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monthly



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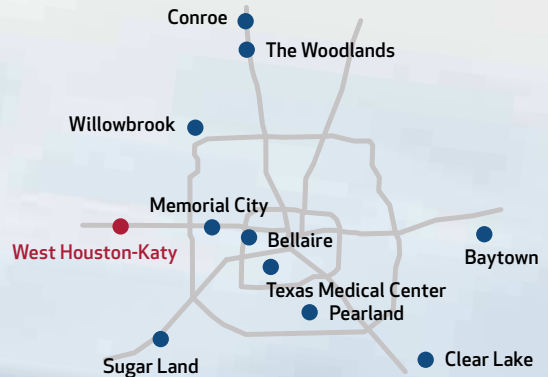
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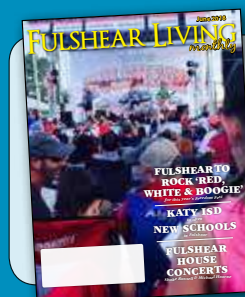
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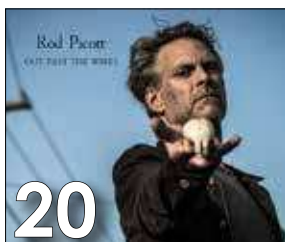
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# Billings set to become first graduate from Fulshear High School

by VALERIE SWEETEN



Graduating from high school is one of the most exciting times in a teen's life and getting to graduate early to start onto your way to college is even better.

Sydney Billings will be doing just that ... in August.

Billings, a Fulshear High School senior, will be getting the diploma in hand along with other Lamar Consolidated ISD seniors who didn't get to graduate on time.

This high school senior, who transferred from Foster High School in 2016, made the most of high school with tennis, Future Farmers of America, WIT and National Honor Society. Fulshear High School opened in 2016 to freshmen and sophomores. The first set of graduating seniors isn't set to walk the stage until next spring in 2019.

How did Billings, the youngest daughter of three girls of Jim and Belynda Billings, get to this point?

"To really study and feel a sense of accomplishment I write down everything I have to do in a list and check it off as I go. My mom brought up graduating early last summer, and I thought it was a perfect fit for me," Billings said.

Teachers and family were also onboard helping Billings reach her goal.

Billings credits her family, who are her role models, with having the biggest impact on her life with their encouragement and to "dream big."

"My teachers have always been a big inspiration to me because they have always taught me what I can become," Billings said. "They showed me and inspired me in the smallest ways and yet impacted my life in such a big way."

Mother, Belynda Billings, who is the principal at Bowie Elementary, said as an educator, she applauds her daughter's drive and grit to make this happen.

"It is not easy to be a student in high school," Billings said. "I don't know that I would recommend this path for everyone. Not everyone needs to finish high school early. It isn't easy to manage extra classes, but doable. Sydney did it and continued to play on the tennis team, winning district mixed doubles this year while taking AP classes and being inducted into NHS."

She also watched as the school supported her daughter's goal.



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“Fulshear High School has done a great job helping Sydney navigate the path to make this work. They differentiated a learning path for her that worked for my child that isn’t necessarily uncommon, but is a first for Fulshear High School,” she said.

Having her two of her daughters graduate back to back is exciting for the family.

“She is graduating the same year as her sister, Caroline, who attends Foster High School, so it has been kind of a double whammy at the Billings’ household, I should say. Her dad and I could not be more proud of the two of them,” Billings said.

The future has many possibilities for Billings, but she leaves with great memories behind her.

“I will mostly miss the familiarity I have with Fulshear High School. I have grown up with most of these kids since second grade. I am most excited about learning new things that I am passionate about in college. Animals have always been a passion of mine, and each class is a stepping stone to becoming a veterinarian,” she said.

Billings will be attending Blinn College in the fall semester.



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# SALUTING VETERANS

## *every day in Fulshear*

by **TOM BEHRENS**

Jon Eiche made a career out of the Army, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel.



**M**emorial Day is a day of remembrance for everyone who gave up their lives serving in the American armed forces. It's also a day to raise a hand in salute to the veterans who came home from the wars.

It's not for just one day but continuing every day.

Bill Heede, Jon Eiche and Ron Duncan are Fulshear/Simonton area veterans who shared their military experiences. All served during the Vietnam conflict. Duncan was involved in the Desert Storm and Ending Iraqi Freedom.

Bill Heede, 76, is a retired Army Sergeant (E-6), did three tours in Vietnam, beginning in August of 1962 in Special Ops. He describes his time there as "hours of boredom surrounded by minutes of sheer terror."

He said he couldn't talk about everything he did there because of secrecy requirements.

"We actually spent time in countries where we weren't supposed to be gathering intelligence, recruiting indigenous people for information who were on our side. We built Special Forces camps in various places around the country and on the borders," Heede said.

The original assignment was to be advisors, go out on missions with the 1st Ranger Battalion of the Army of the Vietnam Republic (ARVN). But then their mission changed to be more of intelligence gathering and trying to win over the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese people.

Heede said the reactions of the people were varied.

"We were invited in, but the regime that was in power was not really popular with the populace. There were some exceptions, but we weren't real popular either. Even if they were friendly, you kind of questioned why they were being friendly because you didn't know what side they were on. You were constantly

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William Heede, pictured here with his wife, Alena, served in Vietnam with Army Special Operations.

not trusting anybody, even the friendly forces because they definitely had VC and North Vietnamese intergraded into their forces. The enemy looked like everyone else. That's was always a challenge, and then add in the weather and language barrier," Heede said.

His unit often came under fire from the enemy, suffering injuries. Heede's wounds earned him the Combat Infantry Badge, but not enough to earn a Purple Heart.

"If you were injured severely enough for the Purple Heart you usually got rotated stateside if you were in Special Forces. I had a couple minor scrapes, shrapnel wounds, but I never reported them because I didn't want to leave my unit," Heede said.

Heede's was the team medic and took care of his own wounds.

"I had plenty of work with all the wounded," Heede said.

His time in the Army helped him grow up and become responsible more than anything.

"I wish we had mandatory service today. The things we see going on in our country today would be a lot different," Heede said.

Jon Eiche, 80, now describes himself as a gardener, glass artist and personal chef.

"I have lots of different irons in different fires, so to speak," Eiche said.

He and Evelyn have been married for 58 years. They have two

sons who all have served in the military.

He began his military career in the Marines when he was 17 years old.

"My mother had to sign for me. My mother wasn't real happy with me because my unit was on alert to ship out. Fortunately, we didn't have go," Eiche said.

This was when there was trouble in Lebanon.

The Marines offered him a direct commission, but he chose to be an officer in the Army.

"I chose to go into the Army because I wanted to go to Europe," said Eiche. "The only people who could serve in Europe with the Marines were embassy people. There were like six slots in all of Europe at that time.

"I joined the ROTC at East Tennessee State University and graduated as a distinguished military graduate," Eiche said.

He received a regular commission and served for more than 20 years, retiring as Lieutenant Colonel.

His years in the Army could be the action-packed basis for a best seller book.

"I was primarily trained as a military officer, but also served as specialist on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe ... spent several tours using that specialty. There were only about 50 of us in the entire defense department that were trained as specialist on Russia," Eiche said.

His job was to advise senior government and senior military officials what the Russians were likely to do in the event of hostilities between the two nations.

“My first assignment they gave me a big thick document to digest, about two inches thick, 9x13 pages, all single-spaced typed. It was our initial position at the Mutual Balanced Forces Reduction talks in Vienna. Dr. (Henry) Kissinger asked me to evaluate and look at the document through the eyes of a Soviet planner and give him an assessment what the Soviets likely reaction would be,” Eiche said.

Eiche’s first reply was a 20-page paper that made it all the way into the White House. It was not very complimentary to the Russians.

“We were willing to give up basically cooks and bakers; we wanted them to give up the most threatening things like tank divisions and artillery divisions,” Eiche said.

He was in Vietnam for a year at the Imperial City of Hue. His job was to position the U.S. battalions in the DMZ area. He said his official title was assistant intelligence officer for 24th Corp Artillery.

“I did a lot flying as an observer in a helicopter and a small fixed wing aircraft for several hours every day. My job was to help position the artillery and look for any kind of enemy artillery

units,” Eiche said.

He was the first to find the Soviet quad 50 caliber radar-controlled machine guns that were in place in North Vietnam.

“One of the missions I flew we took a lot of fire. My pilot decided to go down on the deck, fly as close to the ground as he could so he could break the radar lock of the 50-caliber gun. When we got back to the airfield I spent time cleaning up the aircraft as I lost my cookies from the acrobatics the pilot used to avoid being hit. I counted 137 holes in the aircraft, but neither he nor I got a scratch,” Eiche said.

On another flying mission he communicated with the U.S. battleship New Jersey.

“I was able to adjust the fire of the New Jersey that had 16-inch guns. Normally when you are adjusting fire, you use binoculars, but those rounds from 16-inch guns were so visible I didn’t need binoculars. You could see the rounds coming through the air,” Eiche said.

He did a lot of bomb assessment for the Air Force while he was up in the air. By his count, he was airborne an average of 4-6 hours a day.

“The guy I replaced only held the job for about six weeks; he was killed in action,” Eiche said.

His last assignment in the Army was as a professor of military

**Continued on page 17**

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# FULSHEAR HIGH SCHOOL

— varsity girls' soccer players —

## EARN BIG REWARDS

by **TOM BEHRENS**



Gracie Mikeska was named the offensive MVP of District 23-4A last year for the Fulshear Lady Chargers soccer program.



Karsen Jones was named the Second Team All-Region team last year for the Fulshear Lady Chargers. Jones tore her ACL last year but is expected to return this year for her senior year.

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**T**he Lady Chargers' Ingris Cortez, Karsen Jones and Gracie Mikeska earned impressive accolades for their soccer team. Cortez garnered First Team All-Region and Top midfielder in District 23; Jones earned Second Team All-Region and was voted to First Team All-District. Mikeska took home Most Valuable Player offense honors.

In their first year, with freshmen and sophomores, and playing as a JV team, the girls were 14-1-1, undefeated in district, beating 5A schools. This year the girls were playing a varsity schedule in a tough District 23. Their final record was 10-11-2 and made the playoffs as the fourth-place team. Victoria East, Angleton and Victoria West in the top three spots.

The Chargers lost their first game in the playoffs to San Antonio

Highlands.

Jones provided a lot of leadership, had two freshmen backs under her tutelage. She helped direct the team from the back, one of her key roles.

“She was captain last year on JV,” said Fulshear Head Girls Soccer Coach Mark Kluppel. “That was her year to learn how to lead; this year she took to it very well. The kids looked to Karsen for leadership. She’s the one that kept everybody in line. She’s a very smart kid, understands the game.”

Next year she will be one of first seniors to play girls’ soccer for Fulshear.

Mikeska, a junior, was second in scoring with 23 goals and six assists. She was also Academic All-District.

“Very fast, aggressive forward,” said Kluppel.

Kluppel described Cortez, a sophomore, as a “dynamic ball handler, kind of the engineer of our team,” said Kluppel. “It was hard at first because she was young and trying to coach the other players, get their attention.”

Cortez said it wasn’t that hard to gain the attention of her fellow teammates.

“It wasn’t that difficult,” said Cortez. “They were very confident. You just have to lead by example, let them know they can trust you, take your word and believe.”

Jones tore her ACL in her left leg in the Lamar game.

“We won that game, clinching a playoff spot, but it was kind of a bittersweet victory,” said Kluppel. “Win the game, make playoffs, yet one of your leaders is injured and then hope to have her for district, playoffs next year if we are fortunate to make it that far. We are going to take it slow and make sure she is healthy as can be.

“This was a really good year considering numbers, and the

tons of injuries this year,” Kluppel said to the numbers referring to a squad that varied from 15-16 players with no seniors, mostly sophomores, freshmen and a few juniors. “We were in second place at the first half of the season and then injuries caught up to us.”

Next year the Chargers move down from District 27-5A to District 23-4A, from Region 4 to Region 3.

“They (UIL) had to guess on student population when we opened the school, and they guessed we would be a 5A,” said Kluppel explaining the move. “But we opened with smaller population. So, we will be 4A next year.”

Kluppel hopes that the move down to Class 4A and the experience gained last year will spell success for the Charger program this coming year.

“That’s a hope,” said Kluppel. “We competed very well at 5A. We had a .500 record for the season. We took our lumps this year. Next season we will add a few more players and should have a full squad. Next year we will probably have 20, be a year older, and compete at a high level in 4A.”

*For a complete listing of the Lady Fulshear soccer team, please go to [www.fulshearathletics.com/soccer](http://www.fulshearathletics.com/soccer)*



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# FULSHEAR FOOTBALL

— *heads to varsity level this year* —

by **VALERIE SWEETEN**



**A**s Fulshear High School continues to grow and thrive, so does their football team, which will add a Varsity lineup to their program.

Fulshear High School, only two years old, opened in 2016 to freshmen and sophomores and will now boast upper classmen on this District 13-4A team. Whether they'll be traveling to games as close as Sealy or as far as Brazosport, Oschlor Flemming, campus athletic coordinator and head football coach, and his students are getting ready for the season with summer conditioning.

Flemming, who has a long history in coaching, played at Texas A&M University. His goal is to continue to inspire and motivate his players to be the best they can be even when a storm like Hurricane Harvey throws off your season.

"I'm teaching kids how to overcome mistakes and move on with your life. It's the biggest thing I learned. If you have a vision, stay true to it and what you believe in. Our season was cut short because of Harvey, but we didn't have any damage to the school. They pulled together to help kids, coaches and teachers tearing out sheetrock. All of our kids stepped up. It was awesome," said Flemming.

This year, the Charles will play 10 games with two. Flemming's team of 11 coaches bring a vast range of experience with some from Anahuac and Spring Westfield.

"We're all excited," Flemming said. "These kids are pretty resilient. They're ready to come back to school and get back to work."

Players are pumped about the chance to play at this level of competition.

Brody McLemore has been playing for over five years and will be a senior this year. He said although he doesn't think they're making history, they are creating the building blocks for Fulshear High School.

"The precedent we set as a team will carry on for years at Fulshear. I believe that we will set the standards and inset the traditions that will build a future historical team," said McLemore, who plays on the offensive line.

Keaton Huebner, the team's 17-year-old quarterback, has been on the field since he was in third grade. He said he loved playing in the beginning simply for the fun-filled aspect of it, but as he's grown older, it's become more than that. "I continue to play because I crave seeing my improvements and testing my limits," said Huebner. "It feels good to set an example for all of the future players on the team. We are leaving behind the expectations. We are the examples. We are the role models. It is an incredible blessing to have younger players look up to me and my teammates. I just want to leave behind a legacy."

Junior Olaleke Asenuga said his experience with football as left tackle over the past two years is the reason he continues to play. "It is because the type of bonds you make with the people around you. My favorite part about my team is the type of energy we give off to one another. I feel that if we can keep that up, no one in our district can compete with us. I feel that the history that we are making here in Fulshear is great, and that we're laying a great foundation for the years to come," Asenuga said.

*For more information and the upcoming schedule, go to [www.fulshearathletics.com/fball](http://www.fulshearathletics.com/fball)*



Fulshear recorded a 38-0 win over Lamar Consolidated last year for its first win of the season. This year the Chargers will move to the varsity level for the first time in the school's young history.



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Key players to be counted on this coming season for the Fulshear Chargers as they head into their first varsity season include, from left, Michel Marino, Gio Juarez, Olaleke Asenuga, Cade Tortuta, Keaton Huebner, Brody McLemore and Alex Torres.





Continued from page 11

science and head of the ROTC at Tennessee Tech University.

“I’ve been all over the world, thanks to the military and a strong supporter of a strong military. Freedom is not free; there are costs,” Eiche said.

He received the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Medal and several joint service accommodation medals.

“I just really enjoyed my service. I didn’t volunteer to go to Vietnam, but I didn’t shirk my duty when it was my turn to go,” Eiche said.

Ron Duncan didn’t see combat, but he helped a lot of people who would see firsthand the results. He served as a chaplain in the Army National Guard and Army Reserves. He served 25 years training other chaplains in casualty assistance for all of Texas and Louisiana. During this time the U.S. became involved in Desert Storm.

“At that time, they were anticipating quite a few casualties,” said Duncan.

He was first assigned to the 75th Division (Exercise), responsible for all the casualty assistance activities that would go on.

“But we never had to do much of that. We are very thankful,” Duncan said.

Later he was assigned to the 100 Division in Louisville, Ky., training Chaplains for Operation Enduring Freedom.

“Our objective to prepare the people to go and fight. As a chaplain, I had to prepare my chaplains to be ready to do the types of things they would be doing before the battle and after the battle, emotionally and psychological,” Duncan said. “We developed paper and computer simulations, and they would have to react to the scenarios. I graded them on their reactions.

“The emotional impact one suffers is the hard part. Before they go they look stable, but everybody reacts differently to crisis situations, what they see and the lethality of the modern army — pretty intense,” Duncan said.

Duncan said we want to honor those who gave their lives, but we also need to remember the thousands who came back, who have to reenter and heal.

“That healing process my take two years, five years, maybe 10 years. I want us to honor the dead but also nurture the living,” Duncan said. “I think most people do care about the veterans that have served, maybe hurt or wounded. There’s a lot of people who come back not wounded, don’t get the attention. The psychological impact of what they experience has made an impact in their lives. I have never seen anyone come back the same, never. They are either better ... my son came back better, very positive experience as a man and as a soldier. I have seen the other side, a person who has been broken in many ways.”



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# TWO NEW SCHOOLS

— coming to Fulshear —

by **TOM BEHRENS**



**F**ulshear has the distinction of sharing the Lamar Consolidated Independent School District (LCISD) and Katy Independent School District (KISD) schools within the community; it just depends on where you live as to what school district students attend. Katy ISD has broken ground on a new junior and senior high schools that will serve families in Cross Creek and nearby area.

LCISD and KISD continue to show gains in enrollment. According to City of Fulshear Demographic Update, summer 2017, LCISD had 1,137 for a 3.83 percent increase; KISD 2,476 students, for a 3.39 percent.

In Housing Growth through 2021, Cross Creek is projected to be number two with 993 homes; Tamarron is projected at top with 1,411 housing occupancies. Recent flood events could have a domino effect increasing housing demand in Fulshear.

For Katy ISD it will be Junior High #16 and High School #9. Both schools will provide relief to existing campuses that currently house students in the surrounding boundaries. The buildings will be constructed as part of the 2017 voter-approved bond program.

Junior High #16 is set to open August 2019 and is designed for 1,400 students, but its functional capacity is approximately 1,260. Katy ISD anticipates that Seven Lakes Junior High, Wood Creek Junior High and Tays Junior High will be relieved by the construction of the new school.

High School #9 is set to open in July 2020 and is designed for 3,000 students, but its functional capacity is approximately 2,700. Seven Lakes, Tompkins and Katy High Schools will be relieved by the construction of High School #9

Cross Creek population projections for 2019 is 11,388; 13,208 by 2020.

Enrollment at Seven Lakes Junior High is 1,925; Seven Lakes High School, 3,501, and Tompkins High School at 3,350.

Historically for Katy ISD new high schools open their doors with only freshman and sophomore students. It's not been the practice of Katy ISD to rezone students who are currently juniors and seniors at another school. Junior High schools do not follow the same process. Junior High #16 will open with sixth through eighth grade students.

Gregory A. Prince of PBK Architecture said the square footage for High School #9 as 625,154 square feet; Junior High School #16 will be 198,815.

PBK has provided planning and design services for multiple Katy ISD school campuses over the last several years, including several high schools, junior highs, administration buildings, as well as multipurpose facilities like the Leonard E. Merrell Center and others.

The designs for Junior High #16 & High School #9 are modified designs from Junior High #15 (Stockdick Junior High) and High School #8 (Paetow High School).

In Addition to designing the Junior High and High School Buildings, PBK provided complete design services for the entire facility and complex including all parking areas, athletic fields, stadium grandstands, athletic buildings, and a new natatorium.

Katy ISD Superintendent Dr. Lance Hindt said at the groundbreaking the two campuses will consist of state-of-the-art buildings with collaborative spacing. Prince describes some of the buildings' features.

Said Prince: "Specific learning features of these schools are intended to incorporate aspects of 21st century learning. Agile, multi-functional learning spaces with interactive white boards and mobile furniture are designed to maximize adaptability for rearrangement for various learning modes and group settings. The classrooms and other learning spaces also utilize daylighting principles to bring in as much natural light as possible.

"The site design for this campus also includes a large 'learning green' with walking paths and a teaching amphitheater,"

continued Prince. "The Learning Commons and Dining Commons both have views of the green space with the potential for outdoor dining. The program also accommodates the growing demand for Career and Technology Education courses. Other spaces included in these facilities include a Performing Arts Center, District Natatorium, gymnasiums and athletics fields."

Designed into the buildings are designed access with many levels of safety and security. Access to the entire campus is controlled through two security vestibules (one at the high school and one at the junior high school) that control access to the interior spaces. All guest must be cleared for access prior to obtaining access to student areas of the campus. The "learning green" is also only accessible from the campus interior and is a safe and secure exterior activity area for both the high school and junior high students.

"Within the walls of these schools, future leaders will be taught, memories will be made, and educational opportunities will prepare and inspire," said Superintendent Lance Hindt. "The construction of these campuses will be a new opportunity for this neighborhood and our community at large, to invest in our students as they create their future."

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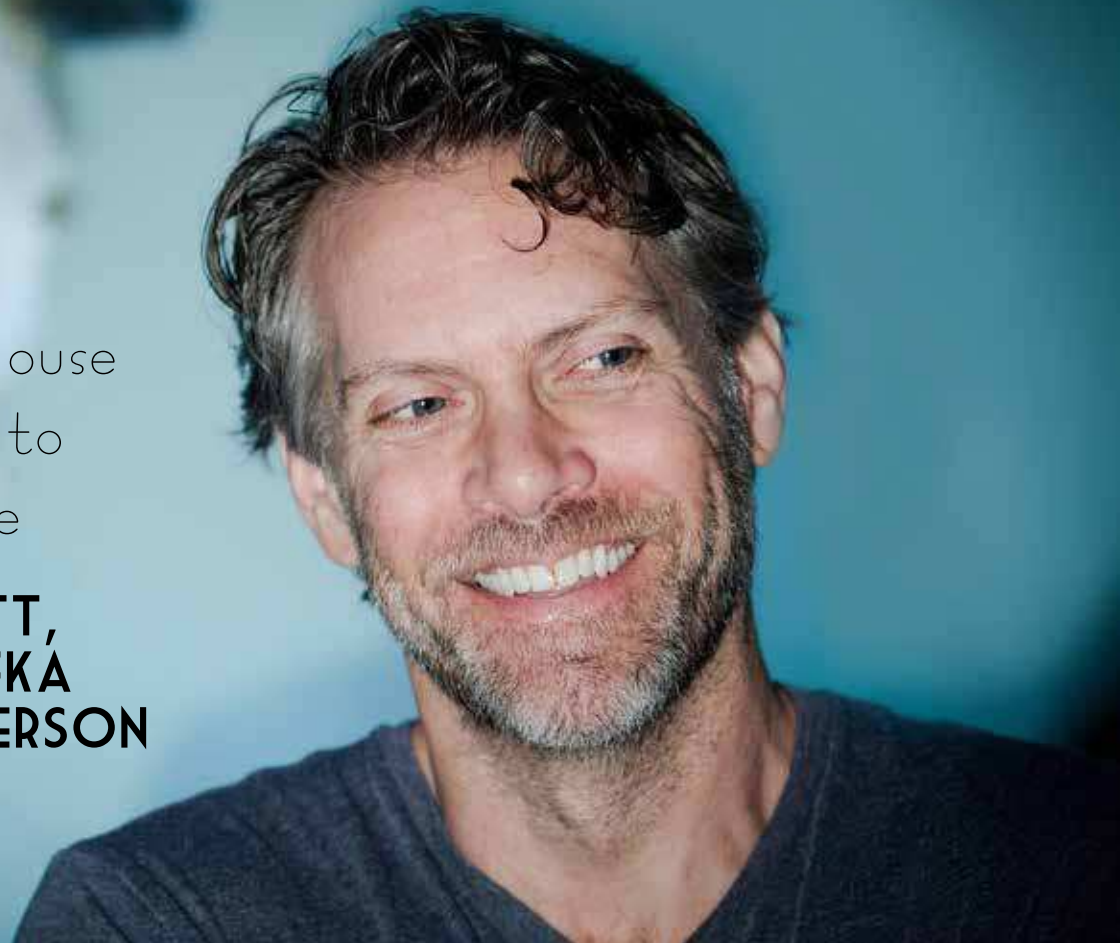
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**ROD PICOTT,  
LESLIE KRAFKÁ  
& WAYNE WILKERSON**  
JULY 28



Fulshear House Concerts will present the musical talents of Rod Picott with Leslie Krafká and Wayne Wilkerson appearing as a supporting act on July 28.

Doors are set to open at 4:30 p.m. with the first set beginning at 5:15 p.m. with a pot-luck dinner. A \$30 artist donation will be taken at the door with 100 percent of the proceeds going to the artists.

Seventeen years ago Rod Picott dropped his tool belt, picked up an acoustic guitar and released his first album *Tiger Tom Dixon's Blues*. The acclaimed debut put a nail in the coffin of his construction career and ignited his second career as a singer-songwriter. With his new album, *Out Past The Wires*, that second career reveals itself in full flame.

The sprawling twenty-two song *Out Past The Wires* ranges from whispery ballads to guitar driven rockers and hits every musical spot between. Like much of Picott's catalog, many of the songs on *Out Past The Wires* center around the lives of working people and the losses, defeats and small victories that can come hard won in a calloused world. It is here in the ordinary where Picott finds the gold he mines so beautifully on songs such as "Take Home Pay" - one of four songs written with longtime friend and co-writer Slaid Cleaves.

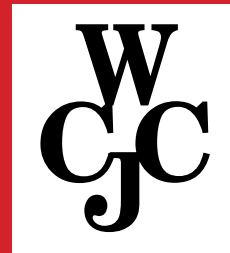
Picott's eye for the revealing detail and sense of empathy has brought praise from music critics since his debut and those qualities, as well as a potent defiance is on full display across *Out Past The Wires*. Now 52 years old and nine albums into his music career Picott is more prolific than ever. The 22 songs were culled from a staggering number of 78. In the two years between *Fortune* and *Out Past The Wires*, Picott has also become a published poet (*God In His Slippers* - Mezcalita Press) written a screenplay and is releasing collection of short stories, also titled *Out Past The Wires*, that accompanies the release of the album. Many of the characters from the songs on the album find their stories expanded and even more finely detailed in the book.

For production duties Picott turned again to Neilson Hubbard (Kim Richey, Matthew Perryman Jones) who produced Picott's most recent album *Fortune*. The recording band consisted of Will Kimbrough/Electric Guitars (Emmylou Harris, Steve Earle, Rodney Crowell) Lex Price/Bass (K.D. Lang), Evan Hutchings/Drums (Brandi Carlisle) and Kris Donegan/Electric Guitars (Sara Evans). The band worked quickly in studio, relying on the instincts of world-class players and Hubbard's steady hand to guide the ambitious project.

*Out Past The Wires* is the latest and one of the most potent pieces of work from Rod Picott since he left his hammer to rust



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and sharpened a new set of tools all those years ago. Picott will be touring throughout 2018 and 2019 in support of the album and book release.

Houston based singer songwriter Leslie Kraflka established her brand of Texas tinged Folk Americana music with her debut CD *The White Cat Sessions* in 2011. She followed it up in 2014 with her well received sophomore CD *on•ward*, which debuted on the *Roots Music Review's Americana Country Chart*. Richard Skanse, the well-known editor and critic of *Lonestar Music Magazine* proclaimed, "Her songs are real winners too, full of buoyant melodies that never sag or drag and lyrics that convey both maturity and a young-at-heart spirit that's playful but never fluffy." And he's not inclined to exaggeration. Leslie is currently focusing on her next music project. And although details are sparse, she is planning on a new CD for 2017. At the same time, Leslie continues to expand her live performance schedule. These days she can heard around Houston and other parts of Texas with her favorite sideman Wayne Wilkerson.

How it began: It was destiny when Leslie attended her first songwriter's workshop. An unexpected destination for someone who had never written a song before....or had sung in public ... or even played an instrument. Hosted by her musical heroes Terri Hendrix and Lloyd Maines, that workshop sparked a passion for songwriting, and started an enduring relationship with Maines and Hendrix that resulted in their co-producing her most recent CD *on•ward*. "That weekend was one of those moments," Leslie recalls, "when I said 'yes' and it changed my entire life."

Indeed, that weekend proved to be a game changer for Leslie.



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With her new found passion fueled by hard work, she honed her craft and found early success. Leslie was named Songwriter of the Year by the Houston Songwriter's Association, as well as Song of the Year honors with Wandering Troubadour to boot. Other recognition's soon followed. Her first CD, The White Cat Sessions, was forged over the course of a year at White Cat Studios as Leslie and producer Jack Saunders honed her earliest creations. Then more work, performing, writing and time spent at The Zone recording studio in Dripping Springs, with the aforementioned heroes, and on•ward was born. Now fully committed to her destiny as a songwriter, and all that comes with it...the highs and lows, the conviction and the doubt, Leslie is more in love with songwriting now than she ever was.

Fulshear House Concerts is a neighborhood concert series for music lovers and live music supporters in Fulshear and the surrounding area.

Each concert features a quality live music performance funded by donations from supporters attending the shows. The donation amount is established by the artist, and 100 percent of all donations go directly to them. House concerts have become a primary source of sustainability for many musicians in today's changing digital music environment.

Fulshear House Concerts is a laid back venue — shows are held in our family room with the furniture cleared out the day of the show. Doors open ½ hour before each show for us to socialize, share food, mingle with the artist.

Address and food details are shared with committed attendees prior to each show, and food is pot-luck — bring a dish to share and Fulshear House Concerts will provide a chair. There are two 45 minutes sets while we are in "listening room" mode for the performance, and there's a break in the middle to refresh beverages, use restrooms, reconnect with artist or buy cd's and other merchandise.

Attendees may not recognize the names of all of the performers, but when after hearing them, attendees will wonder why they are not "big stars."

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*Randle stresses*  
**SAFETY COMES FIRST**  
*— for all LCISD schools —*

**D**r. Thomas Randle issued the following statement of the latest shooting at a high school campus. In his letter to the parents of Lamar CISD students, Randle stressed that the safety of the students remains one of the district's primary concern.

It is with great sadness that I write to you again on the subject of school safety, following another terrible tragedy—this time in Santa Fe ISD. In light of what happened, I'm sure many of you have concerns about what we're doing to keep our schools safe.

Please know, we will always work diligently to keep safety at the forefront. As I wrote to you in February, the District has created a new position: School Safety Coordinator. On the night before the Santa Fe tragedy, the Lamar CISD School Board approved the hire of Rosenberg Police Chief Dallis Warren as our first School Safety Coordinator. In this new position, Warren will ensure all campuses are following best practices in school safety and that all staff and students are prepared for any kind of emergency. Warren has four decades of experience in law enforcement, including more than 25 years in administration. Our schools will certainly benefit from his experience and presence.

In the November bond election, we also included funding for "lockdown" devices—or mechanisms to ensure all classroom doors are reinforced. We reviewed several options with fire and law enforcement officials, before determining Homeland Security Locks are the most appropriate option moving forward. We already have these locks installed on 15 of our campuses. Moving

forward, every new campus will include these locks and plans are in place to retrofit any existing campus without Homeland Security Locks.

Additionally, every one of our schools has a front entrance vestibule that provides pre-determined and monitored pathways for all visitors. We are examining each vestibule to ensure they include a locking mechanism that will prevent unwanted or unnecessary access to the campus.

Our campuses also have multiple surveillance cameras that monitor both the building perimeter and interior. These cameras are all accessible remotely by Lamar CISD administrators and law enforcement.

There are also dedicated School Resource Officers (SROs) on all secondary complexes. For the upcoming school year, we are adding six additional officers that will be assigned to cover our elementary schools, by feeder pattern. For the remainder of this year, you will begin seeing increased police presence on our campuses, which is typical for the final weeks of school.

We believe these plans are very important first steps. That being said, keeping our

schools safe will require ongoing dialogue. Please continue to share your thoughts, as we all work to maintain a safe and comfortable learning environment for our students and staff.

Randle became Lamar CISD's superintendent of schools in 2001. Under his leadership, Lamar CISD is known around the state for academic excellence.

During his tenure, the district has twice been recognized by Texas School Business magazine for its best practices. Lamar



DR. THOMAS RANDLE

CISD has earned the HEB Excellence in Education Award for Best Large District and three campuses achieved the highest possible honor: National Blue Ribbon School.

Student success is also commonplace in Lamar CISD with multiple state championships in athletics and fine arts—among countless other honors and awards.

For over a decade, Lamar CISD has earned the Superior Achievement rating from the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST). In 2014, the Texas Comptroller also recognized Lamar CISD as one of only 46 school districts across the state to achieve the highest level of student success and fiscal management as determined by the Financial Allocation Study for Texas (FAST) report.

Since Dr. Randle's arrival in Lamar CISD, the District has added over a dozen facilities—with plans for another dozen on the way. Student enrollment has increased from about 16,000 to roughly 30,000 and the staff has gone from 2,200 to 4,500—making Lamar CISD the second-largest employer in Fort Bend County.

Dr. Randle also has a strong record of industry leadership, including service with the Texas Association of School Boards Risk Management Fund, the UIL Legislative Committee, the Texas FFA Association, the Texas Association of School Administrators, the Texas Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, Texas Academic Decathlon, the Texas Alliance of Black School Educators and the Texas Business and Education Coalition.

He's a Past President of the Texas Association of School Administrators and a Past President of the Texas Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

He served on the Texas Education Commissioner's Cabinet of Superintendents, the Policy Committee on Public Education Information and as an advisor for the Texas Education Agency's Recommended High School Plan. In 2008, the Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives appointed Dr. Randle to the Select Committee on Public School Accountability.

He's been the Region 4 Superintendent of the Year (2001) and a finalist for Texas Superintendent of the Year.

Other honors include the Leslie Hayley Community Service Award given by the Texas City/La Marque Chamber of Commerce and the 2004 Texas Educational Support Staff Administrator of the Year Award. Dr. Randle is a Rotary Paul Harris Fellow and the 2012 recipient of Texas A&M's John R. Hoyle Award for Educational Leadership. He received an Oklahoma Regent of Higher Education Fellowship and served on a focus group for the Council of Chief State School Officers in Washington D.C.

Dr. Randle earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Texas A&M University and a Doctorate from Oklahoma State University. At A&M, Dr. Randle was a Distinguished Student, and was named an Outstanding Graduate and a Notable Graduate nominee.

Dr. Randle began his education career as an agriculture teacher in Sweeny, then worked his way up the administrative ladder in Conroe ISD, as an Assistant Principal, Principal and Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education. He also served as superintendent in LaMarque ISD for six years prior to arriving in Lamar CISD.

Ultimately, Dr. Randle is still a teacher at heart. He serves as an adjunct professor at Texas A&M University.

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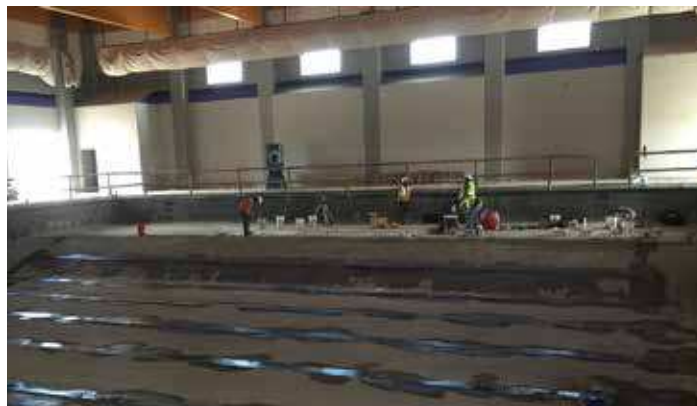
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# Natorium at Fulshear High school SET TO OPEN IN SEPTEMBER

by **TOM BEHRENS**



**T**he new building going up on the south side of Fulshear High School will be the home of the school's natatorium. Foster and George Ranch High Schools are also getting natatoriums. Funding comes from the passage of the 2014 bond package which on average allocated \$8 million for each swimming facility. "We plan to have all of them open for the start of the 2018-2019 school years," said Lamar Consolidated ISD Athletic Director Nicole Nelson. "They will be utilized by our fourth grade swimming instruction program, a part of our fourth grade curriculum, and our high school swimming and diving programs."

Currently all fourth-grade students in LCISD receive swim instruction as part of their curriculum. Each elementary school at certain times of the year is bussed over to one of the two natatoriums that the district presently has. The new natatoriums will allow the children to go to the pool closest to them. The elementary schools in Fulshear that would benefit from the Fulshear High School facility are Huggins and Lindsey.

The Fulshear pool is a 25-meter pool, same as the other new natatoriums, not Olympic size.

"We are call them practice pools," said Nelson. The fourth grade instructional area will be 3 ½ feet deep; the rest of the pool will have eight practice lanes that will be roughly 6 ½ feet deep. These pools will not have diving facilities. The two natatoriums at Terry and the LCISD natatorium have diving facilities. There will be a small seating area for spectators.

"We plan to use these facilities for small events," said Nelson. "Our larger events will be hosted at our LCISD natatorium which is adjacent to Traylor Stadium."

Each LCISD high school has a swimming coach and one diving coach for the district. At Fulshear High School, Matt Tomas is the swimming coach; Stacy Gage, located at Leaman Junior High School, is the diving coach.

"Our students who choose to participate in our swimming and diving program do so during their athletic period, their physical education period, much like the baseball, basketball teams do in their athletic periods," Nelson said.

*Keep up to date with the construction and the Fulshear High School swim team at [www.lcisd.org/campuses/fulshearhs/home](http://www.lcisd.org/campuses/fulshearhs/home)*





# Texana Center awards Cross Creek Ranch for **CONTINUED SUPPORT**

**T**exana Center awarded Cross Creek Ranch the “Community Supporter of the Year” award at a Reaching for the Stars ceremony May 30.

The center, which provides behavioral healthcare and intellectual and developmental disabilities services to residents in a six-county region has been a beneficiary of the popular Cross Creek Ranch Scarecrow Fest for the past three years.

“This particular category was especially tough this year because we have had so many tremendous supporters, but the support we’ve received from Cross Creek Ranch has been over and above,” said Andi Wallis, Community Relations Manager for Texana Center. “The community has not only helped us financially but also brought welcome attention to our organization and important projects.”

Cross Creek Ranch added Texana Center to its Scarecrow Fest beneficiary list in 2016 to support its capital campaign to raise funds for a facility in Fulshear. To date, \$23,500 has been raised for Texana Center through the Scarecrow Fest. The organization will again be a beneficiary during this year’s event, planned for Oct. 20.

“Texana Center already is making a difference in the lives of people with developmental disabilities within the region,” said Rob Bamford, General Manager of Cross Creek Ranch. “The facility planned for Fulshear will allow Texana to serve even more children and adults.”

Texana Center recently broke ground on the first of three buildings planned for its campus along FM 359 north of downtown Fulshear. The first building will house a retail training center for teens and adults with autism and/or intellectual disabilities. The participants will get hands-on experience operating a small bistro-style sandwich, coffee and gift shop. The building also will have a classroom for the expansion of Texana’s Children’s Center for Autism and new adult services that include a daycare program and college-like program. The other two buildings planned for the Fulshear campus will allow both programs to be operated full scale.

Texana Center is a 501(c)3 organization that operates more than 40 facilities throughout Austin, Colorado, Fort Bend, Matagorda, Waller and Wharton counties. More than 800 staff members run six behavioral healthcare clinics, five learning centers and more than 20 group homes. For details, visit [www.texanacenter.com](http://www.texanacenter.com).

*Cross Creek Ranch is a 3,200-acre master-planned community at FM 1463 and FM 1093 in Fulshear. Homes are priced from the \$200,000s. For more information on Cross Creek Ranch, visit <http://www.crosscreektexas.com>.*



Celebrating Cross Creek Ranch being named Texana Center’s “Community Supporter of the Year” are, from left, Sheree Prather, Director of Development for Texana Center; and Carrie Roehling, Rob Bamford and Natalia Grynshyn, all with Cross Creek Ranch.

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# LAMAR CISD TRUSTEES NAME

*Warren district's first school safety coordinator;  
Haack named deputy superintendent*

At its regular May meeting, the Lamar CISD Board of Trustees approved the hiring of Dallis Warren to be the District's first School Safety Coordinator. In his new position, Warren will ensure all campuses are following best practices in school safety and that all staff and students are prepared for any kind of emergency.

Warren will work with all the district's campuses including Fulshear High School, junior high and elementary campuses.

Warren is currently serving as the police chief of Rosenberg. He has been with the city since 1979 and has 40 years of experience in law enforcement, including more than 25 years in administration. He also served as a Criminal Justice instructor at a Wharton County College and Texas A&M's National Emergency Response and Rescue Training Center.

Prior to being chief, he was the assistant chief of police, a captain, detective and sergeant in the Rosenberg Police Department.

He is the graduate of two FBI Sessions, has his master's from Sam Houston State University and a bachelor's from the University of Houston-Downtown.

At a recent meeting, the Lamar CISD Board of Trustees approved Leslie Haack to be the District's first Deputy Superintendent of Support Services.

Haack opened George Ranch High School as principal in 2009. She became Lamar CISD's Executive Director of Secondary Education in 2015.

Prior to arriving at Lamar CISD, Haack was the principal of Sealy High School and an associate principal, assistant principal, teacher and coach in Katy ISD.

She is a graduate of the University of Kansas and has a master's from Prairie View A&M University.

As Deputy Superintendent of Support Services, Haack will oversee the following departments: Maintenance & Operations, Facilities & Planning, Child Nutrition, Technology and Transportation.



Dallis Warren



Leslie Haack

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