

ROYAL HS VOLLEYBALL PREPARING FOR FRESH SEASON

SPORTS | PAGE 9

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R. HANS MILLER

Led ZepAgain, a Led Zeppelin tribute band, was the headliner for this year's Midsummer Festival Katy event. The band has been called the nearest a person can get to led Zeppelin by the original band's guitarist, Jimmy Page. Organizers said they were thrilled with how this year's event went and would be working to create an even better event next year that would be accessible to everyone in the Katy community.

## Local nonprofits praise successful first Midsummer Festival

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Christ Clinic Katy Executive Director Lara Hamilton said she is proud of the results of the first year for the Midsummer Festival Katy event held by her organization in coordination with five other local nonprofits.

The goal for the event was to do better than break even on the investment for the event, and she estimates that about \$85,000 was raised at the event which drew around 1,000 people. "Overall, I feel like it went amazing," Hamilton said.

See **MIDSUMMER**, page 3

## Royal ISD trustees accept Campos' resignation, approve city agreement

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

During the Royal ISD Board of Trustees July 19 meeting, the board unanimously accepted the resignation of Position 1 Trustee Joseph Campos. They also heard a briefing regarding

a proposed \$99.5 million bond election and approved an interlocal agreement with the city of Pattison to repair a playground to establish a city park. "Basically, the city of Pattison is providing the funds,

See **ROYAL ISD**, page 3

## Animal control investigation concludes, but questions remain

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

An investigation into allegations of animal cruelty on the part of Katy Animal Control officers David Brown and Spencer Antinoro has been completed and both officers cleared of most of the allegations against them according to a Katy Police Department investigation file. The Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office declined to prosecute either of the two animal control officers.

"I spoke to (Sherry Robinson from the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office) and she said there's nothing there other than maybe a few procedural errors," Katy Police Chief Noe Diaz said.

The allegations against Brown and Antinoro were made by the city's part-time animal control officer, Chelsea Gerber, who filed the complaint that launched the investigation. The allegations have been a controversial topic at multiple Katy City Council meetings.

### Investigation results

The investigation, which was completed in March of this year, exonerated both officers of unlawfully dumping euthanized animals in city dumpsters. It also said complaints of burying euthanized animals on city property, improper euthanization of animals and inhumane treatment of animals were not sustained.

Accusations of involvement with the case of Angie Wells, in which Wells is being investigated by Fort Bend County authorities for issues related to animal hoarding in March of 2020, were not investigated by Katy PD, Diaz said. He declined to comment on the Wells case because of the active case by another law enforcement agency.

"I already knew we weren't going to get involved with the Angie Wells (case) because I was instructed by the (Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office), 'Don't get involved in it. We're looking at it,'" Diaz said.

The only accusation made by Gerber verified during the investigation was improperly handling and falsifying animal control records. Katy PD Lieutenant Lee Hernandez said that not only were Brown and Antinoro found to have mishandled records at the city's animal shelter, but Gerber had as well.

Gerber had also alleged in her complaint that cats had been set free on Bartlett Road just outside of Katy city limits, west of Cane Island. Hernandez said he was unable to verify those allegations during his investigation.



FILE PHOTO

The death of the cat shown here was a part of the initial allegations against Katy Animal Control officers. The complaints against the officers were investigated and found to be untrue except in a few cases. In one instance, it was found that documentation and procedures hadn't been properly dealt with, while in another, Katy Police Department officials said they did not have authority to investigate the allegation because Fort Bend County officials were already conducting a related investigation.

She had also accused her fellow officers of dipping kittens in diluted bleach to treat ringworm, which could not be verified. Video evidence provided by Gerber does not show any kittens being treated in this manner, and her voiceover only discusses medications for the condition on a nearby workspace.

Allegations regarding the euthanizing of animals without documenting their capture were also made. The investigation report cleared Brown and Antinoro of that accusation, however during the investigation, Hernandez said he relied on documentation available through Katy Animal Control records. Gerber said there would have been no evidence of wrongdoing because the animals killed in that manner weren't documented.

### Inconsistencies

At least some of the findings from the investigation appear to be inconsistent with videos provided by Gerber and a statement made by

Brown to former Katy City Council Member Jennifer Stockdick.

"(Brown) didn't use the word 'killing,'" Stockdick said. "He said, 'I've been putting them down on day one,' and he said, 'No one in 15 years has ever claimed that that was their pet.'"

Stockdick said Brown made the statement during a tour she had taken of the Katy Animal Control facility located on I-10 between FM 1463 and Pin Oak Road in Katy.

While Diaz and Hernandez both said staff were fully trained to humanely euthanize animals, Gerber's video footage shows a tabby cat that Antinoro had put to sleep suffering for an extended time after sodium pentobarbital had been administered. According to The Humane Society of the United States, euthanization via pentobarbital should take two minutes or less to kill an animal. Antinoro eventually administered more of the drug and the cat died soon after.

See **ANIMAL**, page 8

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## Waller County Child Welfare Board Q&A

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

The Waller County Child Welfare Board is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping children experiencing abuse or neglect in Waller County. Members of the board joined together to provide answers to questions posed by the Katy Times. The responses below have been lightly edited to fit in the available space and clarity.

**Q: What is the Waller County Child Welfare Board, and what do you do in the Waller County community?**

**A:** Childhood maltreatment includes physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse and physical and medical neglect. Each day in the U.S., Child Protective Service confirms 1,785 youth are victims of maltreatment. In 2019, CPS received maltreatment referrals for approximately 7.9 million youth and nearly 425,000 children in foster care.

WCCWB consists of county residents appointed by the Commissioners Court to provide normalcy for youth removed from their homes and placed in the foster care system.

See **CHILD WELFARE**, page 3



FILE PHOTO

Waller County Child Welfare Board officials joined area leaders at the Waller County Courthouse in April to pop balloons in honor of Child Abuse Awareness Month. The WCCWB is a nonprofit organization that works to help children in the county who suffer from abuse and neglect.

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## KARE looks out for educators' best interests

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

LeeAnn Nuckles and Marsha Smith are first and second vice presidents of Katy Area Retired Educators, respectively and the pair said they are excited that KARE has been able to start having in-person meetings again. The organization, which is comprised of retirees from the education industry, works to support retired education professionals in the Katy area, they said.

"We aren't all politically aligned, but we are all politically aligned for purposeful education and protecting our benefits," Nuckles said.

Nuckles said that about one in four Texans are somehow involved in the education industry and the Texas Retired Teachers Association, of which KARE is a chapter, advocates for those that have worked in the education through lobbying as well as through grassroots efforts to support school staff at the local level. The group has about 250 members locally, Nuckles and Smith said, with about 100 to 120 members attending the organization's monthly meetings at the Merrell Center the second Wednesday of each month.

"Katy ISD is so supportive of us," Nuckles said. "They let us meet at the Merrell Center and we are able to get our meals there."

Nuckles said the organization pays the district to cater the meals.

Membership in the organization is open to all public school employees who retired under the Teachers Retirement System, including teachers, administrators and all other school employees. Members participate in a variety of activities throughout the year, Smith said. The monthly meetings, which were held via Zoom during the pandemic but have returned to in-person events, allow retired educators to network.

Members also keep an eye out for legislation that impacts educators such as the proposed "13th check" legislation which would

add a bonus pay period for retirees, Nuckles said. The proposed law being examined, if passed by the Texas Legislature and signed by Texas Governor Greg Abbott, would provide a capped bonus to retirees receiving benefits from TRS, she said. Usually, lobbying is accomplished via the KARE's Capital Day event wherein members visit the state capital en-masse to visit with legislators and discuss proposed bills impacting education, academic professionals and benefits for education retirees.

"Everybody wears their red (KARE) shirts," Smith said. "... Everybody from all the districts come and we get on a bus and the legislators meet with us."

Capital Day was canceled this year due to the pandemic, Smith said. However, members of the organization still lobbied via the U.S. Postal Service. Members wrote to their legislators and sent their correspondence in bright red envelopes

in honor of the red shirts ordinarily worn to the event, she said.

KARE also works to support the students of KISD, Nuckles

said. Each year the group hosts a book drive to encourage students to read by providing them with books to enjoy. Members also volunteer around the community, especially in schools, throughout the year, she said. Additionally, KARE has a scholarship program to support local students that are considering going into education. The scholarships have a value of \$1,200 each and Nuckles said the group was able to award seven scholarships at the end of the 2020-21 school year. The scholarships are paid for by fundraising events such as spirit nights at local restaurants, she said.

Smith, who is set to become president of the organization when the current term for KARE President Earlene Hopkins ends, said her involvement in the group has grown since she first joined in 2014. She said the organization gives retirees a sense of purpose and helps them still contribute to the



COURTESY KARE

Photos weren't available for this year's round of scholarships from KARE due to the pandemic. However, in 2019, scholarship awardees were presented with certificates by KARE officers and were joined by Katy ISD Superintendent Ken Gregorski during an April presentation.

profession they lived and loved for so many years.

"And I like the volunteer part," Smith said. "We also turn in our hours for volunteerism, and it's a little bit of a competition between all the (district chapters) in the state, you know - who has the most volunteer hours - and we're always very competitive in the Katy group."

Right now, though, Nuckles and Smith said they are excited for Hooky Day - an annual KARE event held the first day of school each year that allows all of the former educators to get together, network and show support for one another as well as current education professionals.

"It's a great membership moment where people come in and they join for the year because it feels like the beginning of school," Nuckles said.

COURTESY KARE

Katy Area Retired Educators, also known as KARE, officers and committee members recently met at Brazos Valley Schools Credit Union to plan for the organization's annual Hooky Day. Hooky Day is a first day of school celebration for retired educators. It will be held Aug. 18 at the Katy ISD Education Support Complex, room 1200 from 1-3 p.m.



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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.

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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.

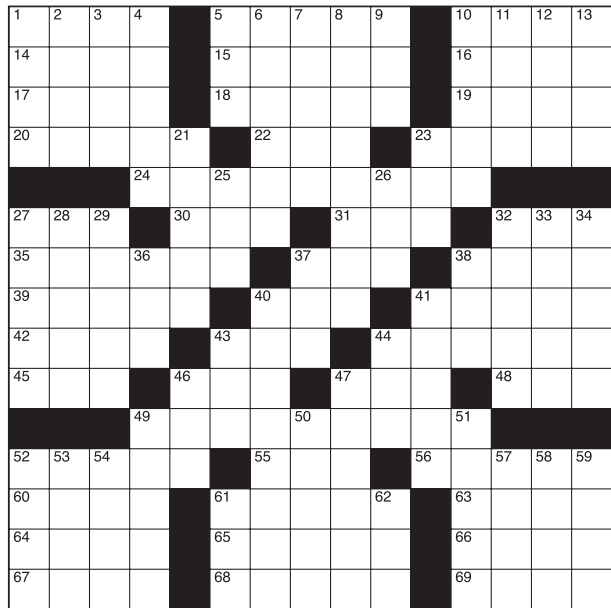
## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

#### CLUES ACROSS

1. Fashion accessory
5. Subatomic particle
10. Ethnic group of the Philippines
14. Popular cookie
15. Fabric
16. Alcoholic liquor
17. Peter \_\_, Dutch portrait painter
18. Longtime Chicago mayor
19. A famous "Lady"
20. Islamic calendar month
22. Rocky peak
23. Polio vaccine developer
24. Songs sung in open air
27. Military movements
30. Male parent
31. Beloved hot beverage
32. Female sibling
35. Tackled the QB
37. Set a dog on someone
38. Long live! (Spanish)
39. Porticos
40. Pouch
41. Smooth fabric
42. Enough (archaic)
43. Institute legal proceedings against
44. Scarred
45. Draw from
46. Brother or sister
47. Body part
48. Commercials
49. London soccer team
52. Satisfied
55. Surgical technique (abbr.)
56. Fencing sword
60. French industrial city
61. Intellectual property organization (abbr.)
63. Helps to carry food
64. "Rule, Britannia" composer
65. One-time Empress of the Roman Empire
66. Intestinal pouches
67. None better
68. "WandaVision" actress
69. Comedic actress Kathryn

#### CLUES DOWN

1. Fifth notes of major scales
2. Region
3. Your consciousness of your own identity
4. Georgetown athletes
5. They follow A
6. Spoke
7. Hairdressers' domain
8. Extravagantly theatric
9. End-blown flute
10. Heroic tales
11. Member of a Semitic people
12. Members of a priestly caste
13. Southern Ghana people
21. Counsels
23. Body of water
25. Awesome!
26. Calendar month
27. Native of region in Caucasus
28. Indian city
29. Exclusive
32. Alaskan town
33. Covered with ivy
34. Loose granular substances



36. Native American tribe
37. Written American English
38. Holiday (informal)
40. Add up
41. Small brown and gray rails
43. Get off your feet
44. Express disgust
46. Surface of the ground
47. Put into a silo
49. Belief
50. British noblemen
51. Tennis game
52. Dry, protective crust
53. Swiss river
54. Large integers
57. La \_\_ Tar Pits, Hollywood
58. Every one of two or more
59. "Deadpool" actor Reynolds
61. Earlier
62. Peter's last name

Answers will be provided in next week's edition.



## MIDSUMMER FESTIVAL KATY ORGANIZATIONS

<https://www.theballardhouse.org>  
<https://christclinic Katy.org>  
<https://compassionkathy.org>  
<https://hopeimpacts.org>  
<https://ktcm.org>  
<https://www.phckaty.org>

## MIDSUMMER

from page 1

“We got lots of feedback from the bands, the production company – people that do festivals and concerts for a living – and they said we did an amazing job, and they really enjoyed the event.”

The new event, which was organized by Christ Clinic, Hope Impacts, The Pregnancy Help Center of West Houston, The Ballard House, Katy Christian Ministries and Compassion Katy, takes the place of the annual color run those organizations usually hold said Hope Impacts Executive Director Tina Hatcher. The event was set up to raise money to help clients of the six organizations while allowing attendees to have some fun, she said.

Entertainment options included live music, a country fair, vendor booths, food from local restaurants and food trucks as well as a family-friendly atmosphere to allow people to relax while supporting Katy-area nonprofits, Hamilton said.

“It’s a way to bring people together to celebrate our community,” Hamilton said. “Kind of a party coming out of COVID.”

While the pandemic isn’t entirely over, the needs of the community have grown dramatically over the last year and a half, directors at all six organizations said, making fundraising to help community members even more important.

Jon Davis of The Pregnancy Help Center of West Houston said the needs of the community have increased over the last year and he anticipates an increased need for his organization’s clients as the year moves forward and new legislation limiting abortion becomes law later this year. Even before the law becomes effective, he said The Pregnancy Help Center sees about 3,000 clients per year that need help.

Hamilton said Christ Clinic’s workload has increased and clients’ ability to donate to help cover the cost of medicine, staffing and supplies has been greatly reduced.

“We do an average of 15,000 visits a year and 75% of our patients lost their jobs or had a significant decrease in income due to the pandemic,” Hamilton said.

Jennifer Hart of Compassion Katy said her organization is preparing for Operation Back 2 School, a school supply drive that provides brand new backpacks for children who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. Katy ISD has 18 Title I schools wherein at least 40% of students qualify for food assistance and in the district’s Title I schools, about 70% or more of the students qualify for those programs, she said.

The Ballard House Executive Director Kathy Alt said the housing nonprofit never slowed down during the pandemic. Her organization provides a free place to stay for those traveling to the Katy area for the treatment of a life-threatening illness such as cancer.

“We’ve offered free lodging for more than 60,000 nights and never closed down during COVID,” Alt said.

Katy Christian Ministries Executive Director Deysi Crespo said her organization has seen an increased need as well. KCM, which provides counseling, financial aid, crisis intervention and other services to the community, has fought the same problems in the community for the past 37 years, she said. In 2020, KCM distributed about 1.7 million pounds of food and provided about 34,000 hours of counseling across the organization. Midsummer Festival Katy is about addressing the needs of the community while at the same time helping the community heal from the stresses of the pandemic, she said.

“The issues that were happening 37 years ago are still prevalent today,” Crespo said. “With nonprofits joining forces, it’s definitely a benefit for the community to also see that we’re on this journey together. Connecting with the community – like (Hamilton) said, it’s a way of coming out of COVID, to just rejoice even in the midst of chaos, even in the midst of crisis.”

## CHILD WELFARE

from page 1

This involves ensuring children have typical childhood experiences, such as playing school sports or attending a school prom. In addition, WCCWB collaborates with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and court appointed special advocates to provide financial support and resources. WCCWB also works with DFPS to provide financial support and resources to help preserve families.

**Q: What are some of the challenges that children in Waller County face that the Board assists them with?**

A: Youth removed from their home may be placed in an institution, residential facility, foster care home or with a relative anywhere in Texas or the U.S. to live with relatives or receive adequate care. Before the pandemic, Waller County had up to 73 children in care. Last year, this number decreased, but these numbers are gradually increasing. In Waller County, most do not remain here due either to placement with relatives who reside elsewhere or because of the shortage of foster homes here. Many foster care youth placed in Waller County reside with relatives who live in this county or reside in Boys and Girls Country, a residential facility in Waller County.

One of the biggest challenges we face is securing qualified foster homes within Waller County. Anyone can search for private adoption agencies in Region 6 or throughout Texas at <https://bit.ly/3kEV-bgo> to look into being a licensed foster home.

**Q: What is the role of a court appointed special advocate – or CASA – in children’s lives that are involved in the child protection system?**

A: When a child enters the foster care system, a judge may appoint a Court Appointed Special Advocate. CASA volunteers are trained to represent and advocate in the best interests of children involved with CPS. CASA volunteers are assigned to help one child or a set of siblings and are committed to them for at least 12 months. CASA volunteers save taxpayers money and children’s futures by helping children find safe, permanent homes as soon as possible.

CASA volunteers serve as the “eyes and ears” for the judge by researching each child’s situation and making objective recommendations to help children reclaim their childhoods from abuse and neglect. It is ideal of every child to have a CASA volunteer. However, there is currently a shortage of volunteers. Those interested can learn more at <https://bit.ly/3wWfit7>.

**Q: If someone sees a child that is struggling with abuse or neglect, what steps should they take to help that child?**

According to Texas law, anyone suspecting child abuse or neglect in Texas must report it immediately. Reports can be filed by phone at 800-252-5400 or online at [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org).

It is imperative to make reports as soon as possible. Tips to remember when reporting:

- Individuals are not expected to prove maltreatment.
- Provide the name of the child, parent, caregiver, or others involved. At a minimum, describe the child and the home address, daycare center or the child’s school.
- Provide information about the child’s age and condition.

- If the suspected maltreatment occurred in public, describe the victim and the alleged abuser, license plate number and witnesses.

- If you are unsure whether to report, call 800-252-5400 immediately and ask.

**Q: How can people pitch in to help children facing the challenges discussed in these questions?**

There are several ways individuals can get involved.

- Churches can get involved by hosting adoption and foster care informational meetings.

- Become a certified foster parent.
- Volunteer to help WCCWB raise awareness, serve on the fundraising committee, support fundraising efforts or make a donation. Donations can be made in several ways. Donations can be through Paypal or Venmo to WCCWB with the email address [wccwbc@wallercounty.us](mailto:wccwbc@wallercounty.us). Through Amazon Smile, individuals can designate Waller County Child Welfare Board as their charity.

- Become a CASA volunteer.
- Individuals can volunteer to serve on DFPS Regional Child Death Review Committee review panels by sending a statement regarding this interest via email to [wccwbc@wallercounty.us](mailto:wccwbc@wallercounty.us).

- Individuals and organizations can donate NEW items to the Rainbow Room, which supplies merchandise during a youth’s removal and new placement.

- Individuals or businesses can register shooters to participate in our annual sporting clay event fundraiser on October 23, 2021 at [www.co.waller.tx.us/page/wc-cwb\\_sporting\\_clay](http://www.co.waller.tx.us/page/wc-cwb_sporting_clay).

## ROYAL ISD

from page 1



MELANI ALANIS, EDITORIAL INTERN

Members of the Royal ISD Board of Trustees met July 19 at the district’s Performing Arts Center which is attached to Royal High School. During the meeting, they heard from Associate Superintendent Kendra Strange (at podium) regarding the district’s test scores which she said lowered during the 2020-21 school year, but on a level similar to that seen across the state from remote schooling during the pandemic. Seated from left to right: Position 4 Trustee Nathaniel Richardson, Jr., Position 5 Trustee Melissa Woods, President and Position 3 Trustee Michael Glover, Superintendent Rick Kershner, Position 2 Trustee Cheri Fontenot, Position 7 Trustee Rose Jones and Position 6 Trustee Elton Foster.

but we’re providing the facility,” Board President Michael Glover said.

The contract, which narrowly passed with a three-vote majority, was a point of contention as some trustees felt the location chosen to develop into a park, the playground at the Royal ISD Administration Building, was not necessarily where the district would want the facility. While a clear majority approved the agreement, a final tally was unclear at the event because Glover chastised two trustees for abstaining from the vote due to a lack of clarity in the motion. He then tried to re-open the vote on the issue, which was objected to by Position 7 Trustee Rose Jones and Position 6 Trustee Elton Foster. The vote subsequently changed to only Glover voting against the agreement.

According to OSBA, an organization that helps establish rules for school board



**JOSEPH CAMPOS**  
Former Royal ISD  
Position 1 Trustee

meetings, a previously acted upon agenda item may not be opened back up for a new vote.

Campos’ resignation created an opening for the district’s Position 1 trustee seat. Glover explained that the board had multiple options to fill the role via appointment. Either board members could nominate eligible individuals in the district or they could accept applications for the position and follow a subsequent application process, per the board’s legal counsel.

Position 5 Trustee Melissa Woods said she would prefer to have a special election to let the people decide how the position was filled.

Glover and Foster both cited precedence for appointment by the board and the board subsequently approved the application process in a five to one vote with Woods voting against the measure.

The board also heard from members of the Royal ISD Community Advisory Committee regarding that group’s recommendation that the district move forward with the \$99.5 million bond election this fall. Committee members said that, after

touring each of the district’s campuses, it became apparent to them that major renovations and possibly campus replacements were necessary to serve Royal’s student body.

If approved by the board at their next meeting to be placed on the November 2021 ballot and subsequently passed by voters, the bond would provide funding for a new preschool and junior high school as well as renovations for the Early Childhood Center, Royal Elementary, the transportation center and the STEM Academy. Some of the renovations would be to keep the old buildings in operation while new facilities were constructed while others would improve the facilities for ongoing use by an expanding student body.

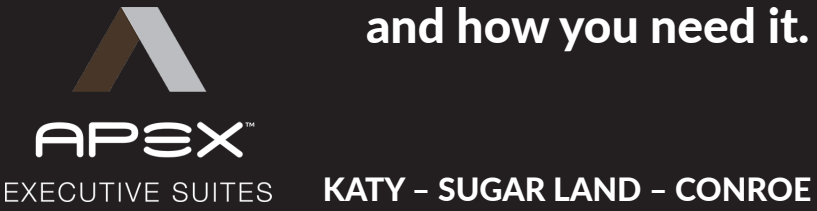
Committee Member John Hovas said he was shocked at the condition of the schools and it was clear to him that the campuses need to be improved upon for students.

“I know most of you guys here on the board,” Hovas said. “I was shocked to see the condition of the schools. I couldn’t believe it. ... I wouldn’t allow my kids to go to the junior high or STEM (Academy).”



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# Biden keeps walking back Trump's border policies

In a move consistent with the Biden administration's walk back of former President Donald Trump's tougher immigration actions and guidelines, the Department of Homeland Security announced it would not pursue time limits on student F-1 visas.

Like virtually all of the dozens of visas available to foreign nationals through the federal government, the F-1 visa is wrought with fraud. When President Trump introduced his proposed restrictions, he said his administration was acting in the best interest of American students.

To support its claim that tighter oversight is necessary, the Trump administration gave an example of an international student who remained in the U.S. for 30 years while allegedly attending a dance school. President Trump could have referenced many more student visa fraud incidents.

In 2019, Immigration and Customs Enforcement indicted eight foreign nationals with conspiracy to commit student visa fraud.

Going back to 2001, at least one of the 9/11 terrorists also entered on an F-1 visa, while others originally entered on different categories of non-immigrant temporary visas. Under Trump's plan, most visas would expire after four years, even if the student needed more time to complete a degree – students born in several dozen countries in the Middle East, Asia and Africa would be limited to two-year terms.

An F-1 visa doesn't have a fixed expiration date, but is instead tied to the course of the study program's ending date. Overstays are frequent, put students into unlawfully present immigration status and give them an easy opportunity to enter the underground employment market if they present, as many do, falsified job applications.

Some F-1 students studying science, technology, engineering and math may qualify for Optional Practical Training, a program that allows more than 250,000 foreign students to work in the U.S. at white-collar occupations for up to three years. The original intent of the student visa was abandoned long ago. Its purposed had been to offer an international resident an opportunity to get a U.S. degree, return home and then use the acquired knowledge to improve his home country. Today, student visas have, through OPT, morphed into a guest worker program.



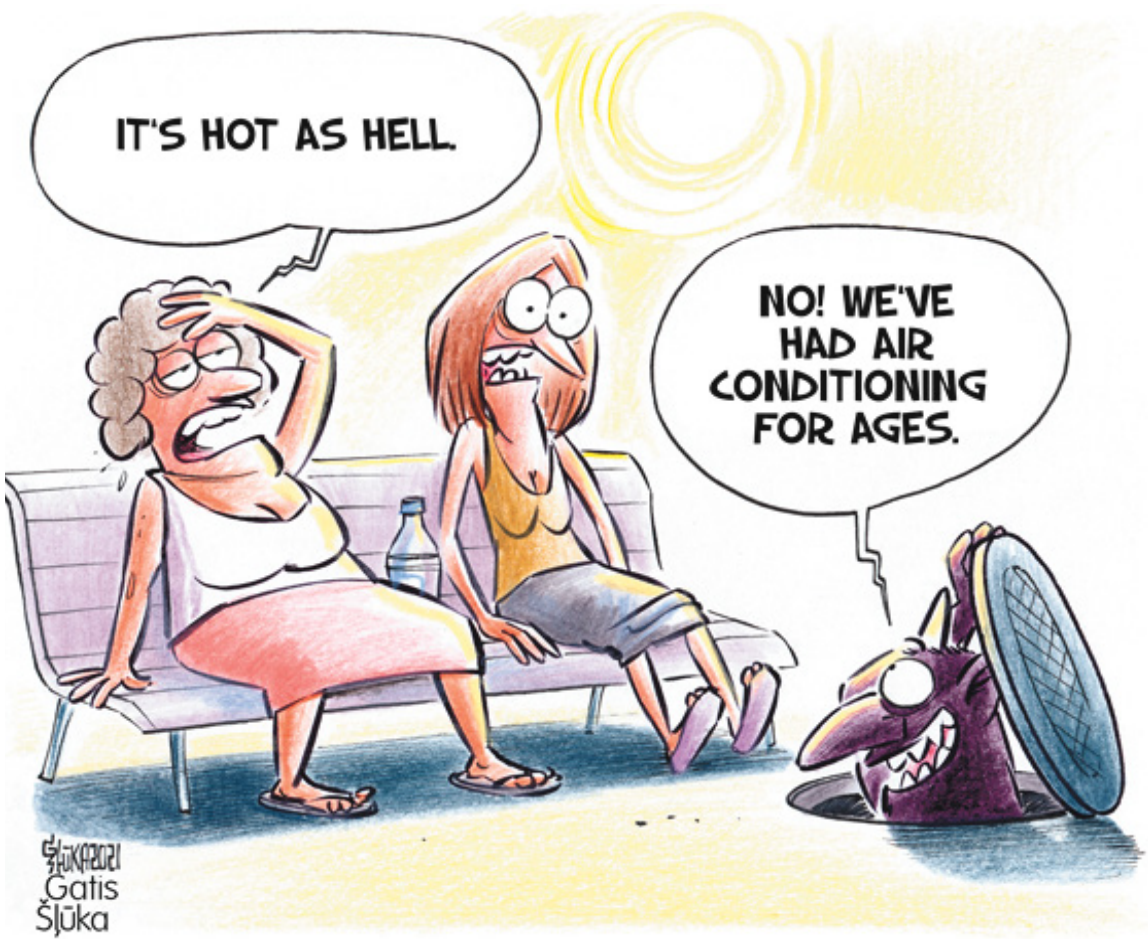
The Biden administration defended its decision to terminate President Trump's more restrictive guidelines by pointing to the comments made on the Federal Register, which said it had received overwhelmingly critical feedback. From the approximately 32,000 comments submitted, 99 percent were opposed.

As part of the big picture, however, 32,000 comments are insignificant. Each year, pre-pandemic, about 1.1 million international students enrolled in U.S. higher learning institutions. You can assume they would oppose more rigid regulations, as would thousands of university professors, administrators, immigration advocates and lawyers.

In its story titled, "The Biden Administration Won't Pursue Fixed Time Limits on Student Visas," The Wall Street Journal quoted immigration advocate Miriam Feldblum, the The Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration's executive director. Feldblum, who had previously opined that time limits would harm international students and the schools that want to enroll them, hailed Biden's reversal.

Omitted from Feldblum's statement is that universities profit handsomely from the higher tuition they receive from overseas students, who displace qualified U.S. kids whose parents have paid into the university system for decades. At the University of Virginia, for example, an in-state student pays \$423 per credit while a non-Virginia resident pays more than three times that sum, \$1,552.

No doubt having to occasionally renew status would be a nuisance. But when the international student considers the trade-off, the small effort is well worth the future benefits: a U.S. university diploma and the earnings potential it represents in exchange for additional administrative paperwork. If the prospective student finds the process too cumbersome, the international learner is not required in the U.S. Worldwide, more than 25,000 universities accept applications each and every year.



# Dance like dad's not watching

Although some men long to have a son to carry on their family name (and their male-pattern baldness), I've always felt lucky to have three daughters.

Having girls is more interesting for me since I've been doing the whole boy thing for almost fifty years – and not all that well. Also, when the girls were very young, my patriarchal, narrow-minded, predisposed, non-pc, androcentric (I got that one from the thesaurus) expectations told me that, with daughters, I might be able to avoid spending every Saturday for a decade watching my children play sports.

I know it seems un-American, but even when I played little-league baseball, the only enjoyment I ever got out of it was visiting the concession stand for Pop Rocks, grape Shasta, and some artificial cheese-product nachos after the game. It also didn't hurt that there was usually a cute, older teenage girl working the stand who I hoped was into slightly chubby younger guys with chili bowl haircuts and glasses thick enough to double as a binocular telescope.

I'm sure you're ahead of me by now, but I soon realized that even if I managed to avoid branding my cheeks with hot metal bleacher imprints at a ballpark every Saturday afternoon, there are a plethora of other equally-excruciating spectator events lying in wait for unsuspecting dads of girl children.

One of these ordeals I experienced recently was a day-long dance recital. Our family attended because my eldest and most expensive daughter participates in every possible



activity that requires me to watch a procession of other people's children perform for hours on end while I wait to see her finally do her thing for three whole minutes.

What I first noticed about the recital (other than the lack of a concession stand) was the staggering amount of sequins. Now, don't get me wrong. I like sequins as much as the next adult male who isn't a figure skater. I fondly remember many a grade-school craft project that involved gluing sequins onto paper plates, cotton balls, toilet paper tubes, and other household goods sacrificed in the name of art. But I've never witnessed a Mt. Kilauea of sequins like I saw at this dance recital. Every dancer seemed to have dipped herself in Karo syrup and performed a swan dive into an enormous vat of sequins. And judging by the cost of the two costumes we purchased, these sequins may have once adorned a garment worn by Cleopatra herself – or a Kardashian.

Once my retinas had adjusted to this sequin throat punch and I'd used my iPhone to invest in the international sequin cartel, I soon became distracted by my fellow spectators. Based on their audience etiquette, many of them had never attended a public

performance of any kind, unless you count watching domestic disputes in the Walmart parking lot.

Several audience members felt compelled to screech out the names and nicknames of every performer they knew before, during and after each dance. (I think I heard "Go, Nay-nay!!!" at least fifty times – and not for the same person.)

Then there were the babies and toddlers doing what babies and toddlers do when you take them to a two-hour event featuring lots of earsplitting techno music and flashing lights. That's right, Sherlock as played by Benedict Cumberbatch, they don't sleep, and thanks to them, neither could I.

Finally, the pre-teens seated behind us spent the show debating, at full volume, which Disney Princesses the dancers were depicting on stage at any given moment while kicking the back of my seat. (After the show, I located my spleen several rows up.)

Despite all of these minor irritations, I beamed with pride when my own be-sequined daughter took the stage and danced her heart out. When she came out to the lobby after the recital, I spread my arms to catch my little dancer in a warm fatherly embrace. Instead, she handed me a bundle of hangers, garment bags and costumes, and ran off to take Instagram photos with friends.

Oh, well, I know she loves and appreciates me, and at least she isn't playing baseball. But I do miss the nachos.



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TRIBUTES

Jack Robert Jungers passed away on Monday, July 12, 2021, in Katy, Texas, at the age of 90. He was born in Centralia, Illinois, on December 10, 1930, to Gus and Lucille Jungers. He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Mary Blanche (Huff) Jungers; sister Judith Swaim; sons Joel Jungers (Lea), Jeffrey Jungers (Elizabeth), and Lindsay Jungers (Emily); stepdaughter Carla Justus (Dennis); stepson John Jordan (Connie), and stepson Jim Jordan (Sue). He is also survived by eight grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, eleven step-grandchildren, thirteen step-great-grandchildren, and three step-great-great-grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his parents, brothers William and Kenneth Jungers, sister Wanda Hesemann, and stepson Arthur Jordan and his wife (Dee).

Jack's entire working career was spent in the Alton Community Unit School District in Alton, Illinois, as a teacher and administrator. He graduated from Centralia Township High School and received a Bachelor's degree in Education in 1952 and a Master's degree in History in



JACK ROBERT JUNGERS  
1930-2021

1957 from Southern Illinois University - Carbondale, graduating with high honors. He did post-graduate work at the University of Illinois and Bradley University. He was a member of Phi Kappa Phi, National Honor Society, and Phi Mu Alpha, a national music fraternity. He was a member and past president of the Gateway East Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa; a life member of the National Education Association; and served as President of the Alton Education Association.

Jack was active in various musical groups and choirs beginning in high school

and continuing in college as a member of the Madrigal Singers. He was often a soloist for weddings and church worship services. He also sang in a number of church choirs and the Houston Senior Choir. A lifelong member of the Christian Church, he was, at the time of his death, an active member of Grace Christian Church, now Current - A Christian Church in Katy, Texas.

The family will receive friends from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, July 18, 2021, at Current - A Christian Church, where funeral services will be held at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday with Pastor Darren Walters officiating. Interment will follow at Katy Magnolia Cemetery.

Those wishing to make memorial gifts may do so to Current - A Christian Church, 26600 Westheimer Pkwy, Katy, Texas 77494.

Condolences may be expressed at [www.Schmidt-FuneralHome.net](http://www.Schmidt-FuneralHome.net).

Funeral services held under the direction of: Schmidt Funeral Home 1344 W. Grand Parkway South Katy, Texas 77494 (281) 391-2424

Janet passed away on July 14, 2021 and per her wishes, she is being cremated and no public service is being held. She was born on July 16, 1944 in Odin, Illinois where she lived in the area until 1968. Her parents were Les Meredith and Beulah (McClland) Meredith. She was the third of four children and graduated high school from Odin School and later earned her degree in accounting. During her lifetime, she worked for various oil and gas companies in Houston, Texas as an accountant until she retired in 2014.



JANET (MEREDITH) FYKE  
1944-2021

She married John W. Fyke in 1965 at Bethel Baptist church in Odin, Illi-

nois. For the past 45 years she lived in Katy, Texas and both she and John enjoyed hobbies such as golfing, sailing, riding on John's motorcycle to explore 46 of the lower 48 states and playing with her grandson.

She is survived by her husband John, daughter Miranda (Fyke) O'Keefe, son in law Brian O'Keefe, grandson Brady O'Keefe, sister Shirley Farthing and brother Dale Meredith. She was preceded in death by her mother and father and sister Kathryn Beasley.

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This new book will contain a credible "unified theory of everything" that can explain the very basics of science. Albert Einstein predicted that someone "off the street" was going to do this someday. After 53 years (at approx. year 2000), I decided to include God at every step of the process of trying to come up with a scientific "Theory of Everything". Prior to this, it was about the "only thing" I felt I had not been successful at inventing or figuring out. --- You see, God had already given me the gift of inventing at age 9-10, in His response to my Second Major Prayer. --- By the year 2014, God had allowed me to assemble sufficient knowledge that I felt 95%, of what I needed to figure out, had been accomplished.

One thing I had always wished for, especially as I was approaching the age of 40, is for God to speak to me. Well, when God did speak to me, I liked my first message from God about as much, I suppose, as Abraham liked his message from God, when he was told to sacrifice his son. But God was testing both of us! God was also making us stronger.

There are still two major topics in life to be addressed, prior to publishing the new book. One is a major release of scientific information of the new theory across the U.S.A. The second is starting an evangelical ministry.

Author of new book is a Chemistry graduate (B.S. 1971/M.S. 1978) of Texas A&M (A&I) in Kingsville, TX. He also attended S.A.C. in San Antonio. He has additional hours at SWTSU, Texas Tech U., Boston College, Westinghouse PWR. He has worked at Texas Uranium Operations as Chief Chemist, at South Texas Nuclear Project as Nuclear Chemist during pre-startup, and retired from City of Houston where he was in charge of Technical Services Section of Bureau of Air Quality Control. Owner of BAKER'S BOOKS is also the author of [God's Amazing Answer To Prayer](#), in 2012.

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BY MEGAN BIASIOLLI  
EDITORIAL INTERN

Friday, July 16, Drew Lasker and Yvonne Harris held a private showing for the movie “Space Jam: A New Legacy” starring LeBron James to promote the launching of their organization, the 21 Foundation, a nonprofit organization that helps young student-athletes.

“This gives me an opportunity to work with kids that were like me who couldn’t afford basketball training, who couldn’t afford all these other resources,” Lasker said.

Lasker is a professional basketball player that plays for the Newcastle Eagles in the British Basketball League. He was born and raised in the Katy area and is a graduate of Katy High. Lasker spends his summers giving back to the Katy community through his other organization, TrainHarder 21. Lasker lives in Britain nine months of the year, then comes back to Katy from May to August. In the summer months he helps train and mentor students. Lasker has never spent a summer in Britain even though he has lived there for 16 years, he said.

The 21 Foundation focuses on training

and mentoring student-athletes who are not able to afford it on their own. The foundation not only works with student athletes on their basketball skills, but also helps guide them in other aspects of their life.

21 Foundation Co-Founder Yvonne Harris first met Lasker when he was training her son. They were able to get to know each other and later form 21 Media and now the 21 Foundation. The foundation was inspired by the lives of Lasker’s grandmother, Vera Lott, and Harris’ mother, Carol Yvonne Plummer Harris.

Lasker and Harris have many plans to help student athletes financially and academically. They will reach out to different lower-income areas. Lasker said they have reached out to a few schools and asked the coaches to point out two or three students that would benefit from basketball lessons but cannot afford them. Then, 21 Foundation will provide them with scholarships. The scholarships can either be used for the 21 Foundation or for another organization of the student’s choice. One of the areas that 21 Foundation will contribute to is the community of Brookshire, he said.

The 21 Foundation will also focus on improving the skills of student athletes’ academic success through math and reading camps. Lasker said he loved math when he was growing up, so he can help students who have difficulty with the subject. He will teach math through statistics and analytics by having kids watch sports and test them over percentages and how many points were scored in the game.

Those interested in being a part of the 21 Foundation program can go to drewlasker.com under the 21 Foundation section to volunteer or donate. Lasker and Harris are working to build an individual website specialized for the 21 Foundation. People can also book a training session on his website drewlasker.com with his organization, TrainHarder 21.

“I want to provide these kids with something I never had,” Lasker said.



MEGAN BIASIOLLI  
Drew Lasker (left) and Yvonne Harris (right) have formed the 21 Foundation, an organization designed to help lower-income students in the Katy area succeed both athletically and academically.



Justin Wang is a 15-year-old international chess master who lives in the Katy area and is competing in the U.S. Juniors and U.S. Senior Chess Championship in Saint Louis, Missouri from last Friday through July 26. Wang said he fell in love with chess while playing with his brother at age 7 and it has helped him make friends over the years.  
COURTESY ELLEN ZHANG

## Local teen heads to U.S. Jr. Championship chess tournament

BY R. HANS MILLER  
NEWS EDITOR

Justin Wang said he started playing chess at the age of seven with his brother. Now, Wang has earned the honor of being one of only 10 young men to play in the 2021 U.S. Juniors and U.S. Senior Chess Championship held from Friday through July 26.

“I’m really excited to play in the tournament because I’ve tried to get qualified for the tournament for many years, so this is a good opportunity to play against many strong players and one of the strongest round-robin tournaments,” Wang said.

This year’s competition will be held in Saint Louis, Missouri and hosted by the Saint Louis Chess Club, according to a press release from the club. The top 10 junior, girls junior and over 50 players from across the U.S. will compete in three separate events with cash prizes and scholarship awards in the prize pot. Winners of the junior and girls’ junior divisions will each receive a \$6,000 scholarship provided by U.S. Chess and Dewain Barber. Wang, who is 15 years old and lives in the Katy area, will be competing in the U.S. Juniors event.

To win, Wang will need to

**Editor’s note:** Keep an eye on [www.katytimes.com](http://www.katytimes.com) for an update on Wang’s performance at the tournament.

face 10-year-old Grandmaster John Burke who is returning to defend his 2020 U.S. Junior Championship title.

Given his history, Wang may have what it takes to make that happen. He became a U.S. Chess Federation National Master in 2015, just three years after he began his chess career. He has previously played in Saint Louis, winning the 2017 Saint Louis Invitational and scoring his first win as an international master. He scored his second international master win in the 2018 World Open and went back to Saint Louis for a third international master win, taking the crown at the Saint Louis Invitational’s IM section.

To prepare, Wang said he’s been playing regularly and reviewing each game to see where he could perform better each time. During the tournament though, he said he doesn’t have any particular strategy or goal outside of playing solid games.

“I basically just try to play high-quality games in the tournament,” Wang said.

## More double-digit growth for Port Houston

BY NITYA HOSUR,  
EDITORIAL INTERN

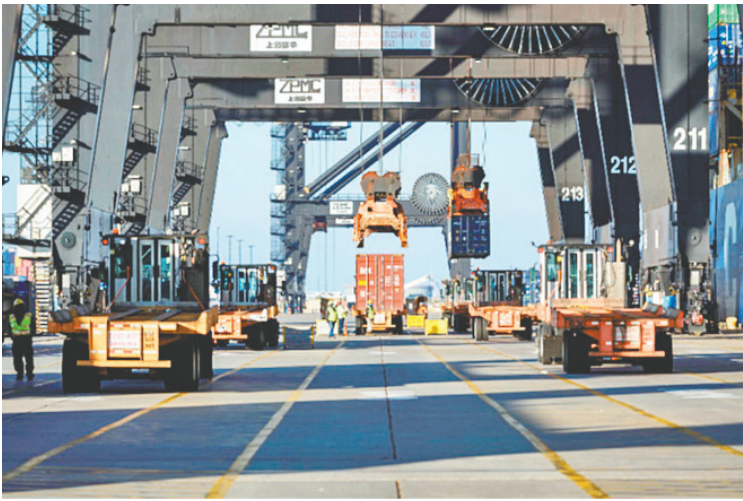
Port Houston saw record growth in June of this year in comparison with June 2020. There is a 13% increase in TEUs – twenty-foot equivalent units – since last year, with more than 1.6 million TEUs processed year-to-date.

“Houston is a growth market and at Port Houston we’re poised and ready for continued growth. As an operating port, we are here to meet the changing needs of vessels and businesses and continue adding new services and additional capacity to move the world and drive regional prosperity,” said Port Houston Executive Director Roger Guenther.

With the pandemic lessening and more ports opening, the Houston port is busier than ever. This June had the highest record for containers in June for Port Houston, with just less than 293,000 TEUs. June was also the best month ever for loaded imports, with a total of about 140,000 TEUs. This June’s statistics reflect a 39% increase since June 2020’s volume.

The total tonnage has also seen an increase, rising 7% in June and 2% year-to-date. Despite the steel and auto volumes dipping in June, the year-to-date is still rising with a 3% increase in steel and a 44% increase in vehicles compared to last year.

The rapid increase in volume at Port Houston can be attributed to the introduction of the vaccine and the reopening of many consumer facilities according to the press release from the Port of Houston.. Consumer spending is rising and is expected to continue upward. Port Houston is responsible for millions of cargo vessels and TEUs and is rising to meet the challenges of increased spending, as well



Port Houston operates the Bayport Container Terminal. Activity at the terminal has seen a steady increase this year and a great improvement over last year as an economic indicator, according to data from the port.  
COURTESY PORT HOUSTON

as the needs of corporate associations.

With this rapid growth, Port Houston has shifted their sights onto the construction of infrastructure. Port Houston has renewed

their Bayport Terminal permit through the U.S Army Corps of Engineers, granting the port authorization of construction for the next five years on the Bayport Terminal. This ultimately al-

lows Port Houston to move forward with its master plan for the construction and building of the terminal, which consists of completing Wharf 6, Container Yard 2 and other projects.

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Travers & Travers is a busy family law office in Katy looking for a full-time employee.

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- Ability to work well both independently and within a team concept.  
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### LAKE MANAGEMENT Company in Katy seeking FIELD SERVICE TECHNICIAN.

Outside work, hands on training, no experience necessary. Benefits available. Pay depends on previous work experience. Apply in person - Mon-Fri: 9am to 3pm @ 4110 Katy Hockley Cut-Off Rd, 77493. **281-391-3688**

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### 950 PUBLIC NOTICES

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

of property to satisfy landlord's lien.

Sale to be held ONLINE AUCTION [StorageTreasures.com](http://StorageTreasures.com).

The facility Bear Creek Mini Storage is located at, 17730 Keith Harrow Blvd, Houston, TX 77084 Bidding will open at 10:00 am on July 29, 2021 and end at 12:00 pm on August 19, 2021. Property will be sold to the highest bidder for cash. Cleanup and removal deposit will be required. Seller reserves the right to withdraw the property at any time before the sale ends. Property includes contents of space of the following tenants: Tebria Reich, Jessica Lee Black, Christopher Page, Craig Roberts, Octavia Pradia, Jose Navarrete, Rowan & Jon Hirst, Michael Aregawi, Baldemar Benavides.



## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

The City of Pattison/County of Waller, plans to apply for the upcoming Texas Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant(s) from the Texas Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Program of the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), and/or other sources, including Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities, and/or Flood Mitigation Assistance. Accordingly, the City of Pattison, Waller County is seeking to contract with a qualified engineering firm to conduct an engineering study if applicable, determine scope of work and prepare all preliminary and final design plans and specifications, and to conduct all necessary interim and final inspections. These services are being solicited to assist the City of Pattison, Waller County, in its pre-award and post-award engineering services of its proposed HMA project(s). Please submit 1 copy of your proposal of services and a statement of qualifications for the proposed services to City of Pattison, City Secretary, [citysecretary@pattison.texas.gov](mailto:citysecretary@pattison.texas.gov). Proposals shall be received by the City of Pattison, Waller County no later than August 5, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. to be considered. The City of Pattison, Waller County reserves the right to negotiate with any and all individuals or firms that submit proposals, as per the Texas Professional Services Procurement Act and the Uniform Grant and Contract Management Standards. Minority Business Enterprises, Women Business Enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are encouraged to submit proposals. The City of Pattison County of Waller is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Servicios de traducción están disponibles por petición.

## INVITATION TO BIDDERS

Sealed Bids, in duplicate, addressed to Willow Fork Drainage District, Attention: Ms. Wendy Duncan, President, Board of Directors, will be received at the office of the Engineer, LJA Engineering, Inc., 1904 West Grand Parkway North, Suite 120, Katy, Texas 77449, until 10:00 a.m., Local Time, Thursday, August 5, 2021, and then publicly opened and read for "Construction of the 2019 Hurricane Harvey Erosion Repairs on Va1, Va9, and Va12 for Willow Fork Drainage District, Fort Bend County, Texas". Bidders may elect to submit bids electronically via <https://bids.lja.com>. Due to the pandemic and Federal guidelines of not gathering in groups of more than 10 people, people of the public who wish to attend the Bid Opening must do so by telephone. The telephone number for the Bid Opening is 713.358.8400, Access Code 0917176.

Scope of Work of the Contract includes the following: Repairing various slope failures in the District's Channel Network.

Bids received after the closing time will be returned unopened. A non-mandatory audio/web pre-bid conference will be held on Thursday, July 29, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. Local Time. To attend the web-format non-mandatory pre-bid conference, go to <https://micollabuca.ljaeng.com/call/0937122>. To attend the audio format non-mandatory pre-bid conference, dial 713.358.8400, Access Code 0937122.

Each Bid must be accompanied by a Bid Bond or a certified or cashier's check, acceptable to the Owner, in an amount not less than five percent (5%) of the total amount Bid, as a guarantee that the successful bidder will enter into the Contract and execute the Bonds on the forms provided, and provide the required insurance certificates within seven (7) days after the date Contract Documents are received by the Contractor. If a certified or cashier's check is provided, the successful bidder shall deliver, at the bid opening address, the original certified or cashier's check within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt of the bid opening.

Bidding documents may be examined at LJA Engineering, Inc., AGC of Texas, Construct Connect, and Amtek or may be obtained by prospective bidders or suppliers upon payment of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00 non-refundable plus cost of delivery) (\$50.00 for electronic copy) for each set of documents at LJA Engineering, Inc., 1904 West Grand Parkway North, Suite 120, Katy, Texas 77449 or at <https://bids.lja.com>.

A Bidder submitting electronic Bids must submit its Bid and bid securities in compliance with Owner's Order Adopting Section 49.2731 Electronic Bidding Rules and all electronic Bids and bid securities must be submitted through <https://bids.lja.com>. Bidders must register and obtain bidding documents on this website for the required payment amount (if any) to submit an electronic bid.

By submitting a Bid, Bidder acknowledges and agrees that the Contract Documents may be accepted, executed or agreed to through the use of an Electronic Signature, as defined by and in accordance with Owner's Electronic Signature Rules for Construction Contracts.

The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all Bids and to waive all defects and irregularities in bidding or bidding process except time of submitting a Bid. The Successful Bidder, if any, will be the responsible Bidder which in the Board's judgment will be most advantageous to the District and result in the best and most economical completion of the Project.

The requirements of Subchapter J, Chapter 552, Government Code, may apply to this Bid and/or Contract and the Contractor agrees that the Contract can be terminated if the Contractor knowingly or intentionally fails to comply with a requirement of that subchapter.

Willow Fork Drainage District

### 950 PUBLIC NOTICES

### 950 PUBLIC NOTICES

### 950 PUBLIC NOTICES



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS City of Pattison, Waller County

The City of Pattison, Waller County of City of Pattison, Waller County has received an allocation from the American Rescue Plan Act program from the U. S. Department of Treasury and is soliciting proposals to provide administration services for the ARP Act eligible projects. Proposals must be received no later than August 5, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. Please electronically submit your proposal in .pdf format via [citysecretary@pattison.texas.gov](mailto:citysecretary@pattison.texas.gov). and/or submit your proposal to City of Pattison, Waller County, City Secretary, PO Box 223, Pattison, TX 77466, on a thumb drive to the address provided. It is the responsibility of the submitting firm to ensure that the proposal is received in a timely manner. The City of Pattison, Waller County reserves the right to negotiate with any and all individuals or firms that submit proposals and may award one or more contracts to one or more service provider(s). Section 3 Residents and Business Concerns, Minority Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises and Women Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area firms are encouraged to submit proposals. The City of Pattison, Waller County of City of Pattison, Waller County is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Servicios de traducción están disponibles por petición.



## GRANT SERVICES PUBLIC NOTICE

CITY OF PATTISON/WALLER COUNTY is soliciting service providers for one or more Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grants from the Texas Division of Emergency Management, Texas Water Development Board and/or other sources, including Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities, and/or Flood Mitigation Assistance. Accordingly, the CITY OF PATTISON /WALLER COUNTY seeks to contract with a qualified service provider for pre-award and post-award management of HMA project(s). Please submit 1 copy of your proposal of services and a statement of qualifications to Attn: CITY OF PATTISON/WALLER COUNTY, LORENE HARTFIEL, [citysecretary@pattison.texas.gov](mailto:citysecretary@pattison.texas.gov). Proposals must be received by the City of Pattison/Waller County no later than 5:00 pm on August 5, 2021, to be considered. The CITY OF PATTISON/WALLER COUNTY reserves the right to negotiate with any and all proposers, as per the Texas Professional Services Procurement Act and the Uniform Grant and Contract Management Standards. Minority Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises, Women Business Enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are encouraged to submit proposals CITY OF PATTISON/ WALLER COUNTY is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Servicios de traducción están disponibles por petición.

## COMPETITIVE BIDDING NOTICE INVITATION TO BID

The County of Waller proposes to enter into contract for the following items on competitive bid:

### Hot-Mix Asphaltic Concrete Pavement (HMAC) Installation

Bids will be received by the Waller County Auditor, Alan Younts, until 2:00 p.m., August 16, 2021 in the office of County Auditor at 836 Austin Street, Suite 221, Hempstead, Texas 77445. Bids shall be opened by Commissioners' Court at 9:00 a.m. August 18, 2021, in the Waller County Courtroom, Hempstead, Texas 77445. The Court shall award the contract on August 25, 2021, at 9:00 a.m., in the Waller County Courtroom, during open session of Commissioners' Court to the responsible bidder who submits the lowest and best bid.

A contract shall not be awarded to a bidder who is not the lowest dollar bidder meeting specifications unless, before the award, each lower bidder is given notice of the proposed award, and is given an opportunity to appear before the Commissioners' Court and present evidence concerning the lower bidder's responsibility.

Bid award shall be based on either unit price or lump sum as indicated on the BID SHEET.

Method of payment will be by check upon completion and acceptance of the work or the fulfillment of the purchase obligation to the County.

Bid Forms may be downloaded from the Waller County web site at <https://www.co.waller.tx.us/page/BidsAndProposalRequests>.

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## CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

### Absent lawmakers stymie special legislative session

BY GARY BORDERS  
TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

Nearly 60 Texas House Democrats left the state last Monday for Washington, D.C. in an effort to stop passage of a Republican-led elections bill. This in effect blocks all legislation since the House doesn't have a quorum present. As the Austin American Statesman and other media outlets reported, Gov. Greg Abbott has threatened to arrest the absent lawmakers upon their return. While in Washington, the legislators

have met with Vice President Kamala Harris and Democratic senators to push passage of a federal elections bill that is currently stalemated.

The House Democrats have vowed to stay in Washington until the special session ends on Aug. 7. They are using private funds as well as campaign accounts to finance their decampment to the nation's capital and are mounting fundraising campaigns. San Antonio lawmaker Trey Martinez Fischer, one of the leaders of breaking the quorum, said Democrats are spend-

ing \$10,000 a day for hotel rooms and meals.

#### Abbott orders investigation of juvenile justice department

Abbott last week directed the Texas Rangers to investigate "multiple allegations" of potentially illegal behavior among certain staff members of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. The department operates five secure facilities and six halfway houses across the state for

youthful offenders. The move comes after numerous complaints that children in state lockups are subject to widespread sexual assault and other violations.

In late 2020, Texas Appleseed and Disability Rights Texas filed a complaint with the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, claiming "grievous violations of children's constitutional rights." TJJD has been under criticism for more than a decade for what critics term chronic understaffing, abuse and scandal, according to reports.

## ANIMAL

from page 1

While the investigation indicated that animals euthanized at the shelter using sodium pentobarbital were not improperly disposed of, videos provided by Gerber depict Brown and Antinoro discussing the disposal of animals in city dumpsters without proper processes being followed. Chapter 169 of the Texas Administrative Code requires animals euthanized with the drug to be disposed of in an appropriate landfill. Sanitation workers must also be notified that the animals contain the drug so the landfill can properly bury the carcasses to prevent injury to wildlife who may attempt to consume the animal remains. However, in one video Antinoro indicates that he spoke with the driver of a trash truck and asked about the driver's route to identify a dumpster to place animal remains in.

In another, Antinoro and Brown explain to Gerber that they plan to use dumpsters to dispose of feline remains.

"I've got a bag full of cats back there now," Antinoro says in the video. "We can take the bag and the box of kittens."

In the video, Antinoro then explains that he's talking about the dumpster at the city-owned Woodland Park Community Center in Katy, while Brown says they can use any city dumpster.

Diaz said he had spoken with representatives of Texas Pride Disposal, the city's refuse services provider, and confirmed that arrangements had been made by Brown to dispose of the animals in Texas Pride's landfills. He said the landfills are appropriate facilities for disposal of euthanized animal remains.

"(Gerber) didn't know," Diaz said. "She didn't know because she was just there on the weekends and David had already made all those arrangements."

However, it was unclear what notification system had been set up to ensure sanitation workers knew remains would be in specific dumpsters to ensure remains were buried appropriately and that a qualified landfill was selected for trucks carrying them.

Gerber said she was frustrated at the lack of action when she had initially brought her concerns to Diaz in June of 2020 and he did not move forward with the investigation at that time.

Diaz initially said during a March 31 interview that he did not move forward with an investigation at the time because Gerber had not filed a complaint in writing. However, when asked where to find the

requirement in policy for the complaint to be in writing during a follow-up interview on May 6, he said Gerber did not actually make a complaint in June of 2021 but had just discussed concerns informally.

"Okay, so that wasn't a formal complaint," Diaz said. "We visited. We talked about her husband. ... It was a very bland meeting of sorts."

Gerber said during multiple interviews that she had notified Diaz of her concerns regarding practices at Katy Animal Control and had expected him to investigate the issues she'd brought up. However, she also said her main concern now is improvements at the facility and getting her life back in order after a subsequent investigation was opened relating to her actions during the investigation.

#### Moving Forward

While the KPD Internal Affairs investigation has been closed, allegations against Brown related to him assisting Wells in hiding animals from investigators are associated with an ongoing case with Fort Bend County Court at Law 4. Additionally, another KPD investigation into the euthanizing of a cat named Jasper was still underway, Diaz said during the May interview.

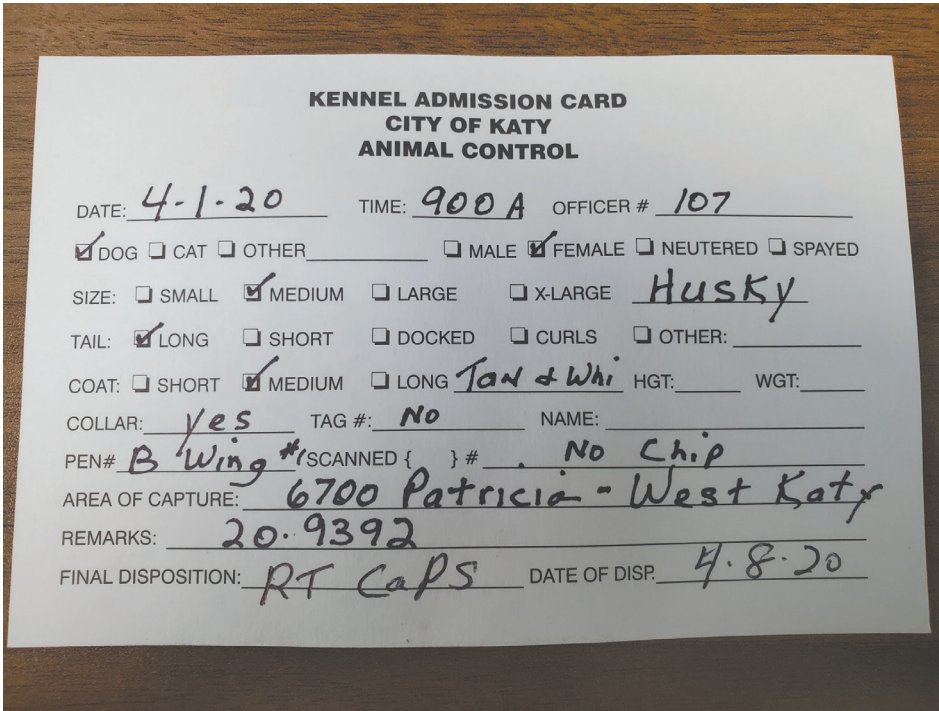
However, the city is moving forward with improvements to the Katy Animal Control program to remedy any shortcomings related to facilities and procedures.

The city adopted Houston Humane Society's animal control policy manual with some adjustments to fit the city's needs, Diaz said. Additionally, the city has formed the Katy Animal Control Advisory Committee made up of members appointed by city council members to examine practices at the facility and bring them in line with modern animal control industry best practices.

Diaz said during a March 8 city council meeting presentation that Katy Animal Control has partnered with the Houston Humane Society to ensure animal remains are properly disposed of. Additionally, euthanasia is now overseen by a veterinarian, he said.

Diaz also said that kennel cards, documents recording animals taken into the shelter, are now being done for each animal taken in and are being processed digitally rather than using easily-lost paper cards.

In a recommendations document submitted to Katy City Council members,



FILE PHOTO

Kennel Cards such as this one were found to be used incorrectly at Katy Animal Control. Multiple animals, usually in family groups, were regularly listed on one card rather than on separate documents. The cards were also not filed correctly, investigators said.

#### How fast does sodium pentobarbital work?

Typically, within five seconds after injection into a vein the animal is unconscious, within 20 seconds the animal stops breathing, within 40 seconds the animal is considered "medically dead" (meaning the heart has ceased circulating blood), and within two minutes the animal is "clinically dead" (meaning all voluntary and involuntary functions have ceased, although muscle twitching may continue for several minutes).

SOURCE: THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

the Katy Animal Control Advisory Group suggested several changes that would cost the city about \$120,000. The majority of the fixes would be relatively inexpensive with a new cat cage, vaccinations, public outreach and pet wellness program costing only about \$10,000. However, a proposed shelter modernization would come in at \$110,000 to

bring the facility up to guidelines set by the Association of Shelter Veterinarians.

A recommendation for a Katy animal outreach coordinator position was also proposed by the advisory group and would not only adjust the job description of an existing part-time position, thus not incurring any additional cost to the city, according to documents provided by a group member. The new position would help establish formal relationships with animal-serving nonprofits, rather than the informal agreements used now.

Council Member Rory Robertson said that, while he is saddened about the overall situation, he feels that the fixes the city is putting in place are important as problems are identified and solutions implemented.

While he could not speak to the closed or ongoing investigation, in a brief conversation, Brown said there is a silver lining to the overall situation.

"One thing about it, it is moving the shelter forward, we've always been shorthanded," said Brown.

*Editor's note: David Brown and Spencer Antinoro were not interviewed for this article because of ongoing investigations through Fort Bend County and Katy PD.*

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#### NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN **ORDINANCE NO. 2996** BEARING THE FOLLOWING CAPTION WAS ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KATY, TEXAS, ON JULY 12, 2021:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF KATY, TEXAS AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES CHAPTER 12, "TRAFFIC AND VEHICLES", SECTION 12.07, "COMMERCIAL VEHICLES", SECTION 12.07.032, "ROUTES ESTABLISHED"; PROVIDING FOR A PENALTY IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$200.00 FOR A VIOLATION, WITH EACH DAY CONSTITUTING A SEPARATE VIOLATION; AND PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY.

#### NOTICE

THE MONDAY, JULY 26, 2021, REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF THE CITY OF KATY, TEXAS, HAS BEEN CANCELLED DUE TO LACK OF QUORUM.

By Order Of Mayor  
And City Council  
City Of Katy, Texas  
July 21, 2021

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## July 15

### Puzzle Answers



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

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# Katy Times





## Royal volleyball aims to soar to new heights

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

2020 was a rough year for the Royal volleyball team.

The coronavirus pandemic was one factor, as it was for all teams, but it was also the first year for coach Tara Schiller.

The Falcons finished with an 0-10 record. This year, they are working towards a new season, and new heights.

"COVID kind of made it difficult for us, with the kids being virtual," Schiller said. "We didn't really have an off-season (to prepare for 2020)."

While they were still able to get some practice, Schiller said there were scheduling issues above and beyond the pandemic.

"It was hard," Schiller said. "We didn't do practices until after school due to scheduling issues. During the athletic period, they would really have a biology class. But it's going to be fixed this year, so I'm excited."

Schiller said the 2021 squad will be young, but hardworking.

"Last year they were sophomores," Schiller said. "This year they will be juniors. They've worked hard. They're definitely putting in the work to do better this year."

Two juniors to watch are Stephanie De La Rosa and Kiara Jones.

"Stephanie was on our junior varsity last year, but when we became one team (the junior varsity players and varsity players formed one roster) she kind of blossomed," Schiller said. "She's worked really hard and she is a lot better now."

De La Rosa plays middle blocker, a front-line position that focuses on blocking and



PHOTOS COURTESY ROYAL ISD/TARA SCHILLER

Royal junior volleyball player Stephanie De La Rosa and her Falcons teammates are working towards the 2021 season.

hitting. When the players rotate, and her spot rotates to the back line, another player comes in for her. De La Rosa said she returns to the court when her spot rotates back to the front line.

De La Rosa was one of those players who began the season on the junior varsity players joined the varsity. She described the season as a "learning experience." She and her teammates have continued working to improve their skills to be competitive as a team. They

See **VOLLEYBALL**, page 10



## LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

Hello, Katy area sports fans.

My name is Tyler Tyre and I have the honor of being named the new sports editor at the Katy Times.

To be named the sports editor in Katy, a town with so much sports history filled with success is such an exciting opportunity for me, and I am absolutely thrilled to be here.

While I may be new to town, admiring Katy sports is not a new thing for me. I spent five years in Cypress growing up, and the success of these programs in the mid-2000s was a huge part of my becoming a sports fanatic.

I moved to Midland in high school before attending Texas Tech University, majoring in journalism with a certificate in sports media.

After spending my high school and college years out in West Texas, I decided it was time to move closer to the place I consider home and took a position as a sports reporter at "The Victoria Advocate."

While in Victoria I focused on coverage of one of the local schools, Victoria West, while also covering the surrounding area, including programs such as Refugio and Shiner in football and Goliad and Vanderbilt Industrial in volleyball. I was able to write stories on two state championship games in my two years at the paper, and the experience I gained by covering the rural communities in the Crossroads was invaluable.

But when I learned that I had a chance to come back to Greater Houston and cover a place like Katy, I knew I had to jump at the opportunity.

I know how much local sports means to our readers and my mission is to deliver quality stories and bring coverage to every school in Katy and Royal ISDs.

I can be reached by email at [tyler.tyre@katytimes.com](mailto:tyler.tyre@katytimes.com) and would love to hear any and all input or sports-related story ideas the community may have.

It is a blessing to be back in the Katy area. I know that I have big shoes to fill here and hope to keep the strong work of the previous sports editor going and serve the Katy community to the best of my ability.



TYLER TYRE  
KATY TIMES  
SPORTS EDITOR

Texas senior Jordan Windle will compete in the 10-meter platform for Team USA at the Tokyo Olympics.



COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS ATHLETICS

## Gibson, Windle ready to represent Longhorns at Tokyo Olympics

BY ZACH SMITH  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Alison Gibson and Jordan Windle are resiliently optimistic.

That attitude has helped the pair of Longhorns stay even-keeled when the college and international competitions got tough.

But it also boosted them to an elite level and helped them earn spots on the U.S. Diving Team, where they will represent the country at the upcoming Tokyo Olympics.

"Both of them consistently brush off any failures and get right back in with funnel focus, knowing that their next opportunity could go great," Texas head diving coach and Team USA Diving assistant coach Matt Scoggin said.

Gibson will compete in the women's synchronized 3-meter springboard, while Windle will take part in the 10-meter platform at the Tokyo Olympics, which runs from July 23 to Aug. 8.

Olympic officials announced last week that there would be no fans in the stands during the games due to rising COVID cases in Japan. Gibson and Windle won't mind having a bit of pressure lifted.

"They're pretty practiced with not having any fans in the stands," Scoggin said. "They're both really good at getting control of their breathing and staying relaxed."

Gibson started swimming at the Texas Swimming Center when she

**"Both of them consistently brush off any failures and get right back in with funnel focus, knowing that their next opportunity could go great."**

— MATT SCOGGIN, TEAM USA DIVING ASSISTANT COACH

See **DIVING**, page 10



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COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS ATHLETICS

Former Texas diver Alison Gibson will compete in the women's synchronized 3-meter springboard for Team USA at the Tokyo Olympics.

## DIVING

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was an eight-year-old. She was walking around the swimming pool and eventually met Scoggin, who suggested she give diving a shot.

“I was like, ‘No! I’m a swimmer! I’m going to go to the Olympics for swimming,’” Gibson said.

When her youth swim program got a new coach a few months later that cut her days in the pool down, she asked her parents if she could spend one day in the diving well.

“I fell in love with the sport, and now Coach Scoggin is taking me

to the Olympics,” Gibson said. “It kind of came full circle. The journey itself has been difficult, but I’ve had a lot of fun along the way.”

People always told Gibson that she had Olympic-level talent, but it was just the love of the sport that kept her going.

Gibson won the 2017 NCAA Title in 1-meter diving, won three Big 12 Championships, and is a four-time All-American. She has represented the United States on two occasions at the FINA World Championships and once at the

World University Games.

When she did get burnt out or frustrated, Gibson reminds herself why she started diving and why she loves it so much.

“If you can remind yourself why you love what you’re doing, it revives your soul,” Gibson said.

Windle was born in Cambodia and adopted by Jerry Windle when he was an infant. His diving abilities were noticed when he was seven years old at a summer camp, and two years later, he won a National Title.

“My dad has sacrificed so much throughout my life,” Windle said. “He’s given me what I needed to succeed and I’m taking that as far as can, and so far, it’s worked out. The emotion he showed after the (Olympic Trials) showed how much love he has for me and it makes me want to work hard and make him proud.”

Windle’s career diving credentials are impressive and include six junior national championships, seven senior national championships and two World Champion-

ship qualifications with Team USA.

With the Longhorns, he was the NCAA Platform Champion in 2019 and 2021, is a nine-time All-American, five-time Big 12 Champion and was named the Big 12 Diver of the Year three years in a row.

“This is the biggest meet of anyone’s career, so I’m trying to treat it like an average meet,” Windle said. “But in the back of my mind, I know this is going to be something incredible, and a great experience. This has been a 15-year journey, and I finally get to go to Olympics.”

**“Last year they were sophomores. This year they will be juniors. They’ve worked hard. They’re definitely putting in the work to do better this year.”**

— TARA SCHILLER, ROYAL VOLLEYBALL COACH



COURTESY ROYAL ISD/TARA SCHILLER

Royal junior volleyball player Stephanie De La Rosa and her Falcons teammates are working towards the 2021 season. (Tara Schiller)

## VOLLEYBALL

from page 10

have practiced four days a week over the summer.

In addition, De La Rosa recently attended a volleyball camp at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches.

“It’s a really nice school, and a really nice campus,” De La Rosa said. “I learned more about passing, blocking, and scoring. It helped me grow as a player.”

Though she is junior, De La Rosa is thinking about her future. She said she hopes to attend college and study engineering, possibly civil engineering. She hopes to play volleyball in college, as well.

But first, there is the upcoming Falcons season. De La Rosa said her goals are to make the varsity team, help bring the team together, and continue to improve her skills as a player.

Schiller described Jones as her “libero,” or defensive specialist, from the beginning of last season.

“This year, I’m excited to see what she can do for us, along with the rest of the back

row,” Schiller said.

Players focused on improving their skills in offseason training that began in January. Their strength and conditioning practices began June 7.

“I’m looking forward to the upcoming season, De La Rosa said.”

The Falcons are looking forward to their season opener, set for August 10 at Fort Bend Willowridge. Royal competes in District 24-4A, along with Bellville, El Campo, Navasota, Sealy, and Wharton.

Bellville won the district title last season, with a 26-4 record (6-1 in district). Sealy finished with a 14-6 record (9-2 record).

Schiller enters her second season at Royal after two years at Paetow and a stint at Cy Springs before that. With a full practice schedule and things returning to a pre-pandemic normal, she believes that the program will reach a new level.

“I’m just excited to see the growth of this program over the next couple of years,” Schiller said.

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