

Leader seeks submissions

The *South Belt-Ellington Leader* encourages local schools, groups and individuals to continue sending story ideas and photos they'd like to see included in the newspaper. Submissions have declined following the death of *Leader* publisher Marie Flickinger in November. Contributions may be submitted to mynews@southbeltleader.com.

HPD PIP changes day, venue

Houston Police Department officials remind residents that the Clear Lake Division has changed the day and location of its monthly Positive Interaction Program meetings.

Previously held the third Tuesday of each month at Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital, the meetings will now take place the third Monday of each month at Grace Church, 14505 Gulf Freeway Classroom No. 103. The meetings will also have a new start time, beginning at 6 p.m. instead of 6:30 p.m. The next event will take place Monday, Aug. 18.

Begun in 1983, HPD's PIP involves police and community members working together for safer neighborhoods. HPD also now lists a new local contact for the program. To learn more about the Clear Lake Division PIP meetings, contact HPD Officer C. Castillo at 832-395-1777.

New Covenant feeds needy

Each month, New Covenant Christian Church, 10603 Blackhawk at Kirkfair, will have food distribution events the first and third Wednesday from 1 to 2 p.m. and the second and fourth Saturday of the month from noon to 1 p.m. or until supplies last. The purpose of the events is to provide food to people in need. For additional information, contact the church at 281-484-4230.

Kirkwood to meet Aug. 25

The Kirkwood Civic Club's monthly meeting will take place 6:30 p.m. Monday, Aug. 25, at the Sagemont Community Center, 11507 Hughes Road near Beltway 8. Meetings are typically held for the last Monday of the month. For additional information, call Kirkwood Civic Club President Ericka McCutcheon at 281-989-9990.

Sagemeadow to meet Aug. 21

Sagemeadow HOA will hold a meeting at 7 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 21, at The Gardens, 12001 Beamer at Hughes. This month's guest speaker will be Shani Descieux (IRS Community Outreach). Meetings are open to the public. All Sagemeadow residents are encouraged to attend. Meetings are typically held the third Thursday of each month. For additional information, visit www.sagemeadow.org.

Gulf Freeway closures set

At least one northbound and one southbound main lane and frontage road lane on the Gulf Freeway will be closed from SH 96/Calder/Brittany Bay in League City to FM 519/Main Street in La Marque daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and from 8:30 p.m. to 5 a.m. until further notice.

At least one northbound and one southbound frontage road lane on the Gulf Freeway will be closed from Deats Road in Dickinson to FM 2004/Camp Wallace Access in Texas City from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. until further notice.

At least one northbound and one southbound main lane and frontage road lane on the Gulf Freeway will be closed from FM 519/Main Street in La Marque to Tiki Drive in Galveston daily from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and nightly from 8:30 p.m. to 5 a.m. until further notice.

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.

Coffee with the Constable

Harris County Precinct 2 Constable Jerry Garcia will be at Donut Haven, 10802 Hughes Road at Beamer, from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. each Thursday morning as part of the weekly Coffee with the Constable series. For additional information, call Sagemont Civic Club President Kay Barbour at 713-419-3545.

Beltway closures planned

One outside lane of the eastbound Beltway 8 frontage road will be closed from Beamer to Hughes Road/Sabo from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays through Wednesday, Sept. 3.

One outside lane of the northbound Beltway 8 frontage road will be closed from Fairmont Parkway to Red Bluff in Pasadena continuously through Wednesday, Sept. 31.

One inside lane of the southbound Beltway 8 frontage road will be closed from Greenshadow to Red Bluff in Pasadena continuously through Wednesday, Dec. 31.

The closures are associated with the ongoing project to widen Beltway 8 from two to four lanes in each direction.

Hughes/Sabo closures set

At least one southbound lane on Hughes/Sabo will be closed continuously at Beltway 8 until further notice.

Westbound Beltway 8 frontage roads may also be intermittently closed at Hughes/Sabo until further notice.

Sink to be named next Dobie principal

As school year begins, Pasadena ISD promotes JFD alumnus to lead campus

At press time Tuesday, Aug. 12, the *Leader* learned from sources at Pasadena ISD that the local school board planned to announce at its meeting later that evening that current Dobie Assistant Principal Carey Sink was being promoted to principal just a day before students returned to class.

The measure was necessary after current Dobie Principal Jorly Thomas was promoted to an administrative position with Pasadena ISD.

A 1990 Dobie graduate, Sink's family has deep roots in the South Belt community. His father, Joe Sink, was heavily involved in the South Belt youth sports scene for many years, particularly the Sagemont-Beverly Hills Little League, where he served as a winning coach for several years. Joe Sink also served as a Pasadena ISD principal, working at Southmore Intermediate for several years.

Also heavily involved in local youth sports,

Carey Sink was a standout varsity football player at Dobie and would later serve as the team's assistant coach for several seasons, as well as head Longhorn coach on an interim basis in 2009.

In 2012, Sink was named assistant principal at Dobie, and aside from a short detour to Angleton ISD, he has been a fixture at the area high school for most of his professional career.

Sink will be the seventh principal to serve at the local school since it opened in 1968. Inaugural Dobie Principal Allen Sory (deceased) served from 1968 to 1976; Frank Braden (deceased) served from 1976 to 1988; Jerry Speer served from 1988 to 2000; Steve Jamail served from 2000 to 2012; Franklin Moses served from 2012 to 2021; and Thomas served in the position from 2021 to 2025.

Thomas began his role as Dobie principal just as unexpectedly as he is departing it, taking the helm mid-year in 2021 when his predecessor



Carey Sink

Moses announced he was taking on a leadership role in nearby Clear Creek ISD.

An educator with more than 20 years of experience, Thomas started his career as a teacher in Galena Park ISD in 1999. He went on to become a counselor the following school year at Spring ISD and then Fort Bend ISD in 2003.

Thomas first joined the Pasadena ISD family in 2006 as an assistant principal at Beverly Hills Intermediate before serving as an assistant principal at Dobie from 2013 to 2015.

In 2015, Thomas was named the inaugural principal at the newly opened Roberts Middle School. Under his leadership, the campus was recognized for multiple academic achievements.

Thomas transitioned into his role as Dobie principal after serving as the school's interim principal from December 2021 to February 2022. His recent promotion to serve as Pasadena ISD executive director of Academic Achievement was necessary because Alyta Harrell, who currently serves in the position, was also promoted from within. An active member of the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce, Harrell will now serve as Pasadena ISD chief of schools, according to sources at the district.

See next week's *Leader* for follow-up story.

Sink to replace Thomas



Pasadena ISD announced at its board meeting Tuesday, Aug. 12, that Dobie Assistant Principal Carey Sink was being promoted to principal, just a day before the 2025-2026 school year was to start. The appointment was necessary after former Dobie Principal Jorly Thomas (left) was promoted to a new administrative position with the school district. A Dobie alumnus and former varsity football player at the school, Sink also formerly served as assistant football coach for the area high school.

Photo by Fred Roberts

Mitchell launches Legislative campaign

Former BAHEP president seeks House District 129 seat

In a move that could reshape the political landscape of southeast Harris County, former longtime South Belt resident and local economic development leader Bob Mitchell has officially announced his candidacy for the Texas House District 129 seat.

The announcement follows incumbent Rep. Dennis Paul's decision to vacate the seat to run for the Texas Senate in District 11. (District 11 incumbent Mayes Middleton is running for Texas attorney general.)

Mitchell, a Republican, describes himself as a "conservative community leader, job creator and Gulf Coast native" who is running to "fight

for Texas jobs, secure our border and defend the conservative values that keep our state strong."

If elected, Mitchell intends to fight what he describes as government overreach.

"I believe in limited government and defending our way of life from radical overreach," said Mitchell. "I'll fight to protect our border, stop woke mandates, cut taxes and stand for the sanctity of life."

The former president of the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership (BAHEP), Mitchell is a trusted voice in coastal and economic development.

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Charter school finally opens in Riverstone Ranch

Opening of controversial campus follows years of setbacks, legal troubles

After years of anticipation, setbacks and controversy, the Elite College Prep Academy – Riverstone Campus finally opened its doors, with

students beginning their 2025-2026 school year Monday, Aug. 11, just days ahead of their Pasadena ISD and Clear Creek ISD counterparts.

Lawmakers mull possible redistricting

Democrats flee state to block quorum on controversial vote

The state of Texas has launched a rare mid-decade redistricting effort, igniting fierce debate over race, representation and political power.

Gov. Greg Abbott added Congressional map redrawing to the July special legislative session, citing "constitutional concerns" raised by the U.S. Department of Justice regarding four Democratic-held districts, three of which are located in the Houston area.

DOJ ruling

In a July 7 letter, the DOJ asserted that four districts – TX-9, TX-18, TX-29 and TX-33 – were unconstitutional racial gerrymanders. The agency cited a 2024 Fifth Circuit Court decision that invalidated so-called "coalition districts," where multiple minority groups combine to form a majority.

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Flood Control to hold public meetings

Virtual functions to discuss county's new SAFER study

The Harris County Flood Control District invites residents to participate in a series of upcoming public meetings to discuss the ongoing Solutions for Advancing Floodplain Evaluation and Resilience (SAFER) study.

This landmark effort, conducted in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

(USACE), aims to identify large-scale ways to reduce flood risk in the region.

Meeting schedule

According to HCFCD officials, the public meetings are to be held virtually on the following dates:

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Hidalgo censured by commissioners

Unprecedented move followed fiery debate over tax hike

In an unprecedented move, Harris County Commissioners Court on Thursday, Aug. 7, voted 3-1 to formally censure County Judge Lina Hidalgo, citing repeated breaches of decorum.

The move followed a heated exchange over a proposed tax increase to fund early childhood education programs. The vote marked the first time a sitting Harris County Judge has been officially admonished by the Court.

What is a censure?

A censure is a formal expression of disapproval issued by a governing body. While it carries no legal penalty or impact on Hidalgo's ability to serve, it is entered into the official record and signals serious concern about conduct unbecoming of public office.

Background

The conflict erupted during debate over Hidalgo's proposal for a "penny tax" – a one-cent increase per \$100 of property valuation – to fund the Early REACH childcare program. The initiative, once supported by federal COVID-19 relief, was set to expire, and Hidalgo urged commis-

sioners to let voters decide its future via a November ballot measure.

Tensions boiled over as Hidalgo invited dozens of children into the courtroom to advocate for the measure; interrupted fellow commissioners; and reportedly used profane language in front of the children. The proposal missed a key deadline and was never formally voted on.

Reactions

The judge was met with sharp criticism from fellow Democrat, Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia, who represents much of the South Belt community.

Garcia voted in favor of the censure and issued a pointed rebuke.

"It's beyond frustrating to yet again witness Judge Hidalgo's disruptive behavior at Commissioners Court today," said Garcia. "We must hold ourselves to the highest standards. It was particularly offensive to witness her trying to use children as props for her political agenda. The people of Harris County deserve better."

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New charter school opens



Following years of challenges and setbacks, the new Elite College Prep Academy – Riverstone Campus finally opened its doors, with students beginning their 2025-2026 school year Monday, Aug. 11, just days ahead of their local ISD counterparts. Part of the Houston Gateway Academy (HGA) charter school network, the campus will focus on college-preparatory study and academic achievement. Located in Riverstone Ranch, the school's opening was delayed for several years due to construction issues and legal troubles.

In My Opinion

Wood: Stop mid-decade redistricting, end gerrymandering

I am writing to express my outrage at the blatant attempt to redraw district lines in the middle of the decade—solely to appease Donald Trump’s demands. This is not only undemocratic; it is an insult to the people of Texas. Redistricting is meant to reflect population changes based on the census, not to serve the short-term political ambitions of one man or one party.

Gerrymandering in Texas has already poisoned our democracy. It allows a racial minority of voters to cling to power in a state where the majority of residents are people of color. That is nothing short of disenfranchisement on a massive scale, an intentional manipulation of representation to silence the voices of millions.

The impact on our largest cities—San Antonio, Austin, Houston, and Dallas—has been devastating. These cities are

home to the majority of Texans, generate the lion’s share of the state’s tax revenue, and drive our cultural and economic vitality. Yet, because of gerrymandering, they are robbed of political influence in the very state they sustain. This is a cynical theft of power that treats the will of urban Texans as irrelevant, despite the fact that without these cities, the Texas economy would collapse.

Mid-decade redistricting is not governance—it is a hostile takeover of democracy. It is an abuse of power, an insult to our state’s voters, and a shameful example to the rest of the nation. The people of Texas deserve fair maps drawn in good faith, not partisan carve-ups designed to protect political insiders and silence the majority.

I urge—no, I demand—all Texans abandon this scheme and commit to ending the gerrymandering that has held Texas back for decades. Stop treating our democracy as a rigged game. The people are watching, and history will remember who stood for the right to vote and who stood in the way.

Joe Wood

Charter school finally opens

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Texas Education Agency and was named a 2023 National Blue Ribbon School.

Programs include bilingual and ESL instruction, college readiness initiatives, and a strong emphasis on math and reading proficiency.

A troubled path to opening

The school’s opening has been delayed for several years due to construction issues and legal troubles. In 2018, the original contractor abandoned the project over a payment dispute, leaving the building unfinished and prompting neighborhood complaints about the eyesore it had become.

Compounding the delays

was the indictment of former HGA superintendent Richard Garza, who pleaded guilty to embezzling more than \$250,000 in school funds. Garza awarded a no-bid contract to an IT vendor who funneled money back to him, which he used to purchase a luxury SUV and a condominium. He was sentenced to five years in federal prison and ordered to pay restitution to the Texas Education Agency.

During the investigation, the Texas Education Agency halted HGA’s expansion plans, including the Riverstone campus. With the legal matters resolved and construction completed, the school is now cleared to open.

Moving forward

The South Belt community, traditionally zoned primarily for Pasadena ISD schools, now has a new educational option. While some residents previously expressed frustration over the stalled project, others are hopeful that the new campus will bring academic opportunities.

For families seeking a high-performing, tuition-free alternative to traditional public schools, Elite College Prep Academy – Riverstone may be the fresh start they’ve been waiting for.

For additional information about the campus, visit www.hgaschools.org/apps/pages/riverstone-bid.

Elected officials share their words

Letter from Council Member Flickinger

Dear District E Residents,

I hope this newsletter finds you well as we gear up for the start of a new school year. With the start of the academic year, it’s essential to reorient ourselves with morning traffic congestion, school zones, speed limits, and a lot more walking and biking within our communities.

– 1. Back-to-School Safety Starts with Routine

Starting on the right foot is crucial in making the transition from summer to school. There is a lot of construction right now, and making sure you have enough time for delays in your morning routines is key to cutting down on morning stress.

– 2. Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety – Put those Phones Down

With the increased volume of children walking to and from school, it’s vital that you are focused on pedestrian and bicycle safety. Please make sure you are vigilant in checking your surroundings and stopping at the white stop bars located at crosswalks.

– 3. School Zones

School zones require heightened attention and adherence to specific traffic laws. We will remind you of the importance of obeying speed limits, watching out for school buses, and understanding crosswalk and signage rules.

– 4. Community Awareness

Building a strong sense of community is crucial in keeping our neighborhoods safe and secure. If you have never attended a Houston Police Department Positive Interaction Program (PIP) Meeting, our office highly encourages it as monthly crime statistics are presented

along with safety tips directly from our local HPD Patrol Officers.

HPD-Clear Lake Division PIP, Aug. 18 at 6 p.m. Third Monday of every month at Grace Church, 14505 Gulf Fwy.

We believe that by coming together as a community, we can make a significant difference in ensuring the safety of our children and communities. Wishing all of our schoolteachers, staff, and administrators a smooth start to this school year.

Finally, I want District E residents to save the date for upcoming town hall meetings in October.

Edgebrook: Tuesday, Oct. 21, from 5:30 to 8 p.m., at OneMovement Bible Church located at 10120 Hartsook Street Houston, Texas 77034.

Clear Lake: Tuesday, Oct. 14, from 5:30 to 8 p.m., at Space Center Houston located at 1601 E NASA Pkwy Houston, Texas 77058.

I have also extended invitations to several city departments, including Houston Public Works and Houston Parks and Recreation, as well as a range of community speakers and elected officials. In addition to various information tables for residents to peruse before the meetings begin. I look forward to everyone hearing these updates and addressing community questions, comments, and concerns. This is the perfect opportunity to engage with your community and have your questions answered. We hope you will join us. Please feel free to invite a neighbor, friend or colleague! Everyone is welcome to attend.

Sincerely,
Fred Flickinger

Mary Ellen Duchow Ngo



Mary Ellen Duchow Ngo returned home to heaven on Sunday, Aug. 3, 2025, after a brief but intense battle with kidney-related sepsis. She was 69 years old.

Born in Fond du Lac, Wis. on Sept. 20, 1955, Mary grew up in Chilton, Wis., where she lived on her parents’ dairy farm. Upon graduation from Hilbert High School in 1973, she attended the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point. After marrying Luke Ngo and having their first child in 1975, Mary moved to Houston in 1978, where she and her husband would have two more children, and where she remained until her death. She was a longtime resident of the South Belt area.

Mary is survived by her daughter, Jennifer Ngo Mohtashami (Vafa); sons David Ngo (Denise) and Jonathan Ngo; and grandchildren Bennett, Mia and Maisie Mohtashami. Mary is preceded in death by her former husband Luke Ngo, her parents Bennie and Esther Duchow, her aunt Frena Pagel and other family members.

Mary’s family held a celebration of life service on Sunday, Aug. 10, at Peevey Funeral and Cremation.

Charles David Bullard



Charles David Bullard, 73, of Houston, passed away on Thursday, July 24, 2025.

David was born on Feb. 11, 1952, in Freeport, to Tom and Millie Bullard. He was raised there, surrounded by family.

As a teenager, David and a close friend started a band that played at local functions. Weekend practices in the backyard often drew a crowd — foreshadowing the connection and joy he would go on to bring so many throughout his life.

After dating for three years, David married Donna Shotwell in December 1976. Shortly after, they joined Grace Memorial Baptist Church in Pasadena. David drove the church bus for many years, with Donna faithfully riding alongside him every Sunday. He also served as the song director, using his voice and heart to lead others in worship. David’s faith was central to his life. It’s clear that he sought to lead his own life with God’s guidance — and he did so with grace, humility and purpose.

On the morning of his passing, David awoke with shortness of breath and was taken to the hospital. Doctors suspected infection and possibly a blood clot. For the first time in eight months, he said he felt like he was in the right hands. After receiving medicine to ease his pain, he smiled and said, “I’m going to take a little nap.” Just twenty minutes later, he went into cardiac arrest and passed away — entering the arms of his savior, Jesus Christ.

Deaths

David was an entrepreneur with a lifelong passion for diving and community. He owned and operated his own diving company, 4 Seasons, and later worked for Ken Lee Gun and Dive. In 2002, David and Donna opened Dixie Deli, which quickly became a neighborhood favorite.

After Donna’s passing in 2021, the deli remained open — thanks to the loyalty and hard work of Cecy Garcia, Lulu Gallegos, Eva Reyes and Rick Fast — continuing to serve its beloved sandwiches and customers.

David’s love for diving and his deep friendship with Gary led them to open Texas Dive Center, right next to the deli. He also owned Texas Gun Center. For David, work was not just a profession — it was his joy, his ministry, and his way of staying connected to the people he cared about. David is survived by his siblings Lynn Bullard (Cindy), Tommy Bullard (Donna), Gary Bullard (Louise), Becky Bullard (Jim) and Susan Bullard Rodgers, as well as by many loving nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, and his parents, Tom and Millie Bullard.

David will be remembered for his many talents, his wit and warmth, and the deep love he had for his family, friends, community and God. He truly glorified God in all he did — and he will be missed beyond measure.

Funeral services were held on Thursday, July 31, at Forest Lawn Funeral Home.

Richard Alan Pennington



Richard Alan Pennington, beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother and uncle, passed away Aug. 3, 2025. He touched many lives with his kindness, strength and love. He was a caring and loving husband and father. He was also a loyal friend and neighbor to many.

Richard was 61, born on May 10, 1964, to Louis Eugene Pennington and Betty Marie Battin in Casper, Wyo. He was a devoted husband and best friend to Lisa Pecot Pennington for 37 years, a loving father to three children, and grandfather to seven grandchildren. He loved many and left a lasting impression on all.

Rick loved to travel. Mostly, he loved his family and loved spending time with them.

Rick is preceded in death by his parents, and his sister, Amy Pennington Dunn.

Rick is survived by his wife; sisters Deanna (Dede) Pennington and Christy Pennington; son Charles Strickland; daughters Myshel Smith (Cody) and Amanda Rowe (Scott); grandchildren Amber Strickland, Elizabeth Strickland, Morgan Smith, Sadie Smith, Noah Rowe, Benjamin Rowe, Samuel Rowe; and stepmother Cynthia Pennington. He is also survived by brothers-in-law Matthew Stocker (Teresa), Kenneth Pecot (Michelle Kubala) and Troy Pecot (Marivel Corvera); and sister-in-law Kerry Mohammadian (Kevin). He also leaves behind numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, as well as cherished friends.

Rick lived his younger life in Houston and moved to Casper, Wyo. when he was 12. He graduated from Kelly Walsh High School in Casper in 1982 and joined the United States Army in 1984. His deployment took him to Germany. When his tour of duty was over, he returned stateside and served the remainder of his service in Fort Hood. He received an honorable discharge and settled for a short time in the Houston South Belt area, where he met his wife Lisa. Shortly thereafter, they moved to Casper.

Rick started his career in Casper. After a while, he moved his family to Gillette, Wyo. and then to Fort Worth. He was a proficient computer programmer for Verizon in Fort Worth. Rick worked in the telecommunications industry with most of his career spent primarily in the Fort Worth area.

His love and legacy will live on in the hearts of all who loved him.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Ernesto “Rico” Medina



Ernesto “Rico” Medina, age 76, of Pearland, passed away on Aug. 7, 2025, after a short battle with cancer. Born on Nov. 4, 1948, in Houston at Methodist Hospital to Bennie and Catalina Medina, he was a graduate of Austin High School and San Jacinto College.

He proudly served his country in the U.S. Air Force stationed in Thailand and Vietnam during the war, where he worked with the K9 unit. Working in commercial HVAC for more than 35 years as an estimator and project manager, he was loved and well respected in his field.

He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Jackie Medina; daughters, Susanne and husband Fred Cook, Eva and husband Jacob Stewart, and Angela and husband Matthew Moore; grandchildren Matthew Ward and Nathan Ward, Preston Wright and Joseph Wright, Audrey Moore and Emmett Moore, and Julian and Taeko Ortiz and their children, Nina and Benjamin; great-grandchildren, Noah Ward and Jackson Ward; siblings and their spouses, Bennie and Elizabeth Medina, Josie and Cruz Gebara, Mary Lou Pham-Ky, Johnnie and Mary Jane Medina, Ricky and Sylvia Medina, Raymond Medina, and Manuel and Eve Medina; many nieces and nephews; and dear family friends.

Rico was a man of incredible faith, humor, integrity, kindness, generosity, and patience and left a lasting imprint on everyone that knew him. He loved to watch baseball (especially his Astros), play golf whenever he could and travel with his family. He shared these loves with his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, leaving a mark on all that will never fade.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and siblings Joe Lewis Medina, Jessie Medina, and Delores Almandarez.

The family finds comfort in knowing that he is with the father in heaven and that his legacy lives on through the lessons he taught, the love he shared, and the memories which will be cherished forever.

The funeral service will be held Thursday, August 14, at 11 a.m. with visitation one hour prior to the service at Peevey Funeral Home 12440 Beamer Road, Houston, TX. 77089.

Interment will follow at South Park Cemetery 1310 North Main St., Pearland, TX. 77581.

Master Gardeners set August meetings

The following meetings have been set for August by Master Gardeners:

Genoa Friendship Garden- Open Garden Day on Monday, Aug. 18, 8:30 to 11 a.m. Free tour of Genoa Friendship Gardens, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Road. Tour a variety of planting exhibits and meet and talk with Harris County Master Gardeners. Visit txmg.org/hemga.

Plants of the Bible by Harris County Master Gardeners on Tuesday, Aug. 19, 11 a.m. to noon. The cultural significance and spiritual meaning of plants in the Bible and similar ones which can be grown. Free virtual lecture hosted by Harris County Public Library via Facebook Live. No reservation required at facebook.com/harriscountyp/events.

AARP Webster sets meeting

AARP Chapter 199 is hosting a bus trip on Tuesday, Aug. 19. They will tour the Natural Museum of Funeral History. Lunch will be at Cracker Barrel. One may register for this trip at the Aug. 14 meeting. One must be a member of the chapter to participate in bus trips.

If one is interested in joining AARP Chapter 199, annual dues are \$8 per year per person. However, one must be a member of national AARP and show one’s current national membership card to join any local chapter. AARP chapters are separately incorporated affiliates of AARP. For more information, contact President Veronica Stanford at 409-256-1195 or at veronica_stfrd46@yahoo.

Local library events set

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

Bracewell Branch Library

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

Thursday, Aug. 14, 3 – 4 p.m. Open lab computer help. Registration required.
Thursday, Aug. 14, 4 – 5 p.m. Bring your family to storytime. Registration required.
Thursday, Aug. 14, 4 – 5:30 p.m. Weekly English language classes. Registration required.

Monday, Aug. 18, 11 a.m. – noon. Open lab computer help. Registration required.
Tuesday, Aug. 19, 4 – 5 p.m. Board games at the library. Register required.
Wednesday, Aug. 20, 6 – 7:30 p.m. Conversational English classes. Registration required.

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

Book drop

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

Parker Williams Library

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

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

The following events are scheduled for Parker Williams Library, 10851 Scarsdale Blvd.:

Thursday, Aug. 14, 10:15 – 10:45 a.m. Toddler time.
Friday, Aug. 15, 1 – 3 p.m. Genealogy.
Friday, Aug. 15, 3 – 5 p.m. Tech workshop: Libby and the HCPL app.
Saturday, Aug. 16, 10 a.m. – noon. Tai Chi.
Saturday, Aug. 16, 10 – 11:30 a.m. Embroidery class with Bibi.
Saturday, Aug. 16, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. Book2Movie Club.
Monday, Aug. 18, 1 – 2:30 p.m. ESL conversation club. Registration required.
Monday, Aug. 18, 4 – 6 p.m. Cricut orientation.
Tuesday, Aug. 19, 10:15 – 10:45 a.m. Babies’ n’ books.
Wednesday, Aug. 20, 10 – 11 a.m. Senior coloring club.
Wednesday, Aug. 20, 10:15 – 11:30 a.m. Personas que corren con libros, club de lectura.
Wednesday, Aug. 20, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Tai Chi.

Parker Williams “No-Contact Curbside Holds Pick-Up”
– After receiving notification that holds are ready for pickup, call 832-927-7870.
– Have a library card number and PIN handy.
– A pickup time and instructions will be given.
– Upon arriving, park in one of the two parking spots reserved for curbside holds.
– Be prepared to show a library card or other form of ID for verification.
Hours are Monday, 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Tuesday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Wednesday, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Thursday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Friday, 1 – 6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Visit <https://www.hcpl.net/branch/parker-williams-branch-library> for details.

Online services

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

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

South Belt-Ellington Leader

The Voice of Community-Minded People

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David Flickinger, owner



ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST
Catholic Church
Rev. Douglas J. Guthrie, Pastor
Rev. Antonio Cisneros, Parochial Vicar
11011 Hall Rd.
(between Beamer & Blackhawk)
www.stlukesatholic.com

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil	5:30 p.m.
Sunday	8 a.m. and 10 a.m.*
Sunday	1 p.m. Misa en Español*
Monday, Wednesday & Friday	9 a.m.
Tuesday & Thursday	7 p.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confessions)
Thursday 7:45 to 8:30 p.m. Saturday 4 to 5 p.m.

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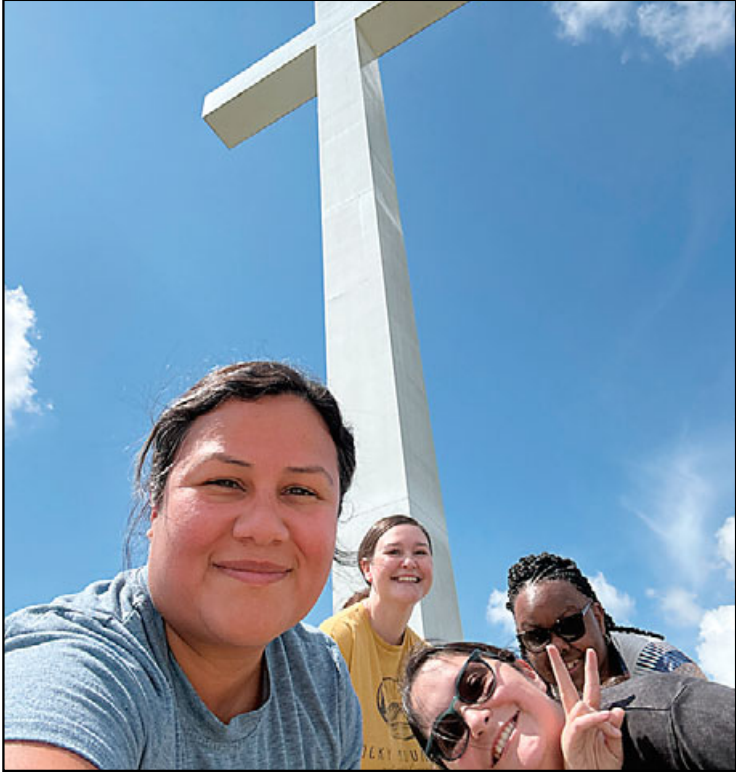

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BHI staff participates in a scavenger hunt activity



Visiting the *Leader* location, left to right, are (front row) Summer Thomoson, (back row) Johna Moreland, Shelly Tillman, Katherine Wood and Abraham Tristian.



Pictured at the Sagemont Church cross are, left to right, (front row) Yara Quntanilla, Berry Mejia, (back row) Melanie Thompson and Stephanie Davis.

Beverly Hills Intermediate School recently participated in a team-building scavenger hunt competing against Thompson Intermediate and had to take pictures of each location during the hunt, one of those locations being the *Leader* office.



Hunting at Dobie 9 are, left to right, (front row) Jesus Arzola, Jamika Lasker, Yesenia Lopez, (back row) Johnny Fernandez and Brandon Bryant.



Checking out H-E-B on Blackhawk Boulevard are, left to right, (front row) Melissa Garcia, Yesenia Ramirez, Lupita Batres, (back row) Jacqueline Resendez and Matthew Martinez.

Dobie FFA student places big in Neumann Classic Prospect Show



Dobie FFA student Luke Stacey was recently invited by his Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo sponsors to participate in the Neumann Classic Prospect Show, an event put on by East Chambers High School in Winnie. Stacey's sponsors are also agriculture teachers at Easy Chambers. Stacey placed first in class and won Reserve Grand Showman. Left to right, are Cameron McGhee (HLSR sponsor and agriculture teacher), Kaley McGhee (HLSR sponsor and agriculture teacher) and Stacey.

17 Pasadena ISD schools named healthiest in U.S.

National children's health organization Alliance for a Healthier Generation unveiled its 2025 list of America's Healthiest Schools, celebrating 1,120 K-12 schools nationwide for their commitment to advancing whole child health, including 17 schools from Pasadena ISD.

Supported by Del Monte Foods, Kaiser Permanente, and Kohl's Cares, Healthier Generation's annual award program recognizes schools for implementing evidence-based policies and practices to support academic success and lifelong well-being. Schools are recognized in nine health-related topic areas.

The following Pasadena ISD campuses were recognized for their commitment to health and wellness:

- Keller Middle School.
- Kruse Elementary School.
- Williams Elementary School.
- Fisher Elementary School.
- Genoa Elementary School.
- Meador Elementary School.
- Parks Elementary School.
- Red Bluff Elementary School.
- Vincent W. Miller Intermediate School.
- George A. Thompson Intermediate School.
- Gardens Elementary School.
- Bailey Elementary School. (All-Star Awardee)
- Harvey Turner Elementary School. (All-Star Awardee)
- L.F. Smith Elementary School. (All-Star Awardee)
- Sam Rayburn High School. (All-Star Awardee)
- Sparks Elementary School. (All-Star Awardee)
- Teague Elementary School. (All-Star Awardee)

Each of these campuses was awarded in one or more of the following categories: Strengthening Social-Emotional Health & Learning, Cultivating Staff Well-Being, Increasing Family & Community Engagement, Improving Nutrition & Food Access, Implementing Local School Wellness Policy, Bolstering Physical Education & Activity, Enriching Health Education, Promoting Tobacco-Free Schools, and Supporting School Health Services.

"Schools play a crucial role in positively shaping the health and well-being of our nation's youth, and they deserve national recognition for their outstanding efforts," said Kathy Higgins, CEO of Healthier Generation. "The dedication of school leaders, educators and staff to support the physical, emotional and academic needs of their students is nothing short of extraordinary. Their commitment is creating healthier futures for children and communities alike."

See the full list of recognized schools on Healthier Generation's website at www.healthiergeneration.org/take-action/schools/award.

SVFD responds to blaze



Firefighters with the Southeast Volunteer Fire Department responded to a house fire on Meadowway Drive in the Highland Meadows Village subdivision the afternoon of Sunday, Aug. 10. Investigators determined the blaze was started by an exhaust fan in the home's bathroom. Included in most modern homes, the fans are a common cause of house fires if not regularly cleaned, according to SVFD officials.

Photo by Cecelia Ganje

Pct. 2 stops leads to arrest



A routine traffic stop led to an arrest around 2 p.m. Monday, Aug. 11, at the Valeo station across the street from the *Leader* office in the 11500 block of Beamer at Beltway 8. According to officials with Harris County Precinct 2 Constable Jerry Garcia's office, it was learned by deputies upon making contact with the driver, that he had open warrants, for which he was subsequently taken into custody and placed in jail.

Photo by David Flickinger

County to hold flood meetings

Public meetings to be held virtually Aug. 19-20

Continued from Page 1

– **Tuesday, Aug. 19:** Meeting will be held via Zoom from 6 to 7 p.m.

– **Wednesday, Aug. 20:** Meeting will be held via Zoom from noon to 1 p.m.

A pair of in-person public meetings was held the previous week, but neither were located near the South Belt community.

About the SAFER Study

The SAFER Study will evaluate, identify and recommend solutions to reduce flood risk, with a focus on protecting communities and increasing resilience.

The multiyear initiative will explore a wide range of flood mitigation options and deliver data-driven, long-term strategies to protect communities across Harris County, and help lay the groundwork for securing partnership funding and implementing large-scale flood risk reduction projects in the future.

The study area includes the following watersheds: Brays Bayou, Buffalo Bayou, Clear Creek, Cypress Creek, Greens Bayou, Halls Bayou, Hunting Bayou, Little Cypress Creek, Sims Bayou, Vince Bayou and White Oak Bayou.

The goal of the SAFER Study is to deliver transformational, community-driven flood risk reduction solutions, in concert with other ongoing efforts, to position Harris County, its communities and its nationally significant resources to be more resilient to future flood events.

HCFCF officials emphasized the importance of public input.

"The SAFER Study is not just about infrastructure – it's about people, neighborhoods and the future of Harris County," said Emily Woodell, chief External Affairs officer for HCFCF. "We want to hear directly from the residents who experience flooding first-hand."

Unable to attend?

Residents unable to participate in the virtual meetings may still submit questions and comments in advance of the functions. The meeting will also be made available for view following the events.

For additional information on the county's SAFER study or to submit comments, visit theSAFER study.org.

Houston Health launches new dashboard to track extreme heat affect on Houston area health, illness

The Houston Health Department (HHD) launched the Houston Summer Surveillance dashboard developed by the Data Science program, the same team previously recognized for work related to the Houston Wastewater dashboard. The Houston Summer Surveillance dashboard is a publicly accessible tool that tracks how extreme heat affects public health and can inform health interventions for heat-related illnesses (HRI) and other health conditions worsened by heat.

"Extreme heat is becoming increasingly more common, and it is essential to formulate tools and strategies to keep our community safe," Dr. Loren Hopkins, chief environmental science

officer, said.

The interactive dashboard collects temperature and health data in the Houston area to compile them into visualizations, such as trends over time and location, demographic breakdowns and summaries. Data fed into the dashboard includes emergency visit data from HHD's in-house, syndromic surveillance system for healthcare facilities, located in the combined region of Harris, Fort Bend and Montgomery counties, and forecasted Heat Index data from the National Weather Service. As of Aug. 7, there have been 1,630 HRI emergency visits within the region since April 1, 2025.

"This dashboard is one segment of the work that the

HHD is conducting to understand the increase in risk of various health outcomes that the Houston community may experience due to extreme heat," Komal Sheth, a senior staff analyst, said. "The data displayed can highlight the populations most burdened by heat-related illnesses and identify hotspot areas or times of day when a cooling center may be most effective."

Users can then navigate the dashboard to see trends in emergency visit counts over time, such as by day of week and/or time of day, as well as spatial hot spots and by specific HRI, such as heat stroke, heat exhaustion, etc. Data can then be filtered through categories, such as age or racial groups, and update visualizations to

reflect those selections. The dashboard also shows emergency visits for other health conditions and vulnerable groups that are exacerbated by heat, such as acute kidney injury, pregnancy-related complications like preterm birth, acute cardiac events, stroke and more.

"HHD is currently developing an alert system that, when complete, will issue warnings on high heat days with reminders to stay safe and cool," said Hopkins.

Another feature includes summaries of how many HRI emergency visits have been documented overall this summer down to specific dates. Users can then compare data to past years. For example, there were 42 HRI emergency department visits reported on July 29,

2025 compared to 31 visits on the same day in 2024 and 21 visits in 2023. Data is updated every Wednesday at 2 a.m. from May through October.

"Because this dashboard is publicly accessible, researchers and organizations in the heat and climate sector, and even the general public if interested, who don't typically have access to this data can leverage the dashboard to understand the effects of heat on health," said Senior Staff Analyst Kaavya Domakonda.

For additional information on Houston Health's new dashboard, visit www.houstonhealth.org/houston-summer-surveillance-heat-related-illness-hri-heat-exacerbated-health-monitoring.

YOU'RE INVITED!

City of Houston's Clear Lake Area PIP Meeting

Partnering with the community for a safer Houston!

When: Monday, August 18, 2025 at 6 P.M.

Location: GRACE Church – Houston • 14505 Gulf Freeway • Classroom #103

WHY ATTEND?

- Learn about HPD programs and community initiatives
- Share your concerns and ideas • Meet neighbors and local officers
- Get involved in making a difference

For more information : C. Castillo at 832-395-1777

Let's build a stronger, safer community—together!

We look forward to seeing you there!

Mission Possible: PISD educators share their stories of purpose, passion, possibility

As the new school year begins, Pasadena ISD educators are embracing the districtwide theme “Mission Possible” with renewed energy and purpose. The first day back for teachers brought a wave of excitement, fresh ideas and heartfelt reunions as teachers returned to their classrooms, ready to

inspire their students. From libraries to math classrooms, these teachers and coaches are proving that with heart, resilience and vision, anything is possible. Teachers responded to questions which included personal motivation, inspiration, mission and goal aspirations.



Patricia Myers, Early College English teacher, Dobie 9 campus
What inspired your teaching philosophy? “I want to be the teacher I wish I’d had. As an ADHD/GT kid, I was bored and restless. I bring energy, movement, and tiny celebrations into the room—Huzzah!”
How do you embody Mission Possible? “I never set the ceiling for my students. I teach them to adopt a growth mindset and give them tools for success. I celebrate the struggle—it’s where we learn and grow.”
What lasting impact do you hope to make? “I tell my students: You may not remember everything I teach, but you’ll never forget how I made you feel.”



Carolina Miranda, first-year kindergarten teacher, South Belt Elementary
What motivated you to become a teacher? “My first-grade teacher, Ms. Bailey, was my inspiration. I’ll always remember her. And now I get to teach in the same district I grew up in—it’s a full-circle moment.”
How do you maintain a positive mindset as a new teacher? “I make sure I’m positive first so I can give that same energy to my students. Building one-on-one connections helps me make the most impact. When they’re struggling, I want to be the one who lifts them up.”
What brings you the most joy in teaching? “Being able to make an impact in students’ lives. I remember all my teachers, and now I get to be that person for someone else. Creating a warm, safe environment is everything.”



Allison Sutton, librarian, South Belt Elementary
What’s your mission as a librarian? “My goal is to make kids readers and help them love reading.” Sutton said. “I want the library to be an escape—a place that opens the door to the future. If you can’t read, everything else becomes harder.”
How do you make Mission Possible real for your students? “I give them steps—small ones for pre-K, bigger ones for fourth grade—so they feel successful,” she explained. “It might be hard, but it’s possible. Just try.”
What keeps you coming back year after year? “One of the best parts of my job is watching students grow over time,” Sutton said. “I get to see them every year, and I know where they started and where they’re headed. That continuity lets me build real relationships and help them reach new milestones.”



Heather Nielsen, ABLE 1 teacher, Thompson Intermediate
What drives your work in special education? “I love teaching SPED. I love working with my kids. They come with new challenges, and it’s great to see them become successful in such a short amount of time. Our goal is to make them more independent—because if they’re not independent, they cannot be successful in the real world.”
What inspired your transition from music to special education? “I started out teaching orchestra and had several SPED students in my program. Some of them had autism and were playing instruments. I saw how music gave them an outlet, and I realized I wanted to do more. That’s when I knew special education was where I belonged.”
What keeps you excited about teaching? “There’s something special about the first day—fresh faces, fresh ideas. Even putting on a new shirt makes it feel new. With any student, anything is possible. ‘Mission Possible’ should be the theme all year, every year.”



Thuy ‘Coach’ Nguyen, eighth-grade math teacher and coach, Thompson Intermediate
How did you transition from computer science to teaching? “Teaching wasn’t my original path—I majored in computer science. But after a life-changing event, I needed a stable career. I took a leap of faith, joined an alternative certification program, and dove in. I fell in love with it.”
What led you to coaching? “I’ve always been a tennis player. After my first year, I started coaching tennis, then volleyball and basketball. I went to my students’ games to support them and fell in love with the sports. I just said, ‘Let’s do it.’”
How do you bring Mission Possible into your classroom? “As a first-generation immigrant, I know what it’s like to feel stuck between expectations and personal dreams. I want my students to know it’s okay to find their own path. I’ve been there. I want to be the teacher who helps them believe in themselves.”

St. Luke Church parishioners take on pilgrimage



Parishioners from St. Luke Church embarked on a five-day pilgrimage, traversing the final 100 miles of the Camino de Santiago. Their journey began in Sarria, Spain, with a destination to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Each day presented them with new challenges as they navigated obstacles and enduring physical hardships. Despite the challenges, reaching the Cathedral brought the parishioners a deep sense of accomplishment and celebrated the journey with newfound friendships. The parishioners earned their official pilgrim’s passport, an emblem of devotion and perseverance. Left to right, are (front row) Monica Marin Ramos, (middle row) Otilia Pereira, Montse Ramos, Guadalupe Castillo, (back row) Juan Jose Ramos, Diana Cantu, Daniela Guardado, Coni Perez and Anisa Perez.

Photo by Monica Ramos

Mitchell launches Legislative campaign

Continued from Page 1

“I’ve dedicated my career to bringing good jobs and economic development to Southeast Texas,” said Mitchell. “And now, I’m running to ensure the Gulf Coast has a strong conservative voice in Austin who knows how to deliver results and protect our families and businesses from government overreach.”
A strong advocate for coastal protection, Mitchell was appointed by Gov. Greg Abbott to the Gulf Coast Protection District Board, where he works to safeguard lives, property and commerce from hurricanes and storm surge. He currently serves as the board’s vice president.
He has also served on the governor’s Aerospace and Aviation Advisory Committee and numerous regional boards in health care, education and economic policy. Locally, Mitchell served

on the boards of Clear Lake Regional Medical Center, UTMB Health System, the Manned Spaceflight Education Foundation and Communities in Schools, among others.
In 2022, Mitchell ran an unsuccessful campaign for Texas House District 11, finishing second in the Republican primary behind Middleton with 15 percent of the vote.
Mitchell’s tenure at BAHF, which began in 2001 and culminated in his Presidency in 2008, was marked by the following high-impact initiatives:
– **NASA advocacy:** Mitchell led efforts to restore funding for NASA’s human spaceflight program in 2010.
– **Flood protection:** Mitchell championed the Coastal Spine project to protect the Gulf Coast from hurricane storm surge.
– **Insurance reform:**

Mitchell played a key role in passing the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014.
– **Economic growth:** Mitchell spearheaded recruitment and retention strategies across aerospace healthcare, maritime, and chemical industries.
Mitchell joins a growing list of candidates vying for the open House District 129 seat.
At press time, Republican Scott Bowen and Democrat Doug Peterson had also filed to run in the race. A former Clear Creek ISD trustee, Bowen recently lost his re-election campaign in the school district to challenger Rebecca Lilley.
Bowen has gained the endorsements of Middleton and state Rep. Briscoe Cain. Meanwhile, Mitchell

boasts the support of several area mayors, including Pearland Mayor Kevin Cole; Friendswood Mayor Mike Foreman; Seabrook Mayor Jim Sweeney; former Seabrook Mayor Thom Kolupski; Taylor Lake Village Mayor Jon Keeney; former Morgans Point Mayor Michel Bechtel; and former Houston Mayor Pro-Tem Dave Martin.
Now residents of Pearland, Mitchell and his wife Joan are proud parents and grandparents and active members of their community.
The general election for Texas House District 129 will take place on Tuesday Nov. 4, 2025, with early voting beginning Oct. 20.
For additional information on Mitchell’s campaign, visit www.facebook.com/mitchell4texas.

Remember When

45 years ago (1980)

The Dobie High School Lariatettes hosted their third annual Muscular Dystrophy Kick-a-thon in the Astroarena over the weekend. What started out as a project for Dobie’s 80 drill team members three years before, had become a regionwide, 1,700-girl event. Pledges for the year totaled more than \$75,000.
At least six burglaries or attempted burglaries occurred in the South Belt area in the course of four days.
Officer Loti Brewer of the Harris County Sheriff’s Department’s south district patrol (including the South Belt area) was promoted to the rank of chief petty officer in the U.S. Naval Reserve. Brewer received the top rating of the three men chosen from 60 who qualified for the rank nationwide.
40 years ago (1985)
The Wings Over Houston air show, sponsored by the South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce, was set to be held at Ellington Field. The event would feature the Ghost Squadron of the Confederate Air Force, 100 vintage World War II aircraft and modern static military aircraft displays and jet fighter flybys. There was also to be a civilian aerobic act, including a wing-walking act.
Dobie High School Principal Frank Braden sent a memo to all faculty directors of extracurricular activities to be on the lookout for any type of hazing activities within the groups during the upcoming school year.
The Sageglen Community Association was in the process of “cracking down” on residents in Sageglen who had erected satellite dish antennae on their properties. It was said that the satellite antennae were violations of the deed restrictions in the subdivision and were a nuisance to most persons who lived there.
35 Years ago (1990)
Construction crews from Austin Bridge Company started putting together field offices for the extension of Beltway 8 from Interstate 45 to Beamer Road. The project was to have a 300-day completion schedule.
A benefit bake sale and car wash was planned by Kroger employees to help defray hospital costs for employee Erwin Whitney who had suffered a seizure the previous week and remained unconscious. Whitney formerly worked at the Target near Almeda Mall.
The South Belt Palominos baseball team won their first-ever world championship at the Palomino World Series in Greensboro, N.C.
30 years ago (1995)
The Clear Creek school district tallied 26,246 students on the fourth day of school, a 4 percent enrollment increase over the same day the previous year. Clear Brook High School enrollment jumped by 4.8 percent to 1,543.
Nearly 2,000 homes in the Sagemont subdivision began the city of Houston’s automated refuse collection program with only Thursday collections. In addition, a separate yard trimming pickup would be conducted each Monday.
Work was underway on the more than \$6 million, 900-space Park ‘N Ride facility being constructed behind the Sabo townhouses. The so-called Fuqua Park N Ride was expected to open the following spring.
South Belt area 4-year-old Pamela Ann Kinsel, the daughter of Bill and Margaret Kinsel, was selected Tiny Miss American Rodeo Queen in a competition in Galveston.
25 years ago (2000)
Three locals took part in national competition: Patricia Marie Alders, Miss Teen Houston; Nikki Williams, Miss Junior Teen Houston; and Angela Marie Hunter for Ms. Houston.
The Rev. Mark Butcher and the Freeway Baptist family celebrated the church’s 50th anniversary.
Jerry Speer was sworn onto the Pasadena Independent School District Board of Trustees.
After Kathleen Woodworth’s horse was killed by a train, the staff at the stables collected enough money to buy her a new one.
Sagemont Church opened Sagemont Centre for the Arts.
20 years ago (2005)
All three proposed schools for the South Belt which were to be open for the new school year were placed on hold by PISD. A demographic study revealed that student growth was far below projections.
Texas Gov. Rick Perry assigned 12 Remotely Piloted Vehicle Predator drones to Ellington Field. Not all RPVs would be physically stationed at Ellington, but they would be radio controlled from there.
CCISD accepted an interlocal agreement with the city of League City to ensure the completion of the district’s fourth high school. The campus would be located on Palomino Lane and was anticipated to be open for the 2007 school year.
The PISD board of trustees was seeking community input to develop a profile for the new superintendent of schools. The new superintendent would replace Dr. Rick Schneider, who had announced his upcoming retirement. Deputy superintendent Kirk Lewis was ultimately hired in April 2006 after trustees limited the search to PISD employees.
15 years ago (2010)
A 92-year-old woman who suffered from Alzheimer’s died after allegedly being sexually assaulted by a family friend at an apartment complex in the 1300 block of Redford near Edgebrook and the Gulf Freeway. Flora Ryan was found naked and unresponsive in her bathtub by her 28-year-old granddaughter, with whom she shared an apartment along with the elderly woman’s 60-year-old daughter and Dean Jerome Wood, a 50-year-old man the family took in about nine months earlier. Wood was charged with aggravated sexual assault of an elderly person.
10 years ago (2015)
The San Jacinto College Board of Trustees unanimously voted to call for a \$425 million bond referendum in the Nov. 2015 election. The funds would provide workforce training, make renovations and improve infrastructure. Nine buildings were renovated – most of which were more than 30 years old.
The measure easily passed, with 68 percent voting in favor of it.
5 years ago (2020)
Tuesday, Aug. 18, marked the start of the 2020-2021 academic year for Pasadena ISD. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the school district provided all instruction virtually until Sept. 8. At that time, students who selected face-to-face instruction returned to their home campuses, while the remainder of students continued to distance-learn until they felt comfortable enough to return to school.
1 year ago (2024)
Summer came to a close and South Belt students returned to class to begin the 2024-2025 school year. Dobie started the year with bang, being nominated a top school by U.S. News and World Report magazine.



Over The Back Fence by Nicole

SCHOOL DAZE

The following staff of the Pasadena Independent School District celebrate birthdays Aug. 14 through Aug. 20.
Burnett Elementary
Share in the birthday fun Aug. 17 with **Jennie Graham**. Send a happy birthday greeting to **Melisa Evans** Aug. 18.
Genoa Elementary
Give a birthday shoutout Aug. 17 to **Erika Gonzalez**. Sing a chorus of a birthday song Aug. 20 to **Parris Patrick**.
Hancock Elementary
Light the birthday candles for **Xochithl Baez** Aug. 20.
Meador Elementary
Send a birthday greeting to **Jennifer Chavez** Aug. 15. Celebrating a birthday Aug. 17 is **Tracie Nair**. Blow out the candles Aug. 19 for **Klarissa Trevino**.
Moore Elementary
Send a happy birthday greeting Aug. 18 to

Roxanne Carbajal.

South Belt Elementary
Aug. 17 is the day for a fun celebration for **Taylor Strickland**.
Stuchbery Elementary
Celebrating a special birthday Aug. 19 is **Lorena Padilla**.
Thompson Intermediate
On Aug. 15, light the birthday candles for **Daniel Sawyer**. Happy birthday wishes are sent Aug. 17 to **James MacGregor**. Give a birthday shoutout Aug. 18 to **Serenity Garcia**. Aug. 19 is the day for a party for **Lorissa Kearbey** and **Ana Perez**.
Dobie High
Best wishes for a wonderful birthday Aug. 16 are sent to **Lesley Sanchez**. The day for **Emma Hernandez** and **Jacquelyn Reyes** to celebrate with ice cream and a double-layer birthday cake is Aug. 17.
FRIENDS CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS
Thursday, Aug. 14: **Roger Woest, Connie**

Alberti, Richard Golenko and Pete Ortiz; Friday, Aug. 15: **Janna Hips and Hector Pombo;** Saturday, Aug. 16: **Nicole Love, Brandon Gray, Larry Bozka, Cynthia Weaver, Brandon Gray, Yvonne Molina and Irl Ellis;** Sunday, Aug. 17: **Denise Motezuma, Linda Rodriguez, Michelle Brovey and Paulo Espinoza,** Monday, Aug. 18: **Marty Gomez, Cathy Shipley, Shametta Benson, Corina Lopez, Jo Anne Muse, Vita Bernal, Annette Barrientos and Chris Cook;** Tuesday, Aug. 19: **Robert Mireles, Nathan Nguyen, Pamela Walters, Jody Urschel-Oun, Shandy Lecourias, Pamela McDonald and Derrick Pyper;** and Wednesday, Aug. 20: **Rachel McClure, Claire Speck, Raymond Jackson and Todd Nathans.**
LEADER WANTS YOU IN THE NEWS
Email anniversary, vacation and information on other events to mynews@southbeltleader.com with OTBF in the subject line by Friday noon for the next week’s issue.

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11/04

Lexie set to lead Lamar VB



Lexi Gonzalez and her Lamar University women’s volleyball teammates will begin the regular season in DeLand, Fla. as the Cardinals take part in the Stetson Hatter Invitational August 29-30 while going against Northern Illinois and Stetson. Gonzalez, a Class of 2024 Dobie graduate, played in all 29 matches for Lamar a season ago and was twice named the Southland Conference Center of the Week on her way to 857 assists for the season.

Pearland Track Xpress 17-18 4x400 places fifth nationally at JOs



The Pearlman Track Xpress summer track and field program delivered an exceptional performance at the season-ending Amateur Athletic Union Junior Olympic Games earlier this month at Turner Stadium in Humble. As part of that effort, the boys’ 15-16 4x400 meter relay team finished fifth nationally with a time of 3 minutes, 18.25 seconds in the event. The Pearlman group included, left to right, coaches Edmond Ewing and Angel Thomas, Zed Thomas, Adam Abiola, Deshawn Singleton, Kevin Jackson II and coaches Elbert Sharp and Cedric Lilly.

Melillo musicians help 11-under Arrietta Elite win championship ring; Ortega named Most Valuable Player



Melillo Middle School student Braylin Ortega put together a terrific two-way performance with three home runs and 12 strikeouts across a couple of appearances as he led the 11-under Arrietta Elite AAA select baseball team to a gold medal at the Perfect Game Bayou World Series in Lake Charles, La. earlier this summer.



Four Melillo Middle School band/orchestra members, Braylin Ortega (honor’s band – percussion), Alexander Gordon (band – euphonium), Evan Rodriguez (band – percussion) and Robin Castillo (orchestra – violin) traded in their musical instruments for baseball gloves and bats this summer as they helped the 11-under Arrietta Elite AAA select team to a championship ring at the Perfect Game Bayou World Series. Facing off against four different teams across seven intense games, Arrietta Elite emerged as tournament champions, earning the coveted championship ring. Ortega slugged three home runs and also collected 12 strikeouts on the hill in the event on his way to tournament Most Valuable Player accolades, and Gordon and Gage Trevino also went deep once each. Members of the team are, left to right, coach Ruben Castillo, Hector Perez, Robin Castillo, Angel Arrieta, coach Hector Arrieta, Trevino, Dylan Valdez, Gordon, Rodriguez, Ortega, Andrew Araujo, Cash Reutzel, Juan Trujillo, R.J. Martinez and coach Ricardo Valdez.

Pleasants named assistant at LSU



Former Louisiana State University and 2021 NFCA All-American shortstop Taylor Pleasants has been named a full-time assistant coach for the LSU softball program after serving as the graduate assistant coach last season. A four-time NFCA All-Region selection and three-time All-SEC honoree, Pleasants coached from first base and worked primarily with the infielders during the 2025 season. A standout throughout her collegiate career (2020-2025), Pleasants finished as LSU’s all-time leader in double plays turned (59) and ranked No. 2 in career assists (520). Offensively, she ranks No. 3 in program history with 217 career RBIs and No. 4 with 47 home runs. Professionally, Pleasants has played two seasons with the Florida Vibe (2024-2025) and has represented Team USA, helping the Eagles capture gold medals at the 2022 World Games and the 2022 Canada Cup. A four-year varsity softball standout at Dobie High School, Pleasants put together a career that ranks her as the greatest offensive player in program history.

JFD JV White Football

Aug. 28 North Shore 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 3 Klein 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 11 *at Dawson 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 25 *Memorial 4:30 p.m.
Oct.1 *at Shadow Creek 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 9 *Pearland 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 16 *Iowa Colony 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 23 Tomas 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 29 *at Alvin 4:30 p.m.
Nov. 6 *Manvel 4:30 p.m.
*District 22-6A game

JFD Fresh. White Football

Aug. 28 TBA 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 3 Klein 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 11 *Dawson 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 25 *at Memorial 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 1 *Shadow Creek 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 9 *at Pearland 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 16 *Iowa Colony 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 23 at Tomas 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 29 *Alvin 4:30 p.m.
Nov. 6 *at Manvel 4:30 p.m.
*District 22-6A game

Brook JV Football

Aug. 28 at Dobie 5:30 p.m.
Sept. 4 at Eisenhower 5:30 p.m.
Sept. 10 G.C. Memorial 5:30 p.m.
Sept. 18 *Clear Springs 5:30 p.m.
Sept. 25 *at Dickinson 6 p.m.
Oct. 2 *Deer Park 5:30 p.m.
Oct. 15 *at Clear Creek 5:30 p.m.
Oct. 23 *Clear Falls 5:30 p.m.
Oct. 30 *Clear Lake 5:30 p.m.
Nov. 6 *at Brazoswood 6 p.m.
*District 24-6A game

JFD JV Orange Football

Aug. 28 Clear Brook 5:30 p.m.
Sept. 3 Klein 6 p.m.
Sept. 11 *at Dawson 6 p.m.
Sept. 25 *Memorial 6 p.m.
Oct.1 *at Shadow Creek 6 p.m.
Oct. 9 *Pearland 6 p.m.
Oct. 16 *S. Houston 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 23 Rayburn 5 p.m.
Oct. 29 *at Alvin 6 p.m.
Nov. 6 *Manvel 6 p.m.
*District 22-6A game

JFD Fresh. Orange Football

Aug. 28 North Shore 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 3 Klein 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 11 *Dawson 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 25 *Memorial 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 1 *at Shadow Creek 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 9 *Pearland 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 16 *Iowa Colony 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 23 Tomas 4:30 p.m.
Oct. 29 *at Alvin 4:30 p.m.
Nov. 6 *Manvel 4:30 p.m.
*District 22-6A game

Brook Freshman Football

Aug. 28 Dobie 5:30 p.m.
Sept. 4 Eisenhower 5:30 p.m.
Sept. 10 at G.C. Memorial 5:30 p.m.
Sept. 18 *at Clear Springs 5:30 p.m.
Sept. 25 *Dickinson 6 p.m.
Oct. 2 *at Deer Park 5:30 p.m.
Oct. 15 *Clear Creek 5:30 p.m.
Oct. 23 *at Clear Falls 5:30 p.m.
Oct. 30 *at Clear Lake 5:30 p.m.
Nov. 6 *Brazoswood 6 p.m.
*District 24-6A game

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Sponsor (7.5" x 2.5")	\$1,500	\$1,700
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CALENDAR

THURSDAY, AUGUST 14
7 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill," Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., and Saturday at 7:30 a.m. Hope Community United Methodist Church, 2838 Lily St. Call 713-686-6300 (24/7) or visit https://aahouston.org/meetings/.
7:30 a.m. **Rotary Club of Pearland** - Check website for time and location https://pearlandrotary.com/events/calendar or call 832-293-9860.
9 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** - Exhibits include dioramas, a turn-of-the-century doctor's office and an old-time kitchen. Open Tues. - Sat., 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., 204 S. Main, Pasadena. Call Karen Hollon at 713-472-0565 for appointment. Tours 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
FRIDAY, AUGUST 15
7:30 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.
7 p.m. **NA - Vigilance Group of NA**, open meeting, 2930 E. FM 518, Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). For details, call 713-661-4200 or visit www.hascona.com or https://nastuff.com/.
7 p.m. **Congregation Shaar Hashalom** - All services are live and on Zoom. For details regarding services or Judaism classes, visit https://www.shaarhashalom.org.
8 p.m. **Serenity Now Al-Anon Group** - meets at CrossRoads UMC 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. Family members and friends of problem drinkers/addicts share and discover choices available. Call 281-484-9243.
8 p.m. **Beverly Hills Sharers Group AA** - meets at CrossRoads UMC, 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. Call 281-484-9243.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group, 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 https://nastuff.com/. Meets Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.
SATURDAY, AUGUST 16
7:30 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.
9 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** - See Thursday's notice.
9:30 a.m. **Congregation Shaar Hashalom** - All services are live and on Zoom online. For details on the 7 p.m. Friday night or the 9:30 a.m. Saturday service, Judaism classes, film series, and lunch with the rabbi, visit https://www.shaarhashalom.org.
SUNDAY, AUGUST 17
5:30 p.m. **Celebrate Recovery** - A faith-based 12-Step program, in the Life Kids Chapel at Life Church, 5125 Preston Ave. Pasadena, TX 77505. Call 713-419-2635 for details.

8 p.m. **Alcoholics Anonymous** - See Friday's notice.
8 p.m. **Beverly Hills Sharers Group AA** - meets at CrossRoads UMC, 10030 Scarsdale Blvd. Call 281-484-9243.
MONDAY, AUGUST 18
5 p.m. - **New Directions Singles Social Group** is a singles group for those 55+. Meetings are the first and third Monday held in the community room at Maplewood Crossing, 600 Hobbs Road, League City. There will a potluck dinner and may include group activities. For further information, call Carol at 281-508-1663. See Facebook page: New Directions Singles Social Group.
6 p.m. **Scrabble Club #511** - Meets Monday at IHOP, 11222 Fuqua. Join the fun and improve crossword skills. COVID-19 vaccination required. Email huff_reunion@juno.com for info.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group, open meeting, 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). See Friday's notice.
6 p.m. **Scrabble Club #511** - Meets Monday at IHOP, 11222 Fuqua. Join the fun and improve crossword skills. COVID-19 vaccination required. Email huff_reunion@juno.com for info.
7 p.m. **TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)** - #0683 Friendswood chapter meets at Friendswood Methodist Church, 110 N. Friendswood Dr. in the educational bldg., room 201. For information, call Lynette Ringrose at 832-858-4617 or Dorothy Pourteau at 713-875-8820.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group, open meeting, 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). See Friday's notice.
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - St. Luke's 12-Step Recovery, open meeting Mondays, in the Education Bldg. in room 4, 11011 Hall Rd. For details, call Jesse at 832-725-8479 or Rita at 281-309-2801.
TUESDAY, AUGUST 19
7 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.
Noon **Ballroom Dancing** - A ballroom dance group welcomes visitors every Wednesday to enjoy free dancing from noon to 3 p.m. at Hometown Heroes Park Ballroom, 1001 East League City Parkway, League City. Everyone is welcome to enjoy dancing to a selection of CD music provided by DJ Neva Schroder and guest DJs. This weekly dance does not include lessons. Free lessons are taught by Jerry Sanford at the same location on Mondays from 1:30 to 3 p.m. While these opportunities are free and provided by volunteers, the park system requires participants to register and get an activity card for all park activities. For more information about the activity card, ask at the front desk or call 281-554-1180.
5 p.m. - **New Directions Singles Social Group** is a singles group for those 55+.

Meetings are the first and third Monday held in the community room at Maplewood Crossing, 600 Hobbs Road, League City. There will a potluck dinner and may include group activities. For further information, call Carol at 281-508-1663. See their Facebook page: New Directions Singles Social Group.
6 p.m. **Scrabble Club #511** - Meets Monday at IHOP, 11222 Fuqua. Join the fun and improve crossword skills. COVID-19 vaccination required. Email huff_reunion@juno.com for info.
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Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - St. Luke's 12-Step Recovery, open meeting Mondays, in the Education Bldg. in room 4, 11011 Hall Rd. For details, call Jesse at 832-725-8479 or Rita at 281-309-2801.
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20
7 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill." See Thursday's notice.
9 a.m. **Pasadena Heritage Park and Museum** - See Thursday's notice.
11:30 a.m. **St. Paul's Anglican Church** - See Sunday's notice.
6:30 - 7:30 p.m. **Southeast Houston Toastmasters** - The Southeast Houston Toastmasters Club #05324194 meets virtually with the exception of the second and fourth Tuesdays (hybrid meeting) at sehouston.toastmastersclubs.org. In-person address 10500 Scarsdale Blvd. (SB Chamber of Commerce). Visit the website or call Karen Nunn at 832-722-9061 for information.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Vigilance Group, open meeting, 2930 E. Broadway (FM 518), Pearland, First Presbyterian Church (youth building). See Friday's notice.
THURSDAY, AUGUST 21
7 a.m. **AA Meeting** - "Breakfast With Bill," Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m., and Saturday at 7:30 a.m. Hope Community United Methodist Church, 2838 Lily St. Call 713-686-6300 (24/7) or visit https://aahouston.org/meetings/.
7:30 a.m. **Rotary Club of Pearland** - Check website for time and location https://pearlandrotary.com/events/calendar or call 832-293-9860.
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Clayton Washington (8) should be a vital part of the the Dobie defensive backfield this season as the Longhorns have reloaded the back end of the defense in anticipation of slowing down the top passing offenses in the district.



Cameron Robertson (64) returns to help anchor a Longhorn offensive line that should be one of the top groups in the district with several veteran starters, including Robertson, returning up front.

Photos by Gloria Wallace

At right, Adrian Taylor (9) was elevated to the Dobie varsity level as a freshman and played in the defensive backfield for the Longhorns but will now make the shift to the offensive backfield as he lends his skill set to a group that figures to get plenty of action as Dobie features their run-heavy offense for 2025. Dobie began preseason workouts Aug. 11 and will head to La Porte ISD's new Bulldog Stadium for a series of scrimmages Aug. 21 against a Bulldog squad that has designs on making a run at the state championship in 5A. As for the Longhorns, they will go against La Porte and then focus their attention on the regular season opener Aug. 29 against Clear Brook at Clear Creek ISD's Veterans Memorial Stadium in League City.



Alyssa Espinoza (1) was a solid contributor to the Dobie varsity girls' volleyball team a season ago, and now she and her teammates are off to a 1-0 start after defeating Baytown Sterling at home Aug. 12 to open the regular season. Espinoza, now a team captain as a junior, will lead the Longhorns Aug. 15 at Goose Creek Memorial. Of note, the Dobie program scored a sweep over the Rangers with victories at all three levels on opening night.

Photo by Gloria Wallace

Dobie volleyball to play Gator invite

The Clear Brook varsity volleyball program will once again face a big opening-week challenge at the Turner Invitational Aug. 14-16 (see Page 5), and both the Wolverines and Dobie will be in action at the same event in week two.

Clear Brook and Dobie will be part of a 32-team field at the Dickinson Invitational Aug. 21 and Aug. 23 that will also include Alief Elsik, Angleton, Galveston Ball, Baytown Lee, Bellaire, Brazoswood, Clear Falls, Clear Lake, Crosby, Dickinson, Dulles, Elkins,

Foster, Friendswood, Galena Park, George Ranch, Goose Creek Memorial, Houston Lamar, La Porte, Longview, Manvel, Nederland, Needville, North Shore, Pasadena Memorial, Pearland, Santa Fe, Shad-ow Creek, St. John's and Baytown Sterling.

Dobie football looks forward to 2025

Continued from Page 5
stands within the front seven on the defensive side, and the secondary will be able to lean on Desmond Talib, among others.

In terms of offensive production, or for that matter statistics on the defensive side of things, the Longhorns will not have a long list of proven performers outside of, for instance, Hodges.

But all rosters turn over at some point in any given season, and Fitzmorris is excited about not only 2025 but 2026 as well as the seasons beyond. In his mind, the foundation has been set within the program, and there is plenty of reason to believe that the Longhorns can and will have a great amount of success not only this season but for those to come.

"We understand the tradition of Dobie football as a coaching staff and hold it to a high regard," Fitzmorris said. "We have a great group of seniors. I have expressed to them that this is their football program.

"Yes we are the coaches, but this is their program. At the end of the day, it's the players who are out there making plays to decide the outcome of games. I have really given our senior group the responsibility of leading the way for not only 2025 but showing the way for some of the younger groups as we look to the future."

"Building a foundation is very important in every program, and we feel like

we have done that here at Dobie," a season ago, a Longhorns needed that victory over Manvel by a margin of 17 or more points just to qualify for the postseason. they did so, but hope not to have to cut things so close this go around. The process toward that final game in November has begun now, and the locals are very confident that they have what it takes to get back to the postseason.

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