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SPORTS | PAGE 9

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THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2021

KATY AREA

Nehls talks recidivism prevention, drainage and transportation

BY R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

Freshman Republican Congressman Troy Nehls (R-Richmond) of Texas' U.S. House District 22 spoke at two separate events at Perry's Steakhouse in LaCenterra hosted by the Fulshear Katy Area Chamber of Commerce and the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce on July 7 and 8, respectively. During his talk, he spoke about frustrating partisanship, mobility, support for drainage projects and reducing recidivism in prison populations.

"We're working hard – very, very hard," Nehls said. "But this is what I'm going to say. People sent me up there to try to get something done. To try to do something. It's so broken. There is no bipartisanship, or very, very low (bipartisan effort)."

However, Nehls said there have been some opportunities for bipartisan efforts. One such instance is the Second Chance Opportunity for Re-Entry Education – or SCORE Act. The bill, House Resolution 3529, currently has 11 Republican sponsors and six Democratic sponsors in the U.S. House.

Nehls said the idea behind the SCORE Act is to take a successful program he'd instituted as sheriff of Fort Bend County and provide educational opportunities to non-violent offenders. This provides those prisoners with skills they need to get living-wage jobs in fields such as HVAC and welding, he said. The Fort Bend program was operated in conjunction with Wharton County Junior College, Nehls said.

If passed and signed by President Joe Biden, whom Nehls said has expressed support for the bill, the SCORE Act would authorize the Department of Justice to create a grant program for eligible county jails to establish career and technical training programs across the country.

According to the text of HR 3529, jails with a population of 500 or more inmates or multiple counties working together with that number of inmates or more may submit applications to the

See **NEHLS**, page 3

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CITY OF KATY

Council approves traffic plan, promotes asst. city admin

BY R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

During Katy City Council's first in-person meeting since early 2020, council members approved the promotion of City Planner Anas Garfaoui to assistant city administrator as well as an ordinance establishing new truck routes in the city to reduce accidents and wear and tear on city roadways.

"On the ordinance implementation, it will be effective upon (council's) approval," Garfaoui said. "There will be a notification period. We'll be sending out notices to the trucking companies and that will give staff ample time to order and install the signs

(designating the routes). During that time, we will also remove the existing signage that's in place where it doesn't apply and the ordinance will become enforceable Oct. 1, 2021."

Katy Police Chief Noe Diaz said he would have his staff visit trucking companies in the area that are known to use the roads such as Avenue D, Katy Hockley, Morton and Clay roads to distribute flyers explaining the new rules and to answer any questions the transportation companies may have regarding the routes and enforcement.

Council members noted that accidents at intersections in the northern portion of the city

See **CITY**, page 3



R. HANS MILLER

Katy Municipal Court Judge Jeffrey Brashear administers the oath of office to newly-appointed Katy Assistant City Administrator Anas Garfaoui while council members observe during Katy City Council's July 12 meeting. Garfaoui has been with the city for nearly nine years.

CONSUMER AWARENESS



R. HANS MILLER

Reggie Chisholm said the pathway above was created by equipment used by a contractor he'd hired to remove a tree, resulting in damage to his yard. Chisholm also claims that while the contractor was there, the company damaged his fence and a utility cover.

Local resident's story good example of need for contractor caution

BY R. HANS MILLER
NEWS EDITOR

Katy area resident Reggie Chisholm has been trying to get contractors to come back to his property and repair damage to his yard and fencing for months now, he said. Since then, the contractor has gone silent, he said.

Chisholm had originally hired a tree stump grinding company run by German Serrano to remove a tree from his yard in early May. Once the work was completed, Chisholm found several deep ruts in his yard caused by Serrano's equipment as well as damage to an iron utility access cover and damaged fence in the small horse pasture on his property.

"I looked and I said, 'Well, I'll be damned. They dropped something else on the fence, never told me, broke the barbed wire,'" Chisholm said. "This is what they did, when they put it all back together, it was all wrapped up because it took the insulators (for the electric line on the fence) off and everything else."

Chisholm said the fence only had a slap-dash repair made to it so that the damage wasn't as noticeable and he had to make a temporary repair to it himself.

Chisholm then contacted Martin Serrano, who was working for German Serrano at the time and pointed out the issue. Martin, who said in a brief statement that he is no longer working with German, said a crew would come out and bring dirt to repair the ruts in Chisholm's yard and would make repairs to the

fence.

Since that time, Chisholm said, he hasn't been able to get anyone to assist him with the damage to his property. Repeated calls to German's phone number have gone unanswered or the person that picks up the phone says they do not speak English, Chisholm said.

The Katy Times has reached out to both German Serrano and Martin Serrano multiple times. Martin said he has ceased working with German and declined to comment further regarding the situation. After multiple calls, an employee of German's called back and said someone would be sent to Chisholm's home on July 14 to look into the situation. However, Chisholm has said he'd gotten similar responses before then.

As the Katy area continues with repairs from Winter Storm Uri and with home improvement projects throughout the summer, there are several tips for choosing contractors provided by the Better Business Bureau and ConsumerAffairs.com that area residents should keep in mind when hiring a contractor:

- **Ask for recommendations:** Reach out to friends and colleagues to get suggestions on which company to hire for the project. When reviewing recommendations, look at the work performed for the person recommending the company and ask about any problems and the associated resolutions, if any.
- **Compare portfolios:** Look at the work done by each of the

See **CONTRACTOR**, page 3

ROYAL ISD

Innovating education: Looking back at the year of COVID-19 at RISD

BY SAMANTHA LOPEZ
EDITORIAL INTERN

COVID-19 has had a great impact on schools around the Katy area by causing stress to students and teachers due to virtual classes throughout much of the school year.

Katy area school districts had to move to virtual learning programs wherein each student received an electronic device from the school to attend classes. Royal ISD had smart buses with WiFi throughout the district to provide remote learning materials and safe, filtered digital access to educational content and resources.

Many learners felt stressed by virtual learning, RISD teachers said. They found it hard to keep up with the homework and deadlines since they weren't accustomed to doing everything remotely.

"I had to learn how to juggle my education, home chores and extracurriculars," Royal Early College High School senior Alondra Melendez said. "It was really hard to keep concentration since I spent about eight hours per day behind a screen. It was also hard to communicate with my professors since you never knew if they received your email and when they did, it was already too late to ask for assistance."

Another challenge was having to sit at a computer every day and not be able to communicate with friends and teachers as you would during a normal, in-person school year, RISD students said. This made it easier for students to lose focus and do other things that did entertain them, which some said caused them to fail classes.

"I felt isolated from society by having to be stuck inside all day with workload after workload with no break. Since I no longer wanted to do my homework or classwork, I wanted to focus on things that did make me happy such as playing video games or FaceTiming my friends." Royal ECHS senior Alexis Ibarra said.

Teachers also struggled during the virtual learning break, they said. It was difficult to keep up with each student since many learners didn't email or send messages to instructors when they needed help. Educators had no idea what was going on, so they had no way of knowing how often to email a student or when to let them be responsible for their work.

"I remember when virtual learning began in Royal and I was not too excited about this decision, since I knew many students would turn in uncompleted tasks," Royal ECHS English Professor Alejandro Dubois said. "This made it harder for me to keep up with everyone, especially since I had new students for which I (did) not know their pace on the workload."



R. HANS MILLER

Royal High School spent a lot of time preparing for any issues that COVID-19 brought upon the 2020-21 school year in order to make sure that students were always in touch. Still, challenges persisted as a year of remote and hybrid in-person and remote learning unfolded.

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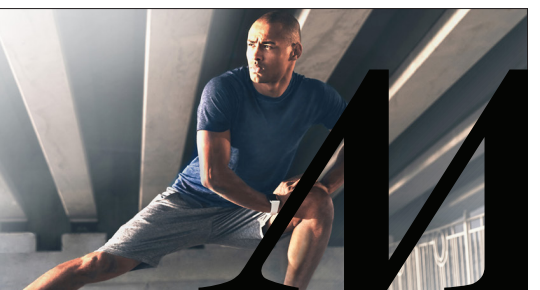
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Angelique: Local performer pushes for success

BY NITYA HOSUR
EDITORIAL INTERN

Angelique is a native Katy singer who works in all sorts of music genres. She draws inspiration from a variety of singers to incorporate into her songs and enjoys expressing herself through her music. She is currently working on producing and recording her own album.

Angelique, who performs only under her first name, said she was exposed to music at a very young age. Her father was a musician and attorney, and she grew up in a household where the entire family would gather around and sing to their hearts' content. Angelique first found her calling when the "Hannah Montana" show was released, she said. At that point, she knew she wanted to make singing her career and follow her passion. Both of her parents were very supportive and enrolled her into a singing and dance classes. At 13 years old, she released her first single, "Come Back to You." Although Angelique did not take choir in middle school, coming into high school, she began putting more effort into her school's dance and choir as preparation for her future.

Angelique said that, while her parents supported her, she was her greatest deterrent. She constantly battled thoughts on her self-image, if she was good enough, and often wondered, "what makes me special?" She tried not to rely on others for help, she said. In the end, however, her parents were the ones who pull her out of her self-spiral

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when she can't. Most of the time, Angelique focuses on believing in herself and her abilities and by looking at what she has accomplished, how far she has come and what she has overcome on her journey as a performer.

Angelique said she draws inspiration from a variety of singers and enjoys trying multiple genres of music rather than sticking to a specific style. Inspirations include Miley Cyrus, Queen, Journey, Adam Lambert, and multiple Disney stars from the early 2000s. One of Angelique's biggest influences was Selena Quintanilla, and as a Mexican-American, Angelique related heavily with Selena. Although Selena did not grow up speaking Spanish, Angelique did, and seeing Selena perform in Spanish made Angelique think, "If she can do it, I can do it too."

During the pandemic, Angelique focused her attention on social media platforms to connect to her fans for support, she said. She also took a break from performing and focused on school. She finished bachelors degree in English at St. Mary's University in San Antonio along with a minor in Spanish. Following the path of her father, she also

began working at a law firm after her performance jobs shut down with aspirations of becoming a lawyer. She still works at the firm during the day and is steadfast in pursuing her dream of being both a singer and an attorney, she said.

Angelique is also working on her first album and wishes to produce it under AmericaStar Entertainment, a professional entertainment company owned by her and her family. She is hoping to have it out by the end of the year, but there is a possibility that it might be delayed due to production time. Its release date will be announced on Angelique's social media platforms.

Angelique said she encourages aspiring musicians to follow their dreams and work to reach them. She also advised new performers to overlook anyone trying to dissuade them. She has worked hard and continues to do so to affirm that her dreams come to fruition, and it has paid off, she said. She now performs live shows all over the Katy area and is in the process of professionally producing her own original album. If

you believe in your goals, the sky's the limit, she said.

"You can have all the talent in the world, and you can have the best publishers and everything, but if you don't believe in yourself, you're never going to go as far as you could," Angelique said.



PHOTOS COURTESY ANGELIQUE/AMERICASTAR ENTERTAINMENT

Katy area musician Angelique has been performing since she was a young teen. She recently performed the National Anthem at Fulshear Freedom Fest and performs regularly throughout the area. She is also working at a law firm and planning on pursuing a legal degree. Her performances include appearances at Texas Borders Bar & Grill, Agave Rio and Post Oak Grill.



A PROGRAM OF THE KATY AREA CHAMBER

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8:30 AM Registration
Visit Business Booths

9:00 AM Business and Legislative Update
Glenn Hamer, President/CEO
Texas Association of Business

10:00 AM Visit Business Booths

10:30 AM Breakout Sessions Begin

Breakout A
What's New with COVID Relief?
Tim Jeffcoat, District Director
US Small Business Administration Houston

Breakout B
Cybersecurity: Protect Your Business
Tom Hicks, Owner
Keel Technology Solutions

11:15 AM Visit Business Booths

12:00 PM Business is Different. Let's Move Forward.
Liz Lara Cerrano, Marketing & Outreach
Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses

1:00 PM Visit Business Booths

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SUDOKU

			6		5			
		2		9	8	1	6	
	5		3					
			4		1	5		2
2					9	8		
		9		3			7	
	1							
	8	3						9
					6		4	

Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers
Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test.

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CLUES ACROSS

1. Sr. enlisted Army member
4. Payroll firm
7. Monetary unit of Macao
10. Cooking vessel
11. Cow sound
12. Hairpiece
13. Spoon-shaped surgical instrument
15. Mother
16. Remove from record
19. Foolish
21. Mailman
23. Unit of data size
24. Stirred
25. Deceptive movement
26. We all have one
27. Direct from pasture beef animal
30. A person's own self
34. Helps little firms
35. Deep, red-brown sea bream
36. Tumbler
41. A short section of a musical composition
45. Young woman (French)
46. Wings
47. Wine bottles
50. Thin layers of rock
54. Opposite to
55. American state
56. Uncertainty about something

57. Basics
59. Indian seaport
60. Owed as a debt
61. Buffer solution
62. Unit of work or energy
63. Soviet Socialist Republic
64. One point south of due east
65. Born of

CLUES DOWN

1. Small stem bearing leaves
2. Female Bacchanalians
3. Mediterranean city
4. Measures electric current
5. Arrived extinct
6. Edible butterfly
7. Causing wonder or astonishment
8. Behaviors showing high moral standards
9. Ancient Irish alphabets
13. Footballer Newton
14. Utilize
17. Sum of absolute errors
18. Opposite of the beginning
20. Shoe company
22. Algerian port city
27. Girls organization (abbr.)
28. Type of cell (abbr.)
29. Swiss river
31. When you hope to get there
32. Fall behind

33. Expresses distaste, disapproval
37. Volume containing several novels
47. Angry
48. Before the present
49. Showy ornaments
51. Norway
52. Comedienne Gasteyer
53. Consume
58. Founder of Babism

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.

NEHLS
from page 1

U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance for grant funding for those educational programs.

Nehls said the local program was funded through funding from the Fort Bend County Jail's commissary, but the federal grants would be funded by DOJ funds if passed.

"I believe my little SCORE bill, this little SCORE Act that I have – I'm really excited about it because I think there's opportunity to get that to the finish line," Nehls said.

Nehls said his experience in law enforcement hasn't kept him from focusing on drainage which he knows is a concern for his district, which includes much of Fort Bend County, including Cinco Ranch, and part of Harris County.

"We requested \$20 million to help with the Barker Reservoir," Nehls said. "... That's a fraction of what we need, but I said to the Corps of Engineers' Lieutenant General (Scott Spellmon), I said, 'Sir, the water has receded on the streets of Canyon Gate, but it hasn't left the minds of the people there.'"

Nehls expressed frustration that U.S. infrastructure projects such as that for flood mitigation can take six years to move forward while



R. HANS MILLER

our Canadian neighbors get those projects approved in as little as three years. However, Nehls said Spellmon did say he would work to move projects through the bureaucracy as quickly as he could.

Regarding transportation infrastructure, Nehls said he is working to fund portions

of the Highway 36A project to improve mobility in the region.

The Highway 36A project has been talked about for a long time in the Katy area and would connect State Highway 36 south of Rosenberg to State Highway 6 north of Hempstead using a combination of improve-

ments to existing roads and building new roads along the route which is hoped to serve commercial traffic once completed.

"We're getting the project approved for (Highway) 36A out there in Rosenberg – about \$20 million. I feel very good about that," Nehls said.

Texas Congressman Troy Nehls (R-Richmond) of Texas' U.S. House District 22 addresses attendees at Perry's Steakhouse in LaCenterra on July 7. Nehls said he is frustrated with partisanship in Washington D.C., but has taken advantage of opportunities to work with all members of Congress regardless of party affiliation as opportunities have presented themselves.

CONTRACTOR
from page 1

contractors via their websites and the reviews left on websites such as Google, the Better Business Bureau and others to see the quality of work provided by the contractor.

- **Ask for licensing and certification:** Many service providers such as general contractors, plumbers and electricians are required to have licenses and to provide them upon request. Eliminate any companies who are unwilling to immediately provide proper credentials.
- **Check for references:** Just like when hiring a new employee, ask for a list of references. A reputable company should have several prior clients they are willing to provide contact information for to certify the quality of their work.
- **Get multiple bids:** Obtaining multiple bids



R. HANS MILLER

Reggie Chisholm said the damage to his property includes a heavy object falling onto his fence. The fence is currently patched with barbed wire just tacked to the top of this post with a nail and the electrical fencing line rerouted temporarily to be functional.

from contractors will help consumers compare important aspects such as overall costs, warranties and general professionalism.

- **Read contracts thoroughly:** Consumers should

make certain they know the terms and conditions associated with hiring any contractor and what the terms of any remedies in workmanship are.

CITY
from page 1

caused by 18-wheelers and cargo trucks have become commonplace in the last few years, with accidents sometimes occurring three or four times a week.

Traffic will now be kept on I-10, Highway 90 and Katy Fort Bend Road/Katy Hockley Cut Off Road, Garfaoui said. The new Katy Court Planned Development district at the intersection of Clay and Katy Hockley Cut Off roads is expected to also lead to the improvement of Katy Hockley Cut Off Road which will help accommodate the new traffic, he said.

Violations of the ordinance may result in up to a \$200 fine, City Attorney Art Pertile III said.

"Council member Harris and I sat with some families on Katy Hockley (Road), not the (Katy Hockley Cut Off Road) but Katy Hockley, and this will be good news for them," Council Member Rory Robertson

said.

Garfaoui's promotion to assistant city administrator comes after he has served since 2017 as city planner. Prior to that, he served as the city's planning technician for a little over three years. He was named the city's employee of the year in 2019.

Garfaoui holds a bachelor of arts in Public Administration and a certified public manager certificate from the University of Houston.

Each member of council and the Mayor Bill Hastings praised Garfaoui for his dedication to the city and his expertise.

"Mayor, this is very exciting for (Garfaoui). He has been a great leader before when I was on council and he was a planning tech and he did a great job with our Katy Development Authority, and he has saved me many times on giving the wrong answer by correcting me. He's definitely is not the person that tells you what you want to hear," Mayor Pro Tem Chris Harris said. "He tells you straightforward on what the issue is and that's a great thing for this position."

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Texas Governor Greg Abbott recently signed Senate Concurrent Resolution 3, which condemns the practice of forced organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience in China. I want to thank Katy area State Senators Lois Kolkhorst and Joan Huffman for sponsoring the resolution and Representatives Cecil Bell, Gary Gates and Mike Schofield who voted in favor of SCR3.

As stated in the resolution, the primary victims of organ harvesting in China practice Falun Gong which is a spiritual discipline rooted in traditional Chinese culture that combines qigong exercise, meditation, and an emphasis on the principles of truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance.

In 1996, I was a university student living in China. At the time I had a serious lung disease and had to visit the hospital weekly. A friend recommended that I take up the practice of Falun Gong. After practicing for only 1 month, the disease disappeared. Not only did I become healthier, but my relationships with others also became more harmonious.

There were countless stories like mine throughout China, and Falun Gong became very popular in the 1990's with government estimates concluding that as many as 100 million people were practicing.

Unfortunately, because of the immense popularity and spiritual nature of Falun Gong, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) considered it a target to be eliminated and in July of 1999, initiated a brutal persecution to eradicate the practice.

Overnight, Falun Gong was labeled as a public enemy. State-controlled media began demonizing Falun Gong 24/7. Even elementary school children were exposed to negative propaganda. There were mass arrests and I constantly heard news of torture and abuse occurring in prisons.

I did what I could to work against the persecution. I traveled to Tiananmen Square in 2000 and publicly sat in meditation as an appeal for Falun Gong. I also handed out CDs with information dispelling the negative propaganda and once I publicly appealed in front of a detention center to request the release of a friend who had been imprisoned.

As a result, I was unlawfully imprisoned in detention centers and brainwashing centers 4 times between October 1999 and June 2007. While detained I was under tremendous pressure to renounce my belief through torture and brainwashing. I was forced to do labor for over 10 hours a day without pay. My husband was also imprisoned when I was 3 months pregnant, and our son didn't get to see his father until he was 1 year old.

Coinciding with this crackdown was an explosion of organ transplantation despite the fact that China did not have a voluntary organ donor program. Hospital websites were advertising the sale of human organs with wait times as short as 2 weeks and China became a destination for transplant tourism. Investigators have concluded that organs were being sourced from Falun Gong prisoners of conscience.

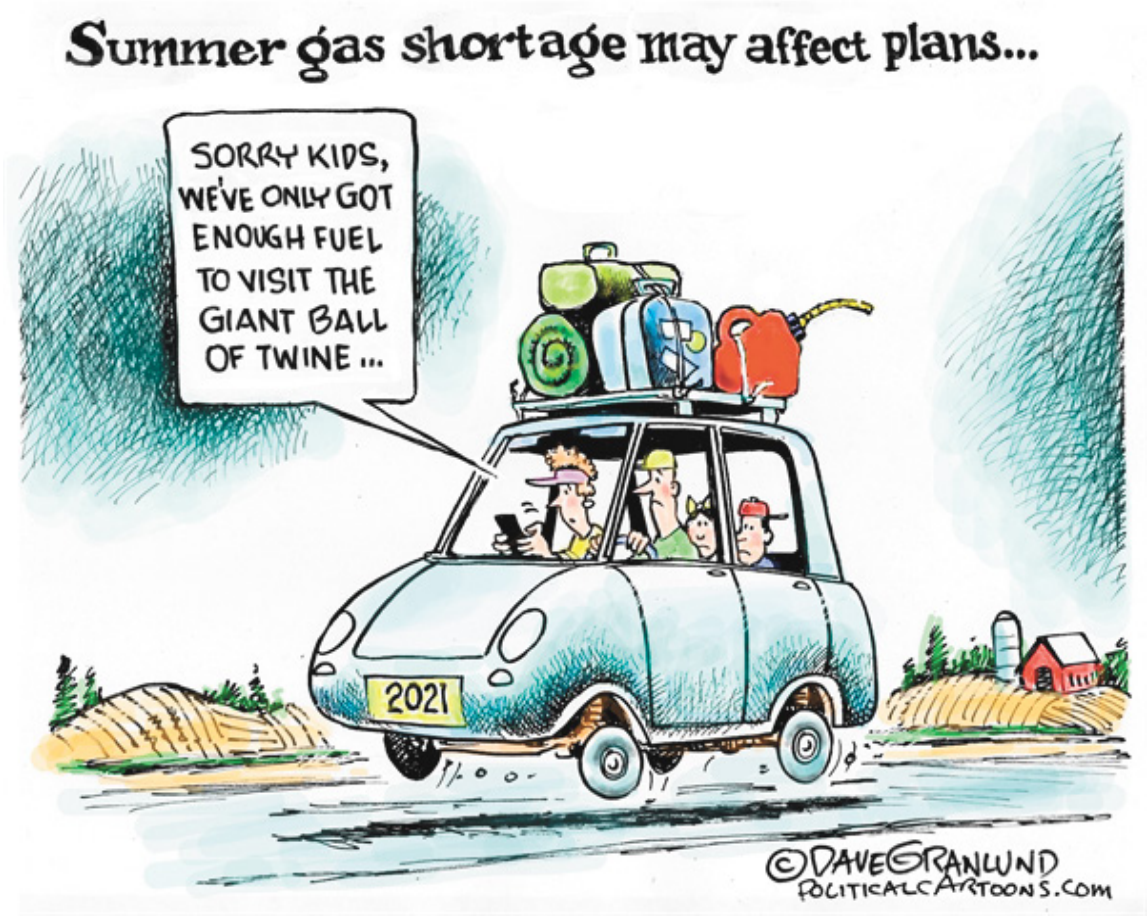
My family and I immigrated to the U.S. in 2008. We are fortunate that we survived the brutal persecution and were able to come to this free land. In China however, there are unknown numbers of Falun Gong practitioners and other prisoners of conscience including Tibetan Buddhists, House Christians and Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang province who are still behind bars where they are at great risk.

The efforts of the Texas State Legislature to confront the issue of forced organ harvesting are meaningful and important to Texas residents. I personally know over 10 Falun Gong practitioners living in the greater Houston area, including Katy, who were persecuted in China. Some of them underwent forcible blood drawing and unusual physical examinations which were obviously not for the benefit of their health, as they were tortured severely. These tests were, however, consistent with organ matching.

SCR3 is part of a global effort to expose transplant abuse in China. As a survivor of persecution in China, I am happy to see this trend. It is important for our medical communities and residents to be aware of organ harvesting and the risks of transplant tourism. No one should become an unwitting accomplice in this crime against humanity.

For reference:
<http://www.stoporganharvesting.org/>
<https://endtransplantabuse.org/>
<https://faluninfo.net/>
Signed,

Wendy Yang
Katy Times Reader



Why Canada matters to Texas

For over 150 years, Canada has been more than just a great neighbor- we are your best customer, closest security partner, and largest supplier of energy. Texas is an important part of all these mutual benefits.

Texans may think of other countries first when they consider international trade and cooperation. We understand that, but we think we should go against type and brag a bit about Canada's contributions to the Texas economy.

Canada is often thought of in terms such as friendly, polite, and snowy. We own them all, but we also have a compelling economic and trade story to tell in Texas - we are Texas' second-largest export market after Mexico. Texas exported \$27.8 billion in goods and services to Canada in 2020, and nearly 700 Canadian-owned companies operate right here in Texas. These companies account for almost 57,000 jobs throughout the state.

Beyond our common North American geography, we share values and interests, and multi-layered economic ties. Here are the adjectives I would use to describe our bilateral relationship and why Canada matters:

Prosperous. Canada and the United States share the largest trade relationship in the world. Our trade is balanced, fair, and supports growth and innovation in both our countries. Every day nearly US\$2billion worth of goods and services cross the Canada-U.S. border. This prosperous economic partnership supports good paying jobs in both countries. More than 5,500 Canadian-owned businesses in the U.S. support nearly 900,000 jobs. We buy more goods from the U.S. than China, Japan and the U.K. combined.



Integrated. Canada and the United States not only sell to each other, we make things together. Since the beginning of the pandemic, our countries have worked hard to maintain the two-way flow of goods, particularly medical supplies and critical inputs across our borders, while protecting our communities from COVID-19. On average, over 25% of a finished product we sell to you is American content. Just like most imports from Canada are used in production that puts Americans to work. These long-standing, binational supply chains have not only kept us safe, they have kept us competitive globally.

Reliable. Energy from Canada - more than from any other country - contributes directly to U.S. economic prosperity, security and environmental objectives. We are your largest and most secure supplier of all forms of energy, carried by 71 oil and gas pipelines and 35 transmission lines across our shared border. We are also investing in new technologies and infrastructure to be a global leader in clean energy and innovation. Canada is developing our energy resources; in a way that creates prosperity and engages communities, while reducing emissions and preserving the environment.

Steadfast. Canada has fought alongside the U.S. in defense of our common values through

World Wars I and II, the Cold War, Korea, Balkans, the Middle East, and Afghanistan. In fact, Canadian Army, Navy, and Air Force officers are embedded throughout the U.S. military, and at the bi-national North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) at all levels - protecting and defending our shared continent in search and rescue operations, interdiction of illegal narcotics, interception of non-allied military aircraft, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions.

Canadian tourists contribute millions to the Texas economy every year. Canadian snowbirds, who feel welcomed when their Texas neighbors call them "Winter Texans," contribute substantially through real estate investments, business sales, and tax revenue.

On July 1, as we celebrate the first anniversary under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), Texas businesses have continued access to duty free supply chains from Canada. Previously known as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the updated agreement preserves key elements of NAFTA, modernizes provisions to address 21st century trade challenges, reduces red tape at the border, and provides enhanced predictability and stability for workers and Texas businesses.

Being more than 1,000 miles away from the tip of the Texas Panhandle can make it easy to forget America's northern neighbor, but our shared values and interests, and deep connections, coupled with the powerful, multi-layered economic ties are definitely reasons why Canada should remain front of mind as we move forward together towards economic recovery.



Katy Times

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TRIBUTES

Jeffery Scott McGowan was born July 27, 1949 in Houston, Texas to Bobbie and Milton McGowan and passed away June 29, 2021.

Scott graduated from Katy High School in May 1967. He attended Sam Houston State University and graduated from the University of Houston. He married Pam Morton in 1969 and had two children, Jeffery and Whitney.

Always the athlete, he played hard and never quit. In high school, he played football and was named "All District" his senior year. He also played basketball and ran track. As an adult, he played in many baseball and softball leagues. Scott coached all of Jeffery's Little League and Katy Youth Football teams. He became an umpire and was al-ways in demand in the Katy and Spring Branch area.

Scott was a loyal friend and always available to help others. He could do anything, which came in handy once he and Pam bought the "Tucker Home" to restore. He loved telling how he got Skeet Poorman



JEFFERY SCOTT MCGOWAN
1949-2021

to agree to cut and move the house and had several stories about riding with Skeet on 'moving day.' He was a Texas history buff and greatly enjoyed historical sites, Texas State Parks, and obscure small towns.

Scott spent most of his career as a valve salesman, retiring in April 2016. He never truly retired because there was always a friend or family member needing help. He and Pam worked together on never-ending renovations to their historical home. Many hours

were spent on the antique trail to find something he needed for his projects. He sometimes fussed when Pam came up with ideas for the house and yard, but he always came through to make them possible.

Scott took great joy in his grandchildren and was a very active "Ole Dad" to Matthew, Hunter, Emma, Lucas and Cameron. They quickly learned he was a soft touch and knew to ask him first when they wanted something. He was always ready to play ball, catch minnows, go swimming, watch cartoons, teach them to drive the 4-wheelers, hunt, fish or practice baseball fundamentals. He attended all games and events and was very proud of each child. Every summer he was the assistant camp director for "Camp Maggie" and helped with the outdoor activities that had been planned for the grandchildren. The 5L Ranch in Leakey was a huge part of his life; he passed that love

and respect for this special place to his family.

Scott was saved when he was a young teenager and was active in the Katy Methodist Church. Later he joined Katy's First Baptist Church and served as a Sunday School teacher, VBS volunteer and greeter.

Scott is survived by his wife, Pam; his children Jeffery and Anissa McGowan of Pattison and Whitney and Justin Lock of Katy, five grandchildren, and a host of extended family and friends.

A memorial service will be held at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, July 10 at Katy's First Baptist Church.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Katy's First Baptist Church, 600 Pin Oak, Katy TX 77494 or Texas State Parks and Wildlife Foundation, 2914 Swiss Avenue, Dallas, TX 75204.

Funeral services held under the direction of: Schmidt Funeral Home
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Luther "Fred" Paben was born January 16, 1935, in Pattison, Texas. The son of Arnold Richard and Inez Morgan Paben, he grew up in Pattison and attended the Royal and Katy schools. After graduating from Katy High School, he served his country in the National Guard until 1965. He married Ruth Arlene Kveton on July 18, 1953, and worked as a peanut farmer and house mover before landing a job with Stoneberg Engineering in 1966. From Stoneberg, he went to Lubrication Systems in 1967 and became a pioneer in the creation of the oil mist system. He worked for Lubrication Systems until retiring at age 65 and then he continued to work with them as a contractor well into his 70s. Through work, he enjoyed traveling all over the world. He shared this love of travel with his wife and children.

He was happiest when he was helping others. A long-term Katy and Sealy resident, he was a leader in the Katy Volunteer Fire Department and EMS and served as an elder and church president in the Memorial Lutheran Church in Katy and at Trinity Lutheran Church in Sealy. His services also included volunteering with the American Cancer Society to drive cancer patients to their appointments, and he was an officer in the Sealy Lions Club. He enjoyed working on projects with the church and was instrumental in the building of the Memorial Lutheran Church bell tower.



LUTHER "FRED" PABEN
1935-2021

He was a devoted father and grandfather, and his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren were the joy of his life.

He passed away on July 7, 2021, after a lengthy illness at his home in Manvel, Texas at the age of 86. He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Ruth; children, Dawn Holmes and husband Doug, Darla Bonar and husband Jared, and Doug Paben and wife Angie; grandchildren, Sheri Towne and husband Chris, Aaron Ramsey, Robyn McKeever, John Coleby McKeever, Joshua McKeever, Drew Paben, Owen Paben, and Reagan Paben; great-grandchildren: Zoey Ramos Ramsey, Nikko Towne, and Kaylee Smalley; sister: Sadie Paben; and brother, Ervin Paben and wife Wanda; and many other dear friends and relatives. Fred was preceded in death by his parents and brothers: Lee Roy Paben, Johnnie Paben, and Arnold Paben.

MASONS CELEBRATE ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST DAY

COURTESY CARTER SHARBROUGH/KATY MASONIC LODGE

Members of Katy Masonic Lodge celebrate St. John the Baptist Day on June 24. Pictured from left to right are District 108 Communications Officer and Past Master Carter Sharbrough, Adrian Martinez; District 108 Deputy Grand Master David C. Bernt, Past Master Larry Arnold; Senior Warden Glenn Jackson, FC Mason, Worshipful Master Michael Spencer, EA Mason; Past Master Jim Muller, EA Mason; Tiler Bart Dawson, Senior Deacon Magver Infante, Junior Warden Dusten Garrett, and Past Master and Treasurer Glenn Royal. Seated: James Sharbrough. Seated in the front is 90-year-old Texas Mason James Sharbrough who has been a Mason for 67 years.

Editor's note: Texas Grand Lodge law forbids the naming of Entered Apprentice Masons or Fellowcraft Masons in news publications. Therefor, they are identified only as EA Mason or FC Mason, respectively in the caption above.



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Elevate With Royal FFA

BY MELANI ALANIS
EDITORIAL INTERN

On Tuesday, July 6, the Royal FFA chapter officer teams, and Lone Star Degree recipients traveled to Fort Worth to attend the 93rd Texas FFA State Convention where they competed in events, attended workshops, received Lone Star Degrees, heard from expert speakers at the sessions and got to explore the exhibit hall.

“There is nothing else in this state like the Texas FFA State Convention,” Spanish Creed Speaking participant Alondra Melendez said. “When you’re there, you know that you’re surrounded by people who share similar values and passions, and you not only get to celebrate other’s achievements but also get to have days full of fun with friends that are practically family.”

Royal FFA members said they enjoyed the convention and could relate to the 2021 Texas FFA State Convention’s theme of “Elevate.” The sessions at the convention included “Elevate Leadership” to “Elevate Community” prompting members



Lone Star Degree Recipients left to right: Angel Velásquez, Jessica Payton, Juan Grimaldo, Kayla Longoria, Melani Alanis, Emily Contreras, Alexis Ibarra, Alondra Meléndez, Samantha López, Nimve Núñez and Hanna Ulbricht.

from all over the state to come together to listen to retiring officer speeches and keynote speakers such as the National FFA Secretary Anna Mathis.

“In these sessions, the retiring officer speeches were supposed to be on something we can take home and integrate into our everyday lives and chapters,” Royal FFA Chapter Vice President Hanna Ulbricht said. “I loved how they had some personal information and

made it more sentimental and got people engaged.”

“The FFA Convention was a one-of-a-kind experience,” Royal High School Graduate Nimve Nuñez said. “Being able to experience this helped me gain a new level of admiration for this program.”

An event that Royal competed in this year at the convention was the Spanish Creed Speaking Contest in which Melendez placed top three in her heat and

advanced to finals.

“On my first day, I was full of nerves, anxiously awaiting my turn to go in for Spanish Creed Speaking,” Melendez said. “I had worked for over a month to memorize the creed and get to a point where I was comfortable answering a variety of questions about it in Spanish.”

The fourth general session “Elevate the Future” started with opening ceremonies in Spanish for

the first time in convention history. The introduction was performed by members competing in the Spanish Creed Speaking event. Later in the session, awards and recognition for the speaking events were announced.

“When the speaker announced that I had gotten eighth place I was elated and giddy as I was given my banner,” Melendez said. “I had never won in a state FFA contest, and it’s everyone’s goal in this organization to receive one of those coveted banners at least once in their FFA journey.”

At the “Elevate the Journey” session recognition was also given to Mr. Woods Classroom which was the name given to the group that competed in the Justin Boots FFA STEM Contest which consisted of Melendez, Melani Alanis, Alexis Ibarra, Samantha Lopez, and Emily Contreras.

“Hard work pays off, no matter what people say,” Ibarra said.

Royal FFA Lone Star Degree Recipients got to walk across the stage during the convention and receive their Lone Star Charms, an

award received only after meeting certain milestones as members of the FFA. (For more information on the Lone Star Degree, visit www.texasffa.org.) The Royal FFA Lonestar Degree recipients consisted of Alanis, Hanna Ulbricht, Angel Velasquez, Ibarra, Nimve Nuñez, Contreras, Juan Grimaldo, Melendez and Samantha Lopez.

“When I got my Lonestar Degree it was an experience that I will never forget,” Ibarra said. “It felt as if I became a part of a bigger family.”

While at the convention, members from the Royal FFA Chapter were able to attend the “Value in Me, Value in You” workshop which was led by the National FFA Southern Vice President Artha Jonassaint prompting members to get out of their seats and mingle with members from other chapters.

“State FFA Convention was truly a great opportunity to meet and greet with other members,” Royal FFA Chapter President Kaelyn Hein said. “Convention this year was definitely an experience like no other.”

Local pet experts offer summer safety tips

BY MEGAN BIASIOLLI
EDITORIAL INTERN

It’s a summer filled with pool parties, beach balls, beach crowds, volleyball, and family gatherings. This summer people are starting to get back to enjoying the summer sun with family and friends, but it is important to remember to keep pets safe and healthy, local experts said.

“The biggest thing is our Texas heat is pretty strong, so I always say keep your pets cool this summer,” owner of Patsy’s Pet Market, Patsy McGirl said.

McGirll sells healthy food and treats for dogs and cats and provides grooming services at her store at 1644 S. Mason Road in the Katy area. Her goal is to “strengthen the

human-animal connection,” she said. Six years ago she moved to Katy and opened Patsy’s Pet Market to make that happen. The store offers grooming, dog walking clinics and training workshops.

When it comes to traveling it requires preparation and action to ensure that pets are safe, said Ana Rodriguez, outreach coordinator for Citizens for Animal Protection. CAP operates an animal shelter that accepts donations, volunteers and has a clinic to ensure animals are safe and healthy. They welcome animals into the shelter, and ensure they are adopted into loving, safe homes.

Summertime is when dogs are in danger of getting heat stroke, McGirl said. It is important to keep dogs cool and not

leave them out in the sun for too long. Pets should not be left in the car because of intense heat exposure. Bored animals can also tear car seats and furniture, she added.

It is also important to keep cats cool, and give them fresh, clean water, McGirl said. If a cat lives outdoors, it is crucial they can get inside to get away from the heat.

McGirll said pet owners should walk their dogs before 9 a.m. or after 7:30 p.m. to avoid the hottest parts of the day and always have their dog on a leash.

Giving dogs watermelon and putting ice in their water bowl will help them cool off and stay hydrated, McGirl said.

McGirll said dog owners should make cooling bandanas by taking any fabric and soaking it in water, then putting it into a zip lock bag and placing it in the freezer. The next day, tie it around the dog’s neck to help cool them off when they are outside.

Fleas can be a big problem for both cats and dogs in the summer, McGirl said. Pet owners should visit their veterinarian to prevent pets from being infested with fleas.

When going to the beach it is important to bring water and find shade for pets, McGirl said. She also said it is essential to keep dog’s fur short during the summer to keep them cool, whether they are at the beach or some other vacation spot.

“The safest way to travel with your pet is with your pet secured in a crate,” Rodriguez said.

Pets should have a crate big enough for them to stand, turn around and lay down in while traveling, Rodriguez said. Pet owners should use clips to secure the crate in a car the same way a person secures a car seat for a child.

Rodriguez also said to take pets to someone you know if you are not bringing them on vacation and periodically check on their pets while out of town. People should also take things that are familiar to their pet like their crate, leash, favorite toys and treats.

When traveling with a pet on an airplane, pet owners should do some research about where their pet will be placed, Rodriguez said. Not all dogs can handle the cargo area, so it is important to ask the airline about what the environment will be like to see if it is a fit for their animal.

Pet owners should also consult with their veterinarian about if they can prescribe something that can calm a pet’s



Theodore was recently adopted from Citizens for Animal Protection into a permanent home. Dogs like Theodore need owners that look out for them to keep them safe during Texas’ extraordinary summer heat.



Patsy McGirl is the owner of Patsy’s Pet Market. Pictured here with a client’s pet, Patsy offers a variety of services at her shop including healthy food and treats, grooming and pet training workshops.

anxiety while on a trip, Rodriguez said.

It is also important to keep gates locked and secured. Many dogs were able to get out of their backyard in fear when hearing the fireworks on the Fourth of July and the period just after. Rodriguez said that on Thursday July 8 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. there was still a line of people bringing lost dogs they’d found after the recent holiday.

Preparation, research, and action are the keys to making sure that pets are safe and protected, McGirl and Rodriguez said.

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CORPUS CHRISTI FLEET MAINTENANCE AUCTION, Sat., July 17, 10 a.m., 5352 Ayers St., Corpus Christi, TX. Bid live on-site or on-line. Viewing: Fri., July. 16, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; sale day: 8-10 a.m. 10% B.P. Partial listing: backhoes, motorgrader, Cat D3C, steel wheel rollers, cars, pickups, vans, dump trucks, crane trucks, trash trucks, car lifts, mini excavators, tire machines, compressors, lathes, utility trucks, Pintel hitch trucks, SUVs, ATVs, ambulances, brush fire trucks, fire engine, a-frames, bumper-pull trailers & much more. www.siskauction.com, TKS#7425, John Sisk Auctioneers, Inc., 361-456-7771.

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4	1	6	5	9	2	8	3	7
7	2	9	8	1	3	4	6	5
5	4	7	3	2	9	1	8	6
3	8	2	6	5	1	7	4	9
6	9	1	7	4	8	2	5	3
1	7	8	9	3	6	5	2	4
2	3	4	1	7	5	6	9	8
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice Is Hereby Given That The Building And Standards Commission Of The City Of Katy, Texas, Will Hold A Public Hearing On **Tuesday, July 27, 2021, At 4:00 P.M.** In Council Chambers At Katy City Hall, 901 Avenue C. Said Hearing Is To Hear And Discuss Final Corrective Action For An Enclosed Area Below The Floodplain. **Legal Description: 610 Woods Lane, Katy Townsite, U/R, Tract 3 (A-393) In Fort Bend County.** Property Owner Of Record Is **Wesley And Lauren Shutter.** **Agent is Doug Nugent.** All Other Vested Interests In The Property Are Hereby Notified.

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Texas House attempting reset on contentious elections bill

New author, new committee in special session

BY PATRICK SVITEK AND
CASSANDRA POLLOCK
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

The Texas House is starting off on a new foot on the contentious elections proposal that blew up the regular legislative session. As a special session reviving the Republican-priority bill got underway Thursday, there were ample signs that the lower chamber was taking a fresh approach to the legislation, at least procedurally. The bill has a new author who is moving early to get colleagues' input, and it is going through a new committee that House Speaker Dade Phelan, R-Beaumont, says he created to bring more diverse perspectives to the issue.

The attempt at a reset comes as House Democrats have said repeatedly they plan to fight the legislation at every opportunity and that tactics such as leaving the state to again break quorum are still on the table. In the final hours of the regular session that ended in May, Democrats staged a walkout that killed the election bill that Abbott had earmarked as a priority.

That legislation, Senate Bill 7, would have placed new limits on early voting hours, local voting options and mail ballots. Democrats have said the bill amounted to voter suppression that would have made it more difficult in particular for people of color in Texas to vote. The House and Senate versions of the elections proposal filed for the special session are fairly similar but not identical to the version debated at the end of the regular session.

"Every option is on the table. We are going to use every parliamentary means in front of us to combat this," Rep. Armando Walle, D-Houston, told reporters during a news conference hosted by the House Democratic Caucus after the chamber adjourned Thursday. He declined to offer specifics when asked by a reporter for further details a few minutes later.

Even as Phelan has made overtures with colleagues over the second effort to pass an election bill, he has also made clear that he could

take a harder line against fleeing Democrats than he did at the end of the regular session.

"My Democratic colleagues have been quoted saying all options are on the table" for the voting legislation in the special session, Phelan told KXAN on Wednesday. "Respectfully, all options are on the table for myself as well."

The House's revised approach to the voting legislation is in contrast to the Senate. In that chamber, Sen. Bryan Hughes, a Mineola Republican, is again carrying the omnibus election proposal, which for a second time will be considered before the upper chamber's State Affairs Committee, which Hughes chairs. The committee is set to consider the legislation Saturday.

One of the starkest changes to the elections bill in the House for the special session was its author. Rep. Briscoe Cain, the Deer Park Republican who chairs the House Elections Committee, carried the bill in the regular session, but Phelan tapped Rep. Andrew Murr, R-Junction, to take the lead on it during the special session. Murr currently chairs the House Corrections Committee.

On Wednesday, Murr sent a letter to House colleagues announcing he had filed House Bill 3 and was soliciting their feedback.

"Because this subject is important to all Members and their constituents, and given the compressed time frame of the special session, I welcome any questions, discussions or comments you may have," Murr wrote, inviting members to call him or come by his office.

Cain did not return a request for comment Thursday about no longer authoring the bill. He had some rocky moments shepherding the legislation during the regular session, fumbling over procedural errors during committee process or struggling at times to defend it during floor debate.

During a committee hearing on Senate Bill 7 in March, for example, Cain abruptly ended a hearing after he refused to take questions from Rep. Nicole Collier, a Fort Worth Dem-

ocrat and chair of the Texas Legislative Black Caucus, who had asked to participate in the hearing. Cain made a procedural error when he recessed the committee by failing to announce a time members would reconvene. That error meant the hearing would not continue that day. More than 100 people who had traveled to the Capitol to testify on the bill were sent home.

Earlier this week, Phelan announced the formation of the House Select Committee on Constitutional Rights and Remedies, saying it would address potential agenda items for the special session. (The agenda had not been revealed yet at that point.)

Phelan said Wednesday that he established the select committee to "to get a broader perspective of House members involved" — and made clear he had the elections bill in mind.

"For instance, on the Elections Committee, there were no African Americans ... and that was not by my choice, that was by committee preferences," Phelan told KXAN. "I thought in this instance, with the seriousness of election integrity, I could create a committee that had an African American female, an African American male on it, that we could diversify geographically and politically to get all perspectives to where we could say this was an election integrity bill that everyone had input."

The Black members on the committee are its vice chair, Rep. Senfronia Thompson — a Houston Democrat who is the longest-serving woman and Black legislator — and Rep. James White, a Hillister Republican.

Phelan did not put Cain on the new panel, nor did he tap Rep. Jessica González, a Dallas Democrat who serves as vice chair of the Elections Committee. But he did tap Rep. Travis Clardy, R-Nacogdoches, a member of the Elections Committee who had helped Cain with the elections bill during the regular session.

On Thursday, the main elections bill for the special session — HB 3 — as well as other voting-related proposals were referred to the select committee instead of the Elections Committee.



CONTRIBUTED

Voting signs sit outside of the South Austin Recreation Center polling site in October of 2020. Legislators began a special session July 8 to address, among other things, voting legislation that Republicans say will secure elections in the state. Democrats say the legislation is exclusionary and designed to reduce access to the polls for minorities.

The election bill was set for a hearing set to start 8 a.m. Saturday.

During Democrats' news conference Thursday, Rep. Chris Turner, a Grand Prairie Democrat who chairs his party's caucus, said that the legislation, despite any changes that may be made to

it, "is inherently flawed."

"The bottom line on HB 3 is, just like SB 7, it's based on a lie," Turner told reporters. "It's based on a lie that there's rampant problems in our elections and the big lie that Donald Trump actually won the last election."

This article originally ap-

peared in The Texas Tribune at <https://www.texastribune.org/2021/07/08/texas-house-reset-election-bill/>. The Texas Tribune is a member-supported, nonpartisan newsroom informing and engaging Texans on state politics and policy. Learn more at [texastribune.org](https://www.texastribune.org).

ARISTOI CLASSICAL ACADEMY

Media Release for Free and Reduced-Price Meals

Aristoi Classical Academy announced its policy today for providing free and reduced-price meals for children served under the attached current income eligibility guidelines. Each school/site or the central office has a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by anyone on request.

Starting on July 19, 2021, *Aristoi Classical Academy* will begin distributing letters to the households of the children in the district about eligibility benefits and any actions households need to take to apply for these benefits. Applications also are available at the District Office located on 5610 Morton Road, Katy, Texas, 77493.

Criteria for Free and Reduced-Price Meal Benefits

The following criteria will be used to determine a child's eligibility for free or reduced-price meal benefits:

Income

- Household income that is at or below the income eligibility levels

Categorical or Automatic Eligibility

- Household receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

Program Participant

- Child's status as a foster child, homeless, runaway, migrant, or displaced by a declared disaster
- Child's enrollment in Head Start or Even Start

Income Eligibility

For those households that qualify for free or reduced-price meals based on income, an adult in the household must fill out free and reduced-price meal application and return it to *Karla Begnaud, Child Nutrition Coordinator*, kbegnaud@aristoi.classical.org (281) 574-6152. Those individuals filling out the application will need to provide the following information:

- Names of all household members
- Amount, frequency, and source of current income for each household member
- Last 4 digits of the Social Security number of the adult household member who signs the application or, if the adult does not have a social security number, check the box for "No Social Security number"
- Signature of an adult household member attesting that the information provided is correct

Categorical or Program Eligibility

Aristoi Classical Academy is working with local agencies to identify all children who are categorically and program eligible. *Aristoi Classical Academy* will notify the households of these children that they do not need to complete an application. Any household that does not receive a letter and feels it should have should contact *Karla Begnaud, Child Nutrition Coordinator* at (281) 574-6152, kbegnaud@aristoi.classical.org.

Any household that wishes to decline benefits should contact *Karla Begnaud, Child Nutrition Coordinator* at (281) 574-6152, kbegnaud@aristoi.classical.org.

Applications may be submitted anytime during the school year. Applications may be accessed by visiting <https://schoolcafe.com> or by downloading the *SchoolCafé App* to your mobile device. Paper applications are available at the District Office or by contacting *Karla Begnaud* at childnutrition@aristoi.classical.org. The information households provide on the application will be used for the purpose of determining eligibility. Applications may also be verified by the school officials at any time during the school year.

Determining Eligibility

Under the provisions of the free and reduced-price meal policy, *Karla Begnaud, Child Nutrition Coordinator* will review applications and determine eligibility. Households or guardians dissatisfied with the Reviewing Official's eligibility determination may wish to discuss the decision with the Reviewing Official on an informal basis. Households wishing to make a formal appeal for a hearing on the decision may make a request either orally or in writing to *Brenda Davidson, Superintendent and Headmaster* at (281) 391-5003, bdavidson@aristoi.classical.org.

Unexpected Circumstances

If a household member becomes unemployed or if the household size increases, the household should contact the school. Such changes may make the children of the household eligible for benefits if the household's income falls at or below the attached current income eligibility guidelines.

Income Eligibility Guidelines for Determining Free and Reduced-Price Benefits

Effective from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022

Family Size	Annually		Monthly		Twice per Month		Every Two Weeks		Weekly	
	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced
1	\$16,744	\$23,828	\$1,396	\$1,986	\$698	\$993	\$644	\$917	\$322	\$459
2	\$22,646	\$32,227	\$1,888	\$2,686	\$944	\$1,343	\$871	\$1,240	\$436	\$620
3	\$28,548	\$40,626	\$2,379	\$3,386	\$1,190	\$1,693	\$1,098	\$1,563	\$549	\$782
4	\$34,450	\$49,025	\$2,871	\$4,086	\$1,436	\$2,043	\$1,325	\$1,886	\$663	\$943
5	\$40,352	\$57,424	\$3,363	\$4,786	\$1,682	\$2,393	\$1,552	\$2,209	\$776	\$1,105
6	\$46,254	\$65,823	\$3,855	\$5,486	\$1,928	\$2,743	\$1,779	\$2,532	\$890	\$1,266
7	\$52,156	\$74,222	\$4,347	\$6,186	\$2,174	\$3,093	\$2,006	\$2,855	\$1,003	\$1,428
8	\$58,058	\$82,621	\$4,839	\$6,886	\$2,420	\$3,443	\$2,233	\$3,178	\$1,117	\$1,589
For each additional family member add:										
	+\$5,902	+\$8,399	+\$492	+\$700	+\$246	+\$350	+\$227	+\$324	+\$114	+\$162

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the *USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form*, (AD-3027) found online at: <https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Fed judge finds U.S. government inaction factor in Sutherland Springs shooting

BY ALLYSON WALLER
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

A federal judge ruled July 6 that the federal government was mostly responsible for Texas' deadliest mass shooting at a Sutherland Springs church in 2017, concluding that the U.S. government failed to submit information that could have prevented the gunman from purchasing the assault rifle he used to gun down 26 people.

On Nov. 5, 2017, Devin Kelley, 26, opened fire during a Sunday service at First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs outside of San Antonio, using a Model 8500 Ruger AR-556, fitted with a 30-round magazine, that he purchased from Academy Sports + Outdoors the previous year. Kelley later died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound after two men chased him as he fled the scene, according to The Dallas Morning News.

He formerly served in the U.S. Air Force at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico. In 2012, Kelley was convicted of assaulting his wife and stepson, and in 2014, he was released from the U.S. Air Force on a bad conduct discharge. According to the decision by federal Judge Xavier Rodriguez of the Western District of Texas, Kelley's likely target was his mother-in-law, Michelle Shields, who was a member of First Baptist Church but wasn't in the church at the time.

The federal lawsuit, which was consolidated from numerous complaints brought by survivors and families of shooting victims, accused the federal government of negligence, citing the U.S. Air Force's failure to report Kelley's assault conviction to the FBI.

Under the federal Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, enacted in 1993, federal agencies are required to report people who are prohibited from purchasing firearms for reasons including a domestic violence conviction or dishonorable discharge from the military.

In the ruling, Rodriguez said the conviction should have prevented Kelley from purchasing the weapon he used to attack the church. The Air Force "had an obligation to submit the final disposition report to the FBI within 15 days," according to the ruling. However, because it was not reported



SHELBY KNOWLES FOR THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Hannah Krueger added a cross to a memorial near the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs on Nov. 8, 2017, three days after a mass shooting there.

to the FBI and entered into its databases, Academy was able to proceed with sale of the weapon.

Rodriguez said the U.S. government was 60% responsible for harm caused by the shooting and liable for damages.

"The Court concludes that the Government failed to exercise reasonable care in its undertaking to submit criminal history to the FBI," Rodriguez wrote in the ruling. "The Government's failure to exercise reasonable care increased the risk of physical harm to the general public, including Plaintiffs. And its failure ... caused the deaths and injuries of [the victims] at the Sutherland Springs First Baptist Church on November 5, 2017."

The federal decision follows a recent state ruling from the Texas Supreme Court that essentially shields Academy from being sued for selling Kelley the weapon.

This article originally appeared in The Texas Tribune at <https://www.texastribune.org/2021/07/07/texas-sutherland-springs-shooting-court-ruling/>. The Texas Tribune is a member-supported, nonpartisan newsroom informing and engaging Texans on state politics and policy. Learn more at [texastribune.org](https://www.texastribune.org).



Area high school footballers play seven-on-seven during summer

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

For football fans, the season is a couple of months away. But now, for local high school coaches and players, football is in an informal, seven-on-seven format.

Seven-on-seven football is different from Friday night football at Legacy Stadium. The field is 45 yards long, not 100 as in regular football.

As for the players, the most obvious difference is the number of players on a side. Regular football features 11 players. On offense, a team has a quarterback, five offensive linemen and a mix of running backs and wide receivers. By contrast, seven-on-seven football features the quarterback, five wide receivers and a center.

A running back might substitute for a wide receiver now and then. Seven-on-seven football has no running plays, though. Passing is the focus here.

The center is the only offensive lineman, but he does not block as in regular football. Mayde Creek coach J Jensen said the center snaps the ball to the quarterback. The center then takes some steps and moves a cone to the line of scrimmage after the play ends.

"It's a good way for the center to get some shotgun snaps in," Jensen said.

Regular football is about contact and collision. Seven-on-seven football eliminates defensive tackling. Still, it enables teams to practice their defensive schemes. Or, if they're up to it, they might try something different.

"Some teams run seven-on-seven defenses," Jensen said.

Jensen, who watches the games without any official formal role in the voluntary activity taken on by the student-athletes, said the informal games allow the team to try defensive and offensive strategies on the field. Keeping an eye on the games is a way for the coaches to judge how their players are doing outside of regular practice as well.

Senior wide receiver Jordan Kelly participated in his first seven-on-seven action this summer.

"I'm used to tackle football, but we went out and competed," Kelly said.

A large seven-on-seven state tournament



Mayde Creek junior wide receiver Leroy Turner, junior cornerback Tay' Shawn Wilson, sophomore quarterback Jaylen Bragg, senior wide receiver Jordan Kelly and senior linebacker James Rhodes are expected to be among the Rams' leaders in 2021

has taken place for years. A team qualifies by winning a qualifying tournament. Tompkins' did that this year.

Jensen said his players who participated in the seven-on-seven this year didn't get started in time for the qualifying tournaments. So, Rams players joined Jordan, Morton Ranch, Sealy and Taylor for their informal matchups. Jensen said the Rams players finished 4-4 on their summer schedule which ended in June.

Senior linebacker James Rhodes said the seven-on-seven games gave the Rams players a chance to learn some things about them-

selves.

"We put in the work every day to get better," Rhodes said. "We played eight games hard. The record is pretty half-and-half, but at the end of the day it's all about the work we put in."

Jensen said he and his coaches want to teach and build on the positives of the experience to help the athletes in the regular season.

"(They) did some good stuff, and ... some stuff we (them) need to improve on," Jensen said.

Jensen knows his way around Mayde Creek. He's a 1998 graduate of that school and was a captain on a regional semi-finalist team there. He began his coaching career in 2003 at Morton Ranch Junior High. In 2005 he rejoined Mayde Creek as an offensive line coach.

Jensen joined the Alief Taylor program in 2010 as offensive coordinator and helped the Lions reach the playoffs in his four years there.

See FOOTBALLERS, page 10

Special Olympics going outside as it works toward normalcy

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Special Olympics Texas is taking things outside as it recaptures its pre-pandemic normal.

The focus on outdoor sports is one precaution Special Olympics is taking. Another is pushing out the schedule. Summer games were reset to September. Fall games were reset to October.

The sport receiving local attention now is bocce. Program coordinator Aaron Keith said bocce tournaments are set for every Monday through July 26 at the Pearland Parks and Recreation Center.

The outdoor sport has European origins but is popular worldwide.

Keith said a Houston-area community-wide "return to play" celebration is being planned for Aug. 4.

Local volunteers helping local athletes

Katy-area volunteers are helping make things happen, Keith said. One local supporter is Harris County Precinct 5 Constable Ted Heap. Keith said Heap's son, Andrew, is an athlete who participates in Special Olympics. Heap volunteers through coaching and serving as an official during games.

"(Heap) is a jack of all trades," Keith said.

One of the athletes Heap has coached is Shelby Day. Shelby is a

"She basically talks about how much she appreciates the support from the government and what she does in terms of sports. She wears her medals. But it's not just the sports that she talks about."

— KARI DAY, MOTHER OF SPECIAL OLYMPIAN SHELBY DAY

31-year-old Katy resident with a rare chromosomal disorder. Her parents, Steve Day and Kari Day, are her guardians.

Kari said her daughter is part of the Katy Wolf Pack team. Katy has several Special Olympics teams, including the Katy Blue Angels, Katy Comets and Katy Development Clinic.

Kari said her daughter has competed in basketball, softball and bowling. Special Olympics athletes can take part in only one sport per season.

"Her favorite sports are swimming and equestrian," Kari said.

Shelby has participated in therapeutic horseback riding for more than 20 years, Day said.

This year, Shelby and her father are playing golf. Shelby and Steve play through a nine-hole course. Shelby takes a swing, then Steve takes a swing.

"It's pretty cool," Kari said. "She's having fun. They usually practice on

Mondays, but have missed the past couple of Mondays because of the rain."

Some school districts enable Special Olympics athletes to train with regular student-athletes. Such arrangements enable both sides to learn from each other. Kari said Katy Independent School District bylaws prevent a local arrangement.

Shelby's story as a Special Olympics athlete is remarkable in itself. But there's more to her story. She is also an advocate. Kari said Shelby asked Superintendent Ken Gregorski and trustee Rebecca Fox to consider changing those bylaws.

Shelby has also spoken at the state Capitol in Austin and the U.S. Capitol in Washington D.C. Last year, at the height of the pandemic, she spoke with elected leaders via Zoom.

See SPECIAL OLYMPICS, page 10



NFL quarterback Andy Dalton, formerly of Katy High School, meets with Special Olympics athlete Shelby Day, of Katy, in this 2020 photo taken at Midway Barbecue.

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FOOTBALLERS

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Jensen joined the Katy Taylor program in 2014 as defensive coordinator. He was part of a successful program there as the Mustangs reached the playoffs in six of his seven years there. The 2020 Mustangs reached the semifinals.

As he returns to Mayde Creek, Jensen and his new staff want to see who they have and what they can do. Players need their chance to improve their skills and show their stuff. Informal opportunities through seven-on-seven matchups give coaches a chance to observe where their players are and identify opportunities for improvement. The second team gets a chance to play and that gives coaches a chance to observe them.

"We just focused on us getting better and our getting our kids better (during the optional seven-on-seven scrimmages). We wanted to get everything in and run against some other people," Jensen said.

Junior wide receiver LeRoy Turner said the games provided an opportunity for everyone to get better during the summer and not just sit around.

"Everybody is learning their plays and everything," Turner said. "We're just getting better and ready for the fall."

The Rams kick off their regular 2021 season Aug. 27 against Conroe at Moorehead Stadium. Jensen said players and coaches are feeling great.

"There's a lot of excitement," Jensen said. "We've got kids in the summer program and want to join the football team. Our numbers are up. We're trying to get better and the kids have been great. Everything has been awesome."

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GEORGE SLAUGHTER

Mayde Creek football coach J. Jensen.

"I'm used to tackle football, but we went out and competed."

— MAYDE CREEK SENIOR WIDE RECEIVER JORDAN KELLY



COURTESY KATY ISD/TAYLOR HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

Mayde Creek plays Taylor in seven-on-seven football at Taylor High School

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

from page 9

"She basically talks about how much she appreciates the support from the government and what she does in terms of sports," Kari said. "She wears her medals. But it's not just the sports that she talks about."

Day said the Special Olympics provides dentists and eye doctors at the games. Not all athletes' families have the money or insurance to get dental or eye care.

"We have always participated in that, even though we have insurance," Day said.

Supporting the teams and athletes

Katy-area residents also support the Special Olympics financially. One way they have done this is through the Tip a Firefighter program.

Katy Fire Department officials said firefighters in past years served chips and salsa at Los Cucos Mexican Restaurant at 5831 Highway 90 in downtown Katy. They also provided drink refills.

But they did not do it themselves. Special Olympics athletes visited tables and helped. Tips to the firefighters and athletes benefited the Special Olympics, Katy Fire Department officials said.

Restaurant waitstaff took orders and delivered the entrees as usual.

Those efforts raised over \$6,000 annually before the pandemic. Keith hopes to visit with Katy Fire Chief Kenneth Parker soon in hopes of resuming that tradition. Parker took over as chief earlier this year.

According to the Special Olympics website, the Texas Roadhouse restaurant chain has also raised money for the Special Olympics. The chain has hosted Tip a Cop nights like the Tip a Firefighter program seen in Katy. The Texas Roadhouse in Katy, at 20840 Katy Freeway has hosted such nights in the past, a manager said Sunday.

Keith described Katy as "one of our top-grossing fundraising communities in the state."

OLYMPIAN RESOURCES

Facebook: @SpecialOlympics

Local Facebook: facebook.com/groups/KatyWolfpack

Special Olympics Texas: <https://bit.ly/3kaTFmf>

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