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SPORTS | B1

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 2023

The iconic Katy caboose, in the foreground, will be opened for tours for the first time at a Saturday celebration hosted by the Katy Heritage Society.  
FILE PHOTO



## Katy Heritage Society to celebrate historic 125-year-old depot

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER  
NEWS EDITOR

The Katy Railroad Park, 5615 1st St., features a depot and caboose that are iconic pieces of Katy's heritage. The depot turns 125 this year, and the Katy Heritage Society is throwing a birthday party for it this weekend. The public celebration is from 2-4 p.m. Saturday at the park. Adrienne Davitz, Katy Heritage Society

president, said the caboose is being opened for tours for the first time. "Even our own city administrator (Byron Hebert) hasn't been on that caboose," Davitz said. Davitz said Saturday's activities also include a trackless train for kids, the unveiling of a historical marker and cookies (as part of the birthday cake). Davitz said the depot building has stood for at least 125 years, but

she did not know precisely how long it has actually stood. The 125-year figure is the best research the society has, she said. The celebration also commemorates the salvaging of the depot itself. The railroad company that built the depot was set to demolish it in 1979, Davitz said. When some local citizens heard of these plans, she said

See **DEPOT**, page A3

## Brookshire, Fort Bend plan activities for MLK Day

CONTRIBUTED REPORTS

The Martin Luther King Jr. holiday is set for Monday, and while government offices and schools will be closed, the I-10 West/Brookshire MLK Celebration activities are set for public enjoyment. Festivities take place both Friday and Saturday. On Friday, Nooney & the Zydeco Floaters, along with Koray Broussard & the Zydeco Unit, will be giving a concert. The show begins at 7 p.m. at Baa Baa Brewhouse, 539 FM 359 in Brookshire. Presale tickets cost \$25. Festivities continue with a Saturday morning block party and afternoon parade. The block party is set for 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Little Zion Baptist Church, 4010 4th St. in Brookshire. The party will have a carnival theme and feature a barbecue cookoff. The parade begins at 12 p.m. at the church. Event sponsors include the City of Brookshire, Joshua Grand Lodge of Texas, Word of Promise Church, and Greater Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, along with community members. For more information, contact Keith Woods at 281-248-3832.

### Volunteer project seeks to restore slave cemeteries in Fort Bend County

Volunteers led by former U.S. Rep. Pete Olson of Sugar Land and Dexter McCoy, Exchange Club of Sugar Land commissioner, will be restoring two historic Fort Bend County cemeteries. The project runs from 8:30-11:30 a.m. Monday at Fort Bend County's Bates Allen Park, which is the site of the historic Newman Chapel Cemetery and the historic Oak Hill Cemetery. The park is at 630 Charlie Roberts Lane in Kendleton.

See **MLK DAY**, page A3



A rendition of a new playground to be installed at the Katy Arboretum, 2046 Katy City Park.  
CITY OF KATY

## Katy City Council approves money for civil engineering and playground replacement

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER  
NEWS EDITOR

The Katy City Council Monday authorized approximately \$15,600 for civil engineering services for the Old Fussell House and 3B Learning Center, 5402 Franz Road.

Parks Director Kevin Browne, in a memo to the council urging approval, wrote that the civil engineering services were necessary to complete the construction documents for renovations. "The original contract with Slattery Tackett approved at the Feb. 14, 2022

council meeting stipulated that civil engineering services may be required, and if so would be submitted to the city at cost without markup, and were determined to be necessary based on the scope of the project, which

See **COUNCIL**, page A3

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### SWEARING IN



HARRIS COUNTY PCT. 4 COMMISSIONER

Harris County Pct. 4 Commissioner Lesley Briones is sworn into office in a Jan. 2 public ceremony. At left is Harris County District Clerk Marilyn Burgess. Briones, whose precinct includes the Harris County portion of Katy, said she was grateful for the opportunity to serve and looked forward to working with officials and the public to drive the county forward.

## Kitzman, Vasut share legislative priorities

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER  
NEWS EDITOR

Property tax relief, and getting into the swing of things at the state Capitol, were among the priorities discussed by two state representatives at a Jan. 4 Highway 36A Coalition luncheon in Rosenberg. Cody Vasut, R-Angleton, will be serving his second term. Stan Kitzman, also a Republican, is from Waller County. He will be serving his first term. Both men were scheduled to take their oaths of office Jan. 10 in Austin.

See **PRIORITIES**, page A3

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## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference set for Feb. 7

The 38th annual Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference has been set for Feb. 7 at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, Buildings C & D in Rosenberg.

Registration is from 7:15-8:30 a.m., with the conference from 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. The cost with lunch included is \$30 before Jan. 20, and \$40 after Jan. 20. Due to preparations, registration at the door will be limited.

The conference is a celebration of vegetable production along the upper Gulf Coast region. Austin, Brazoria, Colorado, Galveston, Harris, Waller and Wharton counties join Fort Bend to stage this event focusing on teaching sustainable practices to help producers maximize efficiencies and profitability.

To register, visit the website, the abbreviated URL for which is [bit.ly/3X4tHkE](http://bit.ly/3X4tHkE). To register and pay in person by check or cash, visit Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, 1402 Band Road (Annex Building) in Rosenberg.

For more information, visit the website, the abbreviated URL for which is [bit.ly/3CvEV9T](http://bit.ly/3CvEV9T), or call Lorraine Niemeyer at 281-633-7033.

### Fort Bend Master Gardeners to host annual fruit tree sale Feb. 11

From citrus, such as grapefruit and lemon, to pome fruits such as pears and apples, Fort Bend County Master Gardeners will have plenty of fruit trees at their Feb. 11 sale.

The 23rd annual sale opens at 9 a.m. in Barn H of the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, 4310 Texas 36 S. in Rosenberg, and closes at noon or until sold out. Last year's sale sold out in less than an hour.

Citrus trees at the sale include grapefruit, lemon, lime, mandarin, orange, pummelo, satsuma and tangerine. All citrus trees available at the sale are certified

to be disease free.

Blueberry and blackberry bushes are part of the sale as are avocado, coffee, dragonfruit, fig, olive, peach, pear and plum trees. The lineup includes apricot, banana and loquat trees, too.

An estimated 75 different varieties of fruit trees, berries and tropicals/sub-tropicals will be for sale with approximately 1,000 different plants available. Fort Bend Master Gardeners will be available to answer questions about how to plant and care for your new tree or plant.

Proceeds from the sale are earmarked for the nonprofit Fort Bend County Master Gardeners Inc. The organization's goal is to provide research-backed horticulture advice to residents of Fort Bend County, in support of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

Master gardeners will have a limited number of wagons to assist shoppers in transporting their purchases. Shoppers may bring their own hand-drawn wagon if they prefer not to wait for a wagon.

For more information, visit the website [fbmg.org/fruit-tree-sale/](http://fbmg.org/fruit-tree-sale/).

### Annual Boots & Badges Gala set for Feb. 11

The annual Boots & Badges Gala, which raises scholarship money for children of Fort Bend County public safety professionals, has been set for Feb. 11 at Safari Texas Ranch in Richmond.

"We'd like to thank our faithful title sponsor, Safari Texas, for their commitment to our mission," Ben Simpson, Behind the Badge Charities board president, said. "Their contribution of the Infinity Ballroom allows us to give more of the money raised to deserving children of our public safety professionals."

Each year, Behind the Badge Charities awards college scholarships valued at \$2,000 each. Proceeds raised from the Boots

and Badges Gala will be used to provide these scholarships.

"Raising money for college scholarships is our way of saying thank you to our Fort Bend County first responders who risk their lives every day for citizens they've never met," Simpson said.

For more information about sponsorships and tickets, visit the website [behindthebadgecharities.org/gala](http://behindthebadgecharities.org/gala).

### Meyers replaced as H-GAC delegate from Fort Bend County

Fort Bend County Judge KP George has replaced Pct. 3 Commissioner Andy Meyers as Fort Bend County delegate to the Houston-Galveston Area Council for 2023.

Commissioners approved the move, which was made at the Dec. 20 meeting, by a 3-2 vote. George, Pct. 2 Commissioner Grady Prestage and Pct. 4 Commissioner Dexter McCoy, all Democrats, voted for the reassignment.

Meyers and Pct. 1 Commissioner Vincent Morales, both Republicans, voted against the reassignment.

Meyers said at the meeting that he did not learn about his replacement until he saw the agenda. Meyers asked George why he was being replaced.

"We're moving in a different direction and changes can happen," George said. "At this point, that is my answer."

—CONTRIBUTED REPORTS



ANDY MEYERS



KP GEORGE

## What's behind your home can be worth more money

BY TIMOTHY GENE SOJKA  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Most homebuyers fall in love with the glamour of the home's elevation first. Potential owners picture their family, business associates, even their boss pulling up to the home and being impressed. The homebuyers think of their kid's prom pictures and Easter egg hunts snapshots in front of the home.

A home's elevation is important and does add to the value of a home. But what if I told you that the back of the home may be more important?

What is behind your home can add or subtract value. Let's analyze landmarks that can greatly increase and sometimes decrease a home's value.

Landmarks that can generally increase your home's value include:

- Golf course lots. This depends on the hole location, however. For example, does the home get shelled by hacker level golfers?
- Waterfront lots. These are the most consistent value improvement.
- Greenbelts or parks backing lots.

Landmarks that can generally decrease your home's value include:

- Commercial backing lots. These commercial operations are busy weekdays, though often quiet on the weekends.
  - Retail backing lots.
  - School backing lots. Schools are busy weekdays though often quiet on weekends.
  - Freeway backing lots. These lots are tougher to sell.
  - Apartment complex facing lots. Like freeway backing lots, these lots are tougher to sell.
  - Power line backing lots.
  - Underground oil pipe backing lots.
  - Any lots near a waste treatment facility or junk yard.
- Other factors can be classified



FILE PHOTO

What's behind your home can be worth more money when it comes time to sell, columnist Timothy Gene Sojka writes.

as wildcards. These include:

- Vacant lot facing lots. These lots if you don't know what's coming behind you.
- Bayou lots. It's important to know the flooding history.
- A neighbor/fence. Are they the best neighbors you ever had, or do they play their music too loud and their dogs bark without provocation?

Every lot has its pluses and minuses based on what's behind it and of course there are exceptions. Some people hate waterfront/golf course lots because people can see in your back yard. Some people like backing to a commercial lot. Still, as stated earlier, these are generalizations.

Most people will have a good old-fashioned fence and a real neighbor. I recommend meeting them in advance of closing. Most importantly, before you close, consider what is behind you.

The prom pics in the front yard are nice, but few things raise or decrease value more than what's behind you.

*Timothy Sojka is the broker of the See TIM Sell Team at Keller Williams. His team has sold over 2,000 homes. Tim is also the author of the Amazon #1 political thrillers Payback Jack, Politickill and the upcoming addiction thriller, 39.*

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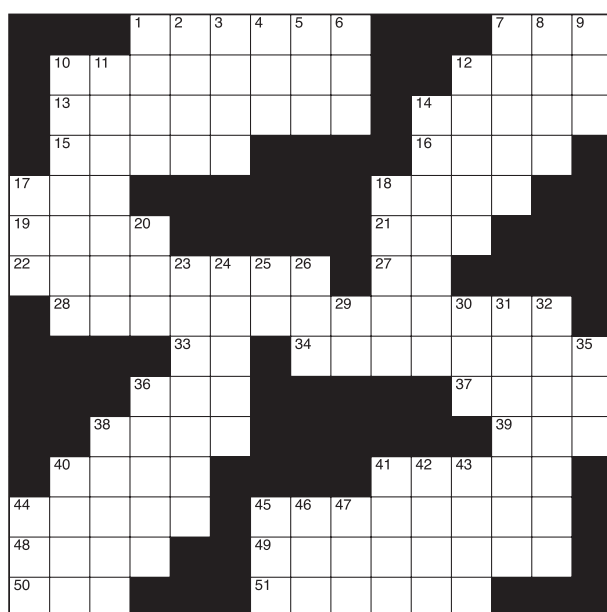
## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

### CLUES ACROSS

1. Respiratory disorder
7. Bulgarian mountain peak
10. Group of important people
12. South American nation
13. Amazes
14. \_\_\_Castell, makers of pens
15. Perlman and Seehorn are two
16. Early medieval alphabet
17. Legislator (slang)
18. Tasty crustacean
19. Course of action
21. Airborne (abbr.)
22. Permanent church appointment
27. Larry and Curly's pal
28. Famed American journalist
33. 12th letter of Greek alphabet
34. In a way, vanished
36. Afflict in mind or body
37. Egyptian sun god
38. Source of the Blue Nile
39. Egyptian unit of weight
40. Be the source of pain
41. Esteemed award \_\_\_ d'Or

### CLUES DOWN

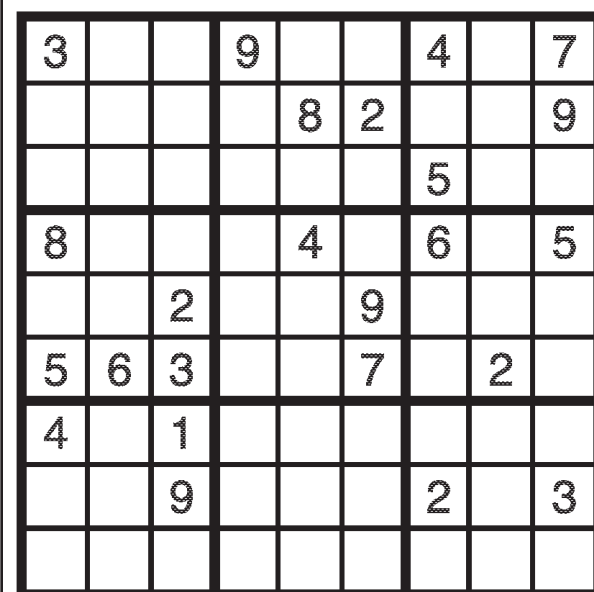
44. Partner to pains
45. Deep blue
48. No longer living
49. Country in the UK
50. Not even
51. Arizona city
1. Wager
2. Classical portico
3. As a result
4. Bird
5. A type of "Squad"
6. Autonomic nervous system
7. Dish with food on a stick
8. City northwest of Provo
9. C. European river
10. One out of jail
11. Henry Clay estate
12. Heathen
14. Refrained
17. Parts per billion (abbr.)
18. "The Stranger" author
20. Not old
23. Periods of starvation
24. Language of tribe in India
25. Savings account



26. Pitching stat
29. Megabyte
30. Ribonucleic acid
31. A place to put your feet
32. The fun part of a week
35. We all have our own
36. Partner to "oohed"
38. African nation
40. Breezed through
41. Sets out
42. Other
43. Not fattening
44. "Much \_\_\_ about nothing"
45. Central Time
46. Former EU monetary unit
47. Charles S. Dutton sitcom

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

## SUDOKU



Level: Intermediate

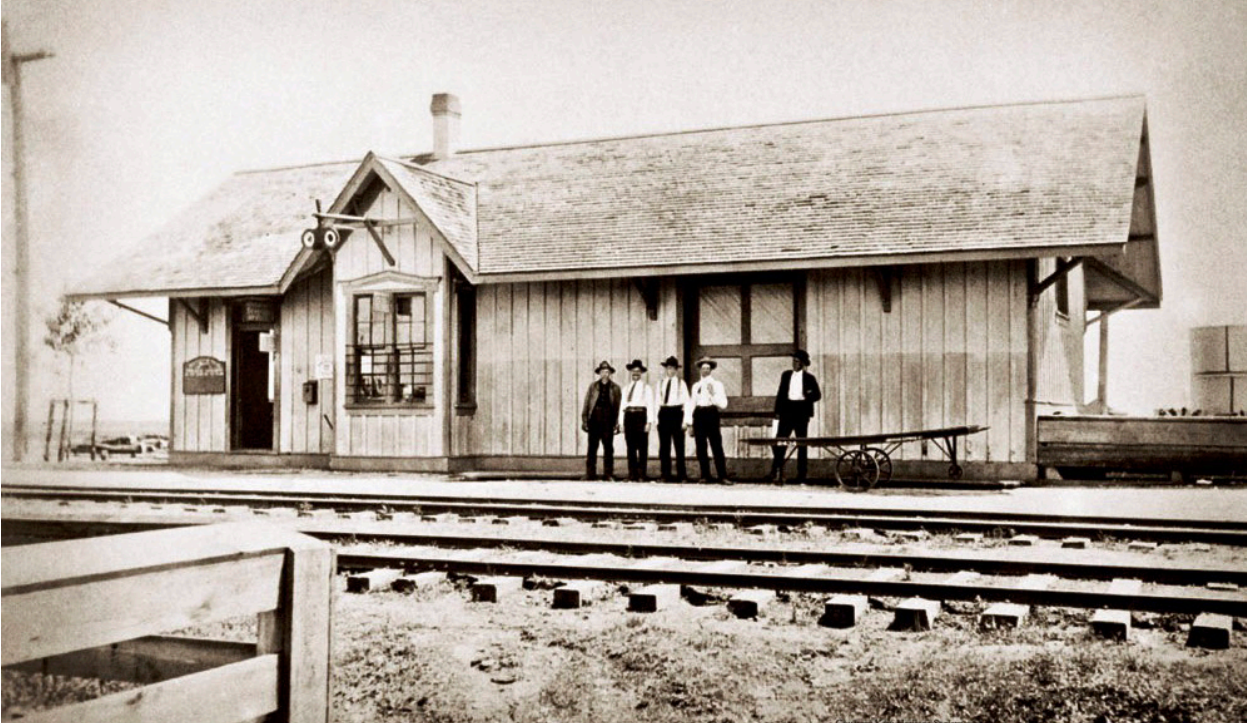
### Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test.

### Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.



KATY HERITAGE SOCIETY

A 1910 photo of the Katy Depot, which will be celebrated Saturday.

## DEPOT

from page A1

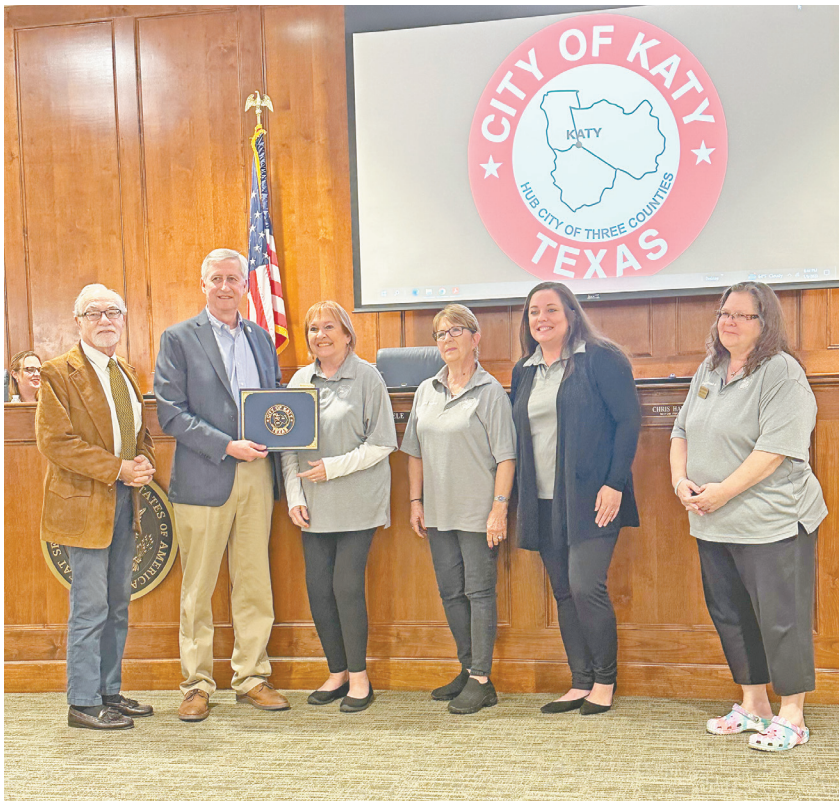
they worked with city officials of that time and purchased the building.

Davitz said the building was judged to be not in great condition, but it was in good enough condition to be saved. The railroad company then asked that the building be moved, as it was on company property. Katy citizens teamed up again and moved it. It was first moved to Katy City Park, at the intersection of Avenue D and Franz Road. The depot and caboose were both moved in 2006 to their current 1st Street location.

Moving the depot and caboose took some work. Luckily, Davitz said, many of the older homes in Katy had been moved multiple times over the years. There were people in Katy that knew how to perform such tasks.

"We had three big name moving companies that moved houses all the time," Davitz said, adding that they could pick up and move a house to a new location in days. So it was with the depot and the caboose.

Davitz said some of the streets near the park will be shut down for the celebration and urged visitors to park at City Hall, 901 Ave. C.



GEORGE SLAUGHTER

The Katy City Council Monday honored the Katy Heritage Society, and the Katy Railroad Park, at its Monday meeting. Pictured are, from left, former board member David Frishman, Mayor Dusty Thiele, secretary Marilyn Frishman, vice president Linda Mikeska, president Adrienne Davitz and board member Brenda Hunter Martin.

## MLK DAY

from page A1

Volunteers will tour the cemeteries and help clean tombstones and removing brush overgrowth that restricts access to historic gravesites for family and the public.

The restoration efforts began after the discovery of the tombstone of Benjamin Franklin Williams, which had fallen into disrepair in February 2022. Volunteers from the Exchange Club made six visits to Bates Allen Park that year to clean tombstones, clear access to tombstones from overgrowth, and reconstruct tombstones that had fallen over.

Williams was a slave for the first 46 years of his life. After becoming a free man in 1865, Williams became the first Black to be recognized by the State of Texas as a Methodist minister.

Williams served three



A miniature train ride is among the attractions set for Saturday's MLK Day block party in Brookshire.

SHERRELL ROGERS

terms representing Fort Bend County in the Texas House of Representatives, where he was the first man of color to receive votes to be the Speaker of the Texas House. He died on Feb. 27, 1886, and is buried in Newman Chapel Cemetery.

When members of the Exchange Club first visited his gravesite, his tombstone had fallen into the mud and was

covered with weeds and fire ant beds. Volunteers righted the tombstone and cleaned it, but maintenance of this tombstone and the thirty other tombstones in both historic cemeteries must be constant. The Jan. 16 visit is the first visit for 2023.

For more information, contact Olson at ppointex@hotmail.com or McCoy at dexter.fbc@gmail.com.

## PRIORITIES

from page A1

While Kitzman is new to the House of Representatives—"It has been quite a year for Stan Kitzman," he said—he has been a part of the Highway 36A Coalition. It comprises local governments, elected officials, private businesses and individuals, and focuses on developing regional transportation running from Brazoria County and Freeport, which has a deep-water port, up through Fort Bend, Waller and Austin counties.

"I was here when we formed the 36A coalition and here when we wrote the bylaws," Kitzman said. "I encourage you to stay energized. From my perspective, the work you do is important. I don't know another project in the state, road-wise, as important as 36A."

Kitzman said the coalition's work to improve transportation for economic development reasons as important, but it was just as important to remember that the transportation work was also for hurricane evacuation purposes. With more residents on the Gulf Coast, this becomes a priority, he said.

"The reality today is that we have more neighbors," Kitzman said.

Vasut urged coalition members to "stay the course" on developing the regional transportation options.

"The squeaky wheel is going to get the grease," Vasut said.

Vasut said the state is looking at a \$27 billion surplus, but with money comes problems. Besides transportation, Vasut said he would be working towards property tax relief. He said a number of proposals were before the legislature. He also wanted to see the state government do what it could to continue encouraging business investment in Texas.

Vasut also spoke about getting along in the Texas Legislature and his experiences during the 2021 session, which was his first.

"It's a learning process," Vasut said. "You come into a body and you have ideas. The freshman representatives, we listen to them the most because you, Stan, you were just on the campaign trail."

Vasut said he had a great experience in the last session. He said he learned a lot and expected to learn even more in this session.



CODY VASUT



STAN KITZMAN

## COUNCIL

from page A1

includes paving, and Harris County and Harris County Flood Control District requirements," Browne wrote.

The city purchased the house, along with a tractor and trailer that came with it, in 2021. The city has been repurposing the building to serve both as parks department headquarters and as a parks learning system center.

The structure sits on a 1.24-acre plot just east of the Katy Library. It sits near the Katy City Park, Mary Jo Peckham Park and the Katy Dog Park.

The city paid \$350,000 for the house, and \$22,750 for the tractor and trailer. Money for these purchases came from the city's reserve fund.

In another action, the council approved funds to replace the playground at the Katy Arboretum, 2046 Katy City Park.

Browne, in a memo to the council urging approval, wrote the total project cost for the design, demolition and removal of the old playground structure, along with the delivery and installation of the new playground and shade structure, is about \$84,700.

The contract is with the PlayWell Group of Boerne, which is near San Antonio.

Browne said the parks advisory board reviewed design submissions for a new playground and decided to proceed with the PlayWell Group proposal at its Nov. 9, 2022 meeting.

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# The shameful return of earmarks

Earmarks are back and they're costing American taxpayers a bundle.

In case you've forgotten, earmarks, says FactCheck.org, "are government funds that are allocated by a legislator for a particular pet project, often without proper review."

Often attached to the 12 large appropriation bills that Congress by law is supposed to pass each year to fund the federal government for the next year, earmarks tend to be concealed.

That way, members of Congress from both parties can slip in funding for pricy or dubious projects in their districts or states that benefit themselves politically and, for the most part, nobody notices.

People and the media especially don't notice earmarks when Congress fails to establish a proper budget for each of the 12 separate appropriation bills—something it has managed to do only three times in the last 47 years, most recently in 1997.

What Congress usually does is wait until the last minute and then lazily bundle the 12 funding bills into a single massive "omnibus" spending bill, such as the stinker that was just passed to fund the government in fiscal 2023.

That \$1.7 trillion monstrosity is 4,155 pages long and filled with 7,200 earmark projects costing \$15 billion that, like the rest of the budget, nobody had time to review and question before hastily voting "aye!"

The spending on earmarks was less than 1% of the cost of the overall omnibus bill.

But the danger is that the earmarks can be used to persuade—bribe?—legislators to support massive bills that do spend ridiculous amounts of money and keep our \$31 trillion in government debt ballooning.

An omnibus bill also allows a lame-duck Congress to "pass" legislation it wanted to pass in 2022 but couldn't—legislation that should be debated and voted upon in the light of day, but was not and never will be.

According to the Wall Street Journal, the omnibus bill included sizable changes to retirement savings rules, cosmetics regulation, Electoral Count Act reform, healthcare and goodness only knows what else.

To be sure, earmarks—euphemistically referred to by our



**TOM PURCELL**  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

government as "Community Project Funding"—can fund useful or worthwhile projects, such as improvement to medical care, education and other important services.

But they are just as likely to fund things they have no business funding.

According to Reason magazine, the omnibus bill President Biden just signed earmarks \$750,000 for fire alarm modernization at the Metropolitan Opera, funds the creation of a Ukrainian Independence Park, whatever that is, and will spend more than \$3.6 million to build a Michelle Obama Trail.

Actually, I favor borrowing money to build such a trail, as it well may be our only opportunity to tell our legislators to take a hike!

You'd think Republicans—the party that pretends to be for fiscal responsibility and against wasteful spending—would understand the dangers of earmark bribery. You'd think they would vote to ban them.

In fact, Republicans did just that in 2011. But House Republicans voted to reverse their ban in March of 2021.

And this past November, House Republicans voted by a 158-52 margin against a bill that would have banned earmarks again in the new 118th Congress, in which they will hold the majority.

I suppose the best we can hope for, then, is that House Republicans will be only slightly less reckless with earmark bribery than the 117th Congress, which was the most recklessly spending Congress in U.S. history.

But considering that Republicans were rewarded with almost half of the earmark largesse packed into the latest omnibus bill, I have my doubts.

*Purcell, creator of the infotainment site ThurbersTail.com, which features pet advice he's learning from his beloved Labrador, Thurber, is a Pittsburgh Tribune-Review humor columnist. Email him at Tom@TomPurcell.com.*



# How Barbara Walters crafted her incomparable career

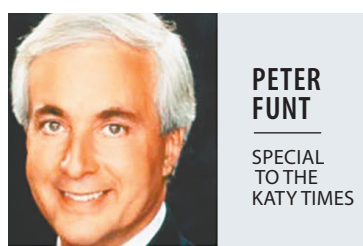
Barbara Walters might never have become a powerful force in broadcast journalism had she lacked the chutzpah to extract a promise from her bosses at NBC News in 1973.

As she explained it to me, she had already worked at the "Today" show for a dozen years, serving first as a writer and then as the "Today girl" on set—a bubbly balance to the program's male host, the journalist Frank McGee. If McGee were ever to leave, NBC pledged, she would be named co-host, an unprecedented role for a woman.

Eight months later, McGee died of cancer. Five days after that, Walters was named co-host and given a voice in selecting her new on-air partner, the unassuming newsman from local TV, Jim Hartz.

Almost every obit about Barbara Walters, who died Dec. 30 at 93, mentions that she "broke the glass ceiling" in TV news. A measure of the enormity of that challenge was contained in Frank McGee's own arrangement with NBC, stipulating that during in-studio interviews he would always ask the first three questions, lest viewers conclude that the woman at his side was of equal status.

I suppose it would be considered a compliment to say that McGee was a shrewd negotiator. But to use the same



**PETER FUNT**  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

**There are a lot of women in broadcasting today who would like to send Barbara Walters a note of thanks.**

term about Walters would be perceived quite negatively, especially a half-century ago. She was, indeed, shrewd.

And demanding. And often manipulative in dealing with superiors, writers like me who covered her and, most of all, the wide range of politicians and showbiz celebrities whom she persuaded to open up—even shed tears—on camera.

She left NBC in 1976 to become TV's highest-paid news anchor at the time, seated alongside Harry Reasoner on the "ABC Evening News." Her \$1 million annual salary was roughly double what CBS icon Walter Cronkite was

earning.

Privately, Reasoner dismissed the new pairing as so much network gimmickry. For her part, Walters acknowledged on her first broadcast that some viewers might have tuned in, "out of curiosity, drawn by the rather too much attention and overblown publicity given to my new duties and my hourly wage."

She survived the flop that the ABC newscast turned out to be and managed to parlay it into a robust career focused primarily on interviewing, for which she was best known. Even that included careful calculation. Though she did interviews both live and recorded, she preferred the latter format. "Whoever holds the scissors controls the entire interview," she told me.

Whenever I wrote about her, even a brief mention, I received a hand-written thank you note in the mail. I wasn't flattered so much as I was impressed by a woman who knew she had to work harder to compete in a male-dominated field.

There are a lot of women in broadcasting today who would like to send Barbara Walters a note of thanks.

*Peter Funt's new memoir, "Self-Amused," is now available at CandidCamera.com.*

## Katy Times

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## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### Fort Bend County announces grant in support of family violence prevention services

Fort Bend County is now accepting applications for the Family Protection Fee Grant. The grant is open to Fort Bend area nonprofits that implement comprehensive domestic violence services, support family violence prevention, and help survivors of domestic violence and their children.

The amount of funding available for the fiscal year 2023 is \$9,559.65. Last year, over \$40,000 was awarded to four Fort Bend area service providers: AVDA, Child Advocates, Family Life Center, and FBC Women's Center.

The grant funds are made possible by the family protection fee that the Fort Bend District Clerk's office collects when someone files a suit for the dissolution of a marriage under Chapter 6, Family Code.

"With the help of our nonprofits, victims of domestic violence and their children can seek safety and get the support and assistance they need through our nonprofit partners," Fort Bend County Judge KP George said. "The only way to end domestic abuse is to work together to rebuild the lives of survivors and their children, and the Family Protection Fee Grant will help support efforts to do so."

Fort Bend County Commissioner's Court adopted the \$15 fee under Government Code, Title 2, which allows for the district clerk to provide funding to a nonprofit organization that provides services for family violence and child abuse prevention, intervention, mental health, counseling, and legal services including marriage preservation services to families that are at risk of experiencing or that have experienced family violence or the abuse or neglect of a child.

The fiscal year 2023 will see the end of the fee collection due to the passing of Senate Bill 41.

The bill consolidates civil court filing fees and establishes a streamlined system while remaining revenue neutral to the greatest extent possible.

The deadline to apply for the grant is Jan. 31. For more information and to apply for the grant, visit the website, the abbreviated URL for which is bit.ly/3IEHASB.

### Fort Bend County Sheriff Eric Fagan elected Houston HIDTA vice chair

Fort Bend County Sheriff Eric Fagan has been elected as the Houston High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) executive board vice chair. Sheriff Fagan has been an executive board member since he took office in 2021.

The mission of the HIDTA program is to "disrupt the market for illegal drugs by dismantling and disrupting drug trafficking and/or money laundering organizations, and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of HIDTA initiatives."

The Houston HIDTA executive board is comprised of 20 representatives including local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. The executive board assesses the drug trafficking threats found in the Greater Houston region, develops strategies to address the threats, and proposes funding needed to carry out the mission.

"It's been an honor serving as member of the executive board and representing Fort Bend in a greater scale," Fagan said. "As vice chair, we will continue to put a stop to drug related crimes, in efforts to keep our communities safe."

Houston HIDTA Director F. Mike McDaniel said having Fagan as a board member has been an asset.

"He's brought valuable input to the executive board, especially in light of his many years of law enforcement experience," McDaniel said. "I am even happier, Sheriff Fagan was selected as the vice chair, with the chair position to follow next November."

—CONTRIBUTED REPORTS



ERIC FAGAN



Over 100 CrossFit athletes from Katy, Cypress and the Houston area participated in the KTX Games, held Saturday at KTX Fit, 802 Ave. A. The competition consisted of four-person teams with athletes ranging in skill from beginner to pro.

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## EDUCATION BRIEFS



Russell Faldyn and David Youngblood, both of whom are expected to become Katy ISD campus namesakes, will speak at a Jan. breakfast.  
KATY ISD

### Men Who Mentor breakfast set for Jan. 20

Russell Faldyn and David Youngblood will speak at the Men Who Mentor breakfast, set for 7:30-9 a.m. in the Legacy Stadium Community Rooms, on the south side of the stadium.

Katy ISD Superintendent Ken Gregorski will moderate the discussion between Faldyn and Youngblood, both of whom are expected, with their wives, to become Katy ISD campus namesakes later this year.

The men's-only breakfast will celebrate powerful influence of men who are willing to mentor Katy ISD elementary and secondary male students.

A district naming advisory committee recommended Youngblood and his wife, Terri, to be the namesakes for Elementary 45. Another such committee recommended Faldyn and his wife, Cindie, to be namesakes for Elementary 46.

The Youngbloods and Faldyns are former educators and district leaders who continue to contribute to Katy ISD. Both couples are still actively involved in the school district and across campuses.

Trustees are expected to take final action on the name recommendations at their Jan. 23 meeting.

Elementary 45 will be located at 25600 Longenbaugh Road. Elementary 46 will be located at 25615 Clay Road. Both locations are in the northwest quadrant of Katy ISD.

The breakfast is part of the KEYS (Keep Encouraging Youth toward Success) Mentor Program, which matches a caring adult with a student on the brink of success. The program's primary focus is on relationship building rather than tutoring, although

increased student academic success often occurs as a result of that mentoring relationship.

To learn more about Katy ISD Partners in Education, Cydney Wright at 281-396-2468 or email [CydneyjWright@katyisd.org](mailto:CydneyjWright@katyisd.org).

To register for the breakfast, visit the website, the abbreviated URL for which is [bit.ly/3inMHvB](http://bit.ly/3inMHvB).

### Friends of Royal FFA holding chili supper and auction Jan. 16

The Friends of Royal FFA are holding a chili supper and auction from 4:30-7 p.m. Jan. 16 at the Pattison Area Volunteer Fire Department, 2950 FM 359 in Pattison. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$6 for children ages 6 years and younger.

Chili to go will be available starting at 4 p.m. For more information, call Mitch and Darleen Gotfried at 713-703-3351.

### Katy ISD Community Education courses open

Registration is open for Katy ISD's community education classes. To see the course catalog, visit the website, the abbreviated URL for which is [bit.ly/3GM99YD](http://bit.ly/3GM99YD).

To sign up for classes, visit the website, the abbreviated URL for which is [katyisd.retrak.net/](http://katyisd.retrak.net/).

For more information, email [CommunityEd@katyisd.org](mailto:CommunityEd@katyisd.org) or call (281) 396-6365.

### Aristoi Classical Academy hosting Protect Young Eyes presentation Jan. 24

Aristoi Classical Academy invites the Katy, Cypress, and Greater Houston Area to



PEXELS

The Friends of Royal FFA are holding a chili supper and auction Jan. 16 at the Pattison Area Volunteer Fire Department, 2950 FM 359 in Pattison.

join in a free, fast-paced and high-energy presentation by Protect Young Eyes to help families learn how to protect their children while using social media.

The presentation is set for Jan. 24 at the academy's Griffin Center, 5610 Morton

Road.

For more information about Aristoi Classical Academy, visit [aristoi.classical.org](http://aristoi.classical.org) or call 281-391-5003.

—CONTRIBUTED AND STAFF REPORTS

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## WEEK OF JANUARY 13

### SCORES & SCHEDULES

#### GIRLS BASKETBALL

##### Friday

- Morton Ranch vs. Katy, 7 p.m.
- Tompkins vs. Cinco Ranch, 7 p.m.
- Mayde Creek vs. Paetow, 7 p.m.
- Seven Lakes vs. Taylor, 7 p.m.

##### Tuesday

- Katy vs. Mayde Creek, 7 p.m.
- Cinco Ranch vs. Morton Ranch, 7 p.m.
- Paetow vs. Jordan, 7 p.m.
- Seven Lakes vs. Tompkins, 7 p.m.

#### BOYS BASKETBALL

##### Saturday

- Katy vs. Morton Ranch, 1 p.m.
- Cinco Ranch vs. Tompkins, 1 p.m.
- Taylor vs. Seven Lakes, 1 p.m.
- Paetow vs. Mayde Creek, 1 p.m.

##### Wednesday

- Mayde Creek vs. Katy, 7 p.m.
- Tompkins vs. Seven Lakes, 7 p.m.
- Morton Ranch vs. Cinco Ranch, 7 p.m.
- Jordan vs. Paetow, 7 p.m.

#### GIRLS SOCCER

##### Thursday-Saturday

- All Katy ISD schools at I-10 Shootout

##### Tuesday

- Cinco Ranch vs. Tompkins, 7:15 p.m.
- Paetow vs. Mayde Creek, 7:15 p.m.
- Katy vs. Morton Ranch, 7:15 p.m.
- Taylor vs. Seven Lakes, 7:15 p.m.

#### BOYS SOCCER

##### Thursday

- Jordan at Coopell, 2 p.m.
- Seven Lakes vs. Reagan, 6 p.m.

##### Friday

- Seven Lakes at Eastland, 11 a.m.
- Paetow at Porter, 7:15 p.m.
- Tompkins at Alief Taylor, 7:30 p.m.
- Jordan vs. Harlan, 3 p.m.

##### Saturday

- Jordan vs. Lake Travis, 4 p.m.

##### Tuesday

- Tompkins vs. Cinco Ranch, 7:15 p.m.
- Mayde Creek vs. Paetow, 7:15 p.m.
- Morton Ranch vs. Katy, 7:15 p.m.
- Seven Lakes vs. Taylor, 7:15 p.m.



## Seven Lakes overcomes Cinco Ranch

### IN BATTLE FOR TOP SPOT IN DISTRICT

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

It had been a few weeks since Seven Lakes was tested in district play. The Spartans had been rolling, winning 13 straight, including their first six District 19-6A games, but they knew that as good as they had been playing, they would have a tough task facing a talented and well-coached Cinco Ranch team.

"Anytime we play those guys its s dogfight," said Seven Lakes head coach Shannon Heston. "I've been here since we started playing varsity basketball and we have played so many games against Cinco — I can't remember one game where it was decided by halftime. It doesn't matter who's the better team — this game is always going to be so tough and today was no exception. They were shorthanded but had such a great gameplan and they smacked us in the mouth."

The Spartans knew they'd be in for a battle, and it was just that, as they had to

See SPARTANS, page B3

Nasir Price throws down a dunk during Saturday's game between Seven Lakes and Cinco Ranch at the Seven Lakes gym.

DOMENIC GREY | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES



Alex Kilgore, Daymion Sanford and Justin Stevenson sit together at their signing ceremony Thursday at Paetow High School.

## Paetow trio celebrates signing to play football at next level

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

It was a big day at Paetow on Thursday. It was a day of celebration, and a day that three young men had been waiting for their whole high school careers, as Daymion Sanford, Alex Kilgore and Justin Stevenson all signed to continue their careers at the Division I level, signing national

letters of intents to play football in college. For Sanford, it's a move just 74 miles up the road, as he signed to play at Texas A&M, joining a class that is ranked in the top 15 in the country and completing what has been a lifelong dream for him. "It's a place I've always wanted to be," Sanford said. "It's close to home — they play in the strongest conference in college

football in the SEC and then the coaches have been so good with me. I'm just excited to go play for them, work for the coaches and continue to get better. It's just a blessing to be able to do this." Sanford had a tremendous high school career and kept it going even past his final high school game, as he showed out in the Army All-American bowl

See SIGNINGS, page B6

## Hicks family seizes special opportunity in All-American game

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

David Hicks Sr. and D.J. Hicks had a unique opportunity over the past week. The father and son have spent plenty of time as player and coach, but they had a different and new type of opportunity as Hicks Sr. coached in and D.J. Hicks played in the Under Armour All-American game on Tuesday. It was a great chance for Hicks Sr. as a coach, as he had a chance to be the linebackers coach for Team Phantom in the game and to coach some of the top recruits in the country. "It was just awesome the entire time," Hicks said. "It was really a once in a lifetime opportunity. To be around that much talent and so many great players and coaches — spending a week with them everyday. It was just amazing. You're learning about all different parts of the world. I



D.J. Hicks (left) and David Hicks Sr. pose for a photo during the Under Armour All-American game.

coached a kid from Finland and I coached another kid that was a world championship wrestler. It was really amazing." But more than that it was a chance for Hicks Sr. to see his

See HICKS, page B3



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# Houston continues rolling with blowout over SMU

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

The University of Houston came into this season with high expectations.

After back-to-back years in which they reached the elite eight, it looked like this year could be the one where they made a breakthrough towards a national championship.

But Kelvin Sampson and his team aren't worried about that. The tournament, their long-term goals and looking ahead are not what the Cougars are focused on, all they care about is winning the day.

That focused showed on Tuesday as the Cougars trounced SMU 87-53 to win their sixth straight game as Houston continued a dominant start to American Athletic Conference play.

It was the third win in a row in ACC this season for Houston and it was in classic Kelvin Sampson fashion, with a team that spread the ball offensively and played suffocating defense.

"When you have a veteran group, you know what you're going to get every night and that's what I appreciate about this group. The thing I liked tonight is that our defense led us," Sampson said. "We got our energy from our defense. That started with Jamal (Shead) and Marcus (Sasser) and Tramon (Mark), those three guys at the point of attack were great tonight."

It was a career day for true freshman Jarace Walker, who tied a career high in points with 23, but showed how dominant he could be in the first half. Walker started the game with 16 points in under 10 minutes of play and 18 points heading into halftime, showing moves in the post, pick and roll and on catch and shoot. He also added 10 rebounds and three assists in what was the strongest game of his collegiate career thus far.

"When he plays like that, it just takes us to another level offensively," Sasser said. "When he's doing what he does, it makes the game easy for the whole team because it opens things up for us. The defense has to key in on him when he's playing at that level and it gives everyone open shots. It opens up the entire offense."

The Cougars came soaring out the gates behind Walker, taking a huge lead early and never looking back.

The Cougars led by 26 points heading into halftime and just continued to build on it in the second half, leading by as many as 39 in the blowout win. Rebounding was a huge factor as Houston had more than twice as many as SMU.

It was the eighth 30-point win for the Cougars this season, which is the most the program has had in a single season since 1978.

Houston will likely be favored in every game the rest of the way this regular season as they look to secure a No. 1 seed heading into the NCAA tournament. The Cougars will play Tulane on Tuesday, as they try to continue a strong run.

"We're getting better, but this game is over, and you don't get any carry over points for that," Sampson said. "Once we get to practice tomorrow it's a totally different story. Once we get to practice, we'll go over our goals and we have zero interest in this game anymore — we have to stay focused on the next one."



Houston forward Jarace Walker (25) dunks the ball during an NCAA men's basketball game between the Houston Cougars and the Southern Methodist Mustangs on Jan. 5, 2023 in Houston. Houston won, 87-53.



Houston forward Ja'Vier Francis (5) blocks a shot by SMU guard Zach Nutall (10) during an NCAA men's basketball game between the Houston Cougars and the Southern Methodist Mustangs on Jan. 5, 2023 in Houston. Houston won, 87-53.



Houston forward Ja'Vier Francis (5) dunks the ball during an NCAA men's basketball game between the Houston Cougars and the Southern Methodist Mustangs on Jan. 5, 2023 in Houston. Houston won, 87-53.



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DOMENIC GREY | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Brett Norton drives towards the basket during Saturday's game between Seven Lakes and Cinco Ranch at the Seven Lakes gym.

## SPARTANS

from page B1



DOMENIC GREY | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Tillman Jaramillo comes down with a rebound during Saturday's game between Seven Lakes and Cinco Ranch at the Seven Lakes gym.

overcome trailing most of the game before pulling away in the fourth quarter to beat the Cougars 65-55, staying unbeaten in district and cementing themselves as the top team in District 19-6A through the first half of the season.

It wasn't a runaway win and the Spartans were given all they could handle from the opening tip. Cinco Ranch jumped out to an early lead, going up by four at the end of the first quarter and growing that lead to as much as nine in the second quarter.

But Nasir Price and Brett Norton kept the Spartans in the game, despite Seven Lakes struggling, as both made clutch plays. Price was everywhere in the first half, hitting a buzzer beating three at the end of both quarters and finishing the half with 18 of the Spartans 28 points as Cinco Ranch led 31-28 at halftime.

"Nasir is such a special player even as a freshman," Heston said. "He has a chance to compete at a very high level and not just in high school, he has a chance to be the best player to come through this school, and you could see glimpses of that today.

He just played in the moment, he scored our first seven points, he hit two buzzer beaters and then he also handled the ball and created for others. It's a huge deal at that age to be able to see and understand what you need to do in each moment."

Once halftime hit, the game started to shift Seven Lakes' way. The Spartans stepped up their pressure defensively in the second half and were able to make the Cougars uncomfortable with their press and with traps. Things were tied at the end of the third quarter and the Spartans were starting to get back in the game.

"We knew at half that we had to stop letting them be so comfortable on offense," said sophomore forward Tillman Jaramillo. "We picked up the pressure — whether it was a full court press, half court trap, anything we could to not let them get in their offense and that was the difference in the game. Our energy was great and it got us back in the game."

Jaramillo struggled with his shot in the first half, but was one of the biggest difference makers in the second half, hitting three three-pointers, including one that put the game out of reach, putting the Spartans up 11 with just over a minute remaining.

Jaramillo's confidence came from his team, as his coaches told him at halftime to keep shooting because they knew he would come up with clutch baskets. Jaramillo went back out on to the court before the start of the second half, and he started feeling it.

"The second you lose your confidence as a shooter, it's over. It disrupts everything, so I just told myself keep shooting it and my coaches did too," Jaramillo said. "I just kept my confidence and I knew eventually the buckets would come. Thankfully it led to some big moments in this game."

Seven Lakes continues to win, but the Spartans know that they are just scratching the surface of their potential and hope to continue building as they prepare for the rest of district play and the playoffs.

"We can be one of the best teams in the state if we just continue to play for each other and play selfless," Norton said. "We have to continue improving defensively as well because our offense will take care of itself with how talented some of the guys are. But we have to lock in defensively and finish possessions every time down."

## HICKS

from page B1

son compete against the top talent of his class and seeing D.J. Hicks prove himself against some of the best competition he's faced was something that Hicks Sr. will never forget.

"It was so cool to see him just be around truly high-level talent at all times and still when I watched him he stood out and you could see he really belonged," Hicks said. "It's just so cool to see as a dad and you could just see his level of play rise as he got to the occasion. It was great to see him compete out there."

The week gave Hicks a chance to be among other top coaches as well, and he took the chance to continue to grow and hone in his own skills.

"It definitely helped me grow," Hicks said. "As a coach, as an individual, being around that can only raise your own level. It really taught me a lot just being around everything that week, seeing the other coaches, coaching those types of players. It was something I can take and grow from."

The game itself ended in a 14-7 win for Team Phantom and D.J. Hicks was named one of the top performers in the game and of the week, despite constantly being double teamed. And taking part in that game was a joy for both of the Hicks.

"It's a great experience to have and to be a part of," Hicks said. "Those kids are big, fast and strong. It's a different level and it almost felt like I was back in the NFL. Everyone there is a big dude, it's a lot of the top 300 players in the nation all in one place. It was truly a special thing to be able to coach all of those guys."



COURTESY DAVID HICKS SR.

David Hicks Sr. (second from right) and the rest of the coaching staff at the Under Armour All-American game.

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PHOTOS BY TYLER TYRE

Above: Haydan Erck takes a free kick during a game between Seven Lakes and Lake Travis at Legacy Stadium. Left: Mackinlee Poole shoots a penalty during a Class 6A bi-district round game between Tompkins and George Ranch at Rhodes Stadium.

# Katy ISD teams host I-10 shootout to kick off season

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

The I-10 shootout is back, as top girls teams from across the state will converge on Katy to kick off the 2023 season.

The tournament will include 15 of the 20 ranked teams in Class 6A-Region III in the Lethal Enforcer Texas High School Soccer rankings, as most of the Houston

powerhouses will show up along with the Katy schools.

Seven Lakes, which is ranked second in the region behind Ridge Point, will host the Spartan bracket which will include Cy-Woods, Foster Friendswood, George Ranch, Memorial, Montgomery and Wakeland.

Katy, the No. 4 ranked team in the region, will be in a bracket with Alvin, Clear Springs, Cy-Lakes,

Elkins, Fulshear, La Porte and St. Agnes. Tompkins, which is ranked No. 6, will be in a bracket alongside Jordan which is ranked No. 12, Atascocita, Clear Lake, Cy-Fair, Cy-Ranch, Mansfield Legacy and Tomball Memorial.

Cinco Ranch, the No. 11 ranked team in the region, will be with Bellaire, Bridgeland, Dawson, Lake Creek, Lake Highlands, San Antonio Churchill and Shadow Creek in

the Cougar bracket. Taylor will play in a bracket with Clements, Cy-Falls, Cy-Ridge, Deer Park, Lamar, Manvel and Richardson. Morton Ranch will be with Cy-Park, Houston Heights, Jersey Village, Kingwood, Lumberton, Oak Ridge and Travis.

Paetow will compete with Brazoswood, Cy-Creek, Fort Bend Austin, Fort Bend Kempner, Langham Creek, Waller and

Westside. Mayde Creek's bracket will have Aldine Davis, Canyon Lake, Cy-Springs, Santa Fe, Summer Creek, Westbury and Willis.

The teams will all battle Thursday-Saturday, competing in both a winners and consolation bracket, with the winners moving on to play at Legacy or Rhodes Stadium on Saturday with a chance to win their bracket.

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Units are being sold to satisfy the storage company's lien at 14122 Hirschfield Rd, Tomball, TX 77377, Jan. 28, 8 AM to Feb. 3, 10 PM at [storagetreasures.com](http://storagetreasures.com). Tenant cannot bid less than owed. Nancy Scott: 10x15 Unit, incl. Large Appliances, Furniture & Decor, Misc Smalls. Sarah Coffey: 10x10 Unit incl. Large & Small Appliances, Furniture, Boxes & Goods. Joshua Martin: 10x10 Unit incl. Washer, Dresser, Workout Equip., Building Material. Sandra Satterwhite: 10x17 unit incl. Piano, Records, Figurines, Furniture. Marla Harris: 10x10 unit incl. Bed Frame/Mattress, Clothes, Couch, Chairs.

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Package Store Permit by Jason Snyder of J&B Manifest Companies, LLC, dba The Liquor Cabinet to be located at 23927 FM 529, Suite 300, Katy, Harris County, Texas. Co-owners of said company are Jason Snyder and Brandy Snyder.

### INVITATION TO BIDDERS

Sealed Electronic Bids addressed to Board of Directors, Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 171, will be electronically received, until 2:30 p.m. Local Time, Thursday, February 9th, 2023 and then publicly opened and read at the offices of SWA Group Landscape Architects, 712 Main St., 6th Floor, Houston, Texas 77002 for "Elyson Section 41 Landscape and Park", Harris County, Texas. In addition to the opening of sealed Bids at the address above, you may view the public opening of sealed Bids via Zoom. Join the meeting from your computer at <https://swagroup.zoom.us/j/8408644870>.

Scope of Work for the Contract includes, but is not limited to, the construction of sprinkler irrigation, grading, grassing, planting, hardscape construction and landscape maintenance.

Bids received after the closing time will not be considered. A MANDATORY pre-bid conference will be held Thursday, January 26th, 2023, at 2:30 p.m. Local Time, via ZOOM. Join the meeting from your computer at <https://swagroup.zoom.us/j/8408644870>. Attendance by each prospective bidder or its representative at the pre-bid conference is MANDATORY, and no Bid will be opened unless the bidder or representative was present at the pre-bid conference.

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Copies of the bidding documents may be reviewed and obtained from [www.CivcastUSA.com](http://www.CivcastUSA.com): search **NWC109**. Bidders must register on this website in order to view and/or download specifications, plans, soils report, and environmental reports for this Project. There is **NO** charge to view or download documents.

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The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all Bids and to waive all defects and irregularities in bidding or bidding process except time of submitting a Bid. The successful bidder, if any, will be the responsible bidder which in the Board's judgment will be most advantageous to the District and result in the best and most economical completion of the Project.

The requirements of Subchapter J, Chapter 552, Government Code, may apply to this Bid and the Contractor agrees that the Contract can be terminated if the Contractor knowingly or intentionally fails to comply with a requirement of that subchapter.

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PHOTOS BY TYLER TYRE

Daymon Sanford signs his national letter of intent to play at Texas A&M.



Justin Stevenson signs his national letter of intent to play at Wyoming.

## SIGNINGS

from page B1

in December.

Sanford intercepted a pass in the game which he returned 28-yards for a touchdown in the second quarter, giving his team the lead in the game. He also made another great play in coverage, tipping a ball that his teammate, Jayden Davis intercepted. For his efforts, Sanford was named the most intense player of the game.

Sanford hopes to build on that experience as he prepares for his next step at College Station.

"It was just such a fun experience. I got to play against so many great, talented players and see what it was like to compete against the type of talent I'll go against in college. It will just continue to prepare me for what I'll need to do."

### Kilgore to continue career at SMU

Alex Kilgore was a leader throughout his entire time in high school.

The senior linebacker was always the first to show up and the last to leave, a voice for the team and coach on the field. Add to that his high level of play and it was easy to see why he was such a sought after recruit.

In the end, it was SMU that Kilgore chose to sign with, as he celebrated signing with the Mustangs on Thursday in front of family, friends and classmates.

But while it's a day of celebration for Kilgore, his work is just starting.

"It's everything I have worked towards, but now you have to turn your eyes to the next goal," Kilgore said. "I'm honored to have the opportunity they've given me, but I'm not done and I'm not satisfied just by having this opportunity. Now I have to go maximize it and that's what I'm going to do — keep working every



Alex Kilgore signs his national letter of intent to play at SMU.

day and pushing myself."

Kilgore was instrumental this year and his presence was felt by all of his teammates and coaches. He was sought by many programs and Paetow head coach David Hicks Sr. knows how special of a player he will continue to be.

"He is the epitome of what we want people to be in our program," Hicks said. "He's what embodies a Panther. He's a great kid, he's the hardest working kid you'll ever see and he is always asking the right questions. He speaks up when he needs to, makes sure his teammates are doing the right things — he's just the kid that you always want to have. He's been so huge to have, and I know he'll keep doing that same thing at the college level."

### Stevenson signs to play at Wyoming

Justin Stevenson's senior year was all about stepping up.

After the graduation of a number of seniors in the Paetow program, Justin Stevenson found himself as the No. 1 wide receiver with a chance to prove himself to the whole country.

Stevenson did just that, having a big senior season and earning a number of scholarship opportunities.

In the end it was the University of Wyoming that Stevenson chose as his

collegiate destination, as he found the opportunity he wanted at the next level.

"It's amazing," Stevenson said. "This is what I've worked to accomplish, and I found a good place for me. I think that Wyoming is just a really good place for me to grow on and off the field, as a receiver and everything else. The coaching staff and the team were great and I just felt like I had a real connection."

Stevenson was one of the biggest weapons in District 19-6A as a senior with his ability to stretch the field and make big plays out of nothing. He hopes to continue that at Wyoming.

"I just want to go out there and prove myself and continue to get better," Stevenson said. "I want to be at my best and play my best for them, so it's about getting there and locking in both on the field and in the classroom."

Hicks for one has no doubt that the three of them will succeed in their goals.

"They all are disciplined and they've already put in that hard work," Hicks said. "They know what they have to do to succeed. They had that structure in place and they thrived. I think the three of them, no matter where they go, no matter what they end up doing in life, they're going to be successful in it because that's the type of people they are."

# UT fires head basketball coach Chris Beard after domestic violence arrest

BY KATE MCGEE  
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

The University of Texas at Austin has fired Texas basketball coach Chris Beard weeks after he was charged with a third-degree felony for family violence, university officials said Thursday.

"The University of Texas has parted ways with Chris Beard," Texas athletic director Chris Del Conte said in a statement. "This has been a difficult situation that we've been diligently working through."

Beard was arrested on Dec. 12 for allegedly strangling his fiancée, Randi Trew, after Austin police responded to a 911 call at a Tarrytown home early that morning. He was released that afternoon from Travis County Jail after paying a \$10,000 bond. He has a hearing in Travis County District Court on Jan. 18. Prosecutors in the Travis County District Attorney's office said Thursday they are reviewing the case to see if it will go forward.

Perry Minton, Beard's lawyer, said in a statement published by KXAN that Beard was "crushed" at the news and said the university had "violated their agreement with the coach."

"At the outset of Coach Beard's suspension, The University promised they would conduct an independent investigation surrounding the allegations and make a decision regarding his employment only after they had done so," Minton said. "They proceeded to terminate Coach Beard without asking a single question of him or his fiancée."

In a letter that UT-Austin's legal team sent to Minton and provided to KXAN, UT-Austin Vice President for Legal Affairs Jim Davis said the university "exercised thoughtful restraint to allow time for additional material facts to emerge," before acting.

"Mr. Del Conte supported Mr. Beard and the program by supporting this pause before action and by presuming his innocence while the facts unfolded. But that support was not a determination regarding Mr. Beard's conduct — such a decision would have been premature," Davis wrote. "It is a mistake to view a manager's support for an employee as a statement of belief in criminal guilt or innocence. It is his actual behavior that we consider, not whether some acts also constitute a crime. Whether or not the District Attorney ultimately charges Mr. Beard is not determinative of whether he engaged in conduct unbecoming a head coach at our university."

Beard's contract contained a standard clause among agreements with UT-Austin that allows the university to suspend or fire him with cause for any behavior that is "unbecoming" or leads to a criminal charge "involving a felony, or any crime involving theft, dishonesty, or moral turpitude," according to the Austin American-Statesman.



COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS ATHLETICS

Chris Beard was fired this past week by the University of Texas, weeks after he was charged with a third-degree felony for family violence.

Since Beard was fired for cause, the university does not need to pay out the remainder of his contract, according to UT-Austin senior communications manager Brian Davis.

Beard was in his second season of a seven-year contract with Texas that paid around \$5 million annually, as well as additional perks. He was one of the university's highest-paid employees.

According to a copy of the arrest affidavit posted on Twitter by Orangebloods reporter Anwar Richardson, Beard's fiancée alleged that the two got in an argument when she grabbed Beard's glasses out of his hands and broke them. She alleged that he slapped her glasses off her face and then choked her with his arm from behind for around five seconds.

"He choked me, threw me off the bed, bit me, bruises all over my leg," she told police, according to the affidavit. Trew told police that she could not breathe while Beard had his arm around her neck. In the affidavit, police noted visible teeth marks and redness in a bite mark on her right forearm.

Following the arrest, UT-Austin suspended Beard, withheld his pay and launched an internal investigation.

Minton did not immediately respond to The Texas Tribune's request for comment on Beard's firing.

*This article originally appeared in The Texas Tribune at <https://www.texastribune.org/2023/01/05/ut-fired-chris-beard-basketball/>. The Texas Tribune is a member-supported, nonpartisan newsroom informing and engaging Texans on state politics and policy. Learn more at [texastribune.org](http://texastribune.org).*

**KATY PONY BASEBALL - WHERE PLAYERS START PLAYING BASEBALL JUST LIKE THE PROS AT AGE 9 - WHERE OPEN LEAGUE BASEBALL IS PLAYED JUST LIKE THE PROS.**

*Katy Pony Baseball registration is open to all players from Katy ISD, Brookshire, Sealy, Cy-Fair and Waller.*

**Katy Pony Baseball features a graduated system in 2-year increments for pitching and base distance to accommodate the physical development of players.**



**SPRING 2023**

Registration League Ages - 4 to 18 (as of May 1st 2023)

Register at Walk-In (see below) or online at [www.katyponybaseball.org](http://www.katyponybaseball.org)

**Season Starts - Week of March 20th - Ends TBD**  
Fall Sportsfest - Baseball, games, food, fun, prizes and team pictures! Saturday, March 25th

**Walk-In Registration will take place at:**

- ▶ Four Seasons Park, Saturday January 14th (10am - 12pm) (*Katy Hockley Cut-Off Rd*) or register online thru 11:59 PM on January 18th at [katyponybaseball.org](http://katyponybaseball.org)
- ▶ Tryouts, at Four Seasons Park, (Ages 6-14) Saturday, January 21st (*times assigned*)
- ▶ No Tryouts Shetland 4/5
- ▶ No Tryouts Colt (Ages 15-18): *Colt Players will be placed on teams by High School.*
- ▶ Player Drafts: *Shetland 6 - Pony - January 22nd.*
- ▶ Teams Formed / Coaches Meeting: *Shetland 4/5 - January 23rd.*
- ▶ Teams Formed / Coaches Meeting: *Colt - January 30th.*

### Registration Info

\$235 per player Pinto (7-8) through Colt (15-18) 🍷 \$225 per player Shetland 6 🍷 \$205 per player Shetland 4/5

- 🍷 Multi-player discount (\$10) for each additional player in same family. 🍷 Players receive a team jersey and baseball cap.
- 🍷 Each player gets \$120 in raffle tickets to sell • keep the money to help offset your cost• or submit in your name if you choose not to sell.
- 🍷 All sign-ups after Jan. 18th will be charged a \$25 late fee . Please register early to avoid waiting list.
- 🍷 Late registration will be available at our facilities (Four Seasons Park) During Tryouts, Saturday, January 22nd
- 🍷 After Tryouts call (281) 371-0887 to schedule registration appointment, *Cash Only*
- 🍷 To expedite the in-person registration process, forms are on our website
- 🍷 Players are assigned to a division/team based on their age as of 5/1/2023
- 🍷 New players please provide a copy or original Birth Certificate with your Registration Form and payment. Cash and checks ONLY when registering in person. Major Credit/Debit cards ONLY when registering on line.

Eligible to play if age 4 by 5/1/2023 in Shetland (T-Ball) division

### Katy PONY Baseball

- 🍷 Paid Certified Umpires - Ages 6 to 17
- 🍷 Paid Concessions Personnel
- 🍷 Paid Professional Groundskeepers
- 🍷 Professional Playing Fields
- 🍷 Graduated Pitching & Base Path Distances
- 🍷 Open Bases (Lead-off's, Steals, Balks) just like the Pro's! beginning at age 9

*Our Parents watch and enjoy the game. They do not have to rake fields, umpire or sell food items. Experience the difference.*

Ages 4-6	Ages 7-8	Ages 9-10	Ages 11-12	Ages 13-14	Ages 15-17
50 ft. Bases	60 ft. Bases	60 ft. Bases	70 ft. Bases	80 ft. Bases	90 ft. Bases
T-Ball	Coach/Dad Pitch	Kid Pitch (46 ft.)	Kid Pitch (50 ft.)	Kid Pitch (54 ft.)	Kid Pitch (60 ft.)
<b>SHETLAND</b>	<b>PINTO</b>	<b>MUSTANG</b>	<b>BRONCO</b>	<b>PONY</b>	<b>COLT</b>

All games will be played at Four Seasons Park, 4702 Katy-Hockey Cut-Off Road (Just North of Clay Road) Katy PONY Baseball is a registered non-profit organization dedicated to provide the best youth baseball experience possible. For more information or details visit [www.katyponybaseball.org](http://www.katyponybaseball.org) or call the facility at 281-371-0887

\* Season Start and end dates are subject to change based on weather and other conditions beyond our control. Field usage and Bunting cages are determined by a set schedule.

**THIS ORGANIZATION AND ITS ACTIVITIES ARE NOT RELATED TO OR SPONSORED BY THE KATY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, or any other Independent School District.**



FIND US ON  
**FACEBOOK**