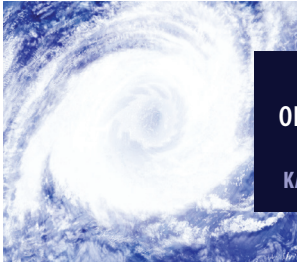


Katy Times



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THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2020

Brookshire reviews waste services

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

Brookshire City Council met Aug. 20 with a shorter-than-usual agenda covering updates associated with the city's moves to deal with the COVID-29 pandemic, addressing flood mitigation near Gresham Avenue and discussing the city's upcoming budget and tax rate.

Police Chief Brandal Jackson said the city has seen 60 cases of COVID-19 but most of the cases are recovered overall. He anticipates a testing site being established within Brookshire in the near future as Waller County finalizes an agreement with Access Health.

City Secretary Claudia Harrison said the city will have a drive-thru window available soon at the city office to help people maintain social distancing while interacting with city employees.

Alderwoman Kim Branch asked the council to approve an item on the agenda to dig out the ditch on the north side of Sixth Street between Gresham Avenue and Kenny Street. Branch said that while the ditch does run by her home, her reasoning for requesting the drainage maintenance was that the drainage along that portion of the street having insufficient capacity caused street flooding and garage flooding throughout the surrounding neighborhood.

The City's attorney Justin Pruitt advised the council to hold off on replacement of culverts that were also requested by Alderwoman Branch – who is married to Mayor Darrell Branch – because the project to replace the culverts may be paid through with grant funding the city is seeking to improve its drainage.

Council also decided to let the city's current property tax rate of \$0.64000 per \$100 valuation stand moving into the next year. While the rate was not formally adopted.

"Just to make sure everybody's clear, we're not adopting the tax rate at all," Pruitt said. "All council is doing is saying they understand that it's 64 cents and it's higher than what we used to call the 'effective

See **BROOKSHIRE**, page 5

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UH Katy begins classes with safety precautions

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

The University of Houston's Katy campus opens Monday for the fall semester. In preparation, staff and faculty have been preparing throughout the summer to establish safety protocols and facilitate increased distance-based learning throughout the summer, said UH Associate Vice President for the university's Sugar Land and Katy campuses Jay Neal.

"This is our community. These are our neighbors. We do take that very seriously. We take their education very seriously, but their health also. The decisions we make aren't in a vacuum," Neal said.

Those decisions include three options for the types of classes students can choose from, additional safety precautions to keep the campus population socially distanced and providing personal protective equipment – or PPE – to students, staff and faculty, he said.

Students' three options for courses include hybrid classes which mix in-person instruction and online instruction, streamed real-time instruction and regular online classes where students work separately, Neal said. Classes have been limited in many instances while more sections were added in order to keep classroom populations low so that desks can be properly spaced apart. There are generally

six feet between students and eight feet between the classes and instructors, Neal said.

"There's an eight-foot barrier between the instructor and the students because most likely the instructor will not be wearing the mask to lecture because it's really hard to hear," Neal said.

Neal said the adjusted class formats would not have an impact on fees, explaining that the hybrid system where half the class is on campus one day and the other half the next and the online-real-time models actually take more preparation and care to manage.

"You know, I was a professor for 15 years. The online components can be more time consuming and take more effort than face to face lectures," Neal said. "No. I think a lot of faculty have put a lot of time and effort to make sure students see value in the content that they're getting, you know. We don't want to be a diminished version of the value that the U of H is offering. ... That hasn't changed at all."

Neal commended faculty and staff for their effort to learn the online tools such as Zoom and other online software which will allow them to provide seamless virtual and in-person instruction.

Hand sanitizer and masks will be available for students as well, Neal said. Masks will be required whenever students, faculty or visitors are in buildings and whenever

they are in a situation on campus grounds that does not allow for social distancing to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus which causes COVID-19.

"We have recently changed out custodial services," Neal said. "So they're doing deep cleaning to be ready for students to come in. We've upgraded all of our chemicals, our disinfectants to hospital grade. We've changed all of our air filters (and) we've put up plexiglass for public-facing desks."

Each classroom has cleaning stations with hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes and designated seating areas to ensure social distancing.

Neal said the planning to institute these changes for UH Katy students was taken with advice from several key stakeholders and internal task forces to ensure the safety of everyone on campus. As other institutions of higher education have opened in the last few weeks, Neal said UH has looked at the stumbles and cases arising at those institutions. He said he feels the university has done what it can to protect its students and will make adjustments to fill any gaps in protocols that students, staff or faculty may notice as the campus gets rolling with the business of education.

Neal said making the university's partnership with Houston Community

See **CLASSES**, page 5



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

The University of Houston's Katy campus is entering its second year in operation with an increase in enrolled students that hasn't been finalized yet and the challenge of setting itself up to prevent an outbreak of COVID-19 among its nursing and engineering students, faculty and staff.



R. HANS MILLER

Katy ISD adopted its tax rate and budget at the Board of Trustees Aug. 24 meeting. Trustees also charged Superintendent Ken Gregorski with establishing a committee to decide on an official name for KISD Junior High 17.

Katy ISD moves toward election, budget hearings

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

The Katy ISD Board of Trustees met for their regular monthly meeting Monday at 6 p.m. and moved closer to adopting a property tax rate and an annual budget. The board also heard from the KISD General Counsel Justin Graham regarding the process to move forward with board elections Nov. 3.

"This will be the ... fourth time in the last 15 years that we've reduced the tax rate," said KISD Chief Financial Officer Chris Smith. "We did it back in the 2005-06 and the 2006-07 school years – then we did it again, fast forwarding it back to the 2015-16 school year. We were able to drop it a penny – of course last year we dropped it by a couple of pennies."

See **KISD**, page 5

Katy City Council moves ahead with trash service

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

Katy City Council met virtually via a Zoom teleconference for their regular Aug. 24 meeting at 4 p.m. During the meeting the council received an update on rollout of the city's new trash service through Texas Pride, reviewed options for a proposed tax rate for the city and scheduled public hearings for the city's proposed budget and tax rate for the coming year.

Solid waste

Kevin Atkinson of Texas Pride said the company was coordinating with

the city and Republic Services – the outgoing waste disposal services vendor – to roll out new trash and recycle bins to residents. The process as of Monday was about 72% complete in regard to trash cart delivery and the company had passed out 14,000 bins to residents as of Aug. 23. Republic Services' dumpsters were set to be removed Wednesday and Thursday of this week, though Hurricane Laura may impact that, he said.

Final removal for Republic Services' trash bins will be Sept. 7 and only the northernmost portion of the city near or north of Franz Road will see a gap

See **COUNCIL**, page 5



R. HANS MILLER

Katy City Council was briefed on the rollout of trash services by Texas Pride, the city's new solid waste services vendor at their Aug. 24 meeting. Council members also discussed the state's new process for setting property tax rates and briefly debated how much to cut property taxes given the city's need to move flood mitigation projects forward.





MEMORIAL HERMANN/R. HANS MILLER

Jerry Ashworth is set to take on the leadership for the Memorial Hermann Katy and Memorial Hermann Cypress hospitals this Sept. 13.

Memorial Hermann to get new CEO

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

Memorial Hermann Hospitals Katy and Cypress locations will have a new senior vice president and chief operating officer come Sept. 13 according to a Memorial Hermann Press Release. Jerry Ashworth will step in to take the reins of the two hospitals as current CEO Heath Rushing moves on to a new position within the hospital system.

“Jerry has been an outstanding leader in our health system for a number of years, and I am pleased he has accepted the opportunity to further his career with Memorial Hermann,” said Memorial Hermann President and CEO Dr. David L. Callender.

Ashworth is currently transitioning out of his position as senior vice president of TIRR Memorial Hermann and Memorial Hermann Rehabilitation Hospital – Katy. The press release said that under Ashworth’s leadership over the last six years, TIRR has grown admissions by 35% and reduced hospital stay lengths by 13%.

Rushing, who served in the position prior to Ashworth’s promotion, has been promoted to senior vice president of service lines for the Memorial Hermann Hospital System, the press release said.

Under Ashworth’s leadership, TIRR Memorial Hermann was ranked third among the nation’s top rehabilitation hospitals according to “U.S. News & World Report’s” best hospital rankings for 2020-21 – a distinction maintained since 2014.

Ashworth holds a bachelor’s degree from LeTourneau University and an MBA from the University of Texas at Tyler along with a master’s degree in Health Care Administration from Trinity University.

“I am excited and honored about the opportunity to lead the Memorial Hermann Cypress and Katy. I am committed to working alongside our physician partners, leaders and employees to improve the health of our community by providing high quality and safe care,” Ashworth said.



R. HANS MILLER

Katy ISD administration, faculty and staff have had a busy summer preparing for online classes and adjusting programs to provide services to students during the COVID-19 pandemic as it drags on into the fall semester – including school lunch programs. Free or reduced cost lunches are vital for food insecure families to ensure their children have a healthy diet, especially given the economic impact of the pandemic.

KISD providing grab-and-go meal

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

Katy ISD will continue to provide grab and go meals to students this fall, similarly to how they delivered food to students during the spring semester as the COVID-19 pandemic forced schools to go virtual. For many local students facing poverty, especially as unemployment remains high throughout the district’s boundaries, free or reduced-cost lunches are important to ensure children do not face food insecurity and go hungry.

“For the 2020-21 school year, the program will look a little different from the summer meal distribution,” said Donna Pittenger, Executive Director of Nutrition and Food Service. “Even though students are learning virtually, it is the District’s goal to ensure that they are eating a nutritious meal and staying healthy.”

For those not on the free or reduced cost lunch programs, breakfasts will cost \$1.25, elementary lunches \$2.25 and secondary school lunches \$2.75. Those costs are reduced by 30 cents for breakfast and 40 cents for all other meals for students who qualify for reduced-cost lunches. Those who qualify for free lunches will not be charged.

In order to reduce the spread of germs, including the novel coronavirus, parents are encouraged to pay for their children’s lunches through the Katy ISD Pay N’ Go

app. The app also offers an online portal that can be reached at <https://katyisd.revttrak.net/>.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Service, which runs the free and reduced lunch programs, students are eligible for reduced cost lunches if household income – for a family of five – is \$56,758 or below annually. For free lunches, students in a family of five would need an annual household income of \$39,884. Parents who believe their families may qualify for the program can apply through the district’s School Café website at www.schoolcafe.com/katyisd.

The School Café system allows parents to set purchase restrictions, establish low balance alerts, view letters and menus as well as apply for meal assistance.

KISD’s statement said that parents and students picking up meals should have a student ID or proof of enrollment – including relevant student ID numbers – in order to receive meals.

The policies allowing the district to proceed with grab and go meal delivery such as this were approved in June by the USDA in order to accommodate good nutrition for students during the pandemic.

“USDA has been extremely aggressive in expanding flexibilities to ensure Americans who have been impacted by the coronavirus continue to receive the food they need for themselves and their families,” said USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue at the time.

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Katy Times

SUDOKU

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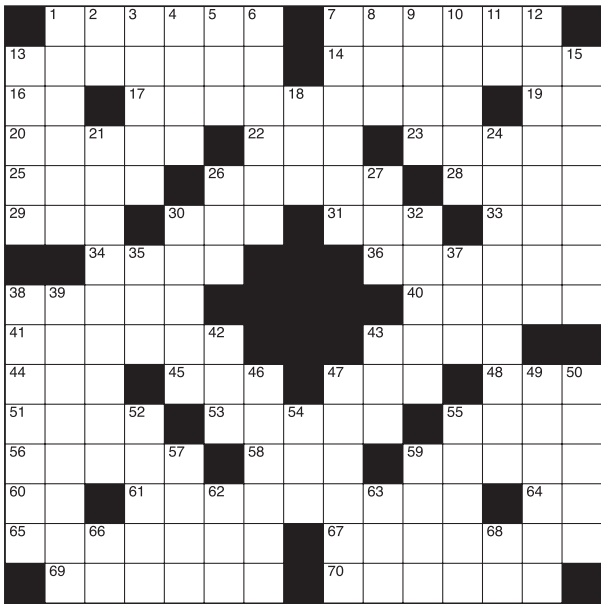
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CLUES ACROSS

- Slopes
- Attacks
- One who has left prison
- Goes against
- Atomic #37
- Home of The Beatles
- Mac alternative
- A common boundary with
- Fluid in a plant
- Genus that includes scads
- Longer of the forearm bones
- Gradually disappears
- AI risk assessor
- Type of whale
- Jaws of a voracious animal
- Patriotic women (abbr.)
- Ancient Egyptian God
- Obsessed with one’s appearance
- Erase
- A type of smartie
- Nostrils
- Influential French thinker
- Popular K-pop singer
- One point south of due east
- Payroll company
- Moved quickly on foot
- Bar bill
- An idiot
- Indicates silence
- Protein-rich liquids
- Rhythmic patterns
- Scatter
- Belongs to bottom layer
- Impulsive part of the mind
- Carousel
- Type of degree
- Ornamental molding
- Locks in again
- Sounds the same
- Come into view

CLUES DOWN

- Speak rapidly
- Trauma center
- River in W. Africa
- Ancient Greek district
- Bulgaria’s monetary unit
- Children’s ride
- Absorbed liquid
- Markets term
- Retail term recording sales
- Automaton
- Spanish form of “be”
- Divide
- Malaysian sailing boat
- Writers
- Cool!
- Popular tourist attraction studio
- Sets free
- An enthusiastic devotee of sports
- Unhappy
- Alternate term for Holy Scripture
- Influential French scholar



- What thespians do
- Local area network
- Free from contamination
- Coastal region of Canada
- Sun up in New York
- High schoolers’ exam
- Fathers
- Call it a career
- Suitable for growing crops
- Rose-red variety of spinel
- Orange-brown in color
- Lowest point of a ridge between two peaks
- Late TNT sportscaster
- A way to wedge
- Cold, dry Swiss wind
- Hockey players need it
- Something highly prized
- Atomic #45
- Top lawyer

Answers will be provided in next week’s edition.

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Q&A with candidates for TX House District 132

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

With the presidential election looming, it's easy to forget that several local races will be decided this fall as well. One of those races is for Texas House District 132 with Democratic incumbent Gina Calanni defending her seat from her predecessor, Republican Mike Schofield and Independent Titus Benton.

"Katy Times" proposed six questions to each of the candidates with the same limits on word count for their answers. Their responses to three of the six questions are listed below due to the limited space available in our print edition. The remaining questions may be found online at www.katytimes.com.

TITUS BENTON INDEPENDENT – KATY

Other than recovery from COVID-19, what will be your primary focus as representative for House District 132?

Citizens of District 132 can't afford to have a primary concern, so neither can I as their representative. My neighbors are wondering how to find affordable healthcare and worrying if their home is going to flood again. We'll address flooding in the following question, so here I'll address two others.

Nearly a third of Texas adults are uninsured — the highest rate of any state in America. In District 132, zip code 77449 has a notably large uninsured population. Millions of young people are uninsured due to job loss in the service economy. Medicaid expansion is a no-brainer, and another possibility is to set up something similar to the Permanent University Fund to increase the capacity of certified charity clinics around the state already serving the un- and under-insured.

We also have an often-overlooked crisis in this district with hundreds of people experiencing chronic or situational homelessness. For others, increased property taxes make staying in homes problematic. We must ensure that people of all economic tiers can find — and stay in — safe, affordable housing.

There is nothing more fundamental to human flourishing than stability in housing and healthcare, so these would be dual priorities of mine.

What are two projects that you will push forward to mitigate flooding risks for your constituents, if elected?

Every election includes discussion around a third reservoir. The cost is estimated at \$500 million.

One of our District's lesser known gems is the Katy Prairie Conservancy. With a footprint of 18,000 acres, we should connect stakeholders to see KPC's vision of doubling that number realized. With one wetland acre holding about a million gallons of water, every acre counts in slowing floods. Land is expensive, but let's just round up and say that would cost \$1 billion.

Irresponsible practices of the past invite future disasters. Homes on what James Wade of the HCFD calls "places that never should have been built" are eligible for buyout, but relocation is slow (only 3 in 100 homeowners accept). The reason? They don't see the buyouts as lucrative enough to relocate. Buyout funds need increased to encourage people leaving harm's way. Again, let's round up and say \$1 billion.

Hurricane Harvey damages have been estimated at \$125 billion. The three initiatives I've named would combine to be a fraction of the clean-up costs associated with a catastrophe like Harvey. We manage to find the money to clean up after a storm. It's time to find it to fund some permanent preventative measures.

Executive orders have been heavily used this year. Within Texas, what should be done to define an appropriate level of authority for city, county and state officials?

The COVID-19 crisis exposed a regrettable but persistent issue in Texas. Even during a crisis, it is increasingly unlikely that leaders from differing parties are willing to work together. The problem is not that lines of authority have not been clearly stated — the problem is that competing partisan interests override what is in the best interests of the public.

What made the pandemic unique is the particular ways the virus impacted local communities. In this instance, I would favor local leaders being given more latitude to make decisions for the cities and counties they serve—the same way they're granted it during a natural disaster.

While I can understand Governor Abbot not wanting to make blanket mandates for dissimilarly impacted counties across a state as large as Texas, I was frustrated that he and other conservative operatives derided Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo's initial mask order April 27th only to issue a statewide order of his own July 3rd.

The COVID-19 crisis highlighted this fissure, but it's not the only time we've seen it in Texas. Unfortunately, ego and political strategy have as much to do with this as any perceived lack of clarity on roles and authority.

GINA CALANNI INCUMBENT DEMOCRAT – KATY

Other than recovery from COVID-19, what will be your primary focus as representative for House District 132?

First and foremost, I am running for re-election to be a voice for everyday, hard-working Texans and continue fighting for the issues that matter to Texas families: guaranteeing access to affordable healthcare, addressing rising property taxes, providing all kids with a high-quality public education, defeating the plague of human trafficking, and making sure our community is equipped to handle future catastrophic disasters. We can come together to tackle these problems, without raising taxes on our families and small businesses. As a cancer survivor, my first priority in the next legislative session will be to expand Medicaid. All Texans deserve to have high-quality, preventative healthcare options, and Medicaid expansion would provide over 1 million more Texans with real access to healthcare. Right now, our state is turning away almost \$10 billion a year in tax dollars that we already paid to the federal government, while we have the largest uninsured population in the nation. That is unacceptable because no family should have to choose between taking a kid to the doctor or paying their electricity bill.

What are two projects that you will push forward to mitigate flooding risks for your constituents, if elected?

Like many other Texans, the catastrophic flooding that followed Hurricane Harvey damaged my home and forced my family to move. While Texans struggled to get back on their feet, the Governor refused to call a special session to use Rainy Day funds on recovery efforts. Next legislative session, I will work to pass more proactive legislation to get our state ready for future disasters and fund critical flood infrastructure projects. In 2019, we made significant progress. I was proud to co-author legislation that will create a property tax exemption for properties affected by natural disasters to ensure Texans are not paying excessive taxes on damaged homes and buildings. We also invested over \$1.6 billion into Harvey relief and large flood control projects. However, we must do more and I'm ready to get back to work.

The pandemic has brought to light concerns over executive authority at the county, state and federal levels. Within Texas, what do you believe should be done to define an appropriate level of authority for the governor, county judges and mayors given how executive authority has been used this year?

Every community in our state is different, and has experienced tough, yet varied, health and economic impacts from this pandemic. The past six months have devastated working families and small businesses, and the virus has killed over 10,000 Texans. That is why it is imperative that we listen to advice from doctors and public health officials in each community to effectively mitigate the challenges from COVID-19. State leadership in Austin should listen to voices on the ground to learn what each region needs, instead of overriding guidance intended to protect Texans' health and ultimately safely reopen our economy and community. From the beginning, I have opposed state overreach and supported a strategy where we listen to medical professionals right here in the Harris County region.

Executive orders have been heavily used this year. Within Texas, what should be done to define an appropriate level of authority for city, county and state officials?

Every community in our state is different, and has experienced tough, yet varied, health and economic impacts from this pandemic. The past six months have devastated working families and small businesses, and the virus has killed over 10,000 Texans. That is why it is imperative that we listen to advice from doctors and public health officials in each community to effectively mitigate the challenges from COVID-19. State leadership in Austin should listen to voices on the ground to learn what each region needs, instead of overriding guidance intended to protect Texans' health and ultimately safely reopen our economy and community. From the beginning, I have opposed state overreach and supported a strategy where we listen to medical professionals right here in the Harris County region.

MIKE SCHOFIELD REPUBLICAN – KATY

Other than recovery from COVID-19, what will be your primary focus as representative for House District 132?

I will work to make sure Texas businesses can thrive again in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, so we can avoid more job losses and get Texans who have lost their jobs back to work.

As we continue to take measures to avoid the spread of COVID-19, we need to realize that being safe doesn't require shutting down the businesses that provide the jobs that feed Texas families. Instead, we must limit any restrictions as narrowly as possible and for as short a time as possible to deal with specific outbreaks. We need a precise scalpel, not a meat cleaver.

Once we have reversed our state's job losses, we need to restore jobs to our neighbors who have lost them during the pandemic. This will include working to get our economy back in gear so businesses have the confidence to re-hire, and also having the Texas Workforce Commission provide training for the types of new jobs that will be created as we rebuild our economy.

And we must fight against the push by so-called "progressives" at the federal level to eliminate oil and gas, which would devastate our local community, costing thousands of jobs and millions in tax revenue.

What are two projects that you will push forward to mitigate flooding risks for your constituents, if elected?

We must do everything we can to keep people from losing their homes when major storms strike. As the peak of hurricane season approaches, we are reminded that we must plan for flood prevention — not just wait until a hurricane strikes and clean up afterward.

When Harvey hit our area, I began working with state and federal officials to build a "third reservoir" under Cypress Creek that would slow down the flow of flood water into Addicks and Barker reservoirs, preventing them from filling as quickly. This levy would hold water for a much shorter time that our current reservoirs — but long enough to protect our neighborhoods from flooding even in a storm the size of Harvey.

We must also protect our homes by ensuring that the Harris County flood control bond money is actually used to clean out debris from waterways that flood, to prevent them from backing water up into our neighborhoods. We must stand up and fight to keep the county from redistributing these funds to other parts of the county for political purposes rather than using them where it actually floods.

Executive orders have been heavily used this year. Within Texas, what should be done to define an appropriate level of authority for city, county and state officials?

While COVID-19 is an extraordinary crisis, calling for unusual measures, it is vital that our government doesn't overstep its bounds and become our master, even in uncertain times.

Many of the orders made by local officials for our own good, although acceptable to most Texans, were made without any state law authorizing them. Under the circumstances, many Texans were ok with that. This time.

Your constitutional rights are fundamental and must be protected even during a crisis. Once government feels it can take away your freedoms "for your own good," there had better be clear limits on how far government's power over you extends. Government's reaction to the pandemic showed that we need to make very clear what emergency powers government officials have to tell you what you can and can't do, to what extent they have that power, and for how long.

The pandemic has shown that the Texas Disaster Act is not nearly clear enough about what extraordinary powers our leaders have during a crisis. This statute, designed mostly for hurricanes, must be amended to ensure that government can take the steps necessary to protect you during a crisis without stripping you of your basic constitutional rights.

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The vanishing art of empathy

Joe Biden reminded the world what grace looks like. Robert Trump, President Trump's younger brother, died Saturday. In response, Biden tweeted:

"Mr. President, Jill and I are sad to learn of your younger brother Robert's passing. I know the tremendous pain of losing a loved one – and I know how important family is in moments like these. I hope you know that our prayers are with you all."

Biden's grace reminds us that despite how heated political rhetoric can be, we're all human in the end – and when tragedy and death occur, we must set our differences aside and celebrate our common humanity. We must demonstrate our empathy.

Regrettably, empathy is on the decline for many.

Just minutes after Robert Trump's death, some Donald Trump opponents showed the opposite of compassion by tweeting that "the wrong Trump died."

"Almost immediately after news of his death was released, tweets calling for the US President's death were posted using the hashtag #wrongtrump, which quickly became the number four trending topic on Twitter," reports the Advertiser.

Such class. Politics tends to bring out the worst in us. President Trump, no stranger to vitriolic tweets, brings out the worst in a lot of people.

But empathy's decline preceded Trump's presidency. It's been declining for years.

Dr. Helen Riess, author of "The Empathy Effect," says empathy's decline has to do with social media.

A Street Roots report on her book says "many of the neurological keys to feeling empathy are missing from the exchange" when we communicate through texts, email and social media posts.

Communicating electronically, not face to face, there's no eye contact, and no paying attention to body language and facial expressions.

Without such visual emotional cues, Riess says, we're left with words on a screen, leading to detachment, emotional indifference – and, we are all noticing more, some very nasty tweets.

"Interviews with internet trolls are shocking in that they reveal these online agitators don't tend to view



"Interviews with internet trolls are shocking in that they reveal these online agitators don't tend to view their victims as real people."

their victims as real people," she writes.

An increasing number of people treat those they disagree with this way – which contributes to the decline of the civil discourse our country needs to address sizable problems.

Luckily, I live in Pittsburgh, where empathy is common. We hold doors open for strangers, wave other motorists in front of us, and stop our cars to help with roadside breakdowns.

But even in Pittsburgh, like the rest of the country, some people are getting ruder and meaner as online empathy wanes.

Viewing political opponents as inhuman, even evil, you may feel you have license to shout at – or even assault – them.

Aren't we seeing more news stories about people assaulted for wearing the "wrong" baseball cap or supporting the "wrong" political idea?

Though Riess says empathy is being blunted, she emphasizes to Forbes that it can be learned.

That takes a conscious effort. We need to get out from behind our electronic devices and engage in person (harder in the covid-19 era, but important). We need to set politics aside now and then to celebrate our common humanity.

Just as Joe Biden did with his classy tweet to President Trump.



Purple Heart winner overcame odds

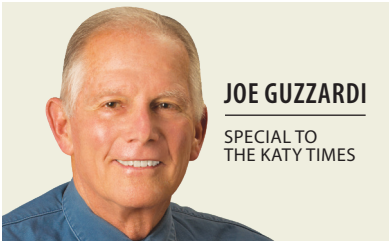
Because of COVID-19 fears, several Major League Baseball players opted out for 2020. Others remained active but have since gone on the Injured List with discomfort or tenderness in various limbs. Players and dinosaur fans from earlier eras rejected discomfort and tenderness as legitimate injuries.

If modern-day players knew U.S. Army Corporal Lou Brissie's story and his determination to play baseball, they might demand to be penciled into tonight's line-up. Or at least feel a little embarrassed.

Brissie had been a South Carolina high school pitching standout, and his dream was to reach the big leagues. By age 16, several clubs put out feelers to the 6-foot-5 lefty smoke-thrower. Among the clubs watching Brissie were the Philadelphia Athletics, whose owner and manager Connie Mack had expressed a keen interest.

But World War II intervened. On December 4, 1944, during combat against the Germans near Florence, Italy, an artillery shell exploded near Brissie, breaking both his feet and shattering his left tibia and shinbone in 30 places. Shrapnel also struck his right shoulder, both hands and both thighs. When his 88th Infantry Division engaged in heavy combat with the Germans, eight enlisted men and three of their four officers were killed or wounded. On the battlefield, and barely conscious, immobile in the snow and mud, squad leader Brissie was left for dead.

Finally, when medics arrived, they wanted to amputate. But Brissie, knowing an operation would end whatever chance he might have to play for Mack's Athletics, refused. "You can't take my leg off," Brissie replied. "I'm a ballplayer. I can't play



on one leg." Doctors warned that without an amputation, Brissie would die. Refusing, Brissie said, "Doc, I'll take my chances."

During the following two years, Brissie underwent 23 surgeries and had 40 blood transfusions. Brissie, now with his leg reconstructed with wire and a metal plate protecting it, still clung to hope that he'd one day achieve his vision of pitching for Mack's Athletics. And Mack did everything he could to encourage the young war hero.

Mack wrote to Brissie to remind him that his immediate responsibility was to heal, and promised that when the time was right, he'd offer the lefty a tryout. But when Mack saw Brissie throw on the sidelines with his damaged foot propped up by a crutch, he thought, "Poor boy, he'll never be able to pitch again."

In six decades of professional baseball, the great Mack rarely miscalculated. But he was wrong about Brissie. In 1946, the Athletics signed Brissie and sent him to the competitive Class A South Atlantic League's Savannah Indians, where he excelled.

Even though opponents tried every trick in the book, including laying down bunts to test his mobility, Brissie led the league in wins, strikeouts and earned run average. At the end of the South Atlantic League's season, the Athletics called Brissie up. His first game was at Yankee Stadium

on Babe Ruth Day, where he debuted with Ruth, as well as baseball immortals Ty Cobb, Tris Speaker and Cy Young looking on. Although Brissie took a 5-3 loss, he said, "I thought I had gone to heaven."

During the 1948 and 1949 seasons, Brissie won 14 and 16 games, respectively, and got a spot on the 1949 All Star team where he described playing with Ted Williams and Joe DiMaggio as being "like a kid in a candy shop." Eventually traded to the Cleveland Indians, Brissie retired in 1953. Pitching legend Bob Feller said that without World War II, Brissie would have been inducted into the Hall of Fame.

In his post-baseball career, Brissie developed young American Legion, Latin American and Australian players. Brissie also scouted for the Atlanta Braves and the Los Angeles Dodgers. Throughout, Brissie continued pain treatment at the Veteran's Hospital. While at the Vet, Brissie comforted Iraq vets whose injuries he described as "worse than WWII."

Brissie, winner of two Purple Hearts and the Bronze Metal, steadfastly refused Hollywood producers' offers to make a film about his wartime and baseball lives. Insisting that he didn't consider himself a hero, and that he didn't feel right about a biographical movie since he felt "blessed," as many of his friends "never came home."

Brissie died in 2013, and remains, sadly, unknown to all but the most devoted baseball historians. To help their players appreciate the gift they've been given, MLB owners should require them to learn more about the remarkable Brissie.

Joe Guzzardi is a Society for American Baseball Research and Internet Baseball Writers Association member. Contact him at guzzjoe@yahoo.com.

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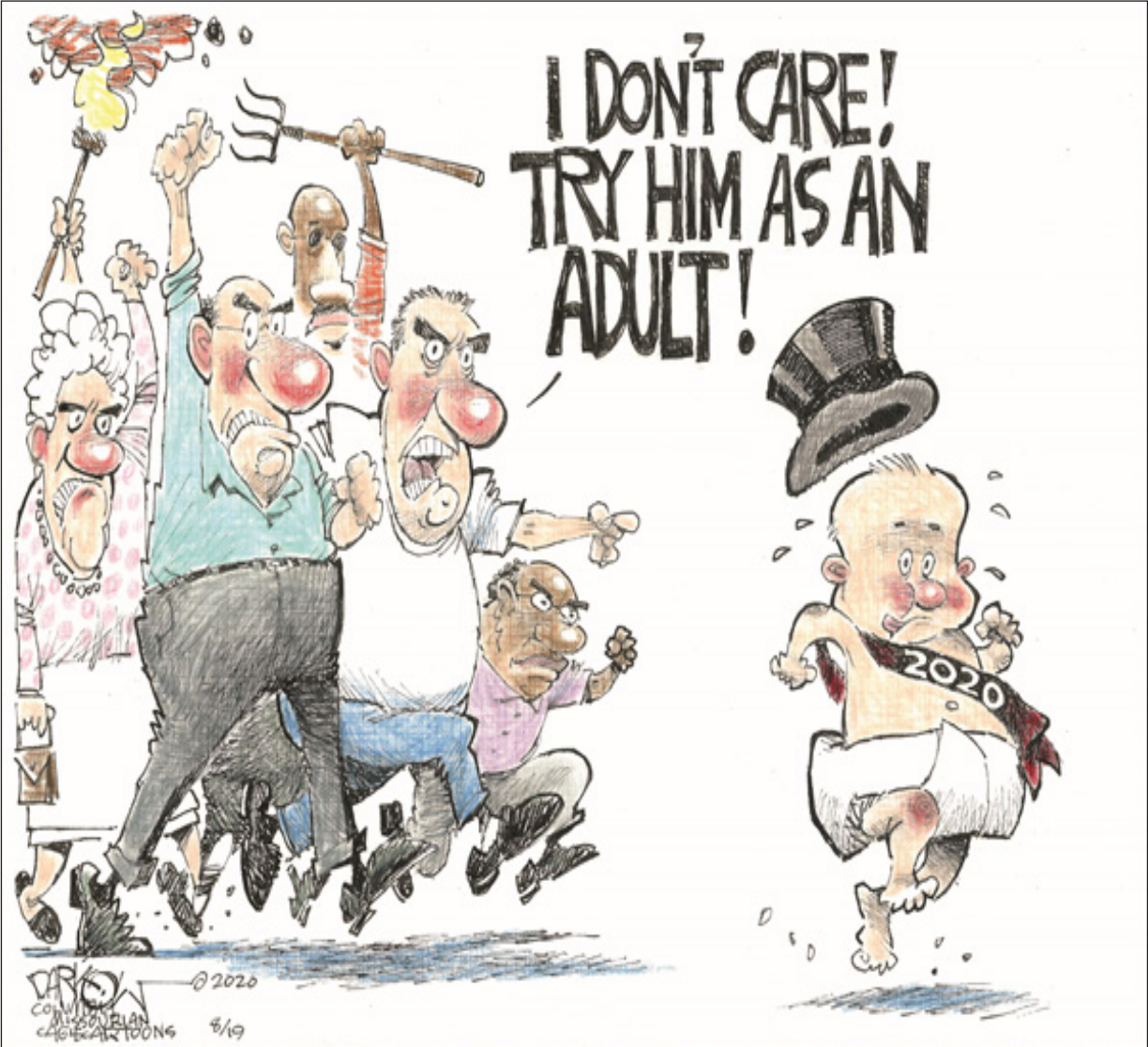
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IMAGES COURTESY OF KIM BRANCH

Street and garage flooding during heavy rains is common along Sixth Street in downtown Brookshire according to Alderwoman Kim Branch. Branch provided these photos which show how water backs up into the street in the neighborhood near Longenbaugh Park at the intersection of Gresham Avenue and Sixth Street.

BROOKSHIRE

from page 1

rate.' It's higher than the no new revenue rate but it's lower than what was called the rollback rate."

A public hearing required by law will be held Sept. 17 to allow residents to provide input on the decision to maintain the tax rate with no increase or decrease.

Under new rules adopted during the last legislative session, maintaining the tax rate as is may make the decision on the tax rate easier for the city's elected officials as other municipalities struggle to figure out the details of how the Texas Property Tax Reform and Transparency Act of 2019 applies to the decision making process – especially during a governor-declared state of emergency.

The city also discussed proposals from Texas Disposal Systems and Waste Corporation – also known as WCA – to replace Republic Services as the city's trash services provider.

Trevor Royal with WCA said his company's proposal included once per week trash service that

includes bulk collection. WCA has been pursuing the city's business for about 18 months they said.

Due to email issues, not all aldermen and alderwomen received copies of the proposals ahead of the meeting. Generally, proposals are accepted as received and then the council reviews the accepted proposals and chooses between them for final negotiations.

The city had sent Republic Services a nonrenewal notice to Republic Services regarding the renewal of the current solid waste contract.

Mayor Pro Tem Marilyn Vaughn and Alderman Lee Jones voted against the measure while Alderwoman Branch and Alderman Green voted in favor of accepting the proposals. With Alderman Lyndon Stamps absent from the meeting, Mayor Branch cast a tie-breaking vote to accept the proposals.

A discussion and potential action to accept a proposal from either TDS or WCA will take place Aug. 27 at 5 p.m. to determine how to move forward with the trash services contracting issue.

CLASSES

from page 1

College for its engineering and nursing students easier to manage was also a change for the year. Rather than having to go between two different accounts and IDs the two institutions of higher learning have set up matching student accounts so UH students can take core classes at HCC and save thousands of dollars over time on their degree plans.

In its second year, the UH Katy campus does have an increased enrollment number from the spring semester, but Neal said that number is still changing as students enroll in more classes over the next few days. He does anticipate an increase in overall enrollment though, he said.

Many of those new students are enrolling in online



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

Associate Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for University of Houston at Sugar Land and University of Houston at Katy and Associate Professor Jay Neal is responsible for operations at the University of Houston's Katy and Sugar Land campuses.

extracurricular activities such as the Katy campus' e-sports club, Neal said. Activities include online stand-up comedy shows and a variety of entertainment options to get as close to the on-campus culture as possible given the pandemic, he added.

"I think it's a great op-

portunity for all the students who are at home and not really on campus as much as usual," he said.

Neal expressed his appreciation for all of the stakeholders involved in helping develop the plans to safely reopen the campus including Dr. Michael Spann, dean of the UH

College of Medicine and Professor Kathryn Tart, dean of the UH College of Nursing – as well as representatives from throughout UH, the Texas Education Agency and other state and county-level authorities that provided input.

Neal also said he wanted to hear feedback from students if they happen to see anything that may be a gap in the university's safety protocols so that those issues could be addressed promptly. Students should reach out to their professors about any observed gaps or any struggles with classes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, he said.

"I think we just need to communicate to the students what their options are and to work closely with us, you know," Neal said. "It's going to be on a case by case basis, but we want to take good care of them."

KISD

from page 1

Money crunching

Regarding financial matters, the board was presented multiple options by district staff for setting a tax rate. District staff and the board are moving toward final approval of an apparent decrease from last year's property tax rate.

In the 2019-20 tax year for the district, the rate was set at \$1.4431 per \$100 valuation. For the 2020-21 tax year for the district, the district's administration proposed a rate of \$1.3888 per \$100 valuation for property taxes. This amounts to a reduction of \$0.0543 per \$100 valuation – or about \$54.30 less for each \$100,000 of property value.

Smith said the tax rate could be lowered due to a tax base growth of about 8.5% while enrollment had only increased about 5.1%. The proposed tax rate is broken down into a maintenance and operations rate of \$0.9988 per \$100 valuation while the debt service rate makes up \$0.3900 per \$100 valuation, Smith said.

With the decrease in the tax rate, the district was still able to provide a

1% increase in pay to staff and faculty, Smith said.

The tax rate and 2020-21 budget are expected to be up for approval at the Board of Trustee's next meeting in September, a district spokesperson said.

The trustees also reviewed the final budget for the 2019-20 budget which is in the process of being closed out.

Staffing, including salary and benefits, accounted for 88% of the district's general fund budget, while non-payroll expenses made up the remaining 12% according to a presentation by district staff. Local revenue accounted for 54% of the general fund's income, with 45% coming from the state and 1% coming from the federal government.

Costly elections

November 3 will see Katy ISD on ballots in Fort Bend, Harris and Waller counties for voters that live within district boundaries, said KISD General Counsel Justin Graham. The election – originally scheduled for May – was postponed by Tex. Governor Greg Abbott due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The delay in the election will be

costly for the district, Graham said. Due to additional requirements when going on countywide ballots and other expenses, the election is expected to cost about \$450,000 compared to an average cost of around \$100,000, he said.

KISD trustee Positions 3, 4 and 5 are up for grabs in November, though Board of Trustees Secretary Ashley Vann who currently holds the Position 3 seat is running unopposed after opponent R.C. Simmons withdrew from the race earlier this year.

In Position 4, incumbent Courtney Doyle and candidate Allen Wortham, Jr. have also withdrawn from the race. Position 4 candidates currently include Leah Wilson and Michael Dillard.

Incumbent Trustee Bill Lacy will face Greg Schulte for the Position 5 seat in November. Brandy Snyder withdrew from the election earlier this year.

The Katy Area Chamber of Commerce will be streaming a candidate forum to provide candidates with an opportunity to answer questions about their goals and campaign platforms in October. "Katy Times" will keep readers apprised of the specific date, time and streaming platform as more information becomes available.

COUNCIL

from page 1

in service that week as part of the transition. Texas Pride will save residents money in comparison to the quoted price from Republic Services. With adjustments for the cost of the surety bond, a trash bin will cost \$13.15 per month compared to \$14.50 from Republic Services under that company's bid.

The new solid waste agreement was approved July 20.

Taxing understanding

City Council also set multiple public hearings regarding the city's finances. The first is a hearing to allow residents to provide feedback on the city's proposed property tax rate at 4 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 14. The second is set for 4 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 28 and will allow residents to provide feedback on the city's

proposed 2020-21 fiscal year budget.

Property taxes were a topic of lengthier than usual discussion among council members as City Finance Director Andrew Vasquez and Katy's General Counsel Art Pertile, III explained how tax rates are set under the Texas Property Tax Reform and Transparency Act of 2019 – colloquially referred to as Senate Bill 2.

Vasquez said the city has multiple options under the new bill, especially with the emergency declarations set in place by Texas Governor Greg Abbott and the city's population being less than 30,000 allow the council some flexibility in deciding on a final tax rate. The city, could look at a variety of options Vasquez said, including setting a rate that allows new revenue at 8% rather than the standard 3.5% under the law.

Mayor Pro Tem Chris Harris said the options would both lower the actual property tax rate from

the current \$0.4800 per \$100 valuation.

At the 8% new income level it would bring in about \$398,000 in additional revenue for the city, Vasquez said. Council member Janet Corte and Harris pointed out that, while setting the higher of the two discussed options would reduce tax bills less, they would also provide revenue that would help the city move forward with drainage projects the city might otherwise have to postpone.

Pertile said the city could qualify for the 8% property tax revenue increase; however, he advised caution because the law is new and Abbott's office, the Tex. Attorney General's Office and the Tex. Comptroller of Public Accounts Office had all failed to issue opinions on the exemptions offered in S.B. 2.

City Administrator Byron Hebert said that he and his staff were set to propose a balanced budget for the city regardless of which

option council members decided upon for the coming year and praised city staff for their hard work during difficult economic times.

City Council will hold a workshop on the tax rate during a special meeting Aug. 28 at 2 p.m. via virtual conferencing.

Other actions

- Approved refunding bonds for the Katy Development Authority in the amount of \$8 million.
- Authorized an agreement with Si Environmental, LLC for emergency utility services at the city's wastewater plant and related infrastructure.
- Authorized a software upgrade contract with IDEMIA Identity & Security USA for the Katy Police Department.
- Terminated an inter-local agreement with Fort Bend County to provide fire protection services to portions of unincorporated Fort Bend County.

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From ‘Horns up’ to ‘Roll Tide’

Tompkins’ Milroe flips commitment, chooses University of Alabama

By COLE McNANNA
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Jalen Milroe, the Tompkins Falcons’ four-star, dual-threat quarterback, announced in an Aug. 17 tweet that he decided to flip his commitment from the University of Texas at Austin to the University of Alabama.

“At this time, after taking a lot into consideration, much prayer, and speaking with my parents, I have decided to decommit from UT and commit to another university that shares my vision and aspirations,” Milroe’s tweet says.

That match to the right school was a major point his current head coach, Todd McVey, brought up in an Aug. 25 phone interview.

“That’s the one time I tell kids - I hate to say it but - be selfish,” McVey said. “This is a place where you’re going to be going for four years. Make sure you check anything and everything. I think that’s something that he and his family came to conclusions (about), with lots of thought in what they wanted to do so I’m very happy for him.”

Milroe said in an interview with BamaInsider.com that one of his first recruiting visits was to the Crimson Tide’s campus in Tuscaloosa, Ala. where he started to develop his relationship with offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Steve Sarkisian as well as head coach Nick Saban.



CHRIS COLIHAN

Tompkins quarterback Jalen Milroe recently announced a switch in his college decision and said after much thought with his family, the University of Alabama was the right next step for him to take after his Falcons’ career closes at the end of this year. Pictured is Milroe hurdling a Cinco Ranch defender en route to the end zone in a 58-0 win to end the regular season.

“Going into my junior season, I went down for a visit and also did a camp there,” Milroe said. “I enjoyed the visit when I was down

there, I was able to get coached by Coach Sarkisian and Coach Tino (Sunseri), and I enjoyed their coaching style. I sat down and

talked to my parents because I was really considering Alabama at the time but I wanted to take other visits and see what they had to offer and wanted to see other programs.”

In the months following the visit to Alabama, Milroe was offered by and eventually committed to the University of Texas at Austin but said he continued to weigh his options with his family.

“I sat down with my parents and talked with them about what would be the best for my future and where I could see myself,” Milroe said. “One thing that we talked about was ‘If you were to wake up at a university could you see yourself there?’ and it came across my mind that Alabama was definitely a school that I can see myself at.”

Many top recruits across the country have the same thought which has led the University of Alabama to earn the top spot in the Rivals.com team recruiting rankings with 15 of 19 recruits landing inside the Rivals250 prospect rankings. However, that high level of competition was another driving factor that led Milroe to sign up and join the Crimson Tide.

“I know that going to Alabama, there’s great competition and the best of the best is at Alabama,” he said. “Every single day you’re going against the best. That’s the greatest thing about going to the University of Alabama because ev-

ery day you’re going to get better, and you have great coaches to top it off.”

McVey thinks Milroe’s work ethic and the extra hours spent in the weight room and on the practice field will help him adjust to one of the nation’s best college programs.

“It’s all the work that he’s putting in and I think it’s kind of like LeBron (James) and Kobe (Bryant) and Michael Jordan all said the same thing, ‘Y’all think this looks easy to just come on the court,’ but they put those thousands of hours of reps in, that’s the same thing Jalen does,” McVey said. “They don’t see the Saturday morning workouts, or the a.m. workouts or the after-workout workouts and things he does that he worked extremely hard at his craft on.”

The University of Alabama’s 2020 roster features seven quarterbacks but Mac Jones, a redshirt junior, and freshman Bryce Young have risen to the depth chart in the early stages of fall camp.

“Coming into Alabama, there’s a dog that’s there right now, a five-star quarterback in Bryce Young, he’s great quarterback,” Milroe said. “I had a chance to talk to him after I committed, we talked and he’s a great dude. ... As far as the quarterback room, they’re all great quarterbacks and I’m just excited to meet those guys and learn and grow in the program.”

Promotions for former Skeeters

By JOE SOUTHERN
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

As the Constellation Energy League heads into its last week of play, it’s former players that continue to make the news.

Last week the Houston Astros promoted former Team Skeeter pitcher Chase De Jong to the active roster. He becomes the second player from the league to make a Major League active roster behind pitcher Brett Eibner, who is now a member of the Miami Marlins.

They are two of six players from the makeshift league to have their contacts purchased by Major League organizations. Left-hander Matt Dermody got the call to join the Chicago Cubs, reliever Fernando Rodney went to the Astros, catcher Brett Sullivan was recalled to the Tampa Bay Rays, and catcher Cameron Rupp returned to the Cleveland Indians.

Baseball fans at Constellation Field welcomed back former Sugar Land Skeeter and Major League All-Star Scott Kazmir, who joined Eastern Reyes del Tigre. The 36-year-old journeyman pitcher, who made his debut with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays in 2004 at the age of 20, joined the Skeeters in their inaugural season in 2012 and became the team’s first player to be called up to the majors. He went from Sugar Land to Puerto Rico and the next year joined the Cleveland Indians. The next season he went to the Oakland A’s and in 2015 was traded to the Astros. In 2016 he signed with the Los Angeles Dodgers and, after struggling with injuries, was traded to the Atlanta Braves in 2017.

Back in Sugar Land with Reyes del Tigre, he made his debut with an inning of relief on Aug. 15, striking out two over a scoreless in-



JOE SOUTHERN

Eastern Reyes del Tigre pitcher Scott Kazmir makes his return to Constellation Field eight years after pitching for the Sugar Land Skeeters in their inaugural season. Kazmir, 36, who is a former Major League All-Star, is making a comeback in the Constellation Energy League.

ning. He got his first start on Aug. 18, leading Eastern to a 6-4 victory over the Sugar Land Lightning Sloths. He struck out five across four innings, giving up four hits and three runs. He holds an ERA of 1.80 heading into the last week.

“Obviously he’s had a very successful big league career for quite a while, so he wanted to come out and pitch and compete again and see where it may take him, so I’m thrilled to have him,” said manager Dave Eiland.

Promotions

Friday will be the fireworks finale of the season and Saturday and Sunday will feature a bucket hat giveaway. For tickets and more information, visit www.sugarlandskeeters.com.

STANDINGS

Skeeters	16-9
Eastern	13-12
Sugar Land	11-13
Texas	9-15

RESULTS

TUESDAY, AUG. 18
Eastern 6,
Sugar Land 4

THURSDAY, AUG. 20
Skeeters 6, Texas 4

FRIDAY, AUG. 21
Eastern 6, Texas 5

SATURDAY, AUG. 22
Skeeters 5, Texas 3
Sugar Land 2,
Eastern 0

SUNDAY, AUG. 23
Texas 8,
Sugar Land 2
Skeeters 6, Eastern 1

KISD’s Foster, Washington named preseason all-state

By COLE McNANNA
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

In the most recent installment of “Dave Campbell’s Texas Football Magazine,” four Katy ISD athletes earned a spot on the preseason Super Team. Two were honored on preseason all-state teams and 11 players were recognized as top-300 recruits in the state entering their final season.

Also, three Katy Tigers were named to the Class of 2022’s top 100 recruits and Morton Ranch’s David Hicks landed on the Class of 2023’s top 25 recruits.

In updated, comprehensive rankings of each classification released Aug. 12, Dave Campbell’s had all but one KISD school in the top 200 out of 245 6A schools. In 5A-DI, Paetow was ranked No. 31 out of 129 teams.

Leading the way for KISD in the 6A rankings were the Katy Tigers at No. 4. The reigning District 19-6A champions were also DCTF’s pick to win the district once again under the 6A preseason coach of the year Gary Joseph, who enters his 16th year at the helm of the program.

The Tigers had the lone KISD representative on the Super Team defense with defensive back Hunter Washington landing on the second team. Washington was also one of the two preseason all-state picks, along with Taylor’s Bryce Foster, a top 25 defensive back recruit and was tabbed as the preseason defensive MVP of District 19.

The Tompkins Falcons, behind the district’s preseason offensive MVP Jalen Milroe, were next at No. 19 in the DCTF rankings. Milroe was also one of the Katy quarterbacks in the top 25



FILE PHOTO BY MARK GOODMAN

Senior Bronson McClelland returns to run the Katy Tigers’ offense as a top-25 quarterback recruit according to Dave Campbell’s Texas Football magazine. Pictured is McClelland escaping the pocket during a conference game between Katy and the Cinco Ranch Cougars at Legacy Stadium Oct. 25, 2019.

quarterback recruits, along with the Tigers’ Bronson McClelland, and landed on the Super Team third-team offense.

After a historic run in the postseason, the Taylor Mustangs checked in at No. 33 in the 6A rankings ahead of the 2020 season. Two members of the “nasty” offensive line that helped spur last year’s win streak return this year as well as made an appearance on the Super Team offensive line. Foster earned first-team distinction and Hayden Conner, a University of Texas commit, garnered a spot on the second team. That pair, along with Morton Ranch’s Aaron Session, were also top 40 offensive line recruits.

The Seven Lakes Spartans, projected to take the final playoff spot with a fourth-place finish in district, was ranked No. 145 entering the year and was followed closely by the Morton Ranch Mavericks which checked in at No. 158.

Taking the No. 163 slot in Class 6A was the Mayde Creek Rams whose 5-foot, 10-inch, 205-pound running back Julius Loughridge

was named one of the top 25 running back recruits. The Cinco Ranch Cougars rounded out the district’s representatives in the 6A rankings at No. 207.

Other KISD athletes landing in the top 300 recruits included Katy tight end Fernando Garza (top 10), Taylor linebacker Trevor Woods (top 25), Katy defensive back Dalton Johnson (top 25) and Tompkins defensive back Dru Polidore (best of the rest).

For the Class of 2022’s top 100 recruits, the Katy Tigers’ Bobby Taylor (6’ 3”, 180-pound defensive back), Malick Sylla (6’ 5”, 220-pound defensive lineman) and Ty Kana (6’ 1”, 195-pound linebacker) cracked the list.

On the Class 5A stage, the Paetow Panthers are projected to finish fifth in District 10 after taking fourth last year and clinching the first playoff berth in school history. Running back Damon Bankston, a player to watch, returns along with 11 other starters from both sides of the ball of last year’s squad.

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Wayne Thomas Boucher passed away on Friday, August 14, 2020 in Katy, Texas at 88 years of age.

Wayne Thomas Boucher was born on September 6, 1931 in Menominee, Michigan to Edmund James Boucher and Laura Elizabeth Mushynski.

Wayne attended high school in Menominee, Michigan and graduated in 1949. Wayne met the love of his life, Donna Mae Gallagher, when driving by as she was shoveling snow. He teased her about having to shovel snow and she threw the snow at him in the car. He jumped from the car and picked up a handful of snow and "gently washed" her face with the snow. Donna always said she knew then that she would marry this man. They later married on July 10, 1951. Wayne and Donna worked tirelessly while raising their ever expanding family and attending Michigan State University. When Wayne received his degree in Engineering from MSU in 1965 he and Donna had eight children and the 9th on the way. In 1980, his job relocated him to the Houston area and he settled down in Katy, Texas. Wayne worked as an engineer throughout his professional career and retired in 1998 from Kvaerner National in Houston.

After retirement, Wayne couldn't be still. He loved working in his lawn, volunteering for free golf at Green Meadows, but Wayne was most proud of his volunteer



WAYNE THOMAS BOUCHER
1931-2020

work at Memorial Hermann Hospital Katy for 23 years. He loved handing out candy to all the nurses and the friendships he built.

He was a devoted Catholic and was a member of the St. Bartholomew Catholic Church, in Katy. He loved spending time with his family and friends, challenging anyone to a game of cribbage, time on the golf course, and watching The Big Ten, especially the Michigan State Spartans, Go Green!

If you knew Wayne, he always made you smile with his quick wit and great sense of humor. You also know him for being a genuinely kind man who was always there to help anyone.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 64 years, Donna Mae Boucher who passed on June 11,

2015, his son, Michael Boucher who passed away on September 26, 2006. His parents, Edmund and Laura Boucher and his sister Audrey Cleary.

He is survived by his children, Thomas (Linda) Boucher of Colorado, Daniel (Kim) Boucher of Michigan, Monica Boucher of Michigan, Jeffrey (Cindy) Boucher of Virginia, Kelli (Phillip) Oberlin of Michigan, Erin (Joseph) Lekovich of Texas, Courtney (David) Hunsucker of Texas, Shannon (Trent) Cooke of Texas; and Greg (LaTonya) Boucher of Texas. His twenty-six grandchildren; his twenty-five great grandchildren; his siblings, Lorna Young of Colorado, Mary (John) Connelly of Michigan, Jerry Boucher of Michigan, Jane Korpella of Pennsylvania and John Boucher of Michigan, as well as, numerous other loving family members and many friends.

Due to COVID-19, no services have been scheduled at this time.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that all memorial donations be made to the American Cancer Society, 2500 Fondren Road #100, Houston, Texas 77063, www.cancer.org.

To express condolences, please visit www.SchmidtFuneralHome.net.

Funeral services held under the direction of Schmidt Funeral Home at 1344 W. Grand Parkway South in Katy. They can be reached at 281-391-2424.

Dressing and dementia

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Believe it or not, despite COVID-19, there is every reason to hope that we'll be entering into more traditional fall weather in Texas soon. Tuesday, September 22 is actually the "official" date, but of course, it's Texas, so who knows?

Cooler weather also brings about a change of wardrobe. As we all know, your physical appearance contributes to your sense of self-esteem. But – for a person with moderate or severe Alzheimer's Disease or another dementia, changing a wardrobe can be frustrating. They may be overwhelmed with choices or the task itself, or even not remember how to dress.

Fortunately, there are things you can do to help.

Physical Problems

- Does the person have problems with motor skills needed to fasten buttons or close zippers?
- Does the person remember how to dress?
- Does he or she recognize their clothes?
- Is he or she aware of the time of day or season of the year?

Environment Issues

- Is the person troubled by lack of privacy, a cold room, poor lighting or loud noises?

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- Is the person being rushed to get dressed quickly?
 - Is the person receiving clear step-by-step instructions on how to dress?
 - Is the person embarrassed by dressing in front of you or others?
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- Lay out clothes for the person.
- When possible, give the person an opportunity to select favorite outfits or colors.
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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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Believe

State of disaster declared ahead of storms

By MITCHELL FERMAN
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

HOUSTON — With two storms gaining strength in the Gulf of Mexico, Gov. Greg Abbott on Sunday declared a state of disaster for 23 counties and requested assistance from the federal government.

Hurricane Marco is expected to make landfall in Louisiana on Monday before moving into East Texas, with forecasters expecting sustained winds of 75 miles per hour, according to the National Weather Service.

Meanwhile, Tropical Storm Laura is expected to advance into the central Gulf Coast late Tuesday, when the storm could strengthen into a hurricane, the National Weather Service said.

“As Hurricane Marco and Tropical Storm Laura approach Texas, the state is taking necessary precautions to protect our communities and keep Texans safe,” Abbott said in a statement.

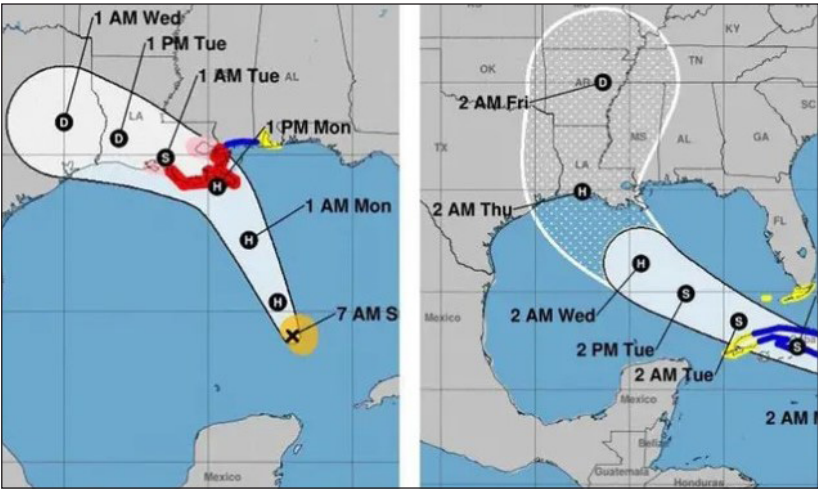
While storm models have a “high degree of uncertainty,” according to Nim Kidd, chief of the Texas Department of Emergency Management, Abbott, speaking alongside Kidd at a Sunday news conference, said Texas is “fully prepared” for both storms.

If the storms land as expected, they could mark the second significant disaster during the 2020 hurricane season in Texas, following Hurricane Hanna dumping more than 15 inches of rain on South Texas in late July as the region was a deadly coronavirus hotspot.

Still, the coronavirus pandemic is pervasive in Texas, killing at least 200 people every day for the last three weeks, and Abbott reminded the public on Sunday to adhere to mask wearing, social distancing and other health guidelines.

“We cannot allow the oncoming hurricanes to set us back in the advancements that we’ve made in combating COVID-19,” Abbott said.

South Texas cities were the first to find out how to deal with a hurricane during the coronavirus pandemic, tweaking shelter practices to have adequate distancing between evacuees and outfitting first responders with protective equipment in order to follow safe coronavirus health guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



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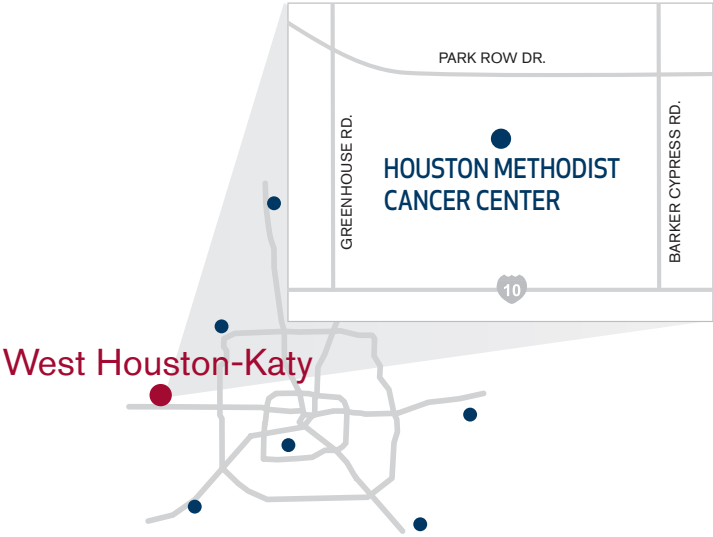
Sunday models for Hurricane Marco and Tropical Storm Laura showed the two powering through the gulf coast and making landfall just hours apart.

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Hurd, McCaul vote for USPS rescue bill

By **ABBY LIVINGSTON**
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

WASHINGTON — The U.S. House voted on Saturday to send \$25 billion to the U.S. Postal Service and reverse operational changes that have slowed the mail service until at least through the end of the year. All Democratic members of the Texas Delegation, and two Texas Republicans, supported the bill.

In a rare move, members, driven by Democrats who say they are worried that cutbacks in mail services will jeopardize mail-in voting this November, returned to the U.S. Capitol amid summer recess to vote on the legislation.

The legislation would mandate the USPS to return to the operational levels of Jan. 1 and stay in place until the COVID-19 public health crisis ends or Jan. 1, 2021 — whichever comes later. It passed late Saturday afternoon. It is doubtful the Republican-controlled U.S. Senate will take up the legislation.

This bill would block any changes that impede mail delivery services, close post offices, reduce facility hours, eliminate overtime pay to USPS employees and increase the volume of undelivered mail.

About two dozen House Republicans voted with Democrats on the measure. Within the Texas delegation, Republican U.S. Reps. Will Hurd, of Helotes, and Michael McCaul, of Austin, voted with the Democrats. A handful of Texas Republicans were not present for the vote. Similarly, several Texas Democrats did not attend the vote, but they opted to vote-by-proxy — a new rule change from the spring in which a member could designate a colleague to vote on their behalf. This measure came to pass amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hurd called the USPS “vital” on Twitter and added, “They are essential, and, like always, I will continue to support them.”

McCaul similarly tweeted about the need for the post office to deliver medication to seniors



R. HANS MILLER

A USPS mail van drives down Pin Oak Road near Katy Hardware. Changes at the USPS have been under serious scrutiny after politicization on both sides of the political aisle. The House of Representatives voted to send \$25 billion in support to the Postal Service Aug. 22 with Mike McCaul of Austin and Will Hurd of Helotes voting in favor of the Democrats' bill in support of postal efficiency.

and for the importance of service to rural areas.

“I have advocated for USPS funding in past COVID-19 relief legislation and will continue to do so along with funding for other essential services during this pandemic,” he added.

The postal office is the latest pocket of government that has exploded in a political outrage, and the rhetoric on the House floor Saturday afternoon matched that fury.

President Donald Trump told Fox Business News earlier this month that it was his aim to starve the USPS of funding in order to compromise the country's mail-in voting process ahead of November's presidential election. Democrats on the House floor pointed to those remarks as the impetus for the emergency vote on the bill Saturday.

The USPS is in its second decade of a major scaling back of employees and operations. Due to the onset of modern technology like email, the post office has had a reduction in demand for first class mail delivery. Postal officials from previous administrations have worked to shrink the size of the mail service while also keeping the aim of fast delivery to remote parts of the country.

Republicans characterized reports of removed mailboxes and sorting machines as part of that process and accused the Democrats of disingenuous attacks on Postmaster General Louis DeJoy and Trump.

“Today's effort is yet another smokescreen, another conspiracy theory foisted upon the American people to distract us from the real problems facing the American people,” said U.S. Rep. Michael

Cloud, R-Victoria, who serves on the committee that oversees the post office.

Cloud's remarks echoed other statements from some Texas Republicans who spoke on the floor and issued statements about the vote. Other Republicans described the debate over delayed mail delivery as “a manufactured crisis” and “fear mongering.”

U.S. Rep. Jodey Arrington, R-Lubbock, tweeted that Democrats were “falsely calling into question the security of our elections to justify a 25 billion dollar bail-out is a dishonest, predatory scam and a political pay-off to their government union bosses,” to which U.S. Rep. Chip Roy, R-Austin, responded with “Amen.”

But Democrats defended their action.

“Over the last couple of hours,

I've heard my friends on the other side of the aisle say this say this is not serious,” said U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Houston. “You know why this is serious? A 176,000 dead Americans from COVID-19 and the projection that there may be another 300,000 dead by Dec. 1.”

“My constituents who are suffering from stage-four cancer need the mail,” she added.

She went on to quote from a letter USPS general counsel Thomas J. Marshall wrote to all 50 states and the District of Columbia warning that the postal service may not be able to meet deadlines for ballots mailed at the last minute.

Other House Democrats relayed constituent stories of delayed mail — including medications — and they released documents they said were prepared within the USPS to brief DeJoy on Aug. 12 that showed a slow down in mail service beginning in mid-July.

This past week, a USPS union leader in San Antonio told reporters and U.S. Rep. Joaquin Castro, D-San Antonio, that postal officials in Washington ordered local postal employees to hide bags of backed up mail — tens of thousands of pieces dating from as far back as March — from the congressman while he was on a tour of a mail plant.

DeJoy said last week that he would pause plans to change mail services until after the election, but the aim of the bill is to reinstate operations — sorting machines, overtime and mailboxes — that were cut back in recent weeks to where they were at the beginning of the year.

The crux of the partisan dispute over the \$25 billion bailout is due the complicated nature of USPS accounting.

House Republican leaders encouraged members to vote against the bill.

DeJoy testified before the U.S. House Oversight and Reform Committee on Monday. Two Texans, Cloud and Roy, serve on that committee.

Water District Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The Harris-Waller Counties Municipal Utility District No. 3 will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2020 on September 21, 2020 at 1:30 P.M. by teleconference at (888) 557-8511, Access Code: 1512581. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

FOR the proposal: Lonnie Lee, Justin Wagner, David Ward, John Hoag

AGAINST the proposal:

PRESENT and not voting:

ABSENT: Dana Thompson

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

	Last Year	This Year
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.93000/\$100 Adopted	\$0.93000/\$100 Proposed
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		\$.00000/\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates (+/-)		0.00%
Average appraised residence homestead value	\$408,815.00	\$406,328.00
General homestead exemptions available (excluding senior citizen's or disabled person's exemptions)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$408,815.00	\$406,328.00
Tax on average residence homestead	\$3,801.98	\$3,778.85
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)		\$-23.13 -0.61%

NOTICE OF TAXPAYERS' RIGHT TO ELECTION TO REDUCE TAX RATE

If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance, and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 8 percent, the qualified voters of the district by petition may require that an election be held to determine whether to reduce the operation and maintenance tax rate to the voter-approval tax rate under Section 49.23603, Water Code.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

Should you have any questions concerning this notice, please contact the tax office at 281-482-0216.

WATER DISTRICT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TAX RATE

The FORT BEND COUNTY M.U.D. #185 will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2020 on September 16, 2020 at 12:00 p.m. It is anticipated said meeting will be held via telephone conference pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.125, as amended, and as modified by the Governor of Texas in the Governor's proclamation concerning the Covid-19 pandemic. Meeting access by Teleconference: (877)746-4263, Access code: 0288221#.

Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

FOR the proposal: Allen Thomas, Scott Donahue, Wesley Noonan, Al Menconi, and Terrell Berger

AGAINST the proposal: None

PRESENT and not voting: None

ABSENT: None

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

	Last Year	This Year
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$.96000/\$100 Adopted	\$.93000/\$100 Proposed
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		\$.03000/\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates(+/-)		-3.12%
Average appraised residence homestead value	\$ 334,806	\$ 345,998
General homestead exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person's exemptions)	\$ 0	\$ 0
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$ 334,806	\$ 345,998
Tax on average residence homestead	\$3,214.13	\$3,217.78
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)		\$ 3.65 .11%

NOTICE OF VOTE ON TAX RATE

If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance, and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 3.5 percent, an election must be held to determine whether to approve the operation and maintenance tax rate under Section 49.23602, Water Code.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

Bob Leared Interests 713-932-9011