

May 2016

FULSHEAR LIVING

monthly

TSTC

Opens It's Doors in August

- The Inaugural Mad Hatter Days of April Was a Huge Success
- The Annual Michael T. McCann Memorial Bike Ride
- Celebrate the Evolving Role of Libraries in Today's Technological World



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Contents & Staff

FULSHEAR LIVING monthly™ | May 2016

Features



16

TSTC to Open Doors in August

Construction of new Texas State Technical College in Rosenberg is on time and on budget.



12

Community

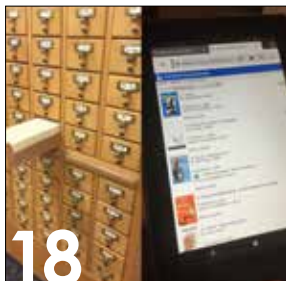
The inaugural Mad Hatter Days of April was a huge success.



14

Events

The annual Michael T. McCann Memorial Bike Ride will be held May 7 at the Union Chappel Vineyards at Bar O Ranch.



18

Activities

Fort Bend County Libraries celebrates the evolving role of libraries in today's technological world.



24

Community

Read how the Firethorn community got its name from the 15th hole at the Augusta National Golf Club.



30

Events

Check out our Events and Happenings page to find out what's going on in and around Fulshear.

FULSHEAR LIVING

monthly™

The Fulshear Living Monthly is a publication of the Fort Bend Herald and the Katy Times.

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Volunteers Team Up to Beautify Fulshear Area



Mayor Thomas Kuykendall and Forever Fulsher Executive Director Ramona Ridge address the crowd of volunteers, prior to the clean-up.



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Second Annual Derby Day Benefitting Reining Strength Therapeutic Horsemanship Set for May 7

Richmond nonprofit offers programs for individuals with special needs



It is estimated that more than 90,000 Fort Bend County residents could benefit from therapeutic horsemanship services.

The second annual Derby Day party benefitting the Richmond nonprofit, Reining Strength Therapeutic Horsemanship, will be held from 4-7:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 7, at Safari Texas.

Funds raised from the event will benefit Reining Strength Therapeutic Horsemanship and its programming for individuals with special needs.

Tickets are \$100 each and may be purchased on the website, www.reiningstrength.org. Sponsorship opportunities are also available.

For more information, call 832-451-6874.

Derby Day will feature a hat contest, boot contest and horse race game. Other festivities include a Mint Julep toast, live streaming of the Kentucky Derby and live and silent auctions. Wine and spirits also will be available.

The need for therapeutic horsemanship services is great: the Reining Strength team estimates that more than 90,000 Fort Bend County residents could benefit from therapeutic horsemanship programming. The services are appropriate for people of all ages with a wide variety of common diagnoses, including anxiety, autism spectrum disorders, cerebral palsy, CVA or stroke, Down syndrome, intellectual and learning disabilities, multiple sclerosis, PTSD, spina bifida, traumatic brain injury and many others.

“In 2015, Reining Strength served more than 35 participants and provided over 500 hours of equine assisted activities,” said Heather Hernandez, M.Ed., executive director of Reining Strength. “Our numbers are projected to surpass that significantly in 2016. We have developed special relationships with local

physical therapy groups and the Boys and Girls Club of Fort Bend County. Clients from each of these diverse audiences have unique and specific needs that a therapeutic horsemanship program can effectively address.

“Recently, a therapeutic riding client’s mother was sharing with us how impressed she was that for the first time her seven year old son is able to sit up on his own in a chair and stand upright while walking,” added Hernandez. “Both she and the child’s therapists attribute this success to riding.”

As the results of scientific research continues to validate the horse as a valuable “agent of change” for therapeutic horsemanship riders, this is an exciting time for the therapeutic horsemanship industry. A recent study proved the impact of therapeutic horseback riding for people with autism spectrum disorder, where improvements in measures of irritability and hyperactivity were documented after just five weeks. Significant improvements were also observed on a measure of social cognition and social communication as well as the total number of words and new words spoken.

Hernandez has been establishing therapeutic horsemanship programs across the country as well as educational benchmarks for the industry for over ten years.

She is heavily involved with the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International as an Advanced Instructor and is a Certified Equine Specialist by the Equine Assisted Growth & Learning Association. A Special Olympics Equestrian Certified Coach, Hernandez was also a co-director of the Therapeutic Riding Center as a faculty member at Texas Tech University.

Hernandez co-founded Reining Strength Therapeutic Horsemanship in 2014 along with her parents, Tom and Peggy Hernandez, launching a campaign to help people with special needs in Fort Bend County. The second annual Derby Day Party marks a new tradition the organization seeks to build upon as it grows and further establishes its roots in Fort Bend County, having celebrated their first anniversary as a 501(c)3 in December 2015.

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Last year's Derby Day drew a large crowd, including these lovely ladies decked out in their attractive hats.

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Central Fort Bend Chamber's Young Professionals Committee Hosts 'Golf Talk' for 40-plus Members

Participants Bring New or Gently-Used Golf Equipment for First Tee Program



Pictured from left, Ashleigh Jones, Caliber Home Loans; Ray Aguilar, Classic Chevrolet of Sugar Land; and Stacey Severovich, Mitchell & Duff, LLC; at the recent 'Golf Talk' event.

Golf, much like business, takes time and patience. That was the message delivered by former golf pros Jeff Haley and John Kennedy to a large group at the "Golf Talk" event. The event, which was hosted by the Central Fort Bend Chamber's Young Professionals Committee and sponsored by Dearborn & Creggs Investments, was held recently at the

Fort Bend Country Club in Richmond.

More than 40 members had the chance to get hands-on instruction from Haley and Kennedy before heading into the Country Club and learning more about how to integrate golf into business and the benefits it has.

"It provides opportunities you would never know existed without golf. The game can be a great tool to interview a potential candidate, see who a person really is," said Kennedy.

Guests were encouraged to bring new or gently used golf equipment for the First Tee program in Fort Bend County. The First Tee is a non-profit program that teaches kids to golf.

"We try to teach the core values. We talk about honesty, integrity and doing the right thing when no one is watching," said David Timmermeyer, the lead instructor with the First Tee in Fort Bend County.

Timmermeyer said many of the kids involved in the program are under privileged, but they are gaining knowledge of how to interact with others. All golf items collected from the event will be donated to the First Tee.

Haley and Kennedy hope the new knowledge the group gained can help them survive the upcoming Fort Bend Scramble season.

"We want people to feel more comfortable playing golf in Fort Bend County and play in various charities," said Kennedy.

The Central Fort Bend Chamber is a 105-year-old non-profit membership organization dedicated to creating a strong local economy where businesses can prosper. The Central Fort Bend Chamber advocates for more than 1,000 local businesses led by a volunteer board of directors who are dedicated to sustaining Fort Bend County's quality of life, and keeping our community and economy vibrant.

For more information on the Chamber or its programs, call 281-342-5464 or visit www.CFBCA.org.



Former golf pros Jeff Haley and John Kennedy address members of the Young Professionals Committee and let them know how to integrate golf into business.

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The Fulshear Area Chamber of Commerce recently held rope-cuttings (known by other chambers as ribbon cuttings) for the following new businesses: Brookshire Residence and Rehabilitation, Center Court Pizza and Brew, Pet Supplies Plus and The Well Pet Center Veterinary Hospital.



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Dogs and Hats, The Madder The Better

First-ever Mad Hatter Days of April draws a big crowd in Fulshear

BY DIANA NGUYEN



Fulshear Councilwoman Tajana Mesic holds 4-year-old maltese mixed Kina at the city's "Mad Hatter Days of April" event.



Fulshear Councilwoman Tricia Krenek holds her 7-year-old tutu-wearing Bella at the city's "Mad Hatter Days of April" event.

Dogs and hats. The madder the better. That was Fulshear Parks Commissioner and event organizer Tajana Mesic's mindset when she created the city's first-ever "Mad Hatter Days of April."

The festival, hosted by Fulshear Parks and Recreation Commission on Saturday, had various family-friendly events for the community to partake in, including a "Mad Hatter" contest, henna and face-painting, a native bird art photography exhibit, a caterpillar and butterfly learning exhibit, an inflatable slide and a scavenger hunt for children.

"Everyone needs a little wonder and laughter in their life, so I thought that having a Mad Hatter Days of April would bring out the children in people and their dogs," Mesic said. "They could wear funny hats and still enjoy a good laugh and meet their neighbors with a smile."

"I think that for a first-time event, the Mad Hatter went well," said City Administrator CJ Snipes. "I sincerely appreciate the hard work from all of the volunteers and staff present. I know these kinds of events help build the relationships with our residents. I have no doubt that next year's event will be even better."

Mesic echoed Snipes' sentiments.

"We are delighted at the success of our inaugural annual Mad Hatter Days of April," said Mesic. "We couldn't have done it without all the attendees from Fulshear and beyond, vendors, prize sponsors, city staff and volunteers."

"Since the Fulshear Parks Commission strives to engage the community in positive activities, this event was by the people for the people. I hope the event takes root and continues bringing our community together one activity at a time."

Fulshear Parks Commissioner and Texas Master Naturalist Patricia Mollere said she appreciated the people who were present.

"We had such a fine, fun-loving group," Mollere stated. "The judges, the sponsors, the participants, the exhibitors, even the dogs enjoyed getting to know each other. I look forward to seeing everyone again soon."

As part of the nature exhibit, Texas Master Naturalist Coastal Prairie Chapter President Diane Russell presented caterpillars for the kids to engage with and educated them on facts about the monarch butterfly.

"We showed the attendees all kinds of caterpillars and butterflies," Russell said. "What gets me excited about sharing this knowledge and experience is that everyone, no matter how old they are, has this ah-ha moment filled with wonder and excitement for the world around them."

"People were grateful and enchanted to learn that so many wonderful creatures are right under our noses, and they left with a newfound sense of wonder for the natural world around them. People are surprised to learn that all you have to do is look underneath the leaf, and they might be very surprised what is living there."

Fulshear resident Bijay Aryal said he felt fortunate he and his family were able to attend the event.

"I would like to thank all the personnel who worked tirelessly to bring this great event to life," Aryal said.

"I believe these kinds of events are a great way to connect with residents and most importantly get the kids and adults to have fun and learn about the great wildlife we have around our community. My hope is that these kinds of events become rituals every year."



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Michael T. McCann Memorial Bike Ride on Tap May 7 at Union Chappel Vineyards/Bar O Ranch

All Proceeds From This Family Event Directly Benefit the Fulshear Community



Participants push their bikes to the starting line at the Bar O Ranch.

Hundreds of bike riders take part in the annual fundraiser.

The Union Chappel Vineyards/Bar O Ranch will be bustling with activity on Saturday, May 7, when Fulshear will hold the 8th annual Michael T. McCann Memorial Bike Ride throughout the community. Beginning at 7:30 a.m., this BP MS 150-recommended ride will feature routes of 19, 35, 51 and 68 miles, respectively.

All proceeds from this family event will directly benefit the Fulshear community.

Dr. Mike McCann passed away in 2007 following a long, heroic battle with cancer. He is remembered as a family man, veterinarian, sailor, grape grower, friend and mentor, who also served as chairman of the Fulshear Planning Commission for many years, dedicating much of his time to the development and growth of the city.

An avid bicyclist, he spent many hours each week cycling, all while undergoing treatments, a true testament to his strength and abilities. He was an ambassador and statesman who epitomized what Fulshear means to many: A friendly town in a beautiful region, that if we all work together, will grow into a prosperous community that cherishes the simple, good things in life.

Bike for Mike is proud to support Fulshear, with all proceeds directly benefiting special projects and beautification of the city. To

date, more than \$100,000 has been donated to the city with ongoing support to many deserving organizations, including the public library, Arts Fulshear, the Fulshear Simonton Volunteer Fire Department, the Fulshear Police Department, Faith FULL-Kids at Huggins Elementary, the Beauti-Fulshear Clean-up Event, the Brookwood Community, our local Boy and Girl Scout troops, and Family Hope.

All rides of Bike for Mike include law enforcement, first aid, support vehicles, ride marshals and motorcycle escorts. Entertaining and well-stocked rest stops are provided, along with restroom facilities and mechanical support offered by Bike Barn. Breakfast by Kolache Factory and a post-ride lunch are included for all participants. T-shirts will be provided to the first 250 registrants.

All riders will leave the Bar O Ranch/ Union Chappel Vineyards located at 8426 Wallis Street, at the corner of Wallis and First Street in Fulshear, directly down from

Wallis State Bank and Ray's Grill in the Fulshear Town Center.

The ride begins at 7:30 a.m. May 7 with the longer distance and fastest riders leaving in front. Helmets are required and no headphones are allowed. The ride will be held rain or shine, with no refunds.

Designated parking will be well marked in Fulshear with spaces available on the lot at Harris and 2nd Street, the First United Methodist Church, the TX DoT lot located at 1093 and FM 359, and City Hall and Metro parking lots. You may also park on any street with the exception of Wallis and 1st Streets for safety purposes.

Afterwards, join in the fun at the vineyard for the popular ride celebration with great food, wine pouring, massage, and live music featuring the 4 Barrel Ramblers.

For more information, e-mail info@bikeformikefulshear.com.

Patchwork of Life: Mending Lives Stitch By Stitch



Patchwork Committee. Pictured from left are Patchwork Committee members Alicen Swift, Libby King, Norma Petrosewicz, Becky Valadez, Joe Freudenberger, Rachelle Kanak, Beth Wolf, Linda Drummond, May Tape, Monica Mondrik, Noell Myska, Donna Jameson, Carolyn Steenbergen, James Steenbergen, Deidre Doggett and Jesse Regalado. Not pictured are committee members Patti Parish-Kaminski and Mandi Bronsell.

The 2016 Patchwork of Life event has been set for Thursday, Oct. 13, at Safari Texas Ranch with this year's beneficiary being the Emergency Care Center at OakBend's Jackson Street location.

The fundraising goal for this event is \$300,000, but the committee led by May Tape, DDS and Beth Wolf hopes to raise more.

The funds raised will bring the most advanced concepts for a healing environment to the Jackson Street Emergency Care Center. Almost 20,000 patients are treated at this location each year. A hospital can be a scary, stressful time – particularly during an emergency.

Studies demonstrate that hospitals can reduce stress and improve patient outcomes by creating

a warmer setting. By creating this type of environment in the Emergency Care Center, OakBend can better serve the people of Fort Bend County.

The Polly Ryon Memorial Volunteers have been named as the Honorees for the October event. Each day, the Volunteers can be found working throughout the hospital greeting patients, transporting patients and volunteering in various departments such as pharmacy, OB, Outpatient surgery and much more.

Pat Hebert has been named as the Honorary Chair for the 2016 Patchwork of Life event; last year Hebert was named the Honoree for the event and was the Chair for the first and second Patchwork of Life fundraisers.

To become a sponsor, donor or to purchase tickets for the event, log onto: www.oakbendmedcenter.org/patchwork-of-life.

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Where People Come to Get a Skill-Set and a Job

The New Texas State Technical College in Rosenberg Will Open for Fall Session

By Tom Behrens

The new Texas State Technical College in Rosenberg, along US 59, just to the west of FM 2218, will be ready for students this coming new school year. Most of the big construction will be completed in June and the school will receive beneficial occupancy.



“Right now we are on time and on budget,” says Randall Wooten, TSTC Vice Chancellor and Chief Execution Officer for the Fort Bend Campus.

Beneficial occupancy means that the building is not officially complete until TSTC has the final walk through on the building. Equipment and furniture will be moved in July, and the first classes start in August.

“Sides are up, roof in place, and it’s looking like a building,” says Wooten. “The vast majority of the work now is going on inside the building at this point. Parking lots, for the most part are completed. One of the main roads is in, but there are still some curbs, access, and some of those kind of things that need to be completed.”

The building is roughly 125,000 square feet and cost \$40 million. Multiple entities in Fort Bend County and surrounding area, such as different foundations, Fort Bend County, City of

Richmond, City of Rosenberg, along with private donors all helped to put the campus in Fort Bend County.

Operational money to operate the school is an item provided by the Texas Legislature, referred to by Wooten as “Ops Money”, which pays for faculty, equipment, utilities and other things.

TSTC will host three programs that the school is already teaching at the tech center, part of the Wharton County Junior College (WCJC) partnership. These are HVAC, Machining, and Diesel. TSTC will add four more programs ... welding, industrial maintenance, telecommunications convergence, and cyber security.

“Welding is still a big demand career field, even though with the downturn in the oil industry,” says Wooten. “Every one of our school locations has a waiting list in welding. We are very excited about our welding program. We will have 84 welder stations in the new building. Telecommunications convergence involves such things as towers, cables, all those kinds of things that come together so your electronics work like



they are supposed to. It’s not just the guys and gals pulling wire. It’s more than that. It’s the integration of all the systems.”

Building number two construction will begin in June of this year and is projected to be ready for students in August 2017 for the new semester.

Building number two will have Megatronics — think of robotics on steroids; Electrical Power and Controls, which includes instruction on high voltage electrical, switching gear and the things, that the big power companies have a need for workers. Environmental Technology Compliance is another program choice, along with a Lineman Program for the people who climb the poles.

Building number two is only about half the size of number one, about 50,000 square feet, at a cost of \$15 million dollars. It will also have a

lot of TSTC student support space and school business operations offices.

Programs are two years if the student wants the degree. If you want a certificate, not the degree, it can be a shorter time.

Two Year Associate Degree or a Certification Programs:

Wooten explains there are several different graduation paths at TSTC. "Certificate 1 and Certificate 2 have different amounts of semester training. For example, in welding you have a Certificate 1 that could probably be accomplished in two semesters. If you want a Certificate 2, more advanced welding, you could probably get it in three or four semesters. If you want the associate degree, which includes the academics on top of the certificate, it will take about five semesters."

The Fort Bend TSTC campus is already taking applications for enrollment. "In just one week we received over 125. By the end of August when school starts we are looking to have at least 500 students.

"You earn an Associate degree at TSTC for less than \$10,000," continued Wooten. If you want the Certificate 1 or 2 cost would be fractions of the \$10,000. We basically want to give you what you want or need to go out there and get the job you want. Many people do not want the academic part of a four year degree. They just want to be able to find a job they are interested in.

"We've done some cost benefit/analysis, return on investment studies. The salaries folks are making in these different fields. Probably the minimum salary starts around \$38,000 and goes up to probably into the \$50,000s. It wouldn't take you very long to pay off a college loan of \$6,000 or \$7,000."

Scholarships and financial aid are available. Right now for the first 500 students to enroll, TSTC has a \$1,000 scholarship. "I have \$500,000 to give away for scholarships to the first 500 students. It shows our intent to help people in the Ft. Bend community. We wanted to come to Ft. Bend County, and the community has been very, very generous helping us with that.

In addition to the TSTC scholarship, there are Pell Grants and other programs just like any other two or four year colleges have.

The long range plan for the campus:

TSTC has 80 acres to work with. "When we received the 80 acres, Ft. Bend leadership wanted us to have enough space to build a campus the size of our original campus in Waco. The student population in Waco is around 4,000 or 5,000 students, which equates to six to eight buildings at the Rosenberg campus, depending on what type of programs that go into them.

"Right now we are just looking at the second building which is being paid for by state Tuition Revenue bonds. We haven't planned further than that. It all depends when dollars are available to provide the next building."

More information about Texas State Technical College and enrolling can be obtained at

www.tstc.edu/fbc or by calling 832-223-0603 or 832-595-8734.

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Libraries Reflect on Dynamic Transformations

In recognition of National Library Week, April 10-16, Fort Bend County Libraries (FBCL) joins communities around the country in celebrating the dynamic changes that are happening in today's libraries. This year's theme, "Libraries Transform," captures the evolving role of libraries as well as the difference that libraries are making in the lives of the people they serve.

In the past 68 years since the Fort Bend County library system was founded, libraries have become much more than just a selection of books, a card catalog with drawers full of index cards, and a quiet place of study. Today's libraries embrace technology and online access to digital media such as ebooks, music and streamed movies, while still maintaining their connection to traditional books and a simpler time.

In 2015, library patrons checked out more than 3.3-million physical books, DVDs and CDs, while others opted for the newer digital format, downloading more than 111,000 audiobooks and ebooks from the libraries' online offerings. The libraries' new digital collection of streamed movies/TV episodes and downloadable music also took off, with more than 8,000 selections checked out in the initial year.

The online homework-help service continues to be well used by students of all ages. In 2015, there were more than 114,000 sessions in which students accessed this online resource's real-time live tutoring, skill-building activities, writing lab, or test center.

Libraries have transformed from sedate institutions into creative and engaging community centers where diverse groups of people come together for common purposes, to share ideas, to collaborate using new technologies, or to gain information from classes.

"Service to the community has always been the focus of the library," said Library Director Clara Russell. "Libraries level the playing field for people of any age who are seeking information and access to technologies that will improve their quality of life."

Libraries are many things to many people. By keeping abreast of the needs and interests of the diverse populations in Fort Bend County, FBCL strives to provide books, resources, services and programs that are reflective of the unique and varied communities in the area. Whether by offering ebooks and technology classes, materials for English-language learners, programs for job seekers, or homework help, libraries and librarians listen to the people they serve, and they respond.

For more information, see the Fort Bend County Libraries website, www.fortbend.lib.tx.us, or call or visit the library branch nearest you.



The original Fort Bend County Library building, which opened in 1949, was located in Richmond by Polly Ryon Hospital (now Oak Bend Hospital). Over the years, the library system began to expand and more space was needed for the central library. George Memorial Library opened in 1986 in Richmond, and it became the new central library for the Fort Bend County library system.



Fort Bend County Libraries has seen many changes over the years, including the automation of the card catalog. The old card catalog with drawers and index cards was replaced by an online catalog, which can now be accessed by any mobile device with an Internet connection. Many books are now available in electronic format as well as the traditional paper version. Movies can be streamed from the library's website, and books and music can be downloaded remotely as well.

BrowseAloud Improves Library's Website Accessibility

Fort Bend County Libraries is working to improve patrons' ability to access information from the libraries' website (www.fortbend.lib.tx.us) by installing a BrowseAloud screen-reading tool, making the website more reader-friendly to anyone with reading difficulties, dyslexia, or mild visual impairments, as well as those people whose primary language is not English.

BrowseAloud reads website content out loud, highlighting each word as it is being spoken in a high-quality, human-sounding voice. The new feature can magnify text on any of the libraries' webpages, enabling users with visual impairments to access even the smallest of text on a webpage.

By clicking on the BrowseAloud icon on the webpage, patrons can indicate sentences that they would like to have enlarged or read to them, with a choice of reading speeds. A

screen-mask feature can also block on-screen clutter so that the reader can focus on the text being read.

BrowseAloud is able to translate the libraries' webpages into 78 different languages. The read-aloud function is available for 35 of those languages. Once the webpage has been translated into one of those languages, library patrons can have the text read to them in the language they have chosen.

There is no need to download anything to use the BrowseAloud feature on the library's website. Simply click on the BrowseAloud headphone icon on the upper right-hand side of the library's webpages, and a toolbar with the different options — read-aloud, translate, screen-mask, or magnify — will open.



BrowseAloud functions will work on all Fort Bend County Libraries webpages, including the catalog, but please be aware that links on library webpages may lead to other websites that do not have BrowseAloud functionality.

BrowseAloud will work on PCs, Apple computers, and mobile devices, such as iPads, iPhones, iPod Touch, and Android v3. The recommended browsers include Internet Explorer 8 and greater and the latest releases of Firefox, Chrome, or Safari.

For more information, call the library system's Public Information Office at 281-633-4734, or ask at any of the libraries in the Fort Bend County library system.

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Newmark Homes Begins Presales in Jordan Ranch

Newmark Homes has started presales in Jordan Ranch, a new 1,350-acre development one mile south of Interstate 10.

The builder is offering 20 one- and two-story designs priced from the \$270,000s in the development, a project of Johnson Development Corp.

“These popular floor plans offer everything a buyer might want, resonating with everyone from young families to empty nesters,” said Jeff Dye, vice president of Newmark Homes.

Ranging from 2,125 to 3,395 square feet, Newmark’s Artisan Series offers buyers open-concept living arrangements, hobby rooms, media rooms, covered patios, up to six bedrooms, three- and four-car garages and a wealth of options that allow families to configure

homes to best meet their needs. Newmark will soon begin construction on a community model home.

Homes by Newmark meet the stringent, energy-efficient standards of the Environments for Living — Gold Level program. Plus, home buyers receive free consultation with award-winning professionals at the company’s Design Center, who will guide them through the many structural and décor options available.

In addition to being near Interstate 10, Jordan Ranch is only a few miles west of the Grand Parkway, giving residents access to Sugar Land,



Newmark Homes has begun presales on homes in Jordan Ranch, a 1,350-acre development minutes from Interstate 10. Prices are from the \$270,000s.

Katy, Cypress, The Woodlands and George Bush Intercontinental Airport. Planned amenities include a lazy river, resort-style pool, splash pad, tennis courts, dog park and exercise room.

For more information on the floor plans Newmark Homes offers in Jordan Ranch, visit www.newmarkhomes.com.

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Ashton Woods Launches Spring Clean Promotion

Buyers of New Homes Will Receive Free Housecleaning for a Full Year After Closing



Ashton Woods is launching a Spring Clean promotion that gives buyers free housecleaning for 12 months. The offer is valid for contracts written through May 31.

Ashton Woods, one of the nation's largest private homebuilders, has a tidy incentive for Houston-area home buyers — The Spring Clean promotion.

Through this limited-time event, buyers of any new Ashton Woods homes will receive free housecleaning for a full year after closing. Housecleaning will be once a month or more, depending on the size of the home. The offer is good for contracts signed April 1 through May 31 in any of Ashton Woods' 16 area developments.

"This incentive perfectly complements the exceptionally designed homes that Ashton Woods is known for," said Dan Gezella, vice president of sales and marketing for Ashton Woods' Houston division. "From backsplash to backyard, we provide homebuyers with inspired designs and countless ways to personalize their homes. And with this incentive, we're giving them a way to make sure each little details continues to sparkle month after month."

Prospective homebuyers can find Ashton Woods in well-located developments in Fort Bend County, Cypress, Katy, Tomball, Spring, The Woodlands, Kingwood, Pearland and League City. The award-winning builder offers an array of floor plans with starting prices from the \$220,000s to the \$490,000s. And at the state-of-the-art Studio by Ashton Woods, homebuyers collaborate with the company's design consultants, who take time to understand buyers' visions and lifestyles and guide them through the many inspiring décor choices Ashton Woods has cultivated from around the world. The result is a home as unique as the people who live in them, Gezella says.

"Our award-winning Studio is truly a 'home to inspiration' where design, personalization and possibilities come to life," Gezella said. "Here our customers can experiment with everything from finishes and color to texture and lighting in a pleasing aesthetic environment that easily lets a customer visualize how each element will look together in their new home."

Founded in 1989, Ashton Woods builds in six Texas markets, as well as Arizona, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina. Last year, it received the coveted Grand Award — Volume Builder for a second consecutive year in the Houston's Best PRISM Awards, presented by the Greater Houston Association of Builders. In Houston, Ashton Woods builds in 16 premier master-planned developments close to shopping, schools and employment centers. Ashton Woods is launching a Spring Clean promotion that gives buyers free housecleaning for 12 months. The offer is valid for contracts written April 1 through May 31.

For more information on Ashton Woods, visit www.ashtonwoodshomes.com.

Ashton Woods Homes Houston can be found throughout the greater Houston area, from Fort Bend County to Pearland to Conroe. The division carefully chooses its community partners, currently building in 16 premier master-planned developments close to shopping, schools and employment centers. Ashton Woods Homes Houston has been a vital part of Houston's bustling real estate market since 1990 and is widely respected among industry leaders, winning numerous awards for design and customer service.

For more information, visit www.ashtonwoodshomes.com/houston.



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Ever Wondered How *Firethorne* Got Its Name?

Firethorne, a 1,400-acre master-planned community in Katy/Fulshear, was named after the firethorn (pyracantha) plant, a resilient evergreen indigenous to the Texas prairie.

Here's the backstory:

The name came from the PGA Masters golf tournament, which took place last month at Augusta National Golf Club. According to Firethorne General Manager Wayne Meyer, Firethorne got its name, thanks to his business partner, Robert White, going to the Masters in 2004.

According to Meyer, the Jefferson Development team was getting everything in place to start the underground utilities on its new project on FM 1463 in Katy/Fulshear. What wasn't in place, though, was the name.

"We wanted a name that was one word that was a strong name that we could do a lot of things with it," he said.

In the same time frame, White had tickets to the Masters golf tournament and asked Meyer to join him. Meyer, engrossed in the community's early development phase, turned down the offer, to which White responded, "Well, do you mind if I go?" Little did either man know that White's golfing adventure would inspire the naming of their latest real estate venture.

The next thing Meyer remembers is getting a phone call from White from Augusta.

"I'm standing on it," he stated.

"Standing on what?" asked Meyer.

"I'm standing on the name. It's Firethorn."

White was standing on hole No. 15 on the prestigious Augusta National Golf Club. Each of the 18 holes of the Augusta National Club is named. Hole No. 15 is named "Firethorn."

White and Meyer agreed to name their new development "Firethorne" (with an 'e' added on the end) and the rest is history, including Gerald Freed's advertising agency developing the Firethorne logo and advertising campaign.

The name has proven successful. To date, Firethorne has closed on 2,676 homes. The community will be built out at 3,400 homes.

To tour Firethorne, take I-10 West and exit Pin Oak to FM 1463, visit www.firethorne.info, or call 281-693-1011.



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Exchange Club of Sugar Land Helping Child Advocates of Fort Bend Make Real Difference



Ruthanne Mefford, left, CEO of Child Advocates of Fort Bend; accepts a \$17,000 check donation from Kevin Barker, President of Exchange Club of Sugar Land.

Exchange Club of Sugar Land kicked off April Child Abuse Prevention Month with a \$17,000 check to Child Advocates of Fort Bend. Exchange Club's generous donation will help fund Child Advocates of Fort Bend's programs for abused and neglected children including the agency's new Parent Child Interactive Therapy Program (PCIT).

This program teaches caregivers strategies to promote positive behaviors in very young children who have severe disruptive behavioral problems as a result of their trauma from abuse. Child Advocates of Fort Bend was selected by Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas to implement this new program.

Anyone can be a hero and have fun doing it. All you need to do is purchase your ticket today and attend Child Advocates of Fort Bend's SuperHero Ball on Saturday, April 30, at 6 p.m. at the Sugar Land Marriott Town Square.

This fun adult event will feature a live auction, silent auction, dinner and dancing. Black tie and costumes are optional. Individual tickets are available for \$150. Some sponsorship and underwriting opportunities are still available

ranging from \$2,000 to \$15,000. This is YOUR chance to join Exchange Club of Sugar Land and make a difference for children in Fort Bend County.

To participate, contact Lisa Moore at 218-344-5108 or lmoore@cafb.org.

Child Advocates of Fort Bend is a non-profit agency dedicated to ending child abuse by providing a voice, healing the hurt, and breaking the cycle of child abuse in Fort Bend County. Through its Court Appointed Special Advocates Program (CASATM), Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) and more than 200 trained community volunteer advocates, Child Advocates improves the lives of more than 400 children each month and has served more than 13,000 children since opening its doors in 1991.

The agency's annual gala and auction raises much needed funds to support its programs for abused and neglected children. The SuperHero Gala will take place April 30, 2016 at the Sugar Land Marriott Town Square. To attend the Gala, become a sponsor or for more information, go to <http://www.cafb.org/Events/Gala-for-the-Children/> or contact Lisa Moore at 281-344-5108 or lmoore@cafb.org.

For more information on how you can become a voice for children and get involved with Child Advocates of Fort Bend, contact Karen Jordin at 281-344-5258 or kjordin@cafb.org or log onto www.cafb.org.

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Memorial Hermann	3	U of H	19	Apple Maids	27	R&S Water Service	28
Houston Methodist	5	Fulshear Family Medicine	20	Bull Creek Cafe & Grill	27	Texas Apache Fence Co., LLC	28
Los Cucos Mexican Café	6	Well Pet Center	20	Fresh Air Inc.	27	Woodworks	28
Cliff Jones Mahindra	7	Physical Therapy Care	21	Hummingbird Bakery	27	Brazos Valley Schools Credit Union ..	29
Ray's Furniture Center	8	Met Plumbing	22	Lone Star Solar	27	Custom Comfort Air	29
Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics	9	Timeless Plastic Surgery	23	Rosenberg Carpet & Flooring	27	Kyle D. McCrea	29
Katy Clearchoice	10	Fulshear Animal Hospital	24	Westside Brick & Masonry	27	Laken Skye Walker	29
Decorating Den	11	The Phone & TV Guy	24	Debi's Unique Flowers	28	Ranger Plumbing Company	29
Typhoon Texas	13	Don's Pest Control	25	Final Touch Roofing	28	Katy Plumbing	30
Helfman Ford/Fiat	15	National Tractor's Inc.	25	Master Psychic	28	Legacy Ford	31
Dr. Shel	17	Finnegan Chevy	26	Nancy Garcia Group	28	Better Homes & Garden	32

**May 3
Toddler Time**

10:15 a.m.
Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library, 8100 FM 359, Fulshear
Caregiver and child activities, stories and songs for children from 12 to 36 months of age.



**May 4
Story Time**

10:15 a.m.
Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library, 8100 FM 359, Fulshear
Residents will vote for Mayor and Aldermen, along with other ordinances.

**May 5
Spring Extravaganza**

4-7 p.m.
The Café at Brookwood, 1752 FM 1489, Brookshire, 77423
Enjoy shopping through unique home décor, clothing, jewelry, beautiful plants and more. Complimentary appetizers will be served.

**May 6 - 7
Spring Extravaganza**

9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
The Café at Brookwood, 1752 FM 1489, Brookshire, 77423
Enjoy shopping through unique home décor, clothing, jewelry, beautiful plants and more. Complimentary appetizers will be served.

**May 7
Election Day**

7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Irene Stern Community Center, 6920 Fulshear-Katy Road, Fulshear
Bill M. Wooten will present a basic introduction to the practice and healthful benefits of mindfulness-based stress reduction. Learn how to increase ability to relax and handle stress more easily.

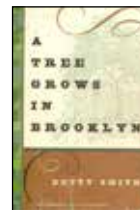
**May 7
Mindfulness: More Than Meditation**

10 a.m.
Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library, 8100 FM 359, Fulshear
Bill M. Wooten will present a basic introduction to the practice and healthful benefits of mindfulness-based stress reduction. Learn how to increase ability to relax and handle stress more easily.



**May 16
Fulshear Book Club**

Noon
Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library, 8100 FM 359, Fulshear
The book to be discussed is "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn," written by Betty Smith.



**May 17
City Council Meeting**

7 p.m.
City Hall, 30603 FM 1093, Fulshear
Monthly City Council meeting for the city of Fulshear.



**Through May 17 (Tuesdays Only)
After-School Art Class**

3 - 4:30 p.m.
Huggins Elementary School
Students in grades K through 5 will learn about some of the most influential artists of the 20th century. Find out more and register online at artsfulshear.org.

**May 23
Fulshear Night Readers Guild**

6:30 p.m.
Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library, 8100 FM 359, Fulshear
Participants will discuss "Orphan Train," by Christina Baker Kline.

**Through May 26 (Wednesdays Only)
After-School Art Class**

3 - 4:30 p.m.
Huggins Elementary School
Students in grades K through 4 will learn and perform a fun-filled musical with a lovely message, too. Find out more and register online at artsfulshear.org.

**Through May 31 (Tuesdays Only)
After-School Theater Class**

4 - 5:30 p.m.
Randolph Elementary School
Students in grades K through 4 will learn and perform a fun-filled musical with a lovely message, too. Find out more and register online at artsfulshear.org.



ONGOING

**May 30-Aug. 27
Summer Reading Club for Children**

6:30 p.m.
Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library, 8100 FM 359, Fulshear
Infants through elementary-aged students are invited to read lots of great books this summer. Participants will earn rewards for the amount of books they read. Register online at fortbend.lib.tx.us.

**May 30-Aug. 27
Middle School Summer Challenge**

6:30 p.m.
Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library, 8100 FM 359, Fulshear
Area youth in grades 6-8 are encouraged to read as many books as they can this summer. Participants will earn rewards for the amount of books they read. Register online at fortbend.lib.tx.us.

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#160393A, Diesel, High Track

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#150834A, Nav Rear Cam, 49K Miles

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*Thank you Fulshear/Richmond Communities
for welcoming us and trusting us with
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