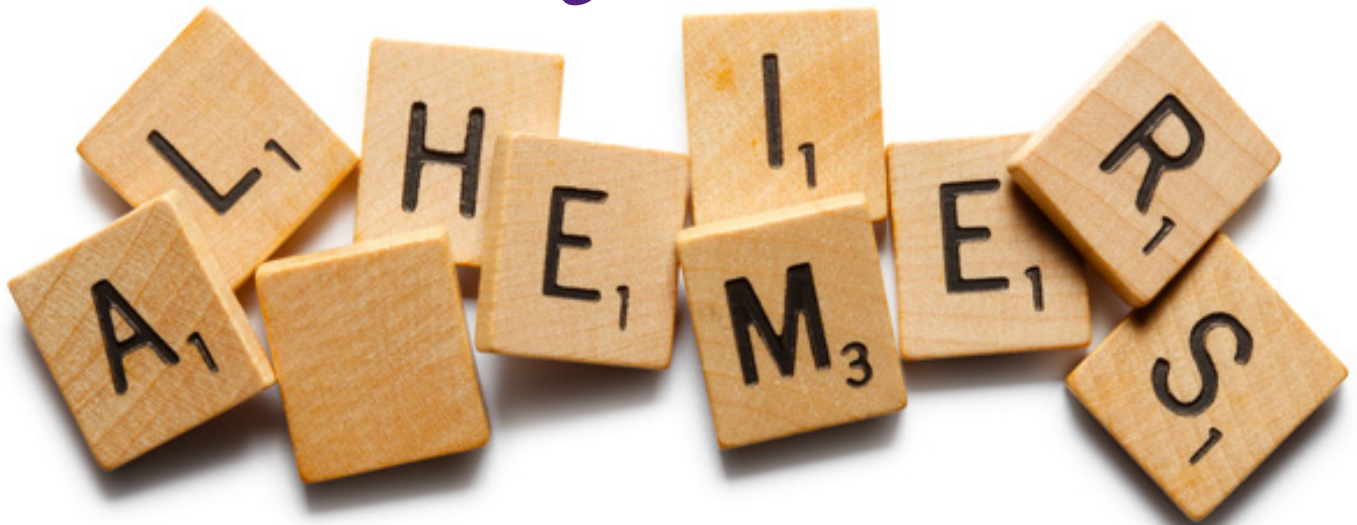


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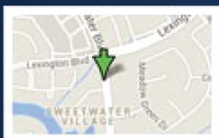
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NEW TERRITORY

monthly™

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Lou Ann Newman (Bowls Committee Co-Chair), Vickie Coates (EFBHN Executive Director), Pat Pratt (Bowls Committee Co-Chair), Albert Goldreich.

Record-Breaking Bowl Throwing for Fort Bend Empty Bowls

Local artist Albert Goldreich will be throwing bowls for more than eighteen hours to break the world record.

Goldreich will attempt to break his own record for the longest a potter has thrown bowls on a wheel in the Book of Alternative Records. His current record is for eighteen hours and three minutes. He'll start throwing bowls on his potter's wheel beginning at 5 a.m. on Oct. 15 at the art gallery at 104 Industrial Blvd. in Sugar Land. Representatives from Fort Bend Empty Bowls will be there from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. allowing guests to sign up to paint one of the record-breaking bowls.

The bowls Goldreich throws will be painted, fired and sold at Fort Bend Empty Bowls, April 28, 2017. The money raised will go to benefit East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry, a food pantry, financial assistance program and resale shop that serves families in temporary financial crisis in East Fort Bend County.

"I don't like to think of people going hungry," Goldreich said in preparation for the event. He said things were a bit rough growing up. "But we never went without a meal."

He broke his first record in 2009 to raise awareness for the Houston Empty Bowls. He was introduced to Fort Bend Empty Bowls when he met Lou Ann Newman, Bowls Committee Co-Chair, while walking in their neighborhood.

Goldreich had no idea there was an Empty Bowls in Fort Bend County. He immediately knew that he wanted to do something to help get the word out.

"I like the idea of having an event," said

Goldreich. He said the event would give people an opportunity to gather and learn more about Fort Bend Empty Bowls, EFBHN and the people the organization helps.

"This is amazing for us, just to bring awareness," said Vickie Coates, Executive Director at EFBHN. "So many people don't think there's hunger in Fort Bend County."

All the clay is being donated by Pamela Owens at "The Ceramic Store" in the Houston Heights. There will be seventeen judges comprised of Fort Bend community professionals.

FBJS's Sugar Plum Market is the perfect one-stop holiday shopping experience

Merchants will travel from all over Texas and beyond to showcase their unique treasures at the 2016 Sugar Plum Market.



Sugar Plum Market Committee members ready for a fabulous Preview Night! Front Row: SPM Co-Chairs, Danielle Hames and Katie Harris. Back Row: Hillary Watson, Heather Allen, Cara Millas, Heather Brown, Tracy Pipes, Taylor Connor, Jessica Miller, Caroline Bordelon, Amy Stine, Danielle Noonan, Jaynee Tierce, Michaela Brady, Stephanie Reilly, and Laura McGowen.

Patrons will be thrilled to see a mix of favorite returning vendors, as well as some fascinating new merchants during the 16th Annual holiday shopping extravaganza.

"The committee is so excited to welcome our returning and new vendors. There are new vendors in women's and children's clothing,

men's fishing wear, food, and many more," said Katie Harris, Sugar Plum Market Co-Chair. "Don't miss out on all of the wonderful merchandise."

Presented by the Fort Bend Junior Service League (FBJS) and Memorial Hermann, this year's "Making Spirits Bright" themed event will once again be held at the Stafford Centre Performing Arts Theatre and Convention Center.

Dates for the 2016 Market are Friday, Nov. 4 from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 5 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. A special Preview Night will be held from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 3.

This VIP event offers patrons the chance to be first to shop the Market.

"This is our sixth year for Preview Night and we are excited for our guests to experience some big changes to the evening's festivities," said Monica Henderson, Sugar Plum Market Co-Chair. "Our goal is to have the best Girls' Night Out party in Fort Bend County, all while raising money for our community."

Preview Night tickets (limited quantity available) are \$75 and include light hors d'oeuvres, a drink ticket, and Market entry Friday and Saturday. General Admission tickets are \$12. Both ticket options are available online at www.sugarplummarket.com.

General Admission tickets may also be purchased at local Randalls stores beginning October 1st and at the door on Market days.

The 2015 Sugar Plum Market raised a record-breaking \$285,000 for local non-profits. The 2016 Market will once again benefit numerous Fort Bend County charities.

Sponsorship and underwriting opportunities are available starting at \$250.

Top sponsors to date include title sponsor, Memorial Hermann, as well as the City of Stafford, Pamela Printing, Fort Bend Lifestyles & Homes, absolutely! focus media, Audi Sugar Land, Randalls and HEB. For information on sponsorship and underwriting opportunities, please visit www.sugarplummarket.com or e-mail information@sugarplummarket.com.



A sample of vendors making their Sugar Plum Market debut this year. Top Row: Follow Your Arrow Boutique and Pinkies Up. Bottom Row: Nested Sanctuary, Burlebo, and Dirt & Glitter Boutique.



Child Advocates of Fort Bend offers N.E.S.T program

Child Advocates of Fort Bend's N.E.S.T. (Nurturing Education and Social Triumphs) Program was established to help children (ages 6-13) build strong foundations in education, health, and social interaction.

The goal is to establish positive behaviors early in life. To that end, the children are provided with workshops, events and resources throughout the

year to start them on a path to a successful future. Seventeen children participated in the agency's week-long N.E.S.T.

Back to School Summer Program last week to get them excited and ready to start the new school year.

"The children who participate in our N.E.S.T. Back to School Workshop have the opportunity to experience invaluable educational and life lessons that will impact them for the rest of their lives," said Metoyer Martin, Child Advocates of Fort Bend CASA program Director.

"N.E.S.T. provides profound positive effects that will continue to matter into adulthood. Child Advocates of Fort Bend's N.E.S.T. Back to school workshop allows children to experience success when trying new adventures and builds self-confidence. Due to the stigma of

foster care as well as the trauma many of our children have experienced, they often lack self-esteem and confidence. N.E.S.T. helps these children practice decision making skills for themselves when participating in activities such as cooking and art projects. Children learn to interact and respect each other as well."

The week included a variety of fun and educational outings, including visits to the Houston

Zoo, Health Museum, Crocodile Encounter, and the Houston Museum of Natural Science. During a visit to Access Health, the children learned how to brush their teeth properly, what makes up each of the food groups and what constitutes a "healthy" plate. A trip to Pinot's Palette allowed them to try their hand at painting (see photo). During a session at Urban Chef, they learned to make dough and created their own pizza lunch.

Former CAFB Board Member and First Tee Houston Executive Director Doug Earl introduced the children to the game of golf and its inherent values. They discussed the importance of honesty and integrity, while learning how to hit a golf ball. Safety presentations by Fort Bend County Internet Crimes Against Children Unit, the DEA, Rosenberg Fire Department and the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Department rounded out the week. They learned how to stay safe online, how to stop, drop and roll in a fire and they enjoyed meeting Jackie, the police dog.

"My favorite thing about N.E.S.T. is "all the things we learned" stated one child at the end of the week. Another said their favorite thing was "being able to make new and more friends." Regardless of what their favorite part was, all enjoyed the week, improved their social skills and are looking forward to the start of school and more N.E.S.T. adventures.

Jingle Tree

Our six-day on-line auction of fabulously decorated trees lets you invest in science education in Fort Bend. Choose your favorite dazzling tree at any of our three showcase events, then let the bidding go wild!

Cookies with Santa

Saturday, Nov. 12

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Bubbles, Bites & Belles

Tuesday, Nov. 15

9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Jingle, Jingle Mix & Mingle

Live Auction and Close of Bidding

Thursday, Nov. 17

5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

**For more information,
visit hmns.org/sugarland**

the Houston Museum of natural science
at Sugar Land

Presenting sponsor: Sterling McCall Acura



Honorary Gala Chairs Chief Ramirez, Chief Berezin, Chief Warren, Sheriff Nehls and Chief Goates Photo courtesy of BAC PHOTOGRAPY

Rosenberg Railroad Museum's "ALL ABOARD! the Whistle Stop Gala" chugging into town

Join Honorary Gala Chairs, the First Responders of Fort Bend County at Rosenberg Railroad Museum's annual "All Aboard!" Gala on Oct. 15 at Safari Texas Ranch in Richmond at 6 p.m.

This year's gala is a celebration of America and Roosevelt's famed Whistle Stop Tour across the USA.

Gala attendees are invited to mix and mingle with other supporters of the Museum, enjoy a sit down dinner, participate in live and silent auctions and to help us honor the first responders in the community.

"We are so very excited to honor the men and women who are the first to respond to an accident or natural disaster and protect us against criminals and those that wish to do us harm," said Gala Committee Chair Lisa Rickert. "It has been a tough year for these

heroes and we hope that you will join us in sending the message that they are appreciated and admired for their selflessness."

Participating first responders include: Police Chief Dallis Warren and Fire Chief Wade Goates from Rosenberg, Police Chief Adams from Richmond, Police Chief Ramirez from Stafford, Police Chief Berezin from Missouri City and Sheriff Nehls.

As a 501(c)3, the Rosenberg Railroad Museum relies on support from the community to fulfill its mission of preservation and education of the rich railroad history of Fort Bend County with all proceeds from Gala going towards museum operating costs. To purchase tickets or to sponsor a table for the event, visit www.rosenbergRRmuseum.org or call 281-633-2846.

LIBRARY NEWS

Popular Digital Magazines Now Available Through Libraries' Flipster® Service

Patrons of Fort Bend County Libraries can now get instant access to popular magazines online through the libraries' new Flipster® service from EBSCO Information Services. Flipster is a next-generation magazine service that allows people to browse digital versions of the latest issues of popular magazines for adults, teens, and children, courtesy of the library.

Flipster magazines are full-print, full-color digital duplicates of the hardcopy print magazine, and library cardholders can now access them remotely through the Fort Bend County Libraries website, www.fortbend.lib.tx.us. The libraries' collection includes 35 popular titles for adults and 14 titles for youth, including selections such as Forbes, Essence, Car & Driver, Highlights, Comics & Gaming Magazine, and much more.

Magazines can be read online on a computer or downloaded to smartphones or tablets, including Android™ phones and tablets, Apple® phones and tablets, and Kindle Fire tablets, for offline reading anytime, anywhere on a free Flipster app that can be downloaded from the Apple App or Google Play stores.

Flipster provides an easy-to-use, browse-able reading experience. An online newsstand provides a carousel of the most recent issues in various categories, and many magazines provide access to back-issues as well.

The collection can be accessed 24/7, and there is no limit to the number of magazines that can be downloaded. There will never be overdue fines for Flipster magazines because the digital file will automatically disappear after a predetermined length of time. A magazine that is published weekly can be downloaded for 2 days, and a magazine that is published monthly can be downloaded for one week.

To browse the Flipster collection of magazines, go to FBCL website, www.fortbend.lib.tx.us, click on "Ebooks and Digital Media," and scroll down to Flipster.

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

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Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics

Epitomizes Partnership

By Marquita Griffin | mgriffin@fbherald.com



Dr. Richard W. Boyd Jr. (left) and Dr. Fred Garrett not only started their successful business on a handshake, but together they found a way to support local education.

It is rare to hear of a handshake partnership, one that endures the changes of time but 38 years ago two orthodontists, Dr. Fred Garrett and Dr. Richard W. Boyd Jr., proved that when two like-minded businessmen work together, not only would they be successful but their community would benefit as well.

1978 was the year that birthed the partnership between Dr. Garrett, who has more than 50 years of experience in orthodontics, and Dr. Boyd, who has more than 38 years experience in orthodontics. In 1984, however, the doctors, both of whom are lifetime members of the American Association of Orthodontists and board certified by the American Board of Orthodontics, solidified their partnership by opening a practice in Sugar Land on Sweetwater Blvd.

In 2011 the duo expanded their business by opening a second practice in Rosenberg's Brazos Town Center.

"They basically started the whole partnership on a handshake," said Dee Duarte, the professional relations coordinator for Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics.

As part of its services, Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics ensures efficient diagnoses and treatment through in-house digital x-rays, state of the art imaging software and iTero Digital scanning, which allows the capture of highly accurate digital impressions of the teeth and jaw and allows the doctors to simulate tooth movement. The practice also offers a variety of treatment options including Invisalign, Accelerated Treatment, as well as traditional braces, notably, without any headgear.

Dr. Boyd always says he would retire if he ever has to fit another headgear.

The Value of Community

Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics features a 15-member orthodontic team including the doctors, who rotate back and forth between the Rosenberg and Sugar Land locations.

"Essentially our patients are dealing with the same team members at both locations," said Duarte, stressing the communal bond between the practice and its patients.

"We provide a fun, friendly atmosphere in a professional setting. We want our patients to feel at ease with an open line of communication to discuss anything they feel is important about their smile. Orthodontics is a long-term commitment for each patient. We treat you like a member of our family and want to establish a relationship with all our patients."

One of the many ways the practice ensures that relationship is by offering free initial exams and screenings on children as early as age 7 to see if early interceptive treatment is need. If the child is not ready for treatment, the orthodontists continue to monitor those patients every six months until they are ready for treatment without any cost to the parents until treatment begins.

"We also offer affordable payment solutions," Duarte said. "We want everyone to enjoy the advantages of a beautiful and healthy smile."

That commitment to its patients is exactly why the Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics' story goes beyond the boundaries of a successful business narrative. Drs. Garrett and Boyd are not just about the model of supply



Sartartia Middle School has been one of many schools that have received funds from Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics.

and demand and providing top-notch care, they want to make it clear that they support the communities their patients call home.

A True Partnership

Five years ago, Dr. Garrett and Dr. Boyd decided another way to show their dedication to the communities they serve was to support education, so they launched a unique program called Partners in Education.

"In an effort to address the budget cuts to the school districts in 2011, Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics launched its Partners in Education program to become part of the solution," Duarte explained, adding that the program is a supplement to the doctors' other support efforts to the community and schools.

"I feel blessed to be an orthodontist and enjoy playing a part in my patient's life. I am also honored to be a part of our community," Dr. Boyd said. "Our Partners in Education program has allowed us to give back to our schools and show gratitude to our patients."

Through Partners in Education, Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics donates funds quarterly to the school the student attends.

"For every patient, who is a student, that starts treatment in our office, we donate \$100 directly to the school PTO/PTA the patient goes to," Duarte said.

In September Duarte reported that since the inception of the program over \$100,000 has been donated to the schools.

Some of the schools that have benefitted from this program include: George Ranch High School, Reading Junior High, Polly Ryon Middle School, Sartartia Middle School, Velasquez Elementary, Campbell Elementary, Dickenson Elementary, Travis High School, Sugar Land Middle School, First Colony Middle School, Fort Settlement Middle School and Foster High School.

"We have the privilege of creating beautiful smiles and changing the lives of our young patients," Dr. Garrett said. "We feel a responsibility to support the schools in our community and join in the partnering of developing each of these students."

Follow Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics on Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Pinterest. For more about services or the practice itself, visit lonestarbraces.com.



Bowie Middle School is grateful for Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics support.



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Saint Laurence representatives were excited about Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics' donation to education.

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On The Front Lines of Down Syndrome: *GiGi's Playhouse*™

By MARQUITA GRIFFIN | mgriffin@fbherald.com



GiGi's Playhouse site coordinator Belinda Orsborn with Grace Ross.

Fourteen years ago Nancy Gianni of Hoffman Estates, Illinois, gave birth to her third child, a little girl named GiGi, who doctors diagnosed with Down syndrome. In an open letter to the public after founding GiGi's Playhouse in 2003, Gianni describes the process of acceptance and determination she and her husband progressed through during the first few days of GiGi's life.

"Panic was welling up inside me but I was afraid for anyone to see it," she said.

"As soon as my husband and I made eye contact I said: 'If anyone can handle this we can.' ... I knew we were going to get through this together.

"Don't get me wrong — we were petrified. I can not even begin to tell you the total fear and devastation I felt. Everything they were telling us about Down syndrome was so negative. Suddenly no one had eye contact with me anymore, they kept the door to my room closed and they kept sending in the clergy."

What Gianni decided to do, in her own way, was change the attitude, to break the myths, to tear away the fear society formed around Down syndrome.

"I realized how strong she actually was," Gianni said. "[...] I made a promise to her that I would change the way the world looked at a person with Down syndrome; that I would help people understand that her and all of her friends were so much more than a diagnosis."

That promise was the first building blocks of GiGi's Playhouse, a worldwide nonprofit network that is, generally speaking, an achievement center for children and adults diagnosed with Down syndrome. Through its free programs, those diagnosed with Down syndrome are offered educational and therapeutic programs devoted to increasing self-confidence and skills.

This year Gianni was named a 2016 CNN Hero. CNN Heroes is a year-long initiative that honors everyday people for their selfless, creative efforts to help others. Each year, CNN receives thousands of nominations from around the world, and this year marks the tenth year of the Peabody Award-winning, Emmy-nominated campaign.

"This is not about me or GiGi. It is about all of us stepping up to make this world a better place,"

Gianni said after learning she was named a CNN Hero. "The real Heroes of GiGi's Playhouse include the participants themselves — they inspire me every day! — the volunteers who run 97 percent of all programming, the courageous families who embrace the journey of opening a Playhouse in their own community, and the believers who make this all possible."

Joining the National Network

To date, GiGi's Playhouse includes more than 30 center across the nation and Mexico and on Dec. 5 2015 Sugar Land became the 27th playhouse in that network and some local parents, including Greatwood's Belinda Orsborn, the site coordinator of GiGi's Playhouse in Sugar Land, wanted nothing more than to be a part of it.

"My good friend Kristi Ross has a daughter with Down syndrome and she told me all about the plan to open a GiGi's here in Sugar Land," Orsborn said. "I immediately fell in love with the whole idea of it and I jumped right in."

Prior to her role at GiGi's Playhouse Orsborn was a teacher at Alief ISD before becoming a stay at home mother.

"I had always wanted to go back and get my Special Education certification. I loved seeing the kids in the Special Education programs in Alief and I told myself if and when I ever went back that I would teach Pre-school Program for Children with Disabilities or Life Skills.

"I have always had a heart for individuals with Down syndrome and when this opportunity came up, I just couldn't pass it up," Orsborn said. "God's plan was bigger than mine and I have loved every part of GiGi's. I love that it also teaches my own children about acceptance and to love all

individuals."

As part of her responsibilities Orsborn manages the playhouse as well as its volunteers, program lessons, communication between the center and the families, community outreach and assists with events and fundraisers.

Since its inception in 2003 GiGi's Playhouses nationwide have assisted more than 25,000 children and adults with Down syndrome, but what is key to remember about GiGi's Playhouse is that its function is not only to support those diagnosed with Down syndrome, but to also shine an encouraging light on a topic society deems stark and unfortunate.

It "is place where families can come and connect with others and give them hope," Orsborn said. "It is a place where families can celebrate their child and let them know that they are not alone."

Each playhouse provides a variety of free programs that range from toddler classes to speech therapy and even features Zumba workouts.

"We offer support for all families, from diagnosis in utero to adults with Down syndrome. It helps the world see that individuals with Down syndrome are

"GiGi's Playhouse is a place where you can leave your advocate hat — that parents of children with special needs are always wearing — at the door because the moment you walk through those doors you know that nobody there needs to be convinced that your child is amazing and capable of great things."

— Kristi Ross, mother of Grace Ross, 4, who is diagnosed with Down syndrome.

accepted and embraced in their families, schools, and communities," Osborn said.

Establishing a Very Real Value

Kristi Ross knows first-hand the stigma that surrounds the diagnosis of Down syndrome. Her first bitter taste of it was when she was 32 weeks pregnant with her third child, a little girl she and her husband David named Grace.

"From the moment we got Grace's diagnosis I realized that many people — especially in the medical community — don't see a whole lot of value in children with Down syndrome," said Ross, a married Greatwood mother of three children: Abigail, Andrew and Grace.

"From the moment you get the diagnosis, you are overwhelmed with information about all the things your child won't do, all the medical problems they will likely have, and how things will never be 'easy' for you or your family again."

Ross, who is one of the founding members of the Sugar Land location of GiGi's Playhouse, said 90 percent of children with Down syndrome are aborted in utero.

"That statistic alone shows the value that society places on these precious lives," she added.

Grace, who is 4 years old, had several open heart surgeries before she was even two years old — her first at two weeks old; a second at six months; a third at 13 months; and three more before she was 16 months old. In a time when most parents biggest fears are their child battling a bad bout with flu or overcoming traditional developmental milestones, Grace Ross spent a large portion of her time in the hospital, fighting for her life.

"We knew that Grace would be born with a very broken heart, but we had no idea that she would endure so much at such a young age," Ross said.

Grace will need one or two more open heart surgeries when she is older, a fact Ross and her husband take in stride — "we trust that God will see us through, just like He did before" — but the "what if's" are always in the back of their mind.

"The thing that is hardest for us to reconcile is the 'what if' her heart can't sustain her and she requires a heart transplant?" Ross said. "At this point in time she would not be eligible for a new heart because of her extra chromosome and the associated

developmental delays."

And this, Ross said, is the crux of the issue.

"I fully understand both sides of the argument on the topic," Ross said. "But I think it speaks to the value that is often times placed on children and adults with Down syndrome, and special needs in general."

In face of all the obstacles, however, Ross acknowledges the hope for families with children diagnosed with Down syndrome.

"We have been blessed to live in a community, Greatwood, that has loved and embraced Grace and our family from the get-go," she said. "Our community has rallied around us and supported us [throughout] fundraisers, donations, loving on Grace's older sister and brother, etcetera, during some of the darkest days of our lives when we were worried that we may lose our sweet Gracie while trying to maintain a sense of normalcy for our two older children."

Ross added that Grace's teachers and the administration of Campbell and Velasquez Elementary Schools — two "amazing public schools" — believe in Grace and wholeheartedly work the with the family to ensure Grace's future but she knows her family's "experience is not necessarily the norm."

"Unfortunately, we know many that aren't nearly as fortunate and are fighting what feels like an uphill battle to get the services that their kiddos need," Ross said.

This, Ross said, is why GiGi's Playhouse is so vital to Fort Bend County.

"This is a place where new moms and dads will be met with a huge hug and congratulations because we know how amazing their journey will be despite what the rest of the world might say," she said.

"That is often times the first congratulations that they hear," Ross added sadly.

"GiGi's Playhouse is a place where you can leave your advocate hat — that parents of children with special needs are always wearing — at the door because the moment you walk through those doors you know that nobody there needs to be convinced that your child is amazing and capable of great things."

And Ross offers hope to other parents in a similar situation: Do not give up hope. Dream immensely

for your child despite the diagnosis.

"Even if we could remove the extra chromosome from Grace, we wouldn't," she said. "Not for a second because she has been the greatest blessing in the life of our family."

"My hope for Grace is that she will be all that God created her to be, and I know that God's plans will be exceedingly, abundantly, beyond anything I can even imagine. I'm confident that she will be included in main stream classes during her academic career," Ross said. "And I wouldn't be surprised if she is a soccer player, swimmer and or a cheerleader."

Grace is starting soccer this year and loves cheering her siblings on at their swim meets, soccer and basketball games..

"I can picture her and her best friend, Sadie, going to college and even being roommates some day. My two older kids want to work at The Rise School, an amazing school in Houston that Grace has attended the past two years, and for Grace to be their teachers assistant," Ross said. "Who knows? Maybe Grace will be a teacher someday. The sky is the limit."

Never on the Sidelines

For almost a year now, Ammie Blahuta's daughter Sadie has participated in GiGi's Playhouse activities and if there is one thing she proudly stresses about the nonprofit is its ability to provide children with Down syndrome — and their families — with a sense of normalcy.

"When we found out the doctor wanted to test Sadie for Down syndrome, we were so uneducated on what that meant," said Blahuta, a married Greatwood mother who is also the board president for GiGi's Playhouse. "We did not know anyone directly that had a child or family member with Down syndrome."

She recalls that when she was growing up, most children with learning disabilities were often put on the sidelines of life. They were not included. They were ignored.

"I felt scared and alone," Blahuta said when she learned Sadie was diagnosed with Down syndrome. But "GiGi's Playhouse provides us a community of others who are going through or have been through



Best friends Grace Ross and Sadie Blahuta are always excited for Princess Ballet.



The Blahuta family: Ammie and Keith Blahuta with their children Sadie and Keaton



Grace Ross knows how to squeeze every ounce of joy out of life.



Sadie knows her way around the kitchen.

our situation. It is comforting to have others to lean on, cry on and learn from.

"GiGi's Playhouse provides a safe place for individuals and their families to get together to bond and be on this journey together," she added. "GiGi's brings together our community as a whole."

That community bond, however, is not limited to families with children diagnosed with Down syndrome, and this, Blahuta said, is a prime example of why organizations like GiGi's Playhouse is so vital to Fort Bend County.

"Someone might not have a child with Down syndrome but they might come volunteer and realize how much joy there is in working with someone who does have Down syndrome and in return they become inclusive and share this with their friends and family."

In other words, the nonprofit is getting rid of those sidelines.

"Sadie is so young so not much gets to her but it has definitely been an eye opener to hear how people talk about intellectual or physical disabilities," she said. "Educating people on proper verbiage and etiquette is a big thing. Hearing the R-word is like a stab to the heart and yet, I know I have used it because I was naïve to what it meant."

Having a disability simply means living with something most others do not — that is it. And when it comes to children with Down syndrome, they are just like their peers in many ways, Blahuta stressed.

"People also always assume Sadie is 'happy,'" said Blahuta who also has a five-year-old son, Keaton. "Yes, she is happy most of the time. It is part of what brings us such joy and blessings, but she does have her moments just like any three year old. She can be quite stubborn."

Blahuta also has a slice of advice for families who received a diagnosis like her family:

"I hope if someone is struggling with the diagnosis of Down syndrome that they come to us and let us welcome them with open arms," she said. "We have programs for individuals of all ages, infants to adults. No one can prepare you for the life that we have, but we certainly can help them on their journey. Down syndrome is such a gift from God. We are the lucky ones."

What GiGi's Playhouse Has to Offer

A myriad of free programs are available at GiGi's Playhouse, including those that focus on developmental skills including: speech, fine and gross motor skills, social skills, literacy and math tutoring, fitness and nutrition, career skills and real world learning and self-confidence.

The programs are accessible to children and adults with Down syndrome and allow families and the community be involved. To date 100 families are in the database of the Sugar Land location of GiGi's Playhouse with about 40 active participants.

"The best thing about GiGi's Playhouse is that all of our programs are free to our participants and families," Blahuta said. We never want cost to be a barrier for providing the education, therapies or information needed to help our kids or adults be successful."

GiGi's Playhouse Needs Your Support

As with any nonprofit, GiGi's Playhouse operates off the work of volunteers and by community donations.

The Sugar Land location has one paid employee, a board of directors comprised of 12 local community members and about 40 volunteers.

"We are always looking for more to help with mail outs, cleaning crews, host families, event organization, tutoring and running programs." Osborn said of the nonprofit's desire to have more volunteers. "We have a place of anyone interested."

"If you have not had the pleasure of joining us at an event or volunteering, I highly encourage you to do so," Blahuta added. "We have a lot of teenagers and younger kids who volunteer and help. The joy that they have for helping our participants is indescribable."

Osborn said the center is also welcomes donations.

"Having a child with special needs can be expensive with all the extras they need from various therapies to different medical appointments and all of our programs are free," Osborn said. "We do not receive government funding so we rely 100 percent on donations so that we can provide those programs."

The cost of running each program can range anywhere from \$100 to \$500.

Donations can be made online at www.gigisplayhouse.org/sugarland or checks can be mailed to 14015 Southwest Freeway, Bldg 11, Sugar Land TX 77478.

GiGi's Playhouse also hosts fundraisers, with its biggest fundraiser, "I Have a Voice" Gala, scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Oct. 15 at Cross Key Acres, 5543 FM 762 in Richmond. Individual tickets are \$150 or \$250 for two tickets. The evening will feature dinner and cocktails, dancing, a live auction as well as a wine and whiskey pull.

The nonprofit will also host its Spring Fashion Show at the Sugar Creek Country Club this year.

Find out more information or keep up with GiGi's Playhouse in Sugar Land by visiting www.gigisplayhouse.org/sugarland or liking its Facebook page "GiGi's Playhouse Sugar Land."

"GiGi's Playhouse is on the front lines of showing our community and the world that 'different' is not bad or scary," Ross said. "Instead it's a chance to see and experience an unparalleled joy and unconditional love that our kiddos have to offer."

A Message from Kristi Ross

Our genetically enhanced kiddos are fearfully and wonderfully made in God's image just like the rest of us. They have so much to teach us and the world about what really matters in life. Having a child with Down syndrome (or what my family calls Up's) is certainly not an easy journey, but it's an awesome one that takes a village. We would love for you to join our village at Gigi's Playhouse Sugar Land. Gigi's Playhouse is a precious place to our family. Grace is always asking to go to "Gigi's House" and my older kids are always eager to volunteer there when ever possible, especially when it involves holding those sweet babies.

Programs at the Playhouse

- **Busy Bodies** is a playgroup for our babies ages 0-2 years old. We laugh, play and work on gross motor skills. It also provides a positive setting for parents to share experiences and learn from each other.

- **LMNOP** (Learning, Music 'N Our Peeps) is for ages 6 months – 3 years old. This program guides parents and infants through learning basic sign language and increases vocalization through music and movement.

- **Busy Hands, Bigger Plans** is a program for school age children that involves circle time, sensory time and strengthening fine motor skills.

- **Art Explosion** is for ages 9 and up to come and get creative. We work on different forms of art and provide a healthy outlet for children to express themselves.

- **Teentastic** is a program for our teens that promotes positive peer relationships and builds social development.

Friday Friends is a fun night out for our adults to socialize. We do anything from Karaoke to Game Night.

- **Literacy Tutoring and Handwriting** without Tears are programs we offer with one-on-one tutoring for ages 4 and up.

Want to Know More?

Visit www.gigisplayhouse.org/sugarland or check the nonprofit out on Facebook "GiGi's Playhouse Sugar Land"



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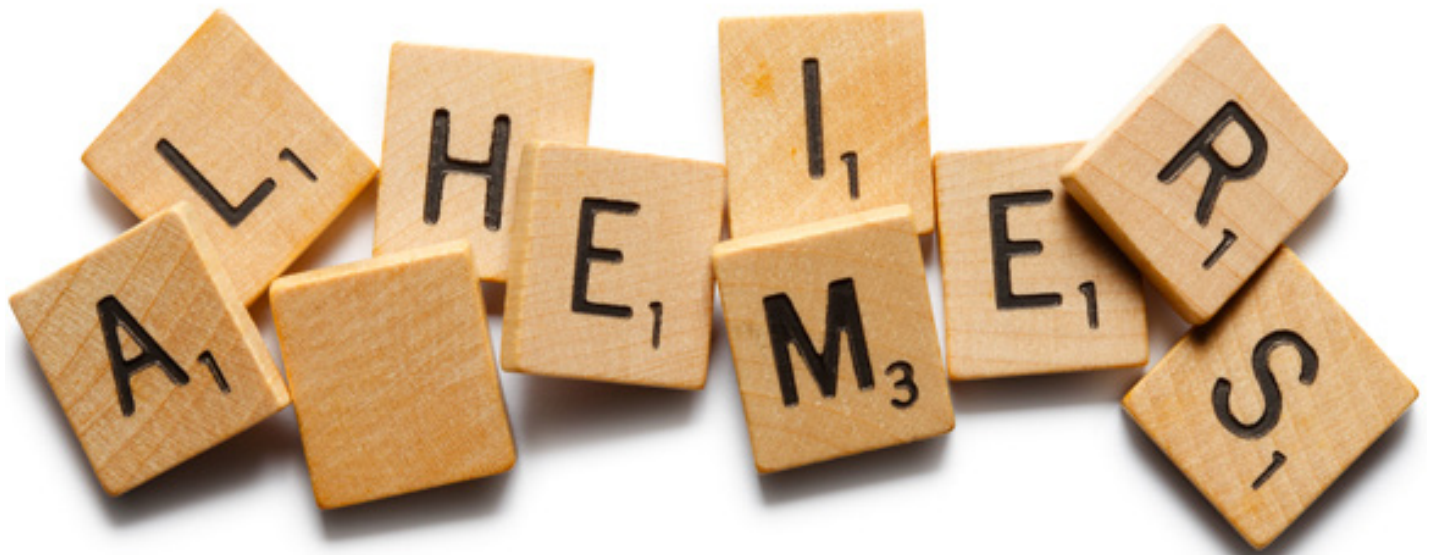


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Let's Take A **WALK** *And End*



By MARQUITA GRIFFIN | mgriffin@fbherald.com

It is a wonder that something so simple, like walking, can generate such a powerful feeling. Walking for a cause is common these days, but not all walks are the same. The Fort Bend Walk to End Alzheimer's, a rain-or-shine event happening later this month, is an emotional walk with so much energy behind it that it becomes more than people donating money and completing a 3.1 mile course.



“The Fort Bend County Walk to End Alzheimer’s is more than a walk; it is an experience,” said Marisa Ramon the Regional Outreach Coordinator for Fort Bend and Wharton. “Over 1,200 participants in Fort Bend County will learn about Alzheimer’s disease and how to get involved with this critical cause, from advocacy opportunities and clinical studies enrollment to support programs and services.”

Characterized by impaired communication, disorientation, confusion, behavior changes and, ultimately, difficulty speaking, swallowing and walking, Alzheimer’s disease is a growing epidemic and is now the nation’s sixth-leading cause of death. The Alzheimer’s Association, the world’s leading voluntary health organization devoted to Alzheimer care, support and research, stated one in three senior citizens dies with Alzheimer’s or another form of dementia and more than five million Americans are living with Alzheimer’s.

“As baby boomers age, the number of individuals living with Alzheimer’s disease will rapidly escalate, increasing well beyond today’s more than 5 million Americans to as many as 16 million by 2050,” Ramon said. “The Walk to End Alzheimer’s provides hope and raises much needed funds to support Alzheimer’s disease care, support and research.”

Currently there is no cure for Alzheimer’s and with 350,000 people who are 65 years old or older in Texas living with the disease, Ramon said there is undoubtedly a need to educate the public and support research.

“Alzheimer’s disease is a growing epidemic and the nation’s sixth-leading cause of death,” she said. “The walk in Fort Bend was one of the first Alzheimer’s walks in the Houston area close to 20 years ago and it is still one of the biggest in the area. The Fort Bend walk helps support early-stage engagement programs in the Fort Bend area, for people living with Alzheimer’s disease.”

To date, the Alzheimer’s Association Walk to End Alzheimer’s — held annually in more than 600 communities nationwide— is the nation’s largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer’s care, support and research, and Fort Bend County continues to show its support through its annual walk.

On Saturday Oct. 29, the annual Fort Bend Walk to End Alzheimer’s, which is being sponsored this year by the Alzheimer’s Association, will start at 9 a.m. at Constellation Field in Sugar Land. Ramon said this year’s goal is raise \$155,600. Last year, the walk raised more than \$140,000.

“All funds raised through Walk to End Alzheimer’s further the care, support and research efforts of the Alzheimer’s Association,” Ramon said.

In addition to the 5K walk, participants also honor those affected by Alzheimer’s disease with the poignant Promise Garden ceremony. Plus they will enjoy KHOU 11 news reporter and anchor Mia Gradney as the event’s emcee who will pay a special tribute to those who have experienced or are experiencing Alzheimer’s.

Event Details

Strollers are allowed, but, skateboards, bicycles, inline skates and wheelie footwear are discouraged, and depending on the Walk location rules, well-behaved dogs are welcome, but must be on a leash at all times.

Registration for the walk is free, but walkers are asked to make a personal donation which will be used to further the care, support and research efforts of the Alzheimer’s Association, a nonprofit organization.

In addition to the walk, participants will enjoy entertainment and special tributes to those who experienced or are experiencing Alzheimer’s.

For more information visit the Alzheimer Association’s web site at www.alz.org, call 713-314-1346 or email walk@alztx.org.

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Join Richmond-Rosenberg Alzheimer's Support Group

Alzheimer's support doesn't end with this month's walk, though. Richmond-Rosenberg area caregivers of patients diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or other related dementias also share information and learn about coping with such a diagnosis at a monthly "Caregivers Support Group" hosted by the Richmond-Rosenberg Alzheimer's Support Group.

The group meets the first Thursday of each month from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at St. John's United Methodist Church, 400 Jackson St. in Richmond, across from the historic Fort Bend County Courthouse. The meeting is open to all caregivers in the surrounding areas who are interested in learning more about Alzheimer's and how to live with the impacts of this disease.

The support group offers speakers, question and answer sessions, information sharing and general discussion of how Alzheimer's affects us as individuals, families and communities. The Oct. 6 meeting, "Coping with Uncertainty," will be presented by Alzheimer Association's Fort Bend Outreach Coordinator, Marisa Ramon. Group discussion will follow the presentation.

Free and open to the public, the Richmond-Rosenberg Alzheimer's Support Group is presented by the Alzheimer's Association Houston and Southeast Texas Chapter (713-314-1313 or 1-800-272-3900) and sponsored by Faith United Methodist Church and St. John's United Methodist Church.



Additionally, the support group is sponsoring a walking team in association with the Alzheimer's Association 2016 Fort Bend County Walk to End Alzheimer's on Saturday, Oct. 29.

The community is invited to join Team Richmond/Rosenberg Alzheimer's Support Group by logging onto: http://act.alz.org/site/TR/Walk2015/General?team_id=341113&pg=team&fr_id=9332

Kim Galloway is Team Captain for the Richmond/Rosenberg Alzheimer's Support Group "Care to Walk" team. You can also reach the page by visiting www.alz.org and searching for the team "Richmond/Rosenberg Alzheimer's Support Group."

The group features a Facebook Page: Richmond-Rosenberg Alzheimer's Support Group. (www.facebook.com/groups/RichmondRosenbergAlzheimersSupport) and can be reached via e-mail at richmonddementia2014@gmail.com.

More Programs

Other area activities for family caregivers and their loved ones include Memory Café.

Memory Café is an informal social gathering for caregivers and individuals living with Alzheimer's Disease. The group provides a social setting where all participants can feel comfortable and relaxed.

Memory Café meets the third Thursday at the Mamie George Senior Center, 1111 Collins Road in Richmond at 9:30 a.m.

For additional information about the group, please contact Alzheimer's Association Fort Bend County Outreach Coordinator Marisa Ramon at 1-800-272-3900 or mmaron@alz.org.



Fort Bend Walk to End Alzheimer FAQs

What is a Promise Garden Flower?

On Walk day, participants will receive a wristband. Each registered walker with a wristband will receive a Promise Garden flower which best represents their connection to the disease.

- **Blue** represents someone with Alzheimer's or dementia
- **Purple** is for someone who has lost a loved one to the disease.
- **Yellow** represents someone who is currently supporting or caring for someone with Alzheimer's.
- **Orange** is for everyone who supports the cause and vision of a world without Alzheimer's.

Registration

Every walker, including children, are required to register. There is no registration fee for the walk, however, every walker will be asked to make a personal donation and commit to raising funds in the fight against Alzheimer's. Parents/guardians can register children online or complete an offline registration form and sign the waiver on behalf of the child.

How to get offline donations to show up on personal fundraising webpage?

Donations can be made offline by submitting a check or money order by mail or hand-delivering to the local Alzheimer's Association office. Be sure to include your offline donation form, which can be found in your Participant Center or on your fundraising Web page, to make sure you receive credit for the donation. Donations typically take 1-2 weeks to show up on your Web page.

Want to volunteer?

Volunteers are needed to help with set-up, clean-up, registration, water stops, promise garden, the T-shirt tent and so much more. All interested volunteers should visit the Fort Bend Walk to End Alzheimer volunteer page for more information about event day roles and responsibilities.

EVENT AT A GLANCE

What: 5K Fort Bend Walk to End Alzheimer

When: Saturday, Oct. 29; registration is at 7:30 a.m., the ceremony is at 8 a.m. followed by the walk at 8:30 a.m.

Where: Constellation Field, 1 Stadium Drive in Sugar Land.

Why: All funds raised through Walk to End Alzheimer's further the care, support and research efforts of the Alzheimer's Association. The Alzheimer's Association is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. All donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law. Find out more at www.alz.org

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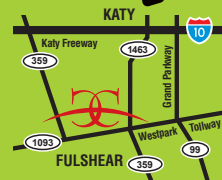
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Fort Bend County is no stranger to urban legends or ghost tales and some of the best tales are at your fingertips if you visit the George Memorial Library.

Sixteen years ago, long-time library and museum volunteer John C. Allwright compiled a collection of ghost stories that he recalled from throughout his lifetime of living in the Rosenberg/Richmond area. The collection was published as "Fort Bend Ghost Stories," and Allwright donated the proceeds from the sales of this book to the Genealogy and Local History Department at George Memorial Library.

The book is one of five that Allwright wrote before his death in 2005. Dedicated to preserving the history of the Rosenberg/Richmond area, Allwright documented his memories of growing up in the area, raising children and grandchildren, and relating the rich history of the area to countless other individuals that he encountered as a volunteer at the library and as a docent at the Fort Bend Museum.

Allwright's memories of growing up in the area and watching the many changes which took place over the years filled three other volumes — "My Memories of Rosenberg," "People of Fort Bend County That I Met,"

and "Fort Bend County Ghost Stories," which is a sequel to "Fort Bend Ghost Stories." His final book was "Short Stories," written in 2003.

For many years, Allwright fascinated the children of the county with tales of ghostly appearances in the area, and he was finally convinced to write them down.

The original "Fort Bend Ghost Stories" features more than 35 stories of ghosts who have haunted the local area throughout its illustrious past. From the "Cotton Seed Mill Robber" to the "Brazos River Ghost" and many more, Allwright brought to life the ghostly residents of the county once again.

The Genealogy and Local History Department at George Memorial Library currently has copies of Allwright's "Fort Bend Ghost Stories" and "Short Stories" available for sale. Proceeds from sales of the book benefit the department at the library.

For more information, call the library system's Public Information Office at 281-633-4734.

Ghost Tours Teeming With History

But perhaps a book is not enough to give you the scare you are looking for. If that is the case, ghost tours hosted by two women will be held in Downtown Historic Richmond for those interested in a bit of creepy history.

Melissa Dixon, owner of Texas Tour Connection who has been involved with local touring in Houston, Galveston and Fort Bend County since 1993, is again hosting her annual Ghost Tours in Downtown Richmond. Whether folks believe the spooky tales or not, the tours are a popular event for Richmond in October.

Dixon's tours are set for Fridays Oct. 21 and 28 and Saturdays, Oct. 15, 22 and 29 at 7 p.m.

All tours this year will meet at Richmond City Hall and the costs to take the tour are \$20 for adults and \$18 for students.

Although the tours will mainly focus about the eerie history of downtown Richmond — so nothing too scary — Dixon stresses that small children should not participate in the tours.

"If people want hardcore séances, I have suggestions for other (guides), but my tours are light, they're entertainment," she said.

Dixon said she will also host private tours, as long as they are

scheduled. Even before October the enthusiastic tour guide had been booked for a few private tours.

"The tour will be similar [to prior years]," Dixon said. "I am looking to make a few changes this year

"But we will still do the jail," she added with a smile.

The jail — the Richmond jail that was built in 1897 — is a popular highlight on the tour and has been the center of many ghost stories.

There is a story about two men who were accused of murdering a woman in Richmond decades ago, and while one man confessed another declared his innocence until his dying breath. The word is that the man who claimed to be innocent still returns to the jail in phantom form still reminding everyone he was not guilty.

Stories similar to this will be told at each of the stops on Dixon's tour. She also advises visitors to wear comfortable shoes and to bring a flashlight and a camera.

For more information or to reserve a spot on a tour call 713-826-6963, email melissa@texastourconnection.com or visit texastourconnection.com.

Adults Only: Black & White Masquerade at the Fort Bend Museum

Visit the Fort Bend Museum on Friday, Oct. 28 for a Black & White Masquerade just in time for Halloween. From 6:30 to 9 p.m., guests ages 21 and up can enjoy hearty appetizers and signature cocktails, wine and beer while surrounded by the spooky-yet-festive atmosphere of the historic Moore Mansion.

"For the past two years, we have offered an All Hallow's Eve-themed house tour in honor of Ivy Moore, John Moore's eldest daughter who loved to host Halloween parties at the home for local children," said Site Director Shereen Sampson. "This year we decided to step it up a notch."

Guests are encouraged to dress in black or white cocktail attire and will be able to get their fortunes told, take a tour of the eerily-decorated 1883 mansion and have a portrait taken next to a Victorian-era glass hearse. There will also be a contest for the best Venetian-style mask.

Fort Bend County Museum Association board member Keely Knipling is helping lead the event committee and says she is especially excited about decorating for the house tours.

"The thought and creativity that has gone into decorating each room of the house is going to result in something truly fabulous," she said. "The black and white theme is also really fun – I just love the chance to dress up and have an awesome event so close to home at the Fort Bend Museum. Having the backdrop of such a gorgeous old home doesn't hurt either."

Tickets are \$40 per person for members of the Fort Bend County Museum Association and \$45 per person for non-members. Must be age 21+. For more information, call 281-342-6478 or visit www.fortbendmuseum.org.

But wait, there is more.

Since the Masquerade is for adults only, , on Oct. 29, the museum is presenting Miss Ivy's Spooktacular Halloween Party, a family-friendly Halloween experience.

The party runs from 2 p.m to 5 p.m. followed by Spooky House Tours from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. The cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 per child. If you are a member of the Fort Bend County Museum Association, the cost is \$8 for adults and \$3 per child.

Spooky games, mysterious tricks and sweet treats will be part of the fun. For those who dare to enter the 1883 historic Moore Mansion, guests will step into the pages of horror classics by authors such as Bram Stoker, Edgar Allen Poe and Mary Shelley.

The Fort Bend Museum is located at 500 Houston Street in Richmond. For more information, call 281-342-6478 or visit www.fortbendmuseum.org.



Ready for the Black & White Masquerade are (front row) Colleen Collins, Ana Alicia Estrada; (second row) Jessica Avery; (third row) Keely Knipling and Letha Wood; and (back row) Dottie Allen.

Fort Bend Symphony Orchestra Kicks Off Its 25th Season With Two Performances This Month

The Fort Bend Symphony Orchestra opens its 25th season on Sunday, Oct. 9, at 2 p.m. in the Stafford Centre, 10505 Cash Road, with a concert evoked by George Gershwin's most famous work, Rhapsody in Blue.



Photo by Susan Lynch Rhapsody in Blue: Stacey Tharalson, Katherine Leskin, Patricia Kelley, Andrea Cope, Tofik Khanmamedov, Jordan Nickerson. Seated: Dan Patterson, Elyssa Munden.

Internationally award-winning Israeli-American pianist Tali Morgulis joins FBSO for this special event.

She appears as soloist with orchestras and chamber music groups across the globe, and can often be found in Houston as a regular performer with Musiq.

Ms. Morgulis began her musical studies at the age of four, and she holds her doctorate degree from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston.

Dominique Røyem, FBSO's music director, chose the selections on Rhapsody in Blue specifically to evoke the elegant jazz so characteristic of the title composition's time period.

From W. C. Handy's St. Louis Blues...to Leroy Anderson's Jazz Legato...moving into a Duke Ellington medley arranged by Calvin Custer...1927's Three Shades of Blue: Indigo...Serenade in Blue, the 1942 swing song made famous by Glenn Miller's Orchestra...Broadway's Highlights from West Side Story...the jazzy pop sounds of A Fifth of Beethoven and other selections on the jazz theme round out this enjoyable family-friendly performance.

Later in the month, give your Halloween costume a trial run when you join Fort Bend Symphony Orchestra for a spooky evening of fun at Hauntcert on Sugar Land Town Square, Sat., October 29.

The concert begins at 7:30, when Conductor Dominique Røyem leads the costumed orchestra as they perform Halloween favorites from popular music, the classics and even video games.

Included on the program are Michael Jackson's Thriller, In the Hall of the Mountain King, The Phantom of the Opera and the theme from Star Wars.

There will be a costume parade during intermission, around 8 p.m. Bring the kids and the lawn chairs - the concert is free of charge.

More information on the concert and a full list of musical selections can be found at www.fbsso.org. There are surprises in store, so be sure to check the website for more information as the concert draws near.



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Season Ticket Information

The four-concert series for FBSO's 2016-17 season is available for early subscribers until October 9 at a special price of \$112 - 160 (box seats), \$72 - 104 (orchestra seats) \$56 - 76 (mezzanine seats) and \$40 - 56 (balcony seats). There is a 10% discount for seniors 55 and over and military, with a 5% discount for all other adult packages.

Season ticket prices for middle and high school students (aged 13 - 18) are \$40. Children 2 and under are free when accompanied by an adult, but must have a ticket, and season tickets for children 3 - 12 are priced at \$20.

Tickets may be purchased online at fbso.org or by calling 281.276.9642.

HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS

Fulshear Scarecrow Festival at Cross Creek Ranch: Oct. 15

The 7th Annual Scarecrow Festival, which will benefit Texana and Arts Fulshear, is scheduled for 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission into the festival is free and open to the public but the all-day carnival tickets are \$10 per person. Considered West Houston's biggest collection of scarecrows, the festival will feature creative, full-size scarecrows, live music, a Carnival, food trucks, apple bobbing, face painting, pumpkin decorating and more.

For more visit www.crosscreektexas.com.



GREATWOOD VETERINARY HOSPITAL

At Greatwood Veterinary Hospital, we are dedicated to providing excellent and compassionate care for your furry, family friends. We offer full veterinary services in our new, spacious 6,500 square foot facility. Our experienced and caring veterinarians and staff strive to provide the best quality care available for your pets, with an emphasis on client education and an understanding of your pet's specific needs. We would like to be partners with you in ensuring your pet's good health and well-being. In addition to full medical, surgical, and dental veterinary care, we also offer boarding, grooming, and cremation services. Greatwood Veterinary Hospital has been providing affordable and quality veterinary care to the Fort Bend area for over 15 years. It is our hope that we can meet all your animal's health care needs with our warm, friendly, and knowledgeable services.

To make an appointment for your pet or for more information, please call us at (281) 342-7770 or visit us at 401 Crabb River Road in Richmond.

Haute Halloween: A Dueling Piano Experience: Oct. 28

7:30 p.m. - 09:30 p.m.

Held in Sugar Land Town Square this event kicks off the Halloween weekend by featuring Felix and Fingers Dueling Pianos who will entertain you with an interactive, all request, laugh out loud show for all ages. From Frank to Hank, Elton John to Lil' John, come ready to sing and dance as Felix and Fingers cover all your favorite requests! Jupiter will be serving beer and wine for \$5/each.

All Hallow's Day: Oct. 29

9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Learn about 100 years of Halloween pasts with the George Ranch Historical Park's fun historic Halloween games and activities, historic candy trick and treating and an exciting scavenger hunt around the Park. Free with general admission.

City of Rosenberg BOO-berg Halloween Carnival: Oct. 29

The City of Rosenberg will again host its popular BOO-berg Halloween Carnival from 10 a.m. to noon at Seabourne Creek Nature Park. The free event is produced by the City's Parks and Recreation Department to give children ages 10 year old and under an opportunity to come out and enjoy the park while participating in fun and safe games and activities with prizes and giveaways. Children are welcome to come in costume and must be accompanied by an adult.

Ghosts & Grub: Oct. 29

7 p.m. - 10 p.m.

When night falls on October 29, adults and children 12 years old and older are invited to enjoy a spooking-ly delightful dinner plus nighttime walking tour of the George Ranch Historical Park — complete with stories of ghostly encounters. Evening event: Advance reservations required. Reserve your spot by calling 281-343-0218 or emailing education@georgeranch.org. Cost is \$20 per person; recommended for ages 12+. The event will run from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. and incorporates more than a mile of walking, so guests are encouraged to wear good walking shoes and bring flashlights.

City of Sugar Land's Halloween Town: Oct. 30

The fun and frights of Halloween Town returns! Come dressed in your most boo-tiful costume and enjoy the various games and activities planned for the evening. Wear your most creative costume and enter Halloween Town's costume contest! Pets, children and even groups are welcome to join in. Please click here for additional information. A free shuttle service will run from Mercer Stadium at 16403 Lexington Blvd. to Sugar Land Town Square from 3:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Limited parking is available in Town Square & all traffic will need to enter from Town Center Blvd. To avoid traffic delays, the use of shuttle service is strongly encouraged. Event attendees are asked to use the Sweetwater Exit if traveling from US 59.

Admission and all activities are free and open to the general public. For more information, visit the COSL website or call 281-275-2885.

Send Us Your Photos!

If you or your kids are dressing in costumes for Halloween, send us your photos for a chance for them to appear in the next edition of the magazine. Please no sexual or grisly photos. Send your photos to mgriffin@fbherald.com with "Halloween Photos" in the subject line. Please identify everyone in the photos.



Did I Just See A GHOST?



As some of you may know, I have been airbrushing at a 1920's era movie theater in Historic Downtown Rosenberg Texas since August.

This movie theater was first opened in 1919 and named the Liberty Theater. In 1937, Mart Cole purchased the movie theater and renamed it the Cole Theater. It has many years of history and retains the same look today as it

did when Mr. Cole purchased and renovated it in the late 1930s.

The local business owner who now owns the Cole Theater hired me to airbrush the front of the theater to appear as if it was being worked on and soon to open. While opening this historic landmark is not actually in the works, the artwork brightens up the façade either way.

This now brings me to the incident that occurred while I was airbrushing on August 5th.

It was about 2 o'clock and I was mid-way through the day and the sweltering heat was taking its toll.

I was painting my last wall and facing away from the theater's front door. I had placed my small ladder far enough into the covered space where I was working so the sun would not directly hit it, yet still outside of my work space. This resulted in the ladder being up against the front glass door.

Now, the front glass door, when opened, swings outwards. This is the only door you can use to get in and out of the theater since the rear door located at the back alley is locked and secure.

While painting, I heard the door slam shut. I immediately turned to look and the ladder was still placed right up against the door. Additionally, there were no "persons of interest" in the immediate area who could have been identified as the perpetrators of the mysterious door-slam.

So this only left one other option, to look inside the glass door to see who might have been the culprit. There stood a man about five feet away from me, inside the theater and on the other side of the glass, walking the other direction with his head turned my way. He stopped, smiled and nodded his head as if to say "Hi, how are you?"

I nodded back and smiled as he continued walking into the abyss.

Now mind you, the theater has no electricity (unless you activate it from the breaker box), has been empty for a millennium, and is darker than Charles Manson's childhood. I wondered why this man, a middle-aged Mexican man, would simply walk into the back theater room with absolutely no lights on, not to return to the front area at all.

About an hour later, I was ready to clean up and load my supplies and materials into my truck.

Not wanting to lock the guy inside, I stepped in and yelled for him. Nobody answered, the place was quiet, desolate and now, mysterious. It immediately hit me: How in the world did anybody get into the place when the ladder never moved from blocking the front door and the back door is locked and secure? Who in their right mind would walk into a pitch dark room and not return at all — and furthermore, disappear? So, I locked the door and went to see the building's owner to return the keys.



I told this short story to the owner, only for her eyes to widen. She said: "You did know that there are accounts of ghosts being seen in there, but not to the extent that you just experienced, right?"

I had absolutely no clue that ghosts have been seen in the theater in the past. I never would have guessed in a million years that I would ever witness one, if in fact this is the case.

I can only surmise that what I did witness was a middle aged Mexican ghost with a very cheerful disposition if somehow, however, that middle-aged Mexican man with a cheerful disposition was simply my own reflection in the glass, I would respectfully ask that you please disregard everything I've written up to this point.

Still, what I believe I experienced was a travel through another dimension, a dimension not only of sight and sound but of mind. A journey into a wondrous land whose boundaries are that of imagination.

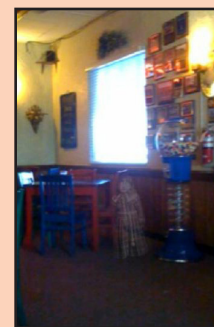
— Paul Sanchez, President/Owner of Simply Artistic, Inc.

There Was An App For That!

Did you know that Larry's Mexican Restaurant in Richmond was at the center of some ghost-sighting gossip? In 2010 a photo began circulating the web, primarily through email, saying a ghost was not only seen at the local restaurant but also caught on a camera phone.

As it turns out that "ghost" was a feature, a "stock spirit" if you will, in a phone app "Ghost Capture."

The image eventually made its way to Snopes.com where the rumors were put to rest. (<http://www.snopes.com/photos/supernatural/dinerghost.asp>)



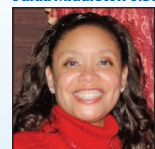
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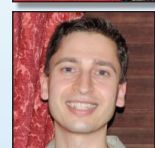
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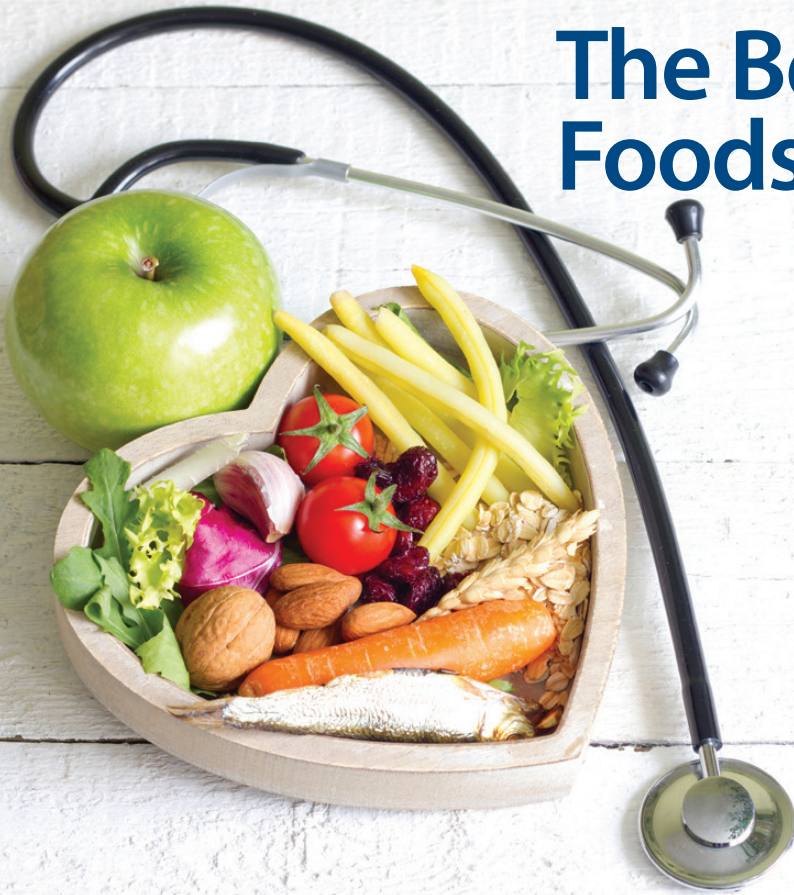
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The Best (and Worst) Foods for Heart Health



No one wants to hear from their doctors that they have joined the millions of people across the globe to be diagnosed with heart disease. The Heart Foundation reports that heart disease, which includes diseases of the heart and cardiovascular system and stroke, is the No. 1 cause of death in the United States, affecting both men and women and most racial/ethnic groups. Heart disease also is one of the leading causes of death in Canada, claiming more than 33,000 lives per year.

Many factors contribute to the development of heart disease, including smoking, lack of exercise and stress. Diet and whether a person is overweight or obese also can have a direct link to heart health. Diet, particularly for those with diabetes and poorly controlled blood sugar levels, is a major concern.

A variety of foods are considered helpful for maintaining a strong and healthy heart and cardiovascular system, while others can contribute to conditions that may eventually lead to cardiovascular disease or cardiac arrest. Moderation enables a person to sample a little of everything, but not to make any one food a habit. The following are some foods to promote heart health and some foods you might want to avoid.



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- Headaches / Migraines
- Stroke • Neck/Back Pain
- Dementia / Alzheimer's Disease
- Movement Disorders / Parkinson's Disease
- Neuropathy / Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
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GOOD

- **Tree Nuts:** Tree nuts contain unsaturated fats that can help lower LDL cholesterol (the bad stuff) and improve HDL (the good stuff). Nuts also are a filling source of protein and other healthy nutrients.
- **Whole Grains:** Whole grains contain complex carbohydrates for energy, as well as protein and fiber. Fiber can help scrub cholesterol from the blood, lowering bad cholesterol levels.
- **Fatty Fish:** Many cold-water, fatty fish, such as halibut, herring and salmon, contain omega-3 fatty acids, which are heart-healthy. Omega-3s also can be found in walnuts, flaxseed and some soy products.
- **Beans:** Beans and other legumes are an excellent source of protein and can be a stand-in for meats that are high in saturated fat. Beans also contain cholesterol-lowering soluble fiber and folate, which can reduce blood homocystein levels. The Bean Institute reports that consuming beans may reduce cholesterol levels by roughly six to 10 percent.
- **Yogurt:** Researchers in Japan found yogurt may protect against gum disease. Left untreated, gum disease may elevate a person's risk for heart disease. Yogurt contains good bacteria that can counteract bad bacteria and boost immunity.
- **Raisins:** Raisins contain antioxidants that may help reduce inflammation. Inflammation is often linked to heart disease and other debilitating conditions. Fresh produce also is a good source of antioxidants.

POOR

- **Fried Foods:** Many fried foods have little nutritional value, as they tend to be high in saturated and trans fats. French fries are particularly bad because they are carbohydrates fried and then doused in salt.
- **Sausage:** Processed meats have frequently earned a bad reputation among cardiologists, but sausage can be a big offender, due in large part to its high saturated fat content.
- **Red Meats:** Enjoying a steak is probably not as bad as eating a deep-fried brownie, but it's best to limit red meat consumption to about 10 percent or less of your diet. Red meats can have a considerable amount of cholesterol, saturated fat and calories.
- **Added Sugars:** Sugar can increase blood pressure and triglyceride levels. Sugar often hides out in foods that you would not associate with the sweetener. Plus, many people unwittingly consume too much sugar simply through sugar-sweetened beverages and ready-to-eat cereals.
- **Salty Foods:** Leave the salt shaker in the spice cabinet and opt for herbs for flavoring, advises the American Heart Association. High-sodium diets often are to blame for hypertension, a major risk factor for heart disease.
- **Dairy:** Artery-clogging saturated fat also can be found in dairy products, particularly the full-fat versions. Butter, sour cream and milk can be problematic when people overindulge. Opt for low-fat dairy when possible.

Oakbend Medical Group Announces New Interventional Cardiologist

OakBend Medical Group is pleased to announce the addition of Dr. Sachin Jain as the newest doctor to join the OakBend Medical Group family of physicians.

Jain comes to OakBend Medical Group as an interventional cardiologist. An interventional cardiologist is a cardiologist with one to two years of additional education and training in diagnosing and treating cardiovascular disease as well as congenital (present at birth) and structural heart conditions through catheter-based procedures, such as angioplasty and stenting.

Dr. Jain received a Post Graduate Diploma in Hospital Management from Annamalai University in India. He did his Internal Medicine Residency and his General Cardiology fellowship at Providence Hospital in Southfield, Michigan. Immediately following, he did his Interventional Cardiology Fellowship then his



Endovascular Cardiology Fellowship at Mount Sinai Heart in New York City.

Jain is board certified in Nuclear Cardiology, Registered Peripheral Vascular Interpretation, Adult Echocardiography, and Diplomate of American Board of Internal Medicine in both Internal Medicine and Cardiovascular Diseases.

Dr. Jain speaks English, Hindi, Tamil and Marwari and enjoys playing chess, swimming and golf.

His career plans involve his desire to be an interventional cardiologist with extensive peripheral endovascular skills and knowledge to allow him to be a well-rounded cardiologist. According to Jain, "My interest is to develop these skills in order to provide a myriad of therapeutic options to my patients."

If you need an appointment or just want to visit, Dr. Jain is located at 1601 Main Street, Suite 502, Richmond, Texas 77469 Tel: 281-633-4925 Fax 281-633-4929.



CANDY BAR POPCORN

This is a much-too-easy yummy treat. You can substitute the Snickers with any variety of meltable candy bars.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3.5 ounce) Package Microwave Popcorn
- 1 King Size Bar Chocolate-Coated Caramel-Peanut Nougat Candy

DIRECTIONS:

Pop the popcorn according to the package directions. While the corn pops, cut the candy bar into 1/2 inch pieces. Spread the popped corn onto a microwave-safe platter (I like to use paper plates for easy clean up). Top with candy bar pieces. Heat on full power in the microwave at 30 second intervals, or until candy is melted.

ACORN CANDY COOKIES

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 Tablespoon Prepared Chocolate Frosting
- 24 Milk Chocolate Candy Kisses (such as Hershey's Kisses unwrapped)
- 24 Mini Vanilla Wafer Cookies (such as Nilla)
- 24 Butterscotch Chips

DIRECTIONS:

Smear a small amount of frosting onto the flat bottom of a candy kiss. Press onto the flat bottom of the vanilla wafer. Smear a little more frosting onto the flat bottom of a butterscotch chip, and press onto the rounded top of the cookie. Repeat with remaining ingredients. Set aside to dry, about 30 minutes.



33rd annual

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MINI CANDY BAR COOKIES

INGREDIENTS:

- 60 Mini Chocolate-Coated Caramel-Peanut Nougat Candy Bars (such as Snickers)
- 2 (18.25 ounce) Packages French Vanilla Flavored Cake Mix
- 2 Eggs
- 2/3 Cup Vegetable Oil
- 1/4 Cup Water



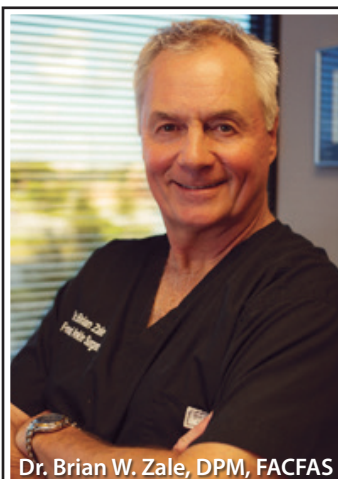
DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Unwrap all the mini candy bars.

Empty the 2 cake mixes into a large bowl, and stir eggs, vegetable oil, and water into the mixes. The batter will be stiff. Roll heaping tablespoons of dough into 1-inch balls. Push a mini candy bar into the cookie ball, and carefully cover the entire

candy piece with dough. If any chocolate is visible, the cookie will leak. Place the filled cookies onto the prepared baking sheets.

Bake in the preheated oven for 11 minutes. Cookies will not look brown on top. Cool for 5 minutes on the baking sheets before removing to finish cooling on racks.



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Dr. Taren L. Cardona, DPM

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Honorary Sugar Shindig Committee Fort Bend ISD Board of Trustees L to R: 1st row: KP George, Noreen Covey, Vice President - FBEF Auxiliary; Grayle James, Ad-die Heyliger, Kristin Tassin, 2nd row: KP George, Dave Rosenthal, Jim Rice

Fort Bend Education Foundation Hosts 2nd Annual Sugar Shindig

Enjoy a sweet time at the Fort Bend Education Foundation's 2nd Annual Sugar Shindig presented by Safari Texas on Friday, Oct. 21, at 6:30 p.m.

Shimmy over to Safari Texas for a casual evening of fun and frolic, including a fajita dinner, a dessert auction and dancing to the music of Password.

This is camaraderie at its finest as staff from our schools and community members vie for the best cakes made by local bakers.

The event is hosted by the Angels of Education Auxiliary, whose mission is to create community awareness for the Foundation's Grants to Teachers and

Schools programs.

Have your cake and eat it too at this shindig! To purchase tickets, adults only \$25/person, or make donations, visit www.fortbendisd.com/foundation.

Fort Bend County Libraries Helps Students Excel With Online Homework Help

Fort Bend County Libraries' Brainfuse HelpNow (Homework Tutoring) program enables the library system to provide online homework assistance in a broad range of subjects in both English and Spanish for students in grades K through 12, free of charge.

This tutoring program is an Internet-based service that provides library patrons with live, on-demand homework help, seven days a week, from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m.. Certified tutors are experienced in Math, Science, Social Studies, and English/Language Arts. If live, real-time assistance is not needed, students may also submit questions any time of the day or night, and emailed responses will arrive within 24 hours.

Math tutors assist with basic skills, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and calculus, while science tutors are versed in biology, chemistry, physics, and earth-science subjects. Social studies tutors cover American history, world history, and political science. English/language arts instructors provide help with writing, reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary skills, as well as help in English literature. Tutors are also able to assist with Advanced Placement (AP) subjects and introductory college courses.

The program includes a 24-hour writing lab, which allows students to submit papers online to trained writing instructors at any time; students receive feedback within 24 hours. Writing experts evaluate the submitted paper and provide constructive comments with the aim of helping students become better writers.

In addition to homework help, the homework tutoring program offers a Skills Building section in which students may receive additional exercises to help them master the concepts being taught in their homework lessons. Skills-building lessons involve one-to-one sessions with live instructors. These tutors utilize a library of field-tested, state-aligned lessons, including age-appropriate content, reading passages, simulated test questions, and worksheets to help students master key academic areas.

Students may access this resource from any computer – whether at home, school, or at the library – by going to the library's website, www.fortbend.lib.tx.us. Click on the "Homework Tutoring" link on the main webpage or the "Live Homework Tutoring" link in the Youth Pages section, type in the barcode number from the FBCL library card, and then enter the Homework Help area or the Skills Building area. There is no time limit to the sessions.

The first time patrons utilize the service from home, they may receive a prompt requesting that they install ActiveX software from the Brainfuse website. Patrons may choose to complete an optional registration form. Completing this registration allows the user to submit papers for feedback, to receive emailed responses, or to review old sessions. While an email address is needed if the user wishes to submit questions or receive feedback, it is not necessary to have an email address to take advantage of the live homework help during the scheduled hours that the service is available.

All tutors are required to have a four-year college degree and to undergo extensive background and reference checks. They are also subject to a rigorous selection-and-training process, multiple screening interviews, and skills-testing. Ongoing monitoring of online sessions ensures security and instructional quality.






For more information, call the Fort Bend County library system's Public Information Office at 281-633-4734.



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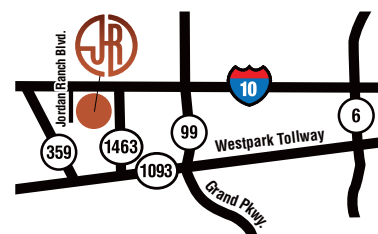
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Calvary Episcopal Preparatory is Off to a Great Start for the 2016-2017 School Year

By Krista Kuperus | Director of Admissions & Advancement

This school year represents a milestone for Calvary as it celebrates the 60th anniversary of serving students and families in the Fort Bend Area. There is also excitement this year as over 50 new Crusaders have joined Calvary. Although most new students come to Calvary from other public or private school in Fort Bend County, 10 are international students, grades 7-12, who come from China, Vietnam and Malaysia. These students are at Calvary to study as well as learn the culture and traditions of our country.

A few visual changes at Calvary are the new BrightLink interactive boards in all of the class rooms and new lockers throughout middle and high school. Calvary Parent Teacher Organization (CPTO), Gary and Amy Randolph and Student Council funded these enhancements and brought much excitement to faculty and students.

PERFORMING AT A SKEETERS GAME

After only three days of school, Calvary Episcopal Preparatory choir director Paula "Ms. Cookie" Smith had a talented group ready to perform the national anthem at the opening of the Skeeters baseball game. Students from pre-kindergarten to high school were on hand for the performance and the game that followed. Headmaster, Mr. MacIom Smith and Father Paul Wehner even got to throw out the first pitch. It was a great night full of Calvary spirit and ballpark excitement.

FOOTBALL OFF TO A GREAT START

Calvary Episcopal Preparatory's football team, under the direction of coach Frederick Brooks, is off to a great start with a decisive victory over Wesley in a game played at "home field" at the TW Davis YMCA.



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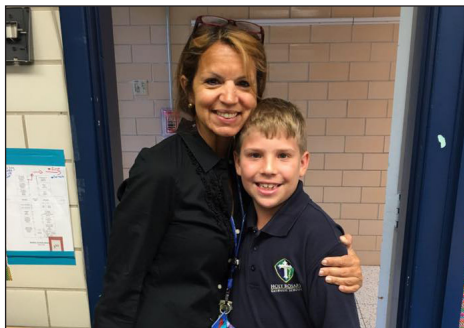
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Holy Rosary Catholic School celebrates 75 years

By Pam McCarthy | Community Relations and Development

This 2016/2017 school year marks Holy Rosary Catholic School's 75th anniversary. We have a multitude of events planned to mark this milestone and we plan on keeping the community informed of these events. In August welcomed our students back for the new school year. Despite the dreary weather, we had a campus full of smiles.





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Oct. 5**Learn the Basics of Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia**

Get a basic introduction to Alzheimer's disease and dementia at a special program at Fort Bend County Libraries' First Colony Branch Library on at 6:30 p.m., in the Meeting Room of the library, located at 2121 Austin Parkway in Sugar Land. Marisa Ramon, Regional Outreach Coordinator for the Houston and Southeast Texas Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, will present "Understanding and Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors."

**Building Better Credit for a Better Business Loan**

Fort Bend County Small Business Development Center will host its free business loan workshop from 9:30 a.m. to noon at Fort Bend County SBDC - Rosenberg, 117 Lane Drive, Suite 31. This workshop will provide important information on building better credit for a better business loan. Visit www.fortbend.sbdcnetwork.net.

Oct. 8**Houston Disc Dogs take on Town Square**

Go see these k-9's do tricks, flips, vaults off their trainer's backs and other frisbee stunts. After the show, stick around because the dogs are doing a short meet and greet. There will be two shows that last 30 minutes each- 12:30 p.m. and 2 p.m.

**Oct. 12****SBA: You, Your Business and the SBA**

Fort Bend County Small Business Development Center will host its free business loan workshop from 9:30 a.m. to noon at Fort Bend County SBDC - Rosenberg, 117 Lane Drive, Suite 31. This workshop will provide important information on business financing and SBA's Loan Programs. Visit www.fortbend.sbdcnetwork.net.

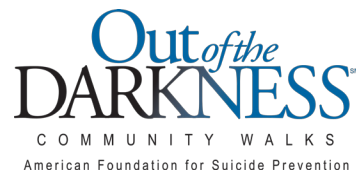
**Oct. 13****Patchwork of Life: Mending Lives Stitch by Stitch**

Oakland Medical Center's 2016 Patchwork of Life event will raise funds for the Emergency Care Center at OakBend's Jackson Street Campus.

This year's honorees are the hospital's volunteers with Pat Hebert being the Honorary Chair. The event will be held at Safari Texas Ranch, 1162 FM 1464 in Richmond from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

**Oct. 15****Out of the Darkness Walk**

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's Fort Bend County's Out of the Darkness Walk will be held from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Sugar Land Memorial Park in Sugar Land. Funds raised support the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and its bold goal to reduce the annual suicide rate in the United States 20 percent by 2025 through research, education, advocacy and support. Registration is Free. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/ootdcommunitywalkfortbend

**Oct. 21****Rock the Block with Sessions Music**

Sessions Music instructors and students will perform for all ages and styles in Sugar Land Town Square. Sessions Music is a revolutionary, new concept dedicated to helping people of all ages and skill levels achieve their modern and classical music dreams. The session will run from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

**Oct. 28****Haute Halloween: A Dueling Piano Experience**

From 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Felix and Fingers Dueling Pianos will be front and center in Sugar Land Town Square as they entertain you with an interactive, all request, laugh out loud show for all ages. From Frank to Hank, Elton John to Lil' John. Jupiter will be serving beer and wine for \$5/each.

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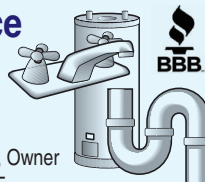
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