

“Early Voting Starts October 19, and ends on October 30, 2026, for the November 3rd Election.”



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October 1 - 7, 2026



By: **Dr. John E. Warren,**
Publisher, San Diego Voice &
Viewpoint Newspaper
Chairman of the Board of
Directors, NNPA

Editorial

The Most Important Vote Since Slaves Were Freed

Most of us know that when President Lincoln freed the slaves in 1863, the stroke of the pen changed the economics of the South and of this nation. This was followed not only by the passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution, but also by mass election of Negroes (Coloreds, Blacks) to public office. Two Black U.S. Senators were elected from Mississippi, and Blacks

were elected to the U.S. Congress. The surge in Black political participation led to the creation of the KKK and the development of States' Rights, allowing the southern states in particular to pass laws restricting the right to vote with the creation of Poll Taxes, ensuring that only landowners could vote.

Freed Black people understood the power of the vote and the need for the

right to vote, which led to massive Black political participation. By 1901, all Black members elected to Congress were out of office until 1921, when Oscar DePreist was elected to Congress from Chicago in 1929.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 ushered in a new wave of Black Political Participation. It helped Fannie Lou Hamer change the Democratic Party in the South and helped elect

local Black officials like Mayors, Sheriffs, city council members, State Legislators, and Black members of Congress.

If we fail to vote on November 3, 2026, we will once again turn the clock back by allowing the Trump supporters at all levels of government to retain their control of all three Branches of Government, effectively killing democracy as we know it. The attack on DEI, mu-

seums, First Amendment rights, books, and due process will only increase.

If we as individuals vote, we can end Trump's abuse of power. We can change the Supreme Court, which is now an instrument of Donald Trump on just about everything.

If we fail to vote, we could find ourselves back in a segregated society. Remember, what happened in Germany before Hitler, or South Africa with apart-

heid, did not happen overnight. Your failure to vote could become the next step toward Trump's Authoritarian America.

Once again, the clarion call is for each one to get one to the polls to vote. Remember, this IS the most important vote since Lincoln freed the slaves. Our weapons are: our vote and our dollars. With them, we can restore and repair what has been taken. Where do you stand?

ICYMI: James Talarico Attends Prairie View A&M vs. Grambling State University Game

Talarico met with university leaders and students before attending the State Fair Classic between PVAMU and Grambling State



U.S. Senate Democratic nominee James Talarico visits the HBCU State Fair Classic at Prairie View A&M University. (Photo Credit: James Talarico for Texas Campaign)

DALLAS, TX — On Saturday, James Talarico attended the State Fair Classic, an annual HBCU rivalry game between Prairie View A&M and Grambling State University. Talarico was introduced during halftime, where he received an ovation from HBCU students and alumni.

Before the game, Talarico visited four historically Black fraternity houses, where he spoke with stu-

dents, alumni, and community leaders.

“Black Texans can tell when you are passing through for a photo-op and when you are actually present to be with the community. At the State Fair Classic and at tailgates down MLK Boulevard in Dallas, folks were excited to see James in our community,” said State Rep. Aicha Davis, who accompanied Talarico. “He knows

we are tired of being treated like an afterthought, and James is ready to listen and treat us with the respect and importance we deserve.”

- “Texas U.S. Senate candidate James Talarico stepped onto the field of the HBCU football classic between Prairie View A&M University and Grambling State University, drawing a warm recep-

tion from Black voters as he campaigns in the final weeks before the midterms.”

- “The Democratic nominee, who has been heavily courting Black voters ahead of the Nov. 3 election against Ken Paxton, spent hours on the campus meeting with university leaders, students and

Continue **Game** Page 4

Texas seniors are getting a huge property tax break. Everyone else is picking up the tab.

By **Joshua Fechter**, The Texas Tribune

These days, property taxes are just about the only thing Jane Lindsley is saving money on.

For the 72-year-old, the cost of everything — from gas and groceries to homeowners insurance and healthcare — have gone up. So it was a welcome surprise when Lindsley, a retired bookkeeper, received her tax bill last fall to find the property taxes on her home in an unincorporated part of Hays County had shrunk by more than 40%.

The chief reason: the amount in school property taxes she owed fell to \$0.

“I was ecstatic,” Lindsley said. “I’m like, ‘this is the only thing in my life that’s going down.’ I can actually afford to pay.”

As Texas Republicans vow on the campaign trail to once again wage war on the state’s high property taxes, among the highest in the nation, a clear victor has already emerged: older homeowners. In the wake of additional cuts the Legislature passed last year,

some 60% of Texas homeowners age 65 and up no longer pay school property taxes, the largest portion of property owners’ tax bills, according to an analysis by state Sen. Paul Bettencourt’s office.

“People have paid a lifetime of taxes,” Bettencourt, a Houston Republican who authored many of the state’s property tax cuts, said at a Senate committee hearing earlier this month. “When they finally pay zero, and they realize it’s not a mistake, it’s a great day for them.”

In recent years, state lawmakers have sent billions of dollars to school districts to drive down their tax rates, put tight limits on how much cities and counties can raise property taxes without asking voters and boosted tax breaks for homeowners. Now, nearly 2.4 million Texans no longer pay school property taxes.

Lawmakers last year

Continue **Tax** Page 2



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Continued **Tax** Page 1

boosted the state’s homestead exemption on school district taxes — or the amount of a homeowner’s primary homestead value that can’t be taxed to pay for public schools — to \$140,000. Coupled with a boost in the state’s senior homestead exemption, which also applies to homeowners with qualifying disabilities, homeowners age 65 and up can get \$200,000 shaved off their home’s taxable value.

Those efforts resulted in the statewide average school tax bill for general

homesteads dropping by 13.6% to \$896 last year, according to Bettencourt’s office. For seniors, it fell some 33% to \$380. Some 40% of the state’s homeowners no longer pay property taxes, per his office’s estimates.

As Texas voters feel pressure from the rising cost of living, Texas Republicans appear eager to pursue more property tax breaks. Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick said last year he wants to extend the senior homestead exemption on school property taxes to people age 55 and up, while boosting the exemption offered to

every homeowner. Meanwhile, Gov. Greg Abbott has proposed eliminating school property taxes for all homeowners, which has sparked fairness questions over who will ultimately be on the hook for Texas property taxes.

Some already see the existing tax-cut scheme as unfair. Younger conservatives, in particular, have argued the state’s tax-cut hawks have focused enough on providing tax relief for older homeowners — as younger folks have struggled to buy homes in Texas — and now should focus on providing relief to other

kinds of taxpayers.

“We don’t begrudge older generations for not wanting to be taxed out of their homes,” said Derrick Wilson, chairman of the Texas Young Republican Federation. “But it does seem foundationally unfair to grant tax relief to an older generation that’s been voting for bonds and things that we still have to pay for.”

Tax policy experts on both sides of the aisle agree and view the disproportionate benefit to senior homeowners, who tend to have more wealth than younger generations, as a wealth

transfer from younger Texans to older Texans.

That transfer occurs because to pay for school property tax cuts, Texas lawmakers have used surpluses of state revenue funded by other taxes everyone else — including working-age adults struggling to make ends meet — is paying.

“There are a lot of younger people that maybe would need the relief more than those who are retired and have a lot of savings,” said Janelle Fritts, senior policy analyst with the conservative Tax Foundation’s Center for State Tax Policy.

No one whom The Texas Tribune spoke to wants to take away tax breaks for older homeowners, whose fixed incomes and lack of access to affordable housing to downsize has made it harder for them to pay for everyday expenses.

Seniors also wield considerable political influence, giving politicians more impetus to deliver benefits to them. Lawmakers and advocates for older adults have long fretted about the possibility of taxing older adults out of their homes.

Continue **Tax** Page 3

Teddy’s Creation

(Answer Key on Page 7)

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

Digger



By Dwight Brown, Film Critic for DwightBrownInk.com and NNPA News Wire

Continue **Digger** Page 5

RELIGIOUS/NEWS

Israel (Woman) in Conflict with the Dragon (Satan)

Revelation 12:1-17



Rev. Johnny Calvin Smith

Chapter 12 marks the beginning of the last half of the Tribulation Period. The last three and one-half years of the Tribulation Period is called “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jeremiah 30:7). In verses 1-2, we are introduced to a Woman who symbolized Israel, who was clothed with the sun, and having the moon under her feet, and had a crown of twelve stars. The same Woman was given the blessed privilege to bring forth into the world the Man Child – the Messiah (v. 2). Having introduced Israel, symbolical as the woman, in verses 3-4, a

personality called the Dragon is described. The Dragon is none other than Satan, the devil. He is depicted as having seven heads, and ten horns, and seven crowns on his head (v. 3).

In verse 4, Satan in his past rebellion against God, led a host of ungodly angels with him; thus, Satan and his cohorts were cast out of heaven. Verse 4 also revealed that the Dragon (Satan) attempted to destroy the Man Child – Jesus. The Man Child, who is Christ, will one day rule all nations with a rod of Iron (v. 5). Christ will come to put down all

enmity, all opposition, all rebellion on earth! Christ will indeed rule with a rod of Iron, and will put to rest the rebellion of this world, for Psalm 2:9 says: “Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” The “catching up of the child” relates to Christ’s ascension, where He is now seated on His Heavenly Father’s Throne (Hebrews 1:3).

Having mentioned the Woman (Israel) in verses 1-2, the Dragon (Satan) in verses 3-4, the Man Child (Christ) in verses 5-6, we come now to Satan being cast to

the earth from heaven (vv. 7-12). From verses 7-9, we learn of the coming battle in heaven, led by the Archangel Michael, against Satan and his angels. Satan and his angels are cast out of heaven. There will be a fierce struggle between Michael and his angels and Satan and his angels; however, Michael and his angels will prevail. The Lord referred to this incident of Satan’s fall from heaven in Luke 10:18: “And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”

In verse 10, there is great jubilation among the redeemed in

heaven when Satan is cast out of heaven. There will be believers on earth who will overcome Satan and his demons by the Blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony (v. 11).

Although the Woman, symbolical of Israel, who became a special object of Satan’s persecution (v. 13), will be greatly protected by the Lord during the last half of the Tribulation Period. God will protect and nourish Israel in view of the Dragon’s fierce persecution (vv. 14-17).

“May God Bless!”

Continued **Tax** Page 2

But, it’s not clear how much more in tax breaks lawmakers can pay for. Already, state budget watchers have warned that lawmakers’ overall approach to property taxes may be unsustainable amid a slower economy. State lawmakers put \$51 billion toward cutting school property taxes last year — an amount they’ve committed to every two years going forward that has made even some Republicans nervous.

The population of older Texans is expected to nearly double in the coming decades, from about 3.9 million in 2020 to 7.5 million in 2050, according to population projections from the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia. As Texas ages, the cost of property tax breaks for older homeowners will grow even faster than breaks all homeowners receive, accord-

ing to the Texas comptroller’s office.

"Nobody likes taxes," said Spencer Banzhaf, a professor at North Carolina State University who has studied age-based property tax exemptions. “Anyone would like to get out of their taxes if they can. And I think seniors have been very successful at that in this case."

The case for older homeowners getting breaks

The cost of virtually everything Lindsley spends money on has gone up.

Her homeowners insurance premium more than doubled because her roof is more than a decade old. She found a cheaper plan, though it was still more expensive than the rate she paid before her previous insurer raised her premium. It’s also gotten more expensive to insure her 2014 Toyota Corolla and to fill up its gas tank,

and she now takes fewer errand trips to save on gas. Lindsley stopped buying beef as prices surged, but just one bag of groceries can still add up to more than \$100, she said. Her health care costs, too, have grown.

Between Social Security and an annuity, Lindsley brings in about \$4,400 a month. She’s able to make ends meet now, but she said she worries costs could eventually grow beyond what she’s able to comfortably afford.

“I just hope it doesn't get much worse,” said Lindsley, who, despite having no school property tax bill, still paid more than \$1,000 in other property taxes on her \$546,000 home last year.

Many seniors are on fixed incomes and rely heavily on Social Security, which often doesn’t fully cover the cost of essentials like housing, healthcare, food and transportation. They might have more wealth given higher home

values, but that wealth isn’t liquid. And not everyone is able to save for retirement.

More than half of older adults in Texas live below the Elder Index, a calculation by the Gerontology Institute to measure the income older adults need to cover basic expenses.

Of those Texans, 28% are below the federal poverty line, said Caitlin Covey, director of the Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging at the University of Massachusetts Boston’s Gerontology Institute. The rest are too well off financially to qualify for additional public assistance, but not well off enough to make ends meet.

“They're making it, but they're making it in a really fragile set of circumstances,” Covey said.

Many Texas seniors are “cost-burdened,” meaning they spend more than 30% of their income on keeping a roof over their head.

Across Texas’ major urban areas, at least 30% of Texans age 65 and up are considered cost-burdened, regardless of whether they own or rent their home, according to Harvard University’s Joint Center for Housing Studies.

Even if they’ve paid off their mortgage, homeowners still face housing costs like utilities, property taxes and insurance. A homeowner in Travis County, for example, who has paid off their home still faces about \$904 a month in those kinds of costs, according to the Elder Index.

"Just because you own your home and it looks like you're wealthy on paper doesn't mean you have the cash flow to absorb” increases in other costs, Covey said.

In the past, lawmakers have argued they need to target breaks toward older homeowners to help

Continue **Tax** Page 5

~ **THEME: MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**
(Solution will appear in October 8 edition)

- ACROSS
- 1. Trampled
 - 5. Dashboard unit, acr.
 - 8. "Be quiet," onomatopoeically speaking
 - 11. Clean the whiteboard, e.g.
 - 12. Morally wicked
 - 13. Former anesthetic
 - 15. Bad luck precursor
 - 16. Banned apple spray
 - 17. *Ringo Starr's instrument, pl.
 - 18. *Home of the bagpipes
 - 20. Big one, at 7-Eleven
 - 21. Contemplate
 - 22. Jewelry stone
 - 23. Hindu queens
 - 26. Something earned
 - 30. Tokyo, formerly
 - 31. *Riddim pair music genre
 - 34. Spock's famous body parts
 - 35. *Animal, source of violin bow strings
 - 37. Scott Joplin's "Maple Leaf ____"
 - 38. Away from port (2 words)
 - 39. Not much (2 words)
 - 40. Post-graduate journey?
 - 42. Always, to a poet
 - 43. Baby bear (2 words)
 - 45. Beach-comber's collection
 - 47. Cholera
 - 48. Popular pie nut
 - 50. Glazier's unit
 - 52. *Flute player
 - 55. Pointy teeth
 - 56. 36 inches
 - 57. Sticky stuff
 - 59. Hot ____ buns
 - 60. Code word for K
 - 61. Mauritania's Eastern neighbor
 - 62. Soda pop container
 - 63. Ems follower
 - 64. Highest point

- DOWN
- 1. *Piano has at least ____ pedals
 - 2. Part of a glass, pl.
 - 3. Leading oil-producers' grp.
 - 4. Indicate
 - 5. Home to Teatro alla Scala
 - 6. Popular core exercise
 - 7. Deer social group
 - 8. Synagogue
 - 9. Cannabis plant
 - 10. Store posting, abbr.
 - 12. Old-fashioned carry-on bag
 - 13. Straight ones in drafter's toolbox
 - 14. *Louis Armstrong's instrument
 - 19. "And Then ____ Were None"
 - 22. "Wow!"
 - 23. User's "getaway"
 - 24. Sun-dried brick
 - 25. Water wheel
 - 26. Intense anger
 - 27. Painter's prop
 - 28. Angler's basket
 - 29. Former Russian leaders
 - 32. Snatch
 - 33. Toothy fish
 - 36. *Lute family instruments
 - 38. "Perfect" Buddhist
 - 40. Theatrical prompt
 - 41. Former Portuguese money
 - 44. Edible herb
 - 46. Brain teaser
 - 48. Like average Jane
 - 49. British peers
 - 50. Prefix for "beyond"
 - 51. Any minute, arch.
 - 52. Type of fish net
 - 53. Daytime TV program
 - 54. Enameled metalware
 - 55. Federal Communications Commission
 - 58. *Standard number of strings on guitar

Statepoint Crossword Puzzle
Theme: MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

CROSSWORD														
1	2	3	4			5	6	7			8	9	10	
11					12					13	14			
15					16					17				
	18				19					20				
			21						22					
23	24	25						26				27	28	29
30				31		32	33				34			
35				36			37				38			
39					40				41			42		
43					44				45		46			
				47				48	49					
	50	51				52						53	54	
55						56					57			58
59						60					61			
62						63					64			

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

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NEWS

Continued Game Page 1

spectators for the annual State Fair Classic.”

- “Talarico was met with thunderous applause from the more than 50,000 attendees as he was introduced onto the field at Panther Stadium. The 37-year-old Democrat was described by the announcer as someone who will take his ‘fight against corruption to Washington, and win, to bring power back to working people.’”

THE DALLAS POST TRIBUNE

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Children's Cancer Fund Announces 37th Annual Fashion Show & Gala

Dave and Leigh Anne Clark to Chair Annual Fundraiser

Alongside Celebrity Chairs Troy Aikman and Dak Prescott

DALLAS — Children’s Cancer Fund will host its 37th Annual Fashion Show & Gala on Friday, April 9, 2027, at the Hilton Anatole Dallas. The annual event will bring together supporters, community leaders and special guests to raise critical funds for children battling cancer. This year’s event will be led by Gala Chairs Dave and Leigh Anne Clark, alongside longtime Celebrity Chairs Troy Aikman and Dak Prescott.

The annual Fashion Show & Gala is Children’s Cancer Fund’s largest signature fundraising event, supporting pediatric cancer research and treatment programs at Children’s Health and UT Southwestern. At the heart of the evening, pediatric cancer patients will take center stage during the signature fashion show, walking the runway alongside celebrity escorts in a celebration of their courage and resilience.

“We are blown away every year by the strength and optimism of these children and their families,” said Dave and Leigh Anne Clark. “It is an honor to play a role in this year’s event.”

“The Fashion Show & Gala is such a special night because it gives our children the opportunity to take center stage and be celebrated for the incredible courage they show every day,” said Children’s Cancer Fund Chief Executive Officer Jennifer Arthur. “With Dave and Leigh Anne leading this year’s event alongside Troy and Dak, we’re looking forward to another meaningful evening that helps us continue advancing research, treatment and support for children and families facing pediatric cancer.”

Aikman and Prescott will once again lend their support to the event, continuing a longstanding tradition of Dallas Cowboys quarterbacks championing Children’s Cancer Fund and helping bring greater awareness to its mission.

“I’m proud to be back and continue showing up for these kids and their families,” said Dak Prescott. “What they’re fighting through every day puts everything into perspective. If we can use our platform to support them, bring more attention to the fight against childhood cancer and help make a difference, that’s what this is all about.”

“These kids are what keep me coming back year after year,” said Troy Aikman. “Their strength is incredible, and I’m proud to continue supporting Children’s Cancer Fund and the work they’re doing for children and families across North Texas.”

Last year’s Fashion Show & Gala raised a record-breaking \$4 million, marking a significant milestone in Children’s Cancer Fund’s ongoing efforts to support children and families impacted by pediatric cancer.

Quinn Simple Scenes

Goldilocks and the bears

By Rix Quinn

What’s the real meaning of the fairy tale about Goldilocks?

To be frank (although Frank is not my name), “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” is more confusing than a stop sign on a roller coaster track.

First, you gotta accept that a bear family owns a fancy two-story deep in the woods. These beasts wake one morning, choose porridge instead of other animals, then go for a walk while it cools.

Obviously, rich bears buy quality products like silver claw clips and expensive fur shampoos. So, why would they leave an unlocked door to tempt intruders?

In walks Goldilocks, possibly a destructive truant with great curiosity, a huge appetite, and some sort of sleep deprivation.

First, she samples some mismatched chairs. She finds one too hard, one too soft, and the third just right...so she breaks it. What is that about?

Next, she tastes the first porridge, and finds it too hot. The second bowl’s too cold. Why? Who cooked this stuff, anyway?

But the third bowl’s just right, so she devours it faster than a hyperactive cannibal gulps ladyfingers at a tea party.

Bloated and sluggish, she wanders upstairs. She tries Mom’s and Pop’s twin beds, then passes out in Junior’s bunk.

About this time, the bears return. They find her asleep, shake her awake, and scare heck out of her. She races out. The bears forget to get a name and address, so they can send a bill for the busted furniture.

This story is too scary for me, because I fear any beast who considers me part of a food group.

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SPORTS/NEWS PAGE

7 Day Weather Forecast for DFW

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 H -80° L -72°	 H 79° L -67°	 H -75° L -70°	 H 78° L 68°	 H -78° L -62*	 H - 78° L -65°	 H -79° L -63°

A Dallas Icon Returns: Historic Forest Theater to Reopen Nov. 1

Grand Return will mark the Forest Theater’s homecoming to South Dallas, culminating in the relighting of its iconic tower and marquee for the first time in more than 50 years

DALLAS – September 1, 2026 – On Sunday, Nov. 1, the historic Forest Theater will reopen its doors to South Dallas with the Grand Return, a community-wide homecoming celebrating one of Dallas’ most significant cultural landmarks and marking a new chapter for the historic Forest Theater and the neighborhood it has called home for generations.

Taking place at 5:30 p.m., the Grand Return will feature live entertainment, musical guests, local businesses in Vendor Village, food trucks and opportunities to experience the restored Forest Theater. The evening will culminate in the ceremonial relighting of the Theater’s iconic tower and marquee for the first time in more than 50 years.

"The Grand Return is more than a celebration - it's a homecoming," said

Elizabeth Wattley, CEO of Forest Forward. "For generations, the Forest Theater was a place where South Dallas gathered, celebrated and saw itself reflected. On Nov. 1, after more than 50 years, we will light the tower again and invite the entire city through these doors to experience what comes next."

The anticipation surrounding the Theater’s return is palpable across South Dallas, reflecting not only the return of a beloved landmark, but a growing sense of pride, possibility and momentum around the neighborhood’s future.

Since opening in 1949, the Forest Theater has mirrored the evolution of South Dallas. The venue became one of Dallas’ premier live entertainment destinations, hosting legendary performers including Prince, B.B. King, Gladys Knight, Ike & Tina Turner,

Wilson Pickett and Dallas native Erykah Badu before closing in 2008. Its reopening represents both the preservation of an important cultural institution and a significant investment in the future of South Dallas.

MORE THAN A THEATER

The restored Forest Theater serves as the cultural anchor of Forest Forward’s broader neighborhood revitalization strategy, connecting arts and culture with investments in education, housing and economic mobility to help strengthen the future of South Dallas.

Forest Forward’s work is built on the belief that the future of a neighborhood is shaped by interconnected investments in people and place. The Forest Theater serves as a catalyst for economic development, bringing arts

and culture together with education, entrepreneurship, job creation and community connection.

The expanded Forest Theater campus will include a 1,000-person concert hall, 200-seat black box theater, 13,000 square foot creative education lab, recording and podcast studios, rooftop gathering space, artist classrooms and community meeting areas – creating a destination designed to serve both residents and the broader Dallas community.

“Even while closed, The Forest Theater has always been bigger than a building,” said Wattley. “It is part of the identity of South Dallas and a reminder of what is possible when we invest in people and place. Its return is about honoring that legacy while creating new opportunities, new economic activity and a place where generations

can imagine what is possible—and have the opportunity to make it possible.”

GRAND RETURN ENTRY

Advance registration is required to attend the Grand Return.

Guests are invited to make a contribution meaningful to them in support of lighting the tower. Each guest must register individually to reserve their place at the celebration. For Grand Return information and registration, visit: Grand Return of the Forest Theater Tickets

LIGHT THE TOWER

The Grand Return also marks a defining moment for Forest Forward’s Light the Tower campaign, a \$2.5 million fundraising effort inviting the community to invest in the Forest Theater’s historic

return and its future.

Inspired by the relighting of the theater’s iconic tower and marquee, Light the Tower gives individuals, families, businesses and organizations opportunities to become part of the Forest Theater’s next chapter – from Grand Return participation and founding recognition to commemorative pavers, permanent Founders Wall recognition and signature naming opportunities.

Every contribution lights the tower.

The campaign is designed not only to celebrate the return of a Dallas landmark, but to invite the community to help write what comes next.

For more information about Light the Tower and recognition opportunities, visit: <https://www.forest-forward.org/light-the-tower/>

Continue **Digger** Page 2

What the?

It’s likely moviegoers will be perplexed by the opening scenes of this bombastic, cautionary satire. The initial, deceptively idyllic visuals throw you off track: A picture window frames a placid scene. Heavenly light pours from a chandelier fit for Versailles. A palatial, 18th-century-looking bedroom reeks

of elegance—a boudoir only a billionaire could afford.

Digger Rockwell (Tom Cruise), an eccentric Texas oil baron, is worried about his sickly, scrawny white cat. But he has bigger issues on his plate than the ailing feline. Underlings warn him that a disaster involving a Greenland glacier could destroy his company and endanger vast numbers of people, especially those

living in coastal areas.

That’s the bare-bones premise of the overwrought, excessively talky screenplay by writer-director Alejandro G. Iñárritu, Alexander Dinelaris, Nicolás Giacobone and Sabina Berman, based on a story by Berman, Iñárritu and Jez Butterworth. The apparent goal is to warn the world about the catastrophic consequences of environmental negligence—disasters that

can start locally and spread globally. That’s the gist. But before viewers reach that conclusion, they have to endure two hours of screaming, arguing and chaos.

Why the hell would anyone sit through this attack on the senses by a chorus of blustery men? In addition, the central character, a narcissistic rich guy, is so damn repulsive. Overconfident like Musk. Insen-

sitive like Bezos. Self-absorbed and self-promotional. He’s surrounded by sycophants unable to stand up to him: “You profit off my company like parasites.” And of course, he thinks he’s smarter than the rest: “Oil is mother nature’s milk.” In his mind, he’ll be the hero who saves the day. But he’s saving the world from a problem he caused.

Though nominated for three acting Oscars, Cruise

has never won a competitive one. His performances in Rain Man and The Color of Money shared the screen with Oscar-winning portrayals by Dustin Hoffman and Paul Newman, respectively. Cuba Gooding Jr. won Supporting Actor for Jerry Maguire, another Cruise-led film. For his co-stars, he seems to have the Midas touch. For him, he’s always the best man and never the groom.

Continued **Tax** Page 3

insulate them from rising property values, which can often translate into higher tax bills, as the state has grown. Lawmakers have pitched breaks as a reward for older homeowners who have spent a lifetime paying property taxes.

To some extent, homestead exemptions as a way to cut property taxes will always benefit older people. Homeowners skew wealthier and older, so if the state only offered the general homestead exemption without an additional break for seniors, seniors will still benefit.

In rural areas, that benefit is compounded because of lower property values. Many rural counties are seeing more than three quarters of their senior homeowners no longer paying school property taxes, owing to lower property values, according to Bettencourt’s office.

Smaller but still considerable shares of older homeowners in urban and suburban counties no longer pay school property taxes.

“People who have paid property taxes in the same community for 45 years have contributed quite a bit financially,” Covey said. “Some would argue that this is giving them a break that they’ve earned, and not just giving them a break because of their age.”

Are senior tax breaks fair?

Tax policy experts across the political spectrum note that older homeowners tend to be better off financially, and government spending at the federal level is heavily tilted toward helping seniors, so tax breaks are just a further leg up. While many seniors struggle to afford property taxes, many are wealthy enough to afford them, they

argued.

“We want folks who have trouble paying their property taxes to get some sort of help,” said Shannon Halbrook, a fiscal policy expert at Every Texan, a left-leaning think tank. “But at the same time, if you can comfortably afford to pay your property taxes, then you should.”

Texas’ property tax-cut regime constitutes a generational wealth transfer because the burden of propping up the property tax cuts falls on younger generations, who are paying state sales tax that then gets passed along to older homeowners in the form of tax cuts, experts said.

More broadly, the state’s tax-cut regime has largely favored homeowners, though lawmakers have also pursued other cuts they argue also benefit businesses and renters.

Continue **Tax** October 8 Edition

Statepoint Crossword Puzzle
Solution: September 24 ~ THE 2010s

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EDITORIAL PAGE

New Orleans Senior
Citizens Know the Value
of Exercise and Fitness

By James B. Ewers Jr., Ed.



Dr. James Ewers

“Aging gracefully” is an expression that is firmly planted in the American lexicon. We have heard it many times as it describes how senior citizens move into another chapter of their lives.

Today, there is more emphasis on health-related matters. Research shows we are living longer and have a better quality of life. It is safe to say that healthcare has improved and is one reason seniors are more active these days.

I am a senior citizen and in the 4th quarter of my life. Getting exercise is an important part of my daily routine. A few years ago, my wife, Deborah, a retired educator, and I found out about the Senior Dance Fitness Class. The New Orleans Ballet Association sponsors it, and it's

held at Joe Brown Park, a New Orleans Recreation Development Commission facility.

This partnership has given us the chance to exercise through stretching and aerobics. I would characterize our sessions as motivating and satisfying.

Another important feature of our class is that we develop new friendships and have great conversations. In my opinion, these classes have a deeply human element. Relaxation and peace of mind are words that hold true here.

Sharing stories and experiences has made us closer as a group. We welcome new members, which allays any apprehension or anxiety they may have.

We get to know one another in a relaxed environment. It is natural and unplanned. It just happens. These weekly engagements have taken on a life of their own. We look forward to them as we are all ardent participants.

Margie, a retired healthcare professional, has been with our group for many

years, and when it comes to recognizing birthdays or sharing updates, she is the go-to person. When I asked her why she joined the class, she said, “I had some health challenges, and this was a part of my rehabilitation plan. Now, it’s a part of my lifestyle.”

Confirmed reports say regular exercise and movement can help people recover from illness. Janice, another member of our class and a retired transportation administrator had an accident. She credits the class as being fundamental in her physical and emotional healing. Janice said, “Our class gives me inspiration each week. It’s simply the best.”

There is undoubtedly a high degree of happiness in being a part of this class. Colette, a former educator and actor, says that she enjoys the conversations she has in the class. Colette said, “I enjoy the music and the dancing very much. The New Orleans Ballet Association has done a brilliant job of putting this together.”

This generation of senior citizens doesn’t sit at home as much. We continue to make contributions to our society. Mary Ann, who worked in banking and social work, retired from New England to New Orleans. She first heard about the Senior Dance Fitness Class through her swimming class at Joe Brown Park. Mary Ann said, “I feel like it’s my community. They give strength and joy.”

While each of us has a different story, we all share the same experience: the excitement and exhilaration we get from our class.

Calvin, a businessman, has been in the class for ten years. He has become an unofficial ambassador for us, telling his friends about the class. He said, “I like to dance, and this gives me the movement and motion that I want.”

Our instructors, Carly and Rebecca, have provided us with expert instruction. Their knowledge and execution have given us a wonderful experience. We are at a well-earned time in our lives, and we are enjoying it.

THE TRUTH CLINIC

How the 545 Con 350
Million Americans

By James W. Breedlove



James W. Breedlove

Misdirection and misinformation are powerful political tools used to divert attention from important issues or manipulate public opinion toward a desired outcome. While these tools have been used for centuries, they have become increasingly prevalent in today's political environment.

Americans are witnessing the significant adverse impact that misdirection and misinformation can have on democracy, including undermining public trust in the electoral process and eroding faith in the foundational tenets that support a government “Of The People, By The People, and For The People”.

While Americans of all political persuasions are confounded by the current quagmire of skillfully orchestrated misdirection and misinformation, conservative columnist Charley Reese addressed this same dilemma in 1984. American voters need to thoroughly understand his insight to prevent America from continuing on its path to self-destruction.

In his article “545 People Make The Mess, But They Unite In A Common Con,” he clearly defined who, in the end, must take responsibility for the government decisions that affect each of us every day.

Politicians are the only people in the world who create problems and then campaign against them.

Have you ever wondered why, if both Democrats and Republicans are against deficits, America still has deficits?

Have you ever wondered why, if all politicians are against inflation and high

taxes, America still suffers from inflation and high taxes?

You and I, the average American citizen, we don't propose the annual federal budget. The President does.

You and I, the average American citizen, don't have the Constitutional authority to vote on government appropriations. The House of Representatives does.

You and I don't write the tax code or set government fiscal policy. Congress does.

You and I don't control monetary policy. The Federal Reserve Bank does.

One hundred senators, 435 congressmen, one President, and nine Supreme Court justices make up 545 officials out of the 350 million American population. These 545 officials are directly, legally, morally, and individually responsible for the domestic problems that plague this country.

The members of the Federal Reserve Board are not included in this number be-

cause Congress created that board in 1913, when It delegated its Constitutional duty to provide a sound currency to a federally chartered but private central bank.

Special interest groups and lobbyists are also not included. They have no legal authority under the Constitution. They cannot coerce a senator, a congressman, a Supreme Court justice, or a President to do anything. Each of the 545 politicians can accept or reject any inducement a lobbyist or special interest group offers.

These 545 constitutionally empowered officials spend much of their energy convincing the American public that what they did is not their fault. They cooperate in this finger-pointing con job, regardless of party affiliation.

The Constitution, the supreme law of the land, gives the House of Representatives sole responsibility for

Continue Con Page 7

Sudie L. Williams Talented and Gifted Academy creates a culture that drives top-tier attendance



Photo courtesy: Dallas ISD

DALLAS — At Sudie Williams Talented and Gifted Academy, school is an immersive experience where learning feels meaningful and vibrant. “School is about more

than just going from class to class and getting your work done,” Emily Brokaw, principal, said. “We create moments for our students to be celebrated, not only for attending school or

passing a STAAR test, but for how they're growing as learners, in their leadership skills, and investing their talents and gifts into the community.” Since 2022, Sudie L. Williams Talented and Gifted Academy has maintained an A rating, earning all seven possible state distinction designations from the Texas Education Agency. It also ranks fourth in Dallas ISD for campus attendance. Brokaw says the two achievements are directly connected: when students feel valued and excited about their environment, academic performance naturally follows.

“You can't benefit from a great school environment and a great education if you're not present,” she said. “We want to see students grow as learners and leaders, and the best way for us to do that is to have them not only show up to school, but give them a school community where they can find a sense of belonging and identity.” Culture at Sudie TAG is created through intentional work, like school traditions, in-school clubs, and the house system. In-school clubs differ from after-school programming by offering kids a chance to relax during the school day in a non-competitive envi-

ronment. From e-sports and Legos to podcasting and book clubs, students can learn hair styling and es-thetics at Sudie Salon, knit with their principal in Sudie Stitchers, or step outside to the parking lot where a teacher-led car club teaches basic automotive care. Open to elementary and middle school students, these 45-minute periods allow students to try new things and pour into their passions. The house system, which was introduced in 2018, offers a sense of purpose and responsibility for all students to build charac-

ter, leadership, and community. And, after years of being in a space where they feel welcome, Sudie Williams' eighth graders transition to high school fully confident in their identity and eager to pursue their passions. “We don't just view culture building as between teachers and students; we expand that to our whole community and create opportunities for them to invest in Sudie and learn what makes every day a ‘Super Day at Sudie.’ It is a special five years in a student's life where they view school as a place where they're cared about,” Brokaw said.

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Continued **Con** Page 6

originating and approving appropriations and taxes. Who is currently the Speaker of the House? Mike Johnson. He leads the majority party. He and fellow House members, not the President, can approve any budget they want. If the President vetoes it, Congress can override the veto if it agrees.

Just 545 Americans, representing both political parties, have fouled up this great nation.

It seems inconceivable that a nation of 350 million cannot replace 545 officials who stand convicted -- by their own actions --

of incompetence and irresponsibility. No domestic problem is untraceable to the action or inaction of those 545 people.

When oppressed Americans fully grasp the plain truth that 545 people exercise the power of the federal government, then it must follow that the condition that exists in America is what they want to exist

If the tax code is unfair, it's because the 545 want it to be unfair.

If the budget is in the red, it's because they want it in the red. The current 40 trillion-dollar debt did not accumulate under one party’s majority. Federal

borrowing has skyrocketed across Republican and Democratic administrations for decades, driven by a mix of wars, recessions, pandemics, tax cuts, and spending that did not match income.

The U.S. national debt first exceeded \$1 trillion in fiscal year 1982, during Ronald Reagan's first term. It took the country 206 years (1776-1982) to accumulate that first \$1 trillion of debt.

The national debt is growing at roughly \$5-6 billion per day, or about \$2 trillion per year. It took 40 years for the debt to go from \$1T to \$10T (1982-2008), but only 18 years to

go from \$10T to \$40T (2008-2026).

If any of America’s military is in Iran or any other place, it's because the 545 want them there.

There is no such thing as an unsolvable government problem; there is only an unwillingness on the part of some or all of the 545 constitutionally empowered officials to do their job of resolving government problems.

American voters, do not let these 545 people continue to shift the blame for government problems to bureaucrats, whom they hire and whose jobs they can abolish; to lobbyists, whose gifts and advice

they can reject; to regulators, to whom they give the power to regulate and from whom they can take this power.

Above all, do not let them con you into the belief that there exists mystical forces such as "the economy," or "inflation," or "politics" that prevent them from doing the very job they take a sworn oath to do.

Those 545 people alone are responsible. They, and they alone, have been delegated the Constitutional power to ensure that the vast resources of the government benefit “We The People”.

They, and they alone,

should be held accountable by the people who elect (hire) them and therefore are their bosses.

This accountability can only happen if the voters have the gumption to manage the employees they hired. The upcoming Mid -Term 2026 elections are a good place to reset this inverted employee/employer relationship.

Vote the finger-pointing advocates of misdirection and misinformation out of office and make sure the newly elected employees know who they really work for.

American Voters, are you up to the task?

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