

Katy Times



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THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2020

Abbott seeks to slow virus

By ED STERLING
TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

Texas is more invested every day in promoting increased and thorough hand washing, disinfecting surfaces and social distancing to reduce cases of the rapidly spreading novel coronavirus, COVID-19.

As of March 22, the cumulative count of patients testing positive in Texas increased to 334. The death count stood at five with 8,756 people having been tested, according to figures posted by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

As the work week began, Gov. Greg Abbott was still not ready to order all Texans to stay at home, as local authorities ordered in Dallas County. However, he issued four statewide executive orders in accordance with federal guidelines issued by President Trump and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- Every person in Texas shall avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10 people;
- People shall avoid eating or drinking at bars, restaurants and food courts or visiting gyms or massage parlors — provided, however, that drive-thru, pickup or delivery options are allowed and highly encouraged throughout the limited duration of the executive order;
- People shall not visit nursing homes or retirement or long-term care facilities unless to provide critical assistance; and
- Schools shall temporarily close.

Abbott's orders, effective through 11:59 p.m. on April 3, are subject to extension.

Texas Department of State Health Services Commissioner John Hellerstedt also declared a public health disaster last week.

Hellerstedt's declaration allows state and local health authorities to more easily require property owners to disinfect, decontaminate, and seal off property that might be contaminated by COVID-19.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHRIST CLINIC

Christ Clinic has had to adjust their practices to ensure patients are segregated from one another in order to keep safe. These changes include screening patients as they arrive to direct them to properly cordoned off areas of the clinic if they show symptoms of COVID-19.

Pandemic affects nonprofits

By R. HANS MILLER
TIMES SENIOR REPORTER

Nonprofits' fundraising events have been cancelled in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic as Katy residents work on social distancing to minimize community spread. The lack of revenue and adjustments in how nonprofits serve the community is extensive say representatives from a variety of charities serving Greater Katy.

"As we get more instructions regarding social distancing, we can't help but wonder what that looks like for our folks who honestly often already feel unheard and unseen," said Tina Hatcher, CEO of Hope Impacts — a local nonprofit that assists the homeless to rebuild their lives. "As people wipe out grocery shelves and items are hard to get how do we keep meeting needs?"

Nonprofits have had to make significant operational changes beyond in the wake of the novel coronavirus pandemic, representatives from several organizations said.

See **NONPROFITS**, page A3



Harris and Fort Bend Co. issue stay home orders

By R. HANS MILLER
TIMES SENIOR REPORTER

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo and Fort Bend County Judge KP George issued executive orders March 24 that place restrictions on their residents and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic through April 3. Violations of either order are punishable by up to 180 days in jail and \$1,000 fines. Both orders were issued after consulting other government officials, community leaders and medical experts, the judges said.

"What these experts, leaders and people in the front line tell us is that, if we keep going at the rate [we are] we will be in the situation that some of these countries like Italy is at," Hidalgo said.

Italy had 63,927 cases of disease caused by the

See **ORDERS**, page A3



Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo announces the issuance of her "stay home, work safe" order the morning of March 24. Fort Bend County Judge KP George issued a similar order that afternoon.



The Katy City Council held a virtual meeting at 6:30 p.m. with residents allowed to log into the meeting via telephone, Facebook Live and Zoom - a digital meeting platform in order to ensure that health risks were minimized, and transparency was maintained.

City Council postpones city elections until Nov. 3

By R. HANS MILLER
TIMES SENIOR REPORTER

Citing public safety concerns and the related logistics of conducting an election during the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, Katy City Council voted unanimously to postpone the city's elections to Nov. 3. The elections were originally scheduled for May 2 and saw Durrant Dowdle, Janet Corte facing multiple opponents while Mayor Pro Tem Chris Harris was set to win due to no opponents stepping forward to challenge him.

"I think - while it is sacred to vote - I think it is also a responsible, adult thing to not have people congregating at the polls just like we don't have people congregating at church. As sacred as it is, we have to prioritize health and safety. While I struggled

with this as a conservative - as a constitutional person who cherishes the Constitution - I also cherish [City Secretary] Becky [McGrew] and all the work that she does and I just can't envision - I've talked to people and I've asked, 'Well, how do we do this?' What could we do to sanitize every surface after every voter?"

Council discussed the possibility of moving the election for about 20 minutes with members asking McGrew, City Administrator Byron Hebert and City Attorney Art Pertile questions about the logistics and legality of holding the election in May.

McGrew said that - under normal circumstances - an election costs between \$25,000 and \$30,000 for the city to hold

See **ELECTIONS**, page A3



Eight shows to binge during quarantine

By R. HANS MILLER
SENIOR REPORTER

Now is a time when Americans can all settle into one of our favorite national passtimes — no, not baseball or football — binge watching great TV. Here are ten shows that will keep you going during the social distancing period facing the country today. From laughs to screams, there's a bit of everything.

Family Friendly

"All Creatures Great and Small" — This series covers the career of James Herriot, a veterinarian in Yorkshire Dales beginning in the 1930s and is inspired by the books of veterinary surgeon Alf Wight who wrote under the name James Herriot. The comedy series — which initially hit TV screens in 1978 — drops laughs by poking fun at the relationships Herriot sees around him as a young veterinarian fresh out of college. Costars include Robert Hardy, whom many today would recognize as the actor that played Cornelius Fudge in the "Harry Potter" franchise. The series spans four seasons with 90 episodes total. PBS is currently in the process of re-making the classic show. Platforms: Amazon Prime | Britbox

"Mr. Bean" — While many have heard of it or even enjoyed it in the theater when it came out as a movie in 1997 and again ten years later, there are probably a lot of folks that have not recently watched the original TV series that launched in 1990. In the series, Rowan Atkinson stars as the titular character, described by Atkinson as "a child in a grown man's body." Each episode shows Mr. Bean in a everyday situation that he somehow manages to make awkward or over-the-top. Platforms: Tubi | Britbox | Amazon Prime | Hulu | Google Play



COURTESY NETFLIX

As Katy residents hunker down in social distancing mode, they can turn to streaming services such as Netflix, Hulu, Disney+ and others to fill hours and keep the family entertained. Some studios are releasing content online — "Frozen 2" as an example — and there are many shows Katy Times readers may have missed over the past few years that might deserve a bit of attention.

Science Fiction/Fantasy

"The Magicians" — A fantasy set in the modern day brings us Quentin Coldwater, a young man who once thought his issues involved mental illness, but it turns out he's simply able to use magic. He joins Brakebills College for Magical Pedagogy and shares a variety of adventures with new friends that are both enigmatic and loyal — mostly. The series is based on the book by the same name which was written by Lev Grossman. The show first aired on SyFy in 2015. Parents may find this show inappropriate for very young children. Platforms: Netflix | Hulu | YouTube | Sling TV | fubo TV | Amazon Prime

"Dark Matter" — The crew of the Raza wake up after being in stasis for an unknown amount of time. All of them have lost their memories and have to figure out how to work together, pilot the ship, deal with the consequences of their past lives that they can't recall and somehow keep from destroying the lives of those they come into contact with. This science fiction series brings in elements from a variety of cultures and science fiction mythos to create a compelling story that keeps viewers pulled in. Parents may find this show inappropriate for very young children. Platforms: Netflix | Amazon Prime | iTunes | YouTube | Google Play | Vudu

Horror

"The Haunting of Hill House" — Based very loosely on Shirley Jackson's 1959 novel of the same name, this 2018 Netflix series tells the tale of the Crain family who have returned to Hill House which they had previously fled in the early 1990s. Awkward family reunions and being confronted with the paranormal happenings in the family's past in the wake of tragedy forces the family into yet more horrific ad-

ventures. This show is not child friendly. Platforms: Netflix

"The Exorcist" — This 2016-2018 TV series pays homage to the horror film of the same name, but does not carry on the original story. Three priests dealing with cases of demonic possession struggle to put a stop to the workings of a demon that is targeting specific families. Intrigue is an added layer to the show with Friar Bennett, played by Kurt Egyiawan, interceding between church officials who wish to stop the exorcists and the holy men trying to save the families. This show originally aired on Fox and ran for 20 episodes. This show is not child friendly. Platforms: Hulu | Amazon Prime | YouTube | iTunes | Google Play | Vudu

Drama

"Kiss Me First" — This 2018 Netflix original series takes Leila, a young video-gamer who has recently lost her mother, on a voyage into the surreal. She connects with a small group of gamers in the virtual world of Azana and soon finds herself in an odd, almost cult-like environment where someone is convincing members of the group to kill themselves. Eventually, she finds she's being framed for attacks on members of the group and has to puzzle out how to extricate herself and her friends out of the situation. This show is not child friendly. Platforms: Netflix

"Marvel's Runaways" — Six Los Angeles teens find themselves in an awkward situation when they discover their parents have been living double lives. A mismatched group of teens, the main cast members were separated a while ago by tragedy but as their parents' secrets come to light, they are forced to accept their own roles in society and face their potential. Platforms: Hulu | Disney+ | Amazon Prime | Google Paly | Vudu

KATY TIMES
PET OF THE WEEK

MEET JAVA



Hello friends! My name is Java and I am a cuddly 1 year old that is ready for my purrrfect home to live out the rest of my years. I prefer to spend my days stretched out on the couch.

Java is available for adoption at Special Pals Shelter located at 3830 Greenhouse Road, Houston. The shelter is the Katy area's oldest no kill shelter and is open Weds., Thurs., Sat. and Sun. from 12-4 p.m. and Fri. 12-6 p.m.

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CLUES ACROSS

1. As soon as possible

5. Gateway (Arabic)

8. Doctors' group

11. Madder genus of plants

13. A team's best pitcher

14. Ancient Greek sophist

15. Go up

16. Neither

17. Bolivian river

18. Manila hemp

20. Comedienne Gasteyer

21. British School

22. Human reproductive organs

25. Surrenders

30. Dog with long, silky coat and drooping ears

31. Sun up in New York

32. Lead alloy

33. Eastern Asian plant

38. Rapid deployment force (abbr.)

41. Japanese warrior

43. Festivity

45. Interruptions

47. Nonsense (slang)

49. Data mining methodology (abbr.)

50. Calvary sword

55. French river

56. Global business conference (abbr.)

57. Afflicted

59. Con man's game

60. No (Scottish)

61. Jewish spiritual leader

62. Fish

63. Camera term (abbr.)

64. Impudence

CLUES DOWN

1. A continuous portion of a circle

2. Genus of seabirds

3. Infant's dining accessory

4. Native Americans from Arizona

5. Popular fruit

6. Poisonous plant

7. Scolded

8. Assists

9. Hand (Spanish)

10. Amazon product identifying system (abbr.)

12. Basics

14. Cain and __

19. Malaria

23. Indicates particular shape

24. Respiratory disease

25. Central Standard Time

26. Imitate

27. Golf score

28. A place to lay your head

29. Three cards of the same suit

34. Not in

35. Human gene

36. Ancient Chinese philosophic concept

37. French river

39. Thinks up

40. Type of geological deposit

41. Helps little firms

42. Area units

44. A device to remove

45. Secret political clique

46. Polite interruption sound

47. Foundation

48. Clare Boothe __, American\ writer

51. Swiss river

52. Prejudice

53. Actor Idris

54. Resistance fighters

58. Speak disrespectfully of

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

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This Week's Puzzle Sponsored by

Katy Times

SUDOKU

	8		9					2
				8		7		
		4						8
				1	8			
		5			2	3		
1		7	5					
						4	5	
	6	1			4		9	
3					7	8		

Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test.

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

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NONPROFITS

from page A1

Operational Changes

Social distancing has caused a need for extra caution when nonprofits deliver services to clients, Katy Christian Ministries Executive Director Deysi Crespo said.

Community members turn to Crespo and her team at KCM for food assistance, counseling, tutoring, support groups and crisis intervention in the face of sexual assault and/or domestic violence.

“On Thurs. we had 23,000 pounds of food from the Houston Food Bank brought in and it was distributed in a five-hour period,” Crespo said. “Plus, an additional 4,000 pounds of food. So, you’re talking about 27,000 pounds of food in just one day.”

Volunteers are manning the food pantry in shifts, Crespo said. Some man the pantry on the inside while others take food to vehicles curbside so that contact with clients is minimized for both the safety of the volunteers and the clients, she said. Social services are still in operation, but much of their usual routine is happening by phone and all other in-person services — including tutoring and support groups — are cancelled until further notice.

The Susan G. Komen Foundation has begun teleworking to ensure that clients and staff — many of whom on both sides have immune systems compromised by current or former cancer treatment — can mitigate risks of exposure to the virus said Julie Voss, executive director of the foundation’s Houston branch. The foundation is also recommending nonessential screenings be postponed.

“We need to limit nonessential things in the healthcare world. Although Komen always encourages screenings, if you’re not symptomatic, you can wait for your safety and the safety of everybody involved,” Voss said.

Hope Impacts changed in-person services too, Hatcher said. The nonprofit is now screening the “street friends” that come to the door in need of help to make sure they don’t have signs of the disease. They’ve added education regarding COVID-19 to their services as well, she said.

Hope Impacts is also providing supplies for clients to practice hygiene more vigorously, Hatcher said.

“Due to the current recommendations we will not be having our outreach breakfast in April,” Hatcher said. “We were wanting to begin an outreach breakfast in May in Richmond/Rosenberg — but we may have to postpone that as we wait until this virus issue is figured out.”

Abi Fourie, founder of Clothed by Faith, said CBF is essentially shut down in the short term on the advice of the CDC and Texas Health and Human Services officials who expressed concern that COVID-19 might be spread through clothing donations and distribution. The charity provides like-new clothing to those in need through-

Nonprofits are a large part of Katy’s social life, sponsoring many of the annual galas and events that allow them to provide services to low-income, elderly, developmentally disabled, homeless and otherwise in-crisis Katy residents. As those nonprofits see cancellations, postponements or modifications to their events, the need for community support increases. These local nonprofits are looking for help as they face the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The needs of each nonprofit are listed on their websites or may be obtained by contacting the charity directly.

THE ARC OF KATY

5819 Tenth St., Ste. C
Katy, TX 77493
832-754-9802
www.thearcofkaty.org

THE BALLARD HOUSE

21421 Cinco Park Road
Katy, TX 77450
281-717-4670
www.facebook.com/TheBallardHouse/

CHRIST CLINIC

25722 Kingsland Blvd., Ste. 111
Katy, TX 77494
281-391-0190
www.christclinic Katy.org

CLOTHED BY FAITH

802 Dominion Drive, Ste. 100
Katy, TX 77450
281-676-8837
www.clothedbyfaith.org

COMPASSION KATY

802 Dominion Drive, Ste. 900A
Katy, TX 77450
281-395-1130
www.facebook.com/CompassionKaty/

EASTER SEALS GREATER HOUSTON

4888 Loop Central Drive, Ste. 200
Houston, TX 77081
713-838-9050
www.eastersealshouston.org

HOPE IMPACTS

802 Dominion Drive, Ste. 900
Katy, TX 77450
713-705-7884
www.hopeimpacts.org

KATY CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

5504 First Street
Katy, TX 77492
*281-391-9623
www.ktcm.org

SUSAN G. KOMEN HOUSTON

602 Sawyer, Ste. 201
Houston, TX 77007
713-783-9188
www.komen-houston.org

**Note: Potential clients should log onto KCM’s website and click on the “contact us” link at the bottom of the page to find the correct number to call to obtain assistance.*

serves as many low-income Katy residents’ only source of healthcare and if only 10 or 11 staff are out due to quarantine, the clinic’s operations would be severely impacted. The clinic is practicing careful segregation of patients — about half of whom are in high-risk COVID-19 categories — and staff to ensure safety, Hamilton said.

“We are putting careful consideration into which patients and employees interact so that we can protect staff to maintain operations,” Hamilton said.

Separation requires screening from the start, Hamilton said. Each patient is screened through checkpoints and directed to the proper portion of the clinic so those exhibiting possible COVID-19 symptoms interact with as few people as possible. But additional resources continue to be necessary. The clinic is also not taking walk-ins at this time and is asking patients to call ahead for an appointment, Hamilton said.

“[Christ Clinic] needs funding to protect most vulnerable population and prevent community spread,” Hamilton said.

Finding Resources

Cancelling, modifying or postponing fundraisers are a serious challenge for

nonprofits because it reduces predictability of income, Crespo said. These revenue-generating events create line items on budgets that allow for flexibility in services and staffing. Grants often come with restrictions that income from fundraising activities don’t have, she said. A loss or postponement of a significant fundraiser puts budgets and associated programs in jeopardy, she said.

COVID-19 event postponements include the Katy Bubble Run, a source of funding for five local nonprofits, Hatcher said. The event has been postponed to an as-yet-undetermined date this fall, Hatcher said. Christ Clinic, Compassion Katy, Hope Impacts, Katy Christian Ministries and The Ballard House all raise money through the fun run.

“[The Katy Bubble Run] Is one of the means that pays for needed staffing,” Crespo said. “It brings in funding for unmet basic needs for families.”

Christ Clinic has immediate needs for funding, Hamilton said. The nonprofit is switching to remote services as much as possible and would like to implement telemedicine and more phone screening options. There is a cost to make that happen, she said.

Like hospitals, the clinic needs masks, hand sanitizer and other medical supplies that are necessary to help patients, Hamilton said.

“Any way that people have to financially support us at this moment would be appreciated and would definitely be a benefit for our entire community,” Hamilton said.

Fourie said she hopes clothing donors will hold onto their donations and be ready to donate for when clients who weren’t identified during the social distancing period of the pandemic come forth in what she expects to come as a large wave.

“I think the biggest message we can get out to the public right now is — we need your donations, please be sure to keep them on hand.” Fourie said. “Keep hold of your stuff and we’re going to need it.”

Voss said Komen, like many larger charities, is able to keep some emergency funding on hand, but she is concerned that the timeframe for the current COVID-19 situation may exceed reserves.

Crespo and Hatcher said their organizations are in serious need of donations of food and other in-kind items and will likely see demand increase after social distancing as well due to the economic impacts of the situation.

“We have a huge need of nonperishable food items and personal care items,” Crespo said. Fourie and Hatcher agreed with their peers at Christ Clinic and KCM in that there is a need to support services in the present and help to prepare for the future. Each of the nonprofits predicts a wave of additional need for assistance after social isolation is completed, similar to what they experienced immediately following Hurricane Harvey.

“I would emphasize that as fundraisers are being cancelled and community needs are increasing the nonprofits need local recurring donations more than ever to keep serving our community,” Hatcher said.

VIRUS

from page A1

The declaration also:

- Authorizes health authorities to take control measures to eradicate the threat to public health;
- Streamlines the process for health authorities to invoke the courts to enforce quarantines of individuals; and
- Activates enhanced tools for DSHS to collect disease and health information and to share that information with law enforcement personnel and first responders, as appropriate.

Governor activates Guard

Gov. Abbott on March 17 activated the Texas National Guard to be prepared to assist with response efforts for COVID-19, ensuring that the military force can assist in various forms throughout the state when needed.

Healthcare workers and first responders who are members of the Texas National Guard are excluded from this activation so that they can continue serving the people of Texas in their respective fields, Abbott said.

SBA assistance requested

Gov. Abbott on March 17 requested designation from the Small Business Administration to access the federal agency’s Economic Injury Disaster Loan program for the entire state.

If granted, Abbott said, the Small Business Administration would provide long-term, low-interest loans to qualifying businesses across the state.

Small business owners are invited to visit the Texas Division of Emergency Management website: <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/> where they will be directed to an online application on the SBA website.

Telemedicine to increase

Gov. Abbott on March 17 waived certain regulations and directed the Texas Department of Insurance to issue an emergency rule relating to telemedicine care in mitigating the spread of COVID-19.

Abbott said his actions build upon previous waivers of portions in the Occupations Code

to expand provider flexibility in providing medical services over the phone.

Medical providers seeking guidance on the impact of the new rule can expect guidance from the Texas Medical Board to be issued in the coming days. Insurers seeking guidance on the emergency rule should contact the Texas Department of Insurance or visit their webpage for more information.

Goal: Stop transmission

The Texas Department of Transportation on March 17 announced actions to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

TxDOT postponed or canceled its in-person public hearings and gatherings through April 3, subject to change. However, work on projects to improve our transportation system continues, as does TxDOT’s ongoing work to maintain and operate our state’s transportation system.

Meanwhile, TxDOT has closed the lobbies of its 12 Travel Information Centers until further notice, but outside restrooms will remain available at all times and will be regularly cleaned between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Also, safety rest areas on highways throughout the state will remain open.

AG: Price-gougers beware

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton on March 21 warned retail suppliers, including those who supply grocery stores and pharmacies, that state law strictly prohibits price gouging in the wake of a disaster.

Price gouging laws apply to any person or entity selling necessities at an exorbitant or excessive price after a disaster has been declared by the governor or president. This prohibition includes those who supply retailers.

Under the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act, Paxton said, any price-gougers may be required to reimburse consumers and may be held liable for civil penalties of up to \$10,000 per violation with an additional penalty of up to \$250,000 if the affected consumers are elderly.

THE HELPERS

RESTRICTIONS AND ESSENTIALS

Fort Bend County and Harris County have issued very similar restrictions but allow essential activities.

RESTRICTIONS:

- Remain home unless conducting essential business
- Nonessential businesses must close or shift to work from home
- All public or private gatherings cancelled
- Restaurants may provide curbside, delivery or drive-through service only
- Religious services must move to digital options
- All elective medical and dental procedures prohibited
- Social distancing is required
- Parks are open, but all play and gym equipment are off limits
- Exercise establishments and grooming businesses must be closed

PERMITTED ESSENTIALS:

- Medical appointments for residents and pets
- Caring for a family member or pet in another home
- Businesses identified by the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency may remain open
- Purchasing fuel, groceries and medicine
- Picking up food from restaurants through curbside or delivery

To obtain clarifications, residents may contact Fort Bend County at 281-633-7795 and Harris County at 832-927-7575.

ORDERS

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novel coronavirus with 9,077 deaths reported as of March 24 at 10 a.m. Italy is currently locked down and is suffering a lack of healthcare resources including personnel and equipment, according to various global media outlets.

Dr. Esmail Porsa, CEO of Harris County Health, said the order could mean the difference between keeping the COVID-19 outbreak manageable or seeing an overwhelming situation such as has occurred in China and Italy from the disease.

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, who joined Hidalgo at the press conference announcing Harris County’s

order, said residents should rest assured that grocery store trips and other essential activities were still okay, but residents should otherwise stay home.

“We have said over and over that the grocery stores are not shutting down and they are not,” Turner said.

Health officials for Fort Bend and Harris counties as well as Houston have seen increasing rates of infection throughout the Greater Houston area, they said. They said computer models showed a clear trend of increased infections without serious action taken.

“There is no indication that this exponential trend will not continue,” Fort Bend County Health Authority Dr. Jacqueline Minter said. “It is clear from experiences around the

world and in our own country that we have to be consistently vigilant and flexible in our response to COVID-19 in order to protect our most vulnerable residents and our health care system.”

The orders require nonessential businesses to shut down and encourage all businesses in each county to practice social distancing in the workplace as much as possible. They also cancelled gatherings, including church services which are required to switch to online worship.

“While short term economic impact is difficult, based on the global experience [with the] coronavirus, it is the only way that we can be able to preserve the local optimum economic and social fabric of our community,” George said.

McGrew also explained that budgeting for an election was a concern. If council had moved the vote on the proposed postponement, which she said she had asked Mayor Bill Hastings to put on the agenda, she would have run through much of the city’s election budget by the time the decision was made.

Hebert said budgeting could be more of a challenge as sales tax revenue the city is dependent upon may be stunted because of business closures such as the businesses at Katy Mills which all closed last week.

Harris, in a Facebook post made immediately after the meeting said he voted for the measure to protect the safety of citizens and to ensure

the city was following Tex. Governor Greg Abbott’s efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19. He added that he feels the Nov. 3 election date will allow county authorities to assist with the voting process to ensure safety.

Mayor Bill Hastings remained neutral on the issue prior to the vote and acknowledged that the decision to postpone the election was not an easy one for council members.

“We’re going into a period of time where we’re going to have to make decisions that not everybody is going to like,” Hastings said. “These are tough decisions. They weigh heavy on our hearts to make these [decisions].”

Apocalypse when?

Two or three times a year, falling trees knock out power at my home, in a heavily wooded section of Central California. When outages stretch over several days food in our refrigerator goes bad, cell phones run down, and flashlight batteries fail. Sometimes roads are impassible and my wife and I are stuck in our chilly, candlelit house.

Big deal? Nope. But if I project that scenario over several months and add to it a raft of deeper concerns related to widespread illness, a picture forms that novelists and late-night radio hosts have been painting for years. Is that how things will look if the COVID-19 outbreak affects, say, 70 percent of the population and remains unchecked?

My office is closed and most of my colleagues are taking meetings only via Skype. I'm writing at the kitchen table, just a few feet from a well-stocked fridge, with music provided by Google Home. It's quieter than usual since the high school down the street is shuttered. Mail arrived on schedule and newspapers were in the driveway. The TV works fine and on it President Trump said, "Relax. We're doing great. It will all pass."

However, I did notice that toilet paper is sold out all over town. When I checked Amazon I was surprised to find that it, too, was, uh, wiped out - except for one offer of four rolls for \$72. Minor inconveniences are how it starts, almost laughably at first, until things turn serious.

Shelves are empty now because of hoarding. They'll be restocked until cracks develop in the production process, in the delivery chain and at retail outlets themselves. As the first wave of workers takes ill, replacements will step in, until there aren't enough replacements. Folks won't just be hoarding toilet paper, they'll be scrambling for basic necessities. Lines of cars will form at gas stations.

The local cable-TV company that I rely upon for phone, internet and television, will suffer breakdowns, manageable at first, but then too great for skeleton crews to handle. People trying to practice social distancing will suffer emotionally as communication is cut.

As of today there is not a single confirmed coronavirus case in our county, but what if before long every other mask-wearing stranger one passes when venturing out in search of supplies is infected? Walking down Main Street at midday will be as unnerving as being out at midnight.

Our community hospital erected a tent in its parking lot to accommodate the expected flood of patients. What happens when that space is filled? When medical supplies run out? When doctors and nurses fall ill?

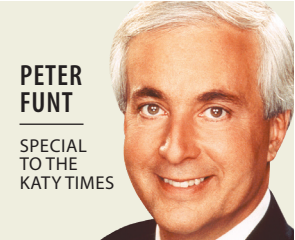
Maybe I should have paid closer attention to late-night radio ads for a month's supply of freeze-dried food and gold coins to use when the banks fail. Perhaps I should have ordered that hand-cranked flashlight.

OK. Enough! The scenario doesn't have to be worst case.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, a voice of reason among federal officials grappling with the pandemic, said Sunday, "I think we should really be overly aggressive and get criticized for overreacting."

So, forgive me for overwriting. It's just that we need government - as well as our fellow citizens - to spend more time preparing for the worst case, so we can avoid actually having to live it.

A list of Peter Funt's upcoming live appearances is available at www.CandidCamera.com. Peter Funt is a writer and speaker. His book, "Cautiously Optimistic," is available at Amazon.com and CandidCamera.com. © 2020 Peter Funt. Columns distributed exclusively by Cagle Cartoons, Inc., newspaper syndicate.



Real estate in the time of COVID-19

I write this on the second day of the Federally recommended 15-day social distancing in the Greater Houston Area, including Katy. Many of us are focused on our soon-to-be-bored children staying at home instead of school, the challenges of working from home, unfortunate closings of area restaurants and businesses, finding enough necessary food and supply items to get us through and just trying to adjust to this brave new world of isolation.

How has the coronavirus pandemic impacted the Katy area real estate market?

Today my Katy office held our regular sales and training meeting, with half attending via Zoom, a popular web based online meeting service. There were glitches in the system but I do think we as a society will all get better at this type of communication.

What I am seeing in our market right now is a hint of a slow-down of activity. Not drastic by any means at this point, but discernable. New listings are still coming on the market but not as many as anticipated for this time of year. I believe this is due to many factors: seller concerns for their health, confidence in current work conditions, stock market shock that may cause some temporary paralysis with plans moving forward.

On the buyer side, we are seeing some buyers continue to search for homes and plan their moves. Buyers previously committed to a new job and simply seeing their plans through. Their house hunting and buying timelines may be delayed due to travel restrictions but not halted. Some buyers, who do not need to buy right now, may be holding off to see what the immediate future brings. There has been some comparison to how the market felt right after 9/11, when experienced agents held their collective breath and then cautiously moved forward. New strategies were put in place to help consumers understand and navigate through uncertain waters. *(See message from Lawrence



Yun, National Association of Realtors Chief Economist below.)

How buyers look at homes may well change as more sellers' limit or block showings for health concerns. If a seller has an underlying health concern or resident elderly family members, they may not be comfortable with strangers entering their home and touching surfaces that might lead to infection. Buyers could also have the same concerns when visiting occupied properties. We are beginning to see buyers and sellers seeking additional information about who is coming to see their home or who is living in the property as it relates to health concerns. We have to all be mindful at this time of the Fair Housing Act and that we treat all parties exactly the same when answering these questions from concerned buyers and sellers.

While it is certainly too early and irresponsible to make predictions, it is safe to say that certain price ranges may feel a limited impact. Potential luxury market cooling due to drastically impacted portfolios and current changes in liquidity. Middle price ranges in the Katy Area could be impacted due to the volatile oil and gas prices and potential future layoffs should this become a long-term condition. Entry-level homes pricing may be impacted due to job insecurity and less than robust consumer confidence. However, lack of inventory and the lowering of the mortgage rates may help consumers overcome some of their buying fear. Savvy investors often jump into and take advantage of market uncertainty which could bolster this market sector. Again, like other times of uncertainty, the market tends to rebound after the source of the un-

certainty is removed or resolved. Long term, no one at this point knows but we are optimistic that this is a temporary shift and not permanent.

Lenders are very busy: trying to calm consumers currently trying to to close on time, potential buyers nervous about purchasing, buyers mistakenly confusing the drop in the Fed rate with currently mortgage lending rates and those trying to refi to capitalize on the historically low rates.

Transactions are still moving forward to closing but with a few unexpected challenges. Appraisals, required for transactions with third party funding, may slow down closings simply as some appraisers stay at home and cannot complete reports in a timely manner. Another function is fear of physically going to the closing office to sign documents to close. Many title companies have abilities for remote closings (notary traveling to signers) and are working on electronic signing of all but a few crucial lender-required "wet" documents. Hopefully, this might encourage both title and lending industries to reevaluate how we can move into this century with a fully digital closing experience, not just in times of national disaster. Please note that some states are instituting total mandatory shut downs so this could include closings.

If you have a property currently listed, you may wish to contact your Realtor to discuss strategies to keep you and your family safe. If showings are slower than usual, this is to be expected. You are basically "open for business" when many other businesses are temporarily shutting down. This is a fluid situation and requires patience and understanding from everyone. Your future buyer may be at home trying to keep safe, too and will rely more on the digital home search or virtual open houses rather than a physical tour, which is why great merchandising or marketing has never been more important.

Be safe, be kind and carry on Katy!
For more information visit the NAR website: <https://www.nar.realtor/coronavirus-a-guide-for-realtors>

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COURTESY FBCSO

FBCSO partners with DENORA to distribute free cleaning solution

By **R. HANS MILLER**
SENIOR REPORTER

The Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office began issuing free disinfectant solution in partnership with area manufacturer, De Nora Water Technologies, to distribute a free disinfectant solution, Sodium Hypochlorite, to Fort Bend County residents over the weekend, but that practice has since been halted for all but county employees.

“Since we started our disinfectant distribution operation for [Fort] Bend County residents four days ago, there has been an overwhelming outpouring of demand. Thousands line up daily to get their hands on it, so I must share that today was our last day to distribute the disinfectant,” Fort Bend County Sheriff Troy Nehls said via Facebook.

During that four-day timeframe, more than 8,000 bottles of the disinfectant solution had been distributed to Fort Bend County residents, Nehls said. He encouraged residents to reach out to Fort Bend County Judge KP George to ask that the distribution center be reopened.

Demand had been so high that the distribution



had to be briefly shut down while additional containers for the solution were produced. Area residents have expressed concern that it has been difficult to find cleaning supplies in stores as many rush to ensure they have enough supplies to sanitize their homes.

Both Nehls and George have continuously encouraged their constituents to practice social distancing, wash hands regularly and follow all other guidelines recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Protection.

“We see what this virus is doing to other parts of the country and it’s crucial we try to stay ahead of it,” said Fort Bend County Sheriff Troy Nehls.

Texas’ budget could take hit

By **CASSANDRA POLLOCK**
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Comptroller Glenn Hegar briefed Texas House members on the state’s economy and budget Sunday night, saying that while it was too soon for specific forecasts, both are expected to take potentially massive hits in the wake of the new coronavirus pandemic, according to multiple people who were on the conference call.

The members-only call, led by House Speaker Dennis Bonnen, R-Angleton, was one of state lawmakers’ first glimpses of the impact the virus is expected to have on multiple industries, state finances and Texas’ largely oil-fed savings account, known as the Economic Stabilization Fund or the rainy day fund.



MARIORIE KAMYS COTERA FOR THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar told lawmakers that state coffers will likely take a significant hit from the coronavirus pandemic.

Hegar, who referred to the state of the economy as “the current recession,” according to multiple people on the roughly hourlong call, predicted both the general revenue for the state budget and the savings account balance will be drastically lower — possibly by billions of dollars — when he makes a revised fiscal forecast. He said that update could happen in July.

Later Sunday, the comptroller’s office said that unless the Legislature spent money out of the savings account before July, the balance for the fund would be revised down, but not by more than \$1 billion.

In October, Hegar estimated that the state budget would have a nearly \$3 billion balance for the fiscal 2020-21 biennium. The balance of the Economic Stabilization Fund, Hegar announced at the time, would be around \$9.3 billion by the end of the 2021 fiscal year, in August of that year.

The virus has already shocked economies around the country, though it’s unclear how extensive the economic downturn will be. As the new coronavirus grew into a pandemic earlier this month and Saudi Arabia declared a price war on Russia, oil prices plummeted to their lowest points in decades. Since Texas is the nation’s top oil-producing state, its economy and budget are particularly sensitive to oil prices. Then, as the virus started spreading within the state’s borders, officials shuttered

or restricted several industries’ operations to limit public interactions and stem the growth of new infections. Those two situations created a double whammy by slowing two key revenues that fuel the state’s budget and economy: sales taxes and oil and gas production. Experts have said the economic damage will largely depend on how long the public health crisis lasts.

Last week, Gov. Greg Abbott issued an executive order directing bars, dine-in restaurants and schools to close as he estimated that tens of thousands of Texans could test positive for the virus in coming weeks.

On Sunday, Hegar told lawmakers he plans to keep all parties updated as the picture for the next several months continues to crystallize. He also pointed to the post-9/11 economy as good perspective for what the near future could look like and mentioned multiple times that the amount of federal funding that Texas receives could also have a major impact.

According to members on the call, Hegar fielded a number of questions, ranging from whether the governor has the jurisdiction to push back sales tax collections for specific industries — no, the comptroller said — to whether state dollars can be shifted around within the state budget during such a crisis. Abbott, for his part, noted last week

that he and the Legislature can tap into the state’s disaster relief fund immediately to help respond to the virus. He also said that the Economic Stabilization Fund could be used “at the appropriate time,” which he said would happen when state leaders “know the full extent of the challenge we’re dealing with.”

Before the stabilization fund could be used, Abbott would need to summon state lawmakers back to Austin for a special session before the Legislature reconvenes in January 2021. When asked at a town hall about the possibility for calling such a session, Abbott said that “every option remains on the table” while noting that there would not be any need for such an action if every Texan followed guidance to help curb the virus.

On Sunday night’s call, after a member mentioned a special session, Bonnen said Abbott had not yet said there was a need for one — though, the speaker added, that could of course change in the future.

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SANDRA KAY DAVIS
1956-2019

Sandra Kay Davis, of Alleyton, TX, passed away on March 18, 2020 at the age of 63. She was born to Graden and Thelma Butler on October 25, 1956 in Houston, TX. She married James Rickey Davis on August 1, 1981. Sandra served as a paralegal for various law firms over the years before retiring last year. She enjoyed spending time with her beloved husband and visiting her family. Sandra was preceded in death by her parents, Graden and Thelma Butler and her brother, Eddie Butler. Sandra is survived by her husband of 39 years, James Rickey Davis of Alleyton; sisters, Theresa Miller and husband Tommy of Corpus Christi, and Deborah Westerman of Livingston; brother, Terry Butler and wife Tootsie of Houston; and step-son, Jonathan Davis of Katy, TX. A Celebration of Life for Sandra will be held at a later date. Memorials may be given in Sandra's name to Susan G. Koman Breast Cancer Foundation, 5005 LBJ Freeway, Suite 526, Dallas, Texas 75244. Online condolences may be given to the family at www.hennekefuneralhome.com.

Ideas for alternate cleaning agents

In light of concerns about COVID-19, various health organizations have issued specific instructions on how to maintain personal safety and cleanliness. These recommendations involve using common household products to sanitize homes, offices and public spaces. As people take such precautions, many are stocking up on extra essentials — resulting in shortages. Everything from hand sanitizers to paper towels may be hard to find on grocery store shelves, leaving some to wonder what they can do to remain safe without sanitizers? The Environmental Protection Agency states that coronaviruses are some of the easiest types of viruses to kill because they have an envelope around them that enables them to merge with other cells and infect them. If that protective coating can be disrupted, the virus can't do its job. For those having trouble finding well-known cleaning agents, these alternatives may suffice.

Hot water and soap

The reason handwashing is at the top of the list of sanitizing methods is because it is so effective at washing away viruses and bacteria. Friction from scrubbing with soap and water can help break the protective envelope, states the EPA. Soap and water can clean all surfaces in a home, especially when applying a little extra elbow grease.

Hydrogen peroxide

As people clear isopropyl (rubbing alcohol) off the shelves, do not discount hydrogen peroxide. The CDC says household hydrogen peroxide at 3 percent concentration can deactivate rhinovirus, the virus that causes the common cold, within six to eight minutes of contact. Coronavirus is easier to destroy than rhinovirus, so hydrogen peroxide may be effective at combatting that virus as well. Natural items can be used for general cleaning but have not been endorsed for use on COVID-19 disinfection. In lieu of shortages, white vinegar, baking soda pastes and citrus oils and juices could fill the void of chemically based cleansers for other home tasks.



For those having trouble finding well-known cleaning agents, these alternatives may suffice.

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Psalms 94:19

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they shall run and not
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walk and not faint."*

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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

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

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UIL extends hiatus

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

The University Interscholastic League, the state's governing body for high school athletics, has extended its suspension of activities because of precautions for the novel coronavirus, or COVID-19. The earliest games may now resume is May 4.

Initially, athletic competition was suspended March 16-29.

Because of reduced calendar dates, there are expected to be changes in qualifying structures and timelines for district and postseason events for the sports seasons that have yet to be completed. Those sports are boys basketball, soccer, golf, tennis, baseball, softball and track and field.

The UIL staff is currently working to confirm facility availability for regional and state tournaments.

Still, UIL athletic director Susan Elza emphasized in a March 19 letter to district superintendents that the organization is committed to completing all competitive seasons.

In the letter, Elza added: "While the immediate future is unclear, we will continue to develop contingency plans and prepare for all possible outcomes, including extended school closures. ... UIL games and contests will resume no earlier than Monday, May 4th. Prior to that date, to allow students and schools to reenter competition, UIL will provide a reasonable acclimatization period for rehearsals and practices to

See **UIL**, page B6

"UIL games and contests will resume no earlier than Monday, May 4th. Prior to that date, to allow students and schools to reenter competition, UIL will provide a reasonable acclimatization period for rehearsals and practices to occur, consistent with the advice of local, state and federal officials."

— UIL ATHLETIC DIRECTOR
SUSAN ELZA

Coaches create remote workouts

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

Katy ISD high school and junior high campus athletic coordinators have started creating remote workouts for student-athletes through Canvas or email.

On March 20, Katy ISD announced it was initiating the online learning platform Canvas for its teachers and students beginning March 23. Coaches are available to students and parents between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

This was the first step for coaches to re-establish consistent contact with student-athletes since Katy ISD suspended athletic events and closed campuses on March 13.

"The biggest thing at this point, especially that first week, is we want our coaches to step up and help take care of the social and emotional needs of our students and engaging them in some sort of platform so they can see the coach's face and keep working through this," Katy ISD athletic director Debbie Decker said.

"This" is the uncertainty due to precautions for the novel

See **KATY ISD**, page B3



DENNIS SILVA II

In this photo from July 2017, Katy ISD athletic director Debbie Decker poses in her office at Legacy Stadium.

Katy Times is starting a new feature called Senior Stars, where we highlight senior student-athletes and feature them during these uncertain times for their respective high school careers.

Because of precautions for novel coronavirus, or COVID-19, the UIL has suspended athletic competition since March 16, with games not resuming until May 4 at the earliest. We want to give voices to senior student-athletes and recognize them and share their stories. For more information, email sports editor Dennis Silva II at densilva2@gmail.com or message on Twitter @densilva2.

SENIOR STARS

Paetow's Lewis a role model for others

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

Rayna Lewis is the first senior for Paetow's softball program. She's also the only one.

"It's honestly the biggest blessing," Lewis said. "I love that I get the chance to leave a lasting legacy on the program. It means a lot, really, because I kind of get to be like a mom to the rest of my teammates. I love helping everybody get better and having everybody push me to be better."

"I take a lot of pride in this program, because I feel that I have an important job to uphold not only on the field, but off the field. I've become sort of a role model for the future classes and underclassmen in our program."

Outside of softball, Lewis is a "bit of a homebody." She loves to cook and bake with her mom, but she also enjoys making TikTok videos in her free time. Her favorite athlete is Serena Williams because of her strength and prominence.

"Oh, we also share the same birthday!" Lewis said.

Lewis' favorite TV show is "Private Practice" and her favorite movie is "The Sandlot." Her favorite musical artist is Rod Wave.

"He has music for all my moods," Lewis said.

Lewis spoke more with The Katy Times about softball and life.

Q: How early did you start playing softball? What was it that made you fall in love with the sport?

A: I started playing softball when I was about five years old. I really fell in love with the sport before I even started playing. My mom played softball in college, and watching her really grew my interest. I guess you can say I really fell in love with playing once I realized that that was all I ever wanted to do in my free time.

Q: What is your fondest memory that you have of playing?

A: Definitely when I won a national championship in, like, 12U. I remember it was like 110 degrees in Dallas, and we were playing on a turf field that didn't make it any easier. I was so tempted to give up that day, but it all worked out at the end. That was just a really fun group that I played with, and we all have stayed close friends since then.

See **LEWIS**, page B3



COURTESY

Rayna Lewis, a North Texas signee, is the first senior for Paetow's softball program. She's also the only one.

Falcons' Van der Walt thinks the game

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

Tompkins senior Monray Van der Walt was 12 years old when he and his family moved from South Africa to the United States.

Until that point, Van der Walt's exposure to sports was limited to rugby and cricket. But when he got to the States, he started playing baseball.

"In my second game I ever played, I hit two back-to-back home runs in the same game," Van der Walt said. "That's when I knew I wanted to play this game for as long as I possibly can."

Van der Walt will be playing for quite a while longer.

The catcher/first baseman is a Lamar University signee, with highly acclaimed athleticism, strength and balance at the catcher position and a direct swing with solid bat speed at the plate. He is a tantalizing 6-foot, 190-pound prospect with a high ceiling.

He is a baseball junkie. Van der Walt does not have many hobbies. Most free time he has is spent toward doing something, anything, to becoming a better player. One of his passions, for example, is weightlifting.

Van der Walt is also a thinker, a cerebral physical specimen who embraces the mental aspect of the game.

"I'm a firm believer that success is made behind the scenes," Van der Walt said. "I believe that it is very important to mentally focus yourself on your goals in order to accomplish them. A lot of times, when I drive to and from places, I kind of mentally calm my thoughts and think about what I want to accomplish in the near future, a plan that I can make for myself to follow to accomplish my goals."

It's why LeBron James is his favorite athlete.

"Because of how he handles situations

See **VAN DER WALT**, page B3



COURTESY

Tompkins senior catcher/first baseman Monray Van der Walt is a Lamar University signee.

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Tompkins' Robisch verbals to Navy

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

Bryce Robisch has been playing soccer ever since he could remember. Born in France, the Tompkins junior defender said the sport was a constant in what was a nomadic childhood.

"I started playing while my dad was still playing basketball, so soccer was just in my blood from the start," Robisch said. "I moved to Australia and Oman and, other than rugby, soccer was the only thing I could do. I would come from school every day and go straight to the park. My younger years revolved around the sport."

Robisch and his family moved to Katy when he was in the fifth grade. It wasn't until he was in eighth grade that he knew about college soccer.

"When I found out about it, I knew I could play and have my education paid for at the (NCAA) Division I level," Robisch said.

That became a reality on March 18, when the 6-foot-5, 190-pounder verbally committed to play at the United States Naval Academy. So far this season, Robisch has seven goals and five assists through 10 games for the Falcons.

Robisch chose the Navy over schools like SMU, Notre Dame and Princeton. He also received a significant amount of attention from schools in California.

During an uncertain time in the country because of COVID-19, the novel coronavirus, Robisch was able to find a semblance of future stability.

"Coronavirus had a minor impact, with just the uncertainty of being able to play again in the foreseeable future, but really just after my visit, I was set on the decision to commit around this time," Robisch said. "It's a relief that I can call it over and find a home."

Robisch talked with The Katy Times about his decision and more.



Tompkins junior defender Bryce Robisch (22) verbally committed to the United States Naval Academy on March 18.

Q. What was it about the Navy that made it the right choice for you?

A: I really liked the head coach (Tim O'Donohue) and assistant, and the amount of talent coming in from top teams all across the country really made me think we could be a top team. Also, coming out of the academy, I'll be set up because of how good the school is, and I'm allowed to go pro with the new law passed by (president Donald Trump). (Editor's note: In June, Trump signed a presidential memorandum ordering the Pentagon to establish a policy allowing athletes attending

military academies to play professionally immediately after graduating).

Q. What did Navy coaches say they had in mind for you? How did they say they could see you developing for them?

A: The Navy coaches needed a center back because both their starters will be graduated when I get there, so I was their top recruit in the 2021 class because of how crucially they needed someone in my position. The head coach is a defensive specialist, so I really think he can develop me to be a top player in the country.

Q. Obviously this high school soccer season has been interrupted with precautions for COVID-19. What are your thoughts on the state of things and the possibility that the UIL could potentially cancel the rest of the spring sports season?

A: Playoffs are, by far, the best part of the season, so it kind of sucks to play a whole year and not have the reward of playing the top teams in the state, but at this point it's beyond our control. It's not about the sports at this point, it's more about the safety of all.

Q. How have you been using this time/break? How have you been trying to stay in shape and sustaining a rhythm so that you'll be ready if/when the season is continued?

A: I actually just got back from Scotland and playing with the professional team Hearts of Midlothian in the Scottish first division, but I had to come back early because of the virus. I'll rest before I get back into working on my game and gaining strength to be ready for going back to play in Scotland over the summer.

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Katy Times



Out of an abundance of caution in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic affecting the Greater Houston Area, Katy Times is postponing our Katy City Council Candidate forum that was originally scheduled for March 25.

Once an election timeline has been determined, we intend to examine when it will be practical and safe to host the forum in order to ensure voters are informed when they go to the polls.

We thank Katy residents for their support and interest in the event and we truly appreciate your readership.

R. Hans Miller
Katy Times Senior Reporter



*Sponsorship of this public event does not imply an endorsement of any particular candidate in any of the races associated with the event.



SPORTS

KATY ISD

from page B1

coronavirus, or COVID-19. The University Interscholastic League, the state's governing body for high school athletics, extended its suspension of activities on March 19. The earliest games may now resume is May 4.

"We're all going to do what the governor has asked, what the president has asked, and at the same time we can work on our skills at home in drills that are safe and continue with our fitness and exercises," Decker said.

During this first week, Decker said coaches will be asked to make contact with every athlete and every student in their class. Engaging students in learning is priority No. 1.

Next week, coaches will begin posting 30-minute workouts per day.

Campus coaches that teach physical education or don't teach a core subject will help develop workout drills for each of the athletic

"We're all going to do what the governor has asked, what the president has asked, and at the same time we can work on our skills at home in drills that are safe and continue with our fitness and exercises."

— KATY ISD ATHLETIC DIRECTOR DEBBIE DECKER

programs, specific to each sport. The workouts vary in how they are created.

Some head coaches have two athletic periods, so they might plan the workouts. Some campuses have strength and conditioning coaches, so they might be the ones devising them.

Students who do not have an athletic period because their academic course load is too full will have to be

engaged in a different way, through the online video conferencing system Zoom, email, Google calendar or another avenue.

"We're not boxing our coaches in on exactly what it has to look like," Decker said. "We're giving them some flexibility."

Decker said she had multiple meetings last week with district superintendent Ken Gregorski and deputy superintendent Leslie Haack

through Zoom about how to keep moving forward.

For instance, the opening of Jordan High School, scheduled to start up in August, and the establishing of its athletic department is not expected to be hindered because of the break in schedule.

On March 23, the district began remotely processing purchase orders for the school.

"There's always a way to work through things," Decker said. "(Jordan High campus athletic coordinator) Coach (Mike) Rabe and (principal) Dr. Ethan Crowell immediately began hiring. (Rabe) almost had his entire staff already and ready to go for this next fall. We will be able to continue with the open of Jordan High School by working remotely. Our business office has been incredible through this in giving us the tools to keep going."

The district also announced on March 19 that Legacy Stadium eventually will be used as a drive-thru testing site for COVID-19 for at-risk individuals. It is the second time in four years that the

site is being used for emergency purposes.

In 2017, Legacy Stadium was used as a sign-up location for search-and-rescue teams during Hurricane Harvey and occupied by multiple emergency first responder groups for about a month.

"Yes, I did envision it to be a place other groups, like county or state officials, could potentially use," Decker said. "I remember where Tully Stadium in Spring Branch ISD was used for some things. The Merrill Center has been used. Any time you have a site like Legacy Stadium with the parking lot capabilities and the infrastructure and whatnot, we absolutely, and the bond committee too, had the vision of all the different things this stadium could be for our community."

"Now, did I imagine it becoming an actual test site? Not necessarily, but I did imagine it being a site that could be commandeered by state and federal agencies that needed it in times of emergency, such as Hurricane Harvey. This is just one more opportunity for the school district to do their part and help."

VAN DER WALT

from page B1

he's put in," Van der Walt said. "I often listen to his podcasts when he talks about the mental game and how he has used that to his advantage, how he is able to analyze a situation and slow the game down."

Van der Walt spoke more with The Katy Times about baseball and life.

Q. What is the fondest memory you have of playing baseball?

A. My sophomore year, we played against Fulshear High. I came up to bat with the bases loaded on a 3-2 count, with a tied game, and hit a grand slam to give us the lead.

Q. What has been the proudest moment of your high school career?

A. When I finally announced my commitment to play D1

"I'm a firm believer that success is made behind the scenes. I believe that it is very important to mentally focus yourself on your goals in order to accomplish them."

— TOMPKINS SENIOR MONRAY VAN DER WALT

baseball and further my career in college. I've worked extremely hard for this, and it's honestly by God's grace that I've been given this amazing opportunity. I felt that my hard work has finally paid off. There was a time when a lot of people told me I couldn't do it and that I wasn't good enough. For me, I just kept working and told myself that there's going to be a day that I'll rise above my doubters. And the day I

announced my commitment was the day I felt the proudest, to be able to prove people wrong.

Q. How has playing baseball and playing for Tompkins made you a better person?

A. The game of baseball is often said to be a game of failure, and that you'll fail more than you'll succeed. I think it is very true.

Personally, I have tremendous respect for the game, and I feel that there is a right way to play it and a wrong way. Playing on this team, and just baseball in general, along with the very tedious recruiting process, I've learned to deal with setbacks. I feel that I've matured in the way I think about situations on and off the field and how to deal with conflicts. Mental toughness.

Q. What are your thoughts about the UIL possibly canceling the rest of its spring sports season?

A. Our season getting postponed, possibly canceled, definitely hit deep, and it's honestly something I know I'll remember forever. All I want to do is play baseball. I mean, (a couple weeks ago) we were getting ready for our first district game. Our lineup was looking good, the pitching staff heating up. But now everything is so uncertain. This whole situation kind of made me realize that I need to cherish every

moment I get to be on the field and take nothing for granted. I think a lot of players, including myself, realize now that it can be taken away from you at any moment. It's really eye-opening to think that this whole situation is out of your control and might be the last you'll ever play high school baseball.

Q. What are your thoughts in general about COVID-19, or novel coronavirus, and these times of social distancing?

A. I think the coronavirus came as a surprise for many people, including myself. It's kind of scary and almost feels like something that only happens in movies; it's unreal. I think this definitely impacts our economy, and I honestly hope everything can go back to normal. Most of us sometimes wish we didn't have school because of homework or classes, but I think all of us wish we had school at this point. Plus, going to school means baseball players get to play ball.

"I take a lot of pride in this program, because I feel that I have an important job to uphold not only on the field, but off the field. I've become sort of a role model for the future classes and underclassmen in our program."

— PAETOW SENIOR RAYNA LEWIS

LEWIS

from page B1

Q. How has playing the sport and playing for Paetow made you a better person?

A. Playing softball has made me a better person in all aspects. Playing sports, in general, teaches you how to be selfless and be a team player, but softball really teaches you how to overcome adversity. There are many factors in the sport that will test your strength, and I think it's important for you to go through them, to build your character as a person. Playing for my high school team has been a more unique experience. I was never really used to being the upperclassman as a junior, so it really forced me to grow up. It also developed my leadership skills because I am the lone senior. I have to hold myself to a different standard than I used to.

Q. What are your emotions about the UIL possibly canceling the rest of its spring sports season?

A. The possibility of UIL canceling sports has been really difficult to try and digest. Our team had made so much progress from the year before, and it was really starting to show, and we were really looking forward to district play. As a senior though, it's been really tough thinking that I could have played my last high school softball game. Although I will be playing in college, I had so many goals for myself and my team that I was well on the way to meeting, so to think that all of our hard work and progress could be taken from us is really difficult to accept.

Q. What are your thoughts in general about coronavirus and these times of social distancing?

A. I think the coronavirus is really confusing. It just came out of nowhere and the whole thing escalated really quickly. I support the social distancing idea. I think it's really smart, and hopefully will bring the virus under control rather quickly. It's been hard as a young person, of course, because I move around a lot and I spend a lot of time outside with other people, so to have to now stay in my house 24/7 is really difficult.

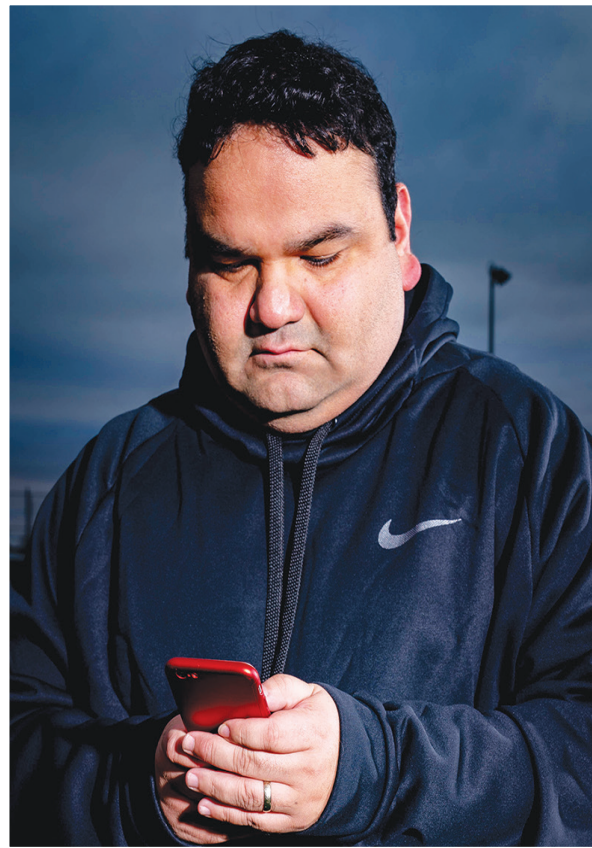
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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

ERICA DELLESKY
TAYS JUNIOR HIGH

Erica Dellesky plays volleyball at a high level. The 14 year old stands 5-foot-9 and is a talented setter for Tays Junior High. She's a stellar student academically, very respectful and a hard worker. Erica has been consistently training with Coach Richard Foy of Eyecan Athletics in Katy and is already being recruited at the collegiate level by a major school. Her future is incredibly bright.

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Six Katy ISD athletes named All-Region

By DENNIS SILVA II
TIMES SPORTS EDITOR

Six Katy ISD athletes were recognized earlier this month by the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches as All-Region selections for the 2019-20 high school basketball season.

Katy ISD competes in Region III for basketball.

Katy High senior wing Allana Thompson and Tompkins freshman guard Loghan Johnson were honored. Johnson helped lead the Falcons to their first undefeated district championship. Thompson, a Prairie View A&M signee, averaged 19 points and eight rebounds in helping lead the Tigers to a playoff berth.

Katy ISD had four boys named to the all-region team.

Morton Ranch senior guard L.J. Cryer was selected after posting one of the best seasons in Texas high school basketball history, averaging 34.2 points, 5.3 assists, 2.6 rebounds and 2.4 steals per game.

Cryer shot 55 percent overall, including 44 percent from 3-point range.

Cryer's backcourt teammate, senior Westley Sellers, was also named to the team. Sellers averaged 9.5 points, 6.3 assists, 6.2 rebounds and 3.2 steals per game.

Cryer and Sellers were essential in leading the Mavericks to a second straight undefeated district championship and the first regional semifinal appearance in program history.

Mayde Creek senior guard Rommell Williams, a Midwestern State signee, was also selected after averaging 20.2 points, 5.9 rebounds and 2.4 assists in leading the Rams to a second straight playoff berth, and just the sixth postseason appearance in the program's history.

Taylor junior guard Jake Arnold, blossoming into one of the premier recruits in the Class of 2021, was honored for his outstanding season. Arnold averaged 23.5 points, 6.5 rebounds and 1.9 steals for the Mustangs. He shot 51 percent from the field.



PHOTOS BY MARK GOODMAN

Mayde Creek senior guard Rommell Williams averaged 20.2 points, 5.9 rebounds and 2.4 assists in leading the Rams to a second straight playoff berth.



Morton Ranch senior guard Westley Sellers averaged 9.5 points, 6.3 assists, 6.2 rebounds and 3.2 steals per game.



Katy senior guard Allana Thompson averaged 19 points and eight rebounds in helping lead the Tigers to a playoff berth.



Morton Ranch senior guard L.J. Cryer posted one of the best seasons in Texas high school basketball history, averaging 34.2 points, 5.3 assists, 2.6 rebounds and 2.4 steals per game.



Tompkins freshman guard Loghan Johnson helped lead the Falcons to their first undefeated district championship.



Taylor junior guard Jake Arnold averaged 23.5 points, 6.5 rebounds and 1.9 steals for the Mustangs.

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March 19 Puzzle Answers

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9	8	5	4	2	3	6	7	1
6	1	7	3	9	5	4	8	2
3	5	2	7	4	8	1	6	9
8	9	4	1	6	2	7	5	3

KATY TIMES CLASSIFIEDS WORK! CALL TODAY! 281-391-3141

PUBLIC NOTICES

APPLICATION HAS BEEN MADE WITH THE TEXAS ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE COMMISSION FOR A BEER RETAIL DEALER'S OFF-PREMISE LICENSE, A WINE ONLY PACKAGE STORE PERMIT AND A PACKAGE STORE TASTING PERMIT BY QUALITY LICENSING CORP. D/B/A QUALITY LICENSING CORP. (STORE #4111W) LOCATED AT 26824 F.M. 1093, RICHMOND, FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS 77406. OFFICERS OF SAID COMPANY ARE JOHN SCUDDER, PRESIDENT/CEO; MATTHEW W. ALLEN, VP; WAYNE HAMILTON, VP; ANDREA M. LAZENBY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY; DANIEL JOHN RICE, ASSISTANT SECRETARY.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

INVITATION TO BIDDERS
Sealed Bids in duplicate will be received by Katy Management District No. 1 in the office of KGA/DeForest Design, LLC (L.A. License No. 2602, Texas), 24275 Katy Freeway, Suite 300, Katy, Texas, 77494 until 2:00 P.M. on April 09, 2020 for **Katy Mills Boulevard Streetscape Project.**

All bids will be publicly opened and read aloud for construction of improvements including roadway pavers, sidewalks, site furniture, entry signage, street signage, street lighting, irrigation, planting, fine grading and hydromulch.

Bidders shall submit two (2) copies of the Bid on exact copies of the Bid Form provided. A Conflict of Interest Questionnaire (Form CIQ) and Certificate of Interested Parties (HB Form 1295) must be returned with Bid. (Forms are provided with Spec Book)

Bid Documents may be examined without charge in the offices of KGA/DeForest Design, LLC, 24275 Katy Freeway, Suite 300, Katy, Texas, 77494, or may be obtained upon deposit of Two Hundred-Fifty Dollars (\$250.00) for each set. This **sum is non-refundable** and checks should be made payable to KGA/DeForest Design, LLC. Only check or money order will be accepted.

A Cashier's Check or Bidder's Bond Payable to Katy Management District No. 1 in the amount of not less than five percent (5%) of the bid submitted, outlined in the Contract Documents, must accompany the Bid.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting is scheduled for March 30, 2020, at 10:30 A.M. at the office of KGA/DeForest Design, LLC.

Bidders must have at least five years of confirmed experience on comparable size projects of a similar scope in the Houston Area.

The successful bidder receiving contract award must furnish Performance, Payment, and Maintenance Bonds in the amount of one hundred percent (100%) each of the total Contract price. Each such bond shall be executed by a corporate surety duly authorized to do business in the State of Texas.

The winning bid is decided not by low price but by this standard:

"The responsible person or persons that, in the Board's judgment, will be most advantageous to the District and result in the best and most economical completion of the District's proposed improvements."

The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive bidding informalities.

INVITATION TO BIDDERS

Sealed Bids, in duplicate, addressed to Waller County Municipal Utility District No. 18, Attention: Doug Bergen, President, Board of Directors, will be received at the office of the Engineer, LJA Engineering, Inc., 1904 West Grand Parkway North, Suite 120, Katy, Texas 77449, until 3:00 p.m., Local Time, Tuesday, April 14, 2020, and then publicly opened and read for "Construction of the Paving and Appurtenances to Serve Twinwood Business Park Phase 2 for Waller County Municipal Utility District No. 18, Waller County, Texas". Bidders may elect to submit bids electronically via <https://bids.lja.com>.

Scope of Work of the Contract includes the following: Construction of paving and appurtenances.

Bids received after the closing time will be returned unopened. A non-mandatory pre-bid conference will be held on Tuesday, April 7, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. Local Time, at the office of the Engineer, LJA Engineering, Inc., 1904 West Grand Parkway North, Suite 120, Katy, Texas 77449.

Each Bid must be accompanied by a Bid Bond or a certified or cashier's check, acceptable to the Owner, in an amount not less than five percent (5%) of the total amount Bid, as a guarantee that the successful bidder will enter into the Contract and execute the Bonds on the forms provided, and provide the required insurance certificates within seven (7) days after the date Contract Documents are received by the Contractor.

Bidding documents may be examined at LJA Engineering, Inc., AGC of Texas, Construct Connect, and Amtek or may be obtained by prospective bidders or suppliers upon payment of one hundred Dollars (\$100.00 non-refundable plus cost of delivery) (\$50.00 for electronic copy) for each set of documents at LJA Engineering, Inc., 1904 West Grand Parkway North, Suite 120, Katy, Texas 77449 or at <https://bids.lja.com>. Bidders must register on this website to download bidding documents.

The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all Bids and to waive all defects and irregularities in bidding or bidding process except time of submitting a Bid. The Successful Bidder, if any, will be the responsible Bidder which in the Board's judgment will be most advantageous to the District and result in the best and most economical completion of the Project.

The requirements of Subchapter J, Chapter 552, Government Code, may apply to this Bid and/or Contract and the Contractor agrees that the Contract can be terminated if the Contractor knowingly or intentionally fails to comply with a requirement of that subchapter.

Waller County Municipal Utility District No. 18

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

WALLER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT
APRIL 8, 2020 9:00 A.M.
COMMISSIONERS' COURTROOM,
WALLER COUNTY COURTHOUSE

The Waller County Commissioners' Court will conduct a Public Hearing under the authority of Transportation Code Chapter 251, Subchapter E to consider the installation of No Thru Truck Signs at the following location:

Lazy Ridge Road – No Thru Trucks
Foxwood Drive – No Thru Trucks

All interested persons are encouraged to attend and participate in the Public Hearing.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

WALLER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT
APRIL 8, 2020 9:00 A.M.
COMMISSIONERS' COURTROOM,
WALLER COUNTY COURTHOUSE

The Waller County Commissioners' Court will conduct a Public Hearing under the authority of Chapter 251.152, Transportation Code, to consider the establishment of speed limits and the installation of speed limit signs on the following roads:

COUNTRY LANE ESTATES – All roads within subdivision – 30 mph.

All interested persons are encouraged to attend and participate in the Public Hearing.

INVITATION TO BIDDERS

Sealed Bids, in duplicate, addressed to Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 213, Attention: Charles "Ted" Lee, President, Board of Directors, will be received at the office of the Engineer, LJA Engineering, Inc., 1904 West Grand Parkway North, Suite 120, Katy, Texas 77449, until 10:00 a.m., Local Time, Thursday, April 9, 2020, and then publicly opened and read for "Construction of the Twinwood Parkway Phase 1A, Segment E Bridge to Serve Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 213, Waller County, Texas". **Bidders may elect to submit bids electronically via <https://bids.lja.com>.**

Scope of Work of the Contract includes the following: Construction of the Twinwood Parkway Phase 1A, Segment E Bridge.

Bids received after the closing time will be returned unopened. A **non-mandatory pre-bid conference** will be held on Thursday, April 2, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. Local Time, at the office of the Engineer, LJA Engineering, Inc., 1904 West Grand Parkway North, Suite 120, Katy, Texas 77449.

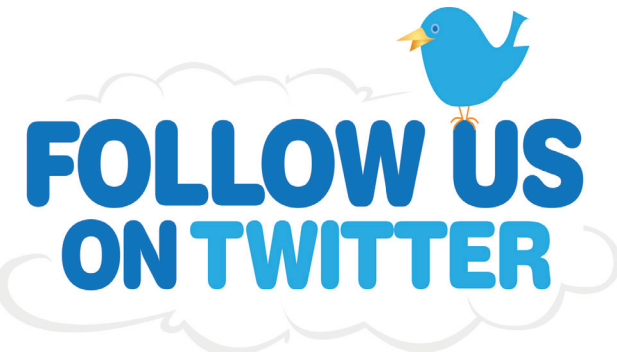
Each Bid must be accompanied by a Bid Bond or a certified or cashier's check, acceptable to the Owner, in an amount not less than five percent (5%) of the total amount Bid, as a guarantee that the successful bidder will enter into the Contract and execute the Bonds on the forms provided, and provide the required insurance certificates within seven (7) days after the date Contract Documents are received by the Contractor.

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The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all Bids and to waive all defects and irregularities in bidding or bidding process except time of submitting a Bid. The Successful Bidder, if any, will be the responsible Bidder which in the Board's judgment will be most advantageous to the District and result in the best and most economical completion of the Project.

The requirements of Subchapter J, Chapter 552, Government Code, may apply to this Bid and/or Contract and the Contractor agrees that the Contract can be terminated if the Contractor knowingly or intentionally fails to comply with a requirement of that subchapter.

Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 213



Visit us at KatyTimes.com

Waller County Municipal Utility District No. 18

UIL

from page B1

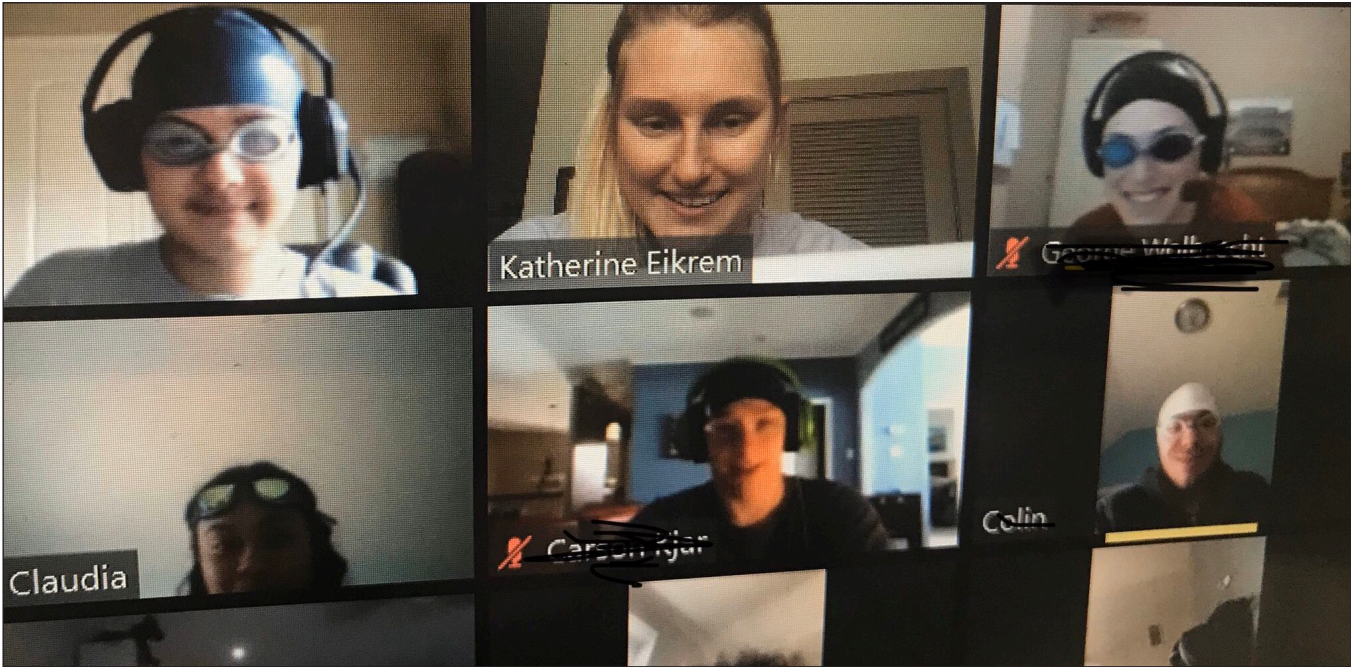
occur, consistent with the advice of local, state and federal officials. We will reevaluate the beginning dates for practices and rehearsals as we receive more information about schools resuming.

“We will be as flexible as possible to help you complete district competitions,” Elza’s letter stated, “and provide your students with all of the benefits that come from competition.”

In the meantime, remote coaching of UIL activities has been permitted through electronic, video or teleconferencing methods. Coaches are now allowed to communicate and instruct student-athletes remotely.

Schools are to limit coaching instruction to a maximum of eight hours per week per sport, in addition to a maximum of 60 minutes per day Monday through Friday. For out-of-season sports, schools are to limit remote coaching instruction to a maximum of 60 minutes per day, Monday through Friday.

On March 23, most school districts, including Katy ISD, initiated online learning programs so students could resume classes. The programs last between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.



COURTESY

Tompkins’ junior varsity swimmers showed up for their team meeting via Zoom on March 23 wearing their swim caps and goggles. Katy ISD transitioned to online learning on Monday through Canvas.

YOU CAN KEEP YOUR COUGH AT HOME

with Houston Methodist Virtual Urgent Care



Our providers are available to screen for the coronavirus via video visit.

Whether you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or want to avoid spreading or catching germs, our board-certified providers are here for you 24/7. Virtual Urgent Care is available to new and existing patients for your non-emergency, urgent care needs. Get the same trusted care you expect from Houston Methodist — from the comfort of your own home.

Virtual Urgent Care is available through the MyMethodist app. Download it today.