its way to get an early spot on the parade route instead found its way to the bottom of the canal on Isla Colon this week.

Around cont. on A4

The New Bob Hall Pier is Open!



The new \$22 million Bob Hall Pier opened this week to much fanfare as a crowd of several hundred gathered to watch the ribbon cutting, many armed with fishing poles to take advantage of the new pier which is free. The lights on the pier are operational.

The contract for construction of the 5000 square-foot restaurant building on the pier is complete and Requests for Proposals for operators is expected to go out by May, according to county officials this week.

Marker 37 Fire



Repair work has begun at Marker 37 where a fire tore through slips early Monday morning damaging more than twenty boats and several vehicles. The cause of the fire is under investigation. No one was hurt. More images on A2

It's time to Vote!



More than 18,000 voters cast ballots across Nueces County in the first week of Early Voting for the March 3 Party Primaries with Democrat voters outpacing Republicans by a margin of 9892 to 8243.

Vote cont. on page A4

Barefoot Mardi Gras Beach Parade Saturday



Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade 2025

The Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade kicks off at 11 a.m. Saturday, February 28 from Padre Balli Park and will head north along the Michael J. Ellis Seawall. The route has changed since last year, see the map of the new route is included in this issue on A2. To watch the parade live see Island Moon Live on YouTube.

A little Island history

Louis Rawalt believed it likely that Amerigo Vespucci was the first European who saw The Island

Editor's note: The following is the final installation of the series based on the journal of Louis Rawalt.

By Lewis Rawalt

The following years my time was divided between fishing and exploring the lower end of the island. When we were in town, I went to



Coastway Bait and Tackle

History cont. on A7

Paper ballots sent for PIPOA election

Change of course in voting for four board seats aimed at ensuring quorum

By Dale Rankin
The Padre Isles Board of Directors this week shifted gears on the method for voting on four board seats currently on the ballot. The board announced this week that paper ballots have been sent to all PIPOA members in an effort to ensure that the 503 votes needed to reach a quorum for the election will be reached and voting is now underway. Prior the change voting was being done solely through the Manage CASA website where as of this week 1428 members have registered, according to Executive Director Rick McGinley at the monthly board meeting on Tuesday.

POA Vote cont. on page A4

The Ghost at The 33

Billy Sandifer Big Shell Beach Cleanup is this weekend



Captain Billy Sandifer

Editor's note: For over thirty years volunteers have gathered in February for the Billy Sandifer Big Shell beach cleanup on Padre Island National

Seashore. The event is named after longtime nature guide Billy Sandifer and organized by the Friends of Padre. Over 30 years, 17,400 volunteers have hauled off 3.2 million pounds of trash on the four-wheel drive section of the park and there is no registration or sign up required, just meet at the Malaquite Visitor's Center at the Padre Island National Seashore no later than 8 a.m. Those without four-wheel drives will be given rides to the work area. T-shirts will be given away while supplies last and lunch will be provided at the conclusion of the event.

Cleanup cont. on A6

Barefoot Mardi Gras Route Map



Fire Aftermath at Marker 37



Photos by Dale Rankin and Jacob Augs

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Letters to the Editor



DESALINIZATION

Our leadership in the Corpus Christi area needs to be more progressive. It should have been obvious to anyone years ago that our declining lake levels and average rainfall had to be dealt with. Drilling more wells is not the answer. Just look at what's been happening to the giant aquifers of the west. We are fortunate to have an OCEAN of WATER at our doorstep here just waiting for our use. Had we started planning for desal years ago when the need started becoming obvious, we could have had it much cheaper and NOT be under the water restrictions we are going through with NO meaningful long term plan. The cost of desalination will only increase over time. So I was disappointed when our "leadership" dropped the desal plan. This past year we had no storms that even entered the Gulf. A good meteorologist could tell you that it's no surprise. Along with global warming is a warming of the oceans. More evaporation earlier and further out to sea cause thunderstorms to build sooner and faster and consequently have to begin fighting the winds aloft sooner than before. Hence what we normally see: the storms turning north and then easterly as they weaken and go along with the jetstream will occur sooner now and further out at sea. At our longitude and latitude the jet stream is always from the west (normally SW in the summer and NW in the winter and can easily blow at a hundred + MPH). It's due to the Coriolis Effect caused by the rotation of the earth. Look it up, very interesting. It's why flights from New York City TO Los Angeles take so much longer than the return flights. Since obviously we will never be able to change the rotation of the earth I hope our local leaders will eventually see the light. Craig J Wooldridge

CCAD

I enjoyed your article about the future of CCAD. As a retired Navy man we have seen this type of budget cutting come and go. To be honest the repair operations should have been more centrally located say Kansas. Easier trucking and better for rail. Hope CCAD don't buckle from political or financial pressure.

Any new word about un-corking the sand plug at the water exchange bridge? I haven't seen any movement from the state, county or city since your last update. I fear this water barrier door idea problem will sit for years. Our taxes deserve a better response. I suspect the future fix is in some million dollar think tank until the budget is used up. Thanks Tom Kennedy

Editor's note: The opening of the plug at the Don Patricio Bridge is still pending approval of the permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the opening of the canal under the new Commodores Drive bridge. That permit is going through the process and mentioning any date for completing that process would be speculation at this point. We can say there is some movement and the applicants are pushing as fast as possible.

On the Lake Padre side the property owner there has been consistent in saying that the sand dam there will be removed when the canal at Commodores is open. The opening of the two canals simultaneously would relieve water flow through the canals owned by the PIPOA south of Whitecap Blvd. by splitting it.

The project to further ease flow through the PIPOA canals by replacing the current underground culverts at Encantada Ave. with larger capacity box culverts is still stuck. City officials, both city staff and the board of the Island Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone #2, which includes the members of the Corpus Christi City Council have consistently said to the Island Strategic Action Committee they will begin the project to place the box culverts after the adjacent canal is dredged by the PIPOA. So far the PIPOA has not announced plans to dredge.

The Water Under Our Feet

Water Water everywhere but not a drop to drink wrote Samuel Taylor Coleridge in *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* couldn't be more apropos here on the island. Saltwater on all sides taunts our plants and grass struggling to survive during this drought we are having. City restrictions on watering have caused many people to seek out other solutions such as shallow water wells for irrigation. Yes there is water useable for irrigation just under our feet. Unlike deep aquifers, our little sliver of water is really more like floating sand. Not recharged by springs or other means, our floating water is only recharged by rain. I do mean floating because fresh water (using this term because it is usable for irrigation, livestock etc.) sits on top of saltwater due to their densities being different. Studies have shown that water this layer could go as 75-100 feet deep depending on rainfall amounts, location on the island and amount of water drawn from it according to TexasCoastgeology.com. If you can remember when it last rained hard and the ditches on Park Road 22 and 361 stayed full for days to weeks after? That is our water table being full and water just sits on the surface until either evaporation or room below moves it. That doesn't mean that when you see standing water there that our water table is full. Like I said, it depends on location, sea level and other variables. Since the quantities of useable "fresh" water is different in different areas, there is no way to determine the volume of useable water available. Since freshwater sits on top of saltwater, drawing useable water creates a cone of depression from underneath making the cone fill with saltwater. This is not usually an issue because most shallow wells are spread out and draw a small amount at various times allowing for the water table to stabilize as it flows towards the Gulf.

The problem is when a major user extracts more water from the "floating" sand than can be replenished. Case in point, "OUR" POA has decided to put four (4) wells right next to each other with a 5200 gallon water tank for irrigation purposes. When questioned about the design rationale of this, I was told that they were told it was not an issue. When asked whether they obtained a permit for this, I was told that they didn't need on as they were exempt. The Great State of Texas has made it clear

that property owners have legal rights to any groundwater under their property. It sets forth certain rules that must be adhered to so your use doesn't cause issues with adjacent property owners. It also sets rules on private "exempt" wells. Some of these rules are: 1) depth of no more than 30 feet 2) pump is incapable of drawing more than 24000 gallons in a 24 hour period 3) use is restricted to no more than 10 acres. Billish Park wells: 1) are 30-40 feet deep 2) just one of the pumps are capable of pumping over 26,000 gallons in a 24 hour period and that's just 1 pump. Multiple by 4 equals 104,000 gallons in a 24 hour period. 3) park is 11 acres. Seems to me that these facts are not in line with the State rules meaning that a permit is required for the wells.

This is in line with the current mentality of the city council, which controls the Corpus Christi Aquifer and Storage Conservation District, making its own rules regarding groundwater. What they are doing with the Evangeline project is an example of what could happen here but that's a separate topic. The issue here on the island is that if the POA depletes the useable water available, it will fill in with saltwater making the water unusable. They also put any wells in close proximity to the park at risk of saltwater intrusion.

The solution would have been to put the multiple pumps in different locations around the park as to not draw too much from one area. The indifference by the POA is frustrating at best because they work for us. We, as a community, must be good stewards of our resources and our POA should do their due diligence and not just rely on the say so of the companies that are installing the systems. I told my family that I felt like the Lorax in Doctor Seuss's book of the same title. I'm speaking for the water rather than the trees. We all have the responsibility to do what we can to make every drop count. All this information is readily available on the internet, it just takes time and effort to become part of the solution and not the problem.

Who knows how long this drought situation will last but we should be all thinking of what we can do to conserve what we have. So I'll do like the Lorax did for now and lift myself by the backside and float away UNLESS Water, Water, everywhere, let's be good stewards so that everyone can drink. Ronnie Pate 20 year resident of our great island.

Beach Parking Permits

Hello, I saw in your 2/19/26 edition that the city council passed the amount of beach passes from \$12.00 to \$20.00 In the Corpus/ Mustang Island areas I have noticed the lack of enforcement of the passes at the beach. Many days I never see beach personnel checking for passes. There are a few stations set up periodically to check cars and sell passes as they come in. The lack of enforcement results in lost revenue. It will probably be higher once the price is raised. Do the beach personnel have any records of how many passes are sold and what days they are actually present at the beach? They miss vehicles all the time during the days where they make a few passes up and down the beach. It would be great if they could present justification for raising prices and not just the cost of maintaining, etc. the beaches and the fact they haven't raised prices. Thank you.

Jane Ryks
Editor's note: We are not aware of a schedule of days when enforcement personnel are on the beach. The Beach Maintenance Department does staff up in the summer months and on most days are present to sell beach parking permits.

The reason stated by each of the three public entities that sell permits and collect the revenue is an increase in the cost of beach maintenance since the prices were

last raised in 2012 - from \$10 to \$12 - and also upcoming beach renourishment projects required by state regulators. A new beach access road inside the Corpus Christi City Limits which is soon to be added is expected to increase traffic in about six miles of beach just north of Mustang State Park on a section of beach that has eroded over time but now will need to be made wider which will create added expense.

The following numbers were provided by the City of Corpus Christi which has been responsible for tracking beach permit sales under the old system.

The first three categories come from the City of Corpus Christi Parks and Recreation Department, the fourth is a projection of numbers based on the new system.

2024 Beach Parking Permit sales
273,228 Total number of permits sold
\$3,118,299.50 Total Revenue

Number of permits sold by each entity

118,021 City of Corpus Christi
153,439 City of Port Aransas
1768 Nueces County

Moon Monkeys

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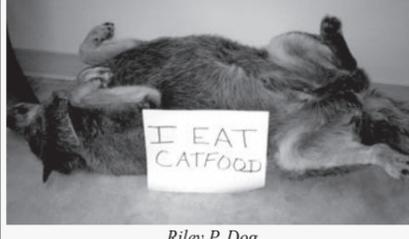
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Flour Bluff	Island Fitness
H.E.B.	Ridleys
Ethyl Everly Senior Center	My Coastal Home

Revenue received by each entity

\$1,418,823 (45.5%) City of Corpus Christi
\$1,200,545 (38.5%) City of Port Aransas
\$498,927 (16%) Nueces County:

Revenue if the price is raised from \$12 per year to \$20 per year

\$5,464,560 total revenue
\$2,360,420 City of Corpus Christi
\$3,068,780 City of Port Aransas
\$874,329 Nueces County

Stuff I Heard on the Island



By Dale Rankin

With Barefoot Mardi Gras season upon us it is often asked how did it originate and who started it?

My first experience was in 2000 when the event consisted of a single event, a Saturday night party at Briscoe King Pavilion that cost \$20 to attend and included food and bring your own bottle. It wasn't called Barefoot Mardi Gras. Some years it had a band and sometimes it didn't. There were various "krewes" organized by Gladys Choyke who got up at the party and made speeches that started with "hear ye, hear ye" that each seemed to last way too long. The event was started by Big Fred and his wife Deedee who had moved down from Dallas and brought the event with them. I include some photos here from the 2005 event. It basically was a costume party and that was about it and it moved from place to place, at least one year at the Pelican Lounge. If it raised money for charities I don't recall.

Then in 2009 Denise and Duane Ebert, who were longtime friends of Big Fred and Deedee in Dallas, took over the event and wanted to kick things up a notch and get some attention outside the Corpus Christi area. The goal was to get on the Today Show and while the three of us were having a high-level strategic meeting while sitting at the bar at the Back Porch bar I pointed out that a party at the pavilion wasn't likely to make the Today Show and the idea of a parade was hatched. But those folks down in New Orleans already had a pretty substantial parade of their own, but what they didn't have was a beach to drive down and a seawall to watch from.

Duane was skeptical. There were all kinds of obstacles starting with city permitting and including a very narrow beach. The dredging of Packery Channel was already four years past and the sand that had been placed there was washing away and what was there was often soft and hard to drive through. The parade location was tabled. The next question was one of a name; Mardi Gras was already taken and we kicked around various ideas until - walla! - a name was scrawled on a cocktail napkin and it was at that moment that Barefoot Mardi Gras was born just a few weeks after the party in 2009.

So during the next year a group of about ten people formed a committee to assign various tasks and things were off and running. The idea of a parade was kicked around and it was finally decided that in 2010 there would be a parade on the beach, but where? I pushed for the seawall, "We don't need a permit, we drive there anyway. We just all do it at the same time." I pointed out that the first year of the Mardi Gras Parade in Port Aransas caused a citywide traffic jam and when the police were called they became the grand marshals and led the procession. The compromise was the county beach from Beach Access Road 5 south to Bob Hall Pier where all we needed was permission from the Nueces County Coastal Parks Board and the beach parade was on. Somehow 11 a.m. was decided on and we lined up on a clear crisp day behind the dune line unsure of what we would see crowd-wise when we hit the beach. My recollection is that there were several hundred people - a lot more than we thought there would be. We were a hit. After the parade we gathered in the parking lot and the party started early. Later that night we gathered at the pavilion where I had paid \$1000 for the Earfood Orchestra to play for the party. They were a nine-piece zydeco outfit and friends of mine from San Antonio complete with horns and accordion. A zydeco band is a tradition I would like to see come back. When they kicked in that night we all knew that things had changed, this was something different. When Gladys got up to make her speech she barely got through Hear Ye



Island Moon founder Mike Ellis with columnist Mindy Niles.

Hear Ye when the crowd shouted her down and demanded that the band strike back up. Gladys protested and I shouted in her ear, "Gladys, this is the best party we ever had and the crowd is not in the mood for speeches."

We made one huge mistake that first year. We brought in Gibb and the Beach Bums to cook the crawfish we had flown in live from Louisiana by the sack and the food was great. The problem was that in our naiveté we let diners fill their own plates and while the folks at the front of the line got heaping helpings the folks at the end of the line got bupkis which we corrected the next year. But Barefoot Mardi Gras was up and running and it was a hit. Over the years we had to move the party a couple of times due to scheduled construction work at Briscoe King (which never happened), first to the Pelican Lounge and then to the clubhouse at the old Padre Isles Country Club where Ponte Bone played and each year the parade crowds got a little bigger and we kept moving the starting point north, first to Beach Access Road 4 and then to Whitecap Blvd. where it remained until this year.

The event eventually got too big for the first group of organizers to handle and it was turned over to the Padre Island Business Association in the mid-teens. For a couple of years we tried a fenced in VIP area at Briscoe King right after the parade but made the mistake of charging \$5 to get in. Islanders will not pay \$5 to imbibe inside a fence when they can imbibe for nothing outside the fence.

The party moved to the Schlitterbahn clubhouse which was a great location because it had an indoor bar and outdoor patio facing south in case of cold winds. The downside was it was no longer a BYOB event (which didn't mean you couldn't sneak in a flask). The rest is pretty much history with one exception.

Last year marked the first year the parade route traveled in front of the seawall, where in my opinion is where it should have always been. The result is that this year the starting point has moved south to allow for more spectator space - a good problem to have - which ironically runs it along the same route as the first year but in the opposite direction. The next step is to make it a statewide event and having it along the seawall is a big step in that direction. We are going to live stream it on Island Moon Live this year and maybe by next year - with the help of Visit Corpus Christi - that can be promoted around the state and draw more visitors during the shoulder season when things are slow.

The closest thing to our beach parade in Texas is the River Parade during Fiesta in San Antonio and while we don't have a river we do have a beach and a beach parade is a one-of-kind event. Moving the parade to the seawall in my opinion is a game changer. We are on our way! And it all started at a high-level executive meeting at the Back Porch Bar on a cocktail napkin. Hey, this is The Island - how else could it have started right?



This float had a live band and working hot tub.



The Island Moon float won second place the first year.



The first King and Queen's float.



Congratulations Debbie!



Downtown Corpus Christi held their annual State of Downtown and Awards Night last week and our own Debbie Noble was awarded downtowner of the year! Congrats Debbie it is a well deserved honor.

POA Vote cont. from A1

"As of this morning we have 1423 properties signed up for ManageCASA (MC). That represents 44% of the eligible property owners," McGinley said. So far over 100 members have already voted electronically-20% in one day."

The vote solely through the ManageCASA site failed to produce the votes needed for a quorum of members in the 2025 election.

Votes is to fill four seats on the seven-person board must be submitted either online or in person at the PIPOA office by March 15 with the results to be announced at the annual Members Meeting at 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 28 at the Seashore Middle

School Cafeteria. No voting will be conducted at the meeting. The worksheet from the ManageCASA website can be printed and taken in person to the PIPOA office where the votes will be recorded.

Board candidates

There will be a meet and greet for board candidates on Thursday, March 5. The candidates are:

(Vote for four)
Terry Brown
Ross Garcia
Mark Dick
Randy Eaton
Jim McFadden
Tom Cable

Vote cont. from A1

Turnout at the polling place on Padre Island was the sixth highest in the county with 1119 votes cast, the highest turnout was at the Deaf & Hard of Hearing Center with 3217 voters. At the Ethel Eyerly Senior in Flour Bluff 1254 votes were cast - 409 Democrats and 845 Republicans. In Port Aransas 344 votes were cast by mid-week.

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. 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.

Early Voting continues from 7 a.m. -7 p.m. through Friday, February 27. All polling places will be open on Tuesday, March 3.

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.

Around cont. from A1

From the looks of the tracks through a vacant lot there the driver was headed along Island Colon without realizing it dead-ended into a cul-de-sac. This happens from time to time *Around The Island* but it had been a while.

Packer Channel Park

Packery Channel Park is scheduled to be shut down in the next few weeks for eight months while \$7.5 million in work is done. The work includes a boardwalk and living shoreline along Packery Channel and is expected to take about eight months. The work is being paid for with grants through the Nueces County Coastal Parks Board which is also about to go out for Requests for Proposals for the concession contract for Horace Caldwell Pier.

Treasure hunting series coming to The Island

Network crews are scheduled to begin shooting a series loosely titled Cowboy Treasure Hunters on Padre Island in the next few weeks. The subjects will focus on local treasure and local treasure hunters searching sites from Aransas Pass south to the National Seashore. Look for them *Around The Island*.

Our man Dotson

A call came in Monday from our friend Island Moon Columnist and man about town Dotson Lewis who got a call from the White House asking him to recite the pledge of allegiance for the visit of President Donald Trump on Friday. At press time mid-week the location for the event had not been announced. Dotson is the natural choice for the event as the host of the Veterans Round Table radio show and himself a veteran of the Korean War. If Dotson isn't the busiest 97 year-old on The Island he's at least in the running. Way to go Dotson it's a well-deserved honor.

We'll see you at the parade everybody, get there early and say hello if you see us *Around The Island*.



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Nature Notes

Hidden Bird Life in the Coastal Marshes

By Martin Hagne



Nelson's Sparrow, Public Domain, via Wikimedia Commons

The habitats of the coastal areas along the gulf are diverse with wildlife, and bird species in particular are rather abundant. From the ever-present gulls to the much less noticed wrens, the ancient looking Brown Pelicans to the tall and stately Great Blue Herons. They are also the nursery grounds for fish, shrimp and crabs to name a few, and they protect us against storm surge! Just a bit further inland lives a whole different group of birds such as the raptors and songbirds. This huge species diversity is due to the several "layers" of habitat types that starts with the ocean and moves inland from there. It goes something like this: the ocean waters of the gulf, the shorelines and beaches, the sand dunes, the coastal marshes and wetlands, the coastal prairies, and eventually the bottomland forests. The coastal marshes and wetlands, coastal prairies, and bottomland forests are also intersected by numerous bayous, sloughs, and rivers adding more habitat types. No wonder our birdlife is so diverse.

One type of habitat that is less known about by many people are the coastal marshes and wetlands. Unless you bird watch, are a biologist, or hunt or fish, there is not much reason to visit such places for most folks. They may even look uninviting, be very muddy, and have sharp saw grasses. But in them lives many bird species that thrive in these rather harsh environments.

As you move inland, the salty coastal environment is eventually mixed with fresh water from the bayous, rivers and rainfall. Here the habitat changes into the more mixed salt and fresh water marshes with ponds and winding bayous. The freshwater and slight elevation change allows for an entirely different plant life to thrive. The dominant species are smooth cordgrass and sea ox-eye daisy. Others include sedges, rushes, grasses, and small woody shrubs. As hostile as this environment seems, many bird species call it home. These are often very secretive birds, never leaving the confines of the marshy land and very thick plant life which they use for cover. With

a little luck and knowledge, you can spy some of the following species. Sedge Wrens and Marsh Wrens are some of the tiniest birds. They sport cryptic brown plumages and flit deep in the thick vegetation, at times landing in the open for a brief glimpse. As with most of these coastal marsh birds they are best detected when they call or sing. There are several species of rails also. In sized order they are King, Clapper, Virginia's, Sora, Yellow, and Black Rails. The last two are super hard to find as they are the most secretive. Few birders ever get to add them to their life list of birds seen.

A few sparrows also call these places home. Nelson's Sparrow and Seaside Sparrow are about as cryptic, but beautiful, as wrens and behave much the same. Once again, the call alerts you to their presence. One warbler, the Common Yellowthroat, is fairly common in these environs and it can be seen along the edges near water at times. Even with it being common and quite colorful, it can be hard to find due to its cryptic and skulking behaviors.

These are just a few of the many bird species that thrive in the coastal marshes, which also houses heron and egrets, ibises, spoonbills, bitterns, and even blackbirds and grackles. That shows just how diverse and very important such habitats are. With increased development, we are encroaching into these "bad lands" along the coast. A GCBO study electronically tracked a Black Skimmer from the Dow Colony as it fed daily, and the data showed that it mostly used these coastal marshlands to feed itself and its young. It is important to conserve, or at least leave alone, these lands for our avian friends living an already tough life, and for all the other benefits. That is one of the many goals of the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory's conservation work. Hopefully next time you see those extensive "brown and ugly" marshlands, you can see their beauty for what they are, a hardworking and important ecosystem.

Beachcombing Report

By Jace Tunnell



Mottled Sea Hare *The sensory tentacles on their heads resemble a rabbit's ears*



Jace with a Mottled Sea Hare

This week I found three mottled sea hares washed up along the high tide line. At first glance they looked like blobs of wet leather, but these strange drifters are actually large sea slugs, marine mollusks related to snails and clams. One of the three was stained with purple ink, a sure sign it had recently used its most famous defense.

When threatened, sea hares release a cloud of purple ink, similar to an octopus. The ink acts as a visual smokescreen and a chemical deterrent. Compounds derived from the algae they eat can interfere with a predator's sense of smell and taste, giving the sea hare time to escape.

The mottled sea hare (*Aplysia brasiliana*) is common in our local seagrass meadows around Port Aransas, though we don't often notice them unless strong tides or winds push them ashore. They can grow nearly a foot long. The name "sea hare" comes from the two rolled sensory tentacles on their heads that resemble a rabbit's ears. Their mottled brown and olive coloring helps camouflage them among turtle grass and drift algae.

All three I found were still alive, so I gently returned them to the water where they swam off, their wing-like flaps undulating gracefully.

As for people eating them, not here. While some species of sea hare are eaten in parts of Asia, they are not commonly consumed along the Texas coast. Around here, they're best appreciated as nature's slow-moving, ink-squirting reminder that not everything washed up on the beach is trash, some of it just needs a little nudge back home. 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](https://www.facebook.com/harteresearch)), Instagram ([@harteresearch](https://www.instagram.com/harteresearch)) and X ([@HarteResearch](https://twitter.com/HarteResearch)) (the platform formerly known as Twitter).

Though they lack an obvious external shell, sea hares are still mollusks. They have a thin, flattened internal shell tucked inside their bodies, a remnant of their snail ancestors. Over time, evolution reduced the shell as these animals adopted a soft-bodied lifestyle.



Mottled Sea Hare on the sand



Mottled Sea Hare hiding in some sargassum

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The Art of Island Life

The Art of the Signature Throw

By Melissa Mitchell

There's always a moment during a Mardi Gras parade when time slows just a bit.

Your eyes scan the float. You lock onto something different—something that feels special. And when it lands in your hands, you already know it's one you'll want to keep. Mardi Gras throws have always been about more than the items tossed from a float. They're about connection—between rider and crowd, between a fleeting moment and a memory that lasts beyond the parade route.

When a Throw Becomes a Keepsake

Some people go home with armfuls of beads. Others leave with just one or two things—but those are often the pieces they remember clearly: where they stood, who threw it, and why it felt worth saving. Long before plastic beads filled the air, early Mardi Gras riders tossed coins, ribbons, and small tokens to the crowd—simple gestures meant to acknowledge the people who gathered along the route. A nod from float to street. A moment of shared joy.

That spirit is still very much alive.

As Mardi Gras traditions evolved, beads became the most practical way to share the celebration with growing crowds. Alongside them, though, certain throws began to emerge that carried more meaning—items created with thought, individuality, and a sense of permanence.

The rhinestone shoes from the Krewe of Muses in New Orleans are a perfect example. Each one is handmade by a rider, reflecting both personal creativity and the spirit of the parade itself. Some people choose to save a single strand of beads from every parade they attend, tying each one to a year or a season of life. Others keep one special throw and give it a place of honor on a shelf or in a shadow box, tucked among photographs and postcards.

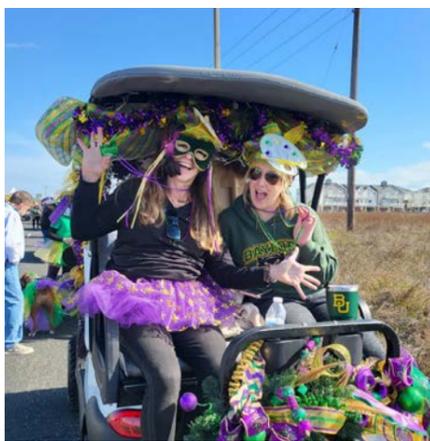
These objects become quiet reminders of what the day felt like—the music, the laughter, the anticipation just before something flew through the air. Over time, they turn into markers of memory rather than souvenirs. What we save is rarely about the object itself. It's about preserving the feeling attached to it.

A Thoughtful Twist on Tradition

This year, as Mardi Gras season unfolds, we wanted to honor that tradition in our own way at Evoke.

We'll still have beads—because they're part of the rhythm and joy of Mardi Gras. Alongside them, we have created a small number of Evoke signature throws with care and restraint, limited by design and personal by nature—focusing less on quantity and more on creating something people may want to keep.

Each miniature hat throw is styled with the same care and intention we bring to our Hat Bar experience at Evoke. No two are exactly alike, because individuality is part of the story. They're intentionally limited, not meant to replace tradition, but to



complement it with something a little more personal.

When the Barefoot Mardi Gras parade comes through, watch for [Evoke's](#) decorated cart. We'll be on the lookout for familiar faces—our longtime supporters—and welcoming new ones as well. Wave your sign, cheer—don't be shy about showing the love. You never know—you might just catch something special.

A Little Piece of Parade History

Twenty-five years ago, my brother took part in a New Orleans Mardi Gras parade. At the end of the festivities, he gifted me a piece of the float—a sparkling goldfish that had been part of its decoration.

Goldie has moved with me three times, packed into boxes and unpacked again, eventually landing back near the Gulf—just on the other side of it.

I call her "little," but from nose to tail she spans twenty-four inches. Over the years, I've always found her a place in my home—usually in the guest room, where she's become a conversation piece tucked among my coastal décor.

This year, she'll make another parade appearance—see if you can spot her. She'll serve as the accent on our cart, a nod to where she began and how far she's traveled.

You don't have to read my articles long to know that I love mixing old and new. Carrying pieces of history forward and giving them fresh life has always been part of how I create.

This goldfish may have started as just another little piece of float décor, but now she carries a story—and that's what makes her worth keeping.

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



The special goldfish

Cleanup cont. from A1

So in honor of Captain Billy this week we begin a short series of a story that was first published in the Island Moon in 1998 about his encounter of a spirit at Beach Marker 33... The Ghost at The 33.

By Billy Sandifer

I've hesitated on ever writing this story but have decided it would be a shame not to put it on paper before I croak, or get too old to remember. Heck, it's been 20 years on the 19th of October and I still remember it as if it were yesterday.

Plenty of folks have heard some of the story, but I don't guess I ever told anyone all of it until now. I'm going to tell it all the way it really happened and with all of the window dressing (and there's plenty). You believe what you will about it, for I really don't care. I will assure you that there's not a word of fiction in it. It happened and I'm simply relaying it to you. Ill caution though on judging its merit when you weren't there.

Charlie Krause walked up to my door in '91 wanting to get acquainted, but mostly wanting to pick my brain concerning the beach and surf fishing.

Right off the bat he blurted out, "They say you stayed down there for days without eating, and that the reason you know where sharks are all the time is that you cut a deal with the Ghost At The 33, you traded him your soul or something." Interesting I thought, entertaining anyway.

I told Charlie that people that don't eat die, and the African hadn't asked me for my soul or anything else. He's just been a pain in the butt more than anything else, and besides, the devil didn't want my soul anyway as I was more trouble than I was worth.

And then it all came flooding back as if it were yesterday, just as it does now. I hate it when they call him "the ghost" for to me he will always simply be "The African." And so begins the tale.

It all started on a clear morning

It was October 19, 1978 a crystal clear morning following the passage of a cold front with early morning temperatures in the mid-50s. David and I wore Levi trousers and jackets to ward off the early morning chill as we headed down island in my red 1979 Toyota Land Cruiser wagon with shark rigs and heavy duty spinning tackle in place on the rod rack.

The water was calm and crystal clear and the beach nearly deserted. We intended to spend the night, but my primary goal was to catch and bring back as many large jack crevalle as possible. Later, I would rig them with hooks and then freeze them for shark bait the following summer. There are more Jacks in the fall than at any other time and our timing was perfect.

David was a perfect shark fishing companion, young, unemployed, not a lick of sense and in most instances he exhibited the heart and courage of a lion. While shark fishing on a near-shore rig off Mustang Island I once watched him climb to the highest level platform, stand on the pipe rail and dive off into the sea simply because someone had said he wouldn't. Yes, David would do just fine.

Not much going on the flat beach at Big Shell but as soon as we dropped into the Devil's Elbow the 20 pound Jacks were thick. We fought them and caught them with large spoons and twenty pound test line until our arms ached. I think I caught 11 and David eight or nine.

Having all the bait we could haul and weary of the jacks we decided to enjoy the splendor of the day and go on down south rather than set a mid-morning shark camp. As we traveled south we began to see scattered Blacktip sharks very close to shore. At the 33 Mile a five-footer was lounging on the shallow bar offshore of a two-foot deep wade gut. I carried a large flying gaff on the tuck in those days and David gets the bright idea to walk out a free gaff this Blacktip for supper. He gets the gaff and he goes in hot pursuit. The Blacktip seems totally unconcerned but won't let David get close enough to gaff him.

David is hollering for help so I go out and I'm trying to herd the Blacktip in his direction. Got my arms out in front of me literally trying to shoo this Blacktip to David. He was on the outside edge of the bar only a couple of feet from the deeper water of the first gut and as the distance between us lessens the Blacktip spooks and disappears back into the gut. So David's whining about losing his supper and I'm laughing my head off when the dorsal of an eight-foot Bull shark pops up about two feet behind him in the first gut. I tell him not to move because there's an eight-foot Bull right behind him and it's fixing to eat him and I want to get a good picture of it doing so. I tell him I figure I should be able to get good money for pictures like that from a magazine or something.

The whole time David is standing frozen in place and leaning on the gaff pole. He's staring intently behind me and says, "Oh yeah, well you've got to get to your camera first and you better look at what's in the wade gut behind you."

I turn around and there are three seven to seven and one-half foot Bull sharks staggered out in that two foot deep wade gut between me and shore. Next thing I knew I was standing on the hood of the Toyota JUST LIKE THAT.

When my senses returned I jumped down and begin searching madly through all the packed gear for my 35 millimeter camera. Terrified the Bull would eat David without me getting pictures of it. 'Bout the time I found it I realized there was no film in it and I knew it was a lost cause.

I leaned on the hood and waved toward the shore to David and he rammed the butt end of the gaff pole into the sand and did a fair job of pole vaulting his way to shore. I don't think he touched down more than four or five times on this way to shore. The sharks had disappeared from view amid all the confusion and we once again started south.

Next week: "The biggest school of black tips I've ever seen..."



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the libraries and lost myself in the fascinating history of Padre. The lore of Indians, pirates, and of the early settlers who had tried unsuccessfully to conquer the sands, had long held great interest for me. But the knowledge of Padre is accumulative. Before long, I was delving into geology and ornithology.

It was my pleasure in the last several years to work with the National Audubon Society, who appointed me warden; with Dr. Armstrong Price, who, until recently, headed the department of oceanography at Texas A&I College; and with Dr. H.N. Fisk, research geologist for the Humble Oil Company, and former professor of geology at Louisiana State University.

Viola has spent much of these last few years in town. About twenty years ago, we discovered a new species of bird circling the skies above our shack. It was a stork. Since it seemed reluctant to leave its bundle on the wild stretches of Padre, we started paying on a home in Corpus Christi. The bundle came, and we called her Louise. Later the stork paid us another visit, this time it was a boy whom we call Charles.

The four of us spend many rich and contented hours of summers and vacations on the island. But the children had to go to school so we have maintained our home in town. Viola is happy being a mother and housekeeper during the seasons when she has to stay at home, but when summer comes we spend the time together on the beach.

My work keeps me on the island much of the time, but even when there is no necessity, the pull of the blue distances overcomes me.

Now, thirty years after the doctors predicted my imminent death, I roam the wilds of my unsubdued island like an aging Karankawa Indian.

Editor's note: So ends the memoirs of Louis Rawalt. However, in the copy of the manuscript this series was drawn from are two pages of typewritten notes which appear to be based on an interview with Viola and/or Louis Rawalt. It is undated. Here is a summation of its contents.

Among the things Louis Rawalt found on The Island: An Army camp circa 1849-1850 with a saber and buckets of bullets. He also found a survey chain "down to boggy slough" from the 1819 survey of the Island done by "de la Fuentes, prior to giving the land grant to Padre Balli."

Rawalt also made measurements from St. Augustine Pass (now Yarborough Pass) during which he found many ships which had run aground because they thought they were heading for the mouth of the Rio Grande but were 30 miles off. He also found molars from a mastodon, teeth from a giant ray, bones from a mammoth, bison teeth, pieces of an ivory tusk, bones of a prehistoric camel, copper sheathing from an ancient ship, an oriental gong, a bottle from the French Navy, a calling card of the battleship Joan d'Arc which was sunk on Christmas day 1917 off the coast of Africa during World War I, a Mayan figurine which he figured was thrown overboard by a Spanish ship trying to lighten its load while being chased down the beach by Tonkawa Indians looking for a Spanish meal; it dated to 4500 B.C.

He also identified the site of a large Karankawa camp at the mouth of the Oso at the spot that is now the intersection of Ennis Joslin and Shoreline drive, near the entrance to Texas A&M Corpus Christi.

The questioner asked if there were any Indian camps on The Island, "You're looking at it," Louis said, and pointed to a condominium "across the way." "Their dredges dug it all up," he said, and then expressed his opinion of development on The Island which is unprintable in these pages. The was one he found in the 1950s which was that of a Tonkawa village at the north end of The Island where shifting sands exposed a clay bank strewn with thousands of perfect arrowheads and other artifacts.

Rawalt said his treasure hunting was done mostly in times of drought when the sand is dry and blows with the wind and the dunes walk. He said the dry dunes "have preserved wood of the old Spanish ships very well" and he would locate the ships by looking for bronze dowel pins. He said he believed it likely that Amerigo Vespucci (the man for whom the Americas were named) was the first European who saw The Island. The first Englishmen to see The Island, he believed, were from the ship Hawks which put ashore two crews in 1639.

During World War II Rawalt talked Port Aransian Bob Flood into flying with patrol planes that watched The Island. When Flood would spot a circle of shells behind the dunes he would throw down a spear with a red flag as a marker. Rawalt had learned these circles marked the spot of old Karankawa Indian camps and would scour them for artifacts.

He later worked as a handyman and guide for oil company surveyors and the military, and was the guardian of Bird Island for the Audubon Society for 43 years. It was on the beachfront that he discovered the clay banks containing the teeth and bones of the mastodons, mammoths, camels and bison preserved since the Ice Age when the plains of South Texas stretched to the 100 fathom curve. His prehistoric finds also included a Folsom projectile point from approximately 12,000 B.C. At the wrecks sites of Spanish galleons he found bottles, silver, ballast stones and the pieces of cannon, armor and ship fittings.

He later told an interviewer, "Back of the sentinel-like row of dunes, I found the happiest hunting ground of all when I came, one day, upon a flat where the wind had swept away the sand to reveal countless spear points and arrowheads."

He found many campsites of the cannibalistic Karankawas on The Island, including one strewn with the human skulls and bones of a long-ago massacre or, perhaps, barbecue. Karankawa sites showed them to have been the first treasure hunters because their campsites often revealed Spanish artifacts scavenged from the shipwrecks.

Rawalt did at least one taped interview, in 1978 with Robert Whistler, chief naturalist for the Padre Island National Seashore. Rawalt attended the Sorbonne in Paris, and took engineering at the University of Texas but had to quit due to complications from shrapnel in his side and stomach from World War I. Louis eventually opened the Coastway retail business on Packery Channel next to the JFK Causeway. His son Charlie ran it from 1980, when Louis passed away, until 2004. The building was torn down to make room for Packery Bar & Grill. Viola passed away in 2010. Their son Charlie still lived in Flour Bluff for many years.



A Long, Strange Trip, Part 3

By Chris Jordan

Though we had not yet become romantically entangled, you wouldn't know it if you saw us together. Stacy and I had been kickin' around together since the summer and now found ourselves at a Manhattan bar after randomly giving the owner a jump start earlier on this Black Friday, nineteen eighty-seven.

If you never read the NYC magazine, *SPY*, you'll just have to take my word for how revolutionary it was. It was mostly snarky social commentary but was also a guide to Manhattan's nightlife, daylife, and the arts as well. The rag's "Naked City" section read like notes jotted on a BevNap. Considering *SPY*'s place in the media, the following mention in May of nineteen eighty-eight is a glowing review. The self-reference is classic *SPY* satirical commentary.

"FORTY WORTH 171 West Broadway; mausoleum-like piano bar; opened six months ago. Fur-designer-of-the-nightclub-future Larissa, downtown-magazine editors. Fear of Exclusivity Most people get in, but John 'This isn't my first time at the rodeo, fellas' was turned away once when the door thugs didn't recognize him. Women will get in no matter what they wear. Social Repertoires Sitting at a table near an anomalous moose-head wall plaque. Laughing knowingly at exotic New Jersey accents. Smirking inwardly. Darkness."

In a turn of irony that *SPY* could not have even conjured itself, Forty Worth was mentioned the very same month in *House & Garden*:

"THE NEW NIGHTLIFE: Among the subterranean shifts in Tribeca is the arrival of Forty Worth. Conceived by the powerfully built Mitch Perl — a man whose physical presence is a legacy of his years as a bouncer and bartender at the original Danceteria — the club represents a move away from the cavernous discos of the early eighties toward a more claustrophobic, curated intimacy. Located at one hundred and seventy-one West Broadway in a basement that previously housed Ira's (a haunt where local politicians once rubbed elbows with the neighborhood's remaining industrial denizens), Forty Worth is a study in calculated oddity. The space is dominated by a grand piano and a series of anomalous moose-head wall plaques that seem to mock the very idea of a traditional lounge. Perl's vision is a clubhouse for the downtown set who have outgrown the dance floor but haven't lost their appetite for the exclusive."

I can't tell you about this splendid dive any better. Mitch was as gracious as a host could be but he had his hands full. As the evening entered prime club time, several groups of patrons gathered. Some of those people didn't come in the main entrance. These little cliques were cloaks for central figures we could scarcely see. Nonetheless, Stacy and I were pretty sure we caught fleeting glimpses of Bianca, Basquiat, Haring, and De Niro. It was Tribeca Rising and we were there for the ascent — if only for one night.

We drank very little and weren't big drinkers to begin with. And a good thing, too, because we were staring down a four-hour drive that was a three-hour drive if your transportation was anything but a forty-horsepower VW bus. Daylight was nigh when we pulled into the student parking of Stacy's on-campus dorm and — at least to this teenage Texan — cold as hell. It was, in fact, barely freezing at thirty-one degrees, practically a sauna as I would soon learn.

The entire campus was empty — a ghost town of higher learning — and we did not see a single soul. I think we fell asleep before our heads hit the pillow.

We had a lot of fun that Saturday night, just the two of us. We poked around the dormitory kitchen and eventually realized we had the makings for cabbage soup and carrot cake. We played board games for a while and then snuggled up to watch *Saturday Night Live*. Of course *SNL* was not aired because of the holiday. Instead NBC offered a World Wrestling Federation match between Hulk Hogan and King Kong Bundy. We snuggled anyway and laughed our asses off. I didn't realize it at the time, but we were definitely playing house. Just a couple of hopelessly romantic kids, optimistically drunk on a seemingly limitless future and each other's precious company.

Ruling the roost at the dorm came to an end Sunday morning as students began to return from wherever they were for Thanksgiving. That eventually included Stacy's roommate, Sara, whose father was the U.S. ambassador to Indonesia. Seemingly as tall as I was at over six feet, Sara commanded a physical presence that was backed up with a staggeringly tall order of intellect. I couldn't imagine it would turn out to be, but as impressive as Sara was, she was only average among the students at this very special college.

The weather turned cold. I was equipped with nothing more than long johns, a knit cap, a scarf, and a motorcycle jacket. It would have to do because I had no choice but to be out there in it: my bus would turn over, but wouldn't start. I disconnected the fuel line from the fuel pump to the carburetor and while Stacy cranked the engine: nothing. No gas was being delivered to the carb which led me to the logical conclusion the fuel pump wasn't working. It seemed odd because those pumps are mechanical and there's just nothing to break but I could think of no other explanation.

The last day of the midterms for Stacy's first semester at college was December twenty-second. We wanted to be back home in Helotes by Christmas Eve to be with our parents. I had long-since run out of money so Stacy bought a new fuel pump. It was twenty-two dollars. Most days, the weather was just too brutal to work on the van. I sucked it up, braved the cold, and pulled the old fuel pump off the engine. I stuck my finger in the hole at the bottom of the pump and actuated the lever that moves the diaphragm that pumps the fuel. To my astonishment, slushy fuel squirted out of the nipple on the pump that supplies fuel to the carb: the pump was fine — my gasoline was frozen.

I helped Stacy study, she finished her exams, we packed up her things, loaded the van, and started a drive that would only take thirty hours if we hadn't been in a VW Campmobile. Stacy seemed unnecessarily downhearted and started to cry as we drove away from Mount Holyoke College. She didn't wait for me to ask. She choked it out through her tears: "I'm not coming back, Chris."

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 We'll have esteemed guest speakers including Dr. Bill Walton from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and Dr. Lindsay Glass Campbell from the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife. We'll have chef demonstrations, children's activities, and a panel conversation on what Texas is doing to encourage restaurants to support the farmed oyster industry.
 More than ten farms will be featured in the FREE farmed oyster tasting room from 2:00-4:00! And our friends from Sink Your Shucks™ Shell Recycling Program will be onsite collecting oyster shells for restoration of natural habitats. The after party will continue at the Executive Surf Club and will feature Molly McDonald, Michael Burtt, and Django Walker.
 For more information about the Texas Oyster Round Up or the Texas Surf Conservancy, please visit www.texassurfconservancy.org.



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Island Outdoors



On the Rocks

By Jay Gardner

That Time of Year... Again.

This weekend is the 31st annual Billy Sandifer and Friends of Padre Big Shell Cleanup. The earlier you show up in a 4x4, the farther down the beach in a section that you go. We are going to try and get from the 40 down south to the 19-mile marker up north. Through the survey data collected at the end (please fill out your card for your T-shirt), they've figured out that up to a 1/3 of the people that participate are new to the clean up each year. That's awesome! So, you don't have to be a seasoned veteran to come out and join us.

There are a few easy to remember rules: due to the warm weather, there may be rattlesnakes out. Please be aware. To that end, please do not go into the dunes; this is a beach cleanup, not the whole Island. If you find drugs, needles, or broken glass, flag it and alert your section leader. Section leaders will have bags and gloves and maybe some snacks. And remember, this is a once-over; we are not picking up the tiny bits and plastics. Although Jace Tunnell would like that, this is not a nurdle hunt. Leave the wood and other natural things on the beach. Looking forward to seeing y'all out there, I should be in my black truck with a CCA flag headed for the 21-mile marker, but things always change.

And yes, this weekend is the big Mardi Gras parade, which looks to be beautiful weather. The tides are starting to edge up, but hopefully they stay down low enough that way the parade can go in front of the seawall. I'm sure that the city crews are out there this week grading the beach in order to help that along. Maybe those of us doing the Big Shell Clean up can catch the tail end of it, although I've managed to injure my ankle and don't think I can hike too far.

Northern Movement

Bird migration is about to get cranked up. The way the jet stream is blowing as winter (hopefully) comes to a close, is that the first birds that are migrating are actually coming up through Mexico and into our area first, instead of bombing across the Gulf to Louisiana and Florida. These will be the purple martins and barn swallows, but also black-and-white warblers, yellow-throated warblers, and our hummingbirds. Make up a good batch of sugar water, and keep it

in a pitcher in the fridge for ease of filling feeders. However, if the neighbor kids accidentally drink some, they might like it and drink it all. Ha!

One of the reasons that the tides are starting to come up is from wind forcing. As we get our southeast wind back, it literally pushes water up against the shore and through the passes into our bays and laguna. The water brings in a bunch of crabs, shrimp, and fish larvae that have been entrained in the nearshore currents, which kicks off some spring fishing patterns. The bait fish come in the passes on incoming tides through the Brazos Santiago and Port Mansfield "East Cut" and head north through the funnel of the Land Cut.

The Truth about Trout

The "old-timers" have a "tide runner" theory that refers to speckled trout that move north through the Land Cut, signifying spring. A study done by Harte Research Institute a few years back did not prove or disprove the theory. Come to find out that trout swim all over the place. What they did find was that trout don't come from the surf and move into the bays or vice versa. They did find that surf trout and bay trout do interact in the passes though. When we were helping with that study, Roadkill Willie tagged a surf trout that pinged a receiver in Packery Channel, proving that. Personally, I think the trout are following the bait that comes in the passes during the incoming tide, and the south wind pushes them up the Intracoastal Waterway from south to north. But then again, doesn't that actually meet the definition of the tide runner theory? Things that make you go hmmm....

Well folks, there's a lot going on this weekend on the Island, and don't forget the CCA banquet next week. Randy and I made it up to Houston to give a report and snapped a pic of us in front of a sample of one of the concrete pyramids that is offshore at the Packery Channel reef. Condolences to fellow Moon Monkey Joey and to those who lost their boats and equipment in the recent Marker 37 fire. Drop me a line like Ronnie did regarding salinities of the Islands groundwater at jaygardner1032@gmail.com and we'll see you next week On the Rocks.



Randy Poelma and I in Houston



Backwater Adventures

By Joey Farah

Fishing is ON FIRE!

Two of the things that certainly have been in my life this week. Fishing has been great as well as the warm spirit of spring. I was waked up by a friend with the news of my boat and the marina a blaze. As I calmly drove over I knew that there was nothing I could do except pray that no one was or would be hurt. Loosing family, friends, or the love of your life certainly is a tragedy, boats and docks not so much. Watching the flames light up the morning darkness I was surrounded by so many that were worried about their lively hood, providing for their families. I watched firemen and police risk their lives in a violent battle where there were no people trapped, they were risking their lives for the property, and the way of life we take for granted each day. Many of those brave HEROS were folks I have grown up with, known for years. Saved so many, comforted souls in their hardest, most painful, frightened, or last moments in life. THANK YOU TO ALL THE FIRST RESPONDERS THAT LOOK OVER US EVERY DAY AND NIGHT.

I was lucky enough I suppose to have not sold my old boat so the next morning found me once again, healing my heart with the glow of a golden orange sunrise over the Island. The first drift of the day was filled with quality trout, a nine fish limit on one drift! A friend reminded me of a time as kids when summer time meant flat seas, we would find the oldest and ugliest surf board and light it up in a beach party bone fire. The surf gods always produces a magic swell and brought us waves. I hope that big old boat fire is going to bless us with a continued incredible fishing season!

We are already in a peak of springtime fishing greatness. For weeks now we have seen a migration of bait and gamefish into the back reaches of our bays, from the wintering grounds of deep water. Shrimp, crabs, baitfish, and millions of invertebrates all flowing in with each tide. Gamefish are following this movement, the ICW canal, and deep areas in the flats are the highways. The grass flats along these deep pathways are the resting areas for the baitfish and predators.

Using your lunar feed times and a varied lure selection and game plan will put you in the right place at the right time.

Shrimp and invertebrates are out at night, they burry up after sunrise. This brings all the gamefish to feed heavy at night out in the deeper zones. By morning most of the action out deep has quieted down. Small pin perch and mullet hide in the grass at night and come out as the first sun beams peak over the dunes. Shallow flats will find an explosion of activity at dawn, drift the shallow flats of 2-4' casting over marbled bottoms of grass and sand. By 11am the fish out deep will have an appetite and start to feed where the shrimp Buffett was on 6-9hrs before under the cover of darkness. So plan and time your fishing to fit the way Mother Nature is serving up her food sources. Lure selection should match this as well. Big paddle tails in the shallows and smaller baits along the deeper drop-offs.

This full moon this weekend will bring out all of the craziness on the Island, and our



Lots of big redfish have been in and around the ICW canal. Spoil islands and drop offs along the channel are holding lots of bait these guys are hunting. Farah

speckled trout populations first spawn of the year. They have been gathering in small groups of mature males and females in the shallow sand pockets. They will be grouped up together for a while. Picking apart the many pockets remember that not all sand spots are the same. They vary in color and bottom structure. When you find one that they like, fish will occupy it for weeks. Drift over and mark them, wade around and bit through them, fishing the special ones from different angles. The few biggest females in these pods of spawning fish are going to be more cautious, picky eaters, and may allow your lures to swim by over and over again until you select the right shape, color, angle, or presentation she wants.

THE SHEEP ARE HERE FOR SPRING BREAK! Right on time the schools of sheep head are congregating in the gulf passes of PACKERY channel and Port Aransas! For weeks I've seen sheep head in the flats, always in pairs, always headed north!??? How funny! It is one heck of a party, if only they knew how many of them were going home on ice. For beginners, do some watching before you jump in the mix. Jetty and bank fishermen should use smaller hooks and bait, many times those sheep head are finicky eaters. Watch the flow of the tide because they are moving back and forth from the open rocks and beyond on low tides, then sweeping in all the way into the bays with incoming tides. Rocks are a problem and using a slip float will help keep you from getting hung up. BOAT FISHERMEN will be gang banging around the bridge, like a circus full of clowns. Some anchored most using high tech trolling motors to keep position in the current. Don't be that one guy motoring into the crowd and causing mayhem. Get your anchor ready and buddy system on point well before entering the PIT! Remember to always wear protective gear when headed into battle in THE SHEEP HEAD WARS! Really it can be a blast and they are very good eating. These hard to clean fish will stick, poke, and make you hurt. Just make it easy and bring them over to my friends at MARKER 37 MARINA TO HAVE THEM CLEANED. You will get more meat and won't choke on the bones or get your hands infected with spines!

The best insurance on the water is Seatow! Our friend Brandon runs this areas service and has been the absolute GO TO man for all of your emergency's from OUT OF GAS, my boat won't start, to I slammed aground, ran into a pole, my boat is sunk, and yes even MY BOAT BURNT TO THE WATER. He knows the process, who to talk to, how to get your things fixed and has all the right equipment to save your life, and property. A membership with our local SEATOW is priceless and will be the calmness in the storm of being on the water. SEATOW 361-548-4773

We all have had just enough winter, cold, and heartbreak to now appreciate the warm sunny rays of spring! Don't forget why you live and play here on Padre! Throw those shoes off and go barefoot on the beaches this weekend! When you decide to enjoy and learn more about our great fishing here pick up the phone and let's find YOUR DAY on the water. Follow all of our hookups and catches on Facebook at JOEY FARAH'S BACKWATER FISHING! 361-442-8145



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Gene's Corner

This Week for Seniors

It's easier to get away with things when you are older

Being a senior citizen can be tough. To start out you soon realize that you have more days behind you than you do in front of you. But we lived a long time and grew up in a no stress world. No cell phones, no video games no computers. Our transportation was mainly bicycles and just walking everywhere. You didn't use the phone very often and you usually just rode your bike to your friend's house, then went and knocked on the door and said to their mom, (in those days the mom was nearly always at home) and said "Hi Mrs. Smith can John come out and play" Your friend came out, got his bike and the day's adventure was on! No one usually knew where you were or when you would be back. Just a whole day of fun and adventure. Simple times with simple games, usually made up on the spur of the moment. We learned life's lessons by experience. Lessons such as when you rode by the neighbor's house with the mean dog, you rode by as fast as you could pedal. No gears on the bike, nothing but pedal power.

Seniors have a treasure trove of life experiences that we use now daily. It is hard to scam a senior because we have seen it all. The grocery stores are good at trying to scam shoppers. Here are a few good examples on the paper aisle. Twelve rolls are equal to 48 rolls. No, seniors can count. 12 rolls are 12 rolls. New bigger rolls Yes, why? Look at the size now of the card board roll. It is almost twice the size that it used to be on paper towels and bathroom tissue as it used to be.

Sugar and other thing are same price as the larger ones used to be. You can't fool seniors. My favorite perks for seniors are simply our age. You can do things and say things that others are afraid to say and they will just blow it off as an age problem. I loved my grandmother; she lived to be 104 years old and sharp as a tack. I loved to go to those birthday parties just to see what she would come up with. At one party when a grossly overweight Aunt went back for another big piece of cake she said out loud "like you really need that", well everyone else was thinking that and just didn't say it. My mom was mortified and fussed at her, and I told my mom when you get to be that age you have earned to be able to speak your mind and it will just be blown off as an age thing. I feel like I have gotten to that point and a love it and use it as often as possible. Forgetting something is good also, the age thing again. Another good thing is when you do something and someone says why did you do that, well I just say "that is they way mom and grandma did it. " Always remember youth and strength can always be overcome by cunning and deceit.

Thought for the day: I can picture in my mind a world without war and without hate. And I can picture us attacking that world because they would never expect it.

Next week, the pros and cons of living alone.



Thoughts from Reverend Ken

Walking through the valley of the shadow of death

By Rev. Dr. Ken

There is a classic scene in the 1991 movie City Slickers where Mitch (played by Billy Crystal) speaks to his son's elementary school class. He is supposed to talk about his job. Instead, he delivers a depressing motivational speech about aging.

He starts with the teenage years when you think you can do anything, and you do. The twenties are a blur. In your thirties you are raising your family and making money. You grow a potbelly in your forties, grow another chin, music is too loud, and a classmate becomes a grandmother. In your fifties you have minor surgery. In your sixties you have major surgery. The music is still loud, but you can't hear it anyway. In your seventies you retire to Florida, start eating dinner at 2 pm, lunch at 10 am and breakfast the night before, all the while wondering why the kids don't call. In your eighties you will have a major stroke, babbling to a nurse your wife can't stand, but you call her mama. He closes with the deadpan, "any questions?"

Walking through the valley of the shadow of death is complicated. It can be overwhelming and anxious. While we like to think we do not fear, we do. When we lay awake at night staring at a spinning fan we might wonder about the uncertainties, the what ifs, what lies ahead, trying to make sense of what is happening to me, or one I love. Aging, disease, and end of life is like that.

Psalm 23 is a great comfort to many people. However, the green pastures of that psalm can feel like rocky plains of cacti when navigating through the challenges of aging. The still waters might resemble thirty-foot waves while in a rowboat. Our soul seems completely spent and empty, not restored. It can feel as if we are walking through the dark valley without any light.

Psalm 23 is a song and prayer of trust. It is not a denial of the reality of evil and death. We must live in the here and now. However, the song is a reminder that we do not do so alone. In the face of danger, trial, misfortune, illness, even death we will be sustained by the love of God. God has not and will not abandon us.

Yes, we will die. This awaits all of us. However, in the victory of Christ we have a defiant faith that believes nothing can separate us from the love of God. We stubbornly choose faith when reality suggests another option. In defiance we choose to walk in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

We do not walk alone in this journey through the valley of the shadow of death. We walk with Christ, and we walk in community.

Navigating the various issues we encounter as we age can be daunting. Island Presbyterian Church is sponsoring a seminar, Seasons of Life, to help discuss some of these issues, especially the end-of-life issues. There will be professionals to talk about the different levels and costs of care facilities, Hospice care, funeral planning, advance directives, medical power of attorney, spiritual concerns, and other important considerations. The best time to think about these things is before we need to address them.

Seasons of Life will occur on March 7, 9:30 am 11:30 am. At Island Presbyterian Church, 14030 Fortuna Bay Dr. No reservation is required. Coffee, tea, water, and snacks will be offered. The event is free. Bring your questions; bring your concerns, brings your experiences.

In defiance of despair and cynicism, fear and anxiety, meaninglessness and despondency we trust the Lord is among us. We journey together being kind, compassionate, supportive, and generous. The Lord is our shepherd. We will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Let's talk about the end-of-life issues together in community. Hope to see you then!

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



Red caught on Bob Hall Pier Tuesday, February 24th.

Island Real Estate Roundup



Apryl Noles

Sale on four homes closed this week

Over the past seven days, the Padre Island real estate market has remained consistently active. Currently, two homes are under option, with prices ranging between \$200,000 and \$380,000. At this time, there are no homes in pending status.

This week, four homes successfully closed, with sales prices ranging from approximately \$320,000 up to \$600,000, reflecting continued buyer activity across multiple price points.

In the condominium market, there were no properties under option, pending, or sold this week. However, the townhome segment showed movement, with one townhome currently under option priced under \$300,000 and another closing above the \$300,000 mark.

It is important to note that the homes and townhomes experiencing successful transactions were strategically priced and had not remained on the market for extended periods. Sellers who follow professional market analysis and pricing recommendations by their Realtor, continue to see positive results.

Stay tuned for next week's update as we continue to monitor activity across the Padre Island market.

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Senior Moments Special to the Island Moon

The Andrews Sisters Part 2

By Dotson Lewis

Dotson's Note: The Andrews Sisters were the most imitated of all female singing groups and influenced many artists, including Mel Tormé, Les Paul and Mary Ford, the Four Freshmen, the Supremes, the Beach Boys, the McGuire Sisters, the Lennon Sisters, the Pointer Sisters, the Manhattan Transfer, Barry Manilow, and Bette Midler. Their style was even emulated internationally; the Harmony Sisters, a popular Finland group that performed from the 1930s to the 1950s, was one such example. Thanks to Lewis Jenkins and Wikipedia for the facts and photos contained in this report.



Most of the Andrews Sisters' music has been restored and released in compact disc form. Over 300 of their original Decca recordings, a good portion of which was hit material, has yet to be released by MCA/Decca. Many of their Decca recordings have been used in such television shows and Hollywood movies as *Homefront*, *ER*, *Agent Carter*, *The Brink's Job*, *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*, *Swing Shift*, *Raggedy Man*, *Summer of '42*, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, *Maria's Lovers*, *Harlem Nights*, *In Dreams*, *Murder in the First*, *L.A. Confidential*, *American Horror Story*, *Just Shoot Me*, *Gilmore Girls*, *Mama's Family*, *War and Remembrance*, *Jakob the Liar*, *Lolita*, *The Polar Express*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Molly: An American Girl on the Home Front*, *Memoirs of a Geisha*, and *Bon Voyage*, *Charlie Brown (and Don't Come Back!!)*. Comical references to the trio in television sitcoms can be found as early as *I Love Lucy* and as recently as *Everybody Loves Raymond*. In 2007, their version of "Bei Mir Bist Du Schön" was included in the game *BioShock*, a first-person shooter that takes place in an alternate history 1960, and later in 2008, their song "Civilization" (with Danny Kaye) was included in the Atomic Age-inspired video game *Fallout 3*. The 2010 video game *Mafia II* features numerous Andrews Sisters songs, with "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy", "Strip Polka" and "Rum and Coca-Cola". The 2011 video game *L.A. Noire* features the song "Pistol Packin' Mama", where the sisters perform a duet with Bing Crosby. The sisters were again featured in a *Fallout* game in 2015, when their songs "Pistol Packin' Mama" and "Civilization" were featured in the game *Fallout 4*.

Christina Aguilera used the Andrews Sisters' "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" to inspire her song "Candyman" (released as a single in 2007) from her hit album *Back to Basics*. The song was co-written by Linda Perry. The London-based trio the Pup-pini Sisters uses their style harmonies on several Andrews Sisters and other hits of the 1940s and 1950s, as well as later rock and disco hits. The trio have said their name is a tribute to the Andrews Sisters. The National WW2 Museum's Victory Belles pay tribute to the Andrews Sisters, performing their music daily in the Stage Door Canteen in New Orleans. The Manhattan Dolls, a New York City-based touring group, performs both the popular songs sung by the Andrews Sisters and some of the more obscure ones, such as "Well Alright" and "South American Way".

The Andrews Sisters were the most sought-after singers in theater shows worldwide during the 1940s and early 1950s, always topping previous house averages. The trio headlined at the London Palladium in 1948 and 1951. They hosted their own radio shows for ABC and CBS from 1944 to 1951, singing specially written commercial jingles for such products as Wrigley's chewing gum, Dole pineapples, Nash motor cars, Kelvinator home appliances, Campbell's soups, and Franco-American food products. The western-themed *The Andrews Sisters' Show* (subtitled "Eight-to-the-Bar Ranch"), co-hosted by Gabby Hayes, began in 1944 and featured a special guest every week.



The Andrews Sisters performing with Bing Crosby on October 30, 1943

The trio recorded 47 songs with Bing Crosby, 23 of which charted on *Billboard*, thus making the team one of the most successful pairings of acts in a recording studio in show business history. Their million-sellers with Crosby included "Pistol Packin' Mama", "Don't Fence Me In", "South America, Take It Away", and "Jingle Bells".

The sisters' popularity was such that after the war, they discovered that some of their records had actually been smuggled into Germany, after the labels had been changed to read "Hitler's Marching Songs". Their recording of "Bei Mir Bist Du Schön" became a favorite of the Nazis, until it was discovered that the song's composers were of Jewish descent. This did not stop concentration camp inmates from secretly singing it, this being most likely because the song was originally a Yiddish song, "Bei Mir Bistu Shein", and had been popularized within the Jewish community before it was recorded as a more successful "cover" version by the Andrews Sisters.

Edward Habib, in the CD liner notes for *Songs That Won the War Vol. 2 The Hollywood Canteen*, states that the Andrews Sisters' radio transcription of "Elmer's Tune" was "so popular it even played on German radio," noting that "the opposition embraced the Andrews Sisters and their songs in the same way the Allied Forces adopted Lili Marlene."

Along with Bing Crosby, separately and jointly, the Andrews Sisters were among the performers who incorporated ethnic music styles into America's Hit Parade, popularizing or enhancing the popularity of songs with melodies originating in Brazil, Czechoslovakia, France, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Mexico, Russia, Spain, Sweden and Trinidad, many of which their manager chose for them.

Dotson's Other Note: The Andrews Sisters became the most popular female vocal group of the first half of the 20th century. You Moon Monkeys may be interested in an unpublished, true story about Maxine Andrews and my friend Lew Jenkins. Don't forget the Veterans Round Table on Thursdays and the Radio Round Table Saturdays at 1440 KEYS RADIO.

THANKS FOR READING THE MOON

State News

Unclaimed Property

\$10 billion in cash and valuables

State Representative Todd Hunter, District 32

Texas is currently holding about \$10 billion in cash and other valuables waiting for their rightful owners to claim. The Texas Comptroller estimates that one in four residents of the State of Texas have unclaimed property. Examples of unclaimed property include dividend, payroll, or cashier's checks; stocks, bonds, and mutual fund accounts; utility deposits and other refunds; insurance proceeds; mineral interest or royalty payments; dormant bank accounts; and abandoned safe deposit box contents.

The Texas Comptroller's office receives unclaimed property as required by law from financial institutions, businesses, and government entities that are holding personal property which is considered abandoned or unclaimed. The unclaimed or abandoned property is turned over to the Comptroller's office when the property owners' whereabouts are unknown, and the property has been inactive on the books of the reporting company after the necessary abandonment period has expired. It is important to know that the Comptroller's office acts only as a custodian of the unclaimed property and holds the property in a trust until such time as it can be claimed. Texas does not take legal ownership of the unclaimed property, so there is no time limit for filing a claim.

Over the past several years, the Texas Comptroller has travelled around the state to bring public attention to the billions in unclaimed property being held by the State of Texas. In fiscal year 2024, the agency paid a record \$422 million in claims. This is important because since the unclaimed property program began, the Comptroller's office returned more than \$5 billion worth of unclaimed property.



In order to make the process of claiming your property easier, the Comptroller's office has outlined a number of recent features on their website to help enable the process. The website is regularly updated with new property that has been received by their office. To find out if you are one of these Texas residents with unclaimed property, I strongly recommend that you check the unclaimed property list by visiting Texas Unclaimed Property at <https://claimtexas.org/> or by calling 800-321-2274 (CASH).

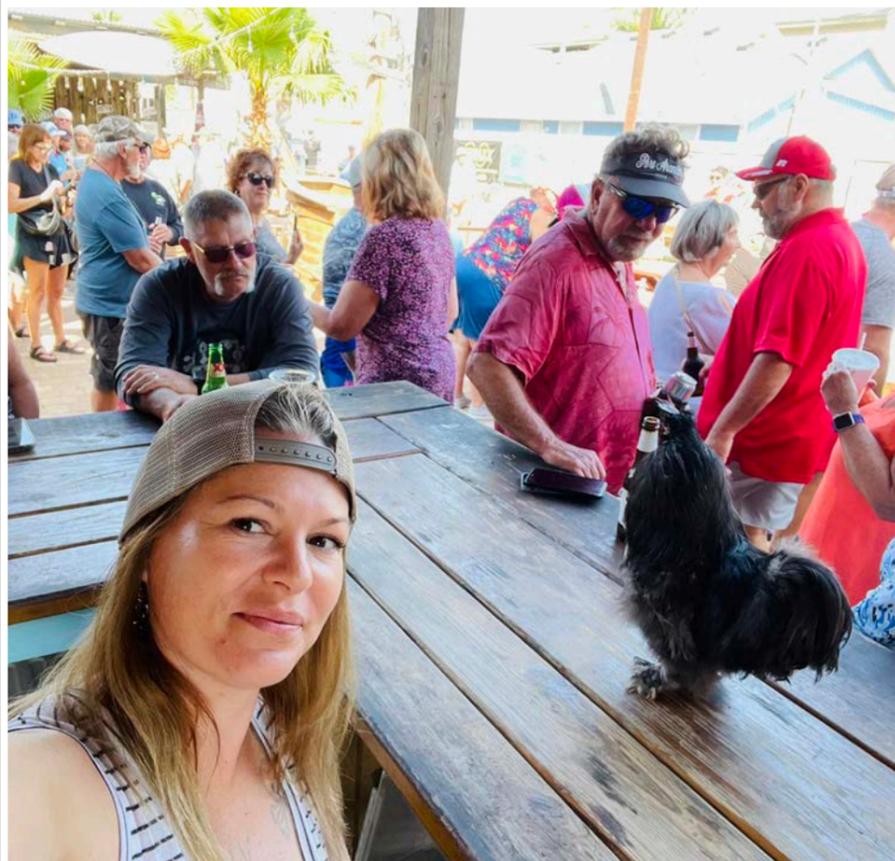
If you have questions regarding any of the information mentioned in this week's article, please do not hesitate to call my Capitol or District Office. Please always feel free to contact my office if you have any questions or issues regarding a Texas state agency, or if you would like to contact my office regarding constituent services. As always, my offices are available at any time to assist with questions, concerns, or comments (Capitol Office, 512-463-0672; District Office, 361-949-4603).

- State Representative Todd Hunter, District 32

Rep. Hunter represents Aransas County and Nueces (Part) County. He can be contacted at todd.hunter@house.state.tx.us or at 512-463-0672.



Seashore 2nd grade fishing club visited the new Bob Hall Pier on Tuesday with Superintendent Elizabeth Jackson



Gaff bartender Victoria Ferguson brings her chicken to work with her.

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

Knuckle-Cracker

6	2				
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Mind-Numbing Frustration

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Brain-Buster

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Island Crossword

Crossword Solution on classifieds page

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15						16	
17					18						19	
			20				21		22			
23	24	25				26	27					
28				29	30				31	32	33	34
35				36					37			
38			39						40			
41					42						43	
44				45						46		
			47	48				49	50			
51	52	53				54						
55				56	57	58				59	60	61
62				63					64			
65				66					67			

Across

- 1. A funny thing happened on the way here
- 6. Entrance into society
- 11. Toward an airplane's tail
- 14. It has a flat neck
- 15. Pica alternative
- 16. Sine ___ non
- 17. Mom's cure-all
- 19. It may be bookmarked
- 20. Delilah portrayer
- 21. Remembrance of things past
- 23. Birthplace of Saint Francis
- 26. Person who digs hard rock?
- 28. Bright light in the big city
- 29. Characters in a Tchaikovsky ballet
- 31. Beatles song "Back in the ___"
- 35. Street in some movies
- 36. Baby kangaroos
- 37. Conductor Zubin
- 38. Meals for fundamentalists?
- 41. Something acquired at a wedding?
- 42. Poetic grief
- 43. Garner
- 44. Early offspring
- 45. Famous person, informally
- 46. Stubborn creature
- 47. Forest place
- 49. Someone making amends
- 51. Legendary lumberjack
- 54. Protection (Var.)
- 55. Compass dir.
- 56. An easy crossword, e.g.
- 62. "Cries and Whispers" star Ullmann
- 63. Declare legally void
- 64. Golf course shouts
- 65. Terminate ungraciously
- 66. Pieces of lemon peel
- 67. Drinks in long drafts

Down

- 1. Govt. broadcast regulators
- 2. Amazed exclamation
- 3. Bonds stat.
- 4. Oliver Twist, for one
- 5. Fabricates
- 6. One-third of a liar's policy
- 7. Overhead trains
- 8. Life story, shortly
- 9. Complete reversals
- 10. Conical quarters
- 11. Marine or plane starter
- 12. Roll up, as a flag
- 13. Like some orders
- 18. Inventor with a bright idea
- 22. Oil container
- 23. Lacking vitality
- 24. Late Mexican-American vocalist
- 25. Certain dweller along the Horn of Africa
- 26. Something to dance around
- 27. Brogan cushion
- 30. United
- 32. James Clavell novel
- 33. Political writer Sir Richard
- 34. Set of horizontal lines
- 36. Skull part
- 37. Cause damage to flavor
- 40. Island united with Trinidad
- 45. Eyetooth
- 46. 1980 Olympics site
- 48. City in western Bolivia
- 50. Spats
- 51. Lugosi of "The Raven"
- 52. Computer operating system
- 53. Field of granular snow
- 54. Snakelike fish
- 57. Naval off.
- 58. Director's cry
- 59. Stepfather of John F. Kennedy, Jr.
- 60. It's tapped into
- 61. Road shape, sometimes

2026 PIPOA eVoting Ballot Worksheet

Printed Property Owner's Name: _____

Printed Property Owner's Address: _____

Submission

Complete this Ballot Worksheet and mail* it to:
* Ballot worksheets must be signed, legible and received at the POA Office no later than **19 Mar 26**. You may also personally deliver it to the office but the **POA staff will not accept ballot worksheets delivered by a 3rd party or incompletely filled out.**

PIPOA
14015 Fortuna Bay Drive
Corpus Christi, TX 78418

Ballot Details

Description:	2026 PIPOA Board of Directors and Bylaw Update - Electronic Voting Only
Calculation Method:	Weighted Property-Based Voting. POA Staff will Verify Name & Address
Reference Files:	Current (2023) Bylaws Candidate Resumes Section A Deed Update
Reference File Location:	https://padreislespoa.org "E-Voting INFORMATION"

Vote on Proposition 1: Board Member Candidates

Please vote for 4 of the following candidates:

- Terry Brown
- Ross Garcia
- Mark Dick
- Randy Eaton
- Jim McFadden
- Tom Cable
- Abstain

Vote on Proposition 2: Bylaw Update

Now that the City of Corpus Christi owns the Seawall, the PIPOA must remove Para 4.05 "Seawall" from the Second Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Padre Isles Property Owners Association and refile the bylaws with Nueces County.

- Yes, I approve of this necessary change to avoid future financial responsibility for the Seawall.
- No, I disapprove.
- Abstain

This eVoting Ballot Worksheet is a written ballot that will be entered into the PIPOA electronic voting system and counted in the same manner as votes cast directly through the owner portal. PIPOA staff handling this worksheet will keep your voting selections confidential and will use them solely for verifying and recording your vote. We cannot enter your voting information into ManageCASA without your legible Name and Address printed above. Paper ballot worksheets received after 19 Mar 26 will not be counted.

By signing below, I certify that I am the record owner of the above property.

Owner Signature: _____ Date: _____

Fifteen Years Ago in the Island Moon



The beach along the Ellis Seawall was being renourished.



A dead whale washed up on the beach in Port Aransas.



The kids at Seashore were using old Moons to make a Moon for the Island Moon float.

Moon Classifieds #1141

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

AI-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 AI-Anon
AI-Anon meets at 7:00 pm Sundays at Padre Island Baptist Church

Services
Appliance Repair



-N- House Appliance Repair
 Most major brands & appliances
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361-960-0911

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 361-99-GRILL (994-7455)
 CoastalBendGrillCleaning.com

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 Construction Debris Removal
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 Repair Wood Replacement, Facia, etc.
Artisan - Joe Cantu
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 htplastering@aol.com

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- Roofing
- Residential & Commercial

Bryan Wolfe
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 15809 El Socorro Loop
 Corpus Christi TX 78418

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 Seniors - single mom's savings available

APPRAISAL REVIEW BOARD MEMBER
 2026 SEASON - Part-Time Contract Labor
 \$170/day

- Nueces County resident for preceding 2 years
- Cannot work for any taxing entities

Role Description:
<https://nuecescad.net/appraisal-review-board/>
 Application available at
http://nuecescad.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/ARB_application_2023.pdf

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED THRU March 27, 2026

For more info contact Brian McCabe
 361-696-7683 tlo@nuecescad.net

LEGAL NOTICE

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a new Beer and Wine Permit (MB) by Corpus Christi Minutemen LLC DBA Best Western Corpus Christi Airport to be located at 2021 N. Padre Island Drive, Corpus Christi, TX 78408. Officer of said corporation is Managing Member Kunal Patel



Weekly Coffee Meetings held Monday morning.

Monthly Happy Hour 3rd Thursday of the Month.

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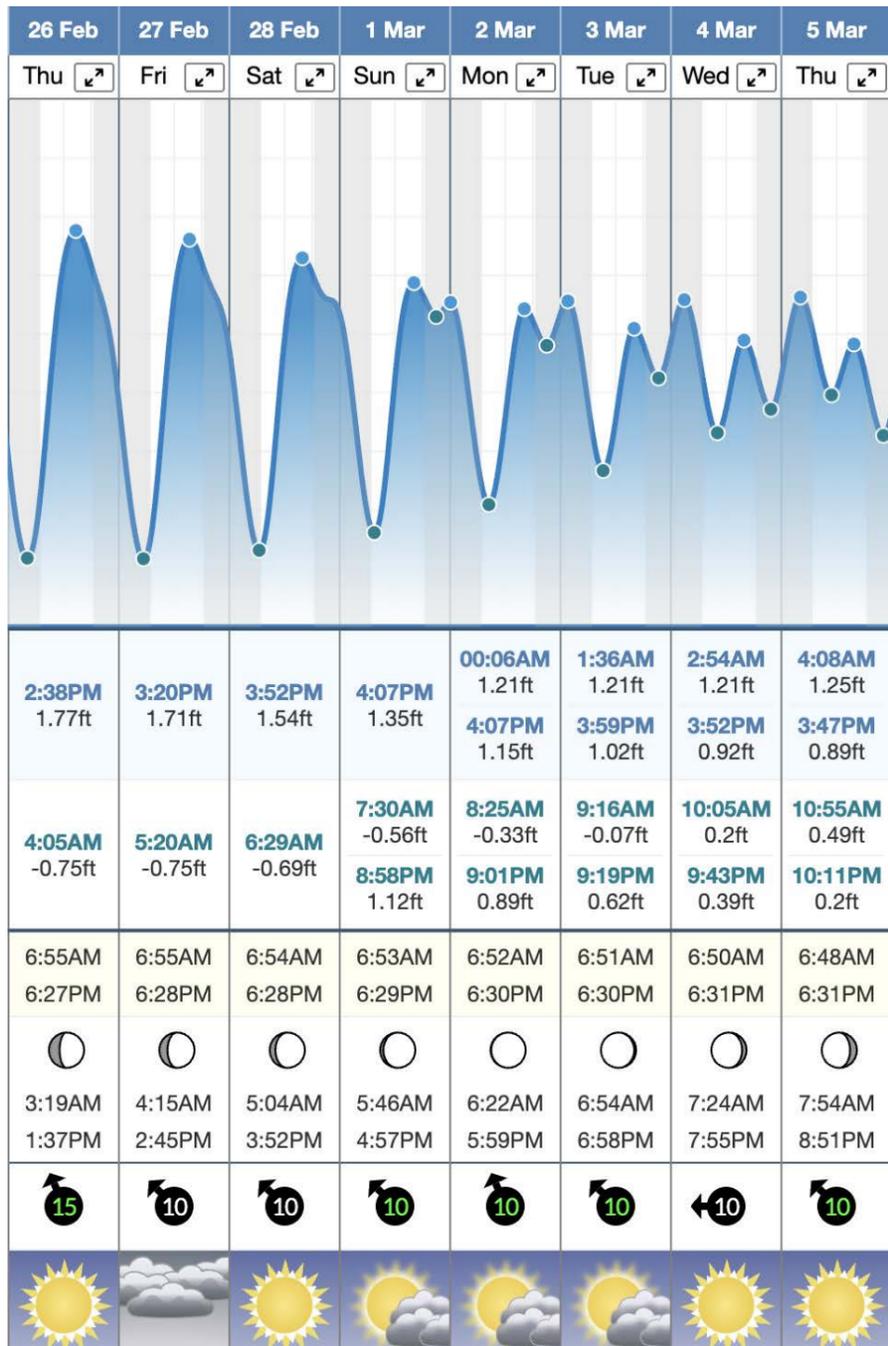
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Tides of the Week



Crossword Solution

F	O	R	U	M		D	E	B	U	T		A	F	T			
C	O	B	R	A		E	L	I	T	E		Q	U	A			
C	H	I	C	K	E	N	S	O	U	P		U	R	L			
			H	E	D	Y			R	E	C	A	L	L			
A	S	S	I	S	I		M	I	N	E	R						
N	E	O	N			S	W	A	N	S		U	S	S	R		
E	L	M			J	O	E	Y	S			M	E	H	T	A	
M	E	A	T	A	N	D	P	O	T	A	T	O	E	S			
I	N	L	A	W			D	O	L	O	R		G	E	T		
C	A	I	N			C	E	L	E	B		M	U	L	E		
						G	L	A	D	E		A	T	O	N	E	R
B	U	N	Y	A	N					E	G	I	S				
E	N	E				P	I	E	C	E	O	F	C	A	K	E	
L	I	V				A	N	N	U	L		F	O	R	E	S	
A	X	E				Z	E	S	T	S		S	W	I	G	S	

Sports

Sports Talk Special to The Island Moon

The 2026 Winter Olympics



Dotson's Note: The 2026 Winter Olympics (Italian: Olimpiadi invernali del 2026), officially the XXV Winter Olympic Games and commonly known as Milano Cortina 2026, was an international multi-sport event taking place from 6 to 22 February 2026 at multiple sites across Lombardy and Northeast Italy, with competition in selected events beginning 4 February 2026. Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo were selected as the host cities on 24 June 2019 at the 134th IOC Session in Lausanne, Switzerland. The three Italian International Olympic Committee (IOC) members, Franco Carraro, Ivo Ferrini and Giovanni Malagò, and two Swedish IOC members, Gunilla Lindberg and Stefan Holm, were ineligible to vote as stated in the Olympic Charter. Stadio San Siro in Milan and Verona Arena are the venues of opening and closing ceremonies, respectively. Thanks to the United States Olympic Committee for the facts and photos contained in this report.

The venue, which was constructed to host speed skating during the 2006 Winter Olympics and after the Games, has hosted events such as exhibitions, fairs and conferences. The venue hosted the same sport in the 2007 Winter Universiade. In April 2023, it was estimated that the temporary ice rink in Fiera Milano would cost nearly €20 million, which would be paid for with private funds. The proposal to use Turin's Oval Lingotto received opposition from Milan-area officials, as Turin was part of the initial stages of the project, but later withdrawn. One of the spokespersons to reject this proposal was the mayor of Milan, Giuseppe Sala, and officials from the host regions of Lombardy and Veneto. Fiera Milano was confirmed as the speed skating venue in April 2023.

The Olympic torch relay started on 26 November 2025 with the flame lighting in Olympia, Greece, and concluded on 6 February 2026 in Milan, Italy, coinciding with the opening ceremony at Stadio San Siro. Along with the 13 regional units and seven regions in Greece, the flame was scheduled to visit the 110 provinces of Italy, making 60 stops over 63 days across 12,000 kilometres (7,500 mi).

Following the lighting of the Olympic flame in Olympia, there was a low-key handover ceremony in Athens on 4 December 2025. The flame then arrived in Rome to visit all 110 provinces of Italy, making 60 stops over 63 days across 12,000 kilometres (7,500 mi) and involving 10,001 torchbearers. The torch was in Naples for Christmas, in Bari for New Year's Eve, and in Cortina d'Ampezzo on 26 January to commemorate the 70th anniversary of its hosting the 1956 Winter Olympics. While the torch is in Piedmont, a tribute is planned for skier Matilde Lorenzi, who died while training in October 2024.

The medals featured an essential design that places emotion and teamwork at its core. They had the traditional Olympic five-ring symbol on one side, with an inscription on the reverse that details the event and commemorates the venue. The medals of several athletes broke after they received them.

Dotson's Other Notes: The 2026 Winter Olympics are scheduled to feature 116 medal events in 16 disciplines, an increase of seven events and one discipline over Beijing 2022. New medal events will include men's and women's dual moguls in freestyle skiing, the return of the men's and women's doubles in luge (replacing the open doubles event), men's and women's team combined events in alpine skiing, women's large hill individual in ski jumping, and a mixed relay team event in skeleton. The Games will have the highest percentage of women's participation in Winter Olympic history, at 47%. Nordic combined remains the only Winter Olympic sport in which only men compete.

THANK YOU FOR READING



SandBox on the Michael J. Elis Seawall grand opening will be on Saturday the 28th, in time for the Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade. Photos by Jan Rankin

Island Moon Live

Our Thursday radio show is now on 1440 KEYS and 98.7 fm as well as streamed live on YouTube and Facebook! We record the show on Thursdays live at Doc's from 11 am to 1 pm. 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 via these links.



Live Streams



Special Videos



The Games primarily utilized existing venues across Lombardy and Northeast Italy, including those used by the 1956 Winter Olympics previously held in Cortina d'Ampezzo, and by the 2013 Winter Universiade hosted by the province of Trentino. Most ice events, aside from curling, were held in the Milan cluster, while sliding and snow events will be held in clusters around Cortina, Valtellina and the Fiemme Valley.

A new 12,000-seat multi-use arena designed by David Chipperfield constructed in Milan's Santa Giulia district hosted ice hockey. Stadio San Siro in Milan hosted the opening ceremony, and the historic Verona Arena in Verona hosted the closing ceremony.

Athletes stayed in several Olympic villages, depending on the location of their sport; Milan Olympic Village, Cortina d'Ampezzo Olympic Village, or in hotels.

During the bidding process, the bidding committee proposed that the speed skating events could be held at the existing Ice Rink Piné in Baselga di Piné. Despite the infrastructure being ready, it required a roof and cost studies indicated would be costly, potentially exceeding the budget. So instead, the committee deliberated over three choices: building an ice rink in the pavilions of Fiera Milano (with a possibility to be permanent or temporary), options that would require significant structural work, or move the events to the Oval Lingotto in the city of Turin which required no structural changes.

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Three Chords and the Truth

By Ronnie Narmour
ronniennarmour@gmail.com

Adios Boots...



Jim Williams and Port A's friendly local alligator Boots 2016

If you've been here for any time at all, you probably know about **Boots**, our community alligator that until recently lives at the **Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center** at the end of **Ross Avenue**. Here's a little back-story... the Birding Center is down the road from **Charlie's Pasture**, the Community Park and next to the wastewater treatment plant. It's a beautiful slice of paradise in a swampy sort of way with over a mile of boardwalks and an observation tower overlooking the salt marsh. Legions of birders/photographers flock there to observe and take photos of the amazing variety of water fowl in that wetland environment. It's not uncommon to see flamingo, white pelican, ducks, and cranes of every sort. This is the general area where **Boots** has lived for many years. Sometimes he can be seen in so close that people feed him hence as precious Boots has grown way too comfortable and sometimes roams the streets near-by. I mean what could go wrong? It wasn't unusual to sometimes see him in the ditch by **Dollar General** or at the city dump. I took this pic ten years ago of Boots and the animal control officer **Jim Williams** out on the street waiting for the tow truck to move our beloved critter back to **Leonabelle**. Long story short, as a tourist attraction Boots went from being cute to dangerous. People got too comfortable feeding him food and throwing stuff at him. So the good folks at the **Gator Country Amusement Park** in Beaumont came and, just to be safe, took him away from us. (BTW, they sell four wieners for \$5 to feed the gators there.) I'm sure we'll get more gators but there will never be another Boots. Adios old friend! Don't be a stranger.

On the local front...



Spring Break 2017 People get ready.

Are you ready? Well you better be because March is right around the corner and let me tell you, there's a lot of working parts come March. Historically speaking, if there's any of the frozen tundra north of Dallas has thawed out yet, the **Winter People** should be heading home around the first of the month, being that the lodging rates go up in March. Me and my **Mermaid Gal** have lived upstairs overlooking a big trailer park for many years and we can tell when the tourist seasons will change just by looking out our windows. I forecast vast availabilities over there next Monday. The short term rentals will turn into dorm rooms for two weeks in the middle of the month when **Spring Break** winks its evil eye. Soon I will talking about such seasonal faves as the **Festering Den of Sin** and **Butt Cheek Beach**, G-rated photos included. Also in this change of season, the bars and music venues, such as the **Sip Yard**, **Bron's** and **Treasure Island**, that chose to sit it out through the winter, will reopen on March 6. In other words, this joint is about to get jumping. Learn your "no left turn" routes and take a refresher course in anger management very soon. The heat is on, get a plan.

Scattered shots...



Kip Shannon encourages Lady of Winter to let her rip at the Gaff's Chicken Poop Bingo last Saturday.

I got out a bit last weekend and saw the **PA Rockers** at this year's **Spring Phling** put on each year by the local **Parrot Heads** in the pavilion at **Roberts Point Park**. It was heavily attended by **Winter People** who call February spring. I was also privy to the **Gaff's** house chicken, **Lady of Winter**, who occupied a solid hour of quite a few people who were there to document the exact location Lady's highly anticipated bowel movement and wager their hard earned money on where that might be. Can you say BINGO? I also went by the **VFW** to see **Silver Corvette** knocking out some familiar tunes and later to catch bluesman **John Cortez** give **Stevie Ray Vaughan** a run for his money. I was a very windy night.



The PA Rockers played the Spring Phling last Saturday.

Coming this week...

Coming this week on Thursday the 26th, a gentleman I have the feeling we're about to see a whole lot more of around here, **Kevin Charles** will play the **Gaff**. I missed his show there last week but heard it was a sell-out. Expect more to come on Mr. Charles. On Friday young **Carson Miller** will play a solo show at the **VFW**, our Cajun pals **Boudreaux and Pousson** will get the butts wiggling at the **Gaff** and trop-rock-er **Billy Snipes** will play the evening at **Shorty's**. In the afternoon on the 27th and 28th the trop-rocking crew, **Pirates and Poets** will play their annual show **Shorty's** in the afternoon and the **Plantation Suites** in the evening. Look for **Dennis Davis** on Friday and **Mark Carson** and **Dan Sullivan** on Saturday...and get there early, this place will fill up with **Parrot Heads** for sure. Also on Saturday the 28th the folks on North Padre Island will be getting sandy for their **Barefoot Mardi gras Parade**. Also on Saturday the **WORLD FAMOUS BELT SANDER RACES** will be held at the **Gaff** at 3 PM and trop-rock-er **Aloha Dave** and the **Tourists** will play the evening show at **Shorty's**. That's a boat load of trop-rocking going on at **Shorty's** this weekend. Plus the **Profile Band** will play the **VFW** on Saturday and the **Coastal Benders** will be there on Wednesday the 4th. Y'all be safe out there.

♪♪♪ And, that's the truth ♪♪♪



Silver Corvette played the VFW last Saturday.



Dan Sullivan will play the Pirates and Poets early show on Saturday.



The John Cortez Blues Band played Shorty's last weekend.

LIVE MUSIC TONIGHT

Thursday

February 26

Johnson All Starz @ Shortys
Kevin Charles @ Gaff
Clark Bros @ Salty Dog
Brad Brown @ Blackbeard's on the Beach
Moshpit Addicts, Black Hat @ House of Rock
Alley Catz @ Brewster Southside
Rich Lockhart Downtown
Eric Graham @ Executive Surf Club
AJ Cruz @ Cassidy's Irish Pub
Blackhat, Dreams End +2 @ House of Rock

Friday

February 27

PIRATES & POETS @ Shorty's (3-5)
Billy Snipes @ Shorty's (8 PM)
Carson Miller solo @ VFW
Boudreaux & Pousson @ Gaff
Dickie Delight @ Salty Dog
The Groove @ Pelican Lounge
Indiglow @ Rokit's
Scarecrow People @ Executive Surf Club
Kat & The Nat 20's @ House of Rock
Aaron Jacob @ Brewster Island
Michael Burtt @ Brewster Southside
Raul Ayala @ Cassidy's Irish Pub

Saturday

February 28

BAREFOOT MARDI GRAS PARADE 11:00
BELT SANDER RACES @ The Gaff
PIRATES & POETS @ Shorty's (12:30-4)
Aloha Dave @

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

KEVIN CHARLES	FEB 26
BOO & POO	FEB 27
JIM DUGAN	FEB 28
DALLAS BURROW	MAR 7
REDBIRD ROAD TRIP	MAR 8

JIM DUGAN & TY DIETZ EVERY SUN
THE ALL STARS EVERY THUR 8-12

PIRATES & POETS (AFTERNOON)	FEB 27-28
BILLY SNIPES	FEB 27
ALOHA DAVE	FEB 28
MANTLE JENNINGS	MAR 6
JOHN ELIJAH BAND	MAR 7

LUCKY DOGZ	MAR 6
JON CAR	MAR 7
BACK PEW REVIVAL	MAR 13
NATIONAL NOBODYZ	MAR 14
CARSON MILLER	MAR 20

CARSON MILLER SOLO	FEB 27
PROFILE BAND	FEB 28
BRAD ETHRIDGE	MAR 3 & 10
COASTAL BENDERS	MAR 4
CARSON MILLER BAND	MAR 6
THE GROOVE 2.0	MAR 7

ALLEY CATZ	MAR 6
CATHOUSE	MAR 7
RIPTIDE	MAR 12
CRUISE CONTROL	MAR 13
B-FLAT DUELING PIANOS	MAR 14
BUSHBULLIT	MAR 19

DARREN MCGILL	MAR 6
RUBEN V	MAR 7
LOVE STREET	MAR 8
RICH LOCKHART	MAR 10
JERRY WARD & DIRTY BIRDS	MAR 11
THE GROOVE 2.0	MAR 12

Shorty's (8-12)
Profile Band @ VFW Port A
Jim Dugan @ Gaff
John Elijah, Matty Lee, Proof of Life, Irie Rebels @ Artisan National Nobodysz @ Pelican Lounge
Tailgate Troubadours @ Hideout 35 AP
Dreaming in Color @ South TX Ice House
The Max @ Rokit's
Emma James @ Brewster Island
Scarecrow People @ Brewster Southside
Left Right Left @ Cassidy's Irish Pub
Texas Oyster Round Up @ Executive Surf Club
The Groove 2.0 @ Sugar Shack RP

Sunday, March 1

Jim Dugan, Ty Dietz @ Shorty's
Clark Bros @ Salty Dog
Riptide Cowboy
Open Mic @ Mikel May's Too

Monday, March 2

Strung Out, Riverboat Gamblers @ House of Rock
Jerry Ward @ Pelican Lounge

Tuesday, March 3

Brad Ethridge @ VFW Port A
Open Mic @ House of Rock

Wednesday, March 4

Open Mic w/Brad Ethridge & Gaff
Coastal Benders @ VFW Port A
PA Rockers @ Bernie's
Ejey "Eddie Alaniz" @ Pelican Lounge
Self Control, Loved in Return @ House of Rock

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