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Issue 1026



The Island Moon

The voice of The Island since 1996

December 15, 2023

www.islandmoon.com

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Weekly FREE



Photo by Debbie Noble



By Dale Rankin



The newly finished Don Patricio Bridge was dedicated to much fanfare on Friday as the public and politicians gathered at the bridge site to cut the ribbon on the \$20 million project. It was certainly a milestone in Island history as the much anticipated bridge was ribbon-cut into reality. Crews are working on the finishing touches to the approaches to the bridge from both side in anticipation of the cutting through of the canal between Lake Padre and Whitecap North Padre Island in January.

Yes, carts will fit under the bridge...



Contrary to a drumbeat of doubt on anti-social media golf carts can indeed fit under the two arches of the bridge designed for cart and pedestrian passage as shown by this photo of the Police Department ATV which made it under the bridge with room to spare.

Michael J. Ellis Beach



The beach along the northern half of the Michael J. Ellis Seawall is now wider than ever due to renourishment from the dredging project in Packery Channel. As part of the dredging process this vehicle, formerly a red SUV and now a clump of seaweed incrustured rust, was removed from the channel to clear the way for dredging. The vehicles landed in the canal half a dozen years ago when a driver who was apparent-

Around cont. on A5

Connecting the Island Canals

Water flow could begin in January 2024

Verbal agreement arrived at pending final written document



By Dale Rankin

A verbal agreement for the connection of Island canals owned by the Padre Isles Property Owners Association (PIPOA) to the canals at Whitecap North Padre Island and connecting to the new Don Patricio Bridge, Lake Padre and Packery Channel has been reached pending a final written agreement between the parties, according to officials with the PIPOA.

PIPOA President Drew Diggins said that organization is awaiting documents from the LJA Engineering, who is conducting the design work for Diamond Beach Holdings, LLC. owners of the Whitecap NPI project, outlining the design for connecting the bulkheads in the canals.

Canal cont. on A3

La Posada 2023

Best in Fleet

Allen Schultz

Theme:

"Santa catching a sailfish"



La Posada Committee



The Payoff!

Each year Islanders gather at the Padre Island Yacht Club on the Sunday after the La Posada Lighted Boat Parades to load the toys that have been collected for the Marine Reserve Toys for Tots Program. This year the event raised 4000 toys and \$40,000 that will touch the lives of 40,000 kids across the Coastal Bend.



A little Island history

The John F. Kennedy Causeway

Originally the Don Patricio Causeway

By Dale Rankin

With the opening of the Don Patricio Bridge this week as well as work winding down on the John F. Kennedy Causeway we have had some inquiries regarding the history of the name and the two.

The Don Patricio Causeway

Early access to North Padre Island was via a wood trestle structure known as the Don Patricio Causeway. It was built in 1927. This causeway was destroyed by a storm in the early 1930's and



Causeway Opening

never replaced. Remnants of it can be seen in the form of wooden pilings at low tide on the west side of the JFK Causeway.

Birth of the JFK...

Nueces County began construction on a new causeway on April 13, 1949. Fill sections were completed on September 30, 1949. The original road bed fill was constructed by dredging a channel north of and parallel to the causeway. Three bridges were placed in the landfill. One at the Humble Channel, another at the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) and a third in the sand and mud flats between the

History cont. on page A5

City approves Whitecap NPI Development Agreement

Five new projects to be completed by January 2026

By Dale Rankin

The Corpus Christi City Council on Tuesday approved into a Development Agreement with the developers of the White North Padre Island project that clears the way for construction of financing Public Infrastructure at the site.

Developer Obligations

The agreement between the City of Corpus Christi and Diamond Beach Holdings, LLC. includes five new amenities all of which must be completed by December 31, 2025.

- Public mobility bridges to allow for public pedestrian and cart access to the Whitecap NPI site.
- Commodores Drive Bridge to allow vehicle passage over an extension of the Commodores canal onto the Whitecap NPI site and eventually to connect to the Island canal system.
- Nature Preserve walking trail allowing access to the nature preserve on the Whitecap NPI site.
- Aquarius Street box culverts to

Whitecap cont. on A5

By the numbers...

Padre Island Housing Report October 2023

- \$450,000** Median house price (Up 9.8% from October 2022)
- 33%** of houses priced from \$300,000-\$399,000
- 29%** of houses priced from \$500,000-\$749,000
- 19%** of houses priced from \$400,000-\$499,000
- 9.5%** of houses priced \$1 million or up
- 247** active listings (up 62% from October 2022)
- 21** closed sales (down 47% from October 2023)
- 7.2** months of inventory (up from 2.8 months in October 2022)

Port Aransas Housing Report October 2023

- \$700,000** Median house price (Up 12% from October 2022)
- 21%** of houses priced from \$500,000-\$749,000
- 21%** of houses priced from \$750,000-\$999,000
- 18%** of houses priced \$1 million or up
- 14%** of houses priced from \$300,000-\$399,000
- 11%** of houses priced from \$400,000-\$499,000
- 306** active listings (up 80% from October 2022)
- 28** closed sales up 12% from October 2023)
- 11 months** of inventory (up from 5 months in October 2022)

La Posada 2023





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City crews have been working to repair the steps on the Michael J. Ellis Seawall.
Photo by Mary Craft

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More Nonsense about the Water Exchange Canal Breakthrough

By Marvin Jones
On December 6, 2023, the President of the Padre Isles Property Owners Association (PIPOA) sent an email to members of the PIPOA. This email has now been published as an article in the Island Moon newspaper on December 8, 2023. Mr. Diggins’ article is a diatribe against myself, Councilman Dan Suckley, LJA Engineering, Diamond Beach Holdings, Dale Rankin, and the Island Moon. My comments are to set the record straight regarding the Diggins’ article, paragraph two. I am only commenting on the second paragraph of his article in which he claims a document provided by Diamond Beach Holdings’ Lawyer, Kevan Richards, was a faulty agreement to attach the Diamond Beach canal to the PIPOA’s canal system. His remarks in paragraph two are false.

Here is the 2nd paragraph: “At the last meeting of the Board before the PIPOA election on March 24, 2023, the prior President, Marvin Jones, asked the Board to consider a proposed agreement by DBH to attach the canals. The proposed agreement brought by DBH through Mr. Jones referenced multiple exhibits which were not included in the documents presented. The missing exhibits referenced critical items needed for the protection and benefit of the PIPOA, ie, the nuts and bolts of the canal connection agreement. For this reason, the Board refused to vote on the item in executive session. Since that time, the PIPOA has repeatedly asked DBH for these referenced exhibits. To date, DBH has failed to provide any draft or proposal for the terms of these critical exhibits.”

Fact: On March 22, 2023, I received a rough draft of a potential settlement agreement from Kevan Richards, the lawyer for Diamond Beach Holdings. Richards also sent it to the PIPOA Attorney, Gregory Cagle.

Fact: This document had absolutely nothing to do with the canal water exchange breakthrough. The words canal, water exchange, breakthrough, and attach do not appear in the document. The document was a preliminary rough draft to be used as a starting point for discussion of a petition/affidavit to be signed by members of the PIPOA to remove Diamond Beach Property from subdivisions of the PIPOA. It also contained language pertaining to the maintenance of bulkheads located on Diamond Beach property after Diamond Beach leaves the PIPOA as per the petition previously mentioned. In particular, a section of bulkhead has collapsed and fallen in the canal to the West of the Old German Bakery. The collapsed section is on Diamond Beach property. The purpose of this section of the document was designed to release Diamond Beach holdings from any disputed back-

due CAM fees (approximately \$90,000) in exchange for Diamond Beach taking responsibility for repairing and maintaining any and all bulkheads on their property including repairing the section West of the German Bakery. Repair estimates for this section were well over \$100,000. Therefore, the PIPOA would not be responsible for spending over \$100,000 to repair the bulkhead on Diamond Beach’s property. Furthermore, some general releases stated in the document did not apply to the canal breakthrough.

Fact: I received this document on the 22nd of March and distributed a copy to each Board member at the Board Meeting on the 24th of March. It was explained to the Board that this was a preliminary rough draft to be reviewed both by the Board and by the Board Attorney, Gregory Cagle, for the purpose of negotiation with Diamond Beach. At no time were the Board members asked to vote on this document. Fact-False Statement: “For this reason, the Board refused to vote on the item in executive session.”

Fact: There were to be three blank exhibits to the document. However, Exhibit A was not included because it would have included the names and addresses of property owners. The other exhibits were intentionally left blank so that negotiation and discussion would produce the exhibits. Please note that Exhibit B is titled Form of Multipurpose Declaration Amendment (covenants), and Exhibit C is titled Description of Bulkheads to be maintained by DBH. None of the Exhibits had anything to do with the canal breakthrough.

Fact-False Statement: “...referenced multiple exhibits which were not included in the documents presented. The missing exhibits referenced critical items needed for the protection and benefit of the PIPOA, ie, the nuts and bolts of the canal connection agreement.”

Fact: This document unequivocally has nothing, REPEAT, NOTHING TO DO with the canal breakthrough for the water exchange.

Fact-False Statement: “...the prior president, Marvin Jones, asked the board to consider a proposed agreement by DBH to attach the canals.”

I have absolutely no idea why Drew Diggins deceived the members of the PIPOA community in paragraph two of his article. What he said in paragraph two is just flat-out false. I will leave it to the readers of my comments to speculate on why he would do such a thing. You should and may read this document from Kevan Richards for yourselves. You can find the document using this link.

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/0mybf8olp11zkozzqoh5q/Settlement-Agreement-PIPOA-and-Diamond-Beach.pdf?rlkey=phb45prrhnw7v217gjwdihgo-9&dl=0>
Marvin Jones

Letters to the Editor



Field of debris,
I’m seeing the baleful character of some of our beach-goers today as we walked along the beach this Sunday afternoon. The debris field is for real. A strong cold norther blew through recently. With the high tide shoving its way with ravaging waves, suddenly the debris field showed its head more than ever. My best friend in the world and I didn’t know whether to wear flip flops or combat boots as we sauntered along our beach. The shoreline was littered with countless fragments of pure yucky junk. The scattering of ocean-worn plastics especially, painted an extremely ugly dark scene as far as we could see. Sadly we had to even watch where we stepped so we didn’t trip.
What a pity! The very place they came to play “people from not here,” as a beach worker put it—left our Island with an indescribable, dirty and nasty debris field. Oh, there are a plethora of trash bins and waste disposal cans all throughout our beaches.... just a few steps away.
Ronnie Lee Johnson

I address this response to your board president and executive director. I’m not impressed with your email espousing concern for our canals and bulkheads. I live every day with the non-actions of these two. My interactions with the POA were only with these two and was refused contact information of other Board members from the executive director to share my concerns regarding deliberate damage to bulkheads by, in my opinion, an incompetent company. I complained originally about a company abusing the common area and bulkhead by driving large equipment over the bulkhead SEVERAL times and about a barge being tied against a bulkhead to trees. (I have video footage over several days of this abuse). So, the POA responded by allowing a SECOND work barge to tie on the same common area. This is a great spot enjoyed by many residents who fish, many young boys who fish, folks watch sunsets, take group pictures, etc. I’ve watched residents over the past few years complain about this executive director and board. It’s not about protecting bulkheads. It’s about “We know more than you people, we will do what we want and you, the residents, don’t question us”. I can say this from experience. I pray we have six board members who genuinely care about this Island.

Mary Ann McShane
Cumana Drive

Moon Monkeys

Mike Ellis, Founder



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for the use of a slice of the 6.7-acre tract of land owned by the district on Padre Island to provide for the connection of the canals at the Whitecap NPI site and the existing canal that runs under Whitecap Boulevard. That move removes one of the obstacles spelled out by the Padre Isles Property Owners Board of Directors to connecting the canal systems who objected to a zig-zag design for connecting two canal systems which would have been required without cutting through a portion of the Flour Bluff parcel which borders the existing canal on the west. The board vote clears the way for a straight-through connection of the two, now bisected canals and plans for that process are part of the paperwork to be approved by the PIPOA board. Flour Bluff ISD has owned the land since 1994 when it bought the land through a tax auction with plans to place a school there as the Seashore Charter Schools were going through the process of obtaining a state charter to open their doors. District officials later determined that the site was not big enough for a school site and three years ago began planning for a facility in conjunction with the Flour Bluff Oceans Program. Plans submitted to the school board this week call for a partnership between FBISD and Whitecap NPI to create “potential learning experiences within the preserve area of the Whitecap NPI site.” No budget nor long-term plans for the aquatic site have been announced. The cost of connecting the two canal systems will be paid by Diamond Beach Holdings, LLC. The managing partner of Gulf Shores Development, Tim Lange, which is

developing the Lake Padre area and which holds the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Permit for connection of the canals, has said he will remove the sand barrier currently separating the canal on the Lake Padre side to the Don Patricio Bridge when an agreement is made to remove the barrier currently separating the canals at the Whitecap NPI site to the PIPOA canals. Crews are currently working to armor the bulkheads on the west, Whitecap NPI, side of the Don Patricio Bridge after which similar work is expected to take place on the Lake Padre side clearing the way for the opening of the canal under the new bridge in January, 2024, pending a final agreement to connect the Whitecap NPI and PIPOA canals.

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By Dotson Lewis

Trench Warfare Part 4



Dotson's Note: Behind the front system of trenches there were usually at least two more partially prepared trench systems, kilometers to the rear, ready to be occupied in the event of a retreat. The Germans often prepared multiple redundant trench systems; in 1916 their Somme front featured two complete trench systems, one kilometer apart, with a third partially completed system a further kilometer behind. This duplication made a decisive breakthrough virtually impossible. In the event that a section of the first trench system was captured, a "switch" trench would be dug to connect the second trench system to the still-held section of the first. Thanks to Joe Mix and Fred Shope, who were both World War I combat veterans, for the facts contained in this report and thanks to Ernest Brooks for the photos.



Above, American soldiers struggle to pass multiple lines of barbed wire

The use of lines of barbed wire, razor wire, and other wire obstacles, in belts 15 m (49 ft) deep or more, is effective in stalling infantry travelling across the battlefield. Although the barbs or razors might cause minor injuries, the purpose was to entangle the limbs of enemy soldiers, forcing them to stop and methodically pull or work the wire off, likely taking several seconds, or even longer. This is deadly when the wire is emplaced at points of maximum exposure to concentrated enemy firepower, in plain sight of enemy fire bays and machine guns. The combination of wire and firepower was the cause of most failed attacks in trench warfare and their very high casualties. Liddell Hart identified barbed wire and the machine gun as the elements that had to be broken to regain a mobile battlefield.

A basic wire line could be created by draping several strands of barbed wire between wooden posts driven into the ground. Loose lines of wire can be more effective in entangling than tight ones, and it was common to use the coils of barbed wire as delivered only partially stretched out, called concertina wire. Placing and repairing wire in no man's land relied on stealth, usually done at night by special wiring parties, who could also be tasked with secretly sabotaging enemy wires. The screw picket, invented by the Germans and later adopted by the Allies during the war, was quieter than driving stakes. Wire often stretched the entire length of a battlefield's trench line, in multiple lines, sometimes covering a depth 30 meters (100 ft) or more.

Methods to defeat it were rudimentary. Prolonged artillery bombardment could damage them, but not reliably. The first soldier meeting the wire could jump onto the top of it, hopefully depressing it enough for those that followed to get over him; this still took at least one soldier out of action for each line of wire. In World War I, British and Commonwealth forces relied on wire cutters, which proved unable to cope with the heavier gauge German wire. The Bangalore torpedo was adopted by many armies, and continued in use past the end of World War II.

The barbed wire used differed between nations; the German wire was heavier gauge, and British wire cutters, designed for the thinner native product, were unable to cut it.

The confined, static, and subterranean nature of trench warfare resulted in it developing its own peculiar form of geography. In the forward zone, the conventional transport infrastructure of roads and rail were replaced by the network of trenches and trench railways.

The critical advantage that could be gained by holding the high ground meant that minor hills and ridges gained enormous significance. Many slight hills and valleys were so subtle as to have been nameless until the front line encroached upon them. Some hills were named for their height in meters, such as Hill 60. A farmhouse, windmill, quarry, or copse of trees would become the focus of

a determined struggle simply because it was the largest identifiable feature. However, it would not take the artillery long to obliterate it, so that thereafter it became just a name on a map.

The battlefield of Flanders presented numerous problems for the practice of trench warfare, especially for the Allied forces, mainly British and Canadians, who were often compelled to occupy the low ground. Heavy shelling quickly destroyed the network of ditches and water channels which had previously drained this low-lying area of Belgium. In most places, the water table was only a meter or so below the surface, meaning that any trench dug in the ground would quickly flood. Consequently, many "trenches" in Flanders were actually above ground and constructed from massive breastworks of sandbags filled with clay. Initially, both the parapet and parados of the trench were built in this way, but a later technique was to dispense with the parados for much of the trench line, thus exposing the rear of the trench to fire from the reserve line in case the front was breached.



Above, Soldiers in a trench on the Ortler, at an elevation of 3,850 meters (12,630 ft) (1917).

In the Alps, trench warfare even stretched onto vertical slopes and deep into the mountains, to heights of 3,900 m (12,800 ft) above sea level. The Ortler had an artillery position on its summit near the front line. The trench-line management and trench profiles had to be adapted to the rough terrain, hard rock, and harsh weather conditions. Many trench systems were constructed within glaciers such as the Adamello-Presanella group or the famous city below the ice on the Marmolada in the Dolomites.

Observing the enemy in trench warfare was difficult, prompting the invention of technology such as the camouflage tree.



No Man's Land -1917-1919.

The space between the opposing trenches was referred to as "no man's land" and varied in width depending on the battlefield. On the Western Front it was typically between 90 and 275 meters (100 and 300 yd), though only 25 meters (30 yd) on Vimy Ridge.

After the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line in March 1917, no man's land stretched to over a kilometer in places. At the "Quinn's Post" in the cramped confines of the Anzac battlefield at Gallipoli, the opposing trenches were only 15 meters (16 yd) apart and the soldiers in the trenches constantly threw hand grenades at each other.

Dotson's Other Note: On the Eastern Front and in the Middle East, the areas to be covered were so vast, and the distances from the factories supplying shells, bullets, concrete and barbed wire so great, trench warfare in the West European style often did not occur. FOR YOUR INFORMATION: The weekly Veterans Round Table meetings are on Thursdays 9-11AM. All veterans, their families and anyone interested in veterans' activities, are invited. The meeting location is at Del Mar College, Center for Economic Development, 3209 S. Staples. (Across from Ray High School). Also, the Veterans Radio Round Table is on the air on KEYS AM 1440 & 98.7 FM, 8 - 10 a.m., Saturdays. Please listen and call in or text. The listener/text line is: 361-882-5397. It's your two hours; please let us hear from you. TO BE CONTINUED



Stuff I Heard on the Island

By Dale Rankin

Regular readers of these pages know that the Island's TIRZ gets a lot of attention, the reason for that is that it is one of the most important – and maybe most misunderstood – public entities on our Island. With that in mind this week I will take a deep dive into what the Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone #2 is, how it works, and why it is of vital importance to our Island at least through the year 2044.

What is a TIRZ and how does it work?

As stated TIRZ stands for "Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone" and TIRZs are governed by Chapter 311 of the Texas Tax Code. A TIRZ is not an additional tax. Instead, it establishes a base tax value for a designated geographic area tabulated when the Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone is created, in the case of Padre Island that base tax value was the property located around Packery Channel before its construction and the commercial zone along SPID since the establishment of the TIRZ #2 in 2002. The Property Tax on all new development inside the boundaries of the zone goes into the TIRZ #2 fund rather than in the City of Corpus Christi's General Fund. Without the TIRZ the \$5 million needed to repair the Packery Jetties after damage from Hurricane Harvey in 2017 and the \$4 million to fund the current dredging project at Packery Channel would have had to come from the General Fund or Capital Improvement Projects fund, with would have had to go to a vote of the Corpus Christ City Council, as would any future work at the channel. That process is time consuming, uncertain, and subject to the vicissitudes of the shifting political landscape of city governance and politics, and would be an ongoing burden for funding Island projects.

Legislation adopted by the State of Texas in 2011 broadened the eligible uses of a TIRZ which now include:

- Public infrastructure that benefits the zone
- Public improvements that benefit the zone
- Capital maintenance of public infrastructure/improvements within the zone
- Programs or other projects that benefit the zone
- Reimbursement to private parties that make improvements to benefit the zone but would not occur "but for" creation of the zone

What is the funding process?

With that said approval of spending of any funds from the TIRZ #2 still must pass muster with the City Council; twice. The first step in TIRZ #2 funding is for the Island Strategic Action Committee (ISAC), which is made up of mostly Island residents appointed by the city council, to approve funding for a particular project. While the ISAC vote is advisory only and not binding, since the ISAC was formed in 2012 city council members have followed the lead of ISAC in all TIRZ #2 funding and that is important because the next step in the funding process is for the TIRZ #2 Board of Directors to approve the funding request from ISAC; the TIRZ #2 Board consists of all nine members of the city council along with additional members from Nueces County and the Del Mar College District both of which remit their Property Tax in the zone after 2002 to the TIRZ #2 account. Once approved by the board the funding request goes to the City Council for final approval, but by the time it reaches the council the members have already voted to approve it at the TIRZ #2 Board level.

Extension of the Island TIRZ #2

As stated above TIRZ #2 was founded in 2002 in order to raise funds to maintain Packery Channel and to fund improvements around the channel and in the entire zone and aside from the channel we would not have the Don Patricio Bridge without the existence of the TIRZ #2 since that was the only available funding source beyond insufficient bond money. Generally the TIRZ #2 has raised between \$3 million and \$6 million each year.

TIRZ #2 was set to expire in 2022 and then District #4 City Councilman Greg Smith led a push to renew it for another twenty years. Estimates at that time by the city staff were that by 2044 it will raise about \$14 million per year which can be used to fund future Island projects.

When TIRZ #2 was extended the boundaries were expanded to include Commodores

Park on the north, Packery Channel Park on the east, and Balli Park on the south. That is important to note because already \$4 million in TIRZ #2 money has been committed to expansion of the Briscoe King Pavilion (yes it could be used to rebuild Bob Hall Pier), and TIRZ #2 money will likely be used for some of the improvements at Commodores Park once a plan is complete.

Common misconceptions

One of the common misconceptions/questions I get is that private developers currently Whitecap NPI and Lake Padre Village- are getting "free tax money" for development of private property. That is not the case for two reasons: Reason numbers one; read the requirements for TIRZ funding listed above. The word *public* is key. TIRZ money cannot be used for private investment, any improvements that include TIRZ money must be available and assessable to the public. The TIRZ #2 money at both Whitecap NPI and Lake Padre Village can only be used to build amenities that are open to the public; cart and pedestrian paths, golf cart bridges, nature areas. In additions the Whitecap NPI development formed a Tax Improvement Zone (TIP) to fund the building of the bulkheads there which allowed the developers to issue debt – bonds – to fund the building of the bulkheads and the cost of those bonds will be baked into the sales price of the property there; it will be repaid by the purchasers of the private property and no public money will be involved.

Reason number two: Any private developer who gets funding from the TIRZ #2 Board can only access funds which it pays in; it cannot take out money paid into the TIRZ #2 account by any other entity, and further it cannot take out more than it puts in. What that means is that the private developers who now are putting a total of \$2 billion in new investment into projects inside the TIRZ #2 zone will be paying Property Tax on all that new construction into the TIRZ #2 fund through the year 2044 and over that time both will pay a lot more money into the TIRZ #2 fund than they will take out; the overage will be used for other projects in the zone boundaries through 2044.

It is important to note that when you read the list of projects funded by TIRZ #2 at the two new developments on The Island that is not current cash in the bank; the funds become available only after they are paid in by each of the developments once new construction is complete and Property Tax on it is being levied. In the meantime the pledge of the funds in the future allows for planning of the developments and a certainty in funding going forward – provided they build the improvements that generate the Property Tax that go into the TIRZ #2 fund. If they don't build the new improvements they get nothing because that money will not be there.

The results

When everything is said and done the net result of TIRZ #2 is that Property Tax money generated from private Island developments remains on The Island through 2044 and is allocated through the process outlined above to other future Island projects. Further, each of the large developments to which TIRZ #2 money has been pledged will over time pay in much more money than they will draw out – by a large margin. Without TIRZ #2 that "excess" of funds would simply go into the city General Fund never to be seen again on The Island.

So when you see that TIRZ #2 funds are being put to use by private developers know two things: There is currently no pot of money sitting in the TIRZ #2 account that is being paid to them, it is money they will pay in as things develop though their private investments. And, no private developer can draw out more money than they pay in, and in fact will pay in a much greater amount than they will draw out over the next 20 years.

Without TIRZ #2 any new Island development over the next twenty years that needs funding for public-use amenities would have to be derived from that current fiscal year's budget in competition with other project around the city and we have all seen how that works out for us on The Island over the years.

Without TIRZ #2 and the certainty is provides to future Island development – both public and private - we would be dead in the water.

I hope that helps.

Around cont. from A1

ly unaware of the presence of the channel went sufficiently airborne to clear the rock jetty on the south side of the channel and turn his vehicle into a submarine. A survey of the channel two weeks ago led dredge crews to believe the underwater anomaly they observed with sonar in the channel was a dislodged granite block from the jetty, however, when removed it was found to be a low-mileage vehicle with a full tank (water). The owner of the submarine/SUV was not identified.



One owner low mileage...This vehicles has been in Packery Channel for several years and was hauled out last week.



The KRIS TV director's booth at the Friday La Posada Parade.

Whitecap cont. from A1

connect Whitecap NPI canals to the Laguna Madre.

-Encantada Avenue bridge to allow for water (and possibly boat) passage under -Encantada Avenue. This project is paid for by the Public Improvement District (PID) at the Whitecap NPI.

Under the agreement effluent water from the Whitecap Wastewater Treatment Plant will be used for irrigation and to maintain water levels in fresh water ponds on the Whitecap NPI site. The water line from the Whitecap plant that was used to bring water to the site which was used to irrigate the Padre Isles County Club golf course is still in place and will be extended onto the Whitecap NPI

La Posada

The Friday night version of the La Posada Lighted Boat Parade went off without a hitch in the north Island canals however, the Saturday night parade hit a snag when the U.S. Coast Guard issued a weather alert that caused many small boat owners that took part on Friday to skip the Saturday parade and led the event organizers to move the start time of the parade up by thirty minutes. This marks the third time in the past decade that plans for the parade have been altered due to dire weather warnings from the Coast Guard, leading to a cancelation of the parade one year and a downsizing in another. This year the bad weather prediction did not come to fruition and the downsized parade made the rounds under near ideal parade weather.

The Friday night parade had twenty six boats and organizers had to turn away entries as boat captains wanted to enter the Friday event which was televised on KRIS TV but the number of boats that could be featured in the one-hour broadcast was limited.

Hisotry cont. from A1



The Don Patricio Causeway. The only road to The Island in 1927

(GIWW) and Padre Island. The Humble Channel Bridge and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway Bridge were swing type bridges. The causeway was open to traffic on June 17, 1950. It was named the John F. Kennedy Causeway by Nueces County in 1968.

This construction was authorized under authority of the state legislature by virtue of Article 6795-B-1, Vernon Civil Statutes, enacted by the legislature in 1947. The law provided that when all of the bonds and interest had been paid, the facility would become a part of the State Highway System. A toll system was enacted by Nueces County to fund the construction. On January 1, 1968, the Highway Department, by virtue of Highway Commission Minute Orders 57880, 58694, and 58770, assumed responsibility for the operation of the Port Aransas Ferry System and the JFK Causeway.

There have been several improvements to the causeway since it was initially constructed. The original roadway consisted of two lanes with swing bridges at the Humble Channel and the Intracoastal Waterway. In March 1973, the swing bridge at the Humble Channel was replaced with a permanent bridge and in

Causeway bridge

October, 1973, the Intracoastal Waterway Bridge was completed. Also in the 70's, the roadway was widened to provide two travel lanes in each direction with six foot paved shoulders along each side. In 1985, work was completed to raise a segment of the roadway east of the Humble Channel. In August 1997, the roadway between Humble Channel and a half mile west was raised to prevent inundation during high tides.

In 1987, the City of Corpus Christi solicited consultants to develop a master plan for development of the Kennedy Causeway area. In February 1988, a conceptual master plan was presented to the Corpus Christi City Council. The Council endorsed the plan as a policy statement. In an effort to make the document an effective and useful planning tool, in May 1988, the City appointed a Kennedy Causeway Advisory Committee. The committee met monthly to discuss the master plan, the planning commission's schedule for preparing the Mustang-Padre Island Area Development Plan and other areas of development along the Kennedy Causeway.



The old Pier supports used to be visible on low tides

On September 28, 1988, a delegation known as the "Island 2000" task force appeared before the Texas Transportation Commission. They requested to improve evacuation and access to Mustang and Padre Islands by upgrading the JFK Causeway and increasing capacity by widening and elevating the westbound lanes as a minimum. The project was authorized by the Commission for Level II project planning which includes route studies, environmental reports, public meetings and hearings, schematics and determination of right of way requirements.

An unwanted dam

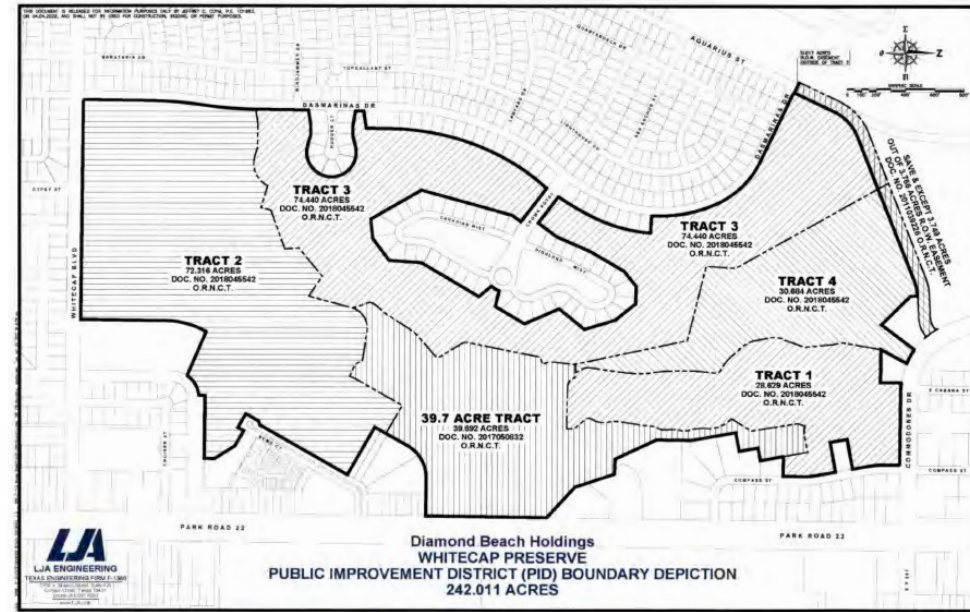
In 1993, the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) submitted a request to hire a consultant to provide data for improvements to the Causeway. This was a result of community concerns that the existing causeway was a dam causing damage to the environmental quality of the Laguna Madre. The Commission agreed to participate in the study and authorized an expanded study to include all investigations necessary to fully address and analyze the environmental effects of the existing roadway and associated fill. In January 1996, a delegation appeared before the Texas Transportation Commission to bring the results of the study (Shiner, Mosely and Associates, Inc.) and to request that the project be included in the department's 10 year Project Development Plan.

Raise the causeway

The Transportation Commission authorized the project in Priority 2 which gave authority for the preparation of plans, specifications and estimates and right-of-way acquisition. In 1997 TxDOT secured an engineering consultant to prepare an environmental assessment and engineering schematic for the project. The district moved forward with the project. The environmental assessment was prepared and submitted to resource agencies and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for review. A public hearing was scheduled for July 1999 after the outcome of the review process. When a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was received, actual plan development began.

The purpose of the project was to raise the existing roadway to a minimum of nine feet above mean sea level to provide a safe and efficient island evacuation route during periods of high tides and tropical storm activities. The project proposed to improve PR 22 from O'Connell Street in Flour Bluff to 1740 feet east of Aquarius Dr. on N. Padre Island. The project included wider lanes and shoulders. It also included a new 2850 foot bridge, west of Humble Channel to improve water circulation in the Upper Laguna Madre.

In February 2002 construction was begun on the \$39 million JFK Causeway elevation project leading to the construction of the causeway that is undergoing improvements today.



Overview of the Whitecap Plan

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Sports

Sports Talk Special to The Island Moon



By Dotson Lewis

Johnny Unitas-NFL Quarterback Part 4

Dotson's Note: Continued from last week. Unitas started the 1973 season with a 38-0 loss to the Washington Redskins. He threw for just 55 yards and 3 interceptions and was sacked 8 times. His final victory as a starter came against the Buffalo Bills in Week 2. Unitas was 10-18 for 175 yards, two touchdown passes, and no interceptions in a 34-7 Chargers rout. Many questioned his role as a starter after a loss to the Bengals in Week 3. Two weeks later, he threw two first-half interceptions, passed for only 19 yards, and went 2-for-9 against the Pittsburgh Steelers. He was then replaced by rookie quarterback and future Hall of Famer Dan Fouts. After posting a 1-3 record as a starter, Unitas retired in the preseason of 1974. Thanks to Bill Morgan for the facts and photos contained in this report.

Unitas finished his 18 NFL seasons with 2,830 completions in 5,186 attempts for 40,239 yards and 290 touchdowns, with 253 interceptions. He also rushed for 1,777 yards and 13 touchdowns. Plagued by arm trouble in his later seasons, he threw more interceptions (64) than touchdowns (38) in 1968-1973. After averaging 215.8 yards per game in his first 12 seasons, his production fell to 124.4 in his final six.

His passer rating plummeted from 82.9 to 60.4 for the same periods. Even so, Unitas set many passing records during his career. He was the first quarterback to throw for more than 40,000 yards, despite playing during an era when NFL teams played shorter seasons of 12 or 14 games (as opposed to today's 17-game seasons) and prior to modern passing-friendly rules implemented in 1978. His 32 touchdown passes in 1959 were a record at the time, making Unitas the first quarterback to hit the 30 touchdown mark in a season. His 47-game consecutive touchdown streak between 1956 and 1960 was a record considered by many to be unbreakable. The streak stood for 52 years before being broken by New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees in a game against the San Diego Chargers on October 7, 2012.



Johnny Unitas In His Later Years

After his playing days were finished, Unitas settled in Baltimore where he raised his family while also pursuing a career in broadcasting, doing color commentary for NFL games on CBS in the 1970s.

He was elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1979. After Robert Irsay moved the Colts franchise to Indianapolis in 1984, a move known to this day in Baltimore as «Bob Irsay's Midnight Ride,» he was so outraged that he cut all ties to the relocated team (though his No. 19 jersey is still retired by the Colts), declaring himself strictly a *Baltimore* Colt for the remainder of his life. Some other prominent old-time Colts followed his lead, although many attended the 1975 team's reunion at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis in 2009. A total of 39 Colts players from that 1975 team attended said reunion in Indianapolis, including Bert Jones and Lydell Mitchell.

Unitas asked the Pro Football Hall of Fame on numerous occasions (including on Roy Firestone's film *Up Close*) to remove his display unless it was listed as belonging to the Baltimore Colts. The Hall of Fame has never complied with the request. Unitas donated his Colts memorabilia to the Babe Ruth Museum in Baltimore. They were on display at the Sports Legends Museum at Camden Yards until its closure in 2015. Unitas was inducted into the American Football Association's Semi Pro

Football Hall of Fame in 1987.

Unitas actively lobbied for another NFL team to come to Baltimore. After the Cleveland Browns moved to Baltimore in 1996 and changed their name to the Ravens, he and some of the other old-time Colts attended the Ravens' first game ever against the Raiders on Opening Day at Memorial Stadium. He was frequently seen on the Ravens' sidelines at home games (most prominently in 1998 when the now-Indianapolis Colts played the Ravens in Baltimore) and received a thunderous ovation every time he was pictured on each of the huge widescreens at M&T Bank Stadium. He was often seen on the 30-yard line on the Ravens side. When the NFL celebrated its first 50 years, Unitas was voted the league's best player. Retired Bears quarterback Sid Luckman said of Unitas, «He was better than me, better than Sammy Baugh, better than anyone.»

On November 20, 1954, Unitas, at age 21, married his high school sweetheart Dorothy Hoelle. They had five children before divorcing. Unitas's second wife was Sandra Lemon, whom he married on June 26, 1972. They had three children, and remained married until his death.

Towson University, where Unitas was a major fund-raiser and which his children attended, named its football and lacrosse complex Johnny Unitas Stadium in recognition of both his football career and service to the university. Toward the end of his life, Unitas brought media attention to the many permanent physical disabilities that he and his fellow players suffered during their careers before heavy padding and other safety features became popular. Unitas himself lost almost total use of his right hand, with the middle finger and thumb noticeably disfigured from being repeatedly broken during games. Unitas lived most of the final years of his life severely hobbled. Due to an elbow injury suffered during his playing career, he had only very limited use of his right hand, and could not perform any physical activity more strenuous than golf due to his artificial knees.

In 1991, Unitas and his wife filed for bankruptcy protection under Chapter 11. Their court filings showed that the couple owed creditors as much as \$3.2 million but had assets of about \$1.4 million. His financial problems arose in part from a business venture in which he and two partners took out loans to buy National Circuits Inc., a maker of printed circuit boards, and the firm subsequently failed.



Gravesite of Unitas-Timonium, Maryland

Dotson's Other Note: On September 11, 2002, Unitas died from a heart attack while exercising at the Kernan Physical Therapy Center (now The University of Maryland Rehabilitation & Orthopedic Institute) in Baltimore. His funeral was held at Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore. Between his death and October 4, 2002, 56,934 people signed an online petition urging the Baltimore Ravens to rename the Ravens' home stadium (owned by the State of Maryland) after Unitas. These requests were unsuccessful since the lucrative naming rights had already been leased by the Ravens to Buffalo-based M&T Bank. However, on October 20, 2002, the Ravens dedicated the front area of the stadium's main entrance as Unitas Plaza and unveiled a statue of Unitas as the centerpiece of the plaza.



By Andy Purvis

Thoughts on the Greatest

How do you begin to write about an icon; one of the few people, other than the Pope, who have been known worldwide for over a half century? The world knew his name. He was perhaps the most recognized man on the planet Earth. What more could be written? What secrets lie unknown? His entire life has been documented for history on radio, film, television, and in more books than the entire collection of the Encyclopedia Britannica. From the jungles of the Philippines to the deserts of Africa and all across this great land, the name Ali resonates with young and old, men and women, of every color and nationality, sitting around tables and telling stories. Smiles break out on their faces and their heads begin to move side to side in disbelief as their memory takes them back to a time when a loud, brash, insulting young boxer, not only changed his name and religion, but like the armies of Alexander the Great against the Persians at Issus, he waded knee-deep through the best collection of heavyweight boxers this world has ever seen. Ali always seemed to be in a hurry, and he boxed like he was double-parked. In a sport populated with more celebrities than a "Red Carpet," Ali was always the best boxer in the room and disposed of his opponents like a box of Kleenex.

I was one of the millions who were mesmerized by Ali. Every picture taken of a young Ali had him with his mouth open. It was as if he had been born during a thunderstorm. He always put on a show before, during and after each fight. Ali had a wonderful smile, but those eyes, those eyes could see right through you. Ali could have been undefeated in a staring contest. He was authentic, a pioneer, muscles glistening under the ring lights; he was over-the-top, the "Louisville Lip," the "Greatest of All Time." With his hands down style, dancing constantly, bouncing on his toes in the ring, Ali put the sport on the world map and helped usher in the Golden Era of Boxing.

So begins my story of Muhammad Ali, the ultimate song and dance man. You see, I'm one of those old guys and from the age of nine, I followed his career, sometimes angry, sometimes enlightened, but always mesmerized and after all that has been said and done, I'm proud to be able to say to any man, "Shake the hand that shook the hand of Muhammad Ali." That's right. Not only did I get to meet Ali in January of 1994, in Houston Texas, but I also had him sign a book and a pair of white Everlast boxing trunks, with black stripes down the sides. I could not believe how big he was in person and when I saw him up close, he was even bigger. I also shook his hand and sang "Happy Birthday" to him. I think I surprised him. Everyone waiting in the autograph line joined in.

His given name was Cassius Marcellus Clay, Jr., born on January 17, 1942, in Louisville, Kentucky, and named after a former politician. His mother, Odessa, was a cook and house cleaner. His father was a sign painter. Cassius grew up in a little pink house located at 3302 Grand Avenue. He loved playing board games and eating hotdogs with his brother, Rudy, and started boxing at the age of 12, after his new red Schwinn bicycle was stolen off a downtown street. Cassius reported the theft to Officer Joe Martin, who also ran a boxing gym. When Cassius described what he wanted to do to the thief, Officer Martin suggested he first learn to box. Officer Martin would train Clay for the next six years. His amateur debut occurred in 1954. Clay won six Kentucky Golden Glove titles and two National Golden Glove titles. Cassius was not a very good student and excelled in only art and gym class. He graduated 376th in a class of 391 from Louisville Central High School. He later said he never really learned to read a book and had to memorize his speeches. He was part of the 1960 U.S. Olympic boxing team that traveled to Rome. I watched him fight because I loved the Olympics; it was us against the world, and he was representing America. I was not disappointed.

In his later life, Ali became somewhat of a saint. Ali was able to transcend from one of the most controversial figures in sports to one of the most beloved. He was respected for sacrificing over three years of his boxing prime for standing firm on his anti-war principles. His demeanor grew softer in old age and the public responded to him in a positive way. Ali generated so much good will that the public's perception of him changed. Ali had many famous quotes. My favorite goes like this: "It isn't the mountains ahead that wear you down. It's the pebble in your shoe."

Ali, a social activist, on integration: "God made us all different. It's natural to be with your own. I want to be with my own. I

have a beautiful daughter and a beautiful wife and they both look like me. We're all happy and we have no troubles. Every intelligent person wants their child to look like him. I want to be with my own. I love my people."

The number of awards that Ali has received are too numerous to mention. Here are a few of the most prestigious. On September 7, 1960, Cassius Clay won an Olympic Gold Medal in boxing. In 1990, Muhammad Ali was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame. Although trembling and nearly unable to speak, Ali was chosen to light the Olympic caldron at the 1996 Olympic Summer games in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1999, *Sports Illustrated* named Muhammad Ali the Sportsman of the Century, and he became the first boxer to appear on a Wheaties Box. On January 8, 2001, Ali received the Presidential Citizen Medal from President Bill Clinton. On November 9, 2005, President George W. Bush awarded Ali the Presidential Medal of Freedom. This is the highest award that can be achieved by a citizen in the United States. Also in 2005, the Muhammad Ali Center, a museum dedicated to respect, hope and understanding, opened in his hometown of Louisville, Kentucky. *Sports Illustrated* announced that Muhammad Ali would grace their cover for the 40th time, during the week of his death.

In the ring, his agility, lightning hand speed, barrage of powerful punches and unpredictable movement allowed him to overwhelm his opponents. He was beautifully trained and conditioned. He circled his opponents like a well-oiled machine. What's important to remember is that Muhammad Ali defeated every top heavyweight contender in his era. According to his trainer, Angelo Dundee, Ali just made it up as he went along. "Ali worked as hard as he talked," said Dundee. He broke all the rules in the boxing handbook. He pulled away when he threw a punch, and again when a punch was thrown his way. Dundee criticized him for not slipping punches by moving his head and for keeping his hands low by his side instead of up in front of his face. Ali dared you to swing at him.

To become the Heavyweight Boxing Champion, you first have to win a fight. And win, he did. He was the 1960 Light-Heavyweight Olympic Champion and a three-time World Heavyweight Champ. His opponents were up and down off the canvas so many times they must have thought they were riding on an elevator. Over 21 years, his career win-loss record stands at 56-5, with 37 wins by knockout. He had fought in a squared ring for more than two decades, but his stage was never big enough. In the ring he became known for the "Ali shuffle." He will be remembered more for what he did outside the ring, what he stood for, and what he believed in. People don't become great because they are perfect every time out. They become great when everything goes wrong and they still find a way to win. We all knew this day was close. Ali suffered with Parkinson's disease for 32 years. Interestingly, it was his ability to take a punch that ultimately did him in. He spent the last ten years of his life in Scottsdale, Arizona. A part of all of us slipped away today. So, now Ali embarks on life's last mystery. History will record the date of his death as Friday, June 3, 2016, in a Phoenix-area hospital. He died from septic shock, brought on by natural causes. He was but 74. The man himself, "Ali," reminded us, "Don't count the days. Make the days count." A better fighter may come along one day, but Ali will always be "The Champ."

One of my favorite writers, Mitch Albom of the Detroit Free Press, tells a wonderful story about Ali visiting a children's hospital. While there, Ali speaks with a young boy who is dying of cancer. After they had spent a few minutes together, Ali said, "I'm going to beat George Foreman and you're going to beat cancer. "No," said the boy. "I'm going to meet God, and I'm going to tell him I know you." I wonder what that little boy and Ali are talking about now. Muhammad Ali once said, "The fame, the championships, the boxing, it's all good, but it's more important to treat people right and to worship God, and living a good life. It's more important than just being a boxer and beating up people." Some people just come along at the right time, and some of us never die. Their legend lives on through the ages. Ali's legacy will always be a part of our history. It has been said that Ali whispered to George Foreman during their fight, "Is that all you got?" He's whispering the same to all of us now.

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By Jay Gardner

On the Rocks

I will share an event with you loyal readers that I haven’t in the past but was reminded of recently. Here on the coast, we all fish, sometimes near other people. We also fight large fish on small gear that invariably has sharp hooks (hopefully). At some point in time, you’re going to hook yourself or someone else. I was being interviewed years ago by our friend Chelsea from the Seashore while we were out fishing in my skiff, and I caught a nice redfish on a new topwater. While holding it up for a picture, it wriggled out of my left hand and drove one of the treble hooks into the fat of my thumb. I managed to get the fish off the lure attached to my hand but was still stuck. There was no way that I was going to be able to pull it all the way through, so I decided to rip it out backwards with a pair of pliers. Thank goodness for bravado and trying to be cool, otherwise I’m not sure I would have been able to get it done. The scar at the edge of my palm is a nice reminder.

Fast forward to fishing with a couple of characters recently that will remain nameless (NOT Curtis). One of them caught a drum, and in taking it off, guess what? The fish drove the jig head well into the top of his hand between the pointer and thumb. After a quick disconnect of the fish, he was left partially impaled. Come to find out, human skin is pretty tough, and he couldn’t push the jig head all the way through to get to the barb with his free hand. Our hero in the story (Roadkill Willie) saw what was going on and jumped in and pushed down

on the skin to pop the barb through. Relief was just a bolt cutter snip away, and we went back about our business after a peroxide flush and bandage. Moral is to be prepared. Incidentally, most of my friends are getting mini bolt cutters for Christmas. Ha!

A sneaky pomp window

It’s that time of year that surf fisherman are watching the weather windows like a hawk. A pomp window snuck up on us the other day on a Monday. I wish I would have seen it coming, I would have played hooky and bombed down south. I did manage to get out of work a few minutes early and head south of what was formerly known as Bob Hall pier for a few casts. The water was surprisingly clear and flat, although a bit chilly. After a few meltdown casts and break offs, I finally got in the groove and caught a handful of bull whiting, an oversized red, and finally a decent pompano. Augs and Roadkill joined me for a nice evening on the sand and Augs helped me wrangle a bull red. It’s a bit far out, but next Wednesday looks decent and I might have to bounce out. Well folks, I’m headed to get my second shingles vaccine. I have to admit that I’ve skipped the last couple of Covid vaccine shots, and also the flu vaccine which I haven’t had in close to 20 years. However, there’s no way I’m skipping this one. I don’t wish the shingles on anyone. Please take a minute to give thanks to everything good in your life, don’t take anyone for granted, and drop me a line at tarponchaser@mail.com . I’ll see you folks next week On the Sand.



Jay and his Bull Red



Backwater Adventures

By Joey Farah
Farah’s Fishing Adventures



Keep the jig heads on your plastics in the 1/8-1/4 ounce range right now. When the bite is hit go light and use the 1/4oz when the bite slows down to keep your bait in the strike zone close to the bottom. Farah

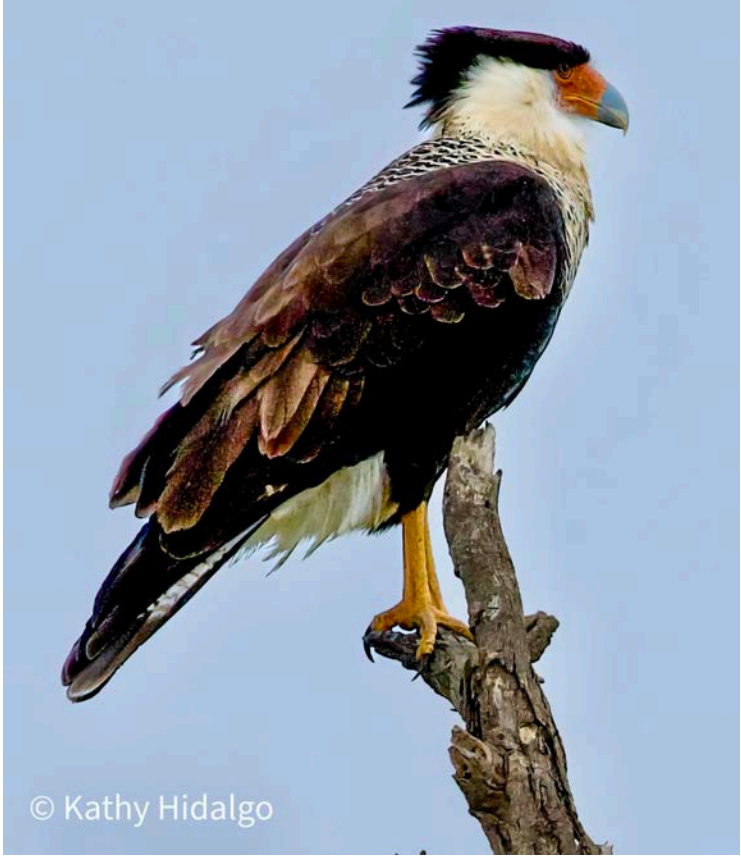
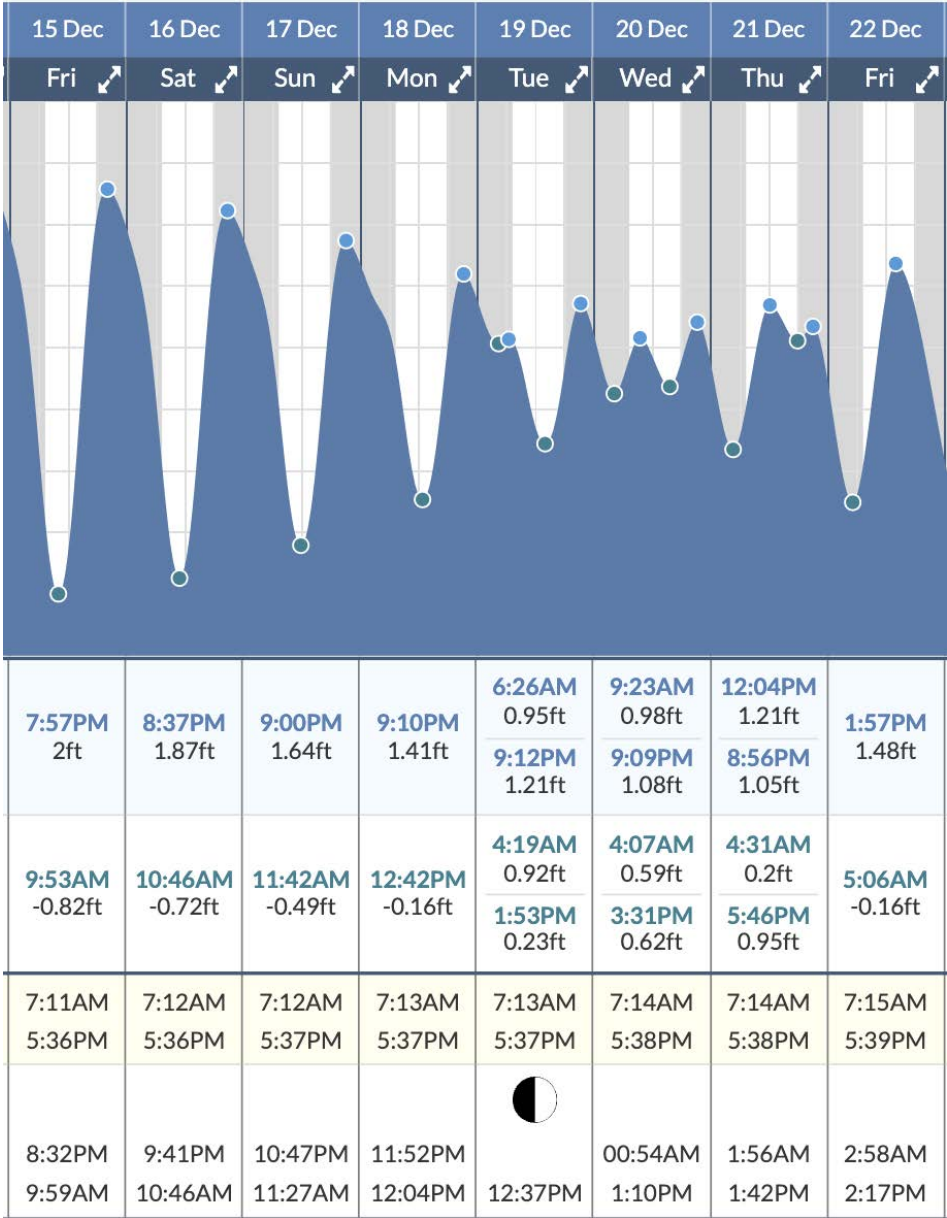


I brought this trout to the boat along the grass lines of the west side of the Laguna Madre. A DOWN SOUTH LURES Purple Reign did the trick!



Lots of great trout action along the Flour Bluff Shoreline! This trout came from the grassy edge of the west side on a soft plastic. Farah

Tides of the Week



© Kathy Hidalgo

Crested Caracara scanning field for next meal. Dec 9, 2023



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Candidates for the March Primary Election

The filing deadline for candidates running in the March party primaries ended this week. The following is a parcel list of Republican and Democrat candidates who have filed.

Republican

Rep. Michael Cloud
U.S Congress
District 27

Luis A. Espindola
U.S Congress
District 27

Raul Torres
Texas State Senate
District 20

Adam Hinojosa
Texas State Senate
District 27

Rep. Todd Hunter
Texas House
District 32

Justice Jaime Tijerina
13th Court of Appeals
Chief Justice

Jenny Cron
13th Court of Appeals
Place 2

Judge Ysmael D. Fonseca
13th Court of Appeals
Place 4

Jon West
13th Court of Appeals
Place 5

Judge Inna Klein
District Judge
214th Judicial District

Michael McCauley
District Judge
28th Judicial District

Laura Ramos
District Judge
28th Judicial District

Judge Missy Medary
District Judge
347th Judicial District

James Sales
Nueces County District Attorney
105th Judicial District

Kristi Britt
Nueces County District Attorney
105th Judicial District

James “Jimmy” Granberry
Nueces County District Attorney
105th Judicial District

Jenny Dorsey
County Attorney
Nueces County

Sheriff J. C. Hooper
Sheriff
Nueces County

Kevin Kieschnick
Tax Assessor / Collector
Nueces County

Mike Pusley
Nueces County
Commissioner Precinct 1

Rachel Caballero
Nueces County
Commissioner Precinct 1

Larry Cantu Jr.
Nueces County
Commissioner Precinct 3

Monty Allen
Constable
Precinct 4

Democrats

(As listed by the Nueces County Democratic Party)

United States Representative, District 27
Anthony Tristan
Tanya Lloyd

State Senator, District 20
Senator Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa

State Senator, District 27
Senator Morgan LaMantia

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Justice Gina Benavides

Justice, 13th Court of Appeals, Place 2
Justice Nora Longoria

Justice, 13th Court of Appeals, Place 4
Jose Martinez

Justice, 13th Court of Appeals, Place 5
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Mike Tamez

County Commissioner, Precinct 1
Commissioner Robert Hernandez
Jesse Molina

County Commissioner, Precinct 3
Commissioner John Marez
Joe Ortiz



Micheal Martin Murphy’s Cowboy Christmas came to CC A&M this week. Evelyn Pless-Schuberth

Going Native

Quercus fusiformis Texas Live Oak

By Ed Proffitt



quercus fusiformis

I grew up in North Carolina surrounded by oaks and pines, and for my Masters degree research I studied a maritime forest on Bogue Bank that was dominated at the beachfront end by gnarled live oaks shaped by salt spray. So, I have a natural affinity for those beasts. Here, we have the Texas Live Oak (Quercus fusiformis or Q. virginiana var fusiformis depending on whose taxonomy you subscribe to. It’s not common on the island, but several small patches are noted by Diamond et al. in their listing of vegetation in the National Sea-shore.

This oak doesn’t reach the size of

live oaks in the eastern U.S., but can grow to be 20 to 40 feet tall and have a trunk diameter of perhaps 40 or 50 inches. The Texas Big Tree registry lists the largest known individual in this state (in Bosque County) as reaching 62 feet in height with a circumference of 342 inches and a canopy spread of 87 feet. Don’t worry, if you plant it in your yard, it won’t Interestingly, to me anyway, it’s listed as being semi-evergreen or semi-deciduous depending on if you’re a glass half full or glass half empty person I suppose. But what that apparently means is that it does drop old leaves in late winter or early spring at the same time that it’s flushing new ones.



quercus fusiformis leaf and acorn



“The Terrible Truck” that has been parked under the JFK for several months was hit by a vehicle this week. Attempts to contact the owner were unsuccessful.



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Business Briefs

By Mary Craft
mkay512@aol.com

The Grand Reopening of The Pearl relaxed waterfront dining and international oyster bar will be on Friday, December 15th 6 pm. It is to celebrate the rebranding from Snoopy's Pearl Oyster Bar and new menu. They have a new courtyard bar & grill and music will be provided by Dan Harrington. They will serve elaborate buffet dishes and offer tequila tasting and signature cocktails.

The Vince King Elvis Birthday Celebration & Vegas Mafia Band will be at the Port Aransas Community Theater on Friday, January 5th and 6th at 8 pm. This popular show sold out within a few days last year. Vince has won multiple Elvis Tribute competitions. General admission is \$25 and front reserved is \$35. A limited amount of VIP tables in front of the stage are available. Call 749-6036 for more info.



Superior H&M Homes owner Mike Mostaghani is selling the homes he was renting out as STRs on the Island for \$809K - \$739K. He also has them listed for long term rental of 30 days or longer starting at \$7200/month.

Christmas Party in the Park will be held on Saturday, December 16th 4 - 6 pm at Billish Park. It is sponsored by Real Life and will have a band, inflatables, cookie decorating, ornament making, games and more. The free food will be smoked chicken and sausage, potato salad and dressed beans. There will also be hot chocolate and hot cider.

It's Ice Skating Time at the American Bank Center Monday, December 18th thru Saturday the 23rd noon - 9 pm. There will be holiday characters, family photo ops and holiday refreshments. Admission is \$12 with skates or \$8 if you have your own skates. Late night skate features a DJ.

American Appliance Repair owner Rafael Cordero fixed my dryer and was so pleasant to deal with. He is a proud family man and US Army veteran who served in the OEF Campaign. Rafael is an experienced appliance technician that recently started his own business. Call 673-0937.

Island Animal Clinic in Port A treats pets like family including Moon dog Lizzy. They do medicine, surgery, radiology, pharmacy



and more. They are located on Beach Street next to the Crazy Cajun Restaurant. Call 749-4134 for appointment.

The city is repairing some of the seawall steps many with rebar showing through.

Texas Sealife Center will have a sea turtle release on Sunday, December 17th 11 am in front of the seawall parking lot.

The Access Road between Commodores and Jackfish will be completed no later than March 2024. The west side they are working on now will have a sidewalk.

Driscoll Children's Hospital Christmas cards and all occasion cards there and



proceeds support the patients and families at the hospital. The cards are from Project Artwork that was begun in 1988 that features art from the hospital's patients on cards, shirts and other merchandise.

The Holiday Home Tour and Raffle will be held Sunday, December 17th 1-4pm. Tickets are \$25 which includes admission to the holiday decorated homes of Kim Erwin, May Mendoza, Kathleen Cullinan, Karen Rossi and Margie Corbett along with a chance to win a \$250 visa gift card. Each home will contain a box for the collection

of personal care items for Timons Ministries. Also needed are long underwear, toiletries, socks, backpacks and men's jeans. These may be dropped off at any of the five homes during the Holiday Home Tour or by contacting Linda Schaeffer. Items can also be taken directly to Timons. Contact Linda to purchase tickets at 720-530-3949.

Hi Tech Plastering, Inc. artisan Joe Cantu has been in the business 30 years. Jobs include stucco, spalling concrete repair, crack repair, facia, eifs coating and more. Call 814-5605.

The Good Samaritan Rescue Mission needs lightly used men's and women's jackets and coats. Also, hats, scarves and gloves would be appreciated. You can drop bags off at The Pelican Lounge and our Good Samaritan Islander Alice Decker will collect them daily. Our winter has set in and your donations will be greatly appreciated. She will be collecting until Sunday, December 17th.

Random Stuff

Nose eyeglass holders are a fun way to keep your computer glasses next to your desktop. If you have several pairs of glasses or sunglasses you can put them on your dresser or on a tabletop on the way out the door. Fun gift for those who have everything.



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Seashore Middle School hosts Winter Arts Showcase

Seashore Middle Academy hosted its Winter Arts Showcase last Wednesday, with Art, Dance, and Music students showing off their artistic talents. The audience viewed a display of art and ceramic pieces with refreshments, followed by live entertainment. Theater students had performed their fall skits the previous week.



Students in the Builder's Club service organization served snacks and drinks to the performers and attendees.



Dance II students Colee Sheehan and Chloe Rodriguez perform as part of the Jazz finale "NutRocker" by the Trans-Siberian Orchestra.



Music 6th graders play "Jingle Bells" on the ukulele. The music performance also featured vocal numbers, "Feliz Navidad" and "Holly Jolly Christmas." photo by Rebecca Markert



Dance I students Sophie Barkdull and Lillie Stewart strike a pose at the finale of the ballet performance to "Ballet Class in Mind" by Modern Melodies. Dance I also performed a modern number and a jazz number.



Student artist Peregrine Cowan poses beside her artwork. The Showcase featured a variety of media: pencil, charcoal, watercolor, mixed media, and ceramics.

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13801 Captains Row - Exceptional custom home, 151' canal front at fingertip of gated st. Elevator, pool, 2 lifts, sunset over ICW **\$1,750,000**. Call **Pam Morgan** at 361-215-8116.



14911 Village Beach Dr. 2/2 gorgeous poolside townhome just a quick walk to the beach! 1041 sq. ft. & fully furnished. **\$430,000**. Call **Kim Mogford** at 361-434-8522.



14010 Eaglesnest Bay 3/2.5/2 + bonus/flex room at 2,142 sq.ft. Open plan, new roof & HVAC in 2017. All new hurricane windows, 3M water treatment system. Large backyard w/room for a pool. **\$464,900**
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15005 Windward Dr. #214 Fully furnished 2 bed, 1 bath, 955 sq ft Surfside Condo walking distance from the beach/seawall. **\$237,000** Call **Madeline Casey** at 361-443-0687.



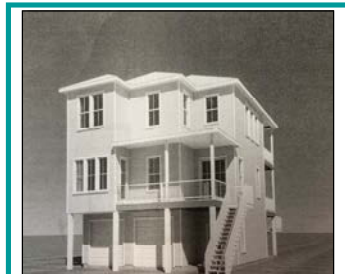
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Palm Bay Village #701 1 bedroom/1 bath, fully furnished, beautifully updated, located less than a mile from the beach. **\$275,000**. **Kim Mogford** 361-434-8522.



14921 Windward Dr #114 Very nice 2/2 short term rental unit, fully furnished across the street from the beach. This one shouldn't last long. Call **Will Flaherty** with questions. **\$290,000**. 361-944-0995.



4118 Claudia Dr Selling "AS-IS" Ready for renter. Fresh paint & fridge, stove & washer/dryer. 3/1/1 1/2 blocks from Lookout restaurant. Easy to show. **\$185,000** **Tinker Boos** at 361-563-6641.

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13906 Mingo Cay #6
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waterfront complex
\$1,350 /month

13958 Fortuna Bay "I"
2/2 furnished
6 month lease
\$1,350/month

13953 Fortuna Bay #5
2/2 waterfront condo
\$1,450 month

15357 Yardarm
3/2.5/2 waterfront
\$2,600 /month



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The Military is a huge part of our Coastal Bend community and the United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce celebrates those who have served every year with their Salute to the Military event. This year we met on the beautiful USS Lexington Museum and heard from Johnny Joey Jones, veteran and entertaining and passionate public speaker. #VivaCC #SeeCC #SaluteToTheMilitary




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A Full Moon Mystery

Sometimes scientific discoveries answer questions scientists have wondered about for years, but more often, a discovery simply raises dozens of new questions to explore. For example, why on earth do dozens of female great hammerhead sharks gather at two atolls in French Polynesia around the full moon each summer? While we don't know the reason right now, the observation opens the door to more research to uncover the mysteries of this severely endangered species.



Female hammerhead sharks have been observed in large numbers at two atolls in French Polynesia during the summer, coinciding with the full moon. This raises questions as to why they are congregating. Credit: Kevin Lino NOAA/NMFS/PIFSC/ESD

Great hammerheads are typically solitary, so it's especially noteworthy if many gather in one place. Yet that's what scientists observed in the Southern Hemisphere summers of 2020 and 2021 around Rangiroa and Tikehau, two atolls in the Tuamotu archipelago of French Polynesia. Biologists observed 54 female great hammerheads independently roaming the bottom of "hammerhead plateau," about 150-200 feet deep. And at least 32 of these sharks have been visiting the same atoll for up to 12 years.

Although the sharks didn't appear to interact with one another, their numbers were highest just before and after the full moon, suggesting some link between the lunar cycle and their reasons for visiting. The question is, what might that link be? Maybe brighter moonlight made it easier for them to hunt the ocellated eagle rays that gather to mate in the area each summer. Or maybe the hammerheads are attracted to the warmer water temperatures. Or perhaps shifts in the Earth's geomagnetic field triggered by the moon's waxing and waning somehow lure the sharks in, since some sharks may use the Earth's magnetic field for navigation. Or, since they're all females, could the area be a shark nursery? Scientists don't have these answers yet, but asking these questions can help lead them toward even more discoveries.

USPS Holiday Shipping and Mailing Deadlines Announced

The U.S. Postal Service is providing 2023 holiday shipping and mailing deadlines. The information below covers domestic, international and military shipping destinations to allow for the timely delivery of cards, letters and packages by Dec. 25th.

No Holiday Surcharges

The Postal Service has announced it will not have a peak, or demand, surcharge this holiday season, offering increased predictability in pricing for customers. As always, the Postal Service offers simple, upfront pricing year-round with no additional fees for residential area delivery, for Saturday delivery, no fuel surcharges and no volume minimums. The Postal Service continues to be the most affordable way to mail and ship this holiday season.

2023 USPS Holiday Shipping and Mailing Deadlines

Within the Lower 48 (excludes Alaska and Hawaii)

- USPS Ground Advantage — Dec. 16

- First-Class Mail (including greeting cards) — Dec. 16
- Priority Mail — Dec. 18
- Priority Mail Express — Dec. 20

Air/Army Post Office (APO), Fleet Post Office (FPO), Diplomatic Post Office (DPO)

- USPS Ground Advantage — Nov. 6
- First-Class Mail — Dec. 9
- Priority Mail — Dec. 9
- Priority Mail Express Military Service — Dec. 15*

* PMEMS not available for APO/FPO/DPO AE ZIPs 093

International Mail

Shipping deadlines for international mail vary depending on the destination. Check out [International Mail and Shipping Services](#) for details. The Postal Service is a secure shipping option that meets [international mail](#) shipping needs to over 180 countries.



NEWS from the PIPOA

By Drew Diggins

Canal Bridge Connection

David Drew Diggins P.E. President, Board of Directors GREAT NEWS ON THE CANAL CONNECTION. The Engineers for the PIPOA and Diamond Beach Holdings, LLC met and presented their findings to City Engineering Services last Monday. Attending the meeting were: Jeff Edmonds, P.E., Director of Engineering Services, City of Corpus Christi, Jeff Coym, Vice President, LJA Engineering, Aaron Horine, P.E., Anchor QEA, Ryan Burke, P.E, Anchor QEA; Drew Diggins P.E., President of PIPOA; Herb Bradley, PIPOA Board Member. First and foremost, the parties agreed that the Whitecap and Gypsy Bridges, including the associated bulkheads within the bridge easement, are city assets, and the city is responsible for their maintenance and protection. The engineers for all groups discussed the increased water velocity and resulting scour that will occur at the Whitecap and Gypsy bridges with the opening of the canals and Don Patricio Bridge. Given the unacceptable risk, the engineers agreed that these bridges need to be armored and scour protection installed "as expeditiously as possible". Mr. Edmonds stated that he would immediately review the appropriate

scour protection required to protect these bridges. The parties discussed interim solutions that would allow the water to flow from Diamond Beach property into the PIPOA canals while work by the City is being performed to mitigate the scouring. The City, LJA and the PIPOA agreed to co-operate in developing a workable solution. At last night's board meeting, the PIPOA Board heard members' concerns regarding the timeline to complete the canal connection. The board is preparing the necessary legal documents, and Diamond Beach engineers have agreed to have the final design plans, location approval from Flour Bluff ISD, and necessary connection procedures delivered to the PIPOA, so that the Board can make approval. The Board is committed to connecting the canal systems as soon as possible, and we look forward to the water quality improvement in the PIPOA canals. Finally, many thanks to those who assisted in this process, especially Tim Lange (and the Lake Padre Development who holds the Army Corp of Engineers permit for the new San Patricio Bridge) for his time and support.

Online payment for PIPOA dues now available

By Gary Klepperich Padre Isles POA We are pleased to announce that beginning January 2, 2024, the POA will be providing an online payment portal for your convenience. All Padre Isles Owners will now have the ability to pay CAM fees via the Community Website: www.padreislespoa.net. On the POA's home page, will be a "Pay Online" button. From there, two payment options will be available: 1) pay by credit card; and 2) pay by ACH/E-Check. Each option link will then take you to the appropriate secure payment portal of your choice for you to make your assessment

payment. Please note that effective January 1, 2024, there will be a 3.5% credit card convenience fee for use of a credit card to make a payment for a CAM fee, ACC Application fee, resale certificate fees, and/or a parking permit sticker purchases. Should there be any questions, please feel free to contact the Executive Director, Gary Klepperich at (361) 949-7025 or gary@pipoa.net.

Thank you, Padre Isles Property Owners Association



A good day on The Island. Evelyn Pless-Schuberth



Grand Opening of Padre Island Family Eye Care By Debbie Noble



Beaches south of Packery Channel are now as wide as they have ever been due to renourishing from the dredging of Packery Channel. Evelyn Pless-Schuberth

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

Knuckle-Cracker

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

Mind-Numbing Frustration

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

Brain-Buster

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

Across

1. "Citizen ____"
5. Poker variation
9. With 64-Across, this puzzle's performers
14. Burger preparation step
15. Make a pitch
16. Plankton component
17. Some American females
20. Elevator man
21. November honoree
22. Johnny Appleseed's last name
26. Golden thing
30. Tiny village
31. Healthful retreats
32. Pitching stat
33. "... and it became lice ____" (Ex. 8:17)
34. Globetrot
35. Smack a fly
36. Words of comfort to a young child?
39. "____ It Romantic?"
40. Harbinger
41. Constellation also known as the Hunter
43. ____ chi (martial art)
44. Takes a turn
45. Actress Lansbury
46. Official language of Tanzania
48. McIntosh alternative
49. Before, to bards
50. Spy Mata ____
51. "I'd love that to happen"
59. Oust
60. Type of code
61. Cyclotron input
62. "No man is an island" poet John
63. Arctic hazard
64. See 9-Across

Island Crossword

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										27	28	29
30															
33															
39															
43															
46															
51	52	53													
59															
62															

Down

1. The Colonel's fast-food chain, briefly
2. ____ carte
3. Null
4. Prefix with center
5. Fired on
6. Shroud city
7. Coffee servers
8. 551, to Caesar
9. Kin of croissants
10. Cream of the crop
11. Sci. of farming
12. Former Oriole Ripken
13. "For ____ a jolly good fellow"
18. Agitate
19. Bird sanctuary
22. Greek X
23. Carpentry tool
24. NH3
25. Factory
26. Reject with disdain
27. Fledglings
28. Colorful brand name?
29. Don the feedbag
31. Saddle or bed woes
34. "My Cousin Vinny" Oscar winner
35. Boot camp boss, informally
37. Made of sheep hair
38. Clyde's partner
39. Part of TGIF
42. Siesta
44. Elasticized garment
45. Car safety device
47. Hunt in Hollywood
48. Word with well or tap
50. Take on
51. Get hitched
52. Tic-tac-toe loser
53. CBS competitor
54. Keyboard key
55. Make a collar
56. "How was ____ know?"
57. Coquettish
58. Miami has two



Long view of the seawall renourishment.
Photo by Jacob Augs

Police Blotter

December 5-10

JFK Causeway to SPID-Aquarius intersection

Crimes against Person

Crimes against Property

Disturbances

Suspicious Person

11800 block SPID 1 p.m. December 9

Traffic

29 Traffic Stops
10400 block SPID 5 p.m. Crash
13300 block SPID 7 a.m. December 8 Crash

SPID West to Laguna Madre

Crimes against Person

Crimes against Property

14500 block Compass. St. 3 a.m. December 8
Theft from Vehicle (two vehicles)
14300 block SPID Midnight December 8
Burglary of a Vehicle
15400 block Fortuna Bay Dr. 8 a.m. December 9
Criminal Mischief \$2500-\$30,000

Disturbances

11800 block SH 361 1 p.m. December 10
15400 block Fortuna Bay 1 a.m. December 7
15600 block Cruiser 11 p.m. December 6

Suspicious Person

Traffic

95 Traffic Stops

SPID East to Gulf of Mexico north to City Limits

Crimes against Person

Zahn Road/Gulf Beach 1 a.m. December 9 Shots Fired

Crimes against Property

15800 block SPID 9 a.m. December 9 Dumping

Disturbances

15800 block SPID 5 p.m. December 7 Warrant/
Public Intoxication (Two individuals)
15200 block Windward 9 a.m. December 8

Suspicious Person

11100 block Gulf Beach 11 p.m. December 9
Newport Pass Rd./Gulf Beach 6 a.m. December 7

Traffic

54 Traffic Stops
Leeward Dr./Running Light Dr. 10 p.m. December 5 DWI
Newport Pass Rd./Gulf Beach 3 p.m. December 5 Crash

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An American Kestrel at the Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center.
By Darla Dollman



Reddish Egret by Tricia Peck Scow

Crossword Solution

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



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Adopt, Not Shop This Holiday Season
*Shelters across the state are overflowing with
puppies and kittens in need of loving families.*

The Texas Humane Legislation Network (THLN) is bringing public awareness to the overcapacity crisis in animal shelters across the state and encouraging prospective pet owners to adopt from Texas shelters and rescue groups as opposed to buying pets from online retailers or pet shops.

“One of the most important reasons Texans should adopt this holiday season is to ensure they are not inadvertently supporting and endorsing commercial breeding facilities, better known as puppy mills, that supply pet stores and sell pets online,” said Shelby Bobosky, Executive Director of THLN. “Out-of-state puppy mills are breeding operations that house hundreds of dogs in deplorable living conditions without proper food, water, veterinary care, or human interaction.”

The sole purpose of a puppy mill is to mass-produce puppies and sell them for monetary gain. There is no regard for the welfare of the breeding stock or the puppies that are produced. Puppies from puppy mills are often seriously ill, poorly socialized, and many times suffer from life-threatening congenital defects due to being poorly bred. “By adopting a pet from your local shelter or rescue, you will free up space for another homeless animal to have the opportunity to find a forever home and relieve the pressure on shelters and rescues. Plus, shelter animals are already evaluated, vaccinated, treated for parasites, tested for life-threatening diseases, and micro-chipped,” concluded Bobosky.

Respiratory Disease in Dogs Sweeping Across the US: Outbreak of Disease or Media Attention?

By Scott Weese

I've held off writing about this but since I've been answering many emails about it every day, here we go. The questions I keep getting (as usual) are *"What's going on with this reported outbreak of respiratory disease in dogs in the US? What new disease is this?"*

I'm not sure there's a new disease here. I'm not even sure there's a major outbreak (or any outbreak).

Various groups in different areas of the US are reporting cases of respiratory disease in dogs (which we refer to as canine infectious respiratory disease complex, or CIRDC) in dogs in various parts of the US. There's always limited info about true numbers, and the disease description is vague and quite familiar (coughing dogs, some that get pneumonia, a few that die).

The issue is, that largely describes the every day status quo when it comes to CIRDC. This syndrome is endemic in dogs and has a variety of known causes (e.g. canine parainfluenza virus, *Bordetella bronchiseptica*, canine respiratory coronavirus, canine pneumovirus, canine influenza virus, *Streptococcus zooepidemicus*... roughly in that order of occurrence, and maybe the enigmatic *Mycoplasma* as well). There are also presumably a range of other viruses involved that have been present for a long time but that we don't diagnose.

We see CIRDC all the time, anywhere there are dogs. There's a background level of disease that usually flies under the radar, alongside periodic clusters of cases. I get lots of emails every week asking whether there's more or more severe CIRDC activity at the moment, but *I've been getting those reports for years, from across North America*. To me, that reflects the fact that CIRDC is always circulating, but we notice it more at certain times than others, either because of local clusters or, increasingly, local increases in awareness, often due to media coverage. Media and social media can drive outbreak concerns. They can be great to get the word out and help sort out issues, but often, they lead to false alarms.

- For example, we might have 100 dogs with CIRDC every week in Guelph (a complete guess since we have no way to track this). Usually, only a few people hear about it. The dogs typically get better and life goes on. However, if someone starts talking about it on social media, we might hear about 50 of those 100 cases. All of a sudden, we have an “outbreak of a disease affecting dozens of dogs” when in reality, we might just have our normal background level of disease that people are actually noticing.

The same thing can happen on a larger scale. There are thousands of coughing dogs in the US every day, since there are millions of dogs. Once people start talking about it, some of these go from “*Oh, my dog is coughing. I guess he picked up something at the park. Whatever.*” to “*OMG, my dog has this new disease that’s sweeping the nation, I need to tell someone!*” With the first approach, no one but the owner usually knows or cares. Once we hit the panic button, many owners start to tell everyone about it.

We don't have any idea if the current stories reflect:

- ☐ A multistate outbreak caused by some new bacterium/virus
- ☐ A multistate outbreak caused by our usual suspects, for some reason
- ☐ Unconnected sporadic local outbreaks caused by usual suspects
- ☐ A slight increase in baseline disease
- ☐ Our normal disease activity with an outbreak of media attention.

I suspect it's one of the last two. My perception is that we have been seeing a bit more CIRDC activity over the past couple of years, and that we are now seeing a somewhat greater incidence of severe cases. However, with more cases, we see more severe disease, so those are linked. Also, with the explosion of breeds like French bulldogs that are much more likely to have severe outcomes from any respiratory disease (since a large percentage of them have been bred to have completely dysfunctional respiratory tracts), increases in deaths could be linked to dog factors, not disease factors.

I never outright discount reports of something potentially new, and we continue to try (futilely so far) to get a better handle on what's happening with regard to CIRDC activity in different areas. It's tough, since there's no effective surveillance system, the voluntary reporting that we've tried tends not to get much buy-in (understandably knowing veterinary clinics are swamped by other priorities), testing of sick dogs is expensive and rarely impacts how we care for an individual animal (great for surveillance but harder to justify the cost to an individual owner), and we have little to no funding to do much with companion animal infectious diseases at all.

My guess is this is simply an outbreak of media attention piggybacked on a somewhat increased rate of CIRDC cases that we've seen over the past year.

I might be wrong, which is why we're still trying to collect more data, but I don't currently see a reason for extra concern.

If you're worried about canine respiratory disease:

- ☐ Limit your dog's contacts, especially transient contacts with dogs of unknown health status
- ☐ Keep your dog away from sick dogs
- ☐ If your dog is sick, keep it away from other dogs
- ☐ Talk to your veterinarian about vaccination against canine parainfluenza virus (CPIV) and *Bordetella bronchiseptica* (plus canine influenza, but influenza is much more sporadic (especially in Canada) and vaccine availability is still an issue).

And, at risk of a flurry of emails, I'll add... consider health when choosing a dog. That doesn't mean no Frenchies, but get one that looks like they used to – one with a nose, not the current popular version of the breed.



Wreaths Across America

Recognition of the service and sacrifice of our veterans, and their families, is especially important during the traditional holiday season. The Wreaths Across America program is an annual tradition that serves to honor and remember men and women of the armed forces who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our country. Founded in 1992, the Wreaths Across America program was first initiated by a donation from the Harrington, Maine-based Worcester Wreath Company of 5,000 holiday wreaths to be placed on the headstones of our nation's fallen heroes at Arlington National Cemetery. Wreaths Across America has grown from a local, community-based outreach program to national nonprofit organization with a mission dedicated to remember, honor, and teach by celebrating the lives of fallen armed service men and women.

Today, Wreaths Across America has grown to include state and federal cemeteries across the country as well as 24 veteran's cemeteries located on foreign soil. The organization works with local partners and trucking companies to carry out its mission. During previous events trucking companies have helped deliver over 300 loads of wreaths to over 1,000 sites across the country.

In 2008, the annual tradition received an official designation from the United States Congress, which proclaimed that one Saturday each December be known as National Wreaths Across America Day. This important event is to be held on Saturday, December 16th. A Wreaths Across America event will take place in Corpus Christi at the Coastal Bend State Veterans Cemetery which is located at 9974 IH 37 Access Road Corpus Christi, TX 78410. This ceremony will take begin at 12:00 p.m. In Port Aransas, a Wreaths Across America ceremony will take place at the Royal Palm Cemetery at 11:00 a.m. The address for the Royal Palm Cemetery is 2342 South 11th Street, Port Aransas, TX, 78373. Additionally, the Wreaths Across America ceremony for Aransas County will be at Veterans

Memorial Park which is located at Veterans Memorial Drive, Rockport, TX 78382. This event will also start at 11:00 a.m. It is important to remember and celebrate the lives of our fallen soldiers.

An important component of the Wreaths Across America program is to teach younger generations the value of our country's freedoms and the importance of honoring the sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform in the name of protecting those freedoms. As a way to fulfill this mission, Wreaths Across America's touches the lives of thousands of schools, scout, civic and religious groups across the country through fundraising for wreath sponsorships. In addition, Wreaths Across America offers many downloadable teaching materials.

There are several ways for those looking to get involved with Wreaths Across America during this year's event, including sponsoring a wreath or volunteering at local wreath-laying events across the Coastal Bend. In addition to its wreath-laying program, the organization also has other initiatives to pay homage to veterans throughout the year. To learn more visit <https://www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/pages/17162/overview/?relatedId=0>.

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 County (Part). He can be contacted at todd.hunter@house.texas.gov or at 512-463-0672.





Three Chords and the Truth

By Ronnie Narmour
ronnienarmour@gmail.com

Tis the Season...



The drone show was a great success.

“It’s coming on Christmas. They’re cutting down trees. They’re putting up reindeer and singing songs of joy and peace.” - J.Mitchell There’s no denying it, we are officially in the throes of Christmas. I love how Port Aransas treats Christmas every year. From all the cool decorations at Roberts Point Park, to the city sponsored hay ride and all the decorated street lights and the big Christmas sand sculpture and all the homes that are decorated beautifully, you can’t help but feel that holiday spirit all around you. My **Mermaid Gal** has boxes upon boxes of Christmas decorations and trust me, there’s an abundance Christmas spirit around our place. We’re staying home this Christmas, just not going to fight the traffic and death defying bedlam of trying to get too far north during the holidays. We love the pot luck dinners they have at *Red’s* and plan to spend the day with our friends in Port A. I’ve been avoiding the obligatory end of year task of writing about the 2023 year in review or as **Rockin’** would say, “The Year that was”. Don’t get me wrong, there’s plenty to write about. It was a confusing world full of drama and tragedy with a few fleeting moments of joy. Yup, sometimes *I wish I had a river I could sail away on*. But I know this is the place I’d want to sail to. Merry Christmas everybody. Now go do something nice for someone... tis the season you know.

On the local front...



1st Prize in the Port A Lighted Boat Parade goes to Captain Randy Laurrell of Red Tag Guide Service. Photo courtesy of the Port Aransas Chamber of Commerce.

Port A had their annual *Lighted Boat Parade* last Saturday. They had a very cool new attraction this year with the live drone show. Since the usual location for the event has moved to *Fisherman’s Wharf* because of all the construction going on at Roberts Point, we spent most of our time driving around looking for it. We sure miss the good ole days when we’d watch all the water events and fireworks shows from **Gentry’s** boat in the marina behind the *Back Porch*. And, I guess you’ve notice that our *Winter Texas* families are back and right on cue. The *City of Port Aransas Parks and Rec Department* is also right on cue with a “1950’s Winter Texan Sock Hop” at the community center on January 4th and a *Country Hoedown* also at the community center on February 1st. Plus the **PA Rockers** will begin their winter Wednesday residency at *Bernie’s Beach House* on January 10th until the end of March. I also want to mention that there’s a new production at the *Port Aransas Community Theater* (PACT) entitled “It’s a Wonderful Life: A Living Radio Play” on December 14th thru the 22nd. This play is directed by Pete Lutz, the founder of *The Narada Radio Company*, the Coastal Bend’s only audio drama production troupe. And finally, you don’t want to miss the *Gaff’s* 9th annual “Hippie James Hayes Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest” this Friday the 15th with our favorite coach **Jim Dugan** providing the music... this one is definitely a DO NOT MISS LIST event. BTW, **Hippie James** lived here and cooked at *Bernie’s* and was my friend. I remember him as a big music lover and an all around great guy who lost his battle to cancer in 2013.

Scattered shots...



Dan Ellison and Jake Daniels put on their Joker and Jester comedy show at Red’s last Sunday.

Last week was a little slow for live music and the *VFW* has recently cancelled all upcoming shows except for **John Cortez** on the 23rd, the **Cleartones** who play every Wednesday, and the **Groove** on New Year’s Eve. I did catch Cortez’s show at *Shorty’s* last Friday with **Jody Jennings** and **Antone Perez** and really dig his powerhouse trio stuff. John also does some **Stevie Ray Vaughan/Jimi Hendrix** tribute shows in Corpus and S.A. I also caught the **Independent Thieves** duo show at *Shorty’s* last Saturday. The cold front forced them to play inside and it was the perfect winter show for that time and place. On Sunday, *Red’s* had a comedy show by the *Joker and Jester Comedy* tour with **Dan Ellison** and **Jake Daniels**. They had an attentive crowd and we all needed a few laughs. I’d like to see other comedy shows hit our island. Maybe *Red’s* will bring them back.

DO NOT MISS LIST Coming this weekend...



Heidi at the Gaff’s Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest in 2016. This year’s event will be this Friday the 15th.

Coming this weekend on Friday, **Joey St. Vincent** will debut *Shorty’s*. I’ve been hearing good things about this guy. Also on Friday, **Triptonite** will host a “Bad Santa Party” at the *Exchange*, and the **Chainlinks** will play the *House of Rock*. Also coming this Saturday the 16th, the great 80’s party band, **Diamond’s Edge**, will play *Rockit’s*, the red hot **Raul Ayala** will play the *Pelican Lounge* on Padre, **Fistful of Metal** will play the *Exchange* and Americana stud **Casey Donahew** will play *Brewster Street Downtown*. On Sunday the 17th **Brad Ethridge** will play the *Gaff* and **Laura Derkits** will have a sing along around the fire pit at *Trinity by the Sea Episcopal Church* on Trojan Street. And finally on Monday the 18th the always outrageous **Unrehearsed and Unafraid** with **Ken Yarbrough** and **Mike Jones** will play their piano bar show at *PACT*! I used to see them play at the old *Wild Horse Saloon* where *Lelo’s* is now and they are hilarious. On Friday the 22nd, **Starlite** and the **Moonbeams** will play *Shorty’s* and the **CBDB’s** will be there on the 23rd. Also on Saturday the 23rd, my tired old **Moon Monkey** will give it another shot at the *Gaff’s* BELT SANDER RACES at 3:00. **Rusty Daniels**, my expert pit boss, tells me I need a new motor if I plan to compete against the *Winter Texans* this season. Plus on Saturday the 23rd, two really great bands will play; **Heavy Soul** with the talented **Louis Mandel** will play the *Surf Club* and Americana heavy weight **Roger Creager** will play *Brewster Street Downtown*. And don’t forget the *House of Rock* will have their annual Tamale Dinner on Christmas Eve.

And, that’s the truth



Coach Jim Dugan played his regular Sunday gig at Shorty’s last Sunday and will play the Hippie James Ugly Sweater Contest at the Gaff this Saturday.



John Cortez, Antone Perez and Jody Jennings played Shorty’s last Friday and will play the VFW on the 23rd.



Mike Jones and Ken Yarbrough aka Unrehearsed and Unafraid will play the PACT on Dec 18

LIVE MUSIC TONIGHT

Friday.

December 15

HIPPY JAMES’
UGLY SWEATER
CONTEST w/Jim
Dugan @ Gaff
Joey St. Vincent @
Shorty’s
Chainlinks @ House
of Rock
Cruise Control @
Executive Surf Club
Triptonite Bad
Santa Party @ The
Exchange
Crosstown
Expressway @ Pelican
Lounge
Rich Lockhart @
Brewster Downtown
Raul Ayala @ Marker
12
Ruben Limas @
Blackbeard’s
Reno Perez @
Republic of Texas

Saturday.

December 16

Mike O’Neil @
Shorty’s
Jim Dugan @ Gaff
Diamond’s Edge @
Rockit’s
Fistful of Metal @
The Exchange
Raul Ayala @ Pelican
Lounge
Billy Snipes @ Island
Italian
Casey Donahew @
Brewster Downtown
Chillbillies @
Legends
Bushbullit @ K-Bob’s
Ruben Limas @
Blackbeard’s
Joey St. Vincent @
Lulu’s Landing
Reno Perez @
Republic of Texas

Sunday.

December 17

Ty Dietz, Jim Dugan,
Emma James @
Shorty’s
Brad Ethridge @ Gaff
Lady Kat & Mattman
@ House of Rock
Jennifer Gayle
Bradley @
Blackbeard’s
Alonzo Cruz @
Pelican Lounge
Eric Magnus @ Sunset
Hideaway Ingleside
Laura Derkits &
Friends @ Trinity by
the Sea

Monday.

December 18

Unrehearsed &
Unashamed @ PACT
Justin & Niki @
Pelican Lounge

Tuesday.

December 19

Open Mic @ Salty
Dolphin
Ruben Limas @
Blackbeard’s
Jules & Chism @ The
Exchange
Joey St. Vincent
@ Mesquite Street
Southside
Eric Graham @ La
Palmera Mall

Wednesday.

December 20

Brad Ethridge Open
Mic @ Gaff
Cleartones @ VFW
Billy Snipes @ Doc’s
Ruben Limas @
Blackbeard’s
Kevin Kurtz @ Pelican
Lounge
Michael Burtts @
Pompanos
John Cortez @ Sam’s
Burger Joint SA

Thursday.

December 21

Selfie @ Shorty’s
Raul Ayala @ Rockit’s
Eric Graham @
Brewster St. Southside
Ruben Limas @ Island
Italian

Friday.

December 22

Starlite & the
Moonbeams @ Shorty’s
Raul Ayala @ Cassidy’s
Pub
Palacios Bros @ The
Exchange
Zack Walther @ Pelican
Lounge
Eric Graham @ Double
Tree Hotel
Michael Burtts @
Kbobs
Ruben Limas @
Blackbeard’s

Saturday.

December 23

BELT SANDER
RACES @ Gaff
CBDB’s @ Shorty’s
John Cortez @ VFW
Cruise Control @ Sugar
Shack Fulton
Raul Ayala @ Retro

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MIKE O’NEIL DEC 16
TY DIETZ, JIM DUGAN DEC 17
STARLITE DEC 22
CBDB’S DEC 23

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