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## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR





Friends,

When you receive this issue of the Reporter, I am confident that we will be further along in our recovery and we will have just had a successful Fiesta Castle Hills. One of the most important items at this time for discussion r is the stability of our electrical grid. As I write this article, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) has been asking people to conserve energy. After the week of February 15th, it became painfully obvious that we know little about the function or purpose of ERCOT. Many community leaders and elected officials were sending their thoughts and opinions to ERCOT and CPS Energy.

In an effort to ensure that as Mayor representing you, the citizens of Castle Hills, I chose to send two letters. The first letter was to CPS Energy asking that we work together to ensure that help avoid and better prepare for another catastrophic weather event like the one that we experienced. Another strong point was the reminder that we as Cities, much like homes and businesses, have limited budgets that are not able to absorb any kind of debt that is passed along as result of the weather event.

The second letter was sent to ERCOT. In that letter to ERCOT, I outlined the need for municipalities to have a seat at the table when it comes to our electrical grid and its operation and offered a method to help facilitate the creation of such a group. Our insurer and legislative supporter is an organization called the Texas Municipal League (TML). TML has divided the state in 15 regions and each region has elected officers that help represent that region. I serve as the Region 7 Vice President representing Bexar County; the area spans Southwest from Del Rio down to Laredo. In my letter, I suggested that ERCOT adopt TML'S regions to ensure that there is adequate representation across the state of Texas without having to recreate the wheel.

In an effort to create solidarity, both letters were presented to the Greater Bexar County Council of Cities which is made up of area Mayors at a regular Alamo Area Council of Government meeting and our Bexar County Suburban Mayors meeting, allowing other Mayors the opportunity to join. Several local Mayors agreed and away the letters were quickly sent.

A month later, I received a call from ERCOT Interim CEO, Mr. Brad Jones. Two days into his new role, Mr. Jones expressed his support for the creation of a Municipal Advisory Committee and asked if I would be willing to take the lead in making it happen. Working with our TML Liaison, Deputy Executive Director Ms. Rachel Pitts, putting together the framework for this group, we designed the Texas Municipal Officers ERCOT Advisory Board to be efficient, sustainable, and with the mission of connecting ERCOT with end users across the entire State of Texas.

(Continued on page 3)





#### **CITY COUNCIL**

JR Trevino Mayor

Joe Izbrand

Mayor Pro-Tem, Place 1

Frank Paul Place 2

Kurt May Place 3

Jack Joyce Place 4

Douglas Gregory
Place 5

#### **CITY STAFF**

Ryan Rapelye

City Manager, (210) 293-9673

**Zina Tedford** 

City Secretary (210) 293-9681

**Lara Feagins** 

Finance, (210) 293-9674

James "Jim" Ladewig

Fire Chief

(210) 342-2341, ext. 217

Steven Zuniga

Police Chief (210) 342-2341

**Rick Harada** 

Public Works & Animal Control Department Director (210) 293-9676

ALL EMERGENCIES, EMT, FIRE & POLICE CALL 911

Non-emergency (210) 342-2341

#### **Monthly Meetings**

All meetings are held at City Hall unless otherwise posted.

City Council

2nd Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Architectural Review Committee**

1st Wednesday, 7:00pm Upon Request

**Board of Adjustment** 

4th Monday, 5:30 p.m. Upon Request

**Zoning Commission** 

1st Tuesday, 7:00pm Upon Request

Crime Control & Prevention
District

3rd Monday, 5:30pm Quarterly or as needed

(Continued from page 2)

At the time this article is being written we have identified 14 and out of the 15 directors and we have our first biannual virtual meeting scheduled for the 29th of June. It is my hope that the Committee will help encourage dialog from subject matter experts at ERCOT and the end users in the communities across the State of Texas. You can expect updates after each Committee meeting regarding information about the electrical grid.

#### **City Improvements**

In 2021, we approved a number of plans to make vast improvements throughout Castle Hills. In 2022, we are going to see those plans come to fruition. I am absolutely thrilled with the amount of progress that are we are going to make in just 18 short months; street maintenance, street reconstruction, and drainage projects! In advance of this kick off, we ask for your patience. We all want to see improvements but those improvements come with traffic, dust, and some noise. If you have any concerns regarding construction, please reach out to City Manager Mr. Ryan Rapelye, any Councilmember, or myself. We are all dedicated to doing our part to the make these investments into our community as painless as possible.

Aside from infrastructure improvements we are seeing an uptick in applications for businesses wanting to move into Castle Hills. Most recently, we have Dutch Bros (pronounced bros) Coffee that is looking to break ground early July at the corner of West Ave and 410. The Dutch Bros team is expecting to be operational within 120 days from breaking ground! The month of June we also held ribbon cuttings for Elena Salon Studios and Southern Liquors. I can say with a fair degree of certainty that 2022 is going to be Castle Hills' best year yet!

#### **Honorary Commanders**

In March, a representative from Joint Base San Antonio reached out and asked if I would be willing to join Joint Base San Antonio's Honorary Commanders program. In short, the Honorary Commanders program brings business and civic leaders together with their respective military counterparts once a month for two years to learn more about Joint Base San Antonio and the over 260 missions that are taking place. I would like to thank General Miller (in the picture) for the

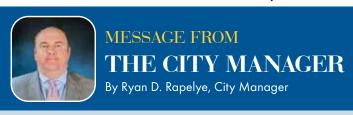


opportunity to get a better understanding of the military operates in San Antonio. Aside from learning about the Military and their missions, I look forward to learning how we can work together in the near future as there are numerous opportunities us to collaborate.

I look forward to seeing you all out in the Commons this summer! As always, if I can be of assistance please do not hesitate to reach out.

Yours in service,

**JR Treviño** Mayor <u>JTrevino@CastleHills-TX.gov</u> 210-559-5940



As I reflect over the last year how COVID-19 has changed not only our lives, but how we operate at City Hall. The City's core purpose is and always has to been to serve the citizens of our community and I am proud to be part of this fantastic team. Despite the challenges we face every day, with the support of the citizens, City Council and staff, we pushed through and found ways to sustain city operations. By all means, it was not perfect, a lot of trial and error, but we pushed forward and continue to learn and live the "new normal".

City hall has been closed to the public for almost a year and recently we have opened the doors in late May. Again, rising to the challenge, during the time we were closed, City staff worked remotely from home or at city hall using technology to assist customers. Being responsive, yet taking every precaution to reduce exposure to COVID-19 to the citizens, co-workers and their families.

In the recent months, our leadership, and staff have worked to become vaccinated as well as held vaccination events in our community to assist residents. As City Manager, I am very proud of our City staff that have kept City services going especially the Castle Hills Police Department, the Castle Hills Fire Department and our Public Works team during this pandemic.

The City of Castle Hill's City Council approved the FY 2022 Budget Calendar on June 8, 2021. The FY 2022 Budget Calendar is available on the City's website. The FY 2022 budget meetings/workshops are underway and will continue through September. The adoption of the tax rate and annual budget is scheduled for Council consideration at the September 14, 2021 meeting. Social distancing guidelines will need to be followed, but Citizens are welcome to attend in person or zoom to provide input. The goal of these meetings is to discuss and assess community needs, priorities, City services, challenges, and opportunities as a part of the formulation of the FY 2022 Proposed Budget. The city budget document is much more

(Continued on page 4)



(Continued from page 3)

than just financial numbers, it is a fiscal plan that represents the City Council's priorities which is based on estimated revenue and expenses over the next year.

As City Manager, I have a number of goals to discuss in the development of the proposed FY 2022 budget which includes, a long-term strategy for our sanitation services, establishing funds for development of a beautification program for monthly maintenance of the City's assets and ROW's in and around our community and evaluating the compensation plan for City employees. City staff continues to monitor revenue and expenditures within our current FY 2021 Budget and the potential long-term impact of COVID-19. As many entities, the City did lose programmed revenue in certain areas of the general fund. However, we are seeing a slight increase in sales tax revenue and monitoring the potential impact this may have on current and future City operations. The City of Castle Hills is in contact and working with State and Federal leaders to obtain the City's portion of the American Rescue Plan Act 2021.

The current capital improvements underway is the Banyan/Glentower drainage project phase II. The City has solicited for bids and anticipate awarding the contract at the July Regular City Council meeting. We are hoping to begin this project in early August and anticipate it will take seven months. The Street Reconstruction Project totaling \$3 Million involves ten streets and is close to being finalized with our City Engineer. We plan to solicit for bids in late July and targeting late August to start this project which will take 8-9 months to complete.

In late July, we will have a contractor onsite to continue efforts on the street maintenance program. The current program lists 17 streets scheduled for maintenance using the micro surfacing technique. This technique helps preserve and protect the underlying pavement structure and provides a new driving surface.

The City has a new website <a href="www.cityofcastlehills.com">www.cityofcastlehills.com</a> and in an effort to promote transparency, the city will have a link listing capital projects, start dates and their status. Project information will also be posted on our social media.

Please contact me at <u>rrapelye@castlehills-tx.gov</u> or at the office at 210.293.9673 if you have any questions on projects or need assistance with services from the City of Castle Hills.

We are here for you, Castle Hills!

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# JOE IZBRAND PLACE 1 Mayor Pro-Tem

Dear Neighbors,

Summer kicked off on a high note in Castle Hills. It was great to see such a terrific turnout for Fiesta Castle Hills in June. The 5k run, parade and fair were all well attended. It reflected the level of excitement felt by residents about being able to gather publicly again after dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic over the past year. Likewise, the Patriotic Pets and People Parade, celebrating Independence Day, was yet another fun event that brought our community together.

My sincerest thanks to the Castle Hills Community Organization (CHCO), its leadership team and the many volunteers who work so hard to create safe and fun activities for residents of all ages throughout the year.

This summer, the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee is also very active conducting forums and ideas workshops as we develop a long-term roadmap for future city services, infrastructure and







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economic development. These ideation sessions give the community a powerful voice in shaping our city's priorities, and all input is welcome. A final plan will be submitted to the city council for review and approval late this year. Thanks to the members of the council's advisory committee for the countless hours they have invested in the project and for their dedication to this initiative.

Another major initiative underway this summer is preparation for the reconstruction and improvements to many of our streets most in need of repair. The request-for-proposals (RFP) process for potential contractors is the next step in the process prior to work beginning late this summer.

Eight streets have been identified as having the greatest need for reconstruction, and certificates of obligation approved by the city council late last year will fund this \$2.9 million initiative. Concurrent with that effort, the city is using dollars dedicated in this year's budget for maintenance, minor repairs, and overlay of other streets.

On the subject of finances, the city council is now in the midst of preparing next year's budget. While we are optimistic that sales tax revenues have remained strong, even in the height of the pandemic, court and permit fees are lower than projected so far this year. That means we will need to take a measured approach in identifying and funding priorities for next year.

There will be at least four budget workshops through August and then public hearings through mid-September, leading up to final budget approval and the setting of the city's tax rate. I will be posting dates and times of the workshops and hearings at <a href="https://www.facebook.com/izbrandplace1">www.facebook.com/izbrandplace1</a> and encourage you to lend your voice to this process.

There are a lot of positive efforts underway in Castle Hills to keep our city the gem that it is and to pave our path to the future. I am tremendously honored to serve as your Place 1 Alderman, and invite you to stay in touch via Facebook, by phone or by email at <a href="mailto:IzbrandPlace1@gmail.com">IzbrandPlace1@gmail.com</a>. Have a great summer!



KURT MAY
PLACE 3

#### **Citizen Participation Is Important**

The work with citizen volunteers for the Castle Hills Business Association and the Castle Hills Historical Society continues to make progress. With the assistance of three college interns, the Business Association is closing in on getting the contact information for a website posting of all Castle Hills' businesses. The Business Association, coordinating with the City, and the City Manager, is also engaged in continuing efforts to benefit our local businesses. Committee members encourage all businesses to keep the Association up-to-date on their contact information.



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The Historical Society continues to meet approximately every other week, as we approach our September 26th Founding Anniversary celebration. Members on this planning committee are focusing on the details of the celebration—food, displays, and telling the history of Castle Hills. We are actively collecting photos of Castle Hills from before 1951 up to the present. If you have photos or memorabilia that you think might interest the rest of the city, please consider sending a copy of the photo or item in an email. Several members of the Society are reaching out to long-time citizens of Castle Hills to interview them about their memories of the city and stories of past citizen accomplishments. If you or a family member would like to be interviewed, please contact me at the email or phone number listed below. The Historical Society welcomes input and participation from all Castle Hills residents, past and present. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 1st at the Community Room at City Hall.

As the City Council begins the budgetary process this summer, each of the members of Council welcome citizen input. As the City continues to receive welcome news on the sales tax revenue side of discussion, the Council is also mindful of the numerous and divergent priorities our citizens have for the expenditure side of our city budget. Please feel free to reach out to me directly. Citizens are welcome to attend in person during the next three months of the budget workshops and City Council meetings, which are posted on the City's refurbished, and updated website.

#### **Kurt May**

Councilman, Place 3 <u>kurtgenemay@gmail.com</u> 210-273-8134





# JACK JOYCE PLACE 4

Friends and Neighbors,

I am really excited to tell you that City Council has agreed to provide \$55,000 in funding for a professional architectural and planning firm to assist with our Comprehensive Plan. This is wonderful news, as our Committee (Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee – CPAC) will soon have much-needed professional help. The Parks and Projects Commission recommended that Council provide funding for the Plan back in March. The funding will come from the CIED fund, established by CPS approximately 10 years ago. The City has made use of these funds over the years, but still has approximately \$410,000 available. We can achieve our Plan with professional help without any major impact to operations funding.

What does this mean for you? It means that our City, for the first time in over 20 years, will have a roadmap for economic development and the care, maintenance and growth of our infrastructure, facilities, green spaces, and services. It means that our citizens will have the opportunity to directly affect the future of our City. It will provide guidance for Commissions such as Zoning and Architectural Review. In addition, CPAC has committed, upon the completion of the Plan, to work with Mr. Rapelye and staff in the development of a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP would be based on the priorities developed by citizens.

Among the topics the plan will address include historic preservation, public safety, services, economic development, transportation, land use, zoning, natural resources, and sustainability. As promised, we will soon publish the results of the survey. Then we will have a speaker forum and invite subject-matter experts to talk with us on current trends or approaches in their field that might make sense for Castle Hills. Topics will be similar to those mentioned above. We are planning to begin this phase in mid-late August. After that, we'll begin the workshops, where with the help of the consultants, we'll explore opportunities and threats in all of our neighborhoods and make recommendations for the future.

The Committee will begin writing the draft document and plan to have a completed draft for citizen and leadership review approximately in October. With luck, we should have the final document complete by the end of the year.

Please keep an eye on your mailbox, the City's website, and communication from your neighbors for information about upcoming activities and dates. We would love to have everyone's input into the Plan!

Have a great summer.

JJ jjoyce@castlehills-tx.gov 210-827-7222

"The statements and facts contained in newsletter articles from the Mayor and City Council Members are their own personal views and should not be considered official city sponsored statements or facts and should not be relied upon as such."



# DOUGLAS GREGORY PLACE 5

Recently, Mayor Pro Tem Izbrand, City Manager Rapelye, Fire Chief Ladewig, and I have formed a committee to upgrade our Emergency Management Plan, i.e., weather problems etc.

The following article written by Chris Tomlinson in the Business Section of the San Antonio Express News on May 12, 2021 was very informative. The article clarifies the dangerous situation we all face if we do not address our energy delivery system:

"To sum up, millions of Texas spent days without power on the coldest nights in a generation and will likely end up overpaying more than \$20 billion for the privilege by the time all is said and done. We are paying for our leaders' decision to withhold regulatory authority from state agencies and underfund their ability to ensure a coordinated energy supply chain."

It is evident that we have been left to our own devices. Buy a cord of wood this summer, convert to natural gas as your energy source, stockpile water for the winter, and keep an eye out for your neighbor. Our local utilities and State Representatives apparently have no idea of what to do. At least in Castle Hills, we are trying to be proactive for the next round of inclement weather. Stay tuned for our reports.



### **Code Compliance Corner**



Howdy! Recently, the City of Castle Hills mailed out a brochure "A Residential Guide for Property Maintenance" to residents detailing information about common code compliance issues and a Q&A if you have received a violation and/or notice. This is not an exhaustive list of code compliance issues, however the brochure highlights some of the more frequent property code violations. The brochure's intent is to inform and educate residents and/or business owners in our community. We believe that most violations result from a lack of knowledge of the local code rather than a blatant disregard of the code. A copy of the brochure can be found on the City's website: <a href="https://www.cityofcastlehills.com">www.cityofcastlehills.com</a>

We appreciate you taking the time to review the brochure. If you would like to report a violation or any questions related to the brochure, please contact our code officer, Priscila Vasquez, at 210-293-9678.



#### **Summer Child Safety Tips with Vehicles**

With the South Texas summer temperatures at our door step, it is important to remind everyone how dangerous the temperatures can climb in our vehicles. Studies have shown temperatures in vehicles can climb more than 30° degrees higher than the air temperature



outside the vehicle. As an example, if we have a common  $100^{\circ}$  summer day, the temperature inside your vehicle can climb to  $130^{\circ}$  in short period of time. These high temperatures can be deadly to children if they are left in a vehicle.

Tragically every year, children die from heatstroke caused by being left in a hot car. In fact, on average a child dies every 10 days from heatstroke in a vehicle and in more than half of these deaths, the caregiver forgot the child was in the car. (Safekids.org) When you

hear of these tragedies, you may ask yourself how someone can forget their child is in the vehicle with them? Unfortunately, many of us get distracted by our personal and professional lives. A person may be worried about financial hardships or a family member that is ill or injured. These things can weigh heavily on our minds and can cause our focus and attention to be elsewhere.

To help as a reminder to keep from leaving a child in a car, use the acronym ACT:

- 1. Avoid heatstroke-related injury and death by never leaving a child alone in a car, not even for a minute. Make sure you keep your car locked when you are not inside so kids do not get in the vehicle on their own.
- 2. Create reminders. Keep a stuffed animal or other memento in your child's car seat when it is empty, and move it to the front seat as a visual reminder when your child is in the back seat. Or you can place and secure your phone, briefcase or purse in the backseat when traveling with your child.
- **3. Take action.** If you see a child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency personnel want you to call. We are trained to respond to these situations.

The Castle Hills Police Department would like to wish everyone a great and fun summer.

Stay safe and stay hydrated.

## Castle Hills Fire Department

By Chief Jim Ladewig

Over the past year and a half, the fire department has implemented many changes in addition to some much needed upgrades to the fire department during the COVID Pandemic. All the changes have aided the department in better protecting our residents, the firefighters and our neighboring departments and reducing chances of exposures. The majority of all these improvements were made possible through CARES Grant funds and donations made by local support agencies. These individuals were recognized in earlier publications of the Reporter, their support has continued and is greatly appreciated.

When the fire department responds to a structure fire or other emergency requiring the firefighters to use their Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus, the air bottles that are used on the packs must be refilled. In the past the fire department would be required to travel to one of our neighboring departments to use their air bottle refilling stations to fill the bottles and place back in service. This would make our firefighters and the neighboring departments personnel subject to exposure. This also extended the time it would take for our SCBA packs to be placed back into service. Late December 2020, the department installed our own SCBA filling station that now allows the packs to be filled in house without having firefighters go to a neighboring station.



Cascade

As with their SCBA's, the firefighter's protective clothing when worn in a hazardous atmosphere, requires cleaning after each incident. This too required the firefighters to travel to our neighboring departments to have them cleaned. This normally would take 24hrs to have the gear washed, dried and placed back into service. New firefighting standards also mandates that this gear will not be placed back into service until it has been cleaned. In October of 2020 the department also acquired an extractor and gear dryer at the station so this process can be completed inside the station, again alleviating possible exposure risks.

The station also received updating to the firefighter quarters. The firefighters quarters consisted of one large room that the 6 firefighters pg.8





Extractor

**Gear Dryer** 

shared. This made it very difficult to isolate the firefighters from one another if one became ill and to disinfect the area that the ill firefighter occupied. Separate individual quarters for each firefighter were made using the same space that was occupied prior, so as to limit the chances of exposure in case a firefighter was to become ill.







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All of these improvements were possible due to grant funds, and the firefighter's own labor, with minimal cost to the city. All fire department personnel recently were trained in administering epinephrine by syringe in case of an allergic reaction instead of by Epi-Pen. With the increasing cost of the Epi-Pens and short shelf life, this will enable for the department to supply this service at a fraction of the cost. The department will continue to search for cost effective ways to improve the department and the services they provide to our residents, business owners and visitors.

As the department tries to continue to move towards a return to normal, we will again participate in multi-department live fire training and advanced skill trainings so as to provide the highest level of services to the city of Castle Hills.













Has your property been affected by wind, hail, fire or pipe bursts and your insurance company isn't treating you fairly?

Do you own a business and need first-class representation?

Have you been injured as a result of the wrongful act of another person or company?

The Lawyers at the Law Vault are excited to have joined the Castle Hills community, and we are ready to help you with your legal needs.

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New Office Location!



pg.10

## **CITY ELECTRONIC NOTIFICATIONS WORKSHEET**

\* Indicates required field

Resident Information	
* Courtesy Title: [Mr.] [Mrs.] [Ms.] [Dr.] [] (Circle one or en	ter other)
* First Name:	
* Last Name:	
Home Contact Information – SECTOR	
*Street Address:*City: Castle Hills *State: Texas *Zip Code: 78213 *Home Phone:	
Mobile Phone:	
☐ I want to receive text messages (Checkmark on the box)	-
If yes, provide mobile carrier:	_
Notifications of Interest	
Checkmark on the box next to the specific types of information to receive	e notifications
<ul> <li>□ Emergency Notices &amp; Public Safety Warnings</li> <li>□ Community &amp; Neighborhood Alerts</li> <li>□ Area Watches &amp; Restrictions</li> <li>□ Emergency Preparedness Information</li> <li>□ Public Service / Volunteer Opportunities</li> <li>□ City Office &amp; Service Notices</li> <li>□ Public Works Notices</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Communication Notice</li> <li>For the purpose of disaster notices, the contact information submit coordinators to send emergency notices to any work or home address in Emergency Notifications without sharing registered names, addresses or Mobile messages, especially text messages are considered to be the morprovide as many options to receive messages as possible.</li> <li>Not all messages will be sent by voice or as text messages</li> <li>Not all mobile carriers provide sufficient bandwidth in all areas to suppose with some providers.</li> <li>Receipt of email, voice and text messages require operational connection.</li> <li>To receive text messages, the Text Messaging option must be available as a telephone or charge registrants to receive notifications, however.</li> <li>Standard phone charges, mobile minutes and text messaging rates in telephone or wireless plan.</li> <li>Each registrant should contact their service provider for details.</li> <li>Changes to personal preferences and contact information can be made.</li> <li>Registrants can opt out of receiving messages at any time by updating to the providence of the</li></ul>	In the designated notification area. The system will send these Mass or phone numbers with the sender. It is trapid method to receive emergency alerts, but registrants should not text message services and registrants can experience major delays and so in the sender. It is not along the mobile, or internet enabled devices. It is not apply for calls and text messages you receive as provided in your by logging into your profile at <a href="https://www.i-info.com/miprofile">https://www.i-info.com/miprofile</a> their profile accordingly.  The agencies I selected, and actives of the agencies I selected, and
☐ I have read and agree with the above statements.	
Signature:	Date:



# **CITY SNAPSHOTS**





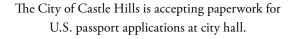




## **Need a Passport?**

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CityofCastlehills.com



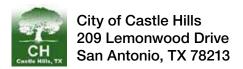
Passport applications will be scheduled Tuesday through Saturday by appointment only.

To schedule an appointment call (210) 293-9675 or (210) 293-9674.

For more information regarding how to apply for or renew your passport, please visit the U.S. Department of State website at: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html



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#### Time Dated





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