



# The Brazoria County News

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2ND ISSUE OF OUR 54TH YEAR

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2015



STAFFING THE NEW WEST COLUMBIA CLINIC will be medical assistant Raquel Navarro, left, and nurse practitioner Joyce Carter.

## New WC clinic to open

The West Columbia Health Clinic Family Practice will open its doors Sept. 1.

Opened by Sweeny Community Hospital, the clinic will serve patients 6 months old and older.

Sweeny Hospital CEO Bill Barnes announced an agreement with the West Columbia Economic Development Corporation in February to bring a clinic to West Columbia. The economic development corporation agreed to provide funds to help with renovation of the space for the clinic, which located at 668 W. Brazos Avenue in West Columbia in a shopping center at the intersection of Highway 35 and Highway 36.

The clinic will be open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m. to noon.

Joyce Carter will be the nurse practitioner on duty at the clinic. Carter comes to West Columbia from Mississippi. She has been a nurse practitioner since January. Before becoming a nurse practitioner, Carter was a registered nurse for 15 years. She



THE NEW CLINIC includes three exam rooms, including one designed for children.

Joining Carter in the office will be medical assistant Raquel Navarro. She has been a medical assistant for the past eight years.

The new clinic has three exam rooms, with one that is especially decorated for children. It also has a lab area, which allows the clinic to be able to do such things as blood work and urinalysis to be done in house.

"Pretty much whatever can be done at a doctor's office can be done here," Carter said.

The clinic takes Medicare and Medicaid and is In-Network for most insurance. Carter said the clinic will offer self-pay patients discounts on services.

"Everyone deserves decent healthcare," Carter said. "I believe in getting people the necessary health services they need."

A grand opening ribbon cutting and open house will be held for the clinic on Wednesday, Sept. 9. The West Columbia Chamber of Commerce will have the ribbon cutting at noon that day. The open house will be from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. the same day.



A LAB is on site at the clinic to do blood work and urinalysis in house.

## Sweeny Police seeking wallet thief

Sweeny Police are looking for a woman suspected of stealing a man's wallet last Thursday.

The theft occurred in the 300 block of West Fourth.

According to police,

the woman asked to borrow \$10 for gas.

The man said the woman saw his wallet, grabbed it and ran out of the apartment.

The wallet contained \$240 along with his credit cards.

Sweeny Police are still investigating the case.

## FBI arrest WC man on child porn warrant

A West Columbia man was arrested on a federal warrant last Thursday on child pornography charges.

Joseph Robert Shoemaker, 35, was picked up at his job by West Columbia Police at UTMB in Angleton on warrants for possession of child pornography and possession of child pornography with intent to distribute.

West Columbia Police held Shoemaker until the FBI could pick him up, Shoemaker has been employed at UTMB for the last six years. Prior to that, he was a substitute teacher with Columbia-Brazoria ISD, Odín said.

FBI agent Richard Rimeson approached Odín six months ago about executing a search warrant on Shoemaker's home.

A computer and hard drives were taken from the home after the search warrant was executed, Odín said.

## County lifts burn ban after August rains

The burn ban was lifted by County Judge Matt Sebasta for all of Brazoria County, effective Tuesday, Aug. 25.

Because of all the rainfall throughout the county, the fire threshold has been below the recommended amount for five consecutive days allowing the ban to be lifted.

The ban was only instituted two weeks ago after a number of 100 degree days and dry conditions. The ban could have stayed in place for 90 days, but

Sebasta decided to lift it early.

On Aug. 11, the Keelch-Byram Drought Index reached 690. Anything ranging from 600-800 is considered high risk for wildfires to occur.

The Office of Emergency Management is encouraging property owners that have large brush and debris piles to take advantage of the lifted burn ban.

With the height of hurricane season upon us, flying debris in a hurricane or high wind

event could cause damage to property and possibly individuals, so it is best to take advantage of the lifted burn ban as soon as possible. All outdoor burning must follow the TCEQ's regulations.

Residents will be liable for any damages that occur from negligent burning practices.

Please refer to the Brazoria County Emergency Management website for information and updates concerning the burn ban www.brazoria-county.com.



LION EYES - Lion Gloria Powell (left) conducts a vision screening on Carlito Saldana at the Brazoria Lions Club Project Head Start vision screening August 17 in Brazoria.

## Brazoria Lions conduct child vision screening

The Brazoria Lions Club conducted a free vision screening at the Brazoria Operation Head Start on Aug. 17.

A total of 45 vision screenings were conducted and five children were identified with vision deficiencies. The purpose of the screening was to determine whether or not vision correction is required.

The equipment used to check vision, is quick, painless and can accurately identify vision problems in a few seconds.

At the end of the

screening, a print out of the results was given to each of the participants (or parents). Those needing eye correction can take the print out to an eye doctor of their choice.

Brazoria Lions Club members (who are not eye doctors) conducting the screening were Gloria Powell, Roy Edwards, Jan Edwards and president Frank Pettaway.

The screening is an outgrowth of the Lions International initiative better vision for all.

This vision screening is targeted for children

ages 6 months - 6 years old because it has been determined that if problems in young eyes can be found soon enough, corrections can be made so that glasses will not be necessary later in life.

Though the event is especially targeted for children, people of any age can have the screening done at no charge.

For more information or to schedule a screening, call Lion Ken Barganier at: 979-236-1967, Lion Gloria Powell at 979-964-4028 or the Brazoria Lions at: 979-798-4444.

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