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THURSDAY, MAY 6, 2021

## KISD to complete Haskett Junior High soon



R. HANS MILLER

A worker assembles lockers at Katy ISD's Haskett Junior High School Campus. The new school is expected to relieve pressure from growing student bodies at Katy and Stockdick junior high schools and will have an estimated first-year enrollment of about 800 students.

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Haskett Junior High is estimated to be completed by June 28, said Katy ISD Associate Project Manager Allan Patrick. The new, roughly \$65.6 million campus, located at 25737 Clay Road, is expected to open for the 2021-22 school year this fall.

"We're going to be pulling (students) from Katy Junior High and Stockdick Junior High and creating the Haskett culture," said Haskett Principal David Paz. "The staff that I've hired are difference makers. They are people that want to do anything and everything for students to be successful."

Paz said he's already hired the assistant principals for the school. According to the campus' website, Lauren Redeker will serve as assistant principal for the sixth-grade class, Stephanie McInturff for seventh grade and Lindsey Stevens for eighth grade. He added that most of the faculty has been hired and he's down to selecting only a few more teachers and staff, which is a process he enjoys.

"I am one of those weirdos that likes to hire," Paz said. "I like hiring good people. I love getting to know good people through the interview process. ... It's just been really, really great just being able to learn and talk to a lot of great educators who want to be a part of Haskett."

Paz said he anticipates an enrollment for the new campus' first year of operation to be about 800 students. Unlike when some other campuses started, Paz said Haskett will start out serving all three grades its inaugural year, which the building has been designed to accommodate.

The three-story section of the building has a floor for each grade, Paz said, with communal learning areas set aside for smaller class assemblies or collaborative instruction.

From an athletics standpoint, the campus has outdoor athletic fields along its western side. On the inside, there are two gymnasiums, a competition gym with bleachers and a second, smaller gym - both located on the western side of the

See HASKETT, page A3

## Fox, Champagne win KISD trustee seats, bonds approved

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Incumbent trustee for Position 7, Dawn Champagne, will retain her seat after defeating challenger Walter Butler. Meanwhile, former Katy ISD Trustee Rebecca Fox will pick the mantle back up after winning the race for the Position 6 seat. All four of the district's bond propositions were passed by voters.



DAWN  
CHAMPAGNE



REBECCA  
FOX

### Trustees selected

"I am so excited," Fox said via social media. "Thank you to all who supported me for Katy ISD Trustee. I am thrilled to be able to serve the community I adore!"

In the Position 6 race, Fox was able to earn the votes of 3,002 KISD voters, while Gesoff followed in second place with 2,754 votes. Bonnie Anderson came in third with 1,598 votes, followed by Garima DasGupta and William X. Branch II with 732 and 80 votes, respectively. Joseph Wojcik who had

informally withdrawn from the race still managed to get 164 votes.

Champagne took in 5,766 votes - about 73% of the total votes - in comparison to Butler's 2,128.

Voting results for all elections are not finalized until canvassed by the election's governing body, in this case, the Katy ISD Board of Trustees.

"Katy ISD trustees are the governing body of the school district and are the main advising group that oversees and shapes policies. Individuals serving as board members are not employees of

See KISD, page A3



R. HANS MILLER

More than three-quarters of the city of Katy's voters cast ballots in favor of the city's Proposition A, a \$1.8 million bond that will allow the city to reimburse itself for repairs to Fire Station 1 on Avenue D.

## Smith, Hicks win Katy City Council seats

### Both city bonds pass

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Gina Hicks has won the race for the Katy City Council Ward B seat against incumbent Jenifer Stockdick with just more than 62% of

the votes in the race. In the Ward A race, Dan Smith has defeated opponent Diane Walker with about 72% of voters marking their ballots in his favor. The city also passed both of its bond propositions which total out to \$6 million.

"For my election and then really the bond elections as

well, I think that the people of the city had their say and said it with a pretty loud voice," Smith said. "So that makes me excited about my campaign that what I had to say resonated with voters and got people excited to turn out and

See ELECTION, page A3

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2 SECTIONS  
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## RISD highlights need for maintenance funding

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Royal ISD's administration hosted the second in a series of meetings with its Community Advisory Committee the evening of Wednesday, April 28. The meeting highlighted the challenges of maintaining the Royal Middle School given the campus' age and growing student body.

"We are embarking on an area that's different than Royal has seen - at least in my experience with Royal, which goes back three and a half decades," Royal ISD Superintendent Rick Kershner said. "But, I didn't always have to look at things like I do now. I looked at things differently as a teacher than I do as an administrator, but there is growth coming, and so we have to decide how we're going to deal with it."

Kershner said subdivisions such as Sunterra at the intersection of Stockdick and Schlipf roads will straddle the border between Royal and Katy ISDs



R. HANS MILLER

RISD Operations Director Derrick Dabney shows where urinals are missing from the walls in the boys' bathroom and Royal Junior High School. Collapsed drainpipes in the walls and under the floor have prevented the installation of new urinals - one of many serious maintenance issues at the half-century-old campus.

with about 7,500 homes being divided between the two districts. Additionally, the Freeman Ranch subdivision will be adding up to 1,000 homes. Both of those subdivisions are expected to bring a rapid influx of students to the district, he said.

RISD's financial advisor, Lucas

Janda, said the growth those subdivisions pose don't just pose challenges, they also provide opportunities. Development in the district increases property values and adds more households that pay taxes, he said. With that, repayment of any debts that come about as a result of capital

improvements that are funded through bonds are spread out among more taxpayers, reducing the overall burden on individual households and helping the district keep the overall debt tax rate low.

The district has already been able to lower its overall tax rate due to new state laws and increases in both property values and tax base, RISD Business Manager Gladys Hein said in an interview with the Katy Times last fall. The 2019 tax rate was \$1.427167 per \$100 valuation which went down by about ten cents to \$1.321817 per \$100 in property value for the 2020 tax year. That rate includes maintenance, operations and debt service, with the debt service accounting for \$0.3588 per \$100 valuation.

District administration expressed concern that the current condition of campuses within the

See MAINTENANCE, page A6

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COURTESY DEB WITT

Katy area teen Matthew Witt, 16, has been missing since April 30. His family is seeking the public's assistance in locating him. Security camera footage (right photo) shows Matthew leaving his home the day he disappeared and the clothing he was wearing at the time.

## Katy family seeks help in locating missing teenager

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Local teenager Matthew Witt, 16, has gone missing according to his grandmother, Deb Witt. Matthew was last seen at his home in Katy on Patriot Park Lane on April 30, wearing a black jacket with blue sleeves and jeans.

The family has filed a missing persons report with the Harris County

Sheriff's Office and anyone with information regarding Matthew's whereabouts is asked to contact Officer H. Foamcom at 713-221-6000.

Matthew is 6-foot tall with a slender build and blond hair.

Teens facing life challenges may contact the Texas Youth Hotline at 1-800-989-6884 for 24-hour assistance.

## TALK DERBY TO ME



SUSAN ROVEGNO

Christ Clinic held its First Annual Talk Derby to Me event on Saturday at Anthony's Market Grill located at 9108 FM 1489 in Simonton. The clinic is a local nonprofit ministry that provides health care and health-related services to those who are uninsured or underinsured for little cost. The clinic is completely funded through donations and through special events such as this Kentucky Derby-themed garden party which reflects traditions associated with the iconic horse race such as large hats for women, bold patterns, pastels and seersucker suits. This year's event raised about \$85,000 for Christ Clinic. The 2021 Kentucky Derby was won by Medina Spirit, a 3-year-old American Thoroughbred.



ANNA MARIE MOZISEK

## Tompkins senior receives scholarship

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Anna Marie Mozisek of Katy was selected to receive the 2021 All American Scholar Award sponsored by Catholic Life Insurance. Each year, Catholic Life awards 35 scholarships worth \$1,000 each to graduating high school seniors who have not only demonstrated outstanding leadership skills and academic achievements but have also gone above and beyond in their civic duties and made a difference in their communities.

Mozisek attends Obra D. Tompkins High School and plans to attend Texas A&M University in the fall. She is the daughter of Brian Mozisek and Erin Mozisek. She submitted an impressive resume of extracurricular activities that include Girl Scouts, American Legion Junior Member, piano, swim team, soccer referee, folk dance, Innovation Club, Visual Art Scholastic Event, Moran Ecotones, and Ranger Science. Mozisek has volunteered with the Houston Museum of Natural Science, Grace Presbyterian Church, St. John Vianney Catholic Church, Girl Scouts, and Cub Scouts Pinewood Derby.

## Two HCSO deputies fired for misconduct

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

The Harris County Sheriff's Office has announced via a press release the terminations of deputies Eric D. Sanchez and Bert Dillow for misconduct after investigations into videos that appeared to show both former officers violating department policies.

"Evidence in these cases is being shared with the Harris County District Attorney's Office to determine whether criminal charges are appropriate," the press release stated.

Sanchez had been with the department since August of 2016 and was placed on administrative duty after an investigation into a video posted to social media was released Feb. 22 of this year. The

video appears to show Sanchez violating policies related to personal conduct, performance of duties, use and discharge of firearms, use of body-worn cameras, traffic enforcement and the issuance of traffic citations during an interaction with a motorist.

The social media video that ultimately led to Sanchez losing his job shows Sanchez with his firearm drawn threatening to kill a motorist who is apologizing and appears to be cooperating with Sanchez.

Dillow was terminated April 28 after an investigation into a use-of-force incident involving a juvenile male made its way onto social media. The investigation began March 29 and Dillow was placed on administrative duty Apr. 1 until his Apr.

28 termination. The HCSO Administrative Discipline Committee reviewed the investigation's findings and determined policies regarding prohibited conduct, the use of de-escalation techniques, use of force and reporting procedures were violated by Dillow.

In the video that led to his firing, Dillow is shown walking up to a young man refueling an ATV at a gas station, asking to see the young man's ID, then moving to handcuff the minor. When the man steps away to turn around, Dillow begins swearing at him and threatening to beat him.

"Both deputies have the right to appeal their terminations in accordance with Sheriff's Civil Service procedures," the press release said.

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

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Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

**CLUES ACROSS**

- Engine additive
- A hearty laugh
- Restrain
- Dried coconut kernels
- Nefarious
- Elderly
- Central part of a church building
- Throw into confusion
- Intestinal
- Qualities of being religious
- Live up to a standard
- Seize
- Go quickly
- Automated teller machine
- Bowling necessity
- One point east of due south
- Japanese honorific
- A way to induce sleep
- Makes cash register rolls
- A city in S Louisiana
- Make more cheerful
- Manicurist
- Consents
- Network of nerves
- Mocking smile
- It covers the body
- Partner to pans
- Perform in a play

**CLUES DOWN**

- Beautiful
- Polynesian island country
- Shrub of the olive family
- Self-governing Netherlands territory
- Shared one's view
- Tailless amphibians
- Charge passengers must pay
- Sound sheep make
- Known for sure
- Filled with unexpressed anger
- Student (abbr.)
- Criticize
- Gathering place
- Informal alliances
- One's mother (British)
- Landholder
- Peter's last name
- Parties
- Title of respect
- Red wine
- Pearl Jam's debut (abbr.)
- Shaft horsepower
- Frosts
- Cry of joy
- Induces vomiting
- Mother or father
- Dal \_\_: Musical navigation marker
- Door fastener part

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

## ELECTIONS

from page A1

vote and make a selection.”  
In the city’s unofficial election results, Smith received 446 votes to Walker’s 172 for Ward A. Hicks pulled in 476 votes to Stockdick’s 291 out of 767 votes for Ward B.

“The results were not what I had hoped for, but I respect the wishes of the voters of Katy, and it was an honor to serve a city I dearly love. I hope only the best for Mrs. Hicks and Mr. Smith. I know that it has been an honor for me, and I hope they have the same experience,” Stockdick said via Facebook.

Walker echoed Stockdick’s sentiments and said she will work to continue to serve the Katy community in other ways.

“Thank you to everyone that supported me, voted, worked the polls and talked to their neighbors and friends,” Hicks said in an online statement.

Only 1,390 of the city’s 13,442 registered voters cast ballots in the city’s elections, or slightly more than 10 % of the city’s electorate.

Both of the city’s bond propositions were passed by the city’s voters.

Proposition A, a \$1.8 million bond, will be used to reimburse the city for repairs to Fire Station 1 at 1417 Ave. D in downtown Katy. About 71% of



**GINA HICKS**



**DAN SMITH**

voters favored Proposition A. The structure has a long history of mold contamination and roofing issues that the city is in the process of repairing. Additionally, Proposition A will provide the city with a means of building a training tower for the Katy Fire Department and an expansion to the city’s fleet maintenance facility. Improvements to Katy Police Department facilities may also be funded through Proposition A.

“We believe that now we’ve finally gotten enough engineers involved and enough contractors that have experience in these types of (repair issues) that

we will not have any further problems with it when they finish,” Katy Mayor Bill Hastings told the Katy Times during an interview in March of this year.

The \$600,000 repair project is being completed by The Gordian Group for the initial round of repairs which began Jan. 12, according to city staff. The first phase of the repair is expected to be completed the last week in May.

Proposition B, a \$4.2 million bond, will allow the city to plan, design and construct a parks administration building, upgrade parks throughout the city, develop trails and paths that could improve walkability citywide, and supplement construction of all of those projects that are not included in the parks administration facility, according to City Planner Anas Garfaoui.

Slightly more than 66% of the city’s voters cast ballots in favor of Proposition B.

All of the 38 updates and changes to the Katy City Charter which were on the ballot also passed. Details regarding those changes can be found on the city’s elections page (<https://bit.ly/3ujRYF2>), but generally, the changes eliminate outdated verbiage or align the charter’s wording with that found in state law.



R. HANS MILLER

One of the unique features of Haskett Junior High is the solar array on its eastern side that is expected to provide about 50% of the school’s electrical needs.

## HASKETT

from page A1

building along with the band hall and other elective areas.

The main entrance to the building will be situated left of the learning tower and will lead into an open-concept library and study area with a small stage. In the learning tower to the west of the main entrance, a large stairwell with a learning stairway – a roomy stairway with seating options – is available as one of the communal work areas. Science labs are available on each floor and computer labs to integrate technology into learning are plentiful in both classrooms and separate technology labs in the school.

Patrick said security improvements had also been worked into the school similar to more recently built KISD junior highs such as Adams Junior High School.

Some minor adjustments have been made to the school such as changing where the elevator doors open, said Greg Prince with PBK Architects, the design firm behind the school’s layout. By switching the elevators to face the southern side of campus rather than the western side, the learning tower can be separated from the rest of the school with a security gate, he said.

Perhaps the most unique feature of the new campus is a large solar array on the campus’ eastern side which Prince said will produce about 50% of the electricity consumed by the school. LED lighting will

also add to the building’s energy efficiency and protect campus assets from freezing weather that hit the area in February. Ideally, the solar array will also be a learning tool, he added.

“We’d love to really showcase it and maybe put some interactive things inside the school so the students can see how much power it is producing,” Prince said.

Paz said the school’s namesakes, Cindy and Bill Haskett, have been involved as much as possible in planning the school’s opening, providing input where they can, and he intends to carry on the tradition KISD has of allowing school namesakes to be involved in campus life. The Hasketts have a pet Husky, he said, which was serendipitous because the mascot committee chose

the Husky as Haskett’s banner animal.

“Our school colors are going to be an indigo blue and gray,” Paz said.

School colors and mascots aside, Paz said he is simply excited to get things going at the new campus with faculty he feels will improve students’ lives.

“That’s one of the intriguing parts of being the principal of Haskett is being able to handpick these difference makers for our school, and I really feel I’ve done that and (students are) just going to be so excited to be able to work with just phenomenal teachers,” Paz said.

For more photos of the progress on Haskett Junior High School, visit our website at [www.KatyTimes.com](http://www.KatyTimes.com).



Katy ISD’s administration expressed gratitude to district voters for the approval of four bond propositions. Among them, Proposition A will provide a funding opportunity to the district that will allow older campuses to be improved. Winborn Elementary, which is about 40 years old, has become cramped and needs a new layout to relieve problem areas such as this collaboration room where teachers make lesson plans.

## KISD

from page A1

Katy ISD, yet they dedicate countless hours to lead an A+ school district,” a statement from the district read.

### Bonds passed

Katy ISD voters also approved all four of the district’s bond propositions which the KISD Board of Trustees approved for placement on the May 1 ballot during a special meeting held Feb. 8. Trustees put forth the \$676.2 million bond package at the recommendation of its 110-person Community Bond Advisory Committee.

“Now, the reason that the bond committee is even considering or has considered bringing forth a bond package is because of the growth of our community, and what fuels that growth is the excellence and the tradition of our school district,” said KISD Chief Communications Officer Andrea Grooms during that meeting.

Proposition A provides \$591,368,568 in funding for new schools, renovations of older campuses, safety and security upgrades and building component replacements. District representatives have said new schools are necessary to accommodate growth in the district, especially in the northwestern quadrant of KISD. Renovations at older campuses such as Winborn Elementary are also seen as important because the campuses don’t work well to facilitate modern teaching practices and have become cramped as the district has grown over the years.

Nearly 72% of the 8,559

**“With the passage of the four 2021 bond propositions, the district and campuses are well-positioned to continue effectively managing our region’s fast growth, updating safety measures and providing building and technology improvements across more than 88 campuses and facilities.”**

— KISD SUPERINTENDENT KEN GREGORSKI

votes cast in the election were in favor of Proposition A. The district reports more than 210,000 district residents are registered voters. Only slightly more than 4% of the district’s electorate voted.

Proposition B is set to help district staff update classroom and campus technology by providing nearly \$60 million in funding. This includes replacing outdated devices and setting up classrooms for digital learning.

About 73% of district voters favored Proposition B.

Proposition C provides about \$14 million for a natatorium for the district’s upcoming tenth high school, while Proposition D will provide about \$11.3 million for repairs and component replacements for the district’s athletic facilities. To read

more about Propositions C and D, see page B1 in our sports section.

KISD CFO Chris Smith has repeatedly said that he does not expect the passage of the bonds to increase the district’s debt service tax rate of \$0.39000 per \$100 valuation.

“Thank you to our parents, staff and community for your long-standing support of Katy ISD students and families,” said KISD Superintendent Ken Gregorski. “With the passage of the four 2021 bond propositions, the district and campuses are well-positioned to continue effectively managing our region’s fast growth, updating safety measures and providing building and technology improvements across more than 88 campuses and facilities.”

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# Texas' public servants need a healthy retirement system

BY QUINT BALKCOM AND RICHARD JANKOVSKY  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

People from every community in the state come to work for the great State of Texas.

They spend decades maintaining and patrolling Texas' roadways and waterways, preserving the peace, overseeing natural areas and resources, and serving the disadvantaged.

Public health workers who worked long shifts in response to COVID-19 are state employees. So are the park employees who maintain natural spaces for Texans.

And so are our fellow game wardens and Department of Public Safety troopers.

These are some of Texas' most essential workers. They played a vital role helping the state weather the pandemic. Many have traded higher private-sector salaries for careers in public service. The state's promise of meaningful retirement benefits encourages and rewards this commitment.

Now, shaky finances have put this promise in jeopardy. For decades, the state has failed to adequately fund its Employees Retirement System - also known as ERS. The pension fund's uncertain future now represents a looming crisis for taxpayers and employees.

Unless something changes, the fund could be completely depleted in 40 years, and it will only get more expensive to prevent this catastrophe. Already, it has been 20 years since state retirees had a cost-of-living annuity adjustment.

It took years to create this problem, and it will take years to solve it. The Texas Legislature can and should take action this year by making a requested investment of roughly \$950 million into the fund and committing to a long-term path that will bring ERS into balance in a way that meets retirees' needs. That includes remaining faithful to the system's traditional and historic structure, which safeguards the interests of young employees even as it protects the livelihoods of retired ones.

The fund's unsoundness is not just a problem for state employees and legislative budget-writers. It endangers things Texans love and need, from beloved state parks to protection by DPS troopers

and Texas game wardens, when the state fails to adequately fund ERS. It's harder to recruit good employees - and harder to keep them - when people cannot be sure of the state's commitment to its pension system. And that undermines the value and effectiveness of essential state services.

Texas taxpayers will ultimately have to cover the fund's liability. The failure to address this problem today means it will be even more expensive for taxpayers to fix in future years. Plus, unfunded pension funds can wreak havoc on the state's bond rating, which increases the cost of borrowing and makes it more expensive simply to operate state government every day.

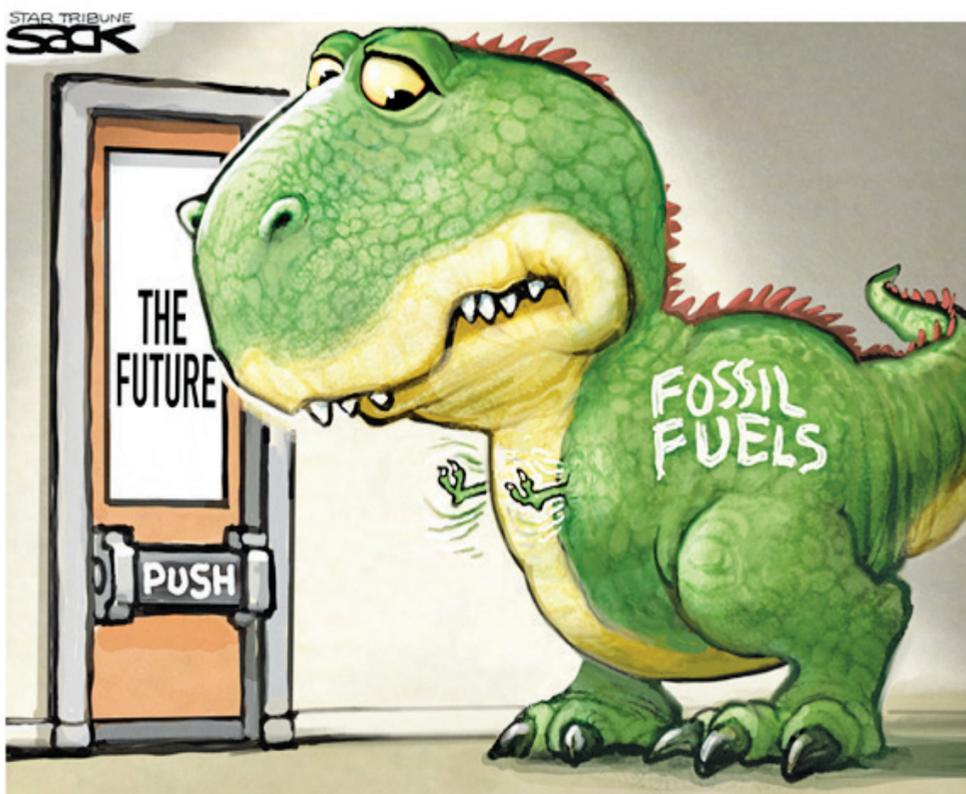
State employees are doing more than their part. Newly hired employees contribute more and more of their paychecks each year to the retirement system. In 2014, the rate went from 6.5 to 6.6 percent; in 2015, to 6.9 percent; and in 2016, to 9.5 percent - 10 percent for law enforcement officers.

Meanwhile, the state has not kept up even with its national peers. In comparable retirement plans in other states, the average state contribution is 14.7 percent; with Texas, it's just 10 percent. The average employee contribution in other states is 6.25 percent; Texas state employees pay nearly four percentage points more.

Most state employees will tell you their work has meaning for them. They know their pay is less than comparable workers in the private sector. They accept reduced take-home pay today, in part, to finance their membership in a stable retirement pension plan. Undermining that plan weakens one of the state's best tools for attracting and keeping good people.

When the state's promise to its workers is in jeopardy, it's a big problem - not just for state employees, but for all Texans. Texas should address it by putting ERS on a path toward long-term health and stability.

**Lieutenant Richard Jankovsky is president of the Department of Public Safety Officers Association. Major Quint Balkcom is president of the Texas Game Warden Peace Officers Association.**



# Planned resilience will help Texas prep for unlikely events

BY TOM LUCE  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

From the coronavirus pandemic to the winter storm that knocked out essential infrastructure across the state, the past year has been marked by several "unprecedented" events. And for each of them, we have been caught unprepared.

There is an important lesson here - many of the events we consider unlikely are still very possible. They're known in the business world as "grey swan" events. They may not happen often or even soon. But probability says they will happen at some point, and the resulting impacts will be significant enough that we have to be ready for them.

Governor Abbott has declared reviewing the state energy grid and expanding broadband as emergency items this session. These are critical infrastructure needs in which Texas can take lessons learned from the past year's events to equip our state better for the future. We should apply the same perspective to all policy areas - including education, workforce development, health, and natural resource management - by anticipating future events and viewing issues through the combined lens of recovery and resilience.

But first, we have to start with data. While the implications of this storm are still unfolding, too many have jumped at the opportunity to frame the

narrative and advance a political agenda. The only agenda we should be advancing is that of providing safe, secure, and reliable services to all Texans.

The 24-hour news cycle may demand hot takes and sound bites, but as this year's Texas Voter Poll found, what voters demand from our officials are solutions. That means taking the time to listen to and work with experts to make sure that we understand exactly what happened - including what worked, and what didn't - so that we can build in the resiliency that will allow us to reduce damage and quickly recover from future disasters.

Ten years ago, Texans suffered through a winter storm that knocked out power for millions of people. Twenty-two years before that, another extreme winter storm brought Texas' electric grid to its knees. I don't mention these historic events to point fingers, but to demonstrate two important issues: first, we have to anticipate facing similar threats in the future; and second, we have Texas data to help craft policies that will mitigate the harm of the next storm.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, the Zurich Insurance Group and the American Red Cross made specific recommendations for Houston to build the resilience necessary to avoid future floods and hurricane disasters.

We can't prevent every catastrophe. And we can't build a system with 100 percent resiliency. But we can't ignore

reality, either. Research shows that Texas is going to face more extreme weather events by 2036. By skimping on new infrastructure or deferring maintenance, we are merely putting off the inevitable - and raising the price tag, both in terms of economic and human costs.

As the old saying goes, "pay now, or pay later." By assessing our systems and infrastructure, we can identify weak points that must be strengthened and ensure that critical systems have built-in redundancies that will pick up the slack when a failure occurs along the line. By making those assessments and investments ahead of time, we can keep costs down. In other words, pay a little now and save a lot later.

This year's winter storm affected every county in the state and could end up costing Texans tens of billions of dollars, making it the most expensive weather event in Texas history. We can help insure against future losses by building and maintaining a resilient, reliable, and cost-competitive energy infrastructure.

But whether it's water, electricity, broadband, education, health, or government performance, Texas has an opportunity to apply the same goals of planned resilience broadly across state policy so that, when the next disaster strikes, we'll be ready.

**Tom Luce, a longtime Texas civic leader, is founder and chairman of Texas 2036.**

## Katy Times

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OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday  
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BILLING:  
Address billing inquiries to: Debbie Prejean, Bookkeeper bookkeeping@katytimes.com

PRESS RELEASES:  
Press releases are accepted but are not guaranteed for publication. Press releases should be e-mailed only to news@katytimes.com.

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES:  
The Katy Times (ISSN 067-180) is published on Thursday for \$35 per year in Harris, Waller and Fort Bend Counties and \$45 elsewhere by The Katy Times, P.O. Box 678, Katy, Texas, 77492-0678. Periodical-rate postage paid at Katy, Texas 77494.

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CIRCULATION:  
Address billing inquiries at 281-391-3141.

POSTMASTER:  
Send address changes to The Katy Times, P.O. Box 678, Katy, Texas, 77492-0678.

ABOUT OUR NEWSPAPER:  
The Katy Times is a member of the Texas Press Association. The weekly newspaper is published every Thursday. Visit our Web site 24 hours a day, seven days a week at www.katytimes.com for more news and information.



## U.S. Constitution

### Article IV: Sec. 3.

**New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the Jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the Junction of two or more States, or Parts of States, without the Consent of the Legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.**

**The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.**

## TRIBUTES

Bill Hartman, 79, died Monday at a Sugar Land hospital, according to a report from the Fort Bend Herald, which he owned.

A longtime newspaperman, Hartman operated Hartman Newspapers, Inc., which has operated newspapers in communities in Oklahoma and Texas, including the Katy Times from 1973-2019.

Hartman was a 1959 graduate of Robert E. Lee High School in Baytown and later graduated from Baylor University in 1962. He later returned to Baytown as general manager of the Baytown Sun under his father. From 1971-1974 he was editor and publisher of the Beaumont Enterprise & Journal.



**BILL HARTMAN**  
1942-2021

In 1974, he founded Hartman Newspapers.

Hartman was active in the Fort Bend County communi-

ty, having served as president of the Rosenberg-Richmond Area Chamber of Commerce; chairman of the board for the Greater Fort Bend Economic Development Council; director of Polly Ryon Memorial Hospital, former chairman of the Fort Bend County Mobility Task Force; former president of the Rosenberg Rotary Club and past director of the Fort Bend County Fair Association.

Hartman is survived by his three children, Fred Hartman and his wife Laura of Austin; Lee Hartman and his wife Shannon of Sugar Land; and Lizz Sansone and husband Chris Sansone of Sugar Land. He has six grandchildren, Drew and Kate

Hartman of Sugar Land and Julia and Blake Hartman of Austin as well as Alex and Ella Stapleton of Austin. He has one surviving sister, Mary Hartman Brown of Baytown.

Hartman was president of the Texas Daily Newspapers Association in 1977 and earned the Pat Taggart newspaper Leader of the Year award by TDNA in 2004.

The Katy Times expresses our sincere appreciation for Hartman's service to the newspaper industry. We also send our deepest condolences to our colleagues at Hartman Newspapers and those who knew and loved him.

## Taylor wins Brookshire's city council election

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Mayor Darrell Branch and Alderperson for Position 2 Lyndon stamps have retained their seats and will be joined by newly elected Alderperson for Position 1, Monique Taylor according to unofficial final results for the May 1 Brookshire City Council election announced by the Waller County Elections Office.



**MONIQUE TAYLOR**

"What God has for me, it is for me; and I thank all of my supporters," Taylor said. "Everybody that supported me, I thank them. Now we need to go to work."

Taylor garnered 288 votes to her opponent, Marilyn Vaughn's 128 of the 416 votes cast in the Position 1 race.

Meanwhile, Branch held onto the Mayoral seat with 265 of the 425 votes cast in the mayoral race. His opponents Lee Nelson Jones and Kim Davis garnered 114 votes and 46 votes, respectively.

"First of all, I want to thank everyone for their support," Branch said. "I also want to say thank you to all of the citizens that came out and voted. I'm looking forward to serving the citizens of Brookshire and moving Brookshire forward. I'd like to remind the citizens of Brookshire that my door is always open."

Stamps held onto the Position 2 seat with 143 of the 418 votes cast in the race. Gary Cruseturner was able to pull in 106 of the remaining votes while Susette Inez Baines came in second with 143 votes.

"I congratulate (Stamps)," Cruseturner said. "I'm certainly not happy with the vote, but I think (Baines) and I - kind of newcomers to the scene - we probably helped split the vote so maybe one of us could have won if the other hadn't have been in the race, so I congratulate both (Stamps and Baines) because we all three ran a pretty good race."

John R. Riley (Jack) of Katy, Texas, was born in 1933, at home, on a farm in Kahoka, Missouri to Dorothea and Ralph Riley. He passed away at his daughter's house in Ouray, Colorado at 87 years young. He was married to Madonna Callahan Riley (Donna) for 62 years who preceded him in death. Jack and his family were residents of Katy, Texas since 1968.

Jack was a Renaissance man with many interests and skills.

Jack was the youngest pilot in the state of Missouri at age 14. He graduated from Wentworth Military Academy in Lexington, Mo. He built his own airplane at age 18. He then went on to get his commercial pilot's license and flew his plane from Woods Rice Farm until he was in his 80's.

He liked to say, "There are old pilots, and there are bold pilots, there are no old, bold pilots!"

He worked as a roughneck in the oil patches in New Mexico and Texas. He and his wife Donna were smoke spotters at Lookout Mountain in Wyoming when they were first married.

He served his country in the U.S. Army during the Korean War and was stationed at Sandia



**JOHN R. RILEY**  
1933-2021

Base, New Mexico as a corporal and military policeman. He was head of security for the Los Alamos Laboratory which had 1000 employees under J. Robert Oppenheimer, the physicist during the Manhattan Project.

Jack was the youngest zone manager for International Harvester, Inc. in Chicago, Illinois, St. Louis, Missouri, and Zurich, Switzerland. He then took a risk and joined his dad in Katy, Texas in 1968, manufacturing truck-mount and pull-type fertilizer spreaders that Jack

designed. Their company, on Highway Blvd. in Katy, Texas, which was originally called Riley Manufacturing Co., is now Texas High Roller Inc., in Bryan, Texas. It manufactures spreader beds on truck-mount and pull-type spreaders on high flotation tires for road repair and agricultural use.

He supplied and sourced medical imaging equipment with his daughter Betsy in the UK, Czech Republic, Eire, Ireland, India and Iran in the 1990s and 2000s bringing lower-cost medical imaging to cash-strapped hospitals and the National Health Service, UK., thus saving many lives.

He was on the board of directors of Woods Rice Farms, as the farmer within him never left despite his worldwide travels. He was an Honorary Member of the Texas Rangers Association and a lifelong member of the AOPA (Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association).

He read a book every day of his life. He was an author and wrote engineering papers and fictional novels. He was a keen historian.

He was also an inventor

with many patents to his name like the AuCon, a self-contained automatic hydraulic controller box, for hydraulic installations. He designed and manufactured the hot mix asphalt conveyor belt for road repair applications.

He was a member of the Knights of Columbus and helped build the Knights of Columbus Hall at St Bartholomew's Catholic Church in Katy, Texas, where he and his family were parishioners.

His sharp wit and guidance will be sadly missed by his survivors, daughter Elizabeth (Betsy) Riley-Nicholson, Son-in-law Howard Nicholson, grandson Jack Riley-Carty, sister Darby Ann Hanssen, nephews, Paul, Joel, Seth and niece Sara, plus many close friends including Colonel Leslie H. Weinstein (U.S. Army, retired) and his daughter Eva Jennings, the Walker clan, and English friends, and many friends from all walks of life.

Jack will be buried at Memorial Oaks Cemetery in Houston, Texas at the Riley Family gravesite.

Condolences can be sent to Betsy.elizabeth3@gmail.com.

## The Katy Times

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# How do special districts work?

Q&A with Simon VanDyk of Touchstone District Services

Throughout the Katy area there are more than 80 special purpose districts that provide services to the community such as flood mitigation, water, sewer, emergency medical services and fire protection. In fact, most people with Katy addresses do not receive those services from the City of Katy.

Simon VanDyk, cofounder of Touchstone District Services, agreed to answer questions regarding how these special purpose districts operate and how they impact Katy Times readers.

**Q. What is Touchstone District Services and what does the company do?**

**A.** Touchstone District Services is a professional services provider and consultant to special purpose districts and municipalities throughout the state of Texas. We represent district boards for communications, resident support, community outreach, and special non-candidate elections such as tax or bond elections. Many of these districts are run by people who live in their MUD and volunteer their time to ensure their community is run well and accountable for every tax dollar collected as, in the case of resident directors, they pay those same taxes themselves. This is the most grass-roots form of government in Texas, yet most residents are not aware they live in one or more special purpose districts or the positive impact (those districts) have on their communities. Our mission is to help these district tell their stories and engage their communities in a positive way.

**Q. Much of your work is focused on municipal utility and emergency services districts elections. What are the guidelines for marketing campaigns associated with items such as bond elections?**

**A.** As governmental entities, special purpose districts are held to every rule outlined by the Texas Election Code and the Texas Ethics Commission. Therefore, they must avoid any advocacy, political advertising or leading the vote when they communicate with constituents. Our role is to assist in collecting the facts, present them in an easy-to-digest manner, and disseminate that information via a variety of avenues – digitally, in print, in-person events and virtual presentations. Although a special purpose district cannot advocate for a ballot measure, it is their responsibility to provide voters with all the facts necessary to enable them to be able to make informed decisions when they step into the ballot box.

**Q. Municipal bodies often claim that they are not raising taxes, though the ballot verbiage indicates that taxes may be being increased. Can you explain how those conflicting statements can both be true?**

**A.** Each district has a financial advisor on its team of consultants whose job it is to determine the best way to fund the district's needs with the least impact to residents' tax rates. The financial advisor attempts to coordinate new bonds with the retiring of old debt to fund maintenance and improvements without increasing taxes. These projections are based on estimated future tax revenue, predicted district growth and inflation.

The ballot language "without limit as to rate or amount" is legislatively required on every ballot measure, to protect the purchaser of bonds. Although this allows the district to levy an amount of property tax required to repay the district's debt, municipal bonds are the most regulated funding option available. State regulators oversee every new debt issue to ensure that a board is not placing an undue burden on its residents.

MUDs generally seek authorizations in the tens of millions with the plan to issue bonds in \$1-2 million increments over a period of 20-30 years, as needed, and with the least disruptive impact to tax rates. It is important to note that with MUDs these are authorizations only, and not an immediate bond sale. The district still must submit a bond package with detailed engineering plans to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for both a technical review (and) a feasibility review to confirm the district can support the sale and repayment of the bonds.

**Q. After the winter storm in February, what are your MUD clients doing overall to ensure their hardware and infrastructure are ready if another storm hits the area in the future?**

**A.** This is more of an operations question and differs from district to district. Many are upgrading or installing additional



COURTESY SIMON VANDYK

Touchstone District Services is owned by Simon VanDyk and his wife, Laura VanDyk. They and their twelve staff work with special purpose districts such as municipal utility districts and emergency services districts to communicate with the public.

on-site generators, putting into effect winterization plans and infrastructure insulation, keeping repair parts on-site at water plants, and looking towards near-response technicians to be available during an event.

In addition to these changes, many districts are now looking at digital communications plans to residents. Fortunately, many of our Katy area MUDs were not affected by Uri yet were unaware that their water system was working properly due to the focus the news media placed on the City of Katy's boiler water notice. Residents of the surrounding unincorporated areas mistakenly thought that they were affected by that notice. Moving forward, we believe many districts will start looking into options to not only communicate with their residents when something is wrong but will also consider ways to help them reassure their constituents that everything is up and running as intended.

**Q. Emergency services districts often work to improve their Insurance Services**

**Office – or ISO – rating. Can you explain what this means for residents and how MUDs affect ISO ratings?**

**A.** Emergency services districts provide fire and emergency medical response to communities in unincorporated areas and can receive a score from 1 to 10 (One is superior fire protection). An ESD is given a public protection classification by ISO. Insurance companies then use that classification rating to set their homeowners and commercial insurance rates. In addition to emergency response times, level of training, and fire prevention efforts, the score also considers the locations, maintenance schedule, and emergency flow rates of all fire hydrants owned and maintained by local MUDs in the fire district. When ESDs work closely with their MUDs to ensure their water infrastructure is in good working order and can handle the surge demand that a major fire may cause, the fire district is able to improve its ISO rating and the entire community benefits with potentially lower property insurance costs.



R. HANS MILLER

Throughout Royal ISD, multiple security systems are used that require district staff to have multiple badges and has the district paying to maintain multiple security systems. Other security issues such as insufficient outdoor lighting and outdated building layouts represent risks to students and staff.

## MAINTENANCE

from page A1

district, particularly Royal Middle School, would represent problems as the district grows. Royal Middle School Principal Orlando Vargas applauded the campus' maintenance team but said they could only do so much with a building that is about half a century old.

"You know, we have air conditioning – or HVAC – concerns in this building," Vargas said. "... Sometimes we'll get rain leaks from the roof as well and also from the HVAC lines."

Royal ISD Operations Director Derrick Dabney, who oversees maintenance for all RISD campuses, said the middle school is facing several serious maintenance concerns. Insulation around HVAC cooling lines that usually keep condensation from forming have deteriorated which has led to humidity damage throughout the building, especially with ceiling tiles, flooring directly beneath HVAC units in the gym, the band and choir hall and paneling on doors throughout the campus.

While no pipes burst at the middle school during Winter Storm Uri, Dabney said there are significant plumbing issues with the building. In both the boys' and girls' restrooms the handwashing sink has been repaired with a makeshift fixture that only allows one person to wash up at a time. Additionally, in the boys' restroom, a collapsed drain pipe that would require portions of the wall or floor to be broken through to repair has collapsed, preventing the installation of new urinals in the bathroom.

Electrically, Dabney said the building is out of date. The library's light switches no longer work, forcing the librarians to use three switches in the breaker box to turn the



R. HANS MILLER

The campus library at Royal Junior High no longer has working light switches. Instead, librarians must flip three circuit breakers in this panel in order to turn lights on or off. The library, as well as the rest of the campus, also is lacking in electrical outlets needed in the digital age.

lights on and off. The school, due to its age, is also short on electrical outlets for teaching in the digital age, he said.

From a security standpoint, staff said the district needs to remodel the school's entry to improve safety and install a new secured entry system across all of the district's campuses. Currently, multiple systems are in use which creates extra work and costs more to maintain, they said.

Janda said the district is in a position where it is feasible to propose a bond with little or no tax rate increase. Last year, the district proposed a \$37.3 million bond package – which was rejected by voters – with a tax base of \$1.45 billion in the district. This year, that position has strengthened with a tax base of \$2.1 billion which would support a \$70-90 million bond package without a tax rate increase. He added that the district has been responsible with its bond debt and expects to pay off millions of dollars in bond debt three years early over this coming



R. HANS MILLER

Many of the doors at Royal Junior High have peeling facades and do not have Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant door handles. Staff are replacing items where they can, but the current maintenance and operations budget does not supply enough funding to complete all of the repairs and upgrades needed.

summer.

Kershner said that, before any bond proposals are looked at for November, the committee will continue to meet to determine the needs of the district and ensure that a plan is in place to manage the district's debt and serve the needs of its students.

"We have two main purposes for (the committee) and ultimately it's strategic planning for the district," Kershner said. "But, also we're looking at facilities – looking at capacity – the current capacity of buildings and facilities in the district. We're looking at the growth that's coming in."

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## 2021 NFL DRAFT



PADDY FISHER

## FORMER KATY STAR FISHER SIGNS WITH PANTHERS

BY DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

As a kid growing up in Katy, Paddy Fisher dreamed of having his own NFL trading card. An intimidating, awe-inspiring game-action photo on the front. Measurables and stats on the back.

He dreamed of opening up a pack of cards and seeing his name among the best of the best, a collector's item for all.

Fisher is a step closer to having that fantasy become reality.

The former Katy High star and Northwestern standout middle linebacker signed with the Carolina Panthers on Saturday, May 1, as an undrafted free agent upon the conclusion of the 2021 NFL draft. Carolina's coaching staff got a close look at Fisher when they coached him for a week at the Senior Bowl in January.

Fisher was ranked by The Athletic NFL draft analyst Dane Brugler as the No. 25 linebacker prospect going in the draft and was projected to be a seventh-round pick or priority undrafted free agent. Based on teams he had talked to, Barry Gardner, Fisher's agent, said he thought his client could go anywhere in rounds four through six, but also said he wouldn't be surprised if Fisher went in the seventh round or undrafted due to the happenstance of the draft.

Carolina went 5-11 in 2020 in former Baylor coach Matt Rhule's first season. In the 2021 draft, Carolina prioritized offense. Of the Panthers' 10 picks, only four were defensive players. None were linebackers.

The Panthers run a base 4-3 defense. Northwestern also ran a four-man front defensively. Going into the draft, Carolina's depth chart at middle linebacker was thin, according to NFL scouting service ourlads.com, with only six-year NFL

See FISHER, page B3

**"I'd rather go to a place where I can contribute and play and be welcomed into a culture of football, opposed to being picked by a team who will pay me, but I won't play."**

— PADDY FISHER

## HIGH SCHOOL TRACK &amp; FIELD



COURTESY OF TOMPKINS ATHLETICS

The Tompkins' 4x100 relay team is pictured after placing second at the Region III-6A track and field meet April 24 in Humble with a time of 40.71 to Alief Taylor's 40.70. From left to right is senior Marquis Shoulders, junior Joshua McMillan II, junior Blake Harris and senior Mark Ngei.

## THE FAST AND FIERY

*Tompkins' dynamic 4x100 relay aiming for gold at state*

BY DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

At The Woodlands Dan Green Invite in March, the second meet of the season, Tompkins' boys 4x100 relay team won with a time of 40.98 seconds, then the No. 1 mark in the U.S.

"No. 1 in the nation," said senior Mark Ngei, the second leg of the relay. "We were all shocked."

Not just the athletes. Coaches, too.

"We were like, 'Whoa,'"

coach Walt Yarrow said. "If you can go a sub-41, that's elite. We've had some good 4x1's here, and that was a school record in the second meet of the year. And the way we train, our goal and our expectation is to run our fastest late. Our training is programmed to where it builds up. So, if you run that fast that early, it's a very good thing."

The Falcons unknowingly established an early standard, and they've done nothing but continue to impress since. Tompkins is headed to the UIL

Class 6A state track and field meet this weekend, Saturday, May 8, in Austin as the No. 2 seeded time behind Region III rival Alief Taylor. Tompkins ran a 40.71 at the Region III-6A meet April 24, which ranks fourth nationally, fourth in Texas and is also a school-best time. Alief Taylor's time of 40.70, which was barely enough to elude Tompkins for the Region III title, is the No. 1 seeded time at state and No. 3 nationally.

See FALCONS, page B2

### MORE STATE TRACK & FIELD COVERAGE INSIDE

>> Tompkins freshman Keys a natural, see page B2

>> Sophomore Ogbeide makes history at Jordan, see page B2

>> Katy ISD state track & field qualifiers, see page B2

## HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

## Tigers cap ring season with celebratory ceremony

BY DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

The curtain ceremoniously closed on the 2020 state championship football season for the Katy Tigers on Monday as they celebrated with coaches, teammates, administrators, program personnel, family and supporters at Legacy Stadium to relive the illustrious campaign one final time.

"I'm thankful we had the opportunity to do this," coach Gary Joseph said. "Our kids needed to know how appreciative our staff was and how appreciative the people of Katy were. It's a total effort, from our

cheerleaders to our band to the brigade. We got them state championship medals, too, because they fought through the whole thing with us and they were part of this.

"The look on these kids' faces when they actually got to see their rings ... I'm proud of them and proud for them."

The two-hour ceremony featured two playoff highlight videos, multiple exchanges of gifts between coaches and players, and the acknowledgement of everyone involved, from student trainers to team videographers to the travel scout team.

See TIGERS, page B5



SHEA DONALDSON | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Katy High juniors Bobby Taylor, left, and Malick Sylla show off their 2020 state championship rings after a celebratory ceremony Monday, May 3, at Legacy Stadium.

## 2021 KATY ISD BOND PACKAGE

## Katy ISD voters approve natatorium, facility renovations

BY DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

Katy ISD residents voted heavily in favor of a natatorium for the district's 10th high school and athletic facility renovations as part of the 2021 bond package.

Per unofficial voting results released Saturday, May 1, Proposition C, the \$13.8-million na-



tatorium for high school No. 10 to be located at the intersection of Longenbaugh at Katy Hockley Road, passed with 63.72

percent approval (5,423 votes). Proposition D, which called for repairs for campus and district athletic facilities among other component replacements that will cost \$11.2 million, had 63.81 percent approval (5,433 votes).

A special board meeting will take place to conduct the official canvass of returns. The deadline to canvass final elec-

tion results is May 12.

"I have to thank the bond committee, our community, our administration, our board of trustees, our superintendent," Katy ISD athletic director Debbie Decker said. "It really takes everybody to have successful programs. Their support means so much to our coaches

See KATY ISD, page B6



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HIGH SCHOOL TRACK & FIELD



DENNIS SILVA II

Jordan sophomore Tiyan Ogbeide is the track and field program's first state qualifier. She will compete in the 800-meter run at the Class 5A state meet on Friday, May 7, in Austin.

# Ogbeide helps set standard for Warriors

BY DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

Jordan sophomore Tiyan Ogbeide is seeded seventh out of nine athletes competing in the 800-meter run at the UIL Class 5A track and field meet this Friday, May 7, at Mike A. Myers Stadium at the University of Texas at Austin.

That's OK, Jordan girls track and field coach Kimberlee Trnka said. That's when Ogbeide is at her best.

"She loves to hunt someone and likes being behind and catching up," Trnka said. "It's like a challenge, and she loves challenging herself. She has an awesome (finishing) kick. If she can just stay close, she has a good shot."

Ogbeide is the first track and field state qualifier at Jordan after placing second in the 800 at the Region III-5A meet two weeks ago. Ogbeide, who also competed in the 400-meter dash and 4x400 relay this season, has a seed time of 2:14.72.

"I'm very happy I get this opportunity," Ogbeide said. "Many people have underestimated this school, but I'm happy to get the chance to represent this school. I came from Tompkins, which was a really big school. Then I came here, and there's not nearly as many people, but it allowed me to work closer with everyone. I like being closer with my teammates and being able to work more one-on-one with my coaches."

Trnka wanted to establish a standard of success in the program's inaugural year of competition. Ogbeide, who won the 400-meter dash and 800-meter run at the district and area meets, has helped accomplish that, so much so that Trnka plans to have Ogbeide speak to athletes at Jordan feeder schools Adams and Seven Lakes junior highs to recruit them to the program.

"This is our first year, we want to win, and we want to make a statement," Trnka said. "I think we've done that. Our JV team

finished second overall in district. Varsity finished third overall, with just seven girls competing. In area, we were fourth and qualified to regionals. And it's awesome for the younger kids to see Tiyan and the success she's had."

Ogbeide started running in the seventh grade. People had always complimented on how fast she was. When she got to junior high, her peers started saying the same.

"Many of my friends said I was good at it, and I was like, 'Oh, wow. Maybe I'm good at something!'" Ogbeide said, laughing. "Other sports, I wasn't very good at. But I found something I was good at, and I liked that."

Trnka said she knew right away that Ogbeide was a special talent.

"She had a great leadership ability and the kids immediately looked up to her," Trnka said. "She's just an awesome all-around person who works hard, does what's asked of her and wants to improve all the time."

Ogbeide's time of 2:14.72 in the 800 at the regional meet was a personal record. She went in with the approach to not focus on a particular time or place, but to just fight and run her best.

It worked. "I was really happy to come out with a PR," Ogbeide said. "I'm a little bit less nervous going into state knowing I did well at a meet like regionals."

Relaxed, confident and having fun have become Ogbeide's ingredients to success. Trnka and Ogbeide are aiming for a sub-2:10 mark at state. They feel it can be done if she can get off to a faster, stronger start, which they have been working tirelessly on during practices leading up to state.

"She's really starting to believe in herself and her abilities," Trnka said. "Even though she's just a sophomore, she knows she can compete with those juniors and seniors and beat them. She's proved that this year."

## KATY ISD TRACK & FIELD STATE QUALIFIERS

The following are local athletes competing at the UIL state track and field Class 5A meet on May 7 and Class 6A meet on May 8. Listed are the events and the athletes who qualified, with their seed placement and time. Athletes or relays seeded first, second or third are in bold type.

### CLASS 5A

**GIRLS 800M RUN:** 7. TIYAN OGBEIDE, JORDAN SO., 2:14.72.

**GIRLS 300M HURDLES:** 7. TUMI ONALEYE, PAETOW SR., 45.17.

**BOYS DISCUS:** 2. CHARLES CHUKWU, PAETOW JR., 165-04.

**BOYS SHOT PUT:** 5. SULTAN BAKARE, PAETOW JR., 55-05.00.

**GIRLS TRIPLE JUMP:** 2. TUMI ONALEYE, PAETOW SR., 39-08.25.

### CLASS 6A

**GIRLS 3200M RUN:** 4. SOPHIE ATKINSON, CINCO RANCH SR., 10:50.22; 5. HEIDI NIELSON, CINCO RANCH SR., 10:51.50.

**BOYS 3200M RUN:** 7. RUBEN ROJAS BETANZOS, SEVEN LAKES JR., 9:15.30.

**GIRLS 4X100 RELAY:** 3. SEVEN LAKES,

45.81 (IBISO DAVID-WEST, SR.; ALYSSA TATE, SO.; SYDNEY KIM, SR.; HALEY TATE, JR.).

**BOYS 4X100 RELAY:** 2. TOMPKINS, 40.71 (BLAKE HARRIS, JR.; MARK NGEI, SR.; MARQUIS SHOULDERS, SR.; JOSHUA MCMILLAN II, JR.).

**GIRLS 800M RUN:** 6. SOPHIE ATKINSON, CINCO RANCH, SR., 2:10.92.

**BOYS 800M RUN:** 9. RUBEN ROJAS-BETANZOS, SEVEN LAKES JR., 1:56.76.

**GIRLS 100M DASH:** 5. JADA CAMPOS, KATY JR., 11.52.

**GIRLS 400M DASH:** 2. HALEY TATE, SEVEN LAKES JR., 53.82.

**GIRLS 200M DASH:** 7. JADA CAMPOS, KATY JR., 23.99.

**GIRLS 1600M RUN:** 1. SOPHIE ATKINSON, CINCO RANCH SR., 4:46.43; 3. HEIDI NIELSON, CINCO RANCH SR., 4:47.07.

**GIRLS 4X400M RELAY:** 1. SEVEN LAKES, 3:44.43 (AVARY CATCHINGS, JR.; ALYSSA TATE, SO.; IBISO DAVID-WEST, SR.; HALEY TATE, JR.).

**GIRLS DISCUS:** 3. AMELIA FLYNT, CINCO RANCH SR., 161-10.

**BOYS DISCUS:** 2. BRYCE FOSTER, TAYLOR SR., 197-09.

**GIRLS LONG JUMP:** 7. PAIGE BOUCHER, SEVEN LAKES SR., 18-09.00.

**BOYS LONG JUMP:** 3. JAYDEN KEYS, TOMPKINS FR., 24-01.50.

**BOYS POLE VAULT:** 7. WILLIAM SAXMAN, CINCO RANCH SR., 15-00.00.

**GIRLS SHOT PUT:** 1. AMELIA FLYNT, CINCO RANCH SR., 49-02.00.

**BOYS SHOT PUT:** 1. BRYCE FOSTER, TAYLOR SR., 66-10.50; 4. MATTHEW RUEFF, SEVEN LAKES JR., 59-03.50.

HIGH SCHOOL TRACK & FIELD

# Tompkins' Keys continuing family legacy

BY DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

Tompkins freshman jumper/hurdler Jayden Keys grew up in a family of track and field athletes.

Keys' dad, Sean, and uncle, Scott, both competed in the sport. His older brother Clayton, a former Falcon standout and now a freshman hurdler at Nebraska, placed third at state in the 300-meter hurdles in 2019 and owns the school record in the long jump at 24-feet, 9-inches. Keys' older sister, Lanaye, was a district champion in the long jump and a regional qualifier in the 100-meter hurdles this season and will compete in track and field at Houston Baptist University next fall.

"I was born into it," Keys said. "It's a mix of pressure and excitement and anxiety. Growing up with it, I'm comfortable with track and field. I've always loved running, and in the long jump, you get to fly."

Keys qualified to the UIL Class 6A state track and field meet this weekend, Saturday, May 8, in Austin after finishing second at the Region III-6A meet two weeks ago in the long jump with a mark of 24-feet, 01.50-inches. His mark is seeded third of the nine jumpers set to compete at Mike A. Myers Stadium at the University of Texas.

Keys actually eclipsed the 25-foot mark on his final try at regional, but it was a scratch because of a minor foul.

"His odds at state are really good," Tompkins jumps coach Tonya McKelvey-White said. "I want him to just go out there and do what he's been working on and do what he's passionate about and what he's trained for. Go get it."

Tompkins boys track and field coach Walt Yarrow remembers when he first saw Keys as a Tays Junior High athlete.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF TOMPKINS ATHLETICS

Tompkins freshman jumper/hurdler Jayden Keys is following in a long line of family track and field stars, though he is doing a fine job carving his own legacy as he ranks fourth in Texas and eighth in the nation in the long jump heading into the Class 6A state track and field meet Saturday, May 8, in Austin.

Middle school meets are often held at Tompkins, so Yarrow had a first-row seat. Yarrow also remembers watching Clayton and Lanaye practice, and Keys working on jumps on his own.

"He's got that positive edge that serves him well," Yarrow said. "He's not intimidated. Super competitive, super focused. He's very coachable and does it right."

Keys opened a lot of eyes at the District 19-6A meet in early April, when he was responsible for 30

of the district champion Falcons' 194 points. Keys won the 110-meter hurdles, 300-meter hurdles and the long jump.

It was at that district meet that Keys set his personal record in the long jump at 24-feet, 4-inches. It's a mark that ranks fourth in Texas and eighth nationally.

"It's not common for a freshman in track to be on varsity," Yarrow said. "Developmentally, it's not very common. But he is very efficient as a hurdler and we had a spot, so we

put him there. We knew he could long jump, but early on it was just hurdles for him the first week or two. Then we got him in long jump, he jumped 24 feet, and he's been off to the races ever since."

Keys is an impressive young man. He recently turned 15 years old, but he has a maturity and competitive nature well beyond his years. He makes eye contact and is well-spoken when talking to others. McKelvey-White teaches ninth grade English, and Keys will often chat her up between classes about what she has her students working on.

He is a natural with his repertoire, personality and demeanor. On the track, he is just as unique.

"Jayden is really gifted at understanding his body awareness, like where he's at on the board, where he's at on the runway, and he understands how to control his speed," said McKelvey-White, who has coached collegiate and high school jumpers since 1994. "That's what sets him apart from a lot of other jumpers, even older jumpers."

Keys said he will often compare his marks to Clayton's. He desperately wants his older brother's school record in the long jump. He has taken hurdling and jumping techniques from Clayton and Lanaye and applied it to his own skillset. Keys has a blend of Clayton's athletic ability and Lanaye's speed, but with height and length as well.

He admits that competing against Clayton and Lanaye has been hard. They are NCAA Division I athletes for a reason. But it's also honed his own competitiveness to where he is fearless on any stage.

"I'm trying to win and be the best all the time," Keys said. "I don't really like losing, so I work my butt off to get up to the top."

## FALCONS

from page B1

"We all know we have a job to do," Ngei said. "All the national marks and state marks don't faze us anymore."

The Falcons are convinced if a brush on the third leg of the relay hadn't occurred during the regional meet two weeks ago, they would be regional champion and awarded the choice of choosing what lane they want to run at state.

"I was running my third leg, and as the other guy on the inside lane took off, he hit me," senior Marquis Shoulders said. "I feel that slowed us down. If that doesn't happen, I think we win the race. So, we're feeling pretty good. We know we can beat them, and we know we've got the speed."

The Falcons are an eclectic

mix of talent and versatility. They include a high jumper in junior Blake Harris, who runs the first leg. Then there's Ngei, a district champion in the 400-meter dash. Shoulders and junior anchor Joshua McMillan II were big-time playmakers on the district champion Falcons football team as a running back and receiver, respectively. Shoulders also runs the 100-meter dash and McMillan the 200-meter dash.

"We all bring something to the table," Ngei said. "We all have strengths from different events that we work in as a team."

McMillan has been an unsung hero stepping in for senior David Foster, a University of California signee who is a star in the 100-meter dash. Foster has had an inju-

ry-plagued season since he was hurt in the first meet, then briefly returned before suffering another injury at the area meet April 16. McMillan has run in his stead and the relay has not skipped a beat.

It was McMillan who was the anchor at The Woodlands meet and the regional meet.

"Josh has been the ultimate team guy," Yarrow said. "He's a competitor. He's not intimidated. He steps up in the big moment and takes care of business, similar to what he probably does on the football field. He's just a clutch kid."

For the soft-spoken yet confident McMillan, he is simply doing his part.

"My job, I thought, was just to sustain things until (David) came back," McMillan said. "But he was

taken off for the area meet and put me on, and I've stayed with it since. I've done the 4x1 since middle school and always been anchor. There's some pressure, but no nerves."

Harris has been another revelation. He did not run in the abbreviated 2020 season, but Yarrow put him in the relay after strong showings in the fall.

Though it's uncommon for high jumpers to place on a relay, Harris showed promise in offseason workouts and was "incredible" at a practice meet. He excelled in max velocity and short sprint workouts, which Yarrow tests all athletes in, no matter what event they compete in.

"We saw he was competing with some of the top guys naturally,"

Yarrow said.

Harris said growing with the team has been "awesome."

"Running our hearts out, just trying to win everything we can to lower that time," he said. "I ran my freshman year and in junior high, but never on this level. It's really fun. It's a lot of trust and connection. They rely on me to have a good start, a good leg, and I rely on them for a strong finish."

Mix all of those aspects together, and you get a special 4x100 relay team that has a pretty good chance at walking away with gold at Mike A. Myers Stadium on the University of Texas campus.

"It's exciting, a little anxious," Shoulders said. "But we're ready. Ready to win state."

## KATY ISD SOFTBALL BI-DISTRICT PLAYOFF RESULTS

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28**

**GAME 1:** TOMPKINS 15, RIDGE POINT 5

**THURSDAY, APRIL 29**

**GAME 1:** KATY 6, FORT BEND AUSTIN 0

**GAME 1:** CINCO RANCH 15, GEORGE RANCH 3 (5 INNINGS)

**GAME 1:** SEVEN LAKES 3, FORT BEND TRAVIS 0

**FRIDAY, APRIL 30**

**GAME 2:** KATY 11, FORT BEND AUSTIN 1 (5 INNINGS) (KATY WINS SERIES 2-0)

**GAME 2:** RIDGE POINT 6, TOMPKINS 5

**GAME 2:** GEORGE RANCH 7, CINCO RANCH 6

**GAME 2:** FORT BEND TRAVIS 2, SEVEN LAKES 1

**GAME 3:** GEORGE RANCH 8, CINCO RANCH 4 (GEORGE RANCH WINS SERIES 2-1)

**SATURDAY, MAY 1**

**GAME 3:** FORT BEND TRAVIS 14, SEVEN LAKES 4 (FORT BEND TRAVIS WINS SERIES 2-1)

**GAME 3:** RIDGE POINT 7, TOMPKINS 5 (RIDGE POINT WINS SERIES 2-1)

## KATY ISD SOFTBALL & BASEBALL PLAYOFF SCHEDULE

**FRIDAY, MAY 7**

**CLASS 6A SOFTBALL AREA PLAYOFFS**

**GAME 1:** KATY VS. HEIGHTS, AT KATY, 5 P.M.

**GAME 2:** KATY VS. HEIGHTS, AT KATY, 7 P.M.

**CLASS 6A BASEBALL BI-DISTRICT PLAYOFFS**

CINCO RANCH VS. RIDGE POINT, AT CINCO RANCH, 7 P.M.

**GAME 1:** TAYLOR VS. FORT BEND TRAVIS, AT TAYLOR, 7 P.M.

**GAME 1:** KATY AT CLEMENTS, 7 P.M.

**GAME 1:** TOMPKINS AT ELKINS, 6:30 P.M.

**SATURDAY, MAY 8**

**CLASS 6A SOFTBALL AREA PLAYOFFS**

**GAME 3 (IF NECESSARY):** KATY VS. HEIGHTS, AT DELMAR STADIUM, NOON.

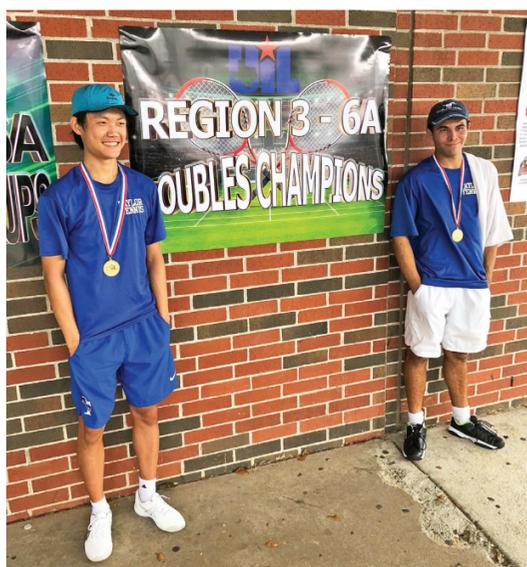
**CLASS 6A BASEBALL BI-DISTRICT PLAYOFFS**

**GAME 2:** TAYLOR AT FORT BEND TRAVIS, NOON (GAME 3 30 MINUTES AFTER GAME 2 IF NECESSARY)

**GAME 2:** CLEMENTS AT KATY, NOON (GAME 3 45 MINUTES AFTER GAME 2 IF NECESSARY)

**GAME 2:** ELKINS AT TOMPKINS, NOON (GAME 3 30 MINUTES AFTER GAME 2 IF NECESSARY)

## MUSTANGS WIN REGIONAL III-6A DOUBLES TITLE



KATY ISD ATHLETICS

Taylor High's Cristopher Cequea-Rivero and Jonathan Lin won the boys doubles championship at the Region III-6A tennis tournament last week at Deer Park High School to advance to the state tournament. Taylor's Ally Lin placed second in girls singles. Tompkins' Charlie Kuchler placed second in boys singles. The UIL Class 6A state tennis tournament will be held May 20-21 at Northside Tennis Center in San Antonio.

## TIGERS SWEEP BULLDOGS TO OPEN SOFTBALL PLAYOFFS



KATY ISD ATHLETICS

After one round of the softball playoffs, Katy High is the only Katy ISD representative left after the Tigers swept Fort Bend Austin in their best-of-three bi-district series April 29-30. The Tigers won Game 1, 6-0, as freshman ace Cameryn Harrison tossed a no-hitter, striking out 14 and walking two in seven innings of work. Junior Kailey Wyckoff had three RBIs. In Game 2, Katy won 11-1 in five innings as it used the home run to advance to the area round this week. Wyckoff and Olivia McFadden each drilled bombs, and Harrison contributed a huge grand slam. Katy will play Heights, which swept Stratford, in the area playoffs this week in a battle of two district champions. Katy is 16-2-2. Heights is 15-6.



FILE PHOTO BY THE KATY TIMES

Paddy Fisher, pictured here as a Katy Tiger, signed as an undrafted free agent with the Carolina Panthers last weekend. Fisher was a standout at Northwestern and starred on the Tigers' undefeated 2015 state championship team.

## FISHER

from page B1

veteran Denzel Perryman and rookie Daniel Bituli on the depth chart.

Prior to the draft, Fisher said his preference was not necessarily the highest slot he could be picked or the place where he could get the most money. It was about the opportunity to play.

"I'd rather go to a place where I can contribute and play and be welcomed into a culture of football, opposed to being picked by a team who will pay me, but I won't play," Fisher said. "I want to contribute, whether it be special teams or the defensive side. I really want to contribute right away."

Fisher was a leader on Katy's 2015 undefeated state championship team, regarded as one of the best high

school football defenses ever. Fisher totaled 250 tackles, eight sacks and eight forced fumbles as a three-year varsity letterman at Katy and was a three-star recruit coming out of high school.

At Northwestern, Fisher was a three-year captain, two-time All-Big 10 selection, the 2020 Big 10 Linebacker of the Year, and the 2021 Ronnie Lott IMPACT trophy winner, awarded to the defensive player with the biggest I.M.P.A.C.T. (integrity, maturity, performance, academics, community and

tenacity) on his team.

Prior to the draft, Fisher sat down for interviews and had follow-up Zoom meetings with Minnesota, Arizona, Las Vegas, Chicago, Miami, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New Orleans, the New York Jets, and the New York Giants.

Carolina has a rookie minicamp scheduled for later this month. After that, the second stint of the voluntary offseason program takes place before OTAs (Organized Team Activity) start May 24.



COURTESY OF TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

## KATY'S GARY JOSEPH HONORED WITH TOM LANDRY AWARD

Katy High football coach Gary Joseph was recognized as the Tom Landry Award winner last weekend by the Texas High School Football Hall of Fame. The award goes to a coach who serves as a positive role model for athletes and is a credit to the coaching profession.

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**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

**NOTICE**

THE MONDAY, MAY 10, 2021, REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF THE CITY OF KATY, TEXAS, HAS BEEN CANCELLED.

By Order Of Mayor And City Council  
City Of Katy, Texas  
April 26, 2021

**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

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**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

AT&T Mobility, LLC is proposing to construct a 33-foot metal telecommunications pole located at 20154 Arbor Creek Dr A, Katy, Harris County, TX 77449. Any interested party wishing to submit comments regarding the potential effects the proposed facility may have on any historic property may do so by sending comments to: Project 6121002791 - CR, EBI Consulting, 6876 Susquehanna Trail South, York, PA 17403, [crobinson@ebiconsulting.com](mailto:crobinson@ebiconsulting.com), or via telephone at (978) 877-3493.

**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

**NOTICE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN ORDINANCE NO. 2980 BEARING THE FOLLOWING CAPTION WAS ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KATY, TEXAS, ON APRIL 12, 2021:

**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KATY, TEXAS, AMENDING ARTICLE 8.02 "MINORS"; DIVISION 1 "SEX OFFENDERS" OF THE CITY OF KATY CODE OF ORDINANCES; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES AND PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HERewith; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND PROVIDING FOR A PENALTY IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$500.**

**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

An application has been submitted to the Foreign-Trade Zones (FTZ) Board by the Port of Houston Authority, grantee of FTZ 84, requesting subzone status for the facility of Pepperl+Fuchs, Inc., located in Katy, Texas. The application was submitted pursuant to the provisions of the Foreign-Trade Zones Act, as amended (19 U.S.C. 81a-81u), and the regulations of the FTZ Board (15 CFR part 400). It was formally docketed on March 8, 2021.

**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

The proposed subzone (12.67 acres) is located at 502 Cane Island Parkway, Katy, Texas. No authorization for production activity has been requested at this time. The proposed subzone would be subject to the existing activation limit of FTZ 84. In accordance with the FTZ Board's regulations, Camille Evans of the FTZ Staff is designated examiner to review the application and make recommendations to the Executive Secretary.

**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

Public comment is invited from interested parties. Submissions shall be addressed to the FTZ Board's Executive Secretary and sent to: [ftz@trade.gov](mailto:ftz@trade.gov). The closing period for their receipt is May 21, 2021. Rebuttal comments in response to material submitted during the foregoing period may be submitted during the subsequent 15-day period to June 5, 2021.

**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

A copy of the application will be available for public inspection in the "Reading Room" section of the FTZ Board's website, which is accessible via [www.trade.gov/ftz](http://www.trade.gov/ftz).

For further information, contact Camille Evans at [Camille.Evans@trade.gov](mailto:Camille.Evans@trade.gov) or (202) 482-2350.

**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

PROJECT: **A&P Mechanical, Inspection Authority and/or Aircraft Maintenance Services at the Pleasanton Municipal Airport**

Sealed REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS will be received at City Secretary's Office, 108 Second Street, City Hall Building, Pleasanton, Texas, 78064, **until 4:00 p.m. (local time/CT) on Friday, May 14, 2021** and shall include acknowledgement of any addenda submitted.

The City of Pleasanton is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) in order to solicit and receive Proposals from qualified firms interested in leasing a maintenance hangar for the purposes of providing A&P mechanical services at the Pleasanton Municipal Airport (KPEZ).

Please submit one (1) marked original and three (3) exact duplicate copies of your complete proposal, labeled and clearly marked **Request for Proposals (RFP) for an A&P Mechanical for the Pleasanton Municipal Airport**. Bids sent via courier must be sealed in a separate envelope inside of the mailer.

POINT OF CONTACT: All inquiries regarding this RFP must be made, in writing, to Andres Aguirre, at [aaguirre@pleasantontx.gov](mailto:aaguirre@pleasantontx.gov). The City shall not be responsible for any verbal communication between any employee of the City and any potential firm. Only written requirements and qualifications will be considered. The City of Pleasanton reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive irregularities, and to accept the proposal deemed the most advantageous to the City.

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City of Pleasanton is accepting Requests for Proposals for A&P Mechanical, Inspection Authority and/or Aircraft Maintenance Services at the Pleasanton Municipal Airport. Sealed RFPs will be received at City Secretary's Office, 108 Second St., City Hall Building, Pleasanton, TX 78064 until 4 p.m. CT, Friday, May 14, 2021. Contact Andres Aguirre, [aaguirre@pleasantontx.gov](mailto:aaguirre@pleasantontx.gov).

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## April 29 Puzzle Answers

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

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SHEA DONALDSON | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Pictured (above) is the 2020 Katy High state championship ring.

## TIGERS

from page B1

Moms of team captains Taylor Saulsberry, Shepherd Bowling, Ty Kana and Dalton Johnson received state championship commemorative footballs signed by the players.

The last part was the best part, however, as players opened black boxes to get their first look at their state championship rings.

"It feels great," said sophomore running back Seth Davis, offensive MVP of the state title game. "I dreamed of this moment all my life and we finally got our rings. We've been waiting a long time. They're real nice. Definitely worth the wait."

The rings featured a red Katy Tiger logo surrounded by diamonds on the face. On the sides of the ring were the years of the nine Katy High state championships, the name of the player, his number, the score of the Class 6A Division II state championship win over Cedar Hill (51-14), and the exterior of AT&T Stadium, where the state title game was played.

This title was extra special, as Katy won in midst of a global pandemic.

"It was very, very tough, from the coronavirus and on," Joseph said. "It was about perseverance, and not just because of the coronavirus, but we fought through a lot of injuries and things that were out of kids' control."



COURTESY OF JAMIE McMARTIN

Pictured (right) is the side of junior defensive back Hamilton McMartin's state championship ring.

And they never dropped their head and came down on themselves. They continued getting better. I can say they were better in weeks 16 and 17 than they were in weeks 11 and 12. That's what you want. Keep improving to give yourself a chance and an opportunity, and they gave us that chance."

Joseph said players learned how to fight and how to be unselfish. The

2020 Tigers were a close-knit group that trusted each other and was selfless.

"That's what we're fighting for in the world," Joseph said. "That's what athletics teaches kids. That's the value. I'm extremely thankful I have an occupation where I can help kids do that day to day."

Katy is in its second week of spring football as it prepares to defend its state championship come August.



SHEA DONALDSON | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Katy coach Gary Joseph holds a 2020 state championship sign awarded to the program on behalf of BSN Sports.

It won't be easy.

The Tigers graduate 15 starters from the state championship game—six on defense, eight on offense and kicker/punter Nemanja Lazic.

"The story of our program has always been 'next man up,'" Joseph said. "We've got to address the depth, and that, to me, is one of the things that goes overlooked. We had depth last year when we had injuries and a lot of kids stepped up. We've got to find starters. We have a long way to go, but I'm looking forward to the challenge and I know the kids are, too."

Indeed, two of the Tigers' stalwarts on offense, Davis and sophomore quarterback Caleb Koger, are excited about what's next after a "crazy, unbelievable" year, Koger said.

"Just got to keep improving," Koger said. "Last season was big for confidence. I want to get better with my accuracy and be more confident with all my throws. Just be more consistent, continue to get better. We're all getting better."

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**KATY ISD**

from page B1

and our kids. We live in one of the greatest places in the nation.”

The entire 2021 bond package will produce no change to the tax rate for Katy ISD taxpayers, although the length of time taxpayers pay on existing and new school district debt will be extended because the outstanding total has increased.

If it had been voted down, high school No. 10 would have been the only Katy ISD high school without a natatorium.

For the 2020-21 school year at Katy ISD, 305 boys and 314 girls participated in swimming. In 2019, Katy ISD produced seven individual All-American swimmers and two All-American relay

teams. In 2020, the district had five individual All-American swimmers and five All-American relay teams.

At the majority of Katy ISD schools, most of the seniors qualified for academic All-American status. At Taylor, for instance, four of the top 20 kids academically this school year are swimmers. The No. 1 student academically in the Class of 2022 is a swimmer.

Jordan High, the district’s biggest pool in regard to seating capacity, hosted the District 19-6A and 19-5A meets this season.

Also, Katy ISD is in the early planning stages of offering water polo after it was approved as a UIL sport in 2019. In October 2020, the

UIL voted to delay the start of water polo at least a year from its initial 2021 start date because of COVID-19.

The Texas Interscholastic Swimming Coaches Association Water Polo board stated on its website it has been assured that the sport will start in the fall of 2022. Jordan High swim coach Scott Slay said water polo was a significant financial resource for kids when he was the swim and water polo coach at Foster High.

During his five years in Richmond, more than \$1 million in academic scholarships were brought in from just the Foster water polo program, Slay said, and the typical water polo player has a swimming background.

Proposition D will bring the following amendments to district athletic facilities within the next five years:

>> Replacement roof, skylights and waterproofing for Rhodes Stadium.

>> Track surface replacements for Memorial Parkway Junior High, Seven Lakes Junior High, Morton Ranch Junior High, West Memorial Junior High, Seven Lakes High School and Tompkins High School.

>> Athletic field lighting replacement for Mayde Creek High School, Morton Ranch High School, Taylor High School, Seven Lakes High School and Tompkins High School.

>> Gym bleacher replacements for Beckendorff Junior



DENNIS SILVA II

Pictured is the natatorium at Jordan High School, Katy ISD’s ninth high school that opened in August 2020.

High, Morton Ranch High School and Seven Lakes High School.

“It’s our community and their understanding of the importance of athletics and fine arts, and, of course, academics is No. 1,” Decker

said. “Athletics and fine arts are instruments used to help educate kids further and to give them something to look forward to, in addition to their studies. It’s great for our coaches and kids to see that support.”

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