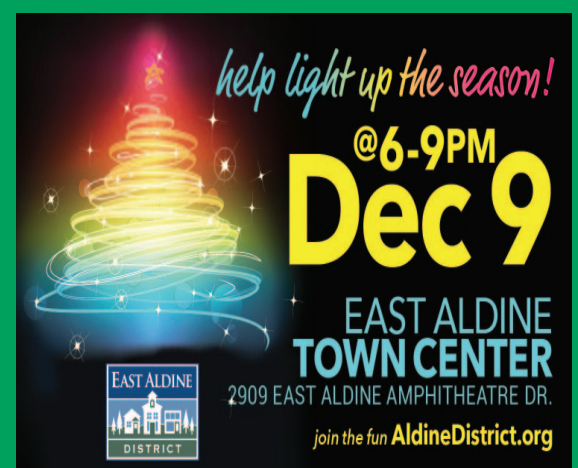


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NORTHEAST NEWS

Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 46 Years
VOL. 46, NO. 46 TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2022 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com



NEWS NOTES

DEC. 9, FRI. Lighting of the East Aldine Tree

Everyone is invited to the First Annual Lighting of the East Aldine Christmas Tree, from 6pm to 9pm in Town Center on Aldine Mail Route.

Events include tree lighting, ride in a horse drawn carriage, play in real snow, hot cocoa, decorate cookies, and nativity photos. Free, everyone welcome.

Come and meet FROSTY.

DEC. 16, FRI. BakerRipley HOLIDAY CONNECTION

BakerRipley invites everyone to a Holiday Connection Event at the East Aldine Campus, 3000 Aldine Mail Route. Friday December 16 from 5pm to 8pm.

There will be face painting, snacks and food, music, games, arts & crafts, and more. Call 346-570-4463 to register your child for a toy.

DEC. 21, WED. BakerRipley HOLIDAY MARKET

Community Partners, HOLIDAY MARKET AT BAKERRIPLEY

For November & December, we decided to have a Holiday Markets in lieu of our Farmer's Market. Our December market is Wednesday, December 21, from 10am-1pm. This will be an indoor event. Urban Harvest will not be at our Farmer's Markets for the remainder of the year; only vendors. If you have time, please come out and support local entrepreneurs, pick up some holiday gifts for your loved ones, and enjoy some amazing coffee from Café Guadalupe.

BAKERRIPLEY
3000 Aldine Mail Route
Houston TX 77039
346-570-4463

Holiday Season opens with Feasts, Parade

By Gilbert Hoffman

Houston got into the Holiday mood starting on Thanksgiving day, with a Super Feast at the George R. Brown Convention Center, serving almost 20,000 a tasty Thanksgiving dinner, and a festive, colorful Parade in downtown Houston.

The Parade continued in spite of a light rain that came and stopped intermittently. Marching band members and riders on floats and horseback simply donned plastic ponchos and kept going. "Don't Rain on my Parade" was the theme, it seemed.

The Super Feast is in its 44th year, and served over 35,000 meals, to both in-person sit-down diners, and drive-up patrons. Each received a food package with about 60 to 80 pounds of various types of foods, including a turkey, chicken or ham, enough for a family for about a week. The organizer of the Super Feast is the City Wide Club of Houston. They



Houston Thanksgiving Day Parade stretched for 20 blocks through downtown.



Super Feast served over 20,000 diners at George R. Brown Convention Center



Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia loading a turkey into an auto trunk.

serve these meals twice a year, on Thanksgiving Day and the day before Christmas, to everyone who comes to the Convention Center.

The Thanksgiving Day Parade is sponsored by H-E-B, and is in its 73rd year. It traverses over 20 city blocks, and features elaborate floats, colorful marching bands and drill and dance teams, balloon figures, horse and wagon units, and much more. Several hundred thousands spectators line the streets to see the spectacle, as well as thousands more watching TV. The Grand Marshal of the Parade this year is Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson. Participating from Aldine was the Carver HS Dance Company.

In the spirit of the Holiday Season, a number of Turkey giveaways occurred through our communities. Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia gave away over 1000 turkeys at a dozen sites, as did Judge Joe

Continued on Page 2

Thanksgiving event at Castlewood



Sgt. Terry Garza and Connie Esparza draw tickets of winners in the Thanksgiving Pie contest. PHOTOS OF WINNERS ON PAGE 2

"In the spirit of Thanksgiving, the Castlewood Civic Club Board raffled to its residents five Thanksgiving pies baked by the Culinary Arts Department of Northside High School

(formerly Jefferson Davis High School). Residents were asked to call or text their name and phone number to the Castlewood

Continued on Page 2

Pct. 2 dedicates Vietnam Fallen Warriors Monument



Veterans and City and County officials were present at the Ribbon Cutting for the new Vietnam Fallen Warriors Monument on Tidwell Road.

Harris County – Thursday, November 10th, 2022, at 10:30 a.m., Vietnam Combat Veterans Association unveiled the Vietnam Fallen Warriors Monument at Veterans Memorial

Park. The monument, a four-year project, honors the 544 service members who died in the Vietnam War from the Houston area. Each of their names is inscribed on this monu-

ment. The total cost of the project was \$300,000 and was raised by foundations, VWF, through fundraisers, and grassroot supporters.

Continued on Page 2

MARKETPLACE – Please Mention the NORTHEAST NEWS when you visit our Advertisers.

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Hit & Run
injures Bicyclist
on Little York

Crime Stoppers and the Houston Police Department’s Vehicular Crimes Division need the public’s assistance identifying the suspect responsible for a Hit and Run – Failure to Stop and Render Aid.

On Friday, September 30, 2022, at approximately 6:17 p.m., the victim was struck by a vehicle in the 2700 block of Little York Rd. in Houston, Texas. During the incident, the victim was riding their bicycle northbound on Little York Rd. when they were struck by the suspect vehicle. The suspect fled the scene without rendering aid to the victim. The victim suffered serious bodily injury and was taken to a local hospital for treatment. The suspect vehicle is described as a gray Cheverolet pickup truck (no license plate information).

Crime Stoppers may pay up to \$5,000 for information leading to the charging and/or arrest of the suspect(s) in this case. Information may be reported by calling 713-222-TIPS (8477), submitted online at www.crime-stoppers.org or through the Crime Stoppers mobile app. Only tips and calls DIRECTLY TO Crime Stoppers are anonymous and eligible for a cash reward.

Winners of the Castlewood
Pie & Gift Card raffle,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

President, Connie Esparza, to submit their entry. Only Castlewood residents were eligible and only one entry per household was accepted. Residents were also asked to share the Nextdoor posting with their neighbor who might not be on that social media

platform. Deadline to submit entry was set for November 15 and drawing on November 16.

Five lucky winners were notified right after the drawing; however, they were in for a very unexpected surprise. Along with their favorite pie, each

winner was gifted a \$75 gift card to Walmart donated by the East Aldine District and the Harris County Sheriff’s Office as part of the “Operation Thanksgiving 2022,” a program that was started by retired HCSO Deputy Grace Luna to assist 100 East Aldine families.

Since her retirement, our very own Sergeant Terry Garza has continued the program, a partnership between the East Aldine Management District and Harris County Sheriff’s Office. Kudos to Sgt. Garza! Wishing everyone a very Happy Thanksgiving from the Castlewood Civic Club Board.



Sheryl Hines



Arlene Van Slyke



Concepcion Herrera



Deloris Frederick



Jose Reyes

Dedication of the Vietnam
Fallen Warriors Monument,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The Vietnam Fallen Warriors Monument Ribbon Cutting, with remarks by Adrian Garcia, Harris County Commissioner, Precinct 2, a City of Houston representative, and Chief Sergeant Major Juan Chavez.

The ceremony was held Thursday, November 10, 2022, from 10:30a.m. – 11:00 a.m. at Veteran’s Memorial Park, 1896 Tidwell Road, on Houston’s north side.



Keynote speakers at the dedication ceremony included Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia, and Chief Sergeant Major Juan Chavez.



View of the Vietnam Fallen Warriors Monument, which is part of the Veterans Memorial Park on Tidwell Road.

COMMUNITY
WATCH

Major fire in Airline Drive store



Houston Fire Department reports a major fire damaged a retail store at 6401 Airline Drive, on November 8 in the afternoon, about 4:00pm.

No injuries reported, damage to the property was estimated at about \$200,000, and property saved was estimated at \$106,321.

The cause is under investigation, according to HFD.

Firefighters arrived on scene within eight minutes to find fire coming from the side of a 1-story store. They made an attack and ventilated the building. The fire was controlled and extinguished. HFD Arson was requested to determine the cause and origin. CenterPoint was on location and controlled the utilities. Crews from Stations 15, 4, 34, 9, 12, 31, 56, 58, 67, 50 and 24 responded to this incident.

The store is closed due to the fire, but operating from another location at 6520 Airline Drive. For more information, call 281-203-1425.

Aldine ISD bus involved in crash

HOUSTON – An Aldine ISD school bus was involved in a crash in northwest Harris County Friday Nov. 18, Precinct 4 constable deputies said. It happened on Kenwick Drive and FM 1960 West Road.

Constable deputies said they received a call in reference to a crash involving an occupied school bus and a sedan. According to investigators, the sedan rear-ended the bus. Constable deputies are reportedly assisted Aldine ISD police with traffic control.

Investigators said EMS was dispatched but no injuries were reported.

Holiday Season
has started,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Stephens in the North Channel area, and a similar giveaway at Davis High School in Aldine. Many other organizations throughout the county had similar free food distribution during the Thanksgiving week.

BLACK FRIDAY SHOPPING

After Thanksgiving, many families spent the next day shopping for bargains at Black Friday sales. However, stores were not as busy as previous years, perhaps because there are more shopping days this year, or online sales have taken the pressure off. Many stores were closed on Thanksgiving day, for the first time. Some shoppers took advantage of Toys-R-Us returning as a department inside Macy’s stores.

TREE LIGHTING

Communities through-

out the county were preparing for Christmas celebrations, with tree lighting ceremonies and appearance of Santa Claus for chats and photos. In Highlands the event will be at the Community Center on Thursday December 8, from 5pm to 7pm, with cookies and hot chocolate and an appearance by the Grinch. In East Aldine a huge tree will be lighted on Friday December 9, from 6pm to 9pm and includes Frosty the snowman, Horse drawn rides, photos, hot cocoa, and Real Snow! In Crosby the 23rd Annual Christmas Festival takes place Saturday December 10 from 1pm to 5pm at Crosby Church, with hayrides, petting zoo, photos with Santa 2pm to 4pm, Holly the Elf, a Christmas Market, free food and at 6pm a Lighted Parade.

HIGH MEADOWS LIBRARY NEWS

12 DAYS OF HOLIDAY FUN @ HIGH MEADOWS:
Beginning December 5th, the library invites you to celebrate the holidays with us. From crafts, movies, storytimes, and games, we have something for all ages. Visit our website for more information or stop by the library for a calendar of events.

POLAR EXPRESS DAY:
DECEMBER 5th is Polar Express Day at High Meadows Library. Join us at 5:30pm for a viewing of Polar Express and fun activities.

KRAFTY KIDS:
Krafty Kids in December is all about the holidays. Parents bring the kiddos in for some fun crafts.

FAMILY TIME:
Family Time is happening all throughout December! The family is invited to build with us this holiday season. Days and times vary. Stop by for a calendar of events.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:
We are in search of volunteers to help us with a variety of projects from shelving to teaching literacy classes. If you are interested in volunteering, please email Jennifer at jennifer.nandlal@hcpl.net.

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
4500 Aldine Mail Rt | Houston, TX 77039
832.927.5540

9-8-8 New Suicide Hot Line

Get the Word Out About 9-8-8, the Nationwide Suicide Prevention Hotline

We know we are living in a time where mental health needs have drastically increased and suicides are also on the rise. Identifying people in crisis and providing them support is one way we can help save lives. Harris County

Judge Lina Hidalgo would like to get the word out about 9-8-8, the new nationwide suicide and crisis hotline that launched in July. Those in crisis or dealing with suicidal ideation or other mental health issues anywhere in the U.S. can now call 9-8-8 and speak with a live trained person who can

help connect them to resources and help them work through their immediate crisis. Our very own Harris Center is the local administrator responding to those calls for 45 counties including Harris County. The Harris Center has already seen a 38% increase in average call volume since 9-8-8 launched.

\$7.5 Million for Food Funding in County

Four Local Nonprofits Receive Additional Funding to Fight Food Insecurity in Harris County

Before the pandemic, 800,000 Harris County residents were estimated to struggle to access food, with an additional 1.3 million residents at risk of food insecurity. The pandemic has only intensified these challenges. Last month, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo and Commissioners Court approved \$7.5 million in American Rescue Plan Act Funds to support projects to reduce the number of county residents who are food insecure. This amount is in addition to the \$15.8 million invest-

ment we made at the start of the pandemic and will help to continue our work to bring quality, affordable foods to key areas in Harris County with high rates of food insecurity, called food deserts. The County will be partnering with the Houston Food Bank, Small Places, The Common Market Texas,

and Urban Harvest Inc. to bring programming that includes developing small urban farms and community gardens, distributing fresh, local foods, and providing nutritional programming. Watch this space for more information on these life changing policies.

You can read the Northeast News current and back issues on our website: www.nenewsroom.com

EAST ALDINE
DISTRICT

Take Pride in our Community
Keep it Clean

SCHOOL NEWS PAGE

Houston Rockets and Memorial Hermann Celebrate with Escamilla Students for Being “Be Fit” Challenge Winners



The Be Fit Challenge presented by Children’s Memorial Hermann is implemented in Houston area schools. It provides children with nutrition and activity tips while participating in fun, educational fitness, and nutrition activities to win contest prizes. The schools also compete to win an exciting Be Fit Rally, starring Rockets entertainment, and Memorial Hermann fitness and nutrition experts.

Escamilla Elementary School won the 2021-2022 school year Be Fit Challenge. All 820 Escamilla Bulldogs participated, logging a total of 13,879,692 fitness minutes/points, giving Escamilla the first-place title. The rally celebration was to take place in the spring of 2022. However, due to scheduling conflicts, it had to be rescheduled for the fall. Still, students received a special sneak peek of the prizes at the end of the 2021-2022 school year receiving Houston Rockets-themed knapsacks and school supplies.

The entire school was invited to participate in the celebration rally in October. The top student winners who advanced to the next grade level did



receive prizes.

Top students who logged the most fitness minutes in each grade level received a special commemorative prize pack. Fifth grader Mayiel Pérez was the school’s overall winner. He received a unique Houston Rockets-branded sports gear to use at home and a backpack to commemorate his outstanding achievements.

The school received new equipment for students to strengthen their football, basketball, and soccer skills (e.g., goals and cones).

Escamilla ES Spring 2022 Top Winners in Each Grade Level

Overall Top Winner — Mayiel Pérez, 5th Grade

1st Grade — Asbai Gálvez

2nd Grade — Kamila Marrero

3rd Grade — Jeremy Reyes

4th Grade — Tristen Andrew

5th Grade — Arely Baidillo

Thank you to Monica Loas, EdD., information literacy specialist and campus key communicator at Escamilla Elementary School, for sharing information and pictures about the event.



Aldine ISD and YES Prep to Dissolve Partnership at End of 2022-23 School Year

The partnership between Aldine ISD and YES Prep Charter Public School System, which began in 2013 as a way to leverage the benefits of its district plus a college-prep charter school to provide an enriching experience for students and families during their educational journey, will end after the 2022-23 school year, thereby dissolving YES Prep Eisenhower.

“Our goal remains to provide choices and opportunities for our students, and there is no shortage of options here at Aldine,” says Aldine Superintendent Dr. LaTonya Goffney. “The curriculum provided at all our comprehensive high schools and our Choice Schools provides students with the resources and guidance they need to prepare for a successful post-secondary experience.”

While YES Prep Eisenhower’s Class of 2023 will be the final graduating



class, all other current students will be able to choose where they will continue their education. 10th and 11th-grade students can choose to remain at Eisenhower High School to complete their senior year with their peers or return to their home school to benefit from its proximity and transportation services.

All other students can enroll in their home school or explore Aldine’s various Choice School options.

“We are incredibly thankful for our partnership with YES Prep,” says Katie Roede, Aldine ISD Chief of Schools. “The decision to dissolve the partnership was mutually agreed upon, and we are pleased to be able

to continue providing our students with a wide range of various unique academic programs and campuses that will fit their individual needs.”

In addition to their closest zoned campus, some Choice School options in Aldine that may be of interest to high school students include:

Avalos Pathways in Technology Early College High (P-TECH) School (Grades 9-12)

Blanson Career and Technology Education (CTE) High School (Grades 9-12)

Carver High School for Engineering, Applied Technology & the Arts (Grades 9-12)

Carver P-TECH School (Grades 9-12)

Eisenhower High School-IB@ Diploma Program (Grades 10-12)

Victory Early College High School (Grades 9-12)

Young Women’s Leadership Academy (to begin serving 9th-graders in fall of 2023)

District Students Demonstrate Generosity with ‘Make a Difference’ Projects



Opportunities to give back to the community instill in students a lifelong commitment to helping others.

Schools across the district took part in “Make a Difference” projects. Students and staff collected and donated non-perishable goods, toiletries, socks, and raising funds for a favorite cause.

Each year, Aldine ISD students and staff show their commitment to the community by taking on projects that address their community’s needs. By participating in events like Make a Difference Day or “Make a Difference” projects, the district hopes to instill in students a lifelong commitment to helping others. “Make a Difference” projects provide an opportunity to develop empathy and respect for others. Giving back to the community helps build a positive culture in

schools and the Aldine ISD community.

The Power of Teaching Kindness

*Studies show tweens increase their happiness through acts of kindness. For children, these acts nurture their well-being or sense of satisfaction and strengthen their positive connections with peers, thus gaining friends.

*Other similar studies also support that acts of kindness toward others benefit the giver. Children benefit developmentally by learning to be caring and kind. They display more positive, less bullying behaviors.

*Compassionate individuals feel good about themselves and tend to have a positive outlook on life, which creates a ripple effect in other areas. For instance, happier kids are more likely to show higher academic achievement.

A few examples of projects included Worsham Elementary School. The school, an Accelerating Campus Excellence (ACE), has faculty, staff, and students donated more than 1,000 canned goods and other non-perishable food items to Harris County Precinct 2 North East Community Center’s Senior Meal Program. Vardeman Primary (EC/PreK/K) collected socks for Aldine ISD’s Homeless Office to give to those in need. And Orange Grove Elementary School partnered with Commander Adam Martínez and Quarter Master Ismael Estrada with the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 9187 to provide hygiene and personal care items.

Thank you to all the schools across the district that took on projects to help our communities.

Aldine ISD Hosts Fall Family Conference



On Saturday, Nov. 5, Aldine ISD’s Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Department hosted its Fall Family Conference at Davis High School. The event was attended by approximately 200 families of the district, all of which came out to learn more about the various opportunities that FACE provides for students and families.

In addition to the 200 families, 21 district partners came out to the event to share information about what their organizations offer. In addition, participants were treated to a perfor-

mance of “ballet Folklórico Ketzally” from a local group.

The event was separated into two sections, two breakout sessions and a community partner session. During the breakout sessions, families took part in activities, while their children were entertained during the session and provided drawing kits. The sessions were available in both Spanish and English, so families were able to engage in the language of their preference.

Once the breakout sessions ended, families returned to the front

greeting area, where they were able to engage with various community partners. Families were able to move throughout Davis High School and learn more about the various organizations who attended the event. The event concluded with a wrap up of the community partners. In addition, families who attended the Conference were provided a gift option of a 10-, 20-or 30-lb weighted blanket.

Aldine ISD is always looking for more ways to engage, and empower district families.

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OPINION PAGE

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OPINION

By Gus Bova

Texas Observer Magazine

Beto's Lost Year

"I don't know what my role or yours will be going forward," said the Texas Dems' political star, after \$70 million bought a bracing defeat.

by Gus Bova, Texas Observer magazine

On Tuesday night, once it was clear his bid for Texas governor had been soundly defeated, Democrat Beto O'Rourke bounded up to address what one reporter called a "small, energetic crowd" in his hometown of El Paso. He flashed his toothy grin; he sported his trademark light-blue button-up. Yet his buoyant demeanor contrasted with seemingly spontaneous lines that came off profoundly sad.

"This may be one of the last times I get to talk in front of you all," he said, prompting a chorus of dismay from the crowd. He spoke of shifting his focus to helping his mom fight through cancer. He jested that his wife, Amy, might be the next O'Rourke to run for office—to which she indicated "No." Finally, he detailed the vision that propelled his year-long crusade to be Texas' top executive: A state "where every woman makes her own decisions about her own body," where "children don't have to fear going to school and being gunned down in their classroom," and where people are "free enough and healthy enough" to fulfill their potential.

"Well, that still is the Texas that I want to live in, that is the dream that I ... will continue to pursue," he said. "I don't know what form that will take—I don't know what my role or yours will be going forward—but I'm in this fight for life."

The crowd began chanting "Beto."

It was an apt microcosm. O'Rourke's personal charm, which helped propel him to premature political stardom, was evident even in defeat. The crowd evinced its passion for him as an individual. Yet the showing was a shadow of 2018, when his concession speech was at a packed minor league baseball stadium. Back then—after falling just 2.6 points shy of unseating U.S. Senator Ted Cruz—O'Rourke said: "I'm as hopeful as I've ever been in my life," and it was believable. We all knew then he would run again for something; it was just the beginning. But now, he says he doesn't know what's next, he implies he's done running, and it's believable.

Beto O'Rourke addresses the crowd at a town hall in Austin on June 3, 2022. Gus Bova/Texas Observer

Here are the numbers, in all their bleak implacability. On Tuesday night, O'Rourke lost to incumbent GOP Governor Greg Abbott by 11 points. That's 5 points worse than President Biden's showing in 2020 and 8 points worse than O'Rourke's tally against Cruz. It is, barely, an improvement over hopelessly outmatched Lupe Valdez's 2018 gubernatorial result. In bellwether Tarrant County, which Biden and O'Rourke narrowly won in the past two cycles, Abbott prevailed by 4. Turnout for the marquee race was 46 percent, down 7 points from 2018. And all this comes after O'Rourke raised and spent more than \$70 million.

Dave Carney, Abbott's longtime campaign guru, now says he hopes O'Rourke will run for office again. "We need Beto," Carney cheekily told the Dallas Morning News in a Wednesday article. "He helps us energize our base. He helps us raise money. He's a good asset to our side."

So, how did we get here? Just four years past, O'Rourke was pure political dynamism—really, the only thing going for statewide Dems in the long shadow of Wendy Davis' 2014 gubernatorial flameout. He was the unheralded El Pasoan, who burst forth on a Facebook Live stream and took the state by storm, stirring something even in cynical observers and coming within a hair of ousting the eminently disagreeable Cruz. Not long after, following some combination of bad instinct and bad advice, he launched a quixotic bid for the Democratic presidential nomination, during which he staked out hard-left positions on unpopular issues. He painted himself into a corner; he outlined himself sharply in the eyes of a Texas electorate that previously saw him in something of a soft, forgiving glow.

By the time O'Rourke declared for governor last November, nothing looked good. Polling was already suggesting a comfortable lead for Abbott and, most tellingly, that O'Rourke was almost universally known and more disliked than liked. Nationally, O'Rourke was stepping into a midterm with an unpopular Democrat in the White House, against an incumbent known for fundraising and campaigning prowess. It was an inauspicious time.

Texas Dems, however, had no one else to run; O'Rourke, two losing campaigns under his belt, was far and away the strongest candidate they could muster. It was practically his duty to run, and lose, like the Lone Star State's fleeting liberal stars before him.

In response, O'Rourke did what O'Rourke does. He hopped in a pickup truck, drove like mad around the whole state, raised a ton of money, and mobilized a bunch of ardent volunteers. He worked hard to massage his past unpopular positions, and he seized on each opportunity fate provided. Often, these took the form of disasters: the lethal electric grid failure of 2021, the suicides of National Guard members deployed to the border, the worst school shooting in Texas history in Uvalde, and the termination of the constitutional right to abortion. It's hard to imagine the gods providing any clearer examples of the violence and power-lust woven through Abbott's politics and practices.

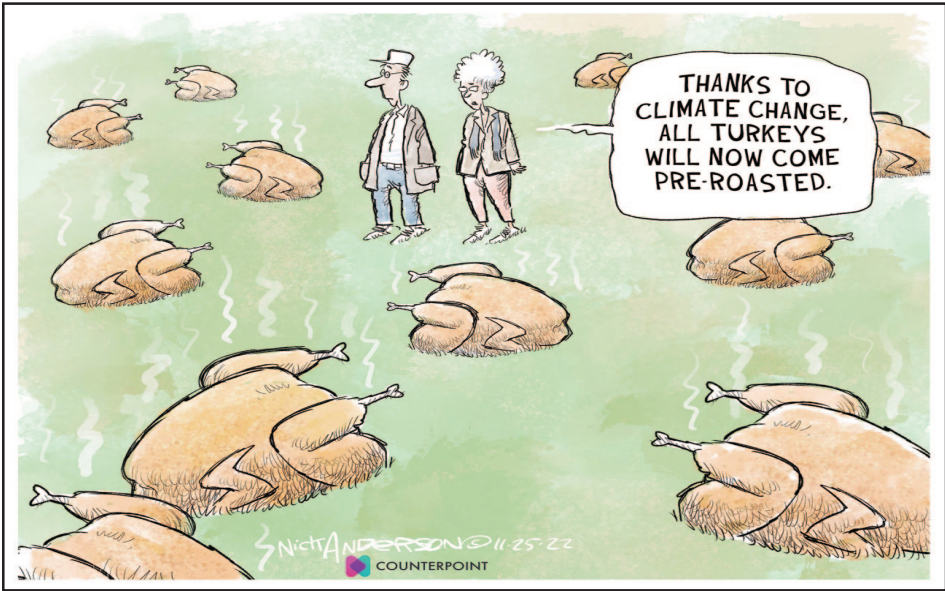
Beto painted himself into a corner; he outlined himself sharply in the eyes of a Texas electorate that previously saw him in something of a soft, forgiving glow.

For a time, these nation-shaking events did seem to infect the governor's race. Over the summer, the polls tightened a tad, and there was all that money coming in. But maybe that was all wishful thinking. What's striking now, looking back, is the static nature of the race. Abbott was up by 12 in an early speculative poll last June; the RealClearPolitics average of all the polling over time is plus-10.4 for Abbott; Abbott won by 11.

If there are silver linings, they're slim. Unlike in 2018, when O'Rourke propelled a suite of down-ballot Democratic wins, this year's race was run on an overwhelmingly non-competitive, freshly gerrymandered map. It's possible that O'Rourke's spending and campaigning helped Houston-area Dems narrowly avoid a county-level wipeout Tuesday. It's also feasible that O'Rourke's statewide campaign infrastructure will one day be inherited by a promising new avatar of Texas progressivism. But, for now, this isn't much to hang one's hat on.

"I'd honestly like to see [O'Rourke] take a break," Carolina Machado, a school counselor, told the Texas Tribune after Tuesday's concession speech in El Paso. "I think he needs some time to kind of chill and be a family man for a little bit ... but I'd love to see him get back out there and really fight for us as Texans."

Machado has the right of it, of course; O'Rourke and his family have more than earned a reprieve. And should he decide to run for office again, the El Paso mayor's seat is up in just a couple short years.



★

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders

Legislators begin filling bills

LEGISLATORS BEGIN FILING BILLS AHEAD OF SESSION

Texas legislators are off to the races, filing more than 850 bills on Monday, the first day of filing season for the 88th session, which begins Jan. 10.

The Austin American-Statesman reported the potential laws, constitutional amendments and propositions address everything from property taxes to border security, access to guns, abortion, education and health care.

Thousands more bills will be filed prior to the March 10 deadline. Gov. Greg Abbott, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick and House Speaker Dade Phelan have not yet announced their legislative priorities.

Property tax relief is likely to be a top item, given past remarks from the state's leaders. With a hefty state surplus of \$27 billion predicted, two bills would carve into that surplus to reduce property taxes.

Other topics drawing proposed legislation:

- Democrats have filed a bevy of bills to increase gun safety and limit access to certain firearms.
- Eight Democratic state senators filed a bill that would create exceptions to the state's abortion ban in the case of rape or incest, as well as additional medical exceptions.
- Legalizing gambling will again be before the Legislature, as it has the past several sessions.
- Another Democratic measure would expand Medicaid benefits for women both before and after birth.

DACA RECIPIENTS URGE QUICK CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

A number of recipients of the Obama-era program known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) are urging Congress to act during the lame duck session to give them permanent protection against deportation.

The Texas Standard reported Austin accountant Edilsa Lopez was one of several recipients who met with Congressional leaders to tell

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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders

their stories and urge them to adopt such legislation.

Nearly 600,000 children who were brought here by parents who are not U.S. citizens are protected under DACA, while another 400,000 are eligible but have been stymied from enrolling by legal challenges.

"This is my third time in D.C. flying to meet with congressmen from both sides of the aisle and they just keep on talking and talking," said Diego Corzo, 32, of Austin. "I think it's time that they finally put an importance to find a solution — a long-term solution — for the DACA recipients, for the Dreamers, so that we stop living in limbo."

RRC INSPECTORS SENT TO REEVES COUNTY AFTER QUAKE

The Texas Railroad Commission sent inspectors to Reeves County in West Texas Thursday after the area was rocked with a 5.4 magnitude earthquake near its border with Culberson County. The agents are examining disposal activity at injection wells in the area.

Tremors from the earthquake were felt in both San Antonio and Austin.

STATE NOW BUSING MIGRANTS TO PHILADELPHIA

The City of Brotherly love is the latest recipient of migrants being bused from Texas border communities, the Texas Tribune reported. The first bus arrived in Philadelphia last Wednesday.

"Since April, Texas' busing strategy has successfully provided much-needed relief to our

border communities overwhelmed by the historic influx of migrants caused by President Biden's reckless open border policies," Abbott said.

Texas has been sending busloads of migrants to Washington, D.C., Chicago, and New York in an attempt to pressure Biden to stiffen his immigration policies.

Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney said the city welcomed the migrants and has been preparing for their possible arrival since summer.

"As a proud welcoming city, we will greet our newly arrived neighbors with dignity and respect," said Kenney.

SAFE DRIVING URGED DURING HOLIDAY SEASON

The Texas Department of Public Transportation is urging holiday season motorists to exert caution and to especially not drink and drive.

The state saw 48,641 traffic crashes during the holiday season from Dec. 1, 2021, to Jan. 1, 2022, with 433 fatalities and 1,695 serious injuries. Nearly a quarter of those deaths — 23% — were related to drunk drivers, according to TxDOT.

"Get together with family and friends and have a great time, but please find an alternative way home if you choose to drink," Marc Williams, TxDOT executive director, said. "You have many options available."

Those options include a designated sober driver, calling a taxi or rideshare service, public transportation, or just staying put.

FED FUNDS SOUGHT AFTER NORTH TEXAS STORMS

Abbott has requested a disaster declaration from the U.S. Small Business Administration for Northeast Texas counties that were hit by severe weather and tornadoes earlier this month.

An SBA disaster declaration would make federal funds available for residents and business owners in Lamar, Morris, Bowie, Camp, Cass, Delta, Fannin, Marion, Red River, Titus, and Upshur counties.

The program, if approved by the SBA, would provide long-term, low-interest loans to qualifying persons who sustained damage and losses.

COVID-19 CASES RISE SLIGHTLY

The number of new cases of COVID-19 during the past week in Texas rose to 13,104, with 57 deaths reported by the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University. Cases of lab-confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations in the state stayed steady at 993, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services.

★

THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

Loved and Lost

We thought we would miss the festivities, which just shows how much we still have to learn about Mexico.

My husband, Peter, and I arrived in San Miguel de Allende on the 2nd of November.

"It's too bad we'll miss the Day of the Dead," I told Peter when he made reservations. I knew a little about the Day of the Dead. I'd seen the elaborate skeleton costumes and the cemeteries filled with flowers and families. I figured it would be all over.

But when we arrived, the streets were festooned with streamers, and there were bright orange Mexican marigolds decorating every doorway. It did not appear the party was over yet.

My former sister-in-law, who is Catholic, explained it to me later.

"Oh! It's All Souls' Day!" she said. All Souls' Day follows All Saints' Day which, in Mexico, is the Day of the Dead.

There were long lines of booths where people were having their faces painted to look like skeletons in an infinite variety of styles. Everyone on the street was dressed in elaborate costumes—adults and children and even a few dogs. One little dog was dressed in festive local fabric in a vivid shade of pink.

"Aren't you cute?" Peter said. The little dog lunged at Peter and barked. It's hard to look vicious when you're all decked out in pink.

There was a man carrying a brightly colored iguana on his shoulder.

"Is it your pet?" I asked his daughter. She nodded.

"Is it nice or dangerous?" I asked. She laughed.

A mariachi band played in the square and a woman sang songs that it seemed everyone knew except me and, finally, there was a parade with carriages pulled by giant draft horses in fancy harnesses, and enormous skeletons walking on stilts, and more bands, and police officers in dress uniforms riding in their jeeps and on their motorcycles, most of them with painted skeleton faces as well. It was marvelous.

But most memorable of all were the "ofrendas," the altars put up all around the square to honor the dead.

Some were quite large, and they were decorated with brilliant orange marigolds, photos of the dead, food, tequila, and other remembrances of things the deceased had loved. Some honored many family members. One was for victims of domestic violence. One was for men who had died on motorcycles. One was for a beloved nun. Most of them, we could only guess.

There was a framed photo of a beautiful woman that looked as if it had been taken several years ago. "Brave heart," the sign below her said. Peter, who lost two sisters to cancer in the last two years, was deeply touched.

Because, beneath all the festivities, there was a serious side to this wonderful celebration. It was a day to remember the souls of people loved and lost. It was a time set aside to remember how short life is and how we miss those who have left us. It was a day to honor them and remember them and feel their presence more keenly than most days of the year. We wish them well. We hope they wish the same for us.

Peter and I had dinner in a restaurant after the parade had passed and the light was growing dim. There would be fireworks later on, as there is for every celebration. The restaurant was filled with people in beautiful, colorful costumes that all, in some way, reminded us that we should enjoy this sweet day and celebrate the dead—before we, too, join their ranks.

Till next time,
Carrie
Photos from the column and other fun stuff can be found at CarrieClasson.com.

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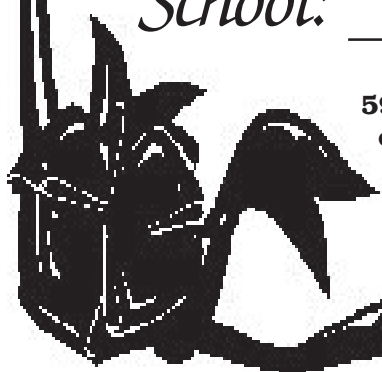
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— King Crossword —
Answers

CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey —

1. Is the book of Issachar in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. What bread component did Jesus compare with the kingdom of heaven? Yeast, Crust, Gluten, Wheat

3. Which of the 12 tribes of Israel wasn't allotted any land? Simeon, Dan, Asher, Levi

4. Who removed a thorn from the lion's foot? Benjamin, Job, Naphtali, Androcles

5. How many books of the Bible (KJV) are credited to Moses? 3, 4, 5, 6

6. What was first to be released from Noah's Ark? Gull, Dove, Raven, Serpent

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Yeast, 3) Levi, 4) Androcles, 5) Five, 6) Raven Hardcore trivia fan? Visit Wilson Casey's subscriber site at www.patreon.com/triviaguy. (c) 2022 King Features Synd., Inc.

Detail of a drawing by Michelangelo

MATTHEW 15:19,20

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SPORTS PAGE

FOOTBALL SEASON WEEK 13:

Desh Shaun Watson returns to Houston: TCU looks to make its case for a CFP bid

The Prodigal Son is returning.

Former Texans QB Deshaun Watson will make his debut as the Cleveland Browns starting quarterback (and savior?) when he returns to NRG Stadium to face his former team on Sunday.

Watson served an 11-game suspension for violating the NFL's personal conduct policy after more than 20 women accused the former Texans No. 1 draft choice of inappropriate conduct while he received massages from them. Watson also fell out of favor with the Houston front office and demanded a trade. That's just what General Manager Nick Caserio did, trading the talented signal caller to the Browns for a boat load of draft picks.

Ironically, Watson plays his first game for the Browns against the team that made him the 12th overall pick in the 2017 draft.

Watson had his moments during his tenure as a Texan, but he forced a divorce and now long-suffering Browns fans are hoping they finally have a quarterback who can take them all the way. It won't be this year because the Browns are pretty much out of the playoff hunt, but Watson has the talent to lead a turnaround in 2023. Cleveland has the pieces in place to be a playoff contender next season.

While a lot of attention will be played to Watson's return to his old stomping grounds, there will be a lot of focus at the college level as teams play their conference title games all over the country. Once the dust has settled, we should have a pretty good idea of what four teams will make up the College Football Playoff field this year.

Defending national champion Georgia takes on LSU and first-year head coach Brian Kelly in the SEC title game in Atlanta. Georgia should have one of the CFP berths locked up, as should the winner of the Big 10 title game, which will be either Michigan or Ohio State. In the Big 12, TCU is assured of one of the slots in the conference title game. The Horned Frogs opponent should be either Kansas State or Texas. If TCU wins the conference title game, they would move to 13-0 on the season. Tennessee's upset loss at South Carolina two weeks ago eliminated the Vols from CFP contention and put TCU in solid position to land perhaps the fourth berth. USC is another team that will be considered for the CFP if the Trojans and first-year head coach Lincoln Riley finish with a win over a good, but not great Notre Dame team and a victory in the Pac 12 title game. The Committee could also consider a one-loss Michigan or Ohio State team as well. Clemson could also be playing for a playoff berth when they face North Carolina in the ACC title game.

Needless to say, there is a lot that will be decided this weekend.

In the NFL, there are a number of interesting games on tap this first weekend of December. Aside from Watson's return to Houston, the Cowboys host the Colts on Sunday Night Football, while the Jets travel to Minneapolis to take on the Vikings. The Chiefs and Bengals meet in a rematch of their AFC title game, but this time they will be playing this one in Bengal country. Week 13 concludes with an NFC South battle as the Saints visit Tom Brady and the Bucs.

Before we take a look at this week's games, let's review last week's record. A



10-2 week brought the season record to 93-49 (65%).

Now, onto this weekend's game.

NCAA

SEC Title Game: Georgia vs. LSU: A year ago, Kirby Smart's team was upset in the SEC title game by Alabama, but I don't expect that to be the case this year. Georgia should have learned from last year's experience. Kelly has done an amazing job in his first year in Baton Rouge and expect him to have something up his sleeve on Saturday in the Mercedes Benz Dome. The Georgia defense is once again one of the top units in the country. The 'Dawgs allow just 11 points per game, and they do a great job of neutralizing their opponents top weapon. That means the Georgia defense will center its attention on LSU dual threat QB Jayden Daniels (2,377 passing yards, 15 TDs/740 rushing yards, 11 TDs). Look for Georgia's front seven to take the run away from him and force him to throw the ball. When the Bulldogs have the ball, look for QB Stetson Bennett IV (3,011 yards, 14 TDs) to make plays down field to tight end Brock Bowlers (41 receptions, 625 yards, 4 TDs) and dependable wideout Ladd McConey (46 receptions, 606 yards, 4 TDs). Look for running back Kenny McIntosh (568 yards, 7 TDs) to handle the work on the ground. Look for the Bulldogs to send a message to the rest of the college football world that they are serious about winning a second straight national title. My pick, Georgia 34, LSU 16

Big 12 Title Game: TCU vs. Kansas State or Texas: TCU is assured of one of the berths in the Big 12 title game, but their opponent is still up in the air. If Kansas State defeated in-state rival Kansas last week, the Wildcats head to Arlington to take on the Horned Frogs. If KSU loses and Texas beat Baylor the Friday after Thanksgiving, then the Longhorns will be the other participant in the Big 12 title game. TCU defeated both teams in the regular season could be playing for much more than a Big 12 title, most notably a berth in the CFP. The Horned Frogs are led by QB Max Duggan (2,888 passing yards, 26 TDs/291 rushing yards, 5 TDs), running back Kendre Miller (1,188 yards, 14 TDs) and wide receiver Quentin Johnson (49 receptions, 764 yards, 5 TDs). If KSU makes it to Arlington, they will lean on running back Deuce Vaughn (1,148 yards, 6 TDs) and if it's UT, Steve Sarkisian's team will also lean on its star running back Bijan Robinson (1,401 yards, 16 TDs). Robinson rushed for a career high 243 yards and scored four TD's in UT's 55-14 thumping of Kansas two weeks ago. TCU appears to be a team of destiny, so they are the pick to win the Big 12 title game.

ACC Title Game: Clemson vs. North Carolina: Clemson's stingy defense takes on NC's high-scoring offense in the ACC title game. A Clemson win keeps their CFP hopes alive, while a loss will dash those hopes. The Clemson defense is very solid, but it will have its hands full with Tarheel QB Drake Maye (3,614 passing yards, 34 TDs/597 rushing yards, 5 TDs). Two weeks ago, NC was up 17-0 at Georgia Tech and wound up losing 20-17. North Carolina

can't afford a let up against a Tiger team that is led by QB DJ Uiagalelei (2,406 yards, 21 TDs) and running back Will Shipley (960 yards, 13 TDs). Look for the Clemson defense to be the difference maker in this one as the Tigers win another ACC title. My pick, Clemson 30, North Carolina 20

NFL

Buffalo at New England: Week 13 begins with a key AFC East contest on Thursday Night Football as the Bills visit New England. This game will feature the high-scoring Bills offense against a stingy Patriots defense, so something has to give. Two weeks ago, the Bills ended their two-game losing streak with a 31-23 win over Cleveland in Detroit after Buffalo was shut down due to six feet of snow. QB Josh Allen (2,930 passing yards, 21 TDs/483 rushing yards, 4 TDs) did just enough to get the Bills back in the winning mode. Buffalo has found a running game behind Devin Singletary (480 yards, 3 TDs), which should open up more passing plays for Allen and wide receiver Stefon Diggs (76 receptions, 1,033 yards, 8 TDs). The Bills offense will face a tough test Thursday night as Bill Belichick has molded one of the top defenses in the NFL. Two weeks ago in their 10-3 win over the Jets, that unit gave up just 213 yards of total offense. NE won the game an 84-yard punt return by former UH star Marcus Jones with just five seconds left in the game. Unlike the Jets, the Bills can play offense and look for Allen and his team to start their late-season run as they look to challenge KC for the best record in the AFC. My pick, Buffalo 27, New England 13

Cleveland at Houston: About the only interesting thing about this game is how well Watson will play after almost two years off the field and what sort of reaction he receives from Texans fans. These are two bad teams, but Watson should be a boost to the offense. With him now under center, teams will have to respect the pass and his mobility, which things should open up for star running back Nick Chubb (923 yards, 11 TDs). And facing the porous Houston run defense should be another factor as for why Chubb could have a huge day inside NRG Stadium. The Browns can bring pressure with Miles Garrett and Jadaveon Clowney off the edges, so look for Houston QB Davis Mills (2,144 yards, 11 TDs) to be in for another long afternoon. My pick, Cleveland 31, Houston 16

New York Jets at Minnesota: The offensively-challenged Jets (they had only 103 yards of total offense in the NE loss) travel to Minneapolis to take on a Vikings team that was dominated 40-3 at home by the Cowboys two weeks ago. The Jets are OK on defense, but their offense can't seem to get going. QB Zach Wilson (1,279 yards, 4 TDs) has got to play better if the Jets hope to challenge for a Wild Card spot. Look for the Vikings offense to shake off its worst performance of the year and bounce back in a big way. QB Kirk Cousins (2,461 yards, 14 TDs) should make some plays to star wide receiver Justin Jefferson (72 receptions, 1,093 yards, 4 TDs), which should open up the running game for running back Dalvin Cook (797 yards, 6 TDs).

Look for the Vikings to get back on track against the Jets on Sunday. My pick, Minnesota 26, New York Jets 13

Tennessee at Philadelphia: The Titans head to the City of Brotherly Love to face the Eagles in a battle of division leaders. The Titans are atop the AFC South standings, while the Eagles rule the roost in the NFC East. Tennessee is a tough, hard-nosed football team, sort of like the Washington team that physically dominated the Eagles on Nov. 14 and handed Philly their first loss of the season. The Titans can run the football with Derrick Henry (1,010 yards, 10 TDs) and QB Ryan Tannehill (1,685 yards, 10 TDs) does a good job of taking what defenses give him. He's not a flashy quarterback and the Titans don't throw deep a lot, but they will take their shots when they see an opening. Two weeks ago, the Eagles escaped Indy with a last-second 17-16 win on QB Jalen Hurts (2,407 passing yards, 14 TDs/440 rushing yards, 8 TDs) late TD run with just seconds left in the game. Hurts will look to make plays in the passing game to wide receivers A.J. Brown (49 receptions, 785 yards, 6 TDs) and Devonta Smith (52 receptions, 559 yards, 3 TDs). Losing dependable tight end Dallas Goedert to a shoulder injury will hinder the Eagles passing game. Look for Henry to have a big day as the Titans pull off the upset. My pick, Tennessee 26, Philadelphia 23

Washington at New York Giants: Don't look now, but the Commanders are in the playoff hunt. The Commander's 23-10 win over the hapless Texans two weeks ago was their fifth win in their last six games and this Sunday they take on the Giants in a key NFC East contest in The Meadowlands. Two weeks ago, the Giants were upset at home by the Lions as running back Jamaal Williams gouged the NY defense for three scoring runs. NY needs to play better on defense, or their bubble could begin to burst. Washington has a tough defense and if defensive end Chase Young is back for this game, Giants QB Daniel Jones (1,596 yards, 9 TDs) and running back Saquon Barkley (931 yards, 6 TDs), could be in for a long day. The Giants will have an extra three days of rest to prepare for this game after they played Dallas on Thanksgiving Day. Look for the Giants to win a tight one on Sunday. My pick, New York Giants 23, Washington 20

Miami at San Francisco: The high-flying Dolphins take their offensive show to Northern Cali to take on the 49ers in what should be one of Week 13's better games. The 49ers defense will have their hands full with QB Tua Tagovailoa (2,265 yards, 18 TDs) and speedy wideouts Tyreek Hill (81 receptions, 1,145 yards, 8 TDs) and Jaylen Waddle (51 receptions, 878 yards, 6 TDs). The 49ers will be looking for a bust out game from speedy running back Christian McCaffrey in this game. Miami's defense is so-so, which means SF QB Jimmy Garoppolo will need to make some big plays downfield to WR Deebo Samuel and tight end George Kittle. I think the SF defense steps up to lead the 49ers to a bg home win. My pick, San Francisco 26, Miami 24

Kansas City at Cincinnati: A rematch of last year's AFC Championship game has the Chiefs playing at the Bengals this time around. This game should be a shootout between KC QB Pat Mahomes (3,265 yards, 28 TDs) and Cinci QB Joe Burrow (2,890 yards, 22 TDs). This game will feature a wealth of offensive weapons as KC tight end Travis Kelce (69 receptions, 855 yards, 11 TDs) and rookie running back Isiah Pacheco (386 yards, 1 TD) will take on Bengals running back Joe Mixon (605 yards, 6 TDs) and wide receivers Tee Higgins (50 receptions, 712 yards, 3 TDs) and Ja'Marr Chase (47 receptions, 605 yards, 6 TDs). Chase should be back for this game after missing the last four games recovering from a hip injury. If Chase is back, he will present the KC defense with a real challenge and make Higgins an even bigger target for Burrow. The Chiefs are not intimidated by playing on the road and will be up to the challenge come Sunday. Two weeks ago against the Chargers, Mahomes worked his magic once again as he led his team on a late game-winning drive as he connected with Kelce for the game-winning touchdown. Mahomes and Kelce hooked up for three scores in the win over LA. I also think the Chiefs want to avenge last year's home loss in the AFC title game, so look for Mahomes to work his magic on the road once again. My pick, Kansas City 33, Cincinnati 31

Indianapolis at Dallas: The Cowboys come off their Thanksgiving break and host the Colts on Sunday Night Football. If Dallas plays the way they did in

their 40-3 pummeling of Minnesota two weeks ago, the Cowboys could be tough to handle from here on out. The defense recorded five sacks, while running back Tony Pollard accounted for 189 yards of total offense (80 yards rushing, 6 receptions, 109 yards, 2 TDs) and Dak Prescott (1,132 yards, 8 TDs) played an efficient game. If the defense continues to bring the heat, and Pollard and Ezekiel Elliott continue to produce in the running game, then that should make things easier for Prescott to make plays to wide receiver CeeDee Lamb (58 receptions, 751 yards, 5 TDs) in the passing game. The Dallas offense could get even better if free agent wide receiver Odell Beckham decides to sign with them. You can be sure owner Jerry Jones will do what it takes to get Beckham into a Cowboys jersey. The Dallas defense must improve its run defense and did play better against Minnesota, but this week they face one of the top backs in the league in Indy's Jonathan Taylor (693 yards, 3 TDs). Shutting down Taylor should be the Dallas' defense top priority. If they do that, look for Micah Parsons and Co. to set their sites on the immobile Matt Ryan (2,443 yards, 10 TDs) as they look to pad their sack stats. My pick, Dallas 31, Indianapolis 15

New Orleans at Tampa Bay: Week 13 concludes on Monday Night Football with the Saints taking on the Bucs in an NFC South battle. Two weeks ago, the Saints earned a 27-20 win at home against the Rams. QB Andy Dalton (1,819 yards, 14 TDs) will need help from running back Alvin Kamara (511 yards, 1 TD) and rookie wideout Chris Olave (51 receptions, 760 yards, 3 TDs) if they hope to upset Tom Brady (2,805 yards, 12 TDs) and the Bucs, who had an extra week to prepare for their division rival. TB picked up a big win over Seattle in Germany three weeks ago and Brady looked like his old self. Don't be surprised if he and the Bucs go on a late-season run. The NFC South is their's for the taking, and you can rest assured Brady is going to start making plays in the passing game to Mike Evans (49 receptions, 671 yards, 3 TDs) and Chris Godwin (45 receptions, 475 yards, 1 TD). Look for the Buck to dominate this game to let the rest of the NFC know they aren't finished yet. My pick, Tampa Bay 31, New Orleans 20

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Aldine ISD

In compliance with state requirements TEC 39A.055(3) and TEC 39A 057, the approval of the 2022-2023 Targeted Improvement Plans (TIPs) for campuses rated Comprehensive Support based on the federal requirements of Domain III must be held. Aldine ISD will hold a public hearing on Dec. 13 at its monthly board meeting.

Campuses rated Comprehensive Support are required to submit, for Board approval, an Effective Schools Framework (ESF) Aligned TIP that will address areas of low performance identified through the three state accountability domains. The targeted elements in the plan will be implemented and monitored throughout the year as campuses engage in the continuous improvement process.

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Lone Star College named one of the Best Workplaces in Texas

HOUSTON (June 15, 2022) – Fortune Magazine and Great Place To Work® has recognized Lone Star College as one of this year's Best Workplaces in Texas™. LSC was the only higher education institution to make the list, being ranked 14th out of 25 companies.

"Lone Star College has worked hard to create a culture where employees want to come to work," said Stephen C. Head, Ph.D., LSC Chancellor. "We are pleased to receive this recognition and grateful to all our employees for making Lone Star College one of the best places to work in Texas."

This year's Best Workplaces in Texas™ award is based on employee feedback collected through America's largest ongoing annual workforce study. Over 1 million employee survey responses, as well data from companies representing more than 6.1 million U.S. employees, were gathered. In that survey, 83% of LSC's employees said that LSC is a great place to work. This number is 26% higher than the average U.S. company.

"As employee demands and expectations have dramatically changed over the past year, these companies have risen to the occasion – and it's not been easy," says Kim Peters, executive vice president of global recognition, research & strategic partnerships at Great Place to Work®. "Their hard work and dedication to listen to and care for the well-being of every employee and support them in a way that's meaningful to all, is the standard all organizations will be held to."

Great Place to Work®, the global authority on workplace culture, select-

ed the list using rigorous analytics and confidential employee feedback. Companies were only considered if they are a Great Place to Work-Certified™ organization and headquartered in Texas.

The survey showed that 91% of LSC employees feel good about the ways the college contributes to the community and 90% reported they are proud to tell others they work at LSC. Visit GreatPlacesToWork.com to see all the data.

About Lone Star College

Lone Star College enrolls over 80,000 students each semester providing high-quality, low-cost academic transfer and career training education. LSC is training tomorrow's workforce today and redefining the community college experience to support student success. Stephen C. Head, Ph.D., serves as chancellor of LSC, the largest institution of higher education in the Houston area and has been named a 2021 Great Colleges to Work For® institution by the Chronicle of Higher Education and ranked 35th in Texas in the Forbes 'America's Best Employers By State' list. LSC consists of eight colleges, seven centers, eight Workforce Centers of Excellence and Lone Star Corporate College.

To learn more, visit LoneStar.edu.

About the Best Workplaces in Texas™

Great Place to Work® selected the Best Workplaces in Texas™ by gathering and analyzing confidential survey responses from its study of thousands of companies representing more than 6.1 million U.S. employees at Great Place to Work-

Certified™ organizations. Companies must be headquartered in Texas to be eligible. Company rankings are derived from 60 employee experience questions within the Great Place to Work Trust Index™ survey.

HCC students win global top prize at Intel AI global competition

Competition had 1,000 entries from 25 nations

(L-R) Serr Brown, Dina Marie Stager and Ryan Galbraith

HOUSTON (Sept. 30, 2022) – A three-student team from Houston Community College Southwest has won the top prize at the Intel AI Global Impact Festival in San Jose, California.

The annual festival gathers next-generation technologists, future developers, teachers and policymakers to learn and share innovations and impacts of artificial intelligence, according to Intel Corporation, an education partner of HCC's AI program.

The HCC team of Serr Brown, Dina Marie Stager and Ryan Galbraith competed against more than 1,000 student entries from 25 nations. They won the top award in the 18-and-older age group with their entry, Indoor Industrial Safety Program. The project utilizes AI and digital mapping to increase safety in indoor workplaces.

The HCC trio's entry centered on a high-performance drone equipped with thermal, infrared and Lidar (light detection and ranging) technology deployed within an indoor industrial site. In just 30 minutes, it uses AI-generated coordinates to scan the floor of a site to create a three-dimensional digi-

tal replica of the area. The drone typically flies just a foot below the ceiling's lights to capture required data.

"It's no small feat," said Dr. G. Brown, HCC AI program coordinator. "It's difficult to get coordinate data indoors. The problem was solved by the students by using AI to provide the drone with coordinates and accuracy needed to build a 3D model."

The technology can aid companies learn about equipment and building layouts before additions or improvements are made, among myriad other applications.

The trio brainstormed for over three months to develop the project, painstakingly envisioning just how to use their AI knowledge and skills to make their drone capable of success.

"We are honored to represent HCC and to be selected as a global competition winner," Galbraith said. "We are thankful for the AI and AR-VR (augmented reality and virtual reality) training from HCC that prepared us to succeed."

Serr Brown, a correctional officer advancing his academic goals at HCC, is passionate about AI. "I be-

lieve that AI has the potential to change the world for the better, and I am excited to be part of the field," he said. "I am looking forward to learning more about AI and how it can be used to improve the lives of people across the world."

As part of the team, Stager is now the first woman to receive the Intel festival top prize. She works as office manager at a local marketing firm and has taken on additional Massachusetts Institute of Technology courses to augment her computer science.

Each winner receives a \$5,000 prize, an Intel-powered laptop and mentorship opportunities.

Dr. Madeline Burillo-Hopkins, president of HCC Southwest and HCC vice chancellor of Workforce Instruction, said the students' win is a testament to the college's quality faculty and effective instruction.

"Our students not only learn the technical skills of AI and machine learning, but also the solutions that they can design as developers to tackle real-world problems," she said. "I could not be more proud of these students and how wonderfully they have represented HCC."

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