

October 2019

# WEST FORT BEND

Living

*Nathan Gaskamp*

opens up about his heart transplant,  
drive to help others and perspective  
on life

**PLUS** The Fort Bend  
Women's Center  
continues to support victims  
of abuse and assault





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OCTOBER 2019

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Living™

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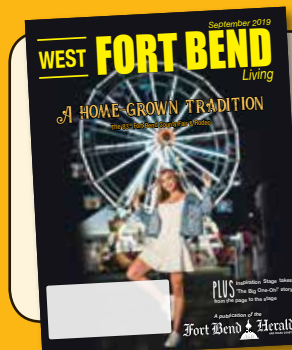
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## Fort Bend Herald

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Nathan Gaskamp in 2010 when he served as camp staff at Slumber Falls Camp.

*After a year with a 'new battery' Nathan Gaskamp shares his journey to a heart transplant*

by MARQUITA GRIFFIN | mgriffin@fbherald.com

**T**he heart beating in Nathan Gaskamp's chest is not his own. He also has three kidneys; two he was born with and the third is from the same donor who provided him with a new heart. Sitting at the kitchen table in a Richmond home where he lives with his father and grandmother, Gaskamp pats his lower abdomen with a slight grin on his face. "That's what this little pooch is," he said jokingly. "Third kidney. Crazy, huh?"

As a man who is devoted helping others and feels compelled to impact lives, even in the slightest ways, "being benched" for the past five years is difficult for Gaskamp. For a little more than decade he was a physical therapist assistant, a position that complemented his passions perfectly, but health problems that began about five years ago snatched away the profession that brought him such satisfaction.

Still, true to his nature, Gaskamp finds way to move through life as a positive force, despite the grueling journey that took him in and out of hospital rooms and eventually to the operating table in September 2018 where he received a new heart — or what Gaskamp cleverly calls his "new battery."

"Had you been talking to me back then, I would have been slumped over like this," he said practically laying on the table. "Because just sitting upright was so exhausting."

Gaskamp had associated his exhaustion and discomfort primarily with his weight, which is why in his mid 20s he started

working out and subsequently shed the pounds. And yet, he stressed, "I wasn't getting stronger."

Considering the amount of weight he was lifting, he should have had prominent and defined muscles, but those kinds of results evaded him. He did gain some muscle, but not nearly what he should have. He lifts up the sleeve of his shirt to reveal an almost sunken in upper arm.

"My muscles are atrophied," he explained.

It took an unexpected nosebleed in 2015 while lifting a patient, however, to move him to act.

Although he experienced other oddities prior to that day — difficulty swallowing food, retaining too much fluid, his skin complexion darkening and being exhausted by seemingly minor or moderate exertions — the nosebleed set off alarms and prompted him to procure professional attention.

"All those other problems — what I now know were symptoms — I explained away. Maybe I overexerted myself. I wasn't drinking enough water. I was drinking too much alcohol. I needed to work out harder. But when that nosebleed happened I knew something was wrong."

After several doctors visits Gaskamp, who celebrated his 35th birthday in August, was finally diagnosed with congestive heart failure caused by overlapping autoimmune disease which, as he explained, is multiple autoimmune disorders.

"My heart was only working at 20 percent," he said.

## 'HANGING ON'

In addition to being told that he could no longer continue working because of the physical demands of the job, Gaskamp spent the next three years undergoing tests, biopsies and treatments regarding his autoimmune disease. It wasn't just a failing heart Gaskamp was suffering from, he was also dealing with the effects of myositis, scleroderma and dermatitis.

Although the Intravenous Immunoglobulin (IVIG) Infusion Therapy he was receiving every three weeks to suppress the auto immune disease did give him "a bit of a spike," his heart condition continued to worsen until one idle day in February 2016 Gaskamp passed out after simply standing up.

*"The best way I can describe it, is to say that I left like I was hanging off the edge of a cliff, barely holding on and I could feel my life slipping away. And no matter how hard I tried I just couldn't get a grip."*

His father found him and got him to the hospital, where it was determined he was in V-tach and needed a pacemaker. At one point after getting it, Gaskamp said he even experienced "that pacemakers do work."

"I'm glad it worked, but that pain of feeling it work was horrible," he said.

Gaskamp admits there were times he just wanted to give up. He was tired of having his blood tested and waiting for biopsy results. He was tired of the tubes and the IVs. He was tired of staying at the hospital for stretches at a time.

He. Was. Just. Tired.

For a moment, he wanted everything to be over. His kidney doctor, father and grandmother, however, refused to let Gaskamp give in.

"They gave me a good talking-to," he adds with a laugh, nodding his head over to the living room where his father, Tommy, is sitting in the chair reading and his grandmother, Florence, is watching TV.

"They are the ones who keep me going," affection saturating his voice. "So I kept fighting for them, and for me."



Photo by Marquita Griffin | Nathan Gaskamp (sitting) with his father Tommy and grandmother Florence. Nathan was thrilled to share that although he can't go back to work, he has been approved to once again be a football spotter for Lamar Consolidated ISD, working alongside his dad Tommy, who has been the announcer for nearly three decades. "I did this since graduating until 2015 because my body couldn't get up those dangum steps," said Gaskamp, who graduated from Lamar Consolidated High School in 2002. "But now I'm back."

## A NEW 'BATTERY'

Unfortunately, in June 2018 with his heart rapidly declining, Gaskamp was put into a medical coma at the Methodist Medical Center in Houston.

Gaskamp recalls the odd, scary and pleasant dreams ("or visions," he wondered) he had during that time of unconsciousness. Although he was in the coma for a week, it "felt more like months or years," he said.

What he experienced ranged from peaceful sights and feelings to utter horror and pain. "I'm still trying to understand everything I experienced," he said. "It's interesting and sometimes hard to explain, but I know there is some meaning in there."

Once he came out of the coma, Gaskamp was placed on the heart transplant list where he remained for a little more than three months.

When the doctor finally brought the good news that Gaskamp he had a heart, Gaskamp noticed how the medical staffed seemed nervous after telling him the heart came from a 20-something-year-old prisoner.

"I thought it was because maybe the heart was infected but that wasn't it. There was nothing wrong with the heart," Gaskamp said. "They told me that sometimes patients will decline a heart just because that person was in prison."

He shakes his head.

"That is completely absurd," he continued, his hand over his chest. "I just can't imagine saying no just because of that. Look, my heart had failed. There was no way I was going to say no. I think some people have their priorities backwards. Think about it: some hearts are just being wasted because of that."

"I told them: 'Cut me open and let's do this.'"

The transplant — which included the heart and a kidney from the donor — took place on September 30, 2018. It was an 8-hour procedure and following the successful transplant, he spent two weeks in the hospital marveling at how different he felt.

"I didn't realize how bad I was, until I felt good," he said.

He is currently on 12 different medications, four of which he'll



Nathan in 2004 as a camp staff member. Prior to his diagnosis which included extreme sensitivity to sunlight, he said he enjoyed being outside at camp and absorbing nature.

have to take for the rest of his life. He carries them in a satchel when he's on the move. He still has to consistently wear a hat — his style of choice is a fedora, because “why not?” he said with a grin — and UV clothing because of his skin disorder.

Unfortunately, he is still prohibited to returning to his work as a physical therapist assistant, which bothers him deeply.

“I used to be the one who helped others heal,” he said. “I’m used to working. I’ve been working since I was 10 years old, so not being able to work is not something I’m OK with.”

In fact, although he has set up a page on GoFundMe ([gofundme.com](http://gofundme.com)) to help with his medical bills, he was only recently persuaded to do so by family and friends. He said he is beginning to understand that accepting help from others is OK, even if he’s not used to it.

His GoFundMe page can be found by searching “Nate Gaskamp.”

“I’m thankful to be alive and to have the ability to try to get back on my feet,” he posted on his page. “However, I have frequent doctor visits in the medical center and must continue taking many expensive medications for the rest of my life. The bills for these unavoidable expenses continue to stack up, but if I knock out some of them, I feel like I will be able to get back on my feet, have a huge weight lifted from me and be forever grateful.”

### **‘WE ARE ALL THE SAME’**

It’s been nearly a year since the transplant, and although he still dealing with the effects of his autoimmune disorder — not long after the interview he had to return to the hospital because he was having difficulty swallowing and keeping food down — his new heart is still going strong.

Even from his hospital bed he exuded hope, inspiration and even wisdom.

Life should revolve around love, understanding and compassion, he said. And adequately experiencing it should be about connecting with people, no matter their socioeconomic status, titles, race, history, background or culture, he added.

“We are all the same.”

“The heart gets too much credit [in regards to emotions],” he said. “Love, compassion and connecting with people is all in the mind.”

Learning how to welcome the help he now needs, the prayer and meditation that is a part of his daily living, his desire to connect to and care for others, “that all comes from here,” he said lightly touching the side of his head.

“I mean, I’m still me. I still think and believe the way I always have. And I don’t even have my heart. I have some other guy’s heart.”





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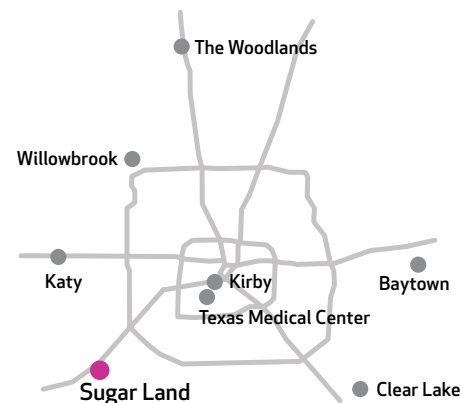


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# The Fort Bend Women's Center: 'SAVES LIVES every single day'

by **MARQUITA GRIFFIN** | [mgriffin@fbherald.com](mailto:mgriffin@fbherald.com)

One of the most commonly held beliefs about domestic violence is that if the victim leaves the abusive relationship, the abuse will end, said Peggy Wright, the sexual assault and counseling director of the Fort Bend Women's Center.

"It is not unusual for abuse to continue months, if not years, after the relationship ends," Wright countered. "For example, verbal or physical abuse during the exchange of the children, legal system abuse — constantly filing frivolous suits — to bankrupt the victim and sabotaging the victim's jobs are common tactics used long after a break-up or divorce."

Additionally, Wright adds, the most dangerous time for a victim is after leaving the abusive relationship.

"When you hear about a woman being murdered, you will most often hear then the murderer is an estranged boyfriend or husband, indicating that she was probably killed soon after leaving the relationship," she said.

The topics of domestic violence and sexual assault is unfortunately surrounded by several fallacies, Wright stressed. Including that such violence only happens to women.

"These crimes happen to men as well," she said, explaining that the center serves men of all ages. "We are called Fort Bend Women's Center, but we help any and all victims of domestic violence and sexual assault."

In 2018, the center assisted 23 male clients with services such as counseling, medical care, crisis intervention, legal assistance, relocation assistance, transportation, housing search and clothing.

"Sometimes it just seems to be too horrible to be true, and yet

it is," Wright said. "If you haven't experienced domestic violence or sexual assault personally, it's very hard to imagine that anyone could act to violently against someone they say they love. But the crime is becoming more and more visible through wide access to media and other outlets, so people are beginning to recognize this type of violence as a very prevalent problem."

## 'INTEGRAL SUPPORT SERVICES'

The Fort Bend Women's Center is the only full-service domestic violence and sexual assault emergency shelter and crisis hotline in Fort Bend. Last year it served 1,289 new clients and as of June 2019, it has assisted 468 clients. But, Wright noted, "this does not include the thousands that sought our help but either had to be referred to another organization due to lack of space or to have other issues addressed."

"The need is still very present in our community."

In 2020 the center will celebrate its 40th anniversary in the community, having grown from a "tiny house that only sheltered a few victims" to the new housing program that will house as many as 72 families simultaneously.

"In the last 40 years, we have become the primary Fort Bend County provider of free, integral support services for survivors," Wright said. "The services we offer help save lives every single day."

"[The support provided by the Fort Bend Women's Center] was the first time someone acknowledged the abuse for what it was. This allowed me to begin accepting and healing," said a current



Volunteers from HCSS at the center's "Measure Up 4 Kids event." From left are Ike Ihekwoaba, Bayo Adeyeba, FBWC CEO Vita Goodell Lisa Helms, Ruth Getachew, Anik Bhattacharya and Dalton Pulsipher.

client who wished to remain unnamed. "The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss and have found their way out of the depths. These people have an appreciation, a sensitivity and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness and a deep loving concern ... Beautiful people do not just happen."

The center offers longterm support services including: counseling, case management, legal advocacy, employment and education assistance, children's services, rape crisis services, rental assistance and transportation.

Additionally, the center has "a history of successfully identifying and adopting innovative approaches to victim services to address the trauma of abuse and break the cycle of violence," Wright said.

"Over the past 10 years, Fort Bend Women's Center has been serving survivors with increasingly complex emotional, psychological and physical needs. Many have experienced abuse throughout their lives and have suffered traumatic brain injury due to head trauma and-or strangulation."

On top of the positive reinforcement, motivational interviewing and mobile advocacy services offered, the center has also introduced a behavioral therapy, called neurofeedback training, to help clients living with brain injuries, post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health disorders.

"We are currently the only agency to offer this therapy to domestic violence and sexual assault victims," Wright said.

Another current client who also did not want to be identified by name, said that in addition to teaching her how to become self-sufficient, the Fort Bend Women's Center taught her "how to be safe for [her] kids," and provided her with "coping mechanisms for stress and trauma."

"They help women who think they have no way out to start over in a positive way," she said, also offering advice to any victims in a desperate situation. "Don't be afraid to get help. Take it one day at a time."



Barbara Jones and Victor Rivas Rivers, the 2018 Healing and Hope Luncheon featured speaker. The 2018 Healing and Hope Luncheon which was sold out with 250 supporters in attendance and raised \$62,000. For 2019 the center relocated the luncheon to Marriott Sugar Land Town Square to increase capacity and it is already sold out with 440 attendees, tracking to raise \$95,000.

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## THE 2019 HEALING & HOPE LUNCHEON

As 2020 approaches, Wright said the center has several goals in mind — like “increase our abilities to help more survivors and their families to achieve safety and independence, free of violence and fear” — and to continue spreading awareness, education and working with the community to end the cycle of violence.

True to this effort, the Fort Bend Women’s Center is hosting its 4th Annual Healing and Hope Luncheon on Oct. 17, featuring Elizabeth Smart, whose story about abduction and abuse became one of the most followed nationwide cases of child abduction in the early 2000s.

The Healing and Hope Luncheon is Fort Bend Women’s Center’s annual keynote event in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Smart was abducted from her own bed in the middle of the night on June 5, 2002. For the following nine months, Smart was victimized before being found by police and returned to her home on March 12, 2003.

At the luncheon, Smart will share her personal story and how she transformed from victim to advocate, traveling the country to educate others and advocate for change in child abductions, recovery programs and national legislation.

“All of our clients have been victimized in horrific ways, wheth-



Elizabeth Smart, an abduction and abuse survivor, will be the guest speaker at the 2019 Fort Bend Women’s Center Healing and Hope Luncheon.

er it was through sexual abuse or physical violence,” said Wright. “Elizabeth was also victimized when she was kidnapped by her abuser at just age 14. Not only can she relate from the perspective of a child victim, she can provide hope for all victims and show that they can survive and thrive after their abuse. We feel Elizabeth offers so many teachings on how a survivor can find healing and succeed after being victimized but also how the people and community around them can help with that process.”

Smart, who founded the Elizabeth Smart Foundation is involved with the National AMBER Alert, The Adam Walsh Child Protection & Safety Act and other safety legislation in the country.

Smart has also authored two books — “My Story” and “Where There’s Hope” — and along with other abduction survivors, has worked with the Department of Justice to create a survivors guide, “You’re Not Alone: The Journey From Abduction to Empower-

ment,” meant to encourage children who have gone through similar experiences.

“We are very pleased to have Elizabeth Smart speak at this year’s luncheon. Her story demonstrates an outcome that we would hope for all of our clients and strive to help them to achieve every day,” said Fort Bend Women’s Center CEO Vita Goodell. “We are beyond grateful for all of the supporters who make that possible by continuing to bring healing and hope to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and their children.

“We could not do this work without them.”



Volunteer Carolyn Anim encourages church leaders to get involved with the center by having at least one person on their staff complete the training certification course to “enable our faith-based communities to better understand what it means to be a survivor of domestic violence and sexual assault.”



A young Fort Bend Women’s Center client with his new school backpack.

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## MOVED TO ACT

Last April there was an exhibit on display in different locations in the community called “What Were You Wearing,” and it was through this exhibit that Carolyn Arnim made her first contact with the Fort Bend Women’s Center.

“As outreach coordinator for my church I wanted to see what it was all about,” Arnim said. “The exhibit was incredibly powerful and moving.”

The exhibit, created by the Women’s Center, showcased mannequins in outfits with sexual assault stories written by Fort Bend County residents.

People still believe that a woman can provoke sexual assault by the way she was dressed or if her “behavior is perceived as promiscuous,” Wright said.

“That type of thinking is comparable to an excuse such as ‘Well, you had a \$100 dollar bill sticking out of your pocket so I felt like it was mine to take.’ Careless decisions or behaviors do not give others a right to commit a crime against you,” Wright said. “People who buy into this rationale do not give men who do not rape the credit they deserve.”

The exhibit was an effort to make the public aware of and to stop the trend of victim-blaming.

While viewing the exhibit, Arnim spoke with Women Center staff who were on site and learned about the center’s STARS Volunteer Auxiliary. Arnim chose to attend one of the meetings and from there was encouraged to sign up for the center’s Sexual Assault Advocate Training, which is a 40-hour certification course.

“This led me on a three-week journey where I had the privilege of hearing from local leaders and experts in the fields of domestic violence and sexual assault. Upon receiving my certification, I was able work directly with Fort Bend Women’s Center clients,” she said. “Basically, the more time I spent engaged with [the center’s] activities, the more I realized I knew nothing about how to really help domestic violence and sexual assault survivors in our community.”

Arnim has been a volunteer for more than a year now, and in that time at least one truth has made itself abundantly clear: domestic abuse can happen to anyone.

“It does not discriminate based on economic status, religion, race, gender or sexual orientation,” she said. “I’ve also learned that abusers don’t come with a warning label. Most people have the misconception that abusers are abusive because they lack self-control. When in fact, they are actually in complete control of what they are doing. That is why they can exist in our community undetected, they are superstars at their jobs, maybe even attend church every week and no one would suspect or believe that they are capable of abuse.”

Arnim said the center’s leaders and staff have a commitment to survivors that “is contagious and inspiring,” and that “we can all want to support domestic violence and sexual assault victims, but we can’t execute the healing process without the proper training.”

“The Fort Bend Women’s Center took my casual interest to get involved and upgraded it,” she said. “They didn’t just train me for a cause. They equipped me for a lifetime.”



Photo by Averil Gleason | An outfit an adolescent male wore when he was sexually assaulted.

## Domestic & Sexual Violence Q&A: What to do

Fort Bend Women’s Center Sexual Assault and Counseling Director Peggy Wright answered questions about how a victim can get to safety following domestic or sexual assault.

### When a victim first experiences domestic violence, what are the first important steps to take?

“The most important step is to get to a safe place. Every circumstance is different and each person’s resources may be different so it is impossible to have a blanket answer that applies to all people. It may mean going to another room in the house, locking the door and waiting until the crisis is over. It may mean grabbing the children, running to the neighbor’s house and calling the police. It may mean calling 9-1-1 immediately or calling our Hotline as soon as it is safe to do so. Whatever you choose to do, think safety. Every victim has several complicated decisions to make, and one of the toughest is: ‘Should I stay or should I go?’ This is not unlike the decision we may make when faced with potential flash flooding. Both staying and leaving involve risks, and the process of leaving is the most dangerous time. Calling Fort Bend Women’s Center and speaking with specially trained advocates who can give you some safety tips as well as help you weigh your options is a good first step to take once you are safe. They will not tell you what to do, but rather help you decide what option(s) might work best for you.”

Wright notes that in the case of sexual assault, the steps are the same, however, another crucial step is to get an exam. “It does help in both cases,” she said.

### When a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault contacts the Women’s Center, what does the process look like?

“A victim can call our hotline (281-342-HELP) any time of the day or night. After you state your reason for calling, the hotline operator will ask a few questions that will help determine how to best accommodate you. Be sure to indicate whether you are seeking shelter or non-residential services. If you are seeking shelter and there is space, the operator will give you instructions for getting safely to the shelter. At the shelter, all your basic needs will be provided. If there is no room at the shelter, the operator will provide you with a list of other shelters and resources. Additionally, the operator can schedule an appointment for you with a non-residential case manager to complete an intake, a needs assessment and various other brief assessments. Once you have completed the intake process, you may request which services you would like to access. The case manager will then send a referral to the appropriate staff member who will contact you to schedule an appointment. All victim services are offered at no cost. Please visit our website at [fbwc.org](http://fbwc.org) for more details about our services.”

## The Fort Bend Women's Center

Phone: 281-344-5750

Crisis Hotline: 281-342-HELP (4357)

[www.ftbendwomensctr](http://www.ftbendwomensctr)



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## Annual Harvest Fest is 'two big days jam-packed with fun and excitement'

**M**ake plans now to join the fun at the 36th annual Needville Harvest Festival, Friday and Saturday, Oct. 18 and 19. The first Harvest Fest took place the third weekend in October, 1983, and it has been held at that time each year since.

Downtown Needville was the site of the celebration for many years, but continued growth necessitated the move to Harvest Park, where nearly 5,000 people gather annually for lots of food, fun, and a wide variety of activities, events and entertainment.

The 16-acre Harvest Park, located at 3001 Violet St., is open year-round for the enjoyment of the community, but Harvest Festival President Chris Janicek said the annual event that made the park possible is something folks look forward to for months.

"Needville Harvest Festival features two big days jam-packed with fun and excitement for people of all ages," he said.

Activities kick off the evening of Oct. 18 with a barbecue cook-off featuring more than 50 teams. Events begin early the following morning with a fun run and continue throughout the day with everything from a talent show to a live auction, lawn mower races to a car show.

More than 60 food and craft vendors offer something for everyone, and the Kidz Zone is always a favorite, featuring performances such as the Jelly Belly Schmelly Show, magician David Gish, and Sonny the Bird Man. Other crowd-pleasers include interviews of Little Miss and Mr. contestants prior to the naming of the winners of those titles, and the crowning of the 2019 Harvest Fest Queen.

Raffle prizes include a new John Deere Gator, a 48-inch riding lawnmower, and cash. All proceeds from the Harvest Fest are used for the development and maintenance of Harvest Park and for scholarships for graduating Needville High School seniors. More than \$30,000 in scholarships have been awarded thus far.

In order to make the festival a continued success, said Janicek, community support is important and sponsors are crucial.

"Sponsors are listed on all event information and advertisement, and we will honor them at a dinner at the park on opening night," he said. "We're counting on our sponsors to help us make this year's festival the best ever. We are so grateful for their support and for the incredibly dedicated and devoted committee members and volunteers who donate endless hours of service to make the Harvest Fest such a success each year."

Needville Harvest Festival, Inc., is a non-profit 501c3



The newest addition to Harvest Park in Needville got under way last week. On hand to watch the start of construction on a new covered pavilion alongside the jogging trail were, from left, Harvest Festival Committee members W. Lee Hedt, Sandra Wendt, Sherry Winkelman, Tommy Stavinoha and Chris Janicek.

organization that raises funds for current and long-range projects for Harvest Park. The newest addition to the park is a 50-foot by 30-foot covered pavilion which is currently being constructed alongside the half-mile paved walkway that winds through the grounds.

The pavilion and security cameras for the protection of physical property are made possible by a grant from The George Foundation in honor of a former board member.

Other recent improvements include: restroom and building expansions; a playground with benches and additional playground area; covered picnic tables and barbecue pits; lights for the walking trail and parking lot; and much more.

"We hope to be able to continue to make improvements to the park, but to do that sponsors are vital, and we need the support of our community in the form of attendance at the festival as well," said Janicek. "We hope folks from all across the area will come out and see all we have to offer at the Harvest Fest and Harvest Park, and we know they'll enjoy meeting lots of friendly folks."

To become a part of all the fun by becoming a sponsor or volunteer, contact Janicek at [chris.janicek@yahoo.com](mailto:chris.janicek@yahoo.com) or 281-468-9314.

## Texas board chair Dianne Wilson retires

**T**exana Center announces the retirement of their last founding Board of Trustees member, Dianne Wilson. Wilson has served on the Texana Center Board of Trustees since its creation in 1999 and has led as Board Chair for the last 14 years.

Prior to her appointment to the Texana Center board, Wilson served in the 1980s as Chair of the Volunteer Services Council for Richmond State Supported Living Center and in the 1990s as a member of the Advisory Committee for Central Gulf State Operated Community Services.

In the early years of Texana, the board focused its time and

energy on successfully merging two separate organizations, one serving those with mental illness and the other serving people with intellectual disabilities. The board also helped in developing Texana's identity and increasing the public awareness of its services to the community. Wilson was on the committee that hired Texana's current and only Chief Executive Officer, George Patterson, in 2000. The Board also made the decision to move Texana Center's headquarters to Rosenberg to be more centrally located in the geographical service area. Today, under her leadership, Texana is an ever-growing and vibrant organization with 850 employees and serving over 14,000 individuals a year at



Diane Wilson

its various facilities in Austin, Colorado, Fort Bend, Matagorda, Waller and Wharton Counties.

With the growth of several programs, the board decided in 2008 that it would be cost effective to build and/or own its facilities in all six counties. After raising approximately \$3 million in Texana's first capital campaign, the second campus in Rosenberg opened its doors in 2011. It combined four leased office spaces into the new Service Center and had Texana's first purpose-built Learning Center

for adults with intellectual disabilities. Texana's board has approved purchases so that most of the 19 group homes throughout the counties are now owned and operated by Texana

In 2014 with Wilson at the helm, Texana Center expanded again and added four new programs: the Behavioral Health Crisis Center, the Behavior Stabilization Team, Therapy for Tots and the second location of the Children's Center for Autism. The following year, the board approved the purchase of 14.5 acres one mile north of downtown Fulshear to build a new regional campus that will serve the most northwestern portion of Fort Bend County as well as Waller, Austin, and Colorado Counties. To date, the Forward Together Capital Campaign has raised approximately \$2.2 million and are in the permitting phase for the first building.

Wilson's retirement also fittingly coincides with Texana Center's 20th Anniversary. "We're grateful for all the years of service that Dianne has given to Texana and are especially thankful that even though she announced her retirement to the board and senior leadership last summer, she agreed to stay until this year to complete this momentous milestone," said George Patterson.

Wilson and her husband Bob have been guardians of his sister with intellectual disabilities since 1985 and have shared a long-time passion for helping people facing various challenges. Wilson retired in December 2014 after serving 32 years as the elected County Clerk of Fort Bend County.

## 2019 FORT BEND COUNTY WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S

More than five million people are living with Alzheimer's and between 2000 and 2017, deaths attributed to Alzheimer's has increased 145%.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, in 2019, Alzheimer's disease will cost the US \$290 billion — and this number is projected to rise to more than \$1.1 trillion in 2050.

Research, the association stresses, is the option to prevent and treat Alzheimer's.

In its efforts to raise funds for Alzheimer's care, support and research, the association is again hosting its Fort Bend County Walk to End Alzheimer's on Oct. 26 at the University of Houston-

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# FESTS

Sugar Land. Registration is set for 7:30 a.m, followed by a ceremony at 8 a.m. and the walk beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Characterized by impaired communication, disorientation, confusion, behavior changes and, ultimately, difficulty speaking, swallowing and walking, Alzheimer's disease is a growing epidemic and is the nation's sixth-leading cause of death. Almost two-thirds of Americans with Alzheimer's disease are women and one in three seniors dies with Alzheimer's or another dementia, the associated reported.

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.

This year's goal for the Fort Bend County Walk to End Alzheimer's is \$175,000.

For more information visit [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org), call 713-314-1346 or email [walk@alztex.org](mailto:walk@alztex.org).



## GOLFERS TO TEST THEIR 'SKILL OF THRONES' DURING HOPE FOR THREE FUNDRAISING TOURNAMENT

Hope for Three will demonstrate its talent for creativity and wholesome fun during the nonprofit's 4th Annual Golf "Fore" Autism by having players test their "skill of thrones" while taking a swing from a literal porcelain throne during this scramble-styled golf tournament.

Sitting on a "throne," golfers will make a drive hit with the ball lying at zero. The best ball is played to continue the scramble.

The tournament, which is presented by Timewise, is what event organizers are calling a "royal opportunity" to raise awareness and funds for local children and families living with autism.

The scramble-style golf tournament is set for Oct. 28 at the Sweetwater Country Club in Sugar Land.

Guests will enjoy food on the course including Off the Vine Bistro and Top Gun BBQ. There are two chances at hole-in-one vehicle wins courtesy of Classic Chevy Sugar Land and Sterling McCall Lexus. Golfers and the general public can also take their chance at winning gas for one year, compliments of Timewise, by donating \$20 for a chance to win \$1,200, \$800 or \$600 (\$2,600 value) in gas cards.

Live and silent auctions with vacations, concerts, jewelry, sporting events and memorabilia, will also held at the dinner and awards banquet.

Teams are available for tournament play — individual (\$125) or foursome (\$500). Sponsorship and underwriting opportunities also available. Golf registration and gas chances are online [www.hopeforthree.org/events](http://www.hopeforthree.org/events)

For additional information on Hope For Three's programs and resources, call 281-245-0640 or visit [hopeforthree.org](http://hopeforthree.org).



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Photo courtesy of Custom Minds Photography | To perfect his technique while sitting on a porcelain "throne" last year, sponsor Jevaughn Sterling of Amegy Bank took a swing for kids with autism.



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When the new school year kicked off, Hope for Three announced the continuation of its "It's Cool to Care" (ICTC) program, which educates and empowers students and educators on the topic of bullying, specifically against children living with autism.



The 2019/2020 Teen Huddle volunteers create a circle of love and band together during their annual beach retreat to prepare for their year of philanthropic giving and supporting families and children living with autism spectrum disorder.

Students living with autism spectrum disorder are 63% more likely to be bullied in public schools than typically developing peers, the nonprofit stated.

Since inception, the ICTC program has successfully presented information to more than 15,000 students and educators throughout the Greater Houston area. ICTC creates heightened awareness and knowledge through its key concepts of patience, empathy, and anti-bullying.

The target audience for this program is grades K-12, as well as faculty members. During the presentation handouts are used to illustrate and define what autism is, and interactive exercises and videos depict the daily struggles and experiences of those living with autism.

Students are also given real-life tactics to put to use on how to be a 'good friend' and an advocate for anti-bullying.

Not only has ICTC reduced bullying and assisted educators in identifying and handling issues, it also inspired students to give back. More than half of this year's Teen Huddle program, presented by Hope For Three, is made up of high school students who completed an ICTC training.

Teen Huddle is an auxiliary group of 20 teen volunteers from 13 different area schools who share a mission: To increase autism awareness and acceptance among teens.

The bi-monthly programs they host provide families with 'Parents Time Out' and 'Sibling Sessions,' a mentor program for siblings of children with autism.

The 2019/2020 Teen Huddle volunteers, which also includes four teens who experienced 'Siblings Sessions' were just inducted during a beach retreat in August and are eager to begin their philanthropic journey.

"ICTC and Teen Huddle are both Hope For Three programs conducted to ignite a stronger, more knowledgeable community," said Samantha Katchy, Hope For Three Family Assistant Manager. "These relationships not only help cut down the statistics of bullying but also provide a pathway for more inclusive opportunities."

Schools, businesses and organizations can schedule an It's Cool To Care presentation by contacting Hope For Three at 281-245-0640 or visit [hopeforthree.org/programs](http://hopeforthree.org/programs)



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## COMING SOON: DISNEY'S MY SON PINOCCHIO JR' & THE ADDAMS FAMILY SCHOOL EDITION'

**I**nspiration Stage is presenting two youth productions in October — Disney's My Son Pinocchio JR and The Addams Family School Edition — featuring local talent.

"I have been in several camp productions but this is my first iStage production," said an excited 13-year-old Bethany Strader, who is a resident of Bonbrook Plantation in Richmond. "It's a funny show with a great message for everyone. The song 'Toys' is hilarious and the choreography is so fun."

Strader, who is an 8th grader with Veritas online and home school, is in both October iStage productions. She will play Signora Conrastana in 'Disney's My Son Pinocchio JR,' which runs Oct. 4 - 6.

In this musical, the classic tale of toymaker Geppetto's little wooden puppet is given new life. This new production, which retells the classic Disney story from Geppetto's perspective, features the beloved classic songs, "When You Wish upon a Star" and "I've Got No Strings," alongside a host of new songs by Oscar winner and Grammy Award winner Stephen Schwartz.



Bethany Strader

Join the Blue Fairy, Stromboli and a lively cast of characters as Geppetto journeys beyond the toyshop to discover the meaning of family. When the Blue Fairy grants Geppetto's wish to bring his beloved puppet to life, the new father quickly learns that being a parent is full of challenges.

He struggles to make his son "the perfect boy," only to lose him to a gang of Roustabouts. It is only when faced with the thought of never seeing Pinocchio again that Geppetto truly learns the joys of being a father and loving his child unconditionally.

"Disney's My Son Pinocchio JR," with its cast of 40 talented youth, ages 7 to 17, is appropriate for audiences of all ages. Four shows are scheduled the weekend of Oct. 4 - 6, all at the Sugar Land Auditorium, 226 Lakeview Dr. in Sugar Land. Showtimes are: Friday, Oct. 4, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 5, 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday, Oct. 6, 3:30 p.m.

### 'A FUN, UPBEAT MUSICAL'

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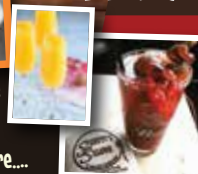
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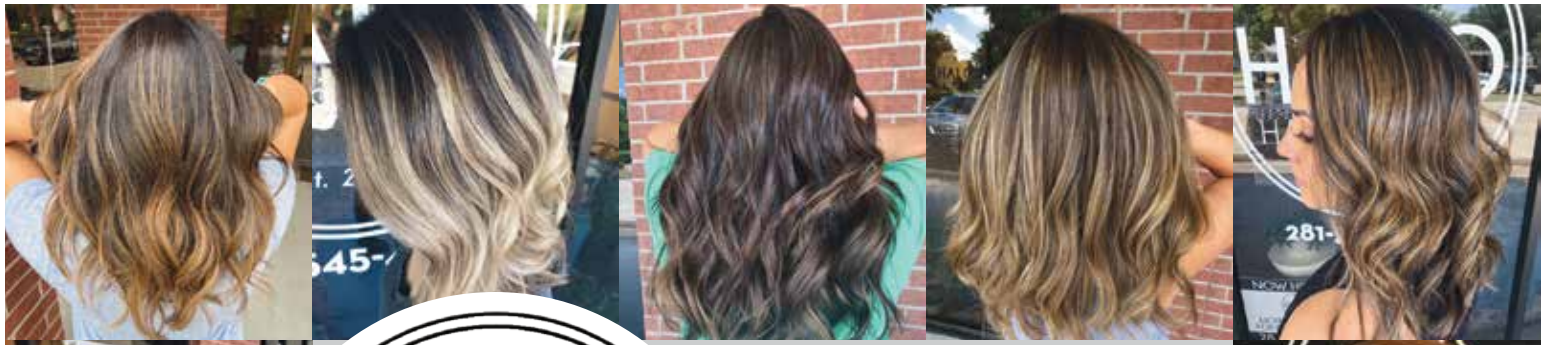


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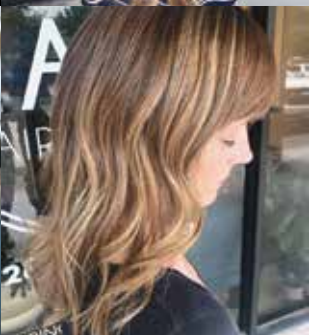
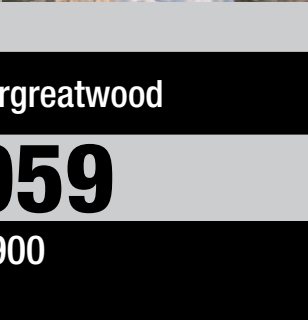
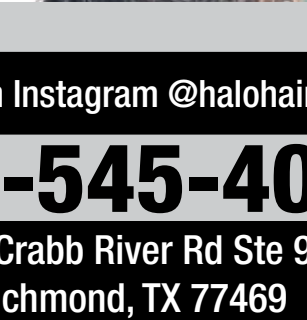
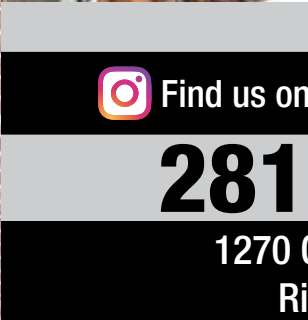
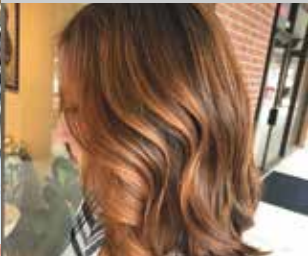


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Morticia (Lizzie Tyer) and Wednesday (Madison Willett) and their ancestors in the "Addams Family School Edition."

ultimate princess of darkness, has grown up and fallen in love with a sweet, smart young man from a respectable family — a man her parents have never met.

If that wasn't upsetting enough, Wednesday confides in her father and begs him not to tell her mother. Now, Gomez Addams must do something he's never done before — keep a secret from his beloved wife, Morticia. Everything will change for the whole family on the fateful night they host a dinner for Wednesday's "normal" boyfriend and his parents.

Strader will play an ancestor in The Addams Family School Edition.

"I'm excited because the cast is amazing and we've had a fun time putting this musical together," she says. "It's a fun, upbeat musical with lots of great music, interesting characters and super fun and challenging choreography."

"The Addams Family School Edition," with its cast of 29 talented youth, ages 12 to 19, is appropriate for audiences ages 8 years old and older. Four shows are scheduled the weekend of Oct. 18 - 20, all at the Sugar Land Auditorium. Showtimes are: Friday, Oct. 18, 8 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 19, 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.; and Sunday, Oct. 20, 3 p.m.

For tickets to this month's shows, visit [inspirationstage.com/shows](http://inspirationstage.com/shows).

## MOTOWN COMES TO MORTON

The Historic Richmond Association is inviting the public to experience its Motown on Morton from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., Oct. 12 in downtown Richmond.



The Level One Band

What began as an effort to bring awareness to ALS by in support of Steven 'Rocket' Rosen, who is a downtown business owner and community hero diagnosed with ALS, has developed to a free evening of great music and dancing in the streets. The fun cranks up with Level One Band jamming with Motown sound at 7 p.m. To learn more about Level One Band visit [www.leveloneband.com](http://www.leveloneband.com).

Activities include costume contest, car cruise-in, food trucks and shops will be open. Funds raised will support ALS Heroes.



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## A LITTLE HOCUS POCUS' FOR HALLOWEEN

## 36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TEXIAN MARKET DAYS CELEBRATES HISTORY

Just in time for the Halloween festivities, the City of Richmond will continue its Movies On Morton series with 1993 Disney film "Hocus Pocus," showing on Oct. 4 in historic Downtown Richmond in front of City Hall, located at 402 Morton Street. "Hocus Pocus" is a comedic movie about a trio of witches who are accidentally resurrected by a teenage boy in Salem, Massachusetts on Halloween. The Movies on Morton series will proceed with Disney's 2017 animated film "Coco" showing on Nov. 1.

The city organized these screenings to provide a free family event — complete with popcorn and refreshments — for residents and visitors. Watch City of Richmond TX Facebook page for updates.



Tickets are now on sale for the 36th annual Texian Market Days festival. Set for Saturday, October 26 at the George Ranch Historical Park, Texian Market Days celebrates more than 150 years of Texas history through battle re-enactments, pioneer folk life demonstrations, cowboys, vintage games, food and craft vendors, historic house tours and much more.

"Texian Market Days has always been an amazing way to get an immersive perspective of this area's history in a memorable, multi-sensory way," said Steve Nelson, 2019 festival co-chair and vice president of the Fort Bend History Association's Board of Trustees. "This year, we're putting the 'market' back in Market Days with more vendors, more food choices, a beer garden and live music - all grouped together as a hub where people can congregate, re-charge and then head back into the Park for more history."

Founded in 1984, the full-day festival celebrates Texas history - ranging from the early pioneer days of the 1820s through World War II and beyond. More than 5,000 students, chaperones and visitors attend the festival annually; guest favorites include live period music and entertainment, cavalry demonstrations, cannonfire, Victorian games and dancing, antique vehicles and children's activities such as making cornhusk dolls, a petting zoo and face painting. Community organizations, both locally in Fort Bend County and from the Greater Houston area, also attend the festival and provide hands-on activities as part of the experience.

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A few of this year's participating organizations include the Houston Maritime Museum, Fort Bend Master Naturalists, Texas Prison Museum, T.W. Davis YMCA, Fort Bend Master Gardeners and Sam Houston Memorial Museum.

Held annually on the fourth weekend in October, the Texian Market Days festival is a community event that benefits the Fort Bend History Association, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and sharing Fort Bend County and Texas history. All proceeds from Texian Market Days benefit the educational and preservation efforts of the Association, which includes the George Ranch Historical Park, Fort Bend Museum, DeWalt Heritage Center and other affiliates.

For the second year in a row, Houston-area H-E-B Business Centers are selling discounted Texian Market Days tickets; advance pricing at H-E-B Business Centers is \$18 for adults and \$13 for seniors and children ages 4-12. At-the-gate or online pricing is \$20 for adults and \$15 for seniors and children ages 4-12. Children 3 and under and members of the Fort Bend History Association are free.

Festival hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Oct.26. The George Ranch Historical Park is located at 10215 FM 762 in Richmond. For more information about Texian Market Days, visit [www.texianmarketdays.com](http://www.texianmarketdays.com) or call 281-343-0218.





Photo by Tyler Johnson | Keith Bollom, aka Doc Parker, at the 2018 Texian Market Days.



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## THE 2019 SUGAR PLUM MARKET IS FAST APPROACHING

The 19th Annual Sugar Plum Market, presented by the Fort Bend Junior Service League and Title Sponsor Memorial Hermann Sugar Land, will focus on this year's "Joy to the World" theme through continued support of organizations in Fort Bend County.

Since 2001, the holiday shopping extravaganza has raised over \$2.5 million for many Fort Bend County non-profit organizations. Previous grants have contributed to educational programs, food pantries, assistance for women and children, literacy programs, and many other charitable needs. The women of Fort Bend Junior Service League (FBJS�) and Memorial Hermann Sugar Land said they hope to spread "joy to the world" by raising money for Fort Bend County's charitable organizations providing assistance to those who need it most.

The Sugar Plum Market offers a variety of sponsorship and underwriting opportunities for both businesses and individuals, with specially tailored packages available. Market sponsors receive marketing benefits, with some packages including social media posts, event signage, and website and program recognition. Certain sponsor and underwriting levels gain access to the

exclusive VIP lounge area. Sponsors and underwriters can choose from several packages, which include the opportunity for exposure to over 7,000 of our shoppers.

The market will feature more than 100 vendors including fan favorites and unique new vendors. Merchandise categories include apparel, jewelry and accessories, home interiors, children's items, food, and holiday gifts and décor. Vendors will be revealed to patrons through Facebook and Instagram. 'Follow' and 'Like' Sugar Plum Market social media pages for information on vendors participating in the Market this year.

The 2019 Sugar Plum Market doors will open at the Stafford Centre Performing Arts Theatre and Convention Center for a special Preview Night shopping event on Thursday, Nov. 7 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. General Market hours will be on Friday, Nov. 8 from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 9 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. General Admission tickets will be available for both presale for \$12



From left, front row: Emily Rhodes, Jason Glover, Malisha Patel, Brigit Engleman, Heather Allen, Cindy Reaves; back row: Kathryn Johnson, Megan Schlafer, Parita Kurian, Courtney Diepraam and Rachel Kelm.

and at the door for \$15.

For more information visit [www.sugarplummarket.com](http://www.sugarplummarket.com) or contact the Sugar Plum Market Co-Chairs by email at [information@sugarplummarket.com](mailto:information@sugarplummarket.com).

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# George Ranch High School theatre department presents 'Mamma Mia!'

Story & Photo by **MARQUITA GRIFFIN** | mgriffin@fbherald.com

The George Ranch High School's theatre department has announced it will present "Mamma Mia!" this month.

A jukebox musical told through the music of ABBA, "Mamma Mia!" is set on a small Greek island where the character of Sophie dreams of a perfect wedding where her father gives her away, except Sophie doesn't know who he is. Her mother, Donna, a former lead singer of the 1970s pop group Donna and the Dynamos, refuses to speak on the past, so Sophie tries her hand at her own investigative work. Sophie ends up getting her hands on her mother's diary, which reveals three possible fathers — Sam, Billy and Harry — so Sophie secretly invites them to the wedding.

"This show is going to be the best that this school has ever seen," said George Ranch High's Tate Mangum. "The talent this year is out of the park, this show is not to-be-missed for sure."

Directing this eager and equally skillful cast is George Ranch High School theatre L. Jay Edmeyer, who said one of his prominent goals is to continually present challenges to the school's theatre department.

"I have, historically, chosen musicals based on what I saw as a need in our department," he said.

He refers to his choice opening show for the 2016 school year, "Sweet Charity," which was a musical that was more advanced, in

terms of subject matter, than any of the department's prior productions at that time.

"I chose "Sweet Charity," not because I had the dancers to do the show well, but because I *needed* dancers to do it," he explained. "I want to always challenge students — as well as other directors, choreographers and even myself — to go beyond their level of comfort."

He notes that his motivation this year was a tad different.

"I decided that I wanted to do something that showed the wonderful talent in my department — even while challenging many — and at the same time have a wonderful time working on a show.

And this, he stressed, is why "Mamma Mia!" was his choice for the department's season opener.

"It is such an amazing opportunity to be able to share not only the love of what we do, but the joy of the process at the same time," Edmeyer said.

"Mamma Mia!" which will feature a cast of 38 students from George Ranch High School plus a youth ensemble comprised of elementary, middle school and junior high students from the maroon track, will run from Oct. 24 through Oct. 26 at 7:30 p.m. and at 2 p.m. on Oct. 27 at the George Ranch High School auditorium, 8181 FM 762 Rd. in Richmond. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$5 for students.

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"I'm excited about this show because it is one of my favorites, and to do it my senior year is such a blessing," said George Ranch High School senior Paige Klase.

Klase, who has performed in varsity theatre since her sophomore year, will play the role of "Donna." The show holds a particular affection from Klase, who said the production "requires a realistic happiness that shoots down barriers any young actor or actress might have."

"This way," she explained, "the actors can feel the joy of the show just as an audience would."

"Anyone who comes to see "Mamma Mia!" will easily let it into their heart as it unfolds major comedy, romance, drama and some killer ABBA songs all in one," said Klase. "It's one of those shows you just can't quite let go of once you see it. I can't wait to tell this amazing story in my last chapter of high school."

George Ranch High School Longhorn Player student actors, from left, Ashley Johnson, Tate Mangum, Paige Klase, Cyrus Fontenot, Caleb Hall, and and Cameron Krouch (sitting) who are all excited about the opening of "Mamma Mia!" on Oct. 24.



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# Calvary Episcopal Preparatory kicks off 2019-2020 school year with excitement

by KRISTA KUPERUS

**E**xcitement and energy radiated from students as they filled the hallways of Calvary Episcopal Preparatory at the start of the new school year. Calvary welcomed 40 new students this year. Eight of those students are enrolled in Calvary's new 3-year old Pre-Kindergarten program. It was an exciting day for faculty and staff to see 3 year old students, all the way up to 18 years old students ready to start their academic school year! The three R's are alive and well at Calvary Episcopal Preparatory... Reverence for God, Respect of others and Responsibility for self, are all hand in hand with an exceptional curriculum and a family atmosphere.



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Donnie Fondon is ready for the start of school.



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From left, Jake Babin, Aubree Kuperus, Sabrina Hunter, Karson Jones and Dori Soward are preparing for class.



High School students, from left, Halla Buhulaiyem, Lilly Matta, Sarah Williams and Favour Okafor.

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## HOUSTON METHODIST SUGAR LAND HOSPITAL

—receives primary stroke center certification—

**H**ouston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital has received certification from DNV GL - Healthcare as a Primary Stroke Center, affirming the hospital's readiness to handle a full range of stroke-related medical problems.

"This certification let's our community know we have the resources and commitment to provide the best possible stroke care," said Maureen Lall, PhD, RN, FNP-BC, SCRNP, COHN-S, director of the Neuroscience & Spine Center. "It's a combination of the right personnel, training and equipment to quickly assess and treat strokes. Achieving certification ensures the health and safety of our patients."

The DNV GL - Healthcare Primary Stroke Center Certification is based on standards set forth by the Brain Attack Coalition and the American Stroke Association, and affirms that the hospital addresses the full spectrum of stroke care - diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and education - and establishes clear metrics to evaluate outcomes.

"Achieving this certification shows commitment to excellence," said Patrick Horine, CEO of DNV GL - Healthcare. "And it helps demonstrate to your community that you are performing at the highest level."

According to the National Stroke Association, stroke is a



The Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital Quality Team. From left, back row: Brooke Taylor, Janan Sackllah, Ada Akogun, Jo Gilbert, Anna Floyd, Jackie Trotter, Damon Smith; and front row: Tanuja Parmar, Diane McGraw, Ann Prather and Monica Salinas.

leading cause of death, killing nearly 130,000 people each year, and is a leading cause of serious, long-term adult disability. Because stroke or "brain attack" effects blood flow to the brain, rapid and effective treatment can save lives and provide the best chance of limiting the extent of long-term damage.

DNV GL is a world-leading certification body that helps businesses assure the performance of their organizations, products, people, facilities and supply chains through certification, verification, assessment and training services.

For more information on Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital, visit [houstonmethodist.org/sugarland](http://houstonmethodist.org/sugarland) or call 281-274-7500 to find a doctor in your area. Visit the Facebook page at [fb.com/methodistsugarland](https://fb.com/methodistsugarland) for the latest news, events and information.

## EXCITING COMMUNITY EVENT:

*The 'i have a Voice' gala set for Oct. 19*

**G**iGi's Playhouse in Sugar Land will host its annual 'i have a Voice' gala from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. at the George Ranch Historical Park in Richmond.

GiGi's Playhouse is a worldwide nonprofit network that is 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.

In 2015 Sugar Land became the 27th playhouse in the network.

GiGi's Playhouse Sugar Land welcomes all ages from prenatal to adults and offers custom, research-based curriculum for advancing literacy, math skills, gross and fine motor skills, improving low muscle tone, building self-esteem, preparing for the workforce in addition to

fostering acceptance, awareness and networking resources for parents, siblings and the community.

All programs are free of charge.

The 'i have a Voice' gala supports these efforts and celebrates children and adults with Down syndrome.

The ticket price includes a gourmet dinner, open bar, live music and dancing, live auction, raffle, wine and whiskey pulls, silent auction, the GiGi Prep Market, boot shine station and "inspiration from our children and adults and much more," said the nonprofit. Complimentary valet is also included.

For more information on the event, ticket prices or sponsorship opportunities, visit [gigisplayhouse.org/sugarland/gala](http://gigisplayhouse.org/sugarland/gala)



# BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

## ALCOHOL AND BREAST CANCER RISK

Many people unwind with a glass of wine or a cocktail after a stressful day, and some research suggests that mild to moderate consumption of alcoholic beverages can have various health advantages.

According to the Mayo Clinic, moderate consumption of alcohol has been linked to a lower risk of developing and dying from heart disease, possibly reducing the risk of ischemic stroke and potentially reducing the risk of diabetes. However, for some people, the risks of consuming alcohol may outweigh the benefits.

Many studies show that drinking alcohol may increase the risk of breast cancer, advises the research and information organization Susan J. Komen.

The group says pooled analysis of data from 53 studies found that, for each alcoholic drink consumed per day, the relative risk for breast cancer increases by about 7 percent.

Researchers aren't quite sure why there is an increased risk of breast cancer associated with alcohol intake, but experts at MD Anderson Cancer Center have some theories.

Some theorize that alcohol can increase levels of estrogen and other hormones that affect breast cancer formation and growth. Excess fat can lead to an increased cancer risk, and the consumption of empty calories through drinking alcohol can lead to unwanted weight gain. Furthermore, those who consume alcohol have increased amounts of folic acid in their systems, which can increase cancer risk. The nonprofit breast cancer organization Breastcancer.org states that, compared to women who don't drink at all, women who have three alcoholic drinks per week have a 15 percent higher risk of breast cancer.

Experts also estimate that the risk of breast cancer goes up another 10 percent for each additional drink women regularly consume each day. Keep in mind that a drink is defined as 12 ounces of beer, five ounces of wine or 1.5 ounces of liquor.

Women who want to do all they can to reduce their risk of developing breast cancer may want to avoid alcohol.

# DOWN SYNDROME AWARENESS

## THE CAUSES OF DOWN SYNDROME

While most cases of Down syndrome, which is sometimes referred to as trisomy 21, are related to a third partial or complete copy of chromosome 21, Down syndrome can be caused by other genetic variations. Mosaic Down syndrome is a rare form in which a person only has some cells with an extra copy of chromosome 21, states the Mayo Clinic.

Translocation Down syndrome, in which a portion of chromosome 21 becomes attached (translocated) onto another chromosome before or at conception, is another form of the syndrome. Children born with translocation Down syndrome have extra genetic material attached to another chromosome from chromosome 21.

There are no known behavioral or environmental factors that cause Down syndrome, which results from chromosomal abnormalities during cell division. Chromosome 21 is the smallest human autosome (non-sex-related chromosome), but it encodes approximately 225 genes.

While most are not affected by an extra copy or extra genetic material, there are a few genes for which an extra copy creates an issue that results in Down syndrome.

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# OCTOBER

## October 1

### Fall Coffee Social

FRIENDS of Child Advocates of Fort Bend will host its annual Fall Coffee membership social at the home of Pat and Brad Somers at 10 a.m. For more information on FRIENDS, the location and to RSVP for the event, contact Kristin Stiles-Janossy at 713-384-8096.

### National Night Out

The Rosenberg Police Department will hold its annual National Night Out from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Texas State Technical College in Rosenberg. Visit [rosenbergtx.gov/national-night-out](http://rosenbergtx.gov/national-night-out).

### Connections: Meet Someone New

Meet new people and make new friends at this casual, come-and-go social hour at the George Memorial Library Oct. 1 at 7 p.m. or Oct. 17 at 10 a.m. in Room 2A. Enjoy music while getting to know one another over a game of cards, chess, checkers, or other board games the library has on hand.

## October 2

### Seabourne Park Monthly Bird Hike

Members of the Coastal Prairie Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists will lead the 8 a.m. hike at the Seabourne Creek Nature Park, 3831 Texas 36 South, Rosenberg. Participation is open to the public. All ages and levels of birders are welcome.

### State of the Schools

The 12th Annual State of the Schools will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Safari Texas Ranch. Visit [fortbendchamber.com](http://fortbendchamber.com).

## October 3

### Connecting People with Nature

Gary Clark's "Connecting People with Nature" free program — at 6 p.m. at the Rosenberg Convention Center, 3825 Texas 36 South, Rosenberg — will explore how birds can reconnect people to the beauty and wonder of nature. For additional information call 281-633-7033 or email [mmcdowell@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:mmcdowell@ag.tamu.edu)

## October 4

### Friday Film Series

In recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, the University Branch Library will show a movie about a beloved Latin American musical artist. from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in Meeting Room 1. Jennifer Lopez plays Selena Quintanilla-Perez in this biographical drama released in 1997. A Texas-born Tejano pop-singing sensation, Selena rose from cult status to an extraordinary career that transcended the Tejano scene to cross over into mainstream success before her tragic murder at the age of 23. This movie is rated PG.

### Friday Twilight & Lore Tour Combo

The Fort Bend History Association's Friday Twilight & Lore Tour Combo will be held at 7 p.m., Oct. 4, Oct. 11 and Oct 18 at the Fort Bend Museum. Brave a twilight tour of the Museum grounds while listening to staff tell the true stories of ghostly encounters throughout the years. Visit [fortbendmuseum.org](http://fortbendmuseum.org).

## October 5

### Brush-Pen Calligraphy Workshop

Graphic designer and calligraphy artist Lauren Cole will present an introductory demonstration of calligraphy at the University Branch Library from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in Meeting Room 2. In this hands-on workshop, learn calligraphy concepts, warm-up drills, basic strokes and lower-and upper-case alphabets. Registration is required.

### Deer & Hog Hunting

A Texas game warden will provide a basic introduction to hunting white-tailed deer and hogs in Texas at 10:30 p.m. at the George Memorial Library in Room 2A. Learn about the preferred habitats, public hunting areas that can be accessed with an Annual Public Hunting Permit, and best strategies for hunting success.

### Cowboy Up 2019

The Parks Youth Ranch's 2019 Cowboy Up event will be held from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. at Parks

Youth Ranch. Dinner, live and silent auction, spirit and wine pulls and barbecue dinner included. Visit [parksyouthranch.org](http://parksyouthranch.org).

## October 6

### Farmer's Market

The Texas Department of Agriculture certified Sugar Land Farmer's Market is open every Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Edward Mercer Stadium.

## October 9

### Rescue Open House

The Rosenberg Animal Control and Shelter will host its Rescue Open House from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the shelter, 1207 Blume Road in Rosenberg.

### Patchwork of Life 2019

OakBend Medical Center's Patchwork of Life event will be held from 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. in the Infinity Room of the Safari Texas Ranch. Proceeds will support 3D Mammography at OakBend's Women's Imaging Department. Visit [oakbendmedicalcenter.org](http://oakbendmedicalcenter.org)

## October 12

### Paper Shredding Event

First Colony Community Services Association is hosting a free paper shredding event from 9 a.m. to noon or until the trucks are full. Items accepted are all paper, file folders, hanging files, notepads and envelopes. There is no need to remove staples, paperclips, fasteners or rubber bands. Unacceptable items include newspapers, magazines, catalogs, plastic bags, electronics and x-rays. Items will be shredded by PROShred Security on-site.

### Heritage Hikes

The Sugar Land Heritage Foundation will host a historic walking tour of Old Sugar Land every second Saturday of the month starting at 10 a.m. Visit [slheritage.org](http://slheritage.org).

### Artisan Market

The Rosenberg Main Street Program is hosting a Artisan Market, featuring goods, handmade crafts, food trucks, local art and live

music from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Historic Downtown Rosenberg.

### Meet the Artists

The 310 Gallery is holding its Meet the Artists Opening Reception from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the gallery, 310 Morton Street in Richmond.

### Movie Night at the Park

First Colony Community Services Association is hosting Movie Night at the Park from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Aquatic Center Park, 4350 Austin Parkway, Sugar Land. The PG movie — How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World — will be shown for free. Movie starts at 7 p.m. but starting at 5 p.m. there will be face painting and special treats for kids.

### Free flu shot clinic

Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital will host a free flu shot clinic and community toy drive from 8 a.m. to noon. Please bring a new, unwrapped toy or clothing item to donate and receive a free flu shot. One flu shot per unwrapped toy or clothing item.

### Fall Vegetable & Herb Plant Sale

The Fort Bend County Master Gardeners will host its annual Fall Vegetable & Herb Plant Sale at its office, 1402 Band Road in Rosenberg.

## October 13

### Garden Party

The Rosenberg Railroad Museum will host its 2019 Garden Party from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the museum, 1921 Ave. F in Rosenberg. Visit [rosenbergrrmuseum.org](http://rosenbergrrmuseum.org).

## October 16

### Culinary Book Club

This month at the University Branch Library, the Culinary Book Club theme is "The Great Pumpkin Cook-Off." Cooking enthusiasts of all ages and experience levels — from beginners to advanced — are invited to join in this monthly potluck and recipe exchange at 1:30 p.m. in Meeting Room 1.

### Open-Mic Night

Open-Mic Night is a casual event for amateur performers to take the stage and express themselves, held from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the George Memorial Library in the Meeting Room. Performances are limited to five minutes or less, and they must not contain any profanity or other insensitive topics. This event is for adults and teens aged 14 and above. Registration required to perform only.

# The RICHMOND TEXAS

## Bucket List

### SEE AN OUTDOOR FILM AT MOVIES ON MORTON.

Enjoy an outdoor movie on the First Friday of the month while taking in the backdrop of historic Morton Street.

### HEAR LIVE MUSIC

Experience a live show at the Lone Star Saloon or during a festival at the beautiful Wessendorff Park.

### EAT A ONE-OF-A-KIND MEAL

Experience a one-of-a-kind meal at local favorites including Sandy McGee's, Larry's Original Mexican Restaurant, Trough Juice Bar, Joseph's Coffee Shop, Buena Vista, Unwine'd Wine & Cheese Lounge, Blockhouse Coffee and Kitchen, or a farm-to-table dinner at The Guild.

### SHOP LOCAL

Visit local boutiques and shops including Dapple Grey Co. Boutique, Treasure Hunters, 310 Gallery, Backwater Boutique, Rustic Closet, The Kombucha Company, Mercy Goods, Jay-Wood Trading Co., Studio of Richmond, and Vintage Hope.

### EXPERIENCE THE HISTORY OF RICHMOND

Tour the Fort Bend History Museum, visit the grave of Mirabeau B. Lamar in the historic Morton Cemetery, take a ghost tour with History & Haunts of Richmond, or visit Blockhouse Coffee & Kitchen to pick up a walking map of the historic district.

### Park and Stroll at 402 Morton Street

Strolling through the streets of downtown Richmond is an attraction in and of itself. Free parking is available throughout the downtown area and Richmond's City Hall provides a central parking location for visitors. City Hall is located at 402 Morton Street.



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## October 17

### Story Spinners Writing Club

This month's topic at the George Memorial Library will be "Revision." From beginning blogger to published novelist, writers of all genres and experience levels are welcome to write, share, learn, support, network, and critique each other's work from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. in Room 2C. This program is recommended for adults and teens aged 14 and up.

## October 18

### 2019 Veteran Expo and Health Fair

Open to all veterans, as well as their family and caregivers, this expo — held at 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Veterans for Foreign War Building, 1903 1st St., in Rosenberg — will provide resources, entertainment and networking opportunities in the area.

### Senior Series:

#### Home Ownership in Retirement

Liz McNeel, a senior real-estate specialist and certified senior-housing professional, will lead a panel of experts who will talk about the responsibilities of owning a home as a senior citizen on a fixed income at the University Branch Library at 10:30 a.m. in Meeting Room 1.

#### Murder Mystery Dinner Dance

Arthur Murray Sugar Land will host a night at "Murray's Mansion" from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. where guests can help solve the murder of Mr. Murray. The evening features dinner and dancing. Visit [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com) for tickets.

## October 19

### Playground Build Day

Friends of North Richmond is holding a KaBOOM playground build day from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 1305 Clay Street in Richmond. Visit [helpbuildaplaygroundinrichmond.eventbrite.com](http://helpbuildaplaygroundinrichmond.eventbrite.com)

### Walk for Freedom 2019

This free event will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Sunset Park in Rosenberg. The public is invited to walk to bring awareness of human trafficking to the community. There will also be a fundraising effort to help them rescue, rehabilitate, and restore victims of human trafficking. Visit on Facebook @ [WalkForFreedomRosenberg](https://www.facebook.com/WalkForFreedomRosenberg).

### Navigating Your Property Taxes 101

Fort Bend County Tax Assessor-Collector Carrie Surratt and Deputy Chief Appraiser Jordan Wise from the Fort Bend Central Appraisal District will provide an in-depth look at property taxes at the George Memorial Library from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. in the Meeting Room.

### Miss Ivy's Spooktacular Halloween Party

The Fort Bend History Association's Miss Ivy's Spooktacular Halloween Party will be held from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Fort Bend Museum. Children of all ages welcome. Trick-or-treating, yard games and family-friendly tours will be featured. Costumes welcomed. Visit [fortbendmuseum.org](http://fortbendmuseum.org).

### Fort Bend Ranchers' Ball

The 5th Annual Fort Bend Ranchers' Ball benefiting Fort Bend Charities will be held from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. at Safari Texas Ranch, 11627 FM 1464 in Richmond. Hosted by Precinct 3 Commissioner Andy Meyers on behalf of Fort Bend Charities Inc. Visit [www.fortbendranchersball.com](http://www.fortbendranchersball.com).

## October 20

### Mattress Fundraiser

Travis High School Dance team is holding its second mattress fundraiser from noon to 6 p.m. at Travis High School, 11111 Harlem Road in Richmond.

## October 21

### LEGO Club

Families with kids of all ages will have an opportunity to get creative with LEGO building blocks at the University Branch Library from 4:15 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Meeting Room 1. Different-sized LEGO pieces will be available for the varying ages in attendance.

## October 22

### Cache Your Money: Keep It Safe

John Rebeles, Jr., will talk about consumer rights at 7 p.m. at the George Memorial Library in Room 2A.

### Fun with Felt

Discover the creative fiber-art craft of needle felting at 7 p.m. in Meeting Room 2 of the University Branch Library. Learn how to use special needles as a sculpting tool to manipulate the fibers of the cloth into pieces of art. Those attending the program will learn how use wool, felting needles, fibers,

and embellishments to create a decorative pumpkin for the fall season. Materials are provided and registration is required.

## October 24

### Senior Health & Wellness Fair

Fort Bend Seniors Meals on Wheels will host its Senior Health & Wellness Fair from 10 a.m. to noon at 1330 Band Road in Rosenberg. Visit [fortbendseniors.org](http://fortbendseniors.org)

## October 25

### Friday Film Series

In recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, the University Branch Library will show a movie from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in Meeting Room 1. This romantic musical drama is based on Andrew Lloyd Webber's Broadway hit about a disfigured composer and his unrequited love for an opera singer. Released in 2004, this film is rated PG-13.

## October 26

### Gathering of Zombies

Hispanics Offering People Education will host its third annual 5K Gathering of the Zombies fun run at 8:30 a.m. at Seabourne Creek Nature Park. Participants may walk, jog or run the course in their best zombie attire. For additional information, call Josie Jimenez at 281-633-1960 or [josieaj@yahoo.com](mailto:josieaj@yahoo.com) or Veronica Munoz at 832-380-1956.

### Boo-Berg

The City of Rosenberg's annual Boo-Berg event will be held at 10 a.m. to noon at Seabourne Creek Nature Park. The event is free for children ages 10 years old and younger. Games and activities will be featured.

### Sherlock Holmes Puzzle Mystery

Mystery-lovers and amateur sleuths can test their detective skills at the George Memorial Library from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the Meeting Room. Solve puzzles, crack codes, and unravel riddles to help the Baker Street Irregulars foil Professor Moriarty's plot to defeat Sherlock Holmes. Costumes and English accents are encouraged. Prizes will be awarded.

### BeerFeast 2019

Hosted by Flying Saucer Draught Emporium, the eighth BeerFeast will be held from 1 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in Sugar Land Town Square featuring more than 100 beers and food. 21+ only. Visit [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com) for ticket prices.

### 2019 Sip & Stroll

Sugar Land Wine & Food Affair will host a Sip & Stroll event, featuring bites from more than 25 area restaurants, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Brazos River Park in Sugar Land. Visit [bigtickets.com](http://bigtickets.com) for ticket prices.

### Halloween Town

The City of Sugar Land announced its annual Halloween Town presented by Imperial Sugar (previously held in Sugar Land Town Square) will now be hosted at Constellation Field 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Tickets are \$5 for children and \$7 for adults. The evening will feature scavenger hunts, balloon artists, a petting zoo, games, vendors, and a costume contest for participants of all ages (\$3 per participant, pre-registered and \$5 on site).

### Trunk or Treat

First Colony Community Services Association will host a Trunk or Treat event from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Adults decorate the back of their cars for Halloween, load up on candy, and kids "trick or treat" from car-to-car. Kids come in Halloween costumes where they can safely run around to collect candy.

## October 28

### Duck Golf Classic

Fort Bend County Exchange Club will host its Duck Golf Classic from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Pecan Grove Country Club. Visit [www.ecfb.org](http://www.ecfb.org).

### International Coffee Hour

Start your week off by sharing a cup of coffee, exchanging news or a corny joke, and chatting with friends at 9 a.m. in the Meeting Room of the George Memorial Library during the monthly social hour celebrating the multitude of diverse cultures found in Fort Bend County.

## October 29

### New Member Orientation

The Central Fort Bend Chamber will hold its new member orientation from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at the chamber.

## Nov. 2

### 46th annual British Fayre

Daughters of The British Empire will host its 46th annual British Fayre from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 1 Fluor Daniel Drive in Sugar Land. Tickets are \$4 at Eventbrite, \$5 at the door and free for children 12 years old and younger.

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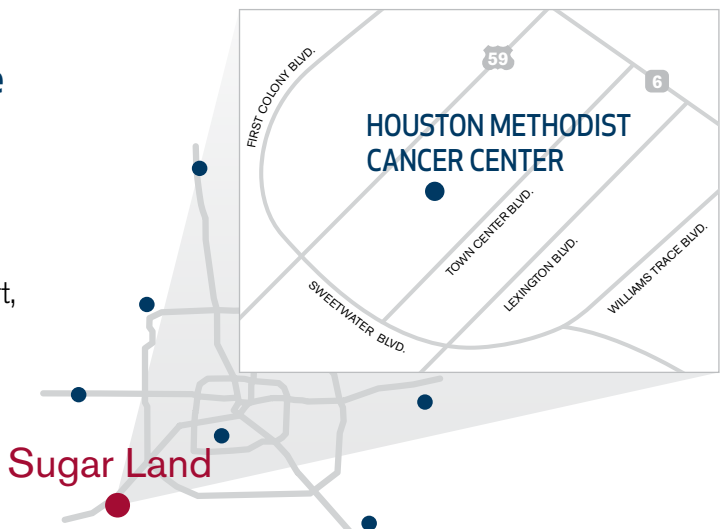
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