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THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 2024

Katy school board approves compensation plan

The school board delays decision on lump sum retention bonus

BY SUSAN ROVEGNO
PUBLISHER

Katy ISD's school board officially approved the compensation plan for the

coming school year at Monday night's meeting – making the staff raises of three per cent at midpoint official – but the trustees were unable to come to agreement on a plan for a lump sum bonus which would reward classroom teachers reaching benchmark years of service. The “teacher retention” bonus plan was delayed, with President Victor Perez requesting an additional work-study meeting to hash out the details.

The board also approved the 2024-

2025 Discipline Management plan, which includes further restrictions on telecommunications devices such as cell phones and accessories and smart watches. The new plan was approved by a 6-0 vote with board member Dawn Champagne abstaining. Champagne, who asked board president Perez to pull the item from the consent agenda, expressed concerns during discussion about smart watches, which the policy states cannot be in use during instructional

periods. Champagne said that the need to check each student for a smart watch would put a burden on teachers and, if watches are confiscated, the expensive devices could be damaged in the process, leading to additional costs for the district.

The Katy Times also reached out to the district to ask if there were any exceptions to the policy – specifically for phones used

See **KISD**, page A3

SEAT founder Cameron Samuels responds to Paxton lawsuit over Title IX

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Katy native, LGBTQ activist and Executive Director of Students Engaged in Advancing Texas (SEAT) Cameron Samuels reacted last week to Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's victory against the Biden Administration's Department of Education, stopping its attempt to have Title IX extend to transgender policies.

In June 2023, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton sued the Department of Education for issuing what his office called “arbitrary and capricious guidance that

unlawfully extended Title IX to include ‘sexual orientation’ and ‘gender identity’ as protected classes.” A press release from Paxton's office said that the policy would have forced Texas schools and universities to allow biological males to use women's restrooms, locker rooms, and other sex-specific spaces. “Any Texas school refusing to follow the mandate risked losing federal education funding. Today, a federal court vacated the unlawful guidance nationwide and issued a permanent in-

See **SEAT**, page A3

Katy ISD honored for work narrowing achievement gaps

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Katy ISD has been named a 2023 Texas Honor Roll District for its commitment to narrowing achievement gaps, particularly for socio-economically disadvantaged student populations, the district announced in a June 18 press release.

Only 89 Texas school

districts, approximately 10% of those eligible for consideration, were named to the list.

“The strongest evidence of our success is that our students – all of our students – continue to make strides in their academic achievement, and the STAAR results

See **HONOR**, page A3

FUZZY'S WELCOMES FLETCHER



PHOTO COURTESY OF JEFF HAJIAR, FUZZY'S PIZZA

Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher (D-Texas) who represents the 7th Congressional District covering a portion of the Katy area, tosses dough at Fuzzy's Pizza, 613 S. Mason in Katy, as she prepares a pizza to be named for her. “The Fletcher's” includes pepperoni, black olives and onion. Fletcher joins a host of other officials for whom Fuzzy's has named menu items, including former U. S. President George Bush, former First Lady Barbara Bush, Texas Governor Greg Abbott, DA Kim Ogg and Congress members Troy Nehls, Wesley Hunt and Morgan Luttrell.

City council approves new vehicles for Katy PD

BY SUSAN ROVEGNO
PUBLISHER

Katy's city council approved new vehicles for Katy Police Department in two separate actions at Monday night's council meeting.

Motorcycle lease agreements between the city and police officers, along with related insurance, were approved. The city has leased motorcycles, rather than purchasing them, since 1997, city administrator Byron Hebert said, and this plan is a modification to insure those vehicles while the officers are on duty.

Council also authorized purchase of fleet Vehicles for Katy Police Department including seven Chevy Tahoes and one Chevy Silverado. The purchase was done with \$562,173.75 in funds from the American Rescue Plan Act. Mayor Pro Tem Chris Harris asked KPD Chief Noe Diaz if this plan included replacement of a city vehicle which was in an accident and Diaz responded that this plan “fills the gap on some of the older vehicles” in the fleet. The input of the new vehicles modernizes the fleet and “gives the officers a little more to work with.” Diaz said that he had been in discussions with the city administrator regarding the purchase of additional vehicles, a matter which will be present-

See **COUNCIL**, page A3

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Rice Harvest Festival announces Sunday headliner



PHOTO COURTESY OF 2024 RICHARD EDWARD PHOTOGRAPHY

Country singer Stoney LaRue will be the headliner at the Rice Harvest Festival in old town Katy on Sunday, October 13 at 4:30 p.m. Tickets go on sale July 1.

BY SUSAN ROVEGNO
PUBLISHER

Red dirt country singer Stoney LaRue has been announced as the Sunday headliner for the City of Katy's annual Rice Festival, the city said in a Facebook post on June 18.

“After two decades in the spotlight and over a million albums and singles sold, Stoney LaRue makes his way to the main stage at Katy Rice Harvest Festival on Sunday, October 13th,” the post said. LaRue's performance is scheduled to begin at 4:30 p.m. on the main stage at the historic plaza in Old Katy, located at Second Street and Avenue C. The annual festival, celebrating Katy's heritage in rice farming, will be October 12 and 13 and is co-sponsored by the City of Katy and the Rotary Club of Katy.

Tickets go on sale July 1st at katyriceharvestfestival.com

“Stoney LaRue joining the festival has added a level of excitement from our sponsors, vendors, and community,” said Kaci Maris, tourism and marketing event coordinator for the City of Katy in an email to the Katy Times. “The support we received

See **FESTIVAL**, page A3

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SUNDANCE HEAD PERFORMS
AT TEXAS BEST MUSIC FEST



PHOTO BY SUSAN ROVEGNO

Sundance Head (right), winner of the 2016 season of The Voice, performs at Texas Best Music Fest held Sunday at Mo's Place, 21940 Kingsland in Katy. The concert, spearheaded by Grammy® winning singer-songwriters Bill and Kim Nash, raised money for Champions Kids Camp, which helps children who have survived a traumatic injury, illness, or personal loss, such as the loss of a parent or sibling.

Free STEM classes
available in July

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Tashvi Singla is a rising senior at Jordan High School in Katy ISD and is planning to hold free virtual and in-person STEM events during summers for the elementary aged kids in the community in Cinco Ranch and neighboring areas. The events, scheduled for July 1 - 3 and July 22-24, every day from 11 to 11:45 a.m. and 4 to 4:45 p.m., will be on Zoom and the link will be communicated via email from the form signup. RSVP at forms.gle/Dbynq2dBte9XVgrT7.

Content covered will be three STEM experiments in each session which focus on principles of mechanical, chemical, industrial, aerospace, robotics, and engineering. The targeted

age range is 2nd - 5th graders.

This outreach is a part of Singla's personal passion project that is in continuation of her participation in the Engineer Girl ambassador program sponsored by National Association of Engineering (NAE) for 2023-2024 year. Singla was among 20 girls from the entire country were selected by NAE. She hosted three virtual workshops and a very successful in person event in April 2024 reaching 40-50 girls and spreading STEM awareness. She also raised \$200 and donated STEM activity kits to Texas Children Hospital.

"I want to help spread accessibility in STEM in my community to create opportunities for the future generation," said Singla.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Start your Independence Day celebration
on June 30 with indoor activities at the 1463
campus of Second Baptist Church

Come to the "Stars and Stripes Spectacular" in the COOOOL Worship Center of Second Baptist Church's 1463 campus on Sunday, June 30th at 5 p.m. and play fun summer games designed for kids young and old. There will be inflatables and fun games for the whole family as well as hot dogs and burgers for sale. Admission is free. The event will be held at 5757 FM-1463 in Katy. For more information, go to second.org/events/.

It's 'Red, White & BOOM' at Second Baptist's
West Campus on June 30

Get an early start to celebrating our nation's birthday at the West Campus of Second Baptist Church, 19449 Katy Freeway, Houston, for "Red, White & BOOM" to be held from 7 to 9 p.m., which will include fireworks, food trucks, a live band, a kids' fun area, a petting zoo and carnival rides and more, say organizers. There will also be a car show and a monster truck. Admission is \$5.00 with children 3 and younger getting in free. For more information, go to second.org/events/.

Maud Marks Library announces July
programs for elementary students

On Mondays, elementary school aged children are welcome to Maud Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen in Katy, for special programs. Tickets will be given out 30 minutes before each performance. Priority seating is for children ages 5-11; little kids and parents will be allowed in as space permits.

• July 1 at 1:30 p.m.: Mark Shelton: Strike, Shake, & Scrape percussion show. A high energy one-man assembly that treats students to world class percussion performances by Mark Shelton. Students will learn about the percussion family as they enjoy the sounds of snare drum, rhythm bones, hammered dulcimer, handpan, electronic percussion and more.

- July 8 at 1:30 p.m.: Magic Show. Presented by Jamie Salinas. Join in for a fun, engaging, event with lots of audience participation.
- July 15 at 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m.: Crocodile Encounter. An educational and entertaining program where kids get to experience reptiles – snakes, lizards, turtles, and tortoises.

Kick off 'Latin Night'
at Texas Rodeo Saloon on July 3

New music venue Texas Rodeo Saloon, located in the former Alamo Draft House location at 531 S. Mason Road in Katy, will launch "Latin Night" Wednesdays starting on July 3 at 7 p.m. Musical group David Lee Garza y Los Musicales will be featured. The saloon, which boasts a "Texas-sized dance floor," will offer \$3 "You Call It" from 7 to 10 p.m. and additional drink specials after 10 p.m. For more information, texasrodeosaloon.com/latin-night-wednesdays/.

DICK's House of Sport in Katy celebrates first
anniversary with exclusive employee bash

DICK's House of Sport, located at 24600 Katy Fwy, Ste. 1100A, Katy, will hold its one-year anniversary bash on Sunday, July 7th to commemorate its grand opening. The celebration will be filled with food, drinks, music, fun games, and numerous surprises. This event, exclusive to the store's dedicated employees, allows them to bring along their family and friends to join in the festivities.

Leading up to the event, employees will have had opportunities to earn tickets redeemable for premium games, including the entertaining "Dunk Your Manager in the Water Tank" and "Pie Your Manager in the Face." Exciting game prizes include a variety of gift cards. The grand prize winner will receive a free pair of shoes from the store. In addition, the event will feature an inflatable football toss, corn hole, tug-of-war, and sack races. Local organizations will also be present with additional games set up in the parking lot. In the event of rain, the celebration will be moved inside the store.



KATY PRIDE'S
FIRST BIRTHDAY BASH

Kristina Shackelford (left), VP of Events & Outreach for Katy Pride, prepares to open the program for the organization's first birthday bash, held June 20 at the Park Place at the Boardwalk Restaurant, 25551 Kingsland in Katy. The nonprofit's mission is to empower the LGBTQ community in Katy and West Houston by creating inclusive events, advocating for equality, and fostering a supportive community of acceptance and diversity.

PHOTO BY SUSAN ROVEGNO

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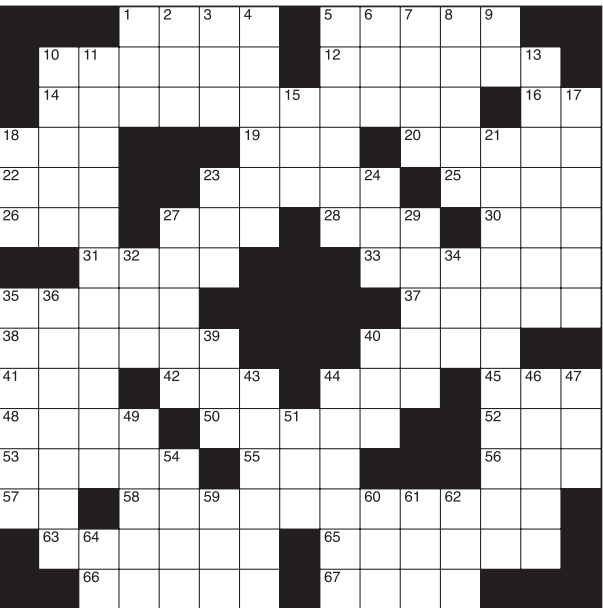
CLUES ACROSS

1. Large, flightless birds
5. Lifts and moves heavy objects
10. Hyundai sedan
12. Wear away by erosion
14. Arranged alphabetically
16. Top prosecutor
18. ___-de-sac: Short dead-end street
19. Digital audiotape
20. Linguistics pioneer
22. Singer DiFranco
23. Arms of the sea
25. Near-reach weapon (abbr.)
26. Ballplayer's accessory
27. You get one at the beach
28. U.S. founding father
30. W. Australia indigenous people
31. Amounts of time
33. Put on the shelf
35. Russian dynasty member
37. City along the Elbe River
38. A peninsula between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf
40. Actor Damon
41. ___ King Cole, musician
42. Company that rings receipts
44. Scatter
45. Basics
48. Part of a door
50. Indicates silence
52. Moved quickly on foot
53. Monetary units

55. A place to crash
56. Many subconsciouses
57. Group of countries
58. About line of latitude
63. Female follower of Bacchus
65. A dentist can treat it
66. Dull brown fabrics
67. Int'l nonprofit

CLUES DOWN

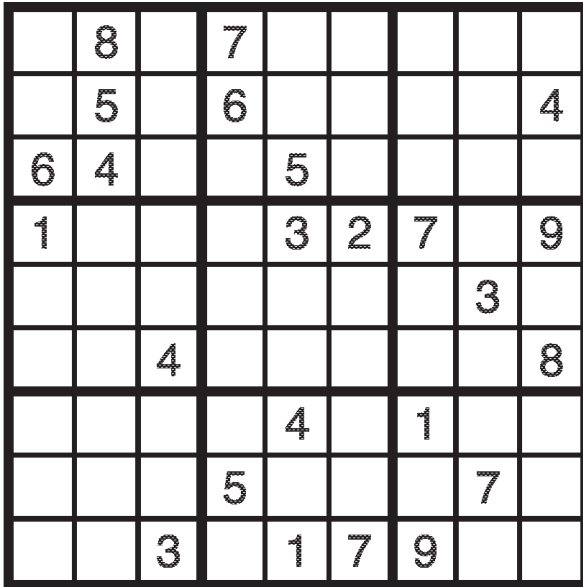
1. Midway between northeast and east
2. Partner to cheese
3. One from Utah
4. A way to move
5. Playing cards
6. Baseball stat
7. Long river in western Asia
8. Grandmothers
9. Entertainment legend Sullivan
10. Steam bath room
11. One who kills
13. Food
15. Swiss river
17. Fleet
18. Taxi
21. Working class
23. More (Spanish)
24. High schoolers' test
27. Large heavily built goat antelope
29. Murdered in his bathtub



32. Tease good-naturedly
34. Morsel
35. Cause persistent resentment
36. A radioactive element
39. Perform in a play
40. Witty remark: Bon ___
43. A great place to kayak
44. Conclude by reasoning
46. In an unfavorable way
47. Complex of nerve tissues (abbr.)
49. Machine for making paper
51. Feline
54. Yugo's hatchback
59. Check
60. Press against lightly
61. Wind-pollinated plants
62. ___compoop
64. Commercial

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.

COUNCIL

from page A1

ed to council in the future. Some vehicles in the fleet are 2015 and 2016 models, Diaz said.

Council also held public hearings to extend the boundaries of the city limits, considering the annexation of two properties on Katy Flewellen Road comprising about 2.5 acres in total and about 1.5 acres of right of way. In other actions, three contracts for debris removal were approved.

Councilmember Rory Robertson, a sixth-generation Katyite whose grandparents were one of the first Jewish families in the area, read a resolution recognizing Katy High School Theater Group for Advancing to 2024 Texas UIL Finals with Production of "Ghetto." The play recognizes lives lost in the Holocaust. It was the first time in 20 years that Katy High School made it to the state competition, Robertson said. The cast and crew won multiple awards at the district, regional and state levels.

Mayor Dusty Thiele reminded attendees that city offices would be closed on Independence Day, July 4.

The next meeting of city council is on July 8 at 6:30 p.m. at Katy City Hall, 901 Avenue C in Katy.

SEAT

from page A1

junction against its enforcement against Texas and its schools," concluded the statement.

"School officials hold a duty to create an inclusive and protective educational environment for all students," Samuels said in a statement to the Katy Times. "Since its inception in 1972, Title IX has been a cornerstone of educational equity, designed to protect all students, not just cisgender girls and women, from discrimination based on sex. This federal law has played a crucial role in ensuring that every student, regardless of gender identity or expression, can pursue our education in a safe and inclusive environment."

"Recently, Texas has wasted taxpayer dollars on frivolous federal lawsuits aiming to narrow the scope of Title IX protections," Samuels continued. "Texas's onslaught of discriminatory laws and executive actions target some of the most vulnerable students in our community, undermining our rights and well-being, despite deserving equal protection and the same opportunities as peers. These flippant actions foment a discriminatory political climate in Texas, where school districts have recently adopted or proposed resolutions rejecting Title IX protections and are even discussing the possibility of rejecting federal funding to uphold unnecessary bigotry and prejudice against their students. SEAT calls on school districts statewide to support and uphold Title IX in its true spirit, ensuring that every student in Texas is afforded the dignity, respect, and protection we deserve."

Samuels organized nationally-recognized efforts against book banning and LGBTQ+ internet censorship in the Katy Independent School District and testified last fall before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, addressing book bans happening across Texas and the rest of the country.

Cinco Ranch High School student Jarred Burton – who has spoken to the Katy ISD board of trustees several times during public comments -- also weighed in on the decision. "If Texas and other alike states are successful in blocking the Title IX reforms permanently, school districts just like Katy ISD will be further emboldened to discriminate against their transgender students," said Burton in an email to the Katy Times. "While anti-trans politicians sit in their offices writing our rights away, those of us in the classrooms are still suffering from the effects every day. These reforms have given us hope, and we're not about to let people like Paxton take that away from us."

FESTIVAL

from page A1

from the City of Katy Mayor Dusty Thiele, council members and especially the Convention & Tourism Bureau Board has made it possible to pursue incredible artists and allow us to attract a whole new audience for our annual festival. Everyone at the City is working very hard

to create the most unique, fun, and exciting Katy Rice Harvest Festival and showing all our visitors why we call Katy, your hometown. We can't wait to have everyone come out in October and we know Stoney will close us out with an epic performance."

LaRue was born in Taft, Texas

but was raised in Oklahoma, where he got his start playing country music in bars in the college town of Stillwater, a city considered to be the center of red dirt music. Red dirt is a genre of country music that gets its name from the color of soil found in Oklahoma.

HONOR

from page A1

are just one way to measure that," said Christine Caskey, Chief Academic Officer. "Being named to the state Honor Roll list is just further evidence that our efforts are successful."

Twenty-seven of the District's schools were also named to the list:

- Cinco Ranch High School
- Katy High School
- Seven Lakes High School
- Taylor High School
- Adams Junior High
- Beck Junior High
- Beckendorff Junior High
- Cinco Ranch Junior High
- Katy Junior High
- Seven Lakes Junior High
- Stockdick Junior High
- Tays Junior High
- WoodCreek Junior High
- Alexander Elementary
- Bethke Elementary
- Campbell Elementary
- Creech Elementary
- Fielder Elementary
- Griffin Elementary
- Jenks Elementary
- Randolph Elementary
- Rylander Elementary
- Shafer Elementary
- Stanley Elementary
- Wilson Elementary
- Wolman Elementary
- WoodCreek Elementary

The Honor Roll list, compiled by the Educational Results Partnership, assesses students' STAAR outcomes, specifically from 2019 to 2023, to mark gains in reading, writing and math proficiency.

The Texas Honor Roll is presented by the Campaign for Business and Education Excellence in collaboration with the Texas Business Leadership Council and other state business partners. Visit the Honor Roll web page at edresults.org/honor-roll to learn more.

CORRECTION

In a front page story on the June 17 meeting of the Katy ISD board of trustees, the Katy Times incorrectly reported that Board President Victor Perez called for security to remove public comments speaker Lisa Lister-Browne from the room. Perez said, "This lady is disrupting the meeting," and Katy ISD security officers approached the speaker. The Times regrets the error.

KISD

from page A1

in conjunction with glucose monitoring or other medical needs. "Students with documented medical needs or for whom an ARD committee has determined that a device is necessary for the student to access their educational program will be accommodated," said the district in an email to the Katy Times. "The device is still expected to not be a telecommunications device."

The board also honored board member Lance Redmon, for earning the Master Trustee designation from the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). Redmon was among

this year's cohort for the highly selective program that elevates school board members from across the state of Texas, the district said in a press release after the meeting.

Redmon, along with 33 other Texas trustees attended the year-long program where they spent more than 75 hours learning how to achieve better governance and improve student support throughout their school districts.

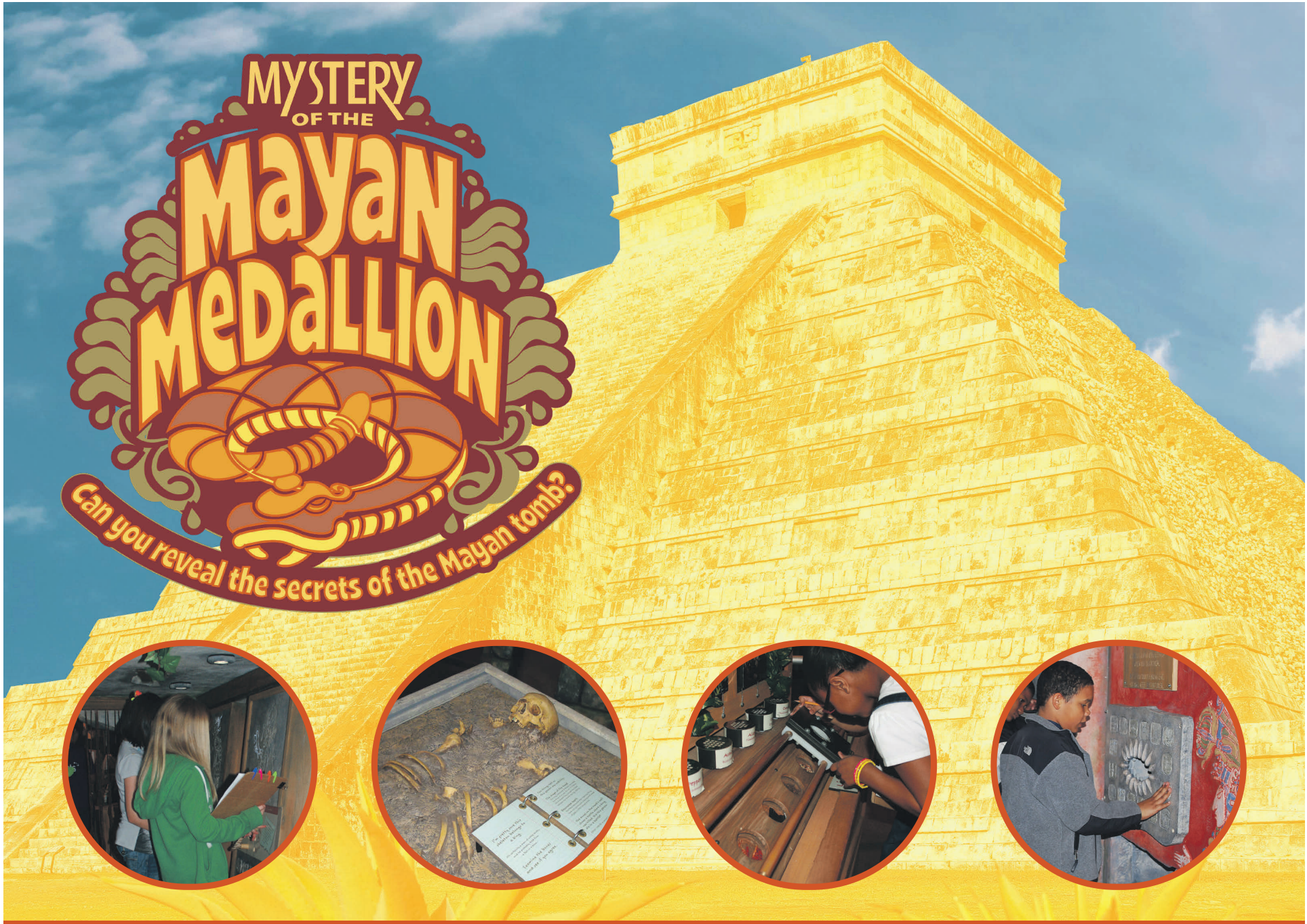
Redmon has served Katy ISD as a member of the Board of Trustees since 2019 and represents Position 2. He is actively involved

in the community, having volunteered for the Katy ISD Education Foundation Board, Katy Improvement Council, and the PTA. He is also a graduate of Katy ISD's Leadership Katy program and has served his local church.

During public comments, Anne Russey, who is vice president for community and education of the LGBTQ+ advocacy group Katy Pride, asked the board to consider a resolution recognizing June as Pride month.

The next meetings of the school board are:

- Work study meeting on July 22
- Regular board meeting on July 29



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For tickets, visit sugarland.hmns.org or call 713-639-4629

Mystery of the Mayan Medallion is an exhibit by the Museum of Discovery, Little Rock, Arkansas



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANGELA VARGAS
Rick (left) and Angela Vargas, shown with daughter Ofelia outside their insurance agency on Third Street in old Katy, have launched new rideshare app Wridz to serve the greater Houston and Katy area.

Local couple launches Wridz to serve Katy and greater Houston region

BY SUSAN ROVEGNO
PUBLISHER

Local entrepreneurs Rick and Angela Vargas, owners of The Vargas Agency at 5718 Third Street in old Katy, have partnered with WRIDZ, a software platform that connects drivers and passengers through the use of the Wridz app.

“Wridz is not just another rideshare company, we are the evolution of rideshare,” said Angela Vargas in an email to the Katy Times. “At Wridz, we put the drivers and our passengers first.”

Rick and Angela married in 2006 in El Paso, then moved to Katy 2007 and started their insurance agency in 2017, quickly becoming active in the community through the Fulshear Regional Chamber for Commerce. They have two children -- daughter Ofelia and son Burabari. In the course of looking for additional business opportunities, the Vargases met with Steve and Donna Wright, founders of Wridz, in September 2023. “After our first meeting we quickly realized this is a company that aligns with our values,” said Vargas. “Once we talked with [the Wrights], we quickly recognize their heart and vision for Wridz was in the right place. Rick and I have a love for business, and we are excited to bring this opportunity to our community.”

Wridz is different from other rideshares in that it addresses three primary areas related to the needs and desires of passengers: passenger safety, fares and locating/verifying the driver, Angela Vargas said. Drivers undergo an extensive background check, an interview process which include an in-person drug test, verifying the driver's photo and other information, and verifying the photo and information about the vehicle. Drivers are continuously monitored, as are their ratings. Wridz strives to keep its fares ten percent lower than

other rideshares serving the area.

“You'll never again worry that you might not be getting into the vehicle with the driver assigned for your trip,” said Vargas. “Wridz has a unique CallingCard”: system to help you locate and identify your driver. You and your driver will each be assigned a color and number combination unique to the pickup area for your trip. You and your driver can each display the CallingCard” in full screen mode to locate your driver. Next, your driver will have a dash placard with a unique driver id and QR code. Point your phone camera at the QR code to be notified if this is, or is not, your driver.”

Wridz is also different from the perspective of the drivers. Drivers get 100 per cent of the fare, without paying a booking fee. The program is subscription-based and drivers choose the region or regions they would like to drive in, paying a monthly subscription fee for the chosen area.

The Wridz app is available in the app store, Vargas said and once it is downloaded, the user has the option to enter the destination and request a ride; also a specific driver. Wait time depends on the number of drivers available. “As we continue to increase the number of drivers weekly, the waiting time will decrease,” Angela Vargas said. Credit cards are accepted.

Under the direction of the Vargases, Wridz will serve the Houston region, as far north as Huntsville down to Galveston, and from Columbus to the border of Louisiana.

“In this difficult time in our economy we feel Wridz will give the opportunity for drivers to earn what they work for,” Vargas said. “Safety in our country has also become a concern -- we believe through the measure of the onboarding process, we are able to minimize an unwanted situation. We love and care for our community and we know that this community/country will support Wridz.”

Katy students awarded National Energy Workforce Scholarship

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

On May 30, Energy Workforce & Technology Council announced the recipients of their 2024 Scholarship – a prestigious list that included four students from the Katy area:

- Daniel Yang
- Dorothy Xu
- Patrick Spillman
- Samuel Yuan

Recipients were selected based on various criteria, including a 3.0-4.0 grade point average, class rank, class load and difficulty. Applicants were also required to submit a one-page personal essay, communicating the student's educational goals, career objectives and how their chosen school will assist

in achieving personal and career development goals.

The Energy Workforce & Technology Council's Scholarship Program provides educational assistance to an employee, spouse, child or other legal dependent of an employee of an Energy Workforce Member Company. Since its inception, the scholarship program has awarded more than \$4 million to help dependents of member companies attend institutions of higher learning, earn undergraduate and advanced degrees, and launch successful professional careers.

“The development of the next generation of leaders and innovators is a cornerstone of EWTC's commitment to the energy industry,” said Energy Workforce President Molly Determan. “The EWTC scholarship is a longstanding program that aids the Energy Workforce in removing financial barriers to higher education for dependents of our member companies. As the industry continues to attract the next generation of talent, we are dedicated to fostering a skilled and knowledgeable workforce that will continue to drive advancement in the energy sector and beyond. We are proud to play a small role in these outstanding young individuals' academic careers and look forward to seeing their impact as they advance their professional development.”

ment to the energy industry,” said Energy Workforce President Molly Determan. “The EWTC scholarship is a longstanding program that aids the Energy Workforce in removing financial barriers to higher education for dependents of our member companies. As the industry continues to attract the next generation of talent, we are dedicated to fostering a skilled and knowledgeable workforce that will continue to drive advancement in the energy sector and beyond. We are proud to play a small role in these outstanding young individuals' academic careers and look forward to seeing their impact as they advance their professional development.”

Ochoa Energy Storage invests in Katy's next generation with awards to Katy Education Foundation, Shaw Center

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Ochoa Energy Storage announced on June 10 that Katy ISD Education Foundation and the Robert R. Shaw Center for STEAM have been selected as the recipients of its spring 2024 Community Giving Program.

The Katy ISD Education Foundation provides resources to enrich teaching, inspire learning, and enhance opportunities for students in the Katy community. Funding from the Ochoa Energy Storage Community Giving Program will support Katy High School's “Aiming for a Net-Zero Campus Using a Native Prairie Ecosystem as a Real-World Model” program, providing students with an immersive opportunity to learn about conserving Katy's natural environment.

Katy ISD Education Foundation Development Director Janet Theis thanked the Ochoa Energy Storage team for their support, saying, “This generous contribution benefits the Katy ISD Education Foundation's district-wide Inspiring Imagination teacher grant program and provides direct support for teacher-led outdoor learning experiences at Katy High School.”

The Robert R. Shaw Center for STEAM's mission is to inspire students to pursue STEAM subjects and careers through hands-on experiences with STEAM activities and participation in advanced robotics programs. Funding from the Ochoa Energy Storage award will help the Shaw Center purchase materials and equipment for Katy ISD student field trips, where students will learn about engineering design through immersive activities like bottle car racing and straw rocket launching. The program will provide supplies and for two years-worth of field trips, benefiting about 28,000 students.

Stephen Adams, Coordinator for the Robert R. Shaw Center for STEAM, said, “The Robert R. Shaw Center for STEAM staff is incredibly thankful for Ochoa Energy Storage's award for our program and

mission. This award will enable approximately 28,000 third and seventh-grade students in Katy ISD to participate in hands-on field trips so they can engage with science on a practical and personal level, helping equip them to become our next generation of STEM leaders.”

Investing in organizations that empower future generations with the tools to create a bright future is a priority for Vesper Energy, said Alex Rohr, Community Affairs Manager for the Ochoa Energy Storage project. “Our team is grateful for the opportunity to invest in Katy's students and educators by partnering with incredible community organizations like the Katy ISD Education Foundation and the Shaw Center for STEAM.”

The Ochoa Energy Storage Community Giving Program is open to organizations working to make an impact on the Katy area community. The next round of applications can be submitted by visiting our website: ochoaenergystorage.com/community-giving-application. The next deadline is August 15, 2024.

About Ochoa Energy Storage

Ochoa Energy Storage is a proposed 500-megawatt Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) project that would provide sustainable, reliable energy to support the Texas grid and millions of dollars of revenue from taxes and construction spending. This project is being developed in Katy, Texas, on privately owned land, directly next to a pre-existing major electrical corridor serving the residents in the Katy area.

About Vesper Energy

Vesper Energy, headquartered in the Dallas area, is comprised of professionals who have collectively delivered more than 10 GW of renewable energy projects globally, owning and operating 100 MW of solar projects, including over 55 renewable energy and energy storage projects with a generating capacity of 17 GW; enough to power more than 2 million homes.



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Katy resident serves aboard U.S. Navy floating airport

BY ASHLEY CRAIG
NAVY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY
OUTREACH

MILLINGTON, Tenn. — Petty Officer 3rd Class Juana Londono, from Katy, Texas, is one of more than 5,000 sailors serving aboard the self-contained mobile airport, USS Theodore Roosevelt.

Londono graduated from Cypress Lakes High School in 2018.

The skills and values needed to succeed in the Navy are similar to those found in Katy.

“Growing up was not always easy for my family and I because we went through a lot to get to where we are now,” said Londono. “Moving from Florida to Texas meant starting from zero, which was very challenging. This move taught me that throughout life we will all go through many obstacles and get things thrown at us, but it will all be worth it in the end. This mindset has helped me succeed in the Navy.”

Londono joined the Navy nearly five years ago. Today, Londono serves as a culinary specialist.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Petty Officer 3rd Class Juana Londono

Katy Responds announces new member of board of directors

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Katy Responds announced the addition of the Rev. Blaise Polk Sr. to its board of directors on May 30.

Polk, originally from New Orleans, LA, has served as a pastor for over forty years, beginning with a small storefront church that grew rapidly, necessitating moves to larger facilities, including the renovation of former industrial buildings into a multifunctional church complex serving the community.

Following Hurricane Katrina, Pastor Polk relocated to Texas, where he established Greater Power Baptist Church in Pleak, TX. In 2013, he founded Dove Nest Ministries in Rosenberg, focusing

on community outreach, extending their mission internationally to support pastors in Pakistan.

Katy Responds began operations in 2018 following Hurricane Harvey and the goal is to repair homes and restore hope in the community for those who are often considered most vulnerable. The nonprofit organization has restored homes for almost 200 families in the Katy and surrounding area and looks forward to continuing to assist those who are suffering in the community, said a representative.

For more information, please visit katyresponds.org or call 281-305-8545 or email. info@katyresponds.org.

REV. BLAISE
POLK SR.

ROYAL ISD BAND TRAVELS TO FLORIDA



Royal ISD's Royal Marching Sound Machine made its inaugural Disney and Universal Studios trip in June. “Our students had the opportunity to spend two exciting days at Universal Studios, where they even had the chance to record in the iconic studios,” said a spokesperson for the district. “Additionally, [they] enjoyed two magical days at Disney, exploring the wonders of Animal Kingdom and Hollywood Studios. For many of our students, this trip marked their first time traveling outside of Texas, and it was truly heartwarming to witness them experience new and exciting things. We are immensely grateful to the school board members for approving this trip, the administration for their unwavering support, and all the parents and staff who helped us raise funds to make this dream a reality.”

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROYAL ISD

The Katy Times

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PHOTO COURTESY OF KATY ISD

Katy ISD students advance to National Arts Competition

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Sixty-one Katy ISD secondary students have advanced to the national Scholastic Art & Writing Awards competition — the nation’s longest running and most prestigious recognitions program for creative teens, the district said in a June 6 press release.

These students earned 70 Gold Keys at the regional competition, with six students receiving Gold Key medals for multiple creative pieces.

“It is a testament to our fine arts program that these students are being considered for national honors in such a prestigious competition,” said G. Damon Archer, Executive Director of Fine Arts. “Our students’ natural

talent is nurtured by passionate educators and this is just one example of much-deserved recognition.”

Each year, the Harris County Department of Education, which hosts the regional competition, welcomes art submissions in the following categories: architecture and industrial design; ceramics and glass; comic art; design; digital art; drawing and illustration; editorial cartoon; expanded projects; fashion; film and animation; jewelry; mixed media; painting; photography; printmaking; and sculpture. The competition also recognizes writing submissions in critical essay; dramatic script; flash fiction; journalism; humor; novel writing; personal essay and memoir; poetry; science fiction and fantasy; and short story.

STUDENTS ADVANCING TO NATIONALS

Name	School	Category	Name of Artwork
Asher Blut	Adams Junior High	Poetry	Helping myself
Markus Brikho	Adams Junior High	Critical Essay	Mars Exploration
Mason Krueger	Adams Junior High	Personal Essay & Memoir	To Live Is To Hurt
Saakshi Kumar	Adams Junior High	Poetry	Under the Stars
Micah Obonyano	Adams Junior High	Poetry	The World WE Live in
Dishita Patil	Adams Junior High	Science Fiction	Awakening of the Heir
Gina Shim	Adams Junior High	Science Fiction	Is This Me?
Faizaan Syed	Adams Junior High	Short Story	Ambrosial Alchemy
Arjun Yerreddu	Adams Junior High	Short Story	WHODUNNIT
Matthew Wei	Beck Junior High	Short Story	Echos in Reverse
Brenda Guzman Quesada	Haskett Junior High	Drawing & Illustration	Stroke of Midnight
Kristina Tymianski	McMeans Junior High	Drawing & Illustration	Joy with the Doctor
Aanisah Chiedozie	Morton Ranch Jr. High	Poetry	Fate Is Not Chosen
Tianqi Hu	Tays Junior High	Drawing & Illustration	My little turtle
Anna Perry	Tays Junior High	Critical Essay	Al: The Future of Education
Antonio Ygnacio	Tays Junior High	Drawing & Illustration	Boys Best Friend
Nevaeh Gregory	Cinco Ranch High School	Painting	Vivid
Dang Gia Vien Nguyen	Cinco Ranch High School	Painting	Winter's Craving
Michelle Lee	Cinco Ranch High School	Drawing & Illustration	Game Over
Sofia Prada	Cinco Ranch High School	Personal Essay & Memoir	Let It Go
Mariya Shpui	Cinco Ranch High School	Personal Essay & Memoir	Well; That's It
Rachel Yun	Cinco Ranch High School	Personal Essay & Memoir	If I Could Go Back In Time
Moemal Al-Wishah	Jordan High School	Poetry	Silent Desolation
Manahil Ali	Jordan High School	Drawing & Illustration	Tribal Threads
Manahil Ali	Jordan High School	Photography	Eureka!
Reese Banister	Jordan High School	Poetry	my home; it's shared rooms.
Valeria Dumitrascu	Jordan High School	Painting	Generations Connected
Valeria Dumitrascu	Jordan High School	Painting	Cradle
Valeria Dumitrascu	Jordan High School	Drawing & Illustration	The Domino Effect
Valeria Dumitrascu	Jordan High School	Painting	Out of Reach
Zoe Guthrie	Jordan High School	Sculpture	Is this better than before?
Arianna Hodge	Jordan High School	Poetry	Fields of Awe
Charlotte Holmes	Jordan High School	Poetry	See You Later
Jocelyn Johnson	Jordan High School	Poetry	My Wheelchair
Krishi Kanani	Jordan High School	Mixed Media	Patched Back Together
Addison McCurdy	Jordan High School	Drawing & Illustration	Pocrescophobia
Charlotte Primrose	Jordan High School	Short Story	Seasons change and skin age
Surya Reddy	Jordan High School	Critical Essay	Premedical Weed-Out
Alejandra Rincon	Jordan High School	Drawing & Illustration	Courses: An Impact Analysis
Amanda Stone	Jordan High School	Drawing & Illustration	Deconstructed
Antara Varma	Jordan High School	Poetry	To a Flame
Edlyn Wang	Jordan High School	Flash Fiction	A Eulogy: Survivor's Edition
Edlyn Wang	Jordan High School	Short Story	Delusion
Arthur Whittle	Jordan High School	Photography	Mudlark
Catherine Xu	Jordan High School	Poetry	Unveiling
Yule Yi	Jordan High School	Drawing & Illustration	you saw tragedy / in me
Grace Zhang	Jordan High School	Personal Essay & Memoir	Endless Ethereality
Kailee Talton	Katy High School	Drawing & Illustration	A Progression on Grief
Kailee Talton	Katy High School	Drawing & Illustration	Black Boy Blues
Kailee Talton	Katy High School	Drawing & Illustration	The Weight Of Expectations
Muhammad Rayyan Faisal	Mayde Creek High School	Photography	When The Leaves Blow
Aerial Chen	Seven Lakes High School	Film & Animation	Namaste
Simar Kalra	Seven Lakes High School	Painting	Eyes of the Artist
Sahara Karmaker	Seven Lakes High School	Film & Animation	Through The Flame
Melissa Matuk	Seven Lakes High School	Painting	Of Self-Reflection
Natalie Reese	Seven Lakes High School	Mixed Media	Misfits' Casino
Chanwoo Sinn	Seven Lakes High School	Drawing & Illustration	Iris
Holden Smith	Seven Lakes High School	Drawing & Illustration	Charleston Weaver
Dennis Wei	Seven Lakes High School	Drawing & Illustration	The Industrial Woman
Ashley Yang	Seven Lakes High School	Mixed Media	Game face
Ziyun Yu	Seven Lakes High School	Photography	Mundane Mornings
Deborah Chung	Taylor High School	Poetry	Spring Cleaning
Sophia Tang	Taylor High School	Poetry	Dinner
Lincoln Brunnert	Tompkins High School	Poetry	how (not) to hide the fact that
Haofei Deng	Tompkins High School	Drawing & Illustration	you're depressed
Haofei Deng	Tompkins High School	Digital Art	Poetry
Grace Ding	Tompkins High School	Photography	The Mind-Sea
Grace Ding	Tompkins High School	Poetry	Dream Land
Brianna Lin	Tompkins High School	Comic Art	The Room Book Cover Concept
Ankitaa Sampath	Tompkins High School	Drawing & Illustration	Luminosity
			dead dove
			NOT A POEM
			A Thoughtless Struggle
			Jigsaw of Memories

Royal Marching Sound Machine Band named a Top 10 high school band in Texas

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

The Royal Marching Sound Machine Band has been honored with prestigious recognition as one of the top 10 High School Show Bands in the state of Texas by Texas Football Life. “This accolade is a testament to the band’s exceptional talent, dedication, and commitment to musical excellence,” said band director Gary S. Miller Jr.

Despite being a show band, the Royal Marching Sound Machine Band has achieved remarkable success by receiving Superior Ratings for the last four years straight. “This outstanding accomplishment dispels the common misconception that show bands can’t have fun and still achieve sweepstakes in UIL competitions,” Miller

said. “You can call us the best from I-10 West or the beast from I-10 East. But one thing is for sure, when you see the Royal Marching Sound Machine Band from Falcon Land, prepare to be thoroughly entertained!”

The Royal Marching Sound Machine Band has captivated audiences with their electrifying performances, innovative choreography, and musical precision.

Under Miller’s guidance, the band has consistently pushed the boundaries of traditional marching band performances, showcasing their creativity and passion for music. “Their dedication to their craft has not gone unnoticed, and this recognition by Texas Football Life further solidifies their status as one of the top high school show bands in the Lone Star State,” said Miller.

Harmony Public Schools teachers eligible for \$32,000 TIA bonuses

Harmony also announces new sign-on bonus for TIA teachers joining from other districts

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

The Texas Education Agency has announced that all Harmony Public Schools teachers will be eligible for up to \$32,000 in additional compensation in 2024-25 after designating all seven Harmony regional districts as Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) designees, the charter school system said in a June 12 press release.

A catalyst for helping high-quality teachers remain in the classroom, TIA was created during the 86th Texas Legislature in 2019 in order to reward and retain highly-qualified teachers. A recent TEA study conducted during the 2023-24 school year showed that designated teacher retention exceeded the statewide teacher retention rate by eight percentage points. About 25,000 educators statewide received the award in 2023-24. More than 1,000 Harmony teachers received a TIA bonus that year. Of those Harmony teachers, more than 100 received \$15,000 or more. More than 30 teachers received \$20,000 or more.

Harmony also recently approved a new sign-on bonus for teachers who received TIA bonuses elsewhere, but are now looking for new career opportunities. Harmony will pay new teachers who were previously designated

as TIA recipients elsewhere up to \$10,000 as a one-time bonus for joining Harmony.

School systems participating in TIA determine teacher designations using data from classroom observations and student growth outcomes. Designated teachers who remain in classroom teaching positions generate annual funding for teacher compensation.

Harmony Public Schools is a Texas-born, Texas-wide public charter school system with campuses serving PreK-Grade 12 students in 23 cities across the state, including

Greater Houston, DFW, San Antonio, Austin, El Paso, Waco, Lubbock, Midland- Odessa, Bryan, Beaumont, and the Rio Grande Valley. Harmony’s curriculum places a heavy focus on STEM skills, Character Education, project-based learning, and college readiness.

Harmony Public Schools is currently accepting applications for the 2024-2025 school year for both students and team members.

To learn more about Harmony Public Schools campuses across Texas, please visit: www.harmonytx.org.

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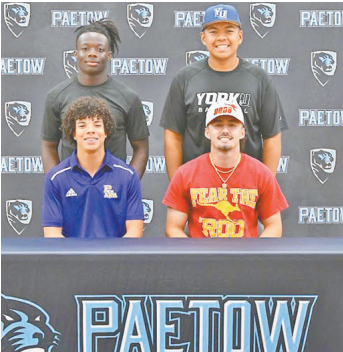
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Paetow student-athletes pose for photos after signing their national letters of intent on national signing day.



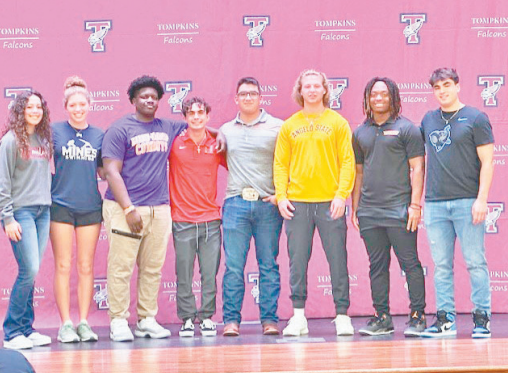
Paetow student-athletes pose for photos after signing their national letters of intent on national signing day.



Paetow student-athletes pose for photos after signing their national letters of intent on national signing day.



Morton Ranch student-athletes pose for photos after signing their national letters of intent on national signing day.



Tompkins student-athletes pose for photos after signing their national letters of intent on national signing day.



Mayde Creek student-athletes pose for photos after signing their national letters of intent on national signing day.



Mayde Creek student-athletes pose for photos after signing their national letters of intent on national signing day.



Jordan student-athletes pose for photos after signing their national letters of intent on national signing day.

52 Katy ISD student athletes sign national letters of intent



Taylor student-athletes pose for photos after signing their national letters of intent on national signing day.



Seven Lakes student-athletes pose for photos after signing their national letters of intent on national signing day.

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Katy ISD) had 52 student-athletes who have signed their national letters of intent in the school district's final signing ceremony of the school year this May. Committing to further their athletic careers at the collegiate level, these students from Katy ISD's nine high schools have worked to reach these heights and were able to celebrate in a final ceremony before beginning their next journey.

"In witnessing remarkable achievements of these student-athletes, we are reminded that greatness is not merely achieved, but forged through perseverance, passion, and commitment. Their journey embodies the spirit of excellence we cultivate within Katy ISD, and we take immense pride in celebrating their successes," said Lance Carter, Executive Director of Athletics. "As they embark on this new chapter, we extend our heartfelt congratulations and best wishes, knowing that they will continue to inspire and uplift those around them with their talents and tenacity."



Katy student-athletes pose for photos after signing their national letters of intent on national signing day.

STUDENTS SIGNING LETTERS OF INTENT

Name	School	Sport	University
Jayden Bratton	Cinco Ranch	Track & Field	Xavier University in Louisiana
Kayla Byrd	Cinco Ranch	Track & Field	University of Houston
Jackson Herman	Cinco Ranch	Wrestling	University of Illinois
Kevin Bello	Cinco Ranch	Track & Field	University of Arkansas
Valentina Garcia-Lara	Jordan	Swimming	University of St. Thomas
Trace Lucio	Jordan	Swimming	La Salle
MJ Leviaguierre	Jordan	Diving	Marshall University
Jebb Stone	Jordan	Wrestling	Arizona Christian University
Diego Carrasco	Katy	Boys Soccer	Oklahoma Christian University
Tarcy Mayah	Katy	Volleyball	Chicago State
Peyton Patterson	Katy	Golf	Oklahoma Christian University
Emilio Camacho-Wiley	Mayde Creek	Boys Soccer	Wiley College
Santos Vega	Mayde Creek	Cross Country	UNT Dallas
Cash Taylor	Mayde Creek	Cross Country	University of Alaska Anchorage
Jayden Jones	Morton Ranch	Basketball	Iowa Lakes College
Kelvin Malone Jr.	Morton Ranch	Baseball	Hesston College
Aden Mazyck	Morton Ranch	Track & Field	University of St. Thomas
Hollie Sylve	Morton Ranch	Basketball	Hill College
Yvann Agah	Paetow	Track & Field	Our Lady of the Lake University
Maddox Prentice	Paetow	Baseball	Austin College
Charles Radley	Paetow	Baseball	Prairie View A&M
Caden Segura	Paetow	Baseball	York University
Ariel Haygood	Paetow	Cross Country	Northern Arizona University
Ben Aviles Vera	Seven Lakes	Boys Soccer	Sul Ross State University
Jesus Duque Smith	Seven Lakes	Boys Soccer	Sul Ross State University
Daniel Ejerenwa	Seven Lakes	Boys Soccer	Houston Christian University
Diego Flamenco	Seven Lakes	Boys Soccer	University of Texas at Dallas
Lauren Hart	Seven Lakes	Girls Soccer	University of Texas at Dallas
Satin Haynes	Seven Lakes	Football	Grandview Iowa University
Aaron Kupoluyi	Seven Lakes	Football	Massachusetts Maritime Academy
Donye Lake	Seven Lakes	Track & Field	Huston Tillotson University
Fernando Lazo	Seven Lakes	Boys Soccer	University of St. Thomas
Kimora Lopez	Seven Lakes	Girls Basketball	Morgan State University
Yeislin Mendez	Seven Lakes	Swimming	University of St. Thomas
Aidan Morrison	Seven Lakes	Boys Soccer	Liberty University
Sean Carlos Rivera	Seven Lakes	Boys Soccer	Sul Ross State University
Heather Thayer	Seven Lakes	Track & Field	Brigham Young University
Stephanie Williams	Seven Lakes	Track & Field	Texas State University
Zaniya Duffie	Taylor	Track & Field	Our Lady of the Lake University
Christian Jaquay	Taylor	Baseball	Brookhaven College
Nate Larsen	Taylor	Baseball	Minot State University
Chase Marshall	Taylor	Baseball	Brookhaven College
Eva Ngom	Taylor	Track & Field	University of New Mexico
Connor Page	Taylor	Baseball	McPherson College
Jabari Parker	Taylor	Basketball	Hardin Simmons University
Dylan Weaver	Taylor	Baseball	Brookhaven College
Colton Collins	Tompkins	Basketball	Concordia University
Jordan Musselman	Tompkins	Swimming	Utah Tech University
Ryan Pacious	Tompkins	Boys Soccer	Thiel College
Patricio Perezpeubla	Tompkins	Swimming	King University
Ryan Sharma	Tompkins	Boys Soccer	Quincy University
David Vasquez	Tompkins	Football	SAGU



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MORRISON

from page B1

“Aidan Morrison is just a special player,” said Dripping Springs head coach Josh Hill. “He controlled the game as a holding midfielder both offensively and defensively in the state title game against us. You don’t always see both of those qualities, but that kid does both.”

Morrison, who was named the Gatorade Player of the Year last year as well, led Seven Lakes on an astounding run this season. The Spartans had a record of 28-1-1 and went on to win the Class 6A State title for the second straight season, also winning district for the school’s fifth straight district title. Morrison scored 16 goals and added 20 assists on the season and he scored the Spartans’ most important goal of the year in the state title game, burying a free kick from 30-yards out with just three minutes remaining in extra time to give Seven Lakes a 2-1 win over Flower Mound.

Morrison is a member of Seven Lakes’ Student Athletic Leadership Team. He has volunteered locally at a Vacation Bible School and he has donated his time as a tutor to special needs students. Morrison graduated with a 3.69 GPA. Recent Gatorade Texas Boys Soccer Players of the Year include Brennan Bezdek (2021-22, Wakeland High School), Bryce Boneau (2020-21, Keller High School) and Mayno Linares (2019-20, Elsik High School).

The Gatorade Player of the Year program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball,



SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Duncanville forward Fabricio Martinez (8) and Seven Lakes defender Aidan Morrison (10) leap to head the ball during the Class 6A boys state soccer semifinal between Seven Lakes and Duncanville on April 12, 2024 in Georgetown. Seven Lakes won 2-0.

boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and

determine the state winners in each sport. “Aidan deserves all of it more than anyone,” said Seven Lakes head coach Jimmy Krueger after the team’s state title win. “For the rest of my career I will be asking, ‘who is my next Aidan Morrison.’ He’s by far the best human being I’ve coached, he’s a better hu-

man than player and that’s hard because he’s a really good player. His legacy is what I hope drives our next generation of players.” Morrison will continue his athletic and academic career at Liberty University, where he signed a National Letter of Intent to attend this fall. “I would have never imagined

this is how my high school career would go,” Morrison said after the state final game. When I stepped onto the field my freshman year, I didn’t even know what the state tournament was. To win the state tournament twice, to get the accolades that I have gotten and this team has gotten has been amazing.”

FOOTBALL

from page B1

Royal will compete in Division II of the tournament, which runs Thursday and Friday. The Falcons were placed in Pool B of Division II with Alvarado, Austin LBJ, and La Grange.

Royal will play La Grange in the team’s opener at 1:45 on Thursday before playing Alvarado at 3:15 and Austin LBJ at 4:45.

In Division II, all teams advance to the Championship Bracket on Friday. Royal will play in the single elimination round on Friday and be seeded based on their performance on Thursday.

Cinco Ranch and Tompkins both will compete in Division I as 6A schools.

Cinco Ranch will be in Pool D for the pool round of the tournament, along with Anna, Lewisville and Corpus Christi Miller. The Cougars will start Friday by playing Anna at 1 p.m. before playing Miller at 2:30 p.m. and Lewisville at 4 p.m.

Tompkins was placed in Pool F, which is arguably the strongest and most talked about group in the entire state tournament along with DeSoto, El Paso Eastlake and Lake Travis. The Falcons will start pool play against Lake Travis at 1 p.m. before playing Eastlake at 2:30 p.m. and finishing the day against Desoto at 4 p.m.

In Division I not all teams advance to the Championship Bracket. The two teams who finish highest in pool play advance to the Championship Bracket at 8:45 a.m. Saturday, while the lower two teams advance to the consolation bracket, which starts at 8 a.m.



Cinco Ranch’s Fischer Reed tries to haul in a catch during a game against Harker Heights at Veterans Memorial Park in College Station two years ago.

TYLER TYRE

Saturday. Tompkins is making a state appearance for the second straight year and it will be the Falcons fourth overall state appearance. The Falcons made it to state in 2018, 2021 and 2023. Last year, the Falcons made it to the championship bracket, but fell to DeSoto in

the first round of championship play, giving the Falcons a chance at revenge in pool play on Friday. Cinco Ranch is back in the state tournament after a one year absence and the 17th overall. In 2022, the Cougars ended up in the consolation bracket but went on a huge run, reaching the final of the

consolation bracket before falling to Frisco Wakeland. This is Royal’s first ever state appearance and the Falcons will try to make a mark in a group that includes Alvarado, a team that made a lot of noise heading into the tournament. There is no entry fee for spec-

tators. Spectators are encouraged to bring their own chairs, water, umbrellas and sunscreen to help beat the heat.

Tompkins has strong final tune up, Jordan unable to qualify for state 7-on-7

Tompkins had a strong final week of preparation for the state 7-on-7 tournament, competing at the Ridge Point State Qualifying Tournament and going undefeated for the third straight week.

The Falcons, who already qualified for the state tournament, continued to get strong practice with tournaments and went 3-0 during pool play during the tournament to top Pool B. Tompkins started the day with a 27-6 win over Bryan Rudder before beating Tompkins 33-6 and also beating Elkins to close out the day. The Falcons did not advance to the state qualifying round since they had already secured their spot at the tournament.

Jordan also competed at the Ridge Point State Qualifying Tournament and for the second straight week came up just short of qualifying for state.

The Warriors started the tournament hot in Pool D. Jordan opened the day with a 26-14 win over Lamar and continued strong with a 19-6 win over College Station, but Jordan was unable to advance to the state qualifying round after a close 13-12 loss to Pearland Dawson. Dawson went on to lose 21-20 to Shadow Creek in the state qualifying round. Ridge Point took the other state qualifying spot at the tournament.



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FALL FOOTBALL
PREVIEW
2024

from
Katy Times

Is there anything more exciting than FOOTBALL in KATY, TEXAS?

Join us as we take a look at the upcoming high school football season for Katy ISD – including a preview of the new Freeman High School program. See highlights from Royal ISD as well as from local private schools. In the special section we'll take a look at the exciting new players for each team – whether it's from Katy, Cinco Ranch, Seven Lakes, Taylor, Tompkins, Morton Ranch, Mayde Creek, Paetow, Jordan, Freeman or Royal high schools. We'll also talk about who's coming back, what the coaches' goals are for the season and how they are working to maintain or improve their programs. It's going to be an exciting fall season in 2024 and your ad in the Katy Times can help us support local athletes as they work hard to make our communities proud.

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DEADLINE FOR ARTWORK: Friday, August 9

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Anyone knowing the whereabouts of
TEVIS DIGGS A/K/A TEVIS DENICE KELLY
A/K/A TEVIS BROWN VICKS KELLY is
 requested to contact Attorney
Raushanah S. Hunter in reference to a
 pending legal matter at (225) 356-5252.

Application has been made
 with the Texas Alcoholic
 Beverage Commission for a
 Package Store (P) by Jay Umiya
 LLC. dba All Star Liquor,
 to be located at 1450 Grand
 Pkwy, STE L, Katy, Fort Bend,
 TX 77494. Officers of said
 corporation are Kapil Patel -
 President, Pareshkumar Patel
 - Vice President, and Pragnesh
 Patel - Director.

Application has been made
 with the Texas Alcoholic
 Beverage Commission for a
 New Mixed Beverage Permit
 by Scholars and Scoundrels
 Elyson LLC dba Scholars
 and Scoundrels Bar And
 Grill, to be located at
 25140 Kingsland BLVD
 Suite 1000, Katy, Fort Bend
 County, Texas. Officer of said
 corporation is Anthony
 Petronella.

June 20
 Puzzle Answers

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4	8	3	9	2	6	1	5	7
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Notice of Public Sale

RecNation RV and Boat Storage unit contents are being
 sold to satisfy a landlord's lien. Sale to be held at
www.storage treasures.com from 6/20 12pm to 7/5 12pm.
 Clean up deposit is required. Seller reserves the right to
 withdraw the property at any time before sale. Unit items
 sold to highest bidder. All spaces contain household items
 unless otherwise noted. TXHOU1118103 - West Little
 York Rd, Katy, TX 77449; Jacqueline Breaux.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE of property to satisfy
 landlord's lien.
 Sale to be held ONLINE at storage treasures.com
 The facility is BEAR CREEK MINI STORAGE 17730
 Kieth Harrow Blvd, Houston, TX 77084. Bidding will open
 at 10:00 am on June 24, 2024, and end at 12:00 pm on July
 1, 2024. Cleanup and removal deposit will be required. The
 seller reserves the right to withdraw the property at any
 time before the sale ends. Unit items are sold as-is to the
 highest bidder for cash. The property includes contents of
 space of the following tenants:
 Gustavo Matta, Patrice Jackson, Ana Salas, Lisandra
 Fuentes, Amy Schnettler

INVITATION TO BIDDERS

Bids for **Synova Ph. 1 Bid Package 2** will be received
 digitally through CivCast until 2:00 p.m. Thursday, July 18,
 2024, at which time the bid summary will be posted to
 CivCast for the furnishing of material, equipment,
 labor and supervision necessary or incidental to the
 Construction of Synova Ph.1 Bid Package 2. Proposals
 tendered after closing will not be opened. Scope of
 Project: 1. Concrete Flatwork, 2. Landscaping, 3. Irrigation,
 4. Minor Site Grading and Preparation, 5. SWPPP
 coordination & removal. Bid documents in digital
 format will be available through CivCast. A MANDATORY
 pre-bid conference will be held on at the offices of
 Half' on Thursday, July 11, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. Questions
 submitted within 72 hours of bid opening may not be
 addressed. The successful bidder may be required to
 provide a performance bond, payment bond, and a
 maintenance bond as provided for in the bid documents,
 for the full amount of the contract. The Owner reserves the
 right to reject any or all bids.

NOTICE OF RECEIPT OF
 APPLICATION BY
 COMMISSIONERS' COURT TO
 REVISE A SUBDIVISION PLAT
 FILED FOR RECORD WITH THE
 COUNTY CLERK

APPLICATION: Winning Construction, LLC, by and
 through Trang Nguyen, sole manager, are requesting to be
 allowed to revise Lots 8 and 9, of BLINKA ESTATES. The
 revision will divide those two lots, Lots 8 and 9, into three
 separate lots. These newly configured lots would consist of
 3 residential lots. BLINKA ESTATES is situated in the Justo
 Liendo Survey, Abstract 41, Waller County, Texas recorded in
 Volume 413, Page 786, in the Real Property Records of
 Waller County, Texas.

*This replat request, if approved, will only revise the
 applicant's property.*

PUBLIC HEARING: A public hearing will be held during
 the regular session of Commissioners' Court at 9:00 o'clock
 a.m. on July 10, 2024, at the Joe Kuciemba Annex, 425 FM
 1488, Hempstead, Texas, 77445.

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INVITATION TO BIDDERS

Sealed Electronic Bids addressed to Harris County Municipal Utility District
 No. 165, will be electronically received, until **2:00 p.m. Local Time, Wednesday,
 July 24, 2024**, and then publicly opened and read at the office of SWA Group
 Landscape Architects, 712 Main St., 6th Floor, Houston, Texas 77002 for
 Construction of **"Avalon at Cypress Section 7 & 8 Landscape"** for Harris County
 Municipal Utility District 165, Harris County, Texas"

Scope of Work of the Contract includes the following: concrete trails, sprinkler
 irrigation, grading, planting, grassing, and landscape maintenance.

In addition to the opening of sealed Bids at the address above, you may view
 the public opening of sealed Bids via Zoom. To join via Zoom call Telephone
 Number 888-475-4499, Meeting ID: 933 8590 1573 and use Passcode: 803740 or
<https://swagroup.zoom.us/j/93385901573?pwd=N7lfb0RK5rtGTl rzQI7RZfO832G0qw.1>

Bids received after the closing time will not be considered. A **NON-MANDATORY**
 pre-bid conference will be held by teleconference on **Tuesday, July 9, 2024, at
 10:00 a.m. Local Time**. To join call Telephone Number 888-475-4499, Meeting
 ID: 916 5742 4854 and use Passcode: 353403 or

<https://swagroup.zoom.us/j/91657424854?pwd=w fsmDha7OVpIBHWNAbV8L3qQ5ad8gK.1>

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 two percent (2%) 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. If a certified or cashier's check is provided, the successful
 bidder shall deliver, at the bid opening address, the *original* certified or cashier's
 check within one (1) business day of receipt of the bid opening.

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

Bidder submitting electronic Bids through Civcast must submit its Bid and
 Bid Securities in compliance with Owner's Order Adopting Section 49.2731
 Electronic Bidding Rules and all electronic Bids and Bid Securities must be
 submitted through www.CivcastUSA.com. Bidder must register on this website
 to submit a Bid and Bid Security and there is no charge to submit Bids and Bid
 Securities on this website.

By submitting a Bid, Bidder acknowledges and agrees that the Contract
 Documents may be accepted, executed, or agreed to using an Electronic
 Signature, as defined by and in accordance with Owner's Electronic Signature
 Rules for Construction Contracts.

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.
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26 Katy ISD soccer players named All-State

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

A number of Katy ISD players were named to both the Texas Association of Soccer Coaches Class 6A All-State and All-Region team, led by Seven Lakes, which sent both their boys and girls teams to the state tournament, with the boys team winning a state title.

The Spartans boys led the way, having four players named to the all-state team and three named to the first team.

Ben Aviles Vera was named first team all state as a goalkeeper, while Aidan Morrison took first team all-state honors in midfield. Kortay Koc joined them as a first team all-state selection at forward and Noa Stasic was named second team all-state at forward.

Cinco Ranch's Noah Machart was named honorable mention all-state at goalkeeper and Ossian Elgstrom was named to the first team at defender. Jordan's Chris Segura was also named all-state as a defender to the second team, while Tompkins' Adetola Fasade earned honorable mention all-state at defender. Jordan's Marcelo Ojeda was named second team all-state in mid-field and Cinco Ranch's Andres Riera garnered honorable mention all-state honors at forward.

Tompkins' keeper Alonso Bastera earned second team all-region honors, Cinco Ranch's Adrian Correa was a first team all-region selection in midfield and was joined in midfield by Cesar

Garcia of Paetow, who was a second team selection, Ryan Armijo of Jordan, who was a second team selection and Tompkins' Brayden Lehner, who was honorable mention all-region. Jordan's Aiden Erol was named first team all region at forward and was joined by Tompkins' Roman Ryabchenko who was also a first team all-region selection.

On the girls side, Seven Lakes had two girls named all-state to lead the way and both were defenders, as Kennedy Reed and Olivia Orellana garnered first and second team all-state honors respectively. Tompkins' Rhegan Coombs joined them as an all-state selection, earning first team honors in midfield.

Jordan's Lilah Katz was named first team all-region and was joined by Audrina Johnson on defense, as the Tompkins sophomore was named honorable mention. Seven Lakes' Wagoner Towsen was named first team all-region in midfield along with Jordan's Ella Bizzell and Madison Lambert, who both garnered honorable mention honors and Tompkins' Naomi Medeiros was named second team all-region at forward.

Seven Lakes coaches were also rewarded for their efforts this season. Seven Lakes boys head coach Jimmy Krueger and assistant coach Andrew Hackney were named the Region III-6A head coach and assistant coach of the year while Seven Lakes girls head coach Kaitlyn Eidson was named the Region III-6A girls coach of the year.



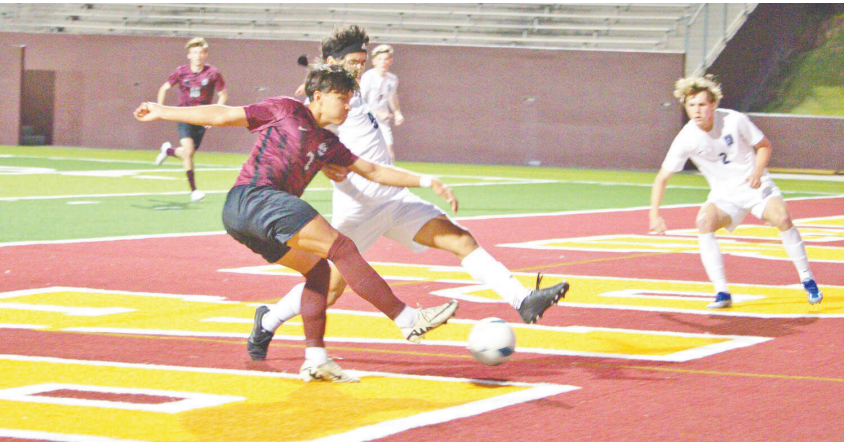
Seven Lakes forward Noa Stasic (7) celebrates after scoring a goal during the Class 6A boys state soccer championship between Seven Lakes and Flower Mound on April 13, 2024 in Georgetown.

SCOTT W. COLEMAN



Left: Seven Lakes defender Aidan Morrison (10) in action during the Class 6A boys state soccer championship between Seven Lakes and Flower Mound on April 13, 2024 in Georgetown. Below: Seven Lakes goalkeeper Ben Aviles Vera (1) during the Class 6A boys state semifinal soccer game between Seven Lakes and Sachse on April 14, 2023 in Georgetown.

PHOTOS BY SCOTT W. COLEMAN



TYLER TYRE

Andres Riera takes a shot during a Region III-6A Semifinal between Cinco Ranch and Kingwood in Deer Park.



PHOTOGRAPHER: ROBERT MARKOWITZ

Official NASA Portrait of Yusef Johnson. Photo Date: October 18, 2022. Location: Building 8, Room 183 - Photo Studio.

NASA

from page B1

persevere, and you find a solution to the problem you're working on.

"As far as similarities, in football, you have a lot of people from different backgrounds and different abilities, and you have to get together to achieve a goal. That's no different from what we do around here," he said.

He said the most important skill he has developed is time management.

"The biggest lesson I've learned is how efficient people have to be with their time," he said.

Not only is time critical in the space industry, but it is equally vital on the gridiron.

"It's (UFL) a lot faster than you think," he said. "Television doesn't do it justice ... There is

not a lot that separates these guys from the NFL."

The internship program was tested last season with two teams in the XFL. It expanded to all eight teams this season in the UFL, which is a merged league combining the XFL and the USFL. The leaders in the partnership expressed their enthusiasm for the program in a press release.

"We are proud to work with Under Armour and the NCMFC to expand our partnership for the 2024 season," said Russ Brandon, president and CEO of the UFL.

"The program is a tremendous growth opportunity for these coaches, and we are deeply committed to creating opportunities and providing unparalleled access to professional coaching at

the highest level."

Sean Eggert, senior vice president of Global Sports Marketing at Under Armour, said, "Under Armour is passionate about creating opportunities for minority football coaches of all levels to increase minority hires year over year, and increase engagement with the Coalition, ultimately bringing more diversity, equity, and inclusion to football.

"With the expansion of this partnership, we will provide NCMFC coaching members in each of these markets a platform to continue to build on their craft, grow personally and professionally, and develop a network so they are in the best position to take the next step in their careers," he said.

Mike Locksley, president and founder of NCMFC, said he was thrilled to participate in the program.

"The mission of the National Coalition of Minority Football Coaches centers around the professional development of minority football coaches, which is why we are excited to expand our partnership with Under Armour and the UFL," he said. "This unique opportunity for a minority fellowship with a professional UFL team will give our coaches the chance to gain invaluable experience as they seek to advance their careers. We know our coaches truly appreciate such a rare opportunity, which was apparent by the vast number of applications we received."

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Katy team wins Red Bull Terminal Takeover event

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

A group of skaters representing Katy had a big accomplishment, topping teams from around the world in the Red Bull Terminal Takeover.

The Terminal Takeover, a four-year tradition that Red Bull has hosted, brought pro and amateur teams from around the world that represent skate shops from their home area together to compete at the Louis Armstrong International Airport terminal. The facility in New Orleans, which has been abandoned since 2019, has for the past been turned into a dreamland for skaters through Red Bull's efforts with the terminal takeover competition.

Teams were invited to the airport in April and spent three days making a skate edit showcasing their best tricks, creativity and ability. The best video was chosen by the public and in the end, team Katy came away the winners of the event after a great skate edit won over voters. Katy won the event over teams from Nashville TN, Pensacola FL, Fairfax FA, Baton Rouge LA, Birmingham AL, New Orleans LA, Tupelo MS, Katy TX, Durham NC, Milwaukee WI and Aichi Japan.

Katy's team represented the Brick Skate Shop at



Team Katy poses for team photo at Red Bull Terminal Takeover in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA on April 18, 2024.

3616 N. Fry Road in Katy, and the team that consisted of Taylor Jett, Anthony Negrete, Jason Bastian, Geovani Sabillon, Jonathan Cosentino, Charlie Frazier, Sean Spofford and Jonathan Bastian. For everyone there it was a special experience.

"I'm from the Philippines, I speak a different language, and we have an international shop now with Japan," said Margie Didal, part of team Japan and a newcomer to the competition. "We don't speak Japanese, but we can communicate through skat-

ing. It's crazy how skateboarding can help people communicate."

The Red Bull pro skaters that attended the event rode with the amateur skate crews, including Katy's, and competed in "cash for tricks" in the unique setting of the Louis Armstrong Airport. The contests included the highest sticker contest, the longest rail grind and best trick competition off an escalator, a consistent proving ground each year for the new teams that reach the finals of the competition.



Above: Crowd of attendees watch as participants compete at Red Bull Terminal Takeover in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA on April 18, 2024. Left: All participants share a group photo at Red Bull Terminal Takeover in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA on April 18, 2024.

PHOTOS COURTESY RED BULL



Texas A&M center Bryce Foster (61) points at a defender before a play during an SEC college football game between LSU and Texas A&M on November 25, 2023, in Baton Rouge. LSU won, 42-30.

SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Taylor grad Foster transfers to Kansas

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

One of the best lineman in college football is on the move. Taylor grad Bryce Foster announced his transfer to the University of Kansas on Sunday, going to the Jayhawks after three years at Texas A&M.

Foster was one of the best transfers available in the nation, ranking in the top 35 interior lineman transfers of the 2024 cycle. It is a big loss for Texas A&M, losing what was a starting lineman and one of the best discus and shot put throwers in the SEC.

Foster came to A&M as a four-star recruit and made an immediate impact for the Aggies. As a freshman, Foster started 12 games and earned All-SEC Freshman and Freshman All-America honors. His

second year with the program as cut short though as he was injured in the fourth game of the season, missing the rest of the year. Foster came back strong this year and played in all 12 games for the Aggies this year, eight of which he started and he was a big part of the teams success. He started 28 games in total over his three years with the Aggies.

Foster joins Lance Leipold's team on the back of a 9-4 season where they ranked as high as 16th in the College Football Playoff poll. The Jayhawks will have big hopes for this year in a season where they think they can compete for one of the top spots in the Big 12. The offensive line was a big need for Kansas to fill and they got one of the best to do it in Foster, who is expected to slot in as the team's starting center. He will have two years of eligibility remaining.



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The Katy Times will be closed on Thursday, July 4, 2024 in observance of Independence Day. Have a safe and happy holiday from The Katy Times staff!

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