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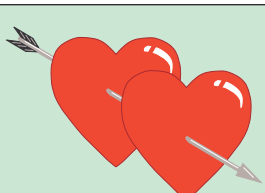
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 VOL. 48, NO. 5 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2024 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

NEWS NOTES



Send your Valentine a Special Message in our Feb. 13 issue. Details on Page 5.

President's Day Celebration February 19th on JFK Blvd.

There will be a President's Day Celebration on Monday, February 19th from 5:00pm to 5:30pm at the John F. Kennedy Statue, at the intersection of Aldine Bender Road and JFK Boulevard.

Program includes a Speech and Poem by MacArthur High School students, and Jazz music by Victor Raymond.

The public is invited, and encouraged to bring a red, white or blue balloon.

The Celebration is sponsored by Bonding Against Adversity, the East Aldine District, and Univision Contigo Houston.

See additional information on Page 8.

Art in the Heart Fundraiser

Galentine's Sip and Paint ART IN THE HEART FUNDRAISER.

Friday, Feb. 9 from 6:30 to 9:30pm, Painting 7:30 to 8:30pm. 8321 Jensen Drive, 77093.

Ticket includes Instructor-led paint activity, glass of wine, door prize entry, light bites. DJ Kittie. \$100 2 ticket discount.

Aldine ISD launches new Health Care High School Partners with Memorial Hermann Health System

ALDINE – Memorial Hermann Health System and Aldine ISD announce an unprecedented partnership to design a career-technical education (CTE) high school that will help prepare students for well-paying careers in health care and address local education and health care talent needs.

The Health Education and Learning High School, or HEAL High School, will share a campus with Nimitz High School and will fully integrate health care career knowledge and job-training with a high-quality, well-rounded high school experience for students in the Houston area, graduating students directly into high-demand health care jobs with family-sustaining wages.

The program, which will open in the fall of 2024 and be phased in over four academic years, will serve approximate-



The Health Education and Learning High School, or HEAL High School, will share a campus with Nimitz High School.

ly 760 students at capacity. It is part of a first-of-its-kind \$250 million initiative led by Bloomberg Philanthropies that is connecting health and education systems to create new CTE high schools in 10 urban and rural communities across the country.

Supported by an initial \$31 million investment from Bloomberg Philanthropies to Memorial Hermann Foundation, Memorial Hermann and Aldine ISD will co-develop HEAL's curriculum, which will offer robust academic programming, specialized health

care classes, work-based learning, and the opportunity to earn industry-valued credentials and certifications along with traditional high school learning and diplomas. This initiative will also offer students an opportunity to gain direct work experience and ac-

cess to rewarding jobs within Memorial Hermann immediately following graduation.

"For too long, our education system has failed to prepare students for good jobs in high-growth industries," said Michael R. Bloomberg, founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies and Bloomberg LP and 108th mayor of New York City. "By combining classroom learning with hands-on experience, these specialized health-care high schools will prepare students for careers with opportunities for growth and advancement. America needs more health care workers, and we need a stronger, larger middle-class—and this is a way to help accomplish both goals."

The state of Texas is currently experiencing shortages in nurses, primary care physi-

Continued. See HEALTH CARE HIGH SCHOOL, Page 2

TCEQ sets new Concrete Plant rules

Lawsuit by Harris County prompts permit changes

Houston, Texas — The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has announced changes to concrete batch plant permit requirements. The updated permit comes after Harris County Attorney Christian Menefee filed the county's lawsuit against the TCEQ and filed a Title VI com-

plaint that triggered an investigation by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The updated permit includes key changes designed to reduce emissions and address environmental concerns raised by Harris County, including:

- **Setback Increases:** The buffer zone at concrete batch plants in certain counties, including Harris County, has been increased by 100 feet.
- **Production Limits:** The maximum production

allowed at concrete batch plants has been reduced by more than 1.5 million cubic yards per year and 100 cubic yards per hour.

• **Dust Emission Controls:** Plants now have additional allowable options to limit their dust pollution, including use of vacuum trucks.

• **Stockpile Limits:** Concrete batch plants are now limited in the amount of acreage they can use to stockpile materials that emit pollutants.

The County's lawsuit

also triggered the TCEQ to adopt the permit using a process with greater language access for people with limited English proficiency, as is common in many Harris County neighborhoods that are proliferated by plants.

"I'm cautiously optimistic about the TCEQ's new concrete permit. Harris County officials and community members have been outspoken about the need for a permit and processes that protect the people who live here. It's good

to see the TCEQ is finally taking initial steps in the right direction," said Harris County Attorney Christian D. Menefee. "But there is more that needs to be done to combat the concrete pollution that is forced upon our most vulnerable communities. The updated permit gives plants currently operating a 10-year window to continue polluting under junk standards. Fifth Ward, Al-

Continued. See TCEQ CONCRETE PLANT RULES, Page 2

Upchurch Family thanks Community for their Support



It was a celebration of Aldine friends and family at the Upchurch party recently following the board's dismissal of eminent domain on the Upchurch homestead. Attending the celebration, from left is Jimmy Upchurch, Carlos Silva, Louis Cervantes, Travis Upchurch, Jr., Tara Upchurch, Coco Martinez, Esmeralda Cervantes, Shirley Ronquillo, Pearl Castaneda, Marina Flores Sugg, Kenneth Sugg, Jr., Mary Garza, and Chris Sustaina.

By David Taylor
 Managing Editor

Following their win in a historic eminent domain case versus Aldine Independent School District, the Travis Upchurch family was ready to celebrate.

"We knew we had to do something to thank the kind and caring people of Aldine who came to our dad's defense in regard to the eminent domain case against him from the school district," said his daughter, Tara Upchurch.

Upchurch and her brother spent two months going to school board meetings asking hundreds of friends, family, and community members to write to the

Continued. See UPCHURCH THANK YOU, Page 7

SUPER BOWL LVIII 49ers, Chiefs meet in rematch for Lombardi Trophy: A KC win would put Mahomes in select QB company

The ultimate game of the 2023 season takes place in Las Vegas on Sunday February 11 when the defending Super Bowl champs the Kansas City Chiefs (14-6) take on the San Francisco 49ers (14-5) in Super Bowl LVIII (58).

The Chiefs will be looking for their second straight Lombard Trophy (they defeated Philadelphia 38-35 on a last-second field goal a year ago) and the fourth in team history, while the 49ers will be looking for their sixth Super Bowl win, which would tie them with Pittsburgh and New England as the only three NFL franchises with six Lombardi Trophies.

SF and Dallas currently have five SB titles each.

You can bet the 49er faithful would like nothing more than to stick it to Jerry Jones' team psyche and win No. 6.

Before we take a look at the game and some of the historical aspects of it, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the amazing job first-year Houston Texas head coach DeMeco Ryans and rookie quarterback C.J. Stroud did for the hometown team this season.



Ryans, the former defensive coordinator of the 49ers, took a 3-win team and led them to 11 wins, the AFC South title and a dominating (45-14) win over Cleveland in the Wild Card round of the NFL playoffs. The Texans season ending on a disappointing note when they dropped a 34-10 decision to Baltimore in the AFC Division round. Stroud, the No. 2 overall pick in the 2023 NFL draft, had one of the best seasons a rookie quarterback has ever had in league history by throwing for 4,108 yards and 23 TDs (he missed two games in December after sustaining a concussion Dec. 10 against the Jets) and should be the Offensive Rookie of the Year when the NFL announces it awards winners on Feb. 8 on CBS and Ryans should

be Coach of the Year. If he isn't, they should retire the award.

The future is indeed bright for the Texans, but fans should be aware that by winning their division, Houston will play a much tougher schedule in 2024 (they will have to play fellow division winners Kansas City, Buffalo, and Baltimore just for starters). They could also lose some players to free agency, but with their success and a dynamic head coach, other free agents might want to give Houston a serious look. The Texans need another weapon at wide receiver to help out Stroud and need to improve the running game.

Continued. See KEENEY'S KORNER, Page 7

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Health Care High School,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

icians, technicians, therapists and pharmacists. Many of these jobs pay family-sustaining wages, provide clear paths to economic mobility, and are resilient to automation or outsourcing. Further, some may not require a four-year degree but offer a path to grow careers through continued education.

"We are excited to partner with Aldine ISD to bring Houston a new career-technical education high school that, through rigorous classroom instruction and a hands-on learning approach, will help prepare students for well-paying careers in health care and address critical health care talent needs, as well as provide

valuable educational opportunities for students throughout the region," said David L. Callender, MD, president and CEO of Memorial Hermann.

"Students are hungry for educational experiences today that feel relevant to what they will do tomorrow in their careers, many of them also wish to serve their community's needs with purposeful work. This new high school model will ensure students in Aldine ISD interested in health care careers can gain real experience while still learning the core foundational math, science, and literacy skills that we focus on during those formative secondary years," said Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney, Superintendent of Schools for Aldine ISD. "We hope to be a model for schools across the country that a holistic high school experience with fully integrated career-technical education is not just possible but profound for students and the entire community."

Bloomberg Philanthropies'

investment will support school start-up costs including personnel needs, classroom and lab renovations, and other work-based learning requirements. HEAL will be specifically designed to provide traditional academic courses based on state graduation requirements, as well as specialized health care classes co-taught by Memorial Hermann employees using the co-designed curricula.

Students will also engage in immersive work-based learning at Memorial Hermann facilities. In ninth and 10th grades, students will participate in job-shadowing and practice their skills in simulation labs; starting in 11th grade, students will have access to paid health care internships and professional mentoring, among other work-based learning experiences. Well-rounded, co-curricular programs including but not limited to arts, physical education and affinity group activities will also be offered.

TCEQ Concrete Plant Rules,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

dine, Kashmere Gardens, and neighborhoods across our county deserve better. I plan to continue pushing the TCEQ to make sure our communities are protected."

Harris County had initially raised these environmental concerns during the TCEQ's 2021 formal commenting process, but the agency declined to update the permit at that time. It was only through legal action and EPA involvement that these necessary changes were implemented. The county is continuing to review the permit to determine if fur-

ther action is necessary.

###

About the Harris County Attorney's Office:

Christian D. Menefee serves as the elected, top civil lawyer for Texas' largest county. The Harris County Attorney's Office represents the county in all civil matters including lawsuits. Menefee leads an office of 250 attorneys and staff members. He entered office at 32 years old, making him the youngest person and first African American elected as the Harris County Attorney.

COMMUNITY WATCH

County Attorney takes legal action against North Houston Concrete Plant

Houston, Texas — Harris County Attorney Christian D. Menefee has announced that Harris County is taking legal action against Texcon Ready Mix, a concrete batch plant located in north Houston near the Kashmere Gardens neighborhood and the County's LBJ Hospital.

Harris County Pollution Control found multiple violations over the course of more than a dozen separate inspections, including materials discharged into a nearby drainage ditch.

"This facility clearly violated the Texas Clean Air Act and rules set by the TCEQ. We have given them plenty of opportunity to clean up their act and follow the law, but since they have failed to do so we are taking action," said County Attorney Menefee. "We have to hold these

companies accountable for putting the people who work and live nearby at risk. We will not tolerate businesses in our communities failing to meet basic minimum standards when it comes to public health and the environment."

Harris County's lawsuit asks that Texcon Ready Mix keeps pollution capture equipment in good working order, cleans up spills promptly, reduce emissions by paving and treating roads, install a PM monitor on the fence-line, and ensures materials are stored away from property boundaries. Additionally, Harris County is requesting Texcon Ready Mix provide a written report in response to each required improvement.

"We have outlined several next steps that will

ensure this facility meets proper standards and is not polluting our air. Hopefully this will serve as notice to other concrete batch plants that we are serious about enforcing environmental laws here in Harris County," added County Attorney Menefee.

###

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Authorities seek information on killing on Greens Drive

Houston, Texas - Crime Stoppers, in collaboration with the Houston Police Department's Homicide Division, is urgently seeking the public's assistance in identifying the suspect(s) responsible for the tragic murder of Jahliil Zachary.

On Saturday, December 30, 2023, 22-year-old Jahliil Zachary was shot in the 800 block of W Greens Dr. in Houston, Texas. During this harrowing incident, he was discovered conscious on the ground, having sustained multiple gunshot wounds. Mr. Zachary revealed that the shooting took place at the "Lake." Despite efforts to save him, Mr. Zachary

succumbed to the injuries inflicted during the incident.

The grieving family of Jahliil Zachary is reaching out to the community for support in bringing the perpetrator(s) to justice. The pain of losing a loved one is immeasurable, and they implore anyone with information to come forward and assist law enforcement in identifying those responsible for this heinous crime.

Crime Stoppers may pay up to \$5,000 for information leading to the identification, charging and/or arrest of the suspect in this case. Information may be reported by calling 713-222-TIPS



JAHILIL ZACHARY

(8477), submitted online at www.crime-stoppers.org or through the Crime Stoppers mobile app. Only tips and calls DIRECTLY TO Crime Stoppers are anonymous and eligible for a cash reward.

OPEN REWARDS

NEW SHOP LOCAL APP!

NUEVA APLICACIÓN PARA COMPRAS LOCALES EN EAST ALDINE

NEW SHOP LOCAL REWARDS PROGRAM

The East Aldine District is thrilled to launch a new program, Open Rewards, to incentivize our community to support local businesses. Open Rewards allows customers to earn rewards on every purchase from businesses in the program.

HOW DOES OPEN REWARDS WORK?

- You earn cash back rewards whenever you shop at any business in the program
• You can redeem those rewards by making additional purchases at any other businesses in the program
• Supports all methods of payment you may use at the local businesses (cash, credit and debit cards)
• No action is required from businesses to give or redeem rewards, it's all done through the Open Rewards app

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR BUSINESSES?

- The program is funded by the district, and there is no cost for businesses to join
• Business will receive free promotional materials, including flyers, tent cards, social media images and other limited time promotional materials

NUEVO PROGRAMA DE RECOMPENSAS PARA COMPRAS LOCALES

El Distrito de Administración de East Aldine está encantado de lanzar Open Rewards, un programa nuevo para incentivar a nuestra comunidad para apoyar los negocios locales. Open Rewards permite a los clientes ganar recompensas por cada compra de negocios en el programa.

¿CÓMO OPEN REWARDS FUNCIONA?

- Acomulas tus recompensas de reembolso cuando compras en negocios del programa
• Puedes redimir las recompensas haciendo compras adicionales en otros negocios del programa
• Admite todos los métodos de pago que puede utilizar en los negocios locales (tarjeta de crédito, tarjeta de débito y efectivo)
• No se requiere ninguna acción por la parte de los negocios para dar o redimir las recompensas, todo se hace en la aplicación Open Rewards

¿QUÉ SIGNIFICA PARA LAS EMPRESAS?

- El programa está financiado por el distrito y no hay ningún costo para los negocios
• Los negocios recibirán gratis materiales para promociones, incluidos folletos, tarjetas de campaña, imágenes para actividades de redes sociales y otros materiales de promoción

DOWNLOAD OPEN REWARDS. SHOP LOCAL. EARN 10% CASH BACK.

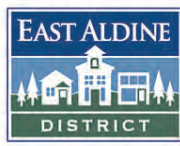


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AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS

Blind Date with a Book - all of February

Join us every day of February at the library where you can grab an unknown wrapped-up book with a description on the front to check-out and read!

Movement Mondays - K-Pop Edition

Come out and move! Join us bi-weekly on Movement Monday and be ready to move to the music. Be prepared for Dancing, Stretching, and Lots of laughter.

Best for kids for toddler/ preschool. Monday, Feb. 5, 11am. No Registration required.

Bilingual Storytime

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! Tuesday, Feb. 6, 11-12pm

English Computer Class

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 from 11:30am - 12:30pm!

Basic Computer Class Registration preferred!

*Important- Instructions are 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. Tommy Terrific's Wacky Magic Presents: Louis Armstrong

Tommy Terrific will be performing a magic show about the African American Jazz Pioneer and Celebrated Musician, Louis Armstrong. The show will feature magic tricks related to his innovative Jazz standards such as, "Hello Dolly", "When the Saints Go Marching In", and "What a Wonderful World". Throughout the show, Tommy Terrific will explore the fascinating life and numerous accomplishments of Louis Armstrong. This show is very interactive, and it is great educational entertainment for children of all ages. Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2-3pm

Are Books Good?

Help us decide once and for all whether books are good. Ms. Gage and Ms. Nicole will read stories out loud, provide snacks, and vote on how good the stories actually are. For this series, we'll be reading fairy tales, myths, and modern retellings to see which ones are best! Tuesday, Feb. 6, 5-6pm. This program is best for ages 10 - 18.

Aprenda Computers & Job Skills

Siteo web de la clase Limited space/ Espacio limitado Pre-regístrate aquí: https://forms.office.com/r/rTQyUGd1Yy luego presentarse a la clase para tomar evaluación de nivel.

Martes- 5:00 pm a 6:45 PM:

Habilidades Esenciales de computación (Computer Essential skills 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. Importante: * Se determinará su nivel de habilidades en uso de tecnología con una evaluación en la computadora durante su primer día de su asistencia. * requerirá una cuenta de gmail.com y outlook.com para acceder a las aplicaciones y programas gratuitos de la internet.

Importante: Instrucciones son en Español y las aplicaciones (Windows, Office 365, Google apps) son todas en Inglés

Aprenda Computers & Job Skills

Siteo web de la clase Limited space/ Espacio limitado Pre-regístrate aquí: https://forms.office.com/r/rTQyUGd1Yy luego presentarse a la clase para tomar evaluación de nivel.

Nivel 2- Intermedio-Jueves- 5:00 pm a 6:45 PM: Cloud Computing-Google workspace + Office 365 (Spanish computer class) Computación en la nube: Aprenderá sobre los servicios y como usar Google (Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms). Como usar: Microsoft Office 365 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint). Además, cubriremos otras aplicaciones como: Canva, Box y otras apps gratuitas. El enfoque general de de las practicas de computación serán para uso en empleos y de uso personal.

Importante: * Se determinará su nivel de habilidades en uso de tecnología con una evaluación en la computadora durante su primer día de su asistencia. * requerirá una cuenta de gmail.com y outlook.com para acceder a las aplicaciones y programas gratuitos de la internet.

Importante: Instrucciones son en Español y las aplicaciones (Windows, Office 365, Google apps) son todas en Inglés

LEGO

LEGO building can be fun and creative! Children of all ages are welcome to join us.. We'll provide the LEGOs and you can create whatever your imagination can come up with. We look forward to seeing you! Happy Building! Wednesday, Feb. 7, 2-3pm.

Valenslime

Let's get creative! This is a special

afternoon Thursday, Feb. 8 kids craft at Aldine!

We're having multiple sessions for valenslime, please double check the calendar! Session 1: 2 pm - limit 15 children Session 2: 3 pm- limit 15 children Session 3: 5 pm - limit 15 children Session 4: 6 pm- limit 15 children

This program is appropriate for children ages 5+ or Kinder and up. Tickets are required to participate. We will hand out tickets 30 minutes before the program starts.

(Don't forget, this is a great opportunity for kids to work on essential life skills like sharing, reading instructions, cutting, gluing, and working in a group.)

Citizenship Preparation Class

Gain all the necessary information required to apply for US citizenship and take the citizenship test with confidence! This class will be taught in English. This session will be on Thursday evenings starting Feb. 15 from 6-8pm. Register online (https://tiny.cc/aldinecitizenship) or in person to save your place. Instructor: Marta Cuadrado

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/qSzMSpjaTL

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 6-8 weeks and expedited processing time is estimated at 2-3 weeks. You can make an appointment for passport services at Aldine Branch - https://www.hcpil.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

Blake Ware Returns to his Roots as Head Coach at MacArthur High School

Blake Ware is coming home.

The MacArthur High School graduate was recently named head football coach and athletic coordinator at the school, where he graduated in 1989.

Ware played tight end for former MacArthur head coach Bob Alpert. As a sophomore and junior, Ware and his teammates reached the quarterfinals.

After graduating from Texas Southern University with a history degree, Ware went to work in the restaurant business, where he met his wife Trina, a graduate of Eisenhower High School. He began coaching his brother's little league football teams, where the coaching bug bit him.

"I went and visited with coach Alpert and told him I wanted to become a coach," Ware said. "He told me it would be tough, but it's something I wanted to do. I love it (coaching)"

Twenty-eight years later, Ware still loves coaching and looks forward to making the Generals relevant again in football.

MacArthur's roots run deep in the Ware family. His mother and father are both MacArthur grads, and he has 15 other relatives who went to school there.

Ware said he was thankful for the opportunity to return to his alma mater and looks forward to the challenge of turning the MacArthur football program around.

"I am," when asked if he was excited about taking over the program he once played for. "We're going to see if we can make a difference. This is a homecoming, for sure."

Aldine ISD Executive Director of Athletics Dre Thompson said he was excited Ware is returning to the district where he was educated and competed in sports as a young man.

"When you look at where we are with MacArthur football and the plan it's going to need for Big Red, Coach Ware was the right choice," Thompson said. "He has the experience and the skill set to make it happen. Coach Ware is known in the coaching world as a program rebuilders. Not only does he have the reputation and the resume to rebuild programs, but he is also a MacArthur product. He is a graduate and former player at MacArthur High School. So, all the needed dots are connected to steer the program in the right direction. And it doesn't hurt to have someone that adds a personal touch."

Ware served for four years as the former head coach at Dayton High School. While at Dayton, he led the team to the playoffs after starting 0-10 in



Blake Ware, a graduate of MacArthur High School, has been named the school's new head football coach and campus athletic coordinator

202. The Broncos improved and finished 7-4 a year ago each year.

Ware remembers the days when MacArthur was a power in football in the 1980s and 1990s under Alpert's leadership. They were a perennial playoff participant and, in 1993, reached the Class 5A Division II state title game, where they lost a 43-37 heartbreaker to Lewisville.

"If I have 15 to 18 years left in me, I want to take all that time to a place I love," he said. "I want to see Mac return to where it used to be."

Ware has already met his new players and believes he made a good first impression.

"I think they liked where I'm coming from," he said. "I told them we want to raise the standard. We have a lot of work ahead of us. It's going to take a lot of consistency and patience. This is a great opportunity with the new stadium opening. It will be great to be on that field again in Red and White."

Ware said his offense will be based on the talent he has returning. In the past, he has run the Pro-I, which he learned from coach Alpert, and will also employ spread concepts. Defensively, the Generals will run an odd front.

While the Xs and Os will take care of themselves, Ware said he and his staff will focus on inspiring their new players from Day 1.

"In my experience, it all starts with hope," Ware said. "It's our job to inspire these kids. To teach them to lift others and have selfless hearts. If we give everybody hope, the train will get going. It's not about me, it's about us. Our job is to put the right people in the right seats on the bus and do what's best for us."

Make no mistake, though, Ware is committed to winning.

"I love winning, and we are going to do things the right way," he said. "We'll be asking our players to trust us. Wins are great, but what that kid is at 35 is what matters the most."

Will he be a good father and a good co-worker? Don't get me wrong, I want to win, but I believe I'm in the business of helping young men become better in their adult lives."

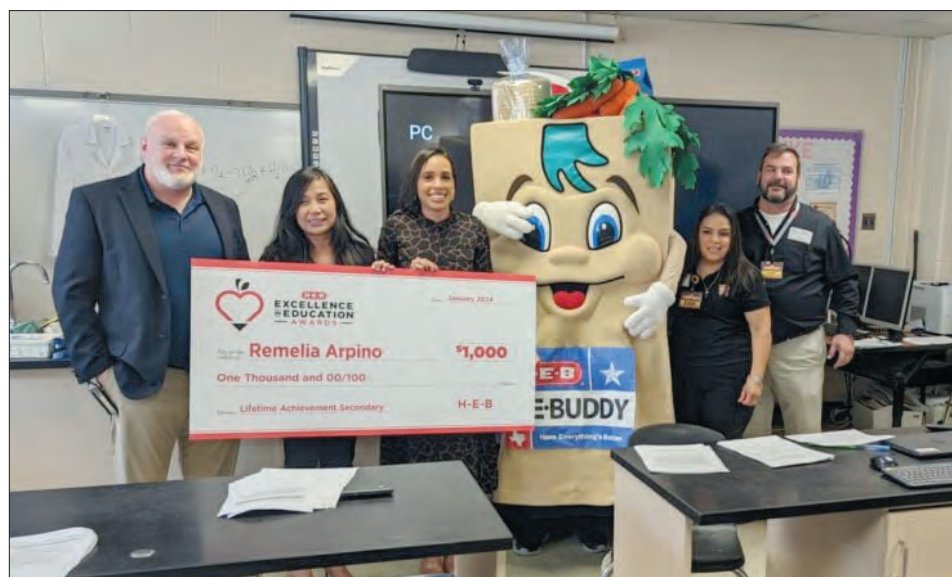
He has also been head coach at St. Pius X High School since 2011-14. Ware has also served as offensive coordinator at New Caney High School (2014-2020), as head football coach at The Woodlands Christian Academy (2010-11), as head coach at Greenhill School in Addison, TX (2005-10), and served as offensive coordinator at St. Pius X from 1997-2005. In 1999, he was part of the St. Pius X staff that won the TAPS state championship. He also served one year on the St. Thomas High School football staff in 1996.

During his 28 years in coaching, Ware has been named a Touchdown Club of Houston Coach of the Year Finalist (2012), was one of 16 coaches selected from across the nation to coach in the Under Armour All-American Game (2013), and was named Liberty County Coach of the Year in 2022.

During his tenure as a head coach and offensive coordinator, Ware has produced 11 running backs that have rushed for 3,000 or more yards in a season, oversaw an offense in 2008 at St. Pius that was the national leader in passing yards per game for the regular season and in 2015, his offense ended the season ranked fourth among Class 5A teams in total offense and fifth in the state in scoring. He has produced four offenses (2016, 17, 18, and 19) that averaged more than 40 points per game, and in that span, all four of his quarterbacks were named Montgomery County Offensive MVPs for those respective seasons.

Ware and his wife Trina have three children: Timmy, Averie, who attends Sam Houston State University; and Alana, who is a senior at Dayton High School.

Eisenhower Science Teacher Remelia Arpino Named H-E-B Excellence in Education Award Finalist



Eisenhower High School science teacher Remelia Arpino, second from left, poses with the \$1,000 check she received from H-E-B for being named one of five state finalists in H-E-B's Excellence in Education Lifetime Achievement Award (secondary). Pictured with Arpino are Eisenhower High School principal James Metcalf, left, and representatives from H-E-B, including the organization's mascot, H-E-Buddy

Eisenhower High School science teacher Remelia Arpino received a pleasant surprise on Jan. 30 when representatives from H-E-B and the school dropped into her classroom to let her know that she had been selected as one of five state finalists for the H-E-B Excellence in Education Lifetime Achievement Award at the secondary level.

Arpino and the school each received a \$1,000 check, and if she is named the overall winner (H-E-B will announce the winners in all categories in the spring), she could also receive an additional \$25,000, as will Eisenhower High School.

Eisenhower High School Principal James Metcalf said he has been impressed with Arpino's dedication to her students for over 15 years. He said she was very deserving of this honor.

"Remelia is a highly passionate secondary educator who believes that everyone deserves a quality education, and she always looks forward to making a difference in every learner's life as well as the educational institution," Metcalf wrote in his letter of recommendation, nominating her for the award. "She is constantly searching for the best opportunities to offer her students through professional advancement and networking with universities, institutions, and the community."

Arpino was also nominated by Eisenhower High School Assistant Principal Kesha Bolton for the award.

During her 30-plus years in education, Arpino has earned numerous honors. She has won the Eisenhower High School Going the Extra Mile Award; she was Eisenhower's Teacher of the Year for the 2017-18 school year, the Science and Engineering Fair of Houston Teacher of the Year

in 2020, the Outstanding Texas High School Science Teacher of the Year in 2022 and earned the Yale Educator Award in 2023. She also mentored a group of Eisenhower students who won the METRO Bus Shelter Design competition in 2022.

Arpino received her bachelor's degree in biology and a master's in science from the University of Southeastern Philippines.

Arpino also dedicates her time to many worthy causes inside and outside education. She has served as the head curriculum writer for Environmental Systems and AP Environment for Aldine ISD, as head facilitator for sciences during district staff development, as a team leader over Biology at Eisenhower, and as lead sponsor for the International Culture Club at Eisenhower. She also volunteers with the Red Cross Disaster Assessment Team, is a St. Matthew's Catholic Church Music and Dance Ministry member, and volunteers with the Houston Food Bank and the International Culture Club. She also volunteered at the George R. Brown Convention Center during Hurricane Harvey.

Arpino said she was incredibly honored to be named a H-E-B Excellence in Education Award finalist.

"Being selected as a finalist for the H-E-B Educator Lifetime Achievement Award holds profound significance for me," she said. "This recognition validates the importance of my daily contributions and reminds me that the flame of passion for nurturing students doesn't diminish with experience. Instead, it emphasizes the responsibility of experienced educators to set the stage for those entering the profession and become role models of true dedication and commitment."

Arpino, who teaches IB Biology, IB Environmental Systems & Societies, and Environmental Systems, said she is thankful she chose education as a profession.

"Teaching holds immense significance for me as it provides the opportunity to nurture young minds and impart skills that extend far beyond the confines of the classroom," Arpino said. "The influence I have can extend across generations, as my students may go on to become future parents and leaders. Consequently, quality education becomes paramount in shaping individual lives and contributing to the well-being of society. Having highly dedicated educators is a gift to society."

She added she was thankful to work with such an excellent staff of fellow dedicated educators at Eisenhower.

"I am deeply grateful for the unwavering support and trust of my colleagues and administrators at Eisenhower High School, without whom many of my initiatives would not have been possible. Additionally, I extend my heartfelt thanks to all my students and the organizations I sponsor, especially the Culture Club and NHS (National Honor Society), for their continuous support of my endeavors outside the classroom."

Created in 2002, the H E B Excellence in Education Awards are designed to honor outstanding public school professionals and to thank them for their dedication and commitment. Through this program, H-E-B seeks to pay tribute to educators who go the extra mile daily to serve their students and their communities and inspire others to do the same.

Carver HS Students Continue Their Urban Farming, and Nutrition Journey

The program helps students grow their interest in food systems, agriculture, and food and health literacy.

Alicia Harris, community garden manager with the City of Houston Health Department's Get Moving Houston Urban Gardens, recently visited students at Carver High School as part of a one-of-a-kind initiative, The Young Agri-business Leaders of Houston (YALH) Education Program.

The 11-week program aims to engage students in the various aspects of hydroponic gardening and lessons on food insecurity, nutrition, urban farming, community development, and entrepreneurship. Click here for details about the program.

During the students' fifth period, Harris began



the class by explaining the importance and significance of gardening. In addition to talking about the types of gardens, Harris also shared information about local gardens and ideas for field trips to local growers.

Harris brought plants and seeds for kale, spinach, lettuce, cilantro bok choy, yellow squash, and mustard.

The 33 students could take their plants home once they finished preparing them.

"The students were so engaged and decided to start a group to keep up with their plant's progress," said teacher Monica Caldwell. The kids took ownership of their learning. They were all ecstatic. Afterward, the students planted the remaining ones into our campus vegetable and



flower garden."

The (YALH) Education Program is funded by an African American Mayors Association (AAMA) and the American Beverage Foundation for a Healthy America (ABFHA) through their Nutrition Access, Affordability, and Education Grant Program, launched at Carver High School in late October.

OPINION PAGE

OPINION By BILL KING



Houston METRO's Purple Line: A Case Study of the Insanity of Building Light Rail

In 2015, Houston Metro opened its Purple Line (aka Southeast Line). The Purple Line is a light rail facility that snakes 6.5 miles from downtown by Texas Southern and the University of Houston, ultimately terminating at Palm Center on Griggs Road.

When Metro first proposed this line in 2008, it estimated that the cost would be \$591 million and the line would carry 28,750 weekday riders. As of September 2020, the project had cost taxpayers \$787 million and is projected to ultimately cost \$822 million, 39% higher than projected.

How did Metro get it so wrong?

We happen to know a lot about this particular project because it was partially funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), which required Metro to file an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with the Houston Galveston Area Council (HGAC). Also, the FTA included the Purple Line in an analysis it did of about thirty transit projects, known as a Projected versus Actual Study, in 2020. Here is what those records show.

This project was originally conceived as part of the Metro Solutions program that Metro put before the voters in 2003. By 2008, Metro had completed its original analysis and came up with a proposed route, which in transit vernacular is called the "Local Preferred Alternative" (LPA).

The EIS filed with HGAC included a chapter on how the Purple Line would impact transportation in the area where it would be built, including a projection of ridership. Below is the table from that chapter which showed Metro's average daily ridership projection for the Purple Line at 28,750.

By the time Metro got around to applying for FTA funding for the Purple Line in 2011, it had quietly dropped its daily ridership projection to 17,200.

While transit ridership projections are notorious for their exaggeration, Metro's ridership projection on the Purple Line was so egregious that it drew special attention from the FTA in its 2020 study. The report notes that Metro's Purple Line projection was the worst of the thirty projects it reviewed. This is a chart that the FTA included in its final report showing what an outlier Metro's projection was.

Because of this, the FTA asked Metro for an explanation of how the projection could possibly be so far off. Specifically, the FTA asked to review the models that Houston Metro used to make the projection.

However, by that time Metro had lost access to the software and the data used to make the original projection. So, instead of providing the FTA with the detailed modeling data it asked for, Metro sent an email to the FTA in which it speculated that the earlier projection models had relied on the assumption that all of the light rail lines included in the Metro Solution program (including the Richmond/Westpark and to each airport) would have been completed and feeding passengers onto the Purple Line.

The FTA skeptically responded, "It leaves us still pondering how changes in the transit network - by themselves - could triple the forecast of Purple Line ridership compared to the . . . actual outcome." Its skepticism was well founded because there was nothing in the 2008 EIS referencing the other light rail lines, other than the Main Street (Red) Line which had been in place since 2003. I think it is fair to conclude that the original projection was badly flawed, and Metro created this explanation after the fact as an excuse

Metro also admitted in the correspondence with the FTA, that it had run a new projection in 2013 that showed average daily ridership would only be about 6,500. Metro pressed the FTA that the 6,500 projection should be used in its study and not the earlier projections of 17,000 or 28,000. The FTA responded, "While METRO and the FTA no doubt wish that those revised assumptions had been used in the forecast in play at the time of the FFGA decision, we cannot substitute the revised forecast for the forecast actually provided to FTA at the time of the FFGA."

The significance here is that the FFGA is the point in time when the FTA had committed to financially supporting the project. If Metro submitted a projection of 6,500 daily riders, the FTA would almost certainly have never approved funding the line. Of course, Houston taxpayers were never told that the original projection of 28,500 riders per day had been reduced by nearly 80%.

Last year, the total trips on the Purple Line were just under 1.2 million. In 2016, Metro estimated that the operating cost of the Purple Line was just under \$13 million. Of course, that is undoubtedly higher today. So, the Purple is costing Houston taxpayers something like \$12 per ride in operating costs.

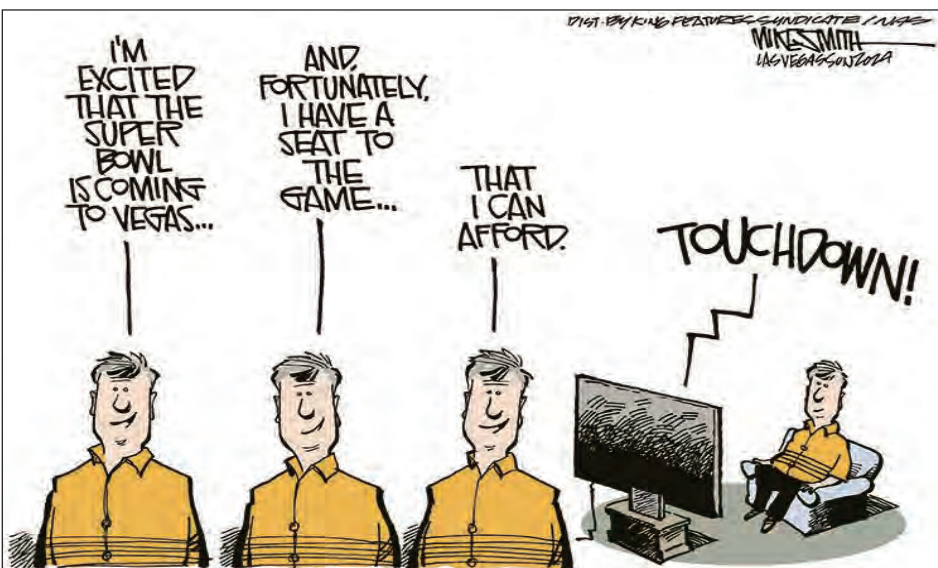
However, that does not include the capital cost of building the line. If you assume that the capital cost of \$822 million is, say 5%; that would add another \$41 million of annual cost, or an additional \$32 per ride. So, the actual ongoing cost of the operations and the opportunity cost of the capital is about \$44 per ride. And that is before you even think about trying to recover the capital investment.

Keep in mind that any trip on this line is, at a maximum, 6.5 miles. A ride sharing trip would cost a small fraction of what taxpayers are paying to provide this service to Metro's riders. By the way, according to a Metro study, the average speed is 14 miles per hour, and it takes about 30 minutes to travel from one end of the 6.5-mile line to the other.

In 2019, Houston voters approved the Metro Next plan, in which Metro incredibly included an additional 16 miles of light rail. Of course, Metro did not share with the public its abysmal record on the Purple Line; or the Green Line which is equally horrible and I will be writing more about soon.

Based on inflation since the Purple Line was completed, that additional 16 miles of light rail would cost something close to \$200 million per mile. If dropping another \$3.2 billion on light rail in Houston is not the definition of insanity, I cannot image what is.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Reader comments on this or any article are welcome.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders



Standoff at Border Continues between State, Feds

A standoff at an Eagle Pass park continues as the Department of Homeland Security has sent a second letter to Gov. Greg Abbott demanding access to the Rio Grande park that is now under state control. Abbott contends the state has the right to defend itself from what he called "record-smashing levels of illegal immigration." The Dallas Morning News reported. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled last week that the Border Patrol can resume cutting or removing razor wire that the state installed to deter migrants. Citing that ruling, DHS sent a second letter demanding the state give Border Patrol agents "full access to the Shelby Park area currently obstructed by Texas." A DPS spokesman said the state is installing more razor wire along the riverbank. U.S. Rep. Joaquin Castro, D-San Antonio, has urged President Joe Biden to federalize the Texas National Guard if the state defies the Supreme Court ruling.

JUDGE REJECTS PAXTON'S MOTION TO BLOCK DEPOSITION

A Travis County judge again blocked a motion by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton to stop a deposition in a wrongful termination lawsuit brought by former top aides in his office, the Austin American-Statesman reported. The deposition is scheduled for Feb. 1. The four aides went to the FBI to complain about the embattled attorney general's actions in helping developer Nate Paul. The aides were subsequently fired and filed suit in 2020. Earlier in January, Paxton tried to end the matter by saying he would no longer contest the facts of the case and accept whatever judgment the court handed down, though he continued to deny any wrongdoing. He condemned the judge's latest ruling, saying Travis County Judge Jan Soifer was "recklessly disregarding legal precedent, abusing the litigation system, and displaying shocking bias." Before Paxton filed his latest motion attempting to avoid testifying, both the state 3rd Court of Appeals and the Texas Supreme Court rejected his earlier appeals. Meanwhile, four months after the Senate voted to acquit Paxton in his impeachment trial, which stemmed from an investigation into a proposed settlement



of the whistleblower lawsuit, a senator that voted to acquit is accusing Paxton of possibly misleading the Senate during that trial. He urged the Senate to consider reopening the Paxton's impeachment. State Sen. Drew Springer, R-Muenster, said Paxton's decision not to contest the facts of the whistleblower lawsuit point to his culpability. Paxton "cannot admit guilt while claiming innocence," Springer wrote in a post on X. Springer had previously announced plans to retire from the Senate.

STATE DELAYS VOTE ON PROPOSED LAND SWAP WITH SPACEX

Heat from conservation groups prompted Texas Parks and Wildlife commissioners to delay a proposed land swap with SpaceX. The proposal would have given the space exploration company 43 acres of Boca Chica State Park land in exchange for 477 acres near the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge, The News reported. Groups, including the Sierra Club and Save RGV, urged commissioners to delay the vote to allow the public more time to examine the proposal, which will be revisited in late March. Environmental groups sued the Federal Aviation Administration last year over its approval of the expansion of billionaire Elon Musk's SpaceX's rocket-launch operations. The suit was filed after the company's Starship exploded during a launch and hurled debris thousands of feet into the air. They have also expressed concern for possible loss of wildlife and habitat since the launch site is within miles of the state park and wildlife refuge.

RECORD NUMBER OF TEXANS ENROLL IN ACA

More Texans than ever have signed up for health care

coverage under the Affordable Care Act for 2024, according to federal health data released last week and reported by the Texas Tribune. The number of Texans in ACA programs, which offer inexpensive or free health care coverage, rose 37% to nearly 3.5 million - or 1 in 9 residents. National enrollment is at record highs as well, with more than 16.3 million people signed up for plans under ACA. That is double the number of Americans signing up for ACA plans since it was launched in 2014. "The clear takeaway is that Texans want coverage that is affordable and comprehensive, and when you make sure they have that - and it's easy to know about, and it's easy to get signed up - they sign up in droves," said Stacey Pogue, a health care policy analyst. Texas continues to lead the nation in the number of uninsured residents, with nearly 5 million Texans living without health insurance coverage. That's nearly double the national average.

DSHS LAUNCHES NEW TOOLS TO TRACK RESPIRATORY VIRUSES

The Texas Department of State Health Services has created a respiratory virus dashboard that shows trends in the three major respiratory illnesses most likely to cause serious illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths - COVID-19, influenza and RSV. "Those data points demonstrate the diseases' most severe effects on people, communities and the health care system," said DSHS Commissioner Jennifer Shuford. "The dashboard provides a near real-time look at conditions, so people can make informed decisions on precautions for themselves and their families, and health care professionals can make recommendations to their patients." The site can be accessed at healthdata.dshs.texas.gov/Home.

FORMER PUC DIRECTOR IS NOW CHAIRMAN

The former executive director of the Public Utility Commission was sworn in last week as chairman of the commission. Thomas Gleeson, who has worked at the PUC for 15 years, most recently as the agency's executive director, was appointed to the commission by Abbott in mid-January. "As a long-time employee of the PUCT, I'm deeply familiar with the duties and responsibilities of the agency. Even more importantly, as a husband, dad, and ratepayer, I know how the decisions we make here impact the daily lives and finances of Texas families," Gleeson said. The PUC regulates the state's electric, telecommunications, water and sewer utilities. It was founded in 1975. 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

Enough

My husband, Peter, and I are headed out to Mexico again, and before we do, I thought it was a good time of year to check in with some folks I care about, to see how 2024 had been treating them so far.

First, I had dinner with my oldest friend, Andrew. He told me about his mother, who lives alone and has been feeling her 92 years. Her activities are becoming more limited, and she may move into a smaller place. She's figuring out what she is still able to do, and how much is enough.

Andrew prepares taxes, and so this is about the last chance I would get to see him in three months, even if I were not leaving for Mexico. He will be working long hours, making most of the money he makes in the year in a short time, and still caring for his mom.

"Take care of yourself!" I say because Andrew is single, and I worry he won't get enough rest. I worry he will eat poorly.

"I do!" he insists. I don't know if this is true. But I hope he gets enough food and sleep and sunshine during this season of cold and gray and taxes.

Then I had lunch with Dane, the cousin who is closest in age to me. This is quite a distinction, because I have 36 cousins. Dane is good about calling me up when he is nearby so we can have lunch. He didn't have a lot of news. Work was going as well as could be expected. He'd had two flat tires hauling a trailer across the country. Dane's sister had successfully nagged him into scheduling a physical and making a will.

"You need to have regular physicals!" I told him.

"I know. I've got one scheduled."

I did not ask how long it had been since his last one.

"I'm getting my teeth cleaned, too," he added, as if he read my thoughts.

I was glad to hear he was taking care of himself (with his sister's urging). Then Dane said something unexpected.

"I realized the other day how unimportant money is to me."

This was a surprising thing for him to say. Dane works hard for his money. He gets up before the sun and does a lot of hard labor and drives a trailer in adverse weather. He's a guy who paid off his mortgage early, doesn't buy new furniture and doesn't take a lot of vacations.

"Oh?"

"I found a \$20 bill on the sidewalk. I picked it up, and it was wrapped around two \$100 bills."

"Wow. Any idea where it came from?"

"No idea. I kept it, but I felt bad. Someone was missing a lot of money and I just felt bad there was no way of getting it back to them."

I looked at my cousin. Like me, he was getting older. Like me, he had a pretty good life. "It's good to have enough, isn't it?" I said.

Dane nodded. Dane is happy with what he has, and he has enough.

Peter and I are leaving for Mexico soon. We'll be staying in our little one-bedroom apartment, and I'll be writing at my little green Formica desk. It's not the fanciest place. It's nowhere near as nice as the homes of most of our friends. But every night our landlord, Jorge, will greet us and the colorful suns hanging from the walls around us will smile at us and we will know we have everything we need. We have more than enough.

Till next time, Carrie

NORTHEAST NEWS 5906 Star Lane, Houston, TX 77057 (713) 266-3444 • FAX (713) 977-1188 email: nenewsroom@aol.com website: www.nenewsroom.com

SPANISH PAGE

Funcionarios Electos Honran a los fideicomisarios de Aldine ISD en la reunión de la Junta Directiva de Enero

En honor al Mes de Reconocimiento de la Junta Escolar en Texas, varios funcionarios electos honraron a la Directiva de Aldine ISD por su liderazgo y compromiso con la comunidad durante la reunión de la junta del 23 de enero. Los representantes de los funcionarios electos que estuvieron presentes en la reunión de la Junta del 23 de enero fueron José Medrano, quien representó al Pct. 2 El Comisionado del Condado Adrián García, Lanita Hale, quien representó al Representante Estatal Jarvis Johnson y Kent Clingerman, quien representó al Pct. 3 Comisionado del Condado Tom Ramsey. Los tres presentaron resoluciones a la Junta Directiva. Otros funcionarios electos que proporcionaron resoluciones o proclamaciones fueron la congresista estadounidense Sylvia R. García, la congresista estadounidense Sheila Jackson Lee, la senadora estatal Carol Alvarado y los representantes estatales Charles Cunningham, Armando Walle, Senfronia Thompson, Harold Dutton y Valoree Swanson. Además de los funcionarios electos, se compartió un video con la audiencia y los miembros de la Junta de directores, maestros y estudiantes agradeciendo a los fideicomisarios por su arduo trabajo y dedicación al distrito. El video fue producido por Bryant Stevens, Especialista en Comunicaciones Multimedia del distrito. Varias escuelas del distrito también proporcionaron regalos, tarjetas de agradecimiento y carteles de agradecimiento. La Junta Directiva de Aldine ISD está compuesta por la presidenta Dra. Kimberly Booker, el vicepresidente Paul Shanklin, la secretaria Connie Esparza, la secretaria adjunta Rose Avalos y los miembros Steve Mead, la Dra. Viola M. García y Randy Bates.

Los fideicomisarios de AISD aprueban la extensión del contrato de la superintendente Goffney Durante la reunión de la Junta del 23 de enero, los fideicomisarios de Aldine ISD aprobaron por unanimidad una extensión de contrato para la superintendente Dra. LaTonya M. Goffney. La extensión del contrato es por un año y se extenderá hasta 2028. Goffney fue contratada en mayo de 2018 y la Junta aprobó un contrato de cinco años en ese momento. Goffney se ha desempeñado anteriormente como Superintendente de Coldspring-Oakhurst CISD y Lufkin ISD. Goffney comenzó su mandato como superintendente de Aldine ISD el 2 de julio de 2018. Estudiantes de Arte de la FFA reconocidos por el Departamento de Enseñanza, Liderazgo y Aprendizaje El Jefe de Escuelas, Dr. Javier Villarreal, reconoció a varios estudiantes de arte de la FFA que recientemente fueron homenajeados en la Exposición Ganadera de Houston y la Recepción de Arte de Rodeo. El Distrito Escolar de Aldine tenía 630 obras de arte en exhibición en la recepción. Varios estudiantes fueron reconocidos como ganadores de la medalla de oro al mejor de la exposición. En la categoría Primaria, Valentín Amador de Anderson Academy ganó una medalla de oro. Su maestro es Tony McMillian. Cristofer López de Anderson Academy ganó el premio Best of Show (McMillian es su maestro), mientras que Edward Conde de Cypresswood Elementary también ganó los honores de Best of Show. Su maestra es Yvonne López. En la categoría de Escuela Intermedia, Kayleen Sosa-Puge de la Escuela Intermedia Hoffman ganó una medalla de oro. Su maestra es Margie Ellis. Kolby Green de la Escuela Intermedia Teague obtuvo los honores de Best of Show. Su maestra es Kelly Hottle. En la categoría de escuela secundaria, Jasmine Kesinger de Aldine High School ganó una medalla de oro. Su maestra es Birgit Langhammer. Zachariah Downing de Nimitz High School también ganó una medalla de oro. Su maestro es Jorge Vázquez. Jasmine Brown, de la Academia de Liderazgo de Mujeres Jóvenes, obtuvo los hon-

ores de Best of Show. Su maestra es Lizette Herrera. Briana Benavides, de la Escuela Secundaria Davis, también obtuvo los honores de Best of Show. Su maestra es Martine Barrera. Martín Figueroa, de la Escuela Secundaria MacArthur, también obtuvo los honores de Best of Show. Su maestra es Hailey Williams. El Dr. Villarreal también anunció que la 65ª Exposición Ganadera y Feria Rural anual de la FFA está programada del 24 al 26 de enero en el Centro Educativo M.O. Campbell. Para promover el evento en la reunión de la Junta Directiva del 23 de enero estuvo presente Brooke Martin, Directora Ejecutiva de Educación Técnica y Profesional, y estudiantes de la FFA Christian Moreno de la Escuela Secundaria Aldine, Sharon Aldana de la Escuela Secundaria Davis, Jaden Harris y Ethan Harris de la Escuela Secundaria Eisenhower, Daniel Cordington de la Escuela Secundaria MacArthur y Reagan Verhalen de la Escuela Secundaria Nimitz. Todos los estudiantes presentes en la reunión de la Junta del 23 de enero competirán en la Exposición Ganadera. Empleados de Aldine ISD reconocidos Durante la 23 reunión de la Junta Directiva del mes de enero, dos empleados de Aldine ISD fueron reconocidos por su liderazgo, conectándose con sus compañeros de trabajo e impactando el éxito de los estudiantes. El Jefe de Policía de Aldine ISD, Paul Cordova, nombró al oficial LeRoy Reed como el Empleado del Mes del Departamento de Policía. La Dra. Keena Bradley, Directora Ejecutiva de Servicios y Experiencia del Empleado, nombró a Norma Cisneros como la Empleada de Recursos Humanos del Trimestre. Los directivos aprueban elementos de acción Durante la reunión de la Junta del 23 de enero, los fideicomisarios de Aldine ISD aprobaron los siguientes puntos de acción:



Aprobadas las actas de las reuniones anteriores de la Junta Directiva Aprobada la Solicitud de Subvención de Referencia No Competitiva para el Estado Principal Temprano de Aldine ISD para el año presupuestario del 3/1/24 al 2/28/2025 y el período del proyecto del 3/1/24/ al 2/28/29 Resolución aprobada por la Junta sobre el empleo o aceptación de capellanes voluntarios bajo el Proyecto de Ley Senatorial 763 Aprobado un Memorando de Entendimiento entre el Centro Nacional para Grow Your Own y el Distrito Escolar de Aldine, vigente desde el 25 de enero de 2024 hasta mayo de 2024, para brindar servicios de apoyo técnico para el Programa Grow Your Own del Distrito Escolar de Aldine Aprobada una resolución para el pago del personal durante el cierre del distrito el 16 de enero de 2024 Contratos individuales aprobados y compras de \$100,000 o más Aprobada la RFP #24-004 Servicios de consultoría para estudiantes de escapatate para tres distritos escolares de Texas Aprobada la enmienda presupuestaria de mitad de año para el

año escolar 2023-24 Resolución aprobada de la Junta Directiva para designar a los Oficiales de Inversiones e Instituciones de Inversión Autorizadas y Representantes para el Cumplimiento de la Ley de Inversión de Fondos Públicos Aprobado el Calendario Académico 2024-245 y el Calendario Académico para el Año Escolar Adicional (ADSY) 2024-25 Reembolsos mensuales aprobados por la Oficina de Impuestos El Dr. Booker anuncia los nombramientos del Comité Durante la reunión de fideicomisarios del 23 de enero, la presidenta de la Junta, la Dra. Kimberly Booker, anunció los nuevos miembros de los Comités Permanentes de la Junta para 2024. Además de los tradicionales Comités Permanentes, Booker anunció la formación de un nuevo Comité de Defensa que presidirá. Los miembros serán Connie Esparza y la Dra. Viola M. García. El Comité de Nominaciones estará compuesto por el Presidente Paul Shanklin y los Miembros Connie Esparza y Steve Mead. El Comité de Políticas de la Junta Directiva estará compuesto por el presidente Randy Bates y los miembros Rose

Avalos y García. El Comité de Miembros de la Junta estará compuesto por la presidenta Connie Esparza y los miembros Randy Bates y Paul Shanklin. El Comité de Nombres de Escuelas estará compuesto por el presidente Mead y los miembros Booker y García. Antes del inicio de la reunión de la Junta del 23 de enero, los estudiantes de la Escuela Primaria Conley dirigieron a la audiencia en el Juramento a la Bandera y el Juramento a la Bandera de Texas. Los colores fueron presentados por la Guardia de Color del JROTC de la Escuela Secundaria Aldine. La reunión de la Junta Directiva de febrero se llevará a cabo el martes 20 de febrero. Comenzará a las 7 p.m. y se llevará a cabo en la Sala de Juntas del Edificio de Administración Donaldson. Caption Los fideicomisarios de Aldine ISD y la superintendente Dra. LaTonya M. Goffney posan frente a las bolsas de regalo que se les presentaron durante la reunión de la Junta del 23 de enero. Las bolsas de regalo fueron presentadas a los Fideicomisarios en honor al Mes de Reconocimiento de la Junta Escolar

GREEN FOREST CIVIC CLUB MONTHLY MEETINGS

Hello, East Aldine Residents. Please mark your calendar! Monthly meetings of the Green Forest Civic Club Last Tuesday of the month @ 6:30 p.m. 2909 E. Aldine Amphitheater Dr. 77039 At our meetings, you will receive in-person updates from elected officials, law enforcement officers, and service providers and organizations about issues, concerns, and events having to do with East Aldine. Also receive advice and assistance on any issue you may be having. Our meetings are open to the public. For additional information, contact Selina Valdez @ 832-416-0964 or at greenforestc1983@gmail.com or on our FaceBook page: Green Forest Civic Club. We look forward to seeing you!

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Valentine's DAY

CITIZENSHIP WORKSHOPS 2024 (FOROS DE CIUDADANIA 2024)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH 901 ROSELANE ST. HOUSTON, TX. 77037	SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM HOSANNA LUTHERAN CHURCH 16526 ELLA BLVD. HOUSTON, TX. 77090	SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM LONE STAR COLLEGE EAST ALDINE CENTER 2430 ALDINE MAIL RTE RD. HOUSTON, TX. 77039
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM LA PROMESA SCHOOL 11101 ALDINE DRIVE HOUSTON, TX. 77037	SATURDAY, MARCH 2 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM NORTHWOODS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 3320 CYPRESS CREEK PARKWAY HOUSTON, TX. 77068	SATURDAY, APRIL 20 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM LONE STAR COLLEGE KINGWOOD CENTER 20000 KINGWOOD DR. KINGWOOD, TX. 77338
THURSDAY, APRIL 25 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 4:00 PM LONE STAR COLLEGE HOUSTON NORTH 250 N. SAN HOUSTON PARKWAY E. HOUSTON, TX. 77060	SATURDAY, MAY 4 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM ST. CHARLES BORROMEO CATHOLIC CHURCH 501 TIDWELL RD. HOUSTON, TX. 77022	SATURDAY, MAY 18 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM ST. LEO THE GREAT CATHOLIC CHURCH 2131 LAUDER RD. HOUSTON, TX. 77039
SATURDAY, MAY 25 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM PRINCE OF PEACE CATHOLIC CHURCH 19222 TOMBALL PARKWAY HOUSTON, TX. 77070	SATURDAY, JUNE 1 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC CHURCH 18511 KLEIN CHURCH RD. SPRING, TX. 77379	SATURDAY, JUNE 15 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA CATHOLIC CHURCH 7810 CYPRESSWOOD DR. SPRING, TX. 77379
SATURDAY, JUNE 22 REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM ST. BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC CHURCH 3356 11th ST. KATY, TX. 77493	PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED: PLEASE SEND EMAIL TO WWW.BAATEXAS.ORG PARA SU CONVENIENCIA, BONDING AGAINST ADVERSITY ESTA DISPONIBLE EN TRES OFICINAS FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL 281-799-9076 OR TEXT 832-906-4214 PARA MAS INFORMACION, POR FAVOR LLAMAR AL 281-799-9076 O ENVIAR TEXTO AL 832-906-4214	

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CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Shimeah (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. In Joshua 10, which people were killed by great stones cast down from heaven? Amorites, Samaritans, Canaanites, Nazarenes
3. From Genesis 2:24, what phrase describes the marriage of a man and a woman? Holy matrimony,

God's reward, One flesh, Today forever

4. Which insect is mentioned in the book of James as an eater of garments? Gnat, Hornet, Ant, Moth
5. What king of Bashan had an iron bed thirteen and a half feet long? Edrei, Og, Argob, Senir
6. On which day of creation was the sun made? First, Second, Third, Fourth

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Amorites, 3) One flesh, 4) Moth, 5) Og, 6) Fourth
Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online.

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

*I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples;
I will sing to You among the nations.
For Your mercy reaches unto the heavens,
And Your truth unto the clouds.
Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;
Let Your glory be above all the earth.*

PSALM 57:9-11 ☞

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SPORTS PAGE

SUPER BOWL LVIII (Continued from Page 1)
49ers, Chiefs meet in rematch for Lombardi Trophy:
A KC win would put Mahomes in select QB company

Now it's up to the front office to get Ryans and Stroud the help they need to go even further in 2024, and maybe, just maybe, put them in the same position the Chiefs and 49ers are.

Speaking of this year's Super Bowl, it has the makings of another classic. These two teams met four years ago in Super Bowl 54 in Miami. The 49ers carried a 10-point lead into the fourth quarter, but KC QB Patrick Mahomes lead the Chiefs to 21 points, enroute to a 31-20 win, giving Mahomes and head coach Andy Reid their first championship. The Chiefs are definitely the class of the NFL, having played in six straight AFC title games and four of the last five Super Bowls. They kind of remind me of a certain baseball team that calls Minute Maid Park home!

Last year, the dynamic duo won their second title as Harrison Butker kicked the game-winning field goal with just seconds left to defeat a game Eagles team, 38-35.

Should Mahomes win on Sunday in the City of Lost Wages, he would become just the fifth quarterback in NFL history to win three or more Lombardi Trophies. Tom Brady leads the way with 7, Joe Montana and Terry Bradshaw have four each and Troy Aikman has three.

The Chiefs are also looking to become just the sixth NFL franchise to win back-to-back titles. Green Bay won SB I and II, Miami won back-to-back in SB VII and VIII, while Pittsburgh did it twice with wins in SB IX and X and XIII and XIV and Denver did it in SB XXXII and XXXIII. Dallas was the last team to win back-to-back titles when Jimmy Johnson's Cowboys dominated SBs XXVII and XXVIII.

This will be KC's sixth Super Bowl (they played in the first one in 1967, in 1970, 2020, 2021 and 2023), while SF will be making its eighth appearance (1982, 1985, 1989, 1990, 1995, 2013 and 2020).

Both teams took different routes to get to Vegas. The Chiefs struggled during the regular season as the offense



sputtered and Mahomes lacked a go-to receiver. Even reliable tight end Travis Kelce (93 receptions, 984 yards, 5 TDs) was not his usual dependable self, but he and his QB have come alive in the playoffs.

Mahomes (4,183 yards, 27 TDS/14 interceptions during regular season) and Kelce have been on a roll in their first three playoff games. Mahomes has completed 70-103 (68%) passes for 718 yards, with four TDs and no interceptions, while Kelce has grabbed 23 passes for 262 yards and 3 TDs. While Mahomes struggled to find a dependable wide receiver during the regular season, he seems to be clicking with rookie wideout Rashee Rice (79 receptions, 938 yards, 7 TDs in regular season) as Rice has latched on to 20 passes for 223 yards and one TD in the postseason. Having a second go-to guy has been a huge boost to Mahomes and the KC offense.

The Chiefs also have a solid running game led by second-year man Isiah Pacheco (935 yards, 7 TDs in regular season as the former seventh-round draft choice has picked up 254 yards on 63 carries (4 yards a carry) with three TDs.

Many figured the Chiefs would be finished when they lost the home field advantage to Baltimore and had to play back-to-back playoff games on the road for the first time in Mahomes' career. KC accepted the challenge with a 27-24 win at Buffalo and a 17-10 win at Baltimore in the AFC title game.

While the offense appears to have found itself, the defense has carried this team for much of the season and continues to be the strength heading into the Big One on Sunday. KC's defense has

allowed 41 points (13 points per game) in its first three playoff games. The Chiefs defense collected 57 sacks during the regular season, along with eight interceptions. SF will need to slow down edge rusher George Karlaifis (10.5 sacks in regular season) and big and quick defensive tackle Chris Jones (10.5 sacks in regular season) if it hopes to have a chance on Sunday.

While Mahomes is connecting with new weapons, SF QB Brock Purdy has a plethora of talent to turn to on offense. Purdy (4,280 yards, 31 TDs in regular season) has struggled a bit in the 49ers first two playoff games, but he rallied them for home wins over the Packers (24-21) and led SF from a 24-7 deficit in the NFC title game to a 34-31 win over Detroit by leading the 49ers to 27 second-half points. This will be Purdy's (43-70 519 yards, 2 TDS/ 1 interception in the playoffs) first big test, and how well he handles the pressure will be a key factor if the 49ers are to win the game.

The 49ers have perhaps the best offensive weapon between the two teams with running back Christian McCaffrey (1,459 rushing yards, 14 TDS/67 receptions, 564 yards, 7 TDs in the regular season. McCaffrey has rushed for an additional 188 yards and 4 TDs in the playoffs. The KC defense must slow him down if it hopes to win its second straight SB title.

Purdy also has three solid options in the passing game in wide receivers Deebo Samuel (60 receptions, 892 yards, 7 TDs in regular season), Brandon Aiyuk (75 receptions, 1,342 yards, 7 TDs) and tight end George Kittle (65 receptions, 1,020 yards, 6 TDs). In the playoffs, Samuel was injured early in the Green Bay

game but returned for the NFC title game and has grabbed 10 passes for 113 yards, while Aiyuk has 6 catches for 100 yards and 1 TD. Kittle also has 6 catches for 108 yards and a TD in the playoffs.

The Chiefs front seven must first slow McCaffrey, which is a tall task. Don't be surprised if head coach Kyle Shanahan (whose father Mike won back-to-back Super Bowls with Denver) has Purdy come out throwing it all over the place to help calm him down and keep the KC defense on its toes. If the 49ers can be successful early with the passing game, that will make McCaffrey all the more dangerous as the game progresses.

The 49ers defense has some issues in the secondary, but its front seven can rush the passer as well as Nick Bosa (10.5 sacks) and Co. recorded 46 sacks and picked off 21 passes this season.

Mahomes, though, is such a cool customer who can move around in the pocket to avoid pressure. The KC offensive line is a veteran bunch and takes pride in keeping Mahomes upright.

SF linebackers Fred Warner and Drew Greenlaw have the speed and quickness to keep up with Kelce. I would expect them to be tasked with keeping tabs on the tight end with the famous girlfriend (I won't mention her name) all afternoon.

This game should be competitive and could be high scoring since it will be played on a fast turf indoors at Vegas' Allegiant Stadium. I expect another nailbiter, just like last year's game.

Purdy has proven he can shake off a bad start and be there when his team needs him the most, but it's tough to bet against Mahomes and Reid. All they've heard all year is that their time at the top has come to an end, but all they've done is keep proving the critics wrong.

Look for Mahomes and Kelce to be the key players down the stretch, as Mahomes leads the Chiefs to their second straight Super Bowl win and third in the last five years. It's been an amazing ride, and it's not done yet. My pick, Kansas City 33, San Francisco 31

Upchurch Thanks,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Travis Upchurch, Jr. gets a laugh as his son-in-law Shawn McDaniel pokes fun at his thick mustache.

board to ask them to reconsider taking their dad's home for the Thorne Stadium renovation project.

"When we realized that we weren't getting anywhere with that, we changed tactics and sent out a call to invite people to the next (September) board meeting and boy did they show up!" Tara said.

Supporters packed the board room, many holding signs of support, and numerous others signed up to speak at the meeting, strongly giving their opinion and threatening the failure of the coming bond election and unseating board members up for election.

Days before the beginning of early voting, the board announced at the October meeting that they were rescinding their pursuit of the Upchurch home.

"We knew then we had so many Aldine community members to thank," Tara said, and they recently took the opportunity to do that with a celebration at the nearby American Legion Hall.

Along with burgers and chili, the family assembled a slide show of photos from the early years in Aldine and Travis Upchurch, Sr. prepared a pecan pie using the pecans from the trees on his property planted by his grandparents decades ago. "Our great great grand-



Carlos and Brooke Silva with their two boys Harrison and Felix joined the family celebration. Silva is chairman of the board for the East Aldine Management District.

parents settled in Aldine in the early 1900's and we loved growing up listening to all the stories passed down about how tight knit the community was back then," she said.

The Upchurch siblings now live abroad and said they were proud to feel that same spirit from the Aldine community even now.

"Aldine residents truly care about one another and look after each other," she said. "That's never changed or gone away. There's no way we could ever repay everyone who looked after us in one of our most stressful and uncertain times as a family. We only hope to stay connected and to continue to find ways to give back and celebrate with such a wonderful community," she said.

ENTERTAINMENT

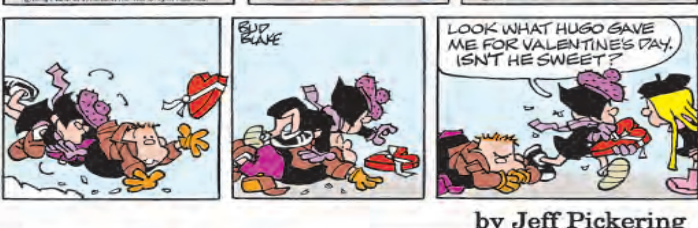
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Weekly SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzle grid and instructions by Linda Thistle. Difficulty: Moderate. HOO BOY!

HOCUS-FOCUS

Spot-the-difference puzzle by Henry Boltinoff. Find at least six differences in details between panels.

February 5, 2024 Posting Date King Crossword

Crossword puzzle grid and word list (ACROSS and DOWN) with clues.

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez with 10 questions and answers. Solution time: 22 mins.



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Lone Star College awarded \$2.3 million in job training grants

HOUSTON (Jan. 8, 2024) – Lone Star College was awarded \$2,337,057 in Skills Development Fund (SDF) grants by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) in 2023.

“As the Texas economy continues to grow, so does the need to invest in our workforce through skills development programs,” said Governor Greg Abbott in a statement. “These SDF grants to Lone Star College will help equip hardworking Texans in the Greater Houston area with the training they need to continue to thrive and advance in high-demand careers. I thank the Texas Workforce Commission and Lone Star College for their partnership as we build a brighter economic future for every Texan.”

LSC received \$321,812 in February, \$168,399 in June and \$1,846,846 in August to provide customized training to upskill over 1,150 employees of GCP Paper, Conroe Concrete Products, Bauer Equipment America, National Oilwell Varco – Grant Prideco, AmeriTex Machine & Fabrication, McCarthy Building Companies Inc., Memorial Hermann Northeast Hospital and Tenaris. The \$2.3 million SDF will provide a trained workforce in various industries like production, construction, energy, healthcare and machining.

“The Skills Development Fund is important to the Texas economy because it supports market-driven, local prioritization of workforce and business needs,” said Bryan Daniel TWC chairman in a statement. “Community partners like Lone Star College excel in providing programs that reskill and upskill employees to fill



critical, in-demand jobs.”

SDF is the state’s workforce training grant program to help businesses upskill their new or incumbent workforce. In partnership with the public community and technical colleges, workforce development boards, and Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service, TWC collaborates to provide customized, innovative training to Texas businesses of all sizes. The SDF grant program has provided training opportunities in partnership with more than 4,800 employers to upgrade or support the creation of over 420,000 jobs throughout Texas since the program’s inception in 1996.

“Lone Star College is proud to work with the Texas Workforce Commission to keep Texas working,” said Mario K. Castillo, J.D., LSC chancellor. “We are excited about this new collaboration and look forward to helping our students succeed and enter the workforce.”

In addition to eight campuses, LSC is also home to eight Workforce Centers of Excellence that provide specialized equipment to offer hands-on learning. Spring 2024 registration is underway. Learn more at LoneStar.edu/Start.

Time is on your side



REGISTER NOW!

• **14-week classes**
start Jan. 29

• **12-week classes**
start Feb. 12

• **8-week classes**
start March 20

NEXT START CLASSES

Lone Star College Next Start offers flexible course options this spring



It's not too late to enroll in a spring 2024 course at Lone Star College. LSC Next Start offers flexible options to help students meet their educational goals.

HOUSTON – Lone Star College is an open-enrollment institution geared toward helping students start, continue or complete their educational journey. LSC began its spring 2024 semester Jan. 16, but there’s still time to enroll in a course through LSC Next Start.

“Lone Star College is definitely the way to go to either earn a degree or attain some college credit because courses are smaller, allowing you to receive more personalized resources and support to help you succeed,” said Alma Gallardo, LSC-CyFair graduate.

LSC Next Start classes range from five to 14 weeks. Available courses fit various academic and career goals to help students earn bachelor’s degrees, associate degrees, workforce and continuing education certificates or transfer credits to a four-year university.

“Lone Star College’s Next Start allows you to earn a college degree on your own time,” said Dwight L. Smith, Ed.D., LSC vice chancellor, Academic and Workforce Success. “Next Start classes are offered throughout the semester, providing flexible options to ensure you meet your academic goals while balancing your personal and professional commitments.”

LSC Next Start offerings are available in-person, online and hybrid with classes starting the week of Jan. 29.

- 14-Week: Jan. 29-May 12
- 12-Week: Feb. 2-May 12
- 12-Week: Feb. 12-May 12
- 9-Week: March 18-May 19
- 8-Week: March 18-May 12
- 8-Week: March 20-May 12
- 5-Week: Feb. 19-March 31
- 5-Week: April 1-May 5

Visit LoneStar.edu/NextStart for more information on Next Start classes at Lone Star College.

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.

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