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NORTHEAST NEWS



Choir Director Micah Schirado leads the MacArthur High School Chorale in the national anthem as they open the 66th Annual Aldine ISD Livestock Show and Auction. Schirado said the music ensemble participates almost every year. See Story Below and on page 5

Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 49 Years
 VOL. 49, NO. 5 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2025 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

NEWS NOTES

Walle Legislative Town Hall Feb. 13

State Representative Armando Walle will hold a Town Hall meeting on Thursday, Feb. 13 from 6pm to 8pm at the BakerRipley East Aldine Campus, 3000 Aldine Mail Route. Join Rep. Walle to discuss legislation aimed at concerns regarding Concrete Batch Plants in the community.

Presidents Day Celebration Feb. 17

East Aldine District and Bonding Against Adversity celebrate Presidents Day, at the JFK Statue, corner of JFK Blvd. and Aldine Bender. Monday, Feb. 17 from 4:30-6:00pm. Music, Art Show, Cake and Refreshments. Come help the community celebrate.

Reimagine Aldine Mail Route with Pct. 2 on Feb. 18

You are invited to join a planning meeting to share your thoughts and ideas about the future of Aldine Mail Route. Meeting Tuesday, Feb. 18 from 1pm to 3pm at the East Aldine Offices, 2909 East Aldine Amphitheatre Drive. Sponsored by Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia.

Small Business Seminar Feb. 27

East Aldine District Small Business Free Seminar Luncheon Series continues, with the subject 2025 Tax Updates. Speaker: Keith Cothral, Houston Tax Attorney. Seminar this month is cosponsored by the Greater Northside Chamber. Thursday, Feb. 27 from 12pm to 1:30pm at the East Aldine Offices, 2909 East Aldine Amphitheatre Drive, off Aldine Mail Route.

FFA Auction Raises \$209,815 for Student Projects

By David Taylor
 Managing Editor

When the judge walked by her steer and slapped him on the back, signifying that he was the grand champion steer, Eisenhower High School Senior Donnae Banks became a part of a 66-year-old legacy at the Aldine ISD FFA Livestock Show and Auction last week.

At the auction, she smiled as big as she could to not only attract the highest bids but to know that the money she was about to earn would help pave the way for her future.

The Superintendent's Group earned the highest bid at \$12,500 and Banks was ready to celebrate.

It was the beginning of a fruitful day in the lives of a lot of young people who had earned the opportunity to auction their animal in the arena at M. O. Campbell Center raising a total of \$209,815.

"We couldn't do this without the bigger group in our community," said Brooke Martin, executive director of CTE in Aldine ISD. "Friends in the middle, (the bidders) you are not just bidding on an animal, you are also bidding on their future, and that's the future, whether they come back and raise another project for their education or even encouragement for our future FFA students."

This year was a special one for the program as they were recognized by the Career and Technical Association of Texas (CTAT) with the 2025 CTE District of Distinction Award after meeting the



The Grand Champion Turkey, raised by Miguel Torres of Aldine High School, was purchased by the Superintendent's Group for \$5,000.



Donnae Banks of Eisenhower High School raised the Grand Champion Steer, which the Superintendent's Group purchased for \$12,500.

stringent guidelines set by the CTAT Board and executive committee. "These students are champions here today and

this day is not stressful," she said. "They get to come out here and be proud of what they've accomplished.

Banks is no stranger to winning. Her pedigree includes grand champion steer winners in both her uncle and her mom. Her

uncle is also her teacher at Eisenhower High School.

"I've had my niece in class now for her junior and senior years," said Derick Banks, FFA teacher.

"This is a family tradition and legacy of our own," he said. "I graduated from Eisenhower High School so I'm a product of Aldine ISD. I raised a couple of champion calves, and then her mom came after me, and she raised the grand champion steer."

Derick was busting with pride.

"Now her she (Donnae) comes along and becomes the third-generation grand champion," he said smiling from ear to ear.

It was her first one to raise.

"I was surprised when I heard I won," she said.

Continued. See ALDINE FFA SHOW, PAGE 5

Senator Alvarado files Bills to correct Hurricane Beryl's problems

By David Taylor
 Managing Editor

Promises made. Promises kept.

Senator Carol Alvarado (D) promised at a Public Utilities Commission of Texas hearing in Houston last fall on the response to Hurricane Beryl that she would file legislation related to the debacle created by CenterPoint Energy. The Senator kept her word.

Now as the session gets underway, some of her colleagues are signing on to strengthen the chance they will get a vote on the floor of the Senate and eventually become law in the state.

Last year, Hurricane



Sen. Carol Alvarado has the mike in the Senate chatting with her colleagues. The Senator filed six bills related to the state's response to the hurricane and the failure of CenterPoint as promised last fall at the Houston PUC meeting.

Beryl struck the Texas Gulf Coast leaving nearly 3 million homes without power, exposing critical gaps in Texas's disaster

preparedness and leaving some of the most vulnera

Continued. See ALVARADO'S BILL, Page 5

CenterPoint provides Emergency Generator at Community Center



County Commissioner Adrian Garcia, center, is flanked by State Rep. Armando Walle, left, and Richard Liger, senior vice president natural gas business, CenterPoint Energy, as he speaks during a ceremony at the Deputy Darren Almendarez Community Center announcing the donation of backup generators by CenterPoint on Friday, Feb. 7, 2025 in Houston.

Garcia said "Harris County Precinct 2 extends A big thank you to CenterPoint for donating a generator to the Deputy Darren Almendarez Community Center! We open our doors to the community on the hottest and coldest days of the year and this donation will help ensure we can continue to serve when people need it most.

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East Aldine District seeks candidates for two vacant board positions

Board Seeks Candidates for Vacant Positions No. 4 and 5

January 31st, 2025 | About the District, Community

The Nominating Committee of the Board of Directors of the East Aldine Management District seeks qualified candidates to fill the vacancies that exist in Director Positions No. 4 and 5 of the board. Statutory qualifications as defined in Chapter 375, Local Government Code, are as follows:

Sec. 375.063. QUALIFICATIONS OF DIRECTOR. To be qualified to serve as a director, a person must be at least 18 years old and:

- (1) an owner of property in the district;
- (2) an owner of stock, whether beneficial or otherwise, of a corporate owner of property in the

district; (3) an owner of a beneficial interest in a trust that owns property in the district; or (4) an agent, employee, or tenant of a person covered by Subdivision (1), (2), or (3).

The Board of Directors meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 6 pm at the East Aldine District's Town Center community room. Candidate must be willing to participate in the Board's regular meetings and serve on at least one committee. The term of Position 5 expires June 1, 2027, and is renewable for an additional four-year term upon recommendation of the Board and approval by the Harris County Commissioners Court. Currently there are no limits on the number of terms a director may serve.

If you are qualified or know someone who is qualified and may be interested, please submit your resume and the application to the Nominating Committee by Friday, February 28, 2025 to the following:

East Aldine Management District
Nominating Committee
c/o Monica Campos
2909 E. Aldine Amphitheatre Dr., Ste. 200
Houston, TX 77039

Or by email to: mcampos@haweshill.com

Download the Candidate Information Form (PDF)



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COMMUNITY WATCH

Another Fire at Tia Pancha #2 Flea Market on Airline

Firefighters contain large fire at North Harris County flea market
Blaze at Tia Pancha on Airline Drive prompts swift response, no injuries reported

Fire crews are investigating an early morning fire at Tia Pancha #2 Flea Market in North Harris County.

The Little York Fire Department responded to the scene around 1:30 a.m. Friday morning, Feb. 7, finding heavy fire at the back of the property.

Firefighters quickly called a second alarm to bring in additional personnel to combat the blaze. The fire was contained to several units at the back of the property.

No injuries were reported among civilians or firefighters. An employee on the property was the first to report the fire.

The cause of the fire is currently under investigation by the Harris County Fire Marshal's Office.

This incident follows a previous fire at the same location on August 16, 2024, which left people with minor injuries and destroyed over 80 vendor stalls. During that fire, a firefighter sustained second-degree burns, and a civilian was hospitalized for smoke inhalation.



House Fire on Lemond near East Little York/Homestead

Houston Fire Department reports a House fire on January 20, 2025, at 1:26 p.m. at 11400 block of Lemond Dr. 77016.

There were No reported injuries. PROPERTY SAVED:

\$32,700 in estimated property saved.

DAMAGE: \$160,000 in estimated damage.

CAUSE: Accidental (electrical - extension cord).

ADDITIONAL

INFORMATION:

Firefighters arrived on scene to find heavy smoke coming from a 1-story house and made an offensive attack. A primary search was completed, and the utilities were secured, with a breaker found

tripped. Crews controlled and extinguished the fire and requested HFD Arson investigators to determine the cause and origin. 40 personnel responded to this incident, including firefighters from Stations 32, 15, 34, 45, 43, 56 and 30.

High Meadows Branch Library

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEB 10-17

10 FEB 11:30 AM FABLES AND FUN
1 PM CONVERSATIONAL ESL

11 FEB 3: PM POKEMON CLUB
1:00PM JUST COLOR

12 FEB 12 PM COMPUTER BASICS CLASS
3:30 PM KRAFTY KIDS
5 PM HOUSTON GRAND OPERA
5:30 PM THE MAGIC OF COLORUR

13 FEB 11 AM TODDLER TIME
11 AM CITIZENSHIP

14 FEB 1:45 PM HEALTHIER YOU
3:30PM HEARTS & HUGS STORYTIME

17 FEB 11:30 AM FABLES AND FUN
1 PM CONVERSATIONAL ESL
3:30PM VALENTINE 'S CRAFTS

FABLES & FUN/ READING WONDERLAND: STORIES, SONGS, RHYMES, AND MORE!

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VALENTINE THEME STORYTIME WITH TEA, CRAFTS, MSUIC AND MORE

HOUSTON GRAND OPERA
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DE-STRESS, UNWIND, AND ENJOY THE ALMOST-MAGICAL CALM THAT COMES FROM PAINTING WITH WATERCOLORS.

AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS

Echoes of Resilience: The Story of Freedmen's Town

The Freedmen's Town Conservancy is proud to present *Echoes of Resilience: The Story of Freedmen's Town*, on view at Aldine Branch Library from February 1, 2025 - February 28, 2025. Coinciding with the National Black History Month theme of 'African Americans and Labor', *Echoes of Resilience: The Story of Freedmen's Town* highlights the history and legacy of Houston Freedmen's Town, with emphasis on the power of community and collective labor. Visit *Echoes of Resilience: The Story of Freedmen's Town* at Aldine Branch Library at 1131 Airline Dr, Houston, Texas, 77037.

Movement Monday

Come out and move! Join us on Monday and get ready to exercise your brain and body! We'll be dancing, reading, singing and moving. This program focuses on improving physical health and also enhances early literacy skills in a fun and interactive way. Program is in English and Spanish. Encouraged to bring your own water. Monday, Feb. 10, 11 - 11:45am.

¡Sal y muévete! Únase a nosotros el lunes y prepárese para hacer ejercicios por su mente y cuerpo. Estaremos bailando, leyendo, cantando y moviéndonos. Este programa no solo se enfoca en mejorar la salud física sino que también mejora las habilidades de alfabetización temprana de una manera divertida e interactiva. El programa está en inglés y español. se recomienda traer su propia agua. Clases de Computación Básica (Basic Computer Classes in Spanish) Si las computadoras son nuevas para usted, se siente incómodo con ellas o simplemente quiere un curso de actualización, este curso es para usted. Revisaremos todo lo básico: ¿de cómo usar un ratón a utilizando el correo electrónico eficazmente y más! Acompañemos los lunes de 4 a 5:30 p.m. Inscripción requerido. Llame o visite para inscribirse.

If you are completely new to computers, feel uncomfortable with them, or simply want a refresher in the basics, this class is for you. We will review all the basics: from how to use a mouse to effectively utilizing email and more! Join us on Mondays from 4 to 5:30 pm. Registration required. Call or visit to register.

Bilingual Story Time & Craft/Hora de cuento con manualidades

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. Last half hour is craft time! Children of all ages are welcome!

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

Open Tech Lab (Bilingual)

Have questions about email, social media, word, your smart phone or more? Come in and let's figure it out! Computer repair or diagnosis is not available. Tuesdays, 5-6:30pm. Registration is required. Call 832-927-5410 or come by to register. ¿Necesita ayuda con un programa específico en la computadora? o cualquier pregunta relacionada con el teléfono celular? ¿Te podemos ayudar! Reparación o diagnóstico de computadoras o telefono celular no sera disponible.

Adult Business Workshop

Do you need help managing your business? Are you interested in starting a business? Join us for a FREE hands on project management workshop hosted by @advocatecoaching22. Tuesday, Feb. 11, 6pm. Register to save your place and join us! *Expert guidance* Focus strategies* Hands-on practice

Pajama Story Time

Come join us in your pajamas for story time at night. We have songs, stories, and crafts! This program is in English and Spanish. Tuesdays, 6-6:45pm.

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 February lineup:

- Feb. 5 - Yoga Stretch & Flow & Guided Meditation
 - Feb. 12 - Indoor Walking & Guided Meditation
 - Feb. 19 - Twist and Stretch Yoga & Tapping Meditation
 - Feb. 26 - Qi Gong & Guided Meditation
- This program is for adults 18 and over. No registration required.

Storybook Opera

Come one, come all! Houston Grand Opera is stopping by the library to perform *Lula and the Mighty Griot*. This half-hour performance is a great way to introduce children to the Houston Grand Opera. Wednesday, Feb. 12, 3-3:30pm.

Tween Spark: Perler Beads

Make Valentine's Day charms with perler beads! We'll provide a range of patterns to choose from and the supplies; all you gotta do is provide the creativity and have fun. Snacks will be provided. This program is best for 6th-9th graders. Wednesday, Feb. 12, 4:30-5:30pm.

Homeschool Social

Are you currently homeschooling? Join us for a social event dedicated to homeschooling families! Enjoy snacks, crafts, robots, and board games. All age groups are welcome. Thursday, Feb. 13, 6-7pm.

Spark 5 Story Time w/The Michelle Project

Join the library and The Michelle Project for a special Saturday story time! These interactive story times are suitable for all ages and abilities. We'll explore the world of early literacy through singing, talking, writing, playing, and reading! Each super fun educational adventure is inspired by celebrations and traditions from that month. There's always a free book waiting for you at every session! Saturday, Feb. 15, 11am - 12pm.

Passport Services

Do you 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 be accompanied people present with them to be added on the list to be seen. Sign-in starts at 1pm.

Michelle Pichon
Library Program Specialist
Harris County Public Library
Aldine Branch Library
11331 Airline Dr.
Houston, TX 77037
832-927-5410

SCHOOL NEWS PAGE

Aldine ISD Making Progress on 2023 Bond Projects



The Bond Oversight Committee members at its Jan. 6 meeting

Aldine ISD is making strides with several bond projects completed a year after voters approved the \$1.8 billion bond. From facilities, maintenance, and security updates to technology upgrades, the district is moving along with the 2023 bond.

The Bond Oversight Committee presented 2023 Bond project updates at a meeting on January 6. Several bond projects have been finished, initiated, or are well underway. Aldine continues to make district improvements as the Board of Trustees approves projects and moves them forward.

In 2024, the district rolled out project activity with its three initial construction projects: Carver High School, Aldine Middle School, and the Educational and Performing Arts Center, with architect selections for each project. Professional services such as traffic engineering (studying the traffic flow of the roads around the site), surveying (assessing the land to help with planning and construction), geotechnical (analyzing soil and rock properties for foundation and structures) and environmental (identifies potential ecological factors) necessary for these projects has already begun for Carver HS and Aldine MS.

“While these three large projects are in the program development phase, the district is working on other aspects of the bond, providing district enhancements and upgrades that improve the student experience,” Chief Operations Officer Fred Washington said.

Security Film

Phase 1: Exterior Security Film Installation in the front area has been completed for high and middle schools. Phase 2: Exterior Security Film Installation in the front area has been completed for elementary and primary schools. Phase 3: Security Film Secondary Entrance at Vestibule is 65% completed, with high and middle schools in progress.

Maintenance

Districtwide chiller coils for HVAC systems have been replaced. Plexiglass replacement has been completed at 59 campuses, with 25 remaining to be completed. The maintenance department started on roofing projects at Nimitz High School, removing gravel from the roof and installing 25% of the roof film. Work has been initiated for Worsham Elementary gym, with materials ordered and on-site. Upcoming roofing projects are scheduled for Reed Academy, Shotwell Middle School, and Goodman Elementary.

Technology

The district is undergoing a major technology overhaul! Starting in November 2024, the technology department has been busy implementing a series of upgrades to improve learning and safety across all schools.

New Devices for Students:

All ninth-grade centers and seven high schools received new Chromebooks.

Primary schools received iPads and headphones.

Victory Early College students received new laptops.

Technology for Teachers & Staff:

New ViewSonic Interactive Panels are being installed in classrooms district-wide (currently halfway complete).

Teachers and staff are receiving new laptops.

Upcoming Security & Infrastructure Upgrades:

The school board recently approved upgrades to security cameras, alarms, and access control systems.

The PA system will be modernized for clearer communication.

Digital marquees will be installed to share news and announcements.

“This wave of technology upgrades demonstrates a strong commitment to providing students and staff with the tools and resources they need to succeed in a modern learning environment,” Chief Information Officer Adam Galvan said. “The focus on security enhancements also shows a dedication to ensuring the safety and well-being of the entire school community.”



Griggs Primary School students with their new headphones and iPads.



Bussey Elementary staff receiving new laptops.

Aldine ISD Celebrates National School Counseling Week



Aldine ISD is honoring its school counselors during National School Counseling Week, observed Feb. 3-7, 2025. This annual celebration recognizes their invaluable contributions to student success and highlights their vital role in supporting students’ academic growth, social-emotional well-being, and future readiness.

“Our counselors make a lasting difference in the lives of our students,” said Josie Treviño-García, Aldine ISD’s director of guidance and counseling. “This week is about celebrating their hard work and ensuring they have the resources they need to continue their incredible efforts.”

Across the district, Aldine ISD counselors serve as advocates, mentors, and trusted guides, helping students navigate challenges and achieve their goals.

Spotlight on Aldine ISD Counselors

Chezzadi Keelen – Carter Elementary School

For Chezzadi Keelen, being a school counselor is about creating a sense of family and support for her students. Originally from New Orleans, Keelen has always been known for her compassion and empathy. While working as a teacher, she realized she wanted to reach more students and make an even greater impact.

“Every student deserves to have someone in their corner, and as a Professional School Counselor at Carter, serving about 800 students, I am honored to be that person,” she said.

She believes National School Counseling Week is a time to “celebrate and highlight the vital role of professional school counselors” and inspire others to embrace kindness, patience, and empathy. At Carter Elementary, she’s making the week extra special by spreading joy through student-led joke sessions over the intercom, gratitude notes at the Appreciation Station, and self-love guidance lessons. Teachers and staff will enjoy mindful moments and self-care activities throughout the week.

Jessica Wiltz – Aldine



Middle School

For Dr. Jessica Wiltz, counseling runs in the family. Inspired by her mother, who has dedicated nearly 50 years to education — many of those as a school counselor — Wiltz saw firsthand how powerful this role can be.

“Middle school students can be a tough group to break through to, but when you do, it’s priceless,” she said. “We are the heartbeat of our schools, and our work truly holds immense value.”

One of the most rewarding moments in her career came recently when a former student, now in college, reached out to thank her. The student shared how much their college and career conversations had shaped their future and that they were attending one of the schools they had researched together.

Courtney Lewis — Eisenhower High School

Courtney Lewis is inspired by her passion for supporting and guiding students on their academic and personal journeys. Her work with students at her alma mater makes it even more meaningful. “It’s where I can give back to the community that played a pivotal role in shaping my own growth and success. SWOOP, SWOOP!” Lewis shared.

Lewis added that one of the most fulfilling moments of her career as a high school counselor is witnessing students walk across the stage at graduation, knowing the obstacles they have overcome. “Seeing their growth and resilience

makes every challenge worthwhile,” she said.

There are three words that best describe her work: perpetual (the gift that keeps on giving), fulfilling (witnessing students’ growth and achievements), and complex (the many challenges that come with the territory). She stays motivated, knowing her students feel heard, valued, and supported. “Moments when students express gratitude for guidance and encouragement reaffirm the impact of this role,” said Lewis.

Throughout the week, counselors will have access to professional resources, including the American School Counselor Association’s (ASCA) National School Counseling Week Toolkit, advocacy materials, and professional development opportunities. Schools are encouraged to celebrate by:

Showcasing counselors’ #AldineImpact on social media; increase the conversation by also including these other hashtags and handles: #SchoolCounselorsWeek, @AldineISD, and @Counseling_AISD

Hosting appreciation activities

Participating in themed spirit days

To express gratitude for their dedication, the Aldine ISD Counseling Department has also prepared a special token of appreciation for counselors.

Join the celebration! Follow Aldine ISD on social media and use #AldineImpact to recognize the district’s outstanding school counselors.

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

OPINION PAGE

OPINION
By **BILL KING**



Harris County's Tax Bill will be a Sticker Shock

As I have previously shared with you, when Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo claimed that the Commissioners' Court was raising property taxes by 8%. Her statement was, to put it nicely, untrue. Tax bills for Harris County began going out shortly after Thanksgiving and many homeowners are seeing jaw-dropping increases. Of course, each homeowner's tax bill is highly dependent on their individual circumstances, but on average, the increase may be the largest ever imposed by a local government in Texas. Here are the numbers.

The Commissioners' Court set the tax rate for four entities: the County, the Hospital District, the Flood Control District, and the Port Authority. Here are the increases in the tax rate for each:

	2023 Tax Rate	2024 Tax Rate	Rate Increase	% Increase in Rate
County	0.35007	0.38529	0.03522	10%
Flood	0.03105	0.04897	0.01792	58%
Port	0.00574	0.00615	0.00041	7%
Hospital	0.14343	0.16348	0.02005	14%
Total	0.53029	0.60389	0.0736	14%

This shows that the tax rate for these four entities increased by 14% in just one year. To be fair, voters narrowly approved the Flood Control District's increase, although I wonder if they would have done so, had Hidalgo not lied to them about how much their Harris County taxes were really going up.

But the Flood Control portion of the County's tax bill is a relatively minor portion. Even if we eliminate the Flood Control District's rate increase, the increase in the rate that was imposed by the Commissioners' Court was still over 11%.

So, there was no universe in which the tax increase was only going to be 8%, as Hidalgo promised.

But it gets worse because your actual tax bill is the product of the tax rate and the taxable value of your property. According to the last report from HCAD, the taxable value of the average home in Harris County is up by just over 3% this year. Because of the compounding effect, **the average homeowner will see a nearly 15% increase in their actual county tax bill this year.**

Commissioners' Court was primarily able to cram down this onerous tax increase by using a loophole that allows local governments to exceed the State imposed limits in the case of the declaration of an emergency (Derecho and Hurricane Beryl). The Court also used several other exceptions to the State limit available to it in previous years but was blocked by the two Republican commissioners boycotting the meeting called to set the tax rate.

Harris County was not the only jurisdiction that jumped on the tax-raising bandwagon. Almost 100 other taxing entities in Harris County raised their tax rates. However, several large jurisdictions held their tax rate even with the City of Houston and Houston ISD being the most notable.

Some homeowners will see truly eye-popping increases, especially if they live in a jurisdiction that raised taxes like Harris County and had a large valuation increase. HCAD raised the value of the home of a friend of mine by 10% this year. He lives in the Houston Community College District, which raised its tax rate by 4.3%. His total tax bill was nearly 18% higher than last year. This is the five-year history of his tax bill from the Tax Assessor-Collector:

Total Tax Bill by Year	\$4,575.88	\$4,139.35	\$4,452.13	\$3,871.14	\$5,441.45	\$4,954.94
Total Year % Diff		-9.54	7.56	-13.05	13.98	17.83

You will notice that his tax bill declined in the previous two years, due to the property tax relief passed by the Texas Legislature. However, in his case, local governmental entities have clawed back about half of that relief.

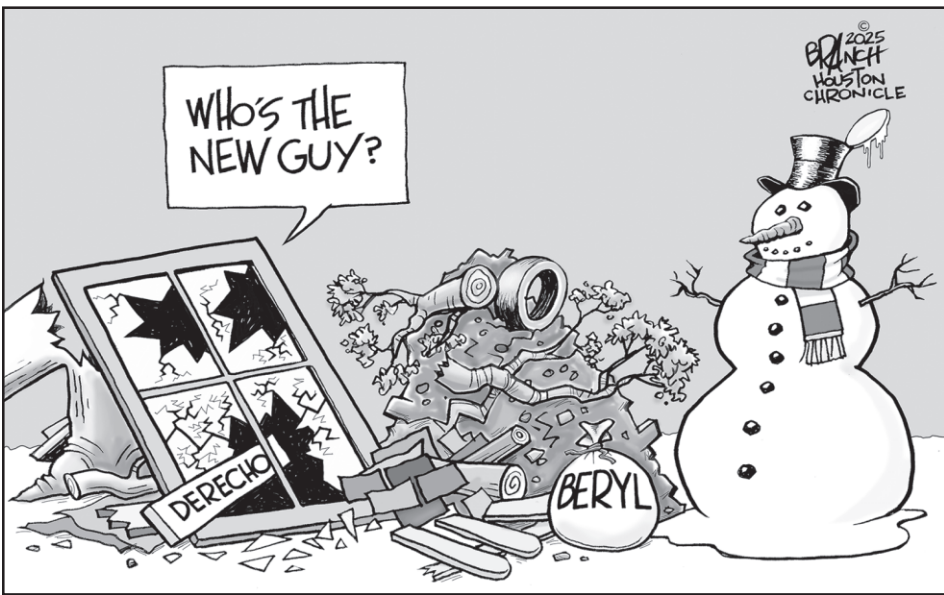
By the way, the five-year history for your home is included on the back of your tax bill or you can access it on the County Tax-Assessor's website by looking up your property and then clicking the blue button in the left-hand margin titled "5 Year Account History."

This year's tax increases came on top of an average increase of over 10% last year because even though a taxing entity did not raise its tax rate, **HCAD increased the average home value** by that amount. As I noted in my earlier post on this topic, wages in the Houston region have been rising for the last five years at a 3.9% annual rate. So, Harris County's taxes over the last two years have risen roughly four times higher than wages.

Recent polls have shown the growing frustration of young people, in particular, at the unaffordability of owning a home. The combination of a storage of single-family homes, high interest rates, and spiraling insurance costs and taxes has simply made it impossible for many young people to purchase a home.

Many attribute this frustration to the trend of many younger Americans abandoning the Democratic Party in favor of more populist candidates. However, many of our local officials, and especially some on Harris County Commissioners' Court, do not seem to recognize that they are contributing to this home affordability crisis with their obsession with ever-larger budgets fueled by ever-higher property taxes. Perhaps Harris County voters will help them make that connection in the next election.

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**



Patrick Releases 25 Legislative Priorities

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick has released his top 25 legislative priorities as the legislative session gets underway, The Texas Tribune reported. They include banning all forms of consumable THC, the psychoactive ingredient in CBD products; increasing the school homestead exemption from \$100,000 to \$140,000; a Texas version of a government oversight department to improve governmental efficiency; and measures to shore up the state's electric grid and water supply.

Patrick released a statement saying his priorities guarantee the Texas Senate, over which he presides, "will continue to lead as the pre-eminent legislative body in America by passing our bold, conservative agenda, helping President Trump deliver on his promise of making America great again."

He said he plans to release an additional 15 priority bills soon, for a total of 40.

FLU CASES SPIKING ACROSS THE STATE

The number of influenza cases is rising rapidly, the Austin American-Statesman reported, particularly in North Texas where at least two school districts were forced to close because of excessive absences. Data from the Texas Department of State Health Services indicates a 34% positivity rate in the week of Jan. 12-18.

A Fort Worth children's hospital last week reported nearly 700 patients visiting its emergency rooms within a 24-hour span.

"Which is just an astronomical number," Dr. Stephanie Felton, attending physician at Cook Children's Medical Center, said. "Every year, we obviously see the flu. This year, I will say, that we're seeing an abundance of it, as far as the numbers."

Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, headaches, and a runny or stuffy nose. Severe symptoms can last up to three days, while less-severe symptoms can hang around for up to two weeks.

ABBOTT SEEKS FED REIMBURSEMENT FOR BORDER SECURITY

Gov. Greg Abbott has asked the federal government to reimburse Texas for the \$11.1 billion the state has spent in the past four years in Operation Lone Star.

"Over the past four years, OLS efforts successfully reduced illegal immigration into Texas by 87%, demonstrated the ongoing effectiveness of President Donald Trump's border measures, and shone a spotlight on a



national crisis," Abbott wrote in a letter to U.S. congressional leadership.

Abbott has long been critical of federal border enforcement efforts under former President Joe Biden, claiming his policies left Texas "defenseless" against infiltration across the border of violent gangs and other criminals.

MEASLES CASES CONFIRMED IN WEST TEXAS, HOUSTON

Two cases of measles have been confirmed in school-aged children in West Texas a few weeks after two cases were reported in a pair of Houston residents, the Houston Chronicle reported. The West Texas cases were children living in Gaines County who had not received the measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine, according to DSHS. The children were hospitalized for a time in Lubbock but have since been discharged.

The cases in Houston involved two unvaccinated adults who had recently traveled internationally.

DSHS has warned that additional cases may occur, given the highly contagious nature of measles. The virus is transmitted by contact with infectious droplets that travel airborne when an infected person breathes, coughs or sneezes. The virus can remain infectious in the air for up to two hours.

Measles can cause life-threatening illness to unvaccinated persons.

MORE THAN 20 BILLS FILED TO WEAKEN VACCINE REQUIREMENTS

More than 20 bills have been filed for this legislative session that aim to claw back vaccine requirements, The Tribune reported. The proposed legislation would make it easier for parents to opt out of vaccinations for their children; give the Legislature final approval on any new vaccinations required by schools; apply more rules for dispensing the COVID-19 vaccination; and demand more transparency regarding

possible adverse effects of vaccines.

The founder of Texans for Vaccine Choice, Rebecca Hardy, said her group is not anti-vaccine.

"We're not here to restrict anybody's access to vaccines or to dismantle the vaccine program," she said. "So, we do not take a stance on if children should get all, some or no vaccines."

Carrie Williams, a spokesperson for the Texas Hospital Association, said vaccines have become politicized and their importance overlooked because of their efficacy.

"Vaccine decisions impact the availability of care, hospital workforce and wait times, and the people around you," she said. "We're always going to be on the side of policies that help prevent epidemics."

DATA CENTERS ARE BOOMING ACROSS TEXAS

The Lone Star State is "ground zero" for the boom in data centers to meet growing demand, including a new joint venture between OpenAI, SoftBank and Oracle announced recently by President Trump. The Texas Standard reported 10 data centers are already under construction, with 10 more on the way. Each building will occupy half a million square feet.

"The demand for digital services continues to increase and continues to be necessary to build out our capabilities for the 21st century economy," said Dan Diorio, senior director of state policy at the Data Center Coalition, an industry trade group. "Texas is uniquely poised to benefit from that."

The expansion, along with population growth and more frequent extreme weather events, could stretch the capacity of the state's power grid. Officials with the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) predict power demand will nearly double by 2030. A growing number of crypto mining facilities is also contributing to the demand for more power.

The state had 279 data centers as of September, according to the state comptroller's office.

STATE'S POPULATION NOW SURPASSES 31 MILLION

For the past two years, Texas has gained an average of 1,542 residents each day, according to the Texas Demographic Center. The U.S. Census Bureau now estimates the state surpassed 31 million residents in 2024, driven largely by international migration.

For example, of those 1,542 new daily residents, 876 were from international migration, the report showed.

"These figures highlight the state's position as a key destination for global migrants, as well as its continued appeal to those relocating from other parts of the United States," according to the report.

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: g.borders@texaspress.com

THE POSTSCRIPT
By **Carrie Classon**

Not My Cake



My father and my niece have a wonderful tradition.

Born just 69 years and one week apart, they have celebrated their birthdays together for as long as my niece has had a birthday. Last night, we all went out to eat and then went to my sister's house to open presents and have birthday cake. I live just a few blocks from a wonderful Italian bakery. They make the best chocolate cake ever, so I offered to bring the cake.

Last year, my father turned 90 and my niece turned 21, and so I bought a single candle that said "21" on it and put in nine candles, and they blew them out together. But this year, with my father turning 91 and my niece 22, I could think of no simple means of representing these ages in candles—without burning my sister's house down.

I thought, as long as the bakery was writing "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" on the cake, they could just as easily write "HAPPY BIRTHDAYS!" followed by "22 & 91." Then I could put a single candle by each age and simplify the whole complicated (but mandatory) candle-blowing-out procedure.

So that's what I did. A nice young woman repeated the message back to me on the phone, and I headed out the next day to pick up the cake.

"Right here!" a young man who I had not seen working there before said.

"Could I have a quick look at it?" I asked.

I only asked because they put their cakes in sturdy boxes tied up with two lengths of strong ribbon and knot the ribbon at the top. It makes it easy to carry the heavy cake home, but there is no way of opening the box without scissors.

"Sure!" the young man said. The cake said, "HAPPY BIRTHDAY."

I knew the young woman had understood me, so I suspected this was not my cake. I told the young man that the ages should be on the cake, and he took the first cake back and went looking for my cake.

He was gone a very long time.

"Got it!" he finally said when he returned with another cake.

"Can I have a look at it?" I asked again. At this point, I was starting to feel like a bit of a nuisance, but the staff was as friendly as always, so I went around the counter and looked at the cake.

It said, "HAPPY BIRTHDAY 55."

"This is not my cake," I told the young man.

By now, the manager—or at least a more senior member of the staff—had taken an interest.

"Aren't you Karen Carlson?" the manager asked.

"No. I'm Carrie Classon." The two bakery employees looked at the cake.

"We gave someone the wrong cake," the young man announced.

By now, a young woman (I believe the one who took the order) was involved. She confirmed what the cake should have said, and the manager wrote it down on a piece of paper, and the young man disappeared into the back again.

"So sorry for the delay!" the manager said. After a long wait, a new cake appeared. "HAPPY BIRTHDAYS! 22 & 91!" it read.

They tied up the cake with very strong ribbon, and I walked home with my cake. And at least twice every block, I stopped to laugh out loud.

Because I knew Karen did not check her cake.

She had already taken that cake to someone who was going to get the most confusing birthday message they have had in all their 55 years.

Till next time,
Carrie

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Aldine FFA Show and Sale raises \$209,815,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

She raised pigs in her prior two years and this year serves as the secretary of the FFA club.

Donnae is also busy running track and a member of the dance team.

"I like to keep myself busy, so I have a busy schedule all the time," she said.

She's up around 5 a.m. every day, gets dressed, and gets to the barn to feed her steer. In the afternoon following her extracurricular and athletic commitments, she goes to the barn to walk her steer, feed him, and do some grooming.

"I'm there till about 8 p.m. every night," she said.

She's also taken the classes to become certified as a veterinarian assistant.

"I teach all the pre-vet classes at the high school," her uncle said, "and she can go to work immediately after graduation working in a vet's office."

Donnae has plans to attend either Texas A&M or Sam Houston

"I love animals and since it's been a family thing, I wanted to do it too," she said about getting into FFA.

For her uncle, it's a bit emotional and touching.

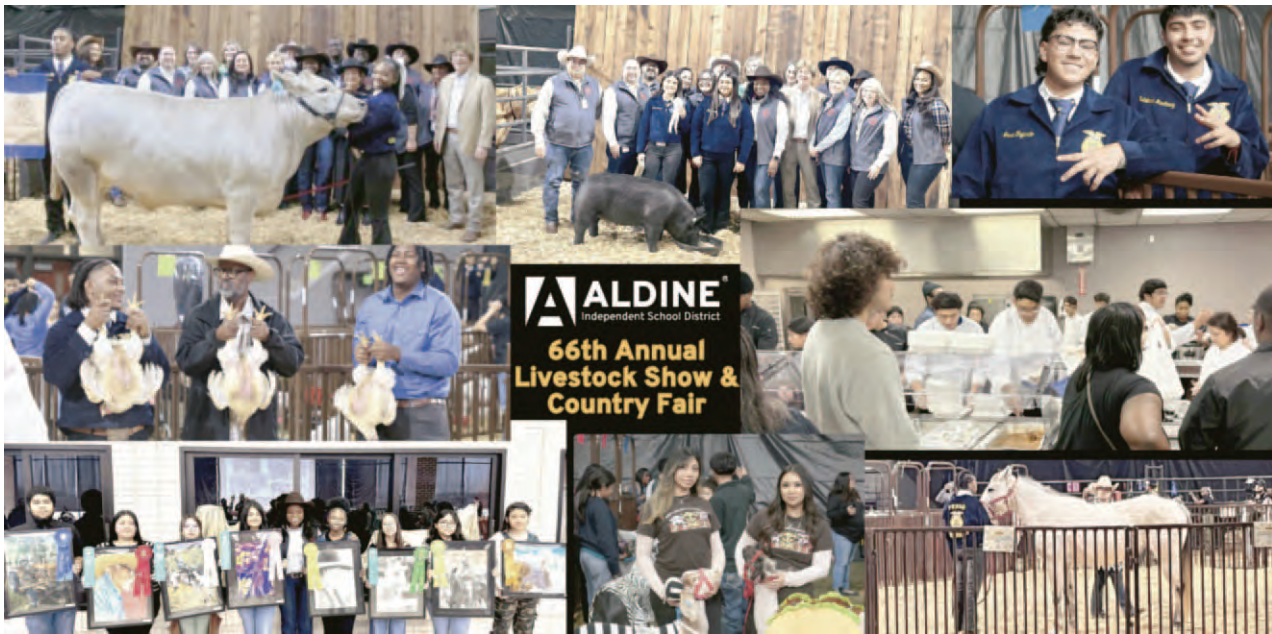
"Watching her grow into the woman that stands before me is humbling," he said. "A steer requires a lot of dedication. They actually have their project longer than any of the other kids."

Her uncle said they get their projects in June.

"When other kids are out of school and heading to the beach, she was in the barn breaking her steer, working with him and they're summer is tied up working with that steer," he said.

Donnae said she had zero days off.

"They depend on us ev-



The Grand Champion Goat, raised by Aniyah McDowell of Eisenhower High School, was purchased by the Optimist Buyer Group for \$4,000.



The Grand Champion Broilers, raised by Robert Allen of Eisenhower High School, were purchased by the Aldine Buyers Group for \$3,250.



Donnae Banks of Eisenhower High School raised the Grand Champion Steer, which the Superintendent's Group purchased for \$12,500.

liams of Eisenhower High School, was purchased by 1st Construction for \$4,000.

The Grand Champion Goat, raised by Aniyah McDowell of Eisenhower High School, was purchased by the Optimist Buyer Group for \$4,000. The Reserve Grand Champion Goat, raised by Julian Aguilera of Aldine High School, was purchased by the Aldine Buyers Group for \$3,250

The Grand Champion Lamb, raised by Robert Allen of Eisenhower High School, was purchased by Beasley Tires for \$3,750. The Reserve Grand Champion Lamb, raised by Bra'Shon Oliphant of Eisenhower High School, was purchased by Atlas Signs for \$2,500.

The Grand Champion Turkey, raised by Miguel Torres of Aldine High School, was purchased by the Superintendent's Group for \$5,000. The Reserve Grand Champion Turkey, raised by Jordan Williams of Eisenhower High School, was purchased by the Optimist Club for \$3,000.

The Grand Champion Broilers, raised by Robert Allen of Eisenhower High School, were purchased by the Aldine Buyers Group for \$3,250. The Reserve Grand Champion Broilers, raised by Xitlalli Padron of Eisenhower High School, was purchased by the Transformation Group for \$2,200.

The Grand Champion Artwork created by Javier Navarrete of Nimitz High School was purchased by Nimitz Vertical for \$5,000.

The Reserve Grand Champion Artwork created by Elia Pedraza of Carver High School was purchased by the Superintendent's Group for \$2,400.

ery day to feed them," she said. That would be around 26 pounds of feed per day. Fortunately, Mr. Gregory is her sponsor and that has helped with the cost of the feed.

Other winners included Katilyn Lincoln, Reserve Grand Champion Steer from Eisenhower High School. Hers was also sold for \$12,000 to Atlas Signs.

The Grand Champion Pig winner was raised by Carmella Espinoza of MacArthur High School and purchased by the Operations group for \$6,000. The Reserve Grand Champion Pig, raised by Jordan Wil-

New Texas laws that took effect on January 1st

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

With the Texas state legislature days away from gaveling in the 89th regular legislative session, the biggest fight on the floor the first day will be over the election of a new speaker. In the last biennium, the legislature drafted legislation that was signed by the governor and went into effect on Jan. 1, 2025. Only about four laws might directly affect local voters. Here they are:

Senate Bill 2 Property tax relief

Most of the law is already in effect with the exception of Sections 3.05, 3.08, and 3.15(b) which took effect on Jan. 1, 2025. Sections 4.02, 4.05, 4.08, 4.10, and 4.12 which take effect on Jan. 1, 2027.

This year, the Education Code will be amended to ensure school districts receive additional state funding to offset property tax revenue lost due to reduced tax increase limits for elderly or disabled homeowners.

In addition, the Education Code will now require the Texas Education Agency to post each school district's maximum compressed rate for the current and preceding tax year bringing light to taxation of taxpayers.

Section 3.15(b) repeals tax discounts that have already expired.

House Bill No. 4 Texas data privacy and security

Most of the law took effect on July 1, 2024, introducing new consumer data privacy regulations, by enhancing protections for Texans' personal information. The key provision of the bill took effect Jan. 1 which was the Business and Commerce Code.

What does it do? It gives consumers more power over their personal data with unified opt-out mechanisms for their personal online data process-



ing.

Consumers will be able to use their browser settings, device preferences, or extensions to automatically opt of targeted advertising, data sales and profiling without the need to interact individually with each business.

Consumers can confirm whether a business is processing their personal data and will be able to access their personal data, correct inaccuracies, delete personal data provided by or obtained about the consumer, and opt out of the processing of personal data for purposes of targeted advertising, the sale of personal data, or profiling.

Businesses will be required to respond to a consumer's request within 45 days after receipt and without delay. They can request and extension as long as they inform the consumer and provides a reason for the extension. If the business wishes to decline the consumer's request, they must provide justification and instructions on how to appeal the decision.

House Bill No. 3297 Eliminating state vehicle inspections

The law was passed in the 2023 legislature and took effect on Jan. 1, 2025.

The new legislation eliminates annual inspections for non-commercial drivers to get their vehicle registration with

a few exceptions that include Harris County.

Drivers will have to pay a nominal \$7.50 fee for the inspection program replacement when they get their registration.

The exceptions are for counties that will require non-commercial vehicles in Harris, Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, and Montgomery counties will include a vehicle emissions inspection and maintenance program. The law also affects drivers in Dallas-Fort Worth in Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker Rockwall, and Tarrant counties. It also includes Travis, Williamson, El Paso, and Bexar (2026) counties.

House Bill No. 4504 Streamlining criminal procedure

This bill is an ongoing effort to simplify legal rules in the state of Texas. There are small, technical updates to the Code of Criminal Procedure without changing the meaning of the laws.

These updates directly involve the duties of police officers, how they interact with the public, where cases can be tried, moving cases to a different location, rules for certain local courts, and clearing criminal records.

There are considerably more laws that don't directly affect taxpayers locally including the creation of several new judicial districts across the state.

Sen. Alvarado delivers on promise, files six bills to strengthen disaster response

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ble residents in dire straits.

Alvarado said the legislation is aimed at closing the gap between the haves and have-nots after disasters, when safe living conditions are too often a privilege.

Here's a brief summary of each of the six bills filed by Alvarado.

—SB 481 requires nursing homes and assisted living facilities to maintain emergency generators to power heating, cooling and emergency functions for at least 96 hours. In Harris County alone, 14 nursing homes and 30 assisted living facilities were without power for at least four days after Beryl struck, leaving residents exposed to extreme heat. This bill ensures facilities can maintain safe temperatures, properly store medications and operate essential medical equipment during extended outages.

—SB 482 protects utility workers by increasing penalties for assault during disasters – the same protections afforded to first responders. After Hurricane Beryl, thousands of line workers traveled from across the country to help restore power to millions of Texans. These essential workers must be protected from harassment and violence.

—SB 483 mandates that utility companies securely share customer contact information to promote timely communication during emergen-

cies. While millions struggled without power during Hurricane Beryl, many were unable to receive basic updates about outages affecting their homes. This bill enables direct emergency communications while implementing strict data security requirements and time limits on information retention.

—SB 484 requires warning labels on portable generators that do not include carbon monoxide safety shut off features. Portable generators are one of the most dangerous consumer products on the market. Carbon monoxide deaths spike predictably because of portable generators after every major power outage and this legislation ensures consumers are properly warned when the product lacks an essential safety feature.

—SB 485 creates clear duties of care for landlords serving senior citizens and Texans with disabilities. The bill establishes clear responsibilities for landlords during disasters, requiring them to take reasonable precautions to protect residents, prepare for hazardous conditions and ensure that staff are properly trained and available during emergencies. Additionally, landlords are prohibited from abandoning their complexes during disaster situations, emphasizing their obligation to remain present and accountable to their tenants.

—SB 486 increases criminal penalties for the abandonment of children,

seniors and disabled Texans during declared disasters. With rising rates of natural disasters, caretakers must be held accountable when they desert those in their care. This bill ensures that leaving vulnerable Texans behind during their time of greatest need carries serious consequences.

"These bills represent critical steps toward ensuring that all Texans have the protections and support they need when disasters strike," Alvarado said in a press release.

All bills must endure a seven-stage process: Stage 1, the bill is filed; Stage 2, the bill leaves out of the Senate committee; Stage 3, the bill receives a vote by the entire Senate and then heads to the House; Stage 4, the bill leaves the House Committee; Stage 5, the bill receives a vote by the House; Stage 6, if the bill survives, it then heads to the governor for his signature; and lastly, Stage 7, the bill becomes law.



CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Jeremiah (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. What's the finish to this Proverbs 14:23 verse: "In all labor there is ..."? Profit, Righteousness, Grace, Rewarding
3. At whose well did Jesus meet the Samaritan woman? Joshua's, Jonah's, Jacob's, Judas'
4. From Revelation 21, how many gates does the New

Jerusalem have? 1, 4, 12, 16
 5. Who was king during Zechariah's time of prophecy? David, Daniel, Darius, Saul
 6. How long did Aaron's followers mourn him? 3 days, 13 days, 30 days, 3 months

ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) Profit, 3) Jacob's, 4) Twelve, 5) Darius, 6) 30 days
 Comments? More Trivia? Gift ideas? Visit www.TriviaGuy.com.
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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

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Anya Taylor-Joy, left, and Miles Teller star in 'The Gorge.'

"Kinda Pregnant"

"KINDA PREGNANT" (R) — Rally your friends, get some snacks and adult beverages, then gather around for a proper girls' night with this hysterical comedy film out now on streaming. Starring Amy Schumer ("Unfrosted"), who also co-wrote the script, the film centers around Lainy, who's pretty much your average woman. And of course, it is sometimes natural for the average woman to experience jealousy after her best friend falls pregnant. What isn't natural, however, is a woman putting on a fake belly to appease her envy. But this is exactly what Lainy does, and as she soon finds out when she meets the man of her dreams, her fake belly might not have been the best approach. Jillian Bell ("Reunion"), Will Forte ("That '90s Show"), and Brianne Howey ("Ginny & Georgia") co-star. (Netflix)

"BRIDGET JONES: MAD ABOUT THE BOY" (R) — "Bridget Jones" is the film franchise that keeps on giving, with an astonishing 24 years between the release of the original film and the fourth installment, which will shortly be available to stream on Feb. 13. Renee Zellweger reprises her role as the titular character, who now navigates life as a single mom. With people around her eager to get her back in the saddle when it comes to dating, Bridget finally decides to try her hand at it when a younger man named Roxster (Leo Woodall) shoots his shot. Although she attempts to get enveloped by this new love interest, memories of her former husband still fill her mind, leaving her to crave a more secure and stable man who could be a better match. Guess we'll have to wait and see who Bridget Jones finally ends up with! Hugh Grant, Emma Thompson, and Colin Firth reprise their

roles from the previous films as well. (Peacock)

"THE GORGE" (PG-13) — Miles Teller took a break from acting after an exciting 2022 with the release of "Top Gun: Maverick." Now he's back ahead of his role as John Branca in the upcoming biopic "Michael," and he stars opposite Anya Taylor-Joy ("Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga") in this film that has a taste of many genres — sci-fi, horror, action, and a bit of romance! Out on Feb. 14, "The Gorge" follows two elite operatives named Levi (Teller) and Drasa (Taylor-Joy), who are tasked with guarding either side of a mysterious gorge. These two snipers must carry out their mission without contacting one another, but with the gorge being described as the "door to hell," they are forced to work together when the evil inside of the gorge finally emerges. (Apple TV+)

"Y O U ' R E CORDIALLY INVITED" (R) — The romantic comedies are in full supply this week! Starring two A-list actors Will Ferrell and Reese Witherspoon, this movie is reminiscent of others like "Shotgun Wedding" (2022), where viewers just know they're going to be taken on an unbelievably wild ride in a traditional wedding setting. Ferrell plays single father Jim, whose daughter plans to get married in a small inn; the catch is, Margot (Witherspoon) also booked the same inn on the same day for her sister and future brother-in-law. When the two parties show up on the same weekend, Jim and Margot start scrambling to figure out how to keep the peace. Lucky for us viewers, their plans backfire into buffoonery. Out now! (Amazon Prime)



Q: I really enjoyed the first two seasons of "The Recruit" on Netflix. It's hard to tell if there will be a third one. Will there be? — K.W.

A: It's too soon to tell, but after the first season of the spy-adventure series "The Recruit" debuted on Netflix, it was a big streaming success. The series stars Noah Centineo ("The Fosters") as a rookie CIA lawyer. His first assignment involved Russia, but the second season that premiered on Jan. 30 led him to Seoul, South Korea, where he's assigned to rescue the wife of a rogue NIS agent (Teo Yoo).

Showrunner Alexi Hawley, whose previous producing credits include "The Rookie," views Centineo's character, Owen, as "flawed, young and selfish." Hawley further explains that "even though Owen had no business getting involved [in the Korean assignment] in the first place, this presented an opportunity for him to prove his worth — not only to the CIA but to everyone he disappointed last season, including himself." The creative team really wanted to see him grow up this second time around and show that it's "not all fun and games — people get killed."

As far as a season three renewal, the show's fate isn't known yet. According to Forbes, Netflix typically analyzes a show's performance over several weeks to months before deciding. Unfortunately, the streamer has also developed a reputation for canceling shows too quickly after just one or two seasons, but hopefully with its strong initial numbers, "The Recruit" will be given the green light.

Q: When is the new "Outlander" spin-off coming out? Will it also be on Starz or somewhere else? — D.P.

A: "Outlander: Blood of My Blood" is a prequel series to "Outlander," which recently wrapped up its seventh season (the eighth will be its last) on Starz. The prequel will have 10 episodes in its debut season, but it won't premiere until this summer. It did, however, drop a teaser just ahead of the "Outlander" finale a couple weeks ago.

According to Entertainment Weekly, "Blood of My Blood" will tell the story of the parents of Jamie (Sam Heughan) and Claire (Caitriona Balfe), as well as their respective love stories in both 18th-century



Noah Centineo stars in "The Recruit" on Netflix.

Scotland and World-War-I-era England. Matthew B. Roberts, one of the co-showrunners behind "Outlander," will write and preside over the new series.

Q: What ever happened to Paula Patton? I remember she was married to Robin Thicke, but wasn't she also an actress? — M.M.

A: Paula Patton divorced her pop-star husband and high-school sweetheart Robin Thicke in 2015 and appears to be living a peaceful life if you follow her Instagram account. The terms of their divorce settlement are private, but she still does acting jobs to exercise her creativity and supplement her income.

Patton most recently guest-starred on the new drama "Murder in a Small Town," but before this, she starred in the BET+ original series "Sacrifice" as well as "Somewhere Between" on ABC. She and Thicke share a 14-year-old son named Julian.

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com, or write me at KFWS, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves

Comic strip 'Amber Waves' by Dave T. Phipps. Panel 1: 'OH, GREAT, HERE COMES HELEN TO DO HER DAILY LIST OF COMPLAINTS.' Panel 2: 'SHE NEVER HAS ANYTHING GOOD TO SAY, ALWAYS JUST CLUCKIN' AWAY.' Panel 3: 'LOUIS, THE HENHOUSE IS A CLUCKIN' MESS. I BLAME BETTY'S CLUCKIN' KIDS.' Panel 4: 'WHOA, KISS YOUR MOTHER WITH THAT MOUTH?'

Comic strip 'Tiger' by Bud Blake. Panel 1: 'MY POINT, HUGO. IT WAS OUT, TIGER.' Panel 2: 'MY POINT! ANY FOOL COULD SEE THAT!' Panel 3: 'WHO YOU CALLING A FOOL?' Panel 4: 'TIGER!' Panel 5: 'TIGER!' Panel 6: 'TIGER!' Panel 7: 'TIGER!' Panel 8: 'TIGER!' Panel 9: 'TIGER!' Panel 10: 'TIGER!' Panel 11: 'TIGER!' Panel 12: 'TIGER!' Panel 13: 'TIGER!' Panel 14: 'TIGER!' Panel 15: 'TIGER!' Panel 16: 'TIGER!' Panel 17: 'TIGER!' Panel 18: 'TIGER!' Panel 19: 'TIGER!' Panel 20: 'TIGER!' Panel 21: 'TIGER!' Panel 22: 'TIGER!' Panel 23: 'TIGER!' Panel 24: 'TIGER!' Panel 25: 'TIGER!' Panel 26: 'TIGER!' Panel 27: 'TIGER!' Panel 28: 'TIGER!' Panel 29: 'TIGER!' Panel 30: 'TIGER!' Panel 31: 'TIGER!' Panel 32: 'TIGER!' Panel 33: 'TIGER!' Panel 34: 'TIGER!' Panel 35: 'TIGER!' Panel 36: 'TIGER!' Panel 37: 'TIGER!' Panel 38: 'TIGER!' Panel 39: 'TIGER!' Panel 40: 'TIGER!' Panel 41: 'TIGER!' Panel 42: 'TIGER!' Panel 43: 'TIGER!' Panel 44: 'TIGER!' Panel 45: 'TIGER!' Panel 46: 'TIGER!' Panel 47: 'TIGER!' Panel 48: 'TIGER!' Panel 49: 'TIGER!' Panel 50: 'TIGER!' Panel 51: 'TIGER!'

Comic strip 'The Spats' by Jeff Pickering. Panel 1: 'NEVER WRESTLE A DINOSAUR.' Panel 2: 'WHY NOT??' Panel 3: 'YOU'LL GET JURASS-KICKED!!'

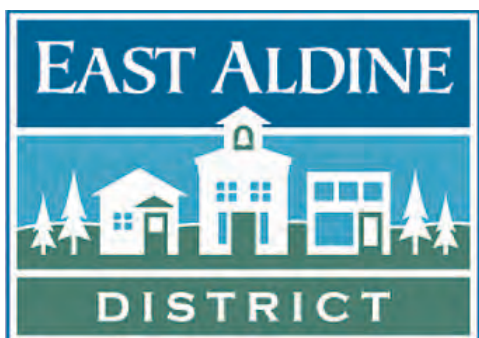
Weekly SUDOKU puzzle with difficulty level 'Moderate' and 'Challenging'.

HOCUS-FOCUS puzzle by Henry Boltinoff. Two panels of a waiter and a customer at a diner. Find at least six differences in details between panels.

February 10, 2025 Posting Date King Crossword

King Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez with 10 questions on geography, television, literature, U.S. states, astronomy, movies, ad slogans, language, science, and general knowledge.



Coming Events in East Aldine

By Monica Campos, Marketing Manager

We are thrilled to share our resources and events happening for the community this month. Join us at our committee meetings and our Board of Directors meeting. Express your community concerns, connect with us, and provide your feedback.

We're excited to join our partners at Baker Ripley for their V-Day Flower Sale and their Black History Month Celebration! Including celebrating President's Day with Bonding Against Adversity at our JFK monument. Attached are flyers for events for more information.

It's all about healthy living at our Revitalizing East Aldine Community Health committee meeting. We will meet to discuss health initiatives and events for 2025, for more information email events@aldinedistrict.org. Also, don't miss out on joining the challenge with High Meadows Branch Library to learn how to eat healthier, save money, and get more active. Register for this FREE class now!

Networking, lunch, and learning! Join us and the Greater Northside Chamber for our FREE Small Business Series and let's talk tax updates and building connections. Register here: AldineDistrict.org/RSVP

In case you missed our eNews Distribution we invite you to subscribe and stay connected at AldineDistrict.org/Subscribe

Should you have any questions, please reach out to me.

Estamos encantados de compartir nuestros recursos y eventos que están sucediendo para la comunidad este mes. Acompañenos en nuestras reuniones para

los comités y la Junta Directiva. Expres sus preocupaciones de la comunidad, conéctese con nosotros y comparte sus comentarios.

¡Estamos muy contentos de unirnos a nuestros socios en Baker Ripley para su venta de flores del día de San Valentín y su Celebración del Mes de la Historia AfroAmericana! Incluyendo la Celebración del Día del Presidente con Bonding Against Adversity en nuestro monumento JFK. Vea los folletos de eventos para más información.

Se trata de una vida saludable en nuestra reunión del comité de Revitalización de la salud comunitaria de East Aldine o R.E.A.C.H. por sus siglas en inglés. Nos reuniremos para discutir iniciativas y eventos de salud para 2025, para obtener más información, envíe un correo electrónico a events@aldinedistrict.org. Además, no se pierda la oportunidad de unirse al desafío con la Biblioteca de High Meadows para aprender a comer de manera más saludable, ahorrar dinero y ser más activo. ¡Regístrese para esta clase GRATIS hoy!

Únase a nosotros y el Greater Northside Chamber para nuestra serie para negocios GRATIS. Una oportunidad de networking, amplía tu red de contactos profesionales y habrá comida gratis. Regístrese aquí: AldineDistrict.org/RSVP

En caso de que te hayas perdido nuestra distribución de noticias electrónicas, te invitamos a suscribirte y mantengase conectado en AldineDistrict.org/Subscribe

Si tienes alguna pregunta, comunícate conmigo.

Respectfully,
Monica Campos

Marketing Manager
East Aldine District



PRESIDENTS DAY CELEBRATION



ART EXHIBIT
FEBRUARY 17, 2025
4:30 PM - 6:00 PM

JOHN F KENNEDY STATUE
14550 JOHN F KENNEDY BLVD,
HOUSTON, TX 77032
(NEAR SUNOCO GAS STATION)

MUSIC BY VICTOR RAYMOND
CAKE AND BEVERAGES WILL BE PROVIDED

BONDING AGAINST ADVERSITY, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is Recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Legal Access Programs

WWW.BAATEXAS.ORG



HD140 Legislative Town Hall with State Rep. Armando Walle

Thursday February 13, 2025
6:00pm to 8:00 pm

BakerRipley East Aldine Campus
Reunion Hall
3000 Aldine Mail Route Road
Houston, TX. 77039

Join Rep. Walle to discuss
legislation aimed at addressing
community concerns regarding
Concrete Batch Plants



PRECINCT 2 REIMAGINE ALDINE MAIL ROUTE PLANNING MEETING TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH - PUBLIC INVITED

We're excited to invite you to our upcoming stakeholder meeting for Reimagine Aldine Mail Rt! This is an opportunity to share your thoughts and ideas about the future of Aldine Mail Rt.

With your guidance we can reimagine it as a safe and vibrant street that reflects the values and stories of our community.

Meeting Details:
Date: February 18th, 2025
Time: 1pm - 3pm
Location: 2909 East Aldine Amphitheatre Dr. Houston Tx. 77039

If you have any specific topics or ideas you would like to discuss, feel free to share them in your response. Thank you for your commitment to our community. We look forward to your participation!

Many Blessings,
Carmen Aguilar
Community Relations Liaison

Harris County Precinct 2

REIMAGINE Corridor Studies

Scan to view map
and find a project
near your
community.

Part of Revive2Thrive

Reimagine Corridor Studies aim to revitalize Harris County Precinct 2's streets for safety and vibrancy. Through community engagement and partnerships, we prioritize safety, integrate community input, and align with Vision Zero's goal of zero traffic-related fatalities and injuries by 2030.

About Revive2Thrive

Revive2Thrive is Commissioner Garcia's community initiative focused on making Harris County Precinct 2 the best place to live, work, and play. The goal is to invest in improving infrastructure, creating economic opportunities, and enhancing residents' overall quality of life.

Our Approach

These projects follow a three-step process.



Listen

Engage and listen to the community. We do this by having in-person meetings with key stakeholders, community meetings, and online surveys.



Report

Our team gathers feedback, reports options and presents tradeoffs back to the community.



Finalize

The preferred option is finalized and presented for further feedback.



SCAN here



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hcp2.com

