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NORTHEAST NEWS

VetFest at East Aldine



State Senator Carol Alvarado with Gathering of Eagles Vet at VetFest honoring our Veterans.

Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 47 Years
 VOL. 47, NO. 43 TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2023 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

Sheriff's "LightsOn" program starts in East Aldine

Broken Car Lights will receive a free Replacement Voucher, Not a Ticket

EAST ALDINE – Many drivers in the East Aldine area will get vouchers – rather than traffic tickets – if they are stopped for non-functioning vehicle lights.

The switch from a costly citation to a money-saving certificate worth up to \$250 is part of a new \$50,000 pilot program for Harris County that goes into action starting Monday, Nov. 20.

Program funds come from a grant from the Minnesota-based Lightson.org, a non-profit organization with a mission to help drivers who might not be able to afford vehicle lights right away.

Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez decided the funds will first go to deputies who work for the East Aldine Management District.

The District employs 21 Sheriff's Office officers to patrol the 20-square mile area northeast of downtown Houston in unincorporated Harris County: 17 deputies, plus supervisors. They respond to emergencies in other parts of the county when necessary.

"Instead of receiving a citation, the deputies will be giving you a voucher to get your lights fixed. It could be a headlight, a tail-light, a blinker, or a license plate," Lt. Mike Santos



Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez, center, announces the new "LightsOn" program will be inaugurated in the East Aldine service area of the Sheriff's department, and later spread County-wide. Others in the photo are sponsoring group Lightson.org and East Aldine deputies under the direction of Lt. Mike Santos, at right.

said. "It builds a better bond with the community, and it helps people get their lives back on track."

"Most encounters with police are negative," Santos said, admitting, "Even I get nervous when I get pulled over."

"Nine out of 10 times when we pull a driver over for a vehicle light violation, they're not even aware of it," Santos added. The program, coming right before the holidays, will build "good will" in the community, he said.

Many residents of the East Aldine area are struggling.

Continued. See HCSO LIGHTSON PROGRAM, Page 2

VetFest honors local vets at East Aldine center

EAST ALDINE – As part of the annual observance of Veterans Day, the East Aldine District and a number of other sponsors presented VETFEST23 last Saturday, November 11 at the East Aldine headquarters building.

The three hour event was held outdoors and in the EAMD office building, as weather curtailed some of the planned outdoor activities.

Billed as a "Celebration Honoring Our Heroes" the event included patriotic talks by State Senator Carol Alvarado and Guest Speaker Dr. Elias Sanchez-Perez, a Vietnam War Veteran who is also the Director of the Gathering of Eagles Veterans Group.

A large number of veterans



of all ages and service history turned out for the ceremonies and activities, especially including families with service members.

Sponsoring groups included the American Legion, Harris County Veterans Service Department, Harris County Public Library, Woodmen Life, BakerRipley, HoustonMediaSource, Aldine ISD, Avalos P-Tech High School, and Lone Star College.



AT LEFT, a Huge American Flag is unfurled at the East Aldine Building as part of the VETFEST Celebration. ABOVE, a group of Veterans join guest speaker Dr. Elias Sanchez-Perez a Vietnam War Veteran, and State Senator Carol Alvarado as part of the ceremonies. MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 2.

Planned activities included a welcome by State Senator Carol Alvarado, the Guest Speaker's remarks, food vendors, Patriotic Quilts display, Army vehicles, an East Aldine Veterans Memorial Slideshow, a huge memorial American flag display, a Wall of Honor with photos of local veterans, music, a rockwall climbing, and more. Even though weather conditions curtailed some of these events, the veterans and families enjoyed the festivities.

Harris County Health offers free COVID-19 booster shots

HOUSTON – Harris County Public Health (HCPH) now offers the updated Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines. The updated vaccines are free at HCPH for community members 6 months and older without health insurance or whose insurance does not cover all COVID-19 vaccine costs.

In September 2023, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) approved the updated Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines. The updated vaccines (or boosters) are recommended for everyone 6 months and older who has completed their primary vac-

cine series. They are designed to protect against the Omicron variant and other circulating virus strains.

"With the cool weather approaching this fall and winter, as well as the holidays, it is important for families to stay up to date with their COVID-19 and flu vaccines," said Ericka Brown, MD, Local Health Authority for HCPH. "The updated COVID-19 vaccines provide the best protection against the most recent strains of the virus, and they are safe and effective for people of all ages."

To schedule a COVID-19 vaccine appointment at HCPH locations, please visit vacstrac.hctx.net or call

(832) 927-8787. HCPH also offers flu shots at its health clinics and sites. People can receive the flu and COVID-19 shots simultaneously.

The COVID-19 vaccines are provided to eligible participants through the enrollment of the Texas Vaccines for Children (TVFC) Program and the CDC's Bridge Access Program to adults 18 and over.

In addition, people with health insurance can receive their flu and COVID-19 vaccines from local healthcare providers, health centers, and pharmacies. Visit vaccines.gov to find locations near you.

SEASON FOOTBALL WEEK 13

Ohio State, Michigan meet for Big 10 title, CFP spot: Red-hot Texans host Jags in key AFC South battle

What a Thanksgiving feast of football we have awaiting us this weekend!

There are big games from here to Ann Arbor in the NCAA and the NFL, and off the field there is also big news that came out of College Station on Nov. 12.

Before we look at this week's loaded schedule, I would be remiss if I didn't discuss Texas A&M's firing of head coach Jimbo Fisher. The school's Board of Regents met in Executive Session on Nov. 9 and decided to part ways after six years with Fisher. The Regents made their decision based on Athletic Director Ross Bjork's recommendation that the school part ways with Fisher, who won a national title at Florida State in 2013.

Fisher was brought to College Station to compete with Alabama for the SEC West title, but that never materialized in his six years at Aggieland. In his second year at A&M, he led the Aggies to a 9-1 finish and a No. 4-ranking in the polls, but he was not able to build on that season. He beat Nick



Saban one time in six tries and the powers that be decided it was time to move on, albeit an expensive one. A&M still owes Fisher \$76 million, which is a nice parting prize.

So, who do the Aggies go after next? There is talent in College Station, but 'Bama isn't going anywhere and LSU is only getting better. Fisher's inability to beat the Mississippi schools (Ole Miss and Mississippi State) could have also been a factor in his firing.

Defensive line coach Elijah Robinson will serve as interim head coach and will lead the Aggies against LSU on Saturday night in Baton Rouge and in their bowl game.

While the Aggies close out their season on Saturday night, their long-time rival Texas will look to land a spot in the Big 12 title game with a win on Friday night at home against Texas Tech. Steve Sarkisian's team will have to do it without starting running back Jonathon Brooks (1,139 yards, 10 TDs) who suffered a season-ending ACL injury in the 'Horns' 29-26 win two weeks ago at TCU. True freshman C.J. Baxter will try and replace Brooks and Baxter has the talent and speed to do just that.

CONTINUED. SEE KEENEY'S KORNER, PAGE 5

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

EAST ALDINE DISTRICT

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 713.595.1220 RCantu@AldineDistrict.org

Operations Manager: **Veronica Sanches**
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VetFest honors local vets at East Aldine center

CONTINUED FROM STORY ON PAGE 1



State Senator Carol Alvarado poses with a group of the attending Veterans at VETFEST23.



Senator Alvarado shares stories with one of the Veterans.



Each attending Veteran received a Commemorative Pin from Senator Alvarado, and the community thanks.



2Vets Woodworking displayed Porch Signs they make to honor Veterans. Daniel is a Marine Veteran. Dora has several family members who have and are still serving. Thank you for supporting two Veterans and our passion!!



HCSO LightsOn Program,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

gling to make ends meet and might not be able to afford the light repairs otherwise, Santos pointed out. "Another good thing about this program is that if we come across folks who need (child) car seats, we will be able to refer them to the District," Santos said. The District provides free child car safety seats to area motorists, even instructing and helping residents with installation. lightson.org was established after the 2016 shooting death of Philando Castile, a resident of a

Minneapolis suburb who was killed by a police officer after being stopped for a broken taillight. Castile was legally carrying a handgun at the time. The police officer was fired but acquitted of criminal charges.

The case inspired Don Samuels, former public safety chair of the Minneapolis City Council, to create Lights On. Since then, the organization has provided grants to several cities nationwide.

"Because Harris County is the third largest county in the nation, they decided to give us the grant," Santos said.

Santos said Houston jeweler Franco Valobra, a longtime supporter of the Sheriff's Office, donated to Samuels' charitable foundation, Microgrants, Inc.

Microgrants' slogan is "Powering with People of Potential." Its mission "is to give a boost to motivated people on their journey to economic self-sufficiency. By providing cash, not loans, we meet the im-

mediate needs of low-income individuals on their quest to start a business, finish their education, or acquire transportation for their job."

The vouchers, for up to \$250 in repairs, may be especially helpful for light replacements for newer cars; they are designed in a way that the entire lighting fixture may need to be replaced, Santos said. He noted that his step-daughter recently had to pay "about \$300" to replace a burnt-out light in her newer model vehicle.

"That's a lot of money right before the holiday season," Santos said.

The vouchers will include the names and locations of four authorized shops that will perform the light replacements. Two are located within the East Aldine Management District, one is in downtown Houston, and the fourth is just east of downtown, Santos said.

— by Anne Marie Kilday

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JOINT RUNOFF ELECTION DATES

Visit the Harris County Clerk's Office Elections Department at HarrisVotes.com or call 713.755.6965 for more information.

In-Person Early Voting November 27 - December 5

Last Day to Apply for a Mail Ballot November 28

Election Day December 9

HarrisVotes.com

COMMUNITY WATCH

4 vehicles in Fatal Crash at 10101 Eastex Freeway

Houston police are investigating a fatal crash at 10101 Eastex Freeway (North U.S. Highway 59) that occurred about 3:05 a.m. on Sunday (November 5).

The identity of the deceased male, 63, is pending verification by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences.

HPD Vehicular Crimes Division Sergeant M. Sudduth and Officer D. Thompson reported:

The driver of a red Chevrolet Silverado pickup truck was traveling southbound near the above address when he crossed multiple lanes and struck a concrete wall.

As the Chevrolet was stopping, it was struck by a blue Dodge Ram pickup truck. After the impact, the Dodge stopped and was struck by a third vehicle and a fourth vehicle then struck the Chevrolet.

The driver of the Chevrolet was pronounced deceased by responding Houston Fire Department paramedics. The driver of the Dodge suffered minor injuries. The driver of the third and fourth vehicle were not injured.

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

Suspect Arrested, Charged in Fatal Crash at 9100 North Freeway

Charges have been filed against a suspect arrested in a fatal crash at 9100 North Freeway (North Interstate Highway 45) that occurred about 12:45 a.m. on Sunday (November 5).

The suspect, Victor Yanes, 31, is charged with intoxication manslaughter and failure to stop and render aid in the 232nd State District Court. A booking photo of Yanes is attached to this news release.

The identity of the deceased female, 20, is pending verification by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences.

HPD Vehicular Crimes Division Sergeant Y. Ramirez and Officer T. Phillips reported:

A white Chevrolet Silverado and a white Volkswagen Rabbit were both traveling northbound near the above address. The Chevrolet then struck the rear of the Volkswagen. The driver of the Chevrolet, later

identified as Yanes, fled the scene on foot without providing assistance.

Houston Fire Department paramedics responded to the scene and pronounced the rear passenger (victim) deceased. The male driver, 28, and male passenger, 21, and juvenile female passenger, 2, in the Volkswagen were transported to an area hospital with minor injuries.

Yanez was located a short time later and was returned to the scene. He was determined to be impaired and was subsequently charged for his role in the crash.



VICTOR YANEZ

AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS

WE WILL CLOSE AT 5PM ON NOV. 22. WE WILL BE CLOSED FROM NOV. 23 - 25 FOR THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY. WE WILL RE-OPEN MONDAY, NOV. 27 AT 11AM.

Bilingual Tots

We'll read stories, sing songs, and use our hands (for fingerplays) to help toddlers build their early literacy skills. This program is appropriate for children ages 18 months to 3 years old. **Monday, Nov. 20, 11 - 11:45am**

Leeremos historias, cantaremos canciones y usaremos nuestras manos (para juegos con los dedos) para ayudar a los niños pequeños a desarrollar sus habilidades de alfabetización temprana. Este programa es apropiado para niños de 25 meses a 3 años.

Para aquellos que califican para tomar el examen en español

Tener 50 años o más al momento de solicitar la naturalización y estar un residente permanente (titular de la Tarjeta Verde) en los Estados Unidos durante 20 años (comúnmente conocida como la excepción "50/20"). Si cumples con los requisitos, regístrate en la página web <https://tinyurl.com/yxcm82fn> o en la biblioteca antes del 13 de noviembre a las 12:30 p.m.

Esta es una clase. Este es el último.

Teens Make It - Sharpie Art

Teens Make It! is a monthly maker program for teens ages 13-18. This month, **Monday, Nov. 13, 3:30pm - 5:30pm**, we'll be creating new pieces of art using ceramic tiles, sharpies, and collage techniques. Every Teens Make It craft is designed to be as easy or as

challenging as you want it to be, whether you're a Picasso in the making or a regular person. Join us every second Monday for a new craft! All materials are generously provided by FABLE (Friends of the Aldine Branch Library Extraordinaire!)

Bilingual Story Time/ Tiempo de cuentos Bilingue

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!

Houston Ballet - Dance to Learn

DANCE TO LEARN is a movement integration program that approaches academic curriculum from a kinesthetic perspective. Houston Ballet teaching artists work together with teachers to create lessons that address TEKS in multiple subject areas while building Social Emotional Skills. For Preschool aged kids. Limit: 15-20 kids. **Tuesday, Nov. 21, 11am - 12pm.**

Apprenda Computers & Tech

Limited space/ Espacio limitado Pre-regístrate aquí: <https://forms.office.com/r/rTQyUGd1Yy> * Important- Instructions are in Spanish language; Software (Windows OS, Office 365, Google) apps are all in English language.

Nivel -1 Habilidades Esenciales - **Martes - 5:00 a 6:45 PM:** Computer Essential Skills (Spanish computer class) - Aprenderá a como obtener las habilidades esenciales sobre: Navegación con Windows, navegación por Internet e

interface, tipos de navegadores, consejos de seguridad, correo electrónico e interface, y otros temas relacionados a la tecnología con enfoque para empleos y uso personal en un nivel para principiantes

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 10 weeks and expedited processing time is estimated at 7 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

Aldine ISD Partners with the University of Houston-Downtown to Kickoff their Bilingual E-Library

On Friday, Nov. 10, Aldine ISD's Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Department, in partnership with the University of Houston Downtown, held its Bilingual E-Library kick off event at the UHD campus.

Earlier this year, UHD was awarded a two-year grant of \$2.5 million by the U.S. Department of Commerce to upgrade its bilingual e-library and improve the connectivity and literacy of Houston's Hispanic community. It was through this grant that UHD sought to partner with AISD and utilize its resources for the Aldine community.

Aldine ISD's Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney attended the event and spoke on the importance of the partnership.

"Through the power of collaboration and education, we believe that liter-



acy is the key that unlocks limitless possibilities," Dr. Goffney said.

Families (240 participants) from Black and Bussey elementary schools will pilot the program in this partnership with the goal of improving family literacy by reading and

writing stories together. From here, five additional campuses will be participating in the program. Both Griggs and Hinojosa primary schools, along with Marcella, Smith and Hill elementary schools will all be included next spring.

A feature of the e-library is a YouTube channel that will offer professional development in literacy and reading comprehension, to both Aldine ISD's in-service bilingual teachers and UHD's pre-service teachers. The event closed out with a performance by Mariachi Acero from Carver High school and Ballet Folklórico Ketzally.

Providing resources for the community are opportunities that Aldine looks to implement. If you would like to find out more about the various events that are held by FACE.

Davis High School Presented a Fall Theater Production to Elementary Students



Earlier this month, the Davis High School Theatre Department presented the children's play Wiley and the Hairy Man by Suzan Zeder. Theater students in Levels 2-4 performed and executed the production for just over 300 Aldine ISD elementary students.

This drama is a spine-tingling tale of a boy and his worst fears in the swamp — eventually overcome by Wiley himself. Set deep within the mysterious Tombigbee Swamp, Wiley and the Hairy Man centers

around a young fatherless boy, his conjure-woman mother, his faithful dog, and the Hairy Man who haunts Wiley's days and dreams. Through rhythm and rhyme, a chorus creates the mystery of the swamp. The magic of this play is not fairy dust. It is soil — the magic of survival, the magic of the earth, and the swamp's mud. In an exciting duel of wits, Wiley learns to rely upon his resourcefulness and conquers two villains: the Hairy Man and his fear.

The family-friendly story was perfect for

teaching about facing fears and conquering a lack of self-confidence.

Thanks and appreciation to Conley Elementary School's step and cheer teams for providing pre-show performances for students to learn and enjoy.

And a special thanks to Principal Anthony Watkins and administration teams and teachers for allowing the students to apply their classroom learning in entertaining these young elementary scholars during this daytime matinee performance.

Aldine ISD's 39th Annual Turkey Trot Held



Participants of the 39th Annual Turkey Trot display their medals.

This year's Turkey Trot was held on Saturday, Nov. 4, at Lone Star College. Participants could place a race bib on their shirts before heading out for a 3- or 1-mile run, trot, or walk on a beautiful sunny morning. Aldine ISD's Health and Physical Education Coordinator, Kenneth Hernandez, thanked the attendees for encouraging the Aldine students to be healthy, lifelong learners.

All participants received finisher medals, water, and a light snack before meeting the Chick-fil-A cow and making a special appearance. More than 400 people participated this year, including some Aldine ISD high school students. This event would not be possible without the support of the Aldine Athletics Department, Health and Physical Education teachers, and the Aldine community.

The 40th Turkey Trot will be held on Nov. 2, 2024

METRO provides Thanksgiving dinners to Garcia-Leza families



Garcia-Leza students and staff thank METRO employees for donating Thanksgiving dinners to nine Garcia-Leza families

METRO made the Thanksgiving holidays a bit brighter for nine Garcia-Leza Primary School families by donating holiday dinners to them.

Garcia-Leza counselor Charlotta Haynes reached out to METRO employees Gillian Pugh and Edgar Morales who organized the donations.

They were joined by bus operating and bus operators on Wednesday, Nov. 15 who helped distribute the meals to the nine families. Garcia-Leza Principal Patricia Willis and her staff were appreciative of METRO's generous contribution to their students.

"We would like to ex-

tend our heartfelt gratitude for Metro's generous food donation to our families. Their commitment to making a positive impact is truly inspiring, and we are incredibly grateful for Metro's contribution. Together, we are making a difference in the lives of others and building a stronger, more compassionate community in Aldine," Willis said.

The families were able to choose between a turkey or chicken dinner. They also received side dishes, bread and fixing for a complete meal. The families also received various snacks (cookies, chips, and juice) for their children to

enjoy during Aldine ISD's Thanksgiving break.

"I am so blessed to have had this opportunity to get this Thanksgiving initiative going," Haynes said. "I believe it went very well. I am so thankful we were able to help nine families that truly needed some help during this holiday season. The families that received the Thanksgiving meals were truly grateful and expressed how the meals were a blessing to them. I feel really good about this opportunity to work with METRO to help our families. I look forward to working with them in the future."

AISD Announces Dates for Class of 2024 Graduations

Ceremonies for the Class of 2024 for the district's 10 high schools.

Graduation ceremonies will occur at the M.O. Campbell Educational Center, 1865 Aldine Bender, Houston, TX 77032.

Parking

Note: This is subject to change. Parking is available at the M.O. Campbell Educational Center. Due to the construction of the W.W. Thorne Stadium, some parking areas may be restricted. Additional parking for graduation will be available this year in four separate lots adjacent to Thorne Stadium. These lots are necessary due to construction at Thorne Stadium. They will be open

to the public until all spaces are occupied. Once all spaces in one lot are filled, the next lot will be opened in order. The following lots are open to the public in the order listed below and have the number of spaces indicated:

LOT A is the first lot to be used. It is located at the De Santiago EC/PreK/K School. This lot has 250 parking spaces and will remain open until all parking spaces are occupied. Once this lot is full, drivers will be directed east to LOT B.

LOT B is the second lot to be used and is located at Eckert Elementary School. This lot has 220 parking spaces and will

remain open until all parking spaces are occupied. Once this lot is full, drivers will be directed east to LOT C.

LOT C is the third lot to be used and is located at Aldine Middle School. This lot has 425 parking spaces and will remain open until all parking spaces are occupied. Once this lot is full, drivers will be directed southwest to LOT E and F.

LOT E and LOT F are the final parking lots to be used during graduation.

LOT D is for assigned Aldine ISD staff.

More details will be shared as the ceremonies draw closer, such as live stream links.


Class of 2024 Graduation Schedule		
DATE	TIME	SCHOOL
May 29	5 p.m.	Avalos High School
May 29	7:30 p.m.	Nimitz HS
May 30	5 p.m.	Blanson HS
May 30	7:30 p.m.	Aldine HS
May 31	9 a.m.	MacArthur HS
May 31	11:30 a.m.	Hall Success Academy
May 31	2 p.m.	Eisenhower HS
May 31	5 p.m.	Carver HS
June 1	9 a.m.	Davis HS
June 1	11:30 a.m.	Victory HS

All graduations to take place at: M.O. Campbell Educational Center
1865 Aldine Bender Rd. 77032

You can read the Northeast News current and back issues on our website: www.nenewsroom.com

OPINION PAGE

OPINION
By **BILL KING**



County Clerk was the Big Winner in the Election

The biggest winner on election night was an official that was not on the ballot - Harris County Clerk Teneshia Hudspeth. There were no long lines at the polls. None of the polls ran out of paper. Early and mail-in results were announced shortly after 7:00PM and final unofficial results were finalized by early Wednesday morning. There were a handful of equipment problems reported but Hudspeth's office was quick to respond and there were no reports of any polls being out of commission for any significant length of time. Of course, this is a dramatic contrast to recent dysfunctional elections in Harris County, which were plagued with long lines, ballot paper shortages and widespread equipment problems.

But the most significant improvement was that the vote tally actually balanced at the end of the election. The State requires each county to file a Preliminary Election Reconciliation report (Preliminary Report) that summarizes how many people voted compared the number of ballots counted. Ideally, the number of voters should equal the number of ballots counted. To give you an idea of the improvement, two days after the primary election in March 2022, Harris County published a Preliminary Report that showed 10,072 more people voted than ballots cast. In other words, just over 10,000 ballots had been "lost." In the "notes" section, where any difference is supposed to be explained, the report only says, "further investigation needed." Early Wednesday morning, Hudspeth's office published its Preliminary Report that the difference between the number of voters and ballots cast was only 65 and the report explains that difference.

After the 2022 primary election, the Harris County Republican Party "established a rapid response team" to field questions and complaints from precinct judges during future elections. During the chaotic general election last year, the team fielded over 900 calls. In this election there were only 75 calls. Several of my Republican friends who were serving as poll workers or poll watchers, told me they were pleasantly surprised at how smoothly the election went. One Republican poll watcher at the vote counting center said the difference between this election and the elections last year was "like night and day."

If you have not been following the ongoing saga of Harris County elections in the last few years, let me briefly bring you up to date. Texas law charges County Clerks with the responsibility to conduct elections, and the Tax Assessor-Collector to maintain voter registration rolls. However, state law also allows County Commissioners' Courts to consolidate these functions in an election administrator who is hired by and reports to Commissioners' Court.

In July 2020, the three Democratic members of Harris County Commissioners' Court voted to create an election administrator for the County. County Commissioner Rodney Ellis argued that having elections and voter registration administered by the democratically elected County Clerk and Tax Assessor-Collector was racist, claiming that "what we have is a vestige, a relic, of that old Jim Crow era." (Houston Chronicle, July 15, 2020). Ironically, at that time, both officials were Democrats and African-Americans.

Also at that time, the County Clerk was Chris Hollins, who had been appointed by the Democratic majority on the Court after the resignation of Diane Trautman. As many of you will recall, Hollins adopted a number of changes to election procedures, such as 24-hour voting and widespread use of unsecured drop-off boxes. Many of those were struck down by the courts as being prohibited by Texas law. His actions were the primary motivation for the adoption of SB1 in 2021, which specifically prohibited many of his changes.

Because of the timing of Trautman's resignation, a special election was required in November 2020 for the balance of her term. However, her resignation came too late for the parties to nominate candidates for the 2022 ballot. In that situation, the precinct chairs of each party elect the nominee. Apparently, Ellis and Hidalgo were expecting that the precinct would rubber stamp the choice for Hollins to be the nominee. However, the precinct chairs bucked the judge and commissioner and selected Hudspeth as the nominee.

The precinct chairs showed much better judgment than Commissioners' Court. At the time, Hudspeth had worked in the County Clerk's office for fifteen years under five previous County Clerks. During her time at the County Clerk's office, she served in various roles, including working in the election division. Harris County voters elected Hudspeth in the November 2020 election. She was re-elected in 2022, to a full term with 58% of the vote.

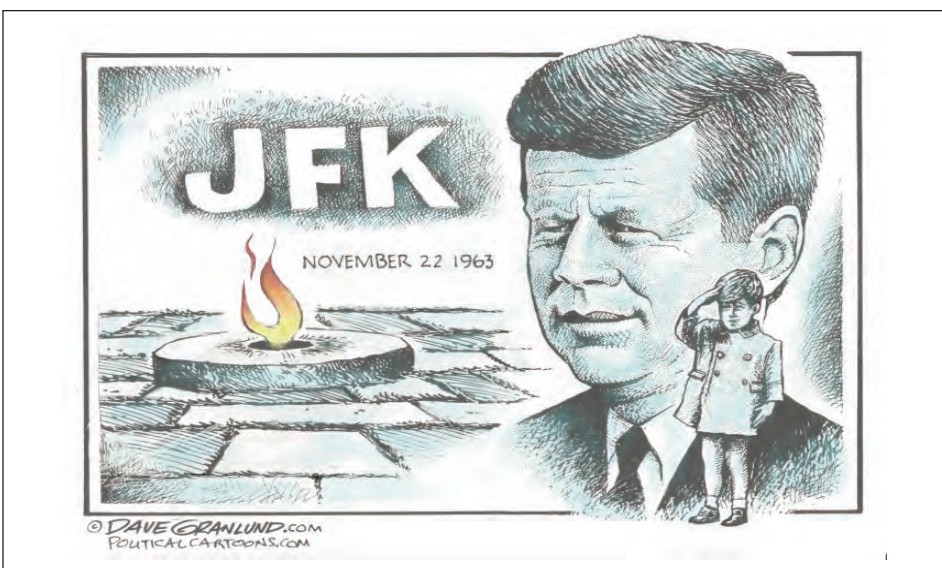
Notwithstanding that two African-American, Democratic women had been elected by the people of Harris County to run voter registration and elections, the Commissioners' Court persisted in their plan to transfer the duties to an election administrator answerable only to them. They then selected a Democratic political operative with zero election administration experience.

However, that plan was upended by the Texas Legislature when it passed SB1750, a bill sponsored by State Senator Paul Bettencourt, which withdrew the authority of commissioners in counties with populations over 3.5 million, from establishing an election administrator and returned those duties to the county clerk and tax assessor-collector.

Of course, Harris County sued to have SB1750 declared unconstitutional. A Travis County judge initially ruled the law was unconstitutional but the Texas Supreme Court stayed her order in late August, giving Hudspeth only a little over two months to get ready for the election . . . making her performance all the more remarkable.

As early voting began, I had an opportunity to visit with Hudspeth. She asked me to contact her if I heard of any problems with the election. On election day, I got a call from a neighbor about a poll that was having equipment problems. I texted Hudspeth, who immediately responded that she would check into it. Within about 20 minutes, she had a tech at the poll and it was back up and running. Somehow, I don't think that would have happened with an election administrator who answered to county commissioners and not the voters.

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



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By **Gary Borders**



Bill Passes to Allow Undocumented Migrants Arrest and Return

A sweeping border security bill that allows state and local police to arrest undocumented migrants is headed to Gov. Greg Abbott's desk, The Dallas Morning News reported. The bill also allows state district judges to order those migrants be returned to Mexico.

In addition, a separate bill that provides billions in funding for expansion of a border wall is headed back to the Senate for final approval.

Abbott has indicated he will sign both bills. Legal experts and Democratic legislators say the bill allowing law enforcement to arrest undocumented migrants is unconstitutional.

"Texas Republicans proudly passed legislation that will allow Greg Abbott's Department of Public Safety to imprison Black and Brown migrants for simply existing in our state," Texas Democratic Party Chairman Gilberto Hinojosa said.

The bill's sponsor, state Rep. David Spiller, R-Jacksboro, defended the measure.

"We still know that the Biden administration has failed and refused to enforce federal immigration laws and secure the border," Spiller said.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF JFK'S ASSASSINATION NOTED

The 60th anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy is Nov. 22, with a number of events taking place in Dallas, where Kennedy was killed in 1963. The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza in Dallas is marking the event with a "Two Days in Texas" exhibition that revisits Kennedy's visit to Texas through eyewitness accounts of his time in Texas before the assassination.

The sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository, now a museum, was the primary crime scene.

An all-day remembrance is also taking place at the Texas Theatre in Oak Cliff, which is where Lee Harvey Oswald was arrested after killing Dallas police officer J.D. Tippit.



LIQUID PLANT'S PLANS PUT ON HOLD

A liquified natural gas terminal planned for Port Arthur has been halted, at least temporarily, after the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled consistent emission standards were not applied, the Texas Standard reported.

The complaint was brought by an environmental group which claimed the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality was going to allow the plant to have higher emissions than similar plants in Texas.

Amy Dinn, with Lone Star Legal Aid, which brought the lawsuit, said in an interview that "We were very concerned that this additional pollution from this facility, if allowed to go forward at the permitted limits TCEQ had approved, would cause potential health impacts for the community that lives there because they're already forced to have a lot of air pollution."

Once the court releases its final decision, the plant's permit application will go back to TCEQ.

TIKTOK BAN CHALLENGED IN COURT

An Austin federal judge will decide whether a ban of TikTok on state-owned and issued devices will stand. A lawsuit was filed on behalf of the Coalition of Independent Technology Research, kut.org reported. Arguments were heard in the case last week.

The coalition represents university faculty who wish to continue using the social media platform for research and teaching purposes at state institutions. Gov. Greg Abbott ordered

the ban on TikTok, which is owned by a Chinese company, last December.

Jameel Jaffer of the Knight First Amendment Institute said plaintiffs are seeking an injunction to lift the ban.

"Their work is about the social media platforms," Jaffer said. "They study the social media platforms, write about the social media platforms, propose regulatory reform relating to the social media platforms. And the ban is impeding them from doing that work."

Todd Dickerson of the Texas attorney general's office maintained the ban is a precautionary measure, that few researchers are affected, and that faculty can do their work with TikTok on their personal devices.

CINNAMON APPLESAUCE POUCHES RECALLED

Elevated levels of lead have been found in several cinnamon applesauce products, prompting a recall and a warning from the Texas Department of Health Services that children who consumed those products should be tested for lead exposure.

The recalled products include:

- WanaBana Apple Cinnamon Fruit Puree pouches
- Schnucks brand cinnamon-flavored applesauce pouches and variety pack
- Weis brand cinnamon applesauce pouches

Some of the recalled products are sold in Texas through a number of retailers. Parents are urged to check their homes and discard these products.

GETTING HOME SAFE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season begins this week, and the Texas Department of Transportation is urging everyone to drive sober and urge their loved ones to do the same.

During last year's 32-day holiday season, 108 people were killed and 229 seriously injured by drunk drivers in crashes across the state.

"A safe and sober ride should be at the top of your list when making plans with family and friends," Marc Williams, TxDOT executive director, said. "If not, you risk your job, your life, and the lives of others. It's just not worth it."

Law enforcement will be on heightened awareness from Dec. 16 through Jan. 1, looking for drunk drivers.

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, Lufkin and Cedar Park. Email: gborders@texaspress.com

THE POSTSCRIPT
By **Carrie Classon**

A Perfect Cup

It's important to have a good coffee cup.

My husband, Peter, makes the coffee, and has since we were married. We will be celebrating nine years of marriage this spring, so you might not be surprised to hear that I no longer remember how to make coffee. This is called "learned helplessness" in psychology circles, and it is certainly true in my case. Peter makes the coffee, and I drink it. This seems to me like a fair division of labor. And having the proper cup is essential.

I am reminded of this every time I return to Mexico, because I do not pack a coffee cup.

Our little furnished apartment has a perfectly fine selection of matching white ceramic coffee cups sitting on the shelf. But none of these cups is my cup. And so, usually on the first day, I will head out to the market where handcrafted items are sold in search of a perfect cup.

Walking through the market, it is surprising how relatively few coffee cups I see. I suppose most people do not have a cup sitting beside them all day, or at least for the first six hours of every day. I don't think this is nearly as common in Mexico as it is in the U.S. But still, there are a lot of nice cups and, eventually, I find my new cup.

"What do you think?" I ask Peter when I triumphantly return with my new perfect cup.

"Isn't that the same cup you had before?" he asks.

Peter does not understand. He drinks his coffee from a white ceramic cup. He does not realize what a wonderful feeling it is when I find my new cup. I do not take my new cup for granted for a moment. I admire it as I drink my coffee. My cup is usually colorful and always hand-painted and, once my new cup is sitting on my green Formica desk, all is right in my little world.

In six weeks' time, I will have formed a bond with my new coffee cup. And when we return to the U.S., I cannot bear to leave the cup behind. Because this cup holds more than my coffee. This cup holds the memories I am making, day by day, sip by sip, as I sit at my desk in Mexico. It holds the bright markets and the feel of the round cobblestone streets beneath my feet and the smiles of the countless friendly people I meet every day.

So, when it is time to leave, I take the new coffee cup with me, and I use it every day I am in the U.S. until we leave for Mexico again. Then I put my new cup away in the cupboard, and when I arrive back in Mexico, I start the process all over again.

Some people (people like Peter) might detect a potential flaw in this routine. Over time, my cupboard in the U.S. is becoming filled with beautiful Mexican coffee cups.

But it seems to me there are worse problems a person could have. Every time I open my cupboard, I am reminded of markets and streets and smiles.

Today, I am enjoying a beautiful new cup I bought just days ago. It is several shades of blue, and I already know there is no possibility I could leave this cup behind. Because this perfect cup holds things I want to keep forever. And I know for certain my coffee always tastes a little better when I drink it out of a perfect cup.

Till next time,
CarriE

NORTHEAST NEWS

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CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey

1. Who wrote in Ephesians 5:20, "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"? Matthew, Peter, Paul, Jude
2. From Psalms 107:1 and 118:1, we should give thanks to the Lord, because He is ...? Evermore, Good, Watching, Hopeful
3. Which book of the Bible (KJV) mentions the word "thanksgiving" the most times at eight? Genesis, Nehemiah, Psalms, Isaiah

4. In 2 Timothy 3:1-2, what human qualities does Paul list as being signs of the last days? Adulterers, Sun worshipers, Renegades, Unthankful people
5. In Leviticus 22, a sacrifice of thanksgiving is most meaningful when it is ...? Sincere, Often, At your own will, Extravagant
6. Who were commanded in 1 Chronicles 16:4 to thank God? Levites, Ammonites, Benjaminites, Danites

ANSWERS: 1) Paul, 2) Good, 3) Psalms, 4) Unthankful people, 5) At your own will, 6) Levites
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Detail of "To the Front!" by Hu Yichuan (1932)

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps

1. SNOW AND BITTER COLD ALREADY... REALLY?
2. OH COME ON, IT WAS JUST THANKSGIVING! WHAT'S THE RUSH??
3. UNCLE LOU, I WANTED TO GIVE YOU THIS. I COULDN'T WAIT UNTIL CHRISTMAS.
4. I WISH THIS SEASON WOULD LAST ALL YEAR LONG!

TIGER
by BUD BLAKE

1. HEY, LOOKIT, PUNKINHEAD!
2. I FOUND A GOOD LONG RUBBER BAND
3. AND HERE'S A PROPELLER
4. HE'LL BE ALONG IN A MINUTE

The Spats
by Jeff Pickering

1. I SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR MY LOST WATCH...
2. ...BUT I JUST CAN'T FIND THE TIME.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

	2			5				3
6			7					5
4	1		2		9			
	9			7		6		
		5			3	2		8
2			9					7
		8			6		7	
		2				9		1
5			4	3				9

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆◆◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

1. David Hasselhoff; 2. Olympia; 3. 15-30 days; 4. "Animal Farm"; 5. Talc; 6. The River Thames; 7. Hangover; 8. "Fast & Furious" (2009); 9. Anaheim, California (1955); 10. Torch.

November 20, 2023 Posting Date

King Crossword

ACROSS

- Squid squirt
- Beloved
- "Ditto"
- "The Simpsons" barkeep
- Killer whale
- Director Kazan
- Get older
- Feel elated
- Two-dot punctuation mark
- Triage ctrs.
- Calendar entry (Abbr.)
- Smiles broadly
- Flight costs
- "Phooey!"
- Hosp. area
- Rich cake
- Quarterback Manning
- Arrears
- NPR show hosted by Terry Gross
- Thoreau piece
- Gym site, for short
- Promptly
- Film trophy
- Rock fan's imaginary instrument
- Employ
- Satan's purchase
- Separate
- Crib
- Ginormous
- Cookware
- Newt
- Yard tool
- Had a hunch
- Carte lead-in
- Roman 1002
- Corn spike
- Sphere
- Klutz
- Campus VIP
- Towel material
- Vicinity
- Niger's neighbor
- Swizzle
- Staffer
- Frozen desserts
- Of-torn knee part, for short
- Prom dates
- Snarl
- Owls
- One of us
- Trace
- Rubik's baffler
- "Dream on!"
- Monopoly payment
- Bonfire residue
- Debtor's note
- Bad hairpiece
- Overly
- Illustrations

DOWN

- Apple computer
- NASA scrub
- Fall (over)
- Memorized
- Historic period
- Of-torn knee part, for short
- Apple computer
- NASA scrub
- Fall (over)
- Memorized
- Historic period
- Of-torn knee part, for short
- Yard tool
- Had a hunch
- Carte lead-in
- Roman 1002
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- Monopoly payment
- Bonfire residue
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Answers

King Crossword

Solution time: 24 mins.

Answers

1. David Hasselhoff; 2. Olympia; 3. 15-30 days; 4. "Animal Farm"; 5. Talc; 6. The River Thames; 7. Hangover; 8. "Fast & Furious" (2009); 9. Anaheim, California (1955); 10. Torch.

Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- TELEVISION: Who starred in the drama "Knight Rider"?
- U.S. STATES: What is the capital of Washington state?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: How long does the average housefly live?
- LITERATURE: Which mid-20th century novel about animals has the subtitle, "A Fairy Story"?
- SCIENCE: What is the softest mineral in the world?
- GEOGRAPHY: Which major river flows through London, England?
- MEDICAL: What is a common name for the condition veisalgia?
- MOVIES: In which movie did the actress Gal Gadot make her debut?
- HISTORY: Where was the first Disney park built?
- LANGUAGE: What is the British term for a flashlight?

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LONE STAR COLLEGE MINIMESTER

Accelerate your future this winter at Lone Star College

NORTHEAST – The National Center for Education Statistics reported that 64% of undergraduate students who started at four-year institutions take six years to earn a bachelor's degree. Taking one or two classes at Lone Star College this winter can help them graduate on time.

"Lone Star College is a great choice for four-year university students who want to continue their education while at home for the winter break," said Dwight L. Smith, III, Ed.D., LSC vice chancellor, Academic and Workforce Success. "We encourage you to catch up or get ahead on your college education with us."

LSC's Winter Mini-Term provides students with an accelerated option to complete their core requirements faster toward a degree or be core complete before transferring to a four-year institution. The short term begins Dec. 18 and ends Jan. 7 (three weeks) or Jan. 14 (four weeks). Offerings include academic transfer, core credits, workforce and continuing education.

"Lone Star College is definitely the way to go to either earn a degree or attain some college credit," said Alma Gallardo, LSC-CyFair graduate and current University of Houston student. "Courses at Lone Star College are smaller than four-year universities, which allows students to have a more personalized relationship with the professors and receive more resources and sup-



The Lone Star College Winter Mini-Term keeps students on track toward achieving their educational or career goals. The short term begins Dec. 18 and courses are available at all LSC locations.

port to help them succeed."

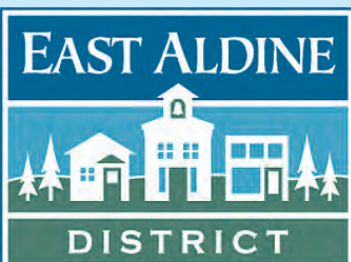
Registration for the LSC Winter Mini-Term 2023 is now open and courses are available in-person, online or hybrid at all LSC locations. Offerings include accounting, anthropology, arts, biology, business, chemistry, criminal justice, communications, economics, drama, government, EDUC 1300, English, foreign languages, health care programs, history, humanities, math, speech and workforce programs.

"My experience at Lone Star College was terrific because I received so much academic support and experienced new heights I never thought was possible," said Jacob Huling, LSC-Tomball and University of Houston graduate. "I will always recommend Lone Star College, especially the Honors College. It saved me thousands of dollars by learning from top-notch professors and participating in high-level workshops."

Lone Star College offers over 200 degrees and certi-

fications and four baccalaureate programs. Visit LoneStar.edu/MiniMester for a complete list of all available courses this winter.

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. Mario K. Castillo, J.D., serves as Chancellor of LSC, the largest institution of higher education in the Houston area. LSC has been named a 2023 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.



East Aldine District COMMUNITY NEWS

District Unveils "cash back" app on Purchases in East Aldine

Houston, TX — The East Aldine Management District has launched the free Open Rewards app that gives shoppers 10 percent back on their purchases from participating businesses within district boundaries.

The app is part of the District's latest efforts to promote economic development and prosperity in East Aldine, a growing, dynamic and hard-working area next to some of the city of Houston's northern boundaries.

The program already has 473 businesses participating, ranging from supermarkets to restaurants to beauty salons to automotive repair shops — all of which will earn customers 10% cash back rewards on their purchases.

The app, developed by Bludot Technologies, Inc., is available for free download on the App Store or Google Play.

"Promotion and support of local businesses is one of the cornerstones of the East Aldine Management District. We are excited about the launch of this

program and the impact it will have on our local community," said Lance Dean, District economic development director.

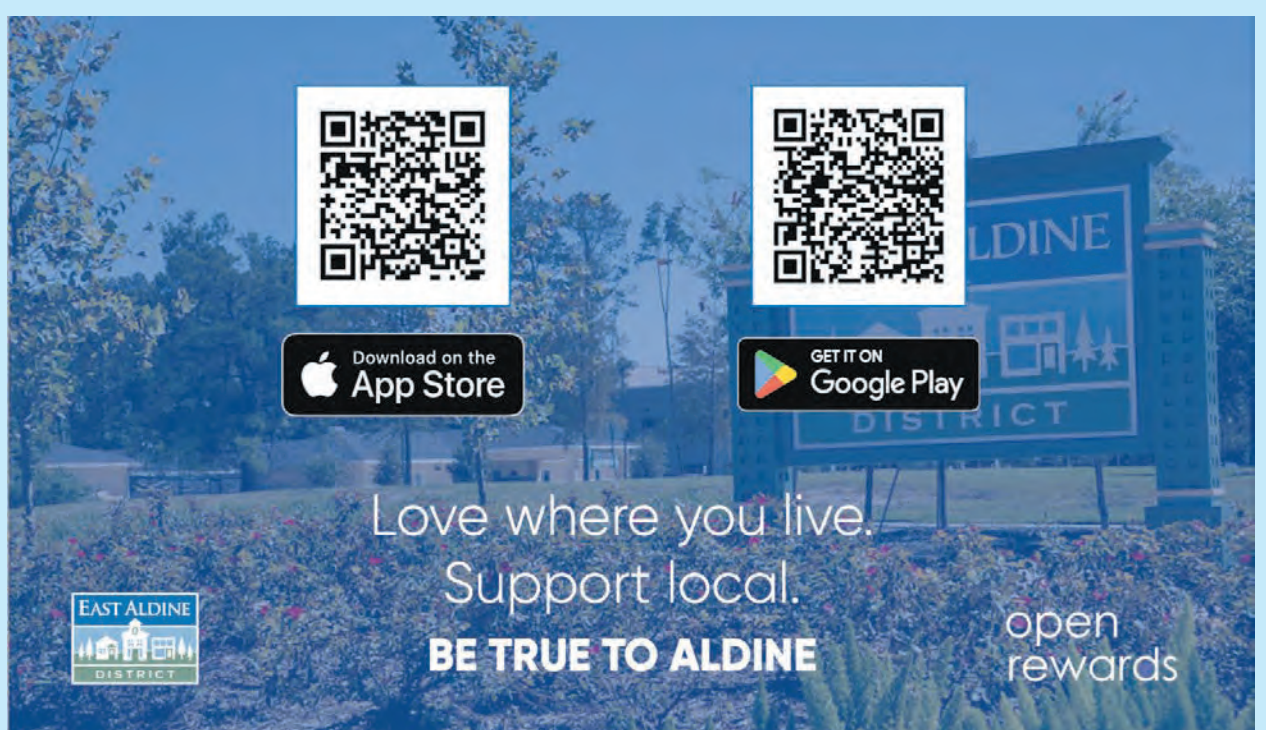
The program is designed to create a large network of businesses in which shoppers can earn and redeem rewards, similar to popular rewards programs for brands such as Sephora or Starbucks.

The way it works is simple. For example:

- Go to a participating restaurant and spend \$50 on dinner.
- Pay the bill in the usual way.
- Upload your receipt to Open Rewards (or link your credit card to the app to bypass this step).
- You will receive 10% cash back rewards in your account.
- Go to another participating business in the program, make a purchase and apply your cash credit toward that purchase (or continue to save your rewards).

"The entire goal of Open Rewards was to create a system that incentivizes shoppers to support local businesses, thus creating an influx of dollars to those businesses. We call this keeping local dollars local," said Bludot Technologies, Inc. founder and CEO Sophia Zheng.

"We're thrilled to bring this program to the East Aldine Management District and empower them to give this incredible resource to one of the major pillars of their community—local businesses," she said.



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