



South Belt-Ellington Leader

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Email: mynews@southbeltleader.com

www.southbeltleader.com

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ZIP COVID numbers reported

The number of local COVID-19 cases continues to escalate, with a record number of 366 new cases being reported this past week in the South Belt community.

As of Wednesday, July 29, ZIP code 77089 had 772 confirmed cases of COVID-19, according to Harris County Public Health officials. That figure is 145 higher than the 627 count reported on Wednesday, July 22. In ZIP code 77075, county officials are now reporting 719 known cases. This number is 110 higher than the 609 cases reported the previous week. County officials are now reporting 740 cases in ZIP code 77034, up 111 cases from last week.

In all, there are currently 67,660 known cases in Harris County, an increase of 9,180 from last week. Of those, 44,749 remain active, up 5,959 from last week. A total of 22,240 have recovered from the virus in the county, an increase of 3,111 from the previous week. To date, 670 have died from COVID-19, up 110 from last week. Statistics are updated daily and include numbers from within both the Houston city limits and throughout Harris County. To view an interactive map, visit publichealth.harriscountytexas.gov/Re-sources/2019-Novel-Coronavirus. (See related chart Page 8.)

Free mask give-away Aug. 7

Harris County Precinct 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis will host a mask-distribution event Friday, Aug. 7, at the El Franco Lee Community Center, 9500 Hall Road near Beltway 8, beginning at 10 a.m.

Pct. 2 deputies arrest shoplifter

Deputies from the Harris County Precinct 2 constable's office made a felony arrest Monday, July 27, after an alleged shoplifting incident at the Family Dollar store in the 10900 block of Scarsdale near Beamer. Deputies responded to the call at approximately 10:40 a.m. Upon their arrival, the deputies searched the area around the store for the male suspect, eventually finding him in the alley behind the shopping center.

The suspect had three backpacks filled with canned food items, laundry detergent and packages of tuna. Deputies were able to confirm this was the theft suspect through surveillance footage and identification through the store manager.

Further, the items in the backpacks were scanned on Family Dollar's computers, tagging them as being the stolen merchandise. Some items from the backpacks were found to not be from Family Dollar, presumably stolen from another business, deputies said. Due to being a repeat offender, the suspect, 49-year-old Terry Eugene Ross, from the Southwest side of Houston, was charged with a state jail felony.

K of C will host BBQ sale

Knights of Columbus Council 9201 will host a BBQ Sandwich Sale at St. Luke the Evangelist, 11011 Hall Road in the rear parking lot Saturday, Aug. 8, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday Aug. 9, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. or until food runs out.

Meals are \$8 and include a chopped beef sandwich with onions and pickles, chips or Fritos and a soft drink. Proceeds benefit KC charities. For more information, call Richard Valdez at 713-542-1760.

PISD Fill the Bus set

Fill the Bus is an annual school supply drive that directly supports local teachers. All items collected are taken to a Pasadena ISD warehouse where teachers get a free "shopping spree" for the upcoming year. Online giving is available now at www.pasadenatx.gov/fillthebus. The official drop-off day is Aug. 10 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Pasadena City Hall at 1149 Ellsworth Drive in Pasadena.

Beltway closures planned

There will be a total closure of all eastbound and westbound Beltway 8 frontage road lanes at SH 288 nightly from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. through Sunday, Aug. 2.

There will be a complete closure of the southbound Beltway 8 frontage road at SH 225 nightly from 6 p.m. to 5 a.m. through Sunday, Aug. 2.

At least one northbound and one southbound Beltway 8 frontage road lane will be closed from Vista to SH 225 daily from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. through Thursday, Aug. 6.

At least one northbound and one southbound Beltway 8 frontage road lane will be closed from Vista to SH 225 nightly from 8:30 p.m. to 5 a.m. through Thursday, Aug. 6. The closures are associated with the ongoing project to widen Beltway 8 from two to four lanes in each direction.

Gulf Freeway closures set

The northbound exit ramp on the Gulf Freeway at NASA Bypass/NASA Road 1 will be closed continuously through 5 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 31.

At least one lane of the northbound and southbound entrance ramp from NASA Bypass/NASA Road 1 to SH 96 and exit ramp from NASA Bypass/NASA Road 1 to SH 96 will be closed nightly from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. through Thursday, Dec. 31.

Two alternate lanes on the Gulf Freeway frontage road will be closed from NASA Bypass/NASA Road 1 to SH 96/League City Parkway daily from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. through Thursday, Dec. 31.

At least one alternate main lane and one frontage road lane on both the northbound and southbound sides of the Gulf Freeway will be closed from FM 518 to FM 517 daily from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and nightly from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. through Wednesday, Sept. 30.

There will be a total closure at the southbound IH 610 connector ramp at the Gulf Freeway through 5 a.m. Monday, Sept. 28. The northbound connector ramp from the Gulf Freeway to the IH 610 South Loop, along with one inside lane, will be closed nightly from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. through Thursday, Dec. 31.

At least two alternate main lanes and frontage road lanes on the Gulf Freeway will be closed from IH 610 South Loop to Broad Street nightly from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. through Thursday, Dec. 31.

The northbound and southbound entrance ramp from IH 610 South Loop to Broad Street and the northbound and southbound exit ramp from IH 610 South Loop to Broad Street will be closed nightly from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. through Thursday, Dec. 31.

The closures are associated with an ongoing construction project to widen the freeway from three to five lanes in each direction and the frontage roads from two to three lanes in each direction.

Tylka, chief 12 years, retires; Cino takes reins

By James Bolen

Longtime South Belt resident Chuck Tylka recently retired as chief of the Southeast Volunteer Fire Department after serving more than 45 years with the organization, 12 as chief.

"This took a tremendous amount of soul searching, but I think it's for the best," Tylka

said. "I had accomplished the goals I set early on, and it's time for a new face to lead us into the future. I have been with the department for 46 years and plan, God willing, to be here when we celebrate our golden anniversary next year."

David Cino, a 38-year SVFD veteran, has been tapped as Tylka's replacement. Tylka will

remain with the department during the transition.

While not an original member of the Southeast Volunteer Fire Department (initially dubbed the Sagemont Volunteer Fire Department, before the city's annexation of the area subdivision), Tylka ranked third in seniority at the time of his retirement, behind only founding members Ed Baker and Jerry Terrell.

Tylka began his tenure with the group as a volunteer firefighter. He had been introduced to the organization by charter member George McKown, who at the time served as Tylka's boss at JC Penney at Almeda Mall.

After one early response call hit particularly close to home, with Tylka's mother-in-law suf-

fering a heart attack and no SVFD crew members knowing CPR, McKown offered to pay for his underling to undergo emergency medical training.

"I didn't want to be helpless again," Tylka said.

In addition to working as both a firefighter and an EMT, Tylka also served as treasurer and president of the SVFD board of trustees, spending 10 years in the latter position.

A fellow longtime member of the department, Cino has also served in multiple positions prior to becoming chief, including lieutenant, captain and assistant chief.

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Changing guard at SVFD

Chuck Tylka (left) recently retired from his position of Southeast Volunteer Fire Department chief after serving more than 45 years with the local organization. A longtime Sagelegen resident, Tylka is shown above passing his fire helmet to his replacement David Cino, also a veteran SVFD member. Tylka will remain with the department during the transition. See related photo on Page 3.

Photo by Marie Flickinger

Area ISDs plan opening under COVID

Local school districts are moving forward with their modified plans to reopen this fall.

Pasadena ISD

Pasadena ISD's 2020-2021 academic year is set to begin Tuesday, Aug. 18. Due to the recent spike in COVID-19 cases, the school district will provide all instruction virtually until Sept. 8. At that time, students who have selected face-to-face-instruction will return to their home campuses, while the remainder of students will continue to distance-learn until they feel comfortable enough to return to school.

Parents have until Aug. 4 to choose which option they want for their children.

Teachers will report for duty Aug. 10. The

additional time on campus will allow for them to learn essential safety procedures.

For more information, see chart on Page 3 this issue and visit www.pasadenaisd.org.

Clear Creek ISD

Clear Creek ISD's start date has been pushed back from Aug. 18 to Aug. 24. As with Pasadena ISD, all instruction will be conducted virtually through Sept. 8. At that date, students who have chosen in-person instruction will return to campus. All others will continue virtual learning. Parents are asked to make their instructional selection as soon as possible.

For more details on CCISD's reopening plan, visit www.ccisd.net/reopen.

St. Luke's CDA urges 1-minute prayer

Members of Catholic Daughters of the Americas of St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church are encouraging South Belt residents to participate in a nightly one-minute group prayer from 8 to 8:01 p.m. CST, from the safety of their own homes or wherever residents may be at that given time.

"I think this would be a very profound use of one minute of our time given the status of our United States at this time in history," Carolyn Friend, who serves as spiritual enhancement member of Court Mother of Unity #2292, said in a group email.

The message reposted by Friend reads as follows:

"Someone has said that if Christians really understood the full extent of the power we have available through prayer, we might be speechless. Did you know that during World War II there was an adviser to Churchill who organized a group of people who dropped what they were doing every day at the prescribed hour for one minute to collectively pray for the safety of England, its people and peace? There is now a group of people organizing the same thing here

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COVID-19 concerns addressed

Harris County Commissioners Court has continued to push measures aimed at helping area families struggling financially in the wake of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Rental relief

Thanks to the leadership of Precinct 2 Commis-

sioner Adrian Garcia, the Harris County Rental Relief Fund will undergo significant increases in how much will be awarded and how many struggling renters will be able to be get rental assistance before being evicted.

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TxDOT to conduct I-45 survey

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is gathering community input to identify transportation issues and propose solutions for a portion of I-45 South from downtown to Beltway 8 South.

This is an opportunity for the community to have a say in what issues and improvements TxDOT prioritizes. The goal of this survey is to make this stretch of highway a safer and more efficient road. Because of the COVID-19 outbreak, this survey is being conducted virtually.

One can view a virtual public meeting on the subject at <https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/get-involved/about/hearings-meetings/houston/071620.html>.

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To give input, written comments may be submitted by mail to the TxDOT Houston District, Director of Advanced Project Development, P.O. Box 1386, Houston, Texas 77251. Written comments may also be submitted by email to houston@txdot.gov or online at <https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/gulf-freeway-pel-study.html>.

All comments must be received by Friday, July 31, 2020.

Responses to comments received will be available online at <https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/gulf-freeway-pel-study.html> beginning fall 2020.

Turner hosts BTS festival

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner will host the city's 10th annual Back to School Fest Friday and Saturday, Aug. 7 and 8, at the NRG Park.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this year's festival will be a drive-thru event, taking place in NRG stadium's Yellow Lot.

"While there is much uncertainty during this time, a critical need for assistance with basic school supplies, food and personal protection equipment for students still remains," a statement on the city's website read.

The mayor's Back to School Fest is designed

to help economically disadvantaged Houston-area elementary school students and their families as they prepare to return to school.

Sponsored by Shell and the Houston Food Bank, the event will provide backpacks, school supplies, masks and food to thousands of elementary students and their families, free of charge.

The event will take place from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. both days, or while the school supplies and food last.

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Graduation ceremonies start July 30

The Pasadena Independent School District is moving forward with its graduation ceremonies, set to take place Thursday, July 30, through Monday, Aug. 3, at Veterans Memorial Stadium, located at 2906 Dabney in Pasadena.

The events were originally set to take place at NRG Stadium but were moved out of COVID-19 fears.

According to Pasadena ISD officials, NRG Stadium could not meet the school district's needs, as the facility would not have time to properly disinfect the establishment between planned ceremonies, given the number of expected guests.

Dobie will hold its graduation July 30; Memorial will hold its graduation July 31; Pasadena will hold its graduation Aug. 1; Sam Rayburn

will hold its graduation Aug. 2; and South Houston will hold its graduation Aug. 3. Lewis Career and Technical High School held its graduation July 28, and Tegeler Career Center held its graduation July 29.

All graduation ceremonies are set to begin at 8:30 p.m.

The school district will take all necessary safety precautions, and families will be seated in accordance to the latest social distancing guidelines.

The amount of tickets distributed to families will be based on the latest social distancing guidelines. The event will be livestreamed for all of those unable to attend the event in person.

For the latest on Pasadena ISD's 2020 graduation information, visit www1.pasadenaisd.org.



What was, but is no more?

Houston firefighters responded to a blaze around 3:35 a.m. Thursday, July 23, at the building that formerly housed the Texas Land & Cattle restaurant near Beltway 8 and the Gulf Freeway. The fire marked the second time since May the facility has caught fire. The last incident was blamed on homeless individuals living inside the establishment who were cooking food. While the latest blaze remained under investigation at press time, fire personnel on scene told the Leader this was again suspected to be the cause. A responding HFD employee further predicted to the Leader that a similar incident might next take place at the vacant Joe's Crab Shack at Fuqua and the Gulf Freeway, saying that's where the homeless individuals now reside. (See additional photo on Page 8.)

Photo by Marie Flickinger

Multiple arrests in Edgebrook robbery

A July 19 robbery call in the 900 block of Edgebrook near Theta led to multiple arrests, including charges of weapons possession and drug dealing.

Officers from both the Houston Police Department and Harris County Precinct 8 Constable Phil Sandlin's office responded to the incident.

According to authorities, Precinct 8 Deputy J. Mitchell was on patrol in the area when he heard an in-progress robbery call around 10 p.m.

Mitchell arrived on the scene and was immediately flagged down by the victim of the robbery. The victim advised the deputy that two suspects were currently inside the store. At that time, one of the suspects exited the store and was pointed out to Mitchell by the victim as being one of the

suspects who robbed him. Mitchell immediately

detained 50-year-old Charles Wendell James.

The victim further advised Mitchell that he was certain the second suspect was still inside the store and stated he was armed. Concerned there may be a secondary robbery occurring inside the store, Mitchell entered the establishment in search of the second suspect. He was able to locate the male, identified as 38-year-old Cesar Salomon Davilla-Chapa, sitting at a slot machine in the back of the store.

Mitchell was able to detain Davilla-Chapa, who was immediately checked for weapons. During a pat down, he recovered a pistol with an extended magazine from Davilla-Chapa's front waistband. A check of the pistol's serial

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Martin announces area street projects

Houston District E City Council Member and Mayor Pro Tem Dave Martin recently announced that Houston Public Works crews will be performing an asphalt overlay along Easthaven Boulevard from College Avenue to the Gulf Freeway from Aug. 3 to Sept. 7, weather permitting.

Martin has allocated \$95,765 from his Council District Service Fund for this project.

The scope of work includes resurfacing the asphalt street. This process includes milling off an approximate two-inch layer of old asphalt, repairing the base as needed, spraying tack coat and overlaying two inches of new asphalt surface

pavement.

Crews are expected to work between 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday and Saturdays from 7 a.m. to noon.

Residents should note one lane will be closed at a time on a continuous basis until the project is completed. Slightly increased traffic congestion for northbound traffic is expected throughout the duration of the project.

As a result of the construction activities, drivers should be aware of flagmen, and orange traffic cones will be put in place on site to help with traf-

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Sales tax holiday set for Aug. 7-9

With the Texas economy slowly awakening from effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Comptroller Glenn Hegar reminds shoppers they can save money on clothes and school supplies during the state's sales tax holiday Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 7-9.

The law exempts sales tax on qualified items — such as clothing, footwear, school supplies and backpacks — priced below \$100, saving

shoppers about \$8 on every \$100 they spend. The date of the sales tax holiday and list of tax-exempt items are set by the Texas Legislature.

"Even though significant uncertainty remains for our public and private schools as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the sales tax holiday is a perfect opportunity to save money on school

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In My Opinion

Muecke shares Edgebrook concerns

We have a problem on Edgebrook, really from I-45 South to Hwy 3. As I have been reporting, much noise and speeding and this confirmed by my other neighbors close by. Mr. and Mrs. Hicks, see note below, have a front seat being at Edgebrook and Theta.

Commander May has placed unmarked patrol cars on Edgebrook.

I was able to visit and thank one officer. A month ago a motor cyclist was killed at Edgebrook at Frey road.

I have mentioned and asked for other control type devices, like more signage. But was told PWE has certain guide lines to follow.

Maybe this needs to be re visited and some other type signs like Pasadena has on Fairmont Parkway, a large PLEASE OBEY ALL TRAFFIC LAWS or some words to this effect.

At Theta and Edgebrook we have A. B. Freeman Elementary school. I have also received reports that the parking lots at St. Frances Cabrini Catholic church on Hartsook is full of tire skid marks from someone doing figure 8's and then St. Steven Presbyterian church on Theta where vandalism is happening in that parking lot. So we have issues.

I know Commander May is stressed, like all of Houston, with all that is going on, but I'm asking all of you to help him resolve this problem on the Edgebrook corridor.

James E. Muecke

Local library events set

Bracewell Branch Library

Bracewell Branch Library is located at 9002 Kingspoint. The phones are open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, noon to 7 p.m., at 832-393-2580 for information.

Bracewell HPL To Go curbside service is in operation

Contactless Curbside services, known as HPL To Go, is available Mondays, noon to 7 p.m.; Wednesdays and Fridays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Customers walking or riding a bike may also pick up reserved materials. For questions, call circulation administration at 832-393-2222. Note that all overdue fines/fees will be waived through Jan. 1, 2021.

To use HPL To Go:

1. Place a hold through the online catalog or by phone.
2. Receive email or phone call of notification prior to scheduling a time for pickup.
3. Upon arrival, park and stay in the vehicle and call to notify staff of arrival.
4. Have MY Link card number and PIN ready.

Bracewell Summer Reading Program

The Summer Reading Program runs through Aug. 15. Visit www.houstonlibrary.org to register and log one's reading. Use the Beanstalk Tracker app on iOS and Android to make logging easy. See the HPL website for storytimes, crafts, STEM and special events. 2020 Environmental Education Summer Programs are being offered through Harris County Precinct 1. Fun and engaging virtual programs with live animals are scheduled every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Mondays, 1 p.m. Nature Detectives (grades 1-4)

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m. Polliwog Club (ages 3-5)

Fridays, 1 p.m. Conservation Conversations (grades 5-8)

The programs will use WebEx, a free video conferencing program which works on a smartphone, tablet or computer. For those unfamiliar with the program, visit <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=WebEx+instructions> for a step-by-step tutorial and tips.

For questions or concerns or for a child care agency interested in having a personalized lesson outside of the above schedule, email christina.hartman@cp1.hctx.net.

Book drop

The book drop is open. Library materials can be returned with no overdue fees. The library continues to provide online resources so the public can enjoy the library at home. Large items such as FLIP kits or laptops should not be placed in the book drop. Keep those items until further notice.

Additional resources

The Houston Public Library is focusing on providing electronic resources, books, audiobooks, databases for research, tutoring, language learning, education and parent information for any resident of Texas with a temporary library card. To get a library card, visit www.houstonlibrary.org, on the Home Page and find the heading Here's What's Happening. Under that heading, there will be three cards. The middle one is Free Resources for All. Click on the card which will go to the page that lists the digital resources available and a link to obtain a temporary card.

Also, under the heading Here's What's Happening, look for the first card on the left, click on the heading titled Online Resources for Kids. One of the programs listed is Virtual Storytime. This is provided every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 11 a.m. The archived storytimes can be found on Facebook by searching Houston Public Library Virtual Storytimes. Another virtual program is Craft. Soon there will be STEM programs.

Houston Public Library's many free online resources and digital services remain 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 robust collection of free e-books and audio books. Visit the catalog to determine if a previously requested hold selection may be in a digital format. Instructions on downloading the e-book or audio book are also on the site.

All due dates for existing borrowed materials will be extended through the closure period. Until further notice, no new late fees and fines will be assessed during the closure period, retroactive to March 14, 2020. While the Bracewell Branch Library remains closed, Wi-Fi service is still available by coming to the library standing/sitting within 6 feet of the building. A password is not needed. Go to Settings, then Network and Internet. Wi-Fi and connect to HPL - Public.

HPL appreciates book donations, but is not accepting them at this time. The library staff requests that donations do not get placed outside library buildings, or at the book drops.

Visit www.houstonlibrary.org to find virtual programs and digital resources including e-books, e-audiobooks, streaming music and videos, online learning, online tutoring and much more. For more information, visit www.houstonlibrary.org to find out how to chat with a librarian 24/7, or how to send questions through HPL's email reference.

Parker Williams Library

Parker Williams Library is located at 10851 Scarsdale Blvd. Although Harris County Public Library locations remain closed to the public, updates are found on the website.

The book drop is open. No late fees will be charged during the library closure. The library social media links are Facebook.com/ParkerWilliamsLibrary and Instagram.com/ParkerWilliamsLibrary. Call 832-927-7870 for information.

Parker Williams "No-Contact Curbside Holds Pick-Up" is up and running!

- After receiving notification that holds are ready for pick-up, call 832-927-7870.
 - Have a library card number and PIN handy.
 - A pick-up time and instructions will be given.
 - Upon arriving at the library, follow the instructions given.
 - Be prepared to show a library card or other form of ID for verification.
- Curbside hours are: Monday - Thursday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Friday, 1 p.m. - 6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Visit <https://www.hcpl.net/branch/parker-williams-branch-library> for details.

Online services

Harris County Public Library will continue to offer a wide array of 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 your account to renew loans or request books.
- e-Books, comics or graphic novels through OverDrive.
- 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>.

Saturday, Aug. 1. Virtual Photo Club. This month's photo challenge is "Abstract." Residents are encouraged to go close in with photo shots and post them online with the tag #HCPLphotoclub for a chance to be featured on the library's social media.

Saturday, Aug. 1. Virtual Poetry Club. Residents may send poetry to the library to be featured on its social media accounts. Send an email to PW@HCPL.NET with the subject "Virtual Poetry Club." These posts will be featured on social media.

Tuesday, Aug. 4, noon. Drawing with Ariel Perez for virtual fun and easy cartoon drawings featuring various doodles, numbers and letters. This video will be featured on social media.

Tuesday, Aug. 4, 4:45 p.m., ages 4-12 Yoga Story Time. A peaceful time for children to learn mindfulness through story, song, breathing and light movement virtually with Celeste Plew. Sign up once with a valid email address online at <https://www.hcpl.net/branch/parker-williams-branch-library> to get a weekly invitation.

Wednesday, Aug. 5, 3:30 p.m., ages 16 and older. Dungeons & Dragons Online. Join Tanner Adams online. No prior experience needed. Contact tanner.adams@hcpl.net for information.

Thursday, Aug. 6, 10:30 a.m. Toddler Time Out. Join virtually for family fun on social media.

Call Parker Williams Library for questions or additional information at 832-927-7870.

Elected officials share their words

County receives \$4.2M to improve transit during COVID

Harris County was awarded a federal grant of \$4,200,000 to help transit providers continue to operate throughout the novel coronavirus outbreak, U.S. Sen. John Cornyn announced recently.

The funding, which was appropriated by Congress in March as part of the CARES Act, comes through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). You can read more about these grants here.

"While Texans continue doing everything they can in response to the spread of the coronavirus, we in Washington

should give them everything they need to succeed," said Cornyn.

"I'm thankful to the Trump Administration for encouraging transit improvement in Harris County."

The grant will support operating, administrative and preventive maintenance costs, such as enhanced disinfecting of buses, driver and staff safety equipment and additional peak service routes to enhance social distancing, in order to respond to and recover from the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Pro Tem Martin announces Easthaven roadwork

Houston City Mayor Pro Tem Dave Martin announced that Houston Public Works crews will be performing an asphalt overlay along Easthaven Boulevard from College Avenue to the Gulf Freeway. Construction is scheduled to begin Monday, Aug. 3, 2020, and is expected to be complete by Sept. 7, 2020, weather permitting. Mayor Pro Tem Martin has allocated \$95,765 from his Council District Service Funds for this project.

The scope of work includes resurfacing the asphalt street. This process includes milling off an approximate two-inch layer of old asphalt, repairing the base as needed, spraying tack coat and overlaying two inches of new asphalt surface pavement. Crews are expected to work be-

tween 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday and Saturdays from 7 a.m. to noon.

Note one lane will be closed at a time on a continuous basis until the project is completed. Slightly increased traffic congestion for north bound traffic is expected throughout the duration of the project.

As a result of the construction activities, please be aware of flagmen and orange traffic cones will be put in place on site to help with traffic flow through the construction zone as temporary lane closures are expected.

For more information, contact Mayor Pro Tem Dave Martin's office at (832) 393-3008 or district@houstontx.gov. (See related story on Page 1.)

Commissioners to provide equal representation access

For too long, individuals' ability to pay has determined the quality of their legal defense and, consequently, determined whether they go free or spend years of their life behind bars. Access to quality legal representation is every person's right, regardless of his or her resources.

At Commissioners Court last week, Harris County Precinct One Commissioner Rodney Ellis addressed the current underfunding of the Public Defender's Office and the implementation of an office of managed assigned counsel in order to ensure that the county guarantees quality legal representation for everyone.

In June, Harris County felony judges appointed the Public Defender's Office in only 3 percent of cases, even though the office has the capacity to handle 15-20 percent of cases. This constitutes a violation of the Texas Fair Defense Act, which requires the court to give priority to a public defender's office to represent an indigent defendant.

"At a time when being in jail can be a death sentence due to COVID-19, I am concerned that our courts are not letting defendants access the best representation possible," said Ellis. "Refusal to appoint the Public Defender's Office not only undermines our justice system for those

who are low-income, but it also violates state law. The integrity of our system requires using the public defender system wherever possible."

In 2019, almost one-third of appointed attorneys handled more than the caseload recommended by the Texas Indigent Defense Commission. In those cases, that means defense counsel was spending only 11 minutes on each case. Felony defendants are less likely to exit the criminal justice system without a record or penalty if they are represented by assigned counsel (28 percent) compared to the Public Defender's Office (37 percent).

If the court doesn't appoint the Public Defender's Office, it must make a finding of good cause for or have another reason under the Act, like using an attorney from a managed assigned counsel program. But that's not happening.

"I urge the Harris County felony judges to appoint the Public Defender's Office more frequently," said Ellis. "Last year we spent almost \$34 million on appointed counsel for indigent defendants."

"We need to make sure we are spending that money in the smartest possible way and providing the best possible legal representation for those without resources."

County to end OmniBase

For Harris County residents, having access to a car is indispensable for daily activities such as getting to work, to a doctor's appointment and to pick up necessities like groceries. Particularly, as COVID-19 cases continue to rise and people are increasingly at risk of losing their jobs, having access to safe and reliable transportation is critical. A recent report, Driven by Debt: Houston, estimated that not only does this program impact hundreds of thousands of drivers in the Greater Houston area, but that those impacted are disproportionately Black and low-income residents.

"Suspending a person's driver's license for not paying fines makes it more difficult for them to earn a living, not to mention to earn the money to pay off the debt," said Mary Mergler of Texas Appleseed. "Particularly given the massive loss of employment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is urgent for cities and counties to remove this obstacle so that people can restore their licenses and have a better chance of returning to stable employment."

The Harris County Commissioners Court agreed to terminate the county's contract with Texas Department of Public Safety, ending the Failure to Appear Program and lifting all existing holds Harris County courts placed on driver's licenses.

The program places holds on driver's licenses when they have unpaid fines or fees. Ending this contract will lift almost

25,000 driver's license holds, giving Harris County residents back their driver's license.

"We know that taking away someone's driver's license makes it less—not more—likely that they will be able to pay off fines and fees," said Commissioner Rodney Ellis.

"But now we also know that this program is disproportionately hurting our most vulnerable residents. Keeping their driver's licenses suspended for simply being unable to pay old fines in the middle of a global pandemic and growing recession is unacceptable."

"I am proud that we voted to end this contract and that we will be able to give tens of thousands of people their driver's licenses back."

Harris County joins other cities across Texas, including Fort Worth, Arlington, Pasadena and Austin, that do not participate in the program. Not only does the program not improve driver safety, it also does not improve collection of fines. The Driven by Debt: Houston report showed that Harris County Justice Courts that do not use the OmniBase Program collect more on average than those that do.

As Harris County continues to both deal with the acute public health and economic impacts of COVID-19, Precinct 1 is proud to have secured the end to this program that trapped residents in a cycle of debt, allowing Harris County's most vulnerable residents to get back on track.

Leader checks out social media

By Natalie Abarca
A member of *People of Sagemont* 2 Facebook group posted a picture of a suspect that broke into their neighbor's vehicles and stole things. The incident happened Friday, July 24, at 8:29 p.m., at Sageyork and Sageroyal.

A member of *Neighbor Group* posted that their vehicle was broken into, but nothing was taken. Other members commented they also experienced the same situation with someone breaking into their vehicles, but stealing nothing.

The incident happened Monday, July 27, on Scarsdale.

Another member of the same group posted that someone entered their vehicle and did not take much since there were not any valuables in the vehicle. The member states that the car was parked on the street and the doors were unlocked. The incident happened Sunday, July 26, on Sagegate Drive. A member of *People of Sagemont* group posted a picture of a trailer that was stolen the night of Tuesday, July 28, on Sagehaven. The member is asking if anyone has any information, to contact them. The trailer contained items belonging to their mother.

Deaths

Gilbert Ontiveros



Gilbert Ontiveros was born April 2, 1919, in Rockdale, Texas, and was 101 years old when he died July 10, 2020.

He worked as a baker for 40 years for Nabisco Company and Kroger. Gilbert lost his wife Lupe Salazar of 58 years in 2004 but together they had 13 children, nine boys and four girls. Although he didn't get out much, he enjoyed yardwork and watching his Astros.

Gilbert was drafted by the U.S. Army in December 1942. At 23 years of age, Gilbert served in World War II. While in the military he held positions of searchlight crewman with 362nd AAA Searchlight Battalion and military policeman with 799th Military Police Company. In December 1945, Gilbert was honorably discharged as private first class and received a "Good Conduct" medal. He was also decorated with Asiatic-Pacific Theater Philippines Liberation Victory ribbons.

Gilbert had a hard life growing up. He had to support his siblings on a soldier's salary. Gilbert lost his mother when he was 14 years old and his father when he was 22 but never forgot about his siblings.

He often talked about his military life and was always emotional when talking about having to leave his siblings behind to meet his obligation to the Army.

In 1946, Gilbert married his young sweetheart, Lupe who waited for him and never gave up on his return and shortly after, moved to Houston, Gilbert had 13 kids and worked very hard to provide all they needed.

When Gilbert retired in 1986, they moved to Bryan, Texas. He loved living in Bryan where he had many relatives and friends. He frequently had barbecues in his immaculate and well-trimmed backyard and always welcomed his kids friends and relatives. He had many people who knew him and loved him, both in Bryan and in Houston.

Gilbert was a proud man, old school, raising 13 kids with a strong hand. Mom only had to say, "Wait 'til dad gets home!" and they knew they were in trouble. He loved a clean and organized house and had an army of kids to help keep it that way. The children had their chores and responsibilities before they could go outside to play. His family could go on and on about their dad's life. After all, he lived for more than a century. He was special like all good dads; hardworking, honest, strong willed and, above all, a loving and giving father.

His legacy is the love and admiration of countless family and friends who live in the South Belt area. He touched many people's lives and his family will miss the great times they shared with him. His loved ones are hopeful they can live their lives as he did through his love and teaching.

His family takes solace in knowing he's been reunited with his loving wife Lupe and son Rick. They are thankful for everything he did for them. Although they love and miss him, they remember he had often said, "We will meet again."

Audrey Shippey Turner



Audrey Shippey Turner, 93, died July 25, 2020. She was born April 6, 1927, in Ben Wheeler, Texas.

She is survived by her loving husband of 14 years Curtis; daughter Nancy Caraway and husband Mike of Seabrook; grandsons Derek Caraway and wife Laura of College Station and Brandon Caraway and wife Wendy of Richmond; great-grandchildren Matthew, Joshua, Andrew, Carly and Zachary Caraway. She also leaves behind her sister Justine Jones of Ben Wheeler; niece Judy Walker and husband Arnold of Ben Wheeler; and numerous other relatives and friends.

Growing up on a farm in Ben Wheeler, Audrey and Justine helped their parents with chores and worked in the fields, learning responsibility at a young age. After work was done, she and her sister had a great time playing in the woods.

She later lived in Houston and Pasadena and worked many years at Sears, retiring as personnel manager.

Audrey was a member of Christian Temple Assembly of God Church in Houston. She came to know the Lord at a young age and was active in church all her life.

She loved Jesus and always had a heart for helping others. Her hobbies were sewing, oil painting, doing crafts and she really enjoyed playing games, especially "42." Camping with the heavenly Sam's RV Club was a favorite pastime, as well as traveling back to the "Derick" farm in Ben Wheeler.

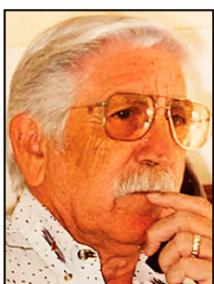
Her happiest moments were family get-togethers. She loved her family dearly and prayed for them every day.

She will be greatly missed, but her loved ones know she is rejoicing with her Lord now.

Audrey was preceded in death by her first husband of 60 years, Earl Shippey; and her parents Floyd and Helen Derrick.

A private graveside service will be held at 11 a.m., Friday, July 31, at South Park Cemetery in Pearland with the Rev. Arnold Walker officiating. Arrangements are under the direction of Niday Funeral Home.

Cheatle (Chet) Highfill



Cheatle (Chet) Highfill, of Pearland died July 22, 2020 in his home surrounded by his loving family. He lived in the Bella Vita senior community on Scarsdale. He was born June 4, 1935, to Lee Highfill and Opal Jewel Highfill.

He was preceded in death by his father and mother; and his brother Bill Highfill.

He is survived by his loving wife of 65 years Polly Highfill of Pearland; brother Don Highfill and his wife Peggy of Bridgeport, Texas; daughter Vickie Cathey of Deer Park; sons Carl and his wife Debbie of Cove, Texas, and Mike and his wife Teri of Pasadena, Texas; and grandchildren Brent Cathey and his fiancé Nancy of Bryan, Texas, Chris Highfill and his wife Katrina of Deer Park, Tiffany Bittner and husband Lance of Needville, Texas, Ryan Highfill and his wife Ashley of Deer Park, Katie Highfill of Cove, Texas, Chase Cathey and his wife Megan of Deer Park, Ashley Breeding and her husband Clayton of League City and Chance Brown of Webster.

He is also survived by his great-grandchildren Paige Highfill, Kayleigh Highfill, Maddie Bittner, Addison Bittner, Emerson Bittner, Tyler Highfill, Preston Cathey, Cora Lynn Breeding and Harper Cathey; many nieces and nephews; and many friends.

Chet was a longtime member of the Houston Livestock and Rodeo. He enjoyed traveling, fishing, hunting, their End of Road Ranch and scratching scratch-offs.

Chet started his career in the ladies' shoe business with the Wohl Shoe Company and retired from the company in 1971. He pursued a career in the air-conditioning field where he eventually started Air-Care Southeast and led it to a successful business, which is still going strong after 47 years. Chet retired in 2019.

Chet, will always be with his loved ones, because love never dies, but lives on in those who remember him.

Funeral services will be held at Forest Park East Funeral Home, located at 22620 Gulf Freeway in Webster. The viewing was held Sunday evening, July 26. A Celebration of Life and Committal services were held Monday, July 27, with a graveside service following.

Community urged to pray every day from 8:00 to 8:01

Continued from Page 1
In America. If you would like to participate: Every evening at 8 p.m., central (time), stop what you are doing and spend one minute praying for the safety of the United States, our troops, our citizens, and for a return to a Godly nation. For those who have a smart phone - set an alarm to pray from 8 - 8:01 p.m.

"Pass this along to your prayerful family and friends. Our prayers are the most powerful asset we have."

Friend urges participants to spread the message to others who may not have the internet.

"Just think of all those prayers going up to God in heaven," Friend said. "It would be like a thunderous storm of epic proportions. Please pass this along to all your friends and neighbors who have the internet. If you know someone who does not have the internet, tell them about this amazing prayer chain."

Church Directory

Attend the church of your choice

The Catholic Community of **ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST**
Rev. Douglas J. Guthrie, Pastor
Fr. Jhon Gallo-Florez, Parochial Vicar
11011 Hall Rd.
(between Beamer & Blackhawk)
www.stlukesatholic.com

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday	Vigil	5:30 p.m.
Sunday		7:30, 9:15, 11:15 a.m.
Sunday		1 p.m. Misa en Español
Monday, Wednesday, Friday		9 a.m.
Tuesday & Thursday		7 p.m.
Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated		
Thursday 7:45 to 8:30 p.m.	Saturday 4 to 5 p.m.	

Parish Office 281-481-6816
Faith Formation 281-481-4251
Youth Ministry 281-481-4735

St. Luke's offers ministries for ALL-families, men, women, youth, children, young adults, single, divorced, separated, widowed.

New Covenant Christian Church

10603 Blackhawk
281-484-4230

Bill & Cheryl Hines, Pastors

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WEEKLY SERVICE TIMES

Sunday	Wednesday
Sunday School • 8:00 a.m.	Prayer Meeting • 7:00 p.m.
Worship Service • 9:00 a.m.	Mid-Week Service • 7:45 p.m.

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Davy & Marie Flickinger, owners

Harris County Public Library presents Authorama

To close out its 2020 Summer Reading Program, Harris County Public Library (HCPL) will be hosting a slate of online author talks by local and nationally known writers and illustrators including Andrew Aydin, creator of the New York Times bestselling and National Book Award winning graphic novel "March"; poet and memoirist Saeed Jones; Gloria Chao, author of young adult bestseller "American Panda"; prolific children's book author Chris Barton; and former Houston Poet Laureate Deborah D.E.E.P. Mouton, among others. All the author talks will give the audience a chance to interact with the authors in a question and answer format following the presentation.

"HCPL wanted, first and foremost, to celebrate talented and compelling authors," says Jennifer Schwartz, programming services manager

for HCPL, "but also ones who can share their own experiences with issues that are crucially important to people right now."

HCPL Summer Authorama programs will be presented on Harris County Public Library's Facebook Live (@harriscountyp). All are free and open to the public. No registration is required.

HCPL Summer Authorama program
This program includes:
- Tuesday, July 28, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. "Newsworthy: A Poetry Reading and Reflection" with Mouton.
With racial tensions running high, it is hard to imagine how society got here. It is even harder to imagine how to get out. How can the conversation be kickstarted?
Watch this live event with former Mouton as she reads from her new collection "Newsworthy" and discusses using discomfort

as a jumping-off point for change.
Register online at <https://www.facebook.com/events/3740413195992405/>
- Wednesday, July 29, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Andrew Aydin hosts "The Time Is Now; Becoming Agents for Change." Andrew Aydin is the creator and co-author of the "March" graphic novel trilogy, with civil rights icon Congressman John Lewis and artist Nate Powell. The New York Times bestselling "March" is a vivid first-hand account of John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights and could not be more urgently relevant in our current lives.
In this vibrant discussion, Aydin will relate history to current events, and help empower citizens to seize this moment in history and be a constructive force in the continuing fight for human rights. Aydin will take questions from the audience following his talk.
Register online at <https://www.facebook.com/events/583830122562061/>
- Thursday, July 30, 11-11:30 a.m. "Live Talk and Q&A" with award-winning picture book author Barton.
Meet online for a fun and informative event with the creator and co-author of his books, his experiences as an author and will also take questions from the audience.
Barton is the author of picture books including bestseller "Shark vs. Train," Sibert honor-winning "The Day-Glo Brothers," Orbis Pictus honoree "Dazzle Ships," "Whoosh!: Lonnie Johnson's Super-Soaking Stream of Inventions," and "What Do You Do with a Voice Like That?: The Story of Extraordinary Congresswoman Barbara Jordan."
Register online at <https://www.facebook.com/events/191160512336197/>

- Thursday, July 30, 2 - 3 p.m. Gloria Chao and Addie Tsai "YA Authors in Conversation."
Meet online for a lively discussion between two contemporary young adult authors Chao and Tsai as they talk about their latest works, the journey to writing YA Literature and coming of age stories and what can be expected from them next.
A Q&A will follow the discussion. Chao is the critically acclaimed author of "American Panda," "Our Wayward Fate" and the upcoming "Rent a Boyfriend," scheduled for Sept. 1, 2020. Tsai teaches literature, creative writing, dance and humanities at Houston Community College and is the author of queer Asian young adult novel Dear Twin.
Register online at <https://www.facebook.com/events/872637366556198/>
Thursday, July 30, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., Saeed Jones in Conversation with Tayari Jones. In his award-winning debut memoir, "How We Fight For Our Lives," poet Jones tells his story, of growing up black and gay in the South and fighting to carve out a place for himself, within his family, within his country, within his own hopes, desires, and fears.
Meet online for this unique opportunity to be part of an intimate, live conversation between Saeed Jones and his friend and mentor, author Tayari Jones ("An American Marriage"), as they discuss his recent memoir and what it means to write about black families.
There will be time for questions after the conversation.
Register online at <https://www.facebook.com/events/1848906745252185/>

Community business supports Memorial staff



Recently Texan Bank donated 1200 breakfast tacos to frontline staff at Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital. Employees working that day received a breakfast taco because of Texan Bank's generosity. Shown left is Rebecca Lilley, director of Physician Resources, showing appreciation to Texan Bank from the staff by holding a sign. In the background is Kenny Koncaba, CEO of Texan Bank.



Kristi Koncaba, co-founder, president, chief operating officer and board member of Texan Bank and her husband Kenny Koncaba, CEO of Texan Bank, and co-founder, director, and CEO of Friendswood Capital Corporation are shown taking a photo together during the delivery of their donation to employees at the hospital.



Shown assisting to bring in the delivered food for hospital employees are, left to right, Sara Martin, Lori Gordon, Jenny Baty, Rebecca Lilley and Jessica Kopacz.



Kristen Marinello, a registered nurse at Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital smiles and holds a sign thanking Kristi and Kenny Koncaba for breakfast.

Vehicle in tree to be removed

Residents on Sagehill were quite surprised to find part of a vehicle hanging from a neighbor's front yard tree. A local law enforcement officer made the resident aware that the vehicle could not hang from the tree and gave the tenant until the end of the day to remove the vehicle.



Photo by Marie Flickinger

Remember When

40 years ago (1980)
A hazardous waste disposal site was being proposed adjacent to Ellington Air Force Base by Gulf Coast Waste Disposal Authority. GCWDA officials announced they had made permit application for the 200-acre site bounded by Ellington, State Highway 3, and the proposed Beltway 8 near Genoa-Red Bluff Road. The facility was expected to cost approximately \$67 million and would incorporate the use of a rotary kiln and, at that time, a relatively new process of detoxification known as Stablax.

was dropped, according to South Belt Security Alliance spokesman Neil West.
The Sagemont-Beverly Hills Little League All-Star team won two games to advance into the semifinals of the Little League State Tournament in Waco.
30 years ago (1990)
First-time drug users or students in possession of narcotics would no longer face mandatory expulsion from Pasadena ISD schools. Board members voted to change that portion of the Discipline Management Plan and relevant section in the student handbook.
As a method of introducing South Belt area residents to the vast amount of local health services, the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce was making plans to host Health Fair '90 with booths set up at Alameda Mall.
South Belt area residents Melissa Atkinson and Manada Whalen, members of the West University softball team, received first-place trophies in the Spring-Klein Invitational 12-and-under Softball Tournament. Both also received Most Valuable Player awards for their efforts throughout the event.
25 years ago (1995)
Dobie's Jennifer Richardson, 15, won the Glamour Girl Model Search Contest (teen division) hosted by Page Parkes Center of Modeling and Glamour Shots of Houston.
It was announced that the 1991 Clear Brook High School graduate who was serving a life sentence in Bangladesh for drug smuggling, would be released.
At a board meeting, Pasadena ISD trustees approved a tougher discipline management plan.
The plan was in compliance with Senate Bill 1, which called for mandatory removal from campus of students who commit serious of

fenses.
Dobie High School's Devin Mitchell joined 230 outstanding high school sophomores from every state for the 1995 Hugh O'Brien Youth Foundation World Leadership Congress during the summer.
20 years ago (2000)
Heather Ogilvie, a 1996 Dobie graduate and Sageglenn resident, relinquished her crown after serving one year as Miss Texas. During her reign, Ogilvie represented Texas at the national level at the Miss USA Pageant, placing 12th.
During a meeting of the Clear Brook City Municipal Utility District, the board toured the new subdivision of Clear Brook Meadows, located just off Blackhawk Boulevard.
A public hearing was set for a proposed apartment complex, slated to be a 250-unit multifamily residential development, to be constructed in the Highland Meadow subdivision.
15 years ago (2005)
Both PISD and CCISD had the "recognized" statuses reduced to "acceptable" after students took the more rigorous Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills tests.
Kristi LaMell was named principal of Clear Brook High School. LaMell replaced Michael Kreis who was principal for only one year.
The 147th Texas Air National Guard received orders to deploy to Iraq in support of the war on terror.

A fatal traffic accident occurred on the Gulf Freeway at the Scarsdale exit. The driver of a late-model Mustang took the exit at the last minute then spun out of control. A 25-year-old male passenger in the car was killed instantly.
South Belt parents were anticipating the annual tax-free shopping weekend for back-to-school clothing items.
10 years ago (2010)
The Southeast Volunteer Fire Department responded to three separate blazes that officials believed were caused by a serial arsonist. The latest of the three incidents occurred at St. Luke's church, where a paper dumpster was ignited.
Two days earlier, firefighters responded to a grass fire near the right-of-way lane on Beltway 8 near Blackhawk that SVFD Chief Chuck Tylka said was started with gasoline. A few days prior, a guitar was set on fire on Hall Road near El Franco Lee Park. Again, Tylka said an accelerant, such as gasoline, was used to initiate the blaze.
According to Tylka, all three incidents occurred around midnight. Given the proximity in time and location, Tylka believed all of the incidents were related. No immediate arrests were made.
5 years ago (2015)
A 2-year-old boy drowned in a swimming pool Aug. 3 in the 11200 block of Sagehill near Hughes Road. Emergency crews responded to the scene to find someone

attempting to perform CPR on the child. Efforts to revive him were unsuccessful and Mason Craft was pronounced dead at the scene. The incident was ruled accidental, and no charges were filed.
Houston District D City Council Member Dwight Boykins hosted the second annual Swingin' for Seniors golf tournament at Hermann Park Golf Course. Proceeds benefited Boykins' Senior Assistance Fund that helped District D senior citizens make needed home repairs.
1 year ago (2019)
U.S. Rep. Pete Olson announced he would not seek re-election in 2020 due to family reasons. Olson was facing a tough re-election campaign, as Democrats had already set their sights on District 22 after challenger Sri Preston Kulkarni came within five points of defeating the Republican incumbent the previous November.
A former U.S. Navy pilot, Olson had held the position since 2008 when he defeated Democrat Nick Lampson.
Human remains were discovered Monday, July 29, in the 900 block of Clear Lake City Boulevard near SH 3/Old Galveston Road. At press time, the victim's gender, identity and cause of death are still pending verification by the county medical examiner's office.
This marked the second time in less than a month that human remains were discovered in the South Belt area. It is unclear if the two incidents were related.

The four-lane divided highway from the Gulf Freeway to Beamer Road on Fuqua opened, and local merchants celebrated with a variety of sales offered in a special section of the Leader.
Local fans of Astros pitcher J.R. Richard collected signatures on a get-well card to be delivered to the star's Sageglenn home after his release from the hospital.
An electrical fire left several businesses in the Kroger shopping center with little or no electricity. The fire occurred in a trough located at the rear of the building which housed a bundle of electrical wires.
35 years ago (1985)
Petitions requesting flashing lights at local school zones and improvements to Hall Road from Kingspoint to Telephone were to be given to El Franco Lee, county commissioner for Precinct 1, at a meeting of the South Belt Civic Coalition. More than 2,000 signatures were secured on the petitions.
In an effort to clean up a 2.4 mile eyesore along the city-county line, Harris County Precinct 1 officials offered to make improvements and maintain a portion of Hall Road between Telephone and Kingspoint.
A \$10,000 lawsuit filed by South Belt Security Alliance against Southeast Security

Deadline extended for P-EBT
The deadline to apply for Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT) food benefits has been extended to July 31. P-EBT is a one-time benefit of \$285 per eligible child and can be used in the same way as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food benefits to pay for groceries.
Children who received free or reduced-price school meals during the 2019-2020 school year may be eligible for this one-time food benefit. Eligible families that received SNAP benefits for March have already received P-EBT benefits and do not have to apply. Visit hhs.texas.gov/pebt to learn more. For questions regarding eligibility or if you need help applying, contact the P-EBT Call Center at 833-613-6220. The public charge rule does not apply to P-EBT benefits.

Self-defense classes go virtual
The American Society of Karate has virtual self-defense classes for teens and adults (ages 13-80).
These classes are Fridays at 7:30 p.m. in the comfort of one's own home.
No previous self-defense or martial arts experience is necessary. Fill out a form at <https://ringcentr.al/2XpnHWj> to preregister.
For additional information, visit www.AskKarate.com or <https://www.facebook.com/askkarate/>, email Online@AskKarate.com or call 281-788-5930.

Over The Back Fence by Alexis
HAPPY BIRTHDAY YELITZA!
Yelitza De Leon celebrates a birthday Tuesday, Aug. 4. Best wishes for a wonderful birthday are sent from her family who say, "Happy Birthday, Yelitza De Leon. Thank you for being an amazing daughter, sister and friend. May God grant you all the desires of your heart. With love from your family."
SCHOOL DAZE
The following personnel of the Pasadena Independent School District celebrate birthdays July 30 through Aug. 5, 2020.
Atkinson Elementary
Sing a happy birthday song to Stacy Fontenot Aug. 1.
Burnett Elementary
Blow out the birthday candles for Luis Arroyo July 31. Light the birthday candles for Maria Romero Aug. 2. Send birthday greetings Aug. 5 to Isabel Amaya and Daniel Kornelis.
Frazier Elementary
Sing a birthday chorus of a birthday song Aug. 5 for Luis Lewis.
Genoa Elementary
Join in a fun birthday celebration Aug. 4 for Emily Delano.
Meador Elementary
The day for balloons and a birthday cake for Karen Barton and Tanya Weaver is Aug. 3.
Moore Elementary
Eduardo Ledezma celebrates a birthday

Aug. 1.
South Belt Elementary
Jacquelyn Anderson is wished a happy birthday Aug. 5.
Stuchey Elementary
Goretti Rerri enjoys a birthday July 30. Best wishes for a wonderful birthday Aug. 1 are sent to Erika Willis. The day for a celebration for Jessica Garcia-Ramos is Aug. 2.
Melillo Middle School
Marking a special birthday Aug. 1 is Stephanie Ali. The day to send a birthday greeting to Norberta Mercado is Aug. 2. Melissa Torres celebrates a birthday Aug. 4.
Beverly Hills Intermediate
Sing a happy birthday song Aug. 2 to Shasta Williams. The day for birthday fun for Arnold Agrella is Aug. 3.
Thompson Intermediate
Send happy birthday wishes to Wayne Sanders July 31. Michael McDonald, Patricia Tabarez and Bob Boyes celebrate a triple-birthday Aug. 1. Send a birthday greeting Aug. 2 to Meliza Evanson. Sing a birthday song Aug. 3 to Stefanie Tang.
Dobie High
Three cheers are in order for Angela Baden, Yvette Castillo and Jeffrey Flores who celebrate a birthday July 30. Birthday greetings are sent to Sherrie Kent and Leah Walker Aug. 3. Shelby Collier marks a

birthday Aug. 4. George Cervantes enjoys a special birthday Aug. 5.
FRIENDS CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS
For those wanting a birthday mentioned in this section, email mynews@southbelt-leader.com with "OTBF: Friends Celebrate Birthdays" in the subject line by Friday noon for the next week's publication.
Thursday, July 30: Donald Rogers, Anne Hyma, Danielle Mendoza, Christine Elliott and Randy Kelley; Friday, July 31: Robert Gentry, David Freeman, Felix Garcia, Jim Waltz and Ashley Glover; Saturday, Aug. 1: Gabriel Diaz, Andrew Burks, Denny Wranch Sr., Ryan Hanzelka, Jo Lyday and Scott Bishop; Sunday, Aug. 2: Mayra Elizabeth, Patricia Lynn Krivik, Ana Acosta, Juanita Herrera, Terry Barclay and Donna Northrup; Monday, Aug. 3: Angela James-Farrar, Joaquin Jimenez, Jennifer Pena-Zuniga and Gina Valdez; Tuesday, Aug. 4: Beth Fawcett, Monica Salazar, Donna Taylor, Kristen Sorenson, Diana Polus, Kevin Baker, Michele Cutler and Robin Wach; and Wednesday, Aug. 5: Edna Peña, Wendy Phillips, Karen Owen, Lillie Alvarez, Deanna Goodlet and Shaun Stanton.
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Email birthday, anniversary, vacation, congratulations, etc., to mynews@southbelt-leader.com with OTBF in the subject line by Friday noon for the next week's publication.

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SPORTS NEWS & NOTES

Fall sports across Houston area facing long odds

It's time to face reality. The likelihood of a complete high school fall athletics season playing out across the Houston area is now facing daunting odds.

As it seemingly the case every day of the week these days, it's been an eventful stretch for both statewide and Houston area public school athletics.

As of July 21, the University Interscholastic League, the official governing body of extracurricular activities within public schools in Texas, appeared to swoop in and save the day for fall sports such as football, volleyball, cross-country and team tennis.

The usual early August

preseason start date, this year set for Aug. 3, was already assumed to be gone for Class 5A and 6A programs, but the UIL now has set forth a plan calling for preseason workouts for 5A and 6A, Clear Brook and Dobie included, to begin Sept. 7.

In turn, regular season football and volleyball matches are marked to begin Sept. 24. While the volleyball season didn't gain a ton in terms of extra days, the football deadline for playoff qualification was pushed to Dec. 5, in theory allowing programs the opportunity for an extra game or two following the delayed start.

Roughly 72 hours after the UIL set its plan online,

however, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo delivered an order that could ultimately change things, at least to some degree.

Hidalgo and Harris County health officials on July 24 issued said order that all public schools and nonreligious private schools delay opening for in-person instruction until at least Sept. 8, a date Hidalgo added that is more than likely to be extended unless there is a significant reduction shown in the county's COVID-19 outbreak.

This of course means that extracurricular activities, said fall sports included, may not proceed during the interim.

For those who think to

themselves that, "Oh, it's just a day or two here or there from what the UIL outlined," consider the true reality. County officials have decided that for the betterment of more than a million students in the county, gathering for school is not safe.

What happens in "team" sports? Students gather. What has been deemed unsafe until at least Sept. 8? Gathering.

The order affects Houston ISD, all of Pasadena ISD and two-thirds of Clear Creek ISD, as well as other outlying school districts.

Pasadena ISD and other Harris County districts have previously complied with Hidalgo's plea that schools

remain closed for in-person instruction until Sept. 8, so at least on paper, there seems to be little issue. Time will tell.

In essence, those who choose to believe the UIL's revamped Sept. 7 fall sports resumption plan will simply carry on without further delay in Harris County come Sept. 8 may be in for disappointment come reckoning time.

Optimism? Remember that the last public school sporting event was contested way back in mid March. In other words, COVID-19 has largely been in control for some five months or more. Public health officials far and wide have admitted that, sans a vaccine, COVID-19 isn't

simply fading away.

As for fall sports, the ever-running calendar will begin to work against it. Time doesn't stand still.

When the UIL did make its announcement July 21, there were already a number of high school basketball coaches clamoring that their season is being encroached upon.

As for football, Dobie is already needing to replace its originally planned season opener against Alief Elsik. Yet now, with Harris County schools closed until at least Sept. 8, a Sept. 24 proposed start to the season has to be in a bit of doubt.

The same goes for volleyball, with perhaps the cir-

cumstances even more dire.

Programs statewide were already facing the loss of as many as 15 to 20 nondistrict matches. The UIL also banned tournament play for 2020. Beginning Sept. 24, simply completing district competition is not going to come challenge-free for volleyball teams.

Cross-country and team tennis? Again, similar issues will persist. The bottom line is there is much more to sports than simply deciding whether or not to play or compete.

It's only July 30, but Harris County has ruled it unsafe to attend in-person classes until at least Sept. 8 and Hidalgo has cautioned that date

is more than likely to be extended.

That ruling, officially an order, has dragged extracurricular activities with it. It's unsafe to gather, has been for some time now. As unfor-omable as it may seem for Harris County high school fall season sports to be in jeopardy, the clock continues to tick.

Yes, there remains more than five weeks before the Sept. 8 moment in time comes, but with each passing day, there still is a lack of light at the end of the tunnel, i.e., a sizable drop in the number of reported COVID-19 cases in Harris County. Talk of another statewide shutdown has also

re-emerged among health professionals.

Today, no one involved in the decision is admitting that Sept. 24 will not include high school athletics, but that doesn't mean it's not getting closer and closer to reality.

With the exception of a few strength and conditioning and sport-specific work outs here and there, these 14-to-18-year-old athletes

have not been allowed to participate in team activities in many months. Getting the proverbial ball rolling at a moment's notice may sound simple, but with all of the other precautions needed due to COVID-19, the return, whether Sept. 8 or later, will be challenging.

UIL leaves basketball preseason, starts same for now

In a COVID-19-controlled world, it is inevitable for someone to cry foul as Texas public school governing body, the University Interscholastic League, makes key decisions aimed at saving a fall sports season that seemingly has hit a slippery slope.

After all, this coronavirus experience ultimately cost Region III 6A boys' champion Dickinson, Region III 5A boys' champ Hightower and other state qualifiers the chance to compete for a championship.

Now, if things stay as they are on the schedule, those with a love for basketball may feel shortchanged again.

While extending post-season qualification dates for both football and volleyball for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year, the UIL has, in the eyes of at least a few hoops leaders, slighted the game of basketball.

Simply put, while the fall sports regular season has been extended to Nov. 17 for volleyball and Dec. 5 for football, the start of basketball activities remains unchanged.

Preseason workouts for Class 6A girls' basketball programs such as Clear Brook and Dobie are set to begin Oct. 21, with opening night coming Nov. 6.

The arrangement hasn't hampered the Lady Wolverines in recent years as few players jump from volleyball to basketball at the varsity level.

However, certainly for 2020-2021, there are top athletes from Dobie who plan to play either football or volleyball and then make the transition to basketball. Ditto for Clear Brook where it relates to football and boys' basketball.

If the fall sports season is indeed played at some point, then basketball teams will go without. For some, that doesn't sit well.

It's understood at the high school level that athletes fulfill their obligation to either football or volleyball before heading to the basketball court.

In most seasons, it's not uncommon for an athlete making the transition to basketball to miss about a week of the regular season.

As things stand now,

players could miss more time on the hardwood.

Want more? There will be no tournament play allowed this season. Only head-to-head single day games will be allowed. Coaches will be allowed to schedule 27 regular season games in all.

Clear Brook and Dobie will both compete in seven-team districts, leaving 12 district contests and as many as 15 for nondistrict play.

With programs potentially beginning the season without both the benefit of a

full varsity roster and common three-day tournament action, is a 27-game schedule doable?

When the UIL made its current fall sports plan public July 21, Twitter was afire with statewide basketball coaches seeking matchups to fill out the tournament gaps in their respective schedules. The process is, no doubt, ongoing.

While Pearland ISD has now lost the revenue and fundraising of the Adidas John Turner Classic, a 58-team volleyball tournament

that annually draws many state title contenders, Pasadena and Deer Park ISDs will suffer as well.

With no hoops tournaments permitted either, the popular Pasadena ISD-based McDonald's Texas Invitational, complete with 48 boys' squads in addition to 32 on the girls' side, will not take place.

So for basketball coaches and players, the hits keep coming. But at least for now, the hoops schedule is on course. Check back soon for updates.

Christmas-Kelly begins 10th WNBA season



Karima Christmas-Kelly, a 2007 Dobie graduate, had seven points and five rebounds in her return to action as she helped the Minnesota Lynx come from behind to defeat the Connecticut Sun 77-69 in the WNBA season opener for both teams at the IGM Academy in Bradenton, Fla., July 26. Coming off injury issues, Christmas-Kelly is now in her 10th WNBA season and has been part of a league championship, that coming in 2012 with Indiana. She helped Dobie reach the state tournament as a freshman in 2003-2004 and enjoyed a successful career at Duke University before joining the WNBA and playing overseas as well. Christmas-Kelly is a member of Dobie's Hall of Honor and the Pasadena ISD Athletics Hall of Fame and has had her No. 13 jersey retired within the Lady Longhorns' program.

SBGSA opens fall sign-up; coaching spots still available

The South Belt Girls Softball Association has opened online registration beginning for the upcoming fall league season, with easy-to-follow steps.

League officials have also set up a pair of convenient in-person sessions for those who prefer that method.

Girls ages 4 to 16 are eligible to play at \$60 per player, and there are sibling discounts available to multi-player families. There are no residency re-

quirements. The online registration runs through Aug. 15 at www.southbelts softball.com.

The league will also host in-person sign-up sessions Aug. 5 and Aug. 12 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. both evenings at the SBGSA facility at El Franco Lee Park. Payments of \$60 per player may only be made by credit card.

No cash will be accepted and social distancing requirements, including the mandatory wearing of a face cover-

ing, must be followed. All registrant families will be required to submit birth certificate proof electronically.

For additional information, visit the SBGSA league sites via Twitter or Facebook at southbelt girls softball.

Coaches sought

South Belt Girls Softball Association officials continue planning for the fall season, which includes recruiting prospective coaches for the various age group divi-

sions. The league needs additional coaching help in the 6-under and 12-under divisions, with no experience required.

Those with previous coaching experience are also needed in the 14-under division. Former college players may also apply to coach.

For additional information on the openings, direct email to sbgssaplayeragent@gmail.com.

Lajaunie tennis now coming Oct. 9-11

The ninth annual Darren Lajaunie Memorial Tennis Tournament will be held Oct. 9-11 at the Harry Taylor Tennis Center in Pasadena following two delays because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Players who have already registered and have paid entry fees will remain set to play, and registration opportunities are still available at www.DLTennisScholarships.com. Those previously regis-

tered but who are unable to play in October may direct email to tournament director John Thomas at jtjohnjr@gmail.com for additional information.

Those registering are

asked to include a cellphone number on the entry form so as to receive up-to-date tournament details including court playing times, etc.

The tournament provides for youth tennis camp and

collegiate education scholarships for young players and honors the memory of Dobie graduate Darren Lajaunie, a tennis enthusiast who died of complications of cancer in 2011.

www.southbeltleader.com

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UIL Class 5A/6A Public Schools Current Key Fall Sports Dates

Cross-Country
Sept. 7 - Regular season meets may begin
Nov. 14 - Regular season begins
Dec. 5 - State championship meet

Football
Sept. 7 - Preseason practices may begin
Sept. 24 - Regular season games may begin
Dec. 5 - End of regular season
Jan., 2021 - State title games round, TBA

Team Tennis
Sept. 7 - Regular season matches may begin
Oct. 24 - End of regular season
Nov. 11-12 - State championships

Volleyball
Sept. 7 - Preseason practices may begin
Sept. 24 - Regular season matches may begin
Nov. 17 - End of regular season
Dec. 11-12 - State championships

Note:
Preseason workouts may not begin in Harris County until in-person learning begins Sept. 8.

Dobie staff urges physicals
All student-athletes looking to take part in sports during the 2020-2021 school year will first be required to have a current and updated physical on file in the athletic department before being eligible to compete.
The deadline for completion is Aug. 1, 2020, but the Longhorn coaching staff is urging their athletes to get it handled sooner than later.
The Dobie sports medicine department has offered the Pearland Clinic as a cost-affordable choice locally.
Open seven days a week, the clinic can be reached at 832-831-3974.

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McDonald's Texas Invitational Tournament Highlights

Began as Texas Invitational in 1999

Kingwood boys won 1999, 2000 crowns

Expanded to include girls' play in 2004

Dobie girls won first-ever Gold championship

Has raised more than \$2.3 million for students

Clear Brook's David Azore
All-Tournament 2015, 2016

Dobie's Victoria Onozie
All-Tournament 2017

198 games played currently over three days

1999 debut event featured
15 boys' teams, four sites

Dickinson's Tramon Mark
Single-game Record 57 points, 2019

Dobie's Royce Hunter
Single game 45 points, 2016

Clear Brook's Anthony Miles
Single game 42 points, 2007
154 tournament points, second best

Clear Brook's Brittany Hilliard
Single-game tourney record
18 free throws made, 2007

Clear Brook 2005 Girls
Gold Bracket Champion

Dobie 2004 Girls
Gold Bracket Champion
(beat Brook)

Dobie later advanced to state

Coronavirus wipes out prestigious McDonald's, Pearland tournaments

The prestigious McDonald's Invitational basketball tournament has not ended for good, but the absence of the 2020 event, forced by the coronavirus pandemic, promises to leave a void come November.

The University Interscholastic League did its best to brighten the hopes for all of those programs, students and coaching staffs when its July 21 announcement included plans for a reboot to the 2020-2021 sports landscape, including football, volleyball, cross-country and team tennis.

Yet with some good things comes a caveat, and the UIL, through the fault of no one, delivered a few.

Given today's need for social distancing, the UIL understandably banned tournament play for the upcoming volleyball season.

If one reads the fine print, the ban extends to the 2020-2021 basketball season.

Tournament play serves a multitude of purposes. On

the surface, it gives competing teams the opportunity to play, on average, five to six games or matches over a three-day period.

This gives teams a chance to see where they stand, good or bad. It also gives coaches the chance to experiment with rosters and give plenty of players the chance to contribute before playing rotations narrow for league play.

For tournament hosts, the three-day events serve several points of emphasis financially, whether it be inner-program, scholarship, charity or otherwise. When the money doesn't come, there's few ways to replace it.

Locally, the folks in Pearland will feel the effects after the Adidas John Turner Volleyball Invitational, usually set for opening weekend of the season in early August, was not allowed to proceed.

Given the lack of preparation, planning and sched-

uling time, not to mention travel limitations, it was going to be very difficult for the Turner Classic to proceed in 2020.

There was almost no way to envision upwards of 58 teams safely, given the pandemic, making their way to Pearland early in August.

So there goes tens of thousands of dollars in funds that would have gone to Pearland educational programs and chosen charities in the area.

And then there is the 2020 loss of the McDonald's Texas Invitational. With 48 boys' teams and a field of 32 on the girls' side, the Pasadena ISD- and Deer Park ISD-based event had become the state's most prestigious preseason tournament solely from a competitive standpoint, with several past state tournament qualifiers and champions allowed to say their title run began at the McDonald's.

Tournament founder Ben Meador steadily built upon a dream over the years as

the Texas Invitational began in 1999 with just 15 boys' teams competing at four locations over the three days back then.

Kingwood was the big benefactor then, winning the tournament championship in both 1999 and 2000.

The event expanded to include 32 boys' teams and 16 girls' teams in 2004, with eventual Region III champion Dobie defeating Clear Brook for the McDonald's title and then capturing the Region III crown en route to its first and still only state tournament appearance.

A year later in 2005, a Kelli Griffin-led Clear Brook team won the girls' championship after the event expanded to include 24 teams, up from 16 the previous season.

Clear Brook was back in the news in 2007 as Brittany Hilliard established what is still a tournament record with 18 free throws made.

In the boys' bracket, Anthony Miles scored 42 points in a single game, still

sixth-best in tournament history. In that tournament overall, Miles, who has fashioned a successful professional basketball career overseas, scored 154 points, still a top-five mark.

In 2019, the McDonald's Texas Invitational included 198 games contested over three days at 10 different venues, with the boys' and girls' Gold bracket championship games live streamed from Phillips Field House.

Over the years, the event has raised more than 3 million dollars, largely aiding the Pasadena ISD and Deer Park ISD education foundations.

COVID-19 has disrupted the event for 2020, just as it has disrupted countless other sporting events. But one can bet organizers in both Pearland and Pasadena/Deer Park will go the extra mile to ensure future tournaments are better than ever.

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CALENDAR

Due to the current public health situation, it is advisable to verify if meetings are still being held prior to attending. Since Gov. Greg Abbott has initiated Strike Force for the reopening of Texas some groups have resumed their meetings. For Alcoholics Anonymous meetings in the area, visit <https://aahouston.org/meetings>. For Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings, visit www.hascona.com. For Al-Anon meetings, visit www.houstonalanon.org/meetings.html.

THURSDAY, JULY 30

AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 713-686-6300 (24/7) or visit <https://aahouston.org/meetings/> for additional information.

7:30 a.m.

Rotary Club of Pearland - Meets Thursdays at 7:30 a.m. online on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81372891968>. Meeting ID: 813 7289 1968. Details are on Pearland Chamber of Commerce website under the calendar.

Noon

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group, noon, 3525 Broadway, Pearland, or online at <https://aahouston.org/meetings/imperfect-nooners>. For details, call 713-686-6300.

7 p.m.

Kirkwood Civic Association meets with a phone meeting. Call Ericka McCrutchon at 281-989-9990 for additional information.

7 p.m.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Women's Group, open meeting, 7 p.m., in Pearland at the First Presbyterian Church, located at 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518) (youth building). For details, call 713-661-4200 or visit www.hascona.com or <https://nastuff.com>.

FRIDAY, JULY 31

7 a.m.

AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 713-686-6300 (24/7) or visit <https://aahouston.org/meetings/> for additional information.

7 p.m.

Bay Area Genealogical Society - Temporarily meets online. For details, visit <https://www.txbayareagen.org/> and access "Meetings Page" link under "Upcoming Events." Click on "Register Here" link for appropriate date.

Congregation Shaar Hashalom - Due to the current public health situation, all in-person synagogue events are canceled. The synagogue is closed until further notice. All services will be performed online. Join the Friday night service at 7 p.m. or the Saturday Shabbat at 9:30 a.m. service on a com-

puter, tablet or smartphone by using the GoToMeeting app and accessing the link <https://www.gotomeet.me/cshonline> with the access code 471-821-285. For those who don't have a computer, services may be accessed by calling (+1)-571-317-3122. For members who wish to download a copy of the prayer book for the online service, visit <https://www.shaarhashalom.org/prayer-book-for-online-service.html>.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of NA, open meeting, 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). For details, call 713-661-4200 or visit www.hascona.com or visit <https://nastuff.com/>.

8 p.m.

Serenity Now Al-Anon Group - meets at CrossRoads UMC Fridays, 8 to 9 p.m., 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. Family members and friends of problem drinkers/addicts share, learn Al-Anon principles, that they are not alone, and discover choices available. For details, call 281-484-9243.

8 p.m.

Alcoholics Anonymous - meeting at CrossRoads UMC on Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday, 8 p.m., 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. For information, call 281-484-9243.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1

7:30 a.m.

AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" 7:30 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 713-686-6300 (24/7) or visit the website <https://aahouston.org/meetings/> for additional information.

9:30 a.m.

Congregation Shaar Hashalom - Due to the current health situation, all in-person synagogue events are canceled. The synagogue is closed until further notice. All services will be performed online. Join the Friday night service at 7 p.m. or the Saturday Shabbat at 9:30 a.m. service on a computer, tablet or smartphone by using the GoToMeeting app and accessing the link <https://www.gotomeet.me/cshonline> with the access code 471-821-285. For those who don't have a computer, services may be accessed by calling (+1)-571-317-3122. For members who wish to download a copy of the prayer book for the online service, visit <https://www.shaarhashalom.org/prayer-book-for-online-service.html>.

11 a.m.

Al-Anon Meeting (Women Only, English) - For women affected by an addict. Saturdays, 11 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, Cornell Conference room #111. Call 281-487-8787, or drop in.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2

5:30 p.m.

Celebrate Recovery - A faith-based 12-Step Program, Sundays, 5:30 p.m., in the Chapel at Life Church, 9900 Alameda Genoa. Call 713-419-2635 for details or to RSVP for child care.

Alcoholics Anonymous - meeting at CrossRoads UMC on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 8 p.m., 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. For information, call 281-484-9243.

MONDAY, AUGUST 3

Noon

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group, noon, 3525 Broadway, Pearland, or online at <https://aahouston.org/meetings/imperfect-nooners>. For details, call 713-686-6300.

6:30 p.m.

Toastmasters - The Young Professionals Southeast Toastmasters Club #05324194 has gone virtual! Meeting is Mondays, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., at the website, <https://youngprofessionals.toastmasters.com/>. Young Professionals SE Toastmasters Club is committed to its member's safety during this National Emergency and will conduct virtual meetings every Monday (except holidays), effective 3/16/2020, to ensure its members continue their journey to becoming confident communicators and leaders. To be a guest at the virtual meeting, select the "contact us" button on our home page menu (www.youngprofessionalstoastmasters.com) to obtain access to our virtual meeting platform. For information, call Karen Nunn at 832-722-9061 or Carolyn Carmichael at 832-372-3565.

7 p.m.

Survivors of Suicide Support Group - gives coping skills in a non-threatening environment to adults who have lost a loved one to suicide. For details email LynneAnnH@yahoo.com or visit www.crisishotline.org or call 832-416-1177.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of NA, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). For details, call 713-661-4200 or visit www.hascona.com.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 4

7 a.m.

AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 713-686-6300 (24/7) or visit <https://aahouston.org/meetings/> for additional information.

Noon

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group, noon, 3525 Broadway, Pearland, or online at <https://aahouston.org/meetings/imperfect-nooners>. For details, call 713-686-6300.

6:30 p.m.

Bay Area Quilt Guild - Meets the first Tuesday, Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, 10310 Scarsdale Blvd. Fellowship is at 6:30 p.m.; meeting/program begins at 7 p.m. Visit www.facebook.com/BayAreaQuiltGuild or call Debby Benson at 713-248-8757 for information. Visitors may attend two meetings free.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of NA, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). For details, call 713-661-4200 or visit www.hascona.com or visit <https://nastuff.com/>.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5

7 a.m.

AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 713-686-6300 (24/7) or visit <https://aahouston.org/meetings/> for additional information.

Noon

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group, noon, 3525 Broadway, Pearland, or online at <https://aahouston.org/meetings/imperfect-nooners>. For details, call 713-686-6300.

7 p.m.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group of NA, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). For details, call 713-661-4200 or visit www.hascona.com or visit <https://nastuff.com/>.

Bay Area Turning Point Crisis Intervention - Call 281-286-2525 (24-hour crisis hotline) for confidential domestic violence/sexual abuse support group for women. Visit www.bayareaturningpoint.org for information.

8 p.m.

Alcoholics Anonymous - meeting at CrossRoads UMC on Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday, 8 p.m., 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. For information, call 281-484-9243.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6

7 a.m.

AA Meeting - "Breakfast With Bill" Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 1062 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, in Cornell Conference room. Call 713-686-6300 (24/7) or visit <https://aahouston.org/meetings/> for additional information.

7:30 a.m.

Rotary Club of Pearland - Meets Thursdays at 7:30 a.m. online on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81372891968>. Meeting ID: 813 7289 1968. For additional information visit the Pearland Chamber of Commerce website at <https://www.pearlandtexaschamber.us/> under the calendar tab.

Noon

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - Imperfect Nooners Group, noon, 3525 Broadway, Pearland, or online at <https://aahouston.org/meetings/imperfect-nooners>. Call 713-686-6300.

7 p.m.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Women's Group, open meeting, 7 p.m., 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). For details, call 713-661-4200 or visit <https://nastuff.com/>.

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A&M tapped to produce vaccine

The federal government has reserved a high-tech bio-manufacturing facility in Texas for mass production of a COVID-19 vaccine as part of a program discussed by President Donald Trump.

The new federal task order is reserving production capacity at one of the College Station facilities to mass manufacture vaccines through the end of 2021.

The order, which supports Operation Warp Speed, is between the federal government and the Texas A&M University System's Center for Innovation in Advanced Development and Manufacturing. The CIADM was developed in response to the H1N1 influenza pandemic.

As a subcontractor to the Texas A&M System, FUJIFILM Diosynth Biotechnologies, Texas, (FDB), owns and operates three facilities built through the CIADM program. They can be tapped for emergency use by the federal government.

FDB is slated to use the reserved capacity at one of the FDB facilities for the COVID-19 vaccine candidate of Novavax, Inc., NVX-CoV2373.

Valued at about \$265 million, the task order also will accelerate a planned expansion at the FDB facility by helping fund new equipment for use in the current pandemic and in future emergencies.

"The Texas A&M System

is ready to save lives and help protect the country," said John Sharp, Chancellor of The Texas A&M University System. "This whole project is a triple win. It's a win for the Texas A&M System. It's a win for FDB. It's a win for the nation."

View a video on the Texas A&M System's role in the project at <https://vimeo.com/442035087>.

Operation Warp Speed aims to begin delivering millions of doses of COVID-19 vaccines by the end of the year if the U.S. Food and Drug Administration determines candidates are safe and effective.

Novavax is being funded by the government to complete late-stage clinical development, including a pivotal Phase 3 clinical trial; establish large-scale manufacturing; and deliver 100 million doses of NVX-CoV2373, Novavax's COVID-19 vaccine candidate.

The FDB plant in North Carolina, where Trump visited Monday, is already producing the Novavax vaccine candidate for its clinical trials. FDB is slated to transfer the manufacturing process to College Station in late 2020 and start bulk production in early 2021.

FDB's facilities and workforce in Texas can accommodate multiple vaccine technologies and help expedite the government's large-scale manufacturing efforts. The

manufacturing preparation is being done in parallel with ongoing clinical trials and the FDA's safety and effectiveness approval process.

FDB calls the facility reserved for Novavax vaccine production its "Flexible Bio-Manufacturing Facility."

"FUJIFILM Diosynth Biotechnologies is committed to be a partner for life and deliver these much-needed COVID-19 vaccine doses," said Dr. Gerry Farrell, Chief Operating Officer of FDB in Texas. "We are ready to move swiftly to deliver on multiple vaccine candidates as directed by the U.S. government."

The Texas A&M System's CIADM was one of three centers developed in the U.S. in response to the H1N1 influenza pandemic by the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Agency (BARDA), part of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The task order is an amendment to the CIADM contract between the System and BARDA.

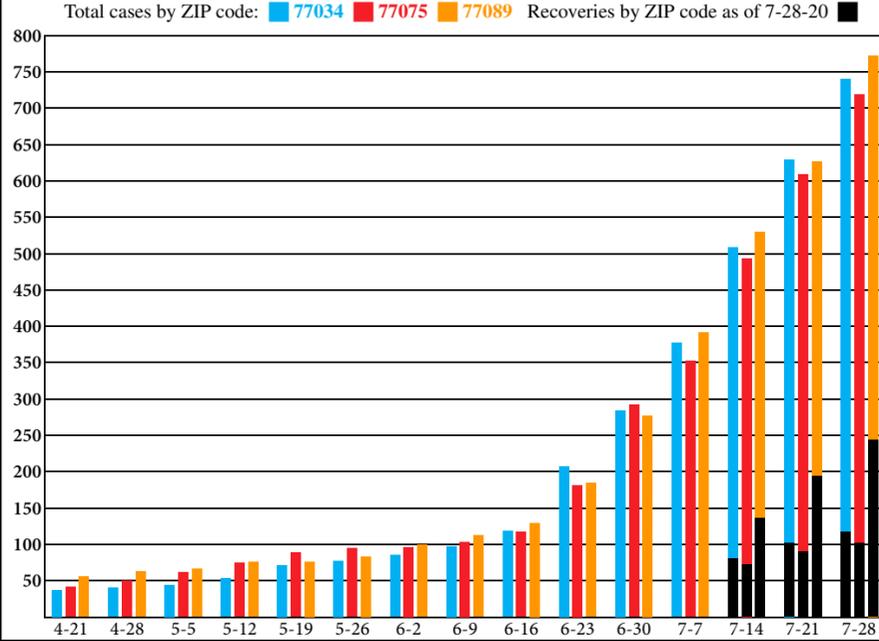
"This validates why the CIADM program was established," said Dr. W. Jay Treat, Texas A&M's chief manufacturing officer for the CIADM. "We have state-of-the-art facilities ready to make millions doses of vaccines to meet the critical needs of our citizens."

Fatal blow to Texas Land & Cattle



The former Texas Land & Cattle restaurant located at Beltway 8 and the Gulf Freeway is now a shell of its former self after catching fire early Thursday, July 23. While crews were able to save approximately \$50,000 in property, investigators estimate damage at around \$100,000. A metal beam used to support the establishment's roof can be seen above collapsed and melted. One firefighter was transported to the hospital for smoke inhalation. Crews from HFD Stations 70, 52, 24 and 93 responded to this incident. The case was still under investigation at press time. See related photo on Page 1.
 Photo by Marie Flickinger

Area ZIPs see major COVID increase



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"Notice of Public Meeting to Discuss Budget"

San Jacinto College District will hold a public budget hearing meeting by videoconference on Monday, August 3, 2020, at 7 p.m. in the Board Room, Suite A1.104, of the Thomas S. Sewell District Administration Building, located at 4624 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, Texas.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the College District's budget that will determine the tax rate that will be adopted. Members of the public may access the live-stream of this meeting as follows: www.sanjac.edu/board-meeting-videos.

Public participation in the discussion is invited. Members of the public who desire to address the Board must comply with the following registration procedures:

A link to a public comments form is available at: www.sanjac.edu/request-speak-to-board. The form must be completed prior to 6:50 p.m. on August 3, 2020, but members of the public are encouraged to complete the form an hour prior to the start of the meeting to allow time to receive call-in information and sufficient time to join the meeting.

A regular meeting by videoconference of the Board of Trustees will be held immediately after at which time adoption of the 2020-2021 budget will be considered.

The proposed budget will be available for inspection beginning on July 31, 2020, in the office of the Vice Chancellor, Fiscal Affairs, Room A1.202, 4624 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, Texas.