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THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 2022

Thiele announces mayoral candidacy

Harris elects not to seek the position

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

Dusty Thiele, the former Katy City Council member, announced his can-

didacy for Katy mayor Tuesday.

Thiele hopes to succeed incumbent Mayor Bill Hastings, who last month announced he would not seek a second term in office, choosing instead to retire and focus on his family.

In a statement announcing his candidacy, Thiele said it was an exciting time for the city as it focuses on updating its various plans, including a

mobility plan totaling about \$33 million approved by the Katy City Council Monday.

"I also want to ensure the ongoing work of drainage and flood mitigation improvements, updates to aging infrastructure and the management of growth while continuing to offer high quality city services," Thiele said.

Thiele, who works in insurance, has

been a Katy resident since 1991. He has served on the council twice. Former Mayor Don Elder Jr. appointed Thiele to fill an unexpired term for a Ward B council seat. More recently, Hastings appointed Thiele to fill an unexpired term for a Ward A council seat.

Thiele is chairman for the City of

See **MAYOR**, page A3



DUSTY THIELE
Candidate for mayor

County raises COVID threat level to red as number of cases rises

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

In response to a growing number of COVID-19 cases, Harris County Commissioners Court agreed to purchase up to 65,000 rapid antigen COVID-19 test kits for \$1.8 million. It also approved a \$41.5 million agreement with Angel Staffing for medical staffing services.

These actions, taken in emergency session Tuesday, follow Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo's raising the declaration on Monday that Harris County's COVID-19 threat level be raised again to Level I, red, the most



LINA HIDALGO
Harris County Judge

See **COVID**, page A3

Katy ISD hiring as it faces staffing shortage caused by COVID-19

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

The Katy Independent School District has sent a letter to parents and staff acknowledging both staffing shortages and a growing number of COVID-19 cases as school resumed Jan. 4.

In the letter, Superintendent Ken Gregorski said the shortage involves over 200 absences due to illness and another 250 vacancies. Gregorski said the hardest hit employee groups are bus drivers, custodians,



KEN GREGORSKI
Katy ISD
Superintendent

See **SCHOOLS**, page A3



A map of the road bond projects to be covered by bonds approved for issuance by the Katy City Council Monday.

City approves issuance of \$26 million in road bonds

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

The Katy City Council Monday approved the issuance of \$26 million worth of bonds to be used in road reconstruction projects around the city.

David Kasper, a city engineer who is also a principal at ARKK Engineers, told the council that the bonds would support four projects on the overall mobility plan. The projects are intended to provide drainage, mobility, and traffic improvements, he said.

Katy-Hockley Road expansion

Kasper said the widening of Katy-Hockley Road from Morton

Road to Clay Road involves expanding from a two-lane road to a four-lane concrete roadway with storm sewers.

Estimated cost is \$7.7 million.

Morton Road expansion

Kasper said the widening of Morton Road from Katy-Hockley Road to Pitts Road involves expanding a two-lane road to a four-lane undivided road. The project includes a replacement of the bridge crossing the Cane Island branch of Buffalo Bayou.

Estimated cost is \$7.7 million.

Pederson Road expansion

Kasper said the widening of Pederson Road from Interstate 10 to U.S. 90 involves expanding from a

two-lane road to a four-lane concrete roadway with storm sewers.

Estimated cost is \$4.2 million.

Pitts and Morton Road intersection

Kasper said the Pitts Road at Morton Road intersection involves realigning Pitts Road at Morton Road to align the new Pitts Road and Cane Island with the existing Pitts Road north of Morton Road. He said the work involves a new concrete boulevard pavement, traffic signal, and proposed storm system sewer.

"Right now, the two roads are offset, if you've been there recently," Kasper said. "We're going to realign

See **BONDS**, page A3

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State plans to expand U.S. 90, other area roads

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

While funding for it hasn't been settled, the Texas Department of Transportation hopes to expand U.S. 90 between Brookshire and Katy, officials said in a Jan. 6 briefing.

Sue Theiss, director for advanced project development for the Texas Department of Transportation, and Catherine McCreight, senior transportation planner, spoke at the briefing, which took place at the Tru by Hilton Katy Houston West, 200 Ernestes Road. The Katy Area Chamber of Commerce hosted the briefing.

Presently, U.S. 90 has one lane in each direction, with eight-foot shoulders and an open and closed drainage system. But with growing commercial development between Brookshire and Katy, the roadway has become more dangerous because it must accommodate a growing amount of traffic.

Theiss said the U.S. 90 expansion would run 10 miles from I-10 in Brookshire west to where it intersects with FM 1463 in Katy. The proposed

design calls for two new travel lanes, a raised median, and a shared use path. It also calls for dedicated turn lanes at intersections, and would convert the open drainage ditches to a closed storm sewer system.

Another public hearing is expected later this spring, after which officials will prepare responses to public feedback and make other decisions on how best to move ahead. Theiss said the project has no start date because the funding has not been settled.

The U.S. 90 expansion project is one of several being planned for the Katy area. The department plans to expand State Highway 99 between I-10 and FM 1093 this fall. The length of this project is approximately 5.9 miles. The project calls for adding one travel lane in each direction, modifying ramps in several locations along the highway, and adding right turn lanes at major intersections, Theiss said.

The department plans to expand I-10 between FM 359 and Mason Road in late 2023. The length of this project

See **ROADS**, page A3



Catherine McCreight, senior transportation planner for the Texas Department of Transportation, speaks at a Jan. 6 briefing hosted by the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce.

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Maud Marks Library opens Imagineering Gallery

Maud Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen, opened its Maker Imagineering Gallery program Jan. 7.

The Innovation Lab is a maker technology lab where the people can innovate, make and collaborate using myriad of materials, machines, and technology, including 3-D printing. The Innovation Lab is open to small businesses as well as individuals.

Katy ISD Preview Nights offer inside look into career & technical courses

Katy Independent School District students interested in enrolling and learning about career and technical courses will have the opportunity to attend upcoming preview night events hosted by Miller Career & Technology Center.

Due to large attendance in past years, the center will offer two opportunities to visit the facility.

Preview night for students in grades 9-11, and their parents, will be from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Jan. 31.

Preview night for students in junior high school, and their parents, will be from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Feb. 22.

Kelly Kirila, the center's principal, said the center serves as a central site for specialized career and technical courses.

"Our mission is to develop college and career-ready students through engaging real-world experiences," Kirila said.

The center will offer over 30 courses during the 2022-2023 school year. Courses cover business, industry, public service, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), as well as a new construction trades course.

For more information, visit the website at bit.ly/3qdCTFD.



Akhila Bhat, right, Maud Marks Library branch manager, cuts the ribbon for the library's new Innovation Lab. Assisting is Linda Stevens (left), Harris County Public Library Division Director for Programs, Partnerships, and Outreach.

is the title sponsor. Presenting partners include Independent Bank Mortgage, the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce, State Farm Insurance, and the Future Farmers of America.

To register, visit the website at bit.ly/3fcstzy.

Katy Junior High Theater to perform one act play

The Katy Junior High School Theater is performing a one-act play, *The Yellow Boat*.

The play will begin at 6 p.m. Feb. 4 and 6 p.m. Feb. 11. The Katy Junior High cast will perform the Feb. 4 play. The One Act Play cast will perform the Feb. 11 show.

The show lasts approximately 40 minutes.

Fulshear-Katy Area Chamber president completes organization management program

Don McCoy, Fulshear-Katy Chamber of Commerce president, has graduated from the Institute of Organization Management.

The institute is the professional development program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. The recognition signifies the McCoy's completion of 96 hours of course instruction in nonprofit management. In addition, individuals can earn credit towards the Certified Chamber Executive or Certified Association Executive certifications.

The chamber said nearly 1,000 individuals attend the institute annually.

"Institute graduates are recognized across the country as leaders in their industries and organizations," Raymond P. Towle, the chamber foundation's vice president of Institute for Organization Management. "These individuals have the knowledge, skills, and dedication necessary to achieve professional and organizational success in the dynamic association and chamber industries."

— CONTRIBUTED REPORTS

Katy Area Chamber of Commerce to host Texas Chili Cook-Off

The Katy Area Chamber is preparing to host its Texas Chili Cook-Off next month.

The event benefits the Katy ISD Future Farmers of America. It is set for 4-7 p.m. Feb. 11 at 814 West Ave.

Registration is \$150 and space

is available for 22 teams.

Local celebrity judges include Shannen Tune, who appeared in season 21 of the television show *Chopped*; Cutter Brewer, who ap-

peared in season 5 of *MasterChef*; and Ken Gregorski, Katy Independent School District superintendent.

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CLUES ACROSS

- Requests
- Calendar month
- Invests in little enterprises
- Bird sound
- S. American plant cultivated for tubers
- Car
- Bullfighter
- Hill (Celtic)
- Strong criticism
- Detector
- When you hope to get there
- Having the skill to do something
- Legendary MLB broadcaster
- Vulcanite
- C. Asian mountain range
- In a way, healed
- Midway between east and southeast
- Small appendages of insects
- ___ Greene, "Bonanza" actor
- A place to bathe
- Postal worker accessory
- Classical music
- A way of wrecking
- Terminator
- You eat three a day
- Pointed end of a pen
- NATO official (abbr.)
- Genus of clams
- Boxing's "G.O.A.T."
- A colorless, odorless gas used as fuel
- Covered thinly with gold paint
- Bachelor of Laws
- Red fluorescent dye
- Engineering group
- Female sibling
- Adjacent

CLUES DOWN

- What a thespian does
- Footwear
- Adjust spacing between
- Witnesses
- Who shows excessive fondness
- Distinct form of a plant
- National capital
- Hunting expedition
- Related to medulla oblongata
- European country
- Cola
- Excluded from use or mention
- Speak
- Bloodshot
- Make better
- Keyboard key
- Type of degree
- Paddle
- Peacock network
- Not young
- Baseball stat
- One's grandmother
- Breakfast food
- Bathroom features
- Disease-causing bacterium
- NY ballplayer
- Got up
- Prophet
- Part of the mouth
- Unnatural
- Acronym for brain science study
- Three are famous
- Languages spoken in Patagonia
- Freedom from difficulty
- Widely used OS
- Many people pay it

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

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Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

"Although I have been honored by all the phone calls and offers of support, I have decided I will not be a candidate for mayor in 2022. I will continue to give my utmost effort on city council and serve the term to which I was elected. We have a tremendous amount of work to do on flood control, mobility projects, parks and improving city services.



CHRIS HARRIS
Katy Council Member-at-Large and Mayor Pro Tem

The bottom line is that I enjoy representing you on city council, my work serving in other civic organizations and time with family. Thank you for supporting me and my family in this decision."

—Council Member-at-Large Chris Harris

MAYOR

from page A1

Katy Convention and Tourism Bureau Board and sits on the City of Katy Zoning Board. He has served both positions for almost 10 years. Thiele was selected to the city's committee to vet developers for the Katy Boardwalk District, and he also serves on the Village of Katy Development District Board. Along with many years of serving the City of Katy, Thiele is an active member of the Rotary Club of Katy.

The mayor's position is the only municipal office on the ballot in the May election. Term of office is three years.

Thiele's decision comes after Chris Harris, council member-at-large and mayor pro tem, said Friday he would not seek the mayoralty, preferring to both remain in his current role and focus on his other community responsibilities.

Harris works for the U.S. Department of Justice. He was first elected to the council in 2018, defeating local businessman and former council member Larry Gore. Harris was reelected without opposition in 2020.

Hastings appointed Harris mayor pro tem after Hastings was elected mayor in 2019. Harris was recently elected to the Katy Prairie Conservancy and is active in the West I-10 Chamber of Commerce.

"Right now, I'm just enjoying serving on the council and the other organizations to help out the community," Harris said.

Harris said he had no reservations about his ability to do the job.

"I would give all my effort to do the job, and that's part of what the discussion was," Harris said. "I know my personality is to give 110% and I know I would do that."

Harris did not rule out a possible future race for mayor—the next election would be in 2025.

"There's no telling what will happen in the future," Harris said. "Forever is a long time."

Harris described his decision not to seek the mayoralty as very difficult, but said while he felt sadness about not making the race, he felt at peace with his decision.

"Ever since I heard that Mayor Hastings wasn't running, I just debated it in my head back and forth, what was the right timing," Harris said. "I've prayed about it. I've spoken to my pastor about it. I had been going back and forth about it because I always wanted to serve in that capacity. When I was sitting down with my family and we were talking about things, we decided right now was not good timing to commit for running for mayor, which is a full-time responsibility."

Asked to describe the qualities Katy needs from the mayor, Harris said he or she must have a vision for the city.

"They are the ones that work with the council," Harris said. "They need to oversee the administrator in carrying out the vision. The mayor is the vision maker and works with the council to refine it as a strategic plan and guide that the administrator and staff can carry out."

The filing deadline is Feb. 18. If a current council member were to file, the city would likely hold a special election on that date for that seat.

SCHOOLS

from page A1

food service employees and skilled trades.

"Our teams have made minor adjustments to bus service, menu options, and campus maintenance schedules when needed," Gregorski said. "And, yes we are experiencing shortages among our teaching personnel, though, we continue to mitigate this matter to ensure the quality of instruction for our students remains uncompromised."

The district last August adopted a return to school plan that includes a five-stage range of severity. Under this plan, Stage 5, prevention, is the best scenario. Stage 1, district closure, is the worst-case scenario. In his letter, Gregorski said the district was at Stage 3, modified operations.

Stage 3 recommends all staff and students wear masks when indoors, on buses, and at indoor after-school events. The plan said large group indoor events may not occur during an instructional day. Officials can reschedule those events when conditions improve.

Gregorski said officials meet daily to identify immediate needs and make needed adjustments.

"I understand this is a difficult time,

though I truly believe that the way we get through these challenges is by working together, and demonstrating patience, grace and understanding," Gregorski said.

As of Jan. 7, the district said it had 1,718 active cases. Of these, 1,197 cases are students, and 521 are faculty or staff.

The letter comes as the district announced that it is hiring staff.

The district will host its annual Certified Teacher Job Fair on March 26 at the Leonard Merrell Center, 6301 S. Stadium Lane.

At the fair, elementary campus leadership will meet interested candidates between 8:30-11:30 a.m., and secondary personnel between 1-4 p.m.

Candidates interested in any Katy ISD position may apply at bit.ly/ApplyKatyISD.

"From educating our students, keeping our campuses clean and safe, and providing transportation to and from school, these men and women are essential to the success of our school district," Brian Schuss, chief human resources officer, said. "Katy ISD offers competitive compensation and benefits packages to those interested in joining our team."

BONDS

from page A1

those and signalize that intersection."

Estimated cost is \$2.4 million.

Bond issuance cost is \$1.1 million.

The council's approval means the bonds can be sold. Each individual project must be authorized, with design phase and bids. The authority and the council must both approve the design and bid before construction begins.

Kasper briefly described some other projects that are not associated with the bond and would be paid for by cash. They include:

- Extending Boardwalk Drive to Katy-Fort Bend Road, for \$2.4 million.
- Extending Prairie Parkway from the

Katy Boardwalk to Kingsland Drive, for \$1.9 million.

- Widening 1st Street from Bartlett Road to Avenue D and replacing the 1st Street bridge, planned for 2022-23, \$2.7 million.

- Adding a second boulevard lane on Cane Island Parkway from Swift to Franz Road, planned for 2023, for \$1.9 million.

- Adding a second boulevard lane on Pitts Road from Cane Island Parkway to Morton Road, planned for 2024, for \$1.7 million.

Kasper said the total of the nine projects and the bond issuance costs was \$33.5 million.

ROADS

from page A1

is approximately 13 miles. The project calls for adding two managed lanes and two general-purpose lanes between FM 359 and where U.S. 90 becomes Katy Mills Boulevard. The project also calls for extending the frontage roads from Peterson Road to U.S. 90/Katy Mills Boulevard. Construction is expected to begin in 2023.

While the Katy area is growing west towards Brookshire, it is also growing north. One project north of

the city is the expansion of FM 529 from State Highway 99 to FM 362. This particular project kicked off in 2018. A public meeting is set for early 2022, and construction expected to begin in late 2025.

Department officials are also working on a comprehensive concept called

REAL (for regional express access lanes). The concept behind REAL is for the establishment of hub centers around the Houston area. Each hub center would have access to various modes of transportation, and a commuter could choose his or her best option to reach a given destination.

McCreight said for the Katy area, an idea under consideration is to establish hub centers at Katy Mills Mall, in Brookshire, and a spot in the industrial corridor between the two cities. In this way, commuters who work at one of the industrial plants in the corridor can more easily get to work.

KATY AREA EDC JANUARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING



Featuring guest speaker

PATRICK JANKOWSKI

Greater Houston Partnership Senior Vice President of Research

Join us on Tuesday, January 18th, as Greater Houston Partnership Senior Vice President of Research Patrick Jankowski shares his insights into the direction Houston's economy is headed this year.

The outlook for the U.S. economy in '22 remains upbeat. It won't boom as it did last year, but growth will remain strong. Too many factors align to support continued expansion. U.S. growth may slow somewhat early in the year as businesses and consumers dealing with a fifth wave of the pandemic. But once that's behind us, growth should resume. What does all this mean for Houston? It depends upon where you live and where you work.

When:

Tuesday, January 18 from 8 a.m.- 9:30 a.m.
(Networking from 8-8:30 a.m.)

Where:

Embassy Suites by Hilton Houston West - Katy
16435 Katy Fwy, Houston, TX 77094

Presenters:

Matt Stoops, LJA Engineering:

2022 Katy Area Development Map Overview

Patrick Jankowski, Greater Houston Partnership:
2022 Greater Houston Regional Outlook

Registration required – contact Vanessa Wheelless at vwheelless@katyedc.org for more details.



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Tim Davis is a member of *Syndicated Columnists*, a national organization committed to a fully transparent approach to safe money strategies for retirement.

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Katy will keep on truckin': A humorous take

The number one question people ask me is, "Tim, you powerful and mighty predictor of the future (okay, I added that part), how will the real estate market perform next year and into the foreseeable future?"

Quick Answer: Awesome.

Most financial indicators point to the mathematical improbability of Katy's real estate decline. For your education purposes, and because I must turn in an article every month, let's review these indicators here.

1. Mom, I'm moving out

The millennials consciously or unconsciously stepped up to home ownership slower than previous generations. However, the single largest surviving generation; over 72 million strong, are between 25 and 40 years of age. Prime home buying years. As younger millennials stretch for their first home, older millennials trade-up for more space.

2. My home is my castle

In the time of COVID, people found themselves trapped in their homes. Homeowners traded up, upgraded, or simply placed more value on their homes. People watched more movies at home, vacationed in place and dined in their own kitchens.

Also, as employees transitioned from office to home office, prices of homes soared. Most estimated put home price increases in Houston between 10% and 15% and some sought-after neighborhoods increased even more.

3. Running from the 'Rona

Because of the coronavirus, some condominium and apartment dwellers opted for more separation from their neighbors, and transitioned to single family homes. Few communities benefitted more from this situation than Katy.

4. California, here I come (scratch that—Texas, here I come)

According to an Oct. 20, 2021, article by Sofia Gonzalez in Houstonia Magazine,



TIM SOJKA

SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

690,000 Californians moved to Texas in the last decade. New Yorkers also find the Houston area, and the opportunity to own a home, appealing. Texas now boasts the second-largest population of any state. Also, Texas ranks as the fifth fastest growing state.

5. The best marketed school district in Houstatropolis

The Katy Independent School District remains an amazing school district, boasting two of the top five high schools in the area according to a recent Houston Business Journal article. Katy's parent participation, a key indicator to a school districts success also remains strong. Katy's marketing logo KA+Y stands as the strongest one-word marketing campaign in the city.

6. The Grand Parkway, I-10 expansion, Westpark Tollway

No city benefits more from recent mobility expansion than Katy. Grand Parkway intersects I-10 and the Westpark Tollway in Katy. Traffic expansion and population growth patterns predict the Houston metroplexes' continued push west into Katy.

Can the market still tank? Sure, I guess, if a hurricane hit (for the record Hurricane Harvey devastated Houston, and hurt many people, however prices increased). A national crisis could precipitate a drop. However, Katy real estate is primed to continue to make a strong run.

Timothy Sojka acts as the leader of the See TIM Sell Team, at Keller William Premier Realty. His team has sold over 2,000 homes. Tim is a frequent guest writer and speaker, radio and TV analyst, and the author of Amazon's #1 Political Thriller Payback Jack.



A REALLY STUPID HILL TO DIE ON

"Don't Look Up!" is a documentary masquerading as satire

We yawn as we drift toward doom. The news is relentless, for those who deign to pay attention.

For instance, scientists discovered last month that a massive (and, until now, stable) ice shelf at the bottom of the globe is rapidly crumbling, with serious consequences for us all: "The rapid transformation of the Arctic and Antarctic creates ripple effects all over the planet. Sea levels will rise, weather patterns will shift and ecosystems will be altered. Unless humanity acts swiftly to curb emissions, scientists say, the same forces that have destabilized the poles will wreak havoc on the rest of the globe."

The havoc is here already. Unprecedented tornadoes destroy entire Kentucky towns, unprecedented wildfires destroy Denver suburbs, the sea routinely runs wild in the streets of Miami, New York City subways drown in floodwater...it's just life in the 21st century.

According to one report about last week's Colorado conflagrations, "heat and dryness associated with global warming are major reasons for the increasing prevalence of bigger and stronger fires, as rainfall patterns have been disrupted, snow melts earlier and meadows and forests are scorched into kindling."

And yet, film critics and armchair curmudgeons are whining that the Netflix satirical film *Don't Look Up!*—a bitter attack on climate change deniers—is too "heavy-handed," too "broad," too "angry," a veritable "sledgehammer" at the expense of subtlety. I watched



DICK POLMAN

SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

the film during the holiday doldrums—like many of you in semi-lockdown mode, I was bingeing TV—and I frankly can't fathom those complaints.

Because the same indictment could be leveled against Dr. Strangelove (on orders from a general named Jack D. Ripper, a gung-ho Texan rides an A-bomb), and against Network (a lunatic anchorman is assassinated on the air because his ratings went bad). Heck, you could say the same thing about Jonathan Swift, the 18th-century satirist who suggested, in his treatise entitled "A Modest Proposal," that poverty in Ireland would be cured if only the impoverished Irish families would agree to fatten their children and sell them as food to the English landowners. He even suggested some yummy recipes.

Spoiler alert: Nobody thought that Swift was literally serious. Satire, by definition, uses "humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices,"—and, in case you haven't noticed, rampant stupidity currently reigns in our benighted disunion. Witness the latest deluge of lies on social media, with keyboard loons insisting, despite all scientific evidence to the contrary, that the Greenland ice sheet has not been losing billions of metric tons of ice each year.

In "Don't Look Up!," a killer

comet is hurtling toward earth—there's incontrovertible scientific proof—but the morons on social media still call it a hoax. A male astronomer gets a lot of air time only because the viewers think he's hunky, while his female assistant gets canceled by the Twitter haters because she's deemed too "shrill." Meanwhile, a MAGA-type president and her dimwit chief of staff (her son, naturally) worry that the comet will sink her poll ratings. An Elon Musk-type billionaire thinks there's money to be made from the comet, brainless followers chant that the comet will "create jobs," and in no time a sizeable chunk of the doomed populace is refusing to look up, wearing buttons that feature an arrow pointing down.

And finally, when it's too late to do anything, Leonardo DeCaprio's astronomer says plaintively, "We had it all, didn't we?"

This is the fractured and fool-infested America we know all too well. If anything, the film is a documentary masquerading as a satire—a metaphor for life as we know it, with tens of millions of people (mostly Republicans and other Trump chumps) still spewing, circulating, and swallowing COVID-19 lies, adamantly refusing to look up.

Anyone who thinks "Don't Look Up!" lacks subtlety needs only to look around and behold what mass stupidity has wrought.

Dick Polman, a veteran national political columnist based in Philadelphia and a Writer in Residence at the University of Pennsylvania, writes at DickPolman.net. Email him at dickpolman7@gmail.com.

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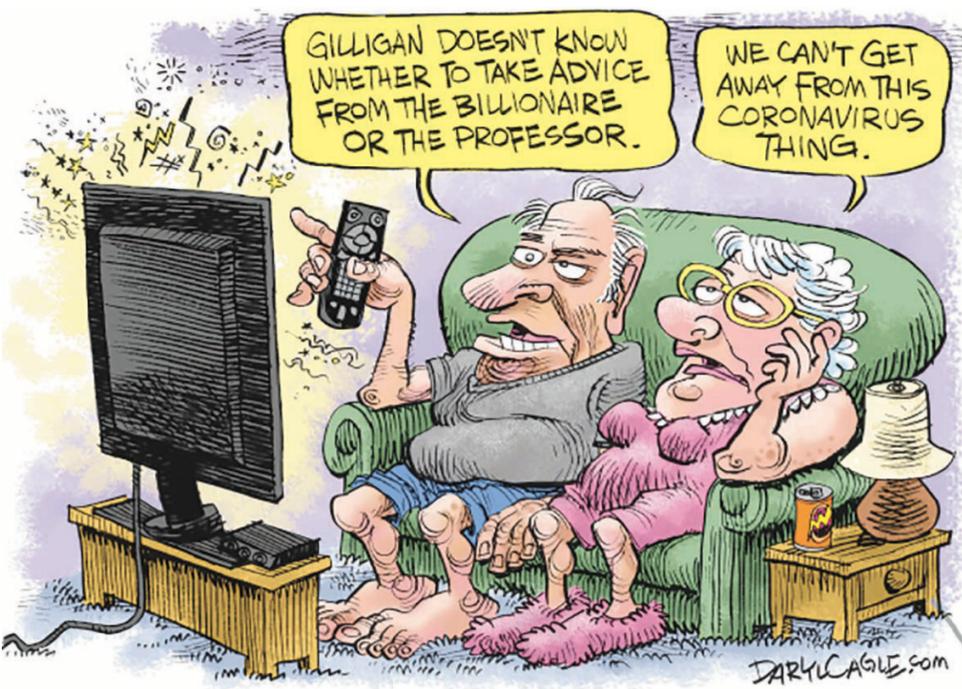
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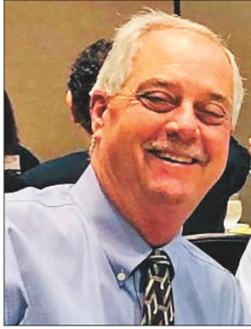
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Rusty Landers, age 66, of Beeville, passed away peacefully in his sleep on Jan 6, 2022, after living a blessed and wonderful life.

Rusty was born on October 26, 1955, to Rufus and Carvis Landers in Beeville, TX and graduated from AC Jones High School. He was married to Sheryl Lightsey in 1976 for 27 years, having 3 sons, Justin Lee (1977), Kyle Hunter (1979) and Trey Lynn (1980).

As a child, he became very good at golf and held the course record and club championship in Beeville for many years.

As a young man, he could often be found in the field hunting doves with his buddies or in the blind searching for the next monster buck. As he got older, he would tell you he wasn't as angry with the animals anymore. The truth is, he was dedicated to his sons'



RUSSELL (RUSTY) LYNN LANDERS
1955-2022

development and being a father. Time just didn't permit for a lot of hunting.

He was actively involved in his kids activities, often coaching their baseball and basketball teams. He enjoyed dragging them along to the golf course when he could and was also actively involved in many

aspects of the community along the way. He served as president of the little league in Beeville, Committee member on Western Week, and a volunteer for the Katy Tiger Scramble.

He spent his life raising his family and working in a profession he loved, which was sales. He started a business in sporting goods and did that until the economy tanked. Then He and Sheryl moved their family to Katy for work. Rusty was a people person, always enjoying the time with others, often connecting with them over a meal or on the golf course. Many of his customers and colleagues became lifelong friends.

Rusty was a great cook, even created a family cookbook. He loved having huge Thanksgiving and Christmas family gatherings each year, helping with the prime rib and or smoking barbecue throughout the year. He

enjoyed family Sunday steak night by the pool in the summers with his wife, Betty Longacre of 9 years. Rusty also enjoyed going to Aggie football games and was an avid attendee of Katy High School football games, for many years never missing a game.

He is survived by sons Justin, his wife Julie (Marhofer) of Katy; Hunter and his wife Alexandra (Sindelar) of Buffalo. Trey and his wife Krystal (Grissom) of Mesquite; six grandchildren, Tori, Riley, Reagan, Jack, Jace and Rigley.

A memorial service will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Friday January 14, 2022, at Church of the King (1507 Katy Flewellen Rd, Katy, TX 77494), with Pastor Randy Beck.

In lieu of flowers, the family has designated that donations be made to Waypoint Community Church in Richmond, Texas.

Fort Bend County offers grant funding to assist in family violence prevention

Fort Bend County is inviting area nonprofit service providers to sign up for the Family Protection Grant to help support survivors of domestic violence and their children.

Grants are available of up to \$40,730 for 2022. The grant funds are made possible by the \$15 family protection fee that the Fort Bend District Clerk's office collects when someone files a suit for dissolution of a marriage. The Fort Bend Commissioners Court adopted it under state law.

The law enables district clerks to provide funding to a nonprofit organization that provides services for family violence and child abuse prevention. It also provides services for intervention, family strengthening, mental health, counseling, legal, and marriage preservation services to families that are at risk of experiencing or that have experienced family violence or the abuse or neglect of a child.

"With the help of our nonprofits, victims of domestic violence and their children can get the support and assistance they need to have a better life," Fort Bend County Judge KP George said. "We must work together to put an end to the cycle of violence. The partnerships with the nonprofit community will provide us with the tools we need to support the needs of survivors and their children."

The deadline to apply for the grant is Jan. 31. For more information and to apply for the grant, visit the website at bit.ly/3zQKahU.

Iliana Arie Velez was born on April 3, 2002 in Houston, Texas to Jose Joel Velez and Dimitrula Lemonudas. Iliana passed away on Monday, January 3, 2022, in Hayes County at the age of nineteen.

Iliana graduated from Mayde Creek High School in 2020. She had great abilities demonstrated in high school as an athlete where she loved playing basketball and running track. She really was talented in many ways, as exhibited in playing the piano and expressing herself in dance. Iliana was a light in her family's life and her beautiful spirit brought true joy to both her family and friends. One of her greatest joys was playing and spend-



ILLIANA ARIE VELEZ
2002-2022

ing time with her little sister, Soraya. She was a lifetime native Houstonian and was a student at Texas State University in San Marcos,

Texas. She was pursuing a dual degree in the study of Architecture and Interior Design. She was creative and excelled in both areas of study.

She is survived by her loving family; parents, Jose "Joel" Velez and mother Trula Velez both of Houston, Texas; sister, Soraya Velez of Houston, Texas; grandmother, Yolanda Rivera of Adjuntas of Puerto Rico; grandmother, Anita Lemonudas of Katy, Texas; great grandfather, Candido Velez of Adjuntas of Puerto Rico. Iliana will be missed by her beloved cat Shady and her much loved dog Benji. There are numerous extended family and friends that will dearly miss Iliana.

The family received friends from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 9, 2022 at Schmidt Funeral Home Grand Parkway, in Katy. Funeral services were held at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, January 10, 2022, at River Pointe Church in Richmond, with Rev. Terrace Clayton and Rev. Bob Page officiating. Interment in Sealy City Cemetery.

Donations in the name of Iliana Arie Velez may be given to the charity of your choice.

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

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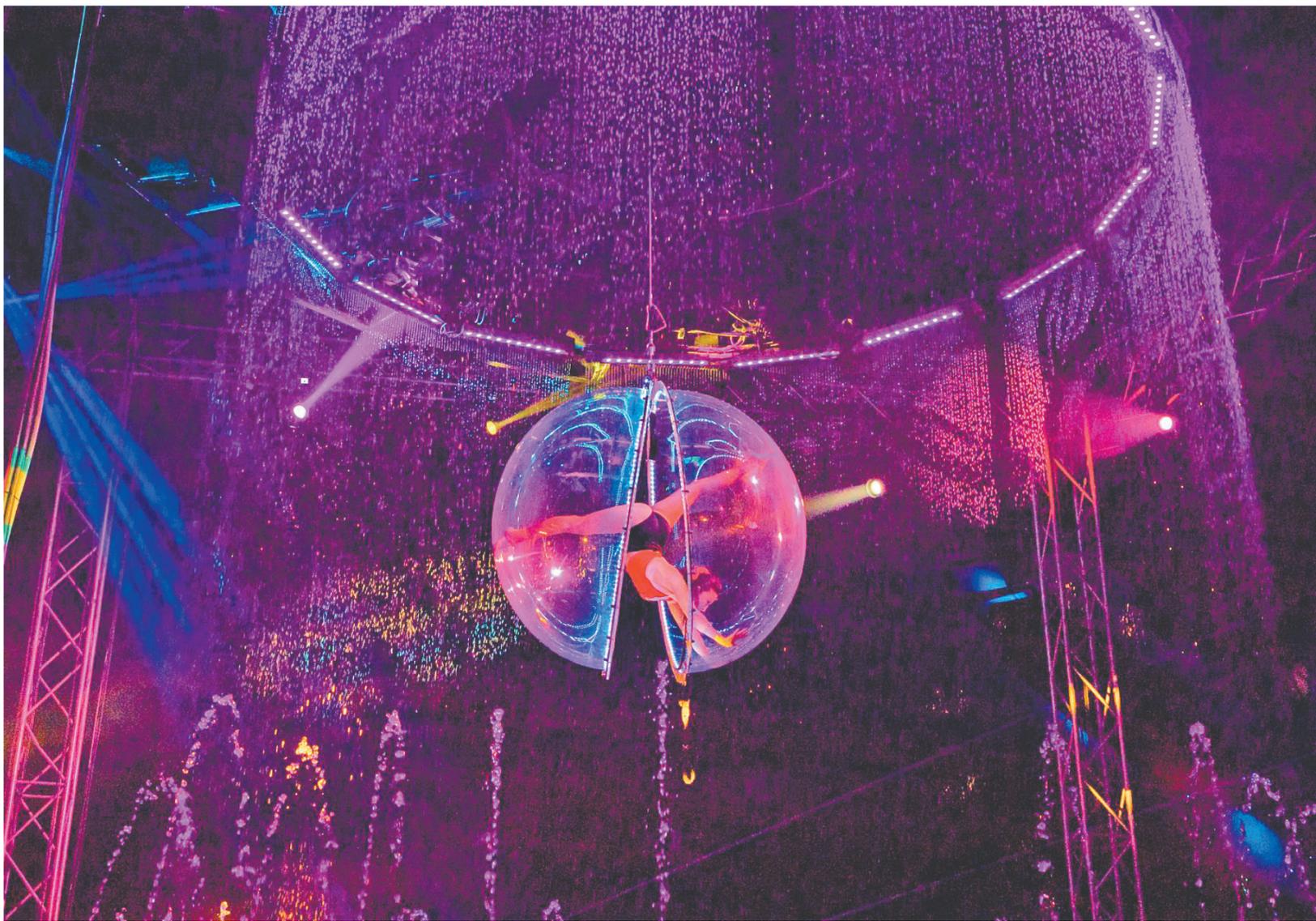
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CIRQUE ITALIA PHOTO

A contortion bubble is among the attractions at Cirque Italia.

Cirque Italia returning to Katy Jan. 20

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

The Cirque Italia water circus is returning to Katy this month, featuring a 1950s theme complete with hula skirts, leather jackets, and rock and roll from that period.

Shows run from January 20-30 at the Katy Mills Mall parking lot.

Like a traditional circus, Cirque Italia features circus acts—aerial acts, juggling, and the like—that are performed in a tent.

But that's where the similarity ends, as a Cirque Italia performance involves a 35,000-gallon water stage where the lid lifts up and a digital water machine enables addition of colors, lights, logos, and words to enhance the

showmanship of the experience. Nobody gets wet.

"It's nothing you've ever seen before," Cirque Italia spokesperson Sarah Keeler said. "It will keep you on the edge of your seat the entire time."

The show itself began in 2012 and now has four units, each of which has between 100-150 people. The silver unit has usually

performed in Katy and is the original unit. The gold unit, which will be performing in Katy this year, opened in 2017. The Paranormal unit opened in 2018. The Alcatraz unit opened in 2021.

Each unit has the same concept for performing, but each has different acts and themes, Keeler said.

"The gold unit hasn't been in

Katy for quite some time," Keeler said. "Normally, the silver unit has performed there."

Tickets range in price from \$10-50. Cirque Italia offers one free child admission with every full priced paying adult ticket in levels 2 or 3. For more information and to purchase tickets, call 941-704-8572 or visit the web site at cirqueitalia.com/tickets.

Katy musician Will Carter will play Friday at No Label Brewery

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
NEWS EDITOR

Katy musician Will Carter is celebrating his 35th birthday this week. He's celebrating by inviting everyone to hear him perform at 7 p.m. Friday at No Label Brewery, 5351 1st St.

"It's a big night for us," Carter said. "We had a great turnout for our last show."

Carter's new album, *How Ya Know*, is produced through his own label. He's making his mark in the Texas country music genre. Last year, the Texas Country Music Association nominated him for its Male Artist of the Year honors. He's received several other nominations as well.

"Bragging rights, if nothing else," Carter said.

Carter's music is available from every digital retailer. Yet he said the best way to hear his music is to come to one of his shows.

"That's the best part of it," Carter said. "My favorite part of the whole thing is performing and getting to hang out with people. We encourage people to come and hang out with us."

Carter returns to the Katy area as he can and has performed at the Katy Rice Festival, among other area venues.

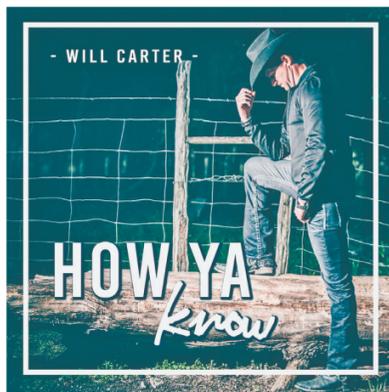
"It's cool to do anything in your hometown," Carter said.

Carter has strong Katy ties. He's a Katy High graduate, class of 2005, and played defensive back for the Tigers football team. Gary Joseph, now the team's head coach, was Carter's position coach then.

"He was my direct supervisor or drill sergeant or whatever you want to call it," Carter said. "My dad was 6-foot-4, 250 pounds. I'm the oldest of four, and Dad was convinced that I'd grow big like he was. My mother is 5-foot-3, 90 pounds. I didn't grow up like Dad expected, but I have good balance and agility."

Carter began writing songs during his high school days. He said he tends to get his ideas from everyday events, such as visiting the grocery store or seeing a sign somewhere. He gets what he calls an "aha" moment, and makes a note to himself. He later sets a time where he takes those notes, and then develop the story, words, and chords to a song.

"You can't force it," Carter said. "Sitting



WILL CARTER

How Ya Know is Katy musician Will Carter's latest album.

down and forcing it doesn't work for me. I don't think you can force creativity."

While still at Katy, Carter also began performing as an opening act for The Emotions. He said he was their front man for about a year, and he learned how to put on a high-energy show.

From there, it was on to Texas A&M University, where he continued to write and sing when he wasn't pursuing his education.

"Katy was the most perfect place for what I was walking into at A&M," Carter said. "The school spirit is like no other at Katy. It's the same thing at A&M. It's over the top. It made for a pretty seamless transition."

While Carter's passion is his music, it is only a part of his professional portfolio. He owns a commercial construction company and said most of his company's projects have been in The Woodlands. He's also made a change in his personal life. He got married last year.

Carter said managing both his careers comes down to having good team.

"I'm surrounded by people who are good at what they do," Carter said. "I'm very blessed in that regard, that I've been able to surround myself with good people."

Technology is also important, Carter said.

"With a laptop and a phone, you can do pretty much anything you need to do," Carter said.

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Paetow returns home champions

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Things still hadn't set in for CJ Dumas as he walked into Legacy Stadium on Wednesday to a roaring crowd.

The quarterback was about to celebrate a state championship, but still had a hard time believing it had happened.

"It really hasn't sunk in," Dumas said. "I walked in here and there was a big crowd up top and everyone was happy and it was crazy, because it's still just sinking in for me."

Katy ISD held a rally Wednesday to celebrate the Panthers' first ever state championship in football, which the team won last month against College Station.

The Panthers players took the opportunity to sink everything in and enjoy their accomplishment.

For the seniors, it's their last hurrah at the home stadium.

"I walked in and there was a crowd there and the crowd just started clapping and stuff," Dumas said. "It kind of felt like I was walking in for gameday one more time. It was just great to be able to have this one last thing for us and to go out here with my team. The fans we have here are so great and it was just a great opportunity."

It only took five years for Paetow to become state champions and only took four years of varsity play. The entire team bought into head coach BJ Gotte's

See **PANTHERS**, page B4



TYLER TYRE PHOTOS

CJ Dumas breaks through the run through sign during Wednesday's Paetow State Championship celebration at Legacy Stadium. The UIL 2021 state championship trophy was on display during Wednesday's Paetow State Championship celebration at Legacy Stadium.



WEEK OF JAN. 15

SCORES & SCHEDULES

BOYS BASKETBALL

- Seven Lakes vs. Cinco Ranch, 7 p.m.
- Jordan at Rudder, 6:30 p.m.
- Morton Ranch vs. Katy, 7 p.m.
- Tompkins vs. Mayde Creek, 7 p.m.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Friday

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

BOYS SOCCER

Thursday

- Cinco Ranch vs. Round Rock, 12:40 p.m.
- Taylor vs. Laredo LBJ, 6 p.m. at Lake Travis
- Tompkins vs. San Antonio Johnson, 6 p.m. at Lake Travis

Friday

- Cinco Ranch vs. Permian, 8 a.m.
- Paetow vs. Jordan, 7:30 p.m.
- Katy at Fort Bend Austin
- Morton Ranch at Aldine Davis
- Seven Lakes vs. Spring Woods, 7:30 p.m. at Legacy Stadium
- Taylor vs. San Antonio Johnson, 7:30 p.m. at Lake Travis
- Tompkins at Lake Travis, 8 p.m.

Saturday

- Cinco Ranch vs. Eastview, 2:30 p.m.
- Tompkins vs. Stony Point, noon at Lake Travis

GIRLS SOCCER

- Jordan vs. Brazoswood, 6 p.m.
- Katy vs. Heights, 6 p.m.
- Mayde Creek vs. Fort Bend Bush, 2 p.m.
- Morton Ranch vs. Fulshear, 4 p.m.
- Paetow vs. Jersey Village, 4 p.m.
- Seven Lakes vs. Bellaire, 2 p.m.

Friday

- Jordan vs. Rudder, 6:30 p.m.

Seven Lakes tops Tompkins to take district lead

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Justice Carlton has taken a step forward in her sophomore year.

The Seven Lakes forward has grown her game in her second year of varsity play, and her growth has benefited the Spartans.

"She really has taken her game to another level," said Seven Lakes head coach Angela Spurlock. "She can play facing the basket and with her back to the basket last year and she did that for us. No one really wants to be a post and have their back to the basket all the time, but she honors that position and as

her game grows and as we work on her game and she works on it outside of school it's starting to show."

It certainly showed on Friday, as she scored the Spartans' first 13 points against Tompkins and finished with 40 points as

See **SEVEN LAKES**, page B6



Ryghé Lyons goes up for a dunk attempt during Saturday's Southland Tip-Off Final between Southeastern Louisiana University and Nicholls State University at the Merrell Center.

TYLER TYRE

SLU tops Nicholls State to win Southland Tip-Off

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Behind 20 points from Ryan Burkhardt and 19 points and five assists from Keon Clergeot, Southeastern Louisiana University

defeated Nicholls State 77-72 in the first Southland Conference Tip-Off on Saturday at the Merrell Center.

The Lions used a fast start in the first half and rode that to the victory, answering every run that Nicholls gave them on the way to

the win, giving the team some big momentum heading into conference play.

Southeastern jumped out to a seven point lead early and although Nicholls made

See **SOUTHLAND**, page B6



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Texans comeback falls short to Titans in season finale

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Final 28-25. 4-13

The Texans had one of their strongest second halves of the entire 2021-22 season in the second half against the Titans on Sunday.

Down three scores at halftime, the Texans mounted a second half comeback, trimming the Titans' lead to three points two different times behind a terrific half of football from Davis Mills.

"Over the course of the season, I feel like I've gotten better and better and better and more comfortable out there," Mills said. "That's the big thing is being comfortable in the offense and being able to play fast. I feel like I did that, especially in the second half today. But a lot of guys on our team played really well today as well."

But that comeback wasn't enough, as the Texans fell 28-25 to the Titans, giving Tennessee the No. 1 seed in the AFC and sending the Texans to the offseason with a 4-13 record.

"We knew what we were in for today, the Titans are a very good football team," said Texans head coach David Culley. "This football team has always played hard, we haven't always played smart but we've played hard and today I think we played hard and smart. Penalties were down, we just had a tough start in the first half."

Mills finished the game with 301 yards passing and three touchdowns, 240 of those yards and all three touchdowns came in the second half, once the Texans committed to throwing the ball and going with a more up-tempo pace.

The Texans gained two first downs on their opening drive, taking the ball to midfield before being forced to punt. After the Houston defense forced a 3-and-out on the Titans first drive, the Texans got the ball back at the Titans 45 but were unable to get anything out of it.

The Titans settled in from there and on their second drive get four first downs but failed to score when Randy Bullock missed a 42-yard field goal, but the Texans once again failed to do anything with it.

Tennessee finally made Houston pay on its first drive of the second quarter, as they went 94 yards on 11 plays and scored a touchdown on a five-yard pass from Ryan Tannehill to Anthony Firkser to take the lead. The Titans added on to it on their next drive, going nine plays on 85 yards and making things a two-possession game with two minutes left in the half on a 14-yard pass from Tannehill to Brown. The Texans tried to run a two-minute offense but left plenty of time on the clock for the Titans who added a third score on a four-yard pass from Tannehill to Nicholas Westbrook-Ikhine.

The Texans had just 70 yards of offense in the first half, leading to the need for a second half comeback.

"We just felt like at halftime we needed to switch up some things," Mills said. "We started the second half fast and decided that we were going to do some tempo and we were able to come out, get up on the ball and make the defense declare to what they were going to do and then we could call the play after that. Obviously, that worked for us."

After averaging just over one yard per carry in the first half, the Texans committed to the pass in the second half and it worked. After a 3-and-out from the Titans to start the second half, Houston put together an eight-play drive and drove 72 yards, scoring on a 28-yard



Houston Texans quarterback Davis Mills (10) during an NFL game between the Texans and the Titans on Jan. 9, 2022 in Houston, Texas. The Titans won, 28-25.

flea flicker pass from Davis Mills to Chris Moore to make things a two-possession game. The Texans trimmed the lead again on a 31 yard field goal from Ka'imi Fairbairn and made things a three point game early in the fourth after scoring on a 7-yard pass from Mills to Danny Amendola and getting a two-point conversion from the same duo to cap off a 8-play 82-yard drive.

"He's coming along, and he's a great quarterback," Amendola said. "He's going to be a good player here for a long time. He can spin it and he's getting all the operation down and he's just a great teammate and I'm rooting for him."

The Titans finally answered back with their first points of the second half on a 3-yard pass from Tannehill to Julio Jones, ending, ending an eight play, 75-yard drive with a score and going up by 10 with seven minutes remaining.

The Texans responded, going 75 yards in three minutes and making it a three-point game again on a 26-yard touchdown from Mills to Amendola. But the Titans were able to gain three first downs and ice the game from there.

Culley said he expects to return as head coach for a second season and would also like to keep his entire staff in place for next year, including offensive coordinator Tim Kelly.

"I expect everybody to be back and I expect us to get better in everything that we're doing," Culley said. "Not just the run game, but our pass game, get better on defense and our special teams. I look forward to going through that this offseason, self-evaluating our-

Right, Houston Texans wide receiver Nico Collins (12) gestures after making a catch for a first down during an NFL game between the Texans and the Titans on Jan. 9, 2022 in Houston, Texas. Below, Houston Texans wide receiver Danny Amendola (89) brings in a 26-yard touchdown pass in the fourth quarter.

elves, figuring out what we need to do to get better and moving forward."

Mills continued to show promise at quarterback and Culley is confident in him leading the team as the starter next season.

"I feel good about him. I got a question going into halftime about making a change and I was like 'no we're not making a change, he's our quarterback,'" Culley said. "I feel very good about that and obviously the way he played in the second half and how the offense played with him directing it, it just goes to show you that he's good enough to do what we need to get done here and win football games."



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Tompkins Kuckler, Sriniketh named MVP's of 19-6A all district tennis team

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Tompkins' Charlie Kuchler and Ananya Sriniketh were named the District 19-6A MVP's after helping lead the Falcons to a repeat as District champs and reaching the regional quarterfinals for the second straight season.

Both Tompkins and Seven Lakes made it to the third round of the playoffs and it showed in the awards, as Tompkins got both MVP's and the first lines consisted of Tompkins and Seven Lakes players.

Taylor and Cinco Ranch were both well represented in the awards after making the playoffs as three and four seeds and Cinco's Colin Harvey was named coach of the year in the district.

Kuchler and Patrick Chen from Tompkins were the first line in boys doubles while Kuchler was also the first line in boys singles.

Anna Bouleau and Liska Knight from Seven Lakes were the first line in girls doubles while Sriniketh took home the first line in girls singles. Seven Lakes' Sofia Portillo and Aidan Nguyen were named to the first line in mixed singles.

Following is the full District 19-6A tennis team.

2021 19-6A

ALL-DISTRICT TEAM TENNIS AWARDS

- **Boys District MVP** - Charlie Kuchler (Tompkins)
- **Girls District MVP** - Ananya Sriniketh (Tompkins)
- **Coach of the Year** - Colin Harvey (Cinco Ranch)

Boys Doubles

Line 1: 1st Team - Charlie Kuchler/Patrick Chen (Tompkins)

2nd Team - Brian Ho/Tanav Kalra (SL)

HM - Jonathan Lin/Jason Lee (Taylor) & Jiawei Zhang/Aaryan Sagar (CR)

Line 2: 1st Team - Mihir Amte/Arjun Kumar (Tompkins)

2nd Team - Tyler Zou/Karan Sura (SL)

HM - Carter Celaya/Sebastian Benchulch (Taylor)

Line 3: 1st Team - Rodolfo Vela/Ryan Shavandi (SL)

2nd Team - Abhijay Setlur/Gavin Gibson (Tompkins)

HM - Gabriel Gil/Eric Huang (Taylor)

Boys Singles

Line 1: 1st Team - Charlie Kuchler (Tompkins)

2nd Team - Brian Ho (SL) & Wilson Salazar (MC)

Line 2: 1st Team - Mihir Amte (Tompkins)

2nd Team - Carter Celaya (Taylor)

HM - Tyler Zou (SL)

Line 3: 1st Team - Patrick Chen (Tompkins)

2nd Team - Karan Sura (SL)

HM - Sebastian Benchulch (Taylor)

Line 4: 1st Team - Arjun Kumar (Tompkins)

2nd Team - Tanav Kalra (SL)

HM - Jason Lee (Taylor) & Hudson Rhodes (K)

Line 5: 1st Team - Abhijay Setlur (Tompkins)

2nd Team - Aiden Nguyen (SL)

HM - Gabriel Gil (Taylor)

Line 6: 1st Team - Gavin Gibson (Tompkins)

2nd Team - Lourenco Martins (SL)

HM - Kenneth Yuan (Taylor)

Girls Doubles

Line 1: 1st Team - Anna Bouleau/Liska Knight (SL)

2nd Team - Ananya Sriniketh/Nathalia Ciliberto (Tompkins)

HM - Ally Lin/Jennifer Wang (Taylor) & Kayla Wan/Anshu Lakshman (CR)

Line 2: 1st Team - Soleil Namunyola/Annie Wang (SL)

2nd Team - Natalia Kha/Gabriella Salyards (Tompkins)

HM - Andrea Borges/Oorjita Vijayakumar (Taylor)

Line 3: 1st Team - Alisha Madhuvarshi/Nicole Tapia (SL)

2nd Team - Abigail Diermeier/Ashley Wang (Taylor)

HM - Anabelen Pons/Luisa Alamo (CR)

Girls Singles

Line 1: 1st Team - Ananya Sriniketh (Tompkins)

2nd Team - Ally Lin (Taylor)

HM - Anna Bouleau (SL)

Line 2: 1st Team - Liska Knight (SL)

2nd Team - Jennifer Wang (Taylor)

HM - Anshu Lakshman (CR)

Line 3: 1st Team - Soleil Namunyola (SL)

2nd Team - Oorjita Vijayakumar (Taylor)

HM - Nathalia Ciliberto (Tompkins)

Line 4: 1st Team - Nicole Tapia (SL)

2nd Team - Natalia Kha (Tompkins)

HM - Andrea Borges (Taylor)

Line 5: 1st Team - Estee Nwana (SL)

2nd Team - Kristina Vasylichuk (Tompkins)

3rd Team - Ashley Wang (Taylor)

Line 6: 1st Team - Annie Wang (SL)

2nd Team - Valery Medina Alvarado (MR)

HM - Luisa Alamo (CR)

Mixed Doubles

1st Team - Sofia Portillo/Aidan Nguyen (SL)

2nd Team - Steven Free/Isabelle Weng (MR)

HM - Dean Chaudhry/Janny Elizalde (CR)

No. 9 Longhorns fall flat in upset loss to Texas Tech

BY ZACH SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

It's been nearly six years since Vic Schaefer lost by 60 points in the NCAA Tournament, but he still remembers was he felt like.

He felt a similar mix of frustration and disappointment on Wednesday.

Texas shot an abysmal 29% from the floor and were outbounded by double digits in a 74-61 loss to Texas Tech in the first Big 12 game of the season at the Frank Erwin Center.

"It was obviously a frustrating loss for us," Schaefer said. "It was really frustrating getting them to listen and do things we wanted them to do. It's nobody's fault but my own. It's part of having a young, immature basketball team. As a coach, you've got to be able to adjust to that."

Aliyah Matharu scored a team-high 12 points for the Longhorns, and Audrey Warren added 11 despite sitting for most of the fourth quarter with foul trouble.

The two teams combined for 58 total fouls. The Red Raiders went 34-for-44 from the free-throw line, while the Longhorns finished 12-for-19.

Wednesday was the first win against a Top 10 team for Texas Tech in nine years. Vivian Gray scored 23 points and grabbed seven rebounds for the Red Raiders, and Bre'Amber Scott added 21 points.

"We've been talking to our kids that they belong in the top," Texas Tech head coach Krista Gerlich said. "You just have to have that confidence and belief. Today, every single one of them believed wholeheartedly in what we were trying to do."

Texas didn't have the best opening quarter from an offensive standpoint, scoring just one of its final 10 field goals and finishing with the same amount of field goals made as turnovers (four).

But the Longhorns started the second quarter on an 8-0 run, capped off by a steal from Warren that led to a fast-break 3-pointer from Matharu



Texas Longhorns guard Joanne Allen-Taylor (11) battles Texas Tech Red Raiders guard Vivian Gray (12) for the ball during an NCAA women's basketball game between Texas and Texas Tech on Jan. 5, 2022 in Austin, Texas.

that cut the lead to one possession.

Warren picked up her fourth foul with just over a minute left in the third quarter, and Joanne Allen-Taylor fouled out 30 seconds later. Texas Tech finished the third quarter 15-of-19 from the free-throw line.

The Red Raiders continued to get to the foul line in the fourth quarter, hitting 12 of their 13 free-throw attempts. DeYona Gaston fouled out early in the period, and Warren stayed on the bench with four fouls for most of the quarter.

"I thought we really lacked toughness and discipline tonight," Schaefer said. "We had a lot of whining. That's young kids. This game is about toughness, you've got to be twice as

tough as everybody else."

Texas has a full week off after their scheduled trip to take on No. 13 Baylor on Sunday was postponed due to COVID-19 protocols within the Bears' program. The game will be rescheduled for later this season.

Schaefer said the Longhorns might be looking for a replacement game over the weekend, but as of now are next scheduled to host Kansas in the first of back-to-back home games at 7 p.m. on Jan. 12.

"It's only a wake-up call if you fix it," Schaefer said. "We'll have a few good practices and we'll see what we're made of in practices. Quite frankly, we need some competitiveness and toughness."

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- ▶ Four Seasons Park, Saturday January 15th (10am - 12pm) (Katy Hockley Cut-Off Rd) or register online thru 11:59 PM on January 19th at katyponybaseball.org
- ▶ Tryouts, at Four Seasons Park, (Ages 6-14) Saturday, January 22nd (times assigned)
- ▶ No Tryouts Shetland 4/5
- ▶ No Tryouts Colt (Ages 15-18): *Colt Players will be placed on teams by High School.*
- ▶ Teams Formed / Coaches Meeting: Sunday, January 23rd.
- ▶ Meet The Coaches Night: Thursday, February 10th, 2022. (Time TBD) (Dick's Sporting Goods I-10 & Katy Ft. Bend)

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All games will be played at Four Seasons Park, 4702 Katy-Hockey Cut-Off Road (Just North of Clay Road)

Katy PONY Baseball is a registered non-profit organization dedicated to provide the best youth baseball experience possible.

For more information or details visit www.katyponybaseball.org or call the facility at 281-371-0887

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PHOTOS BY TYLER TYRE

Paetow players run on the field during Wednesday's Paetow State Championship celebration at Legacy Stadium.



A Paetow flag runner, above, waits on the sideline during Wednesday's Paetow State Championship celebration at Legacy Stadium. Right, the Paetow band performs.



PANTHERS

from page B1

'standard of excellence' and it has shown in the meteoric rise of the program.

"They wanted to be great from day one," Gotte said. "That's the thing is you have to have kids that want to be great. Our kids believed in what we were doing, they wanted to be great and they had the confidence and belief in themselves and each other that we would be able to do that. I think that's the difference, our kids, especially our seniors, they didn't

flinch. They believed in each other, they believed in themselves and that's why I think they were able to handle some of the moments they were in."

For Gotte, this was everything he coaches for and he was happy to see the players, coaches and the community celebrating.

"That's the coolest thing for me as a coach at this stage in my career is watching others have excitement over getting to do stuff like this," Gotte said. "This is what

makes it fun for me, seeing the community, the staff and support staff, the kids, student's, everyone. The excitement they get for getting to go through something like this is what makes it worth it."

The seniors have left a legacy of success on the program that won't soon be forgotten. Something that they had strived to do since they were in eighth grade.

"It's so big, knowing that we basically started things out here," said Kentrell Webb. "For us to come

out here in five years and leave our mark and set that standard, it's everything. It paid off and we've set a standard of excellence. That's what we want to keep going on for our young guys."

While the celebration is still going, so is the preparation for next season. Gotte and the rest of the Paetow staff and players can't wait to get back to the grind.

"We've gotten back to work," Gotte said. "There's a process and last season it started in January

2021. People think football season starts in August, it doesn't, it starts in January. So we're in that process now, we're cleaning our stuff, we're going to test at the end of this week and hopefully into next week and then we're going to have a conversation. Our seniors are gone now, the underclassman that were on that team, that's great, you're a part of that, but it's not your legacy. Now what legacy do you want to leave? And from there we just go to work."

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MECHANICAL ENGINEER - Metrologics LLC (Katy, TX) Read and interpret blueprints, technical drawings, or schematics; Develop and test models of alternate designs or processing methods to assess feasibility, sustainability, operating condition effects, potential new applications, or necessity of modification; Research, design, or evaluate mechanical products, equipment, systems or processes to meet requirements. Candidate should have a Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering. 40hrs/wk. Resume: Fred Wenzel, 27027 Westheimer Parkway, Suite 700, Katy, TX 77494.

950 PUBLIC NOTICES

Application has been made with The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for an Off-Premise Beverage Permit by KATT Endeavors, LLC DBA Farm Stores to be located at 3830 N. Mason Road, Katy, TX. Officers of this company are Amy Wise.

950 PUBLIC NOTICES

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a BG Wine and Beer Retailer's Permit / BF Beer Retailer's Off-Premise License by Q & T Food Mart AND to be located at 4111 5TH ST, BROOKSHIRE WALLER, Texas. Officer of said corporation is Quanesha Survillion OWNER/ MANAGER.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTICE:

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin, or an intention or discrimination." Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. The toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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January 6 Puzzle Answers

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900 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Sealed bids, in duplicate, addressed to the City of Katy will be received at Katy City Hall at 901 Avenue C, Katy, TX 77493 until 10:30 a.m. local time, Friday, January 28, 2022 and then publicly opened and read for **STORM WATER PUMP STATION FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT**. Proposals received after closing will be returned unopened.

A NON-MANDATORY pre-bid conference will be held online on Wednesday, January 19th, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. Below is the website and call in information:

Web Application: Microsoft Teams: teams.microsoft.com
Call in: 346-235-0346 Conference ID: 962 704 680

Each PROPOSAL shall be accompanied by a Bid Bond, the "bid security", in an amount not less than five (5) percent 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 date Contract Documents are received by the Contractor. Bid sureties will be returned to all but the three lowest acceptable bidders the day of opening of PROPOSALS, and the remaining bid sureties will be returned after execution of the Contract.

The successful bidder must furnish PERFORMANCE and PAYMENT BONDS on the forms furnished with the PROPOSAL, in the amount of one hundred percent of the total Contract price, from a surety company acceptable to the Owner.

Plans, specifications and bid documents may be viewed and downloaded free of charge (with the option to purchase hard copies) at the CivCastUSA Website (www.CivCastUSA.com). Reproduction charges will apply according to CivCastUSA rates.

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

Attention is called to the fact that not less than, the federally determined prevailing (Davis-Bacon and Related Acts) wage rate, as issued by the Texas General Land Office - Community Development & Revitalization and contained in the contract documents, must be paid on this project. In addition, the successful bidder must ensure that employees and applicants for employment are not discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual identity, gender identity, or national origin.

The City of Katy is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Section 3 Residents, Minority Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises, Women Business Enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are encouraged to submit bids.

All contractors/subcontractors whose System for Award Management (SAM.gov) registration is not active or that are debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation on federal assistance programs may not undertake any activity in part or in full under this project.

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Annual Report Public Hearing Scheduled January 24, 2022

The Katy Independent School District will conduct a public hearing for the 2020-2021 Annual Report on January 24, 2022. The hearing will be held during the regularly scheduled meeting of the Katy ISD Board of Trustees at 5:00 p.m. in the Katy ISD Administration Building at 6301 South Stadium Lane.

Texas Education Code 39.306 requires each school district's board of trustees to publish an annual report that includes the Texas Academic Performance Report, campus performance objectives, a report of violent or criminal incidents along with prevention and intervention policies, information received from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the district's accreditation status, and the progress towards goals set for early childhood literacy and math proficiency as well as college, career, military readiness.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Skyway Towers, LLC is proposing to construct a 260-foot self-support telecommunications tower at 3500 Porter Road, Katy, Harris County, Texas 77493 (29 49 32.9 N / 95 47 6.7 W). The tower is anticipated to have dual medium intensity obstruction lighting. Interested persons may review the application for this project at www.fcc.gov/asr/ applications and entering Antenna Structure Registration (ASR) Form 854 File Number "A1205715" and may raise environmental concerns about the project by filing a Request for Environmental Review with the Federal Communications Commission. Requests for Environmental Review must be filed within 30 days of the date that notice of the project is published on the FCC's website. The FCC strongly encourages interested parties to file Requests for Environmental Review online at www.fcc.gov/asr/ environmentalrequest. Parties wishing to submit the request by mail may do so by addressing the request to: FCC Requests for Environmental Review, Attn: Ramon Williams, 45 L Street NE, Washington, DC 20554. Public comments regarding potential effects on historic properties may be submitted within 30 days from the date of this publication to: EBI Consulting, c/o Project #6121010449, SNA, 6876 Susquehanna Trail South, York, PA 17403, or via telephone at (757)354-7566.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

ROYAL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT'S State Financial Accountability Rating

Royal Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 6:30 pm, Monday, January 24, 2022 in the Board Room at Royal Administration Building 3714 FM 359 North Pattison, TX

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss Royal Independent School District's rating on the state's financial accountability system.

COMPETITIVE BIDDING NOTICE INVITATION TO BID

The County of Waller proposes to purchase the following items on competitive bid:

- Mowing
- Bridge & Guardrail Improvements
- Gasoline & Diesel Fuels

Bids will be received by the Waller County Auditor, Alan Younts, until 2:00 p.m., January 18, 2022 in the office of County Auditor at 836 Austin Street, Suite 221, Hempstead, Texas 77445. Bids shall be opened by Commissioners' Court at 9:00 a.m. January 19, 2022, in the Waller County Courtroom, Hempstead, Texas 77445. The Court shall award the contract on January 26, 2022, at 9:00 a.m., in the Waller County Courtroom, during open session of Commissioners' Court to the responsible bidder who submits the lowest and best bid.

A contract shall not be awarded to a bidder who is not the lowest dollar bidder meeting specifications unless, before the award, each lower bidder is given notice of the proposed award, and is given an opportunity to appear before the Commissioners' Court and present evidence concerning the lower bidder's responsibility.

Bid award shall be based on either unit price or lump sum as indicated on the BID SHEET.

Method of payment will be by check upon completion and acceptance of the work or the fulfillment of the purchase obligation to the County.

Bid Forms may be downloaded from the Waller County web site at www.co.waller.tx.us.

INVITATION TO BIDDERS

Sealed Electronic Bids addressed to Fort Bend-Waller Counties MUD will be received electronically until 10:00 a.m., Friday January 21st, 2022 and then publicly opened and read for furnishing all plant, labor, material and equipment and performing all work required for the construction of: **Katy Court Detention in Katy Court Phase I**.

The bids will only be received electronically bid through CivcastUSA. The electronic bids will be publicly opened and read via conference call. Physical bids will not be accepted.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, large gatherings are not recommended. Bids will be publicly read aloud at the time bids are due via teleconference call. The number for this call is: 1-832-856-3756. Enter access code 663757253# when prompted.

The project is located within the future Katy Court Development in Harris County, TX. It is within the boundaries of Fort Bend - Waller Counties M.U.D. No. 2 and is in the City of Katy. It is approximately 900 feet south of the Clay Rd and Katy Hockley Cut Off Rd intersection. The project is located in Harris County, Key Map No. 444-G, 444-H, 444-L, and 444-M.

Each bid must be accompanied by a certified or cashier's check (the "bid security") drawn on a responsible bank located in the State of Texas, for at least two percent (2%) of the total amount of the bid and made payable to Owner only. Bid Bonds for five percent (5%) of the maximum total bid amount are acceptable for construction contracts over \$250,000. The successful bidder shall forfeit bid security to Owner as liquidated damages if it shall fail or refuse to enter into a proper contract for the Work, including failure or refusal to furnish the Performance and Maintenance Bond and the Payment Bond required by the Contract. Bid security will be returned to all but the three lowest bidders within three days after the Bid Opening Time, and the second and third lowest bidders may at that time substitute a bid bond by a qualified surety for the certified or cashier's check. Remaining bid security will be returned after execution of the Contract.

Plans, specifications, and bidding documents are available at www.civcastusa.com.

A NON-MANDATORY pre-bid conference will be held on Friday, January 14th, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Local Time, via teleconference call. The number for this call is: 1-832-856-3756. Enter access code 640582424# when prompted.

The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any or all irregularities. No bid may be withdrawn until the expiration of 60 days from the date bids are open.

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Justice Carlton is fouled while going up for a shot during a District 19-6A game between Seven Lakes and Tompkins on Friday at the Tompkins gym.
TYLER TYRE

SEVEN LAKES

from page B1

Seven Lakes remained unbeaten in district 19-6A play with a 74-52 victory over the Falcons at the Tompkins gym.

"I worked over the summer and I lost some weight, worked with my team and playing any chance I get, and I feel way better than I did last year."

Along with scoring the team's first 13 points, Carlton finished with 19 of the team's 22 in the first quarter, helping the Spartans build a seven-point lead. Seven Lakes built it even further in the second quarter as its lead grew to 41-24 as Summer Halphen chipped in nine points in the half as well.

"That start was amazing," Halphen said. "I look up to Justice, even though I may be older I look

up to her and the way she plays. Her confidence towards me and towards the team just brings my confidence up too."

Tompkins made runs at the starts of both the third and fourth quarters, but Seven Lakes was able to bounce back from both and continue to build its lead.

"Tompkins is an outstanding basketball team," Spurlock said. "They have an outstanding coach and staff, they have great teams and they learn really fast and put in really strict and good gameplans. So, we knew coming into the night that we had to play well, we worked really hard coming off our bye. Justice's start was critical, anytime you have a player like that it's critical they start fast and the

whole team rallied around that."

The win was a big one for Seven Lakes, which was tied atop the district standings with Tompkins. Tompkins is the reigning district champion and had won 30 straight district games coming into the contest.

"It was extremely important to get this win," Carlton said. "Last year, losing to them two times, coming back this year and having a performance like this, it just shows how much we've improved as a team."

Seven Lakes expects to compete for a district title this year, and Friday's was a big step in that direction for the Spartans.

"We have to keep practicing every single day like we have

been doing," Halphen said. "We have to keep not letting ourselves get down about anything, keep our routines strong and just stay strong in everything we do. If we do that we're going to be great."

District 19-6A

Seven Lakes 74, Tompkins 52
Points: (SL) Justice Carlton 40, Summer Halphen 18, KK Tucker 9, Aliyah Atiqi 4, Shea McFarland 3; (T) Macy Spencer 19, Gabby Panter 13, Brooklyn Nash 7, Fiyin Adeleye 6, Riri DeLeon 3, Kennedy Bourque 2;

Halftime: Seven Lakes 41-24; 3-pointers (SL) Halphen 4, McFarland; (T) Spencer 3, Panter, DeLeon; Records: Seven Lakes 24-4, 4-0; Tompkins 26-2, 4-1;

SOUTHLAND

from page B1

it a four point game shortly thereafter, the Lions had an answer as Burkhardt scored eight straight points for SLU to increase the lead back to eight.

Nicholls again came back, this time making it a two point game heading into halftime courtesy of a 3-pointer at the buzzer from Pierce Spencer. But Southeastern Louisiana again came out and increased its lead early in the third quarter.

After Devante Carter tied things at 34 to start the half, the Lions steadily increased their lead going up by seven points after another Burkhardt three.

The teams went back and forth from there, but Southeastern was able to keep their lead on the way to the victory.

Burkhardt and Gus Okafor were named to the all-tournament team for the Lions in the preview event for the conference tournament which will come in March.

Southeastern came into the tournament as underdogs but did face an undermanned team as Nicholls was without leading scorer Ty Gordon in the matchup.

The Lions will start conference play off against Northwestern State, while Nicholls State will play next against New Orleans.

Southland Tip-Off Final

Southeastern Louisiana University 77, Nicholls State 72

Points: (SLU) Ryan Burkhardt 20, Keon Clergeot 19, Gus Okafor 15, Jalyn Hinton 14, Roscoe Eastmond 6, Gage Larvadain 2, Antonio Gordon 1; (N) Latrell Jones 23, Devante Carter 18, Ryghe Lyons 13, Pierce Spencer 9, Jalen White 3, Mekhi Collins 2, Tyrease Terrell 2, Caleb Huffman 2;

Halftime: Southeastern Louisiana 34-32; 3-pointers: (SLU) Burkhardt 6, Clergeot 3, Okafor 2; (N) Jones 3, Lyons 2, Spencer 2, White

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Jan 22 & 29 - **SATURDAY**: 1:30pm, 4:30pm, & 7:30pm
Jan 23 & 30 - **SUNDAY**: 1:30pm & 4:30pm
Jan 24 - **MONDAY**: 7:30pm
Jan 26 - **WEDNESDAY**: 7:30pm

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