

# Katy Times



ROYAL ISD  
ANNOUNCES 2020  
VALEDICTORIAN,  
SALUTATORIAN  
PAGE 2

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THE GREATER KATY AREA'S NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1912 ■ [katytimes.com](http://katytimes.com)

THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2020

## KISD parents plan proms

By R. HANS MILLER  
SENIOR REPORTER

In a May 20 update, Katy ISD canceled proms for all district High School Campuses – but that's not something KISD seniors' parents were going to let roll by. Parents of seniors from Katy, Taylor, Tompkins high schools as well as those from Lamar, Travis and Foster high schools outside of KISD are working with the Wildcatter Saloon to make proms a reality for their respective classes of 2020.

"We'll have 3.5 acres of outdoor space, and we know there's not too many places like ours around," said Wildcatter co-owner Dana Whitfield. "We basically just thought our property is perfect for social distancing and wanted to allow some of these kids to get the celebration they deserve."

Katy Tiger mom Cecilia Majewski-Crutchter said she began helping to organize a prom for Katy High after the district's announcement.

"Once they canceled yesterday, I got on the phone (with the Wildcatter). Me and another mother went out there and talked to them and we worked out a real good deal on June 9," Majewski-Crutchter said.

Students wishing to attend the Katy High School prom celebration, which is not being sponsored by Katy ISD, will have to pay \$15 per ticket to attend, Majewski-Crutchter said. The event will be completely outside, she said and while the usual fancy dresses and tuxes were welcome, formal attire will not be required because it is expected to be hot and the main goal is for kids to have fun.

Whitfield said Katy High School is among a group of seven schools The Wildcatter team was able to host, which filled up all the empty spaces on the venue's calendar from late May and into June.

"We wish we were able to host every high school around, but

See **PROM**, page 5

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## Katy provides update on flood mitigation bond

By R. HANS MILLER  
SENIOR REPORTER

In 2018, city of Katy voters approved a \$19.5 million bond package with three propositions that would allow the city to upgrade certain parts of its infrastructure to mitigate flooding in the city. With hurricane season on the horizon, Katy's Mayor Pro Tem Chris Harris and City Administrator Byron Hebert provided an update on the progress of the projects associated with the bond package.

"The biggest challenge that we have is to make sure that all of the projects are going to get done because these were estimates when we had to go and tell voters that we're going to sell bonds," Hebert said. "So now that we're getting hard numbers I wanted to make sure that \$1.25 million that we were going to (use to) do the First Street bridge – well let me hold onto that, because I can use (Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County) funds to get that done."

Hebert said the city is trying to use the bond funding authorization efficiently by supplementing it not only with transportation improvement funding from METRO but also funding from General Land Office grants, the organization in Texas charged with distributing federal Hurricane Harvey relief funding.

### Proposition A: \$4.25 million

The First Street bridge project is part of the 2018 bond package's Proposition A, a bond package in the amount of \$4.25 million dollars to be used to elevate the First Street

Bridge to allow better flow of water out of the city and into the Willow Fork Branch of Buffalo Bayou. The remainder is to be used for improvements to the drainage system along Katy Hockley Road, Hebert said.

"We went to the Katy Development Authority and have gotten them to agree to use METRO funds for the \$1.25 million, so that allows us to keep that bond authorization in case some of these other projects are overrun or cost us more than what the estimates were," Hebert said.

Hebert said city staff is working to establish funding for the Katy Hockley Road project as well. While the city has the authorization to sell bonds now, Hebert said he is looking at property values and city revenues to ensure any bonds sold for the project don't exceed the city's ability to pay for the bond debt.

"Another thing we could do if we can't issue those bonds is we could go back to KDA and use METRO funds to expand and do the drainage for Katy Hockley Road," Hebert said.

### Proposition B: \$10.25 million

The Pine Forest and Riceland Terrace subdivisions were the focus for this portion of the drainage bond package, according to city records. Work in Pine Forest has been completed Harris and Hebert said.

Magnolia Ditch has been dug out in the Pine Forest subdivision, then lined on the bottom and sides with con-

See **BOND**, page 5



R. HANS MILLER

The expansion of the Pitts Road Detention Pond located at the intersection of Morton and Pitts roads is part of Proposition B in the 2018 drainage bond package approved by city of Katy voters. Above, the equipment to expand the pond sits idle on Memorial Day but work is progressing on the pond, Katy officials said.

## Katy ISD grads and principals

By R. HANS MILLER  
SENIOR REPORTER

In unanimous votes by the Katy ISD Board of Trustees, Stephanie McElroy was promoted to principal of Bear Creek Elementary School while Shannon Smith was appointed principal at Shafer Elementary School. The board also discussed options for graduation ceremonies, eventually supporting an outdoor, socially distanced group of ceremonies in June and July.

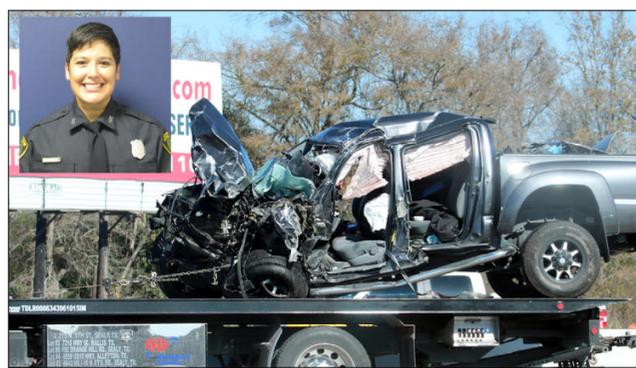
McElroy began teaching with Katy ISD in 1998 as a fifth-grade teacher. She later moved to Sealy ISD to become assistant principal at Selman Intermediate School and was later promoted to principal at that educational institution,

See **PRINCIPALS**, page 5



R. HANS MILLER

The Katy ISD Board of Trustees met virtually Tuesday evening due to the COVID-19 pandemic rather than at the Education Support Complex pictured above, which is their usual meeting place.



COLE McNANNA

Off-duty Houston Police Department officer Gizelle Solorio was killed in a motor vehicle accident on I-10 near Sealy Dec. 19 of last year. After an investigation, Solorio – who was driving the wrong way on I-10 at the time – was found to have a blood alcohol content of more than twice the legal limit.

## HPD Deputy at twice legal limit when killed

By COLE McNANNA  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

The off-duty Houston Police Officer Gizelle Solorio, who was killed in a wrong-way crash near Sealy on I-10 Dec. 19, 2019, was found to have a blood-alcohol level double the legal limit at the time of the crash according to the toxicology report.

"The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) has completed its investigation into the Dec. 19, 2019, fatal crash that led to the death of Gizelle Solorio, 32, of Katy," DPS' May 18 release states. "DPS Troopers concluded, based upon toxicology reports, that Solorio was intoxicated at the time of the collision. Investigators determined this was also a contributing factor in this crash."

Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo also released a statement on May 18 saying how much promise Solorio had shown, being voted president of her training academy class.

See **DEPUTY**, page 5

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## Q&A with Lance LaCour: Katy Area EDC President

By R. HANS MILLER  
SENIOR REPORTER

The Katy Area Economic Development Council is an organization established with the goal of developing the industry and economy in the Katy area. The boundaries of its service area are similar to that of Katy ISD, with some variances. Its service area encompasses portions of Waller, Harris and Fort Bend counties. Katy Area EDC President Lance LaCour responded to the questions below which were posed by Katy Times in order to get an idea of how the EDC is working to meet the needs of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.



LANCE LACOUR

**A:** The service industry in the Katy area is quite vast and encompasses a variety of businesses. We are fortunate to have many entertainment, lodging and restaurants options in our community. However, this means a great number of serviced-based businesses have been impacted in our area as this industry is currently at the forefront of the economic hardships being experienced due to COVID-19. I am hopeful, as our state begins to reopen, the industry will recover in relatively quick manner. I would like to extend a special thank you to our community for supporting the service industry and I encourage the community to continue to do so in a safe, responsible manner.

**Q:** How has the EDC's own operations been impacted by the stay home orders and the new coronavirus?

**A:** Since the stay at home order was implemented, we have been working remotely. Fortunately, we have been able to quickly adapt to the change and continue operations. Our remote working is going well but we are certainly anxious to get back in the office and resume

activities at full capacity. We plan to begin reopening our office, on a limited basis, Wednesday, May 20. I would personally like to thank our members for their understanding during this time. We are incredibly lucky to have such a great group of people and organizations involved with Katy Area EDC.

**Q:** What direct resources does the EDC offer to help businesses recover from the economic challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic?

**A:** As an organization, we are connecting businesses throughout our area with the appropriate resources available at a local, state and federal level. The Katy Area EDC website, katyedc.org, houses a great deal of resources and I encourage businesses to utilize this. We also launched our special COVID 19 GIS page and Zoom Business mapping program on our website, where Katy area businesses can list and post their offerings. I would also encourage businesses with questions about available resources to contact our office and we will be happy to assist however possible. We continue to work on major economic development

projects and help local and companies with expansion and retention.

**Q:** As the local economy opens back up, what external tools is the EDC recommending its community partners utilize in order to keep employees and clients as safe as possible?

**A:** We continue to encourage our community partners to follow the instructions of local, state and federal officials. From the outset, we have been relying on these entities and will continue to do so as the reopening process continues.

**Q:** What have your community partners been saying are their greatest concerns during the past few months as they've faced the challenges presented by COVID-19?

**A:** Our business community is truly doing a tremendous job in this unprecedented time. Unfortunately, many businesses are hurting financially right now. Throughout our community, we continue to hear the key for businesses is to receive financial support which will allow them to get through this time.

## Katy FD responds to Golden Eye house fire

By R. HANS MILLER  
SENIOR REPORTER

The Katy Fire Department responded to a kitchen fire on Golden Eye in the Katy Hockley Estates subdivision on the north end of Katy just south of Clay Road. Katy Fire Chief Rusty Wilson said there were no injuries to firefighters or civilians and the KFD team

was able to contain the fire, though pets were lost during the blaze.

Harris County Emergency Services District 48, Katy FD's neighboring department to the east, assisted with the fire under a mutual aid agreement with the other department, Wilson said. Mutual aid response is standard when responding to a structure fire, he said.

## Sadek joins Katy Times news team

By KATY TIMES STAFF

Sandra Sadek has joined the Katy Times team as an intern for the 2020 summer, assisting with reporting in Katy, Brookshire, Pattison, Fulshear and Sealy. She has worked for Texas State University's independent newspaper, "The University Star," for three years. She also worked as an intern with the Fund for American Studies in Washington D.C. during the summer of 2019. During her time at the Star,



SANDRA SADEK

Sadek covered student government and higher education, crime, elections and transportation.

Sadek is a recent graduate of Texas State University where she majored in Journalism and Mass Communication with a minor in International Relations. A French native, Sadek traveled to ten different countries until her family settled in Katy, where she attended Tompkins High School.

While in college, Sadek also participated in her school's award-winning Model Arab League team where she debated and worked on important issues affecting communities in the Middle East.

In her free time, Sandra enjoys reading, dancing, and hiking. She is an avid Harry Potter and Star Wars fan.

## Murder-suicide incident hits Cinco Ranch neighborhood

By R. HANS MILLER  
SENIOR REPORTER

The Fort Bend County Sheriff's office responded to a 911 call at 10:49 p.m. Saturday evening. Upon arrival, law enforcement officers found two adults deceased in the home from apparent gunshot wounds. The incident happened about a mile from Seven Lakes High School.

"It was determined the shooter, Brian Carter, shot his estranged wife, Kristi Carter, before taking his own life. Their teenage son was at home at the time," said Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office spokesman, Major Chad Norvell.

The couple's son is in the care of family members, Norvell said.

## Royal ISD announces 2020 valedictorian, salutatorian

By R. HANS MILLER  
SENIOR REPORTER

Royal ISD announced earlier this month that Jon'Dasha Price has earned the honor of valedictorian for the RISD graduating class of 2020. Price is joined at the top of her class by Araceli Amador who's hard work has earned her the salutatorian title.

"Mrs. Dawn Richardson has inspired me the most and she always motivated me the most and pushed me," Price said.

Price said she was proud of her efforts to do her best in school and her efforts have helped her to move on to Texas State University. She plans to attend the University of Texas at Austin after obtaining her bachelors degree to pursue a law degree.

Amador has already earned an associates degree and intends to pursue a biochemistry degree at Trinity University when she begins college in the fall.



JON'DASHA PRICE



ARACELI AMADOR

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# Katy Times

## SUDOKU

		7						5	
						7			2
2				5				4	8
5								9	
8	4			1					6
	1		6						
6	3		7	2			8		
			3				5		
4				6					

Level: Intermediate

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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.

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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.

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# Katy Times

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

### CLUES ACROSS

- Common request
- Department in France
- Fungi cells
- Famed inventor
- Hillside
- Cold wind
- La \_\_ Tar Pits, Hollywood
- Resembling a doddering old woman
- Geological periods
- Assists
- Comedienne Gasteyer
- Jewish spiritual leader
- English soccer club
- Body art
- No (Scottish)
- Clumsy person
- Swiss river
- Belittled
- Luxury car
- Single sheet of glass in a window
- Monetary units
- Supervises flying
- Indian term of respect
- Breezed through
- The bill in a restaurant
- Flower cluster
- Moved quickly
- Shooters need to do it
- High schoolers' test
- Split pulses
- Salts
- Breaking Bad actor \_\_ Paul
- Set ablaze
- Semitic Sun god
- Nervous system cells
- Tourist destination Buenos \_\_
- A way to bind
- Behave uncontrollably
- Feels concern
- Sportscaster Andrews
- Subway dwellers
- Astrological aspect
- You may take one

### CLUES DOWN

- Swedish rock group
- Serbian
- Away from wind
- Actor Oliver
- Helps little firms
- Intricately decorative
- American state
- Type of tumor
- Midway between east and southeast
- On a line at right angles to a ship's length
- Fruit of the service tree
- Grouch
- Romanian city
- Units of loudness
- British Air Aces
- Small amount
- Hem's partner
- Turkic people
- Member of the banana family
- Liam Neeson franchise
- Expressed pleasure
- Inward-directed part of psyche
- Insurgent
- Unhappy
- Gateway (Arabic)
- Fundraising political group (abbr.)
- Well-known
- Satisfies
- '\_\_ death do us part
- Jailhouse informant
- French river
- A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
- Drenches
- Clouds
- Companies need to make them
- Created from seaweed
- One's school: \_\_ mater
- A type of act
- Member of Russian people
- Neutralizes alkalis
- Monetary unit
- Play a role
- Midway between south and southeast

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

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## Aristoi Classical Academy class of 2020

Aristoi Classical Academy announced its graduating class for 2020 last week which included 19 students who, among them, accumulated nearly \$2 million in scholarships. At least 16 students were accepted into the following colleges: Abilene Christian University, American University, Austin College, Baylor University, Benedictine College, Cornell University, Dallas Baptist University, Houston Baptist University, Juniata College, Sam Houston State University, Texas A & M University-College Station, University of Arkansas, University of Dallas, University of Houston, University of Mary Hardin - Baylor, and Texas Tech University. A postponed graduation ceremony is expected to be held June 27.



Isabella Birsinger



Thomas Botond



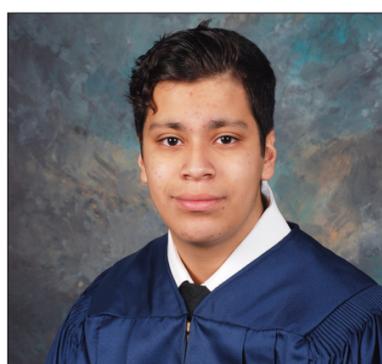
Sarah Charles



Juan Corral



Aleyna Flack



Thomas Gonzales



Von Hart



Caleb Hawk



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## Treat retail clerks like human beings

One of the most awkward, self-conscious incidents in my life occurred when I was shopping with a group, and one of my companions blithely continued browsing long after the store doors were locked.

I have done assembly-line work, junkyard work and freelance writing. But I have also punched enough cash-register keys and worked around enough clerks-slash-sales-associates to know that the retail life isn't all Skittles and beer. (Okay, maybe there IS a lot of Skittles and beer, in the sense of "Cleanup on aisle 9 of all the Skittles and beer someone upchucked.")

Life is messy and legitimate sob stories do exist, but some shoppers are HABITUALLY tardy. Twenty-something years ago, I worked in a retail environment where we (officially) closed every afternoon at 4:30. The same customers were always rushing in at 4:25 and getting finished around 4:40. When we extended our hours to 5:00, those same individuals suddenly, magically started arriving at 4:55 and staying until 5:10.

You might think the "five-second rule" pertains only to eating food that has been on the ground just briefly, but a large segment of humanity interprets it as "if you slip through the front door five seconds before the posted closing time, you have an INFINITE amount of time to window-shop."

The late, great Jim Croce dreamed of saving time in a bottle. He should've tried saving it in a mom-and-pop store.

Savvy shoppers who know all the loopholes brainstorm ever more inventive ways to drag out the shopping experience. ("Yes, dear, I have verified the thread count on all the sheets in ENGLISH, but what if your cousin from Quebec comes for a visit? Un...deux... trois...")

For the sake of their employees (and for the sake of keeping overtime costs down), some stores do use the intercom to deliver reminders such as "Paperclips, Mucilage & Beyond will be closing in 15 minutes. Please make your final



DANNY TYREE

SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

selections and proceed to checkout." But to the hardened dawdler, that's just ambient noise, like holding a seashell to your ear. ("Hey, let's ask for a seashell in something other than the 137 colors they have in stock.")

Returns are another aggravation. Apparently, most shoppers put all their receipts into a rocket and launch them TOWARD the doomed planet of Krypton. And products are rarely in anything resembling their original condition. ("I didn't realize until I opened it that it was a pickle barrel instead of a travel pack of Kleenex.")

Pity the poor clerk who is badgered into honoring some pie-in-the-sky promise allegedly made by a conveniently unidentified co-worker on the customer's previous visit. Of course, the increasingly irritated customer can never remember any distinguishing characteristics. And the timing of the promise can't be pinned down any more accurately than "definitely sometime after the Mesozoic Era. I think."

The NAME of the anonymous co-worker? Don't make me laugh. Even if a store employs someone with a memorable name (like "O.J. Simpson"), the shopper never "catches" it. ("Wait...wait...it was something beverage-y. Do you perhaps have a Tequila Sunrise on the sales staff?")

Don't get me started on the hazards and indignities, like customers licking their fingers before counting money they have produced from deep in their clothing. ("This is my MAD money. I'm mad because my jock itch medicine quit w... hey! What do you mean you're leaving to get a factory job?")

Danny welcomes email responses at [tyreetyrades@aol.com](mailto:tyreetyrades@aol.com) and visits to his Facebook fan page "Tyree's Tyrades."



## Mantle's mammoth Memorial Day blasts

When the 1956 Major League Baseball season began, the New York Yankees were in the unfamiliar position of not being the defending world champion. The previous October the Brooklyn Dodgers dethroned the Yankees, and ended the Bronx Bombers' unprecedented streak of five consecutive World Series titles.

In 1956, the Yankees set out to get back on the championship track. Emerging Yankees superstar center fielder Mickey Mantle had something to prove too. Although Mantle had an outstanding 1955 season, and led the American League in home runs, his injury-plagued World Series limited him to three games and two hits.

For both the Yankees and Mantle, 1956 was stellar. The Yankees returned to the World Series and regained the championship crown from the upstart Dodgers. Mantle led the league in hitting, home runs and runs batted in, and thus became the first player since Ted Williams in 1947 to hit for the elusive Triple Crown.

Memorial Day weekend may have been the apex of Mantle's 1956 season. The Yankees faced the hapless Washington Senators, "first in war, first in peace and last in the American League," to cite the phrase baseball writer and humorist Charles Dryden coined about the perennial cellar dwellers.

Better yet for Mantle, the Senators' first game pitcher was Pedro Ramos, nicknamed the "Cuban Cowboy" because of his fascination with the Lone Ranger movies and his propensity for 10-gallon hats.

Mantle feasted off of Ramos' pitching. In game one of the May 30 double header, Mantle hit a 620-foot blast that came within 18 inches of clearing the distant right field Yankee Stadium facade. In the nightcap,



JOE GUZZARDI

SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Mantle launched a 475-foot homer off Ramos' Cuban compatriot, Camilo Pascual. By the time the seven-hour-long afternoon had ended, Mantle led the league in six offensive categories.

For Pascual, Ramos and Mantle, their post-baseball lives were a mixed bag. Pascual, age 86, lived the least controversial life of the three Memorial Day protagonists. After he retired from the active playing roster, Pascual remained involved in big league baseball for five decades. Pascual served as the Minnesota Twins' pitching coach before he became an international scout for the Oakland A's, the Los Angeles Dodgers and the New York Mets.

Ramos, however, was eventually arrested four times on drug and weapons charges that landed him in a Florida federal penitentiary. One bust found several kilos of cocaine in Ramos' house. During their playing days, Mantle recalled, "Pedro always carried a gun." Interviewed in prison, an unremorseful Ramos, the pitcher-turned-drug dealer, spoke only about fleeing the Castro dictatorship and, while he played for the Senators, hobnobbing with President Richard Nixon.

Mantle's tale may be the saddest among the three Memorial Day adversaries. Idolized by millions of Americans for his baseball prowess, five years after his 1969 retirement, three-time Most Valuable Player

Mantle entered the Hall of Fame on a near-unanimous vote. His only baseball regret, Mantle said, was that he didn't retire earlier to preserve a .300 career average. By lingering too long, Mantle fell short, and hit .298.

Ill-advised hotel and restaurant investments nearly bankrupted Mantle, and when in 1983 he took a job glad-handing at an Atlantic City Casino, Commissioner Bowie Kuhn permanently banned the icon from baseball. The following year, new commissioner Peter Ueberroth reinstated Mantle and Willie Mays, who had also been expelled for casino-fronting. But then the baseball memorabilia boom hit, and Mantle made millions signing autographs, more money than he ever earned as a player.

In Mantle's final years, accounts about his lifelong battle with alcohol and his philandering were included in stories about his liver cancer diagnosis. Liver transplant surgery was successful, but didn't save his life. Mickey Mantle died at age 63.

Before he passed, Mantle ruefully admitted that, because of his alcoholism, he had often been cruel and hurtful to family and friends, and wanted to make amends. At former second baseman teammate and Baptist minister Bobby Richardson encouragement, Mantle became a Christian.

Despite Mantle's many flaws, baseball fans - Yankees and non-Yankees alike - will always remember Mickey as the only player in history that whether batting left or right-handed could launch the ball more than 500 feet.

Joe Guzzardi is a Society for American Baseball Research and Internet Baseball Writers Association member. Contact him at [guzzjoe@yahoo.com](mailto:guzzjoe@yahoo.com).

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## CORRECTION

Due to a printing error in our last edition, some of the photos listed in our KISD valedictorians and salutatorians spread were mixed with the incorrect nameplates. Katy Times truly apologizes for the error and will be reprinting a corrected spread in our June 4 edition.





PHOTO COURTESY CHRIS HARRIS

Makayley Harris and her friend Alyssa Leblanc pose in their prom formal wear. Both students had anticipated attending the normally-scheduled prom before Katy ISD was forced to cancel its celebration. They now have the option to attend a parent-organized event at The Wildcatter Saloon.

## PROM

from page 1

given the number of schools, it just wasn't feasible," Whitfield said.

Whitfield said the venue will be putting extra effort into sanitizing its outdoor spaces. The large, outdoor area has plenty of room for attendees to spread out and there will be sanitizing stations throughout. Off-duty police officers will be on hand to keep things safe and, along with parent chaperones, will be working to make sure social distancing is practiced.

"I think the best part is just having so much space, that you can put tables far enough apart, and keep within the six-foot distance recommendation," Dieterle Whitfield said.

Students said that, while they understood various school districts' decisions to cancel proms based on Texas Education Agency guidelines, they were saddened to hear they wouldn't have their last event with friends, making the news that their parents were going to put on an event all that much more exciting.

"I understood the situation, and I knew obviously coronavirus is a big threat right now, but we just make due with what we have," KISD senior Donnie Miller said.

Miller and classmate Brianna Cormier both said they really appreciated the district's parents and The Wildcatter coming together to make an event that, while not school-sponsored, would still give them a chance to see their friends and be together one last time before heading off to college. Cormier is destined for Lone Star College in the fall with plans to move on to Texas A&M Galveston for a degree in Marine Biology while Miller will be a biology major at Texas Tech with plans to eventually become a doctor. They both want one last hurrah with their friends before they go on to pursue those careers.

"I'm mostly looking forward to seeing my friends again and have that one more chance again, have fun, celebrate with them and just being together," Cormier said.

## PRINCIPALS

from page 1

according to a Katy ISD press release. Afterwards, she transferred to Fort Bend ISD as the associate principal of curriculum and development at Sartartia Middle School. In 2015, she became principal of Navarro Middle School in the Lamar Consolidated School District. McElroy has a bachelors degree from Sam Houston State University and a Masters Degree from the University of Houston in Clear Lake.

Smith first began as a teacher at Berry Middle School in Mesquite, Texas in 2005. She was promoted to testing coordinator for that campus in 2009. She later became assistant principal at Sherman High School in Sherman, Texas. In 2012 she relocated to the Cypress Fairbanks ISD just north and east of Katy ISD where she returned to a teaching role. Smith joined Katy ISD as assistant principal at Exley Elementary in 2015 and three years later moved to Taylor High School as assistant principal there. Smith received her bachelors degree from Texas Tech University and her masters degree from Texas A&M Commerce.

### Graduations

Katy ISD Superintendent Ken Gregorski briefed Katy ISD's trustees regarding options allowed under guidance from the office of Tex. Gov. Greg Abbott. The guidelines allow for three options, Gregorski said.

"We were waiting as a district to receive further guidance from the state and from the (Texas Education Agency)," Gregorski said. "Some of you may or may not know - TEA was tasked with providing districts a variety of parameters that they could give to us for hosting our graduations."

The first option of having the usual graduation ceremonies at the Leonard E. Merrell Center in downtown Katy was not possible, because Abbott's guidelines

MCHS - 9am CRHS - 2 SLHS - 7	MRHS - 2 OTHS - 7	No Ceremony	PHS - 7	KHS - 7	THS - 7	TBD Site SYA -10 Raines - 2
<b>June Dates</b> Saturday June 20	Sunday June 21	Monday June 22	Tuesday June 23	Wednesday June 24	Thursday June 25	Friday June 26
<b>July Dates</b> Saturday July 11	Sunday July 12	Monday July 13	Tuesday July 14	Wednesday July 15	Thursday July 16	Friday July 17

KATY ISD

Katy ISD has tentatively proposed the above dates for graduations over the summer. Administration is working out a plan to ensure state guidelines are followed for the ceremonies to protect attendees from the new coronavirus.



SHANNON SMITH



STEPHANIE MCELROY

required social distancing and outdoor ceremonies.

The second option was to have an outdoor ceremony with graduation ceremonies taking place at Legacy Stadium's Johnston Field, located at 1830 Katyland Drive, near the intersection of Franz Road and Katy Hockley Cutoff Road.

"We continue to have dates on hold for June and July for an in-person graduation and we'd always hoped to get back into our (Leonard E. Merrell Center) and have traditional graduations the way we've always had them, but that does not look like an option," Gregorski said.

A third, virtual option for graduation was also discussed, wherein students would walk the stage but not be gathered as a group and copies of digitally produced ceremonies would be provided to graduates and their families. Gregorski said the

feedback he'd gotten from parents and the community as a whole was that the virtual option was not sufficient to honor Katy ISD's 2020 graduates.

Three Katy ISD Board of Trustees members have seniors graduating including Board President Courtney Doyle, Trustee Dawn Champaigne and Trustee Duke Keller.

Board members asked Gregorski and other staff about the district's ability to ensure safety for students and other graduation attendees. Staff said plans to ensure safety and reduce risk to student, staff and graduation guest health were possible and the district could implement a plan to preserve safety for an outdoor event at Legacy Stadium.

After discussion, the board took no formal action but reached an informal consensus supporting the outdoor ceremony option. Gregorski said staff would work to implement a plan for the outdoor ceremony and inform students and those celebrating graduation with them of that process in the near future.

"Our goal has always been to provide an in-person graduation for all of our graduates," Gregorski said. "We feel that's what our graduates deserve; that's what our families want and that continues to be our goal to do."

## BOND

from page 1

crete to make it easier to maintain capacity over time, Harris said.

Harris said the city has already gone through Riceland Terrace and dug out the ditches to restore them to their designed capacity. However, the remainder of the work in Riceland Terrace will be done using grants from the GLO.

"The plan is the city is going to do the work out of bond funds and a GLO grant is going to pay for part of that project," Harris said. "That project is to convert ditches in the neighborhood to a modern storm sewer drainage system that then drains to the new Town Park Detention Pond."

Hebert said the goal of the storm sewer project is to get water out of neighborhoods and into the detention pond as fast as possible to mitigate flood risks. Patna and Fortuna drives will have the improved storm sewers installed beneath them and city staff have area residents will be informed before work begins that may limit access to driveways.

Expansion of the Pitts Road detention pond was also part of Proposition B, Harris said. Funding in the bond allowed the city to purchase land around the already-existing pond and then expand it by about 14 acres.

"We're just about 25%

complete and that is a 14-acre expansion of the current regional detention pond that's at that location, so there's a 40-acre regional detention pond that is there right now and this bond project was a 14-acre expansion of that. They're digging it right now - so it's about 25% complete," Harris said.

### Proposition C: \$5 million

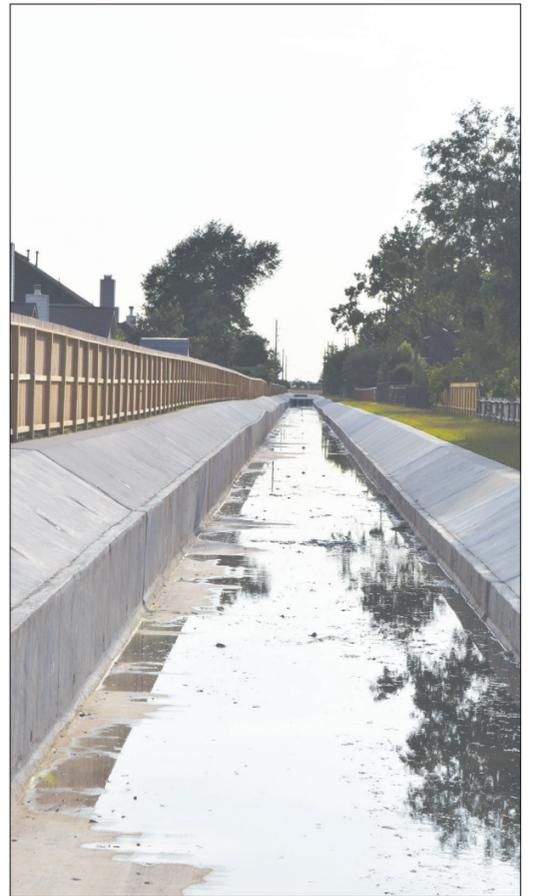
Voters authorized the city to raise \$5 million in bond funding through Proposition C in 2018 as well. Funding from this portion of the bond package is to be used for increasing capacity of the city's wastewater treatment facility on the south side of I-10, between FM 1463 and Pin Oak Road.

"We did issue \$5 million for the expansion of the sewer plant, which is Prop. C, so that's been already issued and we have the money and now it's in the design phase at Clay and Leyendecker," Hebert said.

Clay and Leyendecker, Inc. is the city's engineering consultant.

Hebert said he expects the engineering to be completed in time for the next Katy City Council meeting June 8 so he can ask the council to approve asking for bids for the expansion project.

"All the projects we had voted on - we're going to make sure that all of those projects get done," Hebert said. "Either from METRO or through bonds or through grants."



R. HANS MILLER

Magnolia Ditch which runs between Magnolia Street and Pine Lakes Drive just west of Avenue D in old Katy has been dug out and lined with concrete to shore up its stability and ability to transport water out of the community.

## DEPUTY

from page 1

"While no single decision defines a person, all of our decisions do have consequences," Acevedo said. "HPD takes driving while

intoxicated very seriously, as is reflected in the increased DWI arrests made last year. We have emphasized to the entire department the importance of practicing what we preach about DWI. More importantly, we have expanded our psychological services, peer

support services, and our chaplain program to better serve the mental and emotional health of our workforce."

Initial reports from DPS indicated that at approximately 6:25 a.m. on Dec. 19, a 2018 Kenworth truck tractor towing a trailer was travel-

ing westbound, east of Milcak Road. An eastbound 2013 Toyota Tacoma was traveling the wrong way in the westbound lane of traffic when it struck the front center of the truck.

Solorio was identified as the driver of the Toyota and was pronounced deceased at the scene of

the crash by Austin County Justice of the Peace Precinct 4 Judge Bernice Burger.

Guy Pearson, 65, of La Feria, was identified as the driver of the Kenworth. Pearson was not injured though his big rig was seriously damaged.

# KATY TIMES

## PET OF THE WEEK

### MEET MOO BOO

Moo Boo is an attention grabber. She is big (90 pounds), bold, and beautiful. She was abandoned at the shelter, and she is very grateful! She thinks it is a great place to hang out until she finds herself a home. Since she has only been at CAP a short period of time, we are slowly starting to learn things about her. She appears to be house trained but you'll want to give her time to adjust to your schedule. She is really interested in people and interacting with them. She is excitable and, when over excited, loves to put things in her mouth. She loves frisbees and peanut butter. Because of the mouthiness and her size and strength, she will need to go into a home with kids over 14. She seems to interact well with other dogs but plays rough. You will probably want to bring your dog to meet her to be sure they get along. Her confidence and take-charge attitude can be too much for other dogs. She would probably have a great time in an obedience course where she can show off how smart she is. Take advantage of the 50% discount available at Rover Oaks in Katy. It will be fun and a great bonding experience. Please offer friendly Moo Boo the home and family she deserves.

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# UIL RELEASES GUIDELINES

*Strength and conditioning, sports specific training can resume June 8*

By COLE McNANNA  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

The University Interscholastic League released guidelines last Friday to allow limited summer strength and conditioning and marching band practice to begin no earlier than June 8.

No UIL sanctioned event has occurred since the basketball state championships were suspended on March 12 but with Tex. Gov. Greg Abbott's reopening plan progressing, professional sports can resume without spectators on May 31 and he is hoping to start the college football season on time as well.

In response to Abbott's orders, the UIL has officially released the restrictions that would allow teams to begin preparations for the fall season but UIL Executive Director Dr. Charles Breithaupt added caution in his statement.

"We are cautiously optimistic about beginning summer strength and conditioning programs and marching band practices that safely allow students to get back to working with their coaches and directors in preparation for the 2020-2021 school year," said Breithaupt in a May 22 press release.

"While we are eager to resume UIL activities, we must do so carefully, deliberately and with an understanding that major adjustments are needed to ensure safety. The requirements outline an approach designed to help schools mitigate risk while ensuring students are physically prepared to return to activities in the Fall, should state and federal guidelines allow."

The UIL Executive Committee had been reportedly meeting and deliberating possible resumption solutions since the suspensions began and Katy High head football coach athletic coordinator Gary Joseph tweeted out his appreciation to the UIL later Friday night, May 22.

"On behalf of the Katy High School coaches, we also would like to thank the UIL for their tireless effort in helping us get the opportunity to rebuild the foundations and structures of our athletic programs for all kids," Joseph said.

Starting June 8, the UIL said both strength and conditioning and sports specific workouts can be held until the first day of school for junior high athletes and the beginning of the fall sports season for those high school athletes, if not their first day of school.

The UIL established that strength and conditioning can be no more than two consecutive hours per day during the week and no more than once

Strength and Conditioning Workouts
A strength and conditioning session shall be <b>no more than two consecutive hours per day</b> , Monday through Friday.
Strength and conditioning sessions shall include only strength and conditioning instruction and exercises. <b>No specific sports skills shall be taught</b> and no specific sports equipment, such as balls, dummies, sleds, contact equipment, etc., shall be used.
Schools should consider requiring students who are not actively exercising, but are spotting, to wear cloth face masks.
A student shall attend no more than one session per day.
Any equipment must be thoroughly disinfected before and after each use. If a student uses a piece of equipment, that equipment must be thoroughly disinfected before another student uses it. Schools should limit the use of equipment to further reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

Sport Specific Instruction
Sessions may be conducted in addition to the strength and conditioning session(s), and a student shall attend <b>no more than 90 minutes per day of sport specific skill instruction</b> with no more than 60 minutes per day in a given sport, Monday through Friday.
Sport specific skill sessions may include specific sports equipment, but <b>contact equipment (restricted equipment) is not allowed</b> . School shorts, shirts and shoes may be provided by the school (local school option) but may not be laundered on-site.
<b>Sport Specific Activities Conducted Outdoors</b> - Students may be placed in <b>working groups no larger than 15 total students</b> . Each working group should maintain appropriate distance from other working groups.
<b>Sport Specific Activities Conducted Indoors</b> - Students may be placed in <b>working groups no larger than 10 total students</b> . Each working group should maintain appropriate distance from other working groups.
No competitive drills involving one or more students on offensive against one or more students on defensive may be conducted. (Example: Basketball players may participate in drills, but cannot conduct drills / activities against a defender)
Any equipment, such as sports balls, should be regularly disinfected during workout sessions. This equipment should not be shared between groups. After a group has used such equipment, that equipment must be thoroughly disinfected before being used by a different group.

UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE

per day. Sports specific instruction should not exceed 90 minutes per day with any more than 60 minutes per day in a given sport during the week, the UIL said.

The list of requirements compiled by the UIL was prefaced with the suggestion to designate an individual to solely keep up with the health protocols and any possible in-person screening.

Among the UIL's restrictions on all workouts beginning June 8 are that students will not have access to shower facilities or the locker rooms, there must be one staff member per 20 students,

hand sanitizing/washing stations will be readily available, all surfaces will be cleaned at the end of the day and there will be no shared water or food between students. The full list can be found on the UIL website.

Regarding sports specific training, UIL restrictions include indoor workouts must only be at 25% of capacity, students and staff must remain at least six feet apart – except for reasonable safety considerations like spotting – and the workout stations must be at least 10 feet apart.



Athletic equipment has long gone unused during the new coronavirus pandemic but the UIL recently released guidelines for summer workouts to resume on a limited basis starting June 8.

## Abbott says Texas is aiming to start college football on time



Gov. Greg Abbott announced a strike force last month in charge of laying steps to reopen the Texas economy.

By PATRICK SVITEK  
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Gov. Greg Abbott said last Friday, May 22, that Texas is working to have the college football season start on time, with at least some fans in attendance, as the state continues to reopen amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Abbott, speaking during a TV interview, said there are still a few factors that remain to be seen, such as stadium capacity, the availability of medical treatment for the virus and the overall status of the outbreak in Texas. Abbott said he expects to know more about those issues around mid-July.

Abbott noted that the athletics director for the University of Texas at Austin needs a decision by early August, and the state thinks it will be able to satisfy that timeline. The first UT game is scheduled for Sept. 5 in Austin against the University of South Florida.

"But if you want a prediction, my prediction is yes, we are gonna have college football beginning as scheduled ... with at least

some level of fans in stands," Abbott said in the interview with KXAN-TV in Austin.

Abbott has already allowed certain professional sports events to resume in Texas starting May 31, though spectators are not permitted.

In April, Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp told all 11 university presidents in the system that the schools will be ready to play fall sports. That announcement was quickly echoed by Texas Tech University officials.

Meanwhile, UT-Austin has announced a reopening process that gradually resumes on-campus operations. The school's athletics department recently allowed a group of football coaches and support staff to return to offices at the Darrell K. Royal Stadium. A safety manual released by the school notes that certain precautions will be taken; staff will be screened online before coming to work and be subject to temperature checks before entering the stadium each day.

Raga Justin contributed reporting.

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Jerry Wayne Bolden was born on December 13, 1957 in Avon Park, Florida to Ben and Ruth Cox Bolden. On January 17, 1981, he married Doris Moody in San Antonio, Texas. Jerry and Doris have lived in Katy since 1998, where they are members of the New Life Church. Jerry was an avid drag racer and a legend in his own right. He loved to buy and sell car parts and was considered the "King of the Streets" in street racing. Most importantly, he loved his family. He and Doris are the owners and operators of J&D Environmental in Katy.



**JERRY WAYNE BOLDEN**  
1957-2020

Jerry Wayne Bolden passed away on Tuesday, May 19, 2020, in Katy, at the age of 62.

He is survived by his wife, Doris Bolden of Katy; children, Jerry Bolden, Jr. of Katy, Samantha Riese and her husband Rick of Waller, and Patrick Fuqua and his wife Thy-Thy ("TT") of Boyd, Texas; grandchildren, Alexa Bolden, Jordan Riese, Tyler Riese, Tap Fuqua, Wates Fuqua, Josh Gowen, and Ashley Gowen; brother, Bennie Bolden of Bastrop; nephews, Daniel Bolden and Doug Bolden; as well as numerous other relatives and many friends. He was preceded in death by his parents and one brother, Ricky Bolden.

The family received friends from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Friday, May 22, 2020 at the Schmidt Funeral Home Grand Parkway Chapel, in Katy. Funeral services were held at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 23, 2020 at the New Life Church in Cypress, with Rev. Steve Weaver officiating. Interment in Pilgrim's Rest Cemetery in Bellville, Texas.

Funeral services held under the direction of Schmidt Funeral Home at 1344 W. Grand Parkway South in Katy, Texas. They can be reached at 281-391-2424.

## Coping while social distancing

Coping with the loss of a loved one can be challenging in the best of times, but many people have had to confront such challenges at a time that is unlike any other in modern history.

By the start of the second full week of May 2020, the World Health Organization reported that roughly 279,000 people across the globe had died from the novel coronavirus COVID-19. Many of the 215 countries, areas or territories that reported cases of COVID-19 implemented social distancing measures in an effort to reduce the spread of the virus. While such efforts no doubt saved lives, they also left many people without traditional means of grieving their deceased loved ones. For example, in March the Church of England limited the number of people who could attend funerals to immediate family members only, while restrictions on gatherings in the United States made it difficult if not impossible for more than 10 people to grieve together in person.



Those who have lost loved ones can embrace various strategies to cope with their loss even while stay-at-home orders remain in place.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that grief is a normal response to losing a loved one. In addition, the American Psychological Association says that research has shown that social support can help people recover from such losses.

Though traditional funerals and family gatherings may not be possible as the world responds to the COVID-19 outbreak, those who have lost loved ones can embrace various strategies to cope with their loss even while stay-at-home orders remain in place.

- Host calls with family members and friends. The videotelephone and chat service Zoom has helped millions of people stay connected with loved ones while social distancing. Schools and universities even employed the service when in-person classroom sessions were canceled to stop the spread of the virus. The CDC recommends grieving families employ such technology to connect with each other in the wake of a loved one's death.

- Share stories. Grieving family members are urged to share stories and pictures

much like they would during wakes and funerals. Share them during group conference calls and/or via social media, emails or other modern modes of communications. Connecting in such ways can ensure no one is forced to grieve alone.

- Seek support from your community. The CDC recommends seeking support from faith-based organizations or other trusted community leaders and friends. While in-person church services may not be available, many local religious leaders have made themselves available to congregants and even non-congregants who may need help grieving. Local community organizations may have grief counselors available to help people cope with loss.

- Take part in an activity that meant something to you and your deceased loved one. The CDC notes that doing something in memory of a loved one can help people cope. For example, plant flowers in honor of a deceased parent with whom you shared a love of gardening.

# Devotional Page

This devotional page and directory is made possible by these businesses who encourage all of us to attend worship services. For more information, see our Church Directory Online at [www.katytimes.com](http://www.katytimes.com)

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Psalms 94:19

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## Public Notice

### Federal Railroad Administration Releases Final Environmental Impact Statement and Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for the Dallas to Houston High-Speed Rail Project

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) for the Dallas to Houston High-Speed Rail Project (Project). FRA prepared the EIS in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act to assess the potential beneficial and adverse environmental impacts of FRA's proposed rulemaking to enable effective safety oversight of the operation of a HSR system based on the Japanese N700-Series Tokaido Shinkansen technology that is described in a Petition for Rulemaking for a Rule of Particular Applicability (RPA) submitted by Texas Central Railroad, LLC (TCRR). TCRR's petition for rulemaking contains TCRR's proposal to construct and operate an approximately 240-mile, for-profit, high-speed passenger rail (HSR) system connecting Dallas and Houston based on the Japanese N700-Series Tokaido Shinkansen technology (the Project). On March 10, 2020, FRA published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), proposing a set of minimum Federal safety standards to enable effective safety oversight of the operation of TCRR's HSR system within the United States.

The Final EIS evaluates and documents the reasonably foreseeable potential beneficial and adverse environmental impacts of implementing TCRR's HSR system, including a No Build Alternative and six Build Alternatives between Dallas and Houston. The study area for the Project traverses 10 counties between Dallas and Houston. A preferred alternative has been identified in the Final EIS, which includes terminal station locations in Dallas and Houston, and an intermediate station west of Roans Prairie in Grimes County.

The Final EIS is available for public review on the FRA project website, <https://railroads.dot.gov/current-environmental-reviews/dallas-houston-high-speed-rail/dallas-houston-high-speed-rail> and at these repositories throughout the Project area.

**Dallas County**  
J. Erik Jonsson Central Library: 1515 Young Street, Dallas, Texas 75201  
Martin Luther King Branch Library: 2922 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Dallas, Texas 75215  
Paul Laurence Dunbar Lancaster-Kiest Branch Library: 2008 E Kiest Boulevard, Dallas, Texas 75216  
Pleasant Grove Branch Library: 7310 Lake June Road, Dallas, Texas 75217

**Ellis County**  
Ellis County Courts and Administration: 109 S. Jackson, Waxahachie, Texas 75165  
Ennis Public Library Central Library: 501 W Ennis Avenue, Ennis, Texas 75119

**Navarro County**  
Corsicana Library: 100 N 12th Street, Corsicana, Texas 75110  
Navarro County Courthouse: 300 W. 3rd Avenue, Corsicana, Texas 75110

**Freestone County**  
Freestone County Courthouse: 118 East Commerce Street, Room 205, Fairfield, Texas 75840  
Teague Public Library Central Library: 400 Main Street, Teague, Texas 75860

**Limestone County**  
Gibbs Memorial Library Central Library: 318 E. Main, Mexia, Texas 76667  
Limestone County Courthouse: 200 W State Street, Suite 101, Groesbeck, Texas 76642

**Leon County**  
Buffalo Public Library: 1005 Hill Street, Buffalo, Texas 75831  
Leon County Clerk's Office: 155 N Cass Street, First Floor, Centerville TX 75833

**Madison County**  
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Madison County Library: 605 S May Street, Madisonville, Texas 77864

**Grimes County**  
Grimes County Courthouse: 100 Main Street, Anderson, Texas 77830  
Navasota Public Library Central Library: 1411 E Washington Avenue, Navasota, Texas 77868

**Waller County**  
Waller County Courthouse: 836 Austin Street, Hempstead, Texas 77445  
Waller County Library Central Library: 2331 11th Street, Hempstead, Texas 77445

**Harris County**  
Fairbanks Library: 7122 Gessner Road, Houston, Texas 77040  
Houston Public Library: 500 McKinney Street, Houston, Texas 77002  
Northwest Branch Library: 11355 Regency Green Drive, Cypress, Texas 77429  
Spring Branch Memorial Library: 930 Corbindale Road, Houston, Texas 77024

The list of repositories also can be found in **Appendix B, Distribution List** of the Final EIS and posted on the FRA project website. FRA suggests that the public call the repositories before going there to confirm the availability of, and access to, the Final EIS documents. Additionally, a limited supply of copies of the Final EIS is available to the public in print or electronically (USB flash drive), upon request.

Requests for additional information or for a copy of the Final EIS (as supplies last) may be submitted to Kevin Wright, Environmental Protection Specialist, FRA, at 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, MS-20, Washington, D.C. 20590; or via email at [kevin.wright@dot.gov](mailto:kevin.wright@dot.gov).

### 30-day review period for Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act/Programmatic Agreement

Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended, FRA is providing the public a 30-day review period for the Programmatic Agreement that FRA has developed for the Project in consultation with the Texas Historical Commission (THC), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, United States Army Corps of Engineers, TCRR, and other Consulting Parties.

To ensure the appropriate measures to minimize harm to potential impacts to historic properties, FRA, in consultation with the THC, determined that it is appropriate to develop and implement a Programmatic Agreement for the Project because FRA will not be able to fully determine effects to historic properties prior to issuing a ROD.

The Programmatic Agreement establishes the process that governs FRA's compliance with Section 106 after approval of the Project. FRA has provided Consulting Parties with an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Programmatic Agreement prior to the release of the Final EIS. FRA is also providing the public an opportunity to review the Programmatic Agreement, appended to the Final EIS as **Appendix L**. The public can submit comments on the Programmatic Agreement through June 29, 2020 on FRA's Project website at <https://railroads.dot.gov/current-environmental-reviews/dallas-houston-high-speed-rail/dallas-houston-high-speed-rail>.

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## Texas enters second phase of reopening

By ED STERLING

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

Gov. Greg Abbott on May 18 allowed restaurants to increase occupancy to 50% and relaxed his earlier executive orders that limited certain other public activities over the last two months to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Reopenings, Abbott said, must adhere to restricted occupancy levels and minimum standard health protocols laid out by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Notably, public schools have the option to provide in-person summer school so long as they follow social distancing practices and health protocols laid out by the state health department. Classes may begin as soon as June 1.

"I ask all Texans to continue heeding the guidance of our state and federal medical experts and do their part to protect public health. If we all unite in our resolve, we will overcome this challenge," Abbott said.

The full list of guidelines, openings and relevant dates is available at [gov.texas.gov/opentexas](http://gov.texas.gov/opentexas).

Certain counties where there are surges in COVID-19 cases will have their beginning date of Phase II delayed until May 29. Those Amarillo-area counties where a



Child care centers are able to reopen in the second phase of Tex. Gov. Greg Abbott's reopening process. However, the Texas Workforce Commission is reinstating a requirement for parents to pay a portion of care if they are receiving financial assistance.

spike in cases has been confirmed include El Paso, Randall, Potter, Moore and Deaf Smith. Governor's Surge Response Teams are at work in those Panhandle counties to increase testing, maintain hospital capacity and ensure that COVID-19 is contained and mitigated.

Cumulative figures posted on May 21 by the Texas Department of State Health Services showed that some 52,268 people in Texas had been diagnosed with COVID-19 and 1,440 deaths resulting from

the virus pandemic had been confirmed.

### Budget cuts ordered

Gov. Abbott, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick and House Speaker Dennis Bonnen on May 20 sent a letter to state agencies and institutions of higher education directing each of them to submit a plan identifying savings to reduce general revenue-related appropriations by 5% for the 2020-2021 two-year budget cycle.

The three highest-ranking

state officials urge agencies and institutions of higher education to pursue cost-saving strategies that will not affect the state's response to COVID-19, such as forgoing capital expenditures that can be deferred, avoidable travel expenditures and administrative expenses that are not mission critical, and keeping unfilled any open positions that are not essential to Texas' COVID-19 response.

According to the letter, certain agencies and activities are exempted from the directive "given the importance of the state's response to COVID-19 and the continuity of critical government functions."

### TSTA: It's too early

The Texas State Teachers Association, in a May 20 news release, said June 1 is too early to reopen school buildings for summer school classes and demanded that the state and local school districts agree to enforce a detailed list of safety requirements for school campuses before reopening buildings to students and school employees.

"With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to rage across Texas, the health and safety of students, educators and our communities need to remain our first priority," said TSTA President Noel Candelaria. "The pandemic has struck in the vast majority of Texas' 254

counties and more than 1,200 new cases were reported yesterday. Fourteen people died of COVID-19 in Dallas County alone, a daily high for Dallas."

Candelaria said TSTA is demanding adequate supplies of protective gear for everyone in every school workplace, steps that must be taken to enforce social distancing and sanitation practices and strong enforcement. "Half-hearted enforcement will endanger students and educators, and our members will not stand for it on their campuses," said Candelaria.

### Child care funding is cut

The Texas Workforce Commission on May 19 announced the phase-out of a \$200 million emergency program to subsidize child care for Texas' essential workers.

Subsidies were put in place to assist both essential workers and child care centers during limited enrollment. With Texas reopening, essential workers who are already on the subsidized plan will continue to receive child care for the three-month period they were initially approved for under the program.

Effective June 1, the Texas Workforce Commission will reinstate the requirement for parents receiving financial assistance to pay for a portion of their costs.

## Gov. Abbott lifts restrictions for travelers from hot spots

By STACY FERNÁNDEZ

THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Gov. Greg Abbott lifted air travel restrictions into Texas for those coming from states and major cities that have been considered COVID-19 hot spots. The change will take effect immediately, Abbott announced Thursday.

The governor implemented air travel restrictions as part of his executive orders in late March. Travelers who came from specified states and some major cities

had to undergo a mandatory 14-day self-quarantine.

The governor implemented the same restriction for drivers coming from Louisiana, but that restriction was previously lifted.

The air travel restrictions applied to visitors from the states of California, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Washington. Travelers from Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit and Miami had the same restrictions, according to the release.

The announcement is the lat-

est eased restriction in a series of statewide reopenings. Abbott let Texas' stay-at-home order expire at the end of April. He's since reopened businesses like restaurants, malls and hair salons with some restrictions and occupancy limits.

On Monday, the governor announced that child care facilities could reopen immediately, bars can open Friday with limited occupancy and sporting events can return without fans at the end of the month.



JEREMY DWYER-LINDGREN FOR USA TODAY VIA REUTERS AND THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

American Airlines jets fill Terminal A at Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport.



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## Local Stimulus Grant

Matching grants available to local small businesses

The Katy Times has set aside \$100,000 in matching grant money to help local businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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- Preference given to locally owned and operated businesses.
- Apply at [katytimes.com/stimulusgrant.html](http://katytimes.com/stimulusgrant.html) or look for the ad on our website.

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## Texas Drivers License offices reopen May 22

CONTRIBUTED REPORT BY THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

On Tuesday, May 26, at the direction of Governor Greg Abbott, the Texas Department of Public Safety began reopening driver license offices by appointment only and with limited services.

The reopening of DL offices will happen in a phases in order to allow DPS to keep customers and staff as safe as possible, while also adhering to new safety guidelines and social distancing practices in place due to COVID-19. Appointment availability will be rolled out in phases, with the first phase of appointments available starting May 22.

### Appointments required

A new appointment solution developed over the last few months will take effect in DL offices as they reopen. The appointment solution allows customers to book appointments for a specific day and time up to six months in advance. DPS is moving to appointments only as part of our efforts to provide additional convenience and reduce the time Texans spend waiting in line at DL offices.

Within the new online appointment system, customers can walk through the available appointment options, schedule appointments on a specific date and time, receive appointment confirmations, set up a reminder, and reschedule or cancel an existing appointment. Once customers schedule their appointment, they'll receive a confirmation email that should be brought to their appointment.

Upon arrival customers can check in with their smart device or by using the kiosk inside DL offices. Due to social distancing requirements related to COVID-19, we are asking that customers wait in their car after checking in. Customers will receive a text



message when it's time to come inside to complete their transaction.

### Phased reopening

As DL offices begin their phased reopening, services will be limited to customers with appointments only who are seeking a first-time Texas DL, commercial driver license, learner license or ID card and those who need to take a driving test. These will be the only services available at DL offices during these initial phases of reopening.

- Phase 1: Offices in DPS' Northwest and West Texas regions reopened with limited services on May 26. Customers could begin scheduling appointments in these two regions May 22.

- Phase 2: Offices in DPS' South and Central Texas regions will reopen with limited services beginning May 29. Customers could

begin scheduling appointments in these two regions May 26 at 1 p.m.

- Phase 3: Offices in DPS' North and Southeast Texas regions will reopen with limited services beginning June 3. Customers can begin scheduling appointments in these regions May 29 at 1 p.m.

- Phase 4: Customers can schedule an appointment at a DL office anywhere in the state at an undetermined date in midsummer. DPS will announce the date this phase begins once it has been determined.

As appointments become available throughout the phased reopening plan, customers will be able to book appointments through DPS' website at [www.dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense/](http://www.dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense/).

### Safety measures

DPS is taking measures to limit the spread of COVID-19 and ensure customers

and staff are as safe as possible. The following safety measures will be in place as DL offices reopen:

- All staff members and customers who are taking a driving test will be required to wear face facial coverings.
- Every person will be screened for symptoms prior to coming into a DL office; this includes having their temperature checked.
- Customers may be asked to reschedule if they do not pass the safety screening.
- Only actual customers will be allowed into DL offices. Exceptions include: persons needing ADA accommodations; elderly persons; parents with small children; and parents and legal guardians needed to complete a transaction.
- DPS staff will sanitize workstations and equipment between each customer transaction.
- Eye examinations will no longer require physical contact with an eye testing machine.
- Customers must pay with a credit card, check or money order. Cash payments will not be accepted.

### Expired card extensions remain

As a reminder, the extension of the expiration of Texas DL, CDL, ID and Election Identification Certificate cards remains in effect. This means that all Texas cards that expired on or after March 13, 2020 fall under the period that encompasses the State of Disaster Declaration related to COVID-19 and will remain valid for 60 days after which time DPS issues public notice that the extension period has been lifted and all normal operations have resumed. As of this release, that 60-day period has not begun. Due to the extension still being active, appointments for renewals will not be available until further notice.

## Texas to test residents and staff in state-run homes

By SAMI SPARBER  
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Texas will soon test all residents and staff members for the new coronavirus in state-run homes for people with disabilities, according to an email sent to employees from the state official who oversees the facilities.

"In our continuing effort to protect the health and safety of both our residents and you, we are expanding COVID-19 testing to all residents and employees in our state supported living centers," wrote Scott Schalchlin, associate commissioner of state supported living centers, in a Thursday morning email obtained by The Texas Tribune.

Gov. Greg Abbott made the news official Thursday afternoon when he announced that he was directing the Texas Health and Human Services Commission to expand testing to all patients, residents and staff members at the 23 state-run homes for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and state-run psychiatric hospitals.

"By expanding widespread COVID-19 testing to our state hospitals and state supported living centers, we are better equipped to identify and mitigate these potential hot spots and protect our most vulnerable populations," Abbott said in a statement.

The announcement of the testing expansion comes days after The Texas Tribune reported that a spokesperson for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission said the state supported living centers and state psychiatric hospitals



EDDIE GASPAR/THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Gov. Greg Abbott is directing the Texas Health and Human Services Commission to expand testing to all patients, residents and staff members at the 23 state-run homes for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and state-run psychiatric hospitals.

was not receiving aid to test all residents, patients and employees, even as testing was being made available for all residents and staff at nursing homes. The 23 state-run facilities collectively serve around 4,700 of the state's most vulnerable residents and employ 18,873 full-time staff members.

The test kits for the state supported living center residents have been ordered and are on their way, Schalchlin wrote. The agency is "working on a broader plan to get the test kits for staff," he added.

Previously, residents and patients were only tested if they displayed symptoms of COVID-19

or had possible exposure to the virus. The new round of testing will cover those who have shown no signs of COVID-19 or have not been tested within the last 30 days, Abbott said.

For months, employees and family members of residents at the state-run homes have raised concerns about outbreaks and called for increased testing. In recent weeks, several state lawmakers have also called for widespread testing at the state supported living centers.

"The residents we are now testing do not have symptoms and we have no reason to believe they

have been exposed to or contracted COVID-19, but by taking this step, we will increase our ability to prevent the spread of the virus in our facilities and throughout our system," Schalchlin wrote in a letter to parents and guardians Thursday.

As of Wednesday, there were 161 total positive cases among residents and patients, with 107 reported recoveries, according to new data the agency started releasing on state supported living centers and state hospitals earlier this month. "Fewer than 10" residents and patients have died from complications related

to COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus, the state reported.

That data does not account for staff members who fall ill, and the state is still not releasing the names of facilities with coronavirus cases, leaving many family members in the dark about their loved ones. Seven of the 23 facilities have at least one positive patient or resident, according to the latest data.

State officials have taken a similar approach to nursing homes, which have emerged as hot spots for the virus. Citing a need to protect the state's "vulnerable populations," Abbott directed state officials last week to test all residents and staff members in Texas nursing homes. That testing should be finished by the end of next week, he told KRIV-TV on Wednesday.

Similar to nursing homes, residents and patients at state-run homes and psychiatric hospitals live in close quarters and interact closely with the staff who care for them. The 10 state psychiatric hospitals serve Texans with mental health issues. Across the 13 state supported living centers, which house people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, about 43% of the residents are medically fragile.

"Texas will test all residents and staff in state-run homes for people with disabilities" was first published at <https://www.texastribune.org/2020/05/21/texas-coronavirus-testing/> by The Texas Tribune. The Texas Tribune is proud to celebrate 10 years of exceptional journalism for an exceptional state.

### Jim Baker's Unified Theory Of Everything --- With God's Help

(JBUTOE-WGH) A new book about Science and God. Revised publish date: late 2020

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(ad revised: 11/22/2019; previous ads are null and void)



This new book will contain a credible "unified theory of everything" that can explain the very basics of science. Albert Einstein predicted that someone "off the street" was going to do this someday. After 53 years (at approx. year 2000), I decided to include God at every step of the process of trying to come up with a scientific "Theory of Everything". Prior to this, it was about the "only thing" I felt I had not been successful at inventing or figuring out. --- You see, God had already given me the gift of inventing at age 9-10, in His response to my Second Major Prayer. --- By the year 2014, God had allowed me to assemble sufficient knowledge that I felt 95%, of what I needed to figure out, had been accomplished.

One thing I had always wished for, especially as I was approaching the age of 40, is for God to speak to me. Well, when God did speak to me, I liked my first message from God about as much, I suppose, as Abraham liked his message from God, when he was told to sacrifice his son. But God was testing both of us! God was also making us stronger.

There are still two major topics in life to be addressed, prior to publishing the new book. One is a major release of scientific information of the new theory across the U.S.A. The second is starting an evangelical ministry.

Author of new book is a Chemistry graduate (B.S. 1971/M.S. 1978) of Texas A&M (A&I) in Kingsville, TX. He also attended S.A.C. in San Antonio. He has additional hours at SWTSU, Texas Tech U., Boston College, Westinghouse PWR. He has worked at Texas Uranium Operations as Chief Chemist, at South Texas Nuclear Project as Nuclear Chemist during pre-startup, and retired from City of Houston where he was in charge of Technical Services Section of Bureau of Air Quality Control. Owner of BAKER'S BOOKS is also the author of *God's Amazing Answer To Prayer*, in 2012.

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