

Family’s questions on attack remain

Motive still unclear a year after Texan killed 14 in New Orleans as 2025 got underway

By Dug Begley
STAFF WRITER

Early in its investigation, the FBI was able to trace Shamsud-Din Jabbar’s whereabouts as he drove a rented truck from Texas to New Orleans to commit the first act of terrorism in 2025. Those details, however, do not

explain to Jabbar’s family how religious fanaticism drove their brother and son to kill 14 people and injure nearly 60. “We have the same questions anyone else does,” said his brother Abdur-Rahim Jabbar. Nearly a year later, and with other acts of violence around the globe filling the headlines, the

New Orleans attack remains an open — albeit quiet — investigation. Federal officials have detailed the attack itself, Jabbar’s online history prior to the attack and some elements of his life leading up to New Year’s Day. And yet a clear, easy-to-explain motive remains elusive. “I don’t think there is one singular thing,” said Abdur-Rahim Jabbar, relying on the manifesto his brother left behind, which hinted at frustration with the

modern world and its drift from religious belief. Neighbors, who did not wish to discuss him further, said they had no idea Jabbar would turn violent. He was never seen around the closest conservative mosque to his Houston home and was not listed as an active member of any mosque in the area. The FBI said his religious fervor predated the attack by less than three years and that he be-

came “a more devout Muslim in 2022.” “During this time, Jabbar began isolating himself from society,” the agency said in a January news release. “Around the spring of 2024, Jabbar began following extremist views.” Based on posts made by Jabbar, the severity of his rhetoric increased with a focus on the war in the Gaza Strip. What remains hazy is how *Attack continues on A2*



People walking along East Cesar Chavez Street on Monday bundle up as the cold north wind blows.

Photos by Jay Janner/Austin American-Statesman

Final front of 2025 leaves Austin cold

Sun will shine on 2026 with more Texas-like temperatures

By Mary Wasson
NEWSROOM METEOROLOGIST

Early Monday, the final blustery cold front of the year swept across Texas, with Austin temperatures frantically dropping from 85 to the low 40s like a driver who just saw a cop on in a school zone with a radar gun. The 40-degree plunge in less than 24 hours was a shock to the system. The front also ushered in some light showers and strong north winds, with gusts topping 40 mph in some areas. The highest wind gust across the region was in San Antonio at Stinson Municipal Airport, with a 52-mph gust. In Austin, the highest gust was 46 mph at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, followed by a 38-mph *Cold front continues on A3*



A tattered American flag struggles Monday as wind gusts hit 38 mph near downtown Austin. Temperatures plunged 40 degrees in less than 24 hours.

A thorny overhaul of social studies

Controversy engulfs curriculum change

By Isaac Yu
STAFF WRITER

A rewrite of Texas’ social studies curriculum is underway, with lawmakers, teachers and history enthusiasts at odds over exactly how to present the history of Texas and the United States to the state’s 5.5 million public school students. State education officials regularly review and revamp standards for all subjects. But the social studies rewrite in particular has become a thorny political process, with lawmakers clashing over the portrayal of slavery, civil rights, Indigenous people, the Alamo and other subjects. The process will ultimately result in new state standards, known as Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, which form the basis of classroom teachers’ lesson plans, future textbook editions and the new iteration of the standardized STAAR test. Here’s what you need to know:

Who is writing the new curriculum? The task of rewriting the curriculum is largely delegated to the 15-member State Board of Education, whose members are elected by voters. Currently, the board is made up of 10 Republicans and five Democrats. The Texas Education Agency, led by Commissioner Mike Morath, also provides assistance. Teachers, educators and members of the public from across Texas are asked to provide input through several working groups convened by TEA, though those have yet to be formed. State board members have also appointed nine content advisers to help guide the curriculum. They include several conservative Christian activists, as well as the recently ousted CEO of the Alamo Trust. Only one of the nine advisers appears to have experience working in a Texas public *Studies continues on A3*

Managing transitions as one year ends, a new one begins

By Deepti Hajela
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — It’s that time — December’s waning days, when we prepare to turn the calendar page. Many Americans take stock, review goals, ponder hopes and plans. How’s our health? What’s up with our money? What about the country? Will the coming year look like the departing year, or will it be something different?

It can be an overwhelming time. So the Associated Press reached out to professionals — in home organization, risk management, personal training, personal finance, political science — to talk about their perspectives on changes and transitions. So let’s talk endings and beginnings. **Milestones stir emotions** Transitions are professional organizer Laura Olivares’ work-

ing life. As co-founder of Silver Solutions, she works with senior adults and their families to help make sure they’re in safe environments, whether that means decluttering a lifetime of possessions, downsizing to another home or helping families clear a house after a loved one’s passing. She offers this: Change, even exciting ones, can unearth sadness or grief over places, things and people left behind. Acknowledging *Changes continues on A3*



Eli Ritter/Associated Press

With 2026 on the horizon, experts in a range of fields offer advice on endings and beginnings.

