

# Katy Times



TREES FOR HOUSTON FINISHES ITS SEASON PAGE 3

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THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2020

## Abbott issues new order

By ED STERLING  
TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

An executive order issued by Gov. Greg Abbott to reopen in-store retail shopping, dine-in restaurants, movie theaters, museums, libraries and more took effect May 1 and will continue through May 15.

As Texas, the rest of the United States and the world's nations seek to balance cries for increased commercial activity — and the jobs that result — while also containing the spread of the deadly influenza-like virus, COVID-19, Abbott's order allows most venues to operate at up to 25% of their total listed occupancy with certain other conditions applying.

For example, shopping malls may operate at up to 25% of their total listed occupancy. However, their food-court dining areas, play areas and interactive displays and settings must remain closed.

Abbott's order, in accordance with guidelines issued by White House and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, reminds Texans that schools remain closed to in-person classroom attendance by students through the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Meanwhile, teachers and staff are encouraged to continue to work remotely from home if possible but may return to campuses to conduct remote video instruction and perform administrative duties under strict terms required by the Texas Education Agency. Also, private schools and institutions of higher education are urged to establish similar terms to allow faculty and staff to return to campuses to conduct remote video instruction and perform administrative duties when it is not possible to do so from home.

Notably, the order does not prohibit people from accessing essential or reopened services or engaging in essential daily activities, such as going to the grocery

See **ORDER**, page 5

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## Graduation, other events set

By R. HANS MILLER  
TIMES SENIOR REPORTER

Both Katy and Royal ISD have announced new dates for class of 2020 graduations as well as dates for other events including Royal's annual awards ceremonies and Katy's proms. Katy ISD's graduation ceremonies have been postponed to June while Royal ISD will host their graduation ceremony July 24. Royal ISD's annual awards presentation has been moved to May 20.

"The May twentieth Virtual Awards will take the place of our annual awards night. Each teacher and department will recognize their top students in addition to the Annual Principal's Award which recognizes a student that exemplifies Falcon pride, dedication, hard work, service and commitment to excellence," Royal ISD spokesperson Christi Ginn said via email.

### Katy ISD

Katy ISD's graduation ceremonies will be held from June 20-26 and each day's graduation ceremonies are separated by campus. Backup dates in July have also been added to the district's schedule from July 11-17. Dates for each campus to have their prom have also been scheduled for mid-June as noted in the sidebar on page 5.

Caps, gowns and other accessories for graduation are expected to be available to distribute by May 11, but Katy ISD has not finalized plans for distribution, according to the district's website. Parents with questions regarding their student's graduation order should email [Classof2020@KatyISD.org](mailto:Classof2020@KatyISD.org).

Proms will be held at the Leonard E. Merrell Center, Katy ISD's website said. There is not charge for seniors and their guests.

Additional details will be sent out to parents as they are finalized, including those for IT or sports equipment returns, the district said.



ROYAL HIGH SCHOOL BY R. HANS MILLER

Both Royal ISD and Katy ISD have rescheduled their graduation ceremonies to the summer months in order to ensure the Class of 2020 gets to celebrate their accomplishments.

All students will receive their class rank and quartile rank via the Home Access Center June 1 when student transcripts are finalized after the spring semester, according to an announcement on the district's website.

Seniors may also submit their request for high school transcripts which will be sealed and mailed each Tuesday through August, a KISD announcement said, and campus registrars are available to assist seniors with their transcript requests. Valedictorians and salutatorians are being announced via Facebook the week of May 4.

### Royal ISD

Royal High School's Class of 2020 will receive caps and gowns May 7 from 6-8 p.m. at the high school. Those picking up caps and gowns as well as senior gifts should remain in

their vehicles while picking the items up for their graduates, Ginn said.

"The district will be giving Class of 2020 gifts to each senior," Ginn said. "The district billboard on I-10 will be displaying pictures for each of our seniors on a rotating basis over the month of May, and senior spotlights will be posted on the district website and social media."

This year's Royal High School graduates 144 seniors, 99 of whom have been accepted into colleges or universities. Six of this year's graduates have enlisted in the military. The class includes three advanced placement honor scholars and one national merit scholar qualifier, Ginn said.

The Royal High School graduation will

See **GRADUATION**, page 9



R. HANS MILLER

## Katy Mills opens along with other area Simon properties

By R. HANS MILLER  
TIMES SENIOR REPORTER

Simon Property Group, L.P. has announced that Katy Mills has reopened after being shut down for weeks due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Katy mall as well as The Galleria and Houston Premium Outlets reopened at 11 a.m. today with limited capacity under Tex.

Governor Greg Abbott's executive order which went into effect at midnight last night.

"The health, safety and well-being of those we serve will always be our highest priority, and we have developed a thorough and detailed set of protocols highlighting the exceptional measures

See **OPENS**, page 9

## Morgan takes on a new role

*Morgan promoted to Assistant Superintendent for Secondary School Leadership and Support*

By R. HANS MILLER  
TIMES SENIOR REPORTER

Christopher Morgan was promoted to Assistant Superintendent for Secondary School Leadership and Support by the Katy ISD Board of Trustees at its April 27 meeting. Morgan has served as an educator and/or principal in Irving ISD, Fort Bend ISD and Katy ISD since 1995. Morgan holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Kinesiology from Stephen F. Austin State University and a Master of Education in Administration from Texas Women's University. He will begin his new role this fall for the 2020-21 school year.

Katy Times proposed the questions below to Morgan. His responses have been lightly edited to fit in the space allotted and for clarity.



CHRISTOPHER MORGAN

See **MORGAN**, page 9

## Singer/song-writer Sara Davis Regan drops album

By R. HANS MILLER  
TIMES SENIOR REPORTER

Katy artist Sara Davis Regan released a new album May 1 which she wrote, performed and produced herself - with a little help from her former producer, Chris Jacobie who coached her through the process, she said. Jacobie mixed the album and acted as a consultant to help her get everything right, she said.

"(Jacobie) selflessly encouraged me to pursue production myself because it would enable me to do it from my home and I wouldn't have to drive hours to do it," Regan said. "So I did. I bought the equipment I needed and I learned how to produce."

Regan said Jacobie's help on the new album, entitled "Riverland," brings to fruition another step in her long-running love of music that began with car rides with her dad with The Doobie Brothers cranked. Her father was joined by her brother



"Riverland" has inspirations across a variety of genres from bluegrass to modern alternative.

in inspiring her which prompted her to start learning guitar in fifth grade, she said. She went on to perform in church youth groups, band at school and eventually sold out shows in various Austin venues before she and her husband, David Regan

See **ALBUM**, page 5



COURTESY SARA DAVIS REGAN

Sara Davis Regan is a Texas native that moved to Katy about four years ago and has dropped her new album, "Riverland" this month.





R. HANS MILLER

While activities at The Arc of Katy are shut down for participants in the nonprofit's programs, the organization was able to raise nearly \$4,000 for operations through a geranium sale last week while helping a Texas nursery prevent the plants, which are usually sold through school fundraisers, from being wasted.

## Arc of Katy sale raises thousands

By R. HANS MILLER  
TIMES SENIOR REPORTER

The Arc of Katy held a flower sale April 30 and May 1 to raise funds for the nonprofit, Arc of Katy Board Member Amy Campbell said. The local nonprofit, which offers social activities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, raised \$3,000 through sales and another \$800 through financial donations at the event.

"We ordered 1,000 Geraniums with the hopes that we could really put it out there and sell them," Campbell said. "We sold 930 of them the first day. The next day we had 70 left and we sold those in 18 minutes."

The community came together to help the Arc of Katy in multiple ways, Campbell said. First, there were the community members that bought the flowers and the volunteers for The Arc that ran the flower sale. Second, the Katy Elks Lodge #2628 provided another volunteer, chairs and tents to facilitate the event.

The Arc of Katy's clients did not participate because of health concerns, Campbell said.

"We didn't ask them to participate only because of the social distancing and sometimes they're in the compromised group of people," Campbell said.

The idea for the event came after Campbell spoke with her sister, Randye McAnally, who runs Fredericksburg Farms with her husband Steve McAnally. The nursery usually sells Geraniums for school fundraisers. Most of

the fundraisers the thousands of plants raised at the nursery were going to go unused, so Campbell worked out a deal with her sister to raise funds for The Arc of Katy instead.

The 1,000 Geraniums were sold for \$8 a piece with \$5 going toward the grower's business to keep it going and \$3 going to the nonprofit, Campbell said. Between the profit from the flowers and about \$800 received in financial donations, the total proceeds for last week's event was \$3,800, Campbell said.

Campbell said that, while the nonprofit is not currently hosting in-person events for its program participants, it is partnering with area organizations to provide activities for participants. The Harris County staff at Mary Jo Peckham Park have even created exercise videos for The Arc of Katy clients to enjoy with their families, Campbell said.

Campbell and John Curry of Curry & Co. Consulting helps The Arc of Katy with its public relations said the organization still needs the community's support, even though in-person activities are not ongoing right now. The nonprofit's annual fundraising gala is still scheduled for Aug. 28, they said.

"If (supporters) have any educational or interesting things, they do they could offer those to The Arc of Katy," Campbell said.

If you missed the sale and would like to purchase geraniums, the Katy Elks Lodge will be hosting its own geranium sale Thursday and Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at their lodge, Campbell said.

## Special Pals gets new director, launches new foster program

By R. HANS MILLER  
TIMES SENIOR REPORTER

Special Pals Shelter, located at 3830 Greenhouse Road near Katy, has appointed Becky French as president. The organization has also expanded their services to help other fur-friendly organizations the nonprofit announced last week.

"We are thrilled to add Becky to the Special Pals team," said President of the Special Pals Board of Directors Melissa Houser. "Her passion for animal rescue and her experience with animal care will help us continue to grow our life-saving mission in Houston."



BECKY FRENCH

### New Director

French comes to Special Pals after serving as clinic director for Houston's Rescued Pets Movement, a Special Pals press release said.

Special pals is a limited-intake, no-kill shelter located near where Katy addresses fade to Houston addresses. It is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization that shelters dogs and cats and provides alternatives to euthanasia, adoptive homes, education and resources for pet owners such as low cost vaccination clinics.

French said she has about 14 years of experience in animal rescues and nonprofit organizations in Houston and Washington state.

Erin McCollum, who served as acting director prior to French's appointment to the position, will continue working at the local nonprofit.

"In Washington, the capacity for taking in animals is completely different," she says. "Shelters up there accept lots of animals from outside of their immediate area, and that is more challenging for us in the Houston metro area because our animal population is so massive."

### Rescue Resource Center

Special Pals has also expanded its program to become the Special Pals Rescue Resource Center, said Special Pals representative Katy Heerssen. New services will include rescue boarding as part of the services offered to help animal rescue organizations in the region.

"We recognized a need in our community for a 'hub' for animals, particularly dogs," Houser said. "Groups often find themselves without a temporary place to keep dogs while foster or transport arrangements are made. We've been calling that the 'bottleneck' and our aim is to 'break the bottleneck' between at-risk and adoptable for Houston's homeless animals."

The idea of the expansion is to ensure that animals supported by Special Pals are placed in



PHOTO COURTESY SPECIAL PALS SHELTER

Special Pals Shelter has been in operation for about 40 years and is the Katy area's longest-operating no-kill shelter. Becky French has been named as the operation's executive director and will oversee activities at the shelter. The shelter is also working to better support community partners that serve homeless pets in Greater Houston, including Katy.

foster homes, adopted or placed on an out-of-state transport to a new home, French said.

"With this new focus we will see the number of animals that find homes through Special Pals jump from hundreds to potentially thousands every year," French said.

French said that the low-cost spay and neuter surgeries previously offered by Special Pals have been put on hold temporarily while the organization finds a facility that will work for that purpose.

Adoptions offered at Special Pals will continue, French said, but the new partnering with other nonprofits that support pets will allow the organization to have more of an impact. The low-cost wellness clinic for pets will also be resuming soon, she said.

French said the clinic offers discounted vaccines, microchipping and preventive medications for fleas and heartworm. The

clinic is focused on getting back to work following the near-shutdown it has faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, she said.

"We are making plans to host clinics while following recommendations from the COVID-19 pandemic conditions," French said.

*Disclosure: Special Pals Shelter is one of two Katy-area organizations Katy Times partners with for our weekly "Pet of the Week" feature. (See Page A5)*



### SPECIAL PALS SHELTER

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# Katy Times

## SUDOKU

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

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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# Katy Times

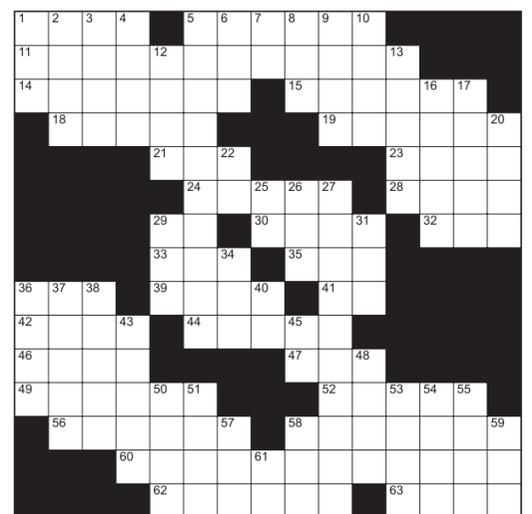
## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

### CLUES ACROSS

- Expression of sorrow or pity
- Not bad
- NYC Mayor
- Essays
- Walk lightly
- Those who utilize
- Actress Judd
- One-time community of nations
- Norwegian river
- Unconscious states
- Make muddy
- Unit of volume
- Consciousnesses
- Envision
- When you aim to get there
- Electronic data processing
- Passports are some
- Snakelike fish
- Military flyers (abbr.)
- Popular computers
- Ecological stage
- Wings
- Used in combination
- Laid back
- Princess's headgear
- Musical composition
- Famed Falls
- Reiterations
- Eras
- Track event

### CLUES DOWN

- Defensive nuclear weapon (abbr.)
- Instead
- Gifts for the poor
- A type of gin
- Torments
- One point south of due east
- Actor Pacino
- Feline
- Chinese dynasty
- Short cries for help
- Straits can sometimes be this
- Further
- Variety shows
- Supernatural
- A university in Connecticut
- Atomic #27
- Of I
- We all have one
- Religious guild
- This can sting
- Sunscreen rating
- Brew
- Religious leader
- Indigo bush
- Burn with a hot liquid
- Jr.'s father
- Ray-finned fish genus
- Morning
- Straight line passing from side to side (abbr.)
- S-shaped line
- Small bunch of hay
- Ripened
- Crater on Mars
- Humanities
- Of the ears
- To the \_\_\_ degree
- Wood
- Cools your home



Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

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## Leaders share words of encouragement

By R. HANS MILLER  
TIMES SENIOR REPORTER

**Former Katy Mayor Chuck Brawner:** The Coronavirus has caused many of us to worry about what the Virus is doing to our Country, Families and livelihoods. Medical Doctors have determined that worrying can damage the body's nervous system causing depression and even shorten our lives. I have been an optimist always looking at life's events in a positive way and not dwelling on the negatives that come up from time to time. One day, I hope very soon, the Coronavirus will be history but will have provided many lessons learned for future generation.



CHUCK BRAWNER

Studies have determined that when you help others you feel better yourself. There's someone around you that's in need. Maybe it's a neighbor or a family member, someone who could really use a helping hand or just a phone call. Marcy and I are helping a family member who lives over 400 miles away. We call three or four times a day our calls end with laughs and we love you. Just making the calls helps us too.

**Fort Bend County Commissioner Pct. 3 Andy Meyers:** Many in our community are rightfully concerned about the COVID-19 pandemic and too many find themselves unemployed because of the government shutting down some businesses.



ANDY MEYERS

However, there is good news. The new coronavirus did not hit Fort Bend County as hard as it was projected in the original models.

Further good news is that Governor Greg Abbott and state leaders are convinced we have "turned the corner" on this pandemic and we no longer have to shelter in place and businesses can begin opening up.

Until there is a significant drop in new cases from the virus, when I am out in public I still intend to wear my cloth mask which my granddaughter made for me, wear protective goggles and gloves and use disinfectant wipes and hand cleanser. I will also wash my hands often - I hope you do the same. By being prudent about possible exposure to the virus, practicing good hygiene and working together as Texans always do, we can beat this hidden enemy and continue getting back to our normal lives.

I am extremely proud of my fellow Texans

who are working to help their neighbors. That is the true character of a Texans.

May the Good Lord bless you and your family and keep you safe and secure.

**Katy ISD Superintendent Ken Gregorski:** ... I never imagined a day where we would see campuses empty in April, students not performing in fine arts programs, athletics or enjoying spring dances. We are living through a moment in history that we will all remember...



KEN GREGORSKI

What seemed an unimaginable feat when the COVID-19 pandemic first became apparent, has quickly evolved into a challenge that our school community has been determined to overcome. In a matter of days our teachers and staff made virtual education a reality through creative and meaningful learning experiences that have provided a pathway for teachers to remain connected with students. Our science educators have turned their kitchens into "labs," kindergarten teachers have set up virtual read alouds in their living rooms, and parents and teachers are coming together like never before to ensure our children continue to master content and skills while campuses are closed. ...

Though no one knows for sure what the

course of this pandemic will be, one certainty remains - we will undoubtedly see some semblance of normalcy in our near future. Kids will be back in school, and Katy ISD will continue to provide a world class education to each and every one of its students.

As we forge ahead with navigating these unprecedented times, I want to thank our school community for always being 'Katy Strong.'

**Fulshear Mayor Aaron Groff:** We are all in the midst of navigating uncharted territory in regard to the current Pandemic. When we experience the unknown it's only natural to respond in fear or focus on the negatives. However, I believe that we have an opportunity to experience joy in this season. I wonder if the secret to experiencing joy in difficult circumstances is to have an attitude of gratitude. I have so much to be grateful for and it begins with my faith and family and extends to the residents of Fulshear. Today, I'm choosing to be grateful. Grateful for extended time with family, an opportunity to focus on essential work, and the incredible people that I work with every day. I hope you'll join me in choosing gratitude over fear in the days to come.



AARON GROFF

## Q&A with Alderwoman Kim Branch

By R. HANS MILLER  
TIMES SENIOR REPORTER

Kim Branch is the Position 3 Alderwoman for the city of Brookshire and wife of Mayor Darrell Branch. Katy Times checked in with the alderwoman for an update on city activities and the impact of COVID-19 on the Brookshire community.

Note: Branch's responses have been lightly edited for clarity and to fit in the available space.

**Q. How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the city of Brookshire so far?**

**A:** It has taken a toll on our economy just like everyone else. We depend on sales taxes for our budget and with all business closed or offering limited access this will take a toll on the city as well as our EDC. We are a strong community and with everyone working together we will come back stronger.

**Q. What is the city doing to help businesses impacted by the shutdown orders at the county and state level?**

**A:** All we can do is keep them up to date to comply to the governor's executive order and pray for them to be able to make it through these trying times.

**Q. How is the Brookshire City Council functioning during the governor's executive orders?**

**A:** Right now, we are all focused on the COVID-19 Virus keeping our citizen's safe and following state mandated guidelines. We continue to have city council meeting via tele-conference so our city can continue to function and grow with new companies coming to our community.

**Q. Has the city council cancelled its May elections in compliance with recommendations from state authorities and when**



COURTESY KIM BRANCH

Alderwoman Kim Branch (right) and her husband, Mayor Darrell Branch (left) pose for a photo. The alderwoman serves in the Brookshire City Council's Seat 3 position and her husband was elected mayor in 2019.

**can residents expect to see campaigns get rolling again?**

**A:** Yes, we will have the elections in November. City Council is working on The City Charter to be approved and mailed out to citizens along with all other guidelines to also have it on the ballot in November.

**Q. How have city staff responded to the COVID-19 crisis and what can residents do to support city staff?**

**A:** This has been a very trying time and a difficult learning curve. We have had to cut hours of operations to keep our staff safe as well as citizens. We have sanitized City Hall offices to ensure the safety of our staff as well as our clients. We are working on repairing the drive-thru window as well as the drop box so clients and staff can have as little contact as possible. We are also working on online payment options.

**Q. How well have Brookshire residents responded to the coronavirus issue and what advice do you have for them to help them get through the next few weeks or months as this crisis is expected to take some time to settle out completely?**

**A:** I think the citizens are doing a great job with the stay home order. We have not seen any problems with large groups gatherings. There are drive-by food pantries that we thank for helping our citizens. We are all going to have to work together and play this by ear one day at a time. Our County Judge, Trey Duhon has been doing a great job keeping everyone informed. If citizens continue to follow the guidelines, we will continue to see the numbers of cases be low. I am in hopes that we continue to pray for each other as well as our nation. I ask residents to help others with sharing information on guidelines as well as resources available to our community.



PHOTO COURTESY TREES FOR HOUSTON

Trees for Houston, a nonprofit organization that plants and encourages others to plant trees in Greater Houston, was able to plant more than 13,000 trees this planting season, despite it being shortened due to COVID-19 concerns.

## Trees for Houston finishes its season

By R. HANS MILLER  
TIMES SENIOR REPORTER

While the planting season was somewhat curtailed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Trees for Houston was able to plant more than 13,000 trees this year, the organization announced in a press release Monday.

"Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, we had to cancel more than 15 volunteer plantings and community outreach events, which would have resulted in 5,000 additional trees being planted this season," said Trees for Houston Executive Director Barry Ward.

The organization is continuing to work to add trees to the Greater Houston area through partnerships with local and regional organizations including

FedEx, Coca Cola and Chevron, according to the press release. Trees help reduce air pollution and stormwater runoff, mitigate noise, provide shade, slow erosion and can aid in reducing stress. They also provide food and habitat for the community, the release said.

Trees were planted in 18 locations throughout the Houston area and the organization is planning more plantings starting in the fall.

"We are continuing to move forward with planning many planting and maintenance projects along with tree giveaways for the fall. With consistent funding, we are confident that our organization will be able to reach our goal of planting and distributing more than 20,000 trees next year," Ward said.

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## What happened to compromise?

Over breakfast the other day, my wife, who happens to be a physician, asked, "Whatever happened to compromise?"

She was wondering why Americans can't seem to put their political and ideological biases aside during the current pandemic and understand that we can do our best to protect ourselves from the virus and still keep our economy from collapsing.

The answer came to me about 30 minutes later, in an angry email from a reader.

In my last column I pointed out that America's patience was wearing thin. Over 30 million people have filed for unemployment in the last six weeks. Our neighbors can't pay their bills. We need to get the economy going while protecting our vulnerable citizens. In other words, I was calling for a balanced approach.

"Presumably, given your job title, you are an educated man," the email began. "From your picture you look old enough that you should have saved some money to be prepared for a period of time when you might have unemployment."

My first thought was that I need a new headshot. As I read on, it was clear the writer was making the argument that if you haven't saved enough money to make it through an unforeseen pandemic or the government-ordered shutdown of your small business, tough darts.

Later, she told me to stop whining and "grow up."

I can't remember the last time I was told to "grow up." It might have been when I didn't get a part in a Hollywood film and my godfather grabbed me by the collar, slapped me around and said, "You can act like a man!" Actually, I think that was a scene from "The Godfather."

Nevertheless, the point is the writer's position leaves no room for compromise. You are either in favor of an indefinite shutdown of the economy or you don't care if people die.

This sort of zero-sum discourse has become a template for debate. If you



**RICH MANIERI**  
SPECIAL TO KATY TIMES

oppose abortion, you hate women. If you believe in enforcing immigration laws, you're xenophobic. If you're a Bible-believing Christian and dare to say so publicly, you're a fanatic. (I can show you the letters.)

There is no daylight for compromise within such wooden positions.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, Republicans and Democrats were able to put aside their differences for the good of the country... for about two weeks.

In 1914, during World War I, there was a series of Christmas cease fires along the western front. German and British soldiers left their trenches and exchanged gifts. On Dec. 27, they resumed slaughtering each other wholesale.

Even the fiercest adversaries can put aside their differences for a little while, merely delaying the inevitable.

Our political cease fire is now over. The "we're-all-in-this-together" spirit, if it ever actually existed, has evaporated. We're back to politics as usual and, as usual, truth is the casualty.

We must now serve as our own factcheckers. The burden of discernment rests squarely on our shoulders, assuming we're interested in getting remotely close to the truth. We can either seek affirmation of our righteous indignation or we can search earnestly for information, weighing disparate perspectives on an issue and drawing our own conclusions.

Or we can get angry at those with whom we disagree and make sure we tell them so.

The latter might make us feel good for a while but it gets us nowhere.

*Rich Manieri is a Philadelphia-born journalist and author. He is currently a professor of journalism at Asbury University in Kentucky. You can reach him at manieri2@gmail.com.*



## This is my family's coronavirus story

It was around 1 a.m. last Friday, and my wife nudged me awake. Her shoulders shook in the darkness. The tears ran freely down her face.

"She's gone," she said softly, her voice filled with depthless pain and loss and disbelief.

It was the news that we prayed would not come. After three weeks of a brave fight that saw her pingpong from the brink of death to what we cautiously hoped was her recovery, my wife's mother, Rona Gertz, 74, of Manalapan, N.J., died on April 24 of complications from COVID-19.

And in a split-second, Rona, a whole person, with a life fully lived, joined the sad cohort of the more than 61,000 Americans who have so far lost their lives in the pandemic. Taken on its own, the tally is so vast that it's almost incomprehensible. It's a faceless sea of data.

But in every death, in every empty place at the table, there is a story.

This is one about Rona. It's the end of February, just before lockdown, and my wife and I are standing in our living room, our bags packed, poised and ready, for her combination birthday/Valentine's Day trip to Niagara Falls. Rona, who will be watching our daughter while we're gone, is due to arrive at any moment.

After 20 years of knowing her, I'd learned to deduct anywhere from 45 minutes to an hour from Rona's announced arrival time. Even though it almost always took us at least three hours to make the trip to her home in central New



**JOHN L. MICEK**  
SPECIAL TO KATY TIMES

Jersey, Rona always seemed to make it to our house in suburban Harrisburg in two hours and some change.

We often joked that it was only a matter of time before some alert New Jersey or Pennsylvania State Trooper, desperate to make quota that month, would smell an enforcement goldmine as Rona went rocketing past him.

And today, when we needed her to be there the most, she was running late.

"I bet she finally got busted," I told her.

Moments later, or so it seemed, Rona materialized on the front porch, bags in hand, her forehead creased in consternation, muttering dark oaths.

"You're late," I joked, greeting her.

"I got pulled over," she grumbled. And my wife and I fell over laughing.

I tell this story to reinforce how absolutely central Rona's family was to her life.

Every December, like clockwork, she'd be there, her arms laden down by flowers, for my daughter's ballet company's performance of "The Nutcracker." And while I know that every grandmother is proud, there is nothing quite like the pride of a Jewish grandmother. Rona would be luminous with it when my daughter emerged from

the dressing room after the show to greet her.

A week or so later, she'd be back, to help our little interfaith family celebrate Christmas and Hanukkah. To this day, I'm not sure how she managed to bend the laws of physics to fit that many bags of gifts into her car. But it was her granddaughter. And it was a holiday. And Einstein could take a flying leap if he didn't like it.

She loved to cook. So when we came out there for simple visits, or for Rosh Hashanah, or other holidays, Rona didn't so much serve meals as she staged endurance tests. There were appetizers before the appetizers. Multiple bottles of wine. Side dishes upon side dishes. And didn't every family have two turkeys for Thanksgiving? And five pies, right?

All of it homemade. From scratch. Leftovers for days.

The restaurant owner's kid in me rejoiced. And we'd chat about recipes and cooking techniques. And I was never more nervous than when Rona came to our place for Christmas and I'd cook dinner for the family. Eisenhower didn't spend as much time planning D-Day as I did those meals.

If I got the nod of approval, and that slow smile, and the "John... this is delicious," then I was golden. If she asked for the recipe? Well, that was just extra.

And I know she doted with equal pride on my two nieces, my brother-in-law's children, two golden-haired girls a few years younger than my daughter. Rona was game for just about

anything. She tagged along with them on road trips to Spartan races, just as she occasionally tagged along with us to Pittsburgh (the marathon for my wife, the half-marathon for me).

There were restaurant dinners, again, always overflowing with laughter and cheer, and food, and, well, let's not be delicate, lots of wine. Every now and again, the tab would be paid before we could get to it. And after a while, we knew better than to protest.

And it's these little things that I think about now. The meals. The ballet performances. The road trips. The phone calls. The quiet moments. We'll have to console ourselves with these memories. And we'll tell these stories over and over, keeping her memory alive.

So when you hear people start talking about numbers in this pandemic, I hope this story will remind you that there are faces attached to every loss. And behind every loss, there are families who are going through the ritual of mourning without being together, making the loss all the more heart-rending.

And if you are mourning a loss right now, saying goodbye to your own Rona, know you're not alone. From my family to yours, we offer our profound condolences and prayers. May all their lives be a blessing.

*An award-winning political journalist, John L. Micek is Editor-in-Chief of The Pennsylvania Capital-Star in Harrisburg, Pa. Email him at jmicek@penncapital-star.com and follow him on Twitter @ByJohnLMicek.*

## Katy Times

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KATYTIMES.COM

## LONNIE H. JOHNSON III

Lonnie H. Johnson III, 31, died Saturday, April 25, 2020 at Mercy Hospital, Iowa City.

A drive through visitation to celebrate Lonnie's life was held Saturday, May 2 from 2 PM to 5 PM at the south end of Penn Meadows Park in North Liberty, Iowa. Signs were placed to guide mourners through the south entrance of Penn Elementary School. Family was present to speak with and social distancing guidelines were followed. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to the family's GoFundMe to help with expenses. <https://gf.me/u/xyxs8q>.

Lonnie was born March 26, 1989 in Houston, Texas, the son of Lonnie Johnson II and Livinia Moyston Johnson. He was a graduate of Cinco Ranch High School in Katy, TX and Le Cordon Bleu in Las Vegas. On November 16, 2011 Lonnie married Rebecca Mosier in Coralville.

Lonnie had worked in hospitality and other customer service fields.

He liked to cook and fish, but most important to Lonnie was time spent with his family, especially his children.



LONNIE H. JOHNSON III  
1989-2019

Lonnie is survived by his wife, Rebecca, and children, Isabella Mosier, Devin and Jayden Johnson; his father, Lonnie II of San Antonio and his mother, Livinia of Seattle; his sister, Ashley Johnson-Saintil and her husband of Seattle, and his half-brother Melvin Powell. Mother and Father in law Rose and Randy Mosier, Brother in law and his wife Todd and Dianna Mosier, Sister in law Amanda Miller and her husband Randy, and many nieces and nephews.

Lonnie was preceded in death by his grandparents and half-sister, Remethia Wallace.

Online condolences may be sent to [www.lensingfuneral.com](http://www.lensingfuneral.com).

# Virus strike force sent to Amarillo

By ALEXA URA  
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

A federal strike force is headed to Amarillo in response to a surge of coronavirus cases tied to meatpacking plants in the area.

Amarillo Mayor Ginger Nelson announced on Saturday that a team of federal officials would arrive in the Texas Panhandle as soon as Sunday to help "attack" outbreaks in the plants and take over testing and investigations of people contracting the new coronavirus.

"They will bring resources and most importantly they will bring strategies that they've been using in other beef packing plants to slow the spread, to get control of it," Nelson said in a video posted to her Facebook page.

The latest figures reported by the state put the number of people who have been infected in Potter County at 684, giving it an infection rate of 5.66 per 1,000 residents. That's roughly four times higher than the infection rates in Harris and Dallas counties.

The spread of the coronavirus in Amarillo though is dwarfed by the rate of infection in Moore County, its neighbor to the north that's home to the massive JBS Beef meatpacking plant. The infection rate in Moore County stood at 16.65 per 1,000 residents, according to data reported Saturday by the state.

State health officials previously confirmed they were investigating a cluster of cases tied to the JBS plant that's located one county over from Amarillo. As of April 24, the outbreak had grown to 159 coronavirus infec-



AMARILLO PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Authorities at the federal level have had to step in to assist Amarillo with investigating and managing the COVID-19 outbreaks among workers at meat packing plants in the seat for Potter County.

tions, including one death associated with the outbreak. Not all the cases were in Moore County though. The JBS plant, which is powered by a workforce made up largely of Hispanics and immigrants, has workers who hail from Oklahoma, the tiny town of Cactus, the city of Dumas and Amarillo, from where JBS shuttles workers to and from the plant.

State health officials did not respond to a Friday request for an update on those figures.

Meat and poultry plants nationwide have emerged as incubators for coronavirus spread. More than a dozen have been forced to shut down temporarily as the number of cases and deaths tied to those facilities

rose; others have scrambled to ramp up health and safety precautions in facilities where meatpackers often must work shoulder to shoulder.

In her video update, Nelson said that community spread of the virus in the area had "started from" meatpacking plants in the area. There is also a Tyson Foods meatpacking plant in Amarillo.

Nelson shared details of a phone call with Gov. Greg Abbott during which the governor told her it was best for Amarillo residents to stay indoors. Abbott last week allowed his statewide stay-at-home order to expire and allowed for the reopening of some businesses that limit their capacity.

## ALBUM

from page 1

moved to Katy about four years ago.

Since then, Regan said she's had to adjust to having less access to the music mentors and "live music capital of the world" resources she had been used to in Austin.

"We moved to Katy and just through the almost four years we've been here the environment has forced me to be a little more creative with the process of putting out music," Regan said.

With her husband's and Jacobie's support, Regan said she has managed to put together a record she's really proud of with "Riverland," the follow up to her 2017 album, "Summit Hour." She wrote the album and recorded and mixed it herself in her home studio, she said, but having Jacobie walking her through the producing portion of it all was really helpful.

Jacobie mixed the album for her, she said.

Regan said her husband's support was key to her being able to continue on as a musician and she appreciated his support that has been consistent despite the challenges that come with being a musician.

"He's always had my back and it's tricky," Regan said. "We talked about it and figured it out. He doesn't take it too seriously but he's always completely in on these dreams of music."

Regan's inspiration for the album came from a wide variety of places, she said. From her father's love of The Doobie Brothers -

## LISTEN IN

Music lovers can buy and stream Sara Davis Regan's new album through the online platforms below by searching for her name on each platform:

- Spotify
- Apple Music
- Amazon Music
- Soundcloud

which is more in the album than she'd first realized - to Alt J and Bluegrass artists, there's a little bit of everything in her sound, she said. She was also inspired by Ben Howard.

"I feel like he coined the whole acoustic with delay on it," Regan said. "There's a song on the album that reminds me of that."

The album is being distributed digitally only at first, Regan said. It became available on Spotify and other platforms, including iTunes last Friday. Several of her songs are available through her video channel on YouTube as well.

With the new coronavirus pandemic, getting out to play and promote the album like she would like is difficult, Regan said. While she would love to be performing live and entertaining people, she said she can wait for the pandemic to be done to make sure fans are safe.

"I don't have anything planned right now. I mean, obviously a live concert isn't really an option right now," Regan said.

## ORDER

from page 1

store or gas station, providing or obtaining other essential or reopened services, visiting parks, hunting or fishing or engaging in physical activity like jogging, bicycling or other outdoor sports, "so long as the necessary precautions are maintained to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and to minimize in-person contact with people who are not in the same household."

The complete executive order is available at [gov.texas.gov](http://gov.texas.gov).

Cumulative figures posted by the Texas Department of State Health Services at noon on May 3 showed that some 31,548 people in Texas had been diagnosed with COVID-19 and 867 deaths had been confirmed as resulting from the influenza-like virus.

### PBS, TEA launch initiative

The Texas Education Agency and PBS television stations on April 21 announced a joint initiative to air educational programming each week in each of Texas' 10 PBS viewing areas during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The programming commenced statewide on April 20 through the "At-Home Learning Initiative" that preempts regularly scheduled weekday programming with grade-level-appropriate programming divided into three age groups: Pre-K through 3rd grade, 5th through 8th grade, and high school.

"This joint initiative between TEA and PBS stands to benefit all students as they work each day to navigate uncharted waters and continue to do their best to learn and grow as students and individuals," said Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath.

### Revenue total decreases

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar on May 1 announced state sales tax revenue totaled \$2.58 billion in April, an amount 9.3% less than the amount reported in April 2019, marking the steepest decline since January 2010.

The majority of April sales tax revenue is based on sales made in March and remitted to the state comptroller in April. Next month's remittances likely will show steeper declines compared to a year ago because of the shuttering of businesses related to COVID-19 and plummeting oil prices throughout April, Hegar added.

### Benefits may continue

The Texas Workforce Commission on April 30 issued new guidance to unemployment claimants concerning their



MIGUEL GUTIERREZ/POOL VIA THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Tex. Gov. Greg Abbott has allowed businesses across the state to reopen with some exceptions including hair salons, tattoo shops and massage parlors which require direct human contact. Abbott has said he may announce additional openings mid-May.

eligibility for unemployment benefits should they choose not to return to work due to COVID-19.

The TWC said Texans can continue to receive unemployment benefits throughout the COVID-19 response if they choose not to return to work for certain reasons, including:

- At High Risk: People 65 years or older are at a higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19;
- Household member at high risk: People 65 years or older are at a higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19;
- Diagnosed with COVID: Individual has tested positive for COVID-19 by a source authorized by the State of Texas and is not recovered;
- Family member with COVID: Anybody in the household has tested positive for COVID-19 by a source authorized by the State of Texas and is not recovered and 14 days have not yet passed;
- Quarantined: Individual is currently in 14-day quarantine due to close contact exposure to COVID-19; and,
- Child care: Child's school or daycare closed and no alternatives are available.

Any other situation will be subject to a case by case review by TWC based on individual circumstances.

### SNAP online is approved

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission on April 23 received federal approval to conduct a pilot program that would allow Texans to purchase groceries online using Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits during the COVID-19 pandemic. Officials said the statewide pilot program is expected to start by May 18.

## KATY TIMES PET OF THE WEEK

### MEET LAVERN

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## Katy, TCU alum signs with Cowboys



NFL quarterbacks Andy Dalton (Cincinnati Bengals) and Tom Savage (Houston Texans) converse after a Christmas Eve game at NRG Stadium in Houston in 2016 which the Texans won, 12-10. Dalton, the former Bengals quarterback, and a Katy native, recently signed a free-agent deal to join the Dallas Cowboys.

### Dalton signs free-agent contract to be backup quarterback in Dallas

By COLE McNANNA  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

After all of about 48 hours on the free-agency market, former Katy High School and Texas Christian University quarterback Andy Dalton signed a deal with a base salary of \$3 million to be the backup quarterback of the Dallas Cowboys Saturday evening.

With the Cincinnati Bengals selecting Louisiana State quarterback Joe Burrow with the No. 1 overall pick in the 2020 NFL Draft, Dalton was released on April 30. Dalton finished a nine-year stint with the Bengals as their franchise leader in passing touchdowns (204) and was second in passing yards (31,594), leading Cincinnati to the postseason every year from 2011 to 2015.

Before then, he was running the offense for the Katy Tigers and after splitting time as a junior, Dalton started his senior year and led Katy to the 2005 Class 5A State Championship game following a 2,877-yard, 42-touchdown campaign. Although the Tigers fell to the Southlake Carroll Dragons 34-20, Dalton threw a 66-yard touchdown pass and ran for a 7-yard touchdown in the second half and finished the game completing 18 of 35 pass attempts for 235 yards.

After quarterbacking Katy, Dalton went up to Fort Worth to throw passes for the TCU Horned Frogs and finished his college career with two consecutive Mountain West Conference Player of the Year honors. By the end of his four years, he was responsible for the fourth-most touchdowns produced in MWC history (93) and

***"I wanted to join a high-class organization and a team that's ready to win. (To be) with Mike McCarthy, with his history with quarterbacks, it gives me a chance to come to a new place, a chance to learn, help Dak out any way I can, and just be an asset for this team."***

— FORMER KATY, TCU QUARTERBACK ANDY DALTON

registered the fifth-most career passing yards (10,314).

Dalton now gets dual homecoming, returning to play football in his home state and close to where he played his college ball. Dalton was a guest on ESPN insider Adam Scheffer's podcast on Monday, May 4, and detailed some reasons why he thought the Cowboys made the most sense not only for this year but for Dalton's future as well.

"Once I got released, at that point I had to figure out, OK, what's going to be best for me, what's going to be best for my future for the next 10 years for me?" Dalton posed on "The Adam Scheffer Podcast." "So, just weighing all the options—I had several options out there, and I had to figure out what was the best situation for me to go into that was going to set me up for this next half of my career. After weighing everything, I felt like going to Dallas was going to be the right fit for me this year."

Dalton said he was surely enticed to join new head coach Mike McCarthy, who brings plenty of quarterback success with him from his previous head coaching gig in Green Bay, as well as provide Dallas' starting quarterback Dak Prescott valuable guidance from the backup role.

"I wanted to join a high-class organization and a team that's ready to win," Dalton said of his decision to join the Cowboys. "(To be) with Mike McCarthy, with his history with quarterbacks, it gives me a chance to come to a new place, a chance to learn, help Dak out any way I can, and just be an asset for this team."

The Katy product said he was looking at the big picture when making this decision, envisioning plenty of football in his road ahead.

"This team's ready to win. I felt like it was the best opportunity for this year,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Andy Dalton, the former Katy High standout, signed a free-agent contract to join the Dallas Cowboys and return to his home state to play his professional football next year. His Perfect Game profile details the 6-foot, 2-inch, 180-pound 2006 Katy graduate has a fastball velocity of 84 mph and runs a 60-yard dash in 7.74 seconds.

and it hopefully set me up for my future. This was a big-picture plan," Dalton said. "I feel like I have a lot of years left (in the NFL). I feel like there is a lot of good football left for me."

As of press time, the 2021 NFL schedule had yet to be released as it was announced earlier in the week that it would be released Thursday, May 7, at 7 p.m.

## UIL provides update on summer sports resumption

By COLE McNANNA  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

The University Interscholastic League Legislative Council held a special meeting last Friday morning and Executive Director Dr. Charles Breithaupt provided an update on the high school sports scene as the summer months draw near.

"Even though we lost the spring seasons and the basketball tournament, we are hoping that we can resume sometime this summer with our offseason conditioning programs and non-school opportunities



to work with students," Breithaupt said at Friday's meeting.

The UIL officially canceled the remainder of activities on April 17 and Breithaupt said plans are being developed both for a regular return to school in the fall as well as a delayed return.

"We are both making plans for the regular start of school and our activities and then if there is a delayed start what we might do," Breithaupt said. "We're also planning for what might happen if we start and have to stop again. If that does happen our staff is up to the task. Our plans are focused on the 2020-2021 season."

Finally, the executive director said the

UIL will follow the lead of professional sports organizations once more and more can resume normal competition.

"We're not going to start any practices in the summer until we see that the NFL, college football, NBA, MLB or any of the pro sports (resume). None of those have resumed play," Breithaupt said. "I saw that Little League Baseball canceled the Little League World Series. So, that tells you that across the world activities have been canceled. We're not going to get ahead of the curve, we're going to make sure our students are safe, just as you are."

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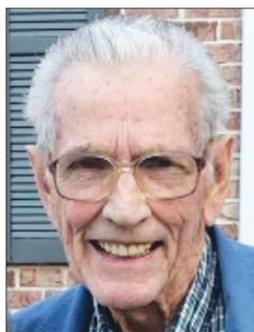
KATYTIMES.COM

## DAVID HANSON SR.

William David Hanson was born on May 14, 1931 in Texarkana, Texas to Jeff Davis Hanson and Margaret Thompson Hanson. David grew up in Texarkana and went to Texarkana High School. He proudly served his country in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. On December 21, 1957, David married the love of his life, Patsy Lou "Patti" Stovall in Palestine, Texas, and to this union, two sons were born.

During his youth, David developed a lifelong passion for baseball and later played in a variety of semi-pro baseball leagues in and around the Houston area. After his boys were born, David Jr. and Doug, his passion for the game was redirected towards coaching them and developing their athletic ability. He was a highly respected youth baseball coach, winning the Pasadena, TX city-wide championship in 1967. Later that year, he and Patti move to Katy where he carried on his winning ways, securing several more league championships in Katy Little League. All of the games back then were played on the old Little League field where Heritage Park sits today.

Besides sports, David loved spending time with his two boys in a variety of other ways. Every weekend you could find David with the boys close behind as they worked in the yard, washed cars, helped friends with various repairs, or help Miss Patti at The Flower Shoppe. He was an avid and dedicat-



DAVID HANSON SR.  
1931-2019

ed Katy Tiger fan, especially when his boys and grandchildren were involved in sports and other activities at Katy Jr. High and Katy High school. David was always there to back his children and grandchildren, and to say he never missed a game would be an understatement because he seldom even missed a practice!

David worked at Sears & Roebuck for 40 years, starting out as a stock boy in the parts department before being drafted and serving in the Korean Conflict. When he returned from war in 1953, David worked his way up at Sears to become a field service technician and ultimately the division service manager at the Park-10 location. During his time as division manager,

the Park-10 location became one of the most respected service facilities in all of Sears Roebuck & Co. It was the last Sears service location to close in the south.

Throughout his life, David was regarded as an expert at fixing just about anything. His nephew Mitch referred to Uncle David as "The Original YouTube". He could not only fix it, he could show you how to do it yourself. He had a tireless curiosity and loved taking things apart and putting them back together so he could learn how all the pieces worked together. He was forever helping out a neighbor or a friend who had a broken washing machine, air conditioner, water heater, lawn mower, dishwasher or ice maker, but his favorite thing to work on had to be his cars.

He had a true passion for automobiles, and you would be hard pressed to find something he could not fix on them. He loved working on cars so much his son Doug says he can remember dad working on cars even when there wasn't anything wrong with them!

A devoted and longtime member of the Fry Road Church of Christ, David was a strong Christian man who was dedicated to serving the Lord, caring for his family and helping out a neighbor, a friend or co-worker.

Above all, David loved his family and was tremendously proud of his sons and his grandchildren. He had a nickname for all of them, which added to his charm and connection. He was the world's greatest grandfather, especially to his grandson, Austin. David devoted countless hours to nurturing and helping Austin, his best "Buddy", through many challenging milestones in life and was most proud to see him become such an independent, strong, kind and capable young man.

William David Hanson passed away on Sunday, April 26, 2020 at his home in Katy, Texas, just three weeks shy of his 89th birthday. David dearly loved the Katy community, a place he has called home for the past 52 years.

He is survived by his loving wife of 62 years, Patti Hanson of Katy, who he affectionately referred to as "Sweet & Low"; his son, Doug Hanson (Boogie) and his wife Helen (Pretty Lady) of Katy; daughter-in-law, Belinda Hillhouse (Mrs. B) of Katy; his beloved grandchildren, Kelsie (Princess Kelkie) & Jimmy Mitchell of Chattanooga, TN, Cale Hanson (Cale-Man) of Chicago, IL, Clay Hanson (Happy Scrapy) of Tampa, FL, Kara Hanson (Kara-Boo Pebbles) of High Point, NC, and Austin Hanson (Buddy) of Katy, his great-grandson James Mitchell (Little Man) of

Chattanooga, TN; as well as many other loving family members and close friends.

He was preceded in death by his son, William David Hanson, Jr. (Bones) in 2005; his parents, Jeff and Margaret Thompson Hanson; and by two brothers, Webster Hanson and James Hanson.

The family received friends in a unique drive-by, social distancing visitation from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 30, 2020 at the Schmidt Funeral Home East Avenue Chapel in Katy. Guest were asked to remain in their vehicles as they paid their respects to the family. Funeral services with limited attendance were held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, May 1, 2020 at the Schmidt Funeral Home East Avenue Chapel in Katy with Mr. David Flatt and Rev. Wayne Fancher officiating. Interment in Katy Magnolia Cemetery. The funeral service will be live streamed from David's webpage at [www.SchmidtFuneral-Home.net](http://www.SchmidtFuneral-Home.net).

Pallbearers were be Doug Hanson, Austin Hanson, Cale Hanson, Clay Hanson, Tucker Stovall, Mike Fralick, Mitch Fralick, and Blake Phillips.

Honorary pallbearers will be Kenneth Yeager and all of David's Co-Workers at Sears, Gary Lewis and Andy Lewis.

Those wishing to make memorial gifts may do so to the Wolf Pack, c/o Schmidt Funeral Home, 1508 East Avenue, Katy, Texas 77493 or to The Arc of Katy, P.O. Box 6133, Katy, Texas 77491.

To express condolences, please visit [www.SchmidtFuneralHome.net](http://www.SchmidtFuneralHome.net)

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Psalms 94:19

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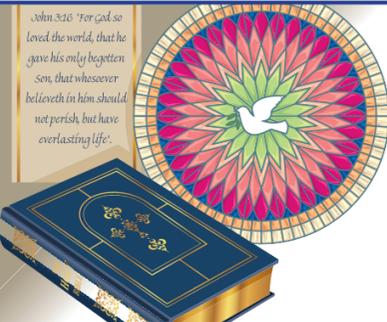
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Isaiah 40:31

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2 Corinthians 1:3-4



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Believe



High School	Graduation	Alt. Graduation	Prom
Cinco Ranch	June 20	July 11	June 11
Katy	June 24	July 15	June 17
Mayde Creek	June 20	July 11	June 10
Morton Ranch	June 21	July 12	June 13
Paetow	June 23	July 14	June 16
Raines	June 26	July 12	N/A
Seven Lakes	June 20	July 11	June 12
Taylor	June 25	July 16	June 18
Tompkins	June 21	July 12	June 15

## GRADUATION

from page 1

take place at Royal High School Stadium at 34499 Royal Road in Brookshire on July 24 from 8-9 p.m., according to the district's website. However, prior to that a virtual

awards presentation will be held May 20 at 7 p.m. and a virtual scholarship presentation will be held May 21 at 7 p.m.

"The (Royal) High Principal will speak and recognize the accomplishments of this outstanding class (at) the awards ceremonies and July graduation ceremony," Ginn said.

## OPENS

from page 1

we've implemented to safeguard shoppers, retailers and employees as we reopen," said Simon President John Rulli.

Katy Mills is one of the primary sources of sales tax revenue for the city of Katy and has been referred to by city administration as a "sales tax engine." According to the city's current year budget, sales tax accounts for about \$15.2 million of the city's overall \$31.6 million in revenues for the 2019-2020 budget year.

The city has had to reject bids for improvements to the parking lots in front of the Katy Police Department, Municipal Courts Building and Katy Library due to concerns over reduction in revenues that the city cannot predict.

"We're going to try to keep as much money as we can right now in our general fund to see where that sales tax number is going to go," City Administrator Byron Hebert said at the April 13 Katy City Council meeting. "So right now, we're asking that (Katy City Council members) would postpone on this. Reject (the bids we've received) now and when we come out of this we'll put these projects back up."

The mall will be open Monday through Saturday of each week from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sundays from 12-6 p.m. according to a City of Katy announcement.

"Please be advised that the mall's occupancy must be limited to 25%, and food-court dining areas, play areas and interactive displays and setting will remain closed," the city's announcement said.

Not all stores have reopened, though Simon's announcement said additional protocols were in place to keep shoppers and staff safe, including:

- Enhanced sanitization and disinfecting using the Centers for Disease Control and prevention approved products with an emphasis on high-traffic locations such as dining areas, restrooms, escalators, stairs, directories, trash bins and door knobs.

- Shopper safeguards that include making available protective masks, sanitizing wipes and temperature testing at entrances or property offices, as well as the encouragement of pre-visit health screenings to ensure shoppers stay home if they have exhibited COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms within 72 hours.

- Hand sanitizing stations will be deployed throughout the properties.

- Signage promoting CDC guidelines for maintaining personal hygiene will be prominently displayed throughout the properties.

- Pre-emptive employee health screening to ensure that employees do not arrive at work within 72 hours of exhibiting COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms.

- Employee safety protections including implementing the CDC's COVID-19 frequent hand-washing protocols, and offering personal protective equipment in addition to other CDC recommended practices.

- Promotion and enforcement of social distancing practices, including occupancy limitations, furniture and restroom spacing, closure of play areas and strollers, as well as coordinated traffic flow with traffic signage and distance markers.

"Our properties are an integral part of our communities; not only in terms of shopping, dining and entertainment, but also job creation, small business growth and community support," Rulli said. "We look forward to once again serving the needs of our communities, and do so in a safe and responsible manner."

## MORGAN

from page 1

**Q:** Can you explain to Katy Times readers what the Assistant Superintendent for Secondary School Leadership and Support does?

**A:** The main role of the Assistant Superintendent for Secondary School Leadership and Support is to oversee the Junior High and High School campuses and provide support to the administration of each school. My job will be to help support the campus in reaching their mission/vision and campus goals. For this to happen, I will really need to get to know each campus and their specific needs, as well as building a strong relationship with the principals.

**Q:** What are you most excited about regarding your new role?

**A:** The opportunity to work with principals and assistant principals. The role of the principal is probably one of the toughest jobs in the district, and they need to know that someone in this role understands what goes on day to day. I was a campus principal for 17 years and I hope that I can now provide some good insight, direction, and support for campus administrators. I am very certain that I will also learn from them as well.

**Q:** As you move into your new position, what are your top three goals to ensure the district is successful in supporting its students?

**A:** My top three goals are to ensure we hire high quality principals, assistant principals, and staff; provide support and resources to campuses to help the staff and students to set them up for success; and, to be visible and available to my campuses. I know this job requires many meetings, but I hope to get to my campuses as much as possible.

**Q:** What do you see as the biggest challenges in your new position and what can parents and students do to help you face those challenges?

**A:** I feel that the biggest challenge is to quickly jump in and get an idea of what the expectations are so that you can see what areas need attention first. I know the principals at the schools I will be overseeing are dedicated and hardworking and have the best interests of the students in mind.

I believe that we are all in this together, so we have to be able to work with one another to ensure each student is successful. We ultimately all want the same thing

for our students, and that is for them to graduate and move on to the next phase of their life.

**Q:** How accessible do you intend to be to students and parents who would like to visit with you about regarding operations at the campuses you will be responsible for?

**A:** We are all in this together. I need to be available to not only the campus staff, but the students and parents as well. I know this job will be very busy, especially overseeing 14 campuses, but I will work hard to respond very quickly to requests. I do trust the principals that I will be serving can handle most situations on their own as they are very good at their jobs and have great reputations.

**Q:** What message would you like to give to the students whose educations you will be overseeing starting next school year?

**A:** I tell students to take full advantage of the great education Katy ISD provides. We have the best educators around and we offer many different pathways for students to explore. As students get into the secondary levels, especially high school, the one thing I say to students is to find something to get involved in besides classes. School of course is about the academics, but I feel you must also find other ways to connect. Being involved in something helps students stay engaged and connected with school and can really help them with their overall school experience.

**Q:** What would you like to say to the Taylor High School faculty, staff and students as a parting message as you move into your new role?

**A:** Words truly cannot express how I feel about this school community. The relationships that I made over the last three years have been amazing, and I know they will continue as I move to this new position. To the parents, thank you for the support you gave to me and to Taylor High. I have to say to the students that I think you are incredible and I will miss the daily interactions we had. It has been a pleasure to watch them grow and succeed. Keep working hard and continue to make me proud in the years to come. To the staff. They are the most wonderful group of educators. They truly care about kids and will do whatever it takes to ensure their students are successful. The way they have handled adversity over the last three years has really inspired me to be a better a principal. All I can say is keep doing what you have been doing the last 40 years and the excellence will continue.



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Matching grants available to local small businesses

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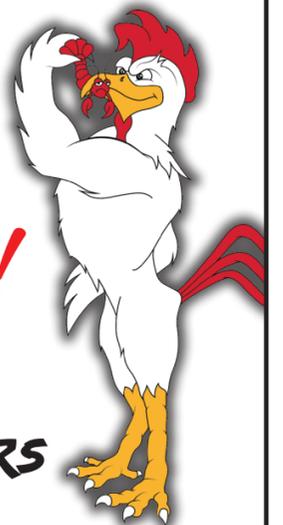
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## CHERYL LYNN BROWN

On Thursday, April 23, 2020, Cheryl Lynn Brown, 61, of Katy, TX, passed away with her husband of 35 years by her side.

Cheryl was born May 30, 1958 in Wahiawa, Hawaii, to Joel and Nina Joseph. On February 2, 1985 she married Robert Brown. They raised six children, Joshua, Brandy, Megan, Mark, Matthew, and William.

Cheryl joined the United States Navy in 1978 in Granite City, IL. as a Hospital Corpsman. She attended Boot Camp in Orlando Florida and attended Corpsman school in Great Lakes IL. Cheryl served at duty stations such as Portsmouth Naval Hospital, New Orleans, Great Lake IL., Atlanta, and finally in Houston, where



CHERYL LYNN BROWN  
1958-2019

she retired in 1999 as a Petty Officer First Class.

Cheryl was a loving mother, avid sewer and knitter. She loved the Navy but loved her family even more. The one thing she wanted more than anything in life was to have children and a family.

She was preceded in death by her son, William Brown; parents, Joel and Nina Joseph; brother, Thomas Joseph and sister, Suzanne Clutts. Cheryl is survived by her husband, Robert Brown; children, Joshua Brown, Brandy Joseph, Megan Brown, Mark Brown, Matthew Brown; brothers, Joel Joseph Jr., Randall Joseph, Timothy Joseph; sister, Debra

Tyser; grandchildren, Olivia and Noelle Hutchins, Tegan and Cody Brown; numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins.

## MARIE ANN KAMINSKI STASTNY

Marie Ann Kaminski Stastny, 65 passed away peacefully in Katy on April 22, 2020 after a courageous battle with cancer. She was born

on May 3, 1954 in Navasota, Texas to parents Leonard and Mae Kaminski.

She graduated from Sealy High School and soon after met the love of her life, Ben Stastny. They were married on October 13, 1973 at Immaculate Conception Church where they are members today. Marie work in banking for 40 years where 16 of those years she worked at Prosperity Bank/Pin Oak as a personal banker/banking officer and was well known in the Katy community. During their happy life together Ben and Marie were blessed with two children Courtney and Cole. Her pride and joy was the title of "Maw" given by her four grandchildren.



MARIE ANN  
KAMINSKI STASTNY  
1954-2019

She is survived by her husband Ben Stastny, daughter and son-in-law Courtney and Jason Williamson, son and daughter-in-law Cole and Katie Stastny,

sister and brother-in-law Sharon and Bobby Sharp, grandchildren Kendalyn Williamson, Brayden, Corbin, and Mason Stastny. Numerous nieces, nephew, family and friend.

The family will gather at Immaculate Conception Cemetery in Sealy for a private burial. A Memorial Mass will be held at a later date.

Memorial Contributions can be made to the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church P.O. Box 337, Sealy, Tx 77474

Funeral arrangements entrusted to Knesek Bros.

Funeral Chapel, 765 Fourth St. Sealy, Tx 77474

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Houston is strong. When confronted with adversity, we band together and overcome. And though this coronavirus pandemic is unprecedented, we face it the same way — together.

Houston Methodist would like to thank our employees, physicians, scientists and all health care workers who are committed to helping the community. Together we can make our city healthy and vibrant again.

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