

LCRA Protects 934 Acres Of Wetlands
SEE PAGE 2



PISD Orders Election of Trustees In May
SEE PAGE 3



Sharkette Sunk In Pair Of Home Losses
SEE PAGE 11

New Police Chief a hot topic at Council

BY RYAN WEST
Palacios Beacon-Publisher

The hot topic around town, new Palacios Police Chief Milton Rivera led discussions at last week's meeting of the Palacios City Council. The Citizen's Forum got things started, with Patricia Loving of the Social Justice Committee of the Palacios Community Conversation. She read a prepared letter outlining the group's prior request to be a part of the search and interview process for a new chief of police and a request for Council to review the hiring of Rivera by City Manager David Kocurek.

"Our members felt the need for real transparency and input," she added. "I find the application of the process questionable."

Rivera's prior two stops before Palacios, resulted in termination from the Harris Co. Pct. 3 Constable's Office on accusations of sexual harassment, and termination from the Clute Police Dept. after three months after an investigation into allegations he threatened to plant drugs on a suspect.

"No accusations here," Loving said. "This information is concerning and needs reviewing."

The fact that the hiring process is left in the hands of the City Manager via the

City Charter, Loving said, "needs addressing."

The hiring of Rivera was called "ridiculous" by Rose Johs. "We have children growing up in this community and it doesn't matter if it's in the past. He should not be a chief of police."

"A chief is supposed to be perfect." While there were detractors, there were also those who urged support of Rivera.

"No one is 100% perfect," Joel Paniagua commented. "We all have marks in our past. The accusations were dismissed without charges. I support Chief Rivera."

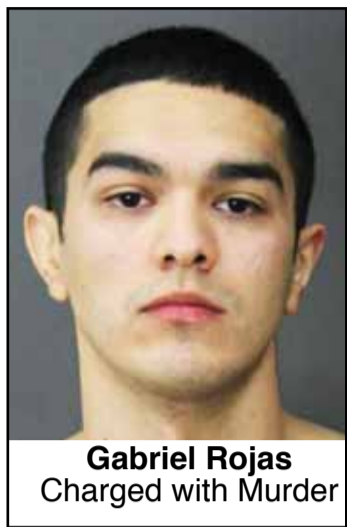
(See CITY, Page 3)

Former Shark hoops star charged with murder

Murder charges have been filed against a former Shark basketball star in a shooting death of a man in Baytown on Jan. 13.

Twenty-five year old Gabriel Rojas, currently of Deer Park, is charged in the death of 28 year old Marco Recio of Atascocita, in a shooting that took place at approximately 6:30 p.m. at a residence in Baytown.

According to police, preliminary investigations indi-



Gabriel Rojas Charged with Murder

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Beacon Deadline 5 p.m. Friday

Except for paid advertising, all articles, photos or other information submitted on Monday will be published on a space available basis only.

Open 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
Beacon Closed Wednesday

Observing Our **114th** Year 1907-2021

BEACON BRIEFS

Coffee with the Chief next Thurs. at Mike's On Main

All are invited to attend Coffee with the Cops next Thursday, Jan. 28, from 8 a.m.-10 a.m. sponsored by Police Chief Milton Rivera. Coffee and refreshments will be served, however, due to COVID the visiting will be occurring outside. All are invited to take this opportunity to visit with your local Palacios Police Department.

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Filing begins today for City, PISD elections

Filing is now underway and runs thru Feb. 12 for the Palacios City Council and Palacios ISD Trustee elections to be held May 1.

On the City ticket, up for grabs will be Pos. 3, Pos. 4 and Pos. 5, currently occupied by Mary Crocker, Troy Lewis and Wayne Dodd, respectively.

Filing for the City races (See FILING, Page 4)

Harmonie Club to downsize Valentine's events due to COVID-19

Due to COVID restrictions for Matagorda County, The Palacios Harmonie Club has chosen to forgo its traditional Sweetheart Ball and Valentine Parade.

However, the Palacios Harmonie Club will have a raffle and a crowning ceremony.

The Community is encouraged to continue to show support for the Palacios community by purchasing a raffle ticket! The Harmonie Club extends gratitude to the community with a big "Thank you for 73 years of support!" See details regarding purchasing your raffle ticket on Pg. 2.

Seawall ramps up Repairs

BY ALAN C. SCHULMAN
Palacios Beacon - Reporter

Last Wednesday's Meeting of the Commissioners of the Matagorda County-Palacios Seawall Commission saw the commissioners reviewing problem areas and planning repairs along Palacios' seawall and boat ramps.

Urban Engineering's Matt Glaze, in researching a drop-off at the end of a local boat ramp, described his findings; "Well, I put some waders on and walked down there, and then I stepped down in the hole and the water went over my waist."

Laughter ensued, along (See SEAWALL, Page 4)



Melee empties Shark Tank...

PANDEMONIUM broke out on the court in the waning moments of the Shark and Yoakum Bulldog basketball game and led to multiple ejections and officials clearing the gym of all spectators before play would resume. For more, see Page 12. (Beacon Photos by Ryan West)

Sign-ups underway for COVID-19 vaccine list at PCMC, MRMC

Registration for the COVID-19 Vaccination are now available with Palacios Community Medical Center. At this time, vaccinations are allocated to those who meet criteria.

For more information please visit: <https://dshs.texas.gov/>

Eligible individuals are encouraged to register online: ptserver.fasthealth.com/web_ecmh_tx/forms/?formID=9279.

Registering online is the preferred manner to register and is more efficient than calling in to register.

However, if you are unable to register online you may register by phone: Last

Names A-M call: (979) 543 6251, ext 606 and for Last Names N-Z call: (361) 972-0377

If you are not able to use the online form, you can call the phone number above, and leave a message. Calls will be returned in 3-5 business days for you to be registered. Once registered, you will be put on a wait list. You will receive a call for an appointment when COVID-19 vaccinations are available to you. MidCoast Health System is will identify vaccination locations as more doses become available. The vaccine may also be available through other

Matagorda County medical facilities & pharmacies.

Please do not call the main phone number for PCMC or PMC to ask for the vaccine; call the numbers above.

Matagorda Regional Medical Center has launched a new COVID-19 Vaccine Wait List. You can find it online at matagordaregional.org/waitlist along with a video providing answers to the most commonly asked questions about vaccine distribution in Matagorda County.

Palacios Area Fund celebrates 40th Anniversary

The Palacios Area Fund (PAF) is celebrating its 40th year of operation and service in the community of Palacios. The PAF was established in 1981 as the first branch office of Communities Foundation of Texas, based in Dallas. PAF was set up as response to a small number of significant designated gifts from the Trull and Herlin families to "help enhance the quality of life in the Palacios area."

PAF was the first branch office of any major community foundation in the United States and takes great pride in being the successful experiment

which led the way for other community foundations and has been of considerable benefit to the Palacios area. Previous Directors were the late Mary A. Eggenmeyer followed by the late Roberta Ripke. Sally Kurtz has headed up the efforts the past 9 years.

"We are willing to serve and provide for the Palacios area. I am humbled by the amount of generous and compassionate givers we have in our community. I am extremely proud of the impact PAF has made with the support of charitable gifts from other," Kurtz stated.

(See PAF, Page 3)



MEMBERS of the Palacios Area Fund Board are: (front, l-r) Rhonda Bates and Sydney Holder; (back) Sally Kurtz, Lynda Richter, Patsy Gibson, and Paul Christensen. (Submitted Photo)

• Deadline for Articles, Classified & Display Ads 4:30 p.m. Friday •



The Lower Colorado River Authority has donated a conservation easement to protect hundreds of acres of Matagorda wetlands from future development. Pictured are some of the protected wetlands at LCRA's Matagorda Bay Nature Park. (Submitted Photo)

LCRA protects 934 acres of Matagorda Wetlands from future development

Conservation easement with Colorado River Land Trust ensures permanent protection of habitat along mid-Texas Coast

The Lower Colorado River Authority has donated a conservation easement on 934 acres of critical Matagorda wetlands to permanently protect the land from future development.

The conserved wetlands are part of LCRA's Matagorda Bay Nature Park along the mid-Texas Gulf Coast. The conservation easement held by the Colorado River Land Trust will allow LCRA to retain ownership of the property while ensuring the land will be protected as natural open space forever.

"We want to guarantee these important wetlands will never be developed," said Phil Wilson, LCRA general manager. "We have no intention of selling the land, but we took this step to ensure that no matter what happens in the future, this land will

remain preserved in its natural state for the people of Texas."

The land will remain part of the 1,333-acre nature park, and LCRA will continue to use the wetlands for recreation and education. The park's welcome center and RV park are in a different area of the property and will remain available to park guests.

Jeff Crosby, executive director of the Colorado River Land Trust, said the tract is one of the last large, intact coastal ecosystems on the Matagorda Peninsula.

"Working with partners like LCRA, who see the value of conservation and land stewardship, ensures the natural resources we Texans depend on are protected," Crosby said. "The Texas coast is unique, and the conservation of these wetlands, where the Colo-

rado River empties into the Gulf of Mexico, provides a tremendous opportunity to protect a diverse and productive habitat."

The 934-acre tract lies within the mid-coast barrier islands and includes extensive tidal marshes, barrier grasslands and tidal flats, as well as habitat that supports a diverse population of plants and animals in the region. In addition to helping protect the region's natural resources, the conservation easement also will help protect nursery habitat for shrimp, crabs and other crustaceans; oyster beds and other mollusks; stopover and wintering habitat for migratory waterfowl; nesting and foraging habitat for resident waterfowl; emergent tidal marshes; seagrass beds; and the beach and dune system.



PALACIOS BEACON Area Briefs

Can't erase the evidence

NAVASOTA: A single-vehicle accident Saturday led to the arrest of Sebastian Domingo, 20, from Navasota for drug possession and vandalism charges. Domingo was arrested on an outstanding warrant out of Brazos County for possession of marijuana. During the search officers also found Domingo in possession of drugs. Domingo was also identified in video surveillance as a suspect wanted in connection to a vandalism incident. In that incident officers responded to a criminal mischief call where the owners of a business reported damages to their video surveillance camera. Officers received the footage from the security camera and were able to positively identify Domingo as the suspect. - *The Navasota Examiner*

Legendary football coach dies of complications from COVID-19

AUSTIN: Texas high school football lost one of its greats last Friday. David Husmann, who coached the Schulenberg Shorthorns to back-to-back football championships and led the school to become a powerhouse football dynasty died at an Austin hospital of complications of the novel coronavirus. He was 67. After a few other coaching jobs in the state, he took the head football coach job in Schulenburg in 1990, and the rest, as they say, is history. During that time, Husmann led the Shorthorns to three perfect seasons, and back-to-back state championships in 1991 and 1992. He led the Shorthorns to the playoffs in 11 of 13 seasons, and a total of 139 wins during his tenure. He led Weimar during its most winning season in the modern era in 2015. That year, for the first time in 55 years, the Wildcats made the playoffs, winning two consecutive playoff games. That same year, Husmann saw his 200th career win. - *The Banner-Press Newspaper*

Taylor-born K.C. Jones dies at 88

TAYLOR: On Friday, NBA Hall of Famer and former Taylor resident K.C. Jones passed way at age 88 in Connecticut after battling Alzheimer's disease for several years. Leaving Williamson County for California at age 10, Jones went on to play basketball collegiately at the University of San Francisco before joining the Boston Celtics and winning eight consecutive NBA championships from 1959 through 1966. Jones also won four more championships in a head or assistant coaching role. - *The Rockdale Reporter*



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COVID-19 VACCINE WAIT LIST

matagordaregional.org/waitlist

Matagorda Regional Medical Center has launched a new COVID-19 Vaccine Wait List. You can find it online at matagordaregional.org/waitlist along with a video providing answers to the most commonly asked questions about vaccine distribution in Matagorda County.

public notice 012021 1a

original 3.333" x 2.166"

J's Custom Cravings receives Bert West Grant from PEDC

Palacios' newest restaurant -- *J's Custom Cravings* -- will open their doors soon with a little help from the Bert West Business Grant approved by the Palacios Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) board of directors in a special meeting Wednesday, Jan. 13.

The new eatery will feature a soup, salad and potato bar and serve made-to-order lunch and dinner items. Located at 317 Commerce in the heart of downtown Palacios, *J's Custom Cravings* hopes to be a regular stop for locals and a convenient draw for tourists as well.

All PEDC board members supported providing the new business with the West Grant -- approving an amount up to \$10,000 -- but it was fellow Palacios small business owner Paula Whitney that expressed the importance of business grant funding to entrepreneurs just getting started. She explained not only the importance of the financial boost, but the what the funding means as an expression of support from commu-

nity leaders as well.

"It is very encouraging to me to see folks starting new business," said Mike Ferdinand, Palacios Economic Development Corporation executive director. "Working with that business in its initial start-up phase is always exciting for me. Seeing a spirit of entrepreneurship alive and well in our community is a key to positive community development."

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Palacios Harmonie Club 2021 Raffle

Donation of \$5 each

Drawing will be on Saturday, February 13, 2021

1. Beneath the Oaks Winery Package (Wine tasting for 2, Two wine glasses, Charcuterie Snack Board, choice of 6 bottles of wine to take home with you) donated by Beneath the Oaks Winery
2. Solart Design 7-piece Canvas Collage (photos of your choice) donated by Solart Design (Marisol Gonzalez)
3. \$100 Gift Certificate to Mad Batter Cheesecake donated by Mad Batter Cheesecake (Brittani Riccio)
4. Oster French Door Digital Toaster Oven
5. Apple AirPods with charging case
6. TCL 40" Smart LED ROKU TV
7. Black & Decker 20V Max Cordless Drill Combo Kit
8. Consuela Purse donated by Palacios Prescription Shoppe
9. Instant Pot 6 Quart Stainless Steel
10. Blackstone Adventure Ready 2 Burner 28" Outdoor Griddle
11. Shark ION Robot Vacuum R76 with Wi-Fi
12. One Hour Photo Session with Haley Kruse Photography donated by Haley Kruse
13. \$100 5th Street Boutique Gift Certificate donated by 5th Street Boutique
14. Danny's Seafood Entrée of choice (Grilled Fish or Steak Plate) donated by Danny's Seafood
15. 60 minute massage gift certificate donated by Massage Heights
16. 5# Shrimp donated by W&W Dock
17. Bissel Crosswave All-in-One Wet Vac donated by Palacios Dental Center
18. Photo Session with Vivid Memories Photography donated by Veronica Kacer
19. 1 Alligator Tag and Guide donated by Jason Gibson

To purchase your raffle ticket email:
Chi Gibson @ chigibson45@gmail.com
or any other Harmonie Club Member or Sweetheart.

Palacios Police Reports

Individuals listed have been arrested and/or charged with an offense. Inclusion in this report does not imply that the person is guilty of any crime. The following are offense and arrest reports submitted by the Palacios Police Dept. to the Palacios Beacon as of noon Friday.

ARRESTS
Tyler Keith Cole, 26, 917 1/2 Morton Ave, was arrested in the intersection of 12th St. and Green Ave at 3:20 a.m. on Jan. 13. Warrant Service Out of County.

INCIDENTS
Information Report: Officers were dispatched to the 400 block of Main St. at 11:46 a.m. on Jan. 14 in reference to counterfeit currency.

Theft: Officers were dispatched to the Dollar General at 7:36 p.m. on Jan. 12 in reference to a theft that had taken place earlier in the day.

Follow-Up - CPS Report: A follow-up was conducted in the 40 block of Seashell Blvd. at 4:30 p.m. on Jan. 11 in reference to a CPS Report.

Abandoned Vehicle: Officer was dispatched to the alley way behind the 800 block of Perryman Ave at 12:26 p.m. on Jan. 11 in reference to a vehicle that was subsequently towed due to city ordinance violation.

Theft: Officer was dispatched to the Police Department at 12:17 p.m. on Jan. 11 in reference to a theft of money order.

Burglary of a Building: Officers were dispatched to the 1000 block of Henderson Ave at 9:10 a.m. on Jan. 11 in reference to a Burglary of a Building.

Reckless Driver: Officer was dispatched to Tran's Restaurant at 9:00 p.m. on Jan. 8 in reference to a Reckless Driver in the parking lot who spun his tires, flinging rocks and debris over the side of the building and several vehicles in the parking lot and the liquor store parking lot next door.

Found Property: Documents, etc. were turned in to the Police Department at 10:27 a.m. on Jan. 9.

Burglary of a Building: Officer was dispatched to the Police Annex at 10:30 a.m. on Jan. 8 in reference to a theft.

Assault: Officers were dispatched to the 300 block of Duson Ave at 10:24 p.m. on Jan. 7 in reference to advice.

PISD holds 2nd meeting of 2021

Orders elections in May for Trustee Pos. 1 & 2

BY ALAN C. SCHULMAN
Palacios Beacon - Reporter

The Palacios ISD board members have been busy in January, holding their second meeting of the month last Monday, within a week of the previous meeting on Wednesday, January 6.

As this was the Regular January Board Meeting, TAPR Presentation and Public Hearing, Dr. Brian Williams presented the 2019-2020 Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR), which 2020 Accountability Rating was Not Rated; Declared State of Disaster, and 2020 Special Education Determination Status: Meets Requirements.

Awards and Recognition
January is School Board Appreciation month, and Dr. William "Bill" Chapman expressed his appreciation to the board for their commitment to Palacios ISD. Further, campus principals presented items made by the students to the board members.

Dr. Chapman also presented the Facilities Committee Report.

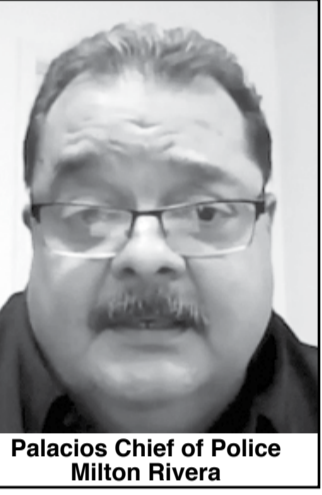
Approved Items
The Consent Agenda, which consists of the Meeting Minutes, with corrections, Changes in the Tax Roll, Order of Election, Early Resignation Incentive Plan, and Contract Services Agreement.

The Early Resignation Incentive Plan is designed to encourage PISD employees who plan to resign to give notice as early as possible in order to give PISD ample time to find their replacement.

Reports to the Board
Business Reports, Tax Office Reports, Monthly Financial Reports, and Monthly Summary of Bills, and Superintendent's Reports were presented to the board.

Next Meeting
The Next Regular Meeting of the PISD Board of Trustees will be on Monday, Feb. 8 at 6:30 p.m.

Letter from Palacios Police Chief Rivera



Palacios Chief of Police Milton Rivera

also leave you vulnerable to con-artists, frauds, and scammers. Here are some safe e-shopping tips:

- Always make sure your online shopping is on safe websites. Please make sure they always start with the HTTP headers.
- Safe websites will neither ask you to send additional information about your finances.
- Do not accept phone calls that will ask you to send additional information about your finances. Do not take any checks from unknown sources that ask you to deposit and send the difference to an unknown person.
- Always safeguard your personal information and do not give or send any monies to anyone unknown.

• Always question a transaction whether you think it is legal.

• Using common sense in all your online transactions will safeguard you from being a target for online predators. Online marketing with a credit card should not require giving a merchant more information than is needed to verify your card and ship you the product. If they do, they may be collecting more information than is needed to verify your card and ship you the product. If they do, they may be collecting information about you that they can sell to someone else.

• Watch out for free advice. Whether it's a stock tip from a chat room or unsolicited e-mail, avoid advice from total strangers. Why would they want to give you free advice? There's usually a motive involved, and that motive is simple: they want to make money off you. Don't listen.

If you feel unsure and it is too good to be real, sign off your computer and turn it off. Your Palacios Police Department urges you to immediately contact 361-972-3112 and have one of your officers come by your home or business and investigate the incident.

CITY

(Continued From Page 1)

Loving came back to the podium for an encore and on Rivera's to be presented plan for the department and the management to get his plans done.

Chief Presentation
Rivera didn't have to wait long to make his first comments as he was next on the agenda to present his vision in developing new programs for the Police Dept. and the community.

Rivera acknowledged, "I have a big perception to overcome. "But I guarantee, I will overcome those perceptions."

Rivera's plan to bring policing in Palacios up to the 21st century with "more community orientation and raising the expectations of the department to match those of the citizens."

Programs he plans to implement include a volunteer chaplain program, "R U OK?" program, Silver Santa, Coffee with the Chief, Crime Prevention, City of Palacios Police Activities League, Police Dept. Training Coordinators, Texas Chief of Police Recognized Law Enforcement Agency, and an Emergency Management Program.

Election Ordered in May
Council approved the ordering of an election on May 1 for Council Pos. 3, 4 and 5. Filing began on Jan. 13 and

runs thru Feb. 12. Filing applications may be picked up at City Hall.

Forum
Jennifer Chau, the 2021 Texas Elite Miss Agriculture was on hand to garner support for herself and 2020 Texas Jr. Miss Ag. Ansley Kubecka, for the upcoming National Pageant.

Sharon Trainor countered the city's recent claims that the recent base water & sewer rate hikes were incorrect.

"There have been three increases in the past nine years," she said and urged council to check and see when the last time the rates were raised.

"The vote to increase was based on incorrect information," she claimed.

MCAD appointment
Council received notice from the Matagorda County Appraisal District Board of Directors to serve the remaining one-year term left of the late John Connor and nomination is due Jan. 29.

Approved Items
Council approved and reaffirmed a funds balance policy for the city in accordance with GASB statement 54 Requirements; approved of a fraud prevention and detection policy; and approved adopting of an investment policy.

Council approved the awarding of an engineer-

ing contract to Urban Engineering for water line repair and replacement under the TxCDBG Community Development Fund administered by the Texas Dept. of Ag.

Council approved the awarding of an engineering contract to Urban Engineering for sidewalks on the north side of Main St. from 5th St. - 6th St. and the south side of Main St. from 3rd St. - 6th St. under the the Texas Capital Fund Downtown Revitalization/Main St. Program of TxCDBG program.

Council approved the first reading to revise and update the Flood Damage Prevention Regulations of the city to conform with FEMA requirements, and also approved adding new Council members as signors at First Financial Bank.

Hearings
Prior to the regular meeting, Council held a public meeting on the on the 2nd phase of downtown revitalization sidewalks project and the continuation of the City's water line replacement efforts.

Next Meeting
Council was to hold a special meeting on Tues. (Jan. 19) and will hold its regular meeting on Tues. (Jan. 26) at 7 p.m.

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PAF

(Continued From Page 1)

PAF belongs to the people of the Palacios community. It is not a government created or supported entity. It is community created, community supported and community operated. A Distribution Committee made up of local citizens meets monthly with the purpose of perpetuating the philanthropic intentions of donors. Over the years, the role of PAF has changed from one which gives only grants, to one that can also assist the community and other nonprofits with emerging needs.

Palacios Area Fund provides the opportunity for donors to invest in both the present and future needs of our community. Since 1981, PAF has awarded more than 1.9 million dollars to charitable efforts in Palacios and the surrounding area.

Awards to the City of Palacios as well as support for our Volunteer Fire Dept., Palacios Recreation Center, Friends of Elder Citizens, Palacios Medical Foundation, Palacios

Chamber of Commerce/PEDC and the Palacios Educational Pavilion have assisted in improvements for these entities. Many non-profits that benefit our youth such as the Boys and Girls Club, Palacios Aquatics Club, Palacios Community HUB, Palacios Little League, Team First Book, Palacios Youth Supporters, Operation Santa Claus, and Palacios ISD all have been benefactors of your gifts as well as various non-profit organizations like the Palacios Area Historical Association, Palacios Lion's Club, Palacios Rotary Club, Palacios Pet Pals, Friends of the Palacios Library and the Texas Baptist Encampment. Palacios Area Fund was also instrumental in the funding and building process of the La Petite Bell project. Soon after completion, it was gifted to the Palacios Area Historical Association.

When you give your hard-earned money, you want to know your contribution will reach those in need. Palacios Area Fund has a rich history as a community foundation and is proud of the many accomplishments over the past 40 years. Palacios Area Fund is simply, Neighbor Helping Neighbor to get things done. If you would like more information on ways to invest in your community, the PAF office is open Monday-Thursday from 9a.m.- 3:30p.m.

For more visit, www.palaciosareafund.org.

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Deadline For
All Articles,
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Friday @
4:30 p.m.

ROJAS

(Continued From Page 1)

cated Rojas was dropping off his two-year old child at the home of the child's mother, where another man was present.

A fight broke out between the two men and ended with Rojas, allegedly, shooting Recio with a handgun.

When law enforcement arrived on the scene, Recio was on the ground with apparent multiple gunshot wounds.

Police reported Rojas fled from the scene before turning himself in.

The Harris County District Attorney's Office charged Rojas with Murder and he is currently in Baytown Jail while awaiting transfer to Harris County Jail.

Rojas was a star point guard for the Shark basketball team and graduated from Palacios High School in 2013.

Are you looking to read more of this week's edition of the **Palacios Beacon???**

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