

ALDINE ISD BREAKS GROUND FOR 2 NEW SCHOOLS

New Schools are part of the 2023 \$1.8bn Bond Package; Will open in 2028

EAST ALDINE - District leaders, students, staff, the Lane family, elected officials, and community members gathered in front of the Earnest F. Mendel Aldine ISD Heritage Museum and Tax Office, looking ahead at what will become two new campuses shaping the next chapter of Aldine ISD.



Aldine ISD celebrated the groundbreaking for Aldine Middle School and Lane School on Tuesday, Dec. 9, as shovels turned the soil to mark the start of construction on both campuses.



The new Lane School.

These are the first projects that are part of the \$1.8 billion bond approved by voters in November 2023. The bond package includes safety and security upgrades, facility enhancements, campus rebuilds and redesigns and instructional technology improvements across the district.

"Today is not just a groundbreaking, it's a statement that every kid matters. Our community believes in progress," said

Superintendent Dr. LaTonya Goffney. "It says we are preparing for the next generation of leaders, thinkers, creators, innovators, and preparing all students for their future. These new facilities will provide safer, more modern learning environments that will help every student reach their full potential."

Both Aldine Middle and Lane School have rich histories that helped build the foundation of Aldine ISD. Lane School, named in honor of Ellen "Ellie" B. Lane in 1985, began as a modest two-room schoolhouse built in 1910, when Aldine was still a collection of small rural schools.

Over time, the school expanded, moved, and became what the community now knows as Lane School to support the needs of some of Aldine's diverse learners. Dale Prioleau, Lane's principal for 10 years, reflected on Lane's legacy and her influence on the district's special education

program. "She often spoke of parents from other states who had heard about AISD's forward-thinking approach to Special Education and traveled to Aldine to meet with her," he said. "Many families moved here, so their children could receive what was considered a high-quality,

innovative, and, in many cases, a unique special education experience. At the time, Aldine's program was among the leading programs in the country." Roger Lane, Ellen Lane's son, shared stories about his mother at the

Continued. See ALDINE ISD BREAKS GROUND, Page 3

NEWS NOTES

3 Nights of Holiday Movies Dec. 17, 18, 19

Join East Aldine for Holiday Christmas Cheer, 3 nights of family oriented free Holiday themed "Movies On The Green." Bring a Blanket & Chair, we'll provide the Popcorn and Hot Chocolate. Showtime is 6:00pm. Movies are: Wed. Dec. 17 **Disney A Christmas Carol** Thur. Dec. 18 **The Santa Clause** Fri. Dec. 19 **The Star**

National Developer Proposes Aldine Station, a 78-Unit Affordable Family Housing Community in East Aldine

A national developer made a presentation of a new housing proposal for East Aldine, at the High Meadows Library last Monday.

Project Description
National CORE is proposing to develop Aldine Station, a high-quality residential community affordable to low-income families in Harris County. Located at the SEQ of Aldine Mail Rte Rd. and Fall Meadow Ln., the development will offer a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartment homes designed for households of all sizes. The community will include a range of amenities that foster connection, recreation, and overall well-being such as a multipurpose community room, gym, cyber cafe, outdoor courtyards with BBQ picnic areas, swimming pool and community garden. Residents will also benefit from on-site programs and supportive services focused on financial literacy, job readiness, youth enrichment, and health and Wellness. Aldine Station is thoughtfully planned to



View of one of the Residential Buildings at Aldine Station, with the garden and pool in the foreground.

Continued. See ALDINE ISD BREAKS GROUND, Page 3

Salazar files to run for TX Legislature, then drops out

Opponent would have been Rep. Walle

Last Monday was the last day to file to run in next March's Primary election. State Representative Armando Walle normally runs unopposed to represent District 140 (Aldine) but this year Ruben Salazar, a newcomer to politics and a board member of the East Aldine District and President of the East Aldine Civic Association filed to run for this seat, but after a few days he reconsidered and withdrew. Below are the Statements the two candidates made regarding the filings:

WALLE STATEMENT:
It's official: I filed for re-election! It was great to be surrounded by family and friends as we once again launched our campaign to continue serving HD-140. I grew up right here in North Houston. My mom, a single mother of five kids, worked so hard to give us a better life. Thanks to her, and the support of so many in my community, I was the first in my



Continued. See LEGISLATURE, Page 3

SALAZAR STATEMENT:
Dear Residents and Community Members of House District 140, After careful reflection, I have decided to withdraw my candidacy from the HD140 Democratic Primary. I have nothing but deep respect and admiration for the people who call HD140 home and for what it means to come from a community of hardworking individuals. I am



FOOTBALL SEASON WEEK 17: Aggies host Miami in first round of CFP: Texans to remain hot against lowly Raiders

This is going to be a great weekend for football fans of both the collegiate and pro fandom.

The College Football Playoffs (CFP) begin and Texas will be well represented with Texas Tech ranked No. 4 and earning a first-round bye, while Texas A&M is ranked seventh and will host No. 10 Miami at Kyle Field on Saturday at 11 a.m. on ABC.

The CFP playoffs kickoff on Friday night when two SEC teams go at it as No. 9 Alabama hosts No. 8 Oklahoma in a rematch of their regular season game in November, which the Sooners won in Tuscaloosa. That game will be on ABC at 7 p.m.

Other first round games will pit No. 6 Oregon against No. 12 James Madison in Eugene, OR, on Saturday at 11:30 a.m. on TNT.

No. 2 Ohio State will face the Miami-A&M winner on New Year's Eve Cotton Bowl at 6:30 p.m. on ESPN. On New Year's Day, No. 4-ranked Texas Tech, winner of the Big 12 regular season and conference title game, will face the winner of James Madison-Oregon in the Orange Bowl at 11 a.m. on ESPN.

No. 1 Indiana (who would have thought Indiana would be ranked No. 1 in the nation and CFP?) will take on the Bama-OU winner in the Rose Bowl at 3 p.m. at 3 p.m. The nightcap will feature No. 3 Georgia, the SEC champ, against the Tulane-Ole Miss winner in the Sugar Bowl at 7 p.m. on ESPN.

All 12 teams will be vying for a spot in the CFP title game, which will be held on Monday, Jan. 19 at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami and will be telecast on ESPN.



The CFP committee upset some folks, most notably those in South Bend, IN by not including a 10-2 Notre Dame team in the 12-team playoff. The Irish did win 10 straight games after losing their first two games of the season on the road at Miami and at home against the Aggies and did dominate their opponents in their 10-game winning streak. The committee felt James Madison, winner of the Sun Belt, and Tulane, winner of the American Conference were more deserving of bids. The hierarchy in South Bend

Continued. See KEENEY'S KORNER, Page 5

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Season's Best Wishes from The Staff and Management of the Northeast News Thank you for your support in the last year.

Letters to Santa

Dear Santa,
I'm very good because I got which stands for gifted talented which is for smart people and I'm very smart.
Angel Cordero, 9 years old
Orange Grove elementary

a dinosaur book years, a dinosaur toys, a dinosaur squishy, a dinosaur bracelet, a dinosaurs air forces, a dinosaur keychain, a dinosaur backpack.
Caroline Perez, 9 years old
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,
I'm sorry, but you're nice, but fake sadly. Someone inspired your very long time ago, if you are real then if I wanted a go kart, how would you get it? How would you enter?
Jose Serna, 9 years old
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,
I want money and extra money. Also extra clothes, slime, thin or slime, necklaces new phone, also squishy.
Asly Velasquez, 9 years old
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Mom,
I want katseye shirt, kateseye jacket, dinosaur everything, a new wallet, katseye sis book both, notebook, sharpener, dinosaur Lego, dinosaur chicken nugget and thank you.
Sophia Tenandon, 10 years old
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,
All I want for Christmas is Boca makers, hello Kitty, blankets, squishy markers, slime, squish mellow, color set, oil paste, gold markers, slime, five below shoes, crocs, Spider-Man plushie, taba squishy.
Sophia Ibarra, 9 years old
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,
I would like a dinosaur pet a dinosaur plushy, a dinosaur blanket, a dinosaur nugget, a dinosaur shirt,

Dear Santa,
I want a new Nintendo switch, red and black nikes, switch and zombies 4 merch for my new switch Harry

Potyer case. Coloring stuff, baggy pants, black, and red sketchbook, sweatpants (loose bottom), VR headset, iPad for Christmas.

Letters to Santa

Chloe Mercado, 9 years old
Orange Grove elementary

Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,
Please send me a Regi plushy and a moon and a sun plush. I was good.
Thank you.
Rey, 6 years old
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,
Please send me a chromy plushy. I was good and sometimes bad. Love Lena, 6 years old
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,
Please send me a Hello Kitty and a new TV and a LOL doll. I was good.
Thank you Santa.
Ember Torres, 7 years old
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,
Please send me a pink LOL doll, TV, lemonade. I was good. Thank you.
Selena G, 6 years old
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,
Please send me a new TV, a new toy truck, a new toy. I was good.
Thank you.
Zanpe, 6 years old
Orange Grove elementary


Dear Santa,
Please send me a big panbu stufe, and a hooj hoosic set and a timn. Thank you! I was good.
Genesis, 6 years old
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,
Please send me sensory stuff and a TV and me is good.
Noah, 6 years old


Dear Santa,
Please send me a vanity, a pretty room, a panda from the mall. I was good. Thank you.
Natali, 6 years old
Orange Grove

Dear Santa,
Please send me a bike.
Abno, 7 years old
Orange Grove elementary

Happy Holidays



from Armando and Debbie Walle & Family
Thank you for giving me the honor of representing you at the Texas House of Representatives.



FROM OUR TEAM TO YOUR FAMILY
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
BONDING AGAINST ADVERSITY



Merry Christmas
From the members
of
The Aldine
Optimist Club
Supporting the
youth of Aldine

Season's Greetings
from
BEASLEY TIRE SERVICE INC.
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Best Wishes for a Safe and Happy Holiday



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Merry Christmas
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—Optimist Club President
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Seasons Greetings to the
East Aldine Community



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Everyone
in our Community
For a Happy New Year



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We thank you for another Year of Support for your Community Newspaper

Best Wishes for the
Holiday Season



News

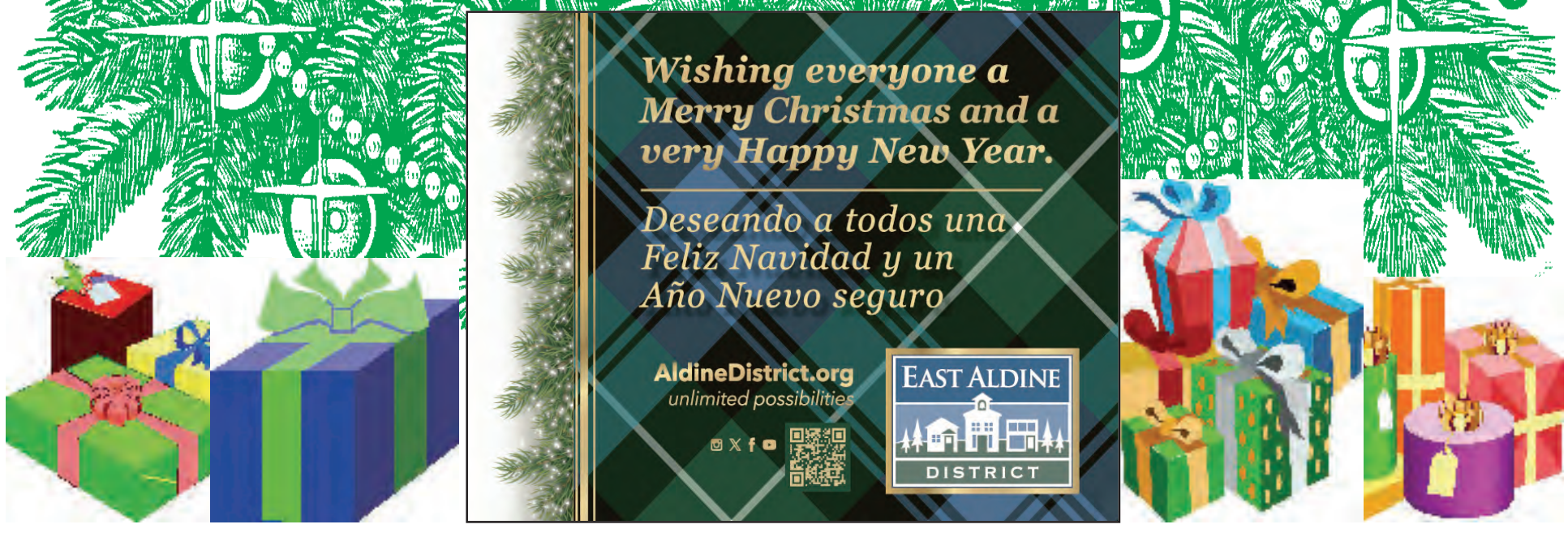
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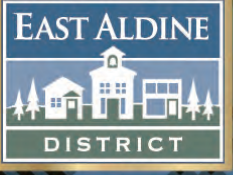
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Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Deseando a todos una Feliz Navidad y un Año Nuevo seguro



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Aldine ISD breaks ground for two new schools in 2028,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

event and expressed excitement that so many people cared about Lane School.

"It has meant so much to me because I know what went into it and what Ellie wanted it to be," he said. "It's satisfying and thrilling to see this kind of commitment and to know the dream is still alive."

The new Lane School will be a three-story, 100,000-square-foot facility featuring academic wings, improved accessibility, specialized learning spaces, and updated instruction areas for about 150 students.

Aldine Middle School, opened in 1948 during a period of rapid district growth, is one of the oldest campuses in Aldine.



The new Aldine Middle School.

Generations of students have walked its halls, each contributing to its history.

Jose Diaz, principal of Aldine Middle School, emphasized the importance of honoring that legacy while preparing for the future.

"We are pushing forward with our goals, strengthening our campus culture, and staying focused on our commitment to academic growth and student success," he said. "We talk often about small, consistent actions—and this is where they matter.

Every lesson taught, every effort made, and every challenge overcome writes the next chapter of this school's story."

The new Aldine Middle School will be a three-story, 226,000-square-foot campus for about 1,200



Roger Lane (far right) with other members of the Lane family.

students, featuring a performing and visual arts wing, a modern athletics complex, and collaborative learning spaces.

Both new campuses are being designed by MWA Architects, which specializes in new education facilities, additions and renovations, creating high-quality learning environments. Construction is set to begin in 2026, with major construction work in 2027. Both campuses expect to open in Fall 2028.

Salazar files to run for Legislature, then drops out

Opponent would have been Rep. Walle

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ARMANDO WALLE STATEMENT, CONTINUED:

family to attend and graduate from college. Being elected to serve the community that made me who I am in the Texas House has been my greatest honor. And in the face of Republican attacks against our public schools, against our friends and neighbors, against our very democracy, I have always dedicated myself to carrying out the fight for those unable to raise their voices. I have spent the last 16 years working directly with community members and organizations, and fostering relationships back home and in Austin to bring victories back each Session to House District 140. I'll continue to fight for a better future for the Texans that make HD-140 the best place to live, work and raise a family. **Friend, I'm running for re-election because I will never back down from a fight when it comes to our communities. But I won't be able to continue standing up for us without your grassroots support. Can you join our people-powered campaign for the Texas State House by donating today?**

RUBEN SALAZAR STATEMENT, CONTINUED

proud to be a product of this district and all those who continue to make it strong. My sole purpose in joining the race was to give our residents another option because in every election, big or small, red or blue, our democracy is stronger when voters have choices and voices. I am grateful for everyone who supported me, encouraged me, and believed in the vision of a more engaged and empowered community.

Although I am stepping out of this race, I am not stepping away from our community. I will continue standing up for our neighborhoods, advocating for our families, and working to ensure that every resident feels heard and valued. That commitment remains unchanged.

Thank you, HD140, for your support, your kindness, and your trust.

With gratitude,
Ruben A. Salazar

Aldine Station a 78 Unit affordable family housing,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

complement the surrounding neighborhood and provide families with convenient access to nearby schools, parks, shopping, and public transportation - creating a vibrant, safe, and enduring place for families to call home.

Location
4.4 acres of land at SEQ of Aldine Mail Rte Rd. and Fall Meadow Ln. in Harris County

Total Units
78 units for families

Affordability
100% affordable to tenants earning between 30% and 60% of the County area median income.

Community Amenities
Multipurpose community room, gym, cyber cafe, outdoor courtyards with BBQ picnic areas, swimming pool and community garden.

Social Services
Focused on our residents, our team will promote independent living through services that address basic needs, physical and mental health, and social connectedness.

For questions regarding this proposed development, please contact:
Ariana Brendle |
abrendle@nationalcore.org



Site Plan of Aldine Station Development, at Aldine Mail Route Road and Fall Meadow Lane. Residences are in the 3 white buildings at the left. A Garden, Pool, and Clubhouse are also part of the development.

JOIN US In the fight, Armando Voters first elected Armando to the North Harris County seat of District 140 in 2008. Born and raised in the district he now proudly represents, Armando Walle is Houston through and through.

Back home in HD 140, Armando spends as much time as possible with his wife, Debbie, and their two young sons. When not on the baseball field helping his two boys train, Armando and his family are often on the sidelines cheering on their beloved Houston Astros.

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

HIGH MEADOWS LIBRARY NEWS

College and Career Assistance | Asistencia Universitaria y Profesional

Wednesday, December 17, 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 click on the link below or call. Virtual appointments are also available.

Winter of the Snow Queen

Wednesday, December 17, 2:00pm-3:00pm
Description
You have a role to play in this wild winter adventure! On the darkest night of the year, children must beware the Snow Queen - and when a boy vanishes from his village, his best friend is the only one who can rescue him. And she needs your help on her quest to stop the Snow Queen! You'll help our heroine decide what happens next, join in the song, and bring the best friends back together. This original, interactive adaptation is inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's story, with an added tour of fairy tales from around the world. Winter of the Snow Queen is created by Brave Little Company and Stages.

Krafty Kids

Wednesday, December 17, 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, December 17, 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.

Citizenship Class / Clase de Ciudadanía

Wednesday, December 17, 6:00pm-7:00pm
Description
Join us for a free class to help you prepare for your naturalization interview and civics test. An English assessment must be taken for class admission. 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 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 solici-

tud. Es necesario inscribirse, ya que el cupo es limitado.

ESL Winter Workshop | Taller de Inglés de Invierno

Thursday, December 18, 12:45pm-1:45pm
Description
Keep practicing your English this winter! This informal class gives you an opportunity to keep learning and refresh your memory in a welcoming, stress-free environment. Don't let the holidays stand in your way—play games, practice conversations, and finally ask the English questions you've always wanted answered!

Teen Lounge

Thursday, December 18, 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—no possibilities are endless! No registration is required. This event is open to ages 12 to 18.

Toon Cafe

Friday, December 19, 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 nonstop cartoon comedy. If you love animation and humor, this is the perfect event for you!

AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS

Upcoming Events at Aldine Branch Library

Wiggle Wednesday

Wednesday, December 17, 11:00am-11:45am
Description
Come Move and Groove with Us!
Join us for a fun-filled session of reading, singing, and playful movement! It's the perfect way to introduce toddlers to the joy of books and reading while building important motor skills. Through music, movement, and play, we'll help support your child's growth in a joyful, engaging way—because play is essential to every part of toddler development!

Resume Assistance Free Workshop

Wednesday, December 17, 1:00pm-2:00pm
Description
Ready to Enhance your Resume? Take your resume to the next level with a Future U advisor who can help you with great insight on how to attract top-notch employers and get their attention. Get great tips on crafting your resume to be tailor-made with your skills, qualifications, and experiences.

Cookie Decorating

Wednesday, December 17, 3:30pm-5:30pm
Description
Get the holiday spirit by decorating cookies at Aldine! Every

child will get two (2!) cookies to decorate however they like. All supplies will be provided
~~~~~  
¡Entra en el espíritu navideño decorando galletas en Aldine! Cada niño recibirá dos (2!) galletas para decorar como quiera. Se proporcionarán todos los materiales necesarios.

#### Reading a Nutrition Facts Label / Como Leer Información Nutricional

Thursday, December 18, 12:00pm-1:00pm  
Description  
Want to learn how to read a nutrition facts label? Come to this free nutrition class to learn how! Plus, this class includes a cooking demonstration with tasting.  
This is the second class of a two-part series of nutrition classes hosted by Harris County Public Health. Registration is required since supplies are limited. Register online, over the phone, or in person.

#### PJ Movie Night

Thursday, December 18, 5:00pm-6:30pm  
Description  
Join Aldine Branch Library for a PJ movie night! Wear PJs, eat some popcorn and watch a fun movie with the whole family.  
¡Únete a la biblioteca Aldine Branch Library para una noche de cine en pijama! Ponte tu pijama, come palomitas y disfruta de una divertida película con toda la familia.

#### Homework Help/ Ayuda con Tarea

Thursday, December 18, 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.

Spark 5 Story Time w/ The Michelle Project  
Saturday, December 20, 11:00am-12:00pm  
Description  
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!

Aldine Branch Library  
11331 Airline Dr.  
Houston, TX 77037  
Phone: 832-927-5410

OPINION PAGE

Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus

By FRANCIS P. CHURCH, First published in The New York Sun in 1897

We take pleasure in answering thus prominently the communication below, expressing at the same time our great gratification that its faithful author is numbered among the friends of The Sun:

Dear Editor—

I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, "If you see it in The Sun, it's so." Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?

Virginia O'Hanlon

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies. You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if you did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived could tear apart. Only faith, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives and lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay 10 times 10,000 years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

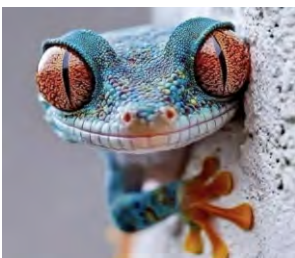
Francis P. Church's editorial, "Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus" was an immediate sensation, and went on to become one of the most famous editorials ever written. It first appeared in the The New York Sun in 1897, almost a hundred years ago, and was reprinted annually until 1949 when the paper went out of business.

Virginia O'Hanlon went on to graduate from Hunter College with a Bachelor of Arts degree at age 21. The following year she received her Master's from Columbia, and in 1912 she began teaching in the New York City school system, later becoming a principal. After 47 years, she retired as an educator. Throughout her life she received a steady stream of mail about her Santa Claus letter, and to each reply she attached an attractive printed copy of the Church editorial. Virginia O'Hanlon Douglas died on May 13, 1971, at the age of 81, in a nursing home in Valatie, N.Y.



THE POSTSCRIPT By Carrie Classon

Gecko Time



I hate getting sick. Maybe being in Mexico while I'm sick is marginally better than being sick back at home in the U.S. because it is warm here and I can sit out in the sunshine like a big, grumpy gecko and soak up the sun. I can put on my dark gecko sunglasses and take my scaly old self onto the roof where there are chairs that overlook the city. I can drink fresh-squeezed orange juice and, when I finish it, some kind person will ask me if I want another one.

"Yes! I want another one!" I want to say. "I want as many of these as it takes until I don't feel like a gecko anymore!"

I don't say that. I usually stop at one orange juice because that's the equivalent of about four oranges, which ought to be enough to frighten off any virus. Although with me they seem especially stubborn. And I know why.

My colds are stubborn because I get them through stubbornness.

I almost always get sick after I'm pushing, pushing, pushing myself to finish something and, as soon as it appears I have made it, my body says, "OK! I did that for you. Now it's my turn!" And I am laid low.

I have done this all my adult life. Every major project, every sustained effort, whether it was finals in school or a season of theater or a particularly demanding presentation or, in this case, getting the first draft of a book shipped to my agent (thank you very much, body!), leads me to spend a few days afterward coughing and blowing my nose with a sore throat and a gecko-like attitude.

(I'm not even sure why I'm picking on geckos. For all I know, they are cheerful creatures. But they look irritated and unattractive, which is how I feel, so I'm sticking with it.)

I have never solved this conundrum. I am honestly unaware that I am pushing myself past my limits. I monitor how much sleep I get, I exercise moderately, I eat healthy things. I do nothing that should cause alarms to go off and warn me I am transforming into a gecko in mere days.

After the project is completed, I feel a rush of euphoria, and I have at least six brilliant ideas I think I should start immediately. I have this feeling, "Well, if I can do that, I can do ANYTHING!"

Cue the sore throat. Usually within hours, my glands will swell, and I'll have trouble swallowing. By the next day, I have to breathe through my mouth, and I'm going through boxes of tissues. You know the drill. There is nothing unique or interesting about my transformation into a gecko.

I never become severely ill. I never get anything requiring medical assistance. I just get the most boring variety of knock-me-on-my-butt illness known, and I have to deal with it for a few days—days that last exactly as long as they are going to, no matter how much fresh-squeezed orange juice I drink.

And I don't have a solution. I wish I could end by saying, "Then one day, I discovered what my problem was! All I needed to do was..."

Because if I figured that out, I would share it with everyone.

Instead, my best advice to gecko self is: Find a warm spot. Sleep as much as possible. Be extra nice to people. And remember there is nothing so special about me that I don't deserve to be a gecko from time to time.

Till next time, Carrie

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders



Supreme Court Upholds State's Redrawn Congressional Map

The U.S. Supreme Court's 6-3 decision to reverse a lower court's ruling and uphold the mid-decade redrawn congressional map for Texas sent candidates scrambling to file or opt to retire with the filing deadline on Monday, Dec. 8. The map is likely to give Republican candidates wins in up to five congressional districts previously held by Democrats.

The majority on the court agreed that the redistricting was done for partisan purposes, calling it "indisputable." The Dallas Morning News reported. Those opposing it claim it was redrawn to dilute the voting power of the state's minorities in Houston, Dallas and South Texas.

SIX TEXAS GOP MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ARE LEAVING

At least six Texas Republican members of Congress are retiring or seeking a higher office, the Houston Chronicle reported. The latest to announce his retirement is U.S. Rep. Troy Nehls, R-Richmond, one of President Trump's most ardent backers in that chamber. His brother, Trevor, has announced he plans to run for that seat.

Others planning to leave when their term ends in 2027 include U.S. Reps. Jody Arrington, R-Plano; Morgan Luttrell, R-Magnolia; Michael McCaul, R-Austin; Wesley Hunt, R-Houston, who is running for the U.S. Senate spot now held by John Cornyn; and Chip Roy, R-Hays County, who is running for Texas attorney general.

Republicans currently hold a 219-seat majority in the House, with Democrats holding 213 seats. There are three vacancies.

'BOUNTY HUNTER' LAW TARGETS ABORTION PILLS

A new Texas law targeting women accessing abortion pills shipped from out of state allows private citizens to sue out-of-state abortion pill prescribers, manufacturers and distributors, the Houston Chronicle reported. Each violation could bring with it \$100,000 in damages, similar to the enforcement mechanism used in 2021 to ban abortions in the state after six weeks of pregnancy.

The law targets groups that operate outside of Texas and ship abortion pills to people in the state, as well as doctors in states where abortion is still legal who write prescriptions to Texas women. They will now be open to civil liability claims if they "knowingly fail" to prevent their abortion drugs from reaching Texas.

The bill's author, state Rep. Jeff Leach, R-Plano, said the goal of his bill was to protect mothers from the potential side effects of the pills.



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

Texas first state to invest in crypto

After passage of a bill last regular session that gives the state comptroller authority to create a publicly funded cryptocurrency reserve, the state has purchased about \$5 million of bitcoin, the Texas Standard reported. Backers say crypto has been surging in value for the past five years and the state should get involved, especially with the rapid growth of data mining centers in Texas.

Opponents say crypto is a risky asset with volatile swings. The state has appropriated a total of \$10 million that can be invested in crypto, which is a small fraction of the state's general fund.

STATE'S 'BATHROOM BILL' NOW IN EFFECT

Transgender people in Texas will no longer legally be allowed to use multi-stall restrooms that do not match their gender identity at birth, as a new law took effect Dec. 4, the Austin American-Statesman reported. The law applies to all public buildings, as well as public schools and universities.

The bathroom bill passed last September after a decade of failed attempts. When similar legislation was introduced previously, some members of the business community argued its passage would harm Texas' ability to attract new business and jobs.

Rather than punishing individuals who use a bathroom not conforming to their birth gender, the law requires public agencies to take "every reasonable step" to ensure the law is being followed. Violations can be reported to the attorney general, who could file lawsuits and seek fines.

"The actual legislation doesn't really tell folks what they should be doing as far as enforcement is concerned," Brad Pritchett, CEO of Equality Texas, an LGBTQ advocacy

group non-profit, said. "What it does is it kind of creates a kind of threat to any municipality. At any time, someone could accuse them of being noncompliant with the law."

The law does not apply to non-public spaces, including private universities or colleges.

PATRICK PROPOSES GIVING TEXAS NEWBORNS \$1,000 EACH

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick has proposed a state program to give every newborn baby in Texas \$1,000 invested in the stock market, The Texas Tribune reported. He said the proposal would be a priority during the 2027 legislative session. It mirrors a federal plan created under Trump's tax and spending bill.

The initiative, if passed by the Legislature, would cost the state around \$400 million annually. The money could not be accessed until the child turns 18.

"If I see a great idea from the President that helps Texans, my first question is always, 'why not do it in Texas, too?'" Patrick posted on social media. "This is a great way to return money back to families and to teach the value of savings and compound interest to young Texans."

Some conservative groups are pushing back, saying it would increase state spending and the growth of government.

"Creating state-run wealth accounts for every newborn violates key liberty principles: It expands government rather than limiting it, replaces personal responsibility with state dependency and undermines free enterprise by turning the state into an investor," the Texas Policy Research nonprofit posted on social media.

TEXAS HEMP INDUSTRY FEELING EFFECT OF LOOMING BAN

A nationwide ban on THC, the psychoactive ingredient in some hemp products, is already affecting business owners selling products derived from hemp, according to the Chronicle. But the owners are hopeful they can convince Congress to overturn the ban before it takes effect next November.

A state ban was passed by the Legislature and vetoed by Gov. Greg Abbott. However, by executive order, he has banned minors from buying such products. The hemp industry in Texas is worth anywhere from \$5.5 billion to \$10 billion, depending on how it is calculated. Approximately 8,000 retailers are scattered around the state.

"Everybody knows, as a standalone bill, this ban would not have passed, and that's why I think everybody is pretty much of the mindset that this won't hold," said Lukas Gilkey, co-owner of a hemp product store who led a public lobbying campaign against the state ban.

The president of the Texas Hemp Growers Association said several members are considering pulling out of growing hemp amidst the uncertainty.

"You throw in all this regulatory uncertainty and the rules changing, it gets real tricky, real fast," Kyle Bingham said. "I don't think it makes sense for anyone to grow right now, any form of the plant."

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches, Lufkin and Cedar Park.

Email: gborders@texaspress.com.

Advertisement for Hoffman-Liu Design Associates featuring a snowman illustration and contact information.

Advertisement for Northeast News with contact details and a list of staff members.

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

**Aldine Independent School District**  
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes  
in Fund Balances  
Governmental Funds  
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2025

| Data Control Codes                                           | 199<br>General Fund   | 599<br>Debt Service Fund | 699<br>Capital Projects Fund | Total<br>Nonmajor Funds | 98<br>Total<br>Governmental Funds |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>REVENUES</b>                                              |                       |                          |                              |                         |                                   |
| 5700 Local and intermediate sources                          | \$ 246,383,465        | \$ 90,421,209            | \$ 21,073,742                | \$ 11,543,425           | \$ 369,421,841                    |
| 5800 State program revenues                                  | 408,015,378           | 6,444,116                | -                            | 11,840,231              | 426,299,725                       |
| 5900 Federal program revenues                                | 9,070,507             | -                        | -                            | 135,725,981             | 144,796,488                       |
| 5020 Total revenues                                          | 663,469,350           | 96,865,325               | 21,073,742                   | 159,109,637             | 940,518,054                       |
| <b>EXPENDITURES</b>                                          |                       |                          |                              |                         |                                   |
| Current:                                                     |                       |                          |                              |                         |                                   |
| 0011 Instruction                                             | 390,414,901           | -                        | 19,277,331                   | 58,508,981              | 468,201,213                       |
| 0012 Instructional resources and media services              | 1,184,773             | -                        | -                            | 228,633                 | 1,413,406                         |
| 0013 Curriculum and instructional staff development          | 17,605,673            | -                        | 6,762,800                    | 19,584,083              | 43,952,556                        |
| 0021 Instructional leadership                                | 15,711,049            | -                        | -                            | 2,981,196               | 18,692,245                        |
| 0023 School leadership                                       | 47,760,957            | -                        | -                            | 2,184,744               | 49,945,701                        |
| 0031 Guidance, counseling, and evaluation services           | 34,846,021            | -                        | -                            | 8,678,367               | 43,524,388                        |
| 0032 Social work services                                    | 3,126,831             | -                        | -                            | 1,481,851               | 4,608,682                         |
| 0033 Health services                                         | 7,379,181             | -                        | -                            | 173,603                 | 7,552,784                         |
| 0034 Student transportation                                  | 43,388,383            | -                        | 5,799,860                    | 485,073                 | 49,673,316                        |
| 0035 Food services                                           | -                     | -                        | -                            | 50,427,089              | 50,427,089                        |
| 0036 Extracurricular activities                              | 10,789,732            | -                        | 495,472                      | 1,731,297               | 13,016,501                        |
| 0041 General administration                                  | 20,533,492            | -                        | 290,013                      | 1,146,721               | 21,970,226                        |
| 0051 Facilities maintenance and operations                   | 68,385,683            | -                        | 7,396,452                    | 336,888                 | 76,119,023                        |
| 0052 Security and monitoring services                        | 13,889,897            | -                        | 1,129,643                    | 2,803,262               | 17,822,802                        |
| 0053 Data processing services                                | 16,667,238            | -                        | 257,482                      | 2,204,256               | 19,128,976                        |
| 0061 Community services                                      | 766,145               | -                        | -                            | 6,186,420               | 6,952,565                         |
| Debt service:                                                |                       |                          |                              |                         |                                   |
| 0071 Principal on long-term debt                             | 3,776,764             | 33,630,000               | 257,482                      | 9,231                   | 37,673,477                        |
| 0072 Interest on long-term debt                              | 175,424               | 53,282,323               | 2,938                        | -                       | 53,460,685                        |
| 0073 Issuance costs and fees                                 | 112,235               | 2,762,778                | 147,296                      | -                       | 3,022,309                         |
| Capital outlay:                                              |                       |                          |                              |                         |                                   |
| 0081 Facilities acquisition and construction                 | 7,722,267             | -                        | 29,396,887                   | 16,000                  | 37,135,154                        |
| Intergovernmental:                                           |                       |                          |                              |                         |                                   |
| 0093 Payments related to shared services arrangements        | 1,301,512             | -                        | -                            | -                       | 1,301,512                         |
| 0097 Payments to tax increment fund                          | 11,123,856            | -                        | -                            | -                       | 11,123,856                        |
| 0099 Other intergovernmental charges                         | 2,282,331             | -                        | -                            | -                       | 2,282,331                         |
| 6030 Total expenditures                                      | 718,944,345           | 89,675,101               | 71,213,656                   | 159,167,695             | 1,039,000,797                     |
| 1100 Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures       | (55,474,995)          | 7,190,224                | (50,139,914)                 | (58,058)                | (98,482,743)                      |
| <b>OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)</b>                        |                       |                          |                              |                         |                                   |
| 7901 Refunding bonds issued                                  | -                     | 259,415,000              | -                            | -                       | 259,415,000                       |
| 7911 Capital-related debt issued (regular bonds)             | -                     | -                        | 40,000,000                   | -                       | 40,000,000                        |
| 7912 Sale of real and personal property                      | 27,871,207            | -                        | -                            | -                       | 27,871,207                        |
| 7913 Issuance of right-to-use leases and subscription assets | 3,042,860             | -                        | 257,482                      | -                       | 3,300,342                         |
| 7915 Transfers in                                            | -                     | -                        | -                            | 67,029                  | 67,029                            |
| 7916 Premium on issuance of bonds                            | -                     | 32,392,121               | -                            | -                       | 32,392,121                        |
| 8911 Transfers out                                           | (2,508,328)           | -                        | -                            | -                       | (2,508,328)                       |
| 8940 Payment to bond refunding escrow agent                  | -                     | (291,704,755)            | -                            | -                       | (291,704,755)                     |
| 7080 Total other financing sources (uses)                    | 28,405,739            | 102,366                  | 40,257,482                   | 67,029                  | 68,832,616                        |
| 1200 Net change in fund balances                             | (27,069,256)          | 7,292,590                | (9,882,432)                  | 8,971                   | (29,650,127)                      |
| 0100 Fund balances - beginning                               | 397,614,060           | 48,000,002               | 385,946,535                  | 30,751,689              | 862,312,286                       |
| 3000 <b>FUND BALANCES - ENDING</b>                           | <b>\$ 370,544,804</b> | <b>\$ 55,292,592</b>     | <b>\$ 376,064,103</b>        | <b>\$ 30,760,660</b>    | <b>\$ 832,662,159</b>             |

The Notes to the Financial Statements are an integral part of this statement.

**FOOTBALL SEASON WEEK 17:**

**Aggies host Miami in first round of CFP: Texans to remain hot against lowly Raiders**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

were not happy with their exclusion from the CFP field and declined a bowl bid. As an avid Irish fan, I found that infantile. The administration looks petty with this move. What's wrong with rewarding your seniors a chance to play a 13th game, allow your younger players to get in 15 extra practices and give your fans a chance to travel to say Florida for a bowl game? Notre Dame should be ashamed for taking its football and staying home.

In the NFL, the Texans, the hottest team in the NFL, will look to make it six straight wins when they host a bad Las Vegas team at NG Stadium on Sunday. Two weeks ago, the Texans defense came through once again and was the difference maker in their 20-10 road win at Kansas City. With the Colts losing starting QB Daniel Jones to a season-ending Achilles injury, the AFC South is now a two-team race between Houston and Jacksonville. Who would have thought that after the Texans lost their first three games of the season.

While the Texans host the Raiders, Week 16 is loaded with key games, starting with the Rams visiting the Seahawks on Thursday Night Football in a huge NFC West game. Both teams improved to 10-3 two weeks ago and the winner of this one could very well win the division and be in line for the top seed in the NFC come playoff time.

Week 16 also brings us Saturday games and there's another big one in the NFC North as the Packers will visit the Bears at 7:30 on FOX. Two weeks ago, Green Bay took over first place in the division with a 28-21 win over Chicago at Lambeau Field. A Packers win could go a long way in securing the North title, but it won't be easy in what should be a frigid night in the Windy City.

In other key games, the Cowboys hope to keep their slim playoff hopes alive when they host the Chargers on Sunday. AFC East leader New England visits a desperate Baltimore team, which lost at home to Pittsburgh two weeks ago to put a dent in its playoff hopes.

There's also a big one in the AFC South as Tampa Bay visits the surprising Carolina Panthers. Two weeks ago, the Bucs lost at home to a two-win New Orleans team, while the Panthers enjoyed their bye week. The loss left the two teams tied atop the division.

Texans fans will be rooting for Denver on Sunday when the Broncos host Jacksonville, which currently leads the AFC South. In another key game, Pittsburgh and Detroit meet in the Motor



City. Both teams need to win to keep their playoff hopes alive.

Week 16 concludes with Monday Night Football as the surging San Francisco 49ers visit the struggling Colts.

Before we look at this weekend's huge schedule, let's review last week's record. A 5-5 week brought the season record to 106-56 (65%).

Now, onto this weekend's game.

**CFP FIRST ROUND**

**Alabama at Oklahoma** - The CFP begins on Friday night when Alabama visits Oklahoma in a meeting of two SEC teams. This is a rematch of the meeting between these two teams on Nov. 15 in Tuscaloosa, which was won by the Sooners, 23-21. Bama suffered a number of untimely turnovers and the OU offense took advantage of them. The Sooners are stout on defense, but their offense has struggled all year long behind dual-threat QB John Mather (2,678 passing yards, 12 TDs/416 rushing yards, 7 TDs). Mather will need help from running back Tony Blaylock (444 yards, 4 TDs) and wideout Isaiiah Satenga (65 receptions, 948 yards, 7 TDs) if they hope to make it two straight over the Crimson Tide. Alabama needed the extra time to prepare for this game after it was roughed up by Georgia in the SEC title game, falling 28-7. Bama has struggled to run the ball all year long and that was very evident when they rushed for -3 yards against the Bulldogs. The Tide should have starting running back Jam Miller (493 yards, 3 TDs) back for this game and that might help QB Ty Simpson (3,268 yards, 26 TDs) open up the passing game and make plays to wide receivers Germie Bernard (57 receptions, 782 yards, 7 TDs) and Ryan Williams (42 receptions, 631 yards, 4 TDs). The Bama offensive line will have its hands full with an OU defense that recorded 41 sacks this season. Something tells me Alabama will turn the 'tide' this time around. My pick, Alabama 24, Oklahoma 20

**Tulane at Mississippi** - No. 11 Tulane heads to Oxford, MS for a rematch

against Ole Miss on Saturday at 11:30 a.m. on TNT. The Green Wave are hoping they play better than they did in September when they were blown out 45-10, who at the time were led by head coach Lane Kiffin. Kiffin left for the LSU job and defensive coordinator Pete Golding. Tulane will rely on QB Jake Retzlaff (2,862 passing yards, 14 TDs/610 rushing yards, 16 TDs) and wide receiver Shazz Preston (35 receptions, 598 yards, 4) to make plays on offense. The defense will have its hands full with an explosive Ole Miss offense led by QB Trinidad Chambliss (3,016 passing yards, 18 TDs/470 rushing yards, 6 TDs), running back Kewan Lacy (1,279 yards, 20 TDs) and big-play wide receiver Harrison Wallace III (46 receptions, 719 yards, 3 TDs). Look for the Rebs to be focused for this one and will make it another long day for the Green Wave. My pick, Ole Miss 34, Tulane 13

**Miami at Texas A&M** - The No. 7 Aggies host the No. 10 Hurricanes in what should be the best first-round game of this year's CFP at 11 a.m. on Saturday on ABC. The Aggie defense will look to force Miami QB Carson Beck (3,072 yards, 25 TDs) into making some key mistakes as he is prone to get rattled at times. A&M has a stout pass rush and if they can slow down Beck, running back Mark Fletcher (685 yards, 10 TDs) and solid wideouts Malachi Tony (84 receptions, 970 yards, 7 TDs) and Keelan Moore (41 receptions, 557 yards, 1 TD), they should be able to take care of business at Kyle Field. The Miami defense will have its hands full with a loaded Aggie offense, led by dual-threat QB Marcel Reed (2,932 passing yards, 25 TDs/466 rushing yards, 6 TDs), running back Ruben Owens II (618 yards, 6 TDs) and explosive wide receivers KC Concepcion (57 receptions, 886 yards, 11 total TDs) and Mario Craver (52 receptions, 825 yards, 4 TDs). Look for the Aggie defense to make some key plays in the fourth quarter to advance A&M to the second round meeting with No. 2-ranked Ohio State. My pick, Texas A&M 33, Miami 23

**NFL**

**Los Angeles Rams at Seattle**

Week 16 begins with a big one for the Thursday Night Football crew with an NFC West showdown between the Rams and Seahawks. Both teams entered Week 15 with identical 10-3 records, but LA holds the tie breaker thanks to their 21-19 home win over Seattle on Nov. 16. Both teams have a number of weapons on offense as the Rams are led by QB Matthew Stafford (3,354 yards, 35 TDs), running back Kyren Williams (952 yards, 11 total TDs) and wideouts Puca Nacua (93 receptions, 1,186 yards, 6 TDs) and Davante Adams (56 receptions, 718 yards, 14 TDs). Seattle is led by QB Sam Darnold (3,162 yards, 22 TDs), running back Kenneth Walker III (762 yards, 4 TDs) and big-play wide receiver Jaxon Smith-Njigba (89 receptions, 1,428 yards, 9 TDs). Both teams are solid on defense, but I give the edge to Seattle's especially since this game will be at home and the Seahawks fans will be loud and raucous. The winner of this game could very well earn the top seed in the NFC, so there will be a lot at stake come Sunday. My pick, Seattle 26, Los Angeles Rams 23

**Green Bay at Chicago** - The NFL starts its Saturday package and has a good one set for prime time as the Packers will visit the Bears on FOX at 7:30 p.m. in a key NFC North contest. Two weeks ago, Green Bay won the first meeting, 28-21, which moved the Pack into sole possession of the division lead. The Bears know they must win this one to remain in the hunt for the division crown. Chicago will need a big night from QB Caleb Williams (2,908 passing yards, 19 TDs/321 rushing yards, 3 TDs). The Packers struggle to stop the run, so look for the Bears to feature their two-headed rushing attack led by D'Andre Swift (837 yards, 5 TDs) and rookie Kyle Monangai (648 yards, 5 TDs). The Packers will look for another solid game from QB Jordan Love (3,028 yards, 22 TDs), who tossed three TD passes in the win over the Bears two weeks ago. Love has a solid runner as well in Josh Jacobs (817 rushing yards, 12 TDs/31 receptions, 231 yards). Look for Micah Parsons and the GB defense to get after Williams and force a key turnover or two as the Packers pick up a big road win and set their sites on the NFC North title. My pick, Green Bay 26, Chicago 23

**Las Vegas at Houston** - The Texans look to continue their post-season run when they host a bad Las Vegas Raiders team on Sunday at NRG Stadium at noon. This one could get ugly early as the Texans defense, ranked No. 1 in the NFL, will look to tee off on a horrible Raiders offense. Look for edge rushers Danielle Hunter (11 sacks) and Will Anderson Jr. (110.5 sacks) to have a field day against a porous Vegas offensive line. On offense, the Texans are playing better with C.J. Stroud (2,181 yards, 12 TDs) playing better every week since he missed three straight weeks after he sustained a concussion against Denver. Rookie running back Woody Marks (554

yards, 5 total TDs) and wide receiver Nico Collins (61 receptions, 916 yards, 4 TDs) to have big days as the Texans roll to the win. My pick, Houston 34, Las Vegas 12

**Los Angeles Chargers at Dallas**

The Cowboys host the Chargers looking to remain in the hunt for a playoff berth. The Dallas defense will have its hands full trying to contain LA QB Justin Herbert (2,981 passing yards, 22 TDs/419 rushing yards, 1 TD). Herbert played with a broken left hand two weeks ago but led his team to a 22-19 home win over Philadelphia. He led the Chargers with 66 rushing yards in that game. Herbert will look for help from running back Kimani Vidal (587 yards, 3 TDs) and wide receivers Ladd McConkey (59 receptions, 695 yards, 5 TDs) and Keenan Allen (63 receptions, 644 yards, 4 TDs). The LA defense will have its hands full when it takes on an explosive Cowboys offense led by QB Dak Prescott (3,637 yards, 26 TDs), running back Javonte Williams (1,022 yards, 11 total TDs), big-play wide receivers George Pickens (78 receptions, 1,179 yards, 8 TDs) and CeeDee Lamb (57 receptions, 865 yards, 3 TDs) and tight end Jake Ferguson (75 receptions, 554 yards, 7 TDs). Dallas knows it has little room for error from here on out, so look for the Cowboys to be very focused come Sunday. My pick, Dallas 32, Los Angeles Chargers 26

**New England at Baltimore**

The Patriots head to Baltimore looking to keep control of the top spot in the AFC East, while the Ravens will be looking to remain in the AFC North race. Two weeks ago, the Ravens dropped a 27-22 decision at home to the Steelers. QB Lamar Jackson (2,060 passing yards, 16 TDs/307 rushing yards, 2 TDs) does not look like he's totally healthy and he could be in for a long day against a very good Patriots defense. Jackson will need a big day from running back Derrick Henry (1,025 yards, 10 TDs). NE will look for another big day from QB Drake Maye (3,412 passing yards, 23 TDs/319 rushing yards, 2 TDs), rookie running back TreVeyon Henderson (625 yards, 6 total TDs) and veteran wide receiver Stefan Diggs (64 receptions, 705 yards, 3 TDs). Look for the Pats to continue the Ravens woes come Sunday. My pick, New England 24, Baltimore 20

**Tampa Bay at Carolina**

When the season began, few people thought this late-season game would mean much, but it sure does now. TB looked like a lock to cruise to the NFC South title, while the Panthers were considered a team that would struggle once again. But the Panthers have been one of the surprise teams in the league this year thanks to QB Bryce Young (2,337 yards, 18 TDs), running back Rico Dowdell (929 yards, 6 total TDs) and rookie wide receiver Tetairoa McMillan (57 receptions, 826 yards, 6 TDs). Carolina also has a solid defense, which will look to make life miserable for Bucs QB Baker Mayfield (2,722 yards, 20

TDs). Two weeks ago, TB lost at home to a two-win New Orleans team as Mayfield struggled to make plays in the passing game. He will need help from rookie wideout Emeka Egbuka (54 receptions, 806 yards, 6 TDs). Carolina is tough at home, which the Bucs will discover come Sunday. My pick, Carolina 26, Tampa Bay 24

**Jacksonville at Denver**

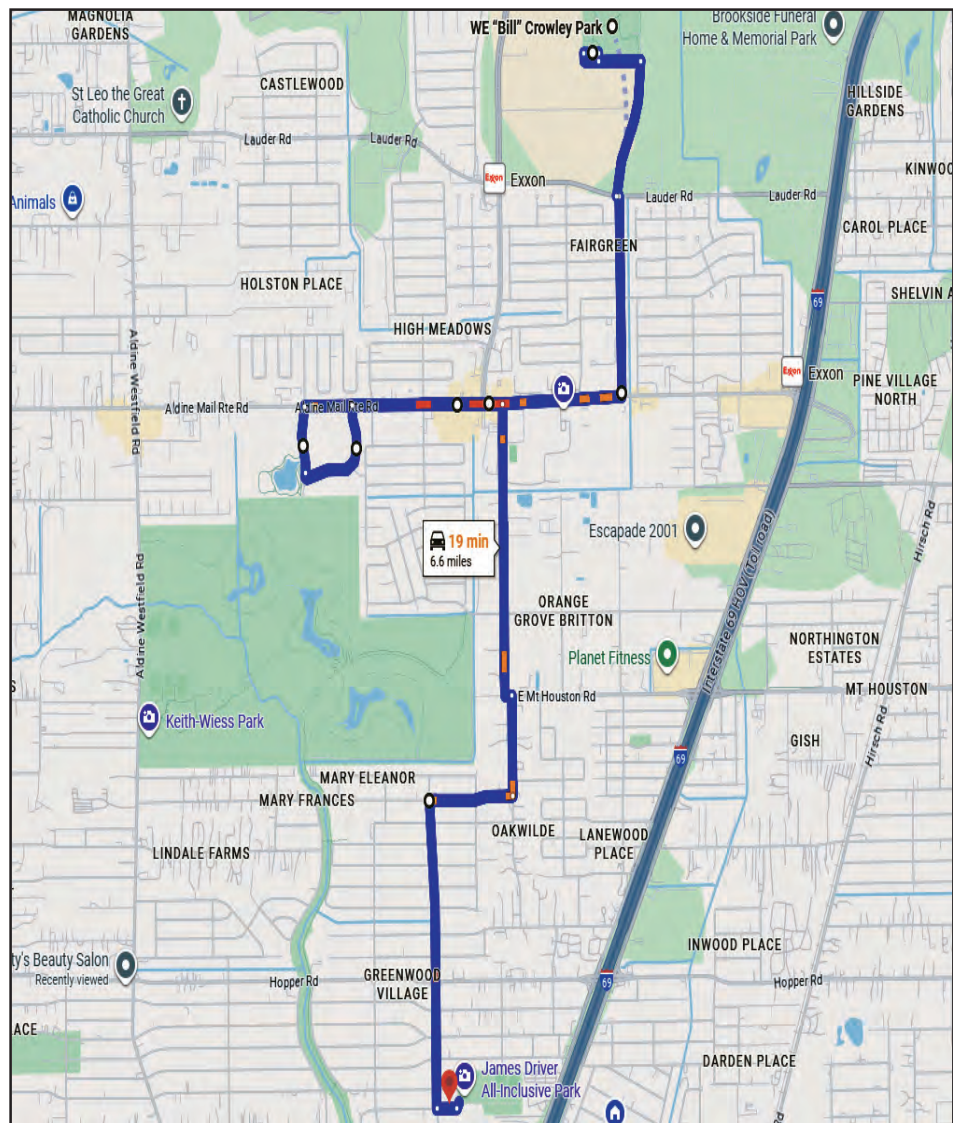
Texans fans will be rooting for the Broncos to beat the Jags on Sunday, which could help Houston's AFC South title hopes. Two weeks ago, the Jags dismantled Indy as QB Trevor Lawrence (2,880 yards, 18 TDs) tossed two TD passes. He will be facing a very good Denver defense, and will need help from running back Travis Etienne (917 yards, 7 TDs). While Denver is solid on defense, its offense has struggled at times as second-year QB Bo Nix (2,954 passing yards, 19 TDs/244 rushing yards, 4 TDs) is still learning head coach Sean Payton's intricate offense. He could use some help from rookie running back RJ Harvey (354 yards, 5 TDs) and wide receiver Courtland Sutton (56 receptions, 773 yards, 5 TDs). Look for the Broncos defense to be the difference maker come Sunday as the Jags suffer a tough, late-season loss. My pick, Denver 23, Jacksonville 18

**Pittsburgh at Detroit**

The Steelers head to the Motor City looking to keep control of the top spot in the AFC North. Two weeks ago, Aaron Rodgers (2,370 yards, 20 TDs) and Co. picked up a huge road win at Baltimore, while the Lions remained in the NFC Wild Card hunt with a 44-30 win on Thursday Night Football over the Cowboys. The Lions offense will look to attack a struggling Steeler defense with QB Jared Goff (3,334 yards, 26 TDs), running back Jahmyr Gibbs (1,062 rushing yards, 13 TDs/58 receptions, 474 yards, 3 TDs) and wide receiver Amon-Ra St. Brown (81 receptions, 976 yards, 9 TDs). Look for the Detroit offense to be too much for the Pittsburgh defense on Sunday. My pick, Detroit 31, Pittsburgh 23

**San Francisco at Indianapolis**

Week 16 concludes with Monday Night Football as the 49ers visit the suddenly struggling Colts. Indy will be without starting QB Daniel Jones, who was lost for the season two weeks ago when he sustained an Achilles injury against Jacksonville. Backup QB Riley Leonard is hobbled by a knee injury. The Colts are so desperate for a QB, that they entertained thoughts of trying 44-year-old Phillip Rivers a game. Good luck with that. Look for the 49ers to roll behind QB Brock Purdy (1,147 yards, 13 TDs) and running back Christian McCaffrey (849 rushing yards, 8 TDs/85 receptions, 806 yards, 5 TDs). The Colts hope running back Jonathan Taylor (1,356 rushing yards, 16 TDs/35 receptions, 304 yards, 2 TDs) to have a big night, but he won't be enough to get his team past a hot SF team. My pick, San Francisco 30, Indianapolis 18



Parade Starting Point will be at W.E. Bill Crowley Park & end at Deputy Darren Almendarez Community Center. Join us along the route and bring out your lawn chairs to sit and watch the parade come through the East Aldine Town Center, Aldine Mail Route, Gloger, and Bentley.



\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
Please send me a  
plushy, dog, bear. I was  
good. Thank you!  
Angel, 7 years old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
Please send me a  
Nintendo switch, 2  
Disr, pue. I was good.  
Christopher, 7 years  
old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
Please send me a VR  
toy, train, TV, toy can.  
Alex, 6 years old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
I want two more horses  
and black Nike jeans.  
Also a pitbull in New  
Mexico World Cup  
jersey FIFA, World  
Cup ball and a PSS!!  
Louis Rivera, 6 years  
old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
I want a baby brother,  
a Santa hat, real  
glasses, my teacher's  
Kat eye. Hello Kitty,  
Spider-Man, my  
friends, Mexican jeans,

Christmas wish list:  
new bed, lil bag, Takis,  
clothes, water bottle,  
Christmas calendar,  
Snoopy stuff.  
Sophia Livay, 9 years  
old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
I want a Xbox, and a  
blanket, and my dad,  
and shoes 4's, and I  
want hot wheels, and  
car toys and I Spider-  
Man hoodie and an  
apple pod's and to fix  
my phone. But yes, bye.  
Santa, please.  
Alexa Mejia, 10 years  
old  
Orange, Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
I want a bike in VR  
headset and then I  
want a Chromebook  
Antonio Valdez, 10  
years old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,

I want a Grinch plushy,  
Play-Doh, crocs 3/4,  
Dino, Nuggets, blanket  
and bracelets. One  
more thing, a hoodie  
size 10.  
Marilyn Medrano, 9  
years old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
I would like an iPhone  
13. I have been good  
kid I have never had or  
spent time on  
Christmas. I want that  
iPhone 13 in black.  
Pretty please.  
Hezekia Ruiz, 10 years  
old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
I really want a plush,  
shoes, blanket, hoodie,  
dinosaur toys, new pair  
of glasses.  
Jacobh Hernandez, 10  
years old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,

I hope you can get  
these toys, here we  
go... I want slime, mug,  
slime, blanket, hoodie,  
stickers, bracelets,  
frozen plushy,  
Nintendo, switch,  
magic, flying ball, toy,  
kitchen, dinosaur,  
misium kid camera,  
frozen toys for girls,  
Air Force, mini charm,  
now this is all I want  
Santa the end of my  
toys I want. Thank you.  
Kelly Alfaro, 9 years  
old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
I want a Labubu, four  
plushy, battle for  
dream and as no,  
blanket, computer, and  
to see my friends.  
Natalie Barrera, 11  
years old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
I want a JBL speaker a  
new watch a new  
cowboy hat and \$60  
Robux card.

David Lopez, 10 years  
old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
I want new dinosaur  
toys, a computer and  
\$50. I also want  
chicken nuggets and a  
pet monkey and piggy  
dandys and Astro plush  
and a Labubu and for  
the last you can choose  
Santa.  
Michael Elson JR  
Rivera, 10 years old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa, I wish a  
Dino nuggets, and  
Bucky clothes, choir  
sonmon with a pochixs  
plushy.  
Ayden Komor, 11 years  
old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
IHOP Santa give  
Lowrider RC, it's the  
red cat, six TV for Car  
in bright blue with light  
blue pin stripping. I  
would like blue lights  
under the car.  
Leo Rivera, 10 years old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
This year I want Legos  
that can form a car.

Another thing that one  
is for all parents to be  
safe. Some crocs will  
be nice, last thing I  
want is passports to go  
to El Salvador and see  
my cousins. This is all I  
want for Christmas.  
Sergio Pulido, 10 years  
old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
For this Christmas, I  
wish to have a VR. My  
second wish I won 100  
or 50 Robux to buy me  
avatars and for steel a  
brainrot. My last wish  
is I want money to buy  
me clothes or games  
for my Nintendo switch  
or socks. This is all I  
want for Christmas.  
Bradley Cordero, 10  
years old  
Orange Grove  
elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
These are the things I  
want for Christmas. My  
first thing I want for  
Christmas is clothes.  
My second thing is  
some shoes. My third  
thing is some charms  
for my bracelet. My  
last thing I want for  
Christmas is some new  
accessories. These are  
all the things I want  
for Christmas.  
Jocelyn Coronado, 10  
years old  
Orange Grove

## CHURCH PAGE

### BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Bethlehem (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Where did the angel Gabriel appear to Mary saying, "Blessed art thou among women"? Nazareth, Tyre, Ninevah, Gazi
3. With perhaps two different biblical answers, who was the father of Joseph? Jacob/Heli, Gideon/Ishmael, Solomon/Nahum, Samuel/Pilate

4. Which Old Testament prophet predicted Jesus would be born in Bethlehem? Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum
  5. For the journey to Bethlehem, how did Mary and Joseph travel? Bible not specific, Cart, Rode donkey, Small raft
  6. Which of these wasn't a gift from the wise men (Magi)? Silver, Myrrh, Gold, Frankincense
- ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Nazareth, 3) Jacob/Heli, 4) Micah, 5) Bible not specific, 6) Silver  
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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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

...When they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Detail from "The Three Magi" by Karl Schmidt-Rottluff (1917)

MATTHEW 2:11

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**Letters to Santa**

Dear Santa, Esta Navidad, las cosas que quiero tener son varias cosas. Lo más importante es ver a mi abuela por otra vez en un año y medio otra cosa que quisiera tener es una patineta eléctrica. La última cosa que quiero tener salud y estudiar más. Neymar Velasquez, 10 años, Orange Grove Elementary

juntos. Jefferson Salinas, 11 años Orange Grove elementary

Santa, ojalá me traigas esto para Navidad. Jason Garcia, 8 años Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa, This Christmas I want so many things. I want another is Snoopy doll, also I would like an Apple Pencil for my tablet. All these show what I want for Christmas. Sasha Victoria Agüero, 10 years old Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa, Esta Navidad hay muchas cosas que quiero. Quiero una computadora, unos zapatos y estar con lo más importante que es mi familia, también quiero ver por un sueño a mi papá, te quiero mucho Papá. Otras cosas son un Snoopy y cosas de ropa. Gracias santa por darme la mejor mamá y padrastro. Los quiero a los dos. Eliana Chirinos, 11 años Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa, Merry Christmas. First I want an iPhone because I have always wanted one. Also, I want an Apple Pencil because I can use it for my iPhone. For last I want a notebook with colors because I like to draw. These are all the presents for Christmas. Jenedith V, Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa, Para esta Navidad, yo quiero pasar el año. Mi segunda petición es tener un abrazo de mi papá. Mi tercera petición es tener un carrito de control remoto para jugar con mi hermano. Mi cuarta petición es explotar, cohetes con mi familia. Pero lo que más quiero es que mi mamá y mi papá que vuelvan para pasar la Navidad todos

Dear Santa, En esta Navidad, yo quiero unos patines azules, también un trompo de cuerda azul. Esto es lo que me encantaría esta Navidad. Raymond A., 8 años Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa, For Christmas, I want the iPhone 17. Also, I want a big stitch and a big Snoopy. At last I wanna color for me and my best friend that is Dana. All this shows what I want for Christmas. Merry Christmas. Mayte Gomez, 10 years old Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa, Para esta Navidad, a mí me gustaría tener un peluche de Snoopy. Además, voy a querer que me prepares galletas con leche y ya

Dear Santa, Para esta Navidad, yo quiero unos patines azules, también un trompo de cuerda azul. Esto es lo que me encantaría esta Navidad. Raymond A., 8 años Orange Grove elementary

**Letters to Santa**

Dear Santa, Yo en esta Navidad quiero tres regalos. Sé que es mucho pero si no puedes traérmelos no pasa nada. Yo sé que me he portado mal y tienes muchos niños para darles regalos. Entonces no importa si no me traes nada. Primer regalo. Quiero que mi familia y yo tengamos salud y nunca nos pase nada y también mi familia de México. Segundo, yo

quiero un iPhone 16 Pro Max, porque mi teléfono se rompió. También conocer a Tom Naultitz cuando era joven en el 200, es mi sueño favorito, y otros regalo es tener otro bebé Reborn que quería para Navidad. Bianca Vázquez, 10 Years old Orange Grove elementary

Navidad. Raymond A, 8 years old Orange Grove Elementary

Dear Santa, Yo quiero una casa de Barbie, una muñeca de Baby Reborn, salud, una Angela, un Stitch, zapatos, ropa y un peluche de Snoopy. Pero lo que más quiero es que mi familia y salud, y también quiero un gato. Un perro, y también quiero una piñata, porque el 31 de diciembre es mi cumpleaños. Tiffany R, 8 years old Orange Grove Elementary

Dear Santa, Esta Navidad quiero una variedad de cosas. Primero te voy a pedir que ya no me traigas carbón. Otra cosa te quiero que quiero un viaje a México. La última cosa es un Xbox cinco y Roblox. Todo esto es lo que quiero de Navidad. Pablo, 10 years old Orange Grove Elementary

Dear Santa, En esta Navidad, yo quiero unos patines azules, también un trompo de cobra azul. Esto es lo que me encantaría esta Navidad. En esta Navidad, yo quiero unos patines azules, también un trompo de cobra azul. Esto es lo que me encantaría esta

Dear Santa, Can I get a chocolate box and a cologne for boys under 13 age, a Snoopy plush, artful plushy makeship and a house for my parents with money please. This is all I want for Christmas. Eric Daniel, 9 years old Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa, En esta Navidad, yo quiero unos patines azules, también un trompo de cobra azul. Esto es lo que me encantaría esta Navidad. En esta Navidad, yo quiero unos patines azules, también un trompo de cobra azul. Esto es lo que me encantaría esta

Dear Santa, I just want a zipud this year because I don't have a zipup and that is the only thing I like. And if you want, you can give me the new jersey of Mexico. My third thing is a box of Legos because I like to build them. This is only one for Christmas. Diego Tzintzun, 9 years old

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# Letters to Santa

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
Esta Navidad, yo quiero mucho, quiero un peluche de tung tung, y también quiero un peluche de kitsune de roblox y por último, quiero una depenche de luz de blox y eso es todo lo que quiero es esta Navidad.  
Ian Mateo, 9 años  
Orange Grove elementary

abuelito y abuelita en Guatemala, estaría más que contenta, pondría muy feliz porque nunca he tenido una. Otra cosa que te quiero pedir, es un peluche de Snoopy porque siempre he querido uno, si no me lo puedes traer está bien. Si pudiera ir con mi abuelito y abuelita en Guatemala, estaría más que contenta, ellos me cuidaron durante dos años y medio. Ahora estoy estudiando y me fui de Guatemala, sólo te puedo llamar y que nunca te vayas de mi vida.  
Yesica, 9 años  
Orange Grove elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
Esta Navidad hay muchas cosas que quiero primero, yo quiero recibir una reborn Baby segundo, quiero unos zapatos de los que sea, también quiero ropa, unos libros y un Snoopy gigante. Todo esto es lo que yo quiero para Navidad.  
Dulce Martínez, 9 years old  
Orange Grove elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
Yo quiero un peluche de Stitch, un boleto de un concierto de Kimberly Loaza. También quiero que mi familia tenga salud y mis animales también. Otra cosa que quiero que todos tengan una feliz Navidad. Todo esto muestra lo que quiero en esta Navidad, y gracias.  
Dayelis Zoe, 10 años  
Orange Grove, Elementary

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
Esta Navidad, yo quiero una bebé de juguete. Lo primero que te quiero decir si me traes una bebé de juguete, me pondría muy feliz porque nunca he tenido una. Otra cosa que te quiero pedir, es un peluche de Snoopy porque siempre he querido uno, si no me lo puedes traer está bien. Si pudiera ir con mi

\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
I want more Lego sets and more Nintendo switch games, sonic the negehoge, 2 pack, action figure, supersonic, and super shadow.  
Ethan Torres, 10 years old  
Orange Grove elementary




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# LETTERS TO SANTA



\*\*\*  
Dear Santa,  
I would like love a 3-D pen, skates, kids, treasure keeper, my look light ups, PD, LOOM animals (doctor s set) kitchen set. See you Santa.  
Royale Walker, 10 years old  
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,  
Are you real? I want Jordan for us, the military black, I want a black iPad, I want Xavi tickets, I want soccer cleats F50 black. I want khanasadie nerch. Katalina, 11 years old  
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,  
Gril soury, F50 bape soccer shoes, gealie gloves D aydra in hardhg. Thank you Jesus. Hoddies.  
Axel, 10 years old  
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,  
I would like to get [Joker Nike vapor Edpe Pro 360, 2 cleats. Reaper off the wall, bone football. All over print, NBA Young Boy concert tickets, demin tear fits, Grich shorts, football, football flags, candy, Jordan shoes, a iPad case, money.  
Alia Guzman, 7 years old  
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,  
I want a ADO plushie, ADO keychain, ADO light up stick, iPhone 16 (mine doesn t work).  
Edith, 10 years old  
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,  
I want an apple iPad, Joden 4, Apple pen, and black crocs, and my Lexia, and Amira Done and I want Donald Trump not to be the Presed.  
Jaslene, 11 years old  
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,  
I want a 35 piece slime, and a nail kit to practice my nails. VRD nice shoes, hello Kitty

pajama, pants and a pink iPad, Leo lights, an Apple computer. Billie Eilish perfume, fur boots, an iPhone, an iphone, some sweatpants. Wingstop. Black and white Nike hair glow oil, lash serum, Billie Elisish tickets.  
Rain, 10 years old  
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,  
I want a pajamas and a Stranger Things shirt and a Stranger Things plushies and a Stranger Things poster and a poster the Will Byers. Janell Cazares, 11 years old  
Orange Grove elementary

Dear Santa,  
What I want for Christmas is a smiley, Play-Doh, squishy and lastly what I want for Christmas is paint and arcglic markers. I also lastly won some online roller skates. I deserve it because I have gotten good grades and I behave good.  
Maloni Garcia, 10 years