

Greatwood

DECEMBER 2019


monthly

Season's Greetings

Christmas gatherings and sweet treats to merry up your holiday

PLUS Two Greatwood actors to embody the iconic Elsa of Arendelle

A publication of the

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monthly™

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Courtesy of Sarah Patterson | Lizzie Tyer, 16 years old, as Elsa in a former performance of "Frozen JR"

Elsa is back

Greatwood actors to take the lead with iconic character in Frozen JR

by MARQUITA GRIFFIN & ALISHA MCMILLEN



Courtesy of Sarah Patterson | Gabby Champion, 15 years old, as Elsa in a former performance of "Frozen JR"



Courtesy of JW Barker Photography | Inspiration Stage performs "Let It Go" at the 2019 Junior Theatre Festival in Sacramento, California.

Courtesy of JW Barker Photography | Inspiration Stage performs "Hygge" at the 2019 Junior Theatre Festival in Sacramento, California.

Ten shows. Two weekends. And a performance perfect for the holiday season — Inspiration Stage's production of Disney's "Frozen JR."

"I am thrilled to be directing Disney's 'Frozen JR' at Inspiration Stage this December," said Sarah Patterson, the show's director and music director. "This brilliant adaptation combines the best of the iconic Disney movie and Broadway show into a delightful, all-ages friendly, 70-minute stage production."

The show runs Dec. 6 through Dec. 15 at the historic Sugar Land Auditorium, 226 Lakeview Drive in Sugar Land.

Disney's "Frozen JR," based on the 2018 Broadway musical, brings Elsa, Anna and the magical land of Arendelle to life onstage. The show features all of the memorable songs from the animated film, with music and lyrics by Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez, plus five new songs written for the Broadway production.

"The show brings the fictional kingdom of Arendelle to life with your favorite characters: Elsa, Anna, Olaf, Kristoff and more," said Patterson excitedly. "As music director for the show, I'm excited to lead the challenge of presenting well-known numbers like, 'For the First Time in Forever,' 'Love Is an Open Door,' 'In Summer,' 'Fixer Upper,' and, of course, 'Let It Go,' with new musical arrangements to our audiences."

"Our young actors are extraordinarily talented and bring fresh energy to familiar material."

The main roles of Anna, Elsa, Kristoff, Olaf and Hans have been double-cast in this group of 61 local youth. In fact, the show's two Elsas are both Greatwood residents: Gabby Champion and Lizzie Tyer.

"I'm excited for 'Frozen' because this show was my introduction to theatre at Inspiration Stage," said Champion, a ninth grader at George Ranch High School. "I started out in a 'Frozen' summer camp as Olaf, and now, years later, I've been given the opportunity to play Elsa."

A story of true love and acceptance between sisters, Disney's "Frozen JR" expands upon the emotional relationship and journey between Princesses Anna and Elsa. When faced with danger, the two discover their hidden potential and the powerful bond of sisterhood.



Gabby Champion, 15, will perform in her 10th iStage production.



Lizzie Tyer, 16, will perform in her 26th iStage production.

"If you loved the movie, you should definitely see the musical," Champion adds. "All of your favorite songs have been incorporated with some new additions for a nostalgic experience."

Tyer, who is a sophomore at iUniversity Prep, will also play Elsa — a character Tyer has prior experience with, having played Elsa in iStage's February 2019 Junior Theatre Festival performance of "Frozen JR."

"I had the privilege of singing 'Let it Go' during the

New Works Showcase of 'Frozen JR' in Sacramento," Tyer said. "I'm excited to have this opportunity to play Elsa again. I love Elsa's transformation during the show from secretive and scared to warm and free."

"Between the music, the costumes and the choreography, 'Frozen' is beautiful, funny and heartwarming to watch," she added. "It is a story about true love with a twist — the true love of sisters and family. 'Frozen JR' is the perfect holiday family outing that will have all ages singing along and will melt even the most frozen of hearts."

COMING SOON: INTO THE WOODS, JR.

Following its "Frozen JR" production, Inspiration Stage will open the new year with "Into the Woods, JR" Jan. 3 through Jan. 5, 2020 at the Sugar Land Auditorium.

The story follows a Baker and his wife, who wish to have a child; Cinderella, who wishes to attend the King's Festival; and Jack, who wishes his cow would give milk. When the Baker and his wife learn that they cannot have a child because of a Witch's curse, the two set off on a journey to break the curse. Everyone's wish is granted, but the consequences of their actions return to haunt them later with disastrous results.

"Into the Woods, JR" is a rare modern classic created by James Lapine and Stephen Sondheim who took popular storybook characters and brought them together.

Greatwood resident Sarah Love Pizzitola, a 6th grader at Polly Ryon Middle School, has been cast in the show's ensemble.

"I am excited about performing in 'Into the Woods' because the show is creative, fun, and full of energy," she said. "It brings classic fairy tales to life and the show is full of surprises."

With a cast of 44 local youth, ages 10-18, "Into the Woods JR" runs four shows over the weekend of Jan. 3, 2020. Showtimes are Friday, Jan 3, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, Jan 4, 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday, Jan. 5 3:30 p.m. Visit inspirationstage.com/shows/into-the-woods-jr/ for more information.

Inspiration Stage will take an abbreviated version of "Into the Woods JR" to Sacramento for adjudication at the Junior Theatre Festival West, Feb. 7 - 9.

The production staff includes: Mandy Seymore-Sensat, Inspiration Stage artistic director, and the show's director/co-choreographer; Sarah Patterson, music director; Annelea Bootle, co-choreographer; Brianna Escobedo, stage manager; and Courtney Sackett, assistant stage manager.



Sarah Pizzitola, 11, will perform in her second iStage production.

'FROZEN JR' DETAILS

SHOWTIMES:

- Friday, Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 7, 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Dec. 8, 3:30 p.m.
- Thursday, Dec. 12, 7 p.m.
- Friday, Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 14, 11:30 a.m., 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Dec. 15, 3:30 p.m.

For more information visit inspirationstage.com/shows/disneys-frozen-jr

PRODUCTION TEAM:

- Sarah Patterson — director / music director
- Mandy Seymore-Sensat — artistic director/co-choreographer;
- Annelea Bootle — co-choreographer
- Diamond Morgan — stage manager
- Lily Delahoussaye — student assistant stage manager
- Reese McGrenera — student assistant director
- and Madison Willett — dance captain

Inspiration Stage is offering special holiday appearances by the "Frozen JR" cast on Dec. 6 at The Sugar Land Tree Lighting ceremony; Dec. 7 at Miracle on Morton Street in downtown Richmond; and Dec. 7 at The Sweet Jamboree at the Sugar Land Heritage Museum.

Holiday Happenings

A home tour, miracle and festival of lights Christmas celebration are abound in Fort Bend and beyond

Since August the Child Advocates of Fort Bend's Christmas Home Tour committee was devotedly preparing for its 28th annual Christmas Home Tour happening this month for a simple, but important, reason — because the children need them to.

For the past 28 years, Child Advocates of Fort Bend, a nonprofit agency that advocates for and provides services to abused and neglected children in the county, has acted on its mission to end the cycle of child abuse by providing its Court Appointed Special Advocates Program, Children's Advocacy Center and more than 200 trained community volunteer advocates to children in need.

Since its opening, Child Advocates has served more than 16,500 children.

The agency's home tour event started 28 years ago as a means to raise money to keep the agency's doors open and has since become a Fort Bend County holiday tradition.

"A group of volunteers, many of whom are still involved, opened their homes, decorated them for Christmas, baked some cookies and charged admission in an effort to keep Child Advocates of Fort Bend's doors open," said Lisa Moore, Child Advocates of Fort Bend Development Officer and event chair. "Thanks to those generous ladies and many others who have participated through the years, this event not only kept the doors open, but it has allowed the agency to increase its programming and staff in order to meet the needs of the Fort Bend community."

Since its inception, the Christmas Home Tour has raised more than \$4 million. This year's tour will take place Dec. 13 and 14.

Over the two days of this event, more than 2,000 guests will tour private Fort Bend County homes all decked out for Christmas. The homeowners included in the tour are from Alkire Lake, Sienna Plantation, Sugar Creek and Sweetwater.

"Homeowners are so special to us," Moore said. "We wouldn't have a tour without them. Each year we are able to showcase an assortment of neighborhoods, displaying the variety of Fort Bend County. We try to find a new twist each year to keep the tour fresh. This year, nearly all of the homes are completed renovated."

One ticket allows entry to all homes during tour hours. The Tour runs Dec. 13 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with a candlelight showing from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Dec. 14 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

More than 1,000 volunteers will help as hosts and hostesses in the homes, serving as entertainers or by baking cookies. While the Home Tour is a spirited community event, it is foremost a fundraiser, with 94 percent of all of the money raised going directly to programs and services that benefit the children served by Child Advocates of Fort Bend.

In 2018, the agency served 2,586 children and families, which was 23 percent higher than the prior year due to a huge increase in reports of child abuse. Nationally, one in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused by the age of 18 and it is estimated that only 1 in 10 ever tells anyone.

"By sponsoring or participating in the Home Tour, you can help us ensure that all child victims of abuse get the therapy and healing services they desperately need," said CEO Ruthanne Mefford.

Sponsorships of \$100 - \$10,000 are available. To become a sponsor

or for more information, contact Lisa at lmoore@cafb.org.

For more information about Child Advocates of Fort Bend visit www.cafb.org.



Shown with the door swags that she donated for the 6th Annual Wreath raffle is Lin Wooten. From left are Irene Wisner, Wooten and Lisa Moore. Participants in the wreath raffle can choose the wreath that they hope to win.

—MORE HOLIDAY EVENTS TO ENJOY—

Miracle on Morton Street

The Historic Richmond Association is inviting the public to its 17th Annual Miracle on Morton Street. Taking place Saturday, Dec. 7 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in downtown Richmond, the event will feature family-friendly activities throughout the day. There will be live entertainment, shopping opportunities at unique vendors in the area and the chance to grab a bite to eat at one of the food trucks. The Gingerbread House Display and a kids' zone will be on site. Plus, the association is offering tours of historic Richmond.

The day before — Friday, Dec. 6, at 6 p.m. — the association's Tree Lighting ceremony will take place at City Hall Park and Morton Street. Following the lighting, the public is encouraged to join the community Christmas Walk, complete with caroling, a Gingerbread House contest and holiday decor tours at local businesses until 8 p.m. For more information visit HistoricRichmond.org.

Rosenberg Christmas Nights

Through partnerships with the Rosenberg Main Street Program and the Rosenberg Cultural District the city of Rosenberg will hold its Rosenberg Christmas Nights Dec. 6 and Dec. 7.

The holiday celebration is a weekend of nightly activities to enhance the magic of the season. Set against a backdrop of spectacular holiday lights, the city invites the public to explore downtown Rosenberg's eclectic shops, cultural exhibits and restaurants during the special season, and throughout the year. The public will also get the chance to view the works of the Deck the Downtown decorating contest. There will be 20 life-size wooden trees decorated by local artists on display in the downtown area.

Additionally, on Dec. 6 of Rosenberg Christmas Nights, the Dinner Under the Stars event will commence at 6 p.m.. Cast Theatrical

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Co. will provided the performance and Ol' Railroad Cafe, Old Main Street Bakery and Bob's Taco Station will cater the meals. Tickets to the performance are \$50, with limited seating.

For more information visit rosenbergtx.gov

Festival of Lights

The City of Fulshear and the Fulshear Katy Area Chamber of Commerce will be co-hosting the annual "Fulshear Festival of Lights" on Dec. 7 at Fulshear High School from 6 p.m. - 9 p.m. The location has been changed from prior years due to the construction in the downtown area and other mobility issues.

The Festival of Lights Parade will begin at 6 p.m., traveling south on Charger Way, and Santa will arrive during the parade. Festival patrons can meet Santa afterwards.

The YMCA is sponsoring and featuring a large children's area, plus event will also feature vendors — crafts, clothing and jewelry — food trucks and a short Christmas themed fireworks presentation during the evening.

For more information visit www.FulshearKaty.com.

Project Noel

For more than 40 years, the Richmond State Supported Living Center has been delighting visitors of all ages with Project Noel, a collection of holiday displays featuring favorites from Santa Claus to Rudolph. These celebratory lighted displays again can be viewed starting Dec. 6, through Jan. 6, 2020.

Children who first saw the project blossom in the early 1970s now bring their children and grandchildren to see the more than 40 holiday scenes that adorn the 241-acre SSLC campus, which is located at

2100 Preston in Richmond. This festive family outing is free and will be open daily from 6 to 9 p.m.

Santa and his elves will visit this event the first two weekends in December. Give Santa your wish list and have a picture made to remember the wonderful evening. Printed pictures will be available for \$5 each - or you can bring your own camera.

Sugar Land Holiday Lights

The sixth annual Sugar Land Holiday Lights returns to Constellation Field through Jan. 5, 2020. This sparkling wonderland features more than three million lights, a carnival and numerous themed displays throughout the ballpark. You can also get some holiday shopping done with a variety of vendors, enjoy great food, and even meet Santa Claus himself.

The hours are: Sunday through Thursday: 6 - 9 p.m.; Friday through Saturday: 6 - 10 p.m.; and on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Years Eve, New Years Day: 6 - 10 p.m. It will be closed Dec. 2.

Tickets available online and at the TDECU Ticket Office at Constellation Field. Ticket discounts available for kids, military (active & retired) and seniors. All tickets are general admission and prices vary by night.

Carnival admission is not included with ticket purchase. Full schedule and ticket prices available at SugarLandHolidayLights.com

Christmas Tree Lighting 2019

Sugar Land Parks and Recreation will host its tree lighting Dec. 6 from 5 - 8 p.m. at Sugar Land Town Square Plaza. Families are invited to enjoy some of the community's most popular musical performances and theatrical acts at this magical holiday celebration. The evening includes: holiday crafts and activities; face painting; performances by local artists and choirs; photos with Santa; and food and beverages will be available for purchase. The event is free and open to the public. www.sugarlandtx.gov/918/Christmas-Tree-Lighting.

Campfire Christmas

The Fort Bend History Association and George Ranch Historical Park will host the annual Campfire Christmas at the George Ranch Historical Park in Richmond Dec. 14 and 21 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., with the last entry at 8 p.m.

Journey back in time to experience Christmas celebrations of the 1830s through the 1930s. This family-friendly holiday evening tour culminates with cowboy songs, stories and hot cocoa around the campfire.

Unlike previous Campfire Christmas events, this year's format will feature holiday tours at each of the main historic sites: celebrate a simple pioneer Christmas with the Jones family in their 1830s log cabin; visit the 1860s Ryon Prairie Home to discover what Christmastime was like after Civil War; tour the 1890s Davis Victorian Mansion and enjoy its resplendent turn-of-the-century holiday trimmings; tour the George Ranch Home to see family heirloom ornaments and decorations from the 1930s and 1940s; and don't forget to join the George Ranch cowboys and cowgirls for songs, stories and hot cocoa around a roaring fire.

A tram will be circling the Park at regular intervals so you can hop on and hop off to visit each site at your own pace.

If you've been to Campfire Christmas before, you may notice a few things that are different this year. Based on visitor feedback, the park was opened to include all four of the major historic sites and lowered ticket prices to accommodate a wider range of family budgets. Unlike previous Campfire Christmases, there is no formal dinner aspect, so guests can arrive on their own schedule and tour the park via the hop on/hop off tram.

View our calendar for more holiday themed events!



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So Sweet Holiday Treats

THE EGGNOG CAKE

Prep: 40 m
Cook: 30 m
Ready In: 3 h 40 m

CAKE INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup butter, room temperature
- 1 1/4 cups white sugar
- 3 eggs, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon finely grated lemon peel
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup prepared eggnog (or see notes for recipe)

FROSTING INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups prepared eggnog (or see notes for recipe)
- 1 cup butter, room temperature
- 1 1/2 cups white sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon rum-flavored extract
- 1/8 teaspoon finely grated lemon peel
- 1/2 cup finely chopped toasted pecans (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1 Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease and flour two 9-inch round baking pans.

2 Beat 1/2 cup butter and 1 1/4 cups sugar with an electric mixer in a large bowl until light and fluffy. Mixture should be noticeably lighter in color. Add eggs, one at a time, allowing each egg to blend into butter mixture before adding the next. Stir in 1 teaspoon vanilla extract and 1/4 teaspoon lemon peel, mixing well.

3 Combine 2 cups flour, baking powder, and 1 teaspoon salt in a bowl. Pour flour mixture into the batter alternately with 1 cup eggnog, mixing until just incorporated. Stir in bourbon. Divide batter evenly between prepared pans.

4 Bake in preheated oven until cake springs back when touched lightly with a fingertip or a toothpick inserted in the centers comes out clean, 30 to 35 minutes (test both cake layers). Cool in pans for 10

minutes before inverting on a wire rack to cool completely.

5 To make frosting, combine 1/4 cup flour and 1/4 teaspoon salt in a saucepan. Gradually whisk in 1 1/2 cups eggnog, whisking until smooth.

6 Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring frequently. When mixture boils, cook for 2 minutes, whisking constantly, until thickened. Remove from heat and let cool completely to room temperature.

7 Beat 1 cup butter and 1 1/2 cups sugar in a bowl until light and fluffy. Mix in cooled eggnog mixture, 1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract, rum extract, and 1/8 teaspoon grated lemon peel. Beat on high speed until mixture is fully incorporated and frosting is fluffy.

8 Spread cake with plain frosting between cake layers, over the top and on the sides. Coat the sides with toasted pecans, pressing the nuts onto sides in small handfuls. Refrigerate until serving time.

THE ITALIAN CREAM CHEESE AND RICOTTA CHEESECAKE

Prep: 15 m
Cook: 2 h
Ready In: 6 h 15 m

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 (16 ounce) container ricotta cheese
- 1 1/2 cups white sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1/2 cup butter, melted and cooled
- 1 pint sour cream

DIRECTIONS

1 Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease a 9-inch springform pan.

2 Mix the cream cheese and ricotta cheese together in a mixing bowl until

well combined. Stir in the sugar, eggs, lemon juice, vanilla, cornstarch, flour, and butter. Add the sour cream last and stir. Pour the mixture into the prepared springform pan.

3 Bake in the preheated oven 1 hour; turn oven off and leave in oven 1 hour more. Allow to cool completely in refrigerator before serving.

THE TOFFEE ALMOND PIE

Total Time: 1 hr 30 min

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pie crust for a 9" pie, from scratch or a refrigerated pack of two
- 3 large eggs
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 cup toffee bits
- 6 ounces (about 1 2/3 cups) sliced almonds

DIRECTIONS

1 Preheat oven to 425°F.

2 Place pie crust in a 9" pie plate and decorate the edges as desired. Chill until ready to fill.

3 Whisk eggs, sugar, corn syrup, melted butter, salt, and cornstarch until smooth and combined.

4 Place toffee bits in the bottom of the prepared pie crust, then place the almonds on top. Pour the pie filling over the top and let the pie sit for a few minutes to allow the almonds to naturally rise to the top. (It's important the toffee goes in before the almonds because it will weight the almonds down if it goes in on top of them.)

5 Place the pie on a cookie sheet (in case of spillage). Cover the outer edges of the crust with a pie crust shield or strips of foil. Bake for 10 minutes at 425°F, then lower the temp to 350°F and bake for an additional 50-60 minutes, or until the almonds are very toasted and the pie is just a bit jiggly in the center. It will set as it cools. Cool completely before slicing.



THE CRANBERRY COOKIES

Prep: 20 m
Cook: 10 m
Ready In: 1 h

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup butter
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 (3.5 ounce) package instant vanilla pudding mix
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 eggs
- 1 (6 ounce) package white chocolate chips
- 1/2 (6 ounce) package dried cranberries

DIRECTIONS

1 Preheat an oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease two baking sheets. Combine flour and baking soda in a bowl.

2 Beat the butter, white sugar, brown sugar, and instant pudding with an electric mixer in a large bowl until smooth. Beat the first egg into the butter until completely blended, then beat in the vanilla with the last egg. Mix in the flour mixture until just incorporated. Fold in the white chocolate chips and cranberries; mixing just enough to evenly combine. Drop spoonfuls of the dough 2 inches apart onto prepared baking sheets.

3 Bake in the preheated oven until edges of the cookies become golden brown, 9 to 12 minutes. Cool in the baking sheet for 10 minutes before removing to cool completely on a wire rack.

Tips for Baking Better Christmas Cookies

Cookies are a classic holiday treat, and some families even build entire traditions around baking Christmas cookies.

Novice bakers making cookies for the first time may be a little overwhelmed when perusing recipes. Baking is a science, and sometimes it takes practice to get the results just right. However, there are some tips that can help yield better, buttery bounties.

Handle butter with care

Butter can make or break a cookie recipe, as butter is often the glue that holds the cookie together. Therefore, it is key to follow the directions

carefully regarding how to handle butter. Smithsonian.com says to leave butter at room temperature for 30 to 60 minutes to properly soften it. This takes patience, but fiddling with butter too much can damage its delectable integrity. While purists may say butter is best, margarine may be acceptable if it has a high fat content; otherwise, cookies may spread out and flatten.

When it comes time to cream the butter with sugar, be sure to do so thoroughly to incorporate air into the butter and remove the grainy texture of the sugar.

Measure flour properly

Measuring flour the right way can ensure cookies come out right. The Cooking Channel says to spoon the flour lightly into a dry measuring cup, then level it off with a knife. Do not dip the measuring cup into the flour or tap the knife against the cup. This will pack too much flour into the measuring cup and result in dry, tough cookies.

Slow down the eggs

Add eggs one at a time to make sure each will emulsify properly with the fat in the butter. Adding eggs en masse may cause the emulsification to fail.

Chill out

Follow recipes that call for chilling cookie dough carefully. This process is important for making sliced and shaped cookies. By chilling, the dough becomes more malleable for rolling and even slicing.

Use a bottom rack

Too much heat may compromise cookie integrity. The food experts at Delish say to try moving cookies onto a lower rack in the oven if they aren't retaining their shape when baked. Put an empty cookie sheet on the top rack. That will block the cookies from the most intense heat that rises to the top of the oven.

—Advertorial—

Halo Hair Studio is Greatwood Strong

by MARQUITA GRIFFIN | mgriffin@fbherald.com

After 10 years of being a stay-at-home mom doing hair on the side, Greatwood mom of three, Kelly Chester took a leap of faith opening her own six-chair salon in her neighborhood. Her career began in hair salons in Maine 22 years ago and continued in places around Sugar Land, until the last 10 years when Chester styled hair out of her home.

“That was one of the many reasons I feel becoming a hairstylist was one of the best choices I ever made,” Chester said. “It gave me the flexibility to do what I love and be a stay-at-home mom at the same time.”

In 2018, however, Chester decided to return to her roots by opening Halo Hair Studio, an independent salon on Crabb River Road in the Greatwood Country Shops.

“I felt there was a need in our area for a high-end salon,” she said.

In Halo Hair Studio’s first year in operation, at least one truth became clear: this hair salon epitomizes what it means to be a community-based business.

“I tried to reach out and use as many Greatwood residents as possible when opening the salon,” Chester said enthusiastically.

Not only is the salon owned by Chester, who is a Greatwood resident, a Greatwood resident has contributed to every stage of this salon’s existence, which is a source of pride for Chester.

The salon was built by a Greatwood contractor with the help of a Greatwood architect, the accountant who helped Chester with business-related concerns hails from Greatwood and even the woman who designed the salon’s logo lives in Greatwood.

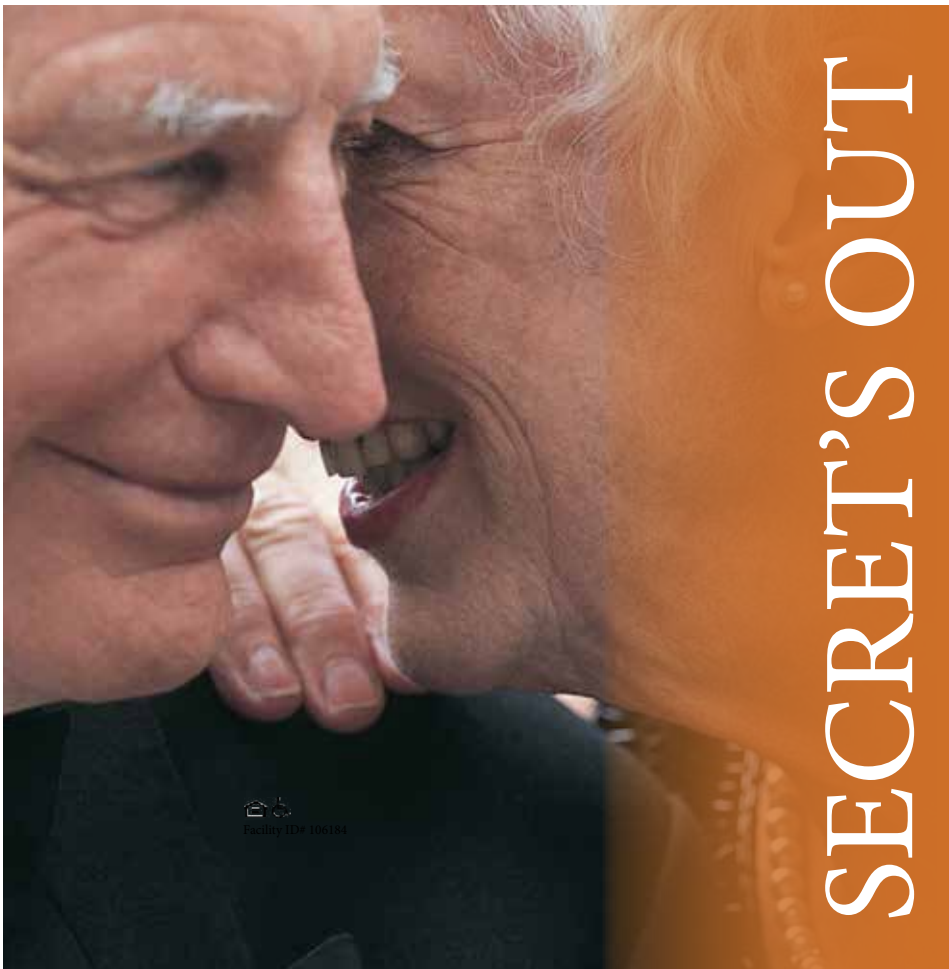
And that’s not counting the receptionists and stylists, who are also from the neighborhood.

George Ranch High School senior Courtney Stewart needs to work 10 hours a week to adhere to requirements from her Practicum in Marketing Co-op class, and Halo Hair, she said, is allowing her to do just that.

“I love working as a receptionist because it helps me meet my class require-



Courtesy of Lori Starkey Photography | Good vibes surround the Halo Hair Studio team. From left, back row: Lindsey Taylor, Kelly Chester, Kirsten Rangel and Zach Parker; front row: Diana Johnson, Emma Flory and Courtney Stewart.



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ments, it is conveniently located in Greatwood, which is where I live, and most importantly, the staff is like a second family to me,” Stewart said. “Kelly has given me the opportunity to learn, and I am truly thankful to be a part of the Halo Team.”

CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Chester’s love of community isn’t contained within the salon walls, though. Halo Hair has sponsored the Greatwood Gators swim team, the George Ranch High School Pro Grad and most recently the Dickinson Elementary Trunk or Treat event.

“We look forward to other ways we can give back to our community,” Chester said, adding the salon strives to foster a connection within the community.

“Our mother-daughter braiding classes have been a huge hit,” Chester said of the salon’s special event — a \$25 braiding class that includes a glass of champagne for mom and light snacks. “We’ve held three sold-out classes so far, with 30 people each.”

The class focuses on tips and tricks for fun styles moms can try on their daughters.

“We’re planning on offering a tween braiding class, for girls ages 10 and up, where girls come with a friend and work on each others hair,” she said of the \$25 class. “It’ll be a parents night out style drop off event.”

Chester added that starting in January the salon will also offer children’s birthday parties on Sundays.

“The parties will include hair, nails and a fashion show for up to 15 girls,” she explained. “We are currently looking to hire five Greatwood teenagers to work as our party crew.”

The salon also offers Ladies Night Out events where a group of women can come to the salon after hours and enjoy mini services like a beach waves tutorial, flat iron, shampoo blowout and a mini makeup session. It’s a bring-your-own-refreshments type of event that allows the guests to relax and speak with the stylists to get free consultations from anything to coloring and style to product recommendations.

“It’s fun and it gets people to come in with friends and connect,” Chester said of the salon’s special events. “I love connecting with people and I love to chat, so I get really excited when I look at my schedule and see all the people I get to catch up with that day.”

That interaction with community is something receptionist Emma Flory said she appreciates.

“Working as a receptionist at Halo Hair has given me the opportunity to improve my social skills, work ethic and learn how to work with a team in order to make a successful business run,” said the Logos Preparatory Academy junior. “I am so grateful for the opportunity to be able to broaden my resume and build relationships within the community, all while at work.”

THE HALO HAIR HOSPITALITY

Fellow receptionist Diana Johnson calls her role at the salon “very rewarding” because she gets to witness “people leaving satisfied with their experience.”

“I am very grateful for the opportunity to work with this amazing team of hard working people,” Johnson said. “The working environment at Halo Hair studio is an easy going and fun atmosphere.”

When it came to deciding just how she wanted to welcome her clients, Chester considered the best approach was to provide them with a classic salon setting.

“With so many salons suites opening in our area with single room salons, we wanted to go back to the original salon feel — an open concept and teamwork amongst the stylists [that clients can see].

“We love it when clients see their friends getting their hair done, too,” Chester explained. “It makes for a fun environment.”

If anything, the mural on one of the walls clearly spells out the salon’s philosophy. It reads: *Good Vibes Only*.

“That pretty much sums up the shop,” Chester said.



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To date, Halo Hair Studio has welcomed more than 1,300 clients — men, women and children — providing them with haircuts, hair coloring, Brazilian blowouts, Keritan soothing treatments, and even up-dos and makeup for special occasions, Chester said, adding that she hopes to offer hair extensions services next year.

Plus the salon also sells the full line of Living Proof Products, and each stylists completed training through Living Proof to be able to recommend products specifically for each clients needs.

“We also offer free consultations by appointment and try to make sure all clients reach their hair goals,” Chester said.

MEET THE HALO HAIR STYLISTS

Enjoying good vibes is just part of the Halo Hair package. Clients can also expect an impressive combination of professionalism, skill and talent from each stylist.

Each Halo stylist has 10-plus years experience and boasts their own personal style and strengths, Chester said. Additionally, the stylists regularly attend classes and hair shows to remain updated on the latest trends and techniques.

Halo Hair currently has four stylists but is currently searching for two more talented stylists to add to the team.

Owner & Stylist: Kelly Sullivan Chester | [@halohairkelly](#)

Chester has worked her way through the hair care industry starting in 1997 when she enrolled at the Headhunters School of Hair Design in Portland, Maine. She subsequently worked in a Maine salon until she and her family moved to Greatwood in 2006.

In 2007 she was the lead stylist who helped open Sweet and Sassy in Sugar Land followed by salon work at Colony Hair, also in Sugar Land.

“I met so many awesome clients, some of whom I still do today,” Chester noted.

Chester specializes in color, specifically blondes; low maintenance lived-in highlights; and is skilled at color correction. “I love a challenge,” she said. “Taking someone from hair they don’t like to hair they love is so fun. And anyone who sits in my chair knows I love to finish off their style with a good beach wave.”

Stylist: Zach Parker | [@halohairzach](#)

Having grown up in the hair industry, it’s no surprise that Zach Park-

er would find his calling in it. The native Houstonian recalls spending time after school and on Saturdays in the back of his mother’s salon, soaking up the trade. In 1998 Parker embarked on his own career working with Aveda and Wella hair color becoming an in-salon coach and color educator.

For the past seven years Parker has been training other stylists in haircutting at Salon on Kirby in Houston and is certified in Brazilian Blowout and Keratin smoothing treatments. Now a Greatwood resident, Paker said he is “excited about the opportunity to be close to home and support the community [he] lives in.”

Stylist: Kirsten Rangel | [@halohairkirste](#)

Kirsten Rangel, who was born and raised in Rosenberg, graduated from Paul Mitchell the School Houston in 2010 and worked at a Katy salon for a year before going back to school for her Cosmetology Instructors license. After receiving that license, she was an instructor and color specialist at Paul Mitchell the School Houston for five years before returning to the salon full time. Rangel specializes in all color services, up-do styles and make-up.

“I love the beauty industry so much because it’s very inclusive and creative,” she said. “And it gives me the freedom to spend time with my family.”

Stylist: Lindsey Taylor | [@tierneylindseytaylor](#)

Lindsey Taylor of Sugar Land wholeheartedly believes that if a people love what they do for a living, they will never work a day in their lives. It’s a motto that could easily be applied to her own life, Taylor said. For the past 13 years Taylor — who specializes in blondes, redheads, brunettes and balayage — has colored, cut and styled hair, which is a passion she’s had since eighth grade.

“I am very grateful to be a part of an incredible salon with amazing fellow stylists,” said Taylor, adding that Halo Hair exudes an “incredible, laid-back environment.”

“We aren’t just a regular hair salon,” she said. “We are a team that loves to involve the community and loves making people feel their best selves.”

All photos are courtesy of Greatwood’s Lori Starkey Photography.

HALO HAIR STUDIO

1270 Crabb River Rd., Richmond, TX 77469

281-545-4059



[@halohairgreatwood](#)

Walk-ins are welcomed as time allows. Setting an appointment is recommended.

Committee formed for 2020 Census

by **CHAD WASHINGTON** | cwashington@fbherald.com

In its effort to encourage county-wide participation in the 2020 U.S. Census, the Fort Bend County commissioners have formed a committee to spread the word.

A Complete Count Committee was approved by county commissioners, which will advise and assist Fort Bend County to obtain the most accurate and complete count of the population through a focused, structured program.

The committee will include individuals from local governments, community and faith-based organizations, businesses and the media to educate the public about the census and why participation is vital.

It is "so important to us to count every person," County Judge KP George said.

The 2020 Census is key to helping the federal government determine where and how much aid an area receives in many different ways, and an accurate count is key for a rapidly-growing county like Fort Bend.

Precinct 1 Commissioner Vincent Morales said that the committee will consist of only volunteers and individuals, since the state has not sent funding to any local areas to assist the census count.



ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING LANGUAGE ADDED TO DOCUMENTS

Fort Bend County also officially came against human trafficking after commissioners approved a resolution requiring anti-trafficking language in all contracts.

County Judge KP George said that the county has spent millions of dollars to fight human trafficking.

"The commissioners court and Fort Bend County recognize the serious nature of human trafficking, which is why we're adding this language," George said. "Fort Bend County spends millions of dollars on projects and services, and adding this language to all our documents enforces our vision of a human-trafficking-free future."

The county's purchasing department will post the phone number to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center on its website, and all county procurements and contracts will have a disclaimer that says Fort Bend County is opposed to human trafficking and no county funds will be used with anyone involved in human trafficking.

man trafficking.

By adding the language, the county hopes that it can promote awareness about human trafficking and encourage contractors who want to work with the county to follow proper labor laws.

If citizens have any information regarding a possible trafficking situation, they are urged to call the NHTRC 24-hour tip line at 1-888-373-7888.



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Announcing Annual Autism Luncheon

Hope For Three Autism Advocates has also announced Mary and Tom Solcher will return as Presenting Sponsors for its Annual Autism Luncheon on Feb. 13, 2020.

The Mardi Gras themed event will be held at Safari Texas Ranch, 11 a.m. to 1p.m. Guest speaker and honorary chairs, Sarah and Greg Swindell will share their personal journey living with autism. Greg, a former Major League



Baseball player and World Series Winner and, Sarah, an actress and author of the recently released book, "Rounding Home," will provide a real, raw look at the challenges and rewards of having a son with severe autism.

For more information call 281-245-0640 or visit hopeforthree.org.

Presenting Sponsors Tom and Mary Solcher.

Golf "Fore" Autism a hit

Cool weather and peaks of a bright sun made for a good day on the greens.

Nearly a 140 golfers gathered in late October for the Fourth Annual Hope For Three Golf "Fore" Autism Tournament. The event, presented by Time-wise, was held at Sweetwater Country Club. Along with swinging the irons, golfers used the power of the pen as various items were up for grabs during the live and silent auctions, as well as, raffles.

Golf "Fore" Autism is one of the many autism awareness campaigns held each year to assist autism families living in Fort Bend County.



Courtesy of Debi Beauregard, Custom Minds Photography | From left: first place winners Team Ocusoft — Steven Orphey, Elijah White, Eric Montgomery and Antonio Biggs.



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FAITH PARLE

TO APPEAR IN NATIONALLY TELEVISED SHOW

by **MARQUITA GRIFFIN** | mgriffin@fbherald.com

Faith Parle of Greatwood was recently filmed in the redesigned PBS studios in San Bernardino, California as a finalist in the national Celebration of Music Talent Competition, and it was a welcomed surprise for the 11-year-old singer.

Last year Parle was one of 22 contestants in the Celebration of Music, a nationwide talent search series, that came to Houston and was hosted by teenage superstar Ethan Bortnick. She didn't win, and yet, the producers invited Parle to sing in the nationally televised event.

"It was the experience of a lifetime," Parle said of the California filming. "I enjoyed meeting Ethan and the many talented people there. My goal for 2019 was to be on TV and I was so proud to have accomplished it."



Faith Parle with Ethan Bortnick.

The Celebration of Music, which was inspired by Bortnick, is a talent search that showcases the best in young musical talent — dancers, bands, musicians and singers between 4 and 25 years old — from across the nation.

During the filming, Parle sang "Never Enough" from the Greatest Showman and performed "New York State of Mind" with Bortnick and several other finalists.

The Celebration of Music show will air nationally on PBS in late Spring 2020 or early Summer 2020. Aside from being involved in the filming of Celebration of Music, Parle has made local appearances.

This past summer she sang the National Anthem for the Houston Astros, was selected to participate in the intermediate to advanced songwriting camp at the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville — "Where I got to perform my original song 'Anyway,'" — Parle interjected — and she sang the National Anthem for the Meet of Champs where members of the Greatwood Gators were swimming.

Then in November she opened up for the Will Carter Band at the Firehouse Saloon in Houston and will perform at Miracle on Morton Street in Richmond on Dec. 7.

"We are so proud of Faith," said her parents Joe and Suzan Parle. "She was one of the only contestants selected nationally who did not win a local Celebration competition. When we set our family goals for 2019, Faith said she wanted to perform on TV and we were very pleased that she accomplished that goal.

"We look forward to seeing her when the show is on air. We are thankful that God continues to open doors for her."

Continued on page 22

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The 'Giving Tree' returns to Campbell Elementary

by ALEINI LACOMBE

The Campbell PTO will be sponsoring our annual Giving Tree Dec. 2 through Dec. 13. Once again, we will be collecting items for students (and siblings) in need at a nearby elementary school. Their counselor will provide a list of items needed for each child. These items will be listed on the ornament tags on the Giving Tree and can be chosen by anyone interested in filling that specific need.

If you select a tag, please wrap the items, attach the tags and return them to the tree by the morning of Friday, Dec. 13. The gifts will be delivered to the counselor later that afternoon. Please consider helping in making this holiday extra special for a child who is just around the corner from us.

IMPORTANT GIVING DATES:

Dec. 2: Campbell Giving Tree Starts: Angels can be adopted online and/or ornaments from the Christmas trees in the front lobby

Dec. 8: Toy Drive Day at Campbell Circle Drive

Dec. 13: Last day to deliver giving tree donations

BOOT SCOOTIN' BOOGIE CHILI COOK-OFF AND CARNIVAL

We are so excited about this year's award-winning spring fundraiser on Friday, Feb. 21, 2019 - 6-9 p.m., which will feature the following events:

Chili Cook-Off Competition — cook-off results and awards announced during the event — and the Boot Scootin' Boogie — music, carnival games, cake walk, silent and online auction.

BOOT SCOOTIN' BOOGIE SPONSORSHIPS

Are you, or someone you know, interested in sponsoring or donating auction items to our Boot Scootin' Boogie Carnival and Auction Event? Email Meredith Tichenor at thetichenorfamily@gmail.com if you are interested or if you have any questions.

CALENDAR

Dec. 2: Progress Reports go Home

Dec. 9: UIL Awards

Dec. 10: PTO Board Meeting at 7:45 a.m.

Dec. 12: 3rd Grade Program at 8:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Dec. 13: Teacher Christmas Luncheon

Dec. 19: 4th Grade Alamo Field Trip

Dec. 20: Grade Level Holiday Parties & School Wide Sing Along (free dress holiday party attire): Sing Along: 8:30 a.m.; KG 10-11 a.m.; 1st: 10:15-11:15 a.m.; 2nd: 10:30-11:30 a.m.; 3rd: 10:45-11:45 a.m.; 4th: 11:00am-noon; 5th: 11:15-12:15 p.m.

Dec. 25- Jan. 6: Winter Break

Dickinson Elementary School

by SARAH TIELKE

Thanks to all of the volunteers for the amazing support we have had this year, so far! Make sure to stay up to date with the latest info by following us on Facebook or Instagram.

CALENDAR

Dec. 2: PTO Meeting (Science Room at 3 p.m.)

Dec. 4: AR Free Dress (if enough points earned); Sweets with Santa (Rec Center, 5-7 p.m.)

Dec. 5: Progress Reports Go Home

Dec. 10: PTO Gift Wrapping Fundraiser (Dickinson at 4 p.m.); Night Out with Specials

Dec. 13: Rudolph Day

Dec. 19: Holiday Parties (Classrooms at 1:15 p.m.)

Dec. 20: Holiday Sing (Gym at 7:45a.m.)

Dec. 23: Winter Break Starts

Jan. 7: Back to School

Jan. 8: AR Free Dress (if enough points earned)

Jan. 13: Board Meeting

Jan. 15: Spirit Night at Freddy's

Jan. 16: Watch DOGS - Woodcrafting Night - 6:30-8 p.m. at Dickinson

Jan. 31: Parents Night Out - 5-9 p.m. at Dickinson

facturing (MFG) Day at Texas State Technical College. The 17-year-old, said the event was an eye opener for her in regards to manufacturing in the 21st century.

"This event was a great opportunity for students like me," she said. "I learned about so many different career paths that I can take within the industry and it was amazing to see that what I'm learning in class is all applicable to the real world."

The Katy native added that she is excited to enter an industry with so much opportunity.

The community event hosted in partnership with the Central Fort Bend Chamber, is part of a national celebration that launched annually on the first Friday of October.

Among the relevant manufacturing programs offered on the Fort Bend County campus include Precision Machining Technology and Industrial Systems.

The halls at the TSTC Brazos Center were lined with nearly 20 industry partners who were ready to network with high school and college students, educators, and leaders and members of the community.

Central Fort Bend Chamber President and Chief Executive Officer Kristin Weiss said this is the first time the event has been put on by the Industrial Division of the Central Fort Bend Chamber.

"I am on cloud nine right now. The event was a great success," said Weiss. "Seeing students excited, interacting with the companies and telling us that they're learning so much makes me so happy. That is



At least 20 industry partners visited with local high school juniors and seniors during MFG Day hosted by TSTC and the Central Fort Bend Chamber.

Local students celebrate new-age manufacturing opportunities

Monica Raumaker, a senior at Cinco Ranch High School and Miller Career and Technology Center in Katy, was one of nearly 200 local high school juniors and seniors who attended Manu-

what this event was all about.”

The event held from 9 a.m. to noon included campus tours, industry visits and a panel discussion with industry specialists and former career technology education students including TSTC Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) alumnus Brandon Felts.

Kellen Dorman from Gurecky Manufacturing in Rosenberg said there is a misperception about what manufacturing careers entail, and with an increase in demand for skilled technicians in the industry this has been a great event to educate and increase awareness about how the growing industry is vital to the economy and provides a number of career opportunities.

“Hosting this type of event was a great idea,” she said. “It’s so important to show our future generations that there are other options outside of a four-year university and how manufacturing is evolving.”

Dorman also added that she was excited to see so many young girls interested in pursuing careers in the manufacturing industry and she hopes that she was able to encourage them.

“We have two women at Gurecky, one of them is a machinist,” said Dorman. “That just goes to show that there is room for women in this industry, especially as the industry’s technology becomes more sophisticated.”

TSTC field development officer John Kennedy said the day was wildly successful for TSTC.

“To have so many students and potential employers in one place was fantastic,” said Kennedy. “The support we received from educators and the community regarding this event was overwhelming. I can already see this event grow annually.”

Kennedy and Weiss said they hope to continue working together to make MFG Day even bigger and better for years to come.

Mullen honored with Connie Wootton Excellence in Teaching award

by KRISTA KUPERUS

Calvary Episcopal Preparatory is proud to announce that one of its teachers, Chris Mullen, was honored with the “The Connie Wootton Excellence in Teaching” award.

Mullen was presented this award, specific to Early Childhood, on Oct. 25 at the SAES (Southwestern Association of Episcopal School) Convention in Houston. This award identifies an exceptional teacher working with Pre-Kindergarten students.

As stated by SAES, the recipient will: display passion for teaching and innovation, demonstrate a deep appreciation for professional development, possess an entrepreneurial spirit, desire their school to reflect an ongoing commitment to excellence, love the students and strive on a daily basis to help them achieve their personal best and exhibits commitment to the Episcopal approach to education which can be understood as “faith seeking understanding.”

Mullen has had a positive influence on our young learners as an early childhood teacher at Calvary for the past nine years.



Mr. Chris Mullen (left) is awarded his \$5,000 check by The Rev. David Madison, the Executive Director of Southwestern Association of Episcopal School.



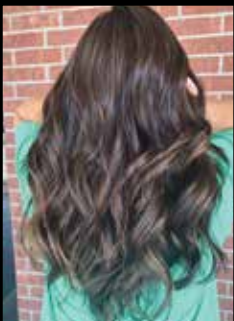
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JOY TO THE WORLD THE FORT BEND BOYS CHOIR'S CHRISTMAS MUSICALE

BY TIANA MORTIMER

Do you hear what I hear? It is the sound of singing boys bringing you good cheer!

Attend the Fort Bend Boys Choir's annual Christmas Musicales concert on Saturday, Dec. 7 at 7 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church-Missouri City.

Three treble choirs - Training, Town and Tour - will be showcased along with Music Magic, the organization's class of six and seven year olds.

Tickets are available on the choir website or at the door. Adult admission is \$15 and children 12 and under are \$5. All proceeds from the Christmas Musicales are used for program support, operational expenses and scholarships.

Visit the Fort Bend Boys Choir's website at www.fbbctx.org or call 281-240-3800 for more details.

Open Auditions set for the Fort Bend Boys Choir

Boys 8 years old and older, with unchanged voices who love music and singing, can audition for the Fort Bend Boys Choir. No previous experience is necessary.

Open auditions will be held at the First United Methodist Church Missouri City, 3900 Lexington Blvd., Missouri City, TX from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Dec. 14.

Special appointments are available if a boy cannot attend the open



Courtesy of Terri Cannon | Tour choirboys performing in the 2018 Christmas Musicales

audition date.

The Fort Bend Boys Choir can help with scholarships and carpool assistance too. Be sure to also ask about Music Magic, the choir's music enrichment class for six and seven year old boys starting March 2020.

Boys from all over the Fort Bend and the Houston metro area have the opportunity to learn more about music and singing as well as many of life's important lessons like leadership, making friends and building self-confidence and self-esteem - all in a safe, proactive setting.

Take advantage of this life-changing activity now before your boy's voice changes.

Find out more by visiting our website at www.fbbctx.org; or, call the choir office at 281-240-3800 to schedule an audition time.

THE FRIDAY FILM SERIES

The University Branch Library is hosting its Friday Film Series this month with the following selections, each one shown from 1 - 3 p.m. in Meeting Room 1:

Dec 6: In this comedy movie from 1958, an orphan goes to live with his free-spirited, eccentric, madcap aunt, who detests nonsense in others, but loves it in herself. Conflict ensues when the executor of his father's estate objects to the aunt's lifestyle and unconventional perspective on life. Based on a 1955 novel written by Patrick Dennis, a musical version of story was later adapted for Broadway. The movie is not rated.

Dec 20: Based on a novel by Louisa May Alcott, this 1994 romantic family drama is set in the 1860s during the American Civil War. With their father involved in the war, sisters Jo, Meg, Amy, and Beth are at home with their mother, a very outspoken woman for her time. The story tells of how the sisters grow up, find love, and find their place in the world. This movie is rated PG.

JOIN THE CRAFT SQUAD AND MAKE HOLIDAY CRAFTS AND CARDS

People who enjoy crafts are invited to join the University Branch Library's Craft Squad, where they can make new crafty friends, learn a new craft or two, and share tips, tricks, and resources with fellow crafters. In December, earn the "Holiday Crafts & Card-Making" badge by making greeting cards and gift tags for the holidays and exploring unique ways to wrap gifts at 7 p.m. in Meeting Room 2.

The Craft Squad, which has met quarterly in the past, will begin meeting weekly in January 2020.

Each month will have an instructional meeting introducing a new craft on the first Friday of the month, and badges can be earned for each new craft that is learned. The rest of the Fridays will be devoted to "Craft-Squad Meet-ups," where patrons can bring their own to craft to work on while networking with other crafters.



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Houston Methodist Sugar Land welcomes Dr. Margaret Umah

Dr. Margaret Umah



Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital is pleased to welcome Margaret Umah, M.D., board-certified family medicine physician.

Umah began seeing patients last month at the Houston Methodist Primary Care Group practice located on the hospital's campus at 16605 Southwest Fwy., Medical Office Building 3, Suite 400 in Sugar Land.

She specializes in men's and women's health issues, adolescent health, preventive medicine, chronic conditions such as diabetes, high

blood pressure and cholesterol disorders, and common illnesses and conditions. Umah also offers wellness exams, annual physicals and adult vaccinations.

Umah earned her medical degree from the University of Missouri School of Medicine and then completed her residency in family medicine at Memorial Hermann Hospital in Houston. She has been serving the health care needs of the Fort Bend community as a family physician since 2012.

"I have always had the greatest respect and admiration for Hous-

ton Methodist Sugar Land and its commitment to high-quality patient care," said Umah. "I share my new colleagues' approach in providing personalized, compassionate care to improve patients' overall well-being through communication and partnership. I am very pleased to be joining Houston Methodist Primary Care Group, where my patients will have access to the full range of technology, expertise and resources that the hospital offers."

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Umah, visit houstonmethodist.org/pcg/southwest or call 281-930-6639.

To learn more about Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital, visit houstonmethodist.org/sugarland or our Facebook page at [fb.com/methodistsugarland](https://www.facebook.com/methodistsugarland) for the latest news, events and information.

Fighting the Flu

The muscle aches. The fever. The tiredness. No one likes having the flu. If you do catch the bug, it's important to know how to care for yourself. It's also important to learn how the flu virus spreads and how it can be prevented.

FLU BASICS

"The influenza virus, more commonly known as the flu, is contagious and usually spreads through the air, by coughing, sneezing, talking or touching a contaminated surface," said Asisat Ope, M.D., board-certified primary care physician with Houston Methodist Primary Care Group in Sugar Land.

People who catch the flu have different symptoms, but many complain of a fever, cough, muscle aches, headache and sore throat. Some adults feel better in a week or two, while others, including small children, the elderly and the chronically ill, may have a harder time recovering.

STOP FLU IN ITS TRACKS

You can help guard yourself against the flu. "The best methods are getting a yearly flu vaccination and keeping your immune system healthy," Ope said.

Get a flu shot. A flu shot can lower your risk of catching the virus. It's best to get the shot by the end of October, before the flu season reaches its height. A flu shot is especially important for people at high risk for flu complications, including adults age 65 or older, chil-



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dren younger than age five, pregnant women and those with chronic health problems.

Steer clear of germs. Unfortunately, sick people don't always keep their germs at home. You can help keep yourself flu-free by washing your hands frequently and following a healthy lifestyle. Carry hand sanitizer with you in case you can't wash your hands right away after being around those who are showing signs of being sick. You may also want to use disinfecting wipes to wipe down surfaces or shopping carts when you're out and about.

If you do get the flu, drink plenty of fluids. Your doctor can prescribe antiviral drugs that may make the illness milder and shorten the time you are sick if you go in right away.

If you have questions about the flu shot, talk to your doctor. To schedule an appointment with Asisat Ope, M.D. or another primary care physician at Houston Methodist Primary Care Group, visit houstonmethodist.org/pcg/southwest or call 832-416-1678.

To learn more about Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital, visit houstonmethodist.org/sugarland or our Facebook page at [fb.com/methodistsugarland](https://www.facebook.com/methodistsugarland) for the latest news, events and information.

2019 Patchwork Of Life Event Raises \$350K

OakBend Medical Center's seventh annual Patchwork of Life event was another very successful fundraising event for the hospital. The event raised more than \$350,000 and those funds will be used for a 3D Mammography machine for the Women's Imaging Department at OakBend's Jackson Street Campus.

With a crowd of over 650 attendees, this year's live auction brought in more than \$100,000, with popular items like a Tuscan villa vacation, and African Safari and



Attendees of Patchwork of Life looking at live auction items.

a Houston sports ticket package causing some friendly competition.

"This year's Patchwork of Life event was a fantastically successful evening," said Beth Johnson, event chair. "The Fort Bend community continues to provide great support to OakBend Medical Center. We are so appreciative of those who made it out and for their wonderful generosity."

Guests also had the opportunity to purchase and personalize a quilt square for the annual dedication quilt made by Pat Hebert. Pat has made a quilt for each Patchwork of Life event since 2013 and this year's quilt will hang in the Women's Imaging Department upon completion.

"Patchwork was energetic and the audience was very generous," said May Tape, OakBend Medical Center Board President. "The personal testimonies from community members in the audience were one of the highlights of the evening for me. I love hearing how OakBend has impacted their lives. I'm proud to be associated with OakBend."

Four Houston Methodist hospitals recognized by Vizient

Vizient announced that four Houston Methodist hospitals have re-

ceived a 2019 Vizient Bernard A. Birnbaum, M.D., Quality Leadership Award. Houston Methodist was the only hospital system in the country to receive four awards.

The award recognizes hospitals for demonstrating excellence in delivering superior quality and safety as measured by the Vizient Quality and Accountability Study, which has been conducted annually since 2005.

Vizient recognized Houston Methodist Hospital in the comprehensive academic medical center category; Houston Methodist Sugar Land in the specialized complex care medical center category; and Houston Methodist Willowbrook and Houston Methodist The Woodlands in the complex medical center category.

"Having four of our hospitals on this list is extraordinary. Receiving such national recognition is an honor, but I'm most proud that the reason for these awards is our concerted focus on quality patient care," said Marc L. Boom, president and CEO of Houston Methodist.

This year, 349 participating hospitals were divided into four cohorts for the Vizient Quality and Accountability Ranking.

The ranking measured performance based on safety, mortality, clinical effectiveness, efficiency and patient centeredness. The ranking's composite scoring system uses patient-level performance data from a variety of sources including the Vizient Clinical Data Base, core measures data, the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems survey and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Healthcare Safety Network.

The Vizient Quality and Accountability Ranking helps participating hospitals and health systems understand their performance against their peers and identifies structures and processes associated with high performance in quality and safety across a broad spectrum of patient care activity. The recognition period is for work spanning from July 2018 through June 2019.



Representatives from Houston Methodist accepted the awards for each of our four hospitals at the 2019 Vizient Connections Education Summit in Las Vegas. From left: Chris Siebenaler, regional vice president and CEO of Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital; Janet Leatherwood, CNO of Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital; Diane McGraw, RN, MSN, CNS-CH, CPHQ, CCM, Director of Quality Management, Infection Control, Risk Management, Accreditation, and Patient Safety Officer at Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital; Jeffrey A. Jackson, MD, FAAN, CQO; Marc L. Boom, president and CEO of Houston Methodist.

HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital's Survivors Offering Support, a breast cancer support group, will meet at 5:30 p.m. Dec. 19 at the hospital.

This group meets every third Thursday of the month in the Main Pavilion Conference Rooms B and C. Refreshments are provided.

The monthly breast cancer support groups include trained facilitators from Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital help women and men at any stage of diagnosis and treatment, understand that breast cancer can affect them emotionally and spiritually - not just physically.

For more information or to register, email snbowman@houstonmethodist.org or call 281.274.7164.

A team of leaders in **UROLOGY**



Laura Martinez, MD
Urology

Neel Srikishen, MD
Urology

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- Kidney stones
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- Urinary symptoms
- Urologic cancers



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December

December 3

Connections: Meet Someone New

Meet new people and make new friends at this casual, come-and-go social hour at the George Memorial Library at 7 p.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. This activity is suitable for adults aged 18 and up. Another Connections will be held at 10 a.m. in Room 2A.

Veteran Financial Fitness

Impact a Hero will host a free introductory course on the principals of financial fitness for veterans at the Mamie George Community Center in Richmond from 6 - 8 p.m. Visit www.impactahero.org.

December 4

Nature Park Bird Hike

A monthly bird hike will be held at 8 a.m. at Seabourne Creek Nature Park, 3831 Texas 36 South, Rosenberg. All ages and levels of birders are welcome. Binoculars and weather-appropriate clothing and footwear are recommended. The next hike is scheduled for Jan. 8, 2020 Visittxmn.org/coastal.

December 6

Sharpen Your Marketing Message

SCORE mentor Jeffrey Jones assist small-business entrepreneurs develop or sharpen a strategic marketing plan in a special workshop at the University Branch Library from 10:30 a.m. to noon in Meeting Room 1. This program is presented in partnership with SCORE, the non-profit mentoring arm of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

2019 Holiday Market

Vintage Market Days of SW Houston Coastal Plains will hold its holiday market — "Merry & Bright" — Dec. 6 - Dec. 8, at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds in Rosenberg. Visit vintagemarketdays.com.

Sounds of the Season

The Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce will host its Sounds of

the Season with Frank Billingsley from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Constellation Field in Sugar Land. Visit www.FortBendChamber.com for tickets and to register.

Needville Country Christmas

Started as a way to promote local businesses, the Needville Annual Country Christmas will be held in Downtown Needville Dec. 6 from 5 to 9 p.m.

Candlelight Tours

The Fort Bend Museum Docents will hold its Candlelight Tours at the 1883 Moore Home 6 - 8 p.m., Dec. 6 and 4-8 p.m. Dec. 7. Festive tours of the historic home, plus cookies and wassail will be featured. Visit www.fortbendmuseum.org.

Nutcracker on Ice

Sugar Land Ice and Sports Center is presenting its 22nd annual production of the Nutcracker on Ice at 7 p.m. Dec. 6, and 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. on Dec. 7 at the center. Tickets available at www.etix.com.

December 7

2019 Run Houston! Sugar Land

Get in the holiday spirit by taking on the final event in Run Houston! from 5 - 10:30 a.m. at Constellation Field, with distances of 10K, 5K, and a Kids 1K, as well as a virtual option.

All registrations include free high-resolution race photos, custom shirt, custom finisher's medal for all distances, custom race bib, and complimentary parking. Participants will also enjoy special access to the Holiday Lights Festival and a post-race party inside the stadium. All ages and abilities are welcome, including strollers. Visit <http://bit.ly/RunSugarLand>.

Jingle Bell Run - Sugar Land

The Arthritis Foundation's Jingle Bell Run is the original festive race for charity. The Sugar Land race will be held from 7 - 11 a.m. at the University of Houston- Sugar Land campus. Visit events.arthritis.org.

Winterfest

Take a break from the hustle and bustle of the holidays with refreshments, family activities, and festive music performed by the Second Street Brass Ensemble during this fun open-house event at

the George Memorial Library from 10 a.m. - noon in the Meeting Room. The performance will begin at 11 a.m. This event is made possible by the Friends of the George Memorial Library.

Cookies with Santa

Houston Museum of Natural Science - Sugar Land will host Cookies with Santa from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Enjoy holiday crafts, the tradition of cookies and milk and a take away photo with Santa and Mrs. Claus. You can also stop at the reindeer station, too, for a fun holiday selfie. \$5 for members; \$5 for non-members plus purchase of \$5 exhibit halls ticket. Jingle Tree Events: www.hmns.org/hmns-at-sugar-land/events/jingle-tree/

Holiday Open House

The University Branch Library will hold a Holiday Open House from 2:30 - 4 p.m. in Meeting Room 2. Music, refreshments, and craft activities will be available for the whole family to enjoy as they catch the holiday spirit. Books on holiday entertaining, decorating, and cooking will be available for check out, along with seasonal music CDs and movies.

Read to a Cat

Fort Bend Pets Alive is hosting a Read to a Cat event at Half Price Books - Sugar Land from 1 - 4:30 p.m. Read to homeless cats and have the option to adopt one for 50 percent off.

Holidays in the Plaza

Two of the groups from Houston Show Choir, Vocal Impact and Vox Evolution, will create a journey through the holidays with pop, country, disco, rock, show tunes, jazz, and more, with fun for everyone from 5 - 7 p.m. at 2700 N Town Center Blvd. in Sugar Land.

December 8

African Hymn Fest and Health Fair

New Wine Chapel invites the public to celebrate "Christmas in Africa" featuring vibrant musical performances from 4 - 7 p.m. in Sugar Land Town Square. You will also have the opportunity to browse through their health fair on site.

December 10

Book Exchange

The Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce will host a book exchange from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Wrap your favorite professional book to give away, and share how

it has deeply impacted your life. The exchange will run similarly to a white elephant exchange. Lunch is included. Visit www.FortBendChamber.com.

December 11

Food Bank

A food bank will be at KRB Dentistry, 5110 Ave. H in Rosenberg, from 8:30 a.m. - noon. Everyone is welcome. All this is needed is your name and phone number.

Winter Holiday Mini-Concert

Students from the Austin Elementary School Cosmic Choir will sing an assortment of holiday carols at the George Memorial Library at 11 a.m. in the Lobby.

Toy Giveaway

Mountain Top Ministries, 4310 Ave H, Suite #12 in Rosenberg, is hosting a Toy Giveaway from 7 - 9 p.m. All types of toys ages from 3 years to 17 years old. Visit www.mtopm.org

Young Adult Book Club

Teen readers in grades 9-12 will have an opportunity to meet with others who share the same love for good books, and have a lively discussion on the reasons a book or its characters were liked or disliked at the George Memorial Library at 5 p.m. in Room 2B. This month, readers are invited to bring their favorite nonfiction book to talk about.

December 12

Coffee with the Court

The Fort Bend County Bar Association is hosting its 5th Annual Coffee with the Court from 9 - 10 a.m. at the Fort Bend County Justice Center.

Garden Railroad Run Day

The Houston Area G Gaugers will be running trains on the garden railroad, weather permitting 1-4 p.m. at the Rosenberg Railroad Museum. Regular museum admission required.

Young Adult Advisory Council

Teens in grades 9-12 who are interested in an exciting new leadership opportunity and volunteer-service hours are invited to attend at 5 p.m. in Conference Room 1 at the University Branch Library. Members will have a chance to share ideas about library programs, to help out at events, to give suggestions for teen services, books and movies and to meet new people.

December 14

Winter Book Sale

The Friends of University Branch

Library will hold its Winter Book Sale from 10 a.m. - 2p.m. in Meeting Room 1 at the library. Prices range from \$0.25 to \$3. Numerous items will be available for sale, such as DVDs, CDs, magazines, and a variety of books, including children's, teens', mystery, computer, special interest and romance.

Holiday Dance Showcase

The public is invited to enjoy a holiday dance showcase by local dance companies from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. in Sugar Land Town Square.

Christmas in Katy

Join Common Ground Community Church at No Label Brewery from noon to 5 p.m. to celebrate Christmas. The event includes live Christmas music, food trucks, market vendors, a Kidz Zone and pictures with Santa.

Popsicle Ornaments

Teens in grades 9-12 will create ornaments using Popsicle sticks and other crafty items at 2 p.m. in Meeting Room 2 at the University Branch Library. Snacks and materials are provided by the Friends of the University Branch Library. Registration is required.

Holiday Market

Troop 801 is hosting its Annual Troop

801 Holiday Market from 9 a.m. -4 p.m. at the KC Hall in Rosenberg. There will be vendors from our local area (Rosenberg, Richmond, Sugar Land, Needville and more) with unique gift items, holiday decor and much more. At the end of the day, there will be a drawing for a hand crafted quilt, fine writing instrument and other door prizes. Visit www.brazostroop801.org.

A Christmas Night of Hope

This adult-only second annual gala is being hosted by Project Clothe A Child from 6 - 11 p.m. a Hilton Garden Inn Sugar Land. A guest speaker, entertainment and giveaways will be featured. All ticket proceeds benefit PCAC and are tax deductible. Visit www.projectclotheachild.org.

Holiday Movie Under the Moon

"The Grinch" will be shown from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. in Sugar Land Town Square. Free and open to the public.

December 15

32nd Annual Fort Bend Kia 30K

Join Finish Line Sports for the 32nd Annual Fort Bend KIA 30K Run from 7 - 11 a.m. in Sugar Land Town Square. Register at www.sfinishlinesports.com/sugar-land-finish-line-sports-30k.

finish-line-sports-30k.

December 16

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. - 5 p.m. in Meeting Room 1. Different-sized LEGO pieces will be available for the varying ages in attendance.

December 18

Culinary Book Club

This club of the University Branch Library will meet at 1:30 p.m. in Meeting Room 1. This month, the group will have a Cookie Exchange for the holiday. Cooking enthusiasts of all ages and experience levels - from beginners to advanced - are invited to join in this monthly potluck and recipe exchange.

Young Adult Advisory Council

Teens in grades 9-12 who are interested in an exciting new leadership opportunity and volunteer-service hours are invited to attend this meeting of the Young Adult Advisory Council at the George Memorial Library at 5 p.m. in Room 2B.

December 19

The Spirit of Christmas Market 2019

Organization supporting students in North Richmond will host this market benefitting Pink Elementary students from 7 a.m. - 4 p.m. . Christmas gift donations will give community children an opportunity to shop for their parents and siblings for their Christmas gifts. Donations can be dropped off at Friends of North Richmond and Del Webb. Call 832-877-1084 for more information.

Story Spinners Writing Club

This month's topic at the George Memorial Library will be "Pacing." 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 - 8:30 p.m. in Room 2C. This program is recommended for adults and teens aged 14 and up.

December 22

Photos with Santa

Sugar Land Town Square and Fort Bend Rainbow Room will host a Photos with Santa event from 1 - 5 p.m. in Sugar Land Town Square. Enjoy a free holiday photo with Santa and Mrs. Claus at 2180

Lone Star Drive (former Z Gallerie space). New stuffed animals for the Fort Bend Rainbow Room's Christmas Project will be collected. All donations will go to children and adults referred by caseworkers from Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

December 24

Christmas Eve & Childrens Mass

Holy Rosary Catholic Church and School and St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church will hold a Christmas Eve Mass and Childrens Mass from 4 - 5 p.m. at Holy Rosary Catholic Church, 1416 George Street in Rosenberg. A Christmas play will be performed by children during this Mass.

December 27

F-R-I-E-N-D-S Holiday Binge

Get in the spirit of the season by binge-watching 11 holiday episodes of this popular '90s sitcom at the University Branch Library from noon - 4 p.m. in Meeting Room 1. Light refreshments will be available, as well as holiday card-making activities, adult coloring sheets, and trivia.

December 28

Vintage Bike Ride

Handlebar Cyclery will hold a non-competitive, 28-mile, vintage bike ride, 28 miles from 7:30 - 9:30 a.m.. The ride starts at Essence House Cafe located in Fulshear. Visit www.handlebarcyclery.com.

December 30

Winter Craft Express

Families with children of all ages will have an opportunity to participate in different winter-related craft activities while watching a popular holiday film at the University Branch Library from 2-4 p.m. in Meeting Room 1.

January 18

Jigsaw Puzzle Competition

Hope for Three will hold its third annual Jigsaw Puzzle competition at Gallery Furniture, 7227 Grand Parkway South in Richmond. Teams will compete to complete a 500-piece puzzle in two-hours. Visit visit hopeforthree.org/events

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