

Mustangs win first district title in 26 years

SPORTS, B1

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2021

KATY ISD

## Katy ISD board calls for \$676M bond election in May

### BONDING EDUCATION

Early voting for the KISD bond referendum and other elections will be held April 19-27 and election day will be May 1. Those wishing to find additional information about the district's bond proposal may visit the district's 2021 bond website at: <https://www.katyisd.org/sites/bonds/Pages/default.aspx>.

By R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

The Katy ISD Board of Trustees has voted to call a May bond election which includes four propositions totaling \$676.2 million. The bond package was developed with input from the district's 110-person Community Bond Advisory Committee – or CBAC.

“Now, the reason that the bond committee is even considering or has consid-

ered bringing forth a bond package is because of the growth of our community, and what fuels that growth is the excellence and the tradition of our school district,” said KISD Chief Communications Officer Andrea Grooms.

At prior trustee meetings, representatives from Population and Survey Analysts, the KISD's demographics consultant, said increased growth in the northwestern quadrant of

the district would require additional campuses to meet district needs. PASA representatives said the growth was in part due to KISD's reputation which promotes rapid development. The district is projected to grow from just more than 84,000 students today to a projected student body of more than 115,000 learners soon after 2030.

See **KATY ISD**, page A5



R. HANS MILLER

Katy ISD is calling for a bond election in May and in order to address growth by adding campuses and facilities to accommodate new students projected to come to the district over the next decade or so. The district has a long history of bonds, including a \$748 million bond package in 2014 that paid for multiple new campuses and Legacy Stadium (pictured) which cost about \$70.3 million.

KATY ISD

## Friendly Li'l Spenders help KISD FFA students

By R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

While the Katy Rodeo may be postponed for an undetermined amount of time, the Katy ISD Future Farmers of America Livestock Show is still set for Feb. 16-20 and local groups are still poised to support FFA students. This includes the 501(C)3 group, Friendly Li'l Spenders, a sort of co-op of donors that work together to ensure every FFA student sees support from the community at large.

“Our job isn't to buy the big animals, the big banners. We sit on our hands and all the fun starts when everybody's getting these big numbers and buying the champions and reserve champions and all that and we just kind of lay low,” said Friendly Li'l Spenders President Rick MacDonald. “Then every year, there's a dip in the action and that's when we start coming in.”

The Spenders goal is to ensure that those dips in bidding at the FFA auction that follows the livestock show don't lead to a student not getting a return on their hard work, MacDonald said. Many FFA participants get up very early to care for their animals each morning, seven days a week, he said. They're also back in the afternoon to ensure the animals are properly groomed and fed again. The Spenders work together to

See **FFA**, page A6

FAITH



R. HANS MILLER

Katy Christian Ministries Executive Director Deysi Crespo (center in pink headhat) poses with KCM Business Development Manager Jeannette Trejo (left) and KCM Master Gardener Karen Smith (right) in front of KCM's new headquarters building at 3506 Porter Road in the Katy area. The new facility will allow the nonprofit to consolidate operations, enlarge its food pantry and enhance its community garden.

## Katy Christian Ministries purchases new headquarters

By R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Katy Christian Ministries Executive Director Deysi Crespo has confirmed that the local 501(C)3 organization has purchased a new headquarters building at 3506 Porter Road just east of the city of Katy's limits after a successful capital campaign. KCM provides a food bank, family crisis intervention and other social services and raised funding for the purchase through a charitable capital campaign.

“We did set a goal of raising \$305,000 that would help us for the down payment of the property,” Crespo said. We hit the road running really fast and on fire and inviting our partner churches to come alongside our vision, and our community

members.”

Crespo said the capital campaign had raised \$231,000 which allowed the organization to put the down payment in place. However, the capital campaign is ongoing to continue to raise funds to help KCM settle into its new home.

Crespo said the new facility, which still requires some renovation, will allow an increase in the size of the ministry's food pantry and allow consolidation of administrative and caseworkers into one facility over time. The nonprofit's two resale shops in downtown Katy and on Kingsland Boulevard just east of The Grand Parkway will remain in operation where they are. Currently, operations staff and caseworkers are located in

See **KCM**, page A5

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

## 2015 Tigers voted one of 10 greatest teams

By DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

The 2015 Katy Tigers were voted as one of the top 10 greatest teams in the 100-year history of UIL football.

Fans recently selected the 2015 Tigers as one of the “best, brightest and most unforgettable” teams in history in an honor awarded by Dave Campbell's Texas Football in partnership with H-E-B.

The 2015 Tigers were titans, undefeated state champions at 16-0 after capping off an impressively dominant season with a 34-7 win over Lake Travis in the state final at NRG Stadium in Houston. They were national champions that season as well.

In a recent Zoom interview posted on [texasfootball.com](http://texasfootball.com) on Jan. 27, Katy coach Gary Joseph, Katy ISD athletic director Debbie Decker, and 2015

senior defensive back Travis Whillock discussed the legacy of that team.

“They were a group that had great leadership, people like Travis, (defensive back) Collin Wilder, (defensive tackle) Joey Woodring,” Joseph said. “A lot of kids that were really, really fine leaders, and not just great leaders but great character. It was a fun group to coach. They were very unselfish. Not real common today for kids to be as unselfish as they are and were.”

“And I guess the reason they were selected is they were a very, very good defensive football team. They gave up very few points for the year, and it's because of that and their unselfishness that led them to be the team that they were.”

The 2015 Tigers allowed 62 total points all season, producing 10 shutouts.

See **TIGERS**, page B2



A screenshot is pictured of a Zoom interview involving Katy High football coach Gary Joseph (middle row, far right), Katy ISD athletic director Debbie Decker (middle row, center) and 2015 senior defensive back Travis Whillock (top row, far right) as they discussed the legacy of the 2015 Katy Tigers, selected by fans as one of the top 10 greatest teams in UIL football history. Also involved in the discussion were Katy ISD superintendent Ken Gregorski (middle row, far left) and Katy High principal Rick Hull (top row, far left).

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KATY

## Council passes pay raise, moves forward with drainage projects

By R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Katy City Council expressed their appreciation for city staff Monday afternoon by passing an across-the-board \$2,600 annual pay increase for all of the city's full-time employees and designating all city staff as employees of the year for 2020 in recognition of their hard work during what Mayor Bill Hastings termed “the COVID year.”

“While we still have COVID challenges to face, we want to thank you for helping us maneuver through 2020,” Hastings said. “We are proud to have such honest, hardworking loyal people on our team.”

City documents indicate that sales tax revenue, which had been predicted to come in lower than average for 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was above that projection by about \$535,000. This unexpected income allowed the city to transfer



R. HANS MILLER

Katy City Council heard an update from LJA Engineering and city staff regarding Harvest Plaza in downtown Katy. Concrete was expected to be poured for the framed patio area behind the new Katy Civic Center the Tuesday afternoon following the meeting.

moneys from its general fund, enterprise fund and other items to pay for the pay increase. This will cost the city about \$375,000 during the current fiscal year which ends Sept. 30 with the total expenditure capped at \$408,000. Council members expressed support for city staff either with an affirmative vote on the issue or with commentary supporting city workers' extra

efforts during 2020.

“The best thing about these pay increases is that everyone in staff that's at a lower or mid-level pay salary, this will greatly affect them instead of (3%) across the board,” said Council Member Jenifer Stockdick. “(A percentage increase) across the board is great for someone at the high end, but someone at the low end – it doesn't boost them enough,

so I'm super-excited that we're doing this.”

Generally, in government, staff-wide pay increases are done in percentages, making the move by the city a rare occurrence.

“I think it's probably very rare that instead of giving a percentage, we're giving an across-the-board, permanent pay increase, just a flat rate that really helps the hourly employees,” Mayor Pro Tem Chris Harris said.

Plaza

Council also heard an update regarding the Harvest Plaza project in downtown Katy. Christopher LeBlanc with LJA Engineering which is overseeing the project said concrete work including a patio behind the Civic Center at 910 Avenue C in downtown Katy, across Avenue C from

See **COUNCIL**, page A5

Enrollment for 2021-2022 school year now open, preschool through 12th grade!



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## Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo cancelled for 2021

By R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo announced Wednesday that the 2021 rodeo, which had been previously rescheduled to May, has now been cancelled outright, according to a press release from the group that organizes the event. The RODEOHOU-  
STON competitions, concerts and entertain-  
ment, carnival and other attractions were  
cancelled due to the ongoing pandemic.

"While we were optimistic that moving our Rodeo to May would provide a better opportunity to host our annual community event that Rodeo fans have come to love and expect, unfortunately, it has become evident that the current health situation has not improved to the degree necessary to host our event," said Chris Boleman, president and CEO of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. "While this is an extremely heartbreak-



STOCK PHOTO BY SKYE RYAN EVANS/PEXELS

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo has cancelled the majority of their 2021 events, though a few of the events supporting young Texans interested in agriculture will still be held as private events.

ing decision for our Rodeo volunteers and the larger Rodeo community, we believe this decision is in the best interest of the health and well-being of our community."

The decision was made after rodeo officials examined the current state of the pandemic and decided to make a decision in the best interest of public safety, the statement said. Last year, as the novel coronavirus first began to spread throughout the region, the rodeo was one of the first public events to be curtailed. This year's cancellations include the associated parade, trail ride, Rodeo Uncorked! Roundup and Best Bites Competition and the World's Championship Bar-B-Que Contest. The Rodeo Run will be held virtually.

While the rodeo is cancelled, the junior livestock show and horse show for younger competitors will still be held. Those competitions will be held in March as private events with limited occupancy in accordance with state and federal guidelines, the press release said.

"The Rodeo and our volunteers are committed to continuing to provide fans with

a community event that all can be proud of," Boleman said. "We look forward to welcoming Rodeo fans back to the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo in 2022 for our 90th anniversary celebration."

Dates for the 2022 event will be announced as soon as they are available, the release said.

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo was established in 1932 to support agriculture. It has evolved since then into an annual event that supports Texas youth that are interested in agriculture and showcases Western heritage. Since its inception, the rodeo has committed more than \$500 million to Texas youth and education.

**Editor's note:** Please note that this event is not the Katy Rodeo. For more information on that event, which has been indefinitely postponed and the Katy ISD FFA Livestock Show, see our Friendly L'il Spenders coverage on A1.

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## UH staff, alumni and students give COVID-19 vaccines in Fort Bend Co.

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

The University of Houston College of Nursing joined Fort Bend County efforts to vaccinate residents against the coronavirus.

Teams of faculty, staff, students and alumni volunteered more than 230 hours in one week at the Rosenberg Annex Clinic and the Smart Financial Centre (a mass vaccination site). Their efforts included initial assessments, signing in clients, helping with organizing supplies, providing health education about the vaccine, and administering the vaccines.

"It is an honor to serve and care for our public. Students enjoy working with nursing colleagues through Fort Bend Health & Human Services and Memorial Hermann Sugar Land hospital," said Kathryn Tart, professor and founding dean. "I am extremely proud of our students. We have seen tears of joy of individuals getting their first dose and letting us know that 'your students have the hands of angels.'"

The college changed its curriculum for the spring semester specifically to prepare them to help the community by administering COVID-19 vaccines.



CONTRIBUTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

The University of Houston made adjustments to its curriculum to ensure students would be able to assist in administering vaccines to the public once they became available.

Students participated in a boot camp to learn the basics of taking vital signs, donning and doffing personal protective equipment and administering inter-muscular injections.

The college offers the traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing at the UH at Katy instructional site and is housed at the UH at Sugar Land. The college has worked with the county on other activities, such as emergency drills for Point of Dispensing sites and volunteering during natural disasters. Additionally, the college will train students in other health profession programs on blood-borne pathogens.

"It will take time to get everyone vaccinated. We need to be patient with the process. We need to continue to protect each other by wearing masks, washing hands, maintaining social distances, and staying out of large crowds," Tart said.

As a leader in community health education, the college also provides an online course for those interested in becoming a contact tracer, as well as workshops on nurses experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder during the pandemic.

"This is the role of nurses and nursing," Tart said. "We are committed."

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# Katy Times

## SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

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Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

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## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

### CLUES ACROSS

- Composed
- Lesotho currency
- Ethnic group associated with Hungarians
- Gains knowledge of
- Gradual destruction
- Purchase
- Pharaoh of lower Egypt
- Where you're going
- The 6th letter of the Greek alphabet
- Fishing net
- Midway between south and southeast
- A way to sort
- C C C
- Popular sports podcast (abbr.)
- Discount
- Consumes tobacco
- A way to run
- Popular musical awards show
- Pertains to the male sexual organ
- Supplements with difficulty
- Green veggie
- Deep-bodied freshwater fish
- Holy fire
- Usually has a lid
- Being of use or service
- Have a yen for
- Unknowingness
- Dry white wine drink
- Unwinds
- Traveling by sea
- Outdoor entertaining areas
- Stringed instruments
- Redgrave, actress
- Moves earth

### CLUES DOWN

- Progressive decay of a bone or tooth
- Burrowing rodents
- French/Belgian river
- A professional cleaner
- A Russian river
- Kiln
- True statements
- Most private
- French city
- Masses of fish eggs
- Apart from others
- Monetary unit of Samoa
- Nanosecond
- Film
- Men's fashion accessories
- Flowering shrub
- North Carolina university
- Former monetary unit of Spain
- Foodies
- New Zealand parrot
- Makes very happy
- A payment required for not fulfilling a contract
- Emerald Isle
- The act of terminating someone's employment
- Gland in some mammals
- Commoner
- Large animals
- Belch
- Employee stock ownership plan
- Work units
- Wagon
- Nerve fiber
- Proclaimed
- Japanese delicacy

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

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The world stopped moving for the Hirsch family at 2:50 am February 5th, 2021. Robert Allen Hirsch, affectionately known as Bob, passed away unexpectedly after beating a month long battle of COVID/pneumonia only to succumb to complications of diverticulitis surgery. Bob is survived by the love of his life and wife of more than 53 years, Jennifer Hirsch, his children Cynthia Gallegos and Antonio Gallegos, Robert G. Hirsch and wife Tori, and Erica Miglicco and husband Jeff, as well as his beloved grandchildren; Anthony, Brett, Tristan and Daniela Gallegos, Blake, Ryan and Brooke Hirsch and Jennifer, Angelina, Natalie and Casen Miglicco.

He was born January 28th, 1948 in Tulsa, Oklahoma to William Robert Hirsch and Florence Marie Hall. He is preceded in death by both of his parents, his brothers Bill and Bruce Hirsch, stepfather Ali Abssi, and so many others who will be there to welcome him into heaven.

Bob had a personality that lit up the world. He had a legendary smile that made everyone feel welcome. He was fiercely loyal, had the best sense of humor that his wife always had to explain, blunt with his words in the



**ROBERT ALLEN HIRSCH**  
1948-2021

most endearing way, the very best husband, father, father-in-law and grandfather ever known. He was always the smartest person in the room, and always had the facts and credentials to back it up. He touched so many lives in his own unique way and made friends wherever he went.

He opened the Hirsch Bros. and All-stars T-shirt and screen-printing stores in the 1970's, and had worked in the financial industry for more than 35 years. He had been with Shearson Financial as an Institutional Broker/Dealer for more than 12 years.

He was a proud University of Houston alumni where he graduated magna cum laude. He was an avid supporter of the Houston Cougars his entire life. He went on to later earn his Master's,

as well as numerous other certifications throughout his career.

He was an active member of the Katy community since the 1970's and was a founding member of Katy Youth Football.

His was a life truly well lived. His love story with his wife Jennifer is legendary. He loved with everything he had, helped everyone he could, took care of whoever needed him, brought joy to everyone he met and believed fervently in his Catholic faith. He was at every single one of his children and grandchildren's activities from football, volleyball, baseball, soccer, track, dance, theater, choir, band and orchestra performances and more. He was his grandchildren's greatest supporter and he leaves a gaping hole in our hearts and in the stands where he used to cheer them on. His children and grandchildren were his pride and joy, he was so proud of all of their gifts and talents but more than anything, the kind of people they are. He was one of the very best friends in the entire world, especially to his wife and children. He loved his brother-in-laws and sister-in laws like they were his very own siblings. He loved his many nephews

and nieces and took his role as Godfather very seriously. He was an incredible storyteller. He was wise and compassionate, genuine and was always giving advice that changed more lives than he ever realized. He had character and integrity rivaled second to none. He seized every opportunity to let people know what they needed to hear and never feared a challenge. There aren't enough words to accurately honor the man that he was, but his legacy will live on in his family and countless others who will try to live up to his example. He will be missed beyond measure, the world was definitely made better by him being in it, and the memories he leaves behind will endure forever.

The viewing was held at Miller Funeral Services at 7723 Beechnut St, Houston, TX 77074 on Wednesday, February 10th from 6-8pm with a rosary at 7pm with speeches to follow. The funeral mass will be held at St. John Vianney Catholic Church at 625 Nottingham Oaks Trail, Houston, TX 77079 on Thursday, February 11th, 2021 at 1:30pm followed by the burial at Memorial Oaks Cemetery.

Condolences may be offered at [www.millerfuneral.com](http://www.millerfuneral.com).

Richard Cummins, much-loved husband, dad, and Papa, age 67 passed away peacefully at his home in Hockley, Texas on January 30, 2021 after years-long battle with kidney failure.

He was born to Richard and Mary Cummins in Indianapolis, Indiana, on July 12, 1953. Rick later found his life and love in Tampa, Florida where he married his wife, Lynn Cummins on May 9, 1975.

In 1976, Rick and Lynn moved from Tampa, Florida to Houston, Texas, and in 1982, they planted roots in Katy, Texas. While working in the construction field all his life, in 1997 he founded R.A. Cummins Construction, Inc. He remained as owner until he retired in 2019. Rick faithfully served the Lord using his gifts of service and generosity through different ministries at his home church, Family Life Assembly of God for the past twenty years. Rick's service to the Lord included serving as a church board member, several missions trips focused on building, leading as head usher, and a mentor to prisoners. Rick's favorite things to do were to spend time with his family and building projects.



**RICHARD CUMMINS**  
1953-2021

He is survived by his wife, Lynn Cummins; four sons; Eric, Jason, Christopher and Matthew; their wives, Julie, Denise, Jenny and Rebekah; seventeen grandchildren; Kaitlyn, Eric, Elyse, Allyson, Hayden, Abigail, Bryn, Joseph, Cade, Paisley, Conley, Jonathan, Joshua, Jacob, Hallie, Cason, and Cash; one great grandchild, Sariah; siblings Doug, Perry, Barbara, and Dennis.

The family received friends from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 4, 2021 at the Schmidt Funeral Home, 1344 West Grand Parkway, Katy, TX, 77494. The Celebration of Life was held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, February 5, 2021 at the Family Life Assembly of God, 24911 Roesner Road, Katy, TX 77494. Interment in Katy Magnolia Cemetery.

## BROOKSHIRE

### Council discusses code enforcement issues at Feb. 4 meeting

By R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Brookshire City Council discussed the need for the city to have a code enforcement officer or contractor that could serve in that capacity at their Feb. 4 meeting. Multiple items on the agenda related to enforcement of the city's ordinances including an alleged nuisance property

on First Street.

City Attorney Justin Pruitt said the issues brought up in the meeting emphasized the city's need to move forward with establishing some sort of code enforcement person or consultant. Pruitt had worked with city staff and spoken with consultants regarding the city's ordinances and their enforcement and recommended the city move

forward with approving the combination job description and bid request language he had provided to them.

Multiple council members said they had not had time to review the verbiage Pruitt had established and asked for a decision on the verbiage to be postponed to the next council meeting on Feb. 18, which was confirmed by a majority vote.

Council also approved allowing city staff to look into helping the family of Julian Nino, whose home was burned down in a Jan. 27 fire. While Pruitt said that the city was legally limited on what it could do, council voted to direct staff to pursue those options available to help remove debris from the trailer home fire at the Cookson Mobile Home Park.



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## In pandemic era, Texans' access to public info at risk

**B**old steps nearly 50 years ago created a landmark protection for the people's right to know in Texas.

Lawmakers approved the state's open records law, now known as the Texas Public Information Act. Born out of a political financial scandal, the act's aim was to allow citizens to hold public officials accountable.

For the most part, this Texas transparency law has served us well.

It's essential in many Texans' routine interactions with their government as they request police reports and school budget documents and so much more. It has been used to expose government action – or inaction – in the wake of hurricanes and floods and turbulent economic times.

Now, amid the coronavirus outbreak, the Public Information Act is having another pivotal moment as Texans try to keep a watch on government during a pandemic.

Where are COVID-19 clusters occurring? Are elderly loved ones safe? What's the latest on COVID testing and vaccine distribution? How are taxpayer dollars being spent on pandemic aid in our communities?

The Texas Public Information Act is supposed to help us answer these questions of life and death and following the money. But in many cases, governments are using the pandemic itself to ignore them.

Some government offices closed their doors to the public to prevent spread of the virus and, citing attorney general guidance, declared this physical office closure doesn't count as business days for responding to Public Information Act requests. That's even if government employees are getting paid to work remotely with electronic access to records. This obstruction could go on indefinitely. It's an outdated approach when much of the work world is operating remotely via email and Zoom meetings.

Clearly, there's a flaw in the interpretation of the law. And it can be repaired.

Today's state legislators, like their predecessors a half century ago, have the chance to take their own historic stand to safeguard the free flow of information for years to come.



**KELLEY SHANNON**

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION FOUNDATION OF TEXAS

The Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas and 20 other diverse organizations have formed the Transparent and Accountable Government Coalition to raise awareness about transparency laws and to support reforms in the 2021 legislative session. Some of these issues already existed, but the pandemic magnified them.

In addition to Public Information Act updates, the virtual meetings provision of the Texas Open Meetings Act needs lawmakers' attention. We must ensure fair rules for public participation in online government meetings, including having a phone call-in line for those without Internet access.

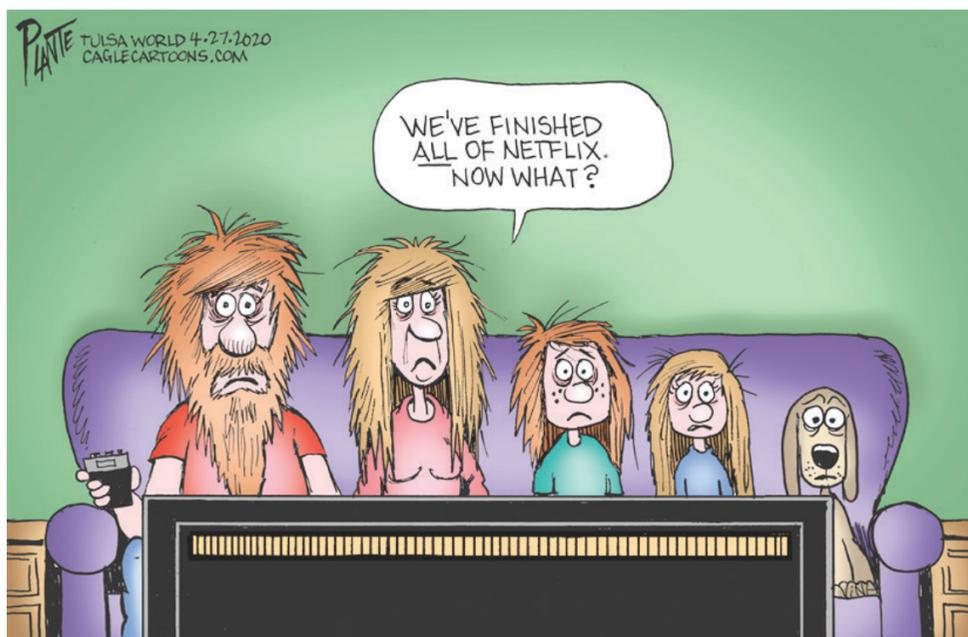
State law also should clarify that the locations of COVID-19 cases in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities are public information. The TAG Coalition is working on these measures and several other open government bills, such as one calling for posting more government contracts online.

On Tuesday, Feb. 9, state Rep. Giovanni Capriglione, R-Southlake, will participate in a webinar about government financial transparency and how we can enhance citizens' ability to obtain information through today's technology. This free program is being hosted by the Texas Association of Broadcasters.

Lawmakers in both political parties are interested in working together to protect and expand public information access. It's a continuous job to make sure Texas laws keep pace with modern times and that governments adhere to the letter and the spirit of our transparency laws.

This pandemic era presents the opportunity to take yet another step on that honorable path.

*Kelley Shannon is executive director of the non-profit Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas. For more information go to [www.foit.org](http://www.foit.org).*



## The wonder of Sonny Fox

**I**rwin Fox died the other day. If you missed it because you were engrossed in obits about Hank Aaron, Larry King and Cloris Leachman, that's understandable. Besides, at 95, Mr. Fox had outlived many of his fans.

As a kid in Brooklyn they called him "Sonny," so he kept it – for the months he spent in a Nazi POW camp during WWII, through broadcasting courses at NYU, and into the offices of the "Candid Microphone" radio program, where my father, Allen Funt, gave him his first job in 1947.

The radio show and its television offshoot, "Candid Camera," became Dad's entire career. Sonny Fox moved on, first as a correspondent for the Voice of America during the Korean War, and then as a pioneer in children's television. He paved the way for performers like Bob Keeshan (Captain Kangaroo) and then Fred Rogers, to name two who, like Sonny, could relate to kids on their own level.

"They taught me as much as I taught them," he said about the children he interviewed. "I had an insatiable curiosity about the inner life that goes on in children."

His first foray into kids TV came at an educational station in St. Louis, where he answered an ad for "A man who can talk to a boy, man-to-man." This daily series, "The Finder," was later used by the Ford Foundation to introduce public



**PETER FUNT**

SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

stations to children's programming – the forerunner of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood."

In the mid-fifties Sonny landed a show on CBS called "Let's Take a Trip," a marvel of live-TV production, using full-size studio cameras that had to be lugged around the globe. Sonny and two young companions visited the Truman Library in Missouri, spring training in Florida with the Dodgers, as well as a rope factory, a shoe factory, and a ski slope in Canada.

Today's kids can go to such places via the Internet, but back then it was unique, embellished by the smooth, gentle, always curious Mr. Fox. Unlike other kids' fare of the period – mostly cartoons and slapstick – "Let's Take a Trip," which ran for three years, was a product of the CBS News Division. Billboard magazine reviewed this series in 1955, noting: "Like so many good things, 'Let's Take a Trip' is so simple it is only amazing it was not done before."

CBS gave Sonny a second job, in prime-time, hosting "The \$64,000 Challenge." He didn't care

for it – and wasn't very good, once reading the answer instead of the question – so getting fired was a piece of good luck. He was spared the quiz show scandals that came a short while later.

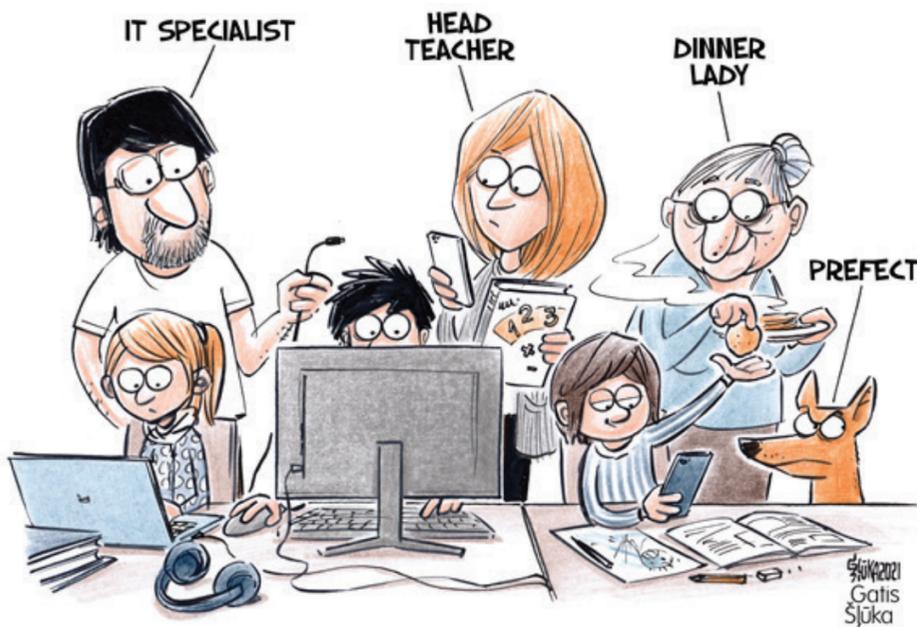
In 1959 he took over as host of a local kids show on Channel 5 in New York that became nationally renowned, although televised only in the tri-state area. "Wonderama" was a weekly four-hour children's festival.

"I have no talent – no performing talent," Sonny conceded. "I don't do puppets, I don't sing. I realized that the kids in the audience were the show. I didn't condescend to them."

"Wonderama" was a mix of fun and games, but it featured guests such as producer Joseph Papp and a troupe of Shakespearean performers, opera star Roberta Peters, and regular appearances by Sen. Robert Kennedy, who conducted "press conferences" with youngsters.

Sonny went on to serve as head of children's programming at NBC, and as chairman of Television Academy, but his legacy lies in what he did for children during the fifties and sixties.

W.C. Fields famously advised performers to never work with animals or kids. It's a good thing my friend Sonny Fox never got the message. "What a long-lasting thumb print we left on those malleable minds," he said.



## Katy Times

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### 22<sup>nd</sup> AMENDMENT

#### SECTION 1

No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of President more than once. But this Article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this Article was proposed by Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

#### SECTION 2

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by the Congress.

### CONSTITUTION CORNER

*U.S. Constitution*



KATYTIMES.COM

## KATY ISD

from page A1

Growth and aging campuses prompted the bond package to be considered, Grooms said. The CBAC met three times in January to hear briefings from KISD representatives explaining the district's needs for growth and campus renovations and upgrades. Committee members debated the district's needs based upon that feedback and came forth with the four-proposition bond package supported by more than two-thirds of CBAC members, Grooms said.

- The bond package includes:
- Proposition A: New schools, renovations, safety and security and building component replacements - \$591,368,568.
  - Proposition B: Classroom and campus technology - \$59,755,242.
  - Proposition C: Natatorium (pool) for proposed High School 10 - \$13,842,610.
  - Proposition D: Campus and district athletic facilities/stadiums repairs and component replacements - \$11,260,000.

If approved by voters, the bond package would pay for a new high school, a junior high, three elementaries, renovations and expansions at aging campuses including Hutsell and Winborn elementaries and a northwest transportation center. All told, about 7,500 new classroom seats would be supported by the bond, Grooms said.

If the propositions are approved by voters, Grooms said the district's \$0.39000 per \$100 valuation debt service property tax rate was projected to remain the same and not increase.

KISD Superintendent Ken Gregorski said that the district understands the tax rate isn't the only factor in total tax bills, because appraisals factor in as well. Due to Katy ISD being an attractive area, home values tend to rise as parents move to Katy seeking educational opportunities for their children. As a result, home values increase - causing tax bills to increase, he said.

KISD Chief Financial Officer Chris Smith said the average KISD home had increased in value by \$101,338 since 2011 due to increased appraisals. Despite the

district lowering tax rates between then and 2021, the typical KISD portion of a median-value home's tax bill had increased by \$924. Gregorski and Smith both said the district expects the maintenance and operation rate to continue to lower over time, given current projections to help offset property value increases.

Smith said bonds would not all be sold immediately, but over time as projects required funding.

Gregorski said his concern if the bond proposals do not pass is that current campuses will become overcrowded, leading the district to look at attendance boundary modifications and portable classrooms. The problem would be especially evident in Katy and Paetow high schools, he said, along with McElwain, Bethke and Leonard elementary with those high school campuses projected to be oversaturated by about 2,500 students.

Gregorski said the district wants to use the bonds to create and upgrade campuses to serve students interested in the arts as much as for athletes. He also said it is important to maintain a high standard for campuses to provide equal facilities so students see the same opportunities throughout the district.

"That's why we build the facilities that we do have," Gregorski said. "And we have huge numbers of kids participate in art in music, orchestra, theater (and) dance. ... Yes, we have traditional athletic programs that use gym space, but we also have cheerleaders who are part of our fine arts program. They use gym space, and we have dance teams, and we have color guards - and all of those folks need space as well in (gyms)."

He also said the district wants to ensure voters are educated about the bonds.

"What I'd say to our voters is we want (them) to be informed voters and understand what we're trying to accomplish in Katy ISD and what we're trying to build for the future of Katy ISD, and if anyone had questions about the bond, we're here to provide those factual responses. We can share information about what's in the bond package and we can help educate our voters to make an informed decision," Gregorski said.

## KCM

from page A1

different sites on First Street in Katy and on Dominion Drive just south of Taylor High School. Crespo said the facility needs renovation and new furnishings to serve the ministry's needs. Crespo estimates the capital campaign needs to raise another \$74,000 is needed to accommodate those needs.

Crespo said the move to the new facility is going to take about two years and will begin after the building is remodeled, which is expected to take roughly two months.

"Right now, which I call year one (the move is set for) our food pantry, our Social Services Department and Administration," Crespo said. "In year two, it's going to be our crisis center; so, in 2022 we'll be doing another build out to welcome our crisis center staff."

that's why I am planning right now."

Crespo said she is excited to be able to expand the food pantry once the move is complete, which is one of the main reasons the capital campaign is continuing. The new food pantry location will have more square feet on the ground, but will also have a much higher ceiling which will accommodate larger refrigeration equipment and shelving to store more food for clients.

"Our idea is to stack up food to utilize the height of this building," Crespo said.

The new facility also offers space for a community garden to help KCM provide fresh produce, which Crespo says will also make a good place for caseworkers to get away after intense client meetings.

KCM's partnerships in the community won't be impacted by the move, Crespo said. Referring clients to community partners such as Hope Impacts, Clothed by Faith or Christ Clinic will continue to flow smoothly. The location of the new building also helps serve one of the high-

**"This location is housed in one of our top three zip codes that we serve for client assistance. So, that was one of the first things that we (asked) from the very beginning - Is this accessible to our clients?"**

—KCM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DEYSI CRESPO

Crespo said she anticipates a move from the current office and food pantry location sometime in April. Her goal is to make sure all of the ministry's clients know ahead of time so that the move will impact them as little as possible. She is working with staff on a transition plan that will include supplemental assistance being issued the week before the move.

"I am looking at how not to affect the food availability to our families during this transition," Crespo said. "If I do have to close the food pantry during this move, I think, at the most I may anticipate it pausing maybe for a week. That could be detrimental for many of our families but

est-demand areas for services in the Katy area, she said.

"This location is housed in one of our top three zip codes that we serve for client assistance," Crespo said. "So that was one of the first things that we (asked) from the very beginning - Is this accessible to our clients?"

Crespo is excited for the future in KCM's new home.

"From a client support standpoint, I look at the overall picture for the food pantry," Crespo said. "And providing additional space for our clients and for them to be in a comfortable environment (that isn't as cramped as our old space)."

## COUNCIL

from page A1

Katy City Hall should be completed Feb. 9. A pergola for the patio is being built off-site and a delivery date is unknown, he said. Additionally, provided weather allows, work on landscaping in the now-bare city square should begin this week and be completed in a couple weeks.

An email address for residents to submit their suggestions for improvements and features in the plaza has been set up at plaza@cityofkaty.com, City Administrator Byron Hebert said.

### Drainage

Council approved multiple items in regard to drainage improvements in the Riceland Terrace subdivision. Measures included a resolution to add about \$44,000 for water line, storm sewer and traffic control devices along Patna Drive, Rexora Lane and Caloro Lane where work is already underway. They also approved the sale of \$3 million in bonds approved by voters in 2018 shortly after Hurricane Harvey caused flooding in the city in

2017 to improve water flow through the city.

"We're going to be using these bonds for Drexel (Drive) and Rexora (Lane) and Caloro (Lane), and then additional funding might be able to send to maybe some drainage projects over at the (various city) drainage ponds," Hebert said.

Josh Netardus with Costello Engineering, the city's drainage consultant, said current projects already underway in Riceland Terrace are expected to be completed in December of this year or January 2022.

### Other items

Council also approved adding signage and making changes to traffic flow in the 1300 block of Pin Oak Road near the U.S. Post Office there. Five city vehicles were declared as salvage for disposal through auction or other means. An annual report regarding racial profiling that is standard procedure was accepted from the Katy Police Department and indicated compliance with the law. Council also approved an agreement with Waller County allowing Igloo, located to the west of the city, to receive tax credits through the Texas Enterprise Zone Program for economic development near the plant which is within Katy's extra-territorial jurisdiction.

## Area's Best Business Review

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We, the editors of this 2020 Area's Best Business Review, offer this suggestion to the people in our area: So, whether or not you need a big grocery shopping trip, get your tire changed or pick-up a prescription, Do what smart shoppers do and make this your one-stop holiday shopping headquarters for the best products, the largest selection and the ultimate in everyday bargains!



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# KATY ISD

RECOMMENDED BY  
COMMUNITY BOND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PROP A

EARLY VOTING

APRIL 19-27, 2021

PROP B

PROP C

ELECTION DAY

MAY 1, 2021

PROP D

New Schools, Purchase of School Sites, Renovations & Expansions for Aging Campuses, Safety & Security, Buses, Building Component Replacements

\$591,368,568

Classroom & Campus Technology

\$59,755,242

Natatorium for High School #10  
(All Katy ISD high schools have natatoriums)

\$13,842,610

Campus & District Athletic Facilities/ Stadiums Repairs & Component Replacements

\$11,260,000

## NO CHANGE TO TAX RATE

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FOR MORE INFO: WWW.KATYISD.ORG/SITES/BONDS



COURTESY FRIENDLY LI'L SPENDERS

Friendly Li'l Spenders members pose with an FFA student and one of the animals the group purchased at the 2020 Katy ISD FFA Livestock Show. The group works to ensure all FFA students are supported by the community and to allow even those who can only contribute a small amount of money to the program to be able to participate through crowd funding.

## FFA

from page A1

sure that each student gets at least a \$1,200 return for their effort, he said.

Friendly Li'l Spenders was founded in 2005 as the Li'l Spenders and began supporting Katy ISD FFA students from throughout the district through small co-op style donations to purchase animals. In 2016, the group merged with the Friends of Katy FFA and changed its name to the current moniker. Since its founding, the nonprofit group has contributed more than \$44,500 in support of KISD agriculture students.

Students can sign up to be sponsored by the Spenders throughout the year by reaching out to the group through a letter, MacDonald said. That places the students on a list that members who attend the

### KATY ISD FFA LIVESTOCK SHOW VIRTUAL AUCTION

www.katy.fairwire.com  
\*Advanced registration recommended

Friendly Li'l Spenders  
www.friendslffa.com

auctions watch to ensure each sponsored student gets at least the \$1,200 minimum. Often, the group bids strategically on sponsored and non-sponsored students' animals to help drive up auction prices, he said.

Katy ISD Agricultural FFA Activities and Events Specialist Guy James said more than 440 students will participate in this year's livestock show with 122 of those making it into the

show. Animals not sold at auction – about 320 animals this year – are generally sold via a barn sale. Students use the proceeds to help pay for college or put toward animals for the following year's FFA events among other purposes.

This year's show and auction will be operated a bit differently due to SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, said Ashlee Laird, KISD Agriculture Education specialist. Due to seating capacity limitations, buyers and parents will be allowed in the livestock show stadium for the show and sale, she said, but with a capacity of no more than 800 people to ensure social distancing. However, the show will also be available virtually to observers and bidders via katy.fairwire.com, she said. Those interested in participating in the event should register ahead of time.

James said the facility

will be sanitized between each species' show in order to ensure risk of spreading COVID-19 is minimized in addition to the capacity limit.

From the Friendly Li'l Spenders' perspective, MacDonald said contributions are still being accepted through friendslffa.com and clicking on the donate button and that the group is committed to ensuring every penny goes to the FFA student participants.

"Our goal is, we sit there to the very end. We're going to make sure ... that we're covering as many of those barn sale animals as we can (and) to lift the prices of the ones that are at auction to try to make sure (the students) feel like they've accomplished something because they work very hard on a project (animal) to get it out to the barn sale or auction," said Friendly Li'l Spenders Vice President of Publicity Toni Williams.

## Abbott releases proposed budget, prioritizes school finance, COVID-19 issues

By R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Governor Greg Abbott released his 2022-23 budget Feb. 5. The document prioritizes improvements to school finance, property tax reform, school safety, disaster preparedness and response to issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I truly believe that Texas will be able to meet its needs and serve the taxpayers and residents of our state during this biennium and beyond," Abbott's introductory letter to the proposed budget read. "We must look toward the future as our economy moves beyond the pandemic."

Abbott's budget highlights several items:

- Access to COVID-19 vaccines and other treatments
- Access to health care for Texans with preexisting conditions
- Increasing access to telehealth and broadband internet
- Improved training access for law enforcement
- Providing additional body cameras for peace officers
- Enhancing capitol security

- Reforming the state's bail program
- Election integrity
- Addressing learning losses caused by the pandemic

- Creating a better foundation for civics knowledge

- Bringing additional jobs to Texas.

- Compliance with requirements for foster care in response to a federal lawsuit

Abbott also prioritized compliance with a 2011 lawsuit which found that Texas' foster care system endangers children and is not sufficient to ensure their wellbeing. In that case, Judge Janice Graham Jack of the Corpus Christi Division of the United States District Court, Southern District of Texas has ruled that the state is in contempt of various orders since the initial class action lawsuit.

Abbott's budget shows prioritized that lawsuit and other safety issues for Texans.

"We will take action so the state can remain a model for the rest of the nation by providing for a healthier, safer, freer, and more prosperous Texas," Abbott said.

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## Mustangs make history with 1st district title in 26 years

By DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

Two sequences defined the Taylor boys basketball team winning its first district championship since 1995, and just the fourth overall in program history.

Early during the second quarter of the Mustangs' demonstrative 69-39 district finale win over Seven Lakes at home on Friday, Feb. 5, senior guard Jake Arnold drilled back-to-back-to-back 3-pointers. After his third triple, Arnold delivered a skip pass to senior Michael Cummings for another 3 on the Mustangs' next possession.

An eight-point first quarter Taylor lead turned into a 20-point lead in a matter of minutes.

"It was really big," Arnold said. "Those 3s, and the way it happened, really set a tone for the rest of the game. I think it made the other team lose a little bit of hope. Playing in these types of games, you never want to give the other team hope."

See **MUSTANGS**, page B6

# ACCOMPLISHED!



DENNIS SILVA II

Taylor sophomore center Elijah Melchiorre cuts down a string from the net in celebration of the Mustangs' 69-39 win over Seven Lakes on Friday, Feb. 5, that won Taylor its first district championship in 26 years.

## Taylor girls 3-peat at region swim meet



RYAN DUNSMORE | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

The Taylor girls swim team won its third consecutive regional title by scoring 345 points, 118 more than second-place Bridgeland, at the Region V-6A swimming championships on Friday, Feb. 5 at the Cy-Fair ISD Natatorium in Cypress.

By DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

Taylor's girls swim team was not nervous or anxious heading into the Region V-6A swim meet in Cypress on Friday, Feb. 5.

If anything, the Mustangs were confident and assured.

"We are expecting to win," senior Kat Pashen said four days prior to the meet. "We need every girl to do their best and prove we deserve first."

The Mustangs did just that, winning four events and capturing the program's third consecutive regional title. The Mustangs scored 345 points, outlasting Bridgeland (227), Seven Lakes (215), and Tomball Memorial (200). Individual swimmers and relay teams that placed first at



ABBIE ALVAREZ

the regional meet were automatic qualifiers to the state meet to be held in San Antonio. The 6A and 5A girls compete Feb. 19 and

Feb. 20, respectively, and the 6A and 5A boys compete Feb. 26 and Feb. 27, respectively.

Senior Abbie Alvarez won gold in the 200-yard individual medley (2-minutes, 5.28-seconds) and the 100-yard butterfly (55.06). Senior Roxana Nolte won gold in the 500-yard freestyle with a time of 5:00.01.

See **REGIONALS**, page B3

## Skilled, athletic and deep, Panthers secure district title

By DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

All season long, No. 1 on the list of goals for the Paetow boys basketball team was to win the District 19-5A title outright. Last year, the Panthers shared the championship with A&M Consolidated.

They were intent on being more selfish this season.

"Last year, it was good to win, but we just didn't like sharing it," senior guard Brian McKnight said. "Our main goal was to go undefeated and win district. We haven't taken it easy during practices. We go after each other, hard, all the time, make each other better. That's why we're able to play as a team and just win."

See **PANTHERS**, page B2



SHEA DONALDSON | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Paetow junior forward Idy Igaroola (10) handles the ball against defensive pressure during the Panthers' game against Bryan Rudder on Saturday, Feb. 6, at Paetow High.



FILE PHOTO BY RAY BORCHERT | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Paetow High senior running back Damon Bankston runs for a touchdown during a game against Deer Park on Dec. 3, 2020, at Rhodes Stadium. In being named Offensive Most Valuable Player in District 10-5A, last season, Bankston rushed for 1,634 yards and 17 touchdowns and caught nine passes for 71 yards in 10 games.

## Bankston finds home at Weber St.

By DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

The recruiting process for high school football student-athletes in the Class of 2021 was a difficult one because of a plethora of restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There was no

**63 KATY ISD STUDENTS PUT PEN TO PAPER ON SIGNING DAY,**  
SEE SPORTS/BS

spring football. Camps were canceled. Official visits were not permitted.

See **BANKSTON**, page B5

## MERRELL CENTER TO HOST PLAYOFF DH

By DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

The girls basketball state playoffs begin this week. A bi-district playoff double-header will be held at the Merrell Center on Thursday, Feb. 11. Tompkins (17-3) plays Fort Bend Travis (11-10) at 5 p.m., followed by Seven Lakes (15-4) vs. Ridge Point (12-6) at 7 p.m. At a doubleheader at Hopson Field House in Missouri City, Cinco Ranch (12-6) plays George Ranch (15-8) at 5 p.m. and Katy (11-9) plays Dulles (22-0) at 7 p.m. ... Many Katy ISD swimmers were honored by the Texas High School Coaches Association on the academic all-state team.

They were Martha Fields (first team), Genevieve Kroll (elite team), and Mia Sacco (honorable mention) from Katy High; Alex Sung (first team), Andres Saa (first team), Emily Peden (first team), Matthew Crabtree (first team), Megan Mahon (first team), Shalimar Hoxha (first team), Tori Hassmann (first team), Colby Mann (second team), Daniel Zanabria (second team), Isabella Alcazar (second team), Sam Bush (second team), Paul Popoviciu (elite team), Sarah Lu (elite team), Carlos Acosta (honorable mention), Celian Cadet (honorable mention), Jessica Coakley (honorable mention), Justin Liao (honorable mention) and Maddie Welborn (honorable mention) from Seven Lakes; Taylor Schababerle (first team), Emilia Mrugala (second team), Katherine Pashen (second team), Roxana Nolte (second team), Youssef Mujahed (second team), Zachary Kangieser (second team), Abbie Alvarez (honorable mention) and Isabella Roos (honorable mention) from Taylor. ... Mayde Creek's girls soccer team donated 292 pounds of food to Katy Christian Ministries this year as part of its community services initiatives. ... Texas-football.com announced on Monday that the Texas state 7-on-7 tournament will be held June 24 at Veterans Park in College Station. Schedule and protocols for the qualifying tournaments are expected to be announced later this month. ... Former Morton Ranch great L.J. Cryer is having an impressive season as a true freshman for No. 2 Baylor. Cryer has played in 13 of 17 games and is averaging 4.9 points with nine steals to eight turnovers while shooting 43.2 percent from 3-point range. ... Former Mayde Creek standout Rommel Williams is having an exceptional freshman season for Midwestern State. Williams, the District 19-6A MVP his senior season in 2019-2020, is averaging 8.6 points and 2.1 rebounds per game while shooting 51.3 percent from the field for 8-7 Midwestern State. ... In the state rankings this week, Seven Lakes is ranked No. 16 in the Texas Girls Coaches Association Class 6A soccer poll and Tompkins is ranked No. 14 in the Texas Girls Coaches Associated Class 6A basketball poll. Paetow is ranked No. 20 in the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches Class 5A boys basketball poll.

*(The weekly sports notebook highlights notes and news that occurred in the Katy area within the last week. To submit a news item, email dennis.silva@katytimes.com or message on Twitter @densilva2).*



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## FINAL H.S. BASKETBALL STANDINGS

### DISTRICT 19-6A GIRLS

	DISTRICT		OVERALL	
	W	L	W	L
xy-Tompkins	12	0	17	3
y-Seven Lakes	10	2	15	4
y-Cinco Ranch	8	4	12	6
y-Katy	5	7	11	9
Taylor	4	8	9	10
Morton Ranch	3	9	3	16
Mayde Creek	0	12	3	14

x-clinched playoff berth  
y-clinched district title

### DISTRICT 19-6A BOYS

	DISTRICT		OVERALL	
	W	L	W	L
xy-Taylor	9	3	15	5
y-Seven Lakes	8	4	13	6
y-Tompkins	8	4	13	9
y-Mayde Creek	7	5	12	8
Katy	6	6	11	8
Cinco Ranch	4	8	9	11
Morton Ranch	0	12	2	15

x-clinched playoff berth  
y-clinched district title

### DISTRICT 19-5A BOYS

	DISTRICT		OVERALL	
	W	L	W	L
xy-Paetow	13	0	18	1

x-clinched playoff berth  
y-clinched district title

### DISTRICT 19-5A GIRLS

	DISTRICT		OVERALL	
	W	L	W	L
Paetow	2	12	5	13

x-clinched playoff berth  
y-clinched district title

## H.S. SOCCER STANDINGS THROUGH FEB. 10

### DISTRICT 19-6A BOYS

	DISTRICT			OVERALL		
	W	L	TIE	PTS	W	L
Cinco Ranch	5	1	0	15	9	1
Seven Lakes	5	1	0	15	12	1
Taylor	3	2	1	10	4	4
Tompkins	3	2	1	10	5	3
Morton Ranch	2	4	0	6	4	4
Katy	1	5	0	3	2	7
Mayde Creek	1	5	0	3	4	7

x-clinched playoff berth  
y-clinched district title

### GIRLS

	DISTRICT			OVERALL		
	W	L	TIE	PTS	W	L
Seven Lakes	6	0	0	18	12	1
Tompkins	5	1	0	15	9	3
Cinco Ranch	1	3	2	5	3	4
Mayde Creek	1	3	2	5	7	4
Taylor	1	3	2	5	8	4
Katy	1	3	2	5	4	5
Morton Ranch	1	3	2	5	4	4

x-clinched playoff berth  
y-clinched district title

### DISTRICT 19-5A BOYS

	DISTRICT			OVERALL		
	W	L	TIE	PTS	W	L
Paetow	4	0	1	13	9	2

x-clinched district title  
y-clinched playoff berth

### GIRLS

	DISTRICT			OVERALL		
	W	L	TIE	PTS	W	L
Paetow	2	2	0	6	4	4

x-clinched district title  
y-clinched playoff berth

## PANTHERS

from page B1

The Panthers are 18-1 overall, 13-0 in district play, after a 69-62 win over Magnolia on Tuesday and a 66-49 drubbing of Bryan Rudder in their final home game of the season on Saturday, Feb. 6. Paetow won the district title outright courtesy of a 63-50 win over Magnolia West on Friday, Feb. 5.

"I feel this really solidifies where we are as a team," senior forward/center Charles Chukwu said. "We've really improved from last year."

The Panthers are in first place in district by a four-game margin. Like last season, Paetow is skilled, athletic, quick and deep. The difference this season is experience and younger players assuming more significant roles.

"A lot of older guys left and a lot of younger guys had to become leaders," Chukwu said. "It was challenging at times, but we find a way to get things done."

Chukwu added that the Panthers were not without motivation.

"It was a chance to prove the haters wrong," he said. "Before the season started, we weren't picked to even win district, so I feel like this proves a lot to whoever didn't believe in us."

The Panthers have been impressively dominant despite dealing with their share of adversity. Head coach Michael Niemi missed a handful of games dealing with COVID-19. Junior starting guard E.J. Roberts recently tore his ACL and is out for the season.

Still, Paetow keeps rolling. It's the next-man-up routine, whether it's lead assistant coach Chuck Arnold stepping in or players like McKnight and senior guard Khi Watkins stepping up.

"My guys are competing at a high level," Niemi said. "Last year's group, everything was so fresh and new, so there was a lot of emotion tied to last year. This year, they have that experience. Having playoff experience, district championship experience, and the understanding that we wanted to win it outright and not share it, all of that has paid huge dividends."

McKnight said the Panthers understand how good they are, but still have a knack for playing down to competition.

That was never more apparent than against Bryan Rudder last weekend. Paetow trailed 10-6 early and only led by five, 32-27, at halftime



SHEA DONALDSON | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Paetow senior guard Brian McKnight scores a layup during the Panthers' game against Bryan Rudder on Saturday, Feb. 6, at Paetow High.

against a Rangers team that had won just five of its 13 district games. The Panthers were lethargic and sloppy.

And then the second half happened, and all was forgiven as Paetow re-established itself. The Panthers outscored the Rangers, 19-10, in the third quarter, forcing eight turnovers and holding Rudder to two field goals.

In all, Paetow held Rudder to 22 total points in the second half against 18 turnovers.

Offensively, Paetow never

got much going consistently aside from a furious run of easy transition buckets off turnovers in the third quarter, highlighted by two fun Chukwu slams. Only two Panthers scored in double figures (Watkins with 16 and junior forward Idy Igaroola with 11), but Paetow's quality depth showed off. Three other Panthers each scored six points, and 12 Panthers total found their way into the scoring column.

"When we flip the switch and we turn it on, no team can compete with us," McK-

night said. "When we play as a team, we're one of the top teams in the state."

With one game left in the district season and the playoffs looming next week, Niemi said it's important his team sees the big picture. An undefeated district season likely awaits, and then, hopefully, the regional finals and a shot at a state tournament berth.

"We feel like we still have a lot more to achieve and we're just scratching the surface," Chukwu said. "If we get to where we want to be, we can be really special."

## TIGERS

from page A1

"That team was so determined, and they persevered through some things," Decker said. "It was strong both offensively and defensively, but that 2015 defense will probably be known as the best defense in Texas high school football history."

Whillock remembers players gathering on their own

in the film room the week of the state game to watch and study video. Players purposefully tailored class schedules to be able to exempt finals that week.

Whillock said while it was one thing to watch film, to go out and finish the job on the field was "a great feeling."

"We had been there before," Whillock said. "Sophomore and junior year, we had come up short in the state title game, and I think just using that as fuel ... just a lot

of learning experiences going into that senior season, it's a testament to our coaching staff and how they were able to prepare us week in and week out. That senior year, they kind of allowed us to take the reins and take control of that team. We had a lot of guys that led. I think of (running back) Kyle Porter, (linebacker/cornerback) Giovanni Stewart, (quarterback) Garrett Doiron. So many guys that knew what it took to get there, and we were so hungry

to finish it that year."

The 2015 Tigers averaged 48.6 points per game and surrendered just 3.9 points per game.

"I go back to their (program) motto, 'When excellence becomes tradition, greatness has no limits,'" Decker said. "That's not just a quote to put on a T-shirt or on the wall, it's the first thing you see when you enter the Katy High School field house and it's something those kids and those coaches believe in."

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SPORTS

REGIONALS

from page B1

The Mustangs' 400-yard freestyle relay team also won gold, posting a time of 3:32.28.

The Mustangs had more call-ups to state. Excluding regional champs, the top eight times in each event from around the state also advanced to state. Taylor's 200-yard medley relay, 200-yard freestyle relay, sophomore Mariana Diaz Ponce (100-yard breaststroke) and senior Amy Evans (100-yard breaststroke) were call-ups.

Seniors Taylor Schababerle and Emma Clark, and juniors Natalia Casas and Emma Xiao also performed admirably at the regional meet and helped the Mustangs maintain their standing as the best in the region.

"It's a collective group of girls who are great, and they're all successful because they're trying to keep up with each other," coach Matt Apple said.

For the 16th consecutive year, a Seven Lakes swimmer or diver qualified for state, an impressive run of excellence.

Seven Lakes sophomore diver Kailey Koval won the Region V-6A title by scoring a 396. Also headed to state for the Spartans as call-ups were senior Maddie Welborn (100-yard freestyle, 200-yard freestyle) and the 200-medley relay of Welborn, sophomore Taylor Craft, senior Kaitlyn Killinger and junior Alva Bjelland.

Jordan freshman Kaeli White won the Region IV-5A championship in the 500-yard freestyle. White posted a time of 5:04.39.

"For region, I had a different approach and a different mindset," White said. "Last week (at district), I was just wanting to go in and drop some time; I never expected that I would win. This week, I was just wanting to prove to myself that the time I had at district wasn't a mistake and that I really had dropped as much time as I had."

White swam a 5:04.05 to win the district title in the 500 two weeks ago.

"Going into state, my only goal is to drop time and hold the pace that I've been working on hitting in practice," she said.

On the boys side at the Region V-6A diving meet, Tompkins junior Matthew Aigner won his second consecutive regional title with a score of 435.50.

Katy ISD boys call-ups to state from the Region V-6A swim meet were Tompkins' 200-yard medley relay, Tompkins senior Drew Ladner (50-yard freestyle, 100-yard freestyle), Taylor sophomore Logan Pack (50-yard freestyle), Cinco Ranch junior Brandon Guo (100-yard freestyle), Cinco Ranch's 200-yard and 400-yard freestyle relays, and Seven Lakes senior Justin Liao (100-yard breaststroke).

Paetow sophomore Kaleb Velazquez finished second at the Region V-5A diving championships to automatically qualify for state.

Katy ISD north side dive coach Kevin Kehoe was recognized as Coach of the Meet at the 5A regional diving meet.



JORDAN HIGH ATHLETICS

Jordan freshman Kaeli White won the Region IV-5A championship in the 500-yard freestyle on Friday, Feb. 5. White posted a time of 5:04.39.



KATY ISD ATHLETICS

Tompkins junior Matthew Aigner won his second consecutive regional title with a score of 435.50.



SEVEN LAKES HIGH ATHLETICS

Seven Lakes sophomore diver Kailey Koval won the Region V-6A title by scoring a 396.

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**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

**INVITATION TO BIDDERS**

Sealed Electronic Bids addressed to Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 495, Attention: President, Board of Directors, will be electronically received, until 2:00 p.m. Local Time, February 23, 2021, and then publicly opened and displayed via: [www.civcastusa.com](http://www.civcastusa.com) project portal for "Katy Pointe Section 4 & 5 Amenities for Harris County M.U.D. No. 495, Harris County, Texas"

Scope of Work of the Contract includes the following: trail grading, sidewalks/trails, planting, irrigation, lake fountain, site furnishings

Bids received after the closing time will not be considered. **NO** pre-bid conference will be held.

**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

An application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a P, BF, and E permit by Liquors 2 u, LLC to be located at: **801 FM 1463, Suite 300, Katy, Fort Bend County, Texas 77494.** Officer of said corporation Mireille Wehbe is the president.

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**February 4 Puzzle Answers**

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

S	R	B	M			H	E	R		G	S	G	H
P	I	L	A	F		A	C	E		H	A	L	E
C	A	U	S	E	S		G	O	N		A	F	A
C	L	E	A	V	E		A	T	E		P	A	D
			E	V	E		R	Y	W	H	E	R	E
C	A	T	E	R	E	R		P	A	U	L	I	
A	M	B	L	I	N	G		E	L	M			
B	A	A	L	S				A	J	J	G	A	
			H	R	S		S	E	N	A	T	O	R
		S	A	L	A	L		B	R	I	G	A	D
		P	O	L	Y	V	A	L	E	N	T		
C	R	A	B		A	V	E		E	I	G	H	T
H	A	K	A		G	E	M		S	E	E	S	A
A	T	E	N		E	R	A		S	E	I	N	E
T	O	D	Y		D	Y	N		S	A	K	I	

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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/or Contract 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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**INVITATION TO BIDDERS**

Sealed Bids will be received by Katy Development Authority on CIVCAST until 2:00 P.M. on March 05, 2021 for **Katy Boardwalk Reverse L Amenity Improvements.**

All bids will be publicly opened and distributed for construction of improvements including sidewalks, pavers, site furniture, lighting, irrigation, planting, and fine grading.

Bidders shall submit the Bid on exact copies of the Bid Form provided on CIVCAST. A Conflict of Interest Questionnaire (Form CIQ) and Certificate of Interested Parties (HB Form 1295) must be returned with Bid. (Forms are provided with Spec Book)

Bid Documents and February 19, 2021 Mandatory pre-bid meeting information are available through CIVCAST. Interested bidders should contact David Boles at [dboles@kgadeforest.com](mailto:dboles@kgadeforest.com) if you have any questions.

A Cashier's Check or Bidder's Bond Payable to Katy Development Authority in the amount of not less than five percent (5%) of the bid submitted, outlined in the Contract Documents, must accompany the Bid.

Bidders must have at least five years of confirmed experience on comparable size projects of a similar scope in the Houston Area.

The successful bidder receiving contract award must furnish Performance, Payment, and Maintenance Bonds in the amount of one hundred percent (100%) each of the total Contract price. Each such bond shall be executed by a corporate surety duly authorized to do business in the State of Texas.

The winning bid is decided not by low price but by this standard:

"The responsible person or persons that, in the Board's judgment, will be most advantageous to the District and result in the best and most economical completion of the District's proposed improvements."

The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive bidding informalities.

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# NATIONAL SIGNING DAY 2020

## Katy ISD student-athletes put pen to paper on National Signing Day

### STAFF REPORT

Sixty-three Katy ISD student-athletes signed to continue their athletic careers at the next level on National Signing Day, Feb. 3.

Signees included the following:

#### Cinco Ranch High School:

>> James Geysler, Football, Blinn Junior College  
>> Kayla Griebel, Volleyball, Brown University

>> Eva Fitzgerald, Volleyball, St. Thomas University (Minnesota)  
>> Isabella Walsh, Wrestling, Lindenwood University

#### Katy High School:

>> Olivia McFadden, Softball, Purdue University  
>> Morgan Blackstock, Softball, Oklahoma Wesleyan University  
>> Grace Torres, Softball, University of St. Thomas

>> Hannah Hoover, Volleyball, Navy  
>> Caleb Matthews, Baseball, Rice University

>> Tyler Martin, Baseball, University of Mary Hardin Baylor  
>> Fernando Garza, Baseball and Football, Texas A&M University  
>> Jaden Maronen, Football, Baylor University

>> Elijah Stewart, Football, Kentucky Western University  
>> Cohen Dearman, Football, Stephen F. Austin University  
>> Hunter Washington, Football, Florida State University

>> Jacob Norman, Football, Ouachita Baptist University  
>> CJ Marsh, Football, Sam Houston State University  
>> Dalton Johnson, Football, University of Arizona

>> Jalen Davis, Football, Stephen F. Austin University  
>> Taylor Saulsberry, Football, University of Houston  
>> Omar Aigbedion, Football, West Point Military Academy

>> Shepherd Bowling, Football, West Point Military Academy  
>> Bill Katsigiannis, Football, West Point Military Academy  
**Mayde Creek High School:**

>> Louis Amaya-Rodriguez, Football, Texas Wesleyan University  
>> Max Dietz, Football, Louisiana College  
>> Kenneth Ellison, Football, Navarro College

>> Ge-Quan Faucette, Football, Navarro College  
>> Alpha Khan, Football, Houston Baptist University  
>> Julius Loughridge, Football, Fordham University

>> Princeton Rayson, Football, University of St. Mary's  
>> L'Den Skinner, Football, Eastern Illinois University  
>> Jace Wilson, Football, Furman University

>> Jazmyn Cameron, Softball, Texas A&M International University  
>> Jordyn Rodriguez, Softball, Tyler Junior College  
>> Brandon Gaskin, Baseball, Finlandia University

**Morton Ranch High School:**  
>> Aaron Session, Football, Yale University  
>> Sam Hampton, Football, West Texas A&M University

>> Jaymarcus Wilson, Football, Hardin Simmons University  
>> Matthew Apata, Football, Trinity Valley Community College  
**Paetow High School:**

>> Tumi Onaleye, Track, University of Pennsylvania  
>> Logan Warren, Track and Cross Country, Southern Arkansas University



COURTESY OF KATY ISD



COURTESY OF KATY ISD



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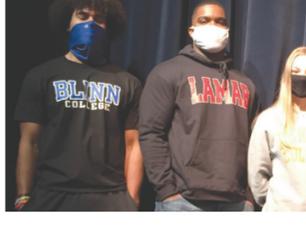
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COURTESY OF KATY ISD

>> Ryan Porter, Baseball, Cornell University  
>> Damon Bankston, Football, Weber State University

**Seven Lakes High School:**  
>> Sam Treadaway, Football, West Texas A&M University  
>> Milton Jones, Football, Eastern New Mexico University

>> Nick David-West, Football, Texas Wesleyan University  
>> Emilio Ramos, Football, McMurry University

>> Tyrone Irving, Football, Tarleton State University  
**Tompkins High School:**

>> Cole Minnick, Wrestling, University of Buffalo  
>> Jose Ojeda, Soccer, University of Memphis  
>> Eliana Posada, Volleyball, University of Pittsburg

>> Janet Tchouangwa, Volleyball, Jackson State University  
>> Hannah Schrader, Volleyball, Winnipeg University

>> Molly Horton, Volleyball, Klamazoo College  
>> PJ Magee, Football, College of Wooster  
>> Kobee Madriz, Football, University of Texas Permian Basin

>> Justin Bevrotte, Football, Black Hills State University  
>> Mason Young, Football, University of Mary Hardin Baylor

## BANKSTON

from page B1

The decision for the next step of their athletic careers was an unforgiving one for seniors, including Paetow running back Damon Bankston.

The explosive 5-foot-9, 180-pounder was an electric playmaker during his two seasons as a Panther. In being named Offensive Most Valuable Player in District 10-5A, Division I, last season, Bankston rushed for 1,634 yards and 17 touchdowns and caught nine passes for 71 yards in 10 games.

Still, interest was minimal, leading to long days and longer nights for the Bankston family.

"It was stressful knowing that you told your child that if he handled his books, he had the talent and someone would see him," said Bankston's father, Augustine. "And because of COVID, it slowed up. To see it slow down, it was stressful. He knew he deserved a lot, and to see him go through that ... I could see him doubting if he'd get a scholarship."

Instead of getting the looks and talks from college coaches that would typically come during spring football following a breakout 2019 junior season in which he ran for

1,087 yards and eight touchdowns with 286 yards and four touchdowns receiving as a backup tailback, Bankston's recruiting did not heat up until after his senior season in late December.

"Watching him almost lose what he worked since he was four years old for, it was painful," said Bankston's mother, Joy. "All I could do was just pray. I knew whatever was meant for him will be for him."

What was intended for Bankston, ultimately, was Weber State. On the verge of accepting that he'd have to begin his college career playing at Blinn College, Bankston received a sudden phone call from Weber State assistant coach Joe Dale about six weeks ago.

The Wildcats did not intend to recruit a running back this cycle, Dale told Bankston. But the coaches had gotten hold of his film, and he was someone they couldn't let slip by.

Bankston, appreciative of the school's relentless pursuit and want of him, verbally committed to the NCAA Division I Wildcats of the Big Sky Conference on Jan. 29. Five days later, on National Signing Day, he made it official.

During virtual tours and daily talks with Dale, Bankston was told, among other things, that Weber State coaches liked that he had a lot of skills they couldn't teach, like

speed and vision. In a little more than a month, it was a remarkable emotional rollercoaster for Bankston, as he went from doubtful and frustrated to ecstatic and grateful.

"I thought my athletic abilities were good enough to go to college for free, and it just wasn't happening the whole process," Bankston said. "I was down. I was tense. I'd been working my whole life for this. When they called and offered me, I felt a lot came off my chest. I didn't have a DI full ride (scholarship) until Weber State came, and then they really wanted me at that. That's when I knew I was home."

Bankston grew up in Katy. Augustine started training him at four years old, which is when Bankston started playing flag football for Katy Youth Football. Bankston has always been fast. But he was small.

"When he played for the Katy Sun Devils in sixth grade, playing on that circuit against other kids outside of Katy for the first time, and seeing the way he responded to it, I saw he could go against anybody despite his size," Augustine said.

Bankston spent his first two years of high school at Morton Ranch because Augustine was a coach at the school. When Augustine left, Bankston transferred to Paetow, where he was zoned to. That move proved critical.

"When we came here and moved and talked about the possibilities, he was on board," Joy said. "I could see that he would do whatever he could to help this program out. His work ethic totally improved once he came here, from the workouts to the discipline. Going into his junior year, I saw how bad he really wanted it."

Joy credits the discipline and expectations of Paetow's program for her son's success. Paetow head coach B.J. Gotte made Bankston earn his spot. Bankston embraced that.

Like Augustine, it didn't take long for Gotte to see he had a special athlete.

"He was very unassuming," Gotte said. "He doesn't want to be the center of things. He just wants to work. So, when he got here, he just blended in. We were kind of unsure about him. And then in spring football, whenever we got him the ball in space early on, he made a play that was like, 'OK. Alright. Wow.' It kind of just blew up from there."

In public, Bankston is serious, a no-nonsense individual who is quiet and mostly keeps to himself. At home, though, he is a prankster. "Goofy, silly," Joy said.

When Joy and Bankston's sister recently went on a trip to the store, Bankston and his younger brother

snuck into the back of the car, hid, and rode along, startling Joy only after she had arrived at the store.

Not everyone gets to see that side of Bankston. But as he assumed more of a leadership role last season, he started to show his sense of humor and let loose a little more around coaches and teammates.

"That was the coolest part," Gotte said.

Just as Bankston's recruiting process was frustrating for the family, it was as much so for Gotte, who pled with college coaches to give his gifted ballcarrier a look.

"I told any coach that would listen: he returns kicks, he returns punts, he can catch the ball out of the slot, he can catch the ball out of the backfield, and, oh yeah, he can run between the tackles," Gotte said. "He checks every box. Great kid, hard worker, comes from a supportive family. There's not anything he hasn't shown he can't do."

It was only a matter of time before a school saw what Bankston has always seen in himself.

"Every time I go on the field, I feel I'm the best player," Bankston said. "I'm so confident because I perfect my craft and I train so hard that I have faith in myself during the games to shine. I'm going somewhere where I have a chance to be a really good player."

**MUSTANGS**

from page B1

The other exemplary moment came during the fourth quarter when Taylor had a 25-point lead. The Mustangs forced three consecutive turnovers early in the period, the last takeaway particularly memorable with senior forward Anthony Pelzer diving on the floor, his arms and legs scrambling in pursuit of another possession.

"That's our team," coach Matthew Brayton said. "You're up 20-something points, and we've got guys diving on the floor for loose balls. Watching that just melts my heart as a coach because you preach that all the time. That's who we are. We play until the very end." For Taylor, however, it's just starting.

The Mustangs (15-5 overall, 9-3 District 19-6A) are district champions for the first time in 26 years,

and they left no doubt. The winner of the game would win district as each team entered 8-3 in 19-6A. But Taylor had a significant advantage in experience, with three senior starters boasting at least two seasons of varsity experience and Seven Lakes starting just one senior, and it showed.

"That experience was big," Pelzer said. "Whenever they got down, they got rattled, whereas we were able to keep our cool and then keep that lead."

These Taylor seniors won a district title as freshmen. Coming into this season, making history was their goal. Nothing more, nothing less.

They're off to a fine start. "What people don't see is the work this team puts in," said Arnold, who scored a game-high 25 points to go with six rebounds and four assists. "Everything is taken seriously. We take film sessions very serious. It's the little things that add up, and it really paid off."

Seven Lakes was without head coach Shannon Heston, who was absent due to COVID-19 protocols.

"Coach Heston is one of my really good friends," Brayton said. "Him and I worked together under Coach (Dan) Miller at Seven Lakes. I feel for him that he couldn't be here because of COVID. That hurt me for him. I respect him so much."

The game started off fast and furious.

Taylor jumped out to a quick start, and Seven Lakes countered to make the deficit just eight. Sophomore guard Braedon Bigott scored all eight of Seven Lakes' points in the first quarter.

But Taylor's rabid spree of hot perimeter shooting to begin the second quarter proved backbreaking. Arnold drilled three straight 3s, the last one leading to an exasperated Seven Lakes timeout, and then, against a trap from the right wing, threw a crisp crosscourt pass to Cummings for another triple.

"Once we hit a few of those, we

were so loose," Brayton said. "The bench was into it. I know we're at a seating capacity, but the crowd was into it. That just blew it open. It was the difference in the game, that second quarter."

Seven Lakes never recovered. Freshman guard A.J. Bates (12 points, seven rebounds) had impressive moments in the second half, but the Spartans never threatened again.

Taylor had three players in double figures, led by Arnold, sophomore center Elijah Melchiorre (13 points, six rebounds) and Pelzer (10 points, five rebounds). Junior Troy Harris, playing just his third varsity game since being moved up from the junior varsity recently, was strong off the bench with six points and six rebounds.

"It's their hunger," Brayton raved about his team. "I'm not sure I've coached a team that plays as hard as these guys. They knew what was at stake, they knew how long it had been, they knew it's

been only three district champions over 40 years in this program. Their leadership took us a long way."

It was a road worth traveling. "This is what we've been dreaming about since week one," senior guard Luke St. Julien said. "All the hard work, all the practices, (strength and conditioning) camp. We came in and did it. Great coaching, great teammates, great chemistry. Every game in our district is a battle and you've got to bring your best. We did that, and we're district champs."

The next goal? Making it out of the second round of the playoffs for the first time in program history.

"We're going to enjoy this," Brayton said. "We'll come back together and talk about what we're going to do, but they'll be ready. There's nothing I have to do. They want it. Their goal to start the season was to make history, and this is a big step. They're ready and they're driven."



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