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Year!

VOLUME 113, ISSUE 4

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2025

## Candidates announce plans to run in May elections



WILLIAM H.  
'DUSTY' THIELE



MICHAEL A.  
PAYNE

BY SUSAN ROVEGNO  
PUBLISHER

It's a new year – but still an election year, with important local positions coming up for a vote.

On May 3, voters will go to the polls to choose a mayor for the City of Katy for the next three

years, and will select two trustees for Katy Independent School District's school board, who will also hold three-year terms.

Current Katy mayor William H. "Dusty" Thiele has announced his plans to run for re-election. Thiele, now retired from the All-state Insurance Agency he owned for many years in Katy, filed the

appropriate paperwork with the city secretary on January 15.

Thiele, who did not draw an opponent when he initially ran for mayor, will face challenger Michael A. Payne, whose application lists his occupation as IT manager.

Current school board members Victor Perez and Lance

Redmon have also announced their plans to run again for the positions they now hold. Perez, board member in Position 1 since 2022 and presently the board president, is a retired chief financial officer who has been a commercial banker and

See **ELECTIONS**, page 3

## Inclement weather forces rescheduling of upcoming meetings

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Forecasts of potentially hazardous weather – including freezing temperatures and possible snow – had local organizations scrambling to reschedule meetings after the winter storm's passage.

The Katy Area Economic Development Council (KAEDC), which was slated to hold its January General Assembly meeting on January 21, notified its members that the meeting would be rescheduled to February.

The Katy Independent School District's board of trustees had originally planned to meet for a "regular" board meeting on Tuesday, January 21, but moved the meeting to Monday, January 27 at 5 p.m. The meeting will take place in the board room of the district's education support complex at 6301 S. Stadium Lane in Katy. The board normally meets twice a month – one work-study meeting and one regular meeting.

Royal ISD, however, said that, in spite of closure of its facilities and cancellation of activities, it would keep to its planned school board meeting on January 22 at 6 p.m. (after press time for this issue of the Katy Times). The agenda for that meeting includes the consideration and approval of naming for the district's newest campus, elementary school No. 2, among other items.

HAVE A NEWS TIP?

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## BROOKSHIRE CELEBRATES MLK DAY IN ADVANCE OF WINTER STORM



PHOTO BY SHERREL ROGERS

Parade Grand Marshal Trayson Graves leads the MLK parade in Brookshire, hosted by the MLK committee on January 18.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SHERREL ROGERS

The City of Brookshire held its annual Martin Luther King celebration on January. 18 at the Amphitheater, 4029 Fifth Street in downtown Brookshire, where "Pillars of The Community" awards were given for being helpful to others and making a great impact on others. Left to right, front row: Pastor Edmond Blouin. Left to right, back row: Dutchess Alexander (received reward for Ray Alexander), Allen Robinson (received reward for Henry Mae McNeil), Virrite Baker, Kenneth Bryd, Pastor Lee Jones Jr., Sherrel Rogers, CaSandra Runnels, Ryan Orbin, Apostle Beverly Vaughn, and Dr. L. N. Jones. Not pictured Elton Foster, John Boaz and Stephen Austin.

## 621 Area Code numbers coming Jan. 23

New Houston-area area code added in response to ongoing population growth

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Responding to high demand for new telephone numbers in the greater Houston area, the Public Utility Commission of Texas has approved an additional area code for the region currently utilizing area codes 281, 346, 713, and 832. The new 621 area code will encompass the greater Houston metropolitan area and surrounding communities such as Baytown, League City, Missouri City, Pasadena, Pearland, Sugar Land, and The Woodlands, reaching from Harris County into Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, and Waller

See **NUMBERS**, page 3

## City staff presents 'roadmap' to doing business in City of Katy

BY SUSAN ROVEGNO  
PUBLISHER

New technology and new tools are making it easiest and more efficient to do business within the city of Katy, city staff members told attendees during a "Roadmap" presentation at the offices of the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce. The meeting took place

on January 16 at the Chamber's offices at 814 East Avenue in Katy.

The presentation was centered around navigating city regulations and requirements pertinent to businesses in the Katy area, with attendees gaining insights into the best practices for engaging with local government. City staff

See **ROADMAP**, page 3



PHOTO BY SUSAN ROVEGNO

The Katy Area Chamber of Commerce hosted the City of Katy's Community Development Department on January 16 at the chamber office at 814 East Avenue in Katy for a panel discussion which provided a "roadmap" to doing business with the city. Pictured are Mayor Pro Tem Chris Harris, Assistant Buildings Official Eli Fernandez, City Planner Rachel Lazo, Community Development Director Ian Clowes, Executive Director of Public Works and Community Development Elaine Lutringer, Councilmember Gina Hicks, and City Administrator Byron Hebert.

## Katy Business Association disbands after 40 years

BY SUSAN ROVEGNO  
PUBLISHER

A Katy institution is no more.

The Katy Business Association, a 40-year-old networking group which served 106 area small businesses at its end, has dissolved.

The group was originally formed by Rosemary Nelson, the original owner of Cottage Door located in old Katy, and Patsy Jean Williams, a local Katy real estate broker, in 1984. Their vision at the time was to create a small organization where local Katy businesses could meet monthly and support each other,

said former KBA President Olivia Martin in a previous interview with the Katy Times.

But times change.

"As our membership grew and the needs

See **KBA**, page 3

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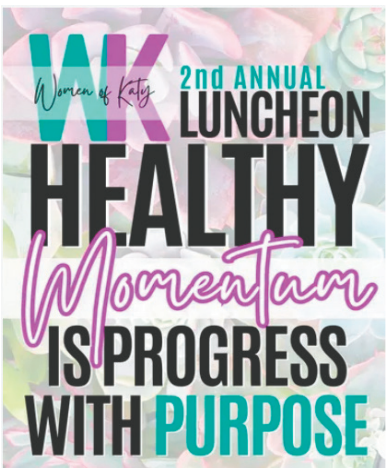
# ‘Women of Katy’ to host panel with focus on momentum and resilience

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The first 2025 “Women of Katy” luncheon, jointly sponsored by the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce and the Katy Business Association, will be held on January 30 at 11 a.m. at Perry’s Steakhouse at LaCenterra, 23501 Cinco Ranch Blvd. in Katy.

With the theme of “Momentum,” the luncheon will center on overcoming change and keeping the momentum, with a spotlight on inspiring personal stories, said KACC Vice President Stacy Jacobs. “We’ll celebrate the remarkable power of women adapting to life’s challenges and transitions, finding strength and purpose in both adversity and success,” she said.

A panel discussion will be moderated by Maida Guillen, community engagement coordinator for Harris County Precinct 4. Guillen, a born and



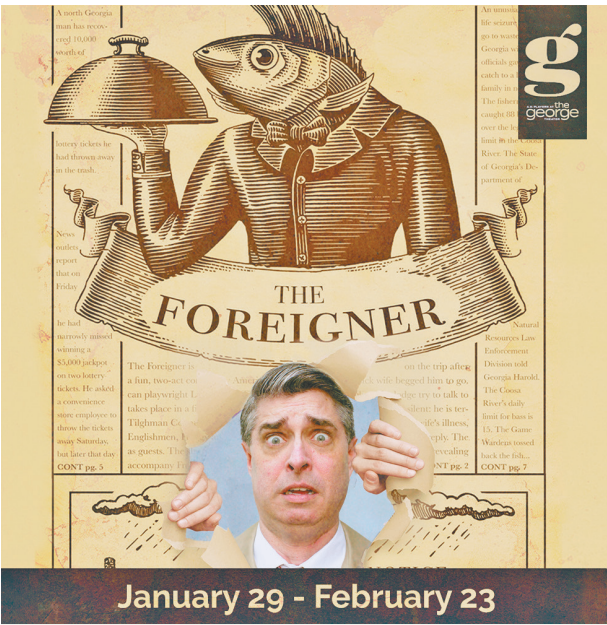
bred Texan, grew up in the Rio Grande Valley. She spent 11 years as a stay-at-home mom raising her two sons and was active as a volunteer in her community. In 2017, she began working with Katy ISD providing administrative

support for several campuses. Guillen harnessed her volunteering skills and community engagement when she began volunteering for the campaigns first for Judge and now County Commissioner Lesley Briones, who heads Harris County Precinct 4.

Program panelists include:

- Chef Lori Pope, owner of Harvest Kitchen & Bakery in Katy
- Dr. Christi Pramudji Dawe, a board-certified urologist in Houston, specializing in urogynecological health and longevity
- Farrah Pramudji Dawe, owner of Sonoma Wine & Cheese
- Lara Mautz, a registered nurse and the Executive Director of Christ Clinic
- Lilac Kennedy, a Registered Behavioral Technician at Action Behavioral Centers

Seating is limited and pre-registration is required. To register, go to [womenofkaty.com](http://womenofkaty.com).



# ‘The Foreigner’ lands at The George Theater for first time

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The George Theater is bringing “The Foreigner” to the stage for the very first time. This uproarious comedy is one of the funniest shows to ever hit the American stage, officials from the theater said in an email to the Katy Times.

Froggy, a British demolition expert who occasionally runs training sessions at a nearby army base in the deep hills of Georgia, brings his friend Charlie, a pathologically shy Englishman who has just learned of his wife’s newest infidelity, to a friendly lodge for a period of rest and relaxation. In order to protect him from having to speak with anyone, Froggy tells the residents of the lodge that Charlie is from an exotic foreign country and speaks no English. But some folks in these parts of Georgia don’t take too kindly to foreigners.

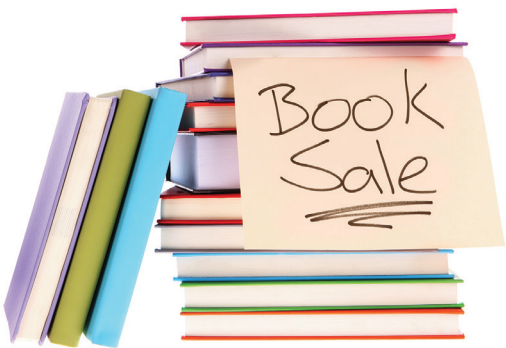
This production is being directed by the George-favorite, Kevin Crouch. The cast includes Kevin Dean, David Gow, John Johnston, Susan Koozin, Alyssa Marek, Jeff McMorrough, and Gabriel Mullen. The production creative team includes Hannah E. Smith (Stage manager), Samantha Dante Patterson (Costume Designer), David Gipson (Lighting Designer), Charly Topper (Properties Designer), Steven C. Kemp (Scenic Designer), and Michael Mullins (Sound Designer).

“The Foreigner” opens with previews on Wednesday, January, 29 and 30, and officially opens January 31 at The George Theater, 5420 Westheimer in Houston. Shows run from Wednesday to Sunday until February 23.

There are no sensory-friendly or relaxed performances for this show. There are also no student matinees. For more information, go to [adplayers.org](http://adplayers.org).

A.D. Players at the George Theater seeks to be the leading Christian theatre company in the world; transforming hearts and minds for the Kingdom of God by providing audiences with challenging, redemptive, and joyful stories that move spirits towards something greater, according to their website.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS



### Maud Marks book sales set for January 25

The Friends of Maud Marks Library (FOMML) will be holding the first used book sale of the year 2025 at the library, 1815 Westgreen Boulevard, Katy, on Saturday, January 25, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Presale viewing and sales (cash or check only) will be available to members of FOMML on Friday January 24, from 4 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. Annual memberships can be purchased at the door for \$10.

All funds earned from the sale are used to support library programs offered to the community, such as the

Senior Bus Trips and the Summer Reading Program. Books (adult or children’s, fiction, nonfiction, reference, foreign language, etc.) that you would like to donate to the sale are now being accepted. Please put them, during library hours, in the bins inside the entrance.

### Fulshear Regional Chamber FOR Commerce to hold monthly meeting Feb. 12

Come network with other business professionals at the monthly breakfast meeting of the Fulshear Chamber FOR Commerce, to be held February 12 from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. at the Parkway Fellowship, 27043 FM 1093 in Richmond. Free to attend. For more information, contact Rachel Durham at [rachel@fulshearregional.com](mailto:rachel@fulshearregional.com).

### Join Hope Impacts for ‘Designer Bag Bingo’ and fashion show on Feb. 12

It’s a fun night of purse bingo and a fabulous fashion show to support local nonprofit Hope Impacts. Shop local boutiques, watch the fashion show for the latest trends, play ten rounds of bingo for a chance to win a designer bag, and enjoy appetizers, refreshments and sweet treats. Ages 18 and up please. The event will be from 4 to 7 p.m. at The Oaks Kitchen, 2100 Cane Island Parkway in Katy. Tickets are \$75.00 per person, with extra bingo cards at \$10.00 each and raffle tickets at \$5.00 each. To register or for more information, go to [hopeimpacts.org/events](http://hopeimpacts.org/events).



### Fulshear Chamber to host ‘Fulsheartexas’ event on Valentine’s Day

Celebrate love, life and community with the Fulshear Regional Chamber FOR Commerce at Briscoe Manor, 5801 FM 723 in Richmond on Valentine’s Day from 6:30 to 10 p.m. Enjoy scrumptious appetizers, open bar, photo booth, beef carving station with extravagant buffet, beautiful flowers and a fantastic live band, Hybrid 7. For more information, please contact Rachel Durham at [rachel@fulshearregional.com](mailto:rachel@fulshearregional.com).



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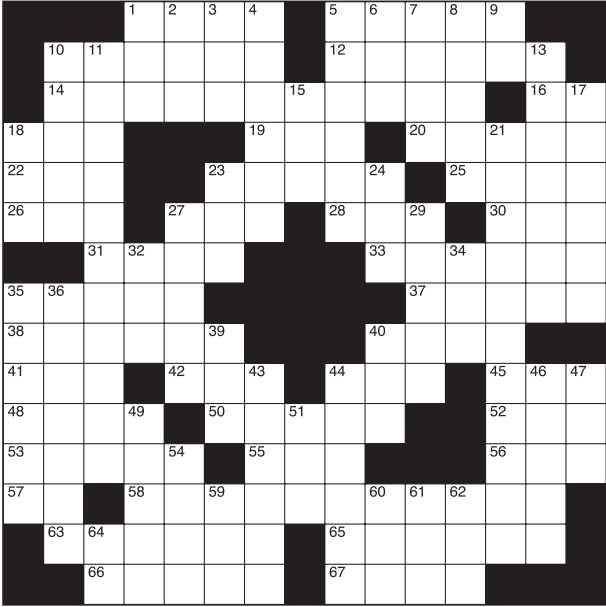
## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CLUES ACROSS

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

CLUES DOWN

- Moved swiftly
- Everyone has one
- Tin
- A mole is one
- Nocturnal hoofed animals
- Oppositional to
- Monetary units
- Not on time
- Hogshead (abbr.)
- Misery resulting from affliction
- Defunction European group
- Line on a map
- Becomes less intense
- Back muscle
- Frosted
- Ethiopian town
- Midway between south and east
- Wipe from the record
- In a continuous way
- Breathe
- Cleaning device
- Male organ
- Tab on a key ring
- Criminals
- Taxi
- Cheer of encouragement
- Wartime American escort carrier
- Polish river



- Current unit
- Life form
- Painful contractions
- Glowing
- Press against lightly
- Melancholic
- Something you can be under
- Of the mind
- E. Indian cereal grass
- Couple
- Sharpshoot
- A baglike structure in a plant or animal
- \_\_\_ Blyton, children’s author
- Human gene
- Data mining methodology (abbr.)
- Examines animals
- Mineral
- Cools your home

Answers will be provided in next week’s edition.

## SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

### Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you’ll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test.

### Here’s How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers will be provided in next week’s edition.



## ELECTIONS

from page 1

has also worked for several energy companies during his career. Redmon, who was elected to Position 2 on the board in May 2019 and is completing his second term, is president of Specialized Building Systems.

Perez will be faced by retired KISD educator James Cross, who served as principal at Beck Junior



VICTOR PEREZ

High and Cinco Ranch High School. KISD recently recognized Cross and his wife, Mitzi, for their contributions to the district by naming one of the



JAMES CROSS

district's newest elementary schools in their honor.

As of Katy Times' press time on January 21, no candidates had filed to run against Redmon.



LANCE REDMON

## KBA

from page 1

of our business community evolved, we recognized the importance of creating a sustainable, impactful program," said Martin in an email to the Katy Times. "Joining forces with the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce was the clear solution—bringing more resources, greater opportunities, and long-term support for our members. The [Katy Business Association] board's decision reflects our belief that unity creates strength, and partnerships open doors to endless possibilities. This collaboration preserves the heart and legacy of the Katy Business Association while evolving into the Katy Business Alliance. Together, we're setting the foundation for a stronger, more connected business community."

On December 31, 2024, the KBA's board of directors sent an email to the organization's members, announcing the dissolution of the networking group, and its absorption into the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce as the "Katy Business Alliance." The email read in part:

"Dear KBA Members,

The Katy Business Association has been part of the Katy business community, fostering connections, providing resources, and cultivating fellowship among small businesses. Today, we are excited to embrace a transformative step forward, ensuring these opportunities continue to grow. In the spirit of John F. Kennedy's words, 'Change is the law of life,' we have thoughtfully decided to dissolve the Katy Business Association and transition into a dynamic partnership with the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce. This evolution will empower us to create a stronger and new KBA known as the Katy Business Alliance, offering enhanced resources, support, and opportunities that will drive even greater success for small businesses in our community!"

The email further outlined how the new entity would work:

- Monthly business luncheons will continue on the fourth Wednesday of each month, focusing on impactful business workshops to support member growth and success. Luncheons will remain open to all—membership will not be required, and attendance will be \$25 per person. Members will receive invitations to upcoming Katy Business Alliance luncheons and workshops beginning in January 2025.
- The logo of KBA will remain the same, with a slight modification to the name "Katy Business Alliance." The mission of supporting small businesses in Katy remains unchanged and is strengthened through this partnership, the email said.
- The Katy Area Chamber of Commerce will manage logistics, registrations, marketing, and financials, allowing the KBA committee to focus on creating meaningful programming and workshops, the email said, with the current KBA Board of Directors transitioning to a KBA Committee within the Katy Area Chamber.
- Current KBA members will receive prorated refunds for their membership dues at \$15 per month remaining, less credit card fees. Refunds of membership dues will be processed promptly, the email said.
- The email also provided background on how the decision was made to disband the organization.
- On, December 18, the KBA board unanimously approved the dissolution of

KBA as an independent entity and transfer of its remaining assets to the Katy Area Chamber.

- On December 20, the KBA board of directors sent a "Proposal for Dissolution and Authorization to Transfer remaining KBA Assets to Katy Area Chamber of Commerce," to all KBA Members with full transparency. Attached was a Proxy with the Deadline date of December 27, 2024.
- The Board received a total of 26 Proxy Votes from KBA Members, 25 Voted YES for dissolution and 1 vote for NO for dissolution.

"We are thrilled about this new chapter for KBA and what it means for our business community," the email concluded.

"The Katy Area Chamber has been looking for ways to support its community by giving everyone what they need most, time and money," said Katy Area Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Matthew Ferraro in a statement to the Katy Times. "In an effort to consolidate programs and/or duplicate memberships to multiple organizations, we are eager to find collaborative partners that have similar initiatives for the community so we can work to become a single, organized resource to advance the Katy area."

Ferraro said that the Chamber was approached by the KBA about an opportunity for long-term collaboration. The result of those conversations came to be a continued program of work, similar to what the KBA has been doing, Ferraro said, with no membership fee required to attend KBA events, and the opportunity to build on business networks with a more diverse audience to support business growth and development.

The KBA Committee will work together to produce the same content and environments that KBA members have loved for over 40 years, Ferraro said. With no membership fee required to attend the KBA programs, previous members of KBA will be saving roughly \$200 year, he said. The KBA programs will be open to the public and will allow Katy Area Chamber members to attend for the same price.

Portions of revenues generated from the KBA program will go to support business grants and future scholarships to be distributed through the Katy Foundation, the 501c3 extension of the Katy Area Chamber, Ferraro added.

Longtime members of KBA shared their support for the move.

"My perspective is I think it is time to move on and I am good with KBA becoming a part of the Chamber," said Patty Raske, who has been involved with KBA since its very early days. "I think they will bring positivity to the Chamber and great support."

"At first, I was really sorry and disappointed to hear that the KBA was going to dissolve," said former Katy mayor Skip Conner, who was honored by KBA in 2024 as one of its longest-serving members. "One reason the KBA started was that the Chamber changed its name and moved out of the City of Katy. The board was very thoughtful in its deliberations, excited about the association's future and the new partnership with the chamber. With a vote of 25 to 1, the majority of members agreed with the new arrangement. I can live with it."

Other KBA members did not respond with feedback to the Katy Times by press time.

## ROADMAP

from page 1

presenters included Assistant Buildings Official Eli Fernandez, City Planner Rachel Lazo, Community Development Director Ian Clowes, and Executive Director of Public Works and Community Development Elaine Luttringer.

After the panelists were introduced, Clowes began presentation with an overview of the organizational chart for the city's development department, which includes the building and permits and the city planning department, with an explanation for each role. Then Lazo gave an overview of the development process for the city, which included a pre-development planning meeting, voluntary annexation, zoning, land use, platting, addressing, certificate of occupancy, permit/plan review and construction and inspections.

Lazo also introduced the city website, which she said "contained a wealth of information" as well as online maps and GIS tools available from the city which could be helpful in the development process. Other online tools available from the city include "Am I a resident?", zoning maps and zoning updates. She also said that the city is working on updating its landscaping ordinance to encourage tree preservation and to "maintain what we have in the city because we are very proud of that."

Lazo discussed the plans for a small entertainment district in the city, which was identified in the city's comprehensive plan and which will tie the city's attractions together and the "Target project" which will

bring the large retailer to Texas Heritage Marketplace. Although she discussed the Katy Court residential development, she said most development now taking place in the city is commercial.

City of Katy current development projects – including applications for certificates of occupancy, commercial projects and projects to be discussed in future public meetings – may also be viewed online, Clowes said.

Assistant Building Official Eli Fernandez gave an overview of the permits staff department and explained the "EnerGov" online permit application portal. Paper submittals are now no longer required in most cases, he said. Permit applications that are now live on the site include residential new construction, commercial electrical, residential electrical, irrigation (both residential and commercial), mechanical commercial, commercial plumbing, residential plumbing, pools, signs, and mobile food vendors. All permits are reviewed electronically and comments are sent back to the applicant via email, Fernandez said. The city is in the process of adding water and sewer tap applications and commercial building permits to the portal. The new technology has decreased permit review turnaround time from 15 to ten days, Fernandez said. The department has also recently extended inspection call in cutoff time from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

The chamber plans to host similar sessions with city staff in the future, KACC President and CEO Matthew Ferraro said.

## NUMBERS

from page 1

Counties.

Starting on January 23, 2025, telephone customers requesting a new phone number in the 281/346/713/832 area code overlay region may be assigned a number beginning with 621. Whether they're requesting new service, adding a line, or in some cases, moving their service, customers who would have expected a number beginning with 281, 346, 713, and 832 will be assigned one with the new code.

Telephone customers should know the following key facts about the 621 area code overlay:

- Telephone numbers, including the current area code, will not change.
- The price of a call, coverage area, or other rates and services will not change due to the overlay.
- What is a local call now will remain a local call.
- Customers in the overlay region will continue to dial 10 digits for local calls within and between the overlay area codes, and 1+10 digits for long distance calls.
- Customers can still dial just three

digits to reach 911 and 988, as well as 211, 311, 411, 511, 611, 711, or 811 if those are currently available in their community.

Telephone customers should continue to identify their telephone number as a 10-digit number (3-digit area code + 7-digit telephone number) and include the area code when sharing the number.

Customers should ensure that the accurate area code is reflected across their phone-related life, from any equipment that uses their phone number (i.e., automatic dialing equipment, wireless phones, PBXs, fax machines, internet dial-up numbers, speed dialers, call forwarding settings, voicemail services, medical alert devices, safety alarm security systems and gates, ankle monitors, etc.) to printed communications including websites, personal and business stationary and printed checks, advertising materials, contact information, and personal or pet ID tags.

For more information, please contact your local telephone service provider or visit the Public Utility Commission of Texas website for further information.



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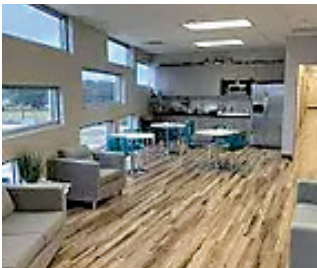
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# Pregnancy Help Center reopens with new name

BY SUSAN ROVEGNO  
PUBLISHER

Following a closure due to broken pipes and subsequent damage from flooding, the Pregnancy Help Center has reopened at 1450 E. Summity Circle in Katy, near Westgreen and Park Row.

But the new year is bringing new changes to the nonprofit – including a new name. As of January 2, the facility began doing

business as Adira Clinic. “Adira” is a Hebrew word meaning “strong,” according to a spokesperson.

“For 35 years we have been the Pregnancy Help Center of West Houston. As we look to the future, we recognize the need to adapt to remain relevant and impactful. The culture and landscape around us have evolved, and so must we, to effectively meet the needs of women today,” said Executive Director Kelli McAnally in an

email announcing the change.

“With our new name, Adira Clinic, we’re focused on empowering women to choose life, especially by connecting with those who may be most concerned about the immediate, physical challenges of an unexpected pregnancy. We’ve found that our current name can sometimes discourage women from seeking our services, and we want to remove that barrier. Understanding that many wom-

en considering abortion see it as a healthcare decision, we are embracing our medical expertise and clinical approach to provide compassionate, professional care, and comprehensive support.”

Through this transition, the clinic will continue to offer all its services free of charge, McAnally said.

Since obtaining an ultrasound machine, the center has operated as an official medical facility,

McAnally said in the email. “We carry medical insurance, have two medical directors, employ licensed medical professionals, and adhere to all regulations under our Clinical Laboratories Improvement Amendments (CLIA) certificate.”

In conjunction with the new name, the organization has a new website for donors and volunteers: [adirapartners.org](http://adirapartners.org). There is also a new website for clients at [adira-clinic.org](http://adira-clinic.org).

## Local Spot eatery coming to Cross Creek Ranch

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Eat Local Concepts, the restaurant group behind Fulshear favorite Local Table, will open a new concept, Local Spot, in Cross Creek Ranch in early 2025.

The Houston area’s only Local Spot location will occupy the former space of Italian Maid Café, located at 6450 Cross Creek Bend Lane adjacent to the Cross Creek Ranch Welcome Center, bringing casual fare and craft cocktails in a friendly, inviting atmosphere.

“We wanted a gathering place for the community,” said Shervin Sharifi, who owns Eat Local Concepts with his brother, Neima Sharifi. “When designing the space and menu, we’ve kept in mind how Local Spot will play a role in the larger community. We want it to be the go-to meeting place for the Cross Creek Ranch neighborhood and surrounding area.”

The menu is under development but promises to bring entirely new offerings than Local Table. However, it will feature a few popular items pulled from all Local concepts.

“We will have certain elevated dishes, some salads and entrees, but I envision the menu to be heavy on classic bar bites,” he said. “We want to

ensure that our customers can either grab-and-go or sit and stay a while.”

Shervin said he also hopes to feature fun community events, including live music on the patio.

“We’ll have ladies’ nights, viewing parties, bourbon nights for the guys,” he said. “We plan to install a drop-down projection screen so that we can air movies for the kids while parents enjoy a glass of wine. We want this to be a family-friendly place where people can come and relax.”

The Sharifis won’t have far to travel to visit their new restaurant — both brothers and their families are residents of Cross Creek Ranch.

“I moved here in 2013 and have watched Cross Creek Ranch grow tremendously,” Shervin said. “When this space became available, we knew it had to be ours. We’re excited to launch this new concept in our own backyard — as long-time residents, we have a unique understanding of what the community and greater Fulshear area needs in terms of a place to dine out and gather.”

Local Spot will be the eighth restaurant for Eat Local Concepts. More information is available at <https://eatatlocaltable.com>. To learn more about Cross Creek Ranch, visit [www.crosscreektexas.com](http://www.crosscreektexas.com).



A new restaurant, Local Spot, is expected to open in Cross Creek Ranch early this year.

## FBJSL celebrates surpassing \$6 million in contributions , 10-year partnership with Memorial Hermann Sugar Land

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

The Fort Bend Junior Service League (FBJS�) announced on January 13 a monumental year of giving and impactful partnerships. This year, FBJS�’s Sugar Plum Market raised and awarded \$335,000 to support local nonprofits, including \$35,400 to the FBJS� Community Assistance Fund, which provides emergency grants to nonprofits for critical and immediate needs in Fort Bend County.

To commemorate this achievement and the League’s decade-long partnership with Memorial Hermann Sugar Land, a check presentation ceremony was held at Memorial Hermann Sugar Land Hospital.

“Reaching over \$6 million in total contributions to Fort Bend County nonprofits is an incredible milestone that

reflects the unwavering commitment of our members, sponsors, and community partners,” said Kelsea Weatherford, FBJS� President. “We are also thrilled to celebrate a decade of partnership with Memorial Hermann Sugar Land, which has been instrumental in helping us support organizations that make a real difference in the lives of so many Fort Bend County residents.”

The 2024-2025 FBJS� Board of Directors includes Weatherford, Lindsay Rolph as President-Elect, April Bray as Vice President, Misty Gasiorowski as Secretary, Sarah Amyx as Treasurer, Jennifer Bombach as Director of Membership, Erin Curtis as Director of Community Service, Monica Hasty as Sugar Plum Market Liaison, Leslie Fish as Director of Technology, Michelle Vargas as Director of New Members, Kaila Williams as Director of Public Relations, and Jessica Gregory as Past President.

## KATY CHAPTER OF NATIONAL CHARITY LEAGUE SALUTES SENIORS



PHOTO COURTESY OF STACY GALLAS

Katy Chapter National Charity League– senior class of 2025 held their senior recognition event on Saturday January 4. Over their six years in NCL, the senior class has contributed 3,053 hours of service to the community. Bottom row, left to right: Natalie Gendron, Kendall Skinner, Katherine Hafling, Taylor Reid, Lauren Neilson, Suzanna Sheffer. Middle row: Christina Gallas, Madelyn Tran, Lyla Huntton. Top row: Mary Cate O’Brien, Shelby Landry, Bailey Silkenon, Ella Randall, Ella Schlorholtz, Savannah Smith, Riley Chnupa, Reese McAlee, Emma Mefford.

## YMSL Katy Chapter volunteers at The Hangar Unity Center during ‘Ultimate Gift’ service event

BY ANA REYES  
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

The Katy Chapter of the Young Men’s Service League (YMSL), a national nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering community service and leadership in young men, recently held a two-day volunteer event benefiting The Hangar Unity Center. The event brought together members of YMSL, composed of moms and their teenage sons, for an impactful service day that combined teamwork, community involvement, and hands-on learning.

During the service event, called “Ultimate Gift,” at The Hangar, a total of 189 volunteer hours were logged by 96 participants from the local YMSL Katy chapter. Over five shifts, lasting two hours each, the mothers and sons worked on various projects to enhance the community center, including building new picnic tables, repairing and removing old tables, sanding and painting the new tables,



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANA REYES

and organizing the equipment and supplies needed for the tasks.

In addition to the table construction, the volunteers focused on cleaning and maintaining the surrounding outdoor areas. They raked leaves, removed weeds, and tidied up the volleyball area, ensuring the center’s facilities were in top condition for future visitors.

The “Ultimate Gift Day” not only benefited The

Hangar Unity Center but also provided an opportunity for mothers and sons to bond over shared efforts. It was a powerful demonstration of the organization’s commitment to nurturing capable, confident, and compassionate leaders while making a tangible difference in local communities.

YMSL members were proud to contribute to The Hangar’s mission and look forward to continuing their service in the future. The event was just one example of how YMSL is shaping the next generation of leaders, one community service project at a time.

YMSL, which operates over 172 chapters across 22 states with more than 27,500 members, encourages its members to volunteer together during the four years of high school. In addition to community service, YMSL’s comprehensive program emphasizes leadership development, life skills, and instilling a lifelong commitment to giving back.

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cultures in our community. In addition to all they have accomplished, this incredible class has faced the sorrow of losing a chapter member. They show remarkable resilience by continuing to support their community while honoring the memory of their NCL sister."


# First Horizon surprises local Katy family on "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition"


First Horizon's participation in the reboot is a natural extension of its ongoing collaboration with Clea Shearer and Joanna Teplin, co-founders of The Home Edit and the new hosts of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," said the press release.



# The Katy Times


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FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

**Proposed Flood Hazard Determinations for the City of Katy, Waller County, Texas, Case No. 25-06-0318P.** The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) solicits technical information or comments on proposed flood hazard determinations for the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), and where applicable, the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report for your community. These flood hazard determinations may include the addition or modification of Base Flood Elevations, base flood depths, Special Flood Hazard Area boundaries or zone designations, or the regulatory floodway. The FIRM and, if applicable, the FIS report have been revised to reflect these flood hazard determinations through issuance of a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR), in accordance with Title 44, Part 65 of the Code of Federal Regulations. These determinations are the basis for the floodplain management measures that your community is required to adopt or show evidence of having in effect to qualify or remain qualified for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. For more information on the proposed flood hazard determinations and information on the statutory 90-day period provided for appeals, please visit FEMA's website at [https://www.floodmaps.fema.gov/fhm/BFE\\_Status/bfe\\_main.asp](https://www.floodmaps.fema.gov/fhm/BFE_Status/bfe_main.asp), or call the FEMA Mapping and Insurance eXchange (FMIX) toll free at 1-877-FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627).

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STATE OF WISCONSIN – CIRCUIT COURT –  
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LANDMARK CREDIT UNION  
555 S. Executive Dr.  
Brookfield, WI 53005,

v.

MARIO D. BENTLEY HENDERSON  
569 Santa Rosa Hills Dr.  
Katy, TX 77493,

Plaintiff,

Defendant.

Case No. 24-SC-004347

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Dated this 15th day of January, 2025.

Attorney Michael A. Sosnay  
State Bar No: 1059549  
735 N. Water St., Suite 205  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
(414) 277-1400

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# January 16 Puzzle Answers

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

P	A	N								G	N	A	T									
A	G	E	S							L	A	U	R	A								
L	O	U	T						P	O	U	T	E	R								
M	U	R	A	T					F	R	O	G	M	A	N							
A	T	O	N	E					I	R	O	N	I	E	S							
S	I	N	G	L	E	S			P	A	C	I	N	G								
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									F	L	I	T	T	E	D			C	U	B	I	C
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									A	T	E	N	S					S	E	E	P	
									G	A	N	G						S	S	E		

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KISD counseling programs honored for excellence

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Six Katy ISD counseling programs have been recognized as winners of the prestigious Counselors Reinforcing Excellence for Students in Texas (CREST) award for the 2024-25 school year, the district announced in a January 10 press release. The programs

include Bryant, Katy, Morton Ranch, and Robertson elementary schools, along with Morton Ranch and West Memorial junior highs. The CREST program recognizes school counseling programs that work to continuously improve in all areas, including:

- Scope and sequence of program curriculum

- Collaboration with stakeholders, including parents and school staff
- Planning, response, support, and guidance of program

The program is sponsored by the Texas School Counselor Association, which is a division of the Texas Counseling Association. Visit [www.tsca.txca.org](http://www.tsca.txca.org) to learn

more. "This achievement reflects the district's ongoing commitment to fostering excellence in supporting students' social and emotional well-being," the district said in the release. "We are so proud of these programs and counselors for their work, supporting students

and staff," said Latrice Patton, Coordinator of Academic Counseling, College & Career Guidance in Katy ISD. "We have surpassed last year's recognition with an even greater number of programs acknowledged." Katy ISD counseling teams provide services to over 96,000 students districtwide.

Katy ISD invites parents and community members to review instructional materials

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Continuing its collaborative relationship with parents and families, Katy ISD invites community members to provide their input on instructional materials scheduled to be implemented in the 2025-2026 school year, the district said in a January 14 press release. The materials will be on display at the Katy ISD Education Support Complex

(6301 S. Stadium Lane, Katy) from Jan. 21-31, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The materials can also be viewed on January 27, from 4 to 7 p.m. The instructional materials under consideration will be for the following content areas:

- AP Biology
- French I, French II, French III KAP
- German I, German II
- Civil Engineering and Architecture
- Practicum of Manufacturing

- Practicum in Computer Technician
- Practicum in Cybersecurity
- Marketing in America
- Reading Elective
- Strategic Learning for Literacy

As a reminder, parents and guardians are invited to review and share their thoughts on instructional materials prior to adoption each year in a variety of content areas.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATY ISD  
Cinco Ranch High School senior Suhhyun Kim earned third place in the Congressional App Challenge for her app, A+attendance.

Cinco Ranch student earns third place in Congressional Challenge for app

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Cinco Ranch High School senior Suhhyun Kim earned third place in this year's Congressional App Challenge (CAC) for Texas' 22nd congressional district, for her app A+attendance, the district announced in a January 17 press release. The app is a comprehensive, automated attendance tracking tool that allows schools to track member attendance and manage participation. The innovative app was inspired by Suhhyun's time as secretary of her school's FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) chapter, where she was responsible for tracking attendance for over 300 members at various meetings and events. Though still undecided on where she'll attend college, Kim plans to study coding and sees great potential in the app. "It's something that I'll have to work on, but I feel like it's something that I can actually develop more, especially in college," she said. "I don't know if clubs work the same way in college, but a lot of clubs need an attendance tracking app." To view a YouTube video of Kim explaining how her app works, go to [youtube.com/watch?v=8omdQehNGQA](https://youtube.com/watch?v=8omdQehNGQA). The 22nd Congressional district is led by Representative Troy E. Nehls. Launched in 2014 by the U.S. House of Representatives and the Internet Education Foundation, the CAC promotes participation in computer science and coding among high school students. Each representative sponsors a challenge for their local district, and winners are invited to attend the annual House of Code event to demonstrate their app and network with students and lawmakers. Visit the Congressional App Challenge website at [congressionalappchallenge.us](https://congressionalappchallenge.us) to learn more.

Enrollment open now for Katy ISD's community education courses

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Looking for a class to learn something new in the new year? Katy ISD's Community Education Spring 2025 courses may be just the thing. Registration is now open, and courses begin Jan. 22. Enrollment is open to adults, and all courses are offered virtually to allow for the greatest convenience and flexibility. Fees per course are listed on the course registration page at [katyisd.revttrak.net](https://katyisd.revttrak.net). "Our Community Education courses remain a popular way for our community members to learn something new, whether acquiring a new skill or growing their knowledge in a certain area," said Nick Petito, director of internal communications for Katy ISD. Community members can choose from art, business, culinary, finance, and music courses, along with courses for retirement and long-term planning. Katy ISD's Community Education program provides the public with learning opportunities ranging from self-improvement to enrichment, recreation, and academic subjects. Visit the Community Education webpage at [katyisd.org/Page/4195](https://katyisd.org/Page/4195) to learn more about the courses offered this spring.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATY ISD  
Katy ISD's in-house alternative teacher certification program (ATC) is expected to produce 100 new teacher candidates.

Katy ISD's first cohort of teacher hopefuls begin certifying journey

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

During January, nearly 100 candidates began their teaching journey as part of the first cohort in Katy ISD's innovative alternative certification program (ACP), Katy ISD TEA+CH, the district said in a January 15 press release. These aspiring educators will work through months of coursework, field experiences, and assessment, as they progress toward their teaching certification in either Core Subjects EC-6 or 4-8. The initiative highlights creative solutions the district is implementing to help address the teacher shortage crisis in Texas. Following the successful completion, newly certified instructors will serve a full year at a Katy ISD school under the guidance of experienced field supervisors, where they will receive formal coaching and observation aimed at helping them develop and hone their craft as Katy ISD teachers. "We are excited to launch this amaz-

ing program for our candidates and for the district," said Katye Shields, EPP (Educator Preparation Program) and recruitment coordinator in Katy ISD. "Not only will we be able to grow our own team of talented and passionate educators, but we're also helping these individuals realize a dream." As just one of a few school districts across the state with an in-house certification program, Katy ISD and its ACP allows future educators to observe and learn from the seasoned teachers who work in Katy ISD. Candidates will benefit from high quality coaching and pedagogy methods from the ACP Instructors and master teachers who helped to make Katy ISD the #1 school district in the Houston area for four consecutive years, according to Niche. Katy ISD TEA+CH exists to provide A+ coursework and coaching, creating an A+ classroom community and culture. Visit the Katy ISD TEA+CH webpage at [katyisd.org/Page/10979](https://katyisd.org/Page/10979) to learn more.

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# Districts postpone athletic events due to wintry weather

## FROM STAFF REPORTS

Unprecedented winter weather – including the possibility of snow in the Katy area – forced local districts to suspend athletic activities this week.

Katy ISD – already closed January 20 in observance of Martin Luther King Day – announced January 18 that the district would also be closed on Tuesday, January 21 and Wednesday, January 22.

“Please be advised that all Katy ISD campuses and facilities will be closed Tuesday Jan. 21 and Wednesday Jan. 22, due to hazardous weather conditions. Families and employees received notification today concerning schedule changes to before- and after- school activities and which employees should report/not report to campus locations, depending on their duties,” the district said in the announcement.

Royal ISD also announced similar closures in a January 19 email:

- Monday 1/20 - Student/staff holiday in observance of MLK Day
- Tuesday 1/21 - All district facilities are closed and all after-school activities are canceled
- Wednesday 1/22 - All district facilities closed and all after-school activities canceled, except the special school board meeting at 6 p.m. - it will be held as scheduled.

# Katy High swimmers take the plunge at CFISD meet

## FROM STAFF REPORTS

Katy High School’s Tiger swim teams took honors in the CFISD Polar Plunge on January 7, according to the Katy Tiger e-newsletter. The girls team was third overall and boys were seventh out of 22 teams.

“What was supposed to be a ‘regional preview’ turned out to be a ‘state preview’ as there were several pool records and meet records broken,” the newsletter said. Katy swimmers and divers had several personal bests and we had three freshman boy’s records broken:

- Pearce Miller’s 1:48.99 in the boy’s 200 Fr, breaks the previous record of 1:52.64 set in 1998 by Remko Hinloopen
- Noah Palmer reclaims his own 100 Fly record that he took back in October from T. Smith, 57.25 from 2000 (a 25-year-old record!) with a 55.56 and scoops up the 100 Br Record as well, going 1:02.10, replacing Derek Wintergrass’ record



from 2020.

Meet Recap:

- Megan Miller took 1st in the 100 Fr with a new personal best and finished 4th in the 100 Bk with a personal best time as well.
- Freshman Jaycee Walsh was 13th in the 50 Fr and 7th in the 100 Bk
- Senior Captain Madi Wood was 8th in the 100 Bk
- Sophomore Chiara Avalos finished 5th in the 50 Fr and 7th in the 100 Fr
- Sophomore Brooklyn Heng-geler was 14th in the 100 Fly with a

personal best.

- Junior Marion Chrietzberg was 15th in the 500 Fr
- Senior Captain, Bella Zepe-da-Otalora was 16th in the 200 IM

All divers had season-best scores, the newsletter said.

- Senior Diver Melissa Spolniki was 4th
- Junior Diver Avery Davidson was 5th
- Junior Diver Eliza Murphy was 8th

The girls’ 200 Medley relay finished 12th, while the 200 Fr Relay took second with a season-best time and the girls’ A 400 Fr relay took 4th and the B relay was 14th.

On the boy’s side:

- 200 Medley Relay was 11th
- Pearce Miller finished 9th in the 200 Fr
- Senior Captain, Sam Rivera was 16th in the 200 IM and 15th in the 500 Fr
- Freshman Noah Palmer was 7th in the 100 Br
- Sophomore Micheal Winter-grass was 11th in the 100

## TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION POLL

On January 20, the Texas High School Baseball Coaches Association released its “Top 10 Overall” poll – with no Katy-area teams selected.	CLASS 6A							
	1	Tomball	0-0	0-0	8	San Antonio Reagan	0-0	0-0
	2	Pearland	0-0	0-0	9	Spring Branch Memorial	0-0	0-0
	3	San Antonio Johnson	0-0	0-0	10	Dripping Springs	0-0	0-0
	4	Prosper	0-0	0-0				
	5	Cy Fair	0-0	0-0	<b>Other Receiving Votes:</b>			
	6	Flower Mound	0-0	0-0	<i>Dallas Jesuit, Southlake Carroll, Ft. Bend Ridge Point, Laredo Alexander, Cy Ranch</i>			
	7	Rockwall Heath	0-0	0-0				

## SOCCKER

# Jordan girls rank 11th in TGCA coaches poll

## CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Katy ISD’s Jordan High was ranked eleventh in the latest soccer poll released by the Texas Girls Coaches Association on January 13. No other KISD schools made the poll.

### Class 6A

1. Southlake Carroll 3-0-0
2. Weatherford 4-0-0
3. Rock Hill 3-0-0
4. El Paso Franklin 4-0-0
5. San Antonio Harlan 6-0-0
6. Pebble Hills 4-0-0
7. The Woodlands 3-1-1
8. Lamar 5-0-0
9. Round Rock Westwood 4-1-0
10. Lewisville 4-0-0
11. Katy Jordan 5-1-1
12. Round Rock 4-1-1
13. Ridge Point 4-0-0
14. El Paso Eastwood 4-0-0
15. Kingwood 7-0-1

## KATY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 2024

Data Control Codes	General	Debt Service Fund	Capital Projects Fund	Special Revenue Fund	Total Governmental Funds
REVENUES					
5700 Local, Intermediate, and Out-of-State	\$ 425,820,387	\$ 214,468,678	\$ 12,550,950	\$ 38,405,837	\$ 691,245,852
5800 State Program Revenues	595,820,541	22,762,550		14,738,322	633,321,413
5900 Federal Program Revenues	11,462,688		959,953	87,331,518	99,754,159
5020 Total Revenues	1,033,103,616	237,231,228	13,510,903	140,475,677	1,424,321,424
EXPENDITURES					
Current:					
0011 Instruction	667,726,691			43,537,031	711,263,722
0012 Instructional Resources and Media Services	10,489,784			636,897	11,126,681
0013 Curriculum and Instructional Staff Development	14,191,290			8,242,570	22,433,860
0021 Instructional Leadership	10,276,247			956,806	11,233,053
0023 School Leadership	57,297,356			1,523,866	58,821,222
0031 Guidance, Counseling, and Evaluation Services	45,115,886			14,840,673	59,956,559
0032 Social Work	1,070,237			623,473	1,693,710
0033 Health Services	11,064,745			197,640	11,262,385
0034 Student Transportation	28,469,063			(1,592)	28,467,471
0035 Food Services				47,637,007	47,637,007
0036 Extracurricular Activities	21,867,260			8,136,618	30,003,878
0041 General Administration	20,603,171			421,771	21,024,942
0051 Facilities Maintenance and Operations	85,418,119			7,777,439	93,195,558
0052 Security and Monitoring Services	15,625,388			107,915	15,733,303
0053 Data Processing Services	19,315,817			52,024	19,367,841
0061 Community Services	599,046			1,729,712	2,328,758
Debt Service:					
0071 Principal on Long-Term Debt	2,645,575	133,741,460		787,638	137,174,673
0072 Interest on Long-Term Debt	1,199	100,596,915		30,705	100,628,819
0073 Bond Issuance Costs and Fees		3,237,071	1,700,695		4,937,766
0081 Capital Outlay: Facilities Acquisition and Construction	1,075,283		195,681,369	3,024,950	199,781,602
Intergovernmental Charges:					
0093 Payments to Fiscal Agents SSA	1,031,611				1,031,611
0095 Payments to JJAEP	16,605				16,605
0097 Payments to Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone	6,810,990				6,810,990
0099 Other Intergovernmental Charges	6,020,350				6,020,350
6030 Total Expenditures	1,026,731,713	237,575,446	197,382,064	140,263,143	1,601,952,366
1100 Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	6,371,903	(344,218)	(183,871,161)	212,534	(177,630,942)
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES/(USES)					
7901 Refunding Bonds Issued		31,495,000			31,495,000
7911 Capital-Related Debt Issued			245,915,000		245,915,000
7912 Sale of Real and Personal Property	54,193				54,193
7916 Premium on Issuance of Bonds		619,192	5,785,694		6,404,886
7949 SBITAs Issued	2,589,034				2,589,034
8940 Payment to Bond Refunding Escrow Agent		(31,915,000)			(31,915,000)
7080 Total Other Financing Sources/(Uses)	2,643,227	199,192	251,700,694		254,543,113
7919 Extraordinary Item - Insurance Recovery	2,500,000				2,500,000
1200 Net Change in Fund Balances	11,515,130	(145,026)	67,829,533	212,534	79,412,171
0100 Fund Balance - September 1 (Beginning)	352,783,437	64,660,404	223,507,579	46,409,452	687,360,872
3000 Fund Balance - August 31 (Ending)	\$ 364,298,567	\$ 64,515,378	\$ 291,337,112	\$ 46,621,986	\$ 766,773,043

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