

# A Ray of Light at Sundown

Navy veteran and longtime educator, Principal Steven Pustejovsky, shines a light on the students at Sundown Elementary

Written by Shetye Cypher | Photography by LaShelby Pate

Having been in education for 39 years and spending 20 of those as principal of Sundown Elementary, home of the Awesome Armadillos, Steven Pustejovsky, or Mr. P as he is lovingly called, was inspired to follow this path while in the Navy.

“I had the opportunity to help coach a little league baseball team with my Navy supervisor and thoroughly enjoyed teaching kiddos. During my sophomore year at Baylor I decided to major in elementary education,” he says.

## From Navy to Classroom

After he finished high school, the Vietnam War was winding down; however he was drafted, and Pustejovsky and his best friend joined the U.S. Navy. He was stationed at a Joint Command in Stuttgart, Germany, but was never on a U.S. Navy vessel. After spending four years in the Navy, he attended Baylor University and received a degree in elementary education. He began his teaching career as a fourth-grade teacher in Alief ISD.

“My most significant challenge was balancing my elementary teaching responsibilities and going to school in the evenings at the University of Houston to complete the requirements for my master’s degree in educational supervision. I had to drive down to the main campus two nights a week for four years,” he says.

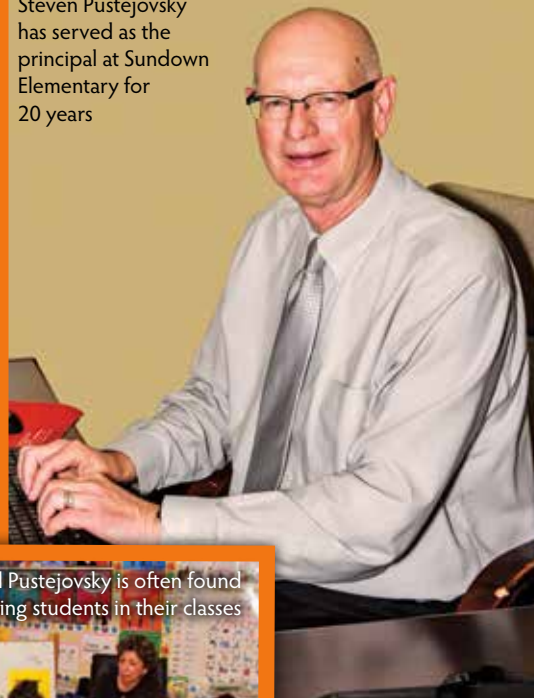
“In my opinion, being in education is the second most important profession with the first most important profession being a parent. In either instance you’re making a difference for kiddos; watching them learn and grow,” Pustejovsky adds.

## A Day in the Life

Pustejovsky, 65, begins each day arriving at the campus between 7:15 and 7:30 a.m. He likes to start off with assisting the morning car rider drop off. He opens doors, says hello to parents, and welcomes the kids to school. After morning car arrival, he goes into the gym and assists with student dismissal to homeroom classes.

## Sundown Elementary

Steven Pustejovsky has served as the principal at Sundown Elementary for 20 years



Principal Pustejovsky is often found visiting students in their classes

On Mondays, he appears on the morning announcements along with the fifth-grade morning anchors. Pustejovsky can often be found in the cafeteria doing lunch supervision, observing students learning activities in the classrooms, or even assisting with school dismissal at the end of the day. “I try my best to capture these events and activities on my iPad and I include them in the Sundown Weekly Faculty Bulletin,” he adds.

## The Katy Spirit

Pustejovsky stresses that one of the main strengths of Katy ISD is the quality and expertise of the teachers and staff. “Here at Sundown, we have a very dedicated and talented faculty and staff and they come to school each day and make a significant difference for our students and their families,” he says. “We are so fortunate to have a Katy ISD Teaching and Learning Department that truly helps stretch me and keeps me up-to-date with educational issues and trends.” He adds that he particularly appreciates the work they have done using Twitter to build their Professional Learning Networks and instantly communicate with educators all over the world.

“It is teachers and students who are responding to a higher calling as we all strive to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of our students. It is also volunteers, community, businesses, and school staff working side-by-side to meet the needs of our students,” he adds. “This is exactly what makes this Katy community so very special. It is the ‘Katy spirit!’” KM



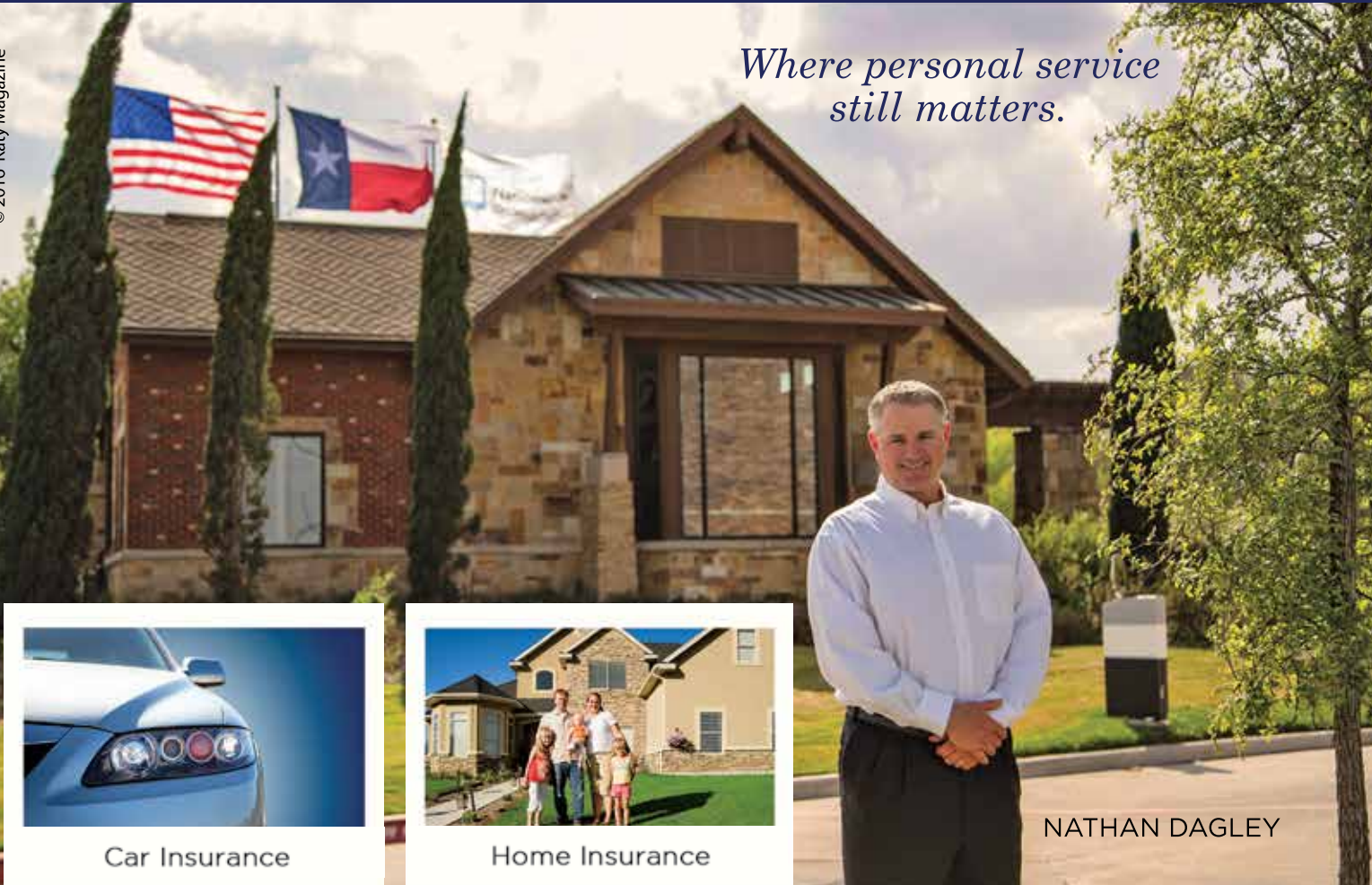
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