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# NORTHEAST NEWS



FRIDA Arts Class at the East Aldine District's International Arts Festival last week.

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 VOL. 47, NO. 19 TUESDAY, MAY 30, 2023 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

## NEWS NOTES

### Aldine ISD Graduation Schedule

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 31**  
 Victory ECHS 5:00pm  
 MacArthur HS 7:30pm

**THURSDAY, JUNE 1**  
 Hall Academy 5:00pm  
 Davis HS 7:30pm

**FRIDAY, JUNE 2**  
 Nimitz HS 9:00am  
 Carver HS 11:30am  
 Aldine HS 2:00pm  
 Blanson CTE HS 5:00pm

**SATURDAY, JUNE 3**  
 Eisenhower HS 9:00am  
 Avalos P-Tech 11:30am

All Graduation Ceremonies at M.O. Campbell Center

# Arts Festival, Mural Fest showcase East Aldine District talent, diversity

The East Aldine District held its first annual multi-cultural International Arts Festival last Saturday, May 20 at the Town Center. Events started at 10am, and continued through the day until 3pm. Also happening was the Mural Fest, centered on the Harris County High Meadows Library on Aldine Mail Route.

Featured were Chalk Artists, a Fashion Show, Floor Pianos, West African Drumming, a Chalk Car, Spoken Word Poety, Cosmo Bots, Power Tiles, Lion & Dragon Dance, Fashion Hats, Puppetry, Bollywood, Art Cars, Capoeira, and Gospel Zion choir.

Games for the public included Rubiks Cube, Kerplunk, and PinPress. East



Lion Dance



Mural Painting



Chalk Artists



Aztec Ceremony blessing the Land

Continued on Page 8

## Authorities initiate fast DWI tests, Click-It drive to combat auto deaths



Sheriff Ed Gonzalez speaks about special DWI initiatives in place over the Memorial Day holiday.

HOUSTON – The Harris County Sheriff's Office, the Harris County District Attorney's Office, Harris County Constables, the Texas Department of Public Safety, American Automobile Association (AAA) and Mothers Against Drunk Driving have joined forces ahead of the Memorial Day holiday weekend to crack down on drunk drivers across the county.

Harris County has had one of the country's high-

est DWI fatality crash rates for several years, a news release said. Officials said the multi-agency impaired driver task force will focus on preventing alcohol and drug-related traffic incidents. The initiative will allow law enforcement to fast-track the process of investigating a drunk driver.

Drivers can expect a

Continued. See DWI initiatives, Page 5

## First graduating class of Avalos P-Tech HS reflects on their four-year journey

By Anne Marie Kilday

EAST ALDINE – They are trailblazers, but more importantly, they have developed a bond that will never be broken.

On June 3, when the 103 seniors from Avalos P-Tech Early College High School walk across the stage and receive their diplomas at the M.O. Campbell Educational Center, they will become the first class in the history of the school to graduate.

It has been quite a four-year journey for the Class of 2023. They have left their mark at the Pathways in Technology High School. Some will move onto post-secondary education, while others will enter the work force.

But no matter where they all go; they will have the common bond of being the first group of Avalos students to earn their high school diploma. And some (44) have already earned



Members of the first graduating class in the history of Avalos P-Tech Early College High School pose in front of the school with Principal Stephen Heady. Pictured with him are, (l-r): Cristian Flores-Zapata, Jason Coreas, Jocelyn Suerete, Monica Flores and David Alvarez.

their associates degrees from Lone Star College, which along with BakerRipley, is a partner with the Aldine ISD campus, which opened in August of 2019.

The school, named after long-time Aldine ISD educator and current Board of

Trustee Secretary Rose M. Avalos, provides students with a chance to earn their high school diploma, an associate's degree and work credentials, including professional certifications and licenses. Students also had the opportunity to engage in work-based education at each level through internships, apprenticeships and other forms of job training programs.

Continued. See Avalos HS Grads, Page 2

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**Summer Festival**

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Executive Director: **Richard Cantu**  
 713.595.1220 RCantu@AldineDistrict.org

Operations Manager: **Veronica Sanches**  
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# COMMUNITY WATCH

## Houston Police Chief Finner: Violent Crime on the Decline in Houston

In a positive crime summary report to Houston City Councilmembers today (May 3), Houston Police Chief Troy Finner shared that violent crime in the City of Houston is down by 12 percent and overall crime is down six percent compared to the same time period one year ago.

The city's murder rate is down 27 percent compared to this same time last year. Unofficially, the city has recorded 111 murders in the first four months of the year, compared to 153 in the first four months of 2022.

"The numbers speak for themselves and we continue to see them trending down," said Chief Finner. "I want to thank the residents of our city and the great work of our men and women in uniform, as well as our support staff. I also want to thank the collaborative effort that we have with our local, state and federal partners," added Chief Finner.

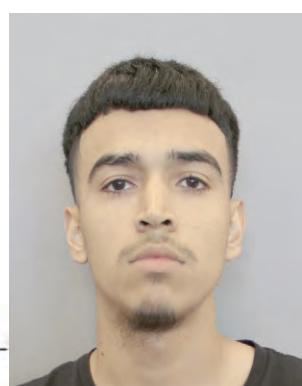
The Chief also thanked Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner and Houston City Council for their support. He specifically highlighted the Mayor's "One Safe Houston" program, which included the overtime funding of 125 additional officers per day, enhanced use of technology and specialized trained personnel to respond to domestic violence and mental health calls.

Chief Finner also reiterated that while he is pleased with the progress, there is still work to be done. He emphasized the need for continued effort from the community to report suspicious activity or information on any crimes that occur.

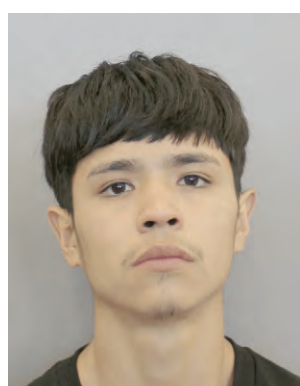
The full presentation by Chief Finner and HPD Assistant Chief Milton Martin can be viewed on the above YouTube video.

The Chief's PowerPoint presentation, including crime numbers through March in each City Council District, is available at <https://bit.ly/3HAWeZ8>

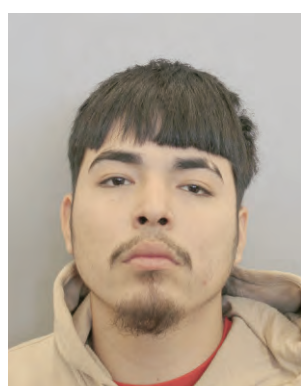
## Three Suspects Arrested, Charged in 2022 Fatal Shooting at 7676 North Freeway



JODY DURON



RAUDEL OROZCO



ROLANDO OROZCO

Charges have been filed against three suspects arrested in the fatal shooting of a man at 7676 North Freeway (North Interstate Highway 45) service road about 12:55 p.m. on December 23, 2022.

The male suspects - Raudel Orozco, 20, Rolando Orozco, 22, and Jody Duron, 19 - are charged with murder in the 262nd State District Court. Booking photos of the suspects are attached to this news release.

The three are charged for their roles in the killing of Luis Casillas, 29.

HPD Homicide Division Sergeant B. Roberts and Detective L. Lange reported:

Officers were dispatched to a shooting call in a business parking lot at the above address and located Mr. Casillas suffering from an apparent gunshot wound. Paramedics transported him to a hospital where he was pronounced deceased.

Further investigation led to the identities of the three suspects wanted in the shooting. Members of the Gulf Coast Violent Offenders Task Force arrested all three males on Tuesday (April 25) without incident. The Orozcoco are brothers.

## Outstanding KARATE students at Northeast Community Center

EAST ALDINE – The American Society of Karate would like to recognize two outstanding Karate students.

Jeriel Ambriz (left) and Christian Contreras (right) train at the Northeast Harris Community Center where Jesse and Sue Diaz are their Instructors. Both are ten years old.

Jeriel is a straight A 4thgrade student at KIPP Dream Prep and proud member of the Light of the World Church. He began taking Karate classes with Mr. Diaz in Aldine in the summer of 2019 and fell in love with the sport since that first class. His goals include getting his Black Belt and going to medical school. He has won numerous trophies and awards in Karate. Jeriel also likes to play with his younger sister and play Fortnite with his friends.

Christian Contreras has been practicing Karate for over five years. This practice has taught him discipline, confidence, and trained his body to be stronger. He has earned around 25 trophies and is currently a third degree red belt. He is in the 4thgrade at River Pines Elementary and has scores in the top 25% out of all Humble Middle and Elementary school students. This year Christian is also playing soccer. He is a top scorer and has earned the nickname "BEAST"!

Free summer Karate classes at



JERIEL AMBRIZ (L) AND CHRISTIAN CONTRERAS (R) WITH THEIR NUMEROUS TROPHIES AND AWARDS.

the Northeast Harris Community start on June 8th. Every Thursday children ages 6 to 12 years of age are from 6:00 to 7:00p.m. Adults are from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. For more information call Sue Diaz at 713-962-6641.

A special thank you from our class to Commissioner Adrian Garcia for offering this free program.



JERIEL AND CHRISTIAN WITH SOME OF THEIR KARATE CLASSMATES.

## AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS

Early registration for the **Summer Reading Program** starts **May 22!** Sign up on **Beanstack**: <https://hcpl.beanstack.org/reader365>. You can also register in person at the library.

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

**KIDS CLUB**  
Let's get ready to LEGO! Wednesday, May 31, 4:30 - 5:30pm for children of all ages.

**TEEN THURSDAY**  
Teen Thursdays at Aldine Branch Library are a fun, safe environment for teens ages (12-18) to hang out after school! Join us as we play games, watch anime, and hang out! Thursday, June 1, 3:30 - 5:30pm.

**Roblox Friday** Starting **Friday, June 1** we will have Roblox Fridays from **4:30 - 5:30pm for kids ages 9-13**. Come and compete against your friends!

**Coffee & Conversation Club**  
Are you learning English and would like to practice your conversation skills? Are you a native English speaker

who would like to help others become more fluent? Join us for some easy-going conversation with friends over coffee! This is NOT a class. This is just for fun and experience. **Saturday, June 3, 2pm.**

**COMPUTER CLASSES**  
We have computer classes in Spanish and in English, online and in-person. If you want to participate, register online at: <https://forms.office.com/r/RTQyUGd1Yy>

**Wednesdays: Office 365 & Google Apps**, (English, Online), 5-7pm  
**Thursdays: Office 365 & Google Apps** (Spanish, in person), 5-7pm

**ADULT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**  
Would you like to be a part of making an impact on people's lives? Are you looking for a meaningful way to spend your time? We are looking for adult volunteers to help with tasks and programs at the library as well as volunteers to teach English language classes, citizenship classes, or computer classes in person and virtually. Pick up an application at the Aldine Branch Library, call 832-927-5410, or click

here: <https://forms.office.com/r/qSzMSpiaTL>.

**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, photos, copies, 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

# AISD's CN Department Recognized at May 16 Board Meeting for Being No. 1 in Texas

During the May 16 Board of Trustees meeting, the district's Child Nutrition Department was recognized for being ranked No. 1 in Texas for providing free, nutritious meals to its students. Chief Operations Officer Fred Washington announced that Aldine ISD's CN Department was ranked first among large school districts in Texas by Children at Risk's School Food Rankings. Washington added the department is ranked No. 10 in the nation. The department is comprised of Executive Director Susan D'Amico, Director of Child Nutrition Services Teresa Lane, Assistant Directors Valerie Barr, Andre Crawford, and Chandra Johnson, Dietitian Carrie Allen, Nutritionist Esha Naaz, Chef Richard Popovic, Chef-Catering Manager Michael Glover, Quality Control Trainer Naomi Davis and Accountant Patrick Ona.



The Child Nutrition Department members were recognized at the May 16 Board of Trustees meeting for being ranked No. 1 in the state of Texas for providing free, nutritious meals to students. The CN Department was ranked No. 1 in Children at Risk's School Food Rankings. Pictured with the CN group is Chief Operations Officer Fred Washington.

Staff Assignments Announced

During the May 16 Board meeting, Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney announced several staff assignments.

- After serving as Principal of Sammons Elementary School, Georgina Foroi was named Executive Director of the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Department.
- La'Keshia Williams was named Principal of Carver High School after serving as an Assistant Principal at Davis High School.
- After serving as an Assistant Principal at Kujawa Primary School, Leticia Sibrian was named Program Director of Elementary Mathematics.
- Torrance Brooks was named an Assistant Principal at Eisenhower College Prep after serving as an Assistant Principal at

Cunningham Middle School in Galena Park.

Aldine PD Names Employee Of The Month

Aldine ISD Police Chief Paul Cordova named AISD Police Officer Allen Hartman as his department's Employee of the Month.

**The two grants totaled \$21,521**

During the May 16 Board meeting, Aldine ISD Trustees approved the following action items:

- Approved the 2023-24 Allotment and TEKS Certification
- Approved a Principal Residency Grant Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Houston, effective 2023-24
- Approved to submit low attendance waivers to the TEA for Vardeman Primary, Aldine Ninth, Aldine High School and La-Promesa
- Approved a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Texas at Austin on behalf of the UTTeach Science Program and Aldine ISD regarding field experience for potential teachers for the 2023-24 school year
- Approved single contracts and purchases of \$50,000 and greater
- Approved a Board Resolution to designate investment officers and authorized investment institutions and representatives

- Approved a Board Resolution of De-commitment of Fund Balance for the Liability Related to Prior E-Rate Appeal
- Approved a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Houston-Downtown to support expanding the UHD Bilingual E-Library to support literacy awareness and connectivity among the Hispanic community to begin in August of 2023
- Approved the term contract recommendations, renewals, and extensions for the 20223-24 school year.

Before the May 16 Board meeting, the Stephens Elementary Choir performed in the foyer of the Donaldson Administration Building. The Aldine Police Department Color Guard presented the Colors, while students led the Pledge of Allegiance and Pledge to the Texas Flag from deSantiago Primary School. The June Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 13. It will begin at 7 p.m. and will be held in the Board Room of the Donaldson Administration Building.

# Impact Leadership Academy Chess Club Makes Great Strides in First Year



Members of the Impact Leadership Academy chess club pose for a photo with all the trophies they won during the 2022-23 school year.

In its first year of existence, the Impact Leadership Academy chess club made great strides.

The team, consisting of 14 Impact students, finished in first place in the District Middle School Chess Tournament and had a top 10 finish at the (8th place) at the State Championship Chess Tournament in McAllen.

Head coach Toby McCraw, who is assisted by Lexis Clinton and Matt Robinson, said he was happy that students took to the game so quickly.

"We at Impact Leadership Academy are committed to improving our students' cognitive abilities and scholastic achievements," McCraw said. "By having students practicing the game of chess, we believe it has helped them tap into their higher-order thinking skills, which is essential to leadership."

McCraw said he and Clinton and Robinson were thrilled to see how the 14 Impact students took to the game and how they improved week by week.

"Our chess students

have demonstrated an overwhelming amount of dedication, grit and tenacity," McCraw said. "This dedication has led each student to earning individual trophies for their hard work through the year."

McCraw added he thinks the members of the team learned more than just how to play the game of chess this school year.

"By students being on the Impact Leadership Academy's chess club, I hope they gained a strong sense of understanding the importance of problem solving, decision making, creative thinking and most importantly, patience," he said.

McCraw added he delighted in watching his students learn the inner workings of the game of chess.

"As a chess coach, I believe it's important to help students discover the power of self-knowledge," McCraw said. "In chess, there are many openings that can be incorporated in the game: the Sicilian Defense, the King's Gambit, the En-

glish Opening, the King's Indian Defense and many more. My goal was to lead our students in discovering these openings and finding the right one that suits them. Once the students discovered the opening that complements their game, I guided them in developing each chess piece as they move and strategize within a game.

"Knowing how to develop their chess pieces as they played, prepared them for any attack and strengthened their strategy. I believe guiding students to self-discovery and incorporating my philosophy in developing their moves led them to success now and for many years to come."

The team consisted of Alexandre Gomez, Anthony Flores, Armando Hernandez, Azarel Haynes, Brander Fuentes, Diego Baires, Jamie Medina, Javier Martinez (team captain), Josue Ulloa, Kristopher Garcia, Nathan Isiorhovoja, Royal Watkins, Levi Robinson and Dylan Estrada.

# Summer College Tours - Explore Your Future

Aldine ISD's Post Secondary Outcomes Department is hosting three college tours this summer. This is a free opportunity to visit a university and learn about the admissions process, financial aid, and more.

These trips are open to all high school students and recent grads. Space is limited and will be first come first serve.

Students can register at [tinyurl.com/summercollegevisit](http://tinyurl.com/summercollegevisit) This summer we will be visiting UHD, UT Austin, and Prairie View A&M University.

# Lone Star College Preview Days, June 6 and 7

Aldine ISD and Lone Star College are hosting two Preview Days for graduates from the Class of 2023. Students will be able to complete their admissions checklists, clear holds, meet with advisors, meet with financial aid, and complete their new

student orientation. The same program will be held on Tuesday, June 6th from 9am-1pm at the Lone Star College Houston North Fallbrook campus located at 12750 Walters Road, and on Wednesday, June 7th from 9am-1pm at the Lone Star College

North Harris campus located at 2700 W. W. Thorne Drive. This program is free and transportation is available upon request through the registration link. Register at: [bit.ly/lscpreviewday](http://bit.ly/lscpreviewday). Please sign up by March 31st.

**Summer College Tours**

EXPLORE YOUR FUTURE

FREE opportunity to visit a university and learn about the admissions process, housing, financial aid, and more! Open to all high school students and recent grads. Space is limited!

<p><b>UHD</b> June 14th, 9am</p>	<p><b>UT Austin</b> June 21st, 7am</p>	<p><b>PV A&amp;M</b> June 22nd, 8am</p>
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Register at [tinyurl.com/summercollegevisit](http://tinyurl.com/summercollegevisit)

ALDINE Independent School District

**LONE STAR COLLEGE PREVIEW DAY**

ALDINE Independent School District

<p><b>TUESDAY, JUNE 6</b> 9 A.M. - 1 P.M. Lone Star College <b>HOUSTON NORTH FALLBROOK</b> 12750 Walters Rd. Houston, TX 77014</p>	<p><b>WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7</b> 9 A.M. - 1 P.M. Lone Star College <b>NORTH HARRIS</b> 2700 W.W. Thorne Dr. Houston, TX 77073</p>
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Ready to enroll for Fall 2023 classes? Attend our upcoming Preview Day and complete the following!

- Admission Checklist
- Financial Aid
- Resource Fair
- Advising
- New Student Orientation
- Fall Class Enrollment!
- Campus Tours

Please visit [bit.ly/lscpreviewday](http://bit.ly/lscpreviewday) or scan the QR Code to register by May 31. \*Aldine transportation request available through the RSVP.

QR Code

LSC-HOUSTON NORTH | LSC-NORTH HARRIS

OPINION PAGE



Remembering Uvalde One Year later; Ending gun violence

One year ago, 19 students and 2 teachers were senselessly murdered, and 17 others were injured at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas—making it the deadliest school shooting since Sandy Hook Elementary in 2012.

No family should ever experience the pain of losing a loved one to gun violence.

As your representative, I've been listening to your voices and working tirelessly to address this issue. Recently, I conducted a district-wide text message survey on gun reform, and the responses were striking. An overwhelming majority of TX-29 residents expressed support for common-sense measures:

- 77% support an assault weapons ban.
• 92% support red flag laws.
• 94% believe domestic abusers should be disarmed.
• 95% agree that background checks should be required for all gun sales.

Last year, Congress took a significant step forward with the passage of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, signed into law by President Biden.

This law will save lives because it delivers the following:

- \$750 million for states to create laws that keep guns out of the hands of people who are dangerous to themselves and/or others;
• enhanced background checks for people under age 21;
• more than \$2.3 billion for school safety programs, mental health support for students, and improved learning conditions; and
• \$250 million in community-based violence prevention programs.

This is the most significant gun violence reduction effort in the last 30 years. But we must do more to protect families and children.

Progress is possible. I remain dedicated to fighting for comprehensive gun reform policies, including:

- Raising the age to purchase an assault rifle from 18 to 21.
• Strengthening gun storage requirements.
• Cracking down on gun trafficking.
• Outlawing high-capacity magazines.

When it comes to keeping our communities safe, there can be no debate. The time for action is NOW. I will always put the children of Texas and the safety of my constituents first. No child deserves to live in fear that they will become the next school shooting victim. Schools are meant for books, not bullets.

I won't stop until we are all safe from preventable gun violence.

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.

Memorial Day 2023

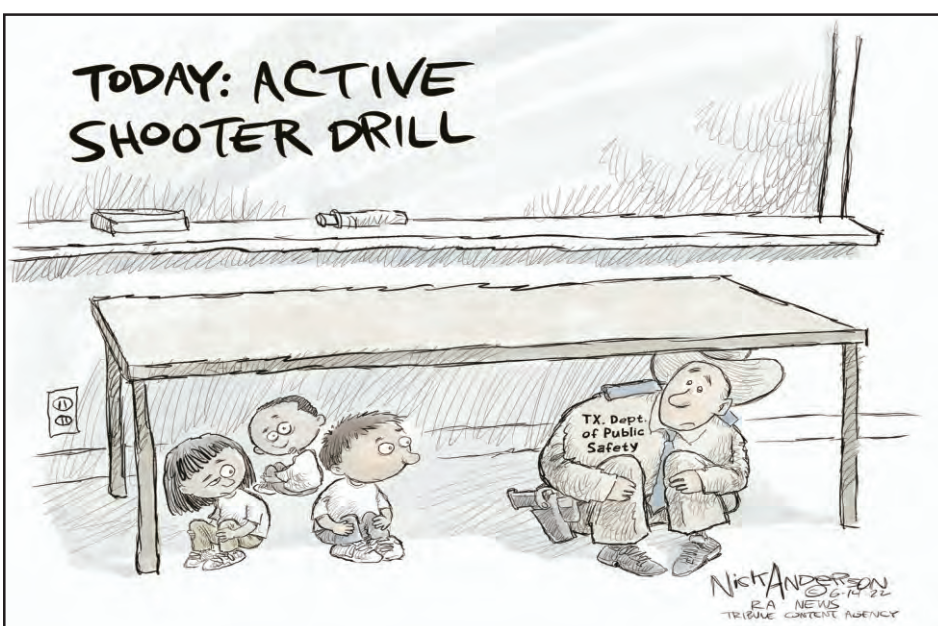
In Flanders Fields

by John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you, from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow,
In Flanders fields.



THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

'Too Old'

My new friend, Betty Lou, started a book club, and she asked me to join.

I was delighted. I hadn't been in a book club for a long time. Because she is a librarian, Betty Lou knows better than most the importance of reading a variety of things and so, at the very first meeting, we read a graphic novel.

None of the members of this group are young, and this was the first graphic novel most of us had read. We weren't sure what to say about it.

"This book is very heavy!" one member finally said.

"It's a doorstop!" said another.

We all agreed we were not crazy about the weight of the book. I wondered if a book club should really be concerned with how much a book weighs, but I figured it was a legitimate concern if you could injure yourself by dropping it. And we did, eventually, get to what was inside.

There were a lot of pictures," I pointed out.

Since it was a graphic novel, this should not have been a surprise. Still, there were a lot more pictures than I expected, and I didn't want to look at them all. I wanted to get on with the story. But the story wasn't being told with a lot of words- it was being told with pictures. I realized this, but it didn't make me want to look at the pictures, it just made me want more words. I began to think that I was not a good reader for graphic novels.

"Are we just too old for this?" one of the members asked. The question hung in the air.

"It's an important story!" another member said, and we all agreed.

We talked about all the important things the book was saying, and we all agreed they were things that should be said.

"But shouldn't it be more entertaining?" I asked.

I felt a little like the boy pointing out that the emperor had no clothes. Everyone looked a little relieved. We all agreed that it should be more entertaining than it was - at least for us. We suspected other people (younger people) might have more fun reading this than we were.

I don't think of myself as being too old for very much. I know younger people are better at some things (anything involving technology), but I don't consider myself too old to learn.

Still, there might be things I am simply too old to enjoy. Graphic novels might be one of them. I'm not sure if that's a bad thing or not.

There are things I know I will not try because I am no longer young - skateboarding, for instance, video games, learning more languages or how to draw. Theoretically, I could learn to do any of these things, and yet I am pretty sure I will not.

It occurs to me it would be good to take at least one of those activities off the "Things I Will Never Do" list and move it over to the "Things I Just Started Doing" list. And yet my day already seems filled with the things I'm doing, things I already enjoy.

And so I'm glad Betty Lou got us to read a graphic novel, even if it was not my favorite book. Now I can say I've read one, and I am reminded that there are many ways of telling stories, even if not all of those stories are interesting to me.

It was a good reminder. It's just the sort of reminder you might expect from a librarian.

Till next time, Carrie

To see photos, check out CarrieClassonAuthor on Facebook or visit CarrieClasson.com.

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders



Texas House Impeaches AG Paxton

The Texas House voted overwhelmingly to impeach Attorney General Ken Paxton Saturday, only the third time in the state's history that has occurred.

The Austin American-Statesman and numerous news outlets reported the chamber voted 121-23 to remove Paxton, 60, from office while he awaits a trial in the Senate during a special session yet to be called.

Last week a House investigations committee heard evidence from investigators and sent 20 articles of impeachment against Paxton.

The evidence presented by investigators against Paxton included a 2015 state securities case, an ongoing federal probe into his connection with campaign donor Nate Paul, an Austin real estate developer, and an extramarital affair he tried to conceal from his wife, state Sen. Angela Paxton, R-Allen.

Adding to Paxton's legal woes, a \$3.3 million settlement with some of his former employees who were whistleblowers fell apart after the House refused to approve paying it with taxpayer money. The case remains pending.

Rep. Andrew Murr, R-Junction, chair of the investigations committee, in closing remarks Saturday urged House members to vote in favor of impeachment. "The evidence is substantial. It is alarming, and it is unnerving," he said.

Paxton called the bipartisan vote — 61 Democrats and 60 Republicans voted for impeachment — "politically motivated."

"The ugly spectacle in the Texas House today confirmed the outrageous impeachment plot against me was never meant to be fair or just," Paxton said in a statement.

BILL ENDING VEHICLE INSPECTIONS HEADS TO ABBOTT

Vehicles registered in Texas would no longer be required to pass safety inspections under a bill headed to Gov. Greg Abbott's desk, the Houston Chronicle reported.

House Bill 3297, sponsored by Rep. Cody Harris, R-Palestine, also creates a new annual \$7.50 inspection replacement fee that will be added to annual vehicle registration fees. Thus, owners won't save any money but will not have to take their vehicle



to a licensed inspection station.

The measure passed the Senate along party lines, 20-11, with the Republican majority arguing the annual inspections are a burden to residents without making Texas roads safer.

Sen. Nathan Johnson, D-Dallas, told his fellow senators that a recent study by the American Society of Civil Engineers found fewer highway fatality deaths in states with an inspection program.

"It found that states that have vehicle safety inspections have 5.5% fewer fatalities per year than states that don't have inspection programs. In Texas, that's 261 dead people every single year," Johnson said.

If Abbott signs the bill or allows it to become law without his signature, it will go into effect Sept. 1.

Texas is currently one of 15 states still requiring regular inspections. Although the statewide inspection rule is on its way out, vehicle emission inspections will still be required in 17 metropolitan counties.

HOUSE APPROVES CHANGES TO UNIVERSITY TENURE POLICIES

The House last week gave approval to a bill changing tenure policies at the state's colleges and universities, the Statesman reported. The lower chamber's measure differs somewhat from the Senate version, which would completely ban public colleges and universities from grant tenure to faculty members beginning in 2024.

The House version "provides a framework to the state's universities about what the Legislature expects regarding tenure, including how tenure is granted to faculty members, how tenured faculty are reviewed and when ten-

ured faculty can be dismissed," the Statesman reported.

The bill now goes back to the Senate in an effort to work out differences in the two measures.

BUDGET WRITERS STRIKE \$321.3 BILLION TWO-YEAR DEAL

Budget writers for the Texas House and Senate have come to agreement on a \$321.3 billion two-year budget that includes \$12.3 billion for property tax cuts and provides considerable new funding for higher education, the energy grid, mental health and broadband, according to the Texas Tribune. The property tax reductions are dependent on passage of a constitutional amendment in November.

A \$15 billion supplemental spending proposal uses some of the state's record surplus to provide funding for a higher education endowment, enhanced retirement for public school teachers, border security, Medicaid costs and state debt reduction, according to the Tribune.

Both plans were expected to get floor votes in each chamber before session adjournment on Monday night.

BOATERS URGED TO 'CLEAN, DRAIN AND DRY'

Texans have begun heading to state lakes and waterways as Memorial Day weekend kicks off the summer boating season. Officials with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department urge boaters and paddlers to protect Texas lakes from invasive aquatic species.

"Memorial Day weekend is the unofficial kick-off to boating season in Texas, and while we want everyone to have a great time, we also want them to avoid giving free rides to invasive species and helping them travel to new lakes," said Brian Van Zee, TPWD Inland Fisheries regional director. "The best way to prevent the spread of many harmful aquatic invasive species is to clean, drain and dry your boats and equipment - every time."

The biggest threat to Texas lakes is zebra mussels and giant salvinia, which continues to spread to new areas of Texas. Other invasive species that can be spread include quagga mussels, crested floating heart, and water hyacinth.

Giant salvinia is now found on 27 East Texas lakes and numerous creeks, marshes and rivers between Houston and Beaumont, according to TPWD. Zebra mussels are now found in 36 Texas lakes and in rivers downstream of infested lakes,

TPWD urges boaters to follow three simple steps to reduce the risk of spreading invasive species: 1. Remove mud, plants and debris. 2. Drain all water from the boat and gear. 3. Once home, open all compartments and let everything dry completely for at least a week, if possible.

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.

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## Avalos P-Tech High School graduates first class,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The school offers four different pathways for students from which to choose: Teacher Preparation, Cyber Security, Paralegal Studies and Inspection Technology.

Recently, first-year Avalos Principal Stephen Heady and a group of seniors sat down to reflect on their last four years.

Heady said this class was a special group of students who will leave a lasting legacy for other classes to follow.

"This group brought a lot of energy and spirit to our school," Heady said. "They're very unique. They have strong and outgoing personalities. I, along with our faculty, our very proud of what they've done over the last four years."

Heady, who has 30 years of experience in the field of education, previously served as an Assistant Principal at Blanson CTE High School, said the first graduating class has definitely made an impression over the last four years.

"They feel a lot of ownership to this school. They basically put it together," he said. "And they've done a lot of good work in this community. They are very close because there are only 103 of them and they've accomplished a lot."

Indeed. Valedictorian Jason Coreas will attend Harvard, while Salutatorian Jocelyn Suerte will attend the University of Chicago. Others will attend Tulane, the University of Richmond, the University of Texas, Texas A&M University, Harvey Mudd College and Pomona College (both are part of the Claremont College System in California).

"This was a very driven class," Heady said.

Heady added the partnership with Lone Star College was also a positive experience for the students.

"This school model is unique. We're all figuring it out together," he said. "The partnership with Lone Star is really important. It gives kids exposure to college. We're proud that 44 of our students received an associate's degree this year. And other will receive their's this summer."

Members of the first graduating class said they enjoyed their four years at Avalos and not only enhanced their future academic careers, but they all developed a bond that will never be broken.

"I thought it was a very positive experience," Jason Coreas said. "We all got really close. There were no clicks. Everyone got along."

Jason will major in political science at Harvard, while Jocelyn Suerte will major in computer science at the University of Chicago. Cristian Flores-Zavala will attend Pomona College and major in Astro Physics and Astronomy, while Monica Flores will attend Howard Mudd College and major in Psychology. David Alvarez will remain in Houston and enter the work force in the industrial inspection field.

Monica admitted she did not give much thought to attending Avalos P-Tech HS,

but her mother insisted she give it a try and was she ever happy she listened to her mother.

"My mom kind of forced me to register, so I did," Monica said. "I do not regret it. I'm so glad I went here. We developed a tight-knit community and this school is very special to us."

Over the last four years, Avalos students have volunteered with LULAC on voter registration campaigns, assisted with Hispanic Heritage programs, volunteered with the Harris County Sheriff's Office, volunteered with Christmas and Easter events and other community-based events.

The students all agreed it was important for them to give something back to the community.

"Because of what we learned here, we will all continue to be active when we move to our new communities," Jason said.

Jocelyn said she and her fellow seniors were proud of the work they accomplished over the last four years and believe they have left a legacy that will endure for future graduating classes.

"We helped set the tone for what this school can be," Jocelyn said. "This is a unique opportunity and we hope others embrace it like we did."

Cristian said the small class sizes helped him come out of his shell.

"I was super shy as a freshman and I didn't talk a lot, but now, I'm outgoing and you can't shut me up," he said, with a laugh.

David Alvarez said he was thankful for the opportunities and hands-on experience he received by working in labs. He said he is looking forward to entering the work force with a lot of confidence.

"I really liked the labs," David said. "We learned a lot about safety and I enjoyed the hands-on training in the labs. Being a part of Avalos has helped set a career path for me."

Cristian said he also appreciated the Avalos staff who took a vested interest in each and every student.

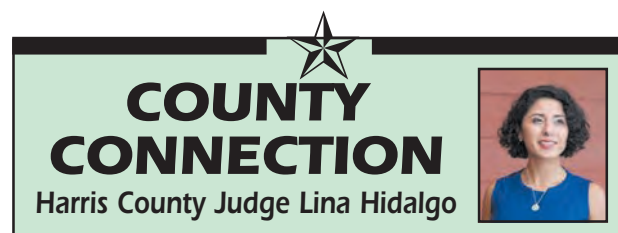
"My teachers were always asking me what my path was," Cristian said. "I appreciated that. It seems like I heard that every day I was here. You could tell they really cared about all of us and what we wanted to do with our lives."

Although many of their fellow classmates will move across the country in the coming months, they know they will remain in contact.

"I feel comfortable with all of my classmates because I've been with them for so long," Jocelyn said. "We'll definitely keep in touch."

And while they look back fondly at their four years at Avalos P-Tech High School, each admitted it will be tough to say goodbye and they admitted, tears will be shed in the coming weeks.

Let's hope they are tears of joy for a job well done.



## County Offers 10% Discount for EZ Tag Drivers of Two-Axle Vehicles

Here in Harris County, we know that transportation is not a luxury. That's why Commissioners Court has approved to cut the toll road rates by 10% for two-axle vehicles. This will put more money in the pockets of our residents and taxpayers to spend on gas, groceries, and other essentials. The updated policy will allow those without bank accounts to pay for EZ tag fees using cash.

## County Approves Climate Action Plan, Taking Significant Step in Our Commitment to Sustainability and Fighting Climate Change

Harris County takes the threat of climate change to our region and its residents seriously. That's why Judge Hidalgo and Commissioners Court approved a bold Harris County Climate Action Plan (CAP). The CAP's goal is to guide the County toward reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 40% by 2030 through emission reduction in our buildings, fleet and commuting, procurement, and waste management. The CAP was designed using nationwide best practices and crafted alongside community partners to transition our entire region and its residents towards a more climate prepared, environmentally just, and economically vibrant future.

## County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council to Receive \$4.7 Million in ARPA Funding

Domestic Violence is connected to a third of the homicides in Harris County. To help families suffering the trauma of domestic violence and put a stop to related crime, Judge Lina Hidalgo and Harris County Commissioners in March made a historic commitment to the Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council with the award of \$4.7 million. With this award, the Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (HCDVCC) created a process to grant 20 community organizations this much-needed critical capital. These flexible funds will serve more than 3,000 families with over 6,600 individuals by providing direct financial assistance to support their immediate needs such as rental and utility assistance, safe hotel stays, moving assistance, car repairs, basic needs, childcare, mental health services, and legal services.

## County Eliminates Library Late Fees

Harris County residents who check out a book from their Harris County-run public library will no longer need to pay library fees for returning their books after the due date. Harris County Commissioners Court passed a motion to make Harris County Public Library a fine-free library system which effectively eliminates fines for late returns of borrowed items. Research has shown that these fines tend to deter library use rather than influence people to return items on time, or even at all. Fines often only account for a small portion of a library system's budget but are usually an administrative burden for staff.

## Apply to Serve on a Harris County Board!

Did you know Harris County has over 60 boards and commissions that residents can serve on? From housing finance to local history, the boards cover a wide range of topics, and we're always looking for candidates to fill these roles. Your work background or lived experience might make you a perfect fit. If you are interested in contributing to the success of the County by serving, we encourage you to learn about the county boards and fill out our online application! For more information, click here.

## Harris County Approves Stipend for Members of Essential Workers Board

Harris County runs on essential workers. And now all of the essential workers serving on Harris County's groundbreaking Essential Workers Board (EWB) will receive a stipend for their service. Oftentimes, seats on boards and commissions go to folks who can afford to do unpaid work. This stipend opens the door for everyday people to shape the policies that affect them.

## Harris County Emergency Rental Assistance Program to Inform National Conversation on Eviction Crisis

Our historic Houston-Harris County Emergency Rental Assistance Program has provided more than \$315 million in rental assistance to more than 76,000 households impacted by COVID-19 and has been recognized by the White House for its efficiency in delivering relief. Judge Hidalgo previously spoke at a White House round-table about how the program has cut red tape and sped up payments to landlords, keeping families from being evicted. So we are not surprised that Princeton University's Eviction Lab has proposed an exciting research initiative to work with Harris County's Rental Assistance Program to inform academic research and conversations to advance public understanding of the eviction crisis.

## Special DWI Initiatives,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

heavy presence of deputies and state troopers that will work to identify and arrest motorists who get behind the wheel while under the influence.

"We're committed to reducing drunk-driving tragedies and educating Harris County residents about the dangers of drinking and driving," Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said. "Every single injury and death caused by drunk driving is preventable."

While Memorial Day weekend serves as a time for family and friends to get together, Gonzalez said it is also a time when alcohol-related accidents and DWI incidents tend to rise.

"We're committed to reducing drunk-driving tragedies and educating Harris

County residents about the dangers of drinking and driving," Gonzalez said. "Every single injury and death caused by drunk driving is preventable. We urge everyone to make responsible choices, plan ahead, and never drive under the influence. Together, we can make this Memorial Day weekend a safe and memorable occasion for all."

Those planning to go out this Memorial Day weekend were urged to designate a sober driver, call a taxi or rideshare service, use public transit, or arrange for someone you trust to pick you up.

Officials said drivers suspected of being impaired will be subject to field sobriety tests and no-refusal blood draws.

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# CHURCH PAGE

## BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Hosea (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. From Luke 8:2, how many demons did Mary Magdalene have in her? 1, 3, 5, 7
3. Who wrote in Proverbs 13:24, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son"? David, Solomon, Job, Ruth

4. From Judges 13-16, who was the strongest man on earth? Hercules, Samson, Obadiah, Timothy
  5. During the great flood, how many humans were on the ark? 2, 4, 6, 8
  6. In Psalms 68:5, who is "father to the fatherless"? Oneself, Heaven, Fool, God
- ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) 7, 3) Solomon, 4) Samson, 5) 8 (Gen. 7:13), 6) God  
Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online.

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For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

1 CORINTHIANS 1: 18,19

"Christ on the Cross with the Virgin and Saint John" (15th century woodcut)

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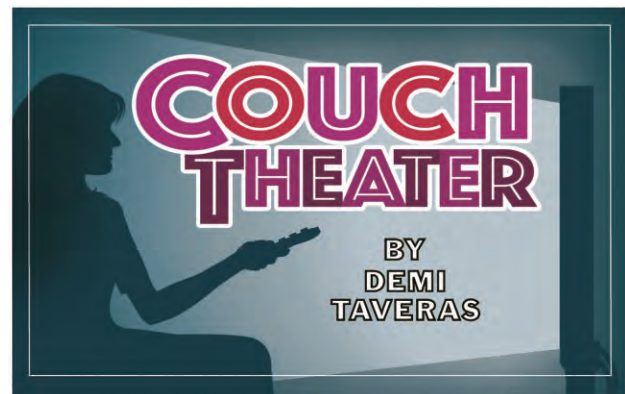
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Sarah Snook, Kieran Culkin and Jeremy Strong star in "Succession."

"Succession"

"Succession" (TV-MA) — What better way to end the killer lineup that HBO's Sunday night slot has had for the past year than with the finale of the show "Succession"?

After four seasons following the dynamic Roy siblings around their vulgar corporate wonderland, the coveted position as CEO of their father's company, Waystar RoyCo, will fall into just one person's hands. As longtime viewers of the show know, anything is possible when it comes to the Roys. The incredible leads — Jeremy Strong, Sarah Snook and Kieran Culkin — along with the rest of the talented cast are sure to bring the show to a bittersweet close. The full 10-episode final season is out now. (HBO Max)

"Menendez + Menudo, Boys Betrayed"

(NR) — A new development in the story of Lyle and Erik Menendez, the brothers who were sentenced to life in prison for murdering their parents, has come to light and spawned a three-part docuseries. During their 1996 trial, the brothers alleged that their father, Jose, had sexually abused them for years, but these claims weren't considered by the prosecution to be their true motivation for the murders. Now, Roy Rosello, former member of Puerto Rican pop group Menudo (previous members also include Ricky Martin and Draco Rosa), comes forward in this docuseries about the sexual abuse he also suffered from Jose Menendez. For those who don't know the Menendez story or the horrific working conditions of being in Menudo

— as well as other American boybands who followed Menudo's lead — I highly recommend this sobering docuseries out now. (Peacock)

"A Man Called Otto" (PG-13) — America's dad Tom Hanks leads this sweet comedy-drama film based on the 2012 novel "A Man Called Ove" by Swedish author Fredrik Backman. Backman's novel was first adapted onto the big screen in Sweden back in 2015, but an English-language film was quickly put into motion in 2017.

Hanks plays Otto Anderson, a widower in Pennsylvania who has become quite the grump after his wife's passing. After retiring, Otto prepares to end his life, but when a new family moves in nearby, their genuine warmth and love slowly lead Otto to find his purpose in life again. "A Man Called Otto" is out now. (Netflix)

"The Old Way" (R) — Declaration-of-Independence-stealer Nicolas Cage stars in this new western film out now on streaming. Taking place in the late 1800s, Colton Briggs (Cage) was known as a truly unruly gunfighter — that is, until he got married. So, now that Colton's a husband to a woman named Ruth, his life has completely altered over the course of 20 years. And he has a spunky 12-year-old daughter, Brooke, to show for it. But, when dear Ruth is murdered in cold blood by a bandit from Colton's past, the gunfighter he kept tucked away comes out for vengeance — this time with a sidekick. This is a father-daughter dance like you've never seen before. (Hulu)

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HOLLYWOOD by Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD — It's been 20 years since Jamie Lee Curtis and Lindsey Lohan made "Freaky Friday," (2003). The story about a mother and daughter whose bodies are switched was funny when Curtis was 44 and Lohan was 16.

Now, they're 64 and 36, how freaky can that Friday be? Winning a supporting actress Oscar (for "Everything Everywhere All at Once") can make all your wishes come true, and Disney is anxious to utilize her fame. She's already completed the \$158 million horror/comedy, "The Haunted Mansion," with Tiffany Haddish, Owen Wilson, Danny DeVito, Rosario Dawson, Dan Levy and Jared Leto, (the second to feature their Haunted Mansion attraction), hits theaters July 28th.

Curtis also wrapped the sci-fi action/comedy, "Borderlands," costarring heavyweights Cate Blanchett, Kevin Hart and Jack Black.

Lindsay Lohan mounted a successful comeback last year (after a period which included jail and bad press) when she revived her career with the successful Netflix rom/com, "Falling For Christmas," opposite Chord Overstreet and Jack Wagner. It did so well she's currently filming a Netflix fantasy/rom-com, "Irish Wish," with Ed Speleers (Jimmy Kent in "Downton Abbey," Stephen Bonnett in "Outlander" and Jack Crusher in "Star Trek: Picard") and "Dr. Quinn" star, Jane Seymour. Lohan's younger sister, Aliana, (28), had a role in "Falling For Christmas" and her younger brother, Dakota, (26), is in "Irish Wish." Another Netflix rom-com is also being prepped.

The long-awaited sequel to "Beetlejuice," (the 1988 classic that grossed \$75 million), has been greenlit as "Beetlejuice 2" and will again star Michael Keaton, be directed by Tim Burton and feature Justin Theroux, (who scored with HBO's "White House Plumbers," opposite Woody Harrelson)



Jamie Lee Curtis

as his co-star. It's set for September 2024.

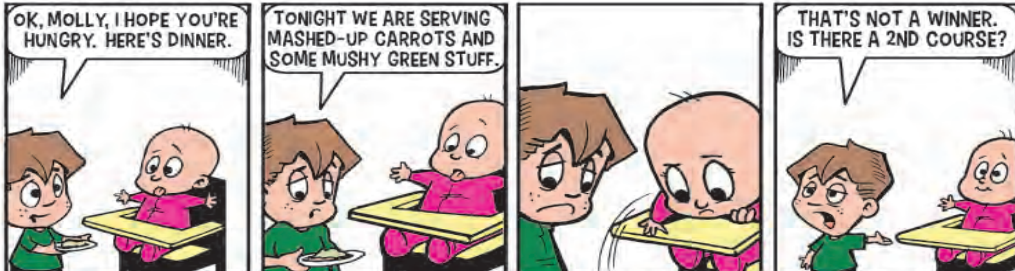
Director Guy Ritchie's hedging his bets by casting three superheroes for his upcoming action film. Jake Gyllenhaal, (of "The Spider-Man" franchise), Henry Cavill, ("The Man of Steel's" Superman) and Eiza Gonzalez, (of "Fast & Furious: Hobbs & Shaw) have all worked with Ritchie before but, as usual, he hasn't revealed the title for this big budget action picture yet.

Mix Tom Hiddleston, (of the "Thor" franchise), Mark Hamill, (of the "Star Wars" franchise) and the genius of Stephen King, in an adaptation of his "The Life Of Chuck" book and you've got a sure fire hot property for sale during The Cannes Film Festival.

Based on King's 2020 short story anthology, "If it Bleeds, The Life Of Chuck," that links three separate stories telling the biography of Charles Krantz in reverse, beginning with his death, from a brain tumor, at 30 and ending with his childhood in a supposedly haunted house. It'll be the first time we prey for a happy beginning since Benjamin Button! (c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU by Linda Thistle. Includes a 9x9 grid and difficulty level: Moderate, Challenging, HOO BOY!

HOCUS-FOCUS by Henry Boltinoff. Includes two panels of a man and a child in a field and a list of differences.

King Crossword. Includes a crossword grid and a list of clues for Across and Down.

Trivia Test Answers: 1. 1977; 2. North Atlantic Ocean; 3. Art Fleming; 4. Cerebellum; 5. "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" by Edgar Allan Poe; 6. Pompeii and Herculaneum; 7. The Albuquerque Isotopes; 8. Food baked in a pastry crust; 9. Peanut; 10. Subway.

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez. Includes a list of 10 trivia questions and their answers.

# International Arts Festival, Mural Fest showcase East Aldine District talent, diversity

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 photos by Juan Islas (e-vision1 pro) and Julieta Paita

Aldine District awarded prizes.

Classes included Frida Kahlo, Pinata making, Rainsticks, and building a violin.

Kids and families were able to spend the whole day at the International Art Festival, and enjoy more: facepainting, arts and crafts booths, tables,

and classes, train rides, and moon walk.

Sponsors included the East Aldine District, Aldine ISD, HCSO, BakerRipley, Suvida Healthcare, and the East Aldine Arts Council. Planning for the event was by Alma DeAlejandro of the East Aldine District, with support from BakerRipley.



Aztec Ceremony blessing the Land



West African Drumming



East Aldine District raffle and back packs



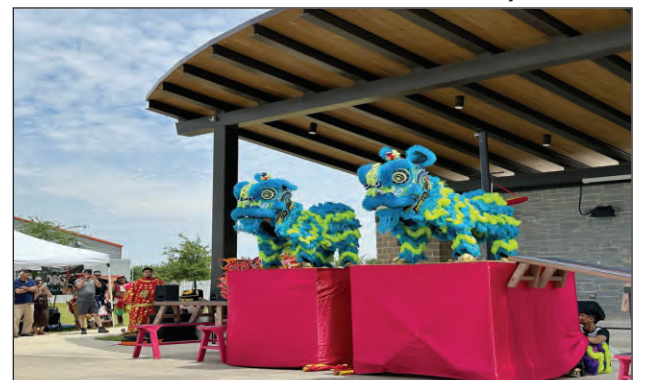
Dragon Dance performance



Good Eats thanks to the HCSO Sheriff's Deputies



Lion and Dragon Dancers set up on stage



Lion Dance performers on stage



Games: Pin Press at left, giant Rubik Cube at right



Lion Dance



Sheriff's Office and Explorers with car seats

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## MILLIONS OF TEXANS STILL NOT WEARING SEAT BELTS

TxDOT partners with law enforcement to urge everyone to "Click it or Ticket"

AUSTIN – It has been nearly seven years since Edén Ganzerla lost control of her car while driving to work and crashed into a retaining wall, breaking nearly every bone in her body. Since then, she has endured thousands of hours of physical, occupational and speech therapy, the result of one fateful decision to not wear her seat belt.

Ganzerla now struggles with a traumatic brain injury, speaks with the aid of a computer, and is slowly learning how to walk and talk again.

"Before the crash, Edén was very outgoing and talkative, living life to the fullest with her animals and friends," said John Ganzerla, Edén's father. "Now, she lives with us in Dripping Springs and is dependent on her mother and me for even the simplest everyday tasks."

Unfortunately, choosing to not wear a seat belt is an all too common mistake in Texas. In 2022 there were 1,258 people killed who were not wearing their seat belt, a 2.5% increase from the year before.

"It's critical for everyone to take just a few seconds to buckle up, every ride, every time," said TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams. "Wearing a seat belt is one of the most important precautions motorists and their passengers can take to protect themselves in a crash. Whatever reason you may have for not buckling up, I promise it's not worth your life."

While more than 90% of Texans make the right choice to wear a seat belt, that still means 10% of Texans make the dangerous choice to stay unprotected on the road. TxDOT's goal is to get 100% of drivers and passengers to wear their seat belt 100% of the time.

From May 22 through June 4, including Memorial Day Weekend, law enforcement from around the state will be working overtime ticketing motorists who are not buckled up. State law requires that every person in a vehicle be secured by a seat belt whether riding in the front or back seat. Fines and court costs for failing to fasten seat belts can add up to \$250 or more.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that the Click It or Ticket initiative has saved more than 7,399 lives, prevented more than 120,000 serious injuries, and resulted in \$28.5 billion in economic savings since its inception in 2002.

TxDOT's Click It or Ticket campaign is a key component of #EndTheStreakTX, a broader social media and word-of-mouth effort that encourages drivers to make safer choices while behind the wheel to help end the streak of daily deaths. Nov. 7, 2000, was the last deathless day on Texas roadways.

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