

Kowis Street rebuild will tie together Pct. 2 trails with Driver Park & Northeast Community Ctr.

Commissioner Garcia's Vision in Progress.

By Jada Mier

EAST ALDINE – Commissioner Adrian Garcia continues his mission to improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of Precinct 2 with his Kowis Street reconstruction project.

The *Northeast News* spoke with Garcia and his Project Manager, Ray Guerra who says, "This project is the first in Texas seeking Envision verification," which specializes in sustainable infrastructure.

Although still in its study phase, Garcia hopes to put the project up for bid in the second quarter of next year. The reconstruction of Kowis Street from the Halls Bayou Hike and Bike Trail to James Driver Park is part of his plan to connect the whole precinct through their parks, hike, and bike trails.

Improvements will be made to the existing bridge connecting two 8 ft trails. A crosswalk and a landscaped median will be added to Royale Pine as it transitions into Kowis street.

See *KOWIS St.* page 3



The public is asked for feedback, especially on the area marked SEE OPTION ENLARGEMENTS where Kowis meets Halls Bayou trails. Send comments to Pct. 2, Amery Reid, at 713-274-2356, or amery.reid@pct2.hctx.net.

Saldivar named president of Lone Star College System board

HOUSTON (Dec. 11, 2020) – The Lone Star College System Board of Trustees selected Myriam Saldivar to serve as chair of the board at its Dec. 10 workshop and regular meeting. Saldivar represents District 6 in the Lone Star College System.

"I would like to thank my fellow board members for the honor of serving as board chair," said Saldivar. "I look forward to working with Dr. Head and my colleagues to ensure our students continue to have access to educational opportunities that keep our community strong and healthy."

Other officer positions appointed by the board were Michael Stoma, vice chair (District 1); Iesheia Ayers-Wilson, secretary (District 3); and Mike Sullivan, assistant secretary (District 8).

"I am grateful to all the trustees for the work they do each and every day,"



MYRIAM SALDIVAR

said Stephen C. Head, Ph.D., LSC chancellor. "Their dedication to student success is truly inspiring."

Board members are elected as representatives of nine single-member districts by citizens in the Lone Star College in-district service area in November of even-numbered years and serve terms of six years each.

"I look forward to working with the board members to ensure our

community continues to have access to affordable, high quality higher education," said Head.

LSC trustees serve staggered terms – three of nine trustees come up for election every two years – so that there are always experienced members sitting on the board.

Lone Star College offers high-quality, low-cost academic transfer and career training education to 93,000+ students each semester. LSC is training tomorrow's workforce today and redefining the community college experience to support student success. Stephen C. Head, Ph.D., serves as chancellor of LSC, the largest institution of higher education in the Houston area with an annual economic impact of nearly \$3 billion. LSC consists of seven colleges, 10 centers, two university centers, Lone Star Corporate College and LSC-Online.

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Letters to Santa

Dear Santa, How are you I hope you are good I know what I want for Christmas, stuff animals and this is for god I know he is gearing so I pray for my family to be safe and I bout want anything just that. Thank you to everyone. Destiny Guzman, 8, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, Ps5 and to only a ps5 please. Kevin Balderas, 10, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, My Christmas list board games, Doll stuff shoes, a keyboard (for music) shopkins (that look like food) and anything. Thank you for everything, you are amazing for all the presents from all the years thank you for everything. Isabella Solano, 8, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, What is it like in the North pole? Do you drink a lot of hot cocs every morning? If so how many cups? I want to thank you for sending Tin my elf. I get happy to wake up seeing him in different spots. I know I'm on the NAUGHTY list but I'm trying my best to be good at home. Here are a few items I want... Led lights, pop socked, new shoes/sandals. I hope you have a Merry Christmas. Joselyn Ramirez, 8, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, I want a ps5 and a remot. Then I want a remot controlor race car and some baderres. I want to be a member a prodigg. I want a remot airplan jet and helicopter. I want some nikies and some footdalls, doacougour and a dad lord. Kymani, 9, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, My name is Jose and I've been very good this year. I want is the ps5, new xbox, jordans, a basketball hoodie, a buck card and the iphone 12. Jose M, 9, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, I want some new shoes because I only have one pair of shoes and I want wear more shoes. Luis Garcia, 10, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, Please give me a roller skater so I can learn hot to skate. Last I want a Barbie Careers Baby doctor so I can learn how to be a doctor when I grow up. Hannah Akatagba, 8, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, Can you get me a line and red ciencs, mini soccer ball and soccer gloves please? Gabriel, 7 years old, Stephens Elementary

Letters to Santa

Dear Santa, I will like a skat bord and a Nintendo switch and Nickks and blue Thackys and a new masck and gluvns and lunch box and morar sickol and spider man TEde Bere. And clos and stockings. Xavier, 7 years old, Stephens Elementary

Dear Santa, I wanta a toy tran and I want a toy legos. Jayien, 7 years old, Stephens Elementary

Dear Santa, For Christmas I want a new elf because my elf he is a boy he is alone, Can I get a girl elf and s skirt for the elf? And can I get a iPad? Please. And can I get new vans. And a plant for my room Emerson Masun, 7, Stephens Elementary

Dear Santa, I want Alex wesey, Alex pljes. Calolz. Nice brother. New stuff for my two bif brother. A xBox 5 for Jualan and some thing for Aj. Liliana Clavir, 7, Stephens Elementary

Dear Santa, Can you please give me a unicorn please and can you mak me happy for kresmus and you give ,e a skir. Serenicy Moncovoriz, 7, Stephens Elementary

Dear Santa, Hello Santa. Can you get me a toy car? I want a pors and please a ps5 like my brother Ere. Isabella Garcia, 9, Stephens Elementary

Dear Santa, Hola Santa yo quiero unos zapatos porque quiero unos zapatos nuevos. Alan Mendoza, 10, Oleson Elementary

Season's Greetings

Season's Greetings



Harris County Department of Education

Happy Holidays



from Armando and Debbie Walle & Family

Thank you for giving me the honor of representing you at the Texas House of Representatives.



Merry Christmas From the members of The Aldine Optimist Club Supporting the youth of Aldine

Season's Greetings



BEASLEY TIRE A FULL SERVICE TIRE COMPANY



May the Season

fill your home with love and joy through the closeness of friends, family, and the comfort of home. And may our nation renew ourselves to serving the least amongst us and treating one another with respect and dignity.

Sylvia R. Garcia

SYLVIA R. GARCIA

Merry Christmas

from STEVE MEAD

Aldine School Board & Optimist Club President

Component Sales & Service 281-442-8127

SEASON'S GREETINGS TO THE EAST ALDINE COMMUNITY

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Best Wishes to Everyone in our Community For a Happy New Year



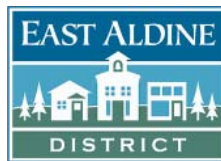
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We thank you for another Year of Support for your Community Newspaper

Best Wishes for the Holiday Season

NORTHEAST BELTWAY 8 News



Happy Holidays

Best Wishes to all the residents of Aldine and Northeast Houston Have a safe and prosperous New Year!

EAST ALDINE DISTRICT

713-595-1232

Best Wishes for a Safe and Happy Holiday



HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY CORPS 2800 Aldine-Bender Rd. Houston, TX 77032



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-1pm. Register at 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 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 8, 2020

HOUSTON AREA 19 COUNTIES

306,274 POSITIVE 3,906 DEATHS 260,270 RECOVERED

TEXAS

1,334,972 POSITIVE 23,195 DEATHS 1,038,806 RECOVERED

UNITED STATES

15,087,418 POSITIVE 285,518 DEATHS 5,714,557 RECOVERED

WORLDWIDE

68,010,230 POSITIVE 1,553,025 DEATHS 43,743,769 RECOVERED

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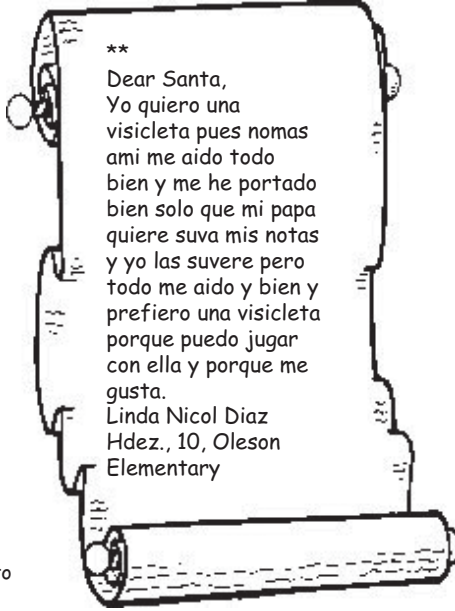
Letters to Santa

Dear Santa, I wish for some stuff. The first thing I want is new joy-cons for my Nintendo, and a bunch of legos. The most important thing I want is peace to people.
Gerardo Sanchez Jr., 10, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, Today I've been good for all day long, and for my gifts I want a beyblade (rock dragon) and I want a ps5 (Spider man) miles morales.
Jeremiah, 9, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, I wish for this world to end and this virus because I want everyone to be safe and healthy and not go out too much and I wish for peace and 2020 to end.
Melany A. Oavedo, 10, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, I want a Pc and I want a dog.
Osvaldo Cramona, 10, Oleson Elementary



**

Dear Santa, Yo quiero una visicleta pues nomas ami me aido todo bien y me he portado bien solo que mi papa quiere suva mis notas y yo las suvere pero todo me aido y bien y prefiero una visicleta porque puedo jugar con ella y porque me gusta.
Linda Nicol Diaz Hdez., 10, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, For Christmas I will like a skatebord. Because I have bin practicing with my cuzinz skateboard. Know I think I am good at skateboarding. And I will like having my own skateboard.
Sopia Guzmna, 9, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, For Christmas I would like a pet dog chow chow dog color white, please and thank you if you get me it.
Auareee Esquivel, 10, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, I want a dounot white frosting with rainbow sprikels and a candel, amogus plushy, and a wish is that we play amogus to school, and for 100 tiktes a toy plushy, some chips, and a cherry slushy from sonic.
Brianna Gomez, 11, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa, For Christmas I want or a wish is a new byecle of rainbow (arcoiris) and new house for my toys for me and my little sister can play with the house.
Melanie Nunez, 9, Oleson Elementary

Schools of Choice Festival Feb. 12 started process of choosing Aldine ISD optional schools

The festival presents options for families to consider for their students during the application period.

ALDINE — The district's Schools of Choice options give students the opportunity to attend schools outside their attendance zones and in areas of interest. The event will enable families to explore their school options for the 2021-2022 school year and learn about the choice application process.

View all the school options from STEAM, early college, career and technology, and the International Baccalaureate (IB®) Program. SEE WEBSITE.

Interested families who joined the virtual festival on Saturday, December 12, will hear from each school of choice option representative who will discuss their campus' programs.

Aldine ISD to Offer Two New Options Starting Fall 2021

The district will offer two new options starting fall 2021 — the Newcomer School and Aldine's Young Women's Leadership Academy.



The Newcomer School is an innovative program targeting high school students newly arrived in the U.S. from non-English speaking countries or with limited English proficiency. They will receive intensive English language learning instruction, core academics, and support services.

Aldine's Young Women's Leadership Academy — Where Girls Shine / Academia de Liderazgo para Mujeres Jóvenes — Donde las Mujeres Jóvenes Brillan

The Young Women's Leadership Academy will focus on college preparatory academics for girls in Grades 6-12, emphasizing

college preparedness, leadership development, and STEM. YWLA is opening in partnership with the non profit organization, Young Women's Preparatory Network.

Families with questions can talk with school staff during the Q&A session.

Again, the link for the Virtual Schools of Choice Festival will not be live until December 12. Additionally, families will also be able to click on the live virtual meeting session links for each campus of interest.

Schools of Choice Festival Agenda on Dec. 12

• **International Baccalaureate Program (Primary, Middle & Diploma) — Programa de Bachillerato Internacional (Primaria, Años Intermedia y Diploma)**

• **9 a.m. — Welcome & Keynote Addresses From District Leaders**

• **9:30-11:30 a.m. — Schools of Choice Q&A** (specific links to be provided on the Schools of Choice Festival link once the site is active)

• **11:30 a.m.-12 p.m. — Application Information &**

Closing Remarks

Frequently Asked Questions

• **When will the applications be available?** —

The applications will not be available until February. However, families can fill out an "Interest Form" to receive a notification when the application becomes available. If a family has follow-up questions or needs assistance completing the applications, they can reach out to the contact provided by each school.

• **How many schools can I choose for my child?** — Families can choose up to three (3) schools ranking first, second, and third choice options. **NOTE:** If a family only has ONE school choice option they are interested in, they are advised to make that ONE their ONLY selection.

• **What happens if my first choice is unavailable?** — If a family's top choice is unavailable, the second choice will be reviewed for seat availability.

For more information, email magnetschoolchoice@aldineisd.org.

Kowis Street rebuild project,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The project's cost is 4.8 million dollars, including traffic calming concepts and pedestrian streetlights. It's important to him that this project does not "intrude in the quality of life of the homeowners around the area" this means ensuring that the draining aspects of the project are environmentally friendly. "We are dependent on corporate vendors to participate, and the prime contractor is Cobb Fendley, RG Miller engineers will do the envision verification, and M2L associates will do the landscaping," Garcia says. Holloway will do the community engagements and understand the environmental aspects. Precinct 2's Dr. Guerra as well as Harris County Engineering Department were also intimately involved in the project.

Garcia decided that the development of James Drive Park and Kowis Street would be all-inclusive. He said when he came into office, he wanted to make sure he was representing everyone, and that people felt welcomed and invited to use their ameni-

OPTION 2



Planners offered three Options where Kowis Street meets Halls Bayou trails.

ties. Although the special needs community has not been a part of his personal life, he has had experience with the community throughout his life and career as a police officer, sheriff, and council member. As a sheriff, he was supportive and dealt with the mentally and physically disabled challenges and those who went through the county jail system. As a county commissioner, he

was not going to leave those commitments behind. Under his administration, he did not want to only do what they have always done; he wanted to make sure that people knew that he cared about the community. The park aids in Garcia's mission by allowing those with and without disabilities the chance to experience the park side by side.

OPINION PAGE

Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus

By FRANCIS P. CHURCH.
First published in The New York Sun in 1897

We take pleasure in answering thus prominently the communication below, expressing at the same time our great gratification that its faithful author is numbered among the friends of The Sun:

Dear Editor—

I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, "If you see it in The Sun, it's so." Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?

Virginia O'Hanlon

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies. You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if you did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived could tear apart. Only faith, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives and lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, a 10 times 10,000 years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

Francis P. Church's editorial, "Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus" was an immediate sensation, and went on to become one of the most famous editorials ever written. It first appeared in the The New York Sun in 1897, almost a hundred years ago, and was reprinted annually until 1949 when the paper went out of business.

Virginia O'Hanlon went on to graduate from Hunter College with a Bachelor of Arts degree at age 21. The following year she received her Master's from Columbia, and in 1912 she began teaching in the New York City school system, later becoming a principal. After 47 years, she retired as an educator. Throughout her life she received a steady stream of mail about her Santa Claus letter, and to each reply she attached an attractive printed copy of the Church editorial. Virginia O'Hanlon Douglas died on May 13, 1971, at the age of 81, in a nursing home in Valatie, N.Y.

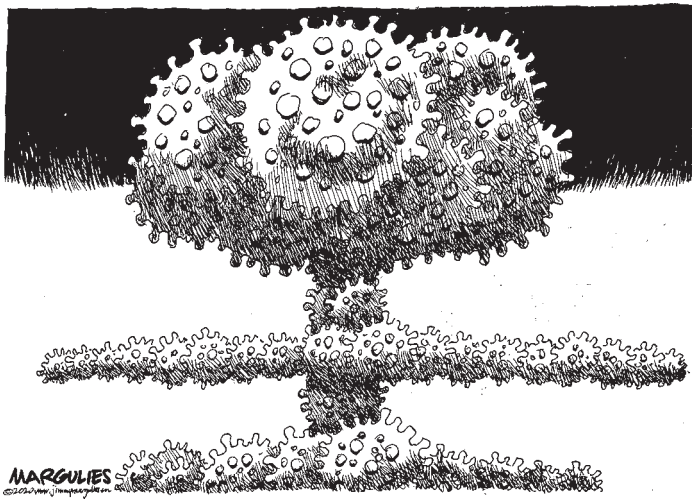
Letters to Santa

Dear Santa,
I have been a wonderful boy all year. My parents have even said so. When I hear your sleigh come I thank you for leaving me a PS4 gift card.
Edward Avila, 9

Dear Santa,
Yes, I was super nice this year. I hope all the boys and girls around the world get something they love from you to open up. Santa all I want are some building Legos.
Andres Turrubiates, 10

Dear Santa,
I have been amazing this year you see, I always take care of my mom and sister. Lets not forget the dogs too! I can't wait to see you and all my gifts!
Remington, 9 years old

Dear Santa,
I have been nice for about a year. I hope you give Joy to all the Children around the World. I wish for is to a lot friends at my new school. Thank you Santa!
Annaniyah Ojeda, 10 years old



MARGOLIES

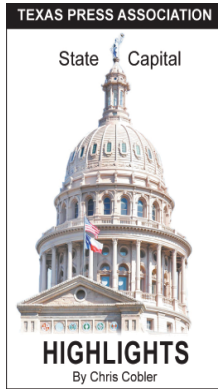


STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Chris Cobler

Texas to get 1.4 million COVID vaccine doses

Texas is ready to distribute 1.4 million doses as soon as the COVID-19 vaccine receives federal government approval. Gov. Greg Abbott said the vaccines should be arriving the week of Dec. 14 and would be distributed to qualifying providers. Health care workers are the first in line to receive the medication, which needs to be given in two shots. Also first in line are residents of long-term living care centers, the Texas Department of Health Services announced. Texas' population is about 29 million, so the line is long. The state agency also announced the list of 109 hospitals in 34 of Texas' 254 counties that will receive the first doses. "The State of Texas is already prepared for the arrival of a COVID-19 vaccine and will swiftly distribute these vaccines to Texans who voluntarily choose to be immunized," Abbott stated. "As we await the first shipment of these vaccines, we will work with communities to mitigate the spread of COVID-19."

Electors set to vote
Texas presidential electors will convene Dec. 14 to officially cast their votes. The ceremony will start at 2 p.m. in the gallery of the House chamber in the State Capitol. The Texas election code calls for electors to meet on the first Monday after the second Wednesday of December. Texas Secretary of State Ruth Hughs congratulated the governor, election workers and the voters for their efforts with this year's elections. "Despite the challenges presented by COVID-19, this election was a resounding success, and turnout among registered voters was the highest in 28 years as Texans exercised their right to vote,"



Workers comp challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic has created new challenges for the Texas workers' compensation system, the state agency said in its biennial report to the Legislature. During the pandemic, Gov. Abbott waived certain statutory requirements that affected COVID-19 workers' compensation claims. The Legislature is expected to consider whether to extend those exemptions, particularly for first responders and essential workers. "Some argue that these requirements should be permanently waived in situations involving a public health emergency, while others are concerned about the cost impact to governmental entities if this defense is waived," the report stated. During the pandemic, some insurance carriers have investigated COVID-19 claims involving firefighters, EMTs and peace officers. Forty-one percent of claims were denied for a variety of reasons, including whether a "statistically positive correlation with work" exists.

Abbott, Cruz in 2024?

The campaign for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination could

start in Texas. The Republican National Committee has invited about a dozen potential presidential candidates to its January meeting in Amelia Island, Fla. The list includes Gov. Abbott and U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas. Others on the list include Donald Trump, Mike Pence and South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott.

The way from San Jose

Another California company is moving its headquarters to Texas. Hewlett Packard Enterprise will relocate its global headquarters from San Jose, Calif., to Spring. The new headquarters will open in early 2022, the Texas Economic Development Corp. announced. HP Enterprise already employs 2,600 people in Austin, Plano and Houston. The announcement did not specify how many new jobs would be added with the move of the headquarters. "Houston is an attractive market to recruit and retain future diverse talent and where we are currently constructing a state-of-the-art new campus," Antonio Neri, CEO of HP Enterprise stated.

Chicken fertilizer

Chicken litter led to a new business venture and state recognition for a young Texas couple. The Texas Farm Bureau honored Matt and Jessica Hanslik of Lavaca County as the 2020 outstanding young farmer and rancher. The recognition came during the organization's 87th annual meeting, which was held virtually this year. The Hansliks grow corn and hay, raise cattle and are part owners of an all-natural fertilizer company, in which they take chicken litter and "upcycle" it for use as farm fertilizer, the farm bureau said in its news release about the award. "The idea was sparked when Jessica, a manager at a national shell egg company, suggested they begin using chicken litter from local broiler houses to fertilize their fields," the Farm Bureau stated. "Now, in addition to using the all-natural fertilizer to boost yields on their own land, they sell the product to other area farms and ranches."

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

THE POSTSCRIPT
By Carrie Classon

"Lower Expectations"

It is a year of lower expectations.

Every year, there is a chorus of folks urging us to lower our expectations for the holidays—buy less, consume less, worry less about having a picture-perfect holiday, and spend more time reflecting on what the holiday means to us. This year, it seems, we will finally get a chance to do that.

I was recently asked what my childhood memories of the holidays were, and I had a couple of vivid ones.

I saw myself sitting on the wooden stairway of the farmhouse where my mother grew up. There were far too many people to sit at a table, too many to get any kind of chair, even after all the folding chairs were called into service and the couch filled to capacity.

The seating was distributed on a strict seniority basis and, as I was very young, all the cousins my age would line up and sit on the stairs leading to the second floor of the farmhouse, one above the other, with our plates on our laps.

This was a fine arrangement, except that the farmhouse had only one bathroom and this stairway led to it. The stairway was narrow and some of my relatives were not. And so, we would lean over as far as we could (still with our plates on our laps) to allow the elderly relatives to make their way up to the bathroom at the top of the stairs.

That is a good memory.

The year I turned five, I had chicken pox at Christmas. I spoke to my mother recently about that year. "Oh! That was a miserable Christmas," she said. And I'm sure, for her, it was. But my memory is not of the festivities I missed.

My mother stayed at home with me on Christmas Eve and all I remember was the small Christmas tree my parents put in my bedroom. My memory is not of being terribly sick, but of seeing those shining Christmas lights every time I opened my eyes and feeling loved and special enough to have my very own tree.

That is another good memory.

I've been telling my husband, Peter, that we are making good memories now. Of course, Peter and I are not working in a hospital or trying to teach school or dealing with grumpy retail customers. We are at home all the time except for our once every other week trip to the grocery store which is beginning to feel more like an exotic adventure every time we do it.

We are seeing no one so we can continue to visit Lori, who continues to fight cancer, and Peter cooks something for her every week and I read a bit more from my book (although by this time I have finished the first book and am reading a new one) and I know we will remember this time.

We won't have memories of a foreign landscape or a breathtaking performance or a fancy gathering. Instead, we'll remember the excitement of hearing the doorbell ring and getting to chat with a neighbor on our front stoop. Our memories from this year will be of the same homecooked meal, the same routine, the same clothes worn, the same neighbors greeted from across the lawn, the same dogs on my walk—as the days turned into weeks and the weeks turned into months. We will remember.

I might miss the excitement of a different kind of life. But I know I will remember the small, good things in this year of lower expectations.

Till next time, Carrie
Carrie Classon's memoir is called, "Blue Yarn." Learn more at CarrieClasson.com.

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SPORTS PAGE

Championship Saturday should go long way in determining who's in, who's out of CFP

This is a BIG weekend in college football.

Conference title games will be played and the two most important ones will take place in Charlotte, N.C. where No. 2-ranked Notre Dame will face No. 3-ranked Clemson in the ACC title game, while in Atlanta, No. 1-ranked Alabama will face No. 6-ranked Florida in the SEC title game.

The Big 12 will also hold its league championship game as two of the hottest teams in the game go after it for a second time this season. No. 9-ranked Iowa State will take on No. 11-ranked Oklahoma at AT&T Stadium in Arlington.

The winners of the ACC and SEC conference title games will earn two of the four berths in the College Football Playoffs (CFP) and I could see a scenario where the SEC would earn two berths if Alabama loses a close game to a pretty solid Florida team.

Texas A&M fans are hoping for a Notre Dame win over Clemson. If that happens and Jimbo Fisher's team wins out, the Aggies should get the fourth and final CFP spot. Since their second loss of the season at No. 1 Alabama, the Aggies have ripped off six straight wins (including a home win over No. 6 Florida) heading into their final home game last Saturday against Mississippi. A&M will close out the regular season this Saturday at Tennessee.

Should Ohio State play a minimum of six games and win the Big 10 title, that should be enough to earn the Buckeyes and head coach Ryan Day another trip to the CFP.

Much will be determined on Saturday, so sit back and enjoy.

In the NFL, the Texans will take another shot at the Colts after losing a heart-breaker to Indy two weeks ago when quarterback Deshaun Watson fumbled a bad snap from center Nick Martin deep in Indy territory as the Texans appeared to be driving for the winning score with less than two minutes to go in the game.

If the Texans didn't have bad luck, they wouldn't have any luck at all! It's been kind of season for the local 11.

Other games of interest have the surging Browns visiting the surging Giants, New England visiting Miami hoping to remain in the AFC playoff hunt and the big one comes late Sunday afternoon when Kansas City takes on New Orleans in the Big Easy in what could be a preview of Super Bowl 55.

Before we take a look at those games and a handful of others, let's review last week's record. A 7-3 week brought the season record to 88-43 (67%).

Now, onto this weekend's games.

NCAA

Notre Dame at Clemson: Brian Kelly's Fighting Irish take on Dabo Swiney's Tigers for the second time this season in the ACC title game and if the this one is as good as the first one, football fans should be in for quite a treat. On Nov. 7, Notre Dame upset then No. 1-ranked Clemson 47-40 in double overtime in South Bend, IN. Clemson played without starting quarterback Trevor Lawrence (2,431 yards, 20 TDs) but he will be under center for this one and that could make a big difference for Clemson. Lawrence and running back Travis Etienne (758 yards, 12 TDs) are electrifying, but ND has some offensive weapons itself in quarterback Ian Book (2,382 passing yards, 15 TDs/465 rushing yards, 8 TDs), running back Kyren Williams (1,011 yards, 12 TDs) and wide receiver Jaxon McKinely (37 receptions, 660 yards, 3 TDs). Book also has quality tight ends to throw to as well in true freshman Michael Mayer (30 receptions, 337 yards, 2 TDs). This should be a high-scoring game, but I think this game turns due to the ND defense. Yes, the Irish have given up points and yards this year, but that until seems to come up with the



KEENEY'S KORNER
By
MIKE KEENEY

play when its most needed. This could very well be a magical year for Kelly's team and the magic continues for one more week. My pick, Notre Dame 34, Clemson 30

Iowa State vs. Oklahoma: Two of the hottest teams in the NCAA meet on Saturday in Arlington for the Big 12 title as Iowa State brings a five game winning streak into this one and OU rides a six-game winning streak (ironically, OU's last loss came on Oct. 3 at home to ISU) into the Big 12 title game. The Cyclones have been riding the hot right arm of quarterback Brock Purdy (2,272 yards, 12 TDs) and the sturdy legs of running back Breece Hall (1,357 yards, 13 TDs) to their Big 12 title game berth. After some growing pains, OU quarterback Spencer Rattler (2,512 yards, 234 TDs) has settled down and is playing well in Lincoln Riley's offense. The Sooners have also improved on defense since their loss to ISU, but something tells me the Cyclones are the better overall team and this could very well be Matt Campbell's swan song in Ames as some bigger programs (Michigan?) might come calling for the talented young head coach. My pick, Iowa State 36, Oklahoma 33

Alabama vs. Florida: This should be a fun one to watch as two of the most explosive offenses in college football meet on Saturday for the SEC title in Atlanta. Florida and head coach Dan Mullen enter the game with a lone loss to Texas A&M, while Nick Saban's Crimson Tide should enter undefeated (they played at Arkansas last Saturday) and ranked No. 1 in the country. Both teams have excellent quarterbacks as Florida is led by Kyle Trask (3,45 yards, 38 TDs), while 'Bama is led by Mac Jones (3,113 yards, 27 TDs). Both have big-play wide receivers as the Gators have Kadarius Toney (53 receptions, 649 yards, 8 TDs) and Kyle Pitts (36 receptions, 641 yards, 11 TDs), while Alabama is led by the speedy and big-play man Devonta Smith (80 receptions, 1,305 yards, 15 TDs). Two weeks in 'Bama's 55-17 route of LSU, Smith had 200 yards receiving and two long scores before halftime. Needless to say, he's a big-game player. The Tide also have a strong running game led by Najee Harris (1,038 yards, 20 TDs). Florida and Trask will make plays, but can they make enough to keep up with Jones and Co.? I don't think so. After a slow start, the Alabama defense has been getting better week-by-week and Saban is on a mission to get his team back in the national title hunt. Alabama takes step one on Saturday in Atlanta. My pick, Alabama 38, Florida 28

NFL

New England at Miami: Don't look now, but Bill Belichick's team is still alive and ready to make a late-season move, but his team faces a very solid Miami team in South Beach. Two weeks ago, the Patriots ran roughshod over the Chargers as the Pats returned a punt for a touchdown and blocked a punt for another score. Quarterback Cam Newton (2,053 passing yards, 5 TDs/435 rushing yards, 11 TDs) is playing a bit better but he will need to be at his best against an aggressive and swarming Dolphins defense. Miami isn't a great offensive football team, but Tua Tagovailoa (898 yards, 7 TDs) is doing just enough to keep Miami in the AFC East and Wild Card race. This could be a seminal moment for former Belichick assistant Bran Flores as he takes on his mentor. Look for the apprentice to beat the mentor on Sunday in South Beach. My pick, Miami 23, New England 20

Tampa Bay at Atlanta:

to come out in attack mode as he goes for the kill shot early. The Texans have been decimated by injuries on defense and you can bet Rivers will show little pity for that unit come Sunday. My pick, Indianapolis 34, Houston 16

Cleveland at New York Giants: Speaking of the Browns, they are looking like a team that could make some noise in the AFC playoffs. Two weeks ago, quarterback Baker Mayfield (2,442 yards, 21 TDs) threw four touchdown passes in the first half as Cleveland stunned Tennessee, 41-35 in Nashville. The Browns take on a Giants team that has been playing well lately and currently leads the woeful NFC East. Two weeks ago, backup QB Colt McCoy and the defense led the G-Men to a 17-12 win at Seattle. The Giants could have starting quarterback Daniel Jones back for this one after he missed the Seattle game with a hamstring injury. Look for the Browns to give the Giants a steady dose of running back Nick Chubb (799 yards, 7 TDs) as the Browns look to chew up clock and wear down the New York defense. My pick, Cleveland 26, New York Giants 21

Philadelphia at Arizona: The Eagles travel to Arizona on Sunday hoping to save their season. Good luck with that. Carson Wentz appears to be an overrated quarterback and appears on his way to being benched in favor of Channelview product Jalen Hurts. Two weeks ago in their 30-16 loss at Green Bay, Wentz once again held onto the ball too long and the of-

fense again struggled until head coach Doug Pederson replaced Wentz with Hurts and Hurts rallied the Eagles to within seven points late in the fourth quarter until GB running back Aaron Jones ripped off a 77-yard touchdown run to seal the deal for the Packers. The Cardinals need this one if they are to remain in the NFC playoff race. Look for quarterback Kyler Murray (2,987 yards, 22 TDs/10 rushing 10 TDs) and wide receiver DeAndre Hopkins (85 receptions, 1,019 yards, 5 TDs) to have a big day against a beat up and suspect Philly secondary. The misery continues in the City of Brotherly Love and I love it. My pick, Arizona 31, Philadelphia 23

Kansas City at New Orleans: The scoreboard operator at the Mercedes Benz Superdome could be one of the busiest people in the stadium on Sunday when the Chiefs and Saints meet in New Orleans. This game will feature two of the top QBs in the league in KC's Patrick Mahomes (3,815 yards, 31 TDs) and Drew Brees (2,196 yards, 18 TDs). Brees should return for this game after missing three games with fractured ribs. His backup, Taysom Hill (629 yards, 2 TDs) did a nice job filling in while Brees mended his beat up ribs. Mahomes has a pair of 1,000-yard receivers to throw to in tight end Travis Kelce (83 receptions, 1,114 yards, 8 TDs) and speedy wide out Tyreek Hill (74 receptions, 1,079 yards, 13 TDs), while Brees has a solid run/pass catching weapon in running back Alvin Kamara (673

rushing yards, 9 TDs/70 receptions, 655 yards, 4 TDs). Kamara is better in the passing game when Brees is under center, so don't be surprised if head coach Sean Payton brings Brees back for this game. Two weeks ago, Mahomes and the KC offense struggled a bit against Denver but still pulled out a 22-16 victory. KC will be facing a much better defense this week and I think the New Orleans defense will be the difference maker as the Saints earn a huge late-season victory and keep a hold on the top seed in the NFC. My pick, New Orleans 33, Kansas City 29

San Francisco at Dallas: When the NFL schedule came out in the spring of 2020, this one looked like it could be a very intriguing game for the Monday Night Football crew. It pitted the defending NFC champion 49ers against a Dallas team many thought would supplant them for the NFC crown in 2020. But injuries have decimated both teams so this one will be played for pride. Two weeks ago, the 49ers lost to the Bills in their temporary new home in Glendale, AZ, while the Cowboys dropped a Tuesday night decision to the Ravens in Baltimore. While the 49ers have been beset with injuries on both sides of the ball, they still have a decent defense and I think that will be the difference maker come Monday night in Arlington. My pick, San Francisco 26, Dallas 20

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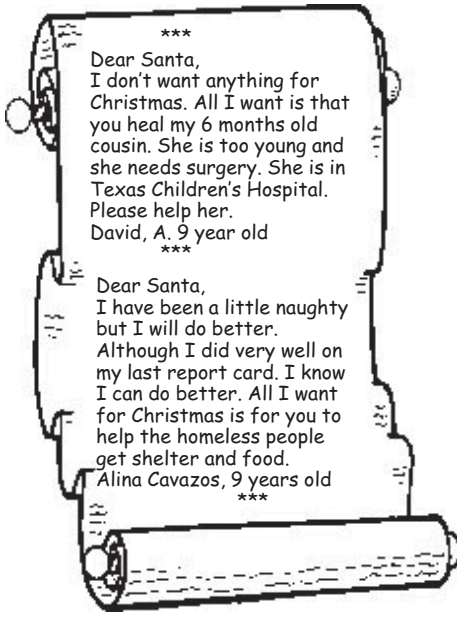
LETTERS TO SANTA

Dear Santa, You are one of the greatest people in the world and I try to be one of the goodest kids I can. For all The girls and boys who try to be nice do it everybody then you will be on the nice list. Thank you santa for all your doing around the world. Christy Reaux, 10 years old

Dear Santa, I've been a wonderful kid this year. I know your thinking I want a gift but... No! All I want is for all these naughty kids to be looking at the bright side. I wish that they all look up to themselves but be their best. Ilda Buenrestre, 9

Dear Santa, I know you are busy making toys so I will be fast. I want you to not forget the kids with cancer. I know they want toys too. Also, I want a real puppy and please get my whole family a Merry Christmas. Sofia Narvaez, 10 years old

Dear Santa, I have been trying to help my family and friends as much as I can. Also, I wish that kids all over the world are healed and get what they want in life. Love, Aspen and thank you Santa! Aspen Sanford, 9 years old



Dear Santa, I don't want anything for Christmas. All I want is that you heal my 6 months old cousin. She is too young and she needs surgery. She is in Texas Children's Hospital. Please help her. David, A. 9 year old

Dear Santa, I have been a little naughty but I will do better. Although I did very well on my last report card. I know I can do better. All I want for Christmas is for you to help the homeless people get shelter and food. Alina Cavazos, 9 years old

Dear Santa, I've been good all year I've gotten good grades and I know That you have been watching me. I know I've been a little bad but I want you To bless the people in need. I would like a phone. Thank you. Israel Marin, 9 year old

Dear Santa, I have been a little naughty but I help my family. I help my brother cur the grass. I help my sister clean her room and what I do is clean the house can I please have a ps4? Adrian G., 10 years old

Dear Santa, I've been bad but it is okay sometimes. All I want for Christmas is that you give my sisters brother mom and my dad what they want. I know they deserve it more than me. Elias Valadez, 9 years old

Dear Santa, I've been a excellent student. I have been helping other people. But what I'm gonna tell you is not for me it's for all the homeless people. They are on the street cold with very little to eat or clothes to wear. So please Santa help them. Daniela Vallejo, 9 years old

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1. Is the book of Immanuel in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Who visited Jesus on the night of His birth and found Mary, Joseph and the babe lying in a manger? Innkeeper, Shepherds, Herod, Magi
3. By biblical accounts, what animals were present and around the manger at Jesus' birth? Lions and bears, Sheep and goats, Donkeys and chickens, No mention of animals

4. When the wise men (Magi) arrived in the Holy Land, where did they go first? Jerusalem, Beersheba, Haifa, Tel Aviv
 5. Which of these wasn't biblically stated as a gift from the Magi? Silver, Myrrh, Gold, Frankincense
 6. Which Old Testament prophet said the most about the birth of Christ? Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Jeremiah
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- ISAIAH 7:14

"Heilige Nacht" (15th-century woodcut)

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Dear Santa,
I wish you could give me some new soccer shoes. Because the ones that I have are too small. But I have only one soccer shoe that it does not fit me. So please Santa can get one pair of soccer shoes.
Bojan Miranda, 9, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
I wish for a good year and that my family and my teachers have a nice time wherever they go and that they have enough money to pay their bills for the house and so they can buy food.
Mario Martinez, 9, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
Can I wish I could have a pet dog and protect me and my family but can I have it for Christmas.
Ryan Garcia, 10, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
I'm Jeremy I am 8 years old and I live far from the North Pole in Houston. Plays songs.
Jeremy Casey, 8, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
I just want to say thank you for all the nice things you have done for me and my family, like give us the presents we want and presents we need. Thank you Santa claus.
Sofia Valdivia, 9, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
I am so glad for giving presents and celebrating Christmas this year I will like a computer and clows. I am very thank you for all the things that you have done for all the years making Avry won, I'm happy that means a lot to me.
Alina Nunez, 10, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
What I want is a monke for me and my sister and I wish to have ten pups and some mine brands and a big box of bunys and of stuff lonnies with tigerse and tow hudise of Tik Tok and a big box of wine the Phoo.
Angeles Rojas Camacho, 10, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
My name is Savanna, I am 8 years old I live very for the North Pole, in Houston. I want to tell you what I'd like for Christmas I'd really lik it if you could bring me these things, a cat, a Lol doll, a 5 sunrise!
Savanna Almerdarez, 8, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
I live very far from the North Pole, in, Houston. I've been waiting a long time to write you this letter and I really have been trying hard to be nice all year! Now year Eve. Can you give me a Bts shoes and Bts back paek. Thank you Santa, Gabby.
Gabriella Garcia, 9, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
I wish to go to the pass so I can see the wars cus it soud rille interesting. And I want to how they hill.
Diego Gutierrez, 9, Oleson Elementary

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