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NORTHEAST NEWS

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HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE - See Page 8

FEDS TELL TXDOT TO HALT I-45 EXPANSION Cite Civil Rights concerns, Seek further Study

HOUSTON – The Federal Highway Administration is invoking the Civil Rights Act to pause a highway project near Houston, a rare move that offers an early test of the administration's willingness to wield federal power to address a long history of government-driven racial inequities.

The FHWA's intervention follows complaints from local activists that the state's proposed widening of Interstate 45 would displace an overwhelmingly Black and Hispanic community, including schools, places of worship and more than 1,000 homes and businesses.

It also comes as Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg has identified

racial equity as a major priority for his department — after decades in which federal highway money has paid for projects that leveled minority and low-income communities.

"I think this project is the poster child for [the administration's] policies," said Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, a Democrat representing the Houston area, who has joined local officials in challenging the project.

In a March 8 letter to the state, the Federal Highway Administration, citing complaints from local activists and Jackson Lee, requested that the Texas Department of Transportation hold off on its expansion of I-45, including initiating more contract solicitations, un-



CONGRESSWOMAN SHEILA JACKSON LEE, COUNTY JUDGE LINA HIDALGO OPPOSE PRESENT PLAN FOR I-45 EXPANSION.



til the federal DOT has time to review civil rights and environmental justice concerns.

Federal officials could ultimately allow the project to proceed, but the action to freeze it at all,

and in particular DOT's use of civil rights laws to underpin that decision, has buoyed activists on the ground and surprised even seasoned regulators in Washington.

"This is a big deal," said

Fred Wagner, an attorney who served as general counsel at FHWA for three years during the Obama administration. "It just doesn't happen very often."

Known as the North Houston Highway Improvement Project, the proposal would widen I-45 in three sections. TxDOT's environmental review of the project, completed in February, found it would have a massive impact on the communities it would roll through, displacing more than 1,000 homes and housing units, 344 businesses, five places of worship and two schools.

Local activists say the communities that would be harmed are disproportionately home to Black and Hispanic residents. And

the impacts go beyond the direct displacements: Twenty-six schools would be brought within 500 feet of the highway, increasing children's exposure to pollution in a metropolitan area that's already rife with car exhaust.

"How can we accept a project like that? It stays with us for a generation at least," said Lina Hidalgo, the elected county judge for Harris County, which primarily contains the Houston metro area and its exurbs, in an interview.

Opponents of the project have proposed an alternative that Hidalgo said has a narrower footprint and allows for transit. The

Continued. See FEDS HALT I-45, page 3

COVID-19 Vaccinations now available "On-Demand," no wait list

Harris County Launches On Demand COVID-19 Vaccine Appointment System; 55,000 COVID-19 Vaccine Appointments Now Available for the Week of April 19

Harris County Public Health Transitions from Waitlist System to Offering Residents Appointment Options Immediately Upon Signing Up; Unvaccinated Residents Strongly Encouraged To Sign Up Now at ReadyHarris.org

Harris County, Texas – Friday, April 16, 2021, Harris County Public Health (HCPH) today announced that it has opened 55,000 COVID-19 vaccines for the week of April 19th. In response to vaccine supply starting to meet demand, residents who sign

up for a vaccine from HCPH will now be given appointment options immediately after registering for a vaccine while supplies last. Individuals will be provided with a choice of date, time, and location to get vaccinated upon registering online at ReadyHarris.org or via phone with the HCPH Vaccine Hotline.

To register, residents should visit ReadyHarris.org, vacstrac.hctx.net or call the HCPH Vaccine hotline at 832-927-8787 for assistance. The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) also directed vaccine providers to prioritize people 80 years and older when scheduling appointments and accommodate anyone in that age group who presents for

vaccination, whether or not they have an appointment.

The new registration system will continue to support Harris County's commitment to providing vaccines efficiently, fairly and equitably by lowering barriers to registration and providing information in multiple languages online and via phone. The county will also continue to prioritize vaccines for vulnerable communities by offering vaccines at mobile sites in hard-hit zip codes, conducting targeted outreach, offering transportation for those who cannot drive to an appointment on their own, and partnering with community organizations to support vaccine

Continued. See VACCINATIONS ON DEMAND, Page 2

Aldine Trustee Viola Garcia new president of National School Boards Association

Aldine ISD Trustee Dr. Viola M. Garcia assumed the office of President of the National School Boards Association (NSBA) on Saturday, April 10, during NSBA's Annual Conference via a virtual ceremony.

Dr. Garcia is the longest tenured Aldine Trustee, having served on the Board since her appointment to the Position 7 seat in 1992 and her election in January 1993. She has held all four board offices and has chaired numerous committees.

Dr. Garcia previously served as NSBA's Secretary-Treasurer, President-Elect and on the NSBA Board of Directors representing the Southern Region, before becoming the organization's President.

Dr. Garcia said she is looking forward to serving as the head of a body that



DR. VIOLA GARCIA

does so much good work for children.

"I ask for guidance for this gathering of school board members, administrators, staff, service providers and partners," she said in her remarks after her swearing in ceremony. "I think you for the good work you are doing and how well your students are doing, what you have accomplished this academic

year, and how we are all working together to serve the students of this great nation.

"With the support of an exceptional board of directors and guidance from our new transformational leader, Anna Maria Chavez, NSBA embarked on a transformation that led us to refocus who we are and what we do, to better serve you, our members, the state associations, and ultimately our primary beneficiaries, the students of this great nation."

She added she is thankful for the support she has received from her family, from around the nation and from her Aldine family.

"I am honored to serve

Continued. See DR. GARCIA PRESIDENT, Page 2

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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.

COVID-19 Cases as of April 6, 2021

HOUSTON AREA
19 COUNTIES

622,067 POSITIVE
6,510 DEATHS
573,978 RECOVERED

TEXAS

2,810,317 POSITIVE
48,812 DEATHS
21,682,763 TESTS

UNITED STATES

30,835,220 POSITIVE
556,391 DEATHS
399,706,574 TESTS

WORLDWIDE

132,135,010 POSITIVE
2,866,016 DEATHS
75,075,069 RECOVERED

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, Randal's

HOSPITALS
houstonmethodist.org
memorialhermann.org
ehhc.care (EH Hospital)

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
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Westfield



Dr. Voila Garcia named NSBA President,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

as you new NSBA President, and I know that the Board of Directors, Officers, Executive Director/CEAO, and the NSBA staff are committed and ready to serve the state associations, our members and ultimately, the students of this magnificent nation to the best of our abilities.

"I want to thank my family, my husband, Jorge, daughters Erica, Leila and Monica and their husbands and families for the love and support they've provided not only this year, but during all of my years of service on my local school board in Aldine ISD and on the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) as well as my service on the National Schools Board Association."

All three of Dr. Garcia's daughters graduated from Eisenhower High School and she praised her fellow Aldine Trustees, Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney and her administration team for their support over the years.

"I want to sincerely acknowledge my local school board members, superintendent, administrators, teachers, staff and community for being there for Aldine students every single day," she said. "To my TASB family, you are the wind beneath my wings. Your incredible work ethic, dedication to Texas school board members, your attention to detail and a constant eye on the horizon for new and innovative ways to expand products and services is appreciated, anticipated and expected. I especially want to acknowledge TASB Executive Director, Jim Crow, for being the ultimate leader of leaders."

As school districts across the country have been challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Garcia believes public education has a bright future.

"I ask God's continued guidance to direct our discussions here, at our state associations and at home so that the decisions we make this coming year provide a promising future for our students," she said. "As we build the foundation to create such a future, may our work on our local boards advocate for all students, for adequate and equitable public school funding, for reasoned measures of accountability, and for initiatives that develop and support the teachers, administrators and those who give their

lives to educate our students."

Dr. Garcia said NSBA's focus must remain on students.

"We must support our young people to stretch beyond their highest dreams to maintain a curiosity for learning, to pursue professional and service opportunities in their field, and to prepare so that when the opportunity to 'step up' presents itself, they will be ready. We must also be ready, and continue to develop mindsets that see problems as opportunities and challenges to be solved, not as threats that require on old deficit models, old thinking, yesterday's dreams and least of all, cause to retreat. Together, as a federation, we can bring our united and collective voices to the forefront. Together, we can and will make a difference with hard work in pursuit of opportunities that today's challenges provide."

During her 29 years of service as an Aldine Trustee, the Board has received numerous accolades including being named the Region 4 Outstanding School Board, the Texas Award for Performance Excellence from the Quality Texas Foundation, the Magna Award from the American School Board Journal and Outstanding School Board Award from the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA).

Dr. Garcia is a retired faculty member of the University of Houston-Downtown, where she chaired numerous committees. She has provided her expertise on a wide variety of topics ranging from academic policy to leadership.

She is also active in many organizations. Dr. Garcia is a member of Kappa Delta Pi-Omega, TASB, where she served as that group's president, the Mexican American School Board Members Association, where she has served as that group's president, she is a life member of PTA, and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO).

NSBA is the umbrella organization for more than 90,000 school board members throughout the United States. The organization advocates for school board interests before Congress, federal government agencies and the courts, in addition to providing information and services to state school boards associations.

Vaccinations now "On-Demand",

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

distribution.

The county is currently offering Moderna and Pfizer vaccines via several county sites, including the FEMA Community Vaccination Center at NRG Park. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines both require two doses for full vaccine protection. Those who received a first dose of the Pfizer vaccine need to get a second dose three to six weeks later, and those who received a first dose of the Moderna vaccine need to get a second dose four to six weeks later.

The Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine is not being administered at any HCPH site at this time, per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Federal Drug Administration (FDA)'s recommendation to pause its use.

For the next week, Harris County will offer appointments at the following drive through locations in addition to other mobile vaccination sites:

Tuesday, April 20 - Friday, April 23

Legacy Stadium
Open Wednesday - Saturday 8am - 5pm
Moderna Vaccine
1830 Katyland Drive,
Katy, TX 77493

Stallworth Stadium
Open Wednesday & Thursday 8am - 5pm
Moderna Vaccine
2102 E. Archer Road,
Baytown, TX 77521

Monday, April 19 - Sunday, April 25

NRG Park
Open daily 8am - 5pm
Pfizer Vaccine

A MESSAGE From Dr. LaTonya Goffney Aldine ISD Superintendent

Message From the Superintendent, April 6, 2021

Dear Aldine Community,

Happy April!

We can now officially say that school will be out next month! While the past year has thrown many obstacles our way, we are in a great place to finish the year strong.

As with many events, this spring's STAAR testing schedule will look different than it has in the past. This year, students will be scheduled to test according to their current learning model (on campus or at home). However, it is important to note that all students are required to test in their assigned school building. All of our safety guidelines will be followed to ensure that students and staff are as safe as possible. Campuses have gotten creative and are using additional spaces in their buildings to ensure social distancing.

This year's tests are important. They will not be used to rate schools or the district or evaluate teachers. Instead, we will use the results to benchmark student performance and plan for how we will continue teaching for the next school year. The scores will not affect promotion for students in any grade. For high school students, the End-of-Course (EOC) assessments are currently required for graduation.

Transportation and meals are available to everyone, and makeup days will be available. All students taking the paper-based test will begin testing this week and should have been contacted directly by campus staff. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or campus principal directly.



tient Care Services, and Community Health Choice to provide COVID-19 vaccines for Aldine ISD staff. On Monday, April 5, Aldine ISD employees had the opportunity to get the COVID-19 vaccine. Read more.

As a reminder, Texas has opened COVID-19 vaccine eligibility to all adults. Under the expanded eligibility, Texans 16 and older can receive a vaccine. However, the Pfizer vaccine is the only approved vaccine available for that age group. The Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines have been approved for people 18 and older. Learn more.

Drive-thru rapid COVID-19 testing continues to be available for all Aldine ISD students and staff. Online registration is required and can be found here. I encourage everyone to continue doing their part: wear a mask, wash your hands, and watch your distance.

Assistant Principals Week

Testing Calendar

ON-CAMPUS LEARNERS		AT-HOME LEARNERS*	
Date	Test	Date	Test
April 13	Writing (4, 7) English I EOC	April 20	Writing (4, 7) English I EOC
April 15	English 2 EOC	April 22	English 2 EOC
May 4	Algebra I EOC	May 11	Algebra I EOC
May 5	Biology EOC	May 12	Biology EOC
May 6	Science (8) U.S. History EOC	May 13	U.S. History EOC
May 7	Social Studies (8)	May 18**	Math (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
May 11	Math (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)	May 19**	Reading (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
May 12	Reading (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)	May 20	Science (5, 8)
May 13	Science (5)	May 21	Social Studies (8)

*All at-home learners must go to their home campus to take tests on their scheduled day(s).
** May 18 and May 19 are Remote Learning Days for students in 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade on-campus students.

As this school year comes to an end, we want to remind our community that it is important for all students — whether learning at home or on campus — to engage with their lessons and complete assignments, quizzes, and projects. If you do not have a Home Access Center (HAC) account, please sign up via the Home Access Center website.

Family and Community Engagement

The FACE Team offers an assortment of programs and resources to support families, like skill development workshops and invitations to community-oriented opportunities. Are you looking for job opportunities? Would you like to learn more about mental health care services? Are you in need of assistance of any kind? The FACE Team at Aldine ISD will be able to point you in the right direction. Our vision for the community does not end with our schools but involves the whole district.

Check out the FACE Department's April newsletter for this month's event dates and family resources, with a few highlights below:

Parent Training

Wednesday, April 7
Topic: Public Library Programs and Services

English Session at 9:00 a.m.
Spanish Session at 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday, April 14
Topic: Literacy Night
Zoom Session
Time: 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Choice School Updates

Hall Success Academy Application
Open for 2021-2022 Admission

Two-Way Dual Language Program
Application for 2021-2022 School Year

Aldine Legacy Builders

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

District High School Students Earn Top Honors at the Annual Texas Academic Decathlon

Read the latest news by visiting AldineISD.org.

COVID-19 Testing/Safety Protocols/Vaccination News

Recently, Aldine ISD has partnered with Custom Care Pharmacy, Texas Pa-

This week is Assistant Principals Week. When schools succeed, we often praise the teachers and principals. We do have amazing teachers and principals. But there are a few other leaders who help their schools run smoothly — assistant principals. These hard-working individuals often manage the operational aspects of a school. They do whatever it takes to ensure that teachers can teach and students can learn. When needed, they cover for teachers; they walk the halls, ensuring everyone is where they need to be. I am grateful for their dedication and respect their commitment to the profession. Thank you, assistant principals, for making a difference!

Remote Learning Day

Remote Learning Days are set aside for all students to learn from home while all campus-based staff will report to school. Our next upcoming Remote Learning Day is Friday, April 16.

During Remote Learning Days, all students should log in to Schoology and revisit pre-recorded lessons and previously posted assignments. It is a perfect opportunity for students to catch up on any missing assignments and review any lessons they may have missed or need additional time to complete. Teachers will not present any live instruction sessions and may not be available for live feedback sessions.

The district will mark attendance through the evidence of students completing assignments and/or logging into Schoology. Families who need students to be on campus Friday or during any designated Remote Learning Days should directly contact their child's campus.

REMINDER: School Meals Available

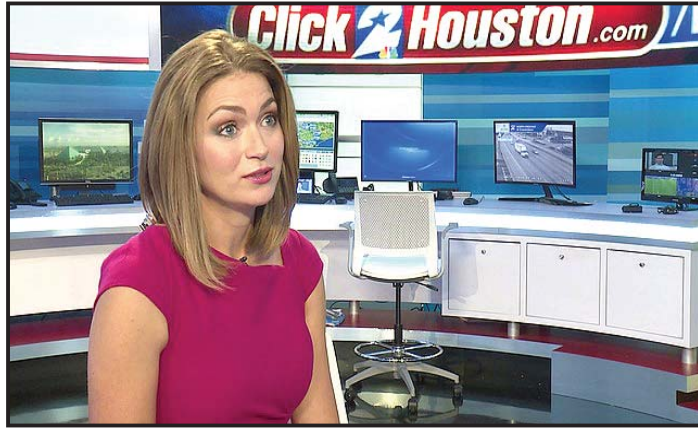
Free curbside meals are available for all children 18 and younger. It's not easy to learn on an empty stomach — we encourage all of our families who need this program to take advantage of it. Please contact your campus for more information.

I wish you a wonderful week ahead.
With Aldine Pride,

Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney
Superintendent

COMMUNITY PAGE

Meteorologist Britta Merwin takes Vardeman students on a TV tour



Local meteorologist, Britta Merwin, gave Vardeman Primary students the VIP treatment during a virtual field trip to her weather station at KPRC.

Students from Nancy Mixon Conyer's kindergarten class were in for a surprise when Merwin showcased what she does for work each day as a meteorologist. The virtual field trip was the finale of the students Seasons and Weather learning unit.

Merwin walked the students backstage all the way to her weather station. She showed the students the tools she uses to broadcast the weather forecast on TV, including the infamous

green screen. Students were able to ask questions and participate in weather observation activities.

"When I was in second grade, my local meteorologist came to my school," Merwin said. "That was the moment I realized my passion for weather was a job. I went home and wrote a letter to my mom stating that when I grew up I was going to be a mommy and a meteorologist."

Conyer extended an invitation to Merwin because she thought it would be a great way for students to connection their learning to real-world experiences. Additionally, she made "mini-Brittass"

for each of the students and they had a chance to use their new meteorologist skills to complete more weather activities after the virtual visit.

"I enjoyed how she talked to the kids in a language they could understand," Conyer explained. "But she also used terminology that was in alignment with our CKLA unit."

Last year, Aldine ISD adopted a new curriculum based on the science of reading called Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA). CKLA is a reading program that builds students' knowledge and vocabulary in literature, history, geography, and science.

Texans donate equipment to Davis High School football



Houston Texans linebackers John Greenard, left, and Jacob Martin, right, visited the Davis High School varsity football team on Thursday, April 15. Both spoke to the players on a number of topics and then handed out equipment and duffel bags that the Texans donated to the Davis football program. Looking on is Davis High School head football coach Scott Joseph.

Members of the Davis High School varsity football team received a pleasant surprise when the Houston Texans donated equipment to the program.

Team members, along with head coach Scott Joseph and his coaching staff, also heard from Texans linebackers John Greenard and Jacob Martin, who addressed the players touching on a number of topics.

After they spoke, the players handed out duffel bags, football cleats, T-shirts and shoulder pads to the players.

Greenard told the players that they should take the time to enjoy and cherish their high school years and the memories they made with their classmates.

"Don't rush it," Greenard said, who attended the University of Florida and is beginning his second year with the Texans. "The real world is real. Remember, don't rush it because you might miss something."

Martin, who is beginning his third season with the Texans, reminded the players that it takes a tremendous amount of hard work and sacrifice to play

football beyond high school.

"What are you willing to sacrifice?" said Martin, who attended the University of Temple. "Not everybody here is going to make it to D1 (Division 1), so take care of your work in the classroom. To make it this far you gotta sacrifice a lot."

Like Greenard, Martin encouraged the Davis players to enjoy their high school years.

"Both of us encourage you to take a deep look at yourself," Martin said.

"Just remember, the little sacrifices you make start to add up and remember to cherish these moments."

Joseph received an email from the Texans asking if his program would be interested in receiving equipment from Houston's NFL team. It didn't take long for Joseph to respond.

"I told them it would be an honor for two of their players to come out and talk to our kids. We can't thank the Texans enough for their generosity. We definitely feel blessed," Joseph said.

Feds Halt I-45 Expansion,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

county recently sued TxDOT, saying it failed to take the environmental impacts into consideration during its planning and review.

"I can't tell you the number of conversations we had with the state on this," she said, adding that she has received "nothing but lip service."

"You can imagine the frustration," she said. "It's been so much time, effort, and heartache by the community as well."

DOT's intervention was a welcome surprise, Hidalgo said, adding that it gives opponents of the project a "more realistic opportunity" to get redress.

"I think [Buttigieg] was engaged, interested and fair," said Jackson Lee, who said she spoke to the DOT head recently about the project. "And I think he was chagrined at federal dollars being used with such disregard of community views."

The Houston project, with its promises of displacement and disenfranchisement echoing the destructive historic highway building that Buttigieg has repeatedly cited, is a test case for Buttigieg, Wagner said.

"It's going to be the first kind of test of the new administration to

demonstrate how it's going to apply its standards for more equitable transportation on a mega-project like this," the former FHWA counsel said.

The project has been in the works for years. So "for DOT to step in, potentially, and say 'We don't think it's an appropriate solution,' would be a really huge deal," he said.

Part of the reason the situation is so unique is that Texas is a so-called "assignment state," one of seven designated as able to serve as a proxy for the federal government when it comes to administering the National Environmental Policy Act.

In most states, the federal government could raise issues with disproportionate impacts through the normal federal environmental review process. But Texas, as an assignment state, already completed that process which resulted in the Record of Decision finalized in February.

So the federal DOT has turned to Title 6 of the Civil Rights Act to justify its pause, which states: "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation

in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

"Clearly the TxDOT blatantly violated that, recklessly violated it," Jackson Lee said.

Next steps could include DOT ordering Texas to redo its analysis of the project, or more drastically, fully reject it under civil rights laws.

"They didn't necessarily play their hand when they said we're going to take a pause," said Wagner.

Neither FHWA or TxDOT responded to specific questions.

"FHWA and USDOT officials are evaluating several Title VI concerns raised by Houston-area community groups regarding the project," a spokesperson for the federal agency said.

And TxDOT spokesperson Adam Hammons said that the agency is "in contact with FHWA seeking clarity around what a pause might mean as far as timing is concerned for future contract solicitation efforts." He would not comment on specifics, citing the pending legislation.

COVID 19 Testing Sites in NE Harris County

CROSBY David H. McNerney Crosby American Legion Make Appointment (936) 333-3333 ; walk ups welcome 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. Mobile or On-Site Testing Texas Mobile Medical Labs	Neighbors Emergency Center No appointment needed 14120 FM 2100, Crosby, TX (281) 328-7770	CVS Channelview (281) 452-7184 Appointment Req.
Crosby ISD Apt. Necessary (281) 328-9200 14670 FM 2100 Crosby,	Crosby Community Center (when open) 409 Hare Rd., Crosby, TX (281) 462-0543	Urgent Care MDs Appointment Req. (281) 428-0000 Located in the DOW Medical Park
Urgent Care MDs No appointment needed 9 until 9 14405 FM 2100, Crosby (832) 821-9780	Nova Medical Ctr. Apt Req. (713) 453-7788 13469 East Freeway, Houston, TX 77015 Open 8:30 a.m.	HUFFMAN Care Now Urgent Care No Appt. Necessary Humble (281) 397-5258
HIGHLANDS (Go to either Baytown or Channelview))		Urgent Care M.D.s No Appt. Necessary Atascocita (281) 570-6856

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Pre-registration required. Please bring a form of ID.

Location for Registration: HOPE Clinic
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Suite 200
Houston, TX, 77039

Please call 713-773-0803, Ext. *705 for questions



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Citas limitadas disponibles

Debe calificar en la categoría Fase 1A, Fase 1B o Fase 1C para recibir la vacuna.

Se requiere preinscripción Por favor traiga una forma de identificación.

Ubicación de registro: HOPE Clinic
3000 Aldine Mail Rte Rd,
Suite 200
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Para preguntas por favor llame 713-773-0803, Ext. *705

COUNTY CONNECTION
Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo



Have You Signed Up for a Vaccine Yet?

Last week, I followed my own advice and got vaccinated! I want to thank every frontline health worker and Harris County Public Health employee who has been working to save lives for the past year. Now more than ever we have reason to be hopeful and proud of the work we're doing together to beat the coronavirus. More than 1 million people have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine in Harris County. Over 750,000 people have signed up for our waitlist and our call center has fielded more than half a million calls and registered over 27,000 people by phone. Our Health Department is vaccinating a larger proportion of vulnerable groups compared to others. This is what progress looks like.



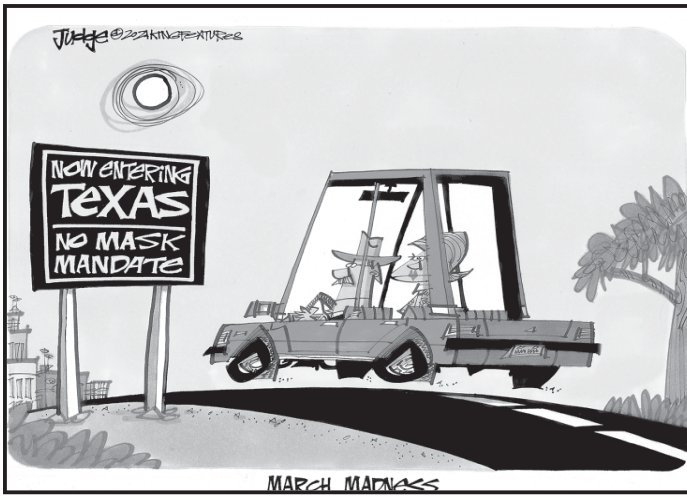
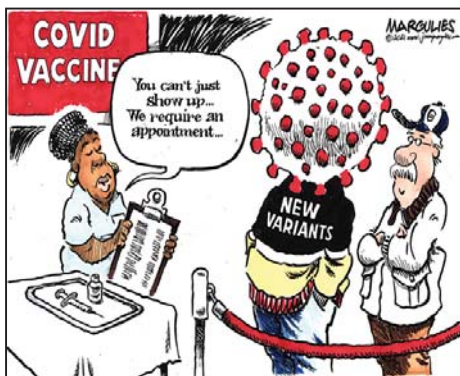
But as County Judge it's my job to look beyond the immediate challenges of limited supply of vaccines and toward our next obstacle. If you look around the corner you'll see evidence that there is a very large proportion of our community that remains wary of getting vaccinated. One national survey shows that up to 40% of Texans say they will either not get a COVID-19 vaccine or are undecided on whether or not to do so. So here's the bottom line — Harris County will never reach herd immunity if up to 40% of our residents refuse to get vaccinated. Vaccine hesitancy is a clear and present danger to our collective health and our ability to pull through this crisis. We need to do more than just offer vaccines and hope folks will show up to receive it.

That's why we launched the Stay Smart, Do Your Part media campaign to reach folks where they are through ads and by going door-to-door in the hardest-hit neighborhoods. It's why we've built a registration process that builds equity by prioritizing vulnerable communities and targeting high risk zip codes. We've provided vaccines at over 77 locations across our County, including communities of faith, homeless shelters, and assisted living facilities. We are providing transportation support for those who need it. But we need everyone to do more. Clinics, hospitals, and pharmacies must make sure they're doing outreach in underserved communities. Vaccine providers must make registration easier for elderly folks and working families and drop any ID requirements that may discourage undocumented or uninsured residents from getting a vaccine. As for our residents, the gates are now open for everyone 16 and over. If you can drive a car, you can and should get a vaccine. Please visit ReadyHarris.org or call 832-927-8787 to sign up for our waitlist now. If you already received your vaccine, help us spread the word to your network and community!

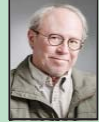
This is on all of us — the sooner we are vaccinated, the sooner we can get back to doing the things we love. We've waited so long for this pandemic to end so that we can return to normal. The remedy is here, we just have to take it.

Go get vaccinated!

Sincerely,
Lina Hidalgo



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders



Governor rules "No government mandated vaccine passports"

Gov. Greg Abbott issued an executive order last week banning state agencies, cities or counties from creating a "vaccine passport" requirement.

In addition, organizations that receive public funds are prohibited from requiring consumers to prove they have received the COVID-19 vaccine. That includes businesses that receive money from the state in return for providing goods and services.

However, nursing homes and other long-term care facilities can still require that their residents are vaccinated under his order.

"Every day, Texans are returning to normal life as more people get the safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine. But, as I've said all along, these vaccines are always voluntary and never forced," Abbott said.

VACCINES CONTINUE STEADY RISE ACROSS STATE

As of Sunday, just more than 9 million Texans have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, and 5.46 million are fully vaccinated, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. DSHS urges those who have not been vaccinated to go to the state's Texas Public Health Vaccine Scheduler, which can be found at getthevaccine.dshs.texas.gov.

Meanwhile, the state's weekly shipment of COVID-19 vaccines dropped this week after a manufacturing error in a Baltimore plant ruined a 15-million batch of the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Last week, the state received 2.5 million doses from the three manufacturers, an amount that dropped to 1.9 million this week, as J&J plays catchup. The company has pledged to deliver 100 million doses nationwide by the end of May, according to an NPR report. J&J reduced its Texas allocation this week by about 350,000.

COVID-19 CASES RISE, BUT DEATHS DROP



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders

The number of new COVID-19 cases in Texas rose to 24,333 last week, up more than 2,500 from the previous week, according to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center.

The number of deaths decreased to 512, down nearly 20 percent from the previous week.

At its peak in January, the state recorded more than four-fold the number of deaths with 2,311 recorded in a single week. At this point, nearly 50,000 Texans have died from COVID-19.

The number of lab-confirmed COVID-19 patients hospitalized stayed steady at 2,804, according to DSHS.

CONTEMPT ORDER AGAINST SALON OWNER TOSSED OUT

The Texas State Supreme Court on Friday threw out a contempt order against a Dallas salon owner who refused to close last year when all non-essential businesses were ordered.

Shelley Luther tore up a cease-and-desist order from Dallas County and was fined \$7,000 and sentenced to a week in jail. The high court ruled unanimously that the restraining order was too vague, and that the contempt of court decree issued by a district judge should be voided as well.

Luther's defiance sparked national coverage, prompting Abbott to reverse part of his order that called for jail time for business owners who did not shut down last year after the

pandemic outbreak.

Luther ran as a Republican for state Senate last year, losing in a December runoff to Drew Springer, R-Muenster.

PAXTON DRAWING POTENTIAL HIGH-PROFILE OPPONENTS

Two candidates with famous surnames are planning to run against Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton in 2022, according to several media outlets.

Paxton, under indictment since 2015 on securities fraud charges, is also battling a whistleblower lawsuit filed by former employees accusing him of bribery and improper dealings with an Austin investor. He denies wrongdoing in both cases.

Democrat Joe Jaworski, a former Galveston mayor and a grandson of Watergate prosecutor Leon Jaworski, announced his plans to run last summer. And last week, George P. Bush, state land commissioner and grandson of President George H.W. Bush, told a talk-radio host that he is considering challenging Paxton next year in the Republican primary.

Paxton has indicated he will run for a third term.

ABBOTT DEMANDS SHUTDOWN OF SAN ANTONIO MINOR FACILITY

The governor's latest salvo against the federally run unaccompanied minor facilities included a letter to Vice President Kamala Harris, who has been tapped to head the effort dealing with a large influx of unaccompanied minors seeking entrance into the United States.

Abbott's letter demanded the Biden administration shut down a facility in San Antonio under investigation by the state for allegations of child abuse and neglect.

"The Biden administration opened the borders and failed to plan for the influx of unaccompanied children crossing the border, and now we are faced with our worst fears—allegations of child abuse and neglect," Abbott said.

To date, there has been no direct response from Harris.

SOON, MORE TEXANS WILL HAVE TO DIAL 10 DIGITS TO MAKE LOCAL CALLS

Folks living in the Panhandle, El Paso area, South Texas, and Deep East Texas will soon have to join the majority of Texans and use all 10 digits when making local calls.

Last summer, the Federal Communications Commission approved "988" as the abbreviated dialing number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. In Texas, the 254, 361, 409, 806, 830, 915 and 940 area codes all contain the 988 prefix.

A "permissive dialing period" begins April 24, during which seven-digit calls will still go through. But after Oct. 24, in those area codes, only calls dialed with 10 digits will be connected.

THE POSTSCRIPT
By Carrie Classon

Stable Footing

The tree was lying on its side when I got to it.

It was a nice-looking pine tree, fluffy and full and as tall as me. The strong winds coupled with some unstable footing had caused it to fall over. This seemed too sad to simply walk by. I went over to the tree and, with a little effort, got it standing upright again. It looked much happier. I finished my walk, feeling I had done my part.

The next day, it was lying on its side again.

I examined it more closely. It had been relying on the rotting remains of another fallen pine to stand upright and the old log had finally given way, taking the young pine with it. I set my hiking poles down and hauled a couple of large rocks lying nearby over to the base of the pine, propping it back up.

The next day, it had fallen over again. This was going to be a bigger project than I expected. I hauled a lot of rocks over and piled them at the base of the young tree. "There! That should hold you." That night, as I sat on the patio, I noticed how the wind was picking up. "I bet my tree has fallen again," I thought.

I was right.

So, on the fourth day, I found another downed log, similar to the one my tree had been relying on, but not as rotten, and hauled it over. I jammed one end into the soil and propped the other end against the narrow tree trunk. A family of bikers nearby watched me curiously, as I piled rocks on top of the log to further secure it.

"Just helping this little tree!" I explained. They smiled, assuming I was crazy, I'm sure.

Yesterday, I returned to the tree. It was standing upright. "Hurray!" I said aloud. At that moment, I remembered my husband, Peter, and I had decided to move.

So far, this decision has resulted in little action on our part. But yesterday Peter ordered a moving van, so presumably things will become very real very soon.

We have lots of good reasons to move.

My parents and my sister and most of my relatives live in the Midwest, as does most of Peter's family. Particularly during the pandemic, we realized how much we missed family, how many occasions we had missed, and how quickly time passes.

And so, we have decided to make the move and we are both filled with mixed feelings because it is hard to leave a place, no matter how many reasons there are to be somewhere else.

Standing in front of this little tree, hoping it would now become a huge, towering pine, I felt a small pang because I would never know. That is the hardest thing about moving. I will never know what I will miss, not living here.

But I was never going to know.

This tree may outlive me by hundreds of years, or it may perish by the end of the summer. I will never know this, nor will I know what any path I have not taken might hold.

Instead, I imagine, because that is all I can do to keep myself upright. I imagine spending my mother's next birthday with her and I imagine going to the theater with my oldest friend and I imagine seeing my nephew graduate.

And, in the back of my mind, I imagine this tree standing tall for hundreds of years after I am dead, on stable footing because of me.

Till next time,

Carrie

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

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SPANISH PAGE

Mensaje del Superintendente, 6 de abril de 2021

Mensaje de la Superintendente, 6 de abril de 2021

Estimada comunidad de Aldine:

¡Feliz mes de abril!

¡Ya podemos decir oficialmente que la escuela terminará el próximo mes! Si bien el año pasado nos presentó muchos obstáculos, estamos a muy buen tiempo para terminar el año con fuerza.

Al igual que con muchos eventos, el calendario de pruebas STAAR (pruebas estatales) de esta primavera se verá diferente de lo que ha sido en el pasado. Este año, se programará a los alumnos para que tomen el examen de acuerdo con su modelo de aprendizaje actual (en la escuela o en la casa). Sin embargo, es importante tener en cuenta que todos los alumnos deben realizar la prueba en el plantel escolar asignado. Se seguirán todas nuestras pautas de seguridad para garantizar que los alumnos y el personal estén lo más seguros posible. Las escuelas se han vuelto creativas y están utilizando espacios adicionales en sus edificios para garantizar el distanciamiento social.

Las pruebas de este año son importantes. No se utilizarán para calificar escuelas o el distrito ni evaluar a los maestros. En su lugar, utilizaremos los resultados para evaluar el desempeño de los alumnos y planificar cómo continuaremos enseñando durante el próximo año escolar. Los puntajes no afectarán la promoción de los alumnos en ningún grado. Para los alumnos de secundaria, actualmente se requieren las evaluaciones de fin de curso (EOC) para graduarse.

El transporte y las comidas están disponibles para todos, y habrá días de recuperación disponibles. Todos los alumnos que tomen los exámenes en papel comenzarán a tomar los exámenes esta semana y deberían haber sido contactados directamente por el personal de escuelas. Si tiene alguna pregunta, comuníquese directamente con el maestro de su hijo o con el director de la escuela.

Testing Calendar

ON-CAMPUS LEARNERS		AT-HOME LEARNERS*	
Date	Test	Date	Test
April 13	Writing (4, 7) English I EOC	April 20	Writing (4, 7) English I EOC
April 15	English 2 EOC	April 22	English 2 EOC
May 4	Algebra I EOC	May 11	Algebra I EOC
May 5	Biology EOC	May 12	Biology EOC
May 6	Science (8) U.S. History EOC	May 13	U.S. History EOC
May 7	Social Studies (8)	May 18**	Math (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
May 11	Math (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)	May 19**	Reading (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
May 12	Reading (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)	May 20	Science (5, 8)
May 13	Science (5)	May 21	Social Studies (8)

*All at-home learners must go to their home campus to take tests on their scheduled days.
** May 18 and May 19 are Remote Learning Days for students in 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade on-campus students.



A medida que este año escolar llega a su fin, queremos recordarle a nuestra comunidad que es importante para todos los alumnos, ya sea que estén aprendiendo en casa o en la escuela, participar en sus lecciones y completar tareas, cuestionarios y proyectos. Si no tiene una cuenta de Home Access Center (HAC), regístrese a través de la página Home Access Center.

Participación de la familia y la comunidad
El equipo FACE ofrece una variedad de programas y recursos para apoyar a las familias, como talleres de desarrollo de habilidades e invitaciones a oportunidades orientadas a la comunidad. ¿Busca oportunidades laborales? ¿Le gustaría aprender más sobre los servicios de salud mental? ¿Necesita ayuda de algún tipo? El equipo FACE del Distrito Escolar de Aldine (Aldine ISD) podrá indicarle la dirección correcta. Nuestra visión para la comunidad no termina con nuestras escuelas, sino que involucra a todo el distrito.

Lea el boletín de noticias del departamento FACE del mes de abril para las fechas de los eventos de este mes, recursos para las familias y más. Algunos temas relevantes son:

Entrenamiento para padres

Miércoles 7 de abril

Tema: Servicios y programas en la biblioteca pública
Sesión en inglés a las 9:00 a.m.
Sesión en español a las 11:00 a.m.

Miércoles 14 de abril

Tema: Noche de alfabetización
Sesión de Zoom
Hora: 5:00 p.m. a 6:00 p.m.

Actualizaciones de las Escuelas de Opción

Solicitud abierta para Hall Success Academy admisión 2021-2022

Solicitud para el programa en dos idiomas para el ciclo escolar 2021-2022

Aldine Legacy Builders

Los estudiantes de teatro de Carver sobresalen en el concurso de teatro de un acto de UIL del distrito, avanzan a la reunión bidistrital

Los estudiantes de secundaria del distrito obtienen los máximos honores en el decatlón académico anual de Texas

Lea las últimas noticias en AldineISD.org.

Pruebas de COVID-19 / Protocolos de seguridad / Noticias de vacunación

Recientemente, Aldine ISD se asoció con Custom Care Pharmacy, Texas Patient Care Services y Community Health Choice para proporcionar vacunas COVID-19 para el personal de Aldine ISD. El lunes 5 de abril, empleados de Aldine ISD tuvieron la oportunidad de recibir la vacuna COVID-19. Lea más aquí.

Como recordatorio, Texas ha abierto la elegibilidad para la vacuna COVID-19 para todos los adultos. Bajo la elegibilidad ampliada, los tejanos de 16 años o más pueden recibir una vacuna. Sin embargo, la vacuna Pfizer es la única vacuna aprobada disponible para ese grupo de edad. Las vacunas Moderna y Johnson & Johnson han sido aprobadas para personas mayores de 18 años. Aprenda más aquí.

Las pruebas rápidas de COVID-19 siguen estando disponibles para todos los alumnos y el personal de Aldine ISD. Se requiere registro en línea y se puede encontrar aquí. Animo a todos a seguir haciendo su parte: ponerse un cubrebocas, lavarse las manos y cuidar la distancia.

Semana de los subdirectores de escuela

Esta es la semana de los subdirectores de escuela. Cuando las escuelas tienen éxito, a menudo elogiamos a los maestros y directores. Tenemos maestros y directores increíbles. Pero hay otros líderes que ayudan a que sus escuelas funcionen satisfactoriamente: los subdirectores. Estas personas tan trabajadoras a menudo gestionan los aspectos operativos de una escuela. Hacen lo que sea necesario para garantizar que los maestros puedan enseñar y los alumnos puedan aprender. Cuando es necesario, cubren a los maestros; caminan por los pasillos, asegurándose de que todos estén en su lugar. Agradezco su dedicación, respeto y compromiso con la profesión. ¡Gracias, subdirectores, por marcar la diferencia!

RECORDATORIO: Comidas escolares disponibles

Comidas gratuitas para llevar están disponibles para todos los niños menores de 18 años. No es fácil aprender con el estómago vacío; alentamos a todas nuestras familias que necesitan este programa a que lo aprovechen. Comuníquese con su escuela para obtener más información.

Les deseo una excelente semana
Con orgullo Aldine,

Dra. LaTonya M. Goffney
Superintendente

ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



R.F.D.



The Spats



Weekly SUDOKU
by Linda Thistle

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

HOCUS-FOCUS
BY HENRY BOLTINGHOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Pillow is smaller; 2. Sign is different; 3. Crumpled blanket; 4. Child is wearing a different shirt; 5. Shippers are added; 6. Durn is different.

Posting Date April 19, 2021
King Crossword

ACROSS

- Civil-rights org.
- Crunchy sandwich
- Eastern "way"
- D-Day beach
- Kanga's kid
- Pirates' quaff
- Stopwatch
- "Charlotte's Web" author
- Van Gogh painting
- Black, in verse
- Lass
- Pouch
- Raiment
- "Rule, Britannia!" composer
- Bush
- Refines, as ore
- Decrees
- Void
- Old U.S. gas brand
- "West Side Story" song
- Stashed
- Science room
- Shortly
- Party snack
- "The War of the Worlds" author
- Did yard work
- Enzyme suffix
- Granola grain

DOWN

- Word of denial
- French pal
- "Winnie-the-Pooh" author
- "Moonstruck" actress
- Seine city
- Rifle part
- High tennis shots
- AAA job
- Navajo or Hopi
- Ones for the road?
- Signs
- Disney's "Love Bug"
- Impudent
- Ozone, for one
- Branch
- Flop
- Broadway's Stritch
- Pine product
- TV schedule
- The Chronicles of Narnia" author
- Airport screening org.
- Weep
- California peak
- Taj —
- Uneasy feeling
- Crew member
- Matt of Hollywood
- Family
- Francis, e.g.
- Privy
- Tolkien creature
- Moines

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King Crossword
Answers
Solution time: 26 mins.

Answers:
ACROSS: 1. CIVIL RIGHTS; 2. CRUNCHY; 3. EASTERN; 4. D-DAY; 5. KANGA; 6. PIRATES; 7. STOPWATCH; 8. CHARLOTTE'S WEB; 9. VAN GOGH; 10. BLACK; 11. LASS; 12. POUCH; 13. RAIMENT; 14. RULE, BRITANNIA!; 15. BUSH; 16. REFINES; 17. DECREES; 18. VOID; 19. OLD U.S. GAS; 20. WEST SIDE; 21. STASHED; 22. SCIENCE; 23. SHORTLY; 24. PARTY; 25. THE WAR OF THE WORLDS; 26. DID YARD; 27. ENZYME; 28. GRANOLA.

DOWN: 1. DENIAL; 2. PAL; 3. POOH; 4. MOONSTRUCK; 5. SEINE; 6. RIFLE; 7. TENNIS; 8. AAA; 9. HOPI; 10. ROAD; 11. SIGNS; 12. LOVE BUG; 13. IMPUDENT; 14. OZONE; 15. BRANCH; 16. FLOP; 17. STRITCH; 18. PINE; 19. TV; 20. NARNIA; 21. AIRPORT; 22. WEEP; 23. CALIFORNIA; 24. TAJ; 25. UNEASY; 26. CREW; 27. MATT; 28. FAMILY; 29. FRANCIS; 30. PRIVY; 31. TOLKIEN; 32. MOINES.

Trivia test
by Fifi Rodriguez

- U.S. CITIES: What is the name of the mountain and city where the famous Hollywood sign is located?
- MOVIES: "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" was filmed in and around which American city?
- LITERATURE: Which 20th-century novel featured a character named Daisy Buchanan?
- TELEVISION: Which 1960s sitcom's theme song is "The Fishin' Hole"?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: Which island nation is home to lemurs?
- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the birth flower for people born in November?
- GEOGRAPHY: Where are the Harz Mountains located?
- HISTORY: What kind of mammal was the first to be cloned successfully?
- MUSIC: Which rock group performed the 1970s song "Doraville"?
- MEASUREMENTS: What does a kilopond measure?

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COMMUNITY WATCH

Fatal Shooting at 1415 West Gulf Bank Road

Houston police are investigating the fatal shooting of a man at 1415 West Gulf Bank Road about 3:35 p.m. on Monday (April 5).

The identity of the victim is pending verification by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences.

HPD Homicide Division Detectives C. Lamont and L. Lange reported:

HPD patrol officers responded to a shooting call at an apartment complex at the above address. Upon arrival, officers and Houston Fire Department paramedics found the victim deceased in the parking lot.

Further investigation determined the victim was returning to his vehicle after throwing away a box in a dumpster when he was shot multiple times. The suspect is described only as an unknown black male, 28-32 years of age, armed with a semi-automatic pistol.

Anyone with information in this case is urged to contact the HPD Homicide Division at 713-308-3600 or Crime Stoppers at 713-222-TIPS.

Shooting at 505 West Little York Road

Houston police are investigating the shooting of a man at 505 West Little York Road that occurred about 4:25 p.m. on Sunday (April 4).

The victim, Darell Taylor, 17, was transported to an area hospital in critical condition.

HPD Major Assaults & Family Violence Division Officers M. Deleon and J. Cimeni reported:

HPD patrol officers responded to a shooting at a restaurant parking lot at the above address and found Mr. Taylor had been shot multiple times in the face and upper chest area. Houston Fire Department paramedics transported Taylor to the hospital.

A preliminary investigation indicated Taylor was a passenger in a vehicle. The witness, who was driving, stated the shooting occurred at an undetermined intersection.

The suspect is described only as a black male, wearing all black clothing and driving a charcoal gray SUV of unknown make or model.

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

Pedestrian hit and killed at 8500 North Freeway

Houston police are investigating a fatal crash at 8500 North Freeway (North Interstate Highway 45) about 12:50 a.m. today (April 6).

The victim, Raymond Lynch, 44, was pronounced dead at the scene.

HPD Vehicular Crimes Division Sergeant D. Rose and Officer A. Chheav reported:

Mr. Lynch, a pedestrian, was crossing the main lanes of the freeway at the above address when he was struck by a white Buick Verano sedan in the southbound lane exit ramp. The driver of the Buick remained at the scene, was determined not to be intoxicated and was released.

The investigation is continuing.

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CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey —

1. Is the book of Agrabah in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Which book repeats this paraphrased counsel three times to the young women of Jerusalem, "Do not stir up or awaken love until it pleases"? Proverbs, Psalms, Song of Solomon, Genesis
3. By Roman reckoning, what time of day did Jesus meet the Samaritan woman at the well? Daybreak, Noon, Mid-afternoon, Dusk

4. On the island of Patmos, to whom was the Book of Revelation given? John, Paul, Matthew, Luke
5. Who hid 100 prophets in two caves and supplied them food and water? Solomon, Philemon, Obadiah, Hosea
6. The Semites were descended from Shem, the son of ...? Moses, Noah, Paul, Jacob

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Song of Solomon (2:7, 3:5, 8:4); 3) Noon; 4) John; 5) Obadiah; 6) Noah
 "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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Psalm 19:14

Detail of "Pensive Girl" by Irving Aizen (1918-2011)

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HCC Adult Ed program to Get Adults Back to School and Work

HOUSTON – With reskilling and upskilling programs in place, adult education is an economic catalyst to help low-skilled adults and their communities recover from the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. O programs provide numerous options for participation, including working from home or receiving in-person instruction.

Houston Community College joins more than 65,000 adult educators in “Moving Ahead with Adult Ed,” a new national campaign to enroll adult learners into programs that equip them with skills that lead to high school equivalency and jobs that pay a family-sustaining wage. Millions of Americans are out of work or underemployed and need to reskill or upskill to re-enter the workforce or pursue their education. The pandemic has exacerbated the need for services.

HCC’s adult education programs including the High School Equivalency, ESL and Career4U Acad-

emy Workforce Certificates. HCC is currently providing instruction both online and Flex-campus a combination of online and in-person. CDC guidelines and sanitation protocols are in place for in-person instruction to ensure a safe learning environment.

An international study indicated approximately 43 million working-age Americans lack the skills needed for many of the nation’s fastest-growing and highest-paying jobs. According to the U.S. Census, there are over 22 million adults in the U.S. without a high school diploma.

“Adult education provides on-ramps to better jobs and to community college,” said Dr. Christina Robinson, HCC Executive Director of Adult Education. “With adult education, the infrastructure is in place to reskill and upskill Houstonians and not only get them back into the workforce but get them into better jobs than they had before the pandemic.”

Campaign partners Coalition on Adult Basic Ed-

ucation and the National Association of State Directors of Adult Education also estimate that for every dollar invested in adult education, a community receives \$60 back in increased income, property taxes and savings on public assistance and legal-system expenses.

The #MovingAhead-WithAdultEd campaign focuses on re-engaging the millions of Americans who are in need of additional skills to compete in the workforce to recover financially from the pandemic. In addition to providing industry skills training through Career4U Academy, our adult education programs teach literacy, numeracy and digital literacy, as well as provide high school equivalency classes for those who want their GED.

For more information: ESL & HSE - hcc.aelinstruction@hccs.edu Career4U - hcc.wctp@hccs.edu Hours of Operation: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. 713.718.5381

Grantham Academy students receive Savings Accounts from Houston Texan

Houston Texans Safety Mike Thomas surprised students at Grantham Academy in Aldine on April 8 with starter savings accounts and a conversation about the importance of financial education as part of a Financial Literacy Month campaign for April with fintech app Goalsetter. The appearance took place via a Zoom bomb with students.

Each account will provide students with a \$40 seed investment into savings and up to five years of

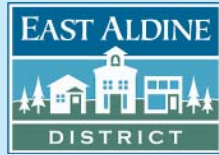
financial education materials that will be linked to the accounts’ use on Goalsetter. Additionally, Thomas spoke to students about important lessons that will help them be better savers, investors and owners while allowing them to build generational wealth.

Today’s event is in partnership with an organization-wide effort between the NFL Player’s Association and Goalsetter, led by Mike Thomas.

Kids who have savings accounts in their names

are 6X more likely to go to college and 4X more likely to own stocks by the time they are young adults. We have an opportunity to prepare our children for a lifetime of financial freedom if we reach them early and teach them in a way that they can relate to.

Goalsetter teaches kids savings habits early by letting them save for goals they care about, and also pairs that with engaging financial education. The app includes fun quizzes that are based on popular culture.



East Aldine District COMMUNITY NEWS

BONDING AGAINST ADVERSITY


Aldine-area organization that helps immigrants who help themselves

The United States citizenship process is no easy task, but Bonding Against Adversity is striving to help members of the community complete the process from start to finish.

Thomas Burdette, president and chief executive officer of Bonding Against Adversity, and Mariana Sanchez, chief operation officer, created BAA in April 2010. The two had been working with the Aldine community for seven years before the organization officially opened its doors.

“From my experience working with the community, I realized the services being offered to the community were not services aligned with what immigrant families needed,” Sanchez explained. “The community needed more information about safe immigration in the U.S. to address their fears.”

Sanchez filled the void with BAA, offering immigration workshops, citizenship classes, and parenting programs. The programs provide assistance for Lawful Permanent Residents who are qualified to, and want to become, U.S. citizens.



BAA HOLDS WORKSHOPS IN IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Most of the people they serve are unable to afford the cost of citizenship preparation and the application process and have limited English language capability.

BAA is knocking down these barriers by assisting more than 1,200 Lawful Permanent Residents each year in becoming U.S. citizens.

The nonprofit has a mission to help others help themselves — giving people a hand up and not a hand out. BAA partners with educational institutions, faith-based organizations, local businesses and passionate volunteers who believe in the mission.

Initially the organization was self-funded. Now funding is provided through grants, business and community contributions and small fees for some of the limited legal services it provides.

BAA has assisted citizens from over 20 countries and nationalities.

Aldine community member Stephanie Clarke-Brooks credits BAA with helping her through her citizenship process. She was born in Monrovia, Liberia came to the United States at age 11. She remembers filling out her family’s forms to be granted Temporary Protective Status, which is provided to nationals of designated countries that are confronting an ongoing armed conflict, environmental disaster or other extraordinary conditions.

Organizations like BAA “should be all over the United States to help people who cannot afford to hire lawyers to help them fill out their forms,” Clarke-Brooks said. “They provide services that all immigrants can benefit from if made available to them.”

Clarke-Brooks recalled how good it felt to take the oath of citizenship at a ceremony along with someone she had assisted through the process.

“The real reward is seeing a person succeed because of their own efforts,” Burdette.


Sanchez echoed his sentiments and explained, “We would not be able to continue to provide our services without the support of our army of volunteers, extended family and the generosity of others.”

For those looking to volunteer or partner with Bonding Against Adversity, there are multiple opportunities to work with people in one-on-one settings, train to lead citizenship preparation classes, and for youth to volunteer at community events.

To volunteer, donate or request services, go to baatexas.org, which is updated with all upcoming events and workshops.

The need for immigration services in the community has not disappeared during the pandemic. BAA has moved workshops and classes online but is also taking in-person appointments. Appointment requests can be made by calling 281-799-9076 or e-mailing info@baatexas.org.

Bonding Against Diversity offices:
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 — Story By Valonia Walker for the East Aldine District



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