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Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 47 Years VOL. 47, NO. 11 TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2023 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com



# NEWS

# Jazz music fills the air in East Aldine

Families enjoy all-day performances and activities at Town Center

#### APR. 8, SATURDAY **East Aldine and** BakerRipley host an **EGGSTRAVAGANZA**

East Aldine District and BakerRipley host an Eggstravaganza at the East Aldine Town Center, 3000 Aldine Mail Route!

Join us for an egg hunt, food trucks, games, arts & crafts, family photo station, door prizes and more. This is a fun event for the whole familly!

Call 346-570-4463 to register. SEE PAGE 8.

#### APR. 27, THURSDAY **East Aldine Small Business Seminar**

East Aldine District Free Luncheon Seminar series. Subject of this class is Commercial Leasing, with Speaker Joaquin Orozco.

12noon to 1pm, Thursday April 27. Reservation required, aldinedistrict.org/RSVP, or 512-658-4985.

Also register for future classes on June 22 and August 24.

#### **Lone Star College** Summer & Fall Registration

Reach your highest potential! Your future awaits. Lone Star College Fall Registration Opens April 6. Register now for Summer and Fall classes. LoneStar.edu/learnmore. See more info on Page 8.

#### BakerRipley April **Events Calendar**

April 5th – Food Fair, 7:30am - 11am April 8th – Eggstravaganza, 10am - 1pm

April 10th – World Autism . Awareness Parent Talk, 5pm -

April 20th - Senior Games, 11:30am – 1pm April 26th – Farmer's Market, 10am - 1pm

Heads up for May. May 13th – Asian American & Pacific Islander Cultural Celebration, 10am - 1pm

#### APR. 29, SATURDAY **EAMD Unlimited** PossABILITIES Day at **Town Center**

A Day of Fun and Adventure at East Aldine Town Center. Where your abilities and disabilities become possibilities!

9am to 2pm at Town Center, Fun Run, Basketball, Origami, Miss AMazing Pageant, Yoga, Face Painting, Music, Balloon Artists, Petting Zoo, Fire Truck and so much more. Everyone welcome. Bring a blanket, a chair, and come have fun. Oh, it's FREE!

Saturday the air was filled with music on the lawn in front of the amphitheater at Town Center, thanks to the Diaz Music Institute.

As part of their events series, the East Aldine District and Diaz Music Institute presented a day of jazz bands performing for an appreciative audience of families, friends, and the public.

The family-friendly event went from 2pm until late in the evening, and included food, face painting, train rides, vendor booths, and more.



The Mead Middle School Band was just one of 11 school bands, plus 4 solo entertainers, that participated in the all-day Jazz Fest at East Aldine Town Center. (Photo by Julieta Paita for the Northeast News) More on Page 2.

Performing their special jazz numbers were bands from Hambrick Middle School, Mead Middle School, Wheatley High School, Humble High School, Aldine ISD Collective, Waltrip High School 2, Atascocita High School, Raul Yzaguirre High School, MacArthur High School, Waltrip High School 1, and the Caliente Band.

Solo performances by guest artists included Brittney Bloom, Robert White, Woody Witt, Horace Alexander Young, and DJ Rev.





# Aldine ISD to hold Community Meetings

Talk with District leaders about the latest campus news

#### Aldine ISD to Host Aldine ISD Community Meetings

Aldine ISD will host five community meetings this spring to inform our families about the latest district news. Hear campus updates, and learn about our numerous programs, choices, and opportunities for Aldine ISD students. Topics include safety and security, accomplishments, summer learning experiences, college and career opportunities, and more. All faculty, staff, parents, students, and community members are invited to attend.

Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney, Aldine ISD Trustees, and district leaders will be present to answer your questions.

Community meetings will be held from 6-7:30 p.m. on the dates and locations listed below:

Tuesday, April 4, at Aldine High School

Thursday, April 20, at Eisenhower High School Thursday, April 27, at Davis High School

Thursday, May 4, at MacArthur High School Thursday, May 11, at Nimitz High School

The event will be streamed live on AISD's Facebook page for those who cannot attend.

### celebrará reuniones comunitarias

Aldine ISD celebrará cinco reuniones comunitarias esta primavera para informar a nuestras familias sobre las últimas noticias del distrito. Escuche las novedades de las escuelas v conozca nuestros numerosos programas, opciones y oportunidades para los estudiantes de Aldine ISD. Los temas incluyen seguridad y protección, logros, experiencias de aprendizaje de verano, oportunidades universitarias y profesionales y más. Todos los profesores, personal, padres, estudiantes y miembros de la comunidad están invitados a

asistir. La Superintendente LaTonya M. Goffney, los síndicos de Aldine ISD v los líderes del distrito estarán presentes para responder sus preguntas.

Las reuniones comunitarias se llevarán a cabo de 6 a 7:30 p.m. en las fechas y lugares que se enumeran a continuación:

Martes, 4 de abril, en Aldine High School

Jueves, 20 de abril, en Eisenhower High School

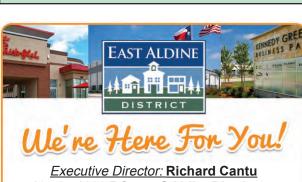
Jueves, 27 de abril, en Davis High School

Jueves, 4 de mayo, en Mac-Arthur High School Jueves, 11 de mayo, en Nimitz High School

El evento se transmitirá en vivo en la página de Facebook de AISD para aquellos que no puedan asistir.



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



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#### **Fatal Crash on** Golf Cart at 14070 JFK Blvd.

Houston police are investigating a fatal crash at 14070 John F. Kennedy Boulevard about 11 a.m. on Saturday (March 25).

The identity of the deceased female, 54, is pending verification by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences.

**HPD Vehicular Crimes** Division Sergeant G. Lopez and Officer M. Mathews reported:

The woman was driving a golf cart eastbound through the parking lot at the above address and struck two parked tractor-trailer trucks. Houston Fire Department paramedics responded to the scene and pronounced the woman deceased. It is believed she suffered a medical episode just prior to the crash.

The investigation is continuing.



## **COMMUNITY** WATCH

## Carjacking, robbery at north Houston vape shop



HOUSTON - A cariacking and robbery at a north Houston vape shop Thursday has led to the discovery of other crimes committed by the suspects, according to the Harris County Sheriff's Office.

Deputies said a group of suspects between the ages of 15 and 20 robbed an employee's vehicle at Vape City, located at 10255 North Freeway, at around 12:20 a.m.

When units arrived at the scene, they saw two vehicles speeding away. Deputies said they immediately started chasing the two vehicles and caught up with a driver who was in a white Jeep at North Shepherd and West 11th Street. Authorities found and recovered the second vehicle — a Dodge Charger that belonged to a vape shop employee — a short time later.HCSO said they also found a black bag on top of the white Jeep that had about \$200 in it that was also stolen. Deputies said the Jeep was stolen and tied to another carjacking and robbery.

Employees at the vape shop told a reporter that the employee whose vehicle was stolen is doing OK. Deputies said no one was hurt. Of the four to five suspects involved, investigators said only one of them is in custody. A search is underway for the others.

# Jazz Fest Performers,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1





# Suspect shot, killed by FBI agents during hostage situation in Greenspoint

HOUSTON - A hostage rescue that left a suspect fatally shot Thursday in Houston began days ago when three migrants were kidnapped from a vehicle in a neighboring county, according to a prosecutor.

The three migrants had been traveling in a vehicle on Interstate 10 in the southern part of Waller County on March 18 when they were stopped by kidnappers and forced into another vehicle, said Sean Whittmore, a prosecutor with the Waller County Dis-

trict Attorney's Office. It is believed the migrants' driver called 911 and informed the Waller County Sheriff's Office about the kidnapping, Whittmore said. The sheriff's office later worked with the FBI, whose agents were involved in a shooting early Thursday morning in north Houston in which two people were rescued.

The kidnappers demand-



at least one of the migrants and were paid, but then they asked for more, according to a person familiar with the matter. The person said that the kidnappers sent the family videos, which they shared with law enforcement, showing that the kidnappers were armed and the hostages were alive, including one of them beating one of the hostages, an older man.

Gunfire broke out be-

ed money from the family of tween FBI agents and the hostage-takers before davbreak Thursday, leading to one of the kidnappers being killed and another being arrested, said the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the case publicly.

Agents with the FBI's hostage rescue team were rescuing the migrants when the shots broke out, said James Smith, special agent in charge of the FBI's Houston office, during a brief Thursday news conference where he took no questions.

Smith said one suspect was fatally shot while another suspect was taken into custody by the Harris County Sheriff's Office. Senior Deputy Thomas Gilliland, a spokesman for the sheriff's office, said he could not provide any information on the suspect as that person was arrested by the FBI.

Smith said agents rescued two people who were being held at a motel.

After the news conference. Whittmore told The Associated Press it was still his understanding that three people had been kidnapped. He referred questions on the discrepancy to the FBI. Smith did not address the discrepancy during his news conference.

Smith said no agents were injured and an FBI review team will investigate the shooting.

"In the interest of protect-

ing the integrity of the ongoing investigation, we cannot provide any more details at this time," Smith said.

The FBI's Houston office declined to comment on how they found the migrants, what led up to the shooting or how many agents were involved.

The FBI said that following the shooting, there was no longer a threat to public

The kidnapped migrants had crossed into the U.S. illegally from Mexico, according to the person familiar with the case.

Whittmore declined to comment on the migrants' immigration status, nationalities or whether they were being illegally transported at the time of their kidnapping.In an email, Tim Oberle, an Immigration and Customs Enforcement spokesman, declined to discuss the people's immigration status, referring all questions to the FBI.

# **AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS**

#### Resume 101

Learn to create a resume for jobs, college applications, scholarships. and more! This program is for teens ages 15+.

#### Bilingual Story **Time**

Join us in the library for story time in English and Spanish now on Tuesdays 11:00am!

#### Kid's Club

It's that time again: Lego Night! Kids 5 and up come and join us Wednesday, Mar. 29, 4:30pm!

#### **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.

#### Mindfulnes for **Teens**

Teens ages 12 to 18 can learn stress relief techniques through mindfulness with Creative Minds Center. Saturday, Apr. 1, 2-3pm.

Como Mantener la <u>Calma en Momentos</u> de Crisis

- En este taller abordaremos las razones biologicas y fisiologicas relacionadas con el estres y la ansiedad y como salir de estos estados.

- Ven y aprende herramientas para controlar la ansiedad y el estres en cuestion de minutos.

- Conoce tecnicas de respiracion y meditación.

Saturday, Apr. 1, 3-4pm, con Creative Monds Center, solo en español

#### Women's History **Month Movie**

Join us for a celebration of Women's History Month with movies based on real women who have made differences and contributions to American History! Snacks provided. Saturday, Apr. 1, 2pm.

#### **Computer Classes**

We have computer classes in Spanish and in English, online and in-person. If you want to participate, call us to register: 832-927-5410.

Wednesdays: Cloud **Computing - Office 365** & Excel (free version), (English, Online), 5-7pm

Thursdays: Office 365 - PowerPoint I (Spanish, in person), 5-7pm

#### **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.

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



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### SCHOOL NEWS PAGE

# Message From the Superintendent, March 30, 2022

Dear Aldine Communi-

Women's History MonthMarch is ending, but we are closing out Women's History Month with an empowering celebration for our graduating high school young ladies. I am super excited that Aldine is hosting its inaugural GIRLS Empowerment Summit tomorrow! Aldine is committed to empowering girls to become future-ready leaders. From opportunities in and out of the classroom, programs like our Young Women's Leadership Academy, and our GIRLS Empowerment Summit, we are vested in advancing our young women to lead and fulfill their

limitless potential. Latest All the Things PodcastWith that thought in mind, I urge everyone to listen to the latest The All the Things podcast. Chief of Staff Sheleah Reed talks with Dr. Anne McClellan, an executive coach, and dynamic systems architect. In this episode, she shares valuable insights on the benefits of writing down your own ideas and practicing the voice you want to be heard. Dr. McClellan also discusses how to maximize what you're good at. She believes that everyone has unique strengths and talents that can be leveraged to achieve success. Tune in!

#AldineBoardWalksOne of the things I enjoy most is meeting and speaking with students and staff in our schools. I started my week on Monday with our Board Trustees and other district leaders for #Aldine-BoardWalk at Hall Success Academy. Hall students are our non-traditional students. Non-traditional means learning and doing things differently, primarily because they have different needs. Hall Success Academy is an example of all the great programs and school choices Aldine ISD has for our students. All means all in Aldine. And for the rose you made for me. I love it! We also visited



Jones Elementary. It never gets old seeing the excitement of our students and the love from our teachers. I loved seeing our amazing teachers facilitate engaging lessons for our students. To everyone working with our students, thank you for staying #AldineConnected!

Community MeetingsStaying connected with our community members is crucial to the work we do. This is why I am excited that we are once again hosting our community meetings this spring. I will give summarized updates on school district news while allowing time for open questions from parents/guardians and community members. You'll also get to speak one-on-one about important issues involving our schools with district leaders and me. The first of these community meetings, which all run from 6-7:30 p.m., will be on April 4 at Aldine HS. Click here for all the dates and locations. All Aldine community members are invited to attend these informative Community Meetings, whether they have children in Aldine schools or not. Join us! Hear our journey and about Aldine's future.

Long-Range Planning Committee — Facilities AssessmentWe are always moving forward in Aldine, including planning for the future. The district's longrange planning committee held its second meeting last week. We are reviewing Aldine's facilities assessment. We are thinking about the

future. Do we really want to consider renovating and remodeling, or do we want to consider building new? Do we consolidate? What are the communities' needs? And how do we best meet those needs while ensuring our students have access to high-quality schools and learning experiences? We'll present the committee's suggestions to the Board of Trustees later this spring. Click here to view our longrange planning committee webpage.

CongratulationsSpring is bustling with activity! And our students are demonstrating their skills in so many diverse areas. Congratulations to Victory Early College students that competed in the FBLA State Leadership Conference in Galveston. Their teammate David Allen won 5th Place! Aldine hosted the FIRST in Texas FTC Championship Competition, where we had CTE students from Mac-Arthur and Carver High Schools compete this year! What a fantastic experience for you! We have had over 560 CTE students compete at the state level. As state competitions conclude and we roll into nationals, Aldine currently has 64 students who have advanced to Nationals. Congratulations to Carver High School's theater troupe for advancing to the UIL Texas Area OAP contest! Their schoolmate Daniel Robinson received a National Silver Medal from Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for his photograph. The Harris County Department of Education will honor Daniel and all the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards winners from the regional contest next month. Our students earned a total of 50 Regional Scholastic Art awards! And we recently discovered two Aldine students won in writing. Congratulations to Eleazar Lucio from Blanson CTE High School and Tahamid Bhuiyan from Eisenhower High School! They both earned Silver Keys for their science fiction and fan-



tasy works! We have amazing talent among our students, and I laud their incredible teachers and sponsors!

And what a night for the MacArthur High School boys' soccer! Last night the team beat Cypress Springs 4-0 to advance to the regional quarterfinals for the third consecutive year! ¡Viva el fútbol!

Thank you for tagging me on social media or reaching out to our Communications Office to make us aware of our students' incredible achievements. G-OO-D J-O-B! Good Job! Good Job!

Before I close, don't forget we are hosting our Prek Enrollment Expo on Saturday, April 1. Join us to learn about all the choices and opportunities we offer our youngest learners, ages 3, 4, and 5. Meet school staff and preregister your students for the 2023-2024 school

#### UPCOMING & ON-GOING EVENTS FOR THE COMMUNITY

March 30: GIRLS Empowerment Summit (Click here)

April 1: PreK Expo Enrollment (Click here)

April 15: Soñadores Summit from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Aldine High School — For students born in and outside the U.S. (Click here for details)

Now-April 21: Free GED and ESL classes for AISD parents with a student enrolled in the bilingual or ESL program in AISD. Click here for details and to register.

Now-Apr. 22: AISD's Health Services Department is holding monthly CPR classes. (Click here)

April 29: AISD's 2nd Annual Festival de Primavera (an all-Spanish event), from 9 a.m. to noon, at the M.O. Campbell Educational Center

Now-June 1: AISD is applying to receive its share of ARP ESSER III (ESSER III) funding as determined by the Texas Education Agency. Aldine ISD seeks feedback from all district and community stakeholders to help determine how the district should best utilize these resources. Click here to take the survey.

Ongoing: Family and Community University's 2022-2023 — Click here to register.

Ongoing: iEducate is hiring college students, especially Aldine ISD grads, as tutors to work with Aldine ISD students. iEducate accepts applications on a rolling basis, and interested students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

# RECENT NEWS & ALDINE ISD PODCAST Join Us at the

PreK Enrollment Expo on April 1

Aldine ISD to Host Community Meetings Aldine ISD to Host its Inaugural Soñadores Summit for All High School DREAMERs

District Student Ambassadors Visit the Texas State Capitol

District Student Named a 2023 Scholastic Art and Writing National Winner; 2 Students Earn Silver Keys in Regional Contest Preregister Your Eligible Head Start, Prekindergarten, and Kindergarten Students for 2023-2024 All The Things: The Aldine ISD Podcast – Episode 6, Season 4

Diesel's Readers Program: Free Houston Dynamo Tickets

<u>Eisenhower College</u> <u>Prep</u> to Open in Fall 2023

View the 2023-2024 AISD School Year Calendars

#### MONTHLY OBSERVA-TIONS

March 27: Report cards are to be available to students and families on HAC

Mar. 29: ENVI2ION School Day (ADSY)

# REMINDERS FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Outside food and beverages are prohibited on all secondary school campuses (middle, ninth-grade, and high school campuses) premises. Click here for details.

The state requires high school seniors to apply for financial aid to graduate. — FAFSA Application link or TASFA Application links

The state requires all entering college students to take the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Assessment. (details).

Aldine ISD's top priorities are students' safety and academic success. The district posts information related to protocols along with any updates at www.aldineisd.org/healthalerts.

FOLLOW US!

Stay connected by visiting AldineISD.org. Check out our District News and Aldine ISD Podcast pages to stay updated on all the great things happening in our district. You can also connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

# Kelvin Chatham, The Next Football Coach and Campus Coordinator For Davis HS

During Tuesday's board meeting, Aldine officially announced Kelvin Chatham as the next football head coach and campus coordinator for Davis High School, returning to Aldine ISD after spending two seasons as HISD Booker T. Washington. He replaces Scott Joseph, who resigned after four seasons in late February with a record of 12-24.

He began his coaching career back at Citrus College, where he coached receivers, before coming to his alma mater Aldine Nimitz to coach receivers. During his time with the Golden Eagles, Chatham had a record of 12-8, highlighted by the 9-1 record this past season, winning district for the first time since 2006 and qualifying for the playoffs.

Growing up in Aldine, Chatham is excited to coach what he calls home. "This is really a great opportunity," he said. "Aldine is my community. I grew up in Greenspoint, and it gives me chills to go back into the community that poured so much into me. I feel like I understand where these kids come from and I want to give



back, because this place gave so much to me."

Chatman grew up in Aldine ISD and graduated from Nimitz High School before his college playing career at Citrus College in Glendora, California, and at Illinois State. After finishing up at Illinois State, Chatham had a brief stint in some NFL camps and spent time in the Canadian Football League.

adian Football League.
"I love the kids and

community at Booker T.," Chatham said in a statement addressing his departure. "The work they put in was unbelievable. It was a great time, and words can't explain the love I have for my staff and those kids. I am forever grateful for Houston ISD and the administration to give me my first shot to be a head coach, I wouldn't be where I am without them taking a chance on me."

# Ralph O. Norman Jr., Retired AISD Administrator Passes Away

Long-time district leader Ralph Odell Norman, Jr. passed away peacefully in his home with his family at his side on March 24.

Mr. Norman grew up in Houston. He attended Aldine schools and graduated from Aldine High School. He received his bachelor's and master's from Sam Houston State University, where he was a Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity member. His dedication to Aldine ISD led him to teach at Carver High School. During his career, he served as a counselor at Eisenhower High School, assistant principal at Carver HS, founding principal of the Aldine Contemporary Education Center, and principal at Aldine High School before moving into a district leadership position, serving in the Finance Department. Everyone who worked with him called him Ralph. To him, everyone was a friend. Ralph was always ready with a

was always ready with a joke, a prank, or a tall tale.
Ralph was a champion of the underdog — always there to support anyone in need, especially kids, and he went out of his way to make everyone feel important. He had a special place in his heart for disadvantaged kids.

Sar

Ben

Mar

Mar

Bill

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advantaged kids.

During his long battle with pancreatic cancer and his brief stay in home hos-



District leader Ralph Odell Norman, Jr.

pice, he was attended by his high school sweetheart and wife of 52 years, Bonnie Gale Norman. Ralph is survived by his children, Jennifer Erb and her husband Chad; Matthew Norman and his wife Kate; J.P. Norman and his wife Sarah; grandchildren, Benjamin and Anna Erb, Harper, Wyatt, and Hawk Norman; and Luke and Mark Norman; his mother, Maxie Norman; brothers, Bill and Edward Norman; brother-in-law, Mike Fleming; along with numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Ralph's life was full of laughter, silly stories, and joy. He was a role model for

his children and everyone who knew him. Ralph loved all and was loved by all in return.

Visitation and Funeral Information

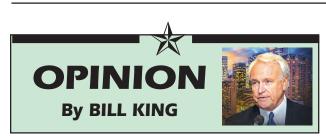
Visitation: 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, March 28, at Kingwood Funeral Home, 22800 HWY 59 N., Kingwood, Texas

Memorial: Wednesday, March 29, at 11 a.m., at First Presbyterian Church, 5520 Kingwood Dr., Kingwood, TX

Burial Services: The burial will be held on March 29 — after the memorial service — in Boontown Cemetery in Groveton, Texas.



#### OPINION PAGE \*



# Nearing Peak World Population

regularly talk to well-informed people who do not realize that world population growth is rapidly slowing and that global population will peak sometime between now and the end of the century. Currently, the UN estimates the most likely case is that the world's population will top out around 10 billion in 2080 and then begin a long, slow decline. Other modelers are projecting the peak will be reached in 2060 at 9 billion and then decline more rapidly. Some scenarios predict there will be fewer people on the planet at the end of century

The UN's predictions for the U.S. are similar, with our population topping out at around 380 million near the end of the century. This is consistent with the Congressional Budget Office projections, which assume the U.S. annual population growth rate over the next 20 years will decline from .5% to .2%. Without immigration, the U.S. population would begin to decline around 2035.

Many of us grew up reading the Ehrlichs' Population Bomb, which predicted a worldwide apocalypse was just around the corner. The book, written in 1968, categorically predicted that "The battle to feed all of humanity is over. In the 1970s hundreds of millions of people will starve to death..." Of course, that did not happen and since around 2000, researchers have found there have been more obese people in the world than those who are undernour-

In part, it did not happen because of an explosion of agricultural technology in the 1950s and 1960s known as the Green Revolution. But the Ehrlichs' prediction also never came to pass because they missed that by the time they were writing their book, women had already begun having fewer

The critical metric for population growth is the average number of children women are having at any particular time, known as the "fertility rate." Other factors, such as childhood survival and longevity, also affect population growth but the fertility rate is the big driver. It takes a fertility rate of 2.1 children per woman to maintain a stable population, known as the "replacement rate." Anything above that and the population will grow and below that it falls.

When the Ehrlichs wrote their book the fertility rate was stunningly high at 5. That astronomical rate would go on to cause the world population to double just 40 years later. But what was not apparent to the Erhlichs at the time was that the fertility rate had peaked about five years earlier at 5.3. That began a steady slide downward to 2.3 today, just barely above the replacement rate.

However, a decline in fertility rate does not show up at once. It takes a while for that lower rate to work through the generational cycle, something referred as "population momentum." That is why vou still see a hefty 25% increase in the world's population in the projections before it tops out in

Many countries around the world are already beginning to feel the effects of slowing population growth. Japan and Russia both face looming drastic population declines. China announced this year that for the first time its population had declined. Some countries have begun adopting policies to encourage young couples to have more children.

Of course, there is no question that the decline in population growth is very welcome news. Indeed, without the downturn we would be facing the apocalypse that the Erhlichs foresaw as we put ever increasing demands on the earth's finite resources. And polling in the U.S. generally finds that most people would like to see a lower population.

But for the last three centuries our civilization has been based on steady population growth and astronomical population growth since the midtwentieth century. Programs like Social Security and Medicare will not work in a world where the population is flat or declining, at least, not without some substantial modification.

Because lower fertility rates are correlated with educational attainment, the most uneducated, poorest parts of the world will be growing the fastest. The only places in the world currently with a fertility rate well above the replacement rate are sub-Saharan Africa and central Asia. This dichotomy will result in greater wealth disparity and conflicts.

The new population paradigm will cause many headaches which our children and grandchildren will have to wrestle. Some are obvious and some probably unforeseeable. It would be great if the world could start thinking through those issues now and begin to prepare. However, human behavior over the centuries has shown that kind of long-term planning is not one of our strong suits.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Opinions expressed here are not necessarily that of this newspaper or its staff. YOUR OPINION is welcome. Send a letter for possible publication to Grafikpress Newspapers, 5906 Star Lane, Houston TX 77057 or an email to GRAFIKSTAR@aol.com. Please limit your words to about 200. Letters will be subject to editing. Thank you.



# STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS **By Gary Borders**

# Texas Leads Nation in Jobs Added

The Lone Star State continues to lead the nation in jobs added with 58,200 new positions in February, bringing the state to nearly 14 million total nonfarm jobs, according to the Texas Workforce Commission. February also marked two full years of uninterrupted job growth in the state.

"The past 24 months of uninterrupted job growth show the strength of the Texas economy and ongoing economic opportunities for Texans," said TWC Chairman Bryan Daniel.

The state's jobless rate in February was 4.5%, which is higher than the national rate of 3.9%, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The highest jobless rate in a Texas metropolitan statistical area is 6.8% in McAllen-Edinburgh-Mission. The lowest rate in an MSA is 3.0% in Midland.

#### **RAINY DAY FUND HITS CAP** FOR FIRST TIME

The state's piggy bank is

Comptroller Glenn Hegar predicts the state's socalled Rainy Day Fund, officially the Economic Stabilization Fund, will reach its statutory limit by 2025, which is 10% of what is deposited in the General Revenue Fund. Rising revenues fueled by spikes in energy prices and inflation have filled the state's coffers, Hegar said.

"The revenue increases that we have seen truly have been historical and unprecedented. We have never seen anything like this in the past, and I don't think we'll see anything like this in the fu-

ture," he said. The state experienced record growth in tax collections in 2022 of 25.6% from the previous year, filling the state's coffers with a surplus of \$32.7 billion.

"I am glad to see that lawmakers are giving careful thought to how this tremendous asset can be best put to work for Texans," Hegar add-

#### **SENATE PASSES BILL TO LIMIT GOVERNOR'S POWERS**

The Texas Senate unanimously passed a bill to rein in the governor's authority during emergencies or disasters, the Austin American-Statesman reported. A



matching proposal in the House is awaiting a committee hearing. The bill, sponsored by state Sen. Brian Birdwell, R-Granbury, would require the governor to call the Legislature into special session if the executive office wants to extend a disaster or emergency declaration past 30 days. Only the Legislature would be able to put restrictions on businesses such as those imposed during the initial weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We must no longer allow a 19-month legislative interim to be leveraged against the Legislature, especially during times of emergency disasters that affect a significant number of Texans," Birdwell said.

Under current law, disaster declarations last 30 days but can be renewed by the governor. For example, Gov Greg Abbott has extended a disaster declaration relating to illegal border crossings each month since May 2021, according to the Statesman.

Abbott expressed support in his State of the State address in January for involving the Legislature in disaster declarations that deal with public health crises.

#### **SENATE BACKS BOOST FOR RETIRED TEACHERS**

The Texas Senate also unanimously approved a package that allocates \$4.7 billion from the budget surplus to increase monthly payments for retired teachers and gives a one-time bump to retirees over the Statesman reported. The bill is now headed to the House for consideration.

The measure calls for a 2% raise for teachers who retired between Sept. 1, 2013, and Jan. 1, 2022, and a 4% raise for those who retired before Sept. 1, 2013. Senate Bill 10 also provides a one-time sti-

#### pend of \$7,500 for retirees older than 75. The bill affects nearly a half-million retired teachers. "This is a significant finan-

cial commitment from the state," state Sen. Joan Huffman, R-Houston, said. "Many TRS retirees have been struggling for so long. We needed to do this."

Retired teachers on average make \$2,100 a month through the Teachers Retirement System.

#### **BOATERS, ANGLERS URGED** TO AVOID COASTAL **ROOKERIES**

Anglers and boaters along the Texas coast are urged to watch out for nesting birds during this peak breeding and nesting season, according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Brown pelicans, roseate spoonbills, black skimmers and reddish egrets are among the birds nesting in dense colonies, called rookeries. TPWD encourages folks to watch out for these nesting birds so they are not disturbed during a sensitive time.

"With too many disturances an entire colony of thousands of birds may abandon an island and give up on breeding for the year, which can potentially lead to drastic population declines," said Trey Barron, a diversity biologist with TPWD. "When approached too closely by boaters or people wading nearby, birds are frightened off their nests, leaving eggs and chicks exposed to the summer sun, which can cause them to overheat. The abandoned nests also allow opportunistic predators like gulls and grackles to quickly swoop in and feed on them."

Boaters and anglers are also encouraged to properly dispose of fishing line, tackle and other waste to ensure it does not harm birds, turtles or other marine life.

"The habitats that waterbirds use are the same habitats in which we — including myself — enjoy fishing, hunting and photographing wildlife," Barron said. "We just have to remember to give them their space, especially during the nesting season, and pick up after ourselves. If you're out on the water, look for the yellow signs that identify rookery islands and keep your distance. We can all enjoy the same places, as long as we do it responsibly."

#### **HOUSE PASSES DIAPER,** PERIOD PRODUCTS BILL

The Texas House last week overwhelmingly passed a bill repealing the state sales tax on diapers, period products, baby wipes and similar items. The measure now heads to the Senate.

Its sponsor, state Rep. Donna Howard, D-Austin, has tried for several sessions to get the measure passed.

"This bill provides an opportunity to help Texas families at every stage of life," Howard said Tuesday, as reported by The Dallas Morning News. The measure also exempts adult diapers.



### "Dog Friends"

My husband, Peter, is trying to impress a local collie.

Peter knows better than this. He had a collie for many years. Collies are not easily impressed. They have their own priorities and their own agenda and if it happens to coincide with yours, you can pretend they did something on your behalf-but you'd be lying to yourself.

But Peter still loves collies. The current object of Peter's affection is named Lassero and lives on a road Peter takes every day on his hike.

Peter met the collie one day when the dog was sticking his head through the curtains. Peter learned his name from the collie's owner, and went on to assume he and the collie would be fast friends. Every day, as Peter walked by, he called out, "Lassero!" and the collie ignored him. So Peter decided he would start bringing treats.

Peter brought a cookie and put it on the windowsill. The collie did not come. On the way home, Peter checked the windowsill. The cookie was gone. Peter did this for several days running.

"Maybe Lassero's owner is finding the cookies," I said. "Maybe he is throwing them away!" Peter was not convinced.

Then one day, Lassero was at the window. Peter gave him a cookie. Lassero ignored it. Peter put it down on the sill. Lassero poked it with his nose. He eventually ate it, but did not seem excited.

"I don't think Lassero likes cookies," Peter concluded. The next day, he went out and bought corn chips.

"If he didn't like cookies, he's not going to like corn chips!" I told Peter. "He's waiting for organic sun-dried beef chips." Peter looked as if he was considering this.

"I could take chicken," he

"You can't take chicken on your hike!" I figured there wasn't much Peter wouldn't do to capture this dog's affection.

Then Peter had an idea. "Popcorn! Dogs love popcorn even more than beef!"

Peter packaged up some popcorn and put it in his backpack. "Lassero!" he called. The dog did not answer. Peter left popcorn on the windowsill. On his way down, he checked. The popcorn was still there, but one piece had been moved. It was now in tiny, wet pieces. Apparently, Lassero did not like popcorn either.

Some dogs will do anything for affection. Some dogs will give you affection once they figure you've earned it. And some dogs are always going to play hard to get. I had a feeling that Lassero might not be in the market for more friends, but I didn't want to break this to

And even though it sounds funny, it's still a little sad. I've been ignored and ghosted by folks I thought were my friends. I realized—a little too late—they were not actually my friends. They already had friends, and I wasn't one of them. It doesn't matter if it's a dog or a person. The realization still hurts.

"You have lots of dog friends," I reminded Peter.

And he does. There is Reacher, who he calls the "Reacher Creature," a giant dog who jumps up in delight when he sees Peter. There is Bucky, who has very short legs and lies down on the sidewalk when Peter talks too long with Bucky's owner. There are several tiny dogs who walk on his route every day and bark in excitement every time Peter goes by. And somewhere, just behind the curtains of his home, is Lassero, ignoring Peter every day.

"Lassero doesn't know what he is missing," I told Peter. And he doesn't.

Till next time,

Carrie

Check out CarrieClasson-Author on Facebook or visit CarrieClasson.com.

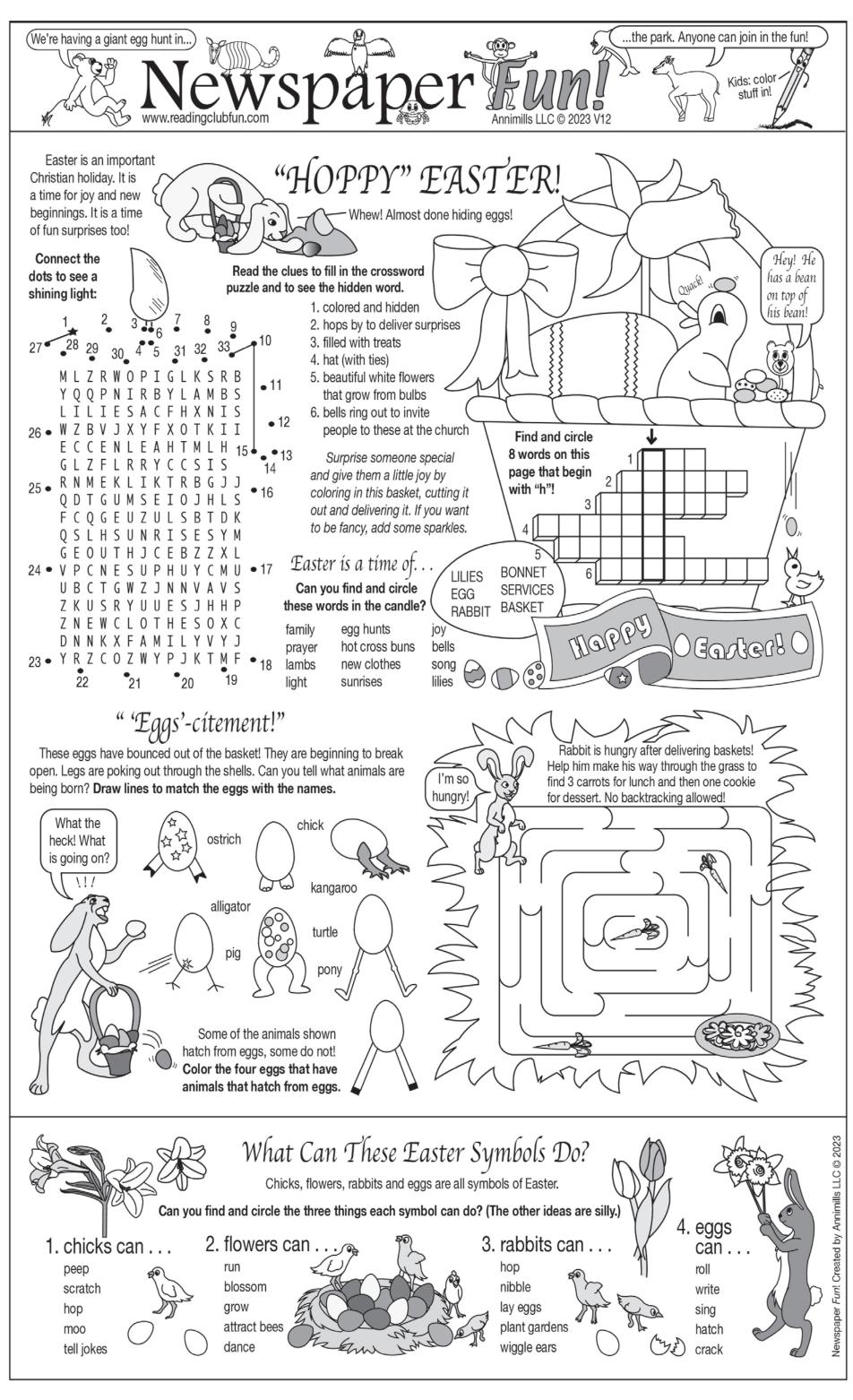


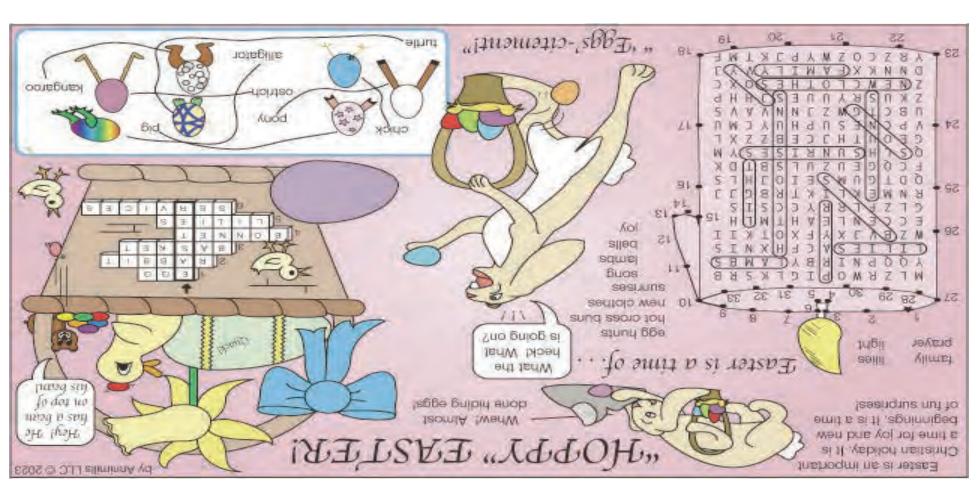
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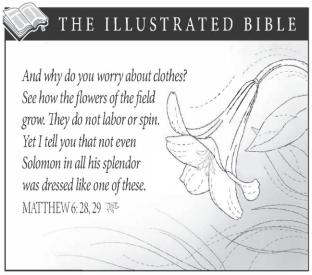
#### **BIBLE TRIVIA**

By Wilson Casey -

1. Is the book of Gethsemane (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. What's the only book of the Bible that mentions Christ's tomb being sealed? Matthew, Mark, Luke, John 3. From Matthew 28:2, who rolled back the stone from the door of Jesus' tomb and sat upon it? Simon, An angel, Villagers, Disciples

4. When Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" came upon the risen Jesus, who did He ask them to inform?



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Priests, Disciples, No one, Villagers

5. From John 20, which disciple doubted that Jesus had risen unless he could see the wounds? Peter, Andrew, Thomas, Thaddeus

6. How long did Jesus remain after His resurrection before He ascended into heaven? Instantaneously, 1 hour, 7 days, 40 days

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Matthew (27:65-66), 3) An angel, 4) Disciples, 5) Thomas (called Didymus), 6) 40 days (Acts 1:3) Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online. (c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.



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# SENIOR NEWS LINE

## by Matilda Charles

# Rising Cost of Home Insurance

When I got my home insurance bill and it showed a massive payment for my policy renewal, I actually laughed. I flipped the page over, believing I'd received someone else's mail by mistake ... probably a neighbor down the street.

But when I saw my own name, I wasn't laughing anymore when I grabbed my calculator and discovered that the new amount was a 45% increase over last year. Still, ever hopeful, I called my insurance company, wondering if someone else's home had been plugged into my account. No, it hadn't. The amount listed was indeed for my home, as were the numbers for out buildings,

personal property and temporary living expens-

I called several neighbors: Has your insurance gone up? No, they all said. I discovered the likely reason for that during a call to a friendly local insurance agent. They're no doubt in the middle of a policy period, he said. Their bad surprise will come when it's time to renew that policy and all the price increases hit them.

There are several reasons why a policy can increase, such as increased assessment, material and labor (which is the big one right now), additions to the house, number of prior claims, your deductible, your credit score and the breed of dog you own.

After several calls to different insurance companies, it's not looking good. What I get so far is that if I decide to gamble and lower my coverage level, I run a risk that something will happen and I'll be stuck for mammoth amounts of money that insurance won't cov-

The only thing that's going to save a few dollars is to pay the whole year upfront and not have to pay the monthly budget fees with every payment. Take a deep breath before you open your next policy renewal envelope. Good luck. (c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.



# by Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD — Bill Skarsgard was third-billed for "John Wick," probably because of his visibility as Pennywise in "It" (2017), which catapulted the \$40-million film to a \$701.8 million gross. And in 2019, the sequel, "It Chapter Two," turned a \$79 million cost into \$473.1 million at the box office. This year, Skarsgard is working nonstop — first up, he has "Boy Kills World" (about a deaf-mute who escapes after his family is murdered into the jungle where he's trained by a mysterious mentor). Then, he has the \$50-million supernatural superhero film "The Crow," opposite Danny Huston, as well as the Gothic horror film "Nosferatu," co-starring Lily-Rose Depp (Johnny Depp's daughter), Nicholas Hoult and Willem Dafoe. Not bad for a budding 32year-old star.

Keanu Reeves, now 58, is lighting his wick at both ends. He jumped right from "John Wick: Chapter 4," which opened last week, into vet another "John Wick" feature — a spin-off called "Ballerina," co-starring Ana de Armas as a ballerinaassassin, Ian McShane, Lance Reddick, Anjelica Huston, Bill Skarsgard, Gabriel Byrne and "The Walking Dead's" Norman Reedus. Shooting began in Prague last November.

"The Walking Dead's" not done with Norman Reedus. He's headlining the upcoming AMC spin-off "The Walking Dead: Daryl Dixon," which drops later this year. In the interim, he's starring opposite Austin Butler, Jodie Comer, Michael Shannon and Tom Hardy in the upcoming drama film "The Bikeriders." Meanwhile, Butler is toplining the AppleTV+ series "Masters of the Air," in the vein of "Band of Brothers."

Morgan Freeman is still going strong at 85, with over 100 films under his belt. Among them are such classics as "Street Smart" (1987), which brought him his first Oscar nom; 1989's "Driving Miss

> **ACROSS** 6 Tyke

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19 Mac alternatives 20 Round Table titles 22 First lady? 24 Expected



Bill Skarsgard ("It" and "John Wick")

Daisy," which brought him his second Oscar nom; "The Shawshank Redemption" (1994); and 2004's "Million Dollar Baby," which earned him his Oscar win for Best Supporting Actor. Freeman is now starring in "The Ritual Killer," with Cole Hauser, which arrived March 10. "A Good Person," with Florence Pugh and Molly Shannon, opened March 24, and he also has the upcoming sci-fi thriller "57 Seconds," with Josh Hutcherson, as well as the Paramount+ spy series "Lioness," opposite Zoe Saldana and Nicole Kidman.

Freeman, who played God in 2003's "Bruce Almighty" and 2007's "Evan Almighty," has shared his views on God. "I think we invented God," he explained. "So, if I believe in God, and I do, it's because I think I'm God!" Freeman is a practicing Zoroastrian who has been married and divorced twice. He has fathered four children and divides his time between Charleston, Mississippi, and a home in New York City. He got his pilot's license at 65 and owns three private planes. It stands to reason — if you're a method actor and you're playing God, you have to believe you are God! Holy moly! (c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.





# ENTERTAINMENT









9

5

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

3

9

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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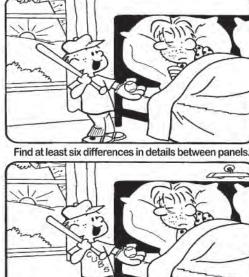
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BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



**HOCUS-FOCUS** 

Differences: 1. Bat is shorter. 2. Logo is missing. 3. Curtain is shorter.

# April 3, 2023 Posting Date

# King Crossword



56 Take offense "Leda and the

hit song 35 Spiked club Swan" poet 36 Mandolin's kin

37 UFO crew 38 Billboards Minor quib-

ures 29 Congers 32 Elvis Presley

bles 42 Nile biter 44 &&&&

46 Deal (with) 50 Weak 52 Missouri-born

president "- serious?" 55 Small songbirds

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Answer

Weekly SUDOKU

Solution time: 21 mins.

**ZISWZNA** 

— King Crossword —

Þ

8 8 2 7 6

1 2 3 5 6 7

DOWN Hayseed Not - many

words

Drudges 4 Eg. and Syr., once

5 Barhopping tour Big truck

maker Ham - (deli order)

Personal bugaboo 10 Power co.

supply 11 Tiny amounts 12 Tokyo-based

carrier 18 Amaze

21 Altar promise 23 Victory sign 24 Poorly lit 25 Actress

Hagen 26 Fugitives

30 Allow © 2023 King Features Synd., Inc



grads

33 Homer's neighbor 34 Profit

39 Beauty parlor 41 Diving gear

42 Miles away 43 Withered 45 Neither fem.

nor masc. 47 Skip 48 Frying needs 49 Em halves

"See ya!" 53 Caviar

# Rodriguez

1. GEOGRAPHY: Which U.S. states share a border with Mexico?

2. MOVIES: Which movie was the first sports film to win the Best Picture award?

3. U.S. PRESIDENTS: How many former first ladies are still living?

4. TELEVISION: What is the name of Bart's teacher on "The Simpsons"? 5. LANGUAGE: What does the Japanese

phrase "domo arigato" mean in English?

6. CHEMISTRY: What is the lightest element? 7. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: Who is Marie Laveau of New Orleans?

8. AD SLOGANS: Which product was advertised with the slogan, "Great taste, less filling"? 9. U.S. CITIES: In which city would you find Thomas Jefferson's Monticello?

10. LITERATURE: Who wrote the autobiography "Dreams From My Father"?

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# Lone Star College receives \$325,000 grant to expand job placements for students



The Texas Workforce Commission presented Lone Star College and Lone Star Corporate College with a grant from the Texas Talent Connection Fund. Pictured, from left, are Stephen C. Head, Ph.D., LSC Chancellor; Bryan Daniel, TWC Commissioner and Chairman and Mary York, TWC Outreach and Employer Initiatives Director.

HOUSTON – The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) presented Lone Star College and Lone Star Corporate College with the Texas Talent Connection (TTC) Fund at a recent check signing event at LSC-University Park.

LSC will use the \$324,792 grant to develop partnerships with area corporations to offer enhanced job placement services for graduates of the associate degree and certificate workforce programs. This joint venture will increase the production of a skilled workforce in six industries: manufacturing, automotive, information technology, business, visual communication and health care.

"Lone Star College is extremely grateful for the support shown to us by the Texas Workforce Commission," said Stephen C. Head, Ph.D., LSC Chancellor. "We enjoy the relationship we have and look forward to strategically planning how to use these funds to ensure student success."

The TTC grant is an initiative of Texas Governor Greg Abbot and is funded by the Wagner-Peyser 7(b) federal funds. The money will benefit people participating in the Strategic Engagement for Student Career Planning project. The funds will also assist first-generation students enrolled in career preparation training programs and workforce associate of applied science degrees that yield industry-specific credentials.

"In Texas, 52 % of the labor market requires some training after school, which disqualifies 24% of job seekers who do not have those criteria," said Bryan Daniel, Texas Workforce Commission Commissioner and Chairman. "The Texas Talent Connection Grant will help educate and train the workforce, which will help address the growing shortage in critical fields."

There are 14.5 million people in the workforce, and a third of the jobs require a bachelor's or master's degree, which a third of the workers have, according to TWC. There are 500,000 unemployed (who want to work and are looking for jobs) people and 525,000 open positions. TWC said the lack of training and educational programs leaves the unemployed population unqualified for vacant jobs.

"Lone Star College will use the grant to create better employment opportunities for our students and introduce our students as a highly-skilled workforce for our corporate partners," said Linda Leto Head, LSC Senior Associate Vice Chancellor External and Employer Relations. "We will help students find jobs in school and after graduation while finding meaningful ways to grow, cultivate and engage employers."

Other speakers at the TTC check signing event included James Giles, National Oilwell Vargo Talent Acquisition Manager and Rick Cochran, HMG Healthcare, LLC Special Projects Vice President. Attendees included LSCS Board of Trustees Jim Cain, Ed.D., and Rebecca Broussard; Seelpa Keshvala, Ph.D., LSC Executive Vice Chancellor and LSC-Online CEO; Dwight Smith, Ed.D., LSC Vice Chancellor Academic and Workforce Success; Melissa Gonzalez, Ph.D., LSC-Kingwood President; Rebecca Riley, Ed.D., LSC-Montgomery President and Archie Blanson, Ph.D., LSC-North Harris President.

In Lone Star College's 50-year history, various agencies have given funds to help create and support innovative educational programs. In the last two years, the Texas Workforce Commission has granted LSC more than \$2.1 million to fund six programs.

"The Texas Workforce Commission has awarded several grants to Lone Star College to implement workforce programs and customized training that can lead to high-earning employment and retention strategies for our business partners," said Leto Head.

Lone Star Corporate College partners with corporations to offer customized training, open-enrollment courses and professional seminars. They also lead the job function for LSC students. The focus is on the energy, computer technology and manufacturing sectors; however, training opportunities are available for retail, hospitality, school districts, health care organizations, nonprofits and other industries. Visit LoneStar.edu/CorporateCollege to learn more.

Lone Star College enrolls over 80,000 students each semester providing high-quality, low-cost academic transfer and career training education. LSC is training tomorrow's workforce today and redefining the community college experience to support student success. Stephen C. Head, Ph.D., serves as chancellor of LSC, the largest institution of higher education in the Houston area and has been named a 2022 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<sup>TM</sup>. LSC consists of eight colleges, seven centers, eight Workforce Centers of Excellence and Lone Star Corporate College. To learn more, visit LoneStar.edu.









