

METEORIC RISE

PAETOW CLAIMS FIRST STATE TITLE WITH THRILLING OVERTIME WIN OVER COLLEGE STATION

BY TYLER TYRE

SPORTS EDITOR

ARLINGTON —Paetow has had faith in its offensive line all season. The Panthers have run over teams all season thanks in large part to that offensive line, and Paetow head coach B.J. Gotte knew he could trust them in any situation. So with the game on the line, no matter the circumstance, Gotte knew he could call on his big men one more time.

"I had confidence in those guys up front; I always will have confidence in those line-man," Gotte said.

Paetow faced the biggest game in its history on Friday against College Station in the Class 5A-Division I state championship at AT&T Stadium. On the biggest play of Paetow's history, Gotte trusted his offensive line one more time.

Paetow faced a fourth-and-one from the College Station 3-yard line in overtime and Gotte called for a quarterback sneak. Senior quarterback CJ Dumas fell forward with the ball, barely crossing the line to gain, but giving Paetow a first down and bringing them just two yards away from a state championship.

Paetow Panthers players celebrate a 27-24 win over College Station in the Class 5A Division I state football championship game on December 17, 2021 in Arlington, Texas.

SCOTT W. COLEMAN

See **PAETOW**, page A8

City denies allegations in lawsuit filed by former animal control employee

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER

NEWS EDITOR

The City of Katy has denied allegations of a former part-time Katy Animal Control Department worker who filed suit against the city, alleging the city violated the Texas Whistleblower Act.

The city denied Chelsea Gerber's allegations in paperwork filed Dec. 12 in state district court. Art Pertile, city attorney, said the city would not comment on pending litigation.

Gerber's lawsuit, filed last month, alleges that she witnessed and reported incidents of animal cruelty at the city's animal control department during her tenure there. Such activities included improper euthanizing of animals, improper storage of the euthanasia

ART PERTILE

Katy city attorney

See **LAWSUIT**, page A3

Cagle, Morales discuss impact of redistricting

BY R. HANS MILLER

SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Fort Bend County Pct 1. Commissioner 1 Vincent Morales and Harris County Pct.4 Commissioner R. Jack Cagle discussed the effects of recent redistricting on their respective counties at a Dec. 16 meeting hosted by the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce.

"The city of Rosenberg now has three commissioners representing it, where it had one. The county seat is no longer in precinct one (but) that's always been from the beginning of the county's existence," Morales said regarding Fort Bend's new map which goes into effect on Jan. 1.

Harris Co. Pct. 7?

On the other side of the Harris-Fort Bend border, Cagle said he and fellow Harris County Commissioner Tom Ramsey are suing Harris County after their precincts were effectively switched during the redistricting process. The basis of the lawsuit, he said, is that the redistricting effectively disenfranchise more than a million voters who should have had the opportunity to vote for a new commissioner but won't after the new map was adopted.

To facilitate ongoing operations while the lawsuit against the county is considered, Cagle said Ramsey had coined the term "Precinct 7" wherein the two commissioners' staffs are working together to assist constituents as seamlessly as possible. He added that his office's Community Assistance Department, which can be reached at 832-927-4444, was working to support residents of both precincts.

Cagle said the map, which to a large extent switch the regions he and Ramsey are responsible for, was adopted at least in part to make it more challenging for him and Ramsey to get reelected. Additionally, it places their historical office locations in the other commissioner's territory, further complicating what he felt was gerrymandering at the county level.

While changes are necessary to balance precinct

See **REDISTRICTING**, page A3

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December 23, 2021
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Harris County reports its first Omicron death

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER

NEWS EDITOR

The COVID-19 Omicron variant has claimed its first Harris County resident.

The Harris County Public Health Department did not release the name of the man who died Monday, but said he was between 50-60 years old and had previously been infected with COVID-19. He had not been vaccinated and had underlying health conditions, the health department said.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the patient's family, and we extend our deepest sympathies," Barbie Robinson, the department's executive director, said in a statement. "This is a reminder of the severity of COVID-19 and its variants. We urge all residents who qualify to get vaccinated and get their booster shot if they have not already."

CORONAVIRUS STOCK PHOTO

Harris County reported its first Omicron-related case Dec. 6. The department said the patient is a woman in her 40s, was fully vaccinated, and had no recent travel history. She has not required hospitalization.

Harris County recently raised its alert level to Stage 2 - Significant, or orange. This level calls for Harris County residents to minimize all contacts unless fully vaccinated.

Fort Bend County reported its

See **COVID**, page A3

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IN KATY & FULSHEAR

American Legion honors first responders

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Eleven outstanding area first responders were honored Dec. 11 at the 7th Annual American Legion First Responders Award dinner held at the Elks Lodge. The American Legion Jonathan D. Rozier Post 164 hosted the event to celebrate the achievements of Katy area firefighters, law enforcement and EMS personnel.

Honorees were:

- Katy Police Department: Officer Emily Wiley.
- Katy Fire Department: Paramedic Andrew Kruut, Firefighter Julio Huerta.
- Westlake Volunteer Fire Department: AEMT Andrea Tager Ballesca, Firefighter Alex Mulhern.
- Harris County ESD 48 Fire Department: Firefighter Grant Kelsoe, Lt. EMS Logistics Lisa Gillette.
- KISD Police Department/Katy Mental Health Intervention Team: Officer Frank Muniz, Officer Imran Admani, Corporal Glen Cloud and Officer Kim Herring.



Front row (from left) Andrew Kruut, Andrea Tager Ballesca, Imran Admani, Frank Muniz and Emily Wiley. Back row: Jim McGuire, Julio Huerta, Alex Mulhern, Kim Herring, Grant Kelsoe and Lisa Gillette. Not pictured: Glen Cloud.

SAMANTHA BRAY, SB PHOTOGRAPHY

HOPE IMPACTS RECEIVES GRANT CHECK

Tina Hatcher, right, and her colleagues at Hope Impacts accept a staged \$5,000 check from the Rouxpour restaurant of Katy. The check is intended to assist Hope Impacts with its mission of promoting healing for the homeless in Katy.

GEORGE SLAUGHTER



KATY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION AWARDS GRANTS



The Katy Business Association awarded grants of \$1,000 to each of three area nonprofits at the organization's Christmas party on December 9. Pictured are representatives of Angels Surviving Cancer, along with KBA board members. Also receiving grants were Katy Christian Ministries and the Pregnancy Help Center. The "Business of the Year" award was given to the Katy Times.

SUSAN ROVEGNO

Katy Lions Club Peace Poster wins first place at local contest

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

The Katy Lions Club's Peace Poster entry won first place at the local 2-S2 Lions District.

The district comprises more than 50 other clubs across seven counties.

The entry won at the state

level competition. It will also be featured in the Lions Club International competition.

Lions Clubs around the world sponsor an art contest in schools and youth groups. The organization said it has done so for over three decades with the idea that creating peace posters gives

children a chance to express their visions of peace.

The Katy Lions Club sponsors the local Lions Club's International Peace Poster Contest. The club works with the Katy Independent School District, where artists ages 11-13 submit their work.

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MERRY CHRISTMAS

Katy Times

will be closed Friday, December 24 so that our employees may spend time with their families.

Deadline for December 30 publication is December 23, Noon
Deadline for January 6 publication is December 30, Noon

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CLUES ACROSS

- Chinese Muslim group
- Alternative name
- Resounds
- Supporter
- Furnishes anew
- Beloved Hollywood alien
- Supervises flying
- Ballplayer's tool
- Coarse edible red seaweed
- Former CIA
- Basketball player
- Travel necessities
- Honey producer
- Military analysis (abbr.)
- Diego, Francisco, Anselmo
- Mental sharpness and inventiveness
- Popular Easter meal
- Man (Spanish)
- de la
- Counterweights
- Made a harsh, grating noise
- Monetary unit
- Commercial
- Cool!
- Partner to cheese
- Expression of creative skill
- Unit of angle
- Transported
- N. American people of Kansas
- Computer game character
- Max

CLUES DOWN

- Hogshead (abbr.)
- Misery resulting from affliction
- Defunction European group
- Line on a map
- Becomes less intense
- Back muscle
- Frosted
- Ethiopian town
- Midway between south and east
- Wipe from the record
- In a continuous way
- Breathe
- Cleaning device
- Male organ
- Tab on a key ring
- Criminals
- Taxi
- Cheer of encouragement
- Wartime American escort carrier
- Polish river

32. Current unit

34. Life form

35. Painful contractions

36. Glowing

39. Press against lightly

40. Melancholic

43. Something you can be under

44. Of the mind

46. E. Indian cereal grass

47. Couple

49. Sharpshoot

51. A baglike structure in a plant or animal

54. Blyton, children's author

59. Human gene

60. Data mining methodology (abbr.)

61. Examines animals

62. Mineral

64. Cools your home

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

SUDOKU

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

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.

COVID

from page A1

first three Omicron-related cases Dec. 9.

The Fort Bend County Health & Human Services said all three individuals were vaccinated with two dosages. They did not report receiving booster shots. They had mild symptoms, and had no recent travel history.

“We have been aware throughout the pandemic that mutations of the original SARS CoV-2 virus would occur,” Dr. Jacquelyn Mintor, Fort Bend County Health & Human Services director, said in a statement. “While the full impact of Omicron is not currently known, we do already know how to reduce the spread of any form of SARS CoV-2. We can protect ourselves and those at highest risk by getting vaccinated, including with boosters, staying away from others when we are ill, getting tested when appropriate, and wearing face coverings indoors or at crowded events with close contact.”

As of Monday, the Texas Department of Health & Human Services reported these figures for the three counties that include parts of Katy:

- Fort Bend County: 91,110 confirmed cases, and 15,467 probable cases. The department said there have been 998 deaths in the county, with an estimated 4,392 active cases and 101,119 recoveries.
- Harris County: 603,958 confirmed cases, and 2,309 probable cases.
- Waller County: 5,536 confirmed cases, and 1,275 probable cases. The department said there have been 87 deaths in the county, with an estimated 173 active cases and 6,534 recoveries.

A discrepancy exists between the numbers kept by the state versus the numbers kept by Harris and Fort Bend counties. Fort Bend County said the Texas Department of State Health Services reports cases from the National Electronic Disease Surveillance System database. Earlier this month, the state changed its public dashboard to reflect Texas cases as reported from that database.

Fort Bend County said it had 89,704 cases, with 1,050 deaths and 86,561 recoveries.

“We’re going to make sure that person is a Fort Bend County resident before we report it out,” Rita Obey, a Fort Bend County Health & Human Services spokeswoman, said.

Harris County said it had 596,077 confirmed cases, 12,562 of which are active. The county said there have been 6,711 deaths and 576,768 recoveries. The Harris County Public Health Department and the Houston Health Department track those numbers in the county and city.

A spokeswoman for the Waller County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management said the county uses the numbers kept by the state.

REDISTRICTING

from page A1

populations after each decennial U.S. Census, Cagle said the Democrats on the court had intended the change to “greenfield” him out of office. He explained that greenfielding is a process in which someone who has established good performance in one political region is changed to another they are not established in, like a farmer moving his operation from a worked field to a field that has lain fallow.

Cagle said the partisan effort by the county’s Democratic commissioners and County Judge Lina Hidalgo was politically motivated and intentional.

Just before the vote adopting the map, Hidalgo had told Ramsey and Cagle, “I think, despite your concerns, that ‘Ellis Three’ is the better map, because I am concerned that your party is on a race to the bottom to literally not be able to pay for lifesaving services when you’re rejecting a tax cut – Cut! – so that you can defund the hospital district by \$17 million in the middle of a pandemic.”

Ellis Three was the third map submitted by Harris County Pct. 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis and was approved by the court in a partisan vote.

Cagle said the change was similar to the film “Freaky Friday” in the abruptness of the switch.

“That happened to Commissioner Tom Ramsey and I,” Cagle said. “We were in commissioners court on Thursday, there was this map that had gone out the day before, and then – boom – the next day, that night, Judge Hidalgo signed the order, and the next day, we were in each other’s body.”

Next steps in the lawsuit include a hearing held on Dec. 17 and follow-up court dates that Cagle, an attorney and former judge, said he expects will eventually make it to the Court of Appeals and the Texas Supreme Court.

Fort Bend switch

New maps adopted by the Fort Bend County Commissioners Court on Nov. 5 in a 3-2 vote

and other county assets will be expensive after the redistricting, Morales said.

“So far, commissioner’s court had to approve \$100,000 just for the initial relocation of offices, rebranding, stationary, etcetera,” Morales said. “We’re not done. ... I predict that we will probably be in the neighborhood – by the time we have to do all the build-out for (offices), buy the time we have to finish up modifying other offices, I would venture to say we’ll probably get close to the million and a half mark, is what it’s costing us as taxpayers.”

Morales said he and fellow Republican commissioner Andy Meyers were not going to sue the county over the redistricting at this time, though his comments did not rule it out. He added that he is still committed to serving the county.

“We feel like we’re here to serve. We’re going to serve you all. We’re here to serve Fort Bend County and we’re just doing our job right now,” Morales said at the close of his speech.

“I will tell you that there’s a lot of folks that, based on my track record, they’re sad that they’re losing the commissioner that they voted for. And I will tell you that 80% of the constituents who voted for the commissioner of their choice have been displaced.”

—VINCENT MORALES, FORT BEND COUNTY PCT. 1 COMMISSIONER

along party lines removed Katy, Fulshear and the majority of Cinco Ranch from the county’s third precinct and placed them in precinct one. To a degree, that switched the regions Morales and Pct. 3 Commissioner Andy Meyers represent on the court, Morales said.

“I will tell you that there’s a lot of folks that, based on my track record, they’re sad that they’re losing the commissioner that they voted for,” Morales said. “And I will tell you that 80% of the constituents who voted for the commissioner of their choice have been displaced.”

Morales said one of the biggest impacts in the county has been the switching of constables’ regions and justices of the peace. JP One, Place One and Place Two will be switched to the new Precinct One, Morales said, which will remove Judge Kelly Crow from Precinct Three. Morales said the Cinco Ranch area will still be within Constable Chad Norvell’s patrol area, though other constables in the county will have new regions to learn.

Office moves and other changes such as signage at parks



Fort Bend County Pct. 1 Commissioner Vincent Morales speaks about the impact of redistricting on county residents and government offices during a Dec. 16 event hosted by the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce. He and Harris County Pct. 4 Commissioner R. Jack Cagle, pictured in the slide presentation, said partisan efforts on the part of Democrats in both counties had effectively gerrymandered the counties to favor Democratic candidates in addition to costing taxpayers large amounts of money for office moves and other logistical expenses.

LAWSUIT

from page A1

drugs, reported her colleagues accordingly, and suffering retaliation for doing so. The lawsuit alleges further illegal euthanizing of animals, and animal dumping.

But rather than taking adequate measures to remedy the situation, the lawsuit alleges that city officials targeted her. They did this by trying to restrain her political speech, placing her on indefinite unpaid leave, and investigating her for unfounded allegations.

The lawsuit alleges the city told Gerber that while she was cleared and asked to return to work, she would be on probation for six months. The lawsuit alleges the city fired Gerber on Aug. 10 after just over two years on the job.

Meanwhile, the two animal control department colleagues against whom Gerber issued her allegations, David Brown and Spencer Antinoro, remain in their jobs. A city investigation, concluded in March, largely exonerated both men.

The lawsuit alleges the city violated the Texas Whistleblower Act and seeks unspecified monetary damages.

Animal control allegations have taken much of the Katy City Council’s time, particularly earlier in the year.

In April, the council created an animal control advisory board that worked with Police Chief Noe Diaz to suggest improvements in animal control practices. Council member recommended the board members. The board makes recommendations, not policy, so its meetings are not public. The department and shelter fall under the authority of the Katy Police Department.

In August, Diaz said the board made eight recommendations, six of which were adopted.

Adopted recommendations included reinstatement of a 72-hour stray hold, establishing a euthanasia policy, and purchasing a cat cage. Also adopted were requiring vaccinations for all intakes, modernizing the shelter, and beginning public outreach.

The other two recommendations, finding a rescue coordinator and establishing a Katy pet wellness pilot program, were referred to city staff.

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HOLIDAY SPECIALS!
Lots of stocking stuffers!

The history of real estate values: A humorous take

BY TIMOTHY GENE SOJKA
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

As the new real estate columnist for Katy Times, I want to start at the beginning; the Genesis (capitalized on purpose). Let us offer an initial salvo into real-estate value, examine the underpinning of real estate winning, pour over the foundation of wealth creation for a community.

Ask yourself: Why do some communities thrive when others dive?

A simple formula, thousands of years old, and ignored in today's society prevails as the path to success. Feel free to disagree, not with me, but with history at your own risk. History does repeat herself, but you must become her friend and stand close to hear her whispers.

#1 Great communities start with healthy places of worship

I understand this may be tough to swallow for some. I am not trying to covert anyone to Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hindu or Judaism, for that matter. I am simply asking you to use your eyes. When you see many healthy places of worship, bursting with members and multiple services, real estate values thrive. When you see a boarded-up place of worship, real estate values often fall.

More importantly, consider history. When kingdoms expanded, smart kings did not send in generals. The crown sent in missionaries. Missionaries proved more cost effective. The clerics started places of worship first. Next, religious leaders brought in educators and started schools.

#2 Schools pave the path for business

Most people place healthy schools as the #1 driver of real estate values. A fair argument if you like to be wrong. Still, schools' importance grade out near the top. Great schools, especially a mix of private, public, secular and faith based, serve as the number one search driver for families when they

consider a community. Parents strive to get children great educations. Hence, great schools serve as an important and most noticeable building block of great communities. The next step to growth—great schools attract great business looking for an educated workforce.

#3 Strong businesses provide an inroads to highways

Businesses follow educated and skilled workforces. Healthy schools, fueled by wonderful places of worship provide the most consistent workforce. Businesses provide the tax base to provide infrastructure and the jobs to demand housing.

#4 Transportation follows commerce and then fuels more commerce and housing

People find a way to get to a successful business. Government tax the businesses. Taxes pay for roads. Roads lead to more commerce. More commerce leads to housings.

#5 Housing provides the clients for retail

Homeowners buy homes and rent apartments they can get to easily from work. Homeowners want to shop, pick up laundry, and dine out near home. Homeowners fuel dining and retail, the last group to the dance. If you ever bought a home in a brand-new community, what arrives last: dining and retail.

I understand, some readers may desire to debate the finer points of my thesis. You can validly argue, this idiot (that's me) is not an economist, a history major, an intellectual, or even a real newspaper reporter. He is just a Realtor®. Correct on all fronts.

He is just a guy who sold over 2,000 houses, what does he know?

Timothy Sojka acts as the leader of the See TIM Sell Team, at Keller Williams, where his team has sold over 2,000 homes. Tim is a frequent guest writer and speaker, radio and TV analyst, and the author of Amazon's #1 Political Thriller Payback Jack.



Are you too old for Santa Claus?

Children all over the United States are currently wringing their iPhone-calloused hands over the possibility that Santa Claus might not make it this year because he's trapped in a delayed shipping container somewhere off the coast of California.

The situation is a little different at my house. With three daughters in their mid-to-late teens, my wife and I are starting to wonder how much longer we should renew our private contractor partnership with Old Saint Nick.

When the girls were younger and asked me if there really is a Santa Claus, I always answered them with great sincerity and insight. I told them to go ask their mother.

Seriously, though, our family has always operated with the understanding that Santa Claus exists in the reality of our imaginations – along with the Tooth Fairy, the Easter Bunny, and the U.S. Government's prudent use of taxpayer dollars.

For us, Santa represents the very real fun of Christmas. And I'm not sure I'm ready to stop giving him credit as the bringer of gifts, stuffer of stockings and nibbler of Christmas cookies in a strategically careless way so that he leaves a few crumbs as evidence.

Although our girls are well into their eye-rolling teen years,

JASE GRAVES

SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES



there is still something magical about seeing their shining faces as they bound toward the tree on Christmas morning – even if we have to wait for them to get their hair “selfie-ready” and adjust their sports bras first.

When Santa comes to our house, it's as if I'm reliving my own Christmas mornings as a young nerdlet with an acute case of bed head and Spider Man Underoos. (Yes, my wife and daughters are grateful I'm not still wearing them – although I'd like to.)

On Christmas mornings in those days, my big brother and I always started under the tree with the “big” gifts from Santa. One year, it was a toy “Star Wars” Millennium Falcon that my pet poodle later desecrated by lifting his leg and marking it as his own. Another year, it was a Stretch Armstrong action figure, which I really loved until I could no longer resist the temptation to find out whether or not his syrupy insides were edible. And one year, it was a new Mongoose BMX-style bike to show off to the neighborhood kids, who managed to one-up me with

the newly-released and totally rad Diamond Back Pro. (That humility-wedgie still stings a little.)

Then it was on to the stockings that were bulging with the perennial apples, oranges, and Life Savers Sweet Storybooks. (I always felt kind of rebellious when I ate the Butter Rums.) And in the toe of the stockings, there was always a handful of unshelled nuts – as if Santa wanted us to know what Christmas was like in the old days when kids had to forage for sugar plums.

Those were truly joyous childhood moments, and I've thoroughly delighted in repeating them with my own kids (minus the stocking nuts). In fact, I don't think I'll cancel Santa's access to my living room – or my credit cards – quite yet. It's just too much fun.

Amid all of the enjoyment of Santa Claus, though, my family always remembers the profound speech by Linus in “A Charlie Brown Christmas” as we celebrate what Christmas is all about – a miracle that can't be trapped in a shipping container somewhere off the coast of California.

Graves is an award-winning humor columnist from East Texas. His columns have been featured in Texas Escapes magazine, The Shreveport Times, The Longview News Journal, and The Kilgore News Herald. Contact Graves at susanjase@sbcglobal.net.

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who wrote the letter, as well as their address and telephone number for verification purposes. Letters can be submitted via e-mail to news@katytimes.com.

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GOOGLE MAPS PHOTO

The Cinco Ranch Public Library will offer family story times on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays beginning Jan. 4. The program is free and open to the public.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Cinco Ranch Public Library
to resume in-person family
story time

The Cinco Ranch Public Library, 2620 Commercial Center Blvd., will present in-person family story times on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, beginning Jan. 4.

During the family story times, families with children of all ages will enjoy stories, songs and action rhymes. Raft packets will be given out at the end of each program, so that children may take them home to enjoy.

These events will happen in library's meeting room. Start times are as follows:

- 10:15 a.m. on Tuesdays.
- 10:15 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. on

Wednesdays.

- 10:15 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. on Thursdays.

Each week features a different theme. January themes include: Clocks & Calendars, Arctic Animals, Bed Time, and Dance Party.

Programs are free and open to the public. For more information, visit the fortbend.lib.tx.us website.

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The agency uses FIRST to encourage public schools to better manage their financial resources.

In addition to its Katy campus, Harmony has campuses in north and south Houston, central Texas, and in north, south, and west Texas.

—CONTRIBUTED REPORTS

TRIBUTES

On Saturday, December 18, 2021, Joan Beck, loving wife, mother, Memaw, and loving companion, passed away at age 86.

Josephine (Joan) Papi Beck was born on February 12, 1935 in Chester, Pennsylvania to Joseph and Josephine Papi. On April 15, 1955, she married William (Bill) Beck. They raised and were survived by their three beautiful daughters: Kris, Kelly, and Karen.

She was further survived by her loving partner Henry (Hank) Vasil and her dear grandchildren: Matthew Clement, Elizabeth Cools and husband Joshua Cools, Ethan Bing and wife Claudia Wei, Molly Trapuzzano and husband Matthew Trapuzzano, Natalie Morgan and husband Cody Morgan, Mariel Godeaux and husband John Godeaux, Elliot Bing, Zoe Strong, in addition to her seven great grandchildren. Joan is also survived by sister in law, Shirley Pusak, and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband of 43 years, as well as her parents, son-in-law Mark Bing, and her six siblings: Rose Papi, Vincent Papi, Larry Papi, Paris Papi, Mary Passaro, and Anna Jackson.

Funeral details and full obituary can be found at www.schmidtfuneralhome.net.

Funeral services held under the direction of Schmidt Funeral Home
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Waller ISD parents working to remove 'obscene' books

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

A group of concerned parents is working with Waller Independent School District officials to review and remove materials considered obscene from school libraries.

Lesha Roberts, an organizer of the Waller County Patriots, said efforts to review and identify obscene material began at the start of the school year. One of the parents, she said, was concerned by what he was reading in books available at the school libraries.

Last month, she said, this parent raised the issue with trustees at their monthly school board meeting.

Last Monday, at their most recent meeting, trustees and Superintendent Kevin Moran heard



LESHA ROBERTS
Organizer, Waller County Patriots



KEVIN MORAN
Superintendent, Waller ISD

some of the offensive material. The group last Tuesday held a public forum on inappropriate content at the Waller County Civic Center in Waller.

"We extended an invitation to the superintendent to our public forum," Roberts said. "He came, and he gave us his opinion. He set up a book review committee and wants to open it up to parents in

January."

She said the district is working to create a way in which parents can go to the district website and express their concerns about something offensive they might see in the children's books.

"It was really a way to educate parents and community members on how we can work with the schools," Roberts said. "He was clearly horrified by the materials that were read at that meeting. These books are in packages from the Texas school board, and districts by them sight unseen."

Among the books cited for obscenity were "Monday's Not Coming," by Tiffany D. Jackson, "Murder Trending," by Gretchen McNeil, "Beyond Magenta: Transgendered Teens Speak Out" by Susan Kuklin, and "The Bluest

Eye," by Toni Morrison.

Roberts said it was astonishing that obscene content would be in school libraries.

"You hear this going around, but you don't expect it to be in your small-town community," Roberts said. "We reached out, set up a meeting, and we are working pretty diligently to resolve the situation."

The biggest issue, she said, was wanting to know who actually ordered the books. She said one parent filed a Freedom of Information request to learn this information.

"The schools are not necessarily responsible for ordering the books," Roberts said. "It comes from the State Board of Education. It's a big problem. What is the State Board of Education sending to the schools as an option for schools to buy?"

Roberts seemed pleased with how the group's efforts are going.

"I think locally were having a good response," Roberts said. "Two of our members are going to run for the school board next year. I don't know enough about the school board members to know how involved they are in this."

Roberts said Moran has reacted quickly to the expressed concerns and that there will be a review process for the packets.

"They're not just going to buy these packets," Roberts said. "I think that's gong to be huge if that takes place. There's a difference in censoring literature and graphic material. In my opinion, if people want to read this material, they can get it themselves. We don't need taxpayer money purchasing this obscene material, and it's graphic."

Push to ban books in Texas schools spreads to public libraries

BY ALLYSON WALLER
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

When the Llano County Library shuts down for three days this week, starting Tuesday, it won't be for the holidays.

Instead, a group of six librarians in this small Central Texas county will be conducting a "thorough review" of every children's book in the library, at the behest of the Llano County Commissioners Court. Their mission will be to make sure all of the reading material for younger readers includes subjects that are age-appropriate. A new "young adults plus" section will be added to separate books written for an older teen audience from those geared toward younger readers.

The three-day closure of the library system in Llano County, about 80 miles northwest of Austin, also means a temporary shutdown of its virtual portal through the online book provider Overdrive.

"I think we owe it to all parents, regardless if it's a school library or a public library, to make sure that material is not inappropriate for children," Llano County Judge Ron Cunningham said.

The Llano County community's push to scrutinize the local library's book stacks comes two months after a Texas lawmaker first questioned the inclusion of more than 850 books about race, equality or sexuality in public school libraries.

And Llano County is not the only community in Texas asking harder questions.

The rise in public library book complaints

Local public libraries in Texas, including those in Victoria, Irving and Tyler, are fielding a flurry of book challenges from local residents. While book challenges are nothing new, there has been a growing number of complaints about books for libraries in recent months. And the fact that the numbers are rising after questions are being raised about school library content seems more than coincidental, according to the Texas Library Association.

"I think it definitely ramped it up," said Wendy Woodland,



TEXAS TRIBUNE

The Llano County Library is temporarily closing so librarians can inventory and catalog their books after community pushback related to titles that some deemed offensive.

the TLA's director of advocacy and communication, of the late October investigation into school library reading materials launched by state Rep. Matt Krause in his role as chair of the House Committee on General Investigating.

In response to Krause's inquiry, Gov. Greg Abbott tapped the Texas Education Agency to investigate the availability of "pornographic books" in schools. In the weeks since, school districts across the state have launched reviews of their book collections, and state officials have begun investigating student access to inappropriate content.

As more residents began turning their sights on local libraries, the state library association set up a "peer counseling" helpline for librarians to get support from others more familiar with book challenges.

"A library may get one or two [book challenges] in two years, or some librarians have never had challenges," Woodland said. "So this is very rare and very unusual and different from the way challenges have been brought forth in the past."

In Victoria, about 100 miles

southeast of San Antonio, Dayna Williams-Capone says the number of complaints about books is the most she's seen in her nearly 13 years working at the Victoria Public Library.

In August, Williams-Capone, the director of library services in Victoria, said her office received about 40 formal requests for review of books, primarily books for children and young adults that touch on topics of same-sex relationships, sexuality and race.

After Williams-Capone and her staff reviewed the requests, they decided to keep the books in the library. Residents who filed the complaints pushed forward, appealing the decision to the library's advisory board for about half of the books, Williams-Capone said.

Last Wednesday, the library's board voted not to remove the books from library shelves.

"I don't think there's a danger in asking the questions and having a civil conversation and learning from each other," Williams-Capone said. "I think that the danger is when we lose that big-picture view of who all is a part of our community, and that the needs of some

members of our community might be very different than what we think our own personal needs are or our own family needs."

One Victoria resident who pushed for book removals was Cindy Herndon.

"It's nothing that I have against anybody in any community," said Herndon, 64. "I don't have any resentment or lack of respect for them. It's just about protecting the children and exposing them to things that they really don't need to see right now."

One of the books she wanted removed was "The Black Flamingo" by Dean Atta, a coming-of-age novel about a mixed-race gay teen who becomes a drag artist.

After reading the book, Herndon said she was opposed to it because to her it seemed to "sexualize children, especially into alternate lifestyles, and make them want to be someone else than who they were born to be."

How the process works and why it's getting blowback

Local public libraries are not regulated by the state. Instead,

they are usually part of a county or city budget funded by local taxpayers.

Williams-Capone, the Victoria library services director, described how books are selected in the first place, and her library's process is typical for most. Staff members peruse lists of bestsellers and literary award winners. They scan literary journals. Library staffers also consider how often visitors check out certain titles or subjects to determine future purchases.

Rules for public libraries, including complaints about content, are determined at the local level.

When a resident challenges a book, "there's a process in place," to handle that complaint, said Woodland, the TLA spokesperson. That process is typically crafted in writing by local governments with input from library staff.

More changes for libraries?

Back in Llano County, Cunningham, the county judge, said the library system's three-day closure is the first of perhaps many changes for the library. He said the county plans to soon establish a library advisory board that will help establish policies on requests to reevaluate books in circulation.

Although parents and lawmakers have stressed they are attempting to protect children from inappropriate content, authors of works that have been at the center of these disputes see the fights as a way to stifle and censor diverse representation in literature.

And librarians see their role as offering reading material for a wider audience.

"These efforts to mute or censor diverse voices in books is part of the just overall extreme divisiveness in our country that was really just exacerbated by the pandemic, [and] the actions taken by Rep. Krause and others have added fuel to that," Woodland said.

She understands there will be those who may not like all of the books in a library. That's not the point of a public library, she said.

"No book is right for everyone, but one book can make a big difference in one person's life," she said. "That's what libraries are about — providing those windows and doors and mirrors to the community."





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HCESD 48 to donate meals to Katy Christian Ministries

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

Harris County Emergency Services District 48 first responders will donate about 700 ready-to-eat meals to Katy Christian Ministries.

The district had approximately 1,900 such meals, called MREs, which district officials had planned to donate in and around Mayfield, Ky., following tornado incidents in that area earlier this month.

But Lia Hales, the district's community relations coordinator, said that Mayfield authorities reported having received approximately 30,000 MREs from across the country. The district looked at a nearby town, Cayce, and planned to donate some MREs there. However, a tornado destroyed the volunteer fire department where the district hoped to send some MREs.

She said the district was disappointed in that it couldn't make a donation to those affected by the tornadoes. At the same time, she said, the district is happy to keep its focus on serving the local area. The district expects to donate the MREs to Katy Christian Ministries this week, with the rest going to other area organizations.

Jerry Hales, Lia's husband and a retired U.S. Marine, knows about MREs. He said a MRE today consists of everything one needs for daily living. He said today's MREs have improved since his service, which was from 1984-88.

"The meals are infinitely better today," Jerry Hales said. "Each one is different. You might have a grilled chicken patty. Is it something you want to eat every day? No. But on the fly? Absolutely."

Lia Hales remembered what the meals were like back then. She said Jerry got her to try one.



DEYSI CRESPO
Executive Director, Katy Christian Ministries

"They were awful back then," Lia Hales said.

The MREs come at an important time. Deysi Crespo, Katy Christian Ministries executive director, said food is the biggest need for families during the holidays.

"Food is definitely a need for many families," Crespo said. "It is one of many issues we tackle."

While food is the biggest need, Crespo said help for rent and mortgage payments are the second biggest need.

"We have been able to be there for the families and address the need," Crespo said. "We are looking forward to seeing what 2022 will be able to show. We are hoping our community will continue to recover. Many families have lost jobs due to COVID-19 or lost income."

Crespo said donations are still being accepted, whether it be food, clothing or other supplies, or through financial donations.

"We are asking the community for canned goods," Crespo said. "We average serving about 85 families on average per day, but the numbers go up during the holidays."

Crespo said she is hopeful about what 2022 will bring.

"I don't know what 2022 is going to look like, but I am definitely hopeful we're going to meet the needs of our community," Crespo said. "Crisis or no crisis, I just love how our community comes together and shows a spirit of unity in helping our neighbors in need."

She also praised the district for its donation. "With their partnership, it helps us make a greater impact," Crespo said.



MREs are ready to be sent to Katy Christian Ministries. Left, Buddy the Elf checks out some of the donations at the Harris County Emergency Services District.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LIA HALES

"I don't know what 2022 is going to look like, but I am definitely hopeful we're going to meet the needs of our community. Crisis or no crisis, I just love how our community comes together and shows a spirit of unity in helping our neighbors in need."

—DEYSI CRESPO, KATY CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Candidates file for federal, state, and county offices

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

Candidates who are seeking federal, state, and county offices have filed to seek their respective seats in the upcoming party primaries.

Both the Democratic and Republican primaries are on March 1. The general election is in November.

U.S. House, District 10

Incumbent Michael McCaul, R-Austin, has filed and has no primary challengers. Linda Nuno, who works in healthcare, has filed in the Democratic primary. She has no challengers there.

The district includes the Katy portions of Harris and Waller counties.

U.S. House, District 22

Incumbent Troy Nehls, R-Richmond, has filed to seek reelection. He faces a primary challenge from Gregory Jonathan Thorne, a CPA and tax accountant.

The winner will face Jamie Kaye Jordan, an attorney, in the general election.

The district includes the Katy portion of Fort Bend County.

Texas Senate, District 17

Much of the Katy and Cinco Ranch areas formerly in District 18 and represented by Republican Lois Kolkhorst were shuffled in the recent redistricting. District 17 incumbent Joan Huffman, a Republican, has no opposition in that primary.

Two Democrats have filed for the seat. They are Titus Benton, a nonprofit executive, and Miguel Gonzalez, a teacher.

Texas House District 132

The district includes the Katy area in Harris County. Incumbent Mike Schofield, a Republican, faces a primary



LINA HIDALGO
Harris County Judge



GINA CALANNI
Former state representative



KP GEORGE
Fort Bend County Judge

challenge from Erik Le, who is a business owner. Two Democrats have filed for the seat. One is Cameron "Cam" Campbell, an entrepreneur. The other is Chase West, a music producer.

Fort Bend County

Incumbent County Judge KP George, a Democrat, faces a primary challenge from Ferrel Bonner, who is retired. Two candidates have filed for the Republican nomination. They are Max Alalibo, who works in the health care industry, and Trevor J. Nehls, a local company president.

The Katy area in Fort Bend County represented by longtime Republican Pct. 3 Commissioner Andy Meyers was shuffled in the recent redistricting. Republican Pct. 1 Commissioner Vincent Morales now represents the area. Morales will be up for reelection in 2024.

Harris County

Incumbent County Judge Lina Hidalgo, a Democrat, faces five primary challengers. They are Erica Davis, chief of staff for Pct. 1 Constable Alan Rosen; Maria Garcia, a manager; Ahmad R. "Rob-Beto" Hassan, a real estate broker and businessman; Kevin Howard, an attorney; and Georgia D. Provost, a professional photographer.

Eight candidates have filed for the Republican nomination for Harris County judge. They are, H.Q. Bolanos, a real estate apprais-

er; Martina Lemond Dixon, an educator; Robert Dorris, a marketing manager; Oscar Gonzales, a retired deputy sheriff; Randall Kubosch, who works in real estate; Vidal Martinez, an attorney; Alex Mealer, a banker; and George Harry Zoes, a local business owner.

The Katy area in Harris County represented by Republican Pct. 3 Tom Ramsey has shuffled in the recent redistricting. Republican Pct. 3 Commissioner Jack Cagle, a Republican, now represents the area. He has filed for reelection and has no opposition in the primary.

Seven Democrats have filed to run. They include Lesley Briones, an attorney and adjunct professor; Gina Calanni, the former District 132 state representative; Benjamin "Ben" Chou, who is self-employed; Clarence Miller, a consultant; Sandra Pelmore, a paralegal; Jeff Stauber, a police officer; and Ann Williams, a secondary education administrator.

Waller County

Incumbent County Judge Trey Duhon, a Republican, drew no opponents in the Republican primary. No Democratic candidates filed to run.

Pct. 4 Commissioner Justin Glenn Beckendorff, a Republican, has filed for reelection. He has no opponents in the primary. He will face Ethel Wilmore, a registered nurse, in the general election. She is the only Democrat who filed to run.

ELECTION 2022 KEY DATES

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

The 2022 election is underway, with candidates for federal, state, and county offices seeking their respective party nominations.

Both the Democratic and Republican primaries are March 1. Winners of those primaries will face off in the Nov. 8 general election. Registration deadline to vote in the March 1 primary is Jan. 31.

According to the Texas secretary of state's office, voters must meet these qualifications:

- A voter must be a U.S. citizen.
- A voter must be a resident of the

county where he or she submits the voter application.

- A voter must be at least 18 years old on Election Day.
- A voter must not be a convicted felon. However, one may be eligible to vote if he or she has completed their sentence, probation, and parole).
- A voter must not have been declared by a court exercising probate jurisdiction to be either totally mentally incapacitated or partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote.

Voters can verify their registration with the secretary of state's office by visiting the [votetexas.gov](https://www.votetexas.gov) website.

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Above, Paetow's Kole Wilson celebrates a 27-24 win over College Station in the Class 5A Division I state football championship game. Left, Paetow Panthers running back Jacob Brown (25) is tackled on a carry during the Class 5A-Division I state football championship game between Paetow and College Station.

SCOTT W. COLEMAN

PAETOW

from page A1

The crowd waited breathlessly as the officials went to replay to determine the call but eventually they gave Paetow the first down.

On the next play, Jacob Brown handed the Panthers their first ever state title with a two-yard touchdown run.

"We were kind of up and down offensively and hot and cold tonight," Gotte said. "And College Station's offense was just so explosive, that you never know when they were going to bust one. It was fourth and a yard and it was just a decision of, if we can't get a yard then I don't know. We just decided to go for it and keep the game in our hands."

Things started as badly as they could for Paetow, on the first play from scrimmage College Station scored on an 80-yard touchdown pass from Jett Huff to Traylen Suel.

Paetow and College Station traded punts but the Panthers responded to tie things, putting together a 14-play, 63-yard drive that ended with a Bryan Del Cid 7-yard touchdown run.

"There wasn't any change after that first play," Gotte said "They kept their composure and we talked about things like that in a meeting yesterday. I said 'look, obviously we want to come out and start fast, and if we start fast and we are playing well, that's great, but theres a chance we won't either. They may bust us and if we do, that's fine, you can't let one big play totally derail what we're doing.' They hit us and I just looked at the guys and said ok, lets go score. It's ok, and I'm proud of the way they kept their composure."

College Station didn't take long to respond as they went on their own 11-play drive, scoring on a 23-yard run by Marquise Collins. But Paetow had the answer once again, driving down the field and capping off a drive with a Gene Kendall 1-yard touchdown.

College Station threatened again heading into halftime, but Kentrell Webb came up with a huge interception near Paetow's endzone to keep things tied after two quarters.

"They were in their goal line package and the receiver tried to set me up with an inside route, my alignment was inside so once he broke back outside and the quarterback threw it outside late I knew I

could make a play on the ball. It just set the team up exactly where we needed. We set the offense up and they set us up when we need it."

The defense carried that momentum they gained by the interception and ran with it early in the second half. Paetow's offense was unable to come away with points on its first drive of the half and College Station drove the ball into Katy territory once again, but Tyler Silves got free to the quarterback, sacked him and forced a fumble and Alex Kilgore returned the fumble to inside the College Station 20-yard line.

"That's what we do, we're playmakers," Webb said. "We have playmakers all around the defense, there's no weak spots on the defense or the offense. Everyone is so talented and we have fun and we just have so much fun playing the game."

Paetow's offense responded, as CJ Dumas scored on a 1-yard run and gave the Panthers their first lead of the game. But College Station responded immediately with a 71-yard run from Collins to tie things up. Paetow went three-and-out but held College Station from scoring to take it into overtime.

From there the Panthers found a way to become state champs.

The Panthers were aggressive all day on fourth down, converting three out of six tries.

"I was kind of lost when they reviewed it and everything because they had just measured it," Dumas said. "I knew that I got the first down though and I knew that it was going to be a first down. It was so great to be able to get that first down and I knew we were going to punch it in once we got the first down."

With the win Paetow became the first school in Katy ISD outside of Katy High School to win a state championship. But that doesn't matter to the players or coaches.

This win is about Paetow, not about anyone or anything else.

"I'm just so happy for our kids, so happy for our community and happy for our coaches," Gotte said. "For these seniors who started with us in eighth grade when the school was brand new. For them to work as hard as we work and bought into what we did. To see them finish up their career as champions is such a cool thing as a coach."

Paetow 27, College Station 24		Team stats	
College Station	7 7 0 7 3 -- 24	College Station	Paetow
Paetow	0 14 0 7 6 -- 27	17	22
First quarter		Yards rushing	30-190
College Station: Jett Huff 80 pass to Traylen Suel (Dawson Schremp kick) 11:40		Yards passing	215
Second quarter		Passes	18-23-1-1
Paetow: Bryan Del Cid 7 run (Anthony Fuentes kick) 11:54		Punts	1-57
College Station: Marquise Collins 23 run (Schremp kick) 8:08		Fumbles-lost	1-1
Paetow: Gene Kendall 1 run (Fuentes kick) 2:28		Penalty-yards	4-16
Fourth quarter		Individual Statistics	
Paetow: CJ Dumas 1 run (Fuentes kick) 11:32		Rushing - Paetow: Jacob Brown, 33-112-1; Kole Wilson, 1-25; Bryan Del Cid, 4-23-1; Damyron Phillips, 8-22; Gene Kendall, 3-9-1; CJ Dumas, 6-7; College Station: Marquise Collins, 23-192-2; Nate Palmer, 3-2; Jett Huff, 3-(-4)	
College Station: Collins 71 run (Schremp kick) 4:04		Passing - Paetow: CJ Dumas, 16-23-165-0-0; College Station: Jett Huff, 18-23-215-1-1	
Overtime		Receiving - Paetow: Kole Wilson, 9-94; Brandon Shanks, 1-31; Justin Stevenson, 3-24; Jason Blue, 2-9; College Station: Traylen Suel, 11-169-1; Bradley Jones, 2-23; Dalton Carnes, 3-13; Houston Thomas, 1-7; Marquise Collins, 1-3	
College Station: Schremp 24 field goal			
Paetow: Jacob Brown 2 run			



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Happy New Year

Our thanks and best wishes to all of you!

Katy Times

will be closed on Friday, December 31.
Deadline for January 6 publication is December 30, Noon



CLASS 5A-DIVISION I STATE CHAMPIONSHIP: Paetow 27, College Station 24

A DREAM FULFILLED

A YEAR TO THE DAY PAETOW'S SEASON WAS CUT SHORT,
THE PANTHERS CLAIM FIRST STATE TITLE



PAGE B2

Gotte has instilled
winning attitude
at Paetow

PAGE B5

MVPs: Brown,
Webb help lift
Paetow to state title

PAGE B6

A full page of photos
from the Panthers'
victory

PAGE B7

Graduating class
leaves impact
on Paetow program



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Paetow Panthers head coach B.J. Gotte gestures to an official after College Station was called offside on a fourth-down play in overtime of the Class 5A Division I state football championship game on December 17, 2021 in Arlington, Texas.

Gotte has created culture of excellence at Paetow

The moment was never too big for Paetow on Friday. Whether it was facing an early punch in the mouth from College Station, whether it was needing a stop with time running down in the first half, whether it was having their backs against the wall and needing a fourth-and-one conversion in overtime, the Panthers never flinched. Paetow was ready for the moment. “It’s completely a credit to coach (B.J.) Gotte,” said senior safety Kentrell Webb. “After practice we do this thing called situational and we change things up to where it’s overtime. It puts us through this exact scenario and it clearly paid off today. He put us in a situation to score and we already had the experience doing this in practice to do so.” In five short years since starting the Paetow program, head coach B.J. Gotte has turned the Panthers into state champions, a testament to the culture he and the Paetow coaching staff have instilled in a young program. It wasn’t a dream for these players to get to a state championship — it was a goal, and their confidence comes from the top down, with a coach that has gotten his program ready for the biggest moment. “People from the jump, were like why would you want to go there, it’s a new school, you won’t win,” Gotte said. “I told these kids from the beginning, we are going to compete to win. Our standard is excellence and excellence starts with what you do every single day. They bought into that and worked hard, and they stuck with each other. For us to be able to call these guys champions now is really cool.” Gotte turning the program into winners has fueled his players. There was one word said more than any other in Friday’s press conference with the players and coaches and that was confidence. Each and every player and coach was confi-

TYLER TYRE

SPORTS EDITOR

dent the entire game, as they have been all season, because they know they can trust what is coming from the top. “He gives all of us confidence,” Webb said. “Coach put the defense out first, that gives us confidence that he has that trust in us, he’s confident in us. We were confident in ourselves because of that. I think we’re the best defense in Texas. We’re confident in ourselves and I can’t really say anything else other than that. The offense is confident in us and we’re confident in the offense. We knew as soon as we held them to a field goal in overtime we were going to win.” Paetow may be making the jump to 6A next year, but the program shows no signs of slowing down under Gotte’s steady leadership and the culture he has established. “These guys just care for each other, they really do,” Gotte said. “They’re a family, and families have ups and they have downs and we’ve had our ups and downs, but at the end of the day, they come together and stand behind one another. That’s what I’m most proud of them for. It’s not all roses and rainbows, but a family sticks together. No matter what comes along, no matter what people say or do, we have each other’s backs.” The seniors who joined Gotte’s program five years ago may not have known what they were getting into, but if you ask any of them now, I would bet they’d tell you that Gotte made them into a better player and person. “I couldn’t ask for a better four or five years than we’ve had,” Webb said. “I couldn’t ask for a better position to be in, in my life right now. We all came up together and we bought in to the program and listened to Coach Gotte. I give the coaches a lot of credit, they pushed us during offseason and make us better. Everything is not the best, we’re not the perfect team, but we come out here and love each other and are just a big family.”



PHOTOS BY SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Paetow Panthers players celebrate a 27-24 win over College Station in the Class 5A Division I state football championship game on December 17, 2021 in Arlington, Texas. Above, Paetow Panthers head coach B.J. Gotte shares a moment with quarterback C.J. Dumas Jr. (15) after the game.

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Katy Times

SCORES & SCHEDULES**GIRLS BASKETBALL****Monday**

- Cinco Ranch and Seven Lakes at Aggieland Tournament
- Taylor at Boerne ISD Tournament
- Tompkins at Lake Travis Tournament

Tuesday

- Mayde Creek at Alief Taylor, 1 p.m.
- Seven Lakes at Aggieland Invitational
- Paetow vs. Caney Creek, 1 p.m.
- Taylor at Boerne ISD Tournament

Wednesday

- Seven Lakes at Aggieland Invitational
- Taylor at Boerne ISD Tournament
- Tompkins at Lake Travis Tournament
- Morton Ranch vs. Aldine Davis, 1 p.m.
- Tompkins at Lake Travis Tournament

BOYS BASKETBALL**Tuesday**

- Cinco Ranch at Brazosport Tournament
- Katy at New Caney Tournament
- Morton Ranch vs. Cy Ridge, 11:30 a.m.
- Taylor vs. Cy-Creek, 1 p.m.
- Tompkins at Vype Tournament

Wednesday

- Cinco Ranch at Brazosport Tournament
- Katy at New Caney Tournament
- Jordan at Lamar Consolidated, 1 p.m.

FOOTBALL

- Paetow 27, College Station 24

PAETOW SUPER FANS

SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Paetow Panthers fans cheer during the Class 5A-Division I state football championship game between Paetow and College Station on December 17, 2021 in Arlington, Texas.

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Sharon Graf

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Webb, Brown named MVP's of state title game

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

ARLINGTON — Kentrell Webb had been there all season when Paetow needed a play.

So with the game tied and College Station driving in the Class 5A-Division I state final, Webb knew he would get a chance to make another one.

Webb had a game changing interception shortly before halftime, sparking Paetow's on the way to a 27-24 win to earn a state championship.

"Alex (Kilgore) asked me 'is that how you're feeling right now with that interception' and I was like 'ya, it's what we do.'" Webb said. "We're playmakers and there's no weak spots on the defense and the offense. We really turned the game around on both that interception and the fumble recovery in the third quarter."

Webb's interception and nine tackles earned him defensive MVP honors in the state title game.

Webb, a captain, has been one of the backbones of the entire defense and secondary all year, and it continued against College Station. The fact that the Paetow coaching staff put their trust in the defense throughout the game fueled Webb as well.

"It just gives all of us confidence on that side of the ball when they put us out there first. It shows how confident coach is in us," Webb said. "We're confident in ourselves too and we want to be the best defense in Texas so it just makes our confidence even higher

knowing they believe in us."

But Webb wasn't the only backbone player of the team to step up.

Jacob Brown has been a workhorse for the Panthers this season. He came back from injury in the playoffs to help guide the Panthers to the state title game and he finished his high school career in the best way a player could in the state title game.

Brown had the walk off 2-yard touchdown run to give Paetow the victory and ended the night with 112 yards on 33 carries, earning offensive MVP of the championship game in the process.

"It really is great knowing that our hard work up front is able to produce great results and touchdowns and huge plays," said senior offensive lineman James Bailey. "He's a great back."

Brown's longest run was only 10 yards, but the senior fought for every yard on every carry on his way to earning offensive MVP.

"It's a dream come true," Brown said. "I remember as a little kid watching Rodney Anderson here at my same position, and if you had told me a couple years ago I would be here I'd never believe you, really. It's truly a blessing."

Brown credited everything to the culture in the program and his coaches.

"It's the brotherhood and the coaches. The coaches, they gave us the game plan and we just followed it and made it here. Those guys up front are amazing too. No matter what they do, no matter what they go through — I know that they'll be there for me, it showed today."




SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Paetow Panthers running back Jacob Brown (25) reacts after scoring the game-winning touchdown in overtime to beat College Station 27-24 in the Class 5A Division I state football championship game on December 17, 2021 in Arlington, Texas.

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NOTICE The City Planning And Zoning Commission And The City Council Of The City Of Katy, Texas, Will Each Conduct Public Hearings At Their Regular Meetings To Be Held At City Hall, 901 Avenue C, Katy, Texas. <u>CITY PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION</u> <u>PUBLIC HEARING</u> 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 11, 2022 <u>CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING</u> 6:30 p.m., Monday, January 24, 2022 The City Planning And Zoning Commission And The City Council Of The City Of Katy, Texas, Will Conduct Hearings At Their Regular Meetings To Be Held At City Hall, 901 Avenue C, Katy, Texas. The Hearings Are Being Conducted To Receive Comments From The Public On A Proposed Ordinance Of The City Council Of The City Of Katy, Texas Amending The City's Subdivision Regulations By Amending Article 10.02 "Specifications And Approval Of Preliminary And Final Plats" Of The Subdivision Regulations; Repealing All Ordinances And Parts Of Ordinances In Conflict Herewith; Providing For Severability And Providing For A Fine Not To Exceed \$2,000 For Each Day A Violation Of This Ordinance Exists.	NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS The City Planning And Zoning Commission And The City Council Of The City Of Katy, Texas, Will Each Conduct Public Hearings At Their Regular Meetings To Be Held At City Hall, 901 Avenue C, Katy, Texas. <u>CITY PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION</u> <u>PUBLIC HEARING</u> 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 11, 2022 <u>CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING</u> 6:30 p.m., Monday, January 24, 2022 The City Planning And Zoning Commission And The City Council Of The City Of Katy, Texas, Will Conduct Hearings At Their Regular Meetings To Be Held At City Hall, 901 Avenue C, Katy, Texas. The Hearings Are Being Conducted To Receive Comments From The Public On A Proposed Ordinance Of The City Council Of The City Of Katy, Texas Amending The City's Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance By Amending The Zoning Map To Zone 78.79 Acres Of Land In The H&TCRR CO Survey, Abstracts 203 & 396, In Waller County As Cane Island Master Planned Community. Amending The City Of Katy's Comprehensive Plan To Conform To The Zoning Classifications Set Forth In This Ordinance; Repealing All Ordinances And Parts Of Ordinances In Conflict Herewith; Providing For Severability And Providing For A Fine Not To Exceed \$2,000 For Each Day A Violation Of This Ordinance Exists. Applicant And Agent Is EHRA, Inc.	NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING WALLER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT January 12, 2022 @ 9:00 A.M. COMMISSIONERS' COURTROOM, WALLER COUNTY COURTHOUSE The Waller County Commissioners' Court will conduct a Public Hearing under the Authority of Chapter 251.152, Transportation Code, to consider the establishment of a No Thru Truck Zone at the following roads: Roche Road - FM 362 to Mathis Road (Pct 3) All interested persons are encouraged to attend and participate in the Public Hearing.	ARE YOU ADVERTISING? Your business is open. Your lights are on. INVITE PEOPLE IN. To advertise, call us at 281-391-3141 Katy  Times					

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Paetow Panthers players celebrate a 27-24 win over College Station in the Class 5A Division I state football championship game on December 17, 2021 in Arlington, Texas.
SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Seniors leave lasting legacy on Paetow program

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

ARLINGTON – Paetow’s senior class has been on a mission to win a state championship since they were in middle school.

The Panthers’ seniors joined the program when they were eighth grade, with a school that hadn’t opened yet and they engrained themselves for five years in a journey to make it all worth it.

That moment that made it worth it came on Friday, when Paetow lifted its first ever state championship trophy after a thrilling 27-24 overtime win over College Station in the Class 5A-Division I state final at AT&T Stadium.

“These seniors who started with us in eighth grade, I’m just so happy for them,” said Paetow head coach BJ Gotte. “The school was brand new when they joined us, but they worked as hard as they could and bought into what we did. To see them finish their careers as champions is really cool.”

The Panthers’ state championship meant even more to the seniors because of what happened a year ago to the day of the state championship game.

On December 17, 2020, the Panthers were told that their season was over because of a COVID-19 outbreak at the high school. On December 17, 2021, the Panthers won a state championship.

Paetow’s seniors were playing to leave a legacy for themselves and the senior class that came before them.

“Today is the day that our season last year, so history repeats itself,” said senior quarterback C.J. Dumas. “Today we’re here as state champions. Those guys last year they’ve supported us from the beginning. They showed up to practices and they showed up to games cheering us on and kept in contact. It’s the love and support from the community that kept us going. It pushed us, anyone could have been defeated after the way last season ended, but we took it as an opportunity. We capitalized on the number of guys we were bringing back and we were strong and confident all year.”

Paetow was poised no matter the situation on Friday, no matter if it was an early touchdown or after the game went into overtime, and Gotte credited that to the leadership that came from this year’s senior class.

There was never a doubt in any persons mind on the Paetow sideline what the outcome of the game would be.

Paetow was ready for the moment.

“It completely comes from senior leadership,” Gotte said. “These kids, they feed off each other and we’ve talked to them from the very beginning about doing your best every day. We’ve talked about these type of moments. I talked to a couple of the guys in here when we played Hightower the first time about how you have to earn the right to play in big games. We did that and these guys knew, you don’t have to change what you do to play championship football. If you have to change that you haven’t been doing your best from the jump, and they’ve always done their best whether it was in August or December. Every day they came out and gave their absolute best and trained to be a champion. They have confidence in each other, we had already prepared for this and that’s why you got the result you got tonight.”



Above: Paetow Panthers wide receiver Kole Wilson (11) gets a toe down in bounds on a reception during the Class 5A-Division I state football championship game between Paetow and College Station on December 17, 2021 in Arlington, Texas.
Left: Paetow Panthers quarterback C.J. Dumas Jr. (15) delivers a stiff arm to College Station Cougars linebacker Jaxson Slanker (34) on a carry during the Class 5A-Division I state football championship game.
PHOTOS BY SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Katy’s Waak named Greater Houston Volleyball player of the year

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Katy’s Maddie Waak was named the player of the year by the Greater Houston Volleyball Coaches Association this past week.

Waak, a senior, finished the season with 341 kills, 910 assists, 524 digs, 57 blocks, and 69 aces to help lead Katy to the second straight season. The Class 6A-Region III Final for the second straight season. The LSU signee totaled 2,974 assists, 1,532 digs, 1,122 kills, 238 aces and 149 blocks for her high school career.

Katy’s Jordan Gamble, Chander Lee and Izzy Denton joined Waak on the team.

Tompkins, which won District 19-6A, had three players

make the team in District MVP Paris Herrman, Natissa Baptiste and Cindy Tchouangwa. Cinco Ranch’s Cataline Martinez and Courtney O’Brien were named to the team as were Seven Lakes’ Casey Batenhorst and Emma Schroder. Mayde Creek’s Mecca Freeman rounded out the Katy ISD selections in Class 6A.

Jordan’s Ella Folse and Alexys James were named the Class 5A team. Jordan will join the 6A ranks next year.

Folse and James also were named the District 19-5A first team while Abby Hoss was named to the second team.

Paetow’s Amaya Thompson made the first team while Caelyn Dumas made second team all-district.



Katy’s Maddie Waak spikes the ball during a regional quarterfinal game at the Merrell Center. Waak was named player of the year by the Greater Houston Volleyball Coaches Association this week.

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