

County Record

Vol. 65 No. 20

Distributed FREE in Orange County, Texas

Week of Wednesday, October 9, 2024

Kids can play firefighter Monday



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MARGARET TOAL For The Record

Kids will be able to experience being a real-life super hero during the Orange Fire Department's annual Open House on Monday, September 14, from 5 to 7 p.m. The free event for families will be at the city's Central Station, at Elm Avenue and Seventh Street in the Old Orange Historic District. Activities will include a

kids-size firefighters obstacle course with participants practicing using ropes and hitting a target with water from a hose. Inflatable bounce toys will also be set up for some fun, plus hot dogs, popcorn, and candy will be served. Tours of Central Station will also be available. The station opened in 2012 after the original Central Station, built in the 1940s, was flooded in Hurricane Ike.

Downstairs in the station is the restored body of the 1920 American La-France fire truck originally ordered by the city of

Orange in 1919. Through the years, the truck had several owners before the city was able to acquire and restore it.

Also, the upstairs conference room includes antique wood furnishings from the 1880s house owned and built by lum-

ber millionaire Henry Jacob Lutzer and his wife, Frances Ann Lutzer.

Firefighter Page 5A



New leaders of the local Texana Toyota dealership are, (L to R) Mike Grewenig, Terry Sinclair, Rick Jones (owner), and Muriel Brown. New owner Rick Jones owns several Toyota dealerships and pledges to provide good customer service along with getting involved in the community. RECORD PHOTO: Gunn's Studio

New Toyota dealer pledges service for Orange

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The longtime Toyota dealership in Orange has a new name, a new giant Texas flag, new construction plans, and a new owner. That owner, Rick Jones, though, isn't focusing all on the visible. He's pledging a new reputation for the dealership along Interstate 10. "There's no where else but to go up," he said. "It was 1,000 percent a troubled dealership." The previous owner of the past decade became part of talk around the county concerning misleading advertising and sales pitches, plus poor work in the service department. Jones said Toyota has 13,070 dealerships in the U.S. and the Orange one was ranked 13,067. He isn't pledging only improved service at the store. He's ready to plunge donations and time into community projects. "That dealership (the previous one) didn't have a servant's heart," he said. He and the new general manag-



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Texana Toyota Page 2A

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about two and a half years ago. It was shot under the Fresh Productions banner, produced by Doug Underwood in March 2022. Originally the title of the screenplay was "Finch," but then a Tom Hanks movie came out with the same title, so it was renamed "5:01." As a sign of the times, when Sonnier was asked for a quote he said, "Oh goodness. Let me break out chat gpt." In reality Sonnier only uses Chat GPT for sarcastic texts

Local Film Page 3A

Creative scarecrows bring fall spirit to Shangri La

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As people across Orange County awoke to cool fall temperatures on Tuesday, the gates to the 14th annual Scarecrow Festival at Shangri La Botanical Gardens opened to bring autumn colors and activities for all ages. Schools, churches, businesses, civic clubs, and families design and set-up scarecrow displays along the walkways of Shangri La. Groups from throughout the area participate and attendees will be able to vote for their favorites in different categories. The gardens are also



decorated with thousands of pumpkins of all colors and sizes, along with fall gourds. A guess how many pumpkins and gourds contest is also part of the activities. Horticulturists have planted displays of fall colors and flowers throughout the gardens. Several special events and activities are planned

with some for children and others for adults. The gardens have free admission and are open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays, and closed to the public on Sundays and Mondays. The fall evening Sip and Stroll held in conjunction with Free State Winery of Orange will be on Thursday, October 17, from 5 to 8 p.m. Free State will sell by pre-order picnic suppers, wine, and sangrias. The suppers and beverages may be ordered through freestatecellars.com under shop/food.

LEFT: Art students from Bridge City High School pose with their Van Gogh inspired entry in this year's 14th Annual Scarecrow Festival at Shangri La Botanical Gardens in Orange.

Scarecrow Page 3A

★ COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS



The Bridge City/Orangefield Rotary Club introduced Abigail Janckila as Rotaries Bridge City October Student of the Month. Abigail has a 4.44 GPA and ranks 15 out of 211 seniors. She plans to attend a university to pursue a degree in nursing to become a pediatric traveling nurse. Pictured left to right are: Alisa Huckaby-Counselor, Gabe Janckila-Brother, Parsi Janckila-Mother, Abigail-Student, Dr. Mike Kelly BCISD Superintendent, Charlee Fitzgerald-Rotary President and Dr. Amanda James-BCHS Principal.



The Bridge City/Orangefield Rotary Club announced Emmerson Rodriquez as their October Student of the Month for Orangefield. Emmerson Ranks 40 out of a class of 114 and has a GPA of 3.6. Emmerson plans to attend Sam Houston State University to pursue a degree in mass communication in order to pursue a career in journalism. Pictured left to right are: Britni Briggs-Counselor, Rebecca Auer-Grandmother, Chris Flowers-Stepdad, Jennifer Flowers-Mother, Emmerson-Student, Chris Rodriguez-Father, Charlee Fitzgerald-Rotary President, Shaun McAlpin-OFISD Superintendent, and Rea Wrinkle OFHS Principal.

Texana Toyota opens here From Page 1

olina. His family has ties and roots in Texas and he enjoys the Louisiana area. Orange on the border of the two states offers a mix of the cultures he enjoys.

He said the Toyota corporation asked him to take over the Orange dealership. A look at the economic indicators of the area helped make the decision.

The Southeast Texas-Southwest Louisiana area is one of the leading parts of the country growing in construction, industry, and population. Orange County is in the center of the growth with the new \$8.5 billion Chevron-Phillips Golden Triangle Polymers chemical plant under construction.

But an economic boom won't guarantee sales for a business. Jones began with hiring all new employees, except for the accounting department. He also brought in department heads experienced in the car business. More new

staff will be hired and trained.

The inventory of new and used cars will be increasing. That will include Toyota gasoline-using hybrid vehicles, now offered in the brand's pickup trucks and SUVs.

He's also planning expansion. "In the next 24 months, we will have a major remodeling or new construction," he said. He's already met with the city of Orange's Economic Development Corporation to discuss the plans.

Jones and Grewenig began their new leadership on Monday, September 30. Three days later, they were already enamored with the local culture, especially the food at Spanky's.

"I hear there's also a trained chef from an old prominent family," Jones said about David C. Claybar's Old Orange Cafe.

Grewenig even asks if they might really see an alligator in the lot. After all,

with Adams Bayou only a short distance away. It's a possibility.

That leads to Jones recalling a story from his New Orleans dealership, which he acquired after Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005. He said a canal runs behind the business and one day, someone spotted a large gator in the canal.

A couple of guys went out and bought some chicken

thighs, which were attached to a giant hook and rope. When the gator took the bait and hook, the guys pulled it onto the parking lot and shot him. "Then they started arguing over who was going to get the tail to eat," he said.

Maybe that helps explain the Texana name for the dealership. Sure, Texana, derived from Spanish, refers to the Texas culture. In

Orange, Texas culture blends with Louisiana's, forming a unique Tex-ana. Jones, Grewenig, and their team are ready to immerse themselves in this community.

Holiday in the Park booth spaces available

Booth registrations are now open to the public beginning for this year's "Holiday in the Park" festival hosted by the City of West Orange.

The festival is scheduled for Saturday, November 2, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 in the park next door to West Orange City Hall (2700 Western Avenue; West Orange, Texas). The event will have food booths, craft booths, children's activities and will feature local entertainment.

NO alcohol of any kind will be sold at, or allowed on, the festival grounds. Rules and regulations, as well as a site map and registration form can be found on the City's website located at www.cityofwestorange.com.

For further information, or to reserve a booth space, contact West Orange City Hall at 409-883-3468.

The Record Newspapers of Orange County, Texas

The Record Newspapers- The County Record and the Penny Record- are published on Wednesday of each week and distributed free throughout greater Orange County, Texas. The publications feature community news, local sports, commentary and much more. Readers may also read each issue of our papers from our web site TheRecordLive.Com.

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Dan Perrine - Sports Editor
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Orange County filmmaker recognized

From Page 1



Seth Sonnier shows off the trophy won for his short film "5:01" Saturday at the Lake Charles Film Festival. RECORD PHOTO: Penny LeLeux

and spam text messages. He replied with this synopsis of the plot.

"5:01 is an anachronistic fever dream, office comedy that follows someone whose bad day just keeps getting worse. Think, Napoleon Dynamite meets Office Space but with a little more P.P."

"5:01" is added to the list of winning Orange County films with a Fresh Productions connection. Both "Shhh" and "Death by King Cake" are multi-award-winning films that Underwood has helped produce.

"From personally starting with one- and two-person film projects to over seventy-five Individuals working on "5:01," it is yet another example of how the extremely talented and motivated network of SETX film makers are taking on bigger and more ambitious projects," said Underwood.

Sonnier's take on the win, "Winning 3rd place at The Lake Charles Film festival in the Short film narrative category is a lot like winning 1st place at Sundance, but instead of 1st, it's 3rd, and instead of Sundance, it's Lake Charles. In some ways it's worse, in some ways it's better." He elaborated, "Sundance has a lot of highbrow Hollywood executives shaking their head at the fact that you didn't come in first. However, Lake Charles has a bunch of homegrown filmmakers, passing out high fives fully stoked that you placed. The networking, the new friendships and community make every place feel like first place."

Jade Hollier of Orange played the part of Lisa. Hollier has been a member of Orange Community Players since she was a youngster, but this is her first film role.

Trini Gonzales, an Orange County native that graduated from LCM, worked diligently in the background of the film. Trini started acting just a couple of years ago and

One of those connections made over the weekend was with Emily Moss Wilson, a director that has filmed 10 Hallmark Christmas movies and may be filming one in Sulphur in the future. She was at the festival with a non-Christmas independent film "Inheritance" that she is currently seeking distribution for. It won the coveted "Scallywag," a pirate head 1st place trophy.

Filmmakers have also been invited to join the Acadiana Film Association. The new organization is building a database of filmmakers and actors and invited the Texas contingent in Southeast Texas to be a part of it.

"5:01" has had four screenings in the last few months, including Tyler Film Festival, just a couple of weeks ago. It picked up 2nd place in the Texas Proud category at the Boomtown Film and Music Festival back in February.

The film was shot in two days in Silsbee and in Old Town Beaumont. Though the film was not shot in Orange County, several of the crew and cast members either live in Orange County or were raised here.

Trini Gonzales, an Orange County native that graduated from LCM, worked diligently in the background of the film. Trini started acting just a couple of years ago and

has exploded on Beaumont Stages. He was one of the two actors in the "Tuna Christmas," cast in Beaumont. That production required him to assume 11 or 12 distinct roles.

"5:01" was the first movie I ever worked on," said Gonzales. "The concept was hilarious and the cast and crew was amazing to work with."

Gonzales was also a main character in last year's Lamar summer

project film, "11:31" that was shot in Vidor. What are the odds that he has been in two films whose title is a time?

Travis Myers, the director of photography (DP) and owner of Bronco Media lives in Orange across the street from Mayor Larry Spears. Myers shoots most of the films made in Orange County and is in heavy demand. He and his wife Kaylee recently welcomed a new addition to their family on

Sept. 5, a son they named Owen. Kaylee is a photographer and when Travis is not making films, he is frequently shooting wedding videos, while Kaylee captures the still images.

Dakota Parker was on the crew as grip. A grip is a technician in the film and television industry who sets up, operates and maintains equipment for cameras and lighting. Parker also lives in Orange.

"5:01" had several local classic vehicles in the production, including the police car owned by Bridge City resident Michael

Murray. His vehicle is a replica of the car driven by "Roscoe P. Coltrain" in "Dukes of Hazzard." The vehicle has autographs of members of the cast of the popular TV show. He has loaned out the vehicle for multiple films locally including the recent proof of concept, "Chasing Faith."

Sonnier also said Tuesday, "I couldn't be happier. Our whole team made this possible, film is a collaborative art and the Lake Charles film festival embodies that to a tee!"

"It's exciting to be a part of the growth," said Underwood.

NOTICE OF GENERAL ELECTION FOR OTHER POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS AVISO DE ELECCIÓN GENERAL PARA OTRAS SUBDIVISIONES POLÍTICAS

To the registered voters of the County of Orange, Texas:
A los votantes registrados del Condado de Orange, Texas:

Notice is hereby given that the polling places listed below will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., November 5, 2024, for voting in a general election for political subdivisions to elect two (2) Commissioner-at-Large positions on the board of Orange County Emergency Services District No. 3.
Notifíquese por la presente, que las casillas electorales citadas abajo se abrirán desde las 7:00 a.m. hasta las 7:00 p.m. el 5 de noviembre de 2024 para votar en la Elección General para elegir Dos (2) puestos de comisionado general en la Junta del Distrito de Servicios de Emergencia del Condado de Orange No. 3

On Election Day, voters may vote at any of the following countywide polling locations:

El día de Elección, los votantes podrán votar en cualquiera de los siguientes lugares de votación en todo el condado:

Location of Election Day Polling Places
Sitios de votación el Día de Elección

WOCCISD Admin/Education Bldg	902 W Park Ave, Orange
Orange Public Library	220 N 5 th Street, Orange
St. Francis Catholic Church	4300 Meeks Drive, Orange
LCMCISD Administration Bldg	6586 FM 1130, Orange
Sabine River Authority	12777 N Hwy 87, Orange
West Orange City Hall	2700 Western Ave, Orange
Salvation Army	1950 Martin Luther King Drive, Orange
Orange County Drainage District	8081 Old Hwy 90, Orange
Mauriceville Community Center	7441 Cohenour Road, Mauriceville
Orange County Expo Center	11475 FM 1442, Orange
Dow Business Center (DERA)	2601 Irving Street, Orange
Orangefield Cormier Museum	9908 FM 105, Orangefield
Bridge City Knights of Columbus Hall	495 W Roundbunch Road, Bridge City
St. Paul Methodist Church	1155 W Roundbunch Road, Bridge City
Orange County Airport	2640 Hwy 87 S, Orange
Vidor ISD Administration Bldg	1122 N Main Street, Vidor
Pecan Acres Baptist Church	14795 Duncan Woods Lane, Vidor
Pine Forest Baptist Church	4800 N Main Street, Vidor
Raymond Gould Community Center	385 Claiborne Street, Vidor
The Oaks Event Center	2110 S Main Street, Vidor

During early voting, a voter may vote at any of the locations listed below:

Durante Votación Adelantada, los votantes podrán votar en cualquiera de los sitios de votación nombradas abajo:

Orange Public Library (Main Early Voting Location) 220 N 5 th Street Orange, TX 77630	Raymond Gould Community Center 385 Claiborne Street Vidor, TX 77662
Mauriceville Community Center 7441 Cohenour Road Orange, TX 77632	Orange County Airport 2640 S Hwy 87 Orange, TX 77630

Days and Hours of Operation

Días y Horas Hábiles

October (octubre) 21 - 25	Monday - Friday (lunes - viernes)	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
October (octubre) 26	Saturday (sábado)	7:00 am - 7:00 pm
October (octubre) 27	Sunday (domingo)	1:00 pm - 7:00 pm
October (octubre) 28 - November (noviembre) 1	Monday - Friday (lunes - viernes)	7:00 am - 7:00 pm

Applications for ballot by mail shall be mailed to:

Las solicitudes para boletas de votación adelantada por correo deberán enviarse a:

Elections Administrator

Donna Aiford

123 S 6th Street

Orange TX 77630

(409)882-7973

Email: elections@co.orange.tx.us

Website: <https://www.co.orange.tx.us/departments/ElectionsAdministration>

Applications for ballot by mail (ABBMs) must be received no later than the close of business on:

October 25, 2024.

Las solicitudes para boletas de votación adelantada por correo deberán recibirse para el fin de las horas de negocio el 25 de octubre del 2024.

Issued this the 23rd day of July, 2024

Emitida este día de 23 de julio de 2024

Signature of Wayne LaCombe
Firma de Wayne LaCombe

Signature of Cammie Vincent
Firma de Cammie Vincent

Signature of Jeffrey Braus
Firma de Jeffrey Braus

Signature of Robert Smith
Firma de Robert Smith

Signature of Cathryn Drake
Firma de Cathryn Drake

Scarecrow Festival

From Page 1

The winery will be selling individual glasses of wine and sangria at the gardens during the Sip and Stroll. Musical entertainment will be provided by Pendulum Hearts of Austin featuring jazz and Western swing.

Some tables and chairs will be set up for dining and sipping, however people are also invited to bring blankets to sit on for more of a picnic atmosphere. No outside food or drinks will be allowed.

The Scarecrow Festival will culminate with the annual Autumn Festival on Saturday, October 26, from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. A number of games, crafts, and activities for kids and their families during the Fall Festival. Vendors booths with information on nature and the outdoors will also be set up.

Winning scarecrow entries will also be announced that day.

Shangri La Botanical Gardens and Nature Center is more than 250 acres along Adams Bayou in Orange. It was established by the late H.J. Lutchter Stark in the 1940s and then closed to the public for more than 50 years.

The Stark Foundation created landscaped gardens for strolling and left acreage in its natural state. Boat tours along the bayou are offered and schools throughout Southeast Texas and Southwest Louisiana take field trips for learning science and nature lessons guided by Shangri La's staff educators.

The main entrance is at 2111 West Park Avenue with free parking available across the street.

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LEFT:

Art students from Bridge City High School pose with their Van Gogh inspired entry in this year's 14th Annual Scarecrow Festival at Shangri La Botanical Gardens in Orange.

Scarecrow Page 3A



Rotary Governor Leon Willhite greets local officers

The Bridge City/Orangefield Rotary Club introduced their 2024-2025 slate of officers to the visiting District 5910 Rotary Governor Leon Willhite. Officers are Charlee Fitzgerald-President, Mike Lund-Vice-President, Karen Collier-Secretary, Lucy Fields-Treasurer, Eric Andrus-Membership and Kirk Roccaforte-Sergeant at Arms.

Firefighter Open House

From Page 1

The house was torn down in the 1940s, but their grandson, H.J. Lutchter Stark, saved and stored an elaborate carved fireplace mantel, along with carved arched windows and a carved door. The Stark Foundation donated the items for the new fire station.

Tours will also include a look at where the firefighters sleep and eat during their 24-hour a day shifts. Fire Prevention Week was started 100 years ago as a way to help children and adults learn safety around fires, heaters, cooking stoves, and other common household places where

fires can start. It's a time to remind people to double check for fire hazards, develop plans to escape and fire, and make sure smoke detectors are in buildings. More information about the Orange Fire Department and the open house are available through 409-883-1050.

Deaths & Memorials

Bertha Garcia Werkheiser, 89

Bertha Garcia Werkheiser, 89, of Bridge City, Texas, passed away on Oct. 1, 2024, in Abilene, Texas.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held 1 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024, at St. Henry Catholic Church in Bridge City. Officiating will be Father Ernie Carpio. Burial will follow at St. Mary Catholic Cemetery in Orange.

Visitation will be from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., with a Vigil to be held at 7 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 11, 2024, at Claybar Funeral Home in Bridge City.

Born in Louise, Texas, on Oct. 2, 1934, she was the daughter of Nemencio Garcia and Victoria Vann Garcia. Bertha lived a life rich in purpose, love, and community service. As a well-known cashier at Kroger, Bertha brought a smile and a welcoming presence to those who frequented the store. Her commitment to service extended beyond her job; she was deeply involved in her local community. Bertha was an active member of St. Henry Catholic Church and the St. Henry Altar Society, reflecting her strong faith and dedication. Beyond her professional life, Bertha was a woman of many talents and interests. She was an avid gardener, taking great joy in her beautifully maintained flower beds and greenhouse. Her passion for cultivating nature was matched by her new found love for dogs later in life, a testament to her nurturing spirit. In her quiet moments, she found peace and contentment sitting in nature, appreciating the beauty around her. Creatively, Bertha expressed herself through embroidery and crochet, crafting pieces that were often gifted to family and friends. She graduated from Stark High School, where she was an enthusiastic member of the Bengal Guards and contributed to her school's basketball team. Bertha took immense pride in her heritage and was dedicated to instilling this pride in her children and grandchildren. Throughout her life, Bertha was profoundly involved in the lives of her children and grandchildren, offering support, guidance, and love. She volunteered at local



Bertha Garcia Werkheiser

schools, reinforcing her commitment to education and the well-being of future generations.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Sterling E. Werkheiser; her parents, Nemencio and Victoria Garcia; her sister, Annie M. Garcia; her brothers, Arthur Garcia and Nemencio Garcia, Jr.; and her grandchildren, Todd Brown and Noah Werkheiser.

She is survived by her children, Victoria A. Brown and husband, Aval, Diana L. McDonald and husband, Gary, John P. Werkheiser and wife, Lisa, Tammy S. Oldani and husband, Doug, and Mark A. Werkheiser and wife, Crystal; her grandchildren, Justin Brown and wife, Jennifer, Phillip Werkheiser and wife, Amber, Elizabeth Chesley and husband, Chad, Michael Wekheiser, Holly Werkheiser, Zara Holmes and husband, Josh, Kara Lee and husband, Zach, Emily Wekheiser, John Oldani, Abby Oldani, Nathan Jeter and wife, Katelyn, and Candace Pagan and husband, Rich; her great-grandchildren, Caleb Brown, Caden Jeter, Collin Jeter, Raelynn Jeter, Olivia Chesley, Eli Werkheiser, Andrew Werkheiser, Mason Holmes, Andrew Holmes, Cooper Holmes, and Kimberly Werkheiser; and numerous other loving family members and friends.

Serving as pallbearers will be Justin Brown, John Oldani, Nathan Jeter, Michael Paul Werkheiser, Phillip Werkheiser, and Rich Pagan. Honorary pallbearers are Caleb Brown, Caden Jeter, Collin Jeter, Andrew Werkheiser, Andrew Holmes, Raelynn Jeter, Olivia Chesley, Eli Werkheiser, Mason Holmes, Cooper Holmes, and Kimberly Werkheiser.

The family would like to extend a special thank you to Minerva Vidaurri and to Carl Mock, Dshay Henson, Rosa Almanza, Essie Shackelford, Missie Swartzfager, Karen Wolsch, Melonice Malone, Homeplace Manor Healthcare Center and staff who became like family, and Hendrick Hospice Center and staff who took great care of Bertha.

James Griffin, 62, of Bridge City

James Griffin, 62, of Bridge City, Texas, passed away on Oct. 4, 2024. He was an all around talent for building, mechanics. His passion was cooking.

He is survived by his parents Thomas Griffin Sr and Emma Griffin of Bridge City, Texas; brothers, Larry Griffin and wife Denise of Orange, Texas, Roger and Rhonda Griffin of Pineland, Texas, Thomas Griffin, Jr. of Bridge City, Texas and sister, Sandra Griffin of Bridge City, Texas.

James also leaves behind 6 sons, 2 daughters and several grandchildren.



James Griffin

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of **VAYDON CRUZ ABREGO**, Deceased, were issued on **OCTOBER 2, 2024**, in Cause No. P20112, pending in the County Court at Law of Orange County, Texas, to: **LYNNA JAN GUCKER**. All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. c/o: **Barron Law Office P.O. Box 279 Orange, TX 77631-0279**

Dated the 2nd day of October, 2024.

George B. Barron
George B. Barron
Attorney for Executor
State Bar No.: 01817500
P.O. Box 279
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NOTICE OF APPLICATION OF ENTERGY TEXAS, INC. FOR AUTHORITY TO RECONCILE FUEL AND PURCHASED POWER COSTS

On September 30, 2024, Entergy Texas, Inc. ("Entergy Texas") filed an Application with the Public Utility Commission of Texas ("Commission") to reconcile its eligible fuel and purchased power costs incurred during the period of April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2024 ("Reconciliation Period"). This filing was made pursuant to Section 36.203 of the Texas Utilities Code and 16 Texas Administrative Code § 25.236. The Commission has assigned Docket No. 57134 to the Application.

In its Application, Entergy Texas seeks to reconcile approximately \$1.61 billion of fuel and purchased power expenses incurred during the Reconciliation Period to generate and purchase electric energy for its retail customers. In this reconciliation proceeding ETI seeks Commission review of Entergy Texas' eligible fuel and purchased power expenses incurred during the Reconciliation Period and a determination they were reasonable and necessary to serve retail customers.

Entergy Texas's under-recovery balance for the Reconciliation Period totals approximately \$30.0 million, which includes interest expense on the under-recovered amounts. Entergy Texas does not seek to implement a fuel-related refund or surcharge of its eligible fuel costs in this case. Entergy Texas proposes to roll any ending fuel balance resulting from this proceeding forward to serve as the beginning balance for the next reconciliation period.

All customers and classes of customers receiving retail electric service from Entergy Texas whose electric service rates include charges pursuant to Rate Schedule FF (fixed fuel factor) will be affected by the Application. This Application has no effect on Entergy Texas' non-fuel rates.

Persons with questions or who want more information on this petition may contact Entergy Texas at Attn: Customer Service—Fuel Reconciliation, 350 Pine Street, Beaumont, Texas 77701, or call 1-866-981-2602 during normal business hours. A complete copy of this petition is available for inspection at the address listed above or by email at tcr@entergy.com.

Persons who wish to formally participate in this proceeding, or who wish to express their comments concerning this petition should contact the Public Utility Commission of Texas, Office of Customer Protection, P.O. Box 13326, Austin, Texas 78711-3326, or call (512) 936-7120 or toll-free at (888) 782-8477. Hearing- and speech-impaired individuals with text telephones ("TTY") may call (512) 936-7136 or use Relay Texas (toll-free) 1-800-735-2989. A deadline for intervention will be established for this proceeding. All communications should refer to Docket No. 57134.

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OC football squads bring home big wins



Orangefield quarterback Carson Gonzales hands off to running back Mason Manning as the Bobcat offensive line blows open a hole to the goal line.
RECORD PHOTO: Cheryl Taylor - Cheryl Taylor Photography



Mason Manning tries to shuck off an Anahuac defensive lineman to gain ground in the 38-0 Orangefield victory over Anahuac.
RECORD PHOTO: Cheryl Taylor - Cheryl Taylor Photography



Carson Gonzales finds an open receiver downfield and gets off a pass during game action in Anahuac. The Bobcats won the contest 38-0.
RECORD PHOTO: Cheryl Taylor - Cheryl Taylor Photography



Orangefield's Mason Manning trudges to the goal line for a touchdown against Anahuac.
RECORD PHOTO: Cheryl Taylor - Cheryl Taylor Photography

TOMMY MANN JR.
For The Record

It was a good weekend for the majority of Orange County football teams as each winning team completely overwhelmed its opposition. Here is a recap of the games from Week 6.

BC pummels Vidor Pirates

The Cardinals have silenced the doubters with another solid victory. Bridge City defeated Vidor 49-20 this past Friday night to remain undefeated on the year.

After a Pirates touchdown early in the first quarter, Abraham Munguia returned the kickoff 86-yards for a touchdown. A short time later, Braxton Lynam picked up a loose ball and returned it 26-yards for another Cardinals touchdown and a 14-6 lead at the end of the first quarter.

Bridge City held a 28-6 advantage at halftime after quarterback Hutch Bearden scored on a 9-yard run and then tossed a 25-yard touchdown pass to Hunter Ford.

Bearden added a 7-yard touchdown run in the third quarter before Vidor found the board again, this time courtesy of a 16-yard run by Daigan Venable to make the score 35-13 at the end of the third quarter.

Bridge City running back Ashton Sumrall scored on a 1-yard run in the fourth quarter, while the defense added another scoop-and-score when Trey Bradley returned a Pirates fumble 28-yards for the touchdown. A late Vidor touchdown run made the final 49-20 for the Cards.

The Cardinals (5-0, 2-0) will be on the road this week to take on the Har-

din-Jefferson Hawks (3-2, 1-1) in Sour Lake. Vidor (1-4, 0-2) returns home to face the Huffman-Hargrave Falcons (5-0, 2-0).

Bobcats steamroll Anahuac

The Orangefield Bobcats scored early and never looked back this past Friday with a 38-0 victory over the Anahuac Panthers.

The Panthers were the preseason pick to win District 10-3A Division 1 and were ranked No. 10 in the state as recently as two weeks ago, but none of that mattered when the Bobcats rolled into Anahuac and whipped the Panthers in all three phases of the game.

The Orangefield defense held the high-powered Anahuac offense to just 135 yards of total offense for the game, while the Bobcats offense churned out more than 420 yards of offense.

Quarterback Carson Gonzalez passed for 165 yards and a touchdown to receiver Zach Morrow, who finished the game with six receptions and nearly 120 yards. Running backs Mason Manning and Jose Lecea both made big contributions to the win as Manning ran for 135 yards and three scores, while Lecea added a touchdown and 85 yards on the ground.

Orangefield (4-2, 2-0) returns home this week in what should be an important game in district standings and playoff implications when the Bobcats face the Cold-spring-Oakhurst Trojans (4-1, 1-0).

SEE FOOTBALL
Page 4B



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Capt. Chuck Uzzle
For The Record



Chuck Uzzle

I have no idea why we as anglers are constantly trying to complicate things, always re-inventing the wheel and adding corners. In our never ending quest to catch more and bigger fish we often stray down the path which we think leads to discovery only to find that out that if we had just read the street signs we'd be in much better shape.

Over the years it seems like we have become so detailed and specific that the average fisherman suffers from "paralysis by analysis". Fishing reports have become "thesis like" statements so full details that instead of helping they now hinder the angler. A once simple task has now become so complex that many anglers doubt their own ability to catch fish. An extremely simple answer to this new "information overload phenomenon" can be summed up with 4 letters, "K.I.S.S.", and they stand for Keep It Simple Stupid. I am a firm believer in the concept and you should be as well.

In our quest to become "fish catching machines" and "super anglers" many of the best things about the sport of fishing routinely take a backseat to the "newest, latest, and greatest". I usually get my own brand of wake up call from clients who share the boat with me, especially kids and anglers new to the sport. Sometimes it takes seeing the sport through a different set of eyes to help you truly focus on what's good.

If you stop for just a moment and think about what is the most basic and pure moment in the whole fishing equation it has to be when a fish pulls on the other end of the line. At that moment it doesn't matter what lure or bait you using, what rod your casting, or even what kind of fish is doing the pulling. All that is good about the sport is compressed into that split second when excitement and anticipation meet, that's what keeps us coming back.

Now a lot of fisherman will scoff at the notion of simplifying the fishing process and they are certainly welcome to do that because the sport means different things to different people. I personally love to simplify things every now and again because it helps me gain perspective. Here recently I have taken to the notion of getting "uncomplicated" and it's been a blast. For years when I first started guiding my security blanket if you will was a handful of Mansfield Maulers and a bag of glo cocahoe minnows.

I spent hours drifting that slender rattling cork, made by the legendary Bob Fuston, and I caught the heck out of fish while doing so. I have come full circle and returned to my old ways it seems as I now reach for that rod with a cork on it more often. I don't care who you are or where you fall out on the angling scale everyone who fishes loves to see a cork dance and then plunge under water, it's the most basic of all scenes in the sport and something that every fisherman has in common with one another.

The idea of fishing with a cork will certainly be met with resistance from those who believe themselves above such mundane types of fishing and that's okay because everyone has certain likes and dislikes. I have no problem slowing things down

CAPTAIN CHUCK Page 5B

Gulf Coast Fishing Reports

This week's Texas Gulf Coast Fishing Reports was compiled by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

• **Sabine Lake**

GOOD. 85 degrees. Ling are good in the gulf. Trout continue to bite at the rigs in 14-20 feet of water. Some catches of triple tail at the rigs off the beach retrieving 3/8 ounce jig heads on the bottom in 36 feet of water.

Ladyfish and sharks are abundant at the jetties. Some triple tails, cobia and snapper in the ICW. North revetment wall is good for speckled trout biting shrimp under a popping cork in the morning. Then we go into the canal off of Pleasure Island Point and drift on the flats for some nice trout and redfish. The fish are running shrimp up out of the deeper water of the intercoastal canal. Target redfish, speckled trout, and flounder with shrimp under a popping cork and shrimp on the shell flats and the rock piles. Slot fish are biting on outgoing tide in the morning and mid-day. Also catching some trout in 10-14 feet of water on a quarter ounce jig head with watermelon red flake 3.5 inch plastic.

Report by Captain Randy Foreman, Captain Randy's Guide Service Sabine Lake.

• **Bolivar**

EXCELLENT. 83 degrees. Expect another week of excellent fishing due to the cool mornings. Plenty of action at the jetty producing limits of slot-sized trout, big bull redfish, and black drum. Flounder are still visible on the low tides and a few bigger females are starting to move in for the fall. Tide changes and incoming tide fishing will be some of the best especially on days with calm winds. The beach has been flat and crystal clear. The surf is producing limits of speckled trout, bull redfish and black drum. The big stingrays and bigger sharks are still running along the whole peninsula with more caught by Gilchrist and the Bolivar flats. Anglers are using all kinds of different bait with awesome results. Report by Captain Shane Rilal, North Jetty Bait Camp.

• **Trinity Bay**

SLOW. 84 degrees. Deeper shell producing fair numbers of keeper trout. Bull redfish are roaming in the open bay. Upper ship channel spoil islands good for black drum, redfish, and sheepshead on live shrimp fished under popping corks. Report by Captain David Dillman, Galveston Bay Charter Fishing. Redfish are schooling really well right now hitting electric root beer WACKy shrimp rigged weedless, or live shrimp under a popping cork. Redfish are territorial, so if the bait is there, they will stay around an area. Trout are by the ship channel north of the Fred Hartman with current and rocks being caught on the same thing redfish are. Drum and sheepshead are around the redfish. Big Jack Crevalle and mangrove snapper can be caught above the Fred Hartman. Pay attention to the wind and weather and always wear your kill switch! Report by Captain Zackary Scott, Zack Attack Fishing.

• **East Galveston Bay**

GOOD. 85 degrees. Redfish catches are good in the marsh at the back of the bay. Scattered birds working over schools of speckled trout. Report by Captain Shane Rilal, North Jetty Bait Camp. Surface water temperature 82 degrees. The water clarity is about average now for East Galveston Bay, with clearer water as you get west of Stingaree. This week there has been light North winds, which allows anglers the opportunity to fish wherever they choose. We focused on grass shorelines with nervous shrimp present finding some trout and the redfish have absolutely been on fire. We utilized imitation shrimp lures under popping corks, with a 1-foot leader, as well as 1/16 ounce jig heads with tails by WacAttack fished slowly. Fish Bites also performed very well when fished under a popping cork. If you like fishing under the birds they are pretty much all over the Bay, and some have better trout mixed in. If you see reefs with birds sitting on the water, the fish are close by. The crowds have thinned now that Labor Day has passed, and fishing is heating up with the surface temp dips, with less fishing pressure and cooler air temps on the way, so get your friends and family and get out on the water. Report by Captain Jeff Brandon, Get the Net Guide Service, LLC.

• **Galveston Bay**

SLOW. 84 degrees. Gas wells still producing decent numbers of keeper size speckled trout with the best bite on calm wind days with live shrimp, but soft plastic lures are working well. Redfish are be-

coming more active over shallow structure, along with black drum. Best bite on live shrimp. Report by Captain David Dillman, Galveston Bay Charter Fishing.

• **West Galveston Bay**

GOOD. 85 degrees. Live shrimp fished over shell producing catches of speckled trout, redfish, and black drum. A few birds working over scattered schools of smaller trout. Report by Captain David Dillman, Galveston Bay Charter Fishing.

• **Freeport**

GOOD. 88 degrees. Christmas Bay, Chocolate Bay, Bastrop Bay, and the upper West Galveston Bay have been good drifting shrimp under a popping cork for trout, redfish and drum. San Luis Pass and The Brazos River are good early in the morning for trout and redfish throwing topwaters, plastics, or free lining mullet or live shrimp. The Freeport Harbor is good for catches of redfish, sheephead mangrove snapper and some trout using live shrimp or mullet free lining along the rocks. Report by Captain Jake Brown, Flattie Daddy Fishing Adventures

• **Texas City**

GOOD. 84 degrees. The south jetty is producing catches of bull redfish, black drum, slot redfish, and sharks. Live shrimp, live crab, and fresh dead shad working best. Near shore fishing in state waters is good for red snapper and the occasional ling. Report by Captain David Dillman, Galveston Bay Charter Fishing. Great fishing conditions that should improve when the tides bring in the clear gulf waters. People are catching plenty of speckled trout, redfish, and a handful of nice flounder every day with some occasional black drum, sheepshead, sand trout, and gafftop. Live shrimp and finger mullet have been the best baits. Report by Captain Shane Rilal, North Jetty Bait Camp.

• **Matagorda Bay East & West**

GOOD. 90 degrees. Very little fishing pressure on the bay. Wade anglers are catching trout on the east side, and those drifting on the west end are landing catches of trout. Abundance of drum can be targeted on shell reefs with artificials. Very few reports of redfish, with most catching coming from West Matagorda Bay. Report by Captain Charlie Paradoski, Captain Charlie Paradoski's Guide Service.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS FINANCIAL RATING

Little Cypress - Mauriceville C.I.S.D. will hold a public meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, October 21, 2024 at the LCM Administration Building, 6586 FM 1130, Orange, Texas to discuss the district's rating on the state's financial accountability system.

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'The Lakes' Fishing

• **Toledo Bend Fishing Report**

FAIR. Water normal stain; 85 degrees; 4.13 feet below pool. It's really back to summer again here the water temperature is back to the mid to high 80s. Bass bite is back to being just fair with shallow fish on topwater and chatterbaits. Creek fish are in 5-8 feet little better. Fish out deep, but most are small to keepers with dropshots and spoons. Crappie slow. Report by Stephen Johnston, Johnston Fishing.

• **Sam Rayburn Fishing Reports**

FAIR. Water slightly stained; 80 degrees; 0.82 feet below pool. Bass are schooling more in the morning so expect more topwater action on grass edges and points. Crappie are fair on standing timber in 27 feet on brush piles with minnows over jigs. Blue and channel catfish are fair in 24-27 feet of water and in the river bends on cut bait and minnows. Report by Captain Lynn Atkinson, Reel Um N Guide Service.

Lake level is holding steady, but expect the lake to drop to 5-7 feet low to continue to work on the dam in the future. Fish are in all stages of the transition. Target bass with jig head minnows and forward facing sonar. Bass are suspended at the mouth of creeks and on off-shores flats chasing bait.

Target the hay grass and flooded bushes early in the morning to catch bass chasing bait using a chatterbait, swimbait or frog. Report by Hank Harrison, Double H Precision Guide Service.

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The Little Cypress-Mauriceville Battlin' Bears rolled to a 49-13 victory over the Hardin-Jefferson Hawks this past Friday evening for another very important District 10-4A Division 1 win. RECORD PHOTO: Kayleigh Ritchey



Little Cypress - Mauriceville Bear senior Kaden Boatmans finds running room and heads downfield. The Battlin' Bears smacked down the Hawks 49-13. RECORD PHOTO: Kayleigh Ritchey



LCM High School cheerleaders Ava Rambo and Ella Russell perform at mid-field before kick-off. RECORD PHOTO: Kayleigh Ritchey



Evan Worset and "KD" celebrate another score for the LCM Battlin' Bears. The Bears demolished the Hawks 49-13. RECORD PHOTO: Kayleigh Ritchey

Buzz Into Action: Texas Pollinator BioBlitz Starts Friday, Oct. 11

Staff Report For The Record

AUSTIN — Texans are invited to see and document pollinators buzzing into action Oct. 11-27 during the Texas Pollinator BioBlitz. This annual event celebrates the bees, wasps, butterflies, moths, beetles, flies, hummingbirds, nectar-feeding bats and other animals that serve as pollinators across Texas.

Many pollinator species have seen declines in their population, which could spell trouble. These important insects, birds and mammals are key to sustaining native plant species, human food crops and even crops for livestock.

To celebrate and recognize the work these species do, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) partners with the National Butterfly Center, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, National Wildlife Federation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service every fall to celebrate the importance of pollinators.

"The annual monarch migration is a spectacular visual reminder to appreciate how pollinators shape our rich Texan landscapes and plates," said Hannah Gray, TPWD invertebrate biologist. "Many native plant communities and food crops depend on pollinators to reproduce and without them our lives would be considerably less vibrant. Loss of habitat and floral resources has led to well

documented monarch declines but also threaten the more than 1,000 native bee species that make Texas their home. By participating in the annual Pollinator BioBlitz, we can all do our part to learn more about these important species."

Anyone can bioblitz! Individuals, families, schools and clubs can join, observe, identify and share at this time of year. With cooler temperatures spreading across Texas, October is the perfect time to photograph, post and record pollinators you see while enjoying the great outdoors.

Students, citizen scientists and outdoor enthusiasts of all ages are encouraged to simply enjoy seeing these various pollinators or even to take it a step further and help collect iNaturalist observations during the peak of fall butterfly and bird migration. Participants can look for pollinators as well as nectar-producing plants, photograph or take video of them, and share their discoveries on iNaturalist, Instagram or Facebook using the hashtag #TXPollinators.

Observations documented on the iNaturalist app help biologists learn more about the distribution of the organisms and plants upon which pollinators depend, helping TPWD manage their habitats and populations for future generations.

Plant and insect species may be difficult to identify, so observers can use the "What did you see?"

function within the app to see science-based suggestions.

Visit the Texas Pollinator BioBlitz website to learn more about the importance of pollinators, sign up to receive pollinator information during the event, and find other happenings across the state.

To view a short video about the Pollinator BioBlitz, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yAxphubVY>.

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How to choose the right bottle of red wine

Brooke McDonald
Texas A&M AgriLife

When navigating the wine selection aisle, the options seem endless. Where do we start when it comes to picking the right red wine?

More options can lead to more questions. Which is sweet? How do you find one that is both high-quality and affordable? Is there a type of red wine that's best to pair with certain foods?

It helps to start with the basics — classifications of red wine, foods to pair it with and price, said Justin Scheiner, Ph.D., Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service specialist and associate professor in the Texas A&M Department of Horticultural Sciences, Bryan-College Station.

Scheiner shared some expert tips to consider when picking out a bottle of red wine.

What are the different classifications of red wine?

Red wines are known for

their astringency attributed to the amount of tannins, which present a drying, puckering sensation when you drink. The astringency determines their dryness and flavor profile, Scheiner said.

- For a more full-bodied wine with the highest astringency, tannins and drying sensation, consumers might reach for a cabernet sauvignon.

- If you want less astringency, a little smoother down the list, a good medium option would be merlot.

- If you're still looking for an even less astringent and lighter bodied wine, a pinot noir is another common red wine to look for.

"A simple way to think about it is that the more tannins the wine contains, the dryer the sensation will be when drinking it," Scheiner said. "Some people have a higher sensitivity to tannins, which is why they may want to stick to a lighter red wine."

Something else to look for on the wine label is the



Something else to look for on the wine label is the variety of the grape. If the label has the name of the grape on it, then you can assume that the wine is not going to be sweet.

variety of the grape. If the label has the name of the grape on it, then you can assume that the wine is not going to be sweet, he said.

Pairing foods with red wine

Once you've found a red you like, you can think about a snack or meal to

pair with your wine.

"The important wine and food pairing strategy is to match the intensity of the wine with the flavor intensity of the food," Scheiner said.

For example, if you prefer a full-bodied red wine with bold flavors, you might pair it with a quality steak to match the flavor profile in-

tensity.

Pairings go both ways. A really spicy food for a meal tends to overwhelm a lighter wine. Lighter wines like pinot noirs are more commonly paired with lighter profile flavors such as lighter meats like pork, turkey and chicken. Pasta dishes or even charcuterie-style meats are also common selections that pair well with lighter reds.

By understanding how to balance wine and food flavors, you can enhance your overall dining experience.

Does price equal quality?

Once you've achieved a balanced approach to pairing, the next question is how to pick a quality wine for a reasonable price. While the price of the wine can be an indicator of its quality, that's not always the case.

"If you are reaching for the cheapest red wine you can buy, the quality is typically not going to be there," Scheiner said. "They just can't produce it with better

ingredients and still sell it at that price point, so your expectations should be lower for the lowest price points."

However, he said, if you are selective with a mid-price range, you should be able to find a quality wine.

"I also recommend that when you are out at a restaurant and find a wine you really like, take a picture of it on the menu and then go find it at your local grocery store," he said. "You can usually find the bottle for a half to a third of the price you paid for it at a restaurant."

Regardless of the price or perceived quality, selecting wine all comes down to personal taste. So, whether you're trying wine for the first time, exploring new varieties or buying a bottle as a gift, don't hesitate to step outside your comfort zone.

"There's a world of wines to discover, from local selections for a personal touch to unique international wines," Scheiner said. "Find the wine that resonates with your preferences and experiences."

Football recap From Page 1B

LC-M Bears demolish H-J

The Little Cypress-Mauriceville Battlin' Bears rolled to a 49-13 victory over the Hardin-Jefferson Hawks this past Friday evening for another very important District 10-4A Division 1 win.

The Bears spotted the Hawks an early touchdown, and then roared to a 28-7 lead by halftime, courtesy of a three touchdown performance by quarterback Braylon Lewis. J'Lynn Morris rushed for 140 yards and touchdowns, while Jonah Fuller added two rushing

touchdowns and over 100 yards on the ground as well as the Bears offense had more than 460 yards of total offense on the night.

The LC-M defense kept the previously high-scoring offense in check all game and held its offense to just 230 yards on the night, while blocking a punt and forcing three turnovers for the game.

LC-M (3-2, 2-0) will make a long road trip this Friday to take on the Lions. Livingston (0-5, 0-2) has lost district games to Hardin-Jefferson, 33-24, and, most recently, to Liberty, 28-22, this past Friday.

Mustangs begin district play

The West Orange-Stark Mustangs were on a bye this past Friday but look ahead to this week as they begin a five-game stretch in District 9-4A Division 2.

The Mustangs (4-1, 0-0) travel to Jasper to face the Bulldogs in the first district battle. Much like WO-S, Jasper (2-3, 0-0) has played a very tough non-district schedule. Two of its three losses have been to state-ranked teams, Tyler Chapel Hill and Carthage, while the third loss was to Class 5A Beaumont United.

Week 7 Schedule

WO-S at Jasper

Bridge City at Hardin-Jefferson

Coldspring-Oakhurst at Orangefield

LC-M at Livingston

Huffman-Hargrave at Vidor

Hull Daisetta at Deweyville

Splendora at PN-G

Nederland at New Caney West Fork

Barbers Hill at PA Memorial

Week 6 Results

LC-M 49 Hardin-Jefferson 13

Bridge City 49 Vidor 20

Orangefield 38 Anahuac 0

Deweyville 56 Colmesneil 6

Liberty 28 Livingston 22

Huffman-Hargrave 38 Lumberton 7

East Chambers 28 Hardin 22

Coldspring 50 Kirbyville 12

Evadale 45 West Hardin 38

Sabine Pass 35 Hull-Daisetta 15

Newton 56 New Waverly 14

Kountze 49 Trinity 12

Woodville 58 Warren 0

Hemphill 44 Merryville 12


PN-G 24 Huntsville 21

Nederland 41 Dayton 17

Galveston Ball 41 PA Memorial 10


Lufkin 29 West Brook 3

Shepherd 50 Diboll 35




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More Orange County Football Highlights.....



Bridge City quarterback Hutch Bearden (9) looks downfield for an open receiver in the second quarter against Vidor. Bearden passed for 94 yards and touchdown, while rushing for 50 yards and two touchdowns. RECORD PHOTO: Tommy Mann Jr.



The Cardinals defense swarms Vidor quarterback Jett Brucia and holds him for a short game. The Bridge City defense held Vidor to 254 total yards of offense, while coming up with two fumble returns for touchdowns. RECORD PHOTO: Tommy Mann Jr.



The Game Face of Kaleb Menard says it all as the Orangefield Bobcats went out and defeat Anahuac 38-0. RECORD PHOTO: Cheryl Taylor - Cheryl Taylor Photography.



Orangefield Bobcat kicker Ty Butler boots an extra point against Anahuac. The Bobcats came home with a 38-0 win. RECORD PHOTO: Cheryl Taylor - Cheryl Taylor Photography

Captain Chuck

From Page 2B

every now and again, taking a little time to just have some fun and get a bite. It's even better when those bites become big fish and it's great when they won't hit any of the "high tech" lures of those who look down upon the cork. Nothing like hearing a guy at the dock who is decked out in the latest high end clothes, glasses, boat, and truck tell his buddies "yeah they caught fish but they were using corks" while he puts an ice pack on his pride.

One last thing to mention and that's the unbelievable hurricane "Milton" that's churning its way towards Florida and is destined to make landfall later on this week with 150mph or more winds. After suffering a major storm less than two weeks ago it appears that

the west coast of Florida will catch the wrath of yet another giant hurricane and receive even more damage. I have friends in that part of the world and most of them are fishermen who continue to say many areas will never be same after everything is all said and done. It's difficult to watch this happen and we can all only hope and pray that no more lives are lost. The future of the fishing industry in that part of the world will be in limbo for quite some time as it will take years to truly assess what these storms did to the affected areas.

Hopefully, in time, things will bounce back and the new normal will provide some hope for all the people and the ecosystems that will be forever changed.



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Live Life Against the Drift

Marshall Segal
Staff Writer
desiringGod.org

The danger of drifting, spiritual or otherwise, is in just how subtle and comfortable drifting can feel. Often we don't even notice it's happening at all.

I grew up outside Cincinnati, Ohio, a far drive from any ocean. I can't even remember a lake near our house. The largest body of water might have been the man-made pond next to the local golf course. So when I finally met the ocean, I would never forget it. I had never seen anything so large and alive and frightening — and yet my little brother and I could splash and wrestle in its wake.

I distinctly remember, on one of those early beach days, mustering up the courage to swim out a little farther, and then a little farther, floating over wave after wave, learning how they obediently march in rows and yet dance in their own way. And then, as happens to so many first-timers, I realized (with great fear) just how far I was from safety. Suddenly the waves were coming higher and faster, pulling me farther than I wanted to go. My feet searched frantically for the bottom. My arms and legs suddenly felt like logs, like they were somehow taking on water. I looked and looked along the beach, but couldn't see my brother, my dad, my mom, anyone. Another wave crashed over my head.

In a panic, I swam frantically, and soon found my



feet back on land, but I had learned just how easy and dangerous it is to drift away from shore. How much more dangerous, then, to drift away from Jesus — to realize, after weeks or months or years, that the waves of life have carried us farther away than we ever expected.

Focus or Drift

One mark of Christian maturity is learning that none of us passively drifts toward Christ, not even after we've followed him for years or even decades. The currents of the still-sinful soul, weathered by constant waves of temptation, still pull us out to sea. We can't sluggishly float in place. We're either swimming toward God or drifting somewhere else.

The writer of Hebrews had felt the undertow of sin battling our love for Jesus. After lifting up the supremacy of the Son in creation, in redemption, in authority, in glory, he writes, "We must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it" (Hebrews 2:1). In

other words, if we take our eyes off of this Christ, we'll soon find ourselves further from him. In the life of faith, we either focus or drift.

For his immediate hearers, the tide threatened to pull them back into the Christ-less rituals of old-covenant Israel. Jewish persecution made following Jesus painful and costly, leaving some in prison (Hebrews 13:3). Many considered retreating from Christ to being mistreated with him. Our souls may drift along similar lines. We might drift because people we love hate the God we love, making belittling comments about our convictions or distancing themselves from us because of them. Or we might drift in other, very different directions.

We might drift after unrepentant sin, allowing some lust or bitterness or craving or envy to take hold and slowly drag our souls from safety. We might, like Demas, drift away into worldliness, slowly allowing our affections and imaginations to be absorbed with some distract-

ion — deadlines and promotions, headline news, sports triumphs or losses, shopping trends and deals, social media controversies. We might even drift away because of a fixation on friends or family. Each of these loved ones is a gift of God meant to lead us to God, and yet how often do they instead become gods?

We might drift any number of ways to any number of places. The warning is that if we're not currently swimming closer to Jesus, we cannot stay where we are. Paddling in place is not an option. And the tide will choose where we go — if we let it. The human soul is designed to wax or wane, to drive or drift. So do you know, in the moments of greater preoccupation and weaker resolve, where your soul tends to drift?

Because of Who He Is

Wholly apart from our tendency to drift, Jesus really is worthy of our whole attention. He really is endlessly fascinating. When my family visited Yellowstone, we came across two grizzly bears playfully wrestling in

a field. We were far enough away to be completely safe, but close enough to see it all. I can still picture those enormous, furry brawlers running and tackling and rolling. No one had to convince us to pay attention or keep watching. Someone could have easily made off with our car, which we had left running.

Similarly, if we could catch a glimpse of who Jesus really is, we wouldn't struggle to focus on him. In fact, we'd probably have a hard time noticing all the things that capture and consume so much of our attention now. When we read our Bibles and feel little, it's like we're scanning the field but can't see the bears. Or we can, but they're too far away and fuzzy. When we stop reading our Bibles, we've stopped even looking in the fields. We're driving right by while we stream some series on our phones.

Hebrews 1 is a trailer to the glory we're missing when our eyes drift away from the field. The boy born in Bethlehem is the heir of all things — in part because he made all things (Hebrews 1:2). This Jesus is the beauty of the universe — "the radiance of the glory of God" — and he upholds that universe with his all-powerful breath (Hebrews 1:3). And though he is the pure, spotless image of God, he stepped between the wrath of God and the enemies of God, to make his enemies his brothers. After dying on the cross, he proved even death was under his feet, rising from the grave and then ascending in even greater glory than he came.

And if you could see him as he now is, even

mouth-stopping, sword-wielding armies of angels would grow dull by comparison. He's always worthy of more attention, and he rewards whatever focus we give him.

Because of Who You Are

We pay exceedingly close attention to Jesus because he's worthy of such attention, and because we know how easily we drift away from him. "We must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it." We keep our eyes fixed on him because of who he is, and because of who we are — tempted, distracted, sometimes wandering.

Staying close to Jesus means steadily moving toward Jesus. Scripture's language of "walking by faith" is a great encouragement here. There are times to run (or swim) hard, but most of the Christian life will be walking with Jesus against the drift, like the disciples who walked with Jesus during his ministry. In an age of driving, riding, flying, and hurrying, many of us have lost the art of walking. Resisting the tide often means just taking the next few steps — reading the next chapter, praying the next prayer, preparing for the next Sunday gathering. As we do, we'll find, on some days and in some seasons, that the waves actually turn to serve us, to lift us higher and farther in the right direction.

As we fight the drift within us, we don't have to try to finish our race today. We just need to go as far as we can in these few hours with our eyes on Jesus.



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