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# NORTHEAST NEWS

Launch Your Future!

## Open House

April 13-17, 2021

Help with Financial Aid • Meet with Advisors and Professors • Get Info on Clubs and Activities

LoneStar.edu/OpenHouse

LONE STAR COLLEGE OPEN HOUSE - See Page 3

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VOL. 45, NO. 13/14 TUESDAY, MARCH 23&30, 2021 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

**COVID-19**  
Cases as of March 22, 2021

**HOUSTON AREA**  
19 COUNTIES

**603,517 POSITIVE**  
**6,223 DEATHS**  
**552,289 RECOVERED**

**TEXAS**

**2,754,616 POSITIVE**  
**47,346 DEATHS**  
**20,683,375 TESTS**

**UNITED STATES**

**29,818,528 POSITIVE**  
**542,356 DEATHS**  
**381,190,995 TESTS**

**WORLDWIDE**

**123,160,171 POSITIVE**  
**2,715,080 DEATHS**  
**69,781,922 RECOVERED**

## State opens COVID shots to everyone

**HARRIS COUNTY** – March 23, 2021  
All adults will be eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine in Texas beginning Monday, March 29. The Texas Department of State Health Services expects vaccine supplies to increase next week, and providers in multiple parts of the state have made great strides in vaccinating people in the current priority groups. The state's Expert Vaccine Allocation Panel recommended opening vaccination to everyone who falls under the current Food and Drug Adminis-

tration emergency use authorizations to protect as many Texans as possible. "As a matter of fact, we in Houston had pretty much exhausted our waitlists and we wanted to have more real-time appointments available," said Houston Health Department director Stephen Williams. Texans can continue to find vaccine providers throughout Greater Houston and sign up on waitlists through the DSHS Vaccine Information page at [dshs.texas.gov/covidvaccine](https://dshs.texas.gov/covidvaccine).



Houston Methodist, consistently one of the area's largest vaccine providers, will allow anyone to sign up on its waitlist but will prioritize those 50 and older for now. "We are closing in on 10 million doses administered in Texas, and we want

to keep up the momentum as the vaccine supply increases," said Imelda Garcia, DSHS associate commissioner for laboratory and infectious disease services and the chair of the Expert Vaccine Allocation Panel. "As eligibility opens up, we are asking providers to continue to prioritize people who are the most at risk of severe disease, hospitalization and death – such as older adults." DSHS has directed vaccine providers to prioritize people 80 years old or older when scheduling appointments and accommodate anyone in that age group who presents for vaccination, whether or not they have an appointment, by immediately moving them to the front of the line. That will ensure vaccination of anyone 80 or older with as small a

*Continued. See COVID SHOTS, page 2*

**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](https://readyharris.org)  
Harris County Mobile Tests 713-439-6000  
MD Medical 1-888-776-5252  
Methodist Hospital Download [mymethodist.app](https://mymethodist.app)

## Construction to start on Northwood Apartments

**Northwood Apartments, a Multifamily Housing Community, to Replace Housing Lost During Hurricane Harvey**

**HOUSTON, TX** (Tuesday, March 23, 2021) – The Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA), Harris County - Community Services Department (HCCSD), Harris County Precinct One Commissioner Rodney Ellis, the Texas General Land Office (GLO), and the develop-



ment partner LDG Development (LDG) celebrate the groundbreaking of Northwood Apartments, a multifamily development located at 12620 Eastex

Freeway to replace housing lost during Hurricane Harvey. The development is financed with Harris County's Community Development Block Grant –

Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds in conjunction with private financing from Citi Community Capital and AEGON USA Realty Advisors, LLC.

This \$53.9 million community's groundbreaking will commence the development of 288 beautiful

*See Northwood, p. 5*

**COVID-19 VACCINE RESOURCES**

**CITY OF HOUSTON**  
Registration [HoustonEmergency.org/covid19](https://HoustonEmergency.org/covid19)  
832-393-4220

**HARRIS COUNTY**  
Registration at [readyharris.org](https://readyharris.org) OR <https://vacstrac.hctx.net>  
832-927-8787

**RETAIL PHARMACIES**  
Registration at Websites CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, Sams Club, HEB, Kroger, Randal's

**HOSPITALS**  
[houstonmethodist.org](https://houstonmethodist.org)  
[memorialhermann.org](https://memorialhermann.org)

## Street Racing Arrests top 200, some cars confiscated

**HARRIS COUNTY** – More than 200 people were arrested on charges ranging from DWI to reckless driving during a county-wide crackdown on illegal street racing this past weekend, Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg announced Thursday.

The arrests were the result of a joint initiative including the Harris County



Deputies confiscated and towed 12 cars.

## Texas House considers Deep Freeze legislation

*Report by Rep. Ana Hernandez*

On March 8, Speaker Dade Phelan announced the first phase of the House's legislative reforms to protect consumers and strengthen our state's electric grid in the aftermath of the recent, unprecedented cold weather event. Speaker Phelan highlighted the following key legislation filed by members of the Texas House of Representatives:

HB 10 - Reforming Energy Reliability Council of Texas Leadership



REPRESENTATIVE ANA HERNANDEZ

*Continued on Page 8*

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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 8 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

## Easter fun - EGGSTRAVANZA at BakerRipley Apr. 3

Drive-Thru Easter Egg Event on Saturday, April 3rd at BakerRipley. 10am until 1pm, by appointment only. Register to receive an Easter Basket for each child. Call 345-570-4463. Meet the Easter Bunny, get Easter Eggs, get Activity Kits.

## COVID shots open to everyone,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

burden on themselves as possible.

Also next week, DSHS will launch a website to allow people to register for a shot through some public health providers. The public will be able to enroll in the Texas Public Health Vaccine Scheduler to identify upcoming vaccine clinics hosted by DSHS or a participating local health department and be notified when new clinics and appointments become available. People can continue to find additional providers through the DSHS Vaccine Information page at [dshs.texas.gov/covidvaccine](https://dshs.texas.gov/covidvaccine).

Online registration will be the best option for most people. For those for whom that is not an option, DSHS will launch a toll-free number to provide assistance making an appointment with a participating provider or locating another provider that has vaccine available.

To date, Texas has administered more than 9.3 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine, equating to more than 6 million people with at least one dose and more than 3 million fully vaccinated. Most vaccines are authorized for people 18 years old and older; the FDA has authorized the Pfizer vaccine for use in people 16 and older.

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Berry Road & Aldine  
Westfield



## MacArthur Grad Paul Mills Led Oral Roberts to the Sweet 16

The Oral Roberts Golden Eagles are one of the best stories in the 2021 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament and are led by MacArthur High School graduate Paul Mills.

Mills' Golden Eagles entered the South Region as a No. 15 seed and shocked the college basketball world by upsetting No. 2 seed Ohio State, 75-72 in the tournament's first round. The Golden Eagles followed that stunner up with another upset in the second round with an 81-78 win over No. 7 seed Florida.

Mills, who has been ORU's head coach since 2017, led his team to the Sweet 16, where they faced No. 3 seed Arkansas on Saturday, March 27 in the South Regional semifinals. A win over the Razorbacks would have sent the Golden Eagles to the South Regional finals and one win away from the Final Four.

Mills graduated from MacArthur High School in 1990 and played basketball for Walt Kaser. He attended Texas A&M University, where he earned a degree in finance in 1996. He began his coaching career as the head coach of North Belt Christian Academy in Houston from 1996-99. He was named the head coach at Fort Bend Baptist Acad-



Paul Mills, Head Coach, Oral Roberts University

emy from 1999-2002 before joining the Rice University basketball program from 2002-03 in the operations department. In 2003, Mills moved to Waco and served as Coordinator of Operations for the Baylor Bears from 2003-09 before joining head coach Scott Drew's staff as an assistant coach from 2009-17. In 2017, Mills was named ORU's head coach.

Mills has led the Golden Eagles to an 18-10 record thus far this season. Former MacArthur High head basketball coach Johnny "Hawk" Carter met Mills his senior year when he served as Kaser's assistant coach and has stayed in contact with him since that time.

Carter said he's happy for Mills' success.

"I've known him since

those days (high school days) and throughout his coaching days," Carter said. "We speak often. Paul is a God-fearing, high-quality person. He has always been a student of the game and is an extremely conscientious individual. I am very proud and happy for him."

Mills attended Oleson Elementary School and Hambrick Middle School before attending MacArthur High School. His wife Wendy attended Aldine High School, where she was a cheerleader during the 1990 football season that saw Bill Smith's Mustangs win state and national football titles.

Mills said he enjoyed his time in Aldine and was fortunate to have teachers and coaches who believed in him.

"I remember football games, basketball games, and enjoying time with friends," Mills said. "I had wonderful teachers and coaches at MacArthur who invested in me, and I'm grateful for their dedication."

And they are probably proud to have been a part of Mills' life and will be cheering for him and his Golden Eagles on Saturday, hoping his team has a few more big wins in them!

## District's Reading Rock Stars Visit Virtually With Children's Book Authors



Students meet Anika Fajardo, author of "Hercules and His 12 Labors: An Interactive Mythological Adventure." (Illustrator Nadine Rita Takvorian) during Reading Rock Stars Day 2021.

This school year, the Texas Book Festival selected several Aldine Independent School District campuses to participate in its Reading Rocks Stars initiative. Right before spring break, students at Wilson Elementary School, Harris ES, and Thompson ES engaged in a fun literacy learning experience known as Reading Rock Stars Day.

The Texas Book Festival's Reading Rock Stars program is a hands-on literacy initiative that sends nationally recognized authors into Title I schools in Texas to inspire young readers with dynamic presentations and send them home with the most empowering experience

of all - owning their very own book.

Reading Rock Stars Day is typically celebrated every March in Houston area schools. It includes a morning full of interactions with authors and illustrators, including presentations, art lessons, a showcase of student work, and classroom visits. Presentations are interactive with the primary goal of encouraging students to read, write, and draw. Each student received a book signed by the authors or illustrators. Schools work with the Texas Book Festival to design their Reading Rock Stars Day. This year, students experienced Reading Rock Stars Day virtually.

## Applications for AISD's Hall Success Academy Open for 2021-2022

Hall Success Academy applications for the 2021-2022 school year are now open for eligible eighth-grade students. In August 2020, the campus relaunched with a new name and a new blended learning instructional model.

Hall Success Academy places the emphasis on student-centered blended learning and allows students, in grades 8-12, to take ownership of their learning experience. Students will have access to traditional classroom instruction, online educational instruction, and structured independent study time.

"Our initial launch has provided students a new learning experience this year and I am excited to offer the opportunity to more students during the upcoming year," Dr. Marcie Strahan, principal of Hall Success Academy said. "We have determined that business as usual will not work in order to serve our district's most at-risk student population."

The intensive program will help both middle and high school students graduate from high school within a time frame that is in line with peers of their same age group. The Hall Success Academy scholars will focus on academic recovery while earning high school elective credits that will count towards their graduation

requirements.

In addition to closing the academic achievement gap and focusing on learning recovery due to the pandemic, Hall Success Academy will focus on strategies that help students build self-confidence, self-esteem, self-worth and responsibility. The blended learning environment will promote student academic success, real-world connections and experiences, along with productive, responsible citizenship as students commit to being present, connected, and respectful.

Other Program Benefits

- Accelerated Credit Acquisition
- College Advisory Counseling
- Career & Technology Certification
- Mentoring Programs
- Smaller Class Size
- Individualized Graduation Plan Support
- Credit Recovery
- Direct Instruction and Online Classes
- Onsite Childcare (limited availability)

Hall Success Academy applications will be available for interested students beginning Thursday, March 24. Interested eighth-grade students are encouraged to contact Danielle Jackson Stevenson at [djackson@aldineisd.org](mailto:djackson@aldineisd.org) or Frederick Delk at [fdelk@aldineisd.org](mailto:fdelk@aldineisd.org).

The changes come as a result of participation in the Texas Education Agency (TEA) New School Design Fellowship program. After completing the year-long program, Dr. Marcie Strahan, Hall Success Academy principal, submitted a New School action fund implementation grant. The grant will provide the campus with \$850,000 to implement the blended learning model throughout the school for the 2021-2022 school year.

Creating a new school model falls in line with the District's New Way Forward strategic plan. The new components of Hall Success Academy are helping redesign the approach to school while creating new opportunities for students. Hall will offer a personalized learning environment and utilize blended learning to address the social-emotional needs of all students, as they maintain the pace for promotion and graduation.

Across the United States, close to 16% of students between the ages of 14 and 15 are considered to be overage students for their grade and at-risk of not graduating from high school. Hall Success Academy aims to start earlier to help close academic achievement gaps for Aldine ISD students that are falling behind in order to improve their odds.

## Texas House on Freeze bills,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

HB 10, filed by Representative Paddie, restructures the ERCOT board, replacing the unaffiliated members with members appointed by the Governor, Lt. Governor, and Speaker of the House. HB 10 also requires all board members to reside in the state of Texas and creates an additional ERCOT board member slot to represent consumer interests.

HB 11 - Protecting Consumers and Hardening Facilities for Extreme Weather

HB 11, filed by Representative Paddie, requires electric transmission and generation facilities in this state to be weatherized against the spectrum of extreme weather Texas may face. Utilities will be required to reconnect service as soon as possible and prevent slower reconstructions for low-income areas, rural Texas, and small communities.

HB 12 - Alerting Texans During Emergencies

HB 12, filed by Representative Raymond, creates a statewide disaster alert system administered by Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) to alert Texans across the state about impending disasters and extreme weather events. The alerts will also provide targeted information on extended power outages to the state's regions most affected. This system builds off the model used in Amber, Silver, and Blue Alert systems.

HB 13 - Improving Coordination During Disasters

HB 13, filed by Representative Raymond, establishes a council composed of ERCOT, Public Utility Commission of Texas, Railroad Commission, and TDEM leaders

to coordinate during a disaster. The committee will identify challenges with fuel supplies, repairs, energy operations and prevent service interruptions from the well-head to the consumer.

HB 14 - Weatherizing Natural Gas Infrastructure

HB 14, filed by Representative Goldman, requires the Railroad Commission to adopt rules requiring gas pipeline operators to implement measures that ensure service quality and reliability during an extreme weather emergency, which covers winter and heat wave conditions.

HB 16 - Defending Ratepayers

HB 16, filed by Representative Hernandez, bans variable rate products like Griddy for residential customers. These types of speculative plans resulted in exorbitant bills. This bill will provide consumer protection to residential customers while still allowing the competitive market to flourish.

HB 16 is scheduled for a public hearing on Thursday, March 18 at 8:00am.

To watch the hearing live, please follow this link: <https://house.texas.gov/video-audio/>.

HB 17 - Protecting Homeowner Rights

HB 17, filed by Rep. Deshotel, prevents any political subdivision or planning authority from adopting or enforcing an ordinance, regulation, code, or policy that would prohibit the connection of residential or commercial buildings to specific infrastructure based on the type or source of energy that will be delivered to the end user.

## COVID 19 Testing Sites in NE Harris County

**CROSBY**  
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Crosby ISD  
Apt. Necessary (281) 328-9200  
14670 FM 2100 Crosby,

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9 until 9  
14405 FM 2100, Crosby  
(832) 821-9780

Neighbors Emergency  
Center  
No appointment needed  
14120 FM 2100, Crosby,  
TX  
(281) 328-7770

Crosby Community Center  
(when open)  
409 Hare Rd., Crosby, TX  
(281) 462-0543

Nova Medical Ctr.  
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Houston, TX 77015  
Open 8:30 a.m.

HIGHLANDS (Go to either  
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CVS Channelview (281)  
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Appointment Req.

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Appointment Req. (281)  
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Atascocita (281) 570-6856



**PCT. 2 TALK**  
By Commissioner Adrian Garcia



## All-inclusive parks in Precinct 2

Hello again, Harris County Precinct 2!

First let me say, I have been so impressed with the resiliency and generosity of you all as we enter recovery-mode yet again. This time it's from the Great Freeze and Power Outages of 2021. I've watched as residents have donated money, time, and energy to food and water distributions, while their own homes still have fresh damage from busted pipes and water leaks. That's the spirit of Precinct 2, and once again, I am inspired by you. My hope every day is that my office is reflective of the wonderful people who live here.

We are emerging from the thaw with so much work to do, however, now that spring is on the horizon, it's finally the time of year that our area parks can be a welcome place for ANYONE to get some rest and relaxation. Under my direction, all Precinct 2 Parks will be welcoming to all visitors.

The crown jewel of these efforts will be James Driver Park in Aldine. As the first county-owned all-inclusive, fully accessible park, James Driver Park will offer something for everyone. The goal of the expansion is to create a space where children and adults of all abilities can have access to fun. I believe parks should be for everybody, and this expansion will be a great attraction for the East Aldine community.

You may be wondering, "what does 'all-inclusive and fully accessible' mean for me and my family?"

Here's what to expect: James Driver Park will have widened walking trails that can accommodate two wheelchairs, side by side. The playgrounds will feature specially designed, wheelchair-friendly equipment where ALL kids can spin, sway swing, slide, and splash. It will have a misting area and plenty of shade for relief from our hot summer days, plus covered dining spaces. There will also be a sensory garden featuring indigenous perennials, an accessible event lawn for music and other entertainment, a designated area for taco and other food trucks, and so much more. We are so excited to debut the brand-new James Driver Park this summer.



James Driver Park in Aldine. The first county-owned all-inclusive, fully accessible park.



James Driver Park in Aldine.



James Driver Park in Aldine.

James Driver Park isn't the only Precinct 2 park that is becoming more accessible. Going forward, most trails in our parks will be expanded to be six to eight feet wide to accommodate wheelchairs. We are upgrading playgrounds to offer more accessible activities such as an ADA-compliant zip line (Bay Area Park in Clear Lake). We've added more splash pads, inclusive swing sets (Burnet Park in the Lynchburg-area), roller slides (Stratford Park in Highlands), and ADA-accessible workout equipment (Highlands Park in Highlands, Crowley Park in East Aldine, and Riley Chambers Park in Barrett).

As long as I am your Precinct 2 Commissioner, my team will always work to ensure that residents of our community will have many options to take a break from the grind of our daily lives. And after the last few weeks, months, and year we've just had, these changes to our parks couldn't come at a better time.

Stay safe everyone!

-Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia

## Aldine ISD Board Approves 2021-2022 School Calendar

Parents and students can start making their summer plans and marking key dates for fall and spring.

The school board approved next year's calendar. The start date is Aug. 16, 2021. The last day of school will be May 26, 2022.

Thanksgiving will be a full week again.

The Aldine ISD Board of Trustees approved the calendar recommendations for the 2021-2022 instructional calendar during its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, March 9.

The district received input from teachers, parents, community members, campus administrators, and support staff. To seek public input, the district posted an online survey for community members to provide feedback on two proposed calendar drafts.

The calendar is based on an instructional year of 76,985 minutes, required by state House Bill (HB) 2610.

### 2021-2022 IMPORTANT DATES

- August 16: First Day of School
- November 22-26: Thanksgiving Holiday
- December 20-31: Midwinter Break for Students
- January 3-4: Staff Development
- January 5: Classes Resume
- March 14-18: Spring Break
- May 26: Last Day of Instruction
- May 27: Last Day for Teachers

What if schools close due to inclement weather or other emergency circumstances?

Inclement weather make-up days will be June 1 and June 2 (if needed). Thereafter, students and staff will make up any time needed to satisfy attendance and the state requirement of 76,985 instructional minutes.

### Student Grading Periods

AISD is waiting for UIL confirmation on the nine-week grading periods. Once confirmed with UIL, the district can add the dates and share them with the public.

**Launch Your Future!**




# Open House

**April 13-17, 2021**

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★ OPINION PAGE ★

**COUNTY CONNECTION**  
Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo



*We are so close to beating the virus*

We are Texans, and the concept of freedom is an essential piece of our identity. We all want the freedom to go out to eat and to socialize, the freedom for our economy and our schools to open without the fear of getting deathly ill, the freedom to use amazing science and vaccine developments to our full advantage. But taking away critical public health interventions that we know are working in the name of personal freedom won't make our community safer, nor will it hasten our return to normalcy. The state's decision on Tuesday to end the statewide mask mandate and increase business capacity to 100% is a threat to all of the sacrifices and progress we've made, as well as to everyone who has not yet received a vaccine. At best, Tuesday's decision is wishful thinking. At worst, it is a cynical attempt to distract Texans from the failures of state oversight of our power grid.

Every time COVID-19 public health measures have been pulled back, we've seen a spike in hospitalizations. If we start the climb now, we'd be starting from the highest starting point ever when it comes to our hospital population, an unacceptable and dangerous proposition. Even more troubling is the revelation that Houston has the unfortunate distinction of being the only city recording every major strain of COVID-19. Our positivity rate is still sky high and moving up, not down — we're now at 13% positivity. We're still seeing hundreds of new cases a day. With the arrival of COVID-19 vaccines, we're finally inching closer to the finish line of this deadly, destructive pandemic — now is not the time to reverse the gains we've worked so hard to achieve. We're able to finally see the light at the end of the tunnel now because of the common sense steps we've taken to prevent the spread of this virus, like wearing masks. We can't take one step forward just to take two steps back.

History will remember those who took part in the unified effort to save lives in our community and pull us through this awful pandemic. It will also remember those who undermined and prolonged this crisis in the name of scoring political points with their base. Our Harris County community is smart — we can see through the politics of this. I know we will keep at it and continue to be good neighbors, good citizens, and do the right thing, including wearing masks. Let's also reward those that do the same. Shop at businesses still requiring masks and keeping capacity low to protect their employees and their patrons.

We've been through so much, but we are so close. Keep holding on. Our success at beating this virus is all up to us now.

**OPINION**  
By BILL KING



*Does the Economy Need an Additional \$1.9 Trillion of Stimulus? No.*

The Biden Administration and Democrats in Congress are pressing for another stimulus bill in the amount of \$1.9 trillion to address the effect the COVID pandemic has had on the economy. This comes on top of about \$4 trillion Congress has already approved, much of which has not yet been spent.

The bi-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released its updated economic projections for the U.S. The CBO runs economic projections to advise Congress on budgetary issues. The CBO now projects that the nation's GDP for this quarter will bounce back to what it was prior to the pandemic.

This article by the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget discusses how think tanks and researchers across the political spectrum have all concluded that an additional \$1.9 trillion will substantially overshoot what is necessary for the economy to recover.

That said, it is clear that some segments of the economy have been damaged by the pandemic (and the attendant government response) much more than others. Obviously, the hospitality industry has been decimated. We should continue to support those disproportionately affected until we get past the pandemic. Programs like extended unemployment benefits, bridge loans and direct assistance targeted to those most affected are absolutely warranted. However, that type of aid could be done for a fraction of \$1.9 trillion.

One of the other talking points is that the massive bill is necessary to conduct the vaccination campaign. However, there is little evidence of that. In the last week, an average of 1.5 million doses were administered, a rate that is almost certain to continue to ramp up. While certainly that effort should be vigorously supported, the constraints right now are on the manufacturing side. There is no indication that throwing massive amounts of money at state and local governments will do anything to speed up the manufacturing process.

The bill includes \$350 billion to bailout state and local governments on the theory that they lost revenue during the pandemic. However, the revenue loss has not been nearly as severe as originally feared. Even the left-leaning Washington Post has opined that this provision is no longer warranted.

No one seems to worry these days much about the national debt, now closing in on \$28 trillion. But the national debt as a percentage of GDP is now higher than it has ever been, even higher than during WWII. This is not the time to adding to it unnecessarily.



**STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS**  
By Gary Borders



*PUC chair resigns in wake of call to energy investors*

Arthur D'Andrea, the chair and sole remaining member of the Public Utility Commission, resigned late last week at the request of Gov. Gregg Abbott. D'Andrea pledged to remain on the PUC until Abbott names a replacement. In the announcement Abbott said in part, "Texans deserve to have trust and confidence in the Public Utility Commission, and this action is one of many steps that will be taken to achieve that goal."

Texas Monthly obtained a recording of a March 9 call D'Andrea had with investors to discuss the fallout from the mid-February power crisis, in the midst of a fierce statewide winter storm. In that 48-minute call, D'Andrea promised to put the "weight of the commission" in opposing efforts to reverse skyrocketing power rates during the blackouts.

Those efforts are being spearheaded by Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, who in effect controls the Texas Senate. That body passed SB 242 last week, calling on the PUC and the Electrical Reliability Council of Texas to correct what Patrick called "billions in pricing errors that occurred" during the winter storm.

However, House Speaker Dade Phelan has called reprising "an extraordinary government intervention into the free market, which may have major consequences for both residential and commercial consumers going forward." The House is holding hearings on restructuring ERCOT and related issues this week.

**RISE IN PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES RINGS ALARM BELLS**

With spring arriving and COVID-19 restrictions easing, state officials warn that pedestrian deaths continue to increase each year. They urge both drivers and pedestrians to watch out for each other. According to the Texas Department of Transportation, pedestrian fatalities account for one in five of all



state traffic fatalities.

In 2019, the latest year for which figures are available, 5,973 traffic crashes involved pedestrians, resulting in 669 deaths and 1,317 serious injuries.

The two leading causes of pedestrian fatalities are: 1) Pedestrians failing to follow traffic safety laws and being struck crossing streets and roadways, and 2) motorists failing to yield the right of way, driving distracted or driving too fast.

TxDOT's pedestrian safety campaign is a component of #EndTheStreak-TX, a social media effort to encourage drivers to make safer choices, such as wearing a seat belt, driving the speed limit, not texting while driving, and never driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. The last deathless day on Texas roadways was Nov. 7, 2000.

**COVID-19 VACCINATIONS UP MORE THAN MILLION IN A WEEK**

With more than 900,000 additional COVID-19 vaccines arriving in Texas this week, the state has now administered more than 9 million doses, according to the Texas Department of Health and Human Services. More than 3 million are now fully vaccinated, roughly 10.8% of the state's population.

Nearly one in seven of all Texans at least 16 years of age are now fully vaccinated, according to DSHS. Anyone over the age of 50, health-care workers, long-term care residents, people

with chronic health issues, and school and childcare workers are all eligible for the vaccine.

You can find a list of vaccine hub providers at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/2u5een4w>

**COVID-19 CASES, DEATHS IN STATE STILL DROPPING**

The number of new COVID-19 cases in Texas dropped again last week, with 27,672 reported, down about 12 percent from the previous week. Deaths also dropped, with 932 reported, according to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University. That's down 16.5% from the previous week.

Hospitalizations of confirmed COVID-19 patients also continue to decrease, with 3,620 in Texas hospitals as of Sunday, according to DSHS. That's down 14.1% from the previous week and 75% lower than the record high of 14,218 hospitalizations in mid-January.

**NATURE CHALLENGE LAUNCHED BY FOREST SERVICE**

The Nature Challenge website has launched, connecting Texans with ways to explore the outdoors, acquire new skills and get involved in their community. The collaboration between the Texas Children in Nature Network, Texas by Nature and the Texas A&M Forest Service encourages Texans to explore nature and earn digital badges to track their progress. The website, [naturechallenge.tamu.edu](http://naturechallenge.tamu.edu), features an interactive map and resources for users of all ages.

"The Nature Challenge provides the perfect opportunity for every Texan to have fun and learn something new while enjoying the physical, mental and emotional benefits of being in nature," said Joni Carwell, CEO and President of Texas by Nature.

Nature-related organizations are encouraged to use the site to promote their services and opportunities at no charge. Information for providers can be found on the Nature Challenge website.

**WEBINAR SLATED TO HELP HOMEOWNERS FILE INSURANCE DAMAGE CLAIMS**

Folks who need help with an insurance claim for winter storm damage can register for a free online webinar set for 11 a.m. Thursday, March 25. Staff with the Texas Department of Insurance will explain what to expect once a claim is filed and cover the options available if a claimant disagrees with an insurance company's decision. Register for the webinar at: <http://bit.ly/TDI-winter-storm-claim-webinar>.

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span. Email: [gborders@texaspress.com](mailto:gborders@texaspress.com)

**THE POSTSCRIPT**  
By Carrie Classon

*Lori's Laughter*

Throughout the past year, my husband, Peter, and I have been seeing no one except Peter's sister, Lori, and her husband.

Lori has Stage 4 cancer and has had a tough fight. She's been on oxygen all this time. The decision of how careful we needed to be was easy. If we were going to see Lori, we had to be extremely careful. And as a reward, once a week we have heard Lori's laughter.

I've been writing fiction for the first time in my life. No one told me in advance that writing novels is a lonely process. Especially now, there are no writers' groups, no coffee shops to write in—although I wasn't part of a writers' group before, and I've always thought a coffee shop was a noisy place to write. Instead, I sit alone at my desk with my coffee cup and a vase of fresh flowers in front of me and I write. I write and I wait for the end of the week when we will see Lori.

"Where did we leave off?" Lori will always ask, sounding excited, followed by, "I might need a reminder," followed by, "I get two chapters this week, don't I?"

I will read in a mask (something I thought would be harder than it is), and I will listen for the sound of Lori's laughter, which is loud and frequent.

And many days—most days, in fact—that is enough reason to write.

Because it's impossible to never have a doubt when you are working on something like this. I wonder if it's any good or if anyone will find it interesting or if I have any idea what I am doing. But then I read another chapter to Lori, and I remember why I'm writing to begin with. I'm writing to tell a story, to entertain, to amuse, maybe even (every so often) to make a small point.

I haven't seen Lori in four weeks now.

She's been too ill for visitors. Her pain is higher, and her oxygen is lower, and we don't really know what is happening because she is too tired to tell us. Peter keeps bringing her food and I keep writing, but I cannot tell you how much I miss Lori's laughter.

I did not realize how much I have relied on Lori's laughter through all these weeks and months. I did not realize how seeing her every week has anchored my life to something real and joyful and positive—because that is what Lori is.

Today the sun is not shining, and a cold wind is blowing, and we have not heard from Lori and I don't know if we will.

"Maybe we'll see her this weekend," Peter says. "Maybe she'll feel better by the end of the week."

But we don't know. No one knows.

There are no platitudes about Stage 4 cancer that will make things fine. Things are not fine, and that is how it is. We don't know what the future will hold. She has battled back before, and we are hoping she will again.

But we don't know. Peter cooks and worries. I write. Lori is now far behind in the story. I am trying to remember what I last read to her.

But every time I come to a part where a deliciously unpleasant person is behaving especially badly, I imagine how Lori would laugh, if I were reading to her, if I finally get the chance to read to her again.

"Oh!" I think to myself. "Lori will love this."

Till next time, Carrie  
Carrie Classon's memoir is called, "Blue Yarn." Learn more at [CarrieClasson.com](http://CarrieClasson.com)

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Published each Tuesday by GrafikPress Corp. Any erroneous statement which may appear will be corrected when brought to the attention of the publisher. Liability for errors is limited to the reprinting of the corrected version. Submissions are encouraged, in person, by mail, by fax, or by email, to [nenewsroom@aol.com](mailto:nenewsroom@aol.com)

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# Northwood Apartments to start construction,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

new apartment units for families seeking quality housing near the Eastex Freeway in the Shelvin Acres community. A virtual groundbreaking ceremony will be held on Thursday, March 25, 2021, at 11 a.m. CT. Access to the virtual ceremony is available upon request at melanie.fahy@hchatexas.org.

"We are honored to partner with LDG Development to build much-needed quality housing that is affordable for working families," said Horace Allison, AIA, Executive Director and CEO of Harris County Housing Authority. "Northwood Apartments will replace housing resources lost during Hurricane Harvey and provide not only a place to live but the facilities and services to improve the lives of the families who will call this community home."

Northwood Apartments will provide a wide array of amenities to the families it serves, including a swimming pool with a sun deck, a playground, and picnic/grilling areas.

"This project is one of sixteen the Harris County Community Services Department is supporting with the use of HUD

CDBG Disaster Recovery funds in the effort to replenish housing stock lost from several past disasters," said CSD Director Dr. Adrienne Holloway. "These developments provide a significant investment in the effort to provide affordable housing for all who live and work in north Harris County."

The apartments are expected to begin leasing in 2022, offering a mix of one, two, three, and four-bedroom units. Rents will range from \$396 to \$865 for a one-bedroom/one-bath unit, \$475 to \$1,033 for a two-bedroom/two-bath, \$551 to \$1,240 for a three-bedroom/two-bath unit and \$613 to \$1,362 for a four-bedroom /two-bath unit.

"We are in a housing crisis. Families who were first displaced by natural disasters like Hurricane Harvey are now facing difficulty staying in the places they grew up because of rising costs," said Harris County Precinct One Commissioner Rodney Ellis. "As we face the economic impacts of COVID-19, which is placing additional strain on families, I am proud that we are coming together to bring new, quality housing units for

Harris County families."

This development will serve residents at incomes below 80% of area median income and is just one in an ongoing HCHA development program to work with private and public partners to address the housing shortage in Harris County.

"The Texas General Land Office is committed to helping Texas communities recover from the widespread damage caused by Hurricane Harvey," said Heather Lagrone, Director of Disaster Recovery, Texas General Land Office. "This community is one of many multifamily developments the GLO is funding with long-term disaster recovery assistance to restore affordable rental housing for Texas families. We are very pleased these funds will provide an additional 288 units of quality housing for families in Harris County."

The total development cost for the new community is \$53.9 million, comprised of \$42.4 million in private funding provided by Citibank Community Capital and AEGON USA Realty Advisors, LLC, and \$11.5 million provided by Harris County Community Services Department

using Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery funds from the Texas General Land Office.

"Access to quality, safe, and affordable housing helps families achieve many of the goals they have in life. Whether it is ensuring their children can thrive in school and pursue a post-secondary degree or certification; or pursuing a new job that will provide for greater financial stability; access to quality housing can help change the trajectory of a family's life. That is why LDG remains committed to bringing more affordable housing to communities like Harris County that share this belief and are focused on helping more families find a place they can be proud to call home," said Dru Childre, Development Coordinator LDG Development.

HCHA is currently developing more than 650 additional housing units scheduled to be brought into the Harris County housing rental market in 2022 to replace housing lost in Hurricane Harvey.

###

About the Harris County Housing Authority

For over 40 years, HCHA, a premier housing provider, has provided quality, livable, and sustainable communities to Harris County residents, including families with school-aged children, seniors, veterans, and persons with disabilities. HCHA has developed ten housing communities and has four more housing developments under construction. HCHA administers more than 4,500 Housing Choice Vouchers providing rental assistance to eligible families. Learn more at www.hchatexas.org.

Texas General Land Office

Following Hurricane Harvey, Commissioner George P. Bush and the Texas General Land Office were appointed by Governor Greg Abbott to lead the historic housing recovery efforts. In addition to short-term housing in partnership with Federal Emergency Management Agency, the GLO also administers CDBG-DR funds from HUD on behalf of the state of Texas. HUD allo-

cated \$5.676 billion in funds to rebuild and protect housing across 49 Hurricane Harvey affected Texas counties. More than \$14 billion has been allocated for recovery following Hurricanes Rita, Dolly, Ike, the 2011 wildfires, the 2015 and 2016 floods, and Hurricane Harvey.

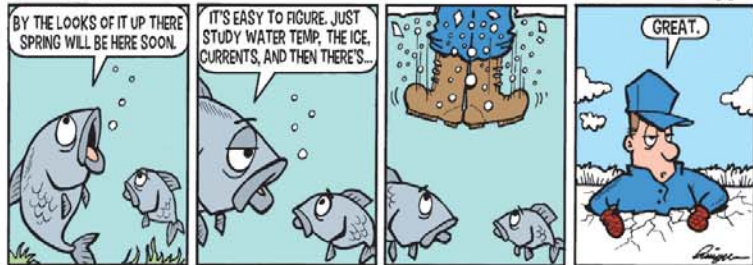
LDG Development

LDG Development is the nation's largest developer of affordable housing. The company was founded more than 25 years ago by Chris Dischinger and Mark Lechner based on their shared belief that everyone deserves a quality place to live. Headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, the company has created more than 16,000 high-quality, affordable housing units for working families and active seniors in seven states. The work of LDG is supported by more than 100 employees in the company's Louisville, Kentucky; Austin, Texas; Nashville, Tennessee; and Atlanta, Georgia offices. For more information about LDG Development, please visit www.ldgdevelopment.com.

## ENTERTAINMENT

Posting Date March 22, 2021

### Amber Waves



### R.F.D.



### The Spats



### Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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 BOLTOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Sign is different. 2. Stick is shorter. 3. Ferris wheel is gone. 4. Mittens is shorter. 5. Skates are different. 6. Cracks in ice are added.

### King Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13						14	
15		16							17	
			18		19		20			
21	22	23			24					
25			26	27	28			29	30	
31		32	33	34	35					
36			37	38	39	40				
		41		42	43	44				
45	46				47					
48			49	50				51	52	53
54			55					56		
57			58					59		

**ACROSS**

1 Actress Farrow  
4 Carries  
9 "Blue Bloods" network  
12 Fireplace residue  
13 WWII sub  
14 "2001" computer  
15 William and Kate's daughter  
17 Lawyers' org.  
18 Cato's 502  
19 Noah's landfall  
21 Summaries  
24 Garr of "Tootsie"  
25 Berliner's cry  
26 Hog haven  
28 Quartet doubled  
31 Ella's style  
33 Congeal  
35 iPhone voice  
36 King of Judea  
38 Dazzle  
40 Right angle  
41 "I've Got — in Kalamazoo"  
43 Sneaky sort  
45 Secret matters  
47 Request  
48 Perched  
49 Fraud  
54 Candle count

**DOWN**

1 Buddy  
2 Somewhat (Suff.)  
3 "Caught ya!"  
4 Dutch exports  
5 Woodwind players  
6 Youngster  
7 Really annoy  
8 Sound system  
9 Donor's beneficiaries  
10 Rum cake  
11 Venetian-blind part  
16 Vitamin stat  
20 Story lines  
21 Impetuous  
22 Caesar's "Behold!"  
23 Role  
27 Evergreen tree  
29 Perry's creator  
30 Cash drawer  
32 Forum wear  
34 In the direc-

**ANSWERS**

1. U.S. PRESIDENTS: The poem "O Captain! My Captain!" was written after the death of which president?  
2. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the weight of a U.S. quarter?  
3. MOVIES: What was the name of the skyscraper in the drama "Die Hard"?  
4. TELEVISION: What city was the setting for the sitcom "Mork and Mindy"?  
5. SCIENCE: What is the study of knowledge, reality and existence called?  
6. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What are male blue crabs called?  
7. GEOGRAPHY: What is the highest point in Japan?  
8. FOOD & DRINK: The acai berry is native to which continent?  
9. LITERATURE: Who wrote the "Winnie-the-Pooh" book series for children?  
10. MEASUREMENTS: What is an angstrom?

Solution time: 22 mins.

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### Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

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2. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the weight of a U.S. quarter?  
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10. MEASUREMENTS: What is an angstrom?

Solution time: 22 mins.

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1. Abraham Lincoln; 2. 0.2 ounces; 3. Nakatomi Plaza; 4. Boulder, Colorado; 5. Philocephalus; 6. Jimmies; 7. Mount Fuji; 8. South America; 9. A.A. Milne; 10. One ten-billionth of a meter, used to measure very small distances



## Two-Way Dual Language Program Application for 2021-2022 School Year is Now Available in Aldine ISD

The Two-Way Dual Language Immersion program started in fall 2019 in kindergarten classrooms and is expanding by one grade level each year. Students must start the program in kindergarten at one of five campuses — De Santiago EC/PreK/K School, Garcia-Leza EC/PreK/K School, Hinojosa EC/PreK/K School, Magrill EC/PreK/K School, and Vines EC/PreK/K School.

Dual Language — The Best of Both Worlds

Aldine ISD's Two-Way Dual Language is a Spanish dual-language

program. It includes instruction in English and Spanish to help students excel academically while becoming bilingual, bi-literate, and bicultural. The two-way program is intended for both native Spanish speakers and native English speakers. The rigorous academic program is committed to educating students in a multicultural learning environment and encouraging learners to celebrate diversity.

No matter one's first language, learning a second language has become crucial as we become global citizens. AISD's Two-Way Dual-

Language Immersion program offers new opportunities for families to become part of this proven method that helps students become proficient in two languages.

Learn more about Aldine ISD's Dual Language Program and why this is a great opportunity for your child at [AldineISD.org/Dual-Language](http://AldineISD.org/Dual-Language)



## Carver Theater Students Excel in District UIL One-Act Play Contest, Advance to Bi-District Meet



Carver HS' theater troupe advances to bi-district UIL one-act play contest. This is the 10th time in 11 years that the magnet school's troupe and students are named district champions.

Theater students from Carver High School competed in the Zone A and District 14 6A UIL One-Act Play contests. Based on their performances in *The Diviners*, the Carver HS thespians are advancing to the Bi-District Meet. The Carver troupe will compete again on Thursday, March 25, at Willis High School.

During the 2021 spring UIL OAP season, Aldine ISD had four school theater troupes advance from the Zone to District contests — Carver HS, Eisenhower HS, MacArthur HS, and Nimitz HS.

### Carver Named District Champions

This is the 10th time in 11 years that the Carver High School theater troupe and performing arts students have been named District Champions. The troupe also received 1st place rankings at both Zone- and District-level contests. Theater Director Roshunda Jones-Koumba and Technical Theater Director Jabari Collins lead the troupe. Carver HS is an Aldine ISD School Choice campus.

*The Diviners* is a marvelously theatrical play by Jim Leonard Jr. It centers on a disturbed young man and his friendship with a disenchanted preacher in southern Indiana in the early 1930s. The play is a luminous story of religion and magic, faith and doubt, love and grief.

### Carver HS Zone A Contest Results

The Diviners — 1st Place, Advancing Play

Best Performer — Trysten Williams  
All-Star Cast — Jocelyn Dorsey  
All-Star Cast — Kaleb Womack  
All-Star Cast — Ryan Randolph

Honorable Mention —  
Cody Dixon  
Trinity Gaddie  
Outstanding Technician — Amare'on Reyna

### District Meet Results

The Diviners — 1st Place, Advancing Play  
Best Performer — Kaleb Womack  
All-Star Cast — Trysten Williams  
Honorable Mention — Jocelyn Dorsey  
Outstanding Technician — Ashleeya Ashley

One-Act Play Student Company Members: Ashleeya Ashley, Tevin Boulton, Jason Chávez, Morgan Childs, Joshua Cruise, Cody Dixon, Jocelyn Dorsey, Kristina Dorsey, Trinity Gaddie, Francean Hougbo, Nevaeh Law, Camron Lettries, Emma Montiel, Courtney Neal, Alton Nealey, Khaliyl Peterson, Ryan Randolph, Amare'on Reyna, Delores Sells, Shamaurie Smart, Devonte Smith, Jaden Smith, Takerwa Swain, Trysten Williams, Kaleb Womack, and Kamryn Womack.

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**About The Author**  
As one who has come from very humble beginnings and overcome many obstacles, I struggle daily to achieve the quest for happiness and inner peace.  
**Issac Bolston**

*On that journey toward happiness and inner peace, there are obstacles placed in one's path daily. Often times one has to go inside oneself to remove the obstacles. The answers are not always outside the person but on the inside.*

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Suite 200  
Houston, TX, 77039

Para preguntas por favor llame 713-773-0803, Ext. \*705



**COMMUNITY WATCH**

**Street Racing arrests,**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Sheriff's Office, the District Attorney's Office, the Texas Department of Public Safety, the Houston Police Department and other law-enforcement agencies.

Twelve vehicles were also seized.

"Flybys are being prosecuted. Street takeovers are being prosecuted. Street racing is being prosecuted. All of these crimes can land you behind bars because these actions can turn deadly," Harris County

District Attorney Kim Ogg said. "It's wrong to put innocent people's lives at risk just for an adrenaline rush. This initiative saved lives."

The initiative focuses on arresting dangerous drivers to save lives on Houston's roads and highways.

"Hundreds of peace officers, prosecutors and support staff spent all of Spring Break protecting our community from dangerous street racers," said

Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez. "Thanks to them, not one motorist lost their life because of a street racer. I personally thank each of them for keeping our streets safe and saving lives."

In addition to the Harris County District Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Office and HPD, the initiative also included the Chambers County Sheriff's Office and Texas DPS.

The partnership also involved the Houston Raceway Park. Owner Seth Angel has urged car race fans to practice their hobby on legal racetracks, not on public roads.

This is the fourth year of the annual anti-illegal street racing program, which took place from March 17-21, 2021.

Prosecutors with the DA's vehicular crimes division worked over 115 com-

bined hours over the five-night event to assist law enforcement with charges, search warrants and evidence collection. There were 222 arrests.

- Charges filed included:
- Racing on a Highway: 56
  - Reckless Driving: 30
  - Obstruction of a Highway: 14
  - Deadly Conduct: 10
  - Evading Arrest: 12
  - Driving While Intoxicated: 53
  - Intoxication Assault: 1
  - Assault of a family member: 2
  - Child Endangerment: 1
  - Possession of a Controlled Substance: 14
  - Weapons charges: 18
  - Car Theft: 2
  - Theft: 2
  - Aggravated assault of Public Servant: 1
  - Interfering with a police officer: 3
  - Failure to Identify: 1

**Fatal Motorcycle Crash at 21300 Eastex Freeway**

Houston police are investigating a fatal crash at 21300 Eastex Freeway (North U.S. Highway 59) service road about 9:40 a.m. on Sunday (March 7).

The victim, Lloyd Longoria, 46, was pronounced deceased at the scene.

HPD Vehicular Crimes Division Sergeant D. Rodriguez and Officer J. Wu reported:

Mr. Longoria was operating a black Harley-Davidson motorcycle southbound at the above address when he struck a blue Saturn Vue sport utility vehicle stopped in the right lane with a flat tire. Longoria then went into the middle lane where he struck a white Chevrolet Silverado pickup truck.

Longoria was riding with other motorcyclists at the time of the crash. Neither they nor the occupants of the Saturn or Chevrolet were injured in this incident.

The investigation is continuing.

**THE FRUGAL FROG**

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by Wilson Casey —

1. Is the book of Gethsemane in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. What signal or mark did Judas use to betray Jesus to the religious leaders of the day? Marked Jesus with ash, Pointed to Him, Gave Jesus a kiss, Washed Jesus' feet
3. In John 11:45-53, who was the high priest who called for Jesus' death? Elieneus, Joazar, Simon Cantheras, Caiaphas
4. When Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" came upon

the risen Jesus, who did He ask them to inform? Priests, Disciples, No one, Villagers  
 5. From John 20, which disciple doubted Jesus had risen unless he could see the wounds? Peter, Andrew, Thomas, Thaddeus  
 6. How long did Jesus remain after His resurrection before He ascended into heaven? Instantaneously, 1 hour, 7 days, 40 days  
 ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Gave Jesus a kiss; 3) Caiaphas; 4) Disciples; 5) Thomas (called Didymus); 6) 40 days (Acts 1:3)  
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