

## Artist's Showcase:



16x24 oil on canvas by mei hoffman  
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## Aldine superintendent hosts Pct. 2 Commissioner Garcia

Discuss joint efforts in education, school safety, workforce

ALDINE – Harris County Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia held a special meeting with school superintendents in his precinct, to explore ways that his administration could help with the goal of improving educational performance, school safety, and workforce development after graduation.

The luncheon meeting was held at the new Aldine Mead Middle School on Lauder Road last Friday.

Attending were some of the precinct superintendents, workforce representatives, TexasCentral high speed rail, Pct. 2 infrastructure, sheriff Ed Gonzalez and his SWAT team, Aldine department heads and police, and Har-

See PCT. 2 MEETING, page 3



Pct. 2 Comm. Adrian Garcia confers with Aldine Superintendent LaTonya Goffney and Assist. Superintendent Selina Chopa.



Representatives from a multitude of agencies met at Mead Middle School to discuss and coordinate education initiatives.

## Commissioner Garcia introduces Paid Family Leave Measure

HARRIS COUNTY, TX – Commissioner Adrian Garcia is continuing his commitment to making county employees a priority and has introduced a measure that would strengthen the current policy on family leave.

The Commissioner requested a study to determine what it will take to provide county employees with paid maternity leave for a period of two weeks over and above current policies.

“This is the fair thing to do for our working families. Many of our employees are the sole providers in their family,” said Commissioner Adrian Garcia. “It’s not right to ask them to choose between abandoning a new child or lose their wages.”

On Tuesday, the court approved the request for County’s Human Resources Department to conduct a formal compensation study and budgetary impact. The vast majority of

working people in the United States do not have paid family

leave through their jobs. In Texas, even unpaid leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act is inaccessible for 62 percent of working people. This is an opportunity for Harris County to lead other agencies in Texas, should it decide to provide family leave beyond what is available to an employee through earned paid sick and vacation leave days.

“Expanding paid family leave ensures our families get the time they need to take care of their loved ones,” said Commissioner Adrian Garcia

If approved, this would be the first time Harris County has implemented this type of paid family leave.



## NEWS NOTES

### Nutrition Classes

Harris County Public Health presents Nutrition classes. Learn how to make delicious, healthy, and easy recipes. 4-session course. Some of the topics covered include: myplate, proteins, dairy, whole grains.

Join Harris County Public Health every Thursday starting March 14 - April 4 from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at Harris County Emergency Corps located at 2800 Aldine Bender Rd., Houston, TX 77032.

Each interactive lesson held will be taught by health professionals and nutrition experts.

### Green Forest Civic Club Meeting

The next meeting will be Tues. 02/26/19, 6:30pm at the American Legion Hall, 3415 Aldine-Mail Rte. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please contact Marina Flores Sugg at 281-684-9751.

### Corrections:

In last week’s Northeast News, the Harris County Judge was incorrectly identified as Linda Hidalgo, the correct name is Lina Hidalgo.

In the issue of February 5, the Northwood Plaza Shopping Center was incorrectly stated as sold to Brixmore Property Group. They were in fact the seller, to an unidentified private buyer.

## Aldine ISD is expanding college opportunities for students



This is an architectural rendering of the East Aldine Town Center. Lone Star College-East Aldine Campus and Rose Avalos P-TECH School will share the facility. Avalos P-TECH School is accepting applications for current eighth-grade students for the freshman class of 2019-2020.

Aldine ISD is multiplying opportunities for high school students to earn a college degree and be career ready at no personal cost to their families in a partnership with the Lone Star Community College System (LSCCS) and industry partners. Through these partnerships, AISD

will open Avalos P-TECH School just in time for the start of the 2019-2020 school year. The school will share space with Lone Star College-East Aldine Campus, which is located on an 80,000-square-foot-site at the East Aldine Town Center (2430 Aldine Mail Rte. Houston, TX 77039).

### Getting Ahead of the Game

Students who attend will be dual enrolled in high school and college courses through LSCCS starting their ninth grade year. By the end of their

See Opportunities, Page 2

## Commissioner Ellis opposes DA’s 31.7% budget increase to hire 102 prosecutors

County Should Invest Tax Dollars in Reforms that Will Make Our Communities Safer and Our Justice System More Fair, Efficient and Effective for All People

HARRIS COUNTY, TX – February 11, 2019 – Citing the need for a criminal justice system that advances equal justice and protects our communities, Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis said he plans to vote against District Attorney Kim Ogg’s request for a massive 31.7 percent budget increase that, if approved, will fund an additional 102 prosecutors.

“This is a significant expansion of the District Attorney’s Office, and it signals a commitment to

doubling down on our system’s over reliance on arrest, prosecution and incarceration for low-level, nonviolent offenses related to poverty, homelessness, mental health, prostitution and substance use,” Commissioner Ellis said. “Given the county’s finite resources, we should be investing in reforms like pre-arrest/pre-charge diversion programs that, unlike pre-trial diversion programs, will divert the person before they enter or



See Budget Increase, Page 3

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\* **ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL** (PG-13) 12:30pm, 3:30pm, 6:30pm, 9:30pm Stadium Seating  
\* **HAPPY DEATH DAY 2U** (PG-13) 12:00pm, 2:20pm, 4:45pm, 7:15pm, 9:35pm Stadium Seating  
\* **HAPPY DEATH DAY 2U** (PG-13) 12:00pm, 2:20pm, 4:45pm, 7:15pm, 9:35pm SPANISH SUBTITLED: Stadium Seating  
\* **ISN'T IT ROMANTIC** (PG-13) 12:20pm, 2:30pm, 4:45pm, 7:00pm, 9:15pm Stadium Seating  
\* **COLD PURSUIT** (R) 12:20pm, 3:00pm, 5:45pm, 8:30pm Stadium Seating  
\* **The LEGO Movie 2: The Second Part in 3D** (PG) 1:00pm, 6:45pm Stadium Seating  
\* **The LEGO Movie 2: The Second Part in 3D** (PG) 12:30pm, 6:15pm SPANISH SUBTITLED: Stadium Seating  
\* **The LEGO Movie 2: The Second Part** (PG) 3:20pm, 9:00pm SPANISH SUBTITLED: Stadium Seating

The LEGO Movie 2: The Second Part (PG) 3:45pm, 9:30pm Stadium Seating  
\* **THE PRODIGY** (R) 12:00pm, 2:15pm, 4:35pm, 7:30pm, 9:50pm Stadium Seating  
\* **WHAT MEN WANT** (R) 1:00pm, 4:00pm, 6:45pm, 9:30pm Stadium Seating  
\* **MISS BALA** (PG-13) 12:00pm, 2:30pm, 5:00pm, 7:30pm SPANISH SUBTITLED: Stadium Seating  
\* **MISS BALA** (PG-13) 12:30pm, 3:00pm, 5:35pm, 8:00pm Stadium Seating  
\* **GLASS** (PG-13) 12:00pm, 3:00pm, 6:15pm, 9:15pm Stadium Seating  
\* **AQUAMAN** (PG-13) 12:00pm, 6:15pm Stadium Seating  
\* **AQUAMAN 3D** (PG-13) 3:10pm, 9:20pm Stadium Seating  
\* **RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET** (PG) 12:35pm, 3:20pm, 6:00pm, 8:45pm Stadium Seating

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# SCHOOL NEWS

## Opportunities, Meteorologist Britta Merwin visits Conley Elementary School

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

senior year, students will graduate with a high school diploma, an associate's degree, and workforce certificates.

Due to the focus on college readiness and programs of study, Avalos P-TECH School will not offer UIL activities such as athletics, band, choir, etc. P-TECH School students may not take part in such activities at another Aldine ISD campus.

Students will have access to mentors, internships, workforce skill workshops, and job shadowing from across their industry of interest.

Superintendent LaTonya M. Goffney believes that the opening of Avalos P-TECH is another opportunity to give Aldine ISD students a choice in how they complete K-12 education in Aldine. Students will choose one of four career pathways and take courses that provide the academic, technical and workplace skills.

"With the P-TECH model, we will bring the brightest educators and experienced industry leaders together," said Goffney. "This model ensures that we prepare our students for well-paying careers once they graduate high school."

6 Great Reasons to Go to Avalos P-TECH School Earn an Associate of Applied Science degree tuition-free while in high school

Earn up to 60 hours of tuition-free college credit as a high school student Eliminate thousands of dollars in college tuition costs by earning college credit hours while in high school

Enter the job market with work-ready skills upon completion of high school

KPRC 2 meteorologist Britta Merwin visited Conley Elementary School on Feb. 7 to talk to students about her career in meteorology. A self-proclaimed weather nut, Britta dreamed of being a meteorologist since the age of eight when her local meteorologist visited her school. Now, she is giving back by inspiring future meteorologists.

Students in grades 1-3 listened as Merwin spoke about her career. She encouraged them to pursue careers in science-related fields.

Merwin also grabbed students' attention with a few different science experiments she performed in front of them. A couple of the experiments had the students in awe.

Before ending her pre-



KPRC 2 meteorologist Britta Merwin grabs students' attention with a science experiment.

sentation, she gave a few words of advice.

"When you grow up, be sure to do what makes you excited," said Merwin. "By following your dreams and working toward making them a reality, you will be successful."

KPRC 2 will air the vid-

eo of Merwin's visit at Conley during the 6 a.m. news hour program on Friday, Feb. 8. If viewers miss the broadcast tomorrow evening, they can visit the KPCE 2 website to find the segment with links to the experiments that Merwin did at the school.

## Marina Ly and Guadalupe Ledezma crowned top spellers



Marina Ly and Guadalupe Ledezma (l-r) show off their trophies.

Some of Aldine's best spellers faced off on February 6 in the District Spelling Bee. Students competed for a spot to advance to the Houston Public Media 2019 Spelling Bee.

Marina Ly, a seventh-grader at Shotwell Middle School, earned the title of Champion. Marina won with the word "tertiary."

The Runner-Up title went to eighth-grade student Guadalupe Ledezma from Mead Middle School.

This is not the first time

Marina wins a top spot at the District-level competition. She was the District Champion in 2018.

Only campus winners advanced to the District event. Contestants must not have passed beyond the eighth grade on or before Feb. 1, 2019.

As the top two District winners, Marina and Guadalupe advance to the next level of competition. The Houston Public Media 2019 Spelling Bee set for March 23 and will stream live on TV 8.

## Jump for Heart at Vardeman EC/ PK /K

**Jump for Heart at Vardeman** Students learned to jump rope to raise awareness for Heart Disease and to raise money for the American Heart Association. The students learned how to jump and stay healthy! This is a new program "Kids Heart Challenge" The school is so proud of all Heart Heroes at Vardeman. Students can donate up until March 1st.



Organizers were so happy to have Mrs. Todd Principal and Area Superintendent Dr. Christina Gomez join them for this special event at the Vardeman Gym during PE. Pictured Mrs. Todd Principal, Area Supt Dr. Christina Gomez and Coach Linda Nigro



Photos submitted by Linda Nigro Physical Education Teacher



## Aldine ISD celebrates CTE month in February



Career and technical education (CTE) covers many different fields, including health care, information technology, advanced manufacturing, hospitality and management and many more. CTE encompasses many different types of education, from classroom learning to certification programs to work-based learning opportunities outside the classroom.

Career and Technical Education Month®, or CTE Month®, is a public awareness campaign that takes place each February to celebrate the value of CTE and the achievements and accomplishments of CTE programs across the country. This year's theme is "Celebrate Today, Own

Tomorrow!"

CTE Works for High School Students High school students involved in CTE are more engaged, perform better and graduate at higher rates.

- Taking one CTE class for every two academic classes minimizes the risk of students dropping out of high school.

- The average high school graduation rate for students concentrating in CTE programs is 93 percent, compared to an average national freshman graduation rate of 80 percent.

- 91 percent of high school graduates who earned 2-3 CTE credits enrolled in college.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

## Sheriff's Office to help kids of incarcerated

HARRIS COUNTY – Somehow in an effort to find justice, a well meaning society seems to be most punitious to those that have done the least injustice.

The Harris County Sheriff's Office and Texas Children's Hospital have partnered to win a grant from the National Institute of Corrections to make the Harris County Jail more child friendly. Experts are visiting the jail this week to make suggestions in areas that include enhancing the inmate visitation experience for children and training jail staff on how to

positively interact with visiting children.

Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez and Nancy Correa, Senior Community Initiatives Coordinator for Public Health and Primary Care at Texas Children's Hospital are spearheading a new program for the children of those in local jails making assessments of the kid's needs.

Some key findings of the needs assessment include:

- Seven percent of all Harris County children have a parent who spends time in the county jail each year.
- Half of Harris County Jail inmates have at least

one child under the age of 18

• Nearly two-thirds (61 percent) of incarcerated parents provided all or most of the financial support for their children before being jailed.

Over the past year, the Sheriff's Office conducted a needs assessment on children with incarcerated parents with Texas Children's Hospital, Baylor College of Medicine and the University of Texas Medical Branch. The assessment was funded by the Texas Medical Center Health Policy Institute.

## Houston Symphony celebrates Rodeo with Western-inspired program

HOUSTON (Feb. 11, 2019) – Just in time for the start of Houston's rodeo season, the Houston Symphony saddles up with the Western-inspired family program Wild, Wild West at 10am and 11:30am on Saturday, Feb. 16 at Jones Hall, featuring students from the Theatre Under the Stars' (TUTS) Humphreys School of Musical Theatre and from TUTS' The River Performing and Visual Arts Center.

Houston families with children and babies of all ages are invited to join Associate Conductor Robert Franz on a wild, Western adventure, filled with musical classics invoking America's Wild West, like Aaron Copland's "Hoe-down," Rossini's William Tell Overture and fun favorites from Toy Story 2, Oklahoma! and more.

Franz and the orchestra welcome children from TUTS' Humphreys School of Musical Theatre, as well as TUTS' The River Performing and Visual Arts Center, an organization that provides arts access and education to children with disabilities, to share the stage.

The Wild, Wild West



sponsored by BBVA Compass program takes place at Jones Hall for the Performing Arts, 615 Louisiana Street, in Houston's Theater District. For tickets and information, please call (713) 224-7575 or

www.houstonsymphony.org. Tickets may also be purchased at the Houston Symphony Patron Services Center in Jones Hall (Monday-Saturday from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.). All programs and artists are subject to change.

## Governor Abbott Sets Date For Special Runoff Election In HD 145

AUSTIN - Governor Greg Abbott today issued a proclamation setting Tuesday, March 5, 2019 as the date for the special runoff election to fill the Texas House District 145 seat in Harris County vacated by the Honorable

Carol Alvarado.

The top two candidates in the January 29th Special Election were Democrats Christina Morales with 1246 votes, or 35.84%, and Melissa Noriega with 1085 votes, or 31.21%. A candidate must get more

than 50% to avoid a runoff.

The early voting period for this runoff election will begin Monday, February 25, 2019.

## Budget increase,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

re-enter the criminal justice system to services and treatments that can better address the root causes of these types of cases."

Commissioners Court on Tuesday will consider the request—which is more than four times the increase recommended by the county's Budget Management Department—during public hearings to approve the county's 2019-20 budgets. The District Attorney's Office budget calls for a substantial increase of over \$25 million per year. So far, the District Attorney's Office has not provided Commissioner Ellis with requested information regarding caseload backlog, its causes and what reform-minded solutions such a budget increase would provide.

"Without clear and convincing evidence of the underlying causes of the caseload backlog, there is no way to know whether this drastic budget increase will provide the most effective and fair solutions. Since we don't know what the problems are or how to best solve them, it would be irresponsible to spend an additional \$25 million a year in tax dollars with-

out conducting a caseload study," Commissioner Ellis said. "At this point, I cannot commit to approving any budget increase above the 7 percent recommended by the county's Budget Management Department."

Commissioner Ellis believes the county must invest tax dollars in reforms that will make our communities safer and our justice system more fair, efficient and effective for all people. Also, the county must invest in smart-on-crime reforms that promote the safety and well-being of all communities and divert people away from the criminal justice system.

"Arresting, prosecuting and locking more people up aren't the way to do that. For too long, we've used our limited public resources to 'get tough on crime' when we should have been smart and fair," he said.

"In Harris County, we are at a transformative crossroads for our justice system. We are finally taking steps in the right direction to end mass incarceration, help communities recover from the devastating effects of these failed tough-on-crime policies and finally bring balance to an unequal justice system. This budget increase would be a huge step back."

## Application period opens for mayor's 2019 summer jobs program for youths

HOUSTON -- Mayor Sylvester Turner's Hire Houston Youth jobs program is open for summer 2019.

All youth ages 16 to 24 in the Houston area can apply for paid jobs and internships in many kinds of industries, non-profit organizations and businesses as well as City of Houston government.

Visit [www.hirehoustonyouth.org](http://www.hirehoustonyouth.org) to apply. Click on the "youth" tab, create an account, and choose a job to apply for. We also encourage youth to follow Hire Houston Youth on social media on Instagram and Twitter @hireHOYouth.

"Hire Houston Youth empowers young people from many walks of life to 'earn and learn' as they plan and train for full-time jobs in Houston's dynamic economy," Mayor Sylvester

Turner said.

Selected applicants will be paid at least \$8 per hour for at least 7 weeks during the summer, and some employers are seeking immediate placements.

Companies such as American Pool Houston are looking to hire 400 lifeguards at various community pools, for example. Other employers include McDonald's, United Airlines, Texas Department of Transportation, Houston Airport System, MD Anderson Cancer Center, iTz Pizza and non-profit organizations like Urban Enrichment Institute, Houston Food Bank and more.

More employers are urged to join the program. Mayor Turner has set a goal of 10,000 jobs for summer 2019, up from 7,500 last year. He started the program in 2016 with

2,500 jobs.

In lieu of providing summer jobs, employers can make a tax deductible \$2,500 donation to sponsor a subsidized youth to work at a non-profit organization, and/or become vendor at a job or career fair.

To sign up, employers should visit [hirehoustonyouth.org](http://hirehoustonyouth.org) and create an employer account.

In addition to participating in Hire Houston Youth, young people will have the chance to seek employment by participating in summer job and career fairs at City of Houston multi-service centers, Lone Star College - Victory campus, George R. Brown Convention Center, Houston Food Bank, and other locations. Voter registration and resources for youth and families will be on site.

## Home and garden improvements that will benefit local wildlife

(StatePoint) When it comes to changing the world, your own backyard is a great place to start. As you make home improvements, consider their potential to benefit local wildlife that travel in and around your property.

Here are a few important steps you can take.

**Plant Native Species**  
By planning native species exclusively in your garden and yard, you will be promoting a healthy local ecosystem while providing proper nourishment and a natural habitat for visiting wildlife, whether that be insects, birds or furry creatures. Because native plant species are meant to thrive in your local climate, they will require less maintenance, which means a beautiful yard with less stress.

**Prevent Bird Strikes**

You may not realize it, but your home poses a risk to birds. Window strikes are common among many species of migrating birds, and millions of wild birds are killed annually flying into windows.

However, a simple home improvement project can

make your home safer for birds. Birds can see certain light frequencies that humans can't, so by applying UV decals and UV liquid to your home's

windows and sliding glass doors, you can make windows visible to birds in a way that won't obstruct your own view.

"Protecting birds adds beauty to your garden, is good for the environment and most importantly, saves lives," says Spencer Schock, founder of WindowAlert, a company that offers UV decals and UV Liquid.

The UV decals and liquid from WindowAlert have been proven to effectively alter the flight path of birds to prevent window strikes. The coating will look like etched glass to the human eye, but be very visible to a bird. As UV reflectivity may fade over time, it's important to replace the decals and liquid



PHOTO SOURCE: (c) Sharon Day / stock.Adobe.com

every four months. Application techniques can be found by visiting [WindowAlert.com](http://WindowAlert.com).

**Build a Bird house**

Add beauty to your yard with a wooden bird house. Find a design you love or get creative and craft your own, using your own home's architecture for inspiration. A strategically placed bird house -- either within three feet of a window or over 30 feet away -- will help avoid bird strikes.

Be a good neighbor -- not just to the other humans. Make improvements to your home that will help protect both local and migratory wildlife.

## PCT. 2 MEETING,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ris County engineering department.

In his opening remarks, Commissioner Garcia said he called the meeting to discuss educational advancement and job opportunities for residents of Pct. 2, with the goal of improving the Quality of Life for them.

He noted that the district had a lower than average household income, and lower academic achievement level than other precincts in the county. He stated that he had run on an education platform, and he wanted to coordinated with others to achieve improvements.

Noting that his office and the school district had tight budgets, he said he was looking for partners to help with innovation in education.

Garcia mentioned that education should start early in the home, that Pre-K was important for everyone, that innovation could help in schools, and adult education was an important part of the solution.

Representatives from Texas Central rail, and Texas Workforce Dept. indicated that this project would bring in 10,000 construction jobs to the area, and 1,500 permanent jobs of all types to run the railroad. Workforce is developing a training program for all the types of jobs that will be available, and expect to provide ancillary services such as childcare and transportation. Comm. Garcia said he was in favor of the project for the benefit it would bring to his constituency in Pct. 2.

Garcia then turned to education matter. He stated that he had hired a consultant, Capital Ideas, to devel-

op new programs for children and youth education.

Garcia then asked Jeremy Phillips of his infrastructure program, and Stuart Corder of the engineering department, to discuss initiatives to alleviate future flooding, and to continue to help victims of the hurricane.

Phillips pointed out that adjacent to the school, the county was building the Lauder Road Detention Basin, a major flood control project. He said that local drainage was also being improvements, such as ditches along roads.

They also addressed improvements to traffic flow and traffic safety around schools and bus stops, citing need for sidewalks, lighting, and stacking lanes. Garcia said these would all receive his attention and action.

In a related discussion, Sheriff Gonzalez spoke about tragic traffic deaths of students, and how they attempt to stop this with increased patrols and traffic adjustments.

Gonzalez also outlined the training and coordination that his agency and others are undertaking to deal with active shooting situations in schools. He also spoke about a new

program he is implementing to help children of parents who are incarcerated. He maintains a 24 hour monitoring by CCTV of crime areas, and also monitors social media for threats and reports. Garcia suggested that they run a real-time exercise in a vacant Aldine school for training.

The HCDE representative said that they now have a new high school for substance abuse recovering students.

Garcia said that another issue for the Adline area, and his precinct in general, was the building of more new homes. This was especially critical in Aldine, since so many had been flooded by Harvey, and many have still not been able to return to their old home. Jeremy Phillips stated that East Aldine was the largest area flooded by Hurricane Harvey in all of Harris County.

Garcia said in summary, that "We are committed to the school districts, and we will support them." He is developing a Master Plan for the priorities in Pct. 2, and encourages feedback from citizens and potential partners to contribute to this effort.

OPINION PAGE

**HOME COUNTRY**  
By Slim Randles



Steve was walking down the sidewalk the other day to get from the barber shop to where he'd parked his pickup. It was a nice kind of day. Chilly, of course, but not bolt-freezing cold.

His mind was on what he had to do that day. In addition to the usual ranch chores, he had to catch up the horses and give their hooves a mid-winter trim. There are only a couple of horses shod at the moment, and the others will get iron on them before the spring gather.

"Mister?"

Steve stopped and turned to see a girl about seven or eight years old coming up behind him.

"Hi there," said Steve, smiling.

"Mister, I think you dropped this."

She held out her hand, and there was an old pocket knife. It was old and beaten up and Steve automatically slapped his left-side vest pocket. Gone.

"Thank you so much," Steve said, taking back the old, worthless pocket knife that had been handed down from his grandfather. He put it back in the vest pocket and buttoned the pocket shut.

"Can I give you anything? A dollar, maybe?"

"No thanks," she said smiling. "See you later."

Steve thought, she did this and didn't even know my name. Well, I don't know hers, either. But that was really nice of her.

Sometimes love can be just a little thing like handing a knife back to someone who dropped it.

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Brought to you by Home Country (the book) available from [www.riograndebooks.com](http://www.riograndebooks.com).



Governor gives lawmakers list of emergency items to tackle

AUSTIN — Gov. Greg Abbott named as his emergency priorities education reform, teacher pay, school safety, property tax reform, mental health services and disaster response in his Feb. 5 "State of the State" address to a joint session of the Texas Legislature.

The House and Senate may schedule committee hearings on bills related to items on the governor's priority list before the 60th day of the legislative session, which hits on March 8. Consideration of all other legislation must wait until after that date, except for House Bill 2 and Senate Bill 2 — the state budget — which is already in the works.

Abbott gave lawmakers something to cheer about when he said, "When you combine our legislative accomplishments with our record-breaking prosperity, you have elevated Texas to a rarified status and I am proud to tell you that the state of Texas has never been better."

Abbott touched on a number of other issues that need attention and funding, such as Hurricane Harvey recovery and disaster readiness, law enforcement and public safety, border security, mental health and services for military veterans.

In a news release, Abbott pointed out that half of the issues on his list "deal directly with public education, more if you count property tax reform, which is inextricably linked with school finance."

Tax panel receives input

The Senate Property Tax Committee on Feb. 6 held its first public hearing of the 86th session of the Texas Legislature to consider SB 2, a proposal to cap local property tax growth at 2.5 percent for most taxing entities and automatic ratification elections if an entity wishes to exceed the cap. There is an

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS  
By Ed Sterling

exemption in the bill for entities that take in less than \$15 million in revenue per annum.

"We're going to solve this problem," said Sen. Paul Bettencourt, R-Houston, author of the bill. "We're going to be here until we do." Bettencourt said property tax bills have pushed many homeowners out of their neighborhoods and kept many others from buying homes, and passing a state law to lower the rollback rate is a way to change what is happening locally.

Much of the testimony given by panel after panel of witnesses in the three-hour hearing was in favor of the cap. Testimony given in opposition to setting the cap at 2.5 percent mostly focused on the potential of negative outcomes the low cap might cause, such as cutbacks in needed services and a reduction in local control.

Hegar distributes revenue

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar on Feb. 6 announced he would send cities, counties, transit systems and special purpose taxing districts \$953.9 million in local sales tax allocations for February.

The amount is 4.6 percent more than the amount returned to governmental bodies in February 2018.

These allocations are based on sales made in December by businesses that report tax monthly; October, November and December sales by quarterly filers; and 2018 sales by businesses that report tax annually.

Revenue total increases

Comptroller Hegar on Feb. 4 announced state sales tax revenue totaled \$2.8 billion in January, an amount 6 percent greater than the total reported in January 2018.

Growth in sales tax collections was primarily due to continued strong spending in oil- and gas-related sectors. Collections from restaurants also grew, while those from retail trade were flat relative to a year ago, Hegar said.

Measles: new cases reported

Seven measles cases have been confirmed in Texas this year, according to information posted Feb. 7 by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Measles is a contagious respiratory illness spread by contact with an infected person through coughing and sneezing.

Measles, a rash that begins as flat, red spots on the face, spreads down the neck and trunk to the rest of the body. Other symptoms include a high fever over 101 degrees, cough, runny nose and red, watery eyes. Anyone who believes they have measles should contact their health care provider as soon as possible, the DSHS said.

The DSHS and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend children get a dose of measles vaccine at 12-15 months of age and again at 4-6 years. The measles vaccine is about 97 percent effective after two doses. Children too young to be vaccinated or who have only had one dose of vaccine are more likely to get infected.

TEXAS SENATE NEWS  
By Richard Lee

Senate finance wraps up first round of hearings

(Austin) After four weeks of hearing agency requests for funding, the Senate Finance Committee will now move on to the next phase of developing the Senate proposal for state spending in 2020 and 2021. Since January 22nd, the committee met 13 times publicly to consider the advice of the Legislative Budget Board and question agency representatives, offering praise for a job well done in many cases but in others, demanding answers on why long-term problems go unsolved. Hearings were broken down by budget article, with Articles II and III taking up both the most hearing time and the most proposed funding. Those are the sections of the budget that fund health and human services and public education, respectively, and together they make up about 85 percent of total proposed state spending. In keeping with priorities laid out by the Governor and Lt. Governor earlier in the session, the Senate budget as filed includes \$6 billion in spending in Article III to pay for across-the-board teacher pay raises and to offset revenue lost by any property tax reform measures passed this session. Next, senators on the 15-member committee will break up into workgroups focused on individual budget articles and develop a spending plan for that section of state government. Then each workgroup recommendation will be rolled into a final version to be voted on by the full committee.

Monday, the Senate Property Tax Committee amended and passed the property tax growth reform bill, Senate Bill 2, by committee chair and Houston Senator Paul Bettencourt, after adding 15 amendments. "This will be a big step in Texans getting the needed property tax relief that they deserve," he said. Bettencourt added these changes were developed following more than 11 hours of public testimony on the bill in a hearing last Wednesday. The major provisions in the bill remain: the 2.5 percent rollback rate, automatic trigger for tax ratification, or rollback, elections, as well as the myriad of transparency and appraisal review board changes. Most of the amendments were technical corrections, but there were some signifi-

cant modifications. Perhaps the biggest change is an amendment added by Conroe Senator Brandon Creighton, which would allow voters in smaller taxing jurisdictions a chance to decide if they want to implement the provisions of SB 2. As filed, the bill exempted those taxing entities that collected less than \$15 million in combined sales and property tax revenue. Another change would prohibit cities and counties from cutting funding to first responders due to fears of lost revenue caused by passage of the bill itself, and a third would change the name of the rollback rate to the "voter-approved rate." Author Senator Kelly Hancock of North Richland Hills said he believed that this would better describe what the rollback rate means, that is, the maximum rate of annual growth in a property tax rate allowed before taxpayers get the final say. That bill now heads to the full Senate.

Also out of committee this week is Flower Mound Senator Jane Nelson's proposal to better coordinate mental health services on a statewide level and improve service delivery to the state's children and adolescents. SB 10 would create the Mental Health Consortium, which would coordinate behavioral health services and research at Texas medical schools and other health-related institutions of higher learning. It would give pediatricians the opportunity to consult with mental health professionals about treatment of their young patients using telemedical technologies, allowing assessment and treatment to begin as early as possible. The bill would also provide access to telemedical consultations for at-risk public school students. Nelson said that youth mental health in Texas is approaching a crisis point, and the state needs to act. "I firmly believe that this legislation will help identify youth at risk, get them to treatment, and prevent them from becoming a danger to themselves or others." This bill was passed by the Health and Human Services Committee unanimously and should fare just as well before the full Senate, as all 31 members are signed on as co-authors.

The Senate will reconvene Tuesday, February 19, at 11 a.m.

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HOME - CARS & ENTERTAINMENT

Top Roofing Trends



(NAPS)—While replacing your roof can be expensive, it may pay to know more about increasingly popular stone-coated metal. There are five good reasons:

1. Durability: Combining the strength of steel with the design versatility of crushed stone, stone-coated metal roofing offers a better-looking way to protect your investment. Thanks to its engineering, stone-coated metal stands up to harsh conditions, including fire, wind, hail, hurricanes, seismic activity, and extreme cold and heat.

2. Curb Appeal: Stone-coated metal comes in a collection of eye-catching contours and colors. Panels can resemble Mediterranean tile, hand-split wood shake, heavyweight shingle or even old-world Italian tile.

3. Long-Term Value: Stone-coated metal offers greater longevity—three-plus times more—and lower maintenance needs than most other roofing products. "In an average lifetime, a homeowner will need to replace an asphalt

CAR CARE COUNCIL

Show Your Vehicle A Little Love

(NAPS)—Your car doesn't ask for much. It's always there for you, getting you where you need to go. A little extra care this Valentine's Day—or any day—in the form of an oil change, tune-up and basic service can be a great gift for the one who keeps you going.

"Don't let your car break your heart by neglecting to take care of it," advised Rich White, executive director of the nonprofit Car Care Council. "Being car care aware can add years of useful life to your relationship with your vehicle and keep you from being stranded because of an unexpected breakdown."

The Council recommends a little tender loving auto care.

• Schedule a tune-up annually to optimize your car's performance. A well-tuned engine delivers the best balance of power and fuel economy and produces the lowest level of emissions.

• Change the oil and filter per the owner's manual. Periodic oil and

filter changes keep your engine clean on the inside.

• Check the tire pressure monthly, including the spare. Your car's tires affect its ride, handling, traction and safety.

• Have the alignment checked annually. Potholes and other road conditions, as well as normal wear, can take their toll on your car's steering and suspension. A wheel alignment reduces tire wear, improves fuel economy and handling, and increases driving enjoyment and safety.

• Inspect the windshield wipers and lights on the car. Lights and wipers play a major role in safe driving, and they are normal wear items that need periodic replacement.

To help make vehicle ownership more enjoyable, economical and convenient so you can keep your relationship with your car on track, the Car Care Council



Show your car you care with proper maintenance and it can take good care of you.

has a free custom service schedule available on its website.

The Council is also the source of information for the "Be Car Care Aware" consumer education campaign promoting the benefits of regular vehicle care, maintenance and repair to consumers.

Free Guide For a free copy of the council's popular "Car Care Guide" or for more information, visit www.carcare.org.

CAR CORNER

Decoding Your VIN

(NAPSI)—When cars are sold, recalled, stolen or involved in accidents, you may hear references to the VIN; that is, the Vehicle Identification Number. Many data registries use the VIN to record details of the vehicle's history. Before you buy a used car, do a VIN lookup to get the vehicle history report and find records of its previous owners, accidents and repairs. You can also find out if the manufacturer has ever issued a recall of the vehicle and whether those repairs were made.

How to Find the VIN Number

On most passenger cars, you can find the VIN number on the front of the dashboard on the driver's side. The best way to see it is to look through the windshield from outside the car. You can also find the VIN number on the driver's side door pillar. Open the door and look around the area where the door latches to the car. A motorcycle's VIN is usually on the steering neck below the handlebars,



Knowing a car's VIN could help you save time, money and trouble.

What the VIN Is

It's a unique code that's assigned to every motor vehicle when it's manufactured and is a 17-character string of letters and numbers without intervening spaces or the letters Q (q), I (i) and O (o); these are omitted to avoid confusion with the numerals 0 and 1. Each section of the VIN provides a specific piece of information about the vehicle, including the year, country and factory of manufacture; the make and model; and the serial number. VINs are usually printed in a single line.

although sometimes it's on the motor or on the frame near the motor. A semi-trailer's VIN is located on the front part of the semi-trailer on the left side.

If you can't find the VIN number on the vehicle, you should be able to find it on your vehicle's title or liability insurance documents.

Learn More To decode your vehicle's VIN number or see if there are any active recalls on your car, visit the free VIN Decoder at https://drivingtests.org/vin-decoder/.

roof at least three times as often for the same cost of one stone-coated metal roof," explained Mark Gallant, Vice President of New Product Development at DECRA Metal Roofing, the original stone-coated steel roofing system, with over 60 years of research and practical experience.

4. Keep It Cool: Metal roofing can help cool your home through air space between the panels and the roof deck, reducing heat transfer. Some roofing colors can also reflect unwanted solar heat.

5. Save Money: A stone-coated metal roof could net you a discount on your homeowners insurance. Check with your in-

urance agent. Overall, a stone-coated metal roof can help your home look better, feel more comfortable while you live in it and be easier to sell when you want to.

Things may be looking up for homeowners who replace their roof with stone-coated metal.

Posting Date February 18, 2019

Amber Waves



R.F.D.



The Spats



Weekly SUDOKU by Linda Thistle. A 9x9 grid with some numbers filled in. Below the grid are instructions: 'Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 3x3 box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.' Difficulty level: Moderate. HOO BOY!

HOCUS-FOCUS by Henry Boltinoff. Two panels of a cartoon. Panel 1: A man says 'Find at least six differences in details between panels.' Panel 2: A man says 'Differences: 1. Baby's shirt has stripes. 2. Picture is different. 3. Curtain covers window. 4. Boy's bowl is larger. 5. Wall outlet is missing. 6. Boy's glass is missing.'"/>

King Crossword

ACROSS 1 Beavers' structure, 4 Second letter, 8 Wild and crazy, 12 Indivisible, 13 Mideast airline, 14 Sheltered, 15 Gin, e.g., 17 Grad rags?, 18 First murderer, 19 Iron, 20 Suitor, 22 Paddock parent, 24 Long-running Broadway musical, 25 Pheasant or grouse, 29 Fuss, 30 Dental filling, 31 Ultramodern (Pref.), 32 Backyard attraction, 34 Somewhere out there, 35 Feedbag fodder, 36 Surprise big-time, 37 Engine, 40 Unwanted email, 41 On in years, 42 Morning garb, 46 Entreaty, 47 "Super-food", 48 Grecian vessel, 49 Transmit, 50 Group of cattle, 51 Despondent, 8 Capital of Croatia, 9 Shaving cream additive, 10 Information, 11 Longings, 16 Speaker's spot, 19 Quarry, 20 Wound cover, 21 Gully, 22 Soda shop orders, 23 Asian nurse, 25 Summertime pest, 26 Notorious, 27 Caboose's place, 28 Collegian quarters, 30 Construction piece, 33 Gizmo, 34 Winged, 36 Garden intruder, 37 3-Down's creations, 38 Leering look, 39 Adolescent, 40 Luminary, 42 "Humbug!", 43 Expert, 44 Lingerie item, 45 Conclusion.

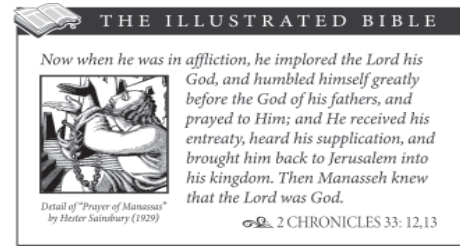
A 10x10 grid of numbers for a Trivia test.

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

- 1. MEDICAL: What is the condition that carries the official name "diaphoresis"?
2. MOVIES: Who played the president in the film "The American President" (1995)?
3. HISTORY: What was the nickname of the Haitian president Francois Duvalier, who died in 1971?
4. U.S. PRESIDENTS: How many future presidents of the United States signed the Declaration of Independence?
5. TELEVISION: Who was the nemesis of Detective Steve McGarrett in the original "Hawaii 5-0" TV drama?
6. SCIENCE: What is the name of the ocean current that warms the eastern seaboard of North America?
7. LITERATURE: What was the name of the bank in the "Harry Potter" book series?
8. ANATOMY: Where is the pinna in the human body?
9. U.S. STATES: Which state is nicknamed the "Cornhusker State"?
10. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the common commercial name of the drug called diazepam?

Trivia Test Answers: 1. Sweating; 2. Michael Douglas; 3. Papa Doc; 4. Two; Thomas Jefferson and John Adams; 5. Wo Fat; 6. The Gulf Stream; 7. Gringoits Wizarding Bank; 8. The outer ear, which is made of cartilage; 9. Nebraska; 10. Valium

LIFESTYLE



Detail of "Prayer of Manasseh" by Heister Sanituary (1929)

2 CHRONICLES 33: 12,13

BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey—

1. Is the book of Pharisee in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. In Matthew 21, to what type of tree did Jesus say, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever"? Cedar, Oak, Apple, Fig
3. From 2 Corinthians 6, what did Paul warn Christians about being "yoked" with? Debt, Unbelievers, Shame, Abundance
4. In biblical times, what was a tambourine or small hand drum called? Timbrel, Cornet, Tartu, Cymbal
5. How many days and nights was Jonah in the belly of the great fish? 2, 3, 5, 8
6. Who was the father of Michal? David, Titus, Saul, Stephen

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Fig; 3) Unbelievers; 4) Timbrel; 5) 3; 6) Saul

LSC-North Harris Drama Department presents a fanciful tale

HOUSTON (February 14, 2019) – Enter the magical world of a Victorian traveling show as the Lone Star College-North Harris Drama Department presents "Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness" beginning Tuesday, Feb. 19.

Directed by Professor John Cash Carpenter, the upcoming production centers on Edward Gant, a prodigy, soldier, traveler, poet and consummate showman who presented his famed traveling show for the very last time in 1881. "Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness" is a reconstruction of

this historic and extraordinary evening of mystery and magic, spectacle and strangeness. Carpenter explains, "It is a theatrical exploration of beauty, morality and wonder."

"I am very excited to showcase some very talented student actors: Jose Moreno, Tatyana Ramirez, Nicholas Vitela, and Braylon Alexander," said Carpenter. "The immersive experience into the mad and magical world of Edward Gant will surely leave you laughing, crying and pondering the wonders of life."

The theatre curtain goes up Tuesday, Feb 19 at 7:30

p.m. The show runs through Saturday, Feb. 23, and each performance is open to the public. Guests will also be treated to a preshow featuring a Victorian Midway Carnival each night from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

General admission tickets are \$15 each and include five complimentary carnival tickets. VIP tickets are \$25 each and include 10 carnival tickets, a private table during the show and complimentary refreshments served at your table.

Tickets are available at [www.LoneStar.edu/drama-dept-nharris.htm](http://www.LoneStar.edu/drama-dept-nharris.htm).

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Premier Equine Auctions Spring Fling Horse Sale April 5th & 6th, Lufkin, Texas. Consignment deadline is March 1st. [PremierEquineAuctions.com](http://PremierEquineAuctions.com), Mike Pedersen & Steve Friskup owners. Phone 337-494-1333.

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**EVENTS**  
Huntsville, TX – Run With Sam 5K, March 2, Registration begins at 7 a.m., race at 8 a.m. The Sam Houston Birthday & Texas Independence Day 5K Fun Run at Sam Houston State University, \$20, first 100 registrants get T-shirts. Plaques and medals awarded in 13 age divisions. Register at [RunWithSam.org](http://RunWithSam.org), email [runwithsam1793@gmail.com](mailto:runwithsam1793@gmail.com).

Beaumont, TX - Home & Garden Show, March 1-3, Ford Park, Beaumont. Golden Triangle Home & Garden Show – Everything for the Home, a multitude of home improvement professionals in one location, [GoldenTriangleHomeAndGardenShow.com](http://GoldenTriangleHomeAndGardenShow.com).

Beaumont, TX - Boat, Sport & RV Show, March 1-3, Ford Park, Beaumont. Southeast Texas Boat, Sport & RV Show is the place to buy your new boat or RV. See over 35 boat brands and 100 RV brands in one location. [SouthEastTexasBoatRVShow.com](http://SouthEastTexasBoatRVShow.com).

San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo, Feb. 7-24. For entertainment lineup and tickets, go to [sarodeo.com](http://sarodeo.com). 210-225-5851.

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# LIFESTYLE

## Aldine ISD middle and high school students earn 32 top honors in 2019 Regional Scholastic Art Awards

Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) recently announced the teens for 2018 Regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. Recipients join the ranks with iconic writers and artists Stephen King, Dan Fogelberg, Sylvia Plath, Robert Redford, Truman Capote, Andy Warhol, Joyce Carol Oates, Marc Brown and Jaida Jones, who all earned awards as Scholastic Art & Writing Awards as teens.

HCDE annually sponsors the regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. A record 7,742 Harris County entries were judged in the prestigious competition. Twenty-two school districts, 26 private schools and home schools are represented as students earn Gold Key, Silver Key and honorable mention awards.



Naomi Frometa Sánchez received a Gold Key for her photograph seen here titled "Roots."

### Gold Keys Represent the Top 5 Percent of Entries

The highest-rated pieces move on to national judging to be considered for Gold and Silver Medals, which are announced in March and awarded in June at a

ceremony at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Students submitted their work through more than 759 teachers who support and participate in HCDE's regional competition. Several hundred volunteer art and writing professionals judged the submissions.

In the art categories, students earned 361 Gold Keys, 514 Silver Keys, and 835 honorable mention awards. In the writing events, students earned 359 Gold Keys, 579 Silver Keys, and 615 honorable mentions.

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# HOME IMPROVEMENTS



## CLEVER KITCHEN UPGRADES

Fresh colors and textures for a functional kitchen style

**F**or avid cooks, seasoned hosts and busy families, the kitchen is likely the center of daily life and a place where both form and function are of the utmost importance. This high-traffic space generally influences the design of the rest of the house, especially if the home has more of an open-concept layout. The colors and materials used in the kitchen normally set the tone for the rest of the home. When it comes to considerations like finish and materials, kitchen cabinetry trends are shifting toward colored cabinetry and a mixture of exposed textures and materials.



### Colorful allure

White kitchen cabinets have dominated the market for years; white is constant, safe and classic. While white kitchens are likely to remain a popular option for homeowners, buying trends are showing a shift in painted cabinetry design from classic white to eye-catching colors. Natural colors, burnt orange, shades of gray, blue hues and green tones are likely to be the leaders in painted cabinetry colors in 2019, and all are offered through an option like Wellborn's ColorInspire program. For those with a visionary and creative approach to design, the blue tones for cabinetry reach atmospheric wisps of colors and capture the unique space between technology and spirituality. The unbridled adventurer may use burnt orange to soak in the blue of endless horizon and the subtle earthy colors of the high plains and desert. For the naturalist, green earthy tones can bring the wonder of the world into your kitchen. For the cozy home-body, dark warm tones of gray on cabinetry add a rich and modern scope that spans space and time.

### Trends in texture

From classic to modern and from farmhouse to high-tech modernistic styling, designers work to make surfaces make a statement. With cabinetry, there's no shortage of options: matte and glossy, dark and light, with and without handles. Technology has played a major role in the improved quality of laminates in the kitchen; many of today's laminate options have a more realistic appearance and texture than their ancestors. For a more authentic wood look, an option like Wellborn Cabinet's Decorative Laminate Veneer Door Collection is filled with color choices in a range of materials spanning embossed and textured melamine, acrylic, laminates, metal and more. Another option is cabinetry featuring timber with exposed grain for a balance between embracing nature and exuding sophistication. This trend celebrates imperfections and allows you to bring nature into your home. Defined or rustic woods are made from materials such as walnut, oak and cherry. For nature enthusiasts or those seeking the rustic farmhouse style, you can find beautiful organic finishes in Wellborn's Aspire Full Access Frameless line. The standout feature is heavy graining. Hand sanding, along with hand-rubbed finishes, provide a quality product with varied textures that minimizes the need for a lot of color.

Explore more trendy looks for your new kitchen at Wellborn.com.

## Focus on Function



A beautiful kitchen may please the eye, but when it comes down to it, a kitchen's function is its greatest value. Integrate these ideas for a kitchen that offers maximum function for one of your home's most-used spaces.

**Declutter the countertops.** Consider incorporating pull-out and roll-out trays into your cabinetry to maximize your storage space, as well as dressing your cabinets with appropriate inserts and organizational kits. Eliminate wasted space by adding corner cabinets to utilize all your available space. In addition, an option like Wellborn Cabinet's Aspire Full Access Frameless cabinetry makes it simple to create diverse design styles with better storage options than traditional cabinet framing allows. Without a face frame on the front of the cabinet box, this style provides more room for storage and easier accessibility. You can create a modernistic kitchen, a rustic farmhouse kitchen or a nature-styled kitchen.

**Determine the island's function.** The island is often the visual centerpiece of the kitchen, but determining its function can maximize its benefit. Fully functional cabinetry around the island can provide added storage space. For example, custom cabinetry appliance panels let you not only conceal bulky appliances, they also give your wall cabinets more space and functionality.

**Make recycling easy.** Place the recycle and garbage bins in a drawer near the sink to allow for easier accessibility and keep them out of sight.

## 4 Steps for DIY Paint Project Success

(Family Features) Painting is one of the easiest and most impactful DIY projects for homeowners to quickly update their homes. Whether it's a new look in a master bathroom, adding a pop of color to the guest room, finishing off a basement remodel or anything in-between, a fresh coat of paint provides a fresh spin that's all your own. To make your painting project go smoothly, consider following these important steps. Take this task list from the experts at Purdy Professional Painting Tools into account before diving in to your DIY painting project.

**Find inspiration.** Having a final design in mind before starting your project can help you plan. From the obvious wall color to more intricate details like painting trim, doors, the ceiling and more, starting your project with a plan can help you avoid multiple trips to the store.

result with less effort, too. One option is Purdy Brushes, which are specially designed and hand-crafted to ensure you get professional-quality results every time. Find a tool selector to help you find the best brushes, roller covers and painting accessories for your project at purdy.com.

**Prepare the area.** Proper planning for your project depends on which room in the house you're painting. The main rules of thumb include removing everything from your walls – including curtains, decor and switch plates – using drop cloths to cover floors; removing or lowering light fixtures from the ceiling; and emptying the room of tables, lamps, furniture and other movable objects. If this isn't possible, push all the pieces to the center of the room and cover with drop cloths.

Don't forget to prepare the surface you are going to paint. Patch and sand



Remember, the details are important: incorporating the correct types and sheens of paint, using complementary colors, buying the proper amount of paint and more.

**Collect the right tools.** Part of the planning process includes ensuring you have the proper tools for the project. A paint brush, roller cover, roller frame, paint tray and extension pole are the basic essentials for your project's success. From step ladders and putty knives to wood filler and drop cloths, it's crucial to have everything you need.

However, keep in mind that not all tools are created equal. For example, when you use a high-quality paint brush, you're more likely to paint straight lines when cutting in to corners and walls. You may also notice a much smoother finish, one without unsightly brush strokes, which means a more visually appealing

any holes or imperfections. Then wipe down surfaces you plan to paint with warm water, which helps remove dirt and dust that can sometimes prevent paint from adhering. If possible, open windows for better ventilation once you're ready to start.

**Clean up.** When the painting process is finished and you're appreciating the hard work, don't forget the job isn't done until you've properly cleaned up. Paint brushes and roller covers should be washed promptly after use to ensure they can be used again. Use warm water and mild detergent to clean then let air dry. If you end up with leftover paint, it can be helpful to save some for future touch-ups. One helpful tip is to write on the can what room or walls you painted, the date and color name. This information can be beneficial should you need to purchase more paint at a later date.

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