



Reindeer visit The Island Page A6



TX Sealife Center turtle release Page B15



Holiday Home Tour Page A2



'04 snow on Christmas Eve Page B15



Real Life Holiday Party Page A9

Issue 1027



The
Island
Moon

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December 22, 2023
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Photo by Debbie Noble



By Dale Rankin
As hard as it may be to believe those who lived on The Island on Christmas Eve 2004 remember that we had a White Island Christmas. Right on cue on The Night Before Christmas a beautiful light snowfall blanketed The Island and stuck Around The Island long enough for us to get shots of the blanket of snow which we include in this issue. It was a Christmas to remember.

Island generator
State Representative Todd Hunter spoke to the Padre Island Business Association this week and explained the reason for the large portable generator that has been making regular appearances Around the Island. As it turns out the reason for the truck being dispatched to our Island during high power usage periods has to do with politics in Austin where Rep. Hunter chairs the State Affairs Committee which, along with just about everything else, covers the regulation of the Texas power grid. If you are the power provider the one place you don't want to have a blackout it is in the district of the person who chairs the committee that regulates you. So we got that going for us... Scuttlebutts

It became official this week that the ten-year run of Scuttlebutt's Bar & Grill at the Loma Alta Plaza on SPID has come to an end as a for lease sign went up at the site this week and the realtor confirmed that the property is on the market. We will miss the place and hope to see it or a related eatery on the Island in the future.

Big and Deep...
Word came this week that progress on the development of Padre Plaza on SPID between Beach Access roads 4 and 5 has hit a snag due to the requirement by the City of Corpus Christi that the owners of the property, the Rasheeds who also own the plaza where the Island Market is located, pay for a \$1.2 million, twenty-four inch sewer line that must be buried eighteen feet deep. Anyone who has ever dug an eighteen-foot deep hole Around The Island knows that after about eight feet you are in water. The planned plaza needs only a shallower eight-inch line but city planners are requiring the larger line in anticipation of development further south and under the current city system the private developers must pay for the infrastructure even if they don't need it for which they will be reimbursed at a later date. The Rasheeds had to pay \$900,000 for a bigger sewer line than they needed when they built the plaza for the grocery store and were eventually paid

Around cont. on A3

How the Island got a bridge with no water



Crews are working to armor the approaches to the Don Patricio Bridge

By Dale Rankin
As the Year of Our Lord 2023 winds down we have a brand new \$20 million water exchange bridge on South Padre Island Drive with no water being exchanged under it. We have two near billion dollar developments on adjacent sides of the SPID roadway which built canals to the new bridge so they would be connected by water. As the process on connecting Island canals drags on as 2024 dawns we take a look back at how we got here. Let's start at the beginning. March 2023
Back in 2014 when the due diligence was done in preparation for construction on the new Park Road 22 Water Exchange Bridge now renamed the Don Patricio Bridge in order to provide the political class with an assurance that they were not going to build a Bridge to Nowhere. A letter from the Padre Isles Property Owners Association Executive Director Maybeth Christensen dated October, 31, 2014 stated the PIPOA support for connecting the canal under the new bridge then under consideration to the PIPOA-owned canals further south. That process moved forward with the private developers on both sides of the site of the new bridge – before approval of the construction of the bridge was complete – digging canals to the bridge site in anticipation of its building by the City of Corpus Christi. That is where things stood until June, 2023, when during a report to the Island Strategic Action Committee it was stated by city staff that plans called for Diamond Beach Holdings, LLC.,

the developer of the Whitecap North Padre Island project and the owners of the canal between the new bridge and those owned by the PIPOA, to cut the earthen dam between the canals by the end of August introducing saltwater to the new canals at Whitecap NPI. Then on July 11 those plans hit a snag when the PIPOA board hired the local law firm of Anderson, Lehrman, Barre and Marist to represent the PIPOA and the firm sent a letter to officers at Diamond Beach Holdings which was printed in the Island Moon a few weeks later. Of note is that the body of that letter did not include the words “cease and desist” and regardless of the intent the effect was that from that time to this there has been nothing beyond discussion with regards to the connection of the canals; no written agreement that would allow the connection of the canals to move forward. A portion of the letters reads as follows:
Please be advised that at this time the PIPOA is opposed to any action that wrongfully interferes with its legal ownership of the Subject Bulkhead and has not agreed to Diamond Beach engaging in any construction work that would impact the Subject Bulkhead. Notably, I have been authorized by the PIPOA to pursue all legal remedies should any damage be done to the Subject Bulkhead prior to any expressed written consent by the PIPOA allowing Diamond Beach to move forward with its planned canal expansion. In the weeks and months that followed the PIPOA letter a series of meeting have been held between various members of the PIPOA

board and representatives of Diamond Beach Holdings, LLC., and late in the process officials from the City of Corpus Christi. The majority of those meetings, according to those present, included only representatives of LJA Engineering since the receipt of the July letter limited the actions of officers of Diamond Beach Holdings due to the legal constraints that apply to the corporate world.

What the PIPOA Board asked for During the course of those meetings and during that same timeframe the demands from the PIPOA board to Diamond Beach Holdings LLC., as stated by PIPOA board members and printed in the Island Moon were as follows:

- Construction drawings for the connection of the new and old canals. According to those involved in the process going back as far as 2022 there was discussion of providing these drawings to the PIPOA board with disagreement among the parties regarding the necessity of doing so. It was stated by the PIPOA board members at their December 12 meeting that LJA Engineering would provide the drawings which, according to both parties, will likely be barebones since the design of the connection is not complicated.
- Never directly state publicly. While it was never stated publicly by the board the underlying logic from the board's side was that Diamond Beach Holdings accept responsibility for future damage to PIPOA bulkheads due to changes in water flow from new canals at Whitecap NPI. At the moment there is no outlet between the new canals at Whitecap NPI and saltwater except through the Don Patricio Bridge. The existing permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers were issued when no canals were being contemplated for what was then the Schlitterbahn waterpark and unless/until a new outlet is

Canal cont. on A4



Big smiles and limits of slot trout are very consistant this time of year on soft plastics.

Deep Water

Wintertime Fishing in the most excellent fishery on the Texas Coast

By Joey Farah
Wintertime fishing here in the Coastal Bend can be some of the best of the year, and it is the most excellent fishery on the Texas Coast. Finding gamefish during this time can be tricky, unlike the summer months when fish are evenly distributed through the bay system. Now, isolated areas are rich in both bait and gamefish as everything is thermal, following the warmer water. Knowing how to stay warm is survival, learning where this warm water sits is the difference in an epic day or sightseeing.

What we call “deep water”, may not really be that deep. In a bay system that has an average of two feet and the deepest natural occurrence is only six feet deep water can be natural channels, or manmade dredged areas. Gamefish will defiantly run to those manmade deep spots in extreme conditions but there are some

Farah cont. on A7

By the numbers

Padre Island Real Estate Activity

November 1 - November 15

By Cindy Molnar Realtor
Coldwell Banker Island, Realtors

Waterfront Homes Sold

13542 Queen Johanna Court
15122 Tesoro Drive
13937 Man O War Court
52 Waterfront Homes Listed From \$479,900.00 To \$2,495,000.00

Interior Lot Home Sold

14922 Topgallant Street
13961 Jacktar Street
13822 Laffite Street
15306 East Chesapeake
15838 Portillo Drive
15118 Aquarius Street
15125 Tesoro Drive
15621 Three Fathoms Bank Drive

45 Interior Lot Homes Listed From \$318,800.00 To \$789,000.00

Waterfront Condominiums/ Townhomes/Duplexes Sold

15425 Fortuna Bay Drive #211
15657 Cruiser Street
Real Estate cont. on A4

A little Island history

The last of the old time Texas Rangers

How they rode into history as Woodrow and Augustus



By Dale Rankin
This story comes to us from the book Life on the King Ranch written in 1951 by Frank Goodwyn whose father Francis Eppse Godwyn was a foreman of the King Ranch's Norias division where he was known for this “quick brush eye and fine roping arm.” Norias covered 238,000 acres of hardscrabble brush country teeming with impenetrable thickets and miles of oak groves and carpeted with native grasses.

The two main characters would achieve immortality in the late 20th century as the inspiration for Woodrow F. Call and Augustus McRae in Larry McMurtry's book Lonesome Dove. Goodwyn's uncle Grover Cleveland Latham work on the Suaz Ranch, a part of the King Ranch. During the height of the Great War Goodwyn as a young boy would visit his uncle to play with his cousin. The Suaz was a lousy
History cont. on page A5

Obituary



David Paul Johnson
August 2, 1960 — December 2, 2023
Corpus Christi

David Paul Johnson, 63, of Corpus Christi, TX, passed away peacefully on December 2nd, 2023, with his wife and son by his side. Born on August 2nd, 1960 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, he moved to Texas at the age of 9, always considering himself a true Texan.

David cherished his childhood memories of playing baseball at Oil Belt Little League, growing up along the Nueces River, and spending weekends with his family at Lake Mathis. He later became a coach at Oil Belt when his son joined a baseball team.

A graduate of Calallen High School in 1978, David began his career in the oilfield, rising to the position of supervisor with The Western Company. In 1988, he transitioned to a career as a licensed insurance agent, working as a Commercial Lines Specialist at Whitney-Vaky Insurance Agency. Eventually, he became the owner of Annaville Insurance and Annaville Insurance on Padre Island. In 1993, he added restaurant ownership to his endeavors with Salsa's Gourmet Mexican Restaurant. He was a member of the Independent Insurance Agents of Texas and the Padre Island Business Association.

A proud Padre Islander for the last 23 years, David found joy in boating, fishing, jet skiing, and beachcombing at Padre Island National Seashore. He loved BBQs, spending time with family and friends, and relishing his role as "Papaw David."

David is preceded in death by his father Reid Johnson and his mother Peggy Hurt. He is survived by his wife of 33 years, Billie Phillips Johnson, son Weston Johnson (Corina), stepson Gil Harris (Sammi), stepdaughter Jenna Harris, grandsons, Wyatt Johnson and Wil Harris, and granddaughter Kendall Killingsworth, brothers Don Johnson (Theresa), Scott Johnson (Laurie) and sister Shelley Quillin.

Celebration of Life service will be private. To order memorial trees or send flowers to the family in memory of David Paul Johnson, please visit Sawyergeorgefuneralhome.com

One day of rain

Photos by Evelyn Pless-Schuberth



Holiday Home Tour

The Padre Island Enrichment clubs annual Holiday Home Tour took place last weekend. Gorgeously decorated Island homes welcome people in for a tour for a donation that benefits the PIE scholarship fund. Photos by Debbie Noble



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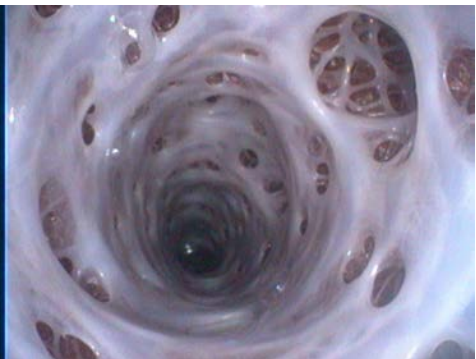
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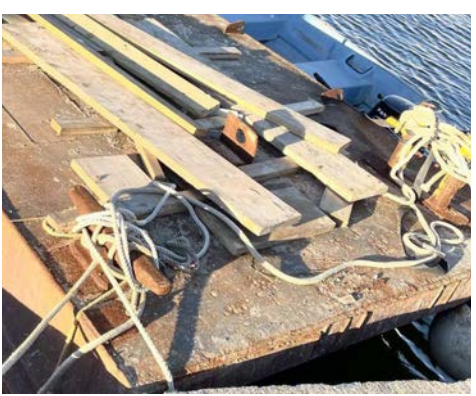
Dec 24, 2023 Island In The Son United Methodist Church
10650 Highway 361, Coprus Christi TX 78418
Christmas on Mustang Island!

Letters to the Editor



Mystery Shot of the Week

The Mystery Shot of the Week came from the Texas Sealife Center and Dr. Tim Tristen. It is a shot inside the lung of a Kemp’s ridley turtle. They were checking for blockage but this guy was fine.



Barge,

POA’s bulkhead repair contrac-tor’s barge is again damaging the bulkhead on Cumana Drive, due to improper mooring against the strong north wind, today.

It moves away and slams back and forth against the POA’s cement bulk-head, creating cracks and chips

Mary Ann McShane

Mr. Drew Diggins,

President

PIPOA Board of Directors

Mr. Diggins,

Just a simple note of thanks to you and your Board for your clear posi-tion on breaking through PIPOA’s bulkheads for the WhiteCap project.

The number one duty of the PIPOA is the maintenance of our canals and bulkheads. Connecting to the water exchange, with the anticipated in-crease in water flow rates, represents an unknown risk to the lifespan of our existing bulkhead system.

The community is unaware of the resulting risk of our canals silting over, nor are they aware that the PIPOA currently has no authority to dredge for any anticipated silting. I think you should tell them. The community is unaware of studies that show the connection of the canal systems will not improve water quality, beyond a couple of hundred feet from the connection. I think you should tell them.

Once again, thank you for setting out the list of expert data points required to make an informed deci-sion, and for sharing your approach with the Members.

Jim McFadden

Three Fathoms Bank Drive

Candidates for Padre Isles Property Owners Association Board of Directors

Candidates for the Padre Isles Prop-erty Owners Association received eight Candidate application resumes for the 2024 Board election, to be held at the March 23, 2024 Annual Meeting. Three of seven Board of Directors seats are up for election. The seats are currently held by Drew Diggins, Ray Singleton and David Rossi, respectively.

The candidates for the upcoming 2024 Board elections are:

Charles Cantu, Jr.

Chul Kim McGuire

Drew Diggins

George Reed

Kevin Tansey

Michael Gdfula

Ray Singleton

Thomas Gottemoller

The 2024 Board Candidates’ re-sumes may be viewed on the Com-munity Website: www.padreislespoa.net.

Around cont. from A1

back from the city development fund. The problem is that when developers all across the city saw what happened there was a rush to file platting documents and the \$3 million that was in the development fund sank to the current level of minus-\$300,000 mean-ing that there is no way of knowing when the Rasheeds would get their \$1.2 million for the newest line back and the project is stalled. This has been an ongoing problem for years and a solution is stymied by the resistance from local developers against paying a developer’s fee on new construc-tion. The result is that for the southern portion of SPID on The Island to develop a private investor has to pay \$1.2 million for an oversized subsurface floating sewer line he doesn’t need and so we are denied the added retail space we so desperately need Around The Island. There are all kinds of punch lines that could be landed here but the fact is that we are being held hostage by our large intestine. And so it goes...

And finally this...


We want to send out a big Island congratu-lations to our Island friends who are fellow alumni of Texas State University in San Marcos as the Bobcats play in their first ever bowl game on December 26 at Gerald R. Ford Stadium in Dallas. If there is one thing we Bobcats have been waiting for all these years it is to throw the Mother of All Tailgate Parties and it’s on for this week. The Strutters will be there! Enough said. That’s all for now have a very merry every-body and we will see you next time with our end of the year edition. Who knows maybe we will get a little snow between now and then...say hello if you see us Around The Island.

PENN THOMAS, P.C.

CPA FIRM

PENN THOMAS, CPA

penn@pennthomascpa.com



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Real Estate cont. from A1

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Interior Condominiums/ Townhomes/Duplexes Sold

15010 Leeward Drive #9303

14521 East Cabana Street #202

15442 Cruiser Street Units A & B

88 Interior Condominiums/Townho-mes/Duplexes Listed From \$150,000 To \$699,999.00

Waterfront Lots

15110 Cane Harbor Blvd.

13534 Peseta Court

21 Waterfront Lots Listed From \$219,900.00 To \$2,550,000.00

Interior Lots Sold

15646 Cruiser Street


15529 Escapade Street

00 Venito Del Mar Drive

23 Interior Lots Listed From \$104,900.00 to \$3,000,000.00

Commercial Lots

13 Commercial Lots Listed From \$110,000.00 To \$2,550,000.00



“The Don Patricio Causeway, built with private capital in 1927, was the first bridge to link Padre Island with the Texas main-land. In addition, it holds the distinction of having been one of the most unusual bridge-es ever constructed in Texas. The builder was Col. Sam Robertson, one of the first promoters of tourism on Padre Island. In the 1920s, Robertson purchased extensive tracts of land on the island, erect-ed picturesque wooden hotels on each end to cater to tourists, and even attempted to build a rudimentary road the entire length of the island. Among the projects he is remembered for is his long wooden bridge, built to make his hotels and other develop-ments more accessible to visitors. He named it Don Patricio in honor of Pat Dunn, from whom he had purchased his island prop-erty. For several months Robertson’s men worked at a pile driver, pounding a total of 3,903 wooden pilings all the way across the Laguna Madre from the Flour Bluff area near corpus Christi to Padre Island. The distance was more than three miles. As the piles were driven, timber crosspieces were mounted on them to support four wooden troughs. Toward the end of construction, Robertson’s men erected a tollhouse and the Flour Bluff end of the bridge and there, beginning with the opening of the bridge on July 4, 1927, began charging holiday seekers three dollars per car for crossing over to the island. After paying, the drivers steered their vehicles into the troughs and made their way 3.25 miles over the cause-way to the island, all the while attempting to keep tires from rubbing too roughly on the sides of the trough. ”



Snowy Egret touchdown Corpus Christi Texas By John Navar

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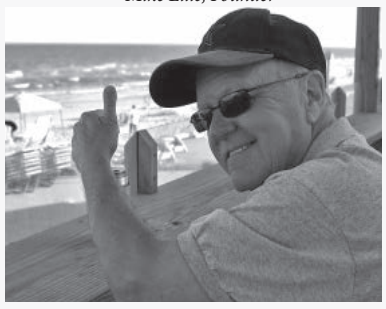






Moon Monkeys

Mike Ellis, Founder



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Co-Publisher, Business Ops Jan Park Rankin

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Joey Farah

Emily Gaines

Jay Gardner

Todd Hunter

Dotson Lewis

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Evelyn Pless-Schuberth



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Senior Moments

Senior Moments Special to The Island Moon

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**

Canal cont. from A1

completed with the extension of the Commodores Drive canal the amount of water flow from the new bridge is the same as was anticipated when the permit was issued for water exchange under the SPID/Park Road 22 roadway in 1997. Board President Drew Diggins suggested in November that the opening of the waterway from the bridge into the PIPOA canal system be delayed until the Commodores Canal is opened which is expected to take two to three years since no USACE permit has yet been applied for. It is anticipated that flow studies which include changes in water flow due to the opening of the new canal will be included in the permitting process for the Commodores Canal, whether those studies will include the PIPOA-owned canals is unknown since the studies will be paid for by Diamond Beach Holdings, LLC. and the permit for the canal will not directly include the PIPOA canals. Whether to include the PIPOA canals in the permitting process would presumably be up to the USACE. It is worth noting that the permit for the connection of the canals is held not by Diamond Beach Holdings, LLC. but rather by Gulf Shores Development which owns the land around Lake Padre and its corporate officers have told the Island Moon and the City of Corpus Christi they will not remove the water barrier between Lake Padre and the Don Patricio Bridge until an agreement is reached to connect the new canals to the PIPOA canals.

- Flour Bluff ISD land. The board raised concerns that the connection of the two canals would include a zig-zag in the canal near the connection point due to the need to utilize a slice of land owned by FBISD on the west side of the new canal and suggested that obstacle needed to be addressed to resolved the issues concerning the connection. Officials from the City of Corpus Christi and Diamond Beach Holding, LLC. approached the Superintendent at FBISD in late summer but no progress was announced other than allowing the future crossing of the FBISD land by work crews during the construction of the canal connection. Subsequently, there was a change in the Superintendent's position and a vote by the FBISD board in its December meeting, with a second reading in a Special Meeting one week later, approved the inclusion of the FBISD land in the design of the new canal and that problem was solved.

- City bridges. This obstacle was a late arriver to the discussion and only came up in late October. After this item was introduced into the conversation by the PIPOA board District 4 City Councilman Dan Suckley requested that the City of Corpus Christi undertake a study to determine what threat, if any, the connecting of the canals would pose to the city-owned bridges at Whitecap Boulevard and Gypsy Street, both of which were damaged by Hurricane Allen in 1980 prior to the annexation of Padre Island by the City of Corpus Christi. Due to the subsequent annexation the bridges became property of the city which has agreed since 2012 that they are the city's responsibility. The \$50,000 city study found that while connection of the canals may pose a long-term threat to the bridge structures there is no need for immediate action as the canals are connected.

The board's position shifted when at its December 12 meeting the board released a letter which read in part: Given the risk, Anchor QEA, LJA Engineering and the Director of Engineering Services for the City agree that these bridges need to armored and scour protection installed before connecting the two canals. The City, LJA and the PIPOA agreed to co-operate in developing a workable solution citing a meeting on Monday, December 11, 2023 which included representatives of the city, LJA Engineering, Anchor QEA, and the PIPOA board.

Board members said at that meeting that an agreement was pending after the anticipated transmittal of a letter from the City of Corpus Christi to the PIPOA in the "next eight to ten days" regarding the city's responsibilities regarding the bridges. The response came in the form of a five-page letter from the city the next day and posted on our Facebook page, Wednesday, December 13. The opening paragraph of the city letter reads as follows:

With the completion and dedication of the Don Patricio Bridge, there have been increasing discussions about fully opening the canal system and removing the earthen dams that are currently preventing flow and navigation. The Padre Island (sic) Property Owners' Association (PIPOA) is preventing Whitecap Preserve from removing the dam separating the Whitecap Preserve Canals from the PIPOA canals." Water Flow Studies

Over time a total of four studies on water flow after the opening of the new canal had been done. The first found that the water

speed in the canals west of the new bridge would drop to 1.5 feet per second which is not sufficient to carry sand, that study did not include any reference to flow speed in the PIPOA canals. Subsequently, and during the same timeframe LJA Engineering conducted two additional studies at the request of the PIPOA and paid for by Diamond Beach Holdings, LLC. which found that increased water flow would not pose a significant threat to PIPOA bulkheads and a fourth study done by Anchor QEA and paid for the PIPOA, \$50,000, was conducted by Anchor QEA to determine the effect of opening the canals on PIPOA bulkheads. The base data and methodology used in the previous LJA studies was provided to Anchor QEA and the results of that study were scheduled to be presented at the December 12 PIPOA board meeting. However, the presentation by Anchor QEA at that meeting stated that their study, "proves there is erosion possibility due to everyday flow at the Gypsy and Whitecap bridges which need to be armored." Addressing the effect of the canal opening on PIPOA-owned bulkheads Anchor QEA officials said only "additional study is recommended." The entire report from Anchor QEA can be read on the PIPOA website.

Where things stand So as 2024 dawns we find ourselves essentially at the same place we were before the process stalled in June. The demands from the PIPOA board that Diamond Beach Holdings, LLC. assume responsibility for future erosion of PIPOA canals were not mentioned as a condition of settlement by the board at their December 12 meeting, whether that changes remains to be seen. As of yet there have been no water flow studies that present an insurmountable obstacle to the opening of the Island canals. Based on their letter of December 13, the City of Corpus Christi has made no promises that the city bridges will be armored prior to the opening of the canals. They have acknowledged ownership and maintenance responsibilities but that is not new and have not announced a timeframe for that work. Their letter specifically placed the delay in the connection of the canals at the doorstep of the PIPOA.

Diamond Beach Holdings LLC. through LJA Engineering has agreed to provide the PIPOA board with a design plan for the structural connection of the two bulkhead systems on each side of the dam one it is removed. Once again, this is not new. That diagram, according to those who will draft it, will be a basic drawing and can be done quickly. This week crews were at work to armor the west (Whitecap NPI) side of the Don Patricio Bridge in preparation of the opening of canal under the bridge. Once that work is complete they will move to the Lake Padre side and repeat the process there and the new canal from Lake Padre through the Whitecap NPI site to the barrier at the north end of the PIPOA canals will be ready for the introduction of saltwater. That process is expected to be complete by mid-January, 2024.

According to a presentation to the Corpus Christi City Council at its December 12 meeting work on the water exchange bridge on Commodores Drive is expected to begin in early 2024 with completion by the end of 2025 with funding from the Island Tax Reinvestment Zone #2. The permitting for the extension of canal onto the Whitecap NPI property will be done while the bridge is under construction. On completion, according to plans presented to the city, the new Commodores Bridge will have a water clearance of fourteen feet, the same as the Don Patricio Bridge. Plans presented at that same meeting call for water exchange culverts under Aquarius Street and water exchange either through culverts or a bridge under Encantada Avenue.

Based on the statement by the PIPOA board at its December 12 meeting and the subsequent issuance of the letter by the City of Corpus Christi the only current outstanding barrier to the opening of the Island canals for water exchange appears to be the issue between the board and the city regarding the timing of the armoring of the two city bridges on PIPOA-owned canals; whether that work must be done before the opening of the canals or can be done after. Barring changes that is where things stand as 2023 winds down.

The next foreseeable milestone will be the completion of the armoring of the Don Patricio Bridge in January followed by a decision on the construction of the connection between the old and new canals. If no agreement can be reached between the parties for the connection of the canals by March, 2024, when the new PIPOA board takes office it will likely fall to them to resolve the problem.

That is where things stand as 2024 rolls in.

place to be a kid because the land was as flat as the sea on a calm day and the houses were in the midst of the brush country providing no view. The loneliness was punctuated by the coo of the turtledoves who called through the thickets to be answered only by the retort of quavering howl of the lonesome coyote's call.

The main house at the Suaz was a white-washed affair with plenty of chipping and cracking. It was a long square-topped building running north and south and it was called The Store but no one really knew why. Since no one came there to buy and if they had there was nothing to sell. The only thing connecting The Store to the real world was a delivery wagon that drove between it and Raymondville twenty-one miles away.

Old Man Durham

In one of the smaller houses surrounding The Store live Old Man Durham. This is the same George Durham who we wrote about in our series about the Nueces Strip and will repeat in the coming weeks. Durham had ridden with Texas Ranger Capt. L.H. McNelly when he and his Rangers cleaned the bandits and outlaws out of the strip in the years after the Civil War.

Goodwyn's best recollection of Durham was when Durham would run out of Durham tobacco and would scream into the new telephone on the ranch, "Hello, Raymondville. This is Mister Durham. When the wagon leaves, send me some Durham tobacco." It was the only time Durham would use the phone as he didn't really trust it but he seemed to take pleasure in the fact that his name and the name of his Bull Durham tobacco were one in the same.

But there was another ex-Ranger who also live in one of the houses on the Suaz. His name was Old Man Tally and he lived alone but did not chew tobacco. But according to Goodwyn he smoked and cursed in equally copious amounts. "He called himself a 'wicked old cuss' and rightly so," writes Goodwyn .

Tally had joined McNelly's Rangers about halfway through their work in the Nueces Strip and was a few years young than Durham. Both men in Ranger tradition wore high-heeled boots that came nearly to their knees and pants and jackets of khaki that had once been brown but were not faded to a pale, washed-out cream. Their big hats were blackened in the seams by dust and use and their brims were crumbled and limber.

Neither man worked any longer having earned their peace through years of violence when violence was the order of the day.

Old Man Tally loved his pistol and cleaned and oiled it daily as he at any moment he might ride off into the South Texas brush in search of rustlers or revolutionaries. His self-assigned task was to take care of the gate of a small pasture about fifty yards down the dusty road from The Store. The gate was a sturdy one and nothing was likely to ever happen to it but if it did Old Man Tally was ready to ride to its defense six-gun ablaze.

Every morning Tally limped down the road in his high-heeled riding boots and made sure it was property closed and latched.

Boot spitting tobacco
Durham's sons ran the ranch but Tally's only task was to guard the sanctity of the blessed gate. The ex-Rangers would visit each other daily and spoke in clipped tones of their day and their past. When Durham visited Tally's home he would spit his tobacco on the toe of his boots rather than soil the wooden floors. It was his sole bow to civilization as it evolved in the modern world that was then South Texas.

The conversation always started the same way with Durham asking, "Been down the gate today?"

"H--- yes, Saw a d--- skunk. Didn't shoot him though. Too d--- close."
"I was over at the pins today," Durham replied. "Shot a snake. Fourteen." From his pocket he pulled a snake's rattle with fourteen points and handed it to Tally.

"Hmmm. D--- good. How far?"

"Twenty feet."

"Gonna send it to Norias?"

"H--- no gonna keep it."
At Norias they paid a five cent bounty for every rattle brought in but Durham would hear none of it. Killing rattlers was his duty and to take money for doing his duty was an abomination.

"Gonna rain?"

"H--- no. Rained last month."

That was the life of the Ranger living out of his time on the King Ranch in the years of World War I. There was only mesquite, starved grass, with no lakes or streams for relief. Nothing but fine-grained, crusty black sand loam packed down hard by years of trampling by livestock. It was a hard land even for the tough mesquite trees.

The peace was interrupted only when either Durham or Tally came across a rattler which produced a short rattle coming through the brush punctuated by a single loud shot.

Into history

Durham died in the early 1930s and Tally decided to move but not far. He moved forty miles northwest of the Suaz but stayed on the King Ranch moving into an abandoned ranch house on Huisaches Altos near Highway 281. For the next twenty years he cleaned his pistol and guarded his gate in silence as he watched fruit trucks and carloads of tourists blasting up and down the highway going to and from the Rio Grande. He was a man out of time with nothing to keep him company but his memories.

At the age of eighty he bought a Ford to drive to town to get a haircut. But he must have liked the city life because at ninety he moved to town, well Falfurrias, saying he was bored living alone. It was there he died in his hotel bed, complaining of no pain but admitted he was "kind of tired."

Little could either Tally nor Durham have had any idea that in the latter part of the 20th century they would achieve immortality as the inspiration for Woodrow F. Call and Augustus McRae in Larry McMurtry's book Lonesome Dove; two hard riding Texas Rangers who lived to the age of the Model T. and the flying machine.

Colonel Howard Frank Stanley US Army Retired



COL Howard Frank Stanley has distinguished himself with almost 40 years of exceptionally meritorious service to the Nation and the United States Army. His extraordinary career culminated with him serving as the United States Army Central Command G2 Forward at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. His career included a multitude of important assignments of increasing responsibility where he consistently demonstrated exceptional and effective leadership, dedicated service, and commitment to Soldiers.

Throughout his military career, COL Stanley has held the positions of Chief of Internal Review with the Military Intelligence Readiness Command; Deputy Commander, Army Reserve Interrogation Group; Deputy Commander, 470th Military Intelligence Brigade; Analysis and Control Element Chief, United States Army South; Battalion Commander, 324th MP BN; Chief of Counterintelligence (CI) Operations, War Crimes Investigations Team Iraqi and CI Operations, United States Army G2-X, and most recently G2 USARCENT (FWD). COL Stanley has been deployed to Bosnia, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait totaling over 42 months of overseas deployment.

COL Stanley most notable mission was the assignment in Iraq where he was hand selected to lead the Department Of Defense Criminal Investigation Task Force, War Crimes Investigation Team Iraq, in pursuing the Senior Iraqi Regime top 55 Most Wanted (commonly known as the Deck of Cards) and investigating the ambush of the 507th Maintenance Battalion. This team which was comprised of Army CI and Criminal Investigation Division, Air Force Office of Special Investigation, Navy Criminal Investigation Service and support personnel were instrumental in locating, capturing and prosecuting the majority of the Senior Iraqi Regime. COL Stanley's intelligence activities were instrumental in having national and even global implications, by coordinating efforts with organizations of the military community, the Iraqi Survey Group, the Iraqi Fusion Cell and other National Intelligence Agencies.

COL Stanley most recent deployment was as the United States Army Central G2 Forward and Director of the Theater Intelligence Platform – Central (TIP-C) at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. COL Stanley successfully coordinated, integrated, and supervised the execution of information collection plans

and operations directly supporting Operation Spartan Shield, TF Sinai, Operation Inherent Resolve, Operation Freedom Sentinel, and Operation Allies Refuge. COL Stanley was instrumental in providing up to the minute intelligence support to the withdrawal of Afghanistan with countless hours of direct operational intelligence support to personnel on the ground and to decision makers in the CONUS support. Specifically, COL Stanley integrated the 82nd Airborne Division MI Company, 1/10 MTN G2 team and disparate intelligence units into the TIP-C allowing direct intelligence operations in support of the Afghanistan retrograde. Additionally, COL Stanley was instrumental in positioning USARCENT G2 in developing and expanding the western basing intelligence operations within Jordan. As the TIP-C Director COL Stanley was the face of Army Intelligence as he directly coordinated with national level agencies such as the CIA, NSA, NRO, NCR, DIA, and various other agencies to include the US Department of State. COL Stanley's was instrumental in saving the USARCENT G2 directorate over \$13 million in FY 21 and 22 through expert management of finite resources and fiscal responsibility. COL Stanley exceptionally performed his duties and improved intelligence operations throughout the USARCENT AOR.

COL Stanley's operational deployments include Operation Noble Eagle, Bosnia-Herzegovina; Operation Iraqi Freedom; Operation Inherent Resolve, Saudi Arabia, and Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Freedom Sentinel. COL Stanley's education includes a bachelor's degree in Police Science from Sam Houston State University and a master's in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.

His awards include the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal (8 oak leaf clusters), Army Commendation Medal (3 oak leaf clusters), Army Achievement Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary and Service Medal, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, Overseas Medal (4), Humanitarian Service Medal, NATO Medal, the Army Staff Identification Badge and the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge.

COL Stanley is married to CPT (P) Candi Stanley

Flour Bluff Street Closure

A contractor will temporarily close the intersection of Flour Bluff Drive and Peaceful Lane to perform sanitary sewer installations for a private development from December 18 through December 22- weather permitting.

The following detours will be in place to redirect traffic around the intersection:

- Traffic traveling southbound on Flour Bluff Drive from S.P.I.D. (SH 358) will be detoured at Purdue Road over to Waldron Road. Traffic then can take Waldron Road to Glenoak Drive and Glenoak Drive to Flour Bluff Drive if necessary.
- Traffic traveling northbound on Flour Bluff Drive to S.P.I.D. (SH 358) will be detoured at Glenoak Drive over to Waldron Road. Traffic then can take Waldron Road to Purdue Road and Purdue Road to Flour Bluff Drive if necessary.

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Sports

Sports Talk Special to The Island Moon



Johnny Unitas Quarterback Part 4

By Dotson Lewis

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.

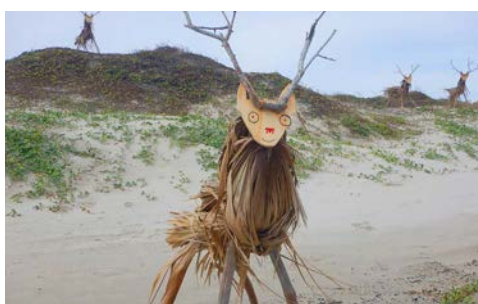
In 1991, Unitas and his wife filed for bankruptcy protection under Chapter 11. Their court filings showed that the couple owed creditors as much as \$3.2 million but had assets of about \$1.4 million. His financial problems arose in part from a business venture in which he and two partners took out loans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

-30- Have fun and hang in there.



*"Now, Dasher! Now, Dancer! Now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On Cupid! On, Donner and Blitzen!"*



Don't Rub his Head

By Andy Purvis



Adrian Beltre

I would be surprised if they did not place him in the Baseball Hall of Fame Museum in Cooperstown this year. This guy can catch anything, including a falling star. Action is the loudest and clearest statement of what people can do when they know they can. His ability to play the "hot corner" was uncanny. It was as if he could see into the future. His mantra was, play as hard as you can and respect your opponent. Meanwhile, catch everything within reach and knock the cover off of the baseball. You didn't look for reasons to take this guy out of the lineup; you looked for reasons to keep him in. He looked so young; you would swear he was playing hooky. His head was big, really big; when he flew on a plane, he needed a separate ticket for his cap. He owned a smile that would melt chocolate, but at times could be cold-blooded like an icebox, especially if you rubbed his head. He hates when people rub his head for luck. It has also been rumored that he does not wear a protective cup while playing. That makes it a lot more important to be able to handle those balls pulled in his direction from only 90 feet away from home plate. He'll be 35 on his next birthday, but you wouldn't know it by watching him play. When greatness meets class, you have Adrian Beltre. When you meet Adrian, remember you may shake his hand, pat him on the back, but don't rub his head.

Boy, can he blister a fastball; some say he could hit .300 with a pool cue. He hits baseballs like Floyd Mayweather hits a chin. Just maybe he has a coupon for all-you-can-eat fastballs. No doubt he can shrink a ballpark with one swing of his bat. He has become known for his signature home-run swing, where he drops down to one knee when he connects with an off-speed pitch. In the last three years with Texas, Beltre has hit .312 at the plate. With an average of over 30 home runs and 100 RBI's a year, this guy is used to doing the heavy lifting for the Rangers. My guess is that he'll be number fifteen, right after Chipper Jones, to take his place in Cooperstown as a third baseman. If he continues to play at his current level he could end up being statistically one of the top two or three third basemen of all time, behind only Eddie Mathews and Mike Schmidt. Beltre grew up in the Dominican and signed with Los Angeles in 1994. Adrian Beltre spent some time in the Minor Leagues with the Dodger Double-A affiliate, San Antonio Missions. The Missions are in the same division as the Corpus Christi Hooks of the Texas League. Beltre made his debut with the Dodgers on June 24, 1998, against the Anaheim Angels. Interestingly, six days after his debut, Adrian hit his first Major League home run off Rick Helling of the Texas Rangers. Beltre would start slowly with the Dodgers, but build toward a terrific season in 2004, where he led all of the Major Leagues with 48 home runs. He

was honored with the Babe Ruth Home Run Award.

In 2005, Beltre signed as a free agent with the Seattle Mariners for 64 million dollars, spread out over five years. The large confines of Safeco Field and the added pressure of a big-time contract created additional weight. While playing in Seattle, he disappeared faster than the big kid in a dodge ball game. His numbers suffered at the plate and his number of errors also increased. Other than making a lot of money, Beltre did accomplish several things. On July 23, 2006, he became the first to hit an inside-the-park home run at Safeco Field. On September 1, 2008, Beltre became the fourth Mariner to hit for the cycle and, third, his decision to not wear a protective cup would come back to haunt him. On August 13, 2009, Beltre took a hard-hit ground ball to the crotch. He ended up on the disabled list. During his first at-bat when he returned to the lineup, teammate Ken Griffey, Jr. had the P.A. announcer play the waltz from The Nutcracker Suite.

On November 5, 2009, he was declared a free agent; next stop, Fenway Park. His one-year 9-million-dollar stop in Boston paid big dividends for the Red Sox and himself.

On January 5, 2011, Beltre signed a five-year deal for 80 million, with the Texas Rangers. This three-time All-Star, four-time Gold Glove winner has continued to get better while leading the Rangers to three consecutive playoffs and two World Series appearances. On August 22, 2012, I watched Adrian Beltre become only the sixth player in Major League history to hit three home runs in a regular season and a postseason game. The others were: Babe Ruth, Reggie Jackson, George Brett, Albert Pujols and Pablo Sandoval.

For eleven of his 17 seasons, Beltre has worn the #29. He now has 430 home runs, with 2,880 hits and has tallied over 1500 RBI's. If it weren't for his five miserable years in Seattle, his career batting average would be near .300.

As for rubbing his head, it's the real deal for him. He hates it. The story goes that while in Seattle, Cy Young winner, pitcher Felix Hernandez, discovered Beltre's dislike of someone touching his head. When Adrian was traded to Boston, King Felix told Red Sox catcher, Victor Martinez, about Beltre's issue with people touching his head. Of course Victor told all his teammates and the picking on Adrian was on. Heck, even Superman had issues with Kryptonite. Now the Rangers all take their turns, especially shortstop Elvis Andrus. How far it will go is anybody's guess. But as long as Beltre keeps putting up numbers, that noggin of his will remain a target.

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By Jay Gardner

On the Rocks



Our buddy Terry Palmer from the Island Strategic Action Committee (ISAC) and HRI is a running machine. I bumped into him and Linda Reed at the Don Patricio Bridge ribbon cutting ceremony, and they told me that Terry was going to run from the north sticks all the way down the Seashore to the Mansfield jetties. You loyal readers know that it's about 65 miles, and that's one way. The plan was for Terry to take off, and then Linda would be road support and meet him down there and scoop him for a return ride. Terry did it, and just short of nine hours with an average pace of eight minute miles. He claims that he had a stiff tail wind. Ha! Evidently there was a record that he wanted to beat, and he had never run that far before. The main thing is that he wanted to experience the beach in a different way, and he sure did. Heck of an accomplishment Terry! Wow!

Speaking of the Seashore...

Speaking of the Seashore, I played hooky the other day and took my dad and sister Olivia down the beach chasing pompano during the window I wrote about last week. Sure enough, conditions were optimal, although the tide was still a bit higher than we typically like. The driving was a 9.5 out of 10, and the only time I used 4-wheel-drive was to go around camps parked in pinch points. The reports were that the water was clearer down south (which is typically the case) so we high tailed it towards the lower end without giving the first half much thought, except for a spot in the 20's. After trying a couple places in the lower 40's and upper 50's, Curtis caught up with us. We saw all the usual characters, Nick and Brenda from Breakaway, Jeff Wolda from Padre Island Light Tackle adventures, Rocky and Silver from Roy's, Oz, and a

few other familiar faces. Anyway, we just couldn't quite cast out past that first bar, and bounced south looking for that fabled pinch point, eventually also winding up at the Mansfield Jetties. Dad hadn't been in 30 years, and Olivia had never been, so that was a treat. After a few pics, we started headed north again, this time with Roadkill Willie leading the charge. We had been talking about "that spot in the 20's" about every stop, and so we made a bold decision and decided to bomb all the way back up north on the prospect of one small stretch of beach. Sure enough, we picked a spot around the 19 that looked promising, and the fish finally turned on in the afternoon. The skunk was off, the camaraderie was strong, and we had a good time putting together a full box of 24 fish between us and left them biting.

The interesting thing about that stretch of beach from about Yarbrough (at the 15, which at this writing is open) till about the 25, is that it is starting to rebuild and resemble what used to be Little Shell (Malaquite). The beach is steeper, the guts in the water are deeper, and the shells are starting to accumulate there again due to the converging currents. The beach composition is back to a lot of shell hash instead of sand, and there is a lot of accumulation of trash and flotsam (will be focusing on this area for the Big Shell Clean Up on February 24th – put it on your calendar now). We found a very large operculum from our Texas state shell, the lightning whelk, and there were coconuts everywhere. The fish kept us from beach-combing too much though. A beautiful day down the beach, and I highly recommend that you get out there and enjoy this time of year on the sand.

Trout limits

There's been some kick back on the proposed TPWD trout bag limits and slot from a vocal minority of folks. On the other hand, you have the now vocal majority typified by local guides like our Joey Farah and David Rowsey and the biologists from TPWD that are trying to be proactive and make sure that our trout populations are healthy and retention practices sustainable. I applaud the latter's efforts and encourage the former group to attend the public meetings and give public comments. Louisiana has long been the example that many people point to as far as generous slots and creels, but they are changing their ways and drastically reducing their limits as a harbinger of the future trends based on increasing pressure. Fish science, I know, but it has a large effect here locally.

I want to wish all you loyal readers (and detractors alike) a very Merry Christmas. Hope Santa Claus brings you a new fishing rod. Y'all drop me a line at tarponchaser@mail.com and I'll see you next week here On The Rocks.



Backwater Adventures

By Joey Farah
Farah's Fishing Adventures

Farah cont. from AI

factors that lead them back out into the flats as soon as there is a rise in temperature. The deep soft black bottom of the dredged areas harbors many small under mud dwelling species. Shrimp, crabs, mud worms and mites of many types, and the baitfish that feed on them. When it is extremely cold the soft mud will hold heat and fish will hold tight to it. The parasites that cling to their stomachs are picked up here and irritate the trout. As soon as it warms up they move to sand, gravel, or rock to scratch these boogers off.



The light 1/8th ounce jig head on this DOA 5.5" JERK BAIT IN BLOODSHAD tickled the bottom and stalled mid water column to get the strike from this nice trout this week

Moving to the shallows

At the same time small baitfish will also move to the shallows to warm in the sun and eat the tiny barnacles off of the sea grass. For anglers, look for the first dip in water temperature to cash in on fish dropping in on the deepest of water. This time is usually the second day of the cold event. They will sit together in groups by size, they regulate their temperatures the same. I like to sneak along the channels and canals, as well as the natural guts in the deepest of the flats with my MINNKOTA ONE BOAT SONAR SYSTEM, this is really hunting fish with electronics. I use the HUMMINBIRD SIDE SCAN to search the channels for schools of bait and gamefish before I even pick up the pole. I can actually identify species and what direction they are facing, as well as size.

When I locate a school or area where fish are concentrated I can use a combination of the MINNKOTA TROLLING MOTOR WITH SPOT LOCK AND MY RAPTER BOAT ANCHORS to hold me still while I present baits. One can hold the boat along the edge of the channel and cast out but that doesn't work as well as sitting deep and bringing lures and baits from the shallows back out over the edge, above suspended fish waiting for bait to leave the protected extreme shallows. When the sun comes out baitfish will try to hang shallow along the channels, a venture out into open water would put them right among the larger predators.

I use a 1/4-1:2 ounce jig head on my soft plastics when fish are along the bottom and cold. Scratching and bumping the bait in the bottom. Many times you feel as you are snagged until they start shaking. As little effort as needed to feed is survival as well as, if it's right there in my face maybe I'll eat it! Stalling lures on the bottom can get a strike often when everything is cold stunned, shaking the lure and only moving the bait a few inches at a time is about the natural speed of a cold stunned food victim. Long soft plastics will have tail float when sitting in the bottom and can be slurped up while that tail is waving up above the bottom. I occasionally tie a double jig head rig one heavy and the other very light, a 1/4&1/16th ounce jig head combination. This will tease and taunt big gamefish. Add some scent attractant and go scratch that along the edge of a channel!

Lunar timing is everything, and use the electronics and learn YOUR UNIT to locate bait and bigger gamefish.

Baffin Bay

Many fish that stay out in the flats and do not run to the manmade deep holes may just lay up in hibernation until the water temps warm. These fish regard the natural guts and open waters of five to six feet in the Laguna Madre and the seven to eight feet water in Baffin as their DEEP WATER. In Baffin Bay I like to start on the large isolated rocks sitting out away from the shallows. Deep soft mud surrounds them and along their bases are gravelly sand and hard rock. This

is a perfect complete habitat with bait if all kinds hovering around the rock structure. Using my HUMMINBIRD SOLIX AND MY TROLLING MOTOR I can inspect and hold position and fish these areas completely. In the Laguna Madre, drifting the transitions between the shallow grass and the deeper bare bottom is where most of my fish are caught. In extreme cold snaps gamefish will move out into the deeper bare bottom. The problem comes with the tidal current, moving water is cold. In rough cold conditions look for them to hold just out of the main current in soft mud, when it's still and cold you will find them deep tight to the bottom out in the open water, especially on the third or fourth day with clear skies and high pressure.

Christmas!! Blessings should be counted, and appreciated. Share and forgive because none of us last forever. Thank you for each of you adding to the mix of the Padre Island Community, I'm looking forward to another year here on this sandy island. God Bless and Go Fishing.



Big Catch of the week! Clam Chowder.

TPWD Seeks Input on Proposed Changes to Spotted Seatrout Bag, Size Limits

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) is seeks public input on proposed rules which, if passed, would change bag and size limits for spotted seatrout on the Texas coast. The proposed rules would reduce the spotted seatrout bag limit to three fish and restrict the allowable size to 15-20 inches, with one fish over 25" allowed daily.

The rule responds to public scoping and survey efforts by the department which found that many anglers wanted to see more restrictive measures to improve the fishery.

TPWD encourages the public to provide comment on the proposed regulation changes at one of several public hearings hosted on the coast, virtually or over the phone. The proposals will then be considered for final action by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission during the January 2024 Commission Meeting.

Opportunities to provide comments for or against these proposals include:

Public hearings- TPWD Coastal Fisheries staff will host several public hearings on the coast to receive input from anglers and constituents concerning the changes:

- Jan. 9, 6-8 p.m. at the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Natural Resources Building, 6300 Ocean Dr., Corpus Christi.
- Jan. 9, 6-8 p.m. at the Greater Chamber of Harlingen, 311 E. Tyler Ave., Harlingen.
- Jan. 9, 6-8 p.m. at the Bauer Exhibit Building, 305 Henry Barber Way, Port Lavaca.
- Jan. 9, 6-8 p.m. at the Saltwater Pavilion at Rockport Beach Park, 210 Seabreeze Dr., Rockport.
- Jan. 10, 6-8 p.m. at the Bob Bowers Civic Center, 3401 Cultural Center Dr., Port Arthur.
- Jan. 11, 6-8 p.m. at the Nessler Civic Center Captain's Room, 2010 5th Ave N., Texas City.
- Online- Provide official public comments on the changes until Jan. 23 on the TPWD public comment page.
- Phone or email- The Coastal Fisheries Division at 512-389-8575 or cfish@tpwd.texas.gov.

Zoom webinar- TPWD Coastal Fisheries staff will present proposed fishing regulation changes and answer questions from 6-8 p.m. Jan. 10 in an online webinar. TPWD will also post the webinar on TPWD's YouTube channel and Facebook.

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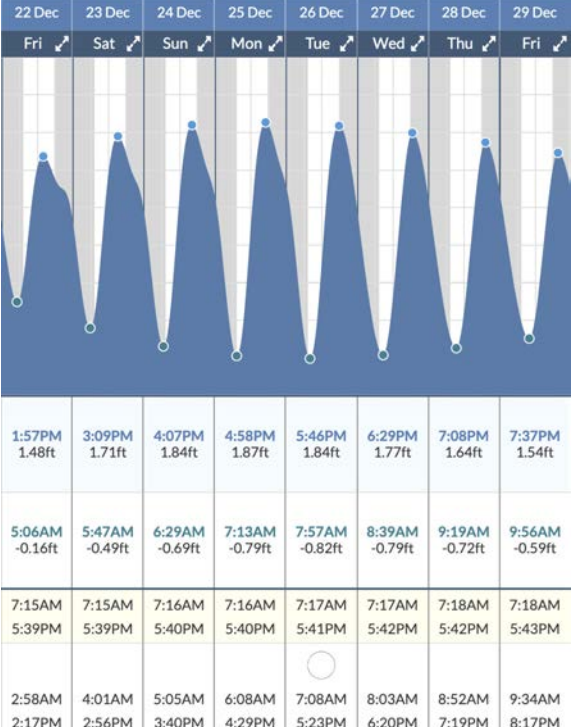
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Eastern Phoebe



by Taylor Bennett
Gulf Coast Bird Observatory’s avian research team is continuing to monitor for non-breeding shorebirds along the Upper Texas Coast. Our main focus are those species that are classified as endangered, threatened, or of high concern due to habitat loss and climate change. The six target species that we monitor are Piping Plover, Red Knot, Snowy Plover, Wilson’s Plover, American Oystercatcher, and Black Skimmer. Gulf Coast Bird Observatory monitors Matagorda Beach, Bryan Beach, Quintana Beach, Surfside Beach, and Follet’s Island. During monitoring, we tend to see other migrants along the beach. One such species we often see this time of year is the Eastern Phoebe.

Eastern Phoebes are medium-sized birds belonging to the flycatcher family. They are migratory and can be seen in Texas in the fall and winter. They prefer woody habitats. For instance, we have observed them hiding out in the salt cedar along Matagorda Peninsula, at our headquarters in Lake Jackson, and at our Quintana Neotropical Sanctuary in Freeport.

They are easily identifiable by their black-brown bodies, whitish yellow chest, large brown head, small pointed black bill, black squared tail, and short black legs and feet. Males are typically larger and darker than the females. Their call and their tail bobbing behavior makes them stand out from other flycatcher species. They get their name from their main call which is a raspy Fee-bee.

The Eastern Phoebe’s main prey are flying insects, which makes sense since they are part of the flycatcher family. They eat wasps, beetles, dragonflies, butterflies, moths, flies, midges, and cicadas. Occasionally, they will eat spiders, ticks, and millipedes. If insects are scarce, they are also able to eat small fruit and seeds.

Eastern Phoebes rarely eat things on the ground, instead typically catching their prey midflight in quick outbursts. If you look closely at their bill, you will see something that resembles whiskers. These are actually modified feathers called facial bristles that help them sense their prey. When they catch their prey, they quickly snap their head back resulting in a snapping sound.

Eastern Phoebes breed in the Northern United States and Southern Canada. They are capable of having two broods per season and they will often use the same nest as previous years. They often utilize buildings and bridges as nesting habitat. They are also resourceful in terms of their nests. Instead of creating a new nest each season, they will often reuse nests of Barn Swallows and American Robins.

Eastern Phoebes are very territorial, even to their own partners. Once the eggs are laid, the female will actually chase the male away, so she can raise the chicks on her own.

Unlike our target species, the conservation status of Eastern Phoebe is of least concern. However, they are still protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, so please give them their space. On behalf of Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, thank you for reading.

IMG_0713: Eastern Phoebe perched on a salt cedar branch on Matagorda Peninsula at Matagorda Beach, TX. Photo taken by Taylor Bennett on November 1, 2023.

Going Native The Douglas fir at Christmas

By Ed Proffitt



Old Douglas Fir logged

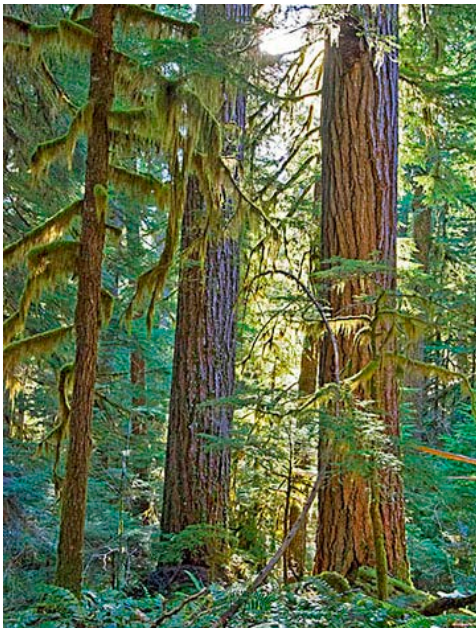
By Ed Proffitt

I know, I know the Douglas fir that I have as a Christmas tree this year isn’t at all native to this region of Texas or to anywhere in the state at all. But, hey, it’s Christmas so I’m taking some leeway here and deviating from my usual path.

I like the Douglas fir because of the soft needles, slight blue-green color, and nice fragrance. Plus, both my cats highly approve of this tree – although in fairness, they approve of any Christmas tree we bring into the house.

The common name is at odds with the taxonomy of the species which is *Pseudotsuga menziesii* (Mirb.) Franco (in Pinaceae, the pine family), because this isn’t a fir at all! “Pseudo” (false) and “tsuga” (hemlock) gives you a better idea of where this plant should be placed. But, I guess, a Christmas tree named false hemlock probably wouldn’t market as well, given the whole Socrates and hemlock association.

In addition to being one of the most popular Christmas trees ever since the 1920’s, in its native range (California up to Alaska) it is a species of considerable importance. When you read about “old growth forests” vs “spotted owls” --- one of the prime ‘old growth’ species is Douglas fir. Individuals can reach at least 250 feet



old growth douglas fir at the douglas fir national monument

tall, some reports say the tallest is 390 feet, have trunks over 5 feet in diameter, and some may be over 1000 years old. Some old growth is preserved in the Douglas-fir National Monument. In addition to being important spotted owl habitat, *Pseudotsuga* is the primary habitat of the red tree vole. These small mammals spend most of their life in the canopy of one or a few nearby Douglas fir trees, eating the needles as their main food source, and licking water from the typically wet canopy foliage. Red tree vole population is in decline and they are a candidate for listing as a threatened species.

Douglas firs cultivate well and are grown in silviculture for construction purposes as well as obviously in Christmas tree farms. They are often preferred over other firs because they grow well in drier conditions than many others. This species was introduced into forests in Europe after the second world war to provide timber and now covers more than 800,000 hectares (nearly two million acres) and is the second most common non-native tree.

So, fir trees in general have come a long way from their storied past. Pagans used these and similar taxa in the pre-Christian era in winter celebrations associated with the winter solstice and a “return of the light” (days getting longer after the solstice). The first use as Christmas trees reportedly was in Germany and has been attributed to Martin Luther, who was so entranced walking through a forest and seeing stars sparkling through the foliage above that he decided to take one home and decorate it. On the other hand, those jolly Puritans that colonized in New England banned decorating trees at Christmas (under penalty of incarceration) because they considered such activities as a pagan ritual. But, I guess that kind of goes along with their penchant for witch hunts anyway. Benjamin Harrison introduced Christmas trees into the White House in 1889. The first tree at the Rockefeller Center was erected and decorated by construction workers during the Great Depression in 1931.

Anyway, keep thinking of Going Native in your landscaping while enjoying the holidays. Those of you with Christmas trees --- keep an eye on your cats!

The Circle of Life

Photo by Ross Long



This photograph beautifully represents the circle of life and showcases the journey that this hatchling is going to go through. There are many barriers facing this hatchling that will prevent it reaching adulthood. Statistically only 1/1000 will reach this status. It will be a journey of growth. It just so happened that this green turtle was returning back to the ocean after laying her eggs when at the same time a hatchling had hatched and made its way down to the

ocean. It was honestly right place at the right time and I managed to get down so quickly to capture this precise moment before the mother turtle passed the hatchling. A good photographer is always prepared as these moments flash by in a second. Always have your settings ready or custom buttons setup, know your camera inside out and always have it turned on. Expect the unexpected as nature really is unpredictable.”



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Business Briefs
By Mary Craft
mkay512@aol.com

Champs Meat Market will be opening their Island location in the old Donut Palace unit around Easter which is March 31st.



The work on the Access Road between Commodores and Jackfish has been completed and it is now fully open with a sidewalk.

The old Sonic For Lease sign is down. There have been people working on the building.


South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center has Holly Days this weekend Friday the 23rd and Saturday with hay rides, photos with Santa, petting zoo, photos with animals, s'mores & cocoa and more. The facility is located at 8545 S. Staples and is dog friendly.

Korean Hot Plate Restaurant is being built in town on SPID near Discount Tire.

The Corpus Cristi IceRays will be at home playing the Odessa Jackalopes on Friday, December 26th and Saturday the 30th at the American Bank Center. Tickets would make a nice Christmas gift.

Hardknocks Sports Grill invites everyone to come to their New Year's Eve party with special guest the Chainlinks providing music 8 pm to midnight. There will be an open dance floor. Seating is limited so call 589-4398 to reserve your table for four. The cost is \$100 which includes a free appetizer of your choice and a bottle of champagne. Free Breakfast Taco Bar at 11 pm Bar seats are \$15/person.

Gift Cards from Island Businesses make for a great Christmas gift. Padre Pizzeria, Ace Hardware, Snoopy's, PI Art Gallery, Hardknocks are some to choose from.



Padre Pizzeria Gift Cards

Guajillo's Restaurant has a good selection of wines and the best part is they charge just \$3 - \$9 more a bottle than you would pay at a liquor store. I checked this out myself comparing prices on the menu with prices online. The family also suggests pairings.

The Friends of Bob Hall Pier say "All we want for Christmas is what we voted for - a two story restaurant, family picnic area and shade structures." Check out their Facebook page.

The Padre Isles POA candidates running for the board in the election in March are incumbents Drew Diggins and Ray Singleton, George Reed, Kevin Tansey, Thomas Gottemoller and Michael Gdula.

The Good Samaritan Rescue Mission said the coats Islanders donated were greatly needed and appreciated. Alice Decker will start the campaign earlier next year to, hopefully, get even more than five big bags of coats.

The daylight hours are now going to start getting longer. Thank goodness.


Restaurants that will be open Christmas Day are Saltgrass Steakhouse, Landry's, U&I, Texas Flame Steakhouse, The Astor and Wyndham.

Church Services

Real Life will have two candlelight services on Friday, December 22nd at 4 and 6 pm. The Service will be at Island in the Son 10650 SH-361.


Grace Church on the Island Christmas Eve service will feature Bible Study at 9 am and worship service at 10 am. I will be at Island Gatherings 14814 Compass.

Island in the Son has a Christmas Eve worship at 10 am. The Family Friendly Candlelight service will be at 6:30 pm.




Random Stuff

Reese's peanut butter is my new favorite. I didn't even know it existed until I came across it last week.



My lift top coffee table I have written about before for eating meals and snacks. Lately I figured out another use and that is to watch a second football game on my laptop.



Merry Christmas everyone! Looks like our gift from Santa was no road construction work going on.

Real Life Christmas Party at Billish Park



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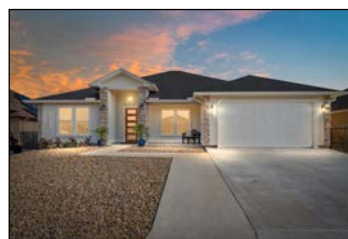
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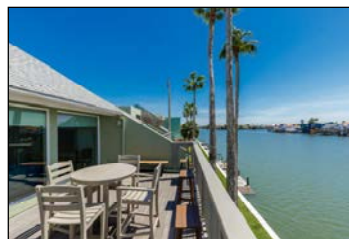
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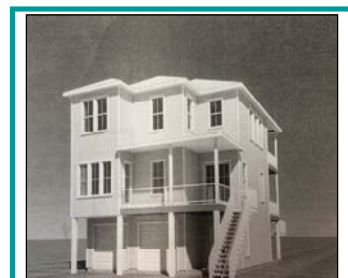
13965 Lanyard 4/3/2 2,502 sq.ft., stainless appliances, quartz & tile throughout plus lots of extras. **\$585,000**. Call **Randy Corpuz** 361-765-9914 or **Charlie Knoll** 361-443-2499.



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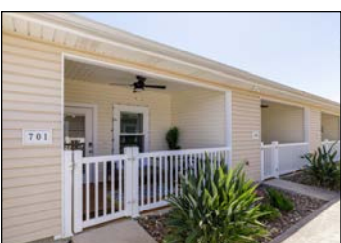
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David and Karen Rossi took the Moon the historic downtown in St. Charles, MO.



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Thoughts from Reverend Ken

By Rev. Dr. Ken

There is power in music and lyric. Adele and Taylor Swift have used music and lyric to process former relationships. When I hear *Stairway to Heaven*, I am taken back to the days of dancing the last dance in high school with the girl who became my wife. When I hear *Brain Damage*, by Pink Floyd, I remember how that song helped me in depths of clinical depression. When I hear *Canon in D*, I remember our daughter’s last piano recital in high school. When I hear or sing Christmas carols my heart is full of hope and joy.

Music and lyric give voice to our longings and hopes, needs and wants. The music of Christmas gives witness that what we see now in this troubled and darkened world is not how things will always be. The music and lyric of Christmas strengthen the heart. Yet, sometimes it is hard to see hope and joy.

In 2007 *The Washington Post* videotaped the reaction of commuters at a Washington DC Metro stop to the music of a violinist. Most of the hurried people didn’t stop or even acknowledge what they were hearing. Some stopped briefly, but then the rush of the race took them on their way. A few even threw a few bucks into the violin case.

Just another street performer hoping for recognition and money? No, it was Joshua Bell, one of the finest concert violinists in the world, playing his expensive Stradivarius violin. The night before, concert goers paid over \$100 to hear him play!

Can we recognize beauty outside the context we expect to encounter beauty? The power of music and lyric helps us to be encountered by beauty in the contexts our everyday lives. Christmas music and lyric orient us to see hope and joy in our everyday lives, especially those places where we least expect it. The joy we sing at Christmas is not a joy that ignores the suffering and injustice that persists. Music and lyric empower us to work for peace and justice

in the contexts within which we live. They empower us to persevere.

Voices drawn together in song in December may seem small in the face of the chaos of struggle and brokenness. Yet, when we sing a carol like *Joy to the World*, we sing of the king who has come to reign. Sins and sorrows no longer infest the ground. The king rules with truth and grace, as opposed to the lies and oppression of evil. We sing a song of joy in the face of the joylessness of this present darkness.

Sing loud this weekend! Allow yourself to be surprised by hope and joy. But more importantly, sing after Christmas Day! Allow music and lyric to reorient your vision to one of hope and joy, peace and justice.

*A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices.
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!* (O Holy Night)

Speaking of joy, a bunch of humans will gather on Sunday evening, 6 pm, at Island Presbyterian Church, Christmas Eve, to rejoice in the birth of baby, the baby Jesus. It will be a candlelight service and we will sing of the joy that has found us. There is room for you at the manger! This service will be different from the Sunday morning service.

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

Choose kindness, compassion, and love; do justice and make peace; welcome the stranger.

pastor@islandpresby.com

Packery Channel Dredging Continues

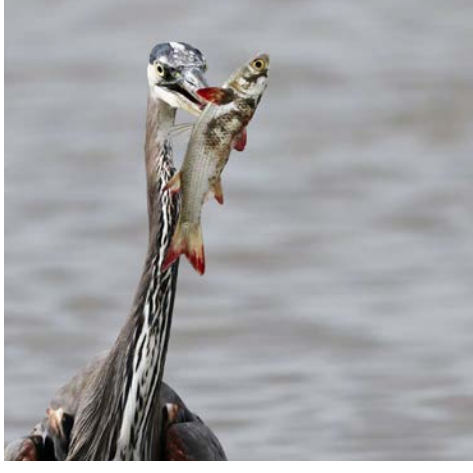
Beach reformation Continues along Michael J ellis Seawall this week



Photographer Debbie Nobles daughter Emily Paulison Celebrates her graduation from college.



We regret to announce the discontinuation of ARK tours in 2024. A change in permit policies requires modifications in order to exhibit residents to the public. We’ve chosen to continue rehabilitations and pursue the ARK mission.



Breakfast By Anthony Clements



Great Egret waiting for its next catch.
Photo By Lu Ann Kingsbury



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Sudoku

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

Going Easy On You...

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

Knuckle-Cracker

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

Mind-Numbing Frustration

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

Brain-Buster

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

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						26				
27									28			29	30	31
			32			33	34	35				36		
37	38					39					40			
41				42							43			
44				45							46		47	48
			49				50	51	52					
53	54	55				56						57		
58						59					60	61		
62						63					64			
65						66					67			

- Across
1. Hands-on electronic game that kinda groans when you lose
6. Legendary Arthur
10. Its state insect is the honeybee
14. Student's busy times
15. "___ and away!"
16. It was good for Caesar
17. Final step in becoming a doctor
20. Nigerian musician King Sunny ___
21. It's no lie
22. Like Lucky Charms
23. How some consent
26. Website visit
27. Rob of "Melrose Place"
28. Michael Jackson song about a rat
29. End of a British queue?
32. Procedures seen on extreme makeover shows
37. Org. opposed to some peer-to-peer file sharing
39. Under way
40. European automaker
41. Anti-Bush news site, with "The"
44. What some spray-ons replicate
45. Penny, in Macau
46. Christopher in 2004 memorials
49. Juan's what
50. Very strong
53. Word repeated before "hey"
56. "Are You Experienced?" name
57. Earned
58. Sports drink variety introduced in 2002
62. Funk
63. Humorist Lebowitz
64. Hired homework help
65. International treaty
66. Gumbo ingredient
67. Milk accompaniment

Down

1. Play nice
2. Nitrous and zinc, for two
3. Teach a puppy to poop indoors
4. Rapscaillon
5. Restaurant general
6. Hearing-related
7. All over the mental map
8. Part of a character name from the "Star Wars" series
9. Prefix for phenomenon
10. German lurker
11. Perfectly
12. Alternative to blinds
13. Jessica in a 1980s scandal
18. Montreal Alouettes et al.
19. Frequent box contents in Mario games
24. Joy of "The View"
25. "___ Lay Dying"
26. Skor alternative
28. Group of nations
29. Name used for the Monica Lewinsky business
30. Shoe size
31. Access letters
33. Not so worldly-wise
34. Nick Drake's "Time ___ Reply"
35. Juice cap in a 1990s fad
36. Surprise 1990s Oscar winner
37. Alphabet segment
38. "___ Believer"
42. Mount Wai'ale'ale's island
43. NY system
47. Type of doll or economics
48. Gets from the wings to the stage
49. Orange video game hero
50. It may be made of bubble gum
51. Name on microwaves
52. Plant your butt
53. Goopy mess
54. Opera set in Egypt
55. Top guy at the U.
56. Steve Martin title role, with "The"
59. Accounts head, for short
60. Ear-related prefix
61. Czech play with robots

Police Blotter December 11-18th

JFK Causeway to SPID-Aquarius intersection
Crimes against Property

14000 block Cabana North December 16 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle

13900 block Jibstay 8 a.m. December 16 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle

15300 block SPID 3 a.m. December 16 Trespassing

14100 block Jackfish 8 a.m. December 15 Trespassing

14000 block Cabana North 3 a.m. December 15 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle

14000 block Cabana North 3 p.m. December 15 Burglary of a Building

15200 block Reales Dr. 8 a.m. December 14 Theft \$750-\$2500

15300 block Yardarm Midnight December 18 Theft of Services

15400 block SPID 10 a.m. December 18 Trespassing

15300 block SPID 3 a.m. December 16 Trespassing

15400 block Fortuna Bay 6 p.m. December 15 Trespassing

15400 block Fortuna Bay 4 p.m. December 14 Trespassing

15300 block SPID 3 a.m. December 16 Trespassing

Disturbances

Verdemar Dr. and Headsail Ave. 4 a.m. December 17

13800 block Brigantine 1 a.m. December 17 Noise Ordinance Violation

14200 block SPID 2 a.m. December Traffic Stop/Possession of Marijuana

14500 block SPID 8 p.m. December 14 Public Intoxication

15000 block Dasmarias 7 p.m. December 12 Noise Ordinance Violation (two calls)

13400 block Aquarius 2 p.m. December 12

13900 block Fortuna Bay 11 a.m. December 16 Noise Ordinance Violation

15500 block Palmira 5 p.m. December 13

Suspicious Person

11800 block SPID 3 p.m. December 13

13300 block SPID 3 a.m. December 17

13300 block SPID 2 p.m. December 13

14300 block Aloha 10 a.m. December 15

15400 block SPID 9 p.m. December 15

16500 block SPID 1 p.m. December 13

Traffic

142 Traffic Stops

SPID West to Laguna Madre
Crimes against Person

13800 block Suntan Ave. 9 a.m. December 17 Harassment

Crimes against Property

13800 block Whitecap Blvd. 11 a.m. December 18 Theft \$750-\$2500

Suspicious Person

13800 block Laffite Noon December 17

Traffic

19 Traffic Stops

SPID East to Gulf of Mexico north to City Limits
Crimes against Property

15800 block SPID 10 p.m. December 11 Unauthorized Use of Motor Vehicle

14800 block Leeward Noon December 17 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle

14800 block Leeward Dr. 2 a.m. December 17 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle

15200 block Beach Way 9 a.m. December 16 Burglary

15000 block Leeward Dr. 9 p.m. December 13 Theft \$750-\$2500

6600 block Seacomber 5 a.m. December 17 Trespassing

Suspicious Person

14800 block Windward 11 a.m. December 18

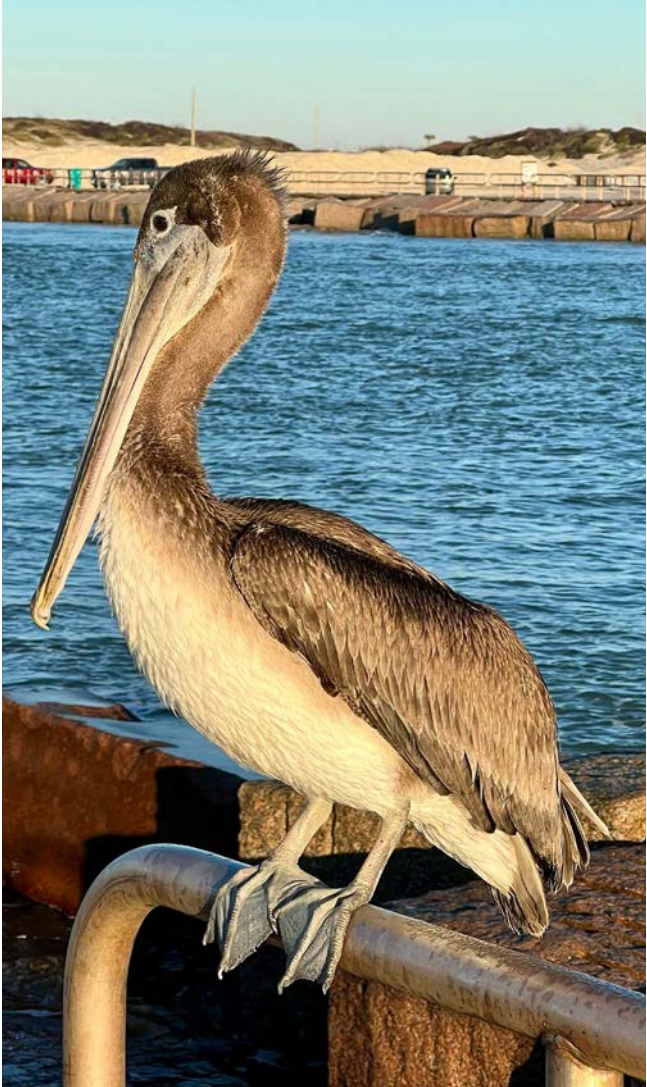
15000 block Windward Dr. 7 p.m. December 16

Traffic

72 Traffic Stops

SH 361/Beach Access Road 3 8 a.m. December 15 Crash

8600 block SH 361 4 p.m. December 15 Crash



Hey bird why the long face...
Evelyn Pless-Schuberth

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The obvious difference is the color of these Pelicans. American White Pelicans are larger than Brown Pelicans with a wingspan of up to 108” and a weight of approx 16 lbs versus approx 54” wingspan and weight of approx up to 10 lbs.

Crossword Solution

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



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“The Don Patricio Causeway, built with private capital in 1927, was the first bridge to link Padre Island with the Texas mainland. In addition, it holds the distinction of having been one of the most unusual bridges ever constructed in Texas.

The builder was Col. Sam Robertson, one of the first promoters of tourism on Padre Island. In the 1920s, Robertson purchased extensive tracts of land on the island, erected picturesque wooden hotels on each end to cater to tourists, and even attempted to build a rudimentary road the entire length of the island. Among the projects he is remembered for is his long wooden bridge, built to make his hotels and other developments more accessible to visitors. He named it Don Patricio in honor of Pat Dunn, from whom he had purchased his island property. For several months Robertson’s men worked at a pile driver, pounding a total of 3,903 wooden pilings all the way across the Laguna Madre from the Flour Bluff area near corpus Christi to Padre Island. The distance was more than three miles. As the piles were driven, timber crosspieces were mounted on them to support four wooden troughs. Toward the end of construction, Robertson’s men erected a tollhouse and the Flour Bluff end of the bridge and there, beginning with the opening of the bridge on July 4, 1927, began charging holiday seekers three dollars per car for crossing over to the island. After paying, the drivers steered their vehicles into the troughs and made their way 3.25 miles over the causeway to the island, all the while attempting to keep tires from rubbing too roughly on the sides of the trough.”



American Legion Post 229

The Islander Post

Texas Veterans Benefits Part 2

Last article I touched on Texas Veterans benefits for enjoying the great outdoors. This time I’ll be talking about Texas property tax exemptions for Veterans. Texas is one of 16 states that offer full property tax exemptions for Veterans with a 100% permanent and total disability rating, or Veterans that have been declared 100% due to individual unemployability. These Veterans are exempt from paying property taxes on their primary residence. An unremarried spouse can continue to receive this exemption if they continue to live on the homestead after the Veteran dies. A surviving spouse can receive this exemption on a subsequent homestead if they do not remarry. Texas offers a partial property tax exemption for partially disabled Veterans. The amount of the exemption is based on the percentage of service-connected disability the VA awarded the Veteran. Disability Exemption Amounts: \$5,000 for 10% - 29% disability rating \$7,500 for 30% - 49% disability rating \$10,000 for 50% - 69% disability rating \$12,000 for 70% - 99% disability rating Disabled Veterans 65 years old or older can receive a property tax exemption of \$12,000 if they have a service-connected disability rating of at least 10%, or are totally blind in one or both eyes, or have lost the use of one or more limbs. An unremarried surviving spouse or child (under 18 and unmarried) of a qualifying

disabled Veteran who dies are eligible for this exemption. An unremarried surviving spouse of a service member who was killed in the line of duty while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces is eligible for 100% property tax exemption on their homestead. Property tax in Texas is a locally assessed and locally administered tax by local appraisal districts and tax assessors/collectors. Veterans who receive compensation from the VA for a service-connected disability should take their proof of VA compensation with the disability rating to their county appraisal district or tax assessor/collector. Veterans and their family members that need assistance with the complex process of accessing VA care and compensation, along with other benefits, can contact our Veterans Service Officers at americanlegionpost0229@gmail.com. Our Salute to Service 2024 concert and live/silent auction event is coming up on January 20th. We have some great items that will be up for auction, an African Safari, guided fishing and shark fishing trips, hunting trips, a custom AR style rifle, pistols, Maui Jim sunglasses, dinner event by Chef Gail Huesmann, a Big Green Egg, a beautiful painting, coolers, spa packages, pig roast, man cave items, dinner packages from many local restaurants, and much more. We have sponsor packages available, tickets and more information available at <https://salutetoservice2024.betterworld.org/>.

A little Island history...

The Year The Island had a White Christmas

Three inches of snow on Christmas Eve 2004!

Just after sundown on December 24, 2004 phones all over Padre Island lit up with the news, “Look outside, it’s snowing!?” Sure enough Padre Island and Port Aransas got a dusting of three inches of snow that lasted through mid-day

on Christmas and even though it was eighteen years ago Islanders who live here then still remember that evening when they walked outside and saw snow covering The Island. So this week we take a look back at White Christmas on The Island!





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Three Chords and the Truth

By Ronnie Narmour
ronnienarmour@gmail.com

Queen of Christmas...



Summer Miller is now the reining Port A Queen of Christmas. She did a wonderful job of MC'ing the Ugly Sweater Contest at the Gaff last Friday.

I hope some of yall made it over to the Gaff last Friday for their annual "Ugly Christmas Sweater" competition. It was a complete and bonafied hoot. **Jim Dugan** was there providing some great live music and the ever so animated **Summer Miller** ran the event. You may remember Summer from the Gaff's Halloween Party where I pronounced her *Port A Queen of Halloween* ... because of her Herculean effort to wear a different costume EVERY day in October. Well, I'm going one step further and I hereby proclaim her the *Port A Queen of Christmas* ... because she deserves it and I have the authority. She's a natural on that microphone at keeping things fun and moving any time there was a little break in the action. She sang us a little song she composed for the event and did so in acapella. It was pretty impressive. I didn't get to stay for the whole party but suffice it to say, it was hilarious. Next on the Gaff's schedule of outrageous party themes will be the WORLD FAMOUS BELT SANDER RACES this Saturday at 3PM followed by a pot luck Christmas dinner and the *Black Eye Pea Off* on New Year's Day.

Two years...
Also last Sunday my **Mermaid Gal** and I attended the *Shorty's Christmas Party at Kody's*. We broke off from it when everybody went bar hopping on **Edwin's** dime because I'm still a little tentative in that department. This *Christmas Eve* marks exactly two years since I've consumed any alcohol... as in "not a single drop". That little episode two years ago when I had gone septic and was admitted to Spohn with pancreatitis, liver failure and pneumonia was a real eye opener. I came real close to taking a dirt nap. It's my constant reminder to keep drinking that ice tea. So enough of me bearing my soul... let's talk about some music.

Scattered shots...



Coach Jim Dugan played the Gaff's Ugly Sweater Contest last Friday.

I finally got to hear **Joey St. Vincent** play. He's been on my radar for a while so I was more than pleased to see him booked at *Shorty's* last Friday. He's a solo act and uses a *looper* to build every song. I'm not sure if it's actually called a *looper* or not but it's a machine that records different parts of the song and then the artist plays it back in real time and records another part of the song over it. Did you get that? He's self contained. It's like having a whole band without having to pay them which worked out well at *Shorty's* since it was cold and windy and the music went inside to the tiny space in the corner of the bar. Mr. St. Vincent has one foot planted firmly in the blues and is an excellent guitarist and entertainer... and a super nice guy. I look forward to seeing him perform again. And on Sunday I went back to *Shorty's* to see 16 year old **Emma James** perform. I don't know much about her but her family was there to help her set up and get going. She sings and plays both the guitar and piano and has a beautiful voice. I can see this young lady has her lifetime career laid out in front of her. Many years ago when I owned the

in-house booking agency for *Antone's Records*, my mentor, **Clifford Antone** instilled in me the importance of working with young people. I will always do my best to encourage them and help them in any way I can. They are the future.



Sixteen year old Emma James played Shorty's last Sunday.

DO NOT MISS LIST Coming this weekend...



Joey St. Vincent played Shorty's last Friday.

Christmas is here and merriment is abound. On Friday the 22nd one of the island's most popular bands, **Starlite and the Moonbeams**, will play *Shorty's*. This is a father/son production and they are great. **Rudolf Llanes Sr.** is on drums and **Jr.** is on guitar and lead vocals and their material is in the vein of R&B and blues. Also on Friday the Cajun/Zydeco duo I've been raving about, **Boudreaux and Pousson** aka **Boo and Poo** aka **Ty Southerland** and **Adam Pousson**, will play the *Gaff*. I really love these guys and am glad to see some other bars booking these guys. It's real deal authentic Louisiana music at its best and brother these boys know how to do it. They trade off on accordion and frottoir (scrub board) and Ty also plays guitar. The beat is lively and fun and you feel like you're in Big Mamou on a Saturday night. Also on Friday the latest new kid, **Raul Ayala**, will take his band downtown to *Cassidy's Pub*. Under the guidance of their keyboardist, **Christopher Ivory**, this band is on fire. They just filmed a new music video, *Pat Mac*, and are out there playing the "A" rooms. Also on Friday in CC we have the **Palacios Brothers** at the *Exchange*, **Matt Hole** and **Hot Rod Gang** bringing rockabilly to the *Surf Club*, **Latin Talk** at *Brewster Street* Downtown, the 80's dance band **The Groove** will play *Rockits* and the great Americana act **Zack Walther** will play the *Pelican Lounge* on Padre Island. On Saturday the 23rd our favorite pirate bar, the *Gaff*, will host their bi-monthly BELT SANDER RACES with **Coach Jim Dugan** playing before and after the races. My racer, the **Moon Monkey** has slowed its roll lately but I'll be out there trying. Also on Saturday, the fab CBDB's with my island son, **John Elijah** up front will return to *Shorty's* where he belongs. Also on Saturday, blues man **John Cortez** will play the *VFW*, **Heavy Soul** with the **Chainlinks** guitarist **Louis Mandel** and drummer **Landin Martinez** will play the *Executive Surf Club*. Plus I want to mention that *Treasure Island* will have **Carson Miller and Steven K** on New Year's Eve... more on that next week. That ought to do it for now. Merry Christmas everybody!!!

And, that's the truth



John Cortez, Antone Perez and Jody Jennings will play the VFW on the 23rd.



Boudreaux and Pousson will play the Gaff on Friday, Dec 22nd.



Carson Miller and Steven K will play Treasure Island on NYE.

LIVE MUSIC TONIGHT

Friday, December 22
Starlite & the Moonbeams @ Shorty's
Boudreaux & Pousson @ Gaff
Raul Ayala @ Cassidy's Pub
Palacios Bros @ The Exchange
Matt Hole @ Executive Surf Club
Latin Talk @ Brewster Street
Downtown
Zack Walther @ Pelican Lounge
Eric Graham @ Double Tree Hotel
Michael Burtts @ Kbobs
Brad Brown @ Blackbeard's
Ruben Limas @ Blackbeard's
The Groove @ Rockits
Latin Talk @ Brewster Downtown
Joey St. Vincent @ Leaping Lizards CC
Eli Brown @ Tannins Southside

Saturday, December 23
BELT SANDER RACES @ Gaff
CBDB's @ Shorty's
John Cortez @ VFW
Jim Dugan @ Gaff
Rock N Roll Flea Market @ House of Rock
Cruise Control @ Sugar Shack Fulton
Raul Ayala @ Retro
Heavy Soul @ Executive Surf Club
Roger Creager @ Brewster Downtown
Crosstown Expressway @ The Exchange
Jerry Bird & the Dirty Wards @ Pelican Lounge
Michael Burtts @ Pompanos
Eli Brown @ South Texas Ice House

Sunday, December 24
Ty Dietz @ Shorty's
Tamale Dinner @ House of Rock
The Daze @ Pelican Lounge
Lady Kat & Mattman @ House of Rock
Jennifer Gayle

Treasure Island
CARSON MILLER & STEVEN K
ON NEW YEAR'S EVE

BRON'S BACKYARD
PORT ARANSAS, TX
BEACH CART RENTALS

SHORTY'S
SELFIE EVERY THURSDAY

STARLITE	DEC 22
CBDB'S	DEC 23
TY DIETZ, JIM DUGAN	DEC 24
JUSTIN & NIKI	DEC 29
RAUL AYALA	DEC 30

101 BEACH STREET, PORT ARANSAS

MOORE-MCDONALD
VFW POST 8967
BEST LITTLE POST ON THE TEXAS COAST
CLEARTONES EVERY WEDNESDAY
JOHN CORTEZ SAT DEC 23
GROOVE NEW YEARS EVE
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Bradley @ Blackbeard's
Eric Magnus @ Sunset Hideaway Ingleside

CHRISTMAS, December 25
Raul Ayala @ Pelican Lounge

Tuesday, December 26
Open Mic @ Salty Dolphin
Ruben Limas @ Blackbeard's
Joey St. Vincent @ Mesquite Street Southside

Wednesday, December 27
FULL MOON
Cleartones @ VFW
Billy Snipes @ Doc's
Michael Burtts @ Pelican Lounge
Tom Cat @ The Exchange
Ruben Limas @ Blackbeards

Thursday, December 28
Selfie @ Shorty's
Hayden Haddock @ Brewster Downtown
Raul Ayala @ The Nest
Michael Burtts @ Rock Bottom
Ruben Limas @ Island Italian
Brad Brown @ Blackbeard's

Friday, December 29
Justin & Niki @ Shorty's
Raul Ayala. Michael Burtts @ Rockit's
The Groove @ Pelican Lounge
OTB @ Packery Bar
Eric Graham @ Cassidy's Pub
Bushbullit @ The Exchange
Ruben Limas @ Blackbeard's

Saturday, December 30
Raul Ayala @ Shorty's
Diamond's Edge @ Rockit's
Pat Green @ Brewster Downtown
National Nobodyz @ The Exchange
Chainlinks @ Pelican Lounge

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