

# Opinion

## The Tribune

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**Brandon Cox • Publisher**  
[brandon.cox@baycitytribune.com](mailto:brandon.cox@baycitytribune.com)

**Shelly Story • Managing Editor**  
[shelly.story@baycitytribune.com](mailto:shelly.story@baycitytribune.com)

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• OURVIEW

# Business support

## City needs to do what it can for existing businesses

While new economic development is important to help build a community, taking care of those who have invested in the city for a lifetime forms the foundation on which you are building.

Which is why the Bay City City Council should feel obligated to do what it can to make sure the existing business community receives its support. And city staff need to be brought on-board with that concept.

At their Sept. 25 meeting, the council was confronted with just such a request from Matagorda Oilfield Specialty. The business, which has been incorporated and operating in the city for 30 years and has been paying property taxes for even longer, explained their request for sewer service had been turned down. It was explained that after getting city approval to make renovations based on a 'promise' from the city to provide wastewater service, their check for a sewer tap fee was returned. They were told, there were no available lines to tap into.

On top of that, the business said they has been served by a "temporary" water line for the past two years after their original line was cut as part of a city project.

The cost of extending the service has been estimated at \$272,000, which is more than a drop in the city's utilities department budget. It was also pointed out those property taxes the company has been paying all these years goes for general city maintenance and operations and not for utility improvements. Which is correct.

However, years of providing goods and services on both a local and regional basis should count for something. The business no doubt has not only been paying property but also sales taxes that have benefited the city as a whole. So it should not be unrealistic an expectation to receive some additional consideration for that loyalty to the community.

Supporting new business is important. But backing existing businesses is what creates the kind of atmosphere that will encourage other employers to look at the city in a positive light.

• TRIBTHUMBS

I would like to send a big THUMBS

UP to the students, staff and parents of Van Vleck ISD for their efforts each and every day making our school district and community a wonderful place to live, learn and grow! – **John R. O'Brien, VVVISD Superintendent**

A huge thumbs up to Alicia Waters who has given thousands of hours as a volunteer promoting Matagorda County and Bay City's history and heritage. Her most recent undertaking is lighting and decorating our historic downtown and courthouse square. – **DC Dunham, BCCDC Director**

Thumbs up to Judge Yeakel on his ruling on the Health and Safety Code. – **Judy Baker**

Thumbs up to Tribune sports editor Barry Halvorson for live tweeting and posting scores of all the local high school football games each Friday night. - **Andre Moore**

Thumbs down to the LCRA board for their continued refusal to do what it best for all of Texas, and not just the rich folks living on the lakes in Austin. - **Steven Humphries**

THUMBS

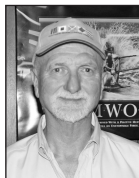
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• NATURALSTATE

# Nature awakens and awes grateful aquaphile

The Matagorda County Birding Nature Center continues to serve as the 6:30 a.m. host site, and offers the use of their kayaks, free of charge to those in need of a boat, for each Monday morning's Fun & Fitness paddlers' outing.



**WILLIE YOUNGER**  
*A Natural State of Mind*

But, after nearly six months of opening up this facility before dawn, I have come to accept the fact, that there are very few folks willing to get up early in order to greet the first warming rays of the sun and shout out loud from their floating observatory, "Good Morning World!"

I must admit that there were times when I was disappointed by a low, sometimes non-existent, turn-out.

But, on the first full day of fall, I experienced a startling shift in my attitude as I found myself on the river totally alone and surrounded by incredible beauty, soul-quieting peace and magical mystery.

In yielding to the counsel of those much wiser, I silently immersed myself in the moment, with my senses on full alert. Suddenly, I realized what an uncommon privilege it was to find my mortal self completely cleared of the distractions of the hectic, artificial world of humankind and have my soul gently re-awakened to the divine purpose of wilderness and its abundant wonders.

I came to view the thick masses of grape vines drooping to delicately touch the placid water serve as lush curtains, hiding the deer, feral hogs and birds watching from among the fringing trees and brush cloaking the banks. As the days become shorter and the evenings cooler, I am made aware that more and more of the area's wildlife will be slowly revealed to stealthy river visitors as the earth stretches to reach winter's bare-all moment.

The great blue and little green herons are perched upon fallen logs lining the edges of this alluring stream like elite palace guards stationed at strategically-positioned posts.

They alert fellow residents that an unwelcomed intruder approaches, the

WANTED: GUEST COLUMNISTS

• The Tribune welcomes submissions by guest columnists. Columns should be 600 words or less, must be signed by the author and include a recent photograph of the author. Email guest columns to [shelly.story@baycitytribune.com](mailto:shelly.story@baycitytribune.com). Mail or deliver guest columns to Bay City Tribune, 2901 Carey Smith Blvd., Bay City, TX 77414. The Tribune reserves the right to edit guest columns for grammar, length and style.

blues with the wide spread of their wings as they take flight, and the greens with their piercing call. They are aided by log-hugging turtles which dutifully belly-flop as a stranger approaches.

While every few hundred yards, a snowy egret stands defiantly erect, like a statue adorning an ancient temple. Their striking beauty serves to tearfully remind me that, a little over a century ago, hundreds of thousands were slaughtered for sugar-white feathers with which to fashionably accessorize ladies hats. Sadly, this mindless annihilation of animals and plants has been an all too common occurrence in the relatively short, but greed-filled, history of Homo sapiens.

Two knobby eyes pop up just ahead of my kayak. It is the worthy spyware of an ancient reptile surveying an awestruck paddler. I begin to ponder whether this toothy lizard is considering me as a potential meal, or as a competitor for the food the river abundantly provides this scaly creature. But, experience, gained over my decades of not-too-close-for-comfort contact, assures me that an unprovoked attack is probably the rarest form of danger I am likely to encounter during this unscripted aquatic adventure.

The leaves have begun to drift down from the cottonwood trees, decorating the air-water interface. Strangely, to me the clusters resemble a flotilla of Greek war ships preparing to do battle with the invading Romans. Soon, our waters will be choked with these fearsome miniature navies of my unrestrained imagination.

I marvel at the skilled troupe of water bugs artfully dancing about on the surface. Comically, this amazing ballet reminds me of hoards of crazed shoppers as a store opens for its Thanksgiving Day sale. Enlighteningly, it tells me that every organism adjusts so well to their environment and

circumstances...if left undisturbed by man.

In my solitude, I was thunderstruck by the reality that, on this cloudless dawning of the day, I alone was chosen to receive these, and countless other, glorious blessings from the Creator! However, as I returned to the Nature Center, a current of disappointment surged through my veins. How many men, women and children will never receive these priceless gifts simply because they opt to trade them for just a few more unproductive minutes of slumber?

Thankfully, Rally on the River allows participants the rare opportunity to become more leisurely acquainted with the magnificent Colorado River. Thus, I would be remiss if I did not remind every business, agency, church, service organization and club in Matagorda County, that the Convention and Visitors Bureau is hosting a special meeting, whereby, they can introduce ways they can add to this annual event in a complementary manner.

This public forum, for designing a community-wide function which enriches and/or enlightens all of those it attracts, will be held at 4 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 9 in the Bay City Civic Center. Call 979-245-8333 to reserve seats for your distinctive group of growth-minded visionaries.



President **Barack Obama**  
 The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Washington, D.C. 20500  
[whitehouse.gov/contact](http://whitehouse.gov/contact)



Vice president **Joe Biden**  
 Executive Office Building Washington, D.C. 20501  
[whitehouse.gov/contact](http://whitehouse.gov/contact)



Texas governor **Rick Perry**  
 P.O. Box 12428 Austin, TX. 78711  
[www.governor.state.tx.us](http://www.governor.state.tx.us)



U.S. senator **John Cornyn**  
 517 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510  
[www.cornyn.senate.gov](http://www.cornyn.senate.gov)



**Ted Cruz**  
 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Ste SDB-40B Washington, D.C. 20510  
[www.cruz.senate.gov](http://www.cruz.senate.gov)



State senator **Glenn Hegar**  
 P.O. Box 12068, Capitol Station Austin, TX 78711  
 District Address: P.O. Box 1008 Katy, TX 77492  
 Phone: (281) 391-8883  
[hegar.senate.state.tx.us](http://hegar.senate.state.tx.us)



U.S. representative **Blake Farenthold**  
 117 Cannon HOB Washington, D.C. 20515  
[farenthold.house.gov](http://farenthold.house.gov)



State representative **Dennis Bonnen**  
 P.O. Box 2910, Austin, TX 78768  
 District Address: 122 East Myrtle Angleton, TX 77515  
 Phone: (979) 848-1770



Matagorda County judge **Nate McDonald**  
 1700 7th Street Room 301 Bay City, Texas 77414  
 979-244-7605



Bay City mayor **Mark Bricker**  
 1901 5th Street Bay City, Texas 77414  
 979-245-2137

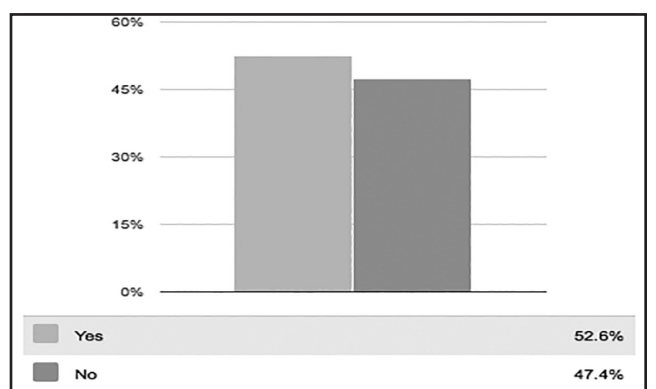


Palacios mayor **John C. Sardelich**  
 311 Henderson Palacios 77465  
 361-972-3605  
[mgcjcs@yahoo.com](mailto:mgcjcs@yahoo.com)

• ONLINE POLL

Poll Results:

"Have you ever taken part in Relay for Life?"



This week's question:

"Do you recycle?"

**MEMBER 2014**

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