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NORTHEAST NEWS

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NEWS NOTES

Mayor Whitmire tours East Aldine District Gives a "Thumbs Up" to results of District Improvements

Mayor Whitmire's BACK-2-SCHOOL Fest August 3

The Mayor's Office is hosting a Back to School Fest on August 3rd 2024, from 8 AM to 2 PM at the George R. Brown Convention Center Halls A & B! Enjoy FREE resources and giveaways including backpacks, school supplies, and on-site health screenings and dental screenings. Register now and prepare to kick off the new school year. bit.ly/Back2SchoolFest

Back2School Sales Tax Holiday Aug. 9 thru Aug. 11

(AUSTIN) — Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar is reminding shoppers they can save money on clothes and school supplies during the state's sales tax holiday on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 9-11. This will be the 25th year of Texas' oldest sales tax holiday.

State law exempts sales tax on qualified items — such as clothing, footwear, school supplies and backpacks — priced below \$100, saving shoppers about \$8 on every \$100 they spend. The dates of the sales tax holiday and list of tax-exempt items are set by the Texas Legislature.

"For a quarter of a century, Texans have saved more than \$1.8 billion on everything from blue jeans to ballpoint pens in

Continued. See SALES TAX HOLIDAY, Page 2

East Aldine District's reputation sparks an interest in a tour

By Gilbert Hoffman

EAST ALDINE – What does a Houston Mayor do on his time off? Well of course he tours another neighboring district that he has heard much about, but never spent time visiting previously.

At least that is what he told Flor Zarzoza, when she invited him to see the progress that the District has made to the quality of life and the environment, since its inception in 2001.

Flor is a board member of the East Aldine Management District, and an avid spokesperson for the improvements here.

Along with East Aldine staffer Victor Beserra, they spent almost 4 hours showing Whitmire the sights of the District.

This included BakerRipley campus, the adjacent Town Center with the am-



Houston Mayor John Whitmire viewing the Mural that was painted on a building on the Town Center campus, during this year's Mural Fest. The mural serves as a primer for many of the aspects of culture and life in the East Aldine community.



Houston Mayor John Whitmire met with East Aldine Board Member Flor Zarzoza Almendarez, State Representative Armando Walle, and East Aldine Safety Director Victor Beserra to start his tour of the East Aldine District. Whitmire spent almost 4 hours viewing the district and various facilities.

phitheater, splash pad, lake, Lone Star College campus, the Westfield fire department building and equipment, the East Aldine District headquarters office building, the Neighborhood Depository and Recycling Center, Darren Almendarez Community Center and Keith-Wiess park, which is a city owned park managed by the district.

Whitmire indicated he was especially impressed by the Fab Lab at BakerRipley, which Jonathan Rath explained to him.

He also mentioned how clean the neighborhoods were, and how the streets were in good condition compared with his city.

Whitmire indicated he would plan on coming back again, since he ran out of time to thoroughly visit Keith-Wiess park, the Harris County's 9-1-1 call center, and other facilities throughout the district..

Continued. See Photos of the tour on, Page 5

Sheila Jackson Lee Honored in City Hall Rotunda

Jackson Lee to Lie in State in Houston City Hall

HOUSTON -, Mayor John Whitmire announced that the late Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee will lie in state in City Hall on Monday, July 29, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday, July 29th.

The Congresswoman is bestowed the highest honor of lying in state at Houston City Hall in recognition of her significant contributions to the City of Houston and her dedicated service to her constituents.

Following a private arrival, the Jackson Lee family, Mayor Whitmire, City Council members, and clergy will hold a brief ceremony. The City Hall rotunda will be open to all, allowing the public to pay their final respects and sign a book of condolence.

Congresswoman Jackson Lee is the second person to be bestowed the rare honor of lying in state in the Houston City Hall rotunda.

In 2008, the family of Dr. Michael DeBakey requested that his body lie in state so that Houstonians



Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee 18th Congressional District January 12, 1950 - July 19, 2024

could remember the legendary heart surgeon.

On Monday, Mayor Whitmire extended the honor to Congresswoman Jackson Lee, and her family members accepted.

"I extend my heartfelt condolences to Congresswoman Jackson Lee's family, staff, and friends. This is a time for unity across Houston as we honor her life and legacy. Although we were opponents in the recent mayoral race, we shared a long history of collaboration spanning over 30 years. Despite our different styles, we consistently worked towards the same goals, advocating for the issues that matter most to Houstonians," said Mayor Whitmire.

Congresswoman Jackson Lee began her political career as a City of Houston Mu-

Continued. See JACKSON LEE HONORED, Page 2

FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers now Open for help

Harris County, TX, July 18, 2024, The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has opened five Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) locations in Harris County for residents seeking federal aid after the recent disasters in Harris County, including Hurricane Beryl.

"There is so much need in Harris County after Hurricane Beryl and the other two disasters we've been through recently, but the good news is that help is here. I'm so glad that our

community is already applying for this assistance that does not have to be repaid, and we are working hard to spread the word. Thank you to President Biden and FEMA for helping us get these crucial recovery resources out into the community as quickly as possible. Right now our community needs all the help we can get, and so I also encourage anyone who is able to help out their neighbors by volunteering," said Judge Lina Hidalgo.

FEMA has already re-

ceived more than 315,000 applications for Individual Assistance for Harris County residents affected by Hurricane Beryl.

How to Apply for FEMA Aid (Individual Assistance):

Residents affected by Hurricane Beryl, the derecho and/or the San Jacinto River flooding can apply for direct financial assistance from the federal government under FEMA's

Continued. See FEMA DISASTER RECOVERY CENTERS NOW OPEN, Page 2

EAD Recycling Center marks first year success

EAST ALDINE – The East Aldine Neighborhood Depository and Recycling Center has fulfilled a much needed service this year, according to Coordinator Selina Valdez.

With a derecho in May and a Category 1 hurricane Beryl in July, the district has kept the Center busy collecting storm debris and disposing of it properly.

Selina says that they have collected over



Selina Valdez, Coordinator East Aldine Recycling Center

750,000 pounds of material since opening one year ago, trash that

would otherwise be strewn about the neighborhoods.

A one year anniversary party that was scheduled for May 18 turned out to be a massive collection day for the derecho debris. But Selina opened the center, and served cupcakes to those who brought their storm debris for disposal. All in a days work, she said.

For the Complete Story on the EA Recycling Center, see Page 8

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VOL. 48, NO. 28 TUESDAY, JULY 30, 2024 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

HCC achieves new Level 2 status

HCC's new status as a Level 2 Institution has important implications for Houston

HOUSTON (June 26, 2024)—When the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) approved two new baccalaureate degree programs at Houston Community College (HCC), it enlarged the pipeline to jobs for thousands in the college's service area.

SACSCOC is the accrediting agency for most public colleges and universities in Texas. At its June 13 meeting, SACSCOC approved HCC's baccalaureate degrees in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Robotics and Healthcare Management and paved the way for the college to offer other four-year degrees.

"We welcome the news that HCC is now a Level 2 institution," said HCC Chancellor Margaret Ford Fisher, Ed.D. "For 53 years, HCC has offered associate degrees and certificates in hundreds of programs which benefit the region's workforce. Now, as a Level 2 institution, HCC will offer baccalaureate degrees which train workers for positions in important career fields, expanding job opportunities for prospective employees throughout the community.

HCC's first two baccalaureate programs—Artificial Intelligence and Robotics and Healthcare Management—will effectively help address employment shortages in the Houston region and throughout the broader community.

The Bachelor of Technology in Artificial Intelligence and Robotics originated in response to the expansion of the AI job market and its impact on the larger economy. Already, AI is being integrated into smart phones, hospitals, factories, agri-



culture, automobiles, gaming, social media, finance/banking, astronomy, data security, travel and transportation, and more.

HCC has been a leader in AI education since it launched its first associate degree in AI Technology in 2020. Nationally, the program receives support from industry leaders like Intel, Amazon Web Services, Nvidia Corporation, and Microsoft, highlighting the need for a talent pipeline in the field.

The program has also received strong support from Wolfram Research, Inc., Machine Learning University, Grimm Co., ICS Village, Inc., IBM, and others.

According to Dr. Samir Saber, dean of HCC's Digital and Information Technology Center of Excellence, AI is a high-growth job field with current vacancies

and sustained growth into the future.

"Over the next five years, it is estimated that 2,586 new positions will emerge in the Houston area alone," Dr. Saber said. "In the Houston region, the Texas Medical Center, NASA, the energy and manufacturing industries, as well as transportation, business, and finance sectors will be in great need of qualified and knowledgeable workers in AI if they are to remain competitive in a world driven by AI tools," he said.

The annual median salary for trained AI professionals is \$97,200, according to Career Coach.

Likewise, the college's new Bachelor of Applied Science in Healthcare Management will enhance any Associate of Applied Science health science degree by preparing students for either career ad-

vancement or entry-level healthcare managerial positions.

The degree program enables working allied health professionals to advance their careers by focusing on leadership skills, knowledge, and credentials in the healthcare management field.

Career Coach reports 1,752 job openings in the Houston area with a median salary of \$64,200.

"These positions are important for the efficient operation of medical practices, hospitals, and health clinics," said Dr. Lutricia Harrison, HCC Coleman College interim president. "HCC is pleased to train individuals who will play important roles in healthcare across the region."

Healthcare Management is offered at HCC's Coleman College for the Health Sciences located in the world-renowned Texas Medical Center.

"These programs make sense for Houston," Dr. Ford Fisher said.

"They will provide trained professionals who will help address the shortage of workers in the region. These HCC programs have an established history and allow students who begin with an associate degree to complete a four-year degree on the campus where they began."

Other programs that "make sense for Houston" will follow, the chancellor said.

"As we work closely with our business and industry partners and survey the needs of our students, the community can count on HCC to deliver new and cutting-edge programs that provide the training for jobs that will move Houston forward in days and years to come."

Houston mourns the passing of Sheila Jackson Lee at 74

By Allan Jamail
A Personal Memoir

Saturday, July 20, 2024 ~ Houston, Texas ~ as a freelance photojournalist often writing for the North Forest News and the North Channel Star it's with deep sadness I'm writing this article (part 1.) about yesterday's death (July 19th) of Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee (S JL). She had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer this June; and her breast cancer had been in remission for over a decade.

For sure Jackson Lee was a living legend, well admired all over the globe for her exceptional abilities and accomplishments.

Over the years I've provided readers with many news stories of S JL's successful congressional work. She was able to secure free federal grant funds for Jacinto City a new ambulance as well as one for Galena Park. She's gotten billions of grant funds for Houston including North Channel areas. She always made sure her Congressional District 18 received their share of grant funds to improve the lives and living conditions of her constituents.

Her tireless work ethics produced positive results; but I feel it might have prevented her from taking some time for her own "self-care."

Sheila's strong relentless work ethics cannot be over stated; she believed a strong work ethic was important for achieving her goals. Her moral principles towards having a strong work ethic guided her behavior and it enabled her to produce high-quantity, high-quality work to achieve her goals.

She pushed her staff to match her tireless efforts so success not failure would improve her constituent's lives. There are reports some of them filed complaints on her because of her driving them beyond what they thought was their ability to satisfy her.

This PART 1 article will be to give readers the news about her death and a glance into Jackson Lee's roots and public service. My PART 2 article that's coming in the future will enlighten readers about her personal side, her abilities to win the hearts of acquaintances and developing them into true friendships. She and I shared many personal conversations about each other's families, I will surely miss her.

Born in Queens, New York, Jackson Lee earned a scholarship for Black students at New York University before transferring to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in political science from Yale University in 1972 and a Juris Doctor from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1975.

In 1978 she and her husband, Elwyn



Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee
18th Congressional District
January 12, 1950 - July 19, 2024

Lee moved to Houston, he now serves as vice president for community relations and institutional access at the University of Houston. They have two children, Jason Lee, a senior adviser to Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson, and Erica Lee, a senior policy adviser for Harris County Precinct 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis and two grandchildren.

That same year (1987) S JL was appointed municipal judge for the city of Houston by Mayor Kathy Whitmire. In 1989, Lee was elected to the Houston City Council; she served on the council until 1994 when she began her campaign for Congress in the Democratic primary for the 18th congressional district. She defeated incumbent Congressman Craig Washington which he had won the seat earlier in a special election to replace the sudden and accidental death of Congressman Mickey Leland. That year Lee easily won the general election in the heavily favored Democrat district.

While on the Homeland Security Committee she introduced the Essential Transportation Worker Identification Credential Assessment Act (TWIC) in 2013. It's critical for the safety of our ports and the maritime industry. The TWIC program provides a tamper-resistant biometric credential to maritime workers requiring unescorted access to secure areas of port facilities, outer continental shelf facilities, and vessels regulated under the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002 (MTSA) and all U.S. Coast Guard credentialed merchant mariners.

One of Shelia's most sought after goals was to insure every American was given equal rights to succeed and pursue the American Dream. She's stood and fought in the trenches taking up for the poor, underprivileged and those being discriminated on+c she's never been

afraid of a fight or getting into trouble if it produced correcting injustices done to others.

In March of 2023 she decided to give up her congressional seat and announced her candidacy for the 2023 Houston mayoral election. In the first round, she placed second behind state senator John Whitmire. Neither Whitmire nor Lee mustered the fifty plus percent votes because of the crowded

field of mayoral candidates.

A runoff election occurred on December 9, 2023; she lost the election to Whitmire. Two days before the filing deadline on December 11th Lee filed to run for re-election to get her congressional seat back and won the Democratic primary on March 5, 2024. Now more than likely because of her death they'll be a Special Election to fill the vacated seat.

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

Finalized funeral plans announced for the late Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee
S JL funeral

HOUSTON – An honorable celebration of life has been announced for the late U.S. Representative Sheila Jackson Lee.

The initial remembrance for the congresswoman will begin with Lee returning to Houston's City Hall, where she once served.

"I extend my heartfelt condolences to the Congresswoman's family, staff and friends. This is a time for unity across Houston as people honor her life and legacy," said Houston Mayor John Whitmire. "While she and I campaigned against each other in the mayor's race, we had a long history of working together over 30 years. We had different styles but advocated for many of the same issues on behalf of Houstonians over the years."

MONDAY, JULY 29, 2024

Body to Lie-in-State
WHERE: Houston City Hall
901 Bagby Street, Houston TX 77002
TIME: 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The city also added in a news release, "Following a private arrival, the Jackson Lee family, Mayor Whitmire, City Council members, and clergy will hold a brief ceremony. The City Hall rotunda will be open to all, allowing the public to pay their final respects and sign a book of condolence."

Congresswoman Jackson Lee will become the second person to ever have the 'rare honor' of lying in state in the Houston City Hall rotunda.

TUESDAY, JULY 30, 2024

Viewing & Remembrance
WHERE: God's Grace Community Church
9944 W. Montgomery Road, Houston, TX 77088
TIME: 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2024

Community Celebration of the Life
WHERE: Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church
TIME: 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. - Viewing
3 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Community Farewell & Appreciation Service

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2024

Celebration of Life Service - "Remembering Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee"
WHERE: Fallbrook Church
12512 Walters Road, Houston, TX 77014
(*Pre-registration may be required)
TIME: 11 a.m.
All services and tributes will be live-streamed.

The congresswoman passed away on July 19 at age 74 after her battle with pancreatic cancer.

OPINION PAGE

TRIBUTES To Sheila Jackson Lee



State Representative Armando Walle:

I'm heartbroken at the passing of my former boss & mentor @JacksonLeeTX18. In 2001, I was young & didn't know much about politics as her staff. SJL quickly taught me about being relentless for your constituents. She was driven & immensely loyal. She always had my back and I was always grateful. Rest in power SJL.

Harris County Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia:

Words cannot fully express the impact of Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. The word 'tireless' gets thrown around in politics, but there's no one I've ever met with that kind of work ethic who could compare Congresswoman Jackson Lee. Her work didn't only benefit the Houstonians she represented for decades; it helped make our nation better for all Americans. Saying she will be missed is an understatement. My condolences to her family and to all who loved her. Thank you, Congresswoman, for your dedication to our city, county, state and country.

Former Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner:

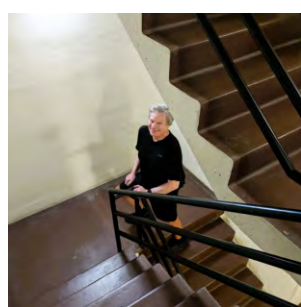
I am deeply saddened by the death of my dear friend and colleague, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. From City Hall to the Halls of Congress, Sheila Jackson Lee has served her constituents well. She has written and passed key legislation and has stood on the floor of the United States House of Representatives speaking passionately for the interests of her district and the country she loved. She has worked with and advised Presidents of our great country, met with global leaders, and has been embraced by world renowned artists. But her work on the ground, in some of the poorest and under-resourced communities; the channeling of billions of federal dollars back to her district; her presence at someone's bedside, giving words of comfort to families who lost loved ones; her appearances at places of worship and events showcasing the global diversity of our City; and her uncanny ability to be everywhere, working every day for those who needed a champion, made her truly exceptional.

When she was elected to the United States House of Representatives she stood in the shadow of Barbara Jordan, Mickey Leland and Craig Washington. Without question, she rose to the occasion and served with great distinction. Even if you disagreed with her politics, you had to respect her work ethic. We can honestly say Sheila Jackson Lee left it all on the field. Rest in peace my sister. Thank you for all you gave us. And, thank you to her family for sharing her with us. We will not forget her sacrifice or yours. Sheila - to God be the glory for the good you have done. It was truly a job well done!

Americanisms
Sheila Jackson Lee
'Her strength and stamina were truly never-ending and her determination to rally a chorus to the fuse of justice was unwavering.'
---Tribute from Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo

THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

Climbing the Stairs



I told my husband, Peter, when he first announced the idea, that I thought it was dumb.

I probably didn't say 'dumb,' because I try to be nicer than that. But I let him know that I thought his idea of getting exercise by climbing stairs in the stairwell was, well, kind of dumb.

'Find out if I can access the stairs in the stairwell!' he told me, after we had purchased this condo, sight unseen, during the pandemic. We didn't see it for almost two years. When we were finally ready to move, the movers were late, and we had to change our airplane tickets. So I flew out to see our condo for the first time without Peter.

I'm going to tell you honestly, it was not impressive.

The condo had been occupied by the woman who bought it when the building was built in the 1980s. She died right there at home, and things had gone downhill toward the end. Other than a fresh coat of paint on the walls and ceiling, very little updating had been done. So I was seeing all this for the first time, and Peter's big concern was whether the stairwell was accessible so he could climb the stairs.

It was, I reported. But I couldn't imagine how that would be any fun at all.

When Peter finally moved in to the condo, he started climbing the steps in the stairwell—12 rounds a day. The building is 20 stories high, and the top 17 are accessible, which means he climbs 238 stories every day.

That works out to 2,856 stairs, if you are interested in doing the math.

While I walked the neighborhood and admired the old mansions and the manicured gardens and the friendly dogs, Peter climbed the stairs every day, seven days a week.

If this wasn't dumb, it certainly seemed a little crazy to me.

But the thing I didn't count on is that Peter didn't go down the stairs. That would be hard on his knees, he explained. He took the elevator down to the third floor and then climbed up those 17 stories. Then he did it again. And every time he took the elevator down, he had a conversation with a different person in our building.

He got to know the young working professionals and the retired folks. He got to know the housekeeper who cleans up the public areas and the maintenance man. He got to know all the dogs who were going out for a walk and all the people who owned them.

And Peter became kind of famous.

He started carrying business cards with our name and picture on them and handed them out when he met new people. 'You're the wife of the guy who does the stairs!' strangers said to me.

So when there was a vacancy on the condo board, it should have come as no surprise that Peter was asked to fill it. Campaigning for a seat on the board was about the last thing Peter would ever do, but everyone on the board knew him by now, and he seemed like a smart choice.

Of course he was.

Now Peter spends a lot of time reading documents and attending meetings for his new duties as board member.

Eventually, after the weather warmed, he bought a bike, and he started riding around town. I have to believe this is more enjoyable. But if there is rain in the forecast, Peter doesn't hesitate. He climbs the stairs.

And when the weather is fine, I'm sure everyone in the elevator misses him.

Till next time, Carrie

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders



PUC Outlines Consumer Protection Rules

As the dog days of August approach and electric bills soar, the Public Utility Commission is reminding consumers of rules in place to protect them from having their power disconnected due to financial difficulties, especially during extreme heat.

'Ensuring the power stays on for all Texans, regardless of their financial situation, is a top priority for all of us at the PUCT,' Executive Director Connie Corona said.

Several utilities have suspended disconnections to allow customers to recover from Hurricane Beryl, which caused widespread outages, particularly in the Houston area.

Consumer protection rules require electric providers to offer bill payment assistance programs, though electric cooperatives and municipally owned utilities in Texas are not subject to this rule; however, most offer some form of bill assistance. Options include a payment arrangement or a deferred payment plan.

Customers seeking assistance should start by contacting their electric provider. They can also learn what assistance programs are available in their area by dialing 211.

MIGRANT APPREHENSIONS DROP TO 2021 LEVELS

The number of migrants apprehended by federal officers in June was at its lowest level in more than three years, according to figures released by the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol and reported by The Texas Tribune. Border Patrol agents apprehended 83,356 migrants in June across the southern border, down from 117,901 in May and the lowest since January 2021, the month President Joe Biden took office.

'Recent border security measures have made a meaningful impact on our ability to impose consequences for those crossing unlawfully,' acting CBP Commissioner Troy A. Miller said in a statement. 'We are continuing to work with international partners to go after transnational criminal organizations that traffic in chaos and prioritize profit over human lives.'

Biden issued an executive order, effective June 5, that essentially ended granting asylum to migrants.

Gov. Greg Abbott in previous statements has credited the state's multibillion-dollar mission, Operation Lone Star, for



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

the decline in migrant apprehensions, The Tribune reported.

TEXAS SECOND-WORST STATE FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH OUTCOMES

A new report from a national women's health nonprofit concludes Texas is among the lowest performing states for women's health outcomes, Texas Public Radio reported.

Only Mississippi ranked worse in the study by the Commonwealth Fund, which analyzed data on maternal mortality, insurance access and other factors in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

One major issue is the lack of maternity care centers or obstetricians in many rural Texas counties, with 46% defined as 'maternity care deserts.' The state also ranked last in the country for health care access and affordability.

'It means that women enter their pregnancy having had less access to health care, particularly if they're poor or low income, and in a poorer health situation than they would have been in had they had health insurance coverage,' said Sara Collins of the Commonwealth Fund.

FEDS OK SNAP HOT-FOOD PURCHASES IN BERYL-AFFECTED COUNTIES

Federal food assistance recipients in 36 counties affected by Hurricane Beryl can use their benefits to buy hot foods and ready-to-eat meals, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission announced last week.

The approval from the U.S. Department of Agriculture applies to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients in Angelina, Austin, Brazoria, Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Grimes, Hardin, Harris, Houston, Jack-

son, Jasper, Jefferson, Lavaca, Liberty, Madison, Matagorda, Montgomery, Nacogdoches, Newton, Orange, Polk, Rusk, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, Shelby, Trinity, Tyler, Victoria, Walker, Waller, and Wharton counties.

'The ability to purchase hot food is a necessity for SNAP recipients who are still recovering from the effects of Hurricane Beryl,' said HHSC Deputy Executive Commissioner of Access and Eligibility Services Molly Regan. 'Many families still cannot prepare meals due to power outages.'

No action is required of SNAP recipients to receive this additional benefit. To find local resources, such as food and shelter, dial 211 and select Option 1.

EXPERTS: POWER OUTAGES LIKELY TO CONTINUE

Experts say widespread outages such as that caused in July by Hurricane Beryl, and in recent years by other weather-related events, are likely to continue in the future because the state's massive power grid is unprepared for severe weather events, The Tribune reported.

The state had 210 weather-related power outages from 2000 to 2023, according to data from the U.S. Department of Energy — more than any other state. In July, Beryl knocked out power to 2.6 million customers in Southeast Texas. That came on the heels of a mid-May windstorm, known as a derecho, that hit the Houston area with 100-mile-per-hour winds and knocked out power to 1 million customers.

'It's like the big, bad wolf: huff and puff and blow the house down,' said Michael Webber, an energy resources professor at the University of Texas at Austin. 'And I don't think any utility or city designs for weather like that, at least not weather that frequent.'

The state's stand-alone power grid will need decades of public investment in order to make it more resilient against storms, which down poles and power lines across Texas.

'The current distribution infrastructure isn't adequate apparently for the job at hand,' Michael Skelly, CEO of Grid United, said. 'What level of reliability do we want to try to get to and what are we prepared to invest?'

Both CenterPoint and Oncor have proposed investing billions to strengthen poles and wires, and install underground wires, but that will likely come at a cost to consumers.

'Ultimately, the bill is going to get loaded onto the backs of the customers, whether or not they were pleased with how [the power outage] was handled,' Sandra Haverlah, president of the Texas Consumer Association, said.

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

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Mayor Whitmire tours East Aldine District

Continued from Page 1: Mayor Gives a "Thumbs Up" to results of District Improvements



Houston Mayor John Whitmire and East Aldine board member Flor Zarzoza Almindarez view the Town Center Lake behind the Lone Star College campus.



Mayor Whitmire chats with visitors at the BakerRipley facility.



Mayor Whitmire views the Splash Pad and recirculating river at the Town Center green.



Mayor Whitmire toured the BakerRipley facilities, including the Fab Lab in the background



Westfield Fire Department personnel explain their equipment and department to Mayor Whitmire.



Mayor Whitmire enjoying the hospitality of East Aldine at the Cafe La Luna on Aldine Mail Route.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FLOR ZARZOZA ALMENDAREZ

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CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Hebrews (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. What did the Lord cast down among the Israelites who complained about their wilderness misfortunes? Fire, Hail, Stones, Winds
3. From Genesis 33, where did Jacob build a house and make booths for his cattle? Beersheba, Succoth, Jerusalem, Kidron

4. On the seventh day of the creation week, what did God do? Created man, Divided the oceans, Named the animals, Rested
5. On which Mount did Moses receive the Ten Commandments? Sinai, Zion, Carmel, Pisgah
6. Whose two sons were Hophni and Phinehas? Ichabod, Eli, Jehoiada, Mattan

ANSWERS: 1) New, 2) Fire, 3) Succoth, 4) Rested, 5) Sinai, 6) Eli
Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online.

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

Let us acknowledge the Lord;
let us press on to acknowledge him.
As surely as the sun rises,
he will appear;
he will come to us like the winter rains,
like the spring rains that water the earth.

HOSEA 6:3

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PET MATTERS
In Memory of Susan Hoffman



Houston BARC receives \$25,000 grant to support lifesaving work

HOUSTON – BARC, the City of Houston's Animal Shelter and Adoption Center, is set to receive a \$25,000 grant investment from national nonprofit Petco Love in support of their lifesaving work for animals in Houston.

Petco Love is a national nonprofit leading change for pets by harnessing the power of love to make communities and pet families closer, stronger, and healthier. Since its founding in 1999, Petco Love has invested nearly \$400 million in adoption and other lifesaving efforts. And Petco Love helps find loving homes for pets in partnership with Petco and more than 4,000 organizations — like ours — across North America, with 6.8 million pets adopted and counting.

During Hurricane Beryl, BARC faced significant challenges, including power outages and generator failures, resulting in the loss of refrigerated medication and a temporary halt in adoptions. The shelter also received damage to outdoor horse stalls and fences. Staff worked tirelessly through the storm to ensure the safety of the animals while intake continued, and this grant will help restore essential vaccines, repair damaged property, and support ongoing lifesaving efforts..

"In times of a disaster like Hurricane Beryl, we know animal shelter staff are strained as they work tirelessly to keep pets in their care safe while also facing hurdles brought on by the severe weather emergency," said Susanne Kogut, president of Petco Love. "We are proud to support our partner organization, BARC, to ensure their shelter pets get the best possible care after the storm and before they are adopted into loving homes."

"We are deeply thankful to Petco Love for their generous grant, which comes at a critical time for BARC as we recover

from the impacts of Hurricane Beryl," said Jarrad Mears, BARC's Shelter Director. "This lifesaving investment will enable us to not only restore vital vaccinations lost during the storm's power outages and repair damaged property but also to strengthen our efforts in saving more lives. Their partnership allows us to continue providing the highest standard of care to our pets and serve our community with resilience and compassion."



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BARC takes in more than 20,000 pets annually regardless of behavior, breed, or medical condition. BARC works each day to improve Houstonians and their pets' health and safety by pioneering programs such as low-cost and no-cost spay/neuter services, mobile adoptions, transfer/rescue partnerships, and pet registration and microchipping. BARC is also committed to public safety through animal enforcement, which answers calls for service from the community and investigates cases of animal cruelty.

For more information about BARC Animal Shelter, visit www.HoustonBARC.com. Learn more about Petco Love here: petcolove.org.

HOLLYWOOD

by Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD — We have two tragic tales this week! Arnie Hammer's breakthrough film "The Social Network" came in 2010, which he followed up with Clint Eastwood's "J. Edgar" (2011). Eleven films later, he hit it big opposite Timothy Chalamet in "Call Me by Your Name." His last film was 2022's "Death on the Nile," then everything came crashing down.

Hammer was accused with sexual abuse, and cancel culture destroyed everything. His wife took their two children to the Cayman Islands, forcing him to follow them. He supported himself there by selling timeshare vacation packages to survive. Still, in 2023, his wife filed for divorce, and Hammer confessed that he's "broke but happier than ever."

He explained, "The good place only comes from walking through hell. It was a brutal experience. Someone might look at me and go, 'Yeah, but financially you are in a very different position than you've ever been in your entire life.'" The worst part is that after three years, his life was snatched away because of sexual abuse charges ... yet no charges were ever filed. The Los Angeles District Attorney dropped all charges due to "insufficient evidence."

Another life destroyed by the court of public opinion! Today Hammer is now sober after entering rehab to battle his addictions to drugs, sex and alcohol. "Therapy's been a life changer," he admitted. "I experienced an ego death, a career death, a financial death."

The second tragedy is the loss of exercise guru Richard Simmons, who passed away on July 13, at 76, due to natural causes. In 1979, as the West Coast editor of Soap Opera Digest, I was sent to a little exercise warehouse called Ruffage in Beverly Hills, California, to interview an exercise instructor. This instructor was giving actual classes on "General Hospital," which became so popular that they kept in-



Fitness instructor Richard Simmons (1948-2024)

creasing his appearances. The result of his popularity evolved into "The Richard Simmons Show," which ran from 1980-84 and earned him multiple Emmy Awards. His video series "Sweatin' to the Oldies" became immensely popular and made him very rich. He became a huge fitness star!

Then, in 2014, it all ended when he disappeared from the spotlight. In 2016, speculations claimed that he was being held hostage by his housekeeper, but Simmons gave an audio interview to "The Today Show" denying those rumors. In March 2017, the L.A. Police Department visited his home to conduct a welfare check and stated that Simmons was perfectly fine. We'll never know what made him shun his success and become a recluse. He recently resurfaced with objections to Pauly Shore playing him in an upcoming film. Shore says he reached out to Simmons, but that they constantly played phone tag.

Early on, I was with agent Beverly Hecht when Simmons begged her to handle him. She told him, "They're not casting 'Peter Pan,' Richard," to which he replied, "Too bad! I can fly without fairy dust!"

ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves

MOM, SINCE MY BIRTHDAY IS NEXT WEEK I THINK I'M ABLE TO DO OLDER STUFF.
NOW THAT I'M BIG I CAN STAY UP LATER AND EVEN WATCH SCARY MOVIES.
EVENTUALLY I MIGHT GET OLD ENOUGH TO HELP OUT WITH DOING THE LAUNDRY.
FUNNY, YOUR FATHER HASN'T HIT THAT AGE YET.

by Dave T. Phipps

TIGER

LET'S GET THE GROUND RULES CLEAR SO WE DON'T ARGUE.
BALLS HIT OVER THE FENCE ARE HOMERS. UNDER IT, TRIPLES.
BALLS LOST IN THE BUSHES, DOUBLES.
BALLS THAT HIT THE WIRES OR HYDRANT ARE FAIR.
BALLS THAT HIT ANY PART OF THE TREE ARE FOUL.
THAT COVERS ALL POSSIBILITIES! LET'S PLAY BALL.

by BUD BLAKE

The Spats

MY WIFE LET ME REMOVE ALL OF HER CLOTHES LAST NIGHT...
...FROM THE DRYER.

by Jeff Pickering

July 29, 2024 Posting Date

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Swear
- 5 Understood
- 8 Six-pack units
- 12 Slightly
- 13 French assent
- 14 October birthstone
- 15 Sultry Horne
- 16 Annoying
- 18 Michelangelo works
- 20 Pumped (up)
- 21 Medit. nation
- 22 "— Blue?"
- 23 Cook in the oven
- 26 Sun spot
- 30 Take courses?
- 31 Pie — mode
- 32 Felon's flight
- 33 Fake ally
- 36 Cavorts
- 38 Mel of baseball
- 39 UFO crew
- 40 Top floor
- 43 Cargo
- 47 First-termers
- 49 Contrue one
- 50 Staffer
- 51 Brit. record label
- 52 Actress
- 53 Colonial flag maker
- 54 "Norma —"

DOWN

- 1 Baby elephant
- 2 Cab alternative
- 3 Trig function
- 4 Equilibrium
- 5 Really dig
- 6 Belonging to us
- 7 Dead heat
- 8 Universal
- 9 Per person
- 10 Handle
- 11 Santa's ride
- 17 Docile
- 19 Chicago winter hrs.
- 22 Altar in the sky
- 23 Ump
- 24 Rowing need
- 25 Packed away
- 26 Aviate
- 27 Carrier to Amsterdam
- 28 Napkin's place
- 29 Ambulance initials
- 31 Invoice fig.
- 34 Loud sounds
- 35 Engrave
- 36 GPS suggestion
- 37 Egyptian deity
- 39 Golfer Els
- 40 Miles away
- 41 Half a sextet
- 42 Turner and Danson
- 43 Disaster aid org.
- 44 Get overemotional
- 45 Prefix with pad or port
- 46 Snare
- 48 Mal de —

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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- TELEVISION: What was SpongeBob SquarePants' original name when the story was pitched?
- MOVIES: Which famous horror film was set at Crystal Lake, New Jersey?
- LANGUAGE: In Great Britain, what are stabilisers?
- MUSIC: Which band had a hit with the 1961 "The Lion Sleeps Tonight"?
- GEOGRAPHY: How many U.S. states have a border with Mexico?
- MATH: How many sides does a hectogon have?
- INVENTIONS: In what year were flat-screen TVs first sold?
- FOOD & DRINK: What kind of cheese is used in a caprese salad?
- U.S. STATES: Which state's nickname is "The Land of Enchantment"?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: What kind of dog is Scooby-Doo in the animated cartoons?

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK:

- Moderate
- Challenging
- HOO BOY!

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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Hand is moved. 2. Ear is larger. 3. Man is thinner. 4. Aiming is different. 5. Tree is moved. 6. Cap is larger.

Answers

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

Answers

King Crossword

Solution time: 23 mins.

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HCC launches alumni association

Goal is to help support Eagle alums in studies and careers

HOUSTON (July 2, 2024) – Houston Community College (HCC) has launched an Alumni Association and opened an Alumni Affairs Office with the goal of better serving graduates.

The association is committed to developing strong connections with alumni through initiatives that include access to HCC’s Career and Transfer Services and others.

Alumni can take advantage of career and transfer events, receive assistance with resume writing and search for career opportunities. Access to these services and the alumni association is available to graduates at no cost.

Among activities planned are transfer fairs to colleges such as the University of Houston, Texas A&M, University of Texas at Austin, Texas Southern University, Sam Houston State University, and other area institutions.

“HCC has an estimated 2 million alumni,” said James Mable, interim director of Alumni Affairs, with the earliest grads dating back to the early 1970s. The Alumni Affairs Office celebrated more than 2,000 students who graduated from HCC on June 13 with free “Class of 2024” t-shirts.

Many HCC alumni have gone on to successful careers. Riyam Al Msari, who went from HCC to the University of California-San Diego for her undergraduate and graduate work, is now at MIT studying to earn a Ph.D. in biological engineering. Al Msari won a \$90,000 fellowship from the Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans. She is researching new ways to improve cancer treatments.

Dennis and Juliana Yazdanpanah, who are married, both attended HCC and earned their associate degrees in engineering science. The couple then transferred to the University of Texas at Tyler and pursued engineering. Dennis Yazdanpanah received his bachelor’s



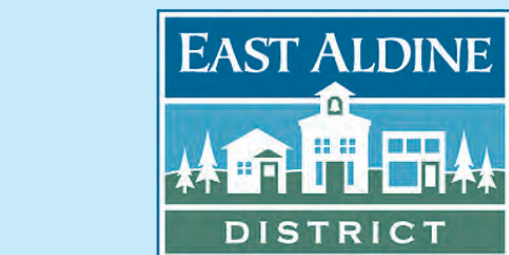
degree in civil engineering and Juliana Yazdanpanah graduated with a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering.

“Our office is dedicated to engaging our vast HCC alumni network,” Mable said. “We are creating benefits that alumni can use locally, nationwide and internationally.

Learn more about the office at <https://www.hccs.edu/alumni>.

HCC Alumnus Riyam Al Msari went from HCC to the University of California-San Diego for her undergraduate and graduate work and is now at MIT studying to earn a Ph.D. in biological engineering.

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



East Aldine District COMMUNITY NEWS

District’s Recycling Center Collects Over 750,000 Pounds of Material in the First Year

Like many Houston-area residents, Selina Valdez woke up on the morning of May 18 in a dark house without an alarm clock, air-conditioning or hot coffee.

As she drove to work to celebrate the first anniversary of the East Aldine Neighborhood Depository and Recycling Center, Valdez was greeted by the noise of battery-powered boom-boxes blaring Tejano music and gas-powered chain saws. Valdez, the coordinator of the recycling center, rapidly realized that plans to celebrate with cupcakes and balloons would need to be boosted with plenty of cold water and Gatorade, as the residents of East Aldine began to recover from a strange and strong spring storm – a derecho—that left eight dead, caused billions in property damage and left hundreds of thousands without power.



Fierce winds had crumpled giant transmission towers, downed tree limbs, torn apart fences and damaged roofs across the city of Houston. Windows in downtown skyscrapers littered the streets for weeks.

For residents of East Aldine, the year-old Recycling Center at 2789 Hopper Road became the place to go. Working with the four-person crew at the center, the community loaded 460 cubic yards of debris from the storm into massive recycling bins, clearing the neighborhood of dangerous and unsightly waste in just two days. Two more massive containers of debris were filled the following week.

East Aldine area neighbors gratefully grabbed cupcakes and cold drinks and went right back to work.

In the year since the East Aldine Management District opened the Neighborhood Depository and Recycling Center, more than three-quarter of 1 million pounds of recyclable materials has been collected for recycling. It is the first and only such recycling center to be operated by a Management District in Texas. And it is working closely with several business partners to ensure that waste products are being recycled.

The cost of the recycling center is \$330, 040 annually. During the first year, more than 2,140 area residents have used the center to dispose of paper, plastic, glass, tires, old furniture, yard waste and some construction materials. The center is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and appointments are required by calling 713-454-7185.

An online appointment system is in the works and will be announced soon. But the telephone appointments will remain open, so that residents can schedule their drop-offs.

Valdez said the center is part of an effort to “save the earth,” by reusing materials that would otherwise pollute the environment, wind up in landfills, or worse, litter the community of East Aldine. (Just recycling tires alone has contributed greatly to neighborhood beautification.)



Because the community is in unincorporated Harris County, there is no regularly scheduled heavy waste clean-up. That has contributed to a long-standing neighborhood problem of illegal dumping sites for tires, mattresses, and old furniture.



With the Recycling Center, East Aldine residents have a place to drop off such unwanted items. That’s contributing to neighborhood beautification.

Because of leadership by the East Aldine Management District and other community “VIPs,” Valdez said the new recycling center has been able to form strategic business partnerships with several area businesses that are taking advantage of the recycled materials. Those include Strategic Materials Inc., which takes glass and paper goods; GFL (Green for Life), which takes plastic recyclables; Prestige Metals, which takes metal; Living Earth, which transforms yard waste into “natural mulch” sold at home and garden stores, as well as On Site Tire Disposal, which is the nation’s second largest recycler of used tires.

“Because of the leadership of the East Aldine Management District, we are doing our part to help save the earth,” Valdez said. “And I feel like our job is to educate to make people feel like they’ve done something good when they get here,” Valdez said.

“Our goal is to help people feel better for having come here. It’s a welcoming place, and we want people to feel special.

In one instance, Valdez said, a family in East Aldine had been meaning to get rid of more than 20 old tires for several years. They just kept piling up, as family members bought new tires that were installed by their father. There is a 4-tire limit for deposits at the recycling center, but repeat visits are allowed.



“The first step to recovery is to clean up – that’s true in life, as well. When your life is a mess, you’ve got to clean it up. Then, all of a sudden, you can see better and clearer. And then, you know you’re on the road to recovery,” Valdez said. “When those tree limbs and torn-up fences are gone, that blue tarp on the roof starts to look pretty good. And you realize, tomorrow really is going to be a better day.”

--Anne Marie Kilday