

Heavy trash pickup set

City residents south of Fuqua will have heavy trash pickup Thursday, Dec. 14. Residents north of Fuqua and west of the Gulf Freeway will have heavy trash pickup Friday, Dec. 15. December is junk waste but tree waste will be accepted. Pickups may be delayed. For additional information, visit www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste or call 311.

HPD's PIP to meet Dec. 17

The Houston Police Department's Positive Interaction Program meets Tuesday, Dec. 17, at 6:30 p.m. at Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital, 11800 Astoria, in the CES Classroom on the first floor of the main building. PIP consists of police and citizens working together for safer neighborhoods. Guest speaker to be announced. For information, contact HPD Officer Richard Buitron at Richard.Buitron@HoustonPolice.org or 832-395-1776.

CCISD to host public hearing

Clear Creek ISD will hold a public hearing to discuss their rating on the state financial accountability system at 6 p.m., Dec. 18, in the board room of the Education Support Center, located at 2425 E. Main St. in League City.

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, Dec. 14, with another event happening the following Thursday, Dec. 21. For more information, call Sagemont Civic Club President Kay Barbour at 713-419-3545.

Local COVID cases reported

The number of active COVID-19 cases in the South Belt community is roughly on par with the previous week, according to Harris County health officials. As of Tuesday, Dec. 12, there were 165 active cases in 77089, up two from the previous week. To date, 138 from the ZIP code have died from the disease, no increase from the previous 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 previous 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 previous 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.

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 daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and nightly from 8:30 p.m. to 5 a.m. through Sunday, Dec. 31. The U-turn lane on the northbound Gulf Freeway frontage road (north to south) at FM-519/Main Street in La Marque will be closed until further notice. The U-turn lane on the southbound Gulf Freeway frontage road (south to north) at FM-519/Main Street in La Marque will be closed until further notice. The northbound Gulf Freeway exit ramp to SH-6/SH-146 in La Marque will close permanently at 9 a.m. Wednesday, July 5. Traffic must exit FM-519 and U-turn. Traffic will merge onto the Gulf Freeway southbound main lanes at the next available entrance ramp. The closures are associated with an ongoing construction project to widen the freeway from three to five lanes in each direction and the frontage roads from two to three lanes in each direction.

Beltway 8 closure planned

At least one northbound frontage road lane on Beltway 8 will be closed from Fairmont Parkway to Spencer Highway continuously through 3 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2024. No detour will be needed but drivers should expect delays. At least one southbound frontage road lane on Beltway 8 will be closed from SH 225 to Pasadena Boulevard continuously through 3 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2024. No detour will be needed but drivers should expect delays.

Kirkwood meeting canceled

The Kirkwood Civic Club's monthly meeting scheduled for Monday, Dec. 25, has been canceled in observance of Christmas. The meetings, typically held the last Monday of the month, will resume on Jan. 29. For additional information, call Kirkwood Civic Club President Ericka McCrutchon at 281-989-9990.

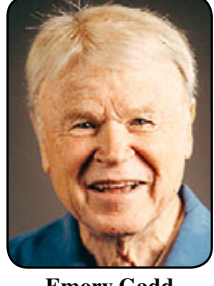
Kirkwood meeting canceled

Last chance before Christmas! Shop a variety of local vendors at the Holiday Gardens Pop Up Market, Sunday, December 17, from 10-4 at The Gardens Houston, 10211 Beamer Rd. Indoor and Outdoor Booths. Open to the public. Vendors being accepted. Call Kay Barbour at 713-419-3545 for information.

Gadd to retire after 50+ years at Sagemont

Longtime pastor widely recognized for community volunteer efforts

Sagemont Church Associate Pastor Emory Gadd is retiring after serving the area church for more than 50 years.



Emory Gadd

Gadd joined the church - then Sagemont Baptist Church - in 1970 while he was working for Delta Airlines. The following summer while ministering at a camp with Sagemont founding pastor, Dr.

John Morgan, Gadd made the decision to devote his life full time to the church. In 1972, Gadd was asked to be Sagemont's first youth minister, a position he would hold for several years. While still operating under the Sagemont Church umbrella, Gadd from 1981 to 1988 headed a nationwide program called Youth Ministry Imperative, in which he traveled across the country ministering to different churches. During these years, Gadd was affectionately known as "America's Youth Minister." In a message to church members, Gadd expressed gratitude to Morgan for his trust and support throughout the departing pastor's decades of service.

"There is no way to adequately thank Dr. John Morgan and our entire Sagemont family for the great honor and privilege I have had to serve alongside him and all of you for these 50+ years. 'You have unconditionally loved, prayed for and supported me and my family on the mountaintops and in the valleys. For many years you entrusted me with your most cherished possessions - your children - and I never took that for granted. Brother John gave me the freedom

to try some pretty unorthodox things back in those days. 'Some of those things worked and some didn't, but God was gracious and blessed, in spite of me. Over the years, I learned so much from John Morgan. Probably the thing that has defined my calling and shaped my ministry more than anything else is that brother John taught me what it means to have a 'shepherd's heart.' 'That has been the driving force behind the way I have done ministry, regardless of what staff position I have held at Sagemont.' **Continued on Page 2**

Many taxpayers get shocking mail - in a good way

Reduction in taxes only affects school district taxes

Annual property tax statements recently began arriving at area mailboxes, leaving many residents shocked or in disbelief at the tax relief that was provided by the passage of Senate Bill 2 this year by the state Legislature. Authored by Sen. Paul Bettencourt, who formerly served as Harris County tax assessor, SB 2 increased the homestead exemption from \$40,000 to \$100,000 for homeowners under age

65 and to \$110,000 for homeowners over age 65. For many Pasadena ISD residents over 65 with frozen levies, the recalculation equates to a zero balance. The change caught so many residents off guard that on the day after the Pasadena ISD statements went out, the *Leader* received messages from at least four residents who believed their \$0 tax bills had been issued in error. On the back of each Pasadena ISD tax state-

ment, residents may compare their current bill with what it would have been without the passage of SB 2. For one Pasadena ISD resident with an appraised home value of \$185,500, this meant a savings of \$325. "If the Texas Legislature had not passed prop-

erty tax relief legislation during the 2023 legislative session, your tax bill would have been \$325," the back of the resident's bill read. "Because of the action taken by the Texas Legislature, your tax bill has been lowered resulting in a lowered tax bill." For more information see next week's *Leader*.

Santa making house calls?



December is a busy time for Constable Jerry Garcia who takes the role of Santa to spread Christmas cheer. Garcia recently participated in three parades in Precinct 2, including one in South Houston, one in Pleasantville and one in Jacinto City. Garcia started this tradition as a sergeant and continues it today. He will visit more than 45 locations this month to take photos with children of all ages, including senior citizens. Pasadena ISD, Houston ISD and Galena Park ISD schools take part in the annual events.

City launches "shop local" app

As the holiday shopping season gets into full swing, the City of Houston is excited to launch the pilot of the H-Town Rewards Program, a six-month "shop local" program intended to spur economic development for local small businesses, with a focus on businesses in select historically under-resourced neighborhoods in Houston. This innovative economic incentive mobile app is designed to afford Houston area residents

the opportunity to earn rewards while shopping and dining at local small businesses across the Houston Metropolitan area. Each H-Town Point = \$1. Earned rewards are easily redeemable on purchases at local Redeeming Businesses. The City of Houston will fully fund the rewards redeemed as a part of the H-Town Re- **Continued on Page 2**

Pct. 2 deputies serve narcotics warrant

Deputies seize 50+ pounds of marijuana, \$200K+

Acting on tips from concerned residents, Precinct 2 deputies recently conducted a narcotics raid on a home in the 10700 block of Fuqua Glen Lane near Fuqua and Blackhawk. On Thursday, Nov. 30, deputies with Precinct 2 Constable Jerry Garcia's Special Operations Unit and Patrol Division successfully executed a search warrant on the residence, taking one suspect into custody. Precinct 2 Special Operations Unit deputies placed the house under surveillance after receiving numerous complaints from alert residents in the neighboring area. Deputies were eventually able to obtain a signed search warrant on the residence. Upon ex-

ecuting this warrant, deputies apprehended one suspect and recovered approximately 54 pounds of marijuana, various weapons and approximately \$200,000 in U.S. currency. Upon completion of this investigation, 29-year-old Douglas Gains was charged with felony possession of marijuana. Precinct 2 officials took to Garcia's Facebook page to encourage residents to speak out if they see something suspicious. "Constable Garcia wants to remind his residents that if you see something, say something," a post on the constable's page read. "He will continue to utilize all his resources to keep his community safe. Please stay safe and God bless."

Deputies make drug bust



Douglas Gains, 29, was arrested Thursday, Nov. 30, after a raid on his home in the 10700 block of Fuqua Glen Lane near Fuqua and Blackhawk. Precinct 2 deputies seized 54 pounds of marijuana and more than \$200,000 cash. The raid followed an investigation based on numerous tips from alert neighbors.

Dec. 9 runoff results tabulated

The results have been tabulated from the City of Houston's Dec. 9 runoff elections, finalizing several key races from November's general election in which no candidate received 50 percent or more of the vote. In the contest for mayor, state Sen. John Whitmire was victorious over U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, receiving approximately 65 percent of the vote to Lee's 35 percent. In the race for city controller, Chris Hollins handily defeated opponent Orlando Sanchez, receiving 59 percent of the vote. District D City Council Member Carolyn Evans-Shabazz will maintain her position, easily defeating challenger Travis McGee. Shabazz received roughly 65 percent of the vote to McGee's 35 percent.

In the At-large Position 4 City Council race, Letitia Plummer narrowly defeated Roy Morales, receiving 52 percent of the vote. To view complete election results from throughout Harris County, visit www.harrisvotes.com/Election-Results.

Whitmire, Houston mayor



Newly elected City of Houston Mayor John Whitmire is here with state Sen. Carol Alvarado before addressing the large crowd that gathered at the George R. Brown Convention Center to congratulate him the evening of the Saturday, Dec. 9 election. *Photo by Marie Flickinger*

Police investigate woman's death

Houston police are investigating the death of a woman found around 8:05 a.m. Friday, Dec. 8, in the 11700 block of Kirkmeadow Drive near Beltway 8 and Beamer. The identity of the woman, 35, and her cause of death were pending verification by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences at press time. According to Houston Police Department officials, patrol officers responded to a person-down call at a residence at the above address and learned the woman's boyfriend, who also lives at the residence, went into the bed-

room and tried to wake her up. When he realized she was nonresponsive, he called 911. Houston Fire Department paramedics responded and pronounced the woman dead at the scene. There were no obvious signs of trauma, investigators said. The investigation is pending the woman's cause of death, to be determined by an autopsy. Anyone with information in this case is urged to contact the HPD Homicide Division at 713-308-3600.

Annual Christmas drive underway

A chill is in the air, and the South Belt community is once again coming together to help those less fortunate by participating in the annual *Leader* Christmas program. Now in its 41st year, the drive is aimed at helping families in the South Belt area by collecting food and gifts. Participating in the program again this year is Stacey Waugh, daughter of active community member Sandy Robb. The volunteers have selflessly donated hours of their free time to support this year's program. "I think it's great," Waugh said of the program. "It helps the less fortunate." This sentiment is shared by her mother. "We've always been fortunate to have a nice Christmas," Robb said. "And it makes you feel good to help someone else have a nice Christmas who otherwise wouldn't." Waugh, who was born with a rare birth defect known as cervical meningocele, has overcome many challenges of her own. At the time of Waugh's birth, doctors told her mother she

would likely never be able to walk. "We never took no for an answer," Robb said. Waugh, now 51, went on to attend Stuchbery, Thompson and Dobie, as well as take courses at San Jacinto College and College of the Mainland. Waugh volunteers her time to work with children. **Continued on Page 2**

Leader apologizes

A story in last week's *Leader* stating Sagemont Church had selected Dr. John "Levi" Skipper as its new lead pastor was published prematurely. While Skipper had gained the approval of the church's pastor search team, he had yet to be approved by the church's members, who were to vote online following the prospective pastor's sermon this past Sunday. Church members solidified Skipper's appointment by voting widely in favor of the new pastor. The *Leader* apologizes for any confusion.

Elected officials share their words

U.S. Congressman Brian Babin on his new bill

U.S. Congressman Brian Babin (TX-36) issued the following statement on his new bill, the Birthright Citizenship Act of 2023 (H.R. 6612). This legislation has 21 original co-sponsors and will ensure America properly implements Section 1 of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution – ending birth tourism.

"For a period following its enactment, Section 1 of the 14th Amendment was properly applied as written and intended: to ensure all American citizens were afforded the sacred constitutional protections they deserve," said Congressman Brian Babin, House Border Security Caucus Co-chair. "While these important protections remain, in recent decades, the misapplication of specific language in the amendment has led to the implementation of the practice of birthright citizenship by which children born to foreign nationals – from illegal migrants to tourists to refugees – are automatically granted United States citizenship. Birthright citizenship has long served as a powerful incentive for illegal immigration, and, over time, has become wrongly accepted as law, with supporters claiming it is guaranteed by our Constitution. Birthright citizenship is enabled by faulty legal application, and ending the practice by clarifying eligibility is a necessary step toward fixing our broken immigration system and stopping the continued exploitation of America's generosity. We must act to put an end to this misguided policy that has fueled the worsening border crisis and weakened our national sovereignty for far too long. I appreciate my colleagues' support of this important bill and hope to move it swiftly through the House of Representatives."

"We must protect the integrity of our legal immigration system and not permit loopholes to be exploited," Congressman Bob Good (VA-05). "I thank Rep. Babin for his leadership in introducing the Birthright Citizenship Act, which prevents birth tourism and safeguards the 14th amendment of the Constitution."

"Every year, thousands of migrants enter the country illegally and give birth knowing their children will reap the benefits of their parents' lawbreaking – the rights, privileges, and immunities of U.S. citizenship," said Congressman Chip Roy (TX-21). "It's time to end this unfair, extra-constitutional practice that incentivizes illegal border crossings. The Birthright Citizenship Act – which I am proud to cosponsor with my friend and fellow Texan, Brian Babin – ensures children born in the U.S. to illegal alien parents do not automatically receive

American citizenship." "The expressed distinction of United States citizenship is a gift that is too often taken for granted by the American people," said Congressman Byron Donalds (FL-19). "As a result of Joe Biden's disastrous mishandling of our nation's borders, the United States has descended into an unprecedented humanitarian and national security crisis, in which illegal aliens are systematically exploiting our legal immigration system through the explosion of birth tourism. Simply put, birthright citizenship should only be reserved for United States citizens, legal permanent residents of the United States, and legal immigrants serving in the United States military."

"This bill closes the citizenship loophole that has incentivized millions of illegal migrants to flood our southern border," said Congressman Bill Posey (FL-08).

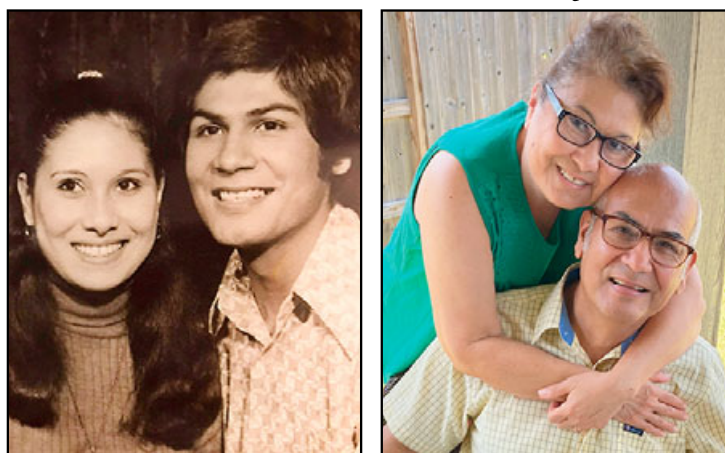
"The United States is one of the only countries in the world to allow an immigrant to enter the country illegally, including tourists, have a baby, and then deem that child an American citizen," said Congressman Glenn Grothman (WI-06). "At a time when our Southern border is overrun with over 200,000 illegal immigrants every month, this flawed interpretation of the 14th Amendment has been exploited to drive even more illegal immigrants to the country and take unfair advantage of essential services that are meant for legal citizens. It is time for the U.S. Congress to work together to strengthen and encourage legal migration rather than continuing to turn a blind eye to the lawlessness that is destroying America from within."

"The Fourteenth Amendment is a critical protection that is being abused by illegal immigrants," said Congressman Buddy Carter (GA-01). "This bill preserves the intent of the constitution and ensures that those who want to be U.S. citizens go through the legal process."

"This legislation keeps our immigration law consistent with the Framers' original intent by closing an outrageous loophole that incentivizes and rewards illegal immigration," said Congressman Eli Crane (AZ-02). "This past year, illegal immigration cost American taxpayers \$150 billion – an excruciating burden that's fueled, in part, by the current birthright citizenship scheme. I'm glad to see this bill introduced, which will fortify our immigration system and rectify a flawed interpretation of the 14th Amendment."

Read the bill text at https://babin.house.gov/uploadedfiles/babin_birthright_citizenship_act_of_2023.pdf

Laredos celebrate 50 years



Sam and Patricia Laredo will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Friday, Dec. 15. Sam and Patricia are lifelong Houstonians and have been residents of Segamore for 23 years. They were high school sweethearts and both graduates of Stephen F. Austin High School in Houston and were married in 1973. Sam worked for AT&T for 39 years and Patricia was a homemaker. They are the proud parents of four daughters and three grandchildren with whom they love spending time.

SeAM needs help for Christmas

SeAM faces this season with fewer allies than ever. With about 25 children still awaiting an individual or family to adopt them for Christmas presents, Southeast Area Ministries has even more pressing needs to meet: eviction notices and utility cut-off notices.

Most of the COVID relief funds have been exhausted. Agencies and ministries that SeAM has collaborated with in the past have either enrolled all the families they can help for the rest of the year, or they have no more funds at all for housing or utilities. Still the calls come in daily for help. Rent increased significantly this year. Utility bills from one of the hottest summers on record still haunt families as cut-off notices can now be sent. Bills of more than a thousand dollars are common.

SeAM has increased its assistance for housing, utilities, medicine, and transportation by 45.5 percent over 2022 and can still only make a dent in the need. The same is true for food. This year the number of people receiving food from SeAM has increased 33.4 percent over last year. However, the pantry has been able to increase the amount of food distributed by only 3.1 percent,

because supplies of donated food have dwindled.

Individuals or businesses can donate online at www.southeastareaministries.com or send contributions to Southeast Area Ministries, P.O. Box 267, South Houston, TX 77587-0267.

Volunteers, especially in the SeAM Thrift Store, would greatly benefit the ministry since the Store is the single largest source of funds. Volunteers should call 713-944-0093 for an application.

Southeast Area Ministries serves the ZIP codes along both sides of the I-45 from Webster to Friendswood, north at Gulfgate to I-610.

Melillo spotlights Joos



Melillo Middle School PE coach Kayla Joos was honored with the Spotlight Award for the month of November for the 2023-2024 school year.

Local library events set

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.hcpl.net/branch/parker-williams-branch-library> or call 832-927-7870.

The book drop is open. 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.hcpl.net/branch/parker-williams-branch-library> for details.

City launches shop local app

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wards Program and there is absolutely no cost for businesses to participate. As an added incentive for businesses to enroll in the program either as a participating business or a redeeming business, the app, developed and powered by Colu Technologies, also provides a platform to market their products and services.

For users

The H-Town Rewards mobile app is available to download by Houston area residents and businesses on Apple's App Store and on Android's Google Play. Users only need to search for "H-Town Rewards." The app is free to both users, who would like to collect rewards, and business owners, who would like to promote their businesses on the app. All that is required to begin collecting H-Points is to link either a credit or debit card to their account.

For businesses

Businesses can participate in the following two ways:

– Participating Business

– Redeeming Business: A "Redeeming Business" is a business located in one of six targeted Houston-area communities (Acreas Homes, Alief-Westwood, Fort Bend-Houston, Gulfport, Second Ward and Kashmere Gardens) that has agreed to participate in the rewards program; and they accept H-Points from customers as a form of payment. These Points (discounts) will be reimbursed to the business by the City of Houston.

By accepting H-Points as a payment from customers at no cost to their business, redeeming businesses benefit from being featured more prominently in the mobile app as a place where customers can spend their H-Points, boosted revenues, attracting new customers, and generating awareness about Houston's culturally diverse neighborhoods.

Business requirements

Businesses must meet the following requirements:

– Must be in good standing with the City of Houston (no

liens or judges or outstanding code enforcement violations).

– Must be a legally operated for-profit business located within the Houston city limits.

– Independently owned and operated franchise businesses and small- to medium-sized corporate-owned regional chains are eligible to participate. Corporate-owned national chains are not eligible.

– Businesses must accept credit cards or debit cards.

– Businesses should contribute to the quality and well-being of the community.

Steps to participate

– Step 1: Complete the Application – APPLY NOW at join-us.colu.com/HTownRewards/index.html

– Step 2: If qualified, one will receive an email indicating next steps.

– Step 3: Once an app profile is finished, an H-Town Rewards app liaison will visit the business to drop off flyers and other promotional items.

For information on the City's H-Town Rewards Program, visit www.houstontx.gov/obo/shop-local.html.

Deaths

Jeffrey Paul Dolen



Jeffrey (Jeff) Paul Dolen, 65, passed away peacefully at home the morning of Nov. 30, 2023, with his loving wife of 46 years, Sandy, by his side. He was a beloved husband, father, brother and friend. He was a longtime resident of South Belt and attended Dobie High.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Sandra; daughter Kryste Dolen; son Kyle (Ashley) Dolen; son Chase Dolen; and brother Ronnie (Cruz) Dolen. He leaves behind a legacy of love, strength and kindness that will be forever cherished by those who knew him.

Jeff was born in Houston, June 22, 1958, and grew up in the southeast area of Houston. He hit the jackpot when he met Sandy at the young age of 14 and asked her to go steady.

They married at 18 years old and together they raised their three children. Jeff dreamed big and met challenges head-on, often with a tenacious spirit and a "refreshingly stubborn" determination that turned obstacles into mere speed bumps on the road to his success.

His steadfast willpower and work ethic led to a career that took him all over the world.

He will be remembered

for his unwavering love for his family, dedication to his work and generous spirit that touched the lives of many. 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 he rest in peace and may his family find comfort and strength during this difficult time.

Marnie Krenek Morrison



Marnie Krenek Morrison, 81, passed away on Oct. 24, 2023. She was a resident of Segamore from 1970 to 2006 and was active in many organizations, including being a charter member of the Segamore Volunteer Fire Department in the early 1970s.

She graduated from Jones High School and attended Sam Houston State University. Marnie was always a busy and caring person. She was an IT business analyst, massage therapist, Reiki Master, Healing Touch practitioner and ordained minister. While living in Sugar Land, Marnie became a Texas Master Gardener.

She is survived by her husband, Tom Morrison; son, Robert Krenek Jr. (wife Deb); daughter Lisa Sullivan (husband Rob); sister Pat Latimer; and five grandchildren. She is preceded in death by her brother Ken Robertson.

Marnie is deeply missed by all who knew her.

Robert John McReynolds Jr.



Robert John McReynolds Jr., of Houston, passed away Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2023, at the age of 85. He was born Oct. 24, 1938, in Amarillo, TX, to Dr. Robert John McReynolds and Carrie Athleen McReynolds.

He attended Park Place Elementary School, James S. Deady Junior High, Milby High School (Class of 1957), Trinity University of San Antonio and the University of Houston.

He was married to Loretta Akin McReynolds for more than 59 years. He had numerous professions. He was a chemist, worked at Brown and Root in quality control, owned his own Pest Control Business for 20 years and retired as an independent insurance adjuster. He loved coaching youth sports, hunting and fishing. He was an avid golfer and a member of the Bandit's Golf Club.

He was a member of the Park Place Masonic Lodge for more than 50 years. He was a longtime member of Kirkwood South Christian Church, Disciple of Christ, where he served as committee chair member, deacon and elder. His happy time was when he was riding his green John Deere tractor to mow the fields at the ranch in Sublime.

Robert is preceded in death by his parents; sisters Marcela Ann McReynolds and Sarah Jane Abbott Koch; brother-in-law Charles Koch; father-in-law Lester Akin; and mother-in-law Jeanette Akin.

He is survived by his daughters Teri Wolff (husband Ray), Carrie McCleery (husband Sam); grandchildren Emily Jones (husband Thomas "Slim"), Katie Rivera (husband Henry), Clay Wolff (wife Emily), Allison Hess (husband Makenna), Ansley McCleery, Audrey McCleery, Samuel Aiden McCleery; great-grandchildren Abbie Wolff, Alyssa Rivera, Devian Rivera, Kyndal Jones, Hadley Rivera, Korbin Jones, Avenly Hess; as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

His memorial service is Saturday, Dec. 16, at 2 p.m. with visitation at 1 p.m. at Peevey Funeral Home, 12440 Beamer. Interment is Sunday, Dec. 17, at 2 p.m. at Stockdale Cemetery, Cemetery Street, Stockdale, Texas 78160.

In lieu of flowers, the family encourage those interested to donate to Kirkwood South Christian Church, 10811 Kirkfair, Houston, Texas 77089 or to the charity of one's choice.

Leader once again hosts Christmas event

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dren at the Segamore Park Community Center.

"She loves kids," Robb said. "That's her thing." Once again, Waugh collected aluminum cans to recycle in order to raise funds for the Christmas program.

To help promote the drive, Waugh distributed flyers to local businesses. "This is our favorite time of the year," Robb said. "We love Christmas."

The drive is unique to the mother-daughter team in the fact that donated goods go directly to help local residents.

"We want to help families in this area," Robb said. "This is our neighborhood."

For Waugh, it's all about spreading cheer.

"I hope everybody has a wonderful Christmas," she said.

Robb is grateful for all the support received from the community.

Mario celebrates with loved ones



Mario Dominguez (center) recently earned a master's degree in public administration from the University of Texas in San Antonio. Shown alongside Mario are his grandparents, Yolanda (left) and Joe Dominguez. His father, Dr. Roland J. Dominguez, graduated from J. Frank Dobie High School in 1979 and his grandparents are longtime residents of Segamore. His parents, grandparents, relatives and friends send him their best wishes, prayers and congratulations for his accomplishment.

Gadd to retire after 50+ years

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Gadd's participation in the South Belt community, however, goes far beyond his work with the church, as he is also active with Pasadena ISD, San Jacinto College, the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce and numerous other local organizations.

The pastor has chaired countless committees and served on many boards, including the Pasadena ISD Education Foundation. Gadd served on planning committees for Pasadena ISD bond measures in both 2000 and 2004. He was also a member of the campus improvement team at Dobie High School.

For his volunteer efforts in the community, Gadd has

earned the following recognitions:

South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year.

South Houston High School Distinguished Alumnus (Class of 1965).

South Houston High School Hall of Honor.

Pasadena ISD Distinguished Citizen of the Year.

Dobie High School Hall of Honor (volunteer).

Houston Baptist University Distinguished Alumnus.

Gadd and his wife Susan have two adult sons, Jimmy and John, both Dobie graduates. Jimmy and his wife Jaenna have two daughters, Kaytlin and Claire.

While Gadd is stepping

down from his duties as pastor, he will continue to serve the church and the South Belt community.

"God hasn't rescinded my calling as a shepherd, so I will be moving on the next assignment he has for me," said Gadd. "The Gadds are a blessed and very grateful people who aren't going anywhere. We plan to still be serving and worshipping with our Segamore family until Jesus comes or he takes us home. In the meantime, we will continue to love, support and pray for our church and will keep walking each other home."

A retirement reception for Gadd will be held at 12:15 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17, at the church's main foyer.

Praise Chapel invites you to enjoy Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve with Family! Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24th at 8:30 & 10:30 a.m.

Pastor Love will bring a Christmas message and our worship team will be singing your favorite Christmas carols.

6 p.m.

Candlelight service and communion with Pastor John Morgan Opera singer Chris Holloway and other well-known musical guest will be singing Christmas carols.

New Year's Eve, December 31st

8:30 & 10:30 a.m.

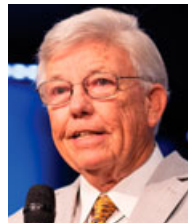
National evangelist & author, Tony Suarez will be bringing a word to finish off your 2023 strong.

6 p.m.

Say goodbye to 2023 with communion and a message to help start off your 2024 right.



Pastor Love



Pastor John Morgan



Tony Suarez



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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.

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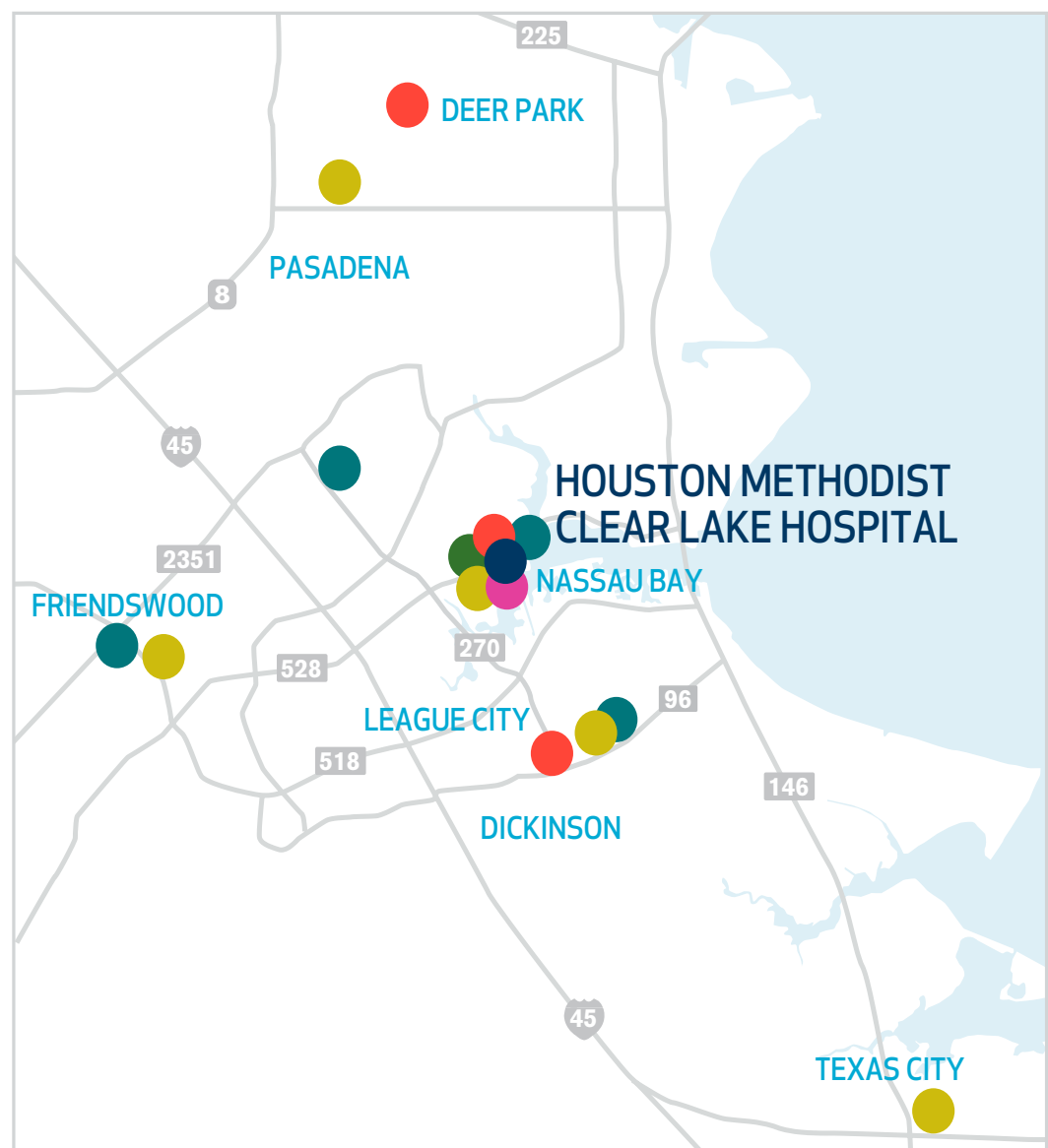


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Appreciation shown for substitutes at Thompson



Thompson Intermediate recently celebrated Substitute Appreciation Day. Shown, left to right, are substitute teachers Wayne Sanders, Sherrie Orr, Barbara Pembroke and John Fowler. They are all retired educators – Sanders, Orr and Fowler retired from Thompson. Sanders is a former assistant principal; Orr is a former reading and language arts teacher; Fowler retired from coaching in 2012 after 43 years; and Pembroke taught in PISD for 31 years.

Photo submitted

Wolverine speech, debate triumphant at Clear Lake

Following a recent annual tournament at Clear Lake High School, the Clear Brook High School speech and debate team now has a seventh qualifier for the upcoming Texas Forensic Association State tournament, to be held in March. These students are required to earn 10 points to qualify for the TFA State tournament, and are well on their way, as evidenced by their efforts at Lake. Senior Stephen Wiggins



Shown, left to right, are Ayla Yoakum, Emily Joseph, Khang Ngo, Isabelle Wills and Stephen Wiggins.

took home the silver medal, which earned him four state points, bringing his total to 13. Following Wiggins in second place was senior Ayla Yoakum who placed in Program of Oral Interpretation, which earned her four more points, bringing her total at eight. Additionally, team sophomore Khang Ngo fought his way to a third-place finish in Domestic Extemporaneous Speaking where he brought his current total to seven points. Fellow speaker Emily Joseph placed fifth and picked up two additional points, bringing her to five, halfway to state qualification. Team vice president and Oratory speaker Isabelle Wills picked up one, bringing her total to eight points. The team continues its journey working toward state to earn a total of thirteen points or more.

Morris announces honor roll

Morris Middle School officials released the names of their honor roll students for the first nine weeks of the 2023-2024 school year.

Abigail Acatitlan, Camiyah Adams, Fajer Al Mezeini, Alton Alexander, Diana Alvarez, Jakayah Amos, Jacob Ayala, Aya Bahar, Abigail Barcenas and Oscar Barrera.

Miral Bensaoud, Jessie Beteta, Alexa Bonilla, Liliana Bonilla, Kathryn Botello, Giselle Cammack Alegria, Emma Cantu, Zoe Carter and Adrian Castaneda.

Sophia Cavazos, Yazlin Cazares, Jeremy Ceasar, David Chavez, Sophia Chayeb, Huy Chung, Devo Cline, Timothy Craig, David Dang, Peyton Deleon and Zuri Dias.

Brandon Do, Harrison Do, Henry Do, Ily Duran, Sophia Echevarria, Luis Escobar Gonzalez, Benjamin Esparza, Ximena Espinoza, Ashton Farris and Isabella Ferrufino.

Fabian Figueroa, Tatiana Gamboa, Isaiyah Garza, Alfredo Gonzalez, Ethan Gonzalez, Jude Gutierrez, Jaythan Guzman, Nyroshi Harris and Lilly Heng.

Arlen Hernandez, Hannah Hernandez, Valerie Hernandez, Chase Hicks, Tyler Hoang, Noah Hodgson, Huy Huynh, Omar Jimenez and Zeniah Johnson.

Dejuan Kelley, Thienkim Le, Jayden Lebron Delgado, Kinley Lerche-Fowler, Noah Lewis, Za'coria Lewis, Shannon Logan, Gael Lopez, David Luis, Minh Lung and Nathalie Mai.

Arleny Maldonado, Kenzie Mariscal, Alvaro Marron, Emily Martinez, Ja'vanni Martinez, Joselyn Martinez, Luke Martinez, Pablo Martinez, Ibrahim Masoom and Paige McMullen.

Michael Mendoza, Vivian Montano, Sethareh Montes, Diego Moreno, An Nguyen, Angelina Nguyen, Christlyn Nguyen, Cindy Nguyen, Jenny Nguyen and Kim Nguyen.

Tommy Nguyen, Tyler Nguyen, Grace Olea, Emmy Ortiz, Mia Pastrana, Katelyn Pham, Tyler Pham, Miguel Pineda Teissonniere, Lyia Resendez and Ariel Reyes.

Neiko Richard, Marvin Rivas, Abigail Rodriguez, Samantha Rodriguez, Jose Rodriguez-Marquez, Julieta Rodriguez-Sotelo, Xavi Romero Chevez, Elysa Rubins and Aiden Ruiz.

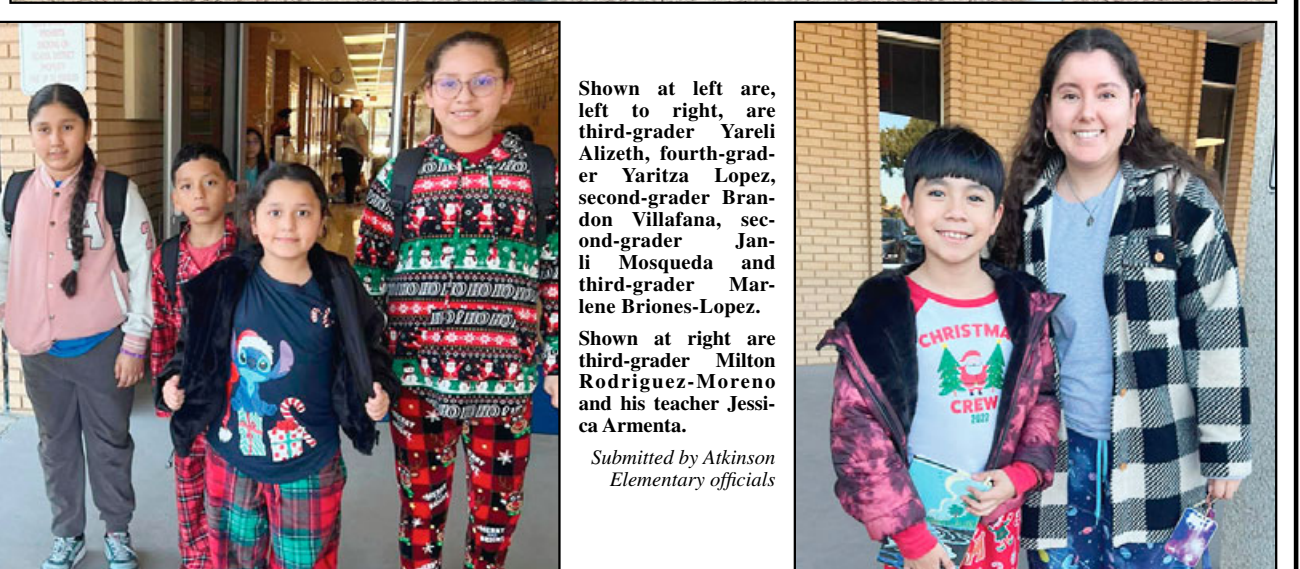
Briana Saenz Garcia, Julio Salazar, Jacobo Salinas, Maddox Sanchez, Sean Santiago, Leslie Serrano, Everett Short, Desean Simmons, Josiah Sonnen and Amira Sosa.

Miia Soto, Jancarlo Tejada, Sophia Tellez, Kai Tillman, Khloe Tran, Ryan Tran, Seraphina Tran, Sean Umazor, Rosalynn Vega, Viviana Villa, Ariel Villanueva, Mina Vo, Michael Vu and Sa Vu.

Atkinson Eagles prepare for holidays with pj's



Atkinson Elementary students began celebrating the 12 Days of Christmas by wearing their pajamas to school. The pajamas were a donation from a local church. Shown is Principal Chris Bui (center) who was surprised by Santa's little helpers and pre-K students, left to right, Scarlett Dominguez, Jeremiah Salazar, Layla Peralta, Isaiyah Velasquez, Amia Garcia, Jessica Silva, Delilah Teran, Elena Cuevas and Valeria Pino.



Shown at left are, left to right, are third-grader Yareli Alizeth, fourth-grader Yaritza Lopez, second-grader Brandon Villafana, second-grader Janli Mosqueda and third-grader Marlene Briones-Lopez.

Shown at right are third-grader Milton Rodriguez-Moreno and his teacher Jessica Armenta.

Submitted by Atkinson Elementary officials

Melillo spotlights Barreiro



Melillo Middle School front office clerk Irma Barreiro was awarded paraprofessional of the month for November of the 2023-2024 school year.

Remember When

45 years ago (1978)
A 24-year-old Sagemont resident was killed, and five other persons were seriously injured, in a head-on collision in the 10100 block of Old Galveston Road.

The Beverly Hills Intermediate girl's eighth-grade basketball team became district champs.

40 years ago (1983)
Dr. William G. Raffetto and John Rawls were hired as the two new administrators for San Jacinto College. Raffetto was hired as dean of student services and Rawls was hired as vocational-technical counselor.

Two vehicles were stolen from the student parking lot of Dobie High School.

35 years ago (1988)
Texas Education Agency officials found what they described as a "different district" following a three-day monitoring visit of the Pasadena Independent School District bilingual program.

Members of the Concerned Citizens of South East Houston received political backing from state Rep. Ralph Wallace in their effort to improve the safety of Genoa Red Bluff.

30 years ago (1993)
Gov. Ann Richards recommended in a letter to Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner that major additions recommended by EPA Washington be implemented even if an amendment to the record of decision or the consent decree was necessary.

Gerland's officials would not confirm that the store on Hughes Road would relocate to Scarsdale until the sale of the AppleTree on Scarsdale was finalized.

Abraham Gallagher, 13, an honor student at Beverly Hills Intermediate, was selected to the 1994 British F.A. Training soccer team that would tour and play in England over the following summer. Approximately 300 students between the ages of 11 and 18 tried out for the 10 available positions.

The South Belt Sidekicks, a 6-year-old girls' soccer team, finished the regular season with a 9-1 record and advanced to the finals of the BAYSIA playoffs before losing to the Friendswood Honey Bees. Members of the Sidekicks were Justina Beagnyam, Katy Beauchemin, Chelsea Blakely, Tiffany Cox, Amy Franze, Stacey Hayes, Laura Iwai, Karissa Mendenhall, Erin Newell and Stefanie Patterson.

25 years ago (1998)
Jack-in-the-Box built a new facility near the new Albertsons at the intersection of the Beltway and Sabo.

Dobie head coach Stan Labay and Clear Brook head coach Jim Hatfield were selected Coach of the Year by their respective districts.

Lindsey Jennings and Felicia Virgadamo were selected to the District 23-5A volleyball all-district team.

20 years ago (2003)
Frazier Elementary School students raised \$1,582 to purchase toys for the South Belt-Ellington Leader's food and toy drive for needy area families. Beverly Hills Intermediate School students raised \$1,500 for the drive.

Funeral services were held at Sagemont Church for Spc. Ray Joseph Hutchinson, 20, who was killed in Mosul, Iraq. The path of the funeral procession was lined with elementary school students and community members waving flags.

15 years ago (2008)

Dobie staff member Melissa McCalla-Allen was named the 2008 Texas Council for the Social Studies (TCSS) Outstanding High School Teacher of the Year. McCalla-Allen taught advanced placement macroeconomics and U.S. history at the high school. She additionally served as the school's peer facilitator. Prior to teaching at Dobie, McCalla-Allen taught social studies at Southmore Intermediate.

South Belt residents caught a rare glimpse of snow.

Dr. Michael Warneke's two-year term as Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital's chief of staff ended. A 23-year resident of the South Belt community, Warneke had operated his Progressive Medical Clinic practice since 1985. The hospital expanded significantly during Warneke's tenure. The facility added a chest pain center with acute heart attack intervention capabilities. It also established a cancer center with state-of-the-art radiation equipment. A neonatal intensive care unit was also added, as was a recognized stroke center.

10 years ago (2013)
The Dec. 14 City of Houston runoff election results were tallied, with voters selecting the candidates who received the largest number of votes in November's general election. In the race to fill the District D City Council seat formerly held by term-limited Wanda Adams, Dwight Boykins handily defeated challenger Georgia D. Provost. In the At-Large Position 2 City Council race, incumbent Andrew C. Burks Jr. was narrowly defeated by challenger David Robinson. In the At-Large Position 3 race to fill the seat vacated by the term-limited Melissa Noriega, Michael Kubosh received 53.35 percent of the vote.

5 years ago (2018)
State Rep. Carol Alvarado won the Dec. 11 special election to fill the state Senate District 6 seat being vacated by Sen. Sylvia Garcia, who was elected to Congress. Alvarado took home 50.4 percent of the vote, narrowly avoiding a runoff. State Rep. Ana Hernandez, received 24.3 percent of the vote, narrowly edging out Republican

Martha Fierro, who finished with 23.2 percent of the vote. Mia Mundy received 2.1 percent of the vote. Gov. Greg Abbott was then forced to call a second special election to fill the state House District 145 seat that Alvarado previously held.

An armored car courier was robbed at gunpoint Monday, Dec. 10, at the Chase Bank at 10997 Scarsdale. The incident took place just after 11 a.m., as a Loomis courier was refilling an ATM at the local bank branch. One of two suspects allegedly fired shots during the robbery, prompting the courier to take cover. During the commotion, the courier reportedly dropped a money bag, which the thieves picked up. The suspects fled in a dark-colored SUV that FBI officials believe was driven by a third suspect. No immediate arrests were made.

1 year ago (2022)
Judge George Risner stepped down from the bench after more than 35 years of service. Risner most recently served as Harris County Precinct 2, Place 2 justice of the peace, a position he had held since 1987. A lifetime resident of Precinct 2, Risner was first elected to Galena Park City Council when he was just 19 years old, seeking to improve recreation in his community. After graduating from Galena Park High School, Risner attended Houston Community College, Kilgore College and Lee College before enrolling at the University of Houston. Risner has served in many groups, including Pasadena Rotary Club; Waltrip Masonic Lodge; Harris County Mayor and Councilman's Association; Pasadena ISD; Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo; and multiple chambers of commerce. The judge is married to Bobbie K. Risner and has four children and seven grandchildren.

Over The Back Fence by Natalie

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, KENNEDY!
Kennedy Flowers celebrates a birthday Friday, Dec. 15. Best wishes for a fantastic birthday are sent from brother Owen; sister Evie; parents Stephen and Stacey (Hayes) Flowers; grandparents Robert and Jannie Scarberry (former longtime South Belt residents); uncles Tyler Scarberry, Joey Hayes, and Austin and daughters Jade and Lily Scarberry; and aunt Jenny (Hayes) and husband Josh Laney, and children Brayden, Baylee and Olivia. Kennedy's mom is a Dobie grad.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JESSICA
Best wishes for a wonderful birthday Dec. 16 are sent to Jessica Escobar, daughter of Leader staffer Luis Escobar, from the South Belt Leader staff.

LUCY ENJOYS A BIRTHDAY
Lucy Peterson celebrates a birthday Tuesday, Dec. 19. She is wished a wonderful day from her family, especially her nine grandchildren; all her friends; and her former co-workers at the South Belt Leader.

SCHOOL DAZE
The following staff and personnel of the Pasadena Independent School District celebrate birthdays Dec. 14 through Dec. 20.

Atkinson Elementary
Join in the birthday fun with Richard Whittaker Dec. 14.

Frazier Elementary
Dec. 15 is the day to break out the balloons and party favors for Kristina Ponce.

Meador Elementary
Send birthday wishes to Katia Garcia Dec. 17. The day for a celebration for Jill Gifford is Dec. 18.

Moore Elementary
Light the birthday candles Dec. 15 for Bobbie Bashinski. Marie Alanis marks a birthday Dec. 18.

South Belt Elementary
Dec. 17 is the day for a celebration for Alyssa Heuer. Dec. 18 is the day for a party for Jasmine Olvera.

Melillo Middle School
Dec. 15 is the day for a birthday celebration for Sheri Richardson.

Roberts Middle School
Give a shoutout Dec. 19 to Charlotte Godley.

Beverly Hills Intermediate
Dec. 15 is the day for a party for Velia Grado-Gutierrez. Send a warm birthday greet-

ing to Geraldine Jones Dec. 18. Mai Tram Tong celebrates a birthday Dec. 20.

Thompson Intermediate
Remember to wish Fani Agüero a happy birthday Dec. 15. Remember to wish Shay Arnold a happy birthday Dec. 20.

Dobie High
Dec. 15 is the day for a birthday celebration for Matthew Park.

FRIENDS CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS
Thursday, Dec. 14: Pedro Gutierrez III, Kay Wood and Melissa Duncan; Friday, Dec. 15: Cheryl Park, Ryan Rushing and Rita Tornaben. Saturday, Dec. 16: Kamisha Dennis, Tamara Spencer and Adam Garcia Sr.; Sunday, Dec. 17: Joy Warneke, Dawn Watkins-Swain and Jabari Dobson; Monday, Dec. 18: Jackie Klayman, Damen Polleck, John O'Connor and Felicia Sharp; Tuesday, Dec. 19: Randy Tenorio, Beckie Davidson, Kim Jones and Rene Gomez; and Wednesday, Dec. 20: Sally Esquivel, Lisa West and Michelle Gerbich.

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.

Melillo Student of the Month

Melillo Middle School recognized fifth-grader Samantha Arriola of Dawn Tomlinson's homeroom as their November Student of the Month. Teachers Tomlinson, Royinn Stewart, Gabriel Busch and Christine Wright wrote of her, "Samantha has a positive attitude and is motivated to do her best each day. She asks questions, volunteers to give answers, works well with other students and shows a real love of learning. She is also ready and willing to help out with daily tasks around the classroom. Samantha is a true role model for others at Melillo."

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SPORTS NEWS & NOTES

SoHo stays 6A

UIL announces 2025-2026 classification enrollments

The University Interscholastic League, the official governing body of public school athletics in Texas, has announced enrollment figures for its upcoming reclassification and realignment due next February, with Pasadena High School headed for the Class 5A Division I ranks.

Following weeks and even months of speculation, the UIL made its official announcement Dec. 8 on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Per its announcement, 247 high schools will be part of the state's Class 6A field, which includes schools with stated student enrollments of 2,275 or more.

The state's 5A Division field will now include Pasadena (2,261.5 students) as one of 128 schools with stated enrollments between 1,903 and 2,274 students.

There had been watercooler chat that South Houston would join Pasadena in the 5A ranks, but with a stated enrollment of 2,285, the Trojans will remain in 6A. The UIL's

biannual realignment, to be announced in February, will encompass the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years.

Dobie, with a total of 3,825 students, remains one of the state's largest high schools based on enrollment. Within Pasadena ISD, Memorial is at 3,169 with Sam Rayburn at 2,788.5 and South Houston at 2,285.

The school district and/or individual schools that ultimately join PISD to form a new 6A competition district will not be revealed until February.

Conversely, Pasadena won't know its destination until then, either.

Clear Brook, in addition to the other four Clear Creek ISD high schools, will also remain in the 6A ranks. Clear Springs is the largest within the school district at 2,800, with Clear Falls at 2,653.

Clear Lake enrolls 2,648 students, while Clear Creek is at 2,584. Clear Brook's figure of 2,563 is CCISD's lowest, yet far exceeds the 2,774 cutoff/5A mark. Let the speculation begin.



A veteran of three previous runs through 22-6A action, Dobie's Dylan Jackson (1) will play a key role as the locals navigate a tough top-to-bottom league that returns Deer Park, Memorial and South Houston as tri-champions.



Sophomore Audrey Volper (1) and her teammates went against Deer Park in the District 22-6A opener Dec. 12 after press time and will host Pasadena Dec. 15 at 7 p.m. before playing at Memorial Dec. 19.

Photos by Donna Alsdorf

Lutheran South runners earn All-District honors

Three Gaitan brothers, including Rice University signees Marcus and Matthew Gaitan as well as their freshman brother, Jeremy Gaitan, were among five Lutheran South Academy athletes to score All-District 5A-5 honors following the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools cross-country season.

Pioneer sophomore Reid Toner also was selected on the boys' side, while LSA senior Lydia Ward was recognized on the girls' all-league team.

The Gaitan trio competed at the TAPPS state championships, with a 5K time of 16:25.94 placing Matthew Gaitan fourth, Marcus Gaitan was fifth at 13:29.70.

In his first high school state meet, Jeremy Gaitan placed 12th with a time of 17:04.68. Toner was next with a clocking of 17:05.29 for 13th place.

In her final cross-country race for the Pioneers Ward was in at 13:57.27 for 32nd place overall for the two-mile distance a state.

At the district meet at The Woodlands, the Pioneer boys were team champions as Matthew Gaitan was the top overall medalist at 15:59.56 in the 5000-meter event, with Marcus Gaitan third, Jeremy Gaitan fifth and Toner seventh. Ward was fifth in the 3,200-meter race at 13:29.70.

LSA football players take all-league spots

Select Lutheran South Academy football players scored postseason all-league accolades for 2023. Pioneer offensive lineman/linebacker Cole Noack earned first-team honors at both positions, while Kai Conerly was a first-teamer at running back.

LSA's Braeden Robinson was a first-team selection at both receiver and defensive back, and defensive lineman Kris St. Claire and defensive back Jalen Bess also earned spots on the first-team defense.

Pioneer defensive line-
Continued on Page 8

- Dobie - 3,825 (6A)**
- Memorial - 3,169 (6A)**
- Rayburn - 2,785.5 (6A)**
- South Houston - 2,285 (6A)**
- Pasadena - 2,261.5 (to 5A)**

Area basketball squads aim at district competition

The Dobie Longhorns have already shown that when they are on, they are a very good varsity basketball team. The latest example of that came as the locals handed Clear Lake a 77-57 defeat Dec. 8 at Dobie main.

The win took away a bit of the sting that came via 56-55 Dec. 5 loss to Barbers Hill at Phillips Field House.

Getting a subsequent 20-point win over a Clear Lake team that has designs on competing for the District 24-6A championship could get the Longhorns started on a roll.

Dobie opened the season with three straight wins and then closed the Katy Invitational earlier this month by beating Cinco Ranch and Foster, but Patel's team is still seeking the kind of run that could mean something big.

The 22-6A schedule opens Dec. 19 as the Longhorns host the Memorial Mavericks, who feature Louisiana State University signee Robert Miller III.

It's the lone league game scheduled before the turn of the year, but could provide the winner with a lift heading into 2024 and

the remaining 11 league games.

Make no mistake, the road to the playoffs within the 22-6A ranks will prove to be a game-by-game adventure.

As of Dec. 9, Deer Park (12-6) led the league in wins, with Pasadena (11-4) and South Houston (11-5) a tick behind and Memorial at 10-4.

As the girls' district races began Dec. 12 after press time, the Clear Brook and Dobie squads were aiming to get on a roll.

Clear Brook is the two-time league champion but is playing this season without its injured two-time district Most Valuable Player. At 6-8 overall, the Wolverines have played a strenuous schedule, and have played great basketball as of late.

At 5-10, the Dobie girls have also gone against a solid slate of opponents. Deer Park is the defending league champion, and Memorial also hopes to make a statement.

The Clear Brook boys played well at the Tulosa Midway event as the 24-6A race gets set to start Dec. 19.

District Continues

Dobie girls host Pasadena

Dec. 15, Dobie main, 7 p.m.

Brook girls host Brazoswood

Dec. 15, 7 p.m.

Dobie girls at Memorial

Dec. 19, 7 p.m.

Brook girls at Clear Lake

Dec. 19, 7 p.m.

District Openers

Dobie boys host Memorial

Dec. 19, Dobie main, 7 p.m.

Brook boys at Clear Lake

Dec. 19, 7 p.m.

Dobie soccer programs eyeing 2024 start

The arrival of 2024 promises to be as exciting as ever for the state's high school soccer-playing population as the regular season starts Jan. 4.

At Dobie, the Longhorn boys' are set to begin their quest for the program's 10th consecutive district championship, with the 2023 group having put together a run to the Region III final.

And while expectations

are as high as ever for head coach Justo Manrique and his players, the Dobie girls hope to start a new era under the guidance of first-

year head coach Theresa Kamara, hired in August to lead a program that is looking to continue a recent run of success.

Scrimmage action will play out on this side of the calendar, with the JFD boys hosting Aldine Nimitz in a Dec. 15 match at Dobie main, beginning at 7:15 p.m.

Manrique's bunch will finish their scrimmages Dec. 19 at Klein Forest, also at 7:15 p.m.

As for the girls, Dobie will host Dulles Dec. 19 and then host Northbrook Dec. 21, both at Dobie main. Junior varsity action is at 5:30 p.m., with varsity play at 7:30 p.m.

Continued on Page 8

Dobie senior Geo Arango, the Goalkeeper of the Year in the District 22-6A ranks a season ago, is back to lead the way for the 2023 Region III tournament finalists.

Photo by Donna Alsdorf



Clear Brook graduate Kailin Newsome (6) who led the Southeastern Louisiana University women's volleyball program to consecutive NCAA tournament berths, has entered the transfer portal.

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Aug 31, '11

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Registration
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10 AM to Noon

Late Registration
begins Jan 21.
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while openings
remain)

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See website or e-mail FDonaghe@aol.com

Dobie senior Geo Arango, the Goalkeeper of the Year in the District 22-6A ranks a season ago, is back to lead the way for the 2023 Region III tournament finalists.

Photo by Donna Alsdorf

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Ten Pasadena ISD sports legends reach Athletics Hall of Fame as 2024 class

By Al Carter
PISD Communications

The latest class of inductees in the Pasadena ISD Athletics Hall of Fame includes two athletes who competed at opposite ends of the timeline of scholastic sports in the school district.

Carl Feazle, known as “the Pride of Pasadena” for his exploits on the football field in the prewar years, will be inducted as well as Amanda Nguyen, a softball speedster who went from the diamond at Dobie to a storied career at West Point.

Of the 65 athletes chosen for induction since the Hall of Fame’s founding in 2012, Feazle represents the earliest district graduate to be honored.

He graduated from Pasadena High School in 1941. Nguyen represents the most recent. She graduated from Dobie High School in 2010.

A total of 10 individuals will be inducted in the Hall of Fame’s gala banquet set for March 6 at the Pasadena Convention Center. Two of those will be inducted as coaches.

Joan Walker Propp coached for 34 years in the district, 26 of those at Sam Rayburn, where her girls cross-country teams won three district titles and where she regularly turned out state meet qualifiers in cross-country and in girls’ track.

Al Campo Sr., an accomplished football and baseball player at Pasadena High School and later the University of Houston, made a successful jump

into the coaching ranks in the mid-1960s.

In 1974, he took the baseball coaching reins at Rayburn and produced three district champs in 12 years – including a 1985 squad that reached the state finals.

Campo is a 1958 Pasadena High graduate. He later served as head football coach at South Houston High School.

The list of new inductees also includes the first to be honored in a new category: Sports Medicine.

Wesley Speights, whose roots as a sports trainer go back to his school days at South Houston Intermediate, went on to become one of the leading sports therapists in the state.

A 1972 South Houston graduate, he spent 54 years in the profession before retiring in 2019.

The induction list also includes a former Houston Astros’ catcher, a former all-conference line-backer at Texas Tech and two players who excelled almost equally in baseball and football, both of whom played collegiately at Rice.

Chris Tremie, a stand-out catcher who graduated from South Houston in 1988, started all four seasons at UH before signing with the Chicago White Sox.

He played with four major league teams before retiring to the managerial ranks in 2006. He is currently the minor league field coordinator for the Cincinnati Reds.

Billy Hale, a 1960 Pasadena High School grad-

uate, and Donnie Brogna, who graduated from South Houston in 1968, both made successful transitions to the college ranks as baseball standouts at Rice. Hale as a shortstop and Brogna as a pitcher/outfielder.

Hale’s college career extended to the college gridiron as well. He played both ways, as a wingback and defensive back, for some of the last teams to be coached by the legendary Jess Neely at Rice.

Brogna’s notoriety exploded in high school, where he regularly made headlines as a quarterback, baseball player and pole-vaulter who qualified for the state meet his senior year.

In 1967, he led the Trojan football team to its first-ever postseason berth. He quarterbacked South Houston to a 13-13 tie against Pasadena, contest in which a penetrations edge allowed the Trojans to advance as zone champions.

The game commanded the first sellout in the district’s new 16,000-seat Memorial Stadium.

The clash was billed as a showdown between the ever-versatile Brogna and Lanny White, the Eagles’ all-state halfback. White was inducted in the Hall of Fame in 2014.

Football was the ticket to fame for two other new inductees: Matt Wingo, who graduated from Dobie in 1987, and Ruben Martinez, a 1996 Pasadena High School graduate.

Wingo emerged as one of the top linebackers in

Texas Tech history, a two-time All-Southwest Conference selection. Wingo still ranks sixth on the Red Raiders’ career tackles list.

In both 1994 and 1995, Martinez finished in the top 10 on the state rushing charts.

Over those two seasons, he rushed for 3,676 yards and 34 touchdowns. He later played baseball for Wharton County Junior College and one season for a professional team in Spain.

Nguyen, an all-state second baseman at Dobie, shredded the school and conference record books as an outfielder at Army.

A prolific slap-hitter and base-stealer, she was named first-team All-Patriot League each of her four seasons and was later selected to the conference’s all-quarter century team. She went on to serve a nine-month tour in Afghanistan.

Feazle had a similarly commendable military connection.

In 1940, he led Pasadena to the regional championship game, the pinnacle for schools at that level. Along the way, he scored 173 of his team’s 253 points.

He played one season for Texas A&M’s freshman team before joining the navy in 1942.

Feazle served at Pearl Harbor for the duration of the war. He passed away in 2006, five years after the death of his wife, Madelon, a longtime teacher in the Pasadena ISD.

- Donnie Brogna*
S. Houston, Class of 1968
- Al Campo Sr.*
Pasadena, Class of 1958
- David Feazle*
Pasadena, Class of 1941
- Billy Hale*
Pasadena, Class of 1960
- Ruben Martinez*
Pasadena, Class of 1996
- Amanda Nguyen*
Dobie, Class of 2010
- Wesley Speights*
S. Houston trainer
- Chris Tremie*
S. Houston, Class of 1988
- Matt Wingo*
Dobie, Class of 1987
- Joan Walker Propp*
Rayburn cross-country



Julio Cisneros (10) has given the Longhorns a boost from beyond the 3-point line and will aim to continue his solid shooting as the locals open 22-6A action against Deer Park. In a 20-point win over Clear Lake Dec. 8, Cisneros made six threes on his way to 22 points.
Photo by Donna Aldorf

Ramirez makes mark at St. T

By John Bechtle
Sports Editor

What a fitting end it was for Tori Ramirez as she capped her collegiate cross-country career at St. Thomas University in early November with a personal record time at the NCAA Division III West Regional cross-country championships in La Verne, Calif.

That Ramirez, a Dobie High School Class of 2022 graduate, was able to deliver her best in her final cross-country meet is what will stick in her memory and those of other family members for years to come.

Completing the challenging 6K course in a Celts’ team best of 24 minutes, 45 seconds for 77th place overall, Ramirez was able to round out her distance career with the Celts in style.

Perhaps the exact time and certainly the 77th place finish will fade with time, yet it’s the memories both of team and of personal accomplishment that will endure.

“I’m proud of the fact that I was able to perform at my best in my final meet, for sure,” Ramirez said.

“I got into running because I truly like it, and a lot of times you have to remind yourself that you are doing it for the appreciation of the rewards you get from teammates, coaches and the (running) community.

“I’ll take nothing but great memories with me from my two years at St. Thomas.”

It all started at Beverly Hills Intermediate in the handful of meets seventh- and eighth-grade seasons for Ramirez, and while she played softball as a

freshman and sophomore at Dobie, she found her way back to cross-country and track and field with the Longhorns.

A valuable member of the second of what was three consecutive District 22-6A girls’ cross-country championships for the Dobie girls from 2020 to 2022, Ramirez was sixth overall at the league championships in 2021.

Because she was a part of San Jacinto College’s Early College associate degree program while at Dobie,

Ramirez both earned her high school diploma and held a two-year general studies collegiate degree in hand when she enrolled at Houston’s St. Thomas University for the start of the 2022-2023 academic year.

Now a collegiate senior, Ramirez is on track to graduate next May with a bachelor’s in criminology law and society with plans to attend law school. During the Celts’ 2024 track and field season, Ramirez plans to compete in the steeplechase.

It’ll be over in a blink, but Ramirez will have the great memories of first being a part of head coach Mo Hickman’s successful program at Dobie and then joining a Celts’ program that has welcomed several Dobie graduates in recent years.

Hickman inherited a Dobie cross-country program that had been a bit devoid of highlights in the few years prior to her taking over and has now built a power that has earned four straight Region III Championships invites.

Yes, at the end of the day, high school coaches will state that it’s all about the athletes. Rightfully so,

but Ramirez is far from the first to credit Hickman.

“(Hickman’s) sort of like a second mom, to be honest,” Ramirez said. “She knows when to be tough and to push us, but also understands the need for understanding and support.

“It’s not always fun to be out there at 5 a.m. training for meets, but I’ve commonly been able to go back to her for reminders, for that guidance in getting the fun involved and doing it for personal growth.”

As for Hickman, she

certainly is appreciative of Ramirez’s athletic abilities but added that the athlete’s worth to the Dobie program went and continues to go well beyond the courses or the running track.

“To be honest, Tori’s overall success in running or what she has accomplished academically has to do with who she is as a person, her character and her desire to be the best at what she does.

“Tori was terrific for us in cross-country and then also won the district cham-

ionship in the mile (1,600 meters) in the spring. But it’s also the intangibles that she brings. Tori is a leader, she is thorough and organized. I often utilized her as a connector with the other kids. Need to get a message out? Tori will handle it. She’s a born leader and takes pride in getting things handled.

“I am thrilled for what she has been able to do when you look at the big picture. The kid has a ton of responsibilities on the plate, yet she delivers time after time.”

Touchdown Club honors LSA players



The Touchdown Club of Houston selected its group of private school finalists for a variety of postseason awards, with, left to right, Lutheran South Academy’s Cole Noack among the choices for the Ironman Award and Matthew Furness in the Defensive Player of the Year category. At far right is Pioneers’ varsity football head coach Don Justice.



Completing the challenging 6K course in a Celts’ team best of 24 minutes, 45 seconds for 77th place overall, Ramirez was able to round out her distance career with the Celts in style.

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CALENDAR

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

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.seen.abwa.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/PARCTX.

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, DECEMBER 15

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

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

1 - 3 p.m. **Parker Williams Genealogy Group** - meets at the library, Beamer at Scarsdale. Email Liz Hicks at erootrot@usa.net for details.

3:30 - 6:30 p.m. **Bay Area Singles Club** - at the VFW Lodge Post 6378, 5204 Hwy. 3, in Dickinson. Call 281-470-2750 or 281-337-3112.

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

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

8 p.m. **Serenity Now AI-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, DECEMBER 16

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** - See Friday's notice.

11 a.m. **AI-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.houstonanon.org/.

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

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

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** - Meets at Revive Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena. Call 713-944-9186.

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, DECEMBER 18

Noon **AA** - Imperfect Nooners. See Thursday's 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.

5 p.m. **New Directions Singles** - Age 55 and older meets for a potluck dinner at Webster Presbyterian Church, 201 W. NASA Parkway. Call 646-489-4367.

6 p.m. **Scrabble Club #511** - Meets Monday at IHOP, 11222 Fuqua. Join the fun and

improve crossword skills. COVID-19 vaccination required. Email huff_reunion@juno.com.

7 p.m. **TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)** - #0683 chapter meets at 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.

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

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19

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

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

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

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

2 p.m. **Local NARFE Meeting** - Chapter 941 meets at El Franco Lee Park Community Center, 9500 Hall Rd. Call 713-734-1461 or 281-464-9708.

6:30 - 7:30 p.m. **Southeast Houston Toastmasters** - Club #05324194 meets virtually at sehouston.toastmastersclubs.org. Visit the website or call 832-722-9061.

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

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

7 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. **Carmelites** - a nondenominational senior citizen social group meeting at St. Bernadette Catholic Church, 15500 El Camino Real. Call 713-444-6744.

10 a.m. **The Community Club** - meets at Golden Corral, 4021 Spencer Highway. New members and guests are invited. Email Jmproy@yahoo.com.

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, League City. 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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Baldwins, UNLV FB to bowl

Dobie High School graduates Johnathan Baldwin (2021, top photo) and his brother, Jalen Baldwin (2023, bottom photo) will join the University of Nevada Las Vegas Rebels as they conclude a successful 2023 football season with a Guaranteed Rate Bowl appearance against the Kansas Jayhawks Dec. 26 at Chase Field in Phoenix. The Rebels, 9-4 overall, are coming off a 44-20 loss to Boise State in the Mountain West Conference Championship game as Johnathan Baldwin had his most productive game of the season with 10 total tackles and a pass breakup. The junior safety has played in 10 games this season, collecting 66 total stops, four pass breakups and a pair of interceptions. Jalen Baldwin joined UNLV as a walk-on last summer and has effectively red-shirted this season. Both Baldwins were three-year varsity starters with the Longhorns.



Beverly Hills girls' cross-country excels at district meet

At right, the Beverly Hills Intermediate Bears' seventh-grade girls' cross-country team grabbed third place at the Pasadena ISD district championship meet late last month as runners challenged a two-mile course. Members of the team are, left to right, (front row) Esmeralda Martinez, Ava Flores, Faith Flores, (back row) Allison Baca, Makaylah Shyne, Mia Chavez (second overall), Regina Carrillo and Marcalla McNeil.



The Beverly Hills eighth-grade girls' team won the Pasadena ISD cross-country team championship late last month as several athletes stood out. Members of the team are, left to right, (front row) Melina Flores, Anita Djato, Hailey Bonilla,

Mikayla Rodriguez (fourth place overall), Idalis Villegas, Destiny Sidiropoulos (eighth overall), Candi Zuniga, (back row) Kimberly Perez, Giselle Esparza, Luna Hernandez, Tiana Leonard, Alyssa Davis, Ineke Hicks, Karely Maldonado and Victoria Flores.

Dobie soccer programs preparing for 2024 season

Continued from Page 5 The JFD boys will open the regular season at the Kilt Cup in The Woodlands Jan. 4-6, taking on consecutive days, while the Dobie girls will

face Hightower Jan. 4 at Alvin ISD's Freedom Field, then go against Baytown Sterling at Iowa Colony High School Jan. 5. Also on Jan. 5, the locals will face Langham Creek at Freedom Field.

As for expectations under her guidance, Kamara said, "We are going to play as one, play hard and go for it until the final whistle blows. We need to stay organized, and take the open shots when they are there. We have a great group of kids who have worked hard in the offseason and preseason. There's a winning tradition here, and we want to continue that."

Dobie went 8-3-1 in league play last season for third place behind league champion Deer Park and second-place Memorial.

"Everybody is excited to get the season started," Kamara said. picks included Conerly man Mason Hoggatt, punter, athlete Prynce John Hill, Wade Laverge at placekicker, J.D. Leblanc at quarterback, Jack Wade at linebacker and Miller Denton along the offensive front. Furness, Hoggatt, Noack and St. Claire were second team All-District picks. Academic All-State honorees for the Pioneers for 2023.

McCalister, K-State headed to Pop Tarts



Colby McCalister (20), a Class of 2022 Clear Brook High School graduate, will be in the lineup at safety for the Kansas State Wildcats as they take on the North Carolina State Wolfpack in the Pop Tarts Bowl at Campers World Stadium in Orlando Dec. 28. A red-shirt freshman, McCalister has appeared in all 12 games for the Wildcats this season and has 21 total tackles. His brother, Cameron McCalister, a quarterback, has entered the transfer portal with three years of eligibility remaining after originally attending McNeese State.

Pioneer footballers earn all-league nods

Continued from Page 5 The Pioneers' all-league honorable mention

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