COM named Business of the Month

COM was honored as the March 2011 Business of the Month by the Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce. This award is given to businesses that give back to the community, strive to make a difference in the Santa Fe area and are renowned for outstanding community and customer service. COM is very proud to be the recipient of this award. COM proudly displays this acclamation in front of the Enrollment Center.

COM Honor Society Receives Awards

The Sigma Delta Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society recently attended the 47th Texas Regional Convention in Round Rock in March. The chapter members received several awards in recognition of their efforts and hard work in representing College of the Mainland. Among the awards they received was a Five Star Chapter Development Award, which is the top ranking level of college chapters; a merit and achievement award for their Honors In Action Issues project involving the development of a banned book club; and the prestigious Texas Top Chapter award for their participation and involvement in meetings and activities within the Texas region, which includes 88 chapters throughout the state.

Chapter advisor Dr. Chris Allen was also elected to serve as secretary on the Texas Region Advisory Board for the 2011 term. The board works along side the Texas Regional and District coordinators in the planning, preparation, and facilitation of regional level meetings during the year.
Playwright at COM Community Theatre


Women’s History Month 2011 speakers

Mayuko Gray, interim director of the COM Art Gallery, speaks to the Women’s History Month “Our History is Our Strength” luncheon, March 24. Seated left to right are Theresa Jones, Director of Testing Services; Dr. Amy Locklear, Dean of General Education Programs; Astrid Lowery, Humanities Professor and Elida Matthews, Program Coordinator of Adult Education.

Former COM CE Artist solo exhibit

“The Journey: Works in Fiber” by Brenda J. Bunten-Schloesser

Former COM continuing education artist Brenda Bunten-Schloesser won the 2010 GoggleWorks award and is now exhibiting her fiber works in a solo exhibition at the Goggle Works Center for the Arts in Reading, Pennsylvania.

The frequent professionalism, collaboration, and peer mentoring from our many talented continuing education participants like Brenda are one example of how community college studio courses — like ours — compete with larger art schools and four-year programs in offering a quality education in the arts.

For more information visit www.goggleworks.org/Exhibitions/Current-Exhibits/.
Retired COM employee receives award

Jim Higgins, former communications director, recently received the D. Richard Petrizzio Career Service Award at the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations. This award honors an NCMPR professional for longtime accomplishments in college marketing and public relations.

Jim Higgins with NCMPR President Heather Dorman.

Dr. Bumphus speaks at LDA Kickoff

Dr. Walter Bumphus lead a discussion about the leadership competencies that the American Association of Community Colleges identified as important to the success of community colleges. Bumphus used a very interactive experience to have the audience recognize the competencies and discuss their views. The afternoon program was for supervisors and those interested in applying to LDA. Bumphus went into depth about the competencies and how they apply to individuals.

Applications for LDA are available in the library and continuing education suite until April 29.

Career and University Transfer Expo a success

Students talk to the career representative from Kemah Boardwalk at the COM Career and University Transfer Expo, March 10. More than 15 colleges and 40 local businesses were in attendance.

A representative from University of Texas at Dallas hands out information to an interested student at the COM Career and University Transfer Expo.
Clemon Prevost

Clemon Prevost was recently featured in AMOCO Federal Credit Union’s website where he talks about being a loyal member since 1983. He stated, “I’ve recommended AMOCO to my entire family. My wife and son, parents, and all of my brothers and sisters are members as well.”

Prevost recently retired from BP after 28 years of service. He is a graduate of College of the Mainland where he received an AAS degree in Electronic Technology and is presently serving on COM’s Board of Trustees.

In 2000, he became the “world’s first” to retrofit a Porsche 911 with a supercharged LS1 Corvette engine and received a U.S. Patent for his unique cooling system that supports the new retrofit. Now in retirement, he will focus on his business, Toy Jet Conversions, and enjoy vacationing with his wife Essie and son Clemon Jr.

You can see Prevost’s interview at www.amocofcu.org/members-stories/prevost.php.

HOLA

COM’s Hispanic Organization for Learning Advancement (HOLA) recognizes Tige Cornelius for all his hard work leading this year’s car wash fundraiser. The event raised more than $350, with proceeds going to the Hispanic Heritage Scholarship Fund. One hundred dollars was donated to the Takeda Art Project currently in progress. If you want to join HOLA, e-mail hola@com.edu or contact Gina Castro, ext. 8243.

JOIN THE VETERANS CLUB

Are you interested in honoring our country’s heroes?

For more information, contact Al Bass, ext. 8419 or Tracy Orr, ext. 8575.

Staff and students interact with a high intensity DVD workout program in the COM Gymnasium on March 23. More than 20 people have been attending the workout regularly for the past month. The class is held Mondays and Wednesdays during college hour. If you’re interested in joining, contact Tige Cornelius, ext. 8421.
April Birthdays

Birthday information is submitted by Human Resources. If there is a discrepancy in your birthday or title, please contact HR.

Tomas Garcia  Assistant Examiner, Advisement/Testing Services .............. 4/1
Susan Gilbert  Theater Box Office Manager, Fine Arts ......................... 4/1
Marilyn Husby  Faculty, Nursing......................................................... 4/1
Jewell Mobley  Laboratory Assistant, Instructional Tech Lab .................... 4/1
Martha Greenwood  Tutor/Mentor, Academic Success ................................. 4/2
Elizabeth Reyes  Tutor/Mentor, Student Support Services ................. 4/3
Mark Adams  Director of Theater Program............................................. 4/4
Patricia England  Administrative Assistant, Continuing Education ............. 4/5
Anne Jeffords  Administrative Assistant, Nursing ..................................... 4/5
Mona Kupsa  Administrative Assistant, Instructional Admin ...................... 4/5
Mary Gonzalez  Accounting Specialist, Financial Services .............................. 4/9
James Heffel  Faculty, Fine Arts .......................................................... 4/10
Stephen Wethington  Faculty, Industrial Technology .................................. 4/11
Leticia Wilson  Records Specialist, Admissions ....................................... 4/12
Carla Anderson  Faculty, Public Service Careers ...................................... 4/14
Bonnie Mitchell  Child Development Specialist ........................................ 4/15
Patrick Harris  Mail Room Clerk, Purchasing ......................................... 4/16
Katherine Moser-Haden  Dean of Transitional Edu & ......................... 4/17
Naomi Grimaldo  Administrative Assistant, Adult Education .................. 4/18
Cynthia Cobb  Administrative Assistant, Academic Success ................... 4/19
Elizabeth Plasek  Child Development Specialist .................................... 4/20
Steven Sewell  Faculty, Social Behavioral Science .................................... 4/20
Chris Carpenter  Web Master ............................................................... 4/23
Bill Raley  Dean of Ind/Tech Prog, Instructional Admin ............................. 4/23
Rosie Rojas  Executive Administrative A, President’s ............................. 4/24
Jamie Powell  Faculty, Cosmetology ..................................................... 4/25
Cissy Matthews  Dean of Public Servie & He, Instructional Admin .......... 4/27
Giselle Hewitt  Acct Specialist, Financial Services ................................. 4/28
Jane Saldua  Administrative Assistant, Prof Development Academy ...... 4/28
Cynthia McConnell  Program Coordinator, Adult Education ................. 4/29
Sheryl Wright  Faculty, Business and Computer Educ ............................... 4/30

Bond Election

In November the College of the Mainland Board of Trustees unanimously approved a modified version of the bond plan recommended by the Community Bond Advisory Committee and called the election at its regularly scheduled February 2011 board meeting.

ELECTION DAY, SATURDAY, MAY 14, 2011, 7 A.M. - 7 P.M.

All registered voters living within the College of the Mainland taxing district are eligible to vote. The COM taxing district includes these independent school districts: Dickinson, Hitchcock, La Marque, Santa Fe and Texas City.

What is included in this bond package?

- New Health Science Center Building $18.675 million (with Math-Science Building renovation and a new addition to the Science Building)
- Workforce Training Center Addition $6.7225 million (with renovations to existing WTC and the Welding-Auto area)
- New Process Technology Center Building $3.0 million
- Tech-Voc Building Renovation $11.52 million
- Learning Resource Center Renovation $4.341 million
- New Academic Success Center Addition $2 million
- Maintenance Building Addition $2.92 million (with renovation of existing structure)
- Student Center Addition $7.14 million (includes renovation of existing center)
- Wellness Center Addition $6.6 million (with renovation of the Physical Education Building)
- Fine and Performing Arts Center Addition $8.5 million (with renovation of existing facilities)
- Central Plant Equipment Upgrades/Screening $0.8 million
- Infrastructure and Parking $2.0 million
- Soft Costs $11,955,055 (bond costs, inflation, contingencies)
  * Total bond package = $86,173,555

How will the bond package affect my property taxes?

Taxpayers can expect a tax increase of $0.065 cents/$100 valuation, which is $65 per year or $5.42 per month on a $100,000 home.

What if I’m 65 or older?

College District taxes on primary residences are frozen in the year that a taxpayer turns 65 years of age and will not increase as a result of this bond election. The dollar amount you pay in the year you turn 65 will not increase as long as you live in the home and do not make major improvements. It is important to note that seniors must request this status to qualify.
Set the Record Straight

I reserve the right to reword questions for clarity and to omit questions or certain parts of questions when it pertains to individuals.

Q The new marquee is beautiful, but why wasn’t it erected at the same location as the old marquee? The location of the new marquee is definitely not an appropriate or an inviting entrance for all students and visitors. If someone enters the campus near the sign, the drive to the main campus is a difficult and potentially dangerous one. Please explain the location choice. I was under the impression that we were trying to make things simpler for our students and visitors.

A The main reason it was moved was because of the elevation. We wanted to place it where it could be seen in either direction on FM 1764. The east side gave us that view. Our plan is once the bond issue is approved that we will create a new sign for the main entrance of the campus.

Q There is a LOT of duck poo on the sidewalk leading the library from the pond. There is NO WAY to dodge all of those droppings! I have NEVER seen so much and the parking lot is absolutely spotted in white dung. When can we get this cleaned up? It is embarrassing and a health hazard to have all the poo brought into the library and student center on the bottoms of our shoes.

A Yes, I have asked the grounds crew to hose down the areas weekly to see if this helps.

Q At Convocation, the president said he would be communicating with the campus via e-mail. I have certainly not received much communication. Is anything going on with the campus or decisions being considered/made?

A There are a lot of activities taking place on campus and I have been communicating specifically relating to the bond each week and this will continue. No major decisions have been made regarding the budget but it will be the next major communication to employees because I know they are concerned about that. Furthermore, please consider the employee newsletter and this column, “Set the Record Straight,” as part of the communication mechanism.

Q After your statement “There will be NO pay increases” 27 employees did receive an increase. These increases amount to approximately $130,893.00 per year. How can you justify a pay cut for those who received a one-time stipend?

A No decision has been made to cut anyone’s pay. The 10 percent cut of employee pay was only one possible remedy addressing the pending budget cuts. However if a justification was necessary it would be that I must do what I have to do in order to balance the budget.

Q If there is a pay cut “across the board,” will the employees and Administrators that received an increase be included in a pay cut?

A Yes.

Q Why are some employees exempt from the policy of being in on time. This is happening on a daily basis in some departments. I feel as though they are protected from the policy. What makes them so special and if we were to have layoffs they would also protect them. Are these employees the golden children of the campus and this does include managers, too?

A I don’t know of any employees that are exempt. All employees are subject to policies in place. Some employees just are not adhering to the policies. Once these employees have been identified, the matter will be corrected. In a previous issue a similar question identified departments and those names have been conveyed to the appropriate sources. Sometimes things aren’t what they seem. In a previous question I told you we were putting accountability features in place and hope to have them in place in the near future and this will have a positive impact.

Q If the AVP of HR received a pay increase for taking on additional duties (that were in the job description of the position for which she was hired) why is there now a job posting for an HR Director?

A I answered this question in a previous newsletter (Oct. 2010 Employee Newsletter) and the answer is still the same. However, let me expand. Every supervisor’s position has job responsibilities that are accomplished by someone else. But it is the supervisor’s responsibility to see that the work gets done. Supervisors are compensated for the individuals they supervise and for the scope of the work that needs to be accomplished.

Set the Record Straight, continued on next page
Rumor has it that the current chair of the Multicultural Team will be returning after retiring as a consultant to the team. Many folks have been waiting for a change in leadership of the team before they would get involved and are gearing up to get involved. People are getting discouraged and won't get involved. We have heard there will be changes but how can that be if we have the same leadership? If you keep doing what you’re doing you’ll keep getting what you’re getting.

Yes, the Multicultural Team leadership is retiring and may return. I have plans to restructure/reorganize the Multicultural Team. I also have plans for Tillie Henson to come back for another project but not in the same capacity.

HR has the most staff it’s ever had and still there are problems and now they want to add a Datatel person. With all the cuts that are going on, how do you justify adding another position to HR?

There are no plans to add a Datatel person to the Human Resources. However, HR was audited by the HODD subcommittee of the Planning Council. During the audit HR was asked for a wish list if money was no object. Of the seven items listed one was for a Datatel personnel that would assist with inputting data required to process for payroll. Again, this position is not being added to HR.

You said that the budget situation is dire and that people may lose 10 percent of their salary. How do you justify buying iPads for your staff, the board members and the VPs?

The purchase of iPads is an actual cost-saver and represents a first step in going green. For a one-time purchase we were able to convert the board and administration to a paperless board packet process. It cost nearly $1000 per month to print and deliver Board packets. We’re now able to eliminate recurring expenses for an opportunity to go green.

We purchased the iPads for several reasons including to improve the connectivity with board member that had no internet at home, to bring the board to the 21st century technology, to save trees by not printing the board packets and to save money on a monthly basis. There is a monthly fee for the phone card, however, that expense is still less than printing the board books.

If you have a question you would like President Elam to answer, submit your question to your council president.

Faculty Council President - Leslie Richardson
Professional Council President - Tamara Hoodye
Classified Council President - Nancy Chacon

All questions are submitted to Marketing without names or identifying information.
The Value of Departmental Procedures

The value in written departmental procedures is the efficient and effective way they help manage risks, risks that can prevent departments from achieving their objectives. Written procedures can help manage risks by setting performance standards for employees in the day-to-day operations of the department and by assisting employees in maximizing productivity in their individual jobs. Also, procedures can be considered internal controls for the department to reduce risks and to help prevent fraudulent activity, for instance, through signature approvals, verifications, compliance to college policies, reconciliation of accounts to the financial system, and safeguarding of assets. As a result, procedures and controls that are acknowledged by and available to all employees are vital in the risk management process.

A good example of the importance of written procedures and internal controls is found in the 2010 Report to the Nations on Occupational Fraud and Abuse, published by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners. The report identifies common issues that allowed fraud to occur in a review of 90 cases of fraud in education. The top three of eight internal control weaknesses sited were the following.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERNAL CONTROL WEAKNESS</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Internal Controls</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Override of Existing Internal Controls</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Management Review</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since management owns the risk management process, development of written procedures goes a long way to keeping everyone on the same page to achieve departmental objectives.

For more information, please contact me by phone or visit my office in Appomattox Square.

If you have a question you would like Frank Scheidler to answer, please submit your question to your council president.

COM’s Experts Guide and Speakers Bureau

The Marketing and Communications Department is updating COM’s Experts Guide and forming a Speakers Bureau. If you would like to participate in either one of these or both of these, please send your name, educational background, area of expertise and a short bio to lpigao@com.edu.

Experts Guide

The College of the Mainland Experts Guide is a list of College faculty and staff who, because of the depth of their knowledge and experience, are considered experts in various fields. This guide is a tool for the media to use when searching for expert sources for news stories. It also represents those COM experts who have experience or an interest in speaking with journalists.

Speakers Bureau

The COM Speakers Bureau is a means of disseminating and exchanging educational, vocational, and cultural information between the people of the greater Houston-Galveston area and the faculty and staff of COM. These faculty and staff members have volunteered to speak at professional and civic organizations on a variety of subjects.
International Festival

Friday, April 29, 2011; 6 - 9 p.m. in the Gym

Music, Dance and Entertainment by:

- Golden Peacock School of Dance
- Anjali Performing Arts
- Toc May Dance Group
- Keiki Tropical Rhythms
- Bourbon Street Band of Houston
- Egyptian Belly Dancer
- Czech Heritage Singers and Dancers of Houston
- Ballet Folklorico Fiesta de Texas City
- and more

Cultural displays will be set up and free international food will be provided. The public is invited to this free event.

Sponsored by the Multicultural Team, Student Government Organization, Nu Psi, English as a Second Language (ESL) Program, Upward Bound Program, International Student Organization (ISO), Organization of African-American Culture (OAAC), the Biology Club and Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB)

For more information, call ext. 409.933.8205.