

NEWS NOTES

TO OUR READERS:
The current Covid-19 Pandemic and other economic conditions have caused us to combine some issues every two weeks, and to change distribution to Pick-up locations. See page 7 for 50 locations where you can get a copy of the Northeast News, and page 6 for email subscriptions. We thank you for your continued support.

COVID-19 RESOURCES

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readyharris.org

MD MEDICAL
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For Pre-screening
Aldine Mail Rte.

Mural at library emphasizes the importance of the census



Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia, left, State Representative Armando Walle, middle, and Pct. 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis, right, in front of a mural outside the High Meadows Library in Aldine. The three provided important updates regarding census self-response.

See Story "Census Mural", Page 3

Food Drive at Stampede feeds thousands Boxes available every Thursday

EAST ALDINE – The owners of the event centers Stampede and Escapade have teamed up with local organizations, to provide boxes of food and milk to residents of the area.

The distribution has been happening every Thursday morning, from 7am to 11am, or when the food runs out.

According to club owner Rob Ferdows, an average of 1600 to 2500 persons

See Food Distribution, Page 8



Drone photo shows about 1000 cars lined up, from the Stampede and Escapade event centers on the right, to Eastex Freeway on the left.

Aldine ISD to hold graduation ceremonies in Thorne Stadium

Aldine ISD will hold its high school graduation ceremonies in Thorne Stadium, July 22-25.

In the near future, the district will inform students about how they can get tickets for their family members and friends. Social distancing rules will remain in place at all graduation ceremonies.

"We decided to change from an inside to outside ceremonies as a result of the Class of 2020 Celebration that went off so well," said Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney. "We are aware our seniors wants in-person graduation ceremonies rather than virtual ones and we are more than happy to accommodate them."

Here is the graduation schedule:

- Carver High School, Wednesday, July 22, 8 a.m.
 - Hall Center for Education, Wednesday, July 22, 9:30 a.m.
 - Victory Early College High School, Wednesday, July 22, 8 p.m.
 - Davis High School, Thursday, July 23, 8 a.m.
 - Eisenhower High School, Thursday, July 23, 8 p.m.
 - MacArthur High School, Friday, July 24, 8 a.m.
 - Nimitz High School, Friday, July 24, 8 p.m.
 - Aldine High School, Saturday, July 25, 8 a.m.
 - Blanson CTE High School, Saturday, July 25, 8 p.m.
- Should any of the ceremonies be interrupted by rain, those ceremonies would be held on Sunday, July 26.

2020 VISION: BRING YOUR FUTURE INTO FOCUS!

The world looks a little different right now, but one thing is clear;
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REGISTER NOW for
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Talk to an advisor: NH-Advisor@LoneStar.edu

Get help with financing: FACC@LoneStar.edu

LSC-East Aldine Center questions:

LSC-EastAldineCenter@LoneStar.edu

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SCHOOL NEWS

Davis High School Seniors
Receive Top Achievers Award

Davis Senior High School graduates, Kenneth Walker II and Moné Walker were recently selected as 2020 recipients of the College Community Career (CCC) Top Achievers Award.

The Walker twins joined the CCC program their sophomore year of high school. CCC prepares students for college admission and graduation from a four-year university. The program focuses on college success, leadership development, civic engagement and career discovery.

CCC stays with students from the 10th grade, through high school graduation and continues with them until they become an employed, civically-minded, college graduate.

This fall, the twins will be attending UT Permian Basin (UTPB). For more information, please contact collegecommunitycareer@gmail.com.



Kenneth Walker II and Moné Walker

Aldine ISD Trustees adopt budget,
set tax rate for 2020-21 school year

The Aldine ISD Board of Trustees adopted the budget and set the tax rate for the 2020-21 school year during a special called meeting on Monday, June 29.

The special called meeting was held in the Board Room of the Donaldson Administration Building.

Chief Financial Officer Dr. Tamika Alford-Stephens recommended Trustees adopt a general operating budget of \$657,902,917. Projected revenues for the 2020-21 school year is \$654,708,937. To balance the general fund budget, the district will use fund balance reserves in the amount of \$3,193,980.

The 2020-2021 General Fund budget adopted by the Board includes an approximately 1.5% increase above last year's budget.

The 2020-21 budget adopted by AISD Trustees includes a 1.5% raise for all district employees.

The general operating budget approved by AISD Trustees provides funding for all instructional programs, student activities and district operations in addition to five priority areas.

Trustees also set the tax rate for the 2020-21 school year at \$1.333515 per \$100 valuation. The Interest and Sinking rate will be .3025 cents and the Main-

tenance and Operation fund will be \$1.031015. The 2020-21 tax rate is .0136 cents lower than the 2019-2020 tax rate.

The District will not officially adopt the tax rate until it receives the Certified Property Values from the Harris County Appraisal District in late August. The adoption of the tax rate will occur during the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees in September.

Aldine ISD Trustees unanimously approved both recommendations.

Proper notification of the special called meeting was posted and advertised in local newspapers.

Avalos P-TECH HS holds induction
ceremony for in-coming freshmen class

Avalos P-TECH High School held a virtual induction ceremony for its in-coming freshmen class on Thursday, June 18.

The Class of 2024 will be the second freshmen class at Aldine ISD's newest high school when the 2020-21 school year begins.

Avalos Principal Diana Del Pilar delivered the welcome, while Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney was the keynote speaker.

Dr. Goffney congratulated the new 130 freshmen for choosing to attend Avalos P-TECH High School, where they will have a seamless path from high school to post-secondary education, to employment.

"I'm very proud of each and everyone of you," Dr. Goffney said. "2020 has not been the best year, but you did not allow that to deter you. You have shown resiliency with a razor-like focus."

Dr. Goffney applauded the in-coming freshman class for choosing a school where they will not only earn a high school diploma, but also an associate's degree from Lone Star College (Aldine ISD and Lone Star College serve as partners of Avalos P-TECH High School) as well as industry certifications and licenses.

"We want you to graduate with choices and opportunities," she said. "There

is power in education. Through education, there are so many things you can accomplish. Do not let anything separate you from your goals."

Following Dr. Goffney's remarks, Dr. Luis Lucio of Lone Star College, announced each of the incoming freshmen and what pathway they have chosen to study.

Del Pilar then read the formal induction statement to the students and delivered closing remarks.

The students could attend either the English or Spanish virtual ceremony. Dr. Jose Luis Zelaya was the keynote speaker of the Spanish ceremony.

AISD Trustee Dr. Viola M.
Garcia named to Mayor Turner's
Literacy Advisory Board

Aldine ISD Trustee Dr. Viola M. Garcia has been appointed to Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner's Literacy Advisory Board.

In Sept. 2019, Mayor Turner launched the new Mayor's Office for Adult Literacy (MOAL) to work collaboratively in addressing the literacy crisis in Houston and to advance the cause of adult education and literacy in Houston.

According to the 2014 Houston's Literacy Crisis: A Blueprint for Community Action of the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation, one out of every five adults in Houston is functionally illiterate and 24% of the city's adults lack a high school diploma.

Mayor Turner said he was pleased to have Dr. Garcia as part of the advisory board.

"As a recognized leader in the Houston community, your contributions to our city make you a valued partner," Mayor Turner said in a letter to Dr. Garcia.

"It is my distinct pleasure to invite you to accept an appointment to serve as a member of this vital board that will be focused on important work to help move Houston forward."

Federico Salas-Isnardi, the Mayor's Director for Adult Literacy, said Dr. Garcia will bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Board.

"I know of your personal and professional engagement with adult literacy and other education initiatives," Salas-Isnardi said. "Also, sitting on the board of one of the city's largest school districts you have a perspective on the needs of families in the Aldine area."

Dr. Garcia has served as an Aldine Trustee since her appointment to the Position 7 seat in 1992. She is Aldine's longest current board member. In addition to serving as an Aldine ISD Trustee, Dr. Garcia is a member of the Mexican American School Board Members Association, and



Aldine ISD Trustee Dr. Viola M. Garcia has been appointed to Mayor Sylvester Turner's Literacy Advisory Board.

has served as that groups president. She is also a member of the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) and currently serves as secretary-treasurer. She is also a life member of PTA and serves as the education liaison for the Greater Inwood Super Neighborhood Council.

Students can win with fall
registration at Lone Star
College-North Harris

HOUSTON (June 29, 2020) – Summer is underway and now is the time to register for fall courses at Lone Star College-North Harris.

To encourage students to think about fall registra-

tion during the sunny days of summer, LSC-North Harris is hosting a weekly prize drawing for students who register for fall courses during June and July. The lucky students' prize will be a pair of LSC-North Harris branded sunglasses, because their future is so bright, they're going to need shades.

Students can also enter the prize drawing by sharing a photo of themselves wearing sunglasses on social media using the hashtag #LSCNHBrightFuture and tagging LSC-North Harris.

All students who register for fall, or submit a qualifying photo on social media, will be entered for the weekly prize drawings. To avoid being removed from the list of entries, students must arrange for payment of their classes.

"LSC-North Harris is committed to providing our students with safe and supportive educational opportunities," said Dr.

Laura Yannuzzi, vice president of instruction. "We currently have 14 programs that have returned to campus safely this summer. This fall, we will be offering 50% of our courses online, 25% of courses in-person, and another 25% as hybrids that only meet one day a week. This flexibility gives our students choices to fit their needs and the best opportunity to succeed."

Available programs for the fall include traditional core courses, university transfer courses, certificates, associate degrees, and the new Bachelor of Applied Science program in Energy, Manufacturing and Trades Management.

In addition to fall courses, enrollment is currently open for summer II. The summer II session begins Thursday, July 9. Fall classes begin Monday, Aug. 24. For more information on the programs offered or to enroll, please visit LoneStar.edu/LearnMore.

Aldine ISD Releases Re-Entry
Plan 'Return to Learn'

Families will have two plans — learning on campus and online learning — to choose from for the 2020-21 school year.

Leaders in the Aldine Independent School District are developing the 2020-2021 re-entry plan, Return to Learn, based upon the latest guidance from the Texas Education Agency's (TEA), state, local authorities, and family input.

Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney stated that the district and schools would support families' decisions.

"Everyone in Aldine looks forward to providing excellent choices and opportunities for all students to thrive this fall and beyond," Goffney said. "We understand that each family has unique concerns about returning to school and taking part in extracurricular activities while COVID-19 is still affecting our communities. We will support you in making the decisions that are best for your child."

Goffney emphasized that the community's health comes first in making decisions about re-entry. She added that district leaders are continually monitoring what is happening across the district.

The preliminary plans below may change as August 17 draws closer.

Preliminary 'Return to Learn' 2020-2021 Plan

Families will have the option of selecting one of two learning models: on-campus or at home.

Learning On Campus: This option will consist of in-person instruction, which includes face-to-face, in-classroom learning using safety pro-

ocols to protect our students and staff. The in-person instruction will be held Monday through Friday.

- Traditional Schedule: Core Courses + Electives
- Daily, specific feedback in-person plus activities completed via Schoology
- Will follow the same standard grading policy (minimum of one grade/week/course)
- Students will take all district assessments online
- Students who require support and interventions will receive them in person

Learning At Home: This option is entirely virtual, requiring students to have a consistent online presence and daily log-in requirements. Students who enroll in the virtual option will remain virtual for the first nine weeks of the semester, with the option to continue virtually for the entire school year.

- Manage Your Schedule: Core Courses + Pre-determined List of Electives
- Daily, specific feedback via Schoology activities and chats
- Will follow the same standard grading policy (minimum of one grade/week/course)
- Students will take all district assessments online
- Students will need access to the internet
- Students will have the opportunity to request a loaner device (laptop/Chromebook)
- Students who require support and interventions will receive those via video conferencing based on the Aldine ISD recommendations.

All Students Need to Register — Returning AISD Students and New Students to AISD

For the district to plan

appropriately, online student registration will be available starting Monday, July 13, and will run through Friday, July 17. Families should register each student, both new and returning, separately and select the best instructional model for them as well as select the need for school transportation.

As a reminder, the first day of school will be Monday, August 17.

All Aldine ISD teachers will plan to support traditional on-campus learning this fall, and online teaching assignments will be based on need and task. The Teaching and Learning Department has continued to improve upon the district's online learning processes as well as prepare teachers to teach in both settings.

Aldine ISD is also working to meet all of TEA's requirements for funding. By doing so, the district can offer all students the best educational experiences, choices, and opportunities.

Goffney is grateful to the staff and AISD families.

"Thank you for your understanding and support as we navigate the unique conditions related to our Return to Learn. This fall presents us with a new set of challenges, and also a new outlook and opportunities to create meaningful learning experiences for students — our number one priority, always. Let's continue moving forward!"

Families can stay updated on the district's plans and preparations by visiting AISD's new school re-entry page: www.aldineisd.org/re-entry.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Harris County announces \$30 Million grant program to assist small businesses impacted by COVID-19

County Judge Lina Hidalgo and each of the Harris County commissioners voted unanimously to approve the Small Business Recovery Fund (SBRF) program, a \$30 million grant program established to assist struggling small businesses who have been unable to obtain financial assistance from other COVID-19 relief programs. The program will provide eligible businesses a grant of up to \$25,000 to help cover payroll costs, rent, accounts payable and other operating expenses. The SBRF targets businesses with 30 or fewer employees and is designed to assist the most vulnerable Harris County small- and micro-enterprises impacted by the pandemic with mounting financial burdens.

"The impact of this crisis on small businesses has been devastating. We can't afford to lose a source of jobs, innovation and the enterprising spirit our region is known for," Judge Hidalgo said. "These grants will help business owners stay afloat as Harris County continues to fight the COVID-19 crisis."

The Program will launch at 8 a.m. July 13 and will remain open for 10 days through July 22. More information regarding eligibility requirements, how to access the application online and over the phone, and what residents will need to prepare for the application will be released in the coming week.

"As the overwhelming demand for the forgivable loan program that I championed shows far too many

of our small businesses are struggling in a big way right now. Small businesses are the lifeblood of our economy and have historically lifted up our community," said Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia. "As we face some of the most difficult challenges in a generation, it's time for county government to continue our support of local small businesses. I thank my fellow commissioners for voting in favor of the \$30 million fund, and I have confidence that HBID will do an excellent job with the expedient and efficient administration of these funds. Small businesses truly are the backbone of our economy, and this program shows that we have their backs!"

Earlier in March, Harris County provided \$10 million under a small business relief program (LEAP), which was able to provide assistance to approximately 400 small businesses. With nearly 500,000 businesses in Harris County, the SBRF represents an effort to provide additional funding to a broader range of businesses suffering from the devastating impact of the novel coronavirus. Priority will be given to applicants that have not received prior assistance from the federally funded PPP Loan Program or other COVID-19 small business relief programs, including the Harris County LEAP program.

"The effects of COVID-19 on our friends and neighbors throughout Harris County are immense and widespread – on our

health, our families, our medical community and our economy," said Harris County Precinct 4 Commissioner Jack Cagle. "Harris County's response to this pandemic must recognize the need to address all these issues. With federal funding from the CARES Act, the Small Business Relief Fund is designed to help alleviate some of the stresses on small businesses throughout Harris County. I encourage those eligible to take advantage of this program."

A local Community Development Financial Institution, Houston Business Development Inc., which specializes in administering government funded small business lending programs, will work closely with the county in launching and administering the SBRF program.

"Helping small businesses survive the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic directly helps the working men and women employed by those small businesses," said Precinct 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis. "The need in our region is immense, but we will support as many of our vulnerable businesses as possible, fairly and transparently, so that the thousands of families who rely on small businesses continue to have the ability to pay their rent, feed their families, and make ends meet."

Those in need of immediate assistance are encouraged to call 211 Texas/United Way helpline to find an organization in their geographic region to serve them.

EXECUTIVE ACTIONS TO STOP COVID-19 SPREAD

Containing spread of COVID-19

Limits certain businesses and services with link to infections

AUSTIN – June 26, 2020 – Governor Greg Abbott issued an executive order limiting certain businesses and services as part of the state's effort to contain the spread of COVID-19. This decision comes as the number of people testing positive for COVID-19 and the number of hospitalizations have increased and the positivity rate in Texas increased above 10%, which the Governor previously stated would lead to further preventative action. The targeted, measured directives in the executive order are based on links between certain types of businesses and services and the recent rise in positive cases throughout the state.

The order includes the following:

- All bars and similar establishments that receive more than 51% of their gross receipts from the sale of alcoholic beverages are required to close at 12:00 PM today. These businesses may remain open for delivery and take-out, including for alcoholic beverages, as authorized by the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission.
- Restaurants may remain open for dine-in service, but at a capacity not to exceed 50% of total listed indoor occupancy, beginning Monday, June 29, 2020.
- Rafting and tubing businesses must close.
- Outdoor gatherings of 100 or more people must be approved by local governments, with certain exceptions.

"As I said from the start, if the positivity rate rose above 10%, the State of Texas would take further action to mitigate the spread of COVID-19," said Governor Abbott. "At this time, it is clear that the rise in cases is largely driven by certain types of activities, including Texans congregating in bars. The actions in this executive order are essential to our mission to swiftly contain this virus and protect public health. We want this to be as limited in duration as possible. However, we can only slow the spread if everyone in Texas does their part. Every Texan has a responsibility to themselves and their loved ones to wear a mask, wash their hands, stay six feet apart from others in public, and stay home if they can. I know that our collective action can lead to a reduction in the spread of COVID-19 because we have done it before, and we will do it again."

Additional reopening phases temporary paused

AUSTIN – Governor Greg Abbott today announced that the State of Texas will pause any further phases to open Texas as the state responds to the recent increase in positive COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. Businesses that are permitted to open under the previous phases can continue to operate at the designated occupancy levels and under the minimum standard health protocols provided by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

"As we experience an increase in both positive COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, we are focused on strategies that slow the spread of this virus while also allowing Texans to continue earning a paycheck to support their families," said Governor Abbott. "The last thing we want to do as a state is go backwards and close down businesses. This tempo-

rary pause will help our state corral the spread until we can safely enter the next phase of opening our state for business. I ask all Texans to do their part to slow the spread of COVID-19 by wearing a mask, washing their hands regularly, and socially distancing from others. The more that we all follow these guidelines, the safer our state will be and the more we can open up Texas for business."

Census Mural,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

HOUSTON (June 18, 2020) – Unifying. Diverse. Inclusive. Three things that books, libraries and Census 2020 have in common.

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo debuted the fourth of five Yes! to Census 2020 murals on June 23, 2020 at High Meadows Library located at 4500 Aldine Mail Rte. Rd, Houston, TX 77039.

Commissioners Adrian Garcia, Rodney Ellis, and Representative Armando Walle were on site to provide important updates regarding census self-response and why completing the census is so important to secure federal funding for accurate representation and improved resources that are vital to creating vibrant, informed, and progressive communities.

The Aldine mural, like its predecessors, is a visual representation of the urgent need for more citizens to complete their census questionnaire prior to the October 31, 2020 deadline. The design is a "picture-perfect postcard" view of the neighborhood with the caption, "Greetings from Aldine!" The mural was conceptualized and installed by local artist Colors Oner 713.

The mural's location at High Meadows Library has a special significance and deeper relationship to the goal of a complete count with a 100% response rate. Not only is federal funding for libraries determined by the census, but as Census 2020 is the first to be conducted primarily online, libraries remove barriers to census completion by providing a place where citizens who do not have home access to internet services can go to respond to the questionnaire. To that effect, Harris County Library Director Edward Melton will announce that the library will kick off a Yes! to Census 2020 initiative through October 31, 2020, which will include:

- Census-themed screen savers in English and Spanish uploaded to every computer in all participating Harris County libraries
- A computer dedicated as a "Census Station" with the 2020census.gov website on display
- Census messaging shared on all Harris County library social media platforms and websites
- New library card applicants will be given a verbal call-to-action to complete the census

"This is the first US census conducted primarily online. Public libraries serve as access points to ensure an equitable and accurate count by provid-

ing hard to count populations with free public Wi-Fi and computers to complete the online census form. Harris County Public Library looks forward to partnering with the community to achieve a complete count," states Edward Melton, Library Director, Harris County Public Library.

In pre-identified undercounted communities, UP Art Studios identified local artists and partnered with community residents to create vibrant murals that reflect each area's unique character, ethnicities, needs, and dreams, to deliver the Yes! to Census 2020 message. The fifth and final mural will be released at the South Central Houston's S.H.A.P.E Community Center by artist Israel McCloud in July.

The Yes! to Census 2020 campaign aims to educate Houston and Harris County residents that the census is important, urgent, safe, and easy to complete. Local trusted voices and hyperlocal influencers unify Houston and Harris County residents by amplifying and encouraging participation among multicultural and potentially undercounted populations. A website with Census 2020 resources, information and events can be found at www.HarrisHoustonCounts.com.

Lone Star College-Houston North and Comcast team up to provide free internet access to students and families during pandemic

Houston (June 29, 2020) – Lone Star College-Houston North and Comcast's Houston Region have announced a business partnership to provide free internet access to approximately 200 LSC-Houston North students and families in need. The new agreement will ensure these students can continue their education through the school's distance learning offerings as many in-person options are on hiatus.

The college is partnering with Comcast's Internet Essentials, a program designed for low-income families and individuals to acquire access to the internet – for education, work and personal health reasons," said Comcast's Ray Purser, vice president of External Affairs, Houston Region. "We're proud to partner with Lone Star College-Houston North to help keep their students connected through our Internet Essentials program."

"Thank you Lone Star College-Houston North for helping me get Comcast Wi-Fi for school, my anxiety was at ease with your help," said Montoya Thomas, Lone Star College student. "It helps me a lot with my schoolwork and continuing being successful in my career. Thank you so much."

Fall registration is underway. Visit LoneStar.edu to more learn more about all the opportunities Lone Star College has to offer.

Since 2011, Internet Essentials has connected 396,000 low-income households in the Houston region. The regular cost for Internet Essentials is \$9.95 per month. Those that qualify for a broad range of federal assistance programs including Pell Grants, Medicaid, HUD-assisted housing, SNAP and SSI, among others, are eligible to apply for Internet Essentials. Interested students and families are encouraged to learn more at www.internetessentials.com and talk to their school counselor about enrolling.



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OPINION PAGE



Social Security Matters

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

Ask Rusty – About Special Extra Earnings for Military Service

Dear Rusty: How do I find out if I get any extra earnings for my military service of 28 years (Navy, 1982-2011), when I begin collecting my full Social Security retirement benefit next year (in July 2021)? Signed: Retired Veteran

Dear Retired Veteran: First, as a fellow veteran, I want to thank you for your 28 years of military service, but I need to clarify what those “special extra earnings” are. That’s not an additional amount which will be added to your monthly Social Security benefit as a bonus for serving. Rather it is an additional dollar amount which has already been added to your earnings record for the years you served in the military.

Those receiving active duty military pay have contributed to Social Security since 1957, and that record of your military pay is already on file with Social Security. But a long time ago Congress decided to bump up the recorded earnings of those with earlier military service to make it easier for them to qualify for Social Security, and to possibly provide a slightly higher benefit when the earnings from those years in the military are included in the computation of SS benefits.

To compute your benefit, Social Security uses the 35 highest earning years from your lifetime earnings record (adjusted for inflation). So, if your earnings during the years you were in the military are among the 35 years used to calculate your SS benefit, those military earnings were supplemented with an additional amount to make them up to \$1200 per year higher than you were actually paid. And that higher earnings amount possibly means a higher Social Security benefit because it could make your lifetime Average Indexed Monthly Earnings (AIME) higher (a higher AIME translates to a higher benefit amount).

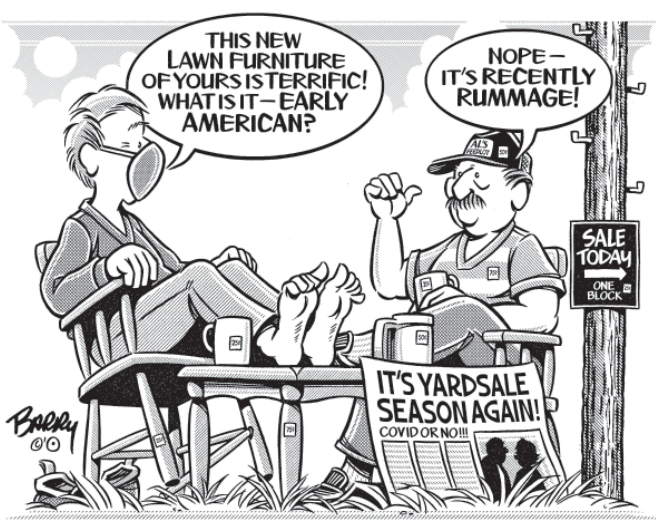
In your case, an extra \$100 for every \$300 in your actual military pay should have been added

to your earnings record for each year you served between 1982 and 2001 (maximum of \$1200 for each year).

For service years after 2001, no additional “special credits” are awarded. To verify this, you may wish to obtain a copy of your lifetime Earnings Statement from Social Security and verify that your recorded earnings for 1982 – 2001 are \$1200 more than you were actually paid while serving. And if not, you should supply a copy of your DD-214 when applying for your Social Security benefits. You can obtain a copy of your lifetime Earnings Statement online if you have a personal “my Social Security” account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount; otherwise you’ll need to request a copy directly from Social Security.

For general information applicable to those who served prior to 1978, computation of their “special extra earnings” were computed a little differently. For those veterans, the maximum annual “special extra earnings” supplement was still \$1,200, but the method for computing their extra earnings was to give an extra \$300 for each calendar quarter of active duty military service. But in any case, the special extra earnings are an addition to your military pay record on file with Social Security, not an additional dollar amount added to your Social Security benefit.

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.



Governor’s order mandates wearing of face masks in public

AUSTIN — Gov. Greg Abbott on July 2 issued an executive order to slow the spread of the deadly coronavirus while keeping Texas as open as possible for business.

With few exceptions, the order requires all Texans to wear a face covering over the nose and mouth in public spaces in counties with 20 or more positive COVID-19 cases.

Abbott also issued a proclamation giving mayors and county judges the ability to impose restrictions on some outdoor gatherings of more than 10 people and mandating that with certain exceptions people cannot be in groups larger than 10 and must maintain six feet of social distancing from others.

“We have the ability to keep businesses open and move our economy forward so that Texans can continue to earn a paycheck, but it requires each of us to do our part to protect one another — and that means wearing a face covering in public spaces,” Abbott said.

“I urge all Texans to wear a face covering in public, not just for their own health, but for the health of their families, friends, and for all our fellow Texans,” he added.

Cumulative figures posted July 5 by the Texas Department of State Health Services showed some 195,239 people in Texas diagnosed with COVID-19 and 2,637 confirmed deaths resulting from the disease.

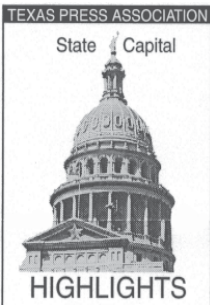
Wear-mask videos posted

The governor’s office released a video of Abbott to coincide with his July 2 executive order plus two more public service announcements imploring Texans to step up efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Major League Baseball Hall of Fame catcher Iván “Pudge” Rodríguez urges Texans in both English and Spanish to wear a mask in public to protect themselves and others from the deadly virus.

Tom Herman, University of Texas head football coach, urges Texans to work together as a team to stop COVID-19 by washing hands regularly, social distancing, wearing a mask and staying home when possible.

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Ed Sterling



Similar public service announcements released previously by the governor’s office feature Major League Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Nolan Ryan and Dallas Cowboys line-backer Jaylon Smith.

SNAP deadline extended

Gov. Abbott on June 29 extended the deadline for families to apply for the federal Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer program to July 31.

“Ensuring access to healthy food in our communities is an important part of our response to this pandemic,” Abbott said.

This one-time benefit of \$285 per eligible child can be used in the same way as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program food benefits to pay for groceries. Eligible families include those with children who lost access to free or reduced-price school meals through the National School Lunch Program due to school closures.

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission partnered with the Texas Department of Agriculture and the Texas Education Agency to launch the \$1 billion federal program on June 1 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Winner to face incumbent

In the top spot on the July 14 Democratic primary election runoff ballot are state Sen. Royce West of Dallas and former U.S. Air Force officer Mary “MJ”

Hegar of Round Rock. The winner will face incumbent Republican U.S. Sen. John Cornyn in the Nov. 3 election.

West, an attorney whose current term as a state senator will expire in 2022, has been a member of the body since 1993. He serves as vice chair of the Senate Higher Education Committee and is a member of Senate committees on Administration, Education and Finance.

Hegar has 12 years of military experience, including three tours as a helicopter pilot in Afghanistan, where she flew combat search and rescue and medical evacuation missions. She is a recipient of the Purple Heart and the Distinguished Flying Cross with Valor.

Cornyn, of San Antonio, a member of the U.S. Senate since 2002, previously served as an associate justice of the Texas Supreme Court from 1992 to 1997 and as Texas attorney general from 1999 to 2002.

Revenue total is down

State sales tax revenue totaled \$2.67 billion in June, an amount 6.5% less than the amount reported for the month of June 2019, Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar said on July 1.

The decline in collections was driven principally by steep drops in remittances from oil- and gas-related sectors. Collections from the construction and amusement service sectors also were down sharply, Hegar said.

However, “While collections from restaurants also were depressed, the extent of the decline was checked by increased takeout and delivery sales,” Hegar said. “And retail trade receipts rose significantly, buoyed by increased online shopping and building material purchases, as business premises were modified for COVID-19 precautions.”

The majority of June sales tax revenue is based on sales made in May and remitted to the agency in June.

THE POSTSCRIPT
By Carrie Classon

“The World of Birds”

The raven nest was the big news this spring.

Our neighbor, Joe, who belongs to every social organization in town, found himself with very little to do. So, every afternoon, Joe parked himself in his Adirondack chair and watched the ravens—frequently with a cocktail.

This pair of ravens got a late start, I thought. There was another pair I passed on my walk every day. They did some quick renovations on an existing nest and got right down to business. But this pair in our backyard seemed (like so many young couples) to realize a little late that they were going to need a home for their babies.

“Oh my gosh! We better get building a nest!” they frantically began collecting sticks to build the giant structure about sixty feet in the air, in the crown of the neighboring pine tree. Then, one day not too long later, we could hear the unmistakable sound of baby ravens demanding food.

From then on, it was a nonstop show, with parents madly flying back and forth trying to keep their demanding brood fed. That is when Joe began his permanent residency in the blue Adirondack chair. Both my husband, Peter, and Joe are retired and the raven nest is between our houses. Comparing raven notes became the new thing that replaced all the other things Joe and Peter used to do.

It was last Saturday night that everything went wrong.

Peter woke up around midnight to the sound of ravens screaming.

“What’s going on out there?” Peter asked. After a terrific lot of noise, the commotion died down. But then, just before sunrise, it started up again and this time it even woke me. It sounded like there was a war happening in the backyard.

The next morning, the nest was vacant.

“What happened?” Peter wondered. Nothing good for the ravens, that was for sure.

There were no more baby ravens screaming for food, no more parents flying back and forth, no more pairs of ravens flying at sunset. The sky was empty—except for hummingbirds, but they don’t really count.

Peter wrote to a friend who used to be an animal control officer in town. He said it could have been a hawk or an eagle or an owl. He said ravens were ferocious fighters and they might have moved the chicks to another location.

But I talked to our neighbor down the street who knows all about the world of birds. “Great horned owl,” he said and he sounded like he knew what he was talking about.

“There are two pair in the neighborhood. Ravens are very vulnerable in the nest. A great horned owl can kill a skunk with no problem. The middle of the night is when they do their work.” He did not think the little ravens had survived the night.

“There’s a whole world of things going on with birds that I never guessed,” I told him. “And it’s violent!” My neighbor agreed.

I brought the news home to Peter. He nodded. He didn’t really think the raven chicks made it either. Peter calls it the “Saturday night massacre” and he still watches the nest in the evenings. No one is there.

I lay in bed last night with the window open. The wind was strong and I could hear it blowing through the pine trees. I thought about all the things happening right in my backyard that I would never know about. I thought about all the dangers I never considered—just because they were not a danger to me.

Till next time,
Carrie
Carrie Classon’s memoir is called, “Blue Yarn.” Learn more at CarrieClasson.com.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



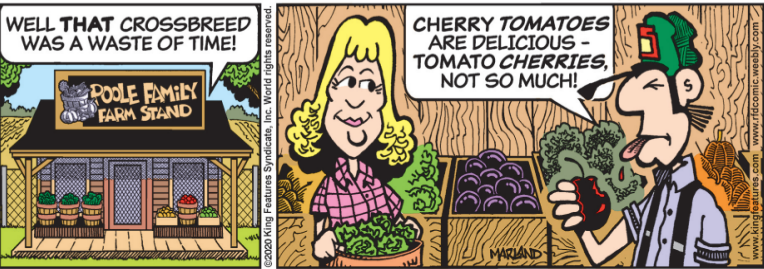
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



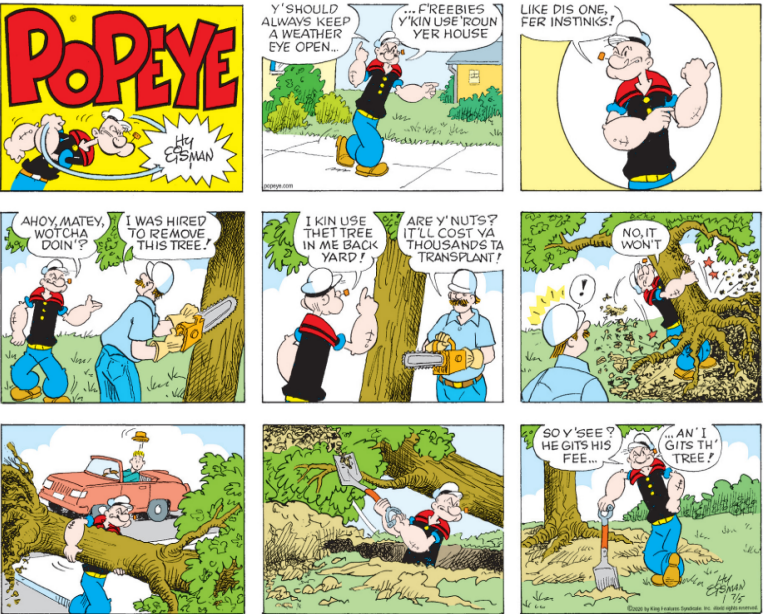
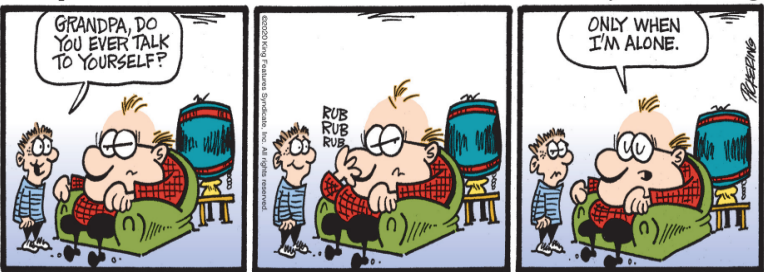
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The Spats

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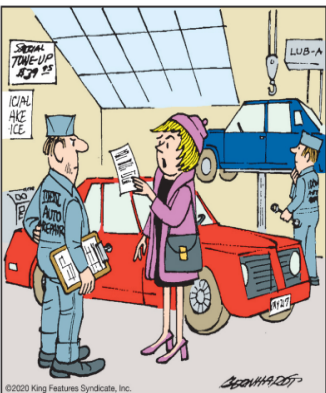


Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



LAFF-A-DAY



Posting Date July 13, 2020

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Give a darn

5 IOU, e.g.

9 Trip to Mecca (Var.)

12 Like 28-Across

13 Top-notch

14 Chicken-king link

15 The Swedish Nightingale

16 Hold sway

17 Cartoonist Chast

18 Creche trio

19 Auto grille cover

20 "For cryin' out loud!"

21 Id counterpart

23 Personal question

25 Beckon

28 Vast sandy expanse

32 Leafy shelter

33 Release a deadbolt

34 Trolley sounds

36 Present from birth

37 Common Mkt.

38 Pigpen

39 Pre-swan

42 Puncturing device

44 It gets in the whey

48 Seek restitution

49 Neighbor-hood

50 Quite eager

51 Historic time

52 Read bar codes

53 — good example

54 Press for payment

55 Cattle group

56 A bit unclear

DOWN

1 Tranquil

2 Bocelli solo

3 Peal

4 "Two Tickets to Paradise" singer

5 Diamonds, essentially

6 Session with a shrink

7 Extended family

8 Shirt shape

9 Tortoise's opponent

10 Lotion additive

11 Satchmo's genre

20 "I Walk the Line" singer

22 Canyon

24 Obsess

25 Pouch

26 Surfer's destination

27 Biz deg.

29 Lawyers' org.

30 Snitch

31 Exist

35 Hard to find

36 Gilligan's home

39 Secondhand

40 Mentor

41 Slender

43 Sport

45 Eye layer

46 "Puttin' on the —"

47 Crucial time

49 Blond shade

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
15				16				17		
18				19			20			
21			22		23	24				
25	26	27			28			29	30	31
32					33					
34				35	36					
37			38							
39	40	41		42	43		44	45	46	47
48			49				50			
51			52				53			
54			55				56			

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. TELEVISION: In which 1980s-90s sitcom did a waitress named Carla Tortelli appear?

2. LITERATURE: What are the tree-like beings called in "The Lord of the Rings"?

3. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the rallying cry for the shape-changing Transformers?

4. U.S. STATES: Which state would a Jayhawker hail from?

5. MOVIES: Which movie featured the line, "Life is a banquet, and most poor suckers are starving to death!"?

6. ANATOMY: Which part of the human body is affected by surgery called rhinoplasty?

7. MUSIC: Which rock group's debut album was titled "Bleach"?

8. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president was known as the "hero of San Juan Hill"?

9. MEASUREMENTS: What does a joule measure?

10. GEOGRAPHY: Where is the Grand Teton National Park?

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HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Window is gone. 2. Girl's swimsuit is different. 3. Lifeguard's shirt is different. 4. Fish has been changed. 5. Lifeguard's shirt is different. 6. Flowers have been added.

Answers

1. "Cheers"

2. Enis

3. "Till all are one"

4. Kansas

5. "Kumie Mame"

6. The nose

7. Nirvana

8. Theodore Roosevelt

9. Energy

10. Wyoming, United States

Z	A	H	D	E	H	N	D
S	R	A	S	C	S	E	R
S	U	E	A	V	A	I	D
C	U	R	I	O	A	I	O
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
A	R	B	A	R	H	O	B
A	R	A	A	A	A	A	A
O	H	W	O	O	O	O	O
M	A	G	I	B	R	A	I
L	O	L	E	H	L	E	L
A	R	I	O	D	I	N	E
C	A	R	E	C	H	I	T

Solution time: 24 mins.

CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: B equals L

WSW NHY VLHE ZSQVON ZHYXO

MOCSHWSQKBNN THJ GOCN

BSTJFJFOKWOW KLW EHYBW FKGO

WSXLON XMOBBX?

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SCRAMBLERS

Today's Word

1. Mingle 2. Gather, solution

3. Ignore; 4. Outside

OUTGOING

King Crossword

Answer

Weekly SUDOKU

Did you know Mickey Mouse periodically got very light-headed and would have Disney spells?

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

SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Blend

LEMING

Band

GREAHT

Avoid

REGION

Facade

TEDIOUS

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CHURCH PAGE

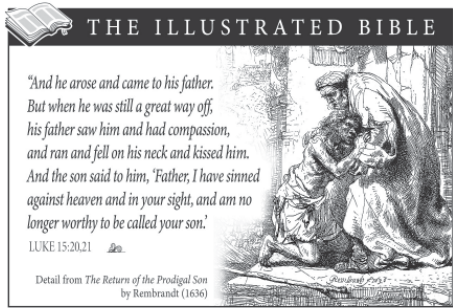
BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey—

1. Is the book of Philemon in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. From 1 Samuel 17, how many stones did David take with him to fight Goliath? 2, 5, 7, 14
3. Which book first refers to Jesus as the Prince of Peace? Isaiah, Daniel, Matthew, Luke

4. Who is thought of as being the "mother of all the living"? Ruth, Sarah, Eve, Esther
5. In Numbers 22, to whom did the donkey speak? Silas, Daniel, Jeremiah, Balaam
6. Where was Paul the Apostle born? Thessalonica, Tarsus, Ur, Antioch

ANSWERS: 1) New; 2) 5 (needed only 1); 3) Isaiah 9:6; 4) Eve, 5) Balaam; 6)



Detail from The Return of the Prodigal Son by Rembrandt (1636)

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RECENT DEATHS

Joel Jon Pockalnik
Ignacio V. Resendez
James Michael Waller
Dimple Ann Patrick
Jose Paulino Valcarce

Daniel Joseph Pierre-Auguste
Wanda Joan Story
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rev0919

Food Distribution,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

have been served every Thursday. Cars line up in the large 20 acre parking lot and patiently wait while the food distribution gets under way.

Ferdows says “the central location and the large parking lot is ideal for events, but also allows us to uniquely help our community during times of need.”

This is not the first time that Ferdows has reached out to help the community. After Hurricane Harvey, they provided food and water for over 8 weeks to the community.

The boxes include fresh fruit and milk, and will be available every Thursday from July 9th through August 27, Ferdows said.

Helping with the distribution and food supply are Borden Dairy, DiMare Fresh Produce, East Aldine District and Harris County Deputies, and Danny and Donna Garcia, who are coordinating the drives. State Representative Armando Walle has also championed the Food Drive.

The Stampede and Escapade Event Centers are part of ImagenVenues, and are located at 11903 East-ex Freeway. The largest clubs have buildings of 50,000 and 35,000, and hold many popular community events and concerts.

The food drive is open to everyone, with no pre-registration or appointment necessary. Just bring your car Thursday mornings, and benefit from the drive. Recipients are welcome to come every week during the Food Drive.



Cars line up early on Thursday morning, as volunteers load up their car with the food box and milk containers.



Several lines of distribution are set up in front of the Stampede and Escapade Centers, which are seen in the background. Wait times are short due to multiple line, even though several thousand cars fill the parking lot for their turn.



Rob Ferdows, left, and State Representative Armando Walle, far right, help load food boxes and milk containers into a resident's car.

Precinct One continues to advocate for housing for all Harris County residents

Commissioners Court approves \$15 million Emergency Rental Assistance Program to serve low-income residents in Harris County

HOUSTON, TX – Since the moratorium on evictions was lifted in May, almost 3,000 eviction cases have been filed in Harris County. In order to address the urgent eviction crisis in the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Commissioners Court on Tuesday approved a \$15 million Emergency Rental Assistance Program to serve low-income residents in Harris County.

Researchers estimate that, were it not for the federal relief in this pandemic, the poverty rate would increase from 12.8% to 16.3% this year. Local governments, including Harris County, have continued

to provide support where others can't or won't.

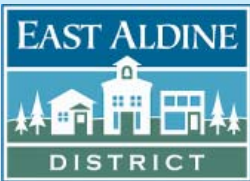
“We are facing an unprecedented public health and economic crisis. Harris County has been able to provide some direct relief, but it is apparent that there is still a great need for assistance to keep people in their homes and able to afford basic needs,” said Commissioner Ellis. “I am hoping my colleagues will join me to keep supporting financial assistance programs that will go directly to the people who need it most.”

The Emergency Rental Assistance Program will provide a one-time payment of \$1,000 per household across all Harris County precincts to be used for rent and fee payments directly to landlords.

The Harris County Commissioners Court also

unanimously voted in support of the COVID-19 Permanent Housing Initiative, which will bring together local organizations to house 5,000 people over two years. The Initiative will be funded by Harris County, the City of Houston and private philanthropy.

“Our local governments are taking a big and bold step to prevent people from becoming homeless and to get people off the streets during this pandemic. I am proud to support this collaborative effort and grateful to Coalition for the Homeless, The Way Home Coalition and all of their partners for their vision and coordinated response to this urgent need,” said Commissioner Ellis. “Housing is always important and more crucial than ever during this public health crisis.”



East Aldine District COMMUNITY NEWS

Safety and community engagement remain among top priorities

By Christina Autry

Not all safety measures taken in the district recently have dealt with COVID-related issues. “Feral hogs are a chronic problem in many urban centers in the U. S., including Houston and Harris County,” says Brian Burks, Deputy Executive Director of the East Aldine District.

“The hogs traverse hundreds of miles, following rivers and bayous, that they use as ‘hog highways.’ They gather in parks, undeveloped properties and neighborhoods.”

According to Texas Parks & Wildlife, “Their razor-sharp tusks combined with their lightning speed can cause serious injury.” So when the East Aldine District got a call from the HCSO emergency dispatch that feral hogs were running through the Town Center property, they knew this was an issue that needed to be dealt with quickly.



Feral hogs captured at Keith Weiss park in March.



Houston Hog Hunters team member Brian Burks helped capture the feral hogs.

Houston Hog Hunters, a public service organization which catches feral hogs, was called to remove the animals from the neighboring Keith-Weiss Park. Thirty hogs were caught, including one weighing 360 pounds, and there are about six more adults with babies that still need to be captured.

We are extremely

grateful for all of the individuals and organizations that work together to keep our community safe. We want all of our residents in East Aldine to feel free to contact the district offices or police departments with any questions or concerns that you may have. Together, we will continue to stay strong.

Progress photos of Town Center Construction



The steel frame of the East Aldine District Office Building has been erected, and work continues on the outside enclosure, as seen below in an architect's rendering.



An aerial view shows the East Aldine District building in the center, with the Lone Star College at left, and BakerRipley in the background.

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