

South Belt-Ellington Leader

Serving South Belt since 1976

The Voice of Community-Minded People

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Email: mynews@southbeltleader.com

www.southbeltleader.com

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Knights to host blood drive

Knights of Columbus Council 9201 will host a blood drive Sunday, May 19, at St. Luke the Evangelist, located at 11011 Hall Road, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Appointments are preferred but not necessary. Donors must bring identification. For additional information or to schedule an appointment, visit www.commitforlife.org/donor/schedules/geo.

Market at The Gardens

The first Sunday Pop-Up Market at The Gardens showcasing local vendors will be held May 5 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Many vendors will be featuring Mother's Day and teacher appreciation gifts among other items. Pop-Up Markets are held on the first Sunday of every month and are open to the public. New vendors are being accepted. For additional information, call Kay Barbour at 713-419-3545.

Sagemont meets May 7

The Sagemont Civic Club will hold a meeting at 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 7, at The Gardens, 12001 Beamer. All Sagemont residents are encouraged to attend. For additional information, call Sagemont Civic Club President Kay Barbour at 713-419-3545.

Local COVID cases reported

The number of reported COVID-19 cases in the South Belt community remains roughly on par with the previous week, according to Harris County health officials. As of Thursday, April 30, there were 279 active cases in 77089, no increase from the previous week. To date, 133 from the ZIP code have died from the disease. (Harris County reported 134 deaths the previous week.) In ZIP code 77075, there were six active cases, no increase from the previous week. To date, there have been 83 deaths in the ZIP code, up two from the previous week. In 77034, there were six active cases, down two from the previous week. To date, 93 residents from ZIP code 77034 have died from the disease, no increase from the previous week. Statistics are updated weekly and include numbers from within the Houston city limits and throughout Harris County. To view an interactive map, visit covid-harriscounty.hub.arcgis.com/pages/cumulative-data.

Gulf Freeway closures set

At least one northbound and one southbound main lanes and frontage road lane on the Gulf Freeway will be closed from SH 96/Calder/Brittany Bay to FM-519/Main Street daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and nightly from 8:30 p.m. to 5 a.m. 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 also be closed until further notice. The closures are associated with an ongoing construction project to widen the freeway from three to five lanes in each direction and the frontage roads from two to three lanes in each direction.

Beltway 8 closures planned

At least one eastbound frontage road lane on Beltway 8 will be closed at Hughes Road/Sabo continuously through 3 p.m. Saturday, May 25. 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.

Ellington eRecycling set

The City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department's monthly electronic recycling event will take place Saturday, May 11, at the Neighborhood Recycling Center at Ellington Airport from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Recycling electronics keeps potentially harmful materials, such as mercury, cadmium, lead and cathode ray tubes out of the waste stream and the environment. Items accepted are PCs, servers, keyboards, mice, laptops, game consoles, monitors, small kitchen appliances, memory chips, hubs and routers, printers, copiers, scanners, fax machines, projectors, rechargeable batteries, cable boxes, car batteries, telephones, cellphones, PDAs, tape drives, hard drives, cords, cables and cameras. The collection events take place the second Saturday of each month. For additional information, visit www.houstonsolidwaste.org or call 311.

Coffee with the Constable

Harris County Precinct 2 Constable Jerry Garcia will be at Donut Haven, 10802 Hughes at Beamer, from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. each Thursday for Coffee with the Constable. The next event will be Thursday, May 2. For additional information, call Kay Barbour, 713-419-3545.

FAFSA leaves many potential students in limbo

Incompetency of feds leaves thousands of students with uncertain futures

A bungled rollout of the 2024-2025 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) program has left the futures of several potential college students in limbo, approximately 1,400 students at San Jacinto College are affected in just one of the multiple categories containing problems. Sen John Cornyn told the *Leader* he will address this issue Wednesday after the *Leader* went to press. Despite originally being designed to simplify the traditionally complicated FAFSA application process, a revamped version of the FAFSA application process from the Biden administration was marred with technical problems and glitches since being launched late last year. At the end of March, approximately 40 percent fewer first-time filers had completed the FAFSA compared with the same time last year, according to the National College Attainment Network. The group estimates that between 500,000 and 700,000 fewer high school seniors will complete the FAFSA this year compared to the Class of 2023. This drop in FAFSA filings is expected to cause a sharp decline in college enrollment in

fall 2024. This decline is expected to primarily affect low-income and minority students – those who traditionally rely on college student loan programs the most. According to San Jacinto College Chancellor Dr. Brenda Hellyer, the largest issue locally involves students who have a Social Security number but have at least one parent who is undocumented. These students must call a federal helpline for assistance but are often cut off after being placed on hold for several hours. The affected students also have the option of filling out a paper FAFSA but there is no indication of when the U.S. Department of Education will begin processing these, according to Hellyer. The chancellor said many students who filed early – in the January/February timeframe – are now being rejected for signature corrections. “We have 1,400 students in this situation, and we are actively assisting them,” said Hellyer. “About 20 percent of all of the FAFSA applications that have been processed have been processed wrong, leading to wrong award amounts. We do not know which ones are wrong, so we have not yet begun

applying awards to student accounts.” San Jacinto College has established a step-by-step guide to help students work their way through the FAFSA application process. For assistance, visit www.sanjac.edu/admissions/paying-for-college/financial-aid. Assistance is also available in person at the college, Hellyer said. A Congressional hearing on the FAFSA debacle held earlier this month drew widespread criticism from both parties in a rare example of recent bipartisan agreement. The Department of Education announced last week that Richard Cordray – the chief officer tasked with overseeing the FAFSA program – was

to step down from his position June 1 after serving roughly three years on the job. He will remain with the department through its transitional period, officials said. Similarly, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) President and CEO Justin Draeger announced last week that he will also be stepping down after 14 years of leadership, effective June 21. While May 1 has traditionally served as an admission deadline for schools nationwide, many colleges are now extending that date to accommodate students negatively impacted by the failed FAFSA rollout.

Ogg wants case tried, gives to Paxton

In a surprising move Thursday, April 25, Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg announced she will be handing over the controversial bribery case against three of County Judge Lina Hidalgo's staffers to Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's Office. “People hate public corruption and it's the district attorney's duty to never sweep it under the rug,” Ogg said at a recent press conference. In spring 2022, three Hidalgo aides – Alex Triantaphyllis, Wallis Nader and Aaron Dunn – were indicted for allegedly steering an \$11 million COVID-19 outreach contract toward Elevate Strategies, despite the one-person company having far less experience in such matters and scoring much lower than competitors on internal evaluations. This past March, Ogg suffered a major loss in her party's primary to challenger Sean Teare, who had the endorsements of Hidalgo, as well as county commissioners Rodney Ellis and Adrian Garcia. Despite her primary loss, Ogg will remain in power until the end of the year.

hired the Republican Party's general counsel to lead the investigation. Now, they are being handed over to the most political prosecutor in the state, who will work in tandem with a politically motivated DA. Throughout my campaign, I emphasized the need to remove politics from the District Attorney's Office. If I were in office, I would have advocated for an independent review by a DA's office with no connections to the parties involved to ensure transparency and fairness. It's crucial that cases of public importance are handled with the utmost integrity and without any hint of political influence. The people of Harris County deserve a criminal justice system that prioritizes truth and justice above political interests. I remain committed to upholding these principles and working towards a system that is free from political malfeasance.”

During Thursday's press conference, Ogg chastised her critics who contend the indictments are political, despite the case being independently investigated by the Texas Rangers. She further railed against her critics, saying there's a clear conflict of interest, as Teare works for a law firm representing at least one of the indicted staffers. “One candidate, my own party's nominee for district attorney, Sean Teare, publicly stated that the cases are nothing more than political prosecution, despite the fact that he's never had access to the evidence in these cases and despite his own conflict of interest,” Ogg said. “Teare is employed by the Cogdell law firm, defending one of the three charged defendants, Alex Triantaphyllis, and Teare sought and received the enthusiastic endorsement of the Harris County judge, whose office is at the center of the controversy and ongoing criminal investigation.”

Ellis released a similar statement. “Our outgoing district attorney's decision to hand over the Elevate Strategies case to Ken Paxton is a new low for Kim Ogg. The future of three young public servants, who were already derailed by this political witch hunt, has now been handed over to a hyper-partisan office with an ax to grind. Giving Ken Paxton the opportunity to undermine Harris County, yet again, is just another feather in Ken Paxton's cap and red meat for his MAGA (Make America Great Again) base. The voters overwhelmingly rejected this sort of behavior by Kim Ogg in March by historic margins, and this is the culmination of a career that will be remembered more for vindictive political investigations than advancing public safety. Ultimately, I'm just saddened for these young people who have become collateral damage in this political gamesmanship. My heart goes out to them.”

Teare said during the campaign, however, he would recuse himself from the Elevated Strategies case if elected. He reiterated that point this past week. “By a three-to-one margin, voters rejected the politicized way that our prosecutor's office has been run,” Teare said in a recent statement. “Unfortunately, Kim Ogg ignored the voters and called a press conference to attack her opponents and make clear that fighting political feuds is more important than finishing her term ensuring justice for victims across our county. I have been clear from day one: we must restore integrity to the DA's Office. Even though I've never had any involvement in this case, I have promised to immediately recuse myself and refer this case to another District Attorney to ensure it receives fair and impartial treatment. These cases were tainted from the beginning, the second they

Hidalgo shared in Ellis' disappointment, also releasing a statement following Ogg's recent press conference, condemning her decision to hand over the case to the Republican-led state attorney general's office. “I'm not surprised at all, just even more disappointed,” said Hidalgo. “DA Ogg showed us months ago the political nature of her work when she secretly hired the general counsel of the Texas Republican Party as the lead prosecutor – all during my re-election. True to form, the DA still has only baseless claims and now she wants to keep the story alive by handing her case to Ken Paxton, who routinely targets me and Harris County. In her parting days, DA Ogg has sealed her legacy by sending this vendetta to somebody who is constantly engaged in political attacks against me and Harris County. I've said from the beginning that this is political in nature and what she did just underscores the point.”

Finally flood relief arrives



The replacement of the home at 10623 Sagetree came to the attention of the Sagemont Park Community Improvement Association September 2022. SPCIA received an email from Stonewater Inc. stating, “We are a home builder working with Texas GLO for the Hurricane Harvey rebuild project.” The homeowner qualified for the Stonewater reconstruction program due to flooding from Harvey. SPCIA finally reached an agreement with Texas GLO in December 2023 despite a year of negotiations, which included several emails and phone calls between SPCIA and Stonewater. In early December 2023 SPCIA was contacted by Texas GLO. It was reportedly the first beneficial discussion. By the end of December 2023 SPCIA and Texas GLO reached a resolution and SPCIA approved the plans for construction. SPCIA's only request was to have the new home built per the SPCIA deed restrictions and be in harmony with the other homes in the area.

Autopsy released for body found at I-45/Fuqua

Charges have been filed against a suspect arrested in the death of a woman found around 3:30 p.m. Monday, April 22, in the 11000 block of Fuqua near the Gulf Freeway. The suspect, Derek Fischer, 31, was charged with murder and tampering with evidence in the 209th State District Court. Fischer is accused of killing Jennifer Ramirez, 45. Ramirez's body was found in a shallow grave near a detention pond behind an apartment complex. Ramirez's body had been decomposed so badly, investigators were initially unable to even identify her gender.



Derek Fischer

According to Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences, Ramirez's cause of death was determined to be a gunshot wound. Family members said Ramirez had been struggling with addiction for decades and had become estranged from her family prior to the killing. According to Houston Police Department officials, investigators were able to identify Fischer as the suspect in this case through witness statements and evidence obtained at the scene. The Harris County District Attorney's Office was contacted and charges for murder and tampering with evidence were filed on Fischer. On Saturday, April 27, homicide detectives received information on Fischer's whereabouts, and he was subsequently taken into custody by HPD Northbelt Patrol Division officers with assistance from deputies with the Harris County Sheriff's Office.

Naked male tased by HPD dies

A Sagemont man reportedly walking naked down Sageleaf Lane died early Sunday, April 28, after being tased by police. According to Houston Police Department officials, multiple area residents began calling 911 around 7 a.m. to report that a suspect – later identified as Egin Tavera – was walking down Sageleaf unclothed, and at times, screaming. Responding police were able to locate Tavera around 7:30 a.m. in the backyard of a residence in the 11000 block of Sageleaf. Police said Tavera's nude body was now covered in blood from breaking glass to gain entry into a sunroom located in the backyard of the residence. Although Tavera lived on Sageleaf, this was not his home, according to police. Backup units and paramedics were called to the scene, as police described Tavera as “agitated” and said he appeared to be on narcotics. As officers attempted to arrest Tavera for exposure, he resisted and fought back against officers, prompting at least one of them to tase the suspect. After being handcuffed and in police custody for approximately one minute, Tavera's heart stopped beating. Paramedics on site from the Houston Fire Department unsuccessfully attempted to revive Tave-

ra for roughly 15 to 20 minutes before transporting him to Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital, where he was officially pronounced dead. Police said Tavera had a long history of drug use and that narcotics may have played a role in his death. “It appears there may have been long-term narcotics use involved,” said HPD Assistant Chief Wyatt Martin. No officers were injured during the struggle, police said. At press time, no officers had been placed on leave due to the incident. HPD officials said all officers were wearing body cameras. As is customary in cases in which a suspect dies in police custody, an HPD Internal Affairs investigation will be conducted. The investigation was ongoing at press time, and the cause of death had yet to be determined. “The cause of death won't be determined until the medical examiner finishes (the autopsy),” said HPD's Martin. “We use Tasers as a less-lethal weapon quite often. Most of the time, people have no adverse effects. This gentleman, we do know for certain was on a (unspecified) narcotic, and that very likely contributed (to his death). The medical examiner will determine that.”

Final voting set for Saturday, May 4

While multiple local elections are all scheduled to take place Saturday, May 4, a lack of coordination between entities will force some residents to cast their ballots at three different locations. Area voters will decide who will fill board positions for Clear Creek ISD, local MUDs and a newly created panel to oversee the Harris County Appraisal District. In the Clear Creek ISD contest, incumbent Jeff Larson is being challenged by Albert Wittliff to represent District 4, which includes most of the South Belt community that is zoned to the school district. Nearby Clear Creek ISD polling locations include Clear Brook High School, 4607 FM 2351 near Beamer in Friendswood. Voting hours are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. For additional information on the Clear Creek

ISD board election, or to see a complete list of polling places, visit www.ccisd.net/elections. In the Clear Brook City MUD election, Secretary Chris Clark is being challenged by Yen Rabe. Clear Brook City MUD board members David Flickinger and Chuck Tyka are both running unopposed. Voting in the Clear Brook City MUD election will be at 11911 Blackhawk. For additional information on the Clear Brook City MUD board election, visit www.cbcmud.com/resources/transparency/#elections. In the Sagemeadow MUD election, candidates Chuck Miracle and Rene Benavides filed to challenge incumbents David Montgomery and Glenn Williams. The two candidates who receive the most votes will assume the board positions, as the challengers do not run for a specific seat. Voting will take place at the Sagemeadow MUD. **Continued on Page 2**

South Houston Hall of Honor announced for fall induction

Two former South Houston High School science teachers, as well as three South Houston alumni with career ties to space exploration, are among five individuals selected for induction in the school's Hall of Honor this fall. The third alumnus to be honored, Michael Seale, Class of 1963, made his mark in the military as a master of materiel logistics – the science of moving things in inner space. The most recent graduate in the bunch – Carla Thomas, Class of 1980 – ranks as one of the nation's leading aviation photographers and as a valued member of NASA's space support team based in California. Brand Norman Griffin, Class of 1965, retired

last year after a prominent career as a space futurist and space systems architect for various NASA contractors. The two science teachers chosen represent opposite ends of South Houston's timeline. Amon Alford, who joined the faculty in 1959 – shortly after the school opened – made national headlines in 1963 with a nutrition research study involving students in his classes. Patrick Fox, joined the faculty ranks in 2000 and taught a wide range of popular courses until 2022, when he passed away suddenly. Fox was the husband of Dr. Mary Campbell-Fox, a well-known family physician in the South Belt area. **Continued on Page 4**

In My Opinion

Ganje on CBC MUD election

Clear Brook City MUD is holding an election for Position 3 on the Board of Directors. There has been NO election required for the past 8 years as there have been no challengers. When you have a well-functioning board that has made every effort to keep your community SAFE and your taxes low, you usually do not have an election challenger. After all, what would that challenger have to offer - especially since they have attended only 3 board meetings in 20+ years of living in the District.

CBC MUD has NOT hidden the announcements for an election. It is required by law to post each election publicly for all area residents. Each election year, a notice is posted on the CBC MUD website, the Administration front door and drive thru window. The information is also printed on the FRONT page of the South Belt Ellington Leader. Quite simply again, When you have a well-functioning board, there will be NO challengers. To imply that CBC MUD has "hidden" or not "told" anyone about the election each year is against the law!

Promising area residents amenities that cannot be provided by CBC MUD is also a huge problem. If a community has NO HOA, there are no street lights or sidewalks due to the residents NOT paying for them. These are funded from HOA monies paid by residents. Chris Clark and I worked for many years with residents of Wood Meadow to start an HOA. Sadly, residents did not want to pay a fee.

Muecke on solving squatter problems

Yes, our community has squatters and homeless as does the city and the nation. Hard to really resolve, no real answers. We had a large encampment behind Popeyes at Edgebrook at I-45 S. We contacted Precinct 2 Constable Jerry Garcia, he immediately got involved, moved the homeless to a shelter and then had the city come

and clean up the big mess. Thank you.

Now we have a lot of news about the squatters taking over a home on Hinds street and creating one big mess. Hinds is next to Theta street a heavy traveled road. Just think how many passed and just said look at this mess but did nothing or said nothing. Well a CONCERNED neighbor, Mr. Morales had enough. Came to the Freeway Manor civic club meeting in "January" and begged/pleaded for help. Nothing happened. Then at the "March" HPD Clear Lake PIP meeting we were fortunate that Ass't Chief Larry Satterwhite visited with us. So did Mr. Morales and he had the right person to plead with and get results. This started the process. The owner had passed, and no family took over, so the house was vacant. Lucky the former VP of the civic club who was illegally removed from the civic club, found Jennifer, a family member and furnished this information to Constable Garcia. He received permission to place a No Trespass sign and haul the squatters off. Then got the city to come and clean up the large amount of trash stacked there.

Ray Soto, a contractor, then with neighbors money and help, board up. Boarding up is fine but as in the past, the boards can be removed so the Constable does go by and check. Recently a friend of mine moved, emptied the house and cut off all utilities. So the house looked vacant and squatters broke in but decided not to try and live there. It cost the owner money to repair.

This one is being resolved, Why? Because Mr. Morales did what many others should do. Our Police tell us, See something, Say something. Contact 311, very easy. Also, if needed, contact our District E Councilman Fred Flickinger and ask for his help. Please attend the monthly PIP meetings where you can directly ask HPD any questions or for help like this issue. Lets make this a better and safer community in which to live safely. NOW THANK YOU Mr. Morales being a CONCERNED CITIZEN and speaking up.

Jim Muecke

Publisher's Opinion

Last day for voting is Saturday

In my opinion this election is very difficult for voters. To vote for all three elections most are involved in, a voter must go to three different locations. What a poor use of election officials and voters' time.

We have addressed the election in previous editorials. I must do a last-minute in comment on the CBCMUD election. I attend many of their meetings and my husband is on the board. They do a great job.

Yen Rabe is spreading false rumors and advising the community incorrectly. She is leading people to believe too many falsehoods to name here. She would be bad for the board.

Please vote for Chris Clark. For a voice in HCAD, vote for Erica McCrutchin. If you are really interested and for more information, call me.

Marie Flickinger, Publisher

EPA awards Texas \$249.7 million

The Environmental Protection Agency has announced that the Texas Solar for All Coalition (the "Coalition"), led by Harris County, was awarded a \$249.7 million grant from the EPA's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. The grant will provide several important benefits to Harris County, including enabling low-income and disadvantaged communities to deploy and benefit from distributed residential solar accelerating investments in clean energy, lowering energy costs for families, creating good-quality jobs in communities that have been left behind, advancing environmental justice, and tackling climate change.

"Harris County was the lead applicant on this grant,

showing that we are a leader in working to reduce pollution while ensuring that every single person living here can thrive," said Harris County Attorney Christian D. Meneff, chair of the EPA's Local Government Advisory Council Environmental Justice Subcommittee. "Funding from this program will not only deliver cleaner air for our communities but will lower utility bills for some of our residents who have been underserved for far too long. I'm proud of my office's role in helping the county navigate the grant process, and I'm grateful for the Biden-Harris administration's dedication to advancing environmental justice across the country and am proud of Harris County for being a leader in this space."

The grant was made possible by the Inflation Reduction Act, which represents the single largest investment in climate and clean energy in history. Coalition members include large, midsize and small cities and counties, spanning urban, suburban and rural areas of the state.

The programs supported by this grant will expand access to rooftop and community solar and help lower customer bills by more than 20 percent in targeted residential communities. The expected annual household savings will be an average of \$1,740. More than half the Texans living in disadvantaged communities live within the Coalition's footprint and even more will be served by our statewide efforts.

Elected officials share their words

Paul on serving his district

This upcoming election cycle will be a pivotal moment in Texas's history. It's a choice between continuing the growth and prosperity of the last decade or risking becoming a debt-ridden, stagnant state like many Democrat-led ones. Texas has seen significant growth, with citizens moving here from other states, notably from places like California, which are experiencing population decline.

As a lifelong Houstonian and a graduate of San Jacinto College and the University of Houston, as well as a small business owner, I am committed to preserving our successful policies of low taxes, fewer regulations, and policies that promote liberty and entrepreneurship. During my time in the legislature, we've passed Constitutional amendments and legislation prohibiting state income and wealth taxes, along with significant property tax cuts, all while imposing strict spending controls to safeguard taxpayers' hard-earned money.

As the lone Professional Engineer in the legislature, I've championed measures to enhance our highways, secure our water supply, and protect against natural disasters like hurricanes. Legislation, like the bill I authored to create the Gulf Coast Protection District, will help protect our community for generations to come.

We've also implemented sound economic development strategies, fostering job growth, and providing opportunities for Texas families. Efforts to bolster industries

such as space, oil and gas, and chemicals have been complemented by investments in infrastructure, and public and Higher Education, ensuring our state can sustain its growth.

Additionally, I recognize the paramount importance of border security for Texas. Under the current administration, our southern border has faced unprecedented challenges, with Mexican cartels exploiting vulnerabilities and endangering our communities with the influx of dangerous drugs like fentanyl. To confront these threats, we've allocated billions of dollars toward border security initiatives. We've deployed DPS border security teams, utilized the Texas National Guard, and initiated the construction of physical barriers in critical areas. These efforts have been crucial in curbing illicit activities and protecting our citizens. Moving forward, I remain committed to strengthening our border defenses and ensuring the safety and security of all Texans.

Looking ahead, I'm dedicated to continuing these efforts, including bolstering border security, promoting affordable energy solutions, and supporting parental rights in education. Ensuring transparency and funding for coastal protection and flood prevention remain key objectives. It's been a privilege serving in the legislature, and I'm eager to continue working with you all in the next session.

Dennis Paul

Peterson invites friends to announcement



Candidate Doug Peterson (left) greeted attendees former Mayor of Galveston Joe Jaworski (center) and former Congressman Nick Lambert (right) at his kickoff event.

Peterson seeking election

Doug Peterson, a long-time public servant and civic activist in the Bay Area, officially announced his candidacy for the Texas House District 129 at a campaign kickoff event held Saturday, April 20, to represent all local residents and communities.

Former Congressman Nick Lampson, candidate Peterson and others spoke at the event at Luka's Barbecue. A 40-year resident of Bay Area, NASA retiree and former Bay Area liaison for Harris County Commissioner Adrian Garcia, Peterson brings extensive knowledge of Bay Area communities, interests and issues. He pledges increased constituent support across the District 129 map.

After a NASA career at Johnson Space Center in External Relations, Peterson retired to help lead creation of Exploration Green, 200-acre flood detention area and nature park, and take on political and environmental initiatives. He ran for Houston City Council, Adrian Garcia's campaign to Harris County Commissioners Court, and organized major flood mitigation and pollution control town hall meetings.

"It's time now to change representation in Austin. While residents face real issues in flooding threats, pollution, frustrating traffic, and broken roads; the big brother government in Austin enforces a far-right extreme agenda driven by billionaire mil-

lions," said Peterson.

"I look forward to meeting residents at their doors and neighborhood meetings to learn more about their real-world needs and discuss solutions in their neighborhoods."

Peterson describes himself as a moderate Democrat, returning focus to local issues and initiatives like Clear Lake's Exploration Green. He's reaching out to Independents and moderate Republicans, who are upset by extreme laws, like the dangerous abortion ban enabling vigilante lawsuits by anyone for any amount.

For more information, visit www.DougPeterson4TX129 and facebook.com/doug.peterson.9231.

Leonard E. "Nick" Nicholas



Leonard E. "Nick" Nicholas passed away on April 24, 2024, in Houston. Son of Donald Nicholas and Helen (nee Reardon) Nicholas, he was born Sept. 25, 1938, in Guymon, Okla. After graduating from Oklahoma State University with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering, he went to work for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in 1960.

It was during this time that he met the love of his life, Petra "Petritra" Medina, through a mutual friend. After a year-long courtship, they married in Vega Alta, Puerto Rico in 1964. After their honeymoon, they moved often throughout the southern U.S., wherever the FAA needed a new radar installed. Shortly before the birth of their first child, Leonard accepted a job with the Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston in 1966, which was renamed the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in 1973.

During his time as a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) electrical engineer for the U.S. space program, he worked on the Gemini, Apollo, Skylab, Apollo-Soyuz and Space Shuttle programs. After 40+ years of working for the federal government, he retired in 2002.

Retirement meant the traveling begin. Petritra and Leonard cruised the Caribbean, the Rhine River, the Panama Canal, the Alaskan coast and the Inside Passage of the Pacific Northwest. They traveled by rail across Canada. They visited many European locales, but their favorites were Italy and Spain. They loved traveling but Leonard always looked forward to getting back home where he could retreat to his garage or his study to tinker with his "stuff."

Leonard was a cherished husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle and friend. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 56 years, his parents, and his brother, Carl. He is survived by his three children, Eileen Nicholas, Suzanne (Jason) Levy, Kevin (Danielle) Nicholas; granddaughter, Jessica Levy; grandson, Nicholas Levy; and numerous in-laws, nieces and nephews.

The family lost their beloved dad and grandfather, and they cherish the memories of being tucked into bed as young children, memorable summer road trip vacations to Colorado, New Mexico, Florida and Oklahoma. Especially unforgettable: driving the rented RV to southern New Mexico, the trip to Disney World, riding the Durango-Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, several trips to Red River, New Mexico; as well as many a trip to Guymon, Okla. They will miss weekday dinners and Sunday afternoon visits. His friends will miss their fishing trips together. He was a quiet man to most, but he had a great laugh when you tickled his funny bone. He was always ready to help his children, grandchildren and friends in whatever way he could. He cherished his wife, his children and grandchildren. He will be greatly missed by all.

The family will receive family and friends Wednesday, May 1, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Peevey Funeral Home, 12440 Beamer Road.

A service honoring Leonard's life will be held Thursday, May 2, at 11 a.m. also at Peevey Funeral Home. Interment will follow at Forest Park East Cemetery, 21620 Gulf Freeway, Webster, TX 77598. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in his memory to the charity of one's choice.

Deaths

Carolyn Irene Cooper



A dear mom, grandma, sister, aunt, and friend passed away in Marble Falls, April 6 at the young age of 91. Carolyn Irene Cooper (formerly Carolyn Cooper Gundelach) was born in Houston on May 24, 1932, to William Prince Cooper and Elsie Penfield Cooper.

Carolyn was an amazing person. She was witty, creative, funny, intelligent and beautiful. She graduated from Columbus High School in Columbus, Texas in 1951 where she excelled in academics, basketball, the school newspaper, and as head cheerleader for the Columbus Cardinals. Carolyn loved to play tennis and taught tennis to many others in her small town.

She attended University of Houston and nursing school at the University of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston. As her children attended school, she became everyone's favorite teacher at Thompson Intermediate in Sagemont of Houston.

Also, as an elder at St. Stephen Presbyterian Church in Houston, she led as an exam-

ple for others. She later diligently studied and earned her certification as an ophthalmic technician and ophthalmologist, working many years before retiring from the Baylor College of Medicine Department of Ophthalmology, Cullen Eye Institute.

She retired to the Texas Hill Country, spent time with family, traveled, and was a member of the Highland Art Guild of Marble Falls as an active artist. She especially enjoyed creating art from Mother Nature's gourds. Carolyn is preceded in death by her parents, brother William Penfield Cooper, sister Margaret Cooper Percival and brother-in-law Richard Hagenlocker.

She is survived by her sisters Elsie Cooper Hagenlocker and Mary J. Cooper Franklin and husband Michael. She is also survived, by her four children, son David Charles Gundelach, daughter Diane Gundelach Doherty and husband Kevin, daughter Jan Gundelach Woods and husband Chuck, and daughter Joan Marie Gundelach; grandson Travis Penfield Doherty and wife Jessica, granddaughter Olivia Woods Rich and husband Cam, grandson Taylor Franklin Doherty, granddaughter Annmarie Jessamy Woods and husband Josh Zimmerer, grandson Trey David Doherty and wife Erika; and great-granddaughters Josephine Jane Doherty and Bella Rose Doherty.

The family asks in lieu of flowers that memorial contributions be made to Living Love Animal Rescue and Sanctuary; <http://livingloveanimalrescue.org/donate/>.

Houston Art Bike Parade & Festival set for May 11

Houston Parks Board and the Orange Show Center for Visionary Art join forces to present the third annual Houston Art Bike Parade & Festival May 11 during Mother's Day weekend.

This free, family-friendly event is open to all with a range of activities at the culturally historic MacGregor Park, which has served as a significant gathering and recreational space for Houstonians for nearly a century. This event is a celebration of the artist in everyone, along with Houston's great parks and trails.

The citywide festival kicks off with the Art Bike Parade at 10 a.m. The parade is open to all Houstonians. Registration is free. Attendees will celebrate Mother's Day, with a photo booth, card making, and alcohol-free "mimosas" sponsored by Tampico and much more. Attendees will also have the opportunity to decorate bikes and safety vests, enjoy art stations, and learn more about summer programming and offerings from local community organizations, offering various creative and engaging activities for families. The festival also includes free food, but attendees are encouraged to bring lawn chairs and water to complement their festival experience.

More than 200 student-led art bike projects of all shapes and sizes — created by students across local schools, such as Smith Elementary School and Blackshear Elementary School — will ride in the parade as HPB and the Orange Show continue their partnership with Houston Independent School District. The parade will conclude with an award ceremony recognizing exemplary creations from HUSD classrooms and community participants.

"The Art Bike Festival is a celebration of our city's diverse artistic expressions," said Lafayette Herring, board president, OSCVA. "It's also an opportunity for people to experience art in a fun and interactive way at MacGregor Park, a place where natural beauty and historical legacy come together.

The recent approval by Houston City Council for visionary improvements, propelled by a generous \$27 million catalyst gift from the Kinder Foundation, marks a significant step in the project. Additional funds are being raised to complete the full project to ensure that MacGregor Park continues to flourish as a vibrant hub of creativity and recreation for all.

The Third Annual Houston Art Bike Parade & Festival is presented by the Orange Show Center for Visionary Art and the Houston Parks Board, in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Special Events and the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, and with support from the Brown Foundation and Houston Independent School District.

More information on the Art Bike Festival can be found at www.houstonartbike.com. Houstonians who are interested in participating in the parade portion of the event are encouraged to register online.

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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.

Parker Williams Library

Parker Williams Library is located at 10851 Scarsdale Blvd. Visit the website at <https://www.hcp1.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.hcp1.net/branch/parker-williams-branch-library> for details.

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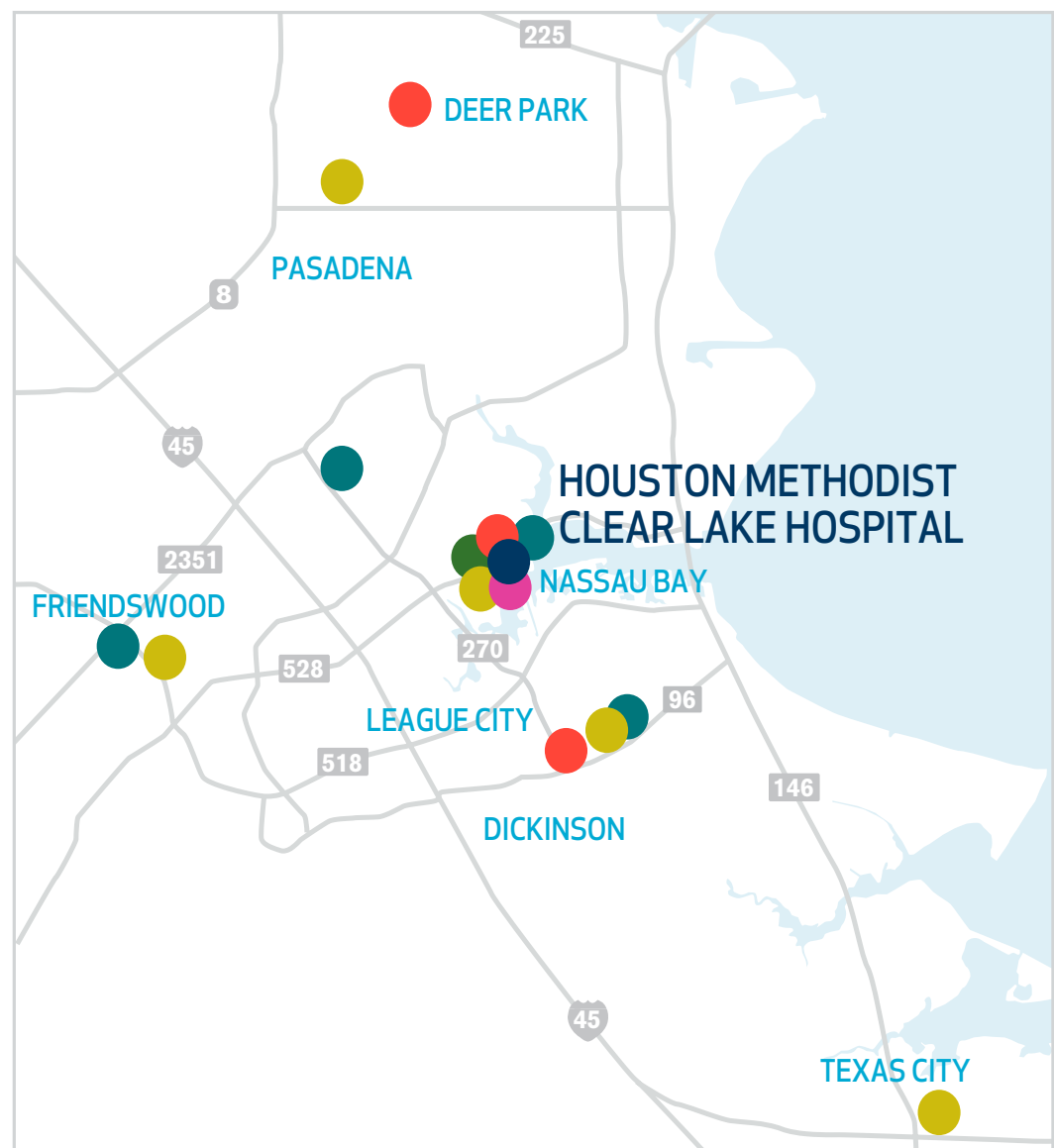


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SoHo Hall of Honor set for fall induction

Continued from Page 1
Of the five new inductees, Seale, Alford and Fox are deceased.

The five inductees will be honored during homecoming activities at the school on Friday, Sept. 20, the day of the Trojans' homecoming game against Sam Rayburn.

The new alumni inductees bring to 71 the total recognized since the Hall of Honor initiative was launched in 2011. The faculty Hall of Honor, established two years later, now has 42 inductees. The 2024 inductees and their accomplishments are listed below.



Michael Seale
Class of 1963

year, he served as program manager for Genesis Engineering Solutions in Lanham, Md. Griffin managed a program tasked with developing a single-person spacecraft for NASA.

Before joining Genesis, he worked for NASA's Advanced Concepts Office at the Marshall Spaceflight Center in Huntsville, Ala. At Marshall, he participated in the design of lunar bases and deep-space habitats.

Formerly, Griffin worked with Boeing as the lead configurator for Space Station Freedom. His designs included an open-cockpit lunar hopper, a wheeled-landing pressurized rover, a horizontal lunar lander and the Skylab II habitat.

He amassed more than 50 hours of experience in NASA space suits conducting space station repair tasks in simulated weightlessness. His next-generation space suit was on display for 10 years at National Air and Space Museum in Washington.



Carla Thomas
Class of 1980

Thomas is a senior photographer at NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center at Edwards AFB in California. Her specialty is aerial photography - and her assignments usually produce spectacular shots, many at high altitude while strapped into the backseat of an F-18 fighter jet.

A big part of her job is to visually document flight research programs. In 2008, she captured what was described as "the most spectacular photo of NASA's shuttle carrier aircraft ever." Thomas trained her camera on one of NA-

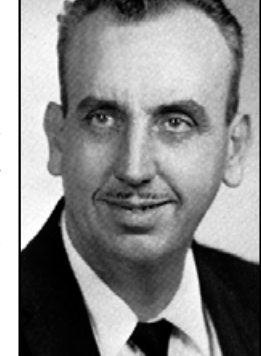
SA's modified 747 carrier jets with the Orbiter Endeavour, en route from California to the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, riding piggy-back.

What made the photo particularly stunning was her overhead angle - taken while Thomas was sitting in an inverted F-18 over the Mojave Desert.

Her photographs have made the covers of "Aviation Week & Space Technology," "Aerospace America," "Flight Training" and other publications. Her work was prominently featured in a 2009 issue of "National Geographic."

In 2015, Thomas was honored by Women in Aerospace as the recipient of the group's 30th Anniversary Commemorative Award for her outstanding photographic skills and for serving "as a role model for girls and young women in aerospace."

Amon Alfred
Chemistry 1959-1968



After four years on campus, Alford began to wonder if the students in his chemistry classes were eating right. He decided to conduct an experiment. Half his students volunteered to go on a balanced diet. The other half agreed to stick with teenager staples, mostly soda and chips.

Sure enough, Alford's study found that the better the diet, the better the grades.

The results made the front pages of newspapers across the country and helped put South Houston High on the map.

Alford was invited to address the American School Food Service Association convention in Atlantic City to give a presentation on his study.

Other school district officials accompanied him on the trip.

His study was even used as the basis for a nutrition commercial that appeared on the CBS game show "What's My Line?"

Alford was more than just a chemistry teacher during his 10 years at South Houston. He was also an integral part of Coach Harry Morgan's football support staff, one of his primary duties be-

ing to administer oxygen to winded players on the sideline.

He also handled the design and construction of more than a dozen sets used for the first Spring Show staged by the Jannettes in 1967. He passed away in 1985.

Patrick Fox
Science 2000-2022



When Fox died suddenly during the 2022 Christmas break, the entire South Houston campus was dealt a staggering blow. The school had lost not only one of its finest teachers, but also one of its most interesting and inspiring personalities, a man whose range of talents extended from coaching sports teams to explaining the periodic chart.

In his classroom a student could learn the intricacies of biology, chemistry or astronomy, all part of his hearty menu of academic offerings. But it was also the place where a student could find the support to express the feelings of being a teenager and to allow friendships to blossom.

Fox attended high school at Father Flanagan's Boys Town outside Omaha, Neb. He excelled in all sports, especially football. He was named the team's most valuable player - and, as a senior, was selected Boys Town's Athlete of the Year. Years later, he joined the Army and served in Operation Desert Storm.

He later earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Houston and began a teaching career in the Pasadena ISD that covered 28 years.

His wife of 36 years, Dr. Mary Campbell-Fox, maintains her own record of service to her school and to the community. Campbell-Fox was inducted into the Dobbie High School Alumni Hall of Honor (from the Class of 1976) in 2013.

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Danzas Folkloricas de Solei showcases spring show

Danzas Folkloricas de Solei presented its spring show "Raices del Sol" to a sold-out audience at the Marie Spencer Flickinger Fine Arts Center. More than 40 dancers, children ages 4 and up, and their directors and teachers, selected traditional Mexican pieces from various regions in Mexico. Dancers adorned in traditional dress presented dances from Jalisco, Tamaulipas, San Luis and Baja California.

Dancers were accompanied by a live performance of Houston's Mariachi Imperial de America, this year's Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Mariachi competition winner.

Danzas Folkloricas de Solei was founded in 2016 by Robert and Evelyn Mejia. DF de Solei is a dedication to Robert and Evelyn's deceased firstborn, Solei. The group is dedicated to promoting and preserving the rich cultural heritage of Mexico through traditional Mexican dances, under the creative direction of Gerardo Moreno along with the founders as general directors and the newest instructor for their youth group, Nayeli Lopez.

Shown are, left to right, (front row) Suhaila Mejia, Evelyn Mejia, Robert Mejia, Nahira Mejia, (back row) Samantha Villegas, Dayana Moya and Alejandra Rivero.

Beverly Hills names honor roll for fifth 6-weeks

Beverly Hills Intermediate School officials have announced fifth six-weeks honor rolls for the 2023-2024 school year.

Seventh grade
Sophia Isabel Acatitlan, Leslie Patricia Aguilar, Angel Arango Ramirez, Jade Nicole Arceneaux, Rick Chidubem Azinge, Allison Guissell Baca, Matthew Antonio Baragan, Liliana Bermudez, Chloe Annmarie Bizzarri, Vy Nguyen Thao Bui, Anabia Muzzammil Butt, Joshua Robert Byron, Valery Yeseña Casillas and Mia Mariana Castillo.

Alexander Paxton Chaney, Duyen Cach Chung, Nicole Churchwell, Isabella Giada Cisneros, Kayla Alyssa Cisneros, Sophia Elizabeth Claros Mendoza, Zorion Knight Collins, Natalia Contreras, Kaci Marie Curry Shepard, Anna Nguyen Dao, Tyler Phan Dao, Aurease Delfante, Ruby Bella Delgado, Laniyah Sa'rae Dukes and Carolyn Elizabeth Erazo.

Isabella Emma Espinoza, Alessandro Ferrufino, Jonathan Noah Fonseca, Elida Sarahi Garcia, Evany Garcia, Layla Maribel Garcia, Carlos Eduardo Garza, Malachi Jesse Gonzales, Xitalic Gonzalez, Arleen Guadalupe Grimaldo, Jiszele Jazmyr Guerrero, Melanie Guerrero, Alexa Yusmarí Guevara and Rolando Cody Guzman.

Yoansy Francisco Hernandez Ramos, Sebastian Jove Maddox Hernandez Rodriguez, Elias Erik Hernandez, Valeria Marlen Hernandez, Han Ngoc Hu, Natalie Julissa Hodgson-Gonzales, Alaya M Jasso, Isela Nicole Jimenez,

Aasia Denise Johnson and Kenberly De'asia Jones. Shavon Ann Lamb, Regina Guadalupe Leal, Diego Nicholas Majano, Ja'daryus Manuel, Rahul Santiago Marroquin, Arielle Jimena Martinez, Esmeralda Martinez, Hailey Julissa Martinez, Isaac Martinez, Isaiyah Ryan Martinez, Melissa Melendez, Carissa Nicole Mendez, Isaac Montano, Isabella Munoz and Bang Hai Nguyen.

Khang Minh Nguyen, Michael Thanh Nguyen, Ferdie Amayray Ochoa Arce, Makayla Rayne Palm, Steven Hieu Pham, Janeisy Arlene Pineda, Hannah Giselle Ponce, Sansa-Ray Shannon Ramsay, Alkeimi Reyes Polanco, Marie Nicole Reyna, Nyla Adryanna Richardson, Annabelle Jasmine Rodriguez, Roberto Rodriguez, Javier Modesto Romero Argueta, Lyla Marie Saldana and Ronaldo Roel Salinas.

Camila Salomon, Brandon Gemel Scott, Sophia Isabella Serafine, Viviani Araceli Serna, Arturo Serrano, Anaxandra Cecilia Sierra-Martinez, Ava Love Soloya, Laryn Ednya Stevenson, Abbygail Hope-Marie Stockton, Marissa Rose Thompson and Gabriela Torres.

Linda Tran, Anna Thanh Trinh, Da'vante Lavar Turner, Jose Angel Turrubiarres Gomez, Vanessa Vernell Udoh, Alejandro Leonel Urrutia Gonzalez, Sophia Ayleen Vanegas, Fur Anahi Vasquez, Ke'sion Curtis Williams and Chanel Adrianna Willis.

Eighth grade
Katherine Michaela Acac, Yaslin Esmeralda Acosta, Lilah Samantha Aguayo,

Daniel Alberto Alvarez, Sofia Yamileth Alvarez, Giovannie Elijah Alvear, Chloe Renee Anderson, Andrea Natalia Arredondo, Ian Avalos, Daniel Barboza, Joshua Barboza, Angelica Jaylynn Barragan, Zadie Layne Battarbee, Rachel Esi Bensmith and Jahsai Burke.

Darryl Dwayne Campbell, Jaxson Eli Canales, Javanni Rene Capuchino, Jesus Julian Carrillo, Manuel Cedillo, Sasha Nicole Cepeda, Dalila Anahi Chapa, Ivanka Midori Chapa, Jade Elia Charles, Damian Jesus Chavez, Ives Didier Collazo Muniz, Jaren D'von Conley, Kyle Gabriel Contreras and Zairie Amiyah-Symone Creeks.

Alondra Itzel Cruz, Alysa Leeann Davis, Brayden Jai Dean, David Del Toro, Emily Joanne Diaz, Anita Jessica Nouko Djato, Ricky Quoc Doan, Demetris D'wayne Drake Elrod, Jacqueline Enriquez, Jessica Marie Escobar, Kimmie Iliana Escudera, Giselle Adene Esparza, Natalie Marie Esquivel, Karla Janet Fernandez and Brianna Alexis Figueroa.

Carlos Eduardo Flores, Christopher Sebastian Flores, Mya Maxene Flores, Miguel Angel Garcia, Christian Donovan Gonzalez, Adrian Alonso Gonzalez, Mia Nevaeh Gonzalez, Ethan Kane Guerrero, Damian Elias Gutierrez, Rebekah Grace Hale, Alexis Joanne Hernandez, Elizabeth Hernandez, Luna Alejandra Hernandez, Mia Gabriela Hernandez and Natalia Hernandez.

Lizbeth Anahi Hinojosa, Huyen Thi Ngoc Hoang, Angela Huynh, Carden Thinh Huynh, Andrew Jaramillo Zamora, Cruz Alexander Jas-

so, Jason Daniel Jasso, Kar-men Alexis Jasso, Elsy Nohe-my Jimenez Velasco, Serenity Kaye Johnson, Zaria Ne'shell Johnson, Jesus Leon, Tiana Rena Leonard, Alexander Josue Limachi and Miguel Enrique Loreda.

Cesar Edgardo Lue Hernandez, Monica Luna, Luis Manuel Lupian, Ashley Ly, Emmery Jayne Lynn, Anthony Ray Maldonado, Karely Jasmin Maldonado, Xavier Keimod Manning-Simmons, Isaias Eubert Marti-nez Gomez, Hammad Matin, Cha'nyia Mona McGowen and Liandis Mercado Solano. Julianna Danielle Mikulski, Ty Shaun Momon, Janen-ish Marie Muniz, Ann Nhu Nguyen, Cathy Nguyen, Jocelyn Jean Nguyen, Johnny Anh Nguyen, Justin Quang Nguyen, Khai Ngoc Quang Nguyen, Lucas Anh Nguyen, Steven Huy Nguyen, O'li-jah Manuel Noble, Kendrick Blyden Norman, Avery Sim-one Payne, Martin Nin Peng and Joseline Perales.

Luis Alfonso Perez, Tor-ryn Embry Provost, Hai-ley Brianna Ramsey, Harsh Rana, Alyah Paola Rangel, Bree Elizabeth Rennert, Elisa Marie Reyes, Rubi Reyes, Reyna Renee Rivera, Je'licia Danielle Rivet, Alyssa Haley Rodriguez, Ella Alissa Rodriguez, Mikayla Riley Rodriguez and Yareli Alexandra Rodriguez.

Kailani Rose Rudd, Cesar Salinas, Davien Sanni-Thom-as, Azari I'ris Schells, Emilia-no Jacob Servin, Bella Jordan Sherwood, Destiny Rhyen Sidiropoulos, Ariel Elizabeth Sierra, Angelica Janel Smith, Sanaa Jeanette Mykiah Stephens, Melayssia Sheree Sykes, Shelby Nicole Talavera, Genesis Mikaela Tamez, Jordyn Marquis Thomas and Enrique Alvarez Torres.

Mikaela Ann Torres, Dawson Tran, Kahlan Nhu-y Tran, Kathleen Mai Tran, Tammy Nguyen Tran, Yen Hoang Tran, Gabriel Trevino, Olivia Trevino, Omar Alexis Vega, Idalys Nitzel Villegas, Kiet Tuan Vo, Victoria Hoang-Anh Vu, Sophia Rose Yang, Greg-ory Anthony Zamora, Zaiyden Joseph Zaragoza, Angelo E. Zuniga and Candi Selene Zuniga.

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Remember When

45 years ago (1979)
A 22-year-old Scarsdale resident was found shot to death in his apartment on Algonquin.

Parents residing in the Gulf Palms area appeared before the Pasadena Independent School District board of trustees to protest the board's decision on a boundary line change.

40 years ago (1984)
The seventh-grade orchestra at Beverly Hills Intermediate School won the sweepstakes award at the UIL orchestra contest.

Jill Miller, a 1980 Dobbie High School graduate, won the title of Miss Galveston and would compete in the Miss Texas-USA Pageant.

35 years ago (1989)
E.J. Ritchey, Thompson Intermediate's principal, was honored with a retirement reception given by the teachers and staff of the school. Ritchey had been principal at Thompson for 15 years.

Friendswood homeowners and city officials reacted with caution concerning alleged illegal off-site dumping of hazardous materials from the Brio refining site in an area across from Sun Meadow Country Club.

30 years ago (1994)
At a state track meet, Dobbie High School athletes Nathan Frazier, Alisha Broussard and Cecily Carrier received medals. Frazier placed second in the high jump, Broussard placed first in the triple jump, and Carrier placed second in the triple jump.

San Jacinto College South held its first International Festival.

25 years ago (1999)
The annual Southeast Economic Development South Belt business of the year award was presented to Sam's Club.

Roger Davis, the only representative from South Belt to have been elected to the Clear Creek Independent School District Board of Trustees, resigned to accept employment

in the Dallas area. Plans were under way for the annual July Fourth parade which would take place July 3 since the holiday was on a Sunday.

Mayor Lee Brown was scheduled to address issues of local concern at the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce luncheon to be held at San Jacinto College South. Brown was to address improvements scheduled for Ellington and Hobby airfields, updates on construction projects scheduled for the area as well as the possibility of a convention center to be located in Clear Lake.

20 years ago (2004)
The Pasadena Independent

School District was to start aggressively enforcing a policy regarding out-of-district students attending its schools.

Early voting was under way in the PISD and Clear Brook City Municipal Utility District elections.

Houston council member for District E, Addie Wiseman, announced three town hall meetings regarding the upcoming citywide special election that would allow the city to opt out of and replace the current pension plan for employees.

South Belt Boy Scouts were collecting torn and faded flags to retire at their annual flag retirement ceremony.

The PISD board approved

a 2.75 percent salary increase for its police officers so as to be more competitive with neighboring police agencies.

15 years ago (2009)
Kirkwood South Christian Church pastor, the Rev. David Fraser, became a naturalized U.S. citizen. Born outside of London, England, Fraser first visited the United States in 1967 and moved to Houston permanently in 1994.

San Jacinto College South celebrated its 30th anniversary. A ceremony commemorating the event honored math professor Dr. Jerry Tate, psychology professor Dr. Marylou Robins, government professor Dr. John Bolen and chemistry professor Dr. Ray

Crawford, as all had been at the campus since its opening.

Two male suspects were captured on Weber Elementary's video surveillance systems throwing Molotov cocktails containing gasoline at the back side of the building, scorching its brick walls. The men also set a bicycle on fire on the school grounds. The suspects attempted to break into the school through its windows, but were unsuccessful at gaining entry.

10 years ago (2014)
The 18th annual South Belt Spectacular Cook-off, held at El Franco Lee Park, was a huge success, raising significantly more funds than any other up to that time. Or-

ganizers said they intended to donate \$10,000 back to the community in the form of youth programs and academic scholarships.

5 years ago (2019)
The 23rd annual South Belt Spectacular Cook-off, held Thursday, April 25, through Saturday, April 27, at El Franco Lee Park, was a huge success, raising thousands of dollars for the yearly South Belt Fourth of July fireworks display, also held at the area park.

1 year ago (2023)
A pedestrian fleeing from police was critically injured around 6 p.m. Monday, May 1, after being struck by a vehicle in the HOV lane in the 12500 block of the Gulf Free-

way near Fuqua. Houston Police officers responded to an assault disturbance call at the InTown Suites, and when they attempted to make contact with the suspect, he fled, leading officers on a foot chase. Officers pursued the suspect across the frontage lanes of traffic but halted the chase as the male crossed the main lanes of traffic out of concern for their own safety.

The suspect successfully crossed the inbound main lanes of traffic, but when he got to the outbound HOV lane, he turned around to see if the police were still chasing him, and he was struck by a passing vehicle. The 26-year-old male suspect was transported to the hospital in critical condition.

Over The Back Fence by Natalie

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, STACEY!
Happy birthday wishes are sent to long-time South Belt resident Stacey Waugh who enjoys a birthday May 4 from her mother Sandy Robb, friends and the Leader staff. She and her mother have volunteered for the Leader Christmas program for years, giving many hours of time during the holiday. She also donates money to the program by collecting aluminum cans throughout the year.

FRED AND LESLIE MARK 29 YEARS
Best wishes are sent to Fred and Leslie Flickinger who celebrate 29 years of marriage May 7 from daughters Kimberly and husband Matt Lipina and Courtney and husband Chris Durham and children Abigail, Jackson and Penelope; Leslie's mother Olive Falkowski; Fred's mom and dad Marie and David Flickinger; and brother Davy and wife Ellie Flickinger.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BRITTNEY!
Best wishes to former Leader staff member, Brittney Cubos, who celebrates her birthday May 7 from her parents Claudia (former Leader staffer) and Erik Cubos, her family members and friends.

SCHOOL DAZE
The following staff of the Pasadena Independent School District celebrate birthdays May 2 through May 8.

Atkinson Elementary
The day for a party for Ashley Garza is May 3. Magdy Canales celebrates a birth-

day May 4.

Burnett Elementary
Erika Gonzalez enjoys a birthday May 3. May 4 is the day to send Daren Dibble a birthday greeting.

Bush Elementary
Send a happy birthday greeting to Nicole Holguin on May 3.

Frazier Elementary
Kayla Pitts celebrates a birthday May 7. Remember to wish India Kemp a happy birthday May 8.

Atkinson Elementary
Martha Lerma enjoys a birthday May 9.

Genoa Elementary
Best wishes for a happy birthday are sent May 7 to Telisa Jones.

Hancock Elementary
May 3 is the day for a fun celebration for Niria Chapa-Cantu. Megan Sgarlata celebrates a birthday April 16.

Moore Elementary
The day for a birthday party for Traci Marr and Bethanne Mullen is May 6.

South Belt Elementary
Send a birthday greeting May 2 to Jasmen Valdez. Light the candles May 3 for Ashley Fleming. Ciara Reliford enjoys a birthday May 6. Nikole Zurek marks a birthday May 8.

Fred Roberts Middle School
Melissa Jimenez enjoys a birthday May 2. Melillo Middle School

Break open the balloons and party favors May 7 for Jorge Palomares.

Thompson Intermediate
Maria Lopez celebrates a birthday May 3. Enjoying a birthday May 4 is Kelli Monneyhun. Birthday wishes go out to Heather Nielson May 6. Lynette Montes and Becky Morrison enjoy a double-layer cake May 7.

Dobbie High
The day for a party for Marcia Griffin is May 2. Break out the party favors May 7 for Jesse Lopez.

FRIENDS CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS
Thursday, May 2: Chris Weatherford, Douglas Redhun, Troy Goffney, David Tho; and Friday, May 3: Craig Pittman, Keith Richardson, Tanya Morales and Brandie Ash; Saturday, May 4: Scott Siscoe and Tamara Fisher; Sunday, May 5: Tori French, Alice Wright, Pat Becker and Amanda Zamora; Monday, May 6: Patrick Ermis, Roni Gonzales and Erin Hill; Tuesday, May 7: Ted Heinrich, Josh Garza, Stephanie Salazar and Jenn Verchiens; and Wednesday, May 8: Christopher Barber, Tiffany Robbins, Julie Kutra and Sara Muller.

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

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SPORTS NEWS & NOTES



Clear Brook junior Kamryn McLaurin is the first Wolverine in program history to reach the 6A state high jump final.

UIL 6A Girls' High Jump
May 4, 9 a.m.
Mike A Myers Stadium
University of Texas

Brook's McLaurin heads to state track

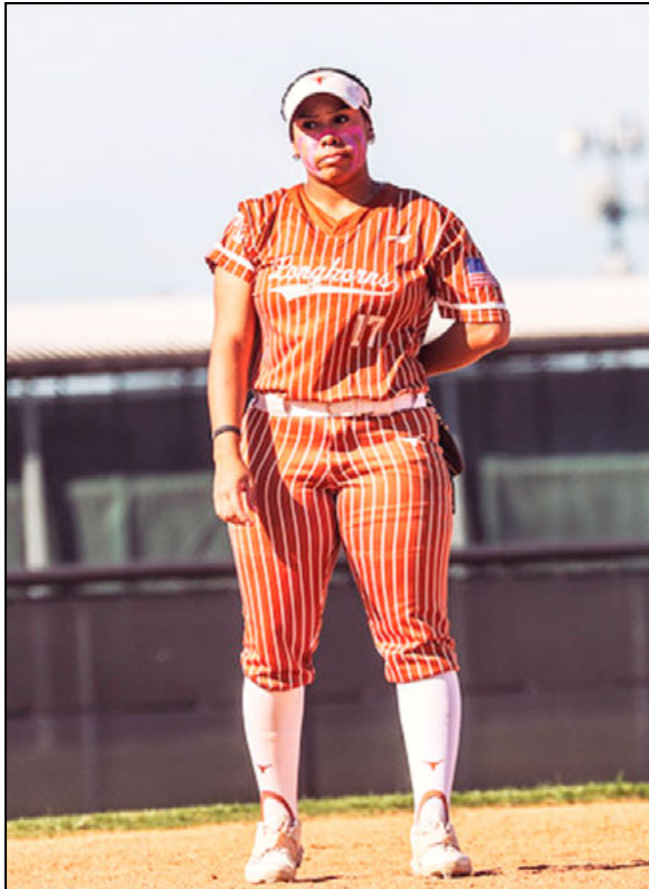
Kamryn McLaurin has done plenty to establish herself as a college-ready basketball player, and now the Clear Brook multisport athlete aims to put her versatility on display in the 6A girls' high jump at the University Interscholastic League's State Track and Field Championships May 4 in Austin.

Beginning May 4 at 9 a.m. at Mike A. Myers Stadium on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin, McLaurin will aim for the gold medal as she goes against eight other 6A state qualifiers in the event.

McLaurin qualified as the state's wildcard in the event after capturing third place and the bronze medal at the Region III championships April 20.

Already Clear Brook High School's all-time record holder in the event at 5 feet, 8 inches, McLaurin is the first Wolverine high jumper to reach the state championship - ever - and the first Clear Creek ISD athlete to reach the state round in the high jump in a decade.

Continued on Page 6



Aidan Johnson (17) of Dobie had a solid final season with the varsity softball program as she helped the Longhorns to second place in District 22-6A.



Dobie senior Alyssa Jones (9) had a terrific final season as she led all regular starters with a .439 batting average during the 2024 campaign.

Atascocita downs Dobie softball in bidistrict round

Atascocita has advanced to the area round of the varsity playoffs at the expense of Dobie after defeating the Longhorns 8-2 and 12-4 to sweep a best-of-three series April 19-20.

The Eagles, set to meet defending state champion Pearland in the area round, won the series with a big closing stretch in the second and deciding game at San Jacinto College South.

Breaking a 3-3 tie with a pair of runs in the top of the fifth inning, Atascocita added two runs in the sixth and five more in the seventh to finish off the series.

In the series opener April 19, the host Eagles used a seven-run second inning en route to the 8-2 win.

Dobie, which entered the postseason as the second seed out of District 22-6A, finished the season at 19-14, with most of the roster set to return for the 2025 season and beyond.

Atascocita and Dobie combined for two of the youngest rosters in terms of grade class anywhere in the Region III ranks, combining to start four seniors in the bidistrict round.

Atascocita senior pitcher Vanessa Valdez earned the win in both games for the Eagles, whose starting lineup offensively featured one senior.

Dobie will now watch seniors Aidan Johnson and Alyssa Jones, who has signed to play collegiately at Arkansas-Pine Bluff, walk across the graduation stage next month.

In her final game with Dobie, Johnson went 2 for 4 with a double, a run scored and a run driven in. Jones singled in her final game.

Heading into a new District 22-6A alignment next season, Dobie will feature a lineup that should be up to the challenge with plenty of experience.

Three pitchers will also return to give the locals talented depth.



The Lutheran South Academy boys' 4x400 relay squad captured gold medals for winning the event at the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools 5A South Regional as, from left, Marcus Gaitan, Case Noack, Corey Griffin and Matthew Gaitan teamed.

LSA tracksters reach state championships

It's all about chasing the gold now as the Lutheran South Academy track and field teams head to the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools State Championships May 3-4 at Midway ISD's Panther Stadium in Hewitt, Texas.

The Pioneer boys' team will head to the championship finale as the South Regional team champion, and several individual and relay squads have legitimate shots at coming away with state championships.

The Pioneers' Wilson Klein is one of several gold-medal seeking athletes heading to Waco as his regional clearance of 15 feet, 7 inches en route to a regional gold medal was both a school and personal record for the senior.

A time of 3 minutes, 27.25 seconds was good for a gold medal in the 4x400 as Marcus Gaitan and Matthew Gaitan were joined by Corey Griffith and Case Noack in the event.

Continued on Page 6

Ravens, Galveston to decide crown



The first-place San Jacinto College softball team, including freshman third baseman Madison Carr (12) took on second-place Galveston April 30 after press time looking to secure the outright Region 14 regular season crown. See additional information in the May 9 issue.

Bidistrict Baseball

Brook vs. Pearland

(Best-of-three series)

Game 1: May 2 at Brook, 6 p.m.
 Game 2: May 3 at Pearland, 6 p.m.
 *Game 3: May 4 at Pearland, 1 p.m.

*(If necessary)

Dobie vs. Summer Creek

(Best-of-three series)

Game 1: May 2 at Summer Creek, 7 p.m.
 Game 2: May 3 at Maguire Field, Pasadena, 4 p.m.
 *Game 3: May 4 at C.E. King H.S., 1 p.m.
 *(If necessary)

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JFD faces Bulldogs



Dobie senior shortstop and team co-captain Junior Orozco (1) will lead the second-seeded Longhorns into the bidistrict baseball playoffs May 2-4 against Summer Creek. See details on Page 5. Photo by Donna Alsdorf

Lutheran South track qualifies to state track meet

Continued from Page 5 Matthew Gaitan posted a time of 4:19.91 as the regional gold medalist in the 1,600, with teammate Reid Toner fourth for a state berth at 4:24.74.

Marcus Gaitan is off to state in the 400 after a time of 50.21 was good for second place and a silver medal at regionals. Freshman Jeremy Gaitan joined the party in the 800 as the Gaitans went 1-2-3 in the 800 for state berths. Marcus Gaitan won the gold medal at 2:02.24, with Matthew Gaitan's time of 2:03.05 second for silver. Jeremy Gaitan's bronze-medal clocking was 2:03.05.

Lutheran South's Kris St. Clair was the regional gold medalist at 164-4 in the discus, and he was also second in the shot with a toss of 51-5. Teammate Cole Noack threw the discus 137-8 for a silver medal to join St. Clair at state. The Pioneers' Ben Hughes went 41-7 1/4 for second place and a silver medal in the triple jump.

The Pioneers' 4x100 relay squad took the bronze medal for third place at 43.95 as the foursome included Jonah Weber, Braeden Robinson, Ben Hughes and Klein. A time of 42.20 also had Case Noack reaching state in the 300 hurdles. Senior Makynna Robbins was among LSA's regional medalists as she was third in the shot with a toss of 37-1/4.



The Pioneers' Wilson Klein is one of several gold-medal seeking athletes heading to Waco as his regional clearance of 15 feet, 7 inches en route to a regional gold medal was both a school and personal record for the senior.



The Pioneers' Ben Hughes went 41 feet, 7 1/4 inches for second place and a silver medal in the triple jump.



Lutheran South's Kris St. Clair was the regional gold medalist at 164 feet, 4 inches in the discus, and he was also second in the shot with a toss of 51-5.

Robbins also reached state in the discus with a fourth-place toss of 112-0. Pioneers Alma Martin and Lanie Ward both cleared 10-0 in the pole vault, with Martin ultimately second for a silver medal and Ward fourth.

Lutheran South's 4x400 relay squad closed the meet with a fourth-place time of 4:17.19 to advance to state as the group included Robbins, Stoeckel, Lydia Ward and Mia Fulton.

The Pioneers' Cassidy Pfeiffer delivered a time of 49.90 for fourth place in the 300 hurdles to advance.

It was LSA's Lanie Ward third for a bronze medal in the 100 hurdles at 17.15, while Pfeiffer's clocking of 17.18 was fourth-best for a state berth.

A time of 50.43 earned the Lutheran South girls' 4x100 relay squad fourth place and a state invitation.

The team team included Emma Schepmann, Avery McPhail, Reed Brenner and Lauren Bonnezcaze.

McLaurin of Brook to compete at state

Continued from Page 5 "I am going to state to hopefully win the gold medal," McLaurin said. "I really believe I can go to 5-10 or whatever it will take to win the event. That's going to be my mentality. I'm there, so I'm going to go for it."

for her fourth varsity season. She is also paying close attention to the collegiate recruiting cycle, with the Clear Brook girls' basketball program sure to be closely monitored by coaches and scouts from now through the end of next season.

For now, though, there's this high jump thing. And Clear Brook head track coach Erica Alexander is confident McLaurin can medal.

"We may work on some things in terms of her approach to the bar, but the key is for Kamryn to be comfortable," Alexander said. "She has terrific athletic ability, so as coaches sometimes our job is to help our kids be comfortable and then let them perform."

The high jump obviously has more technical aspects to it than say a straightaway sprint, but we'll have Kamryn ready to go. Maybe two or three hard workouts in the two weeks leading up to state, and then just go for it."

Lutheran South girls' golf wins district championship; regionals up next



Lutheran South Academy, the defending Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools 5A state girls' team champions, began the 2024 postseason by winning the district championship with a single-day team score of 359. From left, the Pioneers' Addison Trahan fired an 82 for third place, with Emma Poffinbarger fourth with an 83 and Audra Poffinbarger eighth with a 94.



The district championship team plaque secured, the Lutheran South Academy varsity girls' golf team competed at regionals April 30 after press time. Members of the team are, left to right, Sofia Maxwell, Addison Trahan, Emma Poffinbarger, Audra Poffinbarger and Olivia Rivas.



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CALENDAR

THURSDAY, MAY 2
7 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill," Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., and Saturday at 7:30 a.m. Revive Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 713-686-6300 (24/7) or visit https://aahouston.org/meetings/
7:30 a.m. **Rotary Club of Pearland** - Meets Thursdays at either at Pearland Chamber of Commerce, 6117 Broadway St., Pearland, or online on Zoom (attendee preference). See Pearland Chamber of Commerce website (calendar) or call 281-485-3634.
9 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** - Exhibits include dioramas, a turn-of-the-century doctor's office and an old-time kitchen. Open Tues. - Sat., 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., 204 S. Main, Pasadena. Call Karen Hollon 713-472-0565 for appointment. Tours 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 3
7:30 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.
9 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** See Thursday's notice.
Noon **Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group**, 3525 Broadway, Pearland, or at https://aahouston.org/meetings/imperfect-nooners. Call 713-686-6300 for more information. Meets Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
7 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of NA**, open meeting, 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). For details, call 713-661-4200 or visit www.hascona.com or https://nastuff.com/. Meets Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

SATURDAY, MAY 4
7:30 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "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 Zoom online. For details on the 7 p.m. Friday night or the 9:30 a.m. Saturday service, Judaism classes, film series, and lunch with the Rabbi, visit https://www.shaarhashalom.org.
1 p.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - offers a knitting class, Saturdays 1 p.m. Call 281-479-7285 prior to coming.
SUNDAY, MAY 5
8 a.m./10:15 a.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - has worship Tuesday at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday at 7 p.m. (Bible study, Book of Revelation, at 6 p.m.) and Sunday at 8 a.m. and 10:15 a.m., 11456 Space Center Blvd. (in back of a medical/retail community). For details, call 281-479-7285 and leave a message, or stop by.
5:30 p.m. **Celebrate Recovery** - A faith-based 12-Step program, in the Life Kids Chapel at Life Church, 9900 Almeda Genoa. Call 713-419-2635 for details.
8 p.m. **Alcoholics Anonymous** See Friday's notice.

MONDAY, MAY 6
Noon Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) See Friday's notice
12:30 - 3 p.m. **Ballroom Dancing** - at Hometown Heroes Park, 1001 E. League City Parkway, League City, 77573, is open. Neva and Bill Schroder coordinate Wednesday sessions for casual ballroom dancing (not dance lessons). Park activity card holders attend free. Call 281-554-1180 for details.
5 p.m. **New Directions** - Age 55 and older meets the first and third Monday for a potluck dinner with activities and/or guest speakers at Webster Presbyterian Church, 201 W. NASA Parkway. For further information please call Jill at 646-489-4367.
6 p.m. **Scrabble Club #511** - Meets Monday 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. **Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)** - St. Luke's Group, 12-Step Recovery, open meeting Mondays, 7 p.m. in the Education Bldg. in room 6, at 11011 Hall Rd., 77089. For details, call Rita at 281-309-2801.
TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) - #0683 Friendswood chapter meets at the Friendswood Methodist Church, 110 N. Friendswood Dr. in the educational bldg., room 201. For information, call Lynette Ringrose 832-858-4617 or Dorothy Pourteau 713-875-8820.
7 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous (NA)**

See Friday's notice.
TUESDAY, MAY 7
7:30 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.
9 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** See Thursday's notice.
11:30 a.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - has worship Tuesday at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday at 7 p.m. (Bible study, Book of Revelation, at 6 p.m.) and Sunday at 8 a.m. and 10:15 a.m., 11456 Space Center Blvd. (in back of a medical/retail community). For details, call 281-479-7285 and leave a message, or stop by.
6:30 p.m. **Noon Bay Area Quilt Guild** - Meets the first Tuesday, Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, 10310 Scarsdale Blvd. Fellowship at.; meeting/program at 7 p.m. Visit www.Facebook.com/BayAreaQuiltGuild or call Carol at 713-253-2521 for information. Visitors may attend two meetings free. No regular meeting in December.
6:30 - 7:30 p.m. **Southeast Houston Toastmasters** - The Southeast Houston Toastmasters Club #05324194 meets virtually with the exception of the second and fourth Tuesdays (hybrid meeting) at seahouston.toastmastersclubs.org. In-person address 10500 Scarsdale Blvd (SB Chamber of Commerce). Visit the website or call Karen Nunn, at (832) 722-9061 for information.
7 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous (NA)** - Vigilance Group of NA, open meeting, 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). For details, call 713-661-4200 or visit www.hascona.com or https://nastuff.com/. Meets Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8
7:30 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.
9 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** See Thursday's notice.
Noon Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) See Friday's notice
7 p.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - has worship Tuesday at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday at 7 p.m. (Bible study, Book of Revelation, at 6 p.m.) and Sunday at 8 a.m. and 10:15 a.m., 11456 Space Center Blvd. (in back of a medical/retail community). For details, call 281-479-7285 and leave a message, or stop by.
7 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous (NA)** See Friday's notice.
8 p.m. **Alcoholics Anonymous** See Friday's notice.

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22-6A co-champion Dobie girls' soccer lands All-District honors



Dobie senior defender Kelly Flores (5), a team co-captain, was a key player in the back end for the co-district championship squad as she was selected to the 22-6A first team All-District squad.



Dobie's Theresa Kamara pulled all the right strings in her first season with the Longhorns, leading the team to the co-championship in District 22-6A and being named co-Coach of the Year in the league.



Dobie senior Arianna Borrego (13) was named a first team All-District performer for her play in 2024 and was also voted as the Longhorns' Defender of the Year.

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Junior forward Sofia Rodriguez (7) had 17 goals for the co-league champion Longhorns as she was a first team All-District selection and was also voted as Dobie's Offensive Player of the Year.



Junior Mia Campos (center, fielding ball) earned the keeper's role for Dobie in 2024 and turned in a spectacular season, scoring 22-6A first team All-District accolades.



Dobie sophomore forward Kamilah Estrada (12) had a dozen goals scored in her debut varsity season as she was named to the 22-6A first team All-District squad.

5TH

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Second Team All-District

Priscilla Martinez
Jaylece Rodriguez
Karley Goeman
Kyla Lobo
Rebecca Santana
Honorable Mention
Alexandra Rodriguez
Melanie Robles
Academic All-District

Aylin Reyes
Nico Barr
Arianna Borrego

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