

**PERKINS
WILL REP
SELF IN
COURT: 3A**



**WOMAN'S
5K GOAL IS
45 RACES IN
1 YEAR: 1B**



**WHO MADE
THE BIG
PLAYS?
1C**



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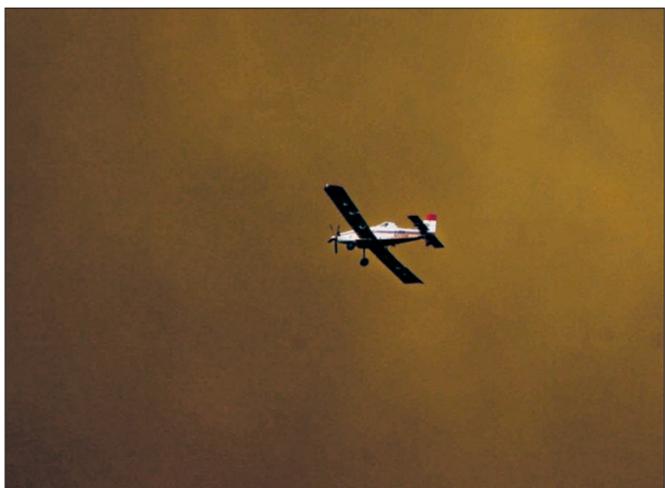


Giuseppe Barranco/The Enterprise

Doug Saunders is the volunteer fire chief in China. He said Friday he can't remember a time that fires were so rampant across Texas. His department has been requested in Montgomery County as backup.

Fire alarm

Area volunteer departments dispatch help to Texas inferno



Nick de la Torre/Houston Chronicle

A spotting plane crosses a spot of smoke that's allowed the daylight to peak through as it helps a tanker locate the best spot to drop a load of fire retardant material Tuesday in Montgomery County.

By Jessica Lipscomb
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Fifty-five homes destroyed. Twenty-three damaged. At least 266 threatened.

Just five days after a now 12,500-acre fire started in Montgomery County, entire neighborhoods have been wiped out.

While residents of Southeast Texas have been somewhat shielded from recent wildfire threats, other regions have not been so lucky. On Friday, the Texas Forest Service sent volunteer firefighters with Beaumont-area departments to help contain the fire.

Chief Doug Saunders with the China Volunteer Fire Department said he can't

INFERNO, page 4A

When are words a crime?

By Heather Nolan
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You can't be picked up in Texas for "bad taste," according to one local law enforcement officer. But you can face charges of disorderly conduct if you spew

hate language or vulgarities.

A Paris court this week convicted a former Christian Dior designer of making anti-Semitic comments in public after he slurred the phrase "I love Hitler" at a Paris bar, with the court ordering him to pay \$31,600 in fees and fines.

If someone in Southeast Texas decided to utter a similar phrase in public, local law enforcement officials say they're not likely to be arrested or charged. But if there are extenuating circumstances, there's a chance the

HATE, page 7A

Plan aims to untangle traffic jam

A three-phase overhaul should help relieve the congestion at I-10 and U.S. 69.

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By Amos Morale III
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State highway officials really are going to do something about the terrible traffic bottleneck at the Interstate 10 and U.S. 69 intersection.

It's just not exactly what they said they might do a few weeks ago.

The general outline that emerged from the Transportation Planning committee Friday morning will be famil-

Road money

Here's how the transportation planning committee is spending the \$136 million it received from Proposition 12:

- \$80 million for the Neches River Bridge reconstruction.
- \$50 million for the renovation to Interstate 10 in Orange County.
- \$6 million for projects to ease congestion on U.S. 69.

iar, and the money allocated for it has gone up, from \$3 million to \$6 million.

TRAFFIC, page 7A



File photo by Dave Ryan/The Enterprise

Energry Texas meters services senior installer Robert Richard fishes a sports drink out of his cooler last month. Southeast Texas likely will be sweating like it's August again next week.

Milder weather won't last long

Temperatures could soar back into the triple digits next week, forecasters warn.

By Eric Berger
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Enjoy this weekend, because the bumper summer is comin' back

In addition to the ongoing drought, forecasters say there's a good chance that 100-degree temperatures could return early next week, possibly from Monday through Wednesday.

We can thank — you guessed it — the high-pressure ridge that's afflicted Texas all summer. The heat should ease a bit by next weekend when a little more cloud cover works into the region, according to the National Weather Service.

Looking for that next cool front? It may not come for another 10 days to two weeks. And when will it rain again? You don't want to know the answer. (Because it's not soon.)

The bottom line is that you'd better enjoy Saturday

HEAT, page 8A

.com

Art can be lighthearted

Did we see you at AMSET's Artopia gala? **BeaumontEnterprise.com/seen**

Cardinals face South Alabama

Get live updates from today's Lamar road game: **BeaumontEnterprise.com/InTheCards**

Readers comment on the president's jobs plan: 6A

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Sunny

