

South Belt-Ellington Leader

42 years of covering South Belt

Voice of Community-Minded People since 1976

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Email: mynews@southbeltleader.com

www.southbeltleader.com

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St. Frances pastor dies

The Rev. Frank T. Fabj, pastor of St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church, died Jan. 5. His obituary and information of the church's planned remembrance is on Page 2A.

Chamber gala set

The South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce will hold its 35th annual gala on Friday, Feb. 8, at Golfcrest Country Club, located in Green Tee. Cocktails will begin at 6 p.m. Dinner will follow. State Sen. Larry Taylor will serve as guest speaker at the event. All incoming chamber officers will also be sworn in at the function. Sponsorships for the event are available. For more information, contact the chamber at 281-481-5516 or info@southbeltchamber.com.

Beltway closures planned

The eastbound and westbound U-turn lanes at Beltway 8 and Beamer will be closed continuously until Friday, Jan. 18.

The northbound and southbound U-turn lanes at Beltway 8 and Genoa Red Bluff will be closed daily from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Friday, Jan. 11.

At least one inside lane of the northbound Beltway 8 frontage road at SH 3/Old Galveston Road will be closed daily from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. through Sunday, Jan. 13.

The northbound and southbound U-turn lanes at Beltway 8 and Crenshaw will be closed daily from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Friday, Jan. 11.

The northbound and southbound U-turn lanes at Beltway 8 and Preston will be closed daily from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Friday, Jan. 11.

The northbound and southbound U-turn lanes at Beltway 8 and Fairmont Parkway will be closed daily from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Friday, Jan. 11.

The southbound U-turn lane at Beltway 8 and Vista will be closed 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Saturday, Feb. 2.

The closures are associated with the ongoing project to widen Beltway 8 from two to four lanes in each direction.

Prayer walk set for Jan. 12

School Prayer Walks USA will host a prayer walk Saturday, Jan. 12, from 9 to 10 a.m., at Laura Bush Elementary School, located at 9100 Blackhawk Blvd.

The community is welcome to join in praying for the protection, peace and safety of students and staff. For more information, call 281-484-0901.

I-45 closures planned

There will be a total closure of the northbound frontage road of the Gulf Freeway from NASA Road 1 to FM 518 through 5 a.m. Sunday, June 30.

The closure is associated with an ongoing construction project to widen the freeway from three to five lanes in each direction and the frontage roads from two to three lanes in each direction.

Free karate classes begin

The American Society of Karate will begin its 2019 self-defense and martial arts classes for teens and adults (ages 13-80) Friday, Jan. 18, at the Sagemont Park Community Center, 11507 Hughes Road.

The free one-hour classes will be held weekly from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. For more information, email Michael.Alonzo@ASKKarate.com, call 281-788-5930 or arrive early at the class.

Ellington e-recycling set

The City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department's monthly electronic recycling event will take place Saturday, Jan. 12, at the Neighborhood Recycling Center at Ellington Airport from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

Recycling electronics keeps potentially harmful materials, such as mercury, cadmium, lead and cathode ray tubes out of the waste stream and the environment.

Items accepted are PCs, servers, keyboards, mice, laptops, game consoles, monitors, small kitchen appliances, memory chips, hubs and routers, printers, copiers, scanners, fax machines, projectors, rechargeable batteries, cable boxes, car batteries, telephones, cell phones, PDAs, tape drives, hard drives, cords, cables, cameras and more.

The events take place the second Saturday monthly. For additional information, visit www.houstonsolidwaste.org or call 3-1-1.

Toastmasters set open house

The Young Professionals Toastmasters SE Club will host an open house Monday, Jan. 28, at the Parker Williams Library conference room, on Scarsdale at Beamer, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

The event will feature a presentation of the history, programs and benefits of Toastmasters International, an organization dedicated to all who wish to improve communication skills and leadership abilities. All ages, professions and speaking abilities are welcome. For more information, visit youngprofessionalsoastmasters.com or call Carolyn Carmichael at 281-481-5032 (leave message).

Pipeline release near schools, wetlands, homes fixed

A pipeline leak was discovered and repaired near Dobie High over the Christmas holidays.

No students were on campus at the time of the incident. The source of the refined gasoline release was quickly detected, and students returned to class as scheduled on Wednesday, Jan. 9, without issue.

The release, which was located in the green

space in front of Dobie, was also near Moore Elementary and multiple area subdivisions, primarily Clear Brook Meadows.

The problem was reported to the ExxonMobil Pipeline Company at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 2. Some teachers and nearby residents said they had noticed a gasoline type odor for approximately a

month, but an official complaint wasn't logged with the company until inspectors with the Pasadena Independent School District determined the smell was related to the underground pipeline.

ExxonMobil crews were quick to respond to the incident, promptly shutting down the pipeline, and isolating the affected segment.

Immediately after being notified of the event, ExxonMobil officials erected a makeshift emergency response headquarters in the Dobie parking lot. More than one hundred ExxonMobil employees and contractors have been part of the response since the incident was first reported.

Operating out of a series of trailers, crew members worked around the clock to make the necessary repairs. The affected pipeline segment was replaced and affected soil removed from the area.

Company officials described the problem as a "pinhole leak" located about 7 feet below ground. The damaged pipeline is more than 60 years old and far predates both the schools and nearby homes.

The pipeline, known as the San Antonio Pipeline - or SAPL - runs from Baytown to a South Houston terminal and then to San Antonio. It is one of three pipelines located on the property, but only two are currently active.

Residents in the immediate area were notified of the incident by ExxonMobil personnel.

Air quality monitoring has been in place at multiple locations in the surrounding community since shortly after the incident was reported. Monitoring data indicates levels that are either non-detect or below occupational exposure limits.

Workers will continue to monitor air quality in selected areas for several weeks, possibly months. Some areas, including an adjacent ditch, will require more stringent testing, as they are located in protected wetlands.

The leak does not affect any drinking water in the area.

ExxonMobil has hired the Center for Toxicol-

ogy and Environmental Health (CTEH), an independent firm to monitor air quality and is paying for Pasadena ISD to also hire a third-party environmental company to compare findings.

The pipeline company has pledged to continue working 24 hours a day until the issue draws to a safe conclusion.

"The safety of the surrounding community, the students and faculty, and the protection of the environment, is our top priority," Johnita Jones, ExxonMobil Pipeline Company, vice president of operations, shared in a statement. "We are committed to operating in a safe and responsible manner. We are working closely with school officials and continue to coordinate with appropriate agencies at the federal, state and local level on our response."

Robo calls from the PISD went out to both Dobie and Moore parents notifying them of the event.

Before it was decided the students would return to school on Wednesday, air testing inside Moore and Dobie was conducted and all test results came back with "non-detect" for chemicals of concern.

"The pipeline has been repaired and cleanup operations are nearly complete," Dobie Principal Franklin Moses said in the message. "The district and ExxonMobil are continually monitoring the environmental impact on the campus and surrounding area and will do so for the next month. ExxonMobil and district air quality test results indicate that there is no danger to students and faculty inside the school. The same applies to areas accessible to students. ExxonMobil will continue to have personnel on site for the duration of post-repair monitoring."

Residents with any questions or concerns are urged to call the ExxonMobil hotline at 855-300-2660.

"We are conducting a full investigation to understand the cause of the release. We wish to thank local emergency responders and the Pasadena Independent School District for their help and efforts," added Jones.

Exxon release gets attention



A pipeline release in an Exxon gas line had crews working 24 hours a day on the J. Frank Dobie property and in the adjoining Clear Brook Meadows subdivision. The cause of the release has been corrected and work continues around the ditch in Clear Brook Meadows.

BAHEP honors Commissioner Bush

Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush has been selected the 2019 recipient of the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership's prestigious 26th annual Quasar Award.

The honor is presented each year by the leadership of BAHEP to recognize an outstanding elected official or business leader who has demonstrated a strong and continual effort to support the business foundations of the Greater Bay Area Houston communities.

Bush is being recognized for his unwavering support of the proposed coastal spine project.

"Commissioner Bush has become the noteworthy champion of the coastal barrier system," said South Belt resident and BAHEP President Bob Mitchell. "His undiminished advocacy has been instrumental in moving the project forward. Due to his vision, which is grounded in basic economics, he has been named the 2019 recipient of BAHEP's prestigious 26th Annual Quasar Award."

Bush was humbled by the honor and said others also play a key role in the project's success.

"The lives and security of the people of Texas and the nation must be our highest priority," Bush said. "I am incredibly grateful to the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership for the Quasar Award. I share this honor with many others who have dedicated themselves to protecting the Bay Area Houston region from the destruction caused by storm surge. I have no doubt the efforts of the General Land Office on the creation of a coastal barrier will continue until our goals are accomplished."

Bush is steadfast in his opinion that the expense of doing nothing far outweighs the investment to protect and enhance the Texas coast, according to a press release from BAHEP. For his unique leadership and his willingness to promote this critical project for Texas and the nation, Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush is highly deserving of the 2019 Quasar Award, the release continued.

The Quasar Award Banquet will be held on Friday, Jan. 25, at the South Shore Harbour Resort and Conference Center in League City.

Leader looks back on 2018 highlights

The year in review is continued from the last issue. Stories up to May 10 can be found in the Dec. 27 edition of the *Leader*.

May 10

Longtime community member and optometrist Dr. B. J. Garner died unexpectedly Thursday, May 3, at the age of 78. Originally from Bryan, Garner moved to the South Belt area during his infancy and in 1976, opened Garner Vision Center on Hughes Road near what would later become Beltway 8. Garner's involvement in the community, however, went far beyond his medical practice. He was a lifetime charter member of the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce, where he served in many leadership roles on its board of directors; he served six years on the Pasadena Independent School District Board of Trustees, partly presiding as its president; he was a longtime member of Sagemont Church, where he taught Sunday School and was a member of the orchestra; he was a member of the U.S. Air Force Reserve, where he served as a lieutenant colonel; and he served as a local Republican precinct judge and chairman. Garner and his wife of 56 years, Laura Nell Sanders Garner, had two daughters, Julie Ann and Jennifer Kay.

Results from the May 5 Clear Creek Independent School District Board of Trustees election were calculated, with two of three incumbents keeping their positions. In District 4, incumbent Page Rander handily defeated challenger Jeff Larson, receiving 61.9 percent of the vote to Larsen's 38.1 percent of the vote. District 5 incumbent Jay Cunningham edged out challengers Michelle Moore and Yvonne Tibai. Cunningham received 43.86 percent of the vote, while Moore received 24.29 percent, and Tibai received 31.85 percent. In the contest for the At-Large Position A seat, incumbent Charles Pond was defeated by challenger Jennifer Broddle, who received 53.21 percent to Pond's 30.85 percent. At-Large Position A challenger Jake Berry received 15.95 per-

cent of the vote.

May 17

The Aspen Institute for Community College Excellence once again named San Jac College one of 10 finalists for the prestigious 2019 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, the nation's preeminent recognition of high achievement and performance in America's community colleges. Awarded every two years since 2011 by the Aspen Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based educational and policy studies organization, the prize recognizes institutions that achieve high student outcomes, and improve those outcomes. The Aspen Prize recognizes community colleges with exceptional achievements in the following four areas: student learning; certificate and degree completion; employment and earnings rates after graduation; and access for and success of minority and low-income students.

May 24

A male student at Beverly Hills Intermediate was arrested for bringing an unloaded gun to school Wednesday, May 23. School officials were alerted of the weapon by an anonymous tip from a fellow student. The incident came fresh on the heels of the recent school shooting in Santa Fe that killed 10 and wounded 13 others.

A woman was robbed Wednesday, May 23, while she was in the drive-thru pharmacy line at the H-E-B on Blackhawk and Beltway 8. The female victim was sitting in her vehicle when someone in another car allegedly pulled up beside her, smashed out her window and took her purse. The woman said her Bible was also stolen during the incident. The victim had reportedly just come from the bank, where she had made a cash withdrawal. Investigators believe she may have been followed to the pharmacy. The suspect was merely described as a man wearing a hoodie. No immediate arrests were made.

The Pasadena Independent School District Board of Trustees approved relocating Thomp-

son Intermediate to a new campus that is to be built near the Riverstone Ranch subdivision on a piece of property already owned by the school district.

The land was originally to be used for an 11th PISD intermediate campus, but other options

were evaluated after Thompson suffered extensive damage during Hurricane Harvey. Following the historic storm, Thompson students were temporarily housed at Beverly Hills Intermediate for five months, while school officials

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Thompson robotics places 4th in world



As in past years, South Belt area students continue to excel in many areas. The Thompson robotics team, the RoboLions, excelled at the VEX World Championships, held in Louisville, Ky., placing fourth of 400 teams from all over the world in programming skills. Under the leadership of Naoreen Shafi, the team accomplished this feat, despite being displaced from their campus for several months due to Hurricane Harvey. Team members shown above are, left to right, (first row) RJ Schreier, Dominic Alanis, Benson Cubos, Raul Diaz, Billy Junkin, (second row) Grace Nguyen, Janelle Barreiro, Jade Cabrera, Jacob Hernandez, Matthew Collins and Jeremiah Palma. Photo submitted

In My Opinion

Verden thanks all who donated to program

The blessings of Christmas come in many different forms. The Christmas Star shown bright for everyone to see it. It introduced the lowly shepherds and the royal wise men to the manger where the world's greatest gift was given.

In this season the Christmas Star has shown again through the businesses and community of the South-Belt area. Countless families experienced the "Light of Christmas" because of the generosity of this Community.

In this very special season, the South-Belt Community's generosity has shown as bright as the Christmas Star for countless families within our community. As toys, electronics, sports equipment, frozen turkeys and food were given away the Christmas Light illuminated hope into families who otherwise would not have had a great celebration. One such family of 5 felt the love of this community when we came alongside them and supplied personal gifts and necessary food to meet their holiday needs.

One of these family members is a Veteran who battles a rare blood cancer, but because of the generosity of the community their holiday was a little brighter. Several single-mother's families who did not know how they would afford presents and food were given the Christmas Light and their needs were met. After losing her home during Hurricane Harvey then losing her father, this wonderful South-Belt Community rallied to her side and provided gifts that illuminated her hope in the giving spirit of the community. This generosity came from individuals, business leaders, and area schools. Everyone's little bit made a huge difference that will be remembered for a lifetime.

The purpose of this letter is to say THANK YOU to the countless givers who may never have their names in lights but have definitely given the "Christmas Light" to those in need in our own community. I pray that your hearts will always be willing to give so that others will receive the very best South-Belt has to offer!

Tim Verden, M.Ed.
Atkinson Elementary
Counselor/Parent Coordinator

Arp expresses thanks to neighbors, friends

Our hearts are full of gratitude when we say many thanks to our friends and Sagemont neighbors for all of the numerous acts of kindness and sympathy: food, flowers, cards, visits and kind words spoken to our family regarding the recent passing of a wonderful mother, grandmother and great-grandmother Patricia Ann Arp.

We are especially grateful for the dispatchers, officers, firefighters, and emer-

gency medical technicians who risk their lives to provide safety and medical attention to our community. Thank you for all of your hard work and bravery. **David Arp**
Publisher's note: Sadly, David lost his mother in a fire that occurred in Sagemont Christmas morning. — Marie Flickinger

Turner prays blessing; grateful for gifts, food

I wanted to give thanks to you. I am truly blessed and grateful for your generosity. Thank you for the gifts and the food. I pray blessings on your families.

Sharon Turner
Porter praises Leader for helping family

South Belt Leader has been the angel to me and my family. I received assistance from them originally years ago when my mother and grandmother was alive about 6 or 7 yrs ago. My mother spoke highly of the staff that she shared her intimate experience with as a 9/11 victim. Since then I lost my mom and grandmother and a lot has changed. As original New Yorkers with no family in the state, South Belt Leader is the only resource reach for us at this time of need. I thank the Leader for being there for my family.

Wrights appreciate Good Samaritan

I am writing to let you know about a Good Samaritan that helped us on New Year's Day, January 1, 2019. We were traveling from Sagemont to Pearland when we thought we might have a flat tire. We pulled off into an entrance of Highland Glen subdivision. A man driving a pickup pulled up and asked if we needed any help. We told him we had a flat tire. He told us to stay put and he would be right back to help. He arrived again shortly. Upon getting out of his truck, he said, "I'm an Aggie, I hope that's okay." Of course it was, as one grandson has already graduated from A&M and another is a Sophomore there now. His name is Wes (and for his privacy we won't give out his last name). Although, we will never forget him!! He had a portable tire compressor, started filling the tire and then he handed us a sack that had 2 bottles of Coke and 2 bottles of water that his wife had sent for us. He got our tire filled and we told him that we would drive straight to Discount Tire. Wes informed us that they weren't open because of it being New Year's Day, as he had tried to call them when he had gone back home. Wes really took care of us on that day. He wouldn't accept anything from us but a big thank you. Which, of course, we gladly gave him, along with a hug!! To us, Wes is the true epitome of a Good Samaritan.

Jim and Dee Wright
Former Sagemont residents

Local library events set

Bracewell Branch Library

The following events are scheduled for the Bracewell Branch Library, 9002 Kingspoint:
Thursday, Jan. 10, 12:15 – 7:45 p.m. Citizenship class. Registration is required.
Thursday, Jan. 10, 6:30 p.m. Spanish computer class
Monday, Jan. 14, 12:15 – 7:45 p.m. Citizenship class. Preregistration is required.
Tuesday, Jan. 15, 12:15 – 7:45 p.m. Citizenship class. Preregistration is required.
Wednesday, Jan. 16, 12:15 – 7:45 p.m. Citizenship class. Preregistration is required.
Wednesday, Jan. 16, 10:30 a.m. Toddler storytime
Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2 p.m. Computer Basics; 3:15 p.m. Internet Basics; 4:30 p.m. Basic PowerPoint
Regularly scheduled every week:
Monday through Wednesday: 10:15 a.m. - 5:45 p.m. Citizenship class by appointment only.
For more information, call the library at 832-393-2580.
Bracewell hours this week are: Thursday, noon – 8 p.m.; Friday, 1 – 5 p.m.; Saturday, 1 – 5 p.m.; Sunday, closed; Monday and Wednesday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Parker Williams Library

The following events are scheduled for the Parker Williams Library, 10851 Scarsdale Blvd.
Thursday, Jan. 10, 10:30 a.m. Computer Basics: Free online classes. The new year is a great time to take a computer class to increase skill for work, gain understanding of a topic or learn a new language. Many free classes are available online at the library website or on the internet, through universities and other sources. Participants will practice navigating the internet to learn about these classes and register for one.
Thursday, Jan. 10, 5 p.m. Music and Rhythm with Mr. John, for ages 3 and older. Meet in the library community room to learn different beats and length of notes from instructor Mr. John.
Wednesday, Jan. 16, 5 p.m. STEM time: Growing Crystals, for ages 8 and older. Meet in the library community room to learn how snowflakes are formed during crystallization. Participants can grow some crystals of their own.
Below are the programs that occur every week, unless the library is closed:
Tuesday, Babytime lapsit, 10:30 a.m. For babies 0 to 18 months, featuring a mother-baby lapsit time with fingerplays, songs and playtime.
Wednesday, Preschool storytime, 10:30 a.m. For children, ages 3 to 5 years, features stories, songs, fingerplays and a craft.
Wednesday, 2 – 3 p.m.: Basic computer classes (Vietnamese). Learn mouse, keyboarding, basic internet skills and more at this weekly class in Vietnamese. Registration is requested.
Thursday, Toddler storytime, 10:30 a.m. For toddlers from birth to 3 years, storytime features stories, songs, fingerplays and bubbles.
Saturday, Vietnamese learning time, for adults and children ages 8 and older. Classes begin at 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 11:15 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. It's the new year and a great time to take a class to help with a skill for work, gain understanding of a topic or learn a language. There are many free classes available online at the library website or on the internet, through universities or other sources. Practice navigating the internet to learn about these, or sign up for one. For more information on these programs, speak with Loc Bui.
For more information on all events, call the library at 281-484-2036.
Library hours this week are: Thursday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Friday, 1 – 6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Sunday, closed; Monday, 1 – 9 p.m.; Tuesday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.; and Wednesday, 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Publisher's Opinion

Leader speaks on leak

We have very little space for a publisher's opinion, so this will be brief. But I must mention the great work done by a couple of groups that highly benefited South Belt this past week.

The Exxon leak could have been a real problem for nearly 4,000 students in Dobie and Moore schools. (See related story Page 1A.) Due to the conscientious work of Principal Franklin Moses and Superintendent Dr. DeeAnn Powell of Pasadena ISD, and her helpers, the safety of the students was top priority and all problems were averted. The Exxon people working with the problem also must be commended. They worked 24-7 to ensure safety of the community. The full job is not yet completed, but they are commended for their high tech, efficient work done so far. If they finish the job as efficiently as they have done so far, it will be great. Thanks to all. —Marie Flickinger

Elected officials share their words

District E News

By Council Member Dave Martin

As we head into 2019, we look forward to the many exciting things taking place in Houston. The Legislative Session will begin shortly, and the District E office will be actively watching and participating in the legislative process; we look forward to creating relationships with newly elected officials to continue advancement of key Harvey recovery projects while planning for future flood risk reduction; and of course, we will continue to pursue much needed infrastructure and drainage improvements within the council district.

In 2019, the City of Houston is tasked with implementing Proposition B. Mayor Sylvester Turner has asked that I, as Chair of the City's Budget and Fiscal Affairs Committee, host a Special Called BFA meeting this month. The sole purpose of the meeting will be to discuss how the City will implement Proposition B. In addition to tackling Proposi-

tion B, the District E office has begun planning our annual Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) town hall meetings.

Please save the date for the following meeting:
Southeast Houston/Clear Lake
Tuesday, March 19, 6:30 to 8 p.m., Space Center Houston, Special, Events Building, 1601 NASA Parkway, Houston, Texas 77058.

Members of the public are invited to attend to hear from various city departments as well as community representatives about ongoing projects, issues and community news related to District E. Information on confirmed speakers will be provided in next month's newsletter, stay tuned for updates.

I wish each of you a very Happy New Year and know 2019 has great things in store for the city and the council district. As always, please contact my office if we can assist in any way.

Trautman takes oath

Dr. Diane Trautman took the oath of office early Tuesday morning, Jan. 1, lawfully becoming the county clerk and chief election officer of the third largest county in the nation, home to more than 4.6 million people.

Trautman, the first representative of the Democratic Party to hold the position in more than two decades, is a native Houstonian with vast experience in the public and private sector and the first county clerk to hold a doctoral degree. She has pledged to inaugurate

Garcia makes history

Joined by many supporters, friends, and colleagues, Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia made history on Jan. 3, when she was sworn in as one of the first two Latinas ever to represent the state of Texas in the U.S. Congress.

"Today is a significant, historic moment for the people of the Texas 29th Congressional District, particularly Texas' Latinas," said Garcia. "Never before has

HCAD releases 2017 mass appraisal report

The Harris County Appraisal District has released its 2017 Disaster Mass Appraisal Report to provide information about the reappraisal of properties flooded by Hurricane Harvey.

The report summarizes the efforts expended and the results achieved in reappraising the thousands of properties damaged by Hurricane Harvey in August 2017 and is intended to make the public aware of the complexity of assessing disaster-damaged properties in a major urban area such as Harris County. The report also satisfies the requirements of the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice for reporting mass appraisal results.

"HCAD is the largest appraisal district in Texas with a range of properties from homes to office towers and from strip centers to petrochemical complexes," said Roland Altinger, chief appraiser. "We had 10 taxing units request a disaster reappraisal and almost 50,000 residential, commercial and business properties had to be inspected in those jurisdictions at the same time we were doing our annual reappraisal of all properties for 2018. No other appraisal district that I am aware of has ever had to do what we accomplished, and I am proud of all my staff who put in extra time and effort to make sure damaged properties were valued correctly."

The report is available on the district's website at www.hcad.org under Appraisal on the top tool bar, then under Reports > 2017 Disaster Mass Appraisal Report or through the following link at <http://hcad.org/assets/uploads/pdf/Reports/2017-Disaster-Mass-Appraisal-Report.pdf>.

Ballroom dance set

Plan to start the New Year dancing on Jan. 15, 7 to 10 p.m. at the Bay Area Community Center 5002 E NASA Pkwy., Seabrook, to some smooth ballroom/Latin music by DJ Pete Hoth. There will be refreshments, door prizes and no alcohol. The cost is \$8 per person.

Patricia Ann Arp



Patricia Ann Arp, 83, of Houston lost her life in a fire at her home on the morning of Dec. 25, 2018.

She was born in Houston on March 18, 1935, to Robert John Louvier Sr. and Blanche (Farrell) Louvier.

Patricia was a very outgoing and charitable woman who dedicated much time and love to her family and to the service of others. She was a caregiver for many years and an active member of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas. Patricia also took pride in regularly participating in an annual sock campaign for soldiers.

She is survived by sons David Arp and John Arp; daughter and son-in-law Deborah and Patrick Watkins; sisters-in-law Romilda Hunsucker and Margaret Wier; grandson Mathew Arp; granddaughters Sarah Shannon and Laura Bartlett; and great-grandchildren Madison Shannon, Kadin Arp and Kylie Bartlett.

Patricia was preceded in death by her parents; step-mother Alice (Schambacher) Louvier; husband Norbert Arp; brother Robert Louvier Jr.; and son Daniel Arp.

The family received friends for visitation on Wednesday, Jan. 2, at Niday Funeral Home, with the recitation of the rosary. The funeral Mass was celebrated on Thursday, Jan. 3, at St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church followed by a Rite of Committal at South Park Cemetery. A reception at St. Luke's social hall followed the services.

John Enrique Salinas



South Belt resident John Enrique Salinas, 67, beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother and uncle, died Friday, Dec. 28, 2018, with his loving wife Norma by his side. After some struggle he passed peacefully at Memorial Hermann Hospital, surrounded by all his loved ones. John was born Nov. 27, 1951, in Glendale, Ariz. He served his country in the Vietnam War and was a disabled veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. He was a kind man with a heart of gold who loved his grandchildren more than anything in this world.

John is survived by his wife Norma Elia Salinas; son John Salinas Jr.; daughter Gina Salinas; loving grandchildren Mario Rodriguez, Sirena Rodriguez, Fabian Rodriguez, John Salinas III, Caleb Salinas; and his brothers, sisters and nieces.

He fought a good fight and, although gone, he is not forgotten by loved ones. Visitation was Wednesday, Jan. 2 at Niday Funeral Home - Beamer Chapel. The funeral Mass was celebrated on Thursday, Jan. 3 at St. Pius V Catholic Church in Pasadena. Burial followed at South Park Cemetery in Pearland.

Peggy Kent



Peggy Kent was born Peggy Ann Nelson in De Queen, Ark. Feb. 9, 1942, and died

Deaths

Jan. 5, 2019. She lived on Peggy Lane in Houston. Later, she moved to the Sagemont subdivision where she lived for many years.

The cozy two-bedroom home is where she spent her childhood. Peggy graduated from Galena Park High School in 1960. Soon after she met and married Jack E. Belden and the couple had three beautiful children, Karen Marie (1964), Scott Allen (1969), and Jayson Wayne (1970). In 1977 Peggy married Gary Kent, who stayed by her side for more than 41 years.

Peggy earned her real estate licenses in 1975 and spent many years selling real estate in the Clear Lake and surrounding areas, working for Red Carpet and Gary Greene. Later she became a mortgage loan officer and retired in 2011. Peggy enjoyed gardening, cooking, canning and baking, and loved to entertain. Most of all, Peggy loved her children, her grandchildren, and her great-grandchildren.

A Celebration of Life service will be held Saturday, Jan. 12, at 11:30 a.m. at First Baptist Church of Seabrook, located at 1506 Bayport Blvd. (Hwy. 146) in Seabrook.

Sheryl Anne Taylor Scott



Sheryl "Nana" Anne Taylor Scott, 74, was born Oct. 9, 1944, in Garden City, Kan., and died peacefully at her home surrounded by her loved ones on Jan. 1, 2019.

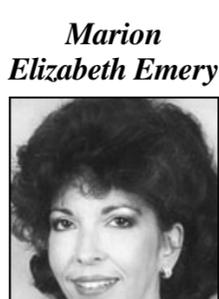
She married John "Waldon" Scott on Oct. 25, 1980, in Houston and they enjoyed 38 years together. They were longtime residents of the South Belt area for more than 35 years. Sher loved playing Bunko, bowling (she was a longtime secretary for many leagues, including some which were the largest in the city at the time), Saturday night poker parties at her home and, of course, her family and friends. Sher and Waldon hosted an annual New Year's Party at their home which welcomed any and all to bring in the new year. She enjoyed trips to Las Vegas for bowling and fun.

Working in the retail industry most of her life, she became the area manager for all the "Shelley's Tall Girls" in Houston. She enjoyed watching her son Shawn play football and baseball, her son Jeff bowl and her granddaughter "Lexi" sing and act.

Sher enjoyed having people in her home; she had a knack for making everyone feel like family – no matter what baggage one came with. She could love unconditionally. Sher will be missed by all who knew and loved her.

She is preceded in death by her mother Mary Anne Telford and a favorite aunt and uncle, Rozada and Phil Daniels. She is survived by her husband; sons Shawn Perez and Jeff Scott; and granddaughter Alexia Perez.

Marion Elizabeth Emery



Marion Elizabeth "Liz" Emery, 75, loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, died Monday, Nov. 19, 2018, in Houston. She was a resident of Sagemont from 1964 to 1980.

Liz was the daughter of the late Carl Ferguson and Marion Ferguson and was born on May 29, 1943, in Sylvania, Ga. Liz traveled the world due to her father's military duty in the

U.S. Army and met the love of her life, Bob Emery in Huntsville, Ala.

She was united in holy matrimony to Robert Lewis Emery on Aug. 17, 1963. This union was blessed with two children. Both children graduated from J. Frank Dobie High School.

Liz was the consummate mother, wife and artist. Her affinity for family activities, friendly gatherings and life itself provided an abundance of cherished moments, much laughter and a sense of warmth.

As a mother, she provided a foundation of love and nurturing throughout her family's lives. As a wife, Liz gave her heart and soul to Bob as he gave his to her. As an artist, possessing extraordinary creativity, she painted in various mediums, fashioned a holiday house wonderland, designed and made exquisite family clothes, and created culinary meals which always made family meals special.

Liz had many friends through the Friendswood and Sagemont bridge groups, Eat-Out Group and Sagemont Garden Club. She also served as a board member of the Friendswood Historical Society, member of the Friendswood Fine Arts committee and volunteer driver for the Lighthouse for the Blind.

Liz was preceded in death by her husband, parents and great-grandson Castor Reid.

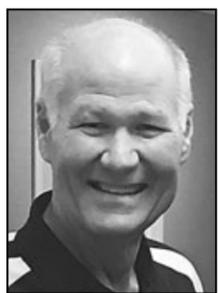
Her beautiful life will forever be cherished in the lives of her son Mark Emery and wife Melissa of Huntsville, Ala.; daughter Leslie Emery Perryman and husband Jeff of Houston; grandchildren Alexis Reid, Samantha Reid, Miles Emery and Marissa Emery; brother-in-law Joe Michael Emery of Santa Fe, N.M.; sisters-in-law Gay Emery of Sun Valley, Idaho, and Kim Emery of Rogers, Ark.; and a host of devoted nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

The family is appreciative to all who gave wonderful care to Liz in her final days including the staff at Atria Westchase and Hospice Plus.

A celebration of her life will be held Saturday, Jan. 12, at 11:30 a.m. at Friendswood Friends Church, 502 S. Friendswood Drive, 281-482-7821, with visitation starting at 10 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests contributions be made to the Alzheimer's Association in tribute to Elizabeth Emery at http://act.alz.org/site/TR/Events/Tributes-AlzheimersChampions?pxfid=527040&fr_id=1060&pg=fund.

William Richard "Rick" White II



William Richard "Rick" White II, 64, of Pearland, died peacefully at home with family by his side on Dec. 27, 2018, after a courageous battle with cancer. Rick was born in Houston Feb. 15, 1954, to William and Evelyn White.

Rick graduated from Dobie high school in 1972 and shortly thereafter married Catherine Denise "Cathy" White. Rick was raised around, and had an affinity for, motorsports including car, boat and motorcycle racing. These passions led to a 40-year career in the automotive tool business, including the last 25 years with Cornwell Tools.

Rick spent many of his early years racing motocross with lifelong friend Frank Harris. He hung up the boots and helmet after the birth of his sons and transitioned to spending many years coaching Little League, Pony/Colt and America Legion baseball teams. He helped coach the high school American Legion baseball team of his oldest son, Jeff, to a Texas state championship.

After "retiring" from coaching, Rick transitioned to prood grandparent and took a seat outside the fence watching his grandkids play sports.

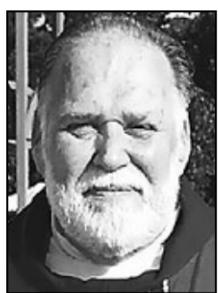
Rick was preceded in death by his parents. Rick is survived by his wife of 44 years; sons Jeff, Jason, Adam and wife Lindsey; grandchildren Jordan, Dylan, Caden, Colin, Blake and Paige White; sisters Diann White and Dori Hicks;

brother Nick White; nephew Kris White; niece and nephew Chrissy White and Darrell Beadle; and nephews Grant and Zach White.

The family is appreciative to all who gave care and support during Rick's battle with cancer, especially the staffs at Methodist Hospital, Houston Hospice and Cornwell Tools.

The memorial service celebrating Rick's life was held Monday, Dec. 31, at Niday Funeral Home.

Rev. Frank Thomas Fabj



The Rev. Frank Thomas Fabj, 70, known for his devotion to Catholic education and to Our Lady of Guadalupe, died Saturday, Jan. 5, 2019.

He was preceded in death by his loving parents Robert Fabj and Florence Maceo Fabj and his brother-in-law Bill Newkirk.

He is survived by his loving sister LeLe Fabj Newkirk; his aunt Concetta Maceo Arena; and numerous cousins.

The Rev. Fabj was born on Galveston Island on Sept. 22, 1948, and was a student in the Galveston Catholic School System. His family and closest childhood friends were keenly aware that, from an early age, his one and only desire was to become a priest. He realized his dream on May 12, 1984, when he was ordained to the priesthood at Sacred Heart Co-Cathedral in Houston by Bishop John L. Morkovsky.

He served as a priest for 34 years and was extremely proud that he was able to lead the congregation of Sacred Heart in Galveston, the church in which he was raised and his family attended.

His most recent assignment was serving the community of St. Frances Cabrini in Houston. He saw this as a blessing since his beloved grandmother "Mama" Katie Maceo, who met Mother Cabrini as a child, was a source of inspiration for his religious vocation.

The following quote was taken from the program used during the ordination to the priesthood of the Rev. Fabj: "The priest is not an angel sent from heaven. He is a man chosen from among men, a member of the church, a Christian. Remaining man and Christian, he begins to speak to you the word of God. This word is not his own. No, he comes to you because God has told him to proclaim God's word. Perhaps he has not entirely understood it himself. Perhaps he adulterates it. But he believes, and despite his fears, he knows that he must communicate God's word to you."

A viewing will be held at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Galveston Thursday, Jan. 10, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. The recitation of the rosary will begin at 6:30 p.m., led by his lifelong friend the Rev. Lee Flores.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 11, at Sacred Heart followed by a private family burial.

Donations may be made to a favorite charity on behalf of the Rev. Frank Thomas Fabj.

A novena will begin with the celebration of the Mass on Sunday, Jan. 13, at 7 p.m., with a small reception to follow. Each evening beginning at 7 p.m. from Monday, Jan. 14, to Sunday, Jan. 20, there will be the recitation of the novena rosary.

In the Cabrini tradition, inspired by Rev. Fabj, the novena will end with the celebration of Mass on Monday, Jan. 21, at 7 p.m., followed by a small reception and more food and fun.

Attendees are invited to bring and share favorite photos of Rev. Fabj. These photos will not be returned, so guests are encouraged to make a copy. Those submitting photos are asked that they be no larger than 4 inches by 6 inches.

Memory boards are being created and will be on display for all to see.

For additional information, call the office at 713-946-5768.

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Still family owned and operated, our exceptional service and affordability set us apart from other funeral homes. The moment you sit down with us, you will feel and see the difference. Niday Funeral Home services all cemeteries and offers a range of funeral and cremation options.

Planning in advance can be one of the most thoughtful decisions you make for your family. Our plans are transferable should you move, and we also accept most existing policies from other funeral homes.



Cornyn's push for federal prison reform helps First Step Act clear U.S. Senate

The U.S. Senate passed a major overhaul of the country's federal prison system Tuesday, Dec. 18. The 87-12 vote is likely to be the toughest hurdle for the legislation, which is expected to easily pass the U.S. House and be signed into law by President Donald Trump.

The First Step Act's aim is to save on federal incarceration spending and prepare inmates for re-entry into society. It is among few pieces of legislation with wide bipartisan backing in the Trump era. But Republican John Cornyn, Texas' senior U.S. senator, has plugged away at the issue, session after session, long before it was in vogue. Its passage in the upper chamber Tuesday will be one of Cornyn's final votes as the GOP Senate majority whip, a powerful position he terms out of in January.

Fellow Texas Republican, U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz, also voted for the legislation. Federal policy advocates and Cornyn, a former state attorney general and state supreme court justice, modeled their approach at an overhaul on former Texas Gov. Rick Perry's efforts to reduce the state's prison population. "The foundation of this legislation is based on the successful prison reform ef-

forts in states like Texas, Georgia, Rhode Island, and other places, where we finally realized that being smart on crime is more important than just being tough on crime," Cornyn said at a recent news conference. "And by that, I mean that people who go to prison get out of prison, and the question is: Are they going to be better prepared than when they went in, when they come out to meet the chal-

lenges of living a lawful, orderly life?" Criminal justice reform is a rare policy area that attracts advocates from both ends of the political spectrum. The roots of the exploding American prison population came about in the 1980s and 1990s, when crime rates soared. Elected officials and hopeful officeholders found that projecting a "tough on crime" image was a political winner, and lawmakers at the state and federal levels passed severe mandatory sentencing laws. That led to swelling prison populations and massive penitentiary construction.

But the policies had massive social implications. For many liberals, the disproportionately higher rates at which people of color were incarcerated is unacceptable. Meanwhile, many conservatives began to grow wary of the costs of incarcerating prisoners serving sentences that, in retrospect, did not match their crimes.

All 12 votes in opposition came from Republicans. Before the vote, critics said they feared the legislation will let violent criminals back into the public. Cornyn's bill will require the Department of Justice to move low-risk inmates to less expensive and less restrictive confines, allow inmates to reduce their sentences if they participate in programs designed to reduce their risk of reoffending, limit the use of restraints on pregnant prisoners, work on reducing prison rape, improve prison guard training and enhance prisoner preparation for re-entry into society.

Outgoing U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wisconsin, supports the bill. It is expected to easily pass the chamber he oversees in the final days of this Congressional term. Trump is also a supporter, along with senior White House adviser Jared Kushner, his influential son-in-law. Kushner's father served time in federal prison. The presidential adviser often visited his dad there.

After a Monday procedural vote, U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell singled out Cornyn for credit in a statement. "Particular credit for this belongs to Senator Cornyn, who has carefully and impressively balanced his role as Majority Whip with his own personal support for this legislation," said the Kentucky Republican. "His leadership has benefited everyone who shares his position and would like to see this bill become law, and he deserves every bit of their gratitude."

Thompson honors students of the month



Thompson Intermediate had a November Students of the Month luncheon on Dec. 19. These students were nominated by their teachers for showing all around Lion Pride. Shown are, left to right, Jordan Leahman, seventh-grader; Maddie Montes, eighth-grader; Travis Webb, eighth-grader; and Stephen Wiggins, seventh-grader.

Bush students participate in art contest



Students at Laura W. Bush Elementary recently had the opportunity to participate in the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Art Contest. Madison Lee, Lelani Hernandez, Stephanie Ochoa and Isabelle Chavez were selected to submit their work for judging in Pasadena Independent School District's districtwide competition. These students' art will be displayed in the administration building. Shown are, left to right, Lee, Hernandez, Ochoa and Chavez.

Photo by Laura Ramsahai

SJC honors DOW Chemical for donation

San Jacinto College held a luncheon recently to honor Dow Chemical for the company's \$250,000 donation toward the upcoming Center for Petrochemical, Energy, and Technology. Dow's investment will ensure that training and education curriculum in the Center will align with the needs of petrochemical manufacturing employers. The Center will open in fall 2019 and will become the largest petrochemical training facility along the Texas Gulf Coast.

San Jacinto College is a primary source for new-hire operators at Dow's Deer Park site. As an industry partner and member of the College's Petrochemical Advisory Council, Dow Deer Park has hired 25 San Jacinto College graduates as operators within the last four years, a number that represents 23 percent of the site's new-hire operators. Three years ago, Dow also established an apprenticeship program at San Jacinto College, which has resulted in the hiring of process operators and instrument technicians as they complete the program.

"We expect to see a higher than normal level of retirements over the next five plus years; rebuilding our workforce is critical at this time," said Jeff Garry, operations director for Dow's Houston Hub. "The need to train and adequately staff our assets will continue to be a pressing concern. As the labor market becomes more competitive for talent, we understand the importance to attract and retain highly skilled and educated workers."

The 145,000-square-foot Center for Petrochemical, Energy, and Technology will be a facility for industry, by industry, and house programs and training labs in process technology, instrumentation and analyzer technology, electrical, nondestructive testing, and craft trades. The Center will feature an 8,000-square-foot exterior glycol process unit to develop troubleshooting skills for entry, advanced credit students, and incumbent workers. Additional features will include the newest software programming, equipment, and technology; and conference, training, and assembly spaces.



San Jacinto College held a luncheon recently to honor Dow Chemical for its \$250,000 donation. Present at the luncheon were, left to right, Dr. Brenda Hellyer, chancellor of San Jacinto College; Monty Heins, site leader for Houston Operations for Dow; Ruth Keenan, executive director of the San Jacinto College Foundation; Jeff Garry, operations director for Dow's Houston Hub and Jim Griffin, senior vice president of petrochemicals and energy at San Jacinto College.

Photo by Melissa Trevizo

Public Library creates Best Book Lists eReading room

Libraries have long embraced the digital age and are continually adding innovations and conveniences to service the members of their community. As another example, Harris County Public Library has digitized the concept of physical reading rooms by creating a specialized eReading room of "Best Book Lists" eBooks and audiobooks. This eReading room features staff favorites, monthly "What's Popular" eBook collections, and the weekly New York Times Bestseller List.

With a library card, Houston residents can browse digital books sectioned off from the rest of the catalog with all searches filtered and dedicated to these best book lists. Readers can find this on <https://hcupl.overdrive.com/library/bestbooks> and on Libby, the award-winning one-tap reading app from OverDrive.

"As someone who works in administration, we don't have many opportunities to interact with patrons on a day-to-day basis," said Megan LeMaster, Harris County Public Library administrative assistant. "This is a fun and unique way to share my love of reading with our customers, as well as showing them that we don't just work here, we are HCPL customers as well!"

Harris County Public Library's digital collection offers thousands of eBooks and audiobooks in a variety of genres for all ages. The eReading room concept was born from the existence of physical spaces in libraries that are designed specifically for special subjects, audiences and formats. Since then, eReading rooms have expanded to highlight materials with certain themes or formats and for select age levels. Within the Libby app, eReading rooms are called "guides" while the library's website refers to them as "collections."

Readers may browse Harris County Public Library's digital collection, instantly borrow titles and start reading or listening for free with a valid library card. This service is compatible with all major computers and devices, including iPhone, iPad, Android devices, Windows tablets, and Kindle (U.S. libraries). All titles will automatically expire at the end of the lending period and there are no late fees. Readers can also download titles onto Libby for offline use.

To explore the library's eReading rooms of eBooks and audiobooks, visit <https://hcupl.overdrive.com/> or download Libby today from Apple, Android and Windows app stores.

Extension made for comments

The Galveston District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the Texas General Land Office, began an examination in November 2015 of the feasibility of constructing projects for coastal storm risk management and ecosystem restoration along the Texas coast. The Coastal Texas Protection and Restoration Feasibility Study, also known as the Coastal Texas Study, will involve engineering, economic and environmental analyses on large-scale projects, which may be considered by Congress for authorization and funding.

The study team encourages full public participation to promote open communication on the issues surrounding the study. In addition, participation by federal, state and local agencies, and other interested organizations is encouraged. One may participate in this process by providing comments for consideration by the study team. Public involvement is integral to assessing the environmental consequences of the proposed project and improving the quality of the environmental and feasibility decision making.

Public comments can be provided to: USACE, Galveston District, Attn: Jennifer Morgan, Environmental Compliance Branch, Regional Planning and Environmental Center, P.O. Box 1229, Galveston, TX 77553-1229; or emailed to CoastalTexas@usace.army.mil. Comments must be post-marked by Feb. 8. To learn more about the Coastal Texas study, visit www.coastalstudy.texas.gov. For more news and information, visit Facebook, www.facebook.com/GalvestonDistrict, or follow on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/USACEgalveston](https://twitter.com/USACEgalveston).

Carter graduates



Zachery Hunter Carter, 2017 Dobie High School graduate, graduated from Fort Jackson in South Carolina on Thursday, Nov. 15. He was made team leader and earned expert marksman while in basic training. Proud parents are dad Jason Carter, stepmom Rebecca Carter, sister Samantha Carter, brothers Joshua, Johnny, Christian and Benjamin Carter and proud parents mom Natalie Reed, stepdad Nick Reed, sisters Grace and Abby Reed.

Morris students read to Meador PK students

On Dec. 14, Meador Elementary pre-K students were very excited to have a group of Morris Middle School students from their Sprinkles of Kindness Club visit and read Christmas stories to them. Former Meador student Mia Campos, now in sixth grade, attended pre-K in that very classroom and enjoyed visiting with her former pre-K teacher and reading to the younger kids. Shown is Campos (left) reading to pre-K students Nathaly Cortex (center) and Yaritza Lopez. Shown below are Meador students, left to right, (first row) Ducea Arias; Sophia Carbajal; Keyla Zeledon; Mariah Elkins; Ailyn Infante; Arwen Cardona; Waleska Palacios; Kaitlyn Resendez; (second row) Krysten Martinez; Kiera Jnlouis; Anthony Dinh; Maria Vasquez; Campos; Allison Lewallen, Morris principal; Cynthia Stanaland, Morris peer facilitator; and Yvette Soloya.



Photos by Tara Merida

BAGS holds monthly dance

The Bay Area Singles Club Monthly Dance will be held Jan. 19 from 7 to 10 p.m. at VFW Lodge, Post 6378, located at 5204 Highway 3 in Dickinson. All singles in the area are invited to attend. Guests are encouraged to bring party snacks to share.

The cost of the event is \$8 for members and \$10 for nonmembers. For more information, call 832-483-3257 or 832-477-6778.

PARC invites all to January meeting

The community is invited to Pearland Area Republican Club's meeting on Thursday, Jan. 10 at the Pearland Church of Christ annex, located at 2217 N. Grand Blvd. Naomi Narvaiz will be the special guest speaker and will discuss Texas values and how they might be impacted by this year's legislative session.

The doors will open at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting begins at 7 p.m. Plan to meet many of the Pearland and Brazoria County elected officials and help keep Pearland and Brazoria County red. Everyone is welcome.

HCMG announce upcoming events

The Harris County Master Gardeners has announced its upcoming events for January, February and March. The Harris County Master Gardeners Green Thumb Series "Preparing Garden Beds and Lawns" will be held Thursday, Jan. 17, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Freeman Branch Library, 16616 Diana Lane.

The Harris County Master Gardeners fruit tree plant sale will be held on Saturday, Feb. 23, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. or until sellout at Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7600 Red Bluff Road in Pasadena.

The Harris County Master Gardeners tomato/pepper, herbs, vegetables and perennials plant sale will be held Saturday, March 30, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. or until sellout at Campbell Hall on the Pasadena Fairgrounds.

South Belt-Ellington Leader

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Verastegui breaks cultural barriers

From the moment Eduardo Verastegui stepped into the production studio of the Lewis Career and Technical High School, where he has studied audio and video production for the last four years, it's clear that the high school senior is no stranger to being in front of a camera.

Verastegui, an immigrant from Mexico, has amassed more than 314,000 followers on his YouTube channel where he creates Spanish videos, documenting life in his new country for an audience who wants to know what life in America is like.

"I try to share the positive things about this country because there is no need to spread negativity on the Internet," said Verastegui. "It makes me feel humbled and honored to be able to share my message, my story, my thoughts and ideas with people around the world."

Verastegui learned at a very early age that blending into the crowd was never an option for him, so instead, he decided to stand out and inspire others, both in person and online.

Born with distinctive facial features caused by Goldenhar Syndrome, a rare birth defect that causes abnormal development of his eye, ear and spine, Verastegui has dealt with questions about his appearance throughout his life.

"A lot of people ask me about it, especially on the Internet, which is where people behind a screen feel more free to ask questions or state their opinions," said Verastegui. "I used to feel discouraged about it but not anymore. I realized that it's not something that I should let affect me, my mental state, my desire to be a better person or from seeking the future that I want."

As he sits down in front of the camera, his eyes burn with passion and a smile comes across his face. In perfect English, he asks technical questions about the interview as the microphone is attached to his navy blue vest.

It's quite an accomplishment considering that just five years ago, when Verastegui and his family moved to the U.S. from Mexico, he could barely say the word "microphone" in English.

"I used to speak very little English, just the basics. I had to learn almost from scratch," said Verastegui.

Being an online content creator and having a passion for video, Verastegui turned to the internet and committed time outside of class to watching English videos, in

order to overcome the language barrier.

"What better way to learn the language than actually hearing conversational English? It really helped me a lot," said Verastegui. "I've also been practicing a lot in school. I always aim to speak as much English as I can with my family and friends...I feel like practice is what makes you master anything you aim to learn."

Becoming fluent in English is something that Verastegui placed a high priority on because he hopes to pursue a future career in Digital Media and Communications.

Recently, that dream became a little closer to reality for him as he was conditionally accepted, pending his high school graduation, to Full Sail University in Orlando, Florida.

"A lot of people consider Full Sail University to be the Harvard for AV (audio and video) production," said Verastegui. "I am really positive about this because I feel that it has everything that I need to be able to succeed in life."

He credits the opportunities he received at Lewis Career and Technical High School for helping him build a foundation for a successful future.

"Being able to attend CTHS has given me constant opportunities. It has helped me get my foot in the door to a lot of things that I probably wouldn't have been able to achieve in another high school," said Verastegui. "I feel like it has helped me in filling my résumé with experiences and seeing what the industry actually looks like."

Even with all his personal successes and the obstacles he has overcome, Eduardo finds the most satisfaction in being an inspiration and delivering a message that is meaningful to others.

"The best advice that I could give to anyone who is looking into pursuing a career in audio and video production would definitely be open to learning new things," said Verastegui. "That is something that I always keep in mind because AV is a really extensive branch, there is a lot of things you can do. There is a lot of competition in this industry and it's something that you have to be on the lookout for and always learn new things and pick up new technology."

An immigrant, a YouTube star and an inspiration, Verastegui is anything but an average kid.

To view his YouTube video, visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxWYj5_njls.



Eduardo Verastegui, an immigrant from Mexico and student at Lewis Career and Technical High School, has amassed more than 314,000 followers on his YouTube channel where he creates Spanish videos, documenting life in his new country for an audience who wants to know what life in America is like.

AARP holds January meeting

The AARP Webster Area Chapter 199 welcomes all to join them at 10 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 18, at the Bay Area Community Center, 5002 E. NASA Parkway, Seabrook. The group meets in the large building with the blue roof inside Clear Lake Park on the north side of NASA Parkway.

Everyone is invited to come to the meetings and to enjoy coffee, cookies and fellowship at 9:30 a.m. before the meeting starts at 10 a.m. Each month there is entertainment or a speaker on various topics of interest to seniors. Some months there is also a potluck lunch.

On Friday, Jan. 18, The Veterans Administration is planning to speak to members and guests about its mission and services to military veterans. They will speak at 10:30 a.m. after the chapter business meeting ends.

There will be no potluck lunch at the Jan. 18 meeting. The next day trip will be on Tuesday, Feb. 5, when the group will tour the Painted Churches in the Schulenburg area. Lunch will be at Oakridge Smokehouse Restaurant.

If anyone is interested in joining the group, annual dues are \$8 per year per person. However, one must be a member of national AARP to join any local chapter. AARP Chapters are separately incorporated affiliates of AARP. For more information, contact Beth Scully at 281-217-2409 or bethscully57@gmail.com.

Over The Back Fence by Alexis

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, KRISTEN!
Kristen Giles celebrates her 19th birthday Jan. 13. Her parents, Tracy and Jim Giles, grandparents Bobby and Ken Griffin, and brothers Aaron and Cody, extend their best wishes for a wonderful birthday. Kristen is a 2018 graduate from Dobie.

CARL VALIGURA ENJOYS A BIRTHDAY
On Sunday, Jan. 13, Carl Valigura celebrates a birthday. His wife, Frances, four children, 13 grandchildren, great-granddaughters and friends at the Leader wish him well on his special day. Carl is well known to merchants where he has delivered the Leader for many years.

DR. JOHN MORGAN CELEBRATES
Greetings are sent to Dr. John Morgan, senior pastor of Sagemont Church, from friends and the Leader staff as he celebrates a birthday Jan. 14.

SCHOOL DAZE
The following personnel of the Pasadena Independent School District celebrate birthdays Jan. 10 through Jan. 16.

Atkinson Elementary
Sing a happy birthday song to Sheri Graham Jan. 11. Send a humorous birthday greeting Jan. 13 to Idania Alvarado.

Burnett Elementary
Join in the birthday fun Jan. 10 with Kanika Douglas, Breana Grullon and Viola Guerra. Light the birthday candles on a double-layer cake Jan. 14 for Jocelyn Chavez and Nichellet Sherman.

Bush Elementary
Cynthia Covarrubias enjoys a birthday Jan. 11. The day for a party for Irma Henriquez is Jan. 15.

Frazier Elementary
The day for a party for Alma Hernandez is Jan. 13. Maria Lozano celebrates a happy birthday Jan. 13. Cecilia Ramirez enjoys a birthday Jan. 15.

Genoa Elementary
Light the birthday candles Jan. 16 for Luz Salazar.

Meador Elementary
Enjoy a slice of a double-layer cake Jan. 11 with Tara Merida and Anne Hamilton.

South Belt Elementary
Send a birthday greeting Jan. 10 to Amy Campos.

Melillo Middle School
Jan. 10 is the day for a celebration for Jessica Adamek.

Roberts Middle School
Sing a happy birthday song Jan. 12 to Jennifer Saucedo. The day for a celebration for Debbie McKelvey is Jan. 14.

Beverly Hills Intermediate
Send a birthday greeting Jan. 11 to Kacee Peterson. Martha Garcia enjoys a birthday Jan. 12. Remember Irene Flores on Jan. 16 with a special birthday wish.

Thompson Intermediate
Special birthday wishes are sent to Tiffany Nelson Jan. 10. Melinda Harrison enjoys a birthday Jan. 15.

Dobie High
Enjoying a birthday Jan. 10 is Camille Calo Widaski. Jan. 11 is the day for a party for Stacy Thomas. Send a birthday greeting Jan. 13 to Audrena Soto. Light the birthday candles Jan. 14 for Chrystal Limon and Constance Ramos. Sing a happy birthday song Jan. 15 to Neal Brownlee. Celebrating a birthday Jan. 16 is Jesse George.

FRIENDS CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS
The Leader sends happy birthday wishes to friends who celebrate a birthday:

Thursday, Jan. 10: Jennifer Murillo, Roy Gunter and Caron Cantu; Friday, Jan. 11: Kelly Cavazos, Myles Barkman, Amy Villareal, Kathleen Wenzel, Deirdre Davis and James Mouton Jr.; Saturday, Jan. 12: Rosalind Vela, Troy Vessel, William Carpenter, Jose Pena, Barry Francis and Tammy Overstreet; Sunday, Jan. 13: Scott Langefeld, Claire Mules, Gregden Martin, Betty Shamblyn, Jessica Hynes, Joseph Farrias and Shane Poynter; Monday, Jan. 14: Tracy Oliver, Laurie Lynn, Tiffany Defreitas and Louis Casas; Tuesday, Jan. 15: Denise Montano, Patrick Lesley, Heather White, Cody Fountain and Barbara Bennett-Northern; and Wednesday, Jan. 16: Rachel Perez, Heidi Ferguson, Troy Merkall, Samesia Bass-Hamlett, Kimberly Dann-Mandy, Dana Willis and Lisa Pennington.

LEADER WANTS YOU IN THE NEWS
Email announcements to mynews@southbeltleader.com with OTBF in the subject line by Friday noon for the next week's publication.

Occidental Petroleum hires process technology students

Six San Jacinto College process technology graduates were recently hired by Occidental Petroleum, proving they have the training it takes to fill the skills gap in today's petrochemical industry.

A signing ceremony was held to celebrate the graduates' achievements of earning their associate degrees and being offered full-time positions with OXY. Occidental Petroleum plays a key role on the San Jacinto College Petrochemical Advisory Council, which ensures students receive training in the skill-sets requested by industry employers.

"Here at San Jac, you have a great group of students who are receiving top-notch technical training, and who are eager to find a career in our industry," said Jason Sevin, director of strategic planning with Occidental Petroleum. "This hiring initiative is a real opportunity to expand where we find valuable people for our workforce in the Permian Basin."

The process of recruiting these San Jacinto College students started in September, when representatives from OXY contacted Jeff Pearce, career coordinator for the future Center for Petrochemical, Energy, and Technology set to open in the summer of 2019.

"I was thrilled when OXY contacted me to set up interviews with our students," said Pearce. "Being able to provide our students direct contact with the companies they are looking to work for is priceless."

During the interview process, OXY met with a group of 100 students to introduce them to the idea of the hiring initiative. This meeting led to interviews with 22 of San Jacinto College's process technology students before narrowing it down to the six students who were offered positions in November of this year.

The students, Adrian Boutte, Tracy Guerra, Jesse Killen, Ruben Perez, Miguel Ramos, and Joseph Ramirez all see this as an opportunity of a lifetime.

"I'm so lucky to be part of this hiring initiative," said Ramirez. "When OXY first came to speak with us we were all excited. Shortly after the first meeting, I was in an interview and I was offered the position. It has been such a smooth transition."

All six students were hired for positions in the Permian Basin region of West Texas. This region is known as the United States' top oil producing region, generating 1 million barrels of oil each day.



Occidental Petroleum has hired six San Jacinto College students for its facilities in the Permian Basin and celebrated with a signing event. Present at the signing were, left to right, (first row) Ruben Perez, graduate; Adrian Boutte, graduate; Tracy Guerra, graduate; Jesse Killen, graduate; Joseph Ramirez, graduate; (back row) Jeff Pearce, career coordinator; Joseph Zwiercan, department chair for petrochemical and energy; James Ragaisis, dean of business and technology; Jim Griffin, associate vice chancellor and senior vice president of the Center for Petrochemical, Energy, and Technology; Van Wigginton, provost of the San Jacinto College Central campus; Darryl Reeves, Michael King and Greg Smith, process technology instructors; Kevin Adams, p-tech program director and instructor and Steven Torres, president of the student p-tech club. Not pictured is Miguel Ramos, graduate. Photo by Melissa Trevizo

Remember When

40 years ago (1979)
Capt. Jim Woods, a member of the Texas Air National Guard 147th Fighter Interceptor Group, was presumed dead after he apparently went down with the F-101 he was piloting.

Dr. Parker Williams, vice president of San Jacinto College's South campus, received a check from Clint Oglesbee of Houston to establish the campus's first scholarship fund.

35 years ago (1984)
Between 35 and 40 Pasadena Independent School District facilities suffered approximately \$25,000 in damage from broken pipes caused by a freeze.

South Belt Security Alliance handed over an 11-year-old and an 8-year-old to their parents after being caught driving a brand new car belonging to the father of one of the boys.

30 years ago (1989)
Emory Gadd, youth minister at Sagemont Baptist Church from 1971 to 1981, returned in the same capacity after a seven-year hiatus during which he traveled as a speaker.

Harris County Commissioners Court approved an agreement between Precinct 2 Constable Gary Freeman's office and the South Belt Security Alliance on a contract basis to augment the group's existing forces.

25 years ago (1994)
One Dobie High School student was arrested as the investigation continued into the local home invasions.

Scarsdale's Denny Wranich was awarded one year free use of a brand-new Corvette after posting one of the top scores in the nation in his section of the annual Chevrolet Technician test.

20 years ago (1999)
The annual South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce banquet marked the installation of Sagemeadow resident Jackie Wiess as chamber president.

Gilbert Aguilera, longtime Sagemont resident and retired lieutenant commander of the U.S. Coast Guard, was recognized for his five years of volunteer service at Dobie High School.

15 years ago (2004)
An issue between the Southeast Volunteer Fire Department and Insurance Services Office Inc. was causing confusion over local residents' homeowners' insurance premiums.

The Blackhawk Park football fields, located at Fuqua and Blackhawk, were vandalized.

Susan Blalock officially assumed the principal's job at the Billie and Kathleen Morris Fifth-Grade Center in South Belt.

Beverly Hills Intermediate School students Phuong Tran, Khai Nguyen and Shelby Trahan received commended performance awards for their perfect TAKS scores. They had perfect scores on TAKS math and reading tests in spring of 2003.

10 years ago (2009)
Brandon Nguyen was the first baby born in 2009 at Children's Memorial Hermann Southeast, a service of Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital. Nguyen is the son of South Belt residents Chan Quach and Jim Nguyen. The baby was delivered at 1:01 a.m., weighed in at 6 pounds and 3 ounces and was 19.5 inches in length.

Mary A. Cross, M.D., was elected chief of staff at Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital by her physician peers. She succeeded Dr. Michael Warneke, who served from Jan. 1, 2006, to Dec. 31, 2008. In addition to her position at the hospital, Cross is also in private practice at Memorial Hermann Medical Group in Pearland, a physician-led subsidiary of Memorial Hermann Healthcare System. A graduate of Northwest Missouri State University, Cross received her medical degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia. After completing an internship at the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital in New Orleans, Cross spent the next four years with the federal government, assigned to various locations throughout the United States.

Highland Meadow resident Homero Rosales Jr. was killed when his car was struck by another vehicle fleeing from police in east Houston. Houston police were chasing Frank Anthony Marron, 17, who was driving a stolen black Ford F-350, shortly before noon when he sped through a yellow sign at South 79th and Elwood near Harrisburg and smashed into Rosales' blue Ford Expedition, causing it to crash into a tree. Rosales, 41, was pronounced dead at the scene. Rosales' passenger, Maurillo Alvarado, 53, was injured in the collision and taken to Ben Taub General Hospital. Marron was charged with felony murder with bail set at \$100,000. He was already on probation in the juvenile system and had been convicted of several crimes, including car theft.

The Southbelt Dolphins football team's storage container at Blackhawk Park caught fire. The Houston Fire Department was dispatched to the scene, but the fire had already been extinguished by a park employee. According to fire department officials, the fire had spread from a nearby dumpster. Arson was not suspected. Almost all the team's equipment stored in the container was destroyed, including field equipment, football equipment and drill team equipment.

5 years ago (2014)
The Gulf Freeway at Edgebrook was the site of two separate fatal motorcycle accidents. The first incident occurred as Roberto Arredondo was operating a Harley-Davidson motorcycle on the service road in the 10400 block of the Gulf Freeway and was involved in a traffic accident with a BMW sedan. Arredondo, 65, was observed to have minor injuries, refused treatment and left the scene on his motorcycle. He died the following day from head injuries suffered in the accident. No charges were filed.

Just four days later, a female passenger on another Harley-Davidson motorcycle was killed in a collision in the 9900 block of the Gulf Freeway. The motorcycle reportedly rear-ended a van as it was entering the freeway. Witnesses said the van had made a late lane change to enter the freeway, but the motorcycle was traveling at a high rate of speed and was unable to avoid the crash. Cynthia Ann Lozano, 56, was pronounced dead at the scene. Again, no charges were filed in the case.

1 year ago (2018)
The new Dobie ninth-grade center officially opened for class Tuesday, Jan. 9. Located at the southeast corner of Fuqua and Monroe, the facility was approved by voters in November 2014 as part of a \$175 million bond package.

The new campus, now informally known as Dobie9, was needed to alleviate overcrowding at the main campus, as Dobie has long been at its maximum capacity. The facility holds approximately 1,000 students, all of whom have the same academic and extracurricular opportunities as students on the main campus.

Work began on the long-awaited city project to make drainage and pavement improvements in the Sagemont subdivision. Originally scheduled to begin in 2012, the endeavor involved making improvements on selected streets determined to be in the most need of repair. Improvements included drainage systems, necessary concrete paving, curbs, sidewalks, driveways and underground utilities. In all, eight area streets were to be addressed.

CB debate competes at Dobie in new year

Clear Brook High School debaters cut their holiday break a few days short when they arrived at J. Frank Dobie High School on Jan. 4 and 5 to compete at the first debate tournament of the new year.

Coming out with the best finish of the team for the weekend was Benjamin Eappen who placed as the top speaker overall in Lincoln Douglas Debate as well as placing third in the event overall. Fellow debaters Kent Pham and the team of Christa Westheimer and Fizza Dhanani both made it to the quarter finals round in Lincoln Douglas Debate and PF Debate respectively. Pham, already qualified for state in Lincoln Douglas Debate, adds to



Benjamin Eappen

Moore spellers win



Richard Moore Elementary held its annual spelling bee on Dec. 18. Each third- and fourth-grade class conducted spelling bees throughout October and November. The two winners from each class participated in the school spelling bee. Muzna Hassan (left) won the school championship. Carter Burback is this year's runner-up. Hassan will represent Moore in the Pasadena Independent School District's Elementary School Spelling Bee on Feb. 7, 2019. Photo by BethAnne Mullen

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Study finds San Jacinto College has \$1.3 billion impact on local economy

A recent study has found that San Jacinto College had a \$1.3 billion impact on the region's economy in fiscal year 2016-2017.

The study, conducted by Economic Modeling Specialists International, reported that the impacts created during the 2016-2017 fiscal year are comprised of \$143 million in added income from operations spending, \$24.4 million from student spending, and another \$1.1 billion from alumni. The college's impact equals 2.4 percent of the regions gross regional product, and a total of 13,044 jobs.

"This study takes into account the investments of our students, our taxpayers, and our communities," said Dr. Brenda Hellyer, San Jacinto

College chancellor. "It reflects our ongoing efforts and commitment to improve our communities and the Gulf Coast region by providing an educated and skilled workforce, and offering our students a quality education that allows them to pursue a higher education credential or gain and maintain employment in high-demand careers."

In return for their investment in the college, the present value of the higher future earnings that San Jac's students will receive during their working careers is \$1.6 billion. This amounts to a return of \$6.30 in higher future earnings for every dollar that students invest in their education. The study also found that students receive a 19.8 percent annual return on

their investment in a San Jacinto College education.

Taxpayers provided \$139.2 million of state and local funding to San Jac in fiscal year 2016-2017. In return, taxpayers will receive an estimated present value of \$586.2 million in added tax revenue stemming from the students' higher lifetime earnings and the increased output of businesses. Savings to the public add another estimated \$34 million in benefits. The average annual return on investment for taxpayers in the San Jacinto College District is 10.8 percent.

For every dollar that society spent on San Jacinto College during the 2016-2017 fiscal year, society receives a cumulative value of \$21.80 in benefits for as long as the 2016-

2017 fiscal year San Jacinto College student population remains active in the state workforce.

"The results of this study confirm the value of a certificate or associate degree from San Jacinto College," said Marie Flickinger, chair of the San Jacinto College board of trustees. "For more than 50 years, we have provided an education that is producing a return on investment for our students and the taxpayers in our region. It is critical that we continue to work hard, and invest in our people and our communities, so that we can provide quality training and transfer programs that are producing more graduates and helping to fill the workforce pipeline in the region."

South Belt Elementary names December VIPs



South Belt Elementary has named its VIPs for the month of December. The students were chosen by their teachers based on their ability to display the character trait of the month: compassion. Shown are, left to right, (first row) Madelyn Rangel, Claudette Reyna, Kristen Lott, Jaelyn Nguyen, Jesslyn Garcia, Maximus Ochoa, Sarah Sulyan, (second row) Nikolas Padilla, Isabella Rembert, Maesyn Poullard, Chacidy Carter, Giselle Ayala, Anna Wilkerson, (third row) Leile Monroe,

Gabriel Castillo, Carissa Cortez, Nathaniel Simpson, Raiden Adamo, Sophia Hernandez, (fourth row) Lori Suarez, Jordyn Rodriguez, Isaiah Machado, Johnathan Vilella, Meredyth Onguso, Nathalie Huynh, Caylee Martinez, (fifth row) Audrey Lopez, Adlin Mena, Aubree Rodriguez, Ibrahim Ali, Matthew Salinas and Chancellor Conley. Not pictured is Manuel Sanchez.

Photo by Lakitha Green

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Lutheran South offers AP Capstone Diploma program

Lutheran South Academy is one of approximately 1,800 schools worldwide to implement the AP Capstone Diploma program, an innovative program that allows students to develop the skills that matter

most for college success, such as research, collaboration, and communication. The program consists of two courses taken in sequence: AP Seminar and AP Research.

Students who score a 3 or higher in AP seminar and AP research and on four additional AP exams of their choosing earn the AP Capstone Diploma. This signifies outstanding academic achievement and attainment of college-level aca-

demie and research skills. Students who score a 3 or higher in both AP seminar and AP research (but not on four additional AP Exams) earn the AP Seminar and Research Certificate.

Lutheran South Academy will start offering AP seminar in fall 2019.

"The addition of this program fits well with our mission of 'Securing Their Future,'" said Steve Garabrant, Lutheran South Academy's high school principal. "This program further enhances LSA's Advanced Placement curricular offerings. This opportunity reinforces our commitment of preparing our students for college and beyond by continuing to provide more challenging coursework and sharpening their reading and writing skills."

In AP seminar, typically taken in 10th or 11th grade, students choose and evaluate complex topics through multiple lenses; identify credibility and bias in sources; and develop arguments in support of a recommendation. AP seminar is a project-based learning course. Official AP seminar assessments include research reports, written arguments, and presentations completed during the academic year.

In the subsequent AP research course, students design, execute, present, and defend a yearlong research-based investigation on a topic of individual interest. They build on skills developed in AP seminar

by learning how to understand research methodology; employ ethical research practices; and collect, analyze, and synthesize information to contribute to academic research. Like AP seminar, AP research is a project-based course. Each student's official AP research score is based on their academic paper, presentation, and oral defense.

"We're proud to offer AP Capstone, which enables students and teachers to focus on topics of their choice in great depth," said Trevor Packer, senior vice president for AP and instruction at the college board. He adds, "This provides terrific opportunities for students to develop the ability to write and present their work effectively, individually and in groups—the very skills college professors want their students to possess."

In partnership with the higher education community, the college board developed AP Capstone so students can practice skills that serve them well in college and career. Colleges and universities have voiced their support for the program.

"We are excited more schools are offering the AP Capstone Diploma program," said Kedra Ishop, vice provost for enrollment management at the University of Michigan. "We believe the research, collaboration, and presentation skills taught in the two courses will be valuable to students throughout their academic and professional careers."

Laura Bush holds spelling bee



Laura W. Bush Elementary recently had its school spelling bee. All students who participated did an amazing job. The student who will be representing Laura Bush at the 2018-2019 District Spelling Bee is Ariana Kainer, with the runner-up being Lyla Crake. Both students are in the fourth grade. Shown are, left to right, Stephanie Miller, principal; Crake, runner-up; Kainer, first place; and Maria Hernandez, assistant principal.

Photo by Rubi Contreras

Shaar Hashalom starts new class

Congregation Shaar Hashalom is happy to announce the start of a new class with Rabbi Stuart Federow. Learn more about Jewish traditions and home celebrations. The congregation invites interfaith families as well as anyone wanting to learn about Shabbat customs including the conclusion of the Shabbat with the Havdalah, about the holy days and the holidays, festivals, traditions in the home and much more.

Participants will have the opportunity to ask any questions. This course is designed to assist in the practical practice and celebration of Judaic customs and traditions in their homes as well as celebrations in the synagogue. This class will meet on Sundays from 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at Congregation Shaar Hashalom, commencing Jan. 20.

The congregation, located at 16020 El Camino Real, is the conservative synagogue in the Bay Area. The course is sponsored by CSH Adult Education Committee. For more information, contact the synagogue office at 281-488-5861 or Sandy at AdultEd@shaarhashalom.org.

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Leader remembers 2018, a yearfull of highlights

Continued from Page 1A
 and an independent committee studied the issue. PISD Superintendent Dr. DeeAnn Powell said the existing Thompson campus will still be utilized for programs that have yet to be determined. The new campus is expected to open in August 2021.
May 31
 Dobie High School's

senior prom was forced to relocate during the event Saturday, May 26, after a small mechanical fire caused a power outage at the function's original location. Initially located at Galveston Island Convention Center at the San Luis Resort, the event was moved a few blocks away to a ballroom at the San Luis Resort, Spa and Con-

ference Center following the incident, which took place shortly after the prom started at 7 p.m., knocking out the air conditioning, lighting and music. While a shuttle was provided to transport the attendees, many of the approximately 800 students opted to just walk to the new location. The second room was significantly smaller in size than the

first one, but tables were removed to accommodate more guests.
 Meador and Bush elementary schools were named to the 2017-2018 Educational Results Partnership Honor Roll for outstanding academic achievements and student success. The schools were among 729 public schools in Texas to receive the distinc-

tion, awarded annually to campuses that continuously demonstrate high levels of academic achievement, improvement in achievement levels over time and reductions in achievement gaps among student populations.
June 7
 A man was shot inside his apartment in the 10200 block of Windmill Lakes Boulevard on Monday, June 4. According to police, the 18-year-old victim answered a knock on his door around 7:30 p.m., and three male suspects allegedly forced their way inside, pushed the resident down to the ground, then shot him in the head. The suspects reportedly then fled the scene in a white Dodge Charger. The victim was transported to a nearby hospital and was expected to recover from his injuries. The three suspects are described merely as black males. No immediate arrests were made.

A temporary restraining order was issued June 6 against Bombshells Restaurant & Bar on the Gulf Freeway at Fuqua, citing multiple alcohol-related crimes. The TRO demanded the facility close at 9 p.m. and only serve food, not alcohol, for 14 days. The business opted to close its doors rather than serve food exclusively. The rare order was put in place after a series of crimes. Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg described the bar as a "crime factory." According to court documents, at least 90 people have been arrested at the business since it opened roughly four years ago. Some of those arrested have been known gang members. In May alone, there were four DWIs related to the bar, one of which seriously injured Houston Police Officer Chayne Brothers, who on June 11, filed a lawsuit against the establishment for over-serving the driver responsible for the accident. A second lawsuit was filed by an injured party from a DWI crash in February. Other reported crimes at the site include shootings, assaults, robberies and drug possession. In January 2015, an off-duty police officer working security at the bar shot and killed a man after he allegedly pointed a gun at him in the parking lot after being kicked out for fighting. In March of that year, the business made national headlines after it refused to serve patrons with face and neck tattoos, claiming it represented gang affiliation, most notably the Houston sect of the Tango Blast prison gang. The

business reopened later that month under requirements that it use computerized systems to monitor alcohol consumption, and that it provide two police officers on site from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. daily.
June 14
 Nearly six months after the Jan. 20 murder of That Huu Le in the parking lot of H-E-B at Blackhawk and Beltway 8, Houston police made an arrest in the case. The suspect, Reginald Hawkins, 18, was charged with capital murder. According to police, Le, 75, had reportedly been followed by two male suspects to the store from a nearby Wells Fargo Bank, where he had made a cash withdrawal. As Le was exiting his vehicle, one of the suspects approached him, and an altercation ensued. During the dispute, the suspect fired multiple shots at Le. The suspects then fled the scene in an older model gold Infiniti, four-door sedan. The vehicle was later recovered by investigators. Le was transported to Clear Lake Regional Hospital, where he was pronounced dead. The cash withdrawal was reportedly still in Le's pocket when he was discovered. When he was charged, Hawkins was already in custody for another crime. In that case, Hawkins was arrested and charged with two counts of aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon after he and another suspect reportedly fired multiple shots at two victims – an adult and a 15-year-old – during an alleged robbery outside a Shell station in the 4400 block of South Loop East the previous April. Additional suspects are still being sought in the H-E-B incident, and the investigation is ongoing.
June 21
 A former South Belt resident was found shot to death possibly Friday, June 15, in the 300 block of Embury, located just north of downtown. The body of Scott Hardin, 42, was discovered in a grassy field near a bayou by a truck driver who was traveling north on Interstate 45. He had been shot multiple times. Hardin, a 1994 Dobie graduate, was pronounced dead at the scene. His vehicle had reportedly been found burned two days earlier near the intersection of Interstate 45 and Parker (approximately 6 miles from where his body was discovered). Hardin left

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Timmons publishes first poetry book

Former Dobie graduate, Robert Timmons II, published his first poetry book in July 2018 and debuted on Amazon's top 100 for African American poetry.

Timmons graduated from Dobie High School in June 2011 and gave the commencement speech at his graduation. His book is titled, "Behind the Smile" published under his poetry alias, "Sleight." This book is a look into Timmons' life from 2015 to 2018 as he stepped into

adulthood and dealt with various road blocks and insecurities, love and heartbreak, and a developing spiritual relationship with God. He uses poetry as a way to process through his emotions and experiences. His hope is

that his story helps to encourage others as they walk on their journey. "Behind the Smile" is available online through Amazon, Barnes and Noble, iBooks, Kobo and Google Play.



Robert Timmons II (center), Dobie High School graduate, celebrated with a book release party for the publication of his first poetry book, "Behind the Smile," published under his alias, "Sleight" in July 2018 at Bar Boheme. Shown with Robert is his family, left to right, Robert Timmons, father; Arnetta Timmons, mother; Chelsea Timmons, sister; and Andre Timmons, brother. Photo submitted

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SECTION B SPORTS & CLASSIFIED

Pleasants makes USA Softball JWNT

Taylor Pleasants has again over the course of proven time and time her academic and athletic

careers that very little is impossible. And she did it again over the holiday break.

Excelling at a Dec. 28 tryout in Florida, Taylor was named to USA Softball's Junior Women's National Team, which will compete in various events beginning this summer, including the World Baseball Softball Confederation's Junior Women's World Cup and more.

Now in her final semester at Dobie, Pleasants has built quite a résumé. The Leader is in the process of receiving permission through USA Softball to speak with Pleasants and plans more news on her for Jan. 17.



LSU signee displays talent

At left, Dobie High School senior and star softball player Taylor Pleasants was named to the USA Softball Junior Women's National Team after excelling at a tryout late last month in Florida. A three-year varsity starter and first team all-district performer from 2016 through 2018, Pleasants is headed to Louisiana State University this fall but will first lead the Lady Longhorns into action beginning next month as the team chases a playoff berth in the revamped 22-6A ranks. As for USA Softball, Pleasants and her Team USA mates will compete in the World Baseball Softball Confederation's Junior Women's World Cup Aug. 11-17 in Irvine, Calif., and will also compete in other events this year. For more on Pleasants, see the Jan. 17 issue of the Leader.

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At left, Dobie forward Bryan Nava (11) pushes the action against Clements during a pool play game Jan. 4 at the Pasadena ISD Cup. Nava had two goals in four games as his Longhorns beat Channelview 4-2 and tied two other matches before defeating Clear Creek 3-1 Jan. 5 in the tournament championship match at The Rig in Pearland. Dobie is headed to Austin Jan. 10-12 to face some of the state's best teams.
Photo by John Bechtle

JFD soccer wins PISD Cup

Though certainly not flawless as a whole, Dobie's performance at the Pasadena ISD Cup varsity boys' soccer event Jan. 3-5 was nonetheless effective as the locals bagged yet another tournament championship.

The Longhorns, having entered the season as one of the Region III contenders, defeated Channelview 4-2 to begin their season and then tied both Clements and Manvel in pool play before meeting Clear Creek Jan. 5 for the title.

There, the Longhorns continued their seemingly annual dominance of the tournament by topping the Wildcats 3-1 at The Rig in Pearland.

Over the four games, Alberto Chavez, Bryan Nava and Raul Hernandez all notched two goals, and Christian Saldivar handed out four assists.

Junior Eduardo Benavides drew the majority of the action in the nets as a first-year starter.

The bottom line is the Longhorns won the tournament for a fourth time in five years.

That said, head coach Justo Manrique acknowledged the Longhorns have to continue to improve, particularly on the back end as a cast of relatively inexperienced players find their footing.

Dobie jumped out to a quick lead over Channelview in the opener but then surrendered a late goal to Clements that cost the group what should have been a win.

With Manvel choosing to pack things in defensive-Continued on Page 6B

Area sports registration SBGSA online sign-up

The South Belt Girls Softball Association has initiated early registration activities for the 2019 spring season. Parents may register their children, ages 4 through 16 as of Jan. 1, 2019, online at www.southbeltsoftball.com.

Regular registration within the league is running now through Jan. 20, 2019, and will cost \$75 per player, and include mandatory participation in the league's candy fundraiser.

For those who wish not to take part in the fundraiser, there is a \$135 buyout fee. For more details on the registration activities or the league itself, visit www.southbeltsoftball.com.

See SBHLL details on Page 6B

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2018 – continuing the *Leader's* look at the special year in community athletics

Editor's note: In continuation of what we started Dec. 27, 2018, the *Leader* is taking a look back at some of the top sports moments of the year. Without further ado, we pick things back up in April.

Something about the story was sounding awfully familiar.

Thanks to a pair of late second-half goals, the defending Region III champion Dobie varsity boys' soccer team was still in the

playoffs, this time by a 5-0 count.

Dobie had finished the varsity soccer season with some momentum heading into the postseason, but the Lady Eagles used plenty of firepower around the net to score the win.

The Dobie boys' and girls' bowling teams won second and eleventh place, respectively, at the state competition in San Antonio and moved on to take on the top teams in the

21/22-6A Area Championships.

Leading the way for the Dobie girls was Singleton, who won the 400-meter dash at the District 22-6A Championships in a time of 1:00.42. Teammate Brisasia Garza ran a season best of 1:03.53 to place third, reaching the area meet.

Singleton also qualified for the area meet in the 800-meter run as she was third in a time of 2:26.22.

Four seniors, including the top-seeded mixed doubles team of Leilani Vargas and "Big" Tommy Nguyen, as well as the boys' doubles team of "Little" Tommy Nguyen and Adrian Tamez, qualified for the Region III Tennis Championships.

Vargas, a four-year varsity player at Dobie, and "Big" Kevin Nguyen both played No. 1 singles for the team during the fall team tennis season.

Seeded No. 1 in the draw, they came up with first place and a regional berth, losing just seven total games in three matches.

In the championship final, Vargas and Nguyen met the overall No. 3 seeded squad from Memorial, prevailing 6-3, 6-2.

Perhaps it took the better part of six decades, but then again that just may have been what made it even sweeter.

The Dobie varsity girls' golf team qualified for the Region III Championships for the first time in program history.

With senior and team captain Cecilia Perez leading the way with a two-day total of 182, and sophomore Alexis Perez just three back at 185, the Lady Longhorns were able to hold off La Porte for third place at the District 22-6A event.

Deer Park's A team, a bona fide Region III title contender, was the clear runaway winner of the top spot at district, with Dobie second at 825 for a team of five golfers over two days.

La Porte and Deer Park's B team made a run on the second day, but Dobie held on for the other qualifying spot.

"We knew we were in good shape heading into the second day, and we challenged the ladies to go out there and shoot their best rounds. Four of the five did, and the other was just one shot over her best. It was a great team performance," Dobie head coach Chris Ferguson said.

It's also something Ferguson has been aiming for all along.

Taking over the program six years previously, Ferguson said he made a vow to Dobie principal Franklin Moses that he wanted to build a true program.

That first year, Ferguson worked with two players.

That number grew to four in year two, and the Lady Longhorns proceeded to build on their collective successes since that time.

Midway through the Region XIV race, the San Jacinto College baseball team appeared to be picking up steam.

At 28-9 overall, includ-

ing 15-4 in conference action, the Gators swept Laredo to keep its roll going.

Laredo was victimized by many SJC players during the series, but Tyreece Silas was a particular problem for the Palominos.

Overall, Silas' 10 hits in the four games, kick-starting the offense at every turn.

The Gators won the opener 12-4 as four players went deep, including Alerick Soularie, Jacob Matheny, Nick Neville and Jordan Myrow.

Silas tripled and doubled, and Matheny led the way with three runs batted in.

SJC's Jacob Cantleberry, the team's top starting pitcher, went 5 2/3 innings, fanning seven along the way to get the win.

In more collegiate news, San Jacinto College Women's basketball head coach Kayla Weaver was named the District L Coach of the Year after guiding San Jac to a 25-11 overall record and the team's second consecutive National Junior College Athletic Association national tournament appearance.

In a way, Dobie's four-run rally that produced a 9-8 walk-off win over La Porte in the bottom of the seventh inning was meant to be as the varsity softball season wound down.

Or perhaps it was simply meant to bring uber-excitement to the regular season finale featuring a heated rivalry.

As it stood, the Dobie varsity softball team was sitting alone in second place within 22-6A after the spirited comeback over La Porte.

The Lady Bulldogs had won their first meeting with Dobie by a 15-5 count, and a second win would have all but guaranteed the Bulldogs a second-place finish behind undefeated 22-6A champion Deer Park.

La Porte appeared on its way to a second win after a five-run, sixth inning and an insurance run in the seventh inning delivered an 8-5 lead. But back came Dobie.

A walk, four straight singles and a sacrifice fly tied the game at 8-all in the bottom of the seventh inning.

Freshman Leslie Longoria then sent the Dobie faithful into a frenzy as she lined a walk-off single into left-center field.

Dani Colunga crossed the plate for the 9-8 win, suddenly thrusting Dobie into second place.

Yet if not for the rally, the Lady Longhorns might have been staring at a fourth-place finish in the

face with a game to play against heated rival Memorial.

Gutierrez began the bottom of the seventh with a walk, and Jacqueline Garcia's single sent runner Jasmine Benitez to second base. Elizalde then singled to load the bases with no outs.

Colunga delivered Dobie's third straight hit as Benitez scored to trim the La Porte lead to 8-6. Alana Ortega's infield single scored Garcia, getting the score to 8-7.

Yvonne Whaley then tied the game with a sacrifice fly, bringing Longoria to the plate. The freshman got the job done, lashing a ball into the gap in left-center field for the win.

San Jacinto College women's basketball player Eryka Sydney was recognized as a National Junior College Athletic Association Division I honorable mention All-American selection after leading SJC in scoring during the 2017-2018 season at 17 points per game.

Also a first team All-American as a freshman, Sydney scored more than 1,000 points over her two seasons with the Gators.

Now at Texas Tech University, Sydney has started nine of the Lady Red Raiders' 12 games, averaging just over seven points per contest.

A clutch 4-3 win at La Porte had the Dobie Longhorns in the varsity baseball playoffs moving forward, and a season-ending win over Memorial April brought a playoff berth.

Dobie senior midfielder Sebastian Leal was named the Most Valuable Player in District 22-6A varsity boys' soccer, while fellow senior Ramon Cahue was named the Goalkeeper of the Year for the second straight season.

The team captains helped the Longhorns to their third straight league championship at 13-1, including a 12-match winning streak before the team's regional quarterfinal playoff loss to North Shore.

At the Class 5A District 4 meet, the Lutheran South Academy Pioneers were led by a pair of senior girls, who pocketed district championships along with invitations to regionals.

At 98 feet, 11 inches, Skylar Johnson won the discus for Lutheran South, and teammate Gabi Scott to championed the triple jump with a leap of 31-9.

Johnson also represented the Lady Pioneers in the shot put after she was second in the event, coming through with a top throw of 33-2.

Francesca Scott, a



Sophomore right-hander Daniel Garza was brilliant throughout the season as he helped guide Dobie to a playoff berth against Atascocita. For his effort, Garza was a first team all-district selection in District 22-6A.

sophomore and younger sister of Gabi Scott, made her way to regionals as her throw of 84-6 was second in the event.

Other silver medalists for Lutheran South Academy at the district meet included junior Bethany Address, who cleared 4-8 in the high jump for second place.

Teammate Laura Demchak, a sophomore, made her way over the 4-4 mark for fourth place in the same event.

At 7-0, junior Allison Klein was second in the pole vault, with freshman teammate Isla Diertert fourth at 6-6 for a regional qualification.

Senior Vanessa Campos ran the 3,200-meter event in 13 minutes, 42.79 seconds for third place and a regional berth, and sophomore Laiya Palmer was third in the long jump with a top effort of 15-9 1/2 to advance.

Eight games remained in Region XIV action as the San Jacinto College baseball team kept preparing for what promised to be another deep postseason run.

With 13 straight wins and counting, the Gators were playing as well as any team in the country as the regular season neared a close.

The Gators swept Galveston in April as the Whitecaps were allowed no earned runs over the four games.

In the series opener, San Jacinto staff ace Jacob Cantleberry won his 21st

career game, tossing five innings to run his record this season to 10-1.

Cantleberry scattered four hits and struck out four to get the win.

Thanks in large part to an explosive night from Taylor Pleasants and a shutout pitching performance from Alana Ortega, the Dobie varsity softball program remained alive in the Region III playoffs.

Crushing North Shore 11-0 in five innings at San Jacinto College South, the Lady Longhorns advanced to the area playoff round for the first time since 2012.

Dobie went on to face Clear Falls in the area round and led 3-0 entering the bottom of the sixth inning before the Lady Knights plated four runs to steal a 4-3 win, ending Dobie's season.

In a precursor of what is surely to become a heated rivalry in the revamped District 22-6A ranks later this spring, the Dobie and Atascocita varsity baseball teams met in the bidistrict baseball playoffs, with the Eagles sweeping the series two games to none.

Atascocita arrived at that point by taking second place in 21-6A, going 20-9 overall and 11-3 in 21-6A, second to Kingwood.

Dobie, in the midst of its finest season since 2011 in terms of overall record, was 22-8 entering the postseason after closing out the District 22-6A slate with a 4-1 win over Memorial that netted a

10-4 record and the No. 3 seed.

Dobie graduate Chelsea Blakely clearly loves volleyball.

Following four-year and record-setting playing careers both with the Lady Longhorns and at UT-Pan American, Blakely is now one of the sport's top ambassadors at the collegiate level.

Now a Senior Associate Athletic Director at UT-Rio Grand Valley, Blakely was in 2018 appointed to the NCAA women's Volleyball Rules Committee.

"It really has been such an amazing experience," Blakely said of her career path to this point.

"I'm so grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the sport. It has provided so much opportunity in my life."

Dobie High School graduate and current University of Houston-Victoria junior softball player Marissa Longoria was named the Jaguars' Softball Player of the Year at the team's annual banquet to end the 2018 season.

Longoria, the Jaguars' primary starting catcher since the start of the 2017 campaign, hit .218 this season with 10 runs scored and 12 runs batted in over 39 games.

Her biggest contributions came defensively as Longoria was named the Defensive Player of the Year in the Red River Athletic Conference and was also an all-conference first-

Continued on Page 3B



Leilani Vargas (above), a four-year varsity player at Dobie, and "Big" Kevin Nguyen both played No. 1 singles for the team during the fall team tennis season. Seeded No. 1 in the draw, they came up with first place and a regional berth, losing just seven total games in three matches.

hunt to repeat as Region III champions.

And like in 2017, making a trip to the Region III Final Four meant the Longhorns would have to go through North Shore in the regional quarterfinals, the third straight meeting in the same round between the two teams.

In 2016, North Shore ended the Longhorns' season with a win.

But a season later, the Longhorns turned the tables on the Mustangs, using a big quarterfinal win as a springboard to the program's first-ever Region III championship.

In the opening two rounds of the 2018 playoffs, the Longhorns used late-game scores to advance, setting up the clash with North Shore.

In the opening bidistrict round at Goose Creek Memorial, Dobie's Raul Hernandez scored the eventual game-winner midway through the second half as the locals moved on with a 2-1 win over the Patriots.

Moving ahead to the area-round tilt against Friendswood, Dobie's Bryan Nava scored the game's first goal in the 52nd minute, and teammate Luis Arellano put the game on ice with a score with five minutes remaining as the Longhorns punched their ticket for a rematch with North Shore.

Just five games remained in the regular season for the Dobie varsity softball team.

While the locals are not exactly where they want to be just yet, they were close. Best yet, they had every opportunity to control their fate down the stretch.

A 17-4 pounding of South Houston gave the Lady Longhorns their third straight win, their seventh in nine District 22-6A contests. The team would continue its momentum.

Lutheran South Academy's Alan Ngo qualified to compete at the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools state tennis championships at the Waco Regional Tennis Center after winning the district championship without losing a game.

Atascocita, a Region III finalist a season ago, defeated Dobie for the second time in the bidistrict

country at nationals later in the summer.

The state competition began with 24 competing teams bowling three complete games in the singles event.

The scores were totaled cumulatively and the top 12 teams advanced to the second round, where they seeded and placed in the bracket play.

Bracket play featured games with five players bowling together for one complete game, and the winning team advanced to the next round.

Dobie head coach Steven Mullins said that the margin of error that kept the boys' team from securing a first place finish and a state title was razor thin.

"For the tournament, our boys averaged a 221, while the champions only averaged a 206," said Mullins.

"They beat us when we just happened to have our lowest scoring games of the competition."

The Lady Longhorns' varsity track and field team certainly entered the 22-6A championships with confidence after their performance at the Rockhold Relays in Baytown.

Each of Dobie's three relay teams scored points, and freshman Amari Singleton was also on point in a couple of individual events, as was Kiome Dixon.

Singleton landed Dobie's lone gold medal, winning the 400-meter run in a time of 58.32 seconds.

At the 800-meter distance, Singleton's time of 2 minutes, 28.94 seconds placed her fifth.

Dobie's best relay finish came in the 4x200 as Erin Fleming, Deira Jackson, Ambreon Jones and Aajaylah Reed teamed for a time of 1:45.87 for second place, a full two seconds behind champion Baytown Sterling.

Fleming, Jackson, Jones and Rachel Smith combined in the 4x100-meter relay as Dobie posted a time of 50.35 for fourth place.

In the 4x400-meter event, it was Brisasia Garza, Jones, Atziri Galarza and Singleton teaming for a clocking of 4:12.24 and fifth place.

The Dobie track and field teams also sent several athletes to the District

The Lady Longhorns are also off to the area meet in the relays as the 4x100-meter team of Erin Fleming, Deira Jackson, Ambreon Jones and Rachel Smith placed second at 50.23.

Also, Fleming, Jackson, Amya Ray and Aajaylah Reed competed in the 4x200 as Dobie was third in a time of 1:46.52.

In the 4x400-meter event, Dobie was second in a time of 4:19.51 as Itziri Galarza was joined by Garza, Jones and Singleton.

A time of 49.87 got Jones to the area meet in the 300-meter hurdles as she was fourth at district. In the 100-meter dash, Reed advanced as the No. 3 finisher at 12.64. Kiome Dixon was fourth at 12.75.

District 21-6A champion North Shore headed to the Region III boys' soccer tournament at the expense of Dobie.

The Mustangs got it done by scoring a goal with roughly 15 minutes remaining, defeating the defending Region III champion Longhorns 2-1 at Galena Park ISD Stadium.

For Dobie, the 2018 season came to a close at 21-4-2. The three-time running District 22-6A winners had won 13 straight matches before the loss to North Shore.

Against the Mustangs, Sebastian Leal scored the Longhorns' goal on an assist by Antonio Arias, who finished 2018 with a team-high 12.

It was the third straight time that North Shore and Dobie had met in the regional quarterfinals. The Mustangs previously prevailed in 2016 as well.

North Shore, 22-1-3 in 2018 after its win over Dobie, advanced to the Region III Final Four to meet 2011 state champion Strake Jesuit. Jesuit defeated North Shore before Alief Elsieit downed Jesuit for the Region III crown.

Dobie tennis coach Manuel Moreno Jr. correctly predicted that those who played their best two days of tennis would advance to the regional tournament.

He was right, and fortunately for his Longhorns, four of those players were wearing burnt orange and white colors.



Eryka Sydney was a two-time All-American guard at San Jacinto College, leading the program to consecutive national tournament appearances along the way. She is now a junior playing at Texas Tech University in Lubbock.



Dobie High School graduate and current UH-Victoria junior softball player Marissa Longoria (in catching gear) enjoyed a banner season in 2018 for the Lady Jaguars. Making just one error in 240 chances, Longoria was named the Defensive Player of the Year in the Red River Athletic Conference, which included a berth as the league's first-team catcher. She was also a Scholar Athlete within the RRAC for the second straight school year. Photo courtesy UHV

Special athletes, teams made 2018 year in sports one for the ages

Continued from Page 2B
 team pick after her stellar play behind the dish. Longoria, a health science major, was also named a Scholar Athlete within the RRAC for the second straight school year.
 Last month, Longoria was also honored with the RRAC's Character Athlete of the Week designation.
 From a local standpoint, the high school track and field season come to a close, and select athletes from Clear Brook and Dobie high schools had quite a bit of which to be proud.
 The Region III Championships, long considered the most competitive of any of the four in the Class 6A ranks, played out at Turner Stadium in Humble with only state berths left to be had.
 Kenneth Pree, who is now at the University of Houston, was involved in the long jump finals, the final event of his prep career.
 There, he went against teammate John'te Horace and others from across the region. In the end, Pree's top jump of 22 feet, 7 3/4 inches landed him fifth place overall.
 Horace, meanwhile, was just a tick behind Pree, soaring 22-4 3/4 for sixth place in the same event.
 Could the San Jacinto College baseball team finally crack through and win a national title after two near misses?
 Gator fans were about to find out as the locals prepared to compete in the Region XIV Postseason Tournament at Roadrun-

ner Field on the campus of Angelina College in Lufkin, an event the Gators had dominated over the previous three seasons.
 San Jacinto, which was ranked No. 1 in the National Junior College Athletic Association's Division I poll on multiple occasions, was the top seed from the South division at the Region XIV event.
 The Gators finished the regular season at 44-12 overall after winning their final three games against Alvin. The locals wound up 28-7 in the region.
 Alvin won the series opener by a 5-2 count before the Gators finished strong. In the second game of the twin bill, the Gators won 11-1 as Luke Matheny went five innings for the win on the mound.
 Matt Goodheart tripled and doubled and drove in three runs. Peter Zimmerman, who also drove in three runs, had two hits, as did Tyriese Silas and Sergio Macias. Jacob Matheny also doubled.
 Alerick Soularie had three hits and drove in four as SJC defeated Alvin 12-1 May 5. Silas and Herbert Iser also had two hits each.
 Striking for five runs in the sixth inning, Blinn ended San Jacinto College's softball season at the Region XIV Postseason Tournament in Port Arthur.
 San Jacinto finished the season at 24-31 overall after losing to Bossier Parish 4-3 and defeating Angelina 6-1 before the elimination game setback against

the Bucs.
 In the end, South division No. 1 seed Galveston and North division No. 1 seed Tyler advanced to the National Junior College Athletic Association's Division I World Series in St. George, Utah.
 As few as four outs stood between the Dobie team and an appearance in Class 6A Region III quarterfinal round.
 But Clear Falls had other thoughts. First getting a two-run single from Juli Niedermaier and then a two-out, go-ahead two-run double from Aaliyah Garcia, the Lady Knights rallied from a 3-0 deficit in the bottom of the sixth inning, stunning Dobie 4-3 in an area-round winner-take-all clash at Clear Lake High School.
 Dobie junior starting pitcher Alana Ortega was working on a scoreless string of 10 innings in the postseason when she stepped into the circle for the top of the sixth inning.
 The Lady Longhorns, who got a solo homer in the top of the first inning from Taylor Pleasants to go with a two-run single from Jacqueline Garcia in the fifth, seemed in control with its then 3-0 advantage.
 But the Lady Knights got things started in the sixth with a lead-off walk from Katie Hoke.
 Ortega came back to strike out Erica Riley for the first out, but Baylee Freudenberg followed with an RBI double, getting Falls on the scoreboard.
 Niedermaier then

smacked an RBI single as Falls got within 3-2.
 A fielder's choice helped Dobie register the second out, and Ortega took Garcia to 0-2 in the count before it went full at 3-2.
 Garcia then sent the go-ahead, two-run double to left, sending the Lady Knights' faithful into a frenzy.
 Dobie tried one last-ditch effort in the top of the seventh inning but it wasn't to be as Clear Falls advanced.
 Junior distance runner Noa Miller was the person of the week at Lutheran South Academy after winning a gold medal at the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools 5A Track and Field Championships in Waco.
 In a time of 1 minute, 59.55 seconds, Miller was the first to the finish line in the 800-meter run at Waco Midway High School.
 He was the lone gold medalist for the Pioneers, who also delivered numerous solid performances at state. The boys' team finished sixth in the final totals, and the girls were 10th.
 LSA's Carson Noack made a bid for gold in the pole vault, where he cleared 12 feet, 6 inches but had to settle for a silver medal.
 Atascocita, now one of four newcomers to the District 22-6A varsity baseball ranks this season ousted Dobie from the bidistrict playoffs last June with 7-0 and 13-6 victories over the Longhorns. In 2017, Kingwood, which is also set to join 22-6A, handed Dobie a bidistrict playoff round setback.
 At 21-8 entering the postseason, the Longhorns were planning to give the Eagles a run for their money. But the Eagles simply got the jump in both games.
 Two runs in the bottom of the first and two more in their half of the second gave the Eagles an early 4-0 lead en route to the 7-0 victory at Atascocita High School.
 Dobie then-sophomore Daniel Garza pitched well in his four-inning stint, but walks, which were a problem in both games, helped the Eagles.
 Atascocita led the second game 5-1 before the Longhorns got to within 5-4. However, the Eagles' eight-run fourth inning provided the difference.
 So Dobie's 2018 season was ended, while Atascocita, the No. 2 seed out of District 21-6A, advanced to take on Clear Falls in the area playoffs.
 The Texas Association of Soccer Coaches recognized a select group of players from the Dobie varsity boys' program.
 A season after winning the Region III title, the Longhorns once again stood out in 2018, going



Alerick Soularie, a freshman from Atascocita High School, was one of the top hitters in a variety of categories for the San Jacinto College baseball program as the team again reached the college world series. Soularie is now a sophomore at the University of Tennessee after hitting .402 as a freshman with SJC.

20-4-3 over the course of the season.
 Dobie won its fourth consecutive District 22-6A championship with a 13-1 record and then went on to defeat Goose Creek Memorial and Friendswood before a regional quarterfinal loss to North Shore.
 At season's end, TASCOCO honored District 22-6A Most Valuable Player Sebastian Leal, 22-6A Goalkeeper of the Year and 22-6A first team forward Kevin Hernandez as All-Region III first team selections.
 Oscar Trevino, also a 22-6A first team selection, was a TASCOCO Honorable Mention pick. Clear Brook senior Gareth Cupples was a TASCOCO first team choice, and senior teammate Jordan Greenshield was a TASCOCO Honorable Mention choice.
 Former Dobie High School varsity football head coach Mike Norman landed on the staff at C.E. King High School in the Sheldon ISD as an offensive assistant coach.
 A longtime assistant at Pearland High School, Norman succeeded Jim Phillips at Dobie prior to 2015. The Longhorns reached the postseason that first year but subsequently missed two straight. Norman resigned at Dobie following the 2017 campaign.
 Dobie varsity girls' basketball head coach Shane Brown guided his team to its second straight District 22-6A title and a bidistrict playoff round win. He then called it a wrap in the

coaching field.
 Following a second-round playoff loss to Alief Elsik, Brown elected to leave his role, exiting a program at Dobie that has been on the rise under his leadership.
 Senior left-hander Kolby Johnson tossed a one-hit shutout as the Lutheran South Academy varsity baseball team reached the state championship game with a 4-0 win over San Antonio Christian at Crosby High School.
 With the win, the Pioneers advanced to the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools' Class 4A state championship game.
 That meant two state championships in four seasons for the Lutheran South Academy baseball program after a 7-3 win over Brook Hill Two teams, and two very different paths to a crown.
 State semifinal hero Kolby Johnson was a freshman pitcher on that 2015 team, and Lutheran South Academy also featured right-hander Paul Salazar, who was eventually drafted by the St. Louis Cardinals.
 Salazar, having battled back from an injury setback, is now a free agent looking to get back into professional baseball.
 Trent Franson and Evan McDonald, older brother to LSA's Ethan McDonald, were also among the players to compete collegiately. Franson played the 2018 season with San Jacinto College.
 But this 2018 team featured just four seniors.

Three Lutheran South Academy baseball players earned Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools all-state nominations after helping lead the Pioneers to the 2018 Division II state championship.
 Johnson, a senior left-hander and outfielder, was terrific this season as he helped the team win a second state crown.
 A University of Central Arkansas commit, Johnson homered and tossed a one-hitter in the state semifinal game.
 Following the season, Johnson earned TAPPS first team all-state status, and junior shortstop Jared Chambers, who had a two-run single in the state final, was named to the TAPPS second team all-state accolades.
 Additionally, Pioneers' junior catcher Chad Allen was named to the TAPPS all-state honorable mention list. Johnson dominated S.A. Christian on the mound and also homered in the first inning to give his team the only run it would need to win the state semifinal.
 With one out in the first inning, Johnson blasted a solo shot over the left field fence for a quick 1-0 lead.
 LSA tacked on insurance runs three times during the game, with leadoff hitter Evan Buisson driving in a pair.
 Buisson was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded and later rocked an RBI triple as the Pioneers, winners of 30 of 37 games to that point in the season, got within one win of the

state championship.
 LSA began the post-season with a 12-2, 13-2 series sweep of San Antonio Incarnate Word before beating rival Second Baptist 3-2 to reach the state tournament.
 The San Jacinto College baseball team won the 2018 Region XIV Tournament with an 8-7 win over Northeast Texas Community College, earning its fourth consecutive berth in the Alpine Bank Junior College World Series.
 Overall, it was the 26th JUCO World Series appearance for San Jac, which has won five national titles and finished as national runner-up on 10 occasions.
 Clear Brook High School catcher Gavin Machado was named a District 24-6A first-team pick for the 2018 season, as selected by the league's respective head coaches.
 Machado, a three-year starter and currently a freshman baseball player at the University of Texas at San Antonio, was one of the most productive offensive players in 24-6A during the 2018 season even as the Wolverines struggled to a 2-12 finish in the league.
 Senior Yvonne Whaley capped her brilliant four-year varsity softball career at Dobie by grabbing the District 22-6A Most Valuable Player Award for the 2018 season.
 Whaley, who is continuing her playing career at Texas Tech University this spring, led the 22-6A ranks in hits and batting average during both the 2017 and 2018 seasons.
 Lutheran South Academy senior-to-be Adrian Morales was named to the All-Greater Houston second team after leading the Pioneers to the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools' Division 2 state title in March.
 Morales tallied 31 goals and 10 assists as he helped the Pioneers to a 27-7-3 record, which included a sudden death shootout win over Garland Brighter Horizons in the state title game.
 Dobie's Sebastian Leal, who guided the Longhorns to a fourth straight District 22-6A championship and an appearance in the Region III quarterfinals, was a first-team AGH pick.
 Following the 2018 softball season, seven student-athletes from San Jacinto College earned post-season honors.
 Freshman Allison Bravo, a Class of 2017 Dobie High School graduate and sophomore Taylor McHenry were both named to the all-conference and all-Region XIV first teams.
 In addition, freshman Michelle Kristoff, also of Dobie and sophomores Natalie Hoyt, Mackenzie Kotrla, Katlyn Rivera and Riley Bullen earned

second team honors.
 Another season, another without a national championship for the San Jacinto College baseball program.
 The Gators, second overall at National Junior College Athletic Association's Division World Series in both 2016 and 2017, finished third this time around.
 Following a 17-0 loss to Walters State in second-round action, San Jacinto fought its way back into title contention, eliminating Monroe, N.Y. 11-1 and Southern Idaho 8-6 but then came trouble.
 Chipola, Fla., which defeated the locals twice consecutively to win the 2017 World Series crown, eliminated SJC at the 2018 world series with an 11-0 win.
 Chipola went on to win its second straight national title, beating Walters State 10-7 in the championship finale.
 San Jacinto, which finished the 2018 season at 49-17 overall, saw sophomore catcher Herbert Iser named to the all-tournament squad.
 In major league draft news in June, San Jacinto College freshman left-handed pitcher Rylan Kaufman of Friendswood High School led the way as San Jacinto College saw seven of its baseball players selected in the 2018 MLB First-Year Player Draft earlier this month.
 Kaufman, who went 7-1 in 2018 as a starter with a 2.18 earned run average, was taken in the 12th round, the 362nd player overall, by the Kansas City Royals. In 53 2/3 innings over the 2-18 season, Kaufman fanned 59 hitters.
 He also won a game in the JUCO World Series as the Gators finished third overall in 2018.
 Besides Kaufman, the Gators had three other pitchers and three position players chosen over the course of the three-day draft.
 Trey Dillard, who stepped into the closer's role for the Gators and wound up with a 2-0 record and seven saves, was picked in the 16th round by the Los Angeles Dodgers.
 Dillard, a Phoenix native, struck out 33 hitters in just 21 innings of work. The hard-throwing right-hander finished with a 1.71 ERA.
 San Jacinto's first position player taken in the draft was sophomore catcher Iser, who helped guide the Gators to back-to-back World Series appearances during his career. In next week's *Leader*, we will continue our look back at 2018 with the final of three installments. Be sure to pick up what promises to be a hot read.



Having guided the Dobie varsity girls' basketball program to back-to-back district titles and then bidistrict playoff round victories, head coach Shane Brown stepped away from coaching to spend more time with family.

CALENDAR

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10
 7 a.m.
AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787 for details, or drop in.
 9:30 a.m.
NASA Aglow Community Lighthouse - Second Thursday of the month, 9:30 a.m., Praise Chapel, 18516 Hwy. 3 in Webster. The public is welcome and encouraged to bring others. For details, call 281-910-1971.
 10 a.m.
Fun Bunch - for senior citizens, ages 55 and older, meets the second Thursday of each month at 10 a.m. at the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce, 10500 Scarsdale Blvd. For details, call Ronn Canon at 281-610-8999 or the chamber at 281-481-5516.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - 299'er games Tuesday and Thursday, 10 a.m., 16614 Sea Lark, 77062. Call the club at 281-480-1911 or email at jpochnsner@aol.com for details.
 11:30 a.m.
ABWA - Southeast Express Network - American Business Women's Association-South meets the second Thursday, Spring Creek Barbeque, 9005 Broadway (FM-518), Pearland. Lunch is 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. (\$20). Includes networking with professional business women and guest speaker. Women of all ages/occupations invited. Bring business cards. Reservations appreciated. Visit www.seen-abwa.org.
 Noon
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group, noon, 2245 N. Main, Pearland. For details, call 713-856-1611.
 6:30 p.m.
Pearland Area Republican's Club - meets monthly on the second Thursday (except December, June and July) at the Pearland Church of Christ Annex, 2217 N. Grand Blvd.,

Pearland. For details, call Gary at 281-993-8335.
 7 p.m.
Congregation Shaar Hashalom's - Rabbi Stuart Federow hosts free discussions on Judaism and religion in general, open to the public, second Thursdays, at Victor's, 1425 NASA Pkwy., (next to "space" McDonald's). This is the conservative synagogue in the Bay Area. For details, contact the office at 281-488-5861 or at cash@shaarhashalom.org.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Women's Group, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM-518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). For details, call 713-856-1611.
FRIDAY, JANUARY 11
 7 a.m.
AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787 for details, or drop in.
 10 a.m.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - Open games Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 10 a.m., 16614 Sea Lark, 77062. Call the club at 281-480-1911 or email the director at jpochnsner@aol.com for details.
 Noon
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - West End Group, noon, Shepherd of the Heart United Methodist Church, 12005 County Rd. 39, Pearland. For details, call 713-856-1611.
 7 p.m.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of NA, open meeting, 2245 N. Main St., Pearland. Call 713-856-1611.
 8 p.m.
Serenity Now Al-Anon Group - meets at CrossRoads UMC Fridays, 8 to 9 p.m., 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. Family members and friends of problem drinkers/addicts share, learn Al-Anon principles, that they are not alone, and discover choices available. For details,

call 281-484-9243.
SATURDAY, JANUARY 12
 7:30 a.m.
Alcoholics Anonymous - "Breakfast with Bill", Saturdays, 7:30 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787, or drop in.
 10 a.m.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of NA, open meeting, 2245 N. Main St., Pearland. For information, call 713-856-1611.
 11 a.m.
Al-Anon Meeting (Women Only, English) - For women affected by an addict. Saturdays, 11 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, Cornell Conference room #111. Call 281-487-8787, or drop in.
 1 p.m.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - Open games Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m., 16614 Sea Lark, 77062. Call the club at 281-480-1911 or email the director at jpochnsner@aol.com for details.
 8 p.m.
Alcoholics Anonymous - meeting at CrossRoads UMC on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 8 p.m., 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. For details, call 281-484-9243.
SUNDAY, JANUARY 13
 1 p.m.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - Open games Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m., 16614 Sea Lark, 77062. Call the club at 281-480-1911 or email the director at jpochnsner@aol.com for details.
 2 p.m.
Grief Support Group - For adults who have lost a loved one. Meets Sundays, except Mother's Day, Easter and Christmas, 2 to 3:15 p.m., First United Methodist Church 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena. For details, call 281-487-8787.

Scleroderma Support Group - Do you know someone with scleroderma? Join a support group on the second Sunday, 2 to 4 p.m., at Memorial Hermann Northeast Hospital in Humble. Bring a friend. Call Jacob Davila at 281-706-6232, or email jdavila@scleroderma.org.
 5:30 p.m.
Celebrate Recovery - A faith-based 12-Step Program, Sundays, 5:30 p.m., in the Chapel at Life Church, 9900 Alameda Genoa. Call 713-419-2635 for details or to RSVP for child care.
 7 p.m.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of NA meets Sundays, 7 p.m., 2245 N. Main St., Pearland. For details, call 713-856-1611.
 8 p.m.
Alcoholics Anonymous - meeting at CrossRoads UMC on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 8 p.m., 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. For information, call 281-484-9243.
MONDAY, JANUARY 14
 10 a.m.
Al-Anon Deer Park - Mondays, 10 to 11 a.m. Literature Study. In His Presence Fellowship Church, 1202 East P Street, Deer Park. Enter through back of church. Call 409-454-5720 for details.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - Open games Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 10 a.m., 16614 Sea Lark, 77062. Call the club at 281-480-1911 or email jpochnsner@aol.com for details.
 11:30 a.m.
Overeaters Anonymous Deer Park - 11:30 a.m. Literature Study. In His Presence Fellowship Church, 1202 East P Street, Deer Park. Enter through Fellowship Hall in back. Call 409-454-5720 for details, or drop in.
 Noon
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group, noon, 2245 N. Main, Pearland. For details, call 713-856-1611.
Continued on Page 4B

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SELLING WASHER and dryer \$250 - for both. Call 832-687-1236. 1-10
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CALENDAR

Continued from Page 3B

MONDAY, JANUARY 14

CrossRoads UMC - Mercy Hearts meets on the second and fourth Mondays, 6 p.m., at CrossRoads UMC, 10030 Scarsdale. The focus is support for families of inmates and ex-offenders. The program will provide a complimentary meal, group Bible study and discussion. Child care is provided. This is a confidential ministry and information will be treated accordingly. For details, contact C. Talbot at 281-245-7072 or Chucktal@msn.com. 6 p.m.

Scrabble Club #511 - Meets Monday at IHOP, 11222 Fuqua. Come, improve crossword skills. Call 281-488-2923 for details.

Mended Hearts Cardiac Support Group - A national organization dedicated to inspiring hope in heart patients and families meets the second Monday at the Clear Lake Heart Towers auditorium, 495 Medical Center Blvd., Webster. A free meal begins at 6:30 p.m., followed by a speaker. For information, call 281-538-4648. 7 p.m.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of NA, open meeting, 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). For details, call 713-856-1611.

Sagemont Civic Club - Meetings are held the second Monday, Sagemont Park Recreation Center, 11507 Hughes Rd. 7:30 p.m.

Congregation Shaar Hashalom - Israeli Folk Dancing on Monday, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m., 16020 El Camino Real, 77062. \$4/session or \$35/10 sessions for CSH members and \$5/session or \$45/10 sessions for nonmembers. Everyone is welcome. For information, contact 281-488-5861 or csh@shaarhashalom.org.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Saint Luke's 12 Step Recovery open meeting Mondays, 7:30 p.m. in the education bldg., 11011 Hall Rd., 77089. For details, call Russell at 832-483-6715.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15

AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787 or drop in. 9:30 a.m.

Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum - Exhibits include dioramas, a turn-of-the-century doctor's office and an old-time kitchen. Tuesday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., 204 S. Main, Pasadena. For details, call 713-472-0565. 10 a.m.

Clear Lake Bridge Club - 299'er games Tuesday and Thursday, 10 a.m., 16614 Sea Lark, 77062. Call the club at 281-480-1911 or email the director at jpochnsr@aol.com for details.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group, noon, 2245 N. Main, Pearland. For details, call 713-856-1611.
Rotary Club of Pearland - Meets Tuesdays, noon to 1 p.m., Golfcrest Country Club, 2509 Country Club Dr., Pearland. Lunch is \$15. Variety of interesting speakers. For details, call 281-900-7257. Email nalix@texas-citizensbank.com. 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Free dance lessons - taught by Lewis and Betty Whistler (35 years of experience) at Hometown Heroes Park, 1001 E League City Parkway, on Tuesdays. Bringing a partner is not required. There is a different dance focus monthly. For details, call Betty at 832-517-5833. For questions about League City's activity card, call 281-554-1180. 1:30 p.m.

TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) - #1530 meets at the Sagemont Park Community Center, 11507 Hughes Rd., For details, call Jeanette Sumrall at 713-946-3713. 2 p.m.

The National Active and Retired Federal Employees - NARFE Chapter 941 meets the third Tuesday, El Franco Lee Park Community Center, 9500 Hall Rd. Visitors welcome. For details, call Roy at 713-734-1461 or EFL Center at 281-464-9708. No meeting in Aug.

Clear Lake Bridge Club Lab Class - Tuesday, 2 p.m., 16614 Sea Lark, 77062. For details/classes, contact Dr. Glandorf at drglandorf@sbcglobal.net or 281-488-6318. 7 p.m.

Houston Skyscraper Shadows Civic Club - meets the third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at 7900 Fuqua (inside Covenant of Faith United Methodist Church). There is no meeting in December. For details, contact Cathy@houston skyscrapershadows.org or call 713-332-6294.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of NA, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church-youth bldg. For information, call 713-856-1611.

Positive Interaction Program - meets the third Tuesday, 7 p.m., at Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital, 11800 Astoria, first floor staff meeting room. PIP is police and citizens working together making neighborhoods safer. Bring a friend. For information, call Officer Richard Buitron at 281-218-3900.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16

AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m.,

First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787 for details, or drop in. 9:30 a.m.

Carmelites - a nondenominational senior citizen social group that meets at 15500 El Camino Real in Clear Lake on the first and third Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. for a time filled with fun, fellowship, lending library, coffee and bingo. The meetings are open to anyone age 50 or older and there are no dues. Day trips and extended trips are available. Deposits are being taken for Texas Hill Country and Gulf Coast, April 1 - 4; Cuba Cruise, Nov. 9 - 16; Classical Italy by Rail, Oct. 15 - 24; New York City Holiday, Dec. 6 - 10; and Classic Danube River Cruise with Oberammergau Passion Play, June 7 - 16, 2020. Plan ahead to join the trips. For details, call Marilyn at 713-947-2388. 9:30 a.m.

The Community Club - meets monthly on the third Wednesday at Golden Corral, 4021 Spencer Hwy., in Pasadena. Social time is 9:30 a.m.; meeting is at 10 a.m. The club is a charitable organization of women helping the Salvation Army feed and care for homebound elderly/disabled people, children and the homeless, providing scholarships for Bridge Over Troubled Water clients. Day trips may be scheduled, followed by a guest speaker/program with fellowship and lunch. New members and guests are invited. For details, email Jmopry@yahoo.com. 10 a.m.

Clear Lake Bridge Club - Open games Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 10 a.m., 16614 Sea Lark, 77062. Call the club at 281-480-1911 or email the director at jpochnsr@aol.com for details. 11:30 a.m.

Houston Hobby Airport Lions Club - meets monthly, first and third Wednesday, Golden Corral, 4021 Spencer Hwy., Pasadena. For information, email Teresa Dover at doverbookkeeper@aol.com.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group, noon, 2245 N. Main, Pearland. For details, call 713-856-1611. 1 - 3:30 p.m.

Hometown Heroes Park - has Hump Day Dance to practice ballroom dances (not lessons) in a casual environment. A variety of rhythms are played from entry to advanced dancing levels at 1001 E League City Pkwy. League City nonresidents must purchase activity card (see Tuesday 12:30 p.m. dance for details). Help is available to assist learning dance moves. For details information on the activity card, call the city at 281-554-1180. 7 p.m.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of NA, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church-youth bldg. For information, call 713-856-1611.

Bay Area Turning Point Crisis Intervention - Call 281-286-2525 (24-hour crisis hotline) for confidential domestic violence/sexual abuse support for women. Visit www.bayareaturningpoint.org for details. 8 p.m.

Alcoholics Anonymous - meeting at CrossRoads UMC on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 8 p.m., 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. For details, call 281-484-9243.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17

AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787 for information, or drop in. 10 a.m.

Clear Lake Bridge Club - 299'er games Tuesday and Thursday, 10 a.m., 16614 Sea Lark, 77062. Call the club at 281-480-1911 or email the director at jpochnsr@aol.com for details.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group, noon, 2245 N. Main, Pearland. For more information, call 713-856-1611. 6 p.m.

Texas German Society, South Belt (SE) Chapter - A social group focused on the culture, music, heritage and language of Texas German immigrants. Meets the third Thursday, monthly, 6 p.m., Fellowship Hall of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, 10310 Scarsdale Blvd. Visitors welcome. Email OpaGivesHugs@gmail.com for details. 7 p.m.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Women's Group, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). For more information, call 713-856-1611.

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The Dobie High School varsity boys' team defeated Clear Creek 3-1 Jan. 5 at The Rig in Pearland to claim the championship trophy at the Pasadena ISD Cup tournament. Members of the team are, left to right, (front row) Israel Perez, Daniel Hernandez, Alberto Chavez, Christian Saldivar, Illsen Urrutia, Oscar Treviño, Fernando Portillo, (back row) Josh Hernandez, Alan Lopez, Jean Arreguin, Adrian Garcia, Imanol Peña, Eris Acosta, Raul Hernandez, Eddie Benavides, Manuel Trejos, Isaac Cortez, Eli Donaho, Gerardo Torres and Oscar Medrano. The Longhorns are now headed to the Austin Lakes Elite Showcase Jan. 10-12 in Austin.



At left, Dobie's Oscar Trevino (8) watches as teammate Alberto Chavez (2) paces up the field against Clements Jan. 4 during the Longhorns' 2-2 tie during Pasadena ISD Cup play. Dobie went on to win the tournament championship Jan. 5 with a 3-1 win over Clear Creek at The Rig in Pearland. Photo by John Bechtle

Austin Lakes Elite Showcase
Jan. 10-12, Austin

Dobie boys vs. Juarez Lincoln
Jan. 10, 3 p.m., Westlake H.S.

Dobie boys vs. Seven Lakes
Jan. 11, 1 p.m., Lake Travis H.S.

Dobie boys vs. S.A. Johnson
Jan. 12, 8 a.m., Lake Travis H.S.

Dobie girls at PNG invite
Jan. 10-12, Port Neches

Brook boys host CCISD tourn.
Jan. 10-12, Webster

Brook girls at I-10 Shootout
Jan. 10-12, Katy

Pasadena ISD Cup Defeating Creek, Dobie boys secure yet another tourney

Continued from Page 1B ly in the final pool play game for both teams, the Longhorns were aggressive on the attack but simply could not find the back of the net in an eventual scoreless tie.

Based on goal differential and other tiebreakers, Dobie advanced to the Pasadena ISD Cup championship match, meeting Clear Creek.

Like they did against Channelview, the Longhorns started quickly and were able to ease past the Wildcats for the championship trophy.

Manrique is not ready to change the name of the tournament to the Dobie Cup. Far from it, but it's easy to see that his team has used the annual event to get its season off and running.

This time around, the Longhorns scored and assisted on nine goals and surrendered five. Dobie figures to have solid goal-scoring ability with the likes of Nava, Chavez and Hernandez up top. Yet, the squad does have some inexperienced players in the back.

"It doesn't matter how we got there (tournament title), but we got there," Manrique said.

"We had to learn the hard way against Clements, but we jumped on Channelview and got a nice win. Same thing against Clear Creek. You're always proud of the guys when you win a tournament."

The defensive group gave up the equalizer late against Clements, and there were other miscues. Manrique believes things will improve with time, but there is never enough preparatory time in a regular season.

Benavides is a junior with only junior varsity experience in the nets. He's replacing Ramon Cahue, a two-time Goalkeeper of the Year in District 22-6A who has since graduated. Time and experience will help Benavides, Manrique said, and the rest of the defense will need to step it up equally.

"Eddie (Benavides) is stepping into a new role in terms of playing varsity soccer, and there are issues with speed of the game, spacing needed and other things.

"In terms of the entire defense, we just have to be a little smarter, a little more clever. It'll come in time."

Dobie will now travel to the Austin Lakes Elite Showcase in Austin, where a very difficult three-game stretch awaits.

Over three days, the Longhorns will face Juarez Lincoln, San Antonio Johnson and Seven Lakes, all ranked in the Texas Association of Soccer Coaches Preseason Top 10 regional rankings.

"We'd like to be able to go out and correct some of our mistakes on the playing field, but that's not going to be easy against this caliber of opponents," Manrique said.

"Juarez, Johnson and Seven Lakes are all ranked regionally and will be tough for us to handle. We were able to possess and control the ball for the most part in this first tournament, but I really think we are going to be playing a lot more without the ball in this tournament.

"It's another adjustment we are going to have to make against solid opponents."

2019 postseason ban hits San Jac baseball program

San Jacinto College, one of the country's premiere junior college baseball programs, has been banned from 2019 postseason play, including the JUCO World Series.

The National Junior College Athletic Association, the official governing body for JUCO athletics, had yet as of press time to formally issue an announcement regarding SJC's penalty.

However, the official NJCAA web site does list San Jacinto College North (home of the baseball program) as indeed being on probation for the remainder of the 2018-2019 academic year, which encompasses the spring semester.

And multiple college sources, including Gator head coach Tom Arrington and Amanda Fenwick, vice president of marketing and public relations, have confirmed that SJC has been disqualified from postseason competition for the coming spring semester.

In a brief release issued just prior to the holiday break, Fenwick stated the following: San Jacinto College's baseball program has been placed on probation for the Spring 2019 season by the NJCAA.

The NJCAA's decision was based upon what was determined to be a violation of NJCAA rules regarding student athlete Letters of Intent.

While San Jacinto College had interpreted the rules in a different way in good faith, the College respects the NJCAA's decision and as a result will comply with the one-semester probation.

San Jacinto College is actively working to address the situation and to provide assistance to the student-athletes affected.

The ruling opens the door for another Region XIV program to reach the college world series later this summer, and also dampens the Gators' plans for a possible title run.

Heading into 2019, San Jac's roster again stacks up as one of the best in JUCO baseball, with several Gators rated among the top 100 draft-eligible junior college players in the country.

The first official day for preseason practice is Jan. 10, and the NJCAA will release its annual preseason rankings Jan. 22.

SJC's postseason ban does not affect the regular season, which begins Jan. 25 as the locals take part in the College of Southern Nevada Invitational.

Suffice to say, San Jacinto College's season will boil down to showing its talent on the field during the regular season, especially with a bevy of professional scouts figuring to be lurking weekly as the season progresses.



Three wins in four matches at the Jan. 3-5 Waller ISD Classic got the Dobie varsity girls' soccer team off to a fast start this season. The locals are now headed to the Port Neches Groves Invitational Jan. 10-12. Members of the team are, left to right, Marissa Maxwell, Aylin Bonilla, Victoria Chu, Tori Nunez, Isabel Castillo, Tania Collier, Kim Lara, (sitting) Natalie Armenta, Mystique Ortega, Miranda Serrano, Marina Vasquez, Brynna Rodriguez, Alondra Acevedo, Maribel Garza, (standing) Emily Solis, Jade DeRobles, Hannah Lazo, Emily Galvan, Yanely Perez, MaKenzie Rankins and Taiya Mitchell.

Lady Longhorn soccer starts with three wins

Concordia was the winner of the season-opening Waller ISD Classic tournament, but that didn't stop the Dobie varsity girls' soccer team from winning three of four games Jan. 3-5.

Aside from a convincing 5-0 shutout loss to eventual tournament champion Concordia, the Lady Longhorns blanked three other opponents.

While the team is still working on a set lineup involving several first-year players, head coach Bryan McDonald was pleased with the way his team competed.

"I thought we improved our play with each game, and that's all you can ask for. We got down 2-0 to Concordia on a muddy field, and I decided to substitute fairly freely in that one. Concordia was very good and went on to win the whole thing. As far as our play, I thought we did some things well and gave everything we had.

Dobie scored a 2-0 win over Cypress Ranch to open the season and also defeated Bellville 2-0 to finish pool play 2-1.

Concordia advanced to the trophy round, so Dobie played a friendly match against Cypress Creek Jan. 5, coming away with another win.

Dobie obviously played well defensively and capitalized on some goal-scoring chances.

Emily Solis led Dobie with a pair of goals over the four games, and Victoria Chu and Alondra Acevedo found the net. Taiya Mitchell scored on a penalty kick for the Lady Longhorns.

Now it's on to the tough Port Neches Groves tournament Jan. 10-12, and McDonald simply wants to see progress.

"We're still experimenting with some players in different spots as we go along," he said.

Area varsity basketball teams brace as playoff push nears

The second half of district play is here for one three others in the varsity basketball ranks, and each team and very close for of those programs face differing scenarios as the games get bigger and bigger.

JFD girls are third
First-year Dobie varsity girls' basketball coach Jasmine Hartman has her team in the mix for a late-season run at first place with eight games remaining in the race.

The Lady Longhorns punished Memorial 52-32 Jan. 4 to close out the first half of league play before the team sat out a bye in the schedule Jan. 8.

If not for a 50-48 loss to Summer Creek at home to begin league play, the Lady Longhorns would be even closer than their current third position in the standings.

Atascocita, a 43-29 winner over Dobie in the first round of play, is out to a 9-0 start in District 22-6A action, with Summer Creek at 8-1.

Dobie is third at 6-2 with Humble 6-3. Memorial is trying to stay in the race at 4-5, and the remainder of the league appears to be playing out the string.

As for the Lady Longhorns, they get another shot at Summer Creek Jan. 11, playing on the road in what is a huge game in the standings.

JFD boys need wins
The District 22-6A varsity boys' race is top-heavy, with Summer Creek at 7-0 and Humble and South Houston both at 6-2. Atascocita scored an easy win over Kingwood Jan. 8 to move to 5-3.

What about Dobie? At 3-4 after a 47-46 win over Memorial Jan. 4, the Longhorns are 3-4 with a home game coming Jan. 11 against first-place Summer Creek.

Junior Marquice Scott leads the Longhorns in scoring at just over 13 points per game, and Shannon Hayes has averaged nine points a game.

CB boys at 2-1
An important 56-52 victory over Alvin has the Clear Brook varsity boys' basketball team in the running early on in the District 24-6A race.

Dickinson's Tramon Mark, one of the area's leading scorers, has led the Gators out to a 3-0 start in the chase, which has been matched by Clear Creek's 3-0 start.

Clear Brook and Clear Lake have both won two of their first three league games, while Clear Springs and Clear Falls are at 1-2. Alvin is winless to this point at 0-4.

The Wolverines, led by first-year head coach Nathan Janak, are about to be tested to the max.

On Jan. 11, the Wolverines will take on Clear Lake at Bill Krueger Field House.

Shifting ahead to Jan. 15, the Wolverines will be at Clear Creek High School to face the Wildcats.

Brook girls winless
A loss to Alvin Jan. 8 has left the Clear Brook Lady Wolverines winless in five district games to this point. The locals have home games coming against Clear Lake and Clear Creek.

Age 10-11 select football showcase planned

A group of Dobie High School graduates is set to host a tryout for 10-year-old football players (can be 11 years old if before July 1, 2019) Saturday, Jan. 26, at Dobie High School. The tryout is expected to begin around 10 a.m. The staff is looking to build a roster of 25-30 players to compete in a showcase tournament Feb. 23-24 in San Antonio. The coaching staff is headed by Dobie graduate and head coach Emmanuel Edmondson, assistant head coach Kelton Bailey as well as Vance and Vaughn Leonard, and Maurice Poullard. For additional information or details, direct email to Bailey at keltonmb@yahoo.com.

Thompson versus Beverly Hills hoops Jan. 14

Pasadena ISD's annual Beverly Hills versus Thompson intermediate basketball clashes will play out Monday, Jan. 14, with the boys' games contested at Dobie High School and the girls' games playing out at Thompson Intermediate. In both cases, the seventh-grade and eighth-grade Dark team action will tip things off at 5 p.m. with the Light divisions to follow around 6:15 p.m.

High school softball practice begins

Dobie and Clear Brook will join the many high school softball programs starting practice Friday, Jan. 18, in preparation for the 2019 season. The first allowable day for scrimmages is Jan. 26, and the regular season will begin Feb. 11.