

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- New Sam Houston Boat . 2
- Top 12 Wine Club 2
- AISD School News 3
- OP-ED ACA Subsidies 4
- CapHi SNAP Subsidies 4
- Keeney's Korner 1, 5
- HS Football Scores/ Schedules 5
- Holiday Gifts 6
- LSC Be The One 8
- Food Bank Distribution .. 8

NORTHEAST NEWS



Flor Zarzoza and Ruben Salazar get into the Spirit of the Fall Festival. See Story and photos below.

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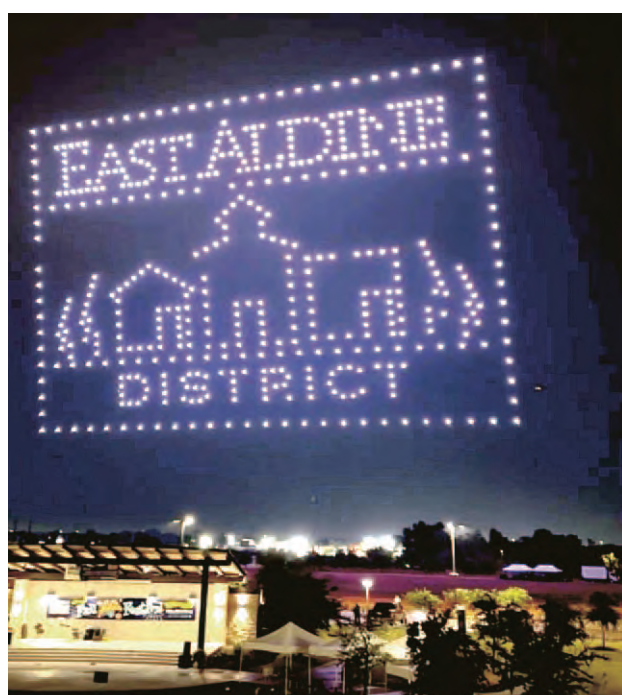
Awesome Drone Show at Fall Festival

Crowds attend East Aldine District Dia De Los Muertos Event

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

The annual Día de los Muertos Fall Festival at the East Aldine District Town Center brought together culture, community, and innovation in a celebration that culminated with a breathtaking drone show, leaving attendees in awe and marking a new tradition for the district.

As dusk settled over the festival grounds, the sky became a canvas for 500 synchronized drones, each programmed to tell a story through light and movement. The show began with three floating butterflies, symbolizing transformation and remembrance,



The East Aldine District Logo displayed at the DDLM Fall Festival



A Memorial Altar as part of the Dia De Los Muertos at East Aldine Festival



Congresswomen Garcia at DDLM



Drone Art

before morphing into a Dia De Los Muertos skeleton adorned with a hat a nod to the holiday's iconic imagery. Spectators watched as a moving dragon rotated into a skeleton mask, followed by a folkloric dancer with a vibrant dress spread wide, celebrating the region's rich heritage.

Seconds later, the drones reformed into a hand holding a rose, which was released into the sky, evoking the act of honoring loved ones. The spectacle continued with a glowing guitar surrounded by musical notes, three large candles with lush green-

Continued. See DIA DE LOS MUERTOS & DRONE SHOW, Page 8

NEWS NOTES

Toys in Da Hood Car Show & Toy Drive Nov. 8

CAR SHOW & TOY DRIVE
NOVEMBER 8
10th Annual TOYS IN DA HOOD
Location: East Aldine Amphitheater Address: 2909 East Aldine Amphitheater Dr.
Set Up: 9 AM - Noon Show: Noon - 4 PM
Activities & Features: - Sound Off Competition - Moonwalk - Vendors - Raffles - Food, DJ & More
Sponsors: - Bayou City K-T-H Houston, TX - GS Customs - East Aldine District
Contacts: - Gil: 713-928-0756 - Kidd: 281-891-0936
All entries welcomed

Congresswoman Garcia hosts telephone Town Hall

From community reports

Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia held a telephone town hall meeting this week, inviting constituents from Houston and surrounding areas to discuss pressing issues related to the ongoing government shutdown and the healthcare crisis. The live, interactive event allowed residents to ask questions directly and share their concerns about the impact of federal budget decisions on local families.

Focus on Healthcare and Budget Uncertainty

Opening the call, Congresswoman Garcia emphasized the importance of affordable healthcare and the urgency of resolving the government shutdown.

We need a spending deal that keeps health care affordable, not one that drives up costs for families and seniors, Garcia said. She highlighted that tax credits under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) are set to expire at the end of the year, warning that if Congress does not act, treatments will double, and in some cases triple for millions of Americans.



Garcia noted the local impact, saying, "Here in Texas 29, my district, that means that 111,000 of our neighbors will pay hundreds or even thousands more for next year. A family of four earning \$64,000 will pay about \$2,600 more for the same coverage. This will make it unaffordable, and people will not get their coverage."

Constituents Voice Concerns

Throughout the event, constituents raised questions about how the shutdown and proposed budget cuts might affect their daily lives. Deborah from Channelview asked about the future of school lunch programs and food assistance.

Texas has already announced that they don't have enough money to continue the SNAP program, which means there would be no more cards put in the mail. In terms of the school lunch programs, some of those were eliminated by the Department of Agriculture and every program theoretically expires

Continued. See GARCIA TOWN HALL, Page 5

Aldine HS Student Heads to Bull Riding Nationals

Pedro Loera, an FFA student at Aldine High School, is preparing to compete in bull riding on October 31 as a member of Team El Imperio 14. With seven years of experience, Loera is continuing a family legacy started by his father, a former bull rider who has always been his biggest inspiration.

"I always wanted to try it after seeing my dad's bull riding pictures," Loera shared. "That motivated me not to give up on the dream little me had — to one day become a world champion."

Loera's relentless dedication to the sport is complemented by his impressive academic performance, as he maintains a strong 3.4 GPA at Aldine High School. After grad-



Pedro Loera riding a Bull in a recent competition

uation, he is set on continuing his rodeo career while confidently pursuing his dream of launching his own business.

Through years of competition, Loera has experi-

enced both triumphs and challenges. "Some of the best moments are when I've had the chance to ride next to my dad, and we

Continued. See ALDINE HS BULL RIDER, Page 2

FOOTBALL SEASON WEEK 11: AISD teams close out district schedule: Texans host Jags with hopes of remaining in the Hunt

Aldine ISD's five varsity football programs will close out their District 14-6A schedules this weekend, and there's a very good chance that three AISD teams are in solid position to earn playoff berths.

Nimitz is assured of a third straight post-season berth, while Davis looks good to make it two playoff appearances in a row, and Eisenhower is positioned to earn the league's final playoff berth.

The final weekend of the district season will have Aldine playing at Spring on Thursday night, while Nimitz hosts Dekaney on the same evening. Eisenhower has the toughest final game of the league season as they will head to Spring to take on



KEENEY'S KORNER

By MIKE KEENEY

eventual 14-6A winner Westfield on Friday. Also on Friday, Davis will face MacArthur.

This will be the final week we will be picking high school games as the upcoming playoff schedule will be unknown from one week to another.

That means we will focus on the college and NFL schedule for the remainder of the season starting with next week's column.

There are a number of in-

teresting games on the college schedule this weekend, as No. 2-ranked Indiana visits a reeling Penn State team, which would like nothing more than to pull off the upset to make its season. The Nittany Lions started the season ranked No. 2 in the country, but four straight losses have left PSU scrambling for a minor bowl and

Continued. See KEENEY'S KORNER, Page 5

NORTHEAST NEWS - Send News Tips and Ad Inquiries to 713-266-3444 or nenewsroom@aol.com

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Say 'Bon Voyage' to The Iconic Sam Houston Tour Boat

By David Taylor
Managing Editor

Cue the confetti and prepare for fond farewells: Port Houston's beloved tour vessel, the M/V Sam Houston, is celebrating its 67th birthday and preparing to retire in 2026. Since her first voyage on July 30, 1958, the Sam Houston has been more than just a tour boat—she's become a living symbol of Houston's rich maritime heritage.

As the Sam Houston approaches her final season, Port Houston is honoring her legendary service with a public storytelling campaign, inviting Houstonians to share their memories and experiences aboard the iconic vessel.

Over the decades, the Sam Houston has welcomed more than two million passengers, including out-of-town visitors, local students, royalty, celebrities, political leaders, and astronauts. Each guest has had the chance to experience the pride and backbone of Houston—the Houston Ship Channel—up close.



"The Sam Houston is more than just a boat; she's a symbol of Port Houston's legacy, hospitality, and connection to the community," said Charlie Jenkins, CEO of Port Houston. "For 67 years, she's offered a front-row seat to the heart of maritime operations, helping guests understand the vital role our port plays in regional prosperity and global trade. As we celebrate

her final season, we also reflect on the impact she's made and the stories that will live on well after her last voyage."

Looking to the future, Port Houston has announced plans to build a new tour vessel. The new boat will expand maritime education outreach, better accommodate guests with restricted mobility, and reinforce the port's commitment to environmental sus-

tainability and carbon neutrality. The new vessel is expected to launch its maiden voyage within the next 12 to 14 months.

At 95 feet long and with a capacity of 100 passengers, the Sam Houston has been the backdrop for countless inspiring and uplifting stories. Families have enjoyed rewarding daytime outings, and the boat has even played

Cupid, sparking love stories that began on her decks and sailed into happily ever after.

"The Sam Houston has launched adventures, sparked lifelong friendships, and captured the spirit of our maritime community and our city," said Maria Aguirre, director of community relations. "As we mark nearly 70 years of memories, we're inviting everyone to share their favorite moments."

Port Houston encourages anyone with a special memory of the Sam Houston to send their stories—written, video, or audio—to communityrelations@porthouston.com. These memories will be compiled and shared through Port Houston's social channels as the Sam Houston approaches her well-earned retirement in 2026.

"While we don't yet have a specific date for the M/V Sam Houston retirement, it is expected to be in Q2 or Q3 of 2026, and the new vessel would begin tours at that time," said spokesperson Christine Abbruscato. Until then, guests can continue to make reservations on the 1st

of the month for the following month, and more info can be found at: <https://porthouston.com/community/tours/sam-houston-boat-tour/>.

The new vessel doesn't yet have a name, but it will be hybrid-electric, aligning with Port Houston's sustainability goals. The capacity will be larger, and it will better serve guests with restricted mobility. The Port Commission approved this purchase at its March 2025 meeting at an amount just under \$7 million, with funds sourced from Port Houston operations.

The current M/V Sam Houston holds 90-100 people, and the new ship will hold 150. While there are no plans for a merchandise store on the new vessel, guests can expect soda, water, and a light snack to be served onboard.

As the Sam Houston prepares to sail into retirement, Port Houston invites the community to celebrate nearly seven decades of memories and look forward to a new chapter in Houston's maritime story.

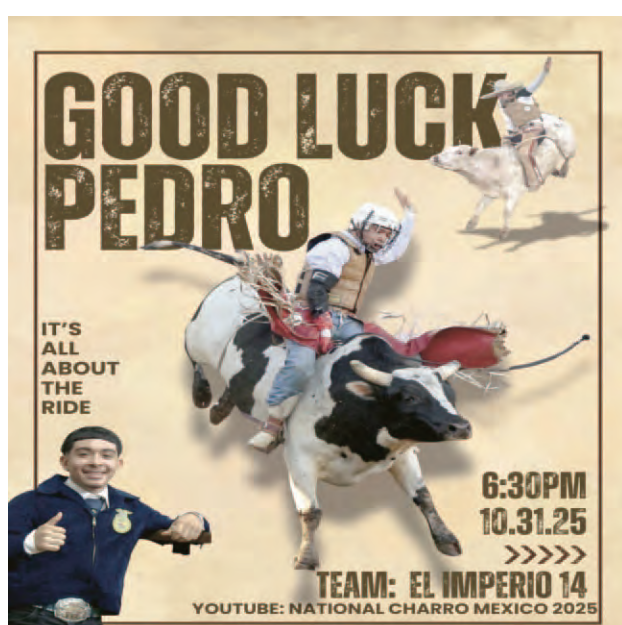
Aldine HS Student Heads to Bull Riding Nationals

Continued from Page 1

both won our category," he said. "But the hard part is dealing with injuries. Bull riding has a lot of ups and downs — one day you can ride, and the next day you can get bucked off in two seconds. You just have to keep your head up and get ready for the next one."

In addition to American bull riding, Loera also competes in Mexican bull riding, which is part of Charrería, the national sport of Mexico. His pride in his culture and sport shines as he prepares for the Nacional Charro 2025 in Aguascalientes, Mexico, a meaningful milestone in his four years of competing.

"This year is special because it's the first time my team has qualified for the Nacional," Loera said. "We'll be competing with



the best from Mexico and the U.S., so it's another dream come true." Aldine FFA proudly congratulates Pedro on his outstanding achievements and fully supports him as he represents Aldine High School,

his team, and his heritage on the national stage. The Aldine FFA stands firmly behind him and looks forward to cheering him on while watching the event on the Federación de Charrería YouTube channel.

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HIGH MEADOWS LIBRARY NEWS

Pathway to Citizenship | Camino a la Ciudadanía
Wednesday, November 05, 11:30am-12:30pm
Description
Join us for a free, 12-week class to help you prepare for your naturalization interview and civics test. An English assessment must be taken for class admittance. Taking this class does not grant citizenship or pay for any application fees. Registration is required as space is limited.
Únase a nosotros en un curso gratuito de 12 semanas para ayudarle a prepararse para su entrevista de naturalización y examen de educación cívica. Es necesario realizar una evaluación de inglés para ser admitido. Este curso no otorga la ciudadanía ni cubre ninguna tarifa de solicitud. Es necesario inscribirse, ya que el cupo es limitado.

College and Career Assistance | Asistencia Universitaria y Profesional
Wednesday, November 05, 12:00pm-6:00pm
Description
Connect with a Future U advisor! Discover the college and career resources around you.
Get help with:
Resume & cover letters
FAFSA application
Free resources for career development
To make an appointment, please call. Virtual appointments are also available.
FutureU Appointment
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Para programar una cita, haz clic en el enlace de abajo o llama. También ofrecemos citas virtuales.

ESL intermedio | Intermediate ESL
Wednesday, November 05, 1:00pm-2:00pm
Description
Are you ready to learn more English? Join this 8-week class! Register in person at High Meadows Branch Library. Register on one of our August Registration Sessions. Classes are every Wednesday from 1-2pm starting September 10th and ending November 19th.

Toon Cafe
Wednesday, November 05, 3:00pm-5:00pm
Description
Lights, laughter, and classic cartoons! Calling all teens—come hang out at the library for a special cartoon
Bring your own favorite snacks to enjoy while you watch and get ready for a fun-filled break with non-stop cartoon comedy. If you love animation and humor, this is the perfect event for you!
Krafty Kids
Wednesday, November 05, 3:30pm-4:30pm
Description

Krafty Kids is a magical space where children can unleash their creativity through various art activities, from painting to sculpting. With a wide range of supplies and guided sessions, kids can explore their talents and create take-home masterpieces. Join us every Wednesday at 3:30 PM for an enriching creative journey!

Aventuras En Lecturas/ Adventures In Reading
Wednesday, November 05, 5:00pm-5:30pm
Description
Join us for our bilingual Storytime! Every week, new story themes like Robots, Superheroes, Dragons, and more! Also, play some instruments with us and play interactive games between the tales. ¡Acompáñanos en nuestra hora del cuento bilingüe! Cada semana, nuevos temas como robots, superhéroes, dragones y mucho más. Además, toca algunos instrumentos con nosotros y participa en juegos interactivos entre cuento y cuento.

Teen Lounge
Thursday, November 06, 3:30pm-5:00pm
Description
Calling all teens and tweens! This is your space to relax and unwind. Draw and color, play some games, do a craft, or hang out with your friends—the possibilities are endless! No registration is required. This event is open to ages 12 to 18.

AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS

Para los Niños: Show What You Know!
Wednesday, November 05, 11:00am-12:30pm
Be a scientist for the day! Have your kids join us and become scientists for the day. They will learn how to collect information and interpret findings the same way scientists do in a safe and environment. Parents let's work together to Teach Together STEM(Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). The program includes fun bilingual activities developed by the Children's Museum of Houston! Activities include Animal Hatchlings, Dr. Vet and Catapult! Children's Museum Family passes given to participating families.
¡Sé un científico para el día! Invítalos a sus hijos a unirse a nosotros y conviértanse en científicos por un día. Aprenderán a recoger información e interpretar sus descubrimientos como lo hacen los científicos, en un ambiente seguro y divertido. Padres, trabajemos juntos para enseñar juntos STEM (Ciencia, Tecnología, Ingeniería y Matemáticas). El programa incluye actividades divertidas bilingües desarrolladas por el Museo Infantil de Houston. Entre las actividades se incluyen Crías de Animales, Dr. Veterinario y Catapulta. Se entregarán pases familiares para el Museo Infantil a las familias participantes.

Beginners Conversational English Class
Wednesday, November 05, 2:00pm-3:00pm
Description
Beginning November 3rd, 2025 join us weekly on Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:00PM to 3:00PM to practice speaking English with other students. You can register for this class October 21, 22, 23 from 12pm - 1:30pm.

Comenzando el 3 de noviembre 2025 tenemos una clase de inglés conversacional cada lunes y miércoles a las 2:00 de la tarde. En esta clase puede practicar el inglés platicando con otros estudiantes. La inscripción para esta clase será en octubre 21, 22, 23.
Tween Spark: Perler Beads
Wednesday, November 05, 4:30pm-5:30pm
Description
Make fun 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

ESL - Beginner
Thursday, November 06, 1:00pm-2:00pm
Description
Are you looking for a way to improve your English skills? ESL Classes are underway at the Aldine Branch Library. The Aldine Branch Library will be offering:
Beginning ESL introduction (in-person)
We will meet twice a week Tuesdays and Thursdays starting October 28th, 2025 - December 4th from 1pm - 2pm
These courses are free of charge.
To register for class visit us October 21-23 from 12pm - 1:30pm a pre assessment test is required. Our Literacy Coordinator will help determine the right class for you.
Estas buscando una manera de mejorar tu inglés?
La Biblioteca de Aldine estará ofreciendo:
Clases de Inglés (en persona)
Empezando el 28 de octubre nos veremos dos veces por semana los Martes y los Jueves a las 1pm-2pm y terminaran 4 de diciembre, 2025.
Para inscribirse en la clase visítanos el 21-23 de octubre de 12pm - 1:30pm se requiere una prueba de evaluación previa. Nuestro coordinador lo ayudará a determinar la clase adecuada para usted.

Homework Help/Ayuda con Tarea
Thursday, November 06, 5:30pm-6:30pm
Description
Looking for homework help? Come on in to your local library to find the resources you need for success! Aldine Library will offer a quiet space for teens and kids on Thursdays @ 5:30 PM. Librarians will be on hand to provide assistance.
Harris County Public Library offers a variety of free resources, including computers, printers, and access to special research websites available with your library card.
Note: Librarians will not do the homework nor can we guarantee any grades; this program is here to offer assistance answering questions.
¿Necesitas ayuda con las tareas? ¡Ven a tu biblioteca local y encuentra los recursos que necesitas para triunfar! La Biblioteca Aldine ofrecerá un espacio tranquilo para adolescentes y niños los jueves a las 5:30 p. m. Los bibliotecarios estarán disponibles para brindar asistencia.
La Biblioteca Pública del Condado de Harris ofrece una variedad de recursos gratuitos, incluyendo computadoras, impresoras y acceso a sitios web especiales de investigación disponibles con tu tarjeta de biblioteca.
Nota: Los bibliotecarios no harán los deberes ni pueden garantizar ninguna calificación; este programa está aquí para ofrecer ayuda respondiendo preguntas.
Bert Barron
Adult Program Specialist
Aldine Branch Library
11331 Airline Dr.
Houston, TX 77037
Phone: 832-927-5410

SCHOOL NEWS PAGE

Aldine Votes: Empowering Students to Lead Change



In a classroom at Davis High School, a group of students gathers around a voter-registration poster. They aren't just learning about elections — they're learning about power, voice, and what it means to take part in democracy.

Through Aldine Votes, a districtwide civic-engagement initiative, students across Aldine ISD are discovering that participation starts long before the ballot box.

"Knowledge is power," said Daniel Meza, Aldine's civic engagement specialist. "Understanding how systems work — and how they affect us — is vital for our community to progress. Even if students can't vote yet, they can still share valuable perspectives that deserve to be heard."

A Movement Rooted in Empowerment



Aldine Votes began with support from a Houston Endowment grant and a clear mission: strengthen civic participation through education and community outreach.

"Our community is often overlooked," Meza said. "We're here to make sure our voices are heard. By fostering civic engagement and empowerment, we're creating a space where Aldine can actively participate and make a difference."

The program's focus is not political but deeply personal — helping students understand their role in shaping schools, neighborhoods, and the future of their community.

Learning by Doing



Through workshops, field trips, and on-campus civic-engagement clubs, Aldine Votes turns civic learning into hands-on experience. Students discuss issues that affect their lives, meet with elected officials, and visit the Texas Capitol to see government in action.

"Legislative visits have been especially powerful," Meza said. "Students get to meet their representatives, ask questions, and offer solutions. It shows them that they belong in rooms where youth voices are often left out."

Workshops and campus events give students opportunities to practice public speaking, teamwork, and advocacy.

"These spaces are intentionally created for them — and often led by them," Meza said. "They build confidence and remind students that change doesn't always come from being the loudest, but from being consistent and informed."

The Ripple Effect

Since launching, Aldine Votes has inspired new energy around civic engagement. Students have started passion projects, pursued internships, and even shifted their career goals toward public service and policy.

Teachers and families have noticed the difference. "Community members appreciate the district taking the lead in informing and empowering students," Meza said. "They see it as a breath of fresh air — a nonpartisan effort to help everyone learn, participate, and grow."

The impact goes beyond classrooms, helping students and parents alike see civic participation as a lifelong responsibility — not just something that happens on Election Day.

Beyond the Ballot

For Meza, "exercising your voice" means showing up — not only at the polls but in everyday life.

"The youth vote is the largest but also the most dormant," he said. "We want students to take the lead in changing that reality."

Aldine Votes encourages students to find their own ways to participate — volunteering, leading discussions, or helping peers register once they turn 18.

"Everyone's voice matters," Meza said. "Leadership doesn't always mean being in the spotlight. You can make a difference simply by learning, sharing what you know, and helping your community grow."

Aldine's Next Generation of Leaders

As Aldine Votes continues to expand, its mission remains the same: to prepare students to become informed, engaged citizens who lead with purpose.



"We hope they leave with a sense of belonging, confidence, and voice," Meza said. "Whatever path they take, those skills will stay with them for life."

Through Aldine Votes, civic education in Aldine ISD isn't just about learning how democracy works — it's about living it.

High-Quality Instructional Materials Are Transforming Teaching and Learning in Aldine ISD

In a fifth-grade classroom at Anderson Academy, a small group of students leans over a passage from A Midsummer Night's Dream. Their teacher asks, "What do you think Shakespeare meant here?" Hands go up. Ideas fly.

Just a few years ago, lessons like this — rooted in complex texts and rich discussion — were rare. Today, they're part of everyday learning in Aldine ISD classrooms.

The change traces back to one simple idea: give teachers and students the right tools, and they can do extraordinary things.

What Are HQIM?



Dr. Faviola Cantu, Chief Academic Officer.



HQIM stands for High-Quality Instructional Materials — ready-to-teach lessons, texts, and resources designed by experts and aligned with state standards. Instead of every teacher searching online for materials, HQIM provides a shared foundation: lessons that build knowledge, vocabulary, and skills in a coherent, grade-by-grade sequence.

"HQIM lets teachers spend less time searching for materials and more time perfecting instruction," said Dr. Faviola Cantú, chief academic officer. "Everything's aligned, on grade level, and intentionally sequenced so students revisit standards over time."

Jacqueline Beas, executive director of literacy and social studies, said that clarity has freed teachers to focus on what matters most — student thinking.

"HQIM ensures all students have access to rigorous, knowledge-rich texts that build understanding and critical thinking," she said.

A Shift Toward Equity

When Aldine first adopted HQIM in literacy, it wasn't just about resources — it was about opportunity.

"Before HQIM, students might have little context about topics like the Renaissance," Cantú said. "Now, we intentionally build that knowledge first — so every child, regardless of background, can access complex texts and engage in meaningful discussion."

Beas puts it more simply:

"It's really hard to think critically about something you don't know. HQIM makes sure all students start from a place of knowledge, not disadvantage."

That commitment to equity has changed the rhythm of instruction districtwide. In every classroom, from bilingual kindergarten to middle-school ELA, students are building background knowledge and connecting ideas across units.

Teachers, Coaching, and Results

Five years into implementation, the impact is visible in both classrooms and data.

Aldine ISD recorded the largest reading gains among large Texas districts in 2025 — a seven-point jump districtwide on the STAAR assessment.

The Texas Education Agency's accountability ratings echoed that success: Aldine's overall score climbed from 63 in 2023 to 73 in 2025, one of the state's biggest improvements. The number of F-rated campuses dropped from 23 to just four.

Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney credited the gains to teacher excellence and the structures supporting them.



"One of the proudest moments of this school year came when we announced that Aldine leads the state in reading gains," Goffney said. "It's a testament to our teachers' dedication, our instructional coaches' expertise, and our innovative use of technology to personalize learning."

Teaching, Not Just Planning

At the heart of HQIM's success is professional learning that focuses on internalization rather than creation.

"Instructional excellence is our standard," Beas said. "HQIM sits at the center of our system — it's what teachers use, what coaches model, and what we refine through professional learning."

Cantú described it as a three-step process: prepare for instruction through curriculum-based training, monitor and support through walkthroughs, and adjust instruction based on data.

"It's not lesson planning anymore — it's lesson internalization," Beas said. "Teachers rehearse, reflect, and refine their delivery so the focus stays on student thinking."

Innovation and Biliteracy



In a district where nearly half of students are emergent bilingual learners, HQIM has also opened new doors.

"Because Aldine is a biliteracy district, we built an integrated curriculum that exists in both English and Spanish," Cantú said. "That doesn't exist anywhere else."

That innovation has made Aldine a statewide model — pairing HQIM with coaching and AI-powered supports like Coursemojo to give students real-time feedback and teachers deeper insight.

A Culture of Belief

Implementing HQIM meant rethinking what students were capable of.

"We had to believe our kids could do hard things," Cantú said. "When people saw fifth-graders discussing Don Quixote and A Midsummer Night's Dream, the results spoke for themselves."

Goffney agrees:

"Our teachers continue to show what's possible when we combine heart, hard work, and high-quality instructional materials," she said. "When students feel that sense of belonging, they thrive."

Looking Ahead



said, "it's about building thinkers through literacy and math — every student, every day."

Today, HQIM has become more than a set of materials — it's part of Aldine's identity.


"Now our teachers are all in," Cantú said. "They see the big picture. For new teachers, HQIM gives them a strong starting point and a community to learn from."

For Aldine, the work continues — but so does the belief that with the right tools, guidance, and trust, every student can rise.

"Ultimately," Cantú

OPINION PAGE

OPINION
By **BILL KING**



Extending the ACA Subsidies

Over the last week, the decision on whether to extend the enhanced ACA subsidies has increasingly become the defining issue of the shutdown. It is an issue that is fracturing the Republican Party and threatening to derail their midterm election prospects.

Unpacking the numbers-

From the outset, the Affordable Care Act subsidized the purchase of health insurance by some lower-income Americans on the health insurance exchanges. The subsidy was based on a sliding scale that set a maximum a person would pay as a percentage of their income. The ceiling for the subsidy originally was 400% of the federal poverty level (FPL). Today, that is about \$60,000 for an individual, a little over \$80,000 for a couple, and \$124,000 for a family of four. Anyone who exceeded that ceiling got no subsidy when purchasing their insurance.

For those below that ceiling, the government would pick up the cost of the insurance that was above a percentage of the person's income. That ranged from just over 2% to almost 10%. According to CMS Marketplace data, the subsidy typically covered 75-85% of the premiums for this group. Before the expansion, nearly 9 million Americans received the subsidy, and they accounted for over three-quarters of all Marketplace enrollment. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the subsidy was costing the federal government about \$50 billion annually.

During the pandemic, Congress expanded the eligibility criteria for the subsidy by eliminating the income limits. But the expansion was only temporary, scheduled to expire at the end of 2025. Since the expansion was adopted during the pandemic and was set to expire automatically, a narrative emerged that the expansion was a pandemic response that would no longer be necessary after the pandemic ended. But the truth is that the expansion had nothing to do with the pandemic. The pandemic was just a pretext to expand coverage, something Democrats had long sought to do. The automatic termination was included to reduce the projected effect on the deficit. This allowed Democrats to use the reconciliation process to avoid a Republican filibuster.

The expansion eliminated the 400% of the FPL limit. However, the benefit was capped by requiring that individuals must pay 8.5% of their income toward the premium before they could receive any subsidy. Furthermore, the premium is based on a particular level of coverage that currently costs about \$10,000 per year for a single adult.

The net effect of the expanded subsidy rules is to reduce the subsidy as a person's income increases. For most people, the subsidy goes to zero at an income of about \$120,000 for an individual and about \$240,000 for a couple. This opened the subsidy to millions of Americans who did not previously qualify. As a result, the number of Americans participating in the Marketplace leaped from 11 million to 21 million, and those receiving some subsidy went from about 8.8 million to 13.3 million. The average monthly subsidy went from \$525 to just over \$600. The expansion benefits have been costing about \$40 billion per year. That amount is consistent with the CBO's estimate late last year of the cost to extend the enhanced subsidy. An extension of the subsidy would add about 2% to the projected federal deficit.

Unpacking the politics-

The expansion was originally on a straight party vote. Not a single Republican voted for the original extension. However, it turns out Americans across the political spectrum came to strongly support the expansion of the subsidies.

A poll by the KFF (fka the Kaiser Family Foundation) found that 77% of Americans want Congress to extend the subsidies. The extension enjoys remarkable support across the political spectrum. Even self-identified MAGA Republicans favor the extension 56-43.

Earlier this year, KFF conducted a detailed analysis of the effect of the expiring subsidies by Congressional district. Those most impacted are skewed toward districts currently held by Republicans. In all but one district held by a Republican, voters over 60 who are currently receiving the subsidy would see an increase in their premium of over 100%. These individuals make up 7% of the population of those districts. Since those individuals are over 60, most are likely registered voters and would typically be more likely to vote Republican.

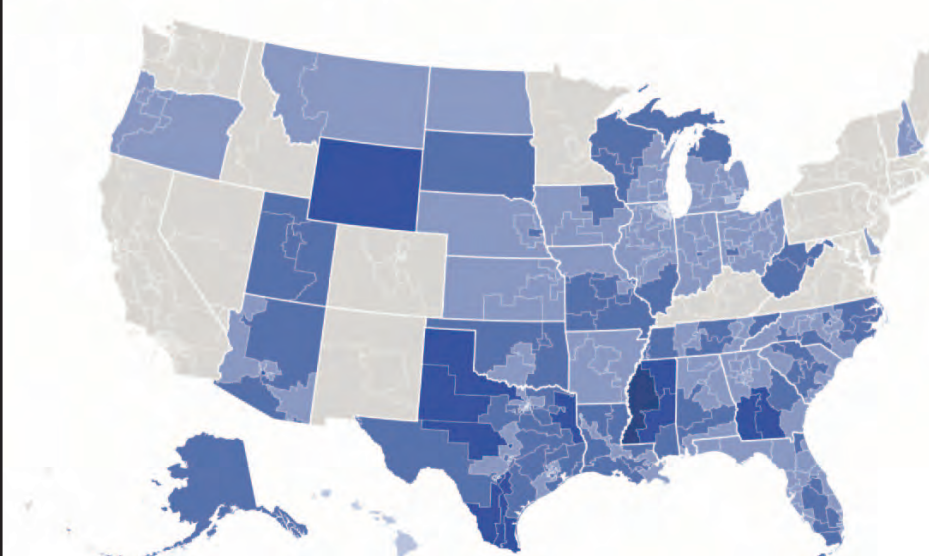
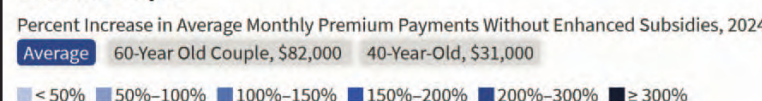
This is an interactive map that KFF prepared. This image shows the average premium increase, but you can click on it to get more detailed information. There is a remarkable overlap between the states facing the largest increases and the states President Trump won in the 2024 election.

We are currently entering the ACA reenrollment period, and many Americans are learning for the first time how much their premiums may go up. As a result, Republican members of Congress are hearing from their constituents. It is, therefore, not surprising that a growing number of Republican members are breaking with the leadership on extending the subsidies. Most notable has been MAGA loyalist Marjorie Taylor Greene.

A compromise on subsidies may be the off-ramp to end the shutdown. President Trump has hinted that he might be open to a deal on healthcare. If the Senate were to pass a bill to end the shutdown that included an extension of the subsidies, it is hard to imagine the House would not do the same.

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, 5832 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.

Premium Payments for Subsidized Enrollees Will Increase Nationwide if Enhanced ACA Subsidies Expire



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By **Gary Borders**



Shutdown Could Halt SNAP for 3.5 M Texans

The continuing federal shutdown means food benefits provided to 3.5 million Texans could be cut off in November, The Texas Tribune reported. Of those affected, nearly half are children.

"SNAP has funding available for benefits and operations through the month of October," according to a letter written by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service to state agencies. "However, if the current lapse in appropriations continues, there will be insufficient funds to pay full November SNAP benefits for approximately 42 million individuals across the nation."

More than \$614 million is distributed monthly in Texas to recipients.

Currently, other assistance programs such as Medicaid and the Children Health Insurance Program, or CHIP, are not affected by the shutdown, which is in its fourth week.

OIL PRICES AT LOWEST LEVEL SINCE PANDEMIC

Oil prices have dropped to their lowest level since early 2021, the Texas Standard reported. In an interview with Matt Smith, lead energy analyst at Kpler, he said strong supply is driving the drop per barrel to about \$57.

Average gasoline prices in Texas stood at \$2.79 a gallon in September, down 67 cents from two years ago, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Smith said U.S. oil production in July, the latest monthly statistic available, was at a record high. He predicted the low oil prices could slow domestic production by next year.

FALL ENROLLMENT SETS RECORD AT TEXAS COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

More than 1.6 million students enrolled this fall at Texas colleges and universities — an all-time high, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board reported. The preliminary numbers cover all levels of higher education, both public and private, and represent a 4.7% increase from last fall.

"The record enrollment numbers will help the state's continuing efforts to build a talent-strong Texas and an increasingly educated workforce," said Commissioner of Higher Education Wynn Rosser.

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

For the first time since the pandemic, enrollment numbers surpassed pre-pandemic numbers in each sector of higher education.

JUDGE TOSSES TEXAS BOOK RATING LAW

A Waco federal judge last week threw out a 2023 Texas law that required booksellers and publisher to rate their books based on sexual content and reference, kut.org reported. The ruling makes permanent a lower court's temporary injunction that was later upheld by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The firm representing the coalition of bookstores and publishers hailed the ruling as a "major First Amendment victory."

"The READER Act would have imposed impossible obligations on booksellers and limited access to literature, including classic works, for students across Texas," attorney Laura Lee Prather said in a statement.

HB 900 sought to restrict which books are available in school libraries. It also required booksellers to rate their own books. The bill's author, state Rep. Jared Patterson, R-Frisco, posted on X that he was "deeply disappointed" by the judge's decision. However, he said SB 412 passed in the last legislative session holds school personnel "accountable" for exposing a child to what he termed "harmful materials."

PROPOSITION WOULD FUND DEMENTIA PREVENTION RESEARCH

As early voting continues through Oct. 31, the Texas Medical Association is backing Proposition 14, which would provide \$3 billion in funding over a 10-year period for research into preventing dementia. The proposal, if approved, would create the Dementia Prevention Research Institute of Texas.

stitute of Texas.

Houston neurologist Reeta Achari, MD, who testified in favor of DPRIT's creation on behalf of TMA, said Proposition 14 has the potential to make Texas a leader in dementia research, and thus "attract much-needed physicians and subject matter experts and innovators from across the world."

Alzheimer's disease comprises 60-80% of dementia cases and is becoming a public health crisis, according to a report from the Texas Department of State Health Services. More than 450,000 Texans over the age of 65 are living with Alzheimer's, the report states.

Opponents of the measure, according to a nonpartisan analysis by the Texas Legislative Council, fear it would create a new state bureaucracy without sufficient accountability and an open-ended financial risk for taxpayers.

FEDS SLASH ACA ENROLLMENT PROGRAM'S BUDGET

With open enrollment set to begin for the Affordable Care Act, funding for a navigator program that helped 65,000 Texans enroll for health insurance has been slashed by 90%, The Tribune reported. As a result, nonprofits are seeking other ways to fund their efforts to help uninsured Texans find health care.

The state received \$17 million in navigator grants last year. Most of the nearly 4 million Texans covered by an ACA plan find coverage on their own. However, navigators enrolled about 26,533 Texans and helped nearly 39,000 others obtain Medicaid.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid said the return on navigator investment was too low.

"Despite receiving \$98 million in the 2024 plan year, Navigators only enrolled 92,000 consumers—just 0.6 percent of plan selections," according to a CMS statement in February.

About 17% of all Texans are uninsured, the highest rate of all states.

NEARLY ONE FOURTH OF TRAFFIC DEATHS IN OIL AND GAS REGIONS

The Texas Department of Transportation is urging drivers to be extra cautious when driving in one of the state's five main energy regions — the Permian Basin, Eagle Ford Shale, Barnett Shale, Anadarko Basin and the Haynesville/Bossier Shale. One in four of the state's 1,023 traffic fatalities in 2024 occurred in those areas.

"Oil and gas production activity means large trucks and heavy machinery share the road with local traffic on rural roads and highways," according to the news release. "Increased truck traffic can mean limited visibility for drivers and wear and tear on road surfaces, potentially creating hazards that are difficult to navigate and maneuver around."

Nearly 79,000 traffic crashes occurred in those five regions. Failure to control speed and driver inattention were the top two factors contributing to those crashes.

THE POSTSCRIPT
By **Carrie Classon**

Memorable Gift



My sister and I told my mother we were throwing her a party for her 90th birthday.

"Not everyone knows I'm 90!" she said.

"Well, it's good we tell them," I said. "We told everyone that Dad turned 90 last year, and we don't want people to think he robbed the cradle."

Mom saw the sense in that, and we sent out invitations to friends and family, and even though a few people couldn't make it at the last minute, we still had 34 guests. A spattering of rain sent everyone indoors, but everyone found a place to sit and eat appetizers and snacks and salads and cake, and we toasted to Mom's 90th year.

Mom told a story about how, on her golden birthday, when she was 10, all the relatives had been invited over to the farmhouse. Mom came from a big family, with 10 siblings and dozens of cousins. They had a tradition that, on your birthday, you got to eat first, which would be a rare thing for a small child in such a large family. My mom and her cousins were out playing in the peat marsh, and when they came in to eat, the family had already started. Mom said she was so hurt that she has never forgotten it. She told this story 80 years later, and we all agreed she should get to eat first.

After the cake had been eaten and most of the guests had left, Mom opened a few gifts. We had told everyone not to bring gifts, but a few family members had disregarded the instructions. Her grandson, Beau, gave her a little bird that, when placed in a pie, blew steam out its beak when the filling was done.

"It's practical and cute!" my mother said, and that is high praise coming from someone who is both.

Just when the last of the guests were thinking it was time to head on home, my oldest friend, Andrew, arrived. He was going to take me to the theater, as I have season tickets and we always go together.

"Happy Birthday, Jone!" Andrew said as he walked into the house. "I have some presents for you!"

Andrew handed my mother two bags. In the first was a cookie that said, "Happy Birthday" on it, which was nice. "Open the other one!" Andrew urged. My mother hid.

"There's food in here," my mother said, sounding very confused.

My mother had a right to be confused. There was an entire meal inside the bag. She pulled the items out, and there were three tacos, wrapped in tinfoil, a brownie and a couple of other items that were not identified.

"Someone from DoorDash left it at my door by mistake, and I thought it was providential, and I should bring it to you!" he said.

"Who is this person?" one of the remaining guests whispered to me.

Then, my sister started to laugh, and I did, too. And my mother shook her head.

"I just thought I should bring you a gift," Andrew explained.

"Well, you didn't buy this, did you?" my mother asked.

"That's not very nice, to ask about a gift!" Andrew replied. My father rolled his eyes, and my mother laughed.

My parents have known Andrew since before he had a driver's license. But even knowing someone for almost 50 years does not prepare you for getting pilfered DoorDash on your 90th birthday.

"I brought the most memorable gift, didn't I?" Andrew asked on the way to the theater.

I could not deny it.

Till next time,
Carrie

NORTHEAST NEWS

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Founding Member North Houston Chamber (now Houston Intercontinental)
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Garcia addresses shutdown, healthcare in Town Hall,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

on the 31st unless it gets funded, Garcia responded.

Eleanor from Northside expressed concern about her Medicaid and Medicare benefits. Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, a former administrator for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, reassured her. Most people who are on Medicare and Medicaid should not see their coverage disrupted. But things like home and community-based services, other types of benefits, that may change. States are under a lot of financial pressure.

Howard from Houston asked about Social Security payments.

The monthly checks will continue. You may end up getting a smaller check if premiums go up for your Medicare Part D program, but your monthly check will continue.

Healthcare Providers and Community Leaders Weigh In

Guest speakers included leaders from local health systems and community organizations. Ray Purser, board chair of Legacy Community Health Services, described the strain on community health centers.

Many patients who rely on the enhanced tax credits will lose coverage. It's going to lead to an increase in the uninsured population, and we've already mentioned Texas already has the largest number of uninsured in the country. As more people lose coverage, they will turn to community health centers like Legacy for care. Our resources are already stretched, and additional demand could overwhelm our capacity.

Robert King-Hellier, senior vice president of public policy and government relations for Harris Health System, added, We're looking at probably a \$600 to \$700 million

reduction in financing going to the safety net providers of this county. Harris County has the largest number of uninsured of any county in the nation. It's over one million.

Ripple Effects and Community Action

Orlando, a state employee, asked about the ripple effect on employer-provided

health insurance.

It will have a ripple effect and it will end up impacting all of us because all our insurance costs, insurance companies will just start making adjustments. So it will impact us, Garcia said.

The town hall concluded with a call to action from Garcia.

Continue to be an advocate, continue to do what you can to make sure people understand that the heart of the matter is healthcare. Our community has been through tough times before hurricanes, floods, pandemics and every single time we've stood back up together. This moment will be no different, she ended.

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL SCORES/SCHEDULES

LAST WEEK'S SCORES THURSDAY, OCT. 30

Aldine Eisenhower 50, Aldine 0
Spring Dekaney 37, Aldine MacArthur 7

FRIDAY, OCT. 31

Aldine Davis 6, Spring Westfield 0
Aldine Nimitz 34, Spring 14

THIS WEEK'S GAMES THURSDAY, NOV. 6

Aldine at Spring at 7 p.m., at Planet Ford Stadium in Spring
Aldine Nimitz vs. Dekaney at 7 p.m., at Thorne Stadium

FRIDAY, NOV. 7

Aldine Davis at MacArthur, at 7 p.m., at Thorne Stadium
Aldine Eisenhower at Spring Westfield, at 7 p.m., at Planet Ford Stadium in Spring



FOOTBALL SEASON WEEK 11: AISD teams close out district schedule: Texans host Jags with hopes of remaining in the Hunt

also cost head coach James Franklin his job.

Speaking of coaches looking for work, LSU head coach Brian Kelly was sent packing two weeks ago after the Tigers were embarrassed at home by Texas A&M, 49-25, in prime time on national TV. The LSU fit never felt right for the arrogant Northeasterner and Tiger fans weren't crying in their Hurricanes after Kelly was dismissed the day following the blowout loss to the No. 3-ranked Aggies. LSU heads to No. 4-ranked Alabama on Saturday.

Speaking of the Aggies, they head to Columbia, MO on Saturday to take on the No. 19-ranked Tigers, who will be without starting quarterback Beau Pribulau, who suffered a season-ending dislocated ankle two weeks ago in their 17-10 loss at Vanderbilt. Pribalau's loss is huge for the Tigers as he was dual-threat with 1,690 yards passing and 11 TDs and 220 yards rushing and five TDs.

The Aggies proved two weeks ago with their win at LSU that they can win on the road in a hostile environment. It also helps that they will have an extra week to prepare for this one.

The biggest game on this weekend's college schedule comes in the Big 12 when No. 10-ranked BYU visits No. 13-ranked Texas Tech. The winner should be in perfect position to land a spot in the Big 12 title game the first Saturday in December in Arlington.

In the NFL, the Texans host Jacksonville in a key AFC South game for both teams. Two weeks ago, the Texans may have saved their season with an impressive 26-15 home win over San Francisco. Quarterback C.J. Stroud had one of his best games in his young three-year career, passing for 318 yards and two TDs, while the defense held SF star running back Christian McCaffrey in check most of the day.

Other key games have the surprising New England Patriots visiting the rested Tampa Bay Buccaneers, while there are two good ones on Sunday Night Football and Monday Night Football. On SNF, the struggling Pittsburgh Steelers will visit the Los Angeles Chargers, while Week 11 concludes on MNF as the Philadelphia Eagles visit the Green Bay Packers. The outcome of that one could go a long way in determining who earns the No. 1 seed in the NFC. The Cowboys have



the week off.

Before we take a look at this weekend's schedule, let's review last week's record. An 8-4 week upped the season record to 66-40 (62%).

Now, onto this weekend's games.

HIGH SCHOOL

Aldine at Spring - Cirilo Ojeda's Mustangs head to Planet Ford Stadium on Thursday night to take on the Spring Lions at 7 p.m. It's been a tough year for Aldine, as the offense has struggled to get things going. Spring, a playoff team a year ago, has also had a tough year. My pick, Spring 16, Aldine 10

Dekaney at Nimitz - Cornelius Harmon's Cougars host Dekaney on Thursday night at 7 p.m. in Thorne Stadium. Nimitz has a playoff spot wrapped up and will probably use this game as a tuneup to postseason play. Harmon would like to see his offense get untracked after being held to just 7 points two weeks ago in Nimitz's 7-6 win over Eisenhower. Nimitz will look for a productive night from QB Albert Brown (699 yards, 6 TDs), running back Brashard Miles (725 yards, 9 TDs) and wideouts Augustus Malachi (43 receptions, 13 TDs) and Kaden Phillips (20 receptions, 406 yards, 5 TDs). My pick, Nimitz 33, Dekaney 17

Eisenhower at Westfield - Padriac McGinnis' Eagles head to Planet Ford Stadium on Friday night to take on District 14-6A power Westfield at 7 p.m. The Eagles should have a playoff spot secured before this game kicks off. Look for Ike to feature running backs Zach Cornish (622 yards, 8 TDs) and Elijah Dixon (402 yards, 4 TDs) as they try to pull off the upset. My pick, Westfield 27, Eisenhower 20

MacArthur vs. Davis - Blake Ware's Generals close out their '25 season taking on Kelvin Chatham's Falcons. Davis appears headed to its second straight playoff appearance, while the Generals will look to carry momentum into the offseason. The Generals will be led by QB Ryan Smith (1,516 yards, 12 TDs),

running back Corey Fisher (321 yards, 2 TDs) and wide receivers Jose Portillo (20 receptions, 209 yards, 2 TDs) and Julian Ponce (21 receptions, 298 yards, 1 TD. Davis will rely on QB Devin Sims (586 yards, 6 TDs), running back Nicholas Tramble (681 yards, 8 TDs) and wideouts Michael Taylor (16 receptions, 277 yards, 1 TD) and David Richardson (32 receptions, 243 yards, 1 TD). Look for Davis to use this game to carry momentum into the playoffs. My pick, Davis 30, MacArthur 26

NCAA

Indiana at Penn State - This is the tale of two teams heading in opposite directions as the No. 2-ranked Indiana Hoosiers visits a beaten down Penn State team that entered last week's game against No. 1-ranked Ohio State riding a four-game losing streak. Many thought the Nittany Lions would contend for a national title this year, but subpar play and injuries have doomed this team. PSU fired head coach James Franklin and needs a signature win to save its season. Good luck with that against an Indiana team that is loaded, led by QB Fernando Mendoza (1,923 yards, 24 TDs), running backs Ramon Hemby (513 yards, 4 TDs) and Kaelon Black (509 yards, 3 TDs) and big-play wide receivers Omar Cooper (40 receptions, 607 yards, 7 TDs) and Elijah Suratt (44 receptions, 585 yards, 10 TDs). Penn State has lost starting QB Drew Allar for the year, so look for the Nittany Lions to try and run the ball with Kayton Allen (612 yards, 9 TDs) and Nicholas Singleton (274 yards, 6 TDs) to control the clock and keep Mendoza off the field. Good luck with that. My pick, Indiana 31, Penn State 18

LSU at Alabama - Speaking of teams that have fallen apart this year, the LSU Tigers are just that. Two weeks ago, they were blown out at home by Texas A&M, 49-24, which cost Brian Kelly his job. This week, they face a hot team when they take on No. 4 Alabama in Tuscaloosa. The LSU offense has struggled

this year behind QB Garrett Nussmeier (1,804 yards, 12 TDs). He will need to make plays to wide receivers Aaron Anderson (29 receptions, 382 yards) and Barion Brown (36 receptions, 361 yards, 1 TD). Those two have combined for a whopping one touchdown catch this year. The 'Bama offense is rolling behind QB Ty Simpson (2,184 yards, 20 TDs), running back Jam Miller (308 yards, 2 TDs) and big-play wide receivers Germie Berard (38 receptions, 526 yards, 6 TDs) and Ryan Williams (33 receptions, 495 yards, 3 TDs). Look for the Crimson Tide to continue to extend the Tigers' misery this year. My pick, Alabama 34, LSU 17

Texas A&M at Missouri - Mike Elko's Aggies come off their bye week with a tough road game at Missouri. After their blowout win at LSU two weeks ago, the Ags received a well-deserved week off, as did the banged-up Tigers, who have lost dual-threat QB Beau Pribulau (1,690 passing yards, 11 TDs/220 rushing yards, 5 TDs). Backup Matt Zollers (213 yards, 2 TDs) will run the Mizu offense, which will feature a heavy dose of productive running back Ahmad Hardy (937 yards, 11 TDs) and productive wide receiver Kevin Coleman Jr. (51 receptions, 558 yards, 1 TD). The Tiger defense will have its hands full taking on an explosive Aggie offense led by QB Marcel Reed (1,972 passing yards, 17 TDs/349 rushing yards, 6 TDs), running back Rueben Owens II (440 yards, 3 TDs) and big-play wideouts Mario Craver (39 receptions, 710 yards, 18.2 yards per catch, 4 TDs) and KC Concepcion (36 receptions, 545 yards, 9 total TDs). Look for the Ags to continue their magical season as they pick up a big road win on Saturday. My pick, Texas A&M 36, Missouri 20

BYU at Texas Tech - This is a big one in the Big 12 for both the Cougars and Red Raiders, with the winner having a good chance of reaching the Big 12 title game Dec. 6 in Arlington. BYU has been one of the surprise teams in the nation this year, which improved to 8-0 two weeks ago with a 41-27 win at Iowa State. The Cougars have gotten excellent play out of true freshman quarterback Bear Bachmeier (1,693 passing yards, 11 TDs/408 rushing yards, 9 TDs), running back LJ Martin (789 yards, 5 TDs) and wide receivers Chase Roberts (32 receptions, 591 yards, 4 TDs) and Parker Kingston (34 receptions, 514 yards, 4 TDs). BYU will face perhaps its biggest test this year when it faces a Tech defense that has allowed just 12 points a game through its first eight contests. The Red Raiders also have some weapons on offense, and should

have starting QB Behren Morton (1,501 yards, 13 TDs in six games) back for this game. Morton missed two games with an ankle injury, and Tech will need him back under center after losing backup QB Will Hammond to a season-ending ACL injury two weeks in Tech's 42-0 win over Oklahoma State. Look for Tech to give running backs Cameron Dickey (680 yards, 9 TDs) and J'Koby Williams (388 yards, 7 total TDs), plenty of action early, then turn Morton loose to hook up with wideouts Caleb Douglas (34 receptions, 511 yards, 2 TDs), Coy Eakin (34 receptions, 455 yards, 4 TDs) and Reggie Virgil (32 receptions, 363 yards, 5 TDs) and tight end Terrance Carter Jr. (23 receptions, 297 yards, 5 TDs) to make plays in the passing game. This could be Tech's biggest home game since its upset of then No. 1-ranked Texas in 2008. My pick, Texas Tech 34, BYU 30

NFL

Jacksonville at Houston - The Texans host the Jaguars in a key AFC South game for both teams. The winner keeps its fledgling playoff hopes alive, while the loser will probably begin looking to the 2026 season. Two weeks ago, the Texans picked up a big win, downing the 49ers, 26-15. QB C.J. Stroud (1,623 yards, 11 TDs) had one of his best games in years, doing it without star wide receiver Nico Collins (26 receptions, 339 yards, 3 TDs), who missed the game with a concussion. In the win over SF, Stroud passed for 318 yards and two TDs. The Houston defense, which has 16 sacks in its first seven games, will look to force a turnover or two from Jags QB Trevor Lawrence (1,620 yards, 9 TDs, 5 interceptions). If the defense can slow down running back Travis Etienne (514 yards, 2 TDs), then the pass rush can bow up and get after Lawrence. My pick, Houston 27, Jacksonville 16

New England at Tampa Bay - The Patriots have been one of the biggest surprise teams so far this season. After winning just four games a year ago, Mike Vrabel has turned the Pats into a serious playoff contender. They entered last week's game against Atlanta with a 6-2 record and atop the AFC East standings. NE has turned things around thanks to second-year QB Drake Maye (2,026 yards, 15 TDs) and wide receivers Stefon Diggs (42 receptions, 470 yards, 1 TD) and Kayshon Boutte (22 receptions, 431 yards, 5 TDs). This will be a good road test when they take on Baker Mayfield (1,919 yards, 13 TDs), whose team is coming off their bye week. They should get some injured re-

ceivers back, which should help rookie sensation Emeka Egbuka (34 receptions, 562 yards, 5 TDs). Look for a stout TB defense to be the difference maker in this one as the Patriots roll is slowed down just a bit. My pick, Tampa Bay 23, New England 20

Pittsburgh at Los Angeles Chargers - A good one for the Sunday Night Football crew as the Steelers visit the Chargers in an important game for both teams. Two weeks ago, the Steelers defense, especially its secondary, was exposed once again in a 35-25 home loss to Green Bay, while the Chargers offense rolled to a 37-10 wipeout of the Vikings. The Pittsburgh defense will face another tough test Sunday when it faces LA QB Justin Herbert (2,140 yards, 16 TDs) and big-play wideouts Keenan Allen (48 receptions, 479 yards, 4 TDs) and Ladd McConey (43 receptions, 469 yards, 3 TDs). The Steelers will need QB Aaron Rodgers (1,489 yards, 16 TDs) to be on, along with running back Jaylen Warren (373 yards) and wide receiver DK Metcalf (27 receptions, 461 yards, 5 TDs). My pick, Los Angeles Chargers 27, Pittsburgh 24

Philadelphia at Green Bay - Week 10 concludes with a really good one as the Eagles visit the Packers. Philly appears to have figured things out on offense as running back Saquon Barkley (150 yards, 2 TDs in win over Giants two weeks ago, 519 yards, 5 total TDs for year) looked like the '24 version. If he gets rolling, that will set up the passing game for QB Jalen Hurts (1,677 passing yards, 15 TDs/207 rushing yards, 5 TDs) and wide receivers DeVonta Smith (44 receptions, 588 yards, 2 TDs) and A.J. Brown (29 receptions, 295 yards, 3 TDs) and tight end Dallas Goedert (30 receptions, 289 yards, 7 TDs). This is the type of game why the Packers traded for edge rusher Micah Parsons (6.5 sacks). Look for Parsons to focus on Hurts most of the night to keep him in check and to keep him from hurting the Pack with his legs. The Packers have a lot of weapons of their own on offense led by QB Jordan Love (1,798 yards, 13 TDs), running back Josh Jacobs (447 yards, 9 TDs) and big-play tight end Tucker Kraft (30 receptions, 469 yards, 6 TDs). Love also has capable receivers in Romeo Dobbs (27 receptions, 350 yards, 4 TDs) and getting Christian Watson back just gives Love one more weapon in his arsenal. Look for Parsons to be the difference maker in this one as Green Bay picks up a big win that could be key to them earning the NFC's top seed. My pick, Green Bay 31, Philadelphia 27

CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE WORD SEARCH

by Elie's Spiritual Treasures

Psalms 38:12c-14

all day long they scheme and lie. I am like the deaf, who cannot hear, like the mute, who cannot speak: I have become like one who does not hear, whose mouth can offer no reply.

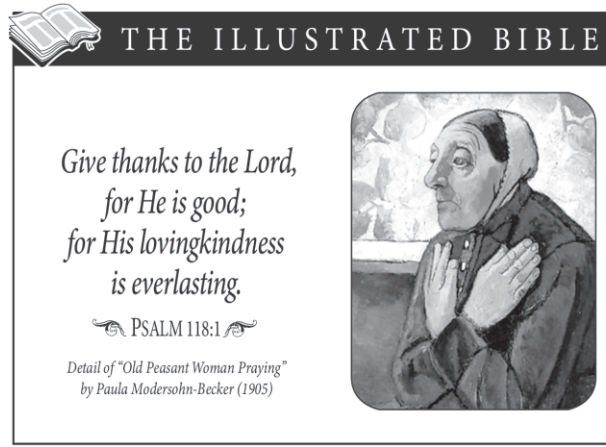
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Find the **bolded/underlined** words in the diagram. They run in all directions — forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

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Detail of "Old Peasant Woman Praying" by Paula Modersohn-Becker (1905)

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BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Philemon (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Who is credited as being "The Mother of All the Living"? Ruth, Sarah, Eve, Esther
3. From Numbers 22, to whom did the donkey speak? Silas, Daniel, Jeremiah, Balaam
4. As stated in Genesis 20:2, who was king of Gerar? Abimelech, Nathan, Nehemiah, Joash
5. Where was Paul the Apostle born? Thessalonica, Tarsus, Ur, Antioch
6. From Acts 18, who was Aquila's wife? Priscilla, Jezebel, Leah, Rebekah

ANSWERS: 1) New, 2) Eve, 3) Balaam, 4) Abimelech, 5) Tarsus, 6) Priscilla
 More than 1,200 brand-new trivia questions in Wilson Casey's latest book "Quest for Bible Knowledge" available in bookstores and online.
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East Aldine Dia De Los Muertos & Drone Show,

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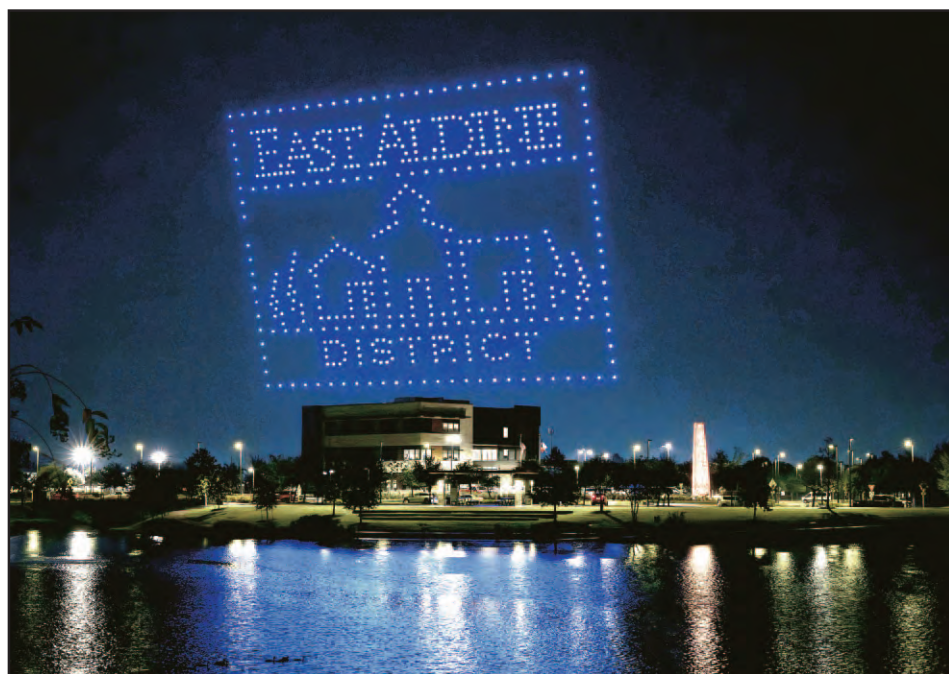
ery, and formations mimicking fireworks. The crowd's excitement peaked when the drones assembled into the East Aldine Management District logo, a proud moment for the community. The finale featured four tiers of green, yellow, red, and blue lights landing gracefully across the acreage, closing the show with a flourish.

"We're so excited to celebrate our culture, community, and loved ones with you at our annual Día de los Muertos Fall Festival!" said Carlos Silva, CEO at the East Aldine Management District. "This is the first-ever drone show brought to you by the district, and it's a testament to what we can achieve together. A huge thank you to our partners, volunteers, and the entire East Aldine community for making this celebration possible."

The festival offered more than just visual marvels. Attendees enjoyed live music, food, vendors, games, prizes, and a community altar where families could honor loved ones by bringing framed photos. Performances included DJ Certified, the MacArthur Jazz Band, solos by Mia Reyes, folklorico dance groups from Aldine ISD Carver HS and Davis HS, Fiesta Mexicana Folklorico Dance Group, and the Variety Catrina Show, among others.

Safety was a top priority, with the sheriff's office ensuring public safety and designated areas cordoned off for the event.

"We really wanted to bring top-shelf entertainment to this community, Silva explained. Very few people have seen something like this with their own eyes. For us, it's about doing something



Drones display East Aldine District over the Lake



East Aldine District Board Members and friends in costume for Dia De Los Muertos

special for Aldine, so people don't have to travel far to have a first-class experience."

The festival's success was evident in the turnout, with well over a thousand people gathering to witness the spectacle.

"It's typically one of the best-attended events here, and this year is no different. You can feel the energy and connectivity buzzing," Silva added.

As the community looks forward to future events including a second drone show planned for the district's tree lighting and holiday kickoff ceremony the Día de los Muertos Fall Festival has set a new standard for celebration in Aldine, blending tradition with technology in a way that honors the past and inspires the future.



A part of Dia De Los Muertos: Colorful Costumes



Thanks to the East Aldine staff that put together the show



Connie and Alex Esparza with Flor Zarzoza enjoy the Drone Show



The Stage had many music and dance performances. See Story for complete listing

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