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NORTHEAST NEWS

CHRISTMAS DAY
DEC. 25



Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 44 Years
VOL. 45, NO. 50 TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2021 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

Pct. 2 opens James Driver Inclusive Park

New concept to serve all persons in the County

ALDINE – A new concept in county parks was unveiled last Saturday, at the James Driver center on Bentley. Harris County



Welcome remarks, and the history of how this park came to be, were made by Harris County Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia. His motto: "REVIVE 2 THRIVE."

Pct. 2 commissioner Adrian Garcia has made new parks and trails one of the priorities in his term in office, and this park renovation held special significance to the public and to him.

The Opening Ceremony included the MacArthur Color Guard, the Houston Brass Band, scores of officials, many persons with disabilities, and over a hundred private citizens interested in the unique features of the park. Emcee for the event was capably handled by Kaitlan Monte of Fox26 news.

In his opening remarks, Garcia explained that he had always noted the difficulties that handicapped had functioning in public, and he vowed to make a



Present at Saturday's Ribbon Cutting for the new park were government officials, medical professionals, and community residents. In the photo above, City Councilman Robert Gallegos, Sheriff Ed Gonzalez, Harris County Pct. 2 Parks director Jose Jimenez, speaker Flora Fuentes, Commissioner Adrian Garcia, Memorial Hermann TIRR representative Peggy Turner, a family with a handicapped daughter, State Senator Carol Alvarado, Pct. 2 Liaison Selina Valdez, and others.

difference for them. Thus, his concept for an "all-inclusive" park with features that persons with disabilities could use successfully was formed. In developing the concept, he had help from medical experts in

several fields, including the Memorial Hermann TIRR rehabilitation staff. He noted that his reason for holding office in Pct. 2, and developing facilities such as this park, was because "I came here to try

to make a difference. His motto for dealing with neglected areas, such as Aldine, is to "Revive2Thrive," with improvements in sidewalks, drainage, and parks and trails. He expects this park to lead to

further economic development in the Aldine area.

Speakers at the opening included Peggy Turner of TIRR, Flora Fuentes who suffered a disability and fought her way back with Therapy, and an Aldine family whose handicapped daughter will benefit from the park.

Garcia noted that there are 500,000 persons in Harris County with some type of disability or limited mobility, and they can all access and benefit from this new park. He emphasized that all are welcome, not just limited persons.

James Driver Park will be a regional destination for persons of all ages and abilities.

Commissioner Adrian Garcia said "We have to make sure that we recognize the fact that people,

Continued. See Photos and Story on Page 6



On hand for the Ribbon Cutting ceremonies were many persons with handicaps, including this group in wheelchairs. Both during and after the opening ceremonies, the public was anxious to begin using the park, as can be seen by activities in the background of this photo.



KEENEY'S KORNER

By
MIKE KEENEY

Texans, Jags meet in the Stink Bowl: Pats put 7-game winning streak on line against Colts

Christmas comes early for NFL fans when two of the league's worst teams meet on Sunday when the Texans visit the Jaguars.

That was definitely a sarcastic sentence!

I have a feeling there won't be a lot of eyeballs on what could be a battle for the No. 1 draft choice in April's NFL Draft. To say both teams have issues would be a huge understatement. Both teams have struggled on offense, but the Texans are the epitome of ineptness on that side of the ball as evidenced by having the 32nd ranked passing game, the 32nd ranked rushing game

and the 32nd ranked scoring offense. I'll say this about the Texans; at least they are consistent when it comes to playing bad offense.

The Jaguars aren't much better, but they do have hope at quarterback thanks to former Clemson star Trevor Lawrence. Lawrence, the No. 1 overall pick in the 2021 Draft, has struggled as a rookie, but he has the potential to be a star if Jacksonville's front office will surround him with some help.

While the Texans and Jags game won't garner a

Continued. See Keeneey's Korner, page 6

By Gilbert Hoffman

The East Aldine District held their annual awards banquet for the first time in their new headquarters building last Thursday night. Over 100 guests, including community leaders and interested citizens, attended the gala affair. The event had special significance, because it marked the 20th anniversary of the beginning of the district, and its service to the Aldine community. Its original charter by the state of Texas included its stated goal of improving the Quality of Life for the residents of the area.

East Aldine's executive director, David Hawes, served as the emcee for the evening. In his welcoming remarks, he noted the success of the District. Having started in 2001 with income from the sales tax of about \$800,000, the economic growth of the District has meant that annual revenue from the sales tax now equals about \$12 million dollars.

The District in turn uses this money toward achieving the original goals. Programs and activities paid for by the district include public safety, educational programs and scholar-

Continued. See EAST ALDINE, page 4

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Letters to Santa

Dear Santa,
All I want for Christmas I want a bike and a scooter and Last I want the show to come.
Ray, 7, Stephens Elementary

Dear Santa,
I wish for Christmas that I can go to the past and to see me grandpa so I can hug and I wish to have a cat for Christmas.
Brianna Romero, 10, Oleson Elementary.

Dear Santa,
What I ask for Christmas is a kit for bracelets because all of my stuff to do bracelets. I don't have anymore. That what I want thanks Santa for your time!
Tania Mondragon Santana, 9, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
Hola Santa yo quiero un perro para jugar todos los dias , Santa te quiero mucho y que Dios te cuide mucho Santa eres bonito con todos los ninos y te quiero mucho santa cuidate mucho te quiero, que Dios te cuide.
Franklin Jasue Orellana, 11, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
I want to tell you what I'd like for Christmas...I'd really like it if you could bring these things: soccer ball, head phones, books, gaming chair, new controller, a clock, a pair of clothes, nerf gun, computer, a mic, magnet, Denis plushies, Alex plushies, guitar, and a piano.
Isaac Ramirez, 8, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
My name is Kristy I 8 years old and I live in Houston very Far from the North Pole I really have been trying hard to do nice all year. Now I'm looking forward to Christmas and I want to tell you if you could bring me some unicorn lamp.
Kristy Cisneros, 8, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
I want a controler for play with my ps4 and I want a phohz to play with my brother and sister.
Christopher Gutierrez, 10, Oleson Elementary

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

Letters to Santa

Dear Santa,
Ryan egg, T-rxe, super Mario toy, Legos glime, Batman hat, art book, ruler, glue, Batman socks.
Joshua Strybelt, 7, Stephens Elementary

Dear Santa,
Can I have a teed ber please and a new bikes and a Barbie and a computer and a toy phone.
Mia Pineda, 7, Stephens Elementary

Dear Santa,
I very to have a ps4 But I net a ps5 and my box play on ps4.
Matthias, 7, Stephens Elementary

Dear Santa,
This year I was a good as I can so this year I want a pair of yeeyis and may you give e a triops kit? Also may you give me an sce-guz plush and a ps5?
Jeremias, 8, Stephens Elementary

Dear Santa,
I Want another sister because I don't have sister and last year I posed to these grate and I thankful God and my parents and my teachers and I love Ms. Zuniga.
Jerem Mendez, 10, Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
Can I please nice for Christmas ps-1 love so much but December is the cool months of the year.
Jacoby Gonzales, 8, Stephens Elementary

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

Dear Santa,
My name is Amy, I am 8 year odd and I live very far from the North Pole, in Houston Texas. I want to tell you what I like for Christmas I really like it if you could bring me these things, slime, clay, Christmas book and Christmas doll.
Amy Abrego, 8, Oleson Elementary

Season's Greetings



Harris County Department of Education

Happy Holidays

from **Armando and Debbie Walle & Family**



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

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



OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL
Friend of Youth

Season's Greetings
from **BEASLEY TIRE SERVICE INC.**
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ADRIAN GARCIA
COMMISSIONER

Merry Christmas
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Aldine School Board & Optimist Club President
Component Sales & Service
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SEASON'S GREETINGS TO THE EAST ALDINE COMMUNITY

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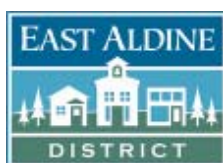
Best Wishes for the Holiday Season

News
NORTHEAST/BELTWAY 8


EAST ALDINE DISTRICT **Happy Holidays**

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

EAST ALDINE DISTRICT
713-595-1232



Best Wishes for a Safe and Happy Holiday



HARRIS COUNTY EMERGENCY CORPS
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Houston, TX 77032

Season's Greetings & Best Wishes for the New Year!



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SCHOOL NEWS PAGE

Message from the Superintendent,
December 6, 2021

Dear Aldine Community,

The countdown continues to the end of the semester! We have just 10 school days left until our winter holiday break, and a lot is happening between now and then.

I am excited to announce that the Aldine ISD Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Department will host its first-ever Share the Joy event. Our generous district staff members and community partners have donated coats, toys, and other items. FACE will have the registration form on the FACE website for families to sign up.

As a reminder to families, between December 15 and December 17, students in secondary schools will be taking finals and end-of-course exams before the mid-winter break. During testing dates, secondary schools will have early dismissal times. High schools will dismiss at 11:10 a.m., and middle schools will begin dismissal at 12:00 p.m. For more information, click here.

We are continuing to monitor COVID-19 cases across the community and the state. As long as we continue to hold strong, Aldine ISD plans to lift the mask mandate after the midwinter break when staff return on January 3 and students return to class on January 5, 2022. At that time, we will continue to strongly encourage wearing face masks, especially for unvaccinated individuals, to minimize the spread of the virus. We also strongly encourage all eligible individuals to get vaccinated. The district will continue to work with community partners to help ensure our community is aware and has access to testing and vaccines.

From the beginning, we came together to fight COVID-19 and will always prioritize a safe and healthy learning environment. Please continue to protect yourself and others by taking precautionary measures to prevent infection of all viruses, including COVID-19: wash your hands often, cover your coughs and sneezes and keep a safe distance from others.

I am grateful for the patience and cooperation necessary to reach these prom-



ising milestones during a pandemic. Let's not let our guard down so that we continue moving in the right direction in our fight against COVID-19.

With Aldine Pride,

Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney
Superintendent

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 11: Aldine High School Community is having a Community Fall Festival on Saturday, December 11, from 10 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Click here for details.

December 16: Share the Joy — One Community in Generosity will take place on Thursday, December 16. FACE to contact identified families.

December 15-17: Final/semester exams and early release for middle and high school students will take place. High schools will dismiss at 11:10 a.m., and middle schools will begin dismissal at 12:00 p.m. For more information, click here.

OBSERVATIONS

December
December 6-12: Computer Science Education Week
December 20-31: Midwinter Break
January
School Board Recognition Month



January 17: Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday

January 24-28: Holocaust Remembrance Week

REMINDERS

Aldine ISD has released new cell phone guidelines for students. To learn more, click here.

Aldine's Family and Community Engagement Department has launched the Family and Community University and aims to provide knowledge and resources to empower families to support students academically, socially, and emotionally. All programming is free and

open to all Aldine families. Learn more and register today.

The state requires high school seniors to apply for financial aid to graduate. The FAFSA application opened on October 1.

Aldine ISD's top priorities continue to be the safety and academic success of all students. We will post all information related to our operations along with any updates at www.aldineisd.org/healthalerts.

Please stay connected by visiting the District News and District Podcast pages to stay up to date on all the wonderful things happening in our district. You can also connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

HIGH MEADOWS LIBRARY NEWS

By Jennifer Nandlal
Sr Adult Program Specialist

LIBRARY CAPACITY INCREASED:

The High Meadows has had an increase in capacity to 75%. Programming is still virtual, but please check back with us occasionally for any changes.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY HOURS:

For the Christmas Holiday, we will be open from 10am to 5pm on December 22nd and will remain closed throughout the Christmas holiday. We will reopen on December 27th at 10am.

GRADCAFÉ:

Every Tuesday we will have representatives from GRADcafé at the High Meadows Library.

GRADcafé is a one-stop-shop offering free services to help you decide on a career, explore education and training options, apply to college, and find the financial aid you need. Whether you want to attend college to get a degree or work on a certificate in a professional trade, we are here to guide you through every step. You're never too young or old to get started. Services are available in English or Spanish.

BECOME A FRIEND OF THE LIBRARY:

We need YOU to become a friend of the library. We are currently looking for individuals who would like to help us form a group to be the voice of the community! If you have what it takes, please contact Jennifer at jennifer.nandlal@hcpl.net.

BACKPACK BUDDY PROGRAM:

We are looking for school age children and teens who are interested in receiving food during the school year. We are partnering with the Houston Food Bank to provide Backpack Buddies: a weekly food distribution. Registration is required.

For information on any of the above events or programs, please call us at 832-927-5540 or stop by the library.

HIGH MEADOWS LIBRARY
4500 ALDINE MAIL RTE
HOUSTON, TX 77039

Library Hours:
Mondays-Thursdays:
10am to 6pm
Fridays: 1pm to 6pm
Saturdays: 10am to 5pm
Sundays: Closed

Kelsey-Seybold Joins Dynamic Community,
Opens Doors to New North Channel Clinic

On Aug. 23, Kelsey-Seybold celebrated the much-anticipated opening of its North Channel Clinic. Patients living nearby and residents in and around the North Channel area now have a convenient location close to home and work. The new 7,500-square-foot clinic is located at 5820 E. Sam Houston Parkway North in The Shops at Stone Park. Ample parking is available in front of the clinic.



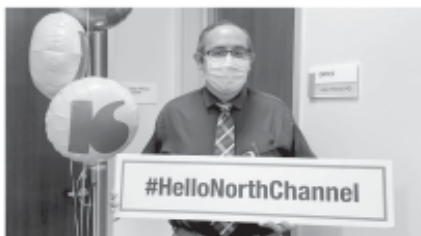
Clinic Administrators Jackie Baker and Alvin Payne welcomed patients to the bright, modern clinic.



Ambulatory Services Representatives Daniella Jackson (left) and Amanda Stringer checked patients in for their appointments on opening day.



New Kelsey-Seybold Physician John Ruelas, M.D., Family Medicine, saw patients on opening day and said they all were excited to have a new clinic so close to home.



Adam Mitchell, M.D., Managing Physician at North Channel clinic, has been with Kelsey-Seybold for 13 years and is delighted to welcome new and current patients to the newly opened clinic.



Clinic staff and providers commemorated opening day at North Channel Clinic with a group photo. Left to right: Jackie Baker, Clinic Administrator; Amanda Stringer, Ambulatory Services Representative; Febe Caspazosa, C.M.A.; Blanca Joseph, Nursing Supervisor; Daniella Jackson, Ambulatory Services Representative; Falke Wiggles, Nurse Supervisor; E. Emma Escarilla, R.M.A.; Terri Harwell, L.V.N.; Adam Mitchell, M.D., Managing Physician; John Ruelas, M.D., Family Medicine; Cecilia Fowler, Senior Director, Ambulatory Clinic; Blanca Galierrez, Director, Radiographic and Mammographic Imaging; Alvin Payne, Clinic Administrator; Summer Creek, Denise Gerez, Radiology Technician; Raedehshah White, Patient Services Technician; Christopher Newton, Supervisor, Patient Service Center; and Nancy Melkoney, Radiology Supervisor.

Kelsey-Seybold Clinic
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North Channel Clinic:

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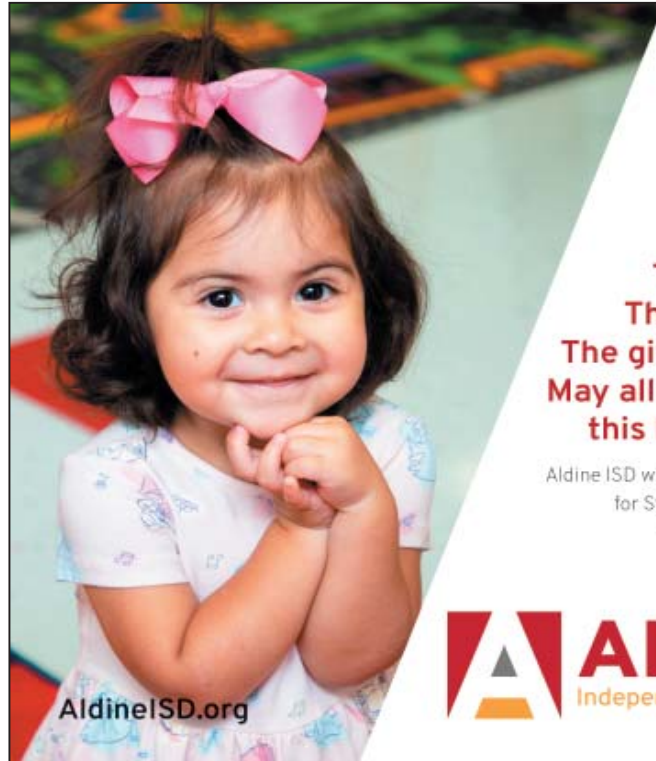
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**The gift of love.
The gift of peace.
The gift of happiness.
May all these be yours
this holiday season.**

Aldine ISD will observe Midwinter Break
for Students Dec. 20-Jan. 4 and
Dec. 20-31 for Employees.



AldineISD.org

Aldine ISD will hold “Share the Joy” Dec. 16 Toy and Coat giveaway

The Aldine ISD Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Department will host its first-ever Share the Joy toy and coat giveaway event on Thursday, December 16, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The FACE Department created this event as a way to give all Aldine ISD families the opportunity to have a warm and happy holiday season. Says Aldine ISD Superintendent, Dr. LaTonya Goffney, “We know that for many of our Aldine families, the winter holidays are not always the happiest of times. I am hopeful that the FACE Department’s Share the Joy event will be a small bright spot for many of those in our community.”

Throughout the month of November, the FACE team collected coats and toys for kids of all ages from our district team members and community partners. The support was overwhelming, as FACE collected a total of 1,200 items (toys and coats and jackets). Dr. Martha Escalante, Executive Director of the FACE Department, said, “We are beyond thankful for the incredible support of our teachers, staff, and community partners. Receiving so many donations ensures that we can reach even more families than we originally planned.”

The event will take place at the M.O. Campbell Educational Center (1865 Aldine Bender, Houston, TX 77032). Because shopping is limited to 300 families, all families are asked to register for the event no later than Monday, December 13. Interested families can register using the links below for their time to shop. All questions can be directed to the FACE team at face@aldineisd.org.



**El don del amor.
El don de la paz.
El regalo de la felicidad.
Que todo esto sea suyo
en esta temporada festiva.**

Aldine ISD observará las vacaciones de
invierno para los estudiantes del
20 de diciembre al 4 de enero.
Y del 20-31 de diciembre para los empleados.



AldineISD.org

Aldine ISD to lift mask mandate in January

Aldine ISD will lift its mask mandate on Monday, January 3, due to an ongoing decline in COVID-19 cases in the district, as well as expanded vaccine eligibility for younger children. The district will no longer require students, staff, and visitors to wear face masks at district facilities or events.

Superintendent LaTonya M. Goffney stated that while she remains cautious, the decision was based on the data and facts available to the district, and the district will continue to prioritize safety while never sacrificing learning.

“I have always emphasized the importance of following science with respect to our district’s safety protocols,” Goffney said. “To that end, we are certainly not out of the woods when it comes to the pandemic. For the safety and wellbeing of our community, I still encourage everyone to wear masks and take precautions, such as getting vaccinated to keep themselves and their loved ones healthy.”

While the COVID-19 vaccine is not required, the district encourages all eligible students and staff to get vaccinated. AISD will continue to work with community partners to help ensure the community is educated and has access to testing and vaccines.

The district will continue to monitor local and school cases to further adjust health and safety protocols as appropriate. Aldine ISD’s COVID-19 dashboard will also continue to be updated daily with active lab-confirmed cases of AISD staff and students who have been in district schools and facilities.

East Aldine District 20th Anniversary,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ships, improved water and drainage systems, economic development, and mobility concerns such as roads, signage, lighting and sidewalks. Over the last 20 years, the District has been able to add \$50 million dollars in improvements to the infrastructure of the area.

The District now serves about 60,000 persons Hawes noted, and this has grown from 50,000 in the last 10 years. The District covers 16 square miles in unincorporated Harris County.

The Banquet ceremony covered a number of awards, commendations and certificates of appreciation from government leaders, and brief talks by officials.

Board chair Joyce Wiley made a presentation of her recollections of the growth of the District based on her early involvement in its establishment. Her talk was laced with personal recollections and warm stories of her involvement with others. Special remembrance was made of the recent passing of Gerald Overturff, board chair for many years.

Harris County Commissioner Adrian Garcia gave a rousing talk on the achievements he has observed and helped with in Aldine, including the large new Inclusive Park for handicapped and limited persons, opening this week at the Northeast Community Center grounds. This investment in the Aldine community amounted to over \$8 million in development, he said. He also noted the nearly \$50 million that the District has invested in new infrastructure, including water and sewer for areas that did not have that service.

Speaking on the successful partnership between the District and local educational organizations were Aldine ISD Superintendent LaTonya Goffney, and Lone Star College-North Houston president Archie Blanson.

The Gala event included an extensive social hour with refreshments before the main meeting, an exquisite meal catered by Cantu’s Kitchen Catering, and tours of the new East Aldine District headquarters building.

ALDINE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE - GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS For the Year Ended June 30, 2021

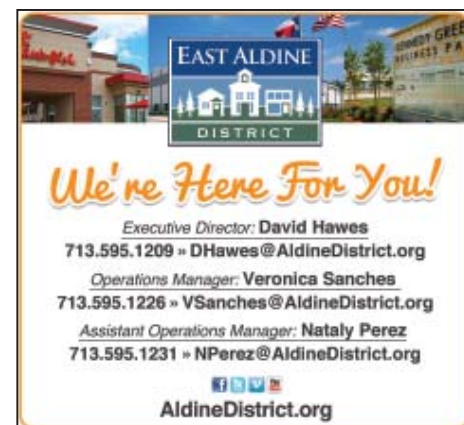
Exhibit C-3

Data Control Codes	General Fund	Debt Service	Nonmajor Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
Revenues				
5700 Local, intermediate, and out-of-state	\$ 239,208,133	\$ 67,615,837	\$ 2,996,698	\$ 309,820,668
5800 State program revenues	416,666,740	2,131,327	17,522,755	436,320,822
5900 Federal program revenues	12,440,948	-	141,691,970	154,132,918
5020 Total Revenues	668,315,821	69,747,164	162,211,423	900,274,408
Expenditures				
Current:				
0011 Instruction	364,651,883	-	107,527,394	472,179,277
0012 Instruction resources and media services	1,425,207	-	76,778	1,501,985
0013 Curriculum and instructional staff development	4,885,809	-	6,080,457	10,966,266
0021 Instructional leadership	10,920,233	-	1,680,383	12,600,616
0023 School leadership	43,826,031	-	1,186,285	45,012,316
0031 Guidance, counseling and evaluation services	18,532,542	-	14,453,640	32,986,182
0032 Social work services	1,484,619	-	328,277	1,812,896
0033 Health services	6,513,889	-	224,359	6,738,248
0034 Student transportation	29,238,064	-	209,100	29,447,164
0035 Food services	-	-	33,389,306	33,389,306
0036 Extracurricular activities	7,862,838	-	1,000,394	8,863,232
0041 General administration	16,364,359	-	730,996	17,095,355
0051 Facilities maintenance and operations	63,889,452	-	18,881	63,908,333
0052 Security and monitoring services	8,841,920	-	2,071,762	10,913,682
0053 Data processing services	13,377,639	-	31,733	13,409,372
0061 Community services	275,161	-	1,311,099	1,586,260
Debt service:				
0071 Principal on long-term debt	-	20,260,000	-	20,260,000
0072 Interest on long-term debt	-	46,313,664	-	46,313,664
0073 Debt issuance costs and fees	-	698,798	-	698,798
Capital outlay:				
0081 Facilities acquisition and construction	3,591,047	-	14,295,941	17,886,988
Intergovernmental:				
0097 Payments to tax increment fund	7,497,879	-	-	7,497,879
0099 Other intergovernmental charges	2,138,461	-	-	2,138,461
6030 Total Expenditures	605,317,033	67,272,462	184,616,785	857,206,280
1100 Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	62,998,788	2,474,702	(22,405,362)	43,068,128
Other Financing Sources and (Uses)				
7911 Refunding bonds issued	-	73,590,000	-	73,590,000
7912 Sale of real or personal property	1,308,983	-	-	1,308,983
7915 Transfers in	-	-	3,218,188	3,218,188
7916 Premium or discount on issuance of bonds	-	11,959,857	-	11,959,857
8911 Transfers out	(8,518,188)	-	-	(8,518,188)
8949 Payment to refunded bond escrow agent	-	(84,852,102)	-	(84,852,102)
7080 Total Other Financing Sources and (Uses)	(7,209,205)	697,755	3,218,188	(3,293,262)
1200 Net change in fund balances	55,789,583	3,172,457	(19,187,174)	39,774,866
0100 Fund Balance - July 1 (Beginning)	253,039,798	33,706,342	78,422,020	365,168,160
1300 Prior period adjustment	-	-	1,079,264	1,079,264
3000 Fund Balance - June 30 (Ending)	\$ 308,829,381	\$ 36,878,799	\$ 60,314,110	\$ 406,022,290

See notes to the financial statements.

21

Aldine ISD 2021 ACFR



East Aldine District

We're Here For You!

Executive Director: **David Hawes**
713.595.1209 » DHawes@AldineDistrict.org

Operations Manager: **Veronica Sanches**
713.595.1226 » VSanches@AldineDistrict.org

Assistant Operations Manager: **Nataly Perez**
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UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF BONDING AGAINST ADVERSITY



Bonding Against Adversity Incorporated

Bonding Against Adversity (BAA) hosted a brunch to give thanks to all volunteers for their support.

With the presence of State Representative Armando Walle, Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez who also attended the brunch, community leaders and BAA board joined founder and Chief Operating Officer Mariana Sanchez to present individual recognitions to volunteers.

come USA citizens. Other citizens from Mexico were also present to celebrate and give thanks to volunteers.

State Representative Armando Walle presented a special recognition to a long time teacher volunteer at BAA and Aldine Education Foundation Coordinator, Judy Hoya.

"You deserve every bit of recognition Judy, we love

dine Independent School District five hundred thousand dollars in scholarships to kids leaving in this community," he concluded.

Judy Hoya mentioned that seeing all students at the citizenship ceremony get their certificates, "is our pay check."

Other special guests were Sheriff Ed Gonzalez, LSC-Kingwood President Dr. Melissa Gonzalez and Bonding Against Adversity Board.

Guests received an umbrella which represents "protection of someone from heat, rain or to provide shade, that is the kind of model we see here (in BAA) - Helping Others Help Themselves," Sheriff Ed Gonzalez mentioned.



Bonding Against Adversity CEO Thomas Burdette, State Rep. Armando Walle, Mariana Sanchez and Sheriff Ed Gonzalez under an umbrella at Giving Thanks to Volunteers brunch



State Rep. Armando Walle giving recognition to Judy Hoya for her long support to BAA.



During the brunch, 15 different nationalities were gathered around the tables. New citizens from Guatemala, Cuba, El Salvador and Iran talked about their stories as an immigrants, their situation and how BAA helped and prepared them and thousands others to be-

you, we are so blessed to have you in our lives," Rep. Walle stated. Working along with Judy and Aldine Education Foundation Board, "this past year, over the last few years, we have raised and provided students in Al-



Citizens from El Salvador, Iran, Cuba and Guatemala sharing their stories at the brunch



Community leaders, citizens, volunteers and BAA Board of Director pose for the group photo at Manny's Mexican Grill and Seafood restaurant where the brunch took place on November 20, 2021.

Photos by Alma Montemayor

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James Drive Inclusive Park: Unique Features and Functions

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



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children in particular, with physical and cognitive disabilities are among the largest under-represented minority groups in the Houston/Harris County area, and we need to do more for them." "This park will be addressing an entire spectrum of special needs – a space where children with disabilities can play alongside with friends and siblings, as well as their parents, caregivers, physical therapists, educators, or even physicians."

The \$7.6 million project, has already been recognized as having an important role in the county. Texas Parks and Wildlife awarded the park a \$1.5 million grant to transform James Drive Park to a space for residents of all ages and abilities to exercise, socialize, and play. Located in an underserved part of Harris County, this expansion project should also help to revitalize the surrounding community and will serve as a destination to visitors of the city.

"One of the things that this park will do is provide opportunities for other children who grew up just like us. If it weren't for these parks, we would not have a place to go hangout, to go play basketball, to come bring family members



Community members on hand for the opening ceremonies.



Commissioner Garcia chats with an amputee who will be able to use some of the park features.

that may have special needs," said Representative Walle, an Aldine area native.

The expansion will include an improved and widened walking trail that will accommodate people in wheelchairs, a playground specially designed for people of all abilities, both physical and cognitive, an outdoor gaming and fitness area featuring bocce, shuffleboard, chess tables, corn hole, bean bag toss and fitness equipment. It will also include a misting area and plenty of shade to providing relief from the heat, covered dining space and outdoor picnic areas, sensory garden featuring indigenous perennials, an event lawn and pavilion for musical and other entertainment, and so much more!

"This [park] will be put to good use for generations and generations to come. The kids are going to be able to

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feel welcome, to feel at home, to feel safe, and this is just another jewel in the cap of Precinct 2," said State Senator Carol Alvarado.

James Drive Park is a 29-acre park and community center located in northeast Houston along US Highway 59 with plenty of premier greenspace.

SPORTS PAGE

Texans, Jags meet in the Stink Bowl: Pats put 7-game winning streak on line against Colts

lot of excitement, there are a number of other games well worth watching this weekend.

Week 15 kicks off on Thursday night with a key AFC West contest, as the Chiefs will visit the Chargers.

Another big game on Sunday will pit the New England Patriots and their seven-game winning streak against a hot Indianapolis Colts team on Saturday night in Lucas Oil Stadium. Also on Saturday, the Las Vegas Raiders and Cleveland Browns will meet in an important game for both teams' playoff hopes. The winner remains alive in the AFC Wild Card race, while the loser will more than likely be out of the playoff picture.

The Dallas Cowboys play their third straight road game when they visit the New York Giants looking to solidify their hold of the NFC East, while Tennessee will visit Pittsburgh in a key game for both teams. The Washington Football Team visits Philadelphia, with the winner remaining alive in the NFC East race and the AFC Wild Card race, while the Packers will visit Baltimore.

Before we take a look at those games and a handful of others, let's review last week's record. An 8-4 week brought the season record to 97-54 (64%).

Now, onto this weekend's game.

NFL

Kansas City at Los Angeles Chargers: The Chiefs look to keep rolling when they visit the Chargers on Thursday Night Football. Two weeks ago, KC won its fifth straight game with a 22-9 victory over Denver, while the Chargers picked up a big road win at Cincinnati (41-22). KC QB Patrick Mahomes (3,384 yards, 25 TDs) did not throw a touchdown



pass against the Broncos, but he should fare better against a suspect LA secondary. Look for Tyreek Hill (86 receptions, 954 yards, 8 TDs) and tight end Travis Kelce (70 receptions, 848 yards, 5 TDs) to play much better than they did against Denver. The Chargers will need a big night from QB Justin Herbert (3,547 yards, 27 TDs), running back Austin Ekeler (663 rushing yards, 8 TDs/56 receptions, 518 yards, 7 TDs) and wide receivers Keenan Allen (86 receptions, 929 yards, 4 TDs) and Mike Williams (55 receptions, 854 yards, 7 TDs). My pick, Los Angeles Chargers 31, Kansas City 30

Las Vegas at Cleveland: Two desperate teams meet on Saturday afternoon with the winner remaining in the AFC playoff hunt, while the loser can start thinking about next year. The Raiders blew a big chance to remain in the AFC West race when they lost at home two weeks ago to the Washington Football Team, while the Browns had their much-needed bye week. Vegas QB Derek Carr (3,663 yards, 17 TDs) might find it tough to make plays in the passing game against a tough Browns defense and the winter weather. The Browns need a big day from so-so QB Baker Mayfield (2,413 yards, 11 TDs), who just hasn't gotten it going so far this season. Look for the Browns to attack the Raiders defense with running back Nick Chubb (867 yards, 6 TDs) as they look to wear down Vegas. My pick, Cleveland 23, Las Vegas 17

New England at Indianapolis: The Patriots come off their bye week with a trip to Indianapolis to take on a Colts team that is playing well on both sides of the ball. Two weeks ago, NE earned a hard-fought 14-10 division win at Buffalo to give Bill Belichick's team a two-game lead in the AFC East, while the Colts earned an easy 31-0 win over the Texans. The Colts will need another big day from running back Jonathan Taylor (1,348 yards, 16 TDs), but he might find it tough to run against a Patriots defense that has been exceptional during its current seven-game winning streak. The Pats have allowed just 10.4 points per game during their winning streak and with an extra week to prepare, you have to figure Belichick will have something special drawn up to slow down the league's best running back. If the Pats are successful slowing down Taylor, then QB Carson Wentz (2,948 yards, 22 TDs) will be called on to carry the offensive load. Wentz does not handle pressure well, and NE can bring the heat with the best of them. On offense, Belichick will once again call on rookie QB Mac Jones (2,869 yards, 19 TDs) to manage the offense and feature the running game, led by Damien Harris (754 yards, 9 TDs). Harris tweaked a hamstring in the Buffalo win, but he's had an extra week to heal and should be good to go come Saturday night. My pick, New England 24, Indianapolis 16

Dallas at New York Giants: The Cowboys play their third straight road game and should take care

of business against a woe-ful Giants team. The Dallas defense, led by rookie linebacker Micah Parsons, should have a field day against a lackluster NY offense. The Cowboys offense hasn't exactly been lighting things up, and it's time for Dak Prescott (3,170 yards, 23 TDs) and Co. to make a run. Running back Ezekiel Elliott (765 yards, 8 TDs) has been slowed with a knee injury, but backup Tony Pollard (602 yards, 2 TDs) has been an adequate backup. He's faster than Elliott and his 58-yard touchdown run sparked the Cowboys to a 27-17 win at New Orleans on Dec. 2. Look for Prescott to make plays to wide outs CeeDee Lamb (57 receptions, 829 yards, 6 TDs) and Amari Cooper (46 receptions, 624 yards, 5 TDs) as the Cowboys return home with a lock on the NFC East. My pick, Dallas 31, New York Giants 17

Houston at Jacksonville: There isn't much to say about this clown show of a game. The Texans are horrible on offense and might turn to rookie QB Davis Mills (1,406 yards, 7 TDs) since Tyrod Taylor has struggled since his return from a hamstring injury. Look for Lawrence (2,514 yards, 9 TDs/10 interceptions) to shred a bad Houston secondary as the Jags move out of the AFC South basement and the Texans move in. My pick, Jacksonville 16, Houston 3

Tennessee at Pittsburgh: An important game for both teams as the Titans try to hold off the Colts in the AFC South, while the Steelers look to remain in the AFC North hunt. Two weeks ago, the Steelers may have saved their season with a 20-19 home win over Baltimore. QB Ben Roethlisberger (2,758 yards, 16 TDs) threw the game-winning TD and then watched as the Ravens failed on a two-point conversion that would have given them the win with just seconds remaining in the game. Big

Ben will need a big day from rookie running back Najee Harris (779 rushing yards, 5 TDs/57 receptions, 387 yards, 2 TDs) if they hope to beat the Titans at home. Tennessee needs a big game from QB Ryan Tannehill (2,774 yards, 14 TDs) and wide receiver A.J. Brown (46 receptions, 615 yards, 3 TDs), but that might be tough against a solid Steelers defense. My pick, Pittsburgh 23, Tennessee 20

Washington at Philadelphia: Both teams are still alive in the NFC East and NFC Wild Card race, so look for a competitive contest on Sunday. The Washington Football Team was riding a four-game winning streak heading into last Sunday's game against the Cowboys, while the Eagles are hanging around thanks to QB Jalen Hurts (2,335 passing yards, 13 TDs/695 rushing yards, 8 TDs), while the WFT has been getting it done with a stout defense and an opportunistic offense led by QB Taylor Heinicke (2,809 yards, 18 TDs), running back Antonio Gibson (800 yards, 5 TDs) and wide receiver Terry McLaurin (61 receptions, 808 yards, 5 TDs). The WFT defense will be the difference maker this week in Philly. My pick, WFT 23, Philadelphia 17

Cincinnati at Denver: Another key AFC contest pits two teams that are still in the playoff hunt. Two weeks ago, the Bengals were shocked at home, 41-22 by the Chargers, while the Broncos lost at KC, 22-9. Look for Joe Burrow (3,135 yards, 23 TDs) to get back to making plays in the passing game to wide receivers Ja'Marr Chase (90 receptions, 958 yards, 8 TDs) and Tee Higgins (52 receptions, 698 yards, 4 TDs), while running back Joe Mixon (978 yards, 12 TDs) takes care of the work on the ground. My pick, Cincinnati 26, Denver 23

Green Bay at Baltimore: This should be an

interesting matchup between the high-scoring Packers and the defensive minded Ravens on Sunday in Baltimore. The Packers are loaded on offense led by QB Aaron Rodgers (2,878 yards, 23 TDs), running back Aaron Jones (564 yards, 3 TDs) and A.J. Dillon (543 yards, 4 TDs) and big-play wide receiver Davante Adams (80 receptions, 1,083 yards, 5 TDs). The Ravens have a solid defense, but they might meet their match against a GB offense that is rolling at this point in the season. Baltimore will need a big game from QB Lamar Jackson (2,865 passing yards, 16 TDs/762 rushing yards, 2 TDs). He needs to make some plays down field to speedy wide out Marquise Brown (65 receptions, 825 yards, 6 TDs) and dependable tight end Mark Andrews (64 receptions, 811 yards, 5 TDs). The GB defense is better than people think and will be out to slow down Jackson from the start. Jackson has struggled in the passing game lately and if the Packers can contain his runs, they have a good shot at winning a big road game. My pick, Green Bay 26, Baltimore 23

Seattle at Los Angeles Rams: Seattle is playing spoiler now that their playoff hopes are pretty much over, while the Rams are looking to get back on track and make a late run at Arizona for the NFC West title. Two weeks ago, Russell Wilson (2,042 yards, 14 TDs) led the Seahawks to a 30-23 upset at home over San Francisco, while Matthew Stafford (3,611 yards, 30 TDs) and wide receivers Cooper Kupp (100 receptions, 1,366 yards, 11 TDs) and Van Jefferson (39 receptions, 621 yards, 5 TDs) rolled by an inept Jacksonville squad, 37-7. Look for a big day from Stafford as he attacks a suspect Seattle secondary early and often on Sunday. My pick, Los Angeles Rams 34, Seattle 23

CHURCH PAGE

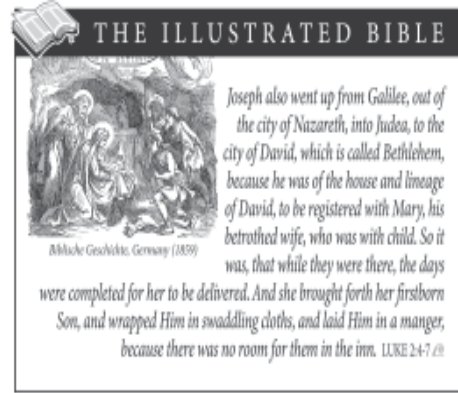
BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey —

1. The main Christmas story about the birth of Jesus is paraphrased from what two New Testament books? Mark/John, Acts/Romans, Matthew/Luke, Jude/Revelation
2. Approximately how old was Jesus when the wise men (Magi) arrived with their gifts? 1 day, 2 weeks, 2 months, 2 years
3. Where did the angel Gabriel appear to Mary, saying, "Blessed art thou among women"? Nazareth, Tyre,

Ninevah, Gazi

4. How many times does the word "Christmas" appear in the Bible (KJV)? Zero, 1, 2, 7
 5. In what city of Judaea was Jesus born? Damascus, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Gezer
 6. Who plotted to kill the baby Jesus? Archelaus, Herod, Pontius Pilot, Caesar Augustus ANSWERS: 1) Matthew/Luke; 2) 2 years; 3) Nazareth; 4) Zero; 5) Bethlehem; 6) Herod
- "Test Your Bible Knowledge," a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online. (c) 2021 King Features Synd., Inc.



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Letters to Santa

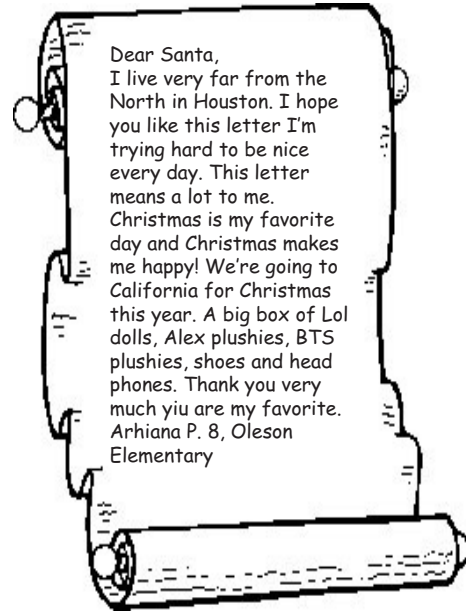
 Dear Santa,
 For Christmas I would like a toy and that toy is named mini brands I want 3 balls of those and another thing and that thing is called I want bows because I love bows a lot and that is it thank you.
 Maria Duarte, 9,
 Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
 I've been wanting a long time to write you the letter and I'm looking forward to Christmas and New Year eve too.
 Isaiah Salinas, 8,
 Oleson Elementary

Dear Santa,
 For Christmas I only want few things. I want confetti vans, flower white vans, and blue slide on's. I also want Ago Pro water proof, and to go fix my James Avery Charm bracelet, and a new Christmas charm. Love, Valeria. P.S. White sock snow man.

Dear Santa,
 I want PJ masks toys, City PJ mask jump suit, PJ Jacket shears. All PJ mask roller skates.
 Love Danny, 5 years old

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



 Dear Santa,
 What I want for Christmas is xbox1 and a card with ten dollars only cable using ir for games.
 William Garza, 11,
 Oleson Elementary

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

*

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

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