



The average cost to fill a 20-gallon gas tank is \$80. Tonya Torres:The Signal

Gas prices on the rise

Carissa Puls
The Signal

High fuel prices have UHCL students diving deeper into their pockets.

The average fuel price in the Houston area is \$3.76 per gallon, and is predicted to increase as high as \$5.

The price of fuel rose earlier this year after Libyan protesters began opposing their government in February.

“North Africa and the Middle East produce the majority of the world’s oil,” said Richard Newell, administrator for the Energy Information Administration, in a statement made before the House of Representatives on March 17. “The situation

in Libya increases oil market uncertainty and that influences prices. Much of that country’s 1.8 million barrels per day of liquids productions, which represents about 2 percent of total world supply, has been shut in. Many participants in the oil markets remain concerned that the unrest in the region could continue to spread.”

The unrest in Libya has influenced everything that correlates with fuel-dependent transportation.

Due to high costs of fuel in March and April, travelers have been running out of gas more frequently.

“We have seen an increase in the need for

Gas: continued on page 10

Security breach risks private identity theft

Matt Candelaria
The Signal

Personal identity information for more than 3 million people was accessible on a computer in the Texas Comptroller’s office for at least a year, resulting in a major security breach.

The Texas Comptroller office held the private information of about 3.5 million people on a public computer server. The information was held on the computer for about a year until it was discovered by the office. Crucial information at risk of exposure consisted of social security numbers, addresses and,

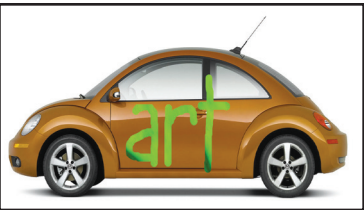
in some cases, birth dates and driver’s license numbers.

The Comptroller’s office realized that a breach had occurred in the system March 31. The information was held in folders on the website and was open for public viewing. The office took immediate action to correct the mistake. R.J. Desilva, Texas comptroller spokesman, offered a state-wide apology saying that the comptroller cannot emphasize enough how deeply they regret that this problem happened and they are obviously angry about it. Desilva said that those involved in the incident were

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Universities brace for massive budget cuts

Ashley Smith
The Signal

Education is taking one of the biggest hits in the proposed state budget cuts, with universities’ and community colleges’ budgets expecting to have at least a 20 percent reduction in state appropriations over the next biennium.

The budget process started last year when every state agency in Texas prepared a legislative appropriations request (LAR), which itemized the funding each agency felt it needed to operate effectively. The LARs were then sent to the Legislative Budget Board. The LBB used the LARs to draft an appropriations bill that lays out how much each agency needs for the 2012-2013 biennium.

At the beginning of 2011, the Texas comptroller issued the Biennial Revenue Estimate, which shows the net general revenue, \$76.5 billion, and the projected ending balance for this biennium, a negative \$4.3 billion. This means the projected general revenue available for the 2012-2013 biennium is \$72.2 billion.

“The Texas Legislature then faces the task of working within that estimate, making spending cuts and/or raising revenue as needed, to craft a budget for the upcoming biennium,” said Allen Spelce, communications director for the Texas Comptroller. “If

the Legislature proposes spending in excess of the BRE, legislators must generate additional revenue to cover that amount.”

The current proposed budget in the Texas senate is \$79 billion, \$7 billion more than the projected general revenue.

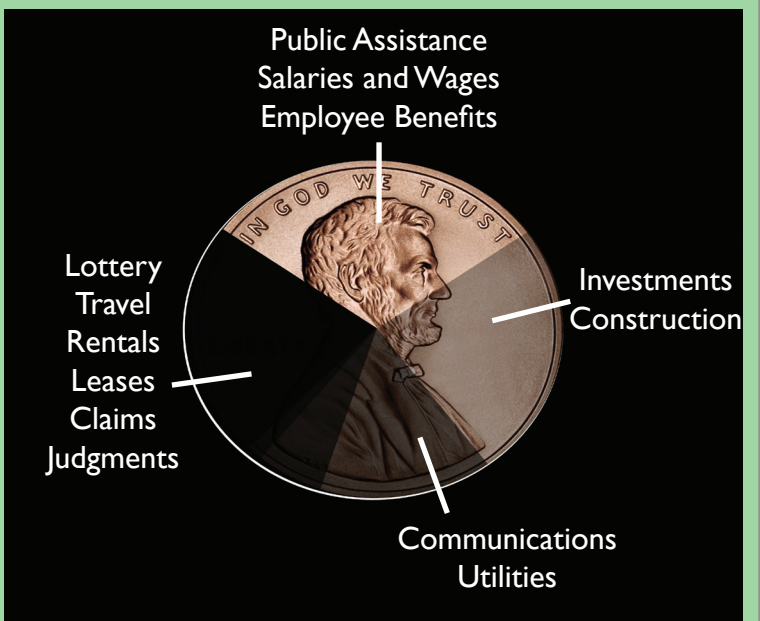
This is where the Legislature is at currently, trying to figure out ways to cut the budget to close that gap. These budget issues should not come as a surprise to Texas legislators or to Governor Perry; because in 2006 then comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn anticipated this would happen and sent Perry a letter in which she warns that his tax plan would cause problems in later years.

“Your plan is fiscally irresponsible,” Strayhorn said in her letter. “As of this moment, this legislation is a staggering \$23 billion short of the funds needed to pay for the promised property tax cuts over the next five years.”

The letter goes on to say that with Perry’s tax plan, the state will be short \$5 billion by 2011, which is the situation that Texas currently faces.

For fiscal year 2011, which began Sep. 1, 2010, and runs through Aug. 31, 2011, the state of Texas has so far spent \$79 billion and has brought in \$74

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Tonya Torres:The Signal

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ONLINE

- Video: Rising Gas Prices
- Video: Yarn Bombs on Campus
- Social: Follow The Signal on Twitter and Facebook
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FOOD FOR THOUGHT: If you build it, they will come

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The Signal staff further encourages the students, faculty and staff to go online and complete the survey. Maybe then food services can perceive a clearer picture of what appeals to the UHCL community.

Video Gameocalypse: The end has begun

David Miller
The Signal

The end of the world is near; no stores carry their items anymore and their shelves are bare. This is only the beginning of the end ... for video games to be sold in stores.

Now that the Internet has become the tool for global networking and communication, it has also become a medium to transfer video games among gamers, forever transforming the industry.

I used to buy games from the store just like anyone else. Stores like Electronics Boutique (now EB Games), Gamestop, Circuit City and Best Buy used to be the only places around that would distribute games.

Walmart added video games into its electronics section and games became even easier to come by, until digital distribution started on the Internet.

Recently, more and more software companies have cut out

the middle man and moved to digital distribution. Instead of the business paying to create artwork for the box, full-color manuals and other accessories, they just upload the game files directly to your computer or gaming system.

Although this means that the video game company saves tons of money, it also causes the product to lose some of its original flavor.

During the 1990s and early 2000s, PC game design was at an all-time high and some of the products were extremely competitive. Product design evolved into giant limited-edition

packages complete with maps, figurines, cards and tons of other collectibles.

There were full-color, 200-page manuals to some of the more in-depth genres, and the amount of money that the game's producing company put into the packaging showed.

Now that the Internet is capable of transferring multiple gigabytes within a reasonable amount of time, gaming consoles have changed forever.

Nintendo Wii, Sony Playstation 3 and Microsoft Xbox have online networks where players can download games, demos and videos right to their hard drive. Some larger games aren't available for direct download yet, but



David Miller

still offer add-on content online.

This issue is reminiscent of another digital evolution – when CDs began replacing record albums. Record album covers were once a popular culture art form. Album covers such as Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon" and the Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" are still collectors items.

The gamers that still believe in the artistry behind their video game of choice will most likely become collectors of those games as well.

As far as PC gaming goes, the market of distribution is nearly deceased. You can still find decade-old games at Walmart, but the rest are just about all online. Networks like Steam, Gamespy and EA Games all have download clients, which saves games you've bought online.

This means that instead of having a unique CD or DVD with anti-hacking encryption, serial

numbers and other expensive-to-make codes, the game you buy is forever saved to a login account you create on their network.

There's no box, artwork or accessories, and only an Adobe Acrobat manual saved to your computer. The trade-off, that you don't have to worry about scratching a disc and ruining your game, is enough to make it worthwhile.

Video games in general are continually forced to evolve in order to entice audiences. By having entire games ready to download, gaming companies are able to distribute more numbers more quickly. Also, instead of spending funds on the packaging, they are focusing their time on designing the game itself. It is unfortunate that the level of artistry in video games' packaging design will never be the same, but I would rather have developers focus on creating the game than the box it comes in any day.

SELLING SOLES

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AND...

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IT MAKES ME WONDER WHAT WE'RE REALLY SELLING HERE.

BY: KALAN LYRA

COLUMN

'I open at the close': Saying goodbye to a friend

Sophia Stewart
The Signal

July 15, 2011, my best friend will suddenly pass on; just like the turn of the last page in a book, it will be quick, expected, but unwanted.

My best friend's name is Harry Potter.

As with the conception of most of my friendships, I was intimidated by Harry Potter at first and ignored him to avoid the awkward vulnerability of meeting someone for the first time.

Only when faced with extreme boredom during the hot summer months did I first open a Harry Potter book and fall unconditionally in love.

I was 15 years old.

With Harry Potter, I could escape the teenage pressures of my life and explore the magical world of Hogwarts with my new friend; for the first time, I yearned to read.

As Harry grew throughout the series, I grew older and emotionally stronger with him. We entered into similar challenges and

experienced joys together that no words can explain. Only within my mind could our story be heard.

I remember the moment when the seventh and final book, "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows," first touched my nervous hands. Years of anticipation and dread entered my hands at the same time.

Despite squeezing my fingers around it, I knew, just as the sound of sirens plague a hopeful spirit, that the end was near, and my wish for more books would go ignored.

Throughout author J.K. Rowling's book series, protagonist Harry Potter's seven milestones of conquering evil have taught lessons of strength, honesty and the magical powers of love.

Harry's themes and symbols announced truths that perplexed and angered our world, war-

ranting research from scholars to answer their significance and revolts from religions with book burnings.

Scholars have found the magic in Harry Potter to be instrumental, like technology, and not at all mystical. Frostburg State University offers a class where they use the basic principles of physics to explain the magic events in the Harry Potter books.

Harry's magic has contradicted some religious stances, most commonly on the grounds that it is used at all, yet it has also been used by others to exemplify the sacrificial love that parallels biblical heroes in the Bible.

Through every angle perceived within our "muggle" world, within every religious



Sophia Stewart

argument praising or loathing, and past all the scholarly analysis, there lays a vastly important character that has proven to give purpose to its readers lives. Regardless of your stance, the undeniable truth is that Harry Potter is important.

I am grateful to my parents for not ignorantly protesting my reading of the Harry Potter books. The lessons I have learned from Harry Potter are presents, and no one but Harry could have pointed out for me to learn. Lessons on unfailing trust, sacrificial love and the importance of fighting to do what is good.

One story that resonated with me was in the last book. Harry learns that in order to save the world, he must sacrifice himself. As he bravely walks toward what he thinks will be his final destiny, stands at the edge of his peril, the memories of his parents and friends that died appear around him in a surge of love which gives him the strength needed to take that last step over the edge to face his death.

The power of love is the true magic in Harry Potter, and I did not realize that phenomenon until then.

"Will you stay with me," Harry asked his father.

"Until the very end," Harry's father replied.

Support.

That is the present Harry gave me, and in the same moment that I perceived that, I realized that I, too, was Harry's support. I stayed with Harry until the very end.

This July 15, an era will appear to end with the second and final installment of Harry Potter, in "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part Two."

There will be no more anticipated books or movie releases, no more hasty strikes upon the calendar, and no more midnight lines.

Though the last movie brings this fictional series to an end, our nonfictional inheritance from young Harry will not die, but will live on for future generations. Like the scar upon a forehead, Harry Potter will never truly vanish.



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&
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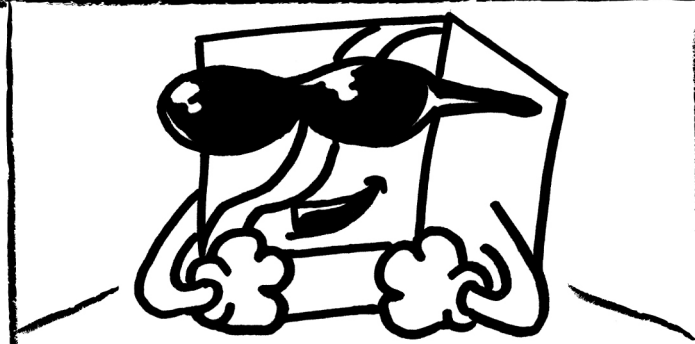
On behalf of the University of Houston-Clear Lake family, I salute the academic achievements of the spring 2011 graduating class and celebrate the promise of their future accomplishments.

William A. Staples

William A. Staples
President

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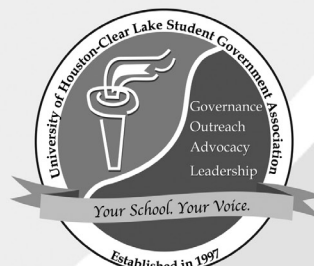


Donations Totaled: 4,111

Summer Meeting Schedule:
June 7th July 5th August 2nd

First Fall SGA Meeting:
August 22nd

**All meetings are at 11:30 am
in the SSCB Lecture Hall (1.100.03)**



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- Mohandas Gandhi

For Details Contact The SGA Executive Council:

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Chicken-egg conundrum=savings for students

Ashley Smith
Natalie Epperley
The Signal

Chegg Inc., one of several on-line textbook rental sites, has recently expanded its services to include CourseRank and Cramster, personalization features that will allow students to schedule courses and get homework help.

CourseRank, acquired by Chegg in 2010, is a planning tool for students that gives them access to student feedback of classes and teachers at their specific university. The site also offers students a chance to build their course schedule and see what classes their friends are taking.

Once the student’s schedule is decided, Chegg advises the student which books are necessary for their chosen courses.

Chegg also obtained Cramster, a homework helping service available to college as well as high school students. Help is offered in a wide range of subjects from math and science to humanities and business classes.

Besides these new services offered, Chegg also partners with American Forestry and plants a tree for every book that is rented.

“This way you are giving back to the enviroment as well as saving money,” said Mike J., customer service representative for Chegg.

The trees are planted once a month.

Osman Rashid, and Co-Founder Aayush Humbhra

founded Chegg in 2005. Their original plan was to make money through advertising with a Craigslist-type website for college students.

The students could sell anything from clothes to textbooks. The site evolved into what it is today after discovering that textbooks were the most popular items.

Chegg offers textbooks for a rental rate that is around 60 percent less than the original price. For example, if a book cost \$180, through Chegg students would pay around \$60.

Books are usually shipped in seven business days.

When a student is ready to return a book, he or she accesses a mailing label through his or her online account and prints it for the books that he or she wants to return.

Renting through Chegg allows students to avoid the high prices of purchasing books at college bookstores. There are no monthly fees and

book and be able to return it back when they want,” said Vanessa Brown, textbook manager at UHCL.

The name Chegg actually came from the idea of the words chicken and egg, based on the creators experience after graduating from college. How can a student pay for college books without having started their career – i.e., which came first, the chicken or the egg?

“The company came to specialize in renting books because the founders felt that it would be more of a value for students if they could have the option to rent a book rather than purchase it,” Mike J. said

Bridgette Cummings, a recent legal studies graduate, said that she really likes the website because it makes it really easy to pick out the books she needs for class.

“Students don’t have to worry about the high cost of purchasing their books,” Cummings said.

Chegg also gives the option of keeping a book if a student wishes. Books can then be purchased at low prices. A student also has the option to request an extension on any rental for up to 30 days, if needed.

Chegg.com

“Students don’t have to worry about the high cost of purchasing their books.”

Bridgette Cummings,
Legal Studies Graduate

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Roman Rama III :The Signal

Painting of Marcel Duchamp's "Fountain" by Jason Makepeace, lecturer in art.



All photos Roman Rama III :The Signal

Duchamp's "Fountain" inspired art car, a work in progress.

First UHCL art car is a royal flush

Students' art car project draws inspiration from Duchamp's 'Fountain'

Jessica O'Rear

The Signal

What is art? This is a question that many artists ask themselves. Is art classified with set-in-stone rules and regulations, or can anything be art based on the opinion and eye of the viewer?

That's also the question the UHCL art department addresses with its new Art Car class, offered to students for the first time this semester. The art car, titled "Fountain" and shaped like an upside-down urinal, is designed to resemble a ready-made sculpture by artist Marcel Duchamp.

Jason Makepeace, lecturer in art, has had a long-time interest in establishing an art car class after creating an art car years ago.

"In my past 9 to 10 years here at UHCL as the sculpture instructor, I always thought designing an art car and participating in the parade would be a great class," Makepeace said. "Over the past two years, the course really began to take shape. With the support of HSH and the Office of University Advancement, I was able to get this class off the ground. Dean, associate dean, fellow art faculty and my division chair Deborah Griffin were very supportive."

The class was provided with a Toyota Corolla, donated by AutoNation thanks to the efforts of Elbby Antony, associate director of development for the president's cabinet in the Office of University Advancement. The group began brainstorming a design theme the first day of the semester and students voted to narrow down their top five ideas based on feasibility.

"We had a few different project ideas

at the beginning," said Angela Zesiger, art major and student in the art car class. "At



Roman Rama III :The Signal

The spring art independent study class focused on designing and executing an art car for Houston's Art Car Parade May 22.

first we were working with a playground idea, but we decided the car wouldn't be big enough. With people swinging on it and all of the motion, we knew it wouldn't work. We also considered creating a pirate ship. In the end, we wanted to focus more on art and what makes art. Marcel Duchamp was the turning point of conceptual art – he was the 'Father of Conceptualism.'"

The art car students agreed to base the car's design on the creations of Marcel Duchamp, an artist who challenged traditional views and premises of art. Duchamp is known for his "ready-made" works – common man-made objects that he selected and modified – as a remedy to what he named "retinal art," or art that is only visual.

In 1917, Duchamp tested the waters of the art world by submitting a unique piece

to a jury-free Society of Independent Artists exhibition, which claimed all submissions would be displayed.

To challenge the show's open invitation, Duchamp purchased a urinal from J. L. Mott Iron Works in New

York, turned the porcelain throne upside down and signed "R. Mutt, 1917" across the front. He named it "Fountain" and entered the piece into the exhibition. Duchamp believed that by taking items and then repositioning and signing them, he had created art. The entry was ultimately rejected from the show.

"As artists in the construction of our UHCL art car, we see a parallel to the 'Fountain' and agree with this statement: 'Whether Mr. Mutt with his own hands made the 'Fountain' or not has no importance. He CHOSE it. He took an ordinary article of life and placed it so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view – creating a new thought for that object,'" said the class in a collaborated statement.

The group faced a few trials along the way. One of their biggest challenges was the size of the car. Most students didn't have any experience with art car design prior to the course, requiring a lot of work time outside of the classroom.

"We didn't know if the car's suspension would support the frame," Shaw said. "We had to do a lot of research on the Internet to make sure it could hold the weight. The car itself was also a challenge. We tried to figure out what to remove and we were careful with what we cut off. A few times we had to go back and add more support after we cut too much off. We had no precedent ... we had to use Jason's knowledge to get the project going."

The group plans to display their finished product May 22, 1-3 p.m., at the international 2011 Art Car Parade produced by the Orange Show, a nonprofit art foundation.

"I plan to offer this course every spring semester and participate in the annual Houston Art Car Parade from this point forward," Makepeace said. "I could not have asked for such an experimental course to function as well as it has. The energy of the students is great, and I cannot wait until we run in this year's parade and listen to the response from the people attending the parade."

The Orange Show website states that the Art Car Weekend draws more than 200,000 spectators and displays hundreds of movable works of art produced by mechanics, students and artists, among other groups. For more information about the Orange Show or the Art Car Parade, visit <http://www.orangeshow.org/art-car/>.

Yarn bombs explode on campus

Jennifer Cox
The Signal

UHCL campus has been “bombed” with yarn with the help of the Neumann Library staff members to commemorate the Judy Chicago art exhibit on display in the library.

Yarn bombing is a type of graffiti or street art that employs colorful displays of knitted or crocheted cloth rather than paint or chalk.

A woman named Magda Sayeg started the cultural phenomenon of knit bombing in 2005 by simply knitting a cover for the door handle to her boutique, Raye located in Houston. “Knitta Please,” a group founded by Sayeg and anonymous member “AKrylik,” is the knit graffiti group credited with spawning the international

yarn bombing movement.

Darlene Woodbury, a librarian at UHCL, was the person who inspired the idea to bring yarn bombing to UHCL as

a way to honor the women’s movement art exhibit.

“She is a textile person and she suggested this novel approach to the advertisement of Judy Chicago,” said Jane Davidson, assistant professor of Art History.

“Yarn bombing is not something that I have ever done before,” Woodbury said. However, she heard about the yarn bombing movement and thought that it would be clever way to get people’s attention.

To celebrate its 30th anniversary, the “Setting the Table” exhibit will be displayed in the university’s Alfred R.

Neumann Library until April 30. As you walk around campus, especially by the library, there are pieces of yarn that cover railings, sculptures or the pillars in the building.

“Volunteers knit or crochet covers for things around campus, and put them up much like installation art,” Davidson

said. “A tag attached to the door knob cover or the knitted cover around a tree limb directs viewers to the website explaining the exhibit.

The connection between knitting and Judy Chicago’s process works on display now at the library is key to the knitting expression. The Setting the Table show is a display of the preparatory materials, the line drawings and ceramic test plates show the process of creating The Dinner Party. The table runners were all textile artworks, made of embroidery and cloth which is associated with Darlene’s knitting. These are ‘women’s work’ that were never thought of as ‘art.’”

The Judy Chicago exhibit started Feb.25 and Woodbury’s goal was to have all the knitting done for the opening of the event.

“This exhibit is about the process of creating the ‘Dinner Party,’ making the place setting for 39 women includes table runners, plates, goblets and silverware,”

Woodbury said.

Woodbury has high hopes that the yarn would catch people’s attention who were unaware of the Judy Chicago art exhibit and would bring them into the special collections room to see what it is all

“I work with an incredibly talented group of people who loved the idea and started knitting pieces for the project.”

- Darlene Woodbury
Librarian at the
Neumann Library



Roberta Cowan: The Signal
The bust found in the Neumann Library, by Bertil Thorvaldsen, was “bombed” in style.



David Miller: The Signal

Masaru Takiguchi’s “Embracing” 1977, found at the main entrance to the Neumann Library, did not miss out on the “bombing.”

‘Setting the Table’ exhibition to close April 30

Attend the “Setting the Table” exhibition closing event and visit with a former university dean. Join Cal Cannon, the Dean of Humanities and Human Sciences who brought the groundbreaking feminist sculpture, “The Dinner Party” to UH-Clear Lake’s campus in 1980, for the closing reception of the exhibition on display in UH-Clear Lake’s Alfred R. Neumann Library and is scheduled through April 30, 6 – 8 p.m., Alfred R. Neumann Library, 2700 Bay Area Blvd., Houston, TX, 77058.

“Setting the Table” examines the behind-the-scenes creation of Chicago’s “The Dinner Party,” first displayed at UH-Clear Lake March 9, 1980 during Women’s Week, which drew 36,000 viewers to the debut.

Chicago’s original work, “The Dinner Party,” comprises 39 place settings on a triangular table that includes embroidered table runners, gold chalices and utensils,

and painted porcelain plates honoring an important woman from history and each woman’s unique personality. Inscribed in gold luster on the white tile floor are the names of another 999 mythical and historical women. It has been seen by more than one million viewers at venues in six countries.

Chicago is an artist, author, feminist and educator with a career spanning four decades.

The commemorative “Setting the Table” display includes a themed collection of drawings, test plates and maquettes, or rough draft models of unfinished work, from original installation’s design. With a theme of process and collaboration, the exhibit will showcase the historical work’s design process from start, in 1974, to finish, in 1979.

Simultaneously, attendees have had the opportunity to experience artists Mar-

garita Cabrera’s 2010 video documentary titled “Space in Between,” a collaborative project involving sewing and embroidery workshops for women across U.S. border cultures.

The project is supported in part by a grant from the City of Houston Mayor’s Special Initiative Program of the Houston Arts Alliance, Houston Endowment, Michael and Ann Wismer-Landolt, Ben Mieszkuc, Gina T. Rizzo, M.D., UH-Clear Lake’s Office of the Provost and UH-Clear Lake’s School of Human Sciences and Humanities.

For more information on this event, email artinfo@uhcl.edu or call

281-283-2016. For more information about the exhibition, visit <http://hsh.uhcl.edu/judychicago>.



Roberta Cowan: The Signal

Part of the “Setting the Table” exhibit by Judy Chicago, this test plate represents Sacajawea.

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\$5
OFF
YOUR TABLE'S
FOOD PURCHASE
OF \$15 OR MORE

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BURGERS &
SANDWICHES
\$6⁹⁹

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PROMO CODE: MARUNIV699E7

HURRY! OFFER EXPIRES MAY 23, 2011

ANY SIZZLING
ENTRÉE
\$8⁹⁹

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PROMO CODE: MARUNIV899SE

Like daughter,

like mother

Two UHCL students share a bond, classes & genetics

Roman Rama III

The Signal

At UHCL it's possible to not know the person sitting next to you, even if you've shared several classes together.

That cannot be said for Ann Reynoso and Jessyka Reynoso, both cross-culture studies majors, who share the bond of mother and daughter; Ann is Jessyka's mother. The pair are known to do everything together – from taking the same classes to working at the same job.

"We really are more like friends," Jessyka said. "I don't want to say I've outgrown needing a mother. I've outgrown needing the kind of mother that takes care of little kids because I'm not a little kid. We are able to enjoy each other as adults."

Ann said that Jessyka matured at an early age.

"When my daughter was younger... she really didn't need that parent assistance from me," Ann said. "She was just a very loving child, a good child, and I was really blessed that she was because I didn't really have to say 'don't do this,' or 'don't do that.'"

Going to college together wasn't their plan.

Jessyka graduated from high school in 2004 as a home-schooled student and when she attempted to enroll at Alvin Community College, she ran into a dilemma. ACC wanted Jessyka to take the GED test, but she refused.

"I was like 'no, I have a diploma,'" Jessyka said. "I was umbrellaed under the Pensacola Christian College in Florida."

The Reynosos called on lawyers from the American Homeschool Association and Marvin Zindler, reporter for Channel 13 in Houston.

"We just emailed [Zindler] and the next thing you know, he sends a letter saying 'I'm on this,'" Jessyka said. "[American Homeschool Association's] lawyers and Zindler's lawyers got together and decided, yes, it's legit."

After getting enrolled into ACC, Jessyka was excited, yet intimidated, because she didn't know anyone. Coming from a home-school background, entering a classroom setting was a new, alien environment.

"Jessyka wanted me to go to school with her," Ann said. "So I thought, maybe I should get an education."

Ann thought carefully about her daughter's situation. Having no work experience and only a high school diploma, Ann decided to step in and attend school with her daughter.

"It was good for us to share classes, though, because it helps us with finances, like sharing textbooks," Jessyka said. "My responsibility is to take good notes in class because my mom doesn't hear very well. Her job is to remind me when assignments are due."

At first there were mixed reactions about a mother and daughter going to the

Getting started in a new school, they made their way around campus and tried to familiarize themselves.

"When I met Ann and Jessyka, I met them together," said Kim Case, co-director of the Learning Enhancement Center and assistant professor of psychology and women's studies. "So I already knew they were an amazing mother-daughter team right from the start. They came to me for advising and I was thrilled to meet a mother and daughter embarking on their educational adventures together."

As the semesters went by, both got jobs as student assistants in the Dean of Students Office.

"I found it intriguing that Jessyka and her mother are taking classes together," said David Rachita, interim dean of students. "When I inquired, Jessyka said not only are they taking classes together, but they have been attending college for several years now with the goal to complete their degrees at the same time. 'I think it's great that they see themselves as support for each other. I'm sure Jessyka sees her mother as a role model and Ann sees her daughter as her inspiration.'"

- David Rachita
Interim Dean of Students

In 2010, Ann and Jessyka graduated from UHCL with their bachelor's degrees, Ann's in women's studies and Jessyka's in humanities.

Both are now graduate students at UHCL, pursuing their master's in cross-cultural studies.

"They are a delight to have in class," said Charlotte Haney, visiting lecturer in anthropology and cross-cultural studies. "What is wonderful about them in class is that they are both developing their thesis topics and one can see how their research interest stems directly from their passion for family."

The one thing Ann and Jessyka want people to get out of their experience is the respect between parent and child.

"If I can put positive light on someone else's way of thinking with their daughter, by all means I hope so," Ann said. "I hope I can always put a positive light on someone."

same school and taking the same classes, but people eventually got used to it, giving the duo nicknames like "mother/daughter" and "twins."

Univision did a news story about the Reynosos in 2007 in which they encouraged more Latinos to go to college.

After both graduated with their associate's of arts from ACC, they transferred to UHCL, another definite change in atmosphere.

"It's different here," Ann said. "I felt like a small fish in this huge pond." The reactions they received at UHCL were different than the reactions at ACC.

"People were more accepting," Ann said. "I get a lot of young women who say they wish they can have that type of relationship with their mom, and I get a lot of mothers who tell me they wish they could have the same with their daughters."



Ann Reynoso



Jessyka Reynoso



Mother & Daughter

2011

Budget: continued from page 1

billion. This means that as of right now, Texas has a \$5 billion deficit. The revenue comes from several sources, a big chunk being federal income that includes money from welfare programs as well as education, parks and wildlife, and earned credits. Other sources of revenue include sales tax, cigarette and tobacco taxes, licenses and fines.

The comptroller’s office has set up a website for Texas citizens, texas transparency.org, which fully explains how the budget is set up, where the money comes from and where it goes.

The University of Houston System is bracing for these cuts and trying to find ways to make up the reduction. Under the current House appropriations bill, the UH System is looking at a reduction of \$1, 949 per student over the next biennium.

“Where we are at this point in time is a big question mark,” said Michelle Dotter, vice president of administration and finance at UHCL. “We still have a very substantial unknown in terms of where we are going to end up.”

The UH Board of Regents met recently to finalize a “do not exceed” tuition increase before registration for fall began.

“What we are required to do by the Texas education code is to notify students of what is considered to be a ‘do not exceed’ amount that students might be paying in the next fiscal year,”

Dotter said. “It’s an agreement from the Board of Regents and the presidents of the campuses that this ‘not to exceed’ number will meet the needs of all four of the campuses in the UH System.”

For the next fiscal year, the Board of Regents agreed on a tuition increase of up to 7 percent for undergraduates and up to 9 percent for graduate students. It is not yet known what, if any, tuition increase there will be. The UH System administrators are hoping that by early summer, good news will come out of Austin.

“The sales tax numbers are still very strong,” Dotter said. “The reason that’s important to us is we are all hoping that the comptroller is going to feel comfortable coming back in May or June and telling the Legislature that you have a little bit more money for fiscal years 2012 and 2013 than we thought we had. She’s already made an adjustment for this fiscal year and increased the sales tax numbers by \$300 million.”

These tuition increases will affect all UH campuses, but UHCL is also finding ways to make up for the reduction in state appropriations.

“At this point in time, we feel like we are in limbo with the state,” said Carl Stockton, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost. “We really don’t know what the state is going to do.”

UHCL is planning for a 20 percent budget reduction in state appropriations for the upcoming fiscal year.

“We’re planning for the individual units, the schools and the different units to come up with 10 percent and the university, because of enrollment growth and hopefully new tuition and fee dollars, we’re planning to offset another 10 percent in that scenario,” Stockton said.

There has been some good news to come out of the UH System. Beginning with this upcoming summer semester, students currently enrolled at any UH System institution can take up to 6 credit hours at any other UH System campus. Grades as well as financial aid will automatically transfer.

Community colleges, like San Jacinto College, UHCL’s top source for transfer students, are also taking initiative in trying to find ways to make up for the loss.

“We have already implemented several programs to make up for the \$20 million cut over the next biennium,” said Teri Fowle, associate vice chancellor of marketing at San Jacinto College. “These include Voluntary Severance and Separation Plan as well as looking at operations reduction.”

Currently, 993 employees at San Jac qualify for the Voluntary Severance and Separation Plan, which allows full-time employees to voluntarily leave

their position in return for a cash settlement, is currently in process.

Fowle said it is not yet known what the outcome will be, but there are employees who have already come forward and are interested in the plan.

San Jac has also reached out to its employees and students for money-saving ideas.

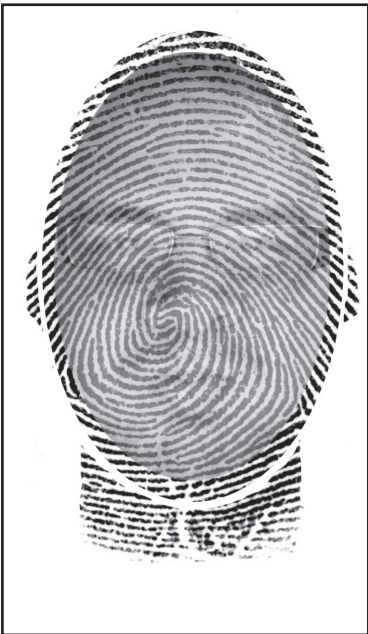
“We have opened up communication through email, Facebook conversations with the chancellor, as well as face-to-face interactions through round-table discussions with student leaders,” Fowle said. “We have already had some ideas coming forward that we have started to carefully look and see how helpful it would be if implemented.”

In her own department, Fowle and her team are trying to decide if it would be more efficient to offer the course catalog and class schedule online, cutting out printing costs.

The UH System, like San Jac, also has established a way for employees and students to contribute money-saving ideas. To submit any ideas or comments about cost saving, revenue generating or better efficiency, email the Planning and Budgeting Committee at suggestion-box@uhcl.edu.

The legislative session ends in May 30, but because of the massive task that is the budget, it will most likely go into special sessions through summer.

Breach: continued from page 1



Tonya Torres:The Signal

data that’s received, and we are working to ensure that agencies that send us data files in the future encrypt them as mandated by statewide agency rules. We have also hired two highly-respected information technology consultants who have begun an examination of information security policies and procedures within the Comptroller’s office,” said Allen Spelce, communication director of public accounts at the comptroller’s office.

The TWC had information for 2 million individuals released. The TRS had information for 1.5 million individuals released. The ERS had around 281,000 state employees and retirees’ information leaked. No one’s information has been reported as abused up to this point.

“So far we know of no one pursuing legal action related to the data exposure,” Spelce said.

The system cannot be controlled by those outside of the corporation; even though UHCL employees were included in the security breach, there was no way for the university to prevent the information from being exposed.

“We have no control over the ERS system,” said Katherine Justice, director of human resources at UHCL.

Justice was instructed to send out a warning alert to the UHCL employees. Because the information released included those in the education system, many of the faculty and staff members from UHCL were affected. The email instructed those with any questions to go to TXsafeguard.org.

As of April 12, TXsafeguard.org will have a 24-hour call line that will assist with any concerns that are not covered on the website. The call line is temporary.

“We have been working tirelessly since learning of the data exposure to measure its full scope, contract with a call center to handle high volumes of inquiries and set up a website with helpful news and information,” Spelce said. “The Texas Safeguard website has received about 281,000 visits and more than 649,000 page views since its launch on April 11. In the call center’s first seven days, we received about 90,000 phone calls.”

For more information, contact Texas Safeguard at: www.TXsafeguard.org 1-855-474-2065

Gas: continued from page 1

emergency fuel delivery over the last several weeks,” said Dan Ronan, manager of corporate communications for AAA Texas.

AAA offers emergency fuel delivery to all of their members, and although the high price of fuel has led to an increase in price for other goods, AAA has not increased the price of membership.

“The price of membership is the price of membership,” Ronan said. “It does not fluctuate because of fuel prices and we have no intention of changing that.”

High fuel prices have forced many to re-evaluate their budgets so they can afford the extra fuel costs.

UHCL is mostly a commuter campus and students often struggle to afford gas.

“I account for it into my weekly budget just like a bill,” said Jessica Faz, communication major. “The price of gas is one of my biggest expenses. I have to drive to the Houston area [from Beaumont] three days a week. I actually traded in my car for a more fuel-efficient vehicle.”

Students who are trying to save on traveling costs may have an impact on the enrollment of online classes.

“I hear a lot more students talking about online classes,” said David Rachita, dean of students. “In fact, I recently heard from a student who was wondering about taking online courses just so she wouldn’t have to drive out here.”

Online classes do not influ-

ence commuting costs because the courses are taken at home via the Internet.

“I think online classes are the trend across the nation for different reasons, but I think one of the reasons is fuel prices,” Rachita said.

High fuel prices are preventing some students from attending classes that are held face-to-face over the summer, when gas prices are traditionally higher.

“For me, taking summer classes on campus is not an option,” Faz said. “I refuse to pay for the commute during the summer when fuel prices are at their highest.”

Not all students are willing to sacrifice an untimely graduation because of fuel costs.

“If anything, I don’t think the trend would be to not to see students taking summer courses, but I do think that students might load their day up so that they take all their classes on a particular day,” Rachita said.

UHCL does offer a solution to the high cost of commuting. Ride Share is an electronic bulletin board for UHCL students that are interested in carpooling.

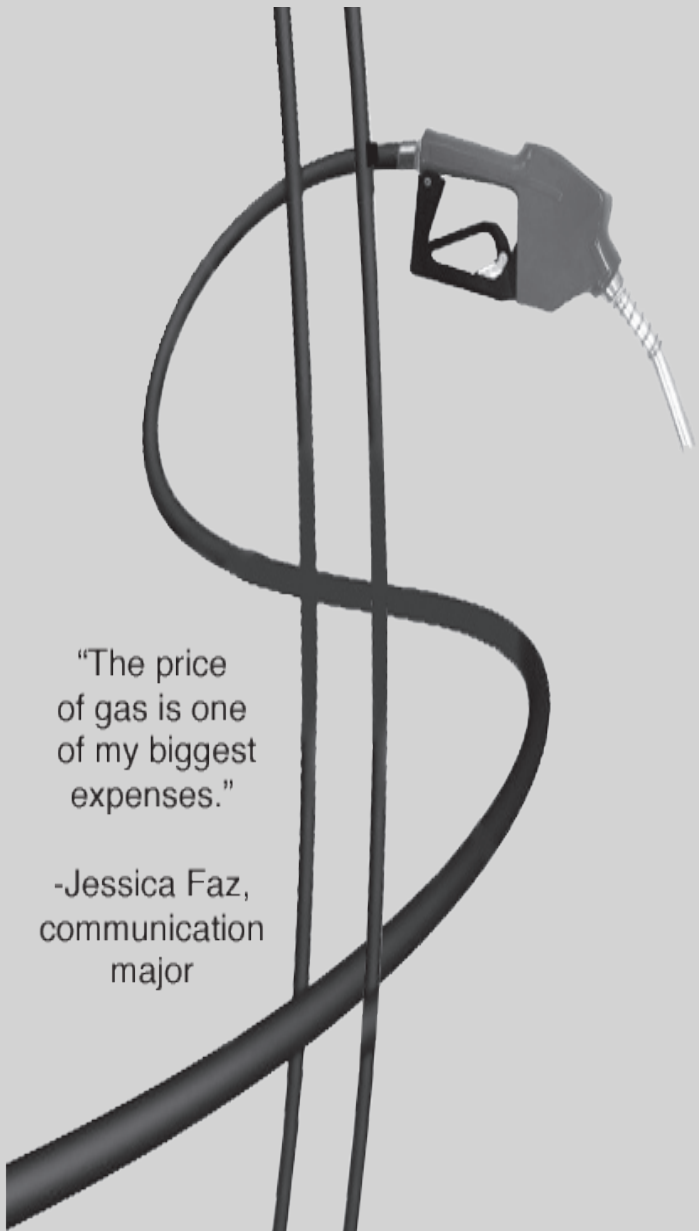
“Only UHCL students can participate in Ride Share and the student has to make the decision to accept a ride or give one,” Rachita said. “UHCL does not match students who are looking for rides with students giving them.”

The Ride Share website had an increase in views since the rise of fuel costs in early March.

This rise may indicate that students are searching for something to help reduce the costs of commuting.

For more information about

Ride Share, email RideShare@uhcl.edu or visit the site at UHCL.edu under the “Dean of Students” tab.



Tonya Torres:The Signal



Courtesy: Center for Inquiry

Billboards placed alongside Houston freeways by the Center for Inquiry displayed the image shown above.

Billboard says non-believers aren’t alone

Eugene Bernard
The Signal

Got God? You don’t need to, according to a message that was brought to three U.S. cities, Houston included, in a recent multimedia campaign that sought to allow the voice of the non-believer to be heard.

Houstonians received free-thinking messages that were displayed on billboards from a nonprofit educational organization out of Amherst, N.Y., called the Center for Inquiry. In efforts to convey the belief that it is possible to have a happy, fulfilling life without believing in God, the Center for Inquiry advertised the message: “You don’t Need God ... to Hope, to Care, to Love, to Live.”

The billboard went up the second week of March and ran in a month-long campaign.

“Our primary focus is not to try to persuade religious people from believing in God, but we believe that you can have a fulfilling life without believing in God,” said Ron Lindsay, CEO and president of the Center for Inquiry.

Lindsay described Washington D.C. and Indianapolis as being characterized by strong religious beliefs, which is why they were also selected to display the billboards. Houston was specifically targeted due to being the fourth-largest city in the nation as well as one of the largest cities in what is referred to as the “Bible Belt.”

“It was a good idea to get our message recognized in an area that it may not be heard that often,” Lindsay said.

Advertising the message in areas where normally it wouldn’t be heard raised questions for non-supporters of the nonprofit’s

“Everyone needs God and we felt it was important to put that message out.”

- Derick Faison
Campus Pastor,
The Potter’s House, Fort Worth

“We have a right to be here, and it’s time we got our place at the table.”

- Fred Edwords
President,
United Coalition of Reason

campaign.

In a recent 740 KTRH radio interview with Dave Welch, executive director of the Houston area pastors’ council, Lindsay defended the purpose of the organization’s campaign by saying the goal was to break down prejudices against non-believers in the United States.

“People have the right to express their beliefs,” Welch said. “We have to recognize that there are two dynamically different world views here, one being that there is a loving and just God who created us, and the other is that we are simply evolved animals, which is the approach Dr. Lindsay is suggesting. If that is true, then ultimately what society boils down to is might makes right, the survival of the fittest, and that is not what most people in this country believe.”

This is not Houston’s first rodeo in terms of godless messages appearing around town. In 2009, the Houston Freethought Alliance posted a billboard that featured the expression “Don’t Believe in God? You are not alone.” Although completely separate entities from one another, the Houston Freethought Alliance and the Center for Inquiry have similar views regarding the vision for campaigning in Houston.

The idea behind both campaigns is to abandon the assumption that everyone believes in God.

“Houston is a population that has a strong influence of people of Christian faith and many times when people first meet you, they ask where you go to church,” said Roxie Deaton, president of Houston Freethought Alliance.

With such a hefty population that believes in God, Houston’s response to the campaign was not as controversial as one might have imagined.

“I think everyone has the right to express what they feel and believe,” said Tyrone Jones, pastor of Zion Hill Praise Center. “To ask the atheist to take down their signs would be like asking believers to take down their signs. Just as the atheists try to convince others that they are right, so do believers. As a believer, I am confident that God can fight his own battles. There is no need to sign petitions or go out in the middle of the night to tear the billboards down, unless God told me to. God will show himself strong and eventually every knee will bow and every tongue will confess.”

The United Coalition of Reason, a partnership with the Houston Freethought Alliance, experienced scenarios that were

severe enough to banish any type of religious ads to be advertised on public transportation in Fort Worth, Texas. Prior to the Coalition of Reason’s ad, Fort Worth buses frequently ran religious ads on public transportation.

“During the Christmas season, the Dallas-Fort Worth Coalition of Reason paid for ads that read, ‘Millions of people are good without God,’” stated the Americans United for Separation of Church and State on their website. “The ads incited a harsh reaction from some Christians who called for a boycott of the buses. In addition, a group of local businesses paid for a van to follow the buses with a sign that said, ‘I still love you. – God.’”

Well-known pastor, T.D. Jakes’ ministry “The Potters House” also responded to the atheist ads by advertising its own ads on six Fort Worth city buses that read “He [God] Still Reigns!”

Derick Faison, campus pastor of The Potter’s House in Fort Worth, appears on the ad alongside Jakes.

“I felt like they [atheists] were perfectly within their rights to express their beliefs or disbeliefs,” Faison states on www.christian-post.com. “Our reaction is to take the same constitutional rights and share with people their need for God. Everyone needs God and we felt it was important to put that message out.”

The Fort Worth case serves as a model for examining freedom

of speech or freedom of religion versus paid advertising.

“Billboard advertisements are placed through private companies,” said Ashley Packard, professor of communication and digital media studies. “You can express any religious or nonreligious message on a billboard that the billboard company is willing to carry. The First Amendment has nothing to do with it. Public transit systems are operated by government entities. Generally, they will not accept religious messages because doing so would suggest that they were endorsing a particular religious view, which would violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment.”

Lindsay said religious ads are projected to be placed on public transportation; however, it depends on the rules of each transportation system.

“If the transit system accepts ads from religious organizations and other nonprofit organizations, it can’t exclude ads from secular nonprofit organizations,” Lindsay said.

In the future, Americans will be able to find atheist billboards in Portland, Ore. and Grand Rapids, Mich., placed by local groups that are associated with the Center for Inquiry.

“The billboards are a very high-profile way to find people who share the same beliefs and informs the public that folks like us exist,” said Fred Edwords, president of the United Coalition of Reason. “We are your friends, your neighbors, your co-workers. We are everywhere; we have a right to be here, and it’s time we got our place at the table.”



Mercury Baroque Ensemble

tickets:
presale: \$12 general admission \$8 UHCL I.D.
at the door: \$15 general admission \$10 UHCL I.D.

Friday, May 13, 2011
8:00 pm, Bayou Theater
www.uhcl.edu/culturalarts



Students bring awareness through research and art



Norma Villarreal:The Signal

Linda Sulpacio, 2010 alumna, Paula Calimlim, psychology major, and Hillary Gramm, cross-cultural studies major, set up their display for the 17th Annual Student Conference for Research & Creative Arts, held April 20-22. The display explains human trafficking that is occurring in east Houston.

UHCL feeds the hungry



Norma Villarreal:The Signal

Student Government Association (SGA) hosted the breakdown for the Hunger's Heroes food drive. Total number of cans collected was 4,111, the most the university has ever collected. The Communication Association won a table at the Student Leadership banquet for collecting the most cans, which was 1,687 cans. The Unity Club and the National Society of Leadership and Success came in second and third.

Film explores gender issues



Norma Villarreal:The Signal

Lydia Nunez, social worker, and Stephen Bauer, quest philosopher, participate in the discussion following the reviewing of the documentary "Middle Sexes," a film that explores gender identity issues around the world. Associate Professor in Communication and Digital Media Studies Leo Chan and Cryss Gudoy, graduate student in digital media studies, led the discussion. Unity Club and IISS hosted the event, held April 14 in the Bayou Building.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
24 The BFA exhibition runs through May 19, Bayou Building, Atrium 1, Art Gallery	25 Foreign language classes run from April 25-June 10. For more information, email paul@uhcl.edu	26 Sexual Assault Awareness month, Denim Day. Self defense demonstrations in Atrium 1 of Bayou Building, 12-7 p.m.	27 Astros vs. St Louis Cardinals, Minute Maid Park , 7:05 p.m.	28 Intercultural & International Services celebrates Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, Garden Room of the Bayou Building, 5-6 p.m.	29 Career Exploration Workshop, SSCB 3103 and 3109, 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.	30 GT supplemental certification for teachers, Arbor Building, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
1 Astros vs. Milwaukee Brewers, Minute Maid Park, 1:05 p.m.	2 Art School for Children and Young Adults offers summer classes, all day in Arbor Building, Suite A190. For more information, call 281-283-3344.	3 Kids' U all day at UHCL. For more information, email youngj@uhcl.edu or call 281-283-3530.	4 May mini-session open registration, contact Office of Admissions at admissions@uhcl.edu.	5 Minute Maid Park Tour, Minute Maid Park, 7 p.m.	6 School of Education hosting a two day conference for English Language Learners, May 6, 8 a.m.-10 p.m. For more information email brabham@uhcl.edu	7 Conference for English Language Learners hosted by School of Education, 8a.m.-4 p.m.