

October 2016

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MONTHLY



On The Front Line
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on Down syndrome

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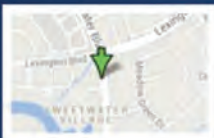
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Contents & Staff

GREATWOOD *monthly*™ | October 2016

Featured this Month



12

GiGi's Playhouse

A unique Sugar Land nonprofit is on the front lines of Down syndrome and it is tearing down stigmas.



22

Walk to End Alzheimer's

Sugar Land walk is focused on Alzheimer's research and cure and the empowerment of those enduring the disease.



26

Holiday Feature

Spooky stories, spectre sightings and some good ol' Halloween fun.



34

The Kitchen Corner

Just a few easy and creative Halloween-themed treats.



33

Health

OakBend Medical Group welcomes new Interventional Cardiologist



36

Business

Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics proves what it means to be a great partner.

GREATWOOD

monthly™

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Good New in Greatwood

By Roberta Terrell |
Greatwood columnist

FOOD TRUCK FRIDAY A HIT DESPITE RAIN

Food Trucks were pulling into the parking lot at Recreation Center #1 on Friday, Sept, 2 when the daily deluge occurred. Waiting for the rain to let up, business was slow at 5 o'clock as residents straggled up to peruse different options for dinner.

Choices for September included German, Lobster, Greek, Vietnamese Fusion, Waffles with toppings, and ice cream desserts. Each truck offered several menu items such as sausage and kraut from the German truck or lobster quesadillas from the "Cousin's Maine Lobster" truck. Residents brought lawn chairs, sat on the curb, ate at the nearby picnic table, or took selections to go. Chip Smith, Treasurer of the Greatwood HOA Board, was there greeting neighbors. He touted lobster rolls. Gavin and Tom Huson were curb sitters, visiting and watching the crowd while eating; Michelle and Josh Peterson were trying to decide. Vietnamese

Fusion was giving away samples to entice the palate. Wanting to sample everything offered it was a hard decision.

CAMPBELL PTO

The PTO Board members at Campbell Elementary are very active volunteers who work to promote the welfare of children and youth. Comprised of President Alisha Shaw, Fall Fundraiser Chair Carrie Miller, VP, Student Services Chair, Lauren Beheler, Treasurer, Susana Wallin, Recording Secretary Shelby Lipasek, Recording Secretary Lacy McKale, Parliamentarian/Hospitality Alisha Weaver, Member Chair Aaron Krupa, Volunteer Coordinator Chair Gretchen Yax, Room Parent Coordinator Chair Nichole Snow, Communications Secretary Julie Sams, Yearbook Chair Arnold Castro, Special Programs Chair Brandi Poss and Audra O'Neal, Teacher Appreciation Chair and Spring Fundraiser Chair Kelly Furgiele. This group of Board Members collectively participate in coordinating volunteers, present educational programs for students and parents, fund field trips, provide



Michelle and Josh Peterson trying to decide what to have for dinner.

additional materials for teachers, assist teachers and staff, raise funds to purchase technology and educational materials to make Campbell an exceptional learning facility and publish the yearbook.

DICKINSON PTO

PTO Board Members at Dickinson Elementary include President Lindsey Cullison, Vice President Corinne Pinter, Membership Shana Runions, Communications Rebecca Rautio, Hospitality Heather Lovell, Volunteers Haydee Rodrigues, Secretary Robin Block and Treasurer

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Paige Ruiz. Volunteers have partnered with Dickinson Elementary teachers and administrators to help make the school the best it can be for its students. Funds raised through membership, events, and donations fund field trips and new technology for the classroom as well as snacks for the weekly teacher meetings. They draw the community together through various extra-curricular activities.

DICKINSON ELEMENTARY — STUDENT COUNCIL UPDATES

Student Council Officer Elections were held on Friday, Sept. 16 followed by the Representative Elections on Sept. 22. The officers will attend the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA) Student Council Workshop at Frost Elementary on Wednesday, Oct. 19. They will learn how to effectively run a meeting and encourage support for Student Council programs. "Socktober," the first event sponsored by the Student Council, will collect socks for the homeless. In November plans include participation in the Lunches of Love Walk as platinum sponsors, meaning that the Council will donate at least \$750 to the organization.

SARAH AUSTIN IS BACK!

Sarah Austin, a fifth grader at Campbell Elementary and one of Greatwood's many talented stars, has finished her tour of "Matilda the Musical," and is back home. Her mother Sue Austin, the music teacher at Campbell, reported that she had a wonderful time traveling with Sarah over the summer to Pittsburgh, Boston and Toronto. Sarah's tour ended in Toronto where she helped with the transition from the American to Canadian cast.

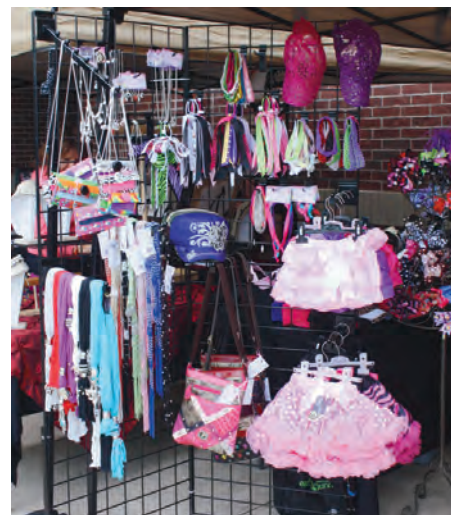
I look forward to hearing your Good News. Please call 281-343-9932 or email robertataterrell@gmail.com.

Don't Forget: Gifts Galore Greatwood Announces 14th Annual Fall Gift Show

By Staci Hartfiel | Gifts Galore
Show Director

Gifts Galore Greatwood will hold its 14th Annual Fall Gift Show on Saturday, Oct. 22 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Dickinson Elementary in Greatwood.

Shoppers will enjoy a Shopping Extravaganza featuring over 75 vendors with a variety of new merchandise including Fall & Holiday Décor & Gifts, Yard & Home Décor, Embellished Clothing,



Jewelry, Handbags, Specialty Foods, Children & Baby Items, Candles, and more.

Our vendors have those unique items you can't

Continued on page 8

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**

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Good News in Greatwood

Continued from page 7

find in regular stores! Concessions will be available including breakfast and lunch items provided by local restaurants.

Admission is free and strollers are welcome. A portion of the proceeds benefits Lamar Educational Awards Foundation (L.E.A.F.) L.E.A.F. is a non-profit community-based organization created to support the educational programs of Lamar CISD.

For more information on Gifts Galore Greatwood Fall 2016 Show, please contact Staci Hartfiel at Staci@GiftsGaloreShows.com.

FBJSL'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.

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 (FBJSL) 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



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.

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.

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

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Continued from page 8

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



Photo courtesy of **BAC PHOTOGRAPHY**

Honorary Gala Chairs Chief Ramirez, Chief Berezin, Chief Warren, Sheriff Nehls and Chief Goates.

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.

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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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On The Front Lines of Down syndrome: GiGi's Playhouse

By MARQUITA GRIFFIN
mgriffin@fbherald.com

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."



Young Athletes Program at Gigi's Plahouse in Sugar Land.

"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.

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Children and volunteers make sure to always incorporate fun when overcoming challenges.



Sporting her daddy's hat, Grace Ross and her mom Kristi cheer at Grace's sister's soccer game.

That promise was the first building block 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



Grace Ross and her dad, David, cheer at swim meet featuring her two older siblings Abigail and Andrew.

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

Continued on page 14



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Continued from page 13

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



All smiles: Sadie Blahuta

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

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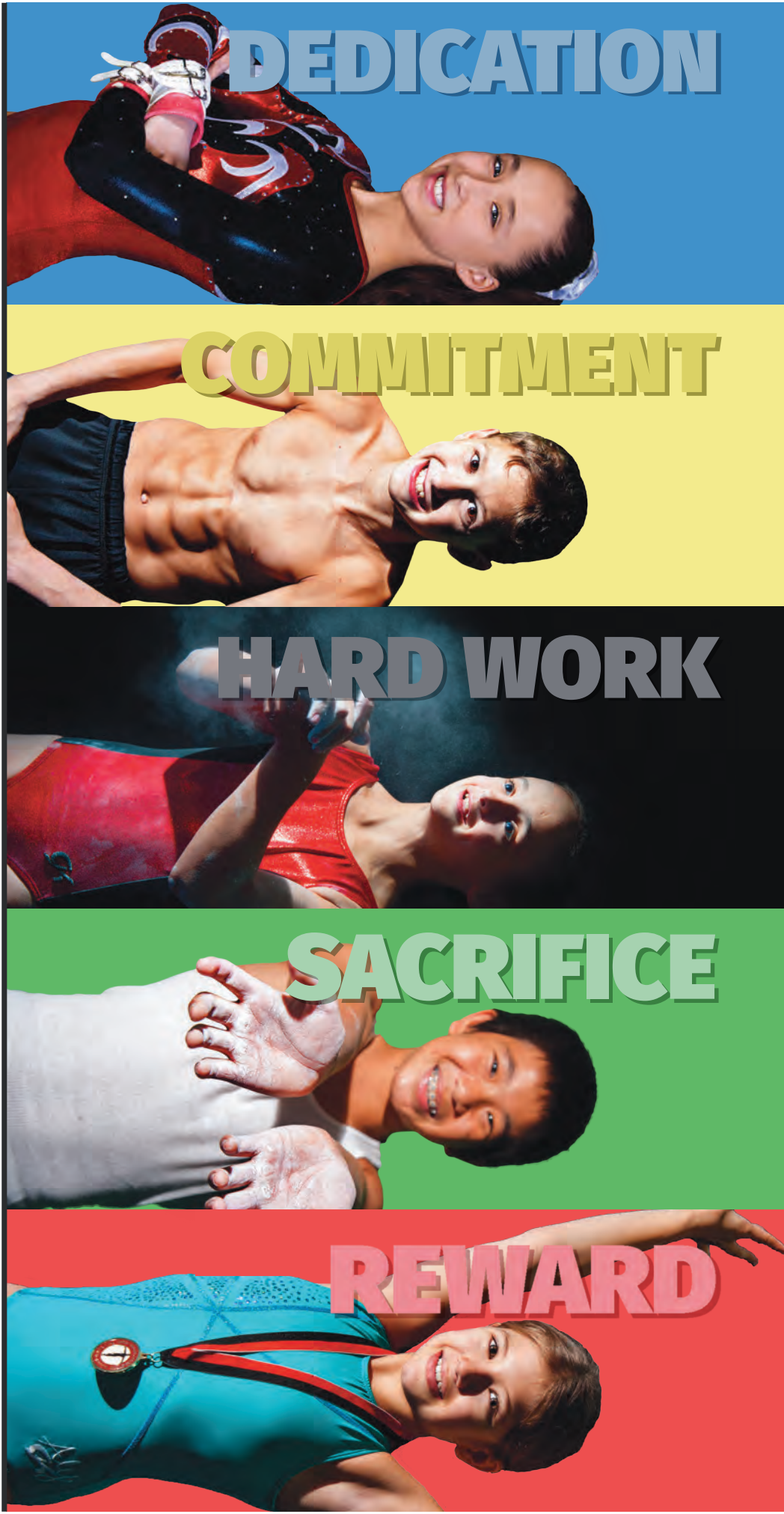


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THIS IS LIFE



Continued from page 14

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



Sadie Blahuta and Grace Ross kick back and enjoy one another’s company at a GiGi’s Playhouse fundraiser.

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.”



GiGi’s Playhouse site coordinator Belinda Osborn with Grace Ross.



The Ross children: Grace with her sister Abigail and brother Andrew.



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The Blahuta Family: Keith and Ammie Blahuta with their children Sadie and Keaton.

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 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

"GiGi's Playhouse provides us a community of others who are going through or have been through our situation. It is comforting to have others to lean on, cry on and learn from."

— Ammie Blahuta, mother of Sadie Blahuta, 3, who is diagnosed with Down syndrome.

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

Continued on page 18



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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:

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.

“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

Continued on page 20

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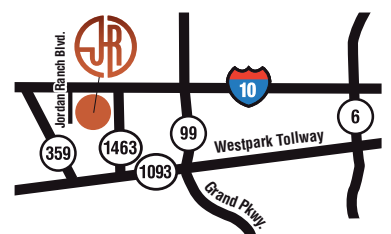
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Continued from page 18

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

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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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.”

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Take a Walk. End Alzheimer's.

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."

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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."

Continued on page 24

EVENT AT A GLANCE

What: 5K Fort Bend Walk to End Alzheimer's

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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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

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.



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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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 Allright wrote before his death in 2005. Dedicated to preserving the history of the Rosenberg/Richmond area, Allright 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,



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.

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

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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.

FBSO 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,



Photo by Susan Lynch

Rhapsody in Blue: Stacey Tharalson, Katherine Leskin, Patricia Kelley, Andrea Cope, Tofik Khanmamedov, Jordon Nickerson. Seated: Dan Patterson, Elyssa Munden.

Rhapsody in Blue.

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 Musiqa.

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.fbs.org. There are surprises in store, so be sure to check the website for more information as the concert draws near.

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.

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Photo by Susan Lynch

Hauntcert: Jordon Nickerson, Andrea Cope, Katherine Leskin

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.

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, 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.



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DID I JUST SEEN 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

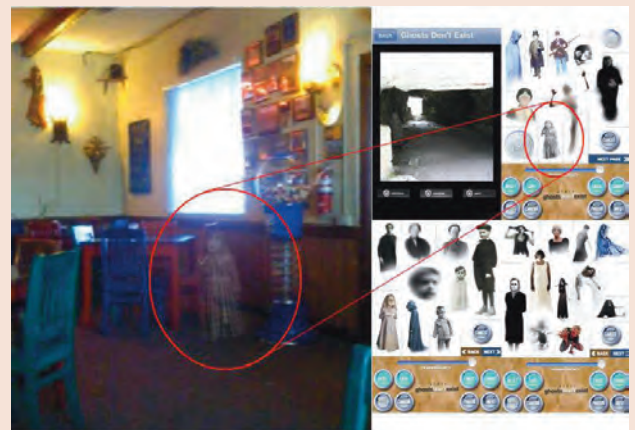
Continued on page 30

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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Continued from page 30

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.

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.

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Also, add "Halloween Photos" to the subject line and please identify everyone in the photos.



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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 involves 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.



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Campbell Elementary Fun Run and Cougar Carnival registration is open

By Julie Sams

The Campbell Cougars are busy logging a lot of time reading their favorite books and collecting donations for our first read-a-thon. Please continue to share your child's Read-A-Thon donation page with family and friends until Oct. 7 when our reading sessions end.



FUN RUN AND COUGAR CARNIVAL

The date is set — **February 25, 2017** — and registration is officially open!

Our registration is hosted on the same web site as last year. More event details are available on our web site: www.campbellpto.org.

COUGAR DRAWING CONTEST

In preparation of our 8th Annual Campbell Elementary Fun Run and Cougar Carnival we are asking the students of Campbell Elementary to draw our Campbell Cougar for the front of this year's T-shirt. The design should characterize our Campbell Cougar in action. Remember that this year our theme is "Catch the Wave."

PTO representatives will vote on the winning design or designs based on creativity, use of theme guidelines, neatness, originality, and how the design will look on a T-shirt. The PTO reserves the right to make changes to the winning design or designs if necessary, so that the design will fit the T-shirt.

There will be one drawing contest winner that will have their drawing featured on the event T-shirt and their design will be forever published in the yearbook. The contest winner will be announced in mid-October during the morning announcements.

Refer to the flyer that came home with your child for the official rules.

Continued on page 36

2016-17 Campbell Elementary Calendar

Dates	Events	Notes
10/6/2016	Open House	6 - 7 p.m. Open House; Dinner available for purchase 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.
10/7/2016	Read-a-Thon ends	
10/7/2016	Health T-Shirt Day	Can be worn in place of school shirt
10/11/2016	Monthly PTO Board Meeting	7:45 a.m.
10/13/2016	Fall Pictures	Uniform Dress
10/21/2016	First Nine Weeks Ends	
10/21/2016	Early Release	11:30 a.m. Release
10/21/2016	Campbell Crisis Drills Practice	
10/24/2016	Second Nine Weeks Begin	
10/24/2016	Red Ribbon Week	10/24 to 10/28
10/26/2017	Report Cards Go Home	
10/28/2016	Field Day	
10/31/2016	Yearbook Memory Message Due	Order forms can be turned in to your teacher
11/2/2016	AR Free Dress Day	For students in grades 1st-5th that qualify
11/3/2016	Early Release for Parent/Teacher Conferences	11:30 a.m. Release
11/4/2016	Early Release for Parent/Teacher Conferences	11:30 a.m. Release
11/4/2016	Health T-Shirt Day	Can be worn in place of school shirt
11/7 thru 11/11/2016	Fall Book Fair	Library
11/8/2016	Monthly PTO Board Meeting	6 p.m.
11/10/2016	4th Grade Patriotic Program	8:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.
11/13 thru 11/18/2016	Parent Involvement Week	
11/18/2016	Parents and Pastries	7 - 7:30 a.m. - Gym
11/21 thru 11/25/2016	Thanksgiving Break	No School
11/27/2016	Yearbook Order Price Increases	Order online at www.campbellpto.org
11/29 thru 12/14/2016	Holiday Giving Tree	Pull your tag and support a family
12/2/2016	Health T-Shirt Day	Can be worn in place of school shirt
12/8/2016	3rd Grade Holiday Program	8:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.
12/13/2016	Monthly PTO Board Meeting	7:45 a.m.
12/16/2016	Grade Level Holiday Parties & School Wide Sing Along (Free Dress - Holiday Party Attire)	KG: 11 - 11:30 a.m. 1st: 11:30 - 12 p.m. 2nd: 12 - 12:30 p.m. 3rd: 12:30 - 1 p.m. 4th: 1 - 1:30 p.m. 5th: 1:30 - 2 p.m.
12/19/2016 thru 1/2/2017	Winter Break	No School
1/3/2017	School Resumes	Full day



The full calendar can be downloaded at **WWW.CAMPBELLPTO.ORG**

JOIN THE CAMPBELL PTO

Return the form that came in your child's or children's back to school packet or sign up today online at www.campbellpto.org.



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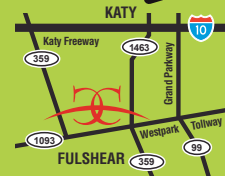
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In FULSHEAR at FM1463 and FM1093

Continued from page 34

Dickinson Elementary PTO to host inaugural "Trunk Or Treat"

By Rebecca Rautio
Communications Chair,
Dickinson PTO

The Dickinson Elementary PTO announced it will host its first Trunk or Treat event, Saturday, Oct. 29 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Dickinson Elementary parking lot.

Dickinson Elementary PTO Trunk or Treat is a family-friendly community event and school fundraiser featuring fun games, bounce houses, raffles, a cake walk, DJ, crafts, concessions, local Food Trucks and of course lots of trick or treating. There will also be a contest for best decorated car. Funds raised will go toward a new marquee that the PTO would like to purchase for the school.

For those who don't know what a "Trunk or Treat" is, we'll explain. A Trunk or Treat is an event where you claim a parking space, choose a theme to decorate your vehicle and hand out candy/prizes in a safe, traffic-free environment, which will be our school parking lot.

Participants can also have a game or trivia questions for trick or treaters as well. We will have 33 spots to fill on a first-come, first-serve basis. Don't forget about the contest for "Best Decorated Car!" A sign-up will be on the PTO website.

Admission to the Trunk or Treat is \$10, which will provide a wristband per child to participate in all the games, bouncing, activities and trick or treating. Tickets will be sold for the cake walk, concessions and raffles. Local food trucks will be on site offering delicious food. Be sure to support their businesses as they will be donating a portion of their sales back to the school.

Tickets and wristbands will be on sale Oct. 1 through Oct. 15 online. You will also be able to purchase tickets and wristbands at the event.

Kids and parents are encouraged to dress in costume... keep in mind there will be little ghouls and goblins, so don't get too scary.

To purchase wristbands, tickets, or for more information about the event and to claim your parking spot, please visit www.dickinsonpto.com/trunkortreat or contact Corinne Pinter, Event Coordinator, vp@dickinsonpto.com

SPIRIT NIGHT

The second Dickinson Spirit Night will be held on Oct. 20 at Chick-fil-A. We welcome you to come out and enjoy dinner while supporting Dickinson Elementary. A portion of the night's sales will be donated back to our school. Locations will change monthly.

YEARBOOK PHOTOGRAPHERS

Do you like to take pictures? Are you willing to attend some of our school events? We need you! We're looking for a number of photographers to share the responsibility of taking pictures for our school yearbook. You don't need to be a professional nor do you need to attend all of the school events. We're

hoping to enlist a number of photographers to share the work. Please contact Rebecca Rautio, Communications PTO Chair, if you're willing to help at communications@dickinsonpto.com.

JOIN THE PTO

Don't forget that our membership drive is underway and you can join for as little as \$10. Your membership helps provide funds for field trips, helps support our teachers, provides school technology needs, playground equipment, and more. Join today at dickinsonpto.com.

- ★ President - Lindsey Cullison
- ★ Vice President - Corinne Pinter
- ★ Membership - Shana Runions
- ★ Communications - Rebecca Rautio
- ★ Hospitality - Heather Lovell
- ★ Volunteers - Haydee Rodriguez
- ★ Secretary - Robin Block
- ★ Treasurer - Paige Ruiz

TEACHER SNACKS

The Hospitality Committee coordinates snacks for the teacher's weekly team meeting held on each Tuesday throughout the school year. Volunteers are needed. Please visit our PTO website to sign-up. Thank you!

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Oct. 20: Spirit Night

Oct. 28: Field Day

For more visit www.dickinsonpto.com.



Reading Junior High Fall Happenings

By Reem Khayal
ARJH Public Relations
Chairman

Fall is around the corner and to accompany the change in weather the Antoinette Reading Junior High PTO has lined up some very exciting events!

Our membership drive with many exciting incentives wraps up on Oct. 7. Every class that reaches 100 percent participation in PTO membership by this date will receive an ice cream party. Each student in those classes will also be entered into a raffle... 10 lucky Longhorns will get to spray Mr Nava with Silly String at Pep Rally.

Oct. 19: We have our annual Color Run! Students are always excited to participate in this fun event and it is an excellent fundraiser for the PTO, so let us know if your company would like to help sponsor.

Oct. 21: The PTO will help sponsor our 7th grade field trip so that they can take a step back in time as they spend a day in 1800's Texas at the George Ranch Historical Park. They will learn about culture crafts and ranching of early Texas.

Oct. 26: We will spoil our teachers with our Spaghetti Palooza Spooktacular. We were also very excited to have recently provided the downstairs teacher lounge and upstairs workroom with some new Keurig coffee machines. Our teachers deserve the very best and we are so glad that we had the opportunity to do something special for them.

The PTO has ongoing fundraiser monthly with our Friday Night at Freddy's spirit nights the first Friday of each month. Drive thru or dine in from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. and tell the workers you are with Reading Junior High and place your receipt in the box labeled Reading and they will donate 20 percent back to our school! So mark your calendar and treat yourself to a burger or shake for a great cause.

We also have our "Popcorn on the Porch" fundraiser the first and third Friday of each month. We will be on the bus porch selling delicious flavored popcorn to the kiddos for \$3 a bag. What a delicious way to give back to the school.

Please contact us anytime, browse and purchase spirit wear and become a member at www.readingpto.org. All board member names and email links are listed under the contacts menu.

Like us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/readingpto/>

Interested in networking and participating at events? Come join us! Email Barry Fineman, VP of volunteers at volunteers@readingpto.org. The link to volunteer is also on our website under volunteer opportunities.

We would like to thank all the parents that came out to our September General Meeting. We are off to a great start! We would also like to thank Carlino's Photography for donating the free photo session to the ARJH PTO.

Thank You to our Touch down Level Sponsors: Melissa Marlow and Wilson Fire Equipment.

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



Photo by **DIANA NGUYEN**

Reading Junior High School cheerleaders show school spirit at the school's Orientation Kick-Off. Front row, from left: Brynn Johnson, Faith Kadiri, Kimberly Suarez, Cami Garcia, Brook Heitkamp, Sofia Giordano, Mia Edwards, Berkley Chambers, Jayla Beston, Sloane Solomon and Sydney Garcia. Back row, from left: Shelby Frizzell, Madison Downey, Sydney Velez, Halle Samuels, Sydney Patterson, Emily Bowers, Olivia Coddou, Brooke Barnett, Ava D'Ambra, Isabella Storer, Lindsey Shultz, Kendall Diepraam, Jenna Maida and Britton Bielitz.



Photo by **DIANA NGUYEN**

Reading Junior High School cheerleaders Sophia Giordano and Cami Garcia, along with their fellow cheer mates, encourage school spirit by dancing to a routine at the school's Orientation Kick-Off.

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.

Continued on page 38

Continued from page 37

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

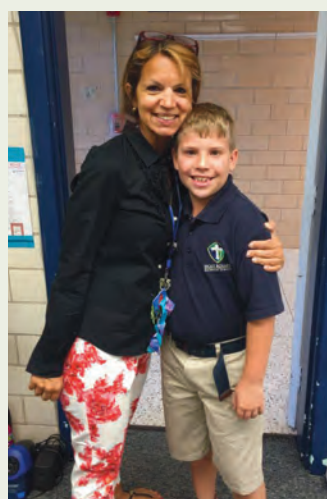
undergo extensive background and reference checks. They are also subject to a rigorous selection-and-training process, multiple screening interviews, and skills-testing. Ongoing monitoring of online sessions ensures security and instructional quality.

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

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.



Garrett & Boyd Orthodontics epitomizes partnership

By Marquita Griffin
mgriffin@fbherald.com

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



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.

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



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

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

Continued on page 40

Continued from page 39

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



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



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

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.



Fred A. Garrett, DDS, MS | Richard W. Boyd, Jr., DDS, MS | www.LoneStarBraces.com



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