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NORTHEAST NEWS



Grandparents' Holiday Luncheon



A Big Thank You to Rep. Walle. MORE PHOTOS on 1&5

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VOL. 49, NO. 2 TUESDAY, JANUARY 14&21, 2025 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

NEWS NOTES

Free Spay/Neuter Event Jan. 18

Pct. 2 is offering a Free Spay/Neuter Clinic for dogs and cats on Saturday, Jan. 18 at James Driver Park, 10918 Bentley Street 77093.

An appointment is required, at: bit.ly/TESPJDP11825. The clinic is free to residents that live in zip codes 77018, 77022, 77037, 77038, 77039, 77060, 77076, 77088, 77091, 77093.

Aldine ISD FFA Livestock Show Jan. 29-31

Aldine ISD will hold the 66th Livestock Show and Auction from Jan. 29 through Jan. 31, at the M.O. Campbell Center.

The Buyers Luncheon will be Friday Jan. 31 at 11am in the MOC Arena, and the Sale of Champions will be held at 1pm.

The public is invited and welcome to participate. Admission is Free.

BakerRipley Leadership Training

BakerRipley offers a free Leadership training class, starting Feb. 24. This seven night class will meet 6-8pm and include Leadership skills and Capacity Building. Classes at BakerRipley East Aldine campus. To enroll, contact Pearl Castaneda at 832-527-0008 or pcastaneda@bakerripley.org.

Legacy Event highlights Aldine ISD Holiday

Former Superintendents, Board members and past leaders assemble for warm reunion

Aldine ISD paid homage to its past leaders by honoring and recognizing them for their work and dedication to the district when it held its first-ever Legacy Holiday Event on Tuesday, Dec. 10 at the new Community Center located at the new Thorne Stadium.

Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney and current members of the Board of Trustees welcomed former Trustees, former superintendents, former district administrators, former principals and former coaches at the event.

Attendees gathered at the new Community Center for fellowship, catching up with old friends and colleagues and they also had the opportunity to tour the new Thorne Stadium, which officially opened in August of 2024. The original Thorne Stadium opened in 1979, and remained untouched for more than 40 years.

Dr. Goffney thanked all of them for helping to



Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney, center, poses with former superintendents Mr. M.B. "Sonny" Donaldson and Dr. Wanda Bamberg, along with current and former members of the Aldine ISD Board of Education at the first-ever Legacy Holiday Event, held Tuesday, Dec. 10 at the district's new Community Center at the new Thorne Stadium.

shape Aldine over their many years of service.

"Your leadership, vision and dedication have created a legacy that continues to inspire and uplift our community," Dr. Goffney said. "You are the pillars of what makes Aldine ex-

ceptional, and I'm honored to celebrate with you in this beautiful space. This new facility is a testament to our community's unwavering support and shared commitment to providing the best for our students, families and staff."

Dr. Goffney also thank former Superintendent W.W. "Bill" Thorne for his leadership and steadfastness during some difficult times in Aldine.

"The stadium's namesake, W.W. "Bill" Thorne, embodied the visionary

leadership that defines The Aldine Way," Dr. Goffney said. "As superintendent from 1958 to 1972, he guided our district through some of its most challenging times. Under his leadership, the district overcame financial difficulties, regained its accreditation, and launched an ambitious building program that set the stage for decades of success. Bur Mr. Thorne's legacy extended far beyond his years as superintendent. He was instrumental in founding Lone Star College-North Harris and remained a steadfast leader in our community until his passing in 2021 at the remarkable age of 97. Known affectionately as "Mr. Aldine," his impact is felt in every corner of this district."

Joining Dr. Goffney at the Legacy Holiday Event were current Trustees, Board Vice-President Paul Shanklin, Board Secretary

Continued. See ALDINE ISD LEGACY HOLIDAY EVENT, Page 8

Grandparents celebrated at Holiday Party at MOC

ALDINE – On December 3rd State Rep. Armando Walle joined in with a huge "Shout Out" to Ms. Shirley Portier Reed for continuing to celebrate our seniors with Grandparents Raising Grandbabies.

The occasion was the Grandparents Holiday Christmas Luncheon at Aldine ISD's M.O. Campbell Center. Fun and dancing were had by all, especially our state rep..



State Rep. Armando Walle welcomes the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, with founder Shhriley Reed at right.



A large crowd attended the Grandparents luncheon at the MO Campbell Center on Tuesday, Dec. 3rd. MORE PHOTOS on page 5.

Aldine ISD Superintendent Named One of Houston's Most Fascinating for 2024

ALDINE - Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney, superintendent of Aldine ISD, has been named one of the Houston Chronicle's 37 Most Fascinating Houstonians of 2024, joining an eclectic list of influencers, innovators, and leaders who made headlines this year.

Goffney's inclusion stems from her pivotal role in launching Aldine ISD's Health, Education, And Learning High School (HEAL), a groundbreaking initiative addressing Houston's healthcare workforce challenges. The specialty program, housed in Nimitz High School's ninth-grade building, wel-



Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney, superintendent of Aldine ISD

comed its first freshman class in August. HEAL, which offers students a direct pipeline to health careers, was created in partnership with Memori-

Continued. See ALDINE ISD SUPERINTENDENT, Page 5

KEENEY'S KORNER

ALDINE OFFENSIVE PLAYERS OF YEAR: Brown, Tramble share NE News Offensive Player of Year honors

By Mike Keeney
Contributing Writer

One did it through the air, while the other did it on the ground and their work helped lead their teams to the Class 6A State Football Playoffs.

Nimitz High School quarterback Albert Brown and Davis High School running back Nicholas Tramble both had solid junior seasons and were named the Northeast News' Co-Offensive Players of the Year for the 2024 season.

This marked the second straight year that Brown has earned the News's Offensive Player of the Year honors, making him only



Nimitz High QB Albert Brown is the Northeast News' 2024 Co-Offensive Player of the Year.



Davis High running back Nicholas Tramble is the Northeast News' 2024 Co-Offensive Player of the Year.

the second Aldine ISD player to win the award. The other two-time winner was MacArthur High School quarterback Odell

James, now the head football coach at Eisenhower High School, won the award

Continued. See KEENEY'S KORNER, Page 2

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METRO Begins Installing Hundreds of Newly Designed Bus Shelters



METRO customers will soon enjoy an even more comfortable wait at stops as the Authority adds hundreds of newly designed bus shelters across the region. On Friday, METRO leadership, elected officials, and community partners cut the ribbon on the first of the modernized shelters.

The shelters are an update to the long-standing bus shelter design and feature a silver-colored, more durable structure with steel framing and solar powered lighting to enhance the customer experience.

"From new shelters to accessibility upgrades, we at METRO are committed to making the necessary improvements for the region to ensure that every customer has a safe and reliable commute," said METRO Board Chair Sanjay Ramabhadran.

Bus Shelter Installation

METRO's Facilities Maintenance Department will install 30 shelters each month, 400 per year, with a goal of 2,000 in the next five years.

Shelter installation priorities will depend on these factors:

- Number of daily boardings at a stop
- Access to a significant senior population
- Access to a community with a high concentration of people living with a disability
- Serves a significant activity center, such as hospitals, retail or grocery stores
- Connects with other bus routes or METRORail.

The first installations will focus on stops without shelters and then move on to replacing older shelters later in the process.

Keeney: Offensive Players of the Year,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in 1994 and 1995.

Brown passed for 2,283 yards and 26 TDs this season to lead head coach Cornelius Harmon's Cougars to a second straight playoff berth.

Tramble rushed for 1,099 yards (6.2 yards per carry) and scored nine touchdowns to help Kelvin Chatham's Falcons finish in second place in District 14-6A and earn the school's first playoff berth since 2018.

Brown, a 6-foot, 200-pounder said he was content with the season, and will use his junior season to improve heading into his senior campaign.

"It was decent," Brown said about the 2024 season. "But it could have been better. We will most definitely use this season to improve and come back stronger next year."

Brown said he will participate in track in the spring to improve his speed and will also work hard to improve as a quarterback.

"I'm going to do a lot of training in the offseason," he said. "I need to work on my speed, agility, throwing form and overall knowledge of playing the position."

Harmon, who is looking forward to having Brown under center for another season, believes the sky is the limit for the hard-working signal caller.

"He battled through a tough season and managed to overcome a couple of injuries. He was pretty banged up all season. Very proud of how he fought through it all," Harmon said.

Harmon added that if Brown commits to improving his craft in the offseason, he could have even a better season as a senior.

"I don't think it's a limit you can put on him, whatever he wants to do or we need him to do he can do it," Harmon said. "He needs to work on his pocket awareness during the offseason. Albert needs to improve in every way, it's never just one area. He will continue to improve in every aspect of the QB position. He will be more active in track this off-season and that will make him a little more explosive."

Harmon is confident Brown will work hard in the offseason to improve his game heading into the 2025 season, and he's happy he will have him for another year.

"Anytime you can go into the off-season and not have to worry about who will be your QB is a great feeling," Harmon said. "Every day, Albert improves on something. He's more vocal now than he was as a sophomore, and he still leads by example."

Harmon said a number of universities have inquired about Brown and he believes the recruiting process will step up this summer.

Tramble was a key cog for the Falcons who lost two of their first three games but rallied in league play to finish 5-2 in District 14-6A and earn a second-place finish.

Chatham said he was not surprised by Tramble's success in his second year on the varsity.

"No, I was not surprised," Chatham said about Tramble's success in '24. "He met the expectations because the team invested in him and he invested in the team, making the success organic. Anytime you put yourself before the team, a byproduct of that means that suc-

cess comes naturally."

Chatham said Tramble is an elusive runner and his ability to catch the football out of the backfield makes him a dual threat.

"He is a multi-purpose back with the ability to catch out of the back field, change direction

on a dime and be physical when needed," Chatham said.

Tramble said he was pleased with his season and is looking forward to even bigger things as a senior.

"I thought it (his season) was alright," he said. "There is always room for improvement, and I will work hard this offseason to improve. I will also run track, which should help me increase my speed." Like Brown, Tramble is also getting noticed by colleges heading into this senior season.

Chatham said Tramble has received interest from Kansas State, SMU, TX State, Kansas, UTEP, Arizona, UNLV, and North Texas.

Chatham said his star running back is well liked by his teammates and is excited he will have him back for another season.

"He's a Davis Falcon. He Does what he is supposed to do, When he is supposed to, the way

Davis does it," Chatham said. "He is a kid that respects and trusts his teammates, coaches, teachers, the program and the process to win. He takes pride in outworking his opponent on and off the field."

The 2024 season was a solid one for Brown and Tramble, and if they take the next step, the 2025 season could be really exciting for Nimitz Cougar and Davis Falcons fans.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

JAN 13 - 18

13 JAN 11:30 AM FABLES AND FUN
1 PM CONVERSATIONAL ESL
4 PM CREATION STATION

14 JAN 4 PM POKEMON CLUB

15 JAN 3:30 PM KRAFTY KIDS
4 PM ARTOPIA
5 PM READING WONDERLAND
5 PM CITIZENSHIP

16 JAN 11 AM CITIZENSHIP
3:30 PM TEEN GAME ZONE

17 JAN 3:30 TEEN FRIDAY FREE SPACE

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CITIZENSHIP CLASS:

AN ON GOING CLASS TO LEARN THE STEPS ON BECOMING A U.S. CITIZEN.

CREATION STATION:

FROM BUILDING ROBOTS TO CODING GAMES TO ART PROJECTS, KIDS WILL EXPLORE AND DEVELOP SKILLS IN STEAM!

FABLES & FUN/ READING WONDERLAND:

STORIES, SONGS, RHYMES, AND MORE!

ARTOPIA:

MAKE SOME ART AND EXPRESS YOURSELF! CREATE SOMETHING NEW USING DIFFERENT MEDIUMS, SUCH AS PAINT, CLAY, AND MORE!

CONVERSATIONAL ESL:

Practice your English with this conversational class.

POKEMON CLUB:

GOTTA CATCH 'EM ALL! DO IT WITH US AS WE PLAY GAMES, DO CRAFTS, AND MORE!

KRAFTY KIDS:

CRAFT PROGRAM CREATED JUST FOR KIDS!

AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS

Happy Hour

Got a case of the Mondays? Fight the mundane Mondays and join us for a Happy Hour, where we do different recreational activities every week! Join us every **Mondays from 11:00 am - 12:00 pm!** For ages 18 & up - no registration required.

Here's what we'll be doing each week in January:

January:
Jan. 6 - Collage
Jan. 13 - Table Games
Jan. 27 - Cooking Demo and Recipe Sharing

Bilingual Story Time

You're invited to attend Story Time every Tuesday at 11 am. Story Time is a great way for children to build early literacy skills with stories, rhymes and songs. Parents are encouraged to participate by sitting with children and singing (and learning!) new songs. Children of all ages are welcome. **Tuesday, Jan. 7, 11am-12pm.**

Beginner ESL Registration

Join us for registration for Beginner ESL classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays! **REGISTRATION** will be held in person on the following days and times: **January 7, 9, 14, and 16 from 12pm - 1:30pm. You must register and take the assessment before you can attend classes.** Classes start January 21 and will go through March

27th. Classes meet twice per week on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12pm - 1:30pm. This class is designed for students who are interested in learning and /or practicing speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills in English. Classes are free and all materials are provided.

Home School Social

Are you homeschooling at the moment? Join us for a social event dedicated to homeschooling families! Come and enjoy snacks, crafts, robots, and so much more. All age groups are welcome. **This event is for families who currently homeschool or those interested in homeschooling.

Tuesday, Jan. 7, 3-4pm.

Self-Care Sessions

Would you like to add a little more movement and peace to your day? Start here with us **every Wednesday at 11am** for Self-Care Sessions. We will do a gentle movement followed by guided meditation. You can thank us later :) Here's the January lineup:

Jan. 8 - Somatic Yoga
Jan. 15 - Indoor Walking
Jan. 22 - Yoga stretch & flow
Jan. 29 - Qi Gong

This program is for adults 18 and over. No registration required.

Computer Basics Class

Harris County Public Library and Harris County Universal Services join forces to bridge the digital divide by offering services to aid in the complete digital literacy of Harris County residents. No registration required. **Thursday, Jan. 9, 5-6pm.**

Ology: Frogs

Frogs! Join us at the Aldine library to learn all about frogs and play frog games to really understand what's going on in their little frog minds. **Thursday, Jan. 9, 6-7pm.**

Passport Services

Do have plans to travel out of the country? You need to get your passport in order! Current routine processing is estimated at 4-6 weeks and expedited processing time is estimated at 2-3 weeks. You can **make an appointment** for passport services at Aldine Branch - <https://www.hcpl.net/services/passport-services>.

Our passport hours - Mondays and Wednesdays 12pm - 5pm; Tuesdays and Thursdays 12pm - 7pm; Saturdays 10am - 12pm and 2pm - 4pm - Appointments required. We also have walk-in service from 2-4pm on most Fridays on a first come first served basis. Those wishing to get a passport executed must have all necessary documents, check/money order, 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

AUGUST 18, 2023

ALDINE
Independent School District

GOFFNEY CHRONICLES

The Official Newsletter of the Superintendent of Schools

Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney
Superintendent of Schools

With Aldine Pride!



Aldine ISD Kicks off New Year with Inspiration, Growth Goals, and a Commitment to Students' Success.

Dear Aldine Community,

Happy New Year! What a wonderful way to kick off the year by gathering with our dedicated Aldine educators at the Superintendent's Town Hall meetings. Although cold, the palpable energy and enthusiasm you all brought as we prepare to return to the classroom after the winter break was truly inspiring. As we embark on this new semester, we know that challenges may arise — whether from decisions made at the state level during this legislative session or necessary optimization within our district. However, I challenge you to embrace a student-first mindset and strive to finish this semester strong.

When I announced some of the campus winners for the highest growth goals at the town hall, it was clear these campus teams were winners as they radiated success when they stepped into the M.O. Campbell Educational Center. They embodied the spirit of winners even before the results were revealed. Remember, W.I.N. stands for "What's Important Now," and right now, what's most important is our students. Let's continue championing their success and working together to ensure we grow every child every day. Together, we can make this a year of incredible achievements for our students!

Each year, I select a word to guide my thoughts and actions. This year, inspired by our strategic plan, Accelerate, and our progress together, my word is "breathe."

To breathe is to pause, center ourselves, and find strength in each moment. It is a reminder of resilience, gratitude, and the need to create space for growth and transformation. This year, I invite students, staff, families, and community members to breathe together as we cultivate an environment where everyone can thrive.

As we begin the spring semester, our staff is energized and ready to provide enriching learning experiences for our students. We know that our students' success is only possible with the unwavering support of our community. We are deeply grateful for your partnership; we will continue to make a difference together.

The latest Aldine Connection newsletter includes important updates and events. Be sure to check out these updates and celebrate our district's achievements.

Finally, I urge you to stay updated as winter weather approaches Texas. Any changes to district operations will be promptly communicated through multiple channels. Your safety is our utmost priority, and we are committed to keeping you informed and secure.

Let's make 2025 a year where we breathe life into our goals — together, let's make an #AldineImpact.

With Aldine Pride,
Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney Superintendent of Schools

SUPERINTENDENT'S TOWN HALL MEETINGS

January 2025



Newsweek Features District's HEAL Program at Nimitz HS

Thanks to a \$31 million grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies, the program is a partnership between Aldine ISD and Memorial Hermann Health System.

Newsweek published the story on December 30, 2024. Below are excerpts from the article by Alexis Kayser, Newsweek's healthcare editor.

Health care faces significant workforce shortages poised to worsen in the coming years. Healthcare workers are in high demand. Students who enter the field will likely enjoy high wages and job stability — and the HEAL Program at Nimitz High School aims to help them get there.

Students accepted to the Choice School/CTE option (Students residing outside of Aldine ISD can also apply.), which opened in the fall of 2024, can choose from five pathways: nursing, medical imaging, pharmacy, health care business administration, or physical and occupational rehabilitation. By graduation, they will have obtained a high school degree and a professional certification that will allow them to apply for jobs in their chosen field (such as pharmacy technician, phlebotomist, or clinical medical assistant roles). Every student who completes the program will have a guaranteed priority interview at Memorial Hermann.

HEAL (Health Education And Learning) will also aid students seeking a college education. In addition to graduating with 15 to 24 transferable college credits, students will have the support of Memorial Hermann staff and mentors who can help them prepare for applications and interviews.

As they progress through the program, students receive



HEAL program students at Nimitz HS prepare for a simulated training experience with a mannequin.



A group of HEAL program students used virtual reality headsets during summer orientation. Similar headsets were used in the fall to simulate patient interactions inside the school.

more hands-on training. For example, ninth and 10th graders receive just over 30 hours of simulation training and mentorship each academic year. By 11th and 12th grade, that instruction has more than doubled to 80 hours.

The high school is building simulation labs that will emulate the hospital rooms at Memorial Hermann. About \$6 billion of grant funding has been allotted to the project, which will take up around 6,500 square feet of the high school.

When the labs are completed in the fall of 2025, students can practice in faux medical-surgical suites, intensive care units, nursing stations, and radiology suites. A pretend pharmacy will have the same inventory control systems and devices that real pharmacists use. Students will also use virtual reality headsets, mannequins, and other medical devices to practice skills without risk.

High school and health system leaders who spoke with Newsweek noted that students have changed professionally and personally over the first semester, becoming more confident and self-assured.

Ricardo Flores, a baseball player who aspires to become a sports medicine doctor, is wrapping up his first semester at HEAL. He starts the day in his "normal classes," like math and biology, and then moves on to health care classes, like medical terminology and principles of exercise.

Flores told Newsweek he enjoys the hands-on curriculum, which has included CPR training and trips to the hospital so far. When the ninth-grader is on Memorial Hermann's campus, he catches glimpses of his potential.

Visiting the hospital "felt good," Flores said, "because I felt like that was going to be me in the future, so I really saw myself there."

Aldine ISD Celebrates School Board Recognition Month



ALDINE
Independent School District

January is Board Recognition Month, a time to honor and express gratitude to the dedicated members of the Aldine ISD Board of Trustees. These committed individuals volunteer countless hours to ensure the success of our students and schools.

The Board of Trustees guides the district by setting policies, approving budgets, and fostering a vision for educational excellence. Their work helps Aldine ISD maintain its mission of providing all students with an equitable and high-quality education.

In a statement, TASB executive director Dan Troxell said this year's theme, 'Leadership for Tomorrow's Texas,' emphasizes the critical role school board members play in shaping the future of our state. School board members help connect education to opportunity, and the theme showcases their

investment in the state's future workforce.

"Our Board of Trustees are passionate advocates for our students, staff, and community," said Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney. "I and so many in Aldine appreciate everything our trustees do on behalf of our public school children. Their unwavering commitment to equity and excellence helps ensure that every child in Aldine ISD has the opportunity to succeed. Their strong local governance and partnership with parents and teachers is the foundation for ensuring our students have the skills and experiences they need to help build tomorrow's Texas. We are truly fortunate to have such an exceptional team leading the way."

This year, we recognize the exceptional service of the following AISD Board of Trustees:

Dr. Kimberley Booker, President Paul Shanklin, Vice President Esperanza 'Connie' Esparza, Secretary Rose Avalos, Assistant Secretary Randy Bates Jr., Member Steve Mead, Member Dr. Viola M. Garcia, Member

In addition to participating in regular school board meetings, trustees also serve as ambassadors and advocates for their school districts in their local communities and Austin. Trustees work long hours attending meetings, collaborating with educators and community members, and making difficult decisions that affect the lives of all students and families.

Join us in thanking these dedicated leaders for their service and commitment to our students, staff, and community.

For more information about Board Recognition Month, visit TASB.org.

OPINION PAGE

OPINION

By BILL KING



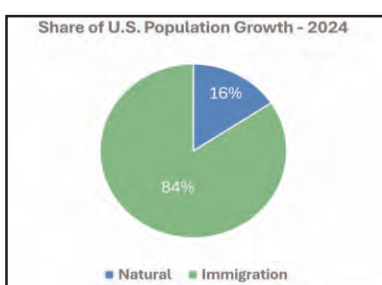
Immigration Continues to Drive U.S. Population Growth

The U.S. Census Bureau just released its population estimates for 2024. It estimated that the nation's population grew by nearly 1%, adding about 3.3 million people. Of that increase, however, 84% was from immigration (2.8 million). Without immigration, the population would have only grown by about .15% (518,000).

However, this probably understates the effect of immigration on U.S. population growth. First, more recent immigrants tend to have a higher birth rate than other U.S. residents.

This study found that in 2019, the fertility rate for Americans born here was 1.69 compared to 2.02 for immigrants. In other words, immigrants are propping up the natural population growth.

Second, the Census Bureau's immigration numbers have been widely criticized as being too low. Last year, when the Census Bureau estimated that net international immigration into the U.S. was 1.2 million, the Congressional Budget Office estimated it was 4 million. So, the Census Bureau's estimate this year of 2.8 million sounds more reasonable. However, our immigration system is so broken that no one knows the actual number. But it is quite likely that if the U.S. were to stop all immigration today, our population would be falling.



Every state added population from international immigration. At 411,000, Florida had the most new residents from other countries, with New York a close second at 389,000. Texas had a 311,000 increase from international immigration. International immigration comprised 88% of Florida's total growth but only 56% of Texas'.

Only three states (Mississippi, Vermont, and West Virginia) lost population last year, but their losses were minimal. However, without international immigration, twenty states would have lost population. California would have been the biggest loser at 129,000. New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Massachusetts rounded out the top five in this category. The twenty states that would have lost population without immigration would have lost a total of 385,000 without it.

There was significantly less moving between states by Americans last year. In 2023, about 1.75 million people moved from one state to another. This year that dropped to 1.15 million, which is about a 34% decline. There has been a decline in interstate migration for several decades, most likely due to an aging population. However, this is an unusually large drop for one year. There has been some speculation about the cause and whether this represents a more persistent trend, but I was unable to find any hard data to explain this year's drop. The ability to work remotely and, therefore, less need to relocate for a job is probably a factor.

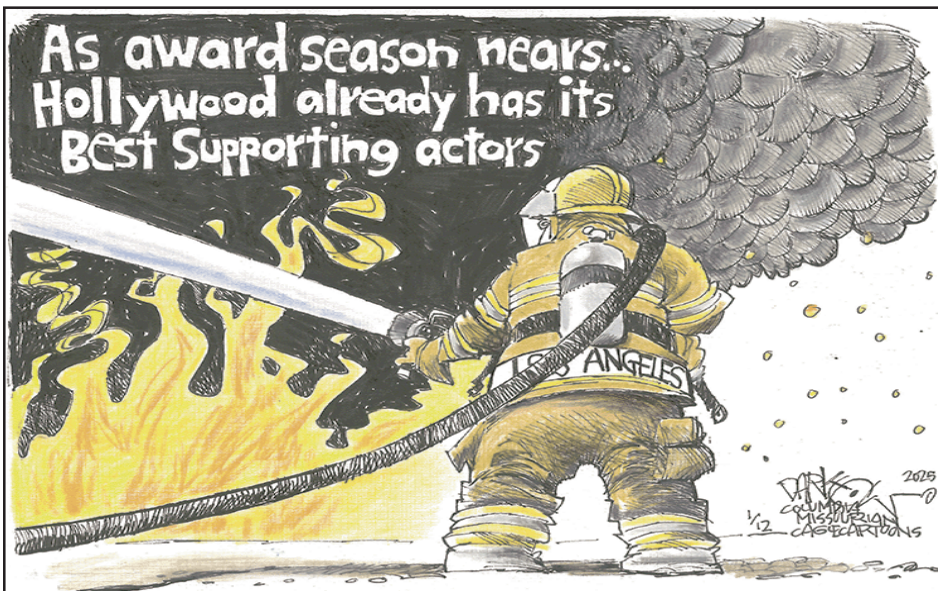
Texas led residents from other states by gaining 85,000. However, that was less than half of its gain from domestic immigration last year. North Carolina was a close second at 82,000. South Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee were third through fifth, respectively. Florida had a jar-dropping 65% decline in domestic immigration (185,000 to 65,000).

California continued to lead the way in losing residents, shedding 240,000 residents. New York lost 120,000. Illinois, New Jersey, and Massachusetts also had significant losses. Louisiana and Mississippi were the only southern states that lost residents to other states.

The new data strongly suggests that assuming the new Trump administration even comes close to making good immigration reforms and deportation promises, there will likely be some significant declines in the U.S. population. The declines will reach almost every part of the country and significantly impact the country. There will undoubtedly be some benefits from a declining population, but there will also be significant and painful disruptions. There will almost certainly be labor shortages in many industries and a significant decline in economic growth.

Polling has consistently shown that Trump's more restrictive immigration policy has widespread support in the country across almost every demographic. It will be interesting to see whether the support continues as the reality of population decline begins to be felt.

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



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Legislative Session Begins on Jan. 14

The 89th Texas legislative session begins on Jan. 14 with a still-unresolved race for speaker of the Texas House of Representatives.

State Reps. David Cook, R-Mansfield and Dustin Burrows, R-Lubbock, are considered the frontrunners for speaker, but speculation continues as to whether other candidates will throw their hats into the ring.

The Republican caucus is split between those who oppose appointing any Democrat to chair a House committee and those who contend it's essential to work across the aisle to get the state's business done in a biennial five-month session. Historically, a few chairmanships have gone to members of the minority party.

In the wake of the November elections, the makeup of the 150-member Texas House is 88 Republicans and 62 Democrats.

School vouchers will again be on the legislative plate since they are a top priority for Gov. Greg Abbott. His efforts to pass what are also called Education Savings Accounts failed numerous attempts in 2023, including several special sessions.

Legislative watchers predict more bills aimed at property tax relief but geared more toward business owners, since those passed in the 2023 session were primarily aimed at homeowners.

Another issue that Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick has prioritized is banning the sale of all THC products in Texas. Since the state legalized the growth of hemp, some stores have begun selling products containing previously illegal levels of THC, the compound that gives marijuana its "high."

GOP BILLS SEEK TO REGULATE WIND, SOLAR AND BATTERY POWER PROJECTS

Several Republican lawmakers have filed bills to increase government oversight over renewable energy projects, The Dallas Morning News reported. Proposals include requiring property buffers between the projects and neighboring properties. Another bill would require environmental fees and studies for any new renewable projects.

The News reported that wind, solar and batteries account for about 46% of electric generation capacity for the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which controls nearly all of the state's power grid.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

Currently, renewable energy facilities do not have statewide guidelines for permitting and decommissioning, leading to variations in how the installations are installed," said state Rep. Jared Patterson, R-Frisco and sponsor of one of the bills.

FBI PROBES REPORTED THREATS AGAINST SPACEX

The FBI is investigating reported threats made against SpaceX's Starbase Facility near Brownsville, the San Antonio Express-News reported. The bureau's San Antonio office confirmed that it is investigating "possible bomb threats in South Texas in recent weeks."

"While we are working to carefully vet and investigate the information we have received, we want to reiterate that the safety and security of the American people is the FBI's highest concern," the bureau said in a statement late last week.

A frequent camper near the launch site reported five male passengers in a vehicle talked of blowing up a SpaceX space vehicle. The probe comes as the company is working toward a planned test flight on Jan. 10 of its second-generation Starship.

The company has come under fire in recent months for its environmental record. Several Rio Grande Valley groups have sued the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for allowing SpaceX to discharge wastewater from its launch platform without a permit.

TEXAS LOSING ITS CLOUT IN CONGRESS THIS SESSION.

There are fewer Texans in leadership in Congress in the

session that just began, largely because of retirements of several GOP members, the Houston Chronicle reported.

U.S. Rep. Kay Granger, R-Fort Worth, who led the powerful Appropriations Committee, and U.S. Rep. Michael Burgess, R-Pilot Point, who led the Rules Committee and was the second-ranked Republican on the Commerce Committee, both retired from Congress this year.

Eighteen of the 25 Texas Republicans in the House have been there for three full terms or fewer. Another incumbent, Michael McCaul, R-Austin, is no longer heading the House Foreign Affairs Committee because of term limits.

STATE STARTS 2025 WITH 2.9 MILLION BUSINESS ENTITIES

Texas rang in the New Year with more than 2.9 million business entities actively registered with the secretary of state's office to conduct business here. That is up more than 125,000 from a year ago, according to Texas Secretary of State Jane Nelson.

"The economic climate in Texas continues to be strong as entrepreneurs grow and create businesses in our state and more out-of-state entities want to expand to Texas," Nelson said.

That number includes both businesses incorporated in Texas and out-of-state companies conducting business here.

STATE'S CITRUS INDUSTRY ON THE BRINK OF DISASTER

The state's citrus industry is reeling after a pair of natural disasters — the deadly winter storm of February 2021 and a severe drought, The Texas Tribune reported. Nearly four years after that winter storm, production levels have not recovered.

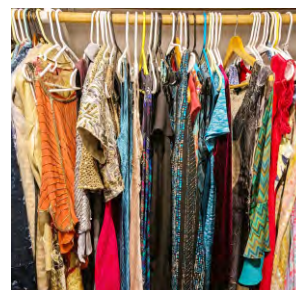
The state's citrus industry is located entirely in the Valley and has an economic impact of more than \$300 million annually. "We are not a large physical footprint anymore, but we still pack enough economic punch," said Dale Murden, president of Texas Citrus Mutual, a nonprofit trade association that represents the interests of commercial citrus growers.

Farmers in the Valley largely depend on surface water from the Rio Grande. A mature citrus tree needs between 40 and 50 inches of water a year, according to the Texas A&M Agrilife Research Center. About half of that amount must be supplied by irrigation. Drought conditions and Mexico falling behind on delivering water under a 1944 treaty are blamed for the drop in citrus production.

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: gbborders@texaspress.com

THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

The Car Wash Dress



My sister took me to task. "You know I was not being mean about your dress, don't you?"

She meant the dress that she had said made me look like a car wash—the part of the car wash where the flappy things slap the car dry. My dress looked a lot like that, especially if I spun around. I thought this was hilarious and mentioned it in a column.

"Of course I knew you weren't being mean!" I told her.

It was not my intention to be so amusing, wearing the car wash dress. From a certain angle, it looks pretty stylish. It was some designer's idea of a good look, and because I wear a smaller size, I can usually fit into these ill-conceived but affordable cast-offs I find on the internet. Not all of them work out. But I am delighted when I can cause some unexpected merriment simply by showing up in an \$11 used dress.

My sister ought to know this. She should know that, at 62, I am not angling for some best-dressed list. I am all about having fun with clothes, trying weird and different things, and a lot of those things absolutely are not going to work out. That is fine with me. I still have the car wash dress. Unlike an actual car wash, it is black, so I could wear it to a funeral sometime when I felt a little levity might be welcomed at the end of the service.

My family has a fine tradition of teasing. I know some people find this hard to believe, and I know some people tease cruelly. That is not what I mean at all. The teasing in my family has always been delivered with a heavy dose of love. Since I was a small child, I have known that the person who got teased was loved and the more people teased, the more love there was.

My dad and his sister were terrible to each other. My father always gave my aunt the meanest birthday cards, until one year she said, "Just once, I'd like a nice birthday card!"

The next year, my father went on a mission to find the most maudlin, absurdly sentimental, "To My Beloved Sister" birthday cards he could find. We found three, doused them in perfume, and presented them to her. (My dad also made her a rather nice set of candleholders in his woodshop that year, as I recall.)

They both laughed so hard they had to wipe away tears. She never asked for another nice card. So when my sister tells me I look like a car wash, it makes my day. I feel seen. I feel loved.

Being able to tell someone they look like a car wash means you know them well. She knows I have an oversized interest in buying dresses—too many dresses—for cheap on the internet. She knows I am not terribly self-conscious. (OK, I'm a bit of a ham.) Most of all, she knows that I know she loves me. She has supported me through every crazy and life-disturbing decision and event—through career changes, through a divorce, through moves across the country. There has never been a moment of my life when I have doubted that my sister would be there for me.

And so she gets to tease me.

I am definitely keeping the car wash dress. And it's not the last crazy dress I will buy. I figure it's my duty to give my sister something new to laugh about. Till next time, Carrie

NORTHEAST NEWS

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Grandparents celebrated at Holiday Party at MOC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Huge Shout Out to Ms. Shirley Portier Reed for continuing to celebrate our seniors with Grandparents Raising Grandbaby's Christmas Luncheon at @AldineISD MOC. Fun and dancing was had.



Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney named among Houston Chronicle's 37 most fascinating Houstonians of 2024,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

al Hermann Hospital and funded by a \$250 million grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies.

"We have identified a problem: healthcare desert, lack of access. We identified a solution: training up our kids who are going to be amazing," Goffney told the Chronicle earlier this year.

Under Goffney's leader-

ship, Aldine ISD prioritizes innovation and equity, tackling systemic challenges head-on. The HEAL program exemplifies her vision of empowering students to transform their communities while addressing critical community needs.

The Houston Chronicle's annual list celebrates individuals who have left

an indelible mark on the region through extraordinary accomplishments, breaking barriers, fostering creativity, or championing change.

Dr. Goffney's recognition underscores her ongoing commitment to redefining education and ensuring brighter futures for Aldine ISD students.



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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. In Matthew 16:23, to whom did Jesus say, "Get thee behind me, Satan"?
3. Who was stoned to death for preaching that Jesus was the Savior?
4. How many men did Nebuchadnezzar see walking


- in the fiery furnace? 2, 4, 20, 40
5. According to Luke 2:4, what village was known as "The City of David"?
6. From the Bible, who could be called "Mr. Patience"?

ANSWERS: 1) New, 2) Peter, 3) Stephen, 4) Four, 5) Bethlehem, 6) Job
 Find expanded trivia online with Wilson Casey at www.patreon.com/triviaguy. FREE TRIAL!
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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

To his surprise, a young lion came roaring against him. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand.

JUDGES 14: 5,6



Detail of "Samson Rending the Lion" by Albrecht Dürer (1497-98)

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Andrew Burnap, left, and Brandy Norwood star in 'The Front Room.'

'The Front Room'

'WICKED' (PG) — Universal Pictures' investment in adapting the Broadway musical 'Wicked' paid off big time...

'WALLACE & GROMIT: VENGEANCE MOST FOWL' (PG) — Those of us who were kids during the 2000s remember the comical shenanigans of Wallace and his dog, Gromit...

'THE FRONT ROOM' (R) — Singer/actress Brandy Norwood ('Descendants: The Rise of Red') is making her return to movies...

'THE GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS' (TV-PG) — Comedian Nikki Glaser hosts this year's Golden Globe Award ceremony...

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Q: Who is the handsome young actor in the new Nicole Kidman movie 'Babygirl'?

A: Harris Dickinson is a 28-year-old British actor who made his feature film debut in the 2017 film 'Beach Rats.'



Harris Dickinson in 'Where the Crawdads Sing' (2022)

Many of his fans state that his best performance is his role as the tragic wrestler David Von Erich in the 2023 film 'The Iron Claw.'

Q: Is it true that the TV series 'Grimm' is being rebooted?

A: Yes, there are substantiated reports that a reboot of the supernatural-drama series 'Grimm' is in the early development stages.

reboot will depend upon their availabilities.

Q: I read that a man is going to replace Hoda Kotb on the 'Today' show...

A: Craig Melvin is familiar to 'Today' show audiences as he's been a co-host of 'Weekend Today' since 2016...

The newly rebranded 'Today with Jenna & Friends' kicked off on Jan. 13 with Taraji P. Henson ('Empire')...

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com...

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



Weekly SUDOKU puzzle grid and instructions

HOCUS-FOCUS comic strip by Henry Boltinoff

January 13, 2025 Posting Date King Crossword

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez with 10 questions

Answers to Trivia Test: 1. Australia (Oceania); 2. Wade Wilson; 3. 128; 4. Marty Byrde; 5. Pune; 6. Detroit; 7. 'Pride and Prejudice'; 8. The cheetah; 9. Muscle twitch; 10. 'Great work'.



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Lone Star College Honors College globalizes programs through Fulbright webinars

HOUSTON – Lone Star College System is committed to internationalizing academic and workforce programs by partnering with the Community College for International Development (CCID). The Office of Honors and International Education at LSCS hosted the CCID Conference, which co-sponsored Fulbright Scholar Program webinars throughout the 2023-2024 academic year to help broaden students' horizons.

"As part of our work with Community College for International Development, we are currently planning spring 2025 webinars, as well as working with the Department of Education to support additional opportunities for our faculty members to research and develop curriculum abroad," said Katharine Caruso, Ph.D., LSCS associate vice chancellor.

LSCS employees like Caruso and Laura Taggett, English professor and International Faculty Fellow at LSC-CyFair, participated in the Fulbright Scholar webinars to learn how international educational opportunities can benefit the college and students. Caruso participated in the United States-Japan International Education Administrators (IEA) Seminar in summer 2024, where representatives positioned the U.S. as a top study destination for Japanese students and designated Japan as a premier choice for American students seeking international experiences. Additionally, the group visited the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology (MEXT) to learn about the government's vision for international exchange and toured the University of Tokyo, Japan's top-ranked university.

"The Japanese higher education system is actively



Lone Star College System co-sponsored Fulbright Scholar Program webinars to show employees like Katharine Caruso, Ph.D., LSC associate vice chancellor, Honors and International Education (left) and Laura Taggett, LSC-CyFair English professor and International Faculty Fellow, how international educational opportunities benefit the college and students.

seeking to internationalize further, which presents exciting opportunities for collaboration with U.S. institutions like Lone Star College System and our peers in the program," said Caruso. "The program was a profound learning experience about Japan's rich culture and higher education landscape."

Taggett was named to the Fulbright Specialist Program Roster in spring 2024, which matches U.S. specialists with international projects at host institutions worldwide. These assignments range from two to six weeks and usually occur during the academic year. As a lifelong learner, Taggett hopes to get a specialized program that will enable her to grow personally and professionally while finding ways to expand her classes globally.

"If I take advantage of this opportunity, there is 100% certainty that I will grow from this as an individual, as a teacher and as a culturally competent human being," said Taggett. "I will bring back artifacts (pictures, videos and concrete artifacts) that I can share with my students. I hope it will make that International Studies designation more tangible for my

students."

The Fulbright Scholar Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government, designed to increase mutual understanding between people from other countries. Lone Star College System works with CCID and the Department of Education to provide faculty, staff and administrators with information sessions on successfully applying for Fulbright Programs and connected funding. LSCS had two finalists in 2023, making it the top community college sender in the United States.

"The Fulbright Scholar Program is an incredible opportunity for Lone Star College System faculty and staff to work with educational institutions across the globe, incorporating what they learn in their classrooms," said Caruso.

The Office of Honors and International Education at LSCS helps meet the needs of high-achieving students through study abroad opportunities, participation in national conferences, scholarships and internationalized classes. Learn more at LoneStar.edu/Honors.

Lone Star College Foundation aces golf tournament for student success

HOUSTON (Dec. 11, 2024) – Lone Star College Foundation hit a hole-in-one for students at the 31st annual Drive for Scholarships Golf Tournament held Nov. 18 at The Woodlands Country Club. The event raised \$175,550 to financially assist LSC students like Sergio Iraheta in achieving their educational goals.

"Lone Star College Foundation scholarships help students like me eat a meal without worrying about affording tuition, books, fees and other academic costs," said Iraheta, former LSC Foundation scholarship recipient. "I am thankful to the generous community partners and Lone Star College Foundation for helping to put my puzzle together and providing the pencils and paper needed to bring my dreams to life."

The Drive for Scholarships Golf Tournament is one of LSC Foundation's major fundraisers and helps change lives. This year, 224 registered golfers and 63 volunteers (mainly LSC employees) raised money to fund educational programs, emergency funds, endowments and scholarship. Proceeds will fund 42 golf tournament scholarships.

"Lone Star College Foundation is grateful to the many sponsors, underwriters, and golfers for providing LSC students the opportunity to begin, complete, and succeed in school and life," said



Lone Star College Foundation raised over \$175,000 at the 31st annual Drive for Scholarships Golf Tournament at The Woodlands Country Club. Pictured from left to right are Jon Scanlon, LSC Foundation golf tournament chair; Mario K. Castillo, J.D., LSC chancellor and Nicole Robinson Gauthier, CFRE, LSC Foundation executive director.

Nicole Robinson Gauthier, CFRE, LSC Foundation executive director. "We can't do this work alone, so we are honored to partner with individuals and businesses to support our hard-working students."

LSC Foundation provided over \$3 million in scholarships to 2,566 students and \$3.3 million in program and emergency support to Lone Star College. Chesmar Foundation, the tournament sponsor, and 62 sponsors and underwriters supported the golf tournament event. See a list of all event sponsors and underwriters at LoneStar.edu/Golf2024.

"The Drive for Scholarships Golf Tournament is more than just a day of golf; it shows how much we care about the next

generation and their success," said Jon Scanlon, LSC Foundation golf tournament chair. "Together, we are opening doors to opportunities, creating pathways to success and strengthening the very fabric of our community."

Visit LoneStar.edu/Giving to learn how you can support students through LSC Foundation.

About Lone Star College Foundation

Lone Star College Foundation impacts students' lives by reducing the financial barriers to a quality college education. Since 1991, LSC Foundation has awarded over \$26 million in scholarships to more than 27,000 students and raised nearly \$13 million in program support. Learn more at

LoneStar.edu/Giving.

About Lone Star College

Lone Star College System enrolls over 90,000 students each semester providing high-quality, low-cost academic transfer and career training education. LSCS 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 LSCS, the largest institution of higher education in the Houston area and has been named a 2024 Great Colleges to Work For® institution by the Chronicle of Higher Education. LSCS consists of eight colleges, seven centers, eight Workforce Centers of Excellence and Lone Star Corporate College. To learn more, visit LoneStar.edu.

Aldine ISD Legacy Event,

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Connie Esparza, Assistant Board Secretary Rose Avalos, and Members Dr. Viola M. Garcia, Steve Mead and Randy Bates. Former Trustees, and school name sakes who attended the event were Vera Escamilla, Marine Jones and Leonard Marcela. Former Superintendents, and school name sakes, Mr. M.B. "Sonny" Donaldson and Dr. Wanda Bamberg, along with former Deputy Superintendents, and school name sakes, Bill Plummer and Dr. Archie Blanson were also in attendance. They were joined by former Assistant Superintendent of Finance Anne-Marie Hazdan and former Chief Academic Officer Dr. Todd Davis at the event, along with a number of former district administrators, campus principals and former coaches.

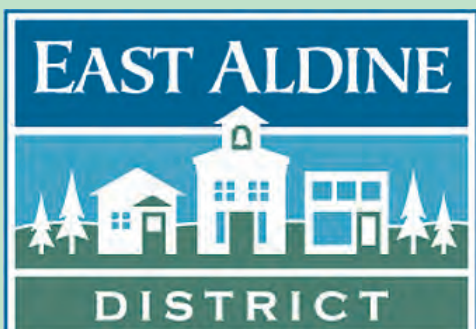
The reception also provided Dr. Goffney with the opportunity to highlight the district's visual arts

program. Four Aldine ISD student-artists work was selected to be displayed in the Superintendent's Suite on the third floor of the Thorne Stadium Press Box.

"It (Thorne Stadium) is also a space that reflects and celebrates the creativity and talent of our students," Dr. Goffney said.

She then introduced the four students, along with their artwork.

The four students are: Sicily Farris, a senior at Carver High School (her art educator is Christina Moreno), Anna Escobar-Diaz, a senior at Eisenhower High School (her art educator is Brad Schmidt), Felicitas Rodriguez, a senior at La Promesa (her art educator is Deanna Calderon) and Angel Diginee, a sophomore at Young Women's Leadership Academy (her art educator is Jennie Settle). The visual arts program is under the direction of Kaileigh Newman, Director of Visual Arts.



EAST ALDINE DISTRICT

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