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# Katy Times



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THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2021

KISD

## Trustees approve Apr. 5 holiday, hear budget and workforce updates

By R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

The Katy ISD Board of Trustees met in a special Monday evening meeting to hear a resolution report about a subcontracting complaint as well as updates on the district's 2021-22 budget process and staffing needs. Trustees also approved an April 5 holiday per the request of KISD Superintendent Ken Gregorski.

"We've asked a lot from our employees and our students or families this year, and we truly appreciate that flexibility and willingness to change direction at a moment's notice or throughout the year with a lot that we've had to handle during this pandemic," Gregorski said. "This fall and spring have been tough and I know at times very exhausting. ... With that said, I'm bringing forward a recommendation to the board of trustees to add an additional paid holiday into our school calendar for April 5, 2021, which is that one day after Easter Sunday."

Gregorski said that, while fourth and sixth graders do have a STAAR test the following day, he feels students are well-prepared for it and will be able to move forward and perform well on the test without having class the day before the exam.

KISD Executive Director of Facilities, Planning and Construction Lisa Kassman provided a report on the resolution of a subcontractor's complaint associated with the construction of Haskett Junior High School. At the board's Feb. 22 meeting, Jimmy Garcia - a subcontracted plumber that worked on the project - said Leon's Plumbing, subcontractor to prime contractor Drymalla Construction Company, paid him less than the prevailing wage for his work while on the job.

Kassman said the situation had been resolved and Garcia and one other plumber had been paid the difference between the prevailing wage and the lower rate they'd been paid and that the primary contractor, Drymalla Construction Company had been charged a \$60 contract penalty per the contract and associated regulations the district must adhere to.

See **KISD**, page A2

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## Police mobilize to fight street racing

By R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

The Harris County Sheriffs Office, Katy Police Department and other Greater Houston law enforcement departments mobilized to fight street racing last week, said Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez in a March 16 press conference at Houston Raceway Park. The increased enforcement came as the TX2K21 Roll & Drag Race Nationals event was held at the race track.

"Unfortunately, a handful of folks make the selfish decision to race on the same public roads our families use each and every day," Gonzalez said. "They put lives in jeopardy and we have seen the deadly consequences. Just last month, our sheriff's office deputies investigated a dangerous street incident that resulted in a crash that killed two young brothers, ages 14 and 16."

At least seven vehicles were impounded in or near the Katy area as a result of showboat driving or illegal street racing between March 16 and March 23, said HCSO Capt. Tommy Shelton via multiple Twitter announcements. Shelton said at least five arrests had been made for racing on a highway, at least one for driving while intoxicated and another on an arrest warrant through the HCSO's enforcement efforts. Locations include roadways near the intersection of FM 529 and Fry Road as well as near the intersection of The Grand



COURTESY HCSO

Harris County law enforcement officials reported at least five arrests and seven impounded vehicles as a result of increased efforts to eliminate street racing on public roads between March 16 and 23. This vehicle was one of the vehicles found hot rodding near the Katy area.

Parkway and Morton Road. Another was also made near the intersection of Highway 290 and Barker Cypress Road.

Gonzalez said HCSO, the Texas Department of Transportation and Houston had all set up task forces to deal with street racing in Greater Houston. HCSO has purchased specially-designed

Chevy Camaros to help with enforcement operations against street racers as part of its efforts to eliminate racing on public roadways. Since the task force was initiated in cooperation with Katy PD, Jersey Village, DPS and the Houston Police Department, HCSO alone has issued 91 traffic citations, made 17 felony arrests

- on charges that include reckless driving, racing on a highway and deadly conduct - 29 misdemeanor arrests for DWI and other offenses. The department has also seized several vehicles, some of which have not been returned to their owners.

See **RACING**, page A3

KATY

## Council okays engineering firm, parks director, expansion of Fire Station 1 project

By R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Katy City Council approved an agreement with Gravitek Engineering Services, PLLC to provide on-call structural engineering services on May 22. Council members also approved an amendment to the city's budget which will facilitate the hiring of a parks director and additional repairs for Katy Fire Department's Fire Station 1.

"The original approved budget (for fire station repairs) was \$600,000 in December, but this is in addition to that," said City of Katy Finance Director Andrew Vasquez.

The adjustment to the project includes almost \$134,000 to SKE Construction out of Cypress to address mold issues; nearly \$176,000 to the Gordion Group for upgrades to

the facility; slightly more than \$19,000 to Graco Mechanical for HVAC upgrades; about \$113,000 to Datacom & Security Solutions, Inc. for various building upgrades; and about \$8,000 to The Gordion Group for project management services as the lead contractor on the project.

The city is hoping to replenish its capital improvement fund budget via an \$800,000 bond proposal, Proposition A, which will be on the May 1 ballot for Katy voters to consider.

Funds were transferred from the city's general fund into the capital fund by council after the repair and improvement items were approved. The budget was also modified to add \$57,000 in funding to the Parks Department for the city to hire a parks director.

See **KATY**, page A3

## Fisher's journey to NFL prospect started in Katy

By DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR



NORTHWESTERN ATHLETICS

Former Katy High all-state linebacker Paddy Fisher is preparing for the NFL Draft following a successful career at Northwestern.

**Editor's Note:** This is the first of a three-part series on former Katy High star Paddy Fisher. Fisher is a middle linebacker out of Northwestern preparing for the NFL Draft.

Paddy Fisher remembers it well.

The former Katy High all-state linebacker likes to talk about hanging out at his friend's house, just down the street. Fisher was either in the first or second grade; that much is foggy. But there's no forgetting flipping through his buddy's big book of NFL cards and being struck with awe.

"I remember seeing Brian Urlacher in there and Brian Dawkins, Ray Lewis, Ed Reed. All these high-level names," Fisher said. "I remember flipping through and seeing all these trading cards and the height and the weight and the stats, and I was like, 'I want to play. I want to be like one of these guys. I want to play in the NFL.'"

To his amazement, many years later, following a storied career at Katy High and impressive run at Northwestern, Fisher, 23, is on

See **FISHER**, page B5

## Joan Murray releases new book to help support community

By R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Joan Murray has printed her 16th book, "You Can Trust Him: Anchoring Your Hope in God During Difficult Times" in support of Joan Murray Ministries, a faith-based community outreach nonprofit. Murray found her faith at the age of 12 and it eventually inspired her to begin the nonprofit which supports residents of the Katy area and Brookshire.

"We have been able to do a massive amount of work," Murray said. "Not only in the Houston area and in other cities in Texas and the U.S. and around the world... We have been able to do that through those books."

Murray said she started writing the book about three

### JOAN MURRAY MINISTRIES

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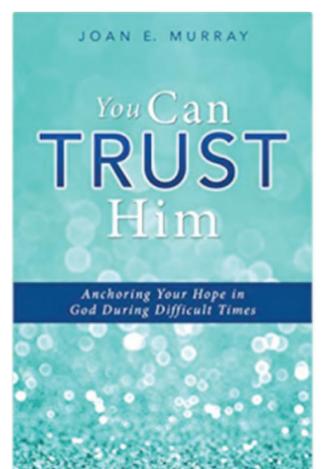
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years ago and shortly after was diagnosed with a frozen shoulder which led to significant pain and delayed the book. She had hoped to release the book at the end of 2019 but had to set the book aside for a while to let her shoulder heal. During that time, she said she

See **MURRAY**, page A3



Joan Murray, founder of Joan Murray Ministries, has released a new book to help those struggling with their face during recent challenging times and help them place their trust in God. Proceeds from all of Murray's books go toward her nonprofit, Joan Murray Ministries, which helps people worldwide but also has a local focus in the Katy area.



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## KATY

from page A1

“I’m just very happy that we’re able to be hiring a parks director,” Mayor Pro Tem Chris Harris said. “We’ve made a real effort the last few years in expanding our park facilities.”

Last year, the city purchased land across the street from Katy City Hall to expand Thomas Park. The city also is proposing a parks bond that will allow the Parks Department to set up trails from Thomas Park north to the newly-monikered Leyendecker Landing – formerly known as the Pitts Road Detention Pond. If the parks bond, known as Proposition B, is approved by voters, it will allow that plan to come to fruition more quickly, including converting the drainage pond project into a city park.

Gravitek was hired to fill the gap left by the passing of former City Engineer David Leyendecker, for whom Leyendecker Landing is named.

Councilmembers also:

- Authorized the issuance of about \$2.9 million by Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District 161 which serves The Reserve at Katy subdivision. The mostly-procedural vote was needed because the city’s boundaries overlap the MUD’s.



Katy City Council moved to hire a parks director at their March 22 meeting. Over the last few years, the city has worked to expand its parks and has a parks bond on the ballot for the May 1 election this year.

- Approved a change order to the Patna Drive drainage improvement project.
- Renewed a contract between Acid Remap, LLC, and the city for EMS protocol and mobile data services to support Katy Fire Department staff.
- Approved the closure of

Fourth Street from Avenue A to Avenue B for the Katy First United Methodist Church’s sunrise service.

- Approved the use of hotel occupancy tax proceeds to replace the HVAC at The Stockdick House and repair HVAC at the Featherston Home for a total cost of about \$16,000. HOT funds

may only be used for items that promote tourism, such as maintaining these two historic homes which the city uses as museums.

- Approved almost \$6,000 in funding for the Katy Heritage Society to digitally and physically preserve historic newspapers left in their care.

R. HANS MILLER

## RACING

from page A1

“I’m proud to work with all of these law enforcement agencies and support them,” said Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg. “And we’re not just doing it through traditional law enforcement – arrest, charge and prosecute – we’re seizing cars, and these cars are valuable.”

Ogg said that her office has worked with judges and law enforcement to permanently seize six vehicles, had 15 cases result in settlements with car owners and returned 18 vehicles. There are 47 additional automobile seizures that are still pending a decision.

Charges against the defendants in cases related to those charges include 36 charges of street racing, two for reckless driving, two for deadly conduct and at least one for engaging in organized crime, Ogg said.

Gonzalez said those with information related to illegal street racing activities should call 713-221-6000 or contact Crime Stoppers anonymously at 713-222-8477. Emails may be sent to [traffickingstips@sheriff.hctx.net](mailto:traffickingstips@sheriff.hctx.net).

Houston Raceway Park General Manager Seth Angel, who joined law enforcement officials at the press conference, said the park was committed to hosting a safe event and was partnering with police to combat street racing.

Angel said street racing aficionados are welcome to visit the raceway every Friday where they can pay for time on the track to race safely without endangering the public. The cost is \$20.

“I’m proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder today with our law enforcement partners ... in their pursuit to end this activity and rid our public roads and highways of illegal street racing of which its consequences can have and will result in participants facing jail time, serious injury to themselves and their property and their vehicles, and – God forbid – something worse, and at the same time endangering innocent and unknowing bystanders,” Angel said.

## MURRAY

from page A1

worked on her relationship with God and realized she didn’t know how to just place her trust in her faith when she was going through a difficult time. She worked on that challenge of faithfulness and in the end, she said, she came out with some ideas that not only helped her but allowed her to incorporate her thoughts on the issue into the book.

“That is why I ended up writing the book, because in addition to myself, when you go into

a difficult time, people really do have a hard time trusting in the Lord,” Murray said.

Murray is hopeful the book will help readers, but she’s also excited for the work the proceeds will help Joan Murray Ministries continue. Over the last 15 years, Murray said the ministry has assisted about 98,000 people with their work throughout the world. The ministry’s work includes distributing about 1,000 pounds of food each year and hosting a variety of community events to help those in need.

Recently, much of the ministry’s local work has been in Waller County, especially the

Brookshire area to assist those facing challenges with food and financial insecurity, Murray said. Other initiatives include the Meals of Hope program that provides meals for halfway houses; assisting The Boaz House with supplies and holiday items; providing school supplies to a local Baptist school; partnering with Child Protective Services to sponsor children in need during the holiday season; and supporting efforts of others in Brookshire such as the Help a Sista’ Out resale store which helps those facing food insecurity in the Brookshire-Pattison area.

In the future, Murray said the ministry is planning to move

its headquarters out to Waller County to better serve the needs of the Waller community, but plans for that move have not been finalized.

Murray said the partnerships with community organizations such as The Boaz House, CPS, Help a Sista Out and others helps Joan Murray Ministries aid more people in need and spread the message of faith that inspires her.

“So, we continue to do those outreaches in the community, and with everything we do, it’s always the Word first,” Murray said. “Always, because the things we give ... they’re temporary for a short period of time, but Christ is permanent.”

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# SUPPORTING LOCAL HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER

by Debra Ford

Looking for ways to support local Katy businesses? Here is one easy way to support two local, female business owners and hundreds of other small businesses. Make plans to attend the **Katy Home & Garden Show and Spring Gift Market** organized by RJC Productions and Home for the Holidays Gift Market this weekend at the Merrell Center.



You can shop for products and services and feel good about knowing you are supporting small businesses from Katy, Houston and throughout Texas. Some are brand new businesses whose owners were forced to replace lost income during COVID. They discovered a new hidden talent and put it to good use by launching unique, one-of-a-kind products and services. Talk about making lemonade from lemons!



It’s been a challenge not being able to conduct business in the past year,” explained Robyn Cade, President of RJC Productions, which hosts the home show. “Generally, within the year following a home show, our exhibitors can expect \$5-8 million in business being generated. That is a lot of revenue that was lost for many local businesses, which in turn goes back into the local economy. Helping small, local business is one of the biggest reasons we encourage people to visit the show,” urged Cade.

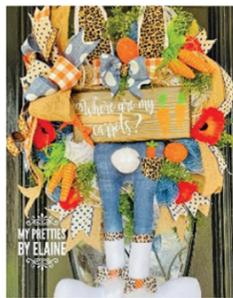
Stacie Henry, a colleague, and friend of Cade’s thought it would be great to partner up and host another community favorite, Home for the Holidays Spring Gift Market, as part of the home show for the same rea-



son. Henry said, “I’ve connected with so many women who have started new businesses like hand-made cards and stationery to wreaths to hand-crafted welcome signs or baseball caps with monograms and hand-made patches. 90% of what you’ll find in the Gift Market can’t be found anywhere else.” Henry added, I am thrilled that we can showcase these talented businesses this spring. It’s really a great place to find unique home décor, a gift for Mother’s Day or the perfect Easter decoration.”

### GIFTING MADE EASY

A full 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.



### GET TIPS FROM LOCAL DESIGN EXPERTS

The **ASK THE EXPERTS PANEL** will feature a range of How-to topics geared to shake off the COVID doldrums like **Build Your Own Home** — ways to take on the task of building a home

yourself; **How-to Be Wall Wise** — learn ways to use art on your walls with advice from the artists at Archway Gallery. Archway Gallery will also be on hand with pieces from its Houston gallery to help you find just the right original art for any room in the house. Be sure to check the website for a final ASK THE EXPERTS topics and times.

If ever there was a time to cultivate green, it is 2021. Nature abounds this year. Plants brighten a mood. Plan to see ideas on expanding both indoor and outdoor green spaces plus shop for spring plants at The Brookwood Community Spring Plant Sale.

Speaking of The Brookwood Community, a non-profit residential and vocational community serving over 250 adults with disabilities, they are the show’s charity beneficiary. Hit hard by the recent freeze, there will be an extra effort this year to support them. Be sure to shop their Spring Plant Sale located at the main entrance! And know when you buy a water or bag of chips at the inside concessions that all proceeds will be donated directly to The Brookwood Community. A supply drive will also be held on site and a list of items needed can be found on the home show website.

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, and hours visit [katyhomeandgardenshow.com](http://katyhomeandgardenshow.com) or call 832-392-0165. Parking is FREE.



## Open records and open courts not the same thing

By AMY KRISTIN SANDERS and RACHEL DAVIS MERSEY  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

The recent winter storm left millions of Texans without power to heat their homes or water to drink. It has shaken our state to its core. As a result, Brazos Electric Power Cooperative, which dubs itself as Texas' largest and oldest generation and transmission cooperative, recently filed for bankruptcy in federal court.

What does this mean for the 1.5 million Texans served by the utility? What about other businesses and families in our communities who will have to file for bankruptcy as a result of the storm's devastation? Unfortunately, the answers to these questions aren't easy to come by because it is needlessly difficult to evaluate the federal courts and how they equitably — or inequitably — engage with the parties who appear before them.

What we know from this example and others is that systematic study of court records—by journalists, legal aid groups and even everyday citizens—has the potential to uncover the successes and failings of our nation's justice system. Yet the records aren't kept in a way that makes that inexpensive or easy.

Turning to the expense, court records, unlike other federal government records, are locked behind a paywall. It'll cost you 10 cents per page to read them online — or even just to view your search results. That means to engage in meaningful oversight, journalists, advocacy groups or even everyday Texans would need to review thousands of records, at an unsustainable cost of time and money.

Major legal research databases that collect some federal court records do exist. But unless you're affiliated with a university, they too carry a hefty price tag.

Second, it has been joked that navigating the antiquated system for accessing the records — known as PACER — requires more luck than money. The system's cumbersome nature and outdated architecture are hardly user-friendly. Often searches return information that is of little value — but you pay for the results anyway.

As our state's watchdogs, Texas journalists regularly engage in government oversight, ensuring the three branches of government operate in the public's interest. But you likely know that relentless budget cuts and staff reductions have made this kind of public-interest, watchdog journalism much

less common. For journalists keeping an eye on our court system, the work is expensive, time consuming and requires significant expertise.

But it doesn't have to be this way. We can build a system that permits free and open access to court records, allowing journalists — and others — the ability to examine these documents just like they can examine the FEMA reports, Congressional roll call votes and nearly every other executive or legislative record.

With a \$5 million award from the National Science Foundation, our team is creating an Open Knowledge Network to increase transparency around court records. Our system, called SCALES, will allow users to engage in natural-language searches of the records — the same way you use Google to search the internet.

With the help of SCALES, journalists, attorneys, scholars — and even judges — can quickly answer important questions about the justice system. The capacity to analyze large amounts of data holds enormous potential, but it requires being able to access court records without paying 10 cents per page.

Making public records free just makes sense. Assembling and disseminating information to the public is a core function of a democratic government. Journalists, attorneys and researchers regularly rely on federal records to hold the government accountable, outline legal strategies and evaluate policy implementation.

As news organizations around the state commemorate Sunshine Week, a nationwide initiative focused on highlighting the importance of open government and public records, we urge you to contact our Texas congressional delegation to voice your support for court records that are open and free to access. Tell them you support the Open Courts Act, a bipartisan bill that would eliminate access fees and align the judiciary with the rest of the federal government. It's time we let a little sunshine into the federal courts.

*Amy Kristin Sanders is an associate professor in the University of Texas at Austin School of Journalism and Media and an expert on freedom of information and government transparency. Rachel Davis Mersey is the associate dean of research for the Moody College of Communication at the University of Texas at Austin. Both are former journalists. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not reflect the official policy or position of the National Science Foundation.*



## Why would Patrick run for Gov.?

Gov. Dan Patrick said once again this week that he's not going to run against Greg Abbott for governor. He was most emphatic.

Maybe we've all been looking at this wrong. Patrick doesn't have to run against the governor, unless he wants the bigger paycheck. Abbott might be his superior on paper, but Patrick has been the stronger leader since the freeze last month.

On a playground, they'd call this a whupping.

That doesn't mean it's good government — just that Patrick has been successful in flushing Abbott's people out of their utility regulation jobs, clearing the way for a set of replacements who will owe as much allegiance to him as they owe the governor.

It's a benefit of the calendar. A governor's appointees have to be confirmed by the Texas Senate. Someone who's appointed when the Legislature is not in session takes office and has to be confirmed the next time the Senate is in regular session. But someone appointed when lawmakers are in session — now, for instance — cannot take office until the Senate has confirmed them for the job.

That gives the Senate — and its presiding officer — veto power over the appointments.

It's unusual to bust someone with a vote. The governor's aides generally check around before an appointment is announced, to avoid a public spectacle if there are serious objections. It's a quiet and relatively efficient process that doesn't get much attention.



But the Public Utility Commission appointments are already a public spectacle, what with the attention on regulators after February's power outages during a hard freeze that killed at least 57 Texans.

Blaming regulators takes attention off of the legislators who designed the regulatory setup that failed so miserably last month. And it takes the spotlight off of lawmakers who, after a 2011 freeze led to similar blackouts, voted for legislation that recommended that companies prepare the state's energy grid for winter weather without requiring them to do so — a weatherizing idea that is under consideration again today.

That group of lawmakers includes the lieutenant governor, who was a senator at the time, along with 20 of the Senate's 31 current members, who voted in favor of the legislation either as senators or as House members.

They'll all have a stake in what happens next, from confirmations of new PUC appointees to proposed protections against widespread, life-threatening power losses during severe weather. Some of those, like fortifying electric generation, transmission and distribution against bad weather — along with the facilities that provide

natural gas and other fuels — are going to be expensive, either for taxpayers, ratepayers or both.

The appointees are pawns in that larger legislative scrum, a lever at the Senate's disposal if other negotiations bog down. And Patrick's moves in the last several weeks have strengthened the Senate's bargaining position.

He called for the heads of the three Public Utility Commissioners and of the CEO of the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, or ERCOT — the operator of the electric grid in Texas. Three are gone, and the last PUC member, Arthur D'Andrea, has resigned pending the appointment of his successor. Of all of the issues before lawmakers this year — a list that includes a pandemic, economic trouble, a budget that has veered from shortfall to windfall with a huge influx of federal money, police reform, racial justice, immigration, elections and voting laws — utility regulation and wholesale pricing is the one that's getting the full public attention of the state Senate's leader.

He has 28 senators' support on this one — all but two of the Republicans and one of the Democrats.

They still have to persuade the House to go along, and Patrick is short of leverage in that department. But with a utility fiasco centered in the executive branch of state government and a successful extermination of the regulators involved, Patrick has the governor under his thumb.

That might be Patrick's best argument for staying right where he is.

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### U.S. Constitution

#### ARTICLE I

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No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil Office under the Authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the Emoluments whereof shall have been increased during such time; and no Person holding any Office under the United States, shall be a Member of either House during his Continuance in Office.



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## TRIBUTE

Clyde Grimet passed away at his home on March 16, 2021, at the age of 74, after battling a long illness.

Howard (Clyde) Grimet, Jr. was born on December 6, 1946, in Sealy, Texas, to Mandy Andrews and Howard Clyde Grimet, Sr. He spent the majority of his life growing up in the Brookshire/Katy area. He graduated from Katy High School in 1965.

He married Carolyn Toman in 1966, and they lived in Katy and Houston until they settled in their home in Brookshire in 1976, where they raised their two children and welcomed their five grandchildren.

Clyde Grimet started his career in law enforcement with Bellaire Police Department in 1969. After two and a half years, he achieved his dream when he was hired with the Village Police Department. In 1987, he continued his profession with the Sealy Police Department until he was appointed Chief of Police of San Felipe in 1990. In 1996, proud of making a full circle, he came home to his beloved Katy to join the Katy Police Department until he retired in 2016, ending his career as a proud Captain.

During his long career in law enforcement, he delivered two babies and was instrumental in the recovery of "Baby Katy", who was an infant discarded at birth along a rural fence line in San Felipe, Texas. For



**HOWARD "CLYDE" GRIMET, JR.**  
1946-2021

his part in her recovery, Governor Bill Clements, Jr., issued Clyde, six officers, and Dr. Cade Nelms a commendation. The commendation read in part, "It is an honor and pleasure to recognize and commend you for your outstanding and genuinely humane efforts to save the life of the girl known as Baby Doe this past September in San Felipe, Texas. Because of your heroic deeds, she is alive and well today." Clyde considered this his greatest accomplishment.

Clyde is survived by his wife of 54 years, Carolyn; Children, H.C. Grimet, III and wife, Beth; Amanda Grimet Moreno and husband, Keith; Grandchildren, Logan and Conley Grimet; Gavin, Mia and

Connor Moreno; Sister, Bliss Mayberry; Nephew, Murrah Mayberry and wife, Mandy; Great nephew and niece, Nicholas and Kennedy Mayberry.

The family would like to thank Clyde's mentors, Chief Pat Adams and DPS Col. James Wilson for their inspiration in his life. The family also thanks Chief Bill Hastings and the CID staff for their untiring support. May God bless the City of Katy and the Katy Police Department.

The family will receive friends from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 28, 2021, at the Schmidt Funeral Home Grand Parkway Chapel, in Katy, where funeral services will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, March 29, 2021, with Rev. David Dubois officiating. Interment will follow in Katy Magnolia Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Katy Police Association, <https://katy-police-officers-association.square.site/> "Veni, vidi, vici" (I came, I saw, I conquered.) - Julius Caesar

To express condolences, please visit [www.SchmidtFuneralHome.net](http://www.SchmidtFuneralHome.net)

Funeral services held under the direction of:  
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1344 W. Grand Parkway South  
Katy, Texas 77494  
(281) 391-2424

## Celebrating Easter during pandemic

### CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Holidays have been celebrated differently since the outbreak of COVID-19. Easter was among the first major holidays to be celebrated differently in 2020. Despite the lifting of state restrictions, some Katy area readers may not be able to attend Easter service or other traditional events due to personal health concerns.

Celebrations and social distancing make strange bedfellows. However, it is possible for people to safely celebrate Easter with their loved ones.

- Watch virtual service together. Though it might not be the same as attending service in person together as a family, watching virtual service together can allow families to engage with their faith alongside one another. If the weather permits, use a projector and set it up outside so families can safely watch in the backyard. Make sure everyone wears masks and keeps their distance. If the weather is not cooperating, families can still watch service together, even if they're not gathered in the same space. Set up a family Zoom call via a smartphone or laptop and then ask all on the call to watch a live stream of service on another device.
- Take Easter brunch outside. An outdoor brunch provides another way for

families to gather this Easter without compromising their health. Brunch makes more sense than dinner since it can be eaten in early afternoon when the weather is likely to be warmer than it will be at dinnertime. Heat lamps can add some warmth to outdoor Easter brunches.

- Host an egg hunt in the backyard. The Easter egg hunt is one tradition that need not be sacrificed during the pandemic. Easter egg hunts traditionally take place outdoors, and children can wear masks like many are already doing when going to school or participating in sports and other extracurricular activities.

- Host an Easter movie night. Families isolating and spending the day with only those in their own households can watch a movie that commemorates their Christian faith. Various films are set around Easter, including the classic "The Greatest Story Ever Told" (1965) starring Max von Sydow and Claude Rains and the more recent "Risen" (2016), which focuses on efforts by a Roman military tribune named Clavius (Joseph Fiennes) who is tasked with investigating what happened to Jesus Christ's body after the Crucifixion.

Families can embrace some old and new traditions as they celebrate Easter in the era of social distancing.



R. HANS MILLER

The Taylor High School Teenage Mutant Ninja Cookers competition barbecue team had already qualified to go to the Texas High School BBQ state competition prior to competing March 20 at Katy ISD's LD Robinson Pavilion. The team took 10th place that Saturday overall, but took home third place in the dessert contest, 10th in the chicken and ribs categories and 8th in the brisket category. While the team said they enjoyed themselves, members said they would be working overtime to ensure they sent judges' taste buds into backflips at upcoming competitions. The state championship will be held in Llano, Texas Apr. 23.

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## APRIL 2021 EVENTS CALENDAR

### APRIL 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 MUSIC BINGO

Stop by The Social Pub and Grill at 1721 Spring Green Blvd., Ste. 700 in Katy from 7-9 p.m. each Thursday for music bingo. Entry is free and prizes are given out to those with the most music knowledge and properly filled out bingo cards. This event is recommended for adults and drink specials are offered. Organizers recommend arriving early because the event fills up quickly.

### APRIL 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24 & 30 BABY GOAT SNUGGLE SESSION

Goat Yoga Katy-Brookshire invites the public out to 1324 Peach Ridge Road in Brookshire to practice yoga and snuggle baby goats. These BYOB – or wine – yoga sessions allow folks to find their zen through yoga while spending time with an adorable kid. Each session is one-hour long. There are a minimum of two attendees per session and only one family or group may attend each session. \$28 per person. Visit <https://bit.ly/3f2YfAs> to schedule. 281-748-5754.

### APRIL 3 CRAWLS FOR A CAUSE

Enjoy an adult easter egg hunt and crawfish boil at No Label Brewing at 5351 First Street at Katy's historic rice dryers. Enjoy locally-brewed beer, crawfish, an adult easter egg hunt, prizes, a raffle and silent auction. Proceeds help Greenwalds Service Rescue division save dogs that are then trained as support animals for veterans. Admission is free but participation in events, food and drink will be sold at the event. This event begins at noon. 281-693-7545. <https://bit.ly/3cZexaV>

### APRIL 9 & 10 SHINE LADIES CONFERENCE 2021

The Pentecostals of Katy hosts this women's conference at 1941 Westborough Drive in Katy. The event consists of a Friday evening service and training opportunities that evening and Saturday. Featured speakers include Dedie Cooley, Shara McKee, Ginger Labat, Shelly Davis and Annabeth Walden. Registration ends March 31 at midnight. Pre-registration for the weekend is \$30 and door admission is \$40 for both days. Friday: 1-7 p.m. Saturday: 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

### APRIL 16

**ELI YOUNG BAND AT THE WILDCATTER SALOON**  
Step out for some live music at the Wildcatter Saloon in Katy at 26913 Katy Freeway for a live performance from the Eli Young Band. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the show begins at 8 p.m. \$30 general admission in advance and \$85 VIP seating. 281-392-2337. Visit [www.facebook.com/thewildcattersaloon](http://www.facebook.com/thewildcattersaloon) and click the events button for more information.

### APRIL 16 & 23 CIRCUS VAZQUEZ

Circo Hermanos Vazquez presents their take on a traditional circus that is appropriate for audience members of all ages. The show, which will be held at Katy Mills, includes dancers, trapeze artists and clowns – among other circus favorites. General admission is free though snacks, drinks and other items may have an associated cost. 7:30-10 p.m. both days. COVID-19 safety protocols will be in place for both performers and guests. <https://bit.ly/3tKE8v0>

### APRIL 17 KATY SIP N STROLL

Love good food and good fun? Step out and participate in Katy Sip N Stroll event at The Ark by Norris – 21402 Merchants Way, Katy – from 5-9 p.m. Proceeds from the food and wine extravaganza benefit The Ballard House, a local nonprofit that helps families facing life-threatening medical situations. General admission \$65, VIP admission \$95. For other ticketing options and more information visit [www.sipandstroll.com](http://www.sipandstroll.com).

### CPR/AED AND FIRST AID TRAINING

Harris County Emergency Services District 48 will be hosting this class from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Saturday evening. The training will follow the American Heart Association's "Heartsaver" curriculum for First Aid, CPR and AED training. The class will be held at the HCESD 48 administration building at 21201 A Morton Road in Katy. \$35. For more information about the department visit [www.hcesd48.org](http://www.hcesd48.org). To register for the training visit <https://bit.ly/3IE6fj6>.

### APRIL 24

**WOOFSTOCK – PEACE, LOVE, DOGS**  
PawzUp DogFest is bringing a dog festival to Katy from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at ILuckyDog Pet Campus located at 21725 Clay Road in Katy. The event includes vendors, food, drinks and a DJ playing music from the hippie era. The event also features a doggie costume contest with prizes donated by the attending vendors. Hand sanitizer will be available and safe COVID-19 practices are strongly encouraged. For more information visit [www.facebook.com/events/403417146987987/](http://www.facebook.com/events/403417146987987/) or call PawzUp at 713-817-9754.

### APRIL 29

**KISD TEACHER OF THE YEAR EVENT**  
Brazos Valley Schools Credit Union, in partnership with Katy ISD, will host this virtual event honoring outstanding teachers at each of KISD's 74 campuses. The stream for this event will begin at 11 a.m. and end at noon. Sponsorships for the event are available at a cost between \$100 and \$500 and proceeds go toward providing gifts for the awarded educators. Contact Lisa McGarity at 281-644-3650 for more information or visit <https://bit.ly/3IE6fj6>.



AUSTIN PRICE/THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo will lead a force of nearly 1,400 officers in Miami, compared with Houston's force of more than 5,200 officers. He previously served as chief of police for the city of Austin.

## HPD Chief Acevedo leaving for Miami

By ANNA CANIZALES  
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo is leaving his helm to lead the Miami Police Department after holding the position for five years, he announced at a press conference.

"With the end of Mayor [Sylvester] Turner's final term in office fast approaching and my strong desire to continue serving as a police officer, we decided that the timing for this move was good," Acevedo said in an email obtained by the Houston Chronicle. The police chief is appointed by the mayor. Turner, who was reelected in 2019, is term-limited.

Turner announced Thursday that Troy Finner, the HPD executive assistant chief, will succeed Acevedo as police chief. Finner, who has been with HPD since 1990, will begin April 5. Turner said in a statement that he has asked Finner to focus on bridging trust and communication gaps between Houstonians and the police department.

Acevedo will be the third major police chief in Texas to depart after a year marked by protests against police violence. Last month, Austin police Chief Brian Manley said he is retiring after 30 years with the department. Manley faced harsh criticism, largely spurred by the police killing of an unarmed man last year and how the department handled summer protests over police brutality.

Dallas Police Chief Reneé Hall resigned in September after scrutiny over the Dallas Police Department's response to protests

against police brutality following George Floyd's killing in 2020.

Acevedo was one of the first big-city police chiefs in Texas to speak out against the killing of Floyd. He marched with protesters in Houston, saying, "We will march as a department with everybody in this community." However, Acevedo also received local backlash for refusing to release body camera footage from several deadly shootings in Houston.

Miami Mayor Francis Suarez told the Miami Herald that "this is like getting the Tom Brady or the Michael Jordan of police chiefs."

Acevedo will lead a force of nearly 1,400 officers in Miami, compared with Houston's force of over 5,200 officers. He will replace former Miami Police Chief Jorge Colina, who retired in February.

"We have been through so much as an extended family," Acevedo said in the email. "Hurricane Harvey, two World Series, a Super Bowl, (Imelda), the summer of protest, and most recently, an ice storm of epic proportion. On top of all this, we have sadly buried six of our fallen heroes."

Turner said in a press conference Monday that Acevedo will stay in Houston for a few more weeks as the police department makes the transition.

"Acevedo has been a champion of policing and a transformational leader while commanding the department of roughly 5,300 officers and hundreds of civilian support personnel in the nation's fourth-largest city," Turner said. "There is no question in my mind Art was the right person at the right time for the circumstances that we had to deal with."

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## AREA SPORTS NOTEBOOK



EMMA STICKLEN

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STICKLEN EARNS  
ALL-AMERICAN  
STATUSBy DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

Former Taylor swimming standout and University of Texas freshman Emma Sticklen finished seventh in the 200-yard butterfly at the 2021 NCAA Championships on March 20 in Greensboro, North Carolina. Sticklen posted a time of 1:54.09 to help the Longhorns to a third-place team finish and earn All-American status. It was Texas' first top-three finish at the NCAA Championships since 2001. Sticklen swims the butterfly, sprint freestyle and backstroke. She won the UIL 6A state championships in the 100 butterfly and backstroke as a Mustang in 2019 and holds the UIL state record in the 100 butterfly (51.88). ... Katy ISD moved into Phase 2 Athletic Event Spectator Capacities, effective Monday, March 22. There will be 100 percent capacity allowed for outdoor sports (soccer, track, baseball, softball, golf, tennis) and 75 percent capacity permitted for indoor sports (wrestling). ... Former Taylor standout Cullen Gillaspia signed with the New York Giants on March 16. Gillaspia, a 2019 seventh-round draft pick of the Houston Texans, appeared in 23 games for the Texans over the last two seasons with nine total tackles as primarily a special teams player. He is fondly remembered for his key block as a fullback pulling out wide on a Deshaun Watson touchdown run late in the Texans' 2019 Wild Card playoff win over the Buffalo Bills. He was released by the Texans on March 9 with a failed physical designation after missing time last season with a back injury. Gillaspia was a former baseball and football standout for the Mustangs. ... Former Katy High standout Andy Dalton signed with the Chicago Bears on March 16. Dalton, the longtime Cincinnati Bengal, spent last season with the Dallas Cowboys, completing 64.9 percent of his passes for 2,170 yards and 14 touchdowns to eight interceptions in 11 games. ... Former Cinco Ranch star and Texas Tech senior outfielder Karli Hamilton recorded her 200th career hit for the Red Raiders in Texas Tech's 8-0 win over Texas-El Paso on March 19. Hamilton is in fifth place in career hits at Texas Tech. ... Two Katy ISD baseball teams are ranked in the top 10 in Class 6A in the state by the Texas High School Baseball Coaches Association. Tompkins is ranked No. 2 and Katy is ranked No. 3. Entering the playoffs later this week, Seven Lakes is ranked No. 10 in the Class 6A girls soccer rankings by the Texas Girls Coaches Association. Tompkins is ranked No. 25.

*(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@katy-times.com](mailto:dennis.silva@katy-times.com) or message on Twitter @densilva02).*



## THE WORLD'S CLUB

## Culture, diversity make up Mustangs boys soccer team

By DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

Taylor's boys soccer players could not be more different in their backgrounds and homelands, but those differences have also made for a close, tight-knit winning team.

Coach Julio Rivas has a unique circumstance in leading a cultured, diverse club. Only one player, senior defender Ethan Mefford, is a full-blooded Texan. Otherwise, Rivas' Mustangs, who are 8-5-2 heading into the first round of the playoffs this

weekend, feature talents from Peru, Finland, Scotland, Colombia, Poland, South Korea, Honduras, and Argentina, among others.

"Everybody's Americanized," Mefford said. "It's actually pretty cool, because when we have team dinners, I

get to try new foods and hear about their cultures. Taylor is a diverse school, so I've gotten pretty used to playing with all different kinds of people. I ask a lot of questions. I do a lot of listening."

See TAYLOR, page B2

DENNIS SILVA II

Pictured are the non-American players of the Taylor varsity boys soccer team.

## HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER

## Falcons' attack 'different' as anticipated playoffs linger



DENNIS SILVA II

Tompkins senior defensive midfielder Felicia Hernandez, left, and senior attacking midfielder Alyssa Garcia have played significant roles in the Falcons sustaining success despite graduating dominant offensive players from the last few seasons.

By DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

Barbara Olivieri is no longer walking through the doors of the Tompkins girls soccer locker room. The Falcons' career leader in assists and No. 2 in goals scored was the 2020 SEC Freshman of the Year at Texas A&M. Nor is Skylar Parker, the Falcons' career leader in goals and points, still donning the crimson and navy blue.

But that doesn't mean coach Jarrett Shipman's attack is not as effective these days. It's just different. It may not be as prolific, but it is capable of being just as potent.

See SOCCER, page B3

## HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER

## Paetow boys capture 2nd straight 19-5A crown

By DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

Paetow's boys soccer team has taken care of business since the program started varsity play in 2019. And the Panthers are in the business of winning.

Junior Dominic Posada's right-footed strike across his body from dead center with 17:01 left in the second half broke a 1-1 deadlock and awarded Paetow a 2-1 win over A&M Consolidated in their District 19-5A finale on Friday, March 19, at Legacy Stadium as the Panthers secured their second straight district championship with the win.

See PANTHERS, page B2



DENNIS SILVA II

Paetow players gather to pray after their 2-1 win over A&M Consolidated on Friday, March 19, at Legacy Stadium. The win secured the District 19-5A boys soccer title for the second straight season.

## HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL

Bats have  
#2 Tompkins  
on hot tear to  
start seasonBy DENNIS SILVA II  
SPORTS EDITOR

Tompkins junior center fielder Jace LaViolette doesn't know what to think. He sees the Falcons with an 18-1-1 overall record, including a 4-0 start in District 19-6A play, ranked No. 2 in Class 6A in the state and No. 18 in the nation, and he's still not sure how good they are.

The LSU commit doesn't think his team knew it would be *this* good. Heck, LaViolette said, he won't even say that the Falcons *are* that good.

"We still have so much to prove, and we still have a lot of good teams to play in this district," LaViolette said. "We have to let our game do the talking."

Their game is already saying a lot.

Tompkins has six run-ruled wins, and five more wins by seven runs or more. The offense has been exceptional. The Falcons have already put up 12, 13, 16, 19 and 38 runs in games this season. Yes, 38 runs. In five innings of work.

See FALCONS, page B3



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**PANTHERS**

from page B1

Paetow (15-3-5 overall, 10-1-3 19-5A) finished with 33 points in district play, one point better than Magnolia West (10-2-2).

"We work hard every day and put 100 percent into everything," senior Hessler Magana said. "We've gotten the results. First place. Two times. Since day one, being a new school, we wanted people to know what we are."

"I'd say we accomplished that." Truer words have rarely been spoken.

Paetow has quickly established itself as a force in Class 5A Region III boys soccer, qualifying for the playoffs all three years of varsity play with a combined total of two losses in district play over the last two seasons. The Panthers lost in the first round of the playoffs during their inaugural year of varsity in 2019. They did not get the chance to compete in the postsea-



DENNIS SILVA II

Paetow junior Lukas Herrera (8, in black) controls possession as he attacks toward the goal during a District 19-5A game Friday, March 19, at Legacy Stadium.

son last year because the pandemic canceled the high school soccer season.

"Last year was tough," coach Vincenzo Vaccaro said. "Those kids who graduated worked really hard to earn the shot at the playoffs, and it was really sad for me to not get to see them have that opportunity. They did so well last year, and not to finish it and get to go to the playoffs, I felt for them. This year, really, is for those seniors. Even though

they're not here, we're thinking about them."

Vaccaro has a fun, feisty bunch. The Panthers play fast, physical and flashy, but they do so with discipline. This year's team has an intense focus, largely because of 12 seniors.

"It's really helped, not just because we're older but there is the motivation to win each game," senior David Montelongo said. "We know with COVID going on and

the way things are, any game could be our last. There's no soccer that compares to high school soccer, so we give it our all."

Vaccaro said this year's team is practically a carbon copy of last year's. Younger players have stepped up to fill in for the graduated seniors; for instance, juniors Posada and Lukas Herrera were responsible for the goals for the Panthers against A&M Consolidated.

Players are hungry and eager to sustain tradition, one that was built by the seniors and continues to evolve with each season.

"These seniors were freshmen when I got them, and they came in and wanted to work," Vaccaro said. "They put in the work and time and it's all a credit for them. I thought if I got kids with good attitudes, we could do some special things. And I do, and we are."

Players have bought into Vaccaro's system. They believe in each other. They work hard. They embrace the process of building a program from scratch. And they have fun while doing so.

It makes for a dangerous club as the postseason arrives.

"This is the grand finale for a lot of us," senior Sebastian Jaramillo said. "The chemistry is real tight and it's exciting for us to bring another championship to this program. Now the playoffs are here and it's our time. We didn't get a chance to do it last year. We missed out. But this is our time to prove who we are."

**TAYLOR**

from page B1

Players have made a concerted effort to get to know each other, establishing relationships and trust over those team get-togethers. Players and coaches rave about a Vietnamese spread made by senior defender Austin Tran's mom that included a scrumptious honey-glazed barbecue pork. Mefford enjoyed crepes for the first time. Rivas talks excitedly about the Ghanaian dish fufu, a meal of rice with chicken that is eaten with the hands.

That togetherness and acceptance off the field has translated onto the field as players acclimated to different views of the game to form a cohesive style of play.

"It's nice to see how different people play from different countries," senior center midfielder Niilo Hanninen said. "We have fast people. We have technical people. We have good passers. We have a little bit of everything."

It has not been without its challenges, however. The general consensus among Taylor's players is that American soccer is more

physical, organized, and refined than soccer in other countries. American soccer is also not as technical and possession oriented.

Hanninen refers to American soccer as "kickball."

"One of the main differences is the style," said junior midfielder Gabriel Stephano Zagastizabal, who is from Peru. "Here is more physical. Over there, it's less organized. I was used to playing with rocks in the neighborhood over there, so when I came over here it was very different. It took me six months to adjust and find a club. It was difficult."

The Mustangs' leading playmaker, senior striker Andrey Millan, is Colombian. Senior defender Jeongwook Yun is from South Korea and will have to serve in the Korean military. Junior midfielder/forward John Park is also from South Korea, but because he has dual citizenship he may not have to serve. Junior goalkeeper Aidan Bousleiman is Lebanese and Argentinian.

There's more. Many more.

Junior defender Luke Skelton's family is from England. Sophomore winger Alei Sabek is Egyptian. Hanninen is from Finland. Tran is from Houston, but his family is Vietnamese. Junior midfielder Lewis Paterson is from Scotland.

Junior defender Lukas Piotrowicz is Polish but was born in Canada. Junior defender Carlos Villatoro is Honduran.

Those are just some of the key players that make up an eclectic roster.

"Every day is exciting," Rivas said. "Every day is different. It's funny, because you have all these guys from different places and backgrounds, but we all have the love of the game in common."

"This group is so close, and they've bonded so well. Last year, I had some egos. This year, I don't. I just have kids that want to work and get better, very humble. They really want to prove themselves."

Rivas admitted he does not have the most technically skilled players or the biggest and strongest athletes. But the Mustangs compete, as shown by their third-place finish in a hotly contested District 19-6A. He has set a standard of toughness and discipline in his two years as head coach because of buy-in from players.

"From the outside looking in, it looks difficult when you have so many different players from different places," Rivas said. "But these guys have a big brotherhood. If you're willing to fight and go that extra mile for the guy next to you,

anything is possible. I know our cultures are different, but the concepts are the same. What are you willing to fight for? What are you willing to battle for? For this team, it's the guy right next to them."

Perhaps the face of the Mustangs' worldliness is junior midfielder Ignacio Saettone.

Saettone is Argentinian but was born in Katy. Because of his father's career, he has lived in London, Angola, Venezuela, Australia, back to England, and finally back to Katy before the start of the 2020 season.

"I feel like I've learned to adapt to different things," Saettone said. "I can relate more to different types of people. It's good for me. Moving around is hard, because it's hard to make friends because you're always meeting new people, but that's also a plus."

Senior midfielder/forward Connor Muñoz's mother is American, but his dad was Mexican. His father's dying wish was for his son to play soccer. While his siblings played football, Muñoz played soccer in honor of his dad.

Even the team managers are non-natives, one from Palestine and another from Ghana.

"Soccer is a universal sport," Tran said. "We've been fortunate to be exposed to so many diverse cul-

tures and it's created an interwoven family."

Rivas said the variance in culture is largely due to the occupations of parents. Most are in the oil or engineering fields. It also helps that Taylor has a strong reputation academically.

"I like coaching guys with different backgrounds because that's like the ultimate team," Rivas said. "You need physical guys like Luke (Skelton), you need guys who are good with the ball at their feet like Stephano and Andrey, our Colombians and south Americans who aren't scared to take you one-on-one. Then you need industrious hard workers like Austin and Lukas. It's nice to have different kinds of cultures to make a unit."

Rivas said the biggest misconception is that there must be a vast division between players because of the substantial difference in cultures. He quickly came to understand that that was far from the case.

People are people. Whether from Peru or Finland or Poland or Honduras, they're human.

"Honestly, we're not so different," Rivas said. "Everybody's got the same problems, going through the same stuff on a daily basis. It's just kids being kids."



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SPORTS

**FALCONS**

from page B1

As a team, the Falcons are hitting .375 and striking out just once every seven at-bats.

"We've got the best lineup in the state," senior leadoff hitter Will Stark said. "Our 7-through-9 hitters are better than some teams' 1-through-3. It's pretty dang good this year."

Coach Kyle Humphreys, who has been at the helm of the program since 2015, said his players are seeing the ball well and laying off bad pitches.

"A lot of high school kids swing at a lot of pitches out of the zone, but these guys have good plate discipline," Humphreys said. "They really do a good job."

It's coming from everywhere, up and down the lineup. In an 8-1 win over Seven Lakes on March 18, for instance, the Falcons pounded out 12 hits. Eight players had at least one hit, and four players had at least two: LaViolette, junior first baseman Jack Little, junior third baseman Cash Russell and junior right fielder Tyler Brownlee.

The Falcons are having a lot of success in two-strike hitting and working at-bats deep into counts, making the defense work.

"We're getting up there with an approach every at-bat and hitting the ball hard," Little said.

As hot as the bats have been, Humphreys said it's the pitching that's really coming around. Humphreys knew he'd have a good lineup coming into this season. Success would be dependent upon the pitching.

The results have been favorable.

Juniors Michael DeBattista, a right-hander, and Solomon Rotberg, a lefty, were coming into their own as sophomores last year before the pandemic canceled the season. But they've picked up where they left off; DeBattista had a nice start against Seven Lakes, allowing one unearned run on two hits, striking out three and walking four in four innings.

LaViolette, who hardly pitched last year, has emerged as a valuable contributor out of the bullpen with his knack for throwing strikes. He pitched two



DENNIS SILVA II

From left to right, Tompkins senior Will Stark, junior Lace LaViolette and junior Jack Little are key pieces to a lineup hitting .375 this season.

scoreless innings of relief against Seven Lakes and struck out four. Humphreys said LaViolette's size (he's 6-foot-5) and delivery make it hard for hitters to track the ball coming out of his hand.

Sophomore Ty Dagley is another intriguing prospect, a lefty with a good three-pitch mix that keeps guys off-balance.

The most runs the Falcons have allowed in a game this year is six.

"I don't want to jinx anything, but we're hitting really well, and our pitching staff is throwing strikes and doing what we need," LaViolette said. "The team chemistry is there. Everything's rolling. It's just about playing ball and having fun."

Tompkins seemingly has what it takes to make a deep postseason run, but it isn't without some concern. Only two seniors start—Wichita State signee Stark and Rice signee Graiden West—and that

void of experience and know-how have made for some issues with errors and a lack of focus.

But the team's talent, depth and competitive disposition are obvious. Players talk excitedly about making it to state. Humphreys, meanwhile, is reluctant to talk about a ceiling for his team, or its potential, or how far it can go.

But he knows he has a special group. "I've never been that far (to state), so I don't know," Humphreys said. "The furthest we've been is round 3. But this team is a very talented group and they have the ability. When I first got here, we won eight games, and all I wanted was for the coach on the other side to say we played hard. Now we have the expectation to win, and other coaches are still telling us we play hard."

"This is a fun group to watch. They're intense and focused. You have to rein them in sometimes, but they're fun."

they were confident, and I knew there had to be someone this year like that on the field to keep that standard up. I knew there had to be that player to control the game, and I had to step up and be that player.

"Putting in the work I did, I was confident and felt I deserved to be that person."

Even while moving from forward at the beginning of the year to attacking mid, Garcia's hard runs make her a force near the net. Her confidence is obvious. She is always talking on the field and playing at a high energy, fully embracing the responsibility and role she has earned.

Shipman said Garcia creates for others as much as she does for herself.

"Alyssa has been a player that's always been on the brink (of success)," Shipman said. "Two years ago, in the regional tournament, it was her and Barb on the field, and they were just vibing. You could see she was going to be a big-time player for us. This year, it's her show. Everything kind of runs through her."

Senior defensive midfielder Felicia Hernandez has also been a key contributor offensively with 19 points, eight goals and three assists. Freshman forward Valentina Gianinetto has 10 points. Senior midfielder Jennifer Pham and senior defender Kyla Warner have three goals each.

"We did focus on Sky and Barb when they were here, because they were exceptional players," Hernandez said. "But this year, we work more on distributing left and right, and getting the wings up and crossing it and working side to side. We don't have just one person to rely on. We rely on everyone as a team to contribute."

It's been more than enough for a

defense that has been practically impenetrable, allowing just three goals all season behind the leadership and skill of junior center back Gabriela Rodriguez and senior defender Avery Burchett.

The Falcons have a plus-20 goal differential this season.

"We're playing pretty soccer this year, as far as moving the ball well and not just having to go through one person," Shipman said. "We look like a really good team, and it's fostered a culture of family. This has been one of the first years where our entire bench plays a lot. It's definitely a team concept."

Tompkins was 17-0-1 with two district games left last season before the pandemic canceled the high school soccer season. It was a devastating time for a program of rich tradition and high standards, having been to the Class 6A state final in 2017 and 2019.

It forced coaches and players to live in the moment this season.

As recently as Tuesday morning's practice, Shipman continued to caution his players about being safe, wearing masks and avoiding large groups. He told of the Netflix documentary "Last Chance U," which covers a junior college basketball team throughout a season. The team's season comes to an abrupt end during the playoffs, when players are pulled off the bus after learning COVID-19 was the reason for elimination.

"Because of COVID, we didn't know how much of a season we'd get this year, if any," Hernandez said. "We just focused on working hard. Everyone has been giving it their all for the seniors that are leaving, and to give a good experience for incoming freshmen or the sophomores on the team, because we don't know how long we have. Nothing this season is set in stone."

**SOCCER**

from page B1

Coming off a third consecutive district championship, Tompkins, ranked No. 25 in Class 6A in the state by the Texas Girls Coaches Association, is a new-look team, though just as talented, boasting a 14-3-2 overall record heading into the first round of the playoffs this weekend.

"We're pretty different up top," Shipman said. "We're still playing the same formation, but when you miss players like Barb and Skylar, you have to replace that. These girls are doing a fantastic job."

"Past teams, it was more, like, we're just going to score more goals than you. This team, we don't get scored on a lot."

The Falcons have a more balanced, open attack. Eight players have compiled at least five points, led by senior attacking midfielder Alyssa Garcia.

Garcia led District 19-5A in goals scored and leads Tompkins overall with 31 points (13 goals, five assists). Her quick rise into a premier playmaker has been a boon for the Falcons, who desperately needed that confident striker after the graduation of Parker and Olivieri, the dynamic duo that terrorized opposing defenses from 2017-2020.

Over the offseason last summer, Garcia prepared herself for what was to come. She trained with her uncle on improving speed and explosion, working on touches and being faster with the ball. When her uncle wasn't available, she trained on her own on campus.

"With Barb and Skylar, I learned their confidence," Garcia said. "They were big players in the middle and it was kind of intimidating to play with them. You had to be at your best. So, I watched how

**H.S. SOCCER STANDINGS FINAL**

**DISTRICT 19-6A**

BOYS	DISTRICT				OVERALL		
	W	L	TIE	PTS	W	L	TIE
yx-Seven Lakes	10	1	1	31	17	1	1
x-Cinco Ranch	8	2	2	26	13	2	2
x-Taylor	7	3	2	23	8	5	2
x-Tompkins	6	4	2	20	9	5	2
Morton Ranch	2	8	1	7	4	9	2
Katy	2	9	0	6	3	13	2
Mayde Creek	2	10	0	6	5	13	1
x-clinched playoff berth							
y-clinched district title							

**GIRLS**

BOYS	DISTRICT				OVERALL		
	W	L	TIE	PTS	W	L	TIE
yx-Seven Lakes	10	1	1	31	16	2	1
yx-Tompkins	10	1	1	31	14	3	2
x-Katy	4	5	3	15	7	7	5
x-Cinco Ranch	3	4	5	14	5	5	6
Taylor	3	5	4	13	10	6	4
Mayde Creek	2	8	2	8	8	9	2
Morton Ranch	1	9	2	5	4	10	2
x-clinched playoff berth							
y-clinched district title							

**DISTRICT 19-5A**

BOYS	DISTRICT				OVERALL		
	W	L	TIE	PTS	W	L	TIE
yx-Paetow	10	1	3	33	15	3	5
x-clinched playoff berth							
y-clinched district title							

**GIRLS**

BOYS	DISTRICT				OVERALL		
	W	L	TIE	PTS	W	L	TIE
Paetow	3	9	2	11	5	12	3
x-clinched playoff berth							
y-clinched district title							

**SOFTBALL STANDINGS THROUGH MARCH 25**

**DISTRICT 19-6A**

BOYS	DISTRICT		OVERALL	
	W	L	W	L
Katy	5	0	7	2
Tompkins	5	1	7	1
Taylor	3	2	4	7
Cinco Ranch	2	3	5	6
Mayde Creek	1	4	3	5
Morton Ranch	1	4	6	4
Seven Lakes	1	4	5	8
x-clinched playoff berth				
y-clinched district title				

**DISTRICT 19-5A**

BOYS	DISTRICT		OVERALL	
	W	L	W	L
Paetow	3	2	5	4
x-clinched playoff berth				
y-clinched district title				

**BASEBALL STANDINGS THROUGH MARCH 25**

**DISTRICT 19-6A**

BOYS	DISTRICT		OVERALL	
	W	L	W	L
Tompkins	4	0	18	1
Katy	4	0	16	3
Cinco Ranch	3	1	11	7
Seven Lakes	2	2	10	10
Taylor	1	3	10	8
Morton Ranch	1	4	11	8
Mayde Creek	0	5	4	12
x-clinched playoff berth				
y-clinched district title				

**DISTRICT 19-5A**

BOYS	DISTRICT		OVERALL	
	W	L	W	L
Paetow	1	3	9	11
x-clinched playoff berth				
y-clinched district title				

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**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

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Anyone knowing the whereabouts of Crystal Hopkins Boudreaux or Dylan Manley should call the law office of George F. Severson at 337-407-5160, LEGAL RIGHTS INVOLVED.

**March 18 Puzzle Answers**

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

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

**950 PUBLIC NOTICES**

**NOTICE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN ORDINANCE NO. 2970 BEARING THE FOLLOWING CAPTION WAS ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KATY, TEXAS, ON JANUARY 25, 2021:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 12 "TRAFFIC AND VEHICLES" OF THE CITY OF KATY CODE OF ORDINANCES AND AMENDING ARTICLE 12.05 "PARKING RESTRICTIONS ON SPECIFIC STREETS" BY AMENDING SECTION 12.05.041 "NO PARKING ZONES" TO PROHIBIT PARKING BETWEEN THE EAST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE AND THE WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF PEDERSON ROAD FROM THE SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF HIGHWAY 90 TO THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF INTERSTATE 10; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HERewith; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR A PENALTY NOT TO EXCEED \$200 FOR A VIOLATION OF THE ORDINANCE.

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**FISHER**

from page A1

the brink of making that dream a reality, hoping to join Andy Dalton, Jorge Diaz, Terrence Frederick, Eric Heitmann and Ryan Mouton as former Tigers to wear an NFL uniform.

"To be here 16, 18 years later, it's crazy," Fisher said. "It's right around the corner."

Fisher is an NFL prospect. At 6-foot-3-3/8 and 240-pounds, he is the prototypical inside linebacker, a throwback to the days of titans like Urlacher and Lewis.

At Katy, Fisher helped lead the Tigers to an undefeated 2015 state championship and No. 1 national ranking. He totaled 250 tackles, eight sacks and eight forced fumbles in three years on varsity. He was a three-star recruit coming out of high school and ultimately signed with Northwestern, where he was an Associated Press All-America third-team selection in 2018 and a Butkus-Fitzgerald Linebacker of the Year honoree and All-Big 10 first-team selection in 2020.

Fisher has been training in Chicago since the season ended, tirelessly working on his craft. He has already met with four teams: Philadelphia, Minnesota, New Orleans and the New York Jets. The NFL Draft is April 29-May 1 in Cleveland.

Fisher was pleased with his performance at Northwestern's Pro Day on March 9, where he showed off speed, quickness and athletic ability—stuff he says teams may have initially seen as weaknesses in the scouting report—in front of all 32 NFL teams.

He knows he has what it takes to play in the NFL.

"Just my overall instincts and nose for the football," said Fisher, who totaled 315 tackles, 20 for loss, three interceptions, nine forced fumbles, eight passes defended and two sacks in four years at Northwestern. "My ability to find the ball and be in the right position to make plays. That's important at the next level, and I have that instinct and football IQ to know what's going on in front of me and behind me, and to understand defense and offense and make plays."

Fisher recently spoke with *The Katy Times* about his time in Katy and the effect being a Tiger had.

**Q: When you were growing up in Katy, was football always a part of your life?**

A: "Geez, I can't remember when it wasn't. I feel like I was just born into it, watching my older brothers play and my dad played. It was just part of the family. It was what we did. I felt like I was brought into that world from a very young age, and I haven't looked back since. I love it."

**Q: What was it about playing linebacker that you really embraced?**

A: "Good question. I'd been playing it my whole life, and I had coaches who saw what I couldn't really see. They just saw I was a linebacker from heart. I fell into it. I learned to love and accept it. It's one of the hardest positions, being the quarterback of the defense. We have to stop the run and defend the pass. It's something I fell in love with because it's a leadership position. It's hard-nosed, it's technical and it's also very



KATY TIMES FILE PHOTO

Paddy Fisher was a three-star recruit coming out of Katy High School, where he was an all-state linebacker and led the Tigers to an undefeated state championship and No. 1 national ranking in 2015.

strategic. I have great abilities and great coaches that have helped me along this way, but I think the best part that I've loved is just being a leader."

**Q: You won a 2015 state championship on a Katy team that was just voted one of the 10 greatest in Texas high school football history. What do you remember about that team and how special, especially, that defense was?**

A: "I remember everybody was bought in. Everyone was just so invested on getting back to the state championship and winning. The two years prior, we lost to Cedar Hill, and we made it very, very evident that we were going to go back and win. It started in the offseason, a certain attitude that you could feel in the air and in the walls of the building that we were going to go, and we were going to win. That was months and months before the actual championship game in December."

**Q: Coach (Gary) Joseph always talks about how that team was player-led, with a great group of senior leaders. What do you remember about leading a team to an undefeated state title and finishing No. 1 in the nation?**

A: "Coach Joseph hit it right on the nose. It was player-led. The coaches didn't really have to get on anybody or discipline anybody. The standard was set from the players. That was another piece that made it so special. We just had great leaders in leadership positions that were extremely invested, and everybody bought in. The coaches never had to intervene."

**Q: What translates from what you learned and experienced playing Katy High School football to the next level and even beyond?**

A: "Specifically, I got to college and I was like, 'Wow, I've been doing this for the last three years.'

It wasn't a tough transition. There were definitely some things I had to transition through and had to pick up and learn along the way, but I look back on my time at Katy and, football-speaking, things I carry with me are how to play the game from a technical standpoint and from a strategic standpoint, game-planning. The (Katy) coaches work their tails off and they operate like it's a college program. That translates, because college programs try to emulate NFL organizations. Off the field, I learned and grew so much, like how to overcome adversity, how to hold myself with high character and to a high standard. I learned how to fail, and how to hold success and keep the success going. One of my biggest memories is persevering through hardships. Those offseasons at Katy in the mat room and running on the track are not easy. You learn all the things you have to learn in college, and me and my teammates were fortunate to learn

those things at a very young age while we were in high school."

**Q: Do you have a favorite memory that stands out at Katy?**

A: "It's got to be the state championship we won our senior year. We lost our sophomore and junior years. Freshman year when we won, I was moved up for the playoffs to help on the scout team for six weeks, so I don't really count that for me. But losing our sophomore and junior years, and going back and winning our senior year, it was the pinnacle of my career there. To see us overcome so much adversity, I think that meant the most."

**Q: What's the plan for you over the next month until the draft?**

A: "It's training. Training, training, training. This is also the time when we'll meet with teams. We'll set up Zoom calls, talking football. Other than that, it's staying in shape and getting my mind right."

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