

KATY AND JORDAN FOOTBALL SEASONS COME TO AN END  
SPORTS | B1

# KatyTimes



Fort Bend County Fairgrounds  
December 6th-8th, 2024  
4310 TX-36, Rosenberg, TX 77471  
[homefortheholidaysgiftmarket.com/rosenberg-hollydays](http://homefortheholidaysgiftmarket.com/rosenberg-hollydays)

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2024



IMAGES FROM AMAZON.COM

## Katy ISD bans more books

‘Slaughterhouse Five,’ ‘Handmaid’s Tale,’ ‘Kite Runner’ among 14 titles removed in November

BY SUSAN ROVEGNO  
PUBLISHER

Katy ISD has banned fourteen additional books in November, according to the district’s website [at.katyisd.org/page/10182](http://at.katyisd.org/page/10182), bringing the total to 22 books banned since the start of the current school year in August. The district site does not provide additional information on the reasons for the books’ removal, nor information on how the removal was initiated. Authors’ names and the year of publication are also omitted on the list of banned books.

Titles removed include three books which have

previously been required reading in advanced placement courses – Kurt Vonnegut’s classic “Slaughterhouse Five,” a science fiction-infused anti-war novel first published in 1969; Khaled Hosseini’s “The Kite Runner,” a novel about a boy in Afghanistan which was released in 2003, and later translated into 42 languages for publication in 38 countries after two years on the New York Times bestseller list; and “A Handmaid’s Tale” by Margaret Atwood, a novel published in 1985 which explores themes of powerless women in a patriarchal society. All three

See **BOOKS**, page A3

### 2024-2025 REMOVED INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

| DATE          | TITLE                               |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| August 2024   | Oryx and Crake                      |
| August 2024   | A Clockwork Orange                  |
| August 2024   | Wicked                              |
| October 2024  | I Never                             |
| October 2024  | Mammal                              |
| October 2024  | A Clash of Kings                    |
| October 2024  | I: New and Selected Poems           |
| October 2024  | Bum Rush the Page: A Def poetry jam |
| November 2024 | The Kite Runner                     |
| November 2024 | Slaughterhouse Five                 |
| November 2024 | The Handmaid’s Tale                 |
| November 2024 | Jesus Land: A Novel                 |
| November 2024 | The Freedom Writer’s Diary          |
| November 2024 | Last Night at the Telegraph Club    |
| November 2024 | Lighter than my Shadow              |
| November 2024 | Nineteen Minutes                    |
| November 2024 | Skin and Bones                      |
| November 2024 | Sold                                |
| November 2024 | Homegoing                           |
| November 2024 | Living Dead Girl                    |
| November 2024 | Skin                                |
| November 2024 | Perfect                             |

“People from outside our community are telling Katy ISD that these books don’t belong in our schools or our community, and not our parents. ...we plan to be in Katy ISD for the long haul and [my kids] won’t have access to these books that are classics and very much a part of American literature.”

—ANNE RUSSEY, Katy ISD parent

## Katy city council holds special meeting

BY SUSAN ROVEGNO  
PUBLISHER

The City of Katy’s city council met in special session on Monday, December 2, with only one item on the agenda: to consider reinstatement of former employee Blanca Charles. Fewer than ten people were in attendance. City Administrator Byron Hebert was not present.

After the meeting was convened, the council immediately went into closed executive session to consult with an attorney and to hold a private hearing as requested by Charles.

When the council appeared in open meeting after the one-hour closed session, councilmembers voted 5 to 0 to uphold Interim Police Chief Bryon Woytek’s decision to terminate her employment. There were no other details about the reason for her termination.

Blanca F. Charles was employed as a police officer at the City of Katy in 2022 and had an annual salary of \$60,093 according to public records listed at [govsalaries.com](http://govsalaries.com).



SUSAN ROVEGNO

Interim KPD Chief Bryon Woytek awaits the start of the special city council meeting on December 2.

## Houston Methodist West Hospital expands robotic heart surgeries

Innovative procedures aim to address heart disease, the leading cause of death in Harris County

### CONTRIBUTED REPORT

As heart disease remains the leading cause of death in Harris County, Houston Methodist West Hospital is providing advanced solutions to help patients manage this life-threatening condition. Since performing the hospital’s first robotic-assisted heart surgery in May, Dr. Mini Sivadasan, a cardiovascular surgeon specializing in robotic-assisted procedures, has continued to treat patients with this innovative approach, offering them a less invasive path to recovery.

According to the most recent report from the Harris County Health Department, heart disease continues to affect thousands across the region, highlighting the urgent need for effective and advanced treatment options. Houston Methodist

DR. MINI SIVADASAN



See **SURGERIES**, page A3

## Harris County Precinct 4 commissioner Briones to wrap up ‘listening tour’ on December 12

### FROM STAFF REPORTS

Harris County Precinct 4 Commissioner Lesley Briones will hold her final “listening tour” of 2024 in a virtual meeting.

“Here’s your opportunity to connect directly with Commissioner Lesley Briones to share your feedback and ask questions,” said the commissioner’s office in a November post on Facebook. “Your voice matters.”

The meeting will be held on December 12 at 5 p.m. online. The meeting is free to attend but an RSVP is required. Reserve a spot at [bit.ly/VLT24Social](http://bit.ly/VLT24Social).



PHOTO BY SUSAN ROVEGNO

Harris County Precinct 4 Commissioner Lesley Briones, shown at a September 14 meeting on the East Katy mobility plan at the Steve Radack Community Center, will hold her last “listening tour” of 2024 in an online meeting on December 12.

### HAVE A NEWS TIP?

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- Tickets can be purchased on our website or at the door. Tickets valid for re-admission with wristband & email confirmation!
- Shopping is indoors, plus outdoor tents & mobile boutiques
- Parking is FREE
- Strollers are allowed
- Children 12 and under are free
- Cash and card are accepted at entrance & booths



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Mrs. Claus coming to Katy  
Budget Books for story time  
on December 6 and 8

Mrs. Claus will be stopping by Katy Budget Books on Friday, December 6 and Sunday, Dec 8 to read to kids and invite them to participate in some fun activities. There will be cookies too. The free family-friendly event will take place at the story at 870 S. Mason in Katy on December 6 at 6:30 p.m. and on December 8 at 3 p.m.

It's 'Beards and Bubbles' at  
LaCenterra on December 10

Get ready to make your holiday season even jollier at LaCenterra's Heritage Square at 23501 Cinco Ranch Blvd. in Katy. On December 10 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., the shopping center's "Beards and Bubbles" festivity will provide photos with Santa -- It's the perfect chance for kids (and adults) to tell him their wishes and snap a memorable photo with the big guy. There will be kid-friendly DJ tunes with a playlist of holiday hits. Watch in awe as enormous bubbles fill the air, creating a whimsical, winter wonderland atmosphere. Perfect for kids and adults who still believe in a little bit of magic. A specialty balloon artist will conjure incredible balloon creations From reindeer to snowmen.

Come to Hotel Zaza Memorial  
City for 'Mistletoe Magic on  
the Lawn' December 11 and  
help Kids Meals

Hotel ZaZa Memorial City presents "Mistletoe Magic On The Lawn," a charity event in support of Kids' Meals and Toys for Tots at 9787 Katy Fwy, Houston on December 11 from 5 to 9 p.m. Celebrate this magical evening on the lawn with festive delights like boozy hot chocolate, gourmet mac and cheese bar, and a s'mores station. Guests under 18 must be accompanied by a guardian. Kids' Meals will receive 100 percent of proceeds from each ticket purchased, and as a special 'thank you' from ZaZa, those who bring an unwrapped book or toy



METRO CREATIVE GRAPHICS

in support of Toys for Tots will be awarded three raffle tickets as appreciation for brightening the holiday for those less fortunate. Purchase tickets at eventbrite.com/e/mistletoe-magic-on-the-lawn-at-zaza-memorial-city-tickets-1049698104287. Since 2006, staff, board of directors, and partners at Kids' Meals have made it possible to deliver more than 14 million free meals to food insecure children in 56 zip codes in Harris County and Montgomery County.

And still MORE pancakes with  
Santa – on December 14 at  
Katy Fire Station No. 2

Yes, you'll be able to choose from 55 different pancake plates – and there will be music, raffles and inflatables at this pancake breakfast from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. on December 14 at Katy Fire Station No. 2 at 25420 Bell Patna Drive in Katy. Sponsored by the Katy Professional Fire Fighters Association, the event will benefit the KT Firefighters scholarship program.

Enchanted Gardens to host  
'Grinch Fest' on December 14

Break out your best Christmas "Who-ville" attire and join Enchanted Gardens for some Grinchy

fun! The green guy himself will be creating mischief around the nursery at 6420 FM 529 in Richmond from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on December 14. There will be plenty of opportunities for photos and a pop-up featuring gourmet cookies from the Sugar Berry Cookie Shoppe. The event also features a Christmas tree decorating contest with local nonprofit groups.

Visit Santa's workshop at  
Bear Creek Pioneers Park on  
December 14

Enjoy a visit to Santa's Workshop with lights at Bear Creek Pioneers Park on December 14 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., sponsored by the office of Harris County Precinct 4 Commissioner Lesley Briones. The event will feature stage performances featuring Mango Punch, Lion Dancers, Bollywood Dancers, and more, as well as face painting, balloon artists, and crafts, carnival games, inflatables, yard games, and hayrides. Don't miss the tree giveaway and the Healthy Parks Workshop. The park is at 3230 Hwy 6, Houston, TX 77084.

It's a holly jolly Christmas  
market at MKT on December 14

Get ready to sip, shop, and

celebrate the season with MKT Distillery on Saturday, December 14 from 1 to 5 p.m. MKT Distillery is turning into a winter wonderland with festive fun, local vendors, and delicious holiday treats. Find unique gifts from local artisans and makers to make your holiday shopping easy and meaningful. Warm up with festive seasonal cocktails crafted just for the season. And join in holiday activities with seasonal surprises and activities to bring out the holiday cheer. The distillery is at 5373 1st Street, Katy.

Katy Branch Library to offer  
assistance with FAFSA on  
December 18 and 19

The FutureU staff of the Katy Branch Library are hosting a FAFSA information presentation on Wednesday, December 18 at 4 p.m. and offering FAFSA drop-in assistance on Thursday, December 19 from 2 to 5 p.m. FAFSA is a free online form that helps students find grants, scholarships, work-study programs, and loans for college or career school. The sessions will be held at the library at 5414 Franz Road in Katy.

Ladies' Night to be held  
in downtown Katy on  
December 18

Bring your friends and get that last minute Christmas shopping done while enjoying sales, specials, lite bites and adult beverages during Ladies' Night sponsored by Katy Market Day in historic downtown Katy. Start your shopping at 5715 Second Street and visit participating merchants The Limited Edition, Dovetail Antiques, Katy Rock Shop, Vintage Backroads and KT Antiques. The event is from 3 to 8 p.m. on December 18.

It's 'Senior Citizens Day' at the  
Hangar on December 19

The Hangar, at 4010 Fourth Street in Brookshire, will have a free Senior Citizens Day featuring food, games, prizes, and guest speakers, as well as a vendor market, on December 19 from 8

a.m. to 1 p.m. For donations, use CashApp at \$quotatious1977 or Zelle 832-361-8861.

Choose from these December  
events at the Radack  
Community Center

The Radack Community Center, operated by Harris County Precinct 4 at 184 Clay Road in Houston, has announced these events for early to mid-December:

- Silver Bells Prom, Friday, December 6 at 5 p.m. Celebrate the season with an evening of laughter, good company, and holiday spirit at this holiday dance. Get dressed up and bring a friend or a partner. There will be light refreshments available and great music by Cool Freddie. Cost is \$10 a ticket. Visit the center for the ticket purchase prior to the event.
- Holiday Cookie Decoration, Saturday, December 7 at 11 a.m. Come for a sweet and festive cookie decorating class with volunteer instructor Maddie. This class is a fun way to learn new skills and enjoy a tasty treat. All the supplies and delicious cookies will be provided, just bring your creativity. Registration is required.
- January Trip Sign-up by Friday, December 6 at 9 a.m. Sign up for the January bus trip, available for individuals 50 and older. Sign-up is on a first-come, first-served basis. Precinct 4 buses will pick up and drop off participants at the center. Limited spots are available. Register online, call, or visit the community center. January's bus trip is to the Museum of the Gulf Coast Downtown in Port Arthur. The museum tells the exciting story of the Texas/Louisiana Gulf Coast region, beginning with paleontology and biology. Permanent exhibits include a section on Native Americans, European contact, the Texas Navy, the Civil War, economic and cultural growth, the petroleum industry, and the region's maritime history. Cost: \$4 per person Date: Wednesday, January 8. Bus departs at 8 a.m. Lunch will be on your own at The Schooner Restaurant.

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**Hollydays Market**

Fort Bend County Fairgrounds  
December 6th-8th, 2024  
4310 TX-36, Rosenberg, TX 77471

**Friday 12:00 pm-6:00 pm | Saturday 10:00 am-6:00 pm | Sunday 11:00 am-4:00 pm**

[homefortheholidaysgiftmarket.com/rosenberg-hollydays](https://homefortheholidaysgiftmarket.com/rosenberg-hollydays)

**Tickets:**  
**General Admission: \$6**

- Tickets can be purchased on our website or at the door. *Tickets valid for re-admission with wristband & email confirmation!*
- Shopping is indoors, plus outdoor tents & mobile boutiques
- Parking is FREE
- Strollers are allowed
- Children 12 and under are free
- Cash and card are accepted at entrance & booths



**CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

**CLUES ACROSS**

- Break
- Ruled Russia
- Having several lobes
- Walked around proudly
- Atomic #77
- Largest living land animals
- The Great Lakes State
- A type of toast
- Partner to feather
- Bristlelike
- Bowfin
- Distributes
- Hairlike structure
- Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
- Where wrestlers work
- Blood relation
- A great deal
- Round Dutch cheese
- Move further away from
- Type of wrap
- Furies
- Removes from the record
- Young salmon
- Feline
- Skin decor
- Disfigure
- They —
- Formal term for “on”
- Weight of precious stones
- Traveled rapidly
- Long-winged aquatic bird
- Prickly husk

**CLUES DOWN**

- Wives of a polygamous man
- Where hurt ballplayers land
- Single-celled animal
- Rhythmic pattern
- One from Utah
- A group of seven
- Refrains from inflicting
- Light brown
- Humanistic discipline
- Emits coherent radiation
- It says who you are
- Roundworm
- Group of Native Americans
- Makes wider
- Headgear
- One who sets others free
- Form of communication
- A Brit's mother
- Title of respect
- Famed modernist painter
- One-time province of British India
- Prosecutors

37. Motor vehicle

38. Non-religious

39. Native Americans of Colorado and Wyoming

42. Pouch

43. Touch gently

46. Chose

47. Actress Tomei

49. Former Broncos coach Dan

50. Icelandic poems

52. More decent

54. Grillmasters use it

55. Self-immolation by fire rituals

57. Expression of annoyance

59. — Spumante (Italian wine)

62. Consumed

63. Body part

66. Thus

68. Rupee

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

**SUDOKU**

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

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.



## BOOKS

from page A1

books have been made into films or adapted for television.

Several states in the U.S. have banned “The Handmaid’s Tale,” including Texas, Florida and Oregon, for its profanity, vulgarity, and sexual overtones, according to Wikipedia. Vonnegut’s book, “Slaughterhouse Five,” has been challenged repeatedly for its sexually explicit content as well as for its anti-war themes – mostly notably in 1982 in *Island Trees School District v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853 where the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the school district. The book was recently banned in Tennessee in 2024 and has also been banned in Florida, according to Wikipedia. “The Kite Runner,” as of 2024, has been banned from libraries at schools in Florida, Michigan, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Pennsylvania, Idaho, and Wisconsin, according to Wikipedia, for its “offensive language, sexually explicit [content], and unsuit[ability for] age group.”

But Katy ISD's ban is raising concerns locally.

Katy ISD parent Anne Russey, who joined forces with other Texas parents Laney Hawes and Frank Strong to found the Texas Freedom to Read Project in 2023, is pushing back against the ban. “I’m not surprised any more [by the book bans] but it hurts every time,” she said in an interview with the Katy Times. “This one feels like an escalation in some ways because it did have ‘The Kite Runner,’ ‘Slaughterhouse Five,’ and ‘The Handmaid’s Tale.’ We’re not just doing library books at this point – these are ones that AP English and dual-credit courses use regularly. And it is going to have an impact on students.”

Russey said that over the past three years or so, there has been a movement toward removing and restricting books based on the ideas that they contain or the content within them. It started in Katy ISD a few years ago when a group of Katy ISD parents and community members challenged Jerry Craft's award-winning graphic novels "New Kid" and "Class Act," written for elementary aged readers, over allegations that the books contained references to "critical race theory." Books were removed but then eventually returned to shelves, with restrictions to fourth grade and up, because they do not contain any illegal ideas or information, Russey said.

One of Russey's primary concerns is that the ban is not being driven locally by the district or by KISD parents, but instead by outside influences.

“The majority of affected titles continue to correspond with a list of 676 titles provided to public school districts throughout Texas by extremist, pro-censorship group Citizens Defending Freedom, following a visit from CDF-affiliated Remnant Alliance ‘pastors’ to Katy ISD’s April 2024 board meeting.” Russey wrote in a blog on the Texas Freedom to Read website in November. “This means that a group that has been labeled ‘anti-government’ by the SPLC [Southern Poverty Law Center] – that has been embraced by sitting Katy ISD school board trustees – is driving the

demands to censor and ban books in Katy ISD – not Katy ISD parents, residents or students.” The majority of books banned in Katy ISD since April are on the list of 676 books, Russey said.

Following appearances by out-of-towners Richard Vega, a pastor from a Houston church on Almeda Genoa, and Llano grandmother Bonnie Wallace at the April 2024 meeting of the Katy ISD school board, Russey posted on X (formerly Twitter) on April 23: “The two speakers who read out of context passages from library books, out loud during last night’s Katy ISD meeting, are activists traveling around the state trying to shock and intimidate school boards into banning books without following board policies.”

“People from outside our community are telling Katy ISD that these books don’t belong in our schools or our community, and not our parents,” said Russey in the Katy Times interview. “As a parent, this is super concerning to me because my kids are not in high school yet. They don’t have access to these books anyway, but we plan to be in Katy ISD for the long haul and [my kids] won’t have access to these books that are classics and very much a part of American literature.”

Russey also notes that “a decent percentage of the Katy ISD population” qualify for free and reduced lunch and those parents can’t just go buy copies of the banned books. School libraries are the primary ways for those students to access books, Russey said.

Russey is also concerned about Katy ISD's process for removing books – with librarians, parents and students squeezed out of the decision-making.

The district is internally reviewing many of the titles; challenges are not coming from parents or people in the community, Russey said. "I believe the district is trying to comply with the rules and expectations the school board has set, which is a very difficult task for administrators," she added. "The board has put them in a terrible position."

Following a public information request, Russey obtained a spreadsheet showing several of the "internal reviews" completed by the district. "You can see the staff names indicate the 'internal review' committee no longer includes campus level librarians and is comprised of ESC administrators -- including two librarian admins but the librarians are now outnumbered by district admins who are not professional librarians -- and includes no parent or campus staff representation or input," Russey said in an email to the *Katy Times*. "The last column seems to indicate the books are being removed because they meet one or more of the criteria used to determine whether the book violates the penal code, or not. I believe that the internal reviewers are using this -- or a similar form -- to evaluate books -- so the ESC administrator staff reviewers are likely answering 'yes' to one or more of the questions about the penal code under sections D, E, or F. They are very likely ignoring the legal require-

ment that any 'sexually explicit' or 'offensive' part of a book or story be considered 'as a whole' or be reflective of the 'dominant theme' of a work."

The book-banning policy will have negative consequences for KISD students, particularly those in advanced placement (AP) or dual-credit college courses, Russey said. “This could have potentially a very negative impact on students’ academic outcomes if Katy students are less prepared for the AP exams because they can’t have access to these books.” Economically-disadvantaged students will face the biggest hardship – as well as the students whose families are not paying attention and don’t know that this is happening, she said. Parents have faith that the school district is preparing their students for their AP tests, but they may or may not have had all of the opportunities that students in other districts who are retaining access to these books have, she said. “There is no indication that any exceptions are being made for these [AP or dual credit] courses,” she said.

And a larger issue looms at the state level very soon. On November 12, House Bill 183, introduced by Rep. Jared Patterson of Frisco, who also introduced last session's HB 900 known as "Reader Act," would give the State Board of Education the power to prohibit school districts from using library materials it considers "inappropriate" or "sexually explicit," according to the Texas Tribune. Those decisions have historically been made by local school districts. Decisions made by the State Board would be binding for public schools and charter schools state-wide, even if local boards do not wish to ban certain books. "This is taking away local control," Russey said.

Russey believes that “this is not about protecting children – it has always been about furthering a political agenda” -- a larger agenda to dismantle and erode trust in public schools, eventually leading to the privatization of public education. “This is not just about books that contain descriptions of sex; this is affecting lots of books and lots of readers.”

Concerned citizens should reach out to the Katy ISD school board and school administration and express their concern or ask for reversals on the bans, Russey said. "There is no mechanism in place for parents to 'reverse challenge' a removal, so if parents want their students to have access, they can contact the school board or speak at a school board meeting. However, a board majority has demonstrated that they are not interested in hearing from parents who want their children to maintain access to the majority of the books that have been removed. It is really important that parents understand the impact of local elections and that they pay attention to who is running." People need to vote for candidates that will protect the freedom to read, she said.

For additional information on the Texas Freedom to Read Project, go to [txftrp.org](http://txftrp.org).

## SURGERIES

from page A1

West Hospital is meeting this need by offering robotic-assisted heart surgeries, which provide patients with a minimally invasive alternative approach to traditional open-heart surgery.

“Robotic heart surgery is transforming cardiac care by allowing us to perform complex procedures through smaller incisions with unmatched precision,” said Dr. Sivadason. “For patients, this means less pain, reduced hospital stays, and a faster return to normal life. Minimally invasive robotic techniques represent a new innovative trend in treating heart disease.”

These minimally invasive procedures have been proven beneficial for patients with heart disease, allowing for shorter recovery times, reduced risk of infection, and minimal scarring. Robotic-assisted surgeries also offer significant benefits for patient outcomes, making it possible to treat selective cardiac cases with greater control and accuracy.

"We are committed to giving our community access to the most advanced treatment options available for heart disease," added Dr. Sivadasan. "Seeing our patients recover faster and resume their lives sooner is incredibly rewarding, and we are proud to provide this innovative care to our community."

As heart disease remains a critical health concern, Houston Methodist West Hospital's commitment to cutting-edge, minimally invasive heart surgery is making a meaningful impact in the lives of patients. By providing advanced care options, the hospital continues its mission to improve health outcomes for patients in West Houston and the Katy area, a spokesperson for the hospital said.

**December 7 | 10 a.m.–1 p.m.**

# Cookies with Santa

**'Tis the season...  
to make merry memories!**

**Get ready for a holly-jolly time as Santa makes his joyful return to Sugar Land! Join us for a magical morning filled with holiday crafts in Santa Land, the timeless treat of cookies and milk, and an unforgettable photo with Santa & Mrs. Claus to capture the joy! Don't forget to bring your camera to snap extra candids of the festive fun!**

**Celebrate the season with us and make memories that sparkle, all while supporting HMNS at Sugar Land's mission of spreading the joy of science education & accessibility.**

**For tickets and event details, visit [sugarland.hmns.org/cookieswithsanta](https://sugarland.hmns.org/cookieswithsanta) or call 713-639-4629.**

# HOUSTON MUSEUM *of* NATURAL SCIENCE

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## Sugar Land



# Christmas Worship Guide

## Christmas worship holds special meaning

BY JEREMIAH MOHR, LEAD WORSHIP PASTOR, PARKWAY FELLOWSHIP  
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

In 1987, my family moved from Houston to a small town called Decatur. Back then, going to church on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day wasn't common unless Christmas fell on a Sunday. For us, Christmas was spent at home. But when I moved back to Houston in 2008, I found a culture where gathering for worship on Christmas Eve was a meaningful tradition. It became one of my favorite times to go to church—not out of obligation, but by choice.

Traditions are powerful, but they can also become routine—something we do because "that's how it's always been." I call these "meaning adjacent" traditions, where the significance is tied to someone else's meaning, not our own. If Christmas feels this way, we risk missing the true purpose: celebrating the birth of a Savior. Without Christ, the celebration of Christmas is empty. But with Him, it's a season filled with hope and life.

What keeps Christmas meaningful is retelling the story of Jesus' birth. In Luke 2 or Matthew 1-2, we see how people from all backgrounds heard the good news of a Savior and responded by going to worship Him. That's what Christmas is all about—reconnecting with this story, letting it fill us with awe and wonder, and going to worship Christ the Lord.

For me, attending church on Christmas Eve is a way to honor and retell this story. Whether this tradition is new for you or one you've celebrated for years, I invite you to go to church this Christmas Eve or Christmas Day—not for what it might mean to someone else, but to discover the true meaning of Christmas in the birth of a Savior—your Savior. He is Emmanuel, which means "God with us."

## 'Musical Memories' celebrates first year anniversary of helping with memory care

BY SUSAN ROVEGNO  
PUBLISHER

A sister and brother decided to make a difference.

One year ago, Anika Ganesh, now a senior at Seven Lakes High School, and her brother, Anish Ganesh who is a medical student at Dell Medical School at UT Austin, started a volunteer group "Musical Memories" that does memory disco programs at memory care facilities in Katy.

"We envision a community where every individual impacted by memory loss feels valued, supported, and celebrated through innovative and inclusive programs like Memory Disco," reads the nonprofit's vision statement.

"Anika has always had a personal connection to music and dancing, she has loved it ever since she was a child," said proud parent Viji Alur Ganesh in an email to the Katy Times. "She later found that the thing she loves so much could greatly benefit memory care patients and knew what she had to do. In later stages of her grandmother's life music was the only means she was able to connect with her. With Anika's deep compassion and love for others she started to go out and do good in the world, connecting members in the community with music—the global language."

The program is based on an Ohio nonprofit called the "Day By Day Project," and they operate nationally. According to the Day By Day website at [daybydayproject.org](http://daybydayproject.org), its mission is to transform dementia care through music. "Emotional memories are encoded rhythmically in the brain and that is one of the only skills preserved throughout dementia," says the site.

Currently 22% of memory care facilities in Ohio have adopted this program, said Alur.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VIJI ALUR

Volunteers for Musical Memories Katy include (left to right) Aahan Golwala, Michah Geordi (VP Musical Memories Katy), Anish Ganesh (VP Day By Day Project (Nonprofit)), Zayan Kirmani, Zeniya Kirmani, Anika Ganesh (Founder and President of Musical Memories) Katy), Brianna Carrion, Priyanshi Sayania, and Shriya Desikan.

"Anika's tried to spin volunteer organization in Katy," Viji Alur Ganesh said. "The memory care facilities, seniors and caregivers tremendously benefit from this program, and we have written testimonials of that. Our volunteers have fulfilling experience of making a community impact as they are able to bring joy these seniors and gives them a perspective of life itself."

Atria Senior Living and Caydance Assisted Living, both in Katy, are currently participating in the Memory Disco Program and the nonprofit plans to further expand this into three or four more facilities in the next year or so, Viji Alur Ganesh said. Approximately, 200 residents have been helped through the Musical Memories Katy Disco Program to date.

Annually, Musical Memories conducts about 24 Memory Discos at the two facilities, directing one to two programs each month. Over the summer the number of programs may increase to three or four pro-

grams each month.

"Most of the residents are more cheerful after we conduct one of our silent discos," Viji Alur Ganesh said. "They feel renewed and re-energized after the Memory Disco(s)."



ANIKA GANESH

Viji Alur Ganesh added that researchers from Southwestern Oklahoma University and the University of Kansas found that the combination of movement (walking) with rhythmic engagement (either small percussion

instrument or singing) led to an improvement in attention function for people with dementia, which is a particular area of difficulty. Researchers from the University of British Columbia conducted a study in 2021 where they found that silent discos were perceived as an easy-to-use tool that leads to positive attitudes in patients and caregivers.

"Dementia rapidly reduces the attention span of a person, making it difficult for them to concentrate and engage with music," Viji Alur Ganesh said.

"In contrast, the headphones make the person focused and immersed in the present moment."

Medical student Anish Ganesh personally makes visits to these facilities when he is in town. Several students and their family members around the Katy area volunteer with the group regularly.

As the organization grows, they hope to recruit more volunteers, Viji Alur Ganesh said.

"Our dedicated volunteers look above and beyond volunteering hours to make a change in the community as this is student run organization often times we struggle to satisfy the rules of student council and National Honor Society," said Viji Alur Ganesh. "But we understand we needed to create a sustainable program for our seniors with memory care issues that can live beyond our high school years and we strive for that."

There are other ways to help, too. Donations to the nonprofit will help expand its reach, said Viji Alur Ganesh. "Our Memory Disco Kits are carefully crafted to inspire joy, blending classic music with easy-to-use, interactive features that captivate people of all ages. This initiative helps fund our mission. With your support, we plan to assemble and donate these kits to local community programs, such as libraries, community centers, and even barber shops, spreading the magic of music to more people and places. Every donation enables us to create additional kits, extending their reach to those who will benefit most—from seniors reconnecting with cherished tunes to families discovering new ways to bond and have fun together."

To volunteer or to learn more, visit the group's website at [www.musicalmemorieskaty.org](http://www.musicalmemorieskaty.org).

## Goodcents to open first Texas restaurant in Katy; more planned in Houston area

### CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Goodcents, a sub sandwich franchise with deep roots in the Midwest, will open its first shop in Texas on Thursday, December 12 at 2206-D Katy Flewellen Road in Katy, the company announced in November and December press releases. Texas becomes the 10th state where Goodcents operates.

A grand opening celebration is slated to begin at 11 a.m., and the first person in line will win free subs for a year. Also, the first 15 in

line will win Goodcents swag bags, and all attendees will be entered into a raffle to win prizes including another chance at free subs for a year and Goodcents swag.

The new restaurant will also offer specials on combos and catering during the first month.

Jax and Chad Johnson, both Kansas City area natives and longtime fans of Goodcents who now live in Texas, are the franchise owners and area representatives. They have signed an agreement to develop ten stores in the Houston

area over ten years.

"We are thrilled to share a taste of Kansas City with our neighbors in our new home. I moved away 14 years ago, and I still crave Goodcents' turkey sub on wheat," said Jax Johnson, who worked at Goodcents when she was in high school. "I have always loved Goodcents' food and the smell of Goodcents' trademark bread baking. No one makes a sandwich like Goodcents."

Joe Bisogno, founder and CEO of Goodcents, said he was excited

for the Johnsons and for the opportunity to grow the brand in Texas. "We are happy to welcome Jax and Chad to the Goodcents family and to celebrate this grand opening with them," he said. "They say everything is bigger in Texas, and we look forward to announcing many more Texas-sized openings and successes in the future."

Goodcents currently has 67 locations with dozens more in development and further expansion planned.

### About Goodcents

Goodcents is celebrating 35 years of experience as a leading sub sandwich franchise. Founded in Lenexa, Kansas, and headquartered in De Soto, the company is known for its signature soft bread baked fresh twice daily in the restaurants, meats hand-sliced to order and hearty pasta dinner entrée options ready to go – "Good food that makes Goodcents." To learn more about Goodcents, please visit [goodcents.com](http://goodcents.com).



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TRIBUTE

Karen L. Gilbert, 60, of Katy, Texas, passed away Friday, November 22, 2024, in Katy, Texas. She was born October 24, 1964, in Marlin, Texas, to Leslie and Clara Cohn.

Karen grew up in Katy, Texas, where she graduated from Katy High School. She went on to attend Blinn Jr. College in Bryan. She lived in Tyler, Texas, before moving to Katy. She settled in and started working as an accounting manager for Spectrum Flooring.

Karen loved the outdoors and never wanted to miss a chance to hunt or fish while enjoying being with her son or enjoying the Frio River. She always had a smile on her face and an even bigger smile on her face when she had the opportunity to dance. She loved to throw on her boots, jeans, and hat to have a great time out on the dance floor. When at home she could be found cooking up a good meal in the kitchen. She was proud to be the sponsor for the Texas State of Mind Cookers at the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo for many years. Everyone that knew her instantly loved her. She could light up a room with her enthusiasm, love, and warm spirit.

She is survived by her husband, Kenneth Duke of Katy, TX; father. Leslie Cohn of Katy,



KAREN L. GILBERT  
1964-2024

TX; brother, Keith Cohn and wife Christy of Katy, TX; and her puppy: Monster.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Clara Kubiak; and son. Garrett Gilbert.

Family and friends will be received Saturday, December 7, 2024, at Schmidt Funeral Home Chapel in Brookshire from 1p.m. to 2 p.m., followed by a celebration of life at 2 p.m.

Please wear your boots and jeans and bring your hats.

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of the Schmidt Funeral Home, PO Box 248, 819 Waller Ave., Brookshire, Texas, 77423 - 281-934-2424 - [www.schmidtfunerals.com](http://www.schmidtfunerals.com).

Signorelli Company unveils plans for new amenity space in Bluestem community

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

The Signorelli Company, a Texas leader in developing and building the finest places to live, work, shop and play, unveiled plans in a November 11 press release for the new amenity space at Bluestem, a 356-acre master-planned community in Waller County designed to accommodate more than 1,300 new homes. The homebuilder is based in The Woodlands.

Homeowners at Bluestem will enjoy popular recreational options that include a playground area, pickleball court, multi-purpose court, artificial turf area, covered pavilion, parking area and miles of scenic walking trails. A plaza, complete with a grove of shade trees and nesting picnic tables, offers residents a place to relax and to gather, creating perfect moments for reflection or for a conversation with neighbors. Construction is expected to begin in Spring 2025, with an anticipated completion date in Fall 2025.

“Our focus is on creating versatile community areas where residents can enjoy a variety of

activities, such as a jog or nature walk, playing catch with their kids, or connecting with friends,” said Jeff Dewese, senior vice president of land division for The Signorelli Company. “Our approach to amenity spaces embodies what residents tell us they want from their communities – a welcoming atmosphere, activities that promote a vibrant, healthy lifestyle for everyone to enjoy – all while keeping HOA costs affordable.”

Located in Brookshire near the intersection of FM 365 and FM 529, about 20 minutes northwest of Katy, Bluestem, named for its local prairie grasses, offers residents quick access to the Grand Parkway, Interstate 10, and Highway 90.

With natural surroundings that reflect The Signorelli Company’s commitment to pioneering green markets, this premier location is surrounded by acres of preserved green space, including miles of sidewalks connecting neighbors with pocket parks every quarter of a mile. Home sales have started, featuring a range of floor plans from acclaimed builders CastleRock Communities, First

America Homes and Legend Homes, with prices starting from the mid \$200s. Perfect for families, students residing in Bluestem are zoned to the rapidly growing Royal Independent School District, which offers a free Early College High School Program allowing students to complete an associate degree by graduation.

More information about Bluestem community and available homesites is found at [www.bluestemtx.com](http://www.bluestemtx.com).

The Signorelli Company, based in The Woodlands, currently builds and develops successful master-planned and mixed-use communities across all nine counties in the Greater Houston area, including Montgomery County, Texas, where Cielo, a new 256-acre development, is currently open for home sales. The company is with land preparation for Austin Point, a 4,700-acre regionally transformative, mixed-use underway development in rapidly growing Fort Bend County, with home sales scheduled to begin there in Spring 2025. For more information, visit [www.signorellicompany.com](http://www.signorellicompany.com).

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# Nottingham Country Elementary nurses help student, family with diabetes diagnosis

New diagnosis builds network of support for third-grader Braylee

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

The start of school can be a stressful time for students and families, with many new things to learn. But no parent expects for a new diagnosis to be part of that equation, or in one so young as Nottingham Country Elementary (NCE) third-grader Braylee Ingvoldstad.

A week before the school year began, Braylee was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes, and it has been a journey for her and her family as they've navigated her new diagnosis. Two of the district's nurses, Christina Klahn and Johnnie Wingate, have been invaluable to the family as they've learned more about the condition and how to help Braylee thrive.

Klahn shares that considerations that once were an afterthought are now important, things like what's on the menu for her, will there be indoor recess or outdoor recess, and will there be special treats in class. All these factors can affect her blood sugar and activity level but Braylee and her family have learned a lot in the months since she was first diagnosed.

"Braylee is doing so well and is such a fun and friendly student. It has really been a joy getting to know her," Klahn said. "She has amazing family support and it's obvious they are doing the absolute best with her care on this new journey."

Most often diagnosed in children and adolescents, Type 1 diabetes is present when the body does not produce insulin or produces very little of it. Insulin is a hormone that helps blood glucose, or sugar, enter the body's cells so that it can be used as energy. Without it, glucose builds up in the bloodstream which can be harmful to the body over time.

A number of children suffer from Type 1 diabetes

and Klahn shares that it is sometimes difficult to teach such young children how to care for themselves when they have chronic conditions. Braylee is old enough to understand and recognize when she needs care, like when her blood sugar number is too high or too low.

Klahn has been at NCE for five years and Wingate has been there for 14 years, and both consider their work challenging but richly rewarding. Their favorite part of the day is interacting with their students.

"Their positive energy and constant curiosity make the job fun and extra special," said Klahn. "Not all nurses get to care for their 'patients' in this unique environment, where education meets healthcare, and we are privileged to be caring for the community in this way."

Aimee Ingvoldstad, Braylee's mom, has been nothing but complimentary of the two for their care and attention to her daughter.

"The nurses at Nottingham Country have been so patient with us as we learn every day about her T1D (type 1 diabetes). They are in constant communication with us and reach out to us if we need anything to help us and to help her at school," she shares. "Braylee feels comfortable and enjoys going to the nurse's office to receive her insulin shots. They are wonderful."

There are students across Katy ISD with diabetes and other chronic conditions, but because of the support of their families, educators, and school nurses, they are able to learn and grow.

"I think parents should know that it may seem scary at first when their child is diagnosed with a chronic condition, but we are here to support them every day. We take their child's care very seriously and they are in good hands with us," said Klahn.

Nottingham Country Elementary is located at 20500 Kingsland in Katy.

Visit [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) to learn about signs, symptoms, and ways to help those living with diabetes.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROYAL ISD

# Falcons advance to state TAFE competition

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

On Friday, November 15th, the Royal Texas Association of Future Educators (TAFE) team attended the Area 4 conference at the University of Houston-Downtown and made history. In only their fourth year competing, they've set a new record with 19 students advancing to state.

Lynette Beyer is the group's advisor.

The 19 Falcons who advanced to state in 15 events are:

- Melina Mendonca and Victoria Gonzalez - Varsity Project Visualize

(Service)

- Andrea Rico and Ciana Diaz - Varsity Spanish Children's Literature PreK-K

- Eleanor Recinos, Kelsey Jung, Melina Mendonca and Kimberly Pedraza - Chapter Yearbook

- Alex Castillo and Consuelo Aguinaga - Varsity Interactive Bulletin Board Elementary

- Quin Boak - JV Children's Literature K-3

- Sara Melendez - Varsity Spanish Children's Literature K-3

- Leslie Thompson - Varsity Creative Lecture

- Eleanor Recinos and Kimberly

Pedraza - Children's Literature

- Myrianna Jimenez - JV Children's Literature K-3

- Walter Diaz - JV Spanish Children's Literature

- Victoria Gonzalez - Non-Core Teaching Subjects

- Alexander Kelsey - JV Creative Lecture

- Franco Robles-Lara - JV Creative Lecture

- Gabriel Velasquez, Cristian Sosa, Jade Lopez and Kelsey Jung - Public Service Announcement

- Victoria Gonzalez and Eleanor Recinos - Educational Leadership Fundamentals

## ROYAL ISD FOOD DRIVE



Lionel Cryer's Leadworthy class at Royal High School collected canned goods and birthday cake kits to support United Way in its mission to help families in need. The project took place on November 20.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROYAL ISD

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**Katy Times**

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- HEIMAT (A Place Where Your Heart Lives)
- Beautiful Horizons Alpaca Farm
- Chappell Hill Methodist Church
- Shaver Parker House
- Red Berry Hollow
- Cedar Street House

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[www.chappellhillgardenclub.com](http://www.chappellhillgardenclub.com)



# Area talent gathers for Katy ISD boys basketball tournament

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

Twenty teams from around the Houston area will all travel to Katy this weekend to take part in this year's boys basketball tournament, with both Katy ISD schools and some area power-houses coming together to prepare for district play in a weekend of great competition.

Six Katy ISD teams will compete in the tournament with the other Houston area teams and they will be split into four brackets, as they teams will play at Jordan, Katy, Cinco Ranch and Seven Lakes over the course of three days to determine the bracket and tournament winners.

Jordan and Seven Lakes headline the tournament, as the two come in ranked No. 13 and No. 16 in the state respectively. The Warriors sit at 9-1 on the season while the Spartans have also had a strong start, sitting at 8-3. They aren't the only ones who have gotten off to a hot start in the district though. Katy has jumped out to a 10-1 overall record and Cinco Ranch sits at 8-2 with more talent right with them in Katy ISD.

Cinco will be joined by George Ranch, Eisenhower, Elkins and Dobie in the Cougar bracket, while Jordan will be joined by Tompkins, Klein Forest, Marshall and Fulshear in the Warrior bracket. In the Tiger bracket, Katy will be battling it out with Morton Ranch, Conroe, Cy-Woods and Westside. Finally, Seven Lakes will be joined by Klein, Davis, Lamar and Foster to round out the brackets.

See **BASKETBALL**, page B3



Thomas Belaiter drives to the basket during a game between Katy and Cinco Ranch at the Cinco Ranch gym.



# Katy falls to North Shore after tremendous effort in regional semifinal

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

Katy gave everything it had. The Tigers erased a big deficit, they made big plays in big moments, forced turnovers, and had North Shore on the ropes for a huge portion of Friday's game.

Katy did everything in its power to keep its season alive. But in the end, it wasn't enough. Katy gave its all for four

quarters but saw its season come to an end with a 42-28 loss to North Shore in the Class 6A-Division I Regional Semifinals.

"We fought, we created opportunities, but we just weren't able to take advantage of some of them when we needed to," said Katy head coach Gary Joseph. "I'm proud of the guys in that locker room. They gave us all they had

See **KATY**, page B3



Above: Cade McCall makes a catch during Friday's game between Katy and North Shore at NRG Stadium. Top photo: Tremayne Hill runs the ball during Friday's game between Katy and North Shore at NRG Stadium.

# Jordan's best-ever season ends in loss to Summer Creek



Andrew Marsh makes a catch during a game between Jordan and Summer Creek at NRG Stadium on Friday.

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

When you are facing the best, you can't have any mistakes. It's an easy lesson to give, but a harder one to grasp without the experience against those types of teams and programs and it's a lesson that Jordan had to go through on Friday night.

The Warriors (11-2) were plagued by uncharacteristic mistakes in their third-round matchup against Summer Creek (11-2). From fumbles to bad snaps and not ever getting in a rhythm, Jordan shot itself in the foot and gave Summer Creek extra chances, and it led to a 54-20 loss that ended a historic season for the Warriors.

"When you get to this level, you have to be excellent in all three phases of the game," said Jordan head coach Mike Rabe.

See **JORDAN**, page B3



Brayden Coffie brings down Blake Thomas for a sack during a game between Jordan and Summer Creek at NRG Stadium on Friday.

WEEK OF DECEMBER 6

SCORES & SCHEDULES

FOOTBALL

Scores

- North Shore 42, Katy 28
- Summer Creek 54, Jordan 20

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Thursday

- Seven Lakes vs. Cedar Park, 10:30 a.m.
- Seven Lakes vs. Lake Highlands, 3 p.m.
- Mayde Creek vs. Galena Park, 6 p.m.
- Taylor at Foster, 7:15 p.m.

Friday

- Seven Lakes vs. Chaparral, noon
- Cinco Ranch at Langham Creek, 5:30 p.m.
- Paetow at Alief Taylor, 7 p.m.
- Katy at Cy-Falls, 7 p.m.
- Tompkins at Fulshear, 7 p.m.

Tuesday

- Tompkins vs. Mayde Creek, 7 p.m.
- Jordan vs. Cinco Ranch, 7 p.m.
- Taylor vs. Seven Lakes, 7 p.m.
- Paetow vs. Morton Ranch, 7 p.m.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Thursday-Saturday

- Katy, Cinco Ranch, Seven Lakes, Jordan, Tompkins and Morton Ranch at Katy ISD Tournament
- Mayde Creek at Needville Tournament

Tuesday

- Cinco Ranch vs. Jordan, 7 p.m.
- Seven Lakes vs. Taylor, 7 p.m.
- Mayde Creek vs. Tompkins, 7 p.m.
- Morton Ranch vs. Paetow, 7 p.m.





DOMENIC GREY | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES  
Texans receiver Nico Collins (12) makes a catch during the Houston Texans and Tennessee Titans game at NRG Stadium in Houston.

# Texans suffer embarrassing loss to the Titans

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

Houston came into Sunday, November 24, as overwhelming favorites against the Titans. The Texans had every right to be confident. They came into the game leading the division and up against one of the teams that has struggled most in the NFL. But in a game that should have been perfectly in Houston's hands, the team did everything in its power to lose. The Texans turned the ball over three times, missed easy field goals, set themselves back with penalties, allowed big plays to a team that has struggled to gain any all season and flat-out did not come to play against a divisional foe. All of that led to one of the most embarrassing losses in recent memory for the Texans, losing to the Titans 32-27 in a game where Houston did not play prepared, did not play disciplined, and looked like a team in freefall 12 weeks into the season. "We didn't do anything well enough to win this game," said Texans head coach DeMeco Ryans. "There were positives, but that

doesn't matter today because there were way too many negatives for us to take advantage of those positives. Negative plays, touchdowns called back, penalties on special teams, explosive touchdowns we gave up on defense. Across the board, we just didn't play well and that starts with me." The Texans had a perfect start to the game, getting an 80-yard kick return from Dameon Pierce to open things before CJ Stroud found Cade Stover for a 19-yard touchdown on the first play from scrimmage. The Titans responded with a field goal and then after a three and out from Houston, Tennessee drove down the field and scored on a wide-open 38-yard touchdown pass from Will Levis to Nick Westbrook Ikhine to take the lead. Houston's offense had to punt again and the Titans offense scored on its third straight drive when Tony Pollard punched in a 10-yard score early in the second quarter. Houston finally answered back on its next drive, going 78 yards in 10 plays and getting a touchdown when Stroud threw a 5-yard pass to Nico Collins. The Texans defense finally made a stop by forcing and recovering a fumble and Houston



DOMENIC GREY | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES  
Above: Texans receiver John Metchie III (8) makes a catch during the Houston Texans and Tennessee Titans game at NRG Stadium in Houston. Left: Texans quarterback CJ Stroud (7) throws a pass during the Houston Texans and Tennessee Titans game at NRG Stadium in Houston.

drove the field before tying it on a 28-yard field goal with just over a minute remaining in the half. Houston got the ball back with a chance to take the lead but Stroud threw an interception and the Titans added a field goal from 56 yards to take a 20-17 lead into halftime. "I can't throw those kind of interceptions," Stroud said. "That's giving them points and it turned out to be the difference in the game. It's little mistakes and I can't have that as a quarterback. I have to be better and that can't happen. I will learn from it." Tennessee added a field goal from 51 yards to start the second half and looked to be on the verge of adding more points after another Stroud interception, but Jimmie Ward came away with a 65-yard interception that he returned for a touchdown that gave Houston its

first lead of the game with seconds left in the third quarter. Houston's offense struggled but managed to get into field goal range early in the fourth, where a 54-yard field goal made it a four-point game. The Titans retook the lead on their first play of the next drive, as Levis completed a simple pass to Chig Okonkwo that turned into a 70-yard touchdown and gave the Titans a 30-27 lead. Houston drove the length of the field late in the game, but Kai'mi Fairbairn missed a chip shot 33-yard field goal that would have tied it. Houston's defense made one last stop and gave the offense a chance to win it, but penalties backed Houston up to its own goal line and CJ Stroud was sacked in the endzone with just over a minute remaining for a safety to end any chances of a comeback and seal the loss.

"The most frustrating thing is even with all the bad today, we still had a chance to win the game," Ryans said. "Everything that could go wrong, went wrong today, but we still had a chance to tie it up or finish the game and we didn't do that. It just wasn't good enough." The Texans' second-half struggles continued in the game as they again failed to score an offensive touchdown. Over the past five games, the Texans' defense has managed to score more second-half touchdowns, with two, than the offense, which has one in those five games. The Texans also managed to lose despite having eight sacks on the day, while allowing the Titans to score their season-high in points. It was a failure, from coaching, to execution, to fundamentals for the Texans as they fell to 7-5 on the season and sat two games above the Colts for first place in the AFC South. "We have to be able to finish games, we've emphasized that repeatedly, but there's been a struggle to execute and finish the right way," Ryans said. "That's on me as a coach. I have to be better, I have to get these guys ready and we have to come out and be better in every area than we were this week."



## city of katy ROADMAP

A Program of the Katy Area Chamber



Where: Katy Area Chamber  
814 East Ave., Ste. A, Katy, TX

When: January 16, 2024  
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM (CDT)



[katychamber.com](https://katychamber.com)



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Rachel Lazo  
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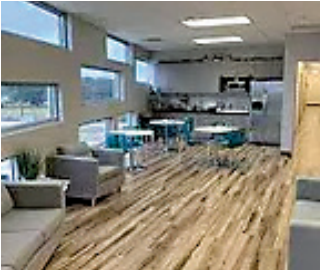
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KATY

from page B1

in them today and we played well. That’s just an excellent football team — we knew they were talented and they made a few more plays than we did.”

North Shore struck fast and early. The Mustangs got stopped on their first drive but after getting a short field off a punt return, North Shore took the lead on an 18-yard pass from Kaleb Bailey to Deion DeBlanc. North Shore got the ball back and doubled its lead late in the first quarter on a 10-yard touchdown pass from Bailey to D’Andre Hardeman Jr. and after another big return on a Katy punt, the Mustangs made it 21-0 early in the second quarter on a 7-yard pass from Bailey to Cameron Smith.

Katy got life back just after that. Bailey left a ball floating near the sideline on a pass and Isaiah McMillan pounced, intercepting it and returning it inside the Mustangs’ 10-yard line, setting the Tigers’ offense up with a short field. Katy’s offense took advantage of that with a 6-yard touchdown pass from Gunner Nelson to Joshua Smith. Katy got a short field again after a fumble recovery inside the North Shore 25 and the Tigers cut it to a one-score game when Nelson found Jon Stephens for a 12-yard touchdown pass.

The Tigers looked to be in good shape heading into halftime, but North Shore got a touchdown on a 51-yard pass from Bailey to Quannell Farrahkan Jr. to give North Shore the momentum back with just 25 seconds left in the half.

“The fight comes from the seniors that stayed with the program and gave us everything,” Joseph said. “They started with 130 four years ago and it turned into 38 this year. It’s a small class but they did so much for this team. Those seniors, they follow through to the end, they know how to fight and they did such a great job for us.”

Katy opened the third quarter and took all of that momentum, driving down the field quickly after the opening kickoff and scoring on a 4-yard Aqualis Jordan run. After a blocked punt, it looked like Katy would drive to tie the game, but a fumble at the North Shore seven-yard line killed the drive



OMENIC GREY | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Israel Olotu-Judah makes a catch during Friday’s game between Katy and North Shore at NRG Stadium.

and it was all Mustangs from there on.

North Shore made it a two-score game early in the fourth when Bailey connected with Chris Thomas on a 70-yard pass and then after Katy turned it over on downs, Hardoman Jr. put the game away with a 25-yard touchdown run with just over five minutes remaining. Katy added a late score from Nelson on a 1-yard quarterback sneak, but the Tigers couldn’t corral the ensuing onside kick and North Shore ran the clock out.

Katy ends the year with an 11-2 record after returning to the regional semifinals and the overall series with North Shore is now tied at six a piece between the two schools. The Tigers have some big pieces to fill next season, but lots of those players were here today — they came back from 21 down, they know what it takes to play at this elite level and they are going to keep getting better and more prepared for next season.

“It’s the way the program is built and I just appreciate all of the players on that field for buying in and giving us all they had,” Joseph said. “It hurt after the game, I hurt with them, but this is nothing to put your head down about. They didn’t give up, they didn’t stop playing or slow down for one second out there. It’s not the types of kids they are and that’s what the younger kids need to learn and take from these players today because they gave everything until the end.”



OMENIC GREY | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Jordan takes the field on Friday for a game between Jordan and Summer Creek at NRG Stadium.

JORDAN

from page B1

“We had some hiccups in special teams, had some bad turnovers and did some things that aren’t like us. That’s stuff we’ve been good at all year, especially the turnover margin. We just didn’t get it done today even though our kids gave their all.”

Jordan opened the scoring on its second drive of the game. The Warriors got a big pass play from Dominic Cangolosi to Tanner West to get down the field and then got a touchdown on a 9-yard pass from Cangolosi to Landon Williams.

The two teams went back and forth the rest of the first quarter, but Summer Creek started to flex its ability in the second.

Jordan gave Summer Creek a short field after a fumble by the punter and the Bulldogs made no mistakes with it, as Blake Thomas ran in a 20-yard score to tie things up. Jordan drove into Summer Creek territory, but another fumble gave the ball back to the Bulldogs and they took the lead when Thomas took a run in from 46 yards out. Jordan then had a snap go over the punter’s head on its next drive and it was picked up by Jashaud Johnson, who took it 25 yards and added to Summer Creek’s lead. Jordan fumbled again Summer Creek took advantage again, as Thomas found Benny Easter Jr. for a 31-yard pass and a touchdown that put Summer Creek up 35-7 going into halftime.

“The kids, no matter the score to-night, they didn’t let up and that means everything as a coach,” Rabe said. “It’s just fortunate that these are the types of kids that we can coach. They’re gritty kids, they like to go out and compete and they play the game hard. That’s all you can ask.”

Summer Creek tacked on another score midway through the third quarter when Braylin Causey ran in a 2-yard touchdown and Thomas threw a 49-yard touchdown to Miller late in the third before Zion Jones returned a kickoff 90 yards for a touchdown.

The Bulldogs added a field goal and another touchdown on a 6-yard run from Aaron Alexander and Zion Jones answered with one final score on a 1-yard Jones run late in the game.

“This group was really special, I feel like I have been with them forever and watched them grow up,” Rabe said. “It’s not often you get to coach a group fully for four years as varsity kids, but that’s what we were fortunate enough to do with this group and they are going to be very much missed.”

Jordan’s best-ever season ends with a 12-2 record and a trip to the regional semifinals for the first time in school history. The Warriors will graduate some extremely talented players, players that came into their program and helped them become more successful in its young history. But the Warriors aren’t satisfied with just getting to this point. They want to continue to climb, continue to get better and continue to reach for greater heights in the future.

“The senior class this year did a good job of setting the stage and showing what kind of work you need to put in,” Rabe said. “I think these other guys have followed suit with that and I anticipate that to continue. They’ve seen what it takes to play at this level and they want to go further than this. This is the first step towards that.”

| NORTH SHORE 42, KATY 28                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----------------|------|--|
| North Shore                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 14 | 14 | 0 | 14 | -- | 42 | Team Statistics |      |  |
| Katy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 0  | 14 | 7 | 7  | -- | 28 | N. SHORE        | KATY |  |
| First quarter                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| NS: Kaleb Bailey 18 pass to Deion DeBlanc (Daniel Cruz kick) 7:39                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| NS: Bailey 10 pass to D'Andre Hardeman Jr. (Cruz kick) 1:25                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| Second quarter                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| NS: Bailey 7 pass to Cameron Smith (Cruz kick) 11:17                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| K: Gunner Nelson 6 pass to Joshua Smith (Giovanni Moreno kick) 8:14                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| K: Nelson 12 pass to Jon Stephens (Moreno kick) 6:00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| NS: Bailey 51 pass Quannell Farrahkan Jr. (Moreno kick) 0:25                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| Third quarter                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| K: Aqualis Jordan 4 run (Moreno kick) 9:39                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| NS: Bailey 70 pass to Chris Thomas (Cruz kick) 9:39                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| NS: Hardoman Jr. 25 run (Cruz kick) 5:39                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| K: Nelson 1 run (Morno kick) 2:54                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| Rushing – Katy: Tremayne Hill, 26-140; Aqualis Jordan, 4-13-1; Joshua Smith, 1-1; Gunner Nelson, 2-1-1; Israel Olotu-Judah, 1-0; North Shore: D'Andre Hardeman, 16-106-1; Kaleb Bailey, 13-37; Chris Thomas, 2-13                                                                                                                    |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |
| Passing – Katy: Gunner Nelson, 8-19-118-2-2; North Shore: Kaleb Bailey, 16-21-300-5-1; Receiving – Katy: Israel Olotu-Judah, 4-86; Jon Stephens, 2-20-1; Joshua Smith, 1-6; Cade McCall, 1-6; North Shore: Chris Thomas, 3-122-1; Deion Deblanc, 4-71-1; Quannell Farrahkan, 4-71-1; D'Andre Hardeman, 3-27-1; Cameron Smith, 1-7-1; |    |    |   |    |    |    |                 |      |  |



DOMENIC GREY | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Isaiah Santos puts a shoulder into a defender during a game between Seven lakes and Jordan at the Jordan gym.

BASKETBALL

from page B1

The teams will compete in their brackets on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Winners of the brackets will be determined by overall record and if tied head to head and then point differential. It will be only bracket play in this tournament, with the winners taking home the top prize from their four respective brackets.

Things will kick off on Thursday, with Cinco Ranch taking on Elkins, Tompkins facing Fulshear, Jordan also playing Fulshear, Morton Ranch and Katy both playing Conroe and Seven Lakes playing Lamar.

The tournament also is sponsored by

some big companies, including Raising Canes Chicken Fingers, Cabo Bobs Burritos and Crave Cookies.

For more information on the tournament, go to <https://sites.google.com/katy-isd.org/katy-isd-tournaments/boys-basketball-home>

For live brackets results, go to <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1rc-bv-7F8ArvSm2hlqDNTyWAZsZlGzWcdwFb-Vq1sFkJo/edit?gid=0#gid=0>

For tickets to the Katy ISD Boys Basketball Tournament, go to <https://www.vanco-events.com/us/events/landing/49028>

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PHOTOS COURTESY KATY ISD

Katy ISD's 2024 Hall of Honor Class was honored during Nov. 1st's football game between Tompkins and Katy at Legacy Stadium.

# Katy ISD inducts Athletics Hall of Honor Class of 2024

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

In a celebratory evening befitting their accomplishments, twenty individuals were inducted tonight into the Katy ISD Athletic Hall of Honor as part of the Class of 2024. Recognized for their standout athleticism, these players, coaches, and supporters were honored for embodying the values of the district's Athletic Department – attitude, character, commitment, leadership, sportsmanship, responsibility, accountability, decision-making, work ethic, and teamwork.

"This is our eighth year of honorees, and we continue to be impressed by the way they exemplify the values of the district, even beyond their time here," said Lance Carter, Executive Director of Athletics in Katy ISD. "It is always a privilege to welcome them back

home and to see them recognized before their families and those who knew them best."

The Hall's Class of 2024 Inductees include:

Stuart Ashley, THS  
Coach Don Clayton, CRHS & KHS  
Kayla Ober Doiron, CRHS  
Lindsay Shabet Ellender, SLHS  
Cullen Gillaspia, THS  
Michael Heitmann, KHS  
Bobby Hoover, THS  
Christen Inman, SLHS  
Kyra Jones, SLHS  
Eric Mikolajczak, MCHS  
KC Nlemchi, CRHS  
Kevin O'Brien, CRHS  
Roland James Radcliffe III, CRHS  
Leslie Hamelin Reese, THS  
Brooke Chrisman Shaw, THS  
Carl Steffens, KHS  
Obra D. Tompkins, Special Merit  
Jared Ulekowski, CRHS  
Amanda Jungwirth Valladares, THS  
Zach Velliquette, CRHS



Above: Katy ISD's 2024 Hall of Honor Class. Left: Obra D. Tompkins (left) was named to the 2024 Katy ISD Hall of Honor Class.

PHOTOS COURTESY KATY ISD

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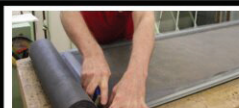


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# Jordan out to make another run

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

Jordan has already done some big things in its short school history. The Warriors have had success each of the last two years, making the playoffs and going on runs each season once they got there. But this year, the Warriors want more. They have big goals for themselves both in the playoffs and before they get there. They know that they have a team that is capable of something special and they are putting in the work to make their goals happen for themselves. That work and effort showed in their game against Stratford, as the Warriors finished off their non-district schedule with a 68-38 win over Stratford, dominating on both ends of the court and heading into the Thanksgiving break with an 8-1 record as they prepare for District 19-6A play. “We’ve made runs each of our first two years in Class 6A, but we aren’t satisfied with that this year,” said senior point guard Elijah Black. “This group of guys has all been there and we know what to do. It’s time for us to take that next



Rayan Fadika shoots a layup during Tuesday’s game between Jordan and Stratford at the Stratford gym.

step and really compete for big things both in our district and in the playoffs.” Jordan came out strong from the opening tip on Tuesday, suffocating Stratford with a full court press and getting easy buckets by getting out in transition. The Warriors played well in the first half, stretching a 19-13 first quarter lead into a 35-26 halftime lead, but they really stretched that lead in the second half, going up by 19 points at the end of the third quarter before winning by 30 and having a chance to put the end of the bench in at the end of the game. “We already are growing rapidly to start the year,” Black said. “There’s small things we can fix up, but day by day we are growing and getting better. We already have that connection and it’s just about fine tuning things and making sure we play the right way.” Jordan is playing a fast pace this year. The Warriors are letting their athletes shine and get easy buckets by getting out in transition and it’s working, as they are averaging over 67 points per game while they are giving up just under 47 points per game. Up tempo offenses can sometimes lead to more turnovers and easy buckets for the other team, but with this Jordan squad it hasn’t. They are a group that has experience, has chemistry and knows how to play smart while still playing fast, a dangerous combination for their opponents. “These guys have a lot of experience and I really trust them out there on the court,” said Jordan head coach Charlie Jones. “There’s a lot of times that I let them figure things out in the huddle or on the court because I know these guys can. Of course there’s times I have to reel them back in but this group knows how to play smart and aggressive at the same time.” Lots of Jones’ faith comes his backcourt duo of Black and Jaden Holt. The two have as much scoring power and creativity as any guard duo that teams will see all year and teams are unable to go after one without accounting for the other making it a nightmare matchup for defenses.



Jaden Holt passes to a teammate during Tuesday’s game between Jordan and Stratford at the Stratford gym.

But it isn’t just those two this year. The Warriors have depth, they have pieces in the front court, they have the experience and poise. This team is one that could challenge for big things this year and that is exactly what Jones and the Warriors expect. “We’re playing for February, that’s our goal,” Jones said. “We know that it isn’t going to be easy but that’s the expectations we have for ourselves and the goal is to just get better every day, put your best performances together and make sure we are ready for district and beyond because this district in Katy has become one of the toughest in the state.”



Elijah Black shoots a floater during Tuesday’s game between Jordan and Stratford at the Stratford gym.

## JORDAN 68, STRATFORD 38

Points: (J) Elijah Black 19, Jalen Black 8, Rayan Fadika 7, Jude Oluokun 7, Jacob Oluokun 7, Jacob Clark 7, Marwane Fadika 6, Jaden Holt 3; Halftime: Jordan 35-26; 3-Pointers: (J) Elijah Black 2, Jalen Black 2, Marwane Fadika 2, Holt, Clark, Jacob Oluokun; Records: Jordan: 8-1;



# Leading Medicine in WEST HOUSTON

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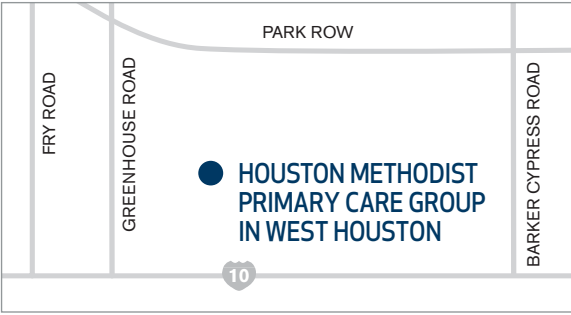
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