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# NORTHEAST NEWS

## Americanisms



“Take it from me, elections matter.”  
— Al Gore

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Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 44 Years  
VOL. 44, NO. 48 TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2020 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

## Shotspotter gunfire detection slated for Aldine

*“This Pilot program will support the Sheriff’s Office efforts to effectively respond to and investigate gunfire incidents” says Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia.*

HARRIS COUNTY — Today Commissioners Court unanimously approved a ShotSpotter pilot program designed to identify, locate, and track active gunfire. The ShotSpotter system, used in several major cities, works by installing sensors – sensitive microphones – around an area to pick up sounds

from the street that might be gunfire, and uses the sensors to locate where the shots were fired. This information will be sent to the Harris County Sheriff Office.

Commissioner Garcia is investing \$780,000 dollars out of his budget to get this implemented in 5 square miles in Aldine where crime rates are 60% higher than the national average.[1]

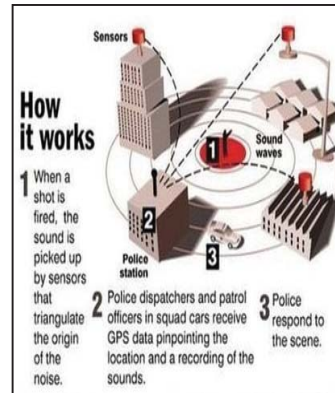
“This is cutting edge technology I’ve been wanting to bring to our region since I was Director of the Mayor’s Anti-Gang Office



Shotspotter equipment pole mounted

under Mayor Lee Brown. The goal is to make our county, neighborhoods and officers safer. Rhetoric on crime has become a political pain point used to sell fear. Often, the loudest voices you hear would rather see themselves being tough on TV than do the hard work to make a difference. We choose a different path – using smart solutions to make a difference in keeping people safe. ShotSpotter is a step toward getting smart on gun violence. This invest-

See Shotspotter, page 3



## East Aldine to hold “Drive & Dash” toy drive Dec. 19

East Aldine District is hosting a special pre-holiday event this year, after a very special young lady started collecting toys to give away to kids who are less fortunate. The East Aldine Management District has granted the funds to make this event possible and the community’s response has been unbelievable.

We continue to take donations and have several drop off locations. (All Town Center partners Baker Ripley, Hope Clinic, Lone Star East Aldine Center, etc, as well as Don Kirrin, Studio 59 and EZ

Wireless) We continue to receive monetary/toy donations to reach our goal of providing gifts for 1,500 kids.

The event will be held: When: Saturday, December 19, 2020 at 10 am.

Where: Lone Star College East Aldine Parking Lot

This event will allow cars to drive through only, people will not be allowed to get out. All vendors are asked to decorate their vehicles and come dressed in their Christmas best. As the vehicles drive through you are asked to provide christmas goodies. (candy bags, coloring books, loot

toys, and any info pertaining to your business if you would like).

To secure your spot in the caravan we are asking our vendors to please return form and be ready to bring Christmas cheer to our kids as well as to the adults accompanying them as we will be providing some with gift cards as well.

Please feel free to reach out to Nataly Perez at 713-595-1226 or nperez@hawes-hill.com at the East Aldine District for a Registration Form for Vendors, and with any questions or concerns.

## Varsity football Nimitz routs Aldine by a score of 48-0

Last Friday afternoon, Nov. 27 the Nimitz Cougars played the Aldine Mustangs, and crushed them by a score of 48-0.

Coach Richard Slater’s Cougars took on coach Hank Semler’s Mustangs at Thorne Stadium. The Cougars are led by RB Jayvon Davis, with outstanding runs in every game. Nimitz is trying to remain in the playoff hunt, and faced Spring last weekend.



Nimitz #23 Devontae Golden escapes Aldine’s #28 Jayden Payne for a big gain. (More photos page 5)

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SCHOOL NEWS

NEWS NOTES

Two HCPH Locations Offering Free COVID-19 Testing

There are two stationary sites. At the M.O. Campbell Education Center in Aldine, children can also be tested. Hours are 6am-1 pm. Register at [www.hcphtx.org](http://www.hcphtx.org) or call 832-927-7575. For the Pasadena stationary site at San Jacinto Central Campus, people must be 13 or older to be tested and people can register at [www.doineeda.com](http://www.doineeda.com) or call 832-927-7575.

New ACCESS2Health Services now open

Pct. 2 has installed a Medical Smart Pod office in the parking lot at the Northeast Community Center on Bentley. The public can get Free COVID-19 tests, and many other medical services. According to Dr. Bernice Koko of United Health Partners, all services are free and walk-ins are welcome, no appointment necessary.

COVID-19

Cases as of December 1, 2020

HOUSTON AREA

19 COUNTIES

288,554 POSITIVE  
3,779 DEATHS  
248,145 RECOVERED

TEXAS

1,239,598 POSITIVE  
21,902 DEATHS  
962,639 RECOVERED

UNITED STATES

13,566,283 POSITIVE  
268,662 DEATHS  
5,146,319 RECOVERED

WORLDWIDE

63,478,019 POSITIVE  
1,472,917 DEATHS  
40,760,630 RECOVERED

AISSD's Williams-Earlie Receives Leadership in Science Education Award

The Texas Science Education Leadership Association (TSELA) has named Xandra Williams-Earlie, Aldine ISD program director of high school science, as the Outstanding Leadership in Science Education Award recipient.

This prestigious award recognizes and honors a TSELA member who has demonstrated outstanding leadership in science education at the school, district, county, regional, or national level through their professional work.

The award, which included a \$1,000-check and a plaque, was presented virtually during the TSELA meeting held at the Annual Conference for the Advancement of Science Teaching (CAST)/Science Teachers Association of Texas (STAT) conference on November 3. STEM-scopes sponsored the prize.

Donald Burken, director of K-12 science for Spring Branch ISD, nominated Williams-Earlie.

"I nominated Xandra for her dedication to our science community," Burken said. "She contributes her time to further advancing science education by taking part in staff development, chairing TEA (Texas Education Agency) TEKS writing committees, providing testimony to the Texas State Board of Education, and volunteering yearly for STAT/CAST (Science Teachers Association of Texas/Conference for the Advancement of Science Teaching). Xandra donates her time planning the Houston area science



XANDRA WILLIAMS-EARLIE

fair as well as working with area school districts to facilitate district-level fairs. Xandra has built a secondary science program second to none. She holds monthly think tanks to promote science within each high school course. Her model has been replicated around the city of Houston and even in the state."

Williams-Earlie trains teachers and helps them better understand science content and ways to integrate science across the curriculum to provide students with optimal learning opportunities.

Burken also noted that Williams-Earlie maintains a long-working partnership with Chevron and JASON Learning. She helped his district launch its JASON Project with the energy company. Williams-Earlie has so far received \$294 thousand in JASON Learning grants. Due to her commitment and dedication, Williams-Earlie won the Chevron Human Energy Award.

"Xandra's vision for building a science-literate citizenry informs the strategies she has deployed to maximize 'real' science engagement and opportunities for stu-

dents, educators, district leaders, and peers outside of her district," said Eleanor Smalley, president and CEO of JASON Learning. "Her innovative and tenacious approach to building STEM literacy demonstrates a career-long commitment to excellence in science education."

Williams-Earlie has served 42 years in the science education field. For 33 years, she has served as AISSD's high school science program director, influencing teachers, administrators, and Board Trustees concerning the science curriculum. She is an adjunct professor at the University of Houston-Downtown, where she shares her knowledge with aspiring science teachers.

A member of numerous organizations, Williams-Earlie is a past president of the Texas Science Education Leadership Association (TSELA) and the Metropolitan Association for Teachers of Science (MATS).

"For me, it's not just about science. It is about all of the content working together thanks to a professional learning community that values a collaborative culture," said Williams-Earlie. "I love working with teachers and seeing them get passionate about what they are teaching because it ignites excitement in students."

Follow @AISSD7\_12 Science on Twitter to see science learning occurring on campuses and how Aldine ISD teachers use the curriculum to build on students' natural curiosity.

57 District High School Students Earn AP Scholar Recognition

Students in schools all over the globe take Advanced Placement (AP) exams every spring. The College Board's AP® program provides willing and academically prepared students with the opportunity to take rigorous college-level courses while still in high school, and to earn college credit, advanced placement, or both for successful performance on the AP Exams.

The College Board released the AP scores in August. A total of 57 Aldine ISD students earned AP Scholar Awards to recognize their exceptional achievement on AP Exams taken in spring 2020.

AP® Scholar Award Level

The AP Scholar Awards are a series of awards given by the College Board to students who have demonstrated exemplary college-level achievement. The high school students have to earn a 3 or above score on at least three AP exams.

- **AP Scholar:** Granted to students who receive 3 or higher scores on three or more AP Exams.

- **AP Scholar With Honor:** Granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams.

- **AP Scholar With Distinction:** Granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP Exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.

- **National AP Scholar:** Granted to students in the United States who receive an average score of at least 4 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams.

In late March, the College Board launched teacher-led AP Online Classes and Review Sessions to help students continue learning and practicing for their exams. Since they were introduced, the classes were viewed 33 million times by 5.2 million unique viewers. Celebrity guests and luminaries—including Lin-Manuel Miranda, Janet Yellen, Valerie Jarrett, Nate Silver, Tony Hale, Jeb Bush, Kristin Chenoweth, Cory Booker, Melinda Gates, and more—signed on to take part in the history-making endeavor to provide unique, real-world learning experiences for students.

Students embraced the new format, and many have asked the College Board to continue the AP Online Classes and Review Sessions. The 2020 AP Exam completion rate is higher (93%) than in typical years (91%).

ALDINE ISD 2020 AP SCHOLARS

ALDINE HIGH SCHOOL

- AP Scholars: Minh Thu Nguyen, Davis Robles & Steven Sánchez

BLANSON CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION HS

- AP Scholars: José Calvillo, José Durán, Max Pequeño & Raquel Reyes

- AP Scholar With Honors: Ricardo J. Palma

- AP Scholar With Distinction: Miguel Chacón

CARVER HIGH SCHOOL FOR APPLIED TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND THE ARTS

- AP Scholars: Vanessa Arias, Alex Camey Benioti, Laila Chinn, Francean Hougbo, Ángel Reyes, Thuy Tran, Cindy Vega-Aguilar, & Daphne López

DAVIS HIGH SCHOOL

- AP Scholars: Luz Carbajal, Cinthia Rangel & Karen Pérez

EISENHOWER HIGH SCHOOL

- AP Scholar: Itzel Gómez

YES PREP EISENHOWER HIGH SCHOOL

- AP Scholars: Wilfredo Escobar & Mario Tobías

MACARTHUR NINTH GRADE SCHOOL

- AP Scholar: Mariana Niño de Riveria

MACARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL

- AP Scholars: Mónica Aguirre, Stephanie Benítez, Cassandra Chapa, Jasmin Guerrero, Valeria Gutiérrez-Gómez, Jacob Hands, Dana Hernández, Jarely Leal, Willie Lewis, Gustavo López, Alexis Martínez, Roxana Méndez, DeLizah Montenegro, Ángela Olivera, Nilo Peralta, Bianca Ponce, Sabrina Prado, Elnecia Preston, Viansi Ramírez, Jesús Ramos, Yoselind Rodríguez, Cynthia Ulloa & Lizbet Valdez

- AP Scholars With Honors: Esteban Echavarría & Jessica Lozoya

NIMITZ HIGH SCHOOL

- AP Scholar: Weyatta Kpinkin

VICTORY EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

- AP Scholars: Alexa Cruz Flores, Anna de la Cuesta & Sara Orellana

- AP Scholar With Distinction: Emilio Argiello

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**ALDINE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
*STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES* Exhibit C-3  
*IN FUND BALANCE - GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS*  
*For the Year Ended June 30, 2020*

Data Control Codes	General Fund	Debt Service	Capital Projects	Other Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
<b>Revenues</b>					
5700 Local, intermediate, and out-of-state	\$ 224,923,726	\$ 61,751,571	\$ 1,406,119	\$ 6,472,458	\$ 294,553,874
5800 State program revenues	420,727,974	6,241,351	-	3,134,688	430,104,013
5900 Federal program revenues	10,373,843	-	-	79,704,084	90,077,927
<b>5020 Total revenues</b>	<b>656,025,543</b>	<b>67,992,922</b>	<b>1,406,119</b>	<b>89,311,230</b>	<b>814,735,814</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>					
<b>Current:</b>					
0011 Instruction	369,156,705	-	-	34,966,531	404,123,236
0012 Instruction resources and media services	1,360,291	-	-	345,316	1,705,607
0013 Curriculum and instructional staff development	3,879,980	-	-	7,272,360	11,152,340
0021 Instructional leadership	10,544,399	-	-	1,266,681	11,811,080
0023 School leadership	42,737,407	-	-	969,115	43,706,522
0031 Guidance, counseling and evaluation services	27,946,017	-	-	2,580,637	30,526,654
0032 Social work services	1,015,535	-	-	483,721	1,499,256
0033 Health services	6,273,531	-	-	144,513	6,418,044
0034 Student transportation	34,970,359	-	-	20,116	34,990,475
0035 Food services	-	-	-	44,379,323	44,379,323
0036 Extracurricular activities	7,872,641	-	-	1,257,281	9,129,922
0041 General administration	15,095,870	-	-	685,580	15,781,450
0051 Facilities maintenance and operations	61,227,367	-	36,149	474,686	61,738,202
0052 Security and monitoring services	7,963,225	-	-	163,228	8,126,453
0053 Data processing services	11,054,342	-	-	95,200	11,149,542
0061 Community services	122,660	-	-	1,043,869	1,166,529
<b>Debt service:</b>					
0071 Principal on long-term debt	-	27,255,000	-	330,000	27,585,000
0072 Interest on long-term debt	-	48,873,713	-	7,838	48,881,551
0073 Debt issuance costs and fees	-	6,250	-	-	6,250
<b>Capital outlay:</b>					
0081 Facilities acquisition and construction	5,159,606	-	31,114,860	10,875	36,285,341
<b>Intergovernmental:</b>					
0097 Payments to tax increment fund	6,455,344	-	-	-	6,455,344
0099 Other intergovernmental charges	2,098,771	-	-	-	2,098,771
<b>6030 Total Expenditures</b>	<b>614,934,050</b>	<b>76,134,963</b>	<b>31,151,009</b>	<b>96,496,870</b>	<b>818,716,892</b>
1100 Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	41,091,493	(8,142,041)	(29,744,890)	(7,185,640)	(3,981,078)
<b>Other Financing Sources (Uses)</b>					
7912 Sale of real or personal property	871,295	-	-	-	871,295
7915 Transfers in	-	-	-	419,130	419,130
8911 Transfers out	(419,130)	-	-	-	(419,130)
<b>7080 Total other financing sources and uses</b>	<b>452,165</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>419,130</b>	<b>871,295</b>
1200 Net change in fund balances	41,543,658	(8,142,041)	(29,744,890)	(6,766,510)	(3,109,783)
<b>0100 Fund Balance - July 1 (Beginning)</b>	<b>211,496,140</b>	<b>41,848,383</b>	<b>91,793,778</b>	<b>23,139,642</b>	<b>368,277,943</b>
<b>3000 Fund Balance - June 30 (Ending)</b>	<b>\$ 253,039,798</b>	<b>\$ 33,706,342</b>	<b>\$ 62,048,888</b>	<b>\$ 16,373,132</b>	<b>\$ 365,168,160</b>

COMMUNITY NEWS

Shotspotter for Aldine,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ment in innovative technology will save lives and help officers do the job of getting danger off the streets. If successful, I hope to see ShotSpotter placed all over Harris County," said Commissioner Adrian Garcia.

Commissioner Garcia applauds Sheriff Ed Gonzalez for becoming the first state agency to do this. "Harris County Sheriff's Office deputies have taken upwards of 3,000 pistols, shotguns, and rifles out of the hands of suspected criminals so far this year," said Sheriff Ed Gonzalez. "We're grateful to Commissioner Adrian Garcia and the entire Commissioners Court for this important new tool that takes the guesswork out of pinpointing the source of gunfire in our neighborhoods. I'm optimistic that this pilot program in the Aldine community will complement the peacekeeping, community-oriented initiatives that are already in place and ultimately save lives."

The ShotSpotter gunshot detection, alert, and analysis system will provide what would be otherwise unobtainable, critical real-time gunfire intelligence. The core capabilities of the ShotSpotter system are:



A typical Shotspotter monitoring room, where a technician locates the gunfire on a map and advises the Sheriff's department for a response.

- **DETECT** – ShotSpotter detects and locates gunfire incidents enabling a fast, precise response to over 90% of shooting incidents within the targeted areas. This has a powerful deterrent effect and disrupts the gun violence cycle.

- **PROTECT** – ShotSpotter helps to protect officers by providing them with comprehensive data on the actual amount of gunfire activity that occurs in the neighborhoods they patrol and provides critical situational awareness when responding to specific incidents.

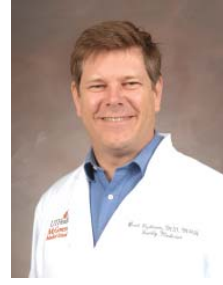
- **CONNECT** – By applying community polic-

ing-oriented best practices, ShotSpotter provides a unique opportunity for law enforcement agencies to connect with vulnerable communities. Rapid response to gunfire incidents in communities that have been most impacted by gun violence builds positive attitudes towards law enforcement and leads to more constructive engagements and cooperation.

The goal is to have the system operational by April 2021. Other Harris County Commissioners expressed interest in also getting this implemented in their precincts.

UT Physicians Multispecialty – Jensen clinic Focused on Worker Health in Northeast Houston

We are expanding our occupational health care program in northeast Houston at our UT Physicians Multispecialty – Jensen clinic. Specializing in work-related injuries and illnesses, our physicians are committed to keeping employees healthy and businesses running smoothly. William B. Perkison, MD, MPH, board certified in both occupational medicine and family medicine, is leading the occupational program within our community-based clinics and working with employers to help improve workplace conditions and communications between key stakeholders.



DR. WILLIAM B. PERKISON

based on their needs, size, resources and goals."

By offering a comprehensive range of health care services and consulting, UT Physicians can help employers plan, develop, and improve the general health of their workforce.

"Employees are businesses' most valuable asset, and it's important to invest in their health and safety," said Perkison. "We can help by creating customized medical plans and services

Administration, US Department of Transportation, and the Federal Aviation Administration," said Perkison. "We can offer the best treatment options and have a large referral network of specialists."

UT Physicians Multispecialty – Jensen provides employee and employer health services, such as on-site health fairs for cholesterol and blood pressure screenings, in-clinic drug and alcohol screening, physicals, immunizations, injury treatment, and worksite surveillance and hazard evaluations. The clinic also offers primary care, pediatric care and behavioral health care.

To learn more about our occupational program, visit UTPhysicians.com/occupational-medicine or call 713-486-8585 to schedule an appointment.

National School Psychology Week recognizes vital work of LSSPs

During the week of November 9–13, 2020, schools throughout the country celebrated National School Psychology Week to highlight the vital work school psychologists (licensed specialists in school psychology or LSSP) and other educators do to help all students thrive.

This year's theme was "The Power of Possibility," which conveys hope, growth, resilience, and renewal. The word "possibility" suggests that even something as small as a seed can grow into something magnificent. Henry David Thoreau wrote, "I have great faith in a seed. Convince me that you have a seed there, and I am prepared to expect great wonders." The word "power" implies that things can and will happen.

"When we focus on what is possible, we have hope that students will grow, thrive, and

bloom. We hope they will be empowered to take the action steps necessary to do so," said Tracy Bailey, executive director of special education. "School psychologists seek to connect with students and staff to highlight how focusing on possibilities can help lead us to our goals, our interests, and our positive growth."

LSSPs help empower children to grow in skills, such as social skills, empathy, compassion for others, and individual or intrapersonal skills such as problem-solving, goal setting, and study skills. The concept that individuals continue to grow and develop as people and with their abilities is central to the theme. Also key is the idea that with help, individuals can build resilience beyond stressful circumstances. School psychologists are exceptionally skilled at assisting students

and staff in seeing possibilities and creating a positive change to thrive in school and life.

"Focusing on these possibilities can help us set goals, identify action steps, communicate needs, and engage in discussions to help create the connections necessary for students to develop critical academic and social-emotional skills," added Bailey.

Additionally, school psychologists and school staff may be empowered to move toward positive change in all leadership areas in the counseling room, the classroom, the community, and beyond. School psychologists can focus on improving the school culture, identifying systems-level change, or prioritizing specific areas of the NASP Practice Model, which has been updated as part of the 2020 NASP Standards.

2020 HOLIDAY SHIPPING DEADLINES			
Between the astronomical rise in online shopping and visitation restrictions, it's more important than ever to mail and ship early this year.			
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<b>UPS</b>	Dec. 15 (for packages delivered by Thursday, Dec. 24).	Ship 2 Day Air by Dec. 22 or Next Day Air as late as Dec. 23 for delivery by Dec. 24.	UPS Stores nationwide. Go to ups.com or call 800-789-6623 to find a location or schedule pickup.
<b>Fed Ex</b>	Dec. 15 for all FedEx Ground packages.	Overnight by Dec. 23; 2 Day Air by Dec. 22 for delivery Dec. 25; Big spenders can get same-day Christmas Day delivery in some areas.	Any FedEx Office location or FedEx authorized shipper.
			Contact www.usps.com www.ups.com; 1-800-PICK-UPS www.fedex.com; 1-800-GO-FEDEX

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School: \_\_\_\_\_

Letters can be mailed to Santa, 5906 Star Lane, Houston, TX. 77057 or e-mailed to newroom@aol.com. Letters must be received by Dec. 11 for publication in our Special Christmas Editions

OPINION PAGE

**STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS**  
By Chris Cobler



State is planning for first COVID19 vaccinations

Plans for first vaccinations

Texas is preparing to distribute the COVID-19 vaccination to medical staff and other first responders later this month. "Texas is ready to distribute these vaccines in the coming days," Gov. Greg Abbott tweeted Sunday, sharing a Wall Street Journal news story about United Airlines operating charter flights to position doses of Pfizer Inc.'s COVID-19 vaccine for quick distribution if the shots are approved by regulators. Earlier, Abbott and the State Department of Health Services announced their guiding principles of vaccine distribution. Texas will initially allocate vaccines based on the following criteria:

- Protecting health care workers.
- Protecting frontline workers.
- Protecting vulnerable populations who are at greater risk.
- Mitigating health inequities.
- Data-driven allocations using the best available scientific evidence and epidemiology.
- Geographic diversity that considers access in urban and rural communities.
- Transparency with the public.

Researcher spotlights 'invisible incentives'

The Texas Enterprise Fund took a hit for lack of transparency in a new research paper from the National Freedom of In-



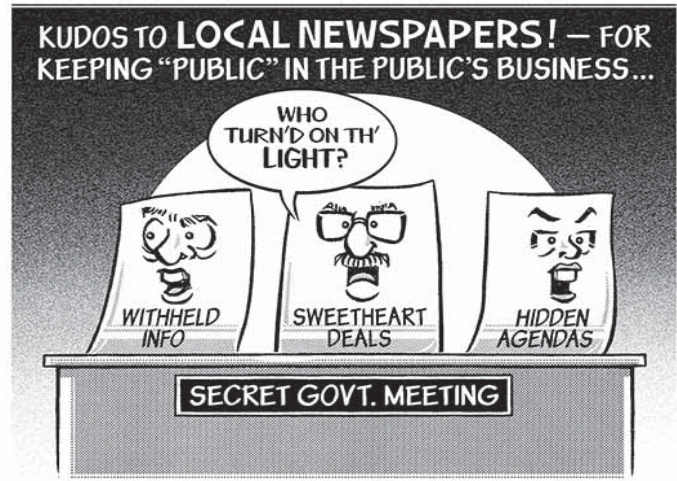
formation Coalition. The paper by journalist Steve Miller is titled "Invisible Incentives: How Secrecy Impedes Evaluation and Accountability of Economic Development Subsidies." Part of the paper spotlights the Texas Enterprise Fund, which the Legislature created in 2003 to provide taxpayer money to companies in exchange for the promise of jobs. "But in numerous cases, the money has been paid and the companies left shortly after the deal was completed, taking the jobs with them," the paper's author writes. "The public rarely hears of it, and the money spent is rarely recouped, although because of the opacity surrounding the TEF, it's difficult to discern if any financial recovery by the state is achieved." The problem is the same across most states, according to the paper, which concludes with this recommendation: "Opening the

records, fully, is the best start to handing the decision to the public." Renae Eze, Gov. Greg Abbott's spokesperson, responded in a statement to the researcher's assertions.

"When he first entered office in 2015, Gov. Abbott established procedures to ensure the protection of taxpayer money and transparency in the spending process, including changing the Texas Enterprise Fund requirements to be performance-based, meaning these companies must first meet their contracted job requirements before any state money is paid out," she stated. "Companies must also remain and maintain those jobs for an extra year on the contract period. If a company falls short, it will be held accountable to the hardworking people of Texas through provisions that enable us to clawback our grant."

\$1 billion less

Two key Texas funds received about \$1 billion less this year because of the economic downturn, state Comptroller Glenn Hegar announced. The State Highway Fund and the Rainy Day Fund each received more than \$1.1 billion in the annual transfer of severance tax money, Hegar said. That's about \$500 million less for each fund than a year ago. The transfer amounts are based on crude oil and natural gas production tax revenues in excess of 1987 collections. If either tax generates more revenue than the 1987



threshold, an amount equal to 75 percent of the excess is transferred. In November 2014, voters approved a constitutional amendment allocating at least half of the severance taxes to the Rainy Day Fund, with the remainder going to the State Highway Fund for use on non-toll highway construction, maintenance and right-of-way acquisition. The economic contraction associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and recent volatility in oil prices contributed to the transfer amounts being lower than the \$1.66 billion each fund received in fiscal 2020, Hegar said. "The Rainy Day Fund and the State Highway Fund are critical pieces to ensure Texas' continued economic strength," Hegar said. "The State Highway Fund is a key funding source for the transportation infrastructure that is fundamental to our economy, and the importance of maintaining a healthy Rainy Day Fund to help weather unforeseen economic downturns has never been more clear than it has been in recent months." With this most recent transfer, the new balance of severance taxes will be about \$10.7 billion.

Texas A&M researchers announced a breakthrough in fighting agricultural plant diseases Kranthi Mandadi, a Texas A&M AgriLife Research scientist and associate professor in Texas A&M's Department of Plant Pathology and Microbiology, has been working on developing new biological technologies. Mandadi and his team are based at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Weslaco. The diseases cause billions of dollars of damage each year. The U.S. citrus industry alone

would save \$3 billion a year through control of just one of these diseases — citrus greening. Additionally, the pathogen that causes Pierce's disease in grapes is the No. 1 threat to the \$1 billion wine industry in Texas. The new technologies allow scientists to better study the pathogens and combat them.

Chris Cobler is a board member and past president of the Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas. He welcomes email at ccobler@texaspress.com.

NORTHEAST NEWS

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Billion-dollar breakthrough?

**OPINION**  
BY Dean Weingarten  
TheTruthAboutGuns author

Gun authority questions effectiveness of Shotspotter

San Antonio Pulls the Plug on ShotSpotter Gunfire Detection System, Hartford, CT Next?  
By Dean Weingarten  
August 21, 2017

"A program intended to help police officers identify where a shooting happens, get there quicker and ultimately cut down on crime has been stripped from the proposed city budget because city leaders said it's not effective, San Antonio, Texas' ksat.com reports. "It cost the city \$270,000 to put ShotSpotters on the city's crime-ridden east and west sides, but police Chief William McManus said the program's results don't match up with its hefty price tag."

The experience in San Antonio shows the ShotSpotter system's limitations. In the fifteen months the system was in place, the police credited four arrests to ShotSpotter. That's arrests, not convictions. The total cost of the system was \$378,000 plus \$168,000 for officer overtime associated with the program. So the city spent about \$136,000 per each arrest.

expressnews.com tells the tale:

The four suspects were arrested on charges of discharging a firearm, a Class A misdemeanor, the SAPD's Sgt. Jesse Salame said. One of the suspects also was charged with possession of narcotics.

There was no known shooting victim in any of those four cases, Salame said.

It's easy to see why Police Chief McManus pulled the plug. While some costs would be spread out over years, the overtime and maintenance costs of the system could conservatively be \$75,000 a year per arrest. That would be most of the cost of a full time police officer, to make one misdemeanor arrest where no shooting victim was involved.

In Connecticut, ShotSpotter system is also under the gun. From fox61.com in 2013:

"It gives us a very, very close location

as to where the shots emanated from," said Lt. Brian Foley of the Hartford Police Department.

But that's only when it's working and the problem is that so far, ShotSpotter has mostly backfired. During an analysis of ShotSpotter in spring 2012, police records show that out of 60 total alerts, only six were confirmed, meaning the system was only 10 percent accurate. Nearly a year later, an interdepartmental police memo shows the system's accuracy on 27 alerts was even lower, at just eight percent. Two of those 27 alerts were labeled as gunfire but really weren't, including one which was just noise from a snow plow.

"Some calls you go to you don't know if it's a firecracker, you don't know if it's a gunshot, you don't know if it's a dump truck swinging its tailgate," Foley said.

The New Haven Police Department purchased ShotSpotter for \$374,000 in 2009 and has made two payments of \$49,000 for maintenance since then, yet police admit the system has been flawed.

"It was definitely frustrating to officers and dispatch, it was taking up a lot of our resources," said Sgt. Max Joyner.

Technological solutions to crime can be helpful, especially for politicians who want to be seen to be "doing something" about "gun violence." But there are always criminal countermeasures. Bad guys wear gloves to stop leaving fingerprints, or masks to foil surveillance cameras. Sensors can be destroyed, etc.

While ShotSpotter can be helpful in locating crime hot spots, those locations are already well-known to the police. Truth be told, violent criminals are small in number in all communities. Spend the resources on monitoring, apprehending and convicting those known individuals, and violent crime will decrease.

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## SPORTS PAGE

# Crazy college season winding down: Texans head to Chicago looking to finish strong

The wild and whacky 2020 college football season is winding down with just a couple of weeks remaining, let's just hope we get to see it completed what with all the postponements and cancelation of games due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most of the major conferences will play their league title games the weekend of Dec. 18-19, but teams that won't be playing in those games will have the chance to play that same weekend to makeup games that had to be postponed earlier in the season.

Jimbo Fisher's Texas A&M Aggies travel to Knoxville on Saturday to take on Tennessee in a game that was supposed to be played in October. Two weeks ago, the Aggies used a stifling defense to defeat LSU, 20-7, to move to 6-1 on the season.

A&M probably won't be playing in the SEC title game because their lone loss came at the hands of No. 1-ranked Alabama, which looked dominant in its 42-13 win at home over arch rival Auburn. Nick Saban, who had to watch the game from because he tested positive for the corona virus, may very well have the best team in the country. Should the Aggies win out, they would need either No. 2 Notre Dame, No. 3 Clemson or No. 4 Ohio State to lose at least one in the final two weeks to give the Ags a legitimate shot at one of the four College Football Playoff (CFP) berths. I don't see that happening, but Fisher's team should be in line for a Jan. 1 bowl game (if they are played) that should carry a load of momentum into the offseason.

In the NFL, the season is also winding down, and there are a number of teams in both the AFC and NFC still in the playoff hunt.

I don't think the Texans are one of those teams, but they have played better since firing head coach Bill O'Brien. Two weeks ago, the Texans embarrassed the Detroit Lions on Thanksgiving Day, 41-25, as quarterback Deshaun Watson threw four touchdown passes. The loss was so bad that Detroit ownership fired head coach Matt Patricia



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and General Manager Dan Quinn.

This week, the Texans take on another NFC North foe when they travel to Chicago to take on the Bears. This is a game the Texans can win.

Other interesting matchups have the Patriots visiting the Rams on Thursday Night Football, the Saints visiting Philadelphia on Thursday Night Football, the Saints visiting Philadelphia with hopes of quarterback Drew Brees returning under center, Kansas City facing a solid Dolphins team in Miami, Pittsburgh visiting Buffalo and on Monday Night Football a good one in the AFC North as Baltimore pays a visit to a vastly-improved Cleveland Browns team.

Before we take a look at those games, let's review last week's record. A 6-4 week brought the season record to 81-40 (67%).

Now, onto these weekends games.

## NCAA

### Michigan at Ohio State:

For years this game has been The Game of the Year in the Big 10, with the winner earning the league's Eastern Division crown, but not this year. Sure, Ohio State has lived up to its end of the bargain and should go undefeated in the regular season, but Michigan has been a huge disappointment this year. Two weeks ago, Jim Harbaugh's team fell to 2-4 on the season when it lost at home to what was a winless Penn State team. There is speculation that this will be it for Harbaugh, who might be a better fit in the NFL. Look for the Buckeyes to roll behind quarterback Justin Fields (1,208 yards, 13 TDs), running back Master Teague III (380 yards, 6 TDs) and wide receiver Chris Olave (26 receptions, 389 yards, 4 TDs). If this one gets ugly, there's a good chance Harbaugh might not make it through the post-game news confer-

ence! My pick, Ohio State 36, Michigan 13

### Oklahoma at West Virginia:

After a slow start, Lincoln Riley's Sooners have bounced back and have a legit shot at playing in the Big 12 title game against Iowa State. But first they've got to take care of business in their final regular season road game at West Virginia. The Mountaineers have been up and down this season, but have a solid defense and a decent quarterback in Jarrett Doege (2,219 yards, 13 TDs). The Sooners have been rolling since their Oct. 3 loss at home to Iowa State, winners of five straight heading into last Saturday's home finale against Baylor. Quarterback Spencer Ratliff (2,319 yards, 22 TDs), running back Rhamondre Stevenson (332 yards, 5 TDs) and wide receiver Marvin Mims (28 receptions, 483 yards, 7 TDs) are making plays all over the field. That bunch will probably face their toughest test to date, but something tells me Riley will have a little something extra for WVU come Saturday. My pick, Oklahoma 33, West Virginia 26

### Texas A&M at Tennessee:

Fisher has Aggie fans excited and they should be as the former Florida State coach has turned the program around in just three years. And the good news for A&M fans is the fact this is still a very young team, especially at the skill positions on offense. Running back Isaiah Spiller (784 yards, 6 TDs) is just a sophomore and while Fisher will lose senior quarterback Kellen Mond (1,573 yards, 16 TDs), he has young talent waiting in the wings to take the program to the next level. Two weeks ago, Mond and the offense struggled in their 20-7 win over LSU at Kyle Field, but the defense played an outstanding game to lead the Ags to a revenge win over the

defending national champions (LSU trounced A&M 50-7 in 2019). Look for the offense to play much better this week as they look to finish strong. My pick, Texas A&M 34, Tennessee 16

## NFL

### New England at Los Angeles Rams:

Bill Belichick's Patriots head to Hollywood to face the Rams on Thursday Night Football. Two weeks ago, NE kept its slim playoff hopes alive with a 20-17 home win over Arizona as kicker Nick Foles nailed a 50-yard field goal on the last play of the game. While the Pats were winning on a last-second field goal, the Rams lost on a last-second field goal to fall to 7-4 on the season. Cam Newton (1,984 passing yards, 4 TDs/387 rushing yards, 9 TDs) and running back Damien Harris (561 yards, 2 TDs) will need to use their legs against one of the league's top defenses. The Patriots have a pretty fair defense as well, but they will have their hands full with a talented Rams offense led by quarterback Jared Goff (2,021 yards, 16 TDs) and big-play wide receivers Cooper Kupp (66 receptions, 763 yards, 2 TDs) and Robert Woods (61 receptions, 679 yards, 5 TDs). The Rams can also run the ball effectively. My pick Los Angeles Rams 26, New England 23

### Houston at Chicago:

The Texans look for a second straight win over a NFC North foe when they visit the Windy City on Sunday. On Thanksgiving Day, Watson turned in a magnificent performance, throwing for 318 yards and four touchdowns. Two of the scoring tosses went to speedy wide receiver Will Fuller IV (53 receptions, 879 yards, 8 TDs). Fuller has had a nice season (and knock on wood) has remained healthy thus far. Texan fans hope his good health continues. The Bears have a decent defense, but that was evident two weeks ago during their 41-25 loss at Green Bay. I think the Bears will play better on that side of the ball on Sunday and if Chicago running back David

Montgomery (575 yards, 1 TD) gets going, quarterback Mitch Trubisky (802 yards, 9 TDs) should be able to make some plays down field against a suspect Houston secondary, but something tells me Watson is going to have another big day as the Texans look to finish the 2020 season strong after a disastrous start. My pick, Houston 30, Chicago 27

### Dallas at Cincinnati:

While the Texans were rolling on Thanksgiving Day, the Cowboys played like a bunch of turkeys, losing at home to Washington, 41-16. It was an embarrassing effort and head coach Mike McCarthy had some questionable calls, but the most glaring was calling for a fake punt at the Dallas 24 yard-line early in the fourth quarter with the game still in reach. Of course, the fake failed and Washington responded with 21 unanswered points to put the Cowboys out of their misery. Andy Dalton (870 yards, 5 TDs) returns to Cincinnati where he spent the first nine years of his job. It would be nice to see running back Ezekiel Elliott (707 yards, 5 TDs) to get back on track and for Amari Cooper (71 receptions, 845 yards, 3 TDs) to continue to make plays down field. The Bengals may be without starting quarterback Joe Burrow, but they play hard. It might behoove the Cowboys to do the same on Sunday or they will get embarrassed again. My pick, Dallas 26, Cincinnati 24.

### Kansas City at Miami:

The Miami Dolphins are the next team that gets to try and slow down Pat Mahomes and the Kansas City Chiefs offense. Good luck with that. Two weeks ago, Mahomes (3,497 yards, 30 TDs) threw for 462 yards and three touchdowns to lead the Chiefs to a 27-24 road win over Tom Brady and Tampa Bay. While Mahomes had another big day, wide receiver Tyreek Hill (68 receptions, 1,021 yards, 13 TDs) had one of the best days by a wide receiver in NFL history as he grabbed 13 Mahomes passes for 269 yards and three touchdowns. KC tight end Travis Kelce (74 receptions, 978 yards, 7 TDs) should join Hill as a 1,000-yard receiver when KC visits South Beach and a Miami team that is a legitimate playoff team. The Dolphins have a solid defense, but so did TB and you saw what Mahomes did to the Bucs two weeks ago. It should be more of the same as Mahomes continues to make plays to Hill, Kelce and other Chiefs as Andy Reid's looks to track down Pittsburgh for the top seed in the AFC. My pick, Kansas City 30, Miami 23

### New Orleans at Philadelphia:

The Saints play their third straight road game when they travel to Philadelphia to take on the shaky Eagles on Sunday. The Saints have continued their winning ways even without quarterback Drew Brees, who is on injured reserve with 11 fractured ribs. Brees could come off the IR for this one, but if he doesn't, Sean Payton's team is in good shape with Taysom Hill (397

passing yards/279 rushing yards, 5 TDs) running the offense. The one big difference between Brees and Hill is that Brees does a good job of getting running back Alvin Kamara (585 rushing yards, 8 TDs/68 receptions, 646 yards, 4 TDs) involved in the passing game. Kamara has caught just one pass in the first two games Hill has started at QB. I don't think it will matter who starts at quarterback for the Saints this week because their defense is playing as well as any defensive unit in the league at the moment. Look for Eagles QB Carson Wentz (he threw another interception in the Eagles' Monday night loss to Seattle) to continue to struggle against the Saints defense as New Orleans picks up another road win. My pick, New Orleans 34, Philadelphia 18

### Pittsburgh at Buffalo:

This should be a tough road test for Ben Roethlisberger and the Steelers on Sunday Night Football. The Bills are tough at home and have a solid front seven that should be able to pressure Big Ben. The Steelers will be playing their third game in a 12-day stretch and the wear and tear could take its toll against the Bills. The Steelers played a rare Wednesday game on Dec. 2 when they outlasted the Ravens, 19-14 on a cold and windy day in the Steel City. It was not the Steelers' finest effort and head coach Mike Tomlin ripped his team following the victory. Two weeks ago, Josh Allen (3,029 yards, 22 TDs/311 rush yards, 6 TDs) led the Bills to a home win against the Chargers. Look for Allen to make some big plays to wide receiver Stefon Diggs (80 receptions, 945 yards, 4 TDs) as Buffalo pulls off the upset and make things interesting down the stretch as the Steelers and Chiefs vie for the No. 1 seed in the AFC. My pick, Buffalo 24, Pittsburgh 20

### Baltimore at Cleveland:

A good one for Monday Night Football pits two teams that simply don't like one another. Remember, former Browns owner Art Modell packed up his team and moved them to Baltimore in 1996 and left Browns fans heart broken and upset. For the last two decades, the Ravens have owned this series, but this is a much-improved Cleveland team and you can bet the Browns will be out for blood on Monday night. Cleveland QB Baker Mayfield (2,108 yards, 17 TDs) has been a solid game manager this year and it helps to have a strong running game led by Nick Chubb (719 yards, 6 TDs) and a go-to receiver in Jarvis Landry (68 receptions, 614 yards, 1 TD). The Ravens won't go quietly, so look for quarterback Lamar Jackson to get things done through the air and on the ground. The Browns have a decent defense. Look for talented defensive end Myles Garrett to make a key play or two late as the Browns give their fans an early Christmas present with a big AFC North victory. My pick, Cleveland 26, Baltimore 23

## Varsity Football: Nimitz 48 Aldine 0



Nimitz#5 Jayvon Davis returns punt for TD



Nimitz #2 Austin Remo just slips thru Aldine's #22 Damien Paredes for a TD

ALL GAME PHOTOS BY RUBEN SAUCEDO FOR THE NORTHEAST NEWS.

**COMMUNITY WATCH**

**MS-13 members charged with murder by U.S. Attorney**

HOUSTON – Five local members of the violent Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) international street gang are set to appear in court following charges of conspiracy and murder in aid of racketeering, announced U.S. Attorney Ryan K. Patrick.

Wilson Jose Ventura-Mejia, 24, Jimmy Villalobos-Gomez, 23, Angel Miguel Aguilar-Ochoa, 35, Walter Antonio Chicas-Garcia, 23, and Mar-

lon Miranda-Moran, 21, will appear for their arraignments and detention hearings via video before U.S. Magistrate Judge Sam S. Sheldon at 10 a.m. All are El Salvadorian nationals who illegally resided in Houston. Also charged is Franklin Trejo-Chavarria, 23, who is currently in custody in El Salvador.

A federal grand jury returned the indictment Nov. 12. All are charged

with conspiracy and murder in aid of racketeering.

The indictment alleges they committed a 2018 murder in furtherance of the MS-13 enterprise. The victim was allegedly beaten to death with machetes in order for the defendants to further their positions in the enterprise.

If convicted, they face a potential death sentence.

**Precinct 3 gave away Thanksgiving turkeys**



Precinct 3 Constable Sherman Eagleton, volunteer deputies, and Precinct 3, Position 1 Justice of the Peace Joe Stephens teamed up to give away Thanksgiving Turkeys to the needy last week before Thursday in Barrett Station, North Shore and Baytown. It was a kickoff to the giving season for the areas.

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# CHURCH PAGE

## BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey —

1. Is the book of Herod in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Which "Caesar" ordered all the world to be taxed, causing Mary to travel to Bethlehem while expecting the baby Jesus? Julius, Tiberius, Claudius, Augustus
3. Where in the Bible (KJV) does it inform of the Christ Child being born

- in a December? Does not, John 1:14, Romans 6:23, Galatians 4:4
4. With seemingly two different New Testament answers, who was the father of Joseph? Jacob/Heli, Gideon/Ishmael, Solomon/Nahum, Samuel/Pilate
5. Where did the angel Gabriel appear to Mary saying, "Blessed art thou among women"? Nazareth, Tyre, Ninevah, Gazi

6. For the journey to Bethlehem, how did Mary and Joseph travel? Bible not specific, Cart, Rode donkey, Small raft

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Augustus; 3) Does not; 4) Jacob/Heli; 5) Nazareth; 6) Bible not specific

"Test Your Bible Knowledge," a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online.

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*But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting. - MICAH 5:2*

*"The Virgin Mary Cradling the Baby Jesus" by Charles-François Hutin (1764)*

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### Aldine ISD wins District of Distinction Art Award

Aldine ISD was one of 42 school districts in Texas named as a 2020 District of Distinction Award winner by the Texas Art Education Association (TAEA). Aldine, and the other 41 school districts in Texas, received the honor for providing a well-rounded education that advocates and integrates visual arts curriculum to inspire creativity and reach all different learners. TAEA is the leading advocate for the visual arts in the state. The organization has previously honored outstanding TAEA members for work in their classroom and districts. This marked the second year that TAEA is honoring districts that meet rigorous criteria as evidenced from data. For the 2020 award, more than 1,000 districts were eligible to apply. Aldine and other school districts submitted documentation they met from the 12-point rubric over the 2019-20 school year. Aldine and 41 other school districts in Texas met the high standards and received the honor indicating they are in the top 4 percent of districts in the state. "Aldine ISD has set a high standard for visual arts advocacy, integrated visual arts curriculum, encouraged creativity and community participation," said Stacia Gower, chair of the Administration and Supervision Division of TAEA. "With the challenges educators faced this past school year it is a true testament to their skill, dedication and

flexibility that the quality of their programs continued strong and comprehensive." The District of Distinction Award is a fairly new award created by the TAEA in 2019. Aldine ISD was one of 20 school districts in Texas named a District of Distinction Award winner following the 2018-19 school year. The Administration and Supervision division oversees the award program. The award honors school districts that are leading the way in the visual arts. The TAEA Administration and Supervision Division recognizes districts with outstanding leadership in promoting the arts in their district and community. TAEA wants to identify districts that are actively participating members in areas such as VASE, Junior VASE and TEAM as a few examples. The organization also looks at field experiences, community service and community exhibitions to name a few as part of the rigorous rubric for the award. TAEA is the largest state professional organization for art educators in the United States. It is the mission of TAEA to promote quality visual arts education through leadership, advocacy, service and professional development.



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