

South Belt-Ellington Leader

Serving South Belt since 1976

The Voice of Community-Minded People

Thursday, February 1, 2024

Email: mynews@southbeltleader.com

www.southbeltleader.com

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Genealogy group meets

The Parker Williams Genealogy Group meets the first and third Fridays of the month from 1 to 3 p.m. at Parker Williams Library on Scarsdale and Beamer. Meetings are free and community members interested in researching their family history are invited to attend. The next meeting is Friday, Feb. 2.

Sagemont to meet Feb. 6

The Sagemont Civic Club will hold a meeting at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 6, at The Gardens, 12001 Beamer at Hughes. All Sagemont residents/homeowners are invited to attend. The meetings typically take place the first Tuesday of each month. For additional information, call Kay Barbour at 713-419-3545.

Coffee with the Constable

Harris County Precinct 2 Constable Jerry Garcia will be at Donut Haven, 10802 Hughes Road from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. each Thursday as part of the weekly Coffee with the Constable. The next event will be Thursday, Feb. 1, with another event the following Thursday. For more information, call Sagemont Civic Club President Kay Barbour at 713-419-3545.

New Covenant feeds needy

New Covenant Christian Church, 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. The next event is Feb. 10. For more information, call 281-484-4230.

Pop-Up Shop set for Feb. 4

There will be a Pop-Up Shop market Sunday, Feb. 4, at The Gardens, 12001 Beamer at Hughes Road, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Held the first Sunday of each month, the markets feature a wide variety of local vendors. Vending space is available. For additional information, call Kay Barbour at 713-419-3545.

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.

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 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.

SH 35 closure planned

At least one northbound lane and one southbound lane on SH 35/Telephone Road will be closed at Airport Boulevard daily from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. through Thursday, Feb. 1.

Local COVID cases reported

The number of reported COVID-19 cases in the South Belt community has leveled off after a spike the previous week, according to Harris County health officials.

As of Tuesday, Jan. 30, there were 218 active cases in 77089, up three from the previous week. To date, 140 from the ZIP code have died from the disease, no increase from the previous week.

In ZIP code 77075, there were 17 active cases, up one from the previous week. To date, there have been 86 deaths in the ZIP code, no increase from the previous week.

In 77034, there were 15 active cases, no increase 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.

Beltway closures planned

At least one northbound frontage road lane on Beltway 8 will be closed from Fairmont Parkway to Spencer Highway continuously until further notice. 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 until further notice. No detour will be needed but drivers should expect delays.

MUD sets up online portal

Clear Brook City MUD now has an online portal that allows residents to set up recurring credit card payments. To set up an account, Clear Brook City MUD residents should visit www.cbcmud.com.

Little League officials hold public meeting

Harris County appoints official to oversee youth sports at EFL Park

Plans for a spring Little League season at El Franco Lee Park are moving forward, according to local officials who hosted a meeting at the area park Tuesday, Jan. 30.

"There will be a spring Little League season. That, you can count on. Little League has been in the community for 50+ years and that's not going to change," said Stefen Breeding, who serves as executive director of the Houston Wildcatters, the youth baseball organization recently selected by county officials to oversee play at El Franco Lee Park following a year-long battle between local Little League and Pony League groups over field use.

While the Wildcatters, led by philanthropist

Scott Freeman, will be in control of the local baseball fields, Breeding assured those in attendance that Little League will have first access to their use.

"Little League is Priority No. 1," said Breeding, noting that the Wildcatters would have second dibs on field use, before opening them up to the public. "We (the Wildcatters) have no skin in the game. There's no hidden agenda."

Breeding added that there will be no charge for field use, unlike many other fields.

"This is not a money grab," said Breeding. "It's not a cash cow for us."

Contrarily, Breeding said Freeman will be investing thousands of his own money to bring the

local fields up to snuff and meet Little League standards.

Breeding stressed to attendees that Tuesday's function was not to re-litigate the past but to work toward the future.

"Whatever happened before the Wildcatters and Scott Freeman came along is in the past," said Breeding. "Measures have been put in place to prevent what's happened in the past from happening again."

Among these measures are posting the group's financials on its website at the end of each month to provide full transparency; hiring a third party accounting firm to oversee the organization's books; and having a third party present at all board meetings to act as an overseer.

Breeding said the ultimate goal is for the local

Little League to be self-sustained and operate on its own.

Moving forward, Southbelt Little League will revert to its original name Sagemont Beverly Hills Little League, according to President Juan Herrera.

"We're going back to where it all started," said Herrera.

Registration is currently open and tentatively scheduled to end Feb. 9, with tryouts taking place around spring break and opening day falling on March 28. Breeding said cost will be dependent on the number of registrations, with Freeman possibly subsidizing some of the expenses.

Volunteers and coaches are also being sought.

Additional information will be available on the local Little League's Facebook page and through the Sports Connect website.

Kirkbluff home catches fire



A house caught fire Saturday, Jan. 27, in the 10000 block of Kirkbluff near Blackhawk. According to Southeast Volunteer Fire Department officials, the blaze started in the backyard when a heater ignited straw/hay bedding used to keep animals warm. In addition to SVFD, units from the Houston Fire Department and the Pearland Fire Department also responded to the incident. No injuries were reported.

Photo by Marie Flickinger

Pasadena ISD receives statewide honor

H-E-B recognizes district as 1 of top 5 in state

Pasadena ISD was recently selected one of five finalists in the 22nd annual H-E-B Excellence in Education Awards program.

Pasadena ISD is one of five in the program's Large District division. Three additional finalists were announced in the Small District division.

This year, H-E-B will award a total of \$90,000 to these finalists (\$5,000 each), and all finalists will go on to compete for even greater cash prizes at the statewide level in May.

This honor is based on the district's commitment to student achievement through innovative programs, parent and community involvement and professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators.

"We are proud to receive this recognition as

it proves once again we are an incredible district and community," said Pasadena ISD Superintendent Dr. DeeAnn Powell. "Our board, administration, and campus faculties work hard to provide the best possible education for our students."

Powell added that if Pasadena ISD reigns victorious in the competition, a small committee of district stakeholders will be assembled to decide how to best utilize the funds.

To determine statewide winners, a panel of judges tour each finalist's campus to engage with administration, staff, parents and community members. Winners will be announced at the H-E-B Excellence in Education Awards ceremony. **Continued on Page 4**

Gibbs film available on Amazon Prime

"Old Man Jackson" available for rent, purchase

"Old Man Jackson" – a film made by longtime South Belt resident Johnny Ray Gibbs – is now available to rent or purchase on Amazon Prime Video.

The independent film made its debut at the Star Cinema Grill - Baybrook in June 2023 to multiple sold-out showings. The film returned to the theater for a second screening in October.

Despite being made on a relatively small budget, Gibbs was able to attract several well-known performers to appear in the film, such as Kathy Garver from "Family Affair" and Butch Patrick from "The Munsters."

The film also features Lorelei Linklater, daughter of famous director Richard Linklater,

as well as David Born, who plays the lead role of Andy Jackson.

The majority of the movie was shot in the South Belt area, with former Southeast Volunteer Fire Department Chief Chuck Tylka making a cameo appearance.

Gibbs said the family movie is fun for all ages. "It's a comedy," Gibbs said. "We need comedy. Even though it's a new movie, I'd describe it as a classic comedy."

A resident of the South Belt community since 1998, Gibbs is the owner of Lighthouse Electric.

To rent or purchase "Old Man Jackson," visit www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B0CK5236FM/ref=atv_pp_fi_0.

Former PISD principal Hollis Powell dies

Powell, 91, served as 1st principal of both Meador, Atkinson

Longtime area educator Hollis Powell died Thursday, Jan. 25, at the age of 91.

Powell served in Pasadena ISD for more than 30 years, working at Meador Elementary and Atkinson Elementary – serving as the first principal for both campuses.

Powell first worked as a teacher and later serving as principal of Meador from 1963 to 1969. At Atkinson, Hollis Powell served as principal from 1969 until his retirement in 1995.

A service for Powell was held Wednesday, Jan. 31, in Jasper. See related obituary on Page 2.

Beamer Ditch work moves forward

Project expected to be complete by end of year

Work is moving forward on the project to make drainage improvements to Beamer Ditch, with work expected to be complete by the end of the year, according to Harris County officials.

Originally to have been complete by fall 2022, the project has been marred by problems since work began in January 2021, with workers accidentally busting a city water line on the first day of construction.

Following that, work came to a halt when the contractor who had been selected to complete work unexpectedly walked off the job, which was only around 30 percent complete, according to county officials. Complete Concrete was originally awarded the low-bid contract to widen the

ditch and install concrete lining from Sagerock to near Dixie Farm Road. Harris County Flood Control District was required by law to accept the lowest offer.

After Complete Concrete deserted the project, massive pieces of concrete piping were left at the construction site, along with pieces of equipment belonging to the county.

In January 2023, Rebel Contractors was approved by Harris County Commissioners Court to complete work on the project. Construction resumed in spring 2023.

Construction on the project is broken into three segments. Phase 1 runs from Sagerock to **Continued on Page 4**

SJC's Promise program deadline nears

Graduating seniors in the class of 2024 who live in the San Jacinto College taxing district have until Feb. 22 to pledge and apply to become a Promise Scholar, allowing them to attend the area college free of charge.

"We are excited to welcome the next cohort of Promise Scholars," said Dr. Allatia Harris, San Jacinto College vice chancellor for Strategic Initiatives. "Thanks to generous donations from community members and partners to our Promise Scholarship, we are able to provide a debt-free college education to every high school senior who lives in our college taxing district."

The Promise @ San Jac Scholarship provides money to graduating seniors who live in the San Jacinto College taxing district to cover the cost of in-district tuition and books. The scholarship is good for up to three years or the student's first certificate or associate degree, regardless of household income or high school GPA. Students are required to enroll at San Jacinto College the fall semester after their graduation and remain a full-time student, which means taking at least 12 credit hours each semester.

Begun in 2022, the program was originally made possible by a \$30 million donation from MacKenzie Scott, former wife of Amazon founder

Jeff Bezos.

The program was initially offered to only Pasadena ISD students but is now offered to graduating seniors from Channelview ISD, Deer Park ISD, Galena Park ISD, La Porte ISD, Pasadena ISD and Sheldon ISD as well. Homeschool, private school and GED graduates in the district are also eligible.

Clear Creek ISD is not located in the college's taxing district.

A few South Belt homes, including some in the Ashley Pointe and Villa Verde subdivisions, are still located in the San Jacinto College tax district, despite being zoned to Clear Creek ISD and Pearland ISD schools, respectively. To verify whether or not they are in the college's taxing district, residents should check their Harris County tax records.

Pasadena ISD has a lengthy relationship working with San Jac College on mutual projects, including Early College High School, Dual Credit programs and workforce training.

The two school districts make a great team, according to Pasadena ISD Superintendent Dr. DeeAnn Powell.

"It's a great collaboration," Powell said of the relationship. "We share a vision."

To learn more about Promise @ San Jac, visit sanjac.edu/promise.

Leader remembers highs, lows of 2023

The *Leader* continues its look back on 2023 with a list of some of the significant stories of the year. For highlights up to June 29, see previous editions of the *Leader*.

June 29

A female driver was killed in a fiery crash around 9:30 p.m. Sunday, June 18, in the 8500 block of SH 3/Old Galveston Road near Fuqua. Kasey Ramirez, 37, was pronounced dead at the scene. According to a witness, Ramirez's vehicle was traveling at a high rate of speed when it lost control, struck a signal pole and burst into flames. Ramirez's car was burned beyond recognition, investigators said.

July 6

The annual South Belt Fourth of July parade returned with a bang Tuesday, July 4, with several hundred of area residents taking part in the celebration. The yearly parade, held 33 out of the last 36 years, had been put on hold since 2020 due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. (The parade was rained out in 2018.) Dozens of local groups decorated their vehicles as part of the event, which was a salute to Ellington Field.

A man was found fatally shot inside a parked car about 3:05 a.m. Monday, July 3, at an apartment complex in the 1200 block of Redford near Edgebrook and the Gulf Freeway. Erick Romero, 30, was pronounced dead at the scene. According to Houston Police Department officials, patrol officers responded to a shooting call in the parking lot of an apartment complex at the above location and found Romero inside a parked vehicle shot to

death. No immediate arrests were made. Dubbed a hot spot for violent crime by Houston police, this marked the first fatal shooting of the year at The Redford apartment complex. By comparison, there were at least five fatal shootings at the complex by this time of the previous year. There were at least 13 total shootings at the complex in 2022.

July 13

A SWAT standoff took place following a stabbing early Friday, July 7, at the Mustang Inn in the 12000 block of Beltway 8 at the Gulf Freeway. According to Houston Police Department officials, patrol officers responded to an incident around 4 a.m. in which a female victim had been stabbed. The victim was transported to a nearby hospital to be treated for non-life-threatening injuries. The woman identified Justin Lee Riojas as the suspect, and hotel records confirmed the man's identity. Officers attempted to make contact with Riojas but he refused to come out of the room. SWAT officers were called to the scene, and a two-hour standoff ensued. Police entered Riojas' room by force at approximately 6 a.m. and apprehended the suspect. The knife allegedly used in the crime was found inside the room, police said. Riojas was also transported to a nearby hospital to be treated for unspecified wounds. Following his release, Riojas was arrested and placed into custody. Riojas, 34, was charged with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.

July 20

Continued on Page 3

Beamer Ditch work progresses



Work continues on the Beamer Ditch project, which will make drainage improvements from Sagerock to around Dixie Farm Road. Marred by multiple setbacks since construction began in January 2021, the project is expected to be complete by the end of the year, according to Harris County officials. Crews are shown above lining the ditch with concrete near Scarsdale. **Photo by James Bolen**

In My Opinion

Leader reaches milestone

We believe most of even our faithful readers do not regularly read the numbers that are on the top right-hand side of the front page and there is really no reason to. But today we would like to share some thoughts with you about those numbers. Today they read Vol. 49, No. 1. This means that we are beginning our 49th year as your local newspaper. This is the first edition of year 49.

Bobby Griffin and I started the paper in our homes. The first issue was printed Feb. 5, 1976. I have been keeping track of these numbers as they got bigger, I set a personal goal of wanting to hit Vol. 50, No. 1.

When we first started the paper, known as *South Belt Press*, I had worked for a Friendswood paper which turned 18 years as a publication. I thought 18 years, how neat it would be for our new publication to

last that long!

My main purpose of writing this is to thank the many who have been a part of our journey so far. Our families first and foremost, our readers and advertisers are also the top of the list. Doing the paper has been fantastic for me. We are able to be a vital part of the community, and I believe things are better in South Belt because of the paper. It is easier to get things done with the paper. Our elected officials find it easy to work with us on area problems.

One change is Bobby can no longer work with us, we miss her. My son Davy, who sometimes is my boss, is a most important part of our operation. We both thank all of you for your support and are looking forward to Vol. 50 No. 1.

Marie Flickinger
Publisher

In My Opinion

Assault per day will keep riders away

In a great piece of reporting, the Houston Chronicle published a story this week by John Wayne Ferguson regarding his research into assaults on Metro's vehicles and properties. He found that Metro-related assaults hit an all-time high last year at 363 . . . just under one every day. And new year has seen an continuation of this trend with the fatal stabbing two weeks ago on the light rail.

As John pointed out in his story, most of the assaults do not occur on the vehicles but on Metro's properties where people are gathering to catch a vehicle like the park and ride lots and light rail platforms. Because of the low ridership many of these platforms and lots frequently are nearly abandoned.

But it is not just the actual assaults, I regularly hear from readers and see media reports and social media posts about customers being accosted by pan handlers and finding homeless people and addicts sleeping on vehicles. When I wrote recently about Metro's failure to provide adequate bus shelters, several readers wrote to me to tell me about shelters that have taken over by homeless people and that Metro had nothing about it.

All of the security issues are occurring notwithstanding that Metro has its own police department with 400 employees and a \$40 million dollar budget. Mayor Whitmire has recently said he intends to merge the Metro Police Department with HPD. Hopefully, this will improve their performance.

The lack of adequate security on Metro's properties and vehicles is just another

example of Metro's misguided priorities. Metro's priority is spending billions on grandiose transit projects that, if history is any indication, are highly likely to be a flop. Instead of getting serious about improving the ridership experience, Metro spends millions running feel-good propaganda TV ads and "community outreach" that provides no information about actual using Metro but rather promote its agenda to spend more money with their consultants and contractors to build more of these useless projects.

In 1979, the City of Houston gave away half of its sales tax revenue to finance Metro. Since then, the City has lost something like \$15 billion in sales tax revenue. Notwithstanding that massive investment of taxpayer money, Metro's ridership peaked in 2006. It steadily declined after that before falling off a cliff in the pandemic. Today, Metro is carrying 41% fewer riders than it did in 2006. In the year before the pandemic its ridership was down by 13%. If you adjusted for the roughly 40% increase in Houston's population since 1979, the ridership number would look even worse.

"The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results" is an axiom frequently attributed to Albert Einstein. Although it is questionable that Einstein ever actually said this, it is nonetheless a priori truth. And it perfectly describes our public transportation policy in Houston. We keep throwing massive amounts of money at a system that has been in steady decline for two decades, notwithstanding that we basically give away the service.

Perhaps it is time to consider some alternatives.

Bill King

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.

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.newcovenantchristianchurchhouston.com
10603 Blackhawk Blvd. Houston, Tx 77089
Blackhawk @ Kirkfair

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.

Shrove Tuesday meal Feb. 13

St. Paul's Anglican Church will hold a Shrove Tuesday pancake and sausage supper on Tuesday, Feb. 13, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. The supper is open to the public free of charge. Traditionally, pancakes were served prior to the beginning of Lent when eggs and fats were forbidden. Ash Wednesday services with the imposition of ashes will be held at noon and 6 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 14.

Ash Wednesday marks the start of the Lenten season, a time of fasting and repentance. Lent reflects the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert in prayer and fasting before beginning his public ministry.

For more information, contact the church at 281-479-7285. St. Paul's is located at 11456 Space Center Blvd., Houston, in Clearpoint Crossing, just south of Genoa Red Bluff Road, between Pasadena and Clear Lake. St. Paul's is a parish of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Services are Sunday at 8 and 10:15 a.m. with evening prayer Wednesday at 7 p.m.

Hollis Dwain Powell



Hollis Dwain Powell, 91, of Pasadena, went to be with the Lord on Thursday, Jan. 25, 2024.

He was born on Nov. 22, 1932, in Brookeland, Texas, to Brink and Leona Powell and was a devoted husband, father, brother, grandfather and great-grandfather.

Hollis graduated from Brookeland High School. He earned a bachelor's and a master's degree from Stephen F. Austin State University.

He also proudly served in the U.S. Army.

Hollis was married for 53 wonderful years and raised their four children in the school district they both served.

Until Carolyn passed in 2011, they enjoyed retirement by traveling, spending time at the lake house, cherishing their moments with grandchildren and helping others.

In the Pasadena Independent School District, Hollis served as a teacher and later was the first principal at Meador Elementary.

He is best known as the first principal at Atkinson Elementary, serving from 1969 until his retirement in 1995. He loved working with his students, staff and the entire South Belt community.

He was a longtime member of Richey Street Baptist Church and later Memorial Baptist Church in Pasadena. He held various leadership roles at the church and spent many hours as a volunteer and will always be remembered as a man of strong faith.

Hollis is survived by his son Mark Powell and wife Anh, daughter Shelly Bunt and husband Don, son Brent Powell and wife Laurie, son Lance Powell and wife Dee-Ann; brothers Glen, Herbert and Charles Wayne; brother-in-law Mickey Stewart and wife Betty; and brother-in-law Keith Stewart and wife Charlotte.

His pride and joy included 12 grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his wife; parents; and siblings Iva Franks, Ola Lee, Ruth Garlington, Doris Barlow, Alfred Powell, Bill Powell and Elmer Powell.

Visitation was held on Tuesday, Jan. 30, from 5 to 7 p.m.

The services for Powell, were held Wednesday, Jan. 31, at Grandview Funeral Home, 8501 Spencer Highway, Deer Park. Interment followed at Weeks Chapel Cemetery, 315 County Road 233, Jasper, Texas 75951.

George Edwin Thomas Jr.



George Edwin "Buddy" Thomas Jr., 83, formerly of South Belt, passed away Jan. 19, 2024, in Pearland.

He was born Oct. 5, 1940, in San Antonio, to parents George Edwin Thomas Sr. and Emma Faye Yelton Thomas. He was most recently a resident of Friendswood.

Buddy married Patricia "Patty" Ann Tachoir in 1962 and resided in and around the Friendswood area since 1964.

Buddy began his career in communications at NASA where he was employed from 1964 until 1974. He then worked in communications and engineering at Exxon serving from 1974 until retirement in 2001.

He lived in South Belt from 1973 until 1986. All his children attended Thompson Intermediate and Dobie High School.

Buddy enjoyed fishing, hunting, camping, hiking and anything that took him outside.

He was an avid car enthusiast; he especially loved vintage cars and over his lifetime owned and worked on several.

His first vehicle was a 1951 Hudson and later a 1935 Oldsmobile coupe which started his love of old cars.

Buddy enjoyed all kinds of music, and would listen to many different genres, from classical, rock, big band, Tejano and classical country.

Buddy had a knack for fixing things. If anything needed to be fixed, Buddy could fix it.

He is preceded in death by his parents; daughter, Christine Kinnear Baker; and grandson, George Edwin Thomas IV.

Buddy is survived by his loving wife, Patty of 61 years; sons, Edwin Thomas III (Tres), Todd Andrew Thomas (Judith); grandchildren, Courtney Elise Thomas, Ross Thomas Baker, Caitlin Elizabeth Thomas, Madison Kinnear Baker-Turner, Kyle Edwin Baker, Emma Kincaid Thomas, Benjamin Tyler Thomas, Judith Seth Thomas; and great-grandchildren, Abigail Rose Turner, William Turner, Aaron Derek Turner, Skylar Kinnear Turner, James Dean Vallee and Olsen Erskine Hall.

A Celebration of Life will be held Feb. 3, at 11 a.m. at Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, 1207 Winding Way, Friendswood.

The Rev. Justin Briggie will officiate. Memorials may be made to Good Shepherd Episcopal Church.

James (Jim) Horace Hoskins



James (Jim) Horace Hoskins was born in Handley, Texas, Jan. 28, 1936. He went home to be with his Lord and savior, on Jan. 21, 2024, in League City. Jim was the son of Jesse and Christine Hoskins. He was the middle child, between older sister Jeannette and younger brother Phil.

In his younger years, he worked at his uncle's dairy farm, and family enjoyed hearing many of his stories. During his teen years, he worked with another uncle learning the skill of carpentry.

He attended Polytech High School in Ft. Worth, where he played in the Poly High band (trombone), and then went to Arlington State College in Arlington.

In the spring of 1956, Jim met the love of his life, Leita Margaret Rayford, and they were married on Sept. 7, 1956. In 1960, they had their daughter Jill, followed by their son Jess in 1965.

Jim and Margie moved to Houston from Ft. Worth, where he was working for The Corps of Engineers on temporary assignment in connection with the construction of The Johnson Space Center, which led to employment at NASA. At NASA, he was a camera technician, where he took many trips to Sweden to be trained on the Hasselblad camera.

His primary role was to instruct the astronauts on the use of this camera and provide camera support for all the missions; ranging from the Mercury program to the Space Shuttle program. The highlight of his career was downloading the film from the Hasselblad camera for the original moon mission. He retired from NASA in 1993 after 29 years of employment.

In addition to working for NASA, he worked part time at H&H Music. He loved playing music in the "Country Corner." He played several instruments and had a love of bluegrass, classical and gospel music. Lastly, he worked at Dorsett Brothers Concrete where he was a management assistant.

In his early family years, he loved taking the family on camping trips over many states in the family "VW camper." As a family, they started going to New Braunfels every Fourth of July, where the tradition has grown and thrives today.

After his retirement, he continued his love of travel with annual trips to California and later New England with his wife and friends.

He was a longtime member of Sagemont Church, where he

played the French horn in the orchestra.

He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. He was a jack-of-all-trades and could fix practically anything. His hobbies included photography, music, jewelry making, stained glass, hunting, master gardening and captain of the Wee Tiki (his 20 foot sailboat).

His greatest accomplishment was the love, respect and care of his family. He never knew a stranger.

Jim is preceded in death by his parents; his sister Jeannette McCally, and her husband James; and other family members.

Jim is survived by his wife Margie of 67 years; brother Phil Hoskins and wife Susie; children Jill Dorsett and husband, BJ Dorsett and Jess Hoskins; grandchildren Ashley Evans and husband, Jordan, Hilary Whitsitt and husband Mike, Savannah Cox and husband David, Laci Dorse, Shelby Kyle and husband Zac, and Sydney Hoskins; and great-grandchildren: Chase, Jackson and Cameron Whitsitt; Carter Hoskins, Kylene and Kaden Evans; Cason and Callie Cox, and Bennett Kyle.

The service honoring his life were held at Peevey Funeral Home, Tuesday, Jan. 30.

Interment followed at Forest Lawn Cemetery, 8601 Alameda Genoa Road.

Floyd Earl Brown



Floyd Earl Brown stopped trucking on this earthly highway on Dec. 12, 2023, at the age of 65 after a harrowing battle with sepsis.

Floyd was born Dec. 26, 1957, to Rex and Juanita Brown in Seattle. As an Army brat, Floyd quickly learned the art of making new friends as he frequently moved from base to base through locations such as Germany, Wisconsin and Arizona.

Eventually his family settled in the South Belt area where Floyd graduated from Dobie High School in 1976.

Two weeks after graduation, Floyd discovered his first love, truck driving. He attended trucking school to become a long-haul truck driver, who went by the CB radio handle "Opie." This was due to his crimson beard, much like the hair on the beloved Opie from "The Andy Griffith Show" and Floyd's goofy nature.

Floyd met the one great love of his life, Terry Grieger, in Inver Grove Heights, Minn. on one of his long hauls. She made such an impression that he found ways to slip through Inver Grove Heights until he could convince Terry to marry him and move to Houston on Sept. 11, 1982.

Their family quickly grew with the births of their daughters Tiffany and Brandi, whom he loved with his whole heart. Floyd loved being a father and spent many nights at Monster truck rallies with Brandi and watching, with Tiffany, the WWE Wrestling for Mankind.

Floyd was a member of New Life Lutheran Church. There he was an active participant on the barbecue team. He was a joker who often told his daughters he was traveling somewhere between a "Stairway to Heaven" and a "Highway to Hell." No matter what road he was trucking, he always lived life to the fullest.

After his grandson Logan was born, he rarely missed one of his baseball games, which was quickly followed by a trip to the 7-11 for a Sturpee and corn dogs.

Floyd never met a stranger, Little Debbie snack, or a buffet he didn't like. If one knew Floyd for long, one was likely a recipient of one of his famous homemade Christmas cookie platters, a tradition he passed on to his daughter Brandi.

His Celebration of Life service will be held at his favorite buffet, Golden Corral, 4021 Spencer, in Pasadena on Feb. 3, where friends and family can pour one out for Floyd.

Floyd was preceded in death by his parents, Rex and Juanita Brown, his wife Terry Grieger Brown, and children Dustin Floyd and Brittany Dawn Brown. He is survived by his daughters Tiffany of Houston, Brandi and Mallory Brown of Marshall; grandsons Logan Pineda of Houston, and Josh Farris of Dallas; brothers Bruce Brown of Baytown, Kevin Brown of Houston, Todd and Julie Greiger of Eagan, Minn., and sister Kim Grieger of Burnsville, Minn.; and numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews and friends.

Luke Joseph "LJ" Cash



Luke Joseph Cash, 86, also known as "LJ" passed away peacefully on Jan. 21, 2024. He was born on Oct. 24, 1937, at St. Joseph Hospital to Sam and Joseph Cash.

Luke was a loving brother, father and grandfather. He is survived by his sister, Julia Montalbano; son Richard Cash; daughters Josie Cash and Danielle Krueger; grandsons Kameron Krueger and Klint Krueger and wife Kelsey and son Merric; and granddaughter, Jasmine Short and husband James.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Sammy Cash.

Luke was a proud and dedicated Catholic. He worshiped at the church of St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church.

He attended Stephen F. Austin High School and later served in the U.S. Army.

Luke had long lasting careers where he met many lifelong friends along the way. Luke was also a very loyal Astros and Houston Texans fan and enjoyed watching the games.

The family is sincerely grateful to the many friends and family who have given support and comfort during this time of loss, offering homes, help, and love and prayers.

Services were held at St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church Wednesday, Jan. 31.

Burial followed at Forest Park Lawndale Funeral Home.

Maria Teresa Mata



Maria Teresa Mata was born on June 16, 1941 to Jose Maria Martinez and Andrea Garcia in La Huasteca, Nuevo Leon, Mex.

She studied toward an administrative career at Cantu Treviño college. She proceeded to accept and flourish in an internship at a retail center called La Aurora, where she met her dear mentor.

Maria Teresa met her husband, Refugio Champion, in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mex. in 1970 and married June 19, 1971.

Together they had three sons in whom they proudly and tirelessly worked to instill values of faith, family and work. She was a loving wife, mother, daughter, sister, grandmother and great-grandmother.

Maria Teresa was a devout Catholic, a founder as well as a recognized and honored member of the Guadalupana Association of St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church. Maria Teresa and her husband were an integral part of bringing the Spanish-speaking Masses and services to the community at St. Luke.

She was also an inspirational figure within the Sagemont Southbelt community. Maria Teresa was always a ray of sunshine throughout the darkest of days and will always be remembered as a compassionate soul and a safe harbor to those in need. Her love and spiritual guidance were known far and wide, touching the hearts of everyone she met.

She is survived by their sons Javier Mata (daughter-in-law, Irma), Omar Mata and Ivan Mata; grandchildren Bianca Marie Mata, Anthony Ray Mata, Anneli Lana Mata, Julian Champion-Ray Mata, Cynthia Consuelo Mata, Sydney Elle Mata, Laura Denise Mata, Madison Grace Mata, Ty William Mata, Ava Sophia Mata and Layla Janet Mata; great-grandchildren Vincent Anthony Castoreno, Omar Francisco Estimbo, Kal-El Luther Estimbo, and Luna Mae Mata; sisters Irma Martinez Garcia and Evita Vasquez; and many loving nieces and nephews.

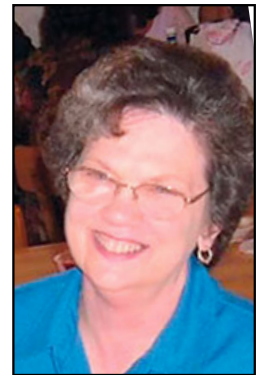
Maria Teresa was preceded in death by her husband, mother, Andrea Garcia; father, Jose Maria Martinez; sisters Aurora Diaz and Eloina Villarreal; and brothers Ernesto Martinez, Jose Maria Martinez and Felipe Martinez.

Services included a viewing Wednesday, Jan. 31, at Forest Park East Funeral Home, 21620 Gulf Freeway, Webster, A rosary was recited.

A Mass will be celebrated at St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church, 11011 Hall Road at 11 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 1, followed by burial at 12:30 p.m. at Forest Park East Funeral Home and Cemetery.

Reception will held at St. Luke the Evangelist social hall at 2 p.m.

Lera Elizabeth Halpin Leslie



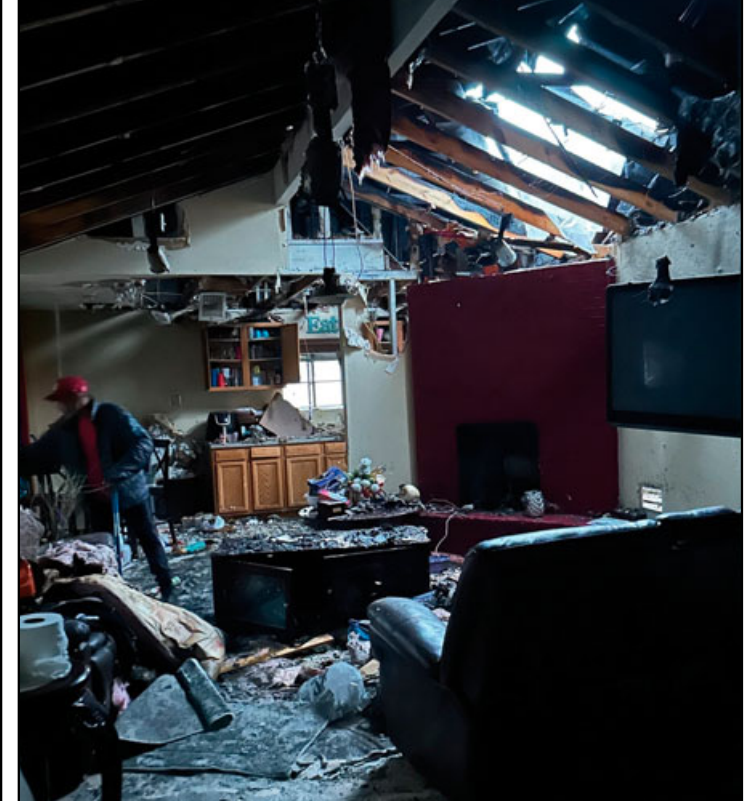
Lera Elizabeth Halpin Leslie, 83, of Houston, went to be with the Lord on Jan. 20, 2024.

She was born Nov. 21, 1940, to John E. Halpin and Edna E. Halpin, in Lake Charles. She graduated from South Park High School in Beaumont in 1957. She married her loving husband, C.J. Leslie, on Jan. 30, 1959.

Lera loved to enter sweepstakes and won two cars and a house along with many other prizes over the years.

Lera also loved to play piano and sing hymns, espe-

Donations sought for fire victims



Donations are still being accepted for a local family who lost everything in a house fire Sunday, Jan. 21, when their home in the 10600 block of Kirkshire Drive succumbed to flames. The fire victims have close ties to Dobie High School, as the mother works at the area school, while one son is a current senior at the school and his older brother is a graduate who is now serving in the U.S. Army. Pasadena ISD officials and the Leader are collecting clothes, blankets, gift cards, financial donations and other items for the family. Donations may be dropped off at the Leader office, located at 11555 Beamer at Beltway 8.

Stuchbery names honor rolls

Stuchbery Elementary officials announced their honor roll and merit roll students for the second nine-weeks of the 2023-2024 school year.

Honor roll
Third grade
Miguel Amaya, Dailyn Cuyuch, Jackelin Flores, Katie Garza, Elias Gomez, Santiago Lara, Anthony Nazario, Alex Nguyen, Sophia Pachon, Gilberto Reyes, Ethan Thompson and Nicole Torres.

Fourth grade
Andres Arizmendez, Leila Arrieta, Javier Garcia, Dorianne Hood, Dylan Salmeron, Hector Sanchez and Carlos Velazquez.

Merit roll
Third grade
Olivia Brito, Jiselle Guevara, Clara Kearby, Macia Salinas, Dante Segovia and Sophia Turruabartes.

Fourth grade
Daniela Salinas.

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Meador Elementary students, staff participate in the Great Kindness Challenge



Meador Elementary participated in the annual Great Kindness Challenge Jan. 22-26. All students were given kindness checklists to complete acts of kindness throughout the week. There were schoolwide dress-up days, and various kindness activities in which students participated. Students received kindness certificates at the end of the week. Meador Mustangs show kindness every day and are responsible, respectful and ready to learn. Shown, left to right are Andy Reyes (fourth), Rosabella Foster (kindergarten), Zariyah De Rouen Blue (first), Colton Foster (third), Trashaun Woodard, (fourth) and Tara Merida (counselor).



Shown above, left to right are Stephanie Bounds (PE coach), Malorie Ehrlich (PE coach), Jennifer Chavez (principal), Tara Merida (school counselor) and Lauren Riojas (dyslexia specialist).



Fourth-grader Mia Gonzales-Session is shown picking up trash in the morning as an act of kindness.

At right, shown left to right, are Laila Alvarez (kindergarten), Ma'iyah White and Aaliyah White, (first-graders) dressed for Aloha to Kindness Day.



PASADENA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 2023

Data Control Codes	General Fund	Debt Service Fund	Capital Projects Fund	Nonmajor Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
Revenue:					
5700 Local, intermediate, and out-of-state	\$ 206,124,730	\$ 64,587,395	\$ 5,182,558	\$ 11,484,223	\$ 287,378,906
5800 State program revenues	314,586,420	2,348,871	-	2,741,311	\$ 319,676,602
5900 Federal program revenues	28,411,891	-	-	148,396,254	176,808,145
5020 Total Revenues:	549,123,041	66,936,266	5,182,558	162,621,788	783,863,653
Expenditures Current:					
0011 Instruction	301,989,028	-	-	100,792,363	402,781,391
0012 Instruction resources and media services	7,565,634	-	-	222,456	7,788,090
0013 Curriculum and instructional staff development	8,090,724	-	-	1,524,985	9,615,709
0021 Instructional leadership	8,990,102	-	-	1,425,266	10,415,368
0023 School leadership	42,646,760	-	-	1,961,180	44,607,940
0031 Guidance, counseling and evaluation services	25,013,897	-	-	7,753,688	32,767,585
0032 Social work services	198,078	-	-	225,152	423,230
0033 Health services	5,770,207	-	-	368,899	6,139,106
0034 Student transportation	20,492,197	-	3,244,796	1,204,177	24,941,170
0035 Food services	778	-	-	36,352,488	36,353,266
0036 Extracurricular activities	8,580,318	-	864,785	4,122,821	13,567,924
0041 General administration	13,814,860	-	-	1,442,789	15,257,649
0051 Facilities maintenance and operations	66,334,837	-	-	1,571,521	67,906,358
0052 Security and monitoring services	6,429,942	-	-	568,733	6,998,675
0053 Data processing services	11,741,988	-	1,081,823	521,496	13,345,307
0061 Community services	211,184	-	-	288,445	499,629
Debt Service:					
0071 Principal on long-term debt	3,227,491	33,811,000	-	625,490	37,663,981
0072 Interest on long-term debt	22,437	28,670,795	-	24,510	28,717,742
0073 Bond issuance costs and fees	-	2,659,013	959,874	-	3,618,887
Capital Outlay:					
0081 Facilities acquisition and construction	12,714,147	-	68,086,324	1,449,869	82,250,340
Intergovernmental:					
0093 Payments related to shared services arrangements	1,222,504	-	-	-	1,222,504
0095 Payments to Juvenile Justice Alt. Ed. Prgm.	174,347	-	-	-	174,347
0099 Other intergovernmental charges	1,620,514	-	-	-	1,620,514
6030 Total Expenditures:	546,851,974	65,140,808	74,237,602	162,446,328	848,676,712
1100 Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	2,271,067	1,795,458	(69,055,044)	175,460	(64,813,059)
Other Financing Sources (Uses):					
7901 Issuance of debt - refunding bonds	-	101,230,000	-	-	101,230,000
7911 Issuance of debt - bonds	-	-	116,900,000	-	116,900,000
7916 Premium on issuance of bonds	-	3,621,774	9,059,874	-	12,681,648
7949 Issuance of debt - SBITAs	823,399	-	-	1,116,311	1,939,710
8949 Payment to refunding agent	-	(103,972,744)	-	-	(103,972,744)
7080 Total Other Financing Sources (Uses):	823,399	879,030	125,959,874	1,116,311	128,778,614
1200 Net change in fund balances	3,094,466	2,674,488	56,904,830	1,291,771	63,965,555
0100 Fund Balance - Beginning	178,185,566	34,616,008	49,680,588	14,922,111	277,404,273
3000 Fund Balance - Ending	\$ 181,280,032	\$ 37,290,496	\$ 106,585,418	\$ 16,213,882	\$ 341,369,828

Leader remembers

Continued from Page 1

A teen driver was found fatally shot in a crashed vehicle near Windmill Lakes around 6:35 p.m. Wednesday, July 5. Jose Mendoza, 16, was pronounced dead at the scene. According to Houston Police Department officials, patrol officers responded to a crash at the above address and found Mendoza shot to death in the vehicle's driver's seat. No immediate arrests were made in the case.

July 27

Murder charges were filed against George Dennis Westem, 29, in the July 3 shooting of Erick Romero, 30, at The Redford apartment complex in the 1200 block of Redford.

Aug. 3

A cyclist was killed in an accident involving an 18-wheeler around 4:25 p.m. Friday, July 28, near Fuqua and Sabo. Longtime resident Greg Maduzia, 56, died in the crash. According to Houston Police Department officials, the driver of a white Freightliner tractor-truck pulling a trailer was behind the Goodwill store at the above address and attempted to pull out of the parking lot onto Sabo. Maduzia was on a bicycle and traveling on Sabo when he attempted to cross in front of the 18-wheeler. The driver did not see Maduzia, continued to pull onto the street and struck the bicyclist. Houston Fire Department paramedics responded and pronounced Maduzia dead at the scene. The driver of the 18-wheeler, who remained at the scene, was determined not to be impaired and was questioned and released. No charges were immediately filed.

Aug. 10

A man was killed in a crash around 3:20 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 3, in the 12200 block of the Gulf Freeway near Alameda Genoa/South Shaver. Jose

Almazan, 30, was pronounced dead at the scene. According to Houston Police Department officials, Almazan was driving a silver Buick LaCrosse on the Gulf Freeway service road at a high rate of speed when he lost control of the vehicle and struck a utility pole, killing him. No other persons or vehicles were involved in this crash.

A SWAT standoff involving a naked man took place early Tuesday, Aug. 8, at the Mustang Inn on Beltway 8 at the Gulf Freeway. According to Houston Police Department officials, officers were called to the motel just after 2 a.m. about a weapons disturbance after a naked man was reportedly walking from room to room with a pistol and either a large knife or a machete. When responding officers attempted to make contact with the suspect, he produced what looked like a pistol, prompting the officer to call for SWAT support. When the SWAT team arrived, the man barricaded himself inside a room with a mattress against the window. At one point during the standoff, the SWAT team attempted to send in a robotic dog named SPOT and the naked suspect came out of the room, grabbed the robot and took it inside. The standoff came to an end around 8:45 a.m. when the suspect came out of the room a second time, this time clothed and obeying police commands. The suspect, who had reportedly been up all night smoking methamphetamine, was apprehended without incident. He was charged with three counts of aggravated assault with a pistol, with additional charges pending. HPD officials said the suspect had previous run-ins with the department's Mental Health Division.

To be continued in next week's *Leader*.

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- Hiding bruises, scars, marks or injuries
- Working excessively long or unusual hours
- Lacking access to basic needs or medical care
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Three Dobie DECA students qualify for state



Dobie High School DECA students competed at the DECA district conference at Ridge Point High School on January 13, 2024. Left to right are Malcolm Sherwood, Daniela Garza, Gizelle Flores, Katelyn Trevino, Ashley Jimenez, Elizabeth Aguirre, Itzel Torres and Matthew Vu. Three students qualified for the State Conference to be held in Houston Feb. 15-17. Aguirre qualified in Quick Service Restaurant Management. Garza qualified in Hospitality and Tourism Professional Selling. Jimenez qualified in Professional Selling. Not pictured are Dobie DECA advisers Amber Allen and Stacy Thomas.

STEAR program offers emergency help

Special needs residents urged to join registry

In the wake of the recent flood and ice events, the City of Houston Office of Emergency Management is reminding residents that if they or anyone they know needs special assistance in times of emergency to register with the State of Texas's Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) program.

The STEAR program is a free registry that provides local emergency planners and emergency responders with additional information on the needs in their community.

Texas communities use the registry information in different ways.

Registering one's self in the STEAR registry does not, however, necessarily guarantee that they will receive a specific service during an emergency.

Houstonians with access and functional needs are advised to register with the STEAR and update their information every regularly.

The STEAR program is a free registry for Texans of any age that need additional assistance during an emergency event due to access or functional needs or lack of transportation for evacuation.

The STEAR registry assists local emergency planners and responders with information about the needs of individuals in their community.

STEAR is intended for people with access and functional needs such as the following:

- People with limited mobility.
- People who have sensory disabilities.
- People who require additional medical assistance during an emergency event.
- People who require transportation assistance.
- People who require personal care assistance.

The information that is shared through STEAR should be updated regularly to ensure information is up to date.

Last-minute registrations prior to an extreme weather event or other type of emergency may not reach local emergency.

For additional information on the state's STEAR program, visit www.tdem.texas.gov/response/state-of-texas-emergency-assistance-registry.

Clear Brook Wolverines winners at Alief Elsik



Wolverine debaters and speakers were both at Alief Elsik High School recently at the annual swing meet hosted by their ninth grade and high school campuses. At the end of the meets, several members inched their way closer to their Texas Forensic Association state qualification. To begin, LD Debater Alim Merchant fought his way to a 3-1 victory in prelims, advancing to octofinals where he unfortunately dropped but did pick up two more state points for a total of six. In speaking events, Informative speaker Abiha Altaf competed in both halves of the swing and placed fourth and fifth which netted three points for a current total of seven, putting her within striking distance as well. Junior and most decorated speaker Greg Stuart competed in Domestic Extemporaneous Speaking where he placed fifth and third which earned him another six points on his already more than 30 points in this event this season. Greg also competed in Impromptu in which he placed second. Fellow Domestic Extemp speaker Ariella Calili, who is also state qualified at this time, placed sixth in this event in the first half of this tournament. Left to right are (front row) Zaina Abedin, Chloe Smith, Kate Blue, (second row) Rich Vo, Natalie Nickell and Charles McIntyre.

HEB names PISD as 1 of top 5 in state

Continued from Page 1

trict will receive \$50,000. Additionally, a winning early childhood facility will receive \$25,000 and one or more school boards will receive up to a total of \$25,000.

The 2024 school district finalists in the H-E-B Excellence in Education Awards program are as follows:

- Large Districts: Pasadena ISD, Galena Park ISD, Allen ISD, Wylie ISD and Klein ISD.
- Small Districts: Angleton ISD, La Porte ISD and Gregory-Portland ISD.

Enjoying BAHEP's annual event



Jan. 24 was the date of the annual Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership dinner held in Clear Lake. Some of those attending were, left to right, Leslie Flickinger, Councilman Fred Flickinger, former city councilman Michael Sullivan, Carol Wilson, David Flickinger and San Jacinto College board of trustee Larry Wilson. Additional photos and information will be in next week's issue.

Beamer Road Ditch work advancing

Continued from Page 1

Scarsdale; Phase 2 runs from Scarsdale to Astoria; and Phase 3 runs from Astoria to Beamer near the South Belt Stormwater Detention Basin.

Work on Segment 1 is currently underway and expected to be complete by spring 2024. Residents should be advised that the left westbound lane may be closed outside of regular working hours to facilitate waterline repairs in this area.

Construction on Segment 2 is expected to in spring 2024 and end in summer/fall 2024. When construction occurs below the Astoria Bridge, traffic will be routed to either Scarsdale Boulevard or the U-turn available between the Beamer Road eastbound and westbound lanes.

Work on Segment 3 is also currently underway and is anticipated to be complete in spring 2024. The Beamer Road bridge will shut down eastbound traffic past Astoria Boulevard. Eastbound traffic takes Scarsdale Boulevard to Blackhawk Road, then west to FM 1959, and travel north where traffic meets back up at Beamer Road. The Astoria Boulevard bridge, as well as westbound Beamer Road, will remain open during this phase.

Funding for the the \$10.7 million project is divided between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Harris County, with the county's portion being part of a \$2.5 billion bond package.

Residents near the project area may see increased construction activity, which will include trucks and heavy machinery. Residents are urged to respect all warning signs as work crews move around the area.

The Mud Gully (Beamer Ditch) Channel Conveyance Improvements project is funded and constructed as part of the Clear Creek Federal Flood Risk Management Project. The project includes constructing approximately 55,911 square yards of concrete channel lining to widen A120-00-00 (Mud Gully) and removing and replacing storm sewer system components.

Once construction is complete, the channel bottom will be widened to 45 feet, with a side slope range that is typically two to three feet horizontal and one foot vertical. Since the width of the channel is limited by Beamer Road on both sides, the concrete lining allows for the maximum volume of water to be conveyed within the channel, decreasing the water surface elevation, which provides the benefit of helping to reduce flood damage risk.

Although the flow in the channel will increase, areas downstream will not be impacted because the additional flow will be mitigated by the South Belt Stormwater Detention Basin, which was substantially completed in fall 2022.

For more information on the Beamer Ditch project and its corresponding traffic control plan, visit hcfcd.org/Mud-Gully.

Remember When

45 years ago (1979)
Two neighboring businesses, The Bottle Barn liquor store and Cullen Savings and Loan, were both victims of criminal activities on separate occasions.

Vandals started a fire and opened the flush valves of a number of fire hydrants in Sageglen subdivision.

40 years ago (1984)
Dobie High School was preparing for its first-ever soccer district game against Baytown Sterling.

Three Moore Elementary School students confessed to vandalizing the school. The boys turned over desks, wrote obscenities on the wall, spread glue over teachers' desks and damaged small items.

35 years ago (1989)
Students' requests for the return of drug-sniffing dogs to Pasadena Independent School District schools received a resounding, unanimous yes as board trustees voted to change district policy allowing use of the dogs.

For the third consecutive year, Dobie High School's Academic Decathlon team qualified for the state finals held in Austin.

30 years ago (1994)
Two men who were suspected of stealing mail, altering checks and attempting to cash the checks at a local bank were arrested the same day as the theft occurred.

Houston police were investigating a drive-by shooting in the 12000 block of Kirkholm.

Clear Brook High senior Kevin Blenham designed the logo that would be used at the Texas Academic Decathlon state finals.

Dobie senior Stephanie Coon made a 1600 on the SAT test, the highest score possible.

25 years ago (1999)
Dobie High School's Academic Decathlon team won first place at the large-school regional competition. Team members received 42 individual medals, and the entire team won gold medals for the Super Quiz.

Clear Brook High School senior Regan Schneider signed a scholarship to play tennis for Lee College.

Blazer ran a red light and was hit by another car. Both suspects were ejected from the Blazer.

Two fatal accidents involving PT Cruisers were reported within two days.

15 years ago (2009)
City of Houston District E Council Member Mike Sullivan hosted a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) meeting to discuss future improvement projects for the South Belt area. Improvements for the South Belt area included a new Braacewell Library, road repair and paving, sports field lighting and additional parking at Blackhawk Park and a new Sagemont Community Center.

Former South Belt resident Susana De Jesus, 37,

was abducted at gunpoint in a Pearlland parking lot as she was leaving a strip shopping center with a co-worker when a masked gunman forced her into her own car and drove away with her. Her car was later found by Houston police, but De Jesus remained missing.

South Belt resident Guibaldo Perez, 31, died in a single-vehicle automobile accident at the Gulf Freeway and Beltway 8. Perez was southbound on the connector road from the Gulf Freeway to the westbound side of the South Sam Houston Parkway when the driver lost control, causing the pickup truck to roll over. A second passenger in the truck suffered minor injuries.

10 years ago (2014)
Several community leaders and elected officials gathered as the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce celebrated its 30th anniversary with a formal installation banquet. The guest speaker at the function was Harris County Judge Ed Emmett, who spoke on the growing challenges of keeping up with ongoing expansion in the area.

The lawsuit of Judge George Risner against the Harris County Republican Party led to the arrests of two campaign workers, with warrants being issued for two others. Ralph Basil Garcia, 57, and Iris Irgoyen, 28, were each arrested and charged with engaging in organized criminal activity and tampering with a governmental record. Annette Irgoyen (the mother of Iris Irgoyen), 53, and David Basurto, 55, were also indicted by a Harris County grand jury but were not immediately arrested.

5 years ago (2019)
A woman was arrested by the FBI for allegedly robbing half a dozen Houston-area banks – including two in the South Belt area – in just five days between Jan. 18 and Jan. 22. The suspect, Lores Clay, had originally been dubbed "the Hairy Heister" because of the colorful wigs she wore during the robberies. Targeted local banks included the Capital One Bank at 11408 Gulf Freeway near Alameda Genoa and the Bank of America located at 1127 Edgebrook near the Gulf Freeway.

1 year ago (2023)
Deputies with Harris County Precinct 2 Constable Jerry Garcia's office kept busy making arrests from crimes ranging from DWI to auto theft.

On Friday, Jan. 13, at approximately 8 p.m., deputies with the Precinct 2 Toll road Division stopped a vehicle for numerous traffic violations in the 8400 block of Beltway 8 near Pearland Parkway/Monroe. During the stop, the driver was found to have an open felony warrant out of Freestone County Sheriff's Office for driving while intoxicated. This warrant was confirmed, and suspect identified as 42-year-old John Powell, was arrested without incident.

On Saturday, Jan. 14, at approximately 6 p.m., deputies with Precinct 2 Patrol Division arrested 41-year-old Jose Lopez in the 7600 block of Alameda Genoa for an open terroristic threat warrant. Upon conducting a search of the suspect, he was found to have a bag of cocaine on his person as well. The Harris County District Attorney's Office was contacted, and accepted an additional charge of felony possession of a controlled substance.

On Saturday, Jan. 14, at approximately 8:45 p.m., deputies with the Precinct 2 Toll Road Division stopped a vehicle in the 10100 block of Beltway 8 at Blackhawk for an illegal buyers tag. During the stop, the driver was found to have an open felony warrant out of the Brazoria County Sheriff's Office for assault of a family member and a misdemeanor warrant out of the Harris County Sheriff's Office for driving while intoxicated/second offense. These warrants were confirmed, and suspect identified as 38-year-old Kenneth Blevins was arrested without incident.

Over The Back Fence by Natalie

ANGELA ENJOYS A BIRTHDAY
Bobby Griffin, former Leader staffer, sends birthday greetings to daughter-in-law Angela Griffin, who celebrates a birthday Feb. 2.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS FOR KARMA
Birthday wishes are sent Feb. 2 to Karma Wright, former Leader staffer, from her family, friends and staff at the Leader.

OWEN ENJOYS 15TH BIRTHDAY!
Owen Michael Flowers celebrates his 15th birthday on Saturday, Feb. 3. Best wishes and lots of love, hugs and kisses are sent to Owen from big sister Kennedy, little sister Evie, parents Stephen and Stacey (Hayes) Flowers; grandparents Robert and Jannie Scarberry, former longtime South Belt residents and Mike and Karen Flowers of Dickinson; uncles Tyler, Austin Scarberry, Joey, Wesley, Travis and Josh; aunts Jenny and Christine; and cousins Brayden, Baylee, Olivia, Jade, Lily, Sierra, Ryker, Connor, Jesse, Christopher and Mason. Owen's mom is a 2005 Dobie High School graduate.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LANE!
Happy ninth birthday to Lane Warren Graham on Feb. 4 from his grandparents, Don and Rosa Graham of Sageglen and Janis and Lane Howell of Friendswood. Lane is a student in Clear Creek ISD and is active in basketball and baseball. He is a huge fan of UH basketball and the Houston Astros. His parents, Esteban and Amy Graham, are graduates of Clear Brook HS and are both employed by CCISD.

OLIVIA CELEBRATES 11TH BIRTHDAY!
Olivia Moreno celebrates her 11th birthday Monday, Feb. 5. Wishing her a wonderful

birthday with lots of love, hugs and kisses are her mom Jenny (Hayes) and husband Josh Lane of Spring; big brother Brayden; big sister Baylee; proud grandparents Robert and Jannie Scarberry (former longtime South Belt residents) and Mike and Doris Hayes of Ada, Okla.; aunt Stacey (Hayes) Flowers; uncles Stephen Flowers, Joey Hayes, Austin and Tyler Scarberry; and cousins Kennedy, Owen and Evie Flowers, and Jade and Lily Scarberry. Mom Jenny is a 1997 Dobie High grad.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DANA!
Dana Lizik enjoys a birthday Feb. 6. Special birthday wishes are sent to Dana from her family, friends and former co-workers at the Leader.

SCHOOL DAZE
The following staff of the Pasadena Independent School District celebrate birthdays Feb. 1 through Feb. 7.

Frazier Elementary
Give a birthday shoutout Feb. 3 to Amalia Sifuentes.

Genoa Elementary
Light the birthday candles Feb. 2 for Anita Thibodeaux. On Feb. 6, Princess McGrew enjoys a birthday.

Hancock Elementary
Cake and ice cream time for Brenda Mendoza is on Feb. 5.

Meador Elementary
Special birthday wishes are sent to Felipe Saucedo Feb. 5. Blow out the birthday candles for Maria Gonzalez Feb. 8.

Moore Elementary
Sharing a birthday Feb. 6 are Angelica Perez and Gerri Watkins.

South Belt Elementary
Wishes for a happy birthday are sent to Colleen Wilkinson Feb. 4.

Fred Roberts Middle School
Celebrating a birthday Feb. 7 is Carey Thibodeaux.

Melillo Middle School
Birthday wishes go out to Marissa Merritt on Feb. 4. Take out the balloons and party hats for Maria Martinez on Feb. 7.

Beverly Hills Intermediate
Feb. 2 is the day for a celebration for Cynthia Wright. Send a birthday greeting Feb. 4 to Melanie Thompson.

Thompson Intermediate
Break out the birthday balloons and party favors for Mark Varian Feb. 5. The day for birthday fun for Emily Schwenk is Feb. 7.

Dobie High
Be sure to have cake and ice cream Feb. 4 for Chastity Hall and Shaqwan Scott.

FRIENDS CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS
Thursday, Feb. 1: Danice Oliver and Lee Terry; Friday, Feb. 2: Lisa Upshaw and John Scheschuk; Sunday, Feb. 4: Bobby Kramer and Deborah Carmona; Monday, Feb. 5: James Kelso; Tuesday, Feb. 6: Lisa Jackson and Chastity Napper; and Wednesday, Feb. 7: Paula Barnett and Lori McBride.

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

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SPORTS NEWS & NOTES

JFD soccer leaps ahead early on in 22-6A races

The Longhorns, defending champions of District 22-6A from 2023 and the previous eight seasons before that, secured six big points right out of the gate, beating visiting Deer Park 2-1 Jan. 23 and then blanking Pasadena 2-0 on the Eagles' home field Jan. 26.

Geo Arango earned the shutout in the nets and Jahir Arias and Gael Pineda had goals, both assisted by Kevin Dominguez, as the Longhorns downed the Eagles for a 2-0-0 start ahead of a Jan. 30 home game, after press time, against the Memorial Mavericks, who opened the campaign at 0-1-1.

Dobie was joined by South Houston as the big winners of the opening week, with the Trojans defeating Pasadena and Memorial to earn six points. Rayburn, tying a pair of games early on, was third in the standings at 0-0-2 for two points.

SJC softball drops three of four

It's almost never about how a season starts but how it ends.

That will be the belief moving forward for the San Jacinto College softball program after an opening weekend trip to McLennan College's Battle on the Bosque yielded a single win in four games.

The Ravens opened 2024 with an 8-7 win over Odessa as Angelina Morales drove in five runs in her first collegiate game. Ari Wright doubled twice

case with so many first-year starters on the field in 2024, the Longhorns have spread the scoring around during a 6-1-2 overall start prior to press time Jan. 30.

Dominguez, one of five players with a team-high two goals, also leads the way with five assists. Pineda, Arias, J.P. Rodriguez and Jefferson Aleman have also notched two goals apiece.

JFD nips DP
Pineda had a goal and an assist, and Alex Olmedo also netted a goal as the Longhorns played their first-ever on-campus district match, dealing rival Deer Park a 2-1 loss Jan. 23 as Jahir Arias also had an assist.

The Dobie boys' soccer program celebrated its 40th season late last month, and the varsity squad aims to make its own mark by winning a 10th straight league title come mid-March. So far, so good.

JFD girls also 2-0

Wolverines stay close Dobie boys' basketball third in 22-6A

Undeafated South Houston (8-0) and Pasadena Memorial (7-1) are all but assured the top two seeds in the 22-6A varsity boys' basketball, but Dobie remains in solid position to lock down the third seed.

Despite a second loss to the Mavericks to begin the second half of league play, the Longhorns first celebrated senior Dylan Jackson's surpassing of the 1,000-career point mark for his career and then went out and defeated visiting Channelview Jan. 26.

Perhaps the Longhorns at 5-3 are only a first-round win over Deer Park clear of the fourth and final postseason slot, but with Channelview, Pasadena and Rayburn virtually out of contention, things are taking shape.

In the 24-6A, a fast start for the Dickinson, Clear Springs and Clear Lake programs has all but left Clear Creek and Clear Brook battling for the fourth playoff seed.

Dickinson and Clear Springs have won seven of their first eight league games to pace the top of the standings, with the Chargers delivering Lake a second half loss to leave the Falcons at 6-2 prior to play Jan. 28 after press time.

Clear Brook is still fifth but has enhanced its postseason hopes with a 51-43 win over the Wildcats as Logan Sariga led three Wolverines in double figures, scoring 16 points. Christian Brown added 15 and Zion Norl



Senior Julio Cisneros (10) helped the Dobie varsity boys' basketball team defeat Channelview 56-44 Jan. 26, as the Longhorns improved to 5-3 in District 22-6A play. Dobie, 18-10 overall, sits third in the league standings. Photo by Gloria Wallace

JFD, CB baseball open scrimmages

The District 22-6A champion Dobie varsity baseball team, led by head coach Miguel Torres, will begin a busy preseason Feb. 3 at Alvin, with the action starting at 11 a.m.

The Longhorns will then host Angleton Feb. 5 at Dobie main. Play starts at 3 p.m.

The regular season starts Feb. 19 as the JFD varsity squad hosts Goose Creek Memorial at 3:30 p.m. at Dobie main.

Subvarsity action is at Goose Creek Memorial High School, with sophomore play at 3:30 p.m. and junior varsity action at 7 p.m.

At Clear Brook, expectations are also high for head coach Gene Flores' varsity program bounces back from a three-way first place tie a season ago.

As for 2024, the Wolverines start scrimmages Feb. 3 at Shadow Creek at 11 a.m. before hosting La Porte Feb. 6 at 4 p.m.

The Wolverines open the regular season Feb. 19 against Pasadena Memorial at Clear Brook High School. First pitch is at 6:30 p.m.

Junior varsity play is also at Clear Brook, beginning at 4 p.m. The sophomore action is at Memorial, with the game at 3:30 p.m. as the respective programs work toward Feb. 19.

Dobie powerlifters excel

Patience Thomas led the way for the Dobie varsity girls' powerlifting team as the Longhorns were second as a team Jan. 24 at Dobie.

Competing in the 132-pound weight class, Thomas won the class. Elsewhere, Victoria Arnsworth placed second in the 132-pound division, while Alexis Van Houten-Guerrero (105 weight division) and Hailey Cubos (181 weight division) both captured third place.

Also in the 132-pound class, Dobie's Keyli Van Houten-Guerrero (fourth place) and Madeline Medina (fifth place) excelled.

SJC hosts Bossier Parish Feb. 1, 3 p.m./5:30 p.m.

for San Jacinto College, and Mia Perez earned the win in relief.

The locals had little luck from there, with host McLennan taking advantage of 13 walks during a 12-4, five-inning win later in the day. Angelina Morales and Chloe Foster both drove in two runs for the Ravens.

Chipola swept San Jacinto College the final day with a 12-3, five-inning win in the opener followed by a 4-3 victory in the finale. Madison Carr had two hits and knocked in a pair in the opener, while Maggie Evans drove in two runs in the final game. Wright struck out 13 despite the loss.

Dobie netters to host Franklin/Kramer Invitational Feb. 2-3

Pasadena ISD's signature spring tennis season event, the Jerry Franklin/Bobby Kramer Invitational will play out Feb. 2-3, with players from 41 area high school programs taking part.

The Deer Park High School North site will

host 21 teams in the Jerry Franklin White division, with the Dobie main campus welcoming another 20 programs in the Bobby Kramer Burnt Orange Division as players compete in a choice of boys' and girls' singles, boys' and girls' doubles and mixed

doubles over the two days. So and Jacob Kostikoglou, Leslie Figueroa, Amalia Reyes and Tiffany Tran. The Longhorns will send boys' doubles combinations of Tre Ramirez and Rigo Alaniz, Vince Bui and Isaac Reynolds as well as Eric Perez and Jonathan Alexander.

Dobie's girls' doubles teams are set to include Vyvy Do and Abby Panza. Moreno plans to team Ryan Le with Hallie Vu, and Kayla Tran with Diego Flores.

Play in the boys' and girls' doubles brackets

SBGSA's parade is Feb. 10

The South Belt Girls Softball Association will celebrate the start of the 2024 spring season by hosting a parade Sat., Feb. 10.

The community is encouraged to line the opening day parade route, which starts at Weber Elementary at 8:30 a.m. and proceeds to the league facility at El Franco Lee Park.

Games will start in all age divisions at 11 a.m. as the season opens.

Julks revs up Coogs' crowd



Corey Julks of the Houston Astros' organization and a former player within the University of Houston baseball program, fired up the crowd at halftime of the Cougars' Big 12 men's basketball game against Kansas State Jan. 27 at Fertitta Center with a "Who's House" chant. Julks played 93 games with the Astros at the major league level and then finished the 2023 season with the Sugarland Space Cowboys. The Clear Brook High School graduate will head to spring training later this month as the Astros begin preparation for the 2024 season. A strong showing in Florida helped land Julks, who turns 28 years of age on Feb. 27, with the big league club a year ago. He no doubt hopes for a similar result this time around.

UIL to realign Feb. 1

The University Interscholastic League will reveal its 2024-2025 through 2025-2026 biannual realignment plans Feb. 1, which is almost sure to bring about new district competition for the Pasadena ISD and Clear Creek ISD athletic programs.

Pasadena High School is ticketed for Class 5A beginning next school year while Dobie, Memorial, Rayburn and South Houston will remain at the 6A classification. The Leader will post an up-to-date brief on its Facebook page Feb. 1 afternoon, with an in-print report to follow Feb. 8.

Regardless of alignment, the Dobie football program is all but assured of remaining a candidate to land in the Class 6A Division I playoff bracket when the time comes.

SBYSC continues sign up

The South Belt Youth Soccer Club continues registration for the spring 2024 season, with U-4 through U-20 age divisions available to players at southbelt.soccer.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 a uniform shirt, socks and shorts while families must provide cleats, shin guards and a soccer ball. Visit www.southbeltsoccer.org for additional details.

Cowboys invite new participants

The Sagemont Cowboys and Cowgirls of the Bay Area Football League will soon accept registration for first-time players as well as members of the drill and cheer squads as preparation for the 2024 season takes shape.

The in-person sign-up session will be held 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 Denny Wranich Jr. at 713-476-1491.

Lajaunie continues fundraising

The Darren Lajaunie Tennis Scholarship Fund has started raising monies for 2024 as efforts to support academic scholarship funds to deserving Dobie High School senior tennis players continue. The fund, named in honor of Dobie graduate and lifelong tennis enthusiast Darren Lajaunie, also annually provides youth training funds to those furthering their games at the Harry S. Taylor Tennis Center in Pasadena. As the Lajaunie fund is a 501(c)(3) entity, all donations are tax deductible. For additional details, visit dtennis.com. For information by phone, call tournament founder Camille Lajaunie at 281-480-6933.

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Legacies, fall season beginnings highlighted 2023 start

As the *Leader* continues its year in review for 2023, the following is a look back at some of August, September and October highlights.

Aug. 3

The *Leader* featured longtime Thompson Intermediate educator and coach Bill Kirchman following his retirement at the end of the 2022-2023 school year.

Arriving at Thompson for the 1981-1982 school year, Kirchman spent 42 years as a Lion, coaching the program's original sports of football, basketball and track and field, then expanding to others in later years.

Dobie High School varsity baseball standout Omar Serna was selected to play in the Baseball Factory All-America Game Aug. 13, at Globe Life Field, home of the Texas Rangers in Arlington as the game aired live on ESPN.

Serna, who is now a junior at Dobie, was a driving force of the Longhorns' District 22-6A championship run last season and has verbally committed to play at Louisiana State University which last June captured the NCAA national baseball championship in Omaha, Neb.

The National Junior College Athletic Association announced that, in part, San Jacinto College ranks second nationally among junior college baseball programs that have had their players selected in the Major League Baseball First Year Player Draft.

The Ravens had one player from the 2023 team picked and saw two former players, Sabin Ceballos of Oregon and Hunter Hollan of Arkansas chosen.

Both third-round picks, Ceballos signed a pro contract with the Atlanta Braves, while Hollan signed with the Cincinnati Reds. For 2023, San Jacinto College's Cale Lansville was chosen by the San Francisco Giants in the 14th round and subsequently agreed to a \$150,000 signing bonus. Ceballos signed for \$597,500 with the Braves while Hollan's agreement with the Reds also included a bonus of \$597,500.

Both Ceballos and Hollan helped San Jacinto College reach the JUCO World Series in 2022.

Aug. 10

Dobie High School graduates Taylor Pleasants and Chris Malveaux participated in the U.S. Women's National Team's Japan All-Star Series, with Pleasants a roster member and Malveaux an assistant coach. Japan won the series final 1-0 and thus captured two of the three games.

Pleasants is now a senior at Louisiana State University (see Page 5) while Malveaux is an assistant coach at the University of Tennessee.

Texas A&M sophomore Camryn Dickson was part of the U.S. women's gold medal-winning 4x100 relay squad at the U-20 Pan American Championships as the foursome set an American age group record of 42.88 seconds to capture gold Aug. 5.

Dickson, a Class of 2022 Clear Brook graduate, was joined by Avery Lewis, Shawnti Jackson and Keila Jackson in the event in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. Dickson also posted a time of 11.48 for a bronze medal in the 100 final.

Clear Brook current senior Jaylon Owens put together a memorable week at the Amateur Athletic Union's Junior Olympic Games at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, winning a national championship with his H-Town Hurricane teammates in the 4x400 relay and grabbing a bronze medal in the 200 with a personal record of 21.1.

Owens also set a PR in the 100 at 10.6 for fourth place. He also took part in the 4x100 with the Hurricanes as the relay group placed fifth.

The Hurricanes won the national championship in the 17-18-year-old 4x400 relay at 3 minutes, 11.01 seconds as Jacorric Allen led off with Owens next and then Mason Roseboro and Nolen Richie finishing the win. The 4x100 relay included Owens, Richie, Cortney Brown and Sincere Timpson, taking fifth at 41.38.

The National Junior College Athletic Association recognized 13 San Jacinto College softball student-athletes for their achievements on the field and in the classroom during the 2023 spring season.

Raven softball athletes earned the following awards: Rayne Althaus, utility, third team All-Academic; Ella Casas, infielder, second team All-South Conference; Kendra Cutlip, utility, first team All-Academic; Kiren Diaz, outfielder, third team All-Academic; Izzy Farmer, infielder, first team All-South Conference, second team All-Region XIV; Chloe Foster, outfielder, first team All-South Conference, second team All-Region XIV; Emma Garcia, infielder, second team All-South Conference; Christin Haygood, pitcher, first team All-South Conference, first team All-Region XIV; Kylie Hernandez, infielder, third team All-Academic; Leslie Longoria, outfielder, first team All-South Conference, second team All-Region XIV; Haleigh McDonald, catcher, second team All-South Conference; Mia McLeer, catcher, second team All-Academic; and Arianna Wright, infielder, first team All-South Conference, first team All-Region XIV.

Her collegiate alma mater, Eastern Kentucky University, announced the former Ohio Valley Conference Player of the Year as one of seven individuals, along with the 1971-1972 men's basketball team, as inductees into the 2023 EKV Hall of Fame class.

"I am incredibly hon-

ored to be considered among a talented and distinguished class of Hall of Fame inductees," said Saenz, who in January began her 21st season as head softball coach at San Jacinto College.

Largely a new cast of players, yes, but similar standout results for the Dobie varsity girls' cross-country team, which took second as a team behind host and champion La Porte at the Bulldog Relays Aug. 18.

At an hour, 22 minutes, 47 seconds, La Porte edged Dobie's total of 1:24.02. Danna Ramirez was the overall champion with her clocking of 26:20.0, and Dobie's Valerie Salazar was second overall at 26:49.8.

A time of 27:18.3 placed Dobie's Arecey Alvarado fifth, and a time of 29:53.0 had the Longhorns' Leyla Martinez 20th.

At 31:28.9, Jasmine Mooney was 24th. Julian Andrade and Manuel Garza went 1-2 overall in the varsity boys' four-mile relay to lead the Deer to the team win, with the Longhorns' Christopher Lopez pacing the locals to third place.

Lopez, sixth overall, clocked in at 21:46.1, while Francisco Dunn was ninth in a time of 22:33.1. Conner Torres of Dobie placed 17th at 23:55.8.

The Lutheran South Academy cross-country program got its season off and running with an appearance at the Frito Friday Night Lights event in Sealy as twins Matthew and Marcus Gaitan were front and center.

The Gaitan duo headed the Pioneers' scoring in the Elite division, with boys' competitors covering four kilometers, or just under two miles.

Friendswood's Zade Kayyali was the overall winner of the Elite boys' race, with Marcus Gaitan taking second place at 12 minutes, 36 seconds. Matthew Gaitan's time of 13:05 placed him sixth.

The race also marked the high school debut of Lutheran South freshman Jeremy Gaitan, who went 13:33 for 18th place, with the Pioneers' Reid Toner 23rd in a time of 13:46. Lutheran South's Jonah Weber posted a time of 15:37, while Nicholas Pena was at 15:53 to lead the Pioneers to 10th place in the varsity boys' division.

The varsity girls' event featured a 1.5-mile course as Lutheran South's Lydia Ward was 12th overall in a time of 9:45, pacing the Pioneers to fifth place overall.

Mia Fulton's clocking

of 10:08 was 21st-best. Wolverines at Falls The three-person Clear Brook varsity boys' team continued week two competition at the Clear Falls Invitational Aug. 18 at Hometown Heroes Park in League City, with Joseph Trevino covering the 4,000-meter course in a time of 13:24.77 for 13th place.

Tristan Ecord was across the finish line at 15:13.56, with teammate Ruben Herrera in at 15:55.67.

Dobie High School junior Stacie Harris again excelled on the summer track and field scene, qualifying for the Amateur Athletic Union Junior Olympic Games July 28 through Aug. 5 on the Drake University campus in Des Moines, Iowa.

Harris was part of the contingent from the Pearlman Track Xpress.

Harris was fourth in the age 15-16 girls' heptathlon with 3,915 points and was a relay member in the 4x800 relay for an eighth-place finish.

She also competed in the 400 hurdles and long jump at nationals. "I did pretty well throughout this season, so I'm happy," Harris said.

"There are events in the HEP I'm strong in that I need to get even stronger in so I can earn more points. I didn't do as well in the 400 hurdles and long jump as I'd like, but I'll get it back. I'm really excited about next year."

Aug. 31

The Dobie varsity football team carried plenty of confidence into its home opener Sept. 1 against Conroe Grand Oaks at Pasadena ISD's Veterans Stadium in Pasadena.

The Longhorns were off to a 1-0 start for the second time in two seasons under head coach Demond Stafford after throttling Clear Brook during zero week play.

Taking on neighboring Clear Brook in the 2023 regular season opener, the Longhorns put together a dominant, one-sided performance on their way to a 35-3 win.

Dobie's veteran defense was on display throughout the night as the Wolverines managed just a field goal.

Dobie junior Cameron Mathews exploded for 181 yards on 23 carries while delivering one of the biggest nights during the opening week and added a touchdown. Demarcus Hodges debuted with 101 yards rushing on 10 carries, including a pair of scoring runs. Senior quarterback Juan Huerta and Tariq Riley connected on a scoring pass.

The Dobie varsity volleyball team won 12 of its first 17 matches entering play Aug. 29 with contributions from many players. Senior Lexie Gonzalez led the way with 110 kills and 214 assists.

Junior Lauren Garza challenged the lead throughout as she posted a personal record time to get her cross-country season off and running, while senior Kyla Lobo also delivered a PR time as the pair led the Dobie varsity girls' squad at the Clear Creek Invitational Aug. 25 at Hometown Heroes Park in League City.

Garza and Lobo, key members of both the 2021 and 2022 District 22-6A championship teams from Dobie, were in top form while delivering top-eight efforts.

Sept. 7

Dobie was among the talented boys' and girls' cross-country programs at the South Houston High School-hosted Goehring Invitational Sept. 1. In the varsity girls' three-mile event, Dobie junior Lauren Garza ran with eventual overall champion Bissnatt Abdelasis of Elsik before taking second place.

Abdelasis was in at 18 minutes, 29.71 seconds for the win, while Garza also cracked 19 minutes at 18:43.52 for a PR at that distance as she was runner-up. A time of 20:10.56

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Doug Sawyer (left), one of many athletic staff members with whom Bill Kirchman worked over a Thompson career that spanned parts of five decades, bestowed Kirchman with a T-shirt commemorating his retirement.

Park in the District 22-6A opener quickly behind it, the Dobie varsity football team entered play Sept. 19 at home against Channelview with 23 overall wins and very much looking like a top-tier 22-6A program.

The 2021-2022 squad won 25 overall matches, the most in head coach Dawn Sexton's tenure at Dobie.

And with senior and four-year varsity standout Lexie Gonzalez surpassing 1,000 career digs in a sweep of Pasadena Sept. 12, the versatile talent is in line to become one of the most productive players in program history.

A Lamar University commit, Gonzalez needed fewer than 100 kills for 1,000 in her career. She surpassed 1,000 career digs Sept. 12 against the Eagles, and last season eclipsed 1,000 career assists.

By Gonzalez showing the way, Dobie came up big this season as nine seniors played a key role along with freshman Amaya Langellier.

Dobie's Lauren Garza again challenged Abiel Elsik's Bissnatt Abdelasis at the La Porte Invitational cross-country meet at Northwest Park in La Porte Sept. 15, with Bissnatt holding on for top overall medalist honors in the 5,000-meter varsity girls' division.

Bissnatt championed the event at 19 minutes, 05.37 seconds, while Garza clocked in at 19:10.22, a personal record for the sophomore.

Lutheran South Academy sophomore setter Aniston Collins eclipsed 1,000 career assists at the varsity level in the Pioneers' district win over The Woodlands Christian Academy Sept. 14 as the locals improved to 27-6 overall.

She had 574 assists as a freshman as Lutheran South won 30 overall matches en route to the state semifinals.

A 17-2 win over Pasadena Memorial has the Dobie varsity team tennis squad in control of its own destiny for the No. 2 playoff seed as the District 22-6A race played out.

A challenging nondistrict schedule combined with a relatively inexperienced lineup added up to a lengthy winless start for

the Longhorns, but wins in five of seven overall provided for plenty of momentum.

"I'm happy for the kids first and foremost but also proud of the way they have continued to work and play for a better result," Dobie head coach Manuel Moreno Jr. said.

Clear Brook High School was set to join the party as two legendary female athletes from the Wolverines' athletic program will be part of Clear Creek ISD's Athletic Hall of Honor Class of 2023 during a Sept. 23 induction ceremony at Challenger Stadium in Webster.

Terri Hunter Bolden, a 1996 graduate, made her mark as a varsity girls' basketball star and also ran track in the spring. Bolden joined Wolverine multisport standout Jennifer Gordon Womack, also a 1996 graduate and former varsity basketball teammate of Bolden, as the first-ever Hall of Honor inductees from Clear Brook.

The CCISD Athletic Hall of Honor debuted in 2016 and focused on graduates of the district's

Continued on Page 8



With 222 yards rushing and three touchdowns in all, Dobie junior back Cameron Mathews (2) lifted the Longhorns to a 27-10 victory over Grand Oaks Sept. 1 at Veterans Stadium in Pasadena. Mathews gained 403 yards and scored four touchdowns during his team's 2-0 start.

Photo by Kelvin Lopez

Cowboys celebrated HC week

At right, the Sagemont Cowboys held homecoming festivities during action against the Magnolia Park Sharks at El Franco Park Sept. 2. A highlight of the day came as league officials crowned their king, queen, prince and princess. Those winners included, left to right, princess Avery Pavlock, queen Brookelynn Hebert, king Fabian Rodriguez and prince Xavier Williams.



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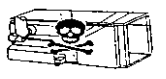
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CALENDAR

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1
7:30 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/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, FEBRUARY 3
7:30 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, FEBRUARY 3
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, FEBRUARY 4
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, FEBRUARY 5
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, FEBRUARY 6
7:30 a.m. **AA** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.
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.tricountyrvw.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 seahouston.toastmastersclubs.org or call 832-722-9061.
7 p.m. **NA** - See Friday's notice.
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7
7:30 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.

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Thompson boys' basketball teams win three Pasadena ISD tournament championships



The Thompson Intermediate seventh-grade A and B teams both won tournament championships as the Pasadena Independent School District basketball season closed out. Members of the seventh-grade title-holding teams included, left to right, (front row) Jayden Villarreal, Luke Kearbey, Ashton Wilson, Jayden Grimaldo, Alexander Hernandez, Zaire Zavala, Garren Gar-

dinar, (middle row) D'Marvia McVea, Chase Flower, Lance Goree, Jayden McNair, Malachi Starks-Glispie, Gabriel Rincon, Fernando Balanta, David Harris, (back row) coach Daniel Sawyer, Me'shai Alexander, Prince Hubbard, Jealae'bion Daniels, Jamal Tillman, Marius Winston, Kelvin Wiley, Zion Taylor and coach Doug Sawyer.

Thompson Intermediate's eighth-grade B division boys' basketball team went unbeaten during the regular season and then took down Bondy 42-30 to capture the Pasadena Independent School District postseason tournament championship. Members of the trophy-winning team include, left to right, (front

row) Nathan Arizpe, Juan Arredondo, Jordan Ramirez, Xavier Arizmendez, Anthony Chapa, Johnathan Villela, Alec Tamgnon, Quenton Taylor, Dexter Sullivan, (back row) Ethan Tran, Terry Betties, Quenton Taylor and head coach Aaron Kutra.

2023 year in review recalls more sports through October

Continued from Page 6

two original high schools — Clear Creek, which opened in 1956 and Clear Lake, which opened in 1972.

Sept. 28

Dobie junior Lauren Garza had great expectations at October's District 22-6A Cross-Country Championships after leading the varsity girls' squad for much of this season.

Garza, a big contributor to Dobie's 2021 and 2022 league championship teams, was fifth at the Dobie-hosted Longhorn Stampede Sept. 21, finishing fifth over the 5,000-meter course at 19 minutes, 40.80 seconds.

Senior Kyla Lobo, last year's 22-6A runner-up finisher, was 29th-best on her home turf, clocking in at 22:39.40.

With the district championship meet coming in mid-October, the Lutheran South Academy cross-country program set the tone for what promised to be a special final stretch run.

The Pioneers were dominant at The Woodlands Christian Academy-hosted event Sept. 23, with the varsity boys' team cruising to the team crown as brothers Marcus, Matthew and Jeremy Gaitan went 1-2-3, with sophomore teammate Reid Toner sixth.

LSA's five qualifiers delivered a low of 29 points based on placements, easily ahead of second-place Providence Classical. Marcus Gaitan, on quite a run during his senior season, was the top overall medalist in the 5,000-meter event as he edged his twin, Matthew Gaitan, who was second.

Marcus Gaitan won at 16 minutes, 16.97 seconds, and Matthew Gaitan's runner-up time was 16:22.95. Freshman Jeremy Gaitan, certainly part of the next wave of runners for the Pioneers, was third for his best placing of the season at 17:04.86.

In what will go down as the greatest come-from-behind win in program history, the Dobie varsity football team thrust itself smack dab in the middle of the 22-6A league title chase following a stunning 38-35 victory over host Deer Park Sept. 2 at Abshier Stadium in Deer Park.

Outscored 130-14 over the previous 10 quarters of football and trailing the Deer 28-7 at halftime, the Longhorns put together one of their most important second halves ever, getting a one-yard touchdown plunge and subsequent 2-point conversion run from senior quarterback Juan Huerta with 36 seconds remaining to cap the victory.

Getting a pair of long touchdown passes, one from Huerta and another from receiver Ethan Nguyen to Tariq Riley in the second half, the Longhorns still found themselves trailing 35-30 in the closing minutes before Huerta found the end one in the final minute.

Senior Ariana Garza registered her 500th career kill as the Dobie varsity volleyball team won its fourth straight league match, tightening its grip on the No. 2 spot in the 22-6A standings along the way with a sweep at Sam Rayburn Sept. 22.

Garza, a four-year varsity performer, was the star of the night as the Longhorns also tied their single-season best of 25 overall wins during head coach Dawn Sexton's tenure.

October 5
Dobie junior Lauren Garza had a personal record time at the Nike South Invitational in The Woodlands as she finished 41st overall in the elite girls' division 5K at 19 minutes, 10.60 seconds.

Senior Kyla Lobo was at 21:45.10 for 49th place in the girls' Red division 5K, while teammates Aracely Alvarado (23:23.40 for 36th place), Mariah Medina (24:26.90 for 54th place), Jasmine Mooney (23:30.40 for 75th place and Madison Puente (25:48.30 for 77th place) competed in the girls' 5K White division.

The Dobie boys, including Chris Lopez (fifth at 17:04.40), Francisco Dunn (27th at 18:09.80), Jose Munoz (37th at 18:21.20), Damian Rosas (43rd at 18:34.40) and Johan Villavicencio (49th at 18:41.40) competed in the boys' 5K White division.

The Dobie varsity team tennis squad finished with five straight wins in District 22-6A play and hosted Atascocita as the bidistrict playoff round started Oct. 10.

On the strength of a five-match winning streak to close out District 22-6A play, the Longhorns earned the right to host Atascocita in the bidistrict playoff round.

Steven Craft's two-yard quarterback keeper in overtime was the difference as the Clear Brook Wolverines stunned Braoswood 14-7 in a key District 22-6A varsity football game Sept. 28 in Webster.

The win evened the Wolverines' league mark at 1-1. Craft, the third player to line up at quarterback for Clear Brook this season, also had a 60-yard touchdown run for his team's other score.

Kelly Saenz, who has won more than 700 career games as San Jacinto College softball head coach, was inducted into

the Eastern Kentucky University Hall of Fame Sept. 23, recognizing her stellar career as a player.

Then Kelly Swanson, she hit .321 over a four-year career and was the 1998 Ohio Valley Conference Player of the Year. "Shocked, honored, surprised," Saenz told the *Leader* of her initial reaction when she received the call notifying her of the induction. "It's both humbling and gratifying to be joining such a prestigious group and to be considered among the greats."

Oct. 12
Lutheran South Academy senior Matthew Gaitan was second in a time of 15 minutes, 57 seconds and his brother, Marcus Gaitan was third (16:00) in the varsity boys' 5,000-meter run to lead the Pioneers at the St. John's Maverick Ramble in Tomball.

The Battle of the Beltway trophy returned to the Dobie field house following the Longhorns' 42-27 win over Pasadena Memorial as the locals delivered a sixth consecutive win in the series Oct. 6 at Veterans Stadium in Pasadena.

Dobie then 5-2 overall and 3-0 in District 22-6A play heading into its home matchup with Channelview.

Longtime Dobie varsity football staff member Charles Washington was lauded by "Dave Campbell's Texas Football" magazine as its week five Offensive Coordinator of the Week after engineering the Longhorns' thrilling final-minute win at Deer Park to open District 22-6A play.

A Dobie graduate, Washington starred at quarterback for the Longhorns during his high school career and is the longest-tenured member of the Dobie staff.

Oct. 19
An epic overtime win over Channelview had the Dobie varsity football team a win away from District 22-6A championship as the Longhorns pursued their first crown since 2020.

Dobie, leading the 22-6A field at 4-0, improved to 6-2 overall with the 41-40 overtime win over Channelview Oct. 14 at Veterans Stadium. The game was originally set for Oct. 12 but was postponed due to a power outage in the Pasadena area that rendered Veterans Stadium dark.

Once the game played out, there was nonstop action throughout. Channelview struck first, getting a 59-yard touchdown run from Tyrone Scyrus on the game's first offensive play as the Falcons led 7-0 just 19 seconds into the game.

The Longhorns bounced back with a big play of their own on their

opening series as quarterback Juan Huerta lofted a deep ball down the seam for 61 yards and a touchdown to Ethan Nguyen.

Dobie was stopped short on the two-point conversion run try but got within 7-6.

The Falcons took advantage of a short field later in the quarter, going 46 yards on six plays, with quarterback Jason Wheelock plunging two yards for a touchdown.

With 4:31 left in the opening quarter, Channelview led 14-6. But Dobie, which produced touchdowns on three straight drives to open the game, would answer.

Sophomore Demarcus Hodges forced his way into the end zone on a 4-yard run with 1:59 left in the first.

The conversion run from Cameron Mathews tied the game at 14-14. Mathews, the leading rusher in the District 22-6A ranks, put together a performance for the record books, rushing for 265 yards on 28 totes and three touchdowns.

Champions never give in, so it is easy to understand how it was Lauren Garza and Kyla Lobo leading the way as the Dobie varsity girls' team pursued a fourth straight district cross-country team crown Oct. 12 at the Jimmy Burke Center in Deer Park.

Garza and Lobo, with a combined five district championship team contributions between them entering this season, dominated the 5,000-meter field this time around.

Garza won top overall medalist honors in a time of 19 minutes, 38.01 seconds, a win of more than a minute, 20 seconds over the rest of the field for the junior.

And while Lobo trailed Garza by a considerable margin, the senior was the 22-6A runner-up for the second straight year, taking second overall with her time of 20:58.08.

Senior Lexie Gonzalez had 12 kills and 16 assists as the Dobie varsity volleyball team assured itself of at least the No. 2 post-season seed out of District 22-6A with a 25-15, 25-22, 25-20 sweep of Memorial Oct. 10 at Dobie.

The team's senior class, nine in all, enjoyed Senior Night pre-match festivities before finishing off a series sweep of third-place Memorial.

The Longhorns went on to score a 25-12, 25-18, 25-15 win at Channelview Oct. 13, getting to 29 wins overall, a program record, and 8-2 in league play.

Clear Brook senior Joseph Trevino was on his way back to the Region III Cross-Country Championships for the third consecutive season after qual-

ifying as the fourth-place finisher out of District 24-6A Oct. 12 as the post-season began at Hometown Heroes Park in League City. Clear Lake was the boys' team champion by a wide margin.

Sam Golla of Clear Lake was the 24-6A top overall boys' medalist as he won by more than 13 seconds in a time of 15 minutes, 02.8 seconds on the 5,000-meter course.

Chris Creedon of Clear Creek was in at 15:16.0 for second place, with Clear Lake's Anthony Roberts third in a time of 16:00.5. Trevino clocked in at 16:03.4 for fourth place.

An extremely strong boys' lineup proved to be the difference as Atascocita, the No. 3 seed out of District 21-6A, eliminated Dobie by a 10-3 count in the bidistrict team tennis playoffs Oct. 10 at Dobie.

An ineligibility issue forced the Longhorns to shuffle their lineup essentially 24 hours before the playoffs began, but Dobie head coach Manuel Moreno made no excuses in the end. His team had chances to change the trajectory of the match, but the Eagles were able to do what was needed to come away with the necessary 10 wins.

"We knew going into the match that Atascocita

was strong on the boys' side, and losing such a key player for us hurt," Moreno said. "Tre Ramirez and Vince Bui stepped up and played well for us, and really, the kids gave it their all. We gave ourselves a chance to win entering the singles, and that's what we always want to try to do."

"Whether it's 10-3, 10-9 or 19-0, a loss is a loss, but I'm very proud of our kids not only for their effort in the playoffs but the entire season."

Oct. 26

Dobie junior Lauren Garza is now one of the school's all-time greats as she qualified to compete in the Class 6A State

Cross-Country Championships in Round Rock.

Covering the 5,000-meter course in a personal record of 19 minutes, 01.8 seconds, Garza was 19th overall among the Region III finishers at Kate Barr Ross Park Oct. 24.

Aside from runners who qualified for state with their teams, the next 10 individual runners advanced. Garza, the 22-6A champion earlier this month, was No. 10.

Guaranteed a share of the District 22-6A varsity football championship and having locked up the top seed in the Division I playoff bracket, the Dobie Longhorns looked to finish their impressive journey Oct. 27 against South Houston.

A dominant 64-0 win over the Sam Rayburn Texans, complete with a 28-0 lead over the game's first eight minutes, locked away the top seed out of the 6A Division I playoff bracket for Dobie.

Arianna Borrego, Aly Frias, Haley DeHoyos, Ariana Garza, Lexie Gonzalez, Alana Goree, Student Trainer Alyssa Hernandez, Student trainer Jordan LeBlanc, Naima LeBlanc, Matison Mitchell, Belle Perridon, Haley Precella, Student trainer Valeria Quiroz. Each of those seniors along with their families deservedly took a bow on Senior Night Oct. 17 in the Dobie varsity volleyball team's home finale against Sam Rayburn.

The special night included the team's 30th regular season win, which has since been extended to a program all-time best of 31 wins following an Oct. 20 victory at South Houston.

At 31-7 overall and 10-2 for second place in District 22-6A, the Longhorns and head coach Dawn Sexton, who during league play secured career win No. 450 and counting, looked forward to the bidistrict playoffs.

The Lutheran South varsity boys' cross-country team, led by top overall medalist Marcus Gaitan, won the 5,000-meter Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools 5A District 5 champion-

ship and will head to state Oct. 30 in Waco with high hopes.

The Pioneer varsity girls' team, pushed by senior Lydia Ward's fifth-place finish at the 3,200-meter distance, placed second as a team and will advance to state as well.

Marcus Gaitan was the first to the finish line at The Woodlands course, finishing at 15 minutes, 59.36 seconds for the gold medal with Christopher Pietrak of St. John's XXIII second at 16:05.13.

The Gaitan brothers were out in front for the Pioneers as they delivered a low of 30 among their five official qualifiers. Pietrak's St. John's XXIII team was runner-up at 46.

Matthew Gaitan, the twin of Marcus Gaitan, was third for a bronze medal as he paced the next wave in at 16:49.18.

Jeremy Gaitan, a freshman for the Pioneers, placed fifth overall as he clocked in with a time of 17:08.83, and sophomore Reid Toner was seventh-best for the Pioneers at 17:20.70.

Clear Brook senior Joseph Trevino was 22nd overall at 16 minutes, 05.68 seconds at the Region III Cross-Country Championships Oct. 24 in Huntsville. A three-time regional qualifier, Trevino completed his stellar career by missing a state berth by three spots.

Had Manuel Moreno Jr. stuck to his original plan, he wouldn't have had nearly as many memories to scan through Oct. 7 as 25 seasons worth of former players and supporters turned out at Dobie High School to celebrate the head tennis coach's silver anniversary.

Moreno may have only meant to spend one season along the baselines at Dobie but has instead turned his 25 years into the most rewarding segment of his career.

"It's rewarding. It's humbling, and it's just so nice to see all of the former players, talk about their lives and get a chance to just see their faces after the years have passed," Moreno said.

Pleasants ready to lead LSU



Four Louisiana State University softball student-athletes were listed on the annual D100 Player Rankings by D1Softball ahead of the 2024 season. Infielder Taylor Pleasants, a Dobie graduate, is ranked No. 22 as she begins her senior season. Despite battling a core injury throughout the 2023 season, Pleasants earned a spot on the NFCA South All-Region First Team for the second consecutive year, became a three-time All-SEC selection and was on the SEC All-Defensive Team. In 55 starts, Pleasants batted .346 and led the team with a .562 slugging percentage, thanks to 56 hits and eight home runs. She also boasted a team-high 53 runs driven in. Defensively, Pleasants paced the team with 118 assists and was part of turning 15 double plays. Pleasants will enter the 2024 season ranked No. 5 in the LSU record book with 37 career home runs and a .597 career slugging percentage. No. 6 with 171 career RBIs, and No. 7 with 389 career assists. The Tigers open the season Feb. 8 against Nichols and then host the LSU Invitational Feb. 9-11 with Pittsburgh and Memphis attending.

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