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# NORTHEAST NEWS



3rd Gun BuyBack Program. Feb. 18

Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 47 Years  
 VOL. 47, NO. 6 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2023 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

**NEWS NOTES**

## 3rd Gun BuyBack set for Feb. 18

*Harris County, Houston will pay up to \$200*

**East Aldine's Small Business Seminar Lunch Feb. 23**

East Aldine District will hold their First Class of 2023 in the Small Business Free Seminar Series, on Thursday February 23 from 12noon to 1pm. This is a Luncheon event.

This meeting will present Business Tax Prep 101. Learn about preparing your business for a smooth tax season.

Co-sponsored by Woodforest National Bank and BakerRipley. RSVP now. A reservation is required. See the QR graphic on Page 8 to complete your registration, AldineDistrict.org, or for more information call 512-658-4985.

**Seniors United at BakerRipley**

Seniors ages 60+ are welcome to join along with Everyone-Counts for a monthly get togethers.

Every third Thursday at BakerRipley East Aldine campus, 11:30am to 1pm. Prizes and Resources from Community Partners. Call to register 346-570-4463. 0

**HARRIS COUNTY** – Residents will now have another opportunity to sell their unwanted firearms. Harris County Precinct One Commissioner Rodney Ellis, Sheriff Ed Gonzalez, and Mayor Sylvester Turner announced last Monday a third gun buyback program, to be held on Saturday February 18 from 8 a.m. until noon at Deussen Park in Northeast Harris County. (SEE MAP FOR DEUSSEN PARK LOCATION).

The city and county previously held two gun buyback events that took place in July and October of last year. City and County officials say the events were successful with huge turnouts and over 2,000 firearms collected. Residents can turn in firearms with “no questions asked” in exchange for gift cards ranging from \$50 to \$200 depending on the type of firearm collected.

“We can’t bring a life back, but we can buy a gun back and make sure it never falls into the wrong hands and causes harm to someone,” said County Commissioner Rodney Ellis “So please



Officers check guns that were turned in at the last Gun BuyBack conducted in October by Harris County and the City of Houston. Over 800 guns were turned in, and Gift Cards varying from \$50 to \$200 were paid.

do as much as you can to help make our communities safer by spreading the word about this – our third gun buyback in Harris County – two in the city and this one will be a county funded one.”

Both the city and county have allocated \$1 million in federal funding towards the gun buyback program. Last year, the county approved its portion of the fund to host up to 8 gun buyback events in an effort to reduce gun violence, suicides, and ac-

cidental deaths caused by a firearm.

The city’s initiative is part of Mayor Sylvester Turner’s \$63 million One Safe Houston Initiative to reduce violent crime throughout the city and allocate funding towards things like mental health programs, domestic violence, and overtime for police officers.

So far, the county has spent \$225,000 on the program and the city has not yet confirmed their amount spent.

The announcement of the third gun buyback program was also an unveiling of the “Stop the Gun Violence” Mural in front of Worthing Early College High School in SunnySide.

Mayor Sylvester Turner said the first two events surpassed the city and county expectations.

“The success of the two events demonstrated that people do want a safe space to dispose of their guns,” he said. “And sure, some may have been driv-

en by the gift cards, but the impact is undeniable – We remove guns that were unwanted and had the potential of falling into wrong and wrong hands.”

The event on February 18 will be from 8 a.m. until noon. The same rules and procedures will apply, but with more lines and staff to accommodate the possibility of a huge turnout that occurred at the first two events.

Officials said they will not be accepting any “ghost guns” or privately manufactured guns, which was a problem during the first gun buyback event in July.

“We discovered we needed more lines, and more people and more staff,” said Turner “The first one we didn’t know how many, we thought a few 100, but the lines were long.”

The program has sparked criticism on whether or not it’s actually driving crime down in the city. Over the years, homicides in Houston were reaching nearly

*Continued. See GUN BUYBACK, Page 2*

### Aldine ISD investigating alleged sexual assault of child on school bus

**ALDINE** – The mother of a 6-year-old Aldine ISD student said her son was sexually assaulted for months by an older student on his school bus before she was notified.

The mother held a press conference with Dr. Candice Matthews with the Texas Coalition of Black Democrats, and Community activist Quannell X on Monday. Matthews said there was video footage of the incident, but the bus driver did not respond because they thought a fight

was taking place. “Whenever you have an incident that happens on that campus, according to the Texas Education Agency’s law you are supposed to notify the parents of what has happened.” Matthews said.

According to the mother, her son, who is in the first grade, rides the bus with older children, which she has complained about. “I’ve come here before

*Continued. See Assault on School Bus, Page 2*



Attorney Quannell X with boy’s mother at news conference last Monday at Aldine ISD bus yard.

### Seventeen Aldine ISD Student-Athletes Take a Step Towards Their Dreams on National Signing Day

**ALDINE** – Seventeen student-athletes from various sports gathered in their school auditoriums, surrounded by their proud families, coaches, and teachers on February 1st for an electric 2023 national signing day.

Eisenhower High School led the way with five student-athletes participating in national signing day, with all athletes staying in Texas. Athlete Tyler Hutcherson signed his letter of intent to attend Stephen F Austin, while cornerback Darrius Adams signed to attend Texas Lutheran University. Star wideout Ryan Niblett to continue his career at the University of Texas. Shooting guard Kelyon Dorsey signed his letter of intent to attend Texas Southern University, while first base Karizma Garcia signed her letter of intent to attend Texas Southern University.

Aldine High School had



Nimitz High School 6’4 290 pound tackle, Kortez Winslow, signed his letter of intent to continue his playing career at Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas.

four student-athletes sign national letters of intent. Defensive end Football Joshua Johnson signed to continue his career at St. Olaf College. While baseball players Daniel Rojas,

Gianni Gonzalez, and Jorge Cruz signed to attend Mountain View Community College.

Davis High School watched as four student-athletes signed to contin-

ue their careers at the next level. Wideout Andre Washington signed to attend Concordia in Wisconsin.

*Continued. See Signing Day, Page 2*

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# Gun BuyBack on Feb. 18,

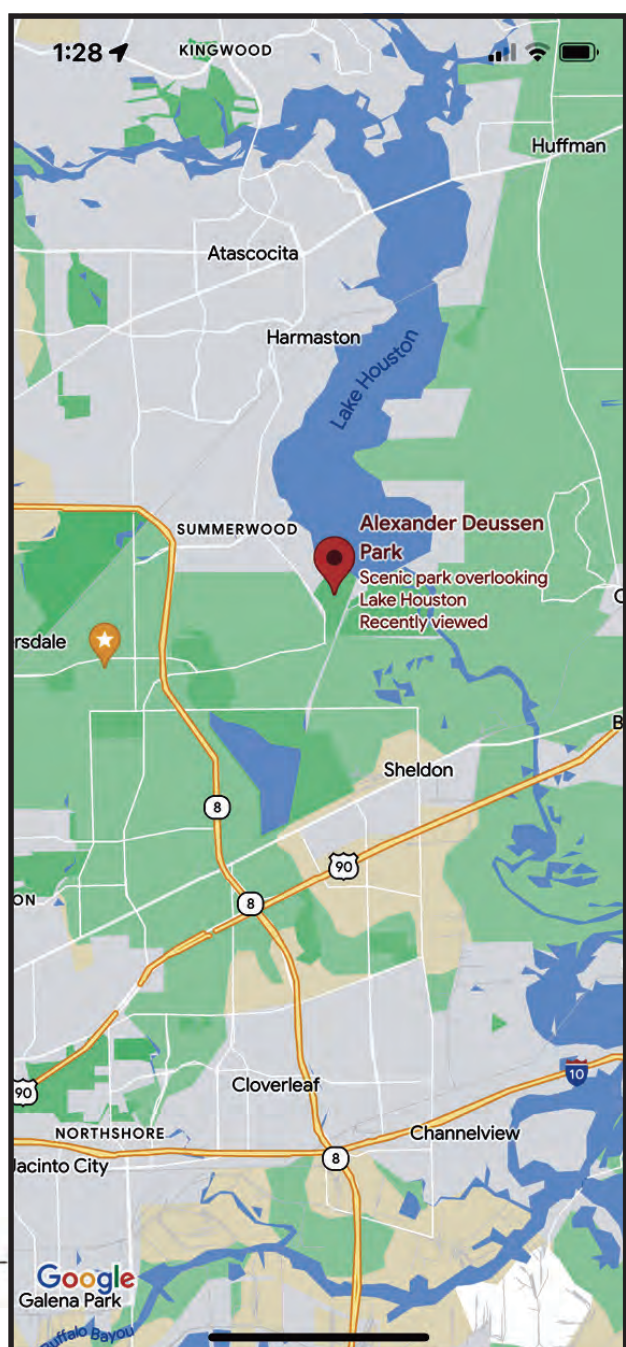
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

500, but a report presented by HPD last month showed numbers were down for 2022.

“It takes time for things to actually show that they have been successful,” said District D Council Member Carolyn Evans-Shabazz. “We

know that a lot of people may question, Why did they even do those buybacks – and certainly I think it makes a difference to someone whose life was preserved because a person did not have an illegal gun.”

# MAP OF DEUSSEN PARK AT LAKE HOUSTON DAM



# Signing Day for 17 Aldine students,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

sin, and athlete Stephen Howard signed to attend Trine University. 1st team-all district defensive end Cortney Davis intends to play for Texas Southern University. Shortstop and pitcher Julian Scott will continue his baseball career at Antelope Valley College.

MacArthur High School had three student-athletes sign letters of intent. Wideout Justin Williams and Cornerback Paul Anthony Stephens, two standout athletes, had signed to at-

tend Rice University, a top-tier academic and athletic institution. Defensive midfielder Cesar Barrientos also signed a letter to attend Sterling College, continuing his athletic career.

Nimitz High School had one student-athlete participate in national signing day, but it was a big one! The 6'4 290 pound tackle, Kortez Winslow, signed his letter of intent to continue his playing career at Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas.

# Lone Star College-North Harris graduate overcame battle with mental health to attend Ivy League school

HOUSTON – After a winding path of uncertainty, Lone Star College-North Harris Class of 2021 graduate Jesse Alvarez will be attending Columbia University in the fall.

Alvarez graduated from Westfield High School in 2016, but a struggle with his mental health forced him to take a three-year gap period before enrolling at LSC-North Harris in 2019.

“When I enrolled at LSC-North Harris, I decided to just make the best out of the situation I put myself in by trying my hardest to do what I should have done in high school,” said Alvarez. “I kept my head down, stayed in my lane, and worked hard. Even when I gathered awards and achievements, I still had not considered applying to an Ivy League because I thought my mental illnesses would forever stain my academic career.”

As an Honors College student, Alvarez earned his Associate of Science degree with summa cum laude distinction. Alvarez also participated in the National Model United Nations team, was a mem-

ber of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society, and selected as a winner of the 2020 Chancellor’s Essay Contest.

While at Columbia, Alvarez plans to study Psy-



Jesse Alvarez graduated from LSC-North Harris in 2021 with his Associate of Science degree and will attend Columbia University in the fall.

chology, focusing on social and biological psychotherapy so he can help others who are going through the same struggles he endured.

“As someone who has a social anxiety disorder and depression that led to suicidality, I feel like it’s my calling to treat people who suffer from similar conditions as myself since I’ve been there myself,” said Alvarez. “I’ve been on the other side of the table where they would be sitting.”

# COVID-19 Novavax Vaccine Booster Now Available for Individuals 18 and Older

Houston - Following approvals from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), individuals 18 years and older who have completed their COVID-19 primary vaccine series will have the option to receive a COVID-19 Novavax monovalent booster vaccine instead of the updated (bivalent) Pfizer or Moderna booster vaccine at Harris County Public Health (HCPH) vaccination sites. Individuals who may not be able to receive an mRNA (Moderna or Pfizer) vaccine as a result of an allergy to a component of the vaccine will now have the Novavax booster as an option.

The Novavax booster option will be available to eligible individuals regardless of their primary series vaccine type. The booster dose is recommended for individuals 6 months after they have completed their J&J, Moderna, Pfizer or Novavax primary vaccine series. The Novavax primary series first became available to the public in August so those who first received their Novavax primary series are not yet eligible for the Novavax booster dose.

Individuals who would prefer the Novavax monovalent booster dose are encouraged to call 832-927-8787 for scheduling or visit any HCPH vaccination site to sign up.

Novavax uses a different technique than the other COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna. Instead of using mRNA, which provides the instructions for your body to create the COVID-19 spike protein which in turn induces your body’s immune response, Novavax’s vaccine injects a small protein that your body detects and triggers its immune response. The Novavax vaccine is based on a well-established method of vaccine development that has been used for years in other vaccines such as the human papillomavirus (HPV), hepatitis B, influenza, and shingles.

COVID-19 primary and booster vaccines available at Harris County Public Health sites include:

- Pfizer-BioNTech (mRNA vaccine)
- Moderna (mRNA vaccine)
- Novavax (protein subunit vaccine)

Moderna, Novavax, and Pfizer are recommended for primary vaccination and Moderna and Pfizer are recommended for booster doses. A person’s eligibility for a booster dose depends on age and the time interval from the last dose received. Fully vaccinated is considered 2 weeks after the final dose in a primary series. People are considered up to date with COVID-19 vaccines when they receive all the doses in their primary series and a booster, when eligible.

HCPH urges residents to get vaccinated against COVID-19 if they have not done so already and get a booster shot, for those who qualify. All COVID-19 vaccines and boosters are safe, effective, and provide strong protection against severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. Vaccines provided by HCPH are free and appointments are not required though encouraged.

If you would like to schedule an appointment, go to ReadyHarris.org, vacstrac.hctx.net, or call 832-927-8787. To find a location near you, click here.

# COMMUNITY WATCH

## Fatal Crash at 800 West Tidwell

Houston police are investigating a fatal crash at 800 West Tidwell Road about 1:30 a.m. on Saturday (January 28).

The identity of the deceased female, believed to be 46, is pending verification by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences.

HPD Vehicular Crimes Division Sergeant E. Alejandro and Officer S. Bouarar reported:

According to witnesses, the victim was driving a silver Mazda 3K westbound near the above address when she failed to stay in a single lane. The Mazda then went onto the sidewalk and struck a tree.

Houston Fire Department paramedics transported the victim to Memorial Hermann Greater Heights Hospital where she was pronounced deceased. A preliminary investigation indicated the victim was not wearing a seatbelt.

The investigation is continuing.

## Fatal Shooting at 9631 Jensen

Houston police are investigating the fatal shooting of one man and the wounding of another at 9631 Jensen Drive about 3:15 a.m. on Sunday (January 8).

The identity of the deceased male, 23, is pending verification by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences. The second male, 26, was transported to an area hospital in stable condition.

HPD Homicide Division Sergeant N. Lazo and Detective L. Osborn reported:

HPD patrol officers responded to a shooting call at a nightclub at the above address and learned an argument occurred in the parking lot and escalated into a shooting. Two men were struck and transported by private vehicles to an area hospital. Doctors pronounced one of the men deceased on Wednesday (January 11)

No charges have been filed at this time, as the investigation is continuing.

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

# Alleged Assault on School Bus,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

inquiring why my son was on the bus with older children,” she said. “I’ve sat here for two hours one day waiting to speak to someone about this particular bus route, the lack of having a regular bus driver, the fact that the route always changes, that he was there five and six years old for two hours at a time.”

The mother, whose name will remain unpublished since a case of sexual assault is involved, said last Tuesday her son came home without his backpack, which caused her to ask what happened.

“He came home without the backpack Tuesday evening,” she said. She said she called the school’s transportation department the next morning and asked if they could radio in the driver to see if his items were on the bus. “The day that I requested it, I was told in a nonchalant manner, another student tossed it out the window. So I asked to speak with a supervisor, I spoke with a supervisor ... I asked them if they could review it, identify the student, get with the principals so we could have a parent-teacher conversation with the other family to rectify the situation between my child and the other child.”

The mother said she received a call five hours later to pick up her son, and that an Aldine ISD police officer wanted to speak to her.

“I thought that perhaps my son did something wrong. I got to the school and I find out that my son was sexually assaulted,” she said. “Days of talking to my child, the details became more and more graphic each and every time. From what I thought was just an oral incident was really a physical incident. No one is being held accountable, I’m angry as hell.”

The mother said she has asked what happened to the bus driver and the other student but has not been given any detail. However, she said she wants the

driver arrested. The videos also showed that the assaults went back as far as three months.

“If my child was being molested in my presence at my home, they would lock me up for endangerment to a child, I’d be sitting behind bars right now,” she said. “The bus driver neglected, she did not do her job.”

Quannell X said the bus driver assumed there was a fight on the bus, “but it was a child fighting and screaming.”

“The child did go to the hospital,” he said. “There is evidence of a physical, absolute rape. And still the school has done nothing to offer counseling to this mother, this child.”

**In a statement, Aldine ISD said:**

**“The safety of our students continues to be the top priority for Aldine ISD and we are committed to providing a safe environment in the classroom as well as when being transported to and from school. Campus leaders consistently work to monitor student behavior and communicate with parents to resolve concerns when incidents occur. An investigation by Aldine ISD PD and district officials immediately began on Wednesday, Feb. 1, 23 after district administration became aware that an incident occurred on a district bus involving two of our elementary-age students. CPS was notified. Once the investigation has concluded, appropriate action will be taken based on investigation findings. Because this is an active investigation, and due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), we are unable to provide additional details of student information.”**

It is reported that Child Protective Services confirmed that they are investigating the incident.

–HoustonPublicMedia

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# SCHOOL NEWS PAGE

## The 2023-2024 AISD Traditional 'Reimagined' School Year Calendar and ADSY Calendar Are Now Available!



Aldine ISD's instructional calendars for the 2023-2024 school year are now set. What is new? The district has reimagined the traditional calendar for students and teachers to create a more balanced approach with fall and spring mid-term breaks.

The start date for most students and schools on the reimagined traditional calendar is Thursday, August 10, 2023. The last day of school will be Thursday, May 30, 2024.

For students attending the district's four schools on the Additional School Days School Year (ADSY) calendar — Vines Primary, Ermel Elementary, Harris Elementary, and Smith Elementary — the first day of instruction will be Thursday, July 13, 2023. The last day of school will be Wednesday, June 14, 2024.

The first mid-term break will be in October, with the second in February. Thanksgiving will be a whole week for all AISD students.

The Aldine ISD Board approved the calendar recommendations for the 2023-2024 instructional calendars during its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, January 24.

The district received input from teachers, parents, community members, school administrators, and sup-

port staff through an online survey on the two proposed calendars.

### 2 Different Aldine ISD School Year Calendars

Most campuses follow the traditional, now reimagined, school year calendar. Vines Primary, Ermel Elementary, Harris Elementary, and Smith Elementary fall under the Additional Days School Year (ADSY) calendar.

The different calendars are part of Aldine's commitment to providing choices and opportunities to students and families.

The ADSY calendar demonstrates the possibilities of reimagining teaching by accelerating learning and strengthening whole-child support. ADSY allows for increased achievement and growth opportunities for learners. The ADSY model incorporates more recess and 'brain' breaks, collaboration, student projects, staff professional development, and increased collaboration between families and schools.

### Important Dates on the Traditional/Reimagined School Year Calendar

First Day of Classes: Aug. 10  
 Labor Day: Sep. 4  
 Fall Intersession: Oct. 10-13  
 Thanksgiving Break: Nov. 20-24

Midwinter Break: Dec. 18-Jan. 1  
 Classes Resume: Jan. 4  
 Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday: Jan. 15  
 Spring Intersession: Feb. 5-9  
 Spring Break: Mar. 11-15  
 Student Holiday: March 29  
 Memorial Day Holiday: May 27  
 Last Day of Classes: May 30

### Important Dates on the ADSY School Year Calendar

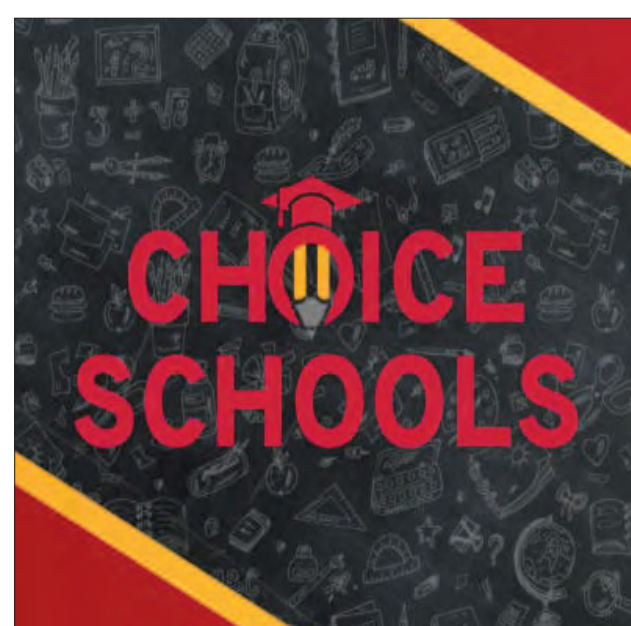
First Day of Classes: July 13  
 Labor Day: Sep. 4  
 Student Holiday: Oct. 16  
 Thanksgiving Break: Nov. 20-24  
 Midwinter Break: Dec. 18-Jan. 1  
 Classes Resume: Jan. 3  
 Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday: Jan. 15  
 Student Holiday: Feb. 12  
 Spring Break: Mar. 11-15  
 Student Holiday: March 29  
 Student Holiday: April 1  
 Memorial Day Holiday: May 27  
 Last Day of Classes: June 13  
 \*ENVI2ION Days under the ADSY will be in August, September, October, November, January, February, and April.

## Aldine ISD to Launch Eisenhower College Prep at Eisenhower 9th and Eisenhower High School in Fall 2023

Aldine ISD will launch Eisenhower College Prep, a college prep program at Eisenhower 9th and Eisenhower High School, beginning in August 2023. The program will replace YES Prep Eisenhower at the end of the 2022-2023 school year due to the partnership dissolution between Aldine ISD and YES Prep Public Charter School System.

"We look forward to the launch of Eisenhower College Prep, which is a continuation of our commitment to providing choices and opportunities for our students," says Aldine Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney. "This program will propel our students forward and prepare them for a successful post-secondary experience."

Aldine ISD is committed to providing a rigorous and enriching educational experience for students so that they meet their post-secondary aspirations. Through a student-based approach to learning, Eisenhower College Prep will provide students with a unique small high school model. It will offer a rigorous college preparatory curriculum, increased student support and enrichment opportunities. Students will also have opportunities for social-emotional learning that will



prepare and inspire middle school students to excel in high school and far beyond. Students can enroll in Pre-AP courses, take Algebra 1, and explore college and career pathways. They can also engage with college access coordinators to create their own multi-year plans for success.

Additionally, Eisenhower 9th Grade will go through a transformational school redesign and will be designed based on an Accelerating Campus Excellence (ACE) model, transforming the 9th grade student experience so that they are well-prepared to fully engage in the college prep experience beginning their sophomore year. The

9th grade experience will include a college atmosphere, community engagement, a focus on AVID, CCMR and 5 Pillars of Success to include:

- Effective Principals and Teachers
- Instructional Excellence
- Extended School Day
- Social and Emotional Support
- Parent and Community Partnerships

Students currently enrolled at YES Prep Eisenhower are welcome to continue their college preparation at Eisenhower College Prep, which will fall under our Choice School Programs, or have the option to be rezoned to a neighboring district campus.

## AISD Schools Name Their 2023 Campus Teachers of the Year

The district Elementary Teacher of the Year and Secondary Teacher of the Year will be named in March.

Each Aldine ISD school chooses a Campus Teacher of the Year before the end of the first semester. In February, a committee will name six District Finalists based on their written applications. The six finalists are invited to interview with the district coordinating committee.

Every Campus Teacher will be honored at the Educators of the Year Breakfast in March. During the event, the district Elementary Teacher of the Year and Secondary Teacher of the Year will be named among the finalists.

The Elementary and Secondary Teacher of the Year will represent Aldine ISD in the Region 4 Teacher of the Year contest during the summer.

Congratulations to the 2023 Campus Teachers of the Year:

**Aldine High School:** Jezer Ureña  
**Aldine Middle School:** Karen Spooner  
**Aldine Ninth Grade School:** Edy López  
**Aldine Young Women Leadership Academy:** Kenebra Collins  
**Anderson Academy:** Taquaveous HARRIS  
**Avalos P-TECH School:** Rodelio Abuan  
**Black Elementary School:** Lucia JeffersonBlanson CTE High School: Gerald Britt  
**Bussey Elementary School:** Sarah JanssenCalvert Elementary School: Jacqueline Gutiérrez  
**Caraway Elementary School:** Naomi Childress  
**Carmichael Elementary School:** Tanya Kirby  
**Carroll Elementary School:** Flor ReyesCarter Academy: Celia Reyes  
**Carver High School:** Brianna McCray  
**Conley Elementary School:** Lekia Stribling  
**Cypresswood Elementary School:** Arie Holliday  
**Davis High School:**

**Daniella Hubbard**  
**Davis Ninth Grade School:** Tiara Hall  
**De Santiago EC/PK/K School:** Delma Islas-González  
**Drew Academy:** Krystal Willis  
**Dunn Elementary School:** Mackenzie Klima  
**Eckert Elementary School:** Nikki Smith  
**Eisenhower High School:** Sandra Walker  
**Eisenhower Ninth Grade School:** Kristin Wilson  
**Ermel Elementary School:** Cassanthia Penn  
**Escamilla Elementary School:** Jessica Barrera  
**Francis Elementary School:** Audette Williams  
**García Middle School:** Johnnie Levy  
**García-Leza EC/PK/K School:** Todd Thomas  
**Goodman Elementary School:** Verice McElroy  
**Grantham Academy:** Jimekia Atkins  
**Gray Elementary School:** Keosha Davis  
**Greenspoint Elementary School:** Ian Herrán  
**Griggs EC/PK/K School:** Sonia Cedillo  
**Hall Success Academy:** Alva Richardson  
**Hambrick Middle School:** Olivia Hershman  
**Harris Elementary School:** Paige Handy  
**Hill Elementary School:** Regan Gower  
**Hinojosa EC/PK/K School:** Miriam Benítez  
**Hoffman Middle School:** LeAnn Broadous-Bowers  
**Houston Academy:** Kathy WadeImpact Leadership Academy: Lydia Montallana  
**Johnson Elementary School:** Esteban Orozco  
**Jones EC/PK/K School:** Yvette CondeJones Elementary School: Andrea Callender  
**Jones Middle School:** Laurentis Butler-Thomas  
**Keeble EC/PK/K School:** Aracely Garza  
**Knippel Education Center:** Latarsha Walton  
**Kujawa EC/PK/K School:** Maggie Abrego  
**Kujawa Elementary**

**School:** Pablo Salas  
**La Promesa:** Jeannette Robledo  
**Lane School:** Althea Bivens  
**Lewis Middle School:** Yaminah Johnson  
**MacArthur High School:** Gary Cooper  
**MacArthur Ninth Grade School:** Arlicia Coleman  
**Magrill EC/PK/K School:** Emily Frye  
**Marcella Elementary School:** Taylor Benford  
**Mead Middle School:** Armand Roquemore  
**Nimitz High School:** Matthew Rideaux  
**Nimitz Ninth Grade School:** Loverous Whittaker  
**Odum Elementary School:** Esther Ibarra  
**Ogden Elementary School:** Tria Gustafson  
**Oleson Elementary School:** Nichole Coleman  
**Orange Grove Elementary School:** Stephanie Flores  
**Plummer Middle School:** Emil Clemons  
**Raymond Elementary School:** Lisa Kerrigan  
**Reece Academy:** Norma Calixto  
**Reed Academy:** Krshika Carter  
**Sammons Elementary School:** Elyana Aguilar  
**Shotwell Middle School:** Markesha Stennis  
**Smith Elementary School:** Kayla Fields  
**Spence Elementary School:** Fritzi Cardenas  
**Stehlik Elementary School:** Abisag Hurtado  
**Stephens Elementary School:** Kelsi Schmidberger  
**Stovall EC/PK/K School:** María Regla  
**Stovall Middle School:** Chiquita Sanders  
**Teague Middle School:** Jonathan Watson  
**Thompson Elementary School:** Verónica Muñoz Rodríguez  
**Vardeman EC/PK/K School:** Hannah Barnes  
**Victory Early College High School:** Stephanie Hall  
**Vines EC/PK/K School:** Brandy Calhoun  
**Worsham Elementary School:** Karen Hernández

## Carver HS' Jones-Koumba Inducted Into EBONY Power 100 Class of Honorees

The EBONY family congratulated Roshunda Jones-Koumba's success and induction into the EBONY Power 100 2022 Class of Honorees. EBONY honored her "for disrupting the industry, pushing boundaries, opening doors, and championing change." She received the Artist in Residence Award.

Jones-Koumba is the theater director at Carver High School and the recipient of Carnegie Mellon University's prestigious Excellence in Theatre Education Award, presented at the 2022 Tony Awards.

The star-studded awards ceremony, held in Los Angeles, honored the remarkable achievements of Black trailblazers across industries.




The 2022 list honored outstanding leaders across various industries and disciplines, from business, sports, media, activism, and music to entertainment

and much more. According to the magazine's website, the honorees made an extraordinary impact in their fields and our society in 2022.

OPINION PAGE

**TEXAS MATTERS**  
By U.S. Senator JOHN CORNYN



## Cornyn Bill to Authorize Coastal Spine Project Signed Into Law



Senator Cornyn meeting with local officials and the Coast Guard and Corps of Engineers last fall, to develop the plans for the Coastal Spine.

### Authorizes Construction of Coastal Spine Project for Texas, Critical for Hurricane Mitigation

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) released the following statement after his Texas Coastal Spine Authorization Act, which authorizes the construction of a large-scale coastal storm risk management and coastal barrier protection system known as the Coastal Spine, was signed into law:

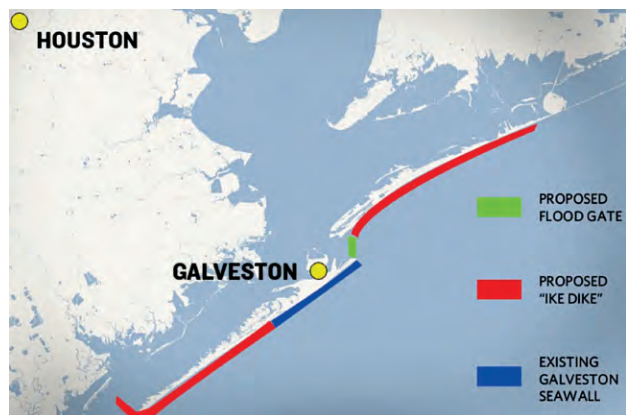
**“The Coastal Spine will provide the critical infrastructure needed to protect our coastal communities and the industries that fuel our state and national economy,” said Sen. Cornyn. “After many years of hard work, I am glad to see that this project has been authorized so that the next steps can be taken to ensure the Texas Gulf Coast is prepared to weather future hurricane seasons.”**

**Background:**

This bill authorizes the construction of the coastal barrier protection system known as the Coastal Spine, a large-scale coastal storm risk management and ecosystem restoration project that will help protect Texas’s coast from storm damage. Sen. Cornyn introduced the legislation earlier this year with Sen. Cruz and Representative Randy Weber (TX-14), which was included in this year’s National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

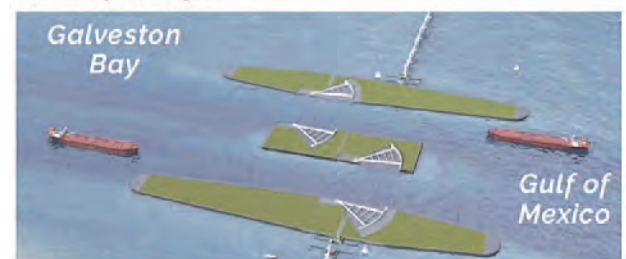
Last year, Sen. Cornyn praised the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Chief’s Report signing of the Coastal Texas Study making the project eligible to be authorized by Congress in the Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA). In Congress, Sen. Cornyn secured full funding in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 to ensure the completion of the study. Previously, Sen. Cornyn introduced legislation to accelerate the study and worked to obtain a critical exemption from statutory costs and time limitations. Last fall, Sen. Cornyn penned an op-ed discussing current coastal Texas projects and the steps to authorize and fund them.

Senator John Cornyn, a Republican from Texas, is a member of the Senate Finance, Intelligence, and Judiciary Committees.



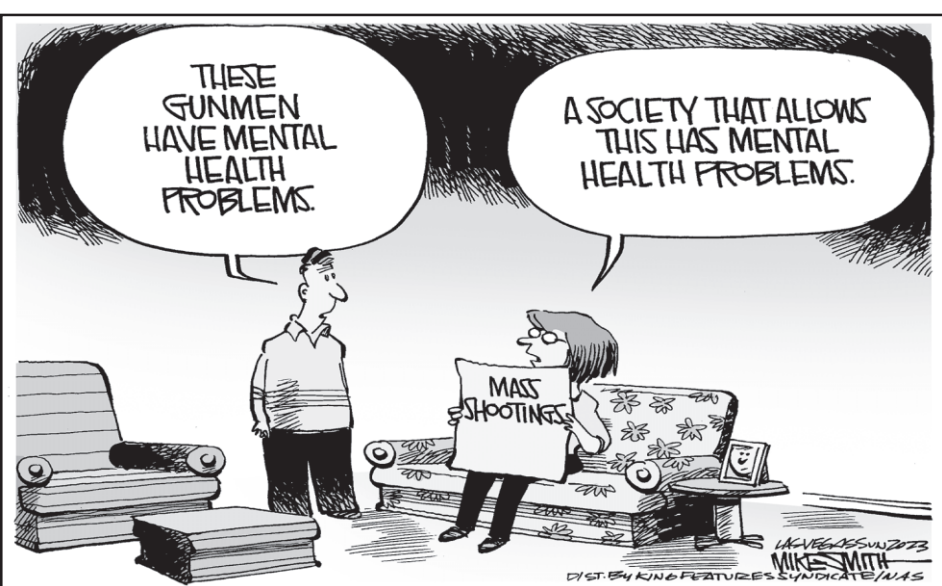
A combination of “dikes”, gates and the existing Galveston Seawall would protect the communities around Galveston Bay from damage from a hurricane storm surge.

**Coastal Spine Project**



Gates would swing closed to stop the surge of water caused by a hurricane in the Gulf.

We welcome your thoughts on Opinions on this page. Send to Letters to the Editor in care of our email address.



**STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS**  
By Gary Borders



## Abbott Issues Disaster Declaration, Seeks Fed Help

Gov. Greg Abbot has issued a disaster declaration for Texas counties affected by the early February ice storm and is seeking a federal declaration as well for areas in Southeast Texas affected by rare January tornadoes. The ice storm caused considerable damage to property and power outages in the affected areas. The declaration for ice-storm damaged counties includes Denton, Hays, Henderson, Milam, Smith, Travis and Williamson counties.

“Through this disaster declaration, we will be able to provide additional assistance to Texans and communities who have experienced property damage and localized power outages from this ice storm,” Abbott said.

The ice storm brought tree limbs snapping and crashing onto power lines. More than 170,000 Austin households were without power for several days, with some going more than 10 days without power.

Abbott also requested a presidential disaster declaration for counties in Southeast Texas hit by tornadoes and severe storms in late January. That request includes Harris, Jefferson, Liberty and Orange counties. If that request is granted, residents and businesses in those counties would have access to federal loans and grants.

**RELIGIOUS FREEDOM BILLS DRAW BIPARTISAN SUPPORT**

Three bills have been filed in the Texas House aimed at improving Texans ability to practice their religions. The Austin American-Statesman reported that state Rep. Salman Bhojani, D-Eules, filed the bills to expand the state’s list of optional holidays to include more religious holy days; prevent standardized tests being given on those



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS  
By Gary Borders

days; and ensure that religious leaders of all faiths can legally perform marriages.

Bhojani, one of the state’s first Muslim legislators, was joined at a news conference by Republican state Rep. Jacey Jetton, R-Richmond, who is Christian, and fellow Muslim state Rep. Suleman Lalani, D-Sugar Land.

“As legislators, it is our duty to ensure that Texas is the religious freedom state, where we can practice our faith with pride, where we can pray in a church, synagogue, mosque, temple, jamatkhana or gurdwara, where we can love God by any name,” Bhojani said.

**PLAN TO BAN TIKTOK ON STATE-OWNED DEVICES RELEASED**

Abbott last week also announced a security plan to ban the use of the popular video app TikTok as well as other software on all state-issued devices, as well as personal devices used to conduct state business. Abbott contends the Chinese-owned company can harvest data from TikTok user’s devices and poses a security risk to Texas.

After Abbott issued the initial order in December, The University of Texas at Austin banned TikTok on all its Wi-

Fi networks. The latest security plan also includes other lesser-known apps, such as WeChat. A number of hardware manufacturers are also prohibited from being used by state agencies and employees.

TikTok, which is known for its short videos, is owned by the Chinese company ByteDance and has more than 86 million users in the United States.

**A WET JANUARY FOR PARTS OF THE STATE**

January brought above-average rainfall for large swaths of East Texas while the rest of the state had below-average precipitation, hydrologist Mark Wentzel wrote in the Texas Water Development Board’s monthly report. Drought conditions expanded by five percentage points to include 54% of the state, while statewide storage in water supply reservoirs is at 72.5% of capacity, down about 10 percentage points from what is normal this time of year.

Drought conditions have been all but eliminated in the eastern portion of Texas, while much of the state is in moderate to severe drought conditions. The worst drought conditions now are in a circle of counties around Bexar County.

Wentzel predicted that except for northeast Texas, much of the state will see expanded drought conditions.

“However, with the anticipated breakup of La Niña conditions later this year, there is some hope that the rest of Texas may see at least some easing of drought conditions as early as May,” he wrote.

**FINAL ROUND OF EMERGENCY SNAP BENEFITS**

This month brings the final allocation of emergency food benefits provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and distributed to eligible households by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. The extra minimum of \$95 per household began during the start of the COVID-10 pandemic and has provided nearly \$10 billion in added food benefits since its inception. However, Congress recently passed legislation ending the emergency benefits, which go to about 1.6 million Texas households.

“We’re thankful that we’ve been able to help millions of Texans by providing more than \$9.7 billion in additional benefits since the Families First Coronavirus Response Act was passed,” said Wayne Salter, HHSC deputy executive commissioner.

**THE POSTSCRIPT**  
By Carrie Classon

## “Valentine Gift”

My husband, Peter, does not believe in Valentine’s Day. I mean, he knows it is a thing. It’s just a thing he prefers to ignore.

“Stupid!” That is Peter’s verdict.

Peter takes offense whenever there is a big marketing effort aimed at getting him to buy things in order to show affection. He feels this way about Christmas, believing it has become too commercialized. He feels this way about birthdays, insisting that the day of his birth is nothing to celebrate. Buying gifts for Peter is pretty easy because he doesn’t want any.

But Peter is one of the most generous people I have ever known. He never hesitates to pick up the bill. He is always a generous tipper. He contributes to organizations he believes in all the time. It just bothers him when he is expected to come up with a gift. He finds it stressful and annoying, and so I learned, long ago, that he would not give me gifts on so-called special occasions, and I wouldn’t try to figure out what he wanted.

I am very glad I don’t have to guess what Peter wants.

Peter has very particular tastes, and he enjoys further refining those tastes. If Peter buys a new shirt, he can tell me more about that shirt than I have ever known about any piece of clothing I own. It will almost certainly be sun-resistant and probably bug-resistant and possibly provide protection against a thermonuclear attack. I don’t even ask. This is equally true of every gadget he uses and every pot and pan in our house. Not having to figure out what Peter wants (or do that kind of research!) is a great relief.

Instead, I try to be nice to him.

I try to remember when I am stressed or bothered that none of these feelings ever have anything to do with him. If my mind is filled with things already, I try to make room and listen closely to whatever he is telling me. I try to stay out of his way when he needs his space. I try to keep him company when he needs it.

And Peter is always giving me gifts. They are just not the kind that seem like presents.

I hate the light in the kitchen of the little place we rent in Mexico. It is bright blue-white.

“I feel like we could be doing elective surgery in here!” I tell Peter.

But the ceilings are high, I don’t have a ladder and we really do need light in the kitchen. The light does not bother Peter. He does not seem to notice the difference in light color the way I do. This is just one of the many ways (I am sure) I seem unreasonably fussy to him.

“Turn the light off as soon as you are through!” I always tell Peter, in an unnecessarily crabby voice.

But then, one day, I walked into the kitchen, and Peter was cooking in a bright, amber-colored light.

“You changed the bulb!” I said in delight.

“I did,” he said. “It wasn’t as high up as I thought.”

I don’t know how Peter got up to the ceiling to change the bulb. But everything else, I know.

He changed the bulb because he understands me. He changed it because he wanted me to be happy. He changed it because he loves me, and this was his Valentine gift to me.

“Thank you,” I said.

“You’re welcome!” he answered.

And both the kitchen and my heart were bathed in a warm light.

Till next time,  
Carrie

Photos and other news can be found at [CarrieClasson.com](http://CarrieClasson.com).

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# top ten

## Comfort Foods During COVID

1. Pizza
2. Hamburgers
3. Ice cream
4. French fries
5. Mac & cheese
6. Potato chips
7. Cookies
8. Chocolate
9. Cereal
10. Fried chicken

Source: OnePoll/Farm Rich

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## HIGH MEADOWS LIBRARY NEWS

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE: FEBRUARY 13TH - 18TH**

**2/13 - PJPALS** - Special Guest HGO - Join us for a special program at 4:30 PM on Monday

**2/14 - TEEN ANIME CLUB** - 3PM Tuesday - Join us for our weekly teen anime club. This program is hosted weekly.

**2/15 - THE ART THING** - 3PM Wednesday - Join us for a tween weekly craft hosted every Wednesday at 3 PM.

**2/17 - ROBLOX TOURNAMENT** - 4:30 Friday - Our monthly roblox tournament will be hosted at the end of the week. Registration is required.

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## AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS

**TEENS MAKE IT**  
 We're making magnetic slime! Teens ages 12-18 join us starting at 4pm. All materials provided.

**BILINGUAL STORY TIME**  
 Join us in the library for story time in English and Spanish now on **Tuesdays** at **11:00am!**

**KID'S CLUB**  
 Kids ages 6 - 13 can join us for some games, building, crafting, and more! **Wednesday, Feb. 15 from 4:30 - 5:30pm.**

**TEEN THURSDAY**  
 Teen Thursdays are a fun, safe environment for teens (ages 12-18) to hang out after school. Join us **Thursdays** from **3:30 - 5:30pm.**

**BLACK HISTORY MONTH PAINTING: ALMA THOMAS STYLE**  
 Learn about Alma Thomas and her painting style then create your own work inspired by her. This is a Family program for ages 7 and older to participate.

Saturday, Feb. 18 at 1:30pm.

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

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

**Wednesdays:** Beginner Computer Class (English), 1:30pm, at the library Beyond the Basics with Office 365 plus Google Apps, (English computer class), 5-7pm, online

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

**PASSPORT SERVICES**  
 Do have plans to travel out of the country soon? Get on the ball and make sure you get your passport in order NOW! You can make an appointment for passport services at Aldine Branch - <https://www.hcpl.net/services/passport-services>

Our **passport hours** - Mondays and Wednesdays 12pm - 5pm; Tuesdays and Thursdays 12pm - 7pm; Saturdays 10am - 12pm and 2pm - 4pm. We also have walk-in service from 2-4pm on Fridays on a first come first served basis. Those wishing to get a passport executed must have all necessary documents and required people present with them.

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## HARRIS COUNTY PRECINCT 2 HEAVY TRASH/RECYCLING DROP-OFF EVENT

**EVERY 3RD SATURDAY**  
 8 AM - 1 PM ONLY

**North Service Center**  
 11901 West Hardy Road, Houston TX 77076 (Enter via John Alber Rd.)

Harris County Precinct 2 is hosting a **HEAVY TRASH/RECYCLING DROP-OFF** day at the Hardy Service Center. This is at **NO COST** to unincorporated Harris County residents. ID is required. **NO COMMERCIAL** waste accepted. Please see list below for items that can be dropped off onsite.

ITEMS ACCEPTED INCLUDE:	ITEMS NOT ACCEPTED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Furniture, bedding, junk waste</li> <li>• Wood fencing</li> <li>• Non-Commercial yard waste (less than 6 inches diameter, 6ft or less length)</li> <li>• Shingles, carpet, lumber, sheetrock</li> <li>• Tires (cars &amp; pickup trucks)</li> <li>• <b>RECYCLING ITEMS:</b> Paper, cardboard, plastics &amp; glass.</li> <li>• <b>METALS:</b> Steel, gutter, aluminum (large items must be dismantled)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• batteries or motor oil</li> <li>• paint cans or spray paint cans</li> <li>• household garbage</li> <li>• commercial tires or tires with rims</li> <li>• chemicals of any kind</li> <li>• concrete or brick</li> <li>• electronics or appliances</li> <li>• <b>RECYCLING ITEMS NOT ACCEPTED:</b> plastic bags, styrofoam, pizza boxes, coat hangers, paint containers, light bulbs, mirrors, windows, dishes &amp; paper towels</li> </ul>

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For more information call (281) 590-4120

## HARRIS COUNTY PRECINCTO 2 BASURA PESADA/RECICLAJE EVENTO DE ENTREGA

**CADA TERCER SÁBADO**  
 SOLO DE 8 AM - 1 PM

**North Service Center**  
 11901 West Hardy Road, Houston TX 77076 (Entrar por John Alber Rd.)

El Precincto 2 del Condado de Harris está organizando un día para DEJAR BASURA PESADA/RECICLAJE en el Centro de Servicio de Hardy. Esto es **SIN COSTO** para los residentes del condado de Harris. Se requiere identificación. **NO** se aceptan residuos **COMERCIALES**. Consulte la lista a continuación para ver los artículos que se pueden dejar en el sitio.

ELEMENTOS ACEPTADOS:	ELEMENTOS NO ACEPTADOS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muebles, ropa de cama, basura</li> <li>• Cercado de madera</li> <li>• Residuos de jardín no comerciales (menos de 6 pulgadas de diámetro, 6 pies o menos de largo)</li> <li>• Tejas, alfombras, madera, yeso</li> <li>• Neumáticos (automóviles y camionetas)</li> <li>• <b>ARTÍCULOS DE RECICLAJE:</b> Papel, cartón, plásticos y vidrio.</li> <li>• <b>METALES:</b> acero, canalón, aluminio (los artículos grandes deben desmantelarse)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baterías o aceite de motor</li> <li>• Tarros o latas de pinturas spray paint</li> <li>• Basura doméstica</li> <li>• Neumáticos comerciales o neumáticos con llantas</li> <li>• Químicos de cualquier tipo.</li> <li>• Concreto o ladrillos</li> <li>• Artículos electrónicos o repuestos</li> <li>• <b>ARTÍCULOS DE RECICLAJE NO ACEPTADOS:</b> Bolsas plásticas, espuma de poliestireno, cajas de pizza, perchas, recipientes de pintura, bombillas, espejos, ventanas, platos y toallas de papel</li> </ul>

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# CHURCH PAGE

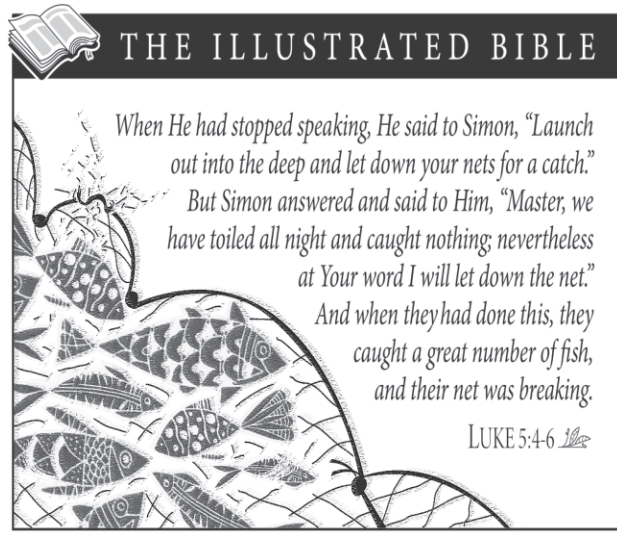
## BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey —

1. Is the book of Valentin (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. From 1 John 3:18, "Let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in ..." Hope, Abundance, Touch, Truth
3. In Proverbs 10:12, "Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all ..." Sins, Beings, Creation, Enemies
4. Which Old Testament book reads like a love story? Ruth, Daniel, Habakkuk, Song of Solomon

5. Where does one find the phrase "God is love"? Genesis, Nehemiah, Hebrews, 1 John
6. From Hebrews 13:4, what is honourable in all? Love, Trust, Marriage, Worship

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Truth, 3) Sins, 4) Song of Solomon, 5) 1 John (4:8, 16), 6) Marriage Hardcore trivia fan? Visit Wilson Casey's subscriber site at [www.patreeon.com/triviaguy](http://www.patreeon.com/triviaguy). (c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.



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Justice Smith, left, and Julianne Moore star in "Sharper."

"Your Place or Mine"

"Your Place or Mine" (PG-13) — Since the arrival of February marked the beginning of the most romantic time of the year, it is the perfect opportunity to dive into a rom-com!

First up is a new film out now from rom-com veterans Reese Witherspoon and Ashton Kutcher. They star as Debbie and Peter, a pair of long-distance best friends who once hooked up on the night they first met.

Twenty years later, they're both single, and Debbie's barely gotten a break from taking care of her teenage son, Jack. So, Peter offers to take care of Jack, switching places with Debbie for a week while she stays in his apartment and enjoys a well-deserved vacation.

But little do Peter and Debbie know how much this one

week will uncover deeply buried feelings from the both of them. (Netflix)

"Spoiler Alert" (PG-13) — The second rom-com film for this week brings a bit more drama with its comedy. Based on the memoir by Michael Ausiello, this film features Jim Parsons ("The Big Bang Theory") and Ben Aldridge ("Fleabag") as Kit and Michael, and just as the title suggests, the spoiler comes before the story actually begins.

In the first scene of the film, Kit dies in his husband Michael's arms after an 11-month battle with terminal cancer, with the rest of the film depicting their love story through Michael's eyes. As with any relationship, the two go through ups and downs, but every circumstance ends up making them stronger, leading up to that moment where Kit takes his very last

breath. Sally Field and Antoni Porowski ("Queer Eye") also star in this very touching film, out now. (Peacock)

"Sharper" (R) — For those who'd rather skip all the mushy-gushiness, "Sharper" — with an impressive cast comprised of Julianne Moore, John Lithgow, Sebastian Stan and Justice Smith — is a psychological thriller that premieres on Feb. 17.

Lithgow portrays billionaire Richard Hobbes, who's in a relationship with Moore's character, Madeline. Madeline's son, Max, is a con artist, who's dying to get his hands on the type of money Richard has. This leads Max to convince his girlfriend, Sandra, to get her claws into Richard's sheepish son, Tom, and make him fall for her so that the two can eventually con him out of Tom's huge inheritance.

But don't be fooled — nobody, not even sweet Madeline, is who they seem to be. (AppleTV+)

"Halloween Ends" (R) — Did you miss the final installment of the newly rebooted "Halloween" trilogy in theaters? Have no fear ... or maybe have some, because "Halloween Ends" premieres right on Valentine's Day. Jamie Lee Curtis reprises her role as Laurie Strode, who has lived with her granddaughter, Allyson, since the death of her daughter, Karen, by Michael Myers. Michael has "vanished," but his aura is still present throughout Haddonfield. Meanwhile, Allyson begins dating a man named Corey, who increasingly begins to show signs of malicious intent. Corey discovers Michael hiding in a sewer, and Corey's so entranced by him that he starts making plans to follow in his footsteps. While this is the least impressive film in the series by far, at least we got to tie a bow on the end of Michael Myers' terrifying reign. (I hope.) (Prime Video)

HOLLYWOOD by Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD — Will Harrison Ford ever slow down? The 80-year-old superstar has completed "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny," due June 30. Then he steps in for the late William Hurt as Thaddeus Ross in "Captain America: New World Order," due May 3, 2024. July 2024 brings "Thunderbolts," where Ford will reprise the role of Thaddeus Ross.

His Paramount+ Western series "1923" premiered Dec. 18, 2022, and will run for two seasons, eight episodes each. You'd think Ford would take time to spend his \$300 million enjoying time with his wife, Calista Flockhart, and his children!

But his 77-year-old co-star, Oscar winner Helen Mirren, is no slouch either. Both "Golda" (as in Golda Meir) and "Shazam! Fury of the Gods," with Zachary Levi, hit screens this March, followed by "Fast X" and "White Bird: A Wonder Story" this May.

In 1968, while shooting celebrities during a press screening of Steve McQueen's film "Bullitt," I got into an altercation with Elliott Gould, then married to Barbra Streisand. We four photographers had to walk backward as they rushed out, and when Streisand saw us, she went crazy and kept covering her face with her hands, saying "You have enough, don't you?"

I answered her with: "If you'd been polite and stopped for us, we wouldn't have to bother you now!" An infuriated Gould lunged at me, grabbed my heavy Nikon Camera chain, and lifted me off the ground. He threw me into the street, pummeling me against a parked car. Doctors at UCLA Medical Center said I had a dislocated shoulder as well as other injuries.

It took three years to get to court, at which time I won all three charges for battery against him. I was awarded four figures, but I told Gould that at the time,



Harrison Ford and Helen Mirren as Jacob and Cara Dutton in "1923"

it wasn't about money. It was about principal and precedent.

Everytime I encountered him after that, he was civil, saying, "They told me to be nice to you." Once, at a charity event, he offered me a marijuana joint as a peace offering, but I declined.

A few weeks ago, I went into a local Smart & Final store, and when I reached the glass cleaner aisle, I was astounded to see Elliot Gould there. I said to him, "Do you recognize me?" He said, "You look familiar." I replied, "Does the name Tony Rizzo mean anything?" "Oh," he said, "You're that guy who won a lawsuit against me."

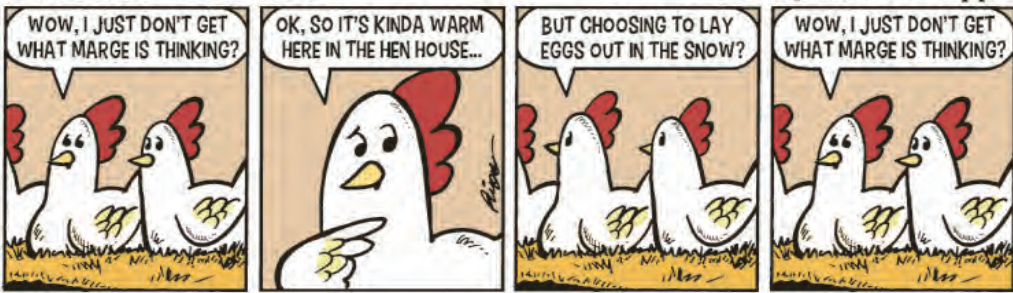
I said, "I hope you know I never blamed you. You, Ryan O'Neal, Don Johnson and Jon Peters all acted as Barbra's protectors when she saw photographers and flipped out."

I asked him why he was there, and he just said, "My maid sent me to get Wind-  
ex."

Such is the price of fame and fortune!  
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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU by Linda Thistle. Grid with numbers 1-9. Difficulty: Challenge HOO Yay!

HOCUS-FOCUS by Henry Boltinoff. Two panels of a boy and girl. Find at least six differences in details between panels.

February 13, 2023 Posting Date King Crossword

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution key at the bottom.

Trivial Pursuit grid with numbers 1-15. Includes a solution key at the bottom.

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez. 10 questions about television, general knowledge, geography, movies, U.S. states, food & drink, history, animal kingdom, literature, and celebrities.

Trivial Pursuit Answers: 1. Long Branch Saloon; 2. 12; 3. Halifax; 4. Seven, including the original movie and six sequels; 5. The name became popular in the 1800s, likely from the poem "The Hoosier's Nest"; 6. 96%; 7. Montgomery Ward; 8. Little armored one; 9. Samuel Langhorne Clemens; 10. Blue Eyes.

# Lone Star College is working to keep our community safe

HOUSTON (Feb. 8, 2023) – Labor shortages are impacting industries nationwide and law enforcement is no exception. Law enforcement agencies are struggling to stay fully staffed leading to resources being stretched thin.

To help address this critical need, Lone Star College recently welcomed its second cohort into the LSC Law Enforcement Academy, a program that prepares students for the state licensing examination and engage in hands-on training to learn the skills applicable to police work.

“The Lone Star College Law Enforcement Academy reinforces our commitment to public safety,” said Stephen C. Head, Ph.D., LSC Chancellor. “We are proud to offer this important program to our community, and we applaud the brave men and women who dedicate their lives to ensure our safety.”

The Law Enforcement Academy began in 2021 and 10 cadets graduated in December 2022. They now work at various agencies, such as Harris County Pct. 4 Constable’s Office, La Marque Police Department, Humble ISD Police Department, Montgomery County Pct. 3 Constable’s Office, Montgomery County Pct. 4 Constable’s Office and Tomball Police Department. The next cohort began Feb. 6.

“Lone Star College was honored to prepare these cadets and we look forward to being the training hub for future law enforcement officers who will perform an invaluable service for our communities,” said Art Murillo, LSC Board Trust-



The Lone Star College Law Enforcement Academy graduated 10 cadets in December. The new police officers are working for various law enforcement agencies in the LSC community. Pictured from left are Glenn Riddle, LSC Law Enforcement Academy Director; Stephen C. Head, Ph.D., LSC Chancellor; Paul Cordova, Aldine ISD Chief of Police; Art Murillo, LSC Board of Trustee Vice Chair and Jamail Lee, LSC law enforcement graduate.

ee Vice Chair.

The LSC Law Enforcement Academy offers day full-time and evening part-time options that can train the next group of police officers in less than a year. Courses are available at LSC-East Aldine Center and upon completion, graduates become certified Texas peace officers.

“This academy consists of academic, physical fitness and training taught by prior and current law enforcement professionals that will graduate top quality officers to serve and protect our community,” said Glenn Riddle, LSC Law Enforcement Academy Director. “Also, we added more hours in de-escalation procedures.”

The LSC Law Enforcement Academy meets Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) re-

quirements. Cadets learn how to maintain order and protect life and property by enforcing local, state or federal laws for various law enforcement agencies, including educational institutions.

“I was a vocational pastor for 16 years, and although my calling shifted, I still wanted to help others,” said Johnny Willard, a new Tomball Police Officer and former Law Enforcement Academy class president. “Law enforcement will allow me to continue making a difference in the community and, hopefully, change people’s negative view of police officers by treating everyone with care and respect.”

Visit LoneStar.edu/Programs-Of-Study/Law-Enforcement-Academy to learn more.



Janis Burke, HCHSA CEO, with Daleny Vaughn, Rayne Lankford, Sally Bradford, John David, and riders.

# RockStar Energy Bike Park hosts the USA BMX Lone Star Nationals

Harris County – Houston Sports Authority Donates 50 New Bikes

NORTH HARRIS COUNTY – This weekend, RockStar Energy Bike Park plays host to the USA BMX Lone Star Nationals. Athletes from all over the nation arrive in Houston to compete in several different divisions, ranging from 6 & Under to Vet Pro and Elite. The community is welcome to attend for free to experience this family-oriented sport.

As a result of hosting this premiere event in Houston, the Harris County – Houston Sports Authority is proud to help facilitate that 50 BMX-style bikes and helmets will be left at RockStar Energy Bike Park to be used in future programming. These bikes, which are from world-renowned manufacturer DK Bicycles, and helmets from Fly Racing, will give an opportunity for at-risk youth in the area to get involved with and participate in the sport.

BMX Racing has exploded in popularity over the last few decades, especially after being introduced into the Olympic Games. The donated bikes will provide the resources and opportunity for all local Houston young people to participate regardless of their family income level.

Under the support and supervision of RockStar Energy Bike Park, the youth of Houston will be serviced, and the barrier to entry into the sport diminished.

“With every event that is brought to our region, we hope to leave a legacy or asset to our local community that benefits our citizens,” said Janis Burke, Harris County - Houston Sports Authority CEO. “Every child should have an opportunity to participate in sports, especially one as exciting as BMX. These bikes will create a lasting benefit for the local youth and hopefully get more kids involved in the exciting world of bicycle motocross.”

Burke was joined by the mastermind behind the RockStar Energy Bike Park, Sally Bradford, Executive Director of the North Houston Development Corporation and USA BMX Chief Strategy Officer, John David.

“USA BMX hosts events all over the nation, but Houston is special,” said John David, USA BMX Chief Strategy Officer. “This city goes above and beyond when hosting sporting events. Houston is dedicated to using sports to change lives. We look forward

to seeing new athletes head out to RockStar Energy Bike Park and try BMX racing!”

Also on the track, representing DK Bicycles, were elite class riders Daleny Vaughn and Rayne Lankford. DKPro Vaughn is the current USA Cycling National Champion, and a 2024 Olympic hopeful. Lankford is Houston’s own AA Pro, and a proud Texan.

The Harris County - Houston Sports Authority is committed to improving the lives of those in the community through sports. Through continued partnerships, like the one with RockStar Energy Bike Park, youth and adults all over the region will be given new opportunities to get active and participate in all types of sports.

RockStar Energy Bike Park was built in North Houston in 2019, adjacent to the North Houston Skate Park. The bike park is over 150,000 square feet, making it one of the world’s largest and most unique parks, consisting of a BMX track, dirt jumps, concrete bowls, and much more. RockStar Energy Bike Park is the #1 BMX track in Texas, and #7 nationally.

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