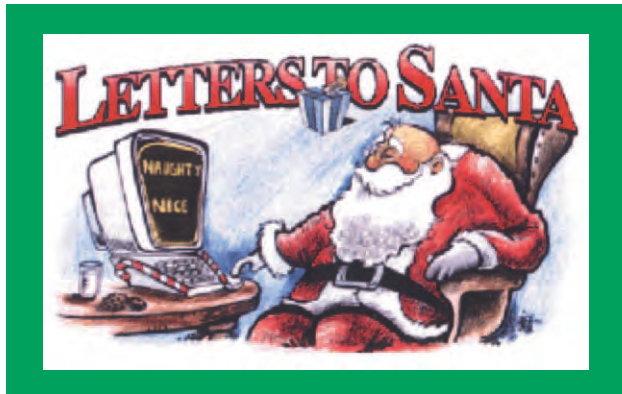




# NORTH CHANNEL ★ STAR

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VOLUME 11, NO. 49 (#499) THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2023 [www.northchannelstar.com](http://www.northchannelstar.com)

## Rotary distributes 300 Food Baskets

Annual Holiday Tradition for the North Shore Community

NORTH CHANNEL – The North Shore Rotary Club with partners assembled and distributed food baskets last Thursday. Baskets and food were assembled at the Rotary Pavilion at the courthouse annex on Wallisville.

In the spirit of gratitude and kindness, Rotarians partnered with John Parrott, Harris County Precinct 2, Food Town Wallisville, GPISD Grounds and Channelview Interact Club in contributing to the well-being of the community by donating 300 food baskets to area ISD students and needy families.

“Gratitude becomes even more meaningful when translated into action. Rotarians are People of Action!!”



Food Baskets assembled for the Galena Park ISD Community. Rotarians, Pct 2 staff, and CVISD Interact members.



Food Baskets for the Channelview Community.



Food Baskets for the Sheldon Community.

## Rep. Ana Hernandez's Holiday Open House



STATE REPRESENTATIVE ANA HERNANDEZ WITH GUESTS AT HER ANNUAL HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE.

By Allan Jamail

Jacinto City, TX. December 13, 2023 at the District 143 State office of Ana Hernandez guests came in large numbers to her annual holiday open house. Attendees rotated in and out numbering a couple hundred in all, some bringing toys for the underprivileged children in the area. Hernandez and her staff, Adriana A. Hernandez & Linda Jamail take the toys and deliver them to the area's schools that make sure those in need will receive them. This year the attendees had their choice of locally hand-made tamales by the El Ahorro Supermarket (Palestine Street), Jose Escobar, Manager (Blanca Garcia tamale cook) and or sandwiches from the local JC Subway sandwich shop. Also there was a variety of cheeses, veggies, dips, fresh fruit and sweetbread, cake and cookies with refreshments. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

## North Channel Area Chamber Holiday Open House



By Allan Jamail

On December 12th, the Chamber had their annual open house for the holidays; members and guests enjoyed delicious foods and refreshments. Chamber Pres. & CEO Margie Buentello greeted everyone and wished them the best of the holiday season. To learn how the chamber can help your business and or individuals visit: [www.northchannelarea.com](http://www.northchannelarea.com) / (713) 450-3600

Sitting, L – R: Crystal Jackson, Bianca Vega (NCAC staff), Margie Buentello (Pres. & CEO, NCAC) Yesenia Doyal (NCAC staff), Linda Jamail (Rep. Ana Hernandez staff), Herlinda Chacon & Maribel Rodriguez.  
Standing, L – R: Melanie Comparan, Taylor Thornton, Dr. Charles Grant, Gail Grant, Enrique Garcia (Congresswoman Silvia Garcia, Shayla Champ, Jocelyn Portillo, Bill Palko, Traci Galyean, Judge Lucia Bates, Ruben Sorola, Ana Clark (Judge Bates staff), Adriana Aguirre, Isaiah Jamail, Kourtney Hunt, Juan Camarena & Alejandro Rodriguez. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

## Two Parents receive Cars as gift, in HCDE Responsible Parenting Awards

Local business donates cars as Holiday Gift

By Allan Jamail

Dec. 14, 2023, Houston, TX. ~ At the Harris County Department of Education's Head Start Division (HCDE) Annual Responsible Parenting Awards ceremony two worthy parents received the Bates Collision Centers gift wrapped refurbished cars packed with gifts.



## NS Mustangs Lose Big One, Again

North Shore 33, Duncanville 49

By Allan Jamail

December 13, 2023 ~ Arlington, Tx. ~ At the AT&T Dallas Cowboy stadium the North Shore (NS) Mustangs (Stang's) lost their second consecutive UIL 6A Division 1 state championship contest to the Duncanville Panthers 49 – 33.

The era of new Mustangs head coach Willie Gaston was on track to bring home another state championship. He and his assistant coaches can be proud of the 15 – 1 record, hopefully next season they'll win it all.

Duncanville's Head Coach Reginald Samples said after the game he wasn't satisfied yet, even though they beat NS back to back in the championship game this year. He said the championship game record between these two teams is 3 to 2 in NS's favor. He said next year if they meet up he's going to even the record to 3-3 with a third consecutive win over their playoff rival Mustangs.

This loss was a team effort the way I saw it. From the coaches down through to the offensive and defensive side of the ball. Everyone in Texas knew long before the game that the



Willie Gaston, Mustangs head coach boarding the bus for Arlington to have his team play for the 6A Division 1 state championship contest. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

Panthers most potent offensive player was the five star rated running back Caden Durham a senior and LSU commit.

Everyone knew about him except NS it appeared. Durham scored three times in the first quarter, running through, around and over the defense. It appeared as if the 15 – 0 Eastside Boys weren't prepared for the high stakes game or Durham.

The once impenetrable NS defense was an easy task to run, pass and score on. The Panthers scored 37 points quickly in the first

Continued. See NS MUSTANGS LOSE BIG ONE, Page 8



North Shore Mustang Christopher Barnes scores on a Kaleb Bailey pass. (Allan Jamail Photo)

The Bates Collision Channelview & Baytown Team who each year refurbish cars and fill them with gifts of toys and necessities for the annual Responsible Parenting Award. Photo front: Mother Marisol Moreno (recipient) and daughter Magaly Guzman, Leila & Lee Bates (far right). (Photo by Allan Jamail)

Each parent with their daughters cried as they feverishly ripped off the wrapping paper concealing their car. There were tears of happiness from the Bates family, the Bates workers and guests in attendance as they watched the joy being expressed by the two mothers. On a sign displayed nearby it listed about 30 of Santa's Helpers who contributed to the gifts.

HCDE Head Start Senior Director Venetia Pea-

Continued. See PARENTING AWARDS, Page 3



Letters to Santa

Dear Santa:  
This year I have been good. I would like for you to bring me an iPad, peachy babies, slime roux and a gift for my teachers. A lot doll and a mini verse capsules. Love-America, 8 yr.

Dear Santa:  
This year I have been a good kid at my house, I would like for you to bring me a uglies quest, I also want a iPhone 12. Love, Ian, 7 yr.

Dear Santa:  
I have been good. I would like you for to bring me a Nintendo switch and cinameloll hat. I also like linnamerololl stuff. Naendellin, 7 yr.

Dear Santa:  
This year I have been good. I would like for you to bring a cute bingbag, and a lotto paper to draw and cinamoroll stuff, and can I have a stickers and two 100 Roux, and peachy babies slimes, Auora jell cube, Kawaii space bear, Axolot ice slime. Andrea, 8 yr

ear Santa:  
For Christmas I would like a nerf grenade and a x-shot insanity motorized rage fire here gun. I know you are busy making toys but these are the only two things I have on my wish list this year. Camedeh, 8yr.

Dear Santa:  
May I get a google and Nerfgun, the mini gun that is a Nerf gun and a lava lamp. Damon, 9 yr.

Dear Santa:  
For Christmas this year I have been very good. •Lego friends set •Coloring book •board games • mini verse • dry erase markers • jewelry Sophia, 8 yr.

ear Santa:  
I would like mini verse, also LoL dolls lego and a jumbo gummy pizza, also a new squishmellow. And new jeans I would also like a white T-shirt with flowers. Aubrey, 9 yr.



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From Our Family to Yours,  
Best Wishes for the New Year



Joe Stephens and family

Wishing you a  
Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!

State Representative  
Ana Hernandez



Letters to Santa

Dear Santa:I don't want much this year, all I want is to get a phone and switch. But the most I want is a good family. Jonathan, 9 yr.

Dear Santa:  
May I have a Cougar toy, a bulls toy, bear toy, a puppy, a kitten, a seal toy and a train set and animal kingdom toys, all of them. Benjamin, 10 yr.

Dear Santa:  
My names is Lorrisa and I'm 10 yrs old. Also this is my wish list: a V.R., a phone, fansy head ponesthat has an mic, and my last wishes for my grandma if you can't do any of those, than just the UZI jacket from glitch productions. Lorrisa, 10 yr.

Dear Santa:  
For Christmas I want a kids 3d pen art supplies, and pet bunny, a big kitchen play set for my sister, and my wish is every one should always be happy and grateful. Lisa, 8 yr.

Dear Santa:  
I want a blue stanly. Here are more things that I want for Christmas: A baby Yoda ornament, so I can hang it up on my tree, new clothes so my mom won't have to buy it. The last thing I really want is world piece and being loved by my family. Ariana, 9 yr.

Dear Santa:  
My name is Zoe. What I want for Christmas is a telescope, 3D ink pan and squish mallow. The reasons why I want these item is because I want a telescope is to see the stars, and 3D ink is when I see the stars I make them, and squish mallows I just collected them. Thank you. Zoe, 9yr.

Dear Santa:  
Are you doing well? I hope you are! My name is Elena and I am 10 years old. Here are some things I would like for the world and me: I want for my mom's books to go famous, so we can get a new house and a little more food. I also want the homeless get what they want. Here are some toys I want and need: I want Sanrie toys, I need clothing and water bottle for school and thank you. Elena 10yr

Merry Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year



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JULIE  
Fallin

Season's Greetings

From

TURNER

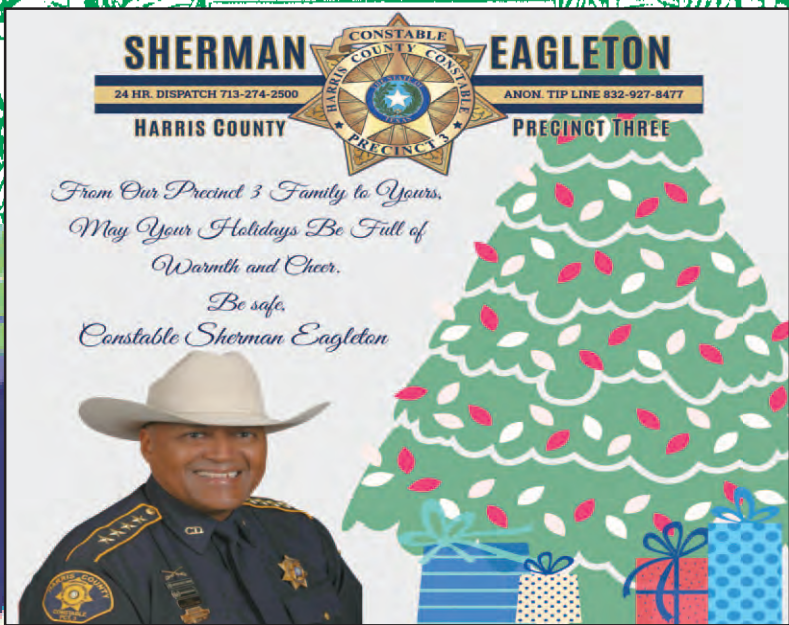


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CHARLOTTE'S WEB

By Charlotte Jackson



## Savor The Moments

It is so hard to imagine that we are at the end of the year. It seems like just yesterday that the community was enjoying Christmas and looking forward to the year 2000 and now, in just a few days, we will celebrate the arrival of 2024. Amid the busyness of the season, I hope you take a few minutes to reflect on the memories of the year. If you are like most people, we have our phones available throughout the day to record pictures and conversations, that makes it much easier to reach back and reflect.

January typically starts with resolutions to work on our physical condition as well as to practice time management with the newest planners, calendars, and gadgets. And as we move forward, we typically abandon those plans by mid-month or February.

Let us make it a little easier on ourselves. When you get the new calendar, pull out your old one and transfer the important dates, such as birthdays, anniversaries, and other reoccurring events. I learned a few years ago to use assorted colors to designate if the event were for family, work, church, volunteer projects or community events.

Are there certain events that you make memories of each year? Perhaps you are active with the North Channel Area Chamber, Rotary Club, Boy Scouts or with youth sports? Be sure to assign those a new color. By flipping through your 2023 calendar, transfer the events that you know will happen on certain dates or if you are unsure of the date, pencil it in. Make sure there is a balance of time you are spending with loved ones, alone as well as at work. Be sure to find at least one event each month to have fun. It can be something as simple as a drive to one of the local parks to have a picnic, or at least a snack with your children or grandchildren. If you enjoy sports, check out the schedule for our local high school athletic programs or the NBL teams that play professional basketball at San Jacinto College North. Or if you are at the college, check out the 2024 schedule for their Baseball Team. (Just a note, their team has been to the JUCO World Series more than any other community college team than any other.)

Visit [www.exploreeastharriscounty.com](http://www.exploreeastharriscounty.com) and see what other events are happening in the area.

Make a list of the groups of friends that you stay in contact with and then reach out and plan a dinner. In 2024, I hope to reconnect with former Rotaract Members, Candy Stripers from North Shore Medical Plaza, the Class of 1980 from North Shore as well as former coworkers. Some of these events will be a dinner, some will be an opportunity to get together and volunteer at a local food distribution or other community event.

Be sure to include time for those important health visits to the doctors, dentist, specialists and to schedule routine maintenance on your vehicles and home. And as you do these things, share a smile, make some memories, and savor each moment. Let's make 2024 count.

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## HCDE Parenting Awards gives cars to families,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Mother Diomanique Brown with daughter Princess Ma'Laya Brown reacts after being surprised with a new vehicle filled with gifts for the Responsible Parenting Award. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

The recipients of the car awards for Responsible Parenting. Standing, L - R: Diomanique Brown (recipient), Leila Bates, Marisol Moreno (recipient), & Lee Bates. Kids with gifts, L - R: 3-year-old Princess Ma'Laya Brown, with her new bike & 5-year-old Magaly Guzman with her new scooter. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

cock said, "In a world where opportunities to uplift others are often missed, the Bates have established a 25-year tradition of doing just that. Their enduring partnership with HCDE for the past two decades speaks volumes about the value they place on community collaboration."

"Family Service Providers from our 20 HCDE Head Start campuses identify parents in good standing and nominate them for the award. Parents then complete the Responsible Parenting Award application, which is reviewed by the Bates Collision Center's employees at their Baytown and Channelview locations. Each center will then select a winner to receive a refurbished car," said Shelby Trahan, Communications Coordinator.

Recipient Diomanique Brown looked up to Heaven and praised God and thanked Jesus before she received the car. Chairperson of the parent committee at Compton Head Start said Brown often uses a borrowed car to make sure she and daughter Princess can get to school and work each day. When she cannot find a ride, she walks or asks friends and family for help.

NC Star writer Allan Jamail got the following comments from the two mothers and Lee and Leila Bates.

Brown said, "This has truly been an amazing day. My daughter Princess Ma'Laya Brown and I are so beyond grateful. This 2023 Christmas will truly be a Christmas to remember, all of you are angels and may God bless you all as well. You all did not have to come together and do all of this for us but you did and we Thank You. This will help Princess and I so much and we're gonna take very good care of our new baby, her name is Prancer 21. And my heartfelt thanks to Compton Head Start for nominating me... goooo Compton".

Recipient Marisol Moreno has depended on friends, co-workers, and ride-sharing apps to get her and her daughter, Magaly, where they need to go. Moreno came to Houston two years ago from Wyoming. She's a teaching assistant at Fondwood Head Start and is working towards her child development associate degree.

Moreno said, "I want to start off by thanking my bosses Markeysha Hinderman and Maria Hollins at

## ASK DIAMOND JIM

### Diamond Jim: "Twas the night before Christmas"

Twas the night before Christmas, and all through our store,  
The diamonds were brilliant like never before,  
Gold earrings and pendants, silver and pearls,  
And so many shoppers, mostly grown boys and girls.

A wall made of watches and another of games,  
We know all your faces but not all of your names,  
Greeted by smiles and fresh drinks from our staff,  
We chat, share memories, and talk of days past.

Red rubies, green emeralds, and sapphires galore,  
More friends are arriving and approaching the door,  
New watches, pretty rings, and low prices to share,  
For more than 40 years, we've known that you care.

So, on Christmas Eve when we then close our doors,  
to spend time with our families, just like you will with yours,  
We're reminded of those who we'll miss at this time,  
It's hard to believe so many years have gone by.

Our proud "Wall of Honor" saluting the Brave,  
Our "Missing Man Table" honors those in their grave,  
I think of the many who've passed on before,  
They protected our peace, our land, and our shores.

And as I turn off the lights on this eve of great joy,  
I can't help but be thankful to those who deploy,  
Tonight with my family, we'll all say this prayer...  
"See them home safely, they have family there."

We are forever grateful to those who have served,  
do Serve and will serve as first responders, member of the US military, and our front-line medical personnel.


Merry Christmas and Thank you!


Thank you for reading the "Ask Diamond Jim" column and for supporting the North Channel Star Newspaper!


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Not all ornaments are for the trees




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## The Christmas Story

Luke 2:1-20,  
King James Version

1: And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.  
2: (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)  
3: And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.  
4: And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)  
5: To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.  
6: And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.  
7: And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.  
8: And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.  
9: And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.  
10: And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.  
11: For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.  
12: And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.  
13: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,  
14: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.  
15: And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.  
16: And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.  
17: And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.  
18: And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.  
19: But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.  
20: And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.



### THE POSTSCRIPT

By  
Carrie Classon

## Dressing Up for Christmas

I tend to be a Christmas maximalist; at least if you ask my husband, Peter, that's what he would say.

Peter would dispense with the tree, the presents and most of the outings. He'd hang a few ornaments on a houseplant, have a nice meal and go to bed early. But Peter cares for me a lot, and he knows how much I love Christmas.

I want a live tree. If I can't chop it down myself, I'll haul it home from the hardware store. I want lights on the balcony and a little present for everyone. I want fancy new wrapping paper and pretty, old ornaments and a holiday setting on the table. I want to light too many candles, bake too many cookies and end up with a floor covered with ribbon and powdered sugar at the end of the night. Peter is very patient.

And I want to get dressed up.

Some of my best memories of Christmas involve my Auntie Jo. She and her family would drive up north to my grandparents on Christmas Eve with a car packed with presents and cousins and a mischievous dog. Thinking back on it now, I'm sure it was stressful for my Auntie Jo. But my memory is of the car pulling in, and Auntie Jo hugging everyone, her arms full of bags of unwrapped gifts and luggage. And this was, for me, the official start of Christmas.

Auntie Jo would head downstairs to wrap presents and, at some point, their dog, Twinkie, would make a mad dash out the door. We'd all scour the neighborhood until we found Twinkie. Then Auntie Jo would go to change her clothes and emerge more resplendent than the Christmas tree.

It was always a treat, as a child, to see what my Auntie Jo would wear at Christmas. I knew there would be glitter or sequins, and probably both. It would be the sort of outfit a person would wear only for a very special day, and seeing Auntie Jo dressed up made it a special day for me.

I understand getting dressed up is not for everyone. A tree is a lot of work. And I don't think holiday preparations should be a burden—something on the must-do list when there are more important things to do.

But every year, I think back on my Auntie Jo, who had such a long drive and so much to do (and such a naughty dog!), and how she would step into the living room, reflecting the Christmas lights. I received a lot of nice presents, and we had a wonderful meal, but seeing my Auntie Jo dressed in her Christmas finery was always a highlight for me.

I am still lucky enough to see my Auntie Jo at Christmas. And, although I will never wear sequins as well as she did, I do my best.

Because dressing up is part of how I participate in Christmas. It helps to make this time of year memorable. When I light the candles on my mantle and string lights outside, it's a recognition that the darkness of winter will pass. Like my Auntie Jo, I want to mark this passage of time; I want to make this day different from other days. Dressing up for Christmas reminds me that we need some extra sparkle in this darkest time of year.

And so (while I try to take it easy on Peter) I am decorating the house, and I'm lighting too many candles. And I already have a dress picked out for Christmas.

Till next time,  
Carrie

## STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



## Property Tax Cuts go into Effect

A total of \$18 billion in property tax cuts were approved by more than 80% of voters in the November general election and should be reflected in property tax bills that are due by Jan. 31. The cuts come in the form of increased home exemptions, lower school district rates, and limiting the amount property appraisals can rise.

Many taxing districts sent out bills before the election that factored in the decrease, anticipating voter approval. For example, in Gregg County in Northeast Texas, the tax bill noted on the back sheet that the lower amount was contingent on voter approval of the proposed amendments. If the amendments had not passed, taxpayers would be billed for the difference.

According to the state comptroller's office, a typical homestead valued at \$350,000 will see a tax savings of about \$1,000. Prior to the approval of the tax cuts, Texas ranked sixth highest in the nation in property tax rates, partly because the state does not have a state income tax.



treat from that statement ever," DeGuerin said. "We presented strong evidence that Paxton just surrendered the power of his office in a corrupt way. It's just that his financial supporters threatened retaliation against the Republicans that would have voted for conviction."

Paxton has vowed to campaign in the Republican primary against House members who voted for his impeachment, especially House Speaker Dade Phelan.

"This is just the tip of the iceberg," Paxton said in a statement released by his campaign. "Whether it's the House costs, Senate costs, or the overall impeachment session costs, many millions more were incurred on Dade Phelan's sham and needless impeachment."

Phelan said Paxton's refusal to testify before the House on a proposed \$3.3 million settlement of a whistleblower lawsuit prompted the investigation that led to the impeachment.

"The investigation, impeachment, and trial of Ken Paxton shed a clear, unflinching light on who Paxton is and the lengths to which he will go to stay in power," Phelan said in a statement.

### TEXAS MEMBERS OF CONGRESS FACE SPARSE ELECTION OPPOSITION

Texas has 38 seats in the U.S. House, and 35 incumbents are seeking re-election, the Texas Standard reported. Of that number,

### PAXTON IMPEACHMENT COST TAXPAYERS \$4.3 MILLION

The Dallas Morning News reported last week that the taxpayer cost of impeaching Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton was more than \$4.3 million. More than two dozen lawyers worked to prosecute Paxton leading up to and during his two-week trial in the Senate. That chamber acquitted him of all 20 charges after the House voted overwhelmingly to impeach Paxton, who is under indictment for securities fraud and was accused of abuse of office.

Lawyers billed more than 7,800 hours related to Paxton's impeachment, The News reported after seeking copies of all invoices and related documents. Co-counsel Dick DeGuerin defended the amount of work done by attorneys.

"Everything we did was justified, and I won't re-

16 do not have a primary challenger, while five will face no opposition in the general election as well.

Of the remaining three seats — all in North Texas — two members are retiring, while U.S. Rep. Colin Allred, D-Dallas, opted to run against U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz next November.

"It is not at all uncommon for incumbents to pretty much coast to reelection, even if they are challenged in the primary or the general election. Incumbents have an enormous advantage in name I.D. and ability to fundraise, connections and networks within the district," Todd Gillman of The News said.

### BOARD SIGNS OFF ON SCHOOL LIBRARY BOOK RULES

The State Board of Education approved guidelines for Texas school libraries to use in implementing policies to ban the possession or purchase of books considered "sexually explicit." The guidelines follow passage of a bill in the last regular session requiring book vendors to supply ratings for titles that contain sexual content. The law is being challenged in court by a coalition of book vendors and associations.

"It was a work of deep value and importance to bring the library standards to fruition. In Texas, parents have been identifying this issue to schools without the necessary support of law," said SBOE member Audrey Young, R-Trinity.

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission must also adopt the standards. Each of the state's 1,000-plus school districts must approve a policy that explains how school libraries acquire books and other materials.

### JUDGE UPHOLDS BAN OF TIKTOK ON STATE-ISSUED DEVICES

An Austin federal judge last week upheld the state's ban of TikTok on government-issued devices such as phones, laptops or tablets, kut.org reported. U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman upheld the policy that was challenged by the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University, which claimed the ban was unconstitutional.

"Texas's TikTok ban is limiting the use of an app on state-provided devices and networks, which is not a blanket prohibition," Pitman wrote. The ban followed concerns that the Chinese company that owns TikTok — a social media platform — could provide sensitive data to the Chinese government.

TikTok spent about \$1.5 billion on an initiative called Project Texas to address national security concerns. The Biden administration has called for the company to sell TikTok or face a national ban. A bill passed by Congress bans its use on federal government devices.

top ten

Most Popular Christmas Movies of All Time

1. The Santa Clause 2 (2002)

2. The Nutcracker and the Four Realms (2018)

3. The Santa Clause (1994)

4. The Holiday (2006)

5. Elf (2003)

6. The Polar Express (2004)

7. A Christmas Carol (2009)

8. How the Grinch Stole Christmas (2000)

9. Home Alone (1990)

10. The Grinch (2018)

Source: ScreenCrush

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☆ SPORTS PAGE ☆

SEASON FOOTBALL WEEK 17

Texans, Browns meet in key game for both teams:  
Cowboys head to Miami to take on high-scoring Dolphins

The NFL is giving fans plenty of games to watch during Christmas weekend as the league has game scheduled for Thursday, Saturday, Sunday and a triple-header on Christmas Day.

Ah, nothing says the holidays like the NFL saturating the airwaves.

The Texans host the Browns on Christmas Eve at NRG Stadium in an important game for both teams. The winner keeps their AFC Wild Card hopes alive, while the loser will need some help in the final two weeks of the season to earn a playoff spot.

But then again, if Jacksonville continues to struggle down the stretch (they entered last Sunday night's game against Baltimore riding a two-game losing streak) and the Texans win out, Houston has a chance to win the division.

Stranger things have happened in the NFL and when the season began, most experts figured a six-win season would be quite an accomplishment for first-year head coach DeMeco Ryans. Well, the Texans had seven wins heading into last Sunday's game at Tennessee and they return home on Sunday to face a tough Browns team that is also in the hunt in its division, the AFC North.

Two weeks ago, the Texans suffered a bad 30-6 loss to the lowly Jets as the weather and the New York defense never let C.J. Stroud and the Houston offense get going. The game was played in horrible conditions as wind and rain persisted throughout the contest. To make matters worse, Stroud sustained a concussion late in the game and was placed in the NFL concussion protocol. Ryans hopes Stroud was able to play against the Titans and if he missed that game, he should be cleared by Sunday when the Texans face a solid Cleveland defense.

With just two weeks to go after this game, the Texans know they can't afford anymore slip ups if they hope to continue to be one of the good stories of the 2023 season.

While the Texans host the Browns, the Dallas Cowboys hit the road for the second straight week and face a second straight AFC East foe (Dallas played at Buffalo last Sunday) when they travel to Miami to take on the Dolphins and their high-scoring offense.



Two weeks ago, the Cowboys dominated the Eagles 33-13 at Jerry World to move to 10-3 on the season and move into a tie with Philly atop the NFC East. Dallas has a tough final three weeks. After the trip to Miami, Dallas returns home to face NFC North leader Detroit then closes out the season with a road game at Washington.

The Eagles, on the other hand, face the woeful Giants twice and three-win Arizona in the final three weeks of the season. The Eagles are probably the favorites to win the division, and relegate Dallas to a Wild Card team.

Other key games this holiday weekend has New Orleans visiting the Rams on Thursday Night Football, Cincinnati visiting Pittsburgh and Buffalo visiting the Los Angeles Chargers. Both of those games will be played on Saturday.

Detroit will look to wrap up the NFC North on Sunday with a win at Minnesota, while Jacksonville visits Tampa Bay. On Christmas Day, we get a triple header leading off with Las Vegas at Kansas City, followed by New York at Philadelphia and the nightcap is a good one as Baltimore visits San Francisco.

Before we take a look at this weekend's games, let's review last week's record. A 4-4 week brought the season record to 101-49 (67%).

I want to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. This has been a tough year for me and my family, but thanks to all of the love and support we have received, it's made a very difficult year a bit more bearable.

Now, onto this weekend's games.

NFL

**New Orleans at Los Angeles Rams:** Week 16 Kicks off with the Saints visiting the Rams on

Thursday Night Football in a game both teams need to win to remain in the NFC Wild Card hunt. The Rams have been playing well as of late thanks to the play of QB Matthew Stafford (3,062 yards, 19 TDs), and wide receivers Puka Nacua (82 receptions, 1,113 yards, 4 TDs) and Cooper Kupp (41 receptions, 547 yards, 3 TDs). They also have a strong running game led by Kyrren Williams (801 yards, 7 TDs). The Saints have struggled on offense due to inconsistent play from quarterback Derek Carr (2,880 yards, 13 TDs). Carr should rely on running back Alvin Kamara (564 rushing yards, 5 TDs/63 receptions, 402 yards, 1 TD) and wide receiver Chris Olave (72 receptions, 918 yards, 4 TDs). Look for the Rams defense to force a turnover or two from Carr as the Rams get the win on Thursday night. My pick, Los Angeles Rams 26, New Orleans 23

**Cincinnati at Pittsburgh:** The first of two Saturday games is a key AFC North contest between the Bengals and Steelers. Despite losing starting QB Joe Burrow to a season-ending wrist injury, the Bengals are still in the AFC Wild Card race. Backup QB Jake Browning (649 yards in three games, 3 TDs) has done an admirable job of running the offense. It helps that running back Joe Mixon (689 yards, 6 TDs) has been playing well in recent weeks. Browning still has star wide receiver Ja'Marr Chase (86 receptions, 1,063 yards, 7 TDs) to throw to. The Steelers just aren't very good on offense and if starting QB Kenny Pickett misses another game with an ankle injury, the Steeler faithful could be in a foul mood at the end of the day. It won't be a Merry Christmas in the Steel City. My pick, Cincinnati 23, Pittsburgh 16

**Buffalo at Los Angeles Chargers:** The Bills head west to take on a beat-up Chargers team

that is simply playing out the string, which could cost head coach Brandon Staley his job. Two weeks ago, Buffalo may have saved its season, and its head coach Sean McDermott's job, with a 20-17 win at Kansas City. That win gave the Bills new life. Look for QB Josh Allen (3,447 passing yards, 25 TDs/374 rushing yards, 10 TDs) to carve up the Chargers defense. Buffalo finally has a running game led by James Cook (789 yards, 4 total TDs) and Allen will look to Cook to soften up the LA defense and then make plays down field to wideout Stefon Diggs (87 receptions, 993 yards, 8 TDs). LA should be without starting QB Justin Herbert, who fractured the index finger on his passing hand two weeks ago in a loss to Denver. Backup Easton Stick just doesn't have what it takes to win at the NFL level, even with a strong running back in Austin Ekeker (497 rushing yards, 5 TDS/36 receptions, 344 yards, 1 TD) and steady wide receiver Keenan Allen (108 receptions, 1,243 yards, 7 TDs). Look for the Bills to get another road win on Saturday in LA. My pick, Buffalo 31, Los Angeles Chargers 23

**Cleveland at Houston:** A key game for both teams as both the Texans and Browns hope to keep their playoff hopes alive on Sunday at NRG Stadium. Cleveland has remained in the playoff hunt thanks to veteran QB Joe Flacco (565 yards, 5 TDs in his first two games after signing with the Browns in early December). Two weeks ago, Flacco led the Browns to a 31-27 win over Jacksonville as he hooked up with tight end David Njoku (59 receptions, 600 yards, 4 TDs) for two TDs. The Houston defense will need to first stop running back Jerome Ford (698 yards, 3 TDs) and then set their sights on the immobile Flacco. The Texans hope to have starting QB C.J. Stroud (3,631 yards, 20 TDs) back for this game. Stroud sustained a concussion two weeks ago in Houston's 30-6 loss to the Jets and Stroud had his worst day as a pro throwing for only 91 yards. The Texans could also be without wide receiver Nico Collins (60 receptions, 1,004 yards, 6 TDs) who suffered a calf injury in the New York game. If Collins is out again, that could make things dicey in the passing game. Someone else needs to step up, but that's been the case all season long for this team. Look for the Texans defense to rise to the occasion as they lead the hometown team to a huge win on Sunday. It won't be pretty, but a

win is a win at this point in the season. My pick, Houston 16, Cleveland 13

**Jacksonville at Tampa Bay:** The Jags visit the Bucs on Sunday with both teams needing a win to remain in the playoff hunt. Two weeks ago, the Jags dropped their second straight game losing at Cleveland, while TB took over the top spot in the weak NFC South with a road win at Atlanta. The Jags will need a big day from QB Trevor Lawrence (3,261 yards, 17 TDs), running back Travis Etienne (806 yards, 9 TDs) and wide receiver Calvin Ridley (55 receptions, 742 yards, 5 TDs). Tampa Bay will be led by QB Baker Mayfield (2,934 yards, 20 TDs), running back Rachaad White (745 yards, 5 TDs) and wide receiver Mike Evans (62 receptions, 1,002 yards, 10 TDs). Look for Lawrence to step up and lead the Jags to a much-needed win on Sunday. My pick, Jacksonville 26, Tampa Bay 23

**Dallas at Miami:** The Cowboys head to South Beach to face a Dolphins team that lost at home to a four-win Tennessee team two weeks ago. Not only did Miami lose the game, but star wide receiver Tyreek Hill (97 receptions, 1,542 yards, 12 TDs) suffered an ankle injury. Hill returned to the game but was limited. If that injury lingers, that will be a huge blow to Tua Tagovailoa (3,697 yards, 24 TDs) and the rest of the Miami offense. Hill is definitely the star of this offense, but Miami has other weapons in running backs Raheem Mostert (924 yards, 16 total TDs), and De'Von Achne (581 yards, 7 TDs) and fellow wideout Jaylen Waddle (63 receptions, 822 yards, 3 TDs). Miami will face a Dallas defense that is playing as well as any unit in the NFL. Two weeks ago, they did not allow a touchdown to the high-powered Philly offense and forced three turnovers in the 33-13 win. The Dallas offense is also rolling behind QB Dak Prescott (3,505 yards, 28 TDs). Prescott is firmly in contention to be the league MVP and a big game on another national stage could go a long way in securing that honor. But Dallas is not a one-man offense. Running back Tony Pollard (796 yards, 5 TDs) has been playing well lately and wide receiver CeeDee Lamb (96 receptions, 1,253 yards, 8 TDS) is having an All-Pro year. Second-year tight end Jake Ferguson (51 receptions, 570 yards, 5 TDs) is becoming a clutch receiver as well. This should be a high-scoring game but look for the Dallas defense to make a play or two down the stretch to hand the Cowboys a huge road win on Sunday. My pick, Dallas 33, Miami 26

**Las Vegas at Kansas City:** The Raiders and Chiefs meet on Christmas Day as these two renew one of the NFL's most storied rivalries. To say the Raiders have struggled on offense would be an understatement. Two weeks ago, Vegas only mustered 196 total yards of offense in a 3-0 home loss to Minnesota. That's inexcusable in today's NFL. Rookie QB Aiden O'Connell (1,365 yards, 4 TDs) just doesn't seem to have what it takes to be an NFL QB. Vegas will need a big day from running back Josh Jacobs (805 yards, 6 TDs) and wide receiver Davante Adams (76 receptions, 805 yards, 6 TDs) if they hope to pull off the upset. The Chiefs haven't exactly been lighting things up on offense, which is strange with a QB of Pat Mahomes (3,398 yards, 23 TDs) ability. The problem is, Mahomes has only one dependable receiver to throw to in tight end Travis Kelce (80 receptions, 896 yards, 5 TDs). The wideouts are suspect. The offense should get a boost with the return of running back Isiah Pacheco (779 yards, 7 total TDs) who missed KC's 20-17 loss two weeks ago against Buffalo with a shoulder injury. Look for the Chiefs to roll on Christmas Day. My pick, Kansas City 34, Las Vegas 12

**Baltimore at San Francisco:** The NFL is providing a nice Christmas night present when the Ravens and 49ers meet in prime time on ABC and ESPN. This could very well be a Super Bowl preview as both teams are the best in their respective conferences at this point of the season. Two weeks ago, the Ravens got a 76-yard punt return for a touchdown in overtime to upend the Rams, 37-31, while the 49ers rolled to a 28-16 win over Seattle at home. Baltimore QB Lamar Jackson (2,934 passing yards, 16 TDS/644 rushing yards, 5 TDs) will test a SF defense that has not been its dominant self this season. The Ravens also have a capable runner in Gus Edwards (605 yards, 10 TDs) and a big-play rookie wide receiver in Zay Flowers (64 receptions, 673 yards, 3 TDs). The 49ers are loaded on offense led by QB Brock Purdy (3,553 yards, 25 TDs), running back Christian McCaffrey (1,177 rushing yards, 12 TDs/52 receptions, 437 yards, 5 TDs), wide receivers Deebo Samuel (45 receptions, 739 yards, 9 TDs) and Brandon Aiyuk (56 receptions, 1,053 yards) and tight end George Kittle (53 receptions, 811 yards, 6 TDs). Look for the 49ers to send a message to the rest of the league that they are serious about winning it all this season. My pick, San Francisco 31, Baltimore 23

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Dear Santa:  
I been working really hard at school. So I been wanting a big mirror with a builtin jewelry organizer. I also been wanting some rings and some spinning organizers. Maybe some lip glosses. I hope you can buy some of this. I will be very grateful.  
Love, Daliah, 9 yr.

Dear Santa:  
I have been a very good student. I do my homework every day and I made good grades. I try my best to do good in school. I have a very nice teacher whose name is Ms. Coopers. She makes learning fun. I am proud to be a tiger at Jacinto City Elementary. Angelica, 8 yr.

Dear Santa:  
I am so happy to have my stuff from last Christmas. My gifts were the best, I love them! You are the best for giving all of us gifts. I think we all in joy them and I will like for you to give the homeless kids that do not have gifts and shoes for the kids and parents that do not have shoes, so they will be happy to have some, I hope they have a great day. Alexia, 10 yr.

Dear Santa:  
I want a drawing set, legos, painting set. I want you to help the poor people too. I want a puppy plush. I loved the gifts you gave me last year. I hope you have a good Christmas, Santa.  
Victoria, 9 yr.

Dear Santa:  
How are you? Thanks for last year's presents. My grandma is going to get surgery. Please help her and every homeless or people who need help. I would like a cap for my dad, a purse for my mom, a furfurn for grandma, and a cooking set. Thank you Santa.  
Victoria, 10yr.  
Dear Santa:  
My name is Magdiel and I hope you are very well. This year I would like two new pairs of dunks, 13,500 V-bucks, a white water bottle, AirPods pros, baggy hoodies, one of them need to be Looney Tunes please. New Elf on end shelf and for you and all others to have a Merry Little Christmas! Thank you Santa! Magdiel, 10 yr.

Dear Santa:  
This year I have been nice. I would like for you to bring me a tree house, barbie house, because I like them, Small slime, 2 box of barbie, make, kitchen toy, iPad. Gianna, 7 ye.

Dear Santa:  
This year I have been good. I would like for you to bring me a a hoverboard and a Neof end a Super Mario kart. Axel, 8ye.

Dear Santa:  
I wish that all the families have a good Christmas. I also want to find the right gift for my mom and dad. Thank you for the gifts you gave me last year. This year I wish for my dad to get a 100 on his test. Happy Holidays.  
Valentina, 10 yr.

Dear Santa:  
How are you today? I hope you are well! I want a VR headset to those who don't have it, a snow and soda machine to those who doesn't have drinks and want snow cones. I also want money to donate to charity.  
Jacob, 9 yr.  
Dear Santa:  
This year I have been nice. I would like you to bring me a electric scooter, I also wants carts of Roblox and a bean bag. Tania, 8 yr.

## SHELDON ISD NEWS

### Sheldon Announces Winners of Holiday Greeting Card Contest

This fall, Sheldon ISD students across the district participated in a holiday greeting card contest. Art students at all grade levels had an opportunity to design the cover of the district's holiday greeting card. Selections were narrowed to 20 and were voted on by staff members at the administration building. The following students, winner and four finalists, are being recognized in the district's annual holiday greeting card contest:

Overall Winner - Sophia Vo, King High School, 10th grade, Ms. Roades' Art Class

District Runner-Up - Chris Cano, King High School, 9th grade, Ms. Roades' Art Class

Elementary School Winner - Sergio Perez, Sheldon Elementary, 5th grade, Ms. Christopher's Art Class

Elementary School Runner-Up - Valeria Paulin, Monahan Elementary, 5th grade, Mr. Randolph's Art Class

Middle School Winner - Anylah Mata, Null Middle School, 6th Grade, Ms.



Barr's Art Class

Their artwork will be featured on the district's Christmas card sent to community members, families, staff and business partners. The overall winner will receive a \$100 gift card and the four finalists will receive \$25 sponsored by the Sheldon ISD Education Foundation. Winners will be recognized at the December 19 School Board Meeting.

Dear Santa:  
What I want for Christmas is a 49ers jersey and a Eagles jersey. I also want a Beagle but a boy for my other dog. And football, cards, and for my grandpa to not be sick any more. And Thank you for every thing you gave me.  
Alonza, 9 yr.

Dear Santa:  
I really want to help my best friend "Quincy" because she is very sick and her parents doesn't know what was happening. So I want to give her a teddy bear to make her feel better. But I don't want that much. I prefer to help people first are homeless and are in the hospital to their day wonderful.  
Hailey, 9 yr.

Dear Santa:  
PS5, bey blades, Justin Jefferson Jersey, Tyreek hill jersey, Jam'arr chase jersey, giant Dino smasher egg, avatar lego set, Madden 24, Allen Iverson shoes, lamely ball jersey, drone, customized Justin Jefferson mouth piece, code lamb jersey, sequin Barkley jersey, Jam'arr chase lego set. Gary, 9 yr.

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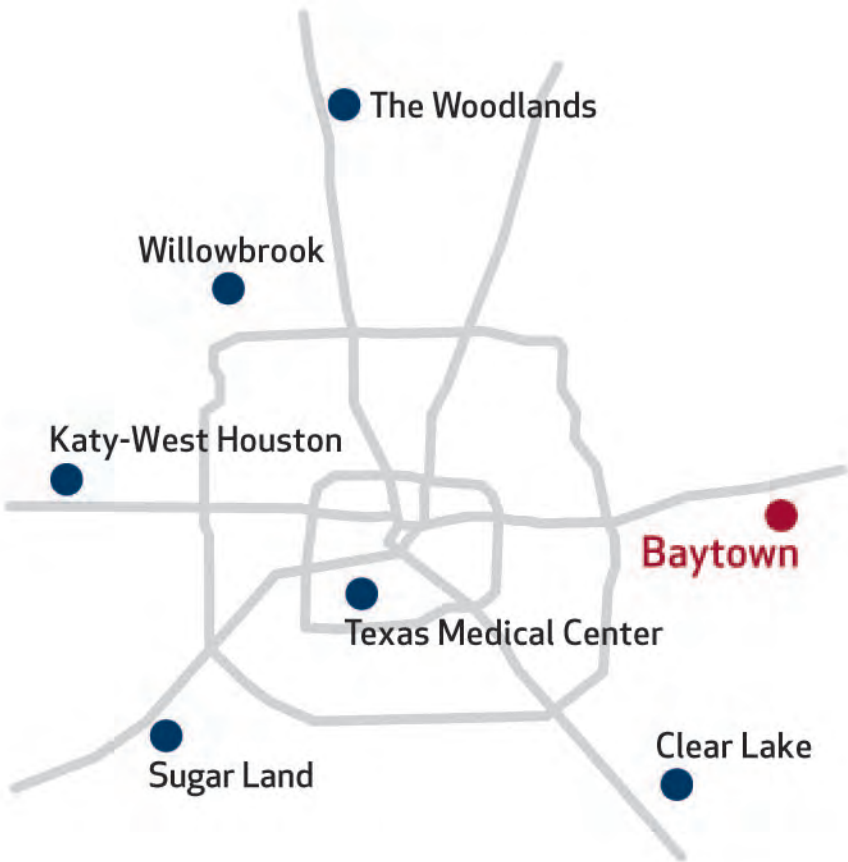




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# Galena Park ISD Community Holiday Open House



Jacinto City Elementary School Choir performs under the direction of Jueretta Berry, Music Specialist. (photo by Allan Jamail)



Woodland Acres Elementary School Choir performs under the direction of Victoria McMillion, Music Specialist. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

By Allan Jamail

November 30, 2023 ~ At the Galena Park Independent School District Administration Building residents came out to hear several of the district's bands playing and choirs singing Christmas songs. They were bused in from each of the schools which

participated. As they came off the buses they walked in single file under the watchful eyes of their teachers. You could see and hear that they were excited to perform. Sherrhonda Hunter, Executive Director for School and Community Relations introduced school trustees, elected and appointment

governmental officials present and she kept the programs agenda moving orderly. Mrs. Hunter is an asset to the district and always does her tasks in a professional manner. Victoria McMillion, Music Specialist of Woodland Acres Elementary School said all of her students are between 9-11 years old,

and are in the 4th and 5th grade. They're from all classes across 4th and 5th grade. She's on her 2nd year of teaching. She went to The University of Texas at San Antonio and studied Music Education with a focus in voice. Jueretta Berry, Music Specialist and SAFE Team Coordinator of Jacinto City

Elementary said her students are 4th and 5th Graders, and ages from 10 - 11 in separate classes. She's been the music teacher for 26 years. She received her degree from Texas Southern University. Chris Gause, Coordinator for Multimedia Communications and

photographer of the district took students and guests' photos with Santa Clause or with the beautifully decorated Christmas tree. Attendees were treated with various types of cookies and refreshments of hot wassail, hot chocolate, iced lemon and lime flavored drinks.



Dear Santa: This year I have been good, I would like for you to bring me a PS5 and a seek plush, also Roux. Matthew, 7 yr.

Dear Santa: This year I have been nice. I would like for you to bring me a Babe dream house, some flash cards too, please. Gracy, 7 yr.

Dear Santa: For Christmas I want a meta guest 3 to play with, but my little brother is Mannix , a dark off brand VR headset. Mason, 8 yr.

Dear Santa: I want a VR and a PS5 and a bed and I want a big pillow. Steven, 9 yr.

Dear Santa: My name is Xavier. Thanks for last year present. This year I want to have Led lights, and a X box. Xavier, 10 yr.

ear Santa: I would like a PC for homework and games. I want a new overboard cause my other one broke. NBA jersey and NBA tickets and a new basketball hoof, because I dream to be a basketball player one day. I a pet dog and some blue, black and white Jordans and more shoes, and anime action figures, and for you to feed world hunger. Tyrone, 10 yr.

Dear Santa: My name is Sofia. I would like the new Oculus and Dinosaur plushies. Please give every homeless person a tent, jacket, warm pants, and boots. Sofia, 9 yr.

Dear Santa: Can you please give me tickets to the Cowboys game? Can I get a cede land jersey? Can I get a two story house? Can I get shoulder pads and a football helmet? Can I get a PS1 and PS2 plus a PS6? Can you give me a goal and drawn and a stanly cup and can the rangers win the World Series? Joseph, 9 yr.

Dear Santa: My name is Jesselyn and I have been very kind this year. I would like Marine Biologist Journal, and a new notebook. I would also be very grateful if you give my grandparents that have passed away a gift of their favorite item with a note that say "Merry Christmas" and with my name on where it says from, thanks! Jesselyn, 9 yr.

Dear Santa: Not trying to ask for much, but is it okay if you give me a go kart because when I see the neighbors kids on their go kart, I feel left out. Santa please give kids toys that don't have toys and I want soccer gloves. Madelyn. 9 yr.

## Mustangs Lose,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

half to NS's 17. By the time the Mustang's woke up to the buzz saw Duncanville offense they couldn't catch up, the game was out of reach. NS's defense held them to a mere 14 points in the second half. But that's like closing the barn door after the horse got out.

The Stang's offense sputtered throughout the game, mostly because the Duncanville coaches had their team well prepared and the team executed as planned. NS had too many turnovers and penalties to mount an affective comeback effort.

One of the bright spots of NS was by kicker Jonathan Soto a junior

who was perfect, kicking two extra points and two field goals. Both field goals were questioned for doing it when they were behind so much and inside the 25 yd line. Once with a 4th and 1 and another 4th and 4. Backseat coaching opinions were, "they should have tried for the first downs, doing so if successful could have brought the game within reach."

Stang's Touchdowns were made by D'Andre Hardeman, Christopher Barnes and Jaylen Bocard. Total rushing yards, Stang's 210 - Panthers 250, passing total yards, Stang's 239 - Panthers 288, first downs, Stang's 20 - Panthers 17. Passing



Junior Jonathan Soto kicks an extra point for NS. He was perfect in the kicking game, 2 extra points and 2 field goals. (Photo by Allan Jamail)

attempts and completions, Stang's QB junior Kaleb Bailey 19 - 26 & 1 interception. Panther's QB junior Keelon Russell 14 - 20 & no interceptions.

Linda Jamail statistician and photographer. Scoring by quarter:

	1	2	3	4	Final
Mustangs	7	10	3	13	33
Panthers	21	14	7	7	49

# Happy Holidays

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