

DATELINE

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Homecoming week celebrates Gator spirit back on campus

BY SHAHERYAR KHAN

Jampacked of busyness, midterms and deadlines have been on the mind of UHD Gators, but what better way to flaunt Gator Grit than UHD's annual homecoming, or better yet, D'Homecoming!

Homecoming is a way for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members to show pride and celebrate what it means to be a UHD Gator. It is a week-long event full of activities, great food, and a chance to meet the exceptional individuals on campus.

This year's homecoming theme was "D'Homecoming," which pays homage to the school's new motto, "Determined. Dedicated. Downtown."

Monday's events consisted of a campus-wide office decorating contest, where UHD offices had the chance to Gator up their spaces with "D'Homecoming 2021" as the theme.

All Gators were invited to the South Deck, where the Dean of Student's office organized the "President's BBQ." Gators were fed free food and drink from a local BBQ spot in Houston.

Once Gators were well fed, they had the chance to visit under the Sky-line Lounge and attend "Mum Making Frenzy," where Gators could showcase their creativity and make UHD mums.

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From left to right: Dean of Students Meritza Tamez, SGA President Shamika Jefferson, and Assistant Dean of Students Branston Harris distribute food at the President's BBQ. Credit: Shaheryar Khan.

National Night Out highlights UHD Police efforts

BY SHAHERYAR KHAN

October has been very eventful for Gators, with many events taking place on campus, since UHD has opened its doors again for students. The UHD Police Department hosted the annual National Night Out on the South Deck on campus on Oct. 5.

The event consisted of live music, many tables run by student organizations, free food and drinks, and a dunk tank, which allowed participants to get the chance to dunk UHDPD Lieutenant Trinity Delafance in water.

UHD President Loren Blanchard kicked off the

event by sharing a few words praising the admirable work of UHDPD.

National Night Out was an event meant for members of the Gator community to acknowledge the men and women in blue who are protecting us. Apart from that, Chief Casey Davis said that the event was "opportunity for us [UHDPD] to actually meet the members of the campus community, students and staff members and kind of show them what we have to offer."

Some things that UHDPD offers are police escorts.

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From left to right: Officer Jose, Corporal Raymond Jenkins, Chief Casey Davis, and Detective Deionne Jackson at the National Night Out event. Credit: Shaheryar Khan.



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FIND US ONLINE!

Multicultural Greek Center hosts Noche Latina

BY GEAN GARCIA

At UHD, the Multicultural Greek Center, now freed from the restraints of the COVID pandemic, resumed hosting its annual “Noche Latina,” (Spanish for Latin Night) party on the South Deck on Oct. 15.

Dressed in boots, cowboy hats, and torn-up blue jeans, students showed up to socialize, eat, and dance all evening long. Kappa Alpha Chi, UHD’s premier sorority, competed with

Sigma Kappa Omega, the Main Street Knights, in an all-out dance competition. Other clubs, such as Sexuality and Gender Alliance, also attended the event.

The party was meant to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, which runs every year from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15. Greek life also brought in a mechanical bull, which attracted students who were looking for a challenge. The beloved automated beast gave everyone a

run for their money. However, the photo booth was the more popular attraction, creating a line of students that went out the door.

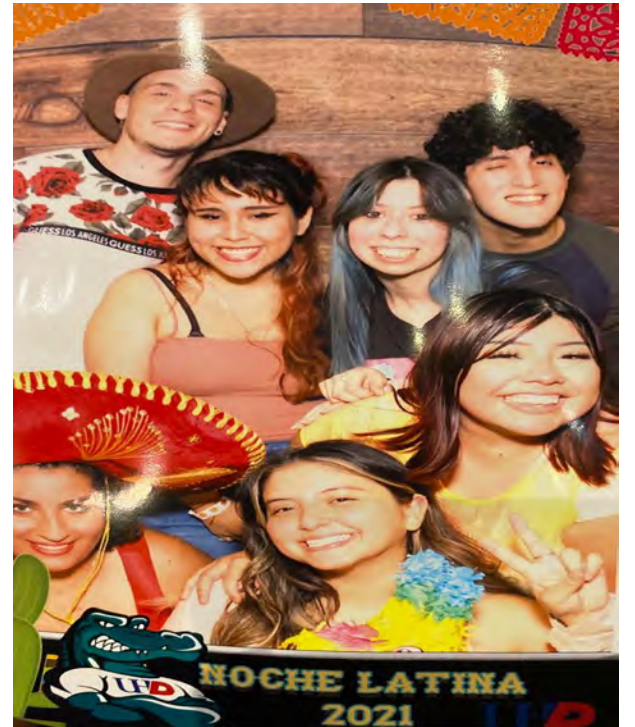
Unfortunately, the food and drinks were lacking. Some of the attendees said that the party had a “pizza party atmosphere” because of the lack of alcohol. Also, the food was not the best.

UHD Gator in attendance, Diana Ambrosio, said she wished the gathering was “more Latinx oriented”

by including Latin food and drinks.

“Instead of having sodas it would have been nice for there had been aguas frescas available,” Ambrosio said. “For food there are various Latin foods available that I would have been happy to see given out.”

Nevertheless, the party was a success, and it continued until midnight along Main Street.



A photo booth offered Gators a souvenir. Courtesy: Gean Garcia



People dance to the beat of Noche Latina on Oct. 15 at the South Deck. Credit: Gean Garcia



Gators got a chance to ride the mechanical bull at the event. Credit: Gean Garcia

UHD honors International Plain Language Day

BY MCKENZIE BREWER

Staring at a piece of document can give headaches even at first glance. Millions of people worldwide experience that moment of confusion trying to read a government document, business papers, newspapers or any other difficult text.

In 2010, former President Barack Obama enacted the Plain Writing Act. This

law requires federal agencies to write their documents into plain language, a historical act that almost went completely unknown by most people.

Every year the nation celebrates International Plain Language Day on Oct. 13 to not only demand more attention to plain language writing but also raise the importance of the Plain Writing Act. Thanks to this new

law, advocates make sure businesses and government institutions develop plain writing tools. That is why UHD participated in this year’s International Plain Language Day. Why is plain language so important? For starters, in the U.S., the national reading average of adults is only at an eighth-grade level. How are citizens supposed to understand new policies and business regula-

tions if they cannot even understand what half the document is saying?

Without the Plain Writing Act, most of the population would be left alone in the struggle to comprehend and read most government documents.

Plain language advocates say citizens have a right to accessible information. They say this is crucial to become properly informed

of what is going on in the country. Not only that, but plain language saves readers time and money. It is faster for a reader to read something clear and concise without stopping at every sentence to translate unknown words.

By demanding plain English writing, or in any language, readers can take advantage of the information they read and ask more in-depth questions.

Plain language saves readers from confusion, increases public participation with rule-making processes and political issues. So, the next time Oct. 13 comes around, remind the people around you of the importance of plain language and never stop demanding government agencies to adhere to one of the most essential laws put into action.

Lawyer shares advice, inspires Gators

BY DIANA AMBROSIO

UHD students had the pleasure of hearing a first-generation lawyer’s advice on Oct. 6. Fanny Turcios, associate attorney at Hartline Barger LLP, shared her story on being the child of an immigrant to becoming a successful attorney.

According to Turcios, her mother was a “cheerleader but not a guidance counselor.” As Turcios was growing up, she was never short a cheerleader, her mother. As a first-generation student, her mother was not able to help her in the ways she needed.

Turcios was looking for advice on applying to school, what school to apply to, what to study, and what career to enter. She was unsure as to

what she wanted to study and what to become.

First, she started as a biology student, but she thought about it more and examined how to use her degree. She even participated in research while at Texas A&M university and even asked questions to her optometrist about their career. She then realized that she wanted to help people not only medically but as well as emotionally.

While working at Shipley’s Donuts, she would have conversations with a frequent customer. This customer knew her situation about not knowing what she wanted to do, so the customer offered a job as a translator at the domestic violence shelter that they worked in.

While working at this non-profit

place, she experienced how much energy it was consuming, and she wanted to be on the more proactive side of this. The work of prosecutors piqued her interest, so she started looking for lawyers to shadow, intern, or get any experience at all.

While looking through the phonebook, she looked for the most Hispanic-sounding name and was lucky enough to find a mentor and mentorship. After getting some experience in this field, she knew that she wanted to continue her studies and make it her career.

If not from hearing Turcios story, then you would not know that she experiences imposter syndrome.

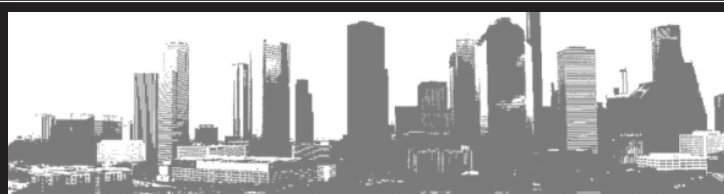
Imposter syndrome is the experience of self-doubt

and personal incompetence regardless of education, experience, and accomplishments. Many first-generation students experience it.

She had to push herself to fight through those feelings and be proud of herself. She still experiences these feelings at times but fights against them.

She wants everyone, especially first-generation students, to continue working towards their goal even if they are unsure what it may be. It is okay to go through university life with unsure thoughts of what you would like to be.

When the time comes, you will be able to figure it out and hopefully enjoy the path that you choose.



THE DATELINE

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Submission Policy

The Dateline staff consists of students from UHD who complete all tasks required to produce the newspaper, which serves all UHD campuses. The opinions and commentaries expressed within reflect the views of the contributing writers. No opinions expressed in The Dateline reflect the viewpoints of UHD, its administration, or students.

The Dateline reserves the right to edit or modify submissions for the sake of clarity, content, grammar, or space limitations. All submissions become property of The Dateline and may not be returned.

All paid writers must be currently enrolled students at UHD. All paid writers must also complete vendor registration with the University of Houston System prior to contributing.

Press releases, story ideas, news tips and suggestions are always welcomed. We encourage all students to contribute. Any student interested in joining The Dateline staff may request more detailed information sending an email to the editor Indira Zaldivar at editordatelinedowntown@gmail.com.

TURCIO'S 4 LAWS TO SUCCESS

1 Seek opportunity, don't wait for it to find you.

2 Lean on your network, your village.

3 Never stop growing. If you're not growing, you're dying.

4 Spend time outdoors

Credit: Indira Zaldivar

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Homecoming CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Monday ended with a volleyball match against current Gators versus UHD alumni, where the alumni won 3-1.

Tuesday was a little less busy with activities. UHD Sports and Fitness continues “Mum Making Frenzy,” for those who missed out or wanted to make more mums.

On Wednesday, Gators were treated with UHD’s version of the popular Fox television series “The Masked Singer,” as the Counseling Services hosted “Unmasked,” where UHD celebrities showcased their talented singing abilities.

Following “Unmasked,” Gator Pride Pep Rally went into full gear. Gators were treated to free food and showed school spirit by cheering and having fun in the process. The event featured appearances by club team members, coaches, and Sports and Fitness members.

Thursday kicked off with an event hosted by UHD Esports, called “Consoles and Kicks,” where Gators got the chance to meet the brilliant individuals from Esports, play some retro games, and check out some neat sneakers.

Following “Consoles and Kicks,” Gators

laughed all night at the Wilhelmina Cullen Robert’s Auditorium for UHD’s Comedy Showcase, hosted by Student Activities.

Friday was Noche Latina, hosted by the Multicultural Greek Council. It was a party along the Houston skyline as we continued to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. Gators enjoyed live music, free food, a mechanical bull, and a fun photo booth.

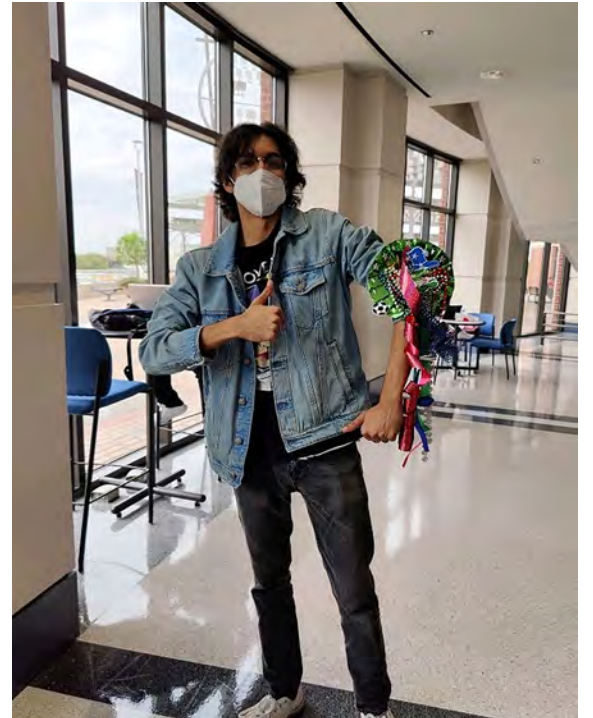
“Tail-Gating” was supposed to kick Saturday’s festivities but was canceled due to fear of weather implications. However, a food drive was continued, spon-

sored by Qatar Charity and the Houston Food Bank. What a fantastic way to end “D’Homecoming,” by showing what it means to be a UHD Gator and give back to the community.

To reflect, this year’s homecoming showed that no matter what issue we face, we are stronger together as a community, and we are all here for one another.

Gators have reached the halfway mark in this academic school year, so remember,

“We are, we are Gators, Gators! Fighting Red! Fighting Blue! Fighting White! BITE, BITE, BITE!”



Shaheryar Khan shows UHD school pride by making his first mum. Credit: Diana Ambrosio



UHD cheerleaders get the pep rally going at the North Deck. Credit: Edward Saenz



From left to right: Brian Garcia, Caterin Rivera, and Hadidja Talamumba enjoy the pep rally. Credit: Indira Zaldivar

National Night Out CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

This service is available to UHD students, staff, faculty, and visitors to ensure their safety, as they walk to their cars or different buildings. The police can either keep an eye out on you until you get to your vehicle, or they can physically escort, if you desire. Requests can be made at the Police Department in Suite N118.

Another service that UHDPD offers is motorist assistance.

UHDPD can assist students with any automotive assistance. Whether it be a battery jumpstart or if you happen to lock your keys in your car, an officer can assist you.

UPDPD is also offering a course for ladies on campus called Rape Aggression Defense System. This free course will instruct Gators “realistic tactics and techniques,” to defend themselves against uninvited encounters.

Classes will be Oct. 22, Oct.29, and Nov. 5, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

UHD is home to more than 15, 000 Gators and National Night Out was a momentous event which let students, faculty, staff, and members of the community meet the great people who are protecting us.

Davis says that he is immensely proud of the turnout of the event and that the department and himself wanted a

“way to say one say thank you and introduce ourselves to the campus community.” Future goals of UHDPD include getting a K-9 unit and hiring individuals with special weapons and tactics training. They would also like to partner with neighboring safety units, such as Harris County Sheriff’s Office, Metro Police Department, and Houston Fire Department.

For Gators on campus, it is essential to have these pieces of contact information in hand.

Non-Emergency: 713-221-8064 and on-Campus emergency: 713-221-8911.

If you see something suspicious, say something right away and contact the authorities. Stay safe Gators.



Courtesy: National Night Out official website.

Free groceries are available for Gators at UHD Food Market

BY SHAHERYAR KHAN

Being a college student is not easy. There are many things to consider, such as classes, living expenses, bills, to name a few, but worrying about food should not be one of those struggles.

That is what the UHD Food Market believes, and they have been feeding Gators since 2017.

Whether you are a full-time student or a part-time student, all students have the opportunity to get groceries on campus.

The market has water, pantry essentials, meat, and many more grocery items for students to choose from, all for free.

The goal of the UHD Food Market is to “alleviate the stress that comes with having food insecurities,” according to one of the students who work at the food market, Cristian Contreras.

The market is one of the most essential services UHD has to offer, but not many people are aware of the Food Market.

According to Contreras, the pandemic halted the traffic towards the Food Market drastically. Since many students are still choosing to learn virtually, many students are unfamiliar with the Food Market and many other useful services that UHD offers to the students.

Since students are returning to campus, it is essential to be aware of the UHD Food Market. Many students can take advantage of this service and spread awareness of their existence to someone who could benefit from receiving free groceries.

“It is a special feeling seeing students’ faces light up when they hear that they can take free groceries,” Contreras explains.

UHD Gators are not just students, they are parents, guardians, service workers, essential workers, front-line individuals, etc.

A student at UHD is not a traditional college student, and we should be proud to have Gator Grit.

It is wonderful to have a service on campus to help out students and to have one less thing to worry about, such as food on their tables.

The UHD Food Market is located on the second floor of the One Main Building in room S292, right next to the new Student Counseling offices.

You can make an appointment by checking your Gatormail for the link sent by UHD Food For Change and filling out the form. You can also find a link in the UHD Food Market’s Instagram page @ uhdfoodmarket. Also, you can visit the Food Market and scan the QR code that is displayed at the door.



Cristian Contreras (left) and Christiana Median (right) will welcome students to the Food Market. Credit: Shaheryar Khan

How food drives help reduce pandemic’s strain on family resources

BY ANONYMOUS

UHD partnered with Qatar Charity to distribute food to those who may need it on Oct. 16. Food distribution sites are essential, especially as of now, due to COVID-19.

Many people have been affected by the pandemic in numerous ways. My own family has been affected directly, for my father lost his job and has had trouble finding employment.

Being provided with food is an excel-

lent service and is appreciated by many. By giving food, it allows people to have one less thing to stress about.

I want more people to come and collect food or even spread the word. This food should go to homes than go to waste.

Even if you keep the box in your car and give the food out to homeless people, you may see that it goes a long way to help in any form. Even if you think about how they will cook it, homeless

people are very resourceful and will find a way.

The next time there is a food drive, feel free to come by and grab some food for yourself or others. And if you do not want any food, that is perfectly fine, as long as you spread the word and make it known to others that it is open to them, or people they might know are in need.



Some food items that were available for distribution at the food drive. Credit: Diana Ambrosio

Vanessa Guillen’s family still fight for bill to reform military

BY INDIRA ZALDIVAR

The family of former U.S. Army Specialist and native Houstonian Vanessa Guillen still fights to have legislation passed that would reform the way military handles sexual assault accusations.

Last year, the “I am Vanessa Guillen Act of 2020” was introduced in the House.

This bill aims to assign a third party to investigate sexual accusations in the military. Currently, the bill remains in limbo.

Typically, the military investigates itself when a member of the military files for sexual harassment.

Due to inaction from legislators, the Guillen family and their attorney tried a new strategy.

They are asking the public to ask lawmakers to attach the bill to a lar-

ger piece of legislation, the National Defense Authorization Act.

“It’s a smart legislative tactic to take a standalone bill like this and try to attach it to a giant must-pass bill. We have to fund the military and a bill like that is going to garner support,” Baylor University Professor Patrick Flavin told KXVV News.

The House passed its own version of the NDAA early in late September. The Senate is yet to write its own version.

While legislation is pending at the national level, the State Legislature has passed “The Vanessa Guillén Act,” which took effect on Sept. 1.

The new law covers the Texas Military Department, which oversees the Texas Army National Guard, the Texas Air National



Vanessa Guillen’s mural in Houston, Texas pays tribute to her life. Credit: Monica Gomez

Guard, and the Texas State Guard. This law makes the Texas Military Department establish a state sexual offense prevention and response program and

“employ or designate a state sexual offense response coordinator to perform victim advocacy services, including ensuring that victims of sexual assault or in-

decent assault received appropriate responsive care and understood the options available for reporting the assault.”

The program and sexual assault response

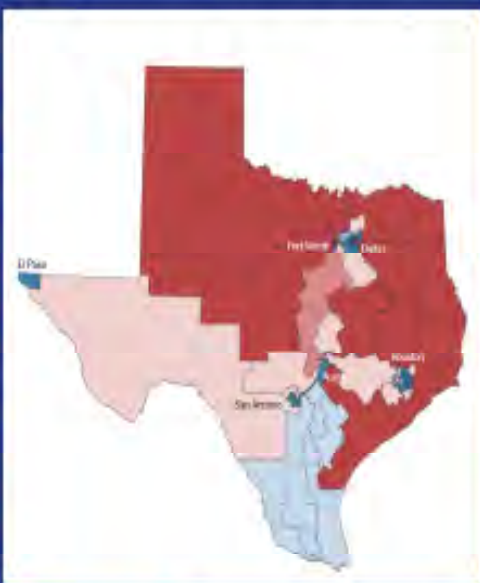
coordinator is allowed to exercise authority “independently from the department’s chain of command.”

CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING IN TEXAS



BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DATELINE

Current Districts



Proposed Redistricting



Texas grew by 3.9 million more people. Now the population is at 20,145,505.

Texas legislators will add a Republican district in Harris County, and a Democratic district in Austin.

Texas legislators will divide Dallas into larger rural areas. Latino votes increased in Dallas.

Photo courtesy of The New York Times

Credit: Giselle Oviedo

Annual women's march in Houston draws controversy

BY CAROLINA VALDEZ

More than 15,000 Houstonians gathered at Discovery Green for the Women's March on Oct. 2 to protest the new Texas abortion law. The crowd marched a mile from the park to City Hall for a rally organized by Houston Women March On, a nonprofit organization that holds annual marches since 2017. Despite the successful turnout and the spirit of the crowd, the Women's March in Houston was not without controversy.

Jasmine Roberts, a member of the Hoochies of Houston, expressed frustration at the Houston Women March On's choice of speakers.

"Today's Women's

March [was] very white-washed, and... not inclusive," Roberts said. "We're sitting here listening to privileged people talk to us about the problems that we're facing every day and it's [nonsense]."

She said the speakers can "afford to go fly out to some other state," unlike poor women. "I don't want to sit here in the rain and listen to white women or privileged rich people tell me about how they do not have access to abortion."

On Oct. 10, the Hoochies of Houston shared with the Houston Chronicle their experience as co-hosts of the march and reported that they felt "tokenized" by HWMO, as they were some of

the few women of color involved in the event.

The Hoochies of Houston alleged that their ideas in meetings following up to the march were dismissed and that a volunteer attempted to cut their speech short during the rally. They also told the Houston Chronicle that a volunteer publicist from HWMO said she was "not too concerned" about the lack of Spanish translators and transgender representation.

HWMO has since responded to the allegations of discrimination and released a statement on their website.

"We have encountered counter-protestors and criticism since we started marching together

in 2017, yet there are multiple disturbing and shocking elements to these recent attacks.

We're your local Houston-area neighbors. For nearly five years, we've reached out to people like you who care about working together for a more just, inclusive, and equitable Texas and America. Today, we ask you to stand up for truth in an increasingly toxic environment for the civic engagement we need for a healthy democracy."

Protestors arrived in the early morning hours, ready to march downtown with their signs and heavy hearts.

"I'm 68-years-old [and we're] doing this again?" Mary Sue McGovern, a protester, said.

"I'm so shocked and disappointed and saddened for [everyone] who has to struggle to make this choice. There's anger, disappointment... sadness, but there is also resolve, and we just have to keep doing this."

Despite her negative feelings towards the law, McGovern remains optimistic about the future.

"I look at young women, and I say 'you can do this!'"

The rally at City Hall featured speakers from across the country, like Padma Lakshmi and Gail Simmons, as well as local leaders Phyllis Frye, U.S. Rep. Al Green, U.S. Rep. Sylvia Garcia, and Mayor Sylvester Turner. In his speech, Turner criticized Gov. Greg Abbott's recent

string of new laws.

"We're dealing with voter suppression bills," Turner said. "We're dealing with the attack on transgender youth. We're dealing with now with the attack on women. There comes a time when Texas says no more!"

He closed his speech by declaring Oct. 2 as Women's Voter Registration Day in Houston.

Houston's first Women's March was on Jan. 21, 2017, as a sister march to the historic Women's March in Washington D.C. that set off a global protest. This historic event was in reaction to former President Donald Trump's inauguration, but it is now an annual march advocating for women's rights in cities across the country.



Marchers displayed signs in protest of the "heartbeat bill" on Oct. 2. Credit: Carolina Valdez



Demonstrators protest controversial Texas abortion law on Oct. 2. Credit: Carolina Valdez

Texas Secretary of State announces audit of 2020 elections

BY SERGIO PRESA

The Texas Secretary of State announced a forensic audit of the 2020 election in Texas. An audit of the election ensures that "Texas voters have confidence in the elections system."

Former President Donald Trump suggested Gov. Abbott should

order an audit, and the announcement of the audit followed a day later. There is not any evidence of widespread voter fraud in Texas, and Trump won the state by 5.5 percentage points in the 2020 election.

According to the Secretary of State's Office, the first phase of

the election audit will include looking for ineligible voters who cast ballots in 2020, testing the accuracy of voting machines and checking cybersecurity.

The office also said that part of the audit has already begun. The audit's second phase will consist of reviewing ballots, ballot

chain of custody, lists of registered voters, signatures, and much more from 2020's election.

Texas had a turnout of 66.73%, meaning 11,315,056 votes were cast in the state.

Out of those 11 million votes, Donald Trump received 5,890,347, while Joe Biden received 5,259,126.

Dallis, Harris, Tarrant, and Collin Counties were included in the audit. Three counties, Tarrant, Dallas, and Harris went to Biden.

Collin County went to Trump, although his margin of victory there was 4.6% in 2020 versus 16% in 2016. The state is not hiring external groups

to conduct the audit like Arizona did. Local officials have said the audit is a partisan move aiming to cast doubt on the election results.

Remembering Leticia Serrano, impacts of sex trafficking on individuals

BY EDWARD SAENZ

In 2017, 13-year-old Leticia “Letty” Serrano was drugged, kidnapped, and forced into human trafficking outside of her middle school by a man whom she knew. Two years later, she was found by police and her trafficker was taken into custody, but he was released a few days later.

“We got her back damaged,” Serrano’s grandmother Cynthia Rivera told ABC13.

Serrano took her own life just six months later, unable to get over the struggle of wanting to be with both her kidnapper and parents.

“Somehow her cries fell through the cracks, and I think that’s why it’s so imperative that we get the schools involved,” Dale told FOX 26. Now, two years later, Houston Police Department Commander



Memorial picture of Letty Serrano. Credit: ABC 13 NEWS

Jim Dale is looking to reopen the case.

Serrano’s case is not an isolated incident. The Department of Health and Human Services estimates that nearly 300,000 victims are trafficked each year in Texas alone.

Men, women, and children of all ages are targeted by human traffickers.

“It’s a very familiar story, unfortunately.

Entire cities are becoming red-light districts. It’s no longer just a centralized or isolated issue. It’s actually spreading across the nation,” Executive Director of Elijah Rising Micah Gamboa told ABC13.

Elijah Rising was started in 2012 by a small group of people who were looking to spread awareness on the rise of human

trafficking in Houston. The initiative aims to help men and women who were coerced into human trafficking. The program offers Awareness Van Tours that will give viewers a full overview of the landscape of human trafficking in Houston.

Elijah Rising goes as far as sending teams of volunteers out to the various red-light districts throughout

Houston, with the intent of intervening and stopping women before it is too late.

Red-light districts are concentrated areas where human trafficking tends to happen. These areas include bars, strip clubs, and adult theaters.

For individuals like Serrano, Elijah Rising offers “Restoration Campuses.” These are long-term shelter

programs where victims will receive care and counseling around the clock. The Texas Department of Health and Human Services features an entire section on its website on human trafficking. The Texas Human Trafficking Resource Center includes information on how to spot human trafficking in the act including physical and behavioral factors to notice.

In 2015, Houston became the first city in the U.S. to establish a full-time cabinet position to combat human trafficking in the city. The cabinet position was built to raise awareness of human trafficking in the city, expand on care services, resources, and work with the Houston PD Human Trafficking Task Force.

If you or someone you know has been impacted by sex trafficking, call 713-322-8000 for immediate help.

Six cyclists were hit by teenager, no arrests were made

BY EDWARD SAENZ

Six cyclists were run over by a 16-year-old driver in a pick-up truck in Waller County, Texas on Sept. 25. The cyclists were training for Ironman Texas, a triathlon event set to be held in April 2022. A triathlon is a 2.4-mile swim, straight into a 112-mile bike ride and ending with a 26.2-mile run.

The group, which consisted of eight cyclists in total, was well into a 70-mile ride down Old Highway 290 when the pickup truck began approaching them. As the truck approached, it began to “roll coal” on the cyclists.

“Rolling coal” is the practice of making modifications to a diesel engine to increase

the amount of soot exhaust fumes. Aggressive drivers will often dangerously accelerate near cyclists on roads to roll coal on them.

Fellow cyclist Will Ferrell witnessed the whole incident. As he was trailing behind, he witnessed the driver speed up towards the group of six cyclists who were ahead of him. Shortly after the driver began rolling coal on them and that’s when the driver ran into the cyclists.

“The reason he couldn’t stop is because he was accelerating to blow more diesel fuel on these cyclists, [so] he ended up hitting three people before his brakes even started,” Ferrell told Fox26 News.

Following the accident, the driver called

the police and paramedics. Two of the cyclists had to be airlifted to the hospital while the rest were moved in ambulances. No arrests were made and neither the driver nor cyclists were questioned. Bystanders who had witnessed the incident offered to give statements, but they were dismissed.

Three days after the incident Waller County PD issued a statement via Facebook stating that an investigation was underway.

“The Waller Police Department is currently investigating an incident that occurred on Saturday, September 25th, 2021. Waller Police Department is continuing their investigation and upon completion, will submit all information and generated reports to the

Waller County District Attorney’s Office for review.” The teenager’s attorney also released a statement.

“My client is a young man in high school with college aspirations. He is a new and inexperienced driver. Immediately after the accident, the police did an investigation at the scene. After their investigation, they decided not to charge my client and did not issue him a traffic ticket.”

Attorneys representing the cyclists say the injuries sustained from the incident range from broken bones and lacerations to severe brain and spinal injuries.

The incident sparked nationwide outrage over the driver not being arrested on-site. It put a spotlight

on Waller County and its continued mistreatment of cyclists. Earlier this year, in July, Victor Tome was sentenced to life in prison for intentionally running over and killing two cyclists in 2017.

The American Diabetes Association runs a yearly cycling marathon called Tour De Cure, in Waller County. The event is often plagued by issues stemming from the areas negative view of cyclists.

Year after year, the police do not assist with closing roads properly, nor are the roads marked to notify drivers of cyclists, leading to many cyclists being scared off the road due to reckless drivers. In 2018 the signs that were meant to mark the route were destroyed,

causing cyclists to get lost and not be able to complete the marathon.

“This case was not handled appropriately by the investigating agency. PERIOD. Despite being encouraged by the Texas Department of Public Safety to treat the scene as a crime scene and to contact the D.A.’s Office for advice on how to proceed, the investigating agency chose not to do so,” Waller County District Attorney Elton Mathis said via a statement via Facebook two weeks after the incident.

The Waller County Police Department is set to hand over the case to the Waller County DA’s Office, which intends to hand the case to a Grand Jury.

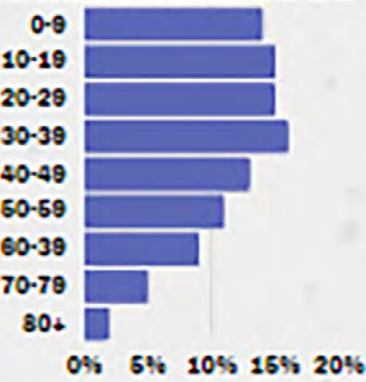
HARRIS COUNTY 2020 CENSUS



Population: 4,731,145

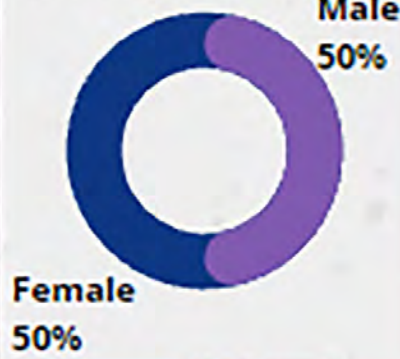
The population increased by 620,149 since the 2010 Census.

Age percentages



The largest age group is 30-39, make up 16% of the population.

Gender



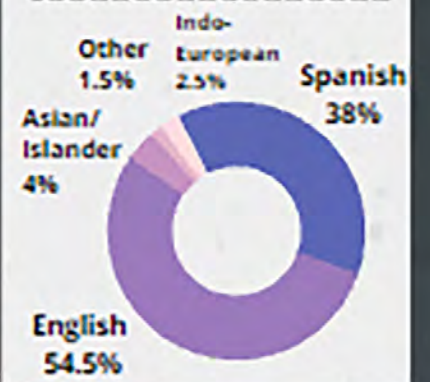
Gender distribution is equal.

Ethnicity and Race



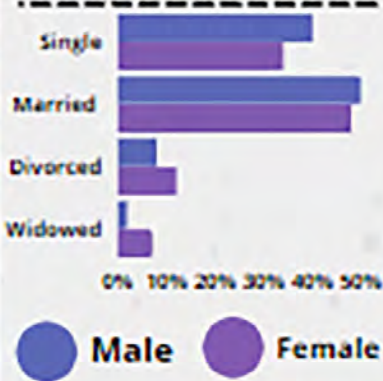
The leading ethnicity and race in Harris County are Hispanic and White people.

Language



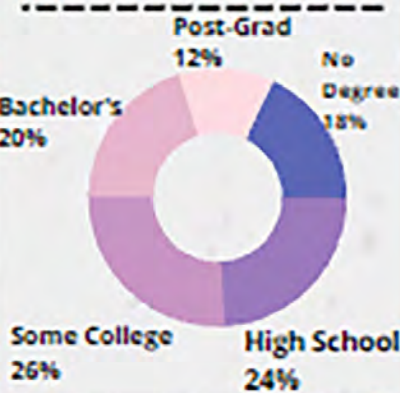
English and Spanish are the most spoken.

Marital Status



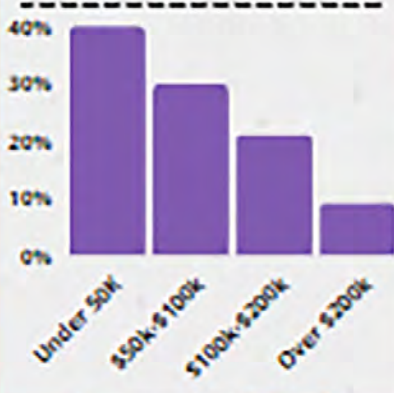
Married is the most abundant marital status for both males and females.

Educational Attainment



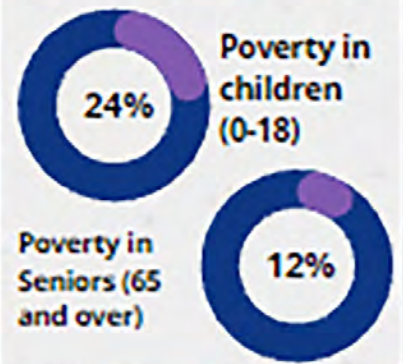
Most Harris County residents have attained "Some College" education.

Household income



Most residents are making under \$50k a year.

Poverty line



Children are twice as likely to be poor than seniors.

Brought to you by The Dateline

MLB's salary cap may cost Astros their star shortstop

BY SAM KROH

Carlos Correa hit a monster homerun in the bottom of the eighth inning, giving the Astros a 6-3 lead on Oct. 3. In the ninth inning, Correa was benched by Dusty Baker. However, before Correa could head to the locker room, the crowd gave him a standing ovation.

The Houston Astros shortstop may have played his last regular season game, and fans wanted him to know how much they have loved him.

Correa's contract will be up at the end of the 2021 season and teams have already begun to show interest in him. Some of these teams, like the Detroit Tigers, need a shortstop, while other teams, like the New York Yankees, don't.

The Astros will struggle to compete with the offers from these top teams.

The MLB has a fundamental problem with its monetary views. With no salary cap in place, this locks teams in by limiting their ability to sign players.

For example, a lower earning team like the Cleveland Indians

cannot afford to offer big names the contracts they deserve, while a team like the Yankees can easily throw money at players like Correa when they have multiple players who can play well at the shortstop position.

Right now, the four teams that top the payroll market are the Los Angeles Dodgers, the New York Yankees, the New York Mets, and the Houston Astros.

The Dodgers come in at first on that list with a 26-man payroll of \$205,649,274, enabling them to easily sign big name players.

Just this year the Dodgers were able to trade for Max Scherzer, who is arguably the best pitcher in the MLB right now. Scherzer is holding a 2.64 ERA (earned run average) for the 2022 season and a WHIP (walks and hits per innings pitched) of .864. To put these numbers in perspective, a normal ERA in MLB is somewhere around 3.00 and a normal WHIP is around 1.50.

So how can teams like the Dodgers and the Yankees afford to keep signing players like this? It's because they have the most

money awarded to their organizations.

Teams like the Pittsburgh Pirates and the Cleveland Indians, who come in last on the payroll list, have no opportunity to compete because of the lack of money they are allotted.

If teams can't sign players that have great talent or can't trade for players because money is holding them back, then those teams will be stuck in playoff droughts for a long time.

The only team to challenge this idea was the 2002 Oakland A's. The A's figured out a way around the salary problem. Instead of looking for big name players, they looked for players who could get on base. These types of players would be cheap to sign since no other teams were looking at them.

The A's ended up with a record of 103-59 and won the division. They had a 20-game win streak in the same season but ended up losing in the second round of playoffs that year. They had players that could get on base, but they lacked players with experience. That's where the big money

comes into play.

Big money attracts big names. For example, the Philadelphia Phillies right fielder Bryce Harper was traded from the Washington Nationals in 2019 for \$30 million. Recently, former ace for the Houston Astros Gerrit Cole accepted a trade to the Yankees for more money than the Astros could compete with.

The main problem MLB has is that it's impossible to compete with top teams like the Yankees or the Dodgers

because of the salary that they are granted.

The Yankees and Dodgers can afford to sign and keep anyone they want because they have the money. Whereas teams like the Pirates have to scrape the bottom of the barrel for players that only might work out in the majors.

Houston will have a hard time retaining their star shortstop for the 2022 season since the Astros have a 26-man payroll of just \$145,127,725.

With having to pay players like Jose Altuve, Yordan Alvarez, Michael Brantley, and Zack Greinke, it will be hard to pay Correa what he deserves.

Correa will be playing in the 2021 post-season, but that may be the last we see of the star shortstop at Minute Maid Park.



Houston Astros shortstop Carlos Correa. Courtesy: Tim Warner

Duo Security protects but could be less annoying

BY AANSA USMANI

Earlier this year, UHD implemented Duo Security, a two-step authentication process to combat security issues surrounding one's university login for students and faculty members. Although the authentication program has significantly decreased security breaches and hacking risks, its processes can sometimes be a handful.

I want to make

one thing clear. I am in favor of additional security measures. With the online world becoming more susceptible to hacking, doxing, and other forms of malicious methods, it is crucial that strict cybersecurity protocols be implemented. What is frustrating, however, is how often one needs to prove themselves with Duo Security.

For example, when accessing Lockdown

Browser or Respondus, a user needs to re-authenticate Duo Security, even if the "remember me for 30 days" box is checked. If a user has previously used the same device for the program, why should there be another pop-up? If it is stated to remember the user for 30 days, why not adhere to that decision?

The other issue I have is the requirement of having a phone log-

in. Sergio Presa Jr. also agrees with this notion.

"I need my phone to log in to anything," Presa said. "If I don't have it on me, I'm locked out completely."

As our world becomes more connected, our phones have become more necessary within our lives. However, logging on to Blackboard or other UHD-based login portals becomes virtually impossible if we do not

have our phones on us. A solution to the Duo Security protocol will be to acknowledge the user's selected choice to "remember them for 30 days." That way, it can help one access resources more quickly and sign on to other essential programs.

Another would be to allow authentication via university email. If for some reason, someone cannot access their phone due to proximity

or it is merely acting up, email should be a secondary option. Many of us have access to our inboxes, and we can just as easily use it to re-authenticate if necessary.

If Duo Security was to remain with the university's login protocol, implementing these solutions would make it easier for many of us to log in.

Dateline sports writer predicts MLB postseason

Editor's note: We asked our sports writer to predict the outcome of the postseason matchups after the Wild Card games.

BY SAM KROH

The 2021 MLB postseason began Oct. 5 with the first of two Wild Card games. This postseason is set to be an explosive one. After a year of COVID-19 impacting the world, the MLB is back to

a regular 162 games. These are my predictions for the season.

National League Championship Series

The Dodgers have extended their season for at least another 4 games and will face the Atlanta Braves. These two teams met last year in the NLCS so the Braves may seek revenge on the Dodgers who knocked them out in the 2020 postseason. The Braves will have

home field advantage for the matchup. The Dodgers had a better record than the Braves, but because the Dodgers came into the postseason as a Wild Card, they are not allowed to get home field advantage. I see the Dodgers winning the series 4-2.

American League Championship Series

The Astros will face the Boston Red Sox. Both have been hard hitting teams but Hous-

ton has a more dangerous lineup. When these two teams met in the regular season, it proved to be a tough match for both. However, the Astros have everything to prove so look to see them win 4-3.

World Series

The Dodgers and Astros will meet once again in what should be an explosive series. In 2017, the Astros beat the Dodgers 4-3. How-

ever, they were found out to have cheated during the 2017 season. The Dodgers have shown their hatred for the Astros quite openly this year.

When these two teams met during the regular season, fights broke out in the stands, beer was thrown onto the field, and fans had to be escorted out of

the stadium along with many other atrocities. However, the Astros will have home field advantage for the World Series. I think this series will go the full seven games with the Astros winning again 4-3.



Credit: Giselle Oviedo

Credit: Giselle Oviedo

Credit: Giselle Oviedo

Vice president, mostly absent, disappoints on expectations

BY GEAN GARCIA

Former California Attorney General Kamala Harris has served as the 49th vice president of the U.S. since Jan. 20. However, people have seen very little of her so far.

Vice President Harris ran with President Joseph Biden on a campaign of racial justice and COVID-19 control in 2020. By encouraging Americans to get

vaccinated and pushing for the George Floyd Act, Harris has delivered on these promises.

However, since Biden and Harris took office there have been other crises such as Biden's botched withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan, Hurricanes Ida and Nicholas hammering the Gulf Coast, and the surge of Haitian migrants at the U.S.-Mex-

ico border. Despite having very few duties, Harris has remained silent or has said very little about these issues.

"We are going to the border. We've been to the border," Harris told MSNBC reporter Lester Holt.

"You haven't been to the border," Holt corrected.

"And I haven't been to Europe," Kamala responded, laughing

in his face. "I mean, I don't understand the point that you're making."

The point Lester was making was that Harris needs to be doing more.

Biden and Harris ran on a ticket of companionship, but Harris seems invisible. Where is she?

Despite her absenteeism, Harris is not without her merit. She

is the first woman of color to make it to the executive office, an unbelievable feat even 20 years ago. But aside from ticking off a few diversity boxes, it is not clear what she brings to the table.

Sure, she gets fiery and impassioned while giving a political speech, but where was she during Afghanistan? Where was she during Hurricanes Ida and

Nicholas? Why is she not handling the border crisis, leaving Gov. Greg Abbott to deal with it himself? So far, the American people are not impressed.

We demand transparency and visibility from our elected officials, not invisible absenteeism.

China is right - restrict minors' access to video games

BY EDWARD SAENZ

In late August, China announced a new restrictive law on gaming time for minors. This law limits minors to just three hours of video game time on the weekends.

The Chinese government passed the law to help stop the growing obsession with video games, which Chinese media call the “opium of the mind.”

Before this, children under the age of 18 were already limited to 90 minutes of game time on weekdays and three hours on weekends.

The law's announcement did not go over well on social media. The vast majority of gaming personalities criticized the law.

Researchers and parents commented that this law was too restrictive and is not going to stop kids from playing video games. I

disagree. While I will concede the specific time frame given is incredibly restrictive, and it remains to be seen if this law will even affect the amount of game time, video games should be restricted for anyone still in grade school.

Growing up, my parents kept my video game time on a tight leash. I only had them on weekends. For most of grade school, they would come into my room Sunday night and take the controllers away.

As I got older, I would bring my parents the controllers. By the time I was in high school, I just knew not to touch the controllers, regardless of them being in my room.

My parents taught me moderation and self-control, something most other gamers failed to learn growing up.

Throughout college, I saw several of my

classmates not doing work in favor of playing video games. It would lead to them having to drop out of classes.

In a few unfortunate cases, I watched close friends get kicked out of school and even their homes because of their obsession.

Being raised the way I was, painted my unique view on my favorite hobby. This was never more apparent than in July 2020.

During an episode of the popular “Joe Rogan Experience” podcast, Joe Rogan said: “video games are fun as [explicit] but a waste of time.”

Even the heaviest anti-gaming advocates would find that statement a reasonable take. However, the gaming community reacted in anger towards the off-hand comment.

While a minority of the comments to Rogan carried interesting counterpoints, the

majority were stating abject opinions as facts and attempting to degrade Rogan for a meaningless comment.

I couldn't understand the comments I was seeing. I thought we all knew games were a waste of time.

Avid followers of the “Joe Rogan Experience” will know that Rogan is a self-expressed video game addict. On multiple occasions, he has talked about his love and outright obsession with video games. It got so bad that at one point he threw his computer out the window.

Many of Rogan's guests have been avid gamers. Rogan has even brought on popular gaming personalities, such as professional Counter-Strike players Jordan Gilbert and John Carmack, the creators of the video game Quake.

While I do agree that the specifics of the new China law are very

restrictive, I do believe that video game time, especially with minors, needs to be controlled more. The question is, how?

In countries such as South Korea and China, citizens use their Social Security numbers to make all online accounts, something I can only imagine would be met with extreme backlash here.

The obvious answer is the parents should do it. The number of parents blaming violence on video games should tell you that it is not happening anytime soon. So, how about the video game developers?

A popular online game called MapleStory, a 2D side-scroller created by South Korean company Nexon, may have had the answer. To date, it is the only game I know of that ever implemented a feature to limit game time.

If you were logged in for eight hours straight, the game would log you out and would not let you log in for 12 hours. However, this was easily circumvented by just logging out and logging back in, which would reset the timer. As of October 2021, this feature is no longer in the game.

This entire problem falls onto parental control. Gaming culture is more prevalent and accepted than ever.

With the rise of Twitch and YouTube, and the ability to make a living playing video games, parents should pay more attention to when and how much they let their kids play video games.

The actual answer is really simple, do what my parents did. Take the controllers away during the week.



Credit: Edward Saenz

It's time for radical reform in the Roman Catholic Church

BY SHAWN AWAGU

The Roman Catholic Church is grappling with many serious issues: critical shortages of priests, declining membership and attendance, and fracturing over politics. But few among these crises damage the image of the Church as much as its failure to adequately tackle sex abuse, particularly child sex abuse.

As reported by the BBC this month, the Independent Commission on Sexual Abuse in the Roman Catholic Church estimated that since the 1950s, more than 216,000 children had been sexually abused by clergy in the French Catholic Church.

The Commission extensively documented eyewitness reports and experiences of 2,700 victims—nearly 200 harrowing pages. President of the Commission Jean-Marc Sauvé noted in a press conference with reporters that “there was a whole bunch of negligence, of deficiency, of silence, an institutional cover-up” with, until re-

cently, “deep, total, and even cruel indifference” to victims. Clearly, something is very, very wrong.

The Commission’s report makes dozens of recommendations, many of which are outside the scope of this article due to the complex nature of the crisis. However, its 11th recommendation states that the church should “closely examine in what ways the paradoxical obsession of Catholic morality on issues of sexuality could be counterproductive in the fight against sex abuse.” But what does this mean?

Broadly, the RCC’s theology of the body places emphasis on God’s creation of dual sexes in the Garden of Eden. In it, Adam was placed over his wife Eve as head of the family, while Eve was assigned the role of servant and mother with each role regarded as sacred. But with this particular premise, many other conclusions necessarily follow, which the report makes reference to.

It is no secret that the RCC has been grappling with its stance towards same-sex attraction. Some, including the current Pope Francis, have adopted a more non-judgmental attitude. However, as I was reminded in Mass this past Sunday, many still equate same-sex attraction with “the temptation of Satan” or “perversions of God’s image.” Who, then, is blamed for the male victims of child sex abuse in the church?

The RCC places blame on those who have “succumbed to the gay lifestyle,” with the sinister linking of same-sex attraction to pedophilia. To be blunt, this is false and a cop-out. Not only is this a damaging assertion to make of the LGBTQ+ community, this kind of thinking is exactly what opens the gate to the church forcing victims to “forgive abusers” and encourages the kind of silence and negligence found in the Commission’s report.

First, by making sex abuse a moral failing, it is actively prevent-

ing non-moral and non-spiritual solutions from being pursued. The RCC prays for an abuser’s soul and metaphorically slaps them on the wrist instead of setting up a robust abuse reporting system and referring abusers to the criminal justice system.

Second, it scapegoats the Catholic gay community by, incredulously, holding them responsible for the actions of sex abusers. This only serves to protect abusers and deeply harm an already persecuted community.

Lastly, it perpetuates myths about sexuality in a culture already largely ignorant of the actual experiences of the LGBTQ+ community and science-based analyses of human sexuality. Indeed, a new understanding of the theology of the body is needed if the RCC wants to comprehensively tackle sex abuse. Human beings are infinitely complex creatures. Sexuality is one aspect that nearly all experience in one form or another,

whether it be through bodily functions, sexual activity, shared experiences, or fundamental constructions of identity. If, within all of this diversity, one reduces sexuality to a duality of man and woman, it is inevitable that parishioners and churchgoers are presented with a fundamental choice: conform or suffer eternal separation from God in the afterlife.

Would the average person really choose the latter? Common sense would say no, which forces an untold number of people into suffering or turning away from the church entirely. Why is the RCC saying that people of certain sexualities are not worthy of God’s love and salvation? That is a question for internal theological debate within the church.

I remember my first attendance at the Archdiocesan Youth Conference. I was questioning everything in my life: who I was, how my past fit with my future, and my purpose in life. All of these questions swirled in my mind as

we prepared for worship ceremonies. Then, I heard the call during the ceremony, “Come as you are, broken and all.”

The people around me, my friends and our chaperones, embodied this call-to-action every step of the way listening to our stories, faults, edges and whispered secrets with compassion and non-judgment. It changed me for the better. Even though I personally no longer believe, I couldn’t have come this far without those moments.

Acceptance is an indescribably powerful thing, and I would not be where I am now without having been accepted by the Catholic church. However, I am not a member of the LGBTQ+ community; I have never needed to hold back any part of myself to be accepted in this regard.

The church needs to reconcile what it is doing by rejecting people. In the form of startlingly frequent sex abuse scandals, the consequences of its theology is plainly evident.



@FilbertCartoons

Courtesy: Anthony Labonte



Reviews

'Lamb' elicits kaleidoscope of beautifully disturbing emotions

BY JAMES JUREWICZ

A24 once again manages to make a film that is equal parts entrancing and disturbing with 2021's "Lamb." Set and shot in Iceland, it is a fantasy horror with English subtitles.

The film takes place on a sheep farm owned and operated by the middle-aged couple Maria, (Noomi Rapace) and Ingvar (Hilmir Snær Guðnason).

When one of their sheep births a lamb that is half human, the couple decide to keep and raise her as a daughter who they name Ada.

The non-verbal Ada is the missing piece to the couple's life. Ada watches television, eats human food and even sits at the dinner

table. The lamb also bonds with the family dog and cat who accept Ada as a member of the family. Ada's mother is constantly bleating and crying out for her and sits outside the window where Ada's crib is kept. Maria is deeply disturbed by this development. The film reveals that Maria and Ingvar had a daughter named Ada who died during childbirth.

Their happy life is further complicated by Ingvar's troublesome brother Petur, (Björn Hlynur Haraldsson). Petur stays with his brother and sister-in-law regularly and helps them with the daily chores on the farm as compensation for his room and board.

Rapace is brilliant as Maria. Audiences should recognize Rapace who starred in "Prometheus" and appeared in the Netflix film "Bright." Rapace conveys deep emotion without speaking a word. Just a long glance out the window is enough for Rapace to convey how her character is feeling.

Haraldsson offers a multifaceted performance in his portrayal of Ingvar's Brother Petur. Petur offers an outside perspective and asks the question every audience member is pondering.

What is going on here? What is this "thing" you are feeding spaghetti to? Why is it dressed in denim

overalls? At first, Petur is repulsed by the sight of Ada and continually refers to her as an animal to Ingvar. When he is caught feeding Ada some grass, he is finally told by Ingvar that if he wants to stay, he needs to accept her as a niece and Ingvar and Maria's daughter.

Director Valdimar Jóhannsson cowrote the film with Icelandic novelist Sigurjón Birgir Sigurðsson. The story they crafted is beautifully disturbing.

The unpredictability and originality of the plot are some of the film's major strengths. "Lamb" is a film that will linger in the viewers psyche for days.

What constitutes a happy family? "Lamb"

addresses this question and touches on tragic loss and healing as well. Lamb also questions the nature of humanity. When Petur bluntly asks his brother "what is this?" Referring to the situation of the hybrid lamb, Ingvar responds in one word, "Happiness."

Isolation also plays a significant role in the film. The family farm is far removed from any signs of civilization. The plot would not work in a crowded city or even a small town.

"Lamb" elicits a kaleidoscope of emotions. From scene to scene, the mood shifts. For example, the adults enjoy some cocktails and music in one scene. Everything is peaceful; the

mood is relaxed. Then offscreen, by some unseen force, the family dog is brutally killed, to which Ada bears witness. Something primal has been watching the small family from the steep cliffs overlooking the sheep farm.

Lamb is the best A24 horror movie since 2019's "Midsommar."

The performances of the actors are convincing and genuine. Jóhannsson delivers a film of peaceful mirth coupled with dreadful despair.

The shots of the Icelandic landscape are beautiful and haunting. The folktale "Lamb" is sure to ascend quickly to cult classic status and will be labeled a must-see for horror fans.

'Venom 2' tops first movie with comical, action-packed romp

BY JAMES JUREWICZ

"Venom 2: Let There Be Carnage" is a 2021 Marvel superhero action movie released on Oct. 1. Director Andy Serkis delivers a great sequel topping the 2018 film, "Venom." Tom Hardy and Woody Harrelson both anchor an enjoyable and action-packed superhero romp.

For the unfamiliar, "Venom" is a Marvel Comic creation and one of Spider Man's Rogues Gallery.

In the '90s, Venom became an anti-hero like Wolverine or Spawn. Comic book artist and entrepreneur Todd McFarlane created Spawn and he also designed Venom's appearance. Both characters look similar with a black and white color scheme. In the film, Venom is the carnivorous,

symbiotic alien creature that physically bonds with journalist Eddie Brock (Tom Brady). Brock is enhanced with super strength invulnerability through his alien passenger.

Venom loves chocolate and fried potatoes. He unfortunately also enjoys biting the heads off any deserving individuals. Brock uses Venom for positive change in his neighborhood and focuses Venom's insatiable appetite on evil people, who seem to be attracted to the human/alien symbiote.

When Brock/Venom discover the location of the victims of serial killer Cletus Kasady (Woody Harrelson) the fallout results in Cletus receiving the death sentence. During the execution, Brock inadvertently infects Cletus with a power-

ful symbiote. Cletus escapes death with the help of the symbiotic infection named Carnage. Brock and Venom are the only ones who can stop the bloodshed.

A red-wigged Woody Harrelson brings a maniacal charisma to his portrayal of the film's villain. The actor chews the scenery like calamari. Serial killer Cletus Cassidy is an example of Woody going full Harrelson, and he holds nothing back. Carnage is a bloodthirsty alien and Cletus generously feeds the beast.

Cletus reunites with the love of his life Shriek/Frances Barrison (Naomie Harris). Also, a super villain, Shriek can scream loud enough to inflict serious bodily harm to others. In the first "Venom," Riz Ahmed did his best to

inject life into his performance as the villain, yet his Carlton Drake was written as whiny and un-intimidating.

"Venom 2" is different; Cletus is scary. Woody Harrelson's red wig was mocked in his post credits stinger in the first "Venom" film. After a haircut, and a symbiotic infection, Harrelson's character offers Brock and Venom a true threat.

Serkis is well known for his talented motion capture work in cinema. Serkis brought a classic literary character to life in Golem for "The Lord of the Rings" in the early '00s and did the motion capture movements for Peter Jackson's "King Kong" in '05. Serkis understands the intricacies of digital effects and motion capture as well as anyone.

This is a contributing factor to the movie's success. Hiring Serkis was a savvy studio move.

"Venom 2" is one of those rare sequels that is better than the original film. Unlike the first film, "Venom 2" is funny. The audience was laughing throughout the 97-minute thrill ride. "Venom 2" also avoids the repetitive trap many superhero films commit. The action is entertaining and different and not just a rehash of the original film.

Superhero action films often contain tired motifs and predictable plots. "Venom 2" is far from predictable. It is refreshing. The pacing of the action keeps the audience engaged and the movie never lags or slows. Woody Harrelson is a hoot. The film

plays so quickly that the end comes as a surprise. During the longer Superhero movies, the finale sometimes cannot come soon enough.

"Venom 2" is worth watching, more so than the original. Stay seated through the credits for a single post credits scene. There are important plot points regarding the Marvel Universe in the scene that are not to be missed.

This is not the audience sitting through 15 minutes of credits for a main character to metaphorically wink at the audience. Looking at you "Spider-Man Homecoming."

"Venom 2" is now playing only in movie theaters.

Reviews

'Blue Bayou' illustrates deportation's toll on families

BY JAMES JUREWICZ

"Blue Bayou" is an independent drama film released on Sept. 17. Blue Bayou is the story of a happy family threatened by deportation.

Writer and Director Justin Chon closely based the film on the real-life experiences of American foreign-born adoptees.

The Roy Orbison song "Blue Bayou" is featured in the film and inspired the title. "Blue Bayou" was also an official Cannes selection this year.

Chon stars as the complicated and troubled Antonio Leblanc. Chon delivers a performance that is genuine and endearing. Rooting for Antonio is easy due to his charming southern laid-back demeanor.

Unfortunately, the character cannot seem to get out of his own way. He was adopted from South Korea as a baby by parents from the New Orleans area. As an adult, he keeps no contact with his parents who only offered him a childhood of domestic abuse. His status as a two-time, non-violent felon keeps him from landing decent and stable employment so he works part time as a tattoo artist.

Antonio's wife Kathy is played by Oscar winner Alicia Vikander and the Swedish actor mimics a Louisiana accent impeccably.

Antonio is a caring stepfather for Kathy's daughter Jessie played by Sydney Kowalske. While shopping at the local grocery store, Antonio is the victim of police brutality and unjustly arrested.

While in ICE custody Antonio discovers that his American citizenship is nonexistent due to the negligence of his abusive adopted parents. They never went through the proper channels of the Child Citizenship Act of 2000 in order to naturalize him.

Antonio faces the decision to go back to South Korea and start the process of legal immigration or, at the risk of permanent deportation, he can attempt an appeal.

Lin Dan Pham portrays a genial woman named Parker who Antonio befriends. Parker acts as an emotional center for Antonio.

She is a Vietnamese refugee herself. Their similar experiences made them both kindred spirits. She understands him better than anyone else in the film. Antonio displays questionable behavior that

continually threatens to sabotage his status and situation.

Early in the film Antonio allows Jessie to use a tattoo gun on himself and his customers at work. Later in the film, Antonio commits a felony level motorcycle robbery to acquire money for his lawyer to appeal.

"Blue Bayou" is about adoption, immigration, and naturalization. Consulting with adoptees and attorneys directly helped Chon craft and shape his script and characters, making the film as realistically accurate as possible.

"I am not an adoptee; it's not my story," Chon told The Hollywood Reporter. "I hope I did them some sort of justice and brought some sort of authenticity to their experience."

Immigration and naturalization are heavy topics that currently need more mainstream attention in the U.S.

Thousands of people living in America are affected by the possibility and fear of deportation. The film ends with pictures of actual adopted naturalized immigrants who experienced the same issue that Chon's

character does. These are real people, not just characters, adding to the emotional weight of the film. Deportation regularly happens to undeserving American people.

There is an ethereal and dreamlike quality in the cinematography for "Blue Bayou." The film has a heavy independent feel that contributes to the realism.

Interspersed in the film are flashbacks of Parker and Antonio as children in Korea and Vietnam. Water is a common theme and appropriate due to the New Orleans setting.

Believable characters, acting and dialogue are some of the major strengths of "Blue Bayou."

The film was a well-crafted drama and deserves recognition.

Chon's excellent writing and directing pulls the viewer into the humid swamps of Louisiana to experience the story.

"Blue Bayou" is available in theaters and to rent for video on demand.



Sydney Kowalske as "Jessie", Justin Chon as "Antonio" and Alicia Vikander as "Kathy" in "Blue Bayou." Courtesy: Focus Features

'Happier Than Ever' tells heartbroken Billie Eilish fans to move on

BY SAVANNAH MIMS

Billie Eilish's romantic dilemmas shine in her newest album "Happier Than Ever," released in July. It includes heart wrenching, personal songs, the kind Eilish is known for, and throws blunt and obvious jabs

at those who have offended her in the past.

This album's success has earned her a spot as the youngest artist ever to headline the Glastonbury Music Festival in 2022 following her "Happier Than Ever" tour that will take place over the

course of the next several months in Europe and select U.S. states.

The titular song "Happier Than Ever" has Eilish's signature somber, melodic tone and possibly refers to a relationship with an older individual that had a substance addiction of

some sort. The lyrics "drunk in your Benz driving home under the influence" allude to this possibility.

Another well-written song by the Grammy-award winning artist on the album is "Getting Older." It reflects the mature

nature of the album and Eilish herself. This song has a minimalistic sound to it which allows her voice to truly shine through while letting the mature lyrics carry the song. With a simple and slow beat, this song truly sets the tone of the album. The

album overall attests to Eilish's personal growth and her growth in the music industry as she continues her career.

The album is available on multiple streaming platforms and stores across the nation.

Nostalgic movies to watch during Halloween

BY JEMA PANTOJA

October brings crisp fall weather, candy corn, the return of pumpkin spice lattes, and of course spooky season. There are hundreds of scary Halloween movies that have been produced but only a few can be called classics.

“Hocus Pocus” (1993) is ironically a child-friendly movie. The comical tale takes place in Salem, Massachusetts on Halloween night. A plucky trio, Max, his sister Dani, and high school crush Allison, fight to defeat three witches, the Sanderson sisters. This magical and charming movie has withstood the test of time and remains a family favorite to watch during the Halloween season.

“Nightmare Before Christmas” (1993) is another cult classic

along with a cult following. There is much debate whether or not Tim Burton’s whimsical animated movie is a Halloween or Christmas movie. Regardless, the movie is perfect to watch every year from October through December.

“The Addams Family” (1991) is an iconic update from the 1960s TV show featuring a bizarre aristocratic family whose values are anything but ordinary. This monster-themed movie is filled with quirky comedy, witty dialogue, and ghoulish adventures. It is no wonder this beloved family keeps getting updated and remade.

“Beetlejuice” (1988) is a movie that makes the living seem like villains and the recently deceased simp-

ly misunderstood. This oddball film is about a pair of ghosts that tries to scare away the family that moved into their family after they passed away due to a car accident. This Tim Burton masterpiece is sure to put you into the Halloween holiday spirit.

“It’s the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown” (1966) might not be the scariest Halloween pick, but it is one that the whole family can enjoy and feel nostalgic. There is a reason why this Charlie Brown classic has stuck around for generations. No other cartoon captures the Halloween excitement better than the Peanut gang.

“Halloween” (1978) is the ultimate slasher film that gets revisited every October and not to mention the nume-



Credit: Gean Garcia

@GeanElZombi

rous sequels that follow it. “Halloween” is a staple in its own right because as soon as we hear that familiar eerie tune playing in the

background, we know that it is the season that Michael Meyers appears. Bring on the Halloween costumes and scary pranks.

Honorable mentions include “Coraline” (2009), “Corpse Bride” (2005), and “Friday the 13th” (1980).

‘9to5’ recounts pioneering actions for gender equality in workplace

BY AANSA USMANI

“9to5: The Story of a Movement” delves into the “9to5” movement against gender inequality within white-collar professions. Its actions and advocacy efforts would later inspire Dolly Parton’s hit single, “9 to 5,” and a 1980s Hollywood movie of the same name.

Originating in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1973 the women secretaries decided to speak up about the toxic treatment they had endured from their male counterparts, ranging from sexual harassment to gender-based wage discrepancies.

After discussing their experiences, the women decided to unite and create the 9to5 movement, hoping to inspire more women to advocate for further equality within the

workplace. Founders Verna Barksdale, Ellen Cassidy, Kim Cook, and Karen Nussbaum detail the early days of the movement, especially in dealing with outdated stereotypical tropes of women within the workplace.

They share archival footage of their advocacy efforts, showing how their equality-based talking points are still being echoed in modern-day progressive movements.

According to the 9to5 organization’s website, the women’s advocacy efforts “spread quickly, inspiring the nationwide movement at the intersection of the women’s movement and the labor movement...chang[ing] the American workforce forever.”

Movements throughout the 1970s and

1980s continued to promote its origin’s ideals, hoping to create a workplace that promoted equality for all.

Additionally, 9to5 also sought out to find unions supportive of their pro-women’s equality agenda. Their efforts within the union sector have contributed to modern-day policies surrounding women within these organizations.

Actress and activist, Jane Fonda, 83, became heavily involved after hearing about a friend’s experiences in dealing with workplace inequality.

“I immediately knew I needed to use my voice to help amplify their stories through a film. While we’ve made some monumental strides for women’s rights, we still have a lot of work to

do. I have dedicated my life to social, political and environmental activism, and I hope that the story of the 9to5 movement will help inspire and teach the next generation of activists.”

Overall, the documentary gives a detailed history of the 9to5 movement, as well as how its originating ideas are still relevant today.

The historic movement contributes to the groundwork for modern-day women’s movements, allowing them to voice their concerns in a similar fashion.

Additionally, the 9to5 movement has had significant legislative achievements concerning women’s rights like job security after maternity leave, and gendered wage inequality for example.

These achievements have certainly given women today more options compared to the movement’s founders. The movement’s efforts effectively highligh-

ted the battle against sexism within the workplace. Although they had achieved a lot of successful wins, the battle is not over yet.



Courtesy: PBS