

The First RRHS Prep Rally



Rebekah McNeal
Round Rock H. S.

Excited, buzzing freshmen and upperclassmen hurriedly scattered into a large gym with the newest songs blasting over the speakers. Large crowds of maroon, black, and white, stood in the middle of the gym, cheerleaders and Dragon dancers. All performers were pumped with energy and spirit, doing cartwheels, back flips, and waving their sparkly pom-poms through the air. All while the band on the west side of the gym, proudly played the Fight Song and Alma mater with their shiny, gold, and silver instruments.

A cheerleader announced the first varsity football and volleyball game was later that night, and the enormous crowd of students went into an uproar.

Some students and administrators were dressed in pajamas and mostly dragon onesies, for the prep rally. And to say goodnight to Harker Heights, the school playing against our Dragon football play-

ers.

The first to perform was the amazingly talented Dragon Dancers. They performed a song they've only rehearsed for about two weeks, perfectly in sync with the music. Their smiles sparkled to all corners of the gym.

Next up was a game. Two football players and two freshmen played against each other. The objective was to get to the other side of the gym and back, with one person holding their partner's ankles and the other using their hands to move forward. The two football player contestants won.

Then, next were the cheerleaders. New and experienced performed an energetic routine. They danced and twirled all over the gym in perfect rhythm with the band. In the end, they all chanted and held up their pom-poms to form the letters R O C K.

After, were the Air Mattress relays. The games called for two football players, our principal, and a girl from the band. One person was to sit on the mattress, and the other had to push them to the other side of the gym and back. We all laughed and cheered despite their hilarious, entertaining struggles. The winners of the relays were our principal and the girl from the band.

YOU CAN READ THE VILLAGER ONLINE
theaustinvillager.com

Emmy Award-Winner and Texas Native Brittany Perry-Russell Returns to Film "We Can Be Heroes"



By Naomi Richard
VILLAGER
Entertainment Editor

VILLAGER NEWS - Emmy Award-winner and Texas native Brittany Perry-Russell returns to her home state with 13-year-old son Isaiah Russell-Bailey to film the just-announced Netflix original movie, *We Can Be Heroes*. The two are also featured in the new Netflix show *Family Reunion*, which debuted on July 10th. *Heroes* is the second Netflix project that the two have filmed together this year — and it is being filmed in Austin, Texas and produced by widely acclaimed director Robert Rodriguez.

Perry-Russell, began her career as a professional dancer. As the "It Girl" of music videos and tours, she appeared alongside a veritable "who's who" of chart-topping artists, including: Selena Gomez, Rihanna, Beyoncé,

Katy Perry, Chris Brown, Nick Jonas, Meghan Trainor, and many more.

Perry-Russell made the transition from lead dancer to actress when she landed a lead role in the Universal film *Honey 2*. She was later cast in Will Ferrell's comedy film *The Campaign*, in Whitney Houston's last film *Sparkle*, in *The Preacher's Son* based on Carl Weber's best seller, and most recently the Netflix new hit series *13 Reasons Why* as Tracy Porter.

This epitome of a "Black Girl that Rocks," Perry-Russell also has to her distinguished list of credits several television appearances including guest-starring roles on *Grey's Anatomy* (ABC), *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* (The CW), and *Fresh Off the Boat* (ABC).

The Villager interviewed Perry-Russell following her 2019 Emmy Award win for Outstanding Choreography For Scripted Programming (*Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* * *Routines*). When asked about filming in Austin she responded, "It's emotional for us to be here. We love Texas and to be here with my son is extra special. His career is taking off! It's great to do a movie together. It's the

Closing the Math Gap



Quinn Langford
Cedar Ridge H. S.

I have been in the Talented and Gifted (TAG) program at school since first grade. The program has been a very important part of my educational story, but throughout elementary and middle school I noticed that it seemed like I didn't learn some math concepts that other students in on-level math knew. My peers who were also in TAG felt the same way. The problem was that Round Rock ISD's TAG math program puts students two years ahead in math by compressing the curriculum. This doesn't leave a lot of time for practicing math skills. TAG students are gifted in math, so they can handle learning the advanced topics, but that doesn't mean that they don't need reinforcement like any other students. The lack of reinforcement creates a "gap" in math knowledge for many students, which is especially problematic for those who don't have access to a tutor to help them practice their math skills.

I have been wanting to solve this problem for a long time, and I fi-

nally found a pathway to accomplish this — Girl Scouts. The highest award a Girl Scout can receive is the Gold Award, which high school girls earn through spending around 80 hours on a sustainable project that addresses a need in their community. Girl Scouts emphasizes thoughtful planning, leadership, and teamwork throughout the Gold Award process, which ensures that the final projects are high quality and leave a lasting impact on the community. I decided to pursue a Gold Award by solving the TAG math gap in my school district.

My solution to the problem was a website that reviews students on the math concepts they missed the most according to testing and survey data. I focused on fifth grade TAG students because that is the most difficult time to join TAG and it is important for students to fortify their math skills before heading into middle school math. The website, which is being shared with all of the TAG teachers in Round Rock ISD, includes practice problems and vocabulary flashcards to help students reinforce math concepts. I hope that, by increasing students' confidence in their math abilities, my website will help improve the quality of my school district and give younger people the tools they need to change the world through science, technology, engineering, and math.



Brittany Perry-Russell
Photo Credit: Press Image/IMDb

first time they've hired an [African-American] mom/son duo... to represent in a kid's movie. I'm the mom of a son and a little girl!"

When asked about balancing life and raising a son in the film industry she answered, "My faith comes first, God and prayer. I only make moves after praying. In the beginning I said 'no' to my son acting. After a while I agreed... but only with a work/life balance. I also insisted on no profanity."

Allowing herself to be vulnerable, Perry-Russell answered the question: Where do you want your career to go from here...what's left on your list of things to accomplish? She said, "I want to create opportunities for African-Americans. We need more diversity. With



Isaiah Russell-Bailey

my son, I am a full-time single mom. That's a big obstacle and it's hard. Plus, as a black woman plus with a black boy we don't see enough blacks in roles." Her emotional response, her drive to open more doors, her conviction to create more platforms and to give more stage time to people of color — all of it was a moving response that revealed a steely determination. It left an impact and an assurance that if anyone is capable of making this dream come true... it is absolutely Brittany Perry-Russell!

High quality and high touch, that's what Perry-Russell left us feeling. Currently, there is no premiere date for the Netflix film but with such an outstanding talent, keep an eye out for its debut.

First week of Junior Year



Sarah Robertson
Connally H. S.

Coming into the 2019-2020 school year as a junior in high school I know what to expect on the first couple of weeks of school. On the first day of school which was August 15; I was so ex-

cited to see all my friends and to meet my new teachers. As my 3rd year in high school and finally becoming an upperclassman I pretty much know the school like the back of my hand. This school year I'm participating in student council, spirit club, HOSA, FCCLA, varsity theatre, varsity choir and varsity golf. My plate is pretty much full this school year and on top of that I'm taking all Ap classes. I'm really excited on what the school holds for me and the best is yet to come. Go Cougars!

FBI: West Texas gunman 'was on a long spiral of going down'

By Associated Press



(AP) - In this Sunday, Sept. 1, 2019, photo Diana Glenn wipes away tears as Midland Mayor Jerry Morales speaks words of solidarity to the people of Odessa, Texas, as they remember those who were killed in a shooting Saturday. (Ben Powell/Odessa American via AP)

The gunman in a West Texas rampage "was on a long spiral of going down" and had been fired from his oil services job the morning he killed seven people, calling 911 both before and after the shooting began, authorities said Monday.

Officers killed 36-year-old Seth Aaron Ator on Saturday outside a busy Odessa movie theater after a spate of violence that spanned 10 miles (16 kilometers), injuring around two dozen people in addition to the dead.

FBI special agent Christopher Combs said Ator called the agency's tip line as well as local police dispatch on Saturday after being fired from Journey Oilfield Services, making "rambling statements about some of the atrocities that he felt that he had gone through."

Fifteen minutes after the call to the FBI, Combs said, a Texas state trooper unaware of the calls to authorities tried pulling over Ator for failing to signal a lane change. That was when Ator pointed an AR-style rifle toward the rear window of his car and fired on the trooper, starting a terrifying police chase as Ator sprayed bullets into passing cars, shopping plazas and killed a U.S. Postal Service employee while hijacking her mail truck.

The daylight attack over the Labor Day holiday weekend came just weeks after another mass shooting killed 22 people in the Texas border city of El Paso. Authorities have not said how Ator obtained the gun used in the shooting, but Ator had previously failed a federal background check for a firearm, said John Wester, an agent with the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. Wester did not say when Ator failed the background check or why.

Odessa officials Monday released the names of those killed, who were between 15 and 57 years old. Among the dead were Edwin Peregrino, 25, who ran out of his parents' home to see what the commotion was; mail carrier Mary Granados, 29, slain in her U.S. Postal Service truck; and 15-year-old high school student Leilah Hernandez, who was walking out of an auto dealership.

Ator fired at random as he drove in the area of Odessa and Midland, two cities more than 300 miles (482 kilometers) west of Dallas. Police used a marked SUV to ram the mail truck outside the Cinergy Movie Theater in Odessa, disabling the vehicle. The gunman then fired at police, wounding two officers before he was killed.

Police said Ator's arrest in 2001 was in the county where Waco is located, hundreds of miles east of Odessa. Online court records show he was charged then with misdemeanor criminal trespass and evading arrest. He entered guilty pleas in a deferred prosecution agreement where the charge was waived after he served 24 months of probation, according to records.