

tx citizen

VOLUME FIVE
ISSUE 3
01.21.16



HEY Y'ALL,
THANKS FOR
HELPING US BLOW
OFF STEAMBOAT A
FOURTH TIME!

3 14

All Your Resorts Are Belong to Us | Halfway House Boils Season's First Crawfish

PLUS: 7 DAY NEW BRAUNFELS LIVE MUSIC GUIDE

POSTSEASON - WEEK TWO
RESULTS ARE IN!

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1ST WORD

**Evangelical Math:
If my church owns
a building, and
you own a resort,
my church owns a
building and a resort.**



I got this letter the other day from reader Jennifer Seidel. My comments follow:

"Mike,

"My father in law, John Seidel, gave me your contact information. I was wanting to contact you in regards to some questions and concerns about T Bar M and a recent Islamic conference they held there the first weekend of December. My husband and I both have attempted on more than one occasion to get some questions answered by contacting T Bar M ourselves, but I now feel like they are avoiding me and unfortunately have yet to get a response via phone or email.

"I heard about this conference from condo residents and then found out that T Bar M took down Christmas decorations in order to accommodate the guest at this conference. My family has several concerns but the first and main concern being that T Bar M may have taken down anything that remotely resembled Christianity. T Bar M has a very established Christian based camp every year and we feel like if it is true that they made the decision to take down Christmas decorations for this event, that they failed in standing up for their very own Christian based values and morals they instill in children year after year in these camps.

"I personally just want my questions answered as to yes they did or no they didn't. Where it does make me feel a bit uncomfortable that they held this conference, my number one concern is how they may have accommodated these guests. I would feel the same and have the same questions if it had been a conference held for atheists, agnostic, Mormon, or any other groups that beliefs didn't align with Christianity.

"Hoping you may just be able to assist possibly with finding out the truth to these questions. I look forward to hearing back from you. Thank you."

Hey, she said she looked forward to hearing back from me. Here goes:

The Issue

First of all, we don't know if there actually was an Islamic conference at T Bar M, or if decorations were altered for it. We didn't bother asking, because what goes on at T Bar M, a private enterprise, is none of our business. T Bar M is private property, and we don't presume ownership or control of what belongs entirely to someone else. That is the greater issue on the table, and I'm going to discuss it in the most diplomatic manner possible.

It's not clear from the letter if Mrs Seidel is a customer of T Bar M, but if she is, she certainly has a right to withdraw her business from them, and to let them know why. Whether or not they get back to her depends entirely on how much T Bar M wants to keep her potential future business. (We recommend that they do, but again, that's none of our concern.)

The Letter

This letter is an example of "Evangelical Birthright" – the idea that everything in America, on a de facto basis, is obligated to endorse evangelical Christian principles. This is the same position that Governor Abbott took when he had the winter solstice exhibit honoring the Bill of Rights removed from the state capitol, on the basis that it "mocked" Christianity (which it did not). Here's the truth: Not everyone in the world is a Christian. Not every Christian is an evangelical. Evangelicals do not speak for their entire religion.

Continued on page 5.

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– Chef Stephanie



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LONG SHOT

It was said by the great philosopher, Plato, that the legal drinking age should be 18, that people should be able to drink in great moderation until 31, and that once a man turns 40 he can have as much wine as he likes to cure the "crabbedness of old age." Now I won't get into a debate about what the legal drinking age should or should not be, and I certainly won't belittle the importance of moderation, but I do believe that our friend Plato was on to something with that last bit. Personally, I think it's safe to say that we have all earned a little relief from our modern lives that support a healthy amount of crabbedness in each of us. So swing by the tasting room and grab a glass or bottle of our hand crafted anti-crabbedness elixirs made right here in the Lone Star State. Try them alongside our tasty new tapas for an even more complete evening. Good food and great wine, now that's a philosophy tested and true enough for Plato himself.

– Josh McFarling

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Tues-Thurs: 12-10pm
Fri: 12-11pm Sat: 10-11pm
Sun: 10am-4pm
(Brunch: 10am-2pm)

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tuesday
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Continued from page 3.

T Bar M does indeed run camps catering to Christians. That in no way obligates them to turn down business from people of other religions. Furthermore, if a group of Christians wanted to rent my property, you can bet there would be a giant Christmas tree in the lobby, and a manger in every room. I'd even put the Genesis 19 saltshakers out if my guests were Old Testament enthusiasts. They would get what they wanted, because that's what businesses do for customers – they indulge their wishes. The "several concerns" noted in the letter surely refer to the fact that T Bar M hosted an Islamic conference at all, let alone changed the décor.

Evangelicals are on the forefront of "Keep Christ in Christmas" marketing. The signs go up everywhere, (and some are still up around town, four weeks after Christmas), to remind us who owns Christmas, and that it's not for everybody, particularly secular people. And Jews.

The irony here is two-fold: First, evangelicals are incredibly sensitive to holiday decorations, and want nativities on as much public and private property as possible, but in this case fail to see that Muslims are hyper-sensitive to decorations in exactly the same way, and second, and absolutely the most important, that only someone who respects the idea that Christmas belongs to believers would have the decorations taken down. Muslims who take down Christmas decorations **are** "Keeping Christ in Christmas". They don't acknowledge a secular Christmas, in precisely the same way

evangelicals don't. Let that one swim around your brain for a while.

The Disclaimer

Finally, Mrs Seidel closed with this, letting us know that her issues with T Bar M aren't Muslim-specific: "I would feel the same and have the same questions if it had been a conference held for atheists, agnostic, Mormon, or any other groups that beliefs didn't align with Christianity."

As an atheist that has dozens of Mormons in my extended family, the best I can do here is chuckle, and let that statement speak for itself. I sincerely hope we'd be welcomed at T Bar M.

\m/

Mike Reynolds
 Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

Postscript: Having spent my share of Christmases in Salt Lake City, I can tell you, without reservation, that nobody decorates Christmas better than a pack of Mormons. Nobody.



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BLOWIN' OFF STEAMBOAT IV

By Brian Strickland

The staff of Music of New Braunfels and the TX Citizen made it through the fourth successful edition of the Blowin' Off Steamboat Music Festival this past Saturday! We've had this event each year at Freiheit Country Store, and this year Freiheit changed things up and built a beautiful new bar and opened one side of the dance hall with a larger covered area, which helps people spread out a bit more and still enjoy the great music out of the elements.

This year, it was our honor to have Marsha Mudge as our beneficiary, and Marsha was feeling well enough on Saturday to spend a few hours with us! Marsha is a school nurse in NBISD, she is battling stage-four breast cancer, raising two young boys and lost her husband Coach John Mudge a little less than two years ago to a cerebral stroke. Read more about Marsha's story at facebook.com/mudgestrong.

Per BOS tradition, our live music started with acoustic performers at noon. We enjoyed performances from BJ Thibodeaux, Nick Rogers, Bo Porter, Kris Smith, Bo Brumble, Brent Michael Wood, Tony Taylor, Alli Mattice, Doug Kent, Matt Kersh, Bret Graham, Tiffany Valentine & Colt Buckalew of Texas Crossing, Dan Adams, Jade Marie Patek, Bryan Catalani, Kori Free of The Groove Hounds, Breeelan Angel, Andrae Blissett & Greg Francescon of Whiskey Rodeo, Jomo Edwards & Jess Clifford of The Possum Posse, Jesse Stratton and Daniel Thomas Phipps!

We also had six amazing full band performances from Dennis Jay & Lonesome Town, Carol Cochran & Two Way Street, Texas Renegade, Sour Bridges, Walt Wilkins & The Mystiqueros, and Matt Begley & Bitter Whiskey!

Walt Wilkins joined us for our inaugural event back in 2013 with an acoustic performance, and was gracious enough to return this year with his mighty Mystiqueros! Dennis Jay was an acoustic performer last year, and he returned with his band Lonesome Town on the heels of releasing a new Lloyd Maines produced album, which should be released within the next month! Carol Cochran & Two Way Street have become a Blowin' Off Steamboat tradition, as they are the only full band to have performed for us every year, the remainder of the full band lineup typically features bands we've never brought you before so we can bring you as much variety as possible!

We also want to say a special thank you to all of our wonderful sponsors this year! Comaltex Insurance, Papa Murphy's Pizza, Keep Austin Country, NB Mattress, Lonestar Medical, The Purple Chair, Smokey D, Tri-County Paint & Spray, Gregersen Family Chiropractic, The Nut Doctor, Kitchen & Bath Solutions and Bonzai Japanese Steak & Sushi!

Last but not least, I have eternal gratitude for BJ Thibodeaux and Robert Steves. Each year they setup, run and tear down our sound system, and this year they built a wall of sound that made every performance sound amazing! Jeremiah Hamilton was on hand and helped them really dial it in.

Thanks to everybody that came out, and we'll see you again next year!

Brian Strickland not only books the heck out of Blowin' Off Steamboat, he's the man behind Music of New Braunfels. Check him out at musicofnewbraunfels.com!



Friday

Jordan Minor and The
Bottom Dollar Band

Saturday

Rich, Miranda and The
Pullin Motorheads

**NFL Playoffs
SUNDAY!**

Wednesday
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soundcheck

YOUR LIVE MUSIC GUIDE

Thu 1.21

ADOBE VERDE
Historia Gruene, Texas

Dennis Jay

6:30pm



Johnny Kiser

8pm

**OMA GRUENE'S
OGSG
SECRET GARTEN**

Jam Night

6pm

**THE PHOENIX
SALOON**

Ken Raba

5pm

**Riley's
TAVERN**

Big Red Drum Spotlight

9pm

Billy's Ice House

Adam Hood

w/ Skylar Hamilton

8pm

Gruene Hall

Chubby Knuckle Choir

6pm

Moonshine & Ale

Rock & Roll Piano Sing Along

8pm

On the Rocks

TBA

7pm

The Pour Haus

Brent Michael Wood

8:30pm

Fri 1.22

ADOBE VERDE
Historia Gruene, Texas

Right on Red

6:30pm



Chad Anderson

8pm

**HAPPY COW
BAR & GRILL**

Jordan Minor and The Bottom Dollar Band

8pm

**LONGSHOT
WINE BAR & TASTING ROOM**

Bob Schmueckle & Derek Krueger

7pm

**OMA GRUENE'S
OGSG
SECRET GARTEN**

Empty Handed Vagabonds

6pm

**THE PHOENIX
SALOON**

Andrew Howard

5pm

The Canvas People

w/ Tahoma

8:30pm

**Riley's
TAVERN**

April Hall Band

9pm



TBA

8pm

Alpine Haus Restaurant

Off the Grid Polka Band

6pm

Billy's Ice House

Reed Brothers

8pm

Gruene Hall

Zac Wilkerson

8pm

On the Rocks

Code 2

7:30pm

Moonshine & Ale

Rock & Roll Piano Sing Along

8pm

The Pour Haus

Austin Gilliam

8:30PM

Vino en Verde

The Hendersons

8:30pm

Sat 1.23

ADOBE VERDE
Historia Gruene, Texas

Shandy

6:30pm

**HAPPY COW
BAR & GRILL**

Rich, Miranda and The Pullin Motorheads

8pm

**OMA GRUENE'S
OGSG
SECRET GARTEN**

Bare Fax

1pm

MC & the Mystyx

6pm

**THE PHOENIX
SALOON**

Sam Pace & the Gilded Grit

9pm

Riley's TAVERN

Three Chord Rodeo

9pm



Mick Hernandez & the Texas Silverados

9pm

Billy's Ice House

Wilkes County Deeds

8pm

Gruene Hall

Midnight River Choir

1pm

Kelly Willis

w/ The Wagoneers

8pm, \$20

Moonshine & Ale

Rock & Roll Piano Sing Along

8pm

NB Farmers Market

Ron Brietzke & the Wandering Sould

9am

On the Rocks

T-Bone & the Bluetones

9pm

The Pour Haus

Dirty White Horse

9:30pm

Vino en Verde

Soul Sessions

5pm

Sun 1.24

OMA GRUENE'S OGSG SECRET GARTEN

Slim Bawb & the Fabulous Stumpgrinders

2pm

THE PHOENIX SALOON

Daniel Thomas Phipps

2pm

Lucas Taylor

7pm

Riley's TAVERN

Eric Middleton

4pm

Geronimo VFW #8456

Sam Bentley Band

3pm

Gruene Hall

Gallows Bound

12pm

Old Salt Union

4pm

The Pour Haus

Dennis Jay

8:30pm

Mon 1.25

Gruene Hall

Bret Graham

6pm

The Pour Haus

Paul Rogers

8:30pm

Tues 1.26



Matt & Travis (Fools of the Trade)

8pm

Bonzai Steak & Sushi

Smooth Jazz

w/ Sam Harriss

6pm

Gruene Hall

Ross Cooper, Randall Clay

6pm

Wed 1.27

THE PHOENIX SALOON

Manzy Lowry

8:30pm

Riley's TAVERN

Matt Kersh

9pm

Billy's Ice House

Ross Cooper

w/ Aaron Stephens

8pm

Gruene Hall

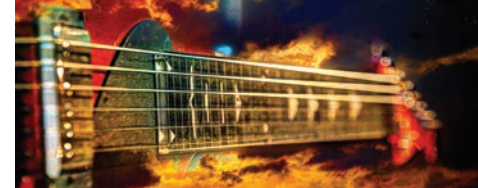
The Georges

6pm

The Pour Haus

Breelan Angel

8:30pm



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Jan 21

@ 6 Jam Night

Jan 22

@ 6 The Empty Handed Vagabonds

Jan 23

@ 1 Bare Fax
@ 6 M.C. & The Mystyx

Jan 24

@ 2 Slim Bawb and
The Fabulous Stump Grinders

Jan 28

@ 6 Jam Night

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Oma Gruene's Secret Garden

SOUND OUT OF TOWN

San Antonio
YOUR LIVE MUSIC GUIDE

Fri 1.22

Cheatham Street Warehouse

Rob Baird

9pm

The Continental Club

Blues Specialists

6:30pm

Ugly Beats, Barrence Whitfield

10pm, \$10

Robert Kraft Trio, 8:30pm

Bruce James, 10:30pm, \$5

Floore's Country Store

Billy Joe Shaver

w/ Jason James

9pm, \$18-\$22

Luckenbach Dance Hall

Hayden Whittington

1pm

Chris Knight

w/ Quincy Harper

8pm, \$25

Luna

D-Soul Davis

8pm, \$10

Sam's Burger Joint

Hayes Carll

8pm, \$20-\$80

Stubb's BBQ

City & Colour

w/ Greyhounds

7pm, Outside, \$32-\$130

Drew Fish Band

w/ Kirk Baxley, Leslie Powell

9pm, Inside, \$10

Sat 1.23

Cheatham Street Warehouse

Doctor G & the Mudcats

9pm

The Continental Club

Redd Volkaert, 3:30pm

Tomar & the FC's, Roxy Roca

10pm, \$10

Hillary York, 8:30pm

The Lost Counts, 10:30pm, \$5

Floore's Country Store

Travis Schultz & the Rutmakers

9pm, \$10

Luckenbach Dance Hall

9th Annual Blues Festival

12pm

Luna

Soul Supporters

9pm, \$10

Sam's Burger Joint

Bob Schneider

8pm, \$15-\$80

Stubb's BBQ

Railroad Earth

w/ Wood & Wire

7pm, Outside, \$23-\$120



HOME OF THE
TWO BUCK HAPPY HOUR!
MON-FRI 4 - 7 PM

GOOD FRIENDS, GOOD
BEER, GOOD DRINKS
GOOD GRIEF,
LET'S PARTY!



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Karaoke

TWednesdays Nights

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THE PHOENIX SALOON

Karaoke

Thursday Nights



Karaoke

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Fridays



Karaoke

Thursdays

The Texas News Grinder with Mike Reynolds

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FREEMAN ON SPORTS

WITH BRANT FREEMAN

Earlier this week, I was out shopping with my wife and we stopped in at an Old Navy to look for pants for our daughter (I know what you're thinking: this column is going to be EPIC). It didn't take long for me to realize that Old Navy is just the WORST. People treat that store like a restaurant that serves free peanuts at the table. Just like there are shells everywhere at (fill in the blank) Roadhouse, you can't walk ten feet without stepping over a pair of capris or an 1879 Harvard Football t-shirt at Old Navy. How did this happen and how did poor ol' Old Navy get chosen as America's laundry basket? Are their customers that awful or are their employees that lazy? (The answer is: yes). Pick your stuff up people. On to the Week In Review.

NFL: No upsets in the divisional round for the first time in 11 seasons this past weekend as the top two seeds in both the AFC and NFC advanced to the conference championship game. Despite the "chalk" last week, the NFL playoffs as a whole have been wildly entertaining. Of the eight games, six of them have been one-score games (thanks for nothing Washington and Brian Hoyer) and we've already seen a handful of crazy moments, from the Bengals collectively losing their minds, to a kicker causing the entire state of Minnesota to experiment mixing moonshine and Red Bull together, to Andy Reid's clock management (akin to a child "managing" to keep their hamster alive for more than two weeks), to a near incredible comeback by Seattle, to Green Bay and Arizona giving us about 17 "what the hell's?!" in a span of ten minutes on Saturday.

When you don't have a "dog in the hunt" this time of year (and I haven't in quite some time and won't again for another 15 years because the Titans continue to hire pieces of cardboard for head coaches), you don't really care who wins. In this case, there are just two items on your NFL playoff checklist: 1) the team you loathe needs to lose by 58

(Texans lost by 30, close enough... CHECK) and 2) the games need to be fun as hell to watch (check).

Looking ahead to this week, we could be in store for an epic NFC Championship Game between Carolina and Arizona and New England "Old Yelling" Peyton Manning in Denver. Look, Denver's defense is awesome and yes, the Broncos beat the Patriots earlier this season, but if you watched Denver's playoff win over Pittsburgh this past week, it was obvious that if the Steelers had Antonio Brown and/or don't fumble the game away in the fourth quarter then they win that game. On Denver's game winning drive, Manning did a bunch of turning around to hand the ball off. It's sad to see one of the league's all-time greats decline so quickly, but no matter how many Nationwide Papa John Insured Pizzas the guy sells now, the dude just doesn't have it any more. Couple that with the colossal mismatch of Bill Belichick vs Gary Kubiak, New England wins on Sunday 24-13.

In the NFC, I've felt for a while that the Arizona Cardinals were the best team in football even during Carolina's 14-0 start and thankfully we get to see the league's top two teams settle things on the field. We did nearly see Carson Palmer choke away his best chance at a playoff win only to be saved by Larry Fitzgerald (easiest guy to root for in sports) and Carolina went super conservative after going up 31-0 over Seattle so each team had its flaws last week, yet here they are. This week, the mistakes will be corrected and we'll see a back-and-forth game that comes down to the final two minutes. Arizona to prevail 20-17 and we get the best headwear matchup in Super Bowl history: The Bruce Arians Kangols vs the Bill Belichick Hoodies.

...does Old Navy sell them?

Brant Freeman is a seasoned local sportscaster, delivering the goods as a reporter for major pro and collegiate sporting events in the greater San Antonio area for over a decade.



POSTSEASON - WEEK TWO TOP PLAYERS

(TIE BREAKERS PLAYED FOR ALL POSITIONS)

1ST PLACE: TATUM DELEON @ THE WATERING HOLE - 87.5%

TIE SECOND PLACE: TERRI HARDIE @ THE HAPPY COW - 87.5%

TIE SECOND PLACE: JC VON RUHMANN @ THE PRICKLY PEAR - 87.5%

FOURTH PLACE: MANDY WRIGHT @ SCORES - 87.5%

THIS WEEK'S WINNING TEAM:

SCORES: 69% ACCURACY

LEAGUE STANDINGS:

OVERALL ACCURACY ON SEASON

+ **SCORES: 54%**

+ THE HAPPY COW: 52%

+ THE WATERING HOLE: 50%

+ THE PRICKLY PEAR: 42%

PLAY HERE:



HAPPY COW
BAR & GRILL

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ASK A MEXICAN!

By Gustavo Arellano

**Dear Mexican: Can you tell me if
Eugenia is a popular name in Mexico?**

Clean for Eugene

Dear Mexican: Hey, I was wondering why it is that Mexicans are said to have low risk for heart attacks, considering they eat lots of beans, animal intestines and other strange foods like pigs' feet and cow tongue? Could there be some mysterious magical healing power in all these strange cultural cuisines?

Max Cherry Burger

Dear Gabacho: How is eating animal intestines, pig's feet and cow tongue "strange"? That's working-class food, whether you're Polish or Mexican, black or a good ol' boy from a Kentucky holler, and it's certainly better than the mainstream mierda gabachos eat. Another fact you got wrong: Mexicans as paragons of heart health. Maybe in el pasado, when we mostly ate cactus and human flesh, but that was a long time ago. Nowadays, no less an authority than the American Heart Association says on its website that Mexis "face even higher risks of cardiovascular diseases because of high blood pressure, obesity and diabetes" due to our newfound diet in the States and lack of exercise. And don't think this affliction is just a pocho thing, either; a 2010 American Heart Journal study by Benjamín Acosta-Cázares and Jorge Escobedo de la Peña titled "High burden of cardiovascular disease risk factors in Mexico: An epidemic of ischemic heart disease that may be on its way?" showed that the rate of Mexicans in Mexico dying of heart disease doubled between 1970 and 2000, just like rates of high blood pressure and diabetes (while still far lower than what's found in the U.S., the report also noted gabacho rates are going down, while ours rise like El Chapo's pito while thinking of Kate del Castillo). Fact is, Mexicans are dying a slow, obese, short-breathed death gracias to our new, Americanized eating patterns—call it Donald Trump's revenge.

Dear Gabacha: Maybe in 1902, when names such as Sabas, Fidencio, Adoración, and Petra were all the rage, but certainly not today!

Dear Mexican: I've enjoyed reading your posts and typically find your responses insightful, even if I might not always agree with your view of history. However, when you replied to an admittedly hostile question about assimilation and the level of education, you completely dropped the ball. Not only did your snarky response fall flat (the randy racist spelled the word in question correctly in the message body of his email), but more importantly you missed a great opportunity to explain a stereotype that from many perspectives seems to be pretty legit. Did this one hit a little too close to home?

Ad Hominem Attacks Are For Losers

Dear Gabacho: You're referring to a question that appeared a couple of weeks ago in the chingón Denver alt-weekly Westword that insisted Mexicans don't assimilate while referring to us as "beans" and "beaners," opining that I've got my "head up your ass" and concluding that Mexico is a "shithole country." And you're upset at me for dismissing his racism with a flippant remark? Sorry, but the Mexican's responses are based on the question posed. And, in your case, you get this: vete a la chingada, pinche pendejo baboso inútil.



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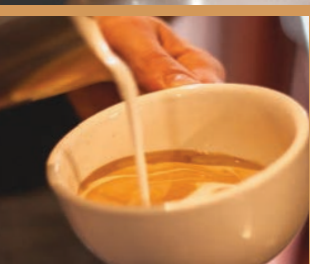


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Male • 5'11" • 205 lbs
DOB: 11/26/1973
CHARGE: Failure to appear/ theft property over \$1500 under \$20,000

ARRESTED



**MULKEY,
FREDDIE RAY**
Male • 5'10" • 198 lbs
DOB: 03/31/1952
CHARGE: Manufacture delivery of a controlled substance PG 1 in a drug free zone



**GONZALES,
ADAM JR**
Male • 5'08" • 204 lbs
DOB: 07/29/1977
CHARGE: Two charges of failure to appear unauthorized use of vehicle



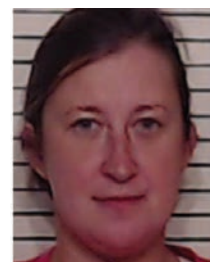
**HARRISON,
MATTHEW JAMES**
Male • 5'11" • 170 lbs
DOB: 05/31/1989
CHARGE: Theft of property over \$1500 under \$20,000

ARRESTED



**WRIGHT,
TONI LYNNE**
Female • 5'05" • 178 lbs
DOB: 11/17/1979
CHARGE: Motion to revoke probation for harassment of public servant

ARRESTED



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The names listed have been released in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act. This is a true and accurate account as of Monday, January 11, 2016 at 9:20 am and may not be current by the time it is read. Do not try to apprehend anyone. These are listings of criminal warrants with the Comal County Sheriff's Office and are not indicative of guilt or innocence. Officers are to verify the status of each warrant prior to making an arrest. Any person is innocent of wrongdoing unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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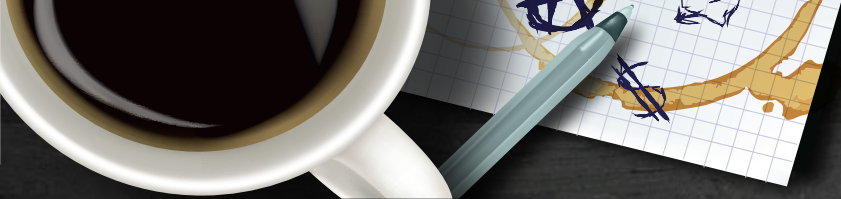



Crawfish season came early this year, with Kevin and Ivran at the Halfway House (formerly Dirty's Bar & Q) out on Hwy 46 throwing down the first mudbugs of the year last Saturday - and they're doing it again this Saturday! 1pm until they run out, \$15 a plate. Come and take it, y'all!



New Braunfels' Betrayed Motorcycle Club secured a donation of \$6,000 for the Texas Elks camp, which serves special needs children, through the generosity of the GVTC Foundation. The motorcycle club will be attending the summer graduations at the camp, which is just outside of Gonzales, to see the fantastic results of this donation!





Last Word

With Kelly Colby

On Primary Season

The start of the primaries is almost upon us. You can tell if you live in Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina or any of the surrounding states, (which you don't), you've likely thrown your TV out the window to avoid watching another campaign commercial. Those of you in Texas have been spared for the moment, but it's coming, I assure you. I, of course, watch it all, and here's how I see it.

I had planned on being happy about the lead-up to the 2016 election. Barak Obama wouldn't be on the ticket, so we were already headed in the right direction, and Rand Paul had thrown his hat into the Republican ring, and it looked like the country was ready for something different which would be good for Paul.

So much for that.

I expected at this point to be telling people that if they're as fed up with business as usual as I am, they should give Rand Paul another look. Instead, I'm asking everyone to please ignore him. He's been in this race too long and is starting to seem a little worn around the edges. At this point I'm just hoping he doesn't damage himself irreparably; I'd love to see him try again in four or eight years.

Paul looked good this year because people were ready for change, and he was far enough out of the mainstream to seem like that change. Unfortunately for Paul (and me), the American public is apparently even more fed up than I am. In a year where Rand Paul being the craziest guy in the room would be a good thing, Paul finds himself nowhere near that blue ribbon, in either party. Paul's message ends up looking like just more of the same, and for Republicans, a bit milquetoast to boot.

Ignoring Paul, the race currently looks like this for Republicans. After winnowing out just a few of the innumerable contenders

for the Republican position, three slots seem to be the ones that will stick around for a while. Donald Trump will almost certainly make it. This is sending some Republicans (mostly the establishment guys) into fits, which I assume is the point. I suspect Charles Krauthammer had to prescribe himself some sedatives just to get this far. The other person still polling well is Ted Cruz. This seems almost as gut-wrenching to the Republican establishment. Trump has some support from conservatives, but Cruz has been reliably conservative for a while, and everybody in DC hates him, even dogs. Which is good this year. Then there will be some establishment choice of candidate, but it's hard to say who. At the moment, my money's on Rubio.

Like Rand Paul, Jeb Bush should go home. He's making a fool of himself at this point. Running negative ads against the other establishment contenders is just a reminder that none of them are particularly conservative, and if they're elected, we can expect a careful attempt to bring back the Washington that worked well together and got things done, like Obamacare. Which is why they're nowhere in the polls. I assume they will get the lobbyist vote, but that's almost certainly all unless the country suddenly decides things have gone far enough.

If you're a nervous-nelly about war, you might be tempted to vote for these guys or even go Democrat, but let me remind you that it is the quiet guys you need to watch out for. History doesn't really connect bellicose rhetoric and war as closely as you might think. It certainly doesn't in this country. It's almost always the guys who promise that it's not our problem that get us in trouble. And, if Trump or Cruz make YOU nervous, think about how nervous the rest of the world will be. It's quite possible everyone will be

on their best behavior for a few years.

For the Democrats, it's a two-man race: Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton. Bernie has been the butt of many jokes during the primary, but his numbers are inching up, and as the Republicans are with Donald Trump, the Democrat establishment is sweating. It appears that Democrats are no more happy with the status quo in their party than the Republicans are, and they've decided to do something about it. This year instead of voting for the person who sounds like a socialist, they're going to vote for the person who actually IS a socialist.

Bernie has suggested breaking up the banks, taxing every transaction on Wall Street and free everything for everyone, and it's worth remembering that this is the toned down version of Bernie. He has taken to calling himself a democratic socialist and pretending that his affinity is for northern European countries. Amusingly enough, this is working. Democrats don't care anymore about how crazy their candidate is that the Republicans do.

Bernie's only real competition is Hillary Clinton: good ol' HRC. (That O'Malley guy that you sometimes see on the stage is a plant to make it look like the Democrats could find someone younger than Methuselah to vote for.) Hillary has the proper qualifications, and, as she will remind you incessantly, the proper sex organs for the job. Aside from that, she's got nothing. Hillary is about as polarizing a character as you could hope to get, that's not so bad for the primary, but it's not much better than running an aging '60s commie in the general election. Couple that with the fact that the top Google search for Hillary during the last debate was: "Will Hillary Clinton Get Prosecuted" and you can see how this is going. The answer to that question really ought to be a resounding

no, but as time wears on, people in the know take longer and longer to answer it. In addition, she has the movie Thirteen Hours, a story about the Benghazi attack playing in theaters now, her husband Bill roaming around the campaign trail doing who knows what (and with whom) and her daughter trying to make Debbie Wasserman Schultz look smart.

If Bernie wins both Iowa and New Hampshire, the two earliest primaries, or Hillary is indicted, the Democrats may have a real problem. The current argument is that Bernie Sanders can't be elected because he's a socialist. That might have been true in the past, but I'm not so sure it's true anymore. Hillary has run a campaign ad or two suggesting that she's the only one who can win against the Republicans, and that would be much more convincing if most polls didn't show her losing to all the likely candidates but Trump and Sanders winning versus all but Rubio. It really looks like in a battle of the crazies, Bernie could go all the way.

I expect that if Bernie does well and/or Hillary has more problems, that HRC will be put away somewhere "for her health," and we'll see a couple of understudies make their debut. Biden is still around, and Elizabeth Warren has also been whispered about. Neither of them are really any better a candidate than Hillary is, but they have the benefit of being mostly sane and out of federal prison.

I'd love to make suggestions for people, but at the moment, I can't even suggest Republican or Democrat. I have decided I will likely vote for the Libertarian candidate this year. He'll lose, but I can pretend that whomever wins isn't my fault.

*Kelly Colby can be reached via the electronic mail at
kellycolby@tccitizen.com*

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