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Walkers, drivers
take heed



In this file photo, emergency personnel investigate a deadly auto-pedestrian accident that happened on the westbound lane of I-10 near Vidor. Photo taken on May 30, 2019.

National Pedestrian Safety Month campaign takes
place amid local accidents

By Kim Brent
STAFF WRITER

In concert with October being National Pedestrian Safety Month, the Texas Department of Transportation is launching a statewide "Be Smart, Drive Smart" campaign this week in an effort to cut down on deadly statistics by making sure drivers and those sharing the roadways on foot use caution and watch out for one another.
The onset of fall brings cooler days that beckon many to head outdoors for a walk or run, but it also means more hours of darkness, with the sun rising later and setting sooner as the end of Daylight Saving Time approaches on Nov. 2.
The changing conditions lie at the heart of what statistically makes October the deadliest month for pedestrian and automobile accidents, according to a TxDOT news release.
They cited that 67% of all serious or fatal pedestrian crashes in Texas last year occurred at night.
In October alone, "89 pedestrians were killed, and another 143 were seriously injured in Texas traffic crashes. What's more, a total of 773 people died while walking on Texas roads in 2024," the news release stated. "And

pedestrian-involved traffic crashes are still on the rise in Texas, up 25% from 2020 through 2024."
Southeast Texas has seen its share of auto-pedestrian accidents already this year.
Nearly a dozen have died to date, including a woman struck by a drunk driver in Buna on Oct. 8, and Jose Martinez-Torres, 75, who died after being hit by a vehicle on South Martin Luther King, Jr., Parkway in early September.
With Halloween just a week away, when even more pedestrians will likely be traversing roadways in poorly lit and less conspicuous places, it's even more imperative that drivers proceed with extra caution behind the wheel.
The TxDOT campaign highlights the story of one Texas woman who became an unfortunate part of the deadly 2024 statistics.
U.S. Air Force Major Brenna Cole-Pickrel, a 31-year-old security expert at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, went out for an afternoon jog last fall when she was struck by a vehicle in a San Antonio crosswalk. She died from her injuries on Oct. 2, leaving behind her fiancé of five months, Kane Pickrell, dog Daisy, other family and friends to mourn.

Her story is shared on the state agency's website.
The site also provides safety tips to help cut down on accidents, bolstering the signage that TxDOT is placing along roadways where drivers and pedestrians intersect.
Safety tips for drivers:
Stay alert. Look out for pedestrians everywhere, at all times.
Stop. Yield for pedestrians in crosswalks.
Yield the right of way to pedestrians when turning.
Pay attention. Put your phone away before you begin driving. Be prepared if pedestrians enter your path.
Be cautious when passing stopped vehicles. They can block your view of pedestrians.
Follow speed limits. Drive to conditions.
Be especially careful if you drive a large SUV or pickup truck. They have large blind spots in front that can make it hard to see pedestrians.
Safety tips for pedestrians:
Cross the street only at intersections and crosswalks.
Make eye contact with drivers
Pedestrians continues on A4

It could be a
rainy weekend

By Bianca Thomas
STAFF WRITER

The dry weather could be over in Beaumont and rain is expected to make a comeback in this weekend's weather forecast.
The chances of showers and thunderstorms have increased to 50 percent and can be expected after 10 a.m. today, according to the National Weather Service Lake Charles. However, skies are expected to be mostly sunny with a high temperature near 89 degrees and a light south wind going 5 to 10 mph.
Rainfall amounts are expected to be between a tenth and quarter of an inch over the weekend. Higher totals could come during possible thunderstorms.
"Few showers cannot be ruled out over SETX, but any rainfall that occurs isn't forecast to amount to much," the National Weather Service Lake Charles forecast discussion said. "Highs will trend
Rain continues on A4

Senate candidate
James Talarico
attends local rally

The Democrat seminarian asks residents to look past 'manufactured divisions'

By Mbu Maqungo
STAFF WRITER

Democratic State Representative and U.S. Senate candidate James Talarico told a gathered crowd how his background fuels his campaign during a stop Wednesday night at the United Steelworkers Local 13-243 union hall in Beaumont.
Mayor Pro Tempore and At-large Councilmember AJ Turner was the first to speak, followed by fellow State House of Representatives member Christian Manuel, who introduced the Presbyterian seminarian and former middle school teacher from northeast Austin.
"Before I was a politician, I was a public school teacher," Talarico said. "I taught 6th grade language arts on the west side of San Antonio. Every day my students struggled heroically to overcome poverty, overcome racism, overcome systems that were designed to hold them back."
Describing his former students as fighters, the outspoken critic of Christian Nationalism likened their circumstances to his mother who escaped with him from a physically abusive relationship at a young age.
He went on to say he thinks the only minority destroying the United States with manufactured culture wars is the minority of the population who are billionaires. People have not seen the same kind of tenacity or fight against those interests
Talarico continues on A4



Mbu Maqungo/For The Beaumont Enterprise
Democratic State Rep. James Talarico after his rally in the United Steelworkers Local 13-243 union hall on Oct 15.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Remembering Bum Phillips

By Megan Zapalac
STAFF WRITER

Oail "Bum" Phillips Jr., a local coaching legend who became a national icon in the NFL, died on this day 12 years ago.
Phillips died of natural causes Oct. 18, 2013 on his ranch in Goliad. Here's a look back at his upbringing, coaching career and

legacy.
Phillips was given the nickname "Bum" as a child when one of his sisters could not pronounce the word "brother" correctly and it sounded like "bum." Both sides of Phillips' family came from a ranching background, and as a child, he often helped his maternal grandfather, who managed a large ranch.
When Phillips was in the seventh grade, his family moved to Beaumont, later attending French High School. He went on to play football at Lamar College, now known as Lamar University. When WWII started, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps, serving in the South Pacific, initially on Guadalcanal, serving about three
Phillips continues on A4



Sam C. Pierson Jr./HC staff/Houston Chronicle
Cougar linebacker Wade Phillips with his father and coach, Bum Phillips on September 1, 1966.