

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Public Safety, P. 1, 6
- Father's Family Fun Day, Pages 1, 8
- Library News, Page 2
- Aldine ISD School News, Page 3
- Gun Violence, Page 4
- Spanish Page 5
- Market Place, Page 5
- Entertainment, Page 6

NORTHEAST NEWS

Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 46 Years
VOL. 46, NO. 24 TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2022 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

Keith Wiess Fishing Pier



Fish at the Pier June 25. See Story

NEWS NOTES

Aldine Region Comprehensive Study (ARCS) Meetings

Tuesday, June 21
6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Aldine High School
11101 Airline Drive,
Houston, TX 77037

Thursday, June 23
6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
East Aldine Management District
2909 E. Aldine Amphitheatre Drive, Houston, TX 77039

Saturday, June 25
10 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
James Driver Park Basketball Pavilion (Outdoors)
10918 Bentley Street, Houston, TX 77093

METRO offers Free Bus Rides to students this summer

Students Ride FREE this summer on METRO buses and Light Rail, with a Discounted METRO Q Fare Card.

Free Rides are from June 1 to August 31, 2022.

Learn more about this Free Ride at RideMETRO.org/Free or scan the QR code on page 6 of this issue.

Sheriff's Storefront Office has Reopened

The Harris County Sheriff's Office Storefront at the East Aldine Town Center Building has reopened to the public. The office is located in the East Aldine District Building, on East Aldine Amphitheater Drive, off Aldine Mail Route.

La Oficina del Harris County Sheriff en East Aldine Town Center Ya está ABIERTA.

Two Big Father's Day events in Aldine

Family Activities for a full day, and Fishing in the Evening on June 25

By Gilbert Hoffman

ALDINE – For Father's Day the East Aldine District has planned a day full of events for families and fathers this Saturday, June 25 at several venues. Calling the celebration "Father's Family Fun Day" it will start at 3pm at the East Aldine Amphitheatre on the Aldine Mail Route campus, and include events at the Lone Star College retention lake, and the fishing pier at Keith Wiess park.

Organizers say most events will occur at the Amphitheatre and the lawn in front of the pavilion, including a boxing demonstration, tent build-



Beat the Heat at the East Aldine District Father's Family Fun Day on Saturday, June 25. Family activities will occur at the Amphitheatre, the lake behind Lone Star College, the fishing piers at Keith Wiess Park, and the Splash Pad seen here.

ing contest, rock climbing, music with a DJ, food trucks, and more fun activities. You will even be able to get a free haircut, to look your best for Father's Day!

A boat race will start with actual boat building in the Fab Lab shops at BakerRipley, and then the race will take place on the retention lake behind Lone Star College. Fathers and their children will work together as a team in this event.

With record heat expected this weekend, the District reminds you to bring chairs and blankets for sit-

Continued. See Father's Fun Day, Page 8

Families enjoy Summer Fair event

Safer Together with COVID shots, Zumba, music, food, prizes

By Julieta Paita

The Summer Fair was part of the Safer Together campaign aimed to combat Covid-19 by increasing the percentage of vaccinated people in the Aldine and surrounding areas.

The Safer Together campaign will end the last day of June and the Summer Fair was one the main events which marks the ending of the campaign.

Providers in the medical

field were on site giving information about their services. There was also entertainment for adults with a zumba session and kids with a bouncy house, musical chairs, pop the balloon with legs and sack race games where every winner received a prize. Gifts to participants were given throughout the event when they registered for the free raffle.

Bonding Against Adversity would like to give a big thanks to all of the sponsors who made this event possible, specifically to East Aldine Management District for

Continued. See Summer Fair, Page 8



The winner of the TV Drawing at the Summer Fair, SANDRA LUNA, gets a big congratulations from BAA Exec. Director Mariana Sanchez.

Aldine Safety meeting hears Pct2 Garcia, Sheriff



Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia, and Sheriff Ed Gonzalez presented information about public safety in Aldine to the meeting group last Saturday, and answered questions.

By Gilbert Hoffman

ALDINE – Residents of the Aldine area gathered at the East Aldine District building last Saturday, after the Summer Fair event, to hear Commissioner Adrian Garcia and Sheriff Ed Gonzalez update the community on efforts underway to reduce gun violence and other types of crimes.

Billed as a meeting to discuss Public Safety, Garcia went into a lengthy dissertation on what that term actually means, and what investment the County has made to reduce crime and increase safety. His main point was that to achieve improvement in Public Safety, you have to view three components: Cops, Courts, and Community. He then detailed actions that the county and his precinct have taken to improve safety in each category.

Garcia started with a video about ShotSpotter, a new technology that allows the Sheriff's deputies to locate gunfire precisely, and know what type of gun has been set off. Shotspotter is a trial program, for 3 years, costing the Precinct about \$780,000. The Sheriff said the program has been very effective, and in the first year resulted in about 55 arrests and 44 guns removed from the streets.

Garcia also discussed

Continued. See Public Safety Meeting, Page 6

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NEWS
NOTES

Aldine ISD
statement on
School Security

In the wake of the mass school shooting in Uvalde, Texas last week, the Aldine ISD District has issued the following statement about their security protocols:
The safety and security of Aldine ISD's students and staff will always be the district's top priority. To that end, the district is fortunate to have its own full-time Police Department that includes officers who are assigned to all high schools and middle schools, and patrol the other campuses and district facilities. Aldine PD officers are on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Because of this, Aldine ISD does not implement the school marshal program. The only authorized firearms on our campuses are carried by fully-licensed police officers.
All 82 campuses have metal detectors that are used everyday during the school year. All high schools and middle schools have police officers assigned to their campuses.

COMMUNITY
WATCH

Large Trash Fire in The Eastex - Jensen Area

Houston Fire Department battled a large trash fire on Wednesday morning, June 8th starting around 10:45. The fire was located at 4515 Terrell, Houston 77093 according to the department.
There were no reported injuries in the fire fight, and the amount of property saved was not available. The cause was listed as "Unintentional (abandoned or discarded materials or products)."
Firefighters arrived on scene within five minutes to find a large trash fire about a half-acre in size. Crews made an attack on the fire and contained it from spreading. Rehab was requested for the firefighters due to the heat. They extinguished the fire within about an hour and a half. Crews from Stations 32, 19, 34, 56 and 30 responded to this incident.

Fatal Crash at 11000 Homestead Road

Houston police are investigating a fatal hit-and-run crash at 11000 Homestead Road about 10:10 p.m. on Saturday (June 11).
The identity of a deceased male victim, 34, and a female victim, 32, are pending verification by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences.
HPD Vehicular Crimes Division Sergeant D. Rose and Officer J. Trevino reported:
A red Chevrolet Corvette and a black GMC pickup truck were racing at high rates of speed at the above address when the Corvette struck the pickup truck, causing the truck to leave the roadway and strike multiple trees. Houston Fire Department paramedics pronounced the male driver and female passenger of the truck deceased at the scene.
The driver of the Corvette did not stop to render aid and parked at a nearby residence. Investigators interviewed the owner of the Corvette. After consulting with members of the Harris County District Attorney's Office, it was determined no charges would be filed at the time, pending further investigation.
Anyone with information in this case or on the wanted driver is urged to contact the HPD Hit and Run Unit at 713-247-4072 or speak anonymously to Crime Stoppers at 713-222-TIPS.

COUNTY
MATTERS

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo



10% payment now required on most Bail Bonds

Harris County, TX — TODAY, after emotional remarks from family members of victims of violent crime, the Harris County Bail Bond Board voted to approve a proposal offered by Treasurer Dylan Osborne to enforce a 10% minimum down payment for some defendants accused of specific violent crimes to be bonded out of jail. The action comes after a Houston Chronicle investigation revealed that some bond companies charge much less than 10% or offer payment plans to bail defendants out of jail. Commissioner Adrian Garcia originally suggested the measure via Resolution at Harris County Commissioners Court that was approved by a unanimous, bipartisan 5-0 vote.
Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia issued the following statement:
"This is a victory for victims and a victory for public safety. It's also a victory for grieving families like the Castro's and the Alvarez's. Since hearing how some companies accept fractions of the standard 10% for bond, we knew we must act. When someone is accused of a violent crime but gets out of jail because they are allowed to literally pay pennies to gain their freedom, it puts the loved ones of victims in a state of fear. I recognize this does not fix all of our public safety concerns, but it is a step in the right direction, and it will be a powerful tool. I am so proud to have led on this issue by working alongside some of the families of victims, and I thank the members for their votes in favor of this move."
The rule mandates that a minimum percentage down payment be made by defendants or their families to secure the release of people accused of the following crimes:
Murder
Continuous Sexual Abuse of Child or Disabled Individual
Attempted murder
Indecency with a Child
Capital Murder
Sexual Assault
Aggravated Kidnapping
Repeated Violation of Certain Court Orders/Conditions of Bond for Family Violence, Child Abuse, Sexual Assault or Abuse, Stalking, etc.
Engaging in Organized Crime Involving a Serious Violent or Sexual Offense
Continuous Violence Against the Family
Aggravated Assault
Aggravated Robbery
Trafficking & Continuous Trafficking of Persons
Sexual Act with a Child

BakerRipley aids Harris County Child Tax Credit Initiative

In April, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo released new data on the County's efforts to increase adoption of the Biden-Harris Administration's expanded child tax credit — a tax benefit designed to help families raising children. Through a county partnership with BakerRipley, Harris County helped local low-income families claim over \$10 million in tax credits — money that may otherwise have gone unclaimed and will now be used to help our local economy grow.
In October last year, Harris County Commissioners Court approved \$500,000 to help residents understand how to apply for and receive additional tax credits through a partnership with BakerRipley. The funds hired additional staff, supported grassroots outreach, and allowed BakerRipley to launch new mobile tax centers, taking tax support into neighborhoods to reach families who need it most. Overall, the County's initiative helped more than 6,000 families file their taxes at no cost and with expert volunteer support, helping them avoid filing fees.



PORTABLE A/C PROGRAM

ONE UNIT PER FAMILY

CALL TO SEE IF YOU QUALIFY

Commissioner Garcia is committed to keeping seniors safe during the hot summer months and will be offering 100 portable A/C units to seniors who need it the most. Units will be available on a first come, first served basis.

QUALIFICATIONS

• Disabled Persons
• 60 years and older
• Fixed / low income
• Must Reside in Precinct 2
• Must APPLY by June 15th

The AC Units will be offered to qualifying seniors or individuals with disabilities who have not received a unit from any other program.

Contact the Precinct 2 Call Center to see if you qualify
713-274-2222



HIGH MEADOWS LIBRARY NEWS

SUMMER READING PROGRAM:
Sign up for Summer Reading today! All throughout the summer, the library is celebrating literacy through our Oceans of Possibilities Summer Reading Program. Track books read, activities, and attend library programs for some fun prizes. You can register online by visiting hcpl.beanstack.org or come into the library. When you register, come to the library and pick up your free pass to the Children's Museum.

BOOK CLUB:
You're invited to our June book club on June 27th at 6pm. We will be reading L.A. Weather by Maria Amparo Escandon. We have copies available for checkout if you'd like to join.

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.

MAKE & PLAY MONDAYS:
Teens are welcome to a weekly program with a different challenge, craft, games or other fun activities each week! Every Monday at 3pm.

MAKING WAVES CRAFT CLUB:
If you're looking for fun projects for the kids – than the Library is the place for you! Join us every Wednesday at 3pm for a fun ocean themed craft.

UNDER THE SEA STORYTIME:
Our storytime has been revamped for the summer. Join us every Thursday at 11:15am for Under the Sea Storytime!

MANGA CLUB:
School is out but Manga Club is still in session! Stop by every Thursday at 3pm for Manga Club!

STORYBOOK OPERA: ARMADILLO'S DREAM:
Everyone is invited to watch Storybook Opera on Tuesday, June 21st at 11am. Houston Grand Opera is proud to introduce a new storybook, The Armadillo's Dream, by Dennis Arrowsmith and illustrated by Eduard Hakobyan. Based on a Bolivian folktale and written by HGO's own Dennis Arrowsmith, this inspiring and timely tale stars an armadillo named Sandy who lives on the Houston bayou and dreams of singing. Though discouraged by the creatures he meets, Sandy is magically transformed during a storm and his shell becomes a part of a production at Houston Grand Opera.

BRIGHT STAR PRESENTS THE LITTLE MERMAID:
Hilarious duo Lenny and Mabel – "The Greatest Actors in the World" – provide this fun take on Hans Christian Anderson's classic fairy tale, The Little Mermaid. The story follows the adventures of a mermaid who wishes to become human and win the heart of a human prince. This surprising tale of love and loss explores the difficulty of being yourself in unfamiliar waters, and is quite a bit different from popular movie versions. See how with The Little Mermaid on Saturday, June 25th at 12:30pm.

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.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:
Want to make a difference or give back to your community? The High Meadows Library needs volunteers to help us with our Summer Reading Program and to teach classes. If you are interested in helping with Summer Reading Program or with our Literacy classes, stop by the library and ask for Jennifer.

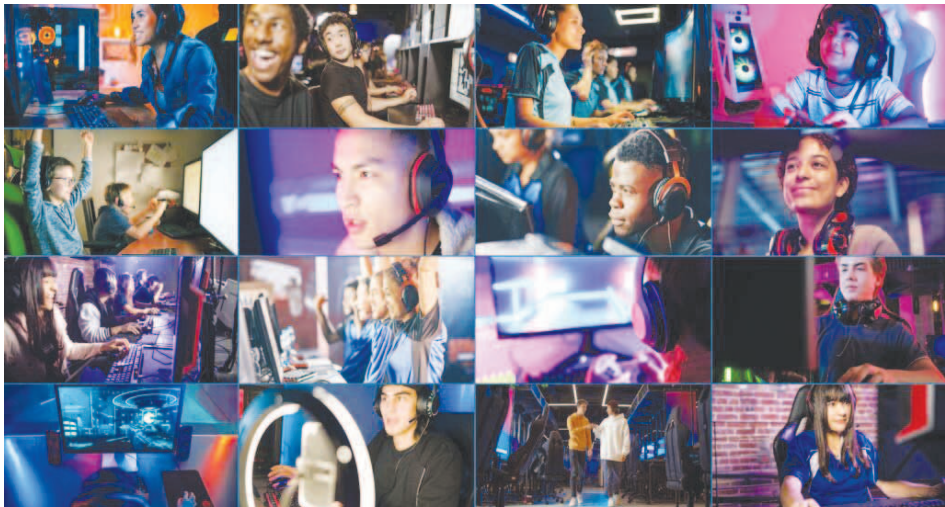
JOB OPENINGS AT THE LIBRARY:
The High Meadows Library is currently hiring! We have two job openings available: Assistant Branch Manager - Youth Services, and Library Service Specialist. To view or apply for these jobs, please visit our website at www.hcpl.net/about/careers.

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.

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SR ADULT PROGRAM SPECIALIST
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SCHOOL NEWS PAGE

Aldine ISD Set to Host Greater Houston Area Inaugural Esports Conference July 20



In partnership with Dell and Advanced Learning Partners, the district will host the Greater Houston Area Inaugural Esports Conference on July 20 at Davis High School.

Greater Houston Area Esports Conference Details

Davis High School, 12525 Ella Blvd, Houston, TX 77067 Wednesday, July 20, from 8:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Keynote Speaker: Danny Martin, Co-founder and CEO of Esposure. The event is open to administrators, teachers, students, and parents.

Esports' rapid rise in popularity comes as no surprise since, among teenagers, 90% play video games. Unless you have an avid gamer in the family, you may not be aware of esports or competitive gaming. It recently became an officially sanctioned high school and collegiate sport. Less than a few years ago, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) first recognized esports as an official sport. Since then, more than 8,600 high schools have started esports teams.

"I knew about gaming, but esports is on another level," said Joshua Hicks, Aldine ISD coordinator of multimedia events. "It is organized, competitive online video gaming. There are leagues, rankings, formats, and coaches. It's become serious business. Esports is very popular and rapidly growing in the Houston area."

Esports tournaments offer peer connections, college, and scholarship opportunities. Several companies across the country are assisting schools in exploring esports technology and educating everyone on why esports is booming.

Hicks expects hundreds of enthusi-

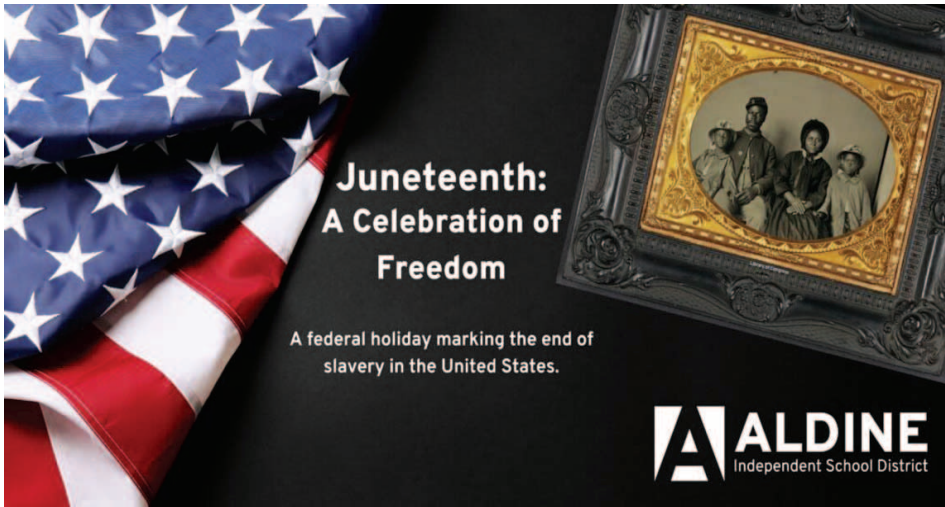
asts — of all age levels — from across the Houston area. The conference will showcase gaming talent and the latest gaming models from Dell. While there will be gaming, the Aldine Club and other participants will see how esports clubs foster leadership, scholarship, and career opportunities in a growing field (i.e., shoutcasting, graphic design, marketing, and business). Presenters, panels, and workshops will round out the event for those seeking to start district, school, and local esports clubs. Interested individuals can also visit the Aldine Esports website.

Participants will also have an opportunity to work with the AISD Digital Learning Department team members to learn about recruiting, inclusionary practices, conduct, and more. Students and their parents will have sessions for frequently asked questions, competitive gameplay, and discussion about the careers offered in the gaming community.

One major draw is esports entrepreneur and native Texan Danny Martin. While in college, he developed his first business, the Geekletes app. It is a web platform where gamers connect to find a tournament or host one — it also has a physical space to meet. Martin, co-founder and CEO of Esposure, has hosted more than 35 esports events. He also is avid about speaking to students about the gaming industry and STEM field opportunities.

"I don't look like a gamer," Martin says. "I don't look like someone who knows technology. So I want people to see that they can be whatever they want. And hopefully, they have fun, too. STEM should be fun."

Juneteenth Day: A Day of Reflection and Celebration of Freedom



Juneteenth Independence Day honors African American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures and is a time for reflection and rejoicing. The U.S. Congress has designated June 19 as "Juneteenth Independence Day" (also called Freedom Day and Emancipation Day) to recognize the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day to the United States. The district encourages everyone to learn more about the past, to understand better the experiences that have shaped this country. Juneteenth recognizes the end of slavery as a part of the history and heritage of the United States.

"As a school district, we are committed to equity and ensuring high outcomes for all," said Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney. "We have ensured that our five-year strategic plan maintains our focus on high-quality teaching and learning. That includes creating systems that increase opportunities and positive outcomes for all. We affirm our commitment to ensuring all our students learn in environments where they feel safe and valued — where their voices are heard. Together, we will continue to build diversity and inclusiveness."

"Juneteenth is also a time to highlight the resilience, solidarity, and culture of the Black community. It is a time to celebrate the freedoms and lives that generations have fought to secure. I encourage everyone in our community to explore the history of Juneteenth and participate in local celebrations."

Juneteenth commemorates the emancipation of those enslaved in the United States. On June 19, 1865, the announcement of the abolition of slavery and the freedom of enslaved African Americans reached the people in Galveston, Texas. The news came two years after The Emancipation Proclamation was issued. That day began the tradition of celebrating Freedom Day. The news created an annual celebration to remember the past and to look to the future. Juneteenth is celebrated annually with gatherings, parades, and special programs. Texas was the first state to establish it as a holiday in 1979.

In 2021, Juneteenth became a federal holiday. The Juneteenth National Independence Day Act is the first new legal public holiday created since Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was signed into law in 1983 by Ronald Reagan.

Share how you will observe and celebrate Juneteenth using the hashtags #Juneteenth and #AldineForward on social media.

Juneteenth Resources and Activities:

- 18 Children's Books to Honor Juneteenth and Black History
- National Museum of African American History & Culture
- NMAAHC Kids – Understanding and Celebrating Juneteenth
- History.com
- LearningForJustice.org (formerly Teaching Tolerance)

Events in the Houston Area

- Houston Chronicle (June 1, 2022)
- City of Houston-Mayor's Office
- Emancipation Park

Roshunda Jones-Koumba Accepts 2022 Excellence in Theatre Education Award at Radio City Music Hall

Theater director Roshunda Jones-Koumba traveled to New York City to accept the 2022 Excellence in Theatre Education Award at Radio City Music Hall. Carnegie Mellon University alumna, trustee, and Tony Award-winner Tamara Tunie (actor, director, producer) served on this year's Excellence in Theatre Education Award judges' panel. Tunie and CMU President Farnam Jahanian presented Jones-Koumba with her award during the Tony Awards Ceremony on June 12, 2022.

The Tony Awards® organization announced in late May that Jones-Koumba had been named the recipient of this year's award, which recognizes a K-12 theatre educator in the U.S. who has demonstrated monumental impact on their students and embodies the profession's highest standards. Jones-Koumba has long lauded the collaboration and community within the theater that supports students pursuing the arts or non-art-related fields. A panel selected Jones-Koumba from among more than 5,000 entries.

CMU is home to the first degree granting drama program in the United States. Since the award was co-founded in 2014, CMU, the American Theatre Wing, and The Broadway League have recognized extraordinary teachers across the country.

As she announced Jones-Koumba, Tunie and Jahanian shared that impassioned endorsements from past and present students and peers from the Houston arts community helped make Jones-Koumba the standout winner.

Jones-Koumba received a standing ovation as she came out to accept her award. She thanked CMU, the Amer-



ican Theatre Wing, and The Broadway League for honoring her with the distinguishing award; she thanked her parents, her husband, her theater partner, Jabari Collins, her family, mentors, and the late Clarence Lee Turner. She also acknowledged the Aldine Independent School District, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, and the Acres Homes Community as champions of the arts. Jones-Koumba also thanked her students at Carver High School and the school's Panther Players Troupe 6753, citing that they are her inspiration and her reason why.

"The arts, especially for Black and Brown communities, provide a fertile soil with which our students flourish. We must continue to enrich them with our love and a passion for the arts, which shows them that even the unattainable is possible. I accept this award on behalf of all the arts educators who work tirelessly to ensure their students have a safe space to be seen and heard. And as Maya Angelou reminds us, 'Do it with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style. Thank you.'"

Jones-Koumba received \$10,000 for her theatre program and tickets to be able to accept her award at the Tony Awards and attend the Gala.

Jones-Koumba is currently in her 18th year of education. She has dedicated all those years to AISD students, especially her theater students at Carver High School for Engineering, Applied Technology and The Arts. In 2020, Jones-Koumba was inducted into the Texas Thespians Hall of Fame and received the inaugural Arts Educator of the Year from the TUTS Leading Ladies organization. She was TxETA's 2017 Educator of the Year and Aldine ISD Carver High School's teacher of the year in 2009 and 2014. As the Carver Panther Players Director, the troupe has been successful on the state and national level at UIL One-Act Play (OAP) contests, Tommy Tune Awards, Texas Thespians State, and International Thespian Festival. Most recently, Jones-Koumba received the Stephen Schwartz Musical Theatre Teacher of the Year Award and the International Thespian Society Inspirational Theatre Educator Award. The ASCAP Foundation presented the Stephen Schwartz Award. The award represents the highest level of achievement for a middle or high school theatre teacher.

Jones-Koumba is a Board member of the Texas Education Theatre Association (TxETA), Texas Thespians, Black Theatre Educator's #39 Caucus, and UIL OAP Advisory Committee.

International Film Festival Honors Aldine ISD Short Film



On Saturday, June 11, 2022, at the Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center in Austin, TX, the Cine Las Americas International Film Festival (CLAIFF) showcased "The Story of La Promesa," an Aldine ISD original short film at their first annual Teach for America feature.

We are so proud of our Multimedia Specialist Luke Rabalais, the "one-man-band" filmmaker behind all of our videos. From screenwriting, interviewing (in English and Spanish), filming, and editing, to even composing music, from beginning to end, this video serves as one of many examples of Rabalais' talent and we are appreciative of the commitment and heart he puts into telling the Aldine story.

"I regularly tear up when I'm editing videos. I tell my coworkers it's just allergies [laughing]. But really, interviewing these La Promesa students changed something foundational in me and I'll never be the same. Listen to them! You'll get it. Listen and see how beautiful life can be when walking that path of conviction, gratitude, and just living with such a love for other people. I want to be like them when I grow up [laughing]."

★

OPINION PAGE

★

COUNTY CONNECTION

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo



We must act to stop Gun Violence



Over the past month, our nation has yet again endured violent deaths from mass shootings and gun violence. In Buffalo, we all witnessed the brutal attack driven by racism and hate that left 13 people dead at a grocery store. 17 people were shot during a mass shooting in downtown Milwaukee. And we are all still mourning the loss of two teachers and 19 innocent children murdered at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde. This violence shows no sign of letting up – between May 24th, the day of the Uvalde tragedy, and June 6th, there have been 33 additional mass shootings, including multiple mass shootings here in Harris County. No one is immune from this bloody plague.

Today, our nation and our county is in the midst of a vital conversation about violent crime and what needs to be done to prevent it. The truth is, we cannot talk about addressing violent crime without talking about the role that guns play in fueling it. On the same day as the tragedy in Uvalde, we released new data from Harris County’s Institute for Forensic Sciences from which the conclusion could not be more clear – we are not just suffering from a rise in homicides, but also from a rise in the percentage of homicides caused by guns. In 2018, gunshot wounds caused 76% of homicides in Harris County. In 2021, that number was 84%. This year’s percentage is at 87%. And we aren’t unique. Statewide, the rate of gun homicides in Texas increased 90% between 2011 and 2020, from a little over 3 deaths per 100,000 people to about 6 deaths per 100,000.

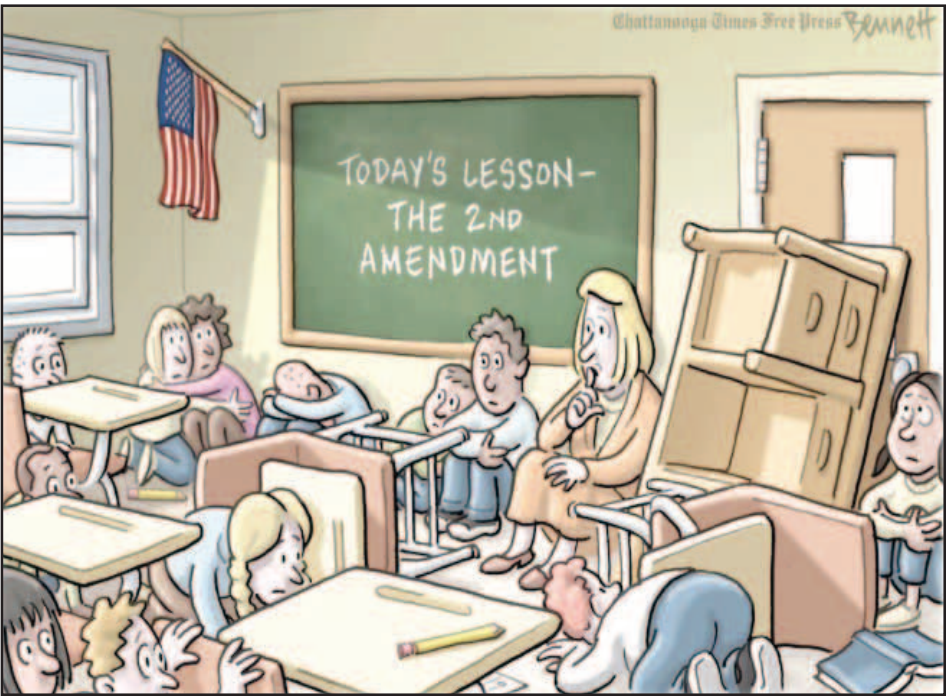
You’d think after decades of enduring tragedy after tragedy, our nation and our state would have had enough and passed common sense gun safety laws to save lives. But no. Texas has actually moved in the opposite direction and eliminated some of the few common sense gun regulations we had. Last year our state legislature passed an extreme permitless carry law which makes it legal to carry a concealed weapon without training or a permit. And yet, polls show a broad coalition of Americans oppose permitless carry and support background checks and other common sense gun safety initiatives. The majority of Americans know that when it comes to fighting violent crime, keeping guns out of the hands of dangerous people is an essential part of the solution.

So we must continue fighting every way we can here at the County level. We’ve made historic investments to fund law enforcement and other smart-and-tough on crime initiatives in Harris County. Our \$1.4 billion budget for justice and safety this year is bigger than any other time in Harris County history. We’re also investing in youth crime prevention initiatives and targeted enforcement in high crime micro-zones. We’re addressing blight and pushing to shrink our criminal court backlog. We’ve also worked with law enforcement and other anti-crime groups like Moms Demand Action to educate the community about how to store guns safely and distribute gun locks. And on the same day we lost 19 children and two teachers in Uvalde, Harris County Commissioner’s Court declared June Gun Violence Prevention Month in Harris County to honor victims of these senseless tragedies.

We’ll never stop pushing our state legislature and congress to do what is right – to act to stop our children, our family, our best friends, our neighbors from being murdered by weapons of war in schools, grocery stores, movie theaters, churches, or anywhere else you can imagine.

Sincerely,


Lina Hidalgo



★

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Anti-gun Violence Protests and more School Safety Measures

Anti-gun violence protests were held in multiple cities across the state over the weekend, while the state has imposed additional measures designed to strengthen school security. Texas State University’s Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) program will be provided to all Texas school districts. The course is “designed to improve integration between law enforcement, fire, telecommunicator and emergency medical services in active attack/shooter events,” according to its website.

Gov. Greg Abbott also requested ALERRT to provide an after-the fact debrief of the school shooting at Robb Elementary in Uvalde once the ongoing investigation is complete. “We sadly recognize we cannot do anything to bring back the precious lives that were taken; however, we must do everything in our power to prevent the same tragic ending from happening again,” reads the governor’s letter.

In addition, the Texas Education Agency has been directed to create the position of Chief of School Safety and Security. The chief will be a “recognized expert on school security and public safety issues, an effective coordinator of multidisciplinary teams, a resource to school districts and the legislature, and effective at implementing programs,” according to a TEA news release.

POLICE CHIEF EXPLAINS DELAY IN CONFRONTING SHOOTER

The Uvalde schools police chief explained the delay in confronting the gunman who killed 19 children and two teachers by saying he couldn’t obtain a key to locked classroom door. “The only thing that was important to me at this time was to save as many teachers and children as possible,” Pete Arredondo said in a Texas Tribune report. He said he tried dozens of keys that failed to work. “Each time I tried a key I was just praying,” Arredondo said. It took 77



minutes after the May 24 massacre began for officers to unlock the door and kill the gunman. Besides the Department of Public Safety, Arredondo is the only other law enforcement official to give a public account of the police response to the shooting. In addition to the state probe, the U.S. Department of Justice has launched a review of the police response.

FIRST MONKEYPOX CASE IN TEXAS CONFIRMED

A single case of monkeypox virus infection was confirmed in a Dallas County resident who had recently traveled internationally, the Texas Department of State Health Services has announced. “Monkeypox is transmitted to humans through close contact with an infected person or animal. It can also be transmitted from person to person by inhaling large respiratory droplets or through close contact with body fluids and lesions, as well as bedding and other contaminated materials. Those infected may experience fever, rash and swollen lymph nodes, as well as more serious complications,” the DSHS release said. The patient is in quarantine at home. DSHS said the virus does not currently present risks to the general public, though it is reaching out to passengers who might have been exposed to the patient on a flight from Mexico to Dallas.

A DRIER AND WARMER MAY FOR MUCH OF STATE

May brought some rain but not as much as hoped, according to Dr. Mark

Wentzel, hydrologist for the Texas Water Development Board. “This May’s modest rainfall and high temperatures combined to provide only small improvements in drought conditions across our state,” Wentzel wrote. “Every little bit counts, but that little bit of recovery is disappointing considering that May has historically been the wettest month of the year for Texas.” Drought conditions covered 78% of the state by the end of May.

ELECTRICITY DEMANDS BREAKING RECORDS

As temperatures soared across the state during the first days of June, demand for electricity set daily and monthly records, according to numbers released last Friday by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas and reported in the San Antonio Express-News. Triple-digit temperatures were reported across the state over the weekend — several days before the official first day of summer. ERCOT asked power generators to defer maintenance over the weekend to ensure adequate generating power. “ERCOT will continue to deploy all available tools to manage the grid reliably and coordinate closely with the Public Utility Commission, generation resource owners and transmission utilities to ensure they are also prepared for the warm weather across the state,” Christy Penders with ERCOT said.

AGENCY RELEASES LATEST COVID-19 WORKERS’ COMP CLAIM TALLY

The number of workers compensation claims related to COVID-19 claims reached 83,000 in May, with 448 fatalities reported to the Division of Workers’ Compensation. Just more than half of these claims and fatalities involved first responders and correctional officers. Most of the claims paid were to compensate people for lost wages.

COVID-19 CASES UNCHANGED IN LAST WEEK

The number of new COVID-19 cases reported in Texas during the past week stayed essentially unchanged, with 47,582 reported by the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University. A total of 77 deaths were recorded. DSHS reported 1,488 lab-confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations, up 27% from the previous week.

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. Email: gborders@texaspres.com.

★

THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

“White Dresses”

I’ve been under some stress lately. I’ve written a novel, and now I have to wait to find someone who thinks it’s worth publishing. (I happen to think it is, for the record.) So, while I wait, I get more and more nervous.

I know all the standard advice for this, and I try to follow it. I try to get plenty of sleep. (But how am I supposed to sleep when I don’t know what will happen tomorrow?!) I try to eat healthy foods at healthy times. (But how am I supposed to avoid snacking at midnight when I’m roaming around the house like a nervous ghost, unable to sleep?!) I listen to guided meditations where this super-calm voice tells me that “everything is happening in perfect timing.” But this meditation was recorded years ago, and there’s no telling if the timing of things might have changed since then (what with the pandemic and all), and I realize I haven’t heard a word she’s said for the last several minutes.

I told my doctor I was stressed, and she offered me some sort of serotonin pills, which do absolutely nothing as far as I can tell, so I forget to take them. I could reduce my coffee intake but, come on, I don’t want to be stressed and dead, so what’s the point in that? I try to read books, but I start to wonder who published them and how long the author had to wait before they were published and if they went crazy in the meantime and if they had some sort of secret edge and how could I get that edge and then I notice I have not read a single word. No. The only thing I’ve found that really helps to calm me down is shopping for dresses.

“Do you need more dresses?” my husband, Peter, asks.

This is such a silly question. Of course, I do not need more dresses. The truth is, I don’t even buy that many dresses. What I do is go to my favorite online consignment shop and look at dresses. OK, occasionally one of them makes it to my house. But that is not the point. It is the focus; it is the hypnotic quality of looking for the perfect white dress. This is very calming.

“You already have a white dress,” a buttinsky voice in my head points out.

“Did I ask you?” I reply. Obviously, I don’t have the particular kind of white dress that I am looking for now and, whose business is it anyway, if I want to buy a \$13 white dress and own two totally different white dresses! I could be roaming the streets looking for hard drugs in my current state of mind. Instead, I am stuffing my closet with white dresses which, it is true, I might not wear that often—if at all.

But that is why dress shopping is so alluring. It has almost nothing to do with the dresses.

Shopping for dresses allows me to imagine where I would wear the dresses, and the places I imagine I would wear them are all pleasant places. They are evenings out where I am not stressed—parties and celebrations and gatherings of friends. These dresses remind me that these things have happened and will happen again, and this current period of sitting in my pajamas in the middle of the night eating snack food is temporary.

Life has its ups and downs. When things are calmer, I plan to wear a lovely new white dress.

Till next time,
Carrie
Follow me on Facebook at: [CarrieClassonAuthor](https://www.facebook.com/CarrieClassonAuthor).

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SPANISH PAGE

Roshunda Jones-Koumba acepta Premio a la Excelencia en Educación Teatral 2022 de Radio City Music Hall

La directora de teatro Roshunda Jones-Koumba viajó a la ciudad de Nueva York para aceptar el Premio a la Excelencia en educación teatral 2022 en el Radio City Music Hall. La ex alumna de la Universidad Carnegie Mellon, fideicomisaria y ganadora del Premio Tony Tamara Tunie (actriz, directora, productora) formó parte del panel de jueces del Premio a la Excelencia en la Educación Teatral de este año. Tunie y el presidente de CMU, Farnam Jahanian, presentaron a Jones-Koumba su premio durante la ceremonia de los Premios Tony el 12 de junio de 2022.

La organización de los Premios® Tony anunció a fines de mayo que Jones-Koumba había sido nombrado ganador del premio de este año, que reconoce a un educador de teatro K-12 en los Estados Unidos que ha demostrado un impacto monumental en sus estudiantes y encarna los más altos estándares de la profesión. Jones-Koumba ha elogiado durante mucho tiempo la colaboración y la comunidad dentro del teatro que apoya a los estudiantes que siguen las artes o campos no relacionados con el arte. Un panel seleccionó a Jones-Koumba entre más de 5.000 entradas.

CMU es el hogar del programa de drama de primer grado que otorga en los Estados Unidos. Desde que el premio fue cofundado en 2014, CMU, American Theatre Wing y The Broadway League han reconocido a maestros extraordinarios en todo el país.

Cuando anunció Jones-Koumba, Tunie y Jahanian compartieron que los apasionados respaldos de estudiantes pasados y presentes y compañeros de la comunidad artística de Houston ayudaron a hacer de Jones-Koumba el ganador destacado.

Jones-Koumba recibió una ovación de pie cuando salió a aceptar su premio. Agradeció a CMU, al American Theatre Wing y a la Liga de Broadway por honrarla con el premio distintivo; agradeció a sus padres, a su esposo, a su compañero de teatro, Jabari Collins, a su familia, a sus mentores y al fallecido Clarence Lee Turner. También reconoció al Distrito Escolar Independiente de Aldine, al alcalde de Houston, Sylvester Turner, y a la comunidad de Acres Homes como campeones de las artes. Jones-Koumba también agradeció a sus

estudiantes de Carver High School y Panther Players Troupe 6753 de la escuela, citando que son su inspiración y su razón por la cual.

«Las artes, especialmente para las comunidades negras y cafés, proporcionan un suelo fértil con el que nuestros estudiantes florecen. Debemos seguir enriqueciéndolos con nuestro amor y pasión por las artes, lo que les demuestra que incluso lo inalcanzable es posible. Acepto este premio en nombre de todos los educadores de artes que trabajan incansablemente para garantizar que sus estudiantes tengan un espacio seguro para ser vistos y escuchados. Y como nos recuerda Maya Angelou, 'Hazlo con algo de pasión, algo de compasión, algo de humor y algo de estilo. Gracias'». Jones-Koumba recibió \$10,000 por su programa de teatro y boletos para poder aceptar su premio en los Premios Tony y asistir a la Gala.

Jones-Koumba se encuentra actualmente en su 18º año de educación. Ella ha dedicado todos esos años a los estudiantes de AISD, especialmente a sus estudiantes de teatro en Carver High School for Engineering, Applied Technology and The Arts. En 2020, Jones-Koumba fue incluida en el Salón de la Fama de Texas Thespians y recibió la inauguración del Educador de Artes del Año de la organización TUTS Leading Ladies. Fue educadora del año 2017 de TxETA y maestra del año de Aldine ISD Carver High School en 2009 y 2014. Como Directora de Carver Panther Players, la compañía ha tenido éxito a nivel estatal y nacional en los concursos UIL One-Act Play (OAP), Tommy Tune Awards, Texas Thespians State e International Thespian Festival. Más recientemente, Jones-Koumba recibió el Stephen Schwartz Musical Theatre Teacher of the Year Award y el International Thespian Society Inspirational Theatre Educator Award. La Fundación ASCAP entregó el Premio Stephen Schwartz. El premio representa el nivel más alto de logro para un maestro de teatro de escuela media o secundaria.

Jones-Koumba es miembro de la Junta de la Asociación de Teatro de Educación de Texas (TxETA), Texas Thespians, Black Theatre Educator's #39 Caucus y el Comité Asesor de UIL OAP.



Tunie y Jahanian posan con Jones-Koumba frente al Radio City Music Hall

Juneteenth Day: Un día de reflexión y celebración de la libertad



El Día de la Independencia de Juneteenth honra la libertad afroamericana al tiempo que fomenta el autodesarrollo y el respeto por todas las culturas y es un momento para la reflexión y el regocijo. El Congreso de los Estados Unidos ha designado el 19 de junio como el «Día de la Independencia de Juneteenth» (también llamado Día de la Libertad y Día de la Emancipación) para reconocer el significado histórico del Día de la Independencia de Juneteenth para los Estados Unidos. El distrito alienta a todos a aprender más sobre el pasado, a comprender mejor las experiencias que han dado forma a este país. Juneteenth reconoce el fin de la esclavitud como parte de la historia y el patrimonio de los Estados Unidos. Juneteenth conmemora la emancipación de los esclavos en los Estados

Unidos. El 19 de junio de 1865, el anuncio de la abolición de la esclavitud y la libertad de los afroamericanos esclavizados llegó a la gente de Galveston, Texas. La noticia llegó dos años después de que se emitiera la Proclamación de Emancipación. Ese día comenzó la tradición de celebrar el Día de la Libertad. La noticia creó una celebración anual para recordar el pasado y mirar hacia el futuro. Juneteenth se festeja anualmente con reuniones, desfiles y programas especiales. Texas fue el primer estado en establecerlo como día feriado en 1979. En 2021, Juneteenth se convirtió en un feriado federal. La Ley del Día de la Independencia Nacional de Juneteenth es el primer nuevo día festivo legal creado desde Martin Luther King, Jr. El día fue promulgado en 1983 por Ronald Reagan.

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Aldine Safety meeting hears Pct2 Garcia, Sheriff

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



A crowd of over 60 Aldine residents, including a group from Pilgrim Place, listened to the presentation of Public Safety information from Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia, and Sheriff Ed Gonzalez, at the right on the podium.

the increase in funding for various police departments in the county, including raises for deputies in the Sheriff and Constable offices. There has also been funding approved for special crime fighting programs, including \$3 million overtime for warrant backlog, \$15 million for body cameras, \$2.6 million especially for hot spot patrols, and a new program called VIPER to target warrants for violent offenders.

Another aspect of Public Safety has been the Courts, and a backlog caused by Hurricane Harvey that the county is still resolving. Garcia said that they have approved \$13.8 million in new funding for additional courts, new judges, and to move jury trials.

The county has also allocated more money for the District Attorney, \$12.7 million for new prosecutors, a new environmental unit, and pay raises. Garcia said there is currently a backlog of 33,000 cases.

The county has also revised the rules on releases on bail, now requiring at least 10% to be paid in advance for most crimes. This had been 1% for some, letting criminals return quickly to the street.

Sheriff Gonzalez spoke in more detail on the ShotSpotter program, stating that there were two locations in Aldine being watched under the program, and that they has been very effective. There are an area around the East Aldine Town Center, and another area close to Keith Weiss Park. Gonzalez said that he would like to see the program expanded to cover more area. He pointed out that when a call is generated by ShotSpotter, that deputies treat it as the highest Priority One. He said the technology is so effective that deputies arriving on the scene can know where that shots were fire, from what type of gun, and what type of gunfire.

Gonzalez said that “we don’t want to see guns in our community, it is unacceptable. When a gun is fired, someone gets hurt or property is damaged.”

Gonzalez discussed other new programs in his department, including a Pro-active squad and a community involvement team. These act before a serious crime occurs, he said.

Garcia spoke about other types of activities that affect Public Safety, not just Cops and Courts. He said the Community is an important component, and that the county funds many activities that contribute to Public Safety.

One effort he cited was mental health, with \$27.1 million for deterrence, treatment, and other initiatives in this category. There has also been new funding for violence deterrence, Holistic Response Teams, nuisance abatement, and domestic violence intervention.

Other community programs from the county include youth programs, early childhood programs, parks, afterschool activities, and workforce development. Garcia’s point is that all of these are part of the bigger picture of crime reduction and public safety.

Even sidewalks, and roadway design can be factors in increasing safety and reducing incidents, he said.

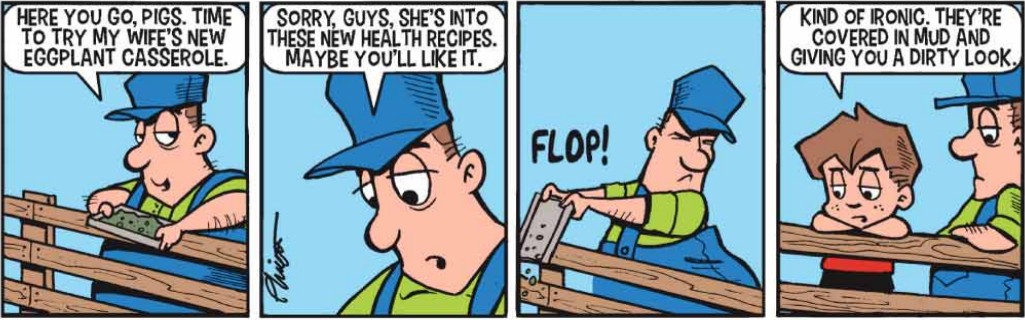
A Question and Answer period followed the talks. Subjects that were asked about included a swimming pool for seniors and disabled (Garcia said too expensive now), more ShotSpotter locations, cleaning ditches, expanding the police academy, and improving Aldine Westfield Road.

Connie Esparza said “this was an important meeting for the safety of our children.” She asked the commissioner to continue these update sessions on a regular basis.

Garcia said his philosophy for the Precinct is “Revive2Thrive” and that for too long Aldine has been forgotten. He said that Precinct 2 has spent \$100 million since he took office to improve the quality of life and county services for the Aldine area.

ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



R.F.D.



The Spats



Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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. Arm is moved. 2. Boat string is missing. 3. Cloud is different. 4. Sail is different. 5. Camera is missing. 6. Log is missing. 7. Log is missing. 8. Bess and George. 9. Influenza. 10. Yellow dwarf of Oz. 4. California, 1996. 5. Snoop Dogg. 6. Hypothalamus. 7. Portugal and Spain. 8. Bess and George. 9. Influenza. 10. Yellow dwarf of Oz.

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June 20, 2022 Posting Date

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 "Dream on!"

5 Clothing protector

8 Greet

12 Well-read folks

14 Celestial bear

15 Beatles drummer before Ringo Starr

16 Algeria's neighbor

17 Occupation, for short

18 Straw hat

20 Young horses

23 Printer's blue

24 New York canal

25 Talkers' marathon

28 Bankroll

29 North African capital

30 Josh

32 Doctor's order

34 Trellis climber

35 Missing

36 Mature, as fruit

37 Small porches

40 Spelldown

41 Ms. Brockovich

42 Oater setting

47 "— Lang Syne"

48 Pokey

49 Disarray

50 Toronto's prov.

51 Artist Bonheur

DOWN

1 Swiss peak

2 "Sprechen — Deutsch?"

3 Addams cousin

4 Weak

5 Folk singer

6 TGIF part

7 Gradually

8 Compassionate

9 "I smell —!"

10 Cruise stop

11 Hideaway

13 Baseball stats

19 Lummoxes

20 Hardly any

21 Verbal

22 Opera set in Egypt

23 Is able to, old-style

25 "Recognize my voice?"

26 Omit

27 Fork prong

29 Sporty car roof

31 Lion's home

33 Light-headed folks?

34 TV audience member

36 Some wines

37 Line of fashion?

38 Verifiable

39 Monet's supply

40 Inky stain

43 Charged bit

44 Id counterpart

45 "Mayday!"

46 Former Delta rival

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Trivia Test Answers

Solution time: 22 mins.

Answers

King Crossword

1. "Buffy the Vampire Slayer"; 2. Italian dessert of coffee and ice cream; 3. "The Wizard of Oz"; 4. California, 1996; 5. Snoop Dogg; 6. Hypothalamus; 7. Portugal and Spain; 8. Bess and George; 9. Influenza; 10. Yellow dwarf of Oz.

CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey —

1. Is the book of Syria in the Old Testament, New Testament or neither?
2. Which Psalm sets man's normal lifespan of threescore and ten? 1, 17, 23, 90
3. From Genesis 7, how many years did Noah live after the flood? 1, 50, 100, 350
4. How many books of the Bible (KJV) begin with the letter "H"? 0, 2, 4, 6

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

Do not wear yourself out to get rich;
do not trust your own cleverness.
Cast but a glance at riches,
and they are gone, for they will
surely sprout wings and fly off
to the sky like an eagle.

Proverbs 23: 4, 5

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5. What does the shield represent in the "armor of God"? Courage, Faith, Gallows, Doves
6. In John 6:35, Jesus said, "I am the ... of life." ? Light, Wine, Giver, Bread

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) 90:10; 3) 350; 4) 4 (Hosea, Habakkuk, Haggai, Hebrews); 5) Faith; 6) Bread
Hardcore trivia fan? Visit Wilson Casey's subscriber site at www.patreon.com/triviaguy.
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Father's Family Fun Day,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



The Venue for Father's Family Fun Day includes the Amphitheatre, left center; the Lawn, center; the Splash Pad right center; BakerRipley Fab Lab at right; Town Center Lake, at rear; and Keith Wiess Park, far background.

ing, and sun and bug protection and perhaps an umbrella. The splash pond for kids will be operating, bringing cooling water sprays also.

In the evening, families are invited to move to the fishing piers at Keith Wiess park, starting at about 7pm. Not only can families enjoy fishing with their fathers, but there will

also be an instructor available with fishing tips and lessons, to make this a more successful evening in the outdoors.

Sponsors of the Father's Family Fun Day include the East Aldine District, BakerRipley, Walmart, Harris County Sheriff's Office, Lone Star College East Aldine Center, 713 Boxing Club, The Hearts of

the Father, Mean Green, Chopped Blades, the YMCA Greenspoint, Jeds Hardware, and Precinct 2 Adrian Garcia.

Parking will be available at the Town Center, and at the Lone Star College campus next door.

Everyone is welcome, and you should come and have a good time, with your Father and Family.



07.17.2021

The stage of the Amphitheatre will be the main venue, with Tents around the Lawn for additional fun activities, games, food, and more.

Safer Together with COVID shots, Zumba, music, food, prizes

providing access to the Amphitheater, flyer's design and help with the organization, to HOPE Clinic for providing Covid-19 vaccines, also to Harris County Sheriff's Office providing security, LSC-East Aldine for providing parking space and Harris County Pct. 2 helping with coordination.

Photos by Julieta Paita

