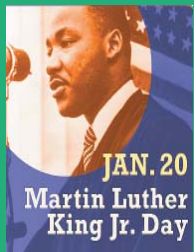


NORTHEAST NEWS



Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 43 Years
VOL. 44, NO. 03 TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2020 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

NEWS NOTES

TCEQ Air Permit Public meeting

Thursday, January 30, 2020, 6:30 p.m. Northeast Community Center, 10918 1/2 Bentley St. Houston, TX 77093. This public meeting is an opportunity to provide comments on the proposed concrete batch plant at Mooney Road. Please plan to attend and ask questions to TCEQ staff concerning the permit application.

Bonding Against Adversity 10 Year Anniversary

BONDING AGAINST ADVERSITY, Inc will celebrate its 10th year of service to the community. "Launch Breakfast" to commemorate this special event on Friday, January 31, 2020, 8 am - 9:30 am, Lone Star College-North Harris Student Services Building Conference Room.

High Meadows Library programs & events

•Wednesday, January 22nd. Genealogy Basics, 1pm: Trace your lineage using our free databases. We have staff to help you get started!

•Thursday, January 23rd. Trivia Night, 5pm: Bring your Harry Potter knowledge to our first ever trivia night. You can win a prize!

•Saturday, January 25th. Family Time, 1pm: Families are invited to play games, read books, and discover the fun of their local library. Light refreshments provided.

Customers can call at 832-927-5540 if they'd like more information about these programs and more. They can also visit the website at www.hcpl.net and view the catalog, look at events, and register for a free library card.

High Meadows Library is located at 4500 Aldine Mail Rt., Houston, TX 77039.

See Page 3 for more special events.

Nutrition Class

Every Thursday, January 29 - April 14, 2020 from 10 am - 11:30 am at BakerRipley East Aldine Campus, 3000 Aldine Mail Rt. 77039. Questions? Call 346-570-4463.

Congresswoman Garcia appointed to Impeachment Managers



House Majority Leader Nancy Pelosi, center in pink, introduces the Congresspersons that will serve as Impeachment Managers during the trial set to start next week in the Senate. L to R, Hakeem Jeffries, Sylvia Garcia, Jerry Nadler, Pelosi, Adam Schiff, Val Demings, Zoe Lofgren, and Jason Crow.

WASHINGTON—Sylvia Garcia, Congresswoman representing the 29th District of Texas, including much of the North and East sides of Harris County, has been appointed one of seven Impeachment Managers for the upcoming trial of President Trump in the Senate.

The selection was made by House Majority Leader Nancy Pelosi, who took

care to have a diverse group of managers. The seven Democratic Congresspersons, most with attorney training and courtroom experience, will act as prosecutors in the ensuing trial which starts next Tuesday in the Senate.

Garcia was elected to the House in 2018, filling the seat previously held by Gene Green.

Garcia was born in south Texas, and educated at Texas Womens University and Texas Southern University. She is one of two freshman legislators appointed as Impeachment Manager.

Commenting on the impeachment, Garcia said on Twitter "Trump is a clear and present danger to our democracy, and he must be held accountable."

Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney reflects on 2018-19 school year, looks ahead to AISD's future at annual State of the District Breakfast



Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney, middle, delivers remarks during the district's annual State of the District Breakfast, held Wednesday, Jan. 15 at the CityPlace Marriott Hotel.

Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney delivered a spirited address to Aldine ISD supporters at the district's annual State of the District Breakfast, held Wednesday, Jan. 15 at the CityPlace Marriott Hotel.

Speaking before a crowd

of parents, business partners, elected officials and district and campus administrators, Dr. Goffney provided a list of accomplishments she and her leadership team attained in her first year as superintendent during the 2018-19 school year, presented

the audience with a number of plans to provide more choices for Aldine students in the future and shared the district's five-year strategic plan, "A New Way Forward."

See State of the District, Page 2

CLIP AND SAVE

Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo 2020

Most of the 2020 Performers!

MARCH 3



Midland

MARCH 4



Willie Nelson

MARCH 5



Becky G

MARCH 6



Hip Hop B&B

MARCH 7



Maren Morris

MARCH 8



Ramon Ayala

MARCH 9



Chris Young

MARCH 10



NCT 127

MARCH 11



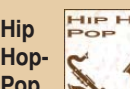
Kane Brown

MARCH 12



Cody Johnson

MARCH 13



Hip Hop Pop

MARCH 14



Jon Pardi

MARCH 15



Dierks Bentley

MARCH 16



Keith Urban

MARCH 17



Gwen Stefani

MARCH 18



Khalid

MARCH 19



Chris Stapleton

MARCH 20



EDM

MARCH 21



Brad Paisley

MARCH 22



Luke Bryan

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PREMIERE CINEMAS

FRIDAY-WEDNESDAY 1/17-1/22

Opens THURSDAY, Jan. 23

- * THE GENTLEMEN (R) 7:00 9:30
- * THE TURNING (PG-13) 7:30 9:15

12:20pm, 3:00pm, 6:00pm, 9:00pm

- * JUST MERCY (PG-13) - 12:00pm, 3:00pm, 6:00pm, 9:00pm
- * SPIES IN DISGUISE (PG) - 12:00pm, 2:30pm, 5:00pm
- * JUMANJI: The Next Level (PG-13) - 12:00pm, 2:45pm, 5:30pm, 8:30pm
- * JUMANJI: The Next Level (PG-13) - 12:30pm, 3:15pm, 6:00pm, 8:45pm
- * FROZEN II (PG) - 12:15pm, 6:15pm
- * Special FROZEN II SING-ALONG (PG) - 3:15pm, 9:15pm
- * FROZEN II (PG) - 12:20pm, 3:20pm, 6:20pm
- * Spanish Dubbed FORD V FERRARI (PG-13) - 8:45pm

12:00pm, 3:00pm, 6:00pm, 9:00pm

- * BAD BOYS FOR LIFE (R) - 12:00pm, 3:00pm, 6:00pm, 9:00pm
- * BAD BOYS FOR LIFE (R) - 12:30pm, 3:30pm, 6:30pm, 9:30pm
- * DOLITTLE (PG) - 12:00pm, 3:00pm, 6:00pm, 9:00pm
- * DOLITTLE (PG) - 12:30pm, 3:30pm, 6:30pm, 9:30pm
- * LIKE A BOSS (R) - 12:30pm, 2:40pm, 4:55pm, 7:00pm, 9:15pm
- * UNDERWATER (PG-13) - 12:00pm, 2:25pm, 4:40pm, 7:00pm, 9:30pm
- * THE GRUDGE (R) - 7:30pm, 9:45pm
- * 1917 (R) -

MOVIES have Stadium Seating & Closed Caption & Audio Description

*No passes on these movies ** No passes accepted for 3D movies. ID Required for R rated movies. *New Releases, no passes accepted for the first two weeks *** Sorry No Passes ** CLOSURE CAPTION ** Policy prohibits admission of ANY child 6 or under to any R-rated movie after Ep. NO EXCEPTIONS.

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SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWS

Elected officials honor Board during School Board Recognition Month



The Aldine ISD Board of Trustees were honored by a number of elected officials in recognition of School Board Recognition Month during the Jan. 14 Board meeting. ABOVE, FRONT ROW: Vice-President Rose Avalos, Assistant Secretary Dr. Kimberley Booker, Dr. Viola M. Garcia, Secretary Connie Esparza; BACK ROW Members Randy Bates, Steve Mead, Superintendent Dr. LaTonya Goffney, and President Paul Shanklin.

In honor of School Board Recognition Month, a number of elected officials honored the Aldine ISD Board of Trustees for its leadership and commitment to the community during the Jan. 14 Trustees meeting.

U.S. Congresswoman Shelia Jackson Lee delivered a message of thanks to the Board for their service to the community via a live video feed. Fellow U.S. Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia also delivered a thank you message via a live video feed.

State Senator Carol Alvarado also presented the board with a resolution thanking them for their

service to the students, staff and Aldine community.

Rain Eatmon, representing State Rep. Jarvis Johnson, also presented the board with a resolution on behalf of the State Rep. State Rep. Armando Walle also presented the board a resolution.

Janice Weaver, representing Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, offered congratulations and thanks on behalf of the Mayor.

Hector Morales, representing Pct. 2 County Commissioner Adrian Garcia, presented the board a resolution on behalf of the

Commissioner.

Morgan Yates, representing Pct. 4 County Commissioner Jack Cagle, also presented the board with a resolution on behalf of the Commissioner.

Trustees also received small tokens of appreciation from Aldine ISD students and schools throughout the district. Aldine ISD's Board of Trustees consists of President Paul Shanklin, Vice-President Rose Avalos, Secretary Connie Esparza, Assistant Secretary Dr. Kimberley Booker and Members Randy Bates, Dr. Viola M. Garcia and Steve Mead.

State of the District,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Board President Paul Shanklin delivers welcoming remarks

Prior to Dr. Goffney's address, Board of Trustees President Paul Shanklin delivered welcoming remarks.

After introducing his fellow Board members, Mr. Shanklin made it clear he and the Board are committed to providing Aldine students with more choices and a quality education for all students.

"We are passionate about public education and proud to serve the families of more than 67,000 students who attend our 82 campuses," he said. "As public servants, we take our roles as trustees seriously because we know that the decisions we make and the policies that we approve impact the world's most precious commodity — our students."

"We are humbled by the confidence this community has put in us to raise Aldine to the next level. Our motto is go big or stay home. Today, you will hear from our transformative superintendent, Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney, and her leadership team who will share the district's celebrations and talk more about the programs and plans that we are developing to ensure we are offering our families the best education. We understand that our economic self-interest is at stake when it comes to the education system. I hope you recognize we are working hard to provide more choices for our students so they can be well-rounded individuals and compete with students from across the state in any area," Mr. Shanklin said.

Blanson CTE High School student Miguel Chacon then introduced Dr. Goffney. Miguel is one of Dr. Goffney's student ambassadors and shared with the audience that he is thankful for the opportunities he has received at Blanson CTE High School. "A lot of families in my community have the misconception that you have to go to college to be successful," Miguel said. "My job as a student ambassador for Blanson CTE High School is to debunk that myth by informing my community about the different paths to success Aldine has to offer. During Dr. Goffney's two-year tenure, the number of opportunities and routes that ultimately lead to success has only risen. On a more personal level, these new opportunities have been a blessing to my family and me. When I told my mother I want to study computer programming, she looked at me bewildered and then Blanson CTE High School opened. Thank you, Dr. Goffney for everything you are doing for all the students in Aldine."

Dr. Goffney lists highlights from her first two years on the job

Dr. Goffney began her address by thanking Aldine ISD Trustees for their work and dedication to Aldine's students.

"I couldn't do the work without you," she said. She also acknowledged a number of elected officials who attended the breakfast. Those in attendance included State Senator Carol Alvarado, State Reps. Senfronia Thompson and Jarvis Johnson, Myriam Saldivar with State Rep's Armando Walle's office, Pct. 2 County Commissioner Adrian Garcia, Ray Betran representing Pct. 1 County Commissioner Rodney Ellis, Janice Weaver representing

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner's office and Houston Mayor Turner's daughter Ashley Turner.

She thanked the state legislators for passing HB 3 during the 2019 Legislative session.

"HB 3 is going to be a game changer for Aldine ISD and school districts across the state," she said. "I want to thank our elected officials that worked on this."

She then shared with the audience a number of accomplishments Aldine attained during the 2018-19 school year.

- Aldine moved from a 'C' rated school district to a 'B' rated school district in the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) state accountability ratings.

- Four Aldine ISD campuses earned grades of 'A' and the district increased the number of 'A' and 'B' schools.

- Blanson CTE High School and Victory Early College High School maintained their 'A' ratings.

- Stephens Elementary School moved from a 'D' school to an 'A' school in one year's time.

- Aldine launched the Aldine ISD Mariachi Band, which will perform in March at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.
- For the 16th consecutive year, Aldine earned a "Superior" rating under Texas' FIRST (Financial Integrity Rating System).

- The Texas Art Education Association (TAEA) named Aldine a District of Distinction. Kujawa Elementary Principal Kimberly Jenkins was named TAEA's Principal of the Year and Jones Middle School art teacher Sara Kersh was named TAEA's Middle School Teacher of the Year.

- Aldine opened Rose Avalos P-TECH High School at the start of the 2019-20 school year.

- Aldine developed a partnership with EMERGE, college-readiness program prepares high-performing high school students, in grades 10-12, to attend and graduate from selective colleges and universities across the nation.

- Houston Endowment provided Aldine with a grant to cover the cost of EMERGE.

- Opened two ACE (Accelerating Campus Excellence) campuses, Goodman and Worsham thanks to Aldine's partnership with Good Reason Houston.

- Aldine was one of three school districts in Houston selected for the Harris County Promise program. Through its partnership with Lone Star College, seniors at Nimitz, Eisenhower and Aldine high schools will have an opportunity to apply for the Harris County Promise Scholar program. The program covers students' tuition and fees after all grants, financial aid and scholarships are applied.

- Aldine was one of six school districts in Texas chosen to participate in The Holdsworth Center's five-year partnership focused on helping school districts grow their pipeline of inspiring leaders so that teachers can thrive and students can excel on every campus.

Dr. Goffney said she and her leadership team are proud of what has been accomplished in a short period of time, but she added there is more work to be done to provide more choices for Aldine ISD students and parents.

"These examples and celebrations are why we do this work," she said. "There is no way I can remember everything that happens in the district. But there is

one thing I am sure of: I am proud of the work we have done to improve student outcome. I come to work every day as your superintendent energized and I know that our teachers, school leaders, bus drivers, custodians, and every team member at Aldine ISD, all come to work energized to ensure our young people are set up for success. We know that all of our students can be successful here in Aldine and in college, career and in life."

Leadership team discusses Aldine's strategic plan

Members of Dr. Goffney's Executive Leadership Team (ELT) then presented Aldine's five-year strategic plan, "A New Way Forward," based on five strategic priorities.

Chief Academic Officer Dr. Todd Davis discussed strategic priority 1, Student Achievement; Chief of Schools Katy Roede discussed strategic priority 2, School Culture, Chief Human Resources Officer Dr. Javier Villareal discussed strategic priority 3, Mission-Driven Leadership, Chief Financial Officer Dr. Tamika Alford-Stephens discussed strategic priority 4, Organizational Efficiency and Chief Communications Officer Sheleah Reed discussed strategic priority 5, Community Engagement and Outreach.

More choices for Aldine ISD students

Dr. Goffney also spoke of the importance of providing more choices for Aldine ISD students and parents.

"We have set goals to create choices to compete with other districts and charter schools," she said. "We must be bold and we must build a system of great schools. The district is intentional about increasing access to choices and opportunities for families in our community."

New programs being considered are:

- Providing magnet schools in every area of the district.

- Expanding Aldine's two-way dual language program to add another grade level and eventually have a K-12 program in every area of the district.

- Strengthen Aldine's International Baccalaureate program.

- Redesigning Hall Center for Education with a focus on an education that prepares students to meet their academic needs, ensure students have skills to take care of themselves and provide the support they need to focus on their families.

- Launching a single-gender campus, one for boys and one for girls.

- Design and launch a New Comer Academy to serve students who are new to Aldine.

"We must demonstrate what is possible for students who are black, brown and come from poverty," Dr. Goffney said. "Our vision is simple, it's that we want all Aldine ISD students to receive dynamic, unparalleled instruction that guarantees them choices and opportunities in the future."

Prior to the start of the program, audience members were entertained by student performances from the Houston Academy dance troupe, and Houston Academy choir, under the direction of Jennifer Colvin and Jocquinn Williams.

The MacArthur High School JROTC presented the colors and the Aldine High School Honor Choir performed the National Anthem.

PERSONAL FINANCE

3 financial planning trends to look for in 2020

(StatePoint) The latest financial planning trends anticipated by industry experts will have important implications for consumers.

From new tech to new rules and regulations, here are three of the biggest trends to watch out for in the months to come, and what they mean for you:

1. More consumer protections. The recommendations and information you receive from your financial advisor may change if he or she is required to comply with new regulations and professional standards taking effect in 2020.

The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission recently approved a new rule known as Regulation Best Interest (BD) that requires broker-dealers to recommend investments and other financial products that are in their client's best interests. Broker-dealers must also fully disclose any conflicts of interest related to the investments and products they sell or recommend to their clients. All broker-dealers must comply with the rule by June 30, 2020.

New professional standards for certain advisors will also enhance consumer protections. The Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards (CFP Board), for example, recently adopted a new standard requiring CFP professionals to act as a fiduciary -- and therefore in their client's best interest -- at all times when providing financial advice. CFP



PHOTO SOURCE: (c) ijeab / iStock via Getty Images Plus

Board will begin enforcing this standard in June 2020, as well.

2. Streamlined technology. The continued development of financial technologies may lead many firms and advisors to adopt new tools that automate certain tasks in the financial planning process. For example, you may be able to communicate with your advisor, check your portfolio performance, manage your accounts and catch up on relevant financial news using a single online financial portal. Your advisor may also employ artificial intelligence and data analytics tools to help assess investment risk, conduct market research or execute trades, allowing them to spend more time taking a big-picture look at your finances and developing a comprehensive strategy to help you achieve your goals.

3. More socially responsible investment opportu-

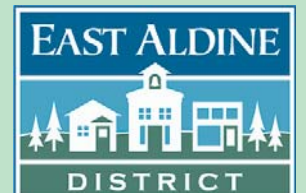
nities. Heightened awareness of climate change and major social issues, coupled with younger generations' desire to make a positive impact on the world, will likely lead to increased options for aligning your values with your investments. Socially responsible investing; environmental, social and governance investing; and impact investing, all present opportunities to earn financial returns while supporting social change. Your advisor can help evaluate your options in this area, including the risks and rewards of each investment type.

A CFP professional can help you understand and navigate these and other trends. To find a CFP professional near you, visit www.letsmakeaplan.org.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

State Rep. Walle applauds City approval of state grants for Melrose and Keith Wiess Parks

City Council officially voted to accept \$1 Million each in state grants, championed by State Rep. Walle, for improvements to Melrose Park and Keith Wiess Park

HOUSTON – Mayor Turner and City Council officially approved last week receipt of \$2 million total in state grant funding from Texas Parks and Wildlife for improvements to Melrose Park and Keith Wiess Park. State Representative Armando Walle (D-Houston), who successfully championed this particular funding initiative in the most recent state budget, issued the following statement:

It was a big victory to be able to bring in these state dollars to a park like Melrose that is heavily used by the community, but sorely in need of some improvements. The improvements at Keith Wiess will better connect the park with the surrounding community and the upcoming East Aldine Town Center which borders the park.

I greatly appreciate Mayor Turner, the new Council, and the Parks and Recreation department's work in moving this state aid forward. I look forward to partnering with Commissioner Rodney Ellis and Commissioner Adrian



State Rep. Armando Walle

Garcia on integrating improvements at these parks with hike and bike trail improvements in the unincorporated areas that surround these parks as well.

Commissioner Adrian Garcia on Gov. Abbott decision to deny refugees

Garcia also plans to participate in Press Conference Tuesday Morning at Catholic Charities

Harris County Commissioner Adrian Garcia condemns the decision by the Governor and issues the following statement:

"Harris County has a long and storied history of accepting refugees into our community. Refugees living here have contributed in countless ways and have helped our county become the diverse, vibrant place in which we love to live and work. This cruel decision by Governor Abbott to make Texas the only state in the union to deny refugees from resettling here is not only disappointing; it does not represent who we are as Texans."

"Texas is a can-do state. We call on the Governor to reconsider this reprehensible decision."

"I also echo the words of Pope Francis, who said recently of refugees, 'we cannot remain insensitive, our hearts deadened, before the misery of so many innocent people. We must not fail to weep. We must not fail to respond.' I ask that the Governor reflect on the Pope's comments during his next attendance at Mass."



Commissioner Adrian Garcia

Texas saw the biggest decrease in cigarette smoking in the last 10 years

By Adam Johnson
Analyst

Texas experienced a 19.55% decrease in cigarette smoking over the last 10 years. This ranks Texas as the 8th-highest rate decreases in tobacco usage in the country.

With tobacco age limit increase, vaping flavor bans, and New Year's resolutions, QuoteWizard analyzed CDC data on the prevalence of smokers

from a period of 2009 to 2018 and e-cigarette users from 2016 to 2017 in each state to find which states saw the largest increase or decrease in tobacco and vaping usage rates.

Key findings:
- Texas saw a 2.13% increase in vaping
- Nationwide there was a 10% decrease in smoking and an 8% increase in vaping.
- 2.2% decline in cancer deaths propelled by gains against lung cancer in

2017
- New Jersey, Delaware and Indiana top states with the largest difference in smokers quitting and people picking up vaping.
- South Dakota, Indiana and West Virginia saw the largest increase in vaping.
- New York, Nevada and Oklahoma saw the largest decrease in smoking.
- Smoking reaches an all-time low of 13.7% in 2018.

Houston Health Department bringing prescription medication savings to Houston homes

HOUSTON – The Houston Health Department is marking the tenth year of its Coast2CoastRx prescription coupon card by bringing it to hundreds of thousands of Houston homes. The free card, which offers significant discounts on prescription medications, will arrive with city utility bills starting in mid-January.

Since its launch in October 2009, the Coast2CoastRx prescription coupon card has saved Houston-area residents more than \$47 million in prescription medication costs. The free card does not require an application, registration or any personal information, and can be used at thousands of participating pharmacies. It is available for free to anyone, regardless of age, income, citizenship status or insurance coverage.

"Over the past decade, the Coast2CoastRx prescription coupon card has been a powerful tool for Houstonians to save significantly on prescription medication costs," said Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner. "The City of Houston is pleased to continue its valuable partnership with Coast2CoastRx into the new decade."

The Coast2CoastRx prescription coupon card is available for pickup at Houston Health Department multi-service centers, WIC clinics and health centers. The card is also available at coast2coastrx.com/houston-tx, where it can be texted, emailed or printed for immediate use. The website also offers a pricing tool that shows how much people will save by using the card. In 2019, the card program saved people nationally an average of 65% on the cost of generic and brand name prescriptions.

Savings for Houstonians through the Coast2CoastRx program comes at no cost to the City of Houston. In addition to the discounts on prescriptions, the card also provides discounts on dental and vision care, hearing aids, diabetic supplies, lab tests, pet prescriptions and veterinarian services. "We find the Coast2CoastRx program to be especially beneficial in enhancing the lives of older adults through our Harris County Area Agency on Aging," said Deborah Moore, assistant director for human services at the Houston Health Department. "The card is an im-

portant tool in helping older adults who may be living on a fixed income stretch their healthcare dollars."

Since 2010, Coast2CoastRx has provided approximately \$70,000 annually to the Houston Health Foundation to support vital public health programs such as See to Succeed, which has provided more than 65,000 pairs of corrective eyeglasses to school-aged children, Project Saving Smiles, which has served 50,000 second graders with dental screenings, sealants, and fluoride varnishes and the home-delivered meals program, which facilitates more than a million meals for senior citizens annually.

"The Coast2CoastRx program will continue to work to bring savings for Houstonians' healthcare needs. As an organization we are dedicated to making the process of obtaining and utilizing free prescription discounts easy and accessible to all," says Edward Rahn, President of Coast2CoastRx. "The Coast2CoastRx program is proud to provide Houstonians this valuable free service."

Special events at High Meadows Library

High Meadows Library in Aldine has some special programs for February to celebrate African American History Month.

• Thursday, February 6th @ 6pm, History of Jazz. From ragtime and Dixieland to the blues, swing, and more, "The History of Jazz" traces America's contribution to the world of music as it developed late in the nineteenth century from African American

work songs, hymns, and spirituals. Light refreshments will be provided.

• Friday, February 21st @ 1:30pm, Black History heroes laid the groundwork for some of the most amazing discoveries of the modern era, especially when it comes to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. Hosted by the incredible scientist, George Washing-

ton Carver, a man who invented thousands of uses for the lowly peanut, this show introduces students to other incredible scientists, entrepreneurs and groundbreakers from Black History. Meet Madame CJ Walker, Jackie Robinson, Thurgood Marshall and more!

Customers interested can contact the library at 832-927-5540 for more information.

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Social Security Matters

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

Ask Rusty – When Should I Claim My Widow’s Benefit?

Dear Rusty: My husband passed away at the age of 52, and I was 53. I am currently 59. I've read about and been encouraged to file for widow's benefits from Social Security when I turn 60. My question is: does doing that impact when I should file for my regular Social Security benefits? In reading on many websites regarding my question, this never is addressed on what is best. Signed: Widowed Survivor

Dear Survivor: You have my sympathy for the loss of your husband at such a young age. I'll try to clarify your options for you.

Provided you have not remarried you can claim your survivor benefit at age 60, but if you do it will be reduced by 28.5% from what it would be at your full retirement age (FRA) of 67. As long as you are explicit when claiming your survivor benefit that you are not also applying for your own Social Security benefit, there will be no negative impact to your eventual Social Security retirement benefit when you claim that. But, determining which benefit to take, and when, requires some thought.

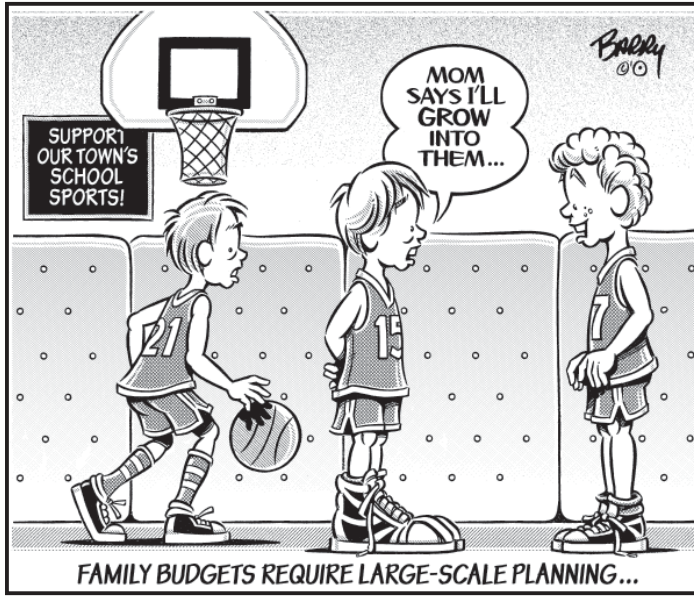
Your goal should be to get the highest benefit possible for the rest of your life. To help you decide how and when to file, you should first see what your survivor benefit will be at your full retirement age (100% of what your husband was entitled to at his death). If that amount is more than you are entitled to on your own at age 70 then you should consider waiting until age 67 (your FRA) to claim your widow's benefit, so you can get that higher survivor benefit for the rest of your life. Conversely, if your own age 70 benefit will be more than your widow's benefit at your FRA, then claiming your widow's benefit first and allowing your own benefit to grow until age 70 when it reaches maximum would be the more prudent choice. You can get estimates of both your survivor benefit and your age 70 retirement benefit by contacting Social Security. But if claiming the survivor benefit at age 60 is what you decide, or if you were to instead claim your Social Security

retirement benefits early (e.g., age 62) there's more for you to consider.

If you are collecting any Social Security benefits before you reach your full retirement age (FRA) and you are still working, you will be subject to Social Security's "earnings limit" which restricts the amount you can earn before they take back some of your benefits (the earnings limit changes annually; for 2020 it is \$18,240). Up until the year you reach your FRA, they will take back benefits equal to one half of any earnings you have over the limit. During the year you reach your FRA the limit increases by about 2.5 times and the penalty is less, and once you reach your FRA there is no longer a limit on your earnings. So, if you claim your survivor benefit at age 60 and are working, exceeding the earnings limit will result in you permanently losing some of your survivor benefits. If, instead, you claim your SS retirement benefit early (e.g., at age 62) you'll still be subject to the earnings limit until you reach age 67, but at your FRA they will give you time credit for any months you didn't get your retirement benefits and increase your benefit amount accordingly.

The important point to remember is that you have a choice of which benefit to take, and evaluating your options as described above should lead you to the right answer - whether you should claim your reduced survivor benefit at age 60, or to delay until it reaches maximum at age 67.

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. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadviser@amacfoundation.org.



FAMILY BUDGETS REQUIRE LARGE-SCALE PLANNING...

THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

“Unexpected Cowboy”

I want to start out by making it clear that I have nothing against cowboys. One of the new developments in my life is that I recently got a manager, Bob, to book performances of my writing. I've never had a manager before, so I didn't know what to expect. But Bob is a wonderful fellow. He says he thinks of the folks he represents as family—which is something a lot of people say, but I get the feeling Bob actually means it. So, I was eager to keep Bob happy. But then he suggested I perform with a cowboy.

“Carrie, I know this is a crazy idea, but I want you to think about it!” Bob said.

“I will,” I said (wondering, as I said it, if I actually would).

Actually, I like cowboy culture a lot. But I don't know a thing about it. I don't write cowboy poetry. I don't know how to use a lariat. (I only have the vaguest idea what a lariat is, to be perfectly honest.) I have a couple pair of cowboy boots, but the last time I was on a horse was a several decades ago. Simply put, I have no cowboy credentials. So, when Bob suggested I perform with a cowboy singer, I was more than skeptical—I thought it was a dumb idea.

But then I remembered this promise I'd made not to say, “no.”

You see, most of my life I've followed the prevailing advice that says a person should have specific and detailed goals. But then my life fell apart. After both my husband and my company dumped me, I realized that I actually knew very little about who I was or what it was I wanted out of life going forward.

I tried to start over again: I tried to create the kind of detailed dreams I had dreamt when I was in my twenties, but then a few things happened to change my mind.

First, I noticed that most of the really interesting things that were happening to me had not happened because I planned them. They happened by chance.

The second thing was that I realized there wasn't a lot of time. Whatever it was that I still wanted to do in my life, I would be well-advised to get going because I'd been running the meter for a while by now.

The third thing was that I met my best girlfriend, Angel, who served as my unpaid life coach and constantly reminded me how important it was to say, “yes,” even when “no” was much easier to say—perhaps especially then.

The fourth thing that happened was that Angel died.

Angel died too young and she died only after a colossal fight—because there was still so much she wanted to do. It was then I realized—when I really understood—that the micromanaging style I'd used to plan my life had outrun its usefulness. It was time to let my dreams evolve. It was time to go with the current. It was time to simply say, “yes” to the universe and be prepared for the ride.

So, that's what I've been trying to do... with occasional success. I like to know what's going to happen next, so this is a huge challenge for me. Then—just when I think I'm sort of getting the hang of it—my manager, Bob, suggests I perform with a cowboy. I can hear Angel laughing now.

I'll be performing next week in New York City with a cowboy. Wish me luck. Till next time, Carrie

Carrie Classon's memoir is called, “Blue Yarn.” Learn more at CarrieClasson.com.

Governor’s domestic terrorism task force meets at Capitol

AUSTIN — Gov. Greg Abbott last week convened the quarterly meeting of his Domestic Terrorism Task Force at the state Capitol.

“We must work together to develop meaningful solutions to fully eradicate domestic terrorism in the Lone Star State,” Abbott said in explaining the purpose of the meeting. “Just as domestic terrorism takes many forms, this task force is committed to developing comprehensive and evolving defense strategies to ensure a safe and secure future for every Texan,” Abbott added.

Abbott's office said the task force analyzed prevention strategies against domestic terrorism in the form of cyber attacks and discussed the importance of good “cyber hygiene.” Task force members include Abbott, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, House Speaker Dennis Bonnen, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton and other high-ranking state, county and federal officials.

DPS releases reports

On Jan. 7, the Texas Department of Public Safety released two reports: the 58-page “Assessing the Mass Attacks Threat to Texas” and the 49-page “Texas Domestic Terrorism Threat Assessment.”

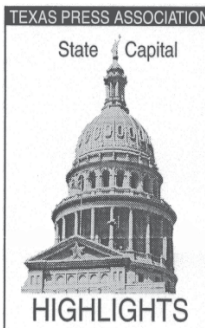
In releasing the documents, DPS Director Steven McCraw said it is critical to evaluate public safety vulnerabilities. To further its mission in preventing acts of violence and terrorism, the DPS is urging Texans to report suspicious activity to their local law enforcement or through the iWatchTexas program, a system that captures and connects potential criminal, terroristic or school safety-related threats.

Both reports are available online at dps.texas.gov/news.htm.

Disaster is declared

Drought conditions have caused a state of disaster in 17 Texas counties, Gov. Greg Abbott declared on Jan. 3. The declaration applies to the counties of Bandera, Bell, Blanco, Burnet, Karnes, Kendall, Kinney, Llano, Maverick, McCulloch, Medina, Real,

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Ed Sterling



Injury statistics posted

The Texas Department of Insurance on Jan. 3 referred to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data showing there are more workers in shopping malls and retail outlets that get sick and injured than in any other private industry sector in Texas.

An estimated 33,200 retail workers in Texas suffered a job-related illness or injury in 2018, as compared to 12,300 in construction, 17,700 in transportation and 20,400 in manufacturing, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

About 25% of these injuries required Texas retail workers to lose a day of work, while about 5% of the injuries required employees to lose 31 days or more of work.

The median time off for injured retail workers in Texas was five days. “There are more retail workers in the state getting injured than employees in construction, transportation

or even on factory floors,” said Chris D’Amura, director of workplace safety at the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers’ Compensation. “We’re seeing a lot of retail workers with sprains, strains, tears and overexertion. According to the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the longer workdays, expanded schedules and irregular shifts can negatively affect the mental and physical health of retail workers,” D’Amura said.

“When you add less sleep and more crowd stress, it’s not surprising we start seeing more accidents. Falls from ladders, slips on floors and trips over boxes and equipment were cited among the most common causes of injuries in the retail industry. Overexertion due to lifting, lowering and repetitive motion is also a high cause of injury in retail,” D’Amura added.

“This case was correctly dismissed months ago for lack of standing, and we are pleased that the Fifth Circuit agreed with our arguments and affirmed the district court’s decision,” Paxton said. “As the court recognized, the plaintiffs had no legal injury from the university’s decision to move property on its campus.”

The bronze statues of Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, Albert Sidney Johnston and John Reagan were moved in 2015 and 2017 to the Briscoe Center for American History on the university campus, where the figures are part of an educational display.

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TIPS & ENTERTAINMENT

Starting a Home Remodeling Project

7 tips for choosing a qualified contractor

(Family Features) Outside of the home itself, remodeling is typically one of the largest investments you can make as a homeowner. While some projects can be tempting to tackle yourself, many larger-scale projects may require hiring a qualified professional.

Because remodeling your home is a big undertaking, it's important to take steps to ensure the professional you hire to perform the work is qualified to complete it to the highest standards of quality and integrity.

Consider these tips from the experts at the National Association of the Remodeling Industry to help you make an informed decision when hiring a remodeling contractor.

Get Recommendations
One of the best ways to find qualified, professional help is through word-of-mouth referrals. Ask your relatives, friends, neighbors or co-workers — particularly if they've recently renovated their own homes — if they have any previous experience with companies they would recommend. Also consider searching online for reviews of companies in your area.

Stay Local
It's often best to consider established local remodeling companies first, as they are typically more



compelled to perform high-quality work, which allows their businesses to thrive and remain in the community. Local professionals are also likely to know permit requirements and building codes in your city or county, which can change from year to year.

Follow Your Design Aesthetic
Whether your home fea-

tures a mid-century modern, contemporary or farmhouse design style, it's critical to choose a remodeler who is knowledgeable in the construction and design of the style of your home. Additionally, a company that specializes in remodeling kitchens may not be suited for a bathroom or bedroom project.

Ask for Licenses and Insurance

Many states, but not all, require contractors to be licensed, bonded and insured. Ask for copies of licenses and insurance certificates for any remodelers you're considering to make sure they're current. Most states also require contractors to carry worker's compensation, property damage and personal

liability insurance for their crews. Contact your state or local licensing agencies to ensure the contractor meets the minimum requirements.

Check References

Once you've narrowed your list of potential contractors, ask for a list of references you can contact and a portfolio of work. A

typical reference list includes 10 or more jobs with dates as well as the customer's name, address and phone number, and a portfolio should also contain at least 10 projects with photos of the space before work began, during the project and after completion. If possible, also consider visiting a current job site to see first-hand how the contractor operates.

Search for Violations or Complaints

Because you can't always rely on a portfolio or references, it's important to also check with your local consumer affairs office or the Better Business Bureau to ensure there are no complaints on record for the contractors you're considering, which may help further narrow your list.

Compare Apples to Apples

While a number of different factors goes into every remodeling project, be sure all contractors you solicit bids from are using the same scope and quality of work requirements. Discuss any significant variations in price or timelines and be wary of any substantially lower estimates.

Find more tips for selecting a contractor at remodelingdoneright.com.

Posting Date January 20, 2020

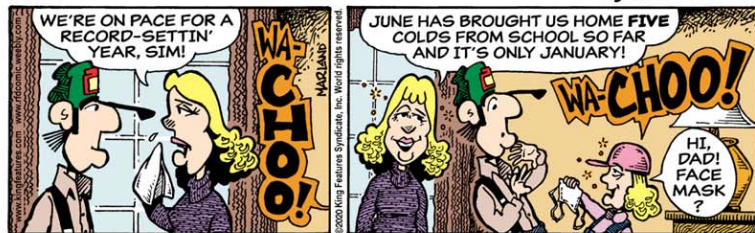
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



Weekly SUDOKU
by Linda Thistle

		1		5				3	
	7		2	1				9	
2					3				4
		6			7			9	2
5			8			3			
	3			6				4	
4	1			3		7			
9			4					1	
		7			8				5

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆◆

◆ Moderate ◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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HOCUS-FOCUS
BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Button is added. 2. Straw is moved. 3. Pillow is different. 4. Hair is different. 5. Knob is moved. 6. Sleeve is shorter.

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- Venomous viper
- Incense
- Pop
- Ball-bearing item
- Beelzebub's doings
- From square one
- Supreme Court Justice Thurgood —
- Calm before the storm
- Comedian Rivers
- Refuge
- Downright
- Road's shoulder
- Hard to find
- Almond confection
- Got a Secret
- Left-hand page
- Ostrich's cousin
- Union
- Valhalla VIP
- Loathe
- Loses traction
- Drive away
- "Wozzeck" composer
- Summertime treats
- Thatcher
- Command-

DOWN

- \$ dispenser
- Vast expense
- Storyteller in court
- Detox center
- Terrible guy?
- Abner
- Right angle
- Sandwich sausage
- Burden
- Place to buy 8-Down
- Piercing tools
- Slightly
- Ricelike pasta
- and proper
- Volcanic spillage
- Cleopatra's boat
- Gaelic
- Vegan's no-no
- Distinguished ancestry
- In the thick of
- Sisters
- Test tube
- Variety of macaque
- Gumbo base
- Music transition
- Ceremony
- Canyon phenomenon
- Lowly worker
- Author Stoker
- Encountered
- was saying ...
- Mess up
- Bill

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Trivia test
by Fifi Rodriguez

- U.S. STATES: Which two states share no borders with any other U.S. state?
- TELEVISION: What is Richie's last name in the 1970-80s series "Happy Days"?
- FOOD & DRINK: What is whey?
- GAMES: What are "bedposts" in bowling?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: What kind of creature is an ocelot?
- U.S. PRESIDENTS: By how many Senate votes was President Andrew Johnson spared removal from office after he was impeached by the House?
- LITERATURE: What is the end of the nursery rhyme that starts: "Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall/ Humpty Dumpty had a great fall ..."?
- ASTRONOMY: Which is the largest planet in our solar system?
- BIBLE: Who was John the Baptist's father?
- MUSIC: How many Top 10 songs were released on Michael Jackson's "Thriller" album?

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1. Hawaii and Alaska; 2. Cunningham; 3. The watery part of milk that remains after cheese curds have formed; 4. A 7-10 split; 5. A small, wild cat; 6. One vote short of necessary two-thirds majority to convict; 7. ... All the king's horses and all the king's men/ Couldn't put Humpty together again; 8. Jupiter; 9. Zechariah; 10. Seven

King Crossword
Answers

Weekly SUDOKU

5	2	4	8	1	7	9	3	6
1	9	5	4	7	8	2	6	3
6	8	7	2	3	9	5	1	4
4	1	6	8	5	2	7	3	9
9	3	7	2	8	4	6	5	1
2	6	9	4	7	5	8	1	3
4	9	3	8	7	6	5	2	1
7	4	9	5	8	1	3	2	6
3	7	1	9	5	6	2	8	4

LIFESTYLE

FLASHBACK

By Mick Harper—

1. What did fans throw at the Beatles during their first U.S. concert?
2. When the Doors were on "The Ed Sullivan Show" in 1967, they were asked to change the lyrics to which song?
3. How much more money does the operator want each time in "Sylvia's Mother"?
4. Who released "The One Who Really Loves You"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "She tunes in to Bandstand every day to watch the kids dancin' 'cross the USA."

Answers
1. Jelly beans. The boys had made the mistake of saying they loved them. Unfortunately they meant

the U.K. version of soft jelly babies. The Beatles were on a round stage with no place to hide from the stinging barrage of hard jelly beans.

2. "Light My Fire." But they didn't, claiming they forgot. (The Rolling Stones also caused the show problems with their questionable lyrics.)

3. The operator keeps wanting "Forty cents more for the next three minutes."

4. Mary Wells, in 1962.

5. "Queen of the Hop," by Bobby Darin in 1958. Although written long ago, the song hasn't been forgotten. It was used on the soundtrack to the "Porky's Revenge" film in 1985 and Shakin' Stevens' 1987 "16 Rock 'n' Roll Greats."

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VETERANS POST

by Freddy Groves

AccessVA: One Portal to Rule Them All

Tired of remembering all the usernames and passwords you need to do things online? The Department of Veterans Affairs has created a one-door portal to access all the VA-related places you need to be with only one set of sign-on infor-

mation to remember.

AccessVA is a new single-entry portal to VA websites and online applications. The list of locations is long and growing. At this point it includes veteran patient statements, life insurance online policy access, My HealthVet, veterans ID card, community care referrals and authorization, and much more.

If you already have

government approved sign on with DS logon, ID.me, VA 1Logon, My HealthVet and more, those will work with AccessVA. If you want to sign up in multiple places, you only have to do it once. Some of the locations might require additional registration to get started, but that will be made clear at the beginning. If you're already enrolled in Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), you'll be good to go. There might be a security requirement and a need for a higher level of credential if, for example, you're a doctor who needs to access patient records.

To learn more, go online to access.va.gov/accessva. Click on About AccessVA. You'll find information on updating

your information (phone numbers and links), the level of credential you'll need, the different levels of security and a FAQ.

Does this process sound complicated? It really isn't. One of the biggest benefits of AccessVA is the need for just one set of credentials, your username and password. Having multiple sets means you're more likely to write them down, which makes it more likely that scammers and thieves can access your information. With two small pieces of information to remember, your info is safer.

Start with the FAQ and if you need assistance, call the eBenefits helpdesk at 800-983-0937.

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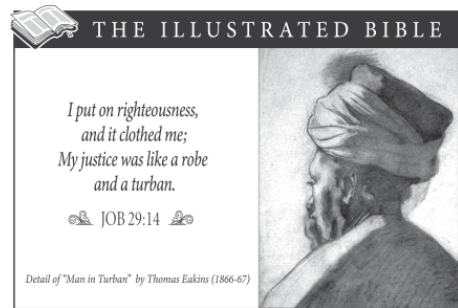
CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey—
1. Is the book of Judges in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Which member of David's army murdered two generals and was slain at a tabernacle altar as punishment? Heliz, Eilka, Joab, Zalmon
3. From Acts 28, who got a snake bite on the hand as he laid sticks on a fire? Noah, Moses, David, Paul

4. What prophet did mouth-to-mouth on a dead boy, restoring him to life? Jonathan, Silas, Elisha, Nahash
5. From Genesis 21, who put her child under a bush to die? Hagar, Miriam, Ezra, Sarah
6. What grandmother got commended by Paul for her great faith? Rachel, Lois, Dorcas, Delilah

ANSWERS: 1) Old; 2) Joab; 3) Paul; 4) Elisha; 5) Hagar; 6) Lois



Detail of "Man in Turban" by Thomas Eakins (1866-67)

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Garry Raws
Gertrude Bernice Wierbicki
David Raymond Binning
Melinda Jane Cosey

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Wedding celebration for Richard & Thelma Cantu



Richard and Thelma Cantu exchanged wedding vows on Saturday, January 11, 2020 at their church Holy Name Catholic Church. This was followed by a large reception attended by many family and friends from the East Aldine area, and the Aldine school district.

East Aldine District Bestows Abel Garza With Strategic Partner Award in Education

The East Aldine Management District recently held its 2019 Strategic Partners Celebration held on December 12 at the Greer & Lowdermilk Conference Center. One of the honorees that evening was Abel Garza, assistant superintendent of community and governmental relations, with Aldine ISD. The management district bestowed Garza with the Strategic Partner in Education Award.

The Strategic Partner Award in Education recognizes educational agencies, institutions, or



EAMD Board of Director Joyce Wiley presents Abel Garza with the Strategic Partner in Education Award. (Photo by Roan Matthews/CrackedFox.com)

individuals who are committed to helping students reach their full potential.

Garza has been involved in Aldine throughout his career for more than 20 years. He and his family have always been a part of positive community efforts, but none more important than educational services. Garza's work was recognized for bringing the community together with government officials for the betterment of the educational resources for the area has been vital to the success of Aldine's future.

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