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THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2022

Fort Bend Co. lowers COVID-19 threat level

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

Fort Bend County Judge KP George Monday lowered the county COVID-19 threat indicator to green, the lowest, or normal, level.

While George said he was happy to see the level returned to normal, he cautioned that the pandemic was not yet over.

"COVID is still here," George said. "It is not gone. And we will continue to inform you what is happening. Good or bad, it's my job to let you know."

George said it was heartbreaking when, with the pandemic at its height, he had to shut down the county.

"It's important that we take the virus seriously," George said.

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

- Fort Bend County: 157, 549 confirmed cases, and 21, 677 probable cases. The department said there have been 1,153 deaths in the county.
- Harris County: 959, 309 confirmed cases, and 38,854 probable cases. The department said there have been 10,817 deaths in the county.

See **COVID**, page A3



FORT BEND COUNTY/FACEBOOK

Fort Bend County Judge KP George announces the lowering of the COVID-19 threat indicator to green Monday.

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March 24, 2022
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MEMORIAL HERMANN KATY HOSPITAL

Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital is expanding.

Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital announces expansion

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

The Katy area is growing, and so is Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital.

The hospital announced Tuesday a \$167 million expansion that will add 115,000-square-feet of new and renovated service areas, nearly 100 beds, and a third professional office building. It will also include additional parking, with a parking garage, to better serve the greater Katy area's growing population.

According to estimates by the Katy Area Economic Development Council, nearly a half-million people will call the area home by 2024.

"Our community continues to grow and we are committed to grow with it, just as we have for the last 40 years," Jerry Ashworth,

senior vice president and CEO of Memorial Hermann Katy and Memorial Hermann Cypress Hospitals, said. "However, I would like to point out that this expansion goes far beyond the addition of physical space to accommodate more patients. It is also strategically focused on growing specialty and surgical care so that residents can depend on us to support their healthcare needs, from routine outpatient visits to complex inpatient procedures, in their own community."

The first phase of the project is underway in existing shell space on the 5th and 6th floors of the hospital's East Tower. Eighty medical/surgical patient beds and six antepartum beds are being added, bringing the hospital's total bed count to close to 300. Plans also include the addition of two new operating rooms, four neonatal intensive care

unit (NICU) rooms and an expansion of the cardiac catheterization lab.

Subsequent phases include the significant expansion of the Emergency Department, which serves as the Katy area's only Level III Trauma Center. Upon completion, the facility will double in size to 40,000-square-feet and add additional treatment rooms, including two state-of-the-art trauma rooms, space for more CT scanners, upgraded equipment and more. In addition, the hospital is focused on expanding its capabilities in the areas of trauma and critical care medicine, neurosurgery, vascular surgery, thoracic surgery and more to better respond to the emergent needs of those who live and work in and around Katy.

"The Emergency Department often func-

See **HOSPITAL**, page A3



GEORGE SLAUGHTER

Fun facts such as these can be found throughout the Dig World adventure park at Katy Mills Mall.

Dig World closes due to machine capacity, will hold re-grand opening

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

Dig World, the new construction-themed adventure park that opened last week at Katy Mills Mall, announced it will close and have a re-grand opening due to machine capacity.

The company made the announcement in a social media post.

"We strive to provide the absolute best guest experience, and right now we aren't

able to do that," the statement read in part. "And we own that! We apologize, but Dig World will come back better than ever."

The park opened late last week and guests of all ages appeared to enjoy operating the excavating equipment and exploring the park's offerings.

Dig World is unique in that guests can operate such equipment. Park patrons must be of a certain height to use the

See **DIG**, page A3

State looking to expand Grand Parkway near Westpark Tollway

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

At a recent Katy Area Chamber of Commerce event, Fort Bend County Pct. 1 Commissioner Vincent Morales shared a photo he took while traveling southbound on the Grand Parkway towards the Westpark Tollway. Looking southbound, the traffic looked heavy, but at least it seemed to be moving.

Looking at the northbound traffic, it seemed a different picture, with plenty of cars and no indication that the traffic was moving.

"He said, 'This is unacceptable,'" Dwayne Grigar, project manager in Morales's office, said.

Morales and Grigar have been talking with state officials about picking up the pace for expanding the Grand Parkway to reduce traffic congestion. Grigar said the Texas Department of Transportation plans to add a third, inside lane on the Grand Parkway to help relieve traffic. He said the letting process, by which the bids are solicited and chosen and the work actually begins, is expected later this year.

The department said the additional lanes

See **PARKWAY**, page A3



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Community Calendar
APRIL

ONGOING THROUGH APRIL
"JOSHUA, JUDGES & JESUS"
An exhibit of archeological artifacts from ancient times. The show opened March 1. The exhibit is at The Bible Seminary, 2655 S. Mason Road. For more information, visit the website TheBible-Seminary.edu/3j.

APRIL 1
CENTRAL GREEN PARK AT LACENTERRA
The movie "Brave," will be shown. The event is from 7-9 p.m. at Central Green Park at LaCenterra, 23501 Cinco Ranch Blvd.

APRIL 2
DEWBERRY FARMS SPRING FEST
Family-friendly attractions include a barnyard, candy cannon, and the Dewville Express train. Tickets required for everyone 3 years of age and older. Discounts offered for citizens 60+ years of age. April 2 is teacher appreciation day. Free admission for teachers providing proof of employment. The farm is at 7705 FM 362, Brookshire. For more information, visit the website dewberryfarm.com.

ROTARY PAWS FOR CAUSE
Charity dog walk, vendor displays, pet chip implant, dog adoption and groomers. The event is from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Jones Creek Ranch Park, 7714 FM 359, in Richmond. Cost is \$12 per adult or \$15 at gate. Children under 16 are free. For more information, visit the website rotarypawsforcause.com.

APRIL 1-2
ROYAL ISD FFA LIVESTOCK SHOW, SALE, AND PARADE
On April 1, judging of horticulture and commercial broilers is set for 11 a.m. On April 2, a parade is set for 10 a.m. in downtown Brookshire. A barbecue luncheon is set for 11:30 a.m. and the livestock auction begins at 1:30 p.m. For more information, visit the website royalffanow.org.

APRIL 2
CENTRAL GREEN PARK AT LACENTERRA
Scottish heritage festival with kid-friendly Highland games. Dancing, music, food, and characters from Disney's movie "Brave." The event is

from 12-3 p.m. at Central Green Park at LaCenterra, 23501 Cinco Ranch Blvd.

KATY RECYCLING DAY
Spring cleaning time is here, and the Katy Lions Club is organizing Katy Recycling Day. The event is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 600 Pin Oak Road.

KATY ISD 36TH ANNUAL FOLK LIFE FESTIVAL
See what life was like for early Texas settlers in the 1800s. The event includes blacksmith demonstrations and honey bee keeping, among other demonstrations. The event is set for 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Kenneth D. Welch Outdoor Learning Center, 25601 Nelson Way.

CAJUN FEST BENEFITTING KATY CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES
Gumbo cookoff, live music and a bounce house, among other activities. Proceeds benefit Katy Christian Ministries. The event is from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at MKT Distillery, 5373 1st St.

PROJECT PROM
Project Prom donates a prom dress, shoes, and accessories to financially disadvantaged senior girls who would not otherwise be able to afford to attend their school prom. Ladies can also book a day for professional hair, makeup and nail treatment. The event is from 12-5 p.m. at the Hangar Unity Center in Brookshire. For more information, call 832-208-2772.

APRIL 2-3
TEXASSELECT.COM EVENT IN BELLVILLE
Cowboy Szymanski, who appeared in the first season of the Forged in Fire television show on the History Channel, invites the public to meet and interact with several of his fellow Forged in Fire competitors at the Texas Select Custom Cutlery Event. The Bellville Lions Club will serve hot food and cold beer, benefitting many local charities. This event will be from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Austin County Fair Convention and Expo Center in Bellville. Admission is \$5 at the door. Parking is free.

APRIL 3
ALMOST HOME PET RESCUE BENEFIT
Cookoff. Presale tickets are \$15, at-the-door tickets are \$18 and kids' tickets are \$5. Proceeds benefit Almost Home

Pet Rescues. The event is set for 11 a.m. at the Wildcatter Saloon.

THE SPAZMATICS AT WILDCATTER SALOON
The Spazmatics, an '80s tribute band, will perform at Wildcatter Saloon, 6913 Katy Fwy. Doors open at 5 p.m., show starts at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$15 general admission pre-sale, \$20 general admission. The concert is at Wildcatter Saloon.

APRIL 7
JORDAN RANCH ARTISAN FAIR
Booths will showcase the wares of local businesses. Guests can stroll through the market while enjoying live music. Jordan Ranch farmers will be selling fresh produce. Also on hand will be Tap Truck, selling wine and beer. Food will be available for purchase from Offbeat Eat. The event is set for 5-8 p.m. at Sunset Farm, 30270 Jordan Crossing Blvd. For more information, visit the website jordanranchtexas.com.

APRIL 8
VETERANS' NETWORKING EVENT
Veterans are welcome for this personal and professional networking event, which is set for 6 p.m. at MKT Distillery, 5373 1st St.

CENTRAL GREEN PARK AT LACENTERRA
A tribute to the musician Prince. The event is set for 7-9 p.m. at Central Green Park at LaCenterra, 23501 Cinco Ranch Blvd.

GROOVE 22
Proceeds from the GROOVE 22 event benefit the Katy ISD Education Foundation. Tickets available starting at \$100. The event is from 7-11 p.m. at The Oaks Kitchen, 2100 Cane Island Pkwy.

APRIL 9
BASKETS & BUNNIES
Katy Baskets and Bunnies sponsored by the City of Katy Parks & Recreation Department. The event is set for 9 a.m. at Katy City Park, 5720 Franz Road.

APRIL 14
KATY ISD SCHOOL BOARD FORUM
Candidates for the Katy Independent School District Board of Trustees share their views about how they would serve the community if elected. Sponsored by the Katy Area Chamber of Com-



KELLEY SWEET PHOTOGRAPHY

The 2022 Katy Sip N Stroll – a wine tasting and culinary event which benefits The Ballard House – will be held April 23rd from 6-9 p.m. at The Ark by Norris, 21402 Merchants Way, Katy. For ticket information, visit sipandstroll.com.

merce. The event is set for 6 p.m. at the chamber office, 814 East Avenue, Ste. G. For more information, visit the website katychamber.com.

APRIL 16
KATY MARKET DAY
The monthly Katy Market Day features vendors, a food truck, beer garden, entertainment, and inflatable for children's entertainment. The event is from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in historic Downtown Katy. For more information, contact Betsy Proctor at The Limited Antiques.

MEGGA EASTER EGG HUNT
Katy's First Baptist Church is hosting an Easter Egg hunt. The event is set for 11:30 a.m. at Katy's First Baptist Church, 600 Pin Oak Road.

CENTRAL GREEN PARK AT LACENTERRA
Live music by Brass Inferno, a 12-piece brass-rock party band featuring a five-piece horn section, playing favorites from bands such as BS&T, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, Chicago, Joe Cocker and more. The show is from 7-9 p.m. at Central Green Park at LaCenterra, 23501 Cinco Ranch Blvd.

APRIL 16-17
EASTER EGG HUNT WITH GOATS
Easter Egg hunt with goats, a cute craft and fun day on the farm. The event is set for 10 a.m. April 16 and 4 p.m. April 17 at R22 Therapeutic Farm and Goat Yoga, 1224 Peach Ridge Road in Brookshire.

APRIL 17
WILDCATTERS ADULT EASTER EGG HUNT
Over \$2000 in cash and prizes, including a \$500.00 grand prize, will be offered at this 21-and-up event at the Wildcatter Saloon, 26913 Katy Freeway. 3 - 5 pm.

APRIL 18
KCM GOLF TOURNAMENT
The 23rd annual Katy Christian Ministries Golf Tournament. The event is set for April 18 at the Weston Lakes Country Club, 32611 FM 1093 in Fulshear. For more information, visit the website ktcn.org/golf.

APRIL 21
FULSHEAR KATY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CASINO NIGHT
Food, drinks, raffle, blackjack, craps,

roulette, and networking. The event begins at 6 p.m. at the Hemi Hideout, 1172 Willpitz Rd., in Brookshire. For tickets, visit the website FulshearKaty.com.

APRIL 23
KACC KATY EARTH DAY CELEBRATION
Shredding on the Go, which provides document shredding, is partnering with Junkluggers to haul away items for recycling or disposal. Howdy Homemade Ice Cream will also be serving delicious treats. Katy Area Chamber of Commerce, 814 East Avenue, Katy. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

APRIL 23
KATY SIP 'N STROLL
Katy Sip 'n Stroll is Katy's largest wine and culinary festival. Discover new wines, craft beer and culinary creations amidst artisan vendors and live music while raising funds for the Ballard House. The event is set for 6-9 p.m. (general admission) at The Ark by Norris, 21402 Merchants Way. VIP admission is at 5 p.m. For more information, visit the website sipnastroll.com.

APRIL 23
CROSS CREEK ART MARKET AND HOME TOUR
Enjoy local art, music, activities for the kids and food from some of the area's best food trucks. The event is from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 6440 Cross Creek Ranch Bend Lane in Fulshear.

KATY AREA SAFETY FEST
A free, family-friendly festival featuring personnel, equipment, and activities from emergency response agencies serving the Greater Katy community. The goal of the event is to connect community members to the people who serve in these agencies, as well as provide education and resources to encourage safety preparedness. The event is from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Katy Mills Mall/Burlington Coat Factory entrance. For more information, visit the website katyareasafetyfest.org/.

APRIL 30
WALLER COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION DEMOLITION DERBY
Lots of crashing and smashing at the Waller County Fair Association Demolition Derby. The Event is set for at the Waller County Fairground, 21988 FM 359, Hempstead.



SUNSET MARKET

Youngsters such as this one can check out the attractions at the Jordan Ranch Artisan Fair, set for April 7.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

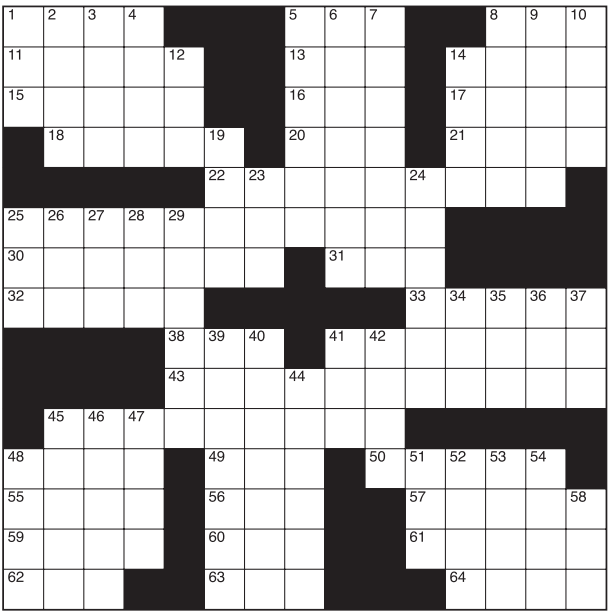
CLUES ACROSS

- 1. One who regrets
- 5. Time zone
- 8. Subway dweller
- 11. Bend in a river
- 13. Alias
- 14. Isodor __, American Nobel physicist
- 15. Very (music)
- 16. Zero
- 17. Phil __, former CIA
- 18. Competitions
- 20. Unwell
- 21. Puts in place
- 22. Gets rid of
- 25. Allows light to pass through
- 30. Climbed quickly
- 31. We all have it
- 32. There's a North & South
- 33. Emaciation
- 38. Supervises flying
- 41. Very dark colors
- 43. Unwanted
- 45. Grants
- 48. Three visited Jesus
- 49. Wife of Amun
- 50. Broadway actress Daisy
- 55. A Spanish river
- 56. I (German)
- 57. French opera composer
- 59. Six (Spanish)
- 60. Last letter
- 61. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation

- 62. Noah had one
- 63. Make a mistake
- 64. Tall plant

CLUES DOWN

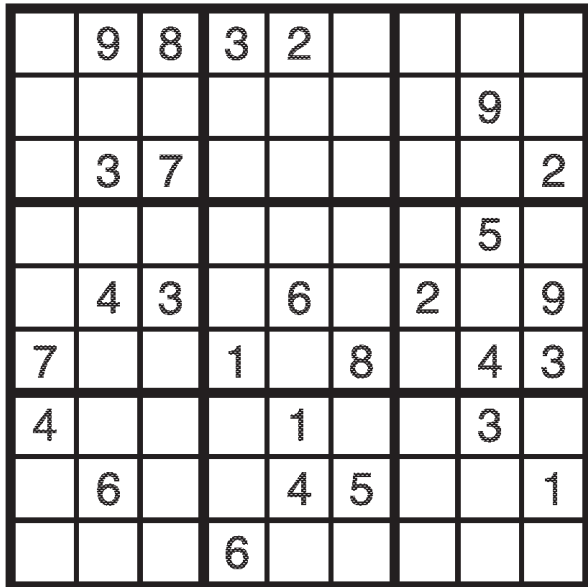
- 1. Computer memory
- 2. "Et __"; "And wife" (Latin)
- 3. Ancient Syrian city
- 4. College army
- 5. Cassava
- 6. Talented
- 7. Capital of Estonia
- 8. Finger millet
- 9. In a way, assists
- 10. Men's fashion accessories
- 12. Misery
- 14. Skin disorder
- 19. Selling at specially reduced prices
- 23. Good friend
- 24. Stationary portion of a generator
- 25. Expression of disappointment
- 26. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet
- 27. Where birds fly
- 28. Midway between north and northeast
- 29. Chaotic states
- 34. Comedic actress Gasteyer
- 35. Kids' dining accessory
- 36. Snakelike fish



- 37. Midway between south and southeast
- 39. Assign lifelike qualities to
- 40. One who cites
- 41. Midway between east and southeast
- 42. North wind
- 44. One or the other
- 45. Cavalry sword
- 46. Of the Hungarian language
- 47. Life stories
- 48. Flat tableland with steep edges
- 51. Swiss river
- 52. Plant that makes gum
- 53. French cleric
- 54. One point east of northeast
- 58. Free from

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

SUDOKU



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.

DIG

from page A1

equipment. Most equipment requires the operator to be at least 3½ feet (or 42 inches) tall.

There was no immediate word when the re-grand opening would happen. The company said guests who pre-purchased tickets will receive an email with instructions for rescheduling their visit.

The park is on the north side of the shopping mall and east of the Bass Pro Shops in the mall. It celebrated its groundbreaking Nov. 19.

The company partnered with Mustang Cat for the excavation equipment. Mustang Cat is a Houston-based construction supply company. It has a retail outlet on the Katy Freeway.

The company intends for the park to be a site for parties and corporate events. Towards that end, a pavilion is being built and outdoor games will be available for patrons to enjoy.

The company partnered with the Texas A&M University Department of Construction Science for educational materials.

Box T Construction built the park and Trivium Advisors developed the park.



Excavation equipment such as this is a popular attraction at the Dig World adventure park at Katy Mills Mall.



A photo taken by Fort Bend County Pct. 1 Commissioner Vincent Morales shows traffic moving southbound on the grand Parkway, but heading northbound was a different story.

PARKWAY

from page A1

would run from north of FM 1093 to south of I-10. The number of lanes would increase from four overall to six overall. Shoulders would be widened from six to 12 feet. For those lanes running between Highland Knolls Boulevard to south of I-10, a concrete median barrier would be added.

North of Westheimer Parkway to Highland Knolls Boulevard, the grassy median would remain and no concrete barrier would be required, the department said. The existing frontage road configuration would remain the same.

The department said noise barriers have also been recommended as a result of a noise analysis for the proposed improvements.

Frontage road construction is another matter.

According to Morales, the only frontage road that exists today runs northbound from FM 1093 to Fry Road. But other, planned frontage roads are being administered, designed and constructed with Fort Bend County funds, with the Texas Department of Transportation providing inspection services during the construction.

Seven sections of frontage road are either in design or are under construction, Morales and Grigar said. They are:

- A 1.04-mile northbound road from Fry Road to Westheimer Parkway, in the design phase.
- A 0.68-mile northbound road from Cinco Ranch Boulevard to Bay Hill Boulevard, in the design phase.
- A 0.57-mile northbound road from Westheimer Parkway to Cinco Ranch Boulevard, in the design phase.
- A 0.57-mile southbound road from Cinco Ranch Boulevard to Bay Hill Boulevard, in the design and construction phase.
- A 0.55-mile southbound road from Westheimer Parkway to Cinco Ranch Boulevard, in the design and construction phase.
- A 1.04-mile southbound road from Fry Road to Westheimer Parkway, in the design phase.
- A 0.70-mile southbound road from FM 1993 to Fry Road, in the design phase.

Grigar said by adding the access roads, a driver no longer has to get on the freeway if, for example, he is driving between Westheimer Parkway and Fry Road. It will ease traffic congestion.

"It will help," Grigar said.

HOSPITAL

from page A1

tions as the first point of entry for patients who come to Memorial Hermann Katy in times of severe illness or as a result of traumatic injury," Vivien Bond, vice president and COO of Memorial Hermann Katy, said. "This expansion – both in size and increased capabilities – will enable us to better serve these patients by providing the full spectrum of quality care right here in our community."

The project will also support a major overhaul of women's services, including relocating the nursery and adding labor and delivery rooms, a cesarean section (C-section) suite and doubling the number of obstetrical emergency rooms. The Ironman Sports Medicine Institute at Memorial Hermann Sports Park-Katy and the Memorial Hermann Breast Care Center are also expanding.

The expansion will also add job opportunities, both clinical and administrative. Qualified candidates can learn more at memorialhermann.org/careers/.

The hospital is also looking to bring on additional volunteers. To learn more about volunteer opportunities, visit the website memorialhermann.org/locations/katy/volunteer.

This project comes following several areas of growth at the hospital. Within the past five years, the campus has opened a 24/7 pediatric emergency department and inpatient unit, as well as the Memorial Hermann Sports Park-Katy. The sports park is a full-range sports medicine facility that provides medical care and athletic training. The hospital also is home to a Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and it serves as a Memorial Hermann Life Flight base for the west Houston metro area.

COVID

from page A1

• Waller County: 7,846 confirmed cases, and 1,594 probable cases. The department said there were 105 deaths in the county.

A discrepancy exists between these numbers, kept by the state, and the numbers kept by Fort Bend and Harris counties. A Fort Bend County official has said the Texas Department of State Health Services reports cases from the national electronic disease surveillance system database. In December, the state changed its public dashboard to reflect Texas cases as reported

from that database.

According to the Fort Bend County COVID-19 dashboard, the county has had 157, 025 total cases, with one, 217 deaths. According to the Harris County COVID-19 dashboard, the county has had 878, 339 confirmed cases, and 7,500 deaths.

Waller County uses the numbers kept by the state.

Harris County remained in a Level III, or yellow, threat level Tuesday. Waller County has not used a threat level system as Fort Bend and Harris counties have.

George said Fort Bend County worked with local hospital systems, clinics and other medical partners to address the pandemic. He said they all played a role in testing county residents, and that Fort Bend County is among the top five counties in the state in terms of testing.

The county set up centers across the county for vaccinations. Today, he said, Fort Bend County has the most vaccinated citizens in the state.

"We were going to deal with this

pandemic and that's what we did," George said, adding that everyone did everything they could to vaccinate the most citizens in Fort Bend County and reduce the threat level.

George said 87% of county residents ages 5 and up have received at least one vaccination shot. He said 78% of county residents ages 5 and up are fully vaccinated.

"That's an incredible accomplishment," George said.

George said the first COVID-19 case occurred on March 4, 2020, in Fort Bend County.

2 Shows in 1
This Weekend!

Katy

HOME & GARDEN

Show

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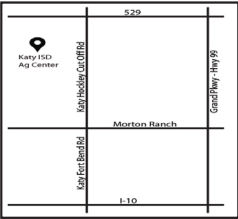
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Genocide is genocide, no matter the race of the victims

Years ago, when I was just beginning to practice immigration law, I remember hearing about two horrific genocides. They were almost back-to-back, happening within little more than a year of each other, and each became the focus of a war crimes tribunal at the Hague. The first one occurred in the spring of 1994 when Rwandan Hutus massacred hundreds of thousands of their Tutsi neighbors in a matter of months. A year later, in Bosnia, thousands of Muslim men and boys were murdered by their Serbian captors in a town called Srebrenica.

At the time, it was difficult to find any overt “racism” as we have come to view it in the United States, because both the victims and the victimizers in Rwanda were Black, and the victims and victimizers in Bosnia were white (although in the latter case there was the additional element of religion, which was the motivating factor for the Bosnian Serbs). All that mattered was that one group of people had terrorized and dehumanized another group of people based on hatred and ignorance, and the world looked on in horror. It was a replay of the Holocaust, only televised.

But when I listen to people like Joy Ann “Why Is She Still On Television” Reid, I realize that we Americans have lost any sense of reality. On her show on MSNBC, Reid made this statement about the deepening humanitarian crisis:

“As the world watches the devastation unfold in Ukraine, nearly 4,000 miles away, another crisis is deepening that we don’t hear much about in the U.S., and that is the war in Yemen. The coverage of Ukraine has revealed a pretty radical disparity in how human Ukrainians look and feel to western media compared to their browner and Blacker counterparts, with some reporters using very telling comparisons in their analyses of the war.” She added that the world cared more for white Christians than it did for people who looked like her.

Interestingly enough, Reid has only recently become interested in Yemen, judging from her searchable public statements. I googled her name next to “crisis in Yemen” and came up with page after page of her most recent tirade against white Christians, but virtually nothing earlier than last week. Nothing. When you consider that the situation in Yemen has been going on since approximately 2011 and really picked up speed in 2014, you might think that Reid is a little slow on the uptake.

Then there were those “I can’t believe that happened!” news flashes about people of color who were taken off of refugee trains to give space to Ukrainians attempting to flee



CHRISTINE FLOWERS
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

their beleaguered country. When there was the suggestion that Black and brown foreign exchange students were taken off of trains, the first reaction should have been: That’s terrible, but people become desperate during war time and lose sense of their humanity.

Instead, it became “those disgusting white people are racist, and they got even more racist when the bombs were falling on their heads and their children were being massacred. God, they are just white supremacists, like those parents at school board meetings.”

I’m exaggerating, of course. But instead of realizing that people act poorly in times of crisis, the mainstream media went right to the George Floyd narrative of “white people hating on people of color.” It never occurred to the observers that maybe, just maybe, the color of the students didn’t matter. It was the fact, equally repellent but not racialized, that Ukrainians had more sympathy for other Ukrainians than they did for foreigners.

It was the same when we were evacuating Afghanistan and my friends were saying “we need to get the Americans out,” and I was saying “we also need to rescue the Afghan allies who risked their lives for Americans.” Country first is not a good thing, in times of crisis. But it’s not about race.

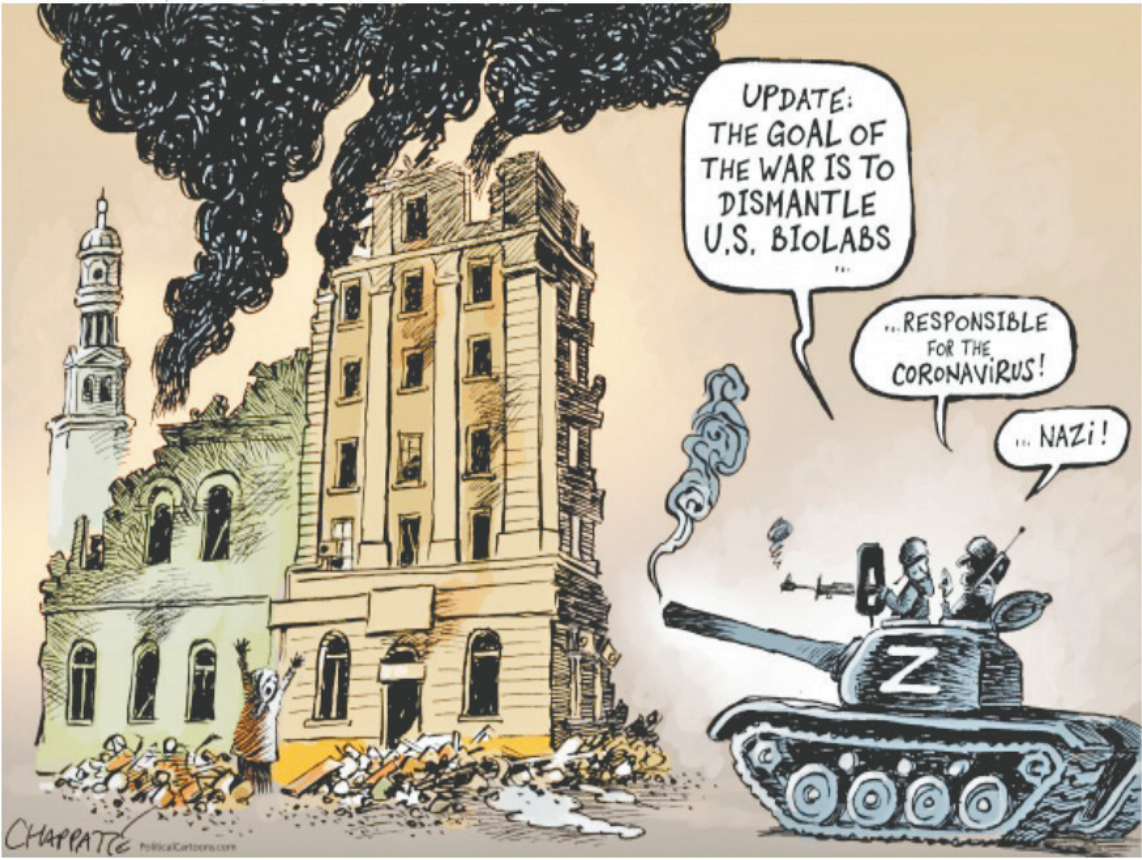
People can be inhuman in many different ways. The Bosnian Serbs hated the Bosnian Muslims because they saw these men, who looked and spoke and lived like them, side by side for generations, as the “other.” It was their religion that put the target on their backs.

In Rwanda, the Hutus went after men, women and children who looked exactly like them, sounded like them, worshiped like them (mostly Catholic Christians), and saluted the same flag. They did this because of tribal loyalties, and ethnic hatreds. And skin color was irrelevant, as it was with the Serbs.

It’s sad that we have to fit every instance of horror and genocide into these nice little Black Lives Matter categories in the U.S., and twist the narrative so that it allows despicable people like Joy Ann Reid to exploit tragedy. There is a genocide going on in Ukraine, and the vast majority of the victims are white Christians.

The fact that this is a problem for people like Joy Ann Reid shouldn’t make a damn difference.

Christine Flowers is an attorney and a columnist for the Delaware County Daily Times, and can be reached at cflowers1961@gmail.com.



Will this be your best spring ever?

A tiny portion of my “day job” at a farm-and-home cooperative involves writing radio commercials and on-hold phone messages.

More often than I like to admit, I get stuck for a closing zinger and settle for trite sentiments, such as “Let our friendly staff help make this your best hunting season/New Year/spring ever!” (Note to self: next spring, remember to try something dignified like “Please, please make your money quit hibernating!”)

But I really do hope my readers enjoy the best spring ever. The opportunities certainly exist.

The glorious days following the vernal equinox are a time for shaking off winter sluggishness and displaying boundless creativity. Still haven’t taken down those Christmas decorations? With a little Daylight Saving Time ingenuity, you can transform Saint Nick into Moses in time for the annual rerun of “The Ten Commandments.” (“Let my people ho-ho-ho!”) Add fireworks, and you’ve got a head start on summer and Uncle Sam!

Whether you’re rekindling your relationship with your Significant Other or seeking “footloose and fancy free” new adventures, spring can be a promising time for romance. As Alfred, Lord Tennyson pointed out, “In the spring a young man’s fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love – although he assuredly keeps his porn stash



DANNY TYREE
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

handy for next winter.”

Yes, warmer weather means hunks and babes showing more skin. But don’t think that sparks will always fly in the time of seasonal allergies. (“Sorry, I’m more interested in the hanky than the panky. Ah-choo! Did anyone ever tell you your eyes look like limpid pools of pollen?”)

Birdwatchers certainly get a chance to grab their binoculars and spread their wings in spring. Maybe when the red, red robin comes bob-bob-bobbing along, they can get in on his class-action suit. (“What if I want to saunter or skip or amble? This bob-bob-bobbing gait is systemic speciesism!”)

Yes, Mother Nature works overtime in springtime. Puppies, kittens, lambs and other young animals frolic everywhere. (“I am Fluffy, king of kings. Look upon my cuteness and despair!”)

Of course, spring is a time for the “weekend squires” (as The Monkees termed them) to hop aboard their steeds (riding mowers) and resume manicuring, pedicuring or liposuctioning their lawns—to stay one step ahead of Neighbor Jones. (“Wait’ll Jones gets

a look at...what? He passed away over the winter? But Welcoming Pines Cemetery has a nationally ranked groundskeeper! My six acres...his plot...noooooo!”)

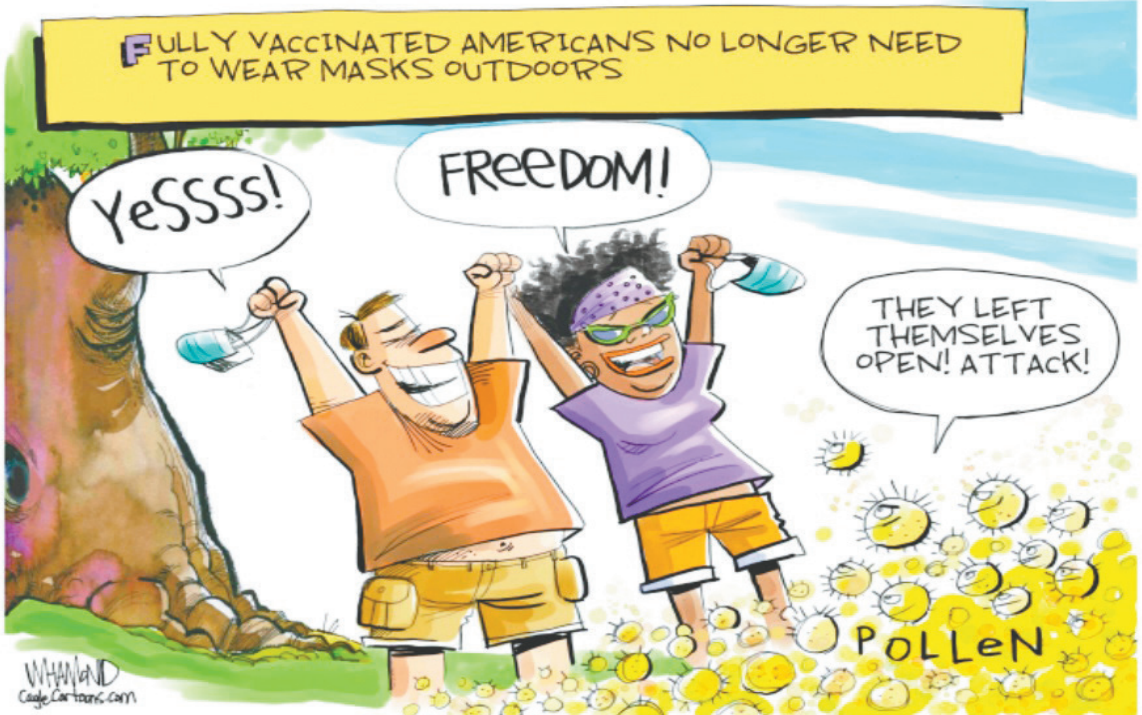
I’m sure many of you are excited about Major League Baseball’s spring training. Maybe one of the players will accidentally discover an equation that keeps the games under two hours. Granted, such a rookie will doubtless keep Jimmy Hoffa company under the pitcher’s mound...

Astrophysicists are fascinated by the simultaneous presence of spring-cleaning campaigns and yard-sale shopping in spring. (“That recently cleared corner in the breakfast nook – it has become a black hole capturing knickknacks and thingamajigs in its gravitational field...”)

Walk a trail, plant a garden. Have that spring fling.

Sure, your excitement may be muted because a loved one who really enjoyed spring is no longer around to share it with you; but you could always hire a TV psychic and reconnect. (“I’m getting an image of you laughing... or singing...or cleaning the lint trap... on either weekends or weekdays... with your beloved aunt from your father’s side of the family or your mother’s side or maybe from a bottle of pancake syrup...”)

Danny Tyree welcomes email responses at tyreetyrades@aol.com and visits to his Facebook fan page “Tyree’s Tyrades.”



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Katy company creates shield to help thwart catalytic converter thefts

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

As catalytic converter theft has become a nationwide problem, a Katy company has created a shield that it hopes will help reduce those thefts.

Torans Precision Fabricating, 5230 5th St., developed the shield last year after being asked to do so by officials at a Texas Toyota dealership, business development manager Amanda Hernandez said.

"They reached out to us to make the part because of the thefts going on in the area," Hernandez said. "This is very problematic, and it's going on in Houston and the surrounding areas. People are losing their lives trying to prevent the thefts."

The top targets for converter thefts are Toyota Tundras and Toyota Tacomas. Hernandez said thieves are more likely to steal converters from these vehicles because they are higher and have four converters.

"Now, we are seeing that Ford and

Dodge models, and a few others, are being targeted," Hernandez said. Last year, the Houston Police Department said the Toyota Prius, Ford F-250 and Honda Element & CRV were popular models for thieves to attack.

Thieves are stealing converters because the precious metals they are made of has a high street value.

"From my understanding, the metal inside it, they can receive a lot of money for it," Hernandez said. "It's just quick cash for a thief."

Victims of converter thefts have to replace those converters, which can run about \$5,000, Hernandez said. Add the time lost with the car in the shop, and having to drive a replacement vehicle in the meantime, can also be troubling.

The shield is made from aluminum.

Shield size varies with the vehicle. For the Toyota Tundra, the boxes are 46 inches long by 37 inches wide by 5 inches high. One can install a shield himself, or he could ask an auto professional to do the work.

"It's very easy to install it yourself," Hernandez said, adding that the company recommends using an auto professional for installation.

The National Insurance Crime Bureau offered these tips to prevent catalytic converter thefts:

- Park in a garage or in a secure area.
- Install a bright, motion sensor light to dissuade potential thieves.
- Park fleet vehicles in secured, alarmed, and well-lit yards.
- Always lock the vehicle and set the alarm.
- Install an anti-theft device.

In addition to these tips, Farmers Insurance also suggests that one etch the license plate number onto the converter. By doing this, the part becomes identifiable to law enforcement. The Houston Police Department suggested etching the vehicle identification number onto the converter.

Hernandez said the shields are available directly from the company, through eBay and Amazon.



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TRIBUTE

BEATRICE THERESE JUNGBLUT DANTE

Beatrice Therese Jungblut Dante passed away on March 16, 2022, at the age of 87. Bea was born on January 31, 1935, in Chicago, Illinois.

In 1956, she graduated at the top of her class Magna Cum Laude from Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with a Bachelor of Science with honors in chemistry and minors in physics, English, and German. She then attended the University of Heidelberg, Germany, as a Fulbright Scholar and earned a Master of Science from Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey. After working as a chemist, she became a stay-at-home mom. Bea then graduated from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas, with a Master of Library Science

and was the librarian at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory in Houston, Texas, for over ten years.

Moving back to New Jersey she was the chief cataloger and head of the technical processing department at Middletown Township Public Library. Retiring to Katy, Texas, she was a volunteer in area Catholic high schools and parish libraries. Bea had a love for traveling, gardening, sewing, playing the piano and playing bridge.

Bea was preceded in death by her husband, Mark Franklin Dante, Ph.D.; and son, Thomas Paul Dante.

She is survived by her son, Joseph Peter Dante and his wife Kisha, and their children, Samantha and Brandon Patterson, Thomas Dante, Philip Dante, and Christopher Dante; and her sister, Lillian Wagner.

The family will receive friends from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 24, 2022, at the Schmidt Funeral Home Grand Parkway Chapel, in Katy, where a rosary will be recited at 7:00 p.m. Mass will be celebrated 11:00 a.m. on Friday, March 25, 2022, at Epiphany of the Lord Catholic Church, in Katy, with Rev. Tom Lam, Celebrant. Rite of Committal will take place in Gate of Heaven Cemetery in East Hanover, New Jersey.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent in Bea's memory to the Dante Scholarship at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory, 8900 Bellaire Blvd., Houston, Texas 77036.

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Katy Taste Fest set for Saturday after 2-year hiatus

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

After a two-year hiatus, the Katy Taste Fest returns with plenty of locally prepared foods to enjoy.

The family-friendly festival is set for 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at Typhoon Texas, 555 Katy Fort Bend Road. VIP entry is at 10 a.m.

Judges for the event are Angelina Allen, Katy Taste Fest representative; Chris Batsios, owner of Pappa Gyros and Sapore Pizzeria; Scott Chapman, owner of Proud Pie; Kevin Muccular, owner of That's My Dog, and Brian Walz, Katy/Fort Bend Foodies administrator.

Batsios said he was asked to be a judge and was excited to participate.

"The Katy Taste Fest is a big event for Katy," Batsios said. "It showcases all the restaurants. We've got some good restaurants in Katy. It's not like it used to be. Katy has grown so much and has new flavors coming in. I remember when I came here 15 years ago from Detroit, things were a little simpler back then."

When Batsios describes the changes in Katy restaurant fare, he includes his own store, now relocated to 21910 Franz Road from its previous location on Kingsland Boulevard. He said he and his team planned to open last March, but the pandemic intervened like



GEORGE SLAUGHTER

Chris Batsios of Pappa Gyros is among the judges at this year's Katy Taste Fest.

it did for so many other businesses. His store finally opened in February.

"That was the craziest time," Batsios said, adding that he was able to keep everyone on his team working at the restaurant during the pandemic, when the dining area had to be closed and customers could only get their food through the drive-through.

"We wanted to keep everyone working," Batsios said.

As for what he'll be judging, Batsios said he will be looking at flavor.

"Flavor is king," Batsios said. "I want to see if the spices are just right, the food is prepared well and the presentation. I'll be looking for any surprises or curveballs that make it stand out, especially in competition. You can't be afraid to look outside the box in those situations."

Organizers said they expect over 1,200 to attend this year. Cyril Thomas, event chair, said organizers are ecstatic that the festival is back.

"It has been a long two years since we could celebrate the flavors of Katy together," Thomas

said. "Our new venue partner, Typhoon Texas, is an incredible space to host the event and it will help us continue to grow the Katy Taste Fest year after year. The only thing that Katy loves more than food, is giving back to the community. We have granted over \$80,000 to charities since 2017 and we can't wait to continue with the money that we raise from the Katy Taste Fest this year."

Organizers said the festival began in 2017 as a way for Katy-area foodies to gather and sample foods while supporting local philanthropic efforts.

Tickets vary in price. They include:

- General Admission Family Pack (\$125): This package includes two adult general admission tickets and up to three Kids' Zone tickets. Bag check enforced.

- VIP Taste Lounge (\$85): This package enables an earlier entry, at 10 a.m., and early access to the lounge, a taste card good for eight (4oz) champagne/wine pours, exclusive mimosa/champagne bar, a disc jockey, and covered private patio. The VIP tent provides comfortable seating areas while you relax with champagne and enjoy exclusive samples. Guests must either be 21 years of age or older, or if they are 18-20 years of age, they must be accompanied by a parent. Bag check enforced.
- General Admission Tasting

(\$50): For guests 21 years of age or older and includes a sampling card good for four (4oz) wines/beers with unlimited tastes from over 20+ restaurants. Bag check enforced.

- Designated Driver (\$40):

For guests 13-20 years of age and those guests who do not wish to consume alcohol. Ticket enables unlimited tastings from over 20 restaurants and unlimited water. Bag check enforced.

- Kids' Zone (\$10): For guests 2-12 years of age. Ticket includes a kid's meal (Chicken tenders from Typhoon Texas, chips and drink). It also offers unlimited access to the Kids' Zone, which includes bounce houses, interactive Kids' Zone activities, and a face painter. Bag check enforced.

- Additional Beer and Wine Tasting Ticket (\$20): Each ticket enables the holder to enjoy four additional samples of favorite alcoholic beverages (wine - 4oz, beer - 6oz). Bag check enforced.

- VIP Plus Private Cabana (\$1,000): This package is touted as the choice for entertaining clients, thanking employees, or holding a neighborhood party. This package includes eight VIP passes with private cabana seating. Each cabana includes a butler for serving the food. Guests must either be 21 years of age or older. Guests 18-20 years of age must be accompanied by a parent. Bag check enforced.



FIREHOUSE SUBS

Taha Mohamed has been named Firehouse Subs West-Central Franchisee of the Year.

Katy Firehouse Subs franchisee earns honor

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Eight years after opening his first Firehouse Subs restaurant, franchisee Taha Mohamed has earned an Axe Award for West-Central Franchisee of the Year.

In the Firehouse Subs system of more than 1,210 restaurants, this top company honor recognizes Mohamed as a high-performing business owner, who has exemplified unwavering commitment to maintain outstanding operations at his three restaurants in Katy. His sharp focus and diligence in making sure Firehouse Subs team members are well-trained has

increased guest satisfaction.

"I am honored to be named Firehouse Subs Franchisee of the Year in the West-Central Region," Mohamed said. "It's always been a dream of mine to build a family business with my three sons and we've loved serving up hot and hearty subs and genuine hospitality to the Katy community since we opened our first location in February 2014."

He has also been active in the Katy community. As a founding member of the Katy Area Safety Festival, Mohamed is passionate about and committed to bettering public safety. One of his favorite parts about being a Firehouse Subs business owner is the portion of every pur-

chase that benefits Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation which has donated 92 grants worth \$1.1 million to first responders and public safety organizations in greater Houston.

The safety festival is set for April 23 at the Burlington Coat Factory entrance to Katy Mills Mall. The safety festival, which is free, is a family-friendly festival featuring personnel, equipment, and activities from emergency response agencies serving the Greater Katy community.

The festival connects community members to the men and women who serve in these agencies as well as provide education and resources to encourage safety preparedness.

Katy Lemonade Day registration underway

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

After two years in which virtual lemonade stands were the norm, organizers for this year's Lemonade Day are hoping for an in-person, splashing success.

Parents, mentors, teachers and youth leaders are being encouraged to register for Lemonade Day, set for May 7. Registration is free and sponsored by Members First Credit Union. Robin Tooms, chief marketing officer, said the purpose of Lemonade Day is more than just making and selling lemonade.

"It's important for kids to learn about financial management early in life," Tooms said.

When one registers to participate in Lemonade Day, Tooms said he or she will receive access to the Lemonade Day app or workbooks designed to teach business skills, financial literacy, teamwork, social and emotional skills, goal setting, and responsibility.

Tooms said many families

register just for the financial literacy materials.

"They don't even plan to set up a stand," Tooms said. "They want their kids to have access to the financial literacy resources."

One feature of this year's event is that three registrants will be chosen to set up their stands at the credit union, 18211 Katy Fwy. Twice each year the credit union hosts a free recycling event, where people can discard old paperwork that needs shredding. A recycling event happens from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. that day and is free.

"Normally, we give out free water, but we're going to encourage them to buy lemonade," Tooms said, adding that in the past, about 180 cars came by with paperwork needing to be discarded and shredded. She said the May 7 recycle event was a case where the customers are coming to the lemonade stands.

For more information and to register, visit the website lemonadeday.com/katy.



Lemonade Day organizers hope the event will be a valuable learning experience for students.

PEXELS



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Tim Davis is a member of *Syndicated Columnists*, a national organization committed to a fully transparent approach to safe money strategies for retirement.

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Used book sale set for March 26

The Friends of the Maud Smith Marks Public Library holds its monthly used book sale from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 26 at the library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd.

The sale features a large selection of hardback fiction and nonfiction, as well as children's books and paperbacks. Proceeds will benefit the library.

3D printer orientation set for April 7

The Maud Smith Marks Public Library offers 3D printer training services at the library. The training is at 4 p.m. on April 7 at the library.

Those completing the class will then be able to schedule time to use the 3D printers at Harris County Public Library branches and MakerCentral, at which time they will complete a short machine-specific orientation at the location of their choice. Attendees will also receive a badge for the Dremel DigiLab 3D45 printer at the Maud Smith Marks Public Library.

Registration is required and space is limited. For more information, call the library at 832-927-7860.

Communication for success training set for April 11

The Maud Smith Marks Public Library presents executive business coach Greg Hess, who will lead a training session intended to improve one's communication skills for personal and professional success. The workshop is at 6 p.m. on April 11 at the library. For more information, call the library at 832-927-7860.

Cricut Design Space training set for April 12

The Maud Smith Marks Public Library offers a class intended to teach users about Cricut Design Space. The first class is set from 2-4 p.m. April 12 at the library. Participants are invited to bring their personal laptops to follow along within their own Cricut Design Space software, or bring a notebook to take notes. For more information, call the library at 832-927-7860.

Book launch set for April 26

Katy Budget Books presents



Used books such as these will be available at a used book sale sponsored by the Friends of the Maud Marks Public Library. Proceeds from the sale, to be held Saturday at the library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd., benefit the library.

Kerrellyn Sparks, a local author of paranormal romance novels. Sparks is releasing her latest novel, *When a Princess Proposes*. The book launch is at 7:30 p.m. on April 26 at the bookstore, 870 S. Mason. For more information, call the bookstore at 281-578-7770.

Cross Creek Ranch donates nearly \$20,000 to local charities

Cross Creek Ranch in Fulshear said it has donated nearly \$20,000 to six Fort Bend charities following the late 2021 Give Back, Build Hope campaign.

Through the campaign, a monetary donation was made for each new home sold in November and December. Each one of the six charities—Abigail's Place, Brookwood Community, Family Hope, Fort

Bend PAWS, Rainbow Room and Texana Center—received \$3,300.

"We started our 'give back' campaign in 2020 after local charities were overrun with requests sparked by the pandemic," Rob Bamford, Cross Creek Ranch general manager, said. "The need continued into 2021, so we saw every reason to continue the campaign. Each of these charities is indispensable, serving distinct populations in Fort Bend County. We are happy to help them continue their important work."

Between the two years, the community has donated more than \$40,000 to local charities.

"This donation really makes a difference," Dale Olson, Family Hope executive director, said. "Many families will receive more food on their table. Just this morning, a family was helped after their

lights were turned off. The need is real and supporters like Cross Creek Ranch help families have a better life."

Family Hope specifically helps those in northern Fort Bend County with food and assistance with medical, rent and utility costs. Throughout the pandemic, Cross Creek Ranch has partnered with Family Hope to provide food for those in need.

Richmond-based Abigail's Place serves single mothers facing episodic homelessness, providing emergency shelter and helping clients toward self-sufficiency. The charity's transitional housing includes on-site shelter units, rental assistance, short-term hotel stays and security deposits.

Brookwood Community provides an educational environment that creates meaningful work,

builds a sense of belonging and awakens genuine purpose in the lives of adults with disabilities.

Fort Bend PAWS (Pets Are Worth Saving) raises funds and awareness for Fort Bend County Animal Services to help them maintain a high save rate. The organization also provides heartworm treatment and preventative and low-cost spay and neuter events.

The Rainbow Room is a resource room stocked with new school supplies, clothes, toiletries, snacks, diapers and other items that could meet the needs of families in crisis. Caseworkers can access the room at all times to meet the basic needs of children between the ages of newborn to 18. The Rainbow Room also holds a Back-to-School drive and a holiday drive to fulfill children's wish lists.

Texana Center focuses on delivering life-changing services to adults and children affected by autism, intellectual disabilities and mental illness in Fort Bend County and surrounding areas. Texana's new Fulshear Campus created the latest program, Center for Advancement, to provide young adults with autism an opportunity to explore their strengths, achieve skills and be prepared to live successful lives.

Cross Creek Ranch also accepted donations of needed items for the charities. Such items included coloring books, puzzles, socks, paper towels, cat toys, board games and more. Dozens of boxes of items also were collected and delivered to the charities.

Eight homebuilders offer new homes priced from the \$300,000s to more than \$1 million in Cross Creek Ranch. A number of homes are available now for those wanting to move in this year. For more information, visit the website crosscreektexas.com.

Cane Island holding spring cleaning

The Cane Island subdivision is holding a spring cleaning event Saturday. Both a Veritrust shred truck and a Katy Christian Ministries donation truck will be available for residents to dispose of or donate items as needed. The event is set for 9-11 a.m. in the welcome center parking lot. For more information, visit the website caneisland.com.

—CONTRIBUTED REPORTS

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Texas Businesses: April 15 is deadline for filing property tax renditions

The Texas comptroller's office reminds business owners that for many property types, April 15 is the deadline to file property tax renditions with their county appraisal districts. Different deadlines apply for certain regulated property.

A rendition is a list of the taxable inventory, furniture and fixtures, machinery, equipment and other property owned or managed as of Jan. 1 each year. The appraisal district may use the information to set property values.

A rendition allows property owners to record their opinion of their property's value and ensures that the appraisal district notifies property owners before changing a recorded value. Exempt property, such as church property and equipment used for farming, is not subject to rendition.

Owners whose property was damaged by storm, flood or fire last year may file a special decreased value report, which indicates the property's condition on Jan. 1, 2022. Filing the decreased value report could lower those owners' final tax bills for

2022.

Rendition forms and decreased value report forms are available from county appraisal district offices statewide and can be downloaded at the comptroller's property tax forms webpage.

For more information about property rendition, deadlines, extensions, penalties and rendition forms, taxpayers may contact the Comptroller's Property Tax Assistance Division at 800-252-9121 (press 2).

Mayekawa USA announces plans for site in Waller County

The Waller County Economic Development Partnership has finalized negotiations with Japanese-owned Mayekawa USA to establish a site in Waller County. The new U.S. headquarters will be in the Pederson Road Business Park next to the new Medline distribution center. Clay Development is building the facility.

"To best accommodate our customers in the Americas, and provide a strong base for future growth, Mayekawa USA is pleased to announce our new U.S. headquarters in Katy," Jim Stoll, Mayekawa USA chief finan-

cial officer, said, "The facility is scheduled for completion in mid-2022. In addition to housing a world class production facility for compressor packages, the facility will also be home to the sales, engineering, and administration offices for the U.S."

Mayekawa began its business in 1924 in Tokyo, Japan with ice manufacturing and cold storage. Today, Mayekawa operates in 47 countries across the world designing, manufacturing, selling, and servicing large compressor units and food processing equipment for the chemical, oil, gas, pharmaceutical, industrial refrigeration industries, and the food processing industry.

"We are excited to have such an industry leader here in Waller County," Justin Beckendorf, Waller County Pct. 4 commissioner, said.

"This is another great win for Waller County," Waller County Judge Trey Duhon said. "We have been working hard to attract top international companies to our community. This new facility is an important step in diversifying our economic base."

Waller County continues to attract strong international companies. In 2014,

the partnership began research and strategy sessions on creating an aggressive foreign direct investment (FDI) strategy. The program was formalized in 2020 after years of preparation and building international relationships. The Waller County - Going Global campaign now includes a partnership office in Berlin, Germany.

The Mayekawa announcement follows the recent announcement by Grundfos US, a Danish company, to build their new headquarters in nearby Brookshire.

"We continue to focus on US reshoring and foreign direct investment," Vince Yokom, partnership executive director, said. "Mayekawa is a great addition to our growing international family of corporate citizens."

Yokom said Mayekawa will create around 68 new jobs in the community with an average annual salary of \$83,000.

Hiring is in process. For more information, visit mayekawausa.com. Applications for employment may also be requested by sending a confidential email to katy.applications@mayekawausa.com.

—CONTRIBUTED REPORTS



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EDUCATION BRIEFS



The Katy High FFA "Katy Krew BBQ" team, comprised of Brett Diezi, Cash Robertson, Carson Wagner and Colton Cater. Not pictured is Joshua Vodehnal, Katy High School agriculture science teacher and FFA advisor.
KATY ISD

Katy ISD to hold job fair

The Katy Independent School District is hosting its annual certified teacher job fair on Saturday. Administrators from elementary and secondary campuses will be available to personally interact with candidates, review applications and conduct "on-the-spot" interviews with individuals seeking to join the district.

The job fair is set for 8:30-11:30 a.m. (for elementary schools) and 1-4 p.m. (for secondary schools) at the Merrell Center, 6301 South Stadium Lane.

"As the district grows, we continue to look for passionate educators to serve our students," Katye Shields, Katy ISD human resources coordinator, said. "As one of Texas's premier school districts, Katy ISD is known for hiring and retaining some of the best educators in the state and nation."

No pre-registration or fee is required. However, participants must show proof of certification, TEA/SBEC content exam scores and/or Statement of Eligibility (SOE). It's recommended that candidates complete an application on the Katy ISD website <https://bit.ly/3D0e3O6> in advance and bring enough resumes to share at the fair.

For more information, visit the website <https://bit.ly/3ism8BR>.

Katy ISD hosts Texas high school BBQ regional cook-off

The Katy High School FFA placed 3rd overall with Reserve Champion Ribs, Reserve Champion Chicken and 3rd Third Place Brisket, winning \$3,000 at the Texas High School BBQ Houston regional cook-off.

The Taylor High School FFA hosted the March 12 event, which took place at the Katy ISD Agricultural Services Center. The event serves as the state qualifier for the Texas High School BBQ state championship cook-off that will be held April 30 in Round Rock.

Seventeen teams from across Texas competed by preparing brisket, ribs, chicken, beans and dessert for the Houston region, which included the Katy FFA "Katy Krew BBQ" team and the Taylor FFA "Teenage Mutant Ninja Cookers."

Both the Katy and Taylor teams advanced to the state championship.

The Taylor FFA placed 7th overall, with 6th place ribs, 6th place brisket, and 7th place chicken.

Paetow Winter Guard wins 2022 class championship

The Paetow High School Winter Guard finished its competitive season on March 12 at the Texas Color Guard Circuit Championships, taking first place in its class earning it the 2022 class championship.

This group of performers works from



The Paetow High School Winter Guard celebrates its 2022 class championship.

the early November through the winter, putting together a competitive production in class and after school. This is the first time in school history that the Winter Guard has placed at a TCGC championship event. Auditions for the fall ensemble are April 11-13 at the high school and are open to all 2022-23 Paetow students.

Aristoi Classical Academy to host Demand Disruption 'Defend the Home' Workshop

Aristoi Classical Academy invites the Katy, Houston, and Cypress communities to a three-part workshop offered by the Houston-based nonprofit organization, Demand Disruption.

Previously known as Love People Not Pixels, Demand Disruption is an organization focused on fighting the demand for sex trafficking by eliminating buyer motivation and reducing access to the exploited.

This three-part workshop provides parents with truths regarding teens and the world they are navigating as well as equip parents with tools and resources to help create connection, empathy, and impact with their teens. Participants learn from experts in topics such as youth mental health, cell phones, social media, a hypersexualized culture, navigating through

tough conversations, grief, and loss.

Join Aristoi Classical Academy on March 28, April 4, and April 11 at the Aristoi Griffin Center, 5610 Morton Ranch Road, to learn specific strategies and practical applications that are needed to defend your home from pornography and hypersexualized media.

UHV-Katy to hold open house

The University of Houston-Victoria is hosting an open house for prospective students.

The open house is set for 10 a.m.-1 p.m. on April 2 at the UHV Katy building, 22400 Grand Circle Blvd.

Prospective students can meet with representatives from academic programs, admissions, financial aid, student services, and more.

To register, visit the website katy.uhv.edu.

Katy ISD Teacher of the Year Award Luncheon set

Brazos Valley Schools Credit Union and the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce are sponsoring the Katy Independent School District Teacher of the Year Award Luncheon.

The luncheon is set for 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on April 28 at the Gerald D. Young Facility (Robinson Pavilion), 5825 Katy Hockley Cut Off Road.

Tickets are \$35 for individuals, \$275 for a corporate (eight-seat) table.

For more information, contact Natalie Latham 281-644-4650.

—CONTRIBUTED REPORTS



One of America's oldest aircraft coming to Katy

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

The Experimental Aircraft Association, known to aircraft enthusiasts as EAA, is selling flights on one of America's oldest aircraft to raise scholarship money.

The public can purchase tickets to fly aboard a 1928 Ford Tri-Motor, which will be making flights March 31-April 3 from the Houston Executive Airport (KTME), 1900 Cardiff Road in Brookshire.

Flights will be available from 2-5 p.m. on March 31, and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on April 1-3.



The 1928 Ford Tri-Motor is one of America's oldest aircraft and served as airliner in its heyday. Today, the public can purchase rides on this historic aircraft to raise scholarship money.

EAA Chapter 774 is one of 900 local chapters of the Experimental Aircraft Association, the world's largest organization for recreational

flying. EAA's mission is to grow participation in aviation through flying, building, restoring and volunteer outreach, sharing "The Spirit of Aviation" and encouraging all who wish

Since inception in 1992, EAA chapters worldwide have flown 2,244,284 EAA Young Eagles, who are between the 8-17 years of age. Each flight is flown locally where chapters are based and is intended to introduce kids and teens to the world of aviation.

They are able to fly the aircraft they are taking flight in and learn the principles of how airplanes fly as well

as the joy of general and sport aviation from the Youth Protection Certified, volunteer pilots and ground volunteers during the EAA Young Eagle experience.

EAA Chapter 774 has flown more than 3,900 Young Eagles over the history of the program. All EAA Young Eagle flights are free to those who are flown.

In addition to carrying out the flights, EAA Chapter 774 has been providing its Young Eagles with EAA Air Academy Scholarships over the past several years. Young Eagles attend the EAA Air Academy in Oshkosh, Wis., to get a unique

aviation experience that can propel them to become general aviation, corporate or airline pilots in their futures.

EAA Chapter 774 uses its proceeds from various events, including tours of very special aircraft like the Ford Tri-Motor to raise funds to award EAA Air Academy Scholarships.

This spring's Tri-Motor tour offers an opportunity to help share the experience of flying in America's first airliner and to send more Young Eagles to the EAA Air Academy.

To schedule a flight, visit the website flytheford.org.

Katy Prairie Conservancy hosts City Nature Challenge

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

The Katy Prairie Conservancy is hosting the City Nature Challenge, which encourages people around the world to find and document wildlife in the cities.

The conservancy will host volunteers from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. April 29 at these sites:

- Indiangrass Preserve, 31975 Hebert Road, in Waller.
- Williams Prairie, Highway 359 and Hepplewhite Drive, in Fulshear.

- Shrike Prairie Preserve at Warren Lake, south of Hockley.

The conservancy will also host an in-town team at the Houston Museum of Natural Science's 9 Natives Garden, 5555 Hermann Park Dr, in Houston.

The Community Science teams at the California Academy of Sciences and the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County lead the challenge, which is an annual four-day global bioblitz at the end of April. Cities work to see what can

be accomplished when everyone works toward a common goal. People can also see which city can gather the most observations of nature, find the most species, and engage the most people in the event.

People can monitor in their own neighborhoods to help our Houston region break past records. For more information, visit the website citynaturechallenge.org/.

The event is free. For more information and to register, visit the website <https://conta.cc/3qs2OZJ>.

COFFEE WITH THE MAYORS



Former Mayor Chuck Brawner, Mayor Bill Hastings, and former mayors Don Elder Jr. and Fabol Hughes enjoy a moment at the March 17 Coffee with the Mayors event held at the Johnny Nelson Katy Heritage Museum, 6002 George Bush Dr.

HEAP SPEAKS

Harris County Pct. 5 Constable Ted Heap speaks at a March 18 Katy Christian Chamber of Commerce meeting at the Church on the Rock, 433 Barker Cypress Road. There, he provided an overview of some of his office's programs, including the Rape Aggression Defense, or RAD, program. RAD is a self-defense system that focuses on awareness and avoidance, and is one of several programs one can sign up to take through his office.



GEORGE SLAUGHTER

SHAMROCK SHINDIG



SUSAN ROVEGNO

Jamie Perez and a four-legged friend enjoy the Fulshear Shamrock Shindig. The Fulshear Katy Area Chamber of Commerce staged the event March 19, two days after St. Patrick's Day, where people enjoyed the live music, children's area, vendors, and more.

Waller County Economic Development Partnership marks 20-year milestone

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

The Waller County Economic Development Partnership celebrated its 20-year anniversary in February. It has been under the leadership of Vince Yokom since 2003 when he was hired to build the program.

"During this time, I have had the honor of serving as a board member and then as the Executive Director," Yokom said. "This vision could not have been done without the grassroots leadership from many of our community leaders, the continued support of county leadership and local EDOs, and our wonderful partner members."

During the past 20 years, the partnership has retained or landed around 6,000 jobs. It has also generated an accumulated taxable value from completed projects of approximately \$3.7 billion, yielding \$26.7 million in tax revenue for the county. When other taxing entities that

"This vision could not have been done without the grassroots leadership from many of our community leaders, the continued support of county leadership and local EDOs, and our wonderful partner members."

—Vince Yokom, Waller County Economic Development Partnership Executive Director

have benefited from these projects are included, the total tax revenue provided is estimated to be in excess of \$100 million.

In addition, the Federal Reserve estimates Waller County's GDP to be around \$2.9 billion. It will likely get to \$3-3.5 billion by the end of 2022 — all of this in a county with an estimated population of around 57,000 and an average organizational operating budget for the partnership of about \$230,000.

Yokom said strong partnerships were a key to the partnership's success.

"Never underestimate the power of synergy through strong partnerships," Yokom said. "I want

to give a special thanks to all our partners and the county for their generous support of our community and organization."

Other highlights over the past 20 years include the organization winning three awards for excellence in economic development from the Texas Economic Development Council and one from the International Economic Development Council, opening an office in Berlin, Germany, starting a formal foreign direct investment and US reshoring program, and establishing the Foreign Trade Zone under Port Houston.

For more information, visit the website at waller-county.org.

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Official says CPS department’s ‘unbelievable’ culture kept worries about foster care facility from being addressed

BY REESE OXNER
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Texas officials were kept in the dark about a foster care facility employee who allegedly sold nude pictures of two girls in their care due to the team culture created by a Child Protective Services manager, a top official told state lawmakers Thursday.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Commissioner Jaime Masters told state senators that DFPS employees had determined ‘The Refuge, a now-shuttered Bastrop facility contracted by the state to care for sex trafficking victims, was at a high risk of harming its youth.

But, she said, two managers failed to escalate the issue, violating policy. One of those managers created an “unbelievable” culture in which their employees hesitated to bring the issue back up for fear of repercussions, she said.

“I do not think this was a failure of process. ... None of us can be everywhere at all times,” she said. “Everyone depends on everyone up the chain to do what they are tasked with doing, and this is what did not happen here. Policy was not followed. Naked pictures of children in our care should have rung every bell.”

The commissioner also revealed that the employee under investigation for selling nude pictures of two girls there is also accused of dating a man who allegedly trafficked another child at the facility.

Masters disclosed those details when she testified before lawmakers at an all-day hearing focused on the state’s beleaguered foster care system.

The first meeting of the Senate Special Committee on Child Protective Services came as the foster care system has yet to remedy numerous issues regarding its care of children. Multiple bombshell reports from federal court monitors have detailed abuse, neglect and deaths over the last several years. On Thursday, senators discussed a wide range of the issues and laws



Buildings located at Refuge Ranch in Bastrop. The Texas-contracted facility is meant to provide residential treatment for child sex trafficking survivors.

that had aimed to fix them.

The Refuge staff member has not been publicly named. She is accused of giving her phone to two girls so they could take naked pictures for her to sell using the mobile payment service Cash App or trade for illegal drugs, Masters testified.

That staff member was fired after the allegation was made on Jan. 24, and a criminal investigation is ongoing. Another facility resident told staff that the alleged perpetrator was dating a man who previously trafficked the girl before she arrived at the facility, Masters said. It was unclear late Thursday if that man — or the staffers’ relationship to him — is being investigated.

No Refuge leaders were present at Thursday’s committee hearing. But Refuge CEO Brooke Crowder released a statement after it ended Thursday, saying she was grateful “for the legislature’s keen interest in the issues.” Crowder is slated to testify before lawmakers at a Texas House meeting on the facility Monday.

“While disappointed we were unable to directly respond to certain inaccurate assertions made, we understand the limitations of the hearing structure,” Crowder said in her statement Thursday. “I look forward to testifying in Monday’s

House hearing and being fully available for any additional Senate hearings and meetings. We remain fully committed to full cooperation with law enforcement, regulators and the Texas Legislature.”

Texas officials ordered the shelter to close temporarily last week after the children had already been removed. Gov. Greg Abbott directed the Texas Rangers last week to investigate the situation.

Steve McCraw, Texas Department of Public Safety director, told lawmakers he believes the staff member will be charged with sexual exploitation of a minor and possibly possession of child pornography.

Masters also told lawmakers that staffers at The Refuge did not do enough to ensure the return of a resident who was one of two kids who ran away from the facility, allegedly with the help of an employee.

“This child called [The Refuge] and said, ‘I’m tired of walking. Can someone come and get me?’” Masters said. “And no one did.”

The staff member accused of assisting her was fired. The Refuge spokesperson Steven Phenix said in a statement to The Texas Tribune that his team “has no record of this” but will address allegations next

week during another hearing.

In that incident, a former Refuge staff member was arrested for lying to law enforcement after saying she hadn’t been in contact with one of the girls who ran away, according to Masters. Both girls returned to the facility before its closure this month.

Masters said she learned of the situations last week — about a month and a half after the initial report of the staff member allegedly selling nude pictures of the youth. She said facility staff should have notified DFPS much sooner — especially when it became clear that the employee accused of selling nude photos was related to others still working at The Refuge.

It’s unclear how many family members related to the alleged perpetrator worked at the facility and how exactly they are related to her. But Masters said DFPS should not have treated the situation as solved just because that employee was fired if her relatives remained.

Sen. Lois Kolkhorst, R-Brenham, who is chairing the special committee, asked Masters why it took DFPS so long to act on the situation.

“There is no good reason why,” Masters replied.

Texas DFPS employees twice this year classified the Bastrop facility as “high risk for harm to

children.” But DFPS managers broke policy by failing to notify higher-ups, including Masters.

“I was told that the supervisor stated ‘She was disengaged,’ and the program director stated it slipped her mind,” Masters said.

Both were fired.

The commissioner repeatedly said the problem isn’t the department’s policies, but rather human error and lack of judgment.

Reports of the nude photo accusations first broke last week when a federal court released a DFPS letter detailing several allegations as part of a nearly 11-year-old, ongoing lawsuit against Texas and its foster care system. The allegations against staff included sexual abuse and sex trafficking.

However, on Wednesday, McCraw said there was “no evidence” of sexual abuse or trafficking at The Refuge even as he confirmed that a former staff member allegedly attempted to sell the nude photos.

Sen. José Menéndez, D-San Antonio, pointed out in an interview with the Tribune that the Texas Rangers shared only their “initial findings,” and McCraw said the investigation was ongoing.

Menéndez, who is also a member of the special committee, said declaring there to be no evidence of sex trafficking seems premature, especially because the solicitation and sale of the two girls’ nudes could potentially fall under that definition.

“It’s almost like declaring victory before all the votes are counted,” he said.

At Thursday’s meeting, Sen. Joan Huffman, R-Houston, said officials shouldn’t minimize what has already been uncovered.

“I’ve heard someone say, ‘Well, they weren’t actually trafficking the child.’ Well, if you’re taking nude photos, and you’re helping them escape, then you are putting them right into the hands of those who would exploit them,” Huffman said. “So I don’t want to hear that. I hope no one says that today because I don’t want to hear that because it’s just completely unacceptable.”

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WEEK OF MARCH 24

SCHEDULES

BOYS SOCCER

Thursday

- Paetow vs. Kingwood Park, 5:30, Pridgeon Stadium
- Seven Lakes vs. Clements, 7:30 p.m., Legacy Stadium

Friday

- Jordan vs. Lake Creek, 7:30 p.m., Legacy Stadium
- Taylor at Fort Bend Bush, 7:30 p.m.
- Tompkins vs. Ridge Point, 7:30 p.m., Rhodes Stadium
- Cinco Ranch vs. Fort Bend Austin, 7 p.m. at Travis High

GIRLS SOCCER

Thursday

- Seven Lakes vs. Elkins, 5:30 p.m., Legacy Stadium

Friday

- Jordan vs. Lake Creek, 4 p.m., Dyer Stadium
- Tompkins vs. George Ranch, 5:30 p.m., Rhodes Stadium
- Katy vs. Clements, 7:30 p.m. at Austin High
- Taylor vs. Ridge Point, 7 p.m., Tully Stadium

SOFTBALL

Friday

- Morton Ranch vs. Cinco Ranch, 6:15 p.m.
- Jordan vs. Paetow, 6:30 p.m.
- Taylor vs. Katy, 6:15 p.m.
- Seven Lakes vs. Mayde Creek, 6:15 p.m.

BASEBALL

Friday

- Morton Ranch vs. Cinco Ranch, 6 p.m.
- Jordan at College Station, 7 p.m.
- Taylor vs. Katy, 6 p.m.
- Seven Lakes vs. Mayde Creek, 6 p.m.

Saturday

- Cinco Ranch vs. Tomball, 1 p.m.
- Jordan at Magnolia, noon
- Paetow at Waller, 7 p.m.
- Tompkins vs. Langham Creek, 2 p.m.

TRACK & FIELD

Thursday

- Cinco Ranch, Katy and Paetow at Katy Home of Champions meet
- Mayde Creek and Tompkins at Rice meet

Friday

- Cinco Ranch, Taylor and Tompkins at Mike A Myers Stadium
- Mayde Creek at Rice meet

Saturday

- Mayde Creek at Rice meet
- Morton Ranch at Klein Memorial meet
- Taylor at Klein meet

GOLF

Friday

- Cinco Ranch at Kingwood Country Club
- Seven Lakes and Tompkins at Eagle Point Golf Course

Saturday

- Cinco Ranch at Kingwood Country Club
- Seven Lakes and Tompkins at Eagle Point Golf Course

TENNIS

Thursday

- Katy at Cy-Fair tournament
- Morton Ranch at Cy-Fair tournament
- Paetow at Waller tournament
- Tompkins at Strake Jesuit tournament

Friday

- Cinco Ranch at Clear Creek tournament
- Jordan at Pasadena Memorial tournament
- Mayde Creek at Cy-Fair meet tournament
- Seven Lakes at Clear Brook tournament



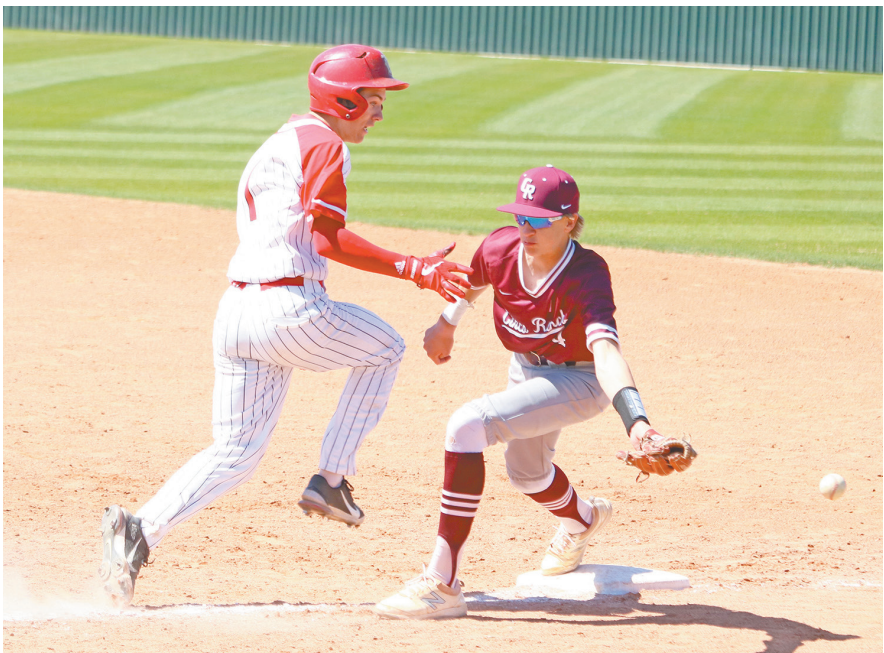
TIGERS ROAR

KATY TOPS CINCO RANCH, SURGING EARLY IN DISTRICT PLAY

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Katy just seems to find a way. Finding a way to stay in games, finding a way to manufacture runs, finding a way to have a good performance on the mound even if a pitcher is struggling. The Tigers just find ways to win. The Tigers have done it all season and it was no different on Friday, as Katy used a late offensive surge to power past Cinco Ranch 4-1 in a game that could go a long way towards deciding the District 19-6A standings. "This win was really important for us,"

See **TIGERS**, page B3

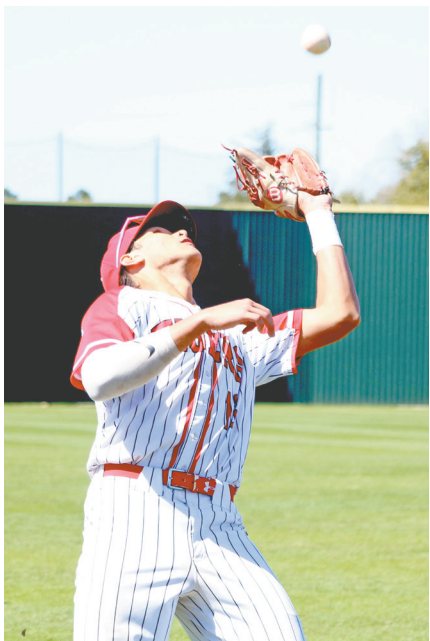


The ball skips past TJ Hughes during Friday's game between Katy and Cinco Ranch at the Katy baseball field.

Katy baseball off to a hot start early in season

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Katy has quietly put together a very strong start to the season. The Tigers have started off the year with a 14-4 record and 2-0 in district, quietly staying tied atop the district race with Tompkins as we come closer to the grind of twice a week district play. Behind that start has been a strong core of pitching, as the Tigers have only allowed three teams to score five or more runs since the start of March. "Its really the defense behind us," said Katy starting pitcher Lucas Moore, "They've been making excellent plays all year. The team is really backing up each other right now and that's what working for us so well. Everyone is doing their job." That kind of philosophy has led to the Tigers giving up four runs over their first two District 19-6A games, including just one run given up to Cinco Ranch, which



Nayden Ramirez catches a pop fly in foul territory during Friday's game between Katy and Cinco Ranch at the Katy baseball field.

See **BASEBALL**, page B2

Katy teams gear up for playoffs

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Katy ISD teams are gearing up for the postseason in soccer, with the teams coming off one of the toughest district gauntlets in the state. There are a number of teams that could make a run and push to the later rounds of the playoffs, both on the boys and girls sides. And it will be an exciting few weeks of playoff soccer beginning Thursday. The Seven Lakes boys are coming off their third district championship and have had a dominant season, totaling a record of 15-1-3 while going 8-1-3 in District 19-6A play. The Spartans have outscored opponents 70-18 this year while their only loss came to district foe Taylor. The Spartans will play Clements in the bi-district round 7:30 p.m. Thursday at Legacy Stadium. In Class 5A, Paetow also comes off its third straight district championship, and the Panthers have also had a dominant season. The Panthers went 16-1-3 on the season while going 13-0-3 in district. The Panthers' only loss on the year was to Houston Lamar. Paetow only tied three opponents in district play Paetow will play Kingwood Park to kick off the playoffs 5:30 p.m. Thursday at Pridgeon Stadium. A year after making it to the regional finals, Tompkins is also set up to make another run at things. The Falcons boys team finished second in district with 26 points, just one off of Seven Lakes and they finished 8-2-2 in district with a 16-3-2 record overall and 64 goals scored to just 25 goals allowed. Tompkins is looking to make another run this year with a strong junior and senior class and that will start when they play Ridge Point at 7:30 p.m. on Friday at Rhodes Stadium. Rounding out the boys playoff field is Cinco Ranch and Taylor. The Cougars had a strong season, going 11-5-4 overall and 7-2-3 in district, Cinco started out district hot, but lost twice to

See **PLAYOFFS**, page B9



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Texans trade Deshaun Watson to Browns

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

The saga is finally over. After 14 months of speculation and drama, Deshaun Watson is no longer a Houston Texan. The franchise made it official Friday, when the Texans traded Watson to the Cleveland Browns. “I think the biggest thing it provides everyone is clarity, just in terms of direction,” said Houston Texans General Manager Nick Caserio. “Deshaun has clarity on what his future holds from a football standpoint, for him individually. And we have clarity as an organization in terms of what the expectation is moving forward with what we have in place.” In return for the star quarterback, the Texans received first round picks from Cleveland in the 2022, 2023 and 2024 drafts as well as the Browns 2023 third-round pick and 2024 fourth rounder. “We just want to look forward and what’s ahead of us,” Caserio said. “There’s a lot of work that we need to get done,” Caserio said. “We’re a long way from where we need to be, there’s going to be a lot of work to get there, but everyone is excited about it. Everyone is anticipating the next step here in the offseason. We’re preparing for the 2022 season but I think we’re heading in the right direction. Hopefully we’re positioning ourselves as an organization to where we can have consistent success.”

The trade came just a week after a Harris County grand jury declined to indict Watson after 22 women filed civil lawsuits against him accusing him of sexual assault during different massage sessions. A criminal investigation occurred, but the grand jury did not find enough to charge Watson. “Our biggest goal, what we’re trying to do is put together a consistent winner, put together a foundation and put together a team that a lot of people can be proud of,” Caserio said. “People within the organization, players, coaches, front office staff, the fans most importantly. I think everyone



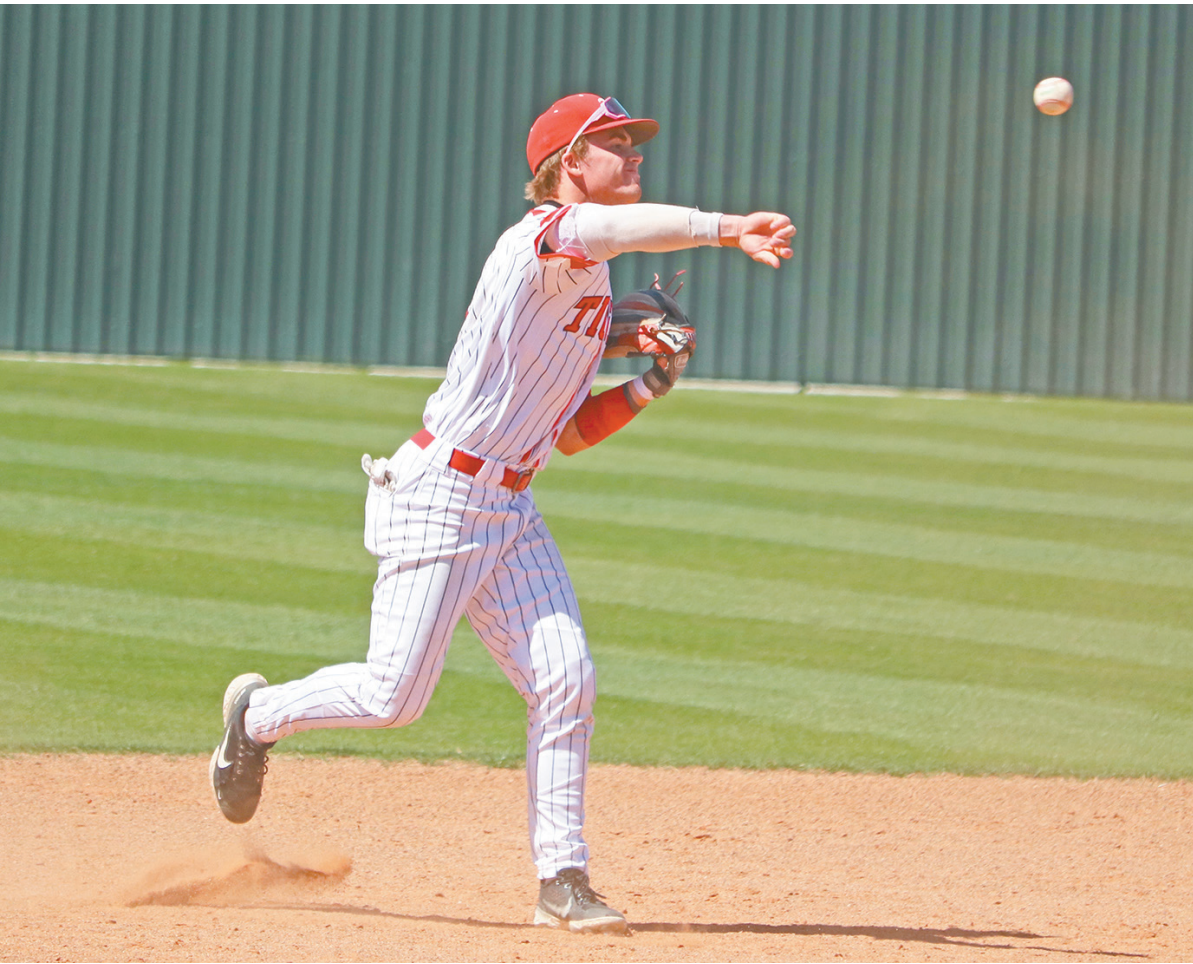
Houston Texans quarterback Deshaun Watson (4) eludes Atlanta Falcons cornerback Desmond Trufant (21) on a scramble during an NFL game between the Houston Texans and the Atlanta Falcons at NRG Stadium in Houston, Texas, on Oct. 6, 2019.

just wanted clarity. We said from the beginning, we’re going to be patient and be very thoughtful. We wanted to make the best decision for the organization and yesterday, we though was the right opportunity and we thought was the right time.” The Browns were one of a number of suitors for Watson and were thought to out of the running earlier this week. But the gave Watson what no one else would and because of that, Watson only

waived his no trade clause for Cleveland and no other team. What they gave Watson was the most guaranteed money to any player in NFL history, as the Browns signed him to a five year, \$230 million contract of which every dollar is guaranteed. The Browns also handed Watson a nearly \$45 million signing bonus, while making his 2022 season salary only \$1 million, a move which in all likelihood came because he still

has a chance of being suspended by the NFL for some duration this season because of the large number of massage therapists accusations. The Browns released a statement in support of Watson and in defense of their trade, but many still have questions. “We are confident in Deshaun and excited about moving forward with him as our quarterback and supporting his genuine and determined efforts,” said Browns

owners Dee and Jimmy Haslam in a statement. With the trade finally in the books for Houston, the team is looking to move forward to free agency and the draft as they prepare for the 2023 season. “There’s a lot of work ahead of us,” Caserio said. “But we are in a better position than we were previously because we have that clarity for everybody involved and it allows us to move forward as a franchise.”




Parker Kidwell throws to first base during Friday's game between Katy and Cinco Ranch at the Katy baseball field.

KATY

from page B1

was ranked in the top 20 in the state last week. “We’re right where we need to be,” said Katy head coach Tom McPherson. “But you can’t let up in this district, anyone can beat you. We just need to keep going and keep building off of this. It’s a blessing to be in the hunt, even if its still early.” Katy is currently ranked No. 9 in the state, with the only team ahead of them in the polls fro Katy ISD being No. 2 Tompkins, who is off to a 15-0 start. “The offense is really a huge help for us,” said Cole Kaase, who also starts on the mound for Katy. “They’ve been putting up runs for us and it puts us in a great position as pitchers. Getting to be in that position, where you can attack and not have to be perfect on every throw, it’s great.” The Tigers though, still have the bulk of their district schedule to go, including both games against Tompkins and both games against Seven Lakes and Taylor, which have had strong starts to the season.


The team knows there are still things to work on, including treating every opponent with great respect and not playing to anyone elses level but their own. “So far this year, we’ve kind of played to our competitions level,” McPherson said. “But we need to be playing to our own, higher level, we can’t play down. Thankfully there’s a lot of season left to work on that and we’ve played well enough to stay in the hunt, but that’s one of the biggest things for us, is keeping our level where it should be and not playing to our competition.” But things are going right or Katy so far, and the Tigers know they can compete with any opponent put in front of them. “We know we can compete for a district title and we have to keep going out there and proving it everyday,” Moore said. “We’re confident in what we can do and we want to go out and show it to people. We just have to keep this going for the rest of district and keep bringing our A-game.”



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PHOTOS BY TYLER TYRE

Blake Hansen, above, hits during Friday's game between Katy and Cinco Ranch at the Katy baseball field. Right, Lucas Moore pitches during Friday's game.

KATY

from page B1

said pitcher Lucas Moore. "We know that both us and Cinco are going to be battling all district and to get a game up on them early is huge. Now we just have to keep this going."

Moore was a huge part of the team's win, as the junior completely shut down a powerful Cinco Ranch lineup, limiting the Cougars to two hits and one run over seven innings while striking out six and walking three.

His off-speed pitches, both his changeup and his curveball, were working all day for him and kept Cinco Ranch off balance, never letting the hitters get comfortable at the plate.

"He was tremendous," said Katy head coach Tom McPherson. "If you don't have that off-speed against this lineup, they're going to wear out that fastball. There's a lot of guys out there for Cinco that can hit the ball, they have some players. So it was important for him to have that going."

Moore gave up his only hit and run in the first inning, as the Cougars jumped ahead in the top of the first. Brock DeYoung was hit by a pitch to start things and Blake Hansen followed that up with a single to right field, moving DeYoung to third. Charlie Atkinson brought the run in on a sacrifice grounder, but Katy got out of the inning without any more damage thanks to a double play.

Katy tied things up in the second, as Nayden Ramirez reached on an error and scored on a single from Sutton Hull to knot things up at one.

"I think I just needed to relax a little bit," Moore said. "This was a pretty big game, I haven't had a lot of those yet, so I had to settle in, see some strikes and do what I can do."

Things remained tied until the bottom of the sixth, when Katy broke things open. The Tigers got a run when Reese Ruderman reached on an error, and then got



two more when Graham Laxton reached on another error on a throw that sailed past the first baseman and into right field to make it 4-1.

Moore then came on in the top of the seventh and calmly induced three fly ball outs to end the game.

This is Moore's first varsity season, and although the acclimation has been quick, he said that the game is a lot different than what he was used to.

"The atmosphere here just

with the varsity squad is totally different and the talent is a lot better," Moore said. "The defense is a lot better and I'm able to pitch to contact more because of how good the guys are behind me. It's nice not having to try to strike everybody out."

While the Tigers have already accumulated a 16-4 record to go with a 2-0 district record, McPherson knows there's still work to do and knows how important for the team to keep pushing themselves.

"We have to learn not to play to our competition, that's the biggest thing," McPherson said. "We've got to keep it up at our level and not play to where our opponents are sometimes. But it's great just to be in the hunt. We'll see how this district goes. Taylor is playing great, Seven Lakes is playing great and Tompkins should be No. 1 in the state. You can't let up because everybody can beat you. We're right where we need to be we just need to keep it up."

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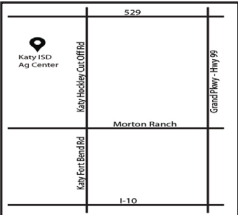
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Texans sign a number of free agents

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

The Texans signed a number of players over the first days of NFL free agency, as the team is expected to have significant turnover after handing out lots of 1-year deals last season.

A good number of players the Texans have brought back including starting center Justin Britt.

Britt, an eight-year NFL veteran was a big part of the Houston offensive last season and resigned on a one-year deal that could be worth up to \$5 million.

He played in 11 games last year, after signing with the Texans on a one-year deal and was a leader among the group. The move is a low risk one for the Texans, who wanted to retain some of the same players they had last season at the offensive line position.

Along with Britt, the Texans brought back Terrence Brooks, Pharoah Brown, Desmond King II, Royce Freeman and Maliek Collins.

Collins got the largest deal, getting a two-year contract worth \$17 million with \$8.5 million guaranteed. The Texans made it a priority to resign the interior lineman, whom Lovie Smith raved about throughout the season and was a good fit for the type of defense the Texans will run. Collins totaled 28 tackles, 2.5 sacks and seven quarterback hits in his first year under Smith.

King was also rewarded for a strong season, as the five year NFL veteran will return to Houston on a two-year \$7 million deal. King was tied for the team lead with three interceptions last season and also had 93 tackles, second most on the team. He did all of this while switching positions from nickel to outside cornerback for the betterment of the team.

Brown has always shown flashes and the physical ability to be a starting caliber tight end and will get another chance at that with his one-year \$4 million deal with Houston.

Brown comes off a season in which he had 23 catches for 171 yards over 15 games, not stellar numbers, but he was solid when called upon for the team. Brown along with Antony Auclair and Brevin Jordan look to be the three tight ends that will be on the roster this season.

Freeman was a surprise resigning. The Texans had the worst run game in the league last season and Freeman totaled just 92 yards on 35 carries, averaging just 2.6 yards per carry on the year. He will likely be a backup this season.

Brooks rounds out the players resigning with the Texans so far and he has been rewarded with a one-year \$2 million deal after his play last year. He primarily was a special teams player last year, but he did get some defensive snaps late in the year. He will add good depth in the secondary and is the fourth safety signed.

There will be new faces in the Houston locker room as well, as a number of free agents signed with the Texans over the week.

AJ Cann, a guard, will join the Texans on a two-year, \$10.5 million deal that has \$4.5 million guaranteed. Cann has been a solid starter for Jacksonville over the course of his career, but suffered an MCL injury last year which limited him to four games.

The Texans then went and got their third lineman from free-agency with Scott Quessenberry signing with the team on a one-year \$1.187 million contract. He will get the chance to back up Justin Britt.

Ogbonnia Okoronkwo signed a one-year deal with the Texans, coming over after winning a super bowl with the Rams. Okoronkwo was mostly a special teams player for Los Angeles, but will add needed depth to the Houston defensive line as well. He had 22 pressures last season to go with two sacks and six quarterback hits.

Okoronkwo is a Houston native and a graduate of Alief Taylor.

Like Cann, Dare Ogunbowale will make the trek from Jacksonville to Houston to join the running back group.

Ogunbowale joins on a two-year \$3 million deal and will join a group that currently has Rex Burkhead, Scottie Phillips and Royce Freeman.

Ogunbowale averaged 3.2 yards per carry last season and will in all likelihood be a backup this year.

Kyle Allen is the final new face to join the group. The Texans were in need of a backup quarterback after Tyrod Taylor joined the New York Giants. Allen will join the team on a one-year \$2.5 million deal.

Allen makes perfect sense as a backup for Davis Mills as they have a similar style of play and Allen although young, has the experience to help Mills though his first full year as the Texans starter.



Above: New York Jets quarterback Zach Wilson eludes Houston Texans defensive tackle Maliek Collins to avoid a sack during an NFL game between the Houston Texans and the New York Jets on November 28, 2021 in Houston, Texas. Left: Houston Texans defensive back Desmond King wraps up Jacksonville Jaguars wide receiver Laviska Shenault Jr. during the second half of an NFL game between the Houston Texans and the Jacksonville Jaguars on September 12, 2021 in Houston, Texas.

PHOTOS BY SCOTT W. COLEMAN



Tennessee Titans running back D'Onta Foreman is tripped up by Houston Texans free safety Terrence Brooks during an NFL game on Jan. 9, 2022 in Houston, Texas.




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Houston Cougars guard Jamal Shead (1) moves the ball during an NCAA men's basketball game between Houston and Wichita State on Jan. 8, 2022 in Houston, Texas.

PHOTOS BY SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Houston on to Sweet 16 for third straight tournament

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

The Coogs are still dancing. For the third straight tournament, The University of Houston men's basketball team is headed to the Sweet 16. But it didn't come without drama. Houston easily ran past The University of Alabama at Birmingham, winning 82-68 in the first round, but had trouble with Illinois in the second round before eventually pulling away for a 68-53 win. "I'm proud of our team," said Houston head coach Kelvin Sampson after the win over Illinois. "After the win over Alabama Birmingham, we knew what we were going to get with Illinois. They're a good team but it's not tricky. They throw the ball into the post and run their offense through that. We take pride in our post defense, but everybody is different. Our kids are tough kids and this is a tough program. That's how we've got this far."

It was an emotional win for the Cougars over the Illini, as they have had to overcome injuries and among other things this season and the team felt doubted.

"You have to let those emotions out sometimes," said Taze Moore. "With the way we work and the way we prepare for things, and the way we work for these moments it was an amazing feeling to come out on top and get the win to head towards the Sweet 16."

Moore had one of his biggest games of the season for Houston in its win over the Illini, as he scored 21 points while bringing in seven rebounds and collecting an assist in the win, helping lead the Cougars down the stretch. Jamal Shead had a big game as well, with 18 points and three assists while Kyler Edwards finished with 15 points.

"It comes down to our heart," Shead said. "It's our heart, we don't



Houston Cougars guard Taze Moore (4) dunks the ball during an NCAA men's basketball game between Houston and Wichita State on Jan. 8, 2022 in Houston, Texas.

want to lose. We want to win for each other. These guys love each other so much and they're really my brothers, it goes way beyond basketball. I don't get this year back with all of my brothers and we just want to keep it going for as long as we can."

Now, for their efforts to make it to the Sweet 16, Houston gets the No. 1 seed Arizona Wildcats on Thursday at 9 p.m.

Arizona comes off a 85-80 win over TCU in overtime in the round of 32.

The Wildcats are led by Benedict Mathurin, who is averaging 17.8 points per game to go with 5.7 rebounds and 2.5 assists per game and they also have a big low post presence

in Christian Koloko, who averages 12.7 points per game and 7.4 rebounds per game while shooting a super efficient 64.2 percent from the field.

Arizona won both the Pac-12 regular season and tournament titles and is currently on an eight game win streak heading into the Sweet 16.

It will be a challenge for the Cougars, but they are ready for it.

"These guys are great kids and high character kids," Sampson said. "Because of that they've completely bought it. They have never made it about themselves, the program is always about we and us. That's what happens when you have great kids and they'll be ready for anything."

SOFTBALL ROUNDUP

Paetow walks off winners for second straight game; Cinco Ranch rolls past Memorial

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Paetow is getting used to this walk-off thing. A game after walking off on a walk against Brenham, the Panthers were at it again, coming from behind to beat College Station in a 7-6 walk-off victory.

College Station was ahead from the jump, as the Cougars got two runs in the first inning. The Cougars were seemingly pulling away with it in the fifth, when they got four more runs on a home run and an RBI single to making things 6-0, but the Panthers' bats came alive in the bottom of the inning.

College Station immediately got two outs in the inning before Sade Guerra got a single and Alexis Rodriguez got a single of her own. Peyton Luna walked to load the bases and Shy'Lynn Brown hit a two RBI double to get Paetow on the board. Then the Panthers trimmed the College Station lead to two runs as Luna scored on a passed ball and Brown scored on an error.

Both teams were held scoreless until the bottom of the seventh from there, when the Panthers took the lead for good.

Guerra reached on a single to start the inning before Rodriguez singled to advance Guerra to second. Both players got into scoring position on a wild pitch before Luna walked to load the bases. Brown then came up in the clutch with a single to trim the deficit to one run. Catherwood then came to the plate and hit a sacrifice fly, scoring Rodriguez and an error by the second baseman allowed Brown to score, giving the Panthers the win.

Brown got the win for the Panthers on the mound as well, coming on in relief and pitching 2.2 scoreless innings, striking out two and walking none while allowing just two hits.

SATURDAY

Cinco Ranch rolls past Memorial

Chela Kovar was feeling it Saturday. The Cinco Ranch pitcher had over a week of rest heading into the team's matchup against Memorial, and that fresh arm showed, as she shut out the Mustangs in an 11-0 Cinco Ranch win.

Kovar struck out seven over five innings, walking none and surrendering just two hits on 64 pitches to earn the victory while the Cougars offense gave her more than enough cushion on the day.

The Cougars offense all came in one inning. The

See **ROUNDUP**, page B8



COURTESY KATY ISD

Paetow earned a walk off victory over College Station on Saturday.

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BASEBALL ROUNDUP

Late surge powers Tompkins past Taylor

Seven Lakes shuts out Morton Ranch

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Trevor Esparza made a statement to start District 19-6A play. The senior pitcher wants to be known as one of the best in the state and he showed what he can do Tuesday, as the senior threw seven scoreless innings against a Taylor side that gave the Falcons problems for five innings. Behind Esparza's 102, pitch nine strikeout, no walk performance, the Falcons came away 5-0 winners over the Mustangs to stay undefeated on the season and start district with a win.

Things stayed tied for the first four innings of the game before Tompkins scored all four of its runs and broke things open in the fifth.

Cooper Markle started things off by drawing a walk before Drew Markle singled, moving Cooper over to second. Jace LaViolette then struck the first big blow, hitting an RBI double to center field scoring both Cooper and Drew, Adam Benavidez walked to score a run as the bases were loaded and Ty Dagley singled to drive in another run, giving Esparza more than enough cushion to finish things off. Esparza finished things off with two three-up three-down innings in the sixth and seventh.

Blake Wolf took the loss for Taylor. Wolf pitched four strong innings, but allowed four runs in the fourth and three hits overall while striking out four.

TUESDAY, MARCH 15

Seven Lakes shuts out Morton Ranch

Lawson Moreno and Tyler Welch helped Seven Lakes get off to a good start in district play combining for a three hit shutout over Morton Ranch in which the duo combined for 10 strikeouts over seven innings.

Lawson Moreno got the start for the Spartans, going 4.1 innings and allowing just two hits while striking out five and walking three.

It took until the bottom of the fourth for the Spartans to get on the board, as Miguel Acosta drove in a run on a sacrifice fly to score Carter Naninni.

Seven Lakes then got two more in the bottom of the fifth, as Brayden Phillips walked to start things and then stole second before Ryan Franden tripled to score Phillips and Jake Steffes hit a sacrifice fly to score Franden, giving the Spartans a three run cushion.

Brandon Hasselbring took the loss for Taylor despite a strong outing. Hasselbring went six innings, giving up two hits and two earned runs while striking out three and walking three.

Jordan takes loss to Magnolia West

Jordan fell 16-0 to Magnolia West in District 19-5A play. Connor Carmichael took the loss for the Warriors. The right hander allowed eight hits and seven runs over 1 and two-thirds innings, allowing eight hits and seven runs while walking one. Magnolia West scored one run in the first, six runs in the second



PHOTO BY TYLER TYRE

Trevor Esparza pitches during Thursday's game between Tompkins and San Antonio Reagan at the Tompkins baseball field.

and nine runs in the fourth inning to secure the win.

Braden Franklin got the Warriors' lone hit, keeping Magnolia West from getting a no-hitter.

Cinco Ranch outlasts Summer Creek in final district tune-up

Cinco Ranch outlasted Summer Creek 9-8, taking the lead in the seventh inning to win its final game before starting district play.

The Cougars took an early lead, as Gavin Rutherford hit an RBI single and TJ Hughes doubled to drive in another run.

Summer Creek responded by scoring one in the bottom of the inning but Cinco got a third run in the second when Brock DeYoung hit an RBI double to left field.

Summer Creek again trimmed the lead by one in the bottom of the second and then took the lead in the bottom of the third by scoring two more runs.

But Cinco had the response in the top of the fourth, as Hughes singled to score two more runs and the Cougars scored two more on an error by Summer Creek.

Summer Creek again took the lead in the bottom of the fourth, making it 8-7 by scoring four in the inning but the Cougars tied things in the fifth with a solo home run by Charlie Atkinson. And Atkinson was at the center of things again when Cinco took the lead for good in the top of the seventh. He reached on an error and a run scored to make things 9-8 before Summer Creek put two on base in the bottom of the inning but couldn't get a run across.

THURSDAY

Huge first inning leads Taylor past Mayde Creek

Taylor used a huge six run first inning to pull away from Mayde Creek as the Rams never were able

to get back in it in a 10-5 win. Mayde Creek got on the board first, as Marcus Rodriguez was hit by a pitch and Jason Hinojosa hit a sacrifice grounder to make it 1-0.

But Taylor had the answer in the bottom of the first. Joe Jefferson led off with a triple and Brett Delojsi followed that up with a single to left to tie things. From there, Hunter Ham doubled to score Delojsi, Taylor got two runs off of errors and then two more runs on wild pitches to break the game open early.

Taylor added to the lead in the second with an RBI single from Nathaniel Lopez and two more in the third on an error. Mayde Creek did its best to battle back in the fifth, Hayden Fullem singled in a runner to give the Rams their second run of the game and Hinojosa followed that up with his second sacrifice grounder of the game. Mayde Creek then added two runs on an error to trim the Taylor lead to four.

But that would be the last runs Mayde Creek would get in the game, and Taylor added their 10th run in the bottom of the fifth, as Jared Schaeffer was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded.

Schaeffer earned the win for the Mustangs, going four innings nad striking out five while walking just one, giving up two hits and no earned runs in the win. Nathan Flores was given the loss after allowing four earned runs on three hits in the first inning.

Tompkins easily tops Morton Ranch to stay undefeated

Tompkins pitching staff put on a show and the offense jumped ahead early, never allowing Morton Ranch to get back into it in a 14-0 win for the Falcons on Thursday.

Jace LaViolette was the name of the day, as the senior A&M commit

went 3-4, drivnng in six runs while scoring four.

Tompkins got their first run early in the first, as LaViolette, who had reached on a fielders choice, stole third base and came around to score on a throwing error. But things were just getting started for the Falcons.

With two men on in the second, LaViolette tripled to center field, driving in two runs and then was brought home on a passed ball. LaViolette then made things 7-0 in the top of the fourth when he hit a home run to left field, driving in two more runs. And Jack Little came around to score on a wild pitch in the same inning, making things 8-0.

In the fifth, Drew Markle got the scoring going again for Tompkins as he drove in a run on a sacrifice fly to right field, and LaViolette followed that up with his second triple of the day, driving in another run. Little then hit his own triple to drive in LaViolette, Kilngbeil Caleb drove in a run on a single to left field, Ty Dagley singled to bring in another and the Falcons' 14th run was brought in on a wild pitch.

Solomon Rotberg earned the win for Tompkins, going three innings and striking out six while walking two and allowing just one hit.

Michael DeBattista and Murdock Judson closed things out for the Falcons. DeBattista threw an inning, striking out one and walking two while Judson threw an inning and struck out all three batters he faced.

Paetow unable to come back against College Station

A seventh inning comeback came up short for Paetow on Friday, as the Panthers lost to College Station 9-6.

Paetow jumped out ahead in

the second inning, Kayin Tillman walked and scored on a passed ball. Then Josh Prieto, after a walk, also came around to score on a passed ball to make things 2-0.

But those runs woke up the College Station offense, which came alive in the third inning, scoring six runs, including four on a grand slam.

Paetow got two runs back in the bottom of the fifth, with Tyler Silves scoring on an error and Isaiah Chacon hitting an RBI single to score Daniel Oviedo-Barela, trimming the College Station lead to 6-4.

But College Station stretched the lead again in the top of the sixth, hitting another home run and getting an RBI single.

Silves trimmed things in the bottom of the seventh with a two-run home run, but it wasn't enough as Paetow wasn't able to come back.

Jordan loses heartbreaker to Magnolia West

Jordan fought, but came up short in a 5-3 loss to Magnolia West on Thursday.

The Warriors had to overcome a strong start from Magnolia West and fought, but ultimately came up short as Magnolia West pulled away late.

Magnolia West got one run in the bottom of the first on a single, and scored twice more on singles in the bottom of the second.

But Jordan didn't let that get to them and roared back in the fourth inning. Braden Franklin started the inning off with a double, before James Lacy walked to put two men on. Chad Gasper reached on an error and Aiden McHugh singled to drive in two runs, cutting the Magnolia West lead to one. Then W. Roby tied things on a single before a double play ended the inning.

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Wednesday, March 30th from 8am-4pm in Conference room at Best Western PLUS Mid County 7550 Anchor Dr. Port Arthur, TX 77642 (409) 237-5749

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Application has been made with The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Wine and Malt Beverage On-Premise Permit by CNBGB, LLC DBA Pappa Gyros, to be located at 21910 Franz Road, Katy, TX. Officer of this company is Christos N Batsios.

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NOTICE

The City Council Of The City Of Katy, Texas, Will Conduct A Public Hearing At Their Regular Meeting To Be Held At City Hall, 901 Avenue C, Katy, Texas.

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

6:30 p.m., Monday, April 11, 2022

The Hearing Is Being Conducted To Receive Comments From The Public On A Proposed Ordinance Of The City Council Of The City Of Katy, Texas Amending The Zoning Ordinance, Ordinance No. 621; Amending Ordinance No. 2445 "West Ten Business Park" Planned Development District; Amending Certain Requirements And Restrictions For Development Within The "West Ten Business Park" Planned Development District; Providing A Penalty Of \$2,000 For Each Day Of Violation Of Any Provision Of This Ordinance; Repealing All Ordinances Or Parts Of Ordinances In Conflict Herewith; And Providing For Severability.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The City Council Of The City Of Katy, Texas, Will Conduct A Public Hearing At Their Regular Meeting To Be Held At City Hall, 901 Avenue C, Katy, Texas.

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

6:30 p.m., Monday, April 11, 2022

The City Council Of The City Of Katy, Texas, Will Conduct Hearings At Their Regular Meeting To Be Held At City Hall, 901 Avenue C, Katy, Texas. The Hearing Is 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 17.067 Acres Of Land In The H&TCRR CO Survey, A-1348, Tracts: 7, 7A, 7B, 7E, 7E-1 7E-1A, 7E-2, 7E, 7G, 7J, 7K, & 7L, In Harris County As "C-1" Commercial District. 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. Applicants And Agents Are Raymond And Shari Boothe, Roger Sury, Lorna Benton, Keith And Christina Henson, Christopher And Rachael Dahl, Stockdick Family Living Trust, David H Shumpert Jr Exempt Lifetime Trust, Margaret Matzinger Shumpert Trust, James G Jones, And Jane Tays.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE of property to satisfy landlord's lien.

Sale to be held ONLINE AUCTION StorageTreasures.com

The facility is at 20150 Park Row Katy, TX 77449. Bidding will open at 10:00 am on March 31, 2022 and end at 10:00 am on April 28, 2022. Property will be sold to the highest bidder for cash. Cleanup and removal deposit will be required. Seller reserves the right to withdraw the property at any time before the sale ends. Property includes contents of space of the following tenants: Christopher Boinott, Marcus Potier, Daniel Dryden, Patricia Carreno, Michael Harlen, April Baker, Diana C. Duong.

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed Electronic Bids, addressed to Quiddity Engineering, LLC, attention Travis W. Miller, PE, will be electronically received until 2:30 p.m. local time, April 12, 2022, and then publicly opened and read for "Construction of Water, Sanitary, and Drainage Facilities in Sunterra Sec 43 for Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 569, Harris County, Texas."

The bids will only be received electronically bid through CivcastUSA. The electronic bids will be publicly opened and read via conference call. Physical bids will not be accepted.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, large public gatherings are not permitted by law. Bids will be publicly read aloud at the time bids are due via teleconference call. The number for this call is: 1-832-856-3756. Enter access code 609-173-233# when prompted.

Scope of Work of the Contract includes the following: Water, Sanitary, and Drainage Facilities.

Bids received after the closing time will be returned unopened. A NON-MANDATORY pre-bid conference will be held on March 31, 2022, at 9:30 a.m. Local Time, via teleconference call. The number for this call is: 1-832-856-3756. Enter access code 785-926-625# when prompted.

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

Copies of the bidding documents are on file at the following locations:

Copies of the bidding documents may be obtained from www.CivcastUSA.com. Bidders must register on this website in order to view and/or download specifications, plans, soils report, and environmental reports for this Project. There is **NO** charge to view or download documents.

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

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

INVITATION TO BIDDERS

Sealed Bids, in duplicate, addressed to Board of Directors, Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 171, will be received at the Elyson Café, 23623 Elyson Falls Dr, Katy, TX 77493, from 1:30 p.m. - 2 p.m. Local Time, Wednesday, April 6th, 2022, at which time all bids will be opened and publicly read for the furnishing of all material, equipment, labor and supervision necessary or incidental for Construction of "Elyson Section 43 Landscape", Harris County, Texas.

Scope of Work for the Contract includes, but is not limited to, the construction of sprinkler irrigation, grading, grassing, planting, and landscape maintenance.

Bids received after the closing time will be returned unopened.

A MANDATORY pre-bid conference will be held on Thursday, March 24, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Local Time, at the Elyson Café, 23623 Elyson Falls Dr, Katy, TX 77493. Bid will not be opened unless the bidder or a representative was present at the pre-bid conference.

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

Copies of the bidding documents may be obtained from www.CivcastUSA.com: search the Project name. Bidders must register on this website in order to view and/or download bid documents for this Project. There is NO charge to view or download documents.

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

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

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ROUNDUP
from page B5

Cougars didn't score in the first or second but put on an onslaught in the third inning.
Faith Piper walked to start the inning and came in to score on an error, giving Cinco its first run. Shelby Hodge then doubled to center field to score two more runs. Kovar helped herself out, reaching on an error and scoring a run, and Katie Schmidt made it 6-0 with a single, driving in two additional runs.
And the Cougars weren't done in the inning. Amanda Croteau added two more runs on a ground ball single to left, before Mariah Hinojosa put the cherry on top, hitting a 3-run home run to center field.
Both Hinojosa and Croteau ended the night with three RBIs, while Hodge and Schmidt added two RBIs a piece in the win.

THURSDAY
Paetow walks off against Brenham
It was tight all night for Paetow in its game against Brenham and it didn't get decided until the bottom of the seventh, as the Panthers beat Brenham 3-2 on a walk to Alicia Briones with the bases loaded.
Briones was also the one who got Paetow started in the first inning, as she tripled to center field to score Mia Galarza, who had led the game off with a triple.
Brenham answered back in the third inning. Avery Maurer drove in on a run on a single to tie things and Hallie Scheel gave Brenham the lead with another RBI single.
Paetow came back to tie things in the bottom of the fourth. Shy'Lynn Brown singled to start the inning and then stole second and then

third to put herself in prime scoring position. Then Makalynn Paterson hit a sacrifice grounder to bring Brown home.
Things remained that way until the bottom of the seventh. Jade Catherwood salked to start the inning and advanced to second as Paterson bunted for a single. Galarza then bunted and reached on an error to load the bases and the game ended when Briones drew a walk to bring in a run.
Jordan comeback falls short against College Station
Jordan hung around and scored five late runs, but it wasn't enough after the Warriors had fallen behind early in an 8-5 loss to College Station.
College Station scored in each of the first four innings of the game, with three runs in the first, one run

both in the second and third innings and three runs in the fourth inning.
Jordan started to climb back into the game in the fifth inning. Morgan Eisenberger singled to start the run and Allie Hakimzadeh walked to put two runners on. From there Cady Bowyer tripled to center field to score two runs.
Jordan got three more runs in the sixth. A. Duhon doubled to start the inning, before Amy Owen tripled to score Duhon. Lyra Berry singled to score another run and after Megan Anton singled, she came around to score on a wild pitch to make things 8-5.
But those were the last runs Jordan would score, as College Station held them scoreless over the final inning.
Bowyer ended the night with two RBIs to lead the Warriors, while Eisenberger had two hits to lead the team.

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INVITATION TO BID
Sealed Electronic Bids, addressed to Jones & Carter, Inc., attention Blair M. Bozarth, PE, will be electronically received until 10:00 a.m. local time, April 7th, 2022, and then publicly opened and read for "Construction of Water, Sanitary, and Drainage, in Sunterra Section 35 for Astro Sunterra LP. on behalf of Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 569, Harris County, Texas."
The bids will only be received electronically bid through CivcastUSA. The electronic bids will be publicly opened and read via conference call. Physical bids will not be accepted.
Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, large public gatherings are not permitted by law. Bids will be publicly read aloud at the time bids are due via teleconference call. The number for this call is: 1-832-856-3756. Enter access code 368168429# when prompted.
Scope of Work of the Contract includes the following: Water, Sanitary, and Drainage Facilities.
Bids received after the closing time will be returned unopened. A NON-MANDATORY pre-bid conference will be held on March 31st, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Local Time, via teleconference call. The number for this call is: 1-832-856-3756. Enter access code 335379336# when prompted.
Each Bid must be accompanied by a Bid Bond or a certified or cashier's check, acceptable to the Owner, in an amount not less than five percent (5%) of the total amount Bid, as a guarantee that the successful bidder will enter into the Contract and execute the Bonds on the forms provided and provide the required insurance certificates within seven (7) days after the date Contract Documents are received by the Contractor.
Copies of the bidding documents are on file at the following locations:
Copies of the bidding documents may be obtained from www.CivcastUSA.com. Bidders must register on this website in order to view and/or download specifications, plans, soils report, and environmental reports for this Project. There is NO charge to view or download documents.
The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all Bids and to waive all defects and irregularities in bidding or bidding process except time of submitting a Bid. The Successful Bidder, if any, will be the responsible Bidder which in the Owner's judgment will be most advantageous to the Owner and result in the best and most economical completion of the Project.
The requirements of Subchapter J, Chapter 552, Government Code, may apply to this Bid and/or Contract and the Contractor agrees that the Contract can be terminated if the Contractor knowingly or intentionally fails to comply with a requirement of that subchapter.

INVITATION TO BID
Sealed Electronic Bids, addressed to Quiddity Engineering, LLC, attention Travis W. Miller, PE, will be electronically received until 9:30 a.m. local time, April 12, 2022, and then publicly opened and read for "Construction of Water, Sanitary, and Drainage Facilities in Sunterra Sec 42 for Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 569, Harris County, Texas."
The bids will only be received electronically bid through CivcastUSA. The electronic bids will be publicly opened and read via conference call. Physical bids will not be accepted.
Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, large public gatherings are not permitted by law. Bids will be publicly read aloud at the time bids are due via teleconference call. The number for this call is: 1-832-856-3756. Enter access code 884-711-017# when prompted.
Scope of Work of the Contract includes the following: Water, Sanitary, and Drainage Facilities.
Bids received after the closing time will be returned unopened. A NON-MANDATORY pre-bid conference will be held on March 31, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. Local Time, via teleconference call. The number for this call is: 1-832-856-3756. Enter access code 187-266-602# when prompted.
Each Bid must be accompanied by a Bid Bond or a certified or cashier's check, acceptable to the Owner, in an amount not less than five percent (5%) of the total amount Bid, as a guarantee that the successful bidder will enter into the Contract and execute the Bonds on the forms provided and provide the required insurance certificates within seven (7) days after the date Contract Documents are received by the Contractor.
Copies of the bidding documents are on file at the following locations:
Copies of the bidding documents may be obtained from www.CivcastUSA.com. Bidders must register on this website in order to view and/or download specifications, plans, soils report, and environmental reports for this Project. There is NO charge to view or download documents.
The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all Bids and to waive all defects and irregularities in bidding or bidding process except time of submitting a Bid. The Successful Bidder, if any, will be the responsible Bidder which in the Owner's judgment will be most advantageous to the Owner and result in the best and most economical completion of the Project.
The requirements of Subchapter J, Chapter 552, Government Code, may apply to this Bid and/or Contract and the Contractor agrees that the Contract can be terminated if the Contractor knowingly or intentionally fails to comply with a requirement of that subchapter.

INVITATION TO BIDDERS
Sealed Electronic Bids, addressed to Quiddity Engineering, LLC, attention Travis W. Miller, PE, will be electronically received until 11:00 a.m. Local Time, Thursday, March 31st, 2022, and then publicly opened and read for "Construction of Water, Sanitary, and Drainage Facilities Sunterra Section 29 for Waller County Municipal Utility District No. 37, Waller County, Texas"
The bids will only be received electronically through CivcastUSA. The electronic bids will be publicly opened and read via conference call. Physical bids will not be accepted.
Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, large public gatherings are not permitted by law. Bids will be publicly read aloud at the time bids are due via teleconference call. The number for this call is: 1-832-856-3756. Enter access code 653-772-626# when prompted.
Scope of Work of the Contract includes the following: Construction of WS&D Facilities in Sunterra Section 29
Bids received after the closing time will be returned unopened. A NON-MANDATORY pre-bid conference will be held on Thursday, March 24th, 2022, at 11:00 a.m. Local Time, via teleconference call. The number for this call is: 1-832-856-3756. Enter access code 349-659-324# when prompted.
Each Bid must be accompanied by a Bid Bond or a certified or cashier's check, acceptable to the Owner, in an amount not less than five percent (5%) of the total amount Bid, as a guarantee that the successful bidder will enter into the Contract and execute the Bonds on the forms provided, and provide the required insurance certificates within seven (7) days after the date Contract Documents are received by the Contractor.
Copies of the bidding documents are on file at the following locations:
Copies of the bidding documents may be obtained from www.CivcastUSA.com Bidders must register on this website in order to view and/or download specifications, plans, soils report, and environmental reports for this Project. There is NO charge to view or download documents.
The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all Bids and to waive all defects and irregularities in bidding or bidding process except time of submitting a Bid. The Successful Bidder, if any, will be the responsible Bidder which in the Board's judgment will be most advantageous to the District and result in the best and most economical completion of the Project.
The requirements of Subchapter J, Chapter 552, Government Code, may apply to this Bid and/or Contract and the Contractor agrees that the Contract can be terminated if the Contractor knowingly or intentionally fails to comply with a requirement of that subchapter.
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MORTON RANCH GRAD SHINES IN NCAA TOURNAMENT



PHOTO BY MARK GOODMAN | FILE PHOTO

Morton Ranch graduate and current TCU center Eddie Lampkin scored a career high 20 points to go with 14 rebounds on Saturday's NCAA Tournament Round of 32 game on Sunday. The No. Horned Frogs nearly upset the No. 1 seeded Arizona Wildcats, falling 85-80 in overtime. Lampkin, a sophomore, averaged 11.6 points and 10.9 rebounds per game his senior year at Morton Ranch, helping the Mavericks reach the regional tournament for the first time in school history.

PLAYOFFS

from page B1

Seven Lakes and lost to Taylor to finish third. They will play Fort Bend Austin 7 p.m. Friday at Travis for their chance to move on.

Taylor finished in fourth place, but was hot down the stretch and will be a force to be reckoned with for any team in the playoffs. The Mustangs started district with four straight losses, and looked out of playoff contention, but five wins in the teams last six games pulled them right back in and clinched a playoff berth.

Those wins included wins over Seven Lakes and Cinco Ranch, as the Mustangs reached a gear down the district stretch. Now they will have a chance to unseat the No. 1 seed from District 20-6-A, when they play Fort Bend Bush at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Austin High.

The Jordan boys finished second in District 19-5A and now have a chance to go on a playoff run for the first time in school history when the Warriors play Lakes Creek at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Legacy Stadium.

On the girls side, Seven Lakes won the district title and is wanting to go on another deep playoff run, setting themselves up perfectly to do so.

The Spartans are 14-2-2 this year with a 10-1-1 record in district, showing a dominance against almost every opponent they've faced. Along with that, the Spartans have allowed just four goals over the course of the entire season and only one goal throughout district play. And defense and goalkeeping is one of the most important aspects of playoff soccer.

Tompkins came in second in the district, but did hand Seven Lakes its only district loss while tying the Spartans in their other meeting, showing the capability of the squad.

The Falcons have their own strong playoff ambitions and they will get the chance to start those 5:30 p.m. Friday at Rhodes Stadium when they take on George Ranch.

Katy and Taylor were the final two playoff teams out of the district and Katy also has a strong ability to make a push in the playoffs. The Tigers went 11-3-3 on the year with a 8-2-2 district record while scoring 42 times compared to giving up just 13 goals.

The Tigers are determined to make this playoff appearance count, as it will be the final playoff run for the school with Dianne Loftin. The Tigers will start the playoffs when they face Clements at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Austin High.



TYLER TYRE

Tompkins' Jose Ramos cuts upfield during a District 19-6A game against Mayde Creek at Rhodes Stadium.



Kennedy Reed dribbles the ball during a game between Seven Lakes and Lake Travis at Legacy Stadium.

Taylor had some drama down the stretch, but made it into the playoffs and will look to play at a high level as they try to advance past an undefeated Ridge Point team 7 p.m. Friday at Tully Stadium.

Jordan rounds out the Katy ISD schools making the playoffs. The first-year program finished second in district, narrowly missing out

on a district title to Magnolia. The Warriors went 13-6-1 this year with a 12-2-1 record in district, scoring 66 goals compared to just 17 goals allowed over the course of the year.

The Warriors have a strong chance at their first ever playoff win when they play at Lake Creek 4 p.m. Friday with a trip to the area round on the line.

Hoore, Harmon lead No. 2 Texas past Fairfield

BY ZACH SMITH
HCN SPORTS EDITOR

The Texas Women's basketball team has been on a pretty good run over the last month and a half.

The No. 2-seeded Longhorns, coming off their first Big 12 tournament title in nearly two decades, downed No. 15 seed Fairfield 70-52 Friday in the first round of the NCAA Tournament to push their winning streak to 12 straight games.

Head coach Vic Schaefer still isn't satisfied. "I'm happy about the win, but I don't think we played particularly well," Schafer said. "I'll wear that. It's my responsibility to make sure our kids play well and do things the right way. I just thought we were really — we just weren't real good today."

Texas will face off against No. 7 Utah — which hit 15 3-pointers to blitz No. 10 Arkansas in the first game of the regional — Sunday at 4 p.m. in the final collegiate basketball game at the Erwin Center.

"Yeah, they like to shoot the three," Schaefer said. "If we want to win on Sunday, we're going to have to be different."

Freshman Aaliyah Moore scored a career-high 18 points and 10 rebounds, while Harmon, the Big 12 Freshman of the Year, had her third triple-double of the season, scoring 10 points and dishing out 11 assists.

Lauren Ebo scored 10 points and grabbed seven rebounds, while Audrey Warren scored eight points with five rebounds and four steals.

Friday's win was especially special for Moore, who was limited to start the season due to an injury and has been coming off the bench over the last 12 games.

"It's definitely been a lot of learning, lots of ups and downs my freshman year, but I wouldn't trade it for anything else," Moore said. "You can learn a lot from the sideline even while you're not out there playing. Just to be the biggest cheerleader for my teammates, because at the end of the day all I want is to win, whether I'm out there or not."

With Warren getting just her third start in the last 18 games, she was one of three Texas players to score four points in the first quarter to help the Longhorns race out to a five-point lead early on.

Harmon scored five of the first seven points for the Longhorns, which helped balloon the lead to double-digits. A 13-2 run late in the quarter extended the lead to 21 points.

The Stags made their run in the third quarter, scoring seven straight and holding the Longhorns without a bucket for more than three minutes as the lead shrunk to 10.

But Warren came away with steals on back-to-back possessions, and Matharu hit a 3-pointer to end the run. The Longhorns went on a 14-0 run of their own in the fourth quarter to pull away for the 18-point win.

"We basically practiced like the way we played today for the last three days, and I think we can just focus more on the little things, not even think about taking teams for granted because everybody is in this tournament for a reason right now," Warren said.

After losing two of their first three Big 12 games and dropping three straight conference games midway through the schedule, Texas finished the year on an 11-game winning streak and won the Big 12 Tournament for the first time since 2003.

There might not be a more locked-in team in the country than the Longhorns, but things only get tougher from here.

"You've got to be ready with (Utah), and you cannot make a mistake defensively," Schaefer said. "I just think we're going to have to play better, y'all. That's all there is to it."

Texas followed up the win with a 78-56 win over Utah to advance to the Sweet 16.



Texas forward Aaliyah Moore (21) looks to shoot as Fairfield forward Andrea Hernangomez (41) defends over the top during a first-round game in the NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament in Austin, Texas on March 18, 2022. Texas won, 70-52.



Texas head coach Vic Schaefer during a first-round game in the NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament in Austin, Texas on March 18, 2022. Texas won, 70-52.

PHOTOS BY SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Correa leaving Houston, signs with Minnesota Twins

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Carlos Correa's time as an Astro has officially come to an end.

After 781 hits, 133 home runs, and a World Series, the short stop helped to usher Houston into a golden age of baseball in the city.

But now, the 27 year old is officially a Twin, as Correa signed a three-year \$105.3 million deal with Minnesota, leaving Houston after seven seasons with the franchise at the MLB level.

The Astros reportedly

offered Correa a five-year \$160 million contract to Correa after the World Series, but when Correa declined, Houston never came back with a second offer. After the lockout ended, Correa was willing to work with the Astros and had hoped to receive a higher offer from the franchise, but it never came.

Jose Altuve, the Astros franchise player, was sad to see the star shortstop depart Houston.

"I was surprised, I wasn't expecting that," Altuve said. "Obviously we're going to miss him. He's a great player and a great guy inside the clubhouse. He was one of our leaders."

Jeremy Pena will in all likelihood get the starting nod at shortstop. Pena, 24, spent 30 games at AAA Sugar Land last season, batting .287 with 10 home runs, 19 RBIS, four doubles and two triples with a .346 on base percentage. But Pena also has not yet been to the big leagues, and it will be a jump he will need to make.

Correa though, will be enjoying life up north.

"Now that he's on another team, I'm happy for him," Altuve said. "He got a great deal, happy for him. I know he's going to play good. He's going to make the Twins better."



FILE PHOTO

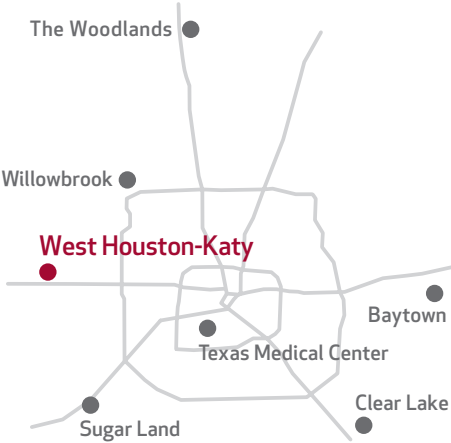
Former Houston Astros short stop Carlos Correa signed a three-year deal with the Minnesota Twins, bringing his time to Houston to a close after seven seasons with the Astros.



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