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NORTHEAST NEWS

WEDNESDAY

St. Patrick's Day

March 17



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VOL. 45, NO. 11 TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 2021 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

COVID-19
Cases as of March 9, 2021

HOUSTON AREA
19 COUNTIES

587,652 POSITIVE
5,931 DEATHS
535,175 RECOVERED

TEXAS

2,704,712 POSITIVE
45,582 DEATHS
19,966,634 TESTS

UNITED STATES

29,093,946 POSITIVE
527,643 DEATHS
364,849,318 TESTS

WORLDWIDE

117,537,686 POSITIVE
2,609,992 DEATHS
66,600,236 RECOVERED

COVID-19 RESOURCES

City of Houston Pre-Screening & VACCINE SHOTS
832-393-4220
Harris County Ask a Nurse
713-634-1110
Harris County Pre-Screening 832-927-7575
or readyharris.org
Harris County Mobile Tests
713-439-6000
MD Medical
1-888-776-5252
Methodist Hospital
Download mymethodist app.

COVID-19 VACCINE RESOURCES

CITY OF HOUSTON
Registration
HoustonEmergency.org/covid19
832-393-4220
HARRIS COUNTY
Registration at readyharris.org OR
https://vacstrac.hctx.net/832-927-8787
RETAIL PHARMACIES
Registration at Websites
CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, Sams Club, HEB, Kroger, Randalls
HOSPITALS
houstonmethodist.org
memorialhermann.org

Aldine ISD names Top Educators of the Year



Breanna Jagodzinski, center, was named Aldine ISD's Elementary Teacher of the Year during the Aldine ISD Educator of the Year Breakfast, held Friday, March 12 at the M.O. Campbell Educational Center. Pictured with Breanna are, (l-r): Pastor David L. Smith, Past President of the Aldine Education Foundation (AEF), Elementary School Assistant Superintendent Dr. Crystal Watson, Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney, Aldine ISD Board President Paul Shanklin and Paul Griffin with Amplify.



Jaime Luna, center, was named Aldine ISD's Secondary Teacher of the Year during the Aldine ISD Educator of the Year Breakfast, held Friday, March 12 at the M.O. Campbell Educational Center. Pictured with Luna are, (l-r): Todd Lindeman, School Assistant Superintendent of High Schools, Aldine Education Foundation Past President Pastor David Smith, Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney, Aldine ISD Board President Paul Shanklin and Paul Griffin with Amplify.

Breanna Jagodzinski, Jaime Luna named AISD's top educators: Shauna Showers, Heather Peterson named district's top principals

Aldine ISD celebrated its top teachers and principals at the Educator of the Year Breakfast on Friday, March 12 at the M.O. Campbell Educational Center. This year's theme was "Adventure Awaits."

Aldine ISD Trustees, district administrators, campus administrators, teachers and business

partners donned their best travel wear to celebrate Aldine ISD teachers and campus administrators.

Breanna Jagodzinski of Houston Academy was named the district's Elementary Teacher of the Year, while Jaime Luna of Davis High School was named the district's Secondary Teacher of the Year.

The four Teacher of the Year finalists were Cindy Nguyen of Carmichael Elementary School, Oscar Acuna of Stehlik Elementary School, Christopher Ceaser of Nimitz High

School and Jarrod Fredericks of Victory Early College High School.

For the second consecutive year, the district also announced its Rookie Educators of the Year. Reagan Burns of Hinojosa Primary School was named the Rookie Elementary Teacher of the Year and Leon Hunt of Davis Ninth Grade School was named the Secondary Rookie Teacher of the Year.

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

Shauana Showers of Stephens Elementary School was named the Elementary Principal of the Year and Heather Peterson was named the Secondary Principal of the Year. Kimberly Dussette of Teague Middle School was named the Rookie Principal of the Year.

The two overall winners, the four finalists and all Campus Teachers of the Year received monetary awards from the Aldine Education Foundation. Jagodzinski and Luna each received round trip airfare tickets from United Air-

lines.

The two overall winners, the four finalists and all Campus Teachers of the Year also received gifts from Aldine AFT, the Houston Astros, Camdon Graphics, Chick-fil-A-Aldine, Comcast, Doggett, Good Reason Houston, Josten's, Magoo's PrintShop, the North Houston District, Raising Cain's, Renaissance, and the Stewart Organization.

Chief of Schools Katy Roede announced the Prin-

Continued. See TOP EDUCATORS, page 2

Pct. 2 Medical SmartPod wins innovation award

Harris County, TX — Commissioner Adrian Garcia and Precinct 2 received the prestigious American City & County 2020 Crown Communities Award. Garcia and Precinct 2 were chosen for their entry, which described the purchase, installation, and deployment of two SmartPod mobile health care units designed by Baylor. Precinct 2's SmartPods are known as ACCESS2HEALTH.

Crown Communities Awards are based on uniqueness, short- and long-term value to the community and effective/innovative financing. The announcement cites ACCESS2HEALTH for its



Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia last October, dedicating his first SmartPod in the Aldine area.

"Innovative COVID-19 Emergency Response." Though the two ACCESS2HEALTH units

were purchased prior to the pandemic, once installed, their availability for remote COVID-19 test-

ing was of immediate value that continues today. Once COVID-19 is no longer the most pressing health issue of the times, ACCESS2HEALTH can be converted to provide clinical and behavioral health services, ultimately providing patients with a medical home.

"With all the debate over our state and nation's health care future, we decided to take matters into our own hands, bringing services directly to the Precinct 2 Community. Harris County is home to the finest medical center in the nation. But, many residents of Precinct 2 cannot access services from The Texas Medical Center,"

said Commissioner Adrian Garcia. "My goal was to bring all the resources of the Texas Medical Center directly into our neighborhoods. That's what makes these

SmartPod ACCESS2HEALTH units so great. We can provide free access to health care services to people in places where they are needed most. It fills my heart with pride that Precinct 2 innovates in ways that help traditionally underserved communities, and I am grateful for this prestigious award."

More information about why Precinct 2 and ACCESS2HEALTH was chosen as an award winner can be viewed at AmericanCityandCounty.com.

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SCHOOL NEWS

TO OUR READERS:
The current Covid-19 Pandemic, weather and economic conditions have caused us to combine some issues every two weeks, and to change distribution to Pick-up locations. See page 5 for 50 locations where you can get a copy of the Northeast News, and page 7 for email subscriptions. We thank you for your continued support.

NEWS NOTES

North Houston Little League event

On Sunday, March 14 the Little League received sporting goods and a check for \$5000 from the Dicks Sporting Goods stores in support of the athletic program. The event was held at the newly renovated Squatty Lyons Park at 1701 Cromwell, in anticipation of the season start.

Report Storm Damage

HOUSTON - The City of Houston Emergency Operations Center has demobilized for its response to last week's severe winter storm. The Joint Information Center media line and media email are no longer being monitored for this response. Media can visit cityofhouston.news for a list of department media contacts.

The City of Houston has begun focusing on recovery efforts and is urging residents to report residential damage caused by last week's Severe Winter Weather.

Houstonians can submit damages via the following "Personal Property Damage Reporting" forms:

- English - <http://bit.ly/DamageReportEn>
- Espanol - <http://bit.ly/DamageReportES>

Affected residents are urged to report severe winter weather damage to their homes. This will help the City of Houston provide an accurate summary of affected structures, which is required for the City and State to qualify for federal recovery assistance.

Additionally, it will allow City of Houston staff to understand the type of help the community needs as staff coordinates local resource with area partners. Please do not use the survey to request direct assistance or disaster relief. Submitting this form is not a way to receive aid.

Residents should continue to report broken pipes and water mains to 311 so that Houston Public Works can isolate the leak. To keep call wait times low, report service requests to 311 online at <https://houstontx.gov/311> or via the Houston 311 app.

Houston residents should continue to visit www.HoustonEmergency.org for updates on the City's ongoing response to the winter storm. Recovery resource information is also available.

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8826 Harrell
Off Jensen between
Berry Road & Aldine
Westfield



Top Educators,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

cipals of the Year and the Rookie Principal of the Year.

Showers said it takes a team to run a successful school and that she has created an atmosphere at Stephens Elementary where everyone works together for the betterment of their students.

"I am a servant leader and consider myself part of the team," Showers said. "I want everyone of my teachers to be excited to come to work everyday. Teachers are given opportunities to collaborate as a team on every process that we implement at Stephens Elementary. I believe this creates the culture that builds our collective efficacy."

Peterson said she is also a team player who leads by example.

"I have learned many things throughout my years as a building principal. I will not ask anyone to do something I am not willing to do myself," she said. "That is the only way you can model professional and ethical behavior. Words mean nothing if deeds do not coincide."

Dussette, who attended Teague Middle School growing up, said becoming a first-time principal during the COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge, but one she willingly accepted.

"Becoming a new principal during a pandemic brings on its own unique set of challenges," she said. "For me, most importantly I needed to ensure the social and emotional health of not only the scholars in the village, but the staff as well. I felt that I needed to guarantee that I had a campus that maintained environments that were physically and emotionally safe, supportive, challenging and socially and emotionally nurturing for all who entered."

Dr. Javier Villarreal, Chief Human Resource Officer, announced the Teachers of the Year and the Rookie Teachers of the Year.

Jagodzinski said she strives to bring out the best in her students.

"I believe each person contains unique qualities that undeniably makes them meant to do one thing in this world," she said. "I have made it my personal lifelong mission to help students find their 'one thing.' This starts in the classroom, through knowledge, discovery and experiences that shape who they are in every facet. Children must understand that it is no coincidence they were placed on this earth."

Luna said he wants his Spanish students to be exposed to a different part of the world through is teaching.

"I approach teaching Spanish as a way to engage students in exploring the world around them," he said. "In my class, we explore Latin America, as well as other regions and cultures. My main goal is for students to understand how people are connected. By choosing topics that interest my students, they begin to make connections as to how different societies are similar."

Burns goal is to make her students life-long learners.

"Everyone deserves a chance to learn," she said. "Education is something that can take you far and provide you many opportunities. As a teacher, I see giving the gift of education is something that no one can ever take away from my students. As a teacher, I am committed to making learning fun and meaningful each and every day."

Hunt said he believes it is his duty as an educator to challenge his students each and every day.

"I believe that a teacher is morally obligated to enter the classroom with only the highest expectations for each and every student," he said. "Thus, the teacher maximizes the positive benefits that come along with a self-fulfilling prophecy. With dedication, perseverance and hard work, their students will rise to the occasion."

Aldine ISD Board President Paul Shanklin thanked all of Aldine teachers for their service and commitment to educating Aldine's youth.

"On behalf of my fellow board members, I want to congratulate all of our campus Teachers of the Year, our six finalists, our Principals of the Year and our Rookie Teachers of the Year," he said. "On behalf of my fellow Trustees, we want you to know how much we value each and everyone of you and we can't thank you enough for your dedication and devotion to the children of Aldine."

"I'm sure you are all aware that teaching is a calling and those who answer that call play a vital role in preparing students for college, and successful careers so that they can enjoy bright and unlimited futures."

Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney delivered closing remarks and also thanked Aldine's teachers for working through the pandemic, Winter Storm Uri and other challenges that have come their way in the last year.

"Thank you for all you do for our students," Dr. Goffney said. "We have amazing educators who give their all. We have educators who care. Learning in Aldine never stopped, despite all the challenges we have all faced in the last year. You create meaningful learning experiences for our students and we can't thank you enough."

Prior to the presentation in the MOC Foyer, Campus Teachers of the Year were feted with a drive-through celebration where they received goodie boxes and a hot breakfast prepared by AISD's Child Nutrition Department.

A number of area companies and individuals served as sponsors for the event. Amplify was the Presenting Sponsor, while United Airlines was the Platinum Sponsor, WCA was the Gold Sponsor and Howard Kelly and Kimberly Elizondo of McDonald's served as Silver Sponsors. Campus Sponsors were Aldine AFT, BakerRipley, Margaret and Bill Ginder, Camdon Graphics, Carrie Durley, Edgenuity, Inc., Good Reason Houston, Josten's, Martinez Architects, Renaissance, Tarkett USA, Inc. and Christi Van Wassenhove.

The Principal of the Year Committee consisted of Sherrie Batro, Rachel Briones, Twiana Collier, Scott Corrick, Raul Fonseca, Bryan Savant, Stacey Smith and Dr. Robin Williams.

The Rookie Principal of the Year Committee consisted of Dr. Dana Arreola, James Colbert, Perla Davila, Altigracia Delgado, Eric Levels, Kaleigh Newman, Dominic Tong and Dr. Robin Williams.

The Teacher of the Year Committee consisted of Aldine ISD Assistant Board Secretary Rose Avalos, Cindia Lara, Yvonne Lopez Taylor, Chad Lane, Amber Johnson, Matte Johnson, Dawn Brimhall, Dr. Keena Bradley and Dr. David Villareal.

Chief Communications Officer Sheleah Reed served as master of ceremonies for the event.

Aldine ISD Board Meeting held on March 9th

For the first time in over a year, the Aldine ISD Board of Trustees met as a group as they held their March board meeting on Tuesday, March 9 in the Board Room of the Donaldson Administration Building.

All seven Trustees attended the meeting, along with Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney and members of her Executive Leadership Team (ELT), in person to conduct district business and recognize a number of students and employees.

Public hearing held on 2019-20 APR

During the March 9 Board meeting, Aldine ISD conducted a public hearing to discuss the district's annual report. Dawn Ayers, Chief of Strategic Initiative and Accountability, conducted the hearing. The report includes the district and campus Texas Academic Performance (TAPR) reports, district accreditation status, campus performance objectives, a report of violent or criminal incidents, and information received under Texas Education Code 51.403(e) from the Texas Higher Education Coordinator Board. Ayers reported that within the next two weeks, the 2019-20 Annual Performance Report will be disseminated and may be accessed in its entirety on the district website.

Trustees approve calendar for 2021-22 school year

During the March 9 Board meeting, Aldine ISD Trustees approved the instructional calendar for the 2021-22 school year. The first day of instruction will be Monday, Aug. 16. Other key dates include:

- Labor Day Holiday – Sept. 6
- Student Holiday – Oct. 18
- Thanksgiving Break – Nov. 22-26
- Midwinter Break – Dec. 20-31
- Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday – Jan. 17
- Presidents Day – Feb. 21
- Spring Break – March 14-18
- Student Holiday – April 15
- Last Day of Instruction – May 26
- Last Day for Teachers – May 27



Aldine Education Foundation Director Linda Flores Olson, left, recognized Halliburton and Melissa Sowell, the company's Manager of Community Relations, for its service to Aldine ISD as a valuable business partner at the March 9 Board of Trustees meeting.

Halliburton recognized as a valuable business partner with Aldine ISD

During the March 9 Board meeting, Aldine Education Foundation Director Linda Flores Olson recognized Halliburton and Melissa Sowell, Halliburton's Manager of Community Relations, as a valuable and generous business partner. During the recent winter storm, Sowell handwrote a check for \$10,000 to support Aldine families and students who were affected by the storm. On Feb. 22, Dr. Martha Escalante, Executive Director of the Family and Community Engagement Department (FACE) organized a water distribution at Aldine High School with the assistance of Sowell and other Halliburton employees. The effort provided food and water to 500 Aldine families. "We are so proud to have Halliburton as a new partner," Olson said. "I envision us doing great things together for our community. Thank you for your bighearted gift."

- tion – May 26
- Last Day for Teachers – May 27

Black History Orator winners announced

During the March 9 Board meeting, Latashia Abrams, Director of Family and Community Engagement, announced the winners of the district's first-ever Black History Oratory competition. The event was held in February during Black History Month. In the Ninth Grade and High School category, Minnatullah Embaby of Aldine High School finished in first place. Patience Washington of Eisenhower Ninth Grade School finished second and Madison Carazes of Eisenhower High School placed third. In the Middle School category, Justina Meta of Teague Middle School finished in first place, while Kesandra Williams of Hall Success Academy placed second and Ayana Ned of Hambrick Middle School

finished in third place. In the Elementary School category, Viviana Maldonado of Johnson Elementary School finished in first place, while Davia Gaines of Harris Elementary School placed second and Umar Syed of Parker Elementary School finished in third place. The three first-place winners recited their speeches during the Board meeting.

Grant announced

During the March 9 Board meeting, Stacy Smith, Director of Special Programs, announced one grant.

Avalos P-Tech High School Principal Dr. Diana Del Pilar and teachers Rodelio Aduan and Jonathan Duncan secured a \$2,500 grant from State Farm to purchase lab coats that will be used for diagramming newly learned Biology course concepts.

The April Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 20.

Spring Break Online Events at the Harris County Public Libraries

Need a break? Harris County Public Library has engaging and fun virtual programs for the whole family during the week of Spring Break (March 15 - 19). We'll have everything from Texas animals to soccer and storytimes! Be sure to check out the these Spring Break inspired reads for kids on OverDrive.

Learn more about upcoming virtual programs at HCPL.net and follow @HarrisCountyPL on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

SPRING BREAK VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

ANIMAL SUPER-POWERS WITH PRECINCT 1
Monday, March 15 @ 11 AM

Look at some REAL animals and ask questions of the specialists. Discover how every animal is uniquely adapted to win at the game of survival.

HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS - COMPOSTING

Tuesday, March 16 @ 11 AM
Join us for an hour with the Harris County Master Gardeners, LIVE at 11am on the third Tuesday of each month.

SOCCER STARTS AT HOME WITH THE HOUSTON DYNAMO AND DASH

Tuesday, March 16 @ 1 PM

Grab a ball and join us for beginner soccer videos created by Houston Dynamo and Dash with stories, songs, and more from HCPL staff. Don't have a ball? There's still plenty of fun to be had!

READ AND PLAY WITH AUTHORS!

Wednesday, March 17 @ 1 PM
Authors Varsha Bajaj and Saadia Faruqi will each read from their work and then open up to Q&A. They are also planning some fun activities including Bollywood singing!

SOFI'S MAGICAL ADVENTURE WITH LIVE Q&A

Thursday, March 18 @ 11 AM

Join Sofi exploring public art, imagination, and the Puerto Rican cultural tradition of Carnival as Sofi visits beautiful places on the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico and gets to know the carnival character, a vejigante. And, sing along, in Spanish and English, (and maybe even dance) to bouncy plena music created by four time Grammy nominated composer William Cepeda.

THE ARMADILLO'S DREAM

Friday, March 19 @ 11 AM

Based on a Bolivian folktale and written by HGO's own Dennis Arrow-smith, this inspiring and timely tale stars an armadillo named Sandy who lives on the Houston bayou and dreams of singing. Though discouraged by the creatures he meets, Sandy is magically transformed during a storm and his shell becomes a part of a production at Houston Grand Opera.



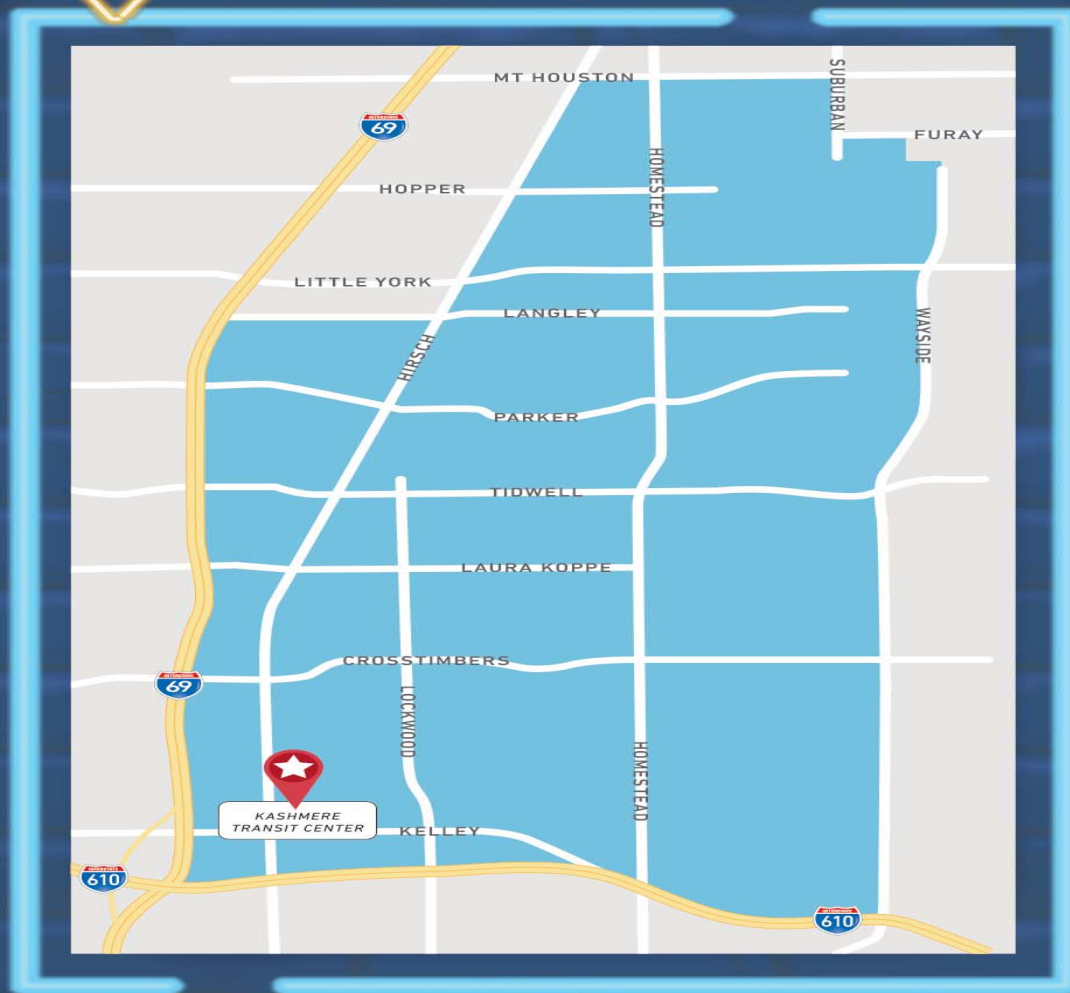
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ZONE MAP



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OPINION
Harris County Judge
Lina Hidalgo



This is not the time to give up

This Wednesday, the state's decision to open everything at 100% and eliminate the mask mandate comes into effect.

For the vast majority of the community who have been following public health recommendations from the beginning, the state's ending COVID-19 precautions is a gut punch. As I said in a recent TIME Magazine Op-Ed:

"It is a heavy burden for a community to carry, to continue to sacrifice in spite of false hopes being offered at the highest levels of the state... I hope that people of this county won't allow pandemic politics to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory and that we won't throw away a year of pain and sacrifice so that politicians can have their 'mission accomplished' moment."

I have received a lot of questions about what that means for Texans, and what our community should do.

The bottom line is this: This is not the time to give up.

Our positivity rate is sky high and still rising. Our COVID-19 hospitalizations are too high and would be the highest starting point ever for a climb in hospitalizations. We're still reporting around 600 cases a day in Harris County. Every time there has been a lifting of restrictions, numbers have worsened within a month or two.

Continue wearing face coverings. It saves lives.

Continue to avoid gatherings with people you don't live with.

Finally, support the businesses, the school administrators, the leaders who are being upfront and realistic about the situation.

A lot has been asked of you over the past year. We have to dig deep and continue our efforts a little longer.

If anyone can persevere, it's the incredibly resilient people of this County and of this State.



with Slim Randlgs

Cactus hairs; worse than Covid-19

Doc had just finished bringing us up to date on the world's fight against the covid-19 virus when ol' Windy Wilson raised his eyes.

"Now don't ya find, Doc," he said, "that the worse stuff in this old life is the junk ya can't see?"

Doc looked puzzled, so Windy continued. "Aw, you know. It's them miterscopic stuff that are really dangerous to us."

Doc nodded.

"Now you jest take in there a braymer bull? He can stomp a guy inta furry, pink Jell-o. And then dance on them bullfighters whilst they're a-tryin' to git yer carcass outa the reenur. But see this here now. That there bull is purty dang big. Big enough to ride, right? So that means he's big enough so's you kin get outa his way if he comes a-stompin'."

Windy, our favorite camp cook, cowboy, philosopher, and interpreter of the English language, sipped on his coffee and looked at us each in turn. "Now, can you see them coronary vibration bugs? No way! Too dang small. They'll sneak up on a guy, get married and have pups and then kill ya deader'n a hammer!

"Thass why, at the conjugal finish a-my thinkin', I'm puttin' them bugs in secondary place on my list of all-time tiny mean stuff."

"Only second place?" said Herb, "What's worse'n dying, Windy?"

"Cactus hairs," he said. "A-course. Ya know, them miterscopic stickers that you can't see when your eyes is nekkid. But ya know they's there, doncha? Oh yes, Aunt Sarah, I'll say ya do!"

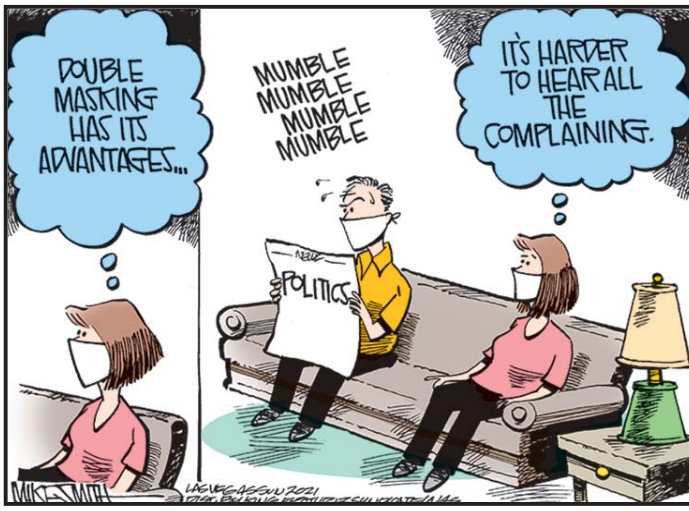
Windy nodded, agreeing with himself. No one else did, but that isn't really necessary with Windy.

"Only way ya kin tell ya got 'em is when ya brush up agin' somethin', like a shirt cuff or somethin'. Hurts like the Civilian War, it does, but ya can't see it."

He leaned forward and whispered. "It's flambastically insidulous!"

"And you kin tell 'em I said so."

Brought to you by the folks who take the shiver out of ordering a quiver for you archers, Cedar Ridge Leather Works, in Nashville. Ask for art@archeryleather.com.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders



Mask mandate ends March 10; Many entities to continue requiring them

While Gov. Gregg Abbott has lifted the statewide mandate to wear a mask in public and allowed all businesses to operate at full capacity, many businesses, schools and other entities say they will continue to require that masks be worn. Abbott issued the order last week, effective March 10.

"With the medical advancements of vaccines and antibody therapeutic drugs, Texas now has the tools to protect Texans from the virus," Abbott said. "We must now do more to restore livelihoods and normalcy for Texans by opening Texas 100 percent." He urged Texans to take responsibility for themselves when it comes to wearing masks and following other health safety practices.

Political leaders in several of the state's largest cities criticized the decision. Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner tweeted, asking (and answering for himself) whether Abbott's move was "an attempt to deflect from the winter storm system-wide state leadership failure. Yes." San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg urged residents to join him in continuing to wear a mask, a sentiment echoed by Austin Mayor Steve Adler and Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins.

Meanwhile, the Texas Education Agency revised its health guidance policies, saying that "local school boards have full authority to determine their local mask policy." Many of the state's college campuses announced they would continue to require that masks be worn, including The University of Texas, the Texas A&M University System, Texas Tech, Southern Methodist University and others.

Several large retailers announced they would continue to require customers to wear masks, including Walmart, Target, Costco and Whole Foods. Grocery retailer H-E-B will "strongly encourage" they be worn, according to a company statement, and employees will continue to wear masks.



HEB president Scott McClelland told the Houston Chronicle that antagonistic customers have caused nearly 2,000 in-store incidents regarding masks at Houston stores alone. He said customers not wearing a mask would be asked to do so, and an employee would offer them a mask if they didn't have one. Store employees will not escalate the situation if a customer refuses, he said.

TEXAS GETTING MORE THAN 1 MILLION COVID-19 VACCINE DOSES THIS WEEK

More than 1 million COVID-19 vaccine doses are shipping this week to providers across the state, a significant increase from previous weeks. That's largely due to nearly a quarter-million doses of the new Johnson & Johnson vaccine coming to Texas. The single-dose vaccine began shipping last week. As of Sunday, more than 4.2 million Texans had received at least one dose and 2,319 million were fully vaccinated. That means about 22 percent of the state's population has gotten at least one dose. Teachers and school staff have been added to the list of those eligible for one of the three vaccines being offered.

COVID-19 CASES DROP, BUT DEATHS INCREASE IN PAST WEEK

The number of new COVID-19 cases reported in Texas in the past week dropped to 43,328, according

to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University of Medicine. That's down 22 percent from the previous week and down nearly 73 percent from the record high of 158,922 recorded the week of Jan. 10. However, recorded deaths in Texas rose to 1,730, up 17 percent from the previous week. Hospitalizations for lab-confirmed COVID-19 patients totaled 4,921, down from the record high of more than 14,000 during the week of Jan. 11.

MORE HEADS ROLL IN WAKE OF WIDESPREAD BLACKOUTS DURING WINTER STORM

As state and federal investigations continue into the massive blackouts during the Valentine's Day winter storm, leaders of both the Public Utility Commission and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas left their positions. DeAnn Walker, chairman of the PUC, resigned on March 1 and was replaced by fellow PUC member Arthur D'Andrea. Abbott will appoint someone to fill D'Andrea's position. ERCOT's CEO Bill Magness was fired a few days later by his board, which has lost nearly half its members to resignations. Magness, whose annual salary was at least \$800,000, soon said he would not seek or accept severance pay, which would have been equivalent to a year's pay, according to the Texas Tribune.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS NOT PENALIZED FOR HIGH ABSENCES, REMOTE LEARNING

The Texas Education Agency announced last week that it will "hold harmless" school districts that have seen attendance declines because of the pandemic, as long as they at least maintain current levels of in-school learning. Districts will be funded on attendance projections made before the pandemic, allowing them to retain teachers who might have faced layoffs because of lower enrollment. The state's top leaders announced their support for the hold-harmless provision in a March 4 press release.

TEENS URGED TO BUCKLE UP

Car wrecks are the leading cause of death among teenagers, and 41% of Texas teen drivers killed in 2019 weren't wearing a seat belt. That's why the Texas Department of Transportation is conducting a "Teen Click It or Ticket" campaign in March. TxDOT is sending out safety messages via social media, TV, radio and digital media. "Due to their limited driving experience, teens are far more susceptible to being in a crash," said TxDOT Executive Director James Bass. "Far too many of these crashes are deadly because of the failure to buckle up. Wearing a seat belt is the single most effective thing you can do to protect yourself in a crash. Click it and be safe."

THE POSTSCRIPT
By
Carrie Classon

March Inspiration

I've never been a fan of March.

March is supposedly spring, but we all know it's not. In much of the country, more snow falls in March than any other month. But it doesn't have the courtesy to stay. March snow falls, makes us shovel it, then turns into a sloppy mess in three days. It becomes slush, mixed with mud. The sky stays gray. And all the... things (you know what I mean), things that were buried in previous snowfalls... all those things come to light. Whatever they were, they are never better for having spent a few months under the snow. I don't need to describe them. You know what I'm talking about.

March is filled with disappointment. Too early for things to bloom, too late for a frosty day, March is a party that is never going to happen, an event canceled in advance. I am an optimistic person by nature, but March always gets me down.

It seems nonsensical, but autumn is a more cheerful season. Things are dying, but they do it so colorfully! The air is crisp and there will be celebrations and bonfires and new sweaters to wear.

What do you wear in March? Something you don't mind getting muddy, that is my advice. You might as well wear those pants you plan on tossing out as soon as it is warm enough. Wear them with the boots that already have a hole in the toe. Your feet will get wet anyway. There is nothing you can do. It's March.

I realize this is not turning into an uplifting column. I do not feel inspired by March; it is true.

But maybe that is because March is when big changes start to happen, and big changes are often not pretty.

Starting a new habit, ending a bad one, getting rid of something that is not working and replacing it with something that works better—none of these things are pretty. Change is messy and fraught with mistakes, and it doesn't look or feel easy or glamorous. June is easy and glamorous. March is clumsy and embarrassing and lonely and dull.

Maybe that's why we need it.

Because change is necessary. The trees need it, and insects need it, and people need it most of all. We need to slough off the old stuff that isn't doing us any good anymore, and we need to awkwardly embrace the new stuff we want to become a part of our life. And we can't do that without some mud and some melting and some unpleasant discoveries under the snow.

I was thinking about butterflies recently, how they start out as caterpillars and emerge with brand new, beautiful wet wings. Then they take off and fly to another continent like they know exactly what they are doing—because they do. I admire everything about that. I admire their beauty, and assurance, and their ability to transform themselves.

But my sister-in-law, Lori, recently reminded me of something that I either didn't know or had forgotten.

"When they are in the chrysalis, they dissolve," she told me. "Their entire body turns to mush! If you open the chrysalis too soon, they never get wings."

I realized I've been admiring butterflies for all the wrong reasons.

I've been admiring those beautiful wings, after all the work is finished. I never stopped to think how it would feel to be mush inside a dark cocoon, making a change that will transform a worm into a magical creature.

Now I'm thinking, maybe that is what March is for.

Till next time,

Carrie

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

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5906 Star Lane, Houston, TX 77057
(713) 266-3444 • FAX (713) 977-1188
email: neneersroom@aol.com website: www.neneersroom.com

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rev0919

Time to celebrate industrious women at an East Aldine neighborhood "pop-up"



"Babes Support Babes" event included the high-stepping fitness classes, held at Studio 59 Fitness Center on the Eastex Freeway Feeder road at Aldine Mail Route.

In honor of International Women's Day – and to promote women entrepreneurs in East Aldine – a special market "pop up" happened Saturday, March 6, at an event center on the Eastex Freeway.

"Babes Support Babes" is the name of event, which included vendors, food, entertainment and music. And demonstrations of the high-stepping fitness classes offered by the self-proclaimed "Babes" who work out at the Studio 59 Fitness Center, 12411A Eastex Freeway.

The focus of the event was the enterprising women who work at jobs and at home, and then, while "normal" people sleep, design, create, perfect and market goods and services ranging from food to fragrances.

The event also featured amusements and diversions for the traditionally shopping-impaired part of the populace not being celebrated on International Women's Day: men. Food vendors, musicians and giveaways were there to occupy those souls.

Adriana Hinojosa, who owns the fitness center, started hosting pop-up markets as a safer alternative for shopping opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was one way to keep her business running while promoting other struggling enterprises in the Aldine area.

Sponsors for the pop-up market include the East Aldine Management District, Houston attorney "Abogada Bianca," Anita y Botita (a mother-daughter clown act), A.L. Parky Balloon, First Convenience Bank and the BakerRipley non-profit. There will be two raffles, sponsored by the bank and BakerRipley.

Hinojosa, who promotes health and fitness, said the outdoor market is a safe shopping environment, but vendors and customers must wear masks.

"The pandemic nearly cost me my business and we're not going to let our guard down now," Hinojosa said. "In fact, most of these vendors started their busi-

nesses, or changed their business, to make extra income due to the pandemic."

International Women's Day, a United Nations-sanctioned global holiday, is officially celebrated this year on March 8. The goal of the annual event is to raise awareness about the struggle for gender equality, and to inspire support for groups that help women. Visitors are encouraged to wear the color purple to celebrate the day.

This year's theme is "Choose to Challenge" gender inequality.

DJ Moe will provide music along with demonstrations by the Vaqueras, a girls' dance team from Studio 59.

Mexican specialties will be served by the Birrieria y Taqueria food truck.

Other goods will be for sale.

Happy shopping! Babes Support Babes occurred at 12411A Eastex Freeway (west side of the highway, just north of Aldine Mail Route Road).

ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

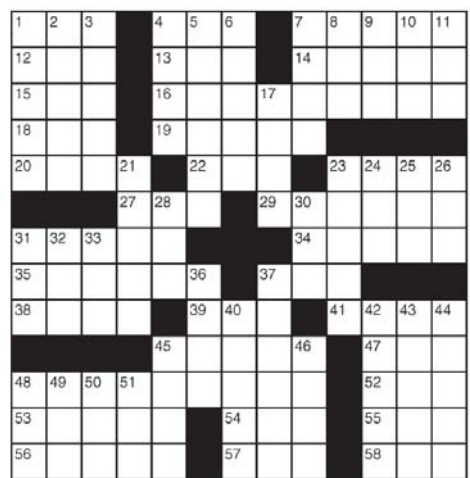
Differences: 1. Boy is moved; 2. Golf club is missing; 3. Hedge is missing; 4. Zipper is added; 5. Golf shoes are different; 6. Golf shirt is missing; 7. Tree is added.

Posting Date March 8, 2021

King Crossword

ACROSS

- Nightwear, for short
- Rm. coolers
- Fable writer
- Decay
- Prefix with athlete
- Preamble
- Mode lead-in
- Soundly defeated
- Zilch
- Berth places
- Retain
- Away from NNW
- Roundish 'do
- Writer Harper
- Sitting room
- Prepared apples for baking
- Street punks
- Uproar
- Rotating part
- A Great Lake
- Actor Stephen
- Dumbstruck
- Striped equine
- Hockey's Bobby
- Performed to the end
- Gun-lobby org.
- Broadcaster
- Code-



- breaking gp.
- Small barrel
- Musical pace
- Thither
- Billboards
- 9 Pigs' digs
- Metal source
- Group of whales
- Get ready, briefly
- West Point freshman
- Bakery lure
- "Alice" waitress
- Scepter
- Hosp. areas
- College URL
- Locations
- Has a bug
- Disney deer
- Owned by us
- MLB stat
- Raised
- Tenor Enrico
- Deep, lustrous black
- Candymaker
- Willy
- Goofed
- Pulls
- Goose egg
- impasse
- Bit of butter
- Fib
- Branch
- "Uh-huh"

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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- LITERATURE: Which 19th-century novel begins with the sentence, "There was no possibility of taking a walk that day"?
- CHEMISTRY: Which element's Latin name is hydrargyrum and goes by the symbol Hg?
- HISTORY: Who was the first female detective in the United States, hired by the Pinkerton Detective Agency in 1856?
- ADVERTISING SLOGANS: What product's 1970s advertising slogan was, "I can't believe I ate the whole thing"?
- U.S. PRESIDENTS: Only two Catholics have served as president of the United States. Who are they?
- MOVIES: The "Star Wars" movie series was partly filmed in which African country?
- LANGUAGE: What does the name Boca Raton (Florida) mean in Spanish?
- U.S. STATES: The highest and lowest points in the contiguous United States can be found in which state?
- ENTERTAINERS: Which American actor and comedian was born Eric Marlon Bishop?
- TELEVISION: Which 1950s Western series featured the theme song "Happy Trails"?

Weekly SUDOKU

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

Solution time: 26 mins.

Trivia Test Answers
1. "Jane Eyre"; 2. Mercury; 3. Kate Warne; 4. Alka-Seltzer; 5. John Kennedy and Joe Biden; 6. Tunisia; 7. Kat's mouth (named for sharp rocks where ships docked); 8. California; 9. Mount Whitney and Death Valley; 10. "The Roy Rogers Show"

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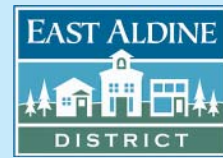
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East Aldine District COMMUNITY NEWS

Dazzling street-level art brightens the District landscape

A pleasing touch of moonlight, flowers and sunshine came to East Aldine just in time for Valentine's Day.

But the feel-good objects won't fade away like the holiday. They are permanent neighborhood decorations known as Mini Murals, which are hand-painted and clear-coated on traffic signal control cabinets at two key traffic intersections where Aldine drivers, passengers and pedestrians can enjoy seeing them day after day.



They also signal exciting steps by the East Aldine Arts Council and the East Aldine Management District to bring more public art to the area.

The district funded creation of two Mini Murals by Houston-based UP Art Studio, which has enlisted artists to create more than 315 street-level, outdoor Mini Murals across Houston. Also coming soon: A unique, sweeping mural, documenting the history and cultures of East Aldine, in the management district's new East Aldine Town Center.

Elia and Noah Quiles, a married couple, founded UP Art Studio in 2012 to put more art where people can enjoy it, for free, in public spaces. They recruit artists who create the Mini Murals, while Noah has evolved over many years from creating graffiti in his hometown Chicago to removing anyone's attempt to deface Houston's Mini Murals.

Artist Anat Ronen painted sunflowers on the metal traffic signal box at Aldine Westfield Road and Greens Road. Artist Sylvia Blanco painted the sun and moon on such a box at Westfield at Little York Road and created a rose image on the other side. Both images were part of a menu of choices from which the Arts Council picked to brighten the area.

"We knew that we wanted to start our art initiative in the district with a pair of Mini Murals," said Carlos Silva, a management district board member and a driving force for the district's Art Council Committee. "It was the perfect way to quickly show residents how art can have an impact in beautifying our community. This in turn helps to grow the collective sense of pride for the area which is really something the Arts Council is committed to doing. These Mini Murals are a wonderful stepping stone for more art in the public sphere here in East Aldine."

Across Houston, the hundreds of other UP Art Studio Mini Murals include images of political figures, plants, sports teams, entertainers, animals, butterflies, birds, gardens, crayons — the list goes on.

Some Mini Murals not only show iconic people and places, but also become gathering places themselves. When U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died last year, a Mini Mural in the Houston Heights depicting her and three other women who served on the court became a crossroads where her admirers left flowers and other memorials.

The art pieces also generate community loyalty. After a Mini Mural portrait of Pakistani activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai was defaced (and cleaned later) in the nearby Oak Forest neighborhood, a resident trained his home security camera on the Mini Mural to prevent any further vandalism.

Mini Murals became popular in Houston after the Quiles pair project-managed a more conventionally sized mural in 2014 — one that aimed to be the city's biggest at the time. After the mural earned many compliments, they dove into the world of Mini Murals and swiftly gained approval from Houston Public Works to use utility cabinets as canvasses.

Council Member Larry Green, who has since died, created a higher level of public enthusiasm for the project when he funded dozens of Mini Murals for his far south/southwest district.

"The media went crazy," Elia Quiles said. "We'd created more public art outside the loop than the city had in its entire collection."

Eventually UP Art made a connection with the East Aldine Arts Council when the company was commissioned to create murals promoting full participation in the 2020 Census. One of the murals went up at High Meadows Branch Library near Aldine ISD's MacArthur High School.

For UP Art Studio, the sky — or the curbside — is the limit. The Quileses have created Mini Murals in other Texas cities and are expanding into working with cities to develop and execute comprehensive plans for public art.

Meantime, in collaboration with the city of Houston, UP Art has put out a fresh call for more artists who will be paid to create mini-murals.



As for East Aldine, the Arts Council is planning more public art projects now that the district's two Mini Murals are in place and drawing positive reactions from the public.

"We're really only just getting started," Silva said. "EAAC has big plans for 2021 including commissioning a large scale sculpture and an outdoor mural that both residents and passerby's can see and enjoy. Not to mention more Mini Murals!"

— by Alan Bernstein

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Here are 2 New Scams to Watch Out For...

Here Are 2 New Scams to Watch Out For —They never stop. Scammers are continually busy, and so must we be to stay one step ahead of them. Here are two more scams they're trying to foist on us. If you're still working and receive W-2 or 1099 forms, look them over very carefully. If it's a 1099-G, that's for unemployment benefits. Did you receive those benefits? If not, it means that a scammer has used your identity to collect benefits. Those 1099-G forms go to the IRS, and that in-

come is taxable. Contact the unemployment office that issued the 1099-G and have them send a corrected form showing zero unemployment income. If you can't get the corrected form in time, file your taxes without using that 1099-G dollar amount and enclose a note saying you didn't receive unemployment benefits. The IRS is well aware of this problem. Then send for your credit report, check it and put a freeze on your credit. In another new scam, if you do an online search for a big box store

and the first result on the list says "Ad" in front of the store name, don't click it. This scam is especially sneaky because if you click on the "Ad" link, you'll initially go to a page that looks very real. It isn't. Clicking it will take you to a site that may freeze your screen ... and provide you a handy phone number to call to have the problem fixed. The person at the other end is a scammer who will ask for permission to access your computer remotely. If you allow it, he'll put a bug in your computer that locks everything up, and you'll have to pay to get it released. Instead of doing a search, type in the Internet address of the store you want (call them if you're not sure what it is) and go directly there.

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VETERANS POST

by Freddy Groves

VA Scams in Florida — What's going on in Florida?

It appears more criminals are operating there than in other areas of the country. One criminal near Tampa worked at the Department of Veterans Affairs as a transportation assistant who awarded contracts to vendors to give rides to VA clinic patients. Vendors had to pay kickbacks to him to be awarded contracts. Eventually the criminal started up two transportation companies of his own, registering them in the names of his wife and daughter to hide his involvement. Invoices were submitted, and they were paid to the tune of

\$305,000 over the course of 17 months.

When the whole scheme started coming down around their heads, they all lied and then got tangled up in those lies. Wife and daughter claimed they ran the two companies, yet the criminal was the one who registered the vehicles and arranged for insurance. Later, the criminal said his wife and daughter had seized control of the companies without his knowledge and were blackmailing him into giving them transportation contracts and assignments. All three pleaded guilty.

Also on Florida's west coast, a criminal operated a telemarketing scam where employees sold medical testing to patients and then turned those into prescriptions that looked like exams had been done via telemedicine. Signatures on the fake prescriptions were obtained from doctors in exchange for bribes. The prescriptions, submitted to the VA, netted the criminal over \$3 million, and he's been sentenced to four years in the federal penitentiary.

Then, on the east coast of Florida, a former VA employee was nabbed for threatening to kill another employee and that employee's family. Not too bright, leaving threatening messages on somebody's cellphone ... more than once. This fool could get a year in the federal pen and a \$100,000 fine.

So, is it the sun that does it in Florida?

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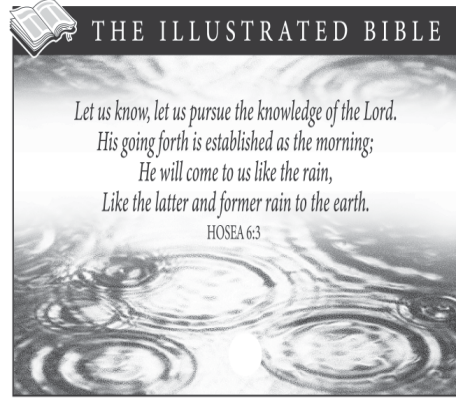
CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey —
 1. Is the book of Samaria in the Old or New Testament or neither?
 2. From Nehemiah 10, what's the most common starting letter of the numerous names listing priests, Levites, chiefs, and fathers? C, B, T, H
 3. Which prophet foretold the ministry of John the Baptist? Levi, Isaiah, Aaron, Mordecai
 4. How did Jesus enter Jerusalem during the

"Triumphal Entry"? On foot, Carried by slaves, On donkey, In golden chariot
 5. From 1 Chronicles 20, Elhanan slew Goliath's ...? Father, Brother, Mule, Oxen
 6. In which book is the parable of the Good Samaritan? Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) H; 3) Isaiah; 4) On donkey; 5) Brother; 6) Luke
 "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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CALL 713-266-3444 to place your Business Card in our Directory. Thousands of Readers in this area will see your message.

LEGAL NOTICE	LEGAL NOTICE	LEGAL NOTICE	LEGAL NOTICE	LEGAL NOTICE	LEGAL NOTICE
<h2>NOTICE ESTABLISHING OFFICES OF DISTRICT</h2> <p>TO THE RESIDENTS OF EAST LAKE HOUSTON MANAGEMENT DISTRICT AND ALL OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES:</p> <p>TAKE NOTICE that in accordance with V.T.C.A., Water Code, Chapter 49.062, as amended, the Board of Directors of EAST LAKE HOUSTON MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (the "District") has, on February 8, 2021, established offices outside the boundaries of the District at Winstead PC, 600 Travis Street, Suite 5200, Houston, TX 77002-2900, Hawes Hill and Associates LLP, 9610 Long Point Rd, Suite 150, Houston, Texas 77055 and Landev Engineers, a Binkly & Barfield Company, 1704 Seamist Drive, Suite 410, Houston, Texas 77008. Said offices are hereby declared to be a public place and the public is invited to attend any meeting of the Board held at such locations. Said offices may be used as a meeting place for the Board of Directors, a mailing address for the District, for the storage of District records, the receipt and opening of public bids for the construction of facilities for or on behalf of the District and for the transaction of such business as is not required to be done within the District. In addition, the District established offices at Winstead PC, 2728 N. Harwood Street, Suite 500, Dallas, Texas 75201, and Winstead PC, 401 Congress Avenue, Suite 2100, Austin, Texas 78701, both of which are located outside the boundaries of the District. Said offices are hereby declared to be public places. Said offices may be used as a mailing address for the District, for the storage of District records and for the transaction of such business as is not required to be done within the District. Furthermore, the District established an additional office at Arete Real Estate & Development Company, 340 N. Sam Houston Parkway, Suite 140, Houston, Texas 77060. Said office is hereby declared to be a public place and the public is invited to attend any meeting of the Board held at such location.</p> <p>YOU WILL THEREFORE TAKE NOTICE OF THE FOREGOING FACTS.</p> <p>February 8, 2021</p> <p style="text-align: right;">East Lake Houston Management District /s/ John Speer, Chairman</p>					

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