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Backwater Adventures A6



The Art of Island Life A5

Issue 1160

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# The Island Moon

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July 9, 2026

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Fourth of July Boat Parade by Debbie Noble

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## Garden of Good Intentions Community Gardens at Douden Park grows mostly weeds



Douden Park



Park cont. on A3

By Dale Rankin  
In 2010 the Island Beautification Trust launched a bold program through the Padre Isles Property Owners Association (PIPOA) to build community gardens at Douden Park. The program was the first of its kind on Padre Island and began with much fanfare and a waiting list of applicants for the garden spots at a cost of \$25. But now sixteen years on the majority of the one-hundred garden plots are overgrown with weeds and

### By the numbers

## Property Appraisals in FBISD

The review process for appraisal of property is underway at the Nueces Central Appraisal District (formerly Nueces Appraisal District). Hearings are ongoing and here are the numbers for the Flour Bluff ISD area as of June 25.

- 5993 total appraisals contested by owners
- 3180 reviews till active
- 3109 Single family homes filed for review
- 1173 Townhomes filed for review
- 140 Multi-family residential properties filed for review
- 216 Commercial properties filed for review
- 568 empty homes (inventory) filed for review

By Dale Rankin  
We are now 250 years and one week into the American Experiment and we survived a July 4 invasion here on our little sandbar. The beaches over the weekend were as packed as they have ever been with traffic moving only one direction on many stretches due to the mass of humanity.

The biggest bottleneck was at Bob Hall Pier where the soft sand had drivers white knuckling through deep sand and where the sand crabs report they have pulled more than seventy vehicles out in the past month. Work on the paved access road there is expected to begin soon but in the meantime steer straight ahead and don't stop if you are heading through that stretch of beach. As reported here last week work is underway on the admission booth there and when it is done the charge to get onto the pier will start. The restaurant building is also coming along.

### Fireworks!



Nick watching the first shot of the July 4 fireworks show.

The fireworks show went off on Saturday and we want to thank Nick Colosi for making the magic happen again this year. The show was shorter and higher this year as the six-inch tubes used allow for more charges to be put in each tube making for multiple semi-simultaneous explosions. This year's show seemed to produce more ooohs and ahhs than ever.

Around cont. on A8

## New Beach Access Road!

Work has begun on the new long-planned Beach Access Road on Mustang Island. It is located just south of Mustang Island Estates Drive off of State Highway 361. The road has been part of the Padre Island Mobility Plan for many years and was approved by voters in bond 2024. It will provide access to the seven miles of beach directly north of Fish Pass which has been a little used stretch due to the difficulty of getting there. It is expected to be ready by the end of 2026.



The new beach access road is going in just south of Port Royal

### Beachcombing Report

## The Return of the White-Spotted Jellyfish



Jace Tunnell holding an Australian White Spotted Jellyfish

By Jace Tunnell

One of the highlights from this week's Beachcombing survey was finding about a dozen Australian white-spotted jellyfish scattered along the shoreline. They were impossible to miss, with some appearing crystal clear, others a rich brown, and a few glowing with beautiful shades of blue in the sunlight. Each one looked a little different, making every discovery feel unique.

Beachcombing cont. on page A7

### A little Island history

## The Island's Community Gardens How a hurricane began the trek that brought them to where they are

By Dale Rankin

The Community Gardens at Douden Park were founded in 2010 but to understand their history and how they came to fall on hard times you have to go all the way back to 1980 when Hurricane Allen came roaring across Padre Island covering most everything with saltwater except the elevated clubhouse at the old Padre Isles County Club (and a few greens) and wiping out a decade's worth of landscaping in the medians of Aquarius St.,



Douden Park Gardens

History cont. on A5

### By the numbers

## Over the Bridge

### Traffic Count

These numbers show the traffic count across the JFK Causeway for the weekend of June 26-28 from the Texas Department of Transportation. They are 24-hour counts taken from the area between the causeway and Aquarius Drive.

#### Sunday, June 28

- Total - 44,349
- Eastbound - 19,240
- Westbound - 25,109

#### Saturday, June 27

- Total - 51,293
- Eastbound - 25,477
- Westbound - 25,816

#### Friday, June 26

- Total - 47,725
- Eastbound - 25,276
- Westbound - 22,449



Light traffic on the JFK Causeway

# Fourth of July Boat Parade

Photos by Debbie Noble



# The Traveling Moon



Greetings from London. Lunch at the Thames River: Evelyn Pless-Schuberth.



Stacy Landry and family spent the Fourth of July in DC for the 250th. Here's a pic of the Moon at the Great American State Fair. He traveled with his daughters, Lauren and Payten, and also his parents and sister's family.

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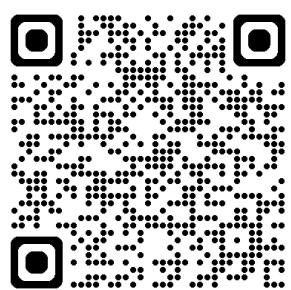
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## Letters to the Editor

I AM WHEEL. HEAR ME SQUEAK.



### Flags

The flags displayed along PR22 are GREAT! On today's Island Moon Live, would you or Augs please provide details on how to donate?

Thanks,

Chris Hornberger

*Editor's note: There is a GoFundMe page to help with funding for next year's flags.*



### Litter Critter Event Scheduled for Flour Bluff on July 11

The City's next Litter Critter community cleanup event will take place on Saturday, July 11, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Flour Bluff High School, 2505 Waldron Road.

The Litter Critter initiative provides residents with a convenient way to dispose of unwanted items outside scheduled pickup dates.

Organizers are excited to announce that cardboard recycling will be offered again at this Litter Critter event. Please bring clean, empty, flattened cardboard boxes, free of any Styrofoam or packing materials.

Residents should prepare to offload their items; commercial hauling is not permitted.

#### Items accepted include

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

#### Items NOT accepted include

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

Please take these items directly to:

#### J.C. Elliott Transfer Station

7001 Ayers Street  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78415  
Open Monday through Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

## THANK YOU, PADRE ISLAND COMMUNITY

From American Legion Post 229 "The Islander Post" and Island Pride

On behalf of American Legion Post 229, "The Islander Post," and Island Pride, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported our **Flags for Freedom** tribute celebrating America's 250th Birthday.

Your generosity, enthusiasm, and unwavering patriotism transformed this vision into a reality. Because of your support, our community, and especially Padre Island, became a beautiful display of American pride, honoring the freedoms we cherish and the men and women who have sacrificed to protect them.

Every sponsored flag represented a story, a family, a veteran, an active-duty service member, a first responder, or a loved one whose service and sacrifice deserve to be remembered. Seeing hundreds of flags proudly flying together was a powerful reminder that our community still believes in honoring those who have served and the values that unite us as Americans.

This event was about much more than displaying flags. It was about bringing our community together, celebrating our nation's 250th Birthday, and supporting the mission of the American Legion. Through your participation, you are helping us con-

tinue to serve veterans, assist military families, promote Americanism, support youth programs such as Scouting, and partner with local schools and community organizations to make a positive difference right here on Padre Island.

To everyone who sponsored a flag, volunteered your time, helped with planning, shared our mission, or simply stopped to admire the display, **We Thank You.** Your kindness, encouragement, and community spirit made this event a tremendous success.

We are honored to live in a community that proudly supports our veterans, celebrates our nation, and comes together for something bigger than ourselves.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for helping make **Flags for Freedom** a memorable tribute to America's 250th Birthday. We hope this becomes a cherished Padre Island tradition for generations to come.

"For God and Country, we thank you for helping us continue our mission of service to veterans, youth, and our community."

With sincere gratitude,

**American Legion Post 229 "The Islander Post"**  
**In Association with Island Pride**

### Park cont. from A1

funding for their upkeep is uncertain at best. Over the years the number of garden spots was expanded and the Island Garden Club added a butterfly garden, but for the past two years finding gardeners to use and maintain the spots has dwindled and the money for the project has dried up with the demise of the Beautification Trust in 2016. "Part of the problem is that as the climate has gotten hotter it has become very difficult to grow vegetables there," said David Dunseth, longtime Garden Club Member who selected the flowers for the original butterfly garden and handled registration of the garden plots and their upkeep for many years. "Most people want to grow vegetables to eat but after the first summer they find out how difficult it is and don't return the second year."

The PIPOA handles registration for the plots and for several years after the folding of the Beautification Trust funded the maintenance through their special projects or community engagement fund.

"But that fund has almost been depleted this year for recovery expenses on the Billish Park irrigation system rebuild," Rick McGinley PIPOA Executive Director said this week. "We have funded some landscaping assistance to the Community Gardens project in the past since the gardens are an "adopt-a-park" carve out from the city. I include a small budget to support the effort every year but the idea is that the gardens are community maintained."

The City of Corpus Christi mows and maintains the remainder of Douden Park but the gardens were put in the hands of the Island Beautification Trust which became responsible for upkeep of the area inside the garden plots. Until two years ago a committee of volunteers formed through the PIPOA worked to maintain the gardens but since that time it has been up to the handful of active gardeners who have had a difficult time of staying ahead of Mother Nature.



"We are in the process of rebuilding the Community Gardens Committee," McGinley said. "The current effort is making some progress but it remains a "community" effort. It never was our intention to assume a management burden; it was always supported through volunteerism."

Islander Lee Neitzel who has several working plots at the gardens says volunteers, with the help of some PIPOA funding, cleared the weeds and put in walking paths up until two years ago when funding wilted and since that time staying ahead of the aggressive weeds has been impossible.

"I think what we need to do is to concentrate the active plots all in one area and maintain that," Neitzel said. "Then if we could get just a couple of thousand dollars per year in funding we could have the place back in shape in a couple of years and cover the unused plots with plastic to keep the weeds out."

Dunseth said aside from the damage from heat growing vegetables for the table is difficult due to wildlife.

"When things get ripe it attracts rats who come in for a feast," he said. "So the vegetable harvest is small and then the coyotes come in to feed on the rats and the neighbors understandably complain." Soon after the gardens were established residents in the area began reporting coyotes roaming the area after swimming the adjacent canal and coming up the nearby boat ramp.

So after sixteen years of operation the future of the gardens is uncertain with volunteers and funding scarce as squash in the South Texas sun. The future of the gardens now depends on the board of the PIPOA who inherited a project it didn't expect or ask for and on volunteers willing to step into the breach.

"Remember that children, marriages, and gardens reflect the kind of care they get,"

H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

## Moon Monkeys



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Wash Tub	Island Italian
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## Stuff I Heard on the Island



By Dale Rankin

We had an emergency this week...well sort of. Word came in that there were emergency crews at the Ski Basin so I headed over to the yacht club to get up on the second story to see what I could see and I saw a boat. Couldn't tell what kind of a boat except one that floats. I checked social media and it turned out that others had seen the boat too and the speculation began.

"I have been telling them there was going to be an emergency at the Ski Basin but no one listens to me!"

"I knew there was going to be an emergency and the city hasn't done anything to prevent it!"

"I bet they caught some smugglers with illegal aliens!"

"I heard a boat sank."

Things sounded bad, really bad, so I started thinking about how to get a boat to go check it out and about that time word came that the emergency crews were staging at the Cartagena boat ramp so I drove over there and sure enough there were several police officers with a drone and a lot of equipment. But it turned out it wasn't an emergency at all, it was a drill. You would have thought that ended it but instead...

"Well, there is going to be an emergency over there sometime if no one does anything, but no one listens to me."

It's a tough world on the internet.

### Police Blotter

A check of the police blotter in this issue finds an uptick in home burglaries. In the years I've been going through the police reports the number of burglaries usually drops in the summer as there are more people (read possible witnesses) around but for some reason we seem to be bucking the trend so far this summer. Maybe it's the same knuckleheads who thought it was a good idea to steal American flags from the roadway over the weekend. There was also an increase in assaults, maybe the hot weather has people worked up.

### Windstorm Insurance

The agency which reviews the cost of Windstorm Insurance this week reported that the rates are 9% higher than they should be and former Corpus Christi City Councilman Greg Smith who is on the committee that reviews the rates made a recommendation to drop the rates by at last 4% but was outvoted 3-2 with one of the three votes against a rate cut coming from the committee member who is supposed to represent ratepayers! The rates have been raised ten times in the past twenty years and when it is all said and done insurance agents get a 16% commission on the state-backed insurance of last resort and private windstorm coverage is available. As regular readers know this is an ongoing struggle but there was some progress made in the last session of the Texas Legislature and homeowners do have some new options. This is a very complicated subject and Greg, Charlie Zahn, and State Representative Todd Hunter have been pushing this rock up the hill against the insurance lobby for more than a decade.

I am still digging through the details and will have a deeper dive in coming issues but there is one thing homeowners need to know. There is an automatic 3% raise in the appraised value of each home built into the windstorm rate system that homeowners can avoid by notifying their agent that they wish to opt out. Homeowners with windstorm insurance are required to insure their home for at least 80% of its replacement value but as long as your policy is written above that level you can avoid the 3% increase by simply opting out. The final vote on the rates is going to the Texas Windstorm Board of Directors in the next few weeks and we will revisit the subject then. In the meantime you can let them know what you think ahead of the meeting on their website. Consumers finally are getting a seat at the table but the fight will continue when the legislature comes back into session in January.

## The Port A Cookbook



### Old San Antonio Steak Night

By Chris Jordan



While my mother was the principal meal-maker in our family, my dad had an outsized impact on my culinary pursuits nonetheless. Friday was always steak night and Dad cooked. In adulthood, I've pared my steak-eating down to only two cuts: tenderloin and ribeye—that's it. But my old man had no such loyalty. He was likely to bring home just about any cut for Friday steak night: strip, chuck eye, round, porterhouse, sirloin, T-bone, flank—you name it, we ate it.

Dad cooked on whatever budget grill he'd bought since the last one rusted out. There were Webers, column smokers, and hibachis. What the fire was made in didn't matter because every steak my dad ever grilled had the same flavor profile: Kingsford briquettes and charcoal lighter fluid. Please avoid this tragedy in your own family, folks. Use real charcoal and NEVER use lighter fluid to start a fire you're going to use for cooking—the taste of kerosene will invariably still be there when you eat—even if ever-so-faint—no matter what.

Mom made baked potatoes. Oddly, there was rarely a proper vegetable on the plate beside our steak and potato. We almost always had salad. Sometimes it was a garden salad with vinaigrette but quite often it was the venerable spinach salad with warm bacon dressing—you know the one with red onion and quartered hard-boiled egg. I love that salad to this day and make it often at home. As I am writing this, I realized it's not on *The Port Aransas Cookbook* menu. I just momentarily task-switched to include it.

### Iced Tea

There was one thing that you might think played only a bit part in this meal, but that would be underestimating the beverage we had with every single lunch or dinner: iced tea. Sometimes we brewed it with recently boiled water and tea bags. Oftentimes—if forethought had graced us—we made sun tea. More often than not though, our iced tea came to life with well water and instant tea. Regardless of how the tea was made, that well water made it special. Filtered through the limestone of the lesser-known Trinity aquifer, our water was clear, odorless, and pristine. It came out of the tap at exactly 68°F and loaded with both magnesium and calcium. Water this good would spoil you. But the icing on the tea cake was the mint. We had a craft-pottery bird bath in the shape of a tree trunk my master potter great-grandfather had made in the 1930s. It was continuously fed by a small copper tube running underground. The base of the fired-clay tree trunk was encircled with D'Hanis bricks to contain an exuberant bed of mint. The mint was just as happy drinking that well water as we were and a sprig of it transformed a glass of iced tea into something magical.

### A Friday night Bonanza

Sometimes steak night was celebrated at a restaurant. If it was just an average Friday night, we might go to a low-brow outfit like Bonanza Steakhouse. This eponymous restaurant was founded by one of the TV show's stars, Dan Blocker. His character Hoss Cartwright was beloved by many, including all the adults in my extended family. Dan died in '72 and we paid our respects many a Friday night at Bonanza Steakhouse.

Also on the no-special-occasion radar was Sizzler. Just like Bonanza, Sizzler served mediocre steaks but paired them with a mighty-fine salad bar with an extensive array of items. Likewise, both served crappy foil-wrapped baked potatoes. This is another thing to never do at home, folks:

wrapping a potato in foil is for crappy restaurants only. It's how they keep a potato baked hours ago still edible at dinner time. But Sizzler had an edge in my mind due to their secret weapon: the Steak & All-you-can-eat Fried Shrimp Special. From the age of ten, I could devour every bit of this adult-sized meal including untold numbers of fried shrimp refills.

On slightly special occasions, Friday steak night might be spent at The Little Red Barn—or if the occasion was ever-so-slightly more special—The Barn Door. Both places were quite barn-y. Both were mid-tier steak houses. The Barn Door was in Alamo Heights and well known as a hub for power-brokerage. Whereas The Little Red Barn was a cultural icon of the people and just southeast of downtown San Antonio. If you had to tell them apart, the important details are as follows: The Barn Door had a salad bar and The Little Red Barn still has waitresses in fringed skirts, gun belts, fancy boots, and cowboy hats. I liked 'em both.

### Steak & Ale

Now somewhere between the homey charm of The Little Red Barn and the societal status of The Barn Door, lay one of Norman Brinker's brilliant concepts, Steak & Ale. This English Tudor-style edifice was a chain that aspired to be not-a-chain. It was pretty good, but we only ate there a handful of times because my dad had business lunches there often. Still, my little sister and I felt sufficiently special eating there.

### Gilded Age meets Barbary Coast

This survey of 1970s-era San Antonio steakhouses brings us to the penultimate steak joint, Old San Francisco Steakhouse. The walls were adorned with every sort of historical kitsch imaginable. The bar was a wooden old-west saloon affair and the lighting was 100% chandelier. The Gilded Age meets Barbary Coast theme carried into the period costumes of the waitstaff. A cart with a giant wheel of Alpine cheese made the rounds to every table. And then, every 45 minutes or so, a woman dressed as a burlesque performer replete with a short red skirt, fishnet stockings, heels, and a garter belt appeared. She mounted a swing that swung from the second-floor ceiling. Once nestled on the red velvet seat of the swing, she would swing ever higher and higher as a piano player banged-out ragtime tunes. The show's finale was when she had swung so high the tips of her toes could stretch out to ring a bell on the wall just below the ceiling she was swinging from. Eating at Old San Francisco Steakhouse was a bit like attending a dinner theatre with a bawdy intermission.

There was only one other place we'd go if we were eating out for steak night and it was reserved for very special occasions: Little Rhein Steakhouse. It's difficult to describe this iconic restaurant other than to say it was the place for a special dinner. It was a historic building in La Villita built of limestone block by German immigrants in the 1850s. There was a cascading, terraced patio leading down to the River Walk and the place had a great view of the Arneson River Theater. They served only prime beef, offered an impressive number of seafood dishes, and had the most well-stocked wine cellar in San Antonio.

But you know, despite having the privilege of eating at all these places as a kid, I cherish even more my memories of steak night at home—even if the meat always had the lingering taste of charcoal lighter fluid, that glass of iced tea with a fresh sprig of mint washed it away every time.

## Island Police Blotter

15400 blk. Grass Cay July 7 Burglary of a vehicle (two counts)  
 14800 blk. Compass July 7 Assault  
 13800 blk. Jolly Roger July 6 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle  
 15400 blk. Grass Cay July 6 Burglary of a Motor Vehicle  
 13800 blk. Mizzen July 6 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle  
 13900 blk. SPID July 5 Assault with a deadly weapon  
 15100 blk. Leeward July 5 Assault family violence  
 14700 blk. Whitecap July 4 Assault  
 15300 blk. Yardarm July 3 Burglary of a Habitation  
 15500 blk. SPID June 29 Burglary of a Vehicle  
 15000 blk. Zahn Road June 28 Theft \$100-\$750  
 13800 blk. Jolly Roger June 27 Burglary of a Habitation  
 13500 blk. Royal Fifth June 24 Burglary of a Habitation  
 15100 blk. Leeward June 21 Assault with a deadly weapon  
 14800 blk. Granada June 20 Assault  
 15500 blk. Gulf Beach June 20 Assault by threats  
 15401 Salt Cay June 19 Burglary of a Habitation  
 15100 blk. SPID June 18 Assault Family violence  
 13800 blk. Longboat June 18 Aggravated Assault with a deadly weapon  
 14800 blk. Granada June 17 Windward Burglary of a Vehicle  
 14900 blk. Windward June 13 Assault  
 14900 blk. Smugglers Cove June 13 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle  
 15300 blk. Leeward June 13 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle  
 15400 blk. SPID June 12 Assault  
 11800 blk. State Highway 361 June 10 Burglary of a Vehicle  
 14002 Rudder Ct. June 10 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle  
 14100 blk. Atascadera June 9 Assault  
 14400 blk. SPID June 8 Theft under \$100  
 Beach Marker 204 June 7 Assault  
 15200 blk. Windward June 7 Burglary of a Motor Vehicle  
 14800 blk. Granada June 7 June 7 Assault  
 10641 State Highway 361 May 30 Burglary of a Motor Vehicle



Great blue heron blowing in the breeze  
By Lu Ann Kingsbury



Black-crowned Night Heron By Riekke Roncinske

History cont. from A1

Whitecap Blvd, Sea Pines Dr., as well the dozens of teardrop shaped medians on fingertip streets all over Padre Island.

Prior to that time care of the medians had been done by the original developers of Padre Island but by 1980 that task had been handed over to the Board of Directors at the Padre Isles Property Owners Association who now had to figure out how to pay for restoration of these centerpieces of the island landscape.

The problem they encountered, according to members of the board at that time, was that when original landscaping of the medians had been done ownership was in private hands and paid for by the private developers. But when the streets on Padre Island had been handed over to the City of Corpus Christi ownership of the medians was included and it was determined that under the tenets of the Padre Isles Property Owners Association money from the organization could not be used to improve property it didn't own. Faith in the ability of the city to restore the median landscaping in a timely manner was as low as the tide after the departure of Hurricane Allen so a workaround had to be found.

That workaround was the founding of the Island Beautification Trust which was funded through donations, not PIPOA dues,

so the money could be used to improve the now city-owned medians. By 2010 the medians had been improved to the point that funds from the trust could be used for other purposes and the idea of funding community gardens at Douden Park took hold. Each year \$22,000 from PIPOA funds was placed in the 501c3 trust to pay an employee to raise money for projects like the gardens.

The first installment included twenty garden plots which were built at a cost of \$16,000, for material and labor, and they were popular enough that construction continued until a total of 100 garden plots divided into five sections were built and the Island Garden Club added a butterfly garden. The gardens grew and blossomed until 2016 when funding for the Beautification Trust wilted and that is when the project veered into the weeds – literally and figuratively.

Without the Beautification Trust raising money the future of the gardens now lies in the hands of the PIPOA, a place it was never intended to go when the trust was formed in 1980. The framework of the trust is still intact as it was never dissolved, only dis-funding offering one possible solution.

So that is how a hurricane that flooded Padre Island in 1980 led to overgrown garden plots 46 years later...and now you know the rest of the story.



*The park in better days.*

## Eco-Friendly Pest Control in the Garden

By Melinda Myers

Spots on tomatoes, holes in hosta leaves and wilting stems mean insects and diseases have moved into the garden. Don't let these intruders reduce the beauty and productivity of your landscape. Work in concert with nature to prevent and control these pests and you will be rewarded with a bountiful harvest and landscape filled with beautiful blooms.

**Monitor.** Take regular walks through the landscape. Not only is it good exercise, but it will improve your mood and you'll discover problems earlier when they are easier to control. Look for discolored leaves, spots, holes and wilting. Inspect the underside of the leaves and along the stems to uncover the cause of the problem.

**Identify.** Once you discover a problem, identify the culprit. Your local extension service, garden center or reliable internet resource can help. Once identified, you can plan the best way to manage the culprit.

**Invite the Good Guys.** Toads, lady beetles and birds help control many garden pests. Attract them to the garden by planting herbs and flowers to attract beneficial insects, adding a house for the toads, and birdbath for songbirds. Avoid using pesticides and learn to tolerate a bit of damage. A few aphids or caterpillars will bring in the ladybeetles, lacewings, birds and toads that are looking for a meal.

**Clean up.** Many insects and diseases can be managed and prevented with a bit of garden cleanup. A strong blast of water from the garden hose will dislodge aphids and mites, reducing their damage to a tolerable level. Or knock leaf-eating beetles and other larger insects off the plants and into a can of soapy water.

Pick off discolored leaves, prune off diseased stems and destroy. Be sure to disinfect tools with 70% alcohol or one part bleach to nine parts water solution between cuts. This will reduce the risk of spreading the disease when pruning infected plants.

**Adjust care.** Reduce the spread and risk of further problems by adjusting your maintenance strategies. Avoid overhead and nighttime watering that can increase the risk of disease. Use an organic nitrogen fertilizer like [Milorganite \(milorganite.com\)](http://Milorganite.com) which encourages slow steady growth that is less susceptible to insect and disease attacks.

Mulch the soil with shredded leaves, evergreen needles or woodchips. This will keep roots cool and moist during drought, improve the soil as they decompose, and also prevent soil borne diseases from splashing onto and infecting the plants.

**Non-chemical Controls.** If the problems continue, try some non-chemical options for insects. A yellow bowl filled with soapy water can attract aphids, a shallow can filled with beer and sunk in the ground will manage slugs, and crumpled paper under a flower pot for earwigs are just a few ways to trap and kill these pests.

Or cover the plants with floating row covers. These fabrics allow air, light and water through, but prevent insects like bean beetles and cabbage worms from reaching and damaging the plants.

**Organic products.** Organic products like insecticidal soap, Neem, horticulture oil and Bacillus thuringiensis can be used to control specific pests. And even though these are organic, they are designed to kill insects or disease organisms, so be sure to read and follow label directions carefully.

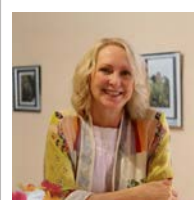
**Take Note.** Make notes on the problems and solutions in this season's garden. Refer to these next year to help you do a better job of monitoring and managing garden pests. And when shopping for new plants, select the right plant for the location and choose resistant varieties whenever possible.

A little eco-friendly gardening can go a long way in creating a beautiful and productive garden.



*Floating Row Cover Gardening*

## The Art of Island Life



By Melissa Mitchell

### The Beach After Dark



By Melissa Mitchell

Recently, during my grandchildren's summer visit, they spent a late evening exploring the beach with flashlights. The next morning, they were full of stories about things they had discovered.

Their excitement was contagious, and the more they talked about their discoveries, the more curious I became. After seeing the photographs, it was easy to understand their excitement. The moon cast a silver, shimmering path across the Gulf. Waves glittered beneath its reflection, and the horizon seemed to disappear into the night sky.

After they left, I couldn't quit thinking about it. So a week later, flashlights in hand, my daughter and I headed to the beach to rediscover a place we thought we knew well. What we found was a side of it we had never seen before.

By the time my daughter and I headed out, the moon had begun to wane, but the sense of stepping into another world remained. The beach looked familiar, yet somehow completely different. The sounds were different too. It also felt wonderfully safe.

Families with children wandered the shoreline carrying flashlights. Dogs trotted alongside their owners. One family offered to share their bonfire. Nearby, we could hear a group enjoying a sing-along. Without the usual daytime sunshine and activity, the steady rhythm of the surf seemed louder. Every wave felt more noticeable. In the darkness, our world shrank to whatever fell within the beam of light. It didn't take long before our flashlights began catching movement in the sand.

#### *New Discoveries*

Tiny sand crabs darted across the beach, moving so quickly they seemed to disappear the moment we spotted them. Some vanished into the sand almost instantly. Others froze long enough for us to take photographs and admire their tiny faces before racing away. One particularly determined little crab seemed unimpressed by our presence. We found him enjoying his evening meal, and as I lowered my camera closer for a photograph, he actually inched toward my finger as though challenging me over his dinner.

We found a hermit crab struggling to right his shell. Was it a new shell? We weren't sure, but we gave him a little assist and let him go on his way. After seeing my son's photograph of a starfish making its way back toward the ocean, I'll admit I spent part of the evening hoping we'd find one too. Somehow, seeing one appear in the beam of a flashlight feels a little like discovering buried treasure.

We didn't see our starfish, but we did encounter strange creatures that looked like small clumps of moving sand. They shot across the beach so quickly that photographing them proved impossible. I only managed to capture them on video before they disappeared beneath the surface.

To be honest, we found that encounter a little unsettling. At one point, there were so many of them beneath the sand that we could actually feel the ground move under our feet. Needless to say, we didn't linger in that particular spot for very long.

I mentioned that it was giving me Tremors vibes—the old movie about giant creatures moving under the ground. My daughter had never seen it, and after watching those things disappear into the sand, she wasn't particularly interested in adding it to her watchlist.

The longer we explored, the more it felt as though we had stepped into a secret world that only comes alive after sunset.

#### *Exploring Like We Used To*

What surprised me most wasn't what we found.

It was how much fun we had finding it. Every few minutes one of us would call out, "Look at this!" or "There's another one!" Then we'd hurry across the sand to investigate whatever new discovery had captured the other's attention.

For two hours, we wandered the shoreline guided by little more than our flashlights, dodging blue button jellyfish, sharing discoveries, and asking questions we couldn't always answer.

What kind of crab is that?  
Can crabs think?  
Where did it go?  
Did you see that?

I've spent countless hours on many beaches over the years, but it occurred to me that I hadn't explored the beach this way with my daughter since she was in high school. Life has a way of filling our days with responsibilities, schedules, and routines. We stop exploring simply because we assume we've already seen what there is to see. Yet there we were—two adults armed with flashlights, completely fascinated by creatures not much bigger than a thumbnail.

And honestly, it was wonderful. As we finally headed home, tired and sandy and far past our normal bedtime, I realized the adventure hadn't required a plane ticket, reservations, or even leaving the island. Wonder was waiting in a place we thought we'd already explored.

All it takes is a different perspective, a little curiosity, and someone you enjoy sharing the adventure with. The creatures had been there all along. The beach hadn't suddenly become magical. The only thing that changed was the way we chose to explore it.

If you haven't been to the beach after dark in a while, I encourage you to grab a flashlight and see it for yourself. You might be surprised by what you've been missing in a place you thought you already knew. *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](mailto:contact@melissamitchellart.com)*



# Island Outdoors

## On the Rocks

By Jay Gardner

Hope you all had a great July 4th and everyone kept their fingers intact. The kids blew up fireworks at the cabin for two days in a row and only had one small grass fire, so we'll take that as a win. I don't need to tell you that it's blazing hot out there, and the rest of us semi-adults spent most of the time in the shade during the day.

### New Beach Access Road



The city's contractors are finally building the new beach access road (I believe it will be 3a or something like that) that is just south of Mustang Island Estates. This will split the existing 7-mile distance between the access roads on Mustang Island to increase safety. This road is a long time coming, with having to get over hurdles of the land belonging to Nueces County, a land swap, jurisdictional wetlands, adjacent property boundaries, political will, and money. This \$4.4 million dollar project is primarily funded by Bond 2020 and Bond 2022 funds. I don't think it will be done by Labor Day, but you never know. You will need a beach parking pass to park on that stretch, but it will alleviate parking and traffic along that stretch during busy times, and as I mentioned, will allow first responders to access that stretch.

### Sugar cane and Saharan dust

We are getting the double whammy of smoke from sugar cane being burned in the Yucatan and dust from the Saharan Desert at the same time. If you have allergies like I do, then it's a tough time outside. I'm on a steady diet of allergy meds and flushing my nose out with saline twice a day. It's best to just stay inside in the A/C. There's a motif there somewhere.

### Dirty water from the nearshore shelf

BooDan texted the fishing crew thread the other day and asked why the water coming in Packery Channel looked like it was Espiritu Santo Bay. I know I sound like a broken record, but it's the upwelling that is bringing the cold, dirty water up from the bottom on the nearshore shelf. I'm not a huge fan of this seasonal occurrence, as it pushes the tarpon farther offshore for a bit. The water is pulled into the bays on the incoming tide and doesn't quite flush all the way back out. Give it another couple of weeks.

But that doesn't mean it's not a great time to be hitting the beach. The water levels have finally gone down a bit, and you don't have to drive at the base of the dunes just to get by. Driving down the seashore should be nice on low tide. Don't forget that we are still in sea turtle nesting season, as there may still be a stray Kemp's ridley that may nest

on a windy, cloudy day. In addition, you need to be extra careful, as some of the early Kemp's ridley's nests may not have been found by turtle patrol. These "in situ" nests would be hatching by now, and even though odds are long, there may be some hatchlings that would emerge in the early morning and head out into the surf around dawn. There may be a stray loggerhead or green sea turtle that might nest, although they nest at night. So, keep your eyes peeled.

### Juvenile tarpon and snook nursery habitat



Isabel Tiller with a juvenile tarpon

Photo credit Center for Sportsfish Science and Conservation - Harte Research Institute

We went and saw Isabel Tiller defend her master's thesis over at the Harte Research Institute the other day. She was studying something near and dear to my heart, juvenile tarpon and snook nursery habitat. You loyal readers know that I've been writing about this topic ad nauseum for many years now. I'm glad I was able to help with some early advice on locations, but also, we (CCA) were able to provide some funding for her, along with another great organization, the Friends of Padre, to conduct her study. She focused on a few likely habitats that have permanent freshwater signatures and was able to capture and tag more than a few tarpon and capture some snook as well. Islander Jeff Kaiser was one of her field advisors as well. I'd like to congratulate her on her excellent work and perseverance on this tough but important project. We'll try to get her back on the radio show in the next couple of weeks.

Well folks, gotta get this gripping edition submitted before I start getting yelled at for pushing deadlines. I have several work trips to Houston lined up over the next couple of weeks and it's taking away from my beach combing and tarpon fishing. We'll be out there soon enough, so drop me a line at jaygardner1032@gmail.com and we'll see you next week On the Rocks.

## Backwater Adventures

By Joey Farah



## In the Weeds!

Too busy to think, not enough hands and feet, orders coming in with tables full of hungry people send waiters and bartenders INTO THE WEEDS! Fishermen here in the Laguna Madre have been feeling just as frazzled with the explosion of sea grass this summer. It is normal and has its up's and downs for fish, bay systems, and anglers.

Decades ago there were only a few small patches of Manatee Grass growing in the flats. We casted at those dozen or so patches hundreds of times and really never caught anything in them. Today the long cord-like grass has taken over much of the sand pockets in the Upper Lagoon. It is pretty much seasonal and restricted to a certain salinity level that is found between Corpus Christi Bay and the more Hyper-saline environment found south of Bird Island. It attacks the open sand pockets that are blown open in the winter, grows almost to the surface during the summer, and then starts to break off and die by the beginning of the fall season. It does force anglers to compete for the few open sand pockets to be found.

The thick carpet of grass is a mix of about 5 different major species of grass in our bay. The grass beds act as a filter and keep water clarity in the shallows TOO CLEAR. Bright sunlight penetrates easily, the thick grass impedes tidal flow, (choking out oxygen), and traps heat under that mat of grass. Bait sources like it in that it's a whole lot of cover! Tiny Grass shrimp can be seen all over the top of the grass after dark with a flash light, pin perch roll like flashing coins nibbling small barbican growths upon the strands of grass, crabs lurk in hidden pockets, and the flats become a jungle of life.

How in the world do anglers fish without getting hung up!?

Many guides and sportsmen will focus on the outer drop offs where tidal flow keeps the grass growth at a minimum. This is also prime for maximum oxygen, and tidal flow, and cooler temperatures during the daytime hours. Bait fishermen will have harvested much of the population of gamefish from these easy to fish spots. Mature gamefish will also move shallow at night to hunt those food sources in the grass, and take advantage of that shallow water cooling off under a dark sky. This is where and why we are finding some of the best action up in that grass.



Lee came all the way from New Mexico to hunt the flats and hang on the beach this July 4th. He brought to hand this INCREDIBLE TROPHY TROUT, burning a DOWN SOUTH LURES White/ice, over thick grass. Farah



Bub Beauregard Casted into a Giant Herd of redfish on this calm morning and caught two whoopers. We saw the school rise to the surface just before the sun broke over the Island. Farah

Light jig heads on our soft plastics; have been allowing us to swim our baits over that grass at a slower sink rate bringing the big fish up out of cover to hunt down our lures. They have been feeling the paddle tails buzzing over their grassy hides, exploding up to them, and often following the lure for a very long time, all the way to then boat! Remember to imagine you are an escaping baitfish, from the moment your bait hits the water until you lots it out of the Sea. Following trout will turn off if a bait they are focused on suddenly dives down into the jungle or swims unnaturally. Pause and suspend the bait over small oven sand pockets and changes in the bottom. The predators will always strike when the bait is falling, presenting its weakness in swim pattern. Brighter colors have been working best for us, when they come up and out of the cover they want to acquire the target quickly.

I do not use the weed less hook set ups because I find, trout more than redfish will PLUCK the bait not getting hooked very easily, with weed less set ups. A smaller short shanked, lighter jig head in 1/16-1/8th ounce is perfect. Keep your rod tip high, and prepare to flip over or engage the reel as soon as the bait hits the water. Don't let it fall to the bottom, skip and dance it as a baitfish would when it enters the water after an attack. With the rod tip high use the BOW OF THE LINE, to dance the lure instead of a forward facing rod movement. The soft movements created by a loose and supple line will create natural swim patterns that will convince your Trophy that it's the real deal in all of that clear water.

A fast retrieve burning soft plastics and weed less gold spoons over the flats can be a burn out on the arms, but just the right move to bring big reds and trophy trout up to strike. There is no special secret spot, it's the middle of summer and fish populations are spread out everywhere. Focus on what level of depth in the flats fish are holding. What level is active at what time? Fish out deep feed at a different time of the 24hr day than those up shallow and in between. Get away from the boats and find some Summer Peace and get yourself OUT OF THE WEEDS!

Follow all of our fishing fun on FACEBOOK AT JOEY FARAHS BACKWATER FISHING, TICKTOCK, and INSTAGRAM!

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## Nature Notes

## The Siren of Texas

*The amphibians that retain their gills through their entire life*

By Hannah Beckett



*Sirens are aquatic, mysterious, and vocal, just like the ones in mythology*

*Credit: Peter Paplanus via Wikimedia*

Did you know that there are sirens living in Texas? No, not the ones from Greek mythology, but amphibians! These animals are aquatic, mysterious, and vocal, earning them the name of "siren" for all species within the family Sirenidae. Of the many siren species in North America, the Rio Grande Siren (*Siren texana*) is unique to Texas and Mexico. Considered a type of salamander, sirens are perennibrachiate and neotenic. These scientific terms indicate they retain their external gills and other juvenile features throughout their life, unlike most other amphibians, which lose their gills in adulthood. The Rio Grande Siren has a dark gray or black body with a subtle light line along the upper jaw. Some individuals may also have small black dots on their already dark skin. Sirens have tiny front legs and lack not only hind legs, but also a pelvic girdle entirely. Adults reach an average length of up to 27 inches. Male sirens are larger than females and have enlarged jaw muscles, making their heads appear larger than their female counterparts.

Rio Grande Sirens live permanently in densely vegetated waters such as bayous, marshes, and ditches in the southern part of Texas. Since they respire through their gills, lungs and skin, they survive well in the often hypoxic environments low in oxygen. Shallow bodies of water that the Rio Grande Siren calls home are prone to drying out during summer months.

Sirens use "aestivation", or summer dormancy, to withstand the rigors of these dry seasons. They burrow into the mud and secrete a mucous cocoon to reduce dehydration. Respiration and heart rate slow significantly and their gills atrophy, which allows them to withstand long periods without water or sustenance. In this way, the Rio Grande Siren is able to survive aestivation for several months and some individuals have even

aestivated for up to 2 years! With the return of water, the sirens become active within a day. However, it will take several weeks for the siren to regain its pre-aestivation metabolic rates and weight.

Rio Grande Sirens have poor eyesight and rely on other senses to forage. They use chemical cues to hunt through the murky waters and dense vegetation for their food. The Rio Grande Siren is primarily carnivorous and preys on crustaceans, insects, worms, snails, amphibians, and other small prey. Some algae and plant material may also be ingested due to their feeding method of gulping large quantities of material. Unlike other salamander species, sirens are very vocal. They can produce various noises such as clicks and yelps. The tendency to click is greater in groups which suggests there maybe communications between sirens. Resting sirens are usually silent but may produce trains of pulsed clicks. Sirens will also yelp in cases of distress or alarm. When sirens butt or bite each other, the bitten or injured individuals may swim away quickly, emitting yelps at frequencies of 880 Hz. These yelp sounds could have communicational significance if they prevent further attack or signal to other individuals that one is injured. They will also emit a very shrill call when approached or attacked by a predator.

Some controversy surrounds the Rio Grande Siren on its standing in the phylogeny. Researchers disagree on whether the Rio Grande Siren is its own species or a subspecies of either Lesser Sirens (*S. intermedia*) or Greater Sirens (*S. lacertina*). More research is required to know the full narrative of these seldom seen and often forgotten eel-like denizens of the slow, muddy waters of Texas.

## Beachcombing Report

*Beachcombing cont. from A1*

Despite their name, the most striking feature is often the top of the bell, which is covered with countless tiny white spots that resemble a star-filled night sky. Turn one over, however, and you'll find something completely different. Instead of long trailing tentacles, the underside is filled with thick, frilly oral arms that look almost like a bouquet of cauliflower. These oral arms are used to capture tiny plankton and other microscopic food drifting through the water.

Australian white-spotted jellyfish are native to the western Pacific and were first documented in the Gulf in the early 2000s, likely arriving in ballast water discharged from large cargo ships. Since then, they have become an established, though seasonal, visitor along the Gulf Coast and are now regularly seen in Texas waters during the warmer months.

Unlike many jellyfish that beachgoers try to avoid, Australian white-spotted jellyfish are considered harmless to people. They do not deliver the painful stings associated with Portuguese man o' war or sea nettles,

making them one of the few jellyfish I don't mind carefully handling. If I find one that is still alive and stranded near the water's edge, I usually pick it up and gently place it back into the surf, giving it another chance to continue drifting with the currents.

This isn't the first time we've seen an influx of these beautiful visitors. Last summer, large numbers washed ashore along the Texas coast, creating one of the more memorable jellyfish strandings I've encountered. Their return this year was a welcome surprise. If you'd like to learn even more about these fascinating jellyfish, I created a Beachcombing video on YouTube during last summer's stranding that explores their biology, where they came from, and why they occasionally appear in such impressive numbers along the Texas coast.

Jace Tunnell is the Director of Community Engagement for the Harte Research Institute at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. His Beachcombing series appears in newspapers, as a weekly video on YouTube and KEDT PBS, and as a weekly feature on KEDT NPR. Follow Jace at harteresearch.org, Facebook (@harteresearch) and Instagram (@harteresearch).



*The bottom side of a white spotted jellyfish showing oral arms*



*A blue colored White Spotted Jellyfish*



*Strawberry Moon By Jodi Wilson*

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# Island Real Estate Roundup

Apryl Noles

## The Summer Pace



July is off to a strong start on Padre Island as we continue to see consistent buyer activity across several market segments. While the market has settled into a more typical summer pace, buyers are still actively making moves and well-priced properties continue to attract attention.

In the detached home sector, three homes went into the option period, two homes moved to pending status, and four homes successfully closed. The condominium market also saw solid activity, with three condos sold, while the townhouse sector recorded two closed sales this week.

Although inventory remains available, buyers are taking advantage of opportunities when the right property hits the market. Whether you're looking for a primary residence, a vacation home, or an investment property, the Padre Island market continues to offer excellent opportunities throughout the summer.

Here you'll find this week's statistics reflecting the latest market activity. As always, stay tuned for next week's update as we continue to keep you informed on what's happening in the Padre Island real estate market!

**Detached Homes In Option Period:**

- 15969 Punta Espada Loop (Listed for \$659,999)
- 13822 Brigantine Dr (Listed for \$580,000)
- 15730 Escapade St (Listed for \$319,900)

**Detached Homes That Are Pending:**

- 14126 Coquina Bay Ave (Listed for \$449,900)
- 13966 Lanyard Dr (Listed for \$299,900)

**Detached Homes That Sold:**

- 15317 Bowsprit Ct (Listed for \$760,000)
- 14834 Highland Mist Dr (Listed for \$679,999)
- 15274 Cartagena Ct (Listed for \$535,000)
- 14234 Bat Bean Dr (Listed for \$347,500)

**Condominiums That Sold:**

- 14810 Windward Sr Unit #508 (Listed for \$409,000)
- 14514 E Cabana St Unit #309 (Listed for \$339,000)
- 14825 Windward Dr Unit #118 (Listed for \$119,000)

**Townhomes That Sold:**

- 15001 Harbor View Dr (Listed for \$495,000)
- 15410 Grads Cay Ct Unit #C (Listed for \$460,000)

*Around cont. from AI*

### Flags for The Island

The first year for placing flags along SPID was a big success and brought a festive holiday look to the roadway. Vandals decided to help themselves to a few but there isn't much that can be done about that. Congratulations to the folks who made it happen and we look forward to next year.

### Christmas in July

With the fireworks behind us it's time to start thinking about La Posada as the first event of the season kicks off at Brewster Street Icehouse on Sunday, July 26. It is a back to school drive to collect supplies and JLB Jose Blanco will provide the music. It will seem a little strange to be at a Christmas event when it is 100 degrees outside but hey, it's never too early to get in the giving spirit.

### Help a dog out...



*Marlin with his wheels.*

This is Marlin and Marlin has a unique problem, he has lost the use of his back legs and needs an operation to get back on his feet. Marlin set up a GoFundMe page at <https://gofund.me/c63a747da> but it took

him a while because he had to hit the space bar with his nose.



*Marlin's GoFundMe*

Marlin's has had a hard road and was rescued from a severe hoarding and abuse situation here in South Texas when he was just a tiny puppy but he's a sweet little guy. He is a foster dog and his humans are offering a fishing charter to help Marlin out so give a dog a paw if you can.

And while we're at it we can show a little love for our canine friends with the *Empty the Shelters* event by the Corpus Christi Animal Care Services department. They are reducing the fees for adopting animals in the busiest time of year for animals in need of some care. They get deluged each summer after the spring kitten and puppy season and are looking to find new homes for their tenants. Summer is the most challenging time of the year for animal shelters. In the spring, kitten and puppy season results in an influx of litters, while adoptions struggle to keep pace so if you are looking for a new family member stop by and help a dog or cat find a new home.

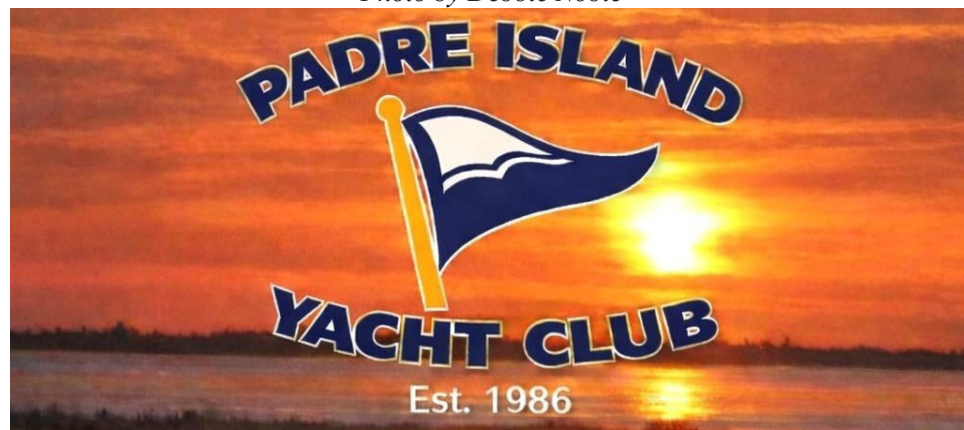
### Plant a garden

We feature a couple of stories about the community gardens at Douden Park this week and if you are interested in putting in a garden of your own there are plenty of spots available. It turns out it is difficult to grow a garden in a yard full of rocks. Who knew!?

We've made it through the first two big holidays of the 2026 summer season and are sprinting our way into Labor Day now. The hurricanes are behaving but man, we got some air you can wear *Around The Island* nowadays, even the seagulls look blistered. That's all for now everybody, stay cool and say hello if you see us *Around The Island*.



*Photo by Debbie Noble*



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*Work continues on the water line going in south of Whitecap on Park Road 22*

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Sudoku answers are not available.

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Going Easy On You...

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

Knuckle-Cracker

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

Mind-Numbing Frustration

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

Brain-Buster

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

# Island Crossword

Crossword Solution on classifieds page

## Across

- Back talk
- First Vice President to become President
- Sudden movement
- Plastic \_\_\_ Band
- Junta
- Title holder
- Play the part
- Flea market item, perhaps
- 1967 chart-topper by the Association
- 1968 film with Katharine Hepburn?
- Wagner of baseball
- Start of summer?
- Rip off
- Beg
- Experience again
- Insurance claim
- Ran in the Indy 500
- 1978 film with Robert DeNiro?
- Hip to, with "of"
- Win, place, or show
- El \_\_\_
- Kitchen appliance
- Source of college funding?
- \_\_\_ Moines
- The Velvet Fog
- 1990 film with Kevin Costner?
- 2:1, e.g.
- \_\_\_ Hawkins Day
- Cambridge univ.
- Checking (someone) out
- Burstyn of "The Exorcist"
- "\_\_\_ you serious?"
- Politican Kefauver
- Requirements
- Nancy Drew's boyfriend

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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	57		58	59				60	61			
62					63					64		
65					66					67		
68					69					70		

## Down

- More than dislike
- Site of MacArthur's Korean War tour de force
- Like a Mickey Finn
- Point the finger at
- Cover with mud
- Dugout
- Home of Acadia National Park
- Hits the brakes
- Scattered, as seed
- Pain in the neck
- Lestat's creator
- Playground game
- "Give it the old college \_\_\_"
- Mangy mutt
- Syr. neighbor
- Fourposter, for one
- \_\_\_ king
- It's larger than a village
- End of a direction?
- Opposite of long.
- \_\_\_-cone
- Word preceding up or down
- Training camp regimen
- Like those participating in 37-Down
- Cenozoic or Paleozoic
- Served up dinner
- Número \_\_\_
- Total
- Work by Pindar
- Site of the 2004 Summer Games
- Bribe
- A sign on his desk read "The buck stops here"
- Nations ruled by a sovereign
- Took a breather
- Birthplace of Big Bertha
- Low spot
- Band of Pirates?
- Bit players
- Eric of Monty Python fame
- Like a game heading into overtime
- Pawnee cousin

## Island Moon Live

Our Thursday radio show is on 1440 KEYS and 98.7 fm as well as streamed live on YouTube and Facebook! We record the show on Thursdays live 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 YouTube at Island Moon Live via this QR Code.



Live Streams



Island Moon Live

## Turtle Nest Count

On 5 July, 6 Kemp's ridley nests were located, including 3 on South Padre Island and 3 on Boca Chica Beach.

On 4 July, 9 Kemp's ridley nests were located, including 4 on North Padre Island at Padre Island National Seashore (PAIS) and 5 on South Padre Island. Additionally, 1 green turtle nest was located at PAIS. On 3 July, 2 Kemp's ridley nests were located on South Padre Island.

Including these, the total numbers of nests found in Texas this year, by species and area, are updated below.

### KEMP'S RIDLEY TURTLE

So far this year, **654** Kemp's ridley nests have been confirmed on the Texas coast, exceeding the previous annual record of 449 nests, set in 2025. Consistent nest record keeping began in 1980.

The 654 nests found this year include (north to south in state):

- 5 Galveston Island
- 2 Surfside Beach
- 1 Brazoria County, N. of Sargent Beach
- 1 Matagorda Peninsula
- 16 San Jose Island
- 40 Mustang Island
- 352 North Padre Island, including 319 at PAIS
- 191 South Padre Island
- 46 Boca Chica Beach



### GREEN TURTLE

So far this year, **18** nests have been confirmed on the Texas coast, including (north to south in state):

- 1 San Jose Island
- 16 North Padre Island, including 14 at PAIS
- 1 South Padre Island

### LOGGERHEAD TURTLE

So far this year, **4** nests have been confirmed on the Texas coast, including (north to south in state):

- 3 North Padre Island, including 3 at PAIS
- 1 Boca Chica Beach

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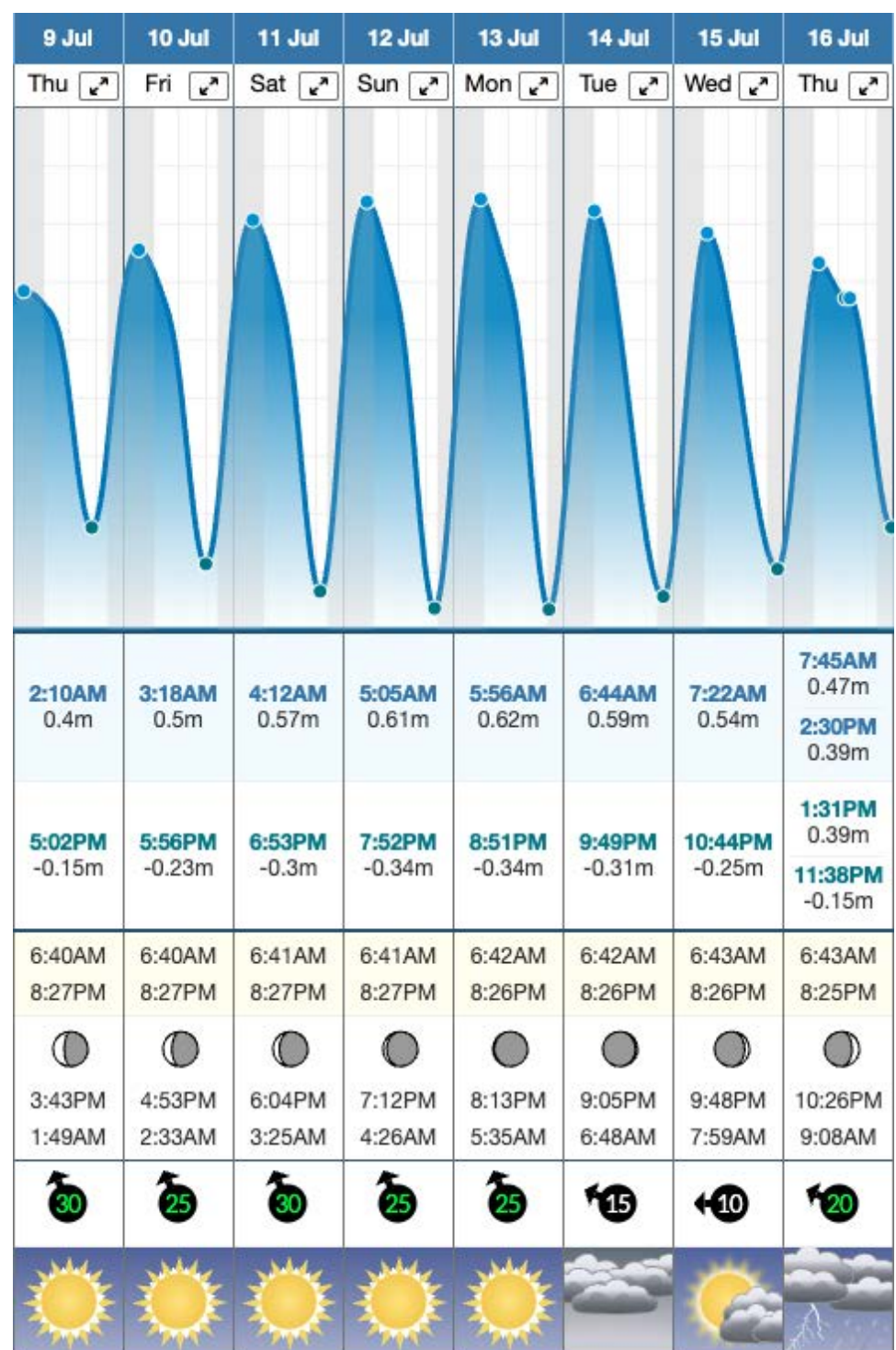
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Tricolored heron fledgling by Lu Ann Kingsbury

## Tides of the Week



## Crossword Solution

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## Sports

Sports Talk Special to The Island Moon



## Marty Marion Baseball Shortstop-Part 4

*Dotson's Note: Marion didn't have to leave home for his next job. Bill Veeck, scuffling to keep his failing Browns afloat, was surrounding himself with ex-Cardinals in the vain hope that they would pull in some customers. He hired Rogers Hornsby as manager, Harry Brecheen as pitching coach, and Marion as a player-coach. The 35-year-old Marion got into 67 games in 1952, but he was clearly finished. Thanks to Bill Morgan and Wikipedia for the facts and Bill Morgan for the photos contained in this report.*

By June the players were in near-revolt against the foul-tempered manager. Veeck fired Hornsby and turned the club over to Marion. The Browns got even worse under their new leader. A 62-90 record left them in seventh place. The American League blocked Veeck's attempt to move his bankrupt franchise to Baltimore.



Veeck's fellow owners wanted to get rid of him and his fan-pleasing stunts and his "socialistic" idea that all teams should share local TV money. News of the proposed move alienated the Browns' few remaining fans. Marion stayed on to preside over a team that lost 100 times in 1953 and fell to last place in attendance and the standings.

As soon as Veeck agreed to sell, AL owners approved the Browns' transfer to Baltimore. But Marion didn't survive the move. He told the new general manager, Arthur Ehlers, exactly how bad the club was, and Ehlers fired him for his "defeatist" attitude. The new Orioles proved their old manager right; they lost 100 again in 1954.

Marion's reputation did survive the train wreck that was the St. Louis Browns. He quickly found work as a coach with the Chicago White Sox in 1954, where he stepped into a three-cornered feud. Sox manager Paul Richards was growing fed up with general manager Frank Lane's second-guessing. Lane was growing fed up with the meddling of Chuck Comiskey, the 29-year-old grandson of the team's founder, who thought he should be running the show.

In three years, Lane and Richards had turned a perennial loser into a consistent winner, but their partnership was fraying. Hiring Marion was Lane's decision, not Richards'. To create an opening on the coaching staff, Lane fired one of Richards' cronies, Doc Cramer. Marion looked like a manager in waiting.

He didn't have to wait long. Richards quit in September to take a better job as both manager and general manager of the Baltimore Orioles. Marion managed the last nine games for a club that finished third with 94 wins. Lane followed Richards out the door a year later, leaving the Comiskey heir in charge – as long as he didn't upset his mother, who controlled the checkbook. Under Marion the White Sox stalled in third place in 1955 and 1956. Chuck Comiskey announced that the manager would return for another year. That promise was soon forgotten as Marion found himself playing the part of Rick Renteria, with Al Lopez as Joe Maddon.

Lopez was the only manager to interrupt the Yankees' string of pennants from 1949-1956, when his Cleveland Indians won in '54. He resigned after the Indians finished second in

'56, and Comiskey grabbed him, dumping Marion in the ditch.

"I don't think the club could have done better than it did this year," Marion said, "but I am willing to step aside to let somebody else see if he can do better." He walked away with the \$30,000 he was owed for 1957. Years afterward he reflected on the job of a manager: "You give me the players, I'll win my share. You give you the players, you'll win your share. The hardest thing about managing is keepin' 'em happy."

Marion, only 40, set his sights higher. Among his offseason jobs during his playing career, he had sold printing services for a St. Louis company owned by Milton Fischmann, a rising business leader about his age. The two became friendly and eventually neighbors in suburban Ladue. With Marion as the front man and Fischmann as the money man, they put together a group of investors in 1957 to buy the Minneapolis Lakers of the National Basketball Association. The sale fell through, and the Lakers later moved to Los Angeles.

Turning to more familiar ground, Fischmann and Marion bought the Houston Buffs, a longtime Cardinals farm team that was joining the Triple-A American Association in 1959. At a press conference, Marion announced that he would move to Houston as president of the club. He went home to find Mary and their four daughters sobbing at the thought of leaving St. Louis. Daddy had to buy the girls a poodle to restore peace in the household, and he became a long-distance commuter.

Fischmann and Marion were positioning themselves to break into the majors. Houston was widely recognized as a leading candidate for an expansion franchise. With no timetable for expansion in sight, the partners bid for the Kansas City Athletics after the club owner, Arnold Johnson, died in 1960. They lost out to Charles O. Finley.

That same year the National League voted to put new teams in Houston and New York. But the league passed over Fischmann and Marion, and awarded the Houston franchise to a syndicate headed by Texaco heir Craig Cullinan Jr., oilman R.E. Smith, and Judge Roy Hofheinz, a local political power broker. Although Marion believed Hofheinz's grand plan for a domed stadium was the deciding factor, the Cullinan group had been laying the groundwork for a big league team for nearly a decade.

Marion had renewed his ties with the Cardinals, serving as a spring training coach after his friend Bing Devine became general manager. When the team moved into the new Busch Stadium in 1966, Marion became part owner and manager of the Stadium Club, an upscale members-only restaurant. He ran the club for 18 years before retiring.

Marion drew a high of 40 percent in 1970 in the sportswriters' voting for the Hall of Fame, far short of the 75 percent needed for election. He lived to see himself eclipsed as the shortstop on the Cardinals' all-time teams by the Wizard, Ozzie Smith.

*Dotson's Other: Marion died of an apparent heart attack at 94 on March 15, 2011. He left behind Mary, his wife of 73 years, and daughters Martinna, Virginia, Linda, and Nancy. According to his family, Marion "enjoyed duck hunting, fishing, farming, driving Cadillacs, smoking cigars, and being in the outdoors all with his friends, his daughters, and their families. Most of all, he enjoyed being with Mary."*

**Thanks for Reading**

The Padre Island Enrichment club this week announced its list of scholarship awards to seven graduating seniors. To be eligible the students must live on Padre Island and be pursuing a secondary education or training. The winners are:

**Aidan Onufrak**  
Flour Bluff H.S. TBD  
Biology/Pre-Med

My ultimate goal is to become a cardiothoracic surgeon. Outside of academics, I am an Eagle Scout candidate working to remodel the lobby of Gabbard Clinic, which provides free care to underserved populations. I am truly honored to be a PIE Scholarship recipient and appreciate the opportunity.

**Kaise Burrill**  
Port Aransas H.S.  
Texas A&M College Station  
Supply Chain Management

I will attend next fall at the Mays School of business, where I plan to study Supply Chain Management. I understand this scholarship will significantly aid in the process of paying for college, and I am immensely thankful for the opportunity to apply.

Now, as I introduce each recipient, I'm going to add a few words taken from their letters of recommendation, written by people who know them well. Our students are usually too modest to brag about themselves, so I'm going to do that part for them. Believe me, the snippets I'm going to share reflect just small parts of these students' achievements. Then each will have the opportunity to speak to you about themselves and their goals. We'll also give their parents a chance to speak, and I'm sure they'll have some bragging to do as well.

**Barrett Matthews**  
Flour Bluff H.S.  
Texas A&M Corpus Christi  
Business Management

One of Barrett's strongest attributes is his passion for aviation and hands-on learning. His accomplishments illustrate his initiative, curiosity and technical aptitude. These experiences highlight his ability to excel in complex environments that require focus, teamwork, and attention to detail. His leadership and service extend far beyond the classroom. He approaches every responsibility with professionalism, confidence, and a strong work ethic. Barrett was fully invested in the classroom experience and engaged well with other students.

Parents: Lisa and Travis

**Caden Meyer**  
Port Aransas H.S.  
Texas A&M Corpus Christi  
Geospatial Systems Engineering

Caden has taken upper level math classes that are dual credit through UT. These are very demanding, teaching time management and how to use upper level reasoning skills. He did what it takes to earn the college credits, including using humor in class presentations that helps keep other students stay interested. Outside of academics, Caden keeps busy. He plays varsity tennis and is competitive while still enjoying himself. If he has an idea on how to make things better for everyone, he is not afraid to approach an adult and respectfully discuss it. He is a leader among students and will make suggestions to his classmates to help them. He's a remarkable young man whose character,

work ethic, and faith distinguish him among his peers.

Parents: Aaron and Jenna Grandmother: Tala Meyer

**John Minners**  
Flour Bluff H.S.  
Texas A&M College Station  
Civil Engineering

John represents the best qualities of our student body—intelligence, integrity, perseverance, and genuine kindness. He is a diligent and thoughtful student who approaches both academics and leadership with maturity above his years. Beyond the classroom, John exemplifies commitment and service. He is an inquisitive student whose motivation drives him to look for new opportunities. He's an individual who supports others in and out of the classroom. He's also a student athlete, works as a surf coach, and has countless hours volunteering outside of school.

Mom: Leeann

**Camille Neri**  
Flour Bluff H.S.  
Texas A&M University  
Agricultural Economics

Camille exemplifies the qualities of a truly outstanding student and leader. As president of Business Professionals of America, she leads with integrity, responsibility, and vision. She encourages collaboration and inclusivity among her peers. She maintains excellent grades while balancing a rigorous schedule of extracurricular activities. She makes a conscious effort to include everyone in activities and ensures that her peers feel valued and supported. She steps forward to support classmates who struggle with group projects, explain difficult concepts, and take on time-consuming logistical tasks without seeking recognition.

Parents: Kelly and Kevin

**Daniel Ruiz**  
Port Aransas H.S.  
Texas A&M Corpus Christi  
Business Management

Daniel's accolades as a high performing academic student, essential athletic team player, and morally sound and dignified mentor to his fellow peers and subordinates are already recognizable and well known among the community of Port Aransas. He comes to school every day eager to learn and explore new challenges. Daniel finds ways to solve problems. He looks at a problem from multiple angles and is not afraid to take a risk. He's also active in several campus and community organizations. Besides being a determined, driven student, he is a wonderful person, both trusting and trustworthy.

Parents: Sara and Tim

I think you can all agree with the Committee and myself that our 2026 awards have been given to seven outstanding students, who have chosen a variety of academic and career paths. As I mentioned before, all our applicants were exceptional this year, and this group rose to the top. If they are any indication, our future is in good hands. Let's give them one more round of applause for their achievements, for their families who have and will continue to support them, and for the goals they are sure to fulfill. Thank you!

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## Three Chords and the Truth

By Ronnie Narmour  
ronnienarmour@gmail.com

### Paul Fain's send-off...



Paul Fain and wife Dede Smith

I guess you've heard by now that we lost our dear friend **Paul Fain**. He battled cancer for six years and died on May 28<sup>th</sup>. We are having his send-off this Sunday the 12<sup>th</sup> from 4-6 in the pavilion behind *Trinity by the Sea Episcopal Church*. Many of the musicians who played Paul's bar, the *Tarpon Ice House*, will honor Paul with a picker's circle. There will be snacks provided by **Chris Jordan** and the facilities have been made available at the generosity of **Father James Derkits**. The picker's circle was a big part of the *Ice House* and was the catalyst that brought us all together. Expect to see such musicians as **Uel Jackson, Dennis Sullivan, Billy Snipes, Stevie Start** and really, anyone who wants to join in, so bring your guitars and stories about our brother Paul. He was actually the first friend I made when I moved to Port A in 2008. I was living and working at the *Tarpon Inn* at the time and **Dana Spinks**, the innkeeper called me in one day to tell me we were getting a lot of calls for the *Tarpon Ice House*, which was only a few blocks away, and would I go over there and see what the deal was. So when I got to the *Ice House* I wandered around back and found a man kneeling on the ground with his back to me. He was busy fiddling with some gas lines running along the ground, which I found out later, was used for his glass blowing art projects. So I walked up behind him still crouched over so I couldn't see his face. So when I asked to speak to owner or manager Paul swung around the opposite direction and stood up saying, "Paul Fain, at your service." We both laughed and immediately became the best of friends from that point on. And that's the way Paul was; funny and quirky and always ready to be your next best friend. After that I spent most every day at the *Tarpon*. I was coming from the big city where music venues were my calling and Paul had the same inklings to make the *Tarpon Inn* viable for its live music and friendly atmosphere. It was a place where anyone could drop in and play music unannounced any time. And friends became family. And the family did grow! And his wife, **Dede**, was always there in the background as she had her own professional duties in the special education field. She and Paul were a glorious couple, both diligent workers, smart and fun loving. The world has sure lost a good man. Please spread the word about our send off on Sunday and bring your guitars. Paul wanted music at his send-off and it will also serve as a *Tarpon Ice House Reunion!* Rest in peace old friend, I'll see you on the flip flop.

### How hot is it...



The beaches were insane last weekend in Port Aransas

This weekend being the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday had EVERY road, beach, bar, restaurant and rubber snake store busier than a one armed paper

hanger. Dude, I'm talking so busy you couldn't even think about making a left turn. It was all gnarled up and all I could see from the window in my home office near the ferry landing on Gulf and Ave A was cars stacked up in every direction and not moving. I sat and watched an ambulance stuck in the intersection with his lights blazing for 20 minutes. Plus it was hotter than all get out not to mention there was a two hour wait to board a ferry leaving the island. And, it was bumper to bumper on the island road and the same deal on Padre. It was like spring break on steroids. We could easily see the fireworks show from our back yard and to us, watching the ridiculous traffic was just part of the show. Needless to say, we kept it close to the crib.

### Scattered shots...



Beto and the Cavemen played the Gaff last Thursday

In spite of the obstacles we were able to worm our ways around to catch a handful of good shows. The *Sip Yard* shows were stellar. The Thursday night show with **Carson Jeffery** was really quite remarkable. Carson is a real deal bronco bustin' cowboy from Cat Spring, Texas and he is great. It was high energy country music at its best. Their guitarist/steel player was coming up with sounds I've only heard from the likes of **Pink Floyd**. Good stuff **Harley** and it was outlaw country at its best. And Friday with **Kin Faux** from San Antonio was as good as it gets. I'd seen them play the old *Back Porch* a bunch and am a big fan. They are truly bonafied and had the gals wiggling at downbeat. They had two fiddlers... enough said. I also caught the great classic rock band **Dreaming in Color** at *Shorty's* and a band I wasn't familiar with, **Beto and the Cavemen** at the *Gaff* on Friday and my old blues buddy **Ruben V** from S.A. on the 4<sup>th</sup> with **Clay Hollis** at the *Yard*. Then I went and hid.

### Coming this weekend...



Dreaming in Color played Shorty's last Friday

The 90<sup>th</sup> Deep Sea Roundup is this week July 9-12 and next week the big money *Billfish Pachanga* runs July 15-18. This weekend on Thursday the *Sip Yard* has the **Dueling Pianos** show, country artist **Mario Flores** on Friday and more country on Saturday with **Tumble Dry Low**. *Treasure Island* has **Jonmikael MREZ** on Friday and country artist **Mario Flores** on Saturday. The *Gaff* has our Cajun buds **Boo & Poo** on Friday and **Coach Jim Dugan** on Saturday. *Shorty's* has the grungy reggae boys **Groove Control** on Friday and the **Toman Brothers** from San Antonio on Saturday. *Bron's* was supposed to have the **Chanklas** on Friday but I heard **Justin Estes** is in the hospital. But on Saturday they have **Dreaming in Color**. Y'all be safe.

♪♪♪ And, that's the truth ♪♪♪



The fabulous Kin Faux played the Sip Yard last Friday

# LIVE MUSIC TONIGHT

## Thursday, July 9

90<sup>th</sup> DEEP SEA ROUNDUP  
Proof of Life, Irie Rebels @ Cole Park  
Johnson All Starz @ Shorty's  
B-Flat Dueling Pianos @ Sip Yard  
Tyler Jordan @ Gaff  
Billy Snipes @ Bron's  
Aaron Boultinghouse @ Trout Street  
Michael Burttis @ Rokit's  
Jim Dugan @ Brewster Island  
Nathan Allen @ Brewster Southside  
Birdie @ 5<sup>th</sup> and Elm  
Johnny Kiser @ Doc's  
Darren McGill @ Sandbox

**THE GAFF**  
BELTSANDER RACES EVERY 2ND & 4TH SAT  
OPEN MIC EVERY WED WITH BRAD E.  
TYLER JORDAN JULY 9  
BOO & POO JULY 10  
JIM DUGAN JULY 11  
PHILIP DEAN WEST JULY 12  
BRAD ETHRIDGE JULY 16  
BOUDREAUX & POUSSON JULY 17

Five Card Draw @ Sip Yard  
Mario Flores @ Treasure Island  
Toman Bros @ Shorty's  
Dreaming in Color @ Bron's  
J & the Sound @ Pelican  
Rip Tide Cowboy @ Island Retreat  
Max Deboard @ Brewster Island  
Scarecrow People @ Brewster Southside  
Devin Michaels @ Brewster Downtown  
Rock N Roll Flea Market @ House of Rock  
The Groove 2.0 @ Rokit's  
Fuzion @ Whalebone  
Michael Perez @ Tannin's  
Boudreaux & Pousson @ Lulu's RP  
Randy Rogers @ Whitewater Amphitheater  
Robin Blue, Trisum, Mike Guerra @ Anchor Bar  
Matt Rodd Band, Hollywood @ Sandbox  
2Gann Band @ Docs  
The Groove @ Fifth & Elm Portland  
Jirie Rebels @ Doc's Waterline  
Rip Tide Cowboy @ Island Retreat PA  
Red Feather @ Headliners Fulton  
Love Street @ Surf Club

**SHORTY'S**  
JOHN ELIJAH BAND EVERY MONDAY  
JOHNSON ALL STARZ EVERY THURS  
JIM DUGAN & TY DIETZ EVERY SUN  
GROOVE CHILI JULY 10  
TOMAN BROS JULY 11  
RUBEN V JULY 17  
MANTLE JENNINGS JULY 18

**Treasure Island**  
JONMAIKAEL MREZ JULY 10  
MARIO FLORES JULY 11  
THE GROOVE 2.0 JULY 17  
DREW BROWN BAND JULY 18  
BILL AYERS BAND JULY 24  
SPLENDIFEROUS JULY 25

MOORE-MCDONALD  
VFW POST 8967  
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
BRAD ETHRIDGE JULY 14  
CARSON MILLER JULY 25

**Sip Yard**  
B-FLAT DUELING PIANOS JULY 9  
MARIO FLORES JULY 10  
FIVE CARD DRAW JULY 11  
FINDING FRIDAY JULY 16-17  
PAYTON HOWIE JULY 18  
BELLAMY BROS JULY 30

**Bron's Backyard**  
BILLY SNIPES JULY 9  
CHANKLAS JULY 10  
DREAMING IN COLOR JULY 11  
THE RESOLUTION JULY 12  
BRANDON MICHAEL JULY 14  
JERRY WARD DUO JULY 15

## Friday, July 10

Mario Flores @ Sip Yard  
Groove Chili @ Shorty's  
Jonmikael Mrez @ Treasure Island  
Boudreaux & Pousson @ Gaff  
The Chanklas @ Bron's  
The Groove 2.0 @ Pelican  
The Drive @ Tannin's  
Mantle Jennings @ Exchange  
Flatbroke, Joseph Martinez @ Rokit's  
Spazmatics @ Brewster Downtown  
Emerald Unplugged @ Brewster Southside  
Meza @ Brewster Island  
Ruben Limas @ Blackbeards on the Beach  
Alley Catz @ South TX Ice House  
Jerry Ward @ Doc's  
Marty J. @ Anchor Bar  
Randy Hopper @ Sugar Shack RP  
Love Street @ Sugar Shack RP  
Mantle Jennings @ Exchange  
ZrenditionZ @ Retro  
Darren McGill @ Sandbox

## Saturday, July 11

BELT SANDER RACES @ Gaff  
Jim Dugan @ Gaff

## Sunday, July 12

PAUL FAIN'S SEND OFF 4-6 @ TRINITY  
Jim Dugan, Ty Dietz @ Shorty's  
TBA @ Sip Yard  
The Resolution @ Bron's  
Philip Dean West @ Gaff  
Nic Goodman @ Trout Streete  
Aaron Boultinghouse, Michael Burttis @ Anchor Bar  
2GannBand @ Doc's  
Jam Band @ Sandbox  
Darren McGill @ Doc's Waterline  
Jerry Ward & Dirty Birds @ Sandbox

**TEXAS RED'S RIVIERA**  
Happy Hour everyday 11-6!  
FULL BAR • FOOSBALL • GOLDEN TEE • DARTS • POOL  
SHUFFLEBOARD • Coldest beer in town!  
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COLD BEER OPEN DAILY AT 11 AM HOT PIZZA

