

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL!

South Belt-Ellington Leader

Voice of Community-Minded People since 1976

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Email: mynews@southbeltleader.com

www.southbeltleader.com

Vol. 50, No. 47

Holiday closures set

South Belt-Ellington Leader

The Leader offices will be closed Wednesday, Dec. 24, through Monday, Jan. 5, for the Christmas/New Year's holidays. Inquiries may be emailed to mynews@southbeltleader.com.

Clear Brook City MUD

Clear Brook City MUD will close at 3 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 23, and be closed Wednesday, Dec. 24, and Thursday, Dec. 25, in observance of the Christmas holiday. The office will reopen Friday Dec. 26, at 8 a.m. For customer convenience, check or money order payments may be left in the drop box located on the drive-thru side of the building. No cash will be accepted in the drop box.

Clear Brook City MUD residents who receive trash services on Thursday will not have pickup on Christmas. Trash services will resume Monday, Dec. 29. All trash must be at curbside no later than 6 a.m. on the day of pickup.

Clear Brook City MUD will close at 3 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 31, and will be closed Thursday, Jan. 1, in observance of New Year's Day. The office will reopen Friday, Jan. 2, at 8 a.m. For customer convenience, check or money order payments may be left in the drop box located on the drive-thru side of the building. No cash will be accepted in the drop box.

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The Houston Solid Waste Management Department has announced its holiday collection schedule, with the following alterations in place:

Christmas

– **Wednesday, Dec. 24:** All regularly scheduled curbside collections will be serviced. Neighborhood depositories, recycling centers and administrative offices will be closed.

– **Thursday, Dec. 25:** There will be no collection services. All facilities and administrative offices will be closed.

– **Friday, Dec. 26:** Thursday's garbage, recycling, yard waste and bulk waste collections will be serviced. All facilities, including neighborhood depositories, recycling centers and administrative offices, will reopen.

– **Saturday, Dec. 27:** Friday's garbage, recycling, yard waste and bulk waste collections will be serviced.

New Years Day

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– **Saturday, Jan. 3:** Friday's garbage, recycling, yard waste and bulk waste collections will be serviced.

For more information, visit us at www.houstonsolidwaste.org or call 311.

CBCMUD to flush water

Clear Brook City MUD residents should be aware the district will be flushing waterlines Monday, Dec. 15, through Friday, Dec. 19, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily or until the last line has been flushed. Done by opening the district's fire hydrants, flushing the system will clear sediment that has accumulated in the waterlines. Residents may experience a drop in water pressure. If one has no water pressure, they should call the district at 281-482-1562.

Residents may also experience discolored water coming from a faucet. If this happens, residents should not use water or do laundry for two hours. After one has waited for this amount of time, they should run the faucet for approximately five minutes to ensure water is clear. If the water does not become clear within two hours, they should contact the district. Clear Brook City MUD will not be responsible for damaged clothes. See related ad on Page 7.

No December PIP meeting

The Houston Police Department will not hold a Positive Interaction Program meeting this month due to the Christmas holidays. Typically held the third Monday of each month, the meetings will resume in 2026 at 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 19, at Grace Church, 14505 Gulf Freeway Classroom No. 103. Guest speaker to be announced.

Began in 1983, HPD's PIP involves police and community members working together for safer neighborhoods. For additional information, contact Houston Police Department Officer C. Castillo at castillo@houstonpolice.org or 832-395-1777.

Kirkwood meeting canceled

The Kirkwood Civic Club's monthly meeting scheduled for Monday, Dec. 29, has been canceled in observance of the Christmas holidays. Typically held the last Monday of the month, the meetings will resume 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 26, at the Sagemont Community Center, 11507 Hughes Road near Beltway 8. For additional information, call Kirkwood Civic Club President Ericka McCrutchon at 281-989-9990.

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PISD students accused in school-shooting plot

2 Memorial students charged with conspiracy to commit capital murder

Two students from Pasadena Memorial High School have been arrested and charged with conspiracy to commit capital murder after investigators uncovered text messages suggesting plans for a mass shooting at the campus.

Although the arrests took place before Pasadena ISD's Thanksgiving break, it was not made public until this past week.

Court records identify one of the suspects as 18-year-old Emilio Lopez, an 11th-grader. Lopez was taken into custody and later released on a \$100,000 bond. He is scheduled to appear in court on Jan. 7. The second suspect, a 10th-grade

student, is a juvenile and has not been publicly named.

According to Harris County court documents, Lopez was taken into custody after investigators uncovered alarming text messages exchanged between him and the juvenile suspect, which allegedly included references to guns, ammunition and carrying out violence at the school. The investigation began when another student reported screenshots of the messages to a parent, who then alerted authorities.

Images posted to Instagram also reportedly showed Lopez with weapons.

While parents and students expressed relief that the alleged plot was intercepted before any violence occurred, the arrests have sparked renewed concern about school safety in Pasadena ISD in an era when such shootings have become commonplace in the national setting.

Pasadena ISD officials were grateful for the community's assistance in alerting about the potential crime, releasing the following statement:

"Pasadena ISD is aware of the arrest of two students who allegedly conspired to commit acts of violence. Parents and staff of Pasadena Memorial High School were immediately notified of the situation during the Thanksgiving break.

At this time, there is no active threat to Pasadena Memorial High School. The District continues to cooperate fully with authorities. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Pasadena

ISD Police Department, the Pasadena Police Department, and the US Marshals Gulf Coast Violent

Offenders and Fugitive Task Force for their professionalism and immediate response to the

threat. Our priority remains the safety and well-being of our students and staff. We are committed to maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment for all. We are thankful for our community's continued partnership in promoting safety."

Pasadena ISD police and district officials have pledged to maintain heightened security measures and continue working closely with local law enforcement to ensure campuses remain

safe.

Past incidents

This marked the third time this year an event involving a gun – or a potential event in this case – has taken place at or near the Memorial campus.

On Saturday, Feb. 1, an 83-year-old man was arrested after allegedly firing a gun at a band event being held at Pasadena Memorial High School. Dennis Erwin Brandl Jr. was arrested and charged with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.

According to police, Brandl had no connection to the school or any of the students involved in the event that involved schools from multiple districts. Brandl told police he had been followed from his house in Spring and he was in fear for his life at the time of the shooting.

A 26-year-old male at the band event was shot in the shoulder and had to be airlifted to an area hospital for treatment. He was expected to make a full recovery. As Brandl was firing his small-caliber handgun, a group of attendees, parents and students led by Cy-Fair dad Juan Lopez tackled the suspect and was able to subdue the shooter until police arrived. Before he could be sentenced for his role in the shooting, however, Brandl died from a medical episode Sunday, March 2, according to police.

Pasadena ISD officials officially recognized Lopez and the other heroes responsible for

Continued on Page 2

New market to replace Macy's



The Market at Almeda is set to occupy the 290,000-square-foot space that formerly housed Macy's at Almeda Mall. The future of the longtime area mall had been in question since the retailer shuttered its doors this past January as part of a nationwide downsizing. Developed by Read King, the new market will feature a grocery store, fitness center and beauty training school.

New development breathes life into Almeda Mall

The Market at Almeda to feature grocery store, restaurants, fitness center

Almeda Mall's future just got brighter: The long-vacant Macy's space will soon be reborn as The Market at Almeda, a grocery-anchored indoor marketplace that developers say will breathe new life into one of southeast Houston's oldest shopping centers.

A new chapter

For decades, Almeda Mall has been fixture in southeast Houston, serving generations of South Belt families since its opening in 1968. But when Macy's shuttered its doors earlier this year as part of a nationwide downsizing, the mall lost its last major anchor tenant, leaving many residents worried about its future in an era when

brick-and-mortar retail faces mounting pressure from online sales.

Now, Houston-based developer Read King is stepping in with a bold plan: converting the former two-story, 290,000-square-foot Macy's into The Market at Almeda, a retro-styled indoor marketplace. The project will feature a grocery store, restaurants, a fitness center and even a beauty school, according to early plans.

Despite having a grocery store, there is no sign that the development is affiliated with Fiesta Mart, as previous rumors had suggested.

What's coming

– **Grocery anchor:** About 65,000 square feet

on the first floor will be dedicated to a supermarket, giving nearby neighborhoods a new option for fresh food.

– **Restaurants:** Dining spaces are planned

to bring back the bustle of family outings and weekend gatherings.

– **Fitness center:** A modern gym concept is

Continued on Page 2

Channel 2 news story causes confusion

PISD not connected to alleged misconduct at Pasadena Head Start

A recent Channel 2 KPRC news story about a pair of teachers at a Pasadena-area Head Start program being accused of sexual misconduct with students and the school's failure to notify parents about it may have inadvertently led viewers to believe the school in question was affiliated with Pasadena ISD.

Although Pasadena ISD does have Head Start campuses, the alleged misconduct – which possibly involved children as young as 3 or 4 years old – took place at the Gulf Coast Community Services Association (GCCSA) Pasadena Head Start Center on Wafer Street in Pasadena, which has no connection to the local school district.

The news story repeatedly shows a sign with large capital letters that says "PASADE-

NA HEAD START" and refers to the affected campus as a "Pasadena school" possibly giving viewers the wrong impression.

A photograph of a sign for the Pasadena Head Start Center. The sign is purple and white with the words "PASADENA HEAD START CENTER" in large letters. Below the name, it says "www.gccsa.org". There are some small images of children on the sign.

Photo courtesy of KPRC

on Page 7.

With holiday shopping and celebrations in full swing, the Houston Police Department has released a comprehensive list of safety tips to help residents protect themselves and their property. The guidance covers precautions both while shopping and at home.

While shopping

– Shoppers are urged to remain alert to surroundings and trust instincts; suspicious activity should be reported to 911.

</

Deaths

Joe Leos



wife, Mary Ann Leos, who preceded him in death on May 26, 2023. Their love was deep, steady and the heart of their family. Together they created a home filled with warmth, humor and open doors — memories that their children and grandchildren will carry with them forever.

Joe had a remarkable ability to brighten a room the moment he walked in. He lived life to the fullest, carried an unforgettable sense of humor and was never — ever — seen in a bad mood. Whether sharing a joke, offering a helping hand, or simply showing up with his warm smile, Joe made others feel lighter just by being near. His joy was contagious, and his generosity unwavering.

Joe is survived by his son Jesse Lee Leos, wife Lisa and grandson Ian Leos; his daughter Denise Palos, husband Art and grandchildren Justin and Lauren Palos; and his daughter Darleen Leos and grandchildren Gabby Perez and Elizabeth Leos. He is also survived by great-grandchildren Josiah Perez, Alex

Joe Leos lived a long and beautiful life grounded in family, laughter and kindness. Born on Feb. 16, 1944, Joe grew up in Gano, then spent the remainder of his life in South Houston and the South Belt area, where he raised his children, built lifelong friendships and became a beloved presence in the community. He retired from Albermarle Oil Company (formerly Ethyl), but never retired from being someone people could rely on.

Joe shared 61 wonderful years of marriage with his

Continued from Page 1

bringing down the shooter at the school district's monthly board meeting Tuesday, Feb. 25.

Roughly just one month later, a 19-year-old suspect was accused of shooting two Pasadena Memorial High School students during a fight after school near campus around 3 p.m. Friday, Feb. 28. Damian Alexander Saiz, 19, was charged Monday, March 3, with two counts

of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.

According to Pasadena ISD Police Department officials, the incident took place at what appeared to be a pre-planned fight after early dismissal Friday at the church grounds across the street from the high school.

As several different physical altercations were taking place at the church, two cars pulled up — one containing Saiz, who reportedly produced

Freida (Hutchison) Mathews

Freida (Hutchison) Mathews was born April 27, 1961, and passed away peacefully at home on Dec. 1, 2025, her mother's birthday, after a valiant battle with cancer. She

is preceded in death by her mother, Doris Hutchison Walters, her father, Joe Hutchison, her grandmother, Lena McClain, her husbands, Johnny Wienecke and Gary Mathews, and her son, Stephen Michael Wienecke.

Freida was born in New York while her father was in the military, but she spent most of her life in Texas. She attended J. Frank Dobie High School, where some of her fondest memories included her involvement with the Latin Club and playing drums in the marching band with her best friend, Becky (Combs) Au. After graduating in 1979, she moved to Kerrville to attend Schreiner University on a scholarship. While attending college, she met and married Johnny Wienecke. They had two beautiful daughters, Stephanie Gilmore and Katie Garza-Villalon, and a son, Stephen, who passed shortly after birth. Freida moved back to the southeast Houston area to raise her daughters closer to family, and both daughters also graduated from J. Frank Dobie High School. She later married Gary Mathews and moved to Danbury, where she lived the rest of her earthly years. Freida enjoyed traveling, taking cruises, a little gambling, researching ancestry and mostly just spending time at the farm with her kids and grandkids.

As the oldest of seven, she is survived by her siblings Rose Hutchison, Loretta Kelley, Janie Bishop, Joey Hutchison, J.D. Hutchison and Melissa Hutchison, their spouses and families; Jerry Walters; and numerous nieces and nephews. Most importantly, Freida leaves behind her two beautiful daughters, Stephanie and Katie, whom she loved more than anything in the world, along with grandchildren Joseph Toole Jr., Hannah White, Abby Orlando, Gage Orlando, Cole Orlando, Michael Garza-Villalon, Joseph White, Heavenly Wright and Kaisley Wright whom she absolutely adored. Although Freida will be missed by her family, many friends and co-workers, all will take comfort knowing she is in heaven with her Lord and savior, Jesus Christ, and

tail. Across the country, malls have struggled to reinvent themselves, as traditional department stores vanish.

Travis Read of Read King told the Houston Business Journal.

The decision to preserve the old Foley's/Macy's also resonates with longtime residents who see the mall as more than just a shopping destination; it's a community landmark.

The recent announcement comes at a critical time in re-

tail.

Large displays of gifts should not be visible from windows or doors.

Boxes from new purchas-

ers should not be placed outside before garbage day, as they signal valuable items inside.

Unknown visitors at the door should not be answered directly; communication through the door can indicate occupancy without revealing children are alone.

Suspicious individuals should be reported to 911 immediately.

Indoor and outdoor lights should be placed on timers to simulate occupancy, with varying schedules across different rooms.

Large displays of gifts should not be visible from windows or doors.

Homes that appear occupied are less likely to be targeted by thieves.

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LEADING EMERGENCY CARE

in Clear Lake

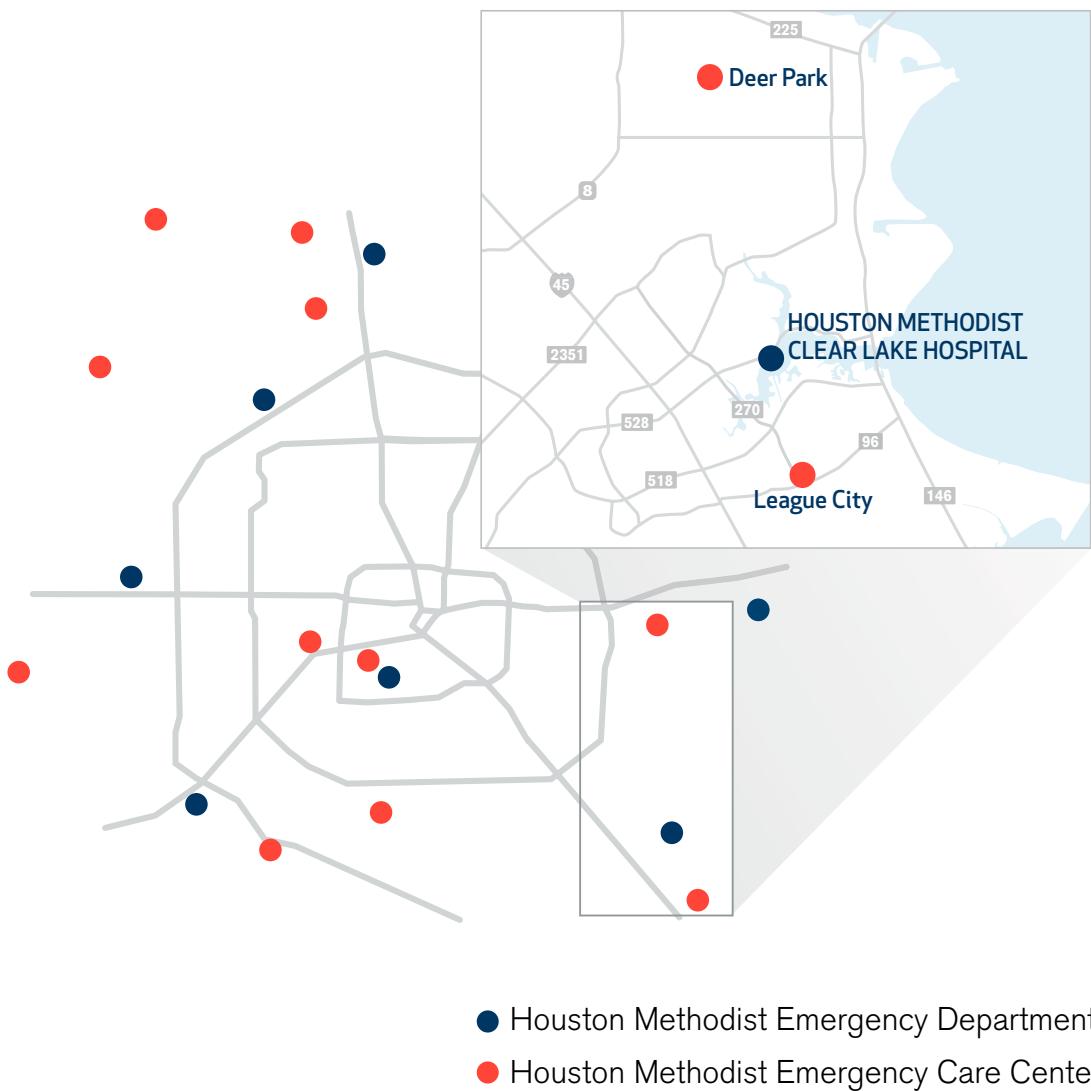


Don't Ignore Your Symptoms

It's important to know where to go when unexpected injuries or illnesses occur.

Whether you have a minor emergency or a life-threatening one, **Houston Methodist** provides state-of-the-art emergency care 24/7/365 to patients of all ages. We offer:

- Board-certified emergency doctors
- On-site laboratory
- Full-service X-ray, CT and ultrasound
- Private treatment rooms
- Admission to Houston Methodist Clear Lake Hospital, if needed



Need emergency care?

Visit houstonmethodist.org/er to find emergency care near you. If you are experiencing a serious or life-threatening medical emergency, please call 911.

Dobie High School FFA members attend, place at La Porte Fall Festival Prospect Show



Dobie High School FFA students and members participated and placed high in the La Porte Fall Festival Prospect Show on Sunday, Nov. 30. Fifth-grader and member of the Dobie FFA chapter for three years, Kacey Martinez placed fourth in both Ring A and Ring B.



Older brother and former Dobie FFA class president Hunter Stacey (left) holds up his brother's two ribbons. Luke Stacey and his heifer, Princess placed second in both Ring A and Ring B.



Dobie High School FFA member Kaleb Jones is pictured with his heifer which placed fourth in Ring A and fifth in Ring B.



Dobie FFA member Pablo Reyes' entry placed third in both Ring A and Ring B.

CBHS speech and debate team take on another competition



The weekend of December 5-6 saw a small contingent of Wolverine speakers at Spring High School flexing their verbal muscle in a host of events ranging from Original Oratory and Extemporaneous Speaking to Dramatic Interpretation. Second-year member Brianna DeLeon seized first place in her preliminary round while fellow teammate Suven Dhakal landed in third which propelled both to the semifinal round. DeLeon missed the final round by just one rank and both are looking to better their odds after great feedback as they attend future meets this semester. After two rounds of preliminary

competition, novice extemporaneous speakers Lydia Hartless and Ricki Fort found themselves in the final round where Ricki walked away with a third-place finish while Lydia took home sixth place. In Dramatic Interpretation, sophomore Sophia Merchant came away ranked fifth which earned her one additional point toward her state goal of twelve. She now stands at seven as she continues her quest to state competition. Left to right, are (front row) Merchant, Sara Sijo, Khang Ngo, Fort, (back row) Zaahid Mansoor, Dhakal, Abhi Komireddy, Kendrick Toennies and DeLeon.

Meador announces spelling bee winners



Officials at Meador Elementary would like to congratulate third-grader Jennifer Nguyen (left) as the runner-up and fourth-grader Michelle Ortega as the winner of the 2025-2026 school spelling bee. Ortega will represent Meador at the district spelling bee on Feb. 3.

Fred Roberts names Aviators of the month



Fred Roberts Middle School officials recently announced the November and December Aviators of the month. These students are recognized for being self-directed learners. They take initiative, find and use resources, reflect on their progress, seek help when needed and stay organized and focused. Left to right, are assistant principal Karen Pena, fifth-graders Bastian Hernandez, Christina Jackson, sixth-graders Marco Lopez, Valkyrie Dennis, principal Lali Guerrero and counselor Crissy Higham.

Remember When

45 years ago (1980)

Houston Lighting and Power Company performed routine maintenance in the Sagemon-Kirkwood area that caused power to be turned off and on during the maintenance. According to HL&P's A.C. Czigan, the work had been going on all year and was expected to continue until June 1981. The power disturbances lasted anywhere from 10 minutes to two hours, but were usually 45 minutes in length. Letters were sent two to four weeks in advance of the event, notifying residents. However, if residents had a business computer, they were instructed to call the phone number on the notification letter and request someone knock on the door a few minutes before the electricity was shut down.

40 years ago (1985)

The arson division of the Houston Fire Department investigated a fire which occurred in the Scarsdale Shopping Center. Most of the shops in the small center suffered smoke damage from the fire which began in Lee's Tailoring. Five fire stations, including Station 70, responded to the fire. Witnesses told firemen they heard three explosions around the time the fire occurred.

The design development phase of construction for Clear Creek Independent School District's third high school was approved by the district's board of trustees and construction was slated to begin in June 1986.

JACQUELYN CELEBRATES A BIRTHDAY

Happy Birthday to Jacquelyn Wiess who celebrates her birthday Dec. 22. The family can't wait to share another fun year of travel and adventure with her. Much love from all her Texas family: husband, Louie; children Heidi, Louie, Kara and spouses; and grandchildren Cody, Louie, Arianna, Amelia and Jence. Many hugs and best wishes from all her friends in North Carolina.

BIRTHDAY WISHES FOR DAVID

David Flickinger is celebrating a birthday Dec. 22. Wishes are sent from his sons Fred and wife Leslie Flickinger and David and wife Ellie Flickinger; granddaughters Kimberly and husband Matt Lipina and their child William; Courtney Durham and children Abigail, Jackson and Penelope; Natalie and husband Jose Abarca and their children Kelvin Lopez and Noah and Elliana Abarca and Isabella and husband

35 Years ago (1990)

South Belt's City Councilman Frank Mancuso was nominated mayor pro tem after the illness and death of Councilman Judson Robinson. Mayor Kathy Whitmire released the

nomination.

Thompson Intermediate assistant principal Stan Honneycutt, eighth-grade science teacher Bill Saxon and seventh-grade science teacher Bill Taylor camped out on the roof for the school to satisfy a promise made to students.

Taylor inspired students to raise more than \$2,000 for United Way when he promised to spend the night on the roof. Thompson students met his challenge and raised close to \$2,300 in one week. In PISD, Thompson ranked first among intermediate schools and second in the district for the most money raised.

A record 23 Dobie High School band members placed

at various levels at the All-Region try-out competition held at Aldine High School.

30 years ago (1995)

San Jacinto College regents met in closed session to discuss grade tampering allegations against chancellor Tom Sewell.

A 31-year-old Highland Meadow resident and a 25-year-old female were found dead, each from a self-inflicted single bullet. A note written in Vietnamese was translated and revealed a suicide pact.

A medical fund was established for Sagemeadow resident Kathy Wilder for injuries she sustained after being thrown from her own van by abductors.

Beverly Hills Intermediate

students and faculty mourned the death of 13-year-old Clarke Flynn. He suffered from a rare genetic defect and had been in a coma for about a week.

Dr. Tom Spencer announced his retirement effective Dec. 31 as president of the San Jacinto College South campus.

25 years ago (2000)

Ten-year-old Lindsay Simpson was facing her second heart transplant.

Gordon and Pat Berg celebrated 10 years of service with Action Ministries.

20 years ago (2005)

Alert neighbors and a less-than-three-minute response by Precinct 2 Constable Deputies Juan Izaguirre and Sgt. Zerick Guinn resulted in the capture of

two men hiding inside a closet in a home they were burglarizing in Clear Brook Meadows.

One of four suspects charged in the capital murder-for-hire death on Luan Cong Pham pleaded guilty to a lesser charge of murder. As part of the plea bargain, Huan M. Vudoan, 18, would serve 10 years in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice but would not be required to testify against the others.

South Belt physician Dr. Mary Campbell-Fox, a 1976 Dobie graduate, was named the 2005 PISD Distinguished Alumna.

15 years ago (2010)

The Leader contacted the City of Houston and repre-

sentatives from City Councilmember Mike Sullivan regarding the troubling northbound traffic at the intersection of Beamer Road and Beltway 8.

Drivers wanting to turn left were restricted to a single lane at the traffic light before the beltway. Due to so many vehicles turning onto the beltway, as opposed to vehicles proceeding straight through the intersection on Beamer, a line of vehicles repeatedly causes congestion at the intersection. The response from the city was brief, but firm that no changes to the intersection would be made.

After receiving the response, the Leader contacted Lauren Doak, South Sector manager for Sullivan, who assisted the Leader in contacting Jeffrey

S. Weatherford, deputy director of the Department of Public Works and Engineering.

Traffic and Transportation Division, who played a crucial role in resolving the traffic issue. Weatherford concluded that the traffic count on vehicles turning onto the beltway, as opposed to vehicles proceeding straight through the intersection on Beamer, was significant enough to warrant a change in lane markings,

which will greatly reduce congestion at the intersection and make a left turn from the second-to-left lane no longer illegal.

According to Weatherford, the timeline on changing the lane markings and signage was to be completed by March

2011.

10 years ago (2015)

The Leader's annual Christmas program was a huge success, providing assistance to roughly 70 area families in need. Several local organizations, schools, businesses and residents stepped up to the plate, making the 2015 drive the most successful in the event's history.

5 years ago (2020)

The Leader's annual Christmas program was a huge success, providing assistance to more than 40 area families in need, including around 120 children. Several local organizations, businesses and residents stepped up to the plate, making the drive one of the

most successful in the event's history.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all aspects of the 2020 Leader drive were moved outdoors as a safety precaution.

1 year ago (2024)

Harris County officials held a ribbon-cutting Friday, Dec. 13, to celebrate the completion of the Beamer Ditch improvements project. A joint project between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Harris County, the \$10.7 million project widened the ditch and installed concrete lining from Sagerock to near Astoria. Longtime Pasadena ISD board member Vickie Morgan died Wednesday, Dec. 18, after serving nearly 40 years.

Over The Back Fence by Nicole



JOEY CELEBRATES A BIRTHDAY

Joseph "Joey" Hayes celebrates his birthday Thursday, Dec. 21. Best wishes and lots of love are sent from mom and dad, Janie and Robert Scarberry, former longtime South Belt residents; sister Jenny (Hayes) and Josh Laney and children Brayden, Baylee and Olivia; sister Stacey (Hayes) and husband Stephen Flowers and children Kennedy, Owen and Evie; brother Austin Scarberry and daughters Jade and Lily; and brother Tyler Scarberry. Joey was a member of the Dobie High School Class of 2000 and the Longhorn Marching Band.

JACQUELYN CELEBRATES A BIRTHDAY

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Sebastian Delgado and their child Esme. SCHOOL DAZE

The following staff and personnel of the Pasadena Independent School District celebrate birthdays Dec. 18 through Dec. 24.

Burnett Elementary

Sing a happy birthday song to Teri Owen Dec. 21. Remember to wish Sylvia Lazard a happy birthday Dec. 22.

Bush Elementary

Blow out the candles Dec. 22 for Cathy Perez.

Genoa Elementary

Send a nice birthday greeting Dec. 18 to Maria Villarreal. Rosa Silva enjoys a birthday Dec. 24.

Hancock Elementary

Blow out the candles for Adriana Garcia Dec. 19.

Meador Elementary

The day for a celebration for Jill Gifford is Dec. 18.

Moore Elementary

Marie Alanis marks a birthday Dec. 18. Send a birthday greeting Dec. 20 to Erica Villarreal.

South Belt Elementary

Dec. 18 is the day for a party for Jasmine Olvera and Joshua Trevino.

Stuchbury Elementary

Sharon Idoux celebrates a birthday Dec. 19. Light the birthday candles Dec. 24 for Cynthia Ramon.

Beverly Hills Intermediate

Dec. 21 is the day for a party for Jaimie Green. Sing a chorus of a happy birthday

song to Johna Moreland on Dec. 22.

Thompson Intermediate

Send a nice birthday greeting Dec. 18 to Karla Chavez. Dec. 21 is the day for a birthday party for Kevin Paul and Maggie Allen.

Dobie High

A day of fun is planned Dec. 18 for Karem Salomon. Remember to wish Meleny Nunez a happy birthday Dec. 21. Best wishes for a special birthday Dec. 23 are sent to Christopher Alaniz. Break out the balloons and party favors for Sydnee Chollett on Dec. 24.

FRIENDS CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS

Thursday, Dec. 18: Jackie Klayman, Damen Polleck, John O'Connor and Felicia Sharp; Friday, Dec. 19: Randy Tenorio, Beckie Davidson, Kim Jones and Rene Gomez; and Saturday, Dec. 20: Sally Esquivel, Lisa West and Michelle Gerbich; Sunday, Dec. 21: Jimmy Thomas, Patricia O'Brien, Scott Louvier, Helen White, Christopher Lewis, Jeana Pierce, Ruth Fischer, Tara Garven and Crystal Biller; Monday, Dec. 22: Jennifer Bryant and Tiffany Wenerstrom; Tuesday, Dec. 23: Miguel Lopez, Sarah Smith and Holly Fielder; and Wednesday, Dec. 24: Lori Lee, James Perales, Tiffany McCullough and Kim McDonald;

LEADER WANTS YOU IN THE NEWS

Email announcements of anniversaries, vacations and graduations to mynews@southbelteellingtonleader.com with OTBF in the subject line by Friday noon for the next week's publication.

Merry Christmas



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SPORTS NEWS & NOTES

Clear Brook, Dobie boys' hoops set for tough league action

District play is the focus on the high school basketball scene as the Clear Brook programs are about to find out where they stand.

The 24-6A varsity boys' basketball race will include some of the most intense competition around the area as most of the programs within the district have delivered outstanding results to this point.

Clear Lake, Dickinson and Clear Springs no doubt count themselves as contenders within the ranks, but at this point the Clear Brook Wolverines can't be discounted. Coach Nathan Janak's team ran its record to 12-2 with Abdiel Jimenez and Ayden Harvey leading the way for Clear Brook with 15 points each. Jimenez added seven rebounds while Harvey collected four caroms. Christian Brown tossed in 12 points, five assists and five steals

while Jace Walker had nine points, five assists and three steals. Joshua Pichon had seven points and four rebounds as the Wolverines put together their usual full-team performance to get the victory.

It was a game of runs as Friendswood actually held an 18-point lead over the Wolverines early on before Clear Brook's shooting heated up the rest of the way en route to the victory.

Clear Brook hosted An-

gleton Dec. 16 after press time and will waste little time in finding out where they stand in the 24-6A field as they play at state-ranked Dickinson Dec. 19.

Dickinson reached the championship game of the Cy-Hoops Invitational

December 13, going up against 5A-power Mansfield Summit.

Although Dickinson lost the final 55-51, the Gators reached the championship game by defeating 5A state-ranked Fort Bend Marshall 41-37 as Troy Nelle Belle had 29 points. Clear Brook at Dickinson is just one of the marquee matchups Dec. 19 to open league play in 24-6A as Clear Lake will play at Clear Springs.

The Falcons lead the district as of press time with 13 overall victories against just four losses. Clear Brook is 12-2, while Dickinson stands at 12-4. Clear Springs is at 9-5, but features star player Madden Hill, who earlier this season established a program record for points in a single game with 45.

Deer Park also has 10 wins to go with five defeats, and Brazoswood cannot be discounted with

Continued on Page 6



At right, Dobie first-year varsity boys' basketball head coach Branford Jones has his Longhorns playing solid basketball midway through the regular season and will now navigate his group primarily through district play the rest of the way.

Photos by Donna Alsdorf

Touchdown Club of Houston honors LSA players



From left, Cade Griffin, Zach Johnson and Braeden Robinson of Lutheran South Academy along with varsity football head coach Corby Meekins (far right) attended the Touchdown Club of Houston's annual post-season awards banquet earlier this month. In the private school category, Griffin was a finalist for Ironman of the Year, Johnson for Top Offensive Lineman and Robinson for Offensive Player of the Year.

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Calone commits to Schreiner



Clear Brook varsity basketball post Cruz Calone (35) has chosen to continue his education and playing career at Schreiner University, an NCAA Division III program in Kerrville, Texas. The Mountaineers compete in the Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference under the direction of first-year head coach Kyle McLeroy. Calone has helped Clear Brook to a terrific nondistrict run this season ahead of the 24-6A opener Dec. 19 at Dickinson.

ets will go on sale in February.

The 2026 class has a

particular lean toward

Dobie High School as

longtime aquatics coach

Dennis Shippey will be

inducted posthumously

along with standout stu-

dent-athletes including Lionel Dotson, a 2003

JFD graduate and Keith Kveton, a 1977 graduate.

Al Carter, the very first

inductee into the Hall of

Fame's special journalism

category, is a Class of 1970 South Houston

High School graduate who also has lifetime ties to the South Belt area.

The other inductees include a pair of Texans, including Class of 2007

Sam Rayburn High School graduate Andrew Gonzalez, a star basketball player

who went on to play collegiately and then at

the professional level for

several seasons.

Amy Williams Stewart is a Class of 1995 Sam Rayburn High School graduate who was a

cross-country and track and field star who later set

records collegiately at Stephen F. Austin University.

A two-time qualifier for the Boston Marathon Williams Stewart is currently a cross-country and track

and field coach at Class 4A Hudson High School in Lufkin.

Continued on Page 6

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League City (2951 Marina Bay Dr.) 281-240-3060

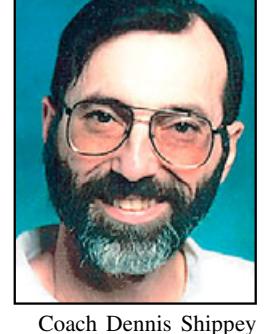
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PISD Athletics Hall of Fame group will enter April 9, 2026

Continued from Page 5

The Pasadena ISD Athletics Hall of Fame inductees that will enter the prestigious group April 9, 2026, include:

Coach Dennis Shippey
Dobie Aquatics
1976-2004



swimmers qualified for state his first year at Dobie, and from 1982-1984, his teams won at least one district title every year.

Shippey was also a nationally recognized adult swimmer. In 2005, he was named All-American swimmer by United States Masters Swimming, and was one of the few swimmers to be honored as an All-American at three different levels: high school, collegiate and masters. Shippey was a high school state champion at Davenport West High School in Iowa.

At Eastern New Mexico University, he earned NAIA All-American honors. He also served in Vietnam with the 101st Airborne Division.

In 2009, he received the prestigious Theron Pickle Lifetime Achievement Award from the Texas Interscholastic Swimming Coaches Association and is a member of the Texas Senior Games Hall of Fame.

In cross-country, Williams was a three-time regional qualifier and a state qualifier in 1992.

In track, Williams was a four-time regional qualifier in the 800 meters and as a senior, took fifth place at state in the 800 with a time of 2 minutes, 16.04 seconds.

Williams' talent on the track and hard work in the classroom earned her a scholarship to Stephen

burn High School swimmer Scott Shippey, now an Austin resident.

Amy Williams (Stewart)
Rayburn Class of 1995
Track/Cross-Country



A 1995 Sam Rayburn graduate, Amy Williams ran cross-country and competed in middle-distance track events at Rayburn for four years under Joan Walker Propp, who is also a PISD Athletics Hall of Fame member.

Williams was three times named to the Southland Conference Commissioner's List for academics.

Post graduation, in 2005 and 2006 she qualified for the Boston Marathon and began her coaching career at Hudson High School (Class 4A).

Over two decades, she has produced 17 district team champions and qualified teams for state 10 times. Williams has coached some two dozen athletes to state berths in both cross-country and track at Hudson.

From 2003 to 2008, Carter served as deputy sports editor for

F. Austin, where she lettered three years in both sports.

In college cross-country, Williams was named to the All-Southland Conference team as a senior. As a junior, Williams was named the winner of the Gwen Cole Cross-Country Award.

In college track, she set school records in the 3,000-meter run (10:03), the 1,500-meter run (4:34.11), the indoor mile (5:01.93) and also as part of the 4x800 meter relay team (9:08).

As a sophomore, Williams was named to the All-Conference Distance Medley Relay team.

Williams was three times named to the Southland Conference Commissioner's List for academics.

He was the recipient of numerous national and regional writing awards, including Oklahoma Sportswriter of the Year (1980) and Texas Sportswriter of the Year (1985).

He has made frequent appearances on TV and radio shows and has had numerous articles published in sports magazines and books.

From 2003 to 2008, Carter served as deputy sports editor for

Journalist Al Carter
South Houston Class of 1970



the San Antonio Express-News. In 2008, with most major newspapers undergoing dramatic downsizing and coverage reductions, he retired from journalism and returned to Houston. He taught history at his alma mater, South Houston High, before joining the Pasadena ISD communications department in 2010. He retired from the district in 2017.

While a student at South Houston, Carter wrote for the student paper and earned a sports writing award his senior year.

After high school, Carter attended San Jacinto College for two years, graduating with an associate of arts degree in 1972. He was later named a distinguished alumnus of the school.

His work as a sports writer for the San Jac paper earned him a spot on the sports staff of The Daily Texan at the University of Texas. He graduated from UT with a Bachelor of Journalism degree in 1974.

Carter began his daily newspaper career with the Savannah Morning News in 1974, but left

after a few months to return to Texas. He wrote for the Corpus Christi Caller-Times from 1975 to 1979, covering mostly high school athletics.

In 1976, he won the Texas Headliners Award for an account of a record-shattering minor-league baseball game. In 1979, he moved to The Daily Oklahoman as the Oklahoma Sooners beat reporter and general sports columnist.

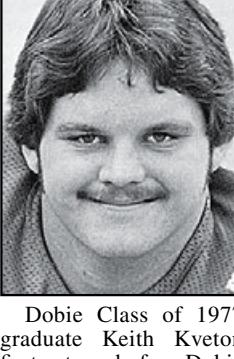
After three years, Carter returned to his hometown and joined the sports staff of the Chronicle, originally as the beat writer for the Southwest Conference.

Carter was honored by the Associated Press Sports Editors in 1986 for his coverage of the circumstances that led to the resignation of UT football coach Fred Akers.

In 1990, Carter accepted an offer to jump to the Chronicle's rival, the Houston Post. At the Post, Carter covered college athletics for one year before taking over as beat reporter on the Houston Oilers for two years.

In 1993, Carter left newspapers for a high-school teaching position. A year after that, with the Big 12 Conference about to begin operations, Carter accepted an offer to cover Texas A&M for The Dallas Morning News, a position he held for nine years.

Keith Kveton
Dobie Class of 1977
Football



Dobie Class of 1977 graduate Keith Kveton first starred for Dobie and was a prestigious All-Greater Houston selection as a senior in 1976 before heading to Rice University.

Kveton lettered in football all four years at Rice, from 1977 through 1980. He started for three seasons at Rice, played center and was co-captain for the Owls as a senior.

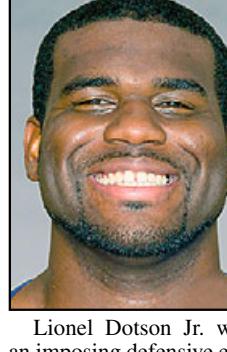
Kveton's stellar play led him to being named a UPI All-Southwest Conference second-team as a senior. Rice as a team went 5-6, its best record in seven years.

The Owls' record that year included victories over LSU, A&M and Arkansas.

Kveton was considered by his coach, Ray Alborn, to be one of the best centers in the country during his college days. After college, Kveton signed as a free agent with Oakland, and became the first former

Dobie player to sign a contract with an NFL team, but did not play in the NFL.

Lionel Dotson Jr.
Dobie Class of 2003
Football



Andrew Gonzalez could simply score the basketball. He elevated the Texans' program to great heights at a point when it was needed as the group made a big push in the 5A ranks during his day.

Staying close to home following his graduation in 2007, Gonzalez put together a solid run at San Jacinto College in Pasadena before moving on to Houston Baptist University.

Pasadena ISD has certainly seen its share of exceptionally talented basketball players over the decades, and Gonzalez is right there with all of them.

A prolific scorer, Gonzalez was one of the top players in Houston Baptist basketball history, playing two seasons (2010 and 2011) at HBU after two years at San Jac.

He posted a 20.9 scoring average that still ranks third in HBU history and was team MVP both seasons.

A first team all-Great West Conference selection after both his junior and senior seasons, Gonzalez was honored as the Great West Newcomer of the Year after his junior season.

Gonzalez ranks ninth on HBU's career scoring list with 1,292 points. He ranks No. 1 in career scoring among those Huskies who played only two years and is No. 9 in career field goal percentage.

In 2011, Gonzalez posted a scoring average of 22.9, still the second highest in school history that ranked No. 6 in the NCAA that season.

He also posted the second highest point total in school history (686).

Twice that season, he scored 36 points in a game. In his HBU career, Gonzalez scored 30 or more points eight times.

As a junior in 2010, he scored 606 points. He ranked No. 7 on the school's all-time list for an average of 18.9 points per game.

At Rayburn in his senior year, Gonzalez averaged 25 points and eight rebounds a game. He was named district MVP, All-Greater Houston and All-Region.

As a sophomore at San Jacinto College, Gonzalez averaged 11 points and 4.6 rebounds under coach Scott Germander and helped lead the Ravens to the quarterfinals of the regional tournament.

Ticket sales will kick off in February

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Continued from Page 5

its 11-4 record at this point.

The 22 6A varsity boys' field doesn't appear to be as deep in talent as that of 24-6A, but TABC 6A No. 9 state-ranked Pearland is 13-1 as of press time with a 12-game winning streak intact.

Dawson is 10-4 overall and has won two straight to open league play, including a 57-55 home win over the Longhorns.

Shadow Creek, next up for Dobie on the road, came away with victories in eight of its first 12 games.

After that, though, there appears to be an opening for a program to step up in the standings. Dobie can be that team.

There are no moral victories in win/loss columns, but the Longhorns have to feel good about their pro-

cess after going toe-to-toe with Dawson in their league opener.

Upon taking on Memorial after press time, the locals will prep for a tough game at Shadow Creek Dec. 19 and then will compete in the Conroe

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good will, these local
merchants and public
servants wish you a Merry
Christmas and a safe and
healthy New Year!*

Stuchberry second-graders write to Santa Claus

Second-grade students from Stuchberry Elementary wrote the following letters to Santa Claus.

Cristel Hines' class

Dear Santa, My name is Leah. I am 8 years old. I been nice. For Christmas I want a IPhon 17, and robacs. I have a question. who is your favorite reindeer? I will leave hot coco.

Love, Leah.

Dear Santa, my name is kevin Iam 8 years old I have been nice for christmas I want a ps5 and VR I have a question. who is your favorite reindeer? I will leave milke and cookies

Love Kevin

Dear Santa, I'm Sumnima. Im 7 years old. I don't know if i'm naughty or nice. I'll leave cookies and milk and carrots for The reindeer. Who is your favorite reindeer and how do you go to many houses in a day? For Christmas I want an artset, slime, and an iphone 18 pro max.

Love, Sumnima

Dear Santa, My name is Josiah. I am 8. I been nice. For Christmas I want timts, a necles, and a poste of me. I have a question. Who is your favorite reindeer? I Will teave i Will leave. milke and cookes

Love, Josiah

Dear Santa, My name is skyler. I am 8 years old. I have been nice. For christmas I want Buney, plushey, and phone. I have a question. Who is your favorite reindeer? I will leave milk and cookes

Love, Josiah

Dear Santa, My name is cassidy. I am 8 year I have been nice. For christmas I want a Bar-Bie house, slime. I have a question Does Rudof have a glowing nose? I will leave cookies

love cassidy**Janet Daod's class**

Dear Santa, What is your faVrel snack? My Name is Saith. I am 7 years old. I have been nice. This year for Christmas I would like 10 socer Ball and a New Dog Man Book I'll Make Sure to leave out soMe cookes.

From, saith

Dear Santa, My name is Liana. This year for Christmas I really want four new bracelets, a new kid pruse, a new big plushy. I have been a good kid this year and when my friend's need , I will go to them.

Liana Luna's class

Dear Santa This year for Christmas I want a huge pack of Baboos and a lot of sicker and a IPhone seventeen and a new charger and meet Lanli Love and Frey Sky and Malkai Barton I have been a reyyl good girl.

Love victoria

Dear Santa This year for Christmas I want a new pair of shows, and I want a new lunchbox, and I want for christmas is a new toys, and a new farends, at school.

Leilani.

Dear santa Tish year For Cristmas I really watnsome new shoes and a stich purse and a IPhone seventeen and a new charger and meet Lanli Love and Frey Sky and Malkai Barton I have been a reyyl good girl.

Love Quinn yaney

Dear santa I really want some airpods and socks because I have been. A good boy by makeing my room and doing the dishes and so if you Give me my gift I wloud be vaey happy.

Love Giomani

Dean anow toy I wota now toy truk. I wot a cup fpr mi mom I wota toy I haf bin a good boy win I hlp my frnds

love Jose

Dear saNta I Bine realy Good this year I Do My chors aND I is in to My MOM aND My DaD For

love Giomani

is jaclyn. I am 7 years old. I been nice. For christmas. I want some Roblox also pj and newRoom. I have a question. who is the favorite child? I will leave cookies and milk

love jaclyn.**Dear Santa, My name**

is Brielle I wood like to

no how old are you I Have

ben nice this year I will

remedr to leve you sam

cookies and milke and

I want a toy kitchen and

sam slime and a iphone

15.

love Brielle.**Dear Santa, I have a**

question how old are you?

My name is Brooklyn

Thomas, and I am 7 years

old. This christmas I woul

like a big Teddy bear. I

Think I am on the nice list

because I am helpful. I'll

make sure To leave you

cookies to eat.

From Brooklyn**Thomas.**

Dear Santa, How many

elves do you have? My

name is Sophia and I am

7 years old. I think i'm

on the nice list because

I share with my sister

even though I had it first.

This year for Christmas I

would like a lot of Books

and legos. I'll make sure

to leave cookies and car-

rots for your raindeer.

Love Sophia.**Dear Santa, When are**

you going to give us our

presents? I'm 7 years old

and I think I'm on the

nice list. I want a barbie

and a srole kit also a Baby

alive.

Love, Alaina.**Dear Santa, Jingles is**

so nice. My name is

Khloe. I am 7 years old.

I have Been Good. For

christmas I want a IPad

and a srole kit also a Baby

alive.

Love, Khloe**Dear Santa, My Name**

is cassidy. I am 8 year

I have been nice. For

christmas I want a Bar

-Bie house, slime. I have

a question Does Rudof

have a glowing nose? I

will leave cookies

I will give you some cookies I will

try to.

Alissa**Dear Santa, How old**

are you? I am 8 years

old. I think I'm on the

nice/naughty list because

nic becus Ishare. This

year for Christmas I want

7elves. I'll make sure to

leave carrots, milk and

cookies for you.

from Aliana**Dear Santa, If I see you**

sant. I Will hug u and I

will say omg. My name

is La'Khyah and 8 years

old and I think I'm on the

nice list because I help

my mom with cleaning

the house. I also play

with my siblings. I would

like a slime, I will leave

cookies y hot chocolate so

that you wont be cold.

love cassidy**Janet Daod's class**

Dear Santa, What is

your faVrel snack? My