



THE NAVIGATOR

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No Regrets by Wayne Oquin

“Say it and forget it. Write it and regret it.” I heard this saying while watching The People’s Court. It’s a catchy way of pointing out how uttered words can be forgotten but once you put it on paper or in a text or e-mail, you own it forever.

For the better part of 20 years, I have been charged with providing the front page article for the *Navigator*. A large majority of the messages have been information about Chamber programs and services. However, I have occasionally drifted off into the wilds of personal opinion. Perhaps due to my superior analysis of

current events and astute criticism of the policies of our elected officials, I have been mostly grief free as a result of my ramblings. It is much more likely that folks either didn’t care or didn’t read. Rest assured there were times I sought to provoke comment. A few times I actually succeeded.

I have on rare occasions irritated elected officials, both conservative and liberal. I have enthusiastically supported public education when a portion of my constituency was critical of same. I have gone against the musings of the print media to the defense of area business and industry. In short, I have said it and written it and I don’t regret it. I am a self-proclaimed momma’s boy. I used to tell people not to ask for my mother’s opinion unless you really wanted to hear it. I guess I have taken it one step further. I often give my opinion unsolicited. In a few instances, I have had to back away from a posi-

tion. In years past, it was called the art of compromise.

What is the current definition of compromise? It once required both sides of an issue to give a little. In today’s vernacular, compromise is defined as **“I say it and you agree to it.”** Now don’t go political on me because it seems to be the same definition regardless of your party affiliation. Just how healthy is it for our leaders to continue to point out the need to basically ask to raise a line of credit? The way that they toss this issue back and forth, it’s like one side wants to use MasterCard and the other wants to use Visa when they are maxed out on both. While all this is going on, they want us to **“do as I say, not as I do.”** Hopefully, by publication of this *Navigator*, they will have looked for and found a solution that is appropriate to address the problem to the benefit of our country.

This is not an article about the debt ceiling. I cite this only as an example. It’s simply a **“say what you mean and mean what you say”** message. It’s about not just talking, but also listening. It’s a call to respect the opinions of others and when necessary to disagree respectfully. It’s about being able to say it or write it and not have to regret it. This article represents my last *Navigator* contribution. On September 2, 2011, I will be leaving the Chamber to start a new chapter in my life. I sincerely thank all volunteers and staff who made my time as President & CEO a joy. I am confident that the Chamber will go forward successfully under the leadership of Dr. Charles Grant. **I leave with great memories and no regrets.**

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2011 Board of Directors

Matt Davis – Chairman,
CommunityBank of Texas

Dr. Vickey Giles– Chair-elect, Sheldon
ISD

Wilfred Broussard Jr.—1st Vice Chair,
Broussard’s Real Estate

Shalonda Dawkins – Secretary, United
Community Credit Union

Bill Chote – Treasurer, CommunityBank
of Texas

Kim Marak— Immediate Past Chair,
Arkema, Inc.

Bob Bartel, Individual
Don Bobo, CenterPoint Energy
Marlene Clowers, Congressman Gene Green
Dr. Shirley Ellisor, Holy Trinity Episcopal
School
Mike Fortner, Fortner Financial
Ramon Garza, Farmers Insurance
Johnny Gonzalez, Houston Community
Newspapers
Kimberly Gonzalez, Platinum Copiers
Dr. Charles Grant, Harris Co. Pct. 2
Dr. Allatia Harris, San Jacinto College N.
June Harris, Halo Branded Solutions
Dean Hofmann, LyondellBasell
David Hopkins, Galena Park ISD
Carrie Hulsey, Texas Bay Area Credit Union
Dale Jones, Sterling Wood Church
Erika Koehler, Wendel D. Ley Y
Terry Loving, Advantage Howard Glendale
Edward Miller, Edward Miller Appraisal Svcs.
Greg Ollis, Channelview ISD
Larry Pfeifer, Sheldon ISD
Mike Roussos, East Houston Reg. Medical
Center
Brian Wilhelm, State Farm Insurance
Jay Woodall, East Houston Reg. Med. Center

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NEW MEMBERS

Mike Rockwood
Sheldon ISD
11411 C.E. King Parkway
Houston, TX 77044
(281)727-2007
Individuals

Treats From Scratch, Cupcakes &
More
14705 Woodforest Boulevard,
Suite 105
Houston, TX 77015
(832)220-3531
Justin Frazier

Still caring...by renewing their membership

A special thank you to the following members who have shown their dedicated support of the Chamber and the community by renewing their membership investment.

6-31 Years

Don’s Auto Service	24 years
Galena Park Motors	24 years
Constable Gary Freeman	22 years
Harris County FWSD #47	16 years
South Lake Houston E.M.S.	16 years
CommunityBank of Texas	10 years
Wal-Mart Supercenter	9 years
John Keating Chevrolet	9 years
Sylvia Garcia	8 years

1-5 Years

Atlas Truck Sales	5 years
Courtesy Roofing & Services, Inc.	5 years
Holy Trinity Episcopal School	4 years
Northshore Dental	4 years
Bob Bartel	3 years
Fortner Financial	2 years
GVMS	1 year
OCTG Tubular Finishing	1 year
Cary Stephens	1 year
Mister Car Wash	1 year
The UPS Store #6204	1 year

OUR MEMBERS

Our chamber thrives on membership. Help us out with the names of new businesses opening in our area.

You show your support for the North Channel community when you purchase goods or services from businesses that display the chamber membership decal.



PORT BRIEFS

Exports Remain Strong, Outpace Imports



While U. S. exports rose to an all-time high in March and back above the pre-crash peak, imports grew even faster except at the Port of Houston. Houston's port has long exported more than it imports, which helps keep the local economy healthy and less vulnerable to economic fluctuations.

The ratio of exports is 65 to 35 percent, according to Ricky Kunz, Vice President of Origination at the Port of Houston Authority. That is an enviable position to be in.

"Looking at 2008, 2009 and 2010, there was a downward spiral in container trades, with many ports losing 20 to 25 percent of total volume," Kunz points out. "We were very fortunate. We didn't lose any business. We remained flat and even had a slight bit of growth during those years.

"So, when we began to grow again, we grew from a level that had remained constant. Ports on the east and west coasts had to regain what they had lost before they could begin to grow."

The leading Port Authority export is plastic resins, which represent 41 percent of overall containerized export tonnage. Plastic resins are a product of the petroleum refining process, and Houston exports more than 25 percent of all U. S. resin export volume.

The largest importers of plastic resins are China, Brazil, South Ko-

rea and Japan. The plastic resins are used to manufacture every manner of industrial and consumer product from toys to telephones and computers.

Chemicals are also a large export commodity for the Port Authority, as is steel. Steel exports for the first four months of 2011 were 169,000 tons, versus 51,000 tons for the same period in 2010 (1,105,000 tons versus 655,000 tons). "We are seeing some fantastic growth and we're very excited about it," says Kunz.

The port's exporting strength is growing in other sectors. Kinder Morgan Energy Partners LP leases the Port Authority's Bulk Materials Handling Plant. The company recently announced that it will begin exporting Colorado coal through the bulk terminal. According to Kinder Morgan, this will be the first time Western coal will be exported from the Port of Houston.

"The Port of Houston continues to be a great partner in assisting us as we expand our capabilities to keep up with the growing demand for bulk commodities movements in and out of the port," says Jeffrey Armstrong, Terminals President for Kinder Morgan.

Exports have been a strong element of Houston's vigorous foreign trade for as long as Houston has existed. Houston's earliest fortunes were made by those

who traded in lumber and cotton. The earliest record of cotton shipped from Houston is 1839 when eight bales were shipped that year. Business grew rapidly from 4,260 bales in 1842 to 11,359 in 1845—a 167 percent increase in just three years. Soon, the bulk of the cargo moving downstream from Houston was cotton on its way to world markets.

Houston became a deep-water port in 1914, and by 1919, it was the second largest spot cotton market in the world only behind New Orleans. The vessel *Merry Mount* left Houston in November 1919 with 23,719 bales representing the first shipment of cotton directly to Europe from the new deep-water port. At one time, Texas produced a quarter of the world's cotton, and in 1930, the Port of Houston led all U.S. ports in the cotton trade.

Cotton remains a leading export commodity for the port. It is still compressed into bales but is now shipped globally in containers.

The cotton trade through the port has remained fairly constant in recent years. In 2010, the total cotton trade at the Port Authority was 32,786 TEUs with exports totaling 29,164 TEUs. Houston's cotton exports primarily sail to Turkey, Peru, Italy, Brazil and China.

NORTH CHANNEL AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Upcoming Events

Tuesday, August 9
Ambassadors Breakfast
8 am @ Location Chick-fil-A

Tuesday, August 16
Board of Directors
11:30 am @ LyondellBasell

Wednesday, August 17
Ribbon Cutting
11 am @ S.T.E.P.S.
13845 Corpus Christi, Ste. A

Wednesday, August 31
Ribbon Cuttings
8 am @ Wal-Mart
8:30 am @ Woodforest National
Bank inside Wal-Mart
I-10 East Frwy. & Freeport

Friday, September 2
Monthly Luncheon
11:30 am @ SJCN

September 12-15
Chamber Membership Drive

Thursday, September 15
Business After Hours
5—7 pm @ CommunityBank of
Texas, 13909 I-10 East Frwy.

Saturday, September 24
SJ Pilot Club Spaghetti Dinner
11 am—3 pm @ NS Senior High

*Did you know you can put
your calendar events on our
website? Go to
www.northchannelarea.com
click on view all events and
then click on submit an
event.*

RIBBON CUTTINGS



ABOVE: A Ribbon Cutting for the new Post Office inside of Go Store It, 16660 Wallisville Road was held on July 13.

BELOW: A Ribbon Cutting for Treats From Scratch, Cupcakes & More, 14705 Woodforest Boulevard was held on July 18.

