

THE Katy News

Katy's ONLY Locally Owned Newspaper

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Community Events

Send Calendar listings to:
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FEB 2-4
SLHs Studio VII presents **Big Fish**.
SLHs Performing Arts Center. Please contact Box Office for tickets 281.237.2836 or on line purchase www.studiovii.org. Performances are 7 p.m. each evening and 2 p.m. Matinee on Saturday. Tickets go on Sale 20 January.

FEB 4
Celebrity Chili Bowl Katy 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Rhodes Stadium
1733 Katy Fort Bend Rd.
The city of Katy will host the 16th annual Celebrity Flag Football Challenge featuring local celebrities like Andy Dalton and Sage Northcutt in conjunction with Celebrity Sweat and Katy ISD. The tailgate and chili cook off portion of the event will last until noon and will incorporate a variety of other activities, including live entertainment, vendors, autograph sessions, celebrity chefs, and a kids zone. Proceeds from the cook off will go to the Katy Rotary Club and will be used to fund scholarships. For more information, contact the City of Katy at 281-391-4800. www.katytailgate.com www.facebook.com/katytailgate.

FEB 9
Third Annual Sweetheart Dinner and Auction 6:00 p.m.
Katy Elks Lodge
1050 Katy Fort Bend Rd.
The Katy Elks Lodge will host their third annual Sweetheart Dinner and Auction. Dinner is homemade and locally catered. We will have live as well as silent auction items. All proceeds go to the Texas Elks Children's Services, Inc., a non-profit organization that has two major state-wide projects supporting special needs children in our local community. Tickets are \$25. This is a non-smoking event. Please RSVP to katyelksweetheart@gmail.com.

FEB 11 & 12
Heart of Katy Craft Show
Katy High School
6331 Hwy Blvd.
Sat, Feb 11 - 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sun, Feb 12 - 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.
For more information, email heartofkatycraftshow@gmail.com

Katy Hardware to Double Space in New Location

From approximately 5,000 to 11,500 square feet, Katy Hardware should be in their new building sometime in March...that's the plan.

By Tom Behrens

A fixture on Avenue B in Historic Downtown Katy for decades, Katy Hardware will be relocating to its soon to open new location—625 Pin Oak Road—in March. Grand opening will probably take place in April. The new building, 11,500 square foot space, will more than double its current location.

Katy Hardware has been located at Ave B for 35 years at least. The new location is located next to what used to be Johnson Hardware. The Columbus based couple, Mickey and Kay Powers have been the proprietors for the last 15 years. Originally the store was never affiliated with any other hardware store chain. "We bought our merchandise from a variety of vendors," said Katy. "When we move to our new store we will be an Ace store."

Mickey said he feels operating the store is his way of giving back to the community. "I've had a wide variety of experiences in my life from working construction to agriculture, farming and ranching, and for a lot home repair stuff," he said. "I can use my knowledge and experiences to help people when they come in." He gets a lot of satisfaction in showing people another way of doing something that's maybe easier.

"Our roots are a traditional hardware store," said Kay. "We still cut and thread pipe." Store employees also cut glass and make screens for doors and windows. "I don't think there are too many people around who do that anymore."

The new location will have twice the amount of retail space. In the building next door to the retail showroom will have the lumber and the bag goods such as concrete mix and sand. It will have two drive throughs so customers can drive in. "We load you up and you drive out," said Kay. The new location will also have some rental tools.

At the present location Katy Hardware has treated and untreated lumber, but it was in two buildings across the street from the NAPA Auto Parts store. "It was really always awkward trying to tell customers where they will find their lumber purchases," explained Kay. "With the new location, everything will be all together."



Kay Powers, co-owner of Katy Hardware shows off the new building at 625 Pin Oak Road. The new Katy Hardware store will open in March, 2017. Photo by Debi Beauregard.

The new Pin Oak location will have at least seasonal plants to start with as well as plenty of parking. "Lots of customers have already commented that will be really nice. We have gotten so busy, and along with the customers from NAPA backing up, it's really kind of dangerous," said Kay.

Fifteen years ago a mutual friend told them about the emerging opportunity to purchase Katy Hardware. "It looked like a good idea," Kay remarked, "Our kids have grown up in the business and it has worked out really well."

Road Closures Could Impact Commutes This Week

Road closures in the downtown area and near Harris County's NRG Stadium could present challenges for commuters during the next week. The Harris County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management and its transportation partners strongly advise motorists with workplaces or appointments in these locations to plan alternate routes and allow for additional transit time.

Various streets in the vicinity of the George R. Brown Convention Center and Discovery Green have been closed to create a pedestrian-friendly environment for attendees of the NFL Experience and Super Live. Closures will be in effect, all day, through February 6, the day after Super Bowl 51.

In addition, beginning on Thursday, February 2, 2017, Kirby Drive directly adjacent to NRG Stadium will be closed to vehicle traffic until Monday, February 6, 2017. Murworth Drive will also be closed directly west of the stadium to assist in game-day parking lot access.

METRO advises bus riders to allow extra time for potential disruptions from these road closures. Additional information on bus and rail schedules is available at www.ridemetro.org.

All information on road closures and conditions is subject to change. Residents should check www.housuperbowl.com/transportation daily for the latest information.



Road Closures associated with the Super Bowl 51 activities this week will affect drives beginning Thursday, February 2nd through Monday, February 6th. This map and more can be found at <http://bit.ly/2jdXvN7>.

Street Closures

- Polk Street (between Austin and LaBranch)
- Dallas Street (between Austin and LaBranch)
- LaBranch Street (between Walker and Bell)
- Surrounding Discovery Green:
- Avenida De Las Americas
- McKinney Street
- Lamar Street

Katy ISD Celebrates Arrival of Super Bowl 51

Katy ISD, the City of Katy and Celebrity Sweat are excited to host the 16th Annual Celebrity Flag Football Challenge prior to Super Bowl 51 Game Day. Events will include tailgating, a chili cook-off, celebrity chefs, food trucks, music, and a star studded line-up including Doug Flutie, Redskins QB Kirk Cousins, two fan favorites from UFC – Sage Northcutt, a local Katy native, and Anthony "Rumble" Johnson. NFL favorites include: Michael Bennett, Seattle Seahawks, Johnathan Cyprien, Jaguars, Kwon Alexander, Bucs, Brandon Marshall, Broncos and a pregame with Katy ISD. Seven Katy ISD high school bands will also be part of the performances on February 4th from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Rhodes Stadium located at 1733 Katy Fort Bend Road.

Tickets available at the door for \$20. Children under 5 are free.



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- Plan ahead so your estate can stay in your family



Andrew Kulha, Native Houstonian Estate Planning Attorney

Upcoming Events:
 Richmond | Saltgrass | February 15 | 11:30 - 1:00 p.m.
 Kingwood | Chachi's | February 16 | 11:30 - 1:00 p.m.
 Katy | Legacy at Falcon Point | February 21 | 6 - 7:30 p.m.
 Katy | The Cellar Door | February 23 | 11:30 - 1:00 p.m.

Space is Limited! Call (832) 844-0410 to register OR
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Well-Known Restaurateur and Renowned Chef Debut Steakhouse in Fort Bend

Sammy's Steakhouse brings a mouth-watering dining experience to the Richmond, TX community

Executive Chef Ja'Nel Witt of Hell's Kitchen fame is showcasing her culinary talent at the newly opened Sammy's Steakhouse in Richmond. Restaurateur Sammy Vela owns five successful sports grills and has added an upscale location catering to steak and wine lovers.

"We saw an opportunity to serve the residents of Fort Bend County who have previously traveled to Houston for a high quality steakhouse experience," says Vela. "This new concept, complete with valet parking, is a first for Richmond residents. Now customers can enjoy the finest cuts of meat prepared to perfection in a dining experience close to home."

Chef Witt's culinary prowess is undeniable. She was the \$250,000 Season 11 winner of Gordon Ramsey's Hell's Kitchen and has debuted a delectable assortment of pasta dishes, classic seafood and poultry, and exciting steak pairings. A soft opening on January 14 resulted in rave reviews for melt-in-your-mouth certified and prime steak selections, delicious desserts including poached pears and the flourless chocolate cake with espresso ganache, as well as meatball and shrimp cocktail appetizers.

The full menu features starters, salads and generous side dishes that blend comfort, soul and artisan qualities. Highly recommended items such as southern corn succotash, roasted garlic-mascarpone mashed potatoes and green chili-smoked gouda mac &

cheese delight taste buds while satisfying the most exacting customer. Desserts such as scrumptious carrot cake bread pudding, lemon tart with toasted meringue, and chai tea spiced crème brûlée add an exquisite ending to a delicious dining adventure.

An experienced staff ensures that Sammy's Steakhouse delivers on its promises. General Manager Bill Loveday has an international background in hospitality and oversees one of the most talked about wine lists in the area. The extensive wine bar offers more than 20 selections by the glass alone, and an incredible array of whites and reds by the bottle. Customers who enjoy wine dinners and tastings are invited to join a wine club with lockers. Specialty cocktails and a happy hour bar menu add a festive ambiance. "This is your neighborhood steakhouse and wine paradise-upscale, yet with a warm and friendly atmosphere," says Loveday.

Utmost attention to detail, expert technique, and true passion are the hallmarks of Sammy's Steakhouse. Enjoy a romantic evening out, or bring the family for cuisine that exceeds expectations. The restaurant is conveniently located at 7035 W Grand Pkwy #10, Richmond, TX 77406. Discover all the restaurant offers on the website and connect on social media. Call 281-762-0866 for more information.

Learn more at sammys-steakhouse.com.

Katy Taste Fest Serving Fun and Food for a Good Cause at 2017 Festival

Festival's charity partners include Katy Care, Krause Children's Center, Helping Kids Ministry, and more

Katy Taste Fest is set to serve up good food for a good cause. The festival is an event for foodies to experience fare from Katy's diverse restaurant scene. Emphasis is on fun for the whole family with a variety of local restaurants, cooking demonstrations, a large kids zone, a dessert oasis, live entertainment, and a silent auction. The festival will debut at Villagio Town Center on March 4, 2017. Katy Taste Fest has partnered with several nonprofits that focus on abused, neglected, and abandoned children.

Celebrating food, having fun, and giving back to the community are the primary goals for Katy Taste Fest," said Cyril Thomas, the festival organizer. "The delectable food, cooking classes, and live entertainment are certainly vital pieces to the food festival, but partnering with local charities that focus on

vulnerable children is what is important to me. We can make a difference celebrating what we enjoy – food, drinks, and fun."

Katy Taste Fest supports several Katy non-profit groups, including Katy Cares, Helping Kids Ministry, Krause Children's Center, and Armor of Hope Foundation. All proceeds from Katy Taste Fest will benefit Katy nonprofits that help vulnerable children. "We believe that Katy Taste Fest's focus on philanthropy is an opportunity for the community to rally for our neighbors in need, both locally and globally, and we're thrilled to be onboard as a charity partner this year," said Allison Stark, President and CEO of Katy Cares.

For more information about Katy Taste Fest charity partners or to purchase tickets, please visit KatyTasteFest.com.

Simon Youth Foundation Seeks Applicants for \$1 Million in Scholarships

The Galleria and Katy Mills are once again proud to help a deserving graduating senior pay for college. Simon Youth Foundation, a national nonprofit that provides educational opportunities for at-risk high school students, is now looking for qualified applicants who live near The Galleria, Katy Mills and the surrounding community.

Each year, Simon Youth Community Scholarships are awarded in every community across the country that is home to Simon, Mills, or Premium Outlets malls. The application period has begun and ends on March 1, 2017.

Students can apply online by visiting syf.org/scholarships.

SYF will award 25 scholarships to students graduating in the class of 2017 who live in communities surrounding any Premium Outlets mall nationwide. No more than one scholarship will be awarded per property. Recipients will receive up to \$1,500 to enroll in an accredited college, university, vocational or technical school.

In addition, an "Award of Excellence" will be given to the top candidate from among the scholarship applicants that

represent the nationwide Premium Outlets locations. That student will receive a \$10,000 award (\$2,500 for up to four years).

In 2016, the Simon Youth Foundation awarded \$1.2 million to 300 students nationwide.

"The cost of college continues to rise, and SYF is proud to partner with The Galleria and Katy Mills to award scholarships that will remove some of the financial obstacles that could otherwise prevent a student from achieving the dream of a college education," said Dr. J. Michael Durnil, SYF President and CEO.

The 2017 SYF Community Scholarship recipients will be selected by International Scholarship and Tuition Services, Inc. (ISTS), a third-party administrator. Students are selected based on a variety of criteria, including financial need, academic performance, leadership skills and participation in school and community activities. Those students who are the first in their family to pursue a post secondary education will also be given close consideration.

Recipients will be notified in May.

Katy ISD Helps Parents and Students Save Money for College

2017 Financial Information Academy FREE for Katy ISD Parents

Parents and students interested in learning how to save money for college, how to complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and how to apply for scholarships are encouraged to attend the 2017 Financial Information Academy to be held Saturday, February 4 from 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. - 3 p.m. at the Katy ISD Education Support Complex

Staff Development Entrance, 6301 S. Stadium Lane.

Representatives at this event will also be able to answer questions about student loans and help families determine which ones will best serve their student's educational funding needs. Registration is not required and the event is FREE for all parents of KISD students.

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Katy Area Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cuttings

The Katy News welcomes these new businesses and invites our readers to visit them and welcome them to the community. Shop local, support small businesses.



January 26th - Lowe's Home Improvement
9505 Spring Green Blvd, Katy, Texas 77494



January 26th - Fajita Pete's
1590 S. Mason Road, Katy, Texas 77450



January 26th - Evergreen Cottages
21605 Provincial Blvd., Katy, Texas 77450



January 27th - O' My Buns!
23701 Cinco Ranch Blvd, Suite 115, Katy, Texas 77494



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The Delaney® at Parkway Lakes Information Center Opens and Introduces Kim Parnell Executive Director and Lacey Trice Director of Sales & Marketing

The Delaney at Parkway Lakes has opened its Information Center and named two team members to lead the new senior living community coming this summer to the master-planned Parkway Lakes development in Katy. Kim Parnell has been named Executive Director and Lacey Trice has been named Director of Sales & Marketing.

"It's exciting to see our plans for The Delaney at Parkway Lakes coming to life," says Peter Muhlbach, SVP/Director of Senior Living Management Rental Division Life Care Services®, An LCS® Company. "Construction has been moving smoothly, and now that we have Kim and Lacey in place, and an open information center, we can finally introduce the greater Katy area to The Delaney at Parkway Lakes."

As Executive Director, Kim Parnell will be responsible for the community's daily operations. She brings senior living expertise spanning more than 20 years to the job, in addition to skills honed working as a nurse.

"From the minute I heard about The Delaney at Parkway Lakes, I knew I wanted to be a part of it," says Parnell. "The Delaney at Parkway Lakes is truly unique. Nothing like a traditional retirement community, it's more like a contemporary Texas manor with a sophisticated, but comfortable aesthetic. Residents will have all the freedom and privacy they want in a residence that offers all the beauty and modern conveniences of their current home, but with new friends, restaurant-style dining, and so many amenities right outside their door."

Parnell adds, "As a resident of the area for over 30 years, I've



Kim Parnell

found that, despite the incredible retail and residential growth happening, we're still able to enjoy that close-knit, neighborhood feel. It's something that will definitely be part of The Delaney at Parkway Lakes' culture."

Bringing more than 8 years of professional experience in the senior living field to her Director of Sales & Marketing position at The Delaney at Parkway Lakes, Lacey Trice explains: "I am passionate about helping seniors enjoy a healthier, happier and more fulfilling lifestyle here at our community."

Parnell and Trice have assumed their roles at The Delaney at Parkway Lakes and may be reached at the community's information center, now open at 22167 Westheimer Parkway, Suite 145 in Katy. Those interested in learning more may call (832) 500-7702 or e-mail info@TheDelaneyatParkwayLakes.com.

The Delaney at Parkway Lakes is currently under construction and scheduled to open later this year. When complete, The Delaney at Parkway Lakes will showcase 120 private apartment residences designed for those seeking an independent, carefree lifestyle. In addition, the community features Hamlets at The Delaney, neighborhoods comprised of 56 residences for those who need assistance with the activities of daily living as well as 36 studio suites for residents with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias who would benefit from specialized memory care programming. The Delaney at Parkway Lakes is being developed by LCS Development™ and will be managed by Life Care Services, both of which are LCS companies.



Lacey Trice

Katy ISD Announces New Campus Athletic Coordinators for Morton Ranch & Paetow High Schools

Katy ISD is pleased to announce the addition of Ron Counter and B.J. William Gotte as our new Campus Athletic Coordinator/Head Football Coach's for Morton Ranch High School and Paetow High School. Both positions were approved unanimously during the Katy ISD Board of Trustees Work Study meeting tonight.



Ron Counter

Coach Counter comes to Morton Ranch High from Stafford High where he was the head football coach and athletic director for the last four years. During his time at Stafford, Coach Counter led the program into the playoffs four years in a row. Prior to Stafford, Coach Counter made coaching stops at Strake Jesuit High, Round Rock Westwood High, Spring Woods High, Alief Hastings High and Klein Oak High. Coach Counter has also received several "Coach of the Year" honors.

For Coach Gotte, moving to Paetow High School means staying close to home. Growing up he attended Cimarron Elementary, West Memorial Junior High and graduated "class of '97" at Katy High School, which is where he also began his career in 2001. Coach Gotte made stops at Deer Park High, La Marque High and Flower Mound Marcus High prior to returning to Katy High in 2009. His role as an Offensive Coordinator at Katy High School has played an integral part in winning three state championships.

The Katy ISD Athletic Department is excited to welcome both coaches to these new endeavors within the Katy ISD family. Both coaches will begin this new journey on February 1st.



B.J. William Gotte

CRHS BRAVO SHOW CHOIR proudly presents *Only in Dreams*

Join our musical voyage on February 2,3 and 4 at 7:30 p.m. in the CRHS PAC. Tickets \$6 in advance, \$10 at the door. Advance tickets can be purchased from Bravo members.

The After-School Break

Crafts, movies, stories, and more for school-aged children in grades 1 through 5 – begin at 4:30 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday. In celebration of Dr. Seuss, on February 9th library staff will read *The Lorax* and make "Truffula Trees." For more information, please call the Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library at 281-633-4675 or the library system's Public Information Office at 281-633-4734.



KATY Aquatics would like to recognize all Katy area High School Swim Teams as they race toward State Championships!

Congratulations to each swimmer for accepting challenges and creating extraordinary achievements during the 2016-2017 High School Swim Season.

Wishing you all the best!

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Ask the Expert— Know Your Funeral Arranger

Sherry Ahart-Davies
Location Manager,
Katy Funeral Home



Q: What should I expect from my funeral arranger?

A: A funeral arranger should care for and guide your family as if you were part of their own. He or she is a caring professional who will be by your side every step of the way—from the arrangement conference to a funeral or memorial service and beyond—to help you understand the options that are available to you, choose what will work best for you and your loved ones and carry out your wishes by coordinating every detail of a meaningful final tribute.

Q: But don't all funeral arrangers do the same thing?

A: On the surface, it may seem that all funeral arrangers are the same, but it's important to remember that it's not just what they do but *how* they do it that sets a funeral professional apart. The loss of a loved one is one of the most difficult experiences in life, and your funeral arranger should strive to provide you and your family with a superior customer experience during what

can be a stressful process. He or she should be committed to service beyond expectation so that you can focus on honoring the memory of your loved one.

Q: What else should I look for in a funeral arranger?

A: You and your family should feel comfortable with and confident in the person helping you to create a personal, memorable send-off for your loved one—or for yourself, if you are planing in advance. From a guided tour of the funeral home or cemetery to grief management resources and even travel assistance, look for a professional who will take care of all the necessary details. Your arranger should do everything in his or her power to make the planning process a little easier, whether in advance or at the time of need. If you're interested in making your own final plans before the time of need, ask your funeral arranger about a planning guide to help you organize vital end-of-life information and record your final wishes. You can contact us to receive a personal planning guide today.

If you have more questions, visit your local funeral provider. They are a good source of information for funeral, cremation and cemetery options.

Sherry Ahart-Davies is the Location Manager at Katy Funeral Home, a member of the Dignity Memorial® network serving the Greater Houston community and families nationwide. Originally from St. Louis, Sherry has more than 20 years of experience providing families with compassionate care and professional service. She is an active member of the Katy Chamber of Commerce and KAEDC and is a Cinco Charities/Ballard House volunteer. For more information or any questions, contact Sherry at 281-395-7070 or Sherry.Ahart-Davies@Sci-us.com.

www.prepaidfunerals.texas.gov

Katy Sports

By Tom Behrens
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The Recruiting Issue

**What you don't know about college football recruiting...
Lots of pressure on both student players and college coaches;
some students will be donning the colors of their new school,
others won't**

By Tom Behrens, tbehrcomm@gmail.com

At press deadlines National Signing Day for college football is just days away. Many of the area's gridiron stars have selected their future destinations; some are even already on campus, while others will announce their decisions on Wednesday, Feb. 1.

The latest information on the top 100 from the Houston area, the following student athletes have made the following decisions:

DT, Corey Bethley, Katy, TCU; LB, Breydon Boyd, Katy, Boise St.; TE, Cameron Horry, Taylor, Texas A&M; TE, Parker Eichenberger, Katy, Houston; OL, Hayden Howerton, Katy, SMU; DE Ryder Anderson, Katy, Mississippi; WR J.C. Angulo, Katy, Undecided; and OL, Kenneth Pleasant, Seven Lakes, Undecided.

Katy High School's two-star defensive back Keegan Otte is committed to Penn, with two-star linebacker Raymond Randle is headed to HBU.

Taylor's Ethan Beek is expected to join Randle at HBU. Seven Lakes three-star offensive lineman Kenneth Pleasant had at least 20 college offers from which to choose, including Houston, North Texas, SMU, Texas State, Texas Tech, UTSA and Texas in state.

Cinco Ranch has defensive back Ben Mathiasmeier set for Columbia. "Ben Mathiasmeier, our free safety, committed to Columbia, a Division 3 school. They don't do scholarships, but they give academic money," said Cinco Ranch Head Coach, Don Clayton.

Other Cinco Ranch signees are J.T McComas, tackle, who will be attending Colorado School of Mines; wide receiver, Greg Williams Jr., Blinn Jr. College; Elliel Ehimare, defensive tackle is looking at several division 2 opportunities right now, as well as a couple Junior Colleges, but hasn't made his mind up, same with center, Connor Walsh, looking at a couple of Division 3 schools."

The ripple effect ...

Head Coach Clayton explains what sometimes happens on National Signing day, what he calls the ripple effect, which you don't see reported in the newspapers, except here in the Katy News.

"Everybody thinks that's the day you have to sign. You have some players who didn't maybe get the Div 1 school like they thought they were going to get, so they go 1-AA... the Sam Houston's, the SFAs, HBUs. The kids, who thought they were going to go to those places, are now going to Div 2 schools. You have other kids that something didn't work out for them, but they may be a pretty good student, and still want to play football, so they sign to go to a Div 3 school."

Clayton tells about one of his former players who signed with the University of Texas after the signing date. Texas had lost one of their recruits that they thought they were going to sign. All of a sudden that opened up a spot. They had that extra scholarship, and it was one of Cinco Ranch players who received it.

Overbooking ...

There was a recent story that reported that some college coaches will offer scholarships to more than 200 players, telling them that it's first come, first served. If a player doesn't commit early, he is threatened with losing his spot.

Colleges commit to kids for scholarships, but sometimes when it comes time to give them out, they don't have enough scholarships.

"I have seen that happen," said Clayton, "It's not very scrupulous." For example, if a college has 20 scholarships, they're probably going to target 55 kids knowing full well that the 55 kids they target, not all of them are going to go to their school. Maybe the top 10 they want, everybody else wants. Maybe that kid has already committed to somewhere else, but they still have an offer on the table in case it didn't happen somewhere else.

It turns into a juggling game for the colleges. Unfortunately sometimes they will drop somebody. "Hopefully it's done the right way; they let the prospect know far enough in advance that it was going to happen," said Clayton.

A lot of the schools will tell a player they need a certain score on the SAT. If the athlete doesn't attain that goal, then that gives the college a chance to slide out on their scholarship offer if they need to.

"What some schools do, and they don't really advertise it," continues Clayton, "they'll hold back one or two scholarships. The thought is 'we'll use this one on somebody that has a great spring training, or we'll use it on somebody who got dropped by somebody that changed their mind.' That way they don't just get painted into a corner. They'll hold back a scholarship or two just in case 'Mr. Right' becomes available."

Recruiting underclassmen...

Recruitment starts early; unfortunately it's gotten out of control. That's why the NCAA at their last convention proposed a December signing date for football.

The NCAA initially proposed creating two additional signing days, one in June and one in December, to ease the pressure. But the June date was dropped after the Division I Council meeting. The American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) voted unanimously in support of the December addition and in opposition to the June addition.

Athletes who are strongly committed to a school can make that commitment official in December, while others who are still on the fence can see how things shake out while they wait for the traditional February signing date. This allows both athletes and coaches time to examine the landscape without the pressure of everything happening at once.

You don't get into a situation where a kid will make a change at the last minute.

Advertising a student ...

"I hope no one at our school feels the need to spend x amount of dollars for someone to make a video that will be sent to a college," said Clayton. "The kids have video available of their games. It so easy now because it's all internet based; it would be easy for kids to make their own highlight video, and easy for coaches to make highlight video."



Taylor's Ethan Beek is expected to join Randle at HBU. Photo by John Glaser/jmgcreativedesign.com.

"People have to understand high school coaches have a direct tie to these colleges. The coaches come to us. They want to know more than what they see on video. What kind of a student is he? Has he had any issues?"

"I had to testify before the NCAA four years ago, and I told them one of the biggest problems we are facing are 'street agents', people who come in and convince a parent that if they pay x amount of dollars, they'll get their son recruited. Unfortunately, that's not always the case. Not all of these people are bad people, but there are too many who are trying to make a dollar off of people, and in return the people don't get what they thought they were going to get."

High school coaches have direct access to college coaches. "They ask us. I've talked to several already this morning about some of our kids. Bottom line is that coach that visits with us is going to ask all the questions he needs answers for; he is going to trust the person who has been working with the kid in practice and games for the last three or four seasons."

And finally ...

I hope all the Katy ISD football players who wanted athletic scholarships, got their wishes fulfilled on Wednesday. The same wish goes out to the colleges looking for the best candidates for their programs. But now after all the guessing and hype is over, let's remember it's just a game. Go out and have fun.

Pacific Pro Football League ...a new professional football league that aims to begin in the summer of 2018

By Tom Behrens, tbehrcomm@gmail.com

Clayton said the fledgling league in California is doing basically what baseball does, what hockey does, and what basketball used to do.

Unlike previous pro leagues that have taken direct aim at the NFL — the USFL and the XFL — Pacific Pro Football has the college game in its crosshairs. Led by Don Yee, Tom Brady's longtime agent, the league offers an alternative to the NCAA for high school graduates hoping to prepare for the NFL — and they will get paid to do so.

"For the first time, the players and families will have a professional option, and one that includes benefits," Pac Pro COO Bradley T. Edwards said. "Most importantly, players will have an option to participate in a league that plays professional football, which is a very different game than amateur football."

Currently, athletes must wait until they are three years removed from high school before entering the NFL. And if they want to keep their skills sharp during that time, college football is pretty much the only game in town.

The NCAA allows these athletes to receive a scholarship from the universities they attend, but as 'amateurs,' they cannot receive a salary or stipend of any kind. Nor can they market themselves or profit from their athletic skill.

Pacific Pro Football is planning to pay its athletes an annual salary of \$50,000, along with paid tuition at local community colleges. The league will feature four teams based in Southern California, each with 50 players, and they will play eight games "under professional football rules, protocols and style," according to a statement sent out by the league.

"I'm not saying I'm for it; I don't have an opinion yet," said Clayton, "but I know there are kids that come out of high school sports that probably aren't college material, just like they're some kids in regular education in high school that aren't are not college material."

I can see where someone says these kids are really good, this is their talent. Academics are not they're talent; they struggle with that. This league gives them a chance to display their talent; that's the framework that the league is falling under."

Devotional Page



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Cinco Ranch Branch Library To Host College Fair

Students who would like to have more information on area colleges are invited to attend a special College Fair at Fort Bend County Libraries' Cinco Ranch Branch Library on Thursday, February 16, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., in the Meeting Room of the library, located at 2620 Commercial Center Blvd in Katy.

Representatives from colleges and universities will be on hand to share information about their programs with current high school students and their parents or guardians. Students will have the opportunity to learn about educational opportunities available at the colleges, as well as admission requirements, financial aid, student housing, and more.

Schools from Texas that will be represented include Texas State Technical College – Fort Bend, Sam Houston

State University, Stephen F. Austin State University, University of Houston Main Campus, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi, Texas A&M University – Kingsville, University of Texas at Dallas, Texas Tech University, and Trinity University.

Colleges from outside of Texas that will be represented include Louisiana Tech University, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Mississippi State University, University of Alabama, Northern Arizona University, University of Missouri, University of Tennessee, University of Tampa, and Cornell University.

The event is free and open to the public. For more information, call the Cinco Ranch Branch Library at 281-395-1311 or the library system's Public Information Office at 281-633-4734.

February Youth Activities At Cinco Ranch Branch Library

Mother Goose Time

Tuesdays at 10:15 a.m. Provides caregiver/infant multisensory circle-time activities including simple sign language, folksongs and lullabies, and finger plays that are especially designed to stimulate babies' social, emotional, and physical development through rhythm and music. Mother Goose Time is intended for infants from age 1 month to 12 months. Mother Goose Time will take place on February 7, 14, 21, and 28.

Stories & Play

Tuesdays at 2:00 p.m. For children from 1 to 3 years of age. Children will be treated to a story and then have open play time. Stories & Play will take place on February 7, 14, 21, and 28.

Toddler Time

Wednesdays at 10:15 am, and Thursdays at 10:15 am and 11:30 a.m. is a structured program of caregiver/child activities, stories and songs for older babies, from 1 to 3 years of age. Program dates are February 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, and 23.

Pajama Night Story Time

Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. Gives families an evening option for the activities presented during the daytime. Program dates are February 7, 14, 21, and 28.

Family Story Time

Family story time takes place on the 1st Saturday of the month, beginning at 10:15 a.m. Families with children of all ages are invited to attend.

The After-School Breaks

Crafts, movies, stories, and more for school-aged children entering grades 1 through 3 begin at 4:30 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month. Program dates are February 1 and 15.

The Creative Connection, which begins at 2:30 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month, is designed for youth in grades 4 through 8. Program dates are February 11 and 25.

Minecraft Monday

February 27, 4:30 p.m. Minecraft challenge for students in grades 4 through 8. Reservations required. To register online at the library's website (www.fortbend.lib.tx.us), click on "Events," select "Cinco Ranch Branch Library," and find the program. Participants may also register by calling the library at 281-395-1311, or by visiting the library.

These programs are free and open to the public. For more information, please call the Cinco Ranch Branch Library at 281-395-1311 or the library system's Public Information Office at 281-633-4734.

Upcoming Events at Katy Library

The Katy Library is pleased to present the following upcoming events and activities from February 6– February 11.

Baby Time

Monday, February 6, 10:15 a.m.
A year-round storytime for infants 3 months to non-walkers.

Genealogy Squad

Monday, February 6, 2:00 p.m.
Join the Genealogy Squad. Learn how to do your own genealogy with other fellow researchers. This month's webinar will be on Researching Time and Place.

Toddler Time

Tuesday, February 7, 10:15 and 11:00 a.m.
A fun program for children 18 months to 3 years old.

AARP Tax Aide

Tuesday, February 7, 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Each year our wonderful AARP volunteers come in to help file taxes. Be prepared to wait and come in by 3:00 pm to ensure you get on the list for each day. Questions? Call us at 281-391-3509.

Knotty & Nice Club

Wednesday, February 8, 1:00 p.m.
The Knotty & Nice Club is the place for you if you want to learn new knitting and crochet techniques, teach someone else, or just hang out with other crafters. Come & join the club.

One Hour of Code

Wednesday, February 8, 4:30 p.m.
Learn the basics of coding with games on code.org.

School Age Kids Craft Time

Wednesday, February 8, 4:30 p.m.
Take a break from homework and come have fun with crafts. Every month on the 2nd Wednesday of the month.

Para Los Ninos/For the Children

Wednesday, February 8, 6:00 p.m.
The evening's theme is Family Communication. Participate in activities that encourage communication between family members. For children 3-7 and their parent/caregivers. Space is limited and tickets will be handed out 30 minutes before the program. Groups please call. Each family will receive a pass to the Houston Children's Museum.

Preschool Storytime

Thursday, February 9, 10:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
A fun program for children 3 to 6 years old.

Katy Garden Club

Thursday, February 9, 11:00 a.m.
Join other gardeners in the area for fun discussions. This month a master gardener will present various methods of composting. The Katy Garden Club meets the second Thursday of every month.

All programs are free and open to the public. The Katy Library is located at 5414 Franz Road. For more information, call (281)391-3509 or log on to www.hcpl.net.

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To place a classified ad, contact Pat@thekatynews.com or call 281-396-3333 by Monday noon.

Social Security Specialist To Speak At Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library

Andrew Hardwick, a Metropolitan Public Affairs Specialist for the Social Security Administration, will present a special program, "Understanding Social Security and Medicare," on Monday, February 13, beginning at 6:00 p.m., in the Meeting Room at Fort Bend County Libraries' Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library, located at 8100 FM 359 South in Fulshear.

Hardwick will provide an overview of Social Security retirement and the Medicare program. Learn how and when to apply to receive maximum benefits; the differences between Medicare Parts A, B, C, and D; and online tools at the Social Security Administration's website. He will also talk about survivor and disability benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Get tips on ways to increase Social Security benefits and learn how to access one's work record online. Hardwick will also talk about the effects of work or other pensions on Social Security benefits and whether or not a divorced spouse can qualify for benefits under their ex-spouse. Those attending the program will leave with a better understanding of how benefits are calculated and who is entitled to receive benefits.

Hardwick has worked for the Social Security Administration for more than 40 years, and has won numerous communication awards during that time. He is a graduate of Brigham Young University with a master's degree in psychology. This presentation is free and open to the public. Anyone over the age of 18 is encouraged to attend. For more information, call the Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library at 281-633-4675 or the library system's Public Information Office at 281-633-4734.

Private Pesticide Applicator Training Scheduled

Do you need to apply restricted use or state-limited use pesticides to produce an agricultural commodity on property that is personally owned or leased? If you have wanted to become a Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) licensed Private Pesticide Applicator, an opportunity to attend the required training is coming up. This training is required prior to taking the TDA Private Pesticide Applicator exam.

The training will be held on Thursday, February 9, 2017 at the Texas A&M

AgriLife Extension Office - Fort Bend County, located at 1402 Band Road, Suite 100, Rosenberg, Texas. Registration is at 8:30 a.m. with the training beginning at 9:00 a.m. The training fee is \$50. This includes two applicator manuals that can be purchased for review in advance of the training. Testing will not be offered. New testing procedures will be explained during the training.

All interested persons may contact Brandy Rader at 281-342-3034 or email brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu.

Learn About Container Gardening

Fort Bend County Libraries' Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library will present a program, "Taming Your Container Gardens," on Monday, February 20, beginning at 6:00 p.m., in the Meeting Room of the library, located at 8100 FM 359 South in Fulshear.

Fort Bend County Master Gardener Kathy Gilmore will discuss container gardening for the home. Whether the gardener has limited space, limited mobility, or simply wants to enhance the landscape with different types of plantings, container gardening offers a variety of alternatives. Learn about the wide range of container sizes and the types and varieties of plants that do well in

containers. Gilmore will demonstrate how to plant a container garden and how to care for and maintain the plants. Gardeners of all experience levels who are interested in learning more about container gardening are welcome to attend.

Gilmore has been a Master Gardener since 2011 and is a member of the Houston Rose Society. She also writes a bi-monthly column on gardening tips for the Meadows Place community.

The program is free and open to the public. For more information, call the Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library at 281-633-4675 or the library system's Public Information Office at 281-633-4734.

New Programs For Teens

Fort Bend County Libraries is launching new programs specifically designed for high school-age teens in grades 9 through 12. The programs provide fun and challenging opportunities for these young adults, who are also encouraged to become active participants in designing and orchestrating new activities for teens in the library system.

In February, the Cinco Ranch Branch Library will roll out the first of many exciting new programs for the Young Adult community.

Young Adult Book Club will be held on Wednesday, February 8, from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m., in the Conference Classroom. Teen readers will have the opportunity to meet with others who share the same love for great books, and have a lively discussion on the reasons a book or its characters were liked or disliked. This month, readers are invited to talk about their favorite book from the "historical fiction" genre. Area teens are invited to join in this inaugural meeting of the library's new Young Adult Book Club and help to launch the new club to a great start.

Young Adult Advisory Council starts on Wednesday, February 22, from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m., in the Conference Classroom. At this monthly meeting, teens are invited to express ideas, organize upcoming activities, and suggest new programs that would be of interest to young adults at the library. Earn volunteer/service hours and meet new friends while helping to shape the future of library services for teens.

These programs are free and open to the public. For more information, call the Cinco Ranch Branch Library at 281-395-1311 or the library system's Public Information Office at 281-633-4734.

The Cinco Ranch Branch Library is located at 2620 Commercial Center Blvd in Katy.

MS Excel Survival Basics Class

This class will take place on Thursday, February 9, beginning at 10:00 a.m., in the Computer Lab. Learn the basics of using this spreadsheet software program, which features calculation tools that are helpful for financial and statistical needs.

The classes are free and open to the public. Seating is limited, however, and reservations are required. To register online at the library's website (www.fortbend.lib.tx.us), click on "Events," select "Cinco Ranch Branch," and find the program. Participants may also register by calling the library at 281-395-1311, or by visiting the library.

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February 10

Medical Business Office Professional Course hosted by the Literacy Council of Fort Bend County

Space still available in the evening classes. Earn your Medical Business Office Professional career certification with the Literacy Council of Fort Bend County. Training classes will begin in February at the Literacy Council of Fort Bend County, 12530 Emily Court, Sugar Land, TX 77478. Classes will meet evenings from 3 p.m.-9 p.m., February 2017-June 2017. The Medical Business Office Professional program will prepare you to work in the business office of a healthcare facility. Eligible candidates must have a valid Texas photo ID, a social security number, and proof of high school diploma or GED. Participants must be able to attend all class sessions, must pass an admissions test and online background check, and pay a one-time registration fee of \$100.

For more information or to RSVP for the Information Session, contact Colleen Mayer, Program Director at (281) 240-8181 or via email: cmayer@ftbendliteracy.org

This course is provided by HCC Adult Education Community-Based Job Training and the Literacy Council of Fort Bend County.

Learn How To Grow Bonsai

Fort Bend County Libraries' Cinco Ranch Branch Library will present a program on "Bonsai Basics," on Saturday, February 25, beginning at 10:30 a.m., in the Meeting Room of the library, located at 2620 Commercial Center Blvd in Katy.

Pete Parker, a member of the Houston Bonsai Society, will discuss fundamentals of the ancient art of bonsai. Get tips on how to get started with this Asian gardening technique, where to buy materials in the Houston area, and what resources are available for information on creating and maintaining bonsai.

According to the Houston Bonsai Society's website, the word "bonsai" (bone-sigh) means "plant in a pot." This ancient, living, art form began thousands of years ago in Asia, and it involves nurturing a tree in miniature by pruning and shaping the branches and roots until it takes on the appearance of an old tree in nature.

Parker began studying the art of bonsai in 1997. He is a graduate of the Futago Tropical Bonsai school, and he is currently studying under professional bonsai artist Boon Manakitivipart.

The program is free and open to the public. For more information, call the Cinco Ranch Branch Library at 281-395-1311 or library system's Public Information Office at 281-633-4734.

Classical Music Of India

Fort Bend County Libraries' Cinco Ranch Branch Library will present a performance of classical music from India, on Saturday, February 18, from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m., in the Meeting Room of the library, located at 2620 Commercial Center Blvd in Katy.

Sangeeta Panse, Varad Gaikwad, and Govind Shetty - members of the Indian Music Society of Houston - will perform classical Indian music on the sitar, tabla, and flute.

Established in 1992, the Indian Music Society of Houston is a nonprofit organization consisting of individuals who are committed to preserving and promoting the myriad of centuries-old classical Indian music.

The performance is free and open to the public. For more information, call the Cinco Ranch Branch Library at 281-395-1311, or the library system's Public Information Office at 281-633-4734.



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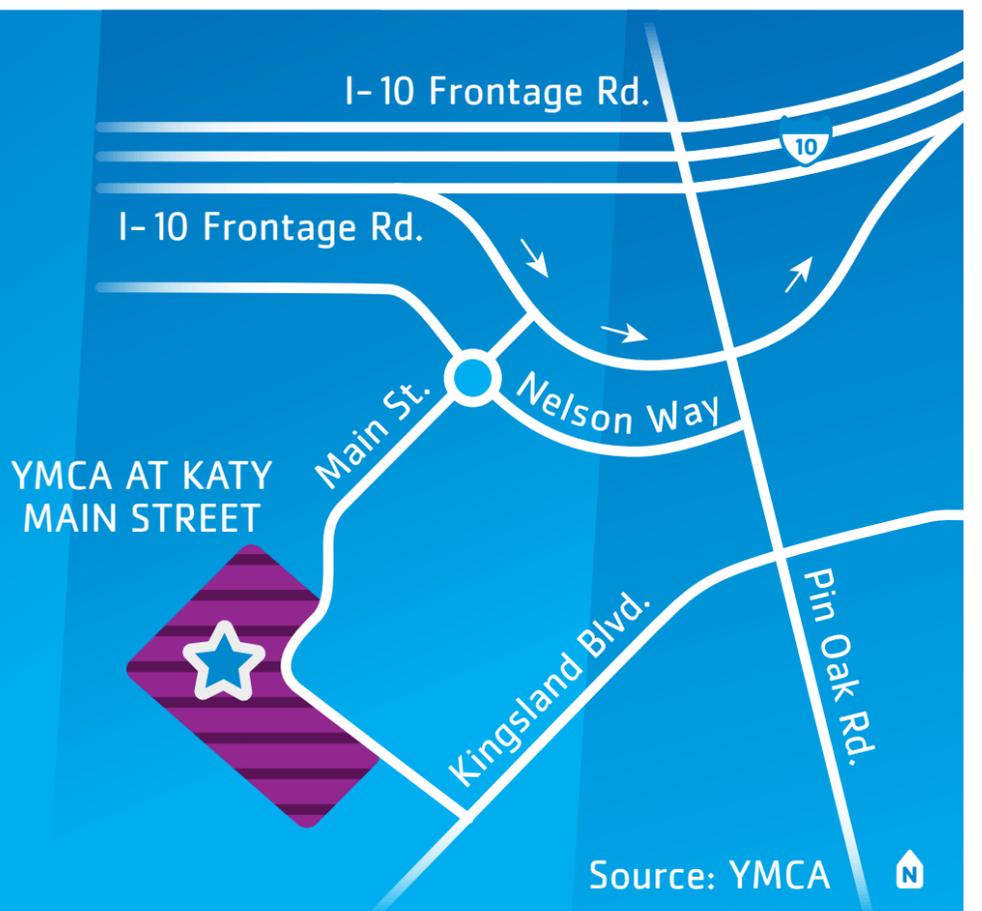
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