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See Page 8

NORTHEAST NEWS

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VOL. 43, NO. 46 TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2019 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com



NEWS NOTES

Free Infant care classes

-Nov. 27: Infant CPR & water safety.
-Dec. 4: Emergencies & medications
-Dec. 11: What to expect at home.
Registration is required.
Text: 832-350-8406 or email: Acorbett@hcec.com.
All classes begin at 6 p.m. at Harris County Emergency Corps, 2800 Aldine Bender Rd.

Kujawa Seniors Gala

Nadine Kujawa Senior Citizen Gala. Live entertainment, lunch will be provided. December 9, 2019 at M.O. Campbell Educational Center, 1865 Aldine Bender Rd, Houston, Tx 77032. All seniors ages 65 and over welcome, 10 am - 1 pm.

Suspect charged in fatal crash on Aldine Westfield

Houston police have arrested a suspect charged in a fatal crash that occurred at 9800 Aldine Westfield about 6:30 pm. on Monday, November 18. Sergio Montenegro, 25 is charged with Intoxication Manslaughter and Failure to Stop and Render Aid.
According to Houston Police Officials, Montenegro was driving a white Chevrolet Suburban southbound on Aldine Westfield when he failed to maintain a single lane. See ACCIDENT, page 2

Aldine ISD bus struck by car

Four students riding in an AISD school bus were taken to the hospital with minor injuries after a car spun out of control and collided with the bus on W. Mt. Houston at Veterans Memorial on Friday morning. The students were going to the Aldine Education Center.
Police said the crash occurred after a car exited onto W. Mt. Houston, was struck by a pickup, and then hit another car and spun into the bus.

County Judge Hidalgo outlines key accomplishments at first State of the County

Announces New Focus on Early Childhood Development

Harris County, Texas - November 15, 2019 - Today, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo joined business leaders, residents, and community leaders from across the region to deliver the first State of the County address of her term. During her remarks to about 900 attendees, Judge Hidalgo outlined key areas of progress in fostering a safer, healthier, and more equitable Harris County and announced a new initiative that will focus on improving early childhood development.
"The state of our county is strong," said Judge Hidalgo. "But being strong is about much more than having a low unemployment rate or a strong bond rating. It's about making sure that all of our residents enjoy equal access to the great op-



Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo

portunities available to them in Harris County. Over the past year we've made county government more transparent, made strides to reform our criminal justice system, and have begun to make up for lost time when it comes to investing in our flood control infrastructure. But there is much more to do, and we look forward to another year

of ambitious, meaningful initiatives, including a focus on what we can do to improve early childhood development and education."

Drawing from the "Talking Transition" initiative, Judge Hidalgo will kick off a community engagement series next year as the first step towards a larger goal of a meaningful early childhood development initiative in Harris County. Programs that focus on early childhood development have one of the strongest returns on investment for any type of public program. Children who benefit from initiatives like subsidized childcare and early education tend to have higher high school graduation rates, fewer arrests, lower rates of substance use, and higher rates of employment as adults.

See State of the County, Page 3

Klineberg speaks on future plans for North Houston District



Dr. Stephen Klineberg

An exciting presentation was led by Rice University-Kinder Institute's Dr. Stephen Klineberg at the North Houston's Business Community Breakfast at the Hyatt Regency Intercontinental Airport Hotel on Oct. 31.

More than 100 guests gathered to hear the ac-

claimed expert on Houston's changing demographics and to learn about the latest improvements for Greenspoint.

See North Houston, Page 8

Local Legislator receives Hunger Leadership Award

Texas State Representative Armando Walle of Houston is one of four state lawmakers who are being honored by Feeding Texas, the state association of food banks, with a 2019 Hunger Leadership Award for their work to end hunger in the 86th Texas Legislative Session.

A ceremony for Rep. Walle was held last Friday, November 15 at the Houston Food Bank.

The four lawmakers honored at the ceremonies were:

- Representative Armando Walle - Houston Food Bank (Houston)
- Senator Brandon Creighton - Montgomery County Food Bank (Conroe)
- Representative Terry Meza - North Texas Food Bank (Plano)
- Senator Charles Perry - South Plains Food Bank (Lubbock)



Rep. Armando Walle, middle, receiving Hunger Leadership award.

- South Plains Food Bank (Lubbock)

See Hunger Leadership Award, Page 8

Aldine ISD earns state's highest fiscal accountability rating for 16th straight year

For the 16th consecutive year, Aldine ISD received a rating of "Superior" under Texas' School FIRST (Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas) accountability rating system. The "Superior" rating is the state's highest, demonstrating the quality of Aldine ISD's financial management and reporting system.

The primary goal of the School FIRST system is to ensure that Texas public schools are held accountable for the quality of their financial management practices. The School FIRST system is designed to encourage Texas public

schools to better manage their financial resources to provide the maximum allocation possible for direct instructional purposes.

The School FIRST system has 15 indicators that are evaluated. The first five indicators are critical indicators and must be met to avoid failure. The other 10 indicators evaluate financial solvency and financial competency.

According to Dr. Tamika Alford-Stephens, Aldine ISD Chief Financial Officer, Aldine met the require-

See Aldine's Accountability, Page 8

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SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWS

Hambrick Middle School Students Visit the University of Houston



Hambrick Middle School students outside University of Houston.

Two Hambrick Middle School organizations were treated to a tour of the University of Houston on Friday, November 15. The students from Business Professionals of America (BPA) and Technology Student Association (TSA) were able to explore the Bauer School of Business, the Engineering school, the Technology School as well as the school of Architecture. In each of the different schools, the students were able to speak with current UH students who gave insightful information about dif-

ferent majors and career opportunities. The students were able to see a real university classroom, which held about 40 students, and a large lecture hall with a capacity of 300 students. A professor from the Finance Department spoke to them about the importance of getting to know your professors by attending class, sitting close to the front and visiting their offices during open office hours for assistance. After lunch in the Student Center, a member of the UH Honors College talked to the students

about the benefits of being a part of the Honor College and answered general questions about the university.

Of course what field trip is complete without a stop at the "gift shop?" The students visited the campus bookstore where they were shocked by the prices of college textbooks, even the used ones! Everyone enjoyed the trip and all the information about college and making decisions to impact their future. There are definitely some future Cougars in the making.

Aldine ISD Schools Honor Veterans With Celebrations



The JROTC cadets from Nimitz High School show off their skills to captivated students at Parker Elementary School. The school celebrated Veterans Day on Monday, Nov. 11.

Parker Elementary School held its Veterans Day celebration on Monday, November 11. Choral students kicked things off with a loud "oorah!" before singing several patriotic songs.

Principal Candace Hardin shared with Parker Elementary students a little history of why we celebrate Veterans Day and how we should show our gratitude to all who have served in the military. After a few more songs, the JROTC cadets from Nimitz High School showed off their skills, which captivated the young audience.

Parker Elementary School was just one of

many schools across the district celebrating Veterans Day. Schools decorated their hallways and walls with displays honoring veterans, and many students and staff wore red, white, and blue. Some schools organized breakfast and lunch events with family, staff, and community members who served in the military.

Primary and elementary students took part in Operation Gratitude, which was a letter-writing campaign to collect letters and artwork from students for our veterans.

Operation Gratitude sends more than 300,000

care packages each year to deployed troops, veterans, recruit graduates, first responders, including wounded heroes and their caregivers. According to Gwendolyn Lockett, program director of elementary social studies, of all the items included in these care packages, the most cherished are the personal letters of appreciation.

The district's goal with Operation Gratitude is to include as many letters and colorful drawings as possible in every care package. Lockett stated everyone involved in the project wants to ensure our heroes know we care.

Thanks for joining Aldine ISD's Choice Festival



Hundreds of families dropped by the festival on Nov. 9 to learn about the district's school choice options such as magnet schools, International Baccalaureate® program (PreK-12), and much more.

The event gave families time to talk with staff and students from the different magnet schools, International Baccalaureate® World Schools, and representatives from choice high school programs.

In addition to learning about the different school choice options, performing and visual arts students entertained the crowds, while the young engineers showcased robotics.

It's Not Too Late to Learn More & Apply

The district offers a wide variety of school

choice options — ranging from early childhood to the 12th grade — that allow parents to elect out of an assigned boundary school zone. Most of the campuses specialize in a specific area or areas of interest. There are even programs for students as young as three years of age.

School Choice Options by Theme

- Career and Technology Education
- Early College
- Fine Arts

- International Baccalaureate®
- Montessori
- Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts & Mathematics (STEAM)
- Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM)
- Additional AISD School Choice Options
- Charter School Partnership With YES Prep
- EMERGE (Information at each high school.)
- Virtual Learning Online
- Early Childhood

AISD reintroduces chocolate milk in schools, sees positive results

Milk has been an integral part of school meals since their beginning. Low-fat flavored milk helps students make a nutritious beverage choice. Data show that students choose flavored milk 70 percent of the time. One recent USDA study showed that when schools removed or limited flavored milk options, milk consumption dropped a dramatic 35 percent, on average.

According to Dani Sheffield, executive director of child nutrition services, Aldine ISD decided to remove fat-free chocolate milk and replace it with 1 percent chocolate milk. The success of the change got the attention of the Dairy Max to chose Aldine ISD for a video feature.

"Our decision was student-focused," Sheffield said. "We looked to provide students with the nutrients they need through an option they enjoy. The new selection began in the 2018-19 school year. We saw a 9 percent increase in the purchase of 1 percent chocolate milk over fat-free chocolate milk in comparison to the 2017-18 school year."

The Importance of Milk
The findings suggest that the resulting drop in



Executive Director Dani Sheffield (center) poses with Child Nutrition Services staff members.

milk consumption equates to a substantial loss in nutrients that can't be replaced by another beverage. It requires three to four food items to match milk's nutrient contribution and adds back more calories and fat than were being reduced.

Milk is a nutrient powerhouse delivering nine essential nutrients, including some that are lacking in children's diets today. Lowfat milk is an excellent source of calcium, vitamin D, riboflavin and phosphorus, and a good source of protein, potassium, vitamin A, vitamin B-12, and niacin. With flavored milk, you get all that nutrition plus the taste-appeal kids love.

The Experts' Opinion
The nation's leading health and nutrition organizations, including the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, recognize the valuable role that milk, including flavored milk, can play in meeting daily nutrient needs. They also recognize the small amount of added sugars in flavored milk is an acceptable trade-off for the nutrients provided.

Flavored milk contributes just 3 percent of added sugars to kids' diets. Sodas and fruit drinks, on the other hand, account for close to half of the added sugar, delivering much less, if any, nutrition in the process. Studies also show that children who drink flavored milk meet more of their nutrient needs. They also do not consume more added sugars or fat than non-milk drinkers.

Surprisingly, if kids skip a serving of milk at school, they're not likely to replace it at home. A recent survey conducted among 1,505 moms of kids between the

ages of 1-18 found that only 29 percent reported serving milk to their children at dinner.

Skim Milk is Tops for Hydration Too

A study from Scotland's St. Andrews University compared the hydration responses of several different drinks. The researchers found that while water — both still and sparkling — does a pretty good job of quickly hydrating the body, beverages with a little bit of sugar, fat or protein do an even better job of keeping us hydrated for longer. Skim milk came out on top of most hydrating beverages. It was followed by oral rehydration solutions (like Pedialyte or Liquid I.V.) and full-fat milk. Chocolate milk also outperforms sports drinks in strength tests with teen athletes.

Plant-based Options
For people who are lactose intolerant or sensitive to dairy products, switching to alternatives can help avoid symptoms and keep their digestive system healthy. Some people are allergic to cow's milk and can have a potentially dangerous allergic reaction to it. Anyone allergic to milk should avoid dairy products altogether.

Sheffield stated that if a student has a doctor's note regarding an allergy or intolerance to milk, child nutrition staff do offer an alternate beverage such as soy, rice, etc. These plant-based beverages contain many additives compared to the three ingredients in milk. Dairy alternatives may have added ingredients such as added sugars, added starch, thickeners such as carrageenan, added flavoring, preservatives, lack of nutrients and minerals, and lack of protein.

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accident,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

drove his passenger side tires along the dirt and grassy area between the street and the sidewalk, and struck the victim (a bicyclist) who was also traveling southbound. Montenegro then fled the scene. The victim was transported to Memorial Hermann Hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Montenegro and his vehicle were located at a nearby business at 9600 Irvington due to a witness that called in the vehicle's location. Officers responded to the scene and arrested Montenegro. The investigation is continuing.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Thank you BAA Volunteers!

The last event of Bonding Against Adversity (BAA) in Aldine was a success! All registered volunteers showed up and worked so hard as always. There were actually more volunteers than applicants, which is a testament to the number of people who help throughout the year whenever they can. With that being said, BAA hope to see all at its last workshop for the year of 2019!

Next year, 2010, BAA will be celebrating its 10 year anniversary at some



Volunteers at last BAA citizenship workshop in Aldine



Mariana Sanchez, Director of BAA, left, with volunteers and community leaders.



Volunteers happy to help BAA during citizenship workshop.

of the various events they have planned for next year.

Your next opportunity to serve will be Saturday, December 14, 2019 at St. Bartholomew the Apostle Catholic Church (5356 11th Street Katy, TX 77493) from 8:00AM -

1:00PM. To volunteer, please call 713-471-5832 for details.

"As the volunteer coordinator, I appreciate all of your suggestions and I want you to know that I hear you. We are always working to improve our ef-

forts in every area, but I am specifically working to improve the volunteer experience. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. Bonding appreciates you and could not do this without you!" concluded Brittney Spears.

Rep. Walle attends Plumbers Local Union with other local leaders



State Rep. Armando L. Walle, center, attended the Plumbers Local Union 68 with Rep. Ana Hernandez, left, and Rep. Senfronia Thompson, right last November 12 in Houston. "My greatest honor is fighting on behalf of working families and for keeping the plumbers profession exactly that, a profession," said Rep. Walle. About 200 members were present.

Aldine ISD schools celebrated for helping families complete meal applications



Several Aldine ISD campus principals were recognized for helping families complete their free/reduced meal applications, at the November Instructional Leadership Team meeting. Each campus was recognized by the Finance Department for their efforts to ensure that all families with economic challenges successfully completed their meal applications. Tamika Alford-Stephens, Aldine ISD Chief Financial Officer, presented the oversized checkmarks to each principal during the meeting. Each campus principal was entered into a drawing to win \$5,000 for their campus principal fund, which provides funding to be used at the campus. Jones Middle School received the \$5,000 check.

The campus principals are photographed below with Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney and their campus School Assistant Superintendent.

The Houston Symphony serves up a cornucopia of Holiday Season offerings at Jones Hall



HOUSTON (Nov. 7, 2019) – Every year, the Houston Symphony offers numerous festive programs during the holiday season. An annual attraction, the Symphony's holiday concerts range from traditional and classical music, popular festive tunes, and family-friendly Christmas music. The Houston Symphony's holiday programming is supported by a generous Cultural Districts Project grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts.

A MUSICAL FEAST: ALL-STRAUSS THANKSGIVING

Nov. 29–Dec. 1, 2019

Houston Symphony Music Director Andrés Orozco-Estrada opens the holiday season at Jones Hall with an all-Strauss program this Thanksgiving weekend. A classical concert to enjoy with the whole family and out-of-town guest, the program features some of Strauss's greatest masterpieces: Death and Transfiguration, Don Juan, and Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks. Also joining the orchestra and Orozco-Estrada in the festivities is Swedish soprano Miah Persson singing Strauss' Four Last Songs. This debut performance with the Houston Symphony has her luxuriating in the sumptuous soprano vocal lines Strauss is known for. "It is so well written for the voice that you can sing his music for hours without getting tired," says Persson. "Sometimes I even get dizzy when I sing his long, high phrases." A Musical Feast: All-Strauss Thanks-

giving is sponsored by Rand Group Great Performers and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

VERY MERRY POPS

Dec. 13–15 & 17, 2019

Former Houston Symphony Principal POPS Conductor Michael Krajewski returns to Jones Hall to lead the orchestra and Houston Symphony Chorus in this cherished musical holiday tradition: an evening full of holiday tunes like "Silent Night" and "Joy to the World." The program includes the Symphony's commissioned holiday piece Glad Tidings, a musical and narrative telling of the Christmas story packed with classic carols and an audience sing-along. Very Merry Pops is sponsored by the Texas Commission on the Arts.

'Twas the Night Before CHRISTMAS

Dec. 14, 2019

Families and children of all ages are invited to join Associate Conductor Robert Franz in a program that includes holiday tunes such as "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and "Sleigh Ride." The seasonal performance includes a visit from Santa Claus and concludes with a festive sing-along. Part of the BBVA Family Series, the Houston Symphony along with students from the Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts (HSPVA) Handbell Choir celebrate the season with beloved holiday classics. Additional support for "Twas the Night Before Christmas comes from the Texas Commission on the Arts.

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Dec. 20–22, 2019

A beloved Houston holiday tradition, performances of Handel's timeless oratorio about the Nativity, Passion, and Resurrection of Jesus bring together the orchestra, Houston Symphony, and star guest soloists this holiday season. Hailed as "one of the finest baroque conductors" (London "Independent"), Nicholas McGegan leads vocalists Sherezade Panthaki (soprano), Diana Moore (mezzo-soprano), Benjamin Butterfield (tenor), and Hadleigh Adams (bass). Handel's "Messiah" is sponsored by the Texas Commission on the Arts.

SINATRA AND BEYOND

Jan. 3–5, 2020

Closing out the holiday season, Houston Symphony Principal POPS Conductor Steven Reineke welcomes the New Year with an all-Frank Sinatra program with vocalist and jazz pianist Tony DeSare. Reineke, DeSare, and the Houston Symphony ring in 2020 with Sinatra's greatest hits, including "Come Fly with Me" and "New York, New York." "Really, any great pop vocalist who has held a mic and fronted a band in the last 80 years owes a debt to Frank Sinatra," says DeSare. "The real greatness in his art was the perfection of a phrase, breath control, and an over-arching musical taste that rarely ever failed him. He knew what material worked for him and it has stood the test of time."

State of the County,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

During her remarks, Judge Hidalgo also provided updates on key priorities since her swearing in. Some key areas of progress include:

- Sped the delivery of flood bond projects by allocating local funds to jumpstart construction instead of waiting for federal match dollars.

- Passed the most stringent flood detention requirements possible so that new development doesn't flood people downstream.

- Fixing our broken cash-bail system. By taking action to settle an expensive, three-year old lawsuit under which federal courts had deemed the County's bail system unconstitutional, the County eliminated practices that often made wealth the sole basis for how someone accused of a misdemeanor crime was treated.

- Reformed environmental protection, monitoring, and enforcement. The County has allocated over \$11 million to build a state-of-the-art air monitoring network, increased the size of the pollution control department by over 50%, and added resources for HazMat First Responders.

- Passed common-sense

gun safety measures. The County has taken action to expand programs designed to keep weapons away from domestic violence abusers, expedite checks to keep gun dealers from unknowingly selling to people convicted of crimes, and encourage the use of gun locks to keep guns from the hands of children.

- Made voting easier by allowing residents to vote anywhere on election day. The County has also expanded early voting hours and locations, including increased access for students with early voting polls opened at the University of Houston and Texas Southern University.

- Directed the county to create a 3-1-1 system to make county information easier to receive.

- Launched Harris Thrives, an initiative to execute a faster, fairer, and smarter flood control policy. As part of this commitment, the County Judge's office is sharing real-time information on construction progress for flood bond projects, including how and where dollars are being spent

- Stood up against the Trump administration's ef-

fort to instill fear in our immigrant communities. Judge Hidalgo has worked to fight against family separation policies, planned immigration raids in the County, and the inclusion of a citizenship question on the 2020 Census. Additionally, the County filed a successful amicus brief against the Federal Government's proposed "public charge rule" designed to threaten safety net services for immigrants and which would also overburden our county safety net systems.

For a more comprehensive list of county initiatives and accomplishments, and a full copy of Judge Hidalgo's speech as prepared is available on her county website at CountyJudgeHidalgo.com





Social Security Matters

by AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor Russell Gloor
Association of Mature American Citizens

Ask Rusty – Does Paying Social Security Payroll Tax Increase my Benefit?

Dear Rusty: After losing my job of 31 years in 2013 at 63 years of age, I decided to start drawing my Social Security benefits. In 2015 I started a part time job, which I still have. In January 2020 I will fully retire. I have been paying Social Security taxes for the last 4 years without receiving any increase in my Social Security benefit amount. Can I therefore claim an increase in benefits, or even a refund of those taxes? If not, is there anything that I can do? Signed: Overtaxed Senior

Dear Overtaxed Senior: I'm afraid it doesn't work that way, nor is there anything you can do to get either an increase in your benefit amount from (or a refund of) those FICA payroll tax contributions you made to Social Security while you were working and also collecting Social Security benefits. Everyone who works and earns - even those who are collecting Social Security benefits - must pay the Social Security FICA payroll tax. But paying that payroll tax doesn't entitle you to a benefit increase. The FICA tax you pay doesn't get credited to a personal account for you; rather it goes into the Social Security general fund to help pay benefits to all current beneficiaries.

Social Security's basic premise since inception in 1935 is that current workers pay for current beneficiaries. Today, there are about 175 million workers contributing to pay benefits to over 63 million beneficiaries. And actually, the ratio of workers to beneficiaries has been declining for years, which is largely responsible for Social Security's current financial issues. For example, in 1950 there were about 16.5 workers for each Social Security beneficiary; today there are about 2.4 workers per beneficiary.

As I said, everyone who works and earns must pay the Social Security FICA

tax, but the FICA taxes you pay do not increase your benefit and there is no refund of FICA taxes for those already collecting Social Security benefits. Once you claimed your Social Security benefit, the amount was set and will only change as a result of COLA (cost of living adjustment) increases, or if any of your current/recent earnings are more than any of the inflation-adjusted earnings in the 35 year lifetime work record used to originally compute your benefit. Social Security uses the highest earning 35 years in your lifetime work history (adjusted for inflation) to compute your benefit, and if you don't have earnings in at least 35 years they put in zeros to make a full 35 years. In that case, any current earnings you have would replace any zero earning years in your 35-year history which would slightly increase your benefit. But except for those circumstances, your benefit won't change simply because you are paying Social Security FICA payroll taxes while you are working.

Think of it this way: The Social Security benefits you are now receiving are being paid for by those Americans currently working, and that will continue even after you retire completely in January. And, you'll continue to get those Social Security benefits for the rest of your life, from the payroll taxes paid by those still working.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity.



★ THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

“Season’s Edge”

“I like the edge season!” my husband, Peter, said, as we watched the moon rise over the mountains and felt a chill breeze rise with it. As far as I know, Peter invented this expression. He might have meant the “season’s end,” but I like the idea of the “season’s edge” better.

Peter and I are staying in the south of Spain and, even here, the season is changing. Restaurants that have been open all summer and fall are finally giving their employees a few days off. Menus are changing, hours are shortening, outdoor tables are now used only during the day and only on days that are sunny. Clouds suddenly appear over the mountains and the diners scatter, looking for somewhere cozy indoors.

And I agree with Peter: I like it.

Peter and I took a bus inland to Granada this week and it was cooler than on the coast. I brought along fancy boots and a skirt and ditched them both after I realized the cobblestones were murder on my feet. I was not willing to make a fashion statement at the expense of my feet. Would I have been willing to do that a few years ago, I wondered? Probably. Perhaps this is a change that has come in my own “edge season.”

I still feel the familiar pull of, “I should really do that,” or, “not everyone gets a chance to do this,” and feel a sense of obligation to chase after some sight or activity and, while I do make an effort not to be a stick-in-the-mud, I can't help but notice how wonderful it feels to simply be where I want, doing what I please.

When I was younger, I was obsessed with the idea of missing out. I could barely stand to be in one place, thinking of all the other places I could be at the same time. The idea of taking a nap was preposterous. The idea of missing an opportunity, too painful to contemplate.

Things are different now.

After Peter and I toured the Alhambra palace in Granada, we came home and took a nap. Instead of imagining all the sights I was not seeing, all the memories I would not have, I thought about the all amazing things I had seen that day. I replayed them in my head and drifted off to sleep.

Later, Peter and I headed out (in practical shoes) and had a kind of very strong Moroccan tea I had never tasted and a delicious crepe. We sat on ornate cushions covered with tassels and sequins, with glittering lanterns overhead, and watched two college girls busy with their phones and their hair.

“Would you take a photo of us?” I asked the students in badly fractured Spanish, “I'm terrible at selfies!”

The young woman with the larger volume of hair cheerfully agreed and took several photos of us—me grinning broadly (as I do) and Peter looking a tad on edge (as he does).

I wondered what these two young women would do in their lives—if they would stay in Granada or travel the world. I wondered if they ever worried they were missing out when they already lived in such an interesting place.

And then I thought how grateful I was to be exactly where I was in my life—dressed in practical shoes with nowhere I wanted to be other than exactly where I was.

I took Peter's hand. “I'm very happy to be here with you,” I told him.

“This is great tea!” Peter said.

It was.
Till next time,
Carrie

Federal funds to assist county in buying out flood-prone properties

AUSTIN — Land Commissioner George P. Bush on Nov. 14 announced the Texas General Land Office's approval of \$21,155,575 in Hurricane Harvey funds for Fort Bend County to conduct a buyout program.

In the late summer of 2017, record-heavy rainfall brought by Hurricane Harvey catastrophically flooded streets and homes. Fort Bend County will use the funds to conduct a buyout program targeting approximately 100 homes most vulnerable to flooding.

The funds come from a much larger pool of federal assistance. Bush was appointed by Gov. Greg Abbott to lead Hurricane Harvey housing recovery efforts funded by \$5.7 billion in Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

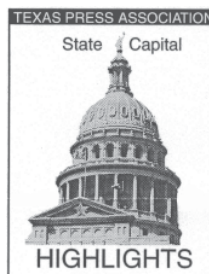
“Hurricane Harvey devastated communities across the Texas Coast,” said Bush. “These recovery funds are critical to protecting lives, homes and businesses from future storms. We continue to work with our partners in communities across the region to leverage these resources efficiently and effectively to benefit Texans affected by Hurricane Harvey.”

Court stays execution

The execution of a Texas death row inmate incarcerated since May 1998 was stayed by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals on Nov. 15.

The court order came five days before Rodney Reed, 51, was scheduled to be executed by lethal injection. A number of Republican and Democratic federal and state lawmakers and celebrities called on Gov. Greg Abbott to prevent the execution as motions for the reexamination of DNA and other evidence and the introduction of new witness statements gained publicity. The Texas Board of Pardons and

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Ed Sterling



chair of the House Committee on Homeland Security & Public Safety; as vice chair of the House Select Committee on Mass Violence Prevention & Community Safety; and as a member of the House Committee on Natural Resources.

AG warns of scam calls

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton on Nov. 14 warned Texans about scam callers falsely claiming to be members of the Attorney General's Crime Victim Services Division and attempting to obtain personal and financial information.

Fraudulent callers attempt to obtain personal identifying information from the call recipient and ask for money transfers or bank details after baselessly claiming the call recipient's Social Security number has been compromised. Fraudsters use local numbers and sometimes provide a false case number during the call.

Paxton is encouraging those who receive such calls to notify his office's Consumer Protection Hotline toll-free at 1-800-621-0508 or to file a complaint online.

Paxton also said his office's true Crime Victim Services phone number is toll-free 800-983-9933 and local number 512-936-1200.

Abbott declares drought

Gov. Greg Abbott on Nov. 8 issued a declaration certifying that exceptional drought conditions pose a threat of imminent disaster in 53 of Texas' 254 counties.

As stated in the disaster declaration, “Significantly low rainfall and prolonged dry conditions continue to increase the threat of wildfire across these portions of the state.”

The declaration authorizes the use of all available resources of state government and of political subdivisions that are reasonably necessary to cope with the disaster.

Paroles voted in favor of granting a 120-day reprieve of the execution.

In 1998, Reed was convicted in the 1996 murder of Stacey Stites, a 19-year-old grocery store clerk. Both Reed and Stites were residents of Bastrop when Stites's body was found. Reed, who had dated Stites, was arrested as a suspect and taken into custody.

Lawmaker is charged

State Rep. Poncho Nevarez, D-Eagle Pass, on Nov. 14 was charged with possession of a controlled substance and released on \$10,000 bond.

In September, Nevarez was observed on Austin airport security cameras dropping an envelope containing some 2 grams of cocaine. A conviction for possession of that amount of cocaine is a third-degree felony that could result in a sentence of up to 10 years in prison.

Nevarez has announced he will not seek reelection to a fifth term as the state representative for District 74, an enormous district that includes the counties of Brewster, Culberson, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, Kinney, Loving, Maverick, Pecos, Presidio, Reeves, Terrell and Val Verde.

Nevarez serves as

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SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Rivalries highlight Thanksgiving football fest: Texans host Patriots on Sunday Night Football

Thanksgiving is right around the corner and that means visiting family and friends, stuffing ourselves with turkey and all the trimmings and a weekend filled with football. Life is good!

This year's traditional rivalries such as Ohio State vs. Michigan, Oklahoma vs. Oklahoma State and Alabama vs. Auburn could also go a long way in deciding which four teams earn berths in the College Football Playoff (CFP).

Unless they completely meltdown down the stretch, LSU and Ohio State look like sure locks for the top two seeds. The other two slots are yet to be decided. If Clemson wins out, including winning the ACC title game, the Dabo Swiney's team should get the chance to defend its national championship. That leaves one spot up for grabs between OU, Alabama, Georgia and maybe Oregon.

This is always a great weekend for football fans because you have three NFL games on Turkey Day, followed by a slew of college action on Friday and Saturday before the NFL returns to reign on Sunday.

Speaking of the NFL, the Texans host the Patriots on Sunday Night Football and their fans have to hope they put up a better effort than they did two weeks ago when they were blown out by the Ravens, 41-7, in Baltimore. That was supposed to be a meeting of two MVP hopefuls as Houston quarterback Deshaun Watson and Ravens QB Lamar Jackson met for the first time in their young careers. Jackson lived up to the hype, throwing for 222 yards and four touchdowns and adding 86 more yards on the ground. Watson picked the wrong time to have one of the worst games of his career as he was limited to 169 yards through the air and threw an interception. The Texans offensive line also had a bad day allowing seven sacks by the Ravens, who entered the game with but 17 sacks on the season.

Things won't get any easier on Sunday night when Bill O'Brien's team faces Bill Belichick's team, which has one of the top defenses in the league and a pretty fair QB in Tom Brady.

Other key games this holiday weekend has Oakland visiting Kansas City in a battle for first place in the AFC West, while the Cowboys host a game Buffalo team on Thanksgiving Day. San Francisco travels across the country to face the hot Ravens and Week 13 concludes on Monday night with a good one as the well-rested Vikings (they had their bye last week) takes on Seattle and MVP-candidate Russell Wilson on Monday Night Football in Seattle.

Before we take a look at this weekend's loaded holiday schedule, let's review last week's record. An 11-1 week, the best of the season, upped the season record to 80-46 (63%).

Now, on to this weekend's game. I hope all of you have a blessed and Happy Thanksgiving.

NCAA

Texas Tech at Texas - Texas fans were anticipating a big season from Tom Herman's team entering 2019, but an early-season loss at home to LSU set the tone for what has turned into a disappointing campaign on the 40 Acres. Depending on how they fared against a good Baylor team last week, Texas could enter this game with a 6-5 record looking for its seventh win and what should be an appearance in a minor bowl game. I don't think UT fans have given up on Herman, but his seat might be getting a little warm heading into the 2020 season. There was also optimism in Lubbock as the Red Raider faithful welcomed a new head coach in Matt Wells. Wells' first season was anything but a success (Tech's a basketball school now) but a season-closing win in Austin could do a lot to boost Tech's confidence heading into the offseason. I just don't see that happening. Look for UT QB Sam Ehlinger (2,914 yards, 27 TDs), and wide receiver Devin Duvernay (87 receptions, 1,017 yards, 7 TDs) to carve up a suspect Tech secondary as the 'Horns end the regular season on a high note. My pick, Texas 34, Texas Tech 26

Oklahoma at Oklahoma State - Two weeks ago, Oklahoma trailed Baylor 31-10 at halftime and it appeared their chance at playing in the Big 12

title game were doomed. But quarterback Jalen Hurts (3,039 yards passing, 28 TDs/983 yards rushing, 15 TDs) rallied his team in the second half leading them to 24 unanswered points as the Sooners escaped Waco with a season-saving 34-31 win. They face their in-state rivals on Saturday and Mike Gundy's team would like nothing more than to throw a wrench into OU's league title hopes. The Cowboys are dangerous on offense with quarterback Spencer Sanders (2,065 passing yards, 16 TDs) and one of the best running backs in the country in Chubba Hubbard (1,726 yards, 20 TDs). This should be a high-scoring game as both teams have issues on defense. Look for Hurts to be the difference maker late as the Sooners earn another trip to the Big 12 title game. My pick, Oklahoma 38, Oklahoma State 34

Texas A&M at LSU - Last year, the Aggies won a seven overtime thriller over the Tigers, escaping with a 74-72 victory in Kyle Field. This year, Jimbo Fisher's team travels to Baton Rouge to face the No. 1-ranked Tigers who are on a mission to not only win the SEC, but also the national championship. LSU is loaded on offense led by quarterback Joe Burrow (3,687 yards, 38 TDs) and wide receivers Ja'Marr Chase (57 receptions, 1,116 yards, 13 TDs) and Justin Jefferson (71 receptions, 1,010 yards, 11 TDs). While the Tigers have a potent offense, their defense has given up gobs of yards and points this season. I think the Aggies will hang around in this one behind quarterback Kellen Mond (2,435 yards, 18 TDs) and running back Isaiah Spiller (796 yards, 8 TDs), but look for Burrow to lead the LSU offense to roll late to pull out the victory. My pick, LSU 41, Texas A&M 33

Alabama at Auburn - The Crimson Tide's CFP hopes took a big hit two weeks ago when quarterback Tua Tagovailoa (2,840 yards, 33 TDs) was lost for the season when he suffered an dislocated hip in 'Bama's 38-7 win over Mississippi State. Tua is a difference maker and with him out, Mac Jones (566 yards, 4 TDs) will be asked to run the Tide offense. Jones will have a lot of help on offense with one of the best wide receiver corps in



the country, but he's not Tua. He will be asked to manage the game and don't be surprised if head coach Nick Saban turns to the running game help Jones. This should be a defensive struggle as Auburn has one of the top defenses in the SEC. Playing at home should also be a big advantage for the Tigers, who pull off the upset and officially end 'Bama's CFP hopes. My pick, Auburn 20, Alabama 17

Ohio State at Michigan - The Big House will be rocking on Saturday when No. 2-ranked Ohio State comes calling against the No. 15-ranked Wolverines. The Buckeyes have one of the most explosive offenses in the country led by quarterback Justin Fields (2,164 yards, 31 TDs) and running back J.K. Dobbins (1,289 yards, 11 TDs), while Michigan has a stout defense. Jim Harbaugh's team has played better on offense down the stretch and entered last week's game at Indiana having outscored their last three opponents 127-31. Harbaugh has never defeated Ohio State in his three years in Ann Arbor. I see the streak running to four straight for the Buckeyes because they are just so good on both sides of the ball. I think Michigan hangs around in this one, but the Buckeyes offensive weapons will be too much for the Wolverines down the stretch. My pick, Ohio State 33, Michigan 21

NFL

Chicago at Detroit - The NFL kicks off its Thanksgiving Day triple-header with the annual Turkey Day game in Detroit as the Lions will host the Bears. Both teams have struggled this season, especially the Bears, who won 12 games and the NFC North a year ago. Two weeks ago, they dropped to 4-6 on the season after their loss to the Rams and head coach Matt Nagy is taking a lot of heat for

the poor play of quarterback Mitch Trubisky. The Lions will be without starting QB Matthew Stafford again this week and will turn to backup Jeff Driskel (478 yards, 3 TDs). For some reason, the Lions always show up for this game no matter what their season record may be. Look for the Lions to pounce on the Bears as the misery continues in Chicago. My pick, Detroit 27, Chicago 23

Buffalo at Dallas - Dallas hosts a solid Buffalo team on Thursday afternoon in a game the Cowboys will need to keep their NFC East hopes alive. Buffalo has a solid defense, but the Cowboys have the No. 1-ranked offense in the NFL. Two weeks ago, quarterback Dak Prescott (3,221 yards, 18 TDs) threw for 444 yards and three touchdowns in a 35-27 win at Detroit. Look for Dallas to give the Bills a steady dose of running back Ezekiel Elliott (833 yards, 8 total TDs), which will set up some deep strikes to wide receiver Amari Cooper (56 receptions, 886 yards, 7 TDs). My pick, Dallas 26, Buffalo 20

New Orleans at Atlanta - The Thanksgiving nightcap will be a NFC South battle between the Saints and the Falcons. Three weeks ago, the one-win Falcons strolled into New Orleans and dominated the Saints on both sides of the ball and left with a 26-9 victory. They followed that impressive win up a week later with a 29-3 trouncing of Carolina in Charlotte. I expect the Saints to be in a nasty mood come Thanksgiving night. Look for Drew Brees (1,296 yards, 8 TDs), running back Alvin Kamara (472 rush yards, 51 receptions, 373 yards) and wide receiver Michael Thomas (94 receptions, 1,141 yards, 5 TDs) to rip into the Falcons defense and serve up a healthy dose of payback on Thursday night. My pick, New Orleans 34, Atlanta 17

San Francisco at Baltimore - A good one on Sunday afternoon pits the 49ers, who

have the best record in the NFC, against a Baltimore team that already owns wins over Seattle, New England and the Texans. This will be a long trip for the 49ers who will travel across the country to take on Lamar Jackson (2,258 passing yards, 19 TDs/798 rushing yards, 6 TDs) and the Ravens. Two weeks ago, Baltimore played perhaps its most complete game of the season as the offense exploded for 41 points against the Texans and the defense recorded seven sacks. The Ravens appear to be one of the top teams in the AFC, while the 49ers have been the surprise team of the league this year. Two weeks ago, "Frisco rallied from a double-digit deficit at home against Arizona behind Jimmy Garoppolo's (2,478 yards, 18 TDs) four touchdown passes to win 36-26 to up their record to 9-1. I think the long trip will factor into this game, as will Jackson's dual threat ability. Baltimore notches another win against a quality opponent and sets its sites on one of the top two seeds in the AFC. My pick, Baltimore 26, San Francisco 23

Oakland at Kansas City - This is one of the nastiest rivalries in the NFL and one which the Chiefs have dominated in recent years, but thanks to a rebirth by the Raiders, this game has division title and playoff implications when the two meet in KC on Sunday. The Raiders entered last week's game against the Jets with a 6-4 record and a half game behind the Chiefs in the AFC West. Head coach Jon Gruden has done a great job turning the Raiders from losers to contenders in just two years. Quarterback Derek Carr (2,494 yards, 15 TDs) has been solid and rookie running back Josh Jacobs (923 yards, 7 TDs) has given Oakland a viable running game. KC QB Patrick Mahomes (2,808 yards, 19 TDs) looks like his old self after missing a couple of games with a knee injury. Two weeks ago, he led the Chiefs to a 24-17 win over the Chargers in Mexico City. The game might have cost Mahomes his deep threat at wide receiver Tyreek Hill left the game with an apparent hamstring injury. If Hill misses this game, look for tight end Travis Kelce (63 receptions, 833 yards, 4 TDs) to get plenty of work over

the middle. The Raiders are back, but the Chiefs are the better team and will prove it come Sunday. My pick, Kansas City 33, Oakland 29

New England at Houston - The Texans host the Patriots on Sunday Night Football in a game that could very well determine whether or not Houston can hang with the big boys of the AFC. Two weeks ago, O'Brien's team wasn't up to the task when they were man handled at Baltimore. While the Texans were getting whipped, the Patriots picked up a hard-earned road win with a 17-10 come-from-behind win in Philadelphia. NE spotted the Eagles a 10-0 lead, then scored the next 17 points as the defense shut down the Eagles in the second half. Deshaun Watson (2,611 yards, 18 TDs) will face a tough test against a very good Pats defense. The Texans defense needs to get to Tom Brady (2,752 yards, 14 TDs) early to rattle him. The Patriots offense has been pedestrian this year and the Texans need to continue that trend, but in the end, Brady will be Brady and lead his team to victory as the Texans squander yet another opportunity to hang with the big boys. My pick, New England 27, Houston 23

Minnesota at Seattle - A good one for the Monday Night Football crew pits the Vikings against the Seahawks. Two weeks ago, the Vikings overcame a 20-0 deficit at home to the Broncos and rallied for a 27-23 victory behind Kirk Cousins (2,756 yards, 21 TDs) three second-half touchdown passes. The Vikings are balanced on offense thanks to running back Dalvin Cook (1,071 yards, 11 TDs) and wide receivers Stefon Diggs (46 receptions, 830 yards, 5 TDs) and Adam Thielen, who should return after missing four weeks with a hamstring injury. Seattle is pretty good on offense as well led by MVP-candidate Russell Wilson (2,737 yards, 23 TDs), running back Chris Carson (853 yards, 4 TDs) and speedy wide receiver Tyler Lockett (62 receptions, 793 yards, 6 TDs). This one should go back and forth, but look for Wilson to be the difference maker late as Seattle pulls out a thriller. My pick, Seattle 31, Minnesota 27

Posting Date November 25, 2019

King Crossword

King Crossword grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a list of crossword clues and a grid with numbers indicating clue positions.

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez. A list of 10 trivia questions ranging from anatomy to animal kingdom.

Amber Waves comic strip by Dave T. Phipps. A three-panel comic strip about a character eating turkey.

R.F.D. comic strip by Mike Marland. A three-panel comic strip about a character waiting for turkey dinner.

The Spats comic strip by Jeff Pickering. A three-panel comic strip about a character eating turkey bills.

Weekly SUDOKU by Linda Thistle. A 9x9 grid with some numbers filled in and difficulty level indicators.

HOCUS-FOCUS by Henry Boltinoff. A two-panel comic strip about finding differences between two panels.

Answers for Trivia test and King Crossword. Lists the correct answers to the trivia questions and crossword clues.

CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey—


1. Is the book of 1 Thessalonians in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. From Genesis 38, who was the first individual killed by God for being wicked? No one has, Er, Onan, Gomorrah
3. How long had the woman been sick that touched the hem of Jesus' garment? 1 hour, 5 days, 6 months, 12 years
4. From 1 Kings 6, who constructed the first altar covered with gold? Gideon, Josiah, Noah, Solomon
5. The year of jubilee (jubilee) comes around every ... year? Fifth, 25th, 50th, 100th
6. Which king ordered Daniel into the lions' den? Darius, Eglon, Herod, Caesar

ANSWERS: 1) New; 2) Er; 3) 12 years; 4) Solomon; 5) 50th; 6) Darius

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

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COLOSSIANS 3:15



Detail from "Prayer before the Meal" by Adriaen Jansz. van Ostade (1653)

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LIFESTYLE

Gulf Coast Educators FCU surprises Aldine ISD Principal

This year for National Principals Month, Gulf Coast Educators Federal Credit Union (GCEFCU) honored four area leaders in its field of membership who make a difference in their school, district, and community. One of the recipients was Principal Crystal Watson at Nimitz High School.

Dr. Watson and each winner received \$500 for their school.

There were 816 nominations for principals all over the greater Houston area. Watson received 28 nominations, the most out of any principal nominated this year. Representatives from GCEFCU surprised Watson on Friday, November 8, with a check and award.

Watson took the helm of Nimitz High School five



Dr. Watson (second from right) poses with a huge check and award alongside Angeles López, Vice President Kyle Ford, and Marissa Álvarez (l-r) from Gulf Coast Educators Federal Credit Union.

years ago. At the time, Nimitz was a D-rated school and deemed academically unacceptable under the state's accountability system. Under her

leadership, "Doc" as she is affectionately known, transformed her campus into a B-rated school. Watson is the first to tell everyone that her work is not

done. She and her staff are continually working to improve outcomes and experiences for students. Under her leadership, Dr. Watson has made sig-

nificant and substantial changes to the culture, climate, and overall dynamics of Nimitz High School. For students, she implemented senior balloon release ceremonies. The balloons contain individual vision and mission statements for each student. She also created monthly and quarterly recognition awards, and many more celebrations to celebrate achievements and increase school pride.

Her changes have also helped Watson's staff, for whom she created an extensive tactical master scheduling method. It allows all teachers with the same core content areas to be off in the same period each day with common professional learning communities. Through her many innovative changes,

Watson has established a positive culture conducive for learning.

One of Watson's teachers said it best.

"She is the sole reason that I am still teaching. I could have retired, but because of the kind of leader she is, I chose to stay. I cannot imagine a better boss that I can also call a friend."



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COMMUNITY NEWS

North Houston,

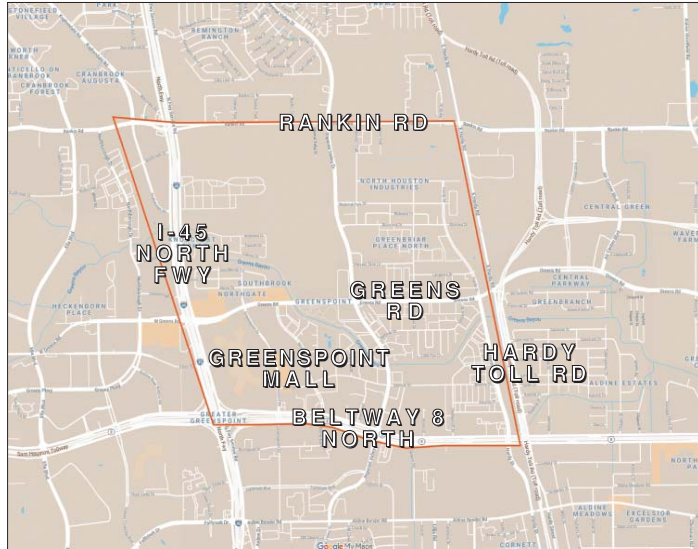
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North Houston/
Greenspoint Livable
Centers Planning Study

Study Summary and Goals
The goal of the study is to create a plan for the study area that will define new, context-sensitive standards for the North Houston District that foster multi-modal access and connectivity, a mix of land

uses, a diversity of housing options, and a sense of place. The study results in a forward-looking vision and practical implementation strategies that consider responsible stewardship of the North Houston District's existing resources to best meet anticipated population growth.
Study Area Map
The North Houston/

Greenspoint Livable Center Study area is roughly bounded by East Hardy Road to the east, Rankin Road to the north, IH-45 to the west, and Beltway 8 to the south. The study area includes Greenspoint Mall, and includes multi-family neighborhoods along Greens Road and Imperial Valley Drive.



Study area map

Aldine's Accountability,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ments of the five critical indicators. Those indicators are: filing of the district's annual financial report within a month, the districts annual financial report was free of any instances of material weaknesses, the district was in compliance with the payment terms of all debt agreements at the end of the district's fis-

cal year, the district made timely payments to the Teachers Retirement System (TRS), Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), the IRS and other governmental agencies, and the district's total unrestricted net asset balance in the Statement of Net Position/Assets was greater than zero.
"Since the implemen-

tation of the School FIRST accountability system, Aldine ISD has received the highest rating a school district can receive," Dr. Alford-Stephens said. "This year's "Superior" rating is a reflection of the district's continued demonstration of high quality financial management and reporting."

USA BMX Competition Hosted in North Houston



The rainy weather didn't get in the way of die-hard bike enthusiasts waiting for the USA BMX Lone Star Nationals at Rockstar Energy Bike Park on Oct. 25-27. This was one of the first major events at the venue, and two more are slated for spring 2020.

Hunger Leadership Award,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Each honoree championed critical legislation to support food banks in their effort to end hunger.
•SB 2334 / HB 3668 (Creighton/Walle) created a funding mechanism to help food banks prepare for and respond to large-scale natural disasters like Hur-

ricane Harvey.
•SB 1445 / HB 3931 (Perry/Meza) proposed simplifying the SNAP application process for Texas seniors, who participate in the program at reduced rates despite their need.
Three of the award ceremonies took place in Sep-

tember during Hunger Action Month; Rep. Walle's ceremony was held this month.
Hunger stat: In Texas, 14% of the population — or 1 in 7 Texans — experiences food insecurity annually.



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