

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- HCC Registration 1
- Movie with a Cop 2
- Library News 2
- Aldine ISD Long Range Planning 3
- OP-ED Death Star Law . 4
- HC Cooling Centers 5
- Pet Matters 5
- Couch Theater 7
- EAMD Recycle Center .. 8
- LSC Map Your Future ... 8
- LSC Start Your Degree 8

NORTHEAST NEWS

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 VOL. 47, NO. 28 TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2023 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

LSC-EAST ALDINE CENTER

Enrollment Breeze Dates & Times

Tuesday, July 11 12 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Friday, July 28 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Saturday, August 12 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

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Sheriff's Explorer Program revived in East Aldine

EDITOR'S NOTE: After an hiatus of several years, the Harris County Sheriff's Office has restarted the Explorer Scout program for youth interested in a career in law enforcement. This story is about the first class in the revitalized program.

By ANNE MARIE KILDAY
 Northeast News/EAMD

A five-member team of Harris County Sheriff's Office Explorer Scout Post 42 stealthily climbed a staircase in the role of deputies.

training exercise, other young people in the team-building exercise pretended to be suspects in a studio apartment.

The "deputies" captured two "suspects," a missing gun and a handbag. But two other Explorer Scouts in the role of the suspected miscreants eluded capture by hiding really, really well in a storage room behind the Christmas ornaments.

A handcuffed Explorer escaped detention and darted swiftly down a darkened hallway



Sgt. Terry Garza with five members of the Explorer Scouts training.

as the pretend law enforcement officers chased him in frustration.

Harris County Sheriff's Sgt. Terry Garza then strictly advised the members of Explorer Scout Troop 42 about their mistakes during the exercise.

The Scout troop – aimed at teens who have an interest in law enforcement – will later compete against other similar Explorer posts statewide. They meet weekly and attend classes and practices at the headquarters of the East Aldine Management District.

For Garza and the other Harris County law enforcement officers who are advisers to the 31-member group, each simulated crime-fighting exercise is serious business. Any small mistakes, as the real law officers know all too well, can be deadly.

Even before the "staircase training" started, the Explorers were given a 23-page hand-out detailing the proper procedures to follow when responding to

See HCSO EXPLORERS PROGRAM, Page 2

HCC Northline Registration Fair & Open House Aug. 12, 19

HOUSTON -- Houston Community College (HCC) Northeast will host two Saturday fall registration events for new and returning students from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. on Aug. 12 and Aug. 19 at the Northline Campus, 8001 Fulton Street, Houston.

The Fall Registration Fairs are designed to provide personalized enrollment support which includes one-on-one help with selecting programs of study, enrolling in courses, and determining financial aid eligibility. Attendees

will also be entered for a chance to win a \$500 scholarship and free giveaways.

The fair provides a one-stop shop opportunity for attendees to speak with program experts and explore interactive displays that demonstrate what students learn in the classroom. HCC offers many career pathways and enrichment opportunities for high school students to senior citizens. Offering the registration fairs over two weekends provides a convenient way for adults, parents, and senior citizens

to learn more about associate degrees, specialized certificates, university transfer courses, dual credit, workforce training, continuing education, adult basic education, and free community learning programs.

For new and returning students seeking to enroll for fall, the fairs also present an opportunity to meet with departments that provide additional support and resources that

See HCC REGISTRATION, page 2

Support for Westfield FD Explorer's program



Westfield Fire Chief Adrian Dillehay displays a check for \$12,000 from the East Aldine District, supporting the Explorer's Program at the fire department. Explorers are youth who are learning about a public safety program with a first responder group. Others in the photo are board members of the East Aldine Management District. See story above for more about the Firefighter Explorers.

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

NEWS NOTES

Back-2-School First Day of Classes:

DISTRICT:	DATE:
ALDINE	AUG 10 THU
HISD	AUG 28 MON
CROSBY	AUG 7 MON
HUFFMAN	AUG 9 WED
GOOSE CREEK	AUG 14 MON
GALENA PARK	AUG 9 WED
SHELDON	AUG 9 WED
CHANNELVIEW	AUG 16 WED
DAYTON	AUG 9 WED
BARBERS HILL	AUG 16 WED

BakerRipley Farmer's Market Aug. 23

Every 4th Wednesday, from 10am to 1pm at the BakerRipley East Aldine Campus. Open to the Public. Fresh Produce, Vendors, Food Truck, Garage Sale. Have SNAP? Get more Fruits & Vegetables with Double Up Food Bucks. \$1 Dollar per \$1 match for up to \$20 Dollars per Day.

Lone Star College-East Aldine Campus "Enrollment Breeze"

Saturday, August 12 - 10am to 1pm. LoneStar.edu/LearnMore. 346-378-7503.

EAMD Small Business Seminar Luncheon 8/24

East Aldine District is hosting a Small Business Seminar/Luncheon at their District Office, on Thursday August 24 starting at 12 noon. All Small Businesses are welcome. Lunch and refreshments provided. Program: How to write a Lending-Ready Business Plan, with David Liu of U of H SBDC. Sponsored by East Aldine District, Woodforest Bank, UH SBDC, BakerRipley. Register at AldineDistrict.org/RSVP. More info or phone registration 512-658-4985.

TURN YOUR SKILLS INTO A CAREER

FALL OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, August 12
 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
 HCC Northline Campus
 8001 Fulton Street
(Registration assistance, fun, information, & HCC swag)

REGISTER NOW

FALL CLASSES BEGIN

AUGUST 21

Scan for steps on how to get started!

Available at the Northeast College Campuses

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic & University Transfer courses High School Equivalency/GED English as a Second Language (ESL) Community Learning classes (Free) Audio Recording Technology Automotive & Diesel Repair Auto Body/Collision Repair Business Administration Cosmetology Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic Water & Wastewater Tech OSHA, Hazwoper, & NCCER Digital Communications Process Operator/Instrumentation Tech Petroleum Technician Police, Fire, & EMS Welding & Bilingual Welding Air Conditioning Technician I & II Bilingual AC Technician I & II Plumbing Technician I & II
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CLASSES OFFERED
 DAY, EVENINGS & WEEKENDS

Acres Homes Campus | 630 W. Little York Road | Houston, TX 77091
Northline Campus | 8001 Fulton Street | Houston, TX 77022
North Forest Campus | 6010 E. Little York Road | Houston, TX 77016
Northeast Campus | 555 Community College Drive | Houston, TX 77013
Automotive Tech. Training Center | 4638 Airline Drive | Houston, TX 77022

713.718.8300 **hccs.edu/fall23**

HCC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity and gender expression, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or Veteran status. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: David Cross, Director, EEO, 504, & Title IX Coordinator, 713.718.8271 or Institutional.Equity@hcc.edu

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HCSO Explorer's Program,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

a reported break-in. A large, well-lit classroom is the first step before each exercise, where experienced officers stress how to respond in emergency situations.

In class, the teens are quiet, polite and attentive. There are no peeks at cell-phones, passing notes or talking.

Out in the hallway, however, their teenage enthusiasm for the Explorer program is obvious and contagious. Some Explorers are the children of law enforcement officers; others are considering a future career and others say they enrolled out of curiosity.

Brian Tenorio, 16, enthusiastically endorsed the Explorer program.

"This training has given me a better understanding of what law enforcement officers face every day. Through this training, they teach us that our job is to protect people, not use our gun, or force," Tenorio said. "I think law enforcement officers have a bad reputation, but most of that is due to the media."

"I have really liked learning how law enforcement officers help one another," Tenorio said. "When I first got here, I was nervous. I was shy. But now I've gotten to know the people here now."

For Garza, the revitalized Explorer program is a dream come true. Previous Explorer Posts had to be curtailed during the pandemic.

Now, it is going strong again.

Garza started her first Explorer Post in 2011 and has seen 62 former Explorers go on to become full-time law enforcement officers.



Physical Training as part of the Explorer's program.

"I'm not a teacher, and I never expected to find out how rewarding this is," Garza said.

Garza said there was no recruitment effort needed for the reopened program.

"We just posted it on social media, and all these kids showed up. And they come back again, every single week," Garza said. Before any training exercise, the students have class time.

"We take the time to explain to them why we do certain things. We explain the laws, we explain in full detail and try to get into every possible situation. So, we are explaining to them exactly what we do on the streets," Garza said. "We do stress that it's all about the laws."

Because all the Post's advisers are patrol officers, "I have a lot of new officers who teach these young people all of the new tactics."

As for the rambunctious foot chase down the hallway, Garza said she would take two Explorers aside to explain why they wouldn't act that way in a real-life situation.

"If he was chasing that guy who was hand-cuffed, that guy could get clothes-lined in the chase. And then, you've having to explain that on Channel 13,"

Garza said. "We try to teach them about all the things they need to think about."

A similar program for would-be firefighters is taught by Chief Adrian Dillehay at the Westfield Fire Station in East Aldine. The board of the East Aldine Management District recently approved a \$12,000 grant to buy more equipment so that Dillehay can expand the firefighter Explorer Program.

Dillehay, who recently took over the partly volunteer department, said Westfield Fire has had about a dozen students enrolled in its Explorer program. But, due to equipment limitations, he's been unable to recruit Explorers for the firefighter program at all Aldine ISD high schools.

Dillehay emphasized that Explorer firefighters don't go into burning buildings, but they do have an extensive training program that eventually allows members to go on firefighters' runs to grass fires or vehicle fires. Extensive training, and fire certification, is required.

"We are really looking forward to working with more students in the community," Dillehay said.

— By Anne Marie Kilday

HCC Registration,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



HCC Northline spring open house

include financial coaching, sports recreation, student life, career services, face-to-face and online tutoring, technology, and library services.

For more information, call 713-718-8300 or visit hccs.edu/now.

About HCC

Houston Community College (HCC) is composed of 14 Centers of Excellence and numerous satellite centers that serve the diverse communities in the Greater Houston area by preparing individuals to live and work in an increasingly international and technological society. HCC is one of the country's largest singly accredited, open-admission community colleges offering associate degrees, certificates, workforce training and lifelong learning opportunities.

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COMMUNITY WATCH

Arrest made in Fatal Bennington shooting

HOUSTON – Charges have been filed against a suspect arrested in the fatal shooting of a male at 6767 Bennington Street about 5:10 p.m. on May 26.

The suspect, Maurice Dewayne Smith, 17, is charged with murder in the 248th State District Court. A booking photo of Smith is attached to this news release.

He is accused in the death of Dearon Stout, 17.

HPD Homicide Division Detectives L. Patterson and N. Henderson reported:

Officers responded to a

report of a shooting at an apartment complex at the above address and found Mr. Stout suffering from a gunshot wound. Responding Houston Fire Department paramedics pronounced him deceased at the scene.

A witness stated they saw an armed male exit a white Chevrolet sedan, heard gunshots and then saw the sedan flee the scene in an unknown direction.

Further investigation identified Smith as the suspect in this case and he was subsequently charged. Members of



Maurice Dewayne Smith

HPD's Northeast Patrol Division Crime Suppression Team arrested Smith on Monday (July 3) without further incident.

Movie with a Cop

East Aldine District
July 19 at 4:34 PM

We had some super special visitors at the East Aldine Management District today! Our young guests from Stay & Play Daycare Center and Academic Academy got to enjoy "Movie with a Cop" with the Harris County Sheriff's Office Community Engagement Division. McGruff the Crime Dog stopped by to visit, too! #FuninEastAldine



Astros honor AISD Students

Javier Villarreal, Ed.D.
@JVillarrealAISD

Proud of our Aldine students for being 2023 Minute Maid Grand Slam for Youth Baseball Scholarship recipients. Karisma Garcia and Julian Scott were honored this evening at the Astros game.
#AldineConnected

AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS

BILINGUAL STORY TIME

You're invited to attend Story Time every **Tuesday at 11 am**. Story Time is a great way for children to build early literacy skills with stories, rhymes and songs. Parents are encouraged to participate by sitting with children and singing (and learning!) new songs. Children of all ages are welcome!

¡Estás invitado a asistir a tiempo de cuentos cada **martes a las 11 am**. Tiempo de cuentos es una excelente manera para que los niños desarrollen habilidades de alfabetización temprana con libros, rimas y canciones. Animamos a los padres a sentarse con los niños y canten las canciones con nosotros. ¡Los niños de todas las edades son bienvenidos!

ENGLISH COMPUTER CLASS

*Important- Instruction is in English.
*Google account is required (Though we can help you make one if you don't have one already)
*Class format: In-person, in the computer lab at the Aldine Library.
Learn computer basics by practicing on our PC's with Instructor Nyla! We will learn about using web browsers, google apps, Microsoft suite, keeping your information safe online, and MUCH more! Join us for a weekly class on Tuesdays! Join us **Tuesday, Aug. 8, 11:30am - 12:30pm**.

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, Aug. 10, 3:30 - 5:30pm**.

APPLICATION BASICS: RESUMES

Learn about what resumes should tell prospective employers, the kinds of online filters they'll pass through, and how long recruiters really spend looking at them. Open to teens and adults. **Saturday, Aug. 12 at 11am**.

CITIZENSHIP CLASSES

Are you applying for Naturalization? You need this class! We can help you prepare. We will meet Wednesdays from 10:30am - 12:30 pm. 10 week course. Starts **Wednesday, Aug. 16**.

All these must apply. — Eligible to apply for Naturalization

— Age 18 or older
— Speak, read, & write Basic English

Register at <https://tinyurl.com/k53c6hth> or at the library on the first day of class.

ADULT VOLUNTEERS

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 for the holidays? You need to get your passport in order NOW! Current routine processing is estimated at 13 weeks and expedited processing time is estimated at 9 weeks. 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 - Appointments required. 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 to be added on the list to be seen. Sign-in starts at 1pm.

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

SCHOOL NEWS PAGE

AISD's Finance Department Earns Certificate of Achievement From GFOA

The Aldine ISD Finance Department has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA).



financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government entity and its management.

The GFOA established the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Program in 1945 to encourage and assist state and local governments to go beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting principles to prepare annual comprehensive financial reports that evidence the spirit of transparency and

full disclosure and then to recognize individual governments that succeeded in achieving that goal.

Aldine ISD's Finance Department consists of Chief Financial Officer Stan Osborne; Alexia Rodgers, assistant superintendent of finance; Firmino Mariano, director of budget; Perla Davila, director of consolidated programs; Desiree Smith, director of accounting and business services; Veronika Norris, assistant director of accounting and business services; Dr. Demetra Skinner, director of federal and state compliance; Carlotta Nicholas, director of purchasing; Stacey Smith, director of special programs; Minerva Alba, accounts payable supervisor; Tony Silva, payroll manager; and Takara Bell; payroll supervisor.

Aldine ISD CNS's Department to Operate CEP Program During 2023-24 School Year



Aldine ISD's Child Nutrition Services Department will operate the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) during the 2023-24 school year.

The Aldine ISD recently announced it would operate the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program for the 2023-2024 school year. Schools qualifying to run CEP serve breakfast and lunch to all children at no charge and eliminate the collection of meal applications for free, reduced-price, and paid student meals. This approach reduces burdens for families and school administrators and helps ensure students receive nutritious meals.

For additional information, contact the following individual:
 Marivel Mendoza, Customer Accounts Coordinator
 Aldine ISD Child Nutrition Services 1802 Aldine Bender Houston, TX 77032
 281985-6441
Mreyes5@aldineisd.org

AISD Police Officer Ariel Holliday Earns 3 Awards From TCPA

Aldine ISD Police Officer Ariel Holliday received three awards from the Texas Crime Prevention Association (TCPA). She received the awards at the group's annual convention in Rockwall.



Aldine ISD Police Officer Ariel Holliday poses with two of the three awards she recently received from the Texas Crime Prevention Association.

Holliday was honored with the "Above and Beyond" Award, the "Crime Prevention Specialist" Award, and the "Crime Prevention Specialist" Award (Small Agency category).

The "Above and Beyond" Award signifies that an individual has exceeded expectations of their role or responsibilities. The award recognizes an officer's exceptional effort, dedication, and outstanding achievement in law enforcement. The award acknowledged Holliday's exceptional commitment to her job, ability to exceed expectations, and willingness to take on additional responsibilities and challenges.

The "Crime Prevention Specialist" Award highlighted Holliday's expertise and contributions to crime prevention. It recognized her knowledge, skill, and efforts in implementing effective strategies to prevent crime, ensuring the safety and security of individuals and communities. In addition, the award acknowledged Holliday's

commitment to creating awareness, implementing preventative measures, collaborating with relevant stakeholders, significantly reducing crime rates, and fostering safer environments.

Holliday said the awards humbled her.

"Receiving these awards means a lot to me," she said. "It demonstrates my exemplary service as a crime prevention specialist. It indicates my exceptional dedication, expertise, and achievements in preventing crime and ensuring public safety. It also serves as recognition for my ability to exceed expectations, consistently deliver outstanding results, and make a positive difference in the

Aldine community."

Aldine ISD Police Chief Paul Cordova said he was proud to have an officer with Holliday's dedication and skills as a member of his police department.

"I am more than pleased that Police Officer Ariel Holliday is the recipient of these prestigious awards," he said. "Her work in the community speaks volumes about her commitment to keeping our kids safe. Her knowledge and specialty as a crime prevention specialist enhance her ability to protect and engage the community meaningfully."

Holliday has seven years of experience as a police officer and has spent five years with the Aldine ISD Police Department.

The Texas Crime Prevention Association (TCPA) is comprised of Law Enforcement Personnel and Civilians interested in Crime Prevention, Community Safety, Neighborhood Watch, Loss Prevention, and Security or Citizens Police Academies. Our organization was founded in 1975 and is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We provide continuous crime prevention-related training to over 400 members dedicated to making safer environments and communities.

Aldine ISD Convenes Long Range Planning Committee, Makes Recommendations for District's Future



Aldine ISD Trustees and Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney participated in a bond proposal workshop with Aldine ISD administrators in the Board Room of the Donaldson Administration Building on Aug. 1.

Aldine ISD Board of Trustees and district leaders held a workshop on Aug. 1 to further discuss a bond proposal based on the recommendations presented to them by the district's Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) at their July meeting. Those recommendations result from several Spring 2023 meetings in which the committee convened to review a comprehensive facilities assessment to address and plan for district improvements proactively.

"The administration is using this committee's recommendations and feedback from the polling to continue developing a bond referendum proposal that we believe meets the needs of our community," said Aldine ISD Chief of Staff and LRPC co-chair Sheleah Reed. "Any proposal presented will include safety and security improvements,

facility enhancements, and instructional technology upgrades."

Committee co-chairs include Chief Financial Officer Stan Osborne and Chief Operations Officer Fred Washington. The LRPC comprises various district stakeholders, including teachers, campus staff, school leaders, parents, community members, students, and district administrators.

An assessment reviewed by the LRPC found that 25% of Aldine ISD's schools are over 50 years old, and many need repair. The ESA found that it would cost \$1.02 billion to address repair needs for all district campuses and that \$2.7 billion will be needed for total repair needs over the next 10 years. Committee members had input in projects they would like the district to undertake should the Board of Trustees call for a bond

referendum in November 2023.

Highlighted projects include an Education and Performing Arts Center, several campus rebuilds and remodels, a District Transportation Center, and a free-standing District Police Department Building.

Additional projects would include improved districtwide WiFi and connectivity, extra buses and an Emergency Notification System, HVAC upgrades, roof replacements, and new marquees.

The district's last bond referendum was in 2015 when Aldine voters overwhelmingly approved a \$798 million bond proposal for the construction of new schools, renovations, enhancements, and other projects.

Visit the long-range planning committee website to learn more: <https://lrpc.aldineisd.org>.

JASON Learning Recognizes District's Xandra Williams-Earlie for Outstanding Leadership in STEM Education

JASON Learning, a nonprofit focused on STEM education, presented the esteemed "Leading By Example" award to Xandra Williams-Earlie, high school science program director for Aldine ISD.

Aldine ISD, with a student population of approximately 62,000 and located on the north side of the greater Houston area, serves a community where 92% of students face economic disadvantages. Despite these challenges, Williams-Earlie's exceptional leadership has transformed STEM education within the district.

This honor celebrates her unwavering dedication to her students, community, and the advancement of STEM education. Williams-Earlie's outstanding leadership in integrating STEM learning across multiple subjects has enriched the educational experience and empowered students to overcome barriers and pursue careers in STEM.

"Xandra is a tenacious leader, deeply passionate about fostering real-world STEM exposure and innovative thinking. Texas, Aldine, and JASON Learning have been blessed by her willingness to mentor and influence science education



Xandra Williams-Earlie

curriculum, providing students in Aldine ISD with engaging and interdisciplinary learning experiences.

"Xandra has an incredible ability to bring STEM subjects to life in the classroom, making them not only relevant but also exciting and enjoyable for her students. We are honored to recognize her outstanding contributions and celebrate her as a true champion of STEM," said Dr. Eleanor Smalley, president and CEO of JASON Learning.

JASON Learning sincerely thanks Williams-Earlie for her invaluable contributions to science education and for championing JASON Learning's mission. Her leadership, vision, and commitment to fostering STEM education have shaped the trajectory of science learning in Texas and inspired educators and students alike.

and district leaders across all disciplines," said Debra Hill, vice president of curriculum development at JASON Learning.

Williams-Earlie's 46 years of dedicated service in public schools have significantly impacted science education throughout Texas. Her commitment to excellence in the field has earned her recognition as the President of the Texas Science Education Leadership Association and the prestigious Outstanding Leadership in Science Education Award in 2020.

As an early adopter and passionate advocate of JASON Learning, Williams-Earlie has seamlessly integrated JASON's innovative STEM resources into the



★ OPINION PAGE ★

★ OPINION

By Mayor Sylvester Turner
City of Houston

Houston files suit
against "Death Star"
law

City of Houston Files Suit Against the State of Texas' "Death Star" Super Preemption Law

HOUSTON - Today, the City of Houston filed a lawsuit in Travis County against the State of Texas to have declared unconstitutional, void, and unenforceable House Bill 2127, the so-called "Death Star" or "Super" preemption bill. Governor Greg Abbott signed Texas House Bill 2127 on June 14, 2023, with an effective date of September 1, 2023.

Preemption under established law is a constitutional doctrine by which our judiciary carefully considers and determines in rare instances that state law displaces conflicting local law, finding there is no possibility that State and local law can coexist. Under HB 2127, preemption is given a new meaning and one that effectively repeals Texas constitutional home rule. Not only is preemption given a new meaning, this legislation disregards the hierarchy of Texas laws where a statute such as HB 2127 cannot repeal a constitutional provision. Our laws require a constitutional amendment election to effect a repeal.

Constitutional local control gives Texas cities the power of self-government, permitting them to tailor their laws specifically to address local residents' and businesses' needs and desires. Well-established Supreme Court decisions place the burden of proof on the party challenging a city law to establish a direct and irreconcilable conflict with unmistakable clarity of preemption.

HB 2127 creates a one-size-fits-all statewide regulation scheme with no attempt to address areas of concern that prompted cities to pass laws in response to constituent requests. Programs like Houston's pay-or-play programs for city contractors, which provide 30,000 uninsured Houstonians with health care, would die under HB 2127. Dallas and Austin's ordinances that mandate water breaks for workers in the Texas heat would similarly go by the wayside.

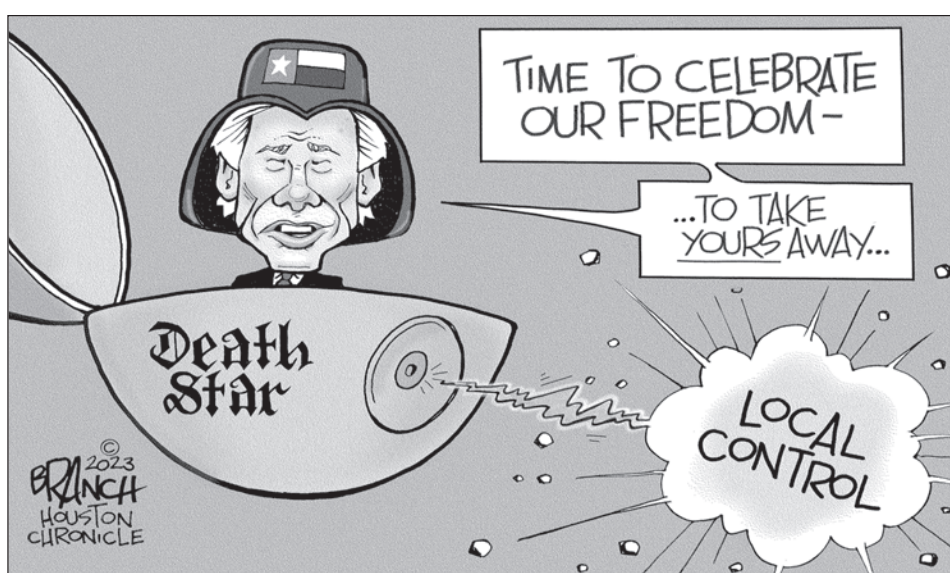
The bill permits the State of Texas simply to decree that whole "fields" of current and future local regulation are off limits to city government. This would be true even in emergencies like Hurricane Harvey. Short of filing lawsuits in the hope that local law is not in one of HB 2127's several "fields" of law, citizens only recourse would be to petition their State Legislature to pass a law addressing the concerns during the five months every two years the Legislature meets or petition the Governor to call a special session.

HB 2127 would also improperly shift the heavy burden of disproving preemption to cities—clearly violating the Texas Constitution and decades of the Texas Supreme Court's preemption rulings.

HB 2127 achieves these unconstitutional ends by using vague language so indefinite and opaque that Texas cities cannot know which of their laws they may enforce, and Texas businesses and residents cannot know which local laws they must obey. Instead, the Legislature has unconstitutionally delegated to the courts the legislative responsibility to identify specific laws or purported fields allegedly preempted, if they can. Adding insult to injury, HB 2127 encourages and forces home-rule cities and their taxpayers to pay fees to finance such lawsuits filed by trade associations seeking to deregulate their industries at the local level.

"The Texas Constitution expressly champions the local control and innovation that has been key to the tremendous economic dynamism in cities like Houston. HB 2127 reverses over 100 years of Texas constitutional law without amending the Constitution. Because Texas has long had the means to preempt local laws that conflict with State law, HB 2127 is unnecessary, dismantling the ability to govern at the level closest to the people and therefore punishing all Texas residents. Houston will fight so its residents retain their constitutional rights and have immediate local recourse to government," said Mayor Sylvester Turner.

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.



★ THE POSTSCRIPT
By Carrie Classon

The Painter

I see him painting every afternoon.

Every day I take a walk and, when I am in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, my walk usually takes me through an old fabric mill that has been converted into gallery space. Most of the galleries sell the work of artists from Mexico City and beyond. But some of the galleries are spaces where artists are both working, and selling their work and the floor is spattered with paint, and easels hold paintings in various stages of completion.

Usually, I don't see the artists. They seem to be somewhat elusive. Perhaps they don't like being pestered by looky-loos coming by to see what they are doing and how they create their magic on canvas.

But one artist is always working. For a long time, I would wave as I walked by.

Then one day, I stopped to tell him how inspiring it was to see him working every day. I told him I was a writer and that sometimes it felt as if there was no one else writing.

"But I see you painting here, every day, and I feel less alone," I told him.

He said he was honored. He spoke English with an accent, but it was not a Spanish accent. He is Italian, as it turns out. His girlfriend is Mexican, from San Miguel.

His work is imposing. He does portrait art, and within the realistic paintings of his subjects, he has abstract art bursting out from inside them, as if their thoughts and emotions had turned into vivid colors and shapes.

"Do you have days when it is easier?" I asked. "Are there days when the painting flows more freely than others?"

I felt a little bad because, in order to answer the question, he paused his painting. He was working on the background of a male figure. The background was flesh-toned, so the person almost melted into it. He was mixing colors of brown and white, painting, covering, mixing again. It was mesmerizing.

"No," he said. "I think the work flows on every day I am painting. If it is not flowing at all, I go home."

But I know he is always there—because I see him.

And then he told me he had not always been a painter. He was trained as an actor and worked in films in Italy. He hated it. He said he was only valued for how he looked.

Then he met his wonderful girlfriend, and he moved to Mexico to be with her. But he had no job. So he and a business partner set up a small export company. He spent eight months working on it and then—without warning—his partner quit. His business dream was over.

That was when he started to paint.

Now he has more commissions and offers to show in galleries than he can accept. People love his work, and so does he.

"It freed me, my partner leaving," he said. "If he hadn't done that, I would never have gotten to paint!" "But how did you learn?" I asked.

"On YouTube!" he said. "I just practiced and practiced."

And I know this is true because he is the one painter who is there every day, working on a new canvas, carefully mixing the colors on his brush, contemplating what he sees growing before him.

I saw him there yesterday. He was concentrating intently, and I didn't want to take up his time. But it is a great comfort to know—even without seeing him—he is there right now, painting.

Till next time,
Carrie

★ STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Wildfire Chances Increasing Across State

The risk for wildfires across the state has risen along with the hot and dry conditions, according to the Texas A&M Forest Service.

"With the recent uptick in wildfire activity, Texas A&M Forest Service has mobilized additional personnel and equipment to assist with response," said Wes Moorehead, Texas A&M Forest Service fire chief. "State and local firefighters are prepared to respond quickly but we need Texans to be careful and prevent wildfire ignitions while conditions remain hot and dry."

Nine out of 10 wildfires cross the state are both human-caused and preventable. The most common causes of wildfires during summer are debris burning and equipment use. That includes parking in dry grass and dragging trailer chains.

The forest service reported seven active wildfires as of Friday, most of which were 90% contained. However, the Blum Fire covering an estimated 300 acres was only 40% contained, while the Classic Canyon Fire in Coryell County, covering 150 acres, was 20% contained.

There are 150 counties in Texas with burn bans.

ABBOTT SIGNS TAX RELIEF BILL; NOW GOES TO VOTERS

With Gov. Gregg Abbott's signature on an \$18 billion property tax relief package, now it's up to the voters in November to approve a proposed constitutional amendment that would put it into effect.

The Austin American-Statesman reported that, if passed in November, homeowners would be eligible for a \$100,000 homestead exemption, with those 65 and older getting an additional \$40,000 exemption. The omnibus measure also exempts many smaller businesses from paying franchise taxes and implements a pilot program to limit annual property tax appraisal value increases.

Voters also will decide the fate of 13 other proposed constitutional amendments on the November ballot. Besides the property tax measure, the



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders

propositions include creating a broadband infrastructure fund; creation of a Texas energy fund to build new electric generating plants; and creation of a water fund to finance water projects in Texas.

BOOKSTORES SUE OVER LAW RATING BOOKS IN SCHOOLS

Texas bookstores have joined with national organizations to sue in federal court over a new Texas law that requires a rating system for books in schools and seeks to ban sexually explicit books from public school libraries.

The American Booksellers Association and other national groups were joined by BookPeople in Austin, Blue Willow Bookshop in Houston and others in filing the suit, saying the law, due to take effect on Sept. 1, "is unrealistic, limits students' reading options and narrows libraries' book selections," according to the Statesman.

Named as defendants in the suit are several state agencies, including the Texas Education Agency, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the State Board of Education, all of which will be responsible for implementing the law.

"This law is bad for small businesses, like independent bookstores," Charley Rejsek, CEO of BookPeople, said. "The workload, and the monetary aspect that goes along with the workload, is just impossible to meet."

In a tweet responding to the lawsuit, Rep. Jared Patterson, R-Frisco, who authored HB 900, said "bring it."

NORTHEAST NEWS

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Published each Tuesday by GrafikPress Corp. Any erroneous statement which may appear will be corrected when brought to the attention of the publisher. Liability for errors is limited to the reprinting of the corrected version. Submissions are encouraged, in person, by mail, by Fax, or by email, to nenewsroom@aol.com

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Aldine ISD CNS's Department to operate CEP program during 2023-24 school year

The Aldine ISD recently announced it will operate the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program for the 2023-2024 school year. Schools qualifying to operate CEP serve breakfast and lunch to all children at no charge and eliminate the collection of meal applications for free, reduced-price, and paid student meals. This approach reduces burdens for both families and school administrators and helps ensure that students receive nutritious meals.

For additional information, contact the following individual:

Aldine ISD
 Marivel Mendoza, Customer Accounts Coordinator
 Child Nutrition Services
 1802 Aldine Bender
 Houston, TX 77032
 281 985-6441
 Mreyes5@aldineisd.org

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Comunicado de prensa muestra: Disposición de Elegibilidad Comunitaria (CEP)

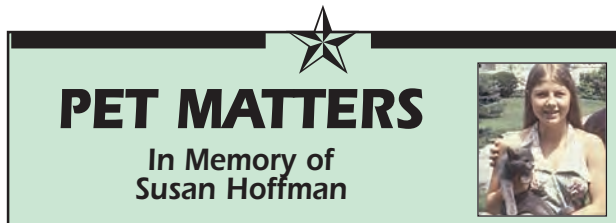
El Aldine ISD anunció el día de hoy que continuará su política de operar la Disposición de Elegibilidad Comunitaria (CEP) bajo el Programa Nacional de Almuerzos Escolares y el Programa de Desayunos Escolares para el año escolar 2023-2024. Las escuelas que califican para operar la Disposición de Elegibilidad Comunitaria (CEP) sirven desayuno y almuerzo a todos los niños sin cargo y eliminan la recolección de solicitudes de comidas para obtener comidas para estudiantes gratuitas, a precio reducido y pagadas. Este nuevo enfoque reduce las cargas tanto para las familias como para los administradores escolares y ayuda a garantizar que los estudiantes reciban comidas nutritivas.

Para obtener información adicional, por favor comuníquese con la siguiente persona:

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Six Tips To Keep Pets Safe During Storm Season

While no one is immune from the devastation of a natural disaster, preparing before a storm hits is key to keeping everyone in your family—including your pets—safe.

“What’s good for us is good for our pets,” said Kris Kiser, President of the TurfMutt Foundation, an environment education and stewardship program, and President and CEO of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), an international trade association representing manufacturers and suppliers of power equipment, small engines and battery power, utility and personal transport vehicles, and golf cars. “My dog is a member of the family, so we have a plan for keeping her safe in the event of an emergency, and we encourage all pet parents to do the same.”

Here are six ideas from the TurfMutt Foundation to help you include pet safety when mapping out a disaster preparedness plan.

—Have pets microchipped. In the event of an emergency—natural or otherwise—you want to ensure your pet can get back to you if you’re separated. Collars and ID tags, though important, can break or detach. Microchips—computerized and scannable implants about the size of a grain of rice—are more fool-proof since they’re inserted under your pet’s skin.

—Bring pets inside at the first sign of danger. Disasters can be disorienting for pets, and they could run away or hurt themselves reacting to loud noises and strange changes to their landscape. Also, rain, flying debris and high winds pose a danger.



—If you have to leave, keep pets with you. Leaving your pets behind during a natural disaster is never a good idea because they could escape or become exposed to a number of life-threatening hazards. Keep them on a leash or in a pet carrier so they don’t escape, even if you are in a “familiar” neighborhood.

—Determine where you’ll go. You need a Plan B if you are advised by government officials to leave your home. Not all emergency shelters will accept pets and physical distancing guidelines may reduce capacity in public shelters. Make a plan and develop a list of pet-friendly hotels open for business and outside your immediate area that you might evacuate to.

—Create a pet-friendly resource list. Research a list of veterinarians in the area should your pet need medical care (your regular vet may have some recommendations). Also, figure out which boarding facilities are nearby in case you need to separate from your pet for a time.

—Pack an emergency bag. Pack emergency provisions for pets well in advance of a catastrophe so

you can evacuate your home quickly if needed. Choose an easy-to-carry bag, label it and keep it where everyone in the family can find it quickly. The bag should include a pet first aid kit; enough food and bottled water for a week (rotate this every couple of months to keep it from going bad); medications (check periodically to ensure medicines in your emergency bag don’t expire); cleanup supplies; food and water dishes; bags (or litter for cats) for collecting waste; an extra collar and leash; photocopies of medical records; towels; recent photos of your pets; and a favorite toy or chewy for comfort. It’s also a good idea to have a sturdy carrier or crate for each pet.

By keeping in mind these ideas, pet preparedness plans can be put into action ahead of a storm instead of spending valuable time trying to determine what needs to be done to best protect pets.

Learn More
 For facts, tips and fun activities for families from the TurfMutt environment education and stewardship program, visit www.TurfMutt.com

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CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey


1. Is the book of Miriam (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Which book may be summarized as "Bad times do not change the nature of God"? Judges, Job, Jeremiah, Jonah
3. From 2 Chronicles 9:11, what are psalteries for singers? Robes, Stringed instruments, Lyrics, Abodes

4. In Revelation 6, what's the name of the fourth horseman? Death, Power, Brimstone, Terror
5. From Ecclesiastes 3, there is a time to break down and a time to? Plow, Climb, Rejoice, Build up
6. Which of these was Abraham's wife? Rebekah, Martha, Sarah, Michal

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Job, 3) Stringed instruments, 4) Death, 5) Build up, 6) Sarah
 Hardcore trivia fan? Visit Wilson Casey's subscriber site at www.patreon.com/triviaguy.
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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

*If you say, "The Lord is my refuge,"
 and you make the Most High
 your dwelling,
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 For he will command his angels
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 to guard you in all your ways...*



PSALM 91:9-11

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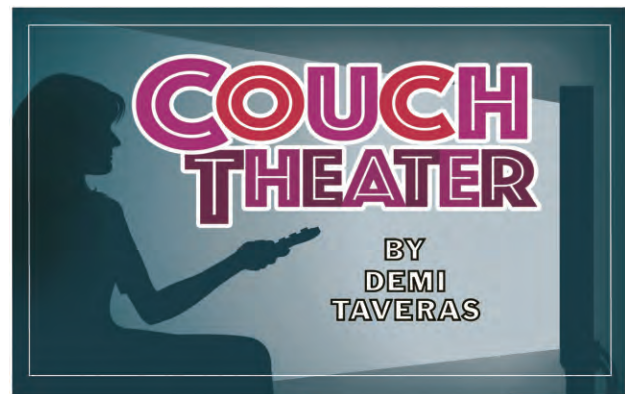
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Gal Gadot stars in "Heart of Stone."

"Heart of Stone"

"HEART OF STONE" (PG-13) — "Wonder Woman" Gal Gadot is back in another crime-fighting role. This time, she plays agent Rachel Stone, a spy in an organization called Charter that abides by strict rules — no friends, no relationships, no political leanings. Rachel is tasked with protecting an object that is considered "The Heart" of the agency, their most powerful tool. But when the tool gets stolen by enemy forces, Rachel must lead the Charter team to regain The Heart before disastrous events strike the world. The developers of "Heart of Stone" envisioned this film to be a start of a franchise similar to the blockbuster "Mission: Impossible" movies, but it remains to be seen if this film has enough legs to pull off the success Netflix desires. Out on Aug. 11. (Netflix)

"TRANSFORMERS: RISE OF THE BEASTS" (PG-13) — The seventh installment in the "Transformers" franchise is out now on streaming. Taking place in the 1990s before the events of the first "Transformers" transpired, Earth is in severe danger of being attacked by the planet-eating god Unicron after museum intern Elena discovers a key that calls out to Unicron and his army. Luckily, the key also calls out to the Autobots resistance, who wish to use it to return to their planet. However, with such a large threat looming over Earth, the Autobots must first team up with humans for an action-packed fight against Unicron. "Rise of the Beasts" stars Anthony Ramos ("In the Heights") and Dominique Fishback ("Swarm") in lead roles, and features voices from

Peter Dinklage, Michelle Yeoh and Pete Davidson. (Paramount+)

"RED, WHITE & ROYAL BLUE" (R) — Fans of the successful LGBT romance novel by Casey McQuiston will be excited to hear that the film adaptation hits streaming on Aug. 11! Taylor Zakhar Perez plays Alex Claremont-Diaz, the son of the president of the United States, whose feud with Prince Henry (Nicholas Galitzine) begins to generate bad press. Alex is then forced by his president mother to play nice with Henry in front of the press as damage control, and the pair's silly disdain for each other morphs into a most unexpected love affair. But, as their relationship evolves, their love for each other must overcome their fear of being accepted by their families and the general public. (Prime Video)

"STRANGE PLANET" (TV-PG) — Nathan W. Pyle's webcomic "Strange Planet" has been brought to life as a sci-fi comedy TV series! The adorable blue beings featured in the comic generated a huge fan base, with 6.6 million followers on Instagram, which propelled Pyle to eventually create a couple of graphic novels that became New York Times bestsellers. So, it only makes sense that a show was somewhere in the works all this time. Throughout the 10-episode season, viewers can follow these blue beings around their cotton-candy home world and enjoy the experiences that aren't too far off from our own here on Earth. Premieres on Aug. 9. (AppleTV+)

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HOLLYWOOD by Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD — Disney was quick to consider "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny" a bomb after it only grossed \$303.6 million after its first two weeks with a budget of \$295 million!

Did you know Steven Spielberg's original choice for Indiana Jones was Tom Selleck? In 1980, Spielberg made no secret Selleck was his choice for Indiana Jones and asked CBS to release Selleck from his contract 10 days early. But it seems that Spielberg's praise was all CBS needed. Knowing a good thing when they saw it, CBS decided to greenlight the pilot for a crime drama series they had shot, which is how Selleck became "Magnum, P.I."

Disappointed at losing the chance at playing the role in what was guaranteed to become a franchise, Selleck flew to Hawaii and rented a house at Black's Beach. The next day, the Screen Actors Guild announced their actors' strike, and he lost his salary, forcing him to do landscaping for his landlord in order to pay his rent.

During the five month strike, Spielberg signed a waiver with SAG, cast Harrison Ford as Indiana Jones and began shooting on June 23, 1980, during the strike. Fortunately, "Magnum" became a huge hit, and in 1982, director Blake Edwards wanted Selleck to star opposite Julie Andrews in "Victor/Victoria." But CBS added four more seasons of "Magnum," and he had to pass, but recommended James Garner, who he worked with on two episodes of "The Rockford Files."

Then, in 1985, Selleck was offered the starring role in "Witness," but CBS, again, decided to add more seasons of "Magnum." So, the role, again, went to Ford, who received an Oscar nomination for the film. Later on in 1987, Selleck starred in "Three Men and a Baby," with Ted Danson and Steve Guttenberg, which cost \$15 million and grossed \$240 million.

Starting in 2005, Selleck starred in "Stone Cold," the first of nine made-for-TV films based on the "Jesse Stone" novels. In 2010, he became police commissioner Frank Reagan in "Blue



Tom Selleck ("Blue Bloods" and "Magnum, P.I.")

Bloods," which has been renewed for its 14th season. So, "Indiana Jones" is officially done after five films, but "Blue Bloods" keeps rolling along.

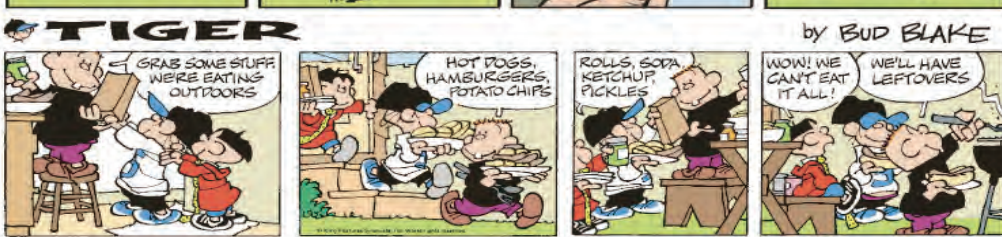
The streaming services have blown CBS, NBC, ABC and Fox out of the water with primetime Emmy nominations. The networks didn't receive any nominations in the Drama categories for Lead Actor, Lead Actress, Supporting Actor or Supporting Actress. "Abbott Elementary" did receive a nomination for Outstanding Comedy Series, as well as nominations for Lead Actress in a Comedy Series (Quinta Brunson) and Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series (Tyler James Williams).

Jimmy Kimmel, Seth Meyers and Stephen Colbert were nominated in the Talk Series category — but not Jimmy Fallon, who only saw his game show "That's My Jam" get nominated. "Amazing Race" and "Survivor" got nods for the Competition Program category, "The Simpsons" for the Animated category, and "Shark Tank" for Structured Reality. Lastly, "Family Feud," "Jeopardy," "The Price Is Right" and "Wheel of Fortune" were the rest of the Game Show noms. This must be why Hollywood is referring to these networks as the "screaming service" networks!

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU by Linda Thistle. Includes a 9x9 grid and difficulty level: Moderate.

HOCUS-FOCUS by Henry Boltinoff. Includes two panels of a boy and girl with a butterfly net and a list of differences.

August 7, 2023 Posting Date King Crossword

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution time of 21 mins.

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez. Includes 10 trivia questions and answers.

Start or complete a degree at Lone Star College



Fall 2023 registration at Lone Star College is still open. Learn more at LoneStar.edu.

HOUSTON (Aug. 1, 2023) – Education pays according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics. The government agency reported workers with a high school diploma earned a median weekly salary of \$853 compared to \$1,005 for those who have an associate degree. That's almost \$8,000 more per year in annual income.

"Lone Star College inspires me to work hard and reach my goals," said Nancy Valdez, LSC-Tomball student and future pharmacist. "This institution gives me a great college experience complete with activities, services and support that are helping me to achieve my career goal."

The fall 2023 semester at LSC begins Monday, Aug. 28. Courses are structured to help students complete a degree, transfer to a four-year university or enter the workforce. Courses include accounting, anthropology, arts, biology, business, chemistry,

criminal justice, communications, economics, drama, government, EDUC 1300, English, foreign languages, health care programs, history, humanities, math, speech and various workforce programs. Classes are available face-to-face, online and hybrid.

"My Lone Star College experience has made an indescribable impact on my life by teaching me to be more responsible, showing me how to manage my time and helping me become a better person every day," Artem Prudnikov, LSC-University Park student. "Each day at Lone Star College is filled with new colors, discoveries, knowledge and connections."

Lone Star College offers over 200 degrees and certifications and four baccalaureate programs. The college will host a Registration Festival Aug. 5-12 at all eight main campuses. Employees will assist students through their

eight-step enrollment checklist, including advising and financial aid assistance. Learn more at LoneStar.edu/Festival.

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. LSC is 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 and recognized by Fortune Magazine and Great Place To Work® as one of this year's Best Workplaces in Texas™. LSC consists of eight colleges, seven centers, eight Workforce Centers of Excellence and Lone Star Corporate College. To learn more, visit LoneStar.edu.



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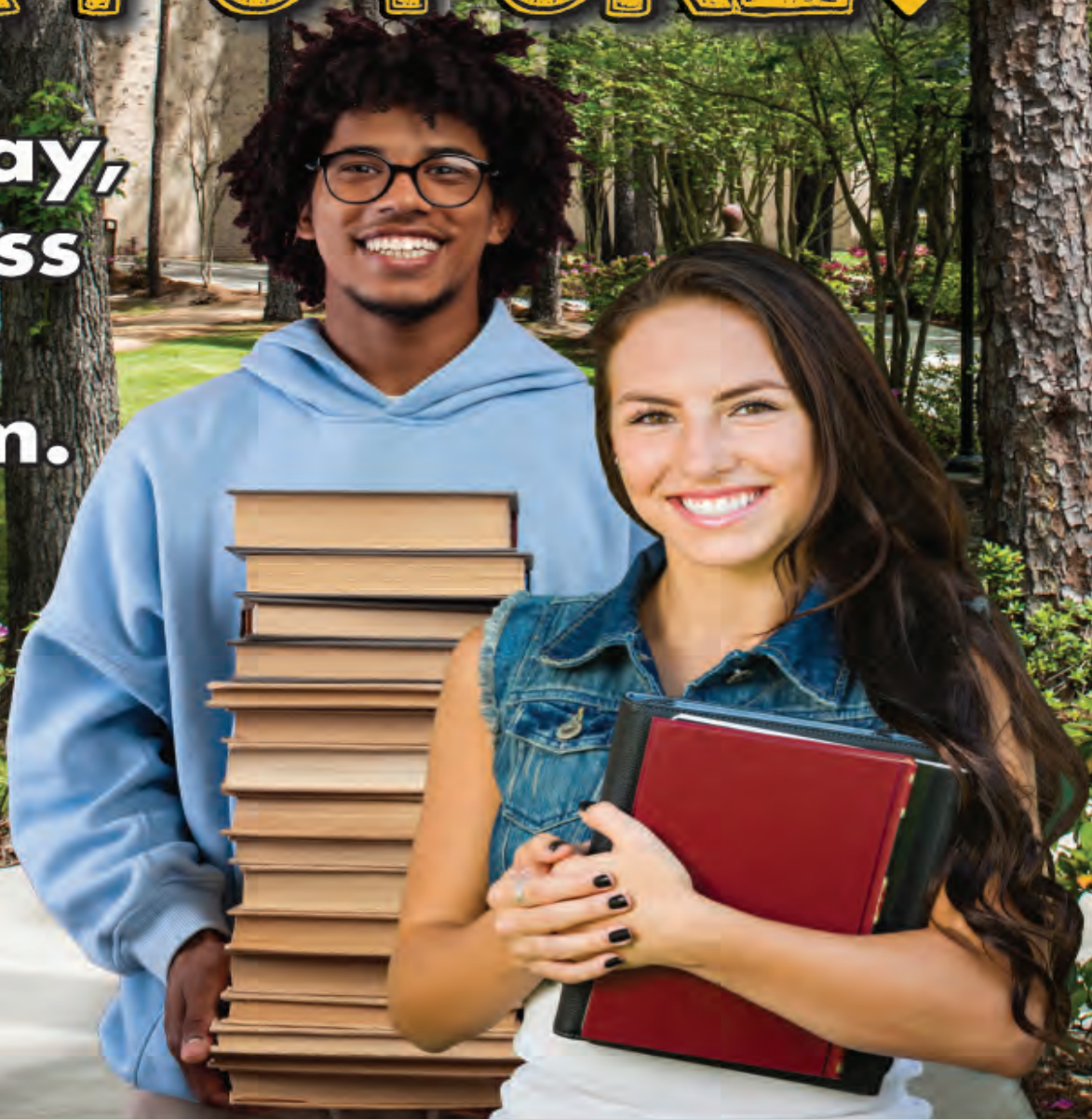


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