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Check us out on Facebook  
 for the most current events!

**October 2024**

# SafetyTOWN

Barbara Franklin and Lucy Pendon, Co-Chairs of Safetytown, were recognized by the Board of Directors as Outstanding Volunteers for their leadership in yet another successful Safetytown Program. We are immensely thankful for their unwavering dedication and tireless efforts in supporting this life-saving initiative, which has been instrumental in protecting our children. Their remarkable service, spanning 36 years, has been crucial to the program's continued success—it simply wouldn't be possible without them!

L to R: Lucy Pendon; Commissioner Donald "Dude" Payne, Chairman of the Board, & Barbara Franklin.



Barbara Franklin, Sandra Shaw, Brazosport Area Chamber President & CEO and Lucy Pendon at the Safetytown Program at Roberts Elementary. Barbara and Lucy have Co-Chaired this Chamber and Brazosport Rotary event for 36 years!



## Inside This Issue:

2. *Chairman's Message*
3. *New Members*
4. *Ribbon Cuttings*
5. *Ground Breakings*
6. *Shop local Weekend*
7. *Government Affairs & BPN*
8. *Congratulations*
9. *News from our Members*



# Chairman's Message.

**W**e are thrilled to congratulate Barbara Franklin and Lucy Pendon, Co-Chairs of the Safetytown Program, who have been honored as Outstanding Volunteers by our Board of Directors for once again leading a successful Safetytown Program. Their 36 years of leadership, dedication, and unwavering commitment have been vital to the program's success, and we are deeply thankful for all they have contributed.

I would also like to invite you to our State of the Community Luncheon on Thursday, October 17th, at 11:30 a.m. at the Dow Academic Center. Our guest speakers will be Brent Bowles, iAD & Chairman of the Board of The Alliance, who will share updates on The Alliance, and David Winder from Freeport LNG, who will provide an industrial update. Table sponsorships for eight seats are available for \$350, and individual tickets can be purchased for \$35 per person. To RSVP, please call the Chamber at 979-285-2501, email us at [chamber@brazosportchamber.org](mailto:chamber@brazosportchamber.org), or visit our website at [brazosportchamber.org](http://brazosportchamber.org), and select RSVP for events under the membership tab.

Additionally, I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Sandra Shaw, President & CEO of the Brazosport Chamber, for her induction into the Junior Achievement Business Hall of Fame. Her remarkable contributions have significantly enhanced the Brazosport area, making it an even better place to live and work. This honor is truly well-deserved, and we are incredibly proud of her.

Lastly, a big thank you to everyone who attended the Dinner & Auction event last month. Stay tuned for the upcoming newsletter, where we will be sharing highlights from the evening.

I look forward to seeing you at the State of the Community Luncheon if we don't meet before then!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dude Payne". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Donald "Dude" Payne  
2024 Chairman of the Board  
"We're in this Together!"

# NEW MEMBERS

## **Aspen Dental**

200 E. Hwy. 332, Ste. C, Lake Jackson  
Michael Geoffrion, 979-487-5671  
<https://www.aspendental.com/dentist/>  
Dental Practice

## **Cavender's Boot City**

100 Hwy. 332 W., Ste. 1200, Lake Jackson  
Sydney Shepard, 979-415-3020  
[www.cavenders.com](http://www.cavenders.com)  
Western Retailer

## **Clear Business Advisors. LLC**

810 N. Dixie Drive, Ste. J-#333, Clute  
Al Rodenburg, 979-231-0858  
Bookkeeping

## **Garden Oaks Apartments**

142 Oyster Creek Dr., Lake Jackson  
Natatia Holder, 979-217-2727  
Apartments

## **Heiko Leinweber, MBA**

[heikoleinweber@adp.com](mailto:heikoleinweber@adp.com)  
713-542-4792  
Individual

## **Image Media Designs & Marketing**

David Stark, 979-549-8543  
<https://imagemediadesigns.com>  
Advertising & Media

## **Inspire Medical Systems**

2323 Clear Lake City Blvd., Ste. 180-200, Houston  
Derrick Ingram, 417-483-1348  
[www.inspiresleep.com](http://www.inspiresleep.com)  
Medical Devices--treatment of sleep apnea

## **Southern Maid & Janitorial**

611 N. Velasco, Angleton  
Stephanie Smith, 979-583-6946  
<http://www.southernmaidinc.com>  
Business & Professional Services

## **SPF Electric, LLC**

16075 Hwy. 288-B, Angleton  
Malcom Frederick, 979-864-3888  
<https://SPF-US.com>  
Electrical System Manufacturing & Fabrication

## **Texas First Insurance**

7900 Emmett F Lowry Expressway, Texas City  
Ethan Stremmel, 832-379-0484  
<https://www.texasfirst.insurance/>  
Finance & Insurance

## **The Jay Café**

145 Oyster Creek Drive, Ste. 1-A, Lake Jackson  
Amir Ahmud, 979-292-8278  
[www.jaycafe.com](http://www.jaycafe.com)  
Restaurant



# The Chamber Brazosport Area

The Economic Engine of Brazoria County

## Ribbon Cutting



### Rise N Grind

840 W. Plantation Drive, Clute  
Lori Houser, 979-459-2118

[www.rise-and-grindcoffee.com](http://www.rise-and-grindcoffee.com)



### IPH Home Health & Hospice Care, Inc.

190 Abner Jackson Parkway, Ste. 210 & 220,  
Lake Jackson

Nancy Roman, 979-529-2500

[www.iphhealthcare.com](http://www.iphhealthcare.com)

Home Health Care/Hospice Care



### The Jay Café

145 Oyster Creek Drive, #1-A, Lake Jackson  
Adam Ahmed, 979-292-8278

[www.thejaycafe.com](http://www.thejaycafe.com)

Restaurant



### Aspen Dental

200 E. Hwy. 332, Ste. C, Lake Jackson  
Michael Geoffrion, 979-487-5671

<https://www.aspendental.com/dentist/>

Dental Practice



# Ground Breakings

## SPCA Ground Breaking (for their new animal shelter)

141 Canna Lane, Lake Jackson  
Nicole Hardesty, 979-285-2340

[www.spcabc.org](http://www.spcabc.org)  
Animal Shelter



**Edward Jones—Scott Ross**  
6 West Way Court, Lake Jackson  
Scott Ross, 979-258-3485  
Financial Investments/Estate  
Planning



# Shop LOCAL WEEKEND



Cindy Cornett, The Facts, stops by the Brazosport Area Chamber to grab a quick breakfast and a shopping bag from Chamber President & C.E.O. Sandra Shaw, for the Shop Local Weekend event.

Congratulations to Renee Schuster! Her receipt from The Uncommon Market won her \$1,000 at the Brazosport Area Chamber Shop Local Weekend event.



# GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The Government Affairs Committee had a meeting with guest speaker Joyce Hudman, Brazoria County Clerk, on "How to Protect Your Home from Property Fraud". Pictured L to R: Nancy Wollam, Representative Cody Vasut's office & Committee Co-Chair, Sandra Shaw, Brazosport Chamber President & CEO; Joyce Hudman, Brazoria County Clerk and Ravi Singhania, Port Freeport Commissioner & Committee Co-Chair.



## BRAZOSPORT PROFESSIONALS NETWORK



The Brazosport Professionals Network met in September to network and share information on their businesses, services and events. Be sure and plan to attend their next meeting on December 5th, 12:00 noon, at the Chamber office. All members are welcome!

# Congratulations!

**Congratulations to Sandra Shaw, President & C.E.O., Brazosport Area Chamber of Commerce, who was inducted into the Junior Achievement Business Hall of Fame in September. Her leadership and dedication to chamber members and the Brazosport community continue to inspire us all!**







# FROM OUR MEMBERS!

## Port COMMISSION ADOPTS A ZERO Tax Rate a self-reliant start to the next century

On September 12th, in a historic milestone for Port Freeport, the Port Commission voted to adopt a ZERO tax rate. This is the first time in Port Freeport's history that it will be self-reliant, and no taxes will be assessed.

The Brazoria County voters approved the creation of the Brazos River Harbor Navigation District of Brazoria County, Texas (now Port Freeport) in December 1925 and approved the issuance of \$1 million in bonds for the purpose of engaging with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to divert the Brazos River. What an amazing impact that decision, made almost 100 years ago, has had on the economic development and prosperity of the area. To honor those that took on that challenge and bore the cost so future generations could prosper, it was time for Port Freeport to become tax independent.

Reflecting on the historic significance of this moment, Chairman Ravi Singhanian remarked, "This achievement represents the culmination of dedication and vision from both current and past commissioners and employees. It all began with the visionary decision of Brazoria County voters in 1925, who laid the groundwork for the creation of Port Freeport. The steadfast trust and commitment of taxpayers, combined with tireless efforts, have fueled growth and opportunity in the region for decades, and we look forward to even more in the future. We are immensely proud to be part of this moment and to have achieved this together."

The first bonds were issued in 1927, and a tax rate of \$0.35 was adopted. The assessed taxable value at that time was \$29.6 million. Today, the taxable value for the Port Navigation District is \$23.5 billion and growing.

In 2023, the Port Commission voted to take the M&O rate to Zero. Setting the M&O rate at zero meant that voter approval would be required before any M&O tax could be resurrected. Now the Port Commission has voted for a Zero I&S rate and has encumbered port operating revenues to cover the fiscal year 2025 debt payments for the bonds approved by the district voters in 2018 for the channel widening and deepening project. Until the voter approved bonds are fully repaid, the Port Commission will annually have to encumber port revenues for each year's debt service payments.

"The recent growth at the Port has greatly bolstered our operating revenues, enabling the Port to fully sustain operations while meeting the debt service requirements on all outstanding bonds, including voter-approved issues. We are very thankful to the taxpayers who have supported the Port for nearly 100 years, but we will take it from here" stated Vice Chairman and Finance Committee Chair, Rob Giesecke.

"This is a proud and transformative moment for the entire community and a reminder of the incredible legacy and responsibility we carry," said Phyllis Saathoff, Port Freeport's Executive Director and CEO. The Freeport Harbor Channel is a gateway for global trade that will continue to fuel growth and prosperity for future generations."

Information on the tax rate and budget, as well as the Freeport Harbor Channel Improvement Project and the 2018 Bond Referendum, can be found on the Port website at [www.portfreeport.com](http://www.portfreeport.com).



Port Freeport Commissioners and Executive Director/CEO sign the Tax Rate Adoption Resolution.