

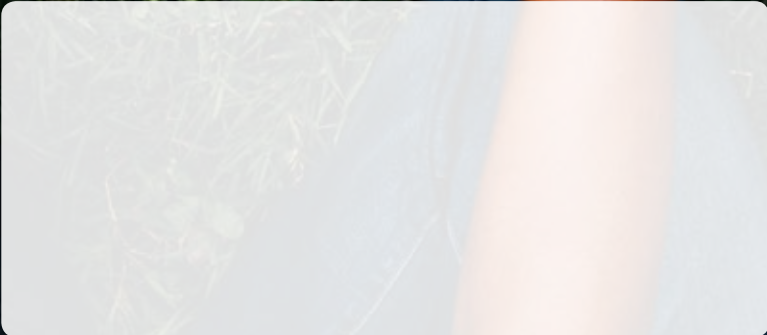
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monthly™

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



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



Maci Hunt

Inspiration Stage is presenting two youth productions in October — "Disney's My Son Pinocchio JR" and "The Addams Family School Edition."

'Disney's My Son Pinocchio JR,' 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.

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'

"The Addams Family School Edition," is a comical feast that embraces the wackiness in every family, and features an original story that's every father's nightmare: Wednesday Addams, the 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.

"I am excited because of the people I get to work with, the amazing choreography and stellar harmonies," said 13-year-old Maci Hunt, an eighth grader who is playing an ancestor in her third iStage production.

"The show is hilarious, and heartwarming — and the acting and singing is amazing," she said.

"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

ON THE HORIZON

Inspiration Stage recently announced its 2019-2020 season.

Don't miss these other Inspiration Stage shows:

- Disney and Cameron Mackintosh's Mary Poppins JR, Nov. 1-10
- Disney's Frozen JR, Dec. 6-15
- Into the Woods JR, Jan. 3-5
- Lyle The Crocodile, Feb. 28- March 1
- Harriet the Spy, April 3-5
- Honk JR, April 17-19
- A Chorus Line - High School Edition, May 1-3

PURGE UNNECESSARY PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Rates of prescription drug abuse in the US are being reported as alarmingly high, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Survey on Drug Use and Health shows year after year that the majority of misused and abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including someone else's medication being stolen from the home medicine cabinet.

Additionally, Americans are now advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines — flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash — both pose potential safety and health hazards.

Last spring Americans turned in nearly 469 tons (937,443 pounds) of prescription drugs at more than 6,258 sites operated by the DEA and 4,969 of its state and local law enforcement partners. Overall, in its 17 previous Take Back events, DEA and its partners have taken in over 11.5 million pounds—nearly 5,908 tons—of unwanted prescription drugs.

Fulshear residents once again have the chance to get rid of prescription drugs at the Fulshear Police Department on Oct. 26.

Medicines that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse and abuse, said the department, adding that the this 18th Take Back initiative helps prevent pill abuse and theft.

Residents are encouraged to bring expired, unused and unwanted prescription drugs to the department, at 29255 FM 1093, Suite 7D in Fulshear, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

This service is free and anonymous. The DEA, however, cannot accept liquids, needles or sharps. Only pills or patches will be accepted.

For more information about the disposal of prescription drugs or about the Oct. 26 Take Back Day event, visit www.DEATakeBack.com or contact the Fulshear Police Department at 281-346-8888.

CROSS CREEK RANCH EARNS COMMUNITY OF THE YEAR' TITLE

Cross Creek Ranch was recently named Community of the Year in the Texas Association of Builders' (TAB) 2019 Star Awards.

The awards program recognizes leading builders, remodelers, architects, designers, sales professionals, marketing professionals and construction professionals across Texas and surrounding areas. Companies submitted 574 entries into this year's competition, with winners announced Aug. 8 during the Sunbelt Builders Show.

"This is one of the industry's most prestigious awards," said Rob Bamford, General Manager of Cross Creek Ranch. "To be recognized among such other exceptional communities is an honor."

The award was one of seven trophies received by Johnson Development communities during the ceremony. Other communities won for marketing efforts, best poolscapes and best event.

It's been a busy year for Cross Creek Ranch, with builders selling more than 320 homes in the development so far — a 10 percent increase. The community moved up four places to No. 21 on a mid-year report by Robert Charles Lesser & Co. of the nation's top-selling master-planned communities. More than 470 homesites will have been delivered to builders by the end of the year to keep up with demand.



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Story Ideas?

Contact Marquita Griffin at mgriffin@fbherald.com with **Fulshear Living** in the subject line, to have your community news and/or photos featured in a future edition.



“Cross Creek Ranch is bustling,” Bamford said. “We are welcoming a new Katy ISD junior high in the community and a high school is under construction. Our commercial component continues to grow and access to and from the community is being enhanced with the expansion of FM 1093 and the start of construction of Texas Heritage Parkway that should happen this fall.”

EYES ON FINAL KISD LOTS

Cross Creek Ranch is also developing its final homesites within Katy ISD, delivering 291 so far in 2019 with another 180 planned by the end of the year.

Among the KISD homesites being developed are the largest remaining for the Fulshear community.

“We expect to be completely built out on the Katy ISD side of Cross Creek Ranch by the end of 2020,” said Bamford. “The remaining neighborhoods are all near the shared junior high and high school campus under construction now in the community.”

A variety of properties have been released to builders, ranging from 50-foot lots to 80-foot homesites. The next section of 28-foot townhome properties is being developed and the community’s final 90-foot properties are still being developed for a gated neighborhood.

“Certainly, Katy ISD has been a driver for home sales since I’ve been selling in Cross Creek Ranch,” said Jim Peterson, a sales representative with Trendmaker Homes who has been in the community since 2008. “It is very sought after.”

Peterson, who sells homes from the upper \$500,000s in Cross Creek Ranch, said home sales have been strong this year.

“We received a new section in March and sold eight homes pretty quickly,” he said.

About five years of development remain for the 3,200-acre community, Bamford estimates. The lots that have been platted within the Lamar Consolidated Independent School District side of the community are 50-, 55- and 60-foot homesites.

“We concentrated development within Katy ISD early, waiting for new schools to be built within Lamar,” Bamford said. “Now there are four Lamar CISD schools within about two miles of Cross Creek Ranch that serve the community, including one that opened this August.”

Leaman Junior High and Fulshear High School both opened within the last three years. Land within Cross Creek Ranch has been set aside for a new LCISD elementary if the district decides they want to build within the community.

Cross Creek Ranch is located at the crossroads of FM 1463 and FM 1093 minutes west of the Grand Parkway. For more information on Cross Creek Ranch, visit www.crosscreektexas.com.



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-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 association 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, call 713-314-1346 or email walk@alztex.org.



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



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.

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" by taking a swing from a literal porcelain throne during this scramble-styled golf tournament.

The scramble-style golf tournament is set for Oct. 28 at the Sweetwater Country Club in Sugar Land. For more information visit www.hopeforthree.org/events

For additional information on Hope For Three's programs and resources, call 281-245-0640 or visit hopeforthree.org.



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

by **MARQUITA GRIFFIN** | 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.



Volunteer Carolyn Arnim 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."

"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



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Volunteer Appreciation Event. From left, Wyndolyn Tongee (volunteer), Becky Watts (FBWC volunteer manager), Liz Moreno (PennyWise Resale Store director), Stacey Baker (PCCA and volunteer), Olga Villarreal (PCCA and volunteer), Nino Kakulia (volunteer), Ruby McDonald (volunteer) and Crystal Becker (volunteer).

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 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



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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."

THE 2019 HEALING & HOPE LUNCHEON



Elizabeth Smart, an abduction and abuse survivor, will be the guest speaker at the 2019 Fort Bend Women's Center Healing and 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, whether 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 Empowerment," meant to encourage children who have gone through similar experiences.

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 for more details about our services."

"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."

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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



Guest speaker and advocate Victor Rivas Rivers signs books at the 2018 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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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."



An outfit (at left) worn by an adolescent male when he was sexually assaulted, and (at right) an outfit worn by a woman when her husband sexually assaulted her. These displays, along with others, were featured in the Fort Bend Women's Center's "What Were You Wearing" exhibit in April.

The Fort Bend Women's Center

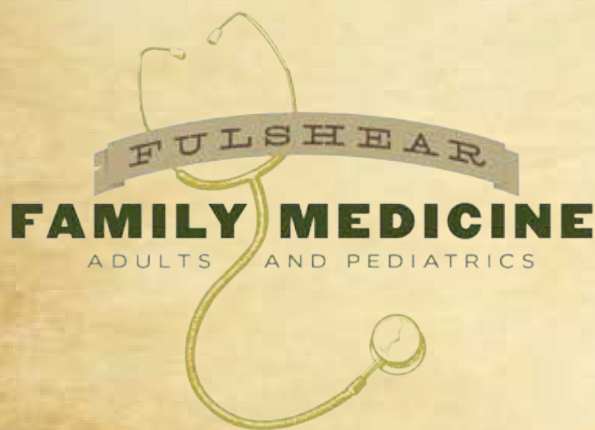
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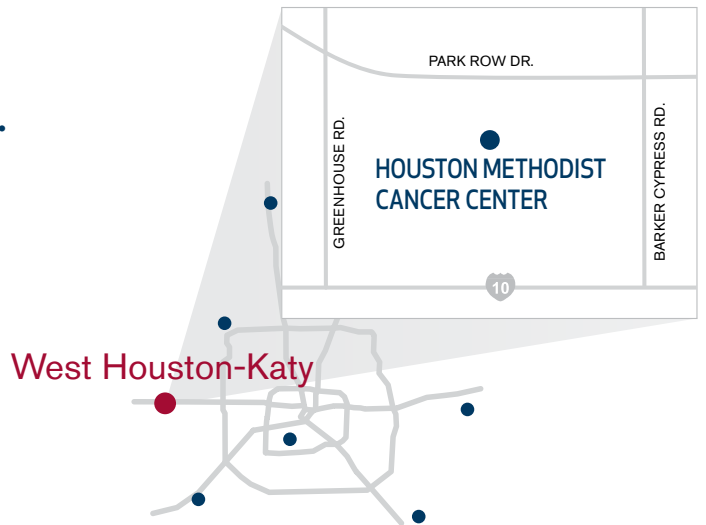
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The 2019 Sugar Plum Market is fast approaching

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.

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.

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 Nov. 7 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. General Market hours will be on Nov. 8 from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Nov. 9 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. General admission tickets will be available for both presale for \$12 and \$15 at the door.

For more information visit www.sugarplummarket.com.



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.

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36th annual Texian Market Days celebrates history

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.

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



Photo by Tyler Johnson | Volunteer Jett Ledman having fun swinging at the 2018 Texian Market Days.

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 or call 281-343-0218.

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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.

LEARN ABOUT DOWN SYNDROME TO ADVOCATE FOR CARE

Having a child is an exciting experience full of anticipation. Thanks to modern medicine, expecting parents are able to learn much more about the little one they will welcome into the world while the fetus is in utero than their own parents could decades ago.

Modern medicine makes it possible to approximate a baby's length, weight, gender, and even if the child will be born with a head full of hair. Doctors also can utilize technology to look for genetic abnormalities, including Down syndrome, so parents can educate and prepare themselves for such situations.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that Down syndrome occurs in approximately one in every 700 pregnancies. Many factors can elevate the risk for Down syndrome, including having already had a child with Down syndrome. Women older than age 35 are more likely to give birth to a child with Down syndrome than women younger than 35, making age one of the biggest risk factors.

Down syndrome also may be referred to as trisomy 21. That's because the syndrome occurs in most cases when there is a third copy — either complete or partial — of chromosome 21. Normally there are two copies of every chromosome. The Mayo Clinic says a third copy results from abnormal cell division while the fetus is developing. This extra genetic material causes the developmental changes and physical features of Down syndrome.

Down syndrome is the most common genetic chromosomal disorder and cause of learning disabilities in children. The Mayo Clinic also states that the disorder commonly causes other medical issues, including heart defects and gastrointestinal disorders.

Down syndrome cannot be prevented, advises the Cleveland Clinic. However, families can take steps to reduce the risk.

Giving birth before the age of 35 can significantly reduce risk. The CDC says Down syndrome occurs in fewer than one in 1,000 pregnancies in which the mother gives birth before the age of 30. After the age of 40, this figure rises to about 12 in 1,000.

Taking folic acid supplements before and during pregnancy also may help lower the likelihood that a baby is born with Down syndrome.

The outlook for babies born with Down syndrome is quite

good. Many traits and conditions are manageable with treatment and therapies. The level of cognitive impairment is unique to each individual and may be mild to moderate. Other effects, such as obesity, sleep apnea and digestive problems, may be treated.

With medical care, support from parents and family and education, many people with Down syndrome live very active and healthy lives. The life expectancy for babies born with Down syndrome is now 60 or older.

A variety of organizations provide support and information for parents of children with Down syndrome. These include the National Down Syndrome Society and the National Association for Down Syndrome. Contact these and other groups for more information.



Doctors also can utilize technology to look for genetic abnormalities, including Down syndrome, so parents can educate and prepare themselves for such situations.

EXCITING COMMUNITY EVENT:

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

GiGi'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



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OCTOBER

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.

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

October 4

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.

October 5

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.

Fall Fun

Dewberry Farm has started its Fall fun activities featuring pumpkins, food, photo ops, children activities and games weekends through Nov. 10. Visit DewberryFarm.com

October 9

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

October 11

Katy Rice Festival

Arts and crafts vendors, carnival, live music, food trucks, kid activities and more will be featured at the Katy Rice Festival at 6 p.m. Oct. 11, 10 a.m. Oct. 12 and noon Oct. 13. For more information, visit www.katyricefestival.com

October 12

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.

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 to host its annual Fall Vegetable & Herb Plant Sale at its office, 1402 Band Road in Rosenberg.

October 17

Family-History Research: Ancestry 101

Carol Beauchamp, from the library system's Genealogy and Local History department, will provide an introduction to the family-history-research resources that are available on the Library Edition of Ancestry.com's genealogy database, which can be accessed for free through the library's website. Learn how to get results tracing family history by using this helpful online resource at the Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library at 6:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room.

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 2p.m. at the Veterans for Foreign War Building, 1903 1st St., in Rosenberg — will provide resources, entertainment and networking opportunities in the area.

FEATURED EVENT:

Art Market & Home Tour

Artisans and artists from Houston's longest-running outdoor market, First Saturday Arts Market, and the popular Market at Sawyer Yards are coming to Cross Creek Ranch. The Art Market & Home Tour event will showcase paintings, ceramics, woodwork, jewelry and other handcrafted items. Guests will enjoy music, local art and delicious cuisine from some of the area's best food trucks. Then, stop by one of Cross Creek Ranch's 22 model homes to pick up the newest décor tips. Visit www.crosscreektexas.com/artmarket



14th Annual Katy Wine Fest

This annual festival will be held from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. at Gallery Furniture, 7227 W. Grand Parkway in Richmond. Visit katywinefest.com

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 helpbuildplaygroundinrichmond.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 for A21 (a nonprofit organization) to help them rescue, rehabilitate, and restore victims of human trafficking. Visit on Facebook @WalkForFreedomRosenberg.

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.

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.

October 23

Adult Lunch & Learn: Texas Wildlife
Russell Hinote, a docent with the Houston Museum of Natural Science, will talk about the wildlife of Texas at 12:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library. Learn about the different habitats around the state, as well as the animals that inhabit them. For this hands-on program, Hinote will have furs, skins, and taxidermied specimens. Lunch will be provided.

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

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 or Veronica Munoz at 832-380-1956.

Crochet Workshop: Borders & Edgings

In this hands-on adult craft class for individuals aged 16 and above, library staff member Marie Picon will demonstrate basic crochet stitches that can be used to create decorative edgings for items like blankets, linens, and garments from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library. The workshop is suitable for complete beginners with no experience, as well as for experienced crocheters who would like a refresher. Reservations are required.

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.

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 27

The Real Craftwives of Katy Fall Festival

This free craft market — being held at noon at No Label Brewing Co. — will feature more than 60 local vendors, food trucks, live music, = and cold craft beer.

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.

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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