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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2019

Radack leaving county position

By R. HANS MILLER
SENIOR REPORTER

Harris County Commissioner for Precinct 3 Steve Radack will not be seeking reelection in 2020, he confirmed by phone on Friday.



STEVE
RADACK

Radack said he would be leaving the position after more than 30 years to try to get voters more energized and informed about issues facing the county.

"I plan on being involved in public service. For 46 of the last 50 years I've been involved in public service. Frankly, I'm going to be working hard to try to inform the voters of how critical a situation we have with the [Harris County] Commissioners Court."

School districts such as Katy ISD need the commissioners court to create infrastructure that will lead to their success such as roads and solid law enforcement, Radack said. He also expressed concern regarding County Judge Lina Hidalgo and the rest of the commissioners court pulling about \$4.8 million combined from Precinct 3 and Harris County Commissioner Jack Cagle's Precinct 4 and giving those funds to Precincts 1 and 2 in August of this year for mobility projects.

Radack and Cagle teamed up in October to block a quorum in the commissioners court and force a tax rate decrease, according to county records. State law requires that at least four commissioners be present when a tax increase is being discussed. Radack and Cagle both missed the meeting in order to allow the law to push forward a tax rate decrease for the county.

"[The other commissioners] tried to raise taxes as high as they could without requiring a vote by the people," Radack said. "I saw people really concerned by the tax increase. We go into the year 2020 with Cagle and I doing

See **RADACK**, page A5

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UPGRADES

Katy ISD appoints 2 principals and approves bus initiatives

By R. HANS MILLER
SENIOR REPORTER

The Katy ISD Board of Trustees passed two measures related to busing services at its Dec. 16 meeting. The board also appointed principals to head Fielder Elementary at 2100 Greenway Village Drive, Katy and elementary #43 at 6631 Greenwood Orchard Drive, Katy.

A matter of principals

"It is an honor to be a principal in Katy ISD. It is an even bigger privilege to have the opportunity to open a brand-new school. I look forward to connecting with the families in the elementary #43 community," Euberta Lucas said.

Lucas was appointed by unanimous vote to run elementary #43 while Marc Kampwerth was appointed to head Fielder Elementary school.

Lucas is leaving her job as principal of Creech elementary, a position she has held since 2010 according to a district press release. She has more than 20 years of experience as an educator, including a stint at Round Rock ISD as a fifth-grade teacher and time at Mayde Creek Elementary school in Katy ISD as a technology facilitator and principal.

"I will do my part to work



EUBERTA
LUCAS



MARC
KAMPWERTH

hard and diligently as a team with parents, staff and students to create and nurture a learning atmosphere that exudes warmth, compassion and a growth mindset," Lucas said.

Elementary #43 is the district's newest campus.

Kampwerth has nearly 20 years in the education field, according to the press release. He began his career teaching math, science and social studies in Cy-Fair and Lamar Consolidated ISDs. He later moved into administration and became assistant principal at Morton Ranch Elementary within Katy ISD.

Kampwerth attended Southern

Illinois University and received his bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, according to the press release. He later went on to pursue a Master of Education in Educational Leadership from the University of Houston, Clear Lake.

"I will miss Morton Ranch Elementary, as we have built a wonderful learning community," Kampwerth said. "I am excited to start this new chapter in my career as a Fielder Falcon."

Rolling with initiatives

Bus initiatives included an agreement with Safety Vision Mobile Video Surveillance Solutions to equip every bus in the Katy ISD fleet with eight cameras, allowing the district to better monitor activities on and around buses. The bus has 330 regular education buses, 241 special education buses and will be purchasing 100 buses. The camera systems and new buses will be paid for using 2017

See **UPGRADES**, page A5



KARE pushes for books and scholarships

By R. HANS MILLER
SENIOR REPORTER

Katy Area Retired Educators hosted Morton Ranch High School's JaZZ'd show choir in their Dec. 11 monthly meeting. The education retirees group is also moving forward with a book drive program and collecting money to distribute to Katy ISD seniors through its scholarship program.

"When I retired from Katy ISD, I wanted to still stay in touch with the students," said KARE's community service chair Jamie Wolman. "I was a mentor in the Keys mentor program for Katy ISD at the elementary level. Today, I had the pleasure of seeing one of the students I mentored, at the KARE meeting, as she sang in the Morton Ranch High School JaZZ'd Choir."

The choir performed a variety of acapella holiday classics in different styles including "Baby it's Cold Outside." The choir was directed by David VanWyk.



COURTESY KARE

The JaZZ'd show choir from Morton Ranch High School provided entertainment at the Dec. 11 Katy Area Retired Educators monthly meeting. Retired teachers were excited to see former students singing in the choir and enjoyed a medley of Christmas classics.

See **KARE**, page A5



Taylor junior Casey Shorter carries the ball during a game against Seven Lakes on Oct. 4 at Legacy Stadium.



Taylor junior Trevor Woods (43) brings down a Houston Memorial ballcarrier during their area playoff game Nov. 23 at Legacy Stadium.

TAYLOR

from page B11

“It’s great to take a step for the future generation of Mustangs,” senior running back Gavin Belue said. “Hopefully we can build something up like Katy. I feel like we built that if you have a brotherhood and you play your butt off for your teammate, you’ll never fail.”

Taylor graduates 32 seniors. Of the 22 players who started the state semifinal, only 10 graduate. Seniors like defensive back Lee Davis, running back CJ Tolbert, defensive end Mike Orechoneg, running back Marcus Grant, defensive end Shannon Johnson, punter Patric Talbot, offensive lineman Luke Sykes, defensive tackle Jahmai Edwards, defensive tackle Gregg Osaghae, Belue, Hay, Nowlin and many, many others will be missed. But their impact will linger.

“The seniors laid everything down and did a great job,” Jensen said. “They led us to where we are, and now we have

to work harder. We came up short and we have to prepare and work even harder.”

That is the Mustangs’ next goal, their next purpose. Consistency. No longer is making the playoffs good enough. They have proven capable of so much more, and they understand and embrace that responsibility.

“We have to sustain this,” Conner said. “Long playoff runs. Great chemistry, a true brotherhood. This is amazing. We made a lot of history and used that as motivation and fuel for the playoffs. We just came up short.”

KATY ISD

from page B1

first time since 2008 and enjoyed its finest season since 1997. And Paetow, in just its second year of varsity Class 5A football, made the playoffs, producing a landmark win over perennial regional power Huntsville and more than doubling last season’s win total (eight to three).

“Anything you can experience helps make you better,” said Paetow coach B.J. Gotte, whose team went 5-2 in a hotly-contested District 10-5A, Division II, featuring regional titans A&M Consolidated, Lamar Consolidated and Huntsville. “This is another experience. We’re growing the program. This isn’t a one-year deal.”

In a testament to the district’s competitiveness, two of the four

playoff spots in 19-6A remained open going into the final week of the regular season. If that wasn’t telling enough, all four of Katy ISD’s Class 6A playoff teams won a postseason game, as the district swept its friendly foes from Fort Bend ISD in the bi-district round.

Mayde Creek beat Fort Bend Bush for its first playoff win since 1997 before falling to regional finalist Cypress Creek in the area round. Katy and Tompkins each won their area playoff games before falling in the regional semifinals. Taylor beat Cypress Creek in its regional final before falling to Austin Westlake in the state semis.

Second-year Taylor coach Chad Simmons said the district was as level as it has been in 20 years, when he first started coaching as an assistant at Cinco Ranch High.

“Some of it is cyclical,” Simmons said. “I’m not trying to give the company line, but you can

talk to people outside of Katy and they’ll tell you how good the support is, at all campuses. People do things the right way here to help kids to grow, and when you do that and you try and teach kids to be more mature and more responsible and to learn life lessons through sports, then the byproduct is success on the field. Our purpose is to grow kids. Our goal is to win. When you win, you have a better chance for kids to listen to you, and when kids listen to you, you have a better chance to win. It all goes together.”

A common theme among Katy ISD’s playoff teams this season was culture.

Katy, obviously, has it in spades thanks to a tradition-rich program boasting eight state championships. Taylor made the playoffs for the fifth time in six seasons and has reached another level under Simmons.

Mayde Creek found itself this season, embracing a “FAMILY” foundation and playing for each other under a creative, no-nonsense coach in Mike Rabe. It’s no coincidence that that selflessness produced a season to remember for the Rams.

“I’m extremely proud of these guys, man,” Rabe said. “The effort they put in, the work they put in. You just see the football season as this time of the year, but it’s a 12-month deal, and these guys committed to it and they did something that was special for our school.”

Tompkins coach Todd McVey’s whole program is built upon culture. “One percent better every day.” “Carrying your water.” “Playing your 1/11th.” All testaments McVey, who was assistant athletic director at Katy ISD for nine years before taking over at Tompkins, has preached and emphasized

since 2017, when the Falcons went 0-9 his initial year to 10-3 last season and to a program-best 11-2 record this year.

“Our administration is kid-based,” McVey said. “Having been on both sides of this, academically, athletically and fine arts, they want all of those kids to have great success. They will provide the tools necessary, whether it’s a classroom teacher or classroom instrument that will help our kids be better. All of our programs are important here, and I think that’s what people miss sometimes. We went to the band contest with some of our captains, and our kids really enjoyed it. That feeling of support starts at the top with the superintendent and comes all the way down. We’re very blessed that we have an administration that understands our worlds, and I think that’s very beneficial for us.”

MUSTANGS FALL TO AUSTIN WESTLAKE IN STATE SEMIFINAL, SEE PAGE A6

MAKING HISTORY

Mustangs produce a season for the record books

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

After he had talked to his team following its Class 6A-Division II state semifinal loss to Austin Westlake on Dec. 14, with applause and tears parading from a solemn but not defeated locker room, Taylor High coach Chad Simmons offered perspective.

Fitting, since perspective is what his team had all season during a historic run into mid-December. Not once did players waver or hang their heads through adversity that included a tough regular season, injuries, and an even more difficult season finale.

Players talked often about being disrespected. They saw the scoffs and doubts from outsiders on social media. They even heard it directly from people they talked to.

They knew how much talent and heart they had, even when others didn't. "It didn't the end the way we wanted it to end," Simmons said in the quiet bowels of Mc-Lane Stadium after the 63-3 setback. "I thought it'd be more competitive than what it was. You start with 64 teams in the (playoff) bracket, and 63 end with a locker room like ours.

"However, we made some firsts for our school and finished a season for us by a pretty large margin. We started a legacy."

In making the playoffs for the fifth time in six seasons, the Mustangs accomplished the following:

- Senior safety Braden Hay set the program career mark for interceptions.
- Junior quarterback J. Jensen III set the program single-game mark for passing yards in a game.
- Junior running back Casey Shorter set the program single-game mark for rushing touchdowns in a game.
- Junior safety Trevor Woods had four interceptions returned for touchdowns, including three in the playoffs.
- Taylor won its first regional championship in surpassing the regional semifinals for the first time in program history.

"We built something that will last for a while at Taylor," junior offensive lineman Hayden Conner said. "The brotherhood and the winning, I think those things stay."

It was certainly an inauspicious start to the season for the Mustangs, though.

Taylor went 5-5 during the regular season, was outscored 319-261 over that span and needed help the final week to get into the playoffs.

But once the Mustangs got there, they flipped a switch. The Mustangs topped 8-2 Fort Bend Elkins, 51-41, in the bi-district round; nipped 7-4 Houston Memorial, 21-14, in the area round; took care of 10-2 Humble in the regional semifinal, 35-14; and walloped 9-4 Cypress Creek in the regional final, 58-20.

Taylor's six losses this season were to Atascocita (12-2, 6A-D1 regional finalist), Dickinson (10-2, 6A-D1 area finalist), Mayde Creek (9-3, 6A-D2 area finalist), Tompkins (11-2, 6A-D1 regional semifinalist), Katy (12-1, 6A-D1 regional semifinalist), and Westlake (14-1, 6A-D2 state finalist).

The defense was the Mustangs' identity, led by Woods, Hay, linebacker Martin Nowlin and defensive end Marcus Daniels, and the offense was as balanced as it has been in quite a while. Taylor's ability to throw the ball, and not rely exclusively on its run game, was a game-changer.

In the end, however, Taylor ran up against a buzz saw in Westlake. The Chaparrals were a team many projected would get that far, whereas Taylor was the surprise story of the playoffs as the only team in the state that placed fourth in its district to make it to the state semifinals.

See **TAYLOR**, page B12



Junior quarterback
J. Jensen III

"It's great to take a step for the future generation of Mustangs. Hopefully we can build something up like Katy. I feel like we built that if you have a brotherhood and you play your butt off for your teammate, you'll never fail."

— SENIOR RUNNING BACK GAVIN BELUE

A LOOK BACK AT THE MUSTANGS

2019 record: 9-6, Class 6A-Division II state semifinalist
District 19-6A finish: 3-3, 4th
Top Passer: Jr. QB J. Jensen III 104-198-10 passing, 1,358 yards, 10 TDs
Top Rusher: Jr. RB Casey Shorter 162 carries, 968 yards, 11 TDs
Top Receiver: Sr. WR Griffin Dougherty 37 catches, 562 yards, 3 TDs
Top Defensive Player: Jr. S Trevor Woods 9.9 tackles per game, 7 sacks, INT
**Stats are for regular season*



Tompkins senior R.J. Smith carries the ball during a game against Taylor on Oct. 25 at Rhodes Stadium.



Tompkins junior Tunmise Adeleye (94) pursues a Mayde Creek ballcarrier during their game Oct. 18 at Rhodes Stadium.

TOMPKINS

from page B10

After misfiring on six of nine pass attempts to go along with an interception in the first half, Milroe completed 11 of 24 passes for 236 yards and two touchdowns to junior running back Marquis Shoulders in the second.

The defense also played considerably better, forcing three takeaways after halftime. Senior defensive back Jesse Jensen and junior linebacker Kobe Madriz recovered fumbles, and Huerter intercepted Matthews.

“When bad things happen, how are you going to respond? The coaches did a great job with adjustments, but the kids came out and played for each other, and that was the adjustment,” McVey said.

The Falcons made things interesting with some nice trickery when Milroe caught a seven-yard scoring pass from receiver Gabe Atkin with 10:42 left in the game. But that was the final score of the evening as the Eagles were able to hold off the Falcons.

“We knew what they were going to do,” Huerter said. “It was just about execution. We tried different things, but it just didn’t go in our favor.”

BITTERSWEET

Seniors leave lasting legacy for surging Tompkins

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

The 2019 season produced the second straight regional semifinal appearance for Tompkins, a remarkable achievement considering the Falcons went 0-9 in 2017.

But in bittersweet fashion, it also marked the end of the careers for 30 foundation-setting seniors, like star running back R.J. Smith and two-year captain Hayden Burke, among others.

It was this senior class that will leave a lasting legacy. The Falcons have won 21 games the last two seasons, and 2019's 11 wins were a program-best.

"It was the buy-in," third-year coach Todd McVey said of his seniors. "As I tell them, it's their program. They get out of it what they put into it. Their investment, leadership, how they did it the right way ... they were big brothers, encouraging the other guys when things were hard. They set the tone, and I hope it continues with its consistency and doing what we do."

McVey credited the sweat equity his seniors put in. They acknowledged that. "This means a lot to me, as far as setting a bar for the younger kids to go accomplish and be better," said Smith, who finished his career as the Falcons' all-time leader in rushing yards and touchdowns. "This season didn't end the way we wanted it to, but I still feel like we did well."

They did, junior defensive back Colby Huerter attested. It won't be forgotten. "We owe it all to the seniors," Huerter said. "Nobody in the country is better than our seniors. They turned an 0-9 team into a successful, well-run machine. I owe it all to them, and I will remember this for next year."

All season long, Tompkins was successful defending the pass. Despite that, however, the Falcons' defense was no match for Atascocita's explosive, versatile passing game in their 42-24 Class 6A-Division I regional semifinal loss on Nov. 30 at NRG Stadium. Eagles senior quarterback Brice Matthews sliced and diced the Tompkins secondary and threw for 390 yards and three touchdowns.

Matthews completed 32 of 43 passes (74.4 percent), was hardly pressured thanks to quick releases and dominant offensive line play, and threw passes to six different receivers, showcasing Atascocita's ridiculous wealth of perimeter playmakers.

"They have a lot of playmakers, a lot of size," Tompkins senior defensive back Pryce Powell said. "We didn't play our best, but they have a lot of weapons, and credit to them for that."

Tompkins entered the game allowing just 167 passing yards per game in the playoffs, and just 103.6 in all for the season. Still, the Falcons could hardly stay with Eagles receivers like 6-foot-3 junior Landen King, 6-4 senior Dylan Robinson (seven catches, 94 yards) and 6-2 sophomore Keith Wheeler (six catches, 68 yards).

A telling stat: King had the most productive day of the bunch with 174 yards and a touchdown on 14 catches, but he is No. 3 on the Atascocita depth chart behind Houston verbal commit Robinson and 6-4 senior and Louisiana Tech verbal commit Darius Edmonds (two catches, 18 yards).

Atascocita used the strength of 254 passing yards in the first half for a 35-3 half-time advantage that was too much for Tompkins to overcome.

"It was a great challenge for our defense, and we were up for it," McVey said. "We had some things we didn't do well that we fixed in the second half. We saw things quicker and just responded well overall."

"We ran out of time, more than anything else."

Indeed, Tompkins never quit, another signature of the culture the seniors helped build.

The Falcons outscored the Eagles 21-7 in the second half as junior quarterback and Texas verbal commit Jalen Milroe found his groove.

See **TOMPKINS**, page B10

A LOOK BACK AT THE FALCONS

2019 record: 11-2, Class 6A-Division I regional semifinalist

District 19-6A finish: 5-1, 2nd

Top Passer: Jr. QB Jalen Milroe 94-141-2 passing, 1,991 yards, 23 TDs

Top Rusher: Sr. RB R.J. Smith 153 carries, 1,041 yards, 21 TDs

Top Receiver: Sr. WR Gabe Atkin 23 catches, 652 yards, 5 TDs

Top Defensive Player: Jr. DE Tunmise Adeleye 7 tackles for a loss, 3.0 sacks, 1 INT

*Stats are for regular season

Junior quarterback
Jalen Milroe

"It was the buy-in. As I tell them, it's their program. They get out of it what they put into it. Their investment, leadership, how they did it the right way ... they were big brothers, encouraging the other guys when things were hard. They set the tone, and I hope it continues with its consistency and doing what we do."

— THIRD-YEAR COACH TODD MCVEY



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Katy High senior Bryan Massey runs the kickoff back to score a touchdown during a regional semifinal playoff game against North Shore on Nov. 29 at NRG Stadium.



Katy High senior Jordan Patrick runs after a catch during an area playoff game against Cy-Fair on Nov. 22 at Tully Stadium.

TIGERS

from page B6

the first half on a scoring pass to Steven Stiles against busted coverage.

Otherwise, the Tigers managed just 4.1 yards per pass attempt.

“Stopping the running game like they did really put us behind the eight-ball,” Joseph said.

Katy only managed three carries greater than 10 yards, and not coincidentally, they came on the only touchdown

drive by the offense in the second half.

“Their fits, the way they flowed. They were just there,” said Jalen Davis, who totaled 44 yards on eight carries. “You could tell they studied. That was good coaching on the defensive side.”

While senior starting running back Ron Hoff, who sprained his ankle early in the bi-district playoff win against Ridge Point and returned for just 10 carries in a limited appearance against North Shore, graduates following a breakout season that saw him catch the eye of NCAA Division I programs, Jalen Davis and fellow junior backup Sherman Smith return next year for Katy.

Smith, too, suffered an ankle injury early in the first quarter

of the Ridge Point game like Hoff, but did return to the field in a limited role against North Shore. Jalen Davis, who totaled 365 yards and three touchdowns on 68 carries in the postseason, said he wants to bring a leadership role next season and predicted this offseason will be his best yet as far as strength and conditioning.

“I learned to step up and how to handle adversity,” Jalen Davis said. “I learned how hesitation can hurt you; just take it and run. Go. Know what you’re doing, play hard and trust God’s plan and we’ll be good.”

The Tigers, who lost two senior starting offensive linemen to injury late during the regular season, will graduate seven of the offensive players who started the North Shore game and six of the players who started on defense.

“We have to be able to establish something running-game wise, and we just didn’t do it. We have to find a way to be more physical up front. North Shore did a better job than we did.”

— KATY COACH GARY JOSEPH

ANOTHER STELLAR SEASON

Katy’s 1-loss campaign ends in heartbreak

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

Katy was great. Terrific, even. On most nights, thirty-five points and only three penalties to no turnovers would be enough to beat anybody, even within the hellacious gauntlet of elite teams disguised as the Class 6A-Division I regional semifinals.

But North Shore’s Dematrius Davis was simply better. The junior quarterback and Virginia Tech verbal commit produced six touchdowns and 317 total yards in leading defending state champion North Shore to a 56-35 win over the Tigers on Nov. 29 at NRG Stadium. “We had a guy there for him on every play,” Katy coach Gary Joseph said. “We had other guys responsible for doing things, too ... We were about a step off on everything we did. We were there, we hit him several times, but we just didn’t get him on the ground. Credit to him.”

The Tigers finished a season with legitimate state-championship hopes at 12-1 overall, ranked No. 8 in the nation and No. 2 in the state in Class 6A throughout most of the season. Katy fell to North Shore for the second straight year in the regional semifinals, and for the third time in four years in the playoffs overall.

In the last four seasons, Katy has lost just seven times. North Shore is responsible for four of those defeats.

“We have to continue finding ways to get this done,” Joseph said. The 6-foot, 195-pound Davis did not run the ball once during Katy’s 24-21 season-opening win over North Shore in late August. In round 2 this season versus the Tigers, he absolutely dominated with his legs.

Davis carried the ball 21 times for 283 yards and three touchdowns. He averaged 13.5 yards per carry, and scored on runs of 40, 30 and 1 yards.

For good measure, Davis showed off his arm, too, completing 8 of 12 passes for 134 yards and three touchdowns of 25, 48 and 11 yards.

North Shore led 35-21 at halftime and extended that to 42-21 on Davis’ 30-yard run less than three minutes into the second half.

But the Tigers made a memorable rally to climb within a touchdown at 42-35 with 3:21 left in the third quarter.

Junior running back Jalen Davis scored on a 10-yard run. On the ensuing North Shore punt, kicker John Villalobos attempted an ill-advised punt after a high snap deep in North Shore territory that fell right into the arms of Katy senior defensive back Daylin Johnson, who took a couple steps into the end zone for the Tigers’ second special teams touchdown in the game.

But that was as close as Katy got. Davis found Charles King on an 11-yard scoring strike with 53 seconds left in the third quarter, and then capped the scoring on a 1-yard plunge with 7:19 left in the game.

Offensively, the Tigers finished with just 79 yards on 24 carries, well off their season average of 204 rushing yards per game and good for only 3.3 yards per tote.

“We have to be able to establish something running-game wise, and we just didn’t do it,” said Joseph, who reconfigured his starting offensive line for the second straight playoff game. “We have to find a way to be more physical up front. North Shore did a better job than we did.”

Katy was forced to pass 17 times, completing nine. Junior quarterback Bronson McClelland had 138 passing yards, but 72 of those came early in

See **TIGERS**, page B7



Senior running back Ron Hoff

A LOOK BACK AT THE TIGERS

2019 record: 12-1, Class 6A-Division I regional semifinalist
District 19-6A finish: 6-0, 1st
Top Passer: Jr. QB Bronson McClelland 68-120-4 passing, 1,214 yards, 15 TDs
Top Rusher: Sr. RB Ron Hoff 216 carries, 1,451 yards, 16 TDs
Top Receiver: Sr. WR Jordan Patrick 31 catches, 634 yards, 6 TDs
Top Defensive Player: Sr. LB Jaylen Phillips 44 total tackles, 7 tackles for loss, 5 sacks, 1 fumble recovery
**Stats are for regular season*



Mayde Creek senior Victor Holdman gets the stop on a Cypress Creek ballcarrier during their area playoff game Nov. 21 at Pidgeon Stadium in Cypress.



Mayde Creek senior Daniel Huery carries the ball during a bi-district playoff game against Fort Bend Bush on Nov. 14 at Legacy Stadium.

RAMS

from page B4

The Rams' nine wins this season were two more than the total number of wins they had over the previous four seasons.

"The playoffs have been a dream and a goal since junior high," senior offensive lineman Curtis Stripling said. "This year, we really locked into just doing our job, everybody doing their part. We understand that when that happens, good things will happen."

The aforementioned culture Rabe implemented since his first year at the helm in 2015 has been vital.

Marcie Impastato, the gracious and spirited athletic secretary in her 10th year at Mayde Creek, said the discernible difference is togetherness.

"Coach Rabe and the staff have created a culture of family," Impastato said. "We are much more cohesive. The boys really care about each other, and that's made all the difference in the world."

Senior defensive lineman Victor Holdman agreed.

"All the other years, we had the talent but never really played together," Holdman said. "This year we're playing as a team."

Another big reason for the season's success was junior running back Julius Loughridge, who was District 19-6A's second-leading rusher and finished with 1,587 yards and 15 touchdowns.

Loughridge gave the Rams something they desperately lacked in previous years: a tough, hard-nosed go-to ballcarrier who can control game tempo and break down defenses with his strength and athleticism.

When Loughridge's father moved during the offseason to coach at Mayde Creek, the son was given a choice to stay at Taylor High or go with dad.

For Loughridge, the decision was easy. Home was a block away from Mayde Creek, and Loughridge was intrigued about helping establish a winning culture for the football program.

He did that.

"I love it here, man. It's fun," Loughridge said. "These guys are my boys. My teammates trust me to make the right decision every time, so I'm going to go out there and play for them."

Rabe, who calls Loughridge "a difference-maker," said he's never had a running back like Loughridge in his five years at the helm of the Rams. Generally, Mayde Creek backs have been small, speedy guys who operate best on the perimeter in open space.

The 5-foot-11, 200-pound Loughridge is speedy—he runs a 4.4 40-yard dash—but powerful, benching 350 pounds and squatting 600. He gives the Rams a back who can run inside the tackles, which opens things up on the outside as the game goes on.

"He's a hard runner," Stripling said. "You make a little hole, he'll power through. He's always getting positive yards."

Loughridge is part of a dynamic returning class for Mayde Creek next season.

While Zolacha, Huery and wideout JaCoby Wilson will graduate, key components of their offense (versatile talent Donte Jones, Loughridge and wideout L'den Skinner) and defense (safety Joseph Kinyock, cornerback Lavonte Bishop and defensive lineman Gequan Faucette) were only juniors.

Sophomore running back/receiver Eddie Harrell also factors in as a potential primary playmaker.

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Mayde Creek junior Donte Jones carries the ball during a game against Morton Ranch on Nov. 8 at Legacy Stadium.

ON A RAMPAGE

Rams enjoy best season since 1997

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

When Mayde Creek running back/receiver Daniel Huery and his Class of 2020 peers stepped into the football fieldhouse as freshmen in August 2016, they were quickly introduced to a demanding, no-nonsense culture that coach Mike Rabe had initiated just a year earlier.

"With the summer programs and workouts, we had to show up early in the mornings," Huery said. "The workouts were tough, hard. Coach made sure nobody quit. Nobody slacked off. He made us hold each other accountable. He made sure we understand our responsibilities."

It took time. Precious, trying time. But after totaling seven wins in the previous four seasons, Mayde Creek experienced a demonstrative breakthrough in 2019.

The season was one of the most successful in the program's history, as the Rams made the playoffs for the first time since 2008 and enjoyed their finest season—9-3 overall—since 1997, when they went 10-2.

"The way they've handled the victories and the way they've handled defeats, as the season goes on you start to feel really comfortable with them, because it doesn't affect them one way or the other," coach Mike Rabe said of his team. "They play with a workman's attitude in practice and do the same things over and over the right way. The moment is never too big for them."

Mayde Creek beat Fort Bend Bush, 27-21, for its first playoff win since 1997 before falling to Cypress Creek, 35-14, in the area round of the playoffs.

"We wanted to be a playoff team," Rabe said. "We felt like we had the potential to do that."

See **RAMS**, page B5

A LOOK BACK AT THE RAMS

2019 record: 9-3, Class 6A-Division II area finalist
District 19-6A finish: 4-2, 3rd
Top Passer: Sr. QB John Zalocha 48-91-3 passing, 780 yards, 5 TDs
Top Rusher: Jr. RB Julius Loughridge 173 carries, 1,331 yards, 13 TDs
Top Receiver: Sr. WR/RB Daniel Huery 20 catches, 360 yards, 2 TDs
Top Defensive Player: Sr. DL Victor Holdman 9.9 tackles per game, 3.0 sacks, 1 INT
**Stats are for regular season*

"The playoffs have been a dream and a goal since junior high. This year, we really locked into just doing our job, everybody doing their part. We understand that when that happens, good things will happen."

— SENIOR OFFENSIVE LINEMAN CURTIS STRIPLING



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BREAKOUT YEAR



Paetow junior Damon Bankston carries the ball during a game against Huntsville on Oct. 27 at Rhodes Stadium.

A LOOK BACK AT THE PANTHERS

2019 record: 8-3, Class 5A-Division II bi-district finalist
District 10-5A, Division II finish: 5-2, 3rd
Top Passer: So. QB Channing Dumas Jr. 80-141-4 passing, 1,109 yards, 22 TDs
Top Rusher: Sr. RB Jonathan Jolly 159 carries, 1,386 yards, 13 TDs
Top Receiver: Sr. WR Johnathan Baker 30 catches, 496 yards, 14 TDs
Top Defensive Player: Sr. LB/DL D.J. Mourning 6.8 tackles per game, 10 tackles for a loss, 7.0 sacks, 3 fumble recoveries, 1 fumble recovery, 1 INT
**Stats are for regular season*

Paetow shows mettle in 2nd year of varsity

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

Paetow coach B.J. Gotte often reflected with his juniors and seniors this 2019 season about how far they came.

In April of 2017, Gotte, who had been hired as head football coach and athletic coordinator at Paetow just four months before, sat with those then-freshmen and then-sophomores in a team meeting room at Morton Ranch High School, because Paetow's campus was still under construction.

Gotte outlined goals and expectations for the student-athletes who would be going to Paetow, which is made up of kids from Morton Ranch High and Katy High.

That meeting set in motion a methodical, if at times tenuous, process of building a program from scratch, initiated with a successful junior varsity season in 2017 and last year's inaugural season of varsity football that produced a 3-7 record.

Fast forward to Oct. 26, 2019, in varsity game No. 18 for the Panthers, and the feeling was "unbelievable," junior fullback Randle Kelley said.

"From way back when we started, from last year 3-7, to now ... the feeling is crazy," Kelley said. "So much hard work. Mat room, weight room. Everybody buying in to what we want to accomplish. This is the result."

Playoffs.

That Saturday October early afternoon will live on forever for Paetow, which punched its ticket to the postseason for the first time, upending regional power Huntsville, 25-14, at Rhodes Stadium.

The Panthers went on to finish the season 8-3, falling to Whitehouse in the first round of the playoffs. Still, the stinging finish did not take away from what was a historic campaign.

"I'm so happy for these kids, for these coaches," Gotte said. "They get to see the success from trusting in the process. Anything you can experience helps make you better."

The Panthers harped all season that experience is what made the difference.

"This team is night-and-day different in a lot of things," Gotte said. "Obviously, we're more experienced. We've grown up. We're more talented. We have senior leadership. We've got guys who have been through competitive, physical situations before, which they hadn't until this year."

After last season, Gotte sought two things he felt his team desperately needed: toughness and explosiveness.

In a pair of quiet late winter transfers, senior Jonathan Jolly from Katy High and junior Damon Bankston from Morton Ranch, the Panthers' concerns were suddenly addressed.

Jolly and Bankston were game-changers for Paetow.

Jolly had 1,404 rushing yards and 13 touchdowns this season. Bankston had 1,097 yards and eight touchdowns to go with 386 receiving yards and four more touchdowns.

"That's why I came over here," Bankston said. "I feel I could really use my talent. I'm using my speed more. I'm trusting blocks better. I'm being lined up in the slot more instead of just running back. It's fun."

Along with senior linebacker/defensive end D.J. Mourning, another transfer from Morton Ranch who averaged 6.8 tackles per game to go with 10 tackles for a loss, seven sacks, three fumble recoveries and a fumble caused, that provided a dominant core for Paetow on both sides of the ball, ideal for Gotte's ball-control, defense-oriented ways.

Gotte, who was the offensive coordinator at Katy High from 2012-2016, said Mourning was "one of the best defensive players I've been around as a coach."

"He is a football nut," Gotte said. "There's kids that do this because they're good or they like the attention or whatever reason. He does it because he enjoys the game. He's a dude that lives in the fieldhouse. He doesn't have any hobbies. Football is his deal."

Gotte brought a lot of the same principles and way of doing things that he saw while at Katy.

The offensive and defensive schemes are very similar. As far as a culture, it's practically the same, from how the Panthers practice to how they warm-up prior to games to how they conduct themselves overall.

Players credited the coaches for the season. Coaches credited players for the buy-in.

"They put us through a hard offseason," senior receiver Johnathan Baker said. "We worked our butts off in the offseason, and I'm just happy to see it all pay off. We know we're not a 3-7 program. The expectation since last November was to make the playoffs. That was the ultimate goal. That work, that mindset to get what we wanted ... it let us have success."



Senior linebacker D.J. Mourning

ON THE GRID

2019 KATY AREA HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Taking a look back at Katy ISD playoff teams

ON THE GRID | THE KATY TIMES
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2019 **B1**

TAYLOR-MADE



MARK GOODMAN

Taylor defensive tackle Gregg Osaghae holds up five fingers to signal the Mustangs' playoff advancement to the fifth round after Taylor won the Region III Class 6A-Division II title over Cypress Creek on Dec. 14 at NRG Stadium.

Katy ISD football experienced banner 2019 season

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

For the first time since 2008, Katy ISD had three football teams in the regional semifinals. For the third time in the last four years, the district had a representative in the state semifinals.

In some ways, this 2019 season was typical for the all-Katy 19-6A district. Katy High won its 11th consecutive undefeated district championship. Tompkins, for the second

straight season, finished second in the district and gave the vaunted Tigers a run for their money in a thrilling 35-30 Katy win on Oct. 3, the closest the Tigers have been challenged in a district game since 2013 against Seven Lakes.

"There's been tests the whole way," Katy coach Gary Joseph said. "We've had some really good football teams that have played very well. You have to be ready to play, and not just that but play your best. You don't take anything or anyone for granted. There's too good of talent around here and too good of coaches to not do that."

In other ways, however, the season was atypical for the district.

Taylor High was the last team standing in Katy ISD, making a mesmerizing run to the state semifinals after never having previously been past the regional semifinals in the school's 40-year history. The Mustangs joined 2016 Cinco Ranch and 2017 Katy High as recent state semifinalists for the district. Mayde Creek secured a playoff berth for the

See KATY ISD, page B12

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Katy purchases park land on Ave. D

By R. HANS MILLER
SENIOR REPORTER

KATY – Katy City Council approved the purchase of about 1.2 acres of land near City Hall at its regular Dec. 9 meeting. The land, located in the 900 block of Avenue D in downtown Katy was purchased for \$595,000.

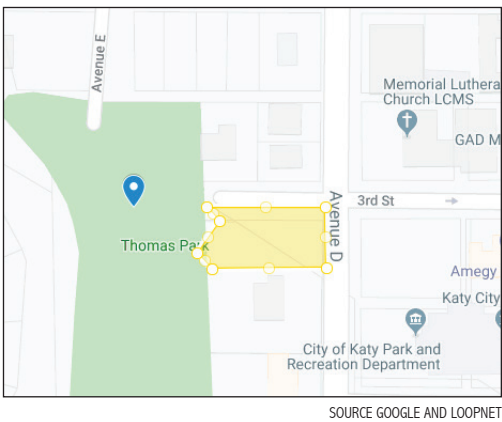
“The property between City Hall and Thomas Park will be a great addition of greenspace for public use in the city of Katy,” said Katy Mayor Pro Tem Chris Harris.

While an exact plan for the property has not been determined yet, Harris said the property is generally expected to be an extension of neighboring

Thomas Park. Additionally, he said the connectivity between the property and the renovated Old Town Katy area on the other side of City Hall from the property was an added bonus. Thomas Park is often overlooked by residents and visitors because it is not visible from Avenue D, he said. Putting some street-front property into the park is something the city hopes might change that, he said.

Strengthening the city’s parks is one of the council’s top priorities, Harris said.

“There are many beautiful large trees, and I am proud this space will be used for many generations in the future,” Harris said.



The Loopnet real estate website shows the area highlighted in yellow as the property purchased by the city of Katy. The site includes several trees and offers direct access to Avenue D for park-goers. The city will likely use this property to expand neighboring Thomas Park.



The newly-purchased park land comes with abundant trees and an easy view of Katy’s City Hall.

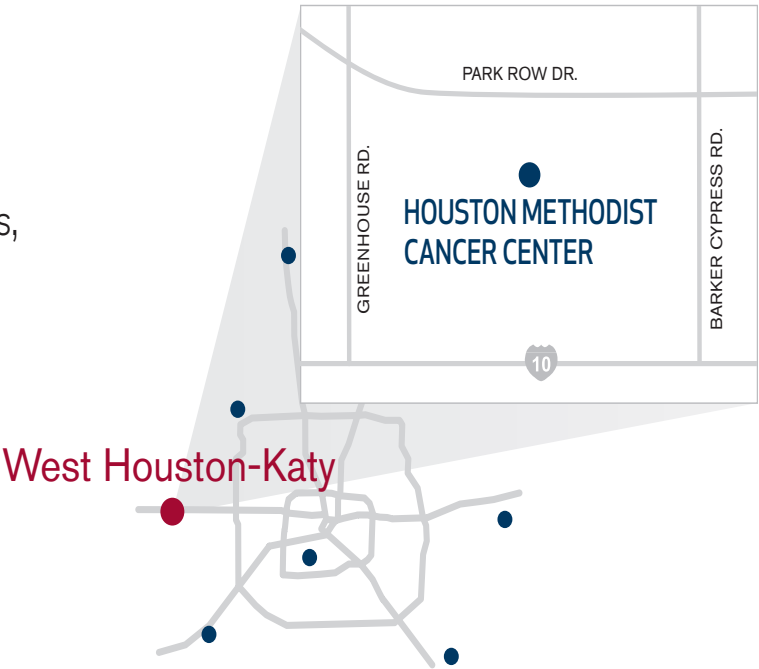
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Dudley Adams was born January 12, 1932, in Houston, Texas to Freda Grace Schonewitz and Ernest Joseph Adams. He grew up in Houston, Texas and attended Sam Houston public schools. As a child, Dudley played in the Buffalo Bayou and at the YMCA. His family's house was at the back near the Buffalo Stadium where his dad took him to see Dizzy Dean hit baseballs as the Houston Buffs, now known as the Houston Astros. He was a lifelong fan of the Houston Astros and enjoyed watching the games.

Dudley joined the United States Army in 1949, where he served three years in the Korean war. He later injured his hand due to the blowback of a hand grenade. He was sent to Okinawa, Japan for surgery and later recalled that the steaks were delicious. Dudley then went to a MASH unit for rehabilitation. He knitted and played pool and ping-pong to help his hand recover its movement. Dudley was a forward



DUDLEY ADAMS
1932-2019

observer in the 519th AAA Gun Battalion, 31st Brigade, 11th AAA Group, U.S. Army, where he received three Bronze Stars. During his time in Korea, he played cards with Bob Hope.

Later he returned home and attended classes at the University of Houston. In the early 50's, he met Fred Toffte at Industrial Tool and Die where he worked for 70 years as a research and development engineer. Dudley had a very smart and inventive mind. He loved all his friends and coworkers and very much enjoyed going into work everyday.

On September 10, 1963, in Lufkin, Texas, he married and loved Beverly June Greenhouse for a wonderful 56 years. They lived in Houston, Texas and later moved to Katy, Texas in 1976.

Dudley passed away Sunday, December 8, 2019 at Katy Memorial Hermann Hospital at the age of 87 years old.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Beverly; his four daughters,

Terri Arlene Whitman, Debbie Lee Churchill, Gina Yvette Adams, and Gayle Lea Adams; his only son Dudley Clinton Adams; ten grandchildren, 13 great grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews; he is also survived by some of his very special friends, Greg Messina, Shelby Smith, Bill McClendon, and Elizabeth Barlow.

Dudley is preceded in death by his parents; his brothers EJ, Freddie William, as well as his one sister Ernestine.

He always enjoyed fishing and would have decided to take his fishing pole and tackle box and go fish on the spur of the moment. He was an excellent pool player and enjoyed watching and playing golf. Dudley will be greatly missed by so many.

The family will receive friends at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 21, 2019 at the Schmidt Funeral Home Chapel, located at 1508 East Avenue in Katy, Texas with Shelby Smith officiating.

To express condolences, please visit www.SchmidtFuneralHome.net Funeral services held under the direction of Schmidt Funeral Home 1508 East Avenue ~ Katy, Texas 77493 ~ (281) 391-2424

Virginia Theresa Radike was born on September 14, 1938 to Ralph Lozano and Theresa Vargo Lozano in Port Huron, Michigan. She was a member of the Epiphany of the Lord Catholic Church in Katy and was a long-time blood donor in local drives. Virginia also enjoyed reading, but loved her family most of all.

On December 11, 2019, Virginia Theresa Radike passed away in Houston, Texas at 81 years of age.

She is survived by her children, Michael Radike and his wife, Lisa, of Millersville, Maryland, Susan Zimmerman of Katy, Kristin Reid and her husband, Scott, of Katy, Steven Radike and his wife, Beth, of Houston, and Scott Radike of Eugene, Oregon; her 11 grandchildren; two great grandchildren; and her two sisters, Josephine Medlen of Michigan and Mary Anderson of Michigan.

Virginia was preceded in death by her husband, David Norwood Radike; one great grandchild; her brother; her sister; and her parents, Ralph and Theresa Lozano.



VIRGINIA THERESA RADIKE
1938-2019

There will be a private inurnment at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Juvenile Diabetes, www.jdrf.org, or to SIRE Therapeutic Horsemanship, www.sire-htec.org.

To express condolences, please visit www.SchmidtFuneralHome.net

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3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort,
4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4



When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul.
Psalms 94:19

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Believe

Prisons violated air conditioning order

By **JOLIE MCCULLOUGH**
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

A federal judge is allowing prisoners' attorneys to dig deeper and find out who is responsible for the Texas prison system's violation of a court order requiring that some inmates be housed in air conditioning.

U.S. District Judge Keith Ellison ruled Wednesday in a lengthy lawsuit over prison heat conditions that inmates' attorneys can further investigate the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's failures this summer to provide air conditioning for inmates protected by the suit — and agency officials' previous denials of such failures.

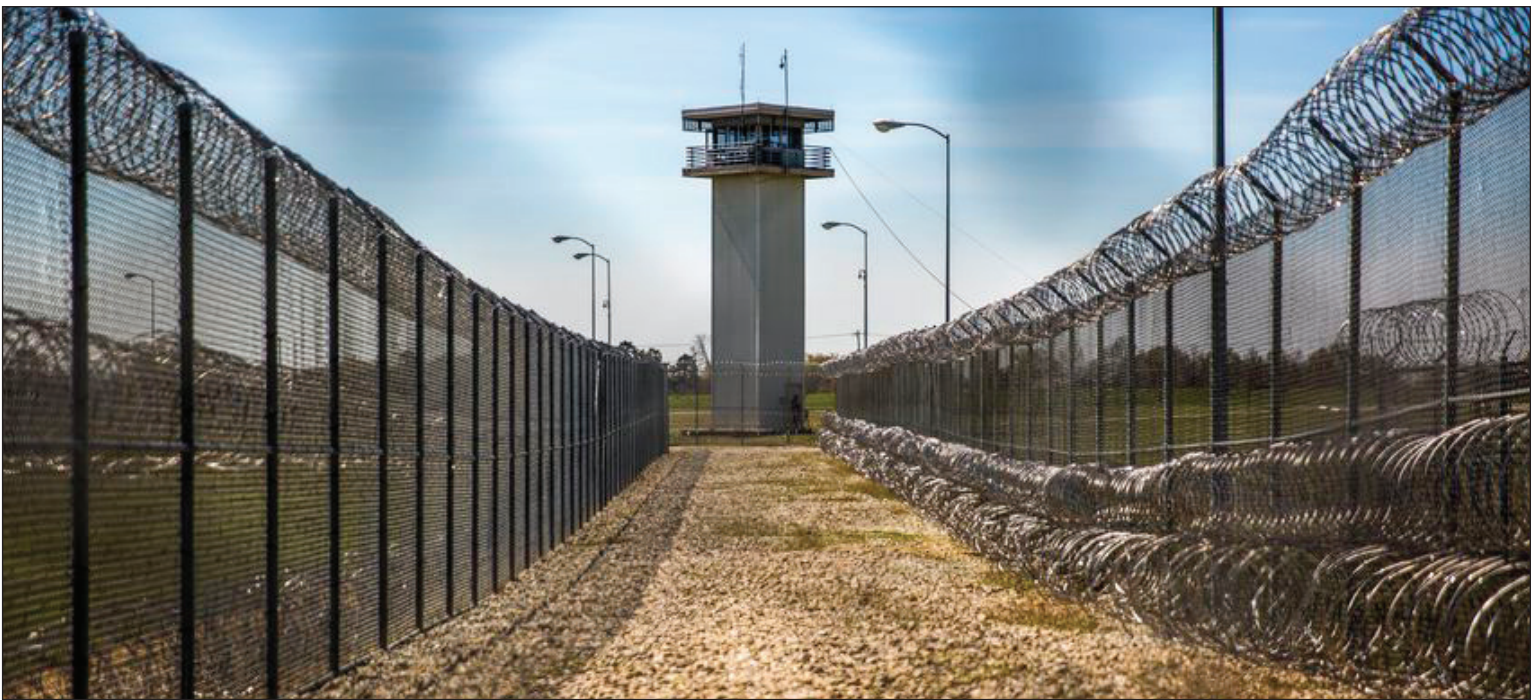
This year's violations were presented to Ellison after the department settled the lawsuit in 2018 and agreed to air condition one prison and provide inmates who had been housed in it with cooled beds even if they were moved to other units. That settlement followed Ellison's ruling that keeping vulnerable inmates in sweltering temperatures was cruel and unusual punishment.

"There is no dispute that Defendants violated the terms of the settlement agreement," Ellison wrote in his ruling. "Additionally, Defendants have also admitted that they had previously made several serious misrepresentations to both [the inmates' attorneys] and this Court."

The judge did not decide whether he would hold TDCJ officials in contempt for the violations and declined to issue any fines for now. But the anger and exasperation Ellison often exhibited in his courtroom over prison officials' noncompliance with the settlement order and misrepresentation of prison conditions were still visible in his writing.

Not only did the state endanger inmates' lives, he said, but it also prevented the discovery of the danger. Given the agency's history of violations in this lawsuit and the inaccurate information officials presented to the court, Ellison wrote that the prison agency's "promises that they will do better without intervention by this Court fall flat."

The ruling sets the scene for fur-



SHELBY KNOWLES FOR THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

About 75% of Texas' more than 100 prison facilities don't have air conditioning in all housing areas.

ther action in a yearslong lawsuit that originated at the William Pack prison near College Station. In 2014, several inmates at the prison sued the department for keeping them in uncooled housing where temperatures routinely surpass 100 degrees. The Pack prison was one of about 75 Texas prison facilities that didn't have air conditioning in housing areas at the time.

In 2017, Ellison ordered medically vulnerable inmates at the prison to be placed in air conditioned beds, and the next year, TDCJ and the inmates' lawyers settled.

Ellison praised the agency for the settlement, but that sentiment disappeared this summer, when the judge threatened to jail TDCJ officials for potentially deadly violations of the order.

In July, the inmates told their attorneys that two prisons housing dozens of prisoners covered by the settlement had temperatures that exceeded what the court order allowed. The prisons are air conditioned, but they claimed the cooling units weren't working. In one prison, TDCJ officials failed to report faulty cooling equipment to the attorneys, as the settlement requires, the ruling states. In

the other, the Le Blanc prison in Beaumont, the agency falsely told the lawyers that temperatures were adequately cool.

When the lawyers continued to receive complaints from prisoners, they asked to inspect the unit, but TDCJ lawyers attempted to re-schedule the inspection at the last minute. They said that the warden was out due to a family emergency and that senior TDCJ officials were out of town at a conference.

Both of those things were false, the agency has since admitted. A TDCJ lawyer said in September court hearings that the warden's daughter had a nonemergency doctor's appointment, and the conference had already ended.

In August, Ellison held an emergency hearing and demanded the inspection take place as scheduled, and it was discovered that temperatures were much higher than the 88-degree heat index, which accounts for humidity as well. That is the maximum temperature allowed by the settlement.

The inmates' lawyers asked Ellison the next month to issue court sanctions for the violations, including hefty fines on the department. They claimed TDCJ

officials lied to try to cover up the high temperatures and dangerous conditions and withheld information.

There have since been multiple hearings at which Ellison has slammed the agency's conduct and ordered that the inmates immediately be placed in cooled housing. The agency's executive director and a defendant in the lawsuit, Bryan Collier, has also appeared in the courtroom for questioning.

Collier admitted fault for the violations, absorbing admonishments from the judge and harsh accusations from the inmates' lawyers. He outlined a plan to move the inmates and new policies created to ensure future compliance with the settlement, including installing permanent temperature readers at all prisons with air conditioning. But it's still unclear who is to blame for the violations and misrepresentations.

In Ellison's ruling Wednesday, he said he would not impose fines on the agency at this point, since that is a cost to the taxpayers, not the individuals. But he said further discovery is necessary to figure out how the agency failed, who provided false information and how to ensure neither happens again.

"Despite numerous hearings, during which multiple witnesses testified, it is still unclear who is responsible for Defendants' failure to abide by the settlement agreement," he said. "None of Defendants' witnesses were able to say who was responsible for the misrepresentations and misleading documents. ... Responsibility was too easily pushed to unnamed mid-level TDCJ officials."

The prisoners' lawyers can now request more information from the agency on the violations and falsehoods and depose five TDCJ officials of their choice before requesting another hearing before Ellison. Ellison also allowed for the attorneys to collect market-rate fees from the agency for that work.

A TDCJ spokesman said he could not comment on pending litigation. Jeff Edwards, the lead lawyer for the plaintiffs, said those costs will likely be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.


"We consider it a success because it allows us to find out who knew that they were violating the settlement agreement and who covered it up," Edwards said. "It is step one in holding the real wrongdoers accountable."



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WINTER

from page A2

the only two items that are provided in exclusively new condition, she said. Children's sizes eight through 14 for both boys and girls often run low, she said, as do small and medium men's sizes which teenaged boys often wear.

Crawford praised the community for assisting in gathering the jackets and other cold-weather gear necessary for the coat drive.

"The community has been very generous in donating. The Rotary Club was able to help us with some new coats through a program that they work with and we even had the girls volley ball team at Mayde

Creek Junior High conduct a coat drive and had about 150 coats that they collected for us," Crawford said. "We have had a great response from all areas of our community."

Barnes said she and her family are grateful for the community's generosity.

"It means everything," Barnes said. "We wouldn't have the means to take care of this."



Clothed by Faith volunteers and staff distributed about 600 coats and cold-weather clothing to community members who had signed up for their coat giveaway on Saturday, Dec. 14. The nonprofit has served about 15,000 community members so far this year, staff reported.



PHOTOS BY R. HANS MILLER

Kara Barnes and her children stopped by the coat drive to pick up coats and clothing for cold weather for themselves and Barnes' husband. Barnes said the coat drive event was a blessing for her family.



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Performance Bond, Payment Bond, and Maintenance Bond, in an amount of one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price will be required.</p> <p>For public projects, not less than the minimum wage rates as prescribed in the General Conditions must be paid.</p> <p>The Contract for this project will be awarded by the City based on the lowest and best bid received</p> <p>The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids, and to waive any informalities in bids.</p> <p>Bonded general contractor may obtain one set of bid documents for each project at the office of the Engineer, Clay & Leyendecker, Inc., 1350 Avenue D, Katy, Texas 77493, (281) 391-0173, upon deposit of a check or cash only in the amount of \$40.00/set, payable to Clay & Leyendecker, Inc. Bidder must telephone before coming to pick up plans. Said amount will be refunded if the bid documents are returned in <u>good condition within one (1) week</u> of the date of bid. Otherwise, no refunds will be made. 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Senior leadership, Johnson ignite Tompkins

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

Through the first 19 games of its season, Tompkins’ girls basketball team has won 16. Perhaps none, however, have been as telling as the Falcons’ District 19-6A opener on Friday, Dec. 13, a thorough 51-31 win over perennial district power Seven Lakes at home.

The Falcons are already three wins shy of tying last season’s 19-win total in a campaign that has been a culmination of senior leadership and experience, as well as the talent and poise of freshman Loghan Johnson.

Seniors like Mia Hill and Nalani Burton were varsity players as freshmen on the 2016-17 team that won nine games. They have been the bedrock for a program that has made strides ever since, making the playoffs in 2017-18, falling a game short of the post-season last season and now potential district title contenders.

“They hold each other accountable. They play for each other,” said coach Tamatha Ray, who won her 100th career game earlier this season. “They learned from last year and this has been a process for these seniors. They’ve taken responsibility and they listen to coaching and they learn.”

The win over Seven Lakes to open district play was a landmark win for Ray, who has coached the program since its inception in 2013-14. The Falcons had never beaten the Spartans.

In their initial meeting this season, though, Tompkins jumped out to a 9-2 lead and never looked back. Hill and junior point guard Crystal Smith led the way in the first half, each scoring six points, before Johnson shut the door on Seven Lakes in the second.

The Spartans climbed within 25-24 early in the third quarter, but the Falcons outscored them 26-7 the rest of the way. Johnson, a versatile wing, had 19 of those points.

A matchup headache for opponents, Johnson drove to the basket with ease and also knocked



Tompkins freshman Loghan Johnson drives to the basket during the Falcons’ District 19-6A opener against Seven Lakes on Friday, Dec. 13, at Tompkins High.

in a 3-pointer. She initiated fast breaks, had a few steals, and showed a power and aggressiveness offensively that was beyond her years.

“I didn’t do so well in the first half and they were playing me softer (in the second half), so I used that as an opportunity to jump on them and get the easy buckets when I could,” said Johnson, who finished with a game-high 28 points to go with four rebounds and three steals. “I’m a bigger player who can handle the ball, so I have a lot of advantages. I just hustled.”

Johnson scored eight points in the third quarter and 13 in the fourth.

“She’s amazing,” Smith said. “I couldn’t ask for a better teammate. On and off the court, she gets it done.”

Ray praised Johnson for her work ethic and coachability, two traits that define this year’s Falcons.

“She can dribble, she can pass, she can shoot. She can post up,” Ray said. “How do you guard her? But she also wants to learn and she listens, and she couldn’t do it without her teammates. She understands that.”

Johnson said pace of the game is the biggest adjustment as she continues to acclimate herself to the varsity basketball. She also said more is expected of



Tompkins junior Crystal Smith grabs a rebound during the Falcons’ District 19-6A opener against Seven Lakes on Friday, Dec. 13, at Tompkins High.

her. Often whenever Seven Lakes threatened, the ball found Johnson on offense and she, more often than not, made a play to keep the Spartans at bay.

“I have to learn how to play with older teammates who are more mature than me,” Johnson said. “I think I’m doing well adjusting to the environment, and socially as well. I’m still on my way up.”

“I just want to keep learning and do everything I can to become a better teammate. This team encourages me and pushes me and I want to do a lot for them, be there for them and learn from them.”

Smith said the win over Seven Lakes was “huge.” Smith has matured from precocious

sophomore to team leader. She finished the Seven Lakes game with nine points, three steals and four assists, but it’s her intangibles, like being a calming presence on the floor as a ballhandler and defender, that makes a difference.

“I wanted to learn how to be a better teammate,” she said of her goals for this season. “It was important we learned how to come together as one. Learn from our mistakes. I think that’s what we’ve done this year. We’ve gelled from that, learned from that and it’s making us what we are now. We motivate each other. We pick each other up.”

“We’re holding each other accountable and just taking games one play at a time.”

Bala, Hursh show off versatility

By STEPHEN GREENWELL
TIMES CORRESPONDENT

Senior Catherine Hursh and junior Abby Bala are the sort of do-it-all wings that can dominate a game with scoring, but in Cinco Ranch’s District 19-6A opener against Mayde Creek on Friday, Dec. 13, their playmaking showed off the depth of this year’s Cougars squad in a 59-14 win.

Cinco Ranch improved to 11-5 overall.

While Bala had 13 points, Hursh only had four. Still, both controlled the game’s tempo and allowed teammates to flourish. The duo combined to set-up 12 layups for teammates, typically as they rolled to the basket or ran the court in transition.

“We’re just trying to execute our offense the best we can,” Bala said. “I want to be able to see the floor more and read the defense, to see where to put the ball because I’m the point guard.”

Hursh added that one of her goals this year was to improve her passing.

“I wanted to improve my assists,” she said. “This year, I think I’ve bumped it up already. As far as a team goal, we want to win district and make it to the playoffs.”

The Cougars missed the playoffs by one game last season.

Cinco Ranch coach Dwayne Archangel said he was happy to see the progress from his two star players.

“Those two young ladies, we’ve been through the fire together,” he said. “Bala was a freshman and I put her on varsity, and I just had to throw her into the position of point guard, which she wasn’t accustomed to. She would average about 17 turnovers a game, but like I told her, ‘Don’t worry. We are building for down the road. The district should be yours, come junior year.’”

Archangel called Hursh a “gifted, athletic player.” She and Bala are attracting interest from NCAA



Cinco Ranch junior Abby Bala, left, and senior Catherine Hursh combined for 17 points and 12 assists in the Cougars’ district-opening win over Mayde Creek on Friday, Dec. 13.

Division I programs, and Hursh has visited several, although she hasn’t made a final decision yet.

“She loves the game of basketball,” Archangel said of Hursh. “She works extremely hard. From her sophomore year going into her junior year, I saw her really working on her shot and it improved tremendously. She just continues to get better and better, which is good for her because she has a lot of colleges looking at her right now. She can handle the basketball and run the offense, which makes things a whole lot easier.”

In addition to those two, sophomore Madison Mascorro had an impressive game, finishing with 13 points, all in the second half. Similar to Bala and Hursh, Archangel said he expected big things from her after she contributed as a freshman on varsity last year.

“Our last game (last year) was a play-in to get into the playoffs against Morton Ranch,” he said. “It was a big game and she was

only a freshman at the time, but she put up 20 points. I was excited, because I knew it was a breakout moment. She’s another one of those players that we’re looking forward to constantly growing.”

Also contributing for the Cougars were seniors Riley King (six points), Kaitlyn Pimentel (6), Taylor Rowland (5) and Victoria Huggins (4). Freshman Dani Williams had four points, including a reverse lay-up in the game’s final seconds that brought the crowd to its feet.

Nine different Cougars had baskets, but Archangel said their focus in practice has been on the defensive end. Despite a large lead, he called two timeouts in the final 10 minutes to emphasize that point after Mayde Creek scored layups in transition.

“Defense, defense, defense. That’s all that we’re drilling right now,” he said. “Right now, we can score, we can shoot, but we’ve got to make sure we get back in transition defense and cutting off the driving lanes.”

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

GIRLS BASKETBALL

- Tompkins 51, Seven Lakes 31
- Taylor 49, Morton Ranch 26
- Cinco Ranch 59, Mayde Creek 14

BOYS BASKETBALL

- Cinco Ranch 66, Pearland Dawson 58

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

CLASS 6A-DIVISION II STATE SEMIFINAL FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS

- Austin Westlake 63, Taylor 3

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16

GIRLS BASKETBALL

- Jersey Village 44, Katy 35
- Cypress Park 45, Mayde Creek 28

BOYS BASKETBALL

- Seven Lakes 77, Pearland Dawson 57
- Katy 61, Alief Hastings 46
- Cinco Ranch 70, Aldine 50
- Eisenhower 67, Mayde Creek 57

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

GIRLS BASKETBALL

- Katy at Taylor, 7 p.m.
- Cinco Ranch at Seven Lakes, 7 p.m.
- Morton Ranch at Mayde Creek, 7 p.m.
- Magnolia West at Paetow, 4:30 p.m.
- Tompkins at Manvel, 4:30 p.m.

BOYS BASKETBALL

- Spring at Tompkins, 4 p.m.
- Kempner at Katy, 7 p.m.
- Mayde Creek at Fort Bend Bush, 7 p.m.
- Cinco Ranch at The Woodlands, 7 p.m.
- Seven Lakes at Bryan Rudder, 5:30 p.m.
- Taylor at Dulles, 4 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26

GIRLS BASKETBALL

- Tompkins at Lake Travis Tournament
- Seven Lakes at Aggieland Invitational, at A&M Consolidated High
- Taylor at Boerne ISD Tournament

BOYS BASKETBALL

- Mayde Creek at Port Arthur Tournament, at Beaumont Westbrook High

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27

GIRLS BASKETBALL

- Tompkins at Lake Travis Tournament
- Seven Lakes at Aggieland Invitational, at A&M Consolidated High
- Morton Ranch at Barbers Hill Tournament
- Taylor at Boerne ISD Tournament

BOYS BASKETBALL

- Mayde Creek at Port Arthur Tournament, at Beaumont Westbrook High
- Cinco Ranch at Pasadena Tournament
- Tompkins at Aldine Tournament
- Katy at New Caney Tournament
- Seven Lakes at Conroe Christmas Classic

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28

GIRLS BASKETBALL

- Bridgeland at Paetow, 11:30 a.m.
- Katy at Stratford, 10:30 a.m.
- Tompkins at Lake Travis Tournament
- Seven Lakes at Aggieland Invitational, at A&M Consolidated High
- Morton Ranch at Barbers Hill Tournament
- Taylor at Boerne ISD Tournament

BOYS BASKETBALL

- Taylor at Kempner, noon
- Mayde Creek at Port Arthur Tournament, at Beaumont Westbrook High
- Cinco Ranch at Pasadena Tournament
- Tompkins at Aldine Tournament
- Katy at New Caney Tournament
- Seven Lakes at Conroe Christmas Classic



PHOTOS BY MARK GOODMAN

Taylor High senior offensive lineman Michael Tulenko (79) and junior defensive back Cecil Ivey Jr (23) shake hands after a tough loss in the state semifinal playoff game against Austin Westlake on Saturday, Dec. 14, at McLane Stadium in Waco.

Taylor's historic season comes to a close in state semis

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

For about 16 minutes of game time, Taylor hung with perennial state power Austin Westlake. But eventually, the Chaparrals' passing prowess proved too much to extend the Mustangs' magical season another game.

History came to an unceremonious end for Taylor on Saturday, Dec. 14, as it fell to Westlake, 63-3, in their Class 6A-Division II state semifinal at McLane Stadium. The Mustangs, playing into December for the first time, struggled containing Westlake senior quarterback Kirkland Michaux, a 6-foot-5, physical gunslinger who lit up Taylor's dynamic playmaking defense for 230 passing yards and five touchdowns en route to a 35-3 halftime lead.

"He was moving faster than everybody else," said senior safety Braden Hay, who added the Chaps' pace of play was a challenge. "He used a lot of his second reads; he didn't throw it to his first guy all the time. There was one touchdown with three receivers on one side. He looked their way, they were covered, and then another guy opens on the other side. They had a good offensive scheme for us."

Michaux finished 15-of-20 passing for 304 yards and seven touchdowns to book the Chaps' trip to this week's state championship game. While Westlake, which improved to 14-1, got its electric passing game going, Taylor could not establish its running game.

The Mustangs had one rushing yard on 15 first-half carries, and totaled 34 yards on 26 carries in the game.

"They did something we hadn't seen them do all season, as far as read cues," junior offensive lineman Hayden Conner said. "If they saw something, they'd attack it, mid-play. It was something pretty advanced that we hadn't seen. Props to them."

Taylor only trailed 7-3 with 8:10 left in the second quarter, scoring on Renan Bae-ta's 38-yard field goal. But Westlake found its groove, showing off Michaux's arm and a wealth of talent at receiver.

Over the final seven minutes of the first half, Westlake scored four touchdowns as Michaux found four different receivers in the end zone: Jackson Coker on a 60-yard pass, Jake Misch from a yard out, Jaden Greathouse from six yards away, and Ma-son Mangum from 38 yards out.

In a matter of 34 seconds late in the second quarter, Westlake sandwiched a



Taylor junior quarterback J. Jensen III (11) scrambles with the ball before being brought down by Austin Westlake's Austin McClendon (96) during their state semifinal playoff game on Saturday, Dec. 14, at McLane Stadium in Waco.

Ford Dickerson fumble recovery of a Taylor muffed kickoff return with a pair of back-breaking touchdowns.

During one stretch, Westlake scored touchdowns on seven consecutive possessions.

Overall, Westlake outgained Taylor 490-92 in total yards. The Mustangs' most productive offensive player was junior quarterback J. Jensen III, who completed 9 of 18 passes for 58 yards with an interception.

"They read stuff, and they read our line and the halfbacks and brought the edges and everybody," said Jensen, who was pressured consistently and was forced to often rush throws. "They threw everything at us."

One game, however, did not take away from a remarkably impressive season for the Mustangs, who finished 9-6.

Prior to the game, school principal Chris Morgan marveled at the spirit and community feel at Taylor High during the previous few weeks.

"It's amazing to walk down the hallways," Morgan said. "It makes school a lot more fun in December, that's for sure."

The Mustangs did that.

Players talked proudly about being the last team from Katy ISD standing, falling one win shy of playing in the season's penultimate game. It was a team that went 5-5 in the regular season and needed help on the final week to secure its playoff berth.

From there, madness.

Taylor cruised to a Region III championship in dominant fashion, blowing away Cypress Creek 58-20 to earn its trip to Waco. In the school's 40 years, the football program had never been past the regional semifinals, and only three times had it been that far.

"I loved every single second of it," senior running back Gavin Belue said. "We were counted out ever since the beginning of the season. Everybody told us we couldn't and we tried to prove everybody wrong that we could."

Taylor was the only team in the state that finished fourth in its district to surpass the regional finals.

"Winning four playoff games and getting to the fifth round sets the bar a little higher," coach Chad Simmons said. "It's a great staff and great kids with great work ethic and buy-in. We'll continue to build on that."

And Taylor could be back. Of the 22 players that started the state semifinal, only 10 graduate. Five on each side of the ball.

"I am nothing but proud of this team," Hay said. "This team has been everything to me. I bought in as a freshman and I've been on varsity for three years, and this team is amazing. From the backups to the top guys, everybody just works, works, works. Everybody fought for the purpose of winning."

"I don't want them to do anything but build on what we've done. I'd like for them to do their thing. Win a state championship next year."



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COURTESY KATY ISD

The Katy ISD Board of Trustees appointed Euberta Lucas as principal of the district's newest campus, Elementary #43. Marc Kampwerth was appointed as principal of Fielder Elementary. Both are experienced principals who were promoted from within the district.

UPGRADES

from page A1

bond funds, said Katy ISD Assistant Superintendent of Operations Ted Vierling. The cost to install the cameras totals about \$2.4 million, he said.

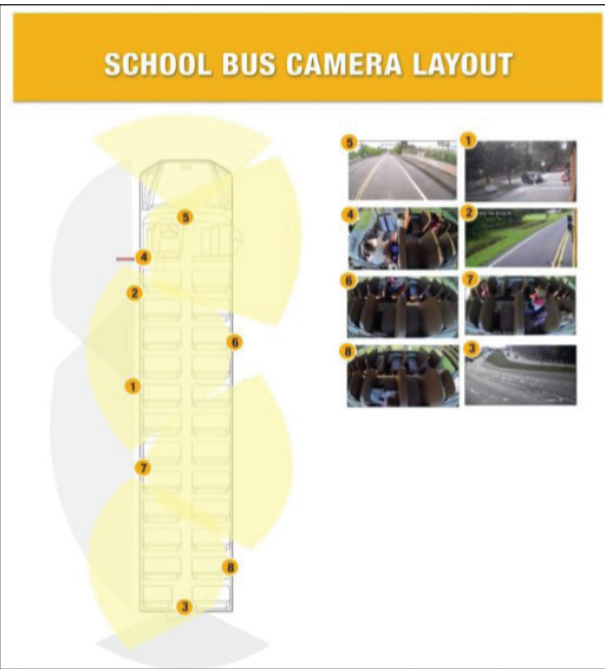
"The camera system upgrade will provide the latest in technology and safety measures available in school bus transportation," Vierling said. "The system is capable of supplying video coverage of every seat positioned in the school bus, while also monitoring the activity in nearly every corner of the vehicle and bus stop locations."

Installation of the safety monitoring equipment throughout the district's bus fleet is expected to be completed by the March of 2020, Vierling said. He added that some delays may cause that goal to be extended, but Safety Vision and district staff would work to complete the camera upgrades in time.

Katy ISD buses have been monitored by video since the late 1980s, Vierling said. However, the current system uses one camera that only monitors the inside of the bus, he said. The system is reliant on SD memory cards to store video and video is only available by manually transferring footage from the memory card to a hard drive when Katy ISD officials or law enforcement need to review the it.

In contrast, the new system will monitor all seats in the buses they are mounted in, Vierling said. The cameras will also monitor the bus driver, the entrance to the bus and the stop sign arms that extend at bus stops. The new system will also connect to the district's Wi-Fi network to upload video as needed. Video will be uploaded whenever manually initiated or when a bus driver presses a button to create a digital bookmark in the video feed.

The Board of Trustees also opted to enter into a 3-year agreement with GoldStar Transit to provide additional drivers to Katy ISD. The district is about 30 drivers short, echoing a statewide shortage of bus drivers, he said. The cost is about \$74,000 per route, Vi-



COURTESY KATY ISD

The layout for the eight-camera video surveillance system that will be installed in the Katy ISD bus fleet will provide more thorough coverage than the single-camera systems currently in place on the district's buses. The current system only records from above the driver's head straight to the rear of the bus, while the new system will monitor the arcs shown in the diagram above.

erling said. With no less than 40 routes, that brings the total cost of the contract to almost \$3 million, which will be paid out of 2017 mobility bond funds.

The shortage of drivers has made it necessary for the District to outsource to a contractor that can increase the number of drivers available, allowing Katy schools to offer the level of transportation services that parents expect, he said.

Currently, the district has had to use their maintenance staff whose purpose is to repair the buses to keep buses rolling, Vierling said. This is especially true when regular drivers call in sick, he added. Having an irregularly staffed bus route is a risk to student safety because the change in staff doesn't allow the drivers to get to know students and identify who the adults are that are supposed to meet the student at the bus stop at the end of their ride, he said.

Vierling's presentation emphasized that no Katy ISD staff were going to be replaced by the GoldStar contract. The busing contract is intended to supplement the efforts of Katy ISD's existing drivers and mechanics, not replace those staff, he said.

"We are not replacing anybody," Vierling said. "We are not replacing one driver - not one driver."

The district will have the option to reject any bus drivers hired by GoldStar whose behavior does not meet with the district's standards, Vierling said. GoldStar drivers will have to meet the same background check, licensing and training standards all directly-employed Katy ISD bus drivers do.

Katy ISD has done what it can to retain and attract drivers, Vierling said. The pay rate for drivers was recently increased from \$16.83 per hour to \$17.17 per hour. Additionally, perfect attendance bonuses were increased from \$200 annually to \$400. Katy ISD bus drivers also have access to health coverage and unique benefits such as \$2 per day child care and a minimum 5-hour work schedule to ensure the drivers make enough to make driving for the district worthwhile to them.

A 6-month noncompete clause is included in the agreement to keep drivers from switching between the two employers quickly, Katy ISD staff said.

"I firmly believe that upgrading our technology and camera system, along with the contracted agreement of a professional transportation company, will enhance our transportation services to be agile and equipped to meet District goals and growth," Vierling said.

Peckham also offers a community center with swimming, a gym and regularly scheduled community activities. John Paul Landing includes a boardwalk and an environmental education center to host events that educate attendees about the Katy Prairie's ecosystem.

Softball, volleyball and other sports facilities along with small parks have also been built during Radack's time in office.

Radack said that he will be focused on educating voters between now and the November 2020 elections. He wants to make sure people are informed about their options and the consequences and importance of decisions made during commissioners court meetings. He feels he can do more for the public by educating them during this next election cycle and by serving as commissioner than if he were focused on running for office again.

"I love being a county commissioner - but sometimes you've got to look up and say, 'Hey. Is there something more I can do,'" Radack said.

Radack will remain in office until his term is completed at the end of 2020.



COURTESY KARE

Katy Area Retired Educators regularly collect and distribute books throughout the community to encourage reading. Cardiff Junior High, Hutsell Elementary, Golbow Elementary and Mayde Creek High School have all received book donations this year.

KARE

from page A1

"The auditioned group is made up of select singers from the choral department, mostly juniors and seniors," said KARE Second Vice President Tracey Patterson.

The retiree group is also collecting and distributing books throughout the community to encourage reading, said Brenda Shaver, KARE's publicity volunteer. Through the program, KARE has been able to distribute books to the Mark A. Chapman YMCA, Bear Creek United Methodist Church for their neighborhood ministry program, Cardiff Junior High, Hutsell Elementary, Golbow Elementary and Mayde Creek High School's Pregnancy Education Program.

The group is also continuing to push

for a successful scholarship year, Shaver said. KARE offers scholarships to Katy ISD seniors entering college the fall after they graduate as education majors who intend to become public school teachers. Last year, the local branch of the Texas Retired Teachers Association was able to provide eight scholarships in the amount of \$1,200 to Katy ISD students. Shaver said they hope to continue to grow the scholarship program.

Katy ISD seniors interested in pursuing an education degree can obtain an application for the scholarship program from their campus counselor.

KARE meets monthly and their next meeting will be held Jan. 8, 2020. All public school employees who retired under the Teachers Retirement System are welcome to attend. Meetings are held at the Merrell Center, room 144.



**Dr. Kimberly Clark and Dr. Nicole Oberle
are the proud new owners of Marek Veterinary Clinic.**




Dr. Clark graduated from Texas A&M University, College of Veterinary Medicine with both a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine and a Doctorate of Philosophy in Veterinary Microbiology. She and her family have been members of the Sealy Community since 2005. She has been practicing veterinary medicine for 20 years and is excited to practice in her own hometown. Dr. Oberle received her Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine from Texas A&M University, College of Veterinary Medicine and has been practicing for over 10 years. Dr. Oberle grew up in the small town of Lamesa, TX. She and her family are looking forward to being a part of Sealy. Dr. Dennis Marek, a life time resident of Austin County and also a graduate from Texas A&M University, College of Veterinary Medicine, started Marek Veterinary Clinic in 1979. The clinic just celebrated its 40th anniversary! Dr. Marek will continue to provide veterinary care for your pets. In addition, all of the very talented veterinary staff will also continue to provide the level of personalized care that you have come to expect.

The clinic will be officially changing its name to Sealy Animal Hospital in 2020. The doctors will combine over 70 years of experience in veterinary medicine and surgery. They look forward to providing your pets with exceptional veterinary care.



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RADACK

from page A1

the best we can to keep as much money as we can for our precincts. With the people voicing their opinions, it will be a huge difference."

Radack said he was proud of the progress Precinct 3 has made in expanding parks and improving roadways during his time in office. He acknowledged that roadways still need attention, but improvements in Precinct 3 are underway, he said. Those improvements include several projects between Fry Road and Katy Hockley Road, south of FM 529 and north of I-10, according to Precinct 3's website.

Radack said two parks in the Katy area he is proud of are John Paul Landing, north of Katy near the intersection of Katy Hockley Cut Off and West roads and Mary Jo Peckham Park in downtown Katy near the Katy Branch Library.

Both parks offer stocked ponds for visitors to fish in, walking trails, pavilions, playgrounds and exercise equipment.

Brookshire celebrates Christmas

By R. HANS MILLER
SENIOR REPORTER

Residents and visitors to Brookshire were able to celebrate the holidays as a community Dec. 13 with a parade and Mardi Gras-themed Christmas festival. The event was hosted by the city of Brookshire and the Brookshire Economic Development Corporation.

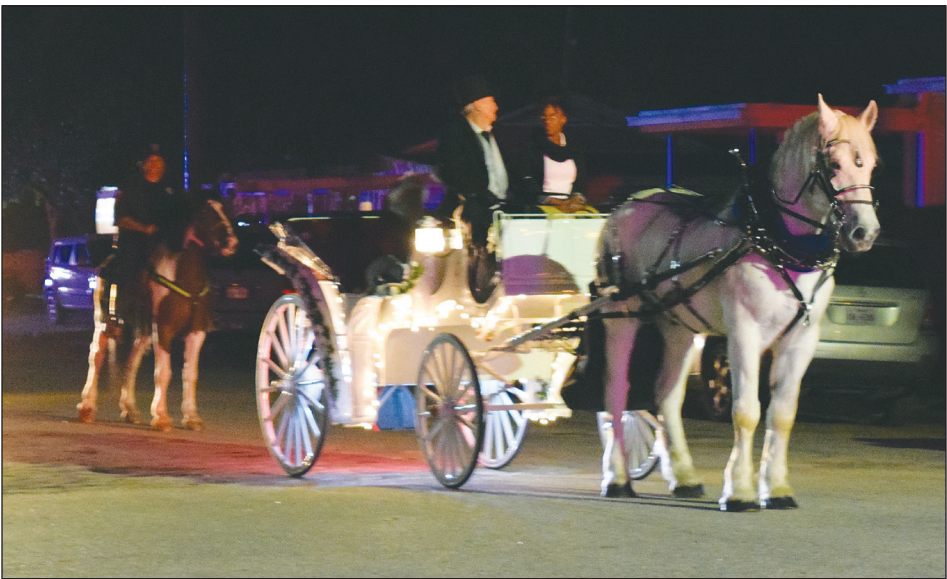
The event started off with a parade that included the Royal High School marching band, first responders, floats and a Sealy Concrete cement truck boasting about 17,000 Christmas lights. Brookshire Mayor Darrell Branch served as grand marshal of the parade with his wife, Brookshire Alderwoman Kim Branch riding next to him.

After the parade, the community played outside or gathered inside of the city's municipal building.

Children were able to celebrate the season by playing in a bounce house and tossing snowballs made from artificial snow that the Brookshire EDC had supplied. Vendors sold jewelry and barbeque to visitors that needed to do a bit of Christmas shopping or get a snack. A DJ provided music outside.

Inside the municipal building, City Secretary Claudia Harrison helped serve refreshments to families eager for a photo with Santa. A live jazz band, in true Mardi Gras style, performed throughout the night. A gumbo contest was held and the city's Christmas tree was lit to make the holidays bright.

Mayor Branch said he was glad the city was able to have the celebration and come together as a community. PHOTOS BY R. HANS MILLER AND BRANDEE MILLER



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The cookie situation

“People have been asking about the squeaking of the ship,” our captain reported, somewhere in the middle of the Atlantic, “but I must tell you, this is nothing to worry about.”

He then proceeded to explain how a ship needed to give in heavy swells, just as an airplane had to flex during flight. “Otherwise,” he explained cheerfully, “the ship would snap in two!”

I’m not sure this was the reassurance worried passengers were looking for.

My husband, Peter, and I are on the second week of our trip across the ocean. The final stop at port has been cancelled due to storms in the Atlantic. This means we will have seven straight days at sea.

Peter and I are delighted. While it is always interesting to see a new place, the port stops on this long journey feel to us like lay-overs and we are happiest when the ship is moving—preferably through a variety of weather.

“The captain said there were 15-meter swells!” I reported delightedly to Peter. Peter smiled. We knew we were not giving maritime safety the respect it deserved. But we really couldn’t as we were preoccupied by what we were now calling, “the cookie situation.”

Peter and I are still rather new at this cruise boat business, since the only time we do it is returning from Spain in the fall. We are amazed and impressed by the massive logistics required and how rarely the ship runs out of anything or seems to experience any difficulties—other than the weather which, despite its best efforts, remains elusively out of control. Cookies, on the other hand, seem firmly within the cruise ship’s control—and equally elusive.

There is some sort of arcane formula afoot concerning the cookies. They are available—if you know where to look—at 2:30 p.m., but not before. Then they disappear again at precisely 5 p.m. After 5 p.m., it is impossible to find a cookie again until 9:30 p.m. You may be skeptical, but Peter and I have dedicated ourselves to a rigorous study of this. (We don’t have much else to do.)

Every evening, we dutifully trot up to the buffet for dessert, just before our 9 p.m. bedtime. (Peter and I have yet to make any evening entertainment as it interferes with my self-prescribed 12-hour sleep.)

“Where are they hiding the cookies?” Peter asked.

“None of your business,” I told him. “You know what curiosity did to the cat.”

“Curiosity did wonders for the cat!” Peter retorted.

I suspected he might be right. So, a couple of nights ago, I went looking for cookies before their appointed hour. I found them, tucked beneath the buffet counter.

I asked the young server standing nearby, “May I have a cookie?”

“Cookies are served at 9:30,” the server politely replied.

“I will be asleep by 9:30,” I told him.

“You want a cookie?” he asked me.

I could tell he was a little taken aback by someone questioning the Maritime Cookie Law.

“Actually, I would,” I told him, seriously.

He quickly looked around, gave me two cookies, then carted the entire tray off to the kitchen where it was out of sight from future busybodies who might come along and question The Cookie Situation.

Last night, the cookies were better hidden. Instead, for dessert, we came across something that had been cooked in a pot. It looked like some sort of fruit soup but the sign over

it proclaimed it was, “Peach and Apple Cake.” We scooped it into bowls and ate it with ice cream. It was the best cake ever.

Until next time,
Carrie

Carrie Classon’s memoir, “Blue Yarn,” was released earlier this year. Learn more at CarrieClasson.com.

CARRIE
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THE
POSTSCRIPT



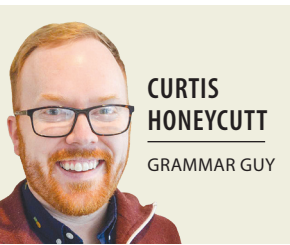
Lighten up with a dose of verbal phrases

What’s a phrasal verb, and how can it make my life better? Those are fair questions, especially because it’s possible you’ve never heard of a phrasal verb.

I have a hunch you can figure out what it is. Think about “phrasal.” This will probably have something to do with a saying that involves multiple words. Phrases are frequently used in colloquial, or casual language and conversation. How about “verb”? This probably means a phrasal verb will contain — you guessed it — a verb. To quote Karen from “Mean Girls”: “I’m a mouse, duh!”

As you just deduced (quite studiously, I may add), a phrasal verb is a phrase that uses two or three words consisting of a verb and a particle and/or a preposition to form one semantic unit. Phrasal verbs are also known as “verbal idioms,” if that helps you understand the term better.

The easiest way to understand phrasal verbs is to share some examples: turn up, back



CURTIS
HONEYCUTT
GRAMMAR GUY

off, tune out, hook up, play along and lean in. Now that you see this list, you probably realize we use phrasal verbs all the time.

What I find fascinating about phrasal verbs is that you can start with one base verb (let’s use “blow”) and, by adding different prepositions, you end up with completely different meanings: blow up, blow in, blow off, blow out. All those phrases have unique meanings. You take one basic verb and “jazz it up” with a punchy preposition. Verbs on their own are so basic.

On the other hand, some phrasal verbs with the same base verbs mean almost the same thing: back off, back away, back down. Those

phrasal verbs all have something to do with retreating.

As we’ve already established, phrasal verbs are informal, which means you have to memorize what they mean. Non-native English speakers may have a hard time with these, as they are a form of idiom. Recognizing and understanding idioms necessitates a contextual knowledge of culture and surroundings. All that to say, you have to “bone up on” your phrasal verbs. My favorite thing about

phrasal verbs? You can end a sentence with one, which means — at least in this case — it’s kosher to end a sentence with a preposition. So, lighten up. Calm down. Chill out. Phrasal verbs are part of our everyday language, and they’re not falling out of fashion anytime soon. Thanks for letting me geek out.

Curtis Honeycutt is an award-winning syndicated humor columnist. Connect with him on Twitter (@curtishoneycutt) or at curtishoneycutt.com.

PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PAGE A7

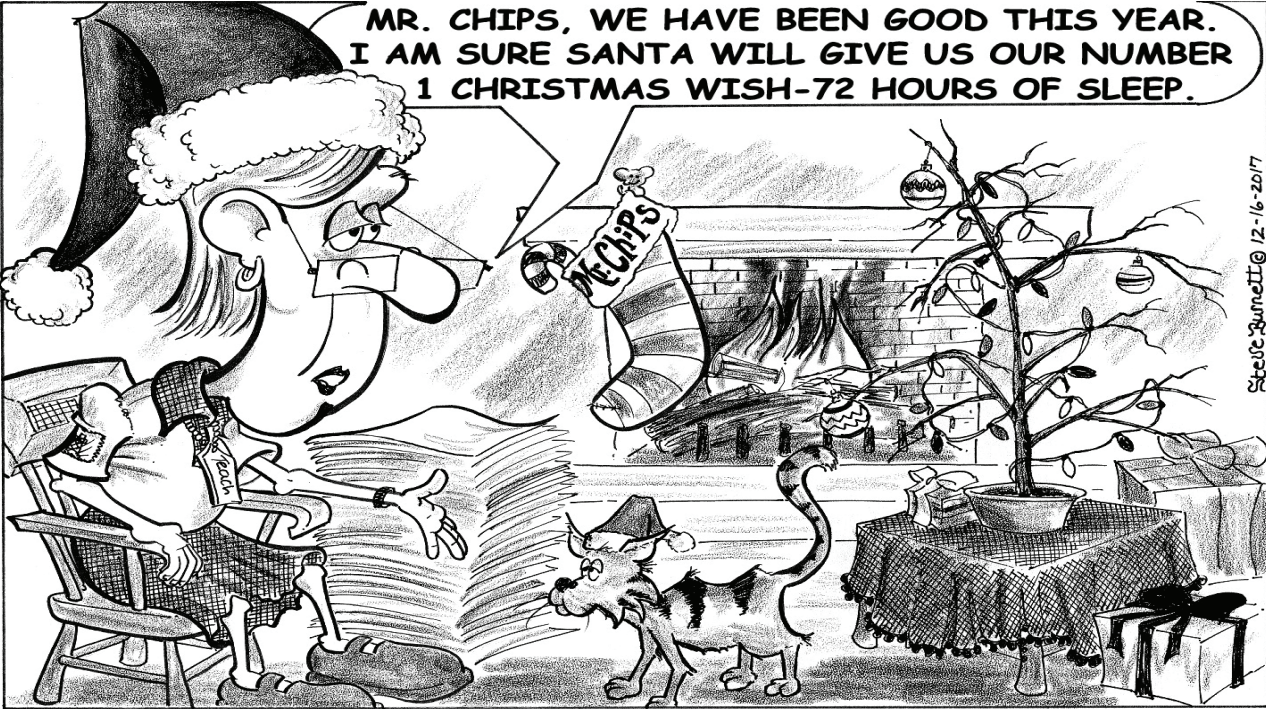
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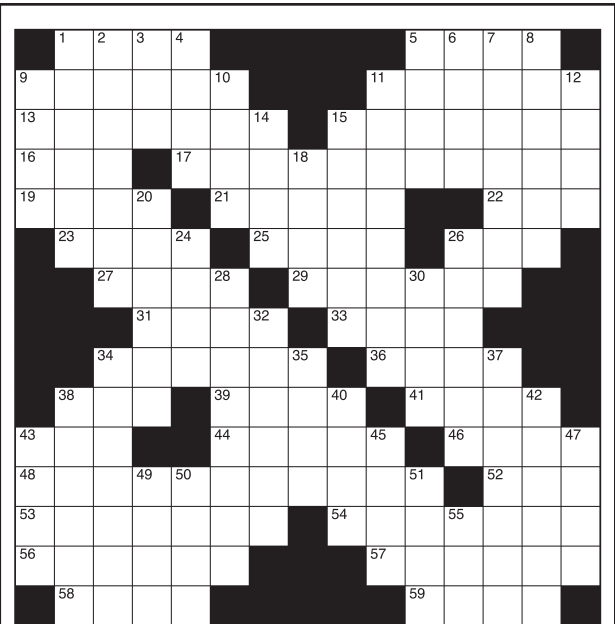
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CLUES ACROSS

- No longer on the market
- W. African language
- A way to open
- A type of pigeon
- Japanese warrior
- Pelvic areas
- No seats available
- Not working
- In a way, soaks
- Growing outward
- Ritzy local __ Air
- Telegraphic signals
- Metric units
- Large wine cask
- Fiber from the husk of a coconut
- Gets up
- French river
- Witnesses
- They make great neighbors
- The sun does it
- Used to store ashes
- First Chinese dynasty
- Network of nerves
- Word element meaning ear
- Metric unit of length (Brit.)
- Tributary of the Danube
- Off-limits
- Appeal earnestly
- It’s good to have them
- Commercial flying company
- Acted out in protest
- Took to the sea
- Cuckoos
- Drove fast

CLUES DOWN

- Trapped
- About osmosis

- Romanian monetary unit
- Form of Persian
- Cold wind
- Leave out
- Small vehicle
- A little off
- Soviet Union
- A narrow path or road
- Contrary beliefs
- One who speaks Gaelic
- Private school in New York
- Jackson and Townshend are two
- Soldier in an airborne unit
- Taken illegally
- Capital of Valais
- Male reproductive organs
- State capital
- One with supernatural insight
- Starts all over again
- Jai alai arena
- Star Wars antagonist
- Freestanding structure
- The ideal place
- The extended location of something
- Made level
- Distinctive smell
- Greek goddess of discord
- Got older
- Type of monkey
- Travels to
- Geological times
- Edge



R. HANS MILLER

Clothed by Faith volunteers and staff distributed about 600 coats and cold-weather clothing to community members who had signed up for their coat giveaway on Saturday, Dec. 14. The nonprofit has served about 15,000 community members so far this year, staff reported.

Clothed by Faith distributes winter gear

By R. HANS MILLER
SENIOR REPORTER

While it may have seemed a stark contrast to the clear, warm weather Katy had throughout the weekend, Clothed by Faith held a special event Saturday morning to distribute about 600 coats to help area residents with tight budgets stay warm as winter progresses.

“We wouldn’t have had a way to get the jackets that are really expensive – to get these nice clothes,” said Kara Barnes, who had come with her family to get jackets for her husband, children and herself.

Barnes is just one of about 15,000 people that Clothed by Faith has assisted with clothing this year in the Greater Houston area. The nonprofit provides gently used and new clothing to both genders of all ages and in all sizes throughout Greater Houston. Its Katy branch is located at 802 Dominion Drive, Ste. 100 in Katy and its Southeast Houston branch is located at 438 E. Eighth Street in Deer Park.

“We certainly have enough to meet the needs today because we had folks register for this event so that we could ensure that we had enough,” said Clothed by Faith

Katy Branch Manager Nanette Crawford. “But we were turning people away and placing them on a waiting list, so we know the demand is greater than what we’re giving out today.”

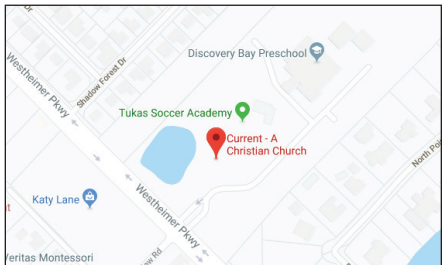
Crawford said the need for clothing donations is constant and there clothing of all sizes for both men and women are needed to fill that need. Clothed by faith is asking area residents to donate either at their Dominion Drive location which is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday or at any of their three bins placed throughout the community. Clothed by Faith will find someone that needs each donation, she said.

“[Donations] are absolutely going to be used. We have requests for clothing of all sizes and we have served clients as young as newborns and as old as 93, so there will be someone that needs the clothing,” Crawford said.

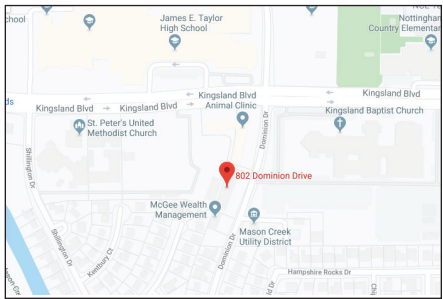
Clothed by Faith has specific items that are more challenging to provide to its clients, Crawford said. Those items include new socks and underwear which are



Grace Presbyterian Church
10221 Ella Lee Lane
Houston, TX 77042



Current - A Christian Church
26600 Westheimer Parkway
Katy, TX 77494



Clothed by Faith
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See **WINTER**, page 9

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