

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- FREE INTERNET, Page 1
- AISD School News, 3
- AISD hosts UIL Championship Games, 3
- Abbott's Priorities, 1, 4
- Johnson Elementary Valentine's Day, 5
- At the Libraries, 5
- Entertainment, 7
- East Aldine Right Place & Time for Business, Page 8

NORTHEAST NEWS



East Aldine Headquarters Office Building is Runner-up in ULI Development of Distinction Awards
See Story Below

Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 47 Years
VOL. 47, NO. 7 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2023 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

NEWS NOTES

STATE OF THE STATE:

Abbott lists 7 Legislative Priorities

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 together.

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

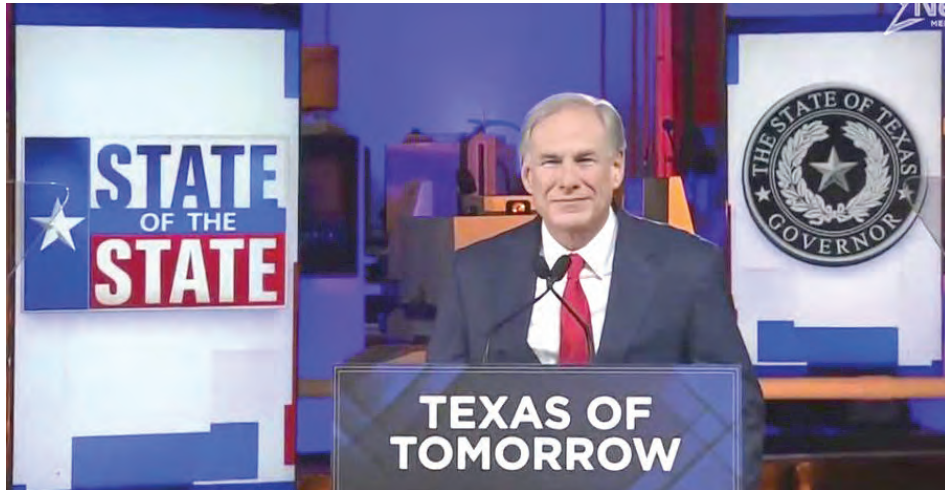
By Patrick Svitek
Texas Tribune

SAN MARCOS – Gov. Greg Abbott on Thursday outlined his highest priorities for the legislative session, offering an agenda centered on the economy, schools and public safety, complete with some proposals to push Texas even further to the political right.

During his biennial State of the State speech, the Republican governor named seven emergency items that lawmakers can vote on immediately: cutting property taxes, ending COVID-19 restrictions “forever,” expanding school choice, making schools safer, ending “revolving-door” bail policies, securing the state’s border with Mexico and cracking down on fentanyl.

“This session, we will ensure Texas remains the leader of this nation as an unflinching force in this world,” Abbott said during the speech in San Marcos. “Together, we will build a Texas for the next generation — the Texas of tomorrow.”

The legislative session, which began in early January, is Abbott’s fifth as governor, and it comes months after he secured a



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT DELIVERS HIS “STATE OF THE STATE” SPEECH, AND LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES, AT THE NOVEON MAGNETICS FACILITY IN SAN MARCOS LAST THURSDAY.

decisive reelection victory for a third term. It also comes as he has emerged as more of a national political figure for his attention-grabbing efforts to secure the border — and as a possible 2024 presidential candidate.

His speech included two references to President Joe Biden, a Democrat. Abbott said in one that Texans are rightfully “furious about the lawlessness caused by Joe Biden’s open border policies.”

The speech otherwise included a host of priorities that Abbott has been emphasizing for months, like using the state’s historic

budget surplus to deliver the “largest property tax cut in the history of Texas.” He also reiterated he wants to root out “woke agendas” in the classroom and let parents use tax dollars to send their kids to schools outside the traditional public education system. He repeated that he wants to do so through Education Savings Accounts, in which state funds would be deposited to help parents pay for nontraditional education expenses, like home schooling or private school.

That may be the most ambitious proposal that Abbott backed, considering

school vouchers have historically run into a wall of opposition from Democrats and rural Republicans in the Legislature.

Texas Democrats responded to Abbott’s speech in a 10-minute wide-ranging video that included comments from state and federal lawmakers, as well as Texans who said their lives were negatively impacted by Abbott’s policies. The video began with the families of victims of the Uvalde elementary school shooting pleading for state lawmakers to do more to prevent gun violence.

“Since that day we’ve been begging Gov. Abbott

ABBOTT’S LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES:

- ★ CUTTING PROPERTY TAXES
- ★ ENDING COVID RESTRICTIONS FOREVER
- ★ EDUCATION FREEDOM
- ★ SCHOOL SAFETY
- ★ ENDING REVOLVING DOOR BAIL
- ★ SECURING THE BORDER
- ★ FIGHTING THE FENTANYL CRISIS

to do what’s right and institute the most common-sense gun safety laws, like raising the age from 18 to 21 to be able to buy a weapon of war in Texas, but he didn’t listen,” said Felix Rubio, whose daughter Lexi was killed during the shooting. Abbott and other Republicans have resisted such proposals.

The Texas House Democratic Caucus responded to Abbott in a news conference Friday morning, accusing him of ignoring a host of issues that are important to everyday Tex-

Continued. See New Board Members, Page 2

Driver Park wins ULI Development Award

URBAN LAND INSTITUTE Houston announces 2023 DEVELOPMENT OF DISTINCTION winners

East Aldine HQ building also wins runner-up

HOUSTON – February 7, 2023 – Houston’s most compelling and innovative real estate projects were recognized by the Houston District Council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) at the 16th annual Development of Distinction Awards presented by Wilson, Cribbs + Goren.

Close to 300 guests gathered for ULI Houston’s centerpiece awards program at Armadillo Palace, which recognizes developments and public open spaces that exemplify best practices in design, construction, economic viability, healthy places, marketing, and management. The program is



PCT. 2 JAMES DRIVER ALL-INCLUSIVE PARK

modeled after the national Urban Land Institute Global Awards for Excellence.

In the For-Profit Category (large*), the 2023 award went to Montrose Collective.

In the For-Profit Category (small**), the 2023 award went to The Plant at Harrisburg.

In the Not-for-Profit

Category the 2023 award went to John S. Dunn Behavioral Science Center.

In the Open Space Category, the 2023 award went to **James Driver Inclusive Park**. James Driver Park, a 29-acre park located in northeast Houston along US High-

Continued. See DRIVER PARK, Page 2

East Aldine District seats two new Board members

EAST ALDINE – Two long-time East Aldine community leaders were recently appointed to serve on the board of the East Aldine Management District.

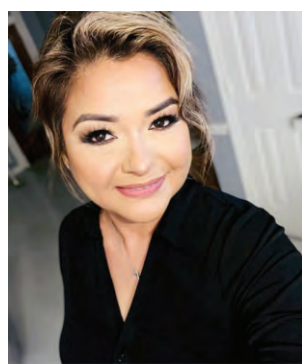
They are Flor Zarzoza, a former District employee and neighborhood volunteer, and Luis A. Lucio, former dean of the Lone Star College East Aldine Center.

Zarzoza, the widow of Harris County Sheriff’s Dep. Darren Almendarez, is a longtime resident of East Aldine who met her late husband while she was working for the District in 2013. As the first anniversary of his fatal shooting approaches, Zarzoza says her late husband serves “as my inspiration” to continue her work to improve the community.

Lucio, who now works as director of special projects at Lone Star College Kingwood, is “a son of



LUIS LUCIO



FLOR ZARZOZA

East Aldine.” The East Aldine native and graduate of MacArthur High School launched his career in education right out of high school, when he worked as a paraprofessional, or classroom assistant, at Aldine’s Gus A. Oleson Elementary School. He earned his bachelor’s and masters’ degrees at Sam Houston State University, and his doctorate in educational leadership from the University of Houston.

Zarzoza said serving on the board “is like a blessing to me because it’s

where I met my husband.” Although she still struggles with grief, Zarzoza likes to remember Almendarez’ fun-loving sense of humor. They met at the first storefront office of the district, when Almendarez “pretended” to ask her a community-related crime question.

“He made up some story to start asking me questions,” she said, with a laugh.

The mother of two chil-

Continued. See New Board Members, Page 2

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Driver Park wins ULI Development Award,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

way 59, is home to the newest premier greenspace in the region. Located in an underserved part of Harris County, the improvements added to James Driver Park should also help to revitalize the surrounding community and serve as a destination for visitors. James Driver Park was built to provide all people with a place to go regardless of their physical and mental condition and sense of belonging. It is a place that is truly made for the public, regardless of ability, age, or economic status. The laughter, joyful screams, and smiles that the park has produced since opening are the true measurement of the success of this park.

This year our judges selected one finalist to receive what they have named the Renewal Award. As ULI Houston does every year, judges



were given leeway to award finalists as they deemed appropriate. The judges felt the Houston

Farmers Market did a great job reinvigorating an institutional destination in Houston. **James Driver Park** also won the

People's Choice award, garnering the most votes on ULI's online survey.

Finalists were selected by a nomination panel of Houston real estate leaders that included: Lawrence Dean, Senior Vice President – Homebuilder Lender – Veritex Community Bank; Rachel Koehring, Director of Marketing – Goree; Kristina Malek, Landscape Architect & Shareholder– Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.; Abbey Roberson, Vice President of Planning – Texas Medical Center and Jay Tatum, Regional Principal – HOK.

A jury of national real estate experts evaluated all finalists' projects in November 2022, to select the 2023 Development of Distinction winners. Our jury this year was: Kim Abreu with US Bank in Miami, Suleman Gajere with WS Development in Boston, and David Haltom with Patrinely in Denver.

The following 2023 category finalists were also recognized during the awards:

- For Profit (small-scale):**
 - Railway Heights Market – 8200 Washington Purchase and Company of Nomads
- Not-for-Profit:**
 - The Center for Pursuit Campus – The Center for Pursuit
 - Avenue Center– Avenue Community Development Corporation
 - East Aldine District Office & Town**

Center Park – East Aldine Management District

Open Space:
The Park at JP Morgan Chase – Hines
Woodchase Park – Westchase District

Since 2008, over 125 projects and public spaces have been recognized as Development of Distinction finalists and winners.

James Driver Inclusive Park Development Team

Developer/Owner – Harris County Precinct 2

Architects – Metalab
General Contractor – D.L. Meacham Construction LP

Civil Engineer – IDS Engineering

Structural Engineer – Fractal

Landscape Architect – Four and One

MEP – AOS Engineering

New East Aldine District Board Members,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

dren, Zarzoza was an active school volunteer who began promoting the East Aldine Management District to area businesses on her own before she was hired as an employee.

"I walked door-to-door to lots of businesses in East Aldine to encourage them to participate and support this way to improve this community," Zarzoza recalls.

"I was a PTO parent, and I did fundraisers for field trips, or I organized activities for the kids like ice-cream socials," Zarzoza said. "I just followed by kids from elementary, though middle and all the way through high school."

Her daughter recently graduated from Texas A&M University and her son is attending Lone Star College.

"There are some days when we just have to take it minute-by-minute," Zarzoza said.

As a long-time resident and early volunteer for the District, Zarzoza said she has been very encouraged by all the progress brought about in East Aldine. As a board member, however, she wants to promote more "door-to-door" outreach to people in the community.

"I know we've got this

great new building and hold lots of events there, but I still miss those 'community walks,' " Zarzoza said.

"I have learned through the years that a lot of our community members are older community people who don't have social media, and we don't all get the Northeast News (newspaper)," Zarzoza said. "The best thing (sometimes) is to go door-to-door to get to know people in the community."

Lucio said being appointed to the board is "extremely rewarding."

"I am very, very happy about it because I think I'm going to be able to really make a bigger impact in my community," he said.

As the newly-appointed chair of the board's health, education and neighborhood services committee, Lucio said one of his key goals on the board is "paving the way for civic engagement."

"I want to educate not only those who have already graduated, but also Lone Star College students on the importance of civic engagement, and how you can give back to your community," Lucio said. "I want them to know that opportunity is out there, to

teach them the kind of political awareness on how we can get funding from strategic partners, like our state representatives."

Like many educators, Lucio has demonstrated that he knows how to engage the community in fun, and funny, ways. At a Halloween event sponsored by the District, he happily dressed up in a pharaoh's costume for the carnival parade. At a western-themed Valentine's Day dance at BakerRipley, he donned western wear to supervise Lone Star students who handed out flyers.

"Anybody's who's ever been around kids' education has to have a fun side," Lucio said.

When he's not involved in higher education and civic engagement, Lucio takes time to watch his daughter play first base on her softball team.

"My summer weekends are fill with softball games," Lucio said. "And I am a big time Houston Astros fan. I love everything Astros, like (mascot) Orbit. I've been an Astros fan since I was since my first game at the Astrodome back in 1980."

— By Anne Marie Kilday

Abbott "State of the State" Priorities,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ans. Rep. Ron Reynolds, chairman of the Texas Legislative Black Caucus, said all he heard from Abbott was "red meat for his MAGA base."

Emergency items are proposals that allow lawmakers to bypass a ban on passing legislation before the 60th day of a session — which would be March 10. Thursday is the 37th day of the session.

Among his emergency items, Abbott called for legislation to permanently prevent COVID-19 mandates, like local requirements to wear masks, get vaccines and shut down businesses. While Texas long ago lifted its statewide COVID-19 restrictions, Abbott has kept in place a disaster declaration for the pandemic that has drawn some criticism from his right, and he has promised to end it once lawmakers act.

Notably, Abbott also nodded to conservative pushback by giving lawmakers more of a say in how he responds to the next pandemic.

"We must change how government responds to future pandemics, including requiring the Legislature to convene if another pandemic is ever declared," Abbott said.

In his speech, Abbott alluded to some of the biggest tests of his governorship over the past two years, including the 2021 power-grid collapse. As he did in his inaugural address last month, he said he wants to build a power grid that will endure for many years to come, but he did not designate it as an emergency item. Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick has deemed it one of his highest priorities for the session and has vowed to force a special session if he does not get his way in the form of adding natural gas plants.

The grid was near the top of a list of 30 legislative priorities that Patrick released Monday. Patrick's priorities featured a number of farther-right ideas that Abbott did not mention Thursday, such as banning "children's exposure to drag shows," outlawing gender-transitioning care for minors and eliminating tenure for public college professors.

Abbott also talked about the most likely policy response to come out of the 2022 Uvalde school shooting: school safety. He did not get too detailed, calling for the "safest standards" and more mental health professionals in schools.

When it came to guns, Abbott focused on getting tougher on crimes involv-

ing guns, calling for a 10-year mandatory minimum jail sentence "for criminals who illegally possess guns." That is consistent with a top priority of the lieutenant governor this session.

When it comes to public safety, Abbott has named tougher bail an emergency item before but has struggled to get one proposal across the finish line: a constitutional amendment to expand the circumstances in which a judge can deny bail. Abbott said Thursday that lawmakers "did a lot last session" to tighten bail policies but still must do more.

Finally, on the border, the main proposal that Abbott mentioned was imposing a "mandatory minimum jail sentence of at least 10 years for anyone caught smuggling illegal immigrants in Texas." That is a tougher proposal than the five-year minimum that Abbott suggested as recently as December.

Abbott has taken extraordinary measures to secure the border over the past two years, and he has signaled that his next major front is stopping the flow of fentanyl, a powerful and often deadly opioid. To that end, he reiterated his desire to prosecute fentanyl deaths as murders and increase the supply of Narcan, the life-saving overdose drug.

Harm reduction advocates have been pushing Abbott to go further.

"If the governor wants to confront the overdose crisis as he says he does, access to Narcan only scratches the surface," said Cate Graziani, executive director of the Texas Harm Reduction Alliance, calling for "harm reduction centers, safe use supplies, and supportive housing."

Beyond his emergency items, Abbott peppered his speech with other pet issues. For example, he said "local communities need new economic development tools this session," alluding to an effort to reinvent a popular corporate tax-break program that lawmakers let expire last year.

The governor has typically given the State of the State before a joint legislative session at the Texas Capitol. But Abbott chose to deliver the speech outside Austin for the second time in a row, after giving it in Lockhart two years ago during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This time, Abbott delivered the speech at Noveon Magnetics in San Marcos, a setting that has drawn some controversy. Attend-

ees were initially asked to sign a nondisclosure agreement, with his office citing "national security and corporate espionage concerns," but the request was rescinded, according to the USA Today Network.

Noveon Magnetics, the site where Gov. Greg Abbott delivered his biennial State of the State speech on Thursday, in San Marcos. Credit: Eli Hartman for The Texas Tribune

Reporters were not allowed to cover the speech in person, but it was broadcast live on Nexstar TV stations across the state and streamed online.

Abbott opened his speech by recognizing Noveon as a "cutting-edge business in the critical field of rare earth elements." He warned that China currently dominates the rare earth materials market and that Texas needs to embrace companies like Noveon to become more self-reliant.

"The future of Texas and the United States should not depend on China," Abbott said.

Ahead of Abbott's speech, the head of the Texas House Democratic Caucus, Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer, issued a memo that said "the only emergency the Governor has in mind is that no one wants him to run for president other than himself." Abbott has not ruled out a 2024 White House run, and his aides say it is something he will consider after the session ends in late May.

The Democratic response video, which at times was jarring because of the rapidly changing scripted segments featuring both lawmakers and everyday Texans, also included a nod to Democratic support for oil and energy jobs, responding to Republican attacks against the party. Democrats also promised to vigorously oppose legislation that would take dollars away from public schools for use at private schools and to fight to expand Medicaid, which is a near impossibility in Republican-dominated Texas.

Martinez Fischer closed the response by saying the session would not be easy.

"We can promise you Democrats are going to fight because you, the people of Texas, deserve the opportunity to succeed no matter your race, life background or where in this great state you call home," said state Rep. Nicole Collier, a Fort Worth Democrat.

James Barragan contributed reporting.

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SCHOOL NEWS PAGE

Aldine ISD to Host UIL Region 3-6A Championships

Aldine ISD will host the UIL Region 3-6A Girls' Semi-Final Basketball Championships to be held on February 24, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and the championship at 2:00 p.m. on February 25, 2023, at M.O. Campbell Educational Center. Admission will be \$10.00 for adults and students.



Aldine ISD will host the UIL Region 3-6A Boys' Semi-Final Basketball Championships to be held on March 3, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and the championship at 2:00 p.m. on March 4, 2023, at M.O. Campbell Educational Center. Admission will be \$10.00 for adults and students.

District High School Student Selected as Texas All-State Musician

Cynthia Estrada-Gómez, a member of the Nimitz High School wind ensemble, will perform with the Texas All-State Concert Band in San Antonio Saturday, February 11, 2023, at the Henry B. González Convention Center as part of the 2023 Texas Music Educators Association Clinic/Convention.

Cynthia was chosen for this prestigious honor through a competitive process held this year across the state at District, Region, and Area levels. Cynthia is a student of Courtney Villarreal and plays at Nimitz HS under the direction of Emilio Reyna, a Texas Music Educators Association member. This is Cynthia's first time performing as a member of a TMEA All-State organization. Cynthia Estrada-Gomez is the child of Marissa Hernández and Juan Estrada.

All-State is the highest honor a Texas music student can receive. 1,875 students were selected through a process that began with over 70,000 students from around the state vying for this honor to perform in one of 18 ensembles. High school students selected to perform in the All-State concerts have competed through auditions to qualify at the state level.

Texas Music Educators Association sponsors the Texas All-State competition. This competitive process begins throughout the state in auditions hosted by 33 TMEA Regions. Individual musicians perform selected music for judges who rank each instrument or voice part. From this ranking, a select group of musicians advances from their Region



to compete against musicians from other areas in eight TMEA Area competitions. The highest-ranking musicians judged at the TMEA Area competitions qualify to perform in a TMEA All-State music group. Only the top 2.6% of musicians who initially audition become All-State musicians.

Over 30,000 people from Texas and worldwide are expected to attend over 290 workshops and 100 performances and visit over 1,200 exhibit booths at the nation's largest music educators convention.

These All-State students participate in four

days of rehearsals directed by nationally recognized conductors during the TMEA Clinic/Convention. Their performances for thousands of attendees bring this extraordinary event to a close. For the All-State concert and conductor information, go to the Performances section of www.tmea.org/convention.

Founded in 1921, Texas Music Educators Association is an association of over 14,000 members dedicated to promoting excellence in music education. Go to www.tmea.org/convention for more information.

February is CTE Month: AISD Offers Over 50 Career and Technical Education Programs



Throughout February, National CTE Month, staff from the CTE Department will visit middle school students as they set their plans in high school and after graduation.

The state's Division of College, Career, and Military Preparation has engaged members of the workforce, secondary education, and higher education to advise on the development of programs of study, including coherent sequences of courses to ensure students are prepared for in-demand, high-skill, and high-wage careers in Texas.

The programs prepare high school students for the 21st century's global economy and rapidly changing workforce needs. All CTE programs are aligned to established academic and technical skill standards to ensure student preparation for college and careers. These programs also include work-based learning opportunities (e.g., internships, clinical experiences, or industry-mentored projects) tied to the student's area of interest. Upon completing a Texas CTE program of study, students can earn college credits and/or industry-recognized credentials such as certifications and licenses.

What You Need to Know Explore!: Students start to explore CTE careers in middle school, and in high school, they participate in CTE classes based on their interests. Students applying to Choice Schools like Avalos P-TECH School, Blanson CTE High School, and Carver P-TECH School select their top choices and are informed of their awarded program of

study or "major." Career Clusters: Click here to see students' options by visiting the CTE Department webpage.

The CTE career clusters are organized to encourage integrated learning between the different CTE and academic programs.

Want More Information About Career Clusters?

Visit the CTE Department website (click on the Teacher Resources link) to view programs by campus and by career clusters. You can also visit the Texas CTE website or here to visit the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Approved Statewide CTE Programs of Study. The state agency websites share information from courses to future salary expectations in a career cluster.

Aldine ISD Programs

Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Career Cluster
Animal Science
Applied Agricultural Engineering
Marketing
Architecture and Construction Career Cluster
Architectural Design
Carpentry
Electrical Engineering
HVAC
Interior Design
Sheet Metal Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications Career Cluster
Digital Communications
Fashion Design
Graphic Design & Multimedia Art

Business, Marketing, and Finance Career Cluster
Accounting & Financial Services
Business Management
Entrepreneurship
Marketing
Education and Training Career Cluster
Teaching and Training
Energy Career Cluster
Oil & Gas Exploration & Production
Process Technician

Health Science Career Cluster
Dental Assistant
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)
Healthcare Therapeutic Services
Personal Care
Hospitality and Tourism Career Cluster
Culinary Arts
Travel, Tourism & Attractions
Human Services Career Cluster
Cosmetology
Personal Care Services
Information Technology Career Cluster
CISCO Networking Systems
(2) Technology (IT)
Information Support & Services
Law and Public Service Career Cluster
Accounting-Business Management
Emergency Medical Technician
Law Enforcement
Legal Studies
Real Estate/Sales Agent

Manufacturing Career Cluster
Advanced Manufacturing & Machinery Mechanics
Manufacturing Technology
Non-destructive Testing
Robotics (Mechatronics)
Welding
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Career Cluster
Biomedical Science
Computer Science
Cybersecurity
Electrical Engineering
General Engineering
Information Technology
Land Surveying
Networking
Programming & Software Development
Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics Career Cluster
Automotive
Automotive Collision Repair/Refinish
Aviation — Davis HS ONLY
Diesel and Heavy Equipment Maintenance/Mechanics
Distribution & Logistics Questions

Contact your child's middle or high school campus or school counselor or visit the district's CTE Department website.

Houston Food Bank Backpack Buddy Program Beneficial to Aldine ISD Community

The Food Bank Backpack Buddy Program is a crucial initiative that has been implemented in many schools across the Houston area. Its goal is to provide children who come from food-insecure homes with nutritious meals to sustain them over the weekend, when school meals are not available.

Aldine ISD is a partnership between the Houston Food Bank and the Aldine Independent School District. Currently, 38 schools in Aldine are participating in the program, which aims to help children from low-income families by providing them with essential meals for the weekend. The program operates by providing participating children with a backpack filled with enough food to last them over the weekend. These backpacks are given to the children on Friday, ensuring that they have enough food to eat during the

weekend. The backpacks contain six meals and eight pounds of food, enough to feed one child for the entire weekend.

The types of food provided in the backpacks are carefully selected to ensure that they are nutritious and balanced. The meals provided include a variety of non-perishable items, such as cereal, canned fruits and vegetables, peanut butter, and tuna. The backpacks also include fresh produce, such as apples, oranges, and carrots, which are important sources of vitamins and fiber.

The program is open to community participation, which means that anyone who is interested in supporting the initiative can contribute by donating food or funds to the program. The food bank is always in need of donations to keep the program running, and any contribution can make a significant impact on the lives of children

who are struggling with food insecurity.

In addition to providing food to children, the program also helps to build a sense of community in the schools. Students, teachers, and staff are all involved in the program, and it provides an opportunity for everyone to work together to help those in need. It also helps to raise awareness about the issue of food insecurity and the impact it has on children.

Overall, the Food Bank Backpack Buddy Program is an essential initiative that provides a critical service to children in need. With 38 schools currently participating in Aldine, there is a significant need for support from the community. By contributing to the program, individuals can make a meaningful impact on the lives of children and help to ensure that they have access to the food they need to grow and thrive.

Thank You for Joining Us at the 2023 Bookworm Festival



On February 4, the Bookworm Festival returned to in-person programming for the first time since the pandemic, taking place at the M.O. Campbell Educational Center. The free bilingual festival featured author and illustrator panels and book signings celebrating literature for young readers (Grades PreK, K, 1, 2, and 3) in Spanish and English.

OPINION PAGE

OPINION By BILL KING



The Ignored Majority: Throwing Down-Ballot Candidates Under the Bus

Imagine that you are a Democrat campaigning for a statewide office in Texas, where one in six jobs is tied to the oil and gas industry.

Or imagine that you are running for a local office in Harris County, Texas, as a Republican, where a Democrat has an 8-10 point natural advantage.

Welcome to the world of being thrown under the bus as a down-ballot candidate. There was a time when party leaders at the state and national levels cared about winning down-ballot races as part of building their party.

That is because the only elections that matter to most elected officials are primaries, which increasingly have become ideological purity tests.

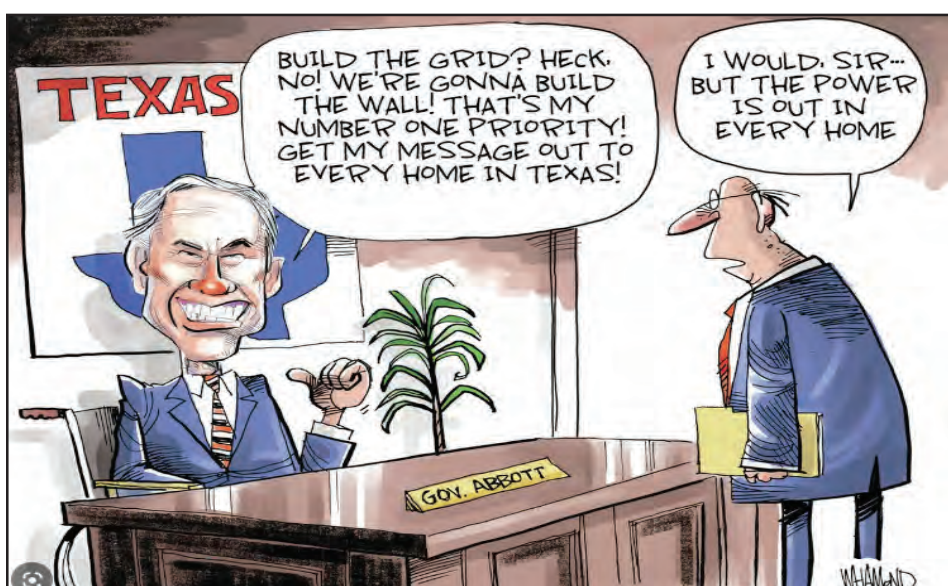
Prior to about 1990, we really had a four-party system, because both parties had conservative and progressive-leaning wings.

But since 1990, the minority wings of both parties have been virtually eliminated. This is a chart that Lee Drutman's book, Breaking the Two-Party Doom Loop, based on data collected by www.voteview.com.

With the complete ideological sorting of the two parties, down-ballot candidates who attempt to navigate more moderate policies to appeal to local voters have become sacrificial lambs to ideological purity.

In the process, critically important state and local issues go largely unaddressed in campaigns. In Texas, for example, the failure of Texas Republicans to address the glaring problems with the Texas electrical grid.

At some point, Democrats in places like Texas and Florida, and Republicans in California, are going to have to accept that their parties' platforms are simply not viable in their states.



THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

"Not Stubby"

My mother has a pet squirrel named Stubby.

He is not, technically, her pet, as he lives outdoors as a wild squirrel. But he spends much of his time sitting on the railing, watching my mother.

While my husband, Peter, and I were up north visiting, however, Stubby had a visitor. "That's not Stubby!" my mother said.

It's easy to identify Stubby since he lost half his tail in some unknown but unquestionably tragic accident. It was shortly after the loss of his tail that my mother took Stubby on as her dependent.

"Stubby has a great life!" I noted when I came up to visit my parents.

It had been cold, but Stubby looked healthy and well-fed. His tail had not grown back, naturally, but where it had been bitten off, new long, black fur had grown.

But then, another squirrel showed up.

"That's not Stubby!" my mother repeated, looking at the squirrel who was sitting where Stubby always sat.

"Maybe Stubby has a girlfriend," I suggested.

"Maybe this squirrel chased Stubby off?" my mother said, apparently far less optimistic about Stubby's chances for romance.

But Stubby was missing. I just was beginning to believe my mother's theory when we spotted Stubby a short distance off. He was eating pine-cone seeds.

"It's very odd," my mother concluded, wondering if she now had two red squirrels to support.

We watched intently out the window, looking for any sign of Stubby's visitor.

"Who was that, Stubby?" I wondered. My mother had an aunt who said she liked to visit folks to "see how they have it."

"Oh, he's got it good, that old Stubby!" Evald would report back to the extended squirrel family. "Old Stubby had that terrible accident, but he really landed on his feet!"

At least, that's how I imagine it. Till next time, Carrie

Photos and other news can be found at CarrieClasson.com.

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders



Abbott lays out seven top priorities in State of the State Address

ABBOTT LAYS OUT SEVEN TOP PRIORITIES

Gov. Greg Abbott, in a State of the State address last Thursday, outlined his seven top priorities for the ongoing legislative session before an invitation-only audience at a manufacturing facility in San Marcos.

The governor, beginning his third term, announced that school safety would also be a legislative priority, while avoiding any mention on curtailing the availability of guns.

Abbott is proposing that \$15 billion of the state's hefty surplus go toward cutting property taxes.

PATRICK ALSO ANNOUNCES PRIORITIES

Texas Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick a few days earlier released 30 legislative priorities, which also includes property tax relief. Patrick, who presides over the state Senate, also wants to increase the punishment for illegal voting.

The Houston Chronicle reported other items on Patrick's list include banning critical race theory in higher education and prohibiting COVID-19 mandates.

"Just because a bill does not make the priority list does not mean it is not a priority for me or the Senate," Patrick said in a statement.

Patrick is also pushing for teacher pay raises, expanding mental health services in rural areas, and strengthening the state's power grid.

BLACK LAWMAKERS BLAST ABBOTT'S HIRING DIRECTIVE

A directive from Abbott



to state agencies ordering them to end the use of diversity, equity and inclusion practices in hiring employees has drawn the ire of the Texas Legislative Black Caucus and the Texas NAACP.

The Statesman reported that the groups called on the NBA and MLB to not host All-Star games in the state, the NFL to not hold Super Bowl games, and the NCAA to decline to host championship games in Texas.

"I am proud to say that the NAACP urges all citizens of goodwill to join us and our partners in fighting to stop our state from continuing to move back to Jim Crow," NAACP President Gary Bledsoe said.

The governor's office has said that hiring on factors other than merit violates state and federal law.

STATE PARK TO BECOME GATED COMMUNITY

A popular Texas state park located 90 miles southeast of Dallas will close at the end of the month, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department announced. After more than 50 years of public use, Fairfield State Park was notified by Vistra, the power company that leased the property to the state.

Vistra closed the coal power plant located on the lake in 2018. Despite

months of negotiation, the company would not consider selling just the parkland to the state. The new owner, Todd Interests, plans to develop a high-end gated community with a private golf course.

"This loss is especially unfathomable at a time when we are celebrating 100 years of state parks, yet absent any cooperation or interest in working with us from the developer, we have no other options," said Arch "Beaver" Aplin, TPWD chairman.

A number of state legislators have expressed outrage over the park's closing. State Rep. Angelia Orr, R-Hillsboro, whose district includes Freestone County where Fairfield State Park is located, has filed a bill that would allow the state to acquire the parkland through eminent domain.

SABINE PASS BATTLEGROUND SITE REOPENS

A Civil War battleground and memorial site closed after damage from Hurricane Harvey in 2017 has reopened after repairs were made to the seawall. The Sabine Pass Battle-ground State Historic Site in Port Arthur is now open to the public seven days a week.

In the battle, Confederate Lt. Richard "Dick" Dowling and 46 men fought back against a Union assault on Sabine Pass, which was the main port for Confederate shipments during the war. The battle lasted less than an hour. Two Union gunboats were destroyed, along with significant casualties and the capture of about 350 prisoners.

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches, and Cedar Park. Email: gborders@texaspress.com.

NORTHEAST NEWS contact information and staff list including Gilbert Hoffman, Mei-Ing Hoffman, Willie G Glasgow, Kristan Hoffman, Julieta Paita, Gerardo Hernandez, and Mike Keeney.

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Johnson Elementary Valentine's Day Police and Pancakes Event



East Aldine District

1d -

Tuesday's Valentine's Day Police and Pancakes event was a success! ❤️ 🍳 Johnson Elementary students with perfect attendance had a wonderful time chatting with the officers and eating pancakes made with love. Officers also handed out hearts with mixed chocolates, and students received East Aldine District string backpacks with fun calendars inside. Officers Selina Perez and Valerie Moreno (Johnson Elementary alumni) gave the students a few encouraging words, too! Thank you to our HCSO team of officers and Westfield Fire Chief Adrian Dillehay for attending!



HIGH MEADOWS LIBRARY NEWS

WEEK: 2/20 - 2/25

JAZZ PERFORMANCE BY SAM DINKINS III - WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22 - 6:00 PM
 Join us for a family friendly Jazz performance in light of black history month.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS:
 Kraft Kids - Wednesday, 4:30
 Family Time - Saturday, 1:00

TEEN PROGRAMS:
 Anime Club: Tuesday, 3:00
 The Art Thing: Wednesday, 3:00

ADULT PROGRAMS:
 Lunch and Learn Literacy- Monday, 5:30
 Novel Book Club - Monday, 6:00
 Lunch and Learn Literacy- Friday, 1:30

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AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS

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. 22 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.**

LECTORES AVIDOS
 ¡Transformemos nuestras vidas a través de la buena lectura, y compartamos mejorando nuestra comunidad! **Sábado, 25 de febrero, 10:30 am.**

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 in-

termediate 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.

E-NEWSLETTER
 Sign up to get our newsletter delivered straight to your mailbox each month in English or Spanish! <http://eepurl.com/h3wOXH>.

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CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of 4 John (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. In Romans 10, what body part does Paul call "beautiful" on those who bring the good news? Hands, Mouth, Heart, Feet
3. Who died after getting his long hair caught in a tree and being found by enemy soldiers? Absalom, Joash, Ahaz, Asa

4. From Matthew 22:14, "For many are called, but few are ..."? Worthy, Chosen, Winners, Liked
5. What caused the death of Job's children? Famine, Flood, Windstorm, Beheaded
6. Who was the mate of Abigail? Abraham, Adam, Nabal, Baasha

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Feet, 3) Absalom, 4) Chosen, 5) Windstorm, 6) Nabal
Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," now available in bookstores and online.
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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

How blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways. When you shall eat of the fruit of your hands, you will be happy and it will be well with you. Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine within your house, your children like olive plants around your table.

PSALM 128:1-3

"Mother & Child Study" by Pablo Picasso (1904)

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celebrity extra

by Dana Jackson

—Q: Is Tina Fey working on any new shows? Did the one about the mayor get canceled? I really loved "30 Rock," and I'm hoping she'll do a reboot of it someday.

—S.L.A: It was recently announced that Fey and her former "Saturday Night Live" Weekend Update co-anchor, Amy Poehler, will be going on a comedy tour together. Since they are very busy women, they only have time for four cities, at least for now. According to Deadline.com, they'll kick it off with their first performance on April 29 in Washington, D.C., then on to the improv capital of the world, Chicago, on May 29. From there, Fey and Poehler will appear at Boston's MGM Music Hall at Fenway on June 9 and will cap off their tour in Atlantic City's Hard Rock Live at Etess Arena on June 10. The Tina Fey & Amy Poehler: Restless Leg Tour is calling itself a celebration of "thirty years of friendship with an evening of jokes, iconic stories and conversational entertainment."

Another pair of comedy legends, Steve Martin



Tina Fey in new Restless Leg Tour

and Martin Short (who star in Hulu's "Only Murders in the Building"), did a similar stage tour last year. Incidentally, Fey had a recurring role on their series as well. There aren't any plans for a "30 Rock" reunion, which would prove especially difficult given star Alec Baldwin's recent legal troubles. Her most recent creation, "Mr. Mayor," starring Ted Danson, was canceled after two seasons. Despite recently striking out, I'm sure it won't be long before Fey hits another creative home run.

*** Q: When does the new season of "The Masked Singer" begin? I usually catch it midway through, and I want to

watch it from the beginning this time.

—L.A.A: Season nine of the hit singing competition show began on Feb. 15 at 8 p.m. ET/PT on Fox. Hopefully, you caught the commercials during the Super Bowl and don't miss any episodes, but if you do, you can catch encore episodes via OnDemand, FOX NOW, Hulu and Tubi. According to "Entertainment Weekly," this season's theme nights include Abba Night, DC Superhero Night and '80s Night. Returning panelists include Ken Jeong, Nicole Scherzinger, Jenny McCarthy-Wahlberg and Robin Thicke. Also, expect some star cameos.

*** Q: I read a rumor that Sheryl Lee Ralph didn't really sing at the Super Bowl — that she lip-synced instead. Doesn't she have a fantastic voice?

—U.J.A: Yes, long before she won an Emmy for her comedy chops in the sitcom "Abbott Elementary," Sheryl Lee Ralph was nominated for a Tony Award for her powerful vocals in Broadway's "Dreamgirls." After she wowed ticketholders at the Super Bowl with her rendition of "Lift Every Voice and Sing," viewers at home wondered if she lip-synced the lyrics instead of singing live. The following day, Ralph neither confirmed nor denied, telling "The Hollywood Reporter," "Does it matter? ... No.

Thank you." Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com, or write me at KFWS, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

HOLLYWOOD

by Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD — Former California governor and Hollywood superstar Arnold Schwarzenegger is starring in "Kung Fury 2," with Michael Fassbender. He's also starring in the new action-adventure Netflix series "FUBAR," with his "Terminator: Dark Fate" co-star Gabriel Luna. The 75-year-old former Mr. Olympia is still in great shape. And don't forget ... as he promised in "The Terminator" — "I'll be back!" ... and back again!

*** In 1959, a 26-year-old Carol Burnett starred in the musical adaptation of "The Princess and the Pea," called "Once Upon a Mattress."

I was 13 and hung out at a little candy store next to the Phoenix Theater where "Mattress" was playing. Carol got her coffee at the candy store before her shows, and she'd joke with me and my two friends who were always there.

I had a huge crush on her, and when "Mattress" moved to Broadway and she became a regular on "The Garry Moore Show," I commuted to the tapings. She got me a seat for every Friday show. One night, I was barred from the studio because they said I was cutting tape by laughing and clapping so that I could hear myself on TV. But what they didn't know was that I'd meet Carol after dress rehearsal at the Studio 54 coffee shop and she'd tell me where she needed laughter to put over a routine.

There I sat, frantic on the floor outside the studio, and a well-dressed, very handsome guy asked me why. I explained why, and he said, "Wait here — I'll see what I can do." He came back a few minutes later and said he'd vouched for me, and we ended up sitting in the fourth row. When Garry Moore did his audience warm-up, he excitedly introduced a celebrity in the fourth row. "Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I'd like you to meet the Yankee Clipper." Joe DiMaggio stood up and



Arnold Schwarzenegger in "Terminator: Dark Fate" (2019)

waved, and it was then that I realized he was the man who came to my rescue. After the show, we went to Carol's dressing room and then to dinner at China Song next door.

On April 26, which will be Carol's 90th birthday, NBC will celebrate her in a two-hour special, co-starring her famous friends — Julie Andrews, Lily Tomlin, Cher, Bernadette Peters, Katy Perry, Vicki Lawrence, "Annie" star Aileen Quinn and too many more to name. The special features moments from "Once Upon a Mattress," "The Garry Moore Show," "Julie and Carol at Carnegie Hall" and "Mama's Family" as well as her films "The Four Seasons," "Pete 'n' Tillie" and "Annie." Of course, it will also feature moments from her 11-year run of "The Carol Burnett Show."

If not for Carol Burnett, I might not be a photojournalist or writing this column now. (c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps

HONEY, I DON'T GET OUR KIDS SOMETIMES. THEY KEEP SAYING I'M LAME, STUBBORN AND USE "DAD HUMOR." I DON'T KNOW, MAYBE I'M JUST BE "PIG-HEADED?" ...OK, I SEE IT NOW.

by Bud Blake

WHAT'S HE GOT? MY WALLET. AM MONEY IN IT? TWO DOLLARS.

by Jeff Pickering

I CAN'T FIND THE CONTROLLER FOR THE TV. TRY LOOKING IN A "REMOTE" LOCATION.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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8					7			1
6		1		8				9
	4		1			7		

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

1. Mad Men; 2. Transfiguration; 3. Memphis, Tennessee; 4. Harry Truman; 5. Antarctica; 6. Daniel Handler; 7. Black Currants; 8. Civil Rights unrest in Little Rock, Arkansas, according to Paul McCartney; 9. Frances Ethel Gumm; 10. Dreys

February 20, 2023 Posting Date King Crossword

ACROSS

- Shade of blue
- Wanderer
- Physician, slangily
- Lessened
- Veep before Biden
- del Fuego
- Some fridges
- Egypt's Anwar
- Have a bug
- Sunrise direction
- Alamos
- Faction
- Cybercommerce
- Pungent relish
- Scratch
- Pub pint
- Passageway for Santa
- Three Sisters' sister
- Godiva
- Dict. info
- "Star Trek II" villain
- "Hail, Caesar!"
- Carvey and Delany
- "— had it!"
- Winter, for one
- Lon of horror films
- Inventor's insurance
- Oregon city
- Modern messages
- Actions
- Subway line in an Ellington song
- Mock
- "Me and Bobby —"
- Longtime Chicago mayor
- Elmer, to Bugs
- "Lassie" lad
- Porterhouse, e.g.
- High cards
- Faithful
- Boris' cartoon partner
- Final notice
- West of Hollywood
- Purse fastener
- Attack
- Think up
- Hankering
- Polished
- Sanctuaries
- In the blink of —
- Confronted
- Word of warning
- Actress
- Elisabeth
- Gender
- Bio stat

DOWN

- Prepare leftovers
- Black Sea port
- Feminine principle
- High cards
- Faithful
- Boris' cartoon partner
- Final notice
- West of Hollywood
- Stinging insects

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8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

6 2 1 8 5 4 3 2 1

2 6 8 1 7 1 7 1 7 1 7 1

9 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

1 4 1 3 8 5 6 9 7

7 4 1 3 8 5 6 9 7

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

3 4 1 2 9 8 7 6 5

Answer

Weekly SUDOKU

Solution time: 21 mins.

Answers

King Crossword

Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- TELEVISION: Which cable TV series features a character named Don Draper?
- MOVIES: What subject does Professor Minerva McGonagall teach at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry?
- HISTORY: Where was civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated?
- U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president had a sign on his desk that read, "The Buck Stops Here"?
- GEOGRAPHY: Where is the world's largest desert?
- LITERATURE: What is the real name of the author Lemony Snicket?
- FOOD & DRINK: What is the fruit that gives the liqueur creme de cassis its flavor?
- MUSIC: What inspired the Beatles' song "Blackbird"?
- CELEBRITIES: What is singer/actress Judy Garland's birth name?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: What are squirrels' nests called?

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Lone Star College gives high school students a head start toward a college degree

HOUSTON (Feb. 20, 2023) – Lone Star College offers a robust and competitive Dual Credit program that allows students to earn college-level certificates and associate degrees while still in high school.

“Dual Credit is a great opportunity to earn both high school and college credit at the same time,” said Gerald Napoles, Ph.D., LSC Vice Chancellor Student Success. “Some benefits include saving money on college tuition, earning a college certificate or degree faster and transferring credits earned to college and universities.”

Dual Credit at LSC is a cost-effective initiative where high school students pay a reduced tuition rate, saving nearly \$800, and the cost of their textbooks. The program also prepares them to transition smoothly to college life. Joselyn Lemus, a Davis High School student, credits the program for helping her to develop time management, communication and problem-solving skills. Lemus will graduate from high school in May with an associate of arts degree from LSC-Houston North Fallbrook.

“I enrolled in dual credit courses to increase my high school GPA, save money for college and graduate from a university early, if possible,” said Lemus. “The program has expanded my knowledge, positively changed my perspective on education and has given me insight into what college is like.” Lemus plans to attend Texas Tech University and earn a bachelor’s degree in architecture.

Students can earn a workforce certificate, complete their core classes or attain an associate degree while balancing school commitments. Natalia Rodriguez, a former dual credit student at Langham Creek High School and LSC-CyFair, said the program prepared her for the next step. She is studying industrial engineering at the University of Houston.

“Dual Credit was a perfect opportunity because I could take college classes now (11th grade), get ahead and have those credits count toward my degree,” said Rodriguez. “The transition from high school to LSC-CyFair was seamless, and because I was prepared, I earned a scholarship to attend the University of Houston.”

Under Dual Credit, the LSC Early College High School program prepares students to graduate high school with a



Lone Star College offers Dual Credit programs at 11 school districts in Harris and Montgomery counties. Pictured is Joselyn Lemus, who will graduate in May from both Davis High School and LSC-Houston North Fallbrook with an associate of arts degree.

diploma and an associate degree or earn at least 60 credit hours toward a baccalaureate degree. ECHS offers rigorous instruction and accelerated courses at no cost to the students. Additionally, they can access academic and support services at LSC, such as the library, campus activities and technology to ensure their success.

“As an Early College High School student, I have the opportunity to take college courses now, which saves me a lot of money and time,” said Xenia Navarro, Spring Early College Academy student who takes classes at LSC-North Harris. “Additionally, I get to experience a taste of college life to discern if it’s something I want to continue post-graduation.”

Lone Star College offers Dual Credit courses at 11 school districts within Harris and Montgomery counties. The college system serves 21,419 dual credit students this spring, a 7.6% increase from spring 2022. Learn more at LoneStar.edu/Dual-Credit.

Lone Star College awarded grant to keep America moving

Houston – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has awarded Lone Star College a Commercial Motor Vehicle Operator Safety Training Grant.

“America is facing a serious shortage of trained truck drivers,” said Lorie Latigo, LSC Senior Manager, Truck Driving Logistics. “These funds will help ensure we have the properly trained labor force to keep goods and supplies moving.”

The grant will be used to expand the number of Commercial Driver’s License holders receiving operator safety training, to assist current or former members of the United States Armed Forces and their spouses with opportunity to enter the trucking industry and to extend grant opportunities to candidates from underserved communities.

The American Trucking Associations estimates that the industry will have to recruit nearly 1 million new drivers to replace retiring drivers, drivers who leave voluntarily and account for the additional drivers needed for industry growth over the next decade.

In all, the DOT awarded \$3.1 million in grants to 19 community colleges and truck driving schools throughout the country. This is the sixth time Lone Star College has been awarded this grant.

The Lone Star College Truck Driving program teaches students the



Lone Star College was awarded a Commercial Motor Vehicle Operator Safety Training Grant by The U.S. Department of Transportation to expand the number of Commercial Driver’s License holders.

skills needed to become a truck driver, including pre-trip inspection, basic control skills, backing and city, street and highway driving.

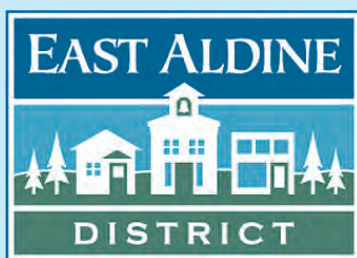
“This program meets the Federal Motor Carrier Entry-Level Driver Training requirements,” said Latigo.

The Lone Star College Transportation & Global Logistics Technology Center is a brand-new, 16,000 square foot state-of-the-art training facility where students learn the skills necessary to become a truck driver. The facility houses 6 classrooms, a large driving track, 6 backing pads and a realistic truck driving simulator.

Visit LoneStar.edu/Truck-Driving to learn more on how you can keep America moving.

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 com-

munity 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, ranked 35th in Texas in the Forbes ‘America’s Best Employers By State’ list and recognized by Fortune Magazine and Great Place To Work® as one of this year’s Best Workplaces in Texas™. LSC consists of eight colleges, seven centers, eight Workforce Centers of Excellence and Lone Star Corporate College. To learn more, visit LoneStar.edu.



East Aldine District COMMUNITY NEWS

At Crossroads, District is in Right Place and Time for Business

First of series on business development in our District

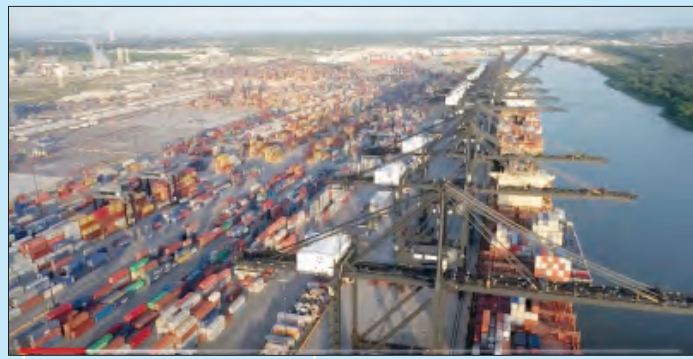
EAST ALDINE TOWN CENTER

For entrepreneurs and other business owners looking to set up shop in the Houston area, East Aldine is a prime spot due to its location and proximity to some of the city’s top destinations, transportation hubs, services, and amenities.

East Aldine is ideally situated within a 15-minute southward drive of downtown Houston. It’s 1.75 miles from the Hardy Toll Road, 1.89 miles from Interstate 69/U.S. 59, two miles from Beltway 8 and 6.5 miles from Bush Intercontinental Airport.

PORT OF HOUSTON

It’s 18 miles away from the Port of Houston, a 50-mile long complex that is one of the world’s largest ports. More than 200 million short tons of



international cargo were handled in 2018 at the port, which is in the midst of a major expansion project

East Aldine is also in a Foreign Trade Zone because of its access to the port, and part of

the district is classified as an “opportunity zone” by the state of Texas. The program offers federal capital gains tax abatements to those who invest in eligible capital.

Parts of East Aldine are considered a “free trade” zone under the state Constitution, a status that provides direct or deferred tax benefits to businesses.

BUSH INTERCONTINENTAL AIRPORT

Bush Intercontinental Airport, through which 45.3 million passengers traveled in 2019, was recently recognized with the highest ranking among U.S. airports in the World’s Top 100 Airports category and placed as



second-best airport in North America. The airport is also an official port of entry for import/export goods.

Many import/export goods flowing through Houston are transported by freight trains as part of “their” journey; the Union Pacific

Settegast Yard, is a short 10 miles away.

Also, businesses — whether industrial, wholesale, retail, or in another category — can find space in East Aldine to set up operations. The area includes some 2.3 million square feet of industrial space, around 1.2 million square feet of office space, and approximately 477,000 square feet of retail space.

The district’s new industrial development was built with desirable features for businesses such as larger space requirements, higher clear heights, cross dock loading configurations and wide interior bays. The development is close to George Bush Intercontinental Airport and major highways.

In the second quarter of 2022, East Aldine saw an influx of new business leases from top companies across industries. The top three new business leases in East Aldine in the second quarter were:

A 194,439-square-foot Walmart distribution center

A 50,730-square-foot space by Logistics and supply chain management company DB Schenker.

A 26,847 square foot space by hotel operations, development, and project oversight company Hospitality Solutions.

Within the boundaries of the East Aldine Management District, the civic and consumer atmosphere, along with government services, have recently improved noticeably — especially as the local population grows.

In the last decade, the number of residents climbed by more than 10,000 to 159,529 people in 2021. It’s expected to reach some 168,508 in 2026.

The East Aldine District participated in \$43 million worth of water and sewer infrastructure improvements in coordination with Harris County and the Texas Water Development Board, while an additional \$35 million went to providing safe and reliable drinking water and sewer service to both homes and businesses in the area.

The newly expanded East Aldine Town Center meets some important needs as home to the Lone Star College’s East Aldine campus and branches of the non-profit HOPE Clinic and non-profit BakerRipley Community Center.

New restaurants and shops, some within two blocks of the Town Center, are moving in to meet consumer demands and higher traffic patterns.

The District landscapes medians, funds branded street signs and public art in major intersections, provides nuisance abatement and supplements Harris County Sheriff’s Office patrols with round-the-clock, tailored overtime shifts for deputies.

The District conducts business seminars at the Town Center for local proprietors and others considering a business move into this dynamic area.

For more information, contact Director of Economic Development Lance Dean.

— By Deborah Lynn Blumberg