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## Local News

May 19, 2008 Edition

### The strength of the human spirit

#### Local teen overcomes ailment to realize dreams

By Brian Walzel  
Editor

Sam Parker-Smith isn't letting a minor obstacle like cerebral palsy get in the way of his dreams.

Ray Bessette, a personal trainer and professional bodybuilder, isn't letting preconceived notions about the will of the human spirit deter him from helping Parker-Smith realize those dreams.



Sam Parker-Smith (right) isn't letting cerebral palsy get in the way of becoming a champion body builder. He is assisted by his personal trainer, Ray Bessette (left).

An 18 year-old senior at Cy-Fair High School, Parker-Smith has been afflicted with cerebral palsy all his life. It has left the right side of his body significantly weaker than his left; his right hand is nearly unusable and his legs are unstable.

He's played soccer and a few other team sports, but he just wasn't able to find his niche. "Some motions I just can't do properly," Parker-Smith said.

A little over a year ago, he found his way to The Fit Effect, a gym on the south side of Tomball where Bessette is a personal trainer.

He was quiet and shy, Bessette recalls, and

### Interviews to begin this week for Magnolia police chief

By Melanie Smith  
Tribune Staff

Magnolia will be holding interviews for candidates of the police chief position this week. The candidates will meet with Mayor Jimmy Thornton and members of the city council to discuss their background and qualifications for the position. The council will interview current interim chief Paul Michna at a later date.

"We're looking for police chief experience as well as a good background," Thornton said.

Michna has 90 days to serve as interim before the city will make the decision to either keep him or hire one of the new candidates. Michna has currently served about half of that time, according to Thornton.

There were a total of 48 applicants for the police chief position. The candidates were narrowed down to four based on qualifications, including Herbert Gilbert, Leonard Cox, Phillip Taylor, and R. L. Parsley.

"We want someone who works well with all citizens, as well as the sheriff's department and state police," Thornton said.

Michna became the interim police chief after former police chief Ron Cunningham's contract was not renewed by the police department last month. Cunningham and former Capt. Mike Smith were indicted by a Montgomery County Grand Jury on two counts of official oppression stemming from allegations brought on by former Cpl. Mike Alexander.

They are awaiting trial.

### Magnolia voters leave in council,

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struggled with much of the gym's equipment. Then one day while at the grocery store, Bessette received a phone call from Caroline, Parker-Smith's mother. She asked Bessette if he would work with her son, not only to build muscle and lose weight, but to also help her son realize his dream of becoming a world-class body builder.

As a boy, Parker-Smith said, he had seen videos of Arnold Schwarzenegger at body building competitions and made up his mind that's what he wanted to become. "I knew it was going to be pretty challenging for me, especially after learning his goals," Bessette said.

After talking with Parker-Smith, Bessette decided to take on the project and quickly got to work creating workouts and exercises that his new client would be able to complete. "With a person with a disability, it's like teaching a blind person how to drive a car," Bessette said.

The challenges for Bessette were monumental. Parker-Smith needed to lose more than 30 pounds, he needed to build muscle, and he needed to learn stage presence to be able to successfully compete, all in less than a year.

Parker-Smith was fitted for special exercise equipment, such as a Velcro band for his right arm that attaches to a strap and allows him to lift weights with his right arm. Not only did he endure a rigorous workout, Parker-Smith had to lose weight, and lose it fast.

"The hardest was no soda," he said. "And I had to cut out all sweets. I ate a lot of chicken and rice."

Parker-Smith lost 32 pounds in four months, all while gaining 11 pounds of muscle. Bessette taught him how to perform on stage, how to gain "symmetry," "muscularity proportion," and learn other aspects of a bodybuilding competition that Parker-Smith would be judged on.

Finally, his first competition came, the 7th Annual NGA Southern States National Extravaganza in Stafford on May 9.

Before the competition, Bessette cautioned Parker-Smith about not getting his hopes up. "We talked a lot about expectations," Bessette said. "No matter how you look, it's all up to the judges. The trophy is really within yourself."

Parker-Smith would not leave disappointed.

He finished second in the teenage division and sixth in the open novice division. "Once I got up on stage, it was like a home to me," Parker-Smith said.

Even Bessette was surprised at his success.

"Not everyone could do what that kid did," he said. "His heart was so big that day." Parker-Smith is already looking forward to the next competition on June 14.

"I feel like it's a whole new ballgame," he said.

But Parker-Smith isn't only doing this for himself,

## school board members

By Melanie Smith  
Tribune Staff

The city of Magnolia held elections May 10 for several positions. For each position, the incumbent was re-elected for another term.

Incumbent mayor Jimmy Thornton beat his opposition Jo Anne Windham by 22 votes. The final tally was 134-112.

"It is a wonderful feeling to be re-elected," Thornton said. "I'm looking forward to continuing to work with the people for the good of the city."

This will be Thornton's third term in office.

In the race for city council Position 4, David Sutherland beat Hank Wright by 34 votes, 133-99.

This will be Sutherland's fifth term in city council.

Patsy Williams, who's opponent, John Polk, dropped out of the race April 11, won 128-104.

This will be Williams' eighth consecutive council term since 1992.

For the Magnolia ISD trustee Position 4, incumbent Brent O'Neal won re-election over Mandy Smith with a count of 334-175.

## Tomball softball wins again, baseball falls to Cedar Park

By Brian Walzel  
Editor

While the 2008 season came to an end for one Tomball High School team, the season continues for another.

The Cougar baseball team was knocked out of the Region 2 playoffs in a best-of-three series loss to Cedar Park, ending their surprise run in the playoffs while the Lady Cougar softball team kept its state title hopes alive with a 2-0 series sweep against Spring in the regional quarterfinals.

Coming out of District 16-5A as the third place team, the Lady Cougars were faced with a steep hill to climb in the playoffs. But an opening round upset over 15-5A district champion Magnolia, followed by a second round victory over Bryan, set the stage for the regional quarterfinal match-up with Spring, a longtime thorn in the Lady Cougars' collective side.

Tomball took the opening game in the series 4-2, a win that put them in commanding position in the best-of-three series. The Lady Cougars wasted no time, taking the second game 2-0 behind a stellar outing by ace pitcher Shelby Lancaster. The series win over Spring set up a showdown with 12-5A runner-up Mesquite in the regional semi-finals. The winner will go on to face either Garland or Klein Oak in the regional championship and for the right to play in the state tournament.

he's showing the world that people like him are capable of so much more than many believe.

"My main focus is to show people that disabled people can do as much as anyone."

For more information about Parker-Smith and to see more photos, visit [www.thefiteffect.net](http://www.thefiteffect.net).

## Quinn, Driver say re-election was vote for zoning

By Brian Walzel  
Editor

Both Warren Driver and David Quinn, who were each re-elected May 10 to serve three more years on the Tomball city council, say the results of the voting were more than just a vote to keep them in office.

Driver and Quinn think the re-elections were more of a referendum on zoning, which the city approved earlier this year.

"I think it was somewhat of a vote, a referendum vote on zoning," Driver said. "Had (the citizens) not wanted zoning to continue, they would have voted our opposition."

Quinn echoed his comments and pointed toward the job the current council is doing as reasons for his re-election.

"I think it was a validation of zoning and a validation of the job of not only the council, but also what the mayor is doing," he said.

Neither Derek Townsend, who ran against Quinn, or David Mayes, who opposed Driver, came out in direct opposition to the zoning plan.

Throughout his campaign, Townsend said he was in favor of "good zoning," while Mayes stated that zoning "must reflect the needs of a growing city, while protecting the peace and tranquility enjoyed by our residents."

Driver added that he suspected the voters to vote the way they did after their vocal support for the zoning ordinance.

"It kind of turned out the way I thought," he said.

Both races ended in a relatively close vote.

In the race for Position 1, Quinn defeated Townsend by just 45 votes, 418 to 373. Townsend outperformed Quinn on Election Day, garnering 171 votes to Quinn's 150. The race for Position 5 wasn't quite as close, with Driver winning by 109 votes over Mayes, 455 to 346.

Nearly 15 percent of the registered 5,438 voters in Tomball turned out to vote.

"All along we knew this was going to be a very tight race, we just had that feeling all along," Quinn said. "I didn't know how many were going to turn out. That's always a question. But I was very pleased to see a huge turnout this year."

Driver said Townsend's and Mayes' campaigns

The results of last weekend's series were unavailable at press time last week.

Meanwhile, the Cougars baseball squad ended their season with a second round defeat to Cedar Park.

After knocking off 15-5A champion The Woodlands in the opening round, the Cougars dropped the first game in their series against Cedar Park 1-0.

The Cougars rallied to win the second game 6-5 in the last half of the seventh inning to force a deciding game three.

A win would have sent the Cougars on to the regional quarterfinals, but Cedar Park was too strong early on, scoring five runs in the first inning and three in the second on their way to a 10-8 victory and the series win.

Tomball finished the season with a 19-12 overall record.



Tomball High School Assistant Principal Mark Vierkant and Associate Principal Carol Houston look on as Student Council Parliamentarian Curtis Morris presents Gabriel Marenco with a certificate during a breakfast honoring seniors in the top 10 percent of their graduating class. Submitted Photo

## Voters Approve Lone Star College System bond measure, elect trustees

A \$420 million bond referendum to build new facilities and infrastructure for Lone Star College System was approved by voters May 10 by a 62-38 percent margin.

At the same time, Position 3 incumbent Stephanie Marquard and Position 9 incumbent Priscilla Kelly were re-elected to new six-year terms on the college's board of trustees. Position 6 incumbent Alan Quintero, appointed to complete an unexpired term, was defeated by challenger Bob Wolfe. Robert J. Adam was elected to fill the Position 4 seat vacated by trustee John Fox, who did not seek re-election.

Final unofficial tallies showed the bond proposal passing in every segment of the community

were well-organized and tough to overcome.

"The opposition really worked hard," he said. "They put a lot of communication out, and I thought they would do well, and they did. But I think, though, that the public wanted a continuation of the good government we have. They didn't want to change courses in the middle of the stream."



Magnolia Mayor Jimmy Thornton (right) issued a public apology to Bobby Lee (left) at a May 13 city council meeting. Lee was recently falsely arrested in Magnolia for allegedly stealing cable. Thornton gave Lee a written apology and promised to update the procedures of the city. "We are currently updating the manual and our policies for arrests," Thornton said. "We made a mistake with Mr. Lee." Photo by Melanie Smith

## Magnolia in consideration to receive tobacco grant

By Melanie Smith  
Tribune Staff

Magnolia is one of several cities being considered to receive a \$40,000 tobacco grant from Texas Comptrollers.

The city would use the grant to educate minors on the risks involved with smoking, as well as educate tobacco sellers of the risks of selling the product to minors.

"We've recently rolled 43 tickets for minor in possession of tobacco in Magnolia," interim police chief Paul Michna said. "But we didn't do any follow up with the people who sell it to minors."

According to Michna, the city doesn't have the funds to do anything to prevent future sales of tobacco to minors at the moment.

"The grant would also pay for the overtime of an off duty officer to go to stores that sell tobacco and talk about putting signs in windows regarding the selling of such products to minors,"

college district with 13,574 votes for to 8,232 against. The district is comprised by 11 independent school districts: Aldine, Conroe, Cy-Fair, Humble, Kingwood, Klein, New Caney, Splendora, Spring, Tomball, and Willis. The proposition drew 21,806 voters.

"We are extremely pleased with the outcome of this election," said LSCS Chancellor Dr. Richard Carpenter. "We got our message out, and residents responded. We are greatly appreciative of the confidence voters have placed in us. We will move aggressively to fulfill the promises we have made to the community, and look forward to meeting the needs of the students we serve."

Lone Star College System enrolled 49,263 students in credit courses last fall, and is adding about 5,000 new students every 24 months, the district reported. At the current rate of growth, the system anticipates more than 72,000 students by 2015. College officials have said that the system's five college are at or beyond total capacity as defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

According to final but unofficial tallies in the trustee election, Position 3 incumbent Marquard received 5,165 votes to 3,798 for Fred Blanton, 3,485 for Jerry Albrecht, and 1,897 for Robert Gandy. In Position 4, Adam defeated Terry Morton, 6,716 to 6,368. Wolfe was victorious in Position 6 with 4,942 votes, Jason Roper with 4,642, and Quintero with 3,834. In Position 9, incumbent Priscilla Kelly won with 3,839 votes, followed by Joe Williams with 2,806, Diane Porter with 2,742, Gail Stanart with 2,264, and Jean Iverson with 1,901. Trustees are elected by a plurality of votes cast; there is no run-off election.

## Tomball Chamber membership drive nets 39 new members

The Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce 2008 Membership Drive was deemed a success by event organizers. According to the Chamber, 39 new member businesses joined the Chamber's roster, pushing the total membership to 840. Members of the Chamber's board of directors, ambassadors, volunteers, and office staff all took part, helping to promote the growth of the entire Tomball area.



Pictured (front row, left to right), Marilyn O'Neal, Beverly

Michna said.

At the May 13 city council meeting, the council voted to accept the grant if offered to the city.

Michna has been working with Texas Comptroller Susan Combs to apply for the grant. Several cities have applied, as well. Only one city will receive the grant in July.



Students from math and science teams in Tomball ISD were congratulated at a recent board meeting. District Math and Science Competition Coordinator Ron Jeggle spoke about students' accomplishments in a recent competition. "The team did exceptionally well and we're very proud of them," Jeggle said. Board members congratulated students for their achievements in the competition.

Photo by Melanie Smith

## NAM embarks on major fund-raising campaign

Northwest Assistance Ministries has launched a three-part campaign, "Neighbors Helping Neighbors...Today, Tomorrow and for Future Generations," to raise \$1.75 million to meet the organization's current financial needs, to position it to handle future challenges, and to ensure continued services in the future.

"NAM is at an important stage of its growth. Planning for a secure financial future is sound fiscal management so the organization can continue to meet the community's needs well into the future," said Maria Magee, NAM Development Director.

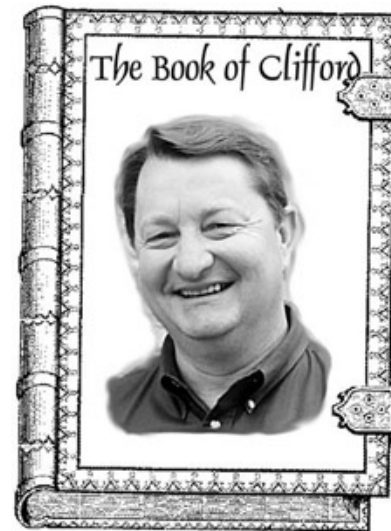
Magee said the campaign consists of:

- An Annual Fund to boost operating revenues on a yearly basis to help the organization meet current, urgent community needs through its programs and services.
- An Emergency Preparedness Fund to create a minimum three-month cash reserve of \$1.5 million over the next three years. The Emergency Preparedness Fund is a "rainy day fund" that helps NAM serve the community when it needs NAM's help

Tucker, Sherry Sykes, Diane Holland, Dianne Anderson, Eric Tanner, Miriam Cooley, Jackie Barnes; (back row, left to right) Jim Fau, Bill O'Neal, Mitch From, Jeremiah O'Neal, and Allen Fletcher.

"Our membership drive is always a great opportunity to connect with existing members who participate in the drive and to build business relationships with new members as well," said Jackie Barnes, Chairman of the Board.

An annual event, the Membership Drive is an integral part of the Chamber's development. Though the Chamber is always accepting new members, this two-day push helps to fund the programs and membership directives for which the Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce is known. For more information concerning the Membership Drive or about becoming a member, call the Chamber offices at 281-351-7222.



## From the Book of Clifford

By Clifford Parker  
Contributing Writer

If I have one problem, I have three to follow. Sometimes I feel like the cartoon character that always has the cloud hanging over his head.

I have been sharing a story with you of the loss of the tip of my finger in a boatlift accident. My son and I were visiting Uncle Ed and Aunt Brenda for a weekend of fishing up at Cedar Creek Lake in East Texas. We were several hours from home and in a place we had never stayed.

I had raised my arm to wave my son in from the lake when I hit a boatlift that was hanging low below my head and sliced off the end of my finger. The injury resulted in my first ambulance ride.

After the trip to the emergency room, I began to contemplate my next few days. I knew that the pain would be hitting me after several hours, and if I did not get home right away, I could be held up in a fishing camp sleeping in a travel trailer for

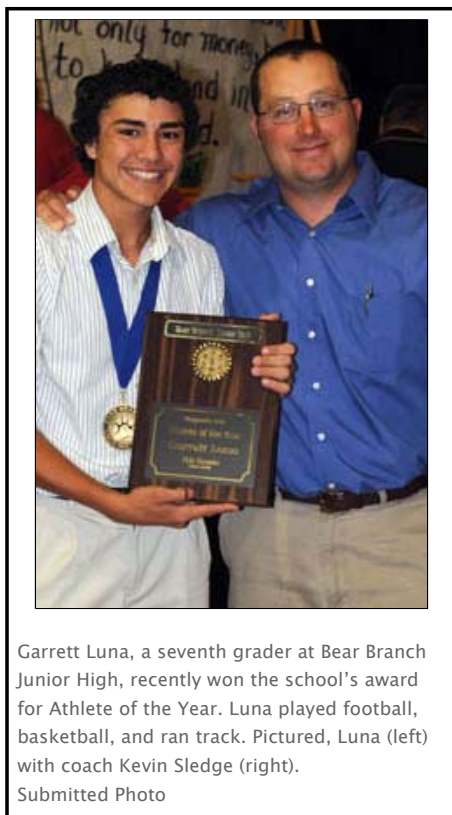
the most, such as during natural disasters and economic downturns.

- A Planned Giving program to grow NAM's Endowment Fund. The mission of NAM's Endowment Fund is to ensure the future services of NAM by providing a permanent source of income from endowed funds.

"The three-part giving initiative allows folks to give in a manner best suited to individual desires and needs," said Harlan Martens, campaign co-chair from NAM's Executive Board. "This campaign will take NAM to the next level of providing services to our community."

The campaign is the result of a feasibility study conducted a year ago by fund-raising consulting firm Dulworth & Gibbs at the request of the NAM Endowment Board, Magee said.

For more information, please contact Magee at 281-885-4605 or mmagee@namon-line.org.



Garrett Luna, a seventh grader at Bear Branch Junior High, recently won the school's award for Athlete of the Year. Luna played football, basketball, and ran track. Pictured, Luna (left) with coach Kevin Sledge (right).  
Submitted Photo

## Tomball Regional to hold 'Night Out' at Astros game

The E.C.H.O. Foundation announced last week that Tomball Regional Medical Center's "Night Out" at Minute Maid Park is Saturday, June 7 at 6 p.m. when the Houston Astros take on the St. Louis Cardinals.

Tickets are available through the E.C.H.O.

two or three days.

I knew I would not want to make the trip home once the numbness wore off. Yes, I knew I had a pain prescription to take, but I made a firm decision to head home. I asked my son to go with me as he gave me comfort knowing he could at least make a phone call if needed.

With my hand bandaged up, hand and finger completely numb, off we headed from East Texas toward Hufsmith. It was supposed to be a three-hour trip. As we traveled the road, the car suffered a blowout.

My son was about 10-years-old at the time and he was not experienced in mechanical issues, but as I sat there discussing with him what our task was about to be, a large black thunder cloud developed and dumped a massive amount of rain on us just as we were getting out of the car to start changing the flat!

I quickly wrapped my hand in a plastic bag and started giving my son step-by-step instructions on what to do. He had not yet developed the strength to break over the lug nuts. We soon resorted to him placing the lug wrench and he held it while I stepped on it to break the nut free.

After giving him instructions on jack placement, we soon had the tire in the air. Eventually the rain stopped and with a tire back in place, we headed for home. The rest of the trip was uneventful.

I hit the house and got cleaned up and headed for bed. My wife had already made the trip to town for my prescriptions. I doped up and off to La La Land for the next two days.

On the third day, I decided to make my way back to work. I had learned how to manage a few things with my left hand as my right hand stayed well protected. Bandages and the ability to hold my hand close to my stomach became a way of life for me. I usually do everything with my right hand, so becoming a lefty took some work.

As I left my home on the first day back to work, it was necessary for me to fill my car up with gas.

Once I had completed the task, I started walking from my car toward the store. There were several cars parked headways into the store and, as usual, the parking spaces are never really wide enough so the cars seemed close together. I was careful to hold my hand to my stomach, as I did not want to hit any of the mirrors of the parked cars with my hand.

As I approached the back side of the cars and headed toward the store, I got about halfway between the cars when a lady who was sitting in her car decided to open her door.

At the very moment my body got even with the opening of her door, the end of the door caught me in the groin. I was sooo worried about my hand that was being held close to my body that I forgot other parts and of course I got hit square...

Foundation for \$20 per ticket, which includes AstrosBucks that can be redeemed at concession stands and for merchandise.

All proceeds from this event will benefit the new Women's Imaging Center at Tomball Regional Medical Center (TRMC) that is currently under construction. The entire center is dedicated to the comfort of female patients.

Women will be treated to spa-like accommodations with new, state-of-the-art equipment, including digital mammography with computer-aided detection and on-board biopsy module, bone density unit, and breast-specific gamma imaging centers.

The Women's Imaging Center will also house 3D/4D ultrasound machines; the latest, most advanced ultrasound units that produce a video allowing the expectant parent to watch their unborn child scratching its nose or sucking its thumb.



The E.C.H.O. Foundation gives 90 percent of the net proceeds received in contributions to TRMC. Since TRMC receives no funding through tax support, private donations help to offset expenses and the rising cost of technology and equipment. The E.C.H.O. Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization and receives donations and contributions to support the Medical Center.

For more information on the E.C.H.O. Foundation or to get tickets for any event, call 281-401-7928.

## Texas Crossword



Crossword puzzles are in Adobe PDF format. Click on the links to open them in Adobe Acrobat Reader, or right-click and choose "Save File As...":

-  - [This week's crossword](#)
-  - [Solution to last week's crossword](#)

well...down there. Fortunately the pain quickly subsided. I'm sure somebody got a kick out of seeing a guy doubled over with one hand bandaged up and held to his stomach with the other hand protecting other things! I was useless for a few seconds. We both exchanged apologies as it was simply a human error. That's why they call them accidents.

To this day the feeling in my finger is very strange. Mushy and very dull feelings are at the tip of my finger and I have actually experienced phantom pains in the past.

All in all, this was minor compared to some people's plight in life. I'm thankful for another day and really enjoy the time and place in this life that I live. It's been great!

-- Clifford

## Who's pops is tops?

Father's Day is June 15, 2008, and the Tribune wants to know who thinks they have the best Dad in town. Send us a short essay (no more than 350 words) telling us why your pops is tops and we'll send you to one of Houston's best water parks and treat Dad and the family to dinner at the famous Goodson's Cafe. The contest will be divided into two age groups, 15 years old and under, and 16 and over. The winner of the 15 and under age group will receive four free tickets to SplashTown. The winner of the 16 and over age group will receive four free tickets to Schlitterbahn Galveston. The winning Dad in each age group will each receive a \$50 gift certificate to Goodson's Cafe. The deadline to enter is Wednesday, June 4, 2008, at 5 p.m. Submissions may be mailed to The Tribune, 517 W. Main St., Tomball, TX 77375, or e-mailed to [editor@tribunenews.com](mailto:editor@tribunenews.com). Include age on submission. For more information, call 281-255-6397.

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