

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Reader Opinion, Page 2
- Assistance loans for small businesses, Page 3
- Whitney Houston to perform at Jones Hall, Page 3

NORTHEAST NEWS



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VOL. 44, NO. 11 TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2020 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

CORONAVIRUS CASES CLIMB TO 27, OFFICIALS CANCEL MOST PUBLIC EVENTS

UPDATED - March 14, 2020 - Health Officials confirmed the fifth case of coronavirus in the City of Houston, and another in Montgomery County, making a total of 27 in the Houston areas. Officials said that the recorded 5 cases in Houston, 6 cases in Harris County, 9 cases in Fort Bend County, 2 cases in Brazoria County, 1 in Galveston County, and 4 in Montgomery County. (NOTE: This number will change as days go by.)

HOUSTON - With 27 coronavirus (COVID-19) cases reported in the Houston and Harris County areas, the city and the county are on high alert. Most of the cases can be traced to either a vacation cruise on the Nile River in Egypt, or attendance at



Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo, Health officials and Rodeo officials, at press conference last Tuesday, announcing that the city and county were issuing Health State of Emergency notices for the month of March. The Rodeo closed immediately and most city events were cancelled.

the Houston Rodeo cook-off. However, several cases have not been identified with these causes, and are being investigated.

Actions have been taken to prevent the virus spread, such as closures of the Rodeo, schools and colleges, athletic events, and entertainment. The scope of closures is unprecedented in modern times.

A call center has been opened to answer questions from the public. Houstonians can call the center at 832-393-4220 to speak to Health department staff and obtain information about the disease or get their questions answered.

The call center will open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. It will return voice messages left after

hours the following day on a first call, first served basis.

Federal action is expected next week, with test centers and financial relief for those unable to work.

Last Thursday, Mayor Turner updated the public on the city of Houston's response to containing and mitigating the spread of COVID-19 at a press conference.

The mayor's office has received questions about whether the city is going to shut down through the end of March. "That is not true. For the month of March, we are rescheduling or canceling events that are produced, sponsored, and permitted by the city of Houston," Mayor Sylvester Turner said. "The status of our grocery stores and retail programs remains

See Coronaviruses, Page 8

List of Cancellations, postponements in area

The containment of the Coronavirus has caused the following cancellations or postponements:

EDUCATION:

Aldine ISD, extended break through March 23, school starts March 24. Free meals will be served on the days off.

Houston ISD, cancelled all classes and events until March 31.

Lone Star College extended their break until March 25, Houston Community College extended until March 23.

EVENTS:

Houston Rodeo cancelled. Most city sponsored events cancelled for March.

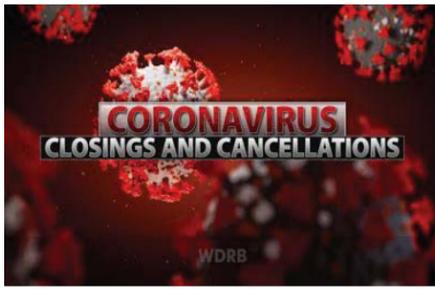
East Aldine Groundbreaking cancelled.

North Houston Little League Parade and Opening Day Postponed. Reset for April 6th games.

Houston Parks Events cancelled for March.

Pct. 1 and Pct. 2 Community Centers closed through March.

St. Patrick's Day Parade cancelled.



celled.

Any public event with over 250 attendees.

San Jacinto Battle and Festival cancelled.

BAA workshop cancelled.

Judge Stephens Teens Rock camp postponed.

ENTERTAINMENT:

Houston Zoo, Space Center Houston, Discovery Green events, Disneyland, Disney World closed for March.

Alley Theater, Houston Symphony and Houston Ballet, cancelled through March.

SPORTS:

Astros season opener moved to April.

Soccer, basketball rescheduled or cancelled, check with your team.

UH Men's Basketball, AAC tournament cancelled.

RESTRICTIONS:

Access to most hospitals and VA Med Ctr. are limited. Supermarkets have limited their hours to 8am to 8pm.

Note: this list is changing daily, check with your event prior to attendance.

Yvonne Lopez-Taylor, Dawn Brimhall named AISD top educators: Sandra Doria, Jeana Morrison-Adams named district's top principals

Aldine ISD celebrated its top teachers and principals at the Boots and Bling Educator of the Year Breakfast, held Friday, March 6 at the Hilton North Houston Hotel.

Aldine ISD Trustees, district administrators, campus administrators, teachers and business partners donned their best western wear to celebrate Aldine ISD teachers and campus administrators.

Yvonne Lopez-Taylor of Carter Academy was named the district's Elementary Teacher of the Year, while Dawn Brimhall of Davis High School was named Aldine's Secondary Teacher of the Year.

The four Teacher of the Year finalists were Darilyn Daniels of Jones Elementary School,

See Educators of the Year, Page 2



PICTURED: Dawn Brimhall and Yvonne Lopez-Taylor, center, were selected Aldine ISD's top educators at the Educator of the Year Breakfast held Friday, March 6 at the Hilton North Houston Hotel. Brimhall was named the district's Secondary Teacher of the Year, while Lopez-Taylor was named the district's Elementary Teacher of the Year. Pictured with them are Aldine ISD Board President Paul Shanklin, Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney, members of the Aldine ISD Board of Trustees, AEF President David Smith and the four district-wide finalists.

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7:00p 9:30p

Closed Caption
BRAHMS: THE BOY II (PG-13)
12:10pm, 2:30pm, 4:40pm, 7:00pm, 9:20pm

THE CALL OF THE WILD (PG)
2:20pm, 7:05pm
Closed Caption: Spanish Dubbed
THE CALL OF THE WILD (PG)
12:00pm, 4:40pm, 9:30pm

MY BOYFRIEND'S MEDS (Las piloras de mi novio) (R)
12:00pm, 4:40pm, 9:00pm

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG (PG)
12:15pm, 2:40pm, 5:00pm, 7:20pm, 9:40pm
Closed Caption
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG (PG)
12:00pm, 2:25pm, 4:45pm, 7:10pm, 9:30pm
Spanish Dubbed

Harley Quinn: BIRDS OF PREY (R)
12:00pm, 6:00pm
Spanish Dubbed
Harley Quinn: BIRDS OF PREY (R)
3:00pm, 9:00pm

BAD BOYS FOR LIFE (R)
12:00pm, 6:00pm
Closed Caption: Spanish Dubbed
BAD BOYS FOR LIFE (R)
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SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWS

Northeast area high school students set to graduate with HCC college credits

HOUSTON (March 6, 2020) – More than 100 students attending high schools served by Houston Community College (HCC) Northeast will graduate with degrees or certificates in May. The future graduates earned their credentials by taking college courses while in high school. Seventy-six area high school seniors will graduate with either an Associate of Arts or Associate in Science degree as a part of the HCC Northeast dual credit program. Others are set to graduate with Level I certificates in welding, graphic design, and video production.

Currently, there are more than 1,300 dual credit enrollments at high schools in the HCC Northeast feeder pattern. Northeast area schools benefiting from dual credit opportunities include Wheatley, Furr, Scarborough, Kashmere, Heights, Barbara Jordan, Sam Houston, North Forest, St. Pius high schools and the North Early College High School. High school students are receiving academic education and training in career fields that include automotive, global energy, performing arts, and digital design. HCC Northeast dual credit students make up only a



High school students taking college courses while in high school to get Houston Community College credits.

portion of the hundreds of students participating in the program and preparing to graduate from schools across Houston.

“HCC Northeast has been a longstanding partner with northeast Houston schools and remains committed to delivering higher education opportunities that are accessible and attainable to all students. We are so proud of our dual credit students and of the fact that we have played a pivotal role in their success,” says HCC Northeast president Dr. Monique Umphrey.

Dual credit is offered in high schools and at HCC campuses where credentialed embedded high

school instructors and HCC instructors teach the courses. The program not only exposes dual credit students to the college environment and student support services, it also helps to ease the transition to college after high school.

By offering high school students a head start in college, it means saving time and money, completing college faster, and greater opportunities for scholarships. Dual credit graduates also have an opportunity to enter the workforce immediately after high school as skilled employees. For more information on the dual credit program, visit hccs.edu/dualcredit.

Educators of the Year,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Ian Herran of Parker Elementary School, Thomasina Gatson of Victory Early College High School and Lauren Settecerri of Teague Middle School.

For the first time ever, the district selected a rookie elementary and secondary teacher of the year. Kimberly Grein of Francis Elementary was named the Elementary Rookie Teacher of the Year and Derrick Houston of Grantham Academy was named the Secondary Rookie Teacher of the Year.

In addition, the district's Principals of the Year and Rookie Principal of the Year were also announced.

Sandra Doria of Worsham Elementary was named the Elementary Principal of the Year, while Jeana Morrison-Adams was named the Secondary Principal of the Year and Aisley Adams of Nimitz Ninth Grade School was named the Rookie Principal of the Year.

All honored educators received monetary awards from the Aldine Education Foundation. Lopez-Taylor, Brimhall, Doria and Morrison-Adams will receive round trip airfare tickets from United Airlines. Lopez-Taylor and Brimhall also received a cash prize from InvesTex Credit Union.

All campus Teachers of the Year received gift bags with items donated by community partners: three-year planners, pens, note pads, lunch kits with a water bottle, plastic storage container, restaurant gift cards and AEF Teacher of the Year shirts.

Additional door prizes included gift baskets from local restaurants, gift certificates to local restaurants, Amazon gift cards, stays at local hotels, two iPads and two tickets to the March 6 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

Chief of Schools Katy Roede announced the Principals of the Year.

Doria said she takes her responsibility as her campus' leader seriously and believes it is crucial to the learning process to have a staff that is centered on its students.

“I believe all students can learn and grow,” she said. “As the campus leader, it is my responsibility to ensure our staff has the necessary materials and capacity to provide student-centered instruction that is rigorous, on-level and allows for student growth.”

Morrison-Adams believes providing her students with a solid education can result in success later in life.

“I believe education is a catalyst for enrichment and empowerment,” she said. “I believe that each student should have the benefit of a nurturing, social and emotional and safe instructional learning environment that strengthens character and encourages potential.”

Dr. Javier Villarreal, chief of human resources, announced the Teachers of the Year.

Lopez-Taylor said she uses her creative talents to help her students hone their own creativity.

“I want to inspire a new

generation of thinkers, explorers, artists and designers with their own determination for success,” she said. “My students learn to critique constructively. They learn how to express opinions without causing tears. They learn to help one another achieve goals. It is important to let students make mistakes and problem solve.”

Brimhall enjoys making educational connections with her students.

“I encourage the students to enhance their learning through trial and error, both in a simulation game and in the analysis of primary sources,” she said. “Additionally, I am able to individually work with students, helping them to make connections and encouraging them to explore new avenues of inquiry.”

Prior to the announcement of the Teachers of the Year, Principals of the Year and Rookie Teacher and Principals, every campus Teacher of the Year was introduced by Chief Communications Officer Sheleah Reed and Human Resources Director Raul Fonseca. The teachers and their principals showed off their best Western dance moves. Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney, Board President Paul Shanklin, fellow trustees and members of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) also helped with introductions.

The audience was also treated to a video of the six Teacher of the Year finalists produced by Luke Rabalais of the district's Communications Department.

The program began with a welcome from Nimitz High School FFA (Future Farmers of America) student Angel Allen, which was followed by the posting of the colors by the Eisenhower High School JROTC.

Board Vice-President Rose Avalos delivered the invocation. Reed then introduced AISD Trustees, Dr. Goffney and members of her ELT.

Following the introduction of the campus Teachers of the Year, AEF Board President David Smith recognized the sponsors who helped make the EOY Breakfast possible.

The presenting sponsor was H-E-B Tournament of Champions. WCA was the platinum sponsor, while The Edu-Source Corporation was the Gold Sponsor. Silver Sponsors included Aetna, Caldwell Companies, Cigna, East Aldine District, McDonald's and Xerox Business Solutions Southwest. Campus Sponsors were BakerRipley, CenterPoint Energy, Edgenuity, Estrada Hinojosa, Josten and Tarkett.

Additional funds of support were received from Noble Drilling Services, Rosewood and Sigma Tube and Bar.

Mr. Shanklin and Dr. Goffney provided closing remarks.

“On behalf of my fellow Trustees, we want you to know what a pleasure it has been to share this wonderful day with so many of

Aldine ISD's finest educators,” Mr. Shanklin said. “We want to congratulate each of you for being champions for all students.”

“Teaching is a calling, and those who answer that call play a vital role in preparing students for college, successful careers so that they can enjoy bright and unlimited futures. All of you have selected the most worthwhile profession on earth. You provide vision, direction and leadership for the community and you incorporate working together to achieve desired goals effectively and efficiently. You have a profound influence on your students and we are confident you are well aware of that fact.”

Dr. Goffney thanked the principals and the teachers for their service to Aldine ISD students and to the community.

“I want to congratulate all of our Educators of the Year with a big thank you for all you do for our students,” she said. “Last year, we took about 20 young ladies to see former First Lady Michelle Obama during her book tour in Houston. During her remarks she spoke about the importance of teachers and her comments resonated with me: We all remember the impact a special teacher had on us – a teacher who refused to let us fall through the cracks, who pushed and believed in us when we doubted ourselves; who sparked in us a lifelong curiosity and passion for learning.”

“Decades later, we remember the way they made us feel and how they impacted our lives. You all have impacted a student's life and made a positive impact. I am sure of it,” Dr. Goffney said.

She also thanked the many sponsors who made the EOY Breakfast possible.

“I also want to offer appreciation and thanks to our sponsors for supporting the teachers and students of Aldine ISD through the Aldine Education Foundation,” she said. “There is nothing like having business leaders and community members who believe in education and support it financially and with their time.”

The Teacher of the Year Committee consisted of Rose Avalos, Donna Burrell, Dr. Keena Bradley, Shannon Decena, Courtney Delco, Mark Mitchell, Kennia Penaloza, Jermel Viltz and Dr. David Villareal.

The Rookie Teacher of the Year Committee consisted of Ruby Allen, Dr. Bradley, Mitchell and Dr. Villareal.

The Principal of the Year Committee consisted of Sherrie Batro, Raquel Briones, Cindy Buchanan, Richard Cantu, Twiana Collier, Raul Fonseca, Patricia Rodriguez, Akilah Willery, and Dr. Robin Williams.

The Rookie Principal of the Year Committee consisted of Dr. Todd Davis, Katy Roede, Dr. Tamika Alford-Stephens, Sheleah Reed, Dawn Ayers-Rodriguez, LaTonya Amerson, LaToya Wynn, Mable Holt, Todd Lindeman and Patricia Rodriguez.

Nimitz High School FFA students served as district ambassadors and ushers for the event.

Prior to the start of the breakfast, the Davis High School Jazz Band provided entertainment.

Aldine ISD Annual Performance Report Hearing set at March 24th Board Meeting

Aldine ISD will hold a hearing for public discussion of the annual report at the March 24 Board of Trustees meeting. According to TEA (Texas Education Agency) guidelines, a hearing must be held within 90 calendar days from January 6, 2020. Parents

and property owners must be notified of the hearing. State law stipulates that notification must include notice to a newspaper of general circulation in the district and notice to electronic media serving the district. This notice can be in the form of a press re-

lease or other announcement, but it must be made available to local print and electronic media (i.e. newspaper, radio and television). It must clearly state the date, time and place of the hearing and explain the nature of the hearing.

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OPINION PAGE

OPINION

By Senator
Sylvia Garcia

COVID-19 Precautions to take

Dear Friend,
With 14 COVID-19 cases reported in the greater Houston area, including two in the City of Houston, and five in Harris County, the city and county are on high alert.

Thankfully, we are lucky to have some of the world's smartest medical experts in the Houston area who are responding to these cases right now.

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner has declared an emergency health declaration for seven days. Houston City Council will vote in a week whether to extend declaration. All city events, produced, cosponsored and permitted, will be canceled for March and rescheduled in April. Harris County also declared a state of emergency.

During this time, here are the most important precautions to take:

- Wash your hands with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.

- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. If you cough into a tissue or blow your nose, wash your hands after you throw away the tissue.

- If you are experiencing symptoms including fever, cough, and shortness of breath, seek medical advice promptly by calling ahead to a doctor or going to a medical provider to get guidance.

- Avoid touching your face, particularly eyes, nose, and mouth, with unwashed hands.

- Practice social distancing, ideally staying 6 feet away when you are in public places.

- Wipe down your phone and keys with a sanitizing wipe. Wipe down your car, steering wheel, and door handles.

In Congress, we've already moved quickly to pass emergency funding to boost the response of the federal, state, and local governments.

You can visit the CDC's website for the latest coronavirus news and all that you need to know: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>. And for the latest local updates, please visit Texas' Department of Health's COVID-19 website www.dshs.state.tx.us/coronavirus/

As always, take care of yourselves. Together, we will take care of our community.

Yours,
Congresswoman Sylvia R. Garcia



Social Security Matters

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

Ask Rusty – About the Dreaded “IRMAA” Provision

Dear Rusty: About a month or two ago I was notified that my Social Security was being reduced from \$1,583 a month to about \$1,283 a month - a \$300 deduction! They said it was because my income was over the limit on my last return. I filed my taxes “married - filing separately” because my wife has her own income. If we had filed jointly, I would not have had the reduction. My question is why wasn't this told to us when we filed our Income Tax last year instead of a last-minute thing? I am a 77-year old and a 100% disabled veteran, which probably has no effect on this, but wanted to add that information. Any light you can shed on the matter will be very much appreciated.

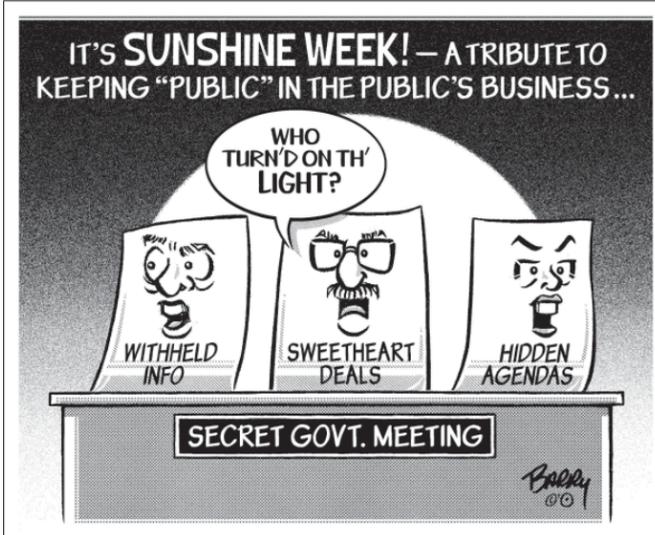
Signed: Irritated Senior
Dear Irritated Senior: First, I want to thank you for your service to our country. Allow me to explain what I believe happened. Your net (not gross) Social Security benefit payment was probably reduced as a result of a rule known as “IRMAA” - the “Income Related Medicare Adjustment Amount.” This is a supplement added to your Medicare Part B premium as a result of higher income, and a higher Medicare premium would mean a lower net Social Security payment.

Although filing your taxes separate from your wife does mean a lower income reported to the IRS for you, it also reduces the clip levels at which the IRMAA rule kicks in. For those who file income tax as an individual, IRMAA applies if your “provisional” income from all sources, including IRA or 401(K) withdrawals and half of your SS

benefits for the tax year, exceeds \$87,000. For those who file taxes jointly as a married couple, IRMAA applies if your combined income is more than \$174,000. Incomes above those clip levels result in corresponding higher IRMAA premiums, up to a maximum of \$491.60 (for 2020). So apparently your income for your filing status exceeded one of the higher IRMAA clip levels, which resulted in your monthly Medicare Part B premium going from the standard \$144.60 to an IRMAA premium about \$300 higher. Note that if your income in a subsequent year falls below the IRMAA clip levels, your Medicare premium will also go down to the level appropriate for your more recent income level.

As far as why you weren't told this in advance, neither Medicare nor the IRS (nor any other Government agency) will advise you in advance on such matters; the onus is upon you (and your tax preparer or financial advisor) to understand the implications of your income on your Medicare premium as well as your income tax obligation. You may want to speak to your tax advisor to see if there is a tax-filing option for eliminating the IRMAA. Once again, thank you for your service to our country, and I hope the above clarifies what happened to your Social Security benefit.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadviser@amacfoundation.org.



Trump, Biden emerge as winners in Texas primaries

AUSTIN — Incumbent President Donald J. Trump, who received 94% of the vote in the Lone Star State's Republican primary election, and former Vice President Joe Biden, who received 34.5 percent of the vote in the Democratic primary, were their parties' top vote-getters on March 3, Super Tuesday.

Biden's closest rival was Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who received 30% of the Democratic vote. Sanders was followed by former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, 14.4%, and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, 11.4%.

Overall voter turnout figures posted by the Texas Secretary of State's Elections Division show 4,084,431 of the state's 16,211,198 registered voters cast a ballot — slightly more than 25% of total registered voters. That's a higher participation rate than in the 2016 Super Tuesday vote. Then, 3,289,218 Texans cast a ballot, or 23% of the 14,238,436 voters who were registered at the time.

In a major down-ballot race, state Sen. Royce West, D-Dallas, and former Air Force helicopter pilot M.J. Hegar, will face each other in a May 26 Democratic primary runoff. The winner will run against long-term incumbent U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, a Republican, in the Nov. 3 general election.

Complete election results are available at the Texas Secretary of State's website, sos.texas.gov.

City cancels festival

The city of Austin and Travis County on March 6 declared a “local state of disaster” in response to

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Ed Sterling

what officials called an increasing concern over novel coronavirus — COVID-19 — the deadly flu-like contagion that has developed into a worldwide health threat.

Austin Mayor Steve Adler issued a related order canceling the South by Southwest festival, an event that has been hosted annually by the capital city since 1987. To illustrate the rapidity of the local decision-making process, only two days earlier, Austin's public health department stated that “there's no evidence that closing SXSW or any other gatherings will make the community safer.”

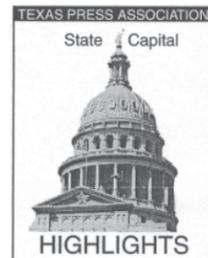
Dr. Mark Escott, commenting on behalf of the department on March 6, said, “While there is no clear guidance on what local jurisdictions should do under these circumstances, our local expert advisory panel took a look at the risk factors and identified a number of concerns.”

The SXSW festival, a global magnet for music lovers, the film and media industries and educators usually attracts more than 150,000 attendees over a 10-day period.

Abbott: Texas can test

Texas now has the capacity to test for COVID-19, Gov. Greg Abbott announced on March 5 in a joint press conference with Department of State Health Services Commissioner John Hellerstedt and Texas Division of Emergency Management Chief Nim Kidd.

Six public health labs within the Texas Laboratory Response Network are now equipped to perform COVID-19 testing, with the remaining four being fully equipped in the coming days, Abbott said. The network provides laboratory diagnostics and maintains the capacity to respond to biological and chemical threats and other public



health emergencies. The six public health labs within the network that are equipped to perform COVID-19 tests include Austin, Houston, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth and Lubbock. The remaining four labs in the network will be equipped with testing capabilities in the coming days: Tyler, San Antonio, Corpus Christi and Harlingen. The state public health lab network will be able to test over 125 patients per day once the entire network is equipped, Abbott added.

Gov. AG warn gougers

Gov. Abbott and Attorney General Ken Paxton on March 6 issued a warning to anyone participating in price-gouging of medical supplies as Texas continues to combat the potential threat of the coronavirus.

Abbott said he would invoke a state law that gives Paxton “broader powers” to prosecute price gougers. Texans who suspect a case of price-gouging related to the potential coronavirus threat should file a consumer complaint with the Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General of Texas, Abbott said. Consumer Protection Hotline: (800) 621-0508.

Revenue total reported

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar on March 3 said state sales tax revenue totaled \$2.89 billion in February, an amount 3.5 percent more than the amount reported in February 2019.

Growth in state sales tax revenue was led by receipts from the retail trade and information services sectors, while receipts from the construction sector were down from a year ago and growth in tax receipts from retail trade was slightly boosted by collections from online marketplace providers and remote sellers, Hegar said.

OPINION

By
Kelley Shannon

Sun starting to shine again on Texas government

By Kelley Shannon
Freedom of Information Foundation

Texans have something to celebrate during Sunshine Week this year. But we also have more work to do to protect the public's right to know about our government.

Sunshine Week, March 15-21, is an annual national initiative proclaiming the importance of access to public information.

First, the bright spot for Texas: Essential elements of contracts between governments and private companies — including pricing and promises — are public again under a law that took effect Jan. 1.

It seems like those basics of how taxpayer dollars are spent should be easily accessible, doesn't it? They were, for years, under our Texas Public Information Act. But the Texas Supreme Court in 2015 blocked the sunshine and in many cases banished that tax-dollar information into the darkness.

The court's action resulted in the Texas Attorney General's Office issuing more than 4,000 rulings from mid-2015 through 2019 allowing governments and private entities to withhold contract details, sometimes even hiding the final price.

Gone from public view were records on school construction contracts; prison supply purchases; Uber, Lyft and Yellow Cab licensing; naming rights agreements at public buildings and stadiums; marketing deals between governments and private firms; and many more tax-dollar expenditures.

After working on it two legislative sessions, Sen. Kirk Watson, D-Austin, and Rep. Giovanni Capriglione, R-Southlake, passed Senate Bill 943 in 2019, reopening key contracting records.

“If Texans are to hold their public officials accountable, access to public information is essential,” Watson said in a joint statement with Capriglione.

Among the law's early success stories is disclosure of the city of McAllen's contract with entertainer Enrique Iglesias to perform at a holiday festival. For four years, the city refused to reveal what it paid and promised Iglesias, but the newly released contract reveals it paid \$485,000. It agreed to charter a flight for the performer from Mexico and supply his backstage with steak, sushi, sashimi and also juice with pulp.

Other previously concealed contracts are now coming to light across the state. Open government advocates and everyday Texans will be watching to make sure the new law works as intended.

Meanwhile, still on the to-do list in the Texas Legislature are other important bills to open information.

Accuracy is crucial, whether in news reporting, vetting political candidates or checking someone's background for employment, credit scores or lending. Birthdates in public records allow for getting it right. Yet, another court ruling has been closing off this vital information. Legislation is needed in 2021 to respond to the court and enhance accuracy.

When it comes to police records surrounding an in-custody death, families and the public need to know what transpired to hold law enforcement accountable.

Many law enforcement agencies use part of the Public Information Act that was intended to protect the living who were arrested but never convicted to instead hide records when an arrested person dies in custody. It's beyond time to close that loophole.

It's also time for a law to codify what the attorney general's office has long stated: Electronic information shall be provided in the format a requestor prefers if it is stored that way and can be provided at no greater expense or time. For example, if government data is stored in a searchable and sortable electronic spreadsheet and it's requested that way, it should be provided as a spreadsheet — not in some other less useful format.

Stay tuned for additional public information initiatives in the months to come. If there's one thing certain about the quest for open government in Texas, it's that the effort never ends.

We must remain vigilant and protect the public's right to know.

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CORONAVIRUS SPANISH

Orientación pública del condado de Harris

Orientación pública del condado de Harris - 12 de marzo de 2020

Orientación para personas con mayor riesgo de enfermedad grave por COVID-19

Personas mayores de 60 años. Personas con afecciones de salud latente

Aquellos que cuidan a menores de edad con afecciones de salud latente

Cualquier persona que tenga preguntas si su condición los pone en mayor riesgo de COVID-19

Orientación para lugares de Trabajo y Empresas. Los empleadores deberán tomar medidas que sean factibles

Los empleadores deberán: Maximizar las opciones de teletrabajo para tantos empleados como sea posible.

teletrabajo para tantos empleados como sea posible. Instar a los empleados a quedarse en casa

Considerar tiempos de inicio y finalización para reducir el número de personas que se reúnen al mismo tiempo.

Limpia y desinfecta las áreas que se tocan con frecuencia

Consideraciones para eventos y reuniones comunitarias. Instamos a los organizadores de cualquier evento

Personas mayores de 60 años. Personas con afecciones de salud latente

Si no puede evitar reunirse con un gran grupo de personas

Cualquier persona enferma no debe asistir. Aquellos que corren un mayor riesgo de contagio

Aumentar la frecuencia de desinfección de puntos de contacto comunes.

Tratar de encontrar maneras de proveer a las personas más espacio físico para que no estén en contacto cercano

Asegurarse de contar con un suministro adecuado de jabón y desinfectante de manos

Anime a los asistentes a seguir una mejor higiene, como: Lavarse las manos a menudo

Si no hay agua y jabón disponibles, los asistentes deberán usar desinfectante para manos a base de alcohol

Evite el contacto cercano con otras personas. Evite tocarse los ojos, nariz y boca. Cubrirse al toser y estornudar con pañuelos desechables

Orientación para Personas de la Tercera edad y Aquellos que Necesitan Asistencia. Las instalaciones para personas de la tercera edad

Implementar medidas de distanciamiento social. Reducir las reuniones grandes

Limitar los programas con personal externo. Considerar que los residentes permanezcan en las instalaciones

Limitar visitantes. Implementar la detección de temperatura y síntomas respiratorios

Implementar cierres a corto plazo según sea necesario entre el personal, los residentes o los clientes que viven en otro lugar

Orientación para las Escuelas. El Departamento de Salud Pública del Condado Harris, HCPH por sus siglas en inglés

cuestión. En este momento, el Departamento de Salud Pública del Condado Harris no recomienda el cierre de escuelas

Algunos niños tienen problemas de salud latentes, como el tener con un sistema inmune débil, el cual podría ponerlos en mayor riesgo de contraer la enfermedad de COVID-19

Es importante que las escuelas limiten la posible propagación de COVID-19 ya que los estudiantes infectados aún pueden entrar en contacto con aquellos que tienen un mayor riesgo de enfermedad de COVID-19

Implementar medidas de distanciamiento social: Reducir la frecuencia de eventos con un considerable número de asistencia

Modifique los horarios para reducir el riesgo a estar expuestos

Limite las interacciones entre escuelas. Considere el aprendizaje vía electrónica.

Considerar chequeos de salud regular para detectar síntomas respiratorios

estudiantes, personal y visitantes (si es posible).

Salida de clases y actividades extracurriculares por anticipado según sea necesario

Los estudiantes con mayor riesgo de enfermedad deben considerar implementar un plan individual para el aprendizaje a distancia

Dar prioridad a las acciones de protección para los estudiantes, el personal y los visitantes que corren un mayor riesgo de enfermedad.

Algunos niños tienen problemas de salud latentes, como el tener con un sistema inmune débil, el cual podría ponerlos en mayor riesgo de contraer la enfermedad de COVID-19

Para Personas Enfermas

Permanezca en casa si está enfermo. No se exponga en público cuando esté enfermo.

Si está enfermo, llame primero al consultorio de su médico antes de ingresar.

No vaya a la sala de emergencias a menos que tenga una emergencia médica.

Si tiene síntomas como tos, fiebre u otros problemas respiratorios, quédese en casa y manténgase aislado hasta que haya contactado a un profesional de la salud.

Para el Público en General

Lávese las manos frecuentemente con agua y jabón durante al menos 20 segundos. Use desinfectante para manos

cuando no se las pueda lavar. Evite tocarse los ojos, nariz y boca con las manos sin lavar.

Cúbrase al toser y estornudar con pañuelos desechables. Si no tiene un pañuelo, utilice su brazo para cubrirse.

Incluso si no está enfermo, evite visitar hospitales, centros de atención a largo plazo u hogares de ancianos en la medida que sea posible.

Evite el contacto cercano con personas enfermas, especialmente si tiene un mayor riesgo de contraer la enfermedad de COVID-19.

Descanse, tome muchos líquidos, coma alimentos saludables y controle su estrés para mantener un sistema inmunológico fuerte.

Limpie superficies de su hogar con limpiadores comunes.

Manténgase informado. La información está cambiando con frecuencia. Visite ReadyHarris.org con frecuencia para obtener actualizaciones.

Recursos de Salud Mental. El brote de COVID-19 puede ser estresante para las personas en la comunidad. El miedo y la ansiedad por una enfermedad pueden ser abrumadores

Las personas con afecciones de salud mental preexistentes deben continuar con sus planes de tratamiento, mantenerse en contacto con su proveedor de atención médica

Llame a su proveedor de atención médica si las reacciones de estrés interfieren con sus actividades diarias.

Llame a la línea de ayuda en casos de desastre al 1-800-985-5990 si experimenta angustia emocional relacionada con COVID-19.

ENTERTAINMENT

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The Spats



Weekly SUDOKU by Linda Thistle. A 9x9 grid with numbers and empty cells for a puzzle.

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF. Two panels of a cartoon showing a car and a person.

King Crossword Posting Date March 16, 2020

King Crossword puzzle grid with ACROSS and DOWN clues. Includes clues like 'Do arithmetic', 'Long tales', 'Stitch', etc.

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Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

- 1. COMICS: In which comic-book series was the character of Wendy the Good Little Witch introduced?
2. GEOGRAPHY: Which is the flattest U.S. state?
3. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president installed the first telephone in the White House?
4. LITERATURE: Which attorney was introduced in the novel "The Case of the Velvet Claws"?
5. HISTORY: Who opened the first birth control clinic in the United States in 1916?
6. SCIENCE: Which element is graphite made entirely of?
7. MOVIES: Which movie featured the famous line, "I'm gonna make him an offer he can't refuse"?
8. MUSIC: Which two country stars released a 1978 song called "You're the Reason Our Kids Are Ugly"?
9. TELEVISION: What was the name of the inn on the "Newhart" comedy series?
10. MEASUREMENTS: Ten inches of snow generally equal how many inches of rain?

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1. "Casper the Friendly Ghost"; 2. Florida; 3. Rutherford B. Hayes; 4. Perry Mason; 5. Margaret Sanger; 6. Carbon; 7. "The Godfather"; 8. Loreta Lynn and Conway Twitty; 9. The Stratford Inn; 10. 1 inch

LIFESTYLE

Selfie Mode

Sometime when you're waiting somewhere, like in the mall while your spouse is shopping, watch people. It is astounding how many will suddenly stop what they're doing to take a selfie. They may even be taking a picture of something really special, but they will ensure that they get in the picture.

This is a great illustration of our modern culture. As a people, we tend to live in Selfie Mode. It's all about what I'm doing, what I have, what I want, where I am. In our Selfie Mode lives, we're like those

photographers. We're concerned about who or what else is in the picture and how they'll make us look. We strive to enhance our own images. And, oh my, but we do want everyone to see us and like us and follow us and comment positively on us.

I'm thinking funeral mode is more powerful. 2 Timothy 2:11 (NKJV) says, "Ag This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. Ah THAT is where we should be. If we're dead to sin and living with Jesus Christ, self no longer controls us. Of course, we

★

**THOUGHTS FROM
HILLSIDE CHURCH**

By Dr. Mark Trice



CHOOSE to die to sin. We DECIDE to keep the focus on Him. No matter what trials and tribulations come.

Yes, trials and tribulations come, but if we stay focused on Him instead of on ourselves and how the trials are affecting us, we shall endure. And then? We reign. 2 Timothy 2:12 (NKJV) tells us that "Ag If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. Ah Oops,

again there is a choice.

So how do we deny Him? By staying in Selfie Mode, by refusing to acknowledge that HE is the be all and end all of our lives and the only One truly worthy of our focus. To reign with Him, we have to endure with Him truly by our sides.

How do we do this? It's easier than most think. We start by actively seeking a relationship with Him. God wanted relationship from the beginning!

Like the bumper sticker says, it's NOT religion. Religion won't get us very far, but a genuine, deep relationship with Him will take us joyfully into eternity.

How do we develop this relationship?

- Pray: Talk to Him all the time, and listen to what He has to say. He wants to spend time with us!

- Get into The Word: The Word is Jesus and Jesus is the Word (John 1:1-5, 14), so to truly know Jesus we must dig into the Bible and get to know it.

- Be in church: No matter how much we may like to deny it or how many excuses we make, though we may prefer to overlook what

is being said, when we really get into the Word (especially the epistles) we see that the Apostles expect Christians to be faithful in their church attendance.

- Seek His will and not our own: Yes, it's the last thing on the list because, guess what? It's hard to know His will if you don't truly know Him. Once we do know Him and come to understand what pleases Him, we choose. Do we do what pleases Him? Or what pleases us?

And we are back to the original question. Will we be like most of today's culture, living in Selfie Mode, or will we choose God's way?

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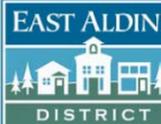
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CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey—

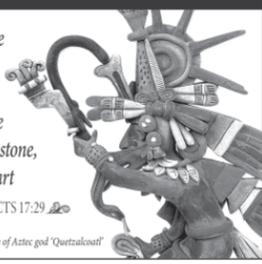
1. Is the book of Zechariah in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Which prophet said God is like a green tree giving shelter to those who trust Him? Joel, Hosea, Joshua, Solomon
3. What man had seven sons who always celebrated their birthdays with a feast? Solomon,

4. From Exodus 2, who became a fugitive after killing an Egyptian? Moses, Cain, Joseph, Jeremiah
5. In Acts 9, what woman had Tabitha as a pet name? Priscilla, Naomi, Dorcas, Delilah
6. Which church was neither hot nor cold? Antioch, Laodicea, Trinity, Philadelphia

ANSWERS: 1) Old; 2) Hosea; 3) Job; 4) Moses; 5) Dorcas; 6) Laodicea

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. ACTS 17:29



Detail of sculpture of Actus god "Quetzalcoatl"

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NORTHEAST BELTWAY 8 News

Coronavirus,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and while it is always good to buy supplies or groceries that can last for a week or two, there is no reason for you to overdo it."

Harris County Health Officials recommend the following steps for people at higher risk. These steps are recommended until March 31, 2020 or until otherwise noted.

GUIDANCE FOR PEOPLE AT HIGHER RISK FOR SEVERE COVID-19 ILLNESS

People at higher risk of severe illness should stay home and away from large groups of people as much as possible, including public places with lots of people and large gatherings where there will be close contact with others. Gatherings of seniors or other people at higher risk of severe illness should be canceled or postponed. Those at higher risk include:

- People 60 and older.
- People with underlying health conditions (e.g. heart disease, lung disease, diabetes)
- People who have weakened immune systems.
- Pregnant women.

Caregivers of children with underlying health conditions should consult with healthcare providers about whether their children should stay home. Anyone who has questions about whether their condition puts them at increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness should consult with their healthcare provider. Those without a healthcare provider should contact Harris Health's Ask A Nurse line at: 713-634-1110.

GUIDANCE FOR WORKPLACES AND BUSINESSES

Employers should take steps to make it more feasible for their employees to work in ways that minimize close contact with large numbers of people.

- Employers should:
 - Maximize telecommuting options for as many employees as possible.
 - Urge employees to stay home when they are sick and maximize flexibility in sick leave benefits.
 - Consider staggering start and end times to reduce large numbers of people coming together at the same time.
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched areas (door knobs, tabletops, countertops, phones, keyboards, etc.).
 - Prioritize protective actions for employees who are at higher risk of severe illness.

EVENT AND COMMUNITY GATHERING CONSIDERATIONS

We strongly urge the organizers of any events over 250 people to cancel or postpone such events. Additionally, we strongly encourage organizers of events of any size in which people will be in close contact to cancel or postpone such events, if possible.

If you cannot avoid bringing a group of people together, we recommend the following guidelines:

- Anyone who is sick should not attend.
- Those who are at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness should not attend.
- Increase the frequency of sanitizing common touch-points.

- Try to find ways to give people more physical space so that they are not in close contact as much as possible.
- Ensure an adequate supply of hand soap, disinfectants, tissues, and paper towels.
- Encourage attendees to follow increased hygiene, such as:
 - Washing their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
 - If soap and water are not available, attendees should use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid close contact with other people
 - Avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth
 - Covering their cough or sneeze with a tissue - if available - or into their elbow

- Alter schedules to reduce mixing (e.g., stagger recess, entry/dismissal times)
- Limit inter-school interactions
- Consider distance learning and/or e-learning in some settings
- Consider regular health checks (e.g., temperature and respiratory symptom screening) of students, staff, and visitors (if feasible).
- Short-term dismissals for school and extracurricular activities as needed (e.g., if cases are identified among staff/students) for cleaning and contact tracing.
- Students at increased risk of severe illness should consider implementing individual plans for distance learning and/or e-learning.
- Prioritize protective actions for students, staff, and visitors who are at higher risk of severe illness.

- Implement social distancing measures:
 - Reduce large gatherings (e.g., group social events)
 - Alter schedules to reduce mixing
 - Limit programs with external staff
 - Consider having residents stay in facility and limit exposure to the general community
 - Visits should be limited and restricted to residents' rooms
- Implement temperature and respiratory symptom screening of attendees, staff, and visitors.
- Implement short-term closures as needed (e.g., if cases are identified among staff, residents or clients who live elsewhere) for cleaning and contact tracing.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces daily.

GUIDANCE FOR SENIOR LIVING AND ASSISTED LIVING

Senior living facilities, assisted living facilities, and other facilities with populations at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness should limit interactions with the general public as much as possible. These facilities should:

- Implement social distancing measures:
 - Reduce large gatherings (e.g., group social events)
 - Alter schedules to reduce mixing
 - Limit programs with external staff
 - Consider having residents stay in facility and limit exposure to the general community
 - Visits should be limited and restricted to residents' rooms
- Implement temperature and respiratory symptom screening of attendees, staff, and visitors.
- Implement short-term closures as needed (e.g., if cases are identified among staff, residents or clients who live elsewhere) for cleaning and contact tracing.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces daily.

GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

Harris County Public Health (HCPH) is currently not recommending closing schools. If a case of COVID-19 is diagnosed at a school, HCPH will work with the relevant school and district to determine actions to take, including potential closure of the school.

At this moment, Harris County Public Health is not recommending school closures at this time because children have not been shown to be at high risk for serious cases of COVID-19. When some schools briefly closed during the H1N1 influenza pandemic, children still gathered in group settings and thus still had exposure to one another. Additionally, closing schools would put a strain on our workforce, including healthcare and emergency workers who are essential to the COVID-19 response. As much as possible, children should be allowed to carry on with their education and normal activities. HCPH respects individual school districts' decisions about closures or postponement of activities.

It is important for schools to limit potential spread of COVID-19 because infected

students may still come into contact with those who are at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness outside the school setting. We are asking schools to take precautions to avoid the spread of COVID-19. Schools should:

- Implement social distancing measures:
 - Reduce the frequency of large gatherings (e.g., assemblies), and limit the number of attendees per gathering.
 - Alter schedules to reduce mixing (e.g., stagger recess, entry/dismissal times)
 - Limit inter-school interactions
 - Consider distance learning and/or e-learning in some settings
 - Consider regular health checks (e.g., temperature and respiratory symptom screening) of students, staff, and visitors (if feasible).
 - Short-term dismissals for school and extracurricular activities as needed (e.g., if cases are identified among staff/students) for cleaning and contact tracing.
 - Students at increased risk of severe illness should consider implementing individual plans for distance learning and/or e-learning.
 - Prioritize protective actions for students, staff, and visitors who are at higher risk of severe illness.

Some children have underlying health conditions, such as weakened immune systems, that put them at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness. Caregivers of children with underlying health conditions should consult with healthcare providers about whether their children should stay home. Those without a healthcare provider should contact Harris Health's Ask A Nurse line at: 713-634-1110.

FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE SICK

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Do not go out in public when you are sick.
- If you are ill in any way, call your doctor's office first before going in.
- Do not go to the emergency room unless you are experiencing a medical emergency. Emergency rooms need to be able to serve those with the most critical needs.
- If you have symptoms like cough, fever, or other respiratory problems, stay home and self-isolate until you have contacted a healthcare professional.

FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer when you cannot wash your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw the tissue away. If you don't have a tissue, use the elbow of your sleeve. Don't use your hands to cover coughs and sneezes.
- Even if you are not ill, avoid visiting hospitals, long-term care facilities or nursing homes to the extent possible. If you do need to visit one of these facilities, limit your time there and keep six feet away from patients.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, especially if you are at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness.
- Get plenty of rest, drink plenty of fluids, eat healthy foods, and manage your stress to keep your immuni-

SYMPTOM	COLD	FLU	CORONA-VIRUS
Fever	Rare	Yes, often high	Yes
Cough	Mild to moderate	Yes	Yes, typically dry
Shortness of breath	Rare	Yes	Yes
Fatigue, weakness	Mild	Yes	Yes
Headache	Rare	Yes	Sometimes
Muscle aches	Slight	Yes, often	Yes
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes	No
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes	Sometimes
Stuffy or runny nose	Common	Sometimes	Rare

Source: World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

ty strong.

- Clean household surfaces with standard cleaners.
- Stay informed. Information is changing frequently. Visit ReadyHarris.org frequently for updates.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

The outbreak of COVID-19 may be stressful for people throughout the

community. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Accordingly, we suggest the following recommendations:

- People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment plans, stay connected with their healthcare provider, and monitor for any

new symptoms.

- Call your healthcare provider if stress reactions interfere with your daily activities
- Call the Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 if you are experiencing emotional distress related to COVID-19.

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10th ANNIVERSARY

Pastoral Celebration

HONORING

Rev. Edward L. Durant Jr.

Sunday, March 22, 2020

POSTPONED

Theme: "Steadfast, Unmovable, Always Abounding" 2 Corinthians 4:1

Due to the serious and ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, our 10th Pastoral Celebration will be postponed until a later date. This is a precautionary measure to ensure the safety of all our family and friends.

Kashmere Gardens Missionary Baptist Church
4302 Cavalcade Street - Houston, Texas 77026