NORTHEAST NEWS

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A Bookstore Changed his Life



How a chance encounter in a Texas bookstore helped shape Jonathan Requena's journey to becoming an Aldine ISD bright spot in literacy. See story in page 3

NEWS NOTES

November 21, SATURDAY.

Bond Against Adversity Free Citizenship Class

Registration 8am to 12:00pm

Location: Christ The Good Shepherd Catholic Church

2430 Aldine Mail Rte Rd. Houston, TX

November 21, SATURDAY.

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INFO/SCAN

Ribbon cutting ceremony Marks opening of new HPD North Belt Station



HPD North Belt Division Captain Corey Harrington gave opening remarks and then introduced City of Houston Mayor John Whitmire.

On October 27th, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held for the newly constructed Houston Police Department station located at 320 Gears Road in the North Houston District's Northwest Quadrant. Construction of the new facility began in August 2025 and was completed in early fall 2026. The building is the new permanent headquarters of the Houston Police Department's North Belt Division.

At the grand opening ceremony, officials from the City of Houston, N. Houston Development Corp/TIRZ 11 (NHDC), North Houston District, and other local organizations and community leaders gathered to celebrate the new facility's completion.

HPD North Belt Division Captain Corey Harrington gave opening remarks and then introduced City of Houston Mayor John Whitmire.

"Today is a real statement to collaboration…and what we can do when we don't worry who gets credit for it. There's so many individuals from the TIRZ, the Management District, and City Council, and then HPD & Houston Fire…who have the attitude of knowing that we're all public servants and we're all in this together," said Whitmire.

The Mayor commended the joint facility as a smart use of resources and pointed to the collaborative model as the future of public safety. He also noted that the new public safety complex and the redevelopment of the Greenspoint Mall property are signals that the area is on the rise.

"Not too many years ago, this site was a vacant piece of land. Eleven years ago we built Fire Station 84 next door, and today with the new HPD station, we complete something truly special: the City of Houston's first public safety complex," shared Richard Vela, Interim Director of the General Services Department.

"We are deeply grateful to the N. Houston Development Corp and to the

Continued. See NEW HPD NORTH BELT STATION, Page 8

East Aldine Civic Association Wraps Up Successful Year with Holiday Celebration and Heartfelt Farewells

By Gerardo Hernandez
STAFF WRITER



Ruben Salazar and other members at the meeting

EAST ALDINE, TX – The East Aldine Civic Association (EACA) concluded its 2026 calendar with a festive and reflective final meeting, celebrating a year of community progress while honoring dedicated board members.

The event, which featured a holiday meal sponsored by the East Aldine Management District, brought together community members and partners for an evening of fellowship and gratitude. The EACA extended special thanks to Ms. Catherine Plasencia, the Cervantes Family, and other generous contributors who helped make the gathering possible.

Along with enjoying the meal, attendees shared important community updates, reflected on the organization's accomplishments, and celebrated another year of collaborative efforts to improve local neighborhoods.

A significant portion of the evening was dedicated to recognizing Vice President Ms. Esmeralda Cervantes, who will retire from the board at the end of the year. The association praised Cervantes for her "incredible influence and presence" in the community, expressing gratitude for her dedication, friendship, and the service she and her family have provided to East Aldine over the years.

The group also took a moment to pay tribute to board member Mrs. Cynthia Barela, who passed away in September. The EACA stated that Barela will forever remain a part of their family and that her contributions and memory will continue to be cherished.

As the organization looks toward 2027, mem-

Continued. See EAST ALDINE CIVIC ASSOCIATION WRAPS UP, Page 8

RECAP: EAMD connects neighbors to safer streets, essential services and public art



At its Oct. 27 meeting, the board approved park connections, sewer improvements, and community support while reviewing neighborhood projects underway during EAD's 25th anniversary year.

A sidewalk to school. Help clean up a senior's property. A hot meal. A mural that tells a neighborhood's story.

The East Aldine District's work takes many forms, but its purpose remains the same: improving daily life for the people who call East Aldine home.

At its Oct. 27 meeting, the East Aldine District (EAD) Board of Directors approved investments in park connections, sewer infrastructure, public safety, and community programs. Directors also reviewed progress on neighborhood projects and public art as EAD continues its 25th anniversary year.

Safer Connections to Schools and Parks

Continued. See FREE BROADCASTS, Page 2

SEASON FOOTBALL WEEK 12

Texans host Colts on TNF looking for revenge:

Cougars face tough road trip to West Virginia



The Texans will be featured in prime time this week when they host the Indianapolis Colts on Thursday Night Football to kickoff Week 11 of the NFL season.

Houston needs to start stacking up wins if they hope to reach the playoffs for the fourth straight year. Two weeks ago, they took a step in the right direction with a 44-22 drubbing of the Los Angeles Chargers as quarterback C.J. Stroud threw for a career high five touchdowns and 384 passing yards. The defense did its part with eight sacks of the hapless Chargers. The schedule is lightening up for DeMeco Ryans' team. Houston played at Cleveland last week and hosts an Indy team that has traded away a number of their top players.

Houston's college team also has a big one this weekend as the No. 14-ranked Cougars head to West Virginia to take on a Mountaineers team that gave No. 10-ranked Texas Tech all it could handle two weeks ago in Lubbock. Tech escaped with a 53-48 win, but this WVU team has a number of weapons on offense, so the UH defense will need to bring its "A" game on Saturday.

There are some other interesting matchups in Week 12 of the college season. No. 4 Indiana has a long road trip to Washington to face a disappointing Huskies team, while there are three big ones in the SEC as No. 24 LSU visits No. 9 Tennessee. If Lane Kiffin's team loses in Knoxville, they could be looking at a five loss season (LSU was blown out at home two weeks ago by Alabama and faced an improving Texas team last week). Fans in Baton

Continued. See KEENEY'S KORNER, Page 5

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East Aldine District connects neighbors to safer streets, essential services and public art

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Construction on the Gloger Street sidewalk project is more than halfway complete. In partnership with Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia, the project will connect MacArthur High School, MacArthur Ninth Grade School and Hambrick Middle School with the High Meadows South and Orange Grove neighborhoods and the Keith-Wiess Park trail system, which includes approximately 1 mile of trails.

The first phase of the Keith-Wiess Park trail connections project is also underway and ahead of schedule. It includes paving the Deer Grove Road extension into the park, adding parking, a picnic pavilion and a fitness station, and creating approximately one mile of trail connecting to existing park paths.

The board approved an agreement with Harris County Precinct 2 for improvements at Squatty Lyons Park, with EAD providing a 50% match of up to $150,000. The project will add a trail around the park perimeter and fill sidewalk gaps along East Hardy Road between the park and Little York Road.

Other sidewalk projects in design include:

East Mount Houston Road: A $4 million Texas Department of Transportation award supports sidewalks from Gloger Road to the Eastex Freeway, improving connections for Orange Grove Elementary School students.

Sandydale and Chrisman: A $3.8 million federal grant supports sidewalks serving Grantham Middle School.

Bertrand Street: The project has received $850,000 in federal funding.

Old Humble Road to Homestead Road: A $2.4 million TxDOT-funded project will expand pedestrian connections.

EAD and its partners also continue planning to widen and reconstruct Aldine Westfield Road. Proposed improvements include a four-lane divided roadway, sidewalks, streetlights, storm sewers, and a waterline. Work is focused on project phasing, coordination, and a funding strategy.

Essential Infrastructure for Neighborhoods

The board approved an agreement with Harris County for the Castledale Drive sanitary sewer project. The county will provide $640,710 in Community Development Block Grant funding, with EAD contributing engineering services and up to $166,200 in matching funds. A&S Engineers is designing the project.

Construction of the Westfield Estates sewer project, supported by $32 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding, is complete. Staff also reported that funding for a second phase remains subject to final approval by the Texas Water Development Board.

The Hartwick sewer project is complete, and the City of Houston has accepted the new sewer infrastructure system. The Lyncrest sewer extension remains in the design phase.

Drainage work is underway at the Hahl site near Halls Bayou at Hardy and Isom roads. The detention basin expansion and storm sewer improvements are supported by $18 million in state funding allocated by state Rep. Armando Walle.

Help With Everyday Neighborhood Needs

A new partnership is helping residents who cannot manage property cleanup on their own.

Through its Nuisance Abatement Assistance Program, EAD is working with Career and Recovery Resources Inc.'s UpRise program to assist eligible low-income homeowners who are older adults or have disabilities. Harris County sheriff's deputies help identify residents who may qualify before issuing a citation or during the abatement process.

Two senior homeowners have received help so far. The partnership also provides work opportunities for people rebuilding their lives after homelessness, incarceration, or recovery.

Routine cleanup work continues across East Aldine. September reports showed crews collected 17,450 pounds of clippings and litter along rights-of-way and another 16,800 pounds of litter through the litter abatement program. Graffiti was removed from 20 business properties and 40 public properties.

EAD is also continuing Light Up East Aldine with CenterPoint Energy. Installation is underway for 426 streetlights in Phase 3 and approximately 425 in Phase 4, which includes High Meadows, Fairgreen, Castlewood, and Western Homes.

The board ratified $51,650 for recycling bins already purchased and installed at locations throughout East Aldine to make recycling more convenient and help reduce litter.

Public Safety and a Planned Resource for Newborns

The board approved up to $29,000 to purchase and construct a Safe Haven baby box at the Westfield Fire Department's Lauder Road station.

The proposed installation will provide a climate-controlled space with an alarm that alerts fire personnel when an infant is placed inside. Board director Sherry Curl introduced the idea.

"This is about the babies that we're going to save," Curl said.

The East Aldine District is working through the next steps for the project, including payment and construction approval. A specific timeline for installation has not yet been established.

The board also received the Harris County Sheriff's Office's September activity report. Deputies reported 110 felony arrests, 102 misdemeanor arrests, 23 stolen vehicles recovered and 14 firearms seized.

Public Art Connects the Anniversary to East Aldine's Future

EAD's 25th anniversary is taking shape on walls throughout the community through the Aldine Mural Route: 25 Murals for 25 Years, also called 25+25.

The $250,000 initiative aims to bring 25 murals to East Aldine by the end of December. UP Art Studio, The Creative Group and Art in the Heart are helping identify locations and coordinate work, with opportunities for local artists and students to participate.

The anniversary project overlaps with Big Walls, Big Dreams, the mural festival running Oct. 30-Nov. 15. EAD is the festival's premier sponsor. As of the East Aldine Arts Council's October update, 11 of 12 planned East Aldine festival walls were confirmed, and some 25+25 murals were scheduled to be painted during the festival, with others continuing through December.

Plans include featuring all 25 anniversary murals on the Houston Mural Map and My City Arts app, along with a Mural Quest scavenger hunt during the festival's final week.

In a separate project, EAD is working with Art in the Heart on a proposed metal fish sculpture near a future Halls Bayou kayak launch. The concept includes a community design workshop. The kayak launch itself is a separate Harris County Precinct 2 project.

Investments in Seniors, Students and Families

Several board approvals will help local organizations meet immediate needs.

The board approved $10,000 for Delightful Days' Better Day Project, which provides hot meals to low-income seniors, and $2,400 for Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations at Pilgrim Place.

During public comment, Coco Martínez of Pilgrim Place II described the importance of that support.

"By getting the funding through you, Delightful Days can provide a hot meal for my seniors," Martínez said.

Other approved investments included:

YES Prep North Central: $5,000 toward an eighth-grade spring educational trip expected to serve 117 students.

Rise & Roll: $6,000 to support free anti-bullying and self-defense training for youth.

Avalos P-TECH School: $11,252.50 for its boys and girls soccer teams.

Mead Middle School: $1,200 for personal hygiene products for students.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: $5,000 for the Nadine Kujawa Senior Citizen Gala on Dec. 1.

Harris County Sheriff's Office Benevolence Association: $5,000 for a shoe drive in memory of Deputy Darren Almendarez.

Asian American Peace Officers' Association: $40,000 for a Thanksgiving turkey drive and giveaway in collaboration with EAD.

Community partnerships extend beyond funding. Monica Campos, EAD's marketing and communications director, reported that approximately 4,000 people attended National Night Out, connecting residents with deputies, community organizations and resources. Free CPR classes offered through Harris County Emergency Corps will continue in 2027.

Resources, Accountability and National Visibility

Financial reports for January through September showed approximately $12.54 million in general fund revenue and $8.61 million in expenditures. Spending was about 12.6% below the budget for that period. Richard Cantú, EAD's executive director, also reported that October sales tax revenue was 7% above budget.

To improve project oversight and service coordination, the board approved $310,737 for the first year of a project management and tracking system from Precision Task Group. The system is intended to help staff track projects, budgets, nuisance abatement cases, and recycling center activity, with mapping and reporting tools to improve coordination.

Directors also approved $188,200 for engineering, design, and fabrication of signage associated with the median improvements project, including a contingency for installation, delivery, and permit fees.

In a separate action following a public hearing, the board adopted a 2026 tax rate of $1.25 per $100 of assessed value for Defined Area No. 1, the Aldine Pines subdivision. The rate is unchanged from last year and applies only within that defined area — not throughout East Aldine.

EAD's work also reached a national audience through a video featured at the International City/County Management Association's annual conference in Long Beach, California. Cantú, Deputy Executive Director Veronica Sanches, Campos, and Board Chairman Carlos Silva attended. Cantú said the video highlights EAD alongside about two dozen cities and counties across the country doing great work.

"I am really proud of all the great things we're doing here in East Aldine," said Cantú.

As the 25th anniversary celebration continues through the end of the year, EAD's work remains rooted in everyday needs — connecting neighborhoods, supporting residents, and creating unlimited possibilities for the community.

Learn more about EAD's programs and services at aldinedistrict.org, and find meeting documents on the board materials page.

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SCHOOL PAGE

The Teacher Who Never Planned to Teach

By Sandra Perez Chaviano
Aldine ISD


Jonathan Requena went to Brenham, Texas, curious about millionaires. He left thinking about books.

How a chance encounter in a Texas bookstore helped shape Jonathan Requena's journey to becoming an Aldine ISD Bright Spot in Literacy

Growing up, his mother had told him that many of Texas' millionaires either lived in Brenham or owned property there. Whether that was actually true, he couldn't say, but the curiosity had stayed with him. So, on his way home from Austin one Sunday, he decided to stop, stroll down Main Street and see what he might find.

He ended up in a bookstore.

Inside was a family of three, nicely dressed, with the father and son wearing khakis and blue blazers. The father picked out a book and suggested it to his son, who couldn't have been older than 12. The boy responded that he wouldn't have time to fit it into his schedule. Before his father could answer, his mother settled the matter.

"Yes, you will, after supper on Sunday."

Requena remembers the exchange vividly. To the family, it was a routine moment, yet he had never witnessed such a matter-of-fact expectation that a child would make time to read.

"On the drive home, I thought to myself, there are people actually living like that," he recalled. "I had never seen anything like it."

Something about that moment unsettled him. He began thinking about how much he didn't know and how much he might be missing.

"From that moment on, I read everything I could get my hands on," he said. "I actually wanted to read because, for the first time in my life, I felt behind."

He had gone to Brenham with millionaires on his mind. What he took home was a hunger for knowledge that would eventually lead him somewhere he never expected: an English classroom at Aldine ISD's Blanson Career and Technical Education High School.

On Nov. 9, that unlikely journey earned him recognition as one of Aldine ISD's Bright Spots in Literacy.

A Career That 'Kind of Just Happened'

If you ask Requena how he became a teacher, don't expect a story about a childhood dream or a lifelong calling. He'll tell you it more or less happened.

His father, who had retired from the City of Houston and started driving school buses for Galena Park ISD, would occasionally remind him that schools needed teachers.

"Dude, there are teachers younger than you leading classes of 30 or 40 students. They need teachers," his father would say.

Eventually, Requena came across Texas Teachers, an alternative certification program. One thing led to another, and years later, he found himself teaching the very subject that had once made him realize how much he wanted to learn.

"Here I am, naturally, I suppose, teaching English," he said. "But if you were to ask me in a normal setting, I would say, 'It kind of just happened.'"

There's something wonderfully unassuming about the way he tells it, as though becoming a teacher were a curious turn of events rather than a life-changing decision. Yet listening to him describe what happens inside his classroom, it's difficult to imagine him anywhere else.

The Kobe Bryant Philosophy

Requena's approach to teaching owes something to an unlikely source: Kobe Bryant.

In the 2015 documentary Kobe Bryant's Muse, the basketball legend reflected on his career after Shaquille O'Neal left the Lakers. Bryant described asking himself a question that stayed with Requena long after he watched the film: "How do I make my standard their standard?"

The answer, as Requena understood it, was simple. If Bryant expected something from his teammates, he had to demonstrate it himself.

"I aim to bring that same philosophy to everything I do, not just the classroom," Requena explained.

For his students, that philosophy is visible in the everyday routines of his English lessons. Instead of standing at the front of the room explaining how an essay should be written, he sometimes sits at an ordinary desk in the middle of the classroom and works through one on the board, letting students watch his thinking unfold. He doesn't hide the mistakes or pretend the process is effortless.

When the class reads a story, he reads it aloud himself, stopping to share his thoughts and experiences so students can see how a reader makes connections with a text. He asks them to do difficult things, and he never asks them to do anything he isn't willing to demonstrate.

"I don't think I'm doing anything beyond what I'm supposed to do," he said, "but students respond to it."

Principal Joshua Van Donsel has watched that approach help Requena build meaningful relationships with his students.

"He is very authentic as an educator," Van Donsel said, noting that Requena uses analogies and cultural references to make lessons relatable. "Students feel like he meets them on their level."

Those connections also shape the academic work. Through discussion and writing activities, Requena encourages students to examine their ideas, explain their reasoning and communicate with greater clarity. His students regularly talk through the writing process together, learning to articulate their thoughts while listening to those of their classmates.

For Van Donsel, what makes Requena stand out is not simply his ability to engage students, but his determination to keep improving his own practice. He expects growth from his students and continues to demand it of himself.

The Teacher Who Doesn't Call Himself One

"If I'm being honest, I still don't view myself as a teacher. It's something I do, not who I am."

He doesn't elaborate on that distinction by listing credentials or accomplishments. Instead, he talks about being someone who has made mistakes, lived through experiences and learned a few things about the world his students are preparing to enter.

"So I do my best to help them however I can," he said.

It's a modest description of a responsibility that has changed him profoundly. He remembers a letter a student once wrote to him:

"Thank you for your guidance and for being the kind of teacher I will carry with me long after the last dismissal. I hope you know that you helped shape the person I am becoming, and that I am beyond grateful for who you were in my life."

What stayed with Requena was the weight of those words. He realized his actions could matter to someone long after they left his classroom.

"I never expect anything in return, but when you see people respond to what you do, you feel a strong sense of responsibility," he said. "A responsibility that is not to be taken lightly."

And the student wasn't the only one changed by the relationship.

"As much as you teach them, they teach you," Requena reflected. "I am a completely different person now from who I was when I first started."

He calls that change a serious pivot in his life, one he will always be grateful for.

Recognizing the Work That Matters

That dedication to student growth and meaningful literacy instruction brought district leaders to Blanson CTE High School on Nov. 9 to surprise Requena with the Bright Spot in Literacy Award.

Created by Aldine ISD's Teaching and Learning Department, the Bright Spots in Literacy initiative recognizes educators, campuses and teams that demonstrate exceptional commitment to literacy instruction, effectively implement curriculum and support the growth of students and fellow educators. By highlighting strong instructional practices across the district, the initiative celebrates the people whose work helps students become stronger, more confident readers and writers.

For Requena, the recognition was unexpected.

"It was special. I felt a sense of gratitude," he said. "It's nice to see your work be appreciated."

Yet when asked what he most hopes students take away from their time in his classroom, he doesn't mention test scores, grades or even a lifelong love of literature. His answer is independence.

He wants students to believe they can figure things out for themselves, even when the answer isn't immediately obvious. He offers a simple example: a student who encounters an unfamiliar word, gets up, walks to the back of the classroom, picks up a dictionary and looks it up instead of waiting for someone else to explain it.

"Whatever that 'it' is, they are fully capable," he said.

Behind that ordinary act is the confidence to confront something unknown and trust that understanding is within reach. And there is something fitting about that hope coming from Requena.

Years ago, he wandered into a bookstore out of curiosity and walked out feeling behind. Today, he teaches students who will inevitably encounter unfamiliar words, difficult ideas and questions they cannot immediately answer. His hope is that they will view those moments as opportunities to discover what they are capable of learning.

Somewhere along that unexpected journey, the man who says teaching is just something he does became that teacher, the one students remember long after the last dismissal.





☆ OPINION PAGE ☆

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Be Ready for Emergencies

With winter (and likely power outages) here, I was encouraged by a younger neighbor, a man who hikes, camps and kayaks, to invest in one of those emergency meal kits. These are freeze-dried foods that come in a handy storage box and last for 25 years. The idea is that you pour hot water into an envelope of dried food and 10 minutes later you have a hot meal.

I checked all the information I could find and decided that no, it was not for me. Most of the meals have too much sodium, many of the meals have to be cooked and the cost of most of the kits is astronomical, in the neighborhood of $10-$12 per meal.

Instead, I've been building my own emergency food and supply stash. It's fairly easy to do.

*Buy a little more of what you already eat: tuna or cooked chicken in pouches, crackers, peanut butter, canned fruit and vegetables. Add in shelf-stable milk (or powdered), cereal and canned juices. Mark the top of each one with the date in big numbers so it's easily seen. Remember to have a manual can opener!

*Water: The rules say one gallon per person per day in an emergency. Store it in a cool, dark place.

*But it's not only food you'll need in an emergency. Batteries and flashlights are crucial, and so is a phone charger. Or look for hand-crank camping lights that will provide adequate lighting if the power goes out.

*Medications and vitamins.

*Pet food and supplies.

*Money (small bills) in case the ATM doesn't work.

For more information on putting together your own emergency kit, go online to www.ready.gov. Be sure to also see the No and Low Cost Preparedness section. Look as well at the Red Cross (www.redcross.org) and search for survival kits.

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VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

Money We'll never see again

What's going on up in New England? Did the thieves and scammers move up there thinking the VAOIG and DOJ wouldn't find them?

First we have a former VA medical staffer who was nailed for wire fraud. This thief applied for paycheck protection loans, claiming to own certain businesses. After being approved for loans, there was an additional claim that all the money went for payroll and a request for loan forgiveness, which was approved.

Then we have the pair of scammers who paid and received kickbacks for spinal implants and then attempted to obstruct a federal investigation into the fraud. Their physician consulting program was at the heart of the scheme, and it ended with two company higher-ups and five physicians being nailed for accepting sham consulting fees.

But it's the veteran who made so many false statements that is most disturbing. This veteran repeatedly claimed to the VA — and received disability money year after year — that he was unable to walk or stand and had to use a wheelchair due to an accident while he was in the Army.

Information surfaced, however, that helped to uncover the fraud, including photos and video of him walking, shopping and posting online about hunting.

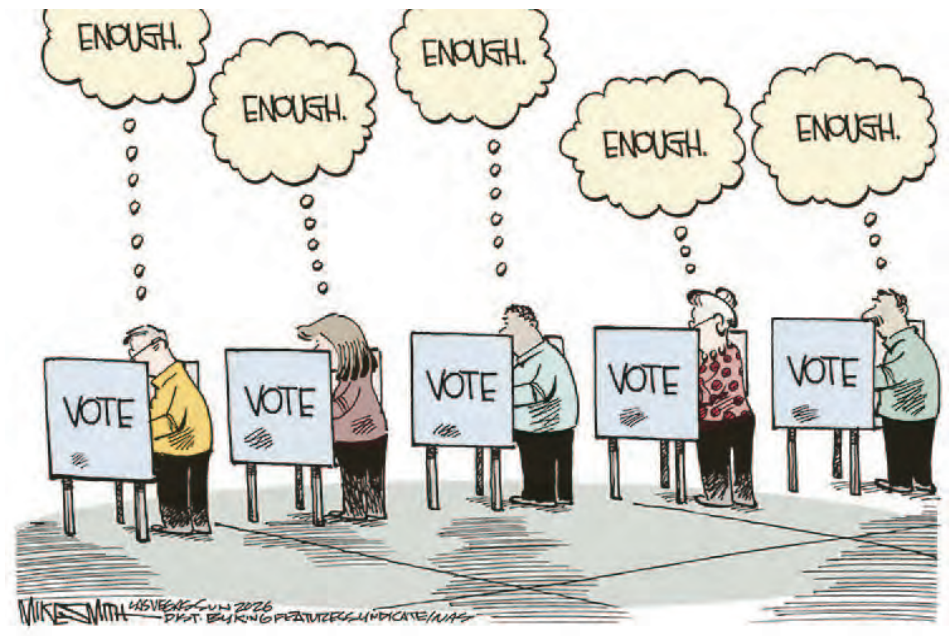
Then, when he was about to be arrested for the fraud, he tried to fake his own death, bringing out all types of rescue people and agencies when he disappeared near the Canadian border. They determined that he wasn't really dead, despite how it looked.

He was finally grabbed by marshals, a year later, halfway across the country and was arrested on a federal warrant. Capturing him took the combined efforts of the VAOIG, Border Patrol, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the National Guard drug task force, the Coast Guard, the Fraud Enforcement Division of the DOJ and more.

While he'll surely see prison time for the fraud, all that disability money he took from the VA over the years is gone. It's nearly a quarter of a million dollars the taxpayers will never get back.

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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



Nuclear Power Projects Coming to Texas



Billions of dollars in federal grants and lucrative tax credits are driving more than a half/dozen nuclear power projects in the state, the Houston Chronicle reported.

A number of startup nuclear companies are located in the state, most setting up offices in and around Austin. Several universities, including Texas Tech, Texas A&M and Abilene Christian University, are partnering with the companies.

In Abilene, the startup Natural Resources is building a test reactor on ACU's campus. The plan is to eventually produce small modular reactors on an assembly-line basis.

"I can see Stargate, one of the world's largest data centers, out my window," said CEO Jordan Robison. "The need is out there. We need to find clean, firm generation sources. The technology is proven, and we have the ability to bring the cost down."

Some skeptics question whether nuclear power is economically feasible. Andrew Kleinman, an analyst at the research firm Wood Mackenzie, said no one has proven that building nuclear reactors can compete economically with more traditional power sources, such as natural gas plants, or wind and solar farms.

"It's all still pretty early on. We have one project under construction and one that just got a construction permit," he said. "We don't know how much it's going to cost, but odds are the first ones are going to be expensive."

HIGH HOUSING COSTS CUT 2025 INCOME GAINS

High housing costs slowed income growth in Texas last year, according to figures from the U.S. Census Bureau, The Texas Tribune reported.

The state's median household income was $82,625, up slightly from the previous year. That is slightly lower than the national median household income of $84,780.

The state's poverty rank shrank, but the number of older Texans and families living in poverty rose, census data indicates. Housing costs rose for both renters and homeowners.

More than half of the state's 4.3 million renters are spending a third of their take-home pay on rent, while the share of homeowners with a mortgage considered "cost-burdened" rose slightly to 32% in 2025.

Hispanic and Black households had the largest increases in median income, now up to $70,438 and $64,664, respectively. That still lags behind white median household income at $92,479.

TEXANS ARE GETTING OLDER, CENSUS DATA SHOWS

The median age of a Texas resident last year was 36.2 years, according to census data, nearly 3 years older than the state's median age a decade ago. The data shows that Texas still remains significantly younger than the country as a whole. The median U.S. age was 39.5 years, The Dallas Morning News reported.

"I don't think I would flag it as a bad thing for Texas," said Lloyd Potter, a professor emeritus at the Texas Demographic Center. He said the state's rising educational levels and diverse workforce are encouraging signs.

Potter said the rising median age in Texas largely reflects the aging baby boomer population and lower birth rates.

"We're still a young state, but we are getting older," he added.

FAMILIES CAN USE VOUCHER MONEY TO SHOP ONLINE

Texas families who have opted to enter the state's new school voucher program received another round of funding in October, and families have spent nearly $50 million on purchases through the online marketplace Odyssey, the Texas Standard reported. That is about 20% of the $270 million allocated thus far.

Families can receive up to $10,400 per child. While much of that goes for tuition and fees at private schools, money left over can be spent for books, school supplies, tutoring, therapy, and enrichment activities.Questions have been raised about oversight of the voucher program, which was originally funded with $1 billion of taxpayer money. Travis Pillow oversees the program for the Texas Comptroller's Office.

"Everything that is on that online purchasing platform has been reviewed to ensure that it meets the requirements in the law and is an eligible education expense," Pillow said.

Texas families can choose from more than 2,200 approved vendors. That includes businesses offering cheerleading, piano, and cooking classes, as well as jiu-jitsu lessons.

State Sen. Royce West, D-Dallas, said allowing families to use taxpayer money for purchases beyond private school tuition is unfair.

"I can give you $10,000, and you can use a portion of that $10k, which is taxpayer money, in order to procure services and/or products at taxpayers' expense," West said. "You can't do that in a public school."

WATERFOWL HUNTERS CAN HELP HALT SPREAD OF INVASIVE SPECIES

Waterfowl hunters can do their part to halt the spread of invasive species that reduce habitat quality, block recreational access and harm aquatic infrastructure, according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

They can do so by taking a few minutes to clean, drain, and dry their boats and equipment, including decoys and other hunting gear, before traveling between lakes. Some tips:

• Use a wet/dry vacuum to he lp remove plants from the boat, trailer and most equipment before rinsing with a water hose that can push plant fragments into small, unreachable spaces;

• Use a water hose to rinse waders and decoys after hand removing plants, mud and organisms, with a stiff brush to clean out boot treads;

• Take care to drain water out of decoys and consider adding drain holes to older, cracked decoys that tend to hold water or plant fragments.

One of the key culprits for Texas lakes is giant salvinia, a highly invasive aquatic fern that can double its coverage area in a week.

"Giant salvinia is often thought of as a plant that causes recreational access issues for anglers and boaters, but additionally it can create serious problems for waterfowl hunters," said Jessica Metz of TPWD.

"This invasive plant can not only form thick mats that block hunters' access to prime waterfowl hunting areas but also outgrow and replace the native plants that waterfowl rely on for food and high-quality habitat. Taking time to clean, drain and dry boats, equipment, waders, and other gear can help protect waterfowl as well as maintain your gear."

Giant salvinia is currently found on 30 East Texas lakes and numerous rivers, creeks and marshes.

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

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THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

Time Enough



I don't have enough time. This is what I say to myself.

I don't have enough time to write the books I want to write, visit the places I'd like to see, spend time with all the people I care about. I don't have time to read all the books I should have read by now. I don't have time to try all the good food that is out there. I don't have time to learn Spanish as well as I'd like. I don't have time to rest. I don't have enough time for sleep.

This past week, my family celebrated the lives of my uncle, Andy, and his wife, Bea. They both passed away last winter. We had a combined funeral and burial for them in the church where Andy had been baptized 94 years earlier.

Bea was also 94 when she died, just a few months after Andy. Bea and Andy married when they were 66 years old. It was a first marriage for them both, and they had almost 30 years together.

Remembering their lives made me think about time.

Because both Andy and Bea had full lives before they met one another. Bea lived in the Bay Area of California. She worked at an important job, traveled a lot, ate at the new restaurants, loved to hike in the mountains and go out for cocktails.

Meanwhile, Andy was a farmer. He inherited the family farm, and he grew soybeans and milked cows and went bowling in the small town where he lived. He had dozens of nieces and nephews, and he told countless bad jokes.

After they retired, they met, and eventually they made the brave and somewhat surprising decision to marry. Growing up with nine inquisitive sisters could not have made it easy when Andy started to get serious about Bea. The remaining sisters — along with the rest of the family and the small town where Andy had lived all his life — were titillated by this exciting development. For the first time in his more than 60 years on the planet, Andy was obliged to provide updates on his love life. I cannot imagine it was easy. But I do remember when he made it official.

He wrote in the round-robin that circulated to all his nosy sisters, one after the other:

"The question is not to Bea or not to Bea. I've been to Bea twice. Now, she is coming to me!"

And she did. She came to spend the summers on the farm, and the two of them spent winters in California. They volunteered for Habitat for Humanity, and they contributed to The Nature Conservancy, and they were active in their church and spent time with their family. They did a tremendous amount in those 30 years. They spent nearly every moment together.

And when Bea was diagnosed with terminal cancer, all Andy could say was, "I was supposed to go before you!"

And he did. Shortly after Bea entered hospice, Andy had a fall and broke his neck and died shortly thereafter. Bea slowly faded away. We told her that Andy had died, and we were not sure she would remember. But she did not ask about him. She died in the small town where Andy had been born.

So we remembered their lives, and we celebrated their love, and we missed them terribly, and we knew they had lived their lives in a way we could only hope to.

There is never enough time. But Andy and Bea had time enough for a very good life.

Till next time,

Carrie

Carrie is the author of "Loon Point." "The Turnip House" will be released in January 2027.

SEASON FOOTBALL WEEK 12

Texans host Colts on TNF looking for revenge:

Cougars face tough road trip to West Virginia



Rouge did not sign up for a five-loss team when it signed Kiffin to a multi-million dollar contract.

Also in the SEC, No. 13 Kentucky faces a tough road test at Missouri. Also, No. 1 Georgia faces a tough road game as well when it visits No. 20 South Carolina, which is riding a four-game winning streak heading into last week's game at a bad Arkansas team.

No. 3 Notre Dame, fresh off its upset win over then No. 1-ranked Miami two weeks ago, faces a dangerous SMU team on Saturday night in South Bend. The Mustangs have one of the top dual-threat QBs in the country in Kevin Jennings, but expect Irish head coach Marcus Freeman to have his team ready for this one because he knows ND cannot afford another loss if it hopes to land a spot in the College Football Playoff (CFP).

While the Texans and Colts start Week 11 on TNF, there are some other interesting matchups this weekend as well.

Baltimore and Carolina will meet in an elimination game for both teams' playoff chances. The Ravens traded for QB Jacoby Brissett to replace the injured Lamar Jackson. Brissett should be an upgrade at quarterback and will look to get Baltimore back on a winning track.

Dallas hopes to remain alive in the NFC East race when it hosts a one-win Tennessee team on Sunday. Two weeks ago, the Pokes improved to 4-5 with a 27-23 road win at Indianapolis. Dallas can't take the Titans lightly. Sure, they've had a tough season, but they play hard and took the Bengals to overtime three weeks ago before coming up short.

Jacksonville, which looks like the best team in the AFC, visits the Giants in one of the top games of the weekend. Dallas will be rooting for a Jags win to help their cause in the NFC East race.

The Sunday Night Football game will feature Minnesota against San Francisco. The Vikings traded for former Vikings QB Kirk Cousins with hopes that he can turn the offense around. Two weeks ago in the Vikes 23-6 home loss to Buffalo, quarterback Carson Wentz had a horrible night, connecting on just 8 of 25 passes for a paltry 81 yards and two interceptions. Cousins should be a big upgrade. Week 11 concludes with Monday Night Football as the Bengals and Joe Burrow visit Washington. Burrow has been on a heater of late. Two weeks ago, he threw three TD passes and ran for another to keep his streak of producing four or more TDs ran up to four games.

The state football playoffs are under way and Aldine ISD will be represented by Kelvin Chatman's Davis Falcons, who finished second in District 14-6 and entered their second straight trip to the post season with an 8–2 record. Cornelius Harmon's Nimitz Cougars also earned a playoff spot, which was their seventh straight playoff berth.

Before we take a look at this weekend's game, let's review last week's record. A 10-2 week was a vast improvement from previous weeks and brought the season record to 80-39 (67%). Now, that's more like it.

Now onto this weekend's games.

NCAA

Houston at West Virginia - This could be an offensive shootout as both teams possess explosive offenses. The Cougars have been known to struggle in November and they will face a tough road game against the Mountaineers team that put up 48 points at Lubbock two weeks ago. UH has a solid offense led by quarterback Conner Weigman (2,279 passing yards, 22 TDs/279 rushing yards, 7 TDs), solid runners in Makhi Hughes (607 yards, 4 TDs) and Re'Shaun Sanford II (573 yards, 3 TDs). The Coogs also have capable and productive receivers in wideout Amare Thomas (47 receptions, 698 yards, 8 TDs) and a good tight end in Park Overmeyer (43 receptions, 497 yards, 7 TDs). WVU has a potent offense as well led by QB Michael Hawkins (1,901 passing yards, 12 TDs/924 rushing yards, 19 TDs) and a productive back in Cam Cook (1,072 yards, 8 TDs). This game will be determined by which team has the better defense, and that's UH. The Mountaineers can score, but they can't stop anyone on defense. My pick, Houston 41, West Virginia 32

Indiana at Washington - No. 6 Indiana heads west to take on a Washington team that has struggled this season. The Hoosiers have had their issues at QB as Josh Hoover (1,860 yards, 19 TDs) has been injured and has struggled the last few weeks. Look for the Hoosiers to feature their running game led by two solid backs in Turbo Richard (745 yards, 6 TDs) and Lee Beebe Jr. (715 yards, 4 TDs). If Richard and Beebe can find success in the running game, that should open up Hoover to make plays to big-play receiver Charlie Becker (50 receptions, 875 yards, 9 TDs). The Huskies will rely on QB Demond Williams (1,667 passing yards, 11 TDs/254 rushing yards, 2 TDs) to keep them in the game. Indiana head coach Curt Cignatti knows his team has little room for error here on out if they hope to make a third straight trip to the CFP, so look for a focused Indiana team to perform well on Saturday in Seattle. My pick, Indiana 30, Washington 18

LSU at Tennessee -No. 24 LSU heads to Knoxville looking for a late-season signature win against No. 9 Tennessee. Good luck with that. The Tigers have been in a funk lately while the Vols have been rising. LSU will face a stout Vols defense, which could make things difficult for Tigers QB Sam Leavitt (2,553 passing yards, 17 TDs/340 rushing yards, 8 TDs), running back Dilin James (713 yards, 7 TDs) and wide receiver Jackson Harris (47 receptions, 800 yards, 7 TDs). Tennessee will look for a consistent game from QB George MacIntyre (853 yards, 2 TDs), but look for them to rely on running back DeSean Bishop (1,066 yards, 13 TDs) to carry much of the offensive load on Saturday. My pick, Tennessee 26, LSU 20

Kentucky at Missouri - No. 13 Kentucky heads to Missouri looking to pick up a road win. Two weeks ago, the Wildcats were routed by Tennessee, 34-6, to give them only their second loss of the season. Kentucky is still in the SEC title hunt race, but will need to win out and hope for Georgia or Alabama to stumble down the stretch. The Wildcats have a productive offense led by QB Kenny Minchey (1,979 yards, 14 TDs), a productive back in CJ Baxter (541 yards, 8 TDs) and productive receivers in wideout Kenny Darby (45 receptions, 576 yards, 3 TDs) and tight end Willie Rodriguez (45 receptions, 405 yards, 3 TDs). The Tigers will look to keep the Wildcat offense off of the field by running the football with Jamal Roberts (1,071 yards, 9 TDs), with hopes of opening up the passing game for QB Austin Simmonds (2,204 yards, 18 TDs). Look for the Wildcats to step up and win a big road game as the magical season continues. My pick, Kentucky 31, Missouri 23

Georgia at South Carolina - No. 1 Georgia heads into a buzzsaw when it faces No. 20 South Carolina which is one of the hottest teams in college football. The Gamecocks rode a four-game winning streak heading into their Nov. 14 game against a bad Arkansas team and the winning streak should be at five games when they face Kirby Smart's Bulldogs on Saturday night in prime time on ABC. Georgia is playing like the best team in the country on both sides of the ball. QB Gunner Stockton (1,857 passing yards, 20 TDs/233 rushing yards, 2 TDs) is doing an excellent job of directing the offense. He's getting help from running backs Dwight Phillips (481 yards, 2 TDs) and Nate Frazier (404 yards, 6 TDs) and wide receiver Talyn Taylor (25 receptions, 426 yards, 6 TDs). The 'Dawgs can play a bit of defense and that unit will be tested by SC QB LaNorris Sellers (2,100 passing yards, 17 TDs/637 rushing yards, 7 TDs), running back Matt Fuller (530 yards, 5 TDs) and wideouts Mazeo Bennett Jr. (38 receptions, 497 yards, 5 TDs) and Nyck Harbor (24 receptions, 404 yards, 3 TDs). Smart knows his team will face a hostile crowd on Saturday, but he will have his team prepared because he knows there is too much at stake at this point of the season. My pick, Georgia 26, South Carolina 18

SMU at Notre Dame - The No. 3-ranked Irish hosts a dangerous SMU team that is loaded on offense led by QB Kevin Jennings (2,763 passing yards, 25 TDs/133 rushing yards, 2 TDs), running back Kendrick Raphael (755 yards, 10 TDs) and wide receiver Yamir Knight (50 receptions, 626 yards, 6 TDs). That until will face a stout ND defense and a productive offense led by QB C.J. Carr (2,168 yards, 21 TDs), running back Nolan James (571 yards, 9 TDs) and wideouts Jordan Faison (44 receptions, 574 yards, 5 TDs) and Micah Gilbert (33 receptions, 528 yards, 5 TDs). ND head coach Marcus Freeman knows his team's CPF chances rely on the Irish winning out, so look for the defense to be the difference maker in this one as the Irish roll to victory. My pick, Notre Dame 34, SMU 20

NFL

Indianapolis at Houston - The Texans host the Colts to kickoff Week 11 in the NFL schedule on Thursday Night Football. Houston will be looking to avenge their early-season loss at Indy and should have the upper hand in the rematch. The Colts traded away a number of key players and will be going with a youth movement from here on out, especially on defense. That should benefit Texans QB C.J. Stroud (2,256 yards, 16 TDs), who is having the best year of his four-year career. Look for Stroud to make plays downfield to Nico Collins (28 receptions, 384 yards, 4 TDs) and Tank Dell, while the Houston defense tees off on Indy QB Daniel Jones. My pick, Houston 31, Indianapolis 13

Baltimore at Carolina - This is a survival game for both teams' playoff hopes. The Ravens have struggled since losing starting QB Lamar Jackson, but they traded for Arizona QB Jacoby Brissett, who should be a better option at this point of the season. Look for running back Derrick Henry (689 yards, 8 TDs) to have a big night against a suspect Panthers run defense. He will soften up the defense for Brissett to make plays in the passing game to Zay Flowers (43 receptions, 614 yards, 3 TDs). Carolina hopes QB Bryce Young (2,197 yards, 16 TDs), running back Chuba Hubbard (619 yards, 5 TDs) and wide receiver Tetairoa McMillan (46 receptions, 625 yards, 3 TDs) to have big days against a suspect Ravens defense. My pick, Carolina 26, Baltimore 23

Tennessee at Dallas - If the Cowboys can't beat the Titans, then they may as well hang things up this season. It's do or die time for Jerry Jones' team, so look for Dak Prescott (2,381 yards, 16 TDs), running back Javonte Williams (629 yards, 10 total TDs) and wideouts CeeDee Lamb (70 receptions, 904 yards, 7 TDs) and George Pickens (39 receptions, 533 yards, 2 TDs) to have big days. The Dallas defense will need to contain Titans QB Cam Ward (1,483 yards, 6 TDs/5 interceptions), which I think they will. My pick, Dallas 33, Tennessee 17

Jacksonville at New York Giants - The Jags head to The Meadowlands to take on the Giants in a meeting of division leaders. The Jags may be the best team in the AFC at this point of the season. They have a productive offense led by QB Trevor Lawrence (1,932 yards, 18 TDs), running back Bhayshui Tuten (526 yards, 4 TDs) and wideouts Parker Washington (29 receptions, 493 yards, 5 TDs) and Jacobi Meyers (26 receptions, 374 yards, 2 TDs). The Jags also are solid on defense, so look for them to make it a long day for NY QB J.J. McCarthy (622 yards, 8 TDs), running back Cam Skattebo (418 yards, 2 TDs) and wide receiver Malik Nabors (53 receptions, 648 yards, 2 TDs). My picks, Jacksonville 27, New York Giants 18

Minnesota at San Francisco - The Vikings head to SF to take on the 49ers on Sunday Night Football with a new QB in Kirk Cousins, who is making his second stint with the Vikes. Vikings fans are hoping Cousins (2,340 yards, 20 TDs) wakes up a dormant Minnesota offense that has struggled so far this season. Cousins' return should benefit wide receiver Justin Jefferson (31 receptions, 393 yards, 4 TDs). The Vikings defense has been one of the best in the league thus far, but they will face a SF offense that is potent, led by QB Brock Purdy (1,980 yards, 17 TDs), running back Christian McCaffrey (457 rushing yards, 9 TDs/36 receptions, 270 yards, 1 TD) and tight end George Kittle (38 receptions, 483 yards, 5 TDs). My pick, San Francisco 24, Minnesota 16

Cincinnati at Washington - Week 11 concludes on Monday Night Football as the Bengals visit the Commanders. The Cinci offense is rolling behind QB Joe Burrow (2,386 yards, 23 TDs), running back Chase Brown (397 rushing yards, 1 TD/39 receptions, 207 yards) and standout wide receivers Tee Higgins (48 receptions, 758 yards, 6 TDs) and Ja'Marr Chase (53 receptions, 647 yards, 7 TDs). Washington plays hard behind QB Jayden Daniels (1,250 yards, 7 TDs in six games). Look for the Bengals offense to be too much for the Commanders as Burrow and Co. continue their winning ways. My pick, Cincinnati 27, Washington 20



HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL SCORES/SCHEDULES

LAST WEEK IN FOOTBALL

Aldine Davis 35, Conroe Grand Oaks 28

The Woodlands 55, Aldine Nimitz 14



THIS WEEK IN FOOTBALL

FRIDAY, NOV. 20

2026 Football Conference 6A, D1, Region II, Area Round

Aldine Davis (9-2) vs Cypress Lakes (9-2), 7 p.m., Cypress Fairbanks FCU Stadium in Cypress

***Aldine, Eisenhower, and MacArthur did not qualify for post-season play and their season is over.**

CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE WORD SEARCH

by Elie's Spiritual Treasures

Psalm 45:10b-12

Forget your **people** and your **father's house**. Let the **king** be **enthralled** by your **beauty**; **honor** him, **for** he is **your lord**. The **city** of **Tyre** will **come** with a **gift**, people of **wealth** will **seek** your **favor**.

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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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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and **be thankful.**

COLOSSIANS 3:15



Detail from "Prayer before the Meal" by Adriaen Jansz. van Ostade (1653)

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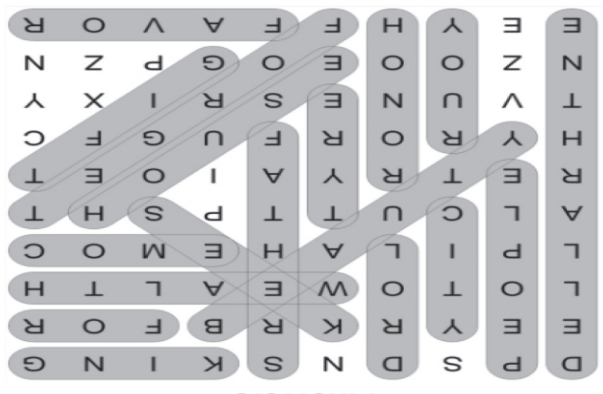
By Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Ishmael (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. From 2 Samuel 11, who received a letter from David telling him to put Uriah into battle? Gideon, Ahab, Isaac, Joab
3. Who told God that Job would curse Thee to His face? Moses, Satan, Bethel, Caleb
4. Matthew, the tax collector, was known by what other name? Levi, Felix, Reuben, Jehu
5. From Mark 6, Herod was called an adulterer by whom? Samson, Jacob, John the Baptist, Zimri
6. Which books did Jesus directly write? Genesis/Exodus, Jude/Revelation, Matthew/Mark, TITLE: None

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Joab, 3) Satan, 4) Levi, 5) John the Baptist, 6) TITLE: None

Find expanded trivia online with Wilson Casey at www.patreon.com/triviaguy. FREE TRIAL!

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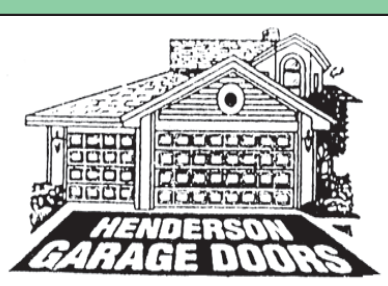


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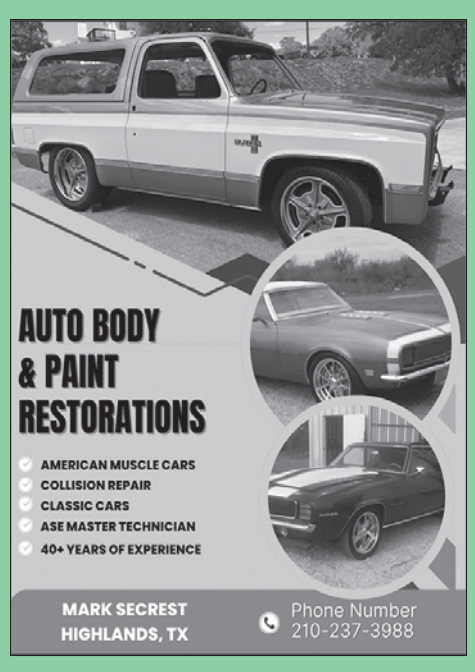
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Andrew Garfield, left, and Claire Foy star in "The Magic Faraway Tree."

"The Magic Faraway Tree"

"The Odyssey" (R) — Four months after its theatrical release that led to a whopping $1.803 billion in the box office, the incredible epic fantasy film from Christopher Nolan ("Oppenheimer") will be available to rent starting Nov. 17. For anyone who had to read Homer's epic poem or watch the 1997 miniseries in their English classes, this film feels like an immersive experience that brings viewers directly alongside Odysseus as he faces a plethora of obstacles to get home to Ithaca. Matt Damon ("The Rip") gives arguably the best performance of his career, as he gives his all to the film's intense physical and emotional scenes. Anne Hathaway ("Verity") is absolutely breathtaking as Penelope, Odysseus' wife, and the rest of the star-studded cast each have their own captivating moments that make this film one of Nolan's best creations yet. (Fandango at Home)

"Sense and Sensibility" (PG) — Another film that's available to rent now following its recent theatrical release is this period romantic drama starring Daisy Edgar-Jones ("Twisters"). And this one's definitely for the yearners out there! Based on the novel by Jane Austen, the film follows the three Dashwood sisters and their mother who lose their estate to the sisters' half-brother John (Frank Dillane). As they deal with their economical circumstances and move into a cottage, the sisters deal with their fair share of romantic troubles as well. The oldest girls each find themselves head over heels for a man who is bound to another by honor or has other commitments. Will the Dashwood girls get their happy endings? Austen's readers surely know! (Amazon Prime Video)

"Heart of the Beast" (PG-13) — Brad Pitt ("F1") is keeping it chill this year, with only two major releases that feature him in a starring role. He's set to reprise his role as Cliff Booth in a Netflix film directed by David Fincher ("The Killer") and written by Quentin Tarantino ("Once Upon a Time in Hollywood"), but first up is this survival thriller film where Pitt plays retired Special Forces veteran James Belmont. James and his combat German Shepherd, Odin, crash-land in the Alaskan wilderness and face an arduous 58-mile trek to safety. Pitt still fills seats just fine on his own, earning this film $188.8 million in box-office grosses against an $82 million budget. And who could resist a film that features a dog as a supporting actor! Out now to rent. (YouTube)

"The Magic Faraway Tree" (PG) — This family-friendly fantasy film might've gone under the radar in the United States, but it's already been greenlit for two sequels, with production starting next year. Andrew Garfield ("The Uprising") and Claire Foy ("The Crown") play a married couple who decide to move their family to the countryside in an effort to get their technology-obsessed children to touch some grass. But one should be very careful what they wish for! As their children explore their new home, the youngest daughter finds an invitation to have tea at a "Magic Faraway Tree" in the woods. Once there, she's whisked away to a magical world where she's able to connect with her imagination like never before. Available to rent now. (Apple TV)

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HOLLYWOOD
by Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD — On Feb. 28, "Saturday Night Live's" host was Connor Storrie ... someone I'd never heard of before! I Googled him and learned that he is 26 years old and played a young inmate in "Joker: Folie a Deux" (2024), which starred Joaquin Phoenix and Lady Gaga ($208 million grosses against a $200 million cost).

In November 2025, Storrie starred in six episodes of the queer Crave network series "Heated Rivalry" (which has been renewed for a second season for 2027). This limited series was so impressive that it prompted "SNL" to ask him to host.

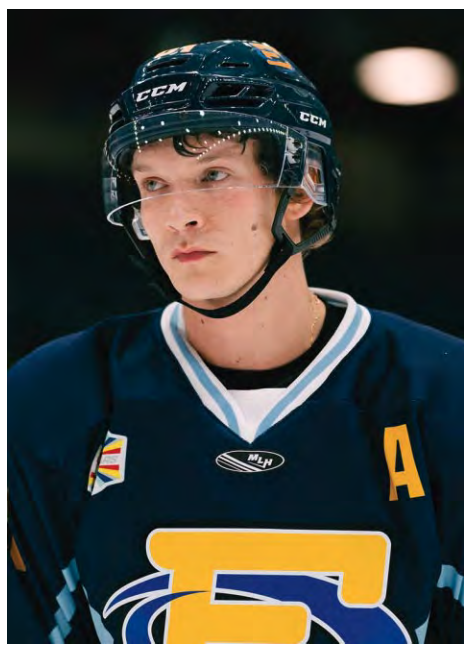
Storrie recently wrote, produced and directed the microbudget sci-fi film "Transaction Planet," which was shot entirely on an iPhone camera. He has also upcoming roles in the comedy film "Peaked" with Dua Lipa, Laura Dern and Amy Sedaris, as well as the crime thriller "Turpentine" with Melissa McCarthy.

Additionally, he wrapped "The Bell Jar" with Carey Mulligan and Ike Barinholtz in September. He's also in talks to be the villain in "Deadpool & Wolverine" director Shawn Levy's reboot of Marvel's "Ghost Rider," which is led by Ryan Gosling. "Ghost Rider" (2007) cost $120 million and grossed $229 million, while "Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance" (2011) cost $57 million and grossed $149.3 million.

***

The ever-active Nicolas Cage has completed five films and has one in production. He plays famed football coach John Madden for director David O. Russell in "Madden," which also stars Christian Bale, Kathryn Hahn, John Mulaney and Sienna Miller. It opened in select theaters on Nov. 11. Cage is following this up with "Best Pancakes in the County," co-starring Justin Long and Ravi Patel. It's set to open in theaters and digitally on Nov. 20.

Next up is the spy-adventure film "Fortitude" with Matthew Goode and Ben Kingsley, which is supposed to be released this year but doesn't have an official date as yet. Then Cage has "Lords of War" with Bill Skarsgard, which opens in January 2027, as well as "The Prince" with J.K. Simmons, Giancarlo Esposito, Andy Garcia, Simon Rex, Beverly D'Angelo and Wayne Brady (no release date yet).



Connor Storrie as Iiya Rozanov in "Heated Rivalry"

As if these weren't enough, he's currently shooting the action-thriller "Parrish," which is set 30 years after a nuclear apocalypse. Cage won an Oscar for "Leaving Las Vegas" (1995) and has starred in over 120 films.

***

HBO's producing a limited series of Alfred Hitchcock's 1963 classic scary film "The Birds," which starred Tippi Hedren, Suzanne Pleshette and Rod Taylor. It cost $3.3 million and grossed $11.4 million. "Succession" star Sarah Snook — who's won an Emmy, a Tony, two Golden Globes, and two Actor Awards — will star in Hedren's original role.

Based on a short story by Daphne du Maurier, the film received mixed reviews during its original release, but over time, its reputation has improved so much that it's now considered one of the greatest horror films of all time. However, it was Hitchcock who saved the film from extinction when he created a brilliant ad campaign on giant billboards all over the country that drove English teachers absolutely cuckoo. ... Hitchcock's tagline was "The birds is coming!"

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



Weekly SUDOKU

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

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

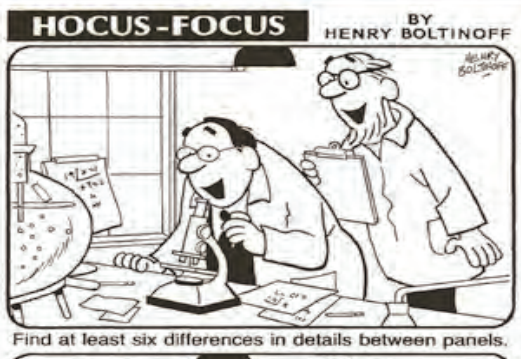
DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging ◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

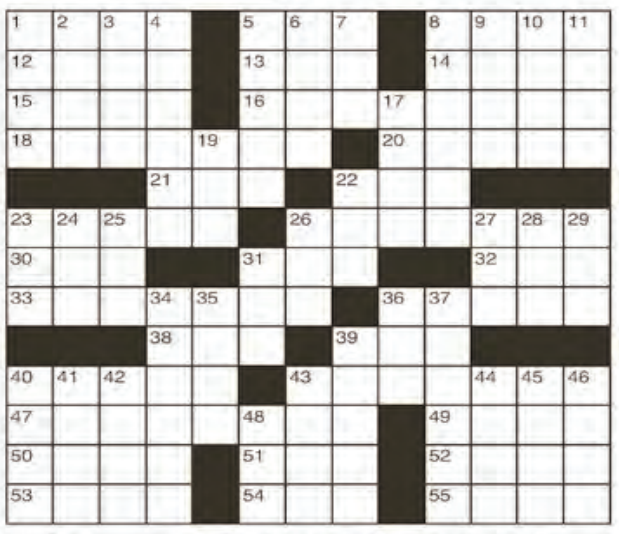


Differences: 1. Pencil is missing. 2. Tie is missing. 3. Pocket is missing. 4. Arm is longer. 5. Light is not as long. 6. Fingers are not showing on clipboard.

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November 16, 2026 Posting Date

King Crossword



ACROSS

1 Furnace fuel
5 Arles buddy
8 Grouch
12 Words said with a sigh
13 A Bobbsey twin
14 Corridor
15 Subsequently
16 Small orchestra
18 Tennis category
20 Like a gorilla
21 Up to
22 "Ben- —"
23 Marina boat
26 "My Way" singer Frank
30 Rock producer Brian
31 Monk's title
32 "Big Blue"
33 Tricky baseball pitches
36 Old photo tint
38 Hosp. hookups
39 Lincoln or Ford
40 Savory taste
43 Winding
47 "The Jungle" author
49 Haydn nickname
50 Essence
51 Joan of —
52 Not that
53 Spanish ayes
54 Salty expanse
55 Phoenix cagers

DOWN

1 Felines
2 Surprised greeting
3 "So be it"
4 Duration
5 Photographer Adams
6 French "but"
7 Hostel
8 "Quantum Healing" author Deepak
9 Hindu royal
10 Famed boxing family
11 Humdrum
17 Mythic goat-man
19 Tipsy
22 That fellow
23 "Certainly!"
24 Singer DiFranco
25 Bamboozle
26 "Help!"
27 Bit of advice
28 Slugger's stat
29 Med. group
31 ER workers
34 Korean cabbage dish
35 Wicked
36 — Diego
37 Blows one's top
39 About, date-wise
40 Priority Mail org.
41 1003, in old Rome
42 Pantry pests
43 Beget
44 Diamond Head locale
45 — arms
46 Back talk
48 Remote batteries, often

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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

1. LITERATURE: Which of Shakespeare's plays is the longest?
2. FOOD & DRINK: What is kefir?
3. GEOGRAPHY: What does Australia mean in Latin?
4. U.S. STATES: What is the capital of California?
5. MOVIES: Which famous Los Angeles landmark is featured in "Rebel Without a Cause"?
6. ANATOMY: What is the common name for the patella?
7. TELEVISION: What is Tina Fey's character's name in "30 Rock"?
8. MUSIC: How many Grammys does Beyonce have (as of 2025)?
9. COMICS: What is the name of Clark Kent's friend and photographer at the Daily Planet?
10. HISTORY: How many wives did Henry VIII of England have?

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— Weekly SUDOKU —

Answer

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

— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 23 mins.



Trivia Test Answers

1. "Hamlet"; 2. Fermented milk; 3. "Southern" (australis); 4. Sacramento; 5. Griffith Observatory; 6. Kneecap; 7. Liz Lemon; 8. 35; 9. Jimmy Olsen; 10. Six

New HPD North Belt Station,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

North Houston District. And a special thank you to Sally Bradford and Greg Simpson for your steadfast support of public safety in the community," Vela said.

The parcel of land where the new station and Station 84 were built was purchased and donated to the City of Houston by the NHDC. NHDC also provided $12M towards the construction of the $23.4M facility.

New North Belt Station & HFD Station 84 form Houston's First Public Safety Complex

Houston Police Department's new North Belt Station joins Houston Fire Department's Fire Station 84 on a shared 10-acre parcel of land. The project marks the first time in City of Houston history that a joint HPD and HFD base of operations has been established, saving resources and tax dollars by consolidating fueling and washing facilities, along with parking.

The 27,000-square-foot main building features a ballistic-resistant lobby, a 1,000-square-foot Community Room, a fitness area and locker rooms with adjacent outdoor flexible use area, and houses up to 137 staff, including units from the Family Violence Division, Narcotics Division, and DART unit (Domestic Abuse Response Team) that are primarily focused on crimes within the North Belt beat.

"This is a big deal in the City of Houston. For us to get something that's going to last 30-40 years and will be a light in the community. It's a beautiful facility…and it's centrally located to this community," said HPD Chief J. Noe Diaz.

The site is in the 500-year floodplain and can withstand flooding up to 30 inches. The building was designed to Risk Category IV to withstand severe weather, and is equipped with a full-facility emergency gas generator backup and on-site stormwater detention. The property also includes a 2,000-square-foot two-bay fleet maintenance building.



Together As One Artist Gelson Lemus


Comm-Unity Rings Artist Obi Grant

Out front, there is a shared public plaza between the new North Belt Station and HFD Station 84. At the center is an interactive sculpture titled "Comm-Unity Rings" by artist Obi Grant, representing a celebration of unity across our public safety teams and the community.

An interior mural from artist Gelson Lemus is titled "Together As One", reflecting the area's skyline and honoring the service of both firefighters and police officers.

About HPD North Belt Division

The Houston Police Department established the North Belt Division in 2018 to better serve four beats located adjacent to Beltway 8 on the north side of Houston, which were previously served by three patrol divisions: Northwest, North, and Northeast. The North Belt Division covers Willowbrook, George Bush Intercontinental Airport, and the TIRZ 11/North Houston District area.

The newly built HPD North Belt Station is right in the middle of the North Belt beat, providing ideal access to all major freeways and thoroughfares in the area.

About HFD Fire Station 84

Houston Fire Department Station 84, a ground-up construction project, was completed on April 1, 2015. The $7.3M, 15,475-square-foot station was funded by NHDC to expand fire and emergency response coverage in the area.

The facility includes five bays and houses an engine, ambulance, and ladder company. Designed with an industrial modern aesthetic, the station features private sleeping quarters, a dedicated triage room, and wood clerestory details that introduce natural light into the space. The facility is LEED Silver certified, reflecting

sustainable design and operational efficiency.

Lone Star College-North Harris to give away 300 free Thanksgiving meal bundles Nov. 21


Lone Star College-North Harris will give meal bundles to the first 300 families at the second annual Thanksgiving Meal Drive on Nov. 21.

HOUSTON (Nov. 12, 2026) – Local families can get a free Thanksgiving meal bundle this holiday season at the second annual Lone Star College-North Harris Thanksgiving Meal Drive, hosted by Daniel Meza, Lone Star College System Board of Trustees member, with support from faculty, staff and student volunteers.

"Many families in our community are struggling to make ends meet as we head into the holiday season," Meza said. "Providing a Thanksgiving dinner is a small gesture to show the community that Lone Star College-North Harris is here for them. I'm delighted to bring this event back for the second consecutive year."

The giveaway will take place Saturday, Nov. 21, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at LSC-North Harris Student Services Building, 2700 W.W. Thorne Drive, Houston. The first 300 families will receive a turkey and sides to prepare a meal for their loved ones.

"Lone Star College-North Harris is committed to serving and uplifting our neighbors," said Magdalena Mendoza-Starck, Ed.D., LSC-North Harris vice president, Student Success. "That commitment extends beyond the classroom. We look forward to welcoming our community with a smile and the supplies needed to prepare a classic Thanksgiving feast."

Registration is not required, but meal bundles will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Learn more at LoneStar.edu/NorthHarris.

East Aldine Civic Association wraps up successful year

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1


Veronica Sanches EAMD Deputy Executive Director



bers expressed gratitude for everyone involved in their journey and a commitment to building on their progress.

This story is based on information published by the East Aldine Civic Association on their official Facebook page.



