

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE, page 2,5
- HCC REGISTRATION, page 8
- UT JENSEN CLINIC, Page 8

NORTHEAST NEWS



Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 44 Years
VOL. 45, NO. 1 TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2021 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

NEWS NOTES

East Aldine District DRIVE & DASH distributes 500 gifts

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.

East Aldine District was in the Holiday spirit last Saturday, Dec. 19th when they held a Christmas Drive & Dash Toy Give-away at the Town Center on Aldine Mail Route.

The drive was the idea of Natalie Lumbreras, who saw the success of the Halloween Caravan, which gave out sweets and treats through the East Aldine neighborhoods, and she thought a similar community event would be appropriate for Christmas.

Over 500 toys were collected or donated by sponsors, and given out on Saturday, as families drove through the Lone Star College parking lot.

The event also included a visit from Santa, live DJ music, monster truck and hot rod car club display, an Astrobot and many more exhibits.

East Aldine District staff that helped stage the event included Natalie Perez, Veronica Sanches, and Richard Cantu.



Drive & Dash organizers included Natalie Perez, Natalie Lumbreras, Santa, and Veronica Sanches.



Natalie Lumbreras gives out one of the 500 Toys to the families that drove through the event.



The Armando Walle family joined the volunteer workers, and was also a Sponsor of the event.



Jumping for Holiday Spirit, Santa and two of the organizers of the Drive & Dash Toy Drive.

All Photos courtesy of ev1pro and East Aldine District. MORE PHOTOS on page 8.

COVID-19 Cases as of January 1, 2021

HOUSTON AREA 19 COUNTIES

378,150 POSITIVE
4,266 DEATHS
308,860 RECOVERED

TEXAS

1,779,595 POSITIVE
28,253 DEATHS
1,435,164 RECOVERED

UNITED STATES

20,108,375 POSITIVE
347,577 DEATHS
--- RECOVERED

WORLDWIDE

83,924,941 POSITIVE
1,826,176 DEATHS
47,261,824 RECOVERED

Smithsonian to get Latino Museum

Cornyn Latino Smithsonian Bill Heads to President's Desk for Signature

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX)'s legislation to authorize the Smithsonian Institution to create a museum honoring American Latinos, the National Museum of the American Latino Act, passed the Senate as a part of the Omnibus funding legislation. It now heads to the President's desk.

"As a proud Texan, I'm fortunate to have grown up in a state steeped in the contributions of Latino Americans."

"From the brave soldiers who fought in the Texas Revolution, to the civil rights activists like Cesar Chaves, cultural

icons like Selena, and leaders of all types in our communities – generations of Latino Americans have shaped our country as it is today."

"But many Americans aren't familiar with the vast contributions of these men and women, and one critical way we can begin to right this wrong is by providing a brick and mortar home for their stories in our nation's capital."

"The National Museum of the American Latino will honor and preserve the stories of Latinos throughout our history, so generations of Americans can view a more accurate picture of the great American story."

See *Latino Museum*, page 3

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SCHOOL NEWS

Superintendent's End of Year message to Aldine ISD:

Message From the Superintendent, Dec. 15, 2020

Dear Aldine Community,

As I sat down to write my last letter of 2020 to families and staff, to me, it was clear that this will be a year we will never forget. One day we'll look back with a mix of sadness, awe, and pride. Sadly, we will remember those we have lost and the things that will no longer be "normal." We will not forget the stress of juggling our children's childcare, education, and work responsibilities. I am sure we will think back to all of the things we did quickly, swiftly, and selflessly to put our community first. And we will wonder how we did it ALL. Our hearts will swell when we think about how everyone — students, families, staff, teachers, and community members — rose to the occasion every single day.

Who would have thought earlier this year that March 6 would be the last day we would be in our buildings without masks? It will be a day that I will never forget. But it is not the only thing I will remember. As we look back on a year like no other, here are a few moments that fill me with pride. I could list so many more, but it would take all week. We have a lot to be proud of in Aldine.

AISD State of the District

On Jan. 15, more than 250 guests gathered at the CityPlace Marriott at Springwoods Village to hear the State of the District, which celebrated Aldine's move from a C-rated school district to a B within one year along with an increased number of A and B campuses.

Harris County Promise Launches in 3 AISD Schools

In January, Harris County Promise launched in Aldine, Eisenhower, and Nimitz high schools giving more than 4,000 high school seniors the opportunity to earn a tuition-free, postsecondary education. The new program provides students with last-dollar scholarships to cover the cost of tuition and fees at participating community colleges.

Davis High School Aeronautics and Aviation Course Takes Flight

Aldine ISD began offering an Introduction to Aviation & Aerospace course to students in Grades 9-12. The Aeronautics and Aviation elective is currently held at Davis High School for students interested in aviation.

Harlem Wizards Play Aldine All-Stars

The Aldine Education Foundation hosted the Sports Spectacular for Scholars, featuring the Harlem Wizards vs. Aldine All-Stars on Jan. 22. The Wizards, known for their amazing basketball talent combined with hilarious comedy, challenged Aldine ISD teachers, coaches, and community leaders to provide a fun-filled evening of basketball hi-jinx — all in the name of scholarships.

#AldineCares: District Teachers Reach Out to Students

As schools across the state pivoted to remote learning in March, Aldine ISD continued establishing a relationship with students and families to determine their needs during these unprecedented times. Teachers began reaching out to every student in the school district to let them know #AldineCares.

District Names Ray Mondragon Executive Director of Early Childhood Learning

The Early Childhood Learning Office will lead all change efforts to increase access to quality programs for the district's youngest students. This includes collaborating with partners and community organizations to create more opportunities for students.

2 AISD Campuses Make U.S. News & World Report 2020 List of Best High Schools

Victory Early College HS and Carver HS ranked in the top 5% and 25%, respectively, of the more than 24,000 schools ranked. The U.S. News List of 2020 Best High Schools ranked public high schools across the nation based on how well they serve all of their students regardless of economic or ethnic background. U.S. News evaluated schools on various factors, including graduation rates and college readiness (measured by AP® and IB® exam performance).

7 High School Juniors Earn National Recognition From the College Board

Several students earned academic recognition as part of the College Board National Recognition Programs.



AISD SUPERINTENDENT DR. LATONYA GOFFNEY

Several organizations serving as advisers for the programs identify high-achieving, underrepresented students who scored among the top percent of PSAT test-takers in their region. The district had one National Achievement Scholar, six National Hispanic Merit Scholars, with one of them also earning a National Indigenous Merit Scholar.

District Art Teacher Yvonne López-Taylor Named Region 4 Elementary Teacher of the Year

Region 4 Education Service Center named Yvonne López-Taylor Elementary Teacher of the Year. The seven-year veteran from Carter Academy was selected from among more than 76,000 teachers in the area.

Aldine ISD Resets and Launches Hall Success Academy

The district launched a new instructional model for Hall Center for Education, now called Hall Success Academy. The new school of choice emphasizes student-centered blended learning. The intensive program helps students in grades 8-12 graduate from high school within a time frame in line with their peers. In addition to closing the academic achievement gap, Hall Success Academy focuses on strategies that help students build self-confidence, responsibility, and much more.

Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Department Launches

In March of 2020, we established our FACE Department to strengthen partnerships with families, the district, and the community. Dr. Martha Escalante was named executive director of the department, which offers campus support, online resources, and two-way communication opportunities for parents to interact more with campus and district leaders.

District Names New Chief of Police

In April, we announced Paul Córdova as the district's new Police Chief. Chief Córdova assumed the role with 37 years of law enforcement under his belt, including working as HISD's Assistant Chief of Police.

New Literacy Initiative Launches

Over the summer of 2019, the Teaching and Learning Department, in partnership with The New Teacher Project (TNTP), launched the Aldine ISD Literacy Task Force. Based on the team's recommendations, the district has adopted Amplify's integrated early literacy suite, built on reading science, to support all students' learning. Ms. Demedia Edwards has been named the Director of Literacy for the district.

Leadership Definition

This year we doubled down on our efforts to lead with equity while seeking out and highlighting employees and others that do the same. We created our first-ever "leadership definition" to share what leading looks like for students and staff in AISD. We also created an aspiring leadership pipeline to support employees on their path to becoming district and campus leaders.

AISD Launches Billboard Campaign

We are Aldine Proud, and we showed it this year with our first-ever billboard campaign designed to inspire and encourage the community by the great work happening across the district. The district printed "Better Together" and #WeAreAldine onto eight billboards posted on I-59, I-45, FM 1960, and Highway 249.

Aldine ISD Celebrates the Class of 2020

Aldine ISD celebrated the Class of 2020 with in-person and virtual celebrations. The district celebrated our graduating seniors in unique ways that we have not before. We shared Senior Spotlights, partnered with the City of Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner to host a senior celebration at Thorne Stadium, and recognized our seniors as official graduates during our virtual Conferral Ceremony. Additionally, our campuses celebrated the seniors with drive-through yard signs, diploma pickups, and senior send-offs.

District Holds Virtual Graduation Ceremonies

The end of the year concluded with nine virtual graduation ceremonies. Seniors and their families and friends were able to watch a live broadcast of their high school graduation ceremony from the safety of their homes.

AISD to Focus on Social and Emotional Learning During 2020-21 School Year

During the 2020-21 school year, Aldine ISD began to place a premium on student outcomes. The district created the Social and Emotional Learning and Culture Department to achieve the goal. Campuses will be provided with the best practices in social-emotional learning (SEL) and school culture by implementing various systems and support structures for all district staff.

District Makes College Board's AP® Honor Roll

The distinction shows that Aldine ISD is successfully identifying motivated, academically prepared students who are ready for Advanced Placement courses. This is the first time the district has made the Honor Roll.

AISD Announces New Schools

In 2020, we proudly announced plans to launch a Young Women's Leadership Academy and a Newcomer School. We are excited to see these special programs launch in the 2021-2022 school year to serve our students' diverse needs better and help them reach their infinite potential.

Aldine in the News

This year, like no other, all eyes were on Aldine ISD as the region and nation watched to see how we were responding to the COVID-19 crisis. Here are just a few of the stories our district participated in:

- CNN Newsroom With Poppy Harlow interview with Dr. Goffney
- MSNBC Live With Stephanie Ruhle interview with Dr. Goffney
- ABC News Prime interview with Dr. Goffney
- Houston Chronicle interviews with AISD leadership

Communicating COVID-19 Support and Resources

Those responsible for sharing information with our staff and families worked tirelessly this year to ensure everyone received accurate information in a timely manner. Here are just a few examples of our communications team at work:

- Announced testing centers for community members
- Keep the community informed about meal distribution — More than three million meals served since March!
- Shared information with families about the P-EBT benefit
- Kept staff informed and encouraged throughout spring and summer

I do hope you feel that there is so much to feel good about here in Aldine ISD. I know I do.

Thank you to each member of our team for their work this year. During the break, I hope everyone — families and staff — take time to recharge, to read, to rest, to spend time safely together, and to reflect on how amazing you are. Everyone deserves a break after the year we've had.

As a reminder, the final day for students is Thursday, December 17. The last day before the break for Aldine ISD Staff is Friday, December 18. Staff will return on January 4, and students return on January 6.

With Aldine Pride and Joy,

Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney
Superintendent

P.S. Happy Holidays!

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RECORDATORIOS POR COVID-19:

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- Favor de llegar 20 minutos antes de su cita
- Si llega 5 minutos tarde a su cita, no se garantiza su turno

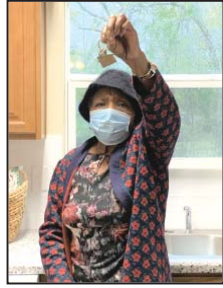
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COMMUNITY NEWS

Christmas wish comes true

Resident gets New Home from Harvey Reconstruction Program

BARRETT STATION – A Christmas wish has come true for Mrs. Verna Green of Crosby, Texas. Mrs. Green just moved into her new home, reconstructed on the site of her previous home, which sustained significant damage from flooding during Hurricane Harvey. The leaky roof and inoperable electrical outlets Mrs. Green contended with since the 2017 storm are no longer concerns, thanks to Harris County Project Recovery's Homeowner Assistance Program (HAP).



New homeowner Mrs. Verna Green flashes the keys to her new home.

"I'm home for the holidays," Mrs. Green exclaimed, flashing the keys presented to her by Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia during a key turn-over ceremony on Dec. 2nd at Mrs. Green's home.

"We are happy to deliver this new home to you. I regret that it has taken longer than we expected, but I hope this will make your holiday season much more pleasant," Commissioner Garcia said.

Administered by the Harris County Community Services Department, Project Recovery's HAP repairs and reconstructs flood-damaged homes of eligible applicants. The \$30 million program is

funded with Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) dollars allocated to the county by the State of Texas General Land Office (GLO) and granted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Through a sub-recipient agreement, the GLO has granted Harris County \$900 million total for several programs aimed at assisting in the county's recovery from Hurricane Harvey and increasing its overall resilience to future floods.

"In addition to our homeowner repair, reconstruction and reimbursement programs, Project Recovery is also addressing the county's critical

affordable housing shortage by developing affordable single-family homes and multifamily rentals," said Dr. Adrienne Holloway, executive director of the Harris County Community Services Department. "Plus, we are investing over \$400 million from CDBG-DR in buyout and infrastructure projects that help remediate flooding where possible and move people out of harm's way in areas where flood control is not feasible," Dr. Holloway said.

Commissioner Garcia added, "Harris County's federally funded disaster recovery programs are layered on top of our voter-approved \$2.5 billion bond program to help us develop projects that reduce flood risks and damages across the county and build resilience to future flooding. We will continue to work to ensure those needed the most are getting the support they need."

Mrs. Green's home was built by Brizo Construction, one of several local home builders contracted for the county's Homeowner Assistance Program.

The GLO is administering a disaster recovery housing program for area residents similar to Harris



View of Mrs. Green's new home in Barrett Station, provided through Harris County's Project Recovery Homeowner Assistance Program.



Dr. Adrienne Holloway, executive director, Harris County Community Services Department; Ms. Sandra Barrett, daughter of homeowner Mrs. Verna Green; Mrs. Green; Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia presenting Mrs. Green with the keys to her new home

County's program, which provided Mrs. Green's new home. For information about the GLO's program, Harris County homeowners impacted by Hurricane Harvey may call 346-222-4686 or toll free at 866-317-1998, or you may email HarrisCounty.glo@recovery.texas.gov.

For additional information about Precinct 2 activities, visit www.hcp2.com. For information about Project Recovery, visit www.HarrisRecovery.org.

About Project Recovery – Project Recovery exists to assist Harris County residents in recovering from floods experienced in 2015, 2016 and Hurricane Harvey through an array of options including homeowner repair reimbursement, new home construction, homeowner buyout for flood mitigation, affordable rental, local infrastructure improvements and new transit options. Through Project Recovery, Harris County Community Services Department and other county departments ensure projects are complete, with the goal of improving long-term resiliency of Harris County.

Domestic disturbance leads to deputy fatally shooting suspect on Aldine Bender



HCSO deputies responded to an officer-involved shooting call at the Costaralto apartment complex on Aldine-Bender Road.

HARRIS COUNTY – A Harris County sheriff's deputy fatally shot a suspect in north Harris County Friday morning, Dec. 25th, officials said.

Around 4:20 a.m., deputies were dispatched to an apartment complex in the 5000 block of Aldine Bender

Road on reports of an officer-involved shooting. On arrival, they located an adult male dead at the scene.

The deputy was not harmed in the incident, Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said.

This is the second time deputies were called to the same complex in less than 6 hours. Andrea Laberne says the man killed by deputies is her ex-brother in law. Her sister had a relationship with him. "January 4th would have made a year that they were actually engaged even though they were separated since September," she said.

Laberne says her mother and sister live at the apartment complex. They had their annual Christmas celebration before the shooting happened.

"I'm happy that my sister and my mom is okay but like I said it's never a good thing when a family member has to die," Andrea Laberne said.

Harris County deputies say it's been a busy night responding to calls at the Costa Rialto Apartments on Aldine Bender Road. Lt. Robert Minchew says it started around 10:20 pm on Christmas Eve.

"A deputy arrived for a family disturbance terrorist type call where an ex-boyfriend was threatening his ex-girlfriend, threatening to shoot up the place," he said.

Minchew says a deputy came to the complex, but the suspect had already left. The deputy took a report and six hours later another call came in about the same suspect at the apartment. When the deputy arrived, Minchew says the suspect was there and had a gun. Minchew says the suspect fired shots at the deputy after he told him to drop the weapon.

"Fortunately, he missed our officer. The deputy is fine. The deputy in fear of his life opened fire and shot and killed the suspect," he said.

The HCSO says the suspect has an extensive history of family violence.

"The suspect also had an open warrant already for harassing communications with the same ex-girlfriend," Minchew said.

Laberne says her sister and mother are not doing okay. She says she doesn't remember her brother-in-law having a bad side.

"He was trying and it's sad that it had to happen like this on Christmas Day," she said.

Minchew says there was only one officer involved and there were no witnesses to the shooting.

The deputy is a 2-year veteran with the Harris County Sheriff's Office, with only 6 months on the patrol unit.

The investigation is ongoing, and deputies say they will review the body cam footage

Latino Museum,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The National Museum of the American Latino Act builds on nearly 17 years' worth of work in laying the foundation for the establishment of a future museum. In 2003, the first Congressional bill was introduced to study the creation of a museum. In

2008, with Presidential and Congressional leadership, a 23-member Commission was established to study the viability of a museum. In 2011, the Commission's work culminated in a final report that detailed that the creation of a museum on the Na-

tional Mall was indeed feasible. In 2020, this legislation will act on the Commission's report and put into motion the process of establishing a Latino Museum, similar to those that established other Smithsonian museums.

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150th Ticket..... \$200 Gift Card	600th Ticket..... Outdoor Propane Fire Pit
200th Ticket..... 250 Amp Battery Charger/Starter	650th Ticket..... GoPro Hero/Black Waterproof Camera
250th Ticket..... Beats Solo 3 Wireless Headphones	699th Ticket..... 50" Roku/Smart TV
300th Ticket..... \$200 Gift Card	700th Ticket..... 2021 Chevy Camaro or 2021 Chevy Colorado Pick-up
350th Ticket..... Fire HD 8" Tablet	<small>(Color & Model may vary from Picture)</small>

Posters Courtesy of the Highlands STAR-Crosby COURIER

OPINION PAGE

PRECINCT 2 MATTERS
By Harris County Commissioner Adrian Garcia



Garcia speaks on Eviction Crisis

“GOVERNOR ABBOTT: DON’T SPIT IN OUR FACES & TELL US IT’S RAINING”

Harris County, TX — TODAY, Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia spoke at a press conference to discuss the current eviction crisis in Harris County. Joining Garcia at the event were: Harris County Precinct 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis, President of Texas Gulf Coast Area Labor Lacy Wolf, Texas State Rep. Armando Walle, and Jon-Ross Trevino of Lone Star Legal Aid. In addition, SEIU member Mercedes Taylor dramatically described being recently evicted when her job at the airport system no longer brought in enough income for her to afford her rent.

In his comments, Commissioner Garcia focused on the State of Texas’ and Governor Greg Abbott’s seeming lack of direction/planning when it comes to helping renters and preventing eviction.

Highlights from Garcia’s remarks (video clips including the sound-byte-ready video can be downloaded for use in all media by clicking here or by copying/pasting this link: <https://we.tl/Y5df7HRJhN>) include the following quotes:

“Countless times, I’ve urged Governor Abbott to be a team player. In Texas, we are known to take care of each other. I ask Governor Abbott to adopt the same philosophy. Join local leaders in helping those in need. Harris County initiated over a dozen programs in response to the pandemic - whether it’s direct assistance, rental relief, digital access, small business aid, workforce development, the bottom line is we stand ready to support our community. Unfortunately, the state seems content to watch, wish and wait the pandemic away.”

“It’s difficult to say, but Governor Abbott has proven he can’t be trusted to care. Research shows Harris County Latinos were 150 Percent more likely to die in July of 2020 than they were in July of 2019. This is the result you get when Governor Abbott, or should I say, Governor Absent, stays in charge. Recently, Governor Abbott puffed his chest announcing the state would extend its eviction diversion program. One problem though - the state program is poorly designed. In that announcement, Abbott was quoted as saying, ‘This innovative partnership, coupled with the renters assistance provided through CARES Act funding, will strengthen our economic recovery efforts and provide a lifeline to renters and property owners alike.’ Here’s the reality: that ‘innovative partnership’? It includes an organization that currently is on a two-week vacation. Struggling renters aren’t getting any breaks; there are no days off for them, their families, their children and it’s unconscionable that those families during this holiday season should be risking eviction. Governor, I simply say: don’t spit in our face and tell us it’s raining.”

“There are just 3 days left in 2020, but for some, the challenges of this year will continue on into 2021. Getting evicted stays with people long after they get kicked out of their home. Evictions make it tough for people to find new housing. Evictions can keep some from being hired for a new job. That’s why Judge Hidalgo, Commissioner Ellis, and I have been working tirelessly to do everything we can to bring relief to renters.”



with Slim Randles

New Year’s Resolutions

“Boys,” said our tall cowboy, Steve, “I’ve got a real problem coming up and I’m not sure how to cope with it.”

The rest of us in the world dilemma think tank, meeting here each morning as long as the Farmers Brothers coffee doesn’t run out, turned toward our friend. We’re nothing if not a helpful bunch. We put our cups down ... even Dud, who was still on his first cup.

Doc said, “Maybe we can help a bit, Steve. Tell us about it.”

“Well, Doc, it’s these dang New Years Resolutions. Time’s almost here, and I don’t even have one ... not even one.”

“Why not?” asked Dud. Steve grinned, picked up his coffee mug and raised it in a toast to others at the philosophy counter of the Mule Barn truck stop.

“Well,” he said, “since I’m dang near already perfect, it makes it kinda hard to find something that needs improvement.”

“We can see,” said Herb, “where that would weigh on a guy’s mind all right.”

“Now Steve, when you say ‘perfect’ you’re speaking hypothetically, right?”

Dud leaned over and whispered to Bert. “I thought a hypothetical was what Doc gives us shots with.”

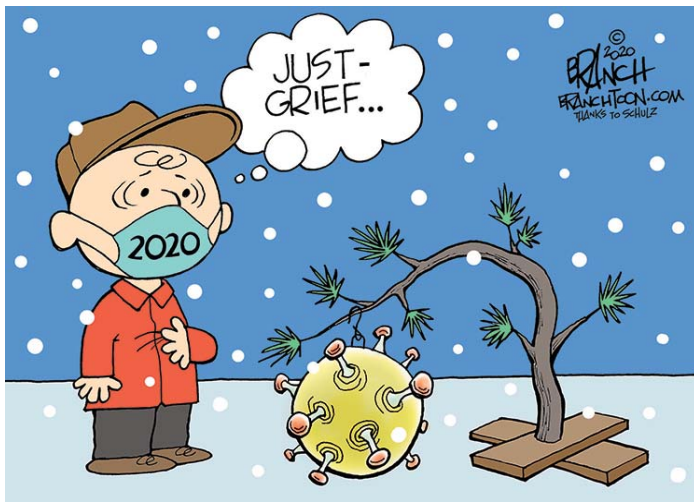
“Hypothetically? Bull drool!” Steve said. “Check this out. Muscles. Brain. Ability to drive a pickup truck. Able to level a horse’s hoof with a rasp and a prayer. Hey, I stand before you a genuine American cowboy, the very pinnacle of human evolution. Thank you very much for the thunderous applause you were just now thinking of giving me. I’ll go to the head of the class.”

“I may have one solution to your dilemma, Steve.”

“What’s that, Doc?”

“Oh ... just maybe you could work on that modesty just a bit next year.”

Brought to you by A Cowboy’s Guide to Growing Up Right. Look it over at www.rriorandebbooks.com. Avuncular tips from a guy who made lots of mistakes.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Chris Cobler



Briscoe Cain questions legality of virtual Legislature

Public access to Legislature up in the air

When the Texas Legislature convenes Jan. 12, a key question is how the public will have access to their lawmakers during the pandemic. State Rep. Briscoe Cain, R-Deer Park, is asking Attorney General Ken Paxton to issue an opinion about whether the Capitol building must be open during the legislative session. Further, should legislators be required to be in person during any debate and vote? During the pandemic, many local and state elected bodies have switched to virtual meetings. The state Legislature, which meets in odd years, has been out of session this year. The Capitol building has been closed since mid-March, but the Texas State Preservation Board reopened the Capitol grounds last week. Briscoe also asks of the attorney general, “Does the Legislature, any other Texas elected official, or any state agency have the power to close the Capitol to the public? If so, under what circumstances?” An attorney general opinion does not carry the weight of law. Meanwhile, leaders in the Texas House and Senate are working on their rules of engagement.

More COVID-19 vaccines on the way

More than 1,100 providers in 185 Texas counties will receive the COVID-19 vaccine during the second week of distribution, the Texas Department of State Health Services announced. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will deliver 460,500 doses of the vaccine manufactured by Moderna and 159,900 doses of the Pfizer vaccine to continue to vaccinate front-line health care workers and residents of long-term care facilities. “Adding the Moderna vaccine will dramatically increase the amount

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION



By Chris Cobler

of vaccine that can go to rural areas and smaller providers because it ships in smaller quantities and can be stored longer at regular refrigerator temperatures.”

DSHS Commissioner Dr. John Hellerstedt said in a statement. “Both the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are safe and effective – both can confer protection against COVID-19, regardless of which vaccine you receive.” The Moderna vaccine began shipping Sunday and is arriving this week in Texas at providers such as hospitals, freestanding emergency rooms, emergency medical service providers, pharmacies, local health departments, health centers and other clinics. For a list of providers, go to dhs.texas.gov. In the first week of distribution, 110 hospitals in 34 counties received more than 224,000 doses of COVID-19. By the end of the month, more than 1 million vaccines will be distributed to a variety of providers, Gov. Greg Abbott said during a news conference. “It is a historic week in the Lone Star State as the first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine arrive in our communities,” Abbott said.

Cyberattack blows back on SolarWinds

An Austin company is at the center of an investigation into a cyberattack on multiple federal

agencies. Various news sources have reported the hackers, backed by a foreign government, stole information from multiple agencies, including the Commerce and Treasury departments and Homeland Security. The cyber spies are thought to have gotten access by tampering with updates released by Austin-based SolarWinds, which provides networking software. Since first being reported Dec. 13 by Reuters, the federal investigation has expanded beyond the SolarWinds breach. SolarWinds was founded in Tulsa in 1999 and moved its headquarters to Austin in 2006, according to its website. The company has more than 3,200 employees globally and about 320,000 customers in 190 countries. In a Dec. 14 filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, SolarWinds said it was unable to predict the financial damages the company would suffer. In the days after the attack was reported, SolarWinds’ stock prices fell more than 15%.

The best Christmas ever

Christmas came early for two Texas institutions of higher learning. Philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, ex-wife of Amazon owner Jeff Bezos, announced she was giving \$50 million to Prairie View A&M University near Houston and \$40 million to Texas A&M International University in Laredo. The two gifts are the largest in the history of both universities. The money is part of more than \$4 billion in donations Scott has made during the past four months to 384 organizations across all 50 states, Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C. “This pandemic has been a wrecking ball in the lives of Americans already struggling,” Scott wrote in a Medium post. “Economic losses and health outcomes alike have been worse for women, for people of color and for people living in poverty. Meanwhile, it has substantially increased the wealth of billionaires.” Ruth J. Simmons, Prairie View president, called the unrestricted gift transformative. “I was stunned and, for a time, speechless,” Simmons said in a statement. “At first I thought I had surely misheard the amount, and I asked them to repeat it; they clarified that it would be ‘\$50, five zero, million.’”

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

“As much Christmas as possible”

Whatever you think about Christmas, I think you would have to agree we need one this year.

Everyone I know seems determined to do as much Christmas as it is possible to do. My pastor announced at the beginning of Advent that we were going to have 26 consecutive Zoom Advent services.

“We’re having 15 minutes of Advent reflections EVERY night!” she announced.

“Surely she means every week,” most of the congregation thought.

“EVERY night!” she repeated for clarification.

“I am not Zooming every single night of Advent,” I thought. “That’s just excessive.”

But after the first night, I looked forward to the second night and then it became a habit and, after a few nights, I couldn’t imagine missing my little 15-minute dose of Christmas hope and positivity and fellowship. Fifteen minutes was just enough to settle my thoughts. There was music. I was asked to read a couple of times. We all waved “hello” at the beginning and, before we knew it, we were waving “goodbye.” I can’t remember ever feeling the approach of the Christmas season so intimately, so incrementally, so intensely.

I’ve heard there is a worldwide shortage of Christmas trees.

Folks who haven’t bothered to put up a tree in years decided this was the year. Usually, if I have a tree at all, I look for a skinny tree I can stash in the corner and still have room for company. Not this year.

This year, I got a big fat tree fresh off the truck. I figured no one else was using the space so, instead of tucking it in the corner, I set it smack-dab in the middle of the room. When I came down the next morning, that tree had doubled in size. My husband, Peter, was completely hidden behind it, as if he were reading the news in the forest.

I’m embracing every-night Advent and the world’s fattest Christmas tree because there is so much else that won’t be the same and, of course, I will miss it.

There will be no crush of middle-aged cousins getting together on Christmas Day. My mom won’t host Christmas brunch and we won’t open presents together and I won’t hear my niece and nephew play piano in church. None of the things that have made Christmas seem like Christmas will happen, and yet I am looking forward to the day with a peculiar fervor.

I think about people long ago who watched as the days grew shorter and the nights got longer and the weather grew colder and their supplies dwindled. When the winter solstice arrived, they needed to assure themselves that the darkness would end. They needed to pull together whatever sort of comforts they could manage and thumb their noses at the cold and dark and growing fear that spring might never come, that the sun might simply disappear one afternoon and never return.

So they had a party.

I’m sure most of the parties were small, as Peter’s and mine will be. But they would eat something special and haul something green into the house and build a bigger fire than usual and reassure themselves that the dark and cold and loneliness would end and a better day would come.

And that’s what we’re doing this year.

We’re going to huddle around our Zoom and our oversized tree and eat a little extra peppermint ice cream and Peter’s good ginger cookies and be grateful for everything we have and more grateful yet that this time—this dark time—will slowly but surely be coming to an end.

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

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COMMUNITY WATCH

Apartment Fire at 225 Aldine Bender on Dec. 24

The Houston Fire Department responded to an Apartment Fire on December 24, 2020 at 1:52 a.m. at 225 Aldine Bender, 77060.

There were no reported injuries and \$150 thousand in estimated property was saved. There was \$20 thousand in estimated damage. The cause is under investigation.

Firefighters arrived on scene within five minutes and found smoke coming from the second floor of 2-story apartment building. The fire was found in a wall on the landing of a vacant apartment. Crews opened the wall and ceiling to check for extension, extinguished the fire and ventilated the smoke from the apartments. HFD Arson investigators were requested to determine the cause of the fire. Firefighters from Stations 31, 64, 74, 58, 84 and 30 responded to this incident.

Woman shot at 7734 Parker Road. One suspect arrested

Houston police are investigating the shooting of a woman at 7734 Parker Road about 8:35 p.m. on Monday (Dec. 21).

The victim, Mikahya Wilson, 20, was transported to an area hospital in stable condition.

HPD Major Assaults & Family Violence Division Officer M. DeLeon reported:

Patrol officers were dispatched to a shooting call at the above address and learned Ms. Wilson's boyfriend transported her to a hospital after she suffered gunshot wounds to the back and side.

Wilson provided a statement to investigators at the hospital, indicating two shooters were involved in the incident. One of the male suspects was detained at the scene after he returned in different clothing. The second suspect, who is still at large, was seen leaving in a green Dodge Charger.

Anyone with additional information in this case is urged to contact the HPD Major Assaults & Family Violence Division at 713-308-8800 or Crime Stoppers at 713-222-TIPS.

House Fire at 600 block Hurley, in the Northline Area

The Houston Fire Department responded to a House Fire on December 24, 2020 at 9:50 p.m. at 600 block of Hurley, 77022

\$56 thousand in estimated property was saved. \$140 thousand in estimated damage to the house. The cause is under investigation.

Firefighters arrived on scene within six minutes to find heavy fire and smoke coming from a house. They made an offensive attack and ventilated the home. A primary search was conducted and a dog was found and removed from the house. Unfortunately, they were unable to revive the pet.

Firefighters extinguished the fire and requested HFD Arson investigators to determine the cause and origin. The American Red Cross was also notified. Crews from Stations 31, 34, 15, 30, 56, 69 and 58 responded to this incident.

See the NORTHEAST NEWS on the Internet: www.nenewsroom.com

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CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey —

1. Is the book of Leviticus in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. For possible New Year's resolutions, Proverbs 16:3 says, "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be ..."? Resolved, Established, Directed, Bountiful
3. In Luke 2, what prophetess

spoke of Jesus "to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem"? Anna, Jezebel, Damaris, Whore of Babylon

4. In which month of the religious calendar did the new year begin in the Bible? 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th
5. From Matthew 2, to what country did Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus flee? Jordan, Syria, Oman, Egypt

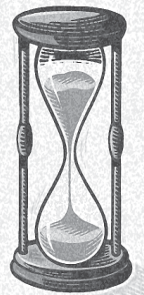
6. Who told Joseph about the death of Herod? Melchior, Angel (in a dream), Augustus Caesar, Phanuel

ANSWERS: 1) Old; 2) Established; 3) Anna; 4) 7th; 5) Egypt; 6) Angel (in a dream)

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

*To everything there is a season,
A time for every purpose under heaven...
A time to keep silence,
And a time to speak;
A time to love,
And a time to hate;
A time of war, and a time of peace.*

ECCLESIASTES 3: 1, 7, 8




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East Aldine Drive & Dash,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



SPONSORS: The Drive & Dash Toy Giveaway was successful thanks to the support of community organizations and businesses.



Drive & Dash included a Hot Rod Car Show, with many fine examples on display. And Santa too, of course. Where's his sleigh?



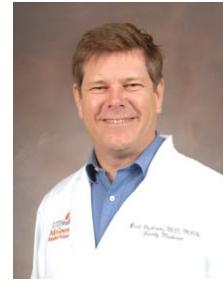
In the Holiday spirit, the ART BUS from the Houston Department of Transformation was decorated for the occasion.

All photos courtesy of ev1pro and East Aldine District.

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.

“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 based on their



DR. WILLIAM B. PERKISON

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.

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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.

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See Info Ad below.

Art Gallery features Paintings by Mei

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