Katy expands tax base, includes Cane Island
City annexations lead to jurisdictional changes, cooperation with counties and Houston

By Jocelyn Kerr

Katy City Council voted to annex three tracts of land totaling just over 400 acres on April 27. The land is part of the 1,100-acre Cane Island master-planned community that broke ground in 2014. As part of the annexation, Katy will provide police, fire, emergency medical and all other city services to homes built on the tracts.

Prior to the annexation, Cane Island was split between Katy and Houston jurisdictions. With annexation, Katy officials saw an opportunity to increase the size and tax base of the city.

“We had three different parcels that made up about 400 acres in the Rise Development [project], Cane Island, that were in Houston’s ETJ, and Rise Development wanted to be in the city of Katy,” Katy Mayor Fabol Hughes said.

In 2013, as Cane Island was still in the planning stages, Hughes said the city of Katy began a nearly two-year process of requesting the land be released from the city of Houston’s ETJ.

The limits of Katy’s growth
Houston’s ETJ map shows its jurisdiction extends from the Houston city limit, roughly the eastern edge of George Bush State Park, all the way to the Katy and Fulshear city limits. It encompasses

Area sees job growth amid oil slump
New sectors provide thousands of jobs

By Carrie Taylor

Nearly 5,000 new jobs were added in the Katy area between 2013 and 2014, according to a May 11 economic survey statement from the Katy Area Economic Development Council.

The job growth—mainly in the engineering, accounting and research industries—helps offset the recent widespread layoffs in the oil and gas sector, the statement said.

U.S. Silica Company, a domestic producer of the commercial silica used in the oil and gas industry, announced in May it leased 17,464 square feet in Katy Ranch Phase I near Katy Ranch Crossing. Civil engineering firm Michael Baker also announced it will open a location in June in the Grandway West Building 1 off Franz Road.

“These developments will help bring new residents to Katy and allow Katy residents to work closer to home,” KAEDC President Lance LaCour said. “It also helps grow and diversify the office workforce, which is a prime

Jurisdictional sprawl across Greater Houston

Katy is surrounded on three sides by Houston’s jurisdictional zone. As area MUDs form annexation partnerships with Houston, the city’s ETJ grows past its original five-mile radius.

- **Houston ETJ**
  Extraterritorial Jurisdictions are set by Texas law to establish a half- to five-mile jurisdictional zone around a city’s limit. Cities govern building codes and mobility standards in their ETJ, but city taxes and ordinances do not apply.

- **Incorporated Houston city limit**
  All city taxes and ordinances are enforced within the incorporated city limit.

- **Limited purpose annexation**
  Cities can establish limited purpose annexations, or LPAs, within its ETJ to split sales tax revenue generated within the LPA. The city agrees not to fully annex the area for a period of time, so the LPA will not have to pay city taxes.

- **Water**
  Source: city of Houston/Community Impact Newspaper
SUIT UP FOR EXCITEMENT!

LAZY RIVER | WATERPARK | SLIDE TOWER

TOWNE LAKE RESIDENT WATERPARK NOW OPEN —

TowneLakeTexas.com | 281.256.2772

CaldwellCos.com | 713.690.0000
Come on over.

We’re right here in West Houston and ready to partner with you in the health care of your child.

With a dedicated pediatric emergency room, pediatric intensive care unit and more than 20 pediatric subspecialties conveniently located on site, we offer top care for kids, close to home. From sports medicine to cardiology to ophthalmology, our specialty clinics are staffed by experts in their fields using the most advanced technology, in facilities designed specifically for children.

Texas Children’s is ranked #4 in the nation by U.S. News & World Report and is the highest ranked children’s hospital in the southwest. The next time your child needs medical care, come to us. We’re all about kids.

For maps and information, visit westcampus.texaschildrens.org.
Move into your new home with the X1 Entertainment Operating System.

Before you move, call and ask about our great Movers offers featuring the X1 Entertainment Operating System® — only from XFINITY.

Then choose the installation option that works best for you:

• Schedule a professional installation on the date you choose within a 2-hour appointment window — guaranteed.

OR

• Take it with you — ask how you can bring your equipment with you when you move.

Call your Move Specialist at 1-877-671-3647 or visit comcast.com/moversedge.

Restrictions apply. Not available in all areas. Installation charges may apply. Prepaid card offer end 12/31/15, and is limited to new HD Preferred XF Triple Play (or above) residential customers. Two-year contract required. Early termination fee applies. Cards issued by Citibank, N.A. pursuant to a license from Visa U.S.A. Inc. and managed by Citi Prepaid Services. Cards will not have cash access and can be used everywhere Visa debit cards are accepted. Call for restrictions and complete details, or visit comcast.com. © 2015 Comcast. All rights reserved.
Residents of the Katy area are no strangers to changing landscapes. Although this is my first editor’s note with Community Impact Newspaper, I have been part of the Katy community for more than a decade, and the number of new businesses sprouting up along I-10 consistently surprises me as I drive west toward Katy’s city limit.

This month we report on annexation in the area and the region’s economic growth despite the recent dip in oil prices. As I’ve learned in my first few months as editor, Katy is redefining itself as an economic engine independent of its neighbor to the east.

You’ve probably noticed some changes with the newspaper this month, too. In our effort to evolve and provide a better experience for our readers, we have changed our size and front-page layout to be more reader-friendly. We’re also launching a new, redesigned website that will seamlessly integrate the high-quality graphics and images readers have come to expect from Community Impact Newspaper. Look for details on that launch in our next issue.

As always, please reach out with any questions, ideas or suggestions. I look forward to hearing your feedback on our new look!

Jocelyn Kerr
jkerr@communityimpact.com

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

TAKE THE POLL

What’s your take on the Katy area’s economic outlook?

☐ With all the oil and gas industry layoffs, the area has to be negatively affected. 44%

☐ Manufacturing and medical companies will bring a surplus of jobs to the area. 37%

☐ The downturn will create new opportunities in engineering, accounting and research. 8%

☐ Higher education programs will flourish as people go back to school. 6%

Yes, but only in classrooms where students are nonverbal 5%

No, the cost to implement a camera program would be too high 5%

No, there are privacy issues involved 6%

Other 4%

Take the poll online at communityimpact.com/kty-poll.

Look for the results right here in next month’s print edition of Community Impact Newspaper.

LAST MONTH’S POLL RESULTS

Do you think cameras belong in the classroom?

44%

37%

8%

6%

5%

Results from an unscientific Web survey, collected 05/01/15–05/13/15

CONTENTS

6 IMPACTS
Now Open, Coming Soon & more

9 BUSINESS
What’s Poppin Popcorn

11 DINING
Texas Traditions

12 TRANSPORTATION
Updates
News, data on local road projects

13 EDUCATION
Robert R. Shaw Center for STEAM

14 DEVELOPMENT
Area athletic facilities open

15 CITY & SCHOOL
Summer activities

17 AT THE CAPITOL

21 CALENDAR

22 RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

25 INSIDE INFO
Redesigned SAT and PSAT

26 GUIDE
Summer activities

29 HISTORY
Outdoor Learning Center

30 CORRIDOR
Park Row shopping center

32 REGIONAL

38 REAL ESTATE
Cinco Ranch NW, 77404

39 IMPACT DEALS

© 2015 Community Impact Licensing LLC. All Rights Reserved.
No reproduction of any portion of this issue is allowed without written permission from the publisher.
Fala Creative launched a creative studio at 1512 Avenue C, Bldg. D in Old Town Katy. The grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony was held May 28. The company offers corporate branding, marketing and advertising services as well as photography workshops. 281-829-3252. www.falacreative.com

Katy Multi Services and Insurance opened in May at 5650 Roberts Road, Ste. 100, Katy. The business provides several services, including title changes and tax preparation for federal and state taxes. The company also sells insurance policies. 281-395-9001.

Laura’s Line located at 23730-J Westheimer Parkway, Katy, in the Super Target shopping center. opened the first week of May. The women’s boutique offers designer clothing and accessories as well as personal shopping services. Online shopping through the company’s website is also available. 281-574-3517. www.laurasline.com

Memorial Hermann Convenient Care Center held its grand opening May 28 and opens for patient care June 1 at 22430 Grand Corner Drive, Katy. The 30,000-square-foot center provides one-stop healthcare services with a 24-hour emergency room, primary care physicians, lab and imaging services, sports medicine and rehabilitation services. This is Memorial Hermann’s third convenient care center in the Greater Houston area, in addition to the Summer Creek and Pearland locations. 281-436-8800. http://mhmg.memorialhermann.org/specialties/convenient-care-centers/

Now Open

1 Bootleggers Spirits & More opened at 1450 W. Grand Parkway S., Katy, near Falcon Landing, in late April. The family-owned specialty store sells wine, spirits and craft beer. 281-665-3489. @BootleggersKaty

2 Christian Brothers Automotive opened its second Katy location at 1421 FM 1463. The service center provides a full range of services including brake repair, oil changes, tire rotations, transmission services and air conditioning maintenance. 832-500-3875.

Eye Level Katy Southwest Learning Center, at 24948 FM 1093, Ste. 215, opened May 16. The franchise offers diagnostic tests that are used to create personalized learning plans to help students improve math and language skills. The facility offers afternoon, evening and Saturday appointments. 281-912-4688.

www.eyelevelkatysouthwest.com

3 Eye Level Katy Southwest Learning Center, at 24948 FM 1093, Ste. 215, opened May 16. The franchise offers diagnostic tests that are used to create personalized learning plans to help students improve math and language skills. The facility offers afternoon, evening and Saturday appointments. 281-912-4688.

www.eyelevelkatysouthwest.com

4 Fala Creative launched a creative studio at 1512 Avenue C, Bldg. D in Old Town Katy. The grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony was held May 28. The company offers corporate branding, marketing and advertising services as well as photography workshops. 281-829-3252. www.falacreative.com

5 Katy Multi Services and Insurance opened in May at 5650 Roberts Road, Ste. 100, Katy. The business provides several services, including title changes and tax preparation for federal and state taxes. The company also sells insurance policies. 281-395-9001.

6 Laura’s Line located at 23730-J Westheimer Parkway, Katy, in the Super Target shopping center. opened the first week of May. The women’s boutique offers designer clothing and accessories as well as personal shopping services. Online shopping through the company’s website is also available. 281-574-3517. www.laurasline.com

7 Memorial Hermann Convenient Care Center held its grand opening May 28 and opens for patient care June 1 at 22430 Grand Corner Drive, Katy. The 30,000-square-foot center provides one-stop healthcare services with a 24-hour emergency room, primary care physicians, lab and imaging services, sports medicine and rehabilitation services. This is Memorial Hermann’s third convenient care center in the Greater Houston area, in addition to the Summer Creek and Pearland locations. 281-436-8800. http://mhmg.memorialhermann.org/specialties/convenient-care-centers/

8 Memorial Hermann Convenient Care Center held its grand opening May 28 and opens for patient care June 1 at 22430 Grand Corner Drive, Katy. The 30,000-square-foot center provides one-stop healthcare services with a 24-hour emergency room, primary care physicians, lab and imaging services, sports medicine and rehabilitation services. This is Memorial Hermann’s third convenient care center in the Greater Houston area, in addition to the Summer Creek and Pearland locations. 281-436-8800. http://mhmg.memorialhermann.org/specialties/convenient-care-centers/

90

Learn More About Our 31 Day Transformation Plan! 281-394-5562 | PREMIERPSTUDIO.COM

3 Months at Premier!
Coming Soon

**Next Level Athletics** opened a 15,000-square-foot facility at 25311 Kingsland Blvd., Katy, the last week of May. The custom-built, state-of-the-art facility includes 5,000 square feet of indoor turf, a 4,000-square-foot gym, cardio room and weight training space. The facility offers sports and performance training classes, personal training, MMA training, youth classes, summer camps and locker rooms with showers. 832-437-9629. www.nlainc.org

**Oceans Behavioral Health Hospital Katy** at 455 Park Grove Drive, held its grand opening May 7 and is now accepting patients. The 48-bed, 34,000-square-foot facility provides specialized psychological care to senior adults over the age of 55 with mood or behavioral disturbances, or progressive degenerative illnesses. The hospital is a partnership between nationally recognized geriatric specialists Oceans Healthcare and SRP Medical, a national healthcare development company. 281-492-8888. http://ohcg.info

**Water Tree Mason** opened its alkaline water store at 1645 Winding Hollow Drive, Ste. 103, on May 2. The store sells specially formulated alkalized bottled water with pH ranging from 8.5-11 to promote health and wellness. The store offers prefilled bottles or customers can fill their own bottles at the store’s self-filling station. 832-321-3139. www.watertreemason.com.

**Logos Preparatory Academy** opened its second location this fall. The university model school was founded in Sugar Land in 2004 and is expanding to meet interest from Katy-area parents. The inaugural class includes third through eighth grades. In fall 2016, the Katy school will expand to include kindergarten through ninth grade, with additional grades added each year until the school offers a full slate of classes from kindergarten through 12th grade. The academy is accepting applications for fall admission. 281-565-6467. www.logosprep.org

**That Storage Place** is under construction at 1492 WoodCreek Bend Lane, Katy, between WoodCreek Junior High and WoodCreek Elementary schools, and opens for business in late July. The business features ground-level, climate-controlled standard drive-up units, two access-controlled entrances, 24-hour surveillance cameras throughout and moving supplies for purchase. 281-392-0182. www.thatstorageplacekaty.com

**Chick-fil-A** opened its Kingsland Boulevard location. 832-437-9629. www.chick-fil-a.com

**Walgreens** has added a new health clinic to a Kingsland Boulevard location. 832-767-6586. http://t-n-o.co

**Renovations**

**Walgreens**, at 25620 Kingsland Blvd., Katy, renovated and expanded its store to include a two-room health care clinic that opened May 6. The 14,800-square-foot renovated clinic includes private consultation and immunization spaces. In addition to immunizations, on-staff clinicians offer physicals, wellness visits, health screenings, and the treatment of minor injuries, skin conditions and ongoing health conditions. 281-371-2360. www.walgreens.com

**Closings**

**Texas National Outfitters** is closing its Katy location at 3522 Mason Road, Katy, and holding a moving clearance and fixture sale the last week of May. The company’s flagship location at 8933 I-10 near Voss Road in Houston will remain open. 832-767-6586. http://t-n-o.co

**Chick-fil-A Katy Green** operating partner Courtney Holmes helps run three locations.

**Walgreens** has added a new health clinic to a Kingsland Boulevard location.
COMING IN JUNE

COMMUNITYIMPACT.COM
Where local lives.

ALL-NEW & COMPLETELY REDESIGNED
**What’s Poppin Popcorn**

Creating gourmet gifts and treats

By Carrie Taylor

Few flavors are off the table at What’s Poppin Popcorn, which boasts more than three dozen popcorn flavors. Many flavors were suggested by customers, and include original recipes such as Bacon Cheddar, Hershey’s S’mores and Birthday Cake.

Co-owner Jodie Anderson opened the business with her husband in September 2013. After spending years as a stay-at-home mom with her three sons, ages 11, 16 and 18, she said she studied the success of a close friend’s popcorn establishment in Dallas.

“[Our kids] are athletes and are very busy, and never had the time to have a job—I wanted them to see what working hard looks like,” Anderson said. “All of my kids have worked here at some point. I wanted them to learn how to talk to people, how to handle money and manage people.”

With a background in social work and a bachelor’s degree in psychology, Anderson’s popcorn venture was off her beaten path, but it has paid off in that the store sees a steady stream of customers daily and never has to throw away a batch of popcorn, she said.

Customers can purchase popcorn in a variety of bag sizes, from tiny to extra-large, as well as popcorn tins decorated in a variety of themes and school logos, both local and collegiate.

Anderson said she closely guards her establishment’s popping methods, including recipes, and requires all employees to sign a confidentiality agreement lest competitors get wind of how she makes her popcorn. She said her staff remains small with six employees, including Anderson’s brother, Chuck Conner, who cooks most of the popcorn.

“Our popcorn is better because of the freshness—I am here cooking every day,” Conner said.

Anderson also arranges custom baskets or buckets for special occasions and holidays. She said she is looking to further her involvement with corporate marketing, in which companies purchase tins of popcorn or other gifts with their logo and distribute them for marketing purposes.

Staffers help customers plan how much popcorn they need to order to feed their guests, and staffers also help pick out coordinating colors and flavors, Anderson said. The staff encourages customers to give feedback on flavors they would like to try because Poppin’s signature taste is not easily replicated at home, she said.

“I always have people tell me they have tried to make some of our flavors at home, and it just never comes out the same,” Anderson said.

What’s Poppin Popcorn

1326 Pin Oak Road, Katy
281-394-2550
www.whatspoppinpopcorn.net
Hours: Mon.-Sat. 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

**Seasonal flavors**

- **Fall**
  - Green Apple, Pumpkin Spice,
  - Marshmallow; customers can choose to add candy corns to any flavor
- **Christmas**
  - Peppermint, White Chocolate Pretzel with Christmas M&Ms
- **Valentine’s Day**
  - Cherries ‘n Cream, White Chocolate Pretzel with Valentine M&Ms
- **Crawfish season**
  - Cajun Spice

**Extra offerings**

- **Popcones:** These cone-shaped bags of popcorn serve as party favors and gifts. Customers can pick colors and flavors. $1/each for a minimum of 20
- **Tin refills:** Customers who purchase a popcorn tin buy refills starting at $14.95.
Enjoy increased access to exceptional care.

Memorial Hermann is proud to offer even more of the latest advancements along with the industry’s top doctors. Now known as Memorial Hermann Orthopedic & Spine Hospital, this facility brings with it an impressive range of orthopedic specialties. It will also house one of our seven renowned Joint Centers – replacing the location at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center. It’s just another way we’re advancing health.

For more information, call 713.314.4444 or visit MHOrthoSpine.org.

HOUSTON ORTHOPEDIC & SPINE HOSPITAL IS NOW MEMORIAL HERMANN.

These hands cared for you... Now let our hands care for them

We invite you to come in to take a tour of our beautiful community and meet our new Resident Care Director, Trish Grueneberg, RN, MSN.

With an individualized care plan provided at The Solana Terrace Assisted Living and the Solana Gardens Memory Care, you know that your loved one’s needs and assistance from our staff are always aligned.

24001 Cinco Village Center Boulevard, Katy, Texas 77494 (281) 720-7522 • www.thesolana.com

FirstService Credit Union

NEW Katy Branch NOW OPEN!

A Full-Service Financial Institution Right in Your Community!

YOU ARE ELIGIBLE! JOIN US AND SAVE $ Our Products and Services include:

- FREE Checking Accounts
- Loans - Auto / Personal
- Credit Cards
- Mortgage Loans
- Refinancing - Home / Auto
- And Much More!

I-10 @ Hwy 99 fscu.com
Texas Tradition
Cooking homestyle meals in Katy

By Ariel Carmona Jr.

Texas Tradition restaurant owners Mike and Denise Phillips said they have a philosophy of providing great customer service in a family-friendly atmosphere and serving simple, satisfying meals on a daily basis.

The husband-and-wife team worked in several restaurants while growing up. Those early experiences defined the down-home offerings in their restaurant’s menu, they said.

Denise learned to make homemade desserts, such as peach cobbler and apple crisp pie, while growing up in Chicago where her parents owned a restaurant. Mike worked with his dad and brother at various family restaurant locations throughout Texas.

Mike said despite changes in the Katy area throughout the years, several things have stayed the same at Texas Traditions: a desire to make high-quality food and a tradition of interacting with customers on a personal level.

“When we opened in August of 2002, we wanted to provide homemade food with great service and just have a place for families to come and be themselves,” Mike said. “A lot of places are stuffy; we can do stuffy, too, but that’s not who we are. We just want people to be comfortable, have a good time and eat some great food.”

In addition to handmade burgers and chicken-fried steak, the restaurant offers all-you-can-eat fried catfish on Friday nights and a large patio on which the restaurant hosts weekend entertainment and live bands.

Denise said the most satisfying aspect of running the restaurant is interacting with her longtime customers.

“A lot of people know everybody. Joan, our day manager, recognizes people and will greet them by name at the door. For me, I love being able to visit and to talk with the customers who have been coming here since we opened,” she said.

One aspect of the business the couple said they are proud of is their commitment to give back to the community by sponsoring local school teams and working with Katy ISD.

“That’s who we give back to,” Mike said. “We give back to the little leagues, we give to the booster clubs and athletic clubs. The community we live in is where we are. It’s the most crucial part of being in business—supporting the people that support you.”

I HAVE THE BEST CLIENTS IN KATY!
THANK YOU FOR MAKING ME KATY’S TOP PRODUCING AGENT 4 YEARS IN A ROW!
Construction is nearly complete on the new road along First Street approved by Katy City Council at the start of the year. Poor weather affected construction, but the city anticipates June completion. The two-lane concrete road runs parallel to the railroad track along Hwy. 90 and stretches from Cane Island Parkway to the Houston Lighting & Power Co. railroad crossing to the east.

**Timeline:** April 8–June

**Cost:** $566,851

**Funding Sources:** Katy Development Authority (via Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County funds)

---

Spring Green Boulevard roundabout at Katy Flewellen Road

Plans are near completion for a roundabout at the intersection of Spring Green Boulevard, Katy Flewellen Road and Cinco Trace Boulevard. The project is expected to open for construction bidding in July. Total construction time is estimated at seven months.

**Timeline:** July 2015–April 2016

**Cost:** $2.77 million

**Funding Sources:** Fort Bend County, private developers

---

Cane Island Parkway

Construction on Cane Island Parkway continues, and completion is expected September 2015. The project creates a north-south thoroughfare to connect the Cane Island master planned community to I-10. Segment 1, connecting Hwy. 90 to the community entrance, was completed October 2014. Phase 2 is underway to connect Hwy. 90 to I-10 and will culminate in an overpass. Construction on the overpass has not yet started.

**Timeline:** October 2013–September 2015

**Cost:** $2 million

**Funding Sources:** city of Katy, private developers, Texas Department of Transportation
Robert R. Shaw Center for STEAM dedicated, aims to inspire innovation

By Jocelyn Kerr

Hundreds of students, faculty and local leaders turned out for the dedication of the Robert R. Shaw Center at 1730 Katyland Drive on April 27. Katy ISD built the $5.4 million, 23,900-square-foot center using funds from the general operating fund, KISD Communications Manager Denisse Coffman said.

Shaw served on the KISD board of trustees from 1997 to 2012. He passed away May 26, 2014, and was remembered at the dedication for his passion for learning and service to the KISD community.

School board trustee member Rebecca Fox spoke at the dedication and attended the center’s inaugural field trip. She said the center will provide space for student innovation.

The facility was designed with an open central area to accommodate exhibits and demonstrations. Around the perimeter, eight individual project bays provide workspace for student projects, including the district’s robotics program. District teachers can reserve space in the center for student use.

The center’s inaugural field trip event was a forensic science workshop April 24 that transformed the space into a crime scene investigation. High school students participating in the district’s forensic science program explored several learning stations that focused on different aspects of forensics study, such as blood splatter analysis and fingerprinting techniques.

“[T]he event was a success. We had about a thousand students come through [during the center’s CSI day],” instructional specialist Miriam Manuel said.

The center is open to all district schools. Manuel said exhibitions and events will be announced on the Shaw Center website.

Katy ISD dedicated the Robert R. Shaw Center for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics April 27.
EMERGENCIES CAN’T WAIT.
NEITHER SHOULD YOU.

Full-Service ER in Your Neighborhood

- 24/7 care
- Free parking
- All ages
- 10 private treatment rooms
- X-ray, CT and ultrasound
- On-site laboratory
- Board-certified emergency doctors

Houston Methodist Cinco Ranch Emergency Care Center

26000 FM 1093
Katy, TX 77494
832.522.6070
houstonmethodist.org/ER

Area adds three athletic facilities

By Carrie Taylor

The athletic training industry continues to grow in the Katy area with three new athletic facilities either opening soon or having opened within the last year. All three facilities are within reach of Katy Mills and have programs targeted to student athletes as well as general fitness and training programs.

Next Level Athletics opened a 15,000-square-foot facility in late May, which includes a 4,000-square-foot weight room, a 25-by-20-yard indoor turf, and locker rooms with showers.

“We are finally bringing to fruition the hard work and time that has gone into this project, and we anticipate our membership to reach 2,000 in the next 24 months,” said Reynaldo Silva, owner of Next Level Athletics.

Founded in 2001, the company did not have a permanent facility prior to the Kingsland location, but it is already serving 550 members, Silva said. He attributes the success of his operation to his company values—welcoming student athletes of all skill levels—as well as the passion area youth has for sports.

Elite Volleyball, a 31,000-square-foot facility, predominantly functions as a volleyball facility, but it also features basketball courts and batting cages as well as a high-performance workout area.

“We will help [student athletes] get better and provide a safe place for them to play [outside of school],” Elite Volleyball owner Wan Yun said.

Yun has worked in the Katy area for about five years, he said, and wanted to build a facility for his program to allow for more program flexibility. He said he anticipates success for his company because he provides programs for students who do not make school teams.

Athletic Performance Lab offers a variety of programs for student athletes looking to improve their sports skills and overall athleticism. Sean Piper is a co-owner of the company.

“We noticed a great opportunity for growth if we built a facility here,” Piper said.

“Katy is a tremendous asset to our program because [the kids] are very driven by a district that provides opportunities for these kids to play on a huge stage,” Silva said. “It’s a good marriage because you’ve got great coaches out there, great schools and great traditions, so it’s only fitting that we thrive here as well.”
Collection of city taxes moving to Fort Bend and Harris counties

**KATY** City Council voted May 11 to authorize the mayor to sign interlocal agreements with Fort Bend and Harris counties to collect property taxes on behalf of the city.

City Administrator Byron J. Hebert said during the meeting that Katy Tax Assessor Charlie Shafer is preparing to retire, and the city looked at alternatives to hiring a replacement. Fort Bend and Harris counties collect taxes on behalf of Katy ISD, Hebert said, and contracting with the counties will save the city approximately $150,000. It will also provide additional payment locations for Katy residents.

Residents will receive one bill from the county that includes county, school and city taxes. Payments can be made online or in person at one of 16 locations in Harris County or five locations in Fort Bend County, according to council records. Residents in Waller County will make payments through Fort Bend County.

“Our estimated cost to the city of Katy for fee collection is less than $7,000 per year. We believe it’s mutually beneficial and we look forward to working with [the city],” said Mike Sullivan, Harris County tax assessor-collector, at the May 11 meeting.

Hebert said Katy tax department employees will be moved to other departments.

**Michalsky, Griffin re-elected to Katy ISD board of trustees**

**KATY ISD** Incumbents Bryan Michalsky and Charles Griffin were re-elected to the Katy ISD board of trustees following the May 9 election. In the Position 6 race, Michalsky received 61.8 percent, or 1,604 votes, compared with challenger John Pendergrass’s 38.2 percent, or 993 votes. In the Position 7 race, Griffin received 62.8 percent, or 1,675 votes, compared with challenger Leonard Ledford’s 37.2 percent, or 992 votes.

**Position 6**

Michalsky, first elected to the board in 2012, is the chief financial officer for Cotton Holdings, Inc., a member of the Katy Area Economic Development Council and a member of the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce. Michalsky said he supports the board’s resolution to repeal high-stakes testing.

“I’m very humbled the community came out and supported me for a second term. I think it’s a validation of the work the current board has done,” Michalsky said.

**Position 7**

Griffin, a United Airlines Boeing 737 captain and retired lieutenant colonel in the Air Force, was first elected to the KISD board in 2012. Griffin said he would continue to support inclusive education programs that encourage leadership among Katy students.

“I would like to thank everyone who participated in this election. Thank you for putting our students first,” Griffin said. “I was honored to be selected to serve the first time, and I thank you for your trust, faith and confidence in me and for allowing me to serve another term.”

**Meetings**

- **Katy City Council**
  Meets at 6:30 p.m. on June 8 and 22.
  910 Avenue C, Katy
  www.cityofkaty.com

- **Katy ISD**
  Meets at 6:30 p.m. on June 22.
  6301 S. Stadium Lane, Katy
  www.katyisd.org
TRUST LOOKS LIKE THIS.

When you choose UT Physicians, you are selecting individualized care from a team of more than 1,000 clinicians ready to meet your medical needs. UT Physicians offers advanced technologies with a personalized touch at our flagship location in the Texas Medical Center and a growing number of sites throughout the greater Houston area.

UT Physicians at Cinco Ranch
23923 Cinco Ranch Blvd.
Katy, TX 77494
713-486-5300

NOW SELLING IN HIDDEN CREEK!
Surrounded by lakes, waterways and green space, Hidden Creek will feature a 20-acre Village Park and 1,000 homesites. Visit the Welcome Center today to discover Hidden Creek.

Live in exotic spaces in not so far away places

Bridgeland, it’s like a whole other world.
New Village Park coming later in 2015 will include a dog park, skate park, heated lap pool, tennis courts, basketball courts and more.

Miles of nature and exercise trails through the vast wilderness of Cypress Creek

BRIDGELAND®
FIND BALANCE
11,400-acre master planned community
Homes from the $250s to over $1 million
281-304-5588 or toll free 1-866-232-0270
www.bridgeland.com
During this legislative session, Community Impact Newspaper is reporting on bills and funding for the state regarding the budget, economy and small business, transportation, public education, higher education, health care and more. All information on this page is as of May 20.

**TRANSPORTATION**

By Amy Denney

The status of additional state funding for the Texas Department of Transportation is up in the air as the House and Senate will discuss their differences on approving a bill designed to divert money to the State Highway Fund that helps fund TxDOT.

On April 30 the House approved Senate Joint Resolution 5, which would dedicate $3 billion of revenue from the state sales and use tax to the SHF each fiscal year. However, the bill differs from the Senate’s version, approved March 4. The Senate’s version of the bill would dedicate the first $2.5 billion of motor vehicle sales tax revenue to the state’s general revenue fund and the second $2.5 billion to the SHF. The Senate declined to accept the House’s version of the bill May 4, requiring both chambers to hash out differences in a conference committee.

**FUNDING TEXAS ROADS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senate</th>
<th>House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motor vehicle sales tax</td>
<td>Sales and use tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2.5 billion to general revenue fund then</td>
<td>$3 billion + 2% of growth to State Highway Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2.5 billion to State Highway Fund</td>
<td>Source: Texas Legislature Online</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ECONOMY AND SMALL BUSINESS**

By Joe Olivieri

HB 40, a bill clarifying that the state—not local authorities—regulates oil and gas activity, was signed by Gov. Greg Abbott on May 18. It took effect immediately.

HB 931, a bill that would change how unemployment insurance benefits are allocated, was sent to Abbott on May 20. According to the bill’s analysis, current law “incentivizes unemployed individuals to remain out of work for at least four weeks because they will be paid double for the fourth week of unemployment.” The bill amends how individuals would be eligible for benefits.

**PUBLIC EDUCATION**

By Kelli Weldon

At a May 14 House meeting, Rep. Jimmie Don Aycock, R-Killeen, moved to postpone consideration of HB 1759—the school finance bill he co-authored—until July 4. As a result, any school finance changes would have to come from general appropriations bill HB 1, according to Aycock’s staff.

On May 11 Gov. Greg Abbott signed SB 149 into law. The legislation will establish committees to determine if students who pass classes but fail state tests can graduate.

On May 7 the Senate passed HB 4. Filed by Rep. Dan Huberty, R-Houston, the bill aims to implement high-quality standards for prekindergarten education. In a statement, Abbott said he thinks HB 4 will help strengthen the foundation for student success. At press time he had not signed the bill.

**HIGHER EDUCATION**

By Jennifer Curington

Many bills slated to bring various changes to higher education establishments are still waiting for passage.

SB 11, which would allow licensed concealed weapon owners to carry a firearm on public college campuses, was approved by the Senate but still has not been heard on the House floor.

SB 1819, a bill repealing current law allowing undocumented students—referred to as “Dreamers”—to pay in-state tuition rates, is waiting to be heard by the Senate. Other bills currently in limbo include those that would issue revenue bonds to help higher education institutions fund capital projects, such as new facilities, on campuses.

**HEALTH CARE**

By Lyndsey Taylor

On May 19 the House passed SB 339, which legalizes and regulates the growth of cannabis plants high in cannabidiol and low in tetrahydrocannabinol in Texas. Gov. Greg Abbott can veto SB 339, sign the bill or take no action.

SB 339 would allow patients access to cannabis as medicine upon the recommendation of two board-certified medical specialists. According to the bill’s analysis, cannabidiol oil has been shown to “dramatically decrease” the number of seizures in people with intractable epilepsy, or people with a higher risk of a shortened life span, bodily injury or mental health impairment. Cannabidiol oil is an extract from the cannabis plant.

**SB 339**

- Authored by Sen. Kevin P. Elfiie, R-Tyler
- Would amend the current law relating to the medical use of low-THC cannabids and the regulation of related organizations and individuals
- Would allow patients access to cannabis oil upon the recommendation of two board-certified medical specialists

**HISTORY**

By Leslee Bassman

Many bills slated to bring various changes to higher education establishments are still waiting for passage.

SB 11, which would allow licensed concealed weapon owners to carry a firearm on public college campuses, was approved by the Senate but still has not been heard on the House floor.

SB 1819, a bill repealing current law allowing undocumented students—referred to as “Dreamers”—to pay in-state tuition rates, is waiting to be heard by the Senate. Other bills currently in limbo include those that would issue revenue bonds to help higher education institutions fund capital projects, such as new facilities, on campuses.

**BUDGET**

By Joe Olivieri

The House of Representatives unanimously passed SB 20 on May 19. The bill, proposed by Sen. Jane Nelson, R-Flower Mound, increases the disclosure and reporting of state contracts.

“Texas citizens rely on state contracts to receive services they need, and we must ensure that those contracts are awarded fairly and transparently,” Nelson said.
If you’re wishing for a community unlike any other, welcome to Cane Island. Located in Katy, and just minutes from Houston’s Energy Corridor, Cane Island is where lush woods harmonize with luxury homes and never-before imagined amenities abound.

Visit CaneIsland.com to learn more about this extraordinary community and sign up for our interest list.

A Rise Community

Top bills filed:
- Authored Senate Bill 182 to recalculate the ad valorem rollback tax rates for certain taxing units. The bill was left pending in the Senate Finance Committee after an April 9 public hearing.
- Authored SB 1215 to abolish the property tax assistance division from the Comptroller of Public Accounts and transfer duties to a newly created tax board. The Senate passed the bill, which was referred to the House Ways & Means Committee on May 4.

Recent tweets:
- “Follow us on Twitter — @impactnews_kty—for Katy, and throughout the legislative session search for #CITxLege for coverage that matters to you.”
- “COMMUNITY IMPACT NW A - @impactnews_nw a
Sen. Donna Campbell lays out school choice in SB 276 to Senate education committee #TxLege #CITxLege

Want more Texas legislative coverage?
Follow us on Twitter — @impactnews_nw a for coverage that matters to you.

More legislative coverage at #TxLege and communityimpact.com

When I say “good,”
you say “neighbor.”

CALL FOR A QUOTE 24/7

Matt Schomburg, Agent
814 East Avenue
Katy, TX 77493
Bus: 281-578-0607
mattinsuresyou.com
Se habla español
Assisted Living Like You’ve Never Seen Before!

A Connected Life
Exploring Relationships

An Active Life
Enjoying Now

A Purposeful Life
Anticipating Tomorrow

Have you ever thought of an assisted living community as a place for seniors to grow - a place for them to enjoy pursuing passions and deepening family relationships?

We do, and that’s what makes Legacy At Falcon Point Assisted Living Like You’ve Never Seen Before! It’s a safe place of detailed care where seniors can be social, and stay physically and mentally active.

281-394-0628

1520 Katy Gap Road
Katy, TX 77494
LegacyAtFalconPoint.com
Hello@LegacyAtFalconPoint.com
CALENDAR

May

30 **Build Your Marketing Toolkit Workshop**
Marketing expert Celina Enamorado presents skills and tools small businesses can use to improve and expand their reach. Enamorado is a part of SCORE, Service Corps of Retired Executives, which is a network of thousands of professional business and marketing volunteers. 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Free. Cinco Ranch Library, 2620 Commercial Center Blvd., Katy. 281-395-1311. www.fortbend.lib.tx.us

30 **End of School Bash**
Macaroni Kid Katy presents its 2015 End of School Bash which provides families numerous free activities and features vendor booths from local businesses and eateries. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Free. Central Green Park LaCenterra, 23501 Cinco Ranch Blvd., Katy. 631-726-1412. http://katy.macaronikid.com

30 **Used book sale**
The Friends of the Maud Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen benefit the library. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. Cinco Ranch Library, 2620 Commercial Center Blvd., Katy. 281-395-1311. www.fortbend.lib.tx.us

30 **Keller Williams Premier 5K**
Keller Williams Premier Realty presents “It's Not Too Hot to Trot” 5K Run and Walk to benefit Cinco Charities. There is a postrace celebration and awards ceremony, and runners/walkers of all experience levels are welcome. The race begins at Villages of Villagio Townhomes at Peek Road and Westheimer Parkway. 8-11 a.m. $35. Villagio Town Center, 22762 Westheimer Parkway. 281-220-2100. http://kwpremier5k.com

30 **Bridal Sip and See**
The Brookwood Community hosts its inaugural Sip and See for brides to meet their vendors, enjoy complimentary drinks and hors d’oeuvres and see the latest wedding and bridal trends for 2015. 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. $20 (presale admission), $25 (general admission). The Café at Brookwood, 752 FM 1489, Brookshire. 281-375-2400. www.brookwoodcommunity.org

June

11 **Banquet and Crawfish Boil**
The Coastal Conservation Association Katy Chapter, a marine conservation nonprofit composed of coastal outdoor enthusiasts, hosts its annual banquet and crawfish boil. A gun raffle includes a variety of rifles, shotguns and pistols. Various sponsorship levels are available. 6 p.m. $65 (individuals). Palacio Maria, 21728 Highland Knolls, Katy. 713-626-4222. www.ccatexas.org

12 **through 13 ** **Joust Fest Texas**
SIRE Therapeutic Horsemanship hosts a two-day international jousting tournament. Five jousting events, foot battles, skills and knowledge courses feature participants from around the world. 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (June 12), 9 a.m.-10 p.m. (June 13). Admission starts at $10 for children, $25 for adults. Great Southwest Equestrian Center, 2501 S. Mason Road, Katy. 281-356-7588. Joustfesttexas.com

14 **Bowlerama Bowling Tournament**
The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo along with the Houston Metro Go Texan Committee in Katy invites the community to its bowling tournament. The event features three hours of bowling, access to the arcade, laser tag and pool tables as well as a silent auction and bake sale. 2-5 p.m. $25 (player entry), $125 (team entry, up to six players). Times Square Entertainment, 402 Grand Parkway S., Katy. 832-667-1000. www.rodeohtouston.com

18 **Katy ISD Junior Achievement Golf Scramble**
Katy ISD and Junior Achievement present its four-person scramble golf tournament. All proceeds benefit both organizations and help bring junior achievement education programs to KISD students. 8 a.m. (breakfast), 8:30 a.m. ( shotgun start), $800 (team of four). Meadowbrook Farms Golf Club, 2320 Meadowbrook Farms Club Drive, Katy. 713-682-4500. www.junioreachieve.org

June

19 **through 20 ** **Legally Blonde, The Musical JR.**
Katy Visual and Performing Arts Center presents the junior version of Legally Blonde as a part of its Summer Broadway Series. The plot follows the movie of the same name where Elle Woods defies stereotypes and succeeds in law school despite the doubts of those around her. 7 p.m. (June 19 and 20), 2 p.m. (June 20). $7. Katy Visual and Performing Arts Center Main Campus, 2501 S. Mason Road, Ste. 290, Katy. 281-829-2787. http://kvpac.org

21 **Jeff and Brede’s Triathlon**
The Houston Racing Triathlon Club presents its 23rd annual triathlon, which includes a 300-meter swim, 10-mile bike ride and 3-mile run as well as a relay. Athletes of all ages are encouraged to participate. An awards ceremony follows the event along with music and refreshments. 6:45 a.m. (race begins). $65 (register by June 15), $75 (at packet pickup, after June 15), $90 (relay, before June 15), $100 (relay at packet pickup, after June 15). Mary Jo Peckham Park, 5597 Gardenia Lane, Katy. www.houstonracing.com

Worth the TRIP

JUNE 05 **Bearkat Invitational Golf Tournament**
The Bearkat Champions Fund holds its second annual golf tournament to raise money for the Sam Houston State University Athletic Department. Funds are used to assist students with travel and equipment expenses. The four-man scramble ends with reception and awards. Refreshments provided. 10 a.m. ( shotgun start), $300 (individuals). Sterling Country Club, 16500 Houston National Blvd., Houston. 936-294-2364. www.gobearkats.com/specialevents

Compiled by Carrie Taylor

Located in Katy and Spring/The Woodlands
281-363-0600
WWW.HDAS.BIZ

Need a new career path?
Become a dental assistant in just 10 Saturdays

If you have good communication skills, enjoy working with people, enjoy working with your hands and want the responsibility and rewards of a professional career, dental assisting is for you. The best way to become a dental assistant is to receive formal training. Our program provides an education based on the latest procedures and techniques.

Open House
Friday, June 5th 2015 4 - 7 PM

10 Week Course
Tuition: $3250 - Payment Plans
Training Since 1995
Summer Classes Begin
July 11th 2015

For info packet call 281-363-0600 or email us at admin@hdas.biz

Approved by the TWC Career Schools and Colleges

Online Calendar

Find more or submit Katy events at communityimpact.com/kty-calendar

To have Katy events considered for the print edition, they must be submitted online by the first of the month.
RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

School groundbreakings

Four new schools broke ground between April 22 and May 26. Junior High No. 15 and High School No. 8 had groundbreaking celebrations in Ventana Lakes on April 22. Celebrations for Elementary No. 38 in Cinco Ranch Northwest and Elementary No. 39 in Ventana Lakes were held May 20 and 26, respectively. The schools join Junior High School No. 14 in Hawk’s Landing as the first new schools built using 2014 bond funds.

1. Katy ISD board of trustees member Rebecca Fox joined community members reviewing renderings April 22.

2. Superintendent Alton Frailey spoke to the crowd gathered for the Junior High School No. 15 and High School No. 8 joint groundbreaking at Ventana Lakes.

3. Five new schools are under construction, along with the new stadium and south transportation center set to begin construction in July and December, respectively.

4. School bands performed at the joint groundbreaking for Junior High School No. 15 and High School No. 8.
Festival season is in full swing in the Katy area. Among the events in April and May were the Katy Jazz Festival, Sip n Stroll and Wild West Brew Fest.

1. More than $75,000 was raised at the fourth annual Wild West Brew Fest on May 2. Hundreds of vendors and thousands of guests gathered at Katy Mills to hear live music and sample craft brews. The Katy Rotary Club holds the event to benefit KISD programs and local nonprofits.

2. The sixth annual Katy Sip n Stroll brought locally owned restaurants such as Fajita Depot and wineries from across the country to Villagio Town Center on April 25. The twice-annual event raises money for Cinco Charities and The Ballard House.

3. KISD teacher Scott Lightle was honored along with Christina Dismuke as districtwide Teachers of the Year on May 13. More than 60 teachers were honored at the 2015 Campus Teachers of the Year celebration at the Merrell Center.

4. The Katy ISD Foundation held Jazz with a Katy Flair on April 23, featuring artists in residence for the Katy Jazz Festival. The foundation awards grants to KISD teachers to support innovative teaching initiatives and projects.

5. Chanda Cashen Chacón, president of Texas Children’s Hospital West Campus, presented plans for a new eight-bed isolation unit and other West Campus expansion projects at a Sewell Cadillac event April 22. Philanthropist David Wolff announced a $100,000 gift to the West Campus at the event.

6. Two Taylor High School students were awarded top honors at the 2015 Congressional Art Contest. Nancy Viola, the art teacher for both students, met with U.S. Rep. John Culberson, R-Houston, in Washington, D.C. to accept the awards.
Westpark Springs

There’s hope. There’s help.

NOW HIRING
Registered Nurses and Therapist

Accepting adult and senior patients.
Accepting Medicare and Private Insurance
Call for a free assessment
832.535.2770

Our mission is to change people’s lives by delivering innovative and evidence-based treatment in a professional, compassionate environment that creates a foundation for long-term healing and recovery.

Westpark Springs is a new 72 bed psychiatric and chemical dependency hospital located in Richmond, Texas. Westpark Springs will offer inpatient treatment, partial hospitalization, intensive outpatient programs, family programs, and alumni support groups for adult and adolescents.

westparksprings.com | 832.535.2770
6902 South Peek Road, Richmond, TX 77407
INSIDE INFORMATION

Redesigned SAT and PSAT

By Jocelyn Kerr

Katy ISD held four community meetings in May to introduce parents and students to the redesigned SAT, which replaces the existing test in March 2016. Sophomores and juniors scheduled to take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test in October 2015 will take the redesigned test.

What’s new?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New scoring</th>
<th>Optional essay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math 800 points</td>
<td>Evidence-based reading and writing 800 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will use a range of graphics and paragraphs to analyze and synthesize information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no longer a need to memorize definitions. Vocabulary knowledge is tested in the context of relevant words found in career and business passages.

The new essay will be a persuasive argument based on a given passage and will be optional as individual colleges may choose not to factor essay scores into admissions decisions.

Math problems will focus on three key areas, including problem solving and data analysis, “heart of algebra” linear equations and complex equation manipulation.

All questions will be based on real-world college and career scenarios.

Texts and graphics will incorporate science, history and social science contexts that encourage students to analyze global events, scientific discoveries and health and environmental issues.

Passages from U.S. founding documents and excerpts from speeches by global authors, such as Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela, will be incorporated to encourage reflection on themes of freedom and justice.

There will be no penalty for wrong answers, so students are encouraged to provide thoughtful answers rather than best guesses.

Comparison of test length and timing: Current SAT vs. Redesigned SAT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current SAT</th>
<th>Redesigned SAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component</td>
<td>Time allotted (minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical reading</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Starting in June 2015, Khan Academy is providing free online assessment and a diagnostic study plan through The College Board website, www.collegereadiness.collegeboard.org.

Sources: Katy ISD, The College Board/Community Impact Newspaper
From the ocean to the rainforest, visitors can learn about wildlife and natural ecosystems while participating in a range of activities. The facility also offers an 18-hole golf course, an IMAX theater and paddle wheel boat rides. The Palm Beach water park is open during the weekends in May and is open daily from June 6-Aug. 23.

HOURS: 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
COST: $59.95 (one-day pass), costs vary for individual attractions.

TEXAS SEAPORT MUSEUM
2100 Harborside Drive
Galveston • 409-763-1877
www.galveston.com/
texaseaportmuseum
Elissa, a historic ship built for commerce in 1877, is docked at this museum where travelers can take a tour. The museum also has an exhibit about shrimping in Galveston and a database of more than 130,000 immigrants who entered the United States through the island.

HOURS: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. daily
COST: $12 (adult), $9 (children ages 6 and up), free (children age 5 and younger).

HUNTSVILLE STATE PARK
40 Park Road
Huntsville • 936-295-5644
www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/
huntsville
This heavily wooded park adjoins the Sam Houston National Forest and encloses the 210-acre Lake Raven. The park offers camping, hiking, biking, boating, fishing, swimming and guided horseback trail rides on horses provided by 2E Stables. Canoe and paddle boat rentals are also available.

HOURS: Gates open 7 a.m.-10 p.m. daily, except for public hunts
COST: $5 (adult), free (age 12 and under).
L A P O R T E

BATTLESHIP TEXAS
3523 Independence Parkway
La Porte • 281-479-2431
www.battleshiptexas.org

The 1,200-acre property is the historical site of the Battle of San Jacinto and Battleship Texas. The last of the battleships to participate in World War I and II, Battleship Texas became the first battleship memorial museum in the U.S. in 1948. Visitors can enjoy self-guided tours of the ship and learn about an important piece of Texas history. Guided tours, group rates and student discounts are also available.

HOURS: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily
COST: $12 (adult), free (children age 13 and under).

SAN JACINTO MONUMENT AND BATTLEGROUNDS
One Monument Circle
La Porte • 281-479-2431
www.sanjacinto-museum.org

The San Jacinto Monument is dedicated to the heroes of the Battle of San Jacinto and all others who contributed to the independence of Texas. The monument is a 570-foot shaft topped by a 34-foot star symbolizing the Lone Star Republic.

L A K E J A C K S O N
SEA CENTER TEXAS
300 Medical Drive
Lake Jackson • 979-292-0100
www.tpwd.texas.gov/spdest/
visitorscenter/seacenter

A marine development, aquarium and education center in Lake Jackson, Sea Center can produce 20 million fingerlings annually—primarily red drum and spotted sea trout—for release into Texas coastal waters. In addition to aquariums, displays and a 24-foot touch-tank, the complex also has a saltwater marsh demonstration boardwalk and a freshwater marsh that is ideal for birding.

HOURS: Tue.-Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Sun. 1-4 p.m.
COST: Free admission (donations appreciated)

GULF COAST BIRD OBSERVATORY
103 W. Hwy. 332
Lake Jackson • 979-480-0999
www.gcbo.org

Travelers can embark on self-guided nature trails across the 34 acres of Columbia Bottomland forest in Lake Jackson. This research and education facility coordinates data on migrating and resident avifauna. The GCBO hosts free bird-banding programs from 8 a.m.-noon on the third Saturday of each month to help track bird migratory patterns.

HOURS: Mon.-Sat. 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
COST: Free (donations accepted)

N E W B R A U N F E L S
SCHLITTERBACH WATERPARK
AND RESORT
400 N. Liberty Ave.
New Braunfels • 830-625-2351
www.schlitterbahn.com/new-braunfels

Whether going for an extended trip or just the day, the popular water park offers dozens of water rides, activities and attractions for all ages. The park offers season passes as well as group discounts. Private cabana rentals are also available. The park is open on the weekends through May, and certain sections of the park are open during the week in May and the first week of June. The entire park opens June 6.

Times and costs vary.

WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON ON THE BRAZOS
FM 1155
Washington • 936-878-2214
www.birthplaceoftexas.com

The 293-acre state historic site is located on the Brazos River. Visitors are encouraged to begin at the Visitors Center, where Texas Parks and Wildlife staff can help plan the visit. Tour options take patrons to Independence Hall to learn about the founding of the Republic of Texas, Barrington Living History Farm to experience life in early Texas and the Star of the Republic Museum for a historic overview.

HOURS: 8 a.m.-sundown (park hours), 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Visitor’s Center)
COST: Costs vary by tour package
THE HIVE
Professional Office Solutions
Check out what all the buzz is about.
281-849-4130

TRUSTED CARE FROM TRUSTED NEIGHBORS
Now you can access a network of comprehensive care at Memorial Hermann Convenient Care Center.

With primary care physicians, a 24-hour ER, advanced imaging – including ultrasound, X-ray and CT scan – and more, we’re revolutionizing the concept of accessible care. It’s convenience without compromise.

Located at the northeast corner of the Grand Parkway and Westpark Tollway.

Providing the full spectrum of care.

Open Monday to Saturday
7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Appointments available
24-hour ER

713.222.CARE • memorialhermann.org

22430 Grand Corner Dr.
Katy, TX 77494

THE RESERVE AT KATY
Homes Available for Quick Delivery!
From the mid-$400s • (832) 449-2266

CINCO RANCH - SYCAMORE MEADOW
Final Opportunity!
From the low $700s • (832) 326-5784

CINCO RANCH - IRONWOOD ESTATES
Homes Available for Quick Delivery!
From the mid-$600s • (281) 394-7680

CANE ISLAND
Now Open!
From the mid-$600s • (832) 326-5784

Call or visit today to schedule a personal tour!
Facility brings wilderness to students

By Jocelyn Kerr

A portrait of Kenneth C. Welch is framed above the glass display cases and mounted wildlife specimens in the classroom of the Outdoor Learning Center that bears his name. Although he retired in 1994, Welch still makes an appearance at the annual Outdoor Learning Center Folk Life Festival each spring, dressed in Texas pioneer garb to greet volunteers at the festival’s chuck wagon station.

Founded in 1981, Katy ISD opened the Outdoor Learning Center on 34.5 acres of wooded land about a quarter of a mile west of the Leonard E. Merrell Center and Katy High School. Welch said the land was located in a hundred-year flood plain, so the district was able to purchase the land to develop an outdoor classroom.

“The thought initially was to do something in an outdoor setting where kids who grow up in subdivisions—where they don’t have woods available, they don’t have a lake available—where kids can learn to fish and experience the outdoors. We have a summer recreation program out here. The kids come out for half a day for two weeks and do all types of outdoor activities,” Welch said.

The center has provided hands-on science and history classes for district students since its inception. Elementary and secondary curriculum specialists developed targeted life science and social studies programs, including an annual fourth-grade “Adaptations” field trip where students rotate through stations to learn about Texas wildlife.

A 1.3-acre pond is stocked with fish and KISD first graders arrive each spring by the busload to witness chick hatchings, Welch said.

Welch arrived in Katy in 1961 to become a junior high school coach, and he said he saw early on the need for an outdoor center to serve the growing area. After ten years as a teacher and coach, he served as KISD athletic director for a decade. Welch later served as the assistant principal of Katy Junior High School and was on the initial OLC master-planning committee in 1980.

As the first OLC director, Welch oversaw the initial pond and classroom construction as well as curriculum development.

“We made it available to everyone early on,” Welch said. “The first three or four years we had high school classes from the biology department and the English department, especially from Katy High School, but now it is limited because there are more than 80,000 students and there’s not enough time for everyone.”

The OLC branched out into summer camp programs to enable more students to spend time in the wilderness. Welch said. Summer activities include fishing, archery, canoeing, flying homing pigeons, candle dipping, air rifle skills and safety, dulcimer lessons and outdoor cooking and farm skills.

“It’s good to know kids are involved and trying to learn about things totally out of their experience,” Welch said.
Spotlight

**Ooh La La Dessert Boutique**

Ooh La La owner Vanessa O’Donnell opened the Park Row location in 2009, just two years after launching the company’s flagship Cinco Ranch location.

“We chose [Park Row] with a commissary kitchen in mind. Think grab and go,” O’Donnell said. “All of our larger custom orders for delivery come out of this location.”

Customers can stop in to purchase made-from-scratch cupcakes, dessert bars, cookies, cheesecakes and other sweet treats, or to place custom orders.

20155 Park Row, Katy
281-492-6166
http://oohlalasweets.com

**Giggles and Fun**

Giggles and Fun indoor playground opened in July 2014 to provide party space and open playtime for children under the age of six. The play area is open to the public Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Day rates start at $8.95 per child. Evening and weekend party packages start at $100 for up to five children. Larger parties with food and decorations are accommodated. Monthly memberships are available.

20117 Park Row Drive, Katy
281-492-2200
www.gigglesandfun.com

**The tools in the Business Plan Center are golden for anyone who’s looking to grow their business.**

Carolyn Miye
Oodles 4 Kids, est. 2012
Portland, Oregon

“Wells Fargo rewarded Carolyn Miye $10,000 to help with her marketing plans.**

Our complimentary Business Plan Tool can help you focus on the things that will make your business thrive.

Like most small business owners, Carolyn Miye was so busy running her business that she found it hard to organize ideas for her company’s future into a business plan. Using the Business Plan Tool from Wells Fargo, she gained valuable insight to help her focus on what to do next. It’s just one of the complimentary resources in the new Business Plan Center. To learn more, visit WellsFargoWorks.com.
Businesses within the Park Row Shopping Center

Dining

Ooh La La Dessert Boutique
20155 Park Row
281-492-6166
http://oohlalasweets.com

Entertainment

Giggles and Fun
20117 Park Row
281-492-2200
www.gigglesandfun.com

Meng’s Martial Arts
1203 Price Plaza Drive
281-492-0090
www.martialarts4katy.com

Retail

Baker Distributing
1231 Price Plaza Drive
281-578-5275
www.bakerdist.com

McDougal Sewing Center
20141 Park Row
281-347-0453
www.mcdouglas.com

NAPA Auto Parts
20113 Park Row
281-492-0948
www.napaonline.com

uberwürx
1311 Price Plaza Drive
877-823-7979
www.uberwurx.com

XL Parts
1211 Price Plaza Drive
713-983-1300
www.xlparts.com

Services

Ariel Janitorial Services Inc.
1219 Price Plaza Drive
281-829-3473
www.arieljanitorial.com

Brewer Construction Services, LLC
1207 Price Plaza Drive
281-789-5507
www.brewerscs.com

Dependable Comfort
1221 Price Plaza Drive
281-578-7245
www.dependablecomfort.com

Exer-Tech
1227 Price Plaza Drive
281-493-2220
www.exer-tech.net

Geophysical Explorer
1327 Price Plaza Drive
281-599-8100

Greenhouse Community Church
1203 Price Plaza Drive
281-870-9950
www.greenhousecma.org

Manufacturing

Botas Cebu, Inc.
1209 Price Plaza Drive
281-398-7770
http://botascebu.com

M.I. Cable Company
1225 Price Plaza Drive
713-334-3114
www.micable.com

Peach State Roofing
1333 Price Plaza Drive
281-646-8950
www.peachstateroofinginc.com

Subsea Technologies
1323 Price Plaza Drive
281-398-5600
www.subseatechnologies.com

Subsea Technologies
1323 Price Plaza Drive
281-398-5600
www.subseatechnologies.com

TEICC
1315 Price Plaza Drive
713-856-8689
http://teicc.com

Vision Sign and Graphics
1219 Price Plaza Drive
281-578-7446
www.visionsignandgraphics.com

WHAT IS LIFE TESTED™?

IT MEANS YOUR HOME ISN’T JUST BUILT FOR LIFE; IT’S BUILT FOR HOW YOU LIVE IT.

Purchase a new home at Trails of Katy or Pin Oak Enclave by 6/30/15 and Receive 50% Off Option Upgrades* (up to $20,000) See sales counselor for complete details.

*Option discount offer valid on to-be-built homes in Pulte Homes’ Trails of Katy or Pin Oak Enclave community for purchase agreements accepted by Pulte Homes from 5/1/15 through 6/30/15 and is subject to change or withdrawal at any time without notice. Buyer may select one or more design options that are made available by Pulte Homes on the home (offer excludes lot premiums) and Pulte Homes will credit buyer, as a reduction to the standard cost of the selected options, up to $10,000 of purchase price of the home (not including any lot premium amount). Buyer is responsible for any cost of selected upgrades in excess of the incentive amount. Any unused credit is the property of Pulte Homes, and may not be used to reduce the Total Purchase Price of the home. Design option selections vary by home. Offer may not be redeemed for cash or equivalent. This incentive may affect the amount of loan for which a buyer may be eligible. Check with your lender for details. Offer is not available in conjunction with other offers, incentives, or promotions. Home conditions, limitations, and restrictions apply. See a Pulte Homes sales consultant for details. This material shall not constitute a valid offer in any state where prior registration is required or if void by law. ©2015 Pulte Homes of Texas, L.P. All rights reserved. (6/28/2015).
**Demographic shift causing Harris County to explore community-based health care**

**CY-FAIR** The system Harris County uses to provide indigent health care services is changing as more low-income individuals and families move from the city of Houston to the suburbs, due in part to the city's gentrification. Ten years ago, many of the suburban areas in the county traditionally did not have a great need for a publicly funded health care system, said Laurie Glaze, executive director of One Voice Texas, a Houston-based network of private and nonprofit groups working to ensure health needs of all Texans are addressed.

“Even in areas like Cy-Fair, as our community pushes out beyond [Loop 610] and Beltway 8, we’re seeing a much greater need for community services in these outlying areas,” she said. “We’re seeing a lot of rebuilding inside Loop 610, which is pushing out low- to moderate-income families.”

In addition, the state’s rejection of a federal expansion of Medicaid—which would have provided health care coverage to 500,000 Harris County residents—puts a strain on the county’s financial resources to provide these services since it relies solely on property tax revenue to fund its indigent health care system.

*Full story by Marie Leonard*

**Low inventories, labor shortages contribute to rising home prices**

**SUGAR LAND** The Sugar Land and Missouri City area experienced a record number of home sales in 2014. However, population growth in the area paired with various construction woes has led to a low home inventory, causing a rise in home prices and a dip in sales since January.

Since 2012 Sugar Land and Missouri City real estate agents have classified the area’s housing market as a seller’s market due to the decreasing inventory of available homes and climbing home costs. As a result, many of Fort Bend County’s master-planned communities are struggling to keep up with the demand brought on by the influx in population in the region.

“We have more customers than we have houses to sell, and we are getting multiple offers on houses,” said Shad Bogany, a real estate agent with Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate in Sugar Land and Missouri City. “We do not have a lot of houses to sell, [and] we have the builders, who have been the biggest pushers of home sales in Fort Bend [County], behind in construction.”

Major construction projects in the Greater Houston area have also led to the increase in home prices due to labor shortages and an overall increase in construction costs. Home developers like Johnson Development Corp. are competing with major mobility and development projects and are struggling to meet homebuyer demands, Bogany said.

Home sales in the Sugar Land and Missouri City area rebounded in March after seeing a decline for the first time in 36 months in February, according to the Houston Association of Realtors Multiple Listing Service.

*Full story by Connor Hyde*
Texas State Technical College unveils new Fort Bend County campus

SUGAR LAND Texas State Technical College unveiled plans for a new Fort Bend County campus in Rosenberg during the April 16 Greater Fort Bend Economic Development Council meeting.

Construction on the new campus is slated to begin as early as June and will be done in phases starting this summer, said Randall Wooten, TSTC Fort Bend County executive manager.

Wooten said the campus will offer Fort Bend County students an alternative to four-year universities and colleges as well as provide students a career pathway for specific skill sets.

“‘There is a full segment of our population who are really smart, but they do not do well in a four-year university setting,” he said. “Those kids come to us, and we give them skill sets.”

The campus will be situated on an 80-acre tract of land north of Hwy. 59 between FM 2218 and Hwy. 36. The six-building, 500,000 square-foot conceptual design only utilizes 40 acres of land for the campus, leaving the remaining 40 acres for future development, Wooten said. The campus is projected to serve more than 5,000 students once complete.

Full story by Connor Hyde

Food truck park to bring new dining options to Tomball, Spring

TOMBALL In an area once largely void of food trucks, Tomball residents have begun to see an increase in mobile dining options over the past few months and will soon have an opportunity to visit a new venue just outside of city limits.

Bernie’s Backyard, a food truck park and entertainment venue, is slated to open this summer at 22314 I-45 near Old Town Spring. The venue will offer live music, craft beer, a kid-friendly dessert shop and multiple food truck vendors.

C. Evans, a park official with Bernie’s Backyard, said the venue will bring a much-needed entertainment option to the Spring area.

“‘The founders of Bernie’s Backyard’ are all foodies,” Evans said. “We like the food truck experience, [and] we find it’s unique. I don’t believe there’s anything like [this] in the area. I hope Houston’s ready for us—the food truck scene is growing.”

The lot contains eight individual spaces for food trucks as well as gas, water and electricity connections. Evans said mobile eatery owners will be able to rent spaces much like they would at a parking lot or other private property.

Full story by Wendy Cawthon

Naseeb Indian Restaurant

SUGAR LAND Brothers Harjinder Kumar and Harjit Kumar started their cooking careers while traveling internationally as competitive power lifters.

Harjinder said they learned basic cooking techniques and northern Indian recipes while training with friends and local athletes. As they traveled and competed in power lifting tournaments over the last two decades, their recipe book developed as well.

“When you do a lot of hard work all the time, the best thing to do is to get the right food,” Harjinder said. “I saw which countries used which ingredients and recipes. Then we learned everything.”

When Harjinder and Harjit moved to the U.S. from Punjab, India in 2007, they brought with them a shared love of cooking as well as 25 years of experience as chefs.

Full story by Connor Hyde

MidPoint bar+eatery

Open for Lunch & Dinner
Happy Hour Everyday 4-7
Exciting New Menu Items

$7 OFF Purchase of $25 or More
Not valid during Happy Hour. Excludes Alcohol. Must present coupon. Not valid with any other offers. Expires 7/31/15

(281) 829-3749
20920 Katy Freeway (I-10 and Westgreen)
Katy, TX 77449
midpointbar.com

Full stories online at communityimpact.com
Annexation
Continued from l 1
areas such as Cinco Ranch and the Interstate 10 corridor.

“An ETJ is not in the city limits, but it’s still defined as being part of the city, except the ordinances and taxes don’t reach out into the ETJ,” state Rep. Cecil Bell, R-Magnolia said.

Bell has worked closely with Katy officials and residents of Waller County who want to be released from Houston’s ETJ.

Suzy Hartgrove, public affairs manager for the city of Houston Planning and Development Department, said requests for ETJ release are infrequent, but are approached with a spirit of cooperation. The department manages Houston annexation requests and ETJ release requests. She said a two-year wait is not uncommon for these requests.

“We do a lot of coordinating with other counties and municipalities in the area to make sure [mobility and service] connections are being made. That’s why ETJs exist,” Hartgrove said. “[A city] has to ask us to release [ETJ] property, and if it’s in our best interest, we do the release. It has to be approved by both city councils, and once we let it go the other city includes it in their ETJ, then they annex it.”

Hughes said the city of Katy has been aggressively annexing land since his election in 2013, mainly to increase the city’s tax base.

“I made up my mind, with all this growth coming … I told my city attorney we want to annex everything we can legally annex because if we don’t we’re going to get swallowed up. We need the commercial development. That’s what brings you sales tax revenue. That’s what increases your tax collections so you don’t have to depend on rooftop taxes,” Hughes said.

Taxation and representation
For the municipal utility districts located outside Katy city limits, the only way to access sales tax revenue is to partner with Houston in a limited purpose annexation. The city also creates strategic partnership agreements to solidify these partnerships, said Gwen Tillotson, Houston’s deputy director for economic development.

“[LPAs and SPAs] are beneficial to MUDs because [MUDs] are not in a municipality. [These agreements] give them a new stream of income that can be used to support things like infrastructure or to pay down debts that may, in turn, lower the tax load [for residents of the MUD],” she said.

Hartgrove said LPAs and SPAs are generally granted in small, mainly commercial, areas with only one or two landowners.

“We evaluate any annexation requests and create a service plan. The most difficult part [in residential annexations] would be the property owners all agreeing to the annexation. If any of the property owners fight it, it goes to binding arbitration,” Hartgrove said.

Once an LPA or SPA is formed, the city of Houston and the MUD split a percentage of sales tax generated, although specific agreements vary from MUD to MUD, Tillotson said.

“The city levies a one percent sales tax on the property that has been annexed for limited purposes, and the District and the City each receive half of the sales tax revenue generated,” said Katherine Carner, an attorney that represents Harris County MUD No. 81.

“HC MUD No. 81 deposits the sales tax revenue in its general operating fund and uses the revenue to pay for a portion of its operation and maintenance expenses, which allows the district to keep water and sewer service rates and operation and maintenance tax rates lower than they otherwise would be without the sales tax revenue,” Carner said.

MUD No. 81’s LPA received approximately $285,000 in sales tax revenue during 2014, Carner said.

For Hughes this issue of sales tax revenue translates to a lack of equity in city services.

“Let me tell you the repercussions of [LPAs and SPAs]. They are serviced by West 1-10 Fire Department [or a MUD-run emergency response team]. West 1-10 takes their calls if they have a fire, and the city of Houston pays nothing,” Hughes said. “West 1-10 is expending their manpower, materials, exposing their vehicles and getting nothing in return. City of Houston is raking all that money into their general fund, and it’s getting spent somewhere else. That’s not fair to the citizens and the cities that service them. So, we’re trying to work through the legislature to see what we can do about it.”

Land lock and legislative action
For the city of Katy, there is virtually no land left to annex. Since the annexations began at the start of his term, Hughes said the city has grown from approximately 10 square miles to roughly 17 square miles.

“We started on a path of annexation, and the only place we could go is west between Hwy. 90 and I-10. We had to take one mile at a time—we’re a home rule city, so that’s all we could do,” Hughes said. “We’re surrounded by the city of Houston on three sides, and Fulshear to the south.”

In working with Houston to release properties from its ETJ, Bell said the process can be lengthy and difficult, but there have been successes such as Cane Island.

“The operative word [when talking about annexation] is voluntary. Any time you talk about annexation it can get contentious, but if you don’t want it [as a property owner], then you don’t have to have it,” Bell said.

Bell and other Katy-area state representatives proposed bills related to annexation in the 84th legislative session. Bell authored House Bill 1418 to enable

“Free Shape it Trainings
Trainings focused on ABA* and behavior intervention strategies
ABA and Health and Behavioral Intervention Clinic
www.shapeofbehavior.com
Ph# 832-358-2655
20718 Park Row  Katy, TX 77449
The Shape Of Behavior
FREE
ABA and Health and Behavioral Intervention Clinic
In Clinic Treatment Social Skills Shadowing Diagnostic Services
Like Us On Facebook
Trainings focused on ABA
ABA and Behavior Intervention strategies
ABA Therapy Clinic and we have been in business since 2000.

JURISDICTIONAL JUMBLE
Glossary
General Purpose Annexation is a large-scale annexation, usually residential, where the city provides all city services and residents are given city voting rights and become subject to the city’s regulations and taxation. A GPA requires a three-year annexation plan to allow time for public notification and input. Kingwood was the city of Houston’s last GPA in 1996.

Limited Purpose Annexation enables cities and municipal districts to partner and split one cent of total sales tax revenue generated within the annexation area. The city does not provide city services and agrees not to fully annex the area for a period of time, usually 30 years.

Strategic Partnership Agreement is similar to an LPA, and may be added to an LPA, but is used to define city responsibilities and agreement lengths that may differ from LPAs.

Municipal Utility Districts are established by counties in unincorporated areas to provide water, sewer, trash collection, parks services and in some cases fire and emergency services to residents of the district.

General rule city has a population of fewer than 5,000 residents and very limited ETJ rights.

Home rule city has a population of greater than 5,000 residents and has ETJ rights for varying distances beyond the city limit based on population.

"The city of Houston is raking all that [LPA and SPA sales tax] money into their general fund and it’s getting spent somewhere else.”

– Mayor Fabol Hughes, city of Katy
smaller, rural communities to partner with private businesses to install sewage, water and utility infrastructure beyond the limits of a community’s ETJ in order to lower residential tax bills, he said.

Current ETJ guidelines place limits on the distance cities can expand, based on the city’s population. The city of Katy, with roughly 16,000 residents, can expand one mile at a time, Hughes said. Houston, on the other hand, has an ETJ that reaches five miles beyond city limits. HB 1418 passed the House and was referred to the Senate Intergovernmental Relations Committee on May 4.

Other bills related to annexation and ETJs did not fare as well this session. HB 2389, co-authored by state Rep. John Zerwas, R-Katy, and a companion bill, Senate Bill 1000, authored by state Sen. Lois Kolkhorst, R-Katy, would have changed the tax funding formulas related to LPAs, but neither made it past the committee stage.

“There’s a lot that goes into [annexation], such as deciding who can best provide water, sewer, police service and trash pick up,” Hartgrove said. “We would have to look at whether we’d be able to build a police station, a fire station, schedule trash pick up, and is it feasible to provide these services?”

The current mayoral administration in Houston has no plans to annex residential areas in the Katy-area Houston ETJ, Hartgrove said.

For more information visit communityimpact.com
I chose the MD Anderson close to me.

- Jeanne Zarazee

When I had breast cancer, the world’s leading care was right here.

My team of experts in Katy focused only on me and my cancer. They guided me through advanced MD Anderson treatment options including surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, clinical trials and support services. They customized a plan just for me. Having MD Anderson in my community kept me close to my friends and close to home.

_I chose MD Anderson in Katy. Find your MD Anderson today._
Growth  
Continued from 11
focus of the EDC.”

In the Energy Corridor, the declining price of oil has not affected the area’s development, said district communications coordinator Mark Klein. In the next two years, 5.4 million square feet of office space is slated, much of which is already preleased, he said. While some companies within the district have suffered from the oil price drop, others have not, Klein said.

“For perspective, it’s important to realize that while a drop in oil price hits oil and gas exploration companies, and particularly oil field services companies, it can help downstream firms—for example, refining—because feedstock prices are low, and there are a lot of downstream companies in Houston,” Klein said.

New developments

Katy Ranch Phase 1 is a six-story, 151,000-square-foot office building in the Katy Ranch Crossing mixed-use development center on I-10. An additional tenant that wishes to remain anonymous has leased the first floor, but there is still 131,888 square feet available, according to parent real estate company Moody Rambin.

U.S. Silica will move into the building this summer, according to Kurt Kistler, vice president of Moody Rambin.

“[U.S.] Silica chose Katy Ranch because of its location and the proximity of its workforce,” Kistler said.

While the possibility of new job creation is still up in the air, corporate consolidation could result in workers moving to the Katy area, he said.

Rambin is also responsible for marketing Mason Creek Office Center II, a three-story, 128,000-square-foot building at 21700 Merchants Way, west of I-10 and the Grand Parkway. It sits next to the existing Geico facility, which is slated to hire several hundred more workers this year, Rambin Managing Director Bob Cromwell said.

Although tenants for Center II have not been finalized, Rambin is looking to secure a maximum of two companies to make use of the facility’s large floor plans, such as engineering firms or call centers, Cromwell said. Construction on Center III will begin this summer and will similarly feature large floor plans that total 93,000 square feet.

This summer Michael Baker International will relocate its Westchase District engineering office to 1904 Grand Parkway N. in The Offices at Grandway West. There will be no immediate job creation because the move is simply a relocation, but there will be growth in the long term, said Erik Spicker, structural manager for MBI.

“We chose the Katy location due to its proximity to the freeways and therefore easy access to the area, the lower lease rates than other areas, and the large volume of young folks—future hires—that are within a short drive to the location,” Spicker said.

The company is an engineering firm that provides services and support to federal, state and local governments as well as private developments and commercial clients. MBI expects to see growth over the next five years, he said.

“New commercial development is good for the economy because it creates jobs. Income and dollars that multiply produce economic impact and grow the economic pie for the region,” LaCour said. “The development supports the tax base, which supports schools and public services.”

Hope after cutbacks

Company relocations and expansions provide opportunities for workers exiting the oil and gas industry, especially to industries where skills can be transferred, said Mona Digs, a supervisor at Workforce Development in Katy.

“These transferable skills can help [workers] in a related occupation, like working as a machine setter, molding core maker—jobs in manufacturing and machinery,” she said.

For some workers, a layoff provides a new opportunity to pursue additional educational opportunities and expand their skill sets, said Keith Wolf with Murray Resources, a career consultant company in west Houston. This could mean going back to school to earn a master’s degree in business administration or enrolling in community college classes during the evening, he said. But all workers should re-examine their resumes and think creatively about how they can apply those skills to other industries, he said.

Wolf said younger employees who are new to the workforce should be aware of the cyclical nature of the oil and gas industry, and that this is the time to take risks.

“If you’re on the early side of your career, use this time to volunteer for challenging projects and those that others shy away from,” he said. “The additional exposure will be an asset down the road as your background and expertise is viewed as more well-rounded.”

Rising through the slump

Despite plummeting oil prices, jobs have increased in the Greater Houston area, which includes the employment centers of Uptown, the Energy Corridor and Texas Medical Center.

According to Rice University’s Kinder Institute for Urban Research 2015 survey:

Greater Houston nonfarm employment rose 2.9%, above the national rate of 2.3%.

69% of Houston-area residents rated local job opportunities as positive.

18% of residents named the economy as the biggest problem in Houston, compared with 37% in 2012.

Unemployment rates for Harris County dropped from 5.7% in February 2014 to 4.3% in 2015.


What's your take on the Katy area's economic outlook?
REAL ESTATE

Cinco Ranch Northwest offers access to all the features within the Cinco Ranch master-planned community. The northwest section is located near the Rollingwood Recreation Center and Tennis Courts, a facility that won a Recreation Center of the Year award from the Greater Houston Builders Association in 2012.

Other amenities include pools, trails, an equestrian center, lake house, and golf course.

Market Data

**On the market (April 2015)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Price Range</th>
<th>77094</th>
<th>77449</th>
<th>77450</th>
<th>77493</th>
<th>77494</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$140,000 or under</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>37/24</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2/126</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000-$199,999</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>58/41</td>
<td>10/21</td>
<td>9/16</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000-$299,999</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>57/51</td>
<td>38/35</td>
<td>53/68</td>
<td>82/87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$300,000-$399,999</td>
<td>9/54</td>
<td>3/9</td>
<td>38/48</td>
<td>20/110</td>
<td>193/68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$400,000-$499,999</td>
<td>4/21</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>9/60</td>
<td>2/236</td>
<td>187/70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500,000-$599,999</td>
<td>5/23</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>12/43</td>
<td>2/153</td>
<td>99/83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$600,000-$799,999</td>
<td>4/33</td>
<td>1/297</td>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>2/74</td>
<td>58/98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800,000-$999,999</td>
<td>2/88</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1/22</td>
<td>4/27</td>
<td>16/124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1 million +</td>
<td>5/196</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>7/102</td>
<td>5/77</td>
<td>22/111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average price of homes sold**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Price</th>
<th>April 2014</th>
<th>April 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$600,000</td>
<td>$640,000</td>
<td>$620,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$550,000</td>
<td>$590,000</td>
<td>$570,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>$520,000</td>
<td>$480,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$450,000</td>
<td>$470,000</td>
<td>$450,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$400,000</td>
<td>$420,000</td>
<td>$390,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$350,000</td>
<td>$380,000</td>
<td>$350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>$330,000</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>$270,000</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$210,000</td>
<td>$190,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>$160,000</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$110,000</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Feasible price range:**

- $140,000 or under
- $150,000-$199,999
- $200,000-$299,999
- $300,000-$399,999
- $400,000-$499,999
- $500,000-$599,999
- $600,000-$799,999
- $800,000-$999,999
- $1 million +

**Recent listings**

- **3306 Mystic Shadow Lane:** $539,000
  - 4 Bedroom / 3.5 Bath
  - 4,409 sq. ft.
  - Agent: Joe Rothchild
  - Keller Williams Signature
  - 281-599-6500

- **27103 Barrington Lodge Lane:** $575,000
  - 4 Bedroom / 4 Bath
  - 3,732 sq. ft.
  - Agent: Karen Karapasha
  - Real Living Karapasha Realty
  - 281-944-3640

- **27914 Bandera Glen Lane:** $439,000
  - 4 Bedroom / 4 Bath
  - 3,270 sq. ft.
  - Agent: Andrew Gleason
  - RE/MAX Grand
  - 281-460-9319

- **27807 Merchant Hills Lane:** $455,000
  - 4 Bedroom / 3.5 Bath
  - 3,749 sq. ft.
  - Agent: Christopher Hiller
  - Keller Williams Premier Realty
  - 281-220-2100

**Why? Is This The Right Time to List My Home for Sale?**

Now is a great time to list. Market inventory is historically low and interest rates even lower. We are definitively in a seller’s market - meaning the inventory of homes is less than the demand. While this is true for Houston as a whole it is even more a reality for areas like Katy and elsewhere. Interest rates are also driving buyers. Buyers understand the benefits of purchasing while rates remain low and ultimately are acting quicker and buying faster. It is not unusual for multiple offers to be received.

**Market Data**

- Median home value: $577,458
- Median price per square foot: $147.91
- Median annual property taxes: $20,640
- Homes on the market: 45
- Homes under contract: 14
- Average days on the market: 86

Market data provided by Jamie McMartin, CNAS
Coldwell Banker United
281-961-5151
www.coldwellbanker.com

Although every effort has been made to ensure the timeliness and accuracy of this real estate data, Community Impact Newspaper assumes no liability for errors or omissions. Contact the property’s agent or seller for the most current information.

**Cinco Ranch NW, 77494**

- **Build-out year:** still in progress
- **Builders include:** Highland Homes, Perry Homes, Ryland Homes, Trendmaker Homes
- **Square footage:** 2,500–5,500
- **Home values:** $312,000–$1,200,000
- **HOA dues (estimated):** $985 annually
- **Amenities:** bike trails, community pool, pocket parks, lakes, tennis courts
- **Schools:** Wolman Elementary School, Thompkins Junior High School, WoodCreek High School

- **Property taxes (in dollars):**
  - Katy ISD: 1.52660
  - Fort Bend County Gen: 0.48476
  - Fort Bend DMG: 0.01500
  - Fort Bend MUD 58: 1.45000
  - Fort Bend County ESD 2: 0.09800
  - Total (per $100 value): $3.57436

**Features:**

- Build-out year: still in progress
- Builders include: Highland Homes, Perry Homes, Ryland Homes, Trendmaker Homes
- Square footage: 2,500–5,500
- Home values: $312,000–$1,200,000
- HOA dues (estimated): $985 annually
- Amenities: bike trails, community pool, pocket parks, lakes, tennis courts
- Schools: Wolman Elementary School, Thompkins Junior High School, WoodCreek High School
- Property taxes (in dollars):
  - Katy ISD: 1.52660
  - Fort Bend County Gen: 0.48476
  - Fort Bend DMG: 0.01500
  - Fort Bend MUD 58: 1.45000
  - Fort Bend County ESD 2: 0.09800
  - Total (per $100 value): $3.57436

- Median home value: $577,458
- Median price per square foot: $147.91
- Median annual property taxes: $20,640
- Homes on the market: 45
- Homes under contract: 14
- Average days on the market: 86

*As of 05/07/15

**Market Data**

- **On the market (April 2015)**
- **Average price of homes sold**

**Why? Is This The Right Time to List My Home for Sale?**

Now is a great time to list. Market inventory is historically low and interest rates even lower. We are definitively in a seller’s market - meaning the inventory of homes is less than the demand. While this is true for Houston as a whole it is even more a reality for areas like Katy and elsewhere. Interest rates are also driving buyers. Buyers understand the benefits of purchasing while rates remain low and ultimately are acting quicker and buying faster. It is not unusual for multiple offers to be received.

**Coldwell Banker United**

Katy Office
3333 South Mason Rd.
Katy, TX 77450 • 281-579-2300
www.cbunited.com/katy
Looking for Coupons?

Explore the all-new IMPACT DEALS.COM

Hundreds of local and regional coupons

Just click and print

Free the coupon!
RIGHT NOW, the video games are unplugged.

With sparkling lakes, gorgeous natural splendor and incredible amenities – including a spectacular resort-style pool, 140-ft waterslide, playgrounds and a dog park – there’s no question everything you want in the great outdoors is right here, right now. Discover the life you’re looking for today in Cross Creek Ranch.

CrossCreekTexas.com • Katy ISD & Lamar CISD • Homes from the $280s to Millions

In FULSHEAR at FM1463 and FM1093