

Tony is back at Tony's!

After a brief hiatus, Tony is back at Tony's Pizza & Grinders, located at 10330 Blackhawk near Dobie High School. Ironically not actually named Tony, original Tony's owner Driton Canolli recently regained ownership of the area restaurant after being away for approximately two years.

Santa to visit South Belt

South Belt residents are invited to hop aboard the Clear Brook Express Sunday, Dec. 11, at the holiday train station at the Clear Brook City MUD Building, 11911 Blackhawk, from 5 to 8 p.m. The event will feature free photos with Santa Claus, free hot cocoa and cookies, while supplies last. The bell will ring for those who believe. Guests are encouraged to bring one nonperishable can of food per person. Either human or pet food will be accepted.

Sageglen to judge lights

Sageglen will hold its annual Christmas light contest on Friday, Dec. 16. Categories will include most colorful, best Christmas spirit, most elegant display and honorable mention. Residents should have their lights on no later than 6 p.m. to be judged.

Melillo hosts annual jog

Melillo Middle School is inviting the South Belt community to its ninth annual Jingle Bell Jog Saturday, Dec. 10. This community event is aimed at helping local families during the holidays. Registration is at 8 a.m. and the jog will begin at 8:30 a.m.

All participants are asked to bring two non-perishable food items or one new unwrapped toy. All the food and toy donations collected will go directly to the South Belt Leader's food and toy drive which gives the items to needy families in the South Belt area. Spread the holiday spirit by dressing up in holiday attire.

The school will also have prizes for first- and second-place Melillo boy and girl joggers. The Melillo band will perform, and there will be a drawing for a free turkey. Businesses in the South Belt-Ellington area are encouraged to bring a group and join in the fun. For additional information, contact Kayla Joos at 713-740-5260.

Kirkmont I to meet Dec. 14

Kirkmont I HOA will hold a board meeting at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 14, at the Kirkmont MUD Building, 10102 Blackhawk. All Kirkmont I residents are encouraged to attend. The function will include refreshments and door prizes. Must be present to win.

Library donations sought

The Friends of Parker Williams Branch Library group is seeking donated materials from the South Belt community. Items sought include DVDs, CDs, gently used children's books and adult fiction. Donations can be dropped off during regular library hours at 10851 Scarsdale Blvd.

Ellington e-recycling set

The City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department's monthly electronic recycling event will take place Saturday, Dec. 10, at the Neighborhood Recycling Center at Ellington Airport from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Residents are encouraged to arrive early, however, as the event ends once trucks are full.

The collection events take place the second Saturday of each month. For additional information, visit www.houstonsolidwaste.org or call 311.

Heavy trash pickup set

City of Houston residents south of Fuqua will have heavy trash pickup Thursday, Dec. 8 (second Thursday of the month). City residents north of Fuqua and west of the Gulf Freeway will have heavy trash pickup Friday, Dec. 9 (second Friday of the month).

December is for junk waste, but tree waste will also be accepted. Due to a larger amount of debris being discarded during the COVID-19 pandemic, pickups may be delayed. For additional information, visit www.houstontx.gov/solid-waste or call 311.

Local COVID cases reported

The number of active COVID-19 cases in the South Belt community remained roughly on par with the previous week, according to county health officials.

As of Tuesday, Dec. 6, there were 75 active cases in 77089, up six from the previous week. To date, 138 from the ZIP code have died from the disease, up one from the previous week.

In ZIP code 77075, there were 34 active cases, up three from the previous week. To date, there have been 84 deaths in the ZIP code, up one from the previous week.

In 77034, there were 35 active cases, no change from the previous week. To date, 90 residents from ZIP code 77034 have died from the disease, up one from the previous week.

According to Harris County officials, the vast majority of the fatalities suffered from pre-existing health issues.

Statistics are updated daily and include numbers from within the Houston city limits and throughout Harris County. To view an interactive map, visit covid-harriscounty.hub.arcgis.com/pages/cumulative-data.

Wyche earns 2023 BAHEP Quasar Award

NASA director has championed human space exploration

The Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership has announced that Vanessa Wyche, director, NASA Johnson Space Center, will be honored with the organization's esteemed 2023 Quasar Award for Economic Development Excellence.

BAHEP's annual Quasar Award Banquet will be held on Jan. 27, in the Crystal Ballroom of South Shore Harbour Resort and Conference Center in League City.

"I'm humbled and honored to be chosen as the recipient of the prestigious Quasar Award. The future of human space exploration is brighter than



Vanessa Wyche

ever as we are developing and operating more human-rated spacecraft than ever in our history, enabling us to conduct low-Earth orbit and deep space exploration at the same time. I'm very proud to be leading NASA's Johnson Space Center at this exciting time, as we partner with industry, academia, and the international space community, to meet NASA's objectives of propelling the space economy and simultaneously exploring low-Earth orbit and deep space under Artemis," said Wyche. "At Johnson, our support for a robust space economy is intended to boost education and job growth in science and engineering, while spurring economic growth to expand the exploration of space for all humanity. Thank you, again, for honoring me for doing a job that I love."

Over the course of his BAHEP career, President Bob Mitchell has had the privilege to work with

five Johnson Space Center directors. He said, "Vanessa has been an exceptional director for NASA JSC — one of its best. She has worked to protect the center's assets and assertively engaged with commercial and government operations to safeguard and expand the nation's human spaceflight program as well as JSC's execution of responsibilities within that program. Vanessa doesn't settle for the status quo but uses her expertise and vision, along with that of her colleagues, to plan for the future of human spaceflight and of NASA JSC."

Brian Freedman, who will become BAHEP's

next president on Jan. 1, 2023, stated, "Vanessa is an outstanding regional leader for economic development. The Johnson Space Center is an economic engine for the region, and she has been aggressive in her efforts to expand JSC's role in human spaceflight, in working collaboratively with the community, and in creating opportunities where industry can participate. The recent successful launch of Artemis I Mission showcases that leadership with her team managing the entire mission and ensuring the next 'first words' from the moon start with 'Houston.'"

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Waugh helps Leader Christmas drive

The South Belt community is once again coming together to help those less fortunate by participating in the annual Leader Christmas program.

Now in its 40th year, the drive is aimed at helping families in the immediate area by collecting food and gifts.

Participating in the program again this year is Stacey Waugh, daughter of active community member Sandy Robb. The volunteers have selflessly donated hours of their free time to support this year's program.

"I think it's great," Waugh said of the program. "It helps the less fortunate."

This sentiment is shared by her mother.

"We've always been fortunate to have a nice Christmas," Robb said. "And it makes you feel good to help someone else have a nice Christmas

who otherwise wouldn't."

Waugh, who was born with a rare birth defect known as cervical meningocele, has overcome many challenges of her own. At the time of Waugh's birth, doctors told her mother she would likely never be able to walk.

"We never took no for an answer," Robb said.

Waugh, now 50, went on to attend Stuchbery, Thompson and Dobie, as well as take courses at San Jacinto College and College of the Mainland.

Waugh volunteers her time to work with children at the Sagemont Park Community Center.

"She loves kids," Robb said. "That's her thing."

Once again, Waugh collected aluminum cans to recycle in order to raise funds for the Christmas program.

To help promote the drive, Waugh distributed

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Thompson celebrates 12 Days



It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas at Thompson Intermediate, as students and staff take part in the school's annual 12 Days of Christmas leading up to the holiday break. On each of the 12 school days between Dec. 1 and Dec. 26, the campus celebrates a different theme, such as western Santa day or pajamas day.

Man charged in 2021 Fuqua murder

A security guard who accidentally killed an innocent woman when firing his weapon during an incident last year outside a Fuqua bar has been charged with murder, police said.

The suspect, Moises Castillo, 28, is charged with murder in the 185th State District Court.

His accused in the death of Ada Aguilar, 47, who was fatally shot Nov. 14, 2021.

According to Houston Police Department officials, witnesses said a man was driving a truck recklessly in the parking lot of the La Playita Bar & Grill on Fuqua just east of the Gulf Freeway around 3:35 a.m., reportedly smashing other vehicles and



Moises Castillo

forcing patrons to run for safety.

A security guard from the bar, later identified as Castillo, reportedly came outside to address the situation and ended up firing his weapon at the reckless driver.

When police arrived at the scene, the victim was already dead next to her car. She appeared to have been driving through the parking lot when she was inadvertently struck, police said.

Police questioned both the security guard and the driver of the truck, but no immediate charges were filed. Further investigation, however, determined Castillo was a suspect, and he became a fugitive. On Monday, Nov. 21, members of HPD's Major Offenders Fugitive Apprehension Team arrested Castillo without incident, and he was subsequently charged.

The same nightclub was the site of another fatal shooting just this past week on Dec. 3. See related story on this page.

Boil notice renews local water controversy

MUD officials say most local warnings unnecessary

A recent boil notice issued by City of Houston officials last week following a pump malfunction caused mass confusion for area residents and local leaders who were unsure if the South Belt community was affected.

While the Leader was able to later confirm through city officials — via an undistributed press release — that both Clear Brook City MUD and Sagemeadow MUD were unaffected, district

leaders were unable to do so at the time, prompting them to err on the side of caution and warn all residents, as required by state law unless told otherwise.

Clear Brook City MUD Director of Operations Dean Baier said he was unaware of the local district's exemption from the Nov. 27 boil notice until he was notified by the Leader the following week on Tuesday, Dec. 6.

Man, 19, fatally shot at Fuqua nightclub

Houston police are investigating the fatal shooting of a man that took place around 4:15 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 3, outside a nightclub in the 11500 block of Fuqua just east of the Gulf Freeway.

The identity of the victim, 19, was pending verification by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences at press time.

According to Houston Police Department officials, patrol officers responded to a shooting in the parking lot of the La Playita Bar & Grill and found the victim unresponsive and suffering from a gunshot wound. Paramedics pronounced

the victim deceased at the scene.

Witnesses stated they heard a disturbance before shots were fired. Shortly after, a suspect described only as a tall black male was seen leaving the scene.

Anyone with information in this case is urged to contact the HPD Homicide Division at 713-308-3600 or speak anonymously with Crime Stoppers of Houston at 713-222-TIPS (8477).

The same nightclub was the site of another fatal shooting in November 2021, in which an arrest was recently made. See related story on this page.

Risner retires from Pct. 2 bench

Judge served 35 years with Harris County

Longtime area judge George Risner is stepping down from the bench at the end of this year after more than 35 years of service.

Risner currently serves as Harris County Precinct 2, Place 2 justice of the peace, a position he has held since 1987.

A lifetime resident of Precinct 2, Risner was first elected to Galena Park City Council when he was just 19 years old, seeking to improve recreation in his community.

At his current position, Risner presides over both criminal and civil cases, including traffic, public health, small claims and occupational driver's license hearings.

Risner's move to retire at this point was has-



George Risner

tened by his risky decision earlier this year to attempt to unseat Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia, a fellow Democrat.

"Over the last three years, I've watched my opponent, with the help of two others, almost destroy the Harris County justice system," Risner said in January, as he launched his campaign. "Someone has to stop this from happening."

Risner was ultimately unsuccessful in his bid for the position.

After graduating from Galena Park High School, Risner attended Houston Community College, Kilgore College and Lee College before enrolling at the University of Houston.

Risner has served in many groups, including Pasadena Rotary Club; Waltrip Masonic Lodge; Harris County Mayor and Councilman's Association; Pasadena ISD; Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo; and multiple chambers of commerce.

The judge is married to Bobbie K. Risner and has four children and seven grandchildren.

TV and online news reports at the time of the city's boil notice repeatedly showed a map of the entire city as being affected and never mentioned any exemptions until the following day on Nov. 28.

According to the current TCEQ Rule 290.46.q, boil water notices are required to be issued in the event of low distribution pressures (below 20 pounds per square inch), water outages, microbiological samples are found to contain Escherichia coli (E. coli) or other approved fecal indicator, failure to maintain adequate disinfectant residuals, elevated finished water turbidity

levels, or other conditions which indicate that the potability of the drinking water supply has been compromised.

Clear Brook City MUD supplies its water via two means: ground water wells located at various district-owned water treatment plant sites and through its ownership interest in the City of Houston's Southeast Water Purification Plant (SEWPP) via the surface water distribution lines located at Scarsdale Boulevard and Hall Road.

The TCEQ rule does not address interconnected systems such as what CBC has with the

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Local "jugging" incidents continue

A longtime South Belt resident had his car burglarized the afternoon of Monday, Dec. 5, after a trip to a local bank near Beltway 8 and the Gulf Freeway.

The victim discovered the crime after eating lunch at an area restaurant. The resident presumed he was followed to the establishment after leaving the nearby bank.

Such crimes are being referred to as "jugging" by police.

According to Houston Police Department officials jugging refers to a crime in which the suspect(s) will sit in a bank parking lot and watch customers, then follow them in hopes of burglarizing or robbing them when given a chance.

There has been a recent up-tick of such crimes in the South Belt community, police said. HPD officials said in a November press release that the jugging trend has surged citywide in recent months.

Man shot at Alameda Genoa gas station

A man was shot multiple times outside a gas station in the 11200 block of Alameda Genoa near Windmill Lakes Boulevard around 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 2.

According to Houston Police Department officials, the man was inside his vehicle at a Valero store when a group of people standing outside a red Toyota began firing at him, before fleeing the scene in the vehicle.

The victim was shot in the arm and leg. He initially drove himself to his brother-in-law's nearby

On Nov. 7, a 59-year-old woman was robbed in her own driveway as she unloaded groceries, near Blackhawk and Fuqua. She had reportedly just left the drive-thru ATM at the First Service Credit Union off Clearwood Drive and the Gulf Freeway.

In that incident, the victim suffered minor injuries and had to be transported to the hospital. The injuries were incurred after the victim — who had \$1,000 cash in her purse — unsuccessfully fought back against her attacker.

Anyone with information in either of these cases is urged to contact the Houston Police Department at 713-884-3131 or Crime Stoppers of Houston at 713-222-TIPS (8477).

Police advise that residents be aware of their surroundings when banking and to always call 911 if they see something suspicious. To read a complete list of HPD's jugging prevention tips, see last week's Leader.

home, before later being taken to an area hospital in stable condition. The man is expected to survive. Numerous shell casings were found at the scene.

Police said the victim did not cooperate with the investigation. At press time, there were no known suspects or motive. The investigation was ongoing at press time. Anyone with information in this case is urged to contact HPD's Major Offenders Division at 713-308-3100 or Crime Stoppers of Houston at 713-222-TIPS (8477).

Elected officials share their words

Babin rejects Biden's rail proposal

U.S. Congressman Brian Babin (TX-36) issued the following statement after voting on H.J. Res. 100 and H. Con. Res. 119.

"Make no mistake, a rail strike would be disastrous to our already spiraling economy," said Babin. "However, Congress has no business dictating the terms of private employment contracts. The president, who deems himself the 'union guy,' should have been able to solve this issue long ago. Instead of sim-

ply extending the cooling-off period, allowing railroad labor and management to negotiate their terms, Speaker Pelosi and President Biden chose a heavy-handed, big-government approach that I could not support. As the representative of so many Texans in the chemical, energy, construction, and manufacturing sectors, which rely heavily on railroads, I am concerned Congress's actions today set a dangerous precedent for future labor negotiations."

UHCL expands education for incarcerated students

Access to higher education in prison improves quality of life for those incarcerated, and increases their opportunity to sustain a successful life after release. Since UHCL opened in 1974, the college has offered classes in Texas Department of Criminal Justice facilities and graduated 600 students. The university's commitment to degree programs for incarcerated students is what drew Christina Novakov-Ritchev, the program's first designated professor, to move from California to join the UHCL.

"Dr. Novakov-Ritchev's connection to prison education was the main reason we wanted her here," said Glenn Sanford, dean of the College of Human Sciences and Humanities, which directs the Transforming Lives By Degrees program. "Her experience sets her apart, because this is a different kind of teaching experience than what most academics have," Sanford explained. "She's now the first full-time faculty member we've had dedicated to the program. We hope this will create continuity and stability as well as adding someone who is specifically researching this traditionally underserved population."

He said that students in that program will also benefit from her work and the data yielded from her research would strengthen the university's Criminal Justice and Criminology program.

offering educational opportunities to inmates goes back nearly 50 years; since the university first opened. "I saw this position wasn't just a prison education program, but a bachelor's and master's program," Novakov-Ritchev said. "I'm so excited to see all the possibilities here." UHCL offers three degree programs at TDCJ's W.F. Ramsey Unit and Beto and Coffield units for men, in Rosharon. Novakov-Ritchev will be teaching in-person courses in the Humanities program, and for the first time, graduate courses will be livestreamed for women incarcerated at the Gatesville unit.

Sanford said the Transforming Lives By Degrees program is expanding to include women because historically, the prison population has mostly men who are serving longer sentences than women. That's why there have been more opportunities for men.

"The population of incarcerated women has been increasing, and we need to offer services to them," he said. "There are some other opportunities for women to get undergraduate degrees in Texas, but we are expanding to include a graduate program for women, which makes us one of the only programs in the entire country offering undergraduate and graduate programs for incarcerated men and women."

Novakov-Ritchev said for those incarcerated, support systems like mental health

infrastructure and more educational opportunities were desperately needed. "These students have lived generational patterns of poverty, abuse and addiction," she said. "Many have never had a chance at anything. The Transforming Lives By Degrees program at UHCL is a unique opportunity to extend a chance to these people, to help them develop their voice, their critical thinking skills, and their critical perspectives on the world."

All her courses were discussion-based. "It's important to keep that face-to-face contact," she said. "Even courses for women that are not in person are live, so students can interact with me directly in real time. UHCL are trailblazers in Texas with this program."

Sanford said research by the RAND Corporation showed for every dollar spent on prison education, \$5 are saved on reincarceration costs. "This is a group of people who are taking very positive steps to turn their lives around," he said. "The requirements for admission, graduation, and tuition payment are the same as for any student."

He said the university's commitment to incarcerated students was unwavering. "Hiring Dr. Novakov-Ritchev is a demonstration of our continued investment in our mission as a regional, comprehensive university to serve all the citizens of Texas," he said.

In My Opinion

King discusses the ignored majority

Imagine that you are a Democrat campaigning for a statewide office in Texas, where one in six jobs is tied to the oil and gas industry.

Then imagine that two days ahead of your election, the Democratic president of the United States promises at a campaign rally in New York there will be no more drilling for oil and gas.

Or imagine that you are running for a local office in Harris County, Texas, as a Republican, where a Democrat has an 8-10 point natural advantage.

Then imagine that the Republican governor and legislature pass an abortion ban that does not contain an exception for rape and incest, a position opposed by about 90% of Harris County residents.

Welcome to the world of being thrown under the bus as a down-ballot candidate.

There was a time when party leaders at the state and national levels cared about winning down-ballot races as part of building their party, but those days are long gone.

That is because the only elections that matter to most elected officials are primaries, which increasingly have become ideological purity tests.

If a gubernatorial candidate must do

something to satisfy the primary base but that damages down-ballot candidates in swing districts, so be it.

It is just another example of how the toxic stew of extreme gerrymandering and the primary system have poisoned the historic two-party system in America. Prior to about 1990, we really had a four-party system, because both parties had conservative- and progressive-leaning wings.

To be sure, these wings were minorities within their respective parties. Nonetheless, having essentially four different "parties" allowed for deal-making across the aisle.

For example, the civil rights legislation of the 1960s was passed by progressive Democrats and Republicans, largely over the objection of each party's conservative wings.

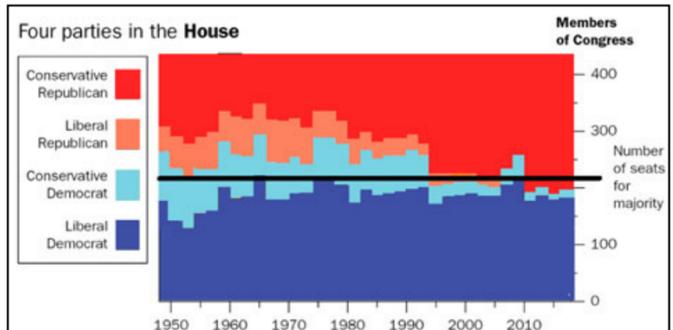
But since 1990, the minority wings of both parties have been virtually eliminated.

This is a chart (see below) that Lee Drutman's book, *Breaking the Two-Party Doom Loop*, based on data collected by www.voteview.com, a research project led by UCLA.

This chart shows the demise of the minority wings of the two parties in the U.S. House of Representatives.

I suspect that a chart of most state legislatures would look similar over the same period.

Bill King



Hancock announces honor roll

Thomas Hancock Elementary recently released the names of their students who earned an academic achievement award for the first nine weeks of the 2022-2023 school year.

Below are listed those students.

- pre-K**
Carlie Aguirre, Gianna Almedia, Arianna Andrade, Jhournee Berry, Jascin Burns, Samantha Caamano, Elijah Chapa, Lessy Costa, Jewel Guillory, Jayce Guillory, Adoree Hamm, Journee Hernderson, Madison Hughes, Saegan Johnson, Leroy Mbusa, Crispin Mendoza, Keanna Nguyen, Marely Orozco, Itzel Perez and Nicholas Torres.
- Kindergarten**
Mariyah Caballero, Elena Camargo, Caison Hall, Eliseo Hernandez, Miguel Medina, Calliope Picazo and Elijah Strong.

- First grade**
Emma Benavides, Laraine Mbusa, Kenzie Morgan, Tabitha Ramirez, Curtis Skinner, Micah Strong and Mateo Vicente.
- Second grade**
Madison Adams-Vera, Emily Chavez, Kristian Clark, Manuel Coronado, Erick Gonzalez, Tamia Jenkins, Skylar Jolaosho, James Majano, Raelyn Mcpherson, Esteban Mendoza and Diego Narvaez.
- Third grade**
Alondra Ochoa, Johanna Rangel, Matteo Rios, Andrew Rivas, Maria Ruiz, Brayden Scott, Mark Segura and Jayden Vu.
- Fourth grade**
Brayden Alfaro, Giovanni Barron, Alejandro Castro, Isaiah Castro, Cadence Gatlin, Valerie Gomez, Aiden Juarez and Chemya Robertson.

- Fourth grade**
Gilchrease, Abigail Gomez, Sophia Ibarra, Legrand Mbusa, Bryan Melesio, Lucas Rodriguez, La'riyah Smith, Nehemiah Thompson and Rooney Vu.

Leader checks out social media

By Natalie Abarca

A member of the *People of Sagemont 3* shared a post that has been shared on other social media pages of a lady that was involved in a hit-and-run after midnight on Saturday, Dec. 3 in the Sagemont area.

The post mentioned authorities need help identifying the lady since she had no identification on her and it seems she has dementia. The suspect is currently on

the run and the lady was still unconscious in the hospital.

A member of *People of Sagemont 2* posted that for the first time A Dog's Best Friend LLC is offering pictures with Santa.

They are inviting the community to come by for a free picture of one's fur baby with Santa. The event will take place Saturday, Dec. 11 from 11 a.m to 3 p.m., 13730 Beamer Rd. No appointment is needed.

Death

Linda Ann Ferro



Linda Ann Ferro, 78, passed peacefully into the arms of her Lord and Savior

on Sunday, Nov. 20, 2022 at her home in Houston. The oldest of three, Linda was born Feb. 27, 1944 in Houston and graduated from Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

She married the love of her life, Sammy Ferro, in 1967 and had three children, four granddaughters and two great-grandchildren. Before staying home to be with her children, Linda worked for what was formerly Houston Methodist St. John Hospital. She loved her family, friends and animals, and lived a life full of love and compassion. She was a kind and selfless woman who was loved by all who knew her, and she will be sorely missed.

She is preceded in death

by her father, John Cegielski; mother, Dolores Cegielski; and great-grandson, Luke Flusche. Linda is survived by her husband, Sammy Ferro; daughters Deanna and Shanna Ferro; son and daughter-in-law, Kyle and Nicole Ferro; granddaughters, Ashley Flusche, Bailey and Emma Ferro, and Gwen Heitman; grandson-in-law, Kevin Flusche; great-granddaughter, Claire Flusche; sisters, Jennifer Eklund and Donna Horlander; and countless nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

The funeral Mass was held Saturday, Dec. 3, 2022 at St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church. Interment followed at Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Dickinson.

Stuchbery names honor, merit rolls

Stuchbery Elementary officials announce first honor roll and merit roll for the 2022-2023 school year.

Third grade
Honor roll
Avinashy Acosta, Hector Sanchez and Carlos Velazquez.
Merit roll
Andres Arizmendez, Ayden Farris, Christian Flores, Javier Garcia-Chavez, Dorianne Hood, Luke Perez, Shane Oga-ga, Allison Ortiz, Daniela Sali-

nas, Dylan Salmeron, Ja'Naya Simms and Abigail Villedas.

Fourth grade
Honor roll
Sophia Cavazos, Kason Dillard, Bryce Dixon, Annie Flores, Paula Sabine Guevara, Charlotte Kearbey, JonCarlo Legoenaga, Damian Lopez, Adalynn McMullin, Victoria Neira, Kenton Nguyen, Kim Ngyuen, Hai Ngyuen, Gift Obah, Delano Oliver-Cooper, Leonardo Segovia, Soraya

Shah and Samantha Villanueva.

Merit roll
Miranda Aguilar, Xavier Arizmendez, Abigail Marie Brooks, Andres Julian Franco, Jacqueline Garcia, Damian Garza, Evelyn Erin Hernandez, Jacob Joel Hernandez, Serenity Kaye Johnson, Linh Thuy Le and Makayla Nicole Mendez.

Maddyson Gill, Mae Green, Matthew Mooney, London Toles and Elissa Vasquez.

Waugh assists with drive

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flyers to local businesses. "This is our favorite time of the year," Robb said. "We love Christmas."

The drive is unique to the mother-daughter team in the fact that donated goods go directly to help local residents.

"We want to help families in this area," Robb said. "This

is our neighborhood."

For Waugh, it's all about spreading cheer. "I hope everybody has a wonderful Christmas," she said.

Robb is grateful for all the support received from the community.

"We'd like to thank everyone for making the toy drive such a success," Robb said.

Those wishing to donate

items should visit the *Leader* office, located at 11555 Beamer, during normal business hours. Desired items include toys for children of all ages, nonperishable food items, paper products and cash. All gifts should be new and unwrapped.

For information, email mynews@southbeltleader.com.

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Nine Holiday Attractions • Hotel • One Venue
Create special memories as Galveston Island transitions to a Winter Wonder Island!
Festival of Lights • Ice Land • 3D Holiday Films • Rudolph 4D • Arctic Slide
Train Rides • Holiday Buffets • Breakfast with Santa • New Year's Palooza • Cirque Joyeux
Hotel Packages Available Now!
ICE LAND is back with a cool island theme!
Cirque Joyeux HOLIDAY SHOW
Save Big: Value Days, Group Rates and Discounts.
Online Always: The best deals are always at www.moodygardens.org
MOODY GARDENS GALVESTON ISLAND
For Information: 409-744-4673
Hotel Reservations: 409-741-8484
MoodyGardens.org

Local library events set

In case of storms or adverse weather, refer to library website for details.

Bracewell Branch Library
Bracewell Library is at 9002 Kingspoint. Customers are encouraged to visit the building to browse, check out and return materials, use the computers and Wi-Fi, and check out holds. For information, visit <https://houstonlibrary.org/>. For online learning, visit <https://houstonlibrary.org/online-learning-7556> or call 832-393-2580. Hours are Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Wednesdays, noon - 8 p.m.; Fridays, 1 - 5 p.m.; and Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Bracewell is closed Sundays.

Thursday, Dec. 8, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. - 4 p.m. Open lab - computer class. Registration required.

Thursday, Dec. 8, 10:15 - 10:45 a.m. Family story time.

Monday, Dec. 12, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. - 4 p.m. Open lab - computer class. Registration required.

Visit <https://houstonlibrary.libcal.com/calendar/events> for more library events.

Book drop
The book drop is open. Library materials can be returned. The library continues to provide online resources to enjoy the library virtually. Large items such as FLIP kits or laptops should not be placed in the book drop, but taken inside.

Additional resources
The Houston Public Library has electronic resources, books, audiobooks, databases for research, tutoring, language learning, education and parent information for Texas residents with a library card. To get a card, visit the home page at www.houstonlibrary.org under Here's What's Happening. Click on Free Resources for All to access digital resources and access a link for a temporary card. Also, under Here's What's Happening, the card titled Online Resources for Kids accesses a Virtual Storytime provided on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 11 a.m. The archived storytimes are found on Facebook under Houston Public Library Virtual Storytimes. Another virtual program is Craft.

Houston Public Library's many free online resources and digital services are available 24/7 with a MY Link Library Card at www.houstonlibrary.org, including e-books and e-audiobooks, streaming TV, movie and music services, online classes and tutoring and databases. Until further notice, only electronic items (i.e. e-books, e-audio books, etc.) are eligible for holds and check-out. HPL has a collection of free e-books and audio books. Visit the catalog for previously requested hold selection may be in a digital format. Instructions on downloading the e-book or audio book are on the site.

Parker Williams Library
Parker Williams Library is open. Visit <https://www.hcpl.net/reopening> for reopening information or the main website at <https://www.hcpl.net/branch/parker-williams-branch-library>. The library will follow state and county guidelines for mask and social distancing.

The book drop is open. Social media links are Facebook.com/ParkerWilliamsLibrary and Instagram.com/ParkerWilliamsLibrary.

The following events are scheduled for Parker Williams Library, 10851 Scarsdale Blvd.:
Thursday, Dec. 8, 10:15 - 10:45 a.m. Toddler story time.
Thursday, Dec. 8, noon - 1 p.m. Adult computer class. Registration required.
Saturday, Dec. 10, 10 - noon. Virtual citizen workshop.
Monday, Dec. 12, 11:15 - 11:45 a.m. Family story time.
Monday, Dec. 12, 6 - 7 p.m. Santa Clause.
Tuesday, Dec. 13, 10:15 - 10:45 a.m. Biligual story time.
Tuesday, Dec. 13, 3 - 4 p.m. Sewing club.
Tuesday, Dec. 13, 4 - 5 p.m. Tech help hour.
Wednesday, Dec. 14, 11:15 - 11:45 a.m. Babies and books.
Wednesday, Dec. 14, 5 - 6 p.m. Camelot to cosmos.

Online services
- Use HCPL Wi-Fi service with HCPL's drive-up Wi-Fi.
- Download e-books and audiobooks, stream movies, research and learn at www.hcpl.net.
- Attend an HCPL program or story time online through Facebook or YouTube.
- Check an account to renew loans or request books, e-books, comics or graphic novels.
- Stream classic films, indie cinema and award-winning documentaries on Kanopy.
- Listen to audiobooks through RBDigital or OverDrive.
- Read along and play with picture books on TumbleBooks.

Don't have an HCPL library card? Instant access can be obtained to all HCPL's digital materials and research tools with an iKnow Digital Access Card. Apply at <https://www.hcpl.net/services/iknow-card> for a HCPL card. For details, visit <https://www.hcpl.net>.

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South Belt Elementary celebrates Western Heritage with rodeo volunteers



Shown above are, left to right, South Belt music teachers Ben McGee and Marcy Pittman, P.E. teacher Melissa Cerda and fourth-grade teacher Jannette Gonzalez. At right are HLSR volunteer Ray Schmidt (left) and ABE paraprofessional Kat Myers demonstrating the two-step.



Support Leader advertisers!

Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo volunteers visited South Belt Elementary to present a Western Heritage event. Students and staff learned about various games, dances, history of the rodeo, Western wear and much more. Shown above are, left to right, (front row) Alex Rodriguez, Kase Elmore, Elias Ruiz, Jaysean Henderson, (back row) Maryella Portillo, Isabella Garza, Sherry Franco, Evalinh Moore, Rich Counts (HLSR volunteer), Alessia Perez, Emma Canales, Jolene Pineda and Ariel Hernandez. Photo by Ann Ton

Red Ribbon Week celebrated at Meador Elementary



The last week in October is always celebrated in schools to promote healthy choices and saying "no" to drugs. It was a busy Red Ribbon Week at Meador with themed dress-up days, a costume parade and also a Trunk or Trot community health fair event. At left, pre-K student Arleen Garcia (left) and fourth-grader Arleth Garcia smile for the camera.



At right, left to right, are librarian John Holder, third-grade teachers Anisa Ramirez, Megan Mayes, Kacie Hedge and Anaseli Juarez at the Trunk or Trot.



Shown far left, nurse Celeste Skipper is all dressed up for the 50th day of school. Shown left, counselor Tara Merida poses with her comfort dog, Luna, and second-grader Angela Nunez as Scooby.



At right, left to right, are Meador first-grade teacher Kourtney Roopwah and first-grade students Faith and Hope Jimenez celebrating college day.

BAHEP Quasar Award earned

Continued from Page 1

NASA JSC is home to America's astronaut corps, Mission Control Center, International Space Station, Orion and Gateway programs, and its more than 11,000 civil service and contractor employees. Wyche previously served as deputy director at Johnson for three years beginning in 2018. As director, she is responsible for overseeing a broad range of human spaceflight activities, including development and operation of human spacecraft, commercialization of low-Earth orbit, and the Center's role in landing the first woman and first person of color on the surface of the Moon. Under Wyche's leadership, NASA JSC was recognized by Forbes and Statista as the No. 1 best employer among Texas' major employers.

In October, Wyche gave the third annual State of Space address. One of NASA's latest accomplishments was the DART Mission, which stands for "Double Asteroid Redirection Test." Based on the data compiled from the trail that came off the asteroid, NASA is certain the spacecraft made an impact, Wyche said. The mission is intended to test whether such a technique could be used to protect Earth by deflecting an asteroid some day in the future.

The Artemis I mission, which successfully and spectacularly launched in the early morning hours of Nov. 16, 2022, is being managed by JSC's Mission Control Center. Future missions will land astronauts on the moon, and JSC and its American and international partners will be major players in that enormous effort. Wyche said NASA is making partnerships with everyone who wants to be part of Artemis.

According to Wyche, research, innovation and workforce development are vital to maintain NASA JSC as the home of human spaceflight. The director believes that it will take many partnerships to accomplish NASA's goals, and she is putting in the work to discover and maintain the best partnerships that will take humans to the moon, Mars and beyond.

Inductees join honors society



On Monday, Dec. 5 Pasadena Memorial High School inducted students in their National Technology Honors Society. Above are shown two of the scholar athletes, who are friends and accountability partners. They are Chance Arriagam (left) and Swazi Gurnell both seniors, student athletes and leaders on the campus. Chance is recognized for boys' basketball and Swazi was recognized for track and field.

"The Best Christmas Pageant Ever," opens

Kids' Backporch Productions is presenting "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" by Barbara Robinson. "It is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of French Inc. The director is Stephen Hurst and stage manager is Amy Kenah-Ricketts. This is KBP's 88th production and their sixth of this play. KBP first presented the play as their ninth show in 2007.

In this hilarious Christmas classic, a couple struggling to put on a church Christmas pageant is faced with casting the Herdman kids—probably the most inventively awful kids in history. You won't believe the mayhem—and the fun—when the Herdmans collide with the Christmas story head on.

This delightful comedy is adapted from the best-selling young adult book, and has become a holiday staple for groups across the United States. It features plenty of great roles for children and adults, a few favorite Christmas carols and a lot of laughs.

Performances are Dec. 9, 7 p.m.; Dec. 10, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; and Dec. 11, 2 p.m. at Shadycrest Baptist Church—Fellowship Hall, 3017 Yost Blvd., Pearland.

Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors (65+) and \$9 for children (18 and under). Doors open half an hour before the show begins. This production is appropriate for all ages.

For more information, visit www.kidsbackporchproductions.org and www.facebook.com/KidsBackPorch. Tickets available for pre-purchase at <http://kidsbackporch.ticketleap.com> and can be bought 30 minutes prior to the show.



Above are angel choir members, left to right, (front row) Enmerie Ricketts as Beth Bradley, Delaney Cline as Alice Wendleken, Eira Mehta as Janet, Lydia He as Beverly, Elizabeth Saenko as baby angel (Roberta), (back row) Peyton Fatter as Shirley, Natalia Peña as Juanita, Piper Fatter as Shirley and Brinley Rusk as Naomi.



Shown above are the cast members rehearsing. Left to right are Madelin Marquez as Claude, Mabre Cole as Imogene, Miles Kessling as Leroy, Andrew Lim as Charley Bradley, Ariana Lim as Ralph and Aria Townsend as Gladys. Not pictured is Helen Zhou as Ollie Herdman.

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Fred Roberts Middle School crowns students of the month



Fred Roberts Middle faculty was excited to celebrate their "Aviator of the Month" students. Shown above, from left to right, are Mike Evans (counselor), Keiliannis Gonzalez Rodriguez (sixth-grader), Tiffany Kamau (fifth-grader), Lali Guerrero (principal), Broderick Braggs (fifth-grader), Devin Hinton (sixth-grader) and Crissy Higham (counselor). Photo by Ashlie Haas

Appreciation shown for Meador chess club



Meador Elementary faculty appreciates the chess club students for representing Meador at the district tournament with pride and sportsmanship on Nov. 5 at Beverly Hills Intermediate. These students practiced before and after school to improve their game. A special thanks goes out to Connie Daumas (instructional coach) for sponsoring the Meador chess club and to Meador teacher Jacob O'Malley who assisted as a chess coach. Shown above, from left to right, are (front row) Eternity Martinez, fourth-grader; Sam Nfor, fourth-grader; Alana Rivas-Lopez, third-grader; (back row) Jennifer Chavez (principal); Isaias Regalado-Orellano, fourth-grader; Sophia Mayh, fourth-grader, Atom Price, fourth-grader; and Connie Daumas, math instructional coach.



Congratulations are in order for Alana Rivas-Lopez (left) who placed sixth out of more than 30 third-graders.

Atkinson recognizes Eagles of the month



Pre-K student Jonathan Le (left), from Mercedes Schreiber's class, is such a responsible student. He always completes his work correctly, uses classroom materials appropriately, and takes care of his supplies. He is a positive role model and a great helper in the classroom.



First-grader Michaela Cisneros (left), from Lisa Byron's class, demonstrates responsibility every day. She can always be counted on to be prepared for class. She turns in her homework on time and does her classwork as well. She is a trusted student to take notes, papers and other materials to other teachers or to the office. She always makes good choices and helps her classmates do the same. She is a pleasure to have in class and all her classmates look to her as a leader.



Second-grader Sophia Garcia (left), from Rebecca Garcia's homeroom, is a positive role model to her peers because she is a responsible student. She is always prepared with her homework and class supplies. She takes care of her own supplies and respects school property as well. She uses her time wisely and stays on task to complete her assignments in a timely manner. Sophia's responsible character traits help her make wise choices each day. Sophia is destined to have a bright future because she is a self-motivated, responsible person.



Kindergartner Christina Verdecia (left), from Samantha Coyle's class, demonstrates responsibility in and out of the classroom. She always makes sure she has her materials for school, returns what is needed, and completes her work without redirection. She can be trusted to do what is right even when no one is watching, and helps to model that to others.



Third-grader Damiya Williams (left), from Diane Davis' class, has been an excellent addition to the Atkinson family this year. She is a very responsible young lady. Damiya can be trusted to do the right thing even when alone. She consistently turns in all assignments and homework on time. She is a model student to her peers. Atkinson staff is so proud of Damiya.



Above, fourth-grader Elisabeth Cordova from Belva Alaniz's class is a very responsible student and is always ready with all of her assignments. She can be trusted to help her fellow students when they need extra help. Elisabeth models responsibility every day, both in the classroom and during specials. She truly deserves Eagle of the Month.

Meador fourth-graders attend symphony concert



Shown above are, left to right, Meador Elementary fourth-graders Eliannys Fuentes, Linsy Rodriguez, Nataly Turcios, Emely Reyes and Brianna Torres who attended the Houston Symphony concert at Jones Hall. The students enjoyed the upper elementary school concert "Sounds of the Orchestra: Groove, Listen, and Move!" Shown below are, left to right, Makayla Clemons, Ja'Kayla Bradford and Alize Laijas who also attended.

City boil requirement renews local water controversy

Continued from Page 1
SEWPP. Therefore, whenever the SEWPP enters into conditions that require it to issue boil water notices, CBC as a downstream recipient, must also issue boil water notices. CBC's concern is the unnecessary issuance of notices to its customers even if the conditions that affected the SEWPP do not affect the CBC system. Historically, CBC's issuance of the notices has been unnecessary. Most instances do not require CBC to issue notices because it can self-treat water, has sufficient facilities

and groundwater to supply water without the contaminant the SEWPP surface water, and has the ability to isolate the SEWPP water from being distributed to the consumers. Repeated water sample testing also rules out any contamination to the downstream water supply. Clear Brook City MUD Board member Chris Clark said the district would like the TCEQ to revise Rule 290.46.q to address how interconnected systems are required to address boil water notices and allow districts with a similar configuration to bypass the requirement to issue notices when there is no threat to the system.

According to Clark, boil water notices take a lot of resources, are expensive, wasteful of water and often put customers on high alert and concern when there is no need for alarm. Baier said Sagemeadow MUD also has a system in place that provides safe water to residents at times when the city often can't. "It really doesn't make sense for them to have to issue a warning," said Baier. "Their water goes into a storage, before it's treated and distributed."

Clark said any change in the warning system would require new legislation. While Clear Brook City MUD found an ally in state rep. Dennis Paul, efforts to pass any legislation failed to pass this session. Clark said such changes in legislation are made easier when there's no push-back from the city. To help in that regard, Clark said the MUD also has found a staunch supporter in City of Houston Mayor Pro Tem and District E City Council member Dave Martin. Clark further said the dis-

trict would have more control over its warning system if its legal status were changed from that of a MUD to that of a "village." Clear Brook City advanced the idea this past year, suggesting that self-operating municipal utility districts with 5,000 or more connections be eligible for the change in status. Clark said only five or six districts in the state would qualify for the legal change. Efforts to push for the change, however, proved unsuccessful this past legislative session.

Remember When

45 years ago (1977)
J. Frank Dobie's varsity basketball team defeated Smiley 54-48 to win first place in a tournament. Members of the 147th FIG of the Texas Air National Guard collected food, toys and clothes for needy families for their 24th annual Christmas project.

40 years ago (1982)
Police confiscated \$450 in cash and between \$3,500 and \$4,000 worth of marijuana from four males who lived in the South Belt area. Three of the males were Dobie graduates and one still attended Dobie.

The Leader office was threatened by an anonymous caller, who spoke with a heavy Spanish accent. The caller said if the Leader published anything negative about the Cowboy youth football program he would blow up the office.

35 years ago (1987)
A.C. Czigan was named Citizen of the Year by the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce.

Sections of 12-inch pipe that were occupying the Beamer esplanades from Fuqua to Hall Road were to be installed as part of a city capital improvement plan.

30 years ago (1992)
The Environmental Protection Agency, at the request of the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, performed soil gas sampling in the South-belt subdivision.

District 23-5A varsity football coaches honored 11 Dobie players with selection to the all-league team. Chris Herpin, Danny Roessler, Mark Wingo, Jerrod Johnson and Kyle Smith were named to the first team. Charles Okwuonu, Mike Simmons and Patrick Winsley were named to the second team. Honorable mentions were Jonathan Herridge, Gary Smith and Zack Stephens.

25 years ago (1997)
The Jack in the Box on the corner of Fuqua and Beamer was totally destroyed in a

multialarm fire. Three Dobie students charged with minor in possession while at a football game lost their appeal to keep from being sent to Highpoint alternative school as punishment.

San Jacinto College system purchased a 21-acre tract near the University of Houston-Clear Lake. San Jacinto South athletic director Judy Harrison was named assistant manager for the U.S. Women's Track and Field team and would accompany the team to Sydney, Australia, for competition in the 2000 Olympics.

20 years ago (2002)
Two new apartment complexes were being planned on land located between Fuqua and South Belt and Sabo and I-45. The San Jacinto College board of regents announced that Dr. William "Bill" Lindemann would be interim chancellor for the district.

15 years ago (2007)
Two Sagemeadow homes in the 11400 block of Sagewhite near Sageplum were destroyed by fire. Seven fire trucks responded to the blaze, including units from the Southeast Volunteer Fire Department, the Forest Bend Fire Department and the Houston Fire Department. Fortunately, there were no injuries. The fire was accidentally started when a 14-year-old resident of one of the homes was burning leaves. Sagemont Church kicked off the holiday season with an outdoor Christmas festival. The event included a 50-foot-tall Christmas tree, simulated snow, a rock wall, a petting zoo, inflatable playgrounds, games, crafts and door prizes. The highlight of the festival was a presentation called "Dreams" that followed

the tree lighting. The program featured music and art teams from the church, plus aerial ballet and acrobatics (similar to Cirque de Soleil) performed by the world renowned Aerial Experience Productions. The event had an estimated 7,500 to 8,000 people attending.

10 years ago (2012)
A mother was arrested after police said she left her sleeping baby in a car at Alameda Mall while she went shopping. Forrescee Markey Owens, 28, of Silsbee, was charged with felony child endangerment. Houston police were called to the mall parking lot at roughly 1 p.m. after a passerby spotted the baby unattended in the vehicle. Police arrested Owens when she returned to the car carrying packages. Owens told police she didn't want to disturb the baby as it was sleeping. It was unclear how long the

infant was left alone.

5 years ago (2017)
Former Burnett Elementary student Thi Nguyen gave back to the school in a big way by hosting a Christmas festival at the campus on Saturday, Dec. 2. Nguyen - who later attended Thompson Intermediate and Dobie High School, graduating in 2007 - said she organized the event in honor of her sister, Jennie Nguyen (also a former Burnett student), who drowned near Galveston in May 2000 at the age of 7. When Jennie Nguyen died, the family relied on donations from the South Belt community to help pay for funeral costs, inspiring Thi Nguyen to repay the favor. In addition to supplying thousands of Christmas gifts, Nguyen also provided synthetic snow, a bounce house, a human-sized snow globe, a photo booth and an appearance by Santa Claus.

Longtime South Belt resident C.J. Leslie died Saturday, Dec. 2, at the age of 81. The first choir director at J. Frank Dobie High School, Leslie was responsible for composing the area campus's Fight Song and Alma Mater. He was also involved in multiple local church choirs. Leslie was a U.S. Army Veteran, serving in the 144th Infantry, 49th Armored Division. He also served as an umpire for various youth baseball organizations.

1 year ago (2021)
Dozens of South Belt community members gathered Saturday, Dec. 4, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Southeast Volunteer Fire Department. Originally called the Sagemont Volunteer Fire Department, the group changed its name in 1974 when the City of Houston annexed the Sagemont subdivision. The

department is now responsible for covering the local communities in Harris County that remain unincorporated. This includes the municipal utility districts of Kirkmont, Sagemeadow and Clear Brook City. The area covers approximately five square miles and has roughly 25,000 residents. Two SVFD members - Jerry Terrell and Ed Baker - had been with the department since the beginning. Former SVFD Chief Chuck Tylka had been with the department for 45 years.

Dobie High School Principal Franklin Moses announced Monday, Dec. 6, he was leaving Pasadena ISD to take a job as assistant superintendent in Clear Creek ISD, the school district where his wife works and daughters attend school. The fifth principal in Dobie's 53-year history, Moses served 10 years in the position, previously serving six years as the high school's assistant principal. Moses began his Pasadena ISD career at Parkview Intermediate, where he served as a math teacher during the 2004-2005 school year. Prior to that, Moses worked at DeRidder High School in DeRidder, La., where he was born and raised. Moses served five years as the high school's math teacher and head girls' basketball coach. Moses was named the 2021 Pasadena ISD Secondary Principal of the Year.

Fred Roberts Middle School Principal Jorly Thomas was named interim principal at Dobie until a permanent replacement could be selected. Thomas had worked at Roberts Middle School for six years, serving as its first principal. Prior to that, Thomas served as an assistant principal, first at Beverly Hills Intermediate and then at Dobie High School. He began his career as a teacher at North Shore High School, where he taught 10th-grade social studies. He has served as a counselor in Spring ISD and Fort Bend ISD. Under Thomas' leadership, Roberts achieved several distinct accomplishments.



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Over The Back Fence by Natalie

BEST WISHES, DAVID AND ELLIE!
Best wishes are sent to David Flickinger, South Belt Leader president, and his wife, Ellie, who celebrate their eleventh wedding anniversary Dec. 10 from daughter Natalie and husband Jose Abarca; grandchildren Kelvin Lopez and Noah, Elliana and Isabella Abarca; parents Marie and David Flickinger; brother Fred and wife Leslie Flickinger; niece Kimberly and husband Matt Lipina; niece Courtney and husband Chris Durham and children Abigail, Jackson and Penelope; and aunt Alexis Lochner.

SCHOOL DAZE
The following staff and personnel of the Pasadena Independent School District celebrate birthdays Dec. 8 through Dec. 14.

Atkinson Elementary
Enjoying a winter birthday Dec. 9 is Ashley Armenta. Join in the birthday fun with Richard Whittaker Dec. 14.

Meador Elementary
Celebrating a birthday Dec. 8 is Miriam Reyna. Send a special birthday greeting Dec. 10 to Sheryl Munn. South Belt Elementary Give a birthday shoutout Dec. 10 for Margot Bravo.

Melillo Middle School
Best wishes for a great birthday Dec. 11 are sent to Sandra Medina.

Roberts Middle School
Give a shoutout Dec. 9 to Christopher Martin and Ashton Ramella for a wonderful birthday. Sing a happy birthday song Dec. 11 to LaShondra Evans. Celebrating a birthday Dec. 12 is Hector Del Rio.

Beverly Hills Intermediate
April Roark celebrates a birthday Dec. 10.

Thompson Intermediate
Nancy O'Connell enjoys a birthday Dec. 11.

Dobie High
Carmela Swinnen celebrates a birthday Dec. 10. Michael Parker marks a birthday Dec. 11. Enjoying a birthday Dec. 12 is Faryal Shaukat. Three cheers for a great birthday are sent Dec. 13 to Courtney Dixon, Philip Foster and Loan Peabody.

FRIENDS CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS
Thursday, Dec. 8: Damon Miles, Adriana Garza, Shannon Sims, Mandy Bennett and Susanne Cook; Friday, Dec. 9: Angela Preciado Melissa Gallegos, Mary Bogan, Paul Garza, Jacob Pena and Alex Blancas; Saturday, Dec. 10: Carmela Swinnen, Rebecca Schwartz, Henry Rubio, Betsy Urschel, Sherri Lindsey, Alexis Bursiaga, Yvette Johnson-Lightfoot and Jason Manriquez; Sunday, Dec. 11: Kara Toro, Robert Summers, Sandra Medina, Amanda Meili and Robert Royal; Monday, Dec. 12: Carolyn Sternes-Ontiveros, Joe Lewis, David Rojas Sr., Pepper Lowe and Diane Lakits Black; Tuesday, Dec. 13: Ryan Tucker, Dustin Cochran and Mike Stacey; and Wednesday, Dec. 14: Pedro Gutierrez III, Kay Wood and Melissa Duncan.

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Email announcements of anniversaries, vacations and graduations to mynews@southbeltleader.com with OTBF in the subject line by Friday noon for the next week's publication. For birthdays, type "OTBF: Friends Celebrate Birthdays" in the subject line by Friday noon for the next week's publication.

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SPORTS NEWS & NOTES



Brook splits at Carlisle/Krueger

Orlando Horton earned tournament Most Valuable Player honors as he guided the Clear Falls Knights to their first-ever Carlisle/Krueger Classic varsity boys' basketball crown Dec. 3 at Carlisle Field House in League City.

In the silver bracket title game, Clear Brook fell 58-37 to Fort Bend Bush as

At left, Clear Brook's Ja'Michael Young (3) earned a spot on the Carlisle/Krueger All-Tournament team as he guided the Wolverines to an appearance in the silver bracket championship game. With two wins in four overall games at the prestigious event, the Wolverines are 7-6 overall prior to Dec. 6 play.

Photo by Andy Tolbert

Ja'Michael Young earned All-Tournament squad honors for the Wolverines, who went 2-2 in the event after winning third place in the 2021 gold bracket.

With Horton taking MVP honors, the rest of the All-Tournament squad included the Heights' Gabriel Alvarez, Clear Falls' Corey Kelley, Aziz Olajuwon of Fort Bend Clements, Fort Bend Bush's Harrison Oriakhi, Glenn Parker of Texas City, Jayden Rammanan of Flower Mound Marcus, Erik Villarreal of Clear Lake and Galveston Ball's Vernon.

In pool play Dec. 1, Clear Brook was handled, 66-46, by Clements but came back to bounce Heights 70-39 in the evening session.

Clear Brook, now 7-6 this season as of Dec. 5,

defeated Texas City to avenge an earlier loss to the Stingarees.

As for Falls, the Knights bested Galveston Ball and Fort Bend Bush in pool play and then took down Flower Mound Marcus in the semifinals before taking out Clements for the gold bracket crown.

The Knights made a late-season push in 2021-2022 and wound up second in the District 24-6A standings.

While the Gators entered the season as the favorites to repeat in the league this time around, Horton has the Knights thinking of a title push.

Clear Brook, meanwhile, is intent on making its way to the top of the standings after settling for a third-place spot a season ago.

Local basketball programs continue nondistrict stretch

While the Clear Brook varsity boys were playing in the Clear Creek ISD-sponsored Carlisle/Krueger Classic, the Dobbie varsity boys' squad went tournament hunting in Beaumont, while the Clear Brook varsity girls' played in the Katy ISD Invitational.

The Dobbie varsity girls, meanwhile, took part in nondistrict play and has one more game Dec. 9 at home against Manvel before the much anticipated District 22-6A opener Dec. 13 at home against Deer Park.

JFD boys split
The Dobbie varsity boys continued their tough nondistrict schedule with an appearance at the Young Men's Business League event in Beaumont, eventually dropping three of their five games in the event.

The Longhorns, 8-9 overall entering play Dec. 6 against Alief Taylor after press time, had a rough first day Dec. 1 in pool play, losing 50-44 to Al-dine Nimitz before a very good Beaumont United team downed the Longhorns 75-49.

Moving ahead to Dec. 2, the Longhorns came back with wins over Channelview (54-50) and Angleton 66-31 before ending the event Dec. 3 with a 63-47 loss to Beaumont West Brook.

Dobbie will face a talented Clear Falls team Dec. 13 at Phillips Field House and then go against Texas City Dec. 16 at home.

The highly anticipated District 22-6A race begins Dec. 20 as the Longhorns, defending champions of the league, will open with a road game at Pasadena Memorial.

Dobbie has an addition-

Dobie girls host Deer Park Dec. 13, 7 p.m.
Brook girls host Clear Falls Dec. 13, 7 p.m.

al tournament appearance coming at the Dec. 28-29 Baytown Lee Gander Classic.

Brook girls cruising
The Pearland and Summer Creek varsity girls' teams have garnered plenty of attention to this point, and rightfully so.

But the Clear Brook varsity girls' team also won 11 of its first 15 games prior to press time Dec. 6, and cruised to the Katy ISD tournament championship with four wins.

Kamryn McLaurin has led the Lady Wolverines' super trio of sophomores in scoring with 12 points a game, with sophomores Chardel Terrell and Rezia Castillo at 10 points per game.

"Obviously, you want to win every game you play, but overall we are pleased with the process and where we are right

now," Clear Brook head coach Mileka Loydrake said.

"When I set up this schedule, I knew we would face our challenges along the way, particularly with a young team like we have. I'm very happy to be at 11-4, but we've got a lot of basketball left."

For Clear Brook, the District 24-6A race tips off Dec. 13 against Clear Falls. The expectation is to repeat as champions, but the Lady Wolverines won't get caught looking ahead, says Loydrake.

"We have to play each game possession by possession, and then the schedule game by game," Loydrake said.

"Looking ahead past the game in front of us is not something we want to do. Repeating as champion is the goal, but we have to take them one at a time."

Brook graduate Price is Player of the Year

By John Bechtle Sports Editor

Jaysen Price had a 2022 collegiate season for the ages while helping guide Texas Wesleyan to its first conference co-championship in decades, earning Sooner Athletic Conference Player of the Year honors as one of the nation's most prolific return specialists.

Price, a sophomore with the Rams, is a Class of 2021 Clear Brook High School graduate who was relatively lightly recruited coming out of high school.

Fast forward to today, as Price has been one of the most explosive return men at any level of football across America this season.

And to think it all started with a simple question coming from Texas Wesleyan offensive coordinator Fran Johnson.

"Coach asked me the first day of practice if I could catch kicks, and I said 'yes,'" Price recalls.

"The next day, they had me out there catching kickoffs and punts. Our primary return guy was injured during my freshman season last year, and I stepped in.

"I knew I had to do something to make the bus (traveling squad for games), and that was my ticket early on."

Price did well enough as a returner his freshman season to warrant a move

up the depth chart.

Coming into 2022 as the Rams' top option in the return game, Price had 16 kickoff returns for 512 yards, averaging 32 yards per return with two scores. He fielded another 19 punts for 480 yards, averaging an unheard-of 25.3 yards per return while also scoring twice.

Named the Sooner Athletic Conference's Special Teams Player of the Week three different times over 11 weeks, Price was the easy choice for conference Player of the Year, with Texas Wesleyan's Joe Prud'homme named co-coach of the Year.

At 9-2 overall and 7-2 in Sooner Athletic Conference action, the Rams finished in a three-way tie with Ottawa University-Arizona and Arizona Christian.

A win over Lyon College in the regular season finale last month brought the program its first-ever Sooner Athletic Conference crown, and Price was right in the middle of it all.

"Really proud of my season, really proud of all of the guys and the coaching staff," Price said.

"We had a chance at 11-0 but let a couple of games get away from us. Overall, though, we have a lot to be proud of."

So just how did Price become one of the most dangerous return men in the country?

"It's all about trying to

make the first guy miss and getting something going forward. Don't let the first guy bring you down. Force multiple players to get involved to stop you.

"Really, just have no

fear and do what you have to do to try to set your team up well on offense. If you score, well then obviously that's a bonus."

Price tied for the team lead in total receptions

with 18, collecting 228 yards through the air with another three scores.

Texas Wesleyan graduates a few pass catchers, leaving Price and fellow junior-to-be A.J. Bobb

possibly in line for bigger roles at receiver.

Still, Price knows where his bread is buttered.

"I was fortunate enough to have a big year in the return game, and I want to continue to do whatever I can to help us win," Price said.

A business marketing major in the classroom, Price aims to one day be a marketing director.

Things have worked out rather well for a young player who had few collegiate playing options as near as a month away from signing day in February 2021.

"Texas Wesleyan has been great for me, and I think I've done my part to help the program," Price said.

"We're not done yet. I'm excited to see what else we can do as a team. We still have things we want to accomplish as a team."



At left, Clear Brook High School graduate and Texas Wesleyan University football star Jaysen Price has been named the Player of the Year in the Sooner Athletic Conference after leading the Rams to a share of the conference crown and a 9-2 overall finish. Price led the NAIA with 25.3 yards per punt return and ranked third with 32.0 yards a kick return this year. Price, a sophomore from Houston, made the all-conference first team as both a kick returner and punt returner. Price struck twice for touchdowns on kick returns and two touchdowns on punt returns, including a 94-yard touchdown at Texas College on October 29. Price bolted 92 yards on a punt return on November 5. He was a three-time SAC special teams player of the week this season.

Texas Wesleyan photo

Newsomes end 2022 volleyball season at NCAA tourney



The Newsome siblings, Jaden Newsome at Iowa State and Kailin Newsome at Southeast Louisiana, saw their 2022 collegiate volleyball seasons come to a close in NCAA tournament action. The Newsomes, both Clear Brook High School graduates, were record-setting players with the Wolverines. Jaden Newsome began her collegiate career at Missouri before playing her final two seasons at Iowa State. Taking advantage of a fifth season due to the pandemic, Newsome was one of five setters in the Division I ranks to have more than 1,000 assists and 110 kills in a season en route to All-Big 12 second team honors. She had more than 700 kills this season as Iowa State defeated Florida Gulf Coast in the NCAA first round before a straight-set loss



to host Florida in the Gainesville bracket. Jaden Newsome's playing career now finished, she has earned a bachelor's degree in sports management from Missouri and is completing master's degree work in information systems and business analytics at Iowa State. Kailin Newsome was a first team All-Southland Conference choice as she led the Lions to their first-ever conference crown and first NCAA tournament appearance to highlight her junior season. Kailin Newsome had 467 kills this season, including a team-high 13 in a straight-set loss to host Minnesota in the first round of the NCAA tournament. The Lions went 25-8 overall this season and will have Newsome back in the mix for another season in 2023.

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Dobie graduate Thomas is All-Conference volleyball pick at McCook County

By John Bechtle
Sports Editor

As unlikely as the pairing might have seemed some 18 months ago, Victoria Thomas says if she had the chance to play for the McCook County Community College women's volleyball program for even another match or perhaps another two seasons, she'd gladly do it.

Thomas, a Class of 2021 Dobie High School graduate and three-year varsity volleyball stand-

out, last month completed her second and final season at McCook County, which competes in the National Junior College Athletic Association within Region IX.

As a team over the two seasons, the Indians were 42-30, winning 22 overall matches this season.

Thomas, who had more than 100 kills as a freshman, led the McCook County program with 347 kills this time around, earning All-Conference

second-team honors. But for Thomas, her stay in McCook, Neb. with head coach Hayley Kobka, her staff and the Indians has been about much more than the team victories and individual statistics.

Thomas admits she got off to a bit of a late start as she began marketing herself to prospective colleges during her senior season at Dobie.

Still, she developed a good feeling about her

potential fit with McCook County following a period of communication with Kobka.

A rising star in the JUCO coaching ranks, Kobka had taken over a struggling McCook program upon her arrival and now has a string of five straight 20-plus win seasons, not counting an abbreviated 2020 spring season shortened by COVID.

"It has been a perfect fit for me," Thomas said. "I feel like I have improved as a player both years, but more than that I have

learned so much about about working with your teammates, being part of a family and doing what it takes for the success of the team.

"We spend so much time together as a team, between practices, matches, travel, whatever it is to keep getting better.

"You better like your teammates and your coaches, and I do. I have formed some bonds that I feel will last a lifetime. I could not have asked for anything more. I'm sad that it's over, but I'm also

excited about the future." Thomas is on track for her two-year degree in communications and plans to finish her education at a four-year institution.

Whether she continues to play the sport collegiately at a four-year institution, Thomas plans to become a volleyball coach herself, preferably at the college level, she says.

Kobka says having Thomas in her program these past two seasons has been special, and she has no doubt Thomas will thrive as she moves for-

ward with an eye on her coaching plans.

When they say people come into your life for a reason, Victoria for sure fit the bill for the saying," Kobka said.

"We weren't looking for players at her position, and she sent out her film probably to numerous coaches and I was very impressed with her highlights.

"In the end, even though we were looking for one last player in the middle blocker position, I ended up going with Vic-

toria. "One, I am partial to Texas as I lived there for 6 years of my life and secondly her personality seemed to mesh with mine.

"Victoria has her strengths and her weaknesses, but her weaknesses have improved so much in the time she has been at McCook Community College. She was not only a top player for us as a right side, but also the NJCAA Region 9 and in the national rankings as well.

"She has a tremen-

dous opportunity to be a demonstrator at the AVCA convention in Omaha during the NCAA national tournament, because she wants to pursue coaching.

"At this time, she is still uncommitted on a 4-year school to continue playing as she is deciding if she wants to focus on her education and coaching. "Victoria has promised me that she will be back to coach with me no matter what in two years, so I guess if it is published in an article, it will have to happen!"



McCook County Community College's Victoria Thomas (16) wrapped up her two-year career with the Indians by scoring Region IX All-Conference second team honors, finishing with 347 kills and 343 digs as a sophomore. A Class of 2021 Dobie graduate, Thomas was also named to the Region IX postseason All-Tournament squad as the Indians finished their season at 22-12 overall. McCook County competes within the National Junior College Athletic Association. A psychology major, Thomas wound up her two-year stay with 539 career kills to go with 443 digs. At Dobie, Thomas was a three-year letterwinner who led the 2020 squad in kills.

Wolverines earn All-District 24-6A honors following football season



The Clear Brook High School varsity football team saw several of its top performers named to the 24-6A All-District second team following the 2022 season. Those honorees included defensive end John Baldwin, inside linebacker Adrian Castillo, offensive lineman Jude Effinger, defensive tackle Kyle Forbes, safety Keyon Kellum, return man Jaylon Owens, safety Jaylen Price, running



back Jaylon Richardson and inside linebacker Jydius Williams. Above, Owens (18) had a pair of kickoff return touchdowns to spark the Wolverines during the 2022 campaign, while Richardson (22, at left) was fifth overall leaguewide during the regular season with 915 yards rushing.

Photos by Andy Tolbert

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CALENDAR

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8
7 a.m. **AA** - "Breakfast With Bill," Revive Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 713-686-6300 or visit https://aahouston.org/meetings/.
7:30 a.m. **Rotary Club of Pearland** - Meets at either 6117 Broadway St., Pearland, or on Zoom. See Pearland Chamber of Commerce website calendar or call 281-485-3634.
9:30 a.m. **NASA Aglow Community Lighthouse** - Praise Chapel, 18516 Hwy. 3 in Webster. Call 281-910-1971 or visit aglownet.org.
11:30 a.m. **ABWA - Southeast Express Network** - American Business Women's Association-South American Business Women's Association- Meetings held at Big Horn BBQ, 2300 Smith Ranch Rd, Pearland, TX 77584, Pearland. Lunch is \$20 cash or check. Visit www.seen-abwa.org.
Noon **AA** - Imperfect Nooners Group, 3525 Broadway, Pearland, or at https://aahouston.org/meetings/imperfect-nooners. Call 713-686-6300.
6:30 p.m. **Pearland Area Republican's Club** - meets at the Pearland Church of Christ Annex, 2217 N. Grand Blvd., Pearland. Email pearlandarearepublican-club@gmail.com or visit www.facebook.com/PARCTX.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9
7 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.
7 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous (NA)** - Vigilance Group of NA, open meeting, 2930 E. Broadway, Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). Call 713-661-4200 or visit www.hascona.com or https://nastuff.com/.
7 p.m. **Congregation Shaar Hashalom** - All services are live and on Zoom. Visit https://www.shaarhashalom.org.
8 p.m. **Serenity Now Al-Anon Group** - meets at CrossRoads UMC, 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. Call 281-484-9243.

8 p.m. **AA** - meets at CrossRoads UMC, 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. Call 281-484-9243.
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10
7:30 a.m. **AA** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.
9:30 a.m. **Congregation Shaar Hashalom** - See Friday's notice.
11 a.m. **Al-Anon Meeting (Women Only, English)** - For women affected by an addict, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, Cornell Conference room #111. Call 281-487-8787, or visit https://www.houstonalanon.org/.
1 p.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - offers a knitting class. Call 281-479-7285 prior to coming.
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11
8 a.m./10:15 a.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - has worship at 11456 Space Center Blvd. (in back of a medical/retail community). Call 281-479-7285.
2 p.m. **Grief Support Group** - Meets at Revive Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena. Call 281-487-8787.
5:30 p.m. **Celebrate Recovery** - A faith-based 12-Step program, in the Life Kids Chapel at Life Church, 9900 Alameda Genoa. Call 713-419-2635.
8 p.m. **AA** - meeting at CrossRoads UMC, 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. Call 281-484-9243.
MONDAY, DECEMBER 12
10 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** - Exhibits include dioramas, a turn-of-the-century doctor's office and an old-time kitchen. 204 S. Main, Pasadena. Call 713-472-0565 for appointment.
Noon **AA** - Imperfect Nooners. See Thursday notice.
1:30 - 3 p.m. **Hometown Heroes Dance** - at Hometown Heroes Park, 1001 E. League City Parkway/Volunteers Jerry and Edith Sanford teach lessons with a different dance rhythm each month. Call 281-554-1180.
6 p.m. **Scrabble Club #511** - Meets Monday at IHOP, 11222 Fuqua. Call 281-488-2923.
6:30 - 7:30 p.m. **Toastmasters** - The Young Professionals Southeast Toastmasters Club in person. Visit https://youngprofession-

altoastmasters.com/ or call 281-467-1880.
7 p.m. **AA** - St. Luke's 12 Step Recovery open meeting in the education Bldg. in room 4, at 11011 Hall Rd., 77089. For details, call 832-725-8479 or 281-309-2801.
7 p.m. **TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)** - #0683 Friendswood chapter meets at the Friendswood Methodist Church, 110 N Friendswood Dr. in the educational bldg., room 201. For information, call Lynette Ringrose at 832-858-4617 or Dorothy Pourteau 713-875-8820.
7 p.m. **NA** - See Friday's notice.
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13
7 a.m. **AA** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.
9:30 a.m. **CCART** - The Clear Creek Association of Retired Teachers meets at Bay Area Community Center, 5002 NASA Parkway in Seabrook. Texas-retired school employees from surrounding school districts welcome. Annual dues are \$50.
10 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** - See Monday's notice.
10:30 a.m. **Tri County Republican Women** - Golfcrest Country Club, 2509 Country Club Dr., Pearland. Lunch available for \$15. Exact cash or a check requested. To RSVP, visit www.tricountyrw.club/ or call 832-250-8901.
11:30 a.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - See Sunday's notice.
Noon **AA** - Imperfect Nooners. See Thursday notice.
7 p.m. **NA** - See Friday's notice.
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14
7 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.
Noon **AA** - Imperfect Nooners. See Thursday notice.
Hometown Heroes Humpday Dance - at Hometown Heroes Park, 1001 E. League City Parkway, League City, 77573, is open for casual dancing. Call 281-554-1180.
7 p.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - See Sunday's notice.
7 p.m. **NA** - See Friday's notice.
8 p.m. **AA** - See Friday's notice.

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Property includes the contents of the spaces of the following tenants: **Randall R. Alaminsky:** Building materials; **Jessica V. Barrera:** misc. items, **Len Y. Brooks:** clothing, boxes, manuals; **Robert T. Butcher:** roofing shingles, cash box; **Janice Rustin:** storage totes, vinyl records, dresser; **Rolando I. Sanchez:** upholstery, electronics, tools, knives; **Dorendia Hamilton (6 Units):** holiday decorations, toys, boxes; **John E. Rodriguez (2 Units):** plastic models, boxes; **Judy A. Wright (3 Units):** pet supplies, cooler, boxes

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8x champions to hit soccer field



Eight-time running District 22-6A champion Dobie has opened preseason workouts and will start scrimmage action Dec. 9 by hosting Aldine MacArthur to begin the boys' soccer season. With the league Offensive Most Valuable Player, Ronaldo Guzman (9), scoring 22 goals and dishing seven assists, the Longhorns claimed their eighth straight district title at 10-1-1 in 2022. Dobie downed Atascocita in the bidistrict playoffs before losing to Strake Jesuit, 3-2, in the area playoff round to complete a 17-3-3 season. As for the start of this season, Dobie will also play road scrimmages at Ridge Point Dec. 13 and at Katy Jordan Dec. 16. Dobie, ranked fifth statewide in the Lethal Enforcer Texas high school boys' soccer poll, will open the 2023 regular season Jan. 3 against Morton Ranch at Katy ISD's Legacy Stadium. Below is the 22-6A Newcomer of the Year, Dobie's Victor Hernandez (7).



Georgetown welcomes Rivera



Victoria Rivera, a two-time Most Valuable Player out of District 22-6A while playing in the Dobie varsity girls' basketball program, has settled into an early-season role at Georgetown University, where she is a freshman with the Hoyas. Georgetown returned from a tournament trip to Puerto Rico in late November. The Hoyas defeated Xavier 74-52 Dec. 4 to improve to 6-2 early this season.

Dobie Varsity Boys' Soccer 2023 Varsity Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time
Dec. 9	Aldine MacArthur scrimm.	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	at Ridge Point scrimm.	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	at Katy Jordan scrimm.	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 3	at Morton Ranch (Legacy)	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 5	Fort Bend Bush (PISD)	10 a.m.
Jan. 6	G.C. Memorial (PISD)	2 p.m.
Jan. 7	Waltrip (PISD)	noon
Jan. 12	at S.A. Johnson (Austin)	2 p.m.
Jan. 13	at S.A. Churchill (Austin)	1 p.m.
Jan. 14	at Laredo South (Austin)	8 a.m.
Jan. 19	Bellaire (at Deer Park)	5 p.m.
Jan. 20	Alief Taylor (at C.E. King)	5 p.m.
Jan. 21	West Brook (at Deer Park)	5 p.m.
Jan. 24	*at Deer Park	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	*Pasadena (PISD)	5:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	*Pas. Memorial (PISD)	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 3	*Channelview (PISD)	6:30 p.m.
Feb. 7	*Rayburn (PISD)	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 10	*S. Houston (PISD)	4:30 p.m.
Feb. 18	*Deer Park (PISD)	noon
Feb. 21	*Pasadena (PISD)	5:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	*Pas. Memorial (PISD)	6:30 p.m.
Feb. 28	*at Channelview	7:30 p.m.
March 3	*Rayburn (SJC South)	7 p.m.
March 6	*S. Houston (PISD)	5:30 p.m.
March 14	at Klein Collins	6:30 p.m.
March 17	at Terry	6:30 p.m.

*22-6A matches

Martinez, Maldonado team in victory



Former Dobie tennis player Lael Martinez (left), now a freshman at Texas State University in San Marcos, and current Longhorn junior Hailey Maldonado won the 6th annual "Toys for a Claus" Mixed Doubles Tennis Tournament held in Galveston on Nov. 26. The two, seeded No. 1, won three matches in all, defeating Galveston's Cornel Jordan/Mitchell Moreno in the quarterfinals, 8-5; Galveston's No. 4-seeded Analiese Rosales/Thuc Ngo in the semifinals, 8-1; and Galveston's No. 2-seeded Claire Jobe/Bryan Han in the final, 8-2.

Moreno versus Moreno only part of the story



By John Bechtle
Sports Editor

Dobie tennis coach Manuel Moreno Jr. has collected many honors and enjoyed many personal and teamwide achievements during an entire lifetime of leading young people in the sport all these years.

Yet on the final day of the regular season, a special moment came again as the family celebrated Moreno versus Moreno, with dad leading his Longhorns against a South Houston squad featuring Mitchell Moreno, a first-year assistant coach with the Trojans.

The results mattered little. Dobie used the easy team victory to assure itself of a second-place finish in the District 22-6A race and eventually advanced to the area playoff

At left, Moreno versus Moreno played out near the end of the team tennis season as Dobie head coach Manuel Moreno Jr. (right) and his Longhorns scored an easy win over South Houston, which features his son, Mitchell Moreno, a first-year assistant with the team.

round.

South Houston, with head coach Zachary Gross leading the group, closed out its season and will look to improve in the off-season.

For the Morenos, the father-son matchup may have once seemed unlikely, making the afternoon all that more special.

Mitchell Moreno, a Class of 2017 graduate of Galveston Ball High School, played two seasons of basketball with the Tors and one day envisions coaching the sport at the high school level.

The way things played out, Mitchell Moreno graduated from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville with a degree in history. A subsequent job search resulted in a job at South Houston High School beginning this school year, where he teaches both world and U.S. history.

Another chat Mitchell had with Trojans' campus athletic director Patrick Longstreet resulted in an agreement to become an assistant coach with the tennis program.

"I just try to relate to the players and encourage them to become the best well-rounded student-athletes they can become," Mitchell Moreno said.

"There are a lot of different challenges going on in the lives of young people. I just want to be as supportive as I can be out there and help the kids become the best versions of themselves that they can be."

7-on-7 tryouts Dec. 10

Dobie graduate Maurice Poullard will host free 7-on-7 tryouts through his Trained To Go Sports organization Dec. 10 as local youths ages 7 to 18 as of Jan. 1, 2023 are eligible to compete.

On Dec. 10, those in

the 7 to 10-year-old age groups can try out from 10 a.m. to noon, with the 11- to 18-year-old groups going 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at El Franco Lee Park.

For additional information, call or text Poullard at (214) 394-6797.

As for having the chance to compete against a team coached by his father, Mitchell Moreno says the day was truly special, and one that both father and son will remember for a lifetime.

"My dad has dedicated his life's work to this sport and so many young people out on the courts," Mitchell Moreno said. "He cares not only about their achievements on the court, but also their lives outside of tennis."

"He's achieved so many honors that are well-deserved, but the key is that he cares and wants what is best for the kids. I'm trying to take some of those lessons and work with our kids on a daily basis."

"We're out here playing tennis, but really, this is all about developing in life and becoming the best people we can be."

As for Manuel Moreno, he's clearly proud of the son he and his wife, Becky, have raised. The Morenos also have a daughter, Kelsey, a teacher in Galveston ISD.

"I'm very proud of Mitchell and the young man he has become," Manuel Moreno said.

"He has chosen to get involved in the coaching field, and there is a lot of good he can do there. Of course we always want Dobie to beat South Houston, but I'm just proud to be Mitchell's father."

"It was a special moment to be out there on the tennis courts competing against him, and I'll never forget it."

Natalie O shines in Alverno volleyball finale

At right, Natalie Onozie (9) put an exclamation point on her freshman season at Alverno College in Milwaukee, Wis., delivering a career-best 20 kills in mid-October as the Inferno won a five-set thriller over the Mount Mary Blue Angels to give the team its fifth win of the season. Alverno finished the regular season at 5-20, with Onozie playing in all of the Inferno matches encompassing 86 sets. Onozie, the District 22-6A Most Valuable Player as a senior at Dobie in 2021, had 185 kills, 144 digs and 116 assists in her collegiate freshman season. Alverno is an NCAA Division III program. A four-year varsity performer at Dobie, Onozie had nearly 1,500 career assists and was named to several all-academic honors lists during her career.



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