

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Library News, Page 2
- Pilgrims Place, Page 2
- Superintendent's Message, Pages 3, 5
- New HCC-NE president, P. 8
- HCC Register, Page 8
- Leadership NH cleans Buckner Park, Page 8

# NORTHEAST NEWS

Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 46 Years  
VOL. 46, NO. 19 TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2022 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

## 2 Dead in Flea Market Shooting



2 Dead, 3 wounded in Airline Drive Flea Market Shoot-out. Story on Page 1

## NEWS NOTES

### Run-off Election May 24

Texas voters get another opportunity to cast ballots starting May 16 in primary runoff elections slated for both Republican and Democratic candidates. The election is May 24, with early voting running until May 20. State-wide runoff races are slated for attorney general and land commissioner in both parties, lieutenant governor and comptroller in the Democratic race, and railroad commissioner on the Republican side of the ticket.

More information can be found about particular races at harrisvotes.com. Voters who cast ballots in one party's primary cannot vote in the other party's runoff election. However, voters who did not cast ballots in the primary can vote in either party's runoff.

### 2 dead, 3 wounded in Airline Drive shoot-out

Two people died and several were others injured in a shootout near a north Harris County flea market Sunday afternoon, deputies aid.

According to officials with the Harris County Sheriff's Office, thousands of people were at a flea market in the 8700 block of Airline Drive near West Gulf Bank Road around 1 p.m. when two groups of people began shooting at each other.

Two people were pronounced dead at the scene, while three others were transported to various hospitals. Their conditions were not known.

The victims were all part of the altercation and no innocent bystanders were harmed, deputies said.

## New VIPER program to reduce crime

### VIPER VIOLENT FELONY WARRANT TASK FORCE

Harris County, TX — TUESDAY, May 10, Harris County Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia was joined by County Judge Lina Hidalgo, Sheriff Ed Gonzalez, and Pct. 6 Constable Silvia R. Trevino announced VIPER - a new violent crime



Sheriff Ed Gonzalez, along with the County Commissioners and Judge Hidalgo, announce the new VIPER program.

warrants task force approved by Commissioners Court. The warrant roundup initiative aims to reduce the number of violent offenders on the loose in Harris County. After being considered by Commissioners Court, VIPER passed unanimously with a 4-0 vote.

There are more than 50,000 people in Harris County who are wanted by police, including more than 700 people who are wanted for murder. The Harris County Commissioners Court passed the creation of a new task force that will be aimed at tracking down and arresting the most violent offend-

ers.

The Harris County Violence Persons Task Force, or VIPER, consists of deputies from both the sheriff's and constables' offices. VIPER will add much-needed staff, whose purpose will be to track down and arrest the most violent offenders in Harris County. The task

*Continued. See VIPER crime reduction, page 2*

## Aldine EF awards \$500k in Scholarships

An awards ceremony was held last week at M.O. Campbell Center, where 200 Aldine ISD graduating seniors were awarded a total of \$500,000 in scholarships by the Aldine Education Foundation.

Speakers at the event included AEF director Linda Flores Olson, President Richard Cantu, State Rep. Armando Walle, and AISD Superintendent LaTonya Goffney.



## Russia may want to trade Griner for criminal in U.S. custody

WASHINGTON, DC — American officials learned last week that Brittney Griner, a professional women's basketball star player will be detained for another month in Russian custody, and that her pre-trial hearing had been delayed until then.

Griner is well known in Houston and Aldine, where she was a star center for the girl's basketball team at Nimitz High School. She currently plays for the Phoenix, and was in Russia for the off-season playing pro ball there.

Griner was detained at a Russian airport in February, and charged with having illegal drugs in her luggage. Since then, U.S.

officials have been working to get her release, with little progress.

For the first time since Brittney Griner's arrest almost three months ago, Russia appears to have publicly signaled its asking price for her safe return, if multiple reports by Russian state media are to be believed.

Russia is looking to exchange the WNBA star in a prisoner swap for notorious convicted arms trafficker Viktor Bout, several state-owned Russian news outlets reported last Friday, citing unnamed government sources.

Bout, whose exploits earned him the nickname the "Merchant of Death,"

flooded fierce conflicts in Africa and the Middle East with weapons, U.S. authorities say. He was arrested during a sting operation in Thailand in 2008, extradited to the U.S. and sentenced to 25 years for conspiracy to kill U.S. citizens, delivery of anti-aircraft missiles and providing aid to a terrorist organization.

After Bout's arrest, the U.S. alleged that his Russian allies tried to block his extradition from Thailand to America by bribing key witnesses to give false testimony. Since his 2012 conviction, Bout has been at

*Continued. See Griner trade possible, Page 6*



Brittney Griner is seen on Russian TV leaving a hearing room last week, where she learned that her detention and pre-trial hearing will be extended another month. Griner, in handcuffs, did not speak to the media. She was accompanied by her Russian lawyer, but no U.S. officials have been allowed to see her except once for a welfare check.

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### East Aldine to hold MURAL FEST2022 on May 21 Mural Contest pays \$5000

The East Aldine District has announced they will hold a Mural Contest to choose an artist to paint a mural on the side of the High Meadows Library during MuralFest22, to be held on Saturday May 21. The painting project will be completed over a three day period at the side of the library. Interested artists were asked to submit information to the district arts committee, at [eaac@aldinedistrict.org](mailto:eaac@aldinedistrict.org). A mural artist will be chosen based on experience and a portfolio and a statement of interest.

## COMMUNITY WATCH

### 16 year-old killed by mom’s boyfriend; Aldine student

A Texas high school sophomore was shot dead while being held captive at home by her mother’s gun-toting boyfriend last Friday morning, authorities said.

The victim’s father identified her as 16-year-old Lauren Juma. She was pronounced dead at the scene in the Houston suburb of Humble.

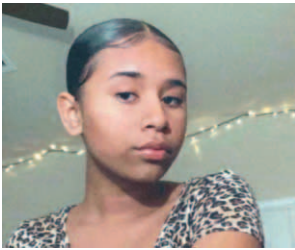
Deputies with the Harris County Sheriff’s Office arrested the suspected shooter, 60-year-old Van Brisbon, who was booked into jail on a charge of murder.

A sergeant quoted the murder suspect as telling cops “You do what you have to do” at the time of his arrest.

Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said in a statement that Brisbon “was not cooperative with investigators and a motive for the murder is unknown at this time.”

According to the sheriff, the incident began unfolding just after 1 a.m. Friday, when Lauren’s sister called 911 to report that their mother’s live-in boyfriend, Brisbon, was holding the 16-year-old at gunpoint.

As deputies responded



LAUREN JUMA

to the family’s home in the 20400 block of Canton Trace Lane in Humble and were approaching the front door, they heard multiple gunshots.

Brisbon then exited the house and was detained. Inside, deputies found Juma dead. Cops said the teen had been shot multiple times.

Juma’s 19-year-old sister was not inside the home at the time of the shooting but was standing outside, and their mother was out of town.

The girl’s dad told Fox 26 Juma was a sophomore at Nimitz High School. Her dream was to join the military or become a police officer when she grew up, he said.

The father added that his daughter was hard-working and sweet, She is survived by her three sisters and a brother.

### \$750K Fire destroys Greenspoint area Restaurant

Firefighters battled a major restaurant Fire in the Greenspoint Area on May 14, 2022 at 4:45 a.m.

It was a vacant restaurant, at 12320 North Freeway, 77060. There was \$750,000 in estimated damage. The cause is under investigation.

Firefighters arrived on scene within four minutes to find smoke coming from the roof of a vacant 1-story restaurant. They made an offensive attack and forced entry. A primary search was completed, the utilities were secured, and the roof was assessed. Conditions deteriorated with fire coming through the

roof and all crews exited the structure to conduct a defensive attack.

Additional HFD units were requested as well as a tanker from the Aldine Fire Department. HPD was requested for traffic control. Aerial truck operations were used, and the fire was controlled within two hours. Firefighters extinguished additional hot spots and HFD Arson investigators were requested to determine the cause and origin of the fire. Crews from Stations 84, 3, 15, 31, 64, 58, 74, Rehab 17 and the Aldine Fire Department responded to this incident.

## Mother’s Day celebration at Pilgrims Place II



East Aldine District  
May 9 at 9:06 PM

The East Aldine Management District was happy to be among the many partners who celebrated Mother’s Day on Sunday with a luncheon for mothers at the federally subsidized Pilgrims Place II apartment complex on Aldine Mail Route Road. The mothers received gift cards, flowers, gift bags and food. Thanks to our partners: Wal-Mart, Brookside Funeral Home and Memorial Park, Americgroup; the offices of state Rep. Armando Walle, state Sen. Carol Alvarado and Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia; BakerRipley, Sheriff’s Sgt. Terry Garza and justice of the peace candidate Sonia Lopez.

### Viper Crime Reduction program,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

force will be made up of two teams, each team will consist of 4 deputy constables and 4 deputy sheriffs.

“VIPER will help ensure public safety that must be addressed,” Commissioner Adrian Garcia said. “Putting a stop to the culture of not feeling there are any consequences for criminal activity.”

“This historic investment in VIPER not only aims to address the warrant backlog of violent cases, for Harris County, it is a first-of-its-kind partnership between all local county law enforcement – the sheriff and constables. Our message to people who are

accused of violent crime and have warrants issued for their arrest: you have a pair of handcuffs on, and you don’t even know it because VIPER is upon you.”

-Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia

“The simple truth is that justice delayed is justice denied. Denied for those who need to present themselves to authorities and denied for crime victims awaiting justice. When dangerous criminals aren’t apprehended quickly, it creates a sense that the government does not do its part in addressing serious crimes, making victims feel ignored and

perpetrators empowered. That’s why this specific initiative is so important.”

-Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo

“50,000 active warrants in our community – 4,800 of those are for aggravated felonies. Almost 1,000 are for bond revocations. We need to make sure we are working together because every community and every precinct in Harris County has violent offenders that have absconded. We want them to know we are going to be out there looking for them.”

-Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez

## HIGH MEADOWS LIBRARY NEWS

### ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH:

Celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month with High Meadows. May 14th at 11am is Kendama Day Celebration. Come join the Japan-America Society of Houston and Michael Martin of the Houston Kendama Meet-Up as we celebrate Kendama Day! The beloved Japanese skill toy was patented on this day in 1919. Learn about the history and background of the kendama and master some cool tricks.

May 19th at 3pm is our Korean Culture Program. Join the Houston Korean Education Center as they teach us all about Korean snacks and learning to write our names in Korean.

May 26th at 3pm is our Henna Program. Henna by Maha will be here to decorate your hands with Henna. Henna is a dye that stains hands and lasts up to 2 weeks if cared for properly. This program is limited to 15 customers and registration is required. Stop by the library to pick up a form to register today.

### SEED LIBRARY:

Every week we will be debuting new seeds

for you to stop by and pick up free of charge. Customers are limited to one packet of seed per person.

### STORY TIME @ THE LIBRARY:

Children of all ages are invited to story time at the library. We have story time on Tuesdays at 11am and Thursdays at 1pm. Enjoy finger plays, stories, songs, and more!

### TEEN EVENTS:

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 3pm are for teens at High Meadows Library. Teens are welcome to come in for anime/manga club, gaming, crafting, and more. Stop by the library and grab a calendar.

### BOOK CLUB:

In May, we are reading and discussing “The Turn of the Key” by Ruth Ware for book club. Our next meet up will be Monday, May 23rd at 6pm. Join us for a lively discussion.

### 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](mailto:jennifer.nandlal@hcpl.net).

### VOTER REGISTRATION:

Register to vote at your local library. We have registration forms available in English & Spanish.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

We are seeking volunteers to help teach our ESL Classes. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with the library, please contact us and ask for Jennifer.

### 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.

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

**JENNIFER NANDLAL**  
**SR ADULT PROGRAM SPECIALIST**  
**HIGH MEADOWS LIBRARY**  
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**“ALONE WE CAN DO SO LITTLE. TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH.” - HELEN KELLER**  
**PASTEDGRAPHIC.PNG**

## AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS

### YOGA & MEDITATION

Ebb and flow like the ocean with gentle flow yoga and calming meditation for all ages. Kevia Jones leads us on May 21 at 10am. Bring a yoga mat or borrow one of ours. Register online for yourself and any others who may be joining you: <https://bit.ly/3LnRDt9>

### KID’S CLUB - KIDS THEATER EVENT

Join Teaching Artist Lily He and learn about Chinese New Year and the Year of the Tiger through an arts lens! This hands-on workshop will explore the Year of the Tiger and participants will learn more about Chinese heritage and culture. May 18m 4:30pm. Children of all ages are welcome. No registration required.

### JOB LAB

If you are interested in gaining or improving your resumé skills or need help searching for jobs, we can help! Come join us Fridays from 1-2pm in the computer lab for assistance with your job search!

### BILINGUAL STORYTIME

Join us back in the library for storytime in En-

glish and Spanish Wednesdays at 10:30am!

### TEEN THURSDAYS

New in April! Teen Thursdays are back! Join us on Thursday afternoons starting at 3:30pm. Each week we will have a fun activity for teens ages 12-18.

### LENA

Registration is still open for the English session of Lena Start at Aldine Branch Library this Spring!

Qualifying participants may be eligible to receive \$100! To register call (832)927-5410 or email [ald@hcpl.net](mailto:ald@hcpl.net). LENA Start is a 10-week program that teaches parents and caregivers of children 0-3 years how to “build babies’ brains” and make a difference in their future success through early talk and interactions!

### CALL FOR LITERACY TUTOR

Would you like to be a part of making an impact on people’s lives? If you are interested in becoming a literacy tutor at the Aldine Branch Library, we want to talk to you! We are looking for volunteers to

teach English language classes in person and virtually. Call 832-927-5410 or email for info: [ald@hcpl.net](mailto:ald@hcpl.net)

### COMPUTER CLASSES

In addition to our online computer classes in both English and Spanish we will now be offering computer classes in person at the library. If you want to participate, call us to register: 832-927-5410.

Tuesdays: various topics (Spanish computer class), 5-7pm, at the library

Wednesdays: Beyond the Basics with Office 365 plus Google Apps, (English computer class), 5-7pm, online

Thursdays: Beyond the Basics with Office 365 plus Google Apps (English computer class), 5-7pm, at the library

**MICHELLE PICHON**  
**LIBRARY PROGRAM SPECIALIST**  
**HARRIS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**ALDINE BRANCH LIBRARY**  
**11331 AIRLINE DR.**  
**HOUSTON, TX 77037**  
**832-927-5410**



SCHOOL NEWS PAGE

Message from the Superintendent,  
May 10, 2022

Dear Aldine Community, The countdown to summer has begun and I know you are all working hard to finish the year strong. Even with the many ongoing activities, I am so pleased we were able to take some time to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week. Thanks so much to everyone who took the time last week to ensure that all of our teachers felt valued and appreciated for all that they do to help our students succeed.

We aren't through celebrating our school heroes just yet! On Wednesday, May 11 we celebrate National School Nurse Day to honor the school nurses who keep our students healthy and ready to learn. May 11th also kicks off National Police Week, which is a collaborative effort of many organizations dedicated to honoring America's law enforcement community. And last, but certainly not least, on May 13 we celebrate our very first School Communicators Day to thank those who help share the wonderful stories and accomplishments of our district. For those of you at a campus, I encourage you to find your campus key communicator or web manager and thank them for keeping your campus' website and social media updated. So to this month's school heroes: your contributions are very much appreciated and we couldn't do what we do without your support! Thank you from all of us here at Aldine!

Finally, I'd like to share an exciting new update in our district that reflects our continued commitment to providing choice and opportunities for our students and their families. Next Fall, we will launch Hoffman College Prep, a new college-prep program at Hoffman Middle School. We are excited to offer this new option through our Choice School Programs and encourage families with eligible students to learn more and consider applying.

I wish you all a wonderful and productive week!

With Aldine Pride,

Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney Superintendent

UPCOMING EVENTS

- May:** Click here for details and dates about STAAR testing.
- May 21:** The 12 primary schools will host an enrollment event with staff assisting eligible families with pre-enrollment. Click here for details.
- Ongoing Until May 31:** Preregistration for eligible PreK3, PreK4, and kindergarten students is open for the 2022-2023 school year. Click here for details on how to register.

MacArthur Cross Country Runner Giovanni Silva signs with McMurray University

MacArthur High School senior cross country runner Giovanni Silva, center, seated, signed a national letter of intent with McMurray University in Abilene. Silva competed on MacArthur's varsity cross country team for four straight years and in that time helped lead the Generals to four straight District 14-6A titles, four trips to the Region II

Meet and one trip to the Class 6A State Cross Country Meet. Pictured with Silva are, front row, (l-r): Marlin Gonzalez, Adriana Silva, and Rosemary Lopez. Back row, (l-r): Head Cross Country Coach Kelly Silha, MacArthur High School Principal Shauna Showers, Lauren Shilling, Shawna Jones and Assistant Coach Mike Peraza.



Victory Early College High School Students Celebrate Decision Day

Victory Early College High School (VECHS) administrators and teachers held a celebration on April 29 at M.O. Campbell Educational Center (MOC) for senior students who have committed to attend a college, university, or trade school as well as those who decided to join the armed forces.

The event promotes College and Career Readiness and celebrates seniors' hard work, dedication, and commitment to earning their high school diplomas, associate's degrees, or interest in the Armed Forces.

Students gathered in the M.O. Campbell Educational Center wearing their senior class shirts with their college, university, or armed forces t-shirts and hats in tow.

Victory Early College principal Dr. Phyllis Cormier and freshman biology teacher Roshon Jeffrey welcomed everyone including the parents, college, university, and armed forces representatives who were present to support the seniors who have committed to attend their institutions. They applauded the students for their academic achievements and for choosing to pursue various education pathways beyond high school graduation.

The senior students kicked off their celebration with a senior shuffle, where the students danced to a Taylor Swift song called "22." The song was a perfect choice for the Class of 2022.

Special guests included Aldine

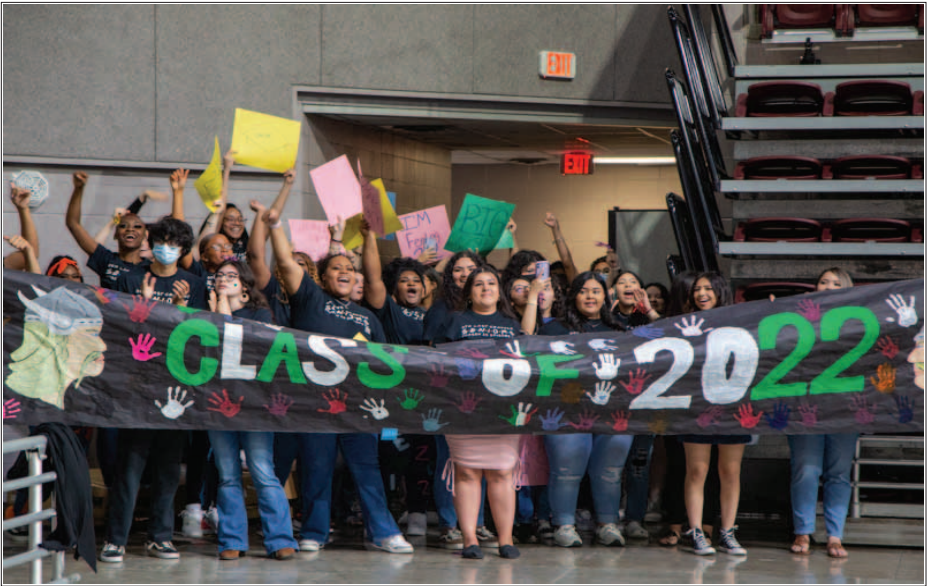
ISD Trustees Dr. Viola M. Garcia and Connie Esparza, Dean of Lone Star College – Houston North Victory Clifford Johnson, and LSC-Houston North Victory Mascot Pawla the Panther.

President of Lone Star College – Houston North Dr. Quentin Wright, delivered a special message congratulating the Victory students on their success and future endeavors.

Aldine ISD middle school students were also in attendance. Some of them were future Victory Vikings. The event consisted of a DJ, campus cheers, student performers, and an opportunity to meet with college and military representatives. Some of the technical schools, armed forces, colleges, and universities in attendance included Lamar University, Prairie View A&M University, University of Houston, Sam Houston State University, and the U.S. Army.

As part of the ceremony, the students signed a Commitment Card Pledge. A pledge to continue their education after high school. During the signing, former VECHS teacher, Coach Thomasina Gatson, gave the students some words of encouragement. Gatson explained, "it's not how you start, but how you finish."

Aldine ISD Board Member Connie Esparza closed out the ceremony and applauded each of the soon-to-be graduates for their commitment to their education and future beyond graduation.



Aldine ISD Campus Key Communicators are Sharing Their Campus Story in a New Way



Aldine ISD is celebrating the inaugural School Communicators Day on Friday, May 13. Last July, the Executive Board of the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) unanimously voted to officially recognize School Communicators Day on the second Friday in May beginning in 2022.

We celebrate School Communicators Day to thank those who help share the wonderful stories and accomplishments of our district. They are Information Literacy Specialists, Teachers, Counselors, and even Assistant Principals. School communicators work tirelessly

ly to ensure meaningful family and community involvement through communication to build support for schools and the students they serve. Members of the Aldine Key Communicator Network work closely with the Aldine ISD Office of Communications and serve as information liaisons between the campus and the school district. This important role provides the District with a unique way to amplify the district brand and strategic priorities. You are encouraged to find your campus key communicator or web manager and thank them for keeping your campus website and social media channels updated.





# STARLITE

By Gil Hoffman, Publisher

## Pages from an editor's notebook

With the COVID-19 Pandemic under control due to vaccinations and social distancing, many activities that were curtailed or cancelled last year have now returned to in-person events.

A few of these activities that kept our staff busy this past week are reviewed here. We welcome your event information too, please let us know what you are doing.

**Aldine Education Foundation Scholarships**

The AEF board and administration of AISD were happy to be able to come together last week and award scholarships to 200 graduating students, whose pictures are on page 1. Here is a look at the AEF folks:



**Highlands Rotary awards 18 scholarships**

Over in Highlands, the Rotary Club held their annual Scholarship Awards. They gave 18 students a total of \$32,000. The keynote speaker was Lee College president Dr. Lynda Villanueva, seen center in the photo:



**North Shore Rotary Fish Fry a huge success**

In North Shore, the annual Rotary Catfish Fry and Crawfish Boil, with its auctions and car raffle, had a great turnout for this benefit:



**Meet and Greet a run-off candidate Mealer**

Alexandra Mealer, one of two run-off Republican candidates for Harris County judge, was at Teapot Depot in Highlands Saturday:

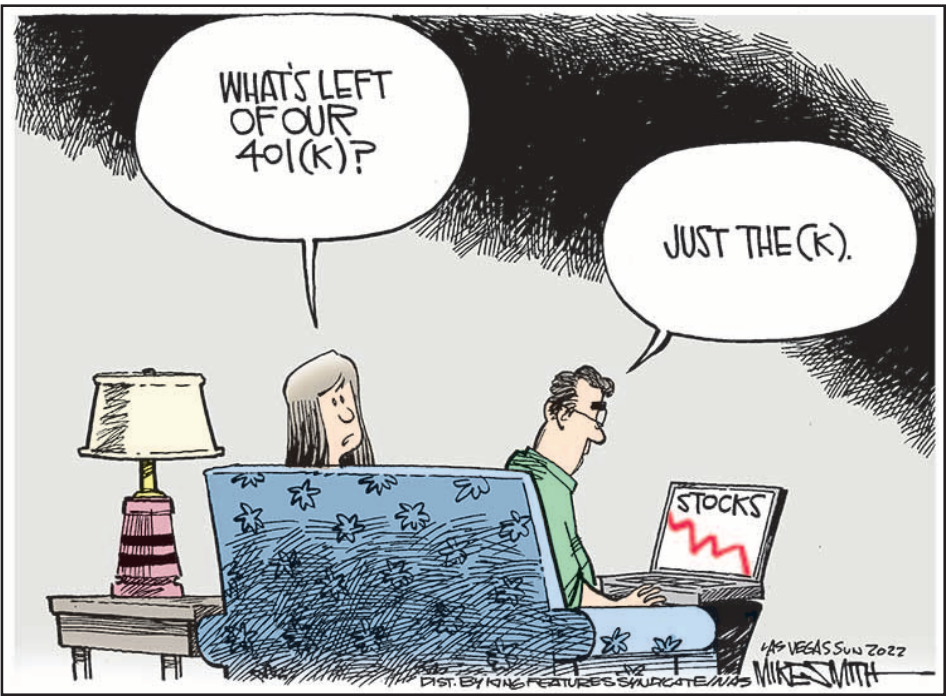


**Country Music at the Buckshot Jamboree**

To close out a busy week, a little Country Music was just the ticket. Buckshot Jamboree, with Buck and Shirley Sloan, plays every Saturday night at 7414 Hartman, just off old Beaumont Highway in Channelview. Below, Shirley accompanies Buck in a number with Danielle Kudelka as the vocalist:



That pretty much rounded out a busy week and weekend, but with an election coming up, and graduation for all nine school districts that we cover, it promises not to slow down until summer. I guess I'll need a few more pages in my notebook.





# STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



## Voters Back Property Tax Amendments

Texas voters overwhelmingly approved two proposed amendments on Saturday that will provide property tax relief to homeowners. According to the Austin American-Statesman, nearly 85% of voters supported Proposition 2, which raises the homestead exemption from \$25,000 to \$40,000= starting this year. That will save the average homeowner about \$175 in school property taxes.

Another proposition that easily passed corrects an oversight to a 2019 bill passed by the Legislature, which didn't apply to homeowners who are disabled or 65 and older, because their school taxes were already frozen. The state will reimburse school districts for tax funding lost by both propositions, with the Legislative Budget Board anticipating the amount at more than a half-billion dollars, according to the Statesman. Meanwhile, Texas voters get another opportunity to cast ballots starting May16 in primary runoff elections slated for both Republican and Democratic candidates. The election is May 24, with early voting running until May 20.Statewide runoff races are slated for attorney general and land commissioner in both parties, lieutenant governor and comptroller in the Democratic race, and railroad commissioner on the Republican side of the ticket.

More information can be found about particular races at votetexas.gov. Voters who cast ballots in one party's primary cannot vote in the other party's runoff election. However, voters who did not cast ballots in the primary can vote in either party's runoff.

### FIRST STATE CASE OF AVIAN INFLUENZA IN WILD BIRD CONFIRMED

A great horned owl at a rehabilitation facility in Wichita County was confirmed to have the virus by the National Veterinary



Services Laboratories, which notified the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

The potentially fatal HAI is highly contagious and transmits easily among wild and domestic bird species. It has been found in 38 states, and its symptoms include diarrhea, incoordination, lethargy, coughing and sneezing.

TPWD recommends enhanced biosecurity measures at labs that deal with wild or domestic birds, including quarantining birds showing symptoms of HPAI.While the risk of transmission to humans from birds is low, TPWD recommends taking basic precautions if contact with birds cannot be avoided, such as wearing gloves and face masks.

### SBA LOANS AVAILABLE FOR EASTLAND COMPLEX FIRE VICTIMS

The U.S. Small Business Administration has approved the state's request for a disaster declaration in communities affected by the recent Eastland Complex Fire, which means low-interest loans are available for qualified homeowners, renters, and businesses in affected communities. Counties included are Brown, Callahan, Comanche, Eastland, Erath, Palo Pinto, Shackelford, and Stephens.

"Thank you to the U.S. Small Business Administration for providing this much-needed financial assistance to communities affected by the Eastland

Complex Fire," Gov. Greg Abbott said.

Applicants can apply online or receive additional disaster assistance information at [disasterloanassistance.sba.gov](https://disasterloanassistance.sba.gov).

The potential for more wildfires continues, especially in the Texas Panhandle and the Trans Pecos, including areas near Canadian, Amarillo, Childress, Lubbock, Abilene, Big Spring, Midland and Alpine, according to the Texas A&M Forest Service. In the first week of May, the service responded to 26 requests for assistance on wildfires that burned more than 18,000 acres across the state. Burn bans are in effect in 132 Texas counties.

### LOOK TWICE FOR MOTORCYCLE

A motorcycle safety and public awareness campaign is underway, spearheaded by the Texas Department of Public Transportation. It urges motorists to look twice for motorcycles, especially at intersections- the most common collision site. Last year, 519 riders were killed and 2,318 were seriously injured in crashes in Texas. More than half of the fatalities result from collisions with other vehicles. "Drivers simply don't see the motorcycle or misjudge its distance and speed.

The small size of motorcycles can make them appear farther away when they're actually closer. The combination of congested roadways, distracted driving and the difficulty of seeing motorcycles in traffic has led to many preventable fatalities each year," a T+DOT news release said.

### COVID-19 CASES TICK UP SLIGHTLY IN STATE

The number of COVID-19 cases in Texas rose slightly in the past week to 21,105, according to the Coronavirus Resource Center at John Hopkins University, with 68 new deaths reported. The number of lab-confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations in the state was essentially unchanged, with 783 reported by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

The number of Texans who are fully vaccinated now stands at 17.615 million, or 60.4 percent of the state's population, while 6.783 million have received a booster shot, according to DSHS.Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches and Cedar Park.



# THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

## Friends like Angel

This time of year still hits me hard.

It is the anniversary of the death of my best girlfriend, Angel, who died too young and left an Angel-shaped hole in my life.

"Can it be six years?" I ask my husband, Peter, in disbelief. Angel died at 50 years old, six years ago.

In the years since she died, I have tried to fill the spot she occupied without success. I expect new friends to be like Angel, and this is, of course, unfair. I expect they will be willing to listen to whatever mad idea has entered my head at any hour of the day. I expect them to type as fast as they speak and keep up three conversations at once—usually with people on different sides of the globe.

While I considered Angel my best girlfriend, I had no illusions that she felt the same about me. Angel was rich in friends. There was no limit to her ability to support and encourage and cajole and occasionally berate her legions of friends into being more hopeful and less gloomy and better able to face the very particular challenges of their lives. Angel floated into and over so many lives. I was just lucky to be one of them.

Of course, she was no angel.

I remember her boyfriend, Alain, discovering she had thawed out all the baguettes he had been saving in the freezer. He was enraged and at a loss for words.

"She is not perfect!" he finally exploded.

This was not news to anyone who knew her. We did not seek her out because she was perfect. We sought her out because she was so unbelievably real.

There was no experience she would dismiss out of hand, no passion she did not think was worth exploring, no body of knowledge she felt was beyond her depth. Art and cooking and politics and string theory and Disney movies and bad '80s rock 'n' roll and fashion and trashy novels and whatever else the person she happened to be talking to was interested in—this is what Angel was interested in. She tried everything. She was the first to admit she was wrong—and she frequently was. But it never discouraged her from experiencing another thing, learning a bit more.

Today, I felt a little wicked.

I spoke the truth to a friend. I told him he had hurt me and that I didn't want to put up with his nonsense anymore. It's the sort of thing I don't often do. Usually, I tell myself how lucky I am and how much easier things are for me than for some people and how I should just forget about the slight. This time I did not. I felt a little guilty, I confess.

And I heard Angel laughing.

Angel would chide me for being so anxious, so careful, so worried about things—things that were never worth worrying about in the long run. She was all about speaking her truth. She was all about getting her needs met without shame or embarrassment. She has been dead for six years, and she is still teaching me. She was bigger and freer and more lively than any person I've known, which is why it is so hard to accept that she is no longer alive.

I don't need another friend like Angel, because there are no other friends like Angel. Besides, the goal was never to replicate her. The goal was to try—in my cautious, nervous, high-strung way—to become a bit more like her.

Till next time,  
Carrie  
For photos from the column and other info visit: [CarrieClasson.com](https://CarrieClasson.com).

# NORTHEAST NEWS

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SPANISH PAGE

Mensaje de la Superintendente, 10 de Mayo de 2022

Estimada comunidad de Aldine:

Ha comenzado la cuenta regresiva para el verano y sé que todos están trabajando duro para terminar el año con fuerza. Incluso con las muchas actividades en curso, estoy muy complacida de que pudimos tomarnos un tiempo para celebrar la Semana de Agradecimiento a los Maestros. Muchas gracias a todos los que se tomaron el tiempo la semana pasada para asegurarse de que todos nuestros maestros se sintieran valorados y apreciados por todo lo que hacen para ayudar a nuestros estudiantes a tener éxito.

¡Aún no hemos terminado de celebrar a nuestros héroes escolares! El miércoles 11 de mayo celebramos el Día Nacional de la Enfermera Escolar para honrar a las enfermeras escolares que mantienen a nuestros estudiantes sanos y listos para aprender. El 11 de mayo también da inicio a la Semana Nacional de la Policía, un esfuerzo de colaboración de muchas organizaciones dedicadas a honrar a la comunidad policial de Estados Unidos. Y por último, pero ciertamente no menos importante, el 13 de mayo celebramos nuestro primer Día de Comunicadores Escolares para agradecer a quienes ayudan a compartir las maravillosas historias y los logros de nuestro distrito. Para aquellos de ustedes en una escuela, los animo a encontrar el comunicador clave o el administrador web de su campus y agradecerles por mantener actualizados el sitio web y las redes sociales de su plantel. Entonces, a los héroes escolares de este mes: ¡sus contribuciones son muy apreciadas y no podríamos hacer lo que hacemos sin su apoyo! ¡Gracias de parte de todos nosotros aquí en Aldine!

Finalmente, me gustaría



compartir una nueva actualización emocionante en nuestro distrito que refleja nuestro compromiso continuo de brindar opciones y oportunidades para nuestros estudiantes y sus familias. El próximo otoño, lanzaremos Hoffman College Prep, un nuevo programa de preparación para la universidad en la Escuela Intermedia Hoffman. Estamos entusiasmados de ofrecer esta nueva opción a través de nuestros programas de escuelas de elección o School Choice y alentamos a las familias con estudiantes elegibles a obtener más información y considerar la posibilidad de presentar una solicitud. ¡Les deseo a todos una semana maravillosa y productiva!

Con orgullo Aldine,  
Dra. La Tonya M. Goffney Superintendente

PRÓXIMOS EVENTOS

Mayo: dé clic aquí para obtener detalles y fechas sobre las pruebas STAAR.

21 de mayo: Las 12 escuelas primarias organizarán un evento de inscripción con personal que ayudará a las familias elegibles con la preinscripción. Dé clic aquí para mayores detalles.

En curso hasta el 31 de mayo: La preinscripción para los estudiantes elegibles de PreK3, PreK4 y kindergarten está abierta para el año escolar 2022-2023. Dé clic aquí para detalles de cómo inscribirse.

Las experiencias de aprendizaje de verano

comienzan en junio: Dé clic aquí para aprender más sobre las diferentes oportunidades de aprendizaje que ofrece Aldine ISD a estudiantes de PreK4-12.

CELEBRACIONES

Mayo Mes de la Herencia Asiática y del Islén del Pacífico de la Herencia Estadounidense de Asia y el Pacífico

11 de mayo: Día Nacional de la Enfermera Escolar (NASN)

13 de mayo: Día del Comunicador Escolar

15-21 de mayo: Semana Nacional de la Policía

18 de mayo: Día Nacional del Patólogo del Habla

RECORDATORIOS

El Departamento de Relaciones con la Familia y la Comunidad de Aldine inauguró la Universidad de la Familia y la Comunidad. La programación es gratuita y está abierta a todas las familias de Aldine. Dé clic aquí para aprender más.

El estado requiere a los estudiantes sénior solicitar ayuda económica para graduarse, dé clic en los enlaces de solicitud FAFSA o TASFA.

El estado requiere que todos los estudiantes universitarios que ingresan tomen la Evaluación de la Iniciativa de Éxito de Texas (TSI). Dé clic aquí para mayor información.

Las principales prioridades de Aldine ISD continúan siendo la seguridad y el éxito académico de todos los estudiantes.

El distrito publicará toda la información relacionada con sus operaciones y actualizaciones en [www.aldineisd.org/health-alerts](http://www.aldineisd.org/health-alerts).

Las familias elegibles de Texas que perdieron el acceso a comidas gratuitas o a precio reducido durante el año escolar 2021-2022 debido a la pandemia de COVID-19 recibirán beneficios de alimentos P-EBT. Dé clic aquí para mayor información.

Davis y MacArthur ganan puestos en los playoffs de Beisbol

Aldine ISD aseguró tres de los cuatro puestos de playoffs en el juego del Distrito 14-6A y competirá en los Playoffs Estatales de Beisbol clase 6A.

Bajo la dirección del entrenador en jefe Ernest Gonzales, MacArthur High se enfrentará a Willis en dos distritos el viernes 6 de mayo en el Lansford Baseball Field en Aldine ISD. El juego comenzará a las 7 p.m.

Bajo la dirección del entrenador en jefe Jason Crawford, Davis High se

enfrentará a The Woodlands en una serie de dos de tres a partir del viernes 6 de mayo. El Juego 1 se jugará en Humble High School y comenzará a las 6 p.m. El Juego 2 será el sábado 7 de mayo en Humble High School y comenzará al mediodía. Si es necesario un tercer juego, comenzará 30 minutos después de la conclusión del Juego 2.

Bajo la dirección del entrenador en jefe Johnny Troups, Aldine High se enfrentará a Oak Ridge en el

distrito bidistrital. El Juego 1 será el viernes 6 de mayo a las 4 p.m., seguido del Juego 2 a las 6 p.m. Si es necesario un tercer juego, se jugará el sábado 7 de mayo a la 1 p.m. en el Lansford Baseball Field en Aldine ISD.

Las entradas estarán a la venta para todos los juegos en la puerta, excepto los juegos jugados en Aldine ISD. Esas entradas se venderán en línea. Los boletos cuestan \$ 3 para adultos y \$ 2 para estudiantes.

Estudiantes de K-12 pueden viajar en METRO GRATIS este verano

El verano se acerca rápidamente y los estudiantes estarán fuera de la escuela. Esto significa que habrá más tiempo para la diversión del verano y la exploración de la ciudad de Houston.

Del 1 de junio al 31 de agosto de 2022, los estudiantes de K-12 y universitarios con una tarjeta de tarifa METRO Q® con descuento viajan gratis en los siguientes servicios:

- Autobús local
- Autobús Park & Ride
- METRO Rail

METRO Rapid METRO curb2curb

Conviértalo en un verano de diversión explorando muchos destinos populares en el centro de Houston y sus alrededores, incluidos el zoológico de Houston, el Distrito de los Museos, Discovery Green y más.

Puede inscribirse para obtener una tarjeta de tarifa METRO Q® con descuento a través de METRO Online RideStore. Después de registrarse, su tarjeta

será enviada por correo postal de los Estados Unidos. Durante su transacción, se le pedirá que cargue documentos específicos como prueba de elegibilidad. Los estudiantes de K-12 deben proporcionar uno de los siguientes para registrarse:

- Identificación actual de la escuela
- Boleta de calificaciones
- Horario de clases

Estudiantes de Aldine ISD arrasan en concurso de Fotografía del Día de la Ley de la Asociación de Abogados de Houston

Los estudiantes de Aldine ISD se llevaron a casa los principales premios en el concurso del Día de la Ley de la Asociación de Abogados de Houston 2022.

El Día del Derecho es una celebración nacional y una oportunidad para participar en discusiones sobre la ley y su papel en la sociedad. Ha sido patrocinado y promovido por American Bar Association y Houston Bar Association desde 1958, cuando el presidente Dwight Eisenhower lo designó feriado nacional. El Colegio de Abogados de Houston se une a los colegios de abogados locales y estatales de todo el país para patrocinar actividades alrededor del 1 de mayo. Aunque la celebración se llama «Semana de la Ley», abarca mucho más. Las escuelas de Aldine ISD celebran el Día de la Ley con diversas actividades y visitas del Colegio de Abogados de Houston.

Este año, el Día de la Ley (1 de mayo) se centró en el tema «Hacia una unión más perfecta: la Constitución en tiempos de cambio». La Constitución es un documento que sirve como modelo para el gobierno. Delega poder, articula derechos y ofrece mecanismos para el cambio. La legislación, los fallos judiciales, las



enmiendas, los abogados y «nosotros, el pueblo» se han basado en esas palabras originales a través de las generaciones para intentar hacer realidad la «Unión más perfecta».

Felicitaciones a nuestros ganadores del concurso Aldine ISD Houston Bar Association Law Day.

Concurso de carteles Grados 3-5:

1er Lugar – Trearm Woodward – Anderson Academy (Profesor Tony McMillan)

\* 2º Lugar en el estado

Ganadores del Concurso de Fotografía:

2º Lugar – Yanira Aguirre – Victory Early College High School (Maestra Tommie Sanders)

3er Lugar – Daisy Espinoza – Carver High

School – (Profesor Matt Kirkpatrick)

Menciones honoríficas de Carver High School: Alexandra Díaz, Darius Robinson y Mariana Vásquez (Maestro Matt Kirkpatrick)

El concurso de ensayos de la Semana de la Ley se estableció a fines de la década de 1970; el concurso de carteles se estableció en 1986; el programa de lectura escolar se estableció en 2003, al igual que el programa de diálogo, y el concurso de fotografía se estableció en 2012. Los concursos de necesidades especiales comenzaron en 2011. El Día de las Necesidades Especiales en el Palacio de Justicia comenzó en 2013.



Gran Exito STEMfest 2022

Más de 200 estudiantes se inscribieron para participar en STEMfest 2022, celebrado el sábado 30 de abril en el Centro de Recursos y Desarrollo Profesional de Bamberg.

El personal celebró todo lo relacionado con STEAM con actividades prácticas llenas de diversión para estudiantes desde el jardín de infantes hasta el grado 12. El objetivo era involucrar a los estudiantes en actividades STEM, sacar a relucir su genio y fomentar el amor por las áreas STEM en un evento lleno de diversión.

STEMfest fue otra oportunidad que Aldine ISD brindó a estudiantes de to

das las edades para aprender o estar expuestos a STEM y para que los estudiantes mayores mostraran o pusieran a prueba sus conocimientos y habilidades en el Escaparate de la Exposición o compitieron en tres diferentes categorías: Aldine Creates (medios digitales), Aldine Codes y Aldine Engineers.

«STEMfest sirvió como una forma de eliminar cualquier falsa idea preconcebida sobre STEM y alentarlos a participar en STEM en la escuela y pensar en las posibilidades de carrera en los campos de STEM. Agradezco a las familias que llevaron a sus

estudiantes a participar, ¡y quiero felicitar a todos los ganadores! Fue realmente una experiencia de aprendizaje divertida para todos», dijo la Dra. Joceyln McDonald, directora del programa de aplicaciones tecnológicas y STEM.

Los socios y patrocinadores del evento incluyeron BootUp, Microsoft TEALS, Osmo, Sam Lab, Sphero, Direct Waste Solutions y #TechItUp, LLC. Además, el actor, comediante, artista y filántropo Kalum Johnson será el maestro de ceremonias del evento. La celebridad local empodera a los jóvenes a través de su Fundación Big Steppers.





# Russia may want to trade Griner for criminal in U.S. custody

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the top of Russia's prisoner exchange wish list and has been linked repeatedly in the Russian state media with potential swaps involving jailed Americans that haven't come to fruition.

WNBA star and two-time Olympic gold medalist Brittney Griner leaves a courtroom after a hearing, in Khimki just outside Moscow, Russia, Friday, May 13, 2022. Griner, a two-time Olympic gold medalist, was detained at the Moscow airport in February after vape cartridges containing oil derived from cannabis were allegedly found in her luggage, which could carry a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. (AP Photo/Alexander Zemlianichenko)

WNBA star and two-time Olympic gold medalist Brittney Griner leaves a courtroom after a hearing, in Khimki just outside Moscow on Friday. Griner, a two-time Olympic gold medalist, was detained at the Moscow airport in February after vape cartridges containing oil derived from cannabis were allegedly found in her luggage, which could carry a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. (AP Photo/Alexander Zemlianichenko)



Griner in Russian Detention in February.

U.S. ambassador to Russia John Sullivan visited Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow on Wednesday, but the State Department did not disclose what they discussed. A spokesperson for the State Department declined comment to Yahoo Sports on Friday when asked if negotiations for Griner's release were underway and if Russia was seeking a trade for Bout.

"Due to operational and privacy concerns, we are unable to discuss specific details," the spokesperson said.

While one Russian state

media report quoted an unnamed source who described a potential Griner-for-Bout exchange as "likely," experts in Russian diplomacy viewed that skeptically. William Pomeranz, a professor of Russian law and the acting director of the Kennan Institute, told Yahoo Sports that he interprets the reports as a signal that "Russia really wants to make that trade" but cautioned that they give no indication of the U.S.'s willingness.

"This is Russia saying, 'Wouldn't this be a great idea?'" Pomeranz said.

"This isn't the U.S. saying they're interested. We've had other opportunities to get rid of Viktor Bout in the past and we haven't done it."

Griner has been behind bars since Feb. 17 when she flew into a Moscow airport and Russian customs officials allegedly found vape cartridges containing hashish oil in her luggage. She is under investigation for the large-scale transportation of drugs and faces up to 10 years in a Russian prison if convicted.

Griner appeared at a hearing in a courtroom outside Moscow on Friday and had her pre-trial detention extended by a month. Photos taken at the hearing show Griner leaving the courtroom handcuffed, the hood of an orange sweatshirt pulled over her head and her signature dreadlocks peeking out.

Last month, the U.S. and Russia completed a prisoner swap despite deteriorating relations between the two nations. Trevor Reed, the former Marine who the U.S. says was wrongfully detained in Russia for almost three years, came home in exchange for Konstantin Yaroshenko, a Russian pilot convicted of drug trafficking.

The release of Reed leaves at least two Americans in Russia who the U.S. classifies as wrongfully detained: Griner and Paul Whelan, another former Marine sentenced to 16 years on spying charges. Their cases are now in the hands of the Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs, which focuses on negotiating the release of American hostages and others deemed to be wrongfully detained in foreign countries.

A 1-for-1 exchange for Griner could



Griner played for TeamUSA in the Olympics

be especially unpalatable for the U.S. if Russia insists on Bout in return. Bout is a far more notorious figure than Yaroshenko, having inspired Nicolas Cage's character in the 2005 movie "Lord of War." Bout's arms trafficking history also makes the allegations against Griner appear minimal by comparison.

Former top Pentagon official Evelyn Farkas hopes the Biden administration explores all options to get Griner and Whelan home, but she points out there is a downside to prisoner exchanges.

"This is the kind of situation that we want to avoid," said Farkas, the executive director of the McCain Institute, "because the Russians will continue to seize Americans as trade bait if we agree to such swaps."

## ENTERTAINMENT

### Amber Waves

SON, THE OLDER I GET, IT SEEMS THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE THEY STAY THE SAME.

FOLKS STILL COMPLAIN ABOUT GAS PRICES AND THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY AND POLITICS.

IS MOM ON YOUR CASE TO GET THE YARD WORK DONE?

THAT ONE IS AS CONSTANT AS THE NORTH STAR.

by Dave T. Phipps

### R.F.D.

THIS IS THAT NEW SHOE STORE I WAS TELLIN' YOU ABOUT, MILLIE.

IT'S WOODFIELD'S FIRST FULL SERVICE SHOE STORE.

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by Mike Marland

### The Spats

THEY TOLD ME I COULDN'T BE AN ORGAN DONOR!!

WHY NOT?

THEY SAID I DIDN'T HAVE THE GUTS.

by Jeff Pickering

**Weekly SUDOKU**

by Linda Thistle

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

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

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦**

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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**HOCUS-FOCUS**

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Sun is missing. 2. Ear flap is missing. 3. Camera cord is shorter. 4. Stick is missing. 5. Arm patch is missing. 6. Stripe is missing.

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May 16, 2022 Posting Date

## King Crossword

**ACROSS**

1 Battery fluid  
5 Sandwich meat  
8 Barks  
12 Leaf  
13 Out — limb  
14 Ganges wrap  
15 Warner —  
16 Naughtiness  
18 Flashing disco light  
20 Trumpet's cousin  
21 Legal wrong  
23 Wee dollop  
24 Sushi bar bowlful  
28 NYC gallery  
31 Dos Passos trilogy  
32 Fizzy drinks  
34 Bankroll  
35 Humorist Sahl  
37 Chooses the wrong actor  
39 Prattle  
41 Unpaid TV spots (Abbr.)  
42 John of "Full House"  
45 Morals  
49 Blunders  
51 "Damn Yankees" vamp  
52 Celestial bear  
53 Hosp. section  
54 McGregor of

**DOWN**

1 LAPD alerts  
2 Shopper's aid  
3 Mr. Stravinsky  
4 Explorer  
5 Where the school day starts  
6 Blackbird  
7 Fem. counterpart  
8 Hindu retreat  
9 Colorful arcs  
10 Gratis  
11 Winnow  
17 Massachusetts cape  
19 Pear choice  
22 Dutch bloom  
24 Silent  
25 Equal (Pref.)  
26 Sea of the North Atlantic  
27 Refuses, as an offer  
29 Wrestling sur-

film  
Euclidean subj.  
Burst  
Orange veggies  
face  
Billboards  
"Shoo!"  
Large gong  
Actress Judd  
Fluffy neck-piece  
Overconfident  
Lose energy  
Omit  
Hawkeyes' home  
Chowder morsel  
Without  
Author Umberto

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**Trivia test**

by Fifi Rodriguez

- GEOGRAPHY: Which country in Africa is the largest in land area?
- MUSIC: What was the original name of the punk rock band Green Day?
- U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president formally declared the executive mansion to be the White House?
- ART: In which major city would you find the Tate Modern museum?
- MYTHOLOGY: What is the name of the Greek goddess of revenge?
- U.S. STATES: Which state is the only one that doesn't have a mandatory seat belt law?
- MOVIES: What is the Dude's favorite drink in "The Big Lebowski"?
- FOOD & DRINK: What is alburmen?
- MEDICAL: What is a more common name for a transient ischemic attack?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is an ibex?

Solution time: 22 mins.

**Answers**

King Crossword

1. Algeria; 2. Sweet Children; 3. Theodore Roosevelt; 4. London, England; 5. Nemes; 6. New Hampshire; 7. White Russian; 8. Egg white; 9. Mini-stroke; 10. A wild goat

Trivia Test Answers



# CHURCH PAGE

## BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey —

1. Is the book of Ezra in the Old Testament, New Testament or neither?
2. From Galatians 5:22-23, the fruit of the Spirit is made up of how many traits? 3, 4, 9, 12
3. Which son of David had been drinking much wine when he was killed? Amnon, Kileab, Absalom, Shephatiah
4. From Psalms 114, what do mountains skip like? Rocks, Children, Rams, Stars



*Flowers appear on the earth;  
the season of singing has come,  
the cooing of doves is heard  
in our land.*

Song of Songs 2:12





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|--|---|

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## HCC Northeast names Michael Edwards as new President

HOUSTON (May 11, 2022)—Dr. Michael Edwards has been named President of Houston Community College (HCC) Northeast College, pending approval by the Board of Trustees on May 16.

Dr. Edwards, a 25-year employee of the district, had been serving as Interim President of HCC Northeast since December 7, 2021.

In his distinguished career, Dr. Edwards has held positions as Associate Vice Chancellor for Systems Operations, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Communications and Government Relations, Executive Director for Institutional Effectiveness, Interim President of Coleman College for Health Sciences, Executive Dean for Instruction and Student Services, Dean of Workforce Development, and President of the HCC Faculty Senate.

His numerous awards and recognitions include the National Institute for Organizational and Staff Development (NI-SOD) Award for Excellence in Teaching, the Certificate in Organizational Innovation from the University of California at Berkeley Haas School of Business, member of the University of Houston at Clear Lake Board of Sociology and Criminology, Quality Texas Foundation examiner for continuous

quality improvement, Commendation for Distinguished Service from the HCC Board of Trustees, and graduate from the Future Leaders Institute of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).



DR. MICHAEL EDWARDS

“Dr. Edwards is the right person at the right time to serve as President of HCC Northeast College,” said Chancellor Cesar Maldonado, “In his significant role as Interim President, he has provided leadership that drives student success and promotes the ongoing development of instructional pathways partly made available through the Northeast College Centers of Excellence.

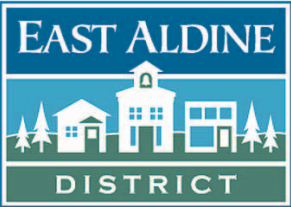
“Equally important is his demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with local community leaders and business and industry partners, as HCC advances its mission throughout the community at-large.”

Since assuming the Interim President role, Dr. Edwards has maintained strong strategic and operational focus, while notably achieving significant progress on

several major initiatives highlighted by work advancing the new Resiliency Center of Excellence and the Resiliency Operations Center (ROC). He continues to provide leadership through multi-divisional team efforts and is reimagining the Acres Homes Campus to bring comprehensive improvement to the North Forest Campus and the overall student experience.

Dr. Edwards holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Legal Studies from Rice University and a Doctorate in Jurisprudence from the University of Texas.

“His background in leadership and overall knowledge of our organizational systems are distinct advantages that he brings to this vital role,” Chancellor Maldonado said.



## East Aldine District COMMUNITY NEWS

### Leadership group digs in to revive damaged park

Thanks to local professionals in a Leadership North Houston class, a safe-family park will re-open behind the Buckner Family Hope Center in the heart of the East Aldine Management District.

The park, at 4700 Aldine Mail Route Rd., sustained heavy damage from vandalism and from the huge ice storm that paralyzed the Houston area in February 2021. Several large trees died and intruders cut down others for use as firewood.

The sub-freezing temperatures caused some long-forgotten underground pipes to burst. A section of the 6-acre park land became an unattractive, slushy “ice rink” due to 22,000 gallons of water that spewed unchecked for days.



Now a class of leadership trainees has carried out a clean-up mission that allows the Buckner Family Hope Center charity to schedule a Spring Break Wilderness Survival Camp for Aldine-area youths at the revived park. Buckner teen program coordinator Jade Paredez, a Leadership North Houston member, proposed the park clean-up to her class last summer. In

late January, the class members were joined by Logcutters, Inc. of North Houston to clear the space. The class also is raising funds for a gravel pathway that will wind through the first phase of the redeveloped park.

“The goal for Leadership North Houston was just to get this park back into a usable, safe space,” Paredez said. “They helped us get the Logcutter company to remove three downed trees, and they cut down another tree that was already dead. They came out and helped their community.”

Paredez has recruited local Eagle Scouts and firefighters to help lead the Wilderness Survival Camp, scheduled March 14-17, during the Aldine Independent School District’s spring break. The camp will teach tech-savvy kids how to get by without Google Maps. Classes will include how to use a compass and a map, tie knots, build a shelter, safely start a campfire, and learn about wildlife.

Although those skills might not seem vital to urban-oriented youth of East Aldine, the program is aimed at triggering “those light bulb moments” that can fire imagination or introduce new ways of thinking, said Shonice Reed, Buckner’s Aldine executive director.

“One of our goals is to make youths aware that there is opportunity in learning. We provide opportunities that you may not normally get. Those skills, you may not need them right now, but you never know that’s going to happen,” Reed said. “We want to draw some people in, now that the park is cleaned up,” Paredez said.

The camp will be open from noon to 4 p.m. each day to boys and girls ages 7 to 17. There will be a \$25 registration fee.

As part of her participation in Leadership North Houston, which is sponsored by Lone Star College, Paredez has developed a four-phase park redevelopment plan.

It includes a recent grant application to restore electricity to the tract, a key component for ensuring safety.

Her ambitious plan includes rebuilding a theater-style seating area for outdoor education, as well as family seating areas that won’t be susceptible to fires in ice storms. The goals include a xeriscape — a cactus-filled and “stone-stacking” garden. Outdoor games like huge dice and corn-hole planks would round out family-oriented activities.

Buckner Family Hope Center has a long history in the East Aldine community. It was founded about 30 years ago as the Aldine Youth Center by community leader Sylvia Bolling.

In 2012, the Dallas-based Buckner Foundation “came and knocked on the door,” Reed said. “And Sylvia realized it was a way to carry out her work in an even greater capacity.” The 140-year-old foundation runs charitable programs internationally.

“East Aldine is a family-oriented community,” Reed said, explaining the non-profit’s role. “But these are families that are struggling to get by sometimes. And the pandemic worsened that.”

Being close to the BakerRipley social service center campus in the East Aldine Town Center “is wonderful,” Reed said: “If there is something we can’t do, we may be able to refer some of our clients over there. We are always working together.”

— by Anne Marie Kilday

