

The Rockport Pilot

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MIDWEEK

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\$1



Local column

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Business Expo
free on Thursday

... see 7A

Brief



Groundbreaking
Thursday for DAP

The site of the Downtown Anchor Project (DAP) has been fenced in, and site work has already begun. The DAP's groundbreaking ceremony is set for 10 a.m. Thursday, April 28 at 302 N. Live Oak St., the site of the old Aransas County Courthouse. The DAP will include a new Courthouse and new Rockport City Hall, both of which were destroyed by Hurricane Harvey.

Thought

I secretly relabeled all the spices in our cupboard. My wife is in for a big surprise next time she cooks dinner. She hasn't discovered my prank yet, but thyme is cumin.

Verse

Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight.

Psalm 119:35

Inside

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390 ballots cast first day of early voting

Early voting for the May 7 Aransas County Independent School District (ACISD), City of Rockport, Town of Fulton, and Constitutional Amendment elections began Monday, April 25.

Through the first day of early voting, 390 votes had been cast. This includes 252 in-person ballots, and 138 mail-in ballots.

(Note: There are seven different ballots. The break down for each of the ballots was not known as of press deadline Monday.)

Remaining days for early voting

Early voting will be held at the Aransas County Election & Voter Registration office (602 E. Concho St.) on the following dates:

- Wednesday, April 27 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
- Thursday, April 28 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

See VOTING, page 12A



Shining Stars

Jordan Garza and Alvira Blue-Roberts, top photo, share a laugh about a cross-country story told during Garza's Shining Stars speech. Standing alongside ACISD Superintendent Dr. Joshua Garcia, bottom, at left, RFHS' Jenny VanderPluym, middle, was named the ACISD Secondary Teacher of the Year. LOLC's Andrea Brewington, was named the ACISD Elementary Teacher of the Year. See story page 4A

Photo by STEVEN SMITH



Sacred Heart School demolition begins



The demolition of Sacred Heart School began in earnest this past weekend, bottom photo. Before demolition began, Father Ray Yrlas, students at the school, and administrators, posed in front of the structure, top. The

school will be rebuilt in the near future, along with parish hall and church offices. Those two structures have already been demolished.

Top photo contributed, bottom by MIKE PROBST

Stop in Rockport longer than expected Spanish explorer circumnavigating globe

By MIKE PROBST
Editor & Publisher

There are a lot of interesting people who make their way through Aransas County, but what about a man, aboard the smallest vessel to ever circumnavigate the world, who gets stranded on our shores for the better part of two weeks?

Spanish explorer and environmentalist Álvaro de Marichalar is expected to leave Aransas County today, heading south on his 11-foot personal watercraft named NUMANCIA.

His solo tour of the world is in celebration of the 500th anniversary of the first circumnavigation by Spanish explorer Juan Sebastian Elcano in 1522. That trip was initiated in 1519 by Ferdinand Magellan, and promoted by King Charles I of Spain.

Marichalar departed from Seville, Spain on August 10, 2019 – the same date 500 years after Elcano started his trip.

After solo touring Spain, Portugal, Monaco, and the French Mediterranean coastline,

he crossed the Atlantic Ocean and solo navigated along the Caribbean Sea.

(Note: Marichalar crossed the

Atlantic from Southern Spain – Gibraltar - to the Caribbean

See GLOBE, page 3A



Spanish explorer Álvaro de Marichalar stands next to the Sea-Doo he is piloting around the world.

Contributed photo

Former teammates to continue football careers at rival colleges

By STEVEN SMITH
Staff reporter

Former Rockport-Fulton High School (RFHS) Pirate football

players John Chupe and Payton McAlister, once teammates, will now play against each other at rival college football programs in Texas. Chupe, Texas Lutheran University (TLU), and McAlister, McMurry University (MU), signed their National Letters of Intent to continue their career as student-athletes

Friday, April 22 in the RFHS Competition Gym.

Chupe and McAlister have been playing football together since they were eight years old.

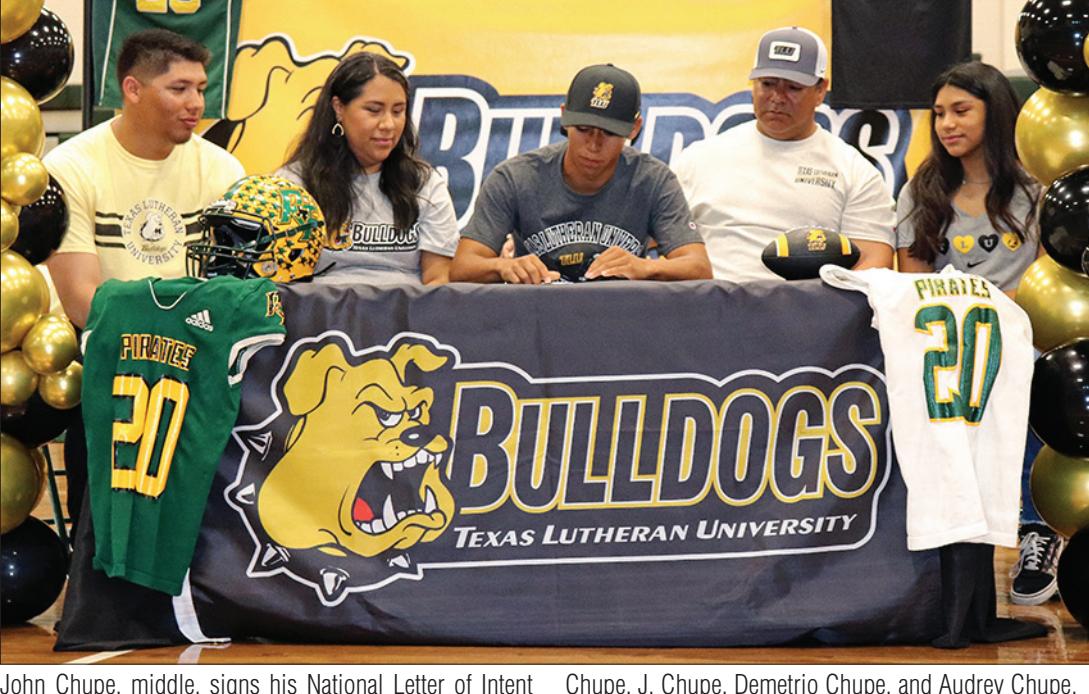
Chupe was always a big part of the offense. McAlister was always a standout defensive player.

Those roles continued all

the way to their senior year at RFHS.

Both Chupe and McAlister

See COLLEGES, page 8A



John Chupe, middle, signs his National Letter of Intent alongside family to play college football at Texas Lutheran University. Pictured are, from left, Ryan Torres, Valerie

Photo by STEVEN SMITH



Payton McAlister, second from left, signs his National Letter of Intent alongside family to play college football at McMurry University. Pictured are, from left, Jamie

McAlister, P. McAlister, Katha McAlister, and Justice McAlister.

Photo by STEVEN SMITH

GLOBE

continued from 1A

island of Guadalupe with a support explorer vessel named Yersin. Other than the Atlantic crossing, he has had no support boat or assistance from land.)

Marichalar arrived in Miami more than two years ago, on March 17, 2020.

He was one of the last vessels allowed to dock in the United States after the pandemic hit. COVID-19 put his travels on hold for almost two years.

During his time off he spoke at more than 100 conferences promoting the fifth centennial of the first tour of the world.

He has spoken at universities, yacht clubs and schools in the United States, Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Saint Barthélemy, Guadeloupe, Spain, Portugal, France, Monaco, Italy, Germany, Russia, Switzerland, Austria, England and Greece.

(Note: His latest speaking engagement was Sunday, April 24 where he addressed outdoor writers gathered in Rockport-Fulton for the Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce's annual Spring Fling.)

With the pandemic waning, Marichalar resumed his Round the World expedition February 19 of this year from Miami, FL.

Between Miami and Rockport, Marichalar had to fight against extreme weather conditions during the last laps in Gulf waters. His longest lap was a 31-hour ride from New Orleans to the Houston Yacht Club in La Porte.

He is in the Miami to Panama stage of his expedition. The main stop during this stage was Pensacola, FL, the First European settlement in the United States. Pensacola was founded in 1559 by Tristán de Luna, an ancestor of Álvaro de Marichalar Sáenz de Tejada.

When he leaves Rockport, he will travel along the coast-

lines of Mexico and Central America to Panama.

After navigating the Panama Canal, Marichalar will head to Alaska, traveling along the west coast.

From Alaska, he will cross to Kamchatka, and will navigate along Asia, back to the Mediterranean, to Monaco and then to his starting port - Seville, Spain.

He said the remainder of his trip will take about 15 months.

Marichalar told members of the Outdoor Writer's Association, gathered at Spring Fling's kickoff dinner, that he refuels and sleeps wherever he finds a place along the coastline.

"Sometimes it's too dangerous to sleep on land. If I need to, I'll stretch out (on my Sea-Doo) and drift in the water," he said.

Marichalar usually tries to sleep at least six hours per day, but rarely in a row.

The maximum range of his tiny vessel is 200 nautical miles, using 50 gallons of gas in two tanks.

He navigates on his feet 100% of the time in order to avoid possible spinal injuries due to the continuous strikes against the waves.

He said, "I love this place," referring to his unexpected layover in Rockport.

"I was leaving last Monday (April 18) and my engine just stopped," said Marichalar. "If everything does well, I'll depart Wednesday (April 27).

"It's an honor to be in your town. I've been treated very well."

A religious man, Marichalar makes it a point to meet the Catholic priest whenever he stays any length of time in a town.

He met Sacred Heart Catholic Church Pastor Father Ray Yrlas, and even addressed the congregation at Easter Mass.

"We sparked off a good friendship," said Father Ray, who also attended the Spring Fling kickoff.

Marichalar asked the Spring Fling crowd to pray for sailors.

"We are all sailors in a way. All we can do is fight fear, and stay in constant contact with God," he said.

Asked how he mentally prepares each day of his journey around the world, Marichalar said, "Any travel must be an internal experience.

"What are you dreaming? What do you want? You need to know who you are before you can talk freely with others.

"In any exploration, the first thing you have to know is yourself.

"You have to be convinced that what you do is for good. The key is to be honorable, and act in truth."

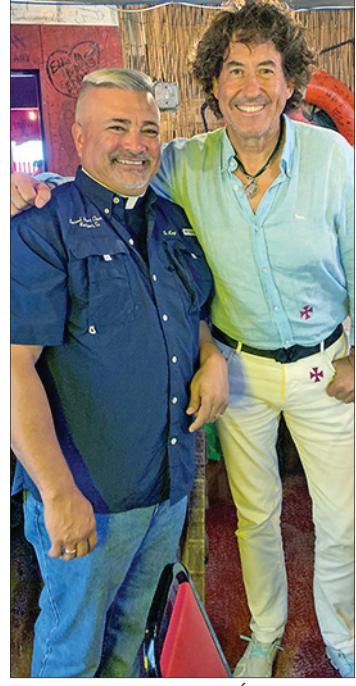
Marichalar has one main sponsor, the yacht club in Monaco.

"I don't accept sponsorships unless I make it. You have to



Marichalar decked out and eating prior to a speaking engagement in Europe.

Contributed photo



Spanish explorer Álvaro de Marichalar makes it a point to meet the Catholic priest in the towns he visits. He caught up with Sacred Heart Church Pastor Father Ray Yrlas soon after his arrival. This picture was taken at the kickoff dinner for the annual Spring Fling Sunday, April 24.

Photo by MIKE PROBST



Spanish explorer Álvaro de Marichalar poses with Karl and Andrea Hattman. K. Hattman, along with Martin Kroesche, met Marichalar on his way across the bay.

Contributed photo

risk your own finances."

He shared that his grandfather was Spain's Minister of Defense, as well as mayor of Madrid.

"He was a noble man," said Marichalar. "He developed (Social Security) in Spain and set the eight-hour work day."

"I learned that those with more should help those with less, and I was to never humiliate someone below me."

Marichalar is carrying out a worldwide exploration focused in the study of the consequences of plastic pollution in the oceans, as well as overfishing, and human trafficking.

He is filming his adventure in order to produce several documentaries to show the world the world in order to educate and entertain.

One can learn more about his trip by visiting www.FIRSTWorldTour.com. One can track him as he circumnavigates the world at <https://my.yb.tl/NUMANCIA>

Marichalar's arrival in Rockport

Martin Kroesche and his wife Cindy live in Key Allegro. He is the CEO of Boaters List, the company that has assisted Marichalar during this segment of his trip, between Florida and Rockport.

Rockport's Karl Hattman, founder of Persona Digital Marketing, recently joined Boaters List as the company's director of marketing.

(Note: Boaters List is an app and website for boaters and water enthusiasts used to find anything one needs while out on the water.)

"The team at Boaters List was in contact with Marichalar when he was in Florida," said Hattman. "Martin invited him to stop and stay at their home when he made his way to the Texas coast."

"Boaters List had a film crew ready for Marichalar's arrival in Aransas Bay Friday April 8, but due to some complications he was delayed."

"Everyone was sent home, but we waited for him to contact us again. That Friday evening we could see his location on his tracking site, so we knew he'd be here around 9:30 p.m."

"Martin asked me to come by at 8:30 p.m., and we launched his 28' Lazzara to meet Marichalar.

The winds had picked up quite a bit and it was rough. Martin was navigating from the fly bridge while I held a spotlight looking for hazards.

"We made our way to the barge channel and started heading towards St. Charles Bay. We were near the intersection of Aransas and Copano bays when we spotted a bright spotlight low in the water, and realized it was Marichalar's Sea-Doo."

"A few minutes later we met him."

"His first words were, 'I'm freezing'."

"Marichalar followed us back to Key Allegro. I was amazed at the punishment he takes on his vessel."

Hattman's daughter works at Latitude and was able to get some steaks to go.

"We all became fast friends and we have been helping him continue his journey ever since," said Hattman. "He is an inspiring person to be around, and has great knowledge about history, and a refreshing per-

spective on life."

The Boaters List team is supporting Marichalar's efforts in a variety of ways. He is using the Boaters List app to locate what he needs along his path to circumnavigate the globe.

Hattman has Instagram with more than 173,000 followers, @badideaboating.

"We reach 15 to 20 million boating fans every month, and we are helping to promote Marichalar's journey," he said.

About Marichalar

Álvaro de Marichalar Sáenz de Tejada (his full name) is an Academic of the Royal Academy of the Sea. He is also a member of the Explorers Club of New York and the Exploration Club of the Yacht Club of Monaco.

He is an entrepreneur in the telecommunications and real estate fields.

He has accomplished 39 maritime expeditions, and holds 14 navigation records.

Among other achievements, Marichalar solo navigated from Rome to New York in 2002, from Hong Kong to Tokyo in 2006, and from Barcelona to Odessa (Ukraine) in 2004.

KIRKCONNELL

Jeannie Lee Kirkconnell died December 1, 2021 at her home in Portland, Texas.

Jeannie was born on March 12, 1968, to father, Walter Kirkconnell and mother, Grace Kirkconnell (Alvarado) in Brownsville Texas. It was there that Jeannie spent her childhood attending school and playing with her three siblings: Janet, Lynn, and Bruce. She graduated from St. Joseph high-school in 1986 and continued on to St. Edwards University where she earned a degree in education, and then later on to The University of Texas for her masters. During her life Jeannie was blessed with three beautiful children: Jacob, Quentin, and Shelby. Jeannie loved adventure and would often tell stories of her time in Honduras. She enjoyed spending time with her family and friends. All of whom always looked forward at chance to try some of Jeannie's home cooked meals.

Jeannie's request was to have her ashes spread in the ocean as her mother did. She will be laid to rest on April 30, 2022. We ask those of you who knew her to remember her for the fun, joyful, beautiful woman that she was. May she rest in peace.

VOTE FOR

Tim JAYROE

Rockport MAYOR

Honesty • Courtesy • Respect

TIM JAYROE'S PROMISES TO ALL CITIZENS OF ROCKPORT

- ✓ Will make city infrastructure a top priority, including drainage and roads
- ✓ Will work to keep the city healthy, viable, and resilient as it grows and evolves
- ✓ Will support responsible and controlled growth accompanied by supporting infrastructure
- ✓ Will keep city taxes low and be a conservative steward of city finances
- ✓ Will always support law enforcement
- ✓ Will preserve the city's local charm
- ✓ Will protect our precious environment and natural resources
- ✓ Will encourage and promote citizen involvement in government
- ✓ Will conduct public meetings with honesty, courtesy, and respect by all involved
- ✓ Will work with other government entities to solve community-wide challenges

Leadership to move Rockport forward

Political adv. paid for by the Tim Jayroe for Mayor Campaign - Treasurer Nita Jayroe

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¹ Bonus available on 1st year premiums. Each year after the 1st contract year, you become vested in a percentage of the bonus, until 100% vested at the end of the 10th contract year. Vested amounts of the bonus are the amounts not forfeited as a result of an early withdrawal or surrender. Bonus, surrender charges, and vesting schedules may vary by state. See brochure and disclosure for details.

² Lifetime Income available through Lifetime Benefit Rider. Available for issue ages 50+.

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