



BASEBALL PLAYOFFS

BISHOP FACES HALLETTSVILLE, SEEKING TO END REGIONAL SEMIFINAL LOSING STREAK. **SPORTS, 1C**

COMPLETE SERIES CAPSULES, **3C**

CORPUS CHRISTI

Caller Times



\$1.00

FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2013 ■ CITY EDITION

caller.com

88°/66°
Breezy
9A

Las Brisas execs in corruption suit

Chase Power cites spending; plant not built

By Rick Spruill
spruillr@caller.com
361-886-3667

A lawsuit filed in a state district court alleges a pattern of corruption by two leading figures in the ill-fated Las Brisas Power Plant development project. John Upchurch, former CEO of Chase Power, and Kathleen Smith, the former president, engaged in a "brazen, calculated, pervasive and deceptive

scheme of embezzlement," according to a summary of the claims filed by Chase Power and a group of Houston-based investors called the Quintana Capital Group.

The investors sank \$44 million into the Las Brisas project that Chase Power sought to develop.

Nueces County agreed to \$40 million in tax abatements. The city of Corpus Christi authorized a guarantee of water.

But the project never turned a spade of dirt on the 82-acre site it leased from the Port of Corpus Christi.

Company officials said

“The civil suit filed in Harris County alleges the executives trumped up invoices and manipulated expense reports to pay tens of thousands of dollars for vacation rental homes in Colorado and Texas and a hunting trip in Mississippi, among other personal purchases.”

The 1,320-megawatt power plant was the victim of an insurmountable regulatory framework erected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which has in recent years raised the bar on permitting requirements for carbon-

based feedstock permits and petroleum coke emissions.

The civil suit filed in Harris County alleges the executives, entrusted with developing the petroleum coke-fired power plant along the Corpus Christi

Inner Harbor, trumped up invoices and manipulated expense reports to pay tens of thousands of dollars for vacation rental homes in Colorado and Texas and a hunting trip in Mississippi, among other personal purchases.

Upchurch, who lives in Spring, and Smith, who lives in Austin, both have issued a general denial of the claims through their attorney, Brandon Allen, of Houston.

A phone number listed for Upchurch is disconnected. Smith does not have a published number.

See **LAWSUIT, 5A**

Quick Read



SAVING MONEY AND ENERGY

Texas' annual Energy Star Sales Tax Holiday is Saturday through Monday, featuring big savings on items that can cost thousands of dollars.

LOCAL, 1B

LIONS SECURE 2A STATE BERTH

The Santa Gertrudis softball team bests Refugio in a one-game playoff in the Region IV-2A championship, advancing to state, with a game Wednesday.

SPORTS, 1C

weekend
A FESTIVAL OF FLAVORS
Rockport Festival of Wine and Food offers wines from all over the world.
Open Daily!

WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL SET

The 17th annual Rockport Festival of Wine and Food will offer more than 100 varieties of wine from all over the world, as well as cooking demonstrations.

WEEKEND



FERTILIZER AND SAFETY ISSUES

Corpus Christi firefighters and EMS officials tour the GateFront fertilizer plant to learn about chemicals used in the plant and emergency safety procedures.

LOCAL, 1B

INDEX

BUSINESS 6B-7B
COMICS 12E-13E
CROSSWORD 13E
OBITUARIES 5B
LOTTERY 2C
OPINION 8A-9A

Local news now.
Download our app with the QR code.

caller.com
WHAT DO RUBBER DUCKIES HAVE TO DO WITH YOUR WEEKEND PLANS?
Watch Caller Entertainment's Top 5 Weekend Picks with Sarah Acosta to find out.

Little angels move on



PHOTOS BY RACHEL DENNY CLOW/CALLER-TIMES

Kindergarten students at Incarnate Word Academy enter the James R. Dougherty Center for graduation ceremonies Thursday. More than 30 students graduated during the event.

More than 30 Incarnate Word Academy students celebrated a milestone as they graduated from kindergarten Thursday.

Students and their families attended a Mass before receiving their kindergarten diplomas.

The Mass is important at the school because it is the cornerstone of Catholic education, said Sister Camelia Herlihy, principal of the elementary level.

"This is a significant milestone for them," she said. "In kindergarten it's a development time. In first, second and third grade they are moving to a more structured system."

Rachel Denny Clow

caller.com GALLERY See more photos from the graduation ceremony.



Matthew Villarreal, 6, lets out a yawn during kindergarten graduation ceremonies at Incarnate Word Academy.

Busy storm season awaits

13 to 20 named storms are expected

By Seth Borenstein
Associated Press

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Get ready for another busy hurricane season, maybe an unusually wild one, federal forecasters say.

Their prediction Thursday calls for 13 to 20 named Atlantic storms, seven to 11 that strengthen into hurricanes and three to six that become major hurricanes.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said there is a 70 percent chance that this year will be more active than an average hurricane season. If you live in hurricane-prone areas along the Atlantic Ocean or Gulf of Mexico, "This is your warning," said acting NOAA administrator Kathryn Sullivan.

The season starts June 1 and lasts through November. A normal year has 12 named storms, six hurricanes and three

See **STORMS, 5A**

THIS YEAR'S NAMES
■ Andrea
■ Barry
■ Chantal
■ Dorian
■ Erin
■ Fernand
■ Gabrielle
■ Humberto
■ Ingrid
■ Jerry
■ Karen
■ Lorenzo
■ Melissa
■ Nestor
■ Olga
■ Pablo
■ Rebekah
■ Sebastian
■ Tanya
■ Van
■ Wendy

Scouts OK gay boys, not adults

Compromise divisive issue for members

By David Cray and Nomaan Merchant
Associated Press

GRAPEVINE — The Boy Scouts of America threw open its ranks Thursday to gay Scouts but not gay Scout leaders — a fiercely contested compromise that some warned could fracture the organization and lead to mass defections of members and donors.

Of the roughly 1,400 voting members of the BSA's National Council

who cast ballots, 61 percent supported the proposal drafted by the governing Executive Committee. The policy change takes effect Jan. 1.

"While people have different opinions about this policy, we can all agree that kids are better off when they are in Scouting," the BSA said after announcing the results at the council's annual meeting near Dallas.

However, the outcome will not end the bitter debate over the Scouts' membership policy.

Liberal Scout leaders — while supporting the proposal to accept gay youth



ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

The Boy Scouts of America's National Council has voted to allow openly gay boys to be accepted as Scouts, but not to open membership to gay adult leaders. Of more than 200,000 leaders, parents and youth members who responded to surveys, 61 percent supported the policy of excluding gays.

See **SCOUTS, 5A**

To subscribe: 883-3800

