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SERVING THE BLACK COMMUNITY WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR SINCE 1947

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EDUCATION



Students walk through Texas State University campus in San Marcos on Jan. 31, 2018.
Photo Credit: **Laura Skelding** for The Texas Tribune

Texans with smaller student loans could see federal debt canceled as soon as February

Texas borrowers enrolled in the SAVE loan repayment program will have their debt canceled if they took out \$12,000 or less and have been repaying for at least 10 years.

BY SNEHA DEY

<https://www.texastribune.org/2024/01/12/texas-student-loan-forgiveness-save/>

The Biden administration has fast-tracked a student loan forgiveness program that could erase the debt of thousands of Texas borrowers with smaller loans.

Texans who took out \$12,000 or less in loans and have been repaying for at least 10 years will have their debt automatically canceled in February, as long as they are enrolled in a federal income-based repayment plan known as SAVE. It will bring significant relief to community college borrow-

ers in particular, who typically borrow in smaller amounts.

More than 590,000 Texans are enrolled in the SAVE plan. The U.S. Department of Education did not immediately say how many of those program enrollees had debts of \$12,000 or under.

The Biden administration is encouraging borrowers who are eligible for early debt cancellation to sign up for the plan at studentaid.gov.

“Today’s announcement will help struggling borrowers who have been making loan payments for years,

Continue **Loan** Page 4

Dallas Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett is going viral – just the way she wants it

A freshman in Congress, Crockett is trying to find her audience and her uncensored barbs and musings have helped launch her into the spotlight.

BY GRACE YARROW



Then-state Rep. Jasmine Crockett, D-Dallas, speaks at a Texas House Progressive Caucus at the Capitol on Sept. 20, 2021.
Photo Credit: **Eddie Gaspar**/The Texas Tribune

<https://www.texastribune.org/2024/01/15/jasmine-crockett-dallas-congress/>

WASHINGTON — In summer 2021, about 50 Democrats from the Texas House arrived at the nation’s capital — absconding from Austin in a plot to block Republicans from passing a bill that would impose tighter restrictions on voting access.

Buzzing with excitement, the lawmakers took their places in front of reporters, with senior members and leadership moving toward the center to field questions. But Jasmine Crockett — a freshman from Dallas — stepped

away from the group to take a call. She held up her phone to film her own live interview with a TV station, the dome of the Capitol building peeking out behind her.

That interview would be one of many that Crockett would take while camped out in Washington to discuss the Democrats’ quorum break, in a move that would raise the little-known lawmaker’s profile as she became an unofficial spokesperson for the dramatic political spectacle.

“There were people in leadership from my understanding that were not a fan of a freshman being a bit of a face of some of this,” Crockett said in an interview with The Texas Tribune.

Nonetheless, she accepted as many interviews as she could fit into her schedule, carrying two phones and a laptop to handle the crush of inquiries she received.

“I did not expect the world to pay attention,” Crockett said.

But she wanted them to. Crockett, 42, didn’t get into politics to wait her turn. While she says she may have ruffled some feathers among her caucus peers at the time, her decision to grab the spotlight catapulted her career and provided the foundation for her to run for Congress the following year.

Continue **Crockett** Page 2

DART Announces Upcoming Partnership to Get Movin’ and Groovin’ with Erykah Badu



See **Badu** Page 6

The Unchecked Path: Trump’s Victory in Iowa Sparks Concerns Over Accountability

Just one day before his second sexual assault civil trial was to begin, Trump cruised to a landslide victory in the Iowa caucuses, solidifying his front-runner status for the Republican presidential nomination.

By Stacy M. Brown

A good parent usually chastises and punishes their child when they’ve egregiously misbehaved. Jaywalkers get tickets, and murderers have received the death penalty. Generally, no one goes unpunished for breaking the law. Not in the United States. Not unless you are of a particular social and financial status, and the crime, for the most part,

isn’t much more than white collar.

But that’s not the case with Donald J. Trump. Undoubtedly, Trump is the kid who has never been chastised or punished. And, as a grown-up, and certainly since his false election claim in 2020 and his

Continue **Path** Page 4



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EDITORIAL PAGE

We Celebrated The King Holiday Despite Moral And Political Decay

We Can't Lose Hope

By James B. Ewers Jr. Ed.D.



James B. Ewers Jr. Ed.D.

Celebratory programs and events marked the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday. Promises and proclamations were made at city halls and places of worship across America.

Our attitudes of hope seem to be buoyed when this special holiday comes around each year. It's timely in the sense that it gives us the rest of the year to practice what we say.

Some years ago, I coined the expression, "it's the doing of the talking". No matter how fervently we say the words of hope, we must also create actions of hope as well.

As history tells us, Dr. King was one of the early architects of the Civil Rights Movement. In fact, he was Time Magazine's Person of The Year in 1964.

His advocacy for people with little to no voice put the United States of America on notice.

He said, "Our nettlesome task is to discover how to organize our strength into compelling power so that government cannot elude our demands." Over time, we have seen this axiom come to fruition. However, we know that there is still work to be done.

How many times have we heard the lyrics we shall overcome some day? Those words have become synonymous with the King Holiday. We want to believe that equal rights are just around the corner. Yet our quest for them is still evolving.

Dr King was an ambassador for people, both Black and White. He knew that we were better together. No man or woman is an island. We are inextricably tied together in the same fabric of brotherhood and sisterhood.

He said, "Justice for Black people will not flow into society merely from court decisions nor from fountains of political oratory. White America must recognize that justice for Black people cannot be achieved without radical changes in

the structure of our society."

Another King Holiday has passed, and our America is still being challenged by demons today. Our vision of prosperity has been dimmed by corrupt and corrosive people. America is at a pivotal moment in its storied history. This year, we have a presidential election earmarked for Tuesday, November 5th. Unless something unforeseen happens, the incumbent Joe Biden will face off against Donald Trump.

Some may ask how can a person with 91 criminal charges against him run for the position of president of the country? It is because Trump's legal team is playing the game of put-off, delay and reschedule.

There are many in America who want him to become president. I wonder what their code of ethics and honesty is. Does telling the truth matter? Is it ok to assault women? Can you get away with inciting riots? It is permissible to overvalue your businesses. Can you admire dictators and want to emulate them? If your answer is yes, then you will vote for Donald Trump.

Sadly, you fall into the

caldron of misguided people who have replaced right with wrong. You have fallen into a sea of misery and misfortune. You are with the wrong person for the wrong reasons.

Now, if you are like me and a proponent of Dr. King's philosophy of hopefulness then you will vote on November 5th. Our vote will count, and our presence will matter. Don't think otherwise.

Right cannot ever be taken for granted as wrong is always lurking. Dr. King and other Civil Rights leaders sacrificed greatly for the rights and privileges that we have today. The King Holiday must not be the only day that we give a little more and do a little more. It must become a lifestyle and a way of living.

Dr. King said, "Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. Even a superficial look at history reveals that no social advance rolls in on the wheels of inevitability. Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering and struggle."

We must continue doing this if we want a better nation for generations to come. This is our responsibility and we can do no less.

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Continued Dallas Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett Page 1



U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Dallas, talks to Jasmine Crockett at Crockett's election night watch party for a congressional seat in Dallas on May 24, 2022. Photo Credit: **Shelby Tauber** for The Texas Tribune

Now a freshman in the U.S. House representing the Dallas-based 30th Congressional District, Crockett is once again finding her voice, seeking out moments to go viral and trying to make a name for herself in a deeper pool filled with bigger fish.

Her unfiltered musings and barbs while in Congress have helped her amass one of the largest social media followings in the Texas delegation, with an online audience of nearly a quarter of a million people on both X and Instagram. Her online reach is bigger than every other Texas Democrat, with the exception of Rep. Joaquin Castro of San Antonio, who has served a decade longer

than Crockett has. And she's been crowdsourcing the name for a new podcast, she's considering.

Crockett got her first taste of going viral during a September hearing of the House Oversight Committee, which garnered media attention because of the Republican impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden. Crockett took aim at former President Donald Trump's mishandling of classified documents, holding up printed photos from his indictment showing boxes of classified documents in the Mar-a-Lago bathroom.

"These are our national secrets, looks like, in the shitter to me," Crockett said

in a clip that was shared on Reddit and Tiktok. One fan edit of the moment set to music, created by a 16-year-old fan, raked in over 8 million views on TikTok.

Crockett spoke about the virality of the moment on CNN, saying younger Democrats are looking for their elected leaders to "push back" against GOP talking points. Actor Mark Hamill, of Luke Skywalker fame, reposted the video on X, supporting Crockett: "Omg is an understatement!"

U.S. Rep. Greg Casar of Austin, another freshman Democrat who sits beside Crockett in the Oversight Committee, said he often struggles to keep a straight face during Crockett's speeches.

"She can speak so directly to people and bring humor to the table in a way that makes folks want to listen. And that's what we need right now," Casar said.

For her online followers, Crockett provides gleeful narration about the unfolding drama within the majority party, such as her updates on X about "SPEAKERGATE," the fallout from the ousting of former Speaker Kevin McCarthy.

Recently, she's chronicled on X the expulsion of New York Republican George

Santos, who was booted from the House following a searing ethics report detailing misuses of campaign funds. "Maybe a cat fight if Santos spills tea during debate, today," Crockett posted before the expulsion vote.

Her posts — often interspersed with popcorn or eyeball emojis — are told as though she's recapping an episode of reality television to a friend: "Welcome to preschool ... I mean our prestigious congress (damn autocorrect)."

Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-Maryland, the ranking member on the House Oversight Committee, said that Crockett's unique voice has proved to be an effective communication tool and that her expertise as an attorney is often on display.

He described her style as a combination of a lawyer's "sharp analysis and lucid exposition" and a "Texan's folksy and intimate manner."

"Always a fighter" Gwen Crockett said her daughter was a sharp-witted speaker from a young age.

In high school, Crockett participated in speech competitions. While in a production of "Little Shop of Horrors" at Rhodes College,

Continue **Crockett** Page 5

RELIGIOUS/NEWS

Pursuing the Goal in the Christian Life

Philippians 3:1-21

Part II



By Rev. Johnny Calvin Smith

Having employed the words - "Finally, my brethren" in Philippians 3:1, one would have concluded that the grand Apostle Paul was about to conclude this epistle. However, Paul was urged to continue this epistle, informing us that there was danger lurking among the Philippian believers because of the insidious teaching of the Judaizers. Certain men, called the Judaizers, insisted that Gentile believers had to submit to the law, especially the law of circumcision in order to be saved. To abolish this error, Paul was deeply urged to warn the Philippian believers of this dangerous teaching of the Judaizers.

Philippians 3:1-21 may be outlined as follows: I. The Dangerous Teaching of the Judaizers Revealed - Philippians 3:1-3; II. The Pedigree of Paul Unveiled - Philippians 3:4-14; III. The Exhortation to Steadfast Spiritual Maturity - Philippians 3:15-21.

II. The Pedigree of Paul Unveiled - Philippians 3:4-14

To drive home the point of his impressive credentials, Paul's intent was to reveal that in the flesh he had more in which he could have boasted than did any of the Judaizers (v. 4). Paul is challenging these Judaizers to a showdown. No matter what credentials the Judaizers brought forth, Paul's advantages super exceeded theirs (Galatians 1:14).

In verses 5-6, Paul will enumerate some seven advantages he had in the flesh, but what he later counted as loss for Christ. The seven advantages listed in verse 5-6 are: circumcision, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, Hebrew son of Hebrew parents, Pharisee, persecutor of the church, blameless regarding the external keeping of the law. However, those things enumerated in verses 5-6, the grand Apostle considered loss for the sake of Christ (v. 7).

Yes, after careful reflection, Paul considered those advantages (vv. 5-6) as loss. Paul considered as loss not

only the things already listed (vv.5-6), but everything (v. 8). In lieu of having confidence in the flesh, Paul gained the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus personally. Christ was now Paul's Lord. All of Paul's former gains he now considered as "rubbish" or "dung" so that he might gain Christ. Having Christ as his Saviour and Lord far surpassed anything he had in Judaism.

In verse 9, to Paul, being found in Christ meant relinquishing his own righteousness, a righteousness based on keeping the law. The only righteousness of value is the righteousness that comes from God in response to faith in Christ. Self-merit has no place at all in God's salvation work! Paul wanted his life to demonstrate that he placed no confidence in legalistic righteousness. Paul considered his life-transforming conversion on the Damascus Road as the time when he switched from confidence in the flesh to confidence in Christ alone.

In verse 10, Paul's

supreme goal in life was to have an ever-increasing experiential intimacy with Christ. The intimacy that Paul was striving for included experiencing "the power of His resurrection." The power of the resurrected Christ, who won victory over sin and death, is available to every believer. It is this power that raises a believer from the old life of sin and enables him to live a new life (Romans 6:4-11; Ephesians 1:19-20). Not only did Paul want to experience more of the power of Christ's resurrection, but he equally desired "the fellowship of His sufferings" (v. 10).

Paul is not referring to experiencing Christ's expiatory suffering He endured for us; instead, Paul was speaking about the identification with Christ that comes with suffering as Christians. As Christ died for sin, so a believer has died to sin (Romans 6:2, 6-7; Colossians 3:3). We should exhibit that cutting off from our former sinful way of living to daily being set apart from sin (Romans 6:1-4, 11-

14), and living a new life by means of Christ's resurrection power (Romans 6:4).

Paul's ultimate hope was the day when he "might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (v. 11). Perhaps Paul had reference to the Rapture, thus revealing his hope of the Lord's return during his lifetime. Although Paul had some high spiritual goals, Paul revealed that he had not yet "attained" (v. 12) or laid hold of, all that he sought. He had not yet reached perfection in his spiritual development. Far from being discouraged, Paul set his sights on the future. Paul strove to reach the objective for which Christ had laid hold of him. Paul knew that his spiritual progress was dependent on Christ, who laid His hand on him at salvation.

In verse 13, Paul repeated his assertion that he had not yet reached his goal. He had not reached the final stage of his sanctification. Although he had not yet attained his goal, he focused his energies on what lay ahead. By "for-

getting those things which are behind" (v. 13), Paul meant that he had put out of his mind both the failures and the achievements of the past. He focused on what lay ahead. What a wonderful outlook all believers should embrace!

Paul was using the imagery of an athletic contest. A successful runner does not look back but instead keeps his attention on what is ahead. Such an outlook is essential to the task of seeking victory in a race. For Paul, victory meant forging ahead in his quest for spiritual maturity.

Using the same imagery, Paul was determined to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (v. 14). Like a runner who refused to quit no matter how much the body screamed for rest, Paul kept moving toward the goal. Paul pursued Christlikeness with enthusiasm and persistence of a runner in the Greek games.

May God Bless!

Here's how to vote in Texas' March 5 primary elections

The deadline to register to vote is Feb. 5. The last day to apply to vote by mail is Feb. 23. Early voting runs from Feb. 20 to March 1.

BY MARÍA MÉNDEZ AND YURIKO SCHUMACHER/Texas Tribune

<link rel="canonical" href="https://www.texastribune.org/2024/01/15/texas-voting-primary-2024/">

Here's what you need to know

- What's on the ballot?
- What dates do I need to know?
- What do I need to know about voter registration requirements?
- What do I need to know about mail-in voting?
- What do I need to know about going to the polls?
- How can I make sure my ballot is counted?

What's on the ballot?

While there is a presidential election this year, eligible Texans can also cast their ballots for many Texas officials running for office at the federal, state and local levels.

This includes representatives in the U.S. and Texas houses and the following elected offices:

- 1 U.S. Senator (Ted Cruz)
- 1 of 3 Railroad Commissioners
- 15 State Senators
- 7 State Board of Education members
- 3 members of the Texas Supreme Court
- 3 members of the Texas Court of Criminal Appeal
- 5 Chief Justices and various justices for Texas Courts of Appeals
- Lower-level judges and local county offices will also appear on the ballot:
- Various district judges, including on criminal and family courts
- County Courts at Law
- Justices of the Peace
- District Attorneys
- County Attorneys
- Sheriffs
- Constables
- Tax Assessor-Collectors

In the March 5 primary election, Texans will be narrowing candidates for these elected offices within the Democratic and Republican parties. The candidate who wins the majority, or more than half, of votes in a race will face candidates from other parties in the November general election. If no candidate gets a majority of votes in a race, the top two vote-getters will head to a May 28 primary runoff election. The Green and Libertarian parties select their candidates through a series of local conventions beginning March 12 and a state convention that each party needs to announce by then. In Texas, voters can only vote in one party's primary and runoff or in a third party's convention.

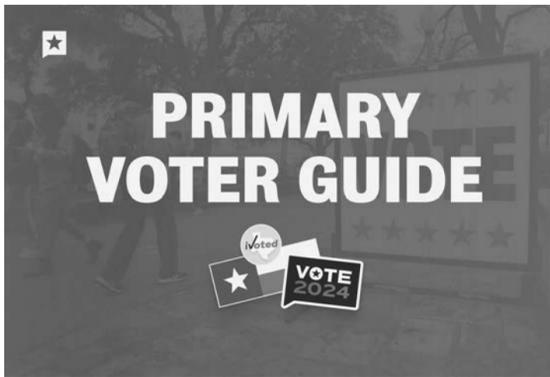
What dates do I need to know?

Feb. 5 is the last day to register to vote and to submit an address change for the midterm election.

You can report an address or name change online. You should do this if you've moved since the last time you voted, especially if you have moved to a different county or political subdivision or have legally taken a different name.

How do I check if I'm registered to vote?

You can check to see if you're registered and verify your information through the Texas Secretary of State's website: (<https://teamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov/MVP/mvp.do>).



You'll need one of the following three combinations to log in:

- Your Texas driver's license number and date of birth.
- Your first and last names, date of birth and county you reside in.
- Your date of birth and Voter Unique Identifier, which appears on your voter registration certificate.

Feb. 23 is the last day to apply to vote by mail.

When do I need to drop off or mail an application?

Applications must be received by the early voting clerk in your county — not postmarked — by Feb. 23. Applications can also be submitted by fax or email, but the county must receive a hard copy within four business days. They can also be dropped off in person.

If you're looking to vote by mail, give yourself as much leeway as possible. You'll need to budget for the time it may take your county to get your ballot to you in the mail after you apply.

What is the deadline to mail my ballot?

The deadline for mail-in ballots to be returned to the county is Election Day, March 5. If a ballot is postmarked by 7 p.m. locally that day, it'll be counted if the county receives it by 5 p.m. on March 6.

Absentee ballots can also be delivered to the county elections office in person with a valid form of ID while polls are open on Election Day.

Completed ballots from military or overseas voters are accepted if they're received by March 11. (Military and overseas voters can go through a different ballot request and return process.) <https://www.fvap.gov/texas>.

Early voting in person runs from Feb. 20 to March 1. If you can't vote inside of a polling place because of COVID-19 or a disability, curbside voting may be available to you. Read more about what qualifies as a disability and about curbside voting options online.

Who is eligible to vote early?

Anyone registered to vote may vote early, but it must be done in person unless you qualify to vote by mail.

Where am I allowed to vote early?

Voters can cast ballots at any polling location in the county where they are registered to vote. Check your county elections office's website for early-voting locations.

Election Day is March 5.

Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Election Day.

Are polling locations the same on Election Day as they are during early voting?

Not always. Check the open polling locations in your area before you head to cast your ballot. In some counties, Election Day voting may be restricted to locations in your designated precinct. Other counties allow voters to cast their ballots at any polling place on Election Day.

Who can register to vote in Texas?

U.S. citizens in Texas can register to vote in the election if they are 18 or older or if they will be 18 by Election Day.

Citizens in the state cannot register to vote if they have been convicted of a felony and are still serving a sentence, including parole or probation, or if they have been deemed mentally incapacitated in court. Here are more specifics on eligibility.

How do I register to vote?

You must complete and submit a paper voter registration application by Feb. 5.

You can request a postage-paid application through the mail or find one at county voter registrars' offices and some post offices, government offices, or high schools. You can also print out the online application and mail it to the voter registrar in your county.

Applications must be postmarked by the Feb. 5 deadline.

Additionally, you can register to vote through the Texas Department of Public Safety while renewing your driver's license. You may be able to register to vote online if you're also allowed to renew your license online. This is the only form of online registration in the state.

After you register to vote, you will receive a voter registration certificate within 30 days. It'll contain your voter information, including the Voter Unique Identifier number needed to update your voter registration online. If the certificate has incorrect information, you'll need to note corrections and send it to your local voter registrar as soon as possible.

The voter registration certificate can also be used as a secondary form of ID when you vote if you don't have one of the seven state-approved photo IDs.

Do you have to reregister to vote?

Once you register to vote, you generally remain registered, but there are various reasons why you may want to verify your registration status. For example, you need to update your registration after a name or address change.

What does it mean if my voter registration is in "suspense"?

If a county receives a nondeliverable notice after sending a voter registration certificate or suspects an address change, a voter is placed on a "suspense list" and asked to confirm their address. Voters on the suspense list can still vote if they update or confirm their address before the voter registration deadline for an election or fill out a "statement of residence" when voting, but they may have to vote at their previous polling location or vote on a limited ballot. If no action is taken by a suspended voter, they are removed from the voter rolls after about four years, according to the Texas Secretary of State's office.

Federal law prevents the state from removing registered voters within 90 days of a federal election unless the voter has died, been convicted of a felony or been declared mentally incapacitated.

Continue Elections Page 5



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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

Continued **Loan** Page 1

including many who never graduated from college,” said Under Secretary of Education James Kvaal in a news release Thursday. “Giving borrowers with smaller loans a faster path to being debt free will help many borrowers avoid financial distress and have peace of mind.”

For every \$1,000 of debt

over \$12,000, a borrower is eligible for forgiveness after one more year of repayments. The debt relief benefit is based on how much a borrower first took out to attend college, not how much they currently owe.

The Biden administration created the SAVE plan last year, touting it as the most affordable federal loan repayment plan in history.

Unlike previous plans, interest on SAVE repayment plans cannot grow to uncontrollable levels. Borrowers who make payments in full and on time will have their unpaid monthly interest canceled. The Education Department has estimated that the plan will make 85% of future community college borrowers debt-free within 10 years.

Borrowers who have defaulted will also benefit from the forgiveness program; more than three in five borrowers with defaulted loans originally borrowed less than \$12,000, Kvaal said.

This article originally appeared in The Texas Tribune at <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/01/12/txas-student-loan-forgiveness-save/>.

Continued **Path** Page 1

egging on a deadly riot at the U.S. Capitol, the twice-impeached and four-times indicted former president hasn't seen a scintilla of punishment. One could argue that America, or his parents, have rewarded his unprecedented bad behavior.

Just one day before his second sexual assault civil trial was to begin, Trump cruised to a landslide victory in the Iowa caucuses, solidifying his front-runner status for the Republican presidential nomination. As several outlets reported, losing one-term presidents rarely mount subsequent successful primary campaigns, much less pull off landslides that demonstrate utter dominance

of their party.

Trump transformed the GOP in 2016. By claiming 50% of the vote in the biggest win in caucus history, putting him on course for his third consecutive nomination, Trump showed that the current GOP is now entirely his party.

President Joe Biden beat Trump in the 2020 general election, 81 million popular votes to 75 million. And while both numbers were stunning, Trump's was more telling, as it demonstrated that 75 million could vote for a man who single-handedly destroyed American Democracy, who championed white supremacy, caged babies, mocked the disabled, and called cowards American troops whom the

enemy captured. Not all Trump followers are racist, but there's no doubt that you must be a racist to be a Trump follower.

Biden's victory over Trump came in part because his slogan, his message, “saving the soul of America,” resonated. It was the first time since President Obama's “Yes We Can” that Dems had a message folks could understand and get behind. Mainly a message that the ultimate swing voters, African Americans, could embrace. During the current campaign, when Biden says there's a need to “save Democracy,” the message falls flat particularly to African Americans who have come to a reckoning that Democracy today, like the

Confederacy of decades ago, doesn't work for Black people.

So, what are they saving? A system that fosters outright racism from politicians, the emphatic truth that Black Lives really don't matter, and more than 75 million, including a few who were born Black (Ben Carson, Clarence Thomas, Candace Owens, Jason Whitlock, etc.) show the worst of African Americans with their allegiance to slavery and their slave master Trump.

It indeed says a whole lot that Trump is the clear front-runner to return to office, where he promises that “on day one,” he'll be a dictator. He'll have people – read

Continue **Path** Page 5

Quinn Minute

Under the weather

By Rix Quinn

Yesterday I head somebody ask, “Why is it so cold?” it's cold because it is winter.

If it were hot, we would worry that there's a hole in the ozone layer. But the ozone layer is invisible, so it would be really hard to find the hole.

For winter amusement,

many people ski. That's fun if you like to go downhill really fast. I don't ski, because I am going downhill fast enough already.

In icy weather, it's unwise to water ski. Not only is it hard to stay up, but falling on a frozen lake is quite painful.

Yes, cold weather can be brutal, but just think how tough winter was B.C. (before central heating). Houses got so cold at night, folks invented windows just so they could close them.

And think about long winter travel before cars. What if your wagon wheel

fell off? What if your horse ran away?

Or what if you got stuck outside in the snow, and you couldn't get cell service so you could watch a winter movie?

I'm convinced winter is like a bad date. It's cold, it's unpleasant, and it seems like it lasts forever.

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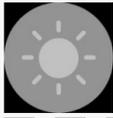
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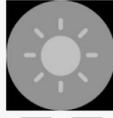
H 63°
L -45°

Friday, Jan. 12



H - 47°
L - 31°

Saturday, Jan. 13



H - 56°
L - 34°

Sunday, Jan. 14



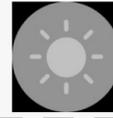
H - 42°
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Monday, Jan. 15



H - 29°
L - 18°

Tuesday, Jan. 16



H - 35°
L - 27°

Wednesday, Jan. 17



H - 41°
L - 33°

Cowboys to see 16 players enter free agency in 2024

By Nick Harris
DallasCowboys.com Staff Writer



Photo Credit: Callena Williams/Dallas Cowboy

FRISCO, Texas — The 2023 season's abrupt end has the Dallas Cowboys now looking into the offseason where 14 players from this past year's team will enter free agency, including key pieces on all three phases of the team.

Here are the 16 players set to enter the free agency market when it opens on March 13. All are set to be unrestricted free agents.

- Tyron Smith (13 seasons with DAL) The impending free agency of starting left tackle Tyron Smith will be one of the more interesting ones to follow as the offseason kicks into high gear.
- Tony Pollard (5 seasons with DAL) The Cowboys decided to use their franchise tag this past season on Tony Pollard, who signed to the tag on a \$10.09 million deal.
- Stephon Gilmore (1 season with DAL) Trading for Stephon Gilmore gave Dallas a veteran cornerback for one season that proved to be even more valuable when Trevon Diggs went down for the season in week three.
- Jourdan Lewis (7 seasons with DAL) The same questions asked about Gilmore could be asked about Jourdan

Lewis who is also looking at potentially being the odd man out in a loaded cornerback room in 2024.

- Dorance Armstrong (6 seasons with DAL) The second-leading sack-getter for the Dallas Cowboys in 2023 is due to hit the free agent market as Dorance Armstrong will look to pair his strong year on the field with a sizable contract this offseason.
- Jayron Kearse (3 seasons with DAL) An up-and-down 2023 season makes the Jayron Kearse free agency interesting going into the offseason, especially considering that the front office extended both Donovan Wilson and Malik Hooker before the season.
- Dante Fowler Jr. (2 seasons with DAL) Speaking of Dan Quinn guys, Dante Fowler Jr. is due for free agency this offseason after two years in Dallas followed up two years spent in Atlanta including one of those with Quinn.
- Noah Igbinoghene (1 season with DAL) After being traded for just days before the season began, cornerback Noah Igbinoghene is set to hit free agency. Igbinoghene only saw late-game, blowout action on defense early in the season and minimal special teams work throughout the year.
- Johnathan Hankins (2 seasons with DAL) The Cowboys tried to add more beef to their defensive interior when they drafted Mazi Smith in the first round last April, but after a rookie year that fell short of expectations, having reliability at the defensive tackle position is one of the bigger offseason priorities.
- Trent Sieg (1 season with DAL)
- Chuma Edoga (1 season with DAL)
- Neville Gallimore (4 seasons with DAL)
- Rico Dowdle (4 seasons with DAL)
- Tyler Biadasz (4 seasons with DAL)
- Sean McKeon (4 seasons with DAL)
- C.J. Goodwin (6 seasons with DAL)

Continued Path Page 4

Black people — shot by police on the spot if they are deemed to have participated in shoplifting or any minor crime. Trump will get rid of the Affordable Care Act, which provides otherwise uninsured Black and poor people with life-saving healthcare coverage. He'll release the seditious, murderous January 6 inmates whom he calls hostages.

Having already banned just about any book with a Black author or one that reveals true American history, Trump will ensure that publishing houses that produce such work will be shut down. That could also mean the Black Press of America, founded in New York 197 years ago before slavery ended in America.

Trump once proudly proclaimed that he could shoot someone on New York's Fifth Avenue and get away with it. He also exclaimed on national television that he and other celebrities are allowed to grab a woman, any woman, by their private parts without permission,

and it's okay. Subsequently, a jury found him civilly responsible for sexual assault, and he currently has 91 felony charges pending against him.

And with a favorable U.S. Supreme Court and three of the justices he put there, Trump is on his way to proving the accuracy of his declarations of committing crimes and getting away with them. America has been good lately about canceling sexual predators, even those who were only accused of sexual assault. America has been good of late with jailing some of the January 6 perpetrators. A judge ordered Trump to pay \$5 million after being found guilty of sexual assault, another judge is on the verge of ordering Trump to pay more than \$250 million for massive business fraud, and evidence recently emerged that Trump probably sold U.S. secrets to foreign entities while in office. Yet, he swept to victory in Iowa and may easily defeat Biden in November. To Trump, there's no better parent, none more lenient, than America.

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Continued Crockett Page 2

a professor took notice of Crockett's talent for public speaking and invited her to participate in a mock trial organization, where she first found her legal voice.

"I think that's when it hit her that she wanted to become a lawyer," Gwen Crockett said.

While at Rhodes College, Crockett was one of only 18 Black students and received threatening, anonymous racist mail.

"That was the first time that I felt helpless and felt targeted as a Black person," she said. Crockett was paired with a Black female lawyer to help investigate who was sending the threats in the mail. Crockett now calls that lawyer her "saving grace" and another factor in her decision to pursue a legal career.

Jasmine Crockett studied at the Texas Southern University Thurgood Marshall School of Law and the University of Houston Law Center. After law school, she moved to Texarkana to be a public defender and later opened her own civil rights and criminal defense law firm.

She said her time representing thousands of Texans in court has given her firsthand experience with inequities in the justice system. Adam Bazaldua, a Dallas City Council member, said Crockett is "always a fighter for the most vulnerable."

Crockett represented thousands of Texans' cases and handled high-profile lawsuits involving police brutality and other cases involving racial

injustice. In 2020, as she campaigned for a seat in the state House, she took on the cases of protesters arrested in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Activist Rachel Gonzales wrote Crockett's phone number on her stomach when she protested an incident of police brutality in Texas outside the state Capitol in Austin.

"I knew that she would be the first person to show up and fight if needed," Gonzales said.

During those protests, Crockett consistently posted information for constituents on social media, according to her former chief of staff, Karrol Rimal. Receiving hundreds of calls, Crockett organized other attorneys to help advocate for protesters.

"She never loses sight of the people," Rimal said.

Crockett was elected to the Texas House in 2020, quickly becoming an outspoken figure in the Legislature. During her first legislative session, she filed 75 solo bills and co-authored another 110, three of which became law.

"Many freshmen, they just kind of sit there. They don't say a whole lot because they're trying to learn," said former Texas Rep. Joe Deshotel, D-Beaumont. "But for her, the learning curve was very short. I mean, she jumped right in."

Those who worked with Crockett pointed to the quorum break trip as her breakout moment.

Continue Crockett - January 25 Edition -

Continued Election Page 3

If you're concerned about your voter registration, you can verify it online.

What if I moved after the voter registration deadline?

You must reside in a Texas county by the voter registration deadline to vote in the upcoming election unless you qualify for absentee voting. You can read more about absentee and mail-in voting online.

You can vote at your previous polling location if you moved within the same county or political subdivision. Or you can vote at your new polling location on a ballot limited to the elections you would qualify to vote in at both polling locations, such as statewide races.

But limited ballots are available only during early voting at a "main early voting polling place," which is usually the office of the election administrator or county clerk who runs elections in your county. The main early voting polling place should be noted in a county's list of early voting locations.

Eligible people experiencing homelessness can vote, as long as they provide on their registration an address and description for where they are residing, such as a shelter or a street intersection. If needed, their mailing address can be different, but a P.O. Box address is usually not considered a residence address.

What do I do if I run into issues with my voter registration?

If you have questions or concerns about your registration, you can find your county's voter registration contact online.

Inside polling locations, there are typically "resolution desks" where poll workers can address registration issues.

You can also find more information on frequently asked questions from the secretary of state's office at votetexas.gov.

How do I know if I'm eligible to vote by mail?

This option is fairly limited in Texas. You're allowed to vote by mail only if:

- You will be 65 or older by Election Day.
- You will not be in your county for the entire voting period, including early voting.
- You cite a sickness or disability that prevents you from voting in person without needing personal assistance or without the likelihood of injuring your health.
- You're expected to give birth within three weeks before or after Election Day.
- You are confined in jail but otherwise eligible (i.e., not convicted of a felony).

College students who are registered at a residence in Texas, such as a parent's home, but are studying out of state can apply for absentee ballots. Students studying in Texas who are from other states can also choose to register to vote in the state with their dorm or Texas address.

If you are voting absentee, such as from overseas, and want to see what will appear on your ballot, you can get a sample ballot from your county. Sample ballots can be found on your county's election website in most cases.

What identification do I need to vote by mail?

Texas rules for voting by mail require voters to provide an ID number on both their application for a ballot and the carrier envelope used to return a completed ballot. This must be one the following ID numbers:

- A driver's license number
- A state ID number
- The last four digits of their Social Security number
- Texas election ID certificate number (a photo ID issued by DPS and which is different from the number found on your voter registration certificate)

If they don't have any of these, voters can also check a box indicating they have not been issued that identification.

This identification rule was added by the Texas Legislature in 2021, and some voters have had their ballots or applications rejected because they didn't provide an ID number or the number they provided did not match the one the state had for the voter.

If you don't have a license number on file or are unsure about which ID number you provided, the secretary of state has previously suggested contacting your local voter registrar to ask about how to add one of the required numbers to your voter registration record.

Other voting advocates have suggested voters include both their driver's license or state ID number and the last four digits of their Social Security number, if they have both, to avoid issues.

Does lack of immunity to COVID-19 qualify as a disability during the pandemic?

While a lack of immunity to COVID-19 alone does not allow a voter to request a ballot based on disability, the Texas Supreme Court ruled in 2020 that it was up to voters to decide if that lack of immunity, combined with their medical history, meets the state's eligibility criteria.

Note that the Texas election code's definition for disability is broader than other federal definitions. A voter is eligible to vote by mail if they have a "sickness or physical condition" that prevents them from voting in person without the likelihood of "needing personal assistance or of injuring the voter's health." It's up to the voter to decide this, and election officials don't have the authority to question a voter's reasoning.

What kind of postage do I need to return my mail-in ballot?

It depends on where you live. Postage for mail-in ballots will vary by county because the style and size of the ballot could be different from county to county — and some counties may pay postage for you. Local elections offices should have the specifics

Continue Election Page 6

DART Announces Upcoming Partnership to Get Movin' and Groovin'

Coming off the celebration of its 40th anniversary in 2023, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) has announced a new partnership with one of North Texas' most iconic community members — and one of DART's biggest fans — Ms. Erykah Badu.

The new partnership will take place throughout 2024, and it will kick off with a sweepstakes leading up to Ms. Badu's annual birthday bash. From January 16 through February 10, DART riders throughout North Texas can enter for a chance to win a one-of-a-kind experience to the event on Saturday, February 24. Four lucky riders and their plus-ones will receive access to a VIP section, pri-

vate entrance, exclusive swag, and a DART monthly pass. To enter, riders can visit DART.org/Badu, 97.9 The Beat, or Majic 94.5.

"Collabing with DART has been fun - new for me and new for them," said Erykah Badu. "I love my hometown and riding DART is still cool."

In addition, on February 24, the winners will be amongst the first North Texans to see the Badu Bus and Rail designs. The new designs will feature artwork and images of the Grammy Award winning artist and will be seen driving throughout North Texas until the end of the year. Find the cool Badu-inspired buses and trains on the GoPass® app to

catch your ride in the DART window seat.

"DART is thrilled to partner with Erykah Badu for our yearlong collaboration celebrating all that North Texas has to offer," said Nadine Lee, DART president & CEO. "As a Dallas native, Erykah Badu has inspired so many people. From her many awards and accolades to everything she's given back to our communities, we're honored to celebrate her many successes."

For additional information, as well as complete rules, prize information and additional entry forms, visit DART.org/Badu.

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About Erykah Badu

Erykah Badu is a powerful creative force who transcends music, film, and fashion. She is renowned for her songwriting, singing, and production skills as well as for her capacity to heal, promote female wellness, challenge oppressive structures, and uphold the values of her Afrocentric and Black Feminist roots. Her imaginative blend of soul, funk, hip-hop, jazz, and gospel has earned her multiple awards and praise since the release of her debut album, "Baduizm" (1997), continuing through her fifth release, "New Amerykah Part Two: Return Of The Ankh" (2010), plus every mixtape, soundtrack, single, video, and musical collaboration in between. Forever the innovator, she established a livestream company, revolutionized home concerts, and launched an online exchange called BaduWorldMarket.com—all in response to COVID.

UNT Dallas to host drive-through food pantry Friday, Jan. 19, from 9 a.m.-noon

As more North Texans seek nutritional support, this free, monthly service is open to the public and any community member in need of food supplies

2024 begins with more and more North Texans struggling to find affordable and nutritious food. As a solution to help close the hunger gap, The University of North Texas at Dallas (UNT Dallas) and the North Texas Food Bank (NTFB) are partnering once again to bring a mobile food pantry to campus on Friday, Jan 19, from 9 a.m. to noon (or until the food runs out).

In her New Year message, the CEO of the North Texas Food Bank said the need is greater now than during the pandemic. Her comments reflect the findings of USDA research, showing food insecurity is affecting more people than in previous years in the DFW region and across the country.

The UNT Dallas mobile food pantry program started during the pandemic and has continued monthly to help students and the community. In 2023, tens of thousands of individuals and families were served and hundreds of thousands of pounds of food were distributed.

Participants complete a simple intake form while remaining inside their cars. Volunteers load a box of food into each person's trunk. Future mobile food pantries will be held on Feb.16, March 15, April 19 and future Fridays through the end of the year.

The UNT Dallas campus is located in southern Dallas at 7300 University Hills Boulevard, Dallas, TX 75241. For more information, go to untDallas.edu.

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Continued Election Page 5

once ballots are finalized. That said, if you don't have enough postage, your ballot is not supposed to be returned to you. Instead, the Postal Service is supposed to deliver the ballot and bill the county for the insufficient or missing postage.

What if there's an issue with my mail-in ballot?

Texas will allow voters to correct their mail-in ballots if the ballots are at risk of being rejected for a technical error, including missing information or signatures. This also applies to issues with the applications for those ballots. County officials are responsible for alerting voters if there is a defect with their application or ballot.

Voters can use a new online ballot tracker to check the status of both their application to vote by mail and their ballot. The tracker can also be used to make corrections.

How does primary voting work?

Primary elections are used to designate who will be a party's candidate in the general election in each race, so you'll be selecting among members of the same party in casting your vote.

At the polls, you'll have to choose whether you want to vote in the Republican or Democratic primary. Some counties will host what's known as a joint primary, which means everyone checks in at the same desk and uses the same voting machines. In other counties, there will be separate check-in stations and lines for either party.

How can I find which polling places are near me?

County election offices are supposed to post on their websites information on polling locations for Election Day and during the early-voting period by Feb. 13. The secretary of state's website will also have information on polling locations closer to the start of voting. However, polling locations may change, so be sure to check your county's election website before going to vote.

What form of ID do I need to bring?

You'll need one of seven types of valid photo ID to vote in Texas:

- A state driver's license (issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety).
- A Texas election identification certificate (issued by DPS).
- A Texas personal identification card (issued by DPS).
- A Texas license to carry a handgun (issued by DPS).
- A U.S. military ID card with a personal photo.
- A U.S. citizenship certificate with a personal photo.
- A U.S. passport.

What if I don't have a valid photo ID?

Voters can still cast votes if they sign a form swearing that they have a "reasonable impediment" from obtaining a proper photo ID. However, those voters will also have to present one of the following types of supporting identification documents:

- A valid voter registration certificate.
- A certified birth certificate.
- A document confirming birth admissible in a court of law that establishes your identity (which may include a foreign birth document).
- A copy of or an original current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other document that shows the voter's name and address. (Any government document that contains a voter's photo must be an original.)

If you have a valid photo ID but forgot it, you can cast a provisional ballot but will have to visit the local voter registrar's office within six days of the election to present an acceptable ID or documentation in order for the ballot to be counted. A registered voter without a valid photo ID or any of the supporting documents can also cast a provisional ballot.

Are there rules at the polls?

Cellphones, cameras, computers and other devices that can record sound or images cannot be used within 100 feet of voting stations (where ballots are marked). There are usually traffic cones or signs indicating this. Campaigning, including

wearing clothing or other items that publicize candidates, political parties or measures on the ballot, is also banned beyond this point.

Voters are allowed to use written notes to cast their ballot at the discretion of election officers, who may determine if the material counts as campaigning.

Firearms, including handguns, are also prohibited at polling places, according to Texas law.

What are my rights as a voter?

If a registered voter's name does not appear on the list of registered voters because of an administrative issue, they have the right to cast a provisional ballot. Voters are entitled to get written instructions about how to cast a ballot or to ask a polling place officer or worker (but not about who or what to vote for). If a voter makes a mistake while marking their ballot, they have a right to use up to two additional ballots to make corrections. Voters generally have the right to cast their ballots in secret and should not be subject to intimidation.

Voters with disabilities or limited English proficiency can also get interpretation, assistance or accommodations to vote. A state law passed in 2023 also allows voters with disabilities or mobility problems to skip the line at their polling location and requires each polling location to have a designated parking spot for curbside voting.

Texas law says voters have the right to vote during work hours without being penalized or losing pay, but this may not apply if a worker has two hours before or after work to go vote.

On Election Day, voters have the right to cast their ballot as long as they're in line by 7 p.m. At the polls, voters can talk to election officers or poll workers if they run into issues.

The secretary of state's office has a helpline at 1-800-252-VOTE (8683) to reach state attorneys available to assist voters and election officials with questions.

A coalition of voting rights groups runs voter protection hotlines in several languages. Disability Rights Texas also offers a helpline for people with disabilities.