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VICTORIA ADVOCATE

Weekend, January 17-18, 2026

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HEALTHCARE



From left, Melissa McConnell, Petrina Lowery, Karina Lopez, Sara Ashraf, M.D., Audrey Svatek, Ryley Purcell (Executive Director of Crossroads Guardians of Hope), Brett Maxfield, Paul Peterson and Ali Jafri, M.D. pose with the check presented to Crossroads Guardians of Hope by DeTar Healthcare System. (Lindsey Plotkin/Victoria Advocate)

PAYING IT FORWARD

DeTar Healthcare System presents Crossroads Guardians of Hope with donation

LINDSEY PLOTKIN

DeTar Healthcare System presented Crossroads Guardians of Hope with a check for \$6,269.95 Thursday, the total amount raised across three October fundraisers. The check was presented to Ryley Purcell, executive director of Crossroads Guardians of Hope, a local nonprofit that supports cancer patients and their families.

Purcell is new to the role as executive director, but not new to helping people. A volunteer firefighter, giving back is his passion. Through Guardians of



Ryley Purcell addresses the staff at the DeTar Cancer Center alongside Audrey Svatek, Director of DeTar Cancer Center (left) and Brett Maxfield, CEO of DeTar Healthcare System. (Lindsey Plotkin/Victoria Advocate)

Hope, he's able to continue giving back to those who are the most vulnerable.

"These funds will be used for both the assistance requests that we get for cancer patients to help with either medical costs or extra living costs associated with going through cancer treatment and but then also for stuff on the operation side," Purcell said. "(It will also help with) truck maintenance and fuel to be able to keep the trucks on the road and keep letting people be able to sign the trucks."

Crossroads Guardians of Hope has a fleet of three pink emergency vehicles, one ambulance, one firetruck and one police car that cancer patients sign when they complete their treatment.

For DeTar Healthcare System CEO Brett Maxfield, being able to support an organization that

supports patients is a main cause of the hospital. The funds were raised through a bake sale, t-shirt and hat sales and a Pink-Out breakfast event.

Crossroads Guardians of Hope not only provides monetary support to patients, but supports them in other ways, giving rides and just being a community.

"(The support) we see for some of these patients is the support that they don't have at home, what Guardians of Hope and the others are able to do, from either a car ride to pay for parking, the faces that you see on these patients when they get that little bit of help and just give them that little bit of hope, I think, is what really drives it home for them," Maxfield said. "These patients are struggling. You don't realize what a lot of people are going through in life sometimes, and just that little bit of help that you can help them through.

And it's a big win for the hospital. It's a big win for the community."

Maxfield emphasized how the hospital's main goal is to support the community, and how by supporting organizations like Guardians of Hope, it is able to extend its outreach. Through a community like Guardians of Hope, the organization and hospital are able to support each other, and most importantly, support patients.

"Hospitals give day in and day out, but giving the dollars to these organizations that help support us goes a long way, and again, it goes back to the community," Maxfield said. "It goes back to serving our community. That's what I preach, day in and day out, to our employees. That's what we're here for. Without the community, the hospital wouldn't be here either. So we rely on each other and have these strong support networks, like Guardians of Hope and all the others that are out there, they're the ones that help us care for this community."

For Purcell, this donation is key to helping his organization keep running. What doesn't go directly to supporting patients will go to upkeep of the trucks and organizational expenses.

Guardians of Hope is completely funded by donations, and once the donations are given out, Purcell feels as if he has fulfilled his purpose.

"I would say probably

SEE DETAR, A3

CRIME AND COURT

Woman convicted of capital murder in infant's death

ADVOCATE STAFF

A Victoria County jury on Thursday afternoon found Nakesha Shantay Barnes, 37, guilty of capital murder in the death of her infant son.

Barnes was indicted on Sept. 30, 2021, for intentionally and knowingly causing the death of 26-day-old James Anthony Richardson on July 14, 2021.

According to evidence presented at trial, Barnes squeezed the infant and caused his head to strike a hard surface or unknown object, resulting in fatal injuries.

Testimony and medical evidence showed that James suffered multiple rib and skull fractures

that were in various stages of healing at the time of his death.

The case was delayed due to constitutionally mandated procedural matters.

Under Texas law, the murder of a child under the age of 10 is classified as capital murder and carries an automatic sentence of life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Assistant District Attorney Zachary Miles prosecuted the case with assistance from First Assistant District Attorney Andrea Harvey. Barnes was represented by attorneys Jerry Clark and Kelsey Downing. Judge Eli Garza presided over the four-day trial.



Nakesha Shantay Barnes (VICTORIA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE)

CRIME AND COURT

U.S. Marshals capture Victoria fugitive in Mexico

ADVOCATE STAFF

A Victoria man accused in a violent assault case was apprehended in Mexico after cutting off

his court-ordered GPS monitor and fleeing the country, according to law enforcement officials.

SEE FUGITIVE, A3



Robert Partida Jr., 45 (left) was arrested in Mexico after fleeing Victoria while out on bond. (Gulf Coast Violent Offender and Fugitive Task Force)

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Love, loss, and the year of the bidet

WEATHER

TODAY

Breezy and cooler with clouds and sun



61

TONIGHT

Breezy early; mainly clear, colder



29

VIEWPOINTS A5

GAS PRICES

MURPHY'S

USA

3407 N. Delmar

As of 4 p.m. Friday, prices vary.

REGULAR:

\$2.42

DIESEL:

\$2.89

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