

THE GALVESTON WESTENDER®

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Photo by Marty Bilek

District 6 Report

Carolyn Sunseri



Carolyn L. Sunseri, District 6 City Council Member Well, the Land Development Regulation process is almost finalized! After four long years and several changes along the way, the majority of the plan was voted on and approved at the March 5th Special Called Meeting of the City Council.

See *DISTRICT* / Page 2

Resilience, a Texas Tradition

Joe Giusti,

Galveston County Commissioner, Precinct 2

As I sat down and contemplated writing this article, I thought about our future for Galveston

Joe Giusti



County. As a life-long resident of Galveston County and being born and spending my first twenty nine years on Galveston Island, I want to see and do what is best for my hometown.

See *RESILIENCE* / Page 3

Who Do I Call?

Police, Fire, EMS Emergencies 911

Animal Control	409-765-3702
Code Enforcement	409-797-3660
Issues at GARM Properties	409-682-3603
Police Non-Emergency	409-765-3702
Public Works	409 797-3630

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Artwork by
Zoe Gibbons

32nd Annual Congressional Art Competition

Randy Weber, U.S. Representative, District 14

This year marks the 32nd annual Congressional Art Competition. This nationwide competition encourages high school students from across America to showcase their artistic talents, which if chosen, will be displayed in the US Capitol for a year starting in June.

Congratulations Zoe Gibbons of La Marque!

See *ART* / Page 3

Randy Weber



Happenings at Galveston Reef

Dr. Greg Bonnen, Texas State Representative, District 24

Galveston Bay and the state's upper Gulf Coast provide an abundant supply of red snapper and other angler favorites for commercial and recreational fishermen alike. Unfortunately, recent regulatory

proposals from Washington have caused uncertainty for those fishermen, and the businesses who depend on them. As is typically the case, Texas is responding with positive action to

preserve this important industry and favorite coastal pastime. See *REEF* / Page 2

Greg Bonnen



Update on the 84th Legislative Session

Office of Larry Taylor, State Senator, District 11

State Sen. Larry Taylor was appointed by Lt. Governor Patrick as the new Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, and serves as a member of the Senate Business & Commerce, Finance and Intergovernmental Relations Committees.

Sen. Taylor filed many priority bills for the Texas coastal region this session.

See *TAYLOR* / Page 4

Larry Taylor



Legislative Progress

Wayne Faircloth, Texas State Representative, District 23

Bills are starting to move through the committee process and they have begun their journey to get to the floor of the Texas House.

See *BILLS* / Page 4



Wayne Faircloth

Upcoming WGIPOA Meetings

Apr 18	Cheryl Johnson-Courtyard by Marriott
May 16	Silver Leaf - Courtyard by Marriott
Jun 20	Hurricane Prep - Jamaica B Firehouse
Jul 18	Randy Weber - Country Club
Aug 15	TBD
Sep 19	Wayne Faircloth - Country Club

Working in Austin

Cheryl E. Johnson, RTA, Galveston County Tax Assessor Collector

With the deadline for filing bills behind us, I am pleased to report that your County Tax Office has 14 on the table with two others very similar to our proposals AND another 12 that support our policy positions (which by the way came from the voters and property owners of Galveston County)

See *AUSTIN* / Page 6



Cheryl Johnson

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REGISTER TO VOTE

REEF Continued from Page 1

In Texas Parks and Wildlife, utilizing a privately-funded Artificial Reef treasury account, is working with state, federal, and local stakeholders to plan and build a near-shore reef in state waters off the West End of Galveston Island. The 160 acre site would host a protective habitat for red snapper and other species to thrive; also resulting in easy access for fishing and recreational diving. The Department expects to receive federal and state clearance this summer, and looks to begin work on the project by year's end.

The City of Texas City has partnered with Parks and Wildlife by making city facilities available for temporary storage of artificial reefing materials. Already known for its fish haven, the Texas City Dike, the city was eager to become a partner in the creation of near shore artificial reefs within state waters.

The Texas City Dike provides 10 miles of shoreline for fishing Galveston Bay. In addition, it's an ideal point of departure for recreational fisherman headed into the Gulf of Mexico. As Mayor Matthew Doyle notes, this enables anglers to drive nearly 5 miles out into the bay, launch, and be in open Gulf waters in about 30 minutes. The Texas City facilities provide a prime location for collection, storage, and eventual shipment of reef-building materials into the Gulf; and city leadership's willingness to dedicate their time and resources to this effort is commendable.

Parks and Wildlife is working diligently to move this plan to completion, and Texas City's partnership is indispensable. As the state and local entities move forward, I urge everyone in the region to become involved in their effort. Donated supplies, logistical support, and public advocacy are all essential to the success of the reef project. More information can be found at http://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/water/habitats/artificial_reef/overview.phtml

Have an article or photo to submit?
editor@galvestonwestender.com

DISTRICT Continued from Page 1

Article 5 regarding Signage and Article 11 regarding Nonconformities was pulled from the final document to allow for further discussion. This was an exhaustive process for many community volunteers and City staff. This project proved that we can get things done if we put all of our resourceful heads together.

One of the big discussions was about Short Term Rentals and regulating them. STR's are a major economic engine for the City and are mostly prevalent in the West End. We had several neighborhoods that wanted to "opt out" of this so that they would be more residential. Colony Park and Cedar Lawn prevailed in getting an R-0 designation that is the strictest zoning and would not allow for anything other than residential purposes. No commercial, owner operated businesses, etc. They also provided City Council with petitions from 75% or more of their residents. This restriction was placed in the LDR's during the approval process. Lafitte's Cove attempted to prove that their deed restrictions addresses this already, but some on Council felt that they needed to go through the same process as the other two neighborhoods. I didn't agree with it and was voted down. I felt like their deed restrictions addressed it sufficiently. Lafitte's is going to try and proceed with the new process.

The City approved an agreement with the Park Board of Trustees for them to take over duties that are beach related. They are better equipped to do so. They will be responsible for trash cleanup as part of the agreement. They are also working with the Corps of Engineers to renourish the beaches from 61st – 103rd and Seawall.

We have recently had some issues with beach access. The City was informed by the General Land Office that we were not in compliance with the plan that was approved in April of 2012. There was an access point at Sea Isle that had signage stating that it was private property. When the HOA did not want to remove it, the City had no choice but to remove the bollards and allow the access to the beach. This did not sit well with the Sea Isle residents, most especially because of safety issues and such a small beach frontage to drive on. A meeting of the Sea Isle residents was held on Saturday, March 14th and a meeting with the GLO was scheduled for Monday, March 16th. The GLO representatives were sympathetic to the Sea Isle board representatives and a temporary plan was put in place. Signage was covered and the bollards were placed back early the next morning. We still have work to do with our Beach Access plan and it will be looked at again. The City has hired a new Coastal Planner, Minh Tak, to start on March 30th. His primary job will be to analyze the plan and make recommendations for amending the plan in place. This has been a long term goal of the Planning Department, so we are anxiously awaiting his arrival. We will also have assistance from John Lee, who is revisiting our Erosion Response Plan. John has vast knowledge in this area and has been doing contract work with the City and the County. We were waiting to complete the LDR's before we addressed these issues.

The Sand Dune Renourishment for Dellanera Park/Seascape Condos & Riviera I & II has been completed. The beach looks great and a new walkover has been placed on the beach.

Dune Walkovers – We are still working with FEMA to get these replaced. The subdivisions affected are going to have to provide at least 20% of the monies. Council has approved the engineering work. A fall completion date is anticipated for this project.

The City Council appointed two new committees recently – a Concessions Ad-Hoc Committee and a Charter Review Committee. The Concessions committee is charged with the following: mobile concessions, consistency of regulations, commercial corridor concessions, special district concessions and special event concessions. They are meeting every other week and are to give Council recommendations by mid-May with an anticipated adoption date of June 11th. The Charter Review committee will address such items as term limits, staggering terms, budgets, taxes, bonds, powers of the City, boards and commissions, etc. It is the desire of Council that these meetings are scheduled quickly and that final recommendations given to them at the June 25th meeting. Proposed changes would then be placed on the November ballot for voter approval.

I am sure that there is more that I can report on. If you have specific questions, please do not hesitate to ask me. Cell: (409) 692-4974 or e-mail: carolynsunseri@cityofgalveston.org

Zoe with her 2014 winning work, family and Randy
From Left to right: Mrs. Geisu Springer Lewis (Mother), Aiyana Alston (Niece), Zoe Gibbons (Student winner), Congressman Randy Weber, C. Solomon Burton (Brother), Robert Lee Lewis III (Brother), and Beverly Guillory Lewis M.D. (Grandmother)



Since its creation over three decades ago, more than 650,000 high school students have participated in the art competition. It is a great way for students from all congressional districts to have a chance at joining the ranks of other historical artists whose work graces our nation's capital. Congressman Weber highly encourages his young constituents to get involved and participate.

Interested participants must submit their artwork to one of my district offices by Wednesday, April 17, 2015 by 5:00 pm. Students may only submit one original entry no larger than 28" x 28" x 4" inches, including the frame. Paintings, drawings, watercolors, pastels, collages, or prints may be submitted.

The winner, in addition to having their artwork displayed in the Capital, also will be provided with two roundtrip tickets to attend the ribbon cutting/opening ceremonies of the art exhibit in Washington, DC. There is also the opportunity of receiving a scholarship to the Savannah College of Art and Design should they apply and be accepted for admission.

To participate or learn more visit weber.house.gov and for additional information about the Congressional Art Competition please contact Janet Brown in our Beaumont district office at (409) 835-0108 or by email: Janet.Brown@mail.house.gov

Sara's 2013 winning work



RESILIENCE *Continued from Page 1*

As I began to write this, I realized that we were in a month that represents the resilience of Texans. On March 6th, 1836, the Alamo fell to a much greater force than a few Texans could defeat, although the force inside the Alamo was able to fend off the attacks for thirteen days. The thirteen days that the siege took, eventually led to General Sam Houston having enough time to rally other Texans and neighbors to the final battle ground at San Jacinto. On April 21st, the battle of San Jacinto was fought and won; a battle that took twenty minutes and led to the formation of The Republic of Texas.

On September 13th, 2008, Hurricane Ike brought another battle to Texas. As Texans, as we have done in the past, we did not wait around. We pulled up our boots and went to work helping family, friends and neighbors with the cleanup and started the rebuilding process.

We are at another critical juncture for our city, county and country. As most of you are aware, Doctor William Merrell of Texas A&M along with numerous other professionals has done a very extensive study on the future protection of our area. The solution, a coastal spine that would protect our entire area. The following is a quote from the Ike Dike home page.

"This terrible scenario can be prevented. We can apply best practices and existing technologies used in the Netherlands and New Orleans to protect our region. The coastal spine concept is the approach the Dutch used after their 1953 surge disaster. They shortened their coast by combining barriers and gates to keep surge out of internal waters. They shared their methods with New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, and today New Orleans has the Greater New Orleans Barrier that protects the city from storm surge. We are using that knowledge here as a solution to protect the Galveston-Houston area."

One of the problems at this point is too many individuals trying to attack the problem from different directions. The original division was between the professionals at A&M and the professionals at Rice University. These professionals have put aside their differences and are now working together for the common goal. The division is now between political entities. The six county coalition that was formed and is following the Core of Engineers process needs to utilize the work that has already been done by the Coastal Spine professionals and move forward.

In 1836 great leaders came together, put aside their differences and formed the greatest State known to man. Let us take their lead and move forward.

TAYLOR Continued from Page 1

His reappointment as a member of the Senate Business and Commerce Committee empowers him to remain at the forefront of an issue of vital importance to SD 11, reforming the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association (TWIA).

S.B. 900, that was heard last week in committee, proposes sweeping reforms of TWIA operations. "The availability of affordable and accessible windstorm coverage for coastal residents and business owners is critical to Texas' economy," said Sen. Taylor. "The Texas coast represents 23% of our state's population and 25% of all jobs."

Sen. Taylor's main goals in S.B. 900 are to create the Texas Coastal Insurance Association (TCIA), restructure the Board's make-up for greater geographical representation and expertise, make changes to the funding formula and give the Commissioner the ability to hire a contractor to take over the management of TCIA. These changes will result in significant administration cost reductions and strengthen the ability to pay for large losses. This ensures Texas coastal policyholders remain protected and businesses stay open in the event of a major disaster. Sen. Taylor hopes that S.B. 900 will be voted favorably out of committee in the second week of April.

Sen. Taylor recently passed S.B. 695 out of the Senate Chamber that will continue the Joint Interim Committee on Coastal Barriers through 2016. This committee originally was formed last session to study the desirability and feasibility of creating a coastal barrier system to protect against storm surge. Economic, environmental and feasibility studies continue to be conducted by various state and federal agencies.

Due to his leadership in the Senate Education Committee and as a member of the Senate Finance Committee, Sen. Taylor chairs the budget workgroup to structure how both public and higher education is funded for the 2016-2017 fiscal years. Sen. Taylor authored a Rider to the budget that was adopted in the Senate Finance Committee appropriating \$2M dollars to Texas A&M at Galveston. "The Texas Gulf Coast is the heart and soul of the Texas economy, and I intend to preserve our economic stability by ensuring we have the right tools and plans in place in the event of a major catastrophe," said Sen. Taylor. This funding is to provide extension services, outreach, research, and policy findings to support coastal viability, protection and move closer to the completion of the "Ike Dike." Expected outcomes are options for hazard protection and mitigation and the development of rapid response plans for critical events.

As the Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, Sen. Taylor is ready to advance our education system to support all students in the state of Texas. "The time has come for greater accountability and productivity in our children's education," said Sen. Taylor. "I intend to look for solutions wherever they may be found and will explore new and innovative ways to enhance our ability to deliver an effective education." Sen. Taylor has filed many pieces of legislation that would create new tools for both parents and their children so students can get the best possible education.

Sen. Taylor filed S.B. 1200 which would bring teachers, administrators, parents, a member of the State Board of Education and a handful of legislators to the same table as one committee to develop and make recommendations to update the assessment and measurements of the education system in Texas by 2017.

BILLS Continued from Page 1

We have been meeting in our committee's for the last several weeks hearing testimony on bills that have been referred to our committee's and set on the calendar. I am excited to begin this next step in the process and to our legislation benefit Chambers and Galveston counties and work them through the system.

House Bill 1687 Coastal Barrier System

House Bill 1687 was heard in Land and Resource Management on March 30th 2015. House Bill 1687 is the continuation of a study related to the desirability and feasibility of creating and maintaining a coastal barrier system. The bill was reported out of committee favorably with no objections. The bill will now make its way to Local and consent calendar to be set on the floor of the Texas House of Representatives.

The Texas House of Representatives Fights to Eradicate Human Trafficking

Texas House of Representatives passed HB 10, which works at curbing, catching, and stopping the criminals involved in the crime of human trafficking in the State of Texas. HB 10 would create a Child Sex Trafficking Prevention Unit, require the Texas Education Agency to report trafficking of a child, and it would make it easier for victims of trafficking to seek compensation from the Crime Auxiliary Fund. House Bill 10 would expand the power and Authority of the Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General of Texas Office. According to the Texas Crime Information Center, the number of state charges for trafficking has increased annually over the past 5 years. The Port of Galveston and The Port of Houston both service House District 23. These are 2 of the busiest ports in the southern United States, and therefore are vulnerable to human trafficking crimes into Texas.

Border Security: A Priority Issue for the Texas House

Rep. Wayne Faircloth and a bipartisan group of Texas House members have called for passage of House Bill 11, the Stronger Border, Safer Texas Act, because it will strengthen border security and help law enforcement stop border-related crime wherever it occurs across the state.

Thank you Texas City/La Marque and Galveston Regional Chambers for visiting your State Capitol

The purpose of WGIPOA is to promote issues of interest to property owner associations and their members, particularly preserving and protecting the gulf and bay shorelines and the quality of life as the West End continues to develop. WGIPOA's 38 members are Home, Condominium, and Property Owner Associations on the west end of Galveston Island. Meetings are held the third Saturday of the month January through October at 9:00 a.m. at the Galveston Country Club except for club event conflicts. **View meeting minutes at www.wgipoa.com**

Jim Stevenson



The Grand Grasspipers

Jim Stevenson, Editor of Gulls 'n Herons Magazine and Director of the Galveston Ornithological Society Galveston has many terrific birds, from the Official Island Bird, the Reddish Egret, to Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, Mottled Ducks, night-herons, Painted Buntings, the glorious spring warblers, tanagers and buntings, pelicans and many more. But today we focus on a made-up name for two neat species everyone seems to notice.

There is a loose collection of (mostly) sandpipers that often forsake the beaches and mudflats and feed in pastures and fields - frequently right in our own yards! One is the majestic Long-billed Curlew and their pal is the equally-impressive Marbled Godwit. And their combined forces make no worm safe!

All the World's curlews have decurved beaks, meaning they curve down. Since they are pretty tasty, they have to look out for enemies. Their decurved beak helps them accomplish that, as they can probe into the soil while keeping their head up. Being a sandpiper, they can fly away from approaching enemies like the wind!

Earth's godwits also have odd bills, but they are recurved, meaning they curve up. They can actually probe deeper than the curlew - which is amazing! - but pushing their bill straight down. The end of both bills is black, as the melanin (bird paint) stiffens the bill and reduces splitting while probing. Many birds have this ingenious adaptation.

It seems like our godwits and curlews are always here, but actually, they migrate to a pretty interesting location to breed. One of our truly endangered ecosystems is the Shortgrass Prairie, in states like Colorado. Their migratory flight is diagonal, taking them northwest, but to a habitat not totally different from a front yard near you! They are back by late summer, and a small number of them don't even bother to go nest.

During their long "winter" stay on Galveston, from August to May, other shorebirds sometimes mix with these two giants. Species like Golden Plovers and Upland Sandpipers, both of which are only around for a month in early spring, are exciting to birders, and nature photographers. And most sandpipers nest on the Arctic Tundra, so they're used to the grass!

So get out this spring and see what's visiting on our lawns!



Long-billed Curlew: Can't Miss that Beak!



Marbled Godwit: Buddies with the Curlew

Galveston Island Hidden Treasure

John D. Kinard, District Clerk, Galveston County

Many people have come to Galveston Island in search of hidden treasure, but very few of them realize that they can find just that at the Galveston County District Clerk's Office. They don't need a treasure map, or any special tools. All they need is a desire to uncover Galveston Island's rich history and internet access! The Galveston County District Clerk's Office has a wonderful selection of Federal Immigration and Naturalization records. Galveston County District Clerk, John Kinard, in partnership with Galveston County Clerk Dwight Sullivan, has digitized all of these records and is pleased to announce the launch of a web-based portal which will enable residents to search these records with the click of a button utilizing Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology. Galveston was a major point of entry at the turn of the century. Current immigration and naturalization records are maintained by the Federal Government, but from the late 1850's until the 1950's, immigration issues were handled by the State District Courts. As a result, the custodian of such records was the Galveston County District Clerk.

The types of documents that one is likely to find when examining these records are Declarations of Intention, Petitions for Citizenship, Petitions for Naturalization, and Certificates of Arrival. Each of these documents include very interesting information about the individual seeking citizenship. For example, these records include the name, age, occupation, addresses, application witnesses, family members and, sometimes, photos. These records contain over 500,000 informational references for immigrants from 61 countries.

Now that these records are available online, people can view them without any concern about their delicate and fragile condition. However, the long term goal is to raise the funds to permanently restore all of these precious records. Tax deductible donations for this cause can be made to the District Clerk Restoration Fund, 600 59th Street, Suite 4001, Galveston, TX 77551.

There is no charge to access these records but there is a nominal charge to print the documents.

These records are truly hidden treasures. Each document represents a life on the brink of a great adventure. To find these treasures you don't need to be a pirate, or a treasure hunter; you just need to visit the Galveston County District Clerk's office new Immigration records portal at the Galveston County District Clerk Website or at <http://gcdcimmigrationrecords.galvestoncountytexas.gov>

John D. Kinard



AUSTIN Continued from Page 1

I am pleased to report that the Lt. Governor is staying true to his promises and has insured tax relief is the first topic of the day with Senate Bill 1 already having a hearing in Senate Finance. This omnibus legislation will address several aspects of taxes and property owners will be one of the beneficiaries. Yeah!

Short list of our successes and our partners:

HB 639/SB 1062	G. Bonnen/Bettencourt	Restoring professional certification to county tax offices (may be bracketed for Galveston Co. Hope Senator Taylor joins us)
HB 1933/SB 624	Darby/Hinojosa	Correcting issues with my pay agreements & allowing late quarter pay installments
HB 2432/SB 767	Faircloth/Bettencourt	Correcting issues with the Water Code for truth in taxation
HB 3470/SB 884	D.Bonnen/Hinojosa	Extending deadlines for cities and counties to take advantage of
HB2670/HB1953	Paul/D.Bonnen	a simplified tax adoption notice
HB 2431	Faircloth	Cleans up legislation from the last session that has offended and threatened property owners
SB 766	Bettencourt	Simplifies truth in taxation – the first step of a long overdue
HB3614/SB1680	Elkins/Bettencourt	concern for all

I am also excited about HB 1096 and SB 984 (Murphy & Bettencourt) which will finally define residency for voting insuring public confidence in future elections. Also, HB 1257 and SB 511 (Shaheen & Burton) are long overdue for governments – ending taxpayer funded lobbying! I have opposed this for over 10 years and look forward to helping. We have LOTS of appraisal cap bills including two that will help ALL property owners – not just homesteads. Great for Galveston’s second home market!

Protect With Respect

Chief Henry Porretto, Galveston Police Chief

The Galveston Police Department’s *Protect With Respect* community outreach initiative brings with it a call for communication between the police and the public. One of the most important things that you can do as a Westender is Call Us if you think something is not right. Do not hesitate. We are here for you. Emergency: 911 Non-Emergency: 409/765-3702 Chief of Police: 409/765-3790



We want Islanders to become familiar with the officers who patrol the West End on Day Watch, Evening Watch and Night Watch. A Sergeant is on-duty for your area patrols from 61st Street to San Luis Pass. Whenever possible, we assign five or more officers to the West End. With Spring Break on the horizon and the summer months not far behind, we are especially focused on maintaining safety for the young people in your neighborhoods. Parents should be aware that allowing unlicensed underage driving of golf carts is a crime and citations will be issued. This is a serious safety factor not only for injuries and property damage but the actions of an inexperienced driver can also evolve into a life threatening event. Sgt. Chad Simmons will oversee the enforcement detail of the Galveston Police Department’s golf cart regulations. From Spring Break to Labor Day Weekend you will see our Mounted Patrol under the coordination of Sgt. Tommy Maffei. He will position two (extra-duty) officers on horseback to cover both Sunny Beach and Hershey Beach; and two Mounted Patrol officers will be detailed to San Luis Pass as staffing allows.

Neighbors are an extremely effective security resource of their own. Get to know your neighbors. Be aware of what is going on around your neighborhood; it is imperative that you report suspicious activity. Provide sufficient outdoor lighting; keep equipment under lock and key; do not leave items in plain sight in your vehicles and make sure they are locked; utilize a timer for a lamp or two; do not hide keys outside; and maintain locked entry doors. Many burglaries are crimes of opportunity and you can eliminate that opportunity. Outdoor activity: Walk with another person, observe bicycle safety rules, keep headphone volumes low, safeguard any valuables you take to the beach—keep them to a minimum and always have a family member or friend observe you, or go in with you, when enjoying the Gulf waters. Participate in your neighborhood association and access the website for up-to-date notices.

We invite you to visit the App store on your IOS or android phone and download the new (free) Galveston Police app for the latest information from our department.

Peter Davis

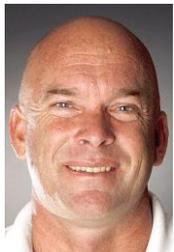


Photo Courtesy of Galveston Daily News

Magic

By Peter Davis, Chief, Galveston Island Beach Patrol/Park Board Police Department

I was at Moody Gardens with my daughter’s school the other day and I walked through the rain forest pyramid. There is a quote I’ve always loved hanging above entrance by Loren Eiseley, anthropologist and author of *The Immense Journey*, that reads, “If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water.”

My Mom used to always buy our whole family a season pass to Moody Gardens, a tradition we continue. At first, I used to think she did it because she was friends with both Ann and Bobby Moody. She would do stuff like that a lot. But I realized later that she did it because it was a great place for our family to gather when they’d come home from all the different places they lived. Galveston is lucky to have so many places like that. My daughter and I used to go to the aquarium all the time when she was little and my wife took her to Palm Beach almost every day for several summers in a row.

See MAGIC / Page 7

MAGIC Continued from Page 6

Like many people here on the island I've always felt a close connection to water and to the sea. Years ago, while my family went through some terrible things, I'd lose/find myself for hours and hours surfing or sailing. I didn't really fix anything, but it gave me a place where our problems seemed more in perspective and offered a connection to something much bigger than our transient existence. As Isak Dinesen says, "The cure for anything is salt water: sweat, tears or the sea."

Throughout my life I've noticed that people with a connection to water found connections with each other as well. There are many famous Texas watermen that demonstrate this. Galveston lifeguard legend Leroy Columbo touched many lives. One of these was Dorian "Doc" Paskowitz who as a child rented surf mats from Columbo. Former lifeguard Babe Schwartz, who needs no introduction, was a huge part in founding the modern Beach Patrol in Galveston. Doc Paskowitz once met Jim Dobbins (one of the first trainers of the Beach Patrol) surfing in California. Doc told Jim that Babe Schwartz once saved his wife's life.

Doc Paskowitz, a Galveston native, has many famous quotes that are repeated all over the world by surfers and lifeguards. One that fits is "There is a wisdom in the wave." to which he added, "While just a child, the warm waters of the Gulf Coast of Texas gave me my first chance at that wisdom."

I'm not sure where in the mix of water and people you find the magic, but in a world where we're trained to accumulate things and hold on to everything tightly, it's a place that forces you to let go.

"To have faith is to trust yourself to the water. When you swim you don't grab hold of the water, because if you do you will sink and drown. Instead you relax, and float." -Alan Watts

Nesting Time is Here

By Carole Allen, Gulf Office Director, Turtle Island Restoration Network

Nesting time is here for the endangered Kemp's Ridley sea turtles. It is probably the most important year we have witnessed in a long time. Since the disastrous oil spill in 2010, nest numbers in both Mexico and Texas have declined. But surprisingly, the nest numbers had declined some before 2010. Since there are ups and downs and cycles, no one thought much about it, but then when nest numbers started a real downward trend, current studies include the year before the oil spill.

The last really good news for the Kemp's Ridelys was two years ago when the Oppe Elementary Green Team wrote a resolution with Rep. Craig Eiland making the Kemp's Ridley the official sea turtle of the state of Texas. Our Texas legislators put aside their differences and passed the resolution which has focused a positive light on Oppe Elementary and its students and staff, Galveston and the state itself.

No one really knows why the Kemp's ridley nesting numbers have declined.

See http://www.tpwmagazine.com/archive/2014/apr/scout1_seaturtles/ to view numbers and read speculations about the cause. Unfortunately, many people think the turtles are still recovering and everything is fine. The US Fish and Wildlife Service must think the same thing as they have cut financial help to the Mexican Kemp's Ridley nesting camps. The state of Louisiana refuses to protect sea turtles migrating and foraging in their state waters; oil may have damaged the blue crab crop which is a favorite Kemp's Ridley food; and losing hundreds, maybe thousands of Ridelys in the oil spill and subsequent oil burning may have killed many more turtles than anyone has estimated. Unfortunately, no government agencies want to try anything new. Instead of hatching Galveston eggs at the State Park, valuable nests are still put in jeopardy by transferring in a vehicle for hours to the Padre Island National Sea Shore. Efforts to obtain money from BP to construct an educational sea turtle rehabilitation facility in Galveston have received little attention.

At any rate, please join the volunteers of Turtle Island Restoration Network (TIRN) as they walk the beaches looking for tracks and sea turtles. Call 1-866-TURTLE-5 (866-877-8535) to report a nester. To reach the Galveston Office of TIRN, call 409-795-8426. Let's hope we see lots of turtles this year!



YEAR-END RESIDENTIAL MARKET RECAP: 2014 vs. 2013 WEST GALVESTON ISLAND

AREA	DOLLAR VOLUME			# OF SOLD TRANSACTIONS		
	2014	2013	% change	2014	2013	% change
All Galveston Island	\$208,263,574	\$171,107,266	+22%	696	640	+9%
West Galveston Island: Sunny Beach to Pointe West, Beach to Bay	\$142,814,232	\$109,905,953	+30%	358	317	+13%
Pirates Beach & Pirates Beach West	\$24,232,100	\$17,960,060	+35%	53	47	+13%
Pirates Cove	\$10,396,975	\$8,690,085	+20%	17	15	+13%
Laffites Cove	\$11,199,263	\$10,187,592	+10%	16	14	+14%
Jamaica Beach	\$18,600,820	\$13,740,750	+35%	66	59	+12%
Sea Isle	\$16,831,034	\$16,799,630	+0.19%	61	66	-8%
West End Beachfront	\$17,781,700	\$17,773,500	+0.05%	32	30	+7%
West End Beachside	\$37,996,090	\$26,007,860	+46%	90	75	+20%
West End Canal/Bay	\$45,743,250	\$34,122,225	+34%	95	84	+13%
West End Home Sites	\$15,544,560	\$11,285,560	+38%	168	155	+8%
Beachside Village including Home Sites	\$10,279,850	\$4,938,000	+108%	27	25	+8%

For specifics about what was listed and sold in your neighborhood, call today! 409.797.5500

WEST END RESIDENTIAL SALES ON GALVESTON ISLAND - YEAR-END MARKET RECAP 2014 vs. 2013:			
Average Days on Market:	2014: 147	2013: 144	% change: +2%
Median Selling Price:	2014: \$329,500	2013: \$285,000	% change: +16%

Source: Galveston Association of Realtors Multiple Listing Service, January 1 - December 31, 2013 & 2014. Data deemed reliable but not guaranteed by MLS or Broker. IF YOUR PROPERTY IS CURRENTLY LISTED WITH A REAL ESTATE BROKER, PLEASE BE AWARE: IT IS NOT OUR INTENTION TO SOLICIT CURRENTLY LISTED PROPERTIES.

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- Realty Executives Advantage • Sand 'N Sea Properties •
- The House Company •

We would like to introduce you to some of our amazing members and supporters of WGIPOA. This month we are featuring Boyd Carr. I have had many conversations with Boyd concerning the research he is doing at UTMB on the cure for diabetes and I believe you will be as fascinated as I have been -- Susan L. McKirahan-Gonzales.

Who's Who – Boyd Carr

Boyd Carr is a West Galveston Island Property Owner Association (WGIPOA) Board Member representing Isla Del Sol since 2001.

He has been performing research at the University of Texas Medical Branch for 36 years, working in several different fields of research, including cancer research, molecular biology, virology, and diabetes research. His latest work was developed from a faculty member that came to UTMB in 2005, Cristiana Rastellini, MD, a surgeon by training that specializes in a new technique for curing diabetes called Pancreatic Islet Transplant.

Boyd explains that "Patients with pancreatitis, a usually painful and serious disease that usually requires the surgical removal of the pancreas, inevitably also lose along with the pancreas the ability to make insulin, some other hormones, as well as digestive enzymes made there also. Her procedure involves a surgeon removing the diseased pancreas, handing it over to us where we take it to a specialized clean room located in the operating room at UTMB, where we mechanically and enzymatically digest the pancreatic tissue and remove and purify the tiny organs called "Islets" that make insulin. After purification, the islets are placed in a blood collection bag. From there the islets are transferred (transplanted) into a vein of the patient's liver where they lodge in the capillaries of the liver's blood supply. After 3 days the islets begin to make insulin and secrete it into the blood, thus automatically adjusting the patient's blood sugar level at the appropriate amount because islets are very sensitive to the amount of sugar in the blood and react quickly to any changing levels. We are now studying ways of improving the survival of transplanted islets by using "stem cell therapy" and possibly increasing insulin production in people with low levels of insulin production (Type 1 diabetes)."

Boyd loves living on the west end with his wife Helen. They live on the bayside in Isla del Sol and plan to retire on the island some day.

Boyd and Helen



Camels on the Beach

By Tom Linton, Galveston Resident and Scrivener

Ever wonder why you can't turn your camel loose when you walk on the beach?

It is a restriction that goes back quite a way. "In Galveston, Texas, it is illegal to have a camel run loose on the beach,"

<http://facts.randomhistory.com/texas-facts.html>

But why was such legislation needed?

Camels were imported into Texas in the 1850s by the U.S. War Department in the belief that they would be handy animals to use during the Indian Wars. A private importation of camels followed the government experiment.



That Camel needs to be on leash!

In 1858, Mrs. M. J. Watson reported to Galveston port authorities she had eighty-nine camels aboard her ship -- port officials refused her unloading the cargo -- she dumped the camels and sailed," <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/quc01>

Camels loose on the beach, a "wrong that was righted" by legislation -- trouble is I can't find that legislation! However, there is legislation that can be found regarding a modern day "animals on the beach problem."

Thanks to guidance from Officer Joel Caldwell of the Galveston Police Department, I found that dogs, like camels, cannot run loose on the beaches of Galveston. Chapter 7 of the Galveston City code contains the specific prohibitions regarding pets on the beach -- leash law & cleaning up after your pet law! Pets must be kept on leashes (at all times) and owners must clean up after their pets is an ordinance that is frequently violated.

To the right is a sign -- several of which are posted in the area around The Grand Theater on Post Office Street -- I saw on my way to the concert this past Sunday. Looks like that "neighborhood" is taking action!

It seems to me that what is needed to reduce the violation Galveston City Code 7-17 is not law enforcement -- it could be simply a matter of reminding beach goers to exhibit good citizenship and consideration for those who come after them to the beach.

So would it not be a very worthwhile undertaking for home owners associations to each take this on as a project -- have such signs printed and posted at the beach access areas in their community?

Meanwhile I shall continue to search for that "Camel on the beach ordinance"

Tom Linton



Sign located downtown.

A Meth Lab on my Property??

By Fran Card, CPA Graduate & Galveston Resident

In 2011 there was enough data on the internet to fill 60,000 Libraries of Congress. Information is readily available on how to make illegal drugs, such as methamphetamine. Chief Porretto says based on research and intelligence gathering, Galveston has become a distribution hub. In 2012 our police seized 204 grams and by 2014 we were up to 9,165 grams, an astounding 4500% increase.

Even a small operation can present a major impact for property owners. The highly toxic vapors can permeate walls, flooring and furniture. The waste is flushed down toilets, drains or just deposited onto the property, contaminating the land. Once a meth lab is discovered whether by happenstance, suspicious activity, fire or explosion and a criminal investigation is completed, the health department makes a determination of contamination. If contaminated, the property is posted, prohibiting the use of all, or a portion of the property. The home owner is responsible for the financial obligations for assessment and cleanup.

Sellers of residential property must disclose certain environmental problems. Real estate agents and home owners in Texas are obligated to disclose meth contamination in a home for sale. Other states require written notices, some require no disclosure if the site has been properly cleaned and treated, while others allow disclosures to be withdrawn, once the site is off the state's contamination list. Today's party hardy groups often combine alcohol with illegal drugs and you don't want to be left cleaning up their mess. Just to confuse the situation, in Texas, there is no law that requires a homeowner to clean up after a meth lab if the police or other officials are not involved.

It is advisable to potential buyers or renters to check with the Galveston police as to whether a property has seen suspicious activity based on calls for service which are available through the open records act. There is a registry of homes known as the National Clandestine Laboratory Registry <http://www.dea.gov/clan-lab/tx.pdf>

<http://www.methinyourhouse.com/meth-house-ndash-whorsquos-responsible.html> #.VQ32xLB0yM8 http://www.lanepowell.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/nesteroffm_002.pdf

Components of Methamphetamine.

Acetone	Nail polish remover or paint thinner. .
Lithium	Used in batteries. It also reacts violently with water and is highly explosive.
Toluene	Used in brake fluid. Toluene is powerful enough to dissolve rubber.
Hydrochloric Acid	It can remove rust from steel and is highly corrosive t
Pseudoephedrine	Decongestant. Cough suppressant now behind the pharmaceutical counter
Red Phosphorus	Found on matchboxes, road flares, and other explosives.
Sodium Hydroxide	Lye.
Sulfuric Acid	Used in drain or toilet bowl cleaner.
Anhydrous Ammonia	Found in fertilizers or countertop cleaners. All of these are corrosive, highly explosive and hazmat issues.

UTMB Microscope Collection among the Best

Many rare and unique instruments

As the state's first medical school and now a burgeoning academic medical center, the University of Texas Medical Branch's most visible tie to the past is the original school building, the Ashbel Smith building.

While "Old Red" is the most visible sign of UTMB's ties to its beginnings, there are other aspects of history at UTMB that may not be so well known. One of those is the historical microscope collection, which is part of the Truman G. Blocker Jr. History of Medicine Collections. Housed in the Moody Medical Library on the UTMB campus, the collection is considered to be one of the best of its type owned by an academic institution in the United States.

"It is hard to adequately illustrate the importance of microscopes in the world of medicine," said UTMB archivist Robert Marlin. "They opened up new dimensions in science. Microscopes allowed for the discovery of things previously unseen."

The collection consists of representative samples documenting the development of microscopy from the 18th through the first quarter of the 20th century. More than 30 individual makers of microscopes or firms are included in the collection.

The library acquired 33 microscopes from Dr. John Bunyan in 1967 with a grant from the Moody Foundation of Galveston. Bunyan was a past president of the Royal Microscopical Society of London, and a collector. There are now more than 100 microscopes in the collection, many of them associated with Bunyan. Others in the collection come from the departments of anatomy and pathology, gifts from former faculty and friends of the university.

One of the most notable instruments in the collection is the circa 1860, French firm Nachet et Fils scope used by Louis Pasteur in his laboratory. Bunyan gave the compound monocular microscope to the Moody Microscope Collection in 1970 after he received it from the curatrix of the Pasteur Institute Paris.

In 1835 Englishman Andrew Ross produced 10 "ball and socket" microscopes in which a ball and socket joint was placed at the top of the pillar allowing the tube to be adjusted in almost any direction. Of the 10 original instruments Ross made, only five remain, and the only one available for public viewing in the U.S. is part of the Moody Microscope Collection.

"This collection illustrates how the world of medicine gets from point A to point B," said Marlin. "We care for these historical pieces, while at the same time in the Galveston National Laboratory researchers care for and utilize the most modern microscopes, which are many times more powerful."

The Blocker collections came into being mostly through the efforts of Dr. Truman G. Blocker Jr., plastic surgeon, medical educator and the first president of UTMB. In addition to the historical microscopes, the collection also contains rare books, archived records, visual materials and other artifacts such as medical and surgical instruments.

Park Board to Assume Beach Maintenance Duties on Galveston's West End

Mary Beth Bassett, Public Relations Coordinator, Galveston Island Park Board of Trustees

Early this year, the Park Board and the City of Galveston entered in to an inter-local agreement giving the Park Board some of the duties city staff once performed on the beachfront. These responsibilities are part of the island's beach access plan and include cleaning and maintenance of the public beach, signage, bollard and portable restroom facility maintenance, and on-the-ground monitoring for code compliance.

The Galveston City Council pledged funding for these activities from the Galveston Island Convention Center Surplus Fund which generates Hotel Occupancy (HOT) Taxes for the city. This year, the fund is budgeted to generate \$1.5 million in HOT for the city, \$300,000 of which is being dedicated to the Park Board for the management of west-end access points.

Park Board staff will continue to pick up litter and debris across the island and will maintain trash cans on west-end beaches. Pickups are scheduled for three times a week from the 400 cans in place on west-end beaches during the summer season. The Park Board will not perform seaweed relocation on the island's west end.

The Park Board will consider recommendations from west end homeowners associations regarding the placement of portable restrooms at the beaches for the summer season. Home Owners association members should make their requests to their HOA president. The HOA president can forward requests to Mario Rabago at the Park Board, mrabago@galvestonparkboard.org.

Maintaining beach access points is another newly designated Park Board responsibility. This entails ensuring that access points have appropriate way finding and code-of-conduct signage and are clearly marked and accessible for vehicles and pedestrians. Park Board staff will maintain bollards, clear sand drifts in the right of way and maintain public beach access.

The Park Board is to ensure that work done on west-end beaches is undertaken according to the city's beaches and dunes rules. This includes planting of dunes, seaweed removal and placing signs on the beach. Code violations will be reported to the proper authorities.

If you would like to report concerns or comments about the above actions, please contact Mario Rabago at (409) 797-5106, Jesse Ojeda at (409)939-3160 or Michelle Hollins at (409) 797-5107.

1% to Conserve Galveston Island™

By Karla Klay, Executive Director & Founder, Artist Boat

Artist Boat is pleased to announce the start-up of 1% To Conserve Galveston Island™. The new start-up will fund land conservation projects on Galveston Island. This protected land will help preserve our beach, bay and uplands; ocean and bay view sheds; wildlife and avian habitat; recreational access; and, clean water.

1% to Conserve Galveston Island™ is a voluntary partnership with local businesses. One hundred percent of the income is collected by local area businesses that have included a voluntary 1% added to customer's purchases. All donations are voluntary; customers who wish to opt out may do so.

Any local area business such as restaurants, lodging, retail, professional services, real estate, recreation, regardless of home office location, may participate. Businesses who choose to participate will receive recognition advertising in area publications. Individuals who wish to participate may do so by frequenting those businesses that proudly support 1% To Conserve Galveston Island™.

The City of Galveston's Comprehensive Plan, Long Term Recovery Plan, Galveston Island Green Print, and many other plans over the years have articulated Galveston's resident's desire for conservation initiatives. This program will provide a funding mechanism and leverage dollars for conservation.

Funding will be granted to qualified applicants who complete a formal application process vetted by the 1% To Conserve Galveston Island™ Advisory Board. The Advisory Board will be comprised of leaders from the tourism industry, natural resource agencies, non-profit conservation and community.

Start-up of the program has been funded by the Houston Endowment, Knobloch Family Foundation, Toyota Together Green and National Audubon Society; and endorsed by the Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Galveston Hotel and Lodging Association. Mrs. Brenda Lee has been named program manager. If you would like to be a business partner please contact: director@toconservegalvestonisland.org. Contact (409)-770-0219

Artist Boat is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting awareness and preservation of coastal margins and the marine environment through the disciplines of the sciences and the arts.



Karla in Her Element

