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SPORTS, B1

Katy Times

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THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2021

KATY

Council hears plaza and animal control updates, approves bond sale for drainage improvements

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

During their March 8 meeting, Katy City Council members heard an update from Police Chief Noe Diaz regarding improvements to operations at Katy Animal Control, as well as an update on the progress in the development of the Katy Downtown Plaza. Councilmembers also voted to approve the sale of \$3 million in bonds as well as a contract for more drainage improvements in the Riceland Terrace subdivision.

The bond sale was approved by voters during the May 2018 elections as part of the city's response to Hurricane Harvey – the first voter-approved bond measure made as a result of that historic storm. Money from the bonds will be used to make water



CITY OF KATY

Katy Animal Control recently received this new vehicle for its officers to patrol the city. Several changes are happening besides the new truck. Policies are being updated within the department to address allegations against department staff and to ensure that the city moves towards what some councilmembers hope is an overall no kill policy that only sees animals euthanized if they are extremely ill or seriously injured.



R. HANS MILLER

Chris LeBlanc of LJA Engineering provided an update to Katy City Council at their regular meeting on March 8. Most of the first phase is completed and landscaping has been installed at the site for the first phase of the project. A trellis over parts of the cement patio at the site should be finished in May and additional improvements to the park are planned for the future.

and sewer improvements and will be sold at a 1.47% interest rate with a 15-year term through First National Bank of Texas, said Loren Morales of RBC Capital Markets who is helping the city with the

bond sale. "This is a very low rate, certainly reflective of the city's triple-A bond rating," Morales said. City Administrator Byron Hebert, who has served as the city's

finance director or administrator since 2000, said the rate for a 15-year term was the best he has seen during his time with the city. City documents from the Feb. 8 Katy City Council meeting

indicate that the funds will be used for improvements to Patna and Fortuna drives and related expenses.

See KATY, page A3

HARRIS COUNTY/KATY



HARRIS COUNTY CONSTABLE'S OFFICE FOR PCT. 5

Cody Harrison Towner was captured Monday after evading arrest after leading law enforcement officers on a pursuit in this pickup which he crashed before evading pursuit on foot. As of Monday evening, he was being held in the Harris County Jail and no bond had been set as yet.

Alleged child predator arrested

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

After putting out a March 4 plea for the community's help via social media for assistance in tracking down their suspect, investigators were able to arrest Cody Harrison Towner, 37, and charge him with aggravated sexual assault of a child. Harris County Constable Ted Heap said in a video posted to social media Monday that Towner was captured with the public's aid.

See PREDATOR, page A3

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HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

From strangers to brothers, Panthers end historic season one for all

By DENNIS SILVA II
SPORTS EDITOR

ALDINE—Paetow started its 2020-2021 boys basketball season a team divided. It finished a family, a *brotherhood* in players' parlance.

What began as individuals hardly talking to each other in the locker room ended a cohesive unit making program history. The No. 20 state-ranked Panthers fell to No. 2 Beaumont United, 59-47, in the Class 5A Region III final on Friday, March 5, in front of a raucous sold-out crowd at the Campbell Center. But in only its third year of varsity basketball play, Paetow went 23-2, was one game shy of making it to the state tournament, and won an undefeated district championship.

Still, as substantial as the success on the court was, it was off the court where the Panthers ultimately found themselves.

"When we first started this season, we didn't like each other," coach Michael Niemi said, laughing. "We didn't get along on the court, we didn't gel. We struggled. You saw it in practice, you saw it in scrimmages, you



DENNIS SILVA II

Paetow players and coaches huddle after the Panthers' 59-47 Class 5A Region III final loss to Beaumont United on Friday, March 5, at the Campbell Center in Aldine.

saw it in our fall leagues. We lost that first game, and in the course of that journey to get where we are now ... some-

where along the line, we started our own individual success."

"It became more about our teammate's success than it did

See PANTHERS, page B5

BROOKSHIRE



R. HANS MILLER

Underneath this water tower which serves the city of Brookshire, work is being done to improve quality of life for residents. Brookshire City Council has passed a measure to adopt a reinvestment zone which may help bring jobs to the city and has moved forward with steps that will help enforce the city's property codes.

Council approves code enforcement hiring, approves reinvestment zone

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

Brookshire City Council moved forward with approval of job descriptions for a code enforcement officer, city engineer and building official, placing it in a position to better enforce city codes. It also established a reinvestment zone at

35270 Cooper Road – the location of B&H Bag Company, a Novolex subsidiary.

"We have been working with Mike Barnes and the (Brookshire Economic Development Corporation) folks, both for the city and the county on this project, representing

See BROOKSHIRE, page A3

PATTISON

Council cancels May election, reviews annual audit

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

Pattison City Council canceled the city's May 2021 city council election after no opponents stepped forward to oppose incumbents Mayor Pro Tem Seth Stokes and councilmembers Fred Branch and Robert MacCallum. The city also heard a variety of reports including the results of the city's annual audit which came back without any concerns raised by the auditor.

"We issued a clean, unmodified in our opinion," said Heather Braeuer of Seidel Schroeder, the city's independent auditing firm. "Basically, this means that, in our opinion, based on the audit procedures that

we performed, there were no material deviations, or anything in the financial statement that could lead a financial statement user to come to a different opinion on anything if they were reading this to make a decision on something in their life."

Braeuer said the city was doing well overall with a few added expenses such as contracted law enforcement with Waller County during the 2020 fiscal year but was otherwise very similar in its financial performance to the 2019 fiscal year. Other significant costs included improvements to Durkin Road and improvements to detention in the area

See PATTISON, page A3

OUTSMARTING CANCER IN WEST HOUSTON & KATY

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Family donut shops weather pandemic

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

One would think the American sweet tooth would make it easy for a donut shop to survive the pandemic, add a selection of kolaches in Texas – and that seems even more of a sure thing. However, Amina Huy, owner of House of Donuts and Kolaches and Mr. Donut & Kolaches – both in the Katy area – says the pandemic was a trying time for her two businesses.

“It was really stressful,” Huy said. “I think that was the worst time in my life.”

Nevertheless, the dessert aficionado pushed forward as best she could. Pregnant with her second child when the pandemic first started, she faced the same things most area businesses did – a 100% shutdown followed by a lackluster reopening that only brought her sales back up to 50% of what they were before the pandemic, despite offering call-in and curbside service. Even being across the street from Katy ISD’s Rylander Elementary and less than a block from Seven Lakes High School didn’t pick things up as she’d hoped, Huy said, perhaps because the schools have yet to reopen at full capacity.

Huy said she loves her work. She’s a morning person, she said, and getting up early in the morning allows her to get her workday done, close the shop and spend the afternoon taking care of her family and personal errands. Additionally, the fact that donuts and kolaches tend to put a huge smile on customers’ faces doesn’t hurt, she said.

Huy said she was able to get assistance from the CARES Act through a Paycheck Protection Program loan, but that was still stressful. The loan – which may qualify as a grant for some businesses – was initially denied and she had to reapply to get the

HOUSE OF DONUTS AND KOLACHES

3030 Falcon Landing Blvd. Ste. 300
Katy, TX 77494
832-437-2564

MR. DONUT & KOLACHES

8945 S. Fry Road
Katy, TX 77494

M-F: 5 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Sat: 5 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Sun: 6 a.m. – 1 p.m.

federal aid.

“It was horrible,” Huy said. “Like, when they were passing out the PPP loans and then we didn’t get the money at first, you know, it was really stressful.”

Huy said she knows part of the problem is that her businesses don’t have drive-thru service because they’re both in the middle of their respective shopping centers. Family members that own businesses with drive-thrus are seeing better business, so she’s working to add more menu items and remind people of some classics.

Both donut shops do well with their blueberry cake donuts, Huy said, and the kolaches are larger than her competitors with some of the sausage kolaches baking out at six-to-eight inches long. Still, she’s looking at adding bubble tea items to the menu in early April and is excited about how that might draw in more customers.

She’s also considering that Texas Gov.



PHOTO COURTESY AMINA HUY

Donuts and kolaches – also known as klobasnek – are the staples of House of Donuts and Kolaches and Mr. Donut & Kolaches. Sales have been down since the pandemic began, but owner Amina Huy says that she feels things are on the upswing and she’s grateful for the community’s support during the strains the pandemic has placed on both of her businesses.

Greg Abbott’s order to rescind the mask mandate might get more people out to local eateries. While she and her staff will continue to wear masks and follow all Centers for Disease Control protocols, she is leaving it up to customers to decide whether to wear masks or not, though she does encourage it.

Mostly though, she is just hoping to ensure that she and her businesses can

keep going to support the local community with jobs, sports sponsorships – her donut shops support little league teams – and great desserts.

“We’re here to help as well,” Huy said. “Whatever (the community) needs from us. We’ve always supported little league, sports or whatever ... we try to give back as much as we can.”

Hand & Stone Massage and Facial Spa opens on FM 1463

By R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

Hand & Stone Massage and Facial Spa opened March 1 at 6230 FM 1463 in Fulshear, offering a variety of massage and skincare services to help local residents get a bit of rest and relaxation and address skin problems they may be concerned about. The main thing the business wants to offer though, is excellent care and a chance for clients to relax and be treated well while becoming a part of the community, said Heather Mize who co-owns the spa with her husband, Mark Mize.

“We plan on having a big involvement in the community and that’s our heart and our passion is definitely to support local communities,” Heather said.

The Mizes, who are both CPAs by trade, had considered a franchise for quite a while before deciding on Hand & Stone Massage and Spa, Heather said. They looked into a variety of options and finally settled on the spa after meeting with the Hand & Stone group out of Philadelphia. After seeing their professionalism, they realized they would be investing in a professional brand that included a team, not just a name

on a shingle above a business. They’re trying to keep that feel at the local level, Heather said.

“We’re building a foundational team of service providers who are passionate about results-driven services,” Heather said.

All of the spa’s staff are fully-certified as either an esthetician or massage therapist, Heather said, so when a client walks into Hand & Stone, they’ll be taken care of by professionals that are fully vetted and trained to take care of the aches, pains and complexion concerns they’re facing.

The spa offers a total of 12

rooms with five of them being dedicated to skincare and seven devoted to massage, Heather said.

Skincare from an esthetician is recommended for those who are seeking to keep their skin healthy or address skin conditions such as acne and other inflammation issues, she said. The spa offers a variety of facials and consultations with estheticians before any skincare regimen beginning. When a new client comes in, the esthetician analyzes their skin and recommends a regimen that



PHOTO COURTESY HEATHER MIZE

Heather and Mark Mize stand outside of their newly-opened location of Hand & Stone Massage and Facial Spa near Fulshear. The couple’s background is in accounting, but they’d always wanted to open a business which led to them opening the new spa focused on pampering Katy area residents.

See SPA, page A5

This Week’s Puzzle Sponsored by

Katy Times

SUDOKU

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

Level: intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

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

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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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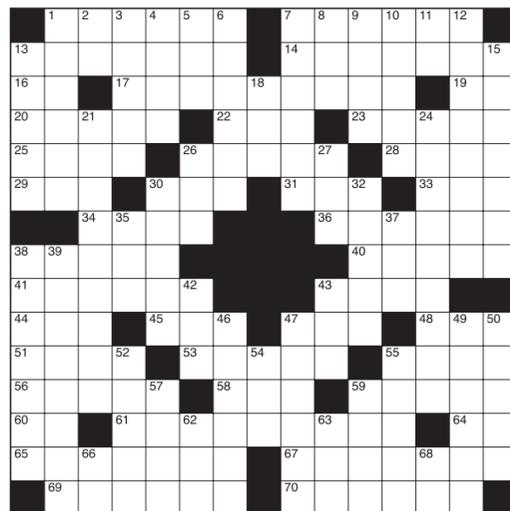
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CLUES ACROSS

- Large dung beetle
- Representation of a plan
- In a fervid way
- The Book of Psalms
- Morning
- Exactly the same
- About
- Brown and basmati are two
- Swiss river
- Philippine island
- Expressions of surprise
- An ant
- Common Japanese surname
- Deoxyribonucleic acid
- Car mechanics group
- A person’s brother or sister
- Ancient pharaoh
- Quantitative fact
- Vividly colored bird
- Your home has one
- Organic compound
- Section at the end of a book
- Flat tableland with steep edges
- Criticize
- Split pulses
- Brief trend
- Cool!
- Purposes
- Brews
- Skin condition
- Pops
- American air travel company
- Minute bug
- Anno Domini (in the year of Our Lord)
- One who rides in your car
- One of the Gospels
- City in southern Spain
- Inquisitive
- Jean Paul __, author
- Pop singer Harry

CLUES DOWN

- An ape or monkey
- Chemical element
- Zodiac sign
- Removes
- Brew
- Nickname
- Architectural structures
- Trigonometric function
- Postmodern architectural building in Vienna
- Henderson and Fitzgerald are two
- Mountain (abbr.)
- Landscaping practice
- Capacitance unit
- Redirect
- Hat for women
- In a way, dressed down
- Granny
- Feed
- Endpoint
- Indian instrument



- Bleated
- Cablegram (abbr.)
- Root mean square (abbr.)
- Jellyfishes
- Individual TV installments
- Talk
- More (Spanish)
- Leaseholder
- Monetary units
- Hostility
- Work stations
- Linguistics giant
- Female sheep
- Calendar month
- Seasoning
- Lofty nest of a bird of prey
- Single Lens Reflex
- A way to remove
- Virginia
- Old English

Answers will be provided in next week’s edition.

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PREDATOR

from page A1

“The suspect was apprehended this morning, we received several tips from the public and with help from officers from precinct five connects Special Operations Division, as well as our investigator, which was assigned to the sheriff’s office, crimes against children unit,” Heap said.

Heap said Towner’s alleged victim was only 7 years old.

Towner, who Heap said was brought into custody without incident, had multiple charges filed against him after his

arrest. Charges include two counts of aggravated sexual assault of a child, one charge of possession of a controlled substance and one count of possession of stolen credit cards, Heap said.

Harris County Jail records also indicate that Towner has been charged with evading arrest or detention with a vehicle.

Towner had gone to extraordinary lengths to avoid capture. Heap said he had changed identities and relocated himself regularly. Further, in the initial announcement of the search for Towner, investigators noted that Towner had led police on a high speed chase which eventually led to him crashing



CODY HARRISON TOWNER

County Jail which is located at 1201 Commerce Street in Houston.

Heap said the assistance of the community was vital in bringing Towner in to face charges. The assistance provided by the community may have been in part due to Towner’s easily recognizable neck

white pickup which he abandoned.

Towner is currently being held at the Harris

tattoo which depicts a musical symbol.

“You know, this really shows the importance of the public working with law enforcement, when we can have the public be our eyes and ears out there. It really is a force multiplier for us to be able to do our job effectively,” Heap said. “So this is a wonderful example of us being able to reach out and utilize the people that are out there living in our community that want to have a safe place to live. So I just wanted to say thank you to all of you who have gone forth and put forth effort gave us tips and letters in the right directions to apprehend the suspect.”

BROOKSHIRE

from page A1

the parent company, Novolex,” said Patrick Zimmer with Max’s Advisors. “... We’re available to answer any questions around the project and obviously, (we’ve) been very appreciative of the support from both the city and the county related to their proposed investment and increase in headcount at the facility.”

A reinvestment zone being established aids the city in providing tax abatement incentives to B&H Bag Company, if city council chooses to do so, though they are not obligated to just because the zone has been established, explained Brookshire City Attorney Justin Pruitt.

Tax abatements are often given to companies that move into or expand a business development in a city to encourage the development of industries that provide jobs and economic opportunities to residents.

The measure was approved by the three council members present for the meeting.

Alderspersion Lee Jones and Alderspersion Eric Green were absent from the meeting; however, a quorum was present due to Mayor Pro Tem Marilyn Vaughn, Alderspersion Kim Branch and Alderspersion Lyndon Stamps in attendance.

The measure for the approval of job descriptions for the engineer, code enforcement officer and building official were approved by the members present as well. This marked the end of several meetings wherein the council has been working to finalize that part of the process for ensuring the city’s ordinances regarding structural safety and other issues are enforced. Pruitt said the descriptions, which he assisted in developing, allowed the city to request qualifications from both companies and individuals to serve those functions.

In recent meetings, multiple residents have complained about properties and construction sites throughout the city that have become nuisances due to possible code infractions and what they felt was a lack of oversight on the city’s part. Council considered those issues and directed Pruitt and other city staff to move forward with establishing appropriate measures that would allow the city to enforce its ordinances.

“And so, we structured the (requests for qualifications) that way, so that we could get responses from – even if it’s just a single person doing engineering alone – or if it is a big firm that can provide all those services, they can all respond to the same RFQ,” Pruitt said.

KATY

from page A1

Improvements to Katy Downtown Plaza are getting close to completion said Chris LeBlanc of LJA Engineering who is overseeing the project, though he added that the project had seen some minor delays due to Winter Storm Uri.

Concrete work is completed at the site and foundations for a large trellis which will cover some portions of the outdoor

walkways is installed along with anchor bolts for the trellis. The trellis is being constructed by a subcontractor and is expected to be delivered the week of May 21. Landscaping is almost complete with all the grading done and sod installed. The contractor is performing final checks on the irrigation system, LeBlanc said, and bed mulching is complete so flower and plant beds are ready for plants. However, many of the plants the city has selected are on backorder because of the storm, so final planting may be a few weeks, he said.

Diaz said work is continuing on improvements to Katy Animal Control’s practices, but did not give an update regarding the investigation into alleged misconduct by some department employees. However, he did say both full-time staff in the department are now current on their training.

The new manual promised in his last update has been drafted and mirrors that of Harris County Animal Control, Diaz said. He said healthy animals are now kept for up to seven days and are then transferred to the Humane Society

rather than being euthanized as had been done in the past, per Mayor Bill Hastings’ directive. Those animals that must be euthanized due to severe health issues or traumatic injuries are now being euthanized by a veterinarian, he said, and all animal remains are being disposed of by The Bridge Pet Memorial Pet Aftercare Services to ensure the department complies with state laws.

An animal control committee made up of residents and subject matter experts is expected to begin meeting soon, Diaz said.

PATTISON

from page A1

and other minor improvements such as road repairs for a capital improvement expenditure total of about \$77,600. The other major new expense was about \$47,000 for the contracted law enforcement officer for the city.

Braeuer also said the city had a line item in its budget for grants that it had not had before due to funding from the CARES Act.

Council also heard an up-

date from Chris Browne, a volunteer with relevant experience who is working on the city’s comprehensive plan. Browne said work on the project was moving forward well and that he anticipated a joint workshop between the city council and the Pattison Planning Commission soon to discuss details.

Mayor Joe Garcia said the city was continuing to move forward on preparing to apply for a Community Development Block Grant and Evan Humphries of GrantWorks, the city’s CDBG consultant, said she was helping the city prepare for any applications that would be submitted.

The CDBG program is a state program that falls under the Texas Department of Agriculture and works to provide state funding to cities under 50,000 in population and counties with populations less than 200,000 to aid in housing, economic development and other community improvements.

Garcia said specific projects for any potential grant funds had not been specified as yet, but that council would survey the community to find out what projects residents wanted prioritized.

Community input is part of the public participation plan required by the CDBG pro-

gram, Humphries said.

Garcia also asked the council to remind residents that the city is working to organize a hazardous waste collection event set for May 22. The event will be held at the Pattison Volunteer Fire Department at 2950 FM 359 in Pattison. He added that volunteers are needed to help run the event which will allow residents to turn in hazardous items such as batteries, gasoline, pesticides, paint and other items. Tires will not be collected, he said, due to limited capacity for materials collected. More information will be put out soon, he said.

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NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

Katy Home & Garden Show and Spring Gift Market Hosts Supply Drive to Help The Brookwood Community damaged by Winter Storm Uri

by Debra Ford

KATY, TEXAS (March 4, 2021) ... The Katy Home & Garden Show and Spring Gift Market announced that it is using its upcoming March 27 – 28 show as an opportunity to give back to a beloved community asset—The Brookwood Community, which suffered significant damage during the recent winter storm. Proceeds from concessions will directly benefit The Brookwood Community and an on-site supply drive will be hosted to help the organization replenish supplies lost due to severe water damage in several of the facilities. The not-for-profit Brookwood Community provides an educational environment that creates meaningful work, builds a sense of belonging, and awakens genuine purpose in the lives of adults with disabilities.

Robyn Cade, President of RJC Productions, Inc., the home show producer said “in the 15 years we’ve been hosting the show in Katy this community has been so supportive. Part of being a good neighbor is making sure to give back. Over the years my family has been frequent visitors to Brookwood and have enjoyed the Café, shopping for our spring plants and garden décor” She added, “when we learned of the heart-breaking devastation, we decided as a family we had to do something to help. I reached out to Stacie Henry with the Home for the Holidays Gift Market, who is partnering on this show and she agreed that we should make The Brookwood Community our primary charity focus.”

Since admission to the home show is free this year to help those recovering from the storm, sales from on-site concessions like water, soda and snacks will be donated directly to The Brookwood Community. A donation truck will be on-site throughout the weekend to accept donations of these



much needed art supplies: craft sponges, detailed paint brushes, foam brushes, artist paint trays, construction paper and modge podge. A complete list of items that will be accepted can be found at kathyhomeandgardenshow.com.

THE BROOKWOOD COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED IN 1985

The Brookwood Community, famously known for its handmade crafts and bountiful nurseries, is so much more. Founded in 1985, the 475-acre campus in Brookshire, Texas consists of: eight group homes, two single-family staff homes, a residential Inn, health and dental clinic, Worship Center, enterprise building, activities, and administration building, 47 green-

houses, Gift and Garden Center and the Café at Brookwood, and several other support buildings.

Brookwood programs serve: 110 resident adults (known as Brookwood “citizens”) who are functionally disabled and live at Brookwood 24/7. Another 120 plus adults participate in day programs. The organization serves a range of diverse including helping people with autism spectrum disorders; Down Syndrome; intellectual disabilities; developmental disabilities; traumatic brain injury; dual diagnosis; and/or aging care needs. It also serves as a resource for families. Brookwood’s outreach program actively shares its innovative concepts and techniques with other professional caregivers across our nation and around the world.

“We are going to need a lot of help to recover from the damage suffered at the hands of Winter Storm Uri,” said Vivian Shudde, Chief Executive Officer for The Brookwood Community. She continued, “We are certainly grateful to have the support from Robyn and her team. We have always been a part of this show with large garden displays. We’re going to need to sell a lot of plants,” Shudde said with a smile.

Brookwood is funded through tuition, donations, and sales from its entrepreneurial enterprises. It does not accept government subsidy. The Brookwood Community is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.

Since Brookwood accepts no government funding of any kind, the community relies on the generosity of the private sector to help build and maintain their facilities and enterprises.

BROOKWOOD PROVIDES MEANINGFUL JOBS

Brookwood aims to provide the best teaching, work environment, and work experience possible for its residential and day citizens. Citizens’ learning styles are studied to develop social and technical skills necessary for productive work in our self-contained enterprise system.



From the Blue Bonnet collection, an example of the many ceramic items crafted by Brookwood community residents and sold online and in the three store locations.



working at Brookwood making something of value for someone else to enjoy.

Craft items like ceramic collectibles, a range of holiday collections, garden items, and gourmet food items such as the best-seller, the Brookwood Mesibov Dressing and Pecan Bundle, are all made by Brookwood residents. Three store locations can be found throughout the Houston-area including: Brookshire, which was the original store; Grand Parkway and The Woodlands.

To shop online visit: <https://brookwood-store.org/>

THE CAFÉ AT BROOKWOOD

Did you know that you can also dine at Brookwood? Bring the family and friends and come enjoy the spectacular garden views, complimented with exceptional cuisine created by Brookwood’s award-winning Chef Michael Fernandez and his team. Chef Michael Fernandez is an accredited chef that acquired his culinary education for The Culinary Institute of America at Hyde Parke New York. He worked for many years as a Senior Chef and Instructor for the Art Institute of Houston as well as a Chef for the Four Seasons Hotel in Austin, Texas and Maui, Hawaii. Brookwood believes their food, service, and ambiance can compete with any restaurant. The Café at Brookwood is open for lunch 6 days a week from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm, closed on Sundays. Reservations are highly recommended. To make a reservation call 281-375-2400.

GARDEN SALE FEATURED AT KATY HOME & GARDEN SHOW & SPRING CRAFT MARKET

“One of the fondest features over our 15 years has been the annual Brookwood plant sale,” remarked Cade. Show guests stock up on a wide range of container plants and hanging baskets. “I’m sure this year the plant sale



Brookwood is famous for its nurseries. It will feature a large plant sale at the upcoming Katy Home & Garden Show & Spring Gift Market. Residents nurture plants under the careful guidance of Brookwood’s on-site horticulturalists.

will do really well since so many yards were decimated from the freeze. I’ve already told my husband to get ready,” chuckled Cade.



The beloved Home for the Holidays Gift Market is part of the show this year. Boasting a wide range of gift items and home décor.

ABOUT THE KATY HOME & GARDEN SHOW AND SPRING GIFT MARKET

Fresh ideas and a beloved community gift market marking the 15th Annual Katy Home & Garden Show to be held March 27-28, 2021 at the Merrell Center in Katy. Find ways to update or repair and create a new level of comfort at home with inspiration from home design, renovation, and trend-setting experts. Learn something new with the ASK THE EXPERTS feature and comparison shop on everything for your home from windows to doors, floors, outdoor living areas, landscape, pools, kitchens, baths, and more. And shop ‘til you drop for gifts galore. For guest safety, the show will follow all necessary COVID protocols.

Nearly a third of the show features gifts and unique finds for the home, family and more from a community fan favorite the Home for the Holidays Gift Market. Need the perfect Easter wreath or a gift for mom? Check. A fun wreath or sign for the front porch? Check. The Spring Gift Market will feature a wide range of specialty gifts and décor including farmhouse décor; clothing; jewelry; monogram children accessories; handmade local crafts including hand-blown glass and much more.

The Katy Home & Garden Show and Spring Gift Market is helping neighbors recover, replace, repair, and renew after Winter Storm Uri by offering free admission for everyone. Hours are Saturday, March 27 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, March 28 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. To register for a \$250 shopping spree or for additional information, directions to the Merrell Center, seminar times and hours visit kathyhomeandgardenshow.com or call 832-392-0165. Parking is FREE.

Texas needed help from an 'illegitimate' president

Once upon a time – just a few weeks ago – Republicans in the great state of Texas were talking about seceding from the union. If memory serves, their state attorney general concocted a crackpot lawsuit that sought to overturn the free and fair presidential election, arguing that Joe Biden's win was illegitimate.

Yep, it looked like Texas wanted to be its own red independent country, practicing its freedom far from the clutches of the socialist White House.

But suddenly, a few days ago, Texas' Republican leaders did a 180-degree turn. They fell on their knees to President Biden, begging and pleading for his help. Suddenly, Biden was legit!

What the heck happened? Reality happened.

MAGA propaganda about a "stolen election," and all the attendant rhetoric about "secession," is grist for weak minds most of the time. But when real life intrudes in the cruelest of ways – for instance, when mother nature dumps a killer winter storm on a state that can't handle it and puts people's lives in peril – all that idiot talk blows away in the wind.

On Saturday, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott essentially said: "Please help us, President Biden." Within hours, Biden answered the call. And on Sunday, oozing gratitude, Abbott shared the good news at home: "I thank President Biden for quickly issuing a Federal Emergency Declaration... This disaster declaration provides Texas with additional resources and assistance that help our communities respond to this winter weather."

Isn't that special. By the way, Ted Cruz also pleaded for federal help. This is the same Ted Cruz who opposed federal help for the blue northeastern states that were hammered by Hurricane Sandy. Perhaps Biden should've promised federal storm aid on the condition that Cruz be shipped to NASA in Houston and strapped onto the next rocket launch.

By the way, one of the reasons Texas urgently needs federal help is because its main power grid can't handle the current storm. The reason its main power grid can't handle the storm is because it's not



DICK POLMAN

SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

linked to the rest of the nation. The reason it's not linked to the rest of the nation is because it was set up to defy the feds and avoid federal regulation. I kid you not.

And by the way, raging against Washington – then pleading for help – is a long-standing Texas two-step.

Back when the governor was Rick Perry (remember him?), he nurtured his presidential ambitions by fuming that the "oppressive" federal government was always "interfering with the affairs of our state." Which was amusing, because he was always in constant pursuit of federal bucks – for farmer "drought assistance," for local law enforcement, for disaster cleanups, for whatever federal money his Washington lobbyists could scavenge. (He paid those lobbyists 30 grand a month).

But this was my favorite Texas two-step: On April 9, 2009, Perry put out a statement boasting about "Texas sovereignty" and state's rights. On April 10, he put out another statement: "Gov. Perry Calls on FEMA to Assist the State in Fighting Wildfires."

Anyway, one facet of the latest episode is particularly noteworthy. President Biden approved the plea for federal relief with all deliberate speed – without telling the state to buzz off because it hadn't voted for him, without ranting that the red governor runs things horribly, without fuming that the state's election lawsuit didn't treat him nice, without offering to throw paper towels, without telling Texans who don't like him to just rake the snow.

Instead, Biden just did his job this weekend – as he promised. This is what it's like to have a president who believes he's responsible for helping red and blue states alike – without favor, without partisan tantrums.

And his quick action should blunt the windbag Texas talk about secession and Washington oppression. Until next time.



Three cheers for Texas

He wasn't the first governor in the country to lift the mask mandate for his state. North Dakota, Montana and Iowa have ended state-wide mask orders in recent weeks and progressive states like Florida and South Dakota never issued them in the first place.

But Gov. Greg Abbott did the country a huge favor this week when he announced that Texas was allowing all businesses in the state to reopen at full capacity on March 10.

It was a loud and bold signal to the whole country that it's time to climb out of our basements, regain our freedoms and get back to "normal," whatever that's going to be.

The national media scolded Abbott for dropping the mask mandate and acted like he was a reckless mass murderer, of course.

Public health experts – who never fail to see a new surge of virus cases over the horizon – warned that it was too dangerous now to loosen up mask rules.

And President Biden, our pessimist-in-chief who sees no return to normal life by Christmas, accused Abbott of "Neanderthal Thinking."

But Abbott decided that his Texans had suffered enough. The economic, social and public health costs of lockdowns and school closings were too high to continue.

Suicides and drug overdoses are up in Abbott's state and across the country because of loneliness and the stress of lost jobs and lost businesses.

Young people across the country are depressed because they



MICHAEL REAGAN

SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

can't be in school with their friends – or even play sports. And dating? That's been virtually impossible for a year.

Meanwhile, the liberal national media who beat up on Abbott this week continue to fail the country every chance they get.

Despite the rapid introduction of the vaccine, the approach of herd immunity and the steep decline in positive COVID-19 tests, deaths and hospitalizations since Christmas, the media still applaud strict government mandates and continue to push panic and negativity.

What they should be doing instead is calling out the autocratic Blue State governors who look for any excuse to hold on to the emergency lockdown powers they've used to destroy thousands of small businesses and keep schools and sports venues closed for a year.

It's an outrage how much petty tyranny governors like Gavin Newsom of California have gotten away with in the name of protecting public health.

It wasn't until Newsom was threatened with a recall election that he backed off his strict edicts and began allowing 40 million Californians out of their basements.

Now he says there will be full attendance at the Dodgers home opener. What a difference 1.8 million signatures on a recall petition make.

If the liberal media had a shred of honesty, they should spend every day shaming the teacher unions for refusing to go back to work and denying the science that says the virus poses virtually no risk to them.

They also should be exposing the unreliable advice we've gotten for a year from the great Dr. Fauci, who's now saying that even with the vaccine our economic and social lives may not return to normal until next March.

When March rolls around, you can bet he'll have several bogus reasons why we should stretch the lockdowns and mask mandates through the 2022 elections.

The Democrats in Washington that Fauci serves so well want to continue to use COVID-19 to scare the country into accepting universal mail-in voting and giving them even more federal power.

For them it's always about getting more power in DC and they don't even try to hide the fact that they're using the current crisis as a way to take it away from the states.

Gov. Abbott's declaration of freedom for Texans came a little late. He made it about half a year after Gov. Ron DeSantis defied the lockdown lobby and freed up the people of Florida.

But Abbott got it right – and he set an example dozens of his fellow governors should follow ASAP.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I am a National Patriot of the United States of America and proud Texan. As I watch the total degradation of all branches of our federal government (executive, legislative and judicial) including radical control of state and federal elections, I believe it is time for Texas to begin preparing for independence. Therefore, I support State Representative Kyle Biedermann's proposed House Bill 1359 referred to as the Texas

Independence Referendum Act (TIRA). If the bill is passed by the Texas Legislature and approved by voters, it will provide a committee to investigate the best method for Texas to return to status as an independent republic.

It is important to know that TIRA is not an effort to immediately leave the union or secede. The concept is to begin preparing for whatever is necessary to retain our core American freedoms and rights even if it is as an indepen-

dent republic. This is extremely important as our federal government continues to degrade and take away many of these cherished freedoms.

If you would like further information on this effort please go to Kyle Biedermann's website at:

• <https://kylebiedermann.com/text-faq/>

God bless America and God bless Texas!

Mark Hartwell
Katy resident

CORRECTION

Katy Times V. 109, Issue 9: Boudin Café brings authentic cajun food to Pattison. The name of the Gaspard's daughter is Lanie Alleman.

Katy Times

SUSAN ROVEGNO | Publisher
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DEBBIE PREJEAN | Bookkeeper

OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday
ADDRESS: P.O. Box 678, Katy, Texas, 77492-0678
PHONE: 281-391-3141

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SPA

from page A2

will help them improve their complexion. For very serious issues, Heather said clients should seek a physician's care, but for day-to-day skincare concerns, an esthetician can be really helpful, including for teens dealing with problematic acne. The spa also offers retail products that can help clients keep their skin clear and looking young, she said.

"I would say that ... our retail is mainly toward the facial skincare," Heather said. "We do offer candles and CBD oil and some other things, but our main focus is the skincare product line."

For the massage side of the business, Heather said that, while simply getting a massage for relaxation and feeling pampered is an option, the business can help manage pain as spa-goers work to get over injuries. Massage products include Himalayan stone massages – the spa's signature massage service – where in heated stones are used to warm the muscles before the massage allowing for better results, CBD oils that help the patient relax and may alleviate soreness, cupping and other massage products that can help a visitor relax and recuperate – something that can be very important during the COVID-19 pandemic,

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Heather said.

Safety and sanitation are important at the spa, especially considering the amount of personal contact needed for the services offered, Heather said. Therefore, the business is asking that all clients wear face masks and utilize hand sanitizer when visiting the spa, out of consideration for staff and other guests.

Regardless of whether a client visits Hand & Stone for a facial or a massage – or even a couple's massage – Heather said she and Mark's goal is to make sure they provide a wonderful experience to their patrons and build a reputation for being community-oriented as a business.

"We would love for this to be the premier spa for the Fulshear-Katy area," Heather said.

David Wayne Rose of El Campo died March 1, 2021 at the age of 56. He was born July 19, 1964 in Houston to James and Bessie Rose of Brookshire.

Raised in Katy, then moving to Columbus in his 6th-grade year David finished high school in Columbus. He went to Wharton County Junior College, then off to Sam Houston State to finish with an Agriculture Education Degree. After graduating from Sam, he ventured to Kentucky for a spell working on a horse ranch there for a friend he met in college. He then went to Missouri Auction School to acquire his auction license. Coming back home to Texas, he reconnected with some college friends. One happened to be his future bride whom he married February 24, 1990. They made their home in El Campo. He worked for various places and even put his education degree to use for two years as he served as the Ag Education teacher at Rice Consolidated High School under Fred Grahmann. He found his way to Shoppa's Farm Supply in April of 1994 as an equipment sales associate and has been there ever since.

David volunteered for many things in and around the Wharton & Jackson County areas including the Wharton County Youth Fair, Jackson County Youth Fair, the Community Roping Club, Rockin' W Rodeo Group, member of El Campo FFA Booster Club and serving as president, and many benefit auctions using his auctioneering talents to bring in the money needed for the benefit at hand. In 2010 he was awarded Jackson County Ag Man of the year.

David never met a stranger, and if he didn't know them, he quickly connected with them in one way or another. David loved helping the customer and he loved his



DAVID WAYNE ROSE
1964-2021

job. His latest venture led him to building a cattle operation for his family, and as his future retirement project. He was fair in his dealings and kind to all. His objective in life was to stay positive no matter what was thrown at him, and he lived by this standard every day.

He is survived by his wife of 30 years, Karen, son Carson, and daughter Madison Rose, all of El Campo. Parents James Lynch & Bessie Rose of Brookshire, siblings Brian and wife Kara Rose of Houston,

Diane Moore of Sealy, and Brenda Kolek of Shepard. Nieces & Nephews: Evelyn, Daniel, Faith, & Carolyn Rose, Kolby Parker, Kathryn Moore, Tyler & Stephen Kolek.

He was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents Louis & Evelyn Sturm, and paternal grandparents Jim & Inez Rose; parents in law Charles & Rosalie Kaliszkeski, and brothers in law Alan Kaliszkeski and James Kolek.

A Celebration of Life ceremony will be held Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 2 p.m. at Crescent Hall located on the Wharton County Fair Grounds, Crescent, Texas.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial donations may be made to David W. Rose Memorial Scholarship Fund, 110 N. Washington St., El Campo, TX 77437.

Memories and condolences may be left for the family at www.triskafuneralhome.com.

Triska Funeral Home
El Campo, TX
979-543-3681



PHOTO COURTESY HEATHER MIZE

Hand & Stone Massage and Facial Spa features a large lobby with retail items to help clients maintain a good skincare regimen. CBD oils and other products for aches and pains are also included, though the focus is on skincare.



Michael and Nichole Oswald of Katy are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Danielle Oswald, to Gabriel Rollins. A June wedding is planned!

The Katy Times Directory of Local Churches & Houses of Worship

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CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

Mask mandate ends Mar. 10

By GARY BORDERS
TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

While Gov. Gregg Abbott has lifted the statewide mandate to wear a mask in public and allowed all businesses to operate at full capacity, many businesses, schools and other entities say they will continue to require that masks be worn. Abbott issued the order last week, effective March 10.

"With the medical advancements of vaccines and antibody therapeutic drugs, Texas now has the tools to protect Texans from the virus," Abbott said. "We must now do more to restore livelihoods and normalcy for Texans by opening Texas 100 percent." He urged Texans to take responsibility for themselves when it comes to wearing masks and following other health safety practices.

Political leaders in several of the state's largest cities criticized the decision. Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner tweeted, asking (and answering for himself) whether Abbott's move was "an attempt to deflect from the winter storm systemwide state leadership failure. Yes." San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg urged residents to join him in continuing to wear a mask, a sentiment echoed by Austin Mayor Steve Adler and Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins.

Meanwhile, the Texas Education Agency revised its health guidance policies, saying that "local school boards have full authority to determine their local mask policy." Many of the state's college campuses announced they would continue to require that masks be worn, including The University of Texas, the Texas A&M University Sys-



FILE PHOTO

tem, Texas Tech, Southern Methodist University and others.

Several large retailers announced they would continue to require customers to wear masks, including Walmart, Target, Costco and Whole Foods. Grocery retailer H-E-B will "strongly encourage" they be worn, according to a company statement, and employees will continue to wear masks. HEB president Scott McClelland told the Houston Chronicle that antagonistic customers have caused nearly 2,000 in-store incidents regarding masks at Houston stores alone. He said customers not wearing a mask would be asked to do so, and an employee would offer them a mask if they didn't have one. Store employees will not escalate the situation if a customer refuses, he said.

In the wake of Abbott's announcement, the Texas Supreme Court removed requirements that most court proceedings in the state be held remotely and gave judges the authority to require masks and social distancing. It encouraged judges to hold trials remotely. Three justices dissented.

Texas getting more than 1 million COVID-19 vaccine doses this week
More than 1 million

COVID-19 vaccine doses are shipping this week to providers across the state, a significant increase from previous weeks. That's largely due to nearly a quarter-million doses of the new Johnson & Johnson vaccine coming to Texas. The single-dose vaccine began shipping last week. As of Sunday, more than 4.2 million Texans had received at least one dose and 2.319 million were fully vaccinated. That means about 22 percent of the state's population has gotten at least one dose. Teachers and school staff have been added to the list of those eligible for one of the three vaccines being offered.

COVID-19 cases drop, deaths increase

The number of new COVID-19 cases reported in Texas in the past week dropped to 43,328, according to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University of Medicine. That's down 22 percent from the previous week and down nearly 73 percent from the record high of 158,922 recorded the week of Jan. 10. However, recorded deaths in Texas rose to 1,730, up 17 percent from the previous week. Hospitalizations for lab-confirmed COVID-19 patients totaled 4,921, down from the record high of more than 14,000 during the week of Jan. 11.



MIGUEL GUTIERREZ, JR./THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

An Austin Energy truck drove through the city last month after a winter snowstorm hit Texas. Many Texans received exorbitant bills after the freeze event which left many with broken plumbing and extensive water damage in addition to enormous electrical bills.

Texas will not fix ERCOT's \$16 billion billing mistake

By MITCHELL FERMAN
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Texas' utility regulator had an opportunity Friday to eliminate some of the \$16 billion that the state's grid operator erroneously overcharged power companies during last month's deadly winter storm — but the board of the Public Utility Commission chose not to do so.

Some Texas electricity customers could have benefited from a decision to readjust the electricity market prices for the week of the storm, according to PUC Chair Arthur D'Andrea and some independent analysts. But other customers could have been harmed by such a move, D'Andrea said.

"I totally get how it looks like you're protecting consumers [by readjusting electric prices]," D'Andrea said Friday during a PUC meeting. "But I promise you you're not."

D'Andrea added that a retroactive decision would have winners and losers: "You don't know who you're hurting. And you think you're protecting the consumer, and it turns out

you're bankrupting [someone else]."

Potomac Economics, the independent market monitor for the PUC, which oversees grid operator the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, had recommended that the PUC retroactively reduce the market price for power for at least part of the week of the freeze.

In Texas, wholesale power prices are determined by supply and demand: When demand is high, ERCOT allows prices to go up. During the storm, PUC directed the grid operator to set wholesale power prices at \$9,000 per megawatt-hour — the maximum price. Raising prices is intended to incentivize power generators in the state to add more power to the grid. Companies then buy power from the wholesale market to deliver to consumers, which they are contractually obligated to do.

But extended freezing weather made that impossible because it knocked a large portion of the state's electricity generation offline.

ERCOT maintained its highest level of emergency alert until the morning of

Feb. 19 — five days after the storm initially struck the state — a signal to the market that the power grid was still unstable, which kept prices high.

Potomac Economics wrote in a letter this week to the PUC that ERCOT kept market prices for power too high for nearly two days after widespread outages ended late the night of Feb. 17. ERCOT should have reset the prices the next day, the letter said.

D'Andrea, who was elevated to chair this week by Gov. Greg Abbott, and PUC Commissioner Shelly Botkin could have decided Friday to order ERCOT to follow Potomac Economics' recommendation — a move that potentially could have shaved billions of dollars off of what the grid operator overcharged power companies.

State Sen. Drew Springer, R-Muenster, was hoping for a different decision by the PUC on Friday.

"Keeping the market at an artificial \$9,000 for 32 hrs cost \$16B," Springer tweeted, adding that the Potomac Economics report "says those hours should be repriced, I agree."

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AREA SPORTS NOTEBOOK

FORMER SPARTANS
CAMPBELL, BROOME
QUALIFY FOR INDOOR
CHAMPIONSHIPSBy DENNIS SILVA II
SPORTS EDITOR

Former Seven Lakes track and field standouts Cooper Campbell (Oklahoma) and Lance Broome (Texas A&M) qualified for the 2021 NCAA Indoor Championships in Arkansas March 12-13.

Campbell, a senior, will compete in the men's shot put after earning the No. 14 spot on the qualifying list and has finished in the top four in all meets he has competed in this season. Broome, a sophomore and former state champion as a Spartan, will compete in the 200-meters. ... Tompkins sophomore guard Loghan Johnson crossed the 1,000-point career scoring mark when she scored 20 points in a Class 6A bi-district playoff win over Fort Bend Travis on Feb. 11. Johnson, District 19-6A's Most Valuable Player this season, helped lead the Falcons to the regional semifinals for the second time in six years. ... Tompkins senior Lanaye Keys ran a 14.90 in the 100-meter hurdles to break her own school record at the Dan Green Invitational at The Woodlands meet March 6. ... Tompkins' boys 4x100 team of Blake Harris, Mark Ngei, Marquis Shoulders and Joshua McMillan II ran a 40.98 to win the relay at the Dan Green Invitational at The Woodlands on March 6. That time currently ranks No. 1 in the nation. ... Seven Lakes junior wide receiver Grayson Medford broke the Spartans football program's 40-yard dash record, running a 4.38 and besting the previous all-time mark of 4.40. ... Morton Ranch senior softball player Zoe Frausto signed to continue her athletic career at Trinity University on March 3. Through the first five games of the season, Frausto was hitting .538 with 10 RBIs and two home runs for the Mavs. ... Cinco Ranch's boys bowling team took down previously undefeated Katy in a recent match. Richard Tuck and Pablo Prado threw key strikes, while Gavin Tan and Leyton Green won their head-to-head matches to cement the 8-7 win, handing the Tigers their first defeat. The Cinco Ranch girls also beat Katy, remaining undefeated and stretching their first-place lead to two games. Lauren Lockard, Ameena Rehman and Samara Simpson all rolled high games. ... Tompkins is ranked No. 4 in Class 6A in the Texas High School Baseball Coaches Association state poll. Seven Lakes is ranked No. 6 in Class 6A in the Texas Girls Coaches Association state soccer 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).

COOPER
CAMPBELLLANCE
BROOMEDOMINANT SPARTANS EYEING
1ST DISTRICT TITLE SINCE '16By DENNIS SILVA II
SPORTS EDITOR

There's a lot of everything going right for the Seven Lakes girls soccer team this season.

Ranked No. 6 in Class 6A in the state by the Texas Girls Coaches Association, boasting an incredible plus-38 goal differential in an intimidating District 19-6A, the Spartans are 16-2-0 overall and 10-1-0 in district play, on the precipice of their second district title in six years with a win Friday, March 12, against Cinco Ranch.

Seven Lakes leads 19-6A with 39 goals scored and has only one goal against in producing 10 shutouts in 11 district games.

"It's one of those things where we worked so hard during the fall semester leading into this, you want to see how the team comes together on and off the field," coach Kaitlyn Eidson said. "We just focus game by game and see where the results fall, and so far they've fallen pretty good for us."

The last time she's had a team this balanced, Eidson said, was in 2016. That's the last time Seven Lakes was district champ.

See SEVEN LAKES, page B2



DENNIS SILVA II

Seven Lakes senior Phoebe Harpole (13) controls possession during the Spartans' 7-0 win over Morton Ranch on Tuesday, March 9, at Seven Lakes High.



DENNIS SILVA II

From left to right, junior Marcos Valecillos, sophomore Santi Tabora, sophomore Jake Manzi and freshman Ossian Elgstrom make up a talented Cinco Ranch defensive backline that is playing beyond its years this season.

Cougars' backline playing
above and beyondBy DENNIS SILVA II
SPORTS EDITOR

Cinco Ranch boys soccer coach Fredy Sanguinetti and his players heard the whispers of the doubters.

They're too young. (Maybe, but does that matter?)
Rebuilding year. (LOL). *They don't have a defense.* (Pssshht ...)

Senior-heavy last season, the Cougars are top-heavy in

underclassmen this year and it's done nothing to interrupt success. Cinco Ranch is 13-1-2 overall, and in a heated District 19-6A title race with Seven Lakes at 8-1-2, and it starts with defense and a quickly maturing young backline of sophomores Santi Tabora and Jake Manzi, junior Marcos Valecillos and freshman Ossian Elgstrom.

See COUGARS, page B6

Diverse attack spurring
Spartans in district raceBy DENNIS SILVA II
SPORTS EDITOR

Seven Lakes trailed Taylor by a goal at halftime of their District 19-6A boys soccer game Saturday, March 6. The score was a bit of an eyebrow-raiser, as the Spartans needed a win to stay in the district title race and had shut out the Mustangs, 2-0, in their initial meeting on Jan. 22.

But Seven Lakes rallied in dramatic fashion. When the Spartans scored twice within a 31-second span late in the second half to take a 2-1 win, it was nothing they hadn't done before.

They figured it was only a matter of time. Seven Lakes boasts a dynamic, versatile attack that leads the district in goals scored, averaging 3.5 per game, with four players among the district's top 12 scorers.

"We've done it before," said senior center midfielder Diego Lazo, who assisted on both of Seven Lakes' goals. "We're used to fighting and this team has heart. We've been down to Tompkins, to Katy, to Taylor. We've come back every time



DENNIS SILVA II

Seven Lakes senior midfielder Vicente Garcia (10) looks to kick the ball downfield during a game against Taylor on Saturday, March 6, at Seven Lakes High.

and we have trust on this team that we're going to always fight back."

Seven Lakes led the district in goals scored before last season was abruptly canceled because of the pandemic.

See SPARTANS, page B6

Army West Point football building pipeline to Katy

By DENNIS SILVA II
SPORTS EDITOR

At this rate, Army West Point will be known as the Katy Knights.

The prestigious institution has established a football recruiting pipeline to Katy, and it started with Casey Shorter a little more than a year ago. The Taylor senior running back heard from Army West Point last February, consistently communicated and exchanged question-and-answer sessions with fullbacks coach Mike Viti, and verbally committed to the Black Knights in late June after

an "incredible virtual junior day."

"At first, I was just excited about the opportunity to play Division I football," Shorter said. "Then I started researching the (United States Military Academy) and all it had to offer. Coach Viti told me it is not just a four-year decision, but rather a 40-year decision. I really took that to heart as he told me I was built for all Army has to offer."

Shorter found his home. At the same time, he unknowingly initiated a movement of sorts.

See PIPELINE, page B3



COURTESY OF CASEY SHORTER

From left to right, Katy High senior linebacker Shepherd Bowling, Katy High senior offensive lineman Vasileios "Bill" Katsigiannis, Katy High senior offensive lineman Omarrian Aigbedion and Taylor senior running back Casey Shorter pose for a photo honoring their signing with Army West Point.



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H.S. SOCCER STANDINGS THROUGH MARCH 9

DISTRICT 19-6A

	DISTRICT				OVERALL		
	W	L	TIE	PTS	W	L	TIE
x-Seven Lakes	9	1	1	28	16	1	1
x-Cinco Ranch	8	1	2	26	13	1	2
x-Taylor	7	3	2	23	8	5	2
x-Tompkins	5	4	2	17	8	5	2
Morton Ranch	2	8	1	7	4	9	2
Mayde Creek	2	8	0	6	5	11	1
Katy	1	9	0	3	2	13	2

x-clinched playoff berth
y-clinched district title

	DISTRICT				OVERALL		
	W	L	TIE	PTS	W	L	TIE
y-Seven Lakes	10	1	0	30	16	2	0
y-Tompkins	9	1	1	28	13	3	2
Taylor	3	5	4	13	10	6	4
Cinco Ranch	3	4	4	13	5	5	5
Katy	3	5	3	12	6	7	5
Mayde Creek	2	7	2	8	8	8	2
Morton Ranch	1	8	2	5	4	9	2

x-clinched playoff berth
y-clinched district title

DISTRICT 19-5A

	DISTRICT				OVERALL		
	W	L	TIE	PTS	W	L	TIE
x-Paetow	8	1	2	23	13	3	6

x-clinched district title
y-clinched playoff berth

	DISTRICT				OVERALL		
	W	L	TIE	PTS	W	L	TIE
Paetow	3	6	2	11	5	8	3

x-clinched district title
y-clinched playoff berth

SOFTBALL STANDINGS THROUGH MARCH 11

DISTRICT 19-6A

	DISTRICT			OVERALL		
	W	L	T	W	L	T
Katy	4	0		6	2	2
Tompkins	3	1		5	1	0
Taylor	3	1		4	6	0
Cinco Ranch	1	2		4	5	0
Morton Ranch	1	2		6	2	0
Seven Lakes	0	3		2	6	0
Mayde Creek	0	3		2	4	0

x-clinched playoff berth
y-clinched district title

DISTRICT 19-5A

	DISTRICT			OVERALL		
	W	L	T	W	L	T
Paetow	0	2		5	4	0

x-clinched district title
y-clinched playoff berth

BASEBALL STANDINGS THROUGH MARCH 10

DISTRICT 19-6A

	DISTRICT			OVERALL		
	W	L	T	W	L	T
Tompkins	1	0		11	0	1
Katy	1	0		10	2	0
Seven Lakes	1	0		6	6	1
Taylor	0	1		7	4	1
Mayde Creek	0	1		3	7	0
Morton Ranch	0	1		0	11	1
Cinco Ranch	0	0		6	4	2

x-clinched playoff berth
y-clinched district title

DISTRICT 19-5A

	DISTRICT			OVERALL		
	W	L	T	W	L	T
Paetow	0	0		6	6	0

x-clinched district title
y-clinched playoff berth



Seven Lakes junior Katie Fitzpatrick (9) makes a run out wide during the Spartans' 7-0 win over Morton Ranch on Tuesday, March 9, at Seven Lakes High.

SEVEN LAKES

from page B1

"I had a really good feeling at tryouts," senior Paige Boucher said. "I saw so many good players and I saw our team coming together. We have really good chemistry this year. The key is staying calm and collected. At the beginning of games, we can get really frantic. But if we can take deep breaths, calm down and put the ball on the ground, we can find each other, and it really helps our game."

Seven Lakes has a diverse, potent attack, with such great speed that forwards have had to slow down to connect better with midfielders to make the good play.

The Spartans' combination of smart passing

and dynamic finishing was evident in their 7-0 win over Morton Ranch on Tuesday, March 9. Boucher and sophomore Haydan Erck scored two goals apiece, and three other Spartans found the back of the net. The Spartans connected on a program record 424 passes in the game, a remarkable feat.

"The identity of this team is keeping possession," Eidson said. "We can get enough shots on goal that enough will go in."

On the defensive side, however, is where the Spartans are really overwhelming opponents.

Despite two new center backs in sophomores Rebecca Romero and Prisha Menon, Seven Lakes has quickly found a rhythm along the backline, thanks to the vocal stewardship of sophomore goalkeeper Maddie Rich, whose leadership skills are well beyond

her years, and the organized play of seniors Lexi Peterson and Sara Lopez, and junior Luann Drake.

Seven Lakes' lone goal surrendered in district play came in a 1-0 defeat to Tompkins on Feb. 2. Otherwise, it's been terrific defensively. It took Taylor, a probable playoff team, 50 minutes before it put a shot on goal in Seven Lakes' 2-0 win on March 6. Morton Ranch was unable to put a shot on goal at all three days later.

"I wasn't expecting this at all, especially with the younger girls we pulled up," Peterson said. "We have really good communication. We're different grades, different ages, but we've done well working together in the back and keeping that chemistry going."

Eidson does not care to look too far ahead or stop and think about how

good her team is. She is of the one-game-at-a-time mentality, and reluctant to highlight specific players as difference-makers.

"With as balanced of a team as this is, that's hard to do," she said.

But Eidson is willing to admit how much a district championship would mean. Of course, a gold trophy is significant in itself, but in a district as heated and competitive as 19-6A—Katy ISD had Seven Lakes, Tompkins and Cinco Ranch ranked in the top 10 regionally in the preseason—it means more.

"We have a lot of goals, but we care most about the district rankings and the district season," Eidson said. "Play the way we want to play, respect our opponents, and let our quality show through. Katy ISD performs really well, and we take a lot of pride in winning district. It would mean a lot."



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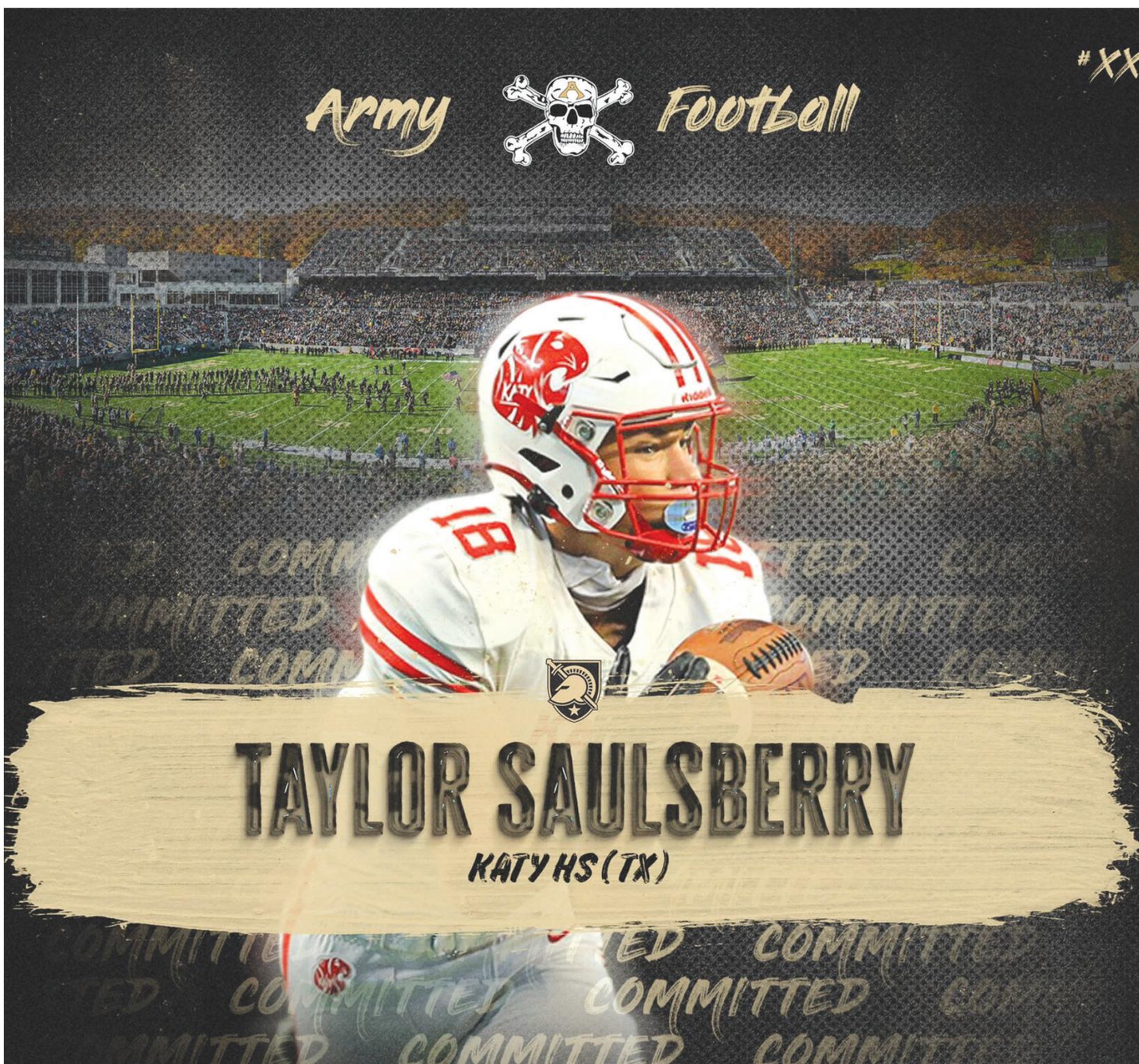
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COURTESY OF TAYLOR SAULSBERRY

Shown is a social media picture graphic Katy High senior receiver Taylor Saulsberry used when announcing his verbal commitment to Army West Point on March 3.

PIPELINE

from page B1

In 10 months, four Katy area football players, including three from Katy High School, verbally committed and then signed on National Signing Day, Feb. 3, to play for Army West Point: Shorter, Katy High senior offensive linemen Omarrian Aigbedion and Vasileios “Bill” Katsigiannis, and Katy High senior linebacker Shepherd Bowling. On March 3, Katy High senior receiver Taylor Saulsberry verbally committed to Army, eventually making it five Katy area players, and four Tigers, to pledge to wear the black, gold and gray once he signs his letter of intent.

“I mostly talked to Omarrian as he first contacted me in late summer,” Shorter said. “We talked a lot about how tough it is going to be, but also about all the great things associated with being a West Point graduate. I was happy when he told me he was going to commit, and then came Bill and Shepherd, which was an unbelievable addition.

“Now that Taylor Saulsberry has committed, it has me wondering who in Katy is next.”

It was a rapid domino effect. Army West Point recruited each player hard and made it known they were wanted. But when the players started recruiting each other, it was an easier sell.

well as talking to some of these other guys.”

Katsigiannis said joining other Katy area players at West Point, including teammates, will make the transition easier.

around West Point itself,” Bowling said. “But at the end of the day, you want to make the smartest decision to set you up not only in your football career, but for life and the opportunities afterward.

Saulsberry said.

The notion of serving one’s country appealed to all, but to Saulsberry a little more than the others.

“My dad served in the army,” Saulsberry said. “It just helped make my decision to know that I’d have some familiar faces around me.”

There is a common trait among all five players. All are devoted leaders.

Saulsberry and Bowling were team captains for the 2020 Class 6A-Division II state champion Tigers, and Katsigiannis and Aigbedion were starters highly respected by their peers.

Since his sophomore year, Shorter has been greatly admired in the Mustangs’ locker room for his work ethic and selflessness.

“I love that I am going in with guys I know,” Shorter said. “It is clear how driven and talented they are as players and people, and I’m looking forward to playing with them. It hasn’t been easy for those of us in the 2021 class, and the pandemic made recruiting tough for many. But everything works out for a reason, and I have heard Coach (Jeff) Monken say this is the best recruiting class he has seen.”

“I love that I am going in with guys I know. It is clear how driven and talented they are as players and people, and I’m looking forward to playing with them.”

— CASEY SHORTER, TAYLOR SENIOR RUNNING BACK

“At first, when I committed, I would always talk to Shepherd about it,” Aigbedion said. “Then when Bill got the offer, he knew that’s what he wanted to do. I feel like that kind of swayed Shep’s decision as well. Just the other day, when Taylor got his offer, I remember all of us just having a conversation about why he should join us and the opportunities it would give him.

“And although he doesn’t go to our school, Casey also played a big deal in my commitment, as

“I love it,” Katsigiannis said. “The more, the better. Our bonds are what’s going to make our team tighter and better.”

For all five players, the opportunity to play NCAA Division I football while getting an elite education was unmatched. Those things alone were enough to make up for the fact they couldn’t visit campus due to restrictions because of the pandemic.

“The football was there already, along with the coaches and players and just the whole aura

I think the long-term benefits are what ultimately led me to commit.”

The five are natural competitors, gifted academically and talented athletically. They are aware of the challenge competing at Army West Point presents. Shorter, for instance, said he already has nerves knowing the first six weeks will be basic training.

“I love that there will be other players from Katy going with me, making the military academy experience less nerve-racking,”

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(4) the extent to which the goods or services meet the City's needs (10%);
(5) the bidder's past relationship with the City (15%);
(6) the impact on the ability of the City to comply with laws and rules relating to contracting with historically under-utilized businesses and non-profit organizations employing persons with disabilities (5%);
(7) the total long-term cost to the municipality to acquire the bidder's goods or services (5%); and
(8) the completeness of the bid (20%).

The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all Bids and to waive irregularities in the bidding. In case of ambiguity or lack of clearness in stating the prices in the Bid, the Owner reserves the right to consider the most advantageous construction thereof or to reject the Bid.

Bid and Bond Requirements:
Each Bid shall be accompanied by a Bid Bond, the "bid security", in an amount of not less than ten percent (10%) of the total amount bid, as a guarantee that the successful bidder will enter into a proper Contract and execute Bonds and Guaranty on the forms provided within five days after the Notice to Proceed is received by the General Contractor. Bid sureties will be returned to all but the three lowest acceptable bidders the day of opening the Bids, and the remaining bid sureties will be returned after execution of the Contract.

The successful bidder must furnish Performance, Payment, and Maintenance Bonds on the forms furnished with the Bid, in the amounts of one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price, from a surety company acceptable to the Owner.

Bid Documents:
Plans and specifications will be available on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at the CivCastUSA website <https://www.civcastusa.com>.

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

from page A1

The Panthers were an eclectic mix of strong-willed personalities and terrific talents. They never found solid footing early, which resulted in a season-opening loss to Cypress Lakes. It didn't help that Katy ISD's shutdown because of COVID-19 early in the season canceled seven games and about twice as many practices.

But something changed. Drastically. The goal, as it is for any ambitious high school basketball team, was to make it to state. But the Panthers weren't just willing to talk about it. They worked for it, especially once they saw what they were capable of.

"At first, we wouldn't even talk to each other in the locker room. It wasn't normal," senior guard Brian McKnight said. "But we started gelling and that's how our success came, off the court. When you step on the court, and that's your family, you're going to play your heart out for your family. This became more than just a team to us."

The Panthers understood if they wanted to maximize what they had, they had to learn to play together. That started with making a genuine effort to get to know and learn each other off the court, and sacrificing an open shot for themselves for a better shot for a teammate or it.

Paetow hit that epiphany during the second half of district play, and it drove them during a remarkable postseason run.

"We believed in everything we were working for and playing for," junior guard Trevor Frank said. "We started to see what we could do. Look at the outcome. We tried."

Paetow played admirably against undefeated United. The Panthers trailed 14-7 after the first quarter before outscoring United, 18-10, in the second and taking a one-point lead into halftime.

Because his team was having difficulty containing dribble penetration, Niemi dialed up pressure in the second quarter and it paid off. Frank had a pair of steals, and he and junior reserve Idy Igaroola combined for 13 points in the period.

But in the third quarter, United unleashed its fury. Junior 6-foot-7 wing Terrance Arceneaux scored 10 points with seven rebounds and the Timberwolves outscored the Panthers, 23-9, in the quarter, thanks to a persistent attack to the basket, earning 11 free-throw attempts and making nine.

United simply had too much size and athleticism, especially with Paetow's 6-foot-9 star junior post Charles Chukwu missing most of the second and third quarters in foul trouble before fouling out two minutes into the fourth.

The Timberwolves did not have a starter shorter than 6-foot-1. They used their size and physicality to their advantage, particularly in the second half. After attempting eight 3s in the first half, making one, United attempted just three more the rest of the game.

Overall, United made 20 of 36 free throws to Paetow's 6-of-14, and won the rebounding edge, 42-25.



PRENTICE C. JAMES | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Paetow boys basketball coach Michael Niemi talks to his players during a timeout in their Class 5A Region III semifinal win over Goose Creek Memorial on Tuesday, March 2, at the Campbell Center in Aldine.

"When we first started this season, we didn't like each other. We didn't get along on the court, we didn't gel. We struggled. You saw it in practice, you saw it in scrimmages, you saw it in our fall leagues. We lost that first game, and in the course of that journey to get where we are now ... somewhere along the line, we started to become a family."

—MICHAEL NIEMI, PAETOW BOYS BASKETBALL COACH

"It was a consistency over the game as far as not doing the little things good enough," Niemi said. "We came out the (regional semifinal) game against Goose Creek Memorial and really sat down defensively. Tonight, I don't think we accomplished that. We let them get by us too easily. We moved late into position, which forced us to foul. We gave up a lot of offensive rebounds and didn't do enough blocking out or body-to-body contact."

United, which led by as many as 18 points in the fourth quarter, was the better team. The Panthers, however, never quit.

"We kept putting pressure ... we tried to make shots, we tried to rebound them, we tried to break their press," said Frank, who had a team-high 17 points to go with four steals and three rebounds. We tried. We played together, and we tried."

Senior guard Khi Watkins added nine points for Paetow. Igaroola finished with seven points and six rebounds.

Arceneaux had a game-high 19 points and 15 rebounds, and it was his aggressiveness in the third quarter that turned the game in United's favor.

Niemi took a lot from how his team lost.

"It's great to see that growth, where we didn't care for each other at the beginning and now they're in the locker room, crying and weeping because they're missing what they've had and put so much value into," he said. "They love each other now. We lost as a family, and you can't look past something like that."

While the Panthers were devastated afterward, the meaning of their season was not lost upon them.

"To lose in the second round last year and come back all the way to the fifth round, it's something special," senior guard Jayden McCullough said.

McCullough, McKnight, forward Everett Marlatt and post Kameron Spanburg were sophomores on the inaugural Paetow varsity basketball team two years ago. That year, the Panthers went 11-20 overall, but 6-8 in district and one win shy of the playoffs. Last season, they broke out, going 26-8 and winning a co-district championship and a playoff game.

This year, they put the Greater Houston area hoops scene on notice as outsiders were forced to learn how to properly pronounce "Paetow."

"We made history, we set a standard for this program," McKnight said. "It puts a smile on our faces to take a new school that nobody believed in or knew and make everyone believers. It's a great feeling to prove people wrong, when people thought we wouldn't make it this far"

They did, however. "We're all brothers," Frank said. "We love each other. As the season went on, we became closer and closer more than we ever were at the beginning. Nothing could separate us."

"It didn't work out, but we're going to come back harder than ever next year. Our confidence is through the roof. This feeling is something we don't want ever again. We'll come back harder. It's going to be scary."

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Katy Times

COUGARS

from page B1

In 11 district games, the Cougars have surrendered 10 goals. That is the second fewest in a district that has three teams ranked in the region in Seven Lakes, Tompkins, and, yes, Cinco Ranch.

"Their growth in big games has been impressive," Sanguinetti said of his back four. "What I love about it is, at the beginning, everybody was saying how we don't have a defense. Right now, we're doing pretty good, and it's a credit to them stepping up."

The Cougars' experience lies in the midfield, specifically in talented seniors Andres Liendo and Hunter Cain, who have combined for nine goals and nine assists in district play. They are the backbone of the club with their leadership and know-how. Junior midfielders Seba Rodriguez and John Ortiz are stabilizers, and sophomore midfielder Julio Colmenares is emerging as a standout.

Defensively, however, Cinco Ranch wasn't supposed to be much. The only returner was Taborda, whose lone varsity experience was starting three games before the pandemic canceled the rest of last season.

But it is a group that has played beyond its years and eased pressure on senior goalkeepers Ollie Cappis and Rodrigo Verduguez, who have shared time in net with Cappis earning recent starts.

"We go after every ball," Taborda said. "We don't care who's on the field, we're going to be aggressive and pursue, no matter what."

It's a group that sacrifices for the greater good.

In Sanguinetti's 4-1-4-1 scheme, which he implemented this year to accommodate his personnel, the backline is asked to not be as involved in the attack as some might be accustomed to.

Sanguinetti's scheme calls for his backline to often-times surrender the glory of playing up and making a run in the attack or taking a touch in the back. He asks his defenders to quickly give up possession to the middle to initiate transition.

"They hustle really well and they're very coachable," Sanguinetti said. "They take to the type of defense and the type of effort we need from them. Even though they might not want to play our style, they will do what's best for the team."

Manzi credits the unit's work ethic, accountability and attention to detail. Youth is not excused, but there is an understanding that mistakes are forgivable if the team can build from them.

"We're very talented, considering that people overlook us because we're young," Manzi said. "They think we're not as good as we are, but we're proving that we are. We communicate and we all have trust in one another."

The season has surprised Sanguinetti, pleasantly and not so pleasantly. The good: The Cougars swept a tough Tompkins team and have wins over Houston area powers Seven Lakes and Friendswood. The worrisome: a 3-2 loss and 1-1 tie to Morton Ranch, a physically gifted team but one that will not make the playoffs.

It's the ebbs and flows of a young team, though one that is in a stronger position than many may have expected. With a win over Seven Lakes on Friday, March 12, Cinco Ranch can win the district championship.

"Having this young group, I feel we've been tested," Sanguinetti said. "I don't want to put a ceiling on it, but I'm so proud of them. These guys were told by different people of how much we were missing, of what we didn't have. Right now, we're just proud of where we are."



DENNIS SILVA II

Seven Lakes senior midfielder Diego Lazo (7) and Taylor junior defender/midfielder Gabriel Stephano Zagastizabal (11) pursue the ball during their game Saturday, March 6, at Seven Lakes High.

SPARTANS

from page B1

Spartans graduated their top three scorers, including stalwarts J.P. Dominguez and Tommy Murray.

"It was who's going to step up and fill in the void, and we've had some guys fill in quite nicely," coach Jimmy Krueger said. "And it's not just one player we're leaning on, it's several players getting it done."

Senior midfielder Vicente Garcia leads 19-6A with nine goals in district play. Senior midfielder Matt Stewart, who did not play against Taylor, has six. Senior forward Bryan Egba has five. Lazo, freshman midfielder/forward Noa Stasic and sophomore midfielder/forward Hunter Merritt, who scored the winner against Taylor, have three apiece.

"It's amazing that we can score from pretty much anywhere and anyone," said Egba, whose header off a free kick from Lazo with 13:40 left tied the game against Taylor. "We have guys who can do some wonderful things with the ball. Everyone is involved, and

that makes it special having that diversity from everywhere."

Krueger figured his team's games would be high scoring this year. Aside from a talented core in Garcia, Stewart and Lazo, he knew there was potential and skill in players like Egba, who has been more consistent this season, and Merritt, who was a JV 'B' player last year and is "killing it," per his coach's words.

Stasic and Aidan Morrison are freshmen playing beyond their years.

"We all have different strengths," said Lazo, who leads the team with five assists in district play. "Some guys can take people on; some guys can shoot. Some guys can do both. We have speed. We have attack. We're not afraid to shoot."

And they're not afraid to compete. The Spartans found themselves down against the Mustangs after a slow-footed first half, and a loss would have likely killed any district title hopes.

But they did not give in, which was not an easy task against a Taylor program that has been rejuvenated under second-year coach Julio Rivas.

"Over the past couple of years, Taylor has kind of re-found itself and they're a contender," Krueger said. "They're doing good things. So, to come back against a side that plays physical and is high energy just shows that there is grit and desire and passion there for us."

Krueger's Spartans are perennially among the best of the best in Region III soccer. He believes this year's team can be the same, especially if junior defenders Keegan Sneedon and Ben Galloway continue to develop into able complements alongside Lazo, who is versatile and skilled enough to play the midfield or drop back and defend, and veteran senior Julian Arai on the backline.

Seven Lakes is 16-1-1 overall and 9-1-1 in district, with a plus-24 goal differential in 19-6A play. With a draw or win Friday, March 12, against Cinco Ranch, Seven Lakes can take that desired step forward and win district.

"We want that district championship," Lazo said. "It's really important. We want the district back to us."



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