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Take on challenges



Spina Bifida has never slowed him down

James May, center, with his mom Debra, left, and sister Kelley at their home in Reno. James has Spina Bifida and is confined to a wheel chair.

May lives life to the fullest

KRISTA GOERTE
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Reno resident James May has an active life.

The 26-year-old loves science fiction novels and Star Trek, enjoys spending time with his family and volunteers regularly with Cavalry Methodist Church. He enjoys time outdoors and taking trips, just like anyone else his age.

And, he does it despite the difficulty he faces every single day.

James has Spina Bifida. He is confined to a wheelchair and is paralyzed from the waste down, but he continues to strive ahead, just as he has since being moved from special classes to mainstream classes in school when he was growing up in Opelousas, La.

After James and his family moved to Paris in 1992, he attended Aikin Elementary

“Try not to let it keep you down, keep you from doing what you want to do.”

James May

School, then North Lamar middle and high schools. His adventurous spirit has led him on youth trips skiing in Colorado, to Galveston and to the NASA Space Center in Houston.

But James does face problems with his severe form of Spina Bifida. Soon after birth, James had surgery, and has been to doctors and hospitals throughout his life with complications of Spina Bifida, including a six-month period at age 4 where he stayed in the hospital. He has scoliosis and his lower back has been fused.

James says the skin on his back is very thin and he has

a water bed to minimize the discomfort.

Although he says he has not had as many problems as in the past, James still has to be careful and watch for potential problems.

For someone facing similar problems, James has some heartfelt advice:

“Try not to let it keep you down, keep you from doing what you want to do,” he said.

He said his condition is sometimes hard to deal with. Among his biggest complaints is that of having difficulty in getting around in

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James May

FROM P-1

his wheelchair, especially when places are too small to maneuver or aren't equipped with ramps.

James is one of the more than 70,000 people worldwide who deal with the effects of Spina Bifida, a neural tube defect that occurs when the tissue of the developing spi-

nal cord of the fetus fails to close properly.

As October is Spina Bifida awareness month, the Spina Bifida Association is making an effort to spread information about the prevention and causes of one of the most common birth defects.

Research shows that the chances of a fetus developing Spina Bifida can be greatly

reduced by a simple prevention method. A daily dose of 400 micrograms of folic acid can reduce the chances of Spina Bifida by up to 70 percent, according to the Spina Bifida Association.

Folic acid is a B-vitamin that helps build healthy cells. During periods of rapid growth, such as pregnancy and fetal development, the

body's requirement for this vitamin increases. Because the body does not store very much folic acid, it is important to take a supplement to maintain both the baby's and the mother's health.

Certain factors for women whose pregnancy is at risk of being affected by Spina Bifida include: The use of certain anti-seizure medica-

tions; medically diagnosed obesity; high temperatures during early pregnancy; and a lower socio-economic status. Spina Bifida is also more common among Caucasian and Hispanic women than African American women.

There are three different types of Spina Bifida that can affect a fetus in varying degrees of severity. The

types range from Occulta, a relatively harmless form of Spina Bifida with very little disturbance of spinal function, to Meningocele and Myelomeningocele, types that can come with nerve damage and more severe physical and mental disabilities.

For more information on Spina Bifida risks, treatments and causes, log on to www.spinabifidaassociation.org.

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May lives life to the fullest

KRISTA GOERTS
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Home resident James May has an active life.

The 26-year-old lives active from sports and the Truck, enjoys spending time with his family and volunteer regularly with Cowboy Methodist Church. He enjoys these outdoors and taking trips, just like anyone else his age.

And, he does it despite the difficulty he faces every single day.

James has Spina Bifida. He is confined to a wheelchair and is paralyzed from the waist down, but he continues to strive ahead, just as he has since being moved from special classes to mainstream classes at school when he was growing up in Opelousas, La. John James and his family moved to Paris in 1962, he attended Adam Elementary

James May, center, with his mom Celina, left, and sister Kelsey at their home in Paris. James has Spina Bifida and is confined to a wheelchair.

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James May

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But James does face problems with his severe form of Spina Bifida. Since after birth, James had surgery, and has been to doctors and hospitals throughout his life with complications of Spina Bifida, including a six-month period at age 4 when he stayed in the hospital. He has scoliosis and his lower back has been bandaged.

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For someone facing similar problems, James has some helpful advice.

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JAMES MAY'S

Groups say death was a hate crime

McClelland's memorial service brings in members of Nation of Islam, New Black Panthers and NAACP

STAFF, AP REPORTS
www.parisnews.com

At a memorial service Saturday for Brandon McClelland in Paris, members of the Nation of Islam, the New Black Panthers and a NAACP group from Irving presented letters protesting to bring more attention to the case.

Speakers after speaker expressed disagreement with the district attorney's stance that McClelland's death was not racially motivated.

"If this is not a hate crime, then there is no such thing as a hate crime," said Khalid Muhammad of the New Black Panthers. "Even if each one of them was

blameless, we will not let him die in vain."

Two white men, accused of running over McClelland and dragging his body about 75 feet beneath their pickup, remain jailed on murder charges.

Activists here said they would seek the additional prosecution that comes with racially motivated crimes in Texas, but have so far seen doubt on theories that the attack was a hate crime.

But Daric Muhammad of the Nation of Islam called McClelland's death an "outrage" of the 1999 James Ford case.

Ford, a black man in

Irving, about 200 miles north of Paris, was chased by the police to the back of a pickup by three white supremacists and dragged for three miles. Two of the killers are on death row; the third is serving a life sentence.

McClelland died after going with two white friends on a late-night beer run across the state line to Oklahoma. On the way back, authorities said, McClelland argued with the two suspects — Shannon Keith Fisher and Charles Ryan Crowley, both 27. His

MCCLELLAND P-4

Two robbers target Water Pipe

BILL HANKINS
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Two men, one armed with a pistol, robbed the Water Pipe, 2015 Pine Bluff, late Saturday and fled with an undetermined amount of cash.

The two entered the store

shortly after 1 p.m. Displayed a weapon, demanded cash from the clerk, grabbed the cash from a cash register and fled on foot.

They were described as a black male, more than six feet tall, and a second, shorter male.

Both had their faces par-

tially covered.

The other robber displayed the weapon. The shooter took the cash from the register.

Paris Police Department received a call at 8:12 p.m. and arrived on the scene at 8:23 p.m., but the robbers already had fled the scene.

Democrats rally around candidates

Local and state level positions represented

MARY MADEWELL
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Democratic candidates for United States Congress, state representative, judicial and local offices spoke to about 75 people gathered Sunday at the Lamar County Courthouse for perhaps the last local rally of the campaign season before next Nov. 4.

Candidates Rick Noriega for U.S. Senate and Glenn Helms for District 4 U.S. Representative were on hand as was state Rep. Mark Finney. Judicial candidates incumbent State District Judge Scott McDowell and 10th Circuit candidate Steven Turner spoke as did Lamar County Commissioner incumbent Lawrence Harrison Helms of Precinct 1 and Judiciary Pollard of Precinct 3.

In introducing Noriega, Helms called him "a special guy" who has served admirably both in the Texas House and in the Texas National Guard for the past 27 years.



NORIEGA



HELMES

In addition to serving in Afghanistan, Helms and Noriega organized the legislative challenge of becoming Hurricane Katrina victims in the Houston Astros home, an accomplishment recognized nationally.

Both Noriega and Helms credited Katrina for propelling them to state office. Helms said he ran first in 2006 because the national government failed to act quickly when Americans were "without food and water for three days" and Noriega said he was inspired by Texas who came together a few days later "to get the job done" at the Astros home.

"I witnessed Texas and

American citizens together when there was a common goal and realizing we are one brotherhood," Noriega said. "And when duty calls, I wanted to lead based on conviction, not greed. Politics, business, government coming together to get the work done."

Noriega mentioned problems with the economy, health care coverage, energy, education and immigration victims.

"It is not a question of can this be done, but will we do it and will we have the leadership to do it, and for the common good living people together as work on

CANDIDATES P-4