

Happy New Year!

South Belt-Ellington Leader

Voice of Community-Minded People since 1976

Thursday, January 11, 2024

Email: mynews@southbeltleader.com

www.southbeltleader.com

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PIP to be held Jan. 16.

On Jan. 16, at 6:30 p.m. HPD will host the PIP meeting at Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital, 11800 Astoria Blvd. in the CES Classroom of the main building. The guest speaker will be Daniel Von Quintus, senior police officer for Special Victims Division. The topic will be child sexual abuse investigations. PIP consists of police and citizens working together for safer neighborhoods.

For additional information contact HPD Officer Richard Buitron at Richard.Buitron@HoustonPolice.org or 832-395-1776.

Coffee with the Constable

Harris County Precinct 2 Constable Jerry Garcia will be at Donut Haven, 10802 Hughes, from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. each Thursday as part of the weekly Coffee with the Constable series.

The next event will be Thursday, Jan. 11, with another event happening the following Thursday, Jan. 18. For more information, call Sagemont Civic Club President Kay Barbour at 713-419-3545.

Sageglen to meet Jan. 15

Sageglen Community Association will hold a homeowner meeting Monday, Jan. 15, at the Sageglen Community Building, 11610 Sageyork, beginning at 7 p.m. All Sageglen residents are encouraged to attend. An open house to showcase the community building's new interior will precede the function, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served. For more information, call 281-481-2160.

New Covenant feeds needy

New Covenant Christian Church, located at 10603 Blackhawk, distributes food the second and fourth Saturday of each month from noon to 1 p.m. or until supplies run out. The purpose is to provide food for community people in need. This month's events will take place Jan. 13 and Jan. 27. For additional information, call 281-484-4230.

Local COVID cases reported

The number of active COVID-19 cases in the South Belt community is roughly on par with the previously reported week, according to Harris County health officials.

As of Tuesday, Jan. 9, there were 190 active cases in 77089, up eight from the previous week. To date, 138 from the ZIP code have died from the disease, no increase from the previously reported week.

In ZIP code 77075, there were seven active cases, no change from the previous week. To date, there have been 84 deaths in the ZIP code, no increase from the previously reported week.

In 77034, there were six active cases, no change from the previous week. To date, 93 residents from ZIP code 77034 have died from the disease, no increase from the previously reported week.

According to Harris County Health officials, the vast majority of the fatalities suffered from pre-existing health issues.

Statistics are updated daily and include numbers from within the Houston city limits and throughout Harris County. To view an interactive map, visit covid-harriscounty.hub.arcgis.com/pages/cumulative-data.

Beltway 8 closure planned

At least one northbound frontage road lane on Beltway 8 will be closed from Fairmont Parkway to Spencer Highway through 3 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 31. No detour will be needed but drivers should expect delays.

Ellington eRecycling set

The City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department's monthly electronic recycling event will be held Saturday, Jan. 13, at the Neighborhood Recycling Center at Ellington Airport from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

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, cellphones, PDAs, tape drives, hard drives, cords, cables and cameras.

The collection events are the second Saturday of each month. For more information, visit www.houstonwaste.org or call 311.

Knights hold blood drive

The Knights of Columbus Council 9201 will host a blood drive at St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church social hall, 11011 Hall Road, Sunday, Jan. 21, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Appointments are preferred but not necessary. To schedule an appointment, visit www.commitforlife.org. Sponsor Code is 1185.

Gulf Freeway closures set

At least one northbound and one southbound main lanes and frontage road lane on the Gulf Freeway will be closed from SH 96/Calder/Brittany Bay to FM-519/Main Street until further notice.

Leader remembers highlights of 2023

Another year has passed, and the *Leader* staff would like to reflect on the more important stories of 2023, including both the highs and lows of an unforgettable year.

Jan. 12

Little League district administrators called a special meeting at El Franco Lee Park Wednesday, Jan. 11, to discuss the future of the local South Belt league, which remained in limbo following the unexpected resignation of President Johnny Ramirez. According to Little League officials, Ramirez resigned as president at a Dec. 31 meeting and subsequently began a local Pony League that caters to more experienced players. The former board made the switch with Ramirez, requiring a new board to

be elected at the function in order to keep the local Little League intact. The two opposing leagues would battle the better part of the next year for use of the El Franco Lee Park playing fields.

A South Belt resident was killed in a crash shortly before midnight Monday, Jan. 2, while crossing the Fred Hartman Bridge between La Porte and Baytown. Lamont Rhodes, 27, was traveling north on the bridge in a black Toyota Corolla when he was struck by 90-year-old Major Abram of the east Houston area, who was driving on the wrong side of the road in a black GMC half-ton pickup truck. Both drivers were pronounced dead at the scene.

Jan. 19

Charges were filed against a suspect arrested in

the fatal stabbing of a woman that took place around 10 p.m. Dec. 31, in the 12200 block of Flushing Meadows Drive near Astoria. The suspect, Derrion Mitchell, 19, was charged with murder in the death of 45-year-old Adrienne Russell. According to Houston Police officials, officers responded to a stabbing call at the residence at the above address. A male told officers he left his female roommate at the residence and when he returned, he found her in the backyard with multiple stab wounds. Paramedics responded to the incident and pronounced the woman dead at the scene. Further investigation led to the identity of the suspect as Mitchell by another male who had been staying at the residence. Mitchell was subsequently arrested without incident. According to a Channel 13 news report, the incident stemmed from an argument over a puppy Mitchell had gotten for Christmas.

Jan. 26

A tornado touched down in the South Belt community the afternoon of Tuesday, Jan. 24, leaving a path a destruction in its wake. The twister touched down near Beamer just north of Beltway 8, causing extensive damage to Beamer Place Apartments and Beverly Hills Intermediate. No injuries were reported at either location. According to Beverly Hills Principal Stacey Barber, both of the school's gymnasiums were damaged in the storm, as was the campus auditorium. The storm left hundreds of residents from Beamer Place Apartments displaced. While less problematic than the wind, the South Belt area also received substantial rainfall, with the gauge at the Beamer Ditch at Hughes Road recording 1 inch of rainfall in just 15 minutes, according to county officials. Pasadena ISD was closed Wednesday, due to lack of power at many campuses. The mayors of Pasadena and Deer Park, along with various charities, opened a joint emergency recovery center at the Pasadena Convention Center to assist storm victims.

Feb. 2

Charges were filed against a second suspect in the fatal shooting of one man and the wounding of another that took place the previous September at an

apartment complex in the 1200 block of Redford. John Howard, 20, was charged with capital murder. Another suspect, Justin Thomas, 31, was previously arrested and charged with capital murder. The deceased victim is identified as Juan Juarez, 38. A second victim, 34, suffered non-life-threatening gunshot wounds. According to Houston Police Department officials, the two victims were inside an apartment at the above address around 1:05 a.m. on Sept. 21, when two black male suspects entered and shot the victims. The suspects took money and other items from the victims and fled the scene. Paramedics pronounced one victim, later identified as Juarez, dead at the scene and transported the other victim to an area hospital. Further investigation led to the identity of one suspect as Thomas. On Sept. 23, Thomas was arrested without incident. Additional investigation led to the identification of Howard as the second suspect in this shooting. On Thursday, Jan. 24, Thomas, who was in custody on an unrelated incident, was charged for his role in the shootings.

Feb. 9

The Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership honored NASA Johnson Space Center Director Vanessa Wyche at its 29th annual Quasar Banquet, held Friday, Jan. 27, at the South Shore Harbour Resort and Conference Center in League City.

Charges were filed against a suspect arrested in the fatal shooting of a man that took place around 4:40 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 5, at an RV park in the 12000 block of Sagedowne near Beltway 8 and the Gulf Freeway. The suspect, Jose Luis Vargas, 26, was charged with murder. According to Houston Police Department officials, officers responded to a shooting in progress call at the RV Park at the above address and found a witness in possession of a gun the witness had taken from the shooter. The witness directed officers to the suspect, Vargas, found waiting nearby. Vargas was detained and taken into custody. Detectives learned the victim, witness and Vargas were drinking together when a physical altercation

Continued on Page 4

Whitmire sworn in as mayor



John Whitmire (right) was officially sworn in as the 63rd mayor of Houston Monday, Jan. 1. Whitmire celebrated the occasion twice, with an event taking place at 12:01 a.m. at City Hall (shown above) and another at 9:30 a.m., Jan. 2, at Wortham Theater. Shown above with the new mayor are left to right, Judge Victor Trevino III, the mayor's daughters Whitney Whitmire Jenkins and Sarah Whitmire.

Whitmire, Council sworn into office

John Whitmire was sworn in as mayor of Houston Jan. 1, in a small, private ceremony at 12:01 a.m. and then again Jan. 2 at 9:30 a.m. at the inaugural ceremony at Wortham Theater.

"There were many times during the campaign that I said I wish I could start work in the morning," said Whitmire. "I don't want to wait a minute longer than I have to."

Whitmire will be the 63rd mayor of America's fourth-largest city. He comes into office following a landslide victory in the mayoral runoff election on Dec. 9. The new mayor will focus on working with the police and fire departments to make the city safer; creating a balanced and transparent budget; improving city services, such as garbage pickup, homelessness, cleaning up illegal dumping and the Permitting Office; and upgrading infrastructure, including the water system and flooding and drainage.

The early morning swearing-in took place in the mayor's office at City Hall with Whitmire's family just after midnight Jan. 1. The mayor-elect was sworn in by Judge Victor Trevino III, Harris County justice of the peace, Precinct 6.

After being sworn in, the new mayor accompanied Houston Police Chief Troy Finner from 12:30 a.m. into the early morning hours to witness the first-hand challenges of Houston's first responders and to put public safety in the spotlight.

"I am making public safety my highest priority

from day one," Whitmire said, "supporting our officers and improving public safety for all our communities."

The inaugural ceremony took place Jan. 2 at Wortham Theater, at 9:30 a.m. In addition to the mayor, City Controller Chris Hollins and 16 at-large and district City Council members were also sworn in, including former South Belter District E Council Member Fred Flickinger.

Following the inauguration, the newly sworn-in mayor and City Council members returned to City Hall for a Council meeting at 11 a.m. Whitmire opened the doors to City Hall at 2 p.m., welcoming Houstonians to shake his hand and share issues of concern.

"I have promised transparency in city government," Whitmire said. "I invited Houstonians to meet your mayor at the front door of City Hall."

Instead of the usual gala that evening, the mayor hosted an appreciation event at the George R. Brown Convention Center for the city's first responders - fire, police and municipal employees.

"Houston is a great city," Whitmire said. "But to reach our full potential, we must admit we have problems and then get to work solving them. Everyone will be a part of this journey. We must celebrate our diversity, while practicing inclusion. I will listen, I will hear, and I will work with all Houstonians. Let's get to work."

HFD responds to house, apartment fires

Local firefighters stayed busy over the Christmas holidays, responding to both house and apartment fires in the area.

The first incident took place around 12:05 p.m. Friday, Dec. 22, in the 12100 block of Binghamton Drive near Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital.

According to Houston Police Department officials, firefighters arrived on scene within seven minutes to find light smoke coming from the attic of a one-story house. They made an attack on the fire and conducted a primary search.

Crews extinguished the fire and determined the fire originated from the stove. An item was placed on it and the knob was accidentally turned on, catching the materials on fire. Investigators determined the fire was accidental.

The kitchen suffered water and smoke damage. The blaze caused approximately \$20,000 in damage. Firefighters were able to save around \$120,000 in property, officials said.

While no humans were injured in the blaze, a dog was found dead inside the home.

In all, 32 personnel responded to this incident, including firefighters from stations 93, 70, 52 and 94.

The following day on Saturday, Dec. 23, firefighters responded to a fire around 1:10 a.m. at an apartment complex in the 11800 block of Algonquin Drive near Scarsdale and the Gulf Freeway.

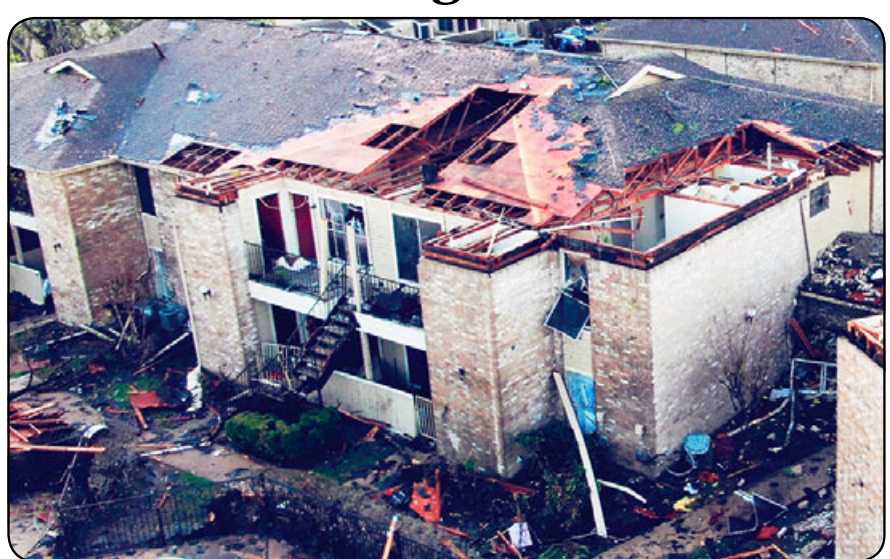
According to HFD officials, firefighters arrived on scene within seven minutes to find light smoke coming from an apartment on the second floor of an apartment building. They made an offensive attack on the fire and pulled the ceiling to complete extinguishment. A primary search was conducted and crews forced entry into several vacant units.

HFD Arson investigators were requested to determine the cause and origin. At press time, the cause of the fire remained under investigation.

The blaze caused approximately \$10,000 in damage. Firefighters were able to save around \$695,000 in property, officials said.

A total of 33 personnel were responded to this incident, including firefighters from stations 93, 70, 52, 94 and 61.

Tornado damage remembered



A cross appeared on the roof of Beamer Place Apartments following a Jan. 24 tornado that devastated the area complex. Despite the devastation, there were no fatalities. The incident displaced hundreds of residents, many of whom were unable to retrieve their belongings. Beamer Place resident Cristian Adolfo Reyes snapped the above photo after the storm passed. Photo by Photography Over the Sky

Pct. 2 deputies respond to home invasion

Precinct 2 deputies responded to a home invasion early Christmas Eve in the 10500 block of Sagevale.

According to officials at Precinct 2 Constable Jerry Garcia's office, five masked men with guns forced their way into a house through the back door around 2 a.m. and tied up the residents, a husband and wife, and demanded to know where money was kept.

After spending approximately 10 minutes in the home, the suspects left with around \$600 in cash and some jewelry, investigators said.

The thieves fled by jumping the back fence

and heading toward Sagemeadow Park, where they then drove away in a waiting SUV of unknown make.

Investigators do not believe the incident was random, saying the victims appeared to have been targeted.

Investigators are seeking any surveillance video that residents may have in the area around Sagebud and Sageyork the morning of the crime.

Anyone with surveillance footage or any other information on this crime is urged to contact Precinct 2 investigators at 281-481-9189.

Local sports groups make 2024 plans

While the future of youth sports at El Franco Lee Park not completely firmed up at press time, local sports organizations are moving forward with registration plans for the upcoming 2024 seasons.

Officials with the Southbelt Little League have announced plans to soon offer registration for the spring 2024 season, which will be held at the baseball facility at El Franco Lee Park.

The \$150 preregistration discounted fee includes a team jersey, hat, pants, team socks and belt. In addition to league play, registered players will also have the opportunity to participate in free camps and clinics during the season.

League officials will provide additional infor-

mation, including registration details, as soon as they are available. Follow on Facebook at Southbelt Little League.

The South Belt Youth Soccer Club is now accepting registration for the spring 2024 season, with U-4 through U-20 age divisions available to players at southbeltsoccer.org. Regular registration prices run through Feb. 14. Players in the U-4 through U-8 divisions will pay \$85, while the fee is \$95 for the U-9 through U-12 divisions. The fee is \$105 for the U-13 through U-20 divisions. The fee includes uniform shirt, socks and shorts while families must provide cleats, shin guards and a soccer ball. Visit www.southbelt-soccer.org for additional details.

Councilman Fred's 1st day at work



Former South Belt resident Fred Flickinger (sitting) is shown above on his first day as Houston District E City Council member. A Dobbie graduate, Flickinger replaced term-limited Dave Martin. Flickinger is the son of David Flickinger (standing) and Leader publisher Marie Flickinger (not shown).

In My Opinion

Haulbrook writes HC commissioners

Dear Commissioners Ellis and Garcia, I have been recently made aware of a proposal before your respective organizations to change how El Franco Lee Park is utilized. Since I was part of the original negotiations, design and implementation of how El Franco Lee Park was to be used, I am compelled to educate you both on the very reason this park exist.

In the early 80's the volunteer-driven youth sports groups facilitating girls softball, little league baseball and pony-colt baseball lost their playing fields off Dixie Farm Road because the U.S. Government came to the realization that the area was highly contaminated. It became known as the Brio Superfund Site. Now the children of the South Belt Community had no home.

In the mid-80's the Greater Houston area needed to expand the runways at Intercontinental Airport Houston (IAH) to handle the growing air traffic. To do so meant building runways in designated wetlands adjacent to IAH. Under federal regulations every acre of wetlands used for runway expansion had to be replaced with the same acreage somewhere within Harris County. That requirement drove the acquisition of the land that is today El Franco Lee Park.

In 1986, following that land acquisition, I personally entered into discussions with the late Commissioner El Franco Lee about filling the need for youth softball and baseball fields in the South Belt area. As Commissioner Garcia knows, I was part of the late Houston Mayor Bob Lanier's Anti-Gang Task Force where youth sports was a key part of our efforts to bring young people from their latch-key environment to parks, and away from the attraction of local gangs. Commissioner Lee knew that my focus was not, nor has it ever been, about making money. It has always been about giving parents the opportunity to give their children the life skills to be assets to the Houston community through youth sports. The needs of the South Belt community was the focus, and cornerstone, of the evolution of El Franco Lee Park.

From a wetland replacement tract that initially was to just be a "learning farm", to a focal point for a close-knit community, and Harris County residents, is how this park has evolved. The vision of Commissioner Lee made this possible. And his commitment to the residents, young and old, of the South Belt community is the reason why the space was renamed El Franco Lee Park. My relationship with Commissioner Lee continued to grow over the years, through the county's funding of land-acqui-

sition for today's Dynamo Stadium, and until his untimely death. Please don't take the intentions he had for this park away from the legacy of El Franco Lee. Sincerely, Les Haulbrook

Weaver thanks the community

The Friends of Parker Williams Branch Library would like to extend our best wishes for the New Year and our sincerest thanks to the Community for their support in years past and their continued support in years to come.

Beatrice Weaver, President, Friends of Parker Williams Branch Library

Jay Do responds to Jim Muecke

Many moons ago, I worked at the Leader as a staff reporter. I was my first job, and I reflect on that time fondly because of the opportunities I had to engage with the incredible activists in our community who work tirelessly to make all our lives a little bit better. One of those individuals was James (Jim) Muecke. I worked with Jim often, and I admired his drive to improve the South Belt community. No one who knows Jim can doubt his conviction to improve our community. Which is why I was so disheartened to see his message published in last week's issue.

I took particular issue with Jim's disparaging remarks regarding a teenage female, allegedly killed in at 1 a.m. Jim did not specify the details, but I suspect he was referring to the tragic killing of 17-year-old Louise Jean Wilson in Downtown Houston in the early hours of Dec. 10. The preliminary evidence suggests Wilson was killed in a road rage incident. Rather than question why or how such a senseless killing could have happened, Jim ponders "why was a teen out at this time of night?" Jim notes that "this is bedtime for normal people." This inflammatory rhetoric detracts from the root of the issue and places blame on the victim. It is wildly inappropriate and absolutely hurtful to the victim's surviving family members that these remarks have been published.

How could being out past Jim's bedtime possibly be construed as a justifiable reason for anyone to be killed in a senseless act of violence?

There are a lot of things wrong with our city, and the discussions that Jim has prompted are how we begin to address our shortcomings. But these conversations should be focused on addressing the root of the issues instead of directing blame on the victims. Jay Do

Local library events set

In case of storms or adverse weather, refer to library website for details.

Bracewell Branch Library

Bracewell Library is located at 9002 Kingspoint. For information, visit <https://houstonlibrary.org/>. For online learning, visit <https://houstonlibrary.org/online-learning-7556> or call 832-393-2580. Hours are: Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Wednesdays, noon - 8 p.m.; Fridays, 1 - 5 p.m.; and Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Closed Sundays.

Tuesdays, 10:30 - 11 a.m. Outdoors storytime for all ages. Plan to enjoy a good story at Bracewell in the fresh outdoors, weather permitting.

Visit <https://houstonlibrary.org/learn-explore/library-events> for more library events.

Parker Williams Library

Parker Williams Library is located at 10851 Scarsdale Blvd. Visit the website at <https://www.hcp.net/branch/parker-williams-branch-library> or call 832-927-7870.

The book drop is open. No late fees will be charged during the library closure. Social media links are Facebook.com/ParkerWilliamsLibrary and Instagram.com/ParkerWilliamsLibrary.

Parker Williams "No-Contact Curbside Holds Pick-Up"

- After receiving notification that holds are ready for pickup, call 832-927-7870.
- Have a library card number and PIN handy.
- A pickup time and instructions will be given.
- Upon arriving, park in one of the two parking spots reserved for curbside holds.
- Be prepared to show a library card or other form of ID for verification.

Hours are: Monday - Thursday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Friday, 1 - 6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Closed Sundays. Visit <https://www.hcp.net/branch/parker-williams-branch-library> for details.

ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST
Catholic Church
Rev. Douglas J. Guthrie, Pastor
Rev. Kingsley Nwoko, Parochial Vicar
11011 Hall Rd.
(between Beamer & Blackhawk)
www.stlukesatholic.com

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil	5:30 p.m.
Sunday	8 a.m. and 10 a.m.*
Sunday	1 p.m. Misa en Español*
Monday, Wednesday & Friday	9 a.m.
Tuesday & Thursday	7 p.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confessions)
Thursday 7:45 to 8:30 p.m. Saturday 4 to 5 p.m.

Parish Office: 281-481-6816
Children's Faith Formation: 281-481-4251
Adult Faith Formation: 713-538-2862
All are welcome to come to worship and serve the Lord in a spirit of love, sharing, and hope.

New Covenant Christian Church
Day Care Christian Based Child Care
Now Enrolling

New Covenant Christian Church provides Christian based child care for the local community. Director Nedra Jackson and her staff are here to take perfect care of your children while you work.

281.481.2003
www.newcovenantchristianchurch.com
10603 Blackhawk Blvd. Houston, TX 77089
Blackhawk @ Kirkfair

Deaths

Jenna Martin Buchanan



Jenna Martin Buchanan, 79, was born July 3, 1944, in Houston, to Pete and Nina Martin. She passed away peacefully Jan. 4, at her home in Spring. Jenna was preceded in death by her husband Robert "Bob" Buchanan and her brother James Martin.

Bob and Jenna lived in Sagemont for approximately 12 starting in the early 1970s.

She is survived by her son Robert "Trac" Buchanan; daughter Pam Gonzalez (Jose); grandsons James "J.J." Gonzalez (Brittany), Andrew "Drew" Gonzalez; granddaughter Kendall Cunningham (Daniel); great-grandchildren

Witten and Landry Gonzalez and Ethan, Emma and Everett Cunningham; and best friend Judy Jackson.

Jenna was a lifelong resident of Houston and graduated from Stephen F. Austin High School which is where Bob the love of her life, also attended.

She met Bob through mutual friends in the summer of 1961 at Garner State Park. They had their first date the very next day, their wedding the following summer and two kids within the next two years. Family life had begun.

The Buchanans were original homeowners in Sagemont.

Bob was very active in the Sagemont-Beverly Hills Little League at the time the league was buying property for the association on Dixie Farm Road. This included serving as president of the league.

Her entire life, Jenna's priority was always her family. From Scout leader to room mom, she was involved in every aspect of her children's lives. She was always there - a listening ear to friends of all ages. She made sure the Buchanan house was full of love, laughter and a homecooked meal. Her motto "There is always room for one more," and

"The more the merrier!" epitomized her home where everyone was welcome and made to feel like family.

She also took on the role of caring for her grandmother daily and later her mother-in-law and mother. As a grandmother, she picked up her grandchildren every day after school, further cementing her multigenerational family bond.

In the 1980s, her love of antiques prompted her and Bob to open an antique store and auction house. Her greatest love was her customers, most of whom soon became friends.

According to her family, there really are not enough words to sum up the life and legacy of Jenna Buchanan. A few of her favorite things were Houston "Luv Ya Blue" Oilers, dancing with her beloved Bob, floating down the Frio River, antiques, and, of course, her family and friends. She was "Jen Jen" to three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren who were her pride and joy.

She made those who knew her better by example and lives will be forever richer because her family and friends knew what it felt like to be loved by her.

She will be greatly missed by everyone who knew her.

Louise Tigrett Holley



Louise Tigrett Holley, 93, passed away on Dec. 31, 2023, in Harris County. She was born Sept. 3, 1930, in Prentiss County, Miss. to Ruby Lee Prince Tigrett and Lee Allen Tigrett and was the oldest of three children. She is preceded in death by her parents; husband Gerald Holley; son Ronnie Holley; brothers Irving and Billy Wayne Tigrett; and grandsons Austen Holley and Chris May.

On Aug. 12, 1950, she married Gerald and they boarded a bus for Houston, to begin their life together; they were married for 71 years. Louise was born on a cotton farm and was no stranger to hard work. She was an avid gardener, an excellent cook and seamstress, creating quilts, drapes, clothes for her family and even pillows for hospitalized patients and satin memory envelopes for parents of babies who passed away shortly after birth.

She was a longtime member of the Southeast Church of Christ where she served for many years as a Bible class teacher, funeral meal volunteer and helped her husband in his role as deacon of mission work by hosting many visiting missionaries from around the world. Louise was a substitute teacher at Queens Intermediate in the Pasadena ISD for many years and was a proud member of the DAR, Jane Long chapter, serving as chairman of conservation and literacy, and later as historian. In their 1987 Chevrolet Suburban, Gerald and Louise traveled to almost every state in the continental U.S., as well as Alaska and Hawaii.

Louise is survived by children Linda Holley May, Greg Holley (Cheryl) and Gary Holley (Juleigh); grandchildren Ryan May (Elizabeth), Lee Holley (Jocelyn) and Barbara Holley Merutka (Nick); and great-grandchildren Julianna and Isaac May; along with sisters-in-law and a brother-in-law, cousins, nieces and nephews. The family is grateful to Becky Massiatte for her compassionate care for Louise in her final years.

Visitation was Jan. 8, at Grand View Funeral Home, 8501 Spencer Highway. The funeral service was Jan. 9, also at Grand View Funeral Home Chapel with burial following at Grand View Memorial Cemetery, Garden of the Four Apostles.

Emiel Daniel Adams Jr.



Emiel Daniel Adams Jr., age 71, peacefully passed away on Dec. 17, 2023, in the comfort of his home in the loving care of his wife, Linda Adams. He was the firstborn of two siblings to Emiel and Thelma Jones Adams on Feb. 13, 1952, in Cleveland.

Emiel was joined in marriage to his high school sweetheart, Linda. They celebrated 51 years of marriage on Sept. 23, 2023. The marriage blessed them with a legacy of four sons and seven grandchildren.

Emiel confessed to the Lord, Jesus Christ as his savior and he worshipped with his family at Sagemont Church.

Known as "Big E," Emiel earned his nickname on the basketball court. He played like a big man despite barely being six feet tall.

His favorite NBA players were Dominique Wilkins, one of the best slam dunkers

in NBA history and Hakeem "The Dream" Olajuwon, considered one of the best NBA centers in history.

Emiel was a great nine-ball pool player and an even greater coach to his four sons. He coached all four in baseball, basketball, track and football. Possessing a straightforward style, he never had a problem speaking his mind and keeping it real. He had a gift for making people laugh and smile, creating inside jokes to make light of something difficult that had occurred. Either way one would be crying, laughing; and find healing from the laughter.

Emiel took great pleasure in firing up the pit and barbecuing. He had an impressive ear for music and had his own singing group. The story goes that a big group in Ohio borrowed some of his music. He also played guitar and keyboard. He tinkered as a LEGO Technic builder, having enjoyed building and creating with his hands.

Emiel earned his degree from Ohio Diesel Technical Institute. Upon graduation he took a leap of faith by leaving Ohio with his family to start a new career in Houston.

He successfully became employed at Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) in spite of several trials and tribulations. He retired from MTA after working more than 30 years. After retirement, he was asked to return to MTA because of his experience and knowledge of procedures and personnel. Genuinely happy, he returned to MTA to work part time.

He leaves to cherish his memorable life a loving and devoted wife; sons Emiel, Tyron, Cody (Shicobie) and Aaron; and sister Karen Ran.

Dung Ky Ngo



Dung Ky Ngo, 88, was born on Nov. 18, 1935. He passed away peacefully at home on Dec. 30, 2023, with his loving wife of 53 years by his side. He was a beloved husband, brother, father and grandfather.

Dung graduated from Lasan Taberd in 1956. He then enrolled in the VN National Military Academy (also known as Dalat Military Academy from 1957-1960 and graduated as second lieutenant. He served his country earning the rank of colonel. He fought in numerous battles in the Vietnam War.

Dung was a resident of the South Belt area for more than 20 years. He was a member of the Vietnamese Martyrs Church on Kingspoint Road.

He enjoyed gardening and spending time with his family.

He is survived by his loving wife KimLieu Pham; son Quoc Ngo and wife Thuy Nguyen, grandchildren Dan and Nam; son Duy Ngo and wife Phuong Nguyen, grandchildren Thinh and Lam; son Viet Ngo and wife Anh Ton, grandchildren An and Bao.

His presence will be deeply missed, but his memory will be held close in the hearts of all who had the privilege of knowing him. May his soul rest in peace and be with his Lord and savior.

The visitation will be held at Winford Funeral Home, Friday, Jan. 12, from 1 to 8 p.m. The Vietnam veterans will honor him with a flag ceremony on Saturday, Jan. 13, 2024, at 9 a.m. at Winford Funeral Home.

The funeral service will be held at the Vietnamese Martyrs Church on Saturday, Jan. 13, at 11 a.m. Cremation service will be held directly after the service at Winford Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, friends may consider donating to a charitable organization of one's choice or to the Sunflower Mission group. If one chooses to make a donation to the Sunflower Mission, checks may be made payable to Sunflower Mission - memo: Dungng.

A donation drop box will be located at Winford Funeral Home on the visitation day. Donations may be mailed to: Sunflower Mission P.O. 1385 - Stafford, TX 77497.

Grace Ramos



On Dec. 23, 2023, Grace Ramos beloved mother and grandmother, was called home to her eternal resting place with the Lord and savior. She was surrounded by her children, grandchildren and family as she left this Earth.

Grace was born in Corpus Christi, Oct. 23, 1949, to Alberto and Francis Martinez. She was the third of four children. She and her siblings grew up attending local elementary and secondary schools and she graduated from Incarnate Word Academy in 1969. She later attended classes at Del Mar College while working as a teachers aide for West ISO.

While working as a teacher aide, she met the love of her life Joe. They were married Nov. 7, 1977, at Christ the King Catholic Church in Corpus. Shortly after saying "I do," they made the big move to Houston to make roots and start their family. She was a devoted wife and loved and cared for her husband through sickness and in health. They were married for 35 loving years before Joe was called home on Dec. 15, 2012. From their beautiful union came their four children Michael Jason Ramos, Michele Francine Guerrero, Kimberly Renee Padua and Alexander Joseph Ramos. These children went on to bless them with nine grandchildren, Nicolas Anthony Ramos, Gabriel Elijah Padua, Isabella Grace Guerrero, Camila Aubrey Padua, Noah Ernest, Olivia Marie and Sofia Penelope Guerrero. Sabrina Renee Padua and Emma Rose Ramos.

Grace spent the majority of her career working in procurement at Johnson Space Center in Houston. She retired in 2015 after 35 years and moved into her full-time position of grand mother. She fully embraced this role and there was never an event or activity that she missed. Whether it was baseball, football, softball, golf, dance, theater or academics; she was there.

Grace was a beacon of love and kindness wherever she went - a small lady with a humongous heart. Her warmth and caring spirit touched everyone fortunate enough to meet and know her. Grace's life was a testament to her unwavering faith and deep commitment to her Catholic faith. Guided by her love for God, she was a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church for 40 years. She displayed compassion and a spirit of generosity that touched the lives of everyone she met.

She had many hobbies including baking her famous cookies, cooking for family, crocheting, and her favorite shopping and spoiling her grandkids. She loved traveling, especially with her siblings. She could often be found on a "trip" to Lake Charles once or twice a year. She was also fortunate to travel to Europe in 2022 for a pilgrimage with her sisters and brother-in-law.

Grace is preceded in death by her loving husband, her parents and her grandson, Noah Guerrero. She leaves behind her four children Michael (Monica) Ramos, Michele (Ernie) Guerrero, Kimberly (Carlos) Padua and Alex (Isabel) Ramos; as well as her eight grandchildren; siblings Joe Martinez, Gloria Sandoval and Gilda Gatica; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She is now reunited with her husband and other family and will be greatly missed. Although her family's loss is great, their love of God is greater and they know they will meet her again. The family says they will miss and love her always.

A rosary will be recited at 11:15 a.m. at St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church Saturday, Jan. 13. Following will be a funeral Mass at noon with a procession to Confederate Cemetery in Alvin for burial of ashes. Join the family for a celebration of life lunch. Location to be announced at the cemetery.

Flower arrangements may be sent to St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church, 11011 Hall, Houston, TX 77089.

South Belt-Ellington Leader

The Voice of Community-Minded People

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Davy & Marie Flickinger, owners

South Houston High School releases Trojan honor roll for second six-weeks

South Houston High School officials recently recognized their honor roll students for the second six-week period of the 2023-2024 school year.

11th grade
Dailah Acosta, Agustín Aguilar, Galilea Aguilar, Isabela Aguilar, Ghisell Agurto Toapanta, Omar Alfaro, Carolina Alvarez, Kevin Alvarez, Anderson Amaya Urias, Annastasia Anoway and Jose Aragon.

Gabriela Aranda, Jocelyn Arando, Esmeralda Arredondo, Galia Barbosa, Maria Barboza Castro, Yamilet Becerril, Ariyanna Benitez, Jazmin Bocanegra, Suany Bonilla Acosta and Jordan Buckner.

Nevaeh Buenrostro, Benito Cadena, Yeison Carbajal, Gabriella Castaneda, Emilliano Castilleja, Adamari Castillo, Natalia Castillo, Nayely Castro Martinez, Selina Chamorro, Melanie Chaverria and Cesar Chavez.

Da'jonee Citizen, Barbara Collazo, Perla Colmenero, Rosa Contreras, Victoria Contreras, Ivan Coronel, Nataly Coto-Chong, Jeady Cruz, Valerie Del Valle, Krystal Delgado, Lorenzo Delgado and Valeria Duran Iracheta.

Ailen Duran, Elizabeth Erwin, Kayleen Erwin, Sharon Escalante, Aaron Escareno, Ruby Espinoza, Edna Fernandez, Andres Flores, Jennifer Flores, Ariana Franco, Kylie Gale and Briahna Garcia.

Brittany Garcia, Daniel Garcia, Diego Garcia, Joey Garcia, Lupita Garcia, Rigoberto Garcia, Xzavian Garcia, Rogelio Garibay, Aldemir Garza, Alinna Garza, Ariana Garza, Giselle Garza, Isabella Garza and Samyra Garza.

Mia Gaytan, Deborah Getu, Cecilia Gomez, Christopher Gomez, Evelyn Gomez, Freddie Gonzales, Rachel Gonzalez Rodriguez, Diana Gracia, Aldo Guajardo, David Guevara, Debanhi Guillen and Karina Guillen.

David Guzman, Rayne Hale, Jason Hernandez, Kendy Hernandez, Mario Hernandez, Ana Herrera, Kaitlyn Houston, Rosa Huerta, Truc Huynh, Scarlet Jaco and Aniya Johnson.

Ninth grade
Gustavo Acosta, Sariah Albert Motley, Gabriela Anoway, Jocelyn Arevalo, Oliver Barragan, Sergio Barreto Ramirez, Eric Beltran, Ashley Cano Rodriguez, Aniya Capers and Jazzelle Cardona.

Allison Castro Bonilla, Yurem Cepeda, Diana Chavez Casillas, Jonathan Chavez, Leah Chavez, Johnny Comacho, Daniela Coreas Rivas, Ivan Cruz, Evanie Diaz and Joshua Duran.

Samantha Elias, Abigail Escobar, Emerson Funes, Alexia Garcia Maldonado, Luis Garcia Ramirez, Wendy Garcia, Alyssa Gonzalez Rodriguez, Melissa Gonzalez-Moz and Rafael Guerra.

Diego Guillen, Alessandra Guzman, Ruben Hernandez Zavala, Jahajeth Hernandez, Stephanie Hernandez, Juan Hinojosa, Anne Hounmetin, Enrique Izaguirre and Johana Jaime Fraga.

Alexander Juarez, Oscar Lemus, Adamari Lopez, Carlos Lopez, Sara Lopez, Nicholas Majano, Gladis Marquez Rodriguez, Fabian Martinez, Arturo Mendoza, Mario Menjivar, Francisco Meza and Jose Meza.

Luisa Mireles Mendoza, Vanessa Montenegro, Belen Morales, Abril Moreno, Xavier Muhammad, Dylan Munoz Garcia, Jose Munoz, Sonia Murcia Reyes, Emely Orduno, Divanny Orellana, Breanna Padilla and Ernesto Palomo Medina.

Jacob Pena, Santiago Perez Campos, Emily Pinedo, Isaac Pomier Gutierrez, Alexander Portillo, Judah Quesada, Dante Rocha, Cecilia Rodriguez, Christian Rodriguez, Nancy Ruano, Braylan Ruiz and Marilynn Salazar.

Alonso Salgado, Aaron Salinas, Juan Salomon, Ivan Sanchez, Azul Serrato, Alexia Tamez, Kate Tello, Dahlilah Tovar, Alejandro Valadez, Diego Valdes Legra, Ricardo Vargas, Hanna Vazquez, Santos Vazquez, Brayden Watkins, Aaliyah Williams, Imalayah Wright and Melanie Zendejo.

10th grade
Melody Acosta, Za'niyah Agege, Ludvin Aleman Retana, Judit Almaguer, Jose Angulo, Audel Arellano Duarte, Yefferson Arqueta Argueta, Manuel Arredondo Garcia and Christopher Avila.

David Bartolo, Alan Bello, Jayneria Brown, Jesse Camacho, Alejandro Castillo, Arelyn Castillo, Katia Chavez, Tiana Costa and Andres Cruz.

Lyannet DelaTorre, Kristal Delacruz, Kenia Diaz-Rivas, Henesis Duarte Luna, Nicole Escobar, Gideon Fowler, Diego Franco Morales and Adrian Fuentes.

Anthony Funez, Sofia Galdamez Osorto, Alejandro Galindo, Joheli Garcia Gonzalez, Angel Garcia, Angela Garcia, Dayana Garcia, Lizzy Garcia and Lizeth Garza.

Jose Godoy, Carlos Gomez, George Gonzalez Aguilera, Antonio Gonzalez, Joel Gonzalez, Lestat Gonzalez, Raul Gonzalez, Meagan Grays and Brianna Grimaldo.

Sumayah Guadalupe, Wendy Hernandez Vega, Ana Hernandez, Miguel Hernandez, Saleste Hernandez, Ann Hounmetin, Roman Huerta, Janette Hurtado, Anthony Jaime Fraga, Mayra Jaime Jaime and Teyana Jenkins.

Amariah Larin, Averie Lalsalle, Anahi Ledesma, Ivan Lopez, Anahi Lule, Evonny Madrigal, Dayris Malasquez Montalvo, Helen Maradiaga Munoz, Diego Martinez, Dylan Martinez, Gerardo Martinez and Jonathan Martinez.

Yair Martinez, Amanda Medina, Maximo Mendoza, Kinereth Meraz Zelaya, Beatriz Meza, Isai Morales, Juan Morales, Emilio Munoz, Jordy Orellana, Ra'tavia Osborne, Lia Otero Cuza, Ria Pandya and Andrea Patino.

Hector Pena, Jayden Pena, Gabriela Portillo, Johana Ramirez, Reggie Rangel Quinones, Alexis Rangel, German Realejo Morataya, Katherin Realejo Morataya, Salome Restrepo Gamboa, Michelle Reyes, Yasmine Reyes and Martha Reyes-Lechado.

Jacob Rivera, Valerie Rodriguez, Rubi Rosario Cruz, Jade Ruiz, Evelyn Sainz, Yamilet Salinas, Freddy Sanchez Lopez, Sheryl Sanchez Ortiz, Ediel Sanchez, Alexandra Santiago and Sophia Saucedo.

Gabriel Serrato, Andrea Silva, Grace Sonnier, Kayla Suarez, Sarah Suarez, Errendira Torres, Hayden Tran, Valery Trevino, Joseph Urdiales, Vanessa Vargas, Jayden Vasquez, Annethe Zacarias Trevizo, Luis Zacarias Trevizo, Emely Zarate, Armando Zavala and Estrella Zavala.

Angelina Damian, Dalia De la Rosa Pantoja, Arlet Delgado and Olga Diaz Camacho.

Paola Diaz Galvan, Aiden Diaz, Xavier Diaz, Abraham Escareno, Syntrel Evans, Everth Flores, Jayden Flores, Jesus Flores, Monika Franco, Natalie Flores, Manuel Gamboa and Aldo Garcia Loya and Abraham Garcia.

Angel Garcia, Mia Garcia, Naomy Garcia, Alexis Garza, Emily Garza, Ethan Garza, Dahlila Gomez, Angel Gonzalez Torres, Eddie Guerrero, Octavin Guidry, Will'aysia Harris and Edwin Hernandez Angeles.

Cristian Hernandez, Martin Hernandez, Valeria Hernandez, Elissa Herrera, Jordyn Hodge, Odyssey Hounmetin, Kayla Hughes, Ciara Jackson, Khloe Johnson, Navya Karunarathne, Jose Labra and Joshua Larry.

Kayleen Leal, Abril Leon, Kheyara Lewis, Stormy Lindsey, Carlos Lopez Montoya, Francisco Lopez Tejada, Anahi Lopez, Nicolas Lopez, Daniela Maldonado, Jesus Marin and Judith Martinez.

Kassandra Martinez, Nevaeh Martinez, Raul Martinez, Jessica Mejia, Ariana Mendoza, Josue Miranda, Alondra Morales Cordon, Edgar Najera, Jaui Navarro, Iliana Olivarez and Rogelio Palma.

Emily Parra, Juan Pena Mendez, Wendy Perez Morales, Michelle Perez, Ryan Pham, Junior Pineda, Zuniga, Adrian Pineda, Evyn Ponce, Fernando Pruneda, Giselle Quintero and Kaylee Ramirez.

Nathaly Ramirez, Joana Ramos, Najavi Ramos, Kimberly Rivera, Stacie Rivera, Cheyenne Robertson, Josephine Robles, David Rodriguez, Mansa Rogers, Carlos Roman and Rigoberto Ruiz Mendez.

Adrian Ruiz, Jose Salazar, Natalie Salinas, Braylan Sanchez, Urva Shah, Jacob Sheppard-Rubio, Irma Sosa, Villafranca, Salomon Sosa, Adrian Soto and Bryanna Suarez.

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December, January South Belt Elementary Super Steers celebrated



South Belt Elementary's Super Steers for the months of December and January 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) Cosette Bekkers, Sienna Warren, Makenzie Aguilard, Loreen Harmouch, Isabella Acosta, Mazzy Flowers, Mia Pesina, Jonathan Le, Andrew Palacios, (second row) Victoria Banks, Ayvah Rios, Madisen Baskin, Reyana Harmouch, Parva Zabihpour, Maya Villarreal, Elliana Mireles, Tye Safary, (third row) Emma Vong, Amaya Corranco, Kaila Espinoza, Liam Gonzales, Adrian Alvarez, Kadi Tran, (fourth row) London Jade, Mila Verdin, Rhett Sullivan, Karsyn Wiley, Isabel Vivier, Alina Posadas, (fifth row) Aisley Mariscal, Amari Edwards, Arianna Molina, Anna Nguyen, Maddie Rangel, Hailee Walker and Payton Meyer. Not pictured are Rolando Rochan and Julia Nguyen.

Photo by Lakitha Thomas (counselor)

BHI, Morris perform with guest

More than 200 Morris Intermediate and Beverly Hills Intermediate orchestra students recently performed with electric violinist, Haydn Vitera. Vitera works with Electrify Your Symphony, a music education group that works with school music directors and their students.



Andrew Jaramillo Zamora, BHI eighth-grader, performed on the electric violin.

Haydn Vitera, of Electrify Your Symphony, performed with the student orchestras.

PISD members earn doctorates



Shown, left to right, are Dr. Jorly Thomas, J. Frank Dobie High School principal; Dr. Toni Lopez, deputy superintendent of staff and academic achievements; Dr. Donna Summers, executive director of research and evaluation; and Dr. Alyta Harrell, associate superintendent, campus development. Thomas, Lopez, Summers and Harrell were inaugural graduates, with doctorates in school improvement, from the University of Texas at Tyler.

Trailblazers pen resolutions

Morris Middle School students shared their New Year's resolutions for 2024.

Heather Smith and Kayla Gibson's fifth-grade class
At least finish two books of Harry Potter.

Valerie Martinez
To have better grades.

Sofia Vega
To get better for the spring season of softball.

Aryanna Cortez
To help my dad at home more and be a better big sister to my siblings.

Aniyah Vargas
My New Year's Resolution is to be better at not talking out loud.

Estrella Arredondo, Andrea Ayala, Jonathan Barrientos, Amy Becerra, Breana Benitez, Christopher Bowsher, Ovidio Bustillo, Marissa Caballero, Rosa Campos, Ashly Canales Arias and Matthew Cardenas.

Jose Cardoza, Emily Castillo, Pablo Cervantes, Maura Colon, Rosana Correa, Lester Cortes Varela, and my pet rat Elmo.

Mayvin Coppens
My new year's resolution is to try better on tests and also do better in school and also my attendance.

Ruben Puente
I will change and not argue with students.

Julissa Arispe
When there is a test at school I'm going to show up brave.

Arleth Garcia
To work on myself and to change and do better. To get good grades and start my youtube channel. To get closer to my sister and spend more time with my family.

E'niyah Nichols
To work hard and do my best.

Damyza Mitchell
To work on my drawing style.

Bradton Lenton
Spend more time with my family.

Eternity Martinez
Take good care of my aunt



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Continued from Page 1.
between the witness and victim ensued. The altercation was resolved and the witness was about to walk away when Vargas fired at least one shot, striking the victim. The witness took the gun from Vargas and called police. Paramedics pronounced the victim dead at the scene.

Feb. 16
Dozens of community leaders and elected officials gathered at the Golfcrest Country Club in Pearland Friday, Feb. 10, for the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce's 37th annual banquet. Southeast Volunteer Fire Department Chief David Cino was named the chamber's Volunteer of the Year for his selfless efforts in the South Belt community. A 40-year SVFD veteran, Cino became fire chief in 2020, replacing longtime Chief Chuck Tylka who had held the position for 45+ years. Prior to becoming chief, Cino served in many positions at the Southeast Volunteer Fire Department, including lieutenant, captain and assistant chief. A lifelong South Belt resident, Cino attended Stuchbery Elementary, Thompson Intermediate and Dobie High School, where he graduated in 1981. Cino also attended San Jacinto College. He joined the Southeast Volunteer Fire Department in 1982. That same year, he also started working at Spectrum Corporation, where he is still employed as an outside salesman.

Feb. 23
Dobie High School hosted its annual Hall of Honor induction ceremony Friday, Feb. 17. In its 11th year, the Hall of Honor recognized graduates

who made significant contributions to the community and served as role models for future students. Five graduates were honored at the 2023 event. Alumni inductees included U.S. Army Col. Mark Russell, Class of 1970; track star Sam Shimmfessel, Class of 1981; entrepreneur/philanthropist Marla Hurley, Class of 1987; stuntwoman and actress Audi Resendez, Class of 1999; and track star/anesthesiologist Dr. Yvonne Claffin, Class of 2001.

Russell earned his commission through the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in the Armor Branch in 1974. He later attended flight school to transition into the Aviation Branch as an attack helicopter pilot. Throughout his career, Russell held multiple command staff positions, including roles in the office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army. After 26 years of dedicated active-duty service, he retired with the rank of colonel in 2000. In retirement, Russell continued to serve through his second career with United Defense Corporation, where he played a crucial role in the management of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle program.

Shimmfessel began his sports career for PISD playing soccer, basketball, football, basketball, and running track and cross-country at Thompson Intermediate. He went on to success in high school as a four-year letterman in track and a three-year letterman in football. Shimmfessel was part of the 4x800 meter and distance medley teams that won the 1981 state championship, holding records still stand-

ing 42 years later. Shimmfessel went on to record-breaking success at the Southland Conference Championship for Louisiana Tech and continued with a world record time in the 4x800 meter relay for Houston Baptist University. He was inducted into the Hall of Honor at HBU in 2022, and Shimmfessel and his Dobie teammates were to be inducted into the PISD Hall of Fame in the spring.

A member of the Lariatets in high school, Hurley credits the experiences and lessons learned at Dobie as key to her success. After graduating from Texas A&M University, she began her career in the oil and gas industry, eventually leaving to assume a senior management role in the family pawn business. Hurley capitalized on her business acumen and sales experience, beginning her own successful luxury consignment business. Today, that business has grown from a web-based storefront to two locations in Round Top, Texas. In addition, Hurley serves as the stylist for Miss Texas USA and Miss Texas Teen USA. She has chaired numerous charitable organizations and was actively involved in the Houston Symphony, Texas Children's Hospital Cancer Center, Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary, Help Cure HD, Houston PetSet, the Junior League of Houston and the Gardenia Janssen Animal Shelter.

Resendez was very active in high school, participating in drama, cheer, student council and choir. One of her proudest moments was winning the Texas State Champion Mascot Award as Lucy the Longhorn.

She received degrees in theater and psychology, performing at Six Flags and numerous operas, ballets, plays and concerts to pay for college. Resendez has worked on over 100 television, film, and commercial productions, including Indiana Jones, Modern Family, The Morning Show and Desperate Housewives. She was selected by Steven Spielberg for several projects and has worked alongside Jennifer Aniston, Eva Longoria, Anthony Hopkins and Kevin Bacon. Audi is an award-winning independent filmmaker, and seeks to create uplifting projects. She is also involved in many student filmmaker outreach programs.

Claffin served as junior and senior class president at Dobie. She competed in Health Occupation Students of America and numerous events with National Honor Society, as well as basketball, cross-country and track. She received a scholarship to Rice University, becoming an All-American in 2002 and won a gold medal in the 200 meters in 2005. She served as a mentor for students of lower socioeconomic status, before attending medical school. Claffin served as vice president of the Student National Medical Association and received the Arnold P. Gold

Humanism Society to medical school. After medical school, Claffin completed her residency at Northwestern University. Today, she is a practicing anesthesiologist in Houston and continues to give back to her community.

March 2
Charges were filed against two suspects arrested in the stabbing of a man that took place about 3:35 a.m. Dec. 22, 2022, at an apartment complex in the 10910 block of the Gulf Freeway near Edgemoor. The suspects, Jack Dean Hairston, 37, and Justin Edmond Salton, 36, are charged with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon in the 208th State District Court. The suspects are accused in the stabbing of Julio Rodriguez, 40. According to Houston Police department officials, officers were dispatched to a cutting/stabbing call at the apartment complex at the above address and found Rodriguez with multiple stab wounds to his back and torso area. The officers also located a female, 37, who sustained swelling, bruising and other facial injuries. Paramedics transported Rodriguez to the hospital in critical but stable condition. The woman was also transported to a hospital for treatment of

non-life-threatening injuries. Further investigation led to the identities of the suspects as Hairston and Salton. Officers arrested Salton on Wednesday, Feb. 15, without incident. Hairston was taken into custody without incident on Jan. 18.

Meador Elementary was named the top Gold Ribbon school in the Greater Houston area by the nonprofit organization Children at Risk.
March 9

Harris County officials held a ribbon-cutting Thursday, March 2, for the official opening of the long-awaited South Belt Stormwater Detention Basin. Located on 174-acres near Beamer Road across from San

Jac College, where the South-bend subdivision once stood, the detention pond would hold more than 500 million gallons of stormwater.
Continued in next week's Leader.

Fred Roberts awards Aviators of the month



Fred Roberts Middle School officials recently recognized their November and December Aviators of the month. Shown, left to right, are Crissy Higham (counselor), sixth-graders Christy Dinh and Treasure Duong, fifth graders Mores Khan and Valerie Mondragon and Lali Guerrero (principal). Photo by Crissy Higham

Fred Roberts Aviators win 1 of 3 PISD media challenges

Fred Roberts Middle School technology teacher Shelby Willis was one of three winners of PISD's Social Media Challenge.

She instructed her students to make videos about bullying, a very important issue at the middle school level.

The students wrote scenarios, acted out their parts, then filmed and edited the final products.

Willis even hosted an Academy Awards ceremony complete with popcorn, a red carpet and Oscar awards for the students.

Crissy Higham, counselor, explained that it was a wonderful learning experience for all Willis' students.



Shown with their Oscars for winning the Roberts Middle School Social Media Challenge are, left to right, (front row) Alexa Jasso, Elijah Chadez, Samuel Vega, Thong Nguyen and (back row) Shelby Willis, technology teacher.



Winning Fred Roberts students, left to right, are Araya Moses, Derek Machuca Cedillo, Michael Rentas, Willis, Lia Romney and counselor Mike Evans.



Shown, left to right, are Crissy Higham (counselor), Ana Padilla Ramirez, Madalynn Murguia, Oscar Moreno Fuentes and Willis.



Shown, left to right, are Leo Berdeja, Kaleb Gavin, Willis, Lily Enciso, Valeria Espinoza and Lali Guerrero (principal).

Burleigh graduates from SFA



Bethany Burleigh (center) recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from Stephen F. Austin State University, receiving her BSIS (Bachelor of Science with Interdisciplinary Studies), with a 4.0 GPA and while working full time. Her friends and family are very proud of her hard work and accomplishments. Shown with Bethany are, left to right, parents Barry, Denise, and grandparents Eleanor and Larrol Burleigh.

Remember When

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

40 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.

35 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.

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

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

20 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.

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

20 years ago (2004)
Susan Blalock officially assumed the principal's job at the Billie and Kathleen Morris Fifth-Grade Center in South

20 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.

20 years ago (2004)
The Blackhawk Park football fields, located at Fuqua and Blackhawk, were vandalized.

15 years ago (2009)
Brandon Nguyen was the first baby born in 2009 at Children's Memorial Hermann Southeast, a service of Memorial Hermann

15 years ago (2009)
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 2003.

15 years ago (2009)
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 yield

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Over The Back Fence by Natalie

KORYN MAKES PROVOST'S HONOR ROLL
South Belt resident, Koryn Johnson has been named to the Provost's Honor Roll for the 2023 fall semester at the Midwestern State University.

To earn a spot on the Provost's Honor Roll, a student who completes 12 hours in one semester with a grade point average of 3.75 to 3.99 and no grade lower than C.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, KRISTEN!
Kristen Giles celebrates her 23rd birthday Jan. 13. Her parents, Tracy and Jim Giles, grandparents Bobby and Kenneth Griffin, and brothers Cody and Aaron and wife Ashley and sons Jaxson and Jace Giles extend their best wishes for a wonderful birthday. Kristen is a Dobie graduate.

DR. JOHN MORGAN CELEBRATES
Greetings are sent to Dr. John Morgan, founding pastor of Sagemont Church, from friends and the Leader staff as he celebrates a birthday Jan. 14. Affectionately called "Brother John" by many who know him, he founded and pastored the church for more than 50 years.

SCHOOL DAZE
The following staff and personnel of the Pasadena Independent School District celebrate birthdays Jan. 11 through Jan. 17.

Atkinson Elementary
Sing a happy birthday song to Mildred Rojas Jan. 13.

Bush Elementary
Light the candles Jan. 11 for a celebration

for Cynthia Covarrubias. Enjoy a slice of birthday cake with Luz Salazar Jan. 16.

Frazier Elementary
Dana Miller enjoys a birthday Jan. 12.

Genoa Elementary
Elizabeth Urieta celebrates a birthday Jan. 18.

Hancock Elementary
Join in the birthday fun Jan. 13 with Veronica Sandoval.

Meador Elementary
Blow out the birthday candles for Tara Merida and Anne Hamilton Jan 11. Send a special birthday wish to Melisa Hinojosa who enjoys a birthday Jan. 16.

South Belt Elementary
Jan. 11 is the day for a celebration for Khoatran. Jan. 12 is the day for a party for Margarita Batres and Jennifer Saucedo.

Fred Roberts Middle School
Light the birthday candles on a birthday cake Jan. 13 for Jorge Rocha.

Melillo Middle School
Send a special birthday greeting Jan. 11 to Diana Moreno.

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
Melinda Harrison enjoys a birthday Jan. 15.

Dobie High
Jan. 11 is the day for a party for Stacy Thomas. Light the birthday candles Jan. 14 for Chrystal Limon and Constance Ramos. Celebrating a birthday Jan. 16 is Jessy George.

FRIENDS CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS
Thursday, Jan. 11: Kelly Cavazos, Myles Barkman, Amy Villareal, Kathleen Wenzel, Deirdre Davis and James Mouton Jr; Friday, Jan. 12: Rosalind Vela, Troy Vessel, William Carpenter, Jose Pena, Barry Francis and Tammy Overstreet; Saturday, Jan. 13: Scott Langefeld, Claire Mules, Gregden Martin, Betty Shamblyn, Jessica Hynes, Joseph Farias and Shane Poynter; Sunday, Jan. 14: Tracy Oliver, Laurie Lynn, Tiffany Defreitas and Louis Casas; Monday, Jan. 15: Denise Montano, Patrick Lesley, Heather White, Cody Fountain and Barbara Bennett-Northern; Tuesday, Jan. 16: Rachel Perez, Heidi Ferguson, Troy Merkall, Samesia Bass-Hamlett, Kimberly Dann-Mandy, Dana Willis and Lisa Pennington; Wednesday, Jan. 17: Scott Greene, Tiffany Juarez, Donald Adams, Katherine Macias, Carla Parker, Jodie Lawson and Kevin Jasso.

LEADER WANTS YOU IN THE NEWS
Email announcements of anniversaries, vacations and graduations to mynews@southbeltleader.com with OTBF in the subject line by Friday noon for the next week's publication. For birthdays, type "OTBF: Friends Celebrate Birthdays" in the subject line.

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SPORTS NEWS & NOTES

Dobie boys' soccer program plans 40th reunion Jan. 19

There is an available commemorative T-shirt recognizing the remarkable 1984-2024 run that the Dobie boys' soccer program has put together over the decades, both former head coach Jon Schmitz and current head coach Justo Manrique hope everyone enjoys in the fun as the Longhorns celebrate the occasion Jan. 19 at Veterans Stadium in Pasadena.

The current Dobie varsity squad, coming off a Region III championship match appearance that was part of a 20-1-4 overall record, will take on Fulshear at 7 p.m.

The 2024 senior class will be recognized at 6:30 p.m., while all Dobie soccer alumni in attendance will be honored at half-time.

Schmitz, who for many years served as Dobie's head athletic trainer, was tasked with getting the Dobie program up and running in the fall of 1983 after the University Interscholastic League gave soccer the thumbs up to begin play as the calendar

Cowboys, Cowgirls invite returnees

The Sagement Cowboys and Cowgirls of the Bay Area Football League will soon accept registration for returning players as well as members of the drill and cheer squads as preparation for the 2024 season takes shape. The in-person sign-up sessions will be held Jan. 20 and Jan. 27, both from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at El Franco Lee Park. There will also be a new player registration session Feb. 3, also from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. A minimum \$100 deposit is due at the time of registration. For additional information, call Cowboys' athletic director at 713-476-1491.

GHVCA honors Dobie athletes

The Greater Houston Volleyball Coaches Association has honored Dobie senior Lexie Gonzalez and freshman Amaya Langellier as members of its Class 6A Postseason Team, while senior Aly Frias was among the group's honorable mention choices. Sophomores, juniors and seniors were eligible for the GHVCA's All-Academic Team, with Dobie's Arianna Borrego, Haley Dehoyos, Frias, Ariana Garza, Gonzalez, Alana Goree, Matison Mitchell, Hope Ortiz, Belle Peridion, Haley Precella and Leslie Sarduy among the honorees.

LSA players earn GHVCA nods

Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools 5A state volleyball finalist Lutheran South Academy saw several of its players honored by the Greater Houston Volleyball Coaches Association following the 2023-2024 season. Taylor Crain, Haleigh Pham, Makynna Robbins, Kenna Sambrano, Kaylee Scarborough and Anna Schepmann earned All-Academic Team honors.

Dobie's Richard picks Ill. State

Dobie standout defensive back and team captain C.J. Richard has announced that he will continue his education and begin his collegiate football career at Illinois State University in Normal, Ill. The Redbirds compete in the NCAA Div. I ranks.



Jon Schmitz (left), who debuted as Dobie's head soccer coach in 1984 and won league crowns with the program in 1985 and 1987, will join current head

coach Justo Manrique as the Longhorns celebrate 40 years as a program Jan. 19. Manrique has now led Dobie to nine straight league titles.

JFD varsity girls' soccer wins Wagon Wheel title

Judging by the opening weekend of the high school soccer season, things are going according to plan and then some for the Dobie varsity girls' team and first-year head coach Theresa Kamara.

With regulation wins over Baytown Sterling and Hightower coupled with a shootout win against Langham Creek, Dobie reached the championship match at Iowa Colony's Wagon Wheel Classic Jan. 4-6 within Alvin ISD.

From there, Dobie bested Elsik 3-1 to claim first place at the event.

As part of what was a long day on the pitch, the

turned to 1984. There may not have been a ton of optimism among higher-ups at Dobie at the time that the program could endure, much less thrive. But others, such as youth players and their parents who had been part of the very successful South Belt Youth Soccer Club, thought otherwise.

"We had a ton of support from the parents, and we had plenty of players show up wanting to play," said Schmitz, who coached the team from 1984 through 1989. Dobie won district crowns in 1985 and 1987.

"That first year, there weren't as many schools fielding teams. We had Clear Lake, Galveston Ball, the Beaumont schools, Brazoswood and some others in our district. Clear Lake won district, but we finished second."

There have been ebbs and flows along the way; every program experiences them at some point, but today's Dobie boys' soccer program has been as successful as any in the state regardless of sport while

less tie against Alief Taylor, the Longhorns defeated Caney Creek Jan. 6 as Aleman again had a goal and an assist. J.P. Rodriguez added a goal and Dominguez logged another assist.

The Longhorns play in the Austin Lakes Elite Showcase, taking on Rockwall Heath Jan. 11 before a Jan. 12 tilt against Vandegrift.

Dobie will finish play in Austin Jan. 13, facing Lake Highlands.

Dobie boys' soccer wins pair at Kilt

The Dobie varsity boys' soccer team opened the 2024 regular season Jan. 4-6 with a pair of wins at the Kilt Cup in The Woodlands, playing Alief Taylor to a scoreless tie in a third match.

The Longhorns, a 6A Region III finalist a season ago, began this campaign with a 2-0 win over New Braunfels.

Jefferson Aleman had a goal and an assist while teammate Alex Escobar also tallied a goal. Kevin Dominguez got involved with an assist.

After the Jan. 5 score-

JFD boys' soccer at Austin

- Jan. 11: vs. Rockwall Heath, 6 p.m.
 - Jan. 12: vs. Vandegrift, noon
 - Jan. 13: vs. Lake Highlands, 8 a.m.
- ## JFD girls' soccer at PNG
- Jan. 11: vs. Huffman, 9 a.m.
 - Jan. 11: vs. Nederland, 12:30 p.m.
 - Jan. 13: vs. Magnolia, 10:45 a.m.
 - Jan. 13: vs. LCM, 1:45 p.m.

Hoops teams battle district

District basketball races are in full swing this month, with the 2-1 Dobie varsity boys' team set to go against unbeaten South Houston Jan. 10, after press time.

Meanwhile, the Clear Brook varsity boys' team went up against Clear Springs Jan. 10. The Wol-

Spring sports season to deliver busy start

As always, the "spring" portion of the athletics schedule is already off to a fast start mere days into January.

While high school basketball races garner plenty of attention with district competition in full swing, the soccer season is quickly heading into week-two tournament play.

High school track and field programs began pre-season training before the holiday break, with the Dobie teams opening the season at the Kethan Relays in Deer Park Feb. 2.

Meanwhile, Clear Brook will open its track and field season Feb. 2 by hosting the Wolverine Winter Relays.

The Dobie tennis program will start its spring season Jan. 19 at Pearland.

As the calendar moves into February, local softball fields and baseball diamonds will be in full use. With the focus of opening the regular season against one another Feb. 12 at Wolverine Field, the Clear Brook and Dobie softball programs can begin practices Jan. 12, with scrimmages allowed to begin Jan. 27.

The 2020 Covid-19 season aside, Dobie is looking to extend a string of 20-plus win seasons that currently has reached five after the locals won 21 overall games in 2023.

Clear Brook, looking to advance to the postseason out of a tough 24-6A field of programs, is led by infielder Lein Brister, a University of Texas signee.

The San Jacinto College softball team, led by sophomore All-American Arianna Wright, will open its 2024 campaign at McLennan Community College's Battle on the Bosque Invitational Jan. 26-27 in Waco, taking on Odessa, McLennan and Chipola (twice) as part of a two-day round-robin format.

San Jacinto College was 42-19 overall in 2023, coming within one win of a third straight trip to the national tournament as Wright, a Grand Canyon University signee, hit .522 and led the team in nearly all offensive categories.

The Clear Brook and Dobie baseball programs, both coming off league championships in 2023, can begin pre-season workouts Jan. 19, with scrimmages allowed Feb. 3.

Dobie, champion of 22-6A in 2023, defeated West Brook in the bidistrict baseball round before a series loss to Clear Falls.

Dobie's varsity team will scrimmage at Alvin Feb. 3 and will open the regular season Feb. 19 at Goose Creek Memorial.

Clear Brook, a bidistrict round series loser to Strake Jesuit, shared the 24-6A crown with Clear Falls and Clear Springs at 8-4 as the race went down to the wire.



Dobie striker Nico Barr (14) found the net during the team's pre-season scrimmages and will aim to provide her team with a solid scoring option up front throughout 2024. The Longhorns opened the regular season in Alvin and will now hit the road again for a three-day event in Port Neches.

Photo by Donna Alsdorf

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2023 year in review offers look at sports highlights in April

As the *Leader* continues its year in review for 2023 the following is a look back at some of April's highlights.

April 6

The District 22-6A Track and Field Championships were coming to Pasadena ISD's Auxiliary Stadium April 11-12, and the Dobie girls' and boys' teams appeared ready for the challenge. Dobie competed at the South Houston Invitational March 30, and there were plenty of stand-out performances.

The legend that is Dobie boys' soccer rolled on as the Longhorns returned to the Region III Final Four tournament at Deer Park ISD's Abshier Stadium.

Katy ISD's Seven Lakes took on Clear Springs (13-6-7) in the first boys' semifinal, with the Longhorns then going against Katy Jordan.

Dobie was seeking to reach its second state tournament, having last won the Region III crown in 2017. A winner of nine consecutive district championships, this Dobie team is in the midst of the best run in program history.

Unbeaten through 27 matches at 23-0-4, the Longhorns punched their regional final four ticket with a 3-1 win over Pearland March 31 at The Rig in Pearland.

Dobie's Jordi Garcia gave the locals a 1-0 lead eight minutes in with a goal, and Miguel Azua and Alex Escobar added second-half goals for a 3-0 lead before the Oilers scored with 14 minutes left.

Dobie reached the regional quarterfinals for the first time in five seasons after blanking the Alief Elsie Rams 1-0 March 28 at Pasadena ISD's Veterans Stadium.

The Lady Longhorns came up with 77 points for fourth place at Shadow Creek, with Stacie Harris delivering a gold medal in the long jump at 18 feet, 7 inches to lead the way.

Dobie's Bre'Yanna Williams, like Harris a sophomore, won a bronze medal for third place as she went 16-6 1/2 in the long jump. The Longhorns also excelled in the 3,200 as Kyla Lobo's time of 12 minutes, 45.243 was good for second place while teammate Ashlee Garcia went 13:09.995 for third place and a bronze medal.

At 50.431, the Longhorns were bronze medalists in the 4x100 relay as Harris was joined by Mia Sanchez, Chloey Matthews and Tailin Curtis in the event. Dobie was also third best in the 4x200 relay in a time of 1:49.554 as Williams, Sanchez, Sophia Perez and Curtis teamed in the event.

Dobie's Christina Rodriguez chipped in as she was third for a bronze medal in the 400 at 1:04.596.

The Dobie varsity baseball team put together a masterful first half of play while sitting atop the District 22-6A standings at 5-1.

But as the Longhorns prepared to travel to Channelview for a game against the 3-1 Falcons, head coach Miguel Torres promised there would be no looking ahead. It was all about taking things one game at a time.

"We have started the race at 5-1 and like where we are, but even at 15-5-2 overall, we can always look back at other games and see where a key play here or there would have helped," Torres said.

"We came into the season with what we felt like was a great situation with our pitching. It was all about staying healthy. In district play, Aiden Sanchez and Cruz Torres have been great for us. They have given us a chance to win every time out, and we have come up with clutch hits."

The Dobie varsity tennis program challenged the field at the District 22-6A Spring Tennis Championships March 29-30 at Deer Park High School as Leslie Figueroa and Dominic Ortiz qualified for regionals after placing second in the mixed doubles bracket.

The Longhorns' top finishers were Ryan Le and Thang Tran, third place boys' doubles; Figueroa and Ortiz, second place/regional qualifiers mixed doubles; and Tiffany Tran and Natalie Vo, third place girls' doubles.

A preview of what was to come in mere days at the District 24-6A Championships played out at Sam Vitanza Stadium for the C.L. Hanna Relays as host Dickinson was joined by Clear Brook, Clear Creek, Clear Falls, Clear Springs and more in both varsity boys' and girls' divisions. The Clear Brook girls continued their strong season with a medal collection at the Hannas even as some athletes chose to compete at the Texas Relays April 1 in Austin. High jumper Kamryn McLaurin cleared 5 feet, 2 inches in the high jump for second place.

In Dickinson, Brook junior Jizzale Davis was third in the 100 for bronze in a time of 12.50 seconds. As for the 200, the Wolverines' Julissa Hudson, a sophomore, finished at 26.37 for fifth.

Clear Brook junior Azayla Smith clocked in at 59.83 for a bronze medal in the 400, and she, Davis and Hudson were joined by McLaurin for second place and a silver medal at 1 minute, 42.23 seconds.

Two-time defending Region XIV softball champion San Jacinto College was set to conclude the first half of conference play April 5 with a pair of games at Galveston Col-

lege as the race to the post-season heated.

The Ravens, with single losses to Blinn and Alvin, were at 8-2 in conference entering the set with Galveston. Overall, the Ravens had won 28 of 40 games.

Freshman Arianna Wright continued to pace the Ravens offensively as the team leader in batting average (.530), doubles (15), home runs (8) and runs batted in (38). Sophomore Emma Garcia hit .373 and freshman Chloe Foster hit .357, but with just 15 home runs in the 40 total games, the Ravens relied heavily on defense and pitching.

The Ravens saw sophomore Christin Haygood go 11-1 with a 1.06 earned run average as she delivered the goods after being named the Region XIV Pitcher of the Year as a freshman.

April 13

The Dobie varsity boys' soccer team's bid for a second regional title since 2017 fell one win shy as instead defending Region III champion Seven Lakes secured a return trip to the state tournament with a 6-0 win over the Longhorns in the championship match April 8 at Abshier Stadium in Deer Park.

The Longhorns, who also suffered their lone loss of the season in their final game, finished at 24-1-4 as part of a terrific season that delivered the finest win-loss record in program history. Dobie began its postseason run after winning its ninth consecutive district championship.

The record books will forever show the 6-0 win for the Spartans as if it were a cruise job, but the Longhorns' halftime deficit was just 1-0 before Seven Lakes erupted for five second-half goals. A third series sweep and seven district wins in pocket, the Dobie varsity baseball team ensured it would be part of the 2023 postseason parade come the first week of May, but this group wanted more.

In topping Channelview 6-5 April 4 and again by a 7-3 count April 6, Dobie continued its push for a league title. In the opener April 4 at Channelview, the locals prevailed late, winning 6-5 as Liam Vasquez was 2 for 2 with three runs batted in and also earned the win on the mound.

Matt Torres, who got the save, doubled twice, scored twice and knocked in a run as the Longhorns used an early three-run frame to put distance between themselves and the Falcons.

In the 7-3 win over the Falcons April 6 at Dobie, Cruz Torres allowed just two hits and improved to 8-0 on the mound with a complete-game effort. Dobie plated five runs in the bottom of the first inning and cruised to its seventh straight win.

Julian Valencia tripled and drove in three runs, and Ian Johnson knocked in a pair of runs, A.J. Hernandez doubled, scored twice and knocked in a run.

A series sweep of Clear Creek could prove to be huge as the Clear Brook varsity baseball team looked to advance to the postseason.

In the 2-1 win over Clear Creek April 4, the Wolverines walked it off with a pair of runs in the bottom of the seventh as reliever Jose Luccioni took the win. Two Wildcat errors and a wild pitch helped set the Wolverines up in the pivotal seventh inning, and Chris Maldonado's sacrifice fly plated Adrian Longoria with the winning run as the Wolverines rallied from a deficit.

Francisco Leija allowed four hits and an earned run over six solid innings as he kept the Wolverines close entering the final inning. Two days later, the Wolverines had no trouble in bouncing the Wildcats 9-0.

Leija, Logan Sariga and Trenton Flores all drove in a pair of runs as the Wolverines scored twice in four different innings. Leija homered and doubled to go with a double from Flores.

Santiago Leija needed just 97 pitches to blank the Wildcats in a complete game, three-hitter as the Wolverines beat the 2022 league champions in League City.

The postseason accolades continued to pour in for Alyssa Berry, a Class of 2022 Clear Brook High School graduate who starred as a freshman scorer for the Hill College women's basketball program during the 2022-2023 season.

Berry, the co-Freshman of the Year in the National Junior College Athletic Association's Region V ranks, was recognized this month by the Women's Basketball Coaches Association as a Two-Year College All-American Honorable Mention selection after she averaged a conference-best 17.4 points per game while shooting 39.8 percent from the field on two-point tries and 33.9 percent on three-point field goal tries at Hill College.

The Rebels wound up the season at 18-13 overall. Berry as a senior at Clear Brook helped the Wolverines to 30 overall wins and was a key contributor to the 2021-2022 squad that captured the program's first-ever Class 6A district championship at 12-0.

Four Clear Brook High School baseball players were among students from the school who were recognized as Superintendent Scholars for the 2022-2023 school year within Clear Creek ISD. The student-athletes included Reid Ridley, P.J. Dailey, Teddy Garza and Logan Sariga.

To qualify for the annual honor, students must have averaged a grade of 95 or better in all Level II courses and a grade of 85 or better in all Level I courses, which includes AP and honors studies.

April 20

The Dobie varsity track and field program had plenty of chances to reach the Region III meet later this month as the Longhorns head to Turner Stadium in Humble for the April 20 District 21-6A/District 22-6A Area Championships.

While Deer Park cruised to the varsity girls' 22-6A crown, runner-up Dobie delivered plenty of medal-claiming and top four area performances. The Dobie girls took gold in both the 4x200 and 4x400 relays to pick up 40 key points. Individually, senior Ashlee Garcia and sophomore Stacie Harris won gold in two events each to lead the charge.

In the 4x200 relay, it was senior Mia Sanchez and sophomore Tailin Curtis joining freshman Kylar Joseph and sophomore Bre'Yanna Williams taking the victory and gold medals at 1 minute, 48.13 seconds.

The Longhorns turned to seniors Ashley Dunn and Sophia Perez along with freshman Christina Rodriguez and sophomore Stacie Harris for the gold-medal win in the 4x400 relay at 4:13.58.

Dobie and Deer Park went to the wire in the 4x100 relay, with the Deer taking the gold in a time of 50.29 and Dobie second for silver in a time of 50.50.

Dobie's area-qualifying foursome included sophomore Chloey Matthews, Harris, Sanchez and Curtis. The Longhorns swept the medals in the 3,200, with Garcia taking gold at 12:41.02, with sophomore Lauren Garza second for silver at 12:52.94 and junior Kyla Lobo third for bronze with her time of 12:59.95.

With a gold medal in 4x400 and silver as part of the 4x200, the sophomore Harris was responsible for 29 team points.

Harris grabbed gold in the long jump as she went 18 feet, 4 inches for the win, with teammate Williams also advancing to the area round by virtue of her fourth-place finish of 15-10 1/2.

On the track, Harris also won gold with a time of 24.45 in the 200, while teammate Sanchez was the bronze medalist with a third-place time of 26.53. It was a big meet for Dunn as she won a gold medal for her victory in the 400 in a time of 1:03.47.

Garcia picked up gold at the 800 distance as well, winning in a time of 2:30.70, while Dunn was the bronze medalist and third-place finisher in a duced the win and gold

medals all around in a time of 1 minute, 26.214 seconds.

Freshman Joshua Shelton starred for the Wolverines in the 400 as he delivered a gold-medal effort of 48.718 seconds.

A time of 21.525 was good enough for Felton to take silver and second place, while teammate Owens was third for a bronze medal at 21.613. Clear Brook came up with a time of 42.665 to place third in the 4x100 relay as Christian Wright, Kartier Johnson, Akinola and Jydis Williams teamed for the locals.

In the 100, Felton kept his senior season in line for the area championships as he was fourth at 10.858. Clear Brook was fourth in the 4x400 relay to grab an area berth in a time of 3:25.092 as the foursome included Johnson, Jesse Shelton, Joshua Shelton and Wright.

A throw of 136 feet, 6 inches earned sophomore Darwin Bolden second place, a silver medal and an area round invitational in the discus as he joined his Wolverine teammates at areas.

Bettering the boys' program all-time record in the 4x200 relay for the fourth time this season, the foursome including, Joshua Akinola, Raymond Felton, Kartier Johnson and Jaylon Owens, cruised to the gold medal for the win at 1 minute, 26.2 seconds at the April 14 District 24-6A Championships at Challenger Stadium in Webster.

Sophomore Tariq Riley starred for the Longhorns as he captured gold in the 400 in a time of 52.30 and also anchored his 4x400 relay group to a gold medal-win in the meet finale.

At 5:50.67, the sophomore Garza won the 1,600 for gold, with Lobo's time of 5:58.60 good for third place and a bronze medal. Junior Jordan Davis also advanced to the area round in the 300 hurdles as she took bronze with a clocking of 53.61.

In the varsity boys' division, the Deer were the class of the league from a team standpoint, while the Longhorns also sent several big-time performers to the area round.

In that 4x400, the Longhorns had juniors Ariel Cortez Amaya and Charles Richard join senior Jeremiah Jackson and Riley for the victory in a time of 3:33.82. Dobie also took the victory in the 4x200 relay in a time of 1:31.82 as senior Derrick Woodley, freshman Damarcus Hodges, Jackson and freshman Jeremiah Davis collected the gold medals.

Elsewhere, the Longhorns' Jackson went 20-8 in the long jump for a silver medal and second place, plus the area berth. Hodges went 43-00 1/2 for second in the triple jump, with Jackson third at 41-07 as both



Clear Brook freshman Joshua Shelton starred for the Wolverines in the 400 as he delivered a gold-medal effort of 48.718 seconds at district and also excelled in the area round to reach regionals.

medaled and advanced.

In the 200, Woodley was back at it as his time of 22.56 was third for a bronze medal. Junior Roderick Drumgo threw the discus 124-02 for third place in the event, and his best of 45-06 was also third in the event as he reached areas in both events.

The Longhorns' Yo-hander Mercado, a senior, made his way to the area meet in the 300 hurdles as his clocking of 43.86 was third-best for a bronze medal. Senior Giovanni Avila extended his season as he was fourth with a time of 2:05.67 at the 800 distance, and Avila also moved on to the area round in the 3,200 as he was fourth at 10:30.19.

Dobie began the relays with a bronze for third place in the 4x100. There, Woodley, Davis, Hodges and freshman Marcus Jones posted a time of 43.26. Sophomore Christopher Lopez advanced to the area round in the 1,600 as his time of 4:53.35 was fourth, and Davis was in at 11.16 for fourth in the 100.

Athletes from Clear Brook High School are off to the area track and field championships as the locals look to reach the Region III meet late this month. Senior Kennedy Thompson was one of several stars for the Clear Brook girls, getting to 122 feet, 8 inches for her second straight 24-6A championship in the discus.

She also threw the shot a personal best of 37-5 for fourth place and an area round invitation. Dickinson collected 142 points to win the 24-6A crown on the girls' side of things. Brook was fifth as a team with 86 points. Clear Brook's 4x400 relay team blazed to a time of 3 minutes, 55.349 seconds for the gold medal win as the foursome includ-

ed Jizzale Davis, Ja'Delle Major, Azayla Smith and Julissa Hudson.

A time of 24.723 seconds earned Brook's Davis a silver medal for second place in the 200. As for the 400, Brook's Smith posted a time of 58.925 for second place and the silver medal.

At 2:22.242, Smith also reached the area round in the 800 as she was fourth. An effort of 34-5 in the triple jump was good for Kyra Freeman to advance as the fourth-place finisher. At 49.284, the Wolverines were second in the 4x100 relay as the group included Kyra Freeman, Davis, Hudson and Twyla Penn.

The locals also advanced to the area round in the 4x200 relay as the group of Ja'Delle Major, Freeman, Penn and Kamryn McLaurin came up with a clocking of 1:47.140.

The 24-6A boys' team championship went down to the final 4x400 relay as the Dickinson Gators collected 123 points to win the crown by a mere two points.

Barreling toward the District 22-6A varsity baseball title with nine straight wins, the Dobie baseball squad went into action against South Houston April 18 looking to extend the program's winning streak.

The Longhorns won their eighth and ninth straight league games, beating Rayburn 10-2 April 11 and then taking down the Texans 14-1 April 14.

Sophomore left-hander Aiden Sanchez struck out six and allowed two hits and no earned runs in a complete game April 11 to improve to 4-1 overall. Daniel Delgado went 3 for 4 with three runs scored and Juelz Martinez had a hit to go with great defense in center field.

In the April 14 win, sophomore Cruz Torres also went the distance to move to 9-0 this season as Delgado was 5 for 5 with a home run, two doubles and four runs batted in while scoring three runs.

Omar Serna went 2 for 3 with a home run, a double and two RBIs, while Martinez was 2 for 2 with two runs batted in and two runs scored. Fernando Flores also had two hits and scored twice as the Longhorns delivered their ninth straight win in District 22-6A action.

Dobie's Leslie Figueroa and playing partner Dominic Ortiz represented the Longhorns at the Region III Spring Tennis Championships April 11 at Deer Park High School.

In the mixed doubles round of 16, the locals fell 6-2, 6-3 to Houston Memorial's Callie O'Neill and Colton Matthews as the spring season came to a close for head coach Manuel Moreno Jr.'s program.

April 27

Dobie High School announced Timir Patel as its new leader of the boys' basketball program, and Patel is excited to lead the Longhorns into the future after a lengthy stay in Katy ISD.

A Cinco Ranch High School graduate and one-time basketball standout in his own right, Patel made several collegiate stops along the way after high school, including Prairie View A&M, Blinn and Houston Baptist University, now Houston Christian University. He's experienced professional play overseas in China, Romania and India, and has most recently been part of four deep postseason tournament runs courtesy of a three-year stop at Paetow and then 2023 at Jordan.

Continued on Page 8



Junior Orozco (1) and his Dobie varsity baseball teammates rolled toward the District 22-6A crown with an impressive winning streak that set up a run to the area playoff round.



Bella Perez had a senior season to remember as the four-year varsity performer helped the Dobie varsity softball program to a fifth straight 20-plus win season and a bidistrict playoff berth.



Dobie's Leslie Figueroa (left) and playing partner Dominic Ortiz represented the Longhorns at the Region III Spring Tennis Championships April 11 at Deer Park High School.

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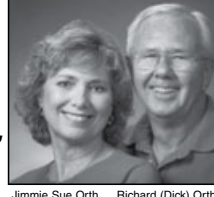
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CALENDAR

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11

7 a.m. **AA** - "Breakfast With Bill," Revive Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 713-686-6300 or visit https://aahouston.org/meetings/.

7:30 a.m. **Rotary Club of Pearland** - Meets at either Pearland Chamber of Commerce, 6117 Broadway St., Pearland, or online on Zoom. See Pearland Chamber of Commerce calendar or call 281-485-3634.

9 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** - 204 S. Main, Pasadena. Call 713-472-0565 for tours of exhibits.

9:30 a.m. **NASA Aglow Community Light-house** - 18516 Hwy. 3 in Webster. The public is welcome and encouraged to bring others. Call 281-910-1971 or visit aglownet.org.

11:30 a.m. **ABWA - Southeast Express Network** - Meetings are held at Big Horn BBQ, 2300 Smith Ranch Rd, Pearland. Reservations appreciated. Visit www.seenabwa.org.

Noon **AA** - Imperfect Nooners Group, 3525 Broadway, Pearland, or at https://aahouston.org/meetings/imperfect-nooners. Call 713-686-6300.

6:30 p.m. **Pearland Area Republican's Club** - meets at VFW Post 7109 Pearland, 4202 W Walnut St., Pearland. Email pearlandarearepublicanclub@gmail.com or visit www.facebook.com/PARTX.

7 p.m. **Congregation Shaar Hashalom** - free discussion about Judaism and religion in general at Sawa Restaurant and Grill, 16608 El Camino Real, Houston. Contact socialaction@shaarhashalom.org.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12

7 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.

7 p.m. **NA** - Vigilance Group of NA, open meeting, 2930 E. FM 518, Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). For details, call 713-661-4200 or visit www.hascona.com or https://nastuff.com/.

9 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** - See Thursday's notice.

9 a.m. **Congregation Shaar Hashalom** - All services are live and on Zoom. For details regarding services, Judaism classes, film series and lunch with the Rabbi, visit https://www.shaarhashalom.org.

8 p.m. **Serenity Now Al-Anon Group** - meets

at CrossRoads UMC 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. Family members and friends of problem drinkers/addicts share and discover choices available. Call 281-484-9243.

8 p.m. **AA** - meets at CrossRoads UMC, 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. Call 281-484-9243.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13

7:30 a.m. **AA** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.

9 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** - See Thursday's notice.

9:30 a.m. **Congregation Shaar Hashalom** - All services are live and on Zoom. For details regarding services, Judaism classes, film series and lunch with the Rabbi, visit https://www.shaarhashalom.org.

11 a.m. **Al-Anon Meeting (Women Only, English)** - For women affected by an addict. Revive Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, Cornell Conference room #111. Call 281-487-8787 or visit https://www.houstonalanon.org/.

1 p.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - offers a knitting class. Call 281-479-7285 beforehand.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14

8 a.m./10:15 a.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - has worship and Bible study programs at 11456 Space Center Blvd. (in back of a medical/retail community). Call 281-479-7285.

2 p.m. **Grief Support Group** - Revive Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy. Call 713-944-9186.

4 - 6 p.m. **Congregation Shaar Hashalom** - Interfaith Call for Peace event. Members of different faith communities expressing their messages for hope and peace throughout the world. Participating faiths include Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Unity, Unitarian Universalists, and many Christian denominations. Security will be present and there will be refreshments and fellowship.

5:30 p.m. **Celebrate Recovery** - A faith-based 12-step program, in the Life Kids Chapel at Life Church, 9900 Alameda Genoa. Call 713-419-2635.

8 p.m. **AA** - See Friday's notice.

MONDAY, JANUARY 15

Noon **AA** - Imperfect Nooners. See Thursday noon notice.

1:30 - 3 p.m. **Hometown Heroes Dance** - at Hometown Heroes Park, 1001 E. League City Parkway. Volunteers teach dance lessons. Call 281-554-1180.

6 p.m. **Scrabble Club #511** - Meets at IHOP,

11222 Fuqua. Join in the fun and improve crossword skills. COVID-19 vaccination required. Email huff_reunion@juno.com for details.

7 p.m. **AA** - St. Luke's 12 Step Recovery open meeting in the education Bldg. in room 4, at 11011 Hall Rd. Call 832-725-8479 or 281-309-2801.

7 p.m. **TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)** - #0683 chapter meets at the Methodist Church, 110 N Friendswood Dr. in the educational bldg., room 201. Call 832-858-4617 or 713-875-8820.

7 p.m. **NA** - See Friday's notice.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16

10:00 a.m. **CCART** - Clear Creek Association of Retired Teachers meets at the Bay Area Community Center, 5002 NASA Parkway. Annual dues are \$50.

9 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** - See Thursday's notice.

10:30 a.m. **Tri County Republican Women** - General meetings are held at the Golfcrest Country Club, 2509 Country Club Dr. Exact cash or check requested for lunch (\$15). RSVP at www.tricountyrw.club/ or call 832-250-8901.

11:30 a.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - See Sunday's notice.

Noon **AA** - Imperfect Nooners. See Thursday noon notice.

6:30 - 7:30 p.m. **Southeast Houston Toastmasters** - Club #05324194 meets in-person at 10500 Scarsdale Blvd (SB Chamber of Commerce). Visit seohouston.toastmastersclubs.org or call 832-722-9061.

7 p.m. **NA** - See Friday's notice.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17

7 a.m. **AA** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.

9 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** - See Thursday's notice.

Noon **AA** - Imperfect Nooners. See Thursday noon notice.

12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. **Hometown Heroes Humpday Dance** - at Hometown Heroes Park, 1001 E. League City Parkway. Casual ballroom dancing offered. Call 281-554-1180.

7 p.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - See Sunday's notice.

7 p.m. **NA** - See Friday's notice.

8 p.m. **AA** - See Friday's notice.

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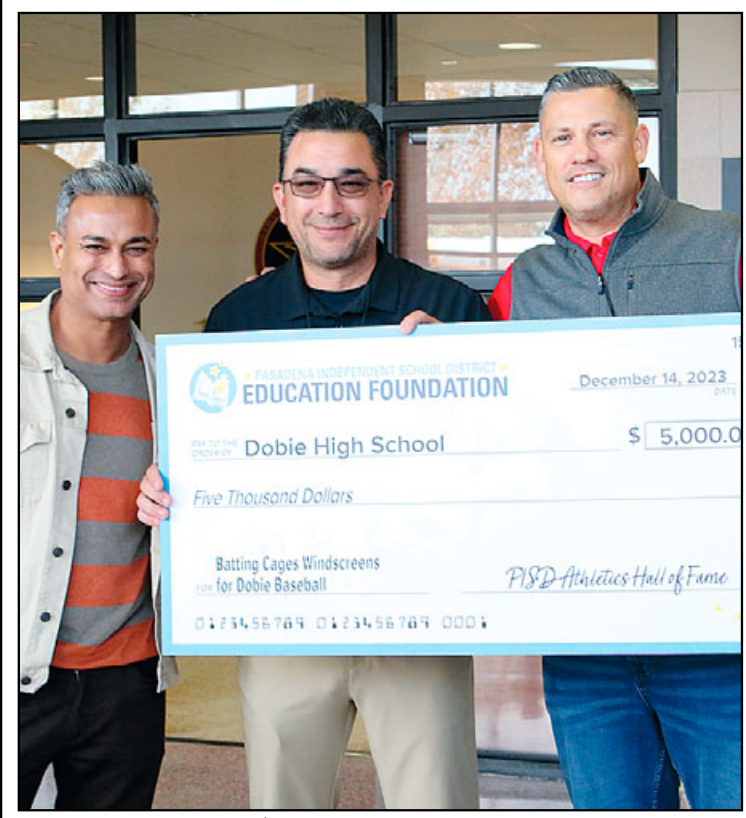
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Area PISD schools recipients of foundation grant funds



The Pasadena ISD Education Foundation awarded more than \$381,000 to the district's schools in the annual foundation's prize parade. Shown are members and staff who were in on the activity. Left to right are Dr. Troy McCarley, Dr. Alyta Harrel, Gloria Gallegos, Emily Ontiveros and Joe Saavedra.



Dobie High School received \$5,000 for physical education equipment with the grant funding from the Pasadena ISD Education Foundation. Left to right are Dr. Jorly Thomas (Dobie principal), Miguel Torres (history/baseball coach) and Kenny Fernandez (PISD board of trustee).



Laura Bush Elementary was a recipient of a grant check from the Pasadena ISD Education Foundation. Shown are Rubi Contreras (librarian), left, and Elaine Domec (music teacher) with their grant check for \$3,850.

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PISD awards grants

Just before the Christmas school break, Pasadena ISD Foundation held its 2023 Prize Parade.

Every year, the educators have the opportunity to write a classroom grant for their individual classroom, department and/or campus.

This year, the Foundation was able to award 93 classroom grants and more than \$381,000 for students in Pasadena ISD.

This is a record amount in the foundation's history. It took effort from the community, sponsors and fundraising all year long to complete this goal.

According to Emily Ontiveros, director of the educational foundation, the members are "super proud of this achievement and would love for the *South Belt Leader* to share the news with the community." The funds awarded impact all the children in Pasadena ISD (pre-K-12th grades.) The more the foundation helps the students reach their full potential, the better opportunities which can be available to their families, community, and city.

To see additional photos, visit <https://communication.sdepartment.smugmug.com/2023-2024-School-Year/Education-Foundation/Prize-Parade-2023>.

Ferguson sets record

Lutheran South Academy's Lauren Ferguson set a new school record in the 500 freestyle as she came through with a time of 5 minutes, 28.84 seconds at the TISCA meet in Houston earlier this month.

Leader recalls 2023 year in sports

Continued from Page 6

In the final two-game set against South Houston, Dobie first topped the Trojans April 18 by a 17-9 count at South Houston, then blanked the Trojans 10-0 April 21 to set up a big celebration at Longhorn Field on the Dobie campus.

In the 17-9 win, Omar Serna went deep, drove in four runs and scored twice. Juan Estrada went 3 for 3 and scored three times and Daniel Delgado had two hits and scored three runs. Sophomore Cruz Torres improved to 10-0 on the mound in the 10-0 clincher April 21 as Serna again knocked in four runs and Delgado crossed the plate three times. As for Torres, his 10-0 record includes an earned run average of just 0.68 with 52 strikeouts over 51 frames of work.

Freshman 400-meter sensation Joshua Shelton came up with his second postseason win in as many weeks while senior thrower Kennedy Thompson delivered a personal record in the discus as the pair led Clear Brook's run to the Region III Track and Field Championships.

Shelton and Thompson moved a step closer to the ultimate goal of reaching the state level as they won gold at the District 23-6A/ District 24-6A area meet April 21 at Challenger Stadium in Webster. Next up is the Region III meet April 28-29 at Turner Stadium in Humble as athletes will aim for two-two finishes in each event, which brings an automatic Class 6A state championship berth in Austin May 13. Shelton doubled down on his 24-6A crown in the 400 as he went 49.30 seconds at the 23/24 area meet to again take gold and the regional berth.

Jack Musgrove of Clear Lake grabbed the other regional berth as his time of 49.43 was second best.

Thompson, the two-time District 24-6A discus champion, came up with a personal record of 136 feet, 9 inches to take the gold at areas and punch her invitation to regionals. The senior, a Mississippi College signee, finished her high school career in the shot at the area meet as her top throw of 35-8 was sixth.

Another senior, Raymond Felton, saw his final season with the Wolverines extend to the Region III meet in the 200 as his time of 21.25 was third for a bronze medal in the event. Felton also competed in the 100 at areas, clocking in at 10.76 for fifth. Teammate Jaylon Owens was also seventh in the 200 in a time of 21.87.

Felton and Owens would be joined by Kartier Johnson and Joshua Akinola in the 4x200 relay at regionals after the program record-holding foursome was second at areas in a time of 1:26.19.

Jizzale Davis, a junior, is also headed to the Region III meet as she clocked in at 24.24 for third place in the 200. Clear Brook sophomore Darwin Bolden capped his solid season in the discus with a throw of 137-02 for sixth place at the area level.

A time of 2:21.29 landed Clear Brook's Azayla Smith eighth in the 800 at the area meet, and the Wolverines were fourth in the 4x400 relay to advance.

See more sports for 2023 in next week's issue.

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