

Happy New Year!

South Belt-Ellington Leader

Celebrating our 40th year of covering the South Belt community

Voice of Community-Minded People since 1976

Thursday, January 7, 2016

Email: mynews@southbeltleader.com

www.southbeltleader.com

Vol. 40, No. 48

Gas leaks in Sageglen

Several Sageglen residents were told to remain indoors for roughly one hour Tuesday, Jan. 5, after a worker from Eurotech caused a gas leak while making a street repair on Sageking. Precinct 2 deputies kept residents at bay while a crew from CenterPoint repaired the leak.

A Night with Pam Tebow

Lutheran South Academy will present *Faith and Family: A Night with Pam Tebow* will be held at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church Friday, Jan. 8. She is the mother of Heisman Trophy winner Tim Tebow, as well as a author and speaker on Christian parenting. She will present on *Raising Christian Kids In An UnChristian World*. Tebow's message is geared toward parents/adults. Tables of eight are \$800 which includes a 6:45 p.m. meet-and-greet with Pam Tebow. Individual tickets are \$35 each and are available through Lutheran South Academy's website at www.lutheransouth.org. Limited seating available, and tickets only available online.

Sagemont Civic Club meets

The Sagemont Civic Club will hold its first meeting of the new year on Monday, Jan. 11, at the Sagemont Park Community Center on Hughes Road from 7 until 8:30 p.m.

Highland Meadow meets

The monthly meeting of the Highland Meadow HOA will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 13, at 7 p.m. at the Parker Williams Library, 10851 Scarsdale Blvd. Homeowners are encouraged to attend. Questions prior to the meeting may be directed to Michael Quast with C.I.A. Services Inc. at 713-981-9000 or at customer@ciaservices.com.

Kirkmont Sec 1 to meet

Kirkmont Sec 1 homeowners meeting will be Wednesday, Jan. 13, at 7:30 p.m. at the Kirkmont Utility Building on Blackhawk Road. Topics discussed will include unfinished business regarding the special assessment tabled at the annual meeting in December. Special assessments for Capital Improvements, Section 4, page 3, reads: "the Association may levy, in any assessment year, a special assessment applicable to that year only for the purpose of defraying the cost of any construction, reconstruction, repair or replacement of a capital improvement upon the common area provided that any such assessment shall have the assent of two-thirds of the votes of each class of members who are voting in person or by proxy at a meeting duly called for this purpose."

Genealogy group meets

The Parker Williams Genealogy Group will meet Jan. 18, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the library at Scarsdale and Beamer. This group meets the first and third Mondays to discuss genealogy research. Meetings are free and open to anyone interested in tracing family history.

Lady Longhorns host bingo

The Dobbie Lady Longhorns Booster Club will hold a bingo fundraiser Friday, Jan. 22. Doors open at 5 p.m. Bingo games will run from 6 to 10 p.m. Tickets can be purchased through a Dobbie soccer player or a booster club member. The event serves as one of the primary fundraisers to help cover costs associated with the Dobbie soccer program throughout the school year. For more information, email jfdgirlssoccer@gmail.com.

PW library events set

The following events are scheduled for the Parker Williams Library, 10851 Scarsdale Blvd. Computer classes offered in January include: Internet Basics on Jan. 13, Files & Folders on Jan. 20, and Email Basics on Jan. 27. All classes will start at 2:30 p.m. and end by 4 p.m. Registration is required. On Thursday, Jan. 7, at 4 p.m., Movie Madness will present *Inside Out*, rated PG. Movie Time for Adults on Friday, Jan. 8, at 2 p.m. will feature *Witness for the Prosecution*, made in 1956, starring Charles Laughton. Wednesdays - Preschool Story Time, 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.; Thursdays - Toddler Story Time, 10:30 a.m.; Saturdays - Vietnamese Storytime. Classes are at 10 a.m., 11:15 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. For more information on Vietnamese programs, speak with Loc Bui. For more information, call 281-484-2036.

Winter Wonderland Jan. 30

The Frozen Winter Wonderland festival will be held at Asbury United Methodist Church, 5354 Space Center Blvd. Saturday, Jan. 30, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free, and snacks and raffle tickets will be available. Activities include snow, games, crafts, and a visit from the Snow Queen. For information, call 281-484-4814 or visit www.asbury.cc.

Commissioner El Franco Lee dies at 66

By James Bolen

Longtime Harris County commissioner and steadfast ally to the South Belt community El Franco Lee died unexpectedly from a heart attack while exercising at his home in the Fifth Ward Sunday, Jan. 3. He was 66.

"I don't believe we could have a politician do a better job for us than what he did," said friend and *Leader* publisher Marie Flickinger. "He was fantastic for us."

A native Houstonian, Lee began his political career in 1979 when he was elected state representative for District 142, where he served five years.

In 1985, Lee was elected Precinct 1 commissioner - a position he would hold for seven terms. He was the first African-American to serve on the panel.

A graduate of Wheatley High School, Lee

went on to attend Texas Southern University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science. He completed related course work and postgraduate studies at the TSU School of Public Affairs and the University of Houston.

Despite their eventual close relationship, Flickinger and Lee didn't necessarily start off on good terms.

"When he was first elected (as commissioner), I had supported another candidate," Flickinger re-



El Franco Lee

called. "But we got him out here very early, right after the election, and the first thing we asked him for was a county courthouse annex. We even told him where to buy the property. And that is now where the county courthouse annex is."

The annex, located at the corner of Beamer and Scarsdale, now houses Precinct 2, Place 1 Justice of the Peace Jo Ann Delgado's courthouse, a Precinct 2 constable substation, the Parker Williams Branch Library, a Harris County Clerk's office and a Harris County tax office.

Flickinger said Lee was faithful to all of his constituents, regardless of demographics and party affiliation.

"When he became commissioner, this area was not Democrat; it was white Republican," Flickinger said. "But he worked as hard for this area as any of his other areas."

Other local contributions include the paving and eventual extension of Beamer Road, the Blackhawk hike-and-bike trail and the community center and youth sports fields on Blackhawk

- just to name a few.

Lee additionally played a pivotal role in putting on the annual South Belt Spectacular Cook-off and Fourth of July fireworks display at the area park that bears his name.

While the City of Pearland was opposed to it, Lee was also instrumental in extending Hughes Road, Scarsdale and Dixie Farm Road beyond the South Belt limits.

More recently, Lee was responsible for the ongoing construction of the new 100-acre detention pond located near Beamer and Dixie Farm.

"There's nothing this community needed that he didn't get for us," Flickinger said. "There was never a project I asked him for, for this community, that he didn't get us in the 30-plus years he was here. Little stuff, big stuff - it didn't matter. He came through."

Lee's Street Olympics, a pet project aimed at helping at-risk youth, is now a county-wide program. The commissioner was also active in the

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El Franco Lee remembered



Longtime Harris County commissioner El Franco Lee died Sunday, Jan. 3, after spending more than half his life in public service. Lee is shown above in 2012 receiving the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce's Citizen of the Year award. Lee is pictured with *Leader* publisher Marie Flickinger and Emory Gadd. Photo by David Ellison

Leader remembers highlights of 2015

Another year has passed, and the *Leader* staff would like to take this opportunity to reflect on some of the more significant stories of 2015.

Due to space limitations, the year in review will be continued in the Jan. 14 edition.

Section B includes the sports year in review.

Jan. 8

A South Belt resident was killed in front of his house while watching fireworks on New Year's Eve after being struck in the head by a stray bullet. Javier Suarez Rivera, 43, died at the scene in the 800 block of Eastlake after being hit by what police suspect was celebratory gunfire. Rivera's death, which made nationwide headlines, was ruled a homicide by the medical examiner's office. No immediate arrests were made.

Juan Luis Guardiola, 29, died Dec. 29 after losing control of his motorcycle in the 400 block of Edgebrook.

Jan. 15

A South Belt woman was responsible for reuniting a family with a pair of young French bulldogs that had been taken from their East Houston home by a FedEx delivery man. The story made national headlines after surveillance footage captured the driver in action. South Belt resident Beth Radcliffe found the dogs near the intersection of Kirkville and Sagecanyon and took them to Kirkwood Veterinary Hospital to see if they had been chipped. Aware of the theft, Kirkwood's Dr. John Gregory reached out to the owners, who then picked the puppies up from his office. Radcliffe said she was offered a reward for finding the puppies, which cost \$3,000 each, but she declined to accept. The FedEx driver, who said he was merely getting the animals out of the cold, was suspended.

A former Dobbie student was one of three Houston police officers to abruptly leave the force Monday, Jan. 12, amid an alleged ticket-rigging scandal. Officer Robert Manzanales, a 1986 graduate, took a dishonorable retirement, while fellow officers Gregory Rosa and John Garcia both resigned. Manzanales had been with the department for more than two decades. A fourth officer, Rudolph Farias, committed suicide when the scandal first broke the previous August. Later in November, Manzanales was sentenced on two felony counts to three years deferred adjudication

and 120 hours community service.

Jan. 22

Beverly Hills Intermediate celebrated its 50th anniversary Jan. 16 with a banquet at the area school that was attended by dozens of current and former staff members, students and community members. All four of the campus's surviving principals were in attendance.

An off-duty police officer shot and killed a man Jan. 16 after he allegedly pointed a gun at the officer outside Bombshells Restaurant and Bar on the Gulf Freeway at Fuqua. Police said the victim had been kicked out of the restaurant earlier for fighting with other patrons.

Jan. 29

The Pasadena Independent School District board of trustees approved naming the new Career and Technical High School the Dr. Kirk Lewis Career and Technical High School. Voters approved construction of the \$37.5 million campus, located at Genoa-Red Bluff and Beltway 8, in a 2011 bond election. The campus opened in August of 2014.

Feb. 5

J. Frank Dobie High School announced its Hall of Honor inductees. Distinguished alumni included Bob Mitchell (Class of 1973), president of the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership; Leonard Cherry (Class of 1974), president of Cherry Companies; Randy McEachern (Class of 1974), former University of Texas quarterback; Kevin Sherrington (Class of 1974), sports journalist; and Reed O'Connor (Class of 1983), federal judge on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas. Airman 1st Class Kyle "Pete" Wells (Class of 1979) was honored as a fallen hero. The late Catherine Haney, who served as both a history teacher and Academic Decathlon coach at the school, was honored as a distinguished faculty member. *Leader* publisher Marie Flickinger was honored as a community volunteer.

A home invasion occurred Feb. 4 in the 9900 block of Sagecourt. Police said two armed men went to the house and demanded money and jewelry from a female resident. The woman said she did not recognize either of the crooks but suspected her house was targeted because her family owns a car dealership and likely had cash on hand.

Juveniles arrested on multiple charges

Three juveniles were arrested on multiple charges related to a stolen vehicle Saturday, Jan. 2, following a police chase and manhunt.

The incident began around 6 a.m. when a car was reported stolen from a home in the 10000 block of Nathan's Cove in the Ashley Pointe subdivision. While one Precinct 2 deputy was interviewing the victim, a second deputy spotted the vehicle a few blocks away. The deputy attempted to pull the driver over, but he refused to stop, and a chase ensued. The pursuit traveled east on Dixie Farm, then north on Highway 3, then west on Beltway 8. Deputies reported that one of the vehicle's tires began to smoke around Sabo, then

completely blew out around Beamer, but the suspect continued to drive on the rim.

The car came to a stop at Blackhawk, as the driver attempted to make a U-turn and crashed into a curb. One suspect ran toward the H-E-B, while two other suspects ran toward the Kirkwood subdivision. Two of the suspects were immediately captured, while the third initially alluded authorities. A perimeter was established around the area, and a manhunt involving a Houston police K-9 unit eventually nabbed the remaining suspect. The three teens were charged with unauthorized use of a stolen vehicle, evading arrest, evading on foot and criminal trespassing.

Resident Bill Morgan dies at 64

Longtime South Belt resident Bill Morgan died from a heart attack on his birthday Monday, Dec. 28. He had just turned 64.

Morgan was an active member of the community and was a former board member for the Clear



Bill Morgan

Brook City Municipal Utility District, serving multiple terms.

Morgan was a founding member of the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce and was responsible for doing the organization's legal work pro bono.

Morgan and his wife Terrie resided in Green Tee and were members of First United Methodist Church of Pearland.

The couple have four children - Will, Ann, Tana and Tara.

See related obituary on Page 2A.

Cars crash at Hughes, Beamer



Emergency crews from the Houston Fire Department and the Harris County Precinct 2 Constable's office are shown above responding to a crash at the intersection of Hughes and Beamer Tuesday, Jan. 5. Police said a gray car (not shown) ran the light and struck the black car pictured above. Residents have complained that ongoing construction on Hughes has caused much confusion, increasing the frequency of accidents at the corner. At least three crashes took place this past week at the intersection. Two people (one shown sitting on ground) suffered minor injuries. Photo by Marie Flickinger

Publisher's editorial

New Year starts with great sadness

There are no words that can express the sorrow I felt at recent losses to our community of men who have given so much.

The first was Jack Niday whom we lost late last year. He was so supportive of the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce. The last act of kindness that I know of from Jack was forgiveness of \$25,000+ which was owed by the chamber for the office building for which he had been the contractor and financial backer. He greatly aided St. Luke's Catholic Church with a land purchase and Pasadena Independent School District, to name a few.

The next community member we lost was Bill Morgan who worked on numerous community projects for the less fortunate.

Additionally, Bill was instrumental in getting the South Belt Chamber organized. He did all the organization work free of charge and then worked hard with us to get it off the ground and running as a viable group.

The third death that has caused such great sadness is that of El Franco Lee.

There are no words that I can use to tell our readers the good that this man did for our community. Since he was elected, as the first Harris County African-American county commissioner, he did nothing but good for the South Belt area. When he was elected, the South Belt was approximately 80% Republican and 90% white. Politics did not interfere with his giving South Belt his complete support. There wasn't one thing I asked of him for this area that we did not get including roads, park improvements, the county courthouse annex, the 100 acre retention area currently, under construction and much more. The only project not yet underway is the water park.

That was OK'd by him and is scheduled to go out for bids this month. He always did a fantastic job for South Belt. We will miss him tremendously.

—Marie Flickinger

El Franco Lee



El Franco Lee 1949-2016
Harris County Commissioner
El Franco Lee
January 30, 1949 –
January 3, 2016
Funeral Mass, Thursday,
January 7, 2016
Holy Rosary Catholic Church
at 10 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to Julia C. Hester House and/or Harris County Street Olympics Inc.
Publisher's note: This is the obituary as submitted by the family. (See related story on Page 1A.)

William L.H. Morgan Jr.



William L.H. "Bill" Morgan Jr., 64, former South Belt resident, died Monday, Dec. 28, 2015. He was born on Dec. 28, 1951.

He is preceded in death by his father, William L.H. Morgan Sr., and brother Jay Morgan.

He is survived by his mother, Mayme Morgan; his wife of 23 years, Terrie Morgan; son Will Morgan and wife Lydia; daughters Ann Morgan, Ph.D., Tana Nickens and husband Ben, Tara Harmolin and husband Jason; sister Vickie Smith and husband Ron; grandchildren Mallory, Mason and McKenna Nickens, and Brooklynn Harmolin; and a host of other family and friends.

Morgan graduated from Milby High School in 1970 before attending the University of Houston where he earned his Bachelor of Arts, his CPA and JD.

Morgan lived by the phi-

losophy that it was always better to give than receive, both professionally and personally, whether it was to his community, to his family or to his friends. He served on multiple bank boards, MUD Board, chambers of commerce, and many local service organizations. He was a founding member of Project Joy and Hope, a charity that works to "enhance the quality of life for families and children who live with life-limiting conditions."

Morgan and his wife attended First United Methodist Church of Pearland. He enjoyed great food, leisurely travel, corny jokes and Texas and American history. He was a gifted listener and an entertaining storyteller.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Morgan's honor to Project Joy & Hope at 2319 Burke Rd., Suite B1, Pasadena, TX 77504 or to First United Methodist Church of Pearland.

A memorial service for Morgan was held Saturday, Jan. 2, 2016, at 10 a.m. at First United Methodist Church in Pearland.

Gerald Bob Bates



Gerald Bob Bates, STCM - SS - U.S.N. Ret., 77, died on Thursday, Dec. 31, 2015. He was born on Oct. 30, 1938.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Frank and Bernice Bates, and his son, Gerald Lee Bates.

He is survived by his sister, Renaé Snow; son Glen Edward Bates; daughter Tracy Lynette Howard; adopted daughter Debbie Poole; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and numerous other relatives.

Bates grew up in La Porte, Texas. He was an Eagle Scout. He joined the United States Navy after graduation. He went to boot camp for nine weeks, came home on leave, and married Jennie Gerber on Aug. 16, 1956. He was 17 and Jennie was 18. They were married 59 years.

Bates served 30 years in the U.S. Navy and was on six submarines. When he retired,

he worked at Helton Boat Works and Whitt Marine in Baytown. He then worked with Helping Hands for Sagemont Church, where he and his wife have been members for more than 20 years.

Funeral services will be held Thursday, Jan. 7, 2016, at 11 a.m. at Niday Funeral Home-Beamer.

Francisco Vega Jr.



Francisco Vega Jr., 56, of South Belt, died Tuesday, Dec. 29, 2015, in Houston. He was born Sept. 22, 1959, in Puerto Rico.

Vega was a man of God, a loving husband, great life partner, leader and big hearted. He loved and served his country with pride.

Vega is survived by his wife, Marianne Vega; mother Virginia Vega; mother Amelia Vega and Francesca Vega; brother Hipolito Vega; sister-in-law Maria Vega; countless cousins; two nephews; and one niece.

Funeral services were held in Florida.

Allison David Ehrlich



Allison David Ehrlich, 51, died on Sunday, Dec. 20, 2015. She was born on July 12, 1964.

She is survived by her husband, Jeff; children Madeline, Joseph and Asa; parents Numa and Patty David; sisters and brothers-in-law Annette and Wally Grabbe and Jennifer and Guy Riemenschneider; brothers and sisters-in-law Numa and Molly David, Bert and Daria David, and John and Terri David; father-in-law and mother-in-law Robert and Rose Ehrlich; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law Larry and Rachel Ehrlich, Greg and Michelle Ehrlich and Daryl and Jenise Ehrlich; and many nephews and nieces, cousins and friends.

Ehrlich grew up in a large and very active family. She was about 10 years old when she found the faith in Jesus Christ that she continually displayed. Her family was active in Sagemont Church.

After earning a college degree from the University of Houston, Ehrlich began a teaching career in Houston Independent School District, later moving to FISD where she taught Spanish at the junior high level. She married in 1992 and was blessed with three children.

When cancer began its attack, Ehrlich fought with all her strength and was able to enjoy many activities with family and friends.

The service celebrating Ehrlich's life was held Monday, Dec. 28, 2015, at Sagemont Church. Interment followed at Forest Lawn Cemetery.

Kenneth Riley Mills



Kenneth Riley Mills, 73, of South Belt, died Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2015, surrounded by his family, after a massive heart attack. He was born March 22, 1942, to Riley and Juanita Mills in Henrietta, Texas. He was known for his compassion for others and his ability to never meet a stranger.

Mills graduated from Wichita Falls High School in 1960, and married Carolyn, his high school sweetheart, on Nov. 21, 1961; they recently celebrated their 54th wedding anniversary.

Mills served in the United States Army from 1963 to 1965. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Business from the University of Houston and held a Certified Purchasing Management (CPM) certification. He retired in 2004 from his job with the City of Houston.

Mills was a longtime member of Sagemont Church. He enjoyed spending time with his two grandchildren, including going to the movies with his grandson Evan, and discussing scientific advances with granddaughter Emilie. He took great pride in caring for his family, friends, and grand dogs, as well as his generosity.

Mills is preceded in death by his father, Riley Mills, in 1977, and mother Juanita Mills in 2009.

He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Carolyn Mills; daughters Cynthia Mills and Kelli Mills Vawter and husband Eric Vawter; granddaughter Emilie Vawter; grandson Evan Vawter; brother Jerry Mills and wife Brenda; sister Donna Loggie; and numerous other relatives.

The celebration of life service was officiated by the Rev. Jerry Williams on Dec. 29, 2015, at Niday Funeral Home. Interment followed at Houston National Cemetery.

Trudy Melvin

Trudy Melvin, 86, died on Friday, Dec. 25, 2015. She was a former longtime South



Belt resident.

She was preceded in death by her sister, Joy Beard, and husband "Shorty" Melvin.

Survivors include son Ronald Melvin; daughters Renee and husband Mark Jones and Andrea and husband Greg Goodrich; three grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

The graveside service was held at 11 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 31, 2015, at Houston National Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hope Church, 770 Pineloch Dr. Houston, TX.

Francis C. Petek



Francis C. Petek, 82, died Monday, Dec. 28, 2015. He was a former longtime resident of Beverly Hills subdivision and a member of Sagemont Church.

Petek was born on April 14, 1933, in Buffalo, N.Y. He was raised by his grandparents, Adam and Alice Bremiller of Delevan, N.Y. His siblings were Arlene (Arnold) Dawson, half-brothers Thomas (Debbie) McMahan and James (Betty) McMahan; half-sister Wanda McMahan. Both sisters preceded him in death.

Petek attended Delevan School through the eighth grade. He served in the U.S. Army from April 1953 until he was discharged in April 1955. He then returned to his job at Gould Battery. In 1956, he went to work for Ford Motor Stamping Plant. After several jobs, he worked for Yansick Lumber in Arcade, N.Y. From there, he moved to Houston in November 1977 to work for Hydro-Tech. He then was a semi-truck driver until his retirement.

Petek married Sheila Brundage, daughter of Fran-

cis and Irene Brundage of West Seneca, N.Y., on June 30, 1956. The couple had four children, Cheryl (Robin) Witter, Annette (Bill) Mau, James Petek and Laurie. They have seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Petek was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and suffered many years while his daughter, Laurie, became his major caregiver.

A memorial service at Sagemont Church is planned. In lieu of flowers, memorials can be sent to the Sagemont Living Proof Project.

Patricia "Pat" Helms



Patricia "Pat" Krajcik Helms, 71, died on Oct. 27, 2015, after a long battle with Alzheimer's. She was born on Aug. 3, 1944, to Viola Krajcik Stringfellow in Pasadena, Texas.

She grew up in Genoa, Texas, where she attended Genoa Elementary and graduated from South Houston High School in 1962. She retired from Hewlett Packard.

Helms was preceded in death by her husband, Randy Helms; nephew John Howard Ragan; and his parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles.

Survivors include her daughter, Laurie, and husband Robert Pusey; son Bobby and wife Angie Helms; grandchildren Andrew and Allyson Helms; sister Susan Stringfellow Ragan; cousins Sharon Pavey, Robin Carpenter, Larry Anthony, Sonny Krajcik and Margie Darmond; and two best friends, Sharon Homan and Ken Donihoo.

Helms loved working and being around people. She worked more than 10 years at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo in the Astrodome feed office with Doug Lammond. She enjoyed doing a variety of crafts and enjoyed her plants and flowers. She loved participating in different functions, including her high school reunions, where she loved seeing her classmates and reminiscing on old friends and school days.

Helms' final wish is to be an organ donor to Alzheimer Research. She will be cremated and buried beside her husband, Randy, in Rockwall, Texas.

In My Opinion

Dimicelli appreciates Diaz's police academy

Last fall, I, along with other homeowners in our area and several students from Dobbie HS, began a ten-week class on Citizen's Police Academy (CPA). This was arranged by HC Constable Chris E. Diaz as a way of educating all who live in Pct 2 to know as much about law enforcement and new laws taking hold in 2016, and how we can help. First night was with Harris County Attorney Vince Ryan who talked about new legislation going into effect on Jan. 1, 2016. So many changes were made that our guys in Austin gave one year for law enforcement and courts to get ready.

I mention briefly the subjects we covered: new laws; nuclear, biological and chemical warfare; emergency procedures; Homeland Security; deployment to areas of disaster; drugs, raids on meth houses, human trafficking, physical assault, robbery, homicide, voter information, and MADD.

My neighbor, Mario, and I wish to thank Cindy Vara-Leija as she organized all the speakers for the 10 weeks and was a champion at keeping the meetings moving. She was awesome!! If this is offered in the spring, I encourage all to sign up. I will add that some of the topics will cause sleepless nights. But we live in a world that is not so pleasant sometimes. By becoming educated, we can help those who keep us safe every night.

And THANK YOU..... Constable Chris E. Diaz!!!!!!
Bonnie Dimicelli

Muecke voices thanks for support

Marie,

I want to take this time to wish you and all your family a very Merry Christmas and a very Happy (2016) Healthy New Year.

I also want to once again thank you for all the sport you have given me on the Berry Bayou project. In an earlier email I forwarded an update. Slow but we are making progress and that is what counts. I learned working with governmental agencies, you have to wait for results. What you and Coles Stringer started is now bearing fruit. Thanks again.
Jim Muecke

Garza: Blessed by Christmas drive

I am writing this letter to let everybody who helped make the Christmas Drive at the Southbelt Leader a success and those who donated the food and gifts a BIG THANK YOU. I have been going here for 4 years and it's a true blessing to have such a great community to come together to help the unfortunate with food and gifts for the kids. I will be praying to god to let him know that these people need extra blessings for helping out the people that are less fortunate. THANK YOU so much from the bottom of my heart for making this Christmas Drive available for our community.

Sincerely
Marcella Garza

Cubos: Christmas miracles for families

Dear South Belt Leader,
This year my family and I were recipients of the Christmas Program, and we are so thankful to the South Belt Community.

We fell on hard times this year and Christmas really wasn't looking very well for our family. I am grateful that our community can come together and make miracles happen for families in need. In a world that is quickly changing, it is so nice to live in a community where we can come together and make a difference.

The holidays are meant to be a hap-

py time and I can't thank the community enough for how this helps my family. I may never meet everyone who donated and made the program possible, but my family and I are very thankful.

Thank you So Much,
Claudia Cubos

Turner gives thanks for Christmas gifts

To: The Community
My name is Sharon. I want to thank the community for the blessed Christmas food, and many gifts. I am so thankful to God for so many caring people, with such big hearts. My Christmas will definitely be happier because of your generous giving.

Thank you, thank you, for all you have done.
Sharon Turner

Williams' thankful for Christmas help

Thank you!!!! To south belt leaders, and all the terrific leaders who helped make this Christmas wonderful for all the families....
Love,
The Williams Family

Jackson: Receiving inspires more giving

I would like to send a great big hug to all that contributed to the toy and food drives in our area. They have made it possible for my family to have a "normal" Christmas. Many people do not think about the less fortunate during the holidays as they are tending to their own lives and stresses this time of year. I want to send a heart felt THANK YOU to each and every one of you who have made us feel special. Times have been hard and we can't wait for our turn to give back. My children and I discuss this regularly, esp on our way to the Houston Food Bank, for our monthly volunteer shift. My heart is overflowing with joy, appreciation, and an overall genuine love for my neighbors. Thank you South Belt Leader for putting us all together.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!!
Alicia Jackson

Happy New Year from Rep. Pete Olson

Dear South Belt Leader,

I hope you and your family have enjoyed a wonderful holiday season filled with joy and the blessing of being with family. Nothing reinvigorates the soul more than spending time with those we love and hold most dear. And nothing helps me focus more on the year ahead as we enter the final months of the Obama Administration.

Despite the president's continuing failures and stubborn refusal to recognize the very real threat of Islamic extremism, the courageous men and women of our armed forces are helping to make progress against ISIS and fighting to hold their ground in Afghanistan. We owe them our most heartfelt thanks and prayers.

While I expect 2016 to be another challenging year stopping and opposing the president's efforts to weaken our rights and further his social justice agenda, I know this is also our opportunity to show the American people our contrasting vision of using conservative solutions to strengthen our economy, rebuild our military, and create the kind of growth necessary to help our hard-working middle class families get stable footing again. Our nation is in desperate need of a President who puts Americans, American ideals, and the future of our nation before everything else. Working together, we can help ensure we elect a new, conservative President to help heal our country and stabilize our future. I hope you will join me in that effort!

Happy New Years,
Pete Olson

Free legal advice for veterans Jan. 9

Veterans who need legal advice or legal assistance can visit a free legal clinic scheduled in Pasadena on Saturday, Jan. 9. The clinic will be held at San Jacinto College, 8060 Spencer Highway, from 9 a.m. until noon. Use the Spencer Highway entrance to the campus to attend the legal clinic.

No appointment is necessary. The clinic is a public service of the Pasadena Bar Association and the Houston Bar Foundation's Veterans Legal Initiative.

Any veteran, or spouse of a deceased veteran, can re-

ceive advice and counsel at the clinic from a volunteer attorney in any area of law, including family, wills and probate, consumer, real estate and tax law, as well as disability and veterans benefits.

Veterans who need ongoing legal representation and who qualify for legal aid will be assigned a pro bono attorney through the Houston Volunteer Lawyers to handle their case.

For information, contact the Houston Bar Association at 713-759-1133 or visit www.hbba.org.

Care Partners meet Jan. 15

Interfaith Care Partners Ministry group at St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church, 10727 Hartsook St. (near Alameda Mall), a gathering for persons with Alzheimer's, dementia or memory loss, meets the third Friday of each month from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Gatherings consist of a continental breakfast, arts and crafts, exercises, entertainment, a singalong, a devotional break, lunch, and ends with a game. Those who have a family member or know of someone with these challenges, are welcome to attend. All services are provided free of charge. An initial interview must be conducted by Interfaith Care Partners staff to welcome new participants into this program.

The next gathering will be held in the Mother Cabrini Center at the church on Friday, Jan. 15. For more information or to register a loved one, call Interfaith Care Partners at 713-682-5995 or visit the website at www.interfaithcarepartners.org.

Stuchbery receives education grant



Stuchbery Elementary recently received an educational grant from the Education Foundation in the amount of \$4,941. Pictured are, left to right, Carolyn Waller, Jennifer Dowell, Kristin Wallis, Tonya Davis, Lauren Nalepa, Cheryl Wilson and Denise Palos.
Photo submitted

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Middle School students write New Year's resolutions for 2016

Melillo Middle School

The following are New Year's resolutions for 2015 written by students at Melillo Middle School.

Maria Diaz's class
My New Year's Resolution is to stay in shape and eat healthy.
Hieu Dang
My New Year's Resolutions are to study more for reading and read other stories to little kids.

Samantha Gama
My New Year's Resolutions are to work hard, help my family and become a better person.
Zulik Garcia
My New Year's Resolutions are to play my room clean, play with my sister, dance with my Wii and play GTA5 online with my cousin LaLa.
Gabriela Garza
My New Year's Resolutions are to study hard for math and reading STAAR tests.
Antony Gonzalez
My New Year's Resolutions are to make better grades and not talk when the teacher is talking.

Martin Hernandez
My New Year's Resolutions are to never give up on my dream job and keep grades up.
Valery Herrera
My New Year's Resolutions are to get good grades, be a good brother and study.

Nathan Leal
My New Year's Resolutions are to study hard for the math and reading STAAR tests.
Antonio Lopez
My New Year's Resolutions are to help others when they're sad.
Joseph Pacheco
My New Year's Resolutions are to get good grades and help my mom without her asking me.

Jocelyn Perez
My New Year's Resolutions are keeping my room clean and doing something right away when my parents ask me to.
Joseph Vu
My New Year's Resolution is to try to finish all my work at school and at home.

Alexa Gonzalez
My New Year's Resolution is to get better at reading. I'm always struggling on that subject. I'm gonna get better!
Raul Perez
My New Year's Resolutions are to get better at reading and be a good brother because I have low grades and I always punch my brother.

Kevin Guzman
My New Year's Resolutions are to be better at math and to get better grades. Finally to pass the 5th grade.
Valerie Palafox
My New Year's Resolu-

tions are to eat more protein and to help my dad.

Huy Nguyen
My New Year's Resolution is to study math and to help people.

Christopher Arias
My New Year's Resolution is that I am going to be a great person, and I want to be positive so I can get good grades.
Andrea Espinosa
My New Year's Resolution is to help my mom and clean my room.

Jasmin Garcia
My New Year's Resolution is that I want to study more so that I can get good grades.
Brian Fernandez
Valerie Espinosa's class
My New Year's Resolution is to read a whole chapter book with no pictures.
Eduardo Supelveda
My New Year's Resolution is to raise \$100 from selling my art. I hope I can sell art wherever I go.

Chyler Harris
My New Year's Resolution is to be a pro at riding my hover board by January 30th 2016.
Gilbert Hernandez
My New Year's Resolution is to lose 40 more pounds by summer time.

Adam Jimenez
My New Year's Resolution is to be able to swim without my feet touching the floor.

Irene Torres
My New Year's Resolution is to pass the STAAR so I can pass to the 6th grade.
DeAndre Cooper
My New Year's Resolution is to help others when they're sad.
Joseph Pacheco
My New Year's Resolutions are to get good grades and help my mom without her asking me.

Elijah Howard
My New Year's Resolution is to play with my little brother more than my electronics.
Steven Nguyen
My New Year's Resolution is to be good to my family and everybody else.

Andrick Perez
My New Year's Resolution is to pick up my grades.
Elyza Flores
My New Year's Resolution is to not make any more trips to the E.R.

Jayden Rodriguez
My New Year's Resolution is to improve in my volleyball skills.

Serena Segura
My New Year's Resolution is to make my own perfume.
Jackie Ruiz
My New Year's Resolution is to make the cheer-leading squad.
Angie Perez
My New Year's Resolu-

tion is to become a popular Viner.

Rylan Navy
My New Year's Resolution is to respect my elders.

Novallee Maxwell
My New Year's Resolution is to go to gymnastics.
Marianna Hernandez
My New Year's Resolution is to eat less donuts. Yes I love donuts.

Alana Yasmine Garza
My New Year's Resolution is to stop using my phone so much.

Yahira Urrutia
My New Year's Resolution is to get better at playing basketball.

Giselle Garza
My New Year's Resolution is to win the little league baseball championship.

Zachary McKenzie
My New Year's Resolution is to stop talking when Ms. E is talking.

Samantha Talamantez
My New Year's Resolution is to improve my grades.

Damien Nguyen

Morris Middle School
The following are New Year's resolutions for 2015 written by students at Morris Middle School.

Jamie Otto's class
My 2016 New Year resolution:
is good grades in school and get a good grade on my STAAR test.
Natalia Garza
to spend time with my family and study harder.

Mia Sanchez
this year is to be very grateful. I also would like to get good grades for the rest of the year.
Haleigh Jones
this year I want to get good grades in Math.

Cesar Rodriguez
is that I will work hard, so I can go to Harvard University.
Jennifer Ben-Smith
Lose 5 pounds

Charles Sanchez
to read 50 books by the end of 2016.

Mariana Perales
is to pass each grade at least 90s or 100s and learn many things in school.

Dibanhi Hernandez
is to play the violin more than 20 mins everyday

Amanda Diaz
to get good Grades Read A lot. Get AR Points. Don't Get into trouble. And have fun.

Mario Valadez
to get good grades
Adrian Lopez
is get average 85% Ar

Jazmine Jimenez
to save innocent lives
Celiara Garcia-Reyna
to go to the city in Mexico.

Juan Raulshio
is not to play my electronics so much. Then I can spend more time with my FAMILY!

Olivia Batres
is to gain enough knowledge in science so I can have my fucher dream job as becoming a doctor fo kids who have cancer and try to make a medicen to help them from dying.

Yarah
Bring up math grade. Read 2 chapter books per month. Be kind to my brother

Sandra Quiroz
1) make people some presents, 2) help charity, 3) make A's

Linh Phan
I want to read a total of 200 books

Samantha Wilkerson
My goal is to be with my famaly.

Emmanuel Hernandez
My goal is to lose weight so i can go to the Beach TWO Peace

Adrianna Terry
My New Year resolution is to READ, READ, help out, and do my best in my academics!

Kelly Nguyen
My Resolution is to get 100 ar point this year.

Hannah Lewallen
My new year Resolution is to get good grades for the year, and pass fifth grade.

And my family to be happy.

Fernando Cordova
My New Year's Resoul-tion is to bring up my Elar Grades to a A or a B.

Abel Espinoza
My 2016 goal is to bring all my "C"s to a "B" or "A"s. At YES Prep school. I promise I will pass 6th grade.

Paola Pombo
My New Year's Resolu-tion is to donate people that need food.

Jeffery Cerrato
I want to change the way I act and dress and study more and get good Grades.

Samantha Palomino
My 2016 New Year's Resolution is to read 20 minutes per day, and when summer starts my goal is to go outside 20 minutes per day.

Luis Torres
My New Year's Resolu-tion is to help a person in need. Like a children or a older man or woman in Mexico.

Leslie Jimenez
My 2016 new year rev-olution is to do good in all my subjects and have good conduct in all my classes.

Nayeli Canales
Read more books. Have better a attitude. Have better grades

Cameron Smother
My goal is to be albe to strat losing weight

Anthona
My goal is to accomplish is to start making A's instead of B's on my report card

Daniel
My goal is to go to my cousin's house and get money from my Uncle. Also go to a Vietnamese Restaurant at Bellaire.

Vivian Phan
Well my New Year Res-olution is to do good on my volin, practice my ka-arate kicks, punch, and my blocks to block attacks. And to get a ipad, or iphone and play lots of games

Thang Tran
My 2016 New Year Res-olution is to learn 20 new songs to prepare for La Voz Kids.

Vaneli Gonzalez
My new year's resolution is to get better grades.

Alessandra Guzman
To read 5 Big chapter Books.

Keely Nicole King

Roberts Middle School
The following are New Year's resolutions for 2015 written by students at Roberts Middle School.

Melissa Cumming's class
This 2016 I want straight As in school because I want to go to a good college. I want to spend time with my family and friends by going shopping and out to eat. I also want to be in sports like track n field or volleyball.

Hailey Channel
My New Year's resolu-tion is to be friendly with my little brother. Usually I play rough, so I want to quit playing rough with him. Also I will try and help my brother with his homework for at least a whole month.

Geovanni Paz
I want to be better at foot-ball. The way I'm going to do it is practice for it and I'm going to get fit and exercise. I will also eat healthy foods that provide energy.

Mohammad Khan
This 2016 I will spend more time with my fam-ily by playing volleyball, football, and soccer with my family for at least three times a week. Also, I will try to do my best on the STA-AR test so I can pass to 6th grade. I will practice my violin so I can be awesome. Finally, this 2016 I will tell my mom that I LOVE her and my father too.

Emily Hernandez
For my New Year's res-olution I will want to make better grades in reading so I could get straight As. I would also want to eat healthy foods five times a week and I would also like to spend time with my fam-

ily by playing games every day for two hours.

Jason Pham
For my New Year's res-olution I want to get my so-cial studies grade up so that I won't have to be studying for a long time. I also want to spend more time with my family by going to the movies. Last, I want to play with my cousins for about 2 hours.

Gerardo Escamilla
For my New Year's res-olution I would like to im-prove my guitar skills. I would also like to finish Dr. Who, the TV show. I also would like to keep my room clean.

Andrew Chapa
I want to spend more time with my little brothers by playing with them. I also want to try to get a better grade in my social studies class because I want to get an A not a B. I want to try to not be on my phone a lot because I'm always on it.

Crystal Morales
My New Year's resolu-tion is spending more time with my family. One of the reasons is that my family is usually busy. The second reason, is I have a lot of homework. That is my New Year's Resolution.

Ismael Banda
My resolution is to help out more at home and help be the best daughter I can be. To make this goal I will take out the trash and start helping my little brother with his homework. I will also improve grades.

Alyza Becerra
Three things I want to improve upon my 2016. First, I want to pass the 6th grade. Second, I want to get in trouble less or even stop. Third, I want to try to get my writing neater.

Elbert Sawyer
I plan to beat level 4 in legendary mode. I will also want to play soccer with my dad more. I also commit to finish watching the TV show, Doctor Who.

Alan Duarte
New Year's is a great time. A common tradition is to have goals for the year. Mind would be to first of all become closer with family and friends, second would be for me to get better grades, and science fair is going to be due really soon too. Last but not least, would be for me to try to be happier. I have been going through some tough times, but it's getting better.

Hassan Gutierrez
I want to improve on my 3pt percentage. My 3pt per-centage is like 67%. I want that to change to at least 80%. I think that is better than some of the NBA play-ers.

Kyron Jackson
So my first resolution is to try and lose weight. My second is to try and be a calmer person and not get angry as much. My third is to become the best French Horn player I can be in band.

Domingo Perez
I want to get better at Madden NFL 16. I want to get better at doing deep passes and running plays.

Jalen Luna
My New Year's resolution is to be a better saxophone player. I need to practice it at least 30 minutes every day and even on weekends. I will study my music more thor-oughly, so I won't mess up. I will continue to improve my saxophone skills, tone and rhythm.

Dylan Nguyen
Laura Smith's class
For the New Year's Res-olution I will gather knowl-edge, like reading a news-paper, reading more, taking interesting pictures and trav-eling. For my health, I will lose weight, exercise, never smoke (ever!), eat healthier, and definitely drink water. Never forget to be nice to others by volunteering. Last, but not least, I need to be home with my friends and family. I will redecorate, sell unwanted stuff and get orga-

nized.

Justin Mai
My New Year's Resolu-tion is to start designing – in other words, making clothes. I love art and my passion is to design. I think designing will help me prove to myself that I'm creative and I can do anything.

Cierra Hoop
This year, I plan to do all of the things listed below, and then congratulate myself (in advance) on achieving these goals. I will do my best and be persistent even if I'm not good at it. 1) I will try to do better in gym and participate in all of the activities. I will make sure to practice all of the exercises at home and take walks. 2) I will improve my social skills by talking to people who are my own age and start to re-lax. I will be sure to hang out with girls who share my interest. 3) I will spend my extra time with my family. I will try to deal with all of the bossy-boots, tattle tales, and crybabies that live with me and try to comfort them. I will be sure to produce hap-piness in my family.

Iveth Flores
My New Year's Resolu-tion is to try to be more positive about things. A few ways to do more positive is to think about happy thoughts, think around prob-lems, and have good people as friends around you.

Jessica Medina
I am really focused on my New Year's Resolution. For example, I want to make straight A's for the second semester. This is really im-portant for me so I can have a good application for col-lege when I grow up. This is so I can get a better job and a better life! This is my New Year's Resolution for 2016.

Brian Nguyen
My New Year's Resolu-tion is to make a fresh new start on life. 1) To put down my electronics, and spend more time with my family. 2) To study/work hard in school, and at home to get into a good college. 3) Eat healthier foods instead of junk food. 4) Practice on my temper and understand that people aren't what you want them to be. 5) Learn to focus on my work, not on others.

Elision Lewis

What I'll do to be better next year is to have more initiative. That means to do something productive even when no one is around. An-other thing that I'll do to be better is work hard on all of my school assignments and get A's on most that I can. I will take my time and do it correctly.

Mac Postal
For the New Year, if I want to get better, I'm going to have to learn more by listening and respectful my teachers. Like one of my old teacher used to say, "Learn more, earn more."

Hao Tran
My New Year's Resolu-tions are to be a little more productive and stop procrast-inating. I also think it's time to start expressing myself more.

Nataly Mendez
Next year, in 2016, I'm going to change my life-style. I won't say the basic New Year's Resolution. I have two Resolutions – be adventurous and inspira-tional! I want to go out and try new things. I want to inspire other kids. I'm not going to be lazy. I will start doing what I strive for! I will start writing. I will start practic-ing sports. I'm going to fol-

low my dreams. This starts January 1, 2016!

Natalie Suarez
Some goals I want to accomplish next year in school are: I won't be tardy to class. I will try my hard-est and study all the time to ace my classes in order to be an excellent student. I finally shall always respect my teachers and follow all class rules. I will try my best in everything I do in my class and life. I will try to accom-plish these goals for next year and always be a good kid.

Angel Arroyo
My New Year's Resolu-tion is to try to become less selfish. It is true that I am selfish and don't like sharing my personal belongings and things. So, I'll make that my goal, or New Year's Resolu-tion, to become a less selfish person.

Zaynab Asafeh
Next year, 2016, I would like to read 100,000 words. I choose this because I love reading. I would accomplish this by reading as much as possible during my free time.

Jesus Reyna
My New Year's Resolu-tion for 2016 is to do a good job and have higher grades.

I want to have 100s, or 90's, at least. I want to get smart-er and smarter every day. I learn because of my nice teachers.

Destiny Rosalez
My New Year's Resolu-tion is to get straight A's. I hope that this will happen because I want to get into an awesome college, such as Rice University or Yale. These college look at your school record to see if you are capable of the work.

Kaylee Goodrum
My New Year's Resolu-tion is to change my char-acter. The reason I would like to change my character is because I want people to see me as a person they can depend on and trust.

Lazarus Gonzalez
I have many things to try to make myself a better person. I want to be a better person by being polite and offering help. I want to participate in class by answering questions, ask-ing questions when I don't understand something, and being a more active learn-er, overall. I will finish my assignments when they are due, or as soon as possible.

Angel Zelaya

Student history clubs rewarded for history of excellence

San Jacinto College's student history clubs have a lengthy history of excellence, which has not gone unnoticed by the Texas State Historical Association (TSHA).

The TSHA recently presented a multi-year grant to the College's history clubs, called Webb Society chapters, after Prescott Webb. San Jacinto College has operated Webb Society chapters on all three campuses for more than 30 years, and the clubs are among the most active in the state.

"Of the more than 20 chapters at colleges around the state, three of the five chapters chosen for the grants are from San Jacinto College, and we are receiving 60 percent of the funding," commented Dr. Eddie Weller, San Jacinto College history professor and principal investigator for the grant. "The Elkins Foundation (the organization providing

the grant) was so impressed by the work of the Webb Society chapters that they provided the next four yearly installments at one time. That means that the clubs and faculty advisors will each receive about \$1,650 this year."

The Elkins Foundation grant funding will enable students and faculty advisors to attend conferences, take course-related field trips to museums, and to hold on-campus activities.

San Jacinto College history major Samantha Thomas, president of the Central Campus Webb Society chapter, says participating in club events and activities brings history alive and greatly enhances traditional classroom learning. "Participating in meetings, and learning hands-on by visiting historical sites supplements what we learn in class and helps with critical thinking," she commented. "I

learned so much during a recent Webb Society trip to the Bryan Museum in Galveston, which houses the personal collection of J.P. Bryan and his wife. It was eye-opening and awe inspiring to see so many Southwestern U.S. and Texas artifacts."

Thomas, of Pasadena, will earn an associate degree from San Jacinto College in May and transfer to the University of Houston Clear Lake to earn a bachelor's and a master's degree in history. Her ultimate career goal is to earn a Ph.D. in history and teach at a college in the Houston area. "Texas history is what compelled me to major in history and I hope to teach it one day, though this semester I have been getting more interested in Mexican-American history," she remarked. I think the way Mexican-American history intertwines with Texas history is fascinating."

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Hernandez graduates



Zaida Hernandez, daughter of Francisco and Sonia Hernandez, graduated from the University of Houston with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering and a minor in Health. The fall 2015 convocation ceremony was held at Hofheinz Pavilion on Friday, Dec. 18, 2015. This spring 2016, she will begin the Master of Industrial Engineering program at the University of Houston. Hernandez currently works as an engineering intern at NASA Johnson Space Center. There she completed six internships while working on her bachelor's degree, rotating between semesters at school and at NASA. She attended Atkinson Elementary, Beverly Hills Intermediate, and is a 2010 Dobie High School graduate.

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Over The Back Fence by Alexis

THANK YOU, CHRISTMAS VOLUNTEERS!

The *Leader* staff expresses gratitude to **Sandra Williams, Rossana Bobbitt and Jay Do** who worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the *Leader* Christmas program. Special thanks also go out to **Gordon and Pat Berg** of Action Ministries for their generous donation of toys for the Christmas program.

LEXI TURNED 6!

Happy belated birthday wishes are sent to **Lexi Rose Smith** who celebrated her 6th birthday Dec. 19 from mom and dad **Darryl and Linda Smith** and grandparents **Darryl and Guadalupe Smith**.

BO CELEBRATES A BIRTHDAY

Best wishes to *Leader* staffer **Bo Bolen** who enjoys a birthday Thursday, Jan. 7, from friends and the staff at the *South Belt Leader*.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, KRISTEN!

Kristen Giles celebrates her 16th birthday Wednesday, Jan. 13. Her parents, **Tracy and Jim Giles**, grandparents **Bobby and Ken Griffin**, and brothers **Aaron and Cody**, extend their best wishes for a wonderful birthday. Kristen is a sophomore at Dobie.

CARL VALIGURA ENJOYS A BIRTHDAY

On Jan. 13, **Carl Valigura** celebrates a birthday. His wife, **Frances**, four children, 13 grandchildren, great-granddaughters and friends at the *Leader* wish him well on his special day. Carl is well-known to merchants in the area where he has delivered the *Leader* for many years.

SCHOOL DAZE

The following personnel and staff members of the Pasadena Independent School District celebrate birthdays Jan. 7 through Jan. 13.

Burnett Elementary

Light the birthday candles for **Laura Estrada** Jan. 8. Send a birthday greeting Jan. 13 to **Jenny Gonzales**.

Bush Elementary

Blow out the birthday candles for **Deborah Muniz** Jan. 7. The day for a party for **Vicki Sheppard** is Jan. 9. **Cynthia Covarrubias** enjoys a birthday Jan. 11.

Frazier Elementary

Light the birthday candles Jan. 8 for **Christine Grazioli**. **Nancy Guerra** celebrates a birthday on Jan. 10.

Meador Elementary

The day for a party for **Nichol Vargas** is Jan. 8. **Tara Merida** enjoys a birthday Jan. 11.

South Belt Elementary

Send a birthday greeting Jan. 9 to **Cynthia Gomez**. Jan. 10 is the day for a birthday celebration for **Amy Campos**. **Jacquelyn Martinez** enjoys a birthday Jan. 11.

Stuchbery Elementary

Sing a chorus of a birthday song Jan. 11 to **Sheri Graham**. **Tina Flotten** is wished a happy birthday Jan. 12.

Meillilo Middle School

Jan. 10 is the day for a birthday cake for **Jessica Adamek**.

Roberts Middle School

Adriana Robinson celebrates a birthday Jan. 9. The day for a double-layer cake for **Jennifer Saucedo** and **Aubree Gencarelli** is Jan. 12.

Beverly Hills Intermediate

Delaney Smith enjoys a birthday Jan. 7. **Thompson Intermediate** Jan. 9 is the day for a birthday cake for

Ashley Chaddock. Send a birthday greeting Jan. 12 to **Marisa Cantu**.

Dobie High

Anthony Benitez Arroyo enjoys a birthday Jan. 7. Light the birthday candles Jan. 9 for **Michael Alexander**. Sharing a birthday Jan. 11 are **Barbara Keogh** and **Stacy Thomas**. **Audrena Soto** celebrates a birthday Jan. 13.

FACEBOOK FRIENDS CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS

The *Leader* sends happy birthday wishes to its Facebook friends who celebrate a birthday this week:

Thursday, Jan. 7: **Michael Lake, Kathi Kemp, Sherry Crawford, Meagan McMurry, Jessica Sellers, Bob Townley, Larry Shewell, Jason Cox, Brian Gallagher and Diane Gonzalez**; Saturday, Jan. 9: **Jennifer Gonzalez, Mary Meyer, Jill Rea, Mike Escobedo, Monette Falzon, Cecelia Faske and Holly Lyons**. Sunday, Jan. 10: **Jennifer Murillo, Roy Gunter and Caron Cantu**. Monday, Jan. 11: **Kelly Cavazos, Myles Barkman, Amy Villareal, Kathleen Wenzel, Deirdre Davis and James Mouton Jr.**; Tuesday, Jan. 12: **Rosalind Vela, Troy Vessel, William Carpenter, Carol Lonidier, Jose Pena, Barry Francis and Tammy Overstreet**; and Wednesday, Jan. 13: **Scott Langefeld, Claire Mules, Gregden Martin, Betty Shamblyn, Jessica Hynes, Joseph Farrias and Shane Poynter**.

LEADER WANTS YOU IN THE NEWS

Email birthday, anniversary, vacation, congratulations, etc., to mynews@southbeltleader.com with OTBF in the subject line. Items must be submitted by Friday noon for the next week's publication.

PISD Prize Parade provides \$101,000 in classroom funds



Beverly Hills Intermediate teachers mini-grant from the Pasadena Education Foundation for \$4,998 for their literacy project. Photo by Reesha Brown

Many Pasadena Independent School District educators were greeted with bells, whistles and shouts as they were surprised by the Education Foundation Prize Parade Tuesday morning. This event, occurring once in the fall and once in the spring, awards mini-grants to teachers for classroom funding they would otherwise do without.

Four teams tackled the entire district and handed out more than \$101,000 in classroom grants to 17 different campuses and special programs.

These grants will be used for various classroom enhancements like iPads for education, providing language software, robotics programs and more.

"The Pasadena ISD Education Foundation has provided over \$1.8 million in mini-grants to educators in the district over the last 12 years," Cindy Parmer, director of Community Relations said. "The foundation board, made up of 35 committed members from business, industry and the community, combine efforts with the support of hundreds of generous donors to make dreams come true for our teachers and students. Seeing the teachers' faces light up as a result of Prize Parade puts the fun in fundraising."

"Thanks to all of the generous sponsors and the Pasadena ISD Education Foundation for making this possible."



Anita Delafield along with Karen Hickman, Pasadena ISD Deputy Superintendent of Academic Achievement, surprise Morris Middle School teacher James Goan with a mini-grant from the education foundation for \$4,615 for his photojournalism and photography clubs. Photo by Reesha Brown



CTAS Audio and Video Production teacher is presented a mini-grant from the Pasadena ISD Education Foundation by foundation board member Patti Bodkins. The \$4,989 grant will be used to purchase camera drones for her students. Photo by Bruce Stone

Remember When

35 years ago (1981)

Commissioner Tom Bass told St. Luke's Flood Committee representatives that money to complete improvements to Sagement area drainage facilities was not available.

Harris County Sheriff's officers and the Houston Police Department teamed

up to apprehend two males (one a juvenile) who were breaking into a coin box at the car wash on Nyack in Scarsdale, and Sheriff's deputies also made arrests of two young men charged with robbing the 7-11 on Hall Road.

30 years ago (1986)

Public forums featuring eight Pasadena Independent School District Board of Trustees candidates began.

Tom Carrell, Pasadena Independent School District assistant superintendent of elementary schools, said the district pushed to recruit Spanish- and Vietnamese-speaking volunteers, not only for interpretation purposes, but to serve as role models for the students by serving as guest speakers.

25 years ago (1991)

South Belt resident Aaron Elliot Hearn, 35, of the 10700 block of Fuqua died after being shot several times in the head and chest. He was shot near Alameda-Genoa and Mykawa. A protest march against proposed incineration at the Brio Superfund toxic waste site took place from Scarsdale and Bean to the site.

South Belt area residents used to playing dodge-the-bullet on the bridge at the intersection of Hughes Road and Beamer were to receive relief in the coming year with the addition of signal lights.

20 years ago (1996)

Dispute over a thoroughfare to link Pearland to the South Belt area arose at a Governmental Affairs Com-

mittee luncheon meeting of the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce.

Dobie varsity and junior varsity cheerleading squads both won superior ribbons and first place in the UCA National High School Cheerleading championship regional finals.

15 years ago (2001)

Judge Jo Ann Delgado was sworn into office on Jan. 5.

John Tuy Pham, 18, who was convicted of killing Dung Van Ha, 19, had his murder conviction overturned due to late parental notification.

10 years ago (2006)

A former employee of Universal Oil and Lube on Beamer was shot and killed by the owner's wife after the former employee shot the owner and the owner's father. The employee, who had been fired after a confrontation with another employee, came back to the business and began shooting after he was told to leave.

A family disturbance between a husband and his pregnant wife resulted in the shooting death of Sherry Arnold, 32. Howard Joseph Holmes, 46, was charged with murder and charges were later upgraded to capital murder.

Construction crews were working at the site of the Sagement Pool to replace the pool and pool building. The pool was replaced in time to open for the 2006 summer swimming season.

5 years ago (2011)

A one-hour manhunt that

shut down much of Scarsdale ended with a suspect being arrested and charged on two felony counts. Christopher Sauseda was arrested at roughly 4:50 p.m. for an open robbery warrant while he was a patient at Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital. Once in police custody, Sauseda, 25, was observed by the arresting deputy moving his handcuffed hands from behind his back to the front of his body. The deputy then called for assistance in detaining the suspect.

Once backup arrived and attempted to extract Sauseda from the squad car, the suspect fled on foot near the intersection of Scarsdale and the Gulf Freeway. After running through a gas station parking lot, Sauseda disappeared into an apartment complex at Scarsdale and Algonquin. The sheriff's department then called the Houston Police Department and the Harris County Precinct 2 Constable's office for assistance. The law enforcement agencies set up a perimeter in the surrounding area, blocking off Scarsdale and adjacent streets, while an HPD helicopter and two K-9 units searched for the suspect. Sauseda was found roughly one hour later hiding in a garage of one of the apartments. He was charged with escape while arrested or confined and robbery causing bodily injury.

1 year ago (2015)

A South Belt resident was killed in front of his house while watching fire-

works on New Year's Eve after being struck in the head by a stray bullet. Javier Suarez Rivera, 43, died at the scene in the 800 block of Eastlake after being hit by what police suspect was celebratory gunfire. Rivera's death, which made nationwide headlines, was ruled a homicide by the medical examiner's office. No immediate arrests were made.

Juan Luis Guardiola, 29, died after losing control of his motorcycle in the 400 block of Edgebrook.

AARP 199 meets Jan. 15

AARP Webster Area Chapter 199 will meet at 10 a.m. Friday, Jan. 15, at Bay Area Community Center, 5002 E. NASA Parkway in Seabrook (the large building with a blue roof inside Clear Lake Park on the north side of NASA Parkway). Everyone is invited to come to the meeting and to enjoy coffee, cookies and fellowship at 9:30 a.m. before the meeting starts at 10 a.m.

Each month, the group has entertainment or a speaker on various topics of interest to seniors. Every two months the group has a potluck lunch.

The speaker for Jan. 15 will be Mary Anne Weber of the Houston Audubon Society who will bring live, *Birds of Clear Lake*, to show live raptors such as owls and hawks and learning about the birds of the area. This meeting is also a potluck lunch so members and visitors are asked to bring a salad, vegetable, or dessert to share. Come at 9:30 a.m. and eat a piece of Chapter 199's 44th anniversary cake.

The group also organizes day trips by bus to local area points of interest at minimal cost.

For those who are interested in joining the group, annual dues are \$6 per year per person. However, one must be a member of national AARP to join any local chapter.

For more information, contact Liz Shepperd at 281-486-7770 or Qeshepperd@yahoo.com.

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Donation enhances training for San Jac welding students

San Jacinto College welding students have enhanced training options, thanks to stainless steel pipes recently donated by LyondellBasell Channelview.

LyondellBasell donated stainless steel and standard carbon steel pipes valued at approximately \$15,000, which will be used in training San Jacinto College welding technology students.

"The carbon steel pipes will be used for training students at every level, and the

donation of the stainless steel pipes is especially significant because it will be used in training advanced students, such as those learning Gas Tungsten Arc Welding," commented Eddie Foster, North campus industrial technology department chair. "To my knowledge, it's the largest single donation of stainless steel pipes the North campus has ever received."

Some of the donated carbon steel pipes have a thin layer of rust, which most steel acquires over time. "Rust on the carbon steel does not diminish the value of the pipe for training purposes," commented Foster. "Most things made of steel will develop a surface layer of rust over time, but the rust can be easily removed by surface grinding."

Stainless steel is typically around four times more expensive than standard carbon steel and has a different alloy composition, requiring welders to use different techniques. "Having a large quantity of stainless steel pipe allows our students to gain valuable hands-on experience with different types of metal, and become more versatile," he commented. "It's an advantage for a graduate applying for a job to have experience welding with stainless steel. We really appreciate this donation from Lyondell, a valuable industry partner with San Jacinto College."

David Sirman, Lyondell-Basell Channelview maintenance coordinator, said the pipe donation is a way of giving back to the community. "We had pipe that was purchased for projects and turnarounds that over a period of time was not used," he said. "We were able to reach out to San Jacinto College and ask if they could use it. We wanted to give back and we were very happy the college could use it."

To learn more about welding training at San Jacinto College, visit sanjac.edu/career/welding-technology.

Thompson is a Kahoot!



Den time teacher Cynthia Lozano (right) helps her students freshen up their math skills by playing Kahoot. Kahoot is a form of gamification where students are asked questions in real-time and have to answer them using their tablets. They love it because

it creates a fun, social atmosphere while learning. Pictured are, left to right, (front row) Andrew Tran, Rhett Rice, Alfred Medel, (back row) Miranda Giraldo, Phuong Tran, Brianna Salazar, Alexa Benitez and Lozano. Photo by Carol Waters

New program celebrates a baby's progress at MSHS

A new program at Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital will allow parents in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) to mark their baby's milestones in a lasting and meaningful way.

The Babies Excelling and Developing (BEAD) program is the brain child of Dobie High School senior Sydney Sweet. Families choosing to participate in the free program are

given a bead to welcome them to the NICU. As babies encounter challenges or celebrate milestones a corresponding bead can be added to their string.

"I think this program will offer a lot of encouragement to parents," says Julie McCarthy, child life specialist, Memorial Hermann Southeast. "A baby's journey through the NICU can often be a rollercoaster. The beads will serve first as a reminder to parents of the challenges their baby faced and the obstacles they overcame and also as a wonderful keepsake to reflect back on their child's earliest days."

There are 22 different beads marking accomplish-

ments ranging from taking their first bath to the red heart handed out to a baby when they are discharged from the NICU.

Sweet is a member of Girl Scout Troop 8015 and completed the program as part of her Girl Scout Gold Award. Sweet has a personal connection to the project having started her life as a NICU graduate. "There were no programs like this when I was a baby," says Sweet. "This will give families a quick reference diary of their baby's experiences and accomplishments that chronicles their first journey in life."

Sweet worked with her church, New Life Lutheran Church in Pearland, to provide the NICU at Memorial Hermann Southeast with enough supplies for the year.

Memorial Hermann Southeast has a Level III NICU. A Level III NICU is capable of caring for the smallest and sickest of newborn babies.

For those needing an even higher level of care, patients may be transferred to the Level IV NICU at Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital.

For more information on the high level of care

offered to women and children through Memorial Hermann Southeast, call 713-222-CARE (2273).

Parent Engagement Conference Jan. 8

The Pasadena Independent School District Office of Special Programs will host the second annual Parent Engagement Conference Friday, Jan. 8, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The event will be held at San Jacinto College Central campus in Building 12, 8060 Spencer Hwy.

Parents will receive child development training, advice

on how to build positive relationships at school and home and tips on ways to enhance parent-child communication. The event will also explore post-secondary and career opportunities available for district students and families.

The overall goal of the conference is to address the needs of the whole child by starting with the family.

Judaism and Religion in General: Free monthly open discussions scheduled

Congregation Shaar Hashalom's Rabbi Stuart Fedorow will host free, open to the public, weekly discussions for those who are interested in learning about Judaism, religions in general, practices and traditions, and comparisons and differences.

The sessions are held every second Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at Bon Appetit Café, 18027 Point Lookout Drive in Nassau Bay.

Come join the discussion and bring any questions, thoughts and opinions to share with everyone present.

Congregation Shaar Hashalom is located at 16020 El Camino Real in Houston and is the conservative synagogue in the Bay Area.

The entire community is invited to attend. For more information, contact the synagogue office at 281-488-5861 or at csh@shaarhashalom.org.

Bay Area Singles Dance Jan. 16

The Bay Area Singles Club monthly dance will be held Saturday, Jan. 16, from 7 to 10 p.m. at the VFW Lodge, Post 6378, at 5204 Highway 3 in Dickinson. Bring party snacks to share. Cost is \$7 for members and \$9 for nonmembers. For more information, call 409-948-1156 or 281-484-4762.

Republican club fundraiser Feb. 6

The annual World Famous "Souper" Saturday Fundraiser at Pearland Area Republican Club will be held on Saturday Feb. 6, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Church of Christ Annex, 2217 N. Grand Blvd. in Pearland. Enjoy many homemade soups and cornbread made from secret family recipes, homemade desserts, and find a special treasure to take home from the silent auction.

Come meet local Republican candidates and elected officials and show support for the local Republican Party. Donations are \$15 per ticket.

All proceeds from this event will go toward grassroots Republican activities and community endeavors.

Moore Elementary Spelling Bee winners named



Twenty students recently competed at the annual Moore Elementary Spelling Bee. The winner for the 2015-2016 school year is fourth-grader Eric Huynh and the runner-up is fourth-grader Ciara Williams. Huynh will go on to compete at the district spelling bee at South Houston High School on Feb. 23, 2016.

At left are, left to right, champion Eric Huynh, spelling bee coordinator and fourth-grade teacher Leah Laredo, and runner-up Ciara Williams.

Photos submitted



Moore Elementary Spelling Bee participants pictured are, left to right, (front row) Abigail Zamarripa, Jorge Jasso, Skylar Stoves, Ciara Williams, Eric Huynh, Victor Grice, Julian Ruiz, spelling bee coordinator and fourth-grade teacher Leah Lare-

do, (middle row) Jordi Zamudio, Angel Castorena, Leonel Hernandez, Austin Silva, Dillon Steve, (back row) Seth Lara, Megan Ly, Nancy Bazaldua, Daniel Martinez, Ja'Kayla Rock, Sabrina Pector, Jimmy Tran and Cardin Vo.

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December Bears of the Month



Students at Beverly Hills Intermediate strive to achieve positive characteristics to guide them throughout their lives. The characteristic for December was *adaptability*. Adaptability is the ability to adjust oneself readily to different conditions. Synonyms are flexibility, adjustable, changeable. The December Bears of the Month were selected by the Social Studies department as best representing this characteristic. Students

received a special Bear paw-print pin and a Bear of the Month T-shirt to wear. Bears of the Month for November are, left to right, (front row) Truc Luu, Juliana Rodriguez, Jessica Sanchez, (back row) Shariel Figueroa, Matthew Castillo, Marcelo Merced, Yair Almaguer, Omar Paradadiaz, Da'ryues Nichelson and Sarah Hernandez. Not pictured are Eric Guerra and Alysia Loosa.

Photo submitted

Identical female triplets start the new year at home

Brad and Stephanie Harris had hoped their three little girls would be home in time for Christmas. For the Harris family, Christmas came just a few days late this year as their identical triplets, Addison, Kinsley and Savannah, were discharged from Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital on Jan. 4, 2016.

The triplets, born Dec. 1 via cesarean section, all weighed between 3 and 3.5 pounds at birth. The identical triplets have spent the last five weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Memorial Hermann Southeast, which is routine care that almost always accompanies a birth of multiples.

"We've been waiting for this day since the girls were born and while I'm a little nervous to have them all at home at once, I'm so happy at the same time," said Stephanie Harris. "The doctors, staff and everyone at Memorial Hermann Southeast have been great. We couldn't have asked for a better experience."

The odds of delivering

identical triplets can range from one in 60,000 to one in two million. "At first we were told we were having twins," said Stephanie Harris. "Then we went back to the doctor and saw a third baby during an ultrasound and heard a third heartbeat. I was shocked and still trying to get over learning we were having twins when we got news of triplets."

The family held a brief press conference at Memorial Hermann Southeast prior to taking the girls home. "I know I'm going to be outnumbered now," says Brad Harris. "It's all worth it to have our girls healthy and on their way home."

Dr. Purvi Kapadia-Jethva, neonatologist, affiliated with Memorial Hermann Southeast, described the scene when the triplets first arrived in the NICU. "We have a really great team at Southeast so you never really have to ask

anyone to do anything because they're already there and doing what needs to

be done," said Dr. Kapadia-Jethva. "We're all going to miss the Harris

family but we're so happy to see them go home with three healthy girls."



Proud parents Brad and Stephanie Harris and grandmother Lynn Sweat (center) hold identical triplets (left to right) Savannah, Addison and Kinsley Harris. *Photo submitted*

San Jac auditions set for *Rashomon*

The San Jacinto College department of theatre and film will hold open public auditions for *Rashomon*, an award-winning drama that was a Broadway hit starring husband and wife performers Rod Steiger and Claire Bloom.

Auditions will be held Tuesday, Jan. 19, and Wednesday, Jan. 20, at 7:30 p.m. for adults 16 and older for a cast that will include up to 35 performers.

Auditions will be held at the Powell Arena Theatre on the Central campus, 8060 Spencer Hwy. in Pasadena. Enrollment at the college is not required. Materials need not be prepared in advance, and all who audition should dress to move.

Rashomon is billed as "a beautiful drama set in Kyoto, Japan" based on two short stories by renowned Japanese author Ryunosuke Akutagawa. The 1950 film, *Rashomon*, was the first Japanese film to gain worldwide acclaim, earning an honorary International Academy Award and a Golden Lion award at the Venice Film Festival in 1951. It is considered one of the greatest films ever made, being the highest-ranked Japanese and Asian film in the Village Voice poll of Best Films of the Century.

Rehearsals begin Jan. 22, and the show opens Feb. 24. For information about San Jacinto College theater and film programs, visit sanjac.edu/ca/reer/theatre-film.

Yang graduates with honors



Navy officer LTJG Zi Yang graduated with distinction honors from the U.S. Navy Nuclear Power School in Charleston, S.C., on Dec. 18, 2015. LTJG Yang is a graduate of J. Frank Dobie High School and Southern Methodist University, the daughter of South Belt residents Chuck Maricle and Xia Yang.

College Week contest winner



Building a college-awareness culture at Melillo Middle School is an ongoing process. Teachers are encouraged to promote higher education by participating in a College Door Contest. The 2015-2016 winner is Alyssa Alvarez, sixth-grade ELAR (English Language Arts and Reading) teacher.

Photo submitted

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Brook boys get first win

Local basketball squads losing ground in district competition

It's not time to panic yet, but both the boys' and girls' varsity basketball teams at Dobie as well as the Lady Wolverines of Clear Brook know time is of the essence.

Those three programs have been losing ground in their respective district races. And given the fast starts of several of the teams at the top of the standings, getting back into playoff contention may take some doing.

As for the Clear Brook varsity boys' team, the Wolverines are 1-1 early on in District 24-6A play, having lost to Clear Creek in a league opener before

rebounding to take down Dickinson Jan. 5.

Against Clear Creek Jan. 2, not much went right for the Wolverines, who trailed 32-15 at half-time en route to a 67-42 loss to the Wildcats.

But needing a win against Dickinson to get things going, the Wolverines turned to leading scorer David Azore, whose 20 points led the way in an eventual 71-63 victory over the Gators.

Things won't get any easier for the Wolverines, who travel to Krueger Field House Jan. 8, for a 7 p.m. contest against 2015 Class 6A state finalist Clear Lake.

JFD boys now 1-4

Granted, Dobie has played and lost to four of the six teams in front of them in the District 22-6A lineup, but that doesn't mean there isn't time for a turnaround. It just has to come soon.

In a low-scoring affair, the Eagles, leading the way at 6-0 in league play, managed to hold off the Longhorns by a 38-28

count. Dobie held an early advantage before the Eagles gained the lead and then did just enough to hold off the Longhorns, who now stand at 1-4 with remaining first-half league games against Alvin (Jan. 8 at Phillips Field House), Sam Rayburn and Memorial.

Brook girls lose to DHS

To this point, the overall strength of the 24-6A

varsity girls' basketball alignment appears to have caught up to Clear Brook.

The Lady Wolverines dropped to 0-4 in district play following a 69-56 loss to the Dickinson Lady Gators Jan. 5.

Clear Brook will try to get its first win of the 24-6A season when it hosts Clear Lake Jan. 8, at 7 p.m. On Jan. 12, Clear Brook will take on regional power Clear Springs.

Dawson falls JFD girls

Count the Dobie varsity girls' team as another group looking up at several others in the current standings.

Jade Giron led Dobie with nine points, but a big 14-4 third-quarter run allowed visiting Dawson to come away with a 41-34 victory Jan. 5.

Now at 2-4, Dobie trails

five other teams in the District 22-6A standings. A big road game against Alvin Jan. 8 is next, and Dobie can also make a

statement with games against Sam Rayburn and Memorial (4-2) to close out the first half of league play.

So there's still time for these teams to get back into the playoff mix before it's too late, but the wins need to start coming.

SBHLL, SBGSA still hosting regular registration chances

With the new year having dawned, time is of the essence for youth softball and baseball players who wish to compete in either the South Belt Girls Softball Association or the Sagement-Beverly Hills Little League.

As of now, there are still regular and late registration dates available in both leagues, but, obviously, officials are asking families to register their children as soon as possible.

SBHLL dates

The in-person registration dates remaining for the Sagement-Beverly Hills Little League include Saturday, Jan. 9, from 9 a.m. to noon and 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., and Wednesday, Jan. 13, from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Youths ages 3 (must turn 3 by Jan. 1, 2016) through 16 may register for the season.

The sign-up dates include Jan. 9, Jan. 16 and Jan. 23 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Jan. 14 and Jan. 21 from 6 to 8 p.m.

Parents of players must bring a copy of their child's birth certificate to the session, and payments will only be accepted in the form of cash and credit/debit cards. No checks will be accepted.

Though it is not recommended as a guideline, there will be a late sign-up session Jan. 30, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

SBGSA to register

South Belt Girls Softball Association officials have scheduled several regular registration dates this month, all at the league's facility at El Franco Lee Park.

The regular registration fee is \$65 plus participation in the league's annual candy fundraiser. There is a \$50 fundraiser buyout option.

SBHLL dates

The in-person registration dates remaining for the Sagement-Beverly Hills Little League include Saturday, Jan. 9, from 9 a.m. to noon and 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., and Wednesday, Jan. 13, from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Youths ages 3 (must turn 3 by Jan. 1, 2016) through 16 may register for the season.

The cost for late registration will be \$80 plus a mandatory candy buyout fee of \$50.

The South Belt Girls Softball Association's preseason practices begin in February, 2016, and the regular season will later that month or early March.

Prep soccer tourneys on tap

For those who enjoy high school soccer during what is usually a frigid January across the area, there won't be a shortage of intriguing matchups involving the varsity boys' and girls' teams from Dobie and Clear Brook.

No slouches for Dobie

The Dobie varsity boys' team, which went undefeated in District 22-6A action a season ago and then advanced to the area playoff round, is looking for more this time around.

And head coach Justo Manrique is taking no short cuts to ensure his group is big match-tested by the time the action counts the most.

The Longhorns opened preseason action Jan. 29 with a road scrimmage against highly-regarded Deer Park.

That one went as well as could be expected, with scoring ace Jose Villalta notching the lone goal of the scrimmage on an assist from Rafael Gomes as the Longhorns scored a 1-0 win.

Now, Dobie opens the regular season at the Pasadena ISD Cup against a trio of playoff teams from 2015.

With three PISD Cup titles already in hand, getting to the championship match this time around figures to be a big challenge for the Longhorns, who will go against Clear Creek (24-6A), Port Arthur Memorial (21-6A) and Alief Taylor (23-6A) in succession over a three-day period beginning Jan. 7.

Dobie boys at PISD Cup

Jan. 7: vs. Clear Creek, 10 a.m. at Friendswood High School

Jan. 8: vs. P.A. Memorial, noon at PISD Veterans Memorial

Jan. 9: vs. Alief Taylor, noon at PISD Veterans Memorial

JFD girls in Humble

Dobie's varsity girls' team, a tiebreaker away from a playoff berth in 2015, will begin what it hopes is an eventual climb back to the postseason when it starts 2016 at the Humble Invitational.

Head coach Bryan McDonald's team will then have a break in the schedule before hosting District 22-6A title favorite Pearland Jan. 15, at Pasadena ISD's Veterans Stadium.

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Senior and four-year letterman Josue Villalta (11) will be a primary scoring source for the defending District 22-6A champion Dobie varsity boys' soccer team this season, a group that has its collecting sights set on reaching the Region III final four tournament this season. One of the top-ranked teams

in the preseason Region III ranks, the Longhorns scored a 1-0 scrimmage win over highly-regarded Deer Park as Villalta scored on a feed from Rafael Gomes Jan. 29. Dobie opens the regular season Jan. 7-9 at the Pasadena ISD Cup, facing a trio of playoff teams from the 2015 season. Photo by John Bechtle

Rising Stars track to register youths

The South Belt Track Club is preparing for the upcoming spring/summer season by hosting its first registration and workout session Saturday, Jan. 9, at Dobie High School.

Team officials will be at Dobie Jan. 9, from 10 a.m. to noon, signing up both returning and first-year athletes for competition in the Amateur Athletic Union program.

The registration fee in-

cludes a team uniform as well as meet dues up to the national meet, which is to be held in Houston this summer.

SBTC will continue weeknight workouts at Dobie each Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, from 4 to 6 p.m. All Saturday workouts are from 10 a.m. to noon.

For additional information

about the longtime area track program or to access online registration options, visit sports.blue.sombroero.com/risingstars track.

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San Jacinto softball opens slate Jan. 29

The San Jacinto College softball team, looking to get back to the National Junior College Athletic Association's national tournament, will open the 2016 spring season in Galveston.

Weather has hindered the schedule in some years, but San Jacinto College has made customary its appearance at the Island Classic, set for Jan. 29-30

at Galveston College.

A season ago, the Coyotes went 4-1 in Galveston to get the 2015 season off to a fast start.

However, a pair of losses in the Region XIV tournament cut short SJCS' bid for a second straight appearance at nationals.

The Leader will have San Jacinto's complete 2016 schedule in the Jan. 14 issue.

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2015: The year in South Belt area athletics was truly top notch

January

As the new year unfolded, it was a great time to be Manuel Moreno Jr.

Moreno, family members and even Dobie High School principal Franklin Moses were in New Braunfels, where Moreno collected hardware.

The United States Tennis Association bestowed Moreno and 13 other high school tennis coaches from across the nation with the Flaming Ball Trophy, which recognizes those coaches who are in support of the no-cut policy.

In basic terms, the no-cut policy means that any student who wishes may join his or her high school program without the fear of being cut or released for lack of playing talent.

Clear Brook varsity volleyball head coach Meredith Thompson and Joe Sabatell, Dobie's varsity volleyball head coach, were chosen to lead a group of select players at the Greater Houston Volleyball Coaches Association's annual all-star match and clinic series at the Campbell Center.

Clear Brook player Juliette DiGiuseppe was also nominated to compete.

It was a fitting end to a stellar career for Sabatell, who officially resigned his coaching position at Dobie following the 2014 season, where he advanced to the playoffs in 10 of his 11 seasons.

Mike Allison was hired as the varsity football head coach and boys' campus athletic coordinator at Clear Brook High School.

Allison spent the majority of his coaching career in the Pearland ISD, with previous stops at Pearland Junior High East and Pearland High School.

He had also been Dawson High School's assistant head coach in 2014.

As for Brook, Allison replaced Paul Lanier, who retired in December, 2014. The Wolverines' varsity football team was 1-9 in 2014.

Things were off to a pretty good start in the District 22-6A varsity soccer ranks for the Dobie boys' and girls' teams.

The Longhorn boys' team opened the league campaign with a pair of wins, topping Pearland 3-0 at Veterans Stadium in Pasadena before tripping Manvel 3-1, at Manvel.

Meanwhile, Dobie's Malyn Nunez had two early goals against Manvel in Pasadena, leading the Lady Longhorns to a 3-0 win over the Lady Mavericks.

Dobie powerlifting teammates Nathaniel Flores and Yuong Truong were medalists at the Dickinson Gator Powerlifting Invitational. Flores was third and Truong second in their respective divisions at the meet.

Meanwhile, female lifters Jessena Luna (fourth) and Kris Kindred (eighth) also stood out for Dobie in their respective divisions.

Three Dobie High School varsity softball players signed letters of intent to continue their education and playing careers collegiately.

Suzu Soza and Emily Wolfe chose to attend Paris Junior College in Paris, Texas, while Sady Olgun elected to attend McLennan College in Waco.

Dobie's most impressive victory this season – by a 64-59 count over first-place Manvel – put the Longhorns in the thick of the playoff hunt with six games to play league-wide in boys' varsity basketball.

February

Dawn Gutierrez, the longtime varsity girls' volleyball head coach at North Shore High School, has accepted the same role at Dobie.

Gutierrez first interviewed for the job earlier in January and then landed the job soon thereafter.

The 2014-2015 swimming season continued for a select group of Dobie varsity swimmers who qualified for regionals.

Overall, the Dobie boys

placed fourth and the Lady Longhorns were fifth at the District 22-6A competition at the Pearland Recreation Center and Natatorium.

As expected, Dobie's Kevin Nguyen was a standout at the meet, qualifying for regionals in two individual events as well as a pair of relays.

Playing the game its own tried and true way plus adding a wrinkle or two worked out just fine for the San Jacinto College softball team at the season-opening Whitecap Invitational in Galveston.

Hitting .361 as a team and stealing 13 bases to boot, San Jacinto produced wins in four of its five games over two days on the island.

Included in the mix was a 9-1 laughter over defending national champion and perhaps new Region XIV rival Angelina. Overall, San Jacinto pitchers and the team's defense combined to allow just eight runs total.

The San Jacinto College baseball team kicked off its 2015 season with a bang.

The college hosted the Tournament of Champions, featuring 10 of the best community college baseball teams in the nation.

Thompson Intermediate's seventh-grade boys' Dark division basketball team captured the Pasadena ISD regular-season tournament championship after defeating Beverly Hills in the title game. The Lions scored big wins over Miller and South Houston in the tournament.

Dobie varsity boys' soccer standout Nixon Vladimar Urrutia decided to continue his education and playing career at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Ill., after signing a letter of intent with the Huskies.

In what was their final appearance together as a mixed doubles team, Dobie's Ruben Vargas and Theresa Tran made it memorable.

The pair won the mixed doubles A division championship for the Franklin/Kramer Pasadena ISD tournament, cruising to a 6-2, 6-0 victory in the finals.

The Longhorn pair also scored wins over squads from Fort Bend Bush, Manvel and Dawson.

San Jacinto College men's soccer alumnus, Mوزه "Mozzi" Gyorio signed to play professionally with the United Soccer League's Pro Austin Aztecs.

Until signing with the Aztecs, the 25-year-old Canada native had been playing as a midfielder for the North American Soccer League's Minnesota United FC.

His rise to professional soccer began at San Jacinto College in 2008, when he helped the team finish as the national runner up.

A couple of school records were set as a select group of Dobie High School swimmers completed their 2014-2015 season at the Region VI championships at the Pearland Recreation Center and Natatorium.

Kevin Nguyen, who ended his career as one of the school's best-ever swimmers, set the school record in the 200-yard individual medley while placing fourth, and his fifth-place finish in the 100-yard freestyle left him .06 of a second short of another school record.

Nguyen was also in on the action along with Tin Nguyen, Joshua Woernley and Samuel Parker as the relay squad lowered the school record during the preliminaries.

That foursome reached the final but was flagged for a disqualification. The same four athletes teamed in the 400-yard freestyle relay for a 10th overall finish at regionals.

Tin Nguyen was 15th overall in the 100-yard flystroke, and the Dobie girls also came up big in the preliminaries.

The 200-yard medley

relay team of Elissa Cruz, Lisa Luna, Jenna Rodriguez and Maria Mejia delivered their best time of the season in the prelims.

Vanessa Gonzalez rose two spots in the seedings with a great effort in the 200-yard freestyle, and Madison Caballero scored the best time of her season in the 100-yard flystroke.

Gonzalez, Summer Naser, Rebecca Shaffer and Caballero also competed in the 400-yard freestyle relay at regionals.

The No. 2 state-ranked North Shore Lady Mustangs handed Dobie a 76-30 loss in the bidistrict playoff round at Deer Park.

Thus, Dobie's varsity girls' basketball season ended at 19-13 overall. See more on Page 2B.

Atkinson Elementary recognized its Big Shoot-Out winners following the completion of the Pasadena ISD competition at Phillips Field House.

Those representing the Eagles at the district event included Matison Mitchell (third-grade girls' winner), Ashly Lopez (fourth-grade girls' winner) and Christian Covarrubias (third-grade boys' winner). Mario Anthony Valadez was the school's fourth-grade boys' winner.

Houston Memorial was easily the best team in the boys' and girls' fields at the Jim Kethan Relays in Deer Park, but Dobie certainly had its fair share of outstanding individual efforts.

Junior Justice Henderson won top honors in three different events, leading the Lady Longhorns to a fourth-place finish in the team standings with 64 points. She was also part of a relay victory for Dobie.

Fast-paced, get up and down the floor basketball was the theme of the night as Dobie's varsity boys' team tussled with defending state champion North Shore, at Pasadena Memorial in a bidistrict playoff matchup.

The Clear Brook varsity boys' bowling team got a great individual effort from three competitors, including Anthony Propeck, D.J. Casas and Viny Thibodeaux. With 65 total bowlers in the mix, the Brook trio went 1-2-3 in the final individual standings and headed to regionals.

Propeck averaged 207 during the season and went on to win his second consecutive district championship.

As a team, the Wolverines were able to claim the Southeast District championship for the first time in school history.

Propeck, Casas and Thibodeaux headed to individual regional competition.

March

Scoring five gold-medal performances along the way, Clear Brook's varsity boys' track and field team landed the team championship at the Clear Falls Knight Relays in League City.

Jared Roberson (pole vault), Luke Barksdale (long jump), Mark Milton (200-meter dash), Brandon Taylor (100-meter dash) and the 4x100-meter relay team earned gold medals as the Wolverines eventually rounded up 87 points to edge out second-place Barbers Hill (80 points).

Jacoby Davis was second in the high jump after clearing 5'8" as he scored seven of Dobie's 12 points at the meet.

Sophomore Michelle Kristoff earned three of Dobie's four wins in the Pearland ISD Haynie Invitational as the Lady Longhorns went 4-2 overall.

Cathy Supak, the longtime girls' athletics trainer at Clear Brook High School, has added the title of hall of famer to her resume.

As part of an outreach program involving Clear Creek ISD and Houston Methodist Orthopedics and Sports Medicine at St. John Hospital, Supak has been at Brook since 1992



Sergio Quintanilla (right), already the District 22-6A Most Valuable Player in varsity boys' soccer, made Port Arthur Memorial understand why as he punched in a couple of goals in the bidistrict playoffs, helping his team to an eventual shootout victory. At left is Dobie's Jorge Martinez.

Photo by John Bechtle

and has earned many honors along the way.

If opening day is a sign of things to come, the Thompson Lions' eighth-grade track and field team is in business.

The team roared to an easy win in the Pasadena ISD's first intermediate track and field meet of the season, at Auxiliary Stadium in Pasadena.

Thompson pulled together 165 team points for first place, with Bondy second with 89. Beverly Hills' 82 points was fourth-best.

San Jacinto won the seventh-grade division with 115, followed by Beverly Hills with 94. Thompson was third with 85.

Several Dobie varsity girls' basketball players earned honors as the District 22-6A head coaches announced their postseason award winners and honorees.

Dobie senior post Patrice Jackson was the first-team pick, while Lady Longhorn sophomores Audrey Wandji and Jade Giron made the second team.

The strong man became just the third male powerlifter from Dobie to reach the state championships, joining Steve Garza and Justin Rice.

Dorothy Tran remains the lone Lady Longhorn to reach state.

The Clear Brook Wolverines, invited to the varsity boys' soccer playoff party thanks to a late-season push, faced the Elsik Rams in a bidistrict playoff game at Deer Park ISD's Abshire Stadium.

Brook, which finished fourth in the final District 24-6A standings, were ready for the big matchup but nonetheless came up a bit short.

"We are very loose, and ready to get going," Clear Brook varsity boys' head coach Chris Stromeyer said.

"Anything can happen in the playoffs. We have had a great week of practice in preparation for Elsik, and we will be ready."

"The boys know it will be a challenge, and that Elsik is a great team."

Thompson Intermediate distance runner Jonathan Nuncio played a starring role while helping the Lions' eighth-grade track and field team to an easy win at the Pasadena ISD championships March 24-25 at Auxiliary Stadium.

Nuncio won the 800-meter run and was second in the 400-meter run to score 18 team points for the Lions. Overall, Thompson went on to score 206 points, more than doubling second-place Beverly Hills' 98 points. The Bears, meanwhile, were led by Jordy Reyes, who won the 2,400-meter run and was second in the 1,600-meter event. Also, Thompson eighth-grade girls' com-

petitor Taylor Pleasants collected 34 points in the two-day meet, including three individual wins. San Jacinto won the seventh-grade boys' team crown, while Bondy swept both girls' divisions.

More than two hours on the field, 100 minutes of varsity boys' soccer play-off action complete. Still nothing decided.

It took 10 shootout attempts from both teams, and finally Dobie claimed victory when Port Arthur Memorial's Ricardo Cibrian watched helplessly as his shootout try bounced forward off the left post.

With that, Longhorn keeper Rigoberto Fuentes raised his arms and was quickly swarmed by teammates in a celebration of victory as Dobie outlasted P.A. Memorial in the most thrilling bidistrict game of the weekend.

April

Dobie's upset bid of defending state champion Clements was within reach, and this time the Longhorns simply couldn't close the deal.

Instead, Clements used an overtime goal in the first 10-minute session to eliminate the Longhorns from the varsity boys' soccer playoffs. It goes down as just Dobie's second loss of the entire season.

More than 90 applicants entered their resumes for a chance to become just the ninth varsity football head coach in Dobie High School program history.

As of press time, only a select few 'interview-invited' candidates remain as Dobie principal Franklin Moses and his trusted committee work toward finding a successor to the departed Jim Phillips.

The suddenly hot bat-swinging San Jacinto College women's softball team is looking to make another late-season push.

Heading into play after press time April 8 at Galveston, San Jacinto had won four straight games to move to 29-18 overall.

Two of those wins came in Region XIV action as San Jac hammered its way past Alvin 10-0 and 10-5. Sophomore slugger Carah Nunez led the way with five runs driven in during both games.

Clear Brook varsity boys' soccer player Andrew Ciancone was one of the big winners as the District 24-6A head coaches announced its postseason honoree list.

Ciancone, a three-year letterman and a team captain, was one of the leaders as the Wolverines made a late-season push to the postseason.

A pair of Dobie High School sports legends are now enshrined forever.

Scott Talton won more varsity games – 500 – than any other head coach in Pasadena ISD history over a 27-year run as the Longhorns' varsity boys' bas-

ketball head coach.

Randy McEachern led Dobie to its first-ever varsity football district championship in 1973 and later starred in the same backfield with Earl Campbell at the University of Texas.

Dobie High School's Ruben Vargas is headed back to the Region III Spring Tennis Championships after winning his third District 22-6A boys' singles title at the Harry Taylor Tennis Center at Strawberry Park in Pasadena.

Vargas entered the tournament as the No. 1 seed in his draw and held it up, defeating Dawson's Patrick Larroza 6-0, 6-0 in the championship match.

Three other JFD players also advanced to regionals at Deer Park High School.

Dobie midfielder Sergio Quintanilla capped a tremendous senior season, grabbing Most Valuable Player honors in District 22-6A after leading the Longhorns to the league championship with an unbeaten record.

Quintanilla later scored a pair of goals against Port Arthur Memorial to get his team to the area playoff round.

The thrill of a 15-5 win over South Houston quickly dissipated less than 24 hours later as the Dobie varsity baseball team suffered a 6-3 loss to Dawson April 21 at Longhorn Field.

Trailing 3-2 in the top of the sixth, the Eagles played the tying run in that sixth inning and then added three runs in the top of the seventh, handing the Longhorns what could be a crucial defeat in the District 22-6A big picture.

Just like that, Ruben Vargas saw his star-studded varsity tennis career at Dobie come to an end.

In a match that might as well have taken place in the South Belt area, Clear Brook's Max Pearson defeated Vargas 6-2, 6-2 in opening-round play at the Region III Spring Championships at Deer Park High School.

Vargas, the three-time district champion while representing Dobie, played his final University Interscholastic League match for the school.

Clear Brook High School girls' track and field stars Raygen Smith and Maygen Smith are attending Texas Tech University in Lubbock after signing letters of intent with the Red Raiders.

May

The state championship ring says it all. Mike Norman has been to the mountaintop in the big time Texas High School football.

Now, the former long-time Pearland High School football assistant coach is switching allegiances. He became a Dobie Longhorn, having gained official Pasadena ISD board approval.

After 21 years as an assistant to Pearland High School varsity football head coach Tony Heath, Norman earned his first chance to lead a big-time Class 6A program.

Stellar pitching once again led San Jacinto College's baseball team to the National Junior College Athletic Association's National Championships.

San Jac defeated Angelina 4-1 at Constellation Field in Sugar Land, sending the locals to the national tournament for the 23rd time in program history. The team's last national title came in 1990.

This time, San Jacinto came out of the loser's bracket to advance.

Deer Park began swinging the bats from the opening pitch of the series and seemingly continued banging out the hits throughout, quickly sending Dobie packing in a bidistrict baseball playoff series at Dickinson High School's Leland Williams Field.

The Deer, undefeated champions of District 21-6A and losers of just one game all season, cranked out 11-1 and 8-4 victories over the Longhorns to ad-

vance to the area round in a sweep.

Dobie, meanwhile, saw its season end in the first round for the second straight season.

Bondy emerged as the champion of the 2014-2015 Pasadena ISD Cup competition, edging Thompson for the crown. Beverly Hills was third.

The annual competition pits each of the district's 10 intermediate schools against one another.

Points are awarded to schools based on first-through 10th-place finish in each of the team sports, including football, volleyball, boys' and girls' basketball and boys' and girls' cross-country and track and field. Individual efforts are also rewarded.

The Dobie High School athletics program has captured another Pasadena ISD Cup award, outpacing each of the district's other four high schools for the honor.

The Longhorns' 229 points in the final PISD Cup standings for the 2014-2015 schools easily outdistanced the 149 points collected by Memorial.

Taylor Pleasants and Kris Morris emerged as the big winners when Thompson Intermediate hosted its annual athletics banquet.

Pleasants, the school's Most Outstanding Female Athlete Award winner, led the way in a variety of sports this school year and was also the district champion in the Punt, Pass and Kick contest.

Morris led the Lions to the eighth-grade A football championship with dominating performances all season and also played basketball and ran track.

Another year, another state track and field medal for the Clear Brook High School program.

Junior sprinter Brandon Taylor battled his way to a bronze medal in the Class 6A boys' 100-meter dash as the University Interscholastic League's State Track and Field evening session got rolling May 16 at the Mike A. Myers Track Complex in Austin.

Garland Sachse's Devin Duvernay was the 100-meter champion, crossing the finish line at 10.27 seconds.

Plano East's Chris Ntreh (10.394 seconds) clipped Taylor at the wire for a silver medal, with Taylor next at 10.399 seconds.

Taylor's medal win gave the Wolverines top-three placing in state-meet competition over three straight years.

Raygen Smith, in the 300-meter hurdles, was third at state during the 2013 and 2014 seasons but did not qualify this time around.

Smith's twin sister, Maygen Smith, won the Region III title in the 400-meter run this season on her way to state.

However, Maygen Smith, did not medal in her final meet as a Lady Wolverine, eventually placing fifth at the 400-meter distance in a time of 56.07.

June

Class of 2015 graduates Andrew Ciancone of Clear Brook and Dobie's Sergio Quintanilla continue to earn praise for an outstanding varsity boys' soccer season.

Ciancone, a three-year varsity letterman who helped lead the Wolverines to the playoffs this season, was a second team All-Greater Houston selection as a defender and was previously the Defensive Player of the Year in District 24-6A.

Lutheran South Academy senior Drew Beakey committed to attending and playing football for Texas A&M University in College Station.

Beakey was a finalist for the 2014 Lineman of the Year, awarded by the Houston Touchdown Club, and was selected for the 2014 All-Greater Houston Preseason Private School Football Team.

He was selected as an all-state first team offen-

sive lineman and earned academic all-state honors as well.

Matt Juengel, a 2008 Clear Brook High School graduate, was named the Southern League Player of the Week for June 1-7 while playing for the Miami Marlins' Class AA affiliate, the Jacksonville Suns.

An eye-popping offensive year at the plate paid big dividends for San Jacinto College sophomore outfielder Walker Pennington, who was named a second team All-America selection by the National Junior College Athletic Association following the 2015 season.

Pennington, a transfer from Texas Christian University who played high school baseball at Houston Memorial, led the San Jacinto College team in numerous categories.

His .410 batting average, 87 hits, 12 home runs and 68 runs driven in were all team highs, and his 12 doubles tied him with two other players for the team lead.

At the JUCO World Series, Pennington was an all-tournament selection after going 10 for 19 with two doubles, a triple and a homer while driving in four runs.

Dobie varsity baseball standout Tyler Myers is among those in the class of 2016 who have been invited to take part in the Houston Area Baseball Coaches Association's Red-Blue All-Star Game.

The game, featuring many of the Houston area's top varsity baseball players, was part of HABA-CA's two-day All-Star Games and Combo Series June at Baseball USA.

July

Mike Norman, named Dobie's varsity football head coach in March of 2015, continued his annual tradition of visiting Croatia as part of a contingent of volunteer football coaches from the HIS PRINT Ministries group.

As he did for many years while an assistant coach at Pearland High School, Norman spent time in Croatia teaching the game of football to youth and college-aged groups from that area.

Then, it was back to the Houston area for the start of two-a-days at Dobie for Norman.

Kaelon Woods and Isaiah Myers, members of Dobie's 2014 varsity baseball team, gave the Houston RBI summer baseball program a big lift en route to the league championship.

Woods compiled a 9-0 record along the way, posting an earned run average of 2.76 with one complete game.

Myers played in the infield, hitting .560 at the plate. He also chipped in on the hill, going 2-0 with five saves along the way.

With the high school football season just around the corner, new offensive and defensive coordinators began to get comfortable at Dobie under first-year head coach Mike Norman.

Dobie's offensive coordinator was none other than Anthony Evans, a former Pearland High School football star who ended his prep career as one of the most prolific rushing yards leaders in Texas.

Defensively, veteran coordinator Donald Randle came over from Summer Creek High School to lead the Longhorns' unit.

Other than those two changes, Norman chose to retain the vast majority of the assistant staff.

August

Amanda Nguyen, a Dobie High School softball legend whose still serving in the United States Army, gained the ultimate honor from Patriot League followers.

Nguyen, who finished her collegiate career in 2014 as the Patriot League's all-time leader in hits and stolen bases, was chosen as a member of the Patriot League's 25th-Anniversary Team.

Continued on Page 6B

Sophomore named All-American

Geoffrey shatters San Jacinto digs record

She shattered the college's record number of total digs in a season of 643 by recording 876 this season, resetting her own record along the way. For this reason and many more, San Jacinto College volleyball libero Manon Geoffroy has been named a National Junior College Athletic Association women's volleyball All-American. Geoffroy's achievement adds to San Jac's historical record for the all-time top 10 players in certain statistical categories.

She now holds eight out of the top 10 spots for digs tallied in a single match. "Manon didn't just break the digs in a single season record, she shattered it," said head coach Sharon Nelson. "She hustled for over 200 more digs than any other defender in San Jac history." Geoffroy's impressive record climb this season started with coming in at No. 9 with 28 digs against 11th ranked Panola College, No. 8 with 29 digs against North Central Tex-

as College, No. 7 with 30 digs against 12th ranked Northeastern Junior College, No. 6 with 31 digs against Tyler Junior College, No. 5 with 32 digs against Blinn Junior College, No. 4 with 33 digs against Lee College, and No. 3 with 38 digs against 20th ranked Wharton County Junior College until reaching to the No. 1 spot twice during a 7 1/2-hour marathon play at the NJCAA regional tournament - once with 43 digs against ninth-ranked Blinn College in a repeat

match and another 43 digs against Blinn College (99th ranked) again at the tournament's championship match. "Players have been working for years to match or break that record, and she does it twice in one day at the end of seven and a half hours of play," said Nelson. "She truly is one of the best of all time at San Jac. The NJCAA also recognizing her talents and honoring her with All-American status is a great honor. "Manon has definitely

earned it, and we are very grateful to the regional and national committees for honoring her." Geoffroy hails from Bordeaux, France, and was named Best Libero in France while leading her team to the 2012 French Championship. She is a dean's list honoree, a member of Phi Theta Kappa, and is set to graduate in May 2016 with a degree focused on international business. For more information about SJC volleyball, visit sanjacsports.com.



Manon Geoffroy was named a National Junior College Athletic Association women's volleyball All-American, capping a sensational two-year run for the San Jacinto College program. Geoffroy broke the college's existing single-season digs total in 2014 as a freshman and then shattered that mark in 2015.

Team-first approach lifts SJC volleyball

Strong team chemistry, selflessness, and a "ton of heart" carried the San Jacinto College volleyball team back to the National Junior College Athletic Association National Volleyball Championship during the 2015 season. After an impressive regional tournament in Tyler, San Jac headed to nationals in Casper, Wyo., and ended the season with 28-15 with a roster that broke college records.

"They are a group that won't quit," said Nelson. "After that long of straight play you want to win and just as importantly, you want to get out of that situation healthy. It is literally something that will be talked about for years." Nelson later received a call from a university coach who has since retold the San Jacinto College volleyball team's story to her team and others. "I was really moved by what we had accomplished and overcome that day," said Nelson. "But hearing that we inspired someone from a division level higher than

ours, that's exactly what this team is about, and the message we want to send about our program and our college." Along the way, several players made their mark on the program. Eventual All-American selection Manon Geoffroy broke into the top 10 eight times for digs in a single match during her sophomore campaign. Her overall record stands with 873 digs, which was second in the nation for the 2015 season. Brianna Moten broke into the top 10 for all-time attack percentage in a single match - with a hitting

percentage of 0.826. She also placed second all time in total blocks (206) in a single season, just under Marlaina Pleydle (214) from the 2012 San Jac volleyball team. Moten added her name to the attack percentage top-10 list for a single season; 0.367 placed her sixth all time for the program's history, tied with Oni Latin from the 2012 San Jac volleyball team. In games played, four players joined the top-10 list at San Jacinto. Moten added her name to the top of the list at 165. Hannah Baker made the list as well at No. 2 with 163, followed by Hannah Malley

with 162, and Geoffroy with 161. Kerstin Jenkins placed fifth all time for total number of attempts in a season, and Baker tallied 1,000 assists this season, running a 6-2 offense from her setter spot. "We had a unique chemistry that every coach wants," Nelson said. Everyone did their job and when there were moments to be the inspiration, they stepped up and became the heroes." Nelson said seven freshmen will return next season, with eight sophomores graduating and moving on to play elsewhere in 2016.

SJC's Benamna gets NJCAA All-American

At right, San Jacinto College soccer forward Donald Benamna was named to the National Soccer Coaches Association of America All-American second team after leading the locals to within a win of reaching the national tournament. Benamna, a sophomore, wrapped up the 2015 season with 21 goals and two assists for 44 points helping the team finish the season as the National Junior College Athletic Association Region XIV runners-up, with a 12-6-1 overall record.

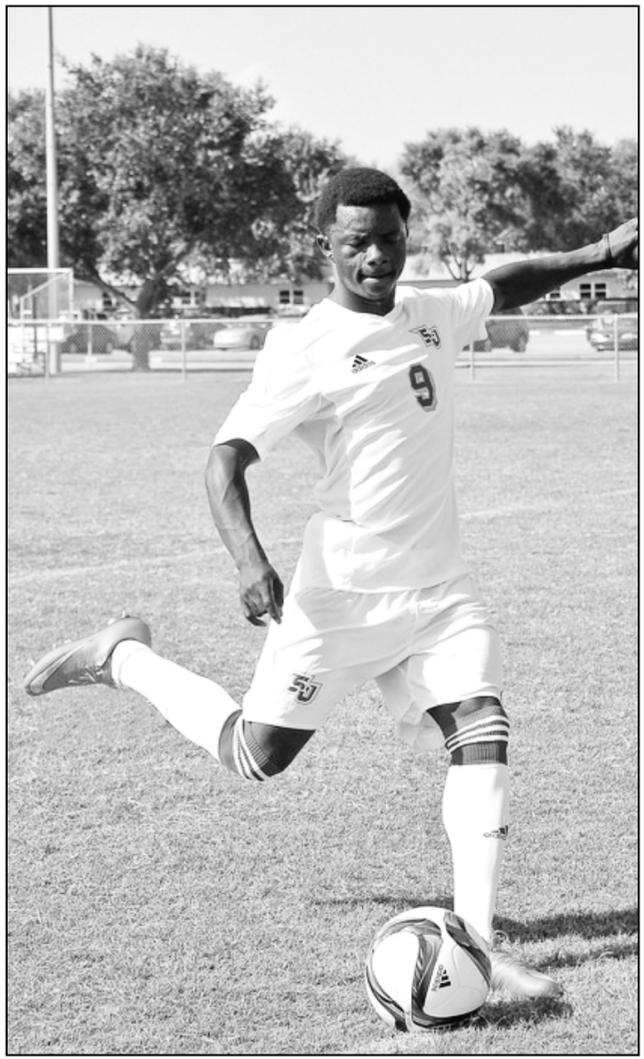


Photo by Andrea Vasquez

H.S. soccer season under way

Continued from Page 1B
Klein up for CB boys
A regular participant in the Klein Showcase, the Clear Brook varsity boys' soccer team is another that is sure to quickly find out how good it is. Grabbing a playoff berth with a late-season run of success in 2015, the Wolverines must replace several top tier players but will again rely on solid team play to succeed. A Jan. 7 matchup against Tomball at the Klein Showcase serves to open the regular season.

Then comes games against Northland Christian (Jan. 8) and Lufkin (Jan. 9) to close out play in the round robin event. The Wolverines, who do not begin District 24-6A action until Jan. 29 against Clear Creek, will also play nondistrict matches against Pearland, Cypress Woods and Summer Creek prior to league play. **CB girls also at Humble**
Is there a chance Dobie and Clear Brook could find itself playing one another at the Jan. 7-9 Hum-

ble Invitational? Doesn't figure to happen, but it could. Both teams are included in the Blue Division at the event, with Clear Brook taking on Katy and Dobie facing Atascocita in a nightcap. Brook will draw either La Porte or Klein Collins Jan. 8, with Dobie getting either Beaumont West Brook or Lumberton Jan. 8. Trophy round matches are set for Jan. 9. The Brook girls also start 24-6A play Jan. 29, against Clear Creek.

Varsity soccer tourneys Jan. 7-9
Humble Invitational
Jan. 7: Dobie girls vs. Atascocita
Jan. 7: Brook girls vs. Katy
Bracket play continues Jan. 8-9
Brook boys at Klein Showcase
Jan. 7: Brook vs. Tomball; Jan. 8: Brook vs. Northland Christian; Jan. 9: Brook vs. Lufkin

Dobie football hosts raffle
The Dobie High School football program is conducting a raffle as a means to raise funds for year-round activities and needs within the football program. Longhorn football players are currently \$10 raffle tickets, with the final drawing for prizes coming Jan. 17, at Bay Oaks Country Club. Winners need not be present to win. The raffle prizes include a first prize of a Samsung 40-inch 1080P, 1080P 60Hz LED HDTV (\$550 value), second prize of a Bay Oaks Country Club round of golf for four (\$400 value) and a third prize of an Apple Watch Sport 38mm (\$350 value). To purchase raffle tickets, visit any Dobie High School football player now through the second week of January.

Sports Calendar

BASKETBALL
Friday, Jan. 8
Dobie varsity girls at Alvin, 7:00
Dobie varsity boys host Alvin, Phillips F.H., 7:00
Brook varsity girls host Clear Lake, 7:00
Brook varsity boys at Clear Lake, Krueger, 7:00
Brook JV boys at Clear Lake, 5:30
Dobie JV girls at Alvin, 5:30
Dobie JV boys host Alvin, Phillips F.H., 5:30
Brook freshman A boys Clear Lake, 5:30
Dobie sophomore boys host Alvin, Dobie, 5:30
Brook freshman A girls at Alvin, 4:00
Dobie sophomore boys host Clear Lake, 4:00
Dobie freshman A girls at Alvin, 4:00
Brook freshman A girls host Clear Lake, 4:00
Dobie freshman A boys host Alvin, Dobie, 4:00
Dobie freshman B girls at Alvin, 4:00
Dobie freshman B boys host Alvin, Dobie, 4:00
Brook freshman B boys Clear Lake, 4:00
Brook freshman B girls host Clear Lake, 4:00

Tuesday, Jan. 12
Dobie varsity girls host Rayburn, 7:00
Dobie varsity boys at Rayburn, 7:00
Brook varsity girls at Clear Springs, 5:30
Brook varsity boys at Clear Springs, 7:00
Brook JV boys at Clear Springs, 5:30
Dobie JV girls host Rayburn, 5:30
Dobie JV boys at Rayburn, 5:30
Brook JV girls at Clear Springs, 5:30
Brook sophomore boys at Clear Springs, 5:30
Dobie sophomore boys at Rayburn, 5:30
Brook freshman A boys at Clear Springs, 4:00
Dobie freshman A girls host Rayburn, 4:00
Brook freshman A girls at Clear Springs, 4:00
Dobie freshman B girls host Rayburn, 4:00
Dobie freshman B boys at Rayburn, 4:00
Brook freshman B boys Clear Lake, 4:00
Brook freshman B girls at Clear Springs, 4:00

SOCCER
Thursday, Jan. 7 through Saturday, Jan. 9
Dobie varsity boys at Pasadena ISD Cup, TBA
Brook varsity boys at Klein Showcase, TBA
Dobie varsity girls at Humble Invite, TBA
Brook varsity girls at Humble Invite, TBA

CALENDAR

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7
7 a.m.
AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787 for information, or just drop in.
10 a.m.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - Bridge games weekdays, 10 a.m., Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m., 16614 Sea Lark Rd. For lessons, contact Dr. Dave Glandorf, bridge instructor, at drglandorf@sbcglobal.net or 281-488-6318. Cost is \$6 per game or \$15 per lesson. For information, call the club at 281-480-1911.
Noon
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group of Alcoholics Anonymous, noon, 2245 N. Main, Pearland. For information, call 713-856-1611.
4 p.m.
Houston Area Parkinson Society - Free water exercise for individuals with Parkinson's disease, 4 to 5 p.m., Kindred Rehabilitation Hospital Clear Lake, 655 E. Medical Center Blvd., Webster. Call 713-313-1652 or visit www.hapsonline.org for a list of all services.
6:30 p.m.
Diabetes Support Group - A support group for young adults with Type 1 diabetes. All subjects are open for discussion: new technologies, research advances, phobias, dating and other personal matters. Meets monthly on the first Thursday (or second Thursday if that day is a holiday) at various area restaurants. Contact Dan Steiner, CDE, at 713-922-9677 information.
7 p.m.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Women's Group of Narcotics Anonymous, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, at the First Presbyterian Church (youth building) on the Westminster side. For information, call 713-856-1611.
Al-Anon (English Speaking) - Provides support for family and friends of alcoholics and addicts. Thursday at 7 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Parkway,

Pasadena, Room 215. Call 281-487-8787, or just drop in.
Alateen - Provides support for teenage children, friends and family members of alcoholics and addicts. Thursday, 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, room 208. Call 281-487-8787, or just drop in.
The Bay Area Writers League - Meets the first Thursday of each month, Barnes and Noble, Bay Area Blvd. and the Gulf Freeway. 7 p.m. Newcomers welcome.
8:30 p.m.
Alcoholics Anonymous - Alcohol problems? AA meetings are held Thursdays, 8:30 to 9:30 p.m., and Sundays and Tuesdays, 8 to 9 p.m., St. Stephen Presbyterian Church, 2217 Theta Street. For information, call 713-204-2481.
FRIDAY, JANUARY 8
7 a.m.
AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" each Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787 for information, or just drop in.
10 a.m.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - Bridge games weekdays, 10 a.m., Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m., 16614 Sea Lark Rd. For lessons, contact Dr. Dave Glandorf, bridge instructor, at drglandorf@sbcglobal.net or 281-488-6318. Cost is \$6 per game or \$15 per lesson. For more information, call the club at 281-480-1911.
Noon
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - West End Group of Alcoholics Anonymous, noon, Shepherd of the Heart United Methodist Church, 12005 County Road 39, Pearland. For information, call 713-856-1611.
6 p.m.
Un Dia a la Vez Alanon Group (Spanish) - Provides support for family and friends of alcoholics or addicts. Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 6 p.m., room 215, First United Methodist Church, Pasadena, 1062 Fairmont Parkway. Call 281-487-8787, or just drop in.
7 p.m.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of Narcotics Anonymous, open meeting, 2245 N. Main St., (Hwy 35), Pearland. For information, call 713-856-1611.
SATURDAY, JANUARY 9
7:30 a.m.
Alcoholics Anonymous - "Breakfast with Bill", Saturdays, 7:30 a.m., First United Methodist Church, Pasadena, 1062 Fairmont Parkway, Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787, or just drop in.
10 a.m.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of Narcotics Anonymous, open meeting, 2245 N. Main St., (Hwy 35), Pearland. For information, call 713-856-1611.
11 a.m.
Al-Anon Meeting (Women Only, English) - For persons whose lives are affected by an addict. Saturdays, 11 a.m., First United Methodist Church, Pasadena, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy, Cornell Conference room #111. Call 281-487-8787, or just drop in.
1 p.m.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - Bridge games weekdays, 10 a.m., Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m., 16614 Sea Lark Rd. For lessons, contact Dr. Dave Glandorf, bridge instructor, at drglandorf@sbcglobal.net or 281-488-6318. Cost is \$6 per game or \$15 per lesson. For information, call the club at 281-480-1911.
SUNDAY, JANUARY 10
1 p.m.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - Bridge games weekdays, 10 a.m., Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m., 16614 Sea Lark Rd. For lessons, contact Dr. Dave Glandorf, bridge instructor, at drglandorf@sbcglobal.net or 281-488-6318. Cost is \$6 per game or \$15 per lesson. For information, call the club at 281-480-1911.
2 p.m.
Grief Support Group - For any adult who has lost a loved one. Meets Sundays, except Mother's Day, Easter and Christmas, 2 to 3:15 p.m., First United Methodist Church Pasadena, 1062 Fairmont Parkway. For information, call 281-487-8787.

3 p.m.
Scleroderma Support Group Meeting - Do you have scleroderma or know someone with scleroderma - a rare illness caused by overproduction of collagen. Join a support group meeting monthly on the second Sunday, 3 to 5 p.m., at Pasadena Bayshore Hospital, 4000 Spencer Hwy., Pasadena. Bring a friend. Contact Jacob Davila, group leader, at 281-706-6232, or email jdavila@scleroderma.org.
5:30 p.m.
Celebrate Recovery - A faith-based 12-Step Program, Sundays, 5:30 p.m., Chapel of the Educational Building at Life Church in Houston, 9900 Almeda Genoa. Call 713-419-2635 for information or to RSVP for child care.
6:30 p.m.
Alcoholics Anonymous - Candlelight Meeting, Sunday, 6:30 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787, or just drop in.
7 p.m.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of Narcotics Anonymous NA meets Sundays, 7 p.m., 2245 N. Main St., Pearland. For information, call 713-856-1611.
8 p.m.
Alcoholics Anonymous - Alcohol problems? AA meetings are held Thursdays, 8:30 to 9:30 p.m., and Sundays and Tuesdays, 8 to 9 p.m., St. Stephen Presbyterian Church, 2217 Theta Street. For information, call 713-204-2481.
MONDAY, JANUARY 11
10 a.m.
Al-Anon Deer Park - Mondays 10 to 11 a.m. Literature Study. In His Presence Fellowship Church, 1202 East P Street, Deer Park. Enter through Fellowship Hall in back of church. Call 409-454-5720 for information, or just drop in.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - Bridge games weekdays, 10 a.m., Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m., 16614 Sea Lark Rd. For lessons, contact Dr. Dave Glandorf, bridge instructor, at drglandorf@sbcglobal.net or 281-488-6318. Cost is \$6 per game or \$15 per lesson. For information, call the club at 281-480-1911.

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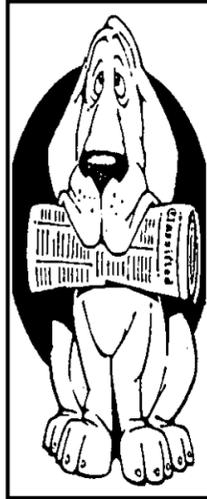
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Continued from Page 3B

MONDAY, JANUARY 11

11:30 a.m.
Overeaters Anonymous Deer Park - 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Literature Study. In His Presence Fellowship Church, 1202 East P Street, Deer Park. Enter through Fellowship Hall in back of church. Call 409-454-5720 for information, or just drop in.

Noon
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon at 2245 N. Main, Pearland. For information, call 713-856-1611.

3:30 p.m.
Houston Area Parkinson Society - Free exercise and speech therapy from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at Clear Lake Rehabilitation Hospital, 655 E. Medical Center Blvd., Webster. Visit www.hapsonline.org for a complete list of services offered. For adults with Parkinson's disease only.

6 p.m.
Scrabble Club #511 - Meets Mondays at IHOP, 11222 Fuqua, 6 p.m. Come and improve crossword game playing skills. Call 281-488-2923 for information.

6:30 p.m.
Mended Hearts Cardiac Support Group - A national organization dedicated to inspiring hope in heart disease patients and their families, meets the second Monday of each month at the Clear Lake Heart Towers auditorium, 495 Medical Center Blvd. in Webster. A free meal begins at 6:30 p.m., followed by a speaker. For information, call 281-538-4648.

Pearland Overeaters Anonymous HOW Meeting - meets Mondays at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 2535 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland. Enter door next to recycling bins. For information, call 713-865-3668 or visit www.oahouston.org.

7 p.m.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of Narcotics Anonymous, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building) on the Westminster side. For information, call 713-856-1611.

Sagmont Civic Club - Meetings are held the second Monday of every month, 7 p.m., Sagmont Park Recreation Center, 11507 Hughes Road.
Friends Helping Friends Grief Support Group - Group meets Mondays, Kindred Rehabilitation Hospital, 655 E. Medical Center Blvd., Webster, 7 to 8:15 p.m., in the staff meeting room. Anyone who has lost a loved one is welcome. Free. For information, call Betty Bielat at 281-474-3430 or Diana Kawalek at 281-334-1033.

7:30 p.m.
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - New AA meeting, Saint Luke's Group, 12 Step Recovery Program, open meeting meets every Monday, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Education Building, 11011 Hall Road, 77089. Call Russell Garcia at 832-483-6715 for information.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 12

7 a.m.
AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday at 7 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church Pasadena, 1062 Fairmont Parkway, in the Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787 for information, or just drop in.

9:30 a.m.
CCART - The Clear Creek Association of Retired Teachers meets the second Tuesday of each month, Sept. through May, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Bay Area Community Center, 5002 Nasa Parkway in Seabrook near Landolt Pavilion. Texas retired school employees from surrounding school districts welcome to attend and join. Annual dues are \$35.

Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum - Exhibits include dioramas, an old-time kitchen and a turn-of-the-century doctor's office. Tuesday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., 204 S. Main, Pasadena. For information, call 713-472-0565.

10 a.m.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - Bridge games weekdays, 10 a.m., Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m., 16614 Sea Lark Rd. For lessons, contact Dr. Dave Glandorf, bridge instructor, at drvglandorf@sbcglobal.net or 281-488-6318. Cost is \$6 per game or \$15 per lesson. For information, call the club at 281-480-1911.

10:30 a.m.
Tri-County Republican Women - General meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month, except June and July, Golfcrest Country Club, 2509 Country Club Drive, Pearland. Lunch available for \$15. Must have exact cash or make checks payable to Golfcrest Country Club. For reservations, call Laura Morgan at 281-484-8083.

Noon
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon, at 2245 N. Main, Pearland. For information, call 713-856-1611.

Rotary Club of Pearland - Meets weekly, Tuesdays, noon to 1 p.m., Golfcrest Country Club, 2509 Country Club Drive, Pearland. Lunch is served for \$15. Variety of interesting speakers. For information, call 281-900-7257 or visit nalix.texascitizensbank.com.

1 p.m.
Ballroom Dance Practice - Tuesdays, Hometown Heroes Park, League City. Come and enjoy free ballroom dancing, 1 to 3 p.m., on a beautiful 3,630 sq. ft. floating hardwood floor. Dancers practice to a large variety of ballroom music. Instructor available to assist people with new moves. Everyone is welcome! For questions, call 281-554-1180. 1001 East League City Pkwy.

1:30 p.m.
TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) - TOPS #1530 meets at the Sagmont Park Community Center, 11507 Hughes Road, at 1:30 p.m. For information, call Jeanette Sumrall at 713-946-3713.

6 p.m.
Un Dia a la Vez Alanon Group (Spanish) - Provides support for family and friends of alcoholics or addicts. Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 6 p.m., First United Methodist Church, room 215, 1062 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena. Call 281-487-8787, or drop in.

6:30 p.m.
Harris County Master Gardeners - The Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 offers free evening gardening lectures the second Tuesday of each month at the Clear Lake meeting room (lakeside) at 5001 Nasa Parkway. Programs will be held at 6:30 p.m. Visit the website for a list of topics and location at <https://hcmga.tamu.edu> or call 281-855-5600.

7 p.m.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of Narcotics Anonymous, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church in the youth building on the Westminster side. For information, call 713-856-1611.

Houston Space City Lions Club - Meets the second and fourth

Tuesday of each month, 7 p.m., at various restaurants. For information, call George Malone at 281-438-7243.

8 p.m.
Alcoholics Anonymous - Alcohol problems? AA meetings are held Thursdays, 8:30 to 9:30 p.m., and Sundays and Tuesdays, 8 to 9 p.m., St. Stephen Presbyterian Church, 2217 Theta Street. For information, call 713-204-2481.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13

7 a.m.
AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., First United Methodist Church Pasadena, 1062 Fairmont Parkway, in the Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787 for information, or drop in.

9:30 a.m.
Young at Heart Club - Meets the second and fourth week of each month (except November and December) at Covenant United Methodist Church, 7900 Fuqua. Lots of activities, trips, etc. Call Nellie Gainey at 713-991-3517 for information.

10 a.m.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - Bridge games weekdays, 10 a.m., Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m., 16614 Sea Lark Rd. For lessons, contact Dr. Dave Glandorf, bridge instructor, at drvglandorf@sbcglobal.net or 281-488-6318. Cost is \$6 per game or \$15 per lesson. For information, call the club at 281-480-1911.

11:30 a.m.
American Business Women's Association Bay Area Vision Chapter - Now meets at Perry's Steakhouse & Grille, 487 Bay Area Blvd., on the second Wednesday of every month. For information or to RSVP, call Lorilyn Wynn at 281-388-5202.

Noon
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon at 2245 N. Main, Pearland. For information, call 713-856-1611.

1 p.m.
Hometown Heroes Park - invites dancers to the Hump Day Dance to practice ballroom dance rhythms from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Every Wednesday, 1001 East League City Pkwy, with friends practicing at their own level of ability. Eileen Bauerlein is available to assist those needing help learning dance moves. Call the park office for details at 281-554-1180 or Neva Schroder at 832-864-2721 for questions regarding the dance.

6 p.m.
Un Dia a la Vez Alanon Group (Spanish) - Provides support for family and friends of alcoholics or addicts. Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 6 p.m., First United Methodist Church, room 215, 1062 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena. Call 281-487-8787, or drop in.

6 p.m.
Alzheimer's Support Group - The free group meets the second Wednesday of each month at Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital. For more information, call Steven Williams at 281-929-4199 or 713-266-6400.

7 p.m.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of Narcotics Anonymous, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church in the youth building on the Westminster side. For information, call 713-856-1611.

Bay Area Turning Point Crisis Intervention Center - Confidential domestic violence support group for women, 7 p.m., 210 S. Walnut off Nasa Pkwy, between I-45 South and Highway 3. Call 281-338-7600 or visit www.bayareaturningpoint.com for information. 24-hour crisis hotline is 281-286-2525.

Bay Area New Democrats - Meet at the Clear Lake Court House at 1020 W. Nasa Pkwy., Suite 204. For information, visit www.bayareanewdemocrats.org.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14

7 a.m.
AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 281-487-8787 for information, or just drop in.

9:30 a.m.
NASA Aglow Community Lighthouse - Second Thursday of the month, 9:30 a.m., Praise Chapel, 18516 Highway 3 in Webster. Public welcome and encouraged to bring others. For information, call 281-910-1971.

10 a.m.
Clear Lake Bridge Club - Bridge games weekdays, 10 a.m., Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m., 16614 Sea Lark Rd. For lessons, contact Dr. Dave Glandorf, bridge instructor, at drvglandorf@sbcglobal.net or 281-488-6318. Cost is \$6 per game or \$15 per lesson. For information, call the club at 281-480-1911.

11:30 a.m.
ABWA - Southeast Express Network - American Business Women's Association-South meets monthly on the second Thursday, Spring Creek Barbeque, 9005 Broadway (518), Pearland. Lunch is 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. for \$20 and includes networking with professional business women and guest speaker. Women of all ages and occupations invited. Bring plenty of business cards. Reservations appreciated. Visit www.seen-abwa.org.

Noon
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group of Alcoholics Anonymous, noon, 2245 N. Main, Pearland. For information, call 713-856-1611.

4 p.m.
Houston Area Parkinson Society - Free water exercise for individuals with Parkinson's disease, 4 to 5 p.m., Kindred Rehabilitation Hospital Clear Lake, 655 E. Medical Center Blvd., Webster. Call 713-313-1652 or visit www.hapsonline.org for a list of all services.

7 p.m.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Women's Group of Narcotics Anonymous, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, at the First Presbyterian Church (youth building) on the Westminster side. For information, call 713-856-1611.

AI-Anon (English Speaking) - Provides support for family and friends of alcoholics and addicts. Thursday, 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, Room 215. Call 281-487-8787, or just drop in.

Alateen - Provides support for teenage children, friends and family members of alcoholics and addicts. Thursday at 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, room 208. Call 281-487-8787, or just drop in.

8:30 p.m.
Alcoholics Anonymous - Alcohol problems? AA meetings are held Thursdays, 8:30 to 9:30 p.m., and Sundays and Tuesdays, 8 to 9 p.m., St. Stephen Presbyterian Church, 2217 Theta Street. For information, call 713-204-2481.

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Leader reflects on outstanding athletic year across community



Raygen (left) and Maygen Smith, track and field stars at Clear Brook High School, are now continuing their studies and preparing for the 2016 outdoor season at Texas Tech University in Lubbock after

Continued from Page 2B

September
Stephen Moreno, a player in the Sagemont-Beverly Hills Little League for many years and a freshman at Dobie High School, died in September after experiencing distress during an offseason run while participating in the JFD baseball program.

Following his death, funds were raised through various sources, including the Stephen Moreno Memorial Invitational, held in November at the SBHLL home site at El Franco Lee Park.

Autopsy results pointed to Moreno's possession of a sickle cell trait as a factor in his death.

Perhaps the actual moment is not much worth remembering for South Belt area fans, but Dobie's 75-7 loss to Manvel Sept. 17 at Veterans Stadium in Pasadena represented the Longhorns' worst-ever margin of defeat in program history.

October

Lutheran South Academy varsity football quarterback Patrick Gonzales was named the Built Ford Tough Player of the Week for Week 6 of the high school season after a record-setting performance. Gonzales completed 21 of 29 passes for 529 yards (school record) and seven touchdowns (tied school record) in the Pioneers' 67-38 win over Tomball Concordia Lutheran.

Even if just for a day, Clear Brook's Taylor Johnson and Mateo Gutierrez had the lifetime experience of representing their cross-country programs at the Class 6A Region III championships in Huntsville.

And both runners acquitted themselves well. Johnson, a junior with the Lady Wolverines, placed 58th in the 5,000-meter event with a time of 23 minutes, 58.50 seconds.

Julia Heymach, who was once a member of the South Belt area's Rising Stars Track and Field program, was the overall Region III girls' champion. Heymach, a junior who once ran at Manvel High School as a freshman, this time posted the victory at 19:39.60 while guiding Houston Lamar.

Nathan Gift of Cinco Ranch was the overall Region III boys' champion at 17:31.10 in the 5,000-meter event, and Gutierrez was 90th at 19:59.00.

November

A fifth consecutive Division I football playoff appearance for Dobie against North Shore ended the same way as the other four, as the Mustangs claimed a 52-17 victory in a bidistrict playoff game at Galena Park ISD Stadium.

As in some of the other games, the Longhorns experienced some early success against the Mustangs in the first-round playoff game before the opposition's overall size, speed and quickness advantage seemed to take over the

game. Of note, North Shore went on to win the Class 6A Division I state championship.

The Thompson Lions' football program proved to be the best in the Pasadena ISD ranks.

While the games were closer than the Lions would have liked, Thompson wound up winning both eighth-grade titles as well as the seventh-grade B championship following playoff wins at Veterans Stadium in Pasadena.

Along the way, the Lions defeated neighborhood rival Beverly Hills in two of the title games, while Miller fell to the Lions in the eighth-grade A title game.

While his team made a terrific run to the boys' Division 2 gold bracket championship, Clear Brook varsity boys' basketball player David Azore was rightfully named to the all-tournament team at the McDonald's Texas Invitational, one of the nation's largest and most prestigious varsity basketball tournaments for boys' (48 count) and girls' (32 count) teams.

In the same tournament, the Dobie varsity boys' basketball team also played well, winning four of five games overall en route to the boys' Division 2 gold division semifinals.

Elsewhere in varsity girls' basketball tournament mix, the Clear Brook squad got off to a great start to the season, going 3-0 overall while beating host Baytown Lee in the championship game of the Pelley Division.

Late in the month, San Jacinto College softball head coach Kelly Saenz traveled back to her roots in Canada, where she and her Smitty's Midget division softball team were inducted into the Softball Canada Hall of Fame.

The Smitty's Midget team won national championships in three straight seasons from 1994 through 1996, and Saenz, whose maiden name is Swanson, played on the 1995 and 1996 teams.

Despite one of the most epic performances in national tournament history, the San Jacinto College volleyball team experienced a sour ending to its 2015 season — one that culminated with yet another National Junior College Athletic Association national tournament appearance. See Page 3B for more information.

In terms of the high school volleyball season, a pair of Dobie players gained big time recognition from the league's respective head coaches following the conclusion of the season.

Senior libero Ashley Perez was named the Co-Defensive Player of the Year in the league.

Meanwhile, freshman outside hitter Taylor Pleasants shared the District 22-6A Newcomer of the Year honor.

choosing to join the Red Raiders last spring. Together, the Smiths made three state track and field meet appearances, with Raygen Smith medaling twice.

Also, from the 22-6A volleyball honors, the league overall Most Valuable Player was junior Brooke Botkin, whose father, Jason Botkin, is a Dobie graduate.

Brooke Botkin's grandparents, Linda and Bill Botkin, still reside in the South Belt area.

December

Former star athletes and a head coach from Dobie once again figured prominently as the Pasadena ISD announced its list of seven inductees from the district's Athletics Hall of Fame.

The ceremony honoring the inductees will come in April.

Longtime Dobie varsity volleyball head coach Donna Branch, who also starred as a high schooler at Sam Rayburn High School, was inducted.

So, too, were former Longhorn varsity baseball teammates Shane Nance and John Scheschuk, both of whom helped the Dobie squad reach the Region III championship game in 1995.

After high school graduation, Scheschuk enjoyed a stellar career at Texas A&M University, where he was entered into the Aggies' Athletics Hall of Fame last September.

Scheschuk was also drafted professionally into the San Diego Padres minor league system, where he played for several seasons.

Nance was an ace at the University of Houston on the mound following his graduation.

He also played for Team USA and then went on to play professional baseball for parts of several seasons, his longest stay coming with the Milwaukee Brewers.

Nance and Steve Cummings are the only two former Longhorn varsity baseball players to play any significant time in the big leagues.

As for Branch, the varsity volleyball court at Dobie is named in her honor, and she is still an assistant principal at the school.

A double overtime loss to Pearland served to spoil an otherwise strong start to nondistrict basketball play as the Dobie varsity boys' basketball team began its 22-6A campaign with a loss.

Unfortunately, the team now stands at 1-4 through five league games after falling Jan. 5, at Dawson.

What a varsity football season it turned out to be for several Clear Brook varsity football players, who were given various District 24-6A accolades following the season.

The district proved to be loaded with explosive players both on offense and defense, but it was hard to find any bigger of a game breaker during the season than Clear Brook senior Brandon Taylor.

Taylor, who played quarterback, running back, receiver and special teams kick and punt re-

More news on Taylor, in November he signed a letter of intent to attend the University of Miami as a member of the university's men's track and field team.

Already a Class 6A

100-meter dash bronze medalist, Taylor will lead a talented Clear Brook track and field team as the group pursues the District 24-6A title come April.

Taylor also has his sights on making his way

back to Austin for a second run at a possible gold medal in the 100-meter dash.

Dobie, which turned an 0-5 start to the season into a playoff berth in the District 22-6A ranks, also had its fair share of players honored by the league's coaches.

Freshman running back Kris Morris won the Newcomer of the Year designation in the league, and first-team players for Do-

bie on defense included senior defensive tackle Chandler Tisby (Newcomer of the Year in 2013) and outside linebacker Dedrick Simpson, a two-time 22-6A first team selection.

On the offensive side of the football, senior running back Anthony Owens, senior receiver Jaylon Bolden, senior tight end Jason Lester and senior offensive lineman Vince Gutierrez made the first team.

The San Jacinto College men's soccer team fell just shy of its goal of reaching the national tournament after a loss to Tyler in the postseason.

However, sophomore striker Donald Benamna gained his share of recognition for what was a terrific season.

Benamna had 21 goals and two assists this season, earning second team All-American honors for his work.



Dobie's Mateo Gutierrez made his second Region III cross-country meet appearance in three seasons, finishing 90th in 2015.

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