

August 2025

WEST FORT BEND

Living

Building a Brand

How one 10-year-old used confidence, business acumen and creativity to develop an award-winning lemonade recipe





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it | Winners of Fort Bend County Libraries' "We Are Fort Bend: Vibrant Colors of Fort Bend" amateur-photography contest will be announced at an Opening Day Reception and Awards Ceremony that will take place, at 2 p.m., in the Bohachevsky Gallery at George Memorial Library in Richmond. All photographs entered in the contest will be on display in the Bohachevsky Gallery at George Memorial Library from August 9 through September 26. www.fortbendlibraries.gov

Richmond's Farmers Market | Find the freshest local produce, homemade treats, and unique gifts at the Richmond Farmer's Market which will run from 3-7 p.m. at 402 Morton Street in Richmond. richmondtx-farmersmarket.com

Movie Night | Head out to Wessendorff Park at 500 Preston Street in Richmond and enjoy 2023's "Under the Boardwalk" at 8:30 p.m. for free with the family. Hosted by the City of Richmond, the Movie Night events at the park are held on the first Friday of the month. Future shows are Sept. 5 (Hotel Transylvania 3, 2018); Oct. 3 (The Canterville Ghost, 2023); Nov. 7 (Paddington in Peru, 2024); and Dec. 5 (Glisten and the Merry Mission, 2023). richmondtx.gov

2 Live Raptors at the Library | Learn all about raptors at a special program, "Get WILD for Raptors," from 2-3 p.m., in the Meeting Room 1 of Fort Bend County Libraries' University Branch Library, located at 14010 University Blvd in Sugar Land, on the UH campus. This program will feature live raptors and Mary Anne Morris, co-founder of Wild Bird Adventures, will talk about the sights, sounds, and natural history of raptors, such as hawks, kites, owls,

and eagles. The program is free and open to the public. fortbendlibraries.gov.



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Back-To_School Health Fair | Access-Health's 2025 Richmond Back-To_School Health Fair will be held 9 a.m. - noon at 400 Austin Street in Richmond. The health fair will offer an opportunity for families to receive important health resources and engage in educational sessions on key topics that promote the overall well-being of children. Featuring: free immunizations, health screenings, vision screenings, limited sports physicals, backpacks and school supplies, and interactive workshops and educational sessions. myaccesshealth.org

IO Fort Bend County Pride | Fort Bend County Pride's "Superheroes of Pride 2025" will be held from noon to 5 p.m. at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. It will be a day of "celebration of love, unity, and courage" in Fort Bend. Go dressed as your favorite superhero or simply as you are. fortbendcountypride.org

I2 Tech Classes for Job Hunters: 'LinkedIn Basics' | Fort Bend County Libraries' Adult Services staff at George Memorial Library in Richmond, will present free, introductory technology classes in August specifically for job hunters. The Aug. 12 class, "LinkedIn Basics" will be held from 10-11 a.m. LinkedIn is the



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5 Tech Classes for Job Hunters: Resumé Writing | Fort Bend County Libraries' Adult Services staff at George Memorial Library in Richmond, will present free, introductory technology classes in August specifically for job hunters. The Aug. 5 class, "Resumé Writing" will be held from 10-11 a.m. Learn how to use MS Word to create a resumé that showcases one's skills. Learn how to use free templates, format a resumé, and save it in required formats. The class is free and open to the public. Seating is limited. Reservations are required. Register online at ortbendlibraries.gov.

9 We are Fort Bend' Photo Contest Exhib-



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world's largest social-media network for professionals and is a great vehicle for connecting with potential customers and employers. Find out how to make the best use of LinkedIn to network and engage with contacts and businesses. Learn how to create a strong profile, connect with professionals, explore career opportunities, and become familiar with online etiquette in the LinkedIn virtual community. The class is free and open to the public. Seating is limited. Reservations are required. Register online at ortbendlibraries.gov.

Unwind with Watercolor | Discover the joy of watercolor with local artist Sarah Beth Baca in a relaxed, beginner-friendly setting at the Fort Bend Museum, 410 S. 5th Street in Richmond. "Unwind with Watercolor: A Creative Workshop with Artist Sarah Beth Baca" is \$10 non-members and free for members. fortbendmuseum.org

I3 Retired Educators Association
The Fort Bend County Retired Educators Association is hosting a "we're-not-going-back-to-school" breakfast at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, Aug. 13 at Long Acres Ranch, 2335 Richmond Parkway in Richmond. The breakfast is free for retirees from Lamar CISD, Needville ISD and Brazos ISD. New members must be in attendance. Please RSVP by Aug. 8 to kaydanziger@aol.com.



I5 The Truth About Scams | Liz McNeel, a senior real-estate specialist and certified senior-housing professional, will moderate a panel of experts who will talk about ways to spot scams before they happen and offer tips on ways to protect oneself from financial and emotional harm at the University Branch Library in Sugar Land at 10:30 a.m. in Meeting Room 1. This is a program in the Senior Series for older adults and their family members. The session will cover the most common scams targeting seniors; the psychological tricks that scammers use; the red flags to watch for in emails, phone calls and unsolicited offers; tips for protecting personal information, finances and identity; how to report scams; expert advice from fraud-prevention specialists, law-enforcement officers, and legal professionals on staying vigilant and safe. fortbendlibraries.gov

I6 Festival of Glass | The Houston Glass Club's 50th Annual "Festival of Glass" & Antique Show and Sale is set for 9 am to 5 pm on Saturday Aug. 16, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 17 at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds in Rosenberg.

Monster Truck | For the first time ever, America's Wildest Monster Truck Show is coming to Rosenberg from noon to 7:30 p.m. at the O.D. Tucker Arena at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. The limited supply of advance child tickets are \$15. monstertrucks.fun

I9 Tech Classes for Job Hunters | 'LinkedIn Learning for Libraries'
Fort Bend County Libraries' Adult Services staff at George Memorial Library in Richmond, will present free, introductory technology classes in August specifically for job hunters. The Aug. 19 class, "LinkedIn Learning for Libraries" will be held from 10-11 a.m. Learn how to access thousands of online job-skills courses covering everything from software development to leadership. Discover expert-led content for personalized learning paths to explore new skills to grow professionally or improve job-hunting prospects. The class is free and open to the public. Seating is limited. Reservations are required. Register online at ortbendlibraries.gov.

22 Pet Pantry | A Pet Pantry event will be held at Catholic Charities' Mamie George Community Center in Richmond in partnership with Fort Bend County Constable Patrick Quincy. This is a first-come-first-serve event.



Food pickup will be done in a drive-thru. For more information or to see other opportunities with the Pet Food Pantry visit houstonhumane.org/about-us/pet-pantry

26 Tech Classes for Job Hunters | 'Big Interview: Using AI for Interview Prep'
Fort Bend County Libraries' Adult Services staff at George Memorial Library in Richmond, will present free, introductory technology classes in August specifically for job hunters. The Aug. 26 class, "Big Interview: Using AI for Interview Prep" will be held from 10-11 a.m. Big Interview is an online service that uses the power of AI to help job hunters prepare resumés and practice job-interview questions to improve their chances of landing a new job. The class is free and open to the public. Seating is limited. Reservations are required. Register online at ortbendlibraries.gov.

28 Party with a Purpose | Fort Bend Hope's Party with a Purpose will feature appetizers and drinks as well as a tour the building for a chance to learn more about the nonprofit's educational programs at 5 p.m. at the center. Please bring a gift card or bottle of wine or whiskey valued at \$40 or more to help the organization prepare for "Superheroes of Fort Bend Hope" benefit in the fall. fortbendhope.org

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ADDRESS



NG *academia*

The benefits of a well-rounded education & methods for overcoming challenges

Academic environments have undergone a significant change over the last several decades. Technological advancements have changed the way educators teach and how students learn, but there's also been a notable shift in what students are learning.

Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) has become a point of emphasis in twenty-first century classrooms, and for good reason. The US National Science Foundation notes that a workforce educated in STEM is vital to a country's prosperity and security. Opportunities in STEM fields are on the rise as well, as the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates STEM occupations will grow by roughly 11 percent between 2022 and 2032.

The value of STEM is undeniable. However, students and parents also should recognize the many ways a well-rounded education that includes math and science but also the humanities and social sciences facilitates strong academic performance.

Critical thinking skills

A well-rounded education can instill important and useful critical thinking skills in students. When students direct the bulk of their attention to a single subject or category of subjects, they're less likely to understand how interconnected coursework, and indeed the world, can be. A well-rounded education can instill in students a more nuanced way of looking

at problems and potential solutions. That ability can positively affect students' personal lives and ultimately their professional lives when their formal schooling ends, as they will be in position to better assess situations.

Comprehension

Tests are designed to gauge students' grasp of material. Students' ability to comprehend lessons taught in the classroom is a big part of that, and a well-rounded education fosters strong comprehension skills. A 2018 report from the New York State Education Department noted that research has found that students are better readers after they have been exposed to the language and vocabulary of the natural world, the sciences and social studies.

Crossover benefits

A well-rounded education can help students perform better in all of their subjects. In 2021, a University of Buffalo academic and researcher studying children and dyslexia made a startling discovery regarding the value of reading and how it affects performance in subjects like math. The research found that reading proficiency crosses academic domains and actually guides how students approach various tasks and solve problems. That means a well-rounded education that includes reading-heavy subjects, like those in the humanities and social sciences, could actually improve how students perform in STEM classes.

NEW FORT BEND LAUNCH: *Teacher in the Library*

Starting in September, Fort Bend County Libraries will offer a “Teacher in the Library” free homework-help service at George Memorial Library, located at 1001 Golfview in Richmond.

The Kick-Off Party for this new program will take place on Aug. 16, from 2-4 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the library.

Families will have an opportunity to meet the teachers and enjoy refreshments, giveaways, and fun! They may even have a chance to meet and take photos with the program’s mascot – Artemis “Artie” the Owl!

Craft and STEM activity stations will be set up for children to enjoy in the Youth Services department. Children will also have an opportunity to hear stories during a special Story Time in the Children’s Corner of the department.

The Teacher in the Library service provides free homework help for students in grades 3 through 6 by providing access to qualified teachers in the library for after-school assistance.

Two teachers will be available Monday through Thursday, from 3 to 6 p.m., beginning Sept. 2, at George Memorial Library to help students: complete homework assignments; prepare for tests; improve study habits; learn about library databases & electronic resources; and grow in confidence.

The goal of the program is to supplement and reinforce the lessons being learned in the classroom and to increase students’ self-confidence and motivate them to succeed. Students receive one-on-one attention from experienced teachers in a safe, comfortable environment.

Appointments are not required. Students may arrive anytime during the tutoring sessions on any day the service is offered, as their schedules permit or as homework needs arise. They can choose to attend as often or as little as needed. There is no cost to participate.

Bottled water and snacks will be available at the sessions, courtesy of the Friends of the George Memorial Library.

George Memorial Library is the third library in the Fort Bend County library system to offer the Teacher in the Library program. The service was launched in 2023 with a pilot program at the Mission Bend Branch Library. In 2024, the program was expanded to include the Missouri City Branch Library.

Visit fortbendlibraries.gov for more information.



→ Strategies for students facing challenging classes

Establish a solid foundation.

The first step towards success in any class is gaining a solid understanding of the basics. If there are gaps in foundational knowledge, assignments and tests can be particularly difficult as the coursework becomes harder. Routinely review previous material to ensure fundamental concepts are mastered.

Help students with ADHD improve their focus

Many students with ADHD, diagnosed or undiagnosed, face an uphill battle in the classroom, where the ability to focus is integral to their success. It may take some trial and error and some help from educators and physicians, but the following are some strategies that could help students with ADHD as they seek to improve their focus in the classroom.

Ask educators about behavioral classroom management |

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes behavioral classroom management is an approach that involves encouraging students when they behave positively in a classroom. The approach may be centered around a reward system or involve teachers issuing daily report cards. Teachers also discourage negative behaviors. The CDC notes behavioral classroom management is driven by teachers and has been shown to have a constructive impact on students of all ages that increases their academic engagement.

Emphasize organization skills |

The CDC notes organizational training that emphasizes time management and planning has been tested on children and adolescents and found to be effective. The Attention Deficit Disorder Association (ADDA) suggests people with ADHD learn how to break down complex tasks, such as end-of-semester school projects or exams, into smaller sub-tasks, and the planning skills emphasized by the CDC can be employed to do just that.

Take breaks |

It’s hard for anyone to maintain intense focus for lengthy periods of time, and that’s true for people with ADHD and those who do not have the condition. A report from the American Psychological Association notes that routine breaks from challenging tasks, including coursework, can restore energy, prevent burnout and improve performance. Fatigue can compromise a person’s ability to focus, so students and parents should not see routine breaks as counterproductive in relation to

Practice active learning.

Engage with the material beyond passively reading texts. Ideas include formulating questions, quizzing classmates, explaining the material to others as a teacher would, and writing down key words and topics so they are more likely to be remembered.

Focus on time management.

Develop an organizational system and time management strategy; a day planner is a useful organizational tool and smartphone notifications can alert to due dates. Break down long-term assignments into smaller pieces that are easier to manage also can be useful.

Seek help when needed.

Don't hesitate to ask for help from peers, academic coaches, tutors, teachers or study groups. Do not wait until failing or falling behind to seek help.

Study regularly.

Reviewing material frequently and reinforcing knowledge is a smart strategy. Creating visual aids like diagrams or

maps can help explain a subject more fully. Looking back on previous lessons may help with current ones.

Don't forget to find balance and prioritize self-care.

Master a balance between schoolwork and other activities. Without it, burnout, stress and additional symptoms will impede the ability to perform well in academics.

the goal of improving focus. In fact, purposeful breaks that are not too long can sharpen focus.

Adjust students' environments | The ADDA notes that several strategies can help students optimize their environment so they can better focus on the task at hand. Utilizing noise-canceling headphones while studying in a quiet spot away from noise and distraction is one way students can optimize their environment. Turning off smartphone notifications, periodically decluttering a workspace and keeping only study materials in spots where schoolwork is done can help students with ADHD sharpen their focus.



Reading is essential

From improving mental health to fostering stronger memory to teaching a person new things, reading offers many benefits. Reading also can boost creativity and help expand vocabulary. Despite these perks, data indicates reading for fun has become less common among American children.

According to a survey conducted in late 2019 and early 2020 by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the percentage of 9- to 13-year-olds who say they read for fun on an almost daily basis are at the lowest levels since the mid-1980s. In 2023, Scholastic released

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'Our number one priority is to help people'
The Mamie George Community Center serves thousands with food, services and hope

story & photos by **MARQUITA GRIFFIN**
mgriffin@fbherald.com

It was a little after noon on a Wednesday in Richmond. The sky was gray and moody, promising an oncoming onslaught of precipitation. Princess Boone had to consider the weather because she rode the bus that day, and if she could help it, she'd like to avoid the rain.

The clock read about a quarter after noon, and she and several others were selecting their groceries at Mamie George Community Center's client-choice market on Collins Road.

The center, which opened in 2011, is the product of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, a nonprofit agency that provides a network of social services that support self-sufficiency.

Accessible by appointment only, the client-choice market is open three days a week for clients who are older than 60 years of age or are involved in any of the center's wraparound programs like the ones for senior citizens, people with disabilities or veterans.

The market, which is laid out like a small grocery-themed convenience store and is stocked with fresh foods, shelved on the perimeter of the market, canned and dried foods, organized in the center, with a selection of non-food items, is one of the center's two solutions for people and families facing food insecurity. The market also carries personal care items and toiletry items.

Princess, whose eyes light up when she smiles, kindly offered her thoughts about the center — likening it to “a savior” — and the client-choice market as she pushed her blue shopping cart around. She placed frozen beef, eggs and vegetables in her basket as she explained how real her fear was when she thought the center would shut down.

“There was a time that I thought this place would close,” she said somberly, referring to the collective nightmare that was the 2020 pandemic.

Like people worldwide, the 2020 pandemic was a happening unlike anything Princess was prepared for, and she said for those already struggling with hardships, the thought that the center would close was terrifying. Not much needed to be explained; the silent part Princess didn't say was still heard, loudly — if the Mamie George food pantry closed, people would have gone hungry.

“But,” she said, her bright smile returning, unabashed relief in her tone, “they did not close.”

And it is because of the staff and the volunteers that the food distribution program runs well and compassionately, she emphasized, pointing to Catherine Sallman, the Mamie George Community Center

pantry supervisor, who at that moment was speaking to a volunteer.

The two women had interacted earlier with embraces and inside jokes. While life circumstances differed for the women, they were the same. They were both people, living through current times, trusting one another and trying their best to do their best.

“This is an important place,” Princess said of the Mamie George Community Center. And

“She's my favorite,” Princess said playfully, nodding to Catherine.

Knowing her bus would be arriving soon, Princess placed her last item in the basket to complete her shopping and got in line, but she offered a few parting words — every community needs a place like the one on Collins Road, and if people think one isn't necessary in their area, that when you know “they really need one,” she stressed.

Sallman, who is moving about the market addressing concerns, assures Princess that she won't be left behind — “I'll make sure they don't leave you, don't worry,” Sallman says quietly to Princess — as she walks past the line to speak to another volunteer.

Just as Princess is ready to depart with her groceries, the sky opens with a crack and heavy waterdrops fall, making plopping noises as they pelt the tops of cars. But Princess isn't bothered at all. She smiles, then laughs and simply waits for the bus to arrive.

FEEDING THOUSANDS MONTHLY

In the past several months, Mamie George Community Center's food pantry has witnessed around a 40 percent decrease in its supplies, and yet, the center hasn't turned anyone away. Not to say such a feat is uncomplicated.

“On a monthly basis we serve 4,500 families,” said Sallman, who has been the pantry supervisor for the past 16 months.

For about four years prior, Sallman volunteered for the pantry and through that period understood that general hardship in a community is often reflected in the food pantry's use.



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"I was looking for volunteer opportunities and came across this charity and the food pantry, and I like the idea, so I started in the distribution line," she said of how she came to volunteer at the Mamie George Community Center.

Witnessing the instantaneous impact the pantry had on the surrounding community, Sallman got interested in the nonprofit's inner workings, ultimately leading her to pantry supervisor.

She explained that when she shares "the sheer number of the people the center serves," — that aforementioned, 4,500 families monthly — people then "realize what it takes to put food on so many tables."

About 90 percent of the food for Mamie George's food distribution programs comes from the Houston Food Bank and its retail partners. Notably, during the pandemic era, Mamie George Community Center became a Houston Food Bank Neighborhood SuperSite to serve more families in the Richmond-Rosenberg area.

Lately, Sallman said the food supply is starting to dwindle.

"Last year we received nearly two million pounds in food donations, but we have seen a slight drop for this year. We'll be a little closer to the 1.75 million, and it's still great, but we hope this is a temporary dip."

According to Feeding America's "Map the Meal Gap" study released last year, "the extra amount of money that people facing hunger said they need to have enough food reached its highest point in the last 20 years."

Map the Meal Gap (map.feedingamerica.org) is the only study that provides local-level estimates of food insecurity and food costs for every US county and congressional district. The study builds on the US Department of Agriculture's latest report of national and state data.

In 2023, the most recent data, the Food Insecure Population in Fort Bend County was reported at 108,850 and the county's Food Insecurity rate was 12.7 percent. For that same year, the USDA reported household food insecurity affected 17.6 percent of Texas households and 5,366,440 was the state's reported Food Insecure Population.

Sallman said the food acquisition challenges food pantries are facing nationwide press on her so intensely that she "dream[s] about solutions to feeding people."

"It's challenging to make sure we have what we need to operate all the programs to their fullest," she said. "But our number one priority is to help people."

MEETING AN INCREASING NEED

Sallman doesn't use loaded rhetoric when discussing the food pantry's concerns; her points are unbiased and succinct. Yet, her admiration for the human spirit is subjective.

She said although trying times aren't anything anyone looks forward to, it is during such patches that like-minded individuals can brainstorm life-altering solutions. The Mamie George Community Center's pivot with the food distribution options about five years ago is a prime example, she noted.

Before the pandemic, the pantry provided 567,000 pounds of food through Saturday food fairs and weekday shopping in its client-choice market. When the pandemic hit, the center transitioned to drive-through food distribution, allowing volunteers to load an assortment of items into vehicles, while maintaining a safe distance to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

It was an out-of-the-box approach pioneered to keep supporting people in need, and it was kept because of its efficiency, Sallman said.



"The pandemic opened eyes to the needs of the community," as well as, unrecognized opportunities for the pantry, she said, explaining that the client-choice market, while empathetically beneficial, can also be limiting due to its physical size.

"We can't serve hundreds of people that way," she said. The drive-through distribution option, however, eliminated that challenge. Now, "we can serve 750 to a thousand families a week in this manner."

The community drive-through food distribution option doesn't require appointments and is available twice weekly to anyone in need of food assistance. The food offered through the community food distribution includes fresh produce, bakery items, proteins, dairy and staple products.

"Anyone who is in need of food assistance can drive through and we load the food in the car," Sallman explained. "A set menu of what is available that week is set, and that changes to week to week."

"That's how the weekly drive-through was born," she continued. "But there are trade-offs to being able to serve this many people; unfortunately, the choice aspect isn't there."

Still, Sallman said the goal of striving for fresh produce and frozen protein for each person or family is prominent for both food distribution options. The center considers the health benefits of offering fresh foods and frozen protein, Sallman confirmed, but the motivation behind the fresh-and-frozen objective is the financial alleviation it provides.

"Those aren't just healthy options, they are usually the most expensive," Sallman said. "If we can give people the more expensive foods, that can help them out in other areas."

THE REAL HOPE

Like all food pantries nationwide, the Mamie George Community Center welcomes donations, and Sallman said she hopes for more support to increase the center's food supply. The easiest way to support the center is to visit catholiccharities.org/mgcc.

"But there is this other hope we have, as strange as it sounds," Sallman said of herself and other center staff and volunteers:

"Our hope is that someday we are not needed at all. As much as I, as we —" she said indicating the volunteers walking about the market "are passionate about and find purpose in what we are doing, we would love it, if we were no longer needed — because that would mean everyone was doing OK."

"Wouldn't that be nice?" she asked rhetorically.

"But until then we will be right here," she said. "Doing what we can do."

in the photographs

From left on page 10, Princess Boone (left) and Catherine Sallman, Mamie George Community Center Pantry Supervisor (right).

new data from its Kids & Family Reading Report®: 8th Edition that found only 32 percent of 9- to 11-year-olds and 15 percent of 15- to 17-year-olds are frequent readers. Parents who want their children to read more can consider these strategies to foster a love of reading in youngsters.

Set limits on screen use

Scholastic's report indicated children's digital activities have risen since 2018 among all age groups studied. Children are increasingly participating in digital activities that include going online for fun and watching videos or utilizing apps. By setting limits on screen time for children, parents may increase the likelihood of diverting youngsters' attention to other activities, such as reading.

Become a reading role model

One of the biggest predictors of reading frequency has to do with perceived importance of reading. If children see their parents frequently reading for pleasure and finding it important, and having access to a wide variety of books to read, then they may be encouraged to read for fun as well.

Make reading accessible

Parents can facilitate opportunities for kids to read by getting their children library cards, frequently taking them to bookstores, participating in school-run book fairs, and participating in other activities that prioritize book access, such as sales at the local library. Furthermore, since children are so in tune with digital devices, offering access to an e-reader or digital reading app on a tablet will enable children to tap into the vast digital library of books.

Don't stress about the content

Experts note that parents should not stress about what kids are reading. Many times parents worry that their kids aren't reading the classics or hard-hitting novels. As long as kids are reading age-appropriate material, the subject matter does not make a world of difference. From comic books to newspapers, kids can read anything so long as it's appropriate for their age.

Set up your ideal home study space

Study skills are integral to academic success. Such abilities help students learn more efficiently and effectively, which can lead to better grades on assignments and tests. Developing strong study habits can prepare students for future success in life, as dedication to studying can be mirrored in habits related to job performance.

The desire to study is one component of being involved in the task. However, setting up an environment conducive to studying is another part of this important equation. Students looking to study longer and better may want to re-evaluate study environments at home. Here are some ways to implement positive changes.

Isolate from interruptions. The first step to setting up a study location is to pick a spot away from the hustle and bustle of the household. While a separate room or home office can be helpful, an out-of-the way nook or similar spot can be just as effective. By dedicating a study spot, you can train your brain to recognize this is a study area and you may immediately become more focused.

Keep only pertinent materials nearby. It may be tempting to check your phone or watch videos or television if those devices are close to the study area. Make it stark and outfitted with only what's necessary for the study session.

Focus on good lighting. To avoid eye strain and avoid difficulty focusing, make sure the study area has adequate lighting. Lighting behind you will help illuminate the pages of textbooks and additional reading materials.

Avoid using computers in dimly lit rooms, as that may aggravate eye strain.

Aim for ergonomics and comfort. You'll want to be comfortable while studying, but not so much that you're falling asleep. Choose a chair that is supportive and keeps you seated in a neutral position.

Store supplies nearby. Having to constantly get up and grab supplies increases the risk of distractions adversely affecting your study time. A zippered pouch or a tote bag that contains all of your study materials can be kept within reach.

Keep a clock in view. A clock should not deter you from studying. Setting deadlines and time constraints on study time can encourage focus. Break down study sessions into chunks of time that are manageable to you.

Utilize noise effectively. Some people need absolute quiet to study. Others appreciate some white noise or music to sharpen their focus. Identify what works for you and incorporate that into your study area. A fan or a running air purifier can produce enough white noise to drown out distractions.

DID YOU KNOW? The American Academy of Sleep Medicine advises school-aged children between the ages of six and 12 get nine to 12 hours of sleep per night, while teens are urged to sleep eight to 10 hours per night. A 2023 study of first-year college students led by researchers at Carnegie Mellon University and published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences found that negative outcomes began to accumulate when students received less than six hours of sleep per night. The researchers behind the study identified a notable decline in students' grade point averages when they received less than six hours of sleep, suggesting humans' ability to learn and remember what they've learned in a given day is compromised if they don't get enough sleep that night.

BOYS REAP BENEFITS FROM SINGING WITH THE FORT BEND BOYS CHOIR

According to the Fort Bend Boys Choir, a Emmy-nominated nonprofit performing arts organization, music education, especially singing in a choir, can be just as beneficial for boys as playing in sports.

Sports and music share several advantages such as a sense of community, a boost in confidence and self-esteem, learning teamwork and developing self-discipline.

Music and singing have even more benefits to offer, choir officials stated, noting the organization's 43 years of music excellence, singing for U.S. Presidents and other dignitaries and winning awards.

"Singing in a choir, and music education in general, activates more areas of the brain than sports and cognitive capacity increases," said Founder and Artistic Director Bill Adams. "This increased capacity boosts academic achievement, reasoning skills and memory. Of course, boys singing in a choir also experience an increase in focus and emotional growth in addition to many transferable skills into other parts of life."

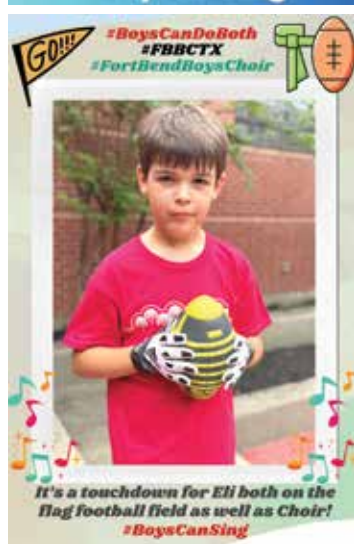
When choosing extra-curricular activities for boys, hopefully singing with the

Fort Bend Boys Choir is one of those choices! They have a Music Magic program for young boys ages six and seven who love music and singing. The class is offered twice a year – one in the fall starting in October and once in the spring starting in March – and no auditions are required.

Once boys are at least eight years of age or older with an unchanged voice, they are eligible to audition for one of the treble choirs. The fall 2025 season starts Thursday, Aug. 14, 2025 and all choir activities take place at the First United Methodist Church-Missouri City.

And take note – boys have an expiration date on their unchanged singing voice. Puberty takes over, that high, pure ethereal singing voice that boys have before hormones start starts to lower and that high voice is gone forever. When making decisions about extra-curricular activities for boys, hopefully this inevitable fact plays a part in choosing the Fort Bend Boys Choir for the boy in your life. They can play sports at any time but they cannot sing like angels for long.

Contact the Fort Bend Boys Choir office at 281-240-3800 or visit the Audition page on their website at fbbctx.org/auditions for additional details.



CEP STUDENTS SHINE AT NATIONAL THESPIAN FESTIVAL

Calvary Episcopal Preparatory announced the achievements of its students at the 2025 National Thespian Festival. Out of the 10 CEP students who qualified for Nationals, five attended and competed—earning top recognition among thousands of high school performers from across the country.

Among the highlights, two of Calvary's youngest performers, Yeva Cherry and Mamie Milford, were selected to perform on the prestigious Main Stage, an honor reserved for only the most exceptional talent.

Yeva and Mamie received an Excellent rating for their duet performance of "If Mama Was Married." Maddie Trinh also earned an Excellent rating for her solo "Watch What Happens." Zoya Cherry and Kamsi Okafor achieved a Superior rating for their powerful duet "Stay With You," while Yeva Cherry was additionally recognized with another Superior rating for her solo performance of "Naughty."

in the photographs

TOP: Yeva and Mamie before their Main Stage production of "If mama was married"; BOTTOM LEFT: Students earning Main Stage at National Thespian Festival praying before their performances; BOTTOM RIGHT: Mamie Milford, Yeva Cherry, Zoya Cherry, Maddison Trinh and Kamsi Okafor getting ready for their performances.



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**ADALYNN LOPEZ RECOGNIZED
FOR BEST-TASTING LEMONADE**

story & photos by
MARQUITA GRIFFIN | mgriffin@fbherald.com

The day was hot, simmering so. Within moments of exiting an AC-chilled vehicle, sweat would begin to pool in armpits and backsides while simultaneously beading at the brow. To the objection of many, it was indicative that summertime's abhorrent temperatures were now a daily burden.

Except, perhaps, 10-year-old Adalynn Lopez, a recent competitor in the Central Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce's Lemonade Day program. The heat was an excellent contrast to her modified lemonade recipe, which guests eagerly awaited to taste at Rosenberg Carpet and Flooring on that hot Tuesday.

Technically, they'd gathered to watch Adalynn accept a certificate from Fort Bend County Commissioner Dexter L. McCoy for earning 2025's "Best Tasting Lemonade," but everyone in attendance was also ready for a first-hand experience as to why Adalynn earned the title.

As people took their first sips, satisfaction was seen, first, in their eyes and then heard through sighs of delight.

One person commented: "Chef's kiss."

The chef smiled kindly and bashfully in return. Still, it was easy to see that the 10-year-old was proud.

It was a good day. Friends, family

and community members had gathered at her lemonade stand — which boldly showcased her business name, The Juicy Lemonade Stand, in vibrant lime and lemon paint — McCoy presented her with a certificate and shared a personal story about entrepreneurship, and underscoring all of this was, that it was happening within her family's longtime Rosenberg business, of which there was a table in the back covered in sweets and drinks.

"We couldn't be more proud," said her parents, Josh and Ruby Lopez. "She is learning how to be a leader not a follower which puts our hearts at ease. She amazes us every day with her creative thinking and new products she wants to try out."

And just as Dagoe Marse painted the ROSENBERG mural on the side of her family's 1st Street business, Marse also painted Adalynn's lemonade stand, which was on display inside the store.

Her grandfather, Michael Lopez, nodded to the subtlety of family tradition running through his granddaughter's achievement.

"I was so excited. You won't make it if your product doesn't taste good," Adalynn said happily about earning "Best Tasting Lemonade." "This was exciting this year because we use to make our lemonade completely dif-

ferent. We use to make our lemonade, bottle it, and before we sealed it up we would add a fresh fruit puree."

CHANGING EVERYTHING AND DOING WELL

In 2023 and 2024, Adalynn earned "Entrepreneur of the Year" for The Juicy Lemonade Stand, and she received this year's title, toasting her recipe's tastiness with the same enthusiasm, explaining that her original recipe "was really good," but the increased expenses were a bitter challenge. "So, we had to brainstorm and change everything this year," she said.

The chamber explained Lemonade Day as a "free, fun, experiential learning program that teaches youth how to start, own and operate their own business — a lemonade stand."

The program — which features life skills, career exploration and mentorship — provides children with an entrepreneurial experience that includes access to a specific curriculum that teaches them how to create budgets, repay investors, serve customers, set profit-making goals and give back to the community.

Adalynn applied that curriculum when pivoting on her recipe to reduce her expenses.

"So the fact that I received the Best Tasting award means we did well," she said cheerfully.



BUILDING HER BRAND AND SHARING HAPPINESS

The Juicy Lemonade is a traveling pop-up lemonade stand, operating from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., depending on the location it's in that day. The stand is also available for private events, arranged through its social media accounts: Facebook @The-Juicy-Lemon-Lemonade-Stand and Instagram @thejuicylemonlemonadestand).

Having a traveling business can be tough, Adalynn said, but it's worth it, especially when she sees her support.

"We are so grateful for all the love, support, and customers that come back every year," said Adalynn. "We are also super grateful for Enchanted Gardens in Richmond, who helped me get started by allowing me to set up there from the very start."

Adalynn started the Lemonade Day program three years ago, encouraged by her mother as "something to try out" while being home-schooled. "And my family's business, Rosenberg Carpet and Flooring, is a part of the chamber and that's how I got started," she added.

Given all that the program introduced her to, Adalynn said: "It's more fun to learn like this."

"We get to meet all kinds of new people every year, its exciting," she added. "I see people I admire on social media and YouTube, and they help me."

But just like those people she admires, this 10-year-old is building her social media following and her brand. "That I have something to share with others makes me happy," she added.

"If I can make someone smile or help them have the confidence to try something new, then its been a good day."

in the photographs

Adalynn Lopez (pg 12) earned the Central Fort Bend Chamber Lemonade Day's 2025 Best Tasting Lemonade title with her new recipe. Find out more about The Juicy Lemonade Stand on Instagram @thejuicylemonlemonadestand. On June 17, Adalynn was recognized by Fort Bend County Commissioner Dexter L. McCoy for earning "Best Tasting Lemonade" in the Central Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce Lemonade Day program. From left (pg 13) is Adalynn alongside her father, Josh, and Commissioner McCoy.



Q&A with *Adalynn Lopez*

Marquita Griffin: What do you think about the Lemonade Day program?

Adalynn Lopez: I love Lemonade Day, I look forward to it every year. It has taught me so much and I think it's a good program for everyone! It makes learning fun with an app and videos.

MG: What have you learned about yourself or about life in general while running your business?

AL: You have to go out and try, even if you're scared. It's okay to make mistakes because you'll learn 2 things if you don't get it right the first time: how to do it right, and what didn't work. I've become more confident and I enjoy meeting new people now. I love to work hard especially if I'm at event where I have an opportunity to give back.

MG: Are you raising money through your lemonade stand for a specific goal or cause?

AL: I am saving some for a food trailer, and some for whatever money I'll need in the future. I also love to give back and support my church, Grace Community Fellowship West (GCF WEST) and my dance school Beautiful Feet Studio of the Arts. I also get to buy something for myself every time I open my stand! Sometimes its candy or clothes and sometimes its dinner for my Mom and Dad.

MG: Is there anything else you would like the community to know about The Juicy Lemon or about yourself?

AL: Be kind, everyone is out here trying. Love God, he's the one who's given it all to you, and go out there and try new things. Don't be scared of failing, you won't regret it if you've tried your hardest. Be brave.





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CUCUMBER SANDWICH

INGREDIENTS

- 2 thick slices whole wheat bread
- 2 tablespoons cream cheese, softened
- 6 slices cucumber
- 2 tablespoons alfalfa sprouts
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon red wine vinegar
- 1 tomato, sliced
- 1 leaf lettuce
- 1 ounce pepperoncini, sliced
- ½ avocado, mashed

INSTRUCTIONS

1 Spread each slice of bread with 1 tablespoon cream cheese.

2 On one slice of bread, arrange cucumber slices in a single layer. Cover with sprouts, then sprinkle with oil and vinegar.

3 Layer tomato slices, lettuce, and pepperoncini.

4 Spread other slice of bread with mashed avocado. Close sandwich and serve immediately.

CUCUMBER SOUP

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon butter, or more to taste
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, chopped
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 2 large English cucumbers, peeled & thinly sliced
- 2 small zucchini, thinly sliced
- 3 cups vegetable broth



INSTRUCTIONS

1 Heat butter and oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat until butter melts.

2 Add onion and garlic; sauté until translucent, 3 to 5 minutes.

3 Add cucumbers and zucchini; cook and stir until softened, 2 to 3 minutes.

4 Add broth and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until vegetables are tender, 20 to 25 minutes.

5 Purée soup with an immersion blender until smooth.



CUCUMBER SALMON BITES

INGREDIENTS

- 24 slices cucumber, each about ¾-inch thick
- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- ½ teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 4 ounces smoked salmon, cut into 2-inch strips
- 24 small fresh dill sprigs

INSTRUCTIONS

1 Form a cup in each cucumber slice by using a melon baller to scoop a 1½-inch-deep depression from one side. Place cucumbers,

scooped-sides down, onto paper towels to drain for 15 minutes.

2 Mix cream cheese, chopped dill, lemon zest, lemon juice, and pepper in a bowl until well combined.

3 Spoon about 1½ teaspoon cheese mixture into each cucumber cup. Top each cup with a salmon strip and a dill sprig.

4 **TIP:** Use reduced-fat cream cheese if desired, and substitute smoked trout for smoked salmon.



CUCUMBER LEMONADE

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups hot water
- ½ cup white sugar
- ½ cup lemon juice from concentrate
- 1 lemon, juiced
- ½ large cucumber, sliced
- 3 (12 fluid ounce) cans or bottles lemon-lime flavored soda
- 2 cups ice cubes, or as needed
- 1 lemon, thinly sliced
- ½ large cucumber, sliced and then halved

INSTRUCTIONS

1 Stir hot water and sugar together in a large pitcher until sugar is dissolved. Stir in lemon juice concentrate, lemon juice, and sliced cucumbers. Refrigerate for 30 minutes or until ready to serve.

2 Pour lemon-lime soda into pitcher. Serve lemonade over ice and garnished with lemon slices and halved cucumber slices.



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CREAMY CUCUMBER SALAD

INGREDIENTS

DRESSING:

1 ½ cups mayonnaise, or more to taste
2 tablespoons vinegar
1 tablespoon white sugar
1 teaspoon dried dill weed
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1 Mix cucumbers, onion, and salt together in a bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit for 15 to 30 minutes.

2 Turn cucumber mixture into a colander set over a bowl or in a sink. Let drain, stirring occasionally, until most of the liquid and salt has drained, 15 to 30 minutes. Transfer drained cucumber mixture to a large bowl.

3 Whisk mayonnaise, vinegar, sugar, dill, garlic powder, and pepper for dressing together in a bowl until smooth.

4 Pour over cucumber mixture and stir until coated.

5 Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 to 2 hours before serving.

TIP: If the sauce is too runny for your liking, add more mayonnaise.

NUTRITIOUS SCHOOL LUNCH IDEAS FOR KIDS



No two children are the same, but many youngsters share a number of similarities. Few young children enjoy going to bed on time, and many can't resist a good trampoline. Kids also have a reputation for being picky eaters, which can be challenging for parents tasked with picking and preparing school lunches.

When dining at home, parents know which foods their kids eat and which they push around their plates in the hopes they won't have to consume them. School lunch is a different scenario altogether, as parents are not around to ensure their youngsters eat a full and nutritious meal. Kids who are picky eaters may not eat any lunch at all. Parents who want to ensure their children get the nutrition they need to do well in school can consider the following school lunch ideas.

MAKE-YOUR-OWN SANDWICH: Kids may be more likely to eat a full lunch if they get to put it together themselves. Parents can put all the elements of a tasty sandwich into youngsters' lunch boxes, but let kids assemble the meal themselves. Sandwiches are not necessarily the healthiest midday meal, but they are much more nutritious when parents pack whole grain bread, tomatoes, lettuce, and low-sodium deli meat in students' lunch boxes. If a do-it-yourself sandwich is a nonstarter, consider a DIY taco lunch complete with whole grain tortillas.

BURRITO BOWL: A burrito bowl with kid-friendly yet nutritious ingredients is another great school lunch option. Red beans are a good source of fiber and the Harvard Medical School notes all beans are rich in potassium. Fiber is filling, so a burrito bowl that includes fiber-rich ingredients, including red beans but also quinoa or brown rice, can help students avoid late-day hunger pangs that can compromise how they feel and perform in the classroom. Burrito bowls are so tasty that kids may not even realize Mom and Dad have snuck some healthy foods like vegetables into their midday meal.

PARFAIT: Parfait has all the looks of a tasty dessert without the pitfalls of ice cream and other treats. The nutritional value of parfait depends on the ingredients Mom and Dad choose to include. Protein-rich Greek yogurt paired with some fruit and granola makes for a filling and tasty meal that's also loaded with vitamins, minerals and fiber. An insulated and airtight lunch box packed with ice packs can ensure the parfait is still cool come lunchtime.

PASTA SALAD: Kids tend to be especially fond of pasta, and parents can use that affinity to their advantage when planning school lunches. A whole-wheat pasta salad with some cherry tomatoes and diced broccoli makes for a nutrient-rich lunch that kids can enjoy. If broccoli figures to raise youngsters' ire, consider a nutritious substitute, such as shaved cucumber or zucchini.



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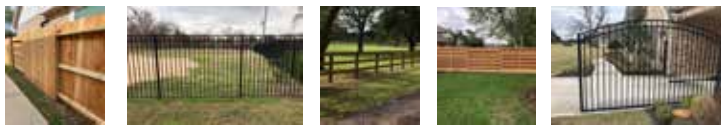
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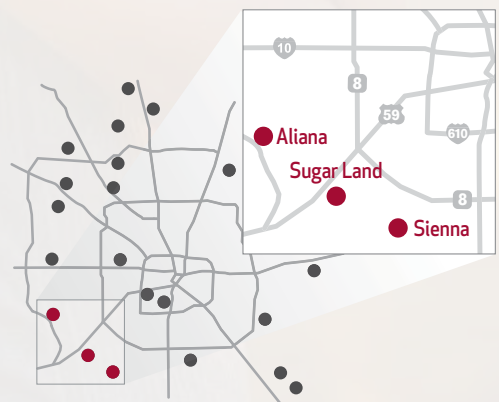
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