

# THE *Current* Shadow Creek Ranch

MARCH 2017  
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## Manvel High School student excels on and off the field with the support of educators

The positive impact that educators can leave on the lives of every student that they cross paths with, has the power to influence the actions and outcomes of students for years to come. The relationships built can assist students with achieving the unbelievable, and that's just the type of impact that Alvin ISD educators are having daily on the nearly 24,000 students served.

"Whatever you do in life, do it with your whole heart, as if unto the Lord."

This is a piece of scripture that Manvel High School senior, London Harris lives by every single day, thanks to the love and work ethic taught to him by his high school coach and father figure, Kirk Martin.

London recently had the opportunity to sign a full athletic scholarship to his college of choice, Texas State University, in front of an entire gymnasium filled with his peers. He could be seen grinning from ear to ear as his classmates, teachers and family members cheered loudly for his success, and as he shared a few words in regards to his fondest memories as a Maverick. However just a few short years earlier no one would have believed that he would have such success on the football field or in the class.

When London was a young elementary student his family and the Martin family became neighbors, and ultimately friends. A few years later when London was in the 8th grade his family experienced a few trials and tribulations that led him to move in with the Martin family full-time, while his mother continued to work hard daily during her 12 hour shifts.

When asked why his family opened their hearts and home to London, Martin replied, "My heart was really soft towards this kiddo. I saw a need and decided to step up and be a solution. My wife and I talked about it, then prayed about it, and decided to welcome him into our home."

*(Continued on Page 2)*



*London Harris, Manvel High School senior, who just signed his letter of intent to attend Texas State University on an athletic football scholarship. London attributes his success and drive to the many educators and family members that have believed in him throughout the years, especially Coach Kirk Martin and his family.*



*Coach Kirk Martin excitedly kisses London, who he has educational guardianship over, on the cheek during National Signing Day on February 1. He could not contain his excitement for this young man that he was blessed to have as a part of his family*

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*(Continued from Cover)*

Eventually the Martins were granted educational guardianship over London, which allows them to receive notification on his progress in school, and assist with the decision making process of his education to help increase his chances of success.

Martin shared that London has always been a smart kid but for a little while struggled. To combat his deficits Martin's wife Karen, who's also a teacher in Alvin ISD, worked diligently with London to help enhance his reading and writing skills. Before the family knew it, London was excelling in class, and proving it by the A's and B's that he was showcasing on his report cards.

"Our kids know that anything less than a B just isn't good enough, and London is family so it applies to him too," shared Martin. "If their studies are just too much, then we'll get them a tutor, but C's aren't allowed."

As London continued to work hard in the classroom, he also continued to learn valuable lessons from his coach that ultimately led to success on the football field.

"Coach Martin taught me the importance of a strong work ethic. He's always told me that I have to have a great work ethic to succeed in life," said London. My whole four years of high school I have worked hard, and now it's paying off."

"One of the worse things someone can say about you is that you have a poor work ethic," Martin said. This is something that he tells all of his four kids, which includes London.

"No one can say that London is not a hard worker. I believe that work ethic can be developed, and he's done just that," added Martin. He's going to be ultra successful at whatever he does. He's going to be awesome!"

London will report to Texas State University in June to begin practicing with his new team. He plans to become a veterinarian. The message and legacy that he hopes to leave is that you have to work hard for everything you want in life. "My goal in life is to work so hard that my mom won't have to."

"I was told that I wasn't ever going to be good enough. Coach Martin taught me how to work at it and how to succeed in life, and I thank him for that."

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## Manvel Names Street Maverick Dr.

On Friday, January 27, 2017, administrators, students, and community members gathered in front of Manvel High School for the dedication of the new Maverick Dr., which runs through the front of the school.

The ceremony kicked off with the Manvel High School Pep Band, cheerleaders, Majestics Dance Team, and Rick, the Manvel HS mascot performing the school song. Then, Dr. Bobby Martinez, Manvel High School principal, shared a few words.

“Maverick Drive welcomes everyone to this amazing campus. I can only imagine the countless number of students, parents, community members, and visitors this Drive has seen since the campus opened in 2006,” Martinez said.

Mayor Delores Martin then commented on what Manvel High School has brought to the City of Manvel.

“Since 2006, Manvel High School has brought the City of Manvel and surrounding communities together, instilling Maverick spirit into all who have walked through the doors. It is only fitting that the street, road, or drive, which connects all of this be called “Maverick Drive,” Martin remarked.



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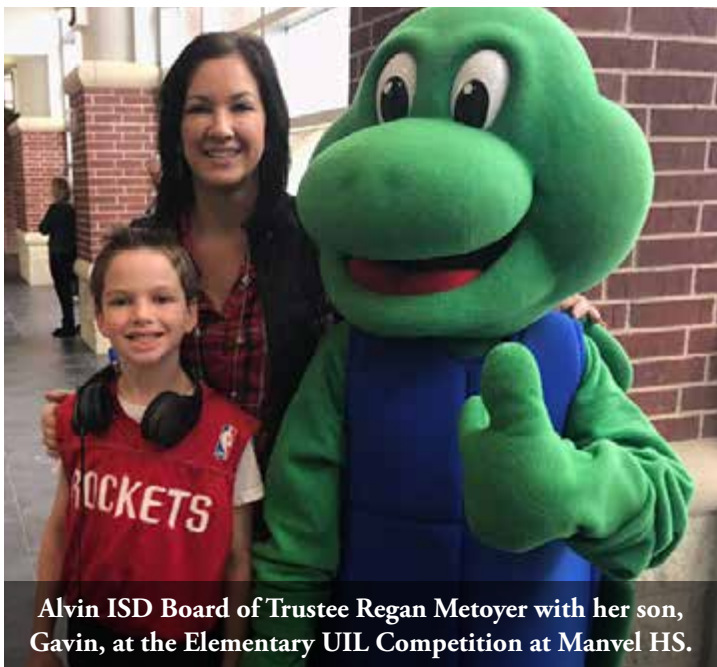


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# SHADOW CREEK RANCH

## Alvin ISD elementary students participate in district UIL



Alvin ISD Board of Trustee Regan Metoyer with her son, Gavin, at the Elementary UIL Competition at Manvel HS.

Over 750 elementary students from Alvin ISD competed in the elementary UIL academic meet at Manvel High School on Friday, January 27 and Saturday, January 28. Students represented their schools in the following competitions: Art, Chess, Creative Writing, Dictionary Skills, Listening Skills, Maps, Graphs, and Charts, Music Memory, Number Sense, Oral Reading, Spelling, Storytelling, Spanish Storytelling, and Ready Writing. Trophies were given for first through third place and medals were given for fourth through twelfth place. Countless adults and students from across the district volunteered to help run the event. Congratulations to all the winners!



Alvin ISD Elementary UIL competition was a huge success.

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# SHADOW CREEK RANCH

## Alvin ISD fourth grade student advances to Houston Spelling Bee

The Alvin ISD Education Foundation graciously sponsors the yearly district spelling bee. This year the event took place at Shadow Creek High School in the auditorium. Student representatives from each of the Alvin ISD elementary campuses and junior high campuses competed for the title of spelling bee champion. After an hour of competing it came down to three spellers. That number quickly dwindled to two. The last standing students were Alaina Jett, fourth grader from Bill Hasse Elementary, and Forrest Chandler, 8th grader at Nolan Ryan Junior High.

Alaina ultimately won by spelling the word “matriarch.”

“This was very exciting and I can’t wait for the next one,” shared Alaina.

It took a lot of hard work daily for Alaina to get to this point. Her mother mentioned, “I really push Alaina to be great, sometimes maybe too much, but she’s just so wonderful.”

Alaina practiced for the past year in preparation for her big day. During all of the excitement her mother shared that she practices every single day, with the exception of her one day off on Christmas Eve.”

A tough schedule for such a young student, but the smile on Alaina’s face upon the completion of the competition proved that she loves it.

“We are so proud of Alaina and excited for what’s in store for her. She is such a great student and I know that she will continue to do wonderful things,” said Dee Dee Baker, principal of Hasse Elementary.

Next up for Alaina is the Houston Public Media Spelling Bee on April 1, 2017 at University of Houston.

20 total Alvin ISD students participated in the district spelling bee this year. In addition to Alaina and Forrest, the following students enjoyed the activities: Anthony Oddesa, 5th grade, Alvin Elementary; Giselle Ibarra, 6th grade, Alvin Junior High; Don Ferrell Evangelista, 5th grade, Don Jeter Elementary; Dashiell Ouano, 5th grade, Dr. Red Duke Elementary; Faith Cheng, 5th grade, EC Mason Elementary; Noah Kelso, 7th grade, Fairview Junior High; Rishabh Makker, 4th grade, Glenn York Elementary; Kaitlyn Field, 8th grade, Harby Junior High; Shelby Smith, 5th grade, Hood-Case Elementary; Kavya Nandagiri, 4th grade, Laura Ingalls Wilder Elementary; A’sha Branch, 7th grade, Manvel Junior High; Audrey Boissoneault, 5th grade Mark Twain Elementary; Carter Vidale, 5th grade, Mark Twain Elementary; Lucas Alaniz, 4th grade, Melba Passmore Elementary; Alivia Green, 5th grade, Meridiana Elementary; Riley Holmes, 6th grade, Rodeo

*(Continued on Page 6)*

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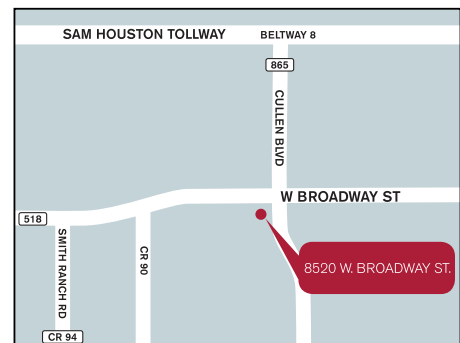
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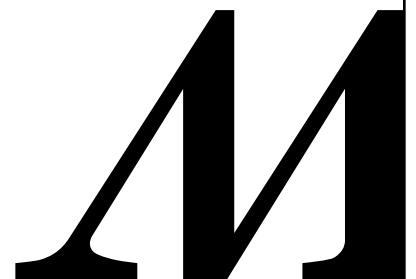
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# SHADOW CREEK RANCH

*(Continued from Page 5)*

Palms Junior High; Jade West, 4th grade Savannah Lakes Elementary; and Carson Dudley, 5th grade, Walt Disney Elementary.

"It's always such a pleasure to sponsor this wonderful event that encourages to students educationally. Thanks to the many Education Foundation supporters, we are able to provide this service for the students of Alvin ISD," said Sheila Olson, Education Foundation executive director.

To stay informed of all of the great things occurring in Alvin ISD, visit [www.alvinisd.net](http://www.alvinisd.net) and follow the district on Twitter @AlvinISD. To support the efforts of the Education Foundation, and in turn support local students, visit [www.alvinisd.net/educationfoundation](http://www.alvinisd.net/educationfoundation) or call 281-245-2505 to see how you can get involved.



*2017 Alvin ISD Spelling Bee champion, Alaina Jett, 4th grader at Hasse Elementary, is pictured with 8th Nolan Ryan Junior High runner-up Forrest Chandler and (from left to right) Lisa Butler, Alvin ISD associate superintendent, Allison Orta of Bill Hasse and Alaina's sponsor, Michelle Boyd of Nolan Ryan Junior who was Forrest's sponsor, as well as Amy Roudbari of the Education Foundation and Sheila Olson.*



*2017 Alvin ISD Spelling Bee participants, along with Lisa Butler, associate superintendent of Alvin ISD, Sheila Olson, executive director of the Education Foundation and Amy Roudbari, president of the Alvin ISD Education Foundation are pictured at the conclusion of the district spelling bee. The Alvin ISD Education Foundation sponsored the event, thanks to numerous supporters.*



*The 2017 Alvin ISD Spelling Bee champion, Alaina Jett, is pictured with Lisa Butler of Alvin ISD and Amy Roudbari, president of the Education Foundation.*

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## Alvin ISD School Board Approves Resolution to Repeal New State Accountability System

At the January 2017 Alvin ISD school board meeting, trustees unanimously voted to pass a resolution, which calls on state legislators to repeal the Texas Education Agency's A-F accountability system for the Texas public schools.

The A-F accountability system maintains that districts and campuses receive a letter grade for each of five domains: 1) Student Performance, 2) Student Progress, 3) Closing Performance Gaps, 4) Postsecondary Readiness, and 5) Community and Student Engagement. The system is slated to go into effect at the start of the 2017-18 school year, however districts across the State of Texas are voting to repeal the system, due to what are viewed as convoluted calculations and questionable methodologies.

"The A-F rating system was declared as a way to provide parents and community members with a simple system that provides increased clarity regarding campus and student performance. Unfortunately, as the system has been designed, it does not provide clarity and is anything but simple," said Dr. Buck Gilcrease, Alvin ISD superintendent of schools.

As an example of the current limitations, an Alvin ISD

elementary school received numerous distinctions from the State including recognition as: "Top 25 Percent: Closing Performance Gaps." Again, the school was commended by the State; however, the State's A-F ratings system now assigns the campus a grade of "C" for "closing performance gaps." The same school, with the same year's data received accolades from the State and now receives a "C".

The resolution's language proclaimed that the new system is highly based on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR), which provides little meaningful information to guide student learning, and is a high-stakes standardized test that does not accurately measure the success of a student. The majority (55%) of the assigned A-F grades are based on STAAR.

The resolution also made mention that "at least 16 states have implemented a similar rating system utilizing A-F grades for schools and districts, and to date there is no definitive research that suggests that these rating have improved student or school performance."

"High-stakes testing creates a false impression about students,

*(Continued on Page 8)*





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# SHADOW CREEK RANCH

(Continued from Page 7)

ignores the unique strengths of each school, and unfairly reduces each student's worth to the school's assigned grade," mentioned Daniel Combs, Alvin ISD assistant superintendent.

"We're not afraid of accountability. We're never afraid of accountability," proclaimed Gilcrease. "It's just that as it is right now the A-F system has been created with false and questionable statistics, which do nothing but hurt our students. When you start to hurt the children by implementing systems that lack data to prove its efficacy, then the idea behind it has lost its meaning.

The goal of passing the resolution in hopes that the system will be repealed, is for the State to implement a new valid system that will encompass multiple assessments, reduce the use of high-stakes/standardized testing, and more accurately reflects what students know and can do in terms of rigorous standards.

"We truly believe that the current A-F system as it is right now is more harmful than it is helpful," added Gilcrease.

For additional information in regards to A-F and how the new rating system will impact schools, visit <http://www.alvinisd.net/afratings>. In addition, parents, community members and stakeholders can stay informed by following Superintendent Gilcrease on Twitter at @SupeGilcrease, as well as Alvin ISD at @AlvinISD.

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# SHADOW CREEK RANCH

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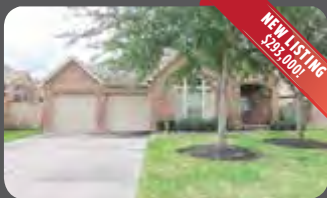
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