

LOCAL

SUICIDE PREVENTION EVENTS

Laredo will host “Rally for Hope” events each Friday in September in south Laredo.

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LOCAL

FREE ARTS AND MUSIC DOWNTOWN

CaminARTE to brings free arts and music to downtown Laredo Friday.

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SPORTS

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL WEEK 2

Alexander hosts Gregory-Portland; South travels to O'Connor.

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Kaylee Greenlee/For The Texas Tribune

House Speaker Dustin Burrows, R-Lubbock, oversees roll call on the House floor in Austin on Sept. 3, 2025.

Texas Republicans wrap up overtime session with major gains

By Kayla Guo and Alejandro Serrano

THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

The Texas Legislature gavelled out its second overtime session with a fresh inventory of GOP victories, including a new congressional map gerrymandered to maximize Republican representation, a host of socially conservative priorities that had long failed to reach the governor's desk, and un-

precedented retribution leveled against the minority party. The final adjournment, coming late Wednesday in the House and shortly after midnight in the Senate, closed out a tense six and a half weeks of overtime legislating, punctuated by a two-week walkout by Democratic lawmakers over GOP redistricting that prompted Republicans to end the first special session early and launch right into a second.

After the Legislature resumed business, GOP lawmakers quickly pushed through much of Gov. Greg Abbott's agenda, sparking fiery debates over abortion, bathrooms and ivermectin that underscored the bitter partisan divisions taking root at the Capitol. "I don't think in the history of the state any Senate body has accomplished so much," Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick said before the session ended.

Session continues on A4

Kennedy tries to defend COVID-19 vaccine stance in raucous Senate hearing

By Matt Brown and Mike Stobbe

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., facing pointed bipartisan questioning at a rancorous three-hour Senate committee hearing on Thursday, tried to defend his efforts to pull back COVID-19 vaccine recommendations and explain the turmoil he has created at federal health agencies. Kennedy said the fired CDC director was untrustworthy, stood by his past anti-vaccine rhetoric, and disputed reports of people saying they have had difficulty getting COVID-19 shots.

Medical groups and several Democrats in Congress have called for Kennedy to be fired, and his exchanges with Democratic senators on the panel repeatedly devolved into shouting, from both sides. But some Republican senators also expressed unease with his changes to COVID-19 policies. The GOP senators noted that Kennedy said President Donald Trump deserved a Nobel Prize for the 2020 Operation Warp Speed initiative to quickly develop mRNA COVID-19 vaccines — and that he also had attacked the safety and continued use of those very shots. "I can't tell where you are on Operation Warp Speed," said

Republican North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis. Tillis and others asked him why the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was fired last week, less than a month into her tenure. Kennedy said she was dishonest, and that CDC leaders who left the agency last week in support of her deserved to be fired. He also criticized CDC recommendations during the COVID-19 pandemic tied to lockdowns and masking policies, and claimed — wrongly — that they "failed to do anything about the disease itself." "The people at CDC who oversaw that process, who put

Kennedy continues on A4

County approves \$258,300 sludge basin cleanup

By David Gomez Jr.

STAFF WRITER

Webb County accepted a nearly \$260,000 contract to clean sludge basins and warned of potential violations if the project is delayed. To avoid violations with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, county leaders weighed options to clean the water basins at Webb

County Water Utilities and the treatment plant in Rio Bravo. They considered doing the work in-house to save money but ultimately wanted the job completed thoroughly and efficiently in the long run. The \$258,300 wastewater basin cleanup contract was awarded to JMJ DS Corporation to clean the sludge basins and prevent further delays

Cleanup continues on A4



David Gomez Jr./Laredo Morning Times

Pct. 1 Commissioner Jesse Gonzalez on Aug. 25, 2025, at the Webb County Courthouse.

Overcoming doubts, locals launch city's first drive-in in decades

By Maria Ruiz

STAFF WRITER

A Laredoan is set to turn a decade-long dream into reality this Friday, reviving a tradition the Gateway City hasn't experienced since the 1980s. Movie drive-ins gained popularity in the late 1940s but were still a novelty for Texans — especially Laredoans — until the mid-1950s, when the concept expanded to more than

400 locations across the state. Laredo's first was Tower Drive In, followed by Fiesta Drive In, Bordertown Drive In and El Ranch Drive In. By the early 1980s, Bordertown Drive In — one of the longest-standing in the city — closed to make way for IH-35 expansion. Now, the nostalgia of watching a film under the stars with the soundtrack humming through car radios is

Drive-In continues on A4



Courtesy/Sunset Drive In Cinema

A scene from the animated film “Coraline” is projected during a private test screening at Sunset Drive In Cinema in Laredo, Texas, on Aug. 25, 2025. The venue officially opens to the public Sept. 5, reviving the city's drive-in movie tradition after more than four decades.

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