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You can’t keep emergencies from happening, but with our expertise, Children’s Memorial Hermann at Memorial Hermann Sugar Land can make it a better experience. Our ER is specifically designed for kids, and the affiliated emergency medicine physicians, pediatricians, nurses and staff understand the emergency medical care children need. Our child-friendly equipment is suited – and sized – just for kids, and Child Life specialists help families cope with the unfamiliar and make kids feel more comfortable.

Reserve your time online at childrens.memorialhermann.org/ER

17500 West Grand Parkway South
Sugar Land, TX 77479
ANDREW ROSS | Although this 8-year-old boy from Greatwood has been diagnosed with cancer, he remains optimistic about his future, especially with the help of God, family and friends.

FAIR TIME | Want to know what this year’s Fort Bend County Fair & Rodeo has to offer?

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS | Greatwood kids working hard around the neighborhood.

GOOD NEWS GREATWOOD | Sue Austin shares what’s going on in the neighborhood.

NON PROFIT | Updates from the Fort Bend Friends and Neighbors Foundation and Fort Bend Cares.

COMING SOON | Looking to be entertained this month? Don’t worry plenty of great acts are coming!

LIBRARY NEWS | September programs and events at University Branch Library.

SCHOOL NEWS | Vital information from George Ranch High School and Campbell and Dickinson elementary schools.

ON THE GREATWOOD SCENE | Moments highlighting the Greatwood Gators and Geysers swimming teams.

BUSINESS STORY | Follow the golden brick road to Clayton Oaks.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY | Check out local businesses.
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#### 2016 FORD TAURUS SEL SEDAN
- **Legacy Price:** $34,950
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*View Details at www.LegacyFordTX.com
**AN ARMY FOR ANDREW**

**Family, friends and communities unite for the Ross family**

BY MARQUITA GRIFFIN

It is God who keeps Greatwood parents David and Kristi Ross from succumbing to devastation. When those words — “cancer,” “Stage IV,” “terminal” — fell from the doctor’s mouth, it was all they could do to keep the room from spinning. Tears fell and prayers were said.

In February, their son Andrew, an 8-year-old boy who offers friendship and love as easily as a bird takes flight, had been diagnosed with cancer, specifically Stage IV pancreatic neuroendocrine tumors.

The news was a breath-taking blow to David and Kristi, especially because only a few weeks prior they were told the possibility their son had cancer was remote.

“We were told that we could ‘Cancel out cancer, with a pencil at least,’” David Ross said. “We were caught off-guard by his diagnosis. Once we left the appointment and had time alone without kids present, we allowed ourselves to be sad and deal with the reality of Andrew’s diagnosis.

“But it was also an opportunity for us to decide right away how we were going to choose to see his diagnosis and this battle with cancer.’’

Their battle plan was clear: God.

“God is good, perfect, all-knowing and all-powerful, Ross said.

“It might not make sense to us, but rather than trying to understand the mind of God, we choose to trust Him,’’ Ross continued.

“Once we realized the importance of allowing the Bible to guide our theology, and allowing our theology to guide our view on what was happening in our life, our perspective changed immediately.”

**DECEIVING TERMINOLOGY**

When the pain started, it always came at night, always in his stomach.

The nightly pains were initially few, just once a night every week, but unfortunately the frequency increased. Two to three times a week. Then four, then five.

Before long Andrew Ross, the middle Ross child, had stomach pains that lasted for hours each night and even during the day.

“We tried adjusting his diet, keeping a food journal, acid reflux medications, allergy testing, etcetera,” said Ross’ father. “After attempting various interventions, all to no avail, Andrew’s pediatrician sent him to have an ultrasound of his abdomen.’’

Neuroendocrine tumors are rare in children and stage four of Andrew’s specific cancer — which had spread well beyond the original location — is deemed terminal since there are no current cures available.

As daunting as that sounds, the Ross family demonstrates steadfast optimism.

“With this type of cancer, the terminology can be deceiving,” said Andrew’s father.

“Neuroendocrine tumors are very slow growing tumors and even at stage four can be present for many years before really creating a problem. We have found some people with Stage IV Pancreatic Neuroendocrine Tumors who have been battling this cancer for five to 20 years.

“We believe the initial prognosis we received of Andrew having roughly three years is just inaccurate,” Kristi Ross said, adding they are praying for a treatment to be developed. “We believe we will have Andrew for many years to come.”

**ONE BOY’S DETERMINATION**

Andrew, a third grader at Campbell Elementary known for his kindness unwavering faith, admitted that when he learned of his diagnosis he was terrified.

“I felt that I was done for, like I was going to die soon,” he said. Despite his age, Andrew takes on the reality of his health with a determination that can only be described as inspiring.

“He’s a tough cookie,” said his mother. “He is always pushing through the pain and living life to its fullest, however, he hates cancer and the tummy pain that comes along with it.

“He gets sad when he thinks about the possibility of him dying at a young age, despite the fact that he is confident in where he is going.”

“I pray a lot,’’ Andrew said, adding that he takes his pain medications on time and a nap when told to because when he gets rundown, the pain is worse.

He also stays involved with the typical pastimes of an eight year old and playing with his friends, which include his older sister Abigail and youngest sister Grace, who is diagnosed with Down syndrome.

“It makes me sad to watch him in pain,” said Abigail Ross. “I encourage him and pray for him. I love how much he loves me and always wants to spend time with me. I also love how tough he is as he battles cancer. Even though he goes through so much, he is still able to power through it.”

**EVER EXPANDING COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

Because of the rarity of Andrew’s cancer, his parents have to travel for care.

They currently fly to meet with surgical specialist, Dr. Eric Liu, in Dever, Colorado and a pediatric specialist, Dr. Sue O’Dorisio, with University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa.

During one of these traveling appointments a member of the Southwest Airlines counter at Hobby Airport coordinated a care package, of sorts, to encourage Andrew.

Uplifting signs were made and special visits with the airplane pilots were arranged. Andrew even had the opportunity to sit in the pilot’s seat and make announcements. A welcome home pep rally was also hosted for Andrew and his family upon their return.

“We were humbled and blown away!” said Andrew’s mother. “We hardly feel worthy of such generosity, so we are just so grateful that people would bear our burdens with us and look for any opportunity to stand in the gap for our family during this battle.”

**LOVE AT HOME**

David and Kristi Ross said they are often at a loss for words when it comes to describing just how supportive the Greatwood community is — “there really aren’t words to describe all they have done,” they said.

Continued on page 8
Continued from page 6

“So often people ask us what our needs are and we never have a good answer because we live day by day and don’t really have a clue what our needs are,” Andrew’s father said. “Somehow, God lets our community know our needs even when we don’t because they have done everything.”

Making meals, hosting fundraisers, prayer meetings or helping clean the house is the tip of the iceberg when it comes to how neighbors have stepped in to help the Ross family.

“It is so important to us that our community near and far know that every prayer uttered for our boy, every ounce of support, tangible or otherwise, does not go unnoticed,” he added. “We pray and praise God for the members of Andrew’s Army every day.”

ANDREW’S ARMY

The treatments and surgery Andrew has undergone are expensive, especially because of the need to travel, so GoFundMe page has been created for the Ross family: www.gofundme.com/andrews-army

“One treatment in particular is not FDA approved yet, so at this point we would have to pay cash for each round of treatment,” Andrew’s father said.

David Ross said they hope to increase and spread awareness about this rare form of cancer as well as other pediatric cancers.

“Pediatric cancer research only gets 4 percent of the almost $5 billion budget for National Cancer Institute,” he said. “In terms of raising awareness, we have partnered with Triumph Over Kid Cancer and Andrew is the Wingman this year for this incredible foundation.”

Andrew shared that his ultimate hope is to be cancer-free or “live a long life with cancer and help other people accept Christ and go to Heaven.”

“Cancer is horrible and one of the worst things in the world,” Andrew said. “But God is the most important thing in the world.”

PHOTOS (Bottom left, clockwise):
Andrew Ross and his older sister Abigail, enjoying a moment in the flight deck before flying to one of Andrew’s doctor’s appointments out of state. • Family and friends praying over Andrew before we left for Iowa. “We are beyond grateful because we are certain that we couldn’t do it without them,” David Ross said of the community support. “They hold us up when we don’t think we can stand any longer, put a smile on our face when we need it most, and constantly remind us that we are not fighting alone.” • Andrew and Grace napping while visiting Grace at the hospital after her six open heart surgery in May. • A member of Andrew’s Army all the way in Uganda.

Mary Prine, a friend of the Ross’ church family and Patricia, the little girl the Ross family sponsors in Uganda. • Andrew, Abigail and Grace after Andrew was discharged from the hospital. “Andrew is one of the kindest people you will ever meet. He is quick to forgive and give a word of thanks for big and little things. A friend just told me Andrew thanked their family for being so nice to his sisters,” Kristi Ross said. I wasn’t surprised a bit. He adores his sisters, they are his best friends.”
HOUSTON METHODIST UROLOGY ASSOCIATES WELCOMES DR. MARTINEZ AND DR. SRIKISHEN

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It’s Time for the
FORT BEND COUNTY FAIR!

It’s Time for the
FORT BEND COUNTY FAIR!

You’ve made up your mind that you’re going and there is no stopping you. It’s too fun. Too important. Too delicious.

It’s a tradition children and adults eagerly wait for each year: The Annual Fort Bend County Fair & Rodeo.

This year marks the 81st local fair and rodeo and its theme of “Serving Youth Today for a Better Tomorrow” is something we understand and respect.

Our children are our future, there’s no doubt about it. And the Fort Bend County Fair Association plays its part in supporting local Fort Bend youth.

This year alone, the scholarship association presented 42 scholarships — at $4,000 each — and five Fort Bend County Fair Queen scholarships to local hard-working students.

The recipients are set to pursue a wide-range of higher educational paths. Agricultural degrees spanning from science to business, to finance and medical degrees, make up a few of the career choices of the recipients.

Each scholarship was earned by individual students who shared the passion for continuing their education but were diverse on their journeys to obtain them.

Several of the scholarships were awarded to lifelong fair exhibitors, while others were earned by students who excelled outside of the show arena.

The Fair’s scholarships are divided into several divisions: restrictive, non-restrictive, open, art, vocational and Queen.

“It is so rewarding to give away these scholarships; we look so forward to watching these kids at their next level — at college — to see what they do in life,” said Fort Bend County Fair President Ernest Lawson. “It is extremely rewarding and I couldn’t be happier to do what we do.”

The Fort Bend County Fair Association scholarships are a result of money raised by the Fort Bend County Fair Association and its various committees’ fundraising efforts and individual sponsors. The Go Tejano Committee, Life Member Silent Auction, Art Auction Committee, Grapes on the Brazos Committee and sponsors such as The Charlie Seely Memorial, Durwood Greene Construction, Kunz Farms, and McDonald’s have given back by generating or donating scholarship funds.
A Sight to See: The Annual Fair Parade

Officially kicking off the fair season is the annual Fair Parade set for 9 a.m. Sept. 29 in Downtown Richmond.

Around 200 captivating entries will make their way from the Historic Court House in Richmond headed west down Highway 90A to Jennetta Street in Rosenberg.

Prior to the parade will be the Rosenberg Lion’s Club’s 5K Run.

This event raises funds for the Fort Bend County Fair Scholarship Fund as well as the Rosenberg Lions Club Charities Fund.

Runners will start at the Historic Richmond Courthouse at 301 Jackson Street and follow the parade route to Rosenberg. For more information or to register call Liz Gerstenberger 281-380-9728 or email gekofron@aol.com.

Mary Sarah Named Fair Parade Grand Marshall

The darling of Nashville, Mary Sarah, is coming home to Fort Bend County as the 2017 Grand Marshall of the Fort Bend County Fair’s Parade.

With a powerful voice that has a distinct veteran sound, 22-year-old Mary Sarah is well on her way to cutting her place in country music history.

The pride of Fort Bend County has already appeared on the Grand Ole Opry and has a duet album featuring icons such as Dolly Parton, Tanya Tucker, Willie Nelson and the late Merle Haggard. She was also a contestant on “The Voice.”

The parade will wind its way through Richmond and Rosenberg on Friday, Sept. 29, but Mary Sarah will make more than one appearance at the parade — she will also be headlining at this year’s Fair on Saturday, Oct. 7.

Opening for her is local favorite and multi-talented, Moses Rangel, who Mary Sarah credits as her inspiration from the time they started attending church together and singing.

“This means the world to me. Where you grow up and the people you grow up with influence your life in ways that cannot be explained,” she said. “I love my hometown. It is truly an honor to be coming home, and to say I am headlining is just a dream!”

Mary Sarah is no stranger to the Fort Bend County Fair — growing up in the area, attending Foster High School and for years she would enter the Fair’s talent contest.

Continued on page 12
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Although she never won, year after year, she would walk on stage and perform.

“I always did the singing contests,” said Mary Sarah, whose talents were honed by her vocal and piano coach Jane Turner of Rosenberg Music.

“It was something I always looked forward to doing because as a young singer there wasn’t a lot of places to sing.

“I loved the opportunity to get onstage. But, I also just loved the atmosphere. The rides, hanging with friends, funnel cakes and music. Can’t get much better than that.”

Fort Bend County native and singing sensation Mary Sarah will make more than one appearance this fair season.

ERNEST LAWSON

THE NEW FAIR PRESIDENT IS MOTIVATED BY STUDENTS AND THE FUTURE THEY IMPACT

Ernest Lawon, the 2017 Fort Bend County Fair and Rodeo President, is a well-known face to the fair family, exhibitors and parents.

The man, often identified by his iconic gazing look in the livestock arena, is known for his constant presence at all the fair events, his passion for the show kids and his dedication to serving the Fort Bend County Fair.

Lawson’s path to the presidency includes Chairman of the Parking Lot in 2009, elected to the board of directors in 2011, and serving as Director-in-charge of the Parade, Jr. Livestock Auction and Grand Entry.

“In 2013 President Brad Bowman appointed me as Co-Director with Calvin Zwahr over the Livestock Committee,” said Lawson.

“I have remained heavily involved with the Livestock Committee ever since.”

A Man with a Plan

The 81st Annual Fair will see some changes under Lawson’s leadership.

“I intend to accomplish a lot during my Presidency. However, it will come with the voluntary cooperation of our great volunteer base,” said Lawson who oversees several hundred volunteers who serve on at least 52 committees.

The new George Barn will debut at the 2017 Fair and there will be an increase in value for the Fair Scholarships, a revamped Queen’s contest and the creation of an Auction Buyers committee under Lawson’s Presidency.

The Perfect Fit for President

Growing up, Lawson was involved in FFA, both in leadership and showing of animals.

“I have raised and have shown swine, rabbits and steers at all levels. On the leadership side, I was elected Greenhand President my freshman year and Chapter President for the following three years,” said Lawson.

He has also served as President of the Southeast Ricebelt District and as Area 9 Vice President.

As part of the Texas Young Farmers Association, he was elected to the office of Chapter President, the State of Texas Spokesman for Agriculture and earned the Lone Star Farmer Degree — the highest level of membership offered by the State FFA.
Lawson’s Motivation

Over the years Lawson has spent countless hours in the livestock show arena, and he reveals that his motivation are the kids. “Fair projects teach our youth responsibility, work ethics, priorities, and discipline,” said Lawson, adding that he believes show kids grow up to become responsible young adults who have and understand commitments.

“Kids that raise animals are not out causing problems, breaking the law or harming others, they are too busy with their livestock projects,” he said.

“When I see those exhibitors, the future of Fort Bend County, working so hard and placing everything they have into that moment, it motivates me beyond belief.”

Lawson and his wife Lisa are loyal advocates at the fair, and both have spent countless hours of volunteering on various committees and have been known to enjoy a good two-step on the dance floor. Ernest and his wife Lisa make their home in Needville and have four children: Michael, Macy, Jacob, and Grace.

Photo by Bill Robertson
2017 Fort Bend County Fair President Ernest Lawson (right) with 2016 President Neil O. Yeiderman (left).

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WHO WILL CAPTURE THE CROWN?

The chase for the coveted crown has begun.
The 2017 Fort Bend County Fair Queen Scholarship contest has 11 young ladies vying for the crown, scholarships, and all the other awards that come with the title.

Reining Fair Queen, Katie Koerth, the Fair Queen Scholarship Committee, Board members and Fair staff welcomed the girls who represented high schools from all areas of Fort Bend County.
The 2017 Fort Bend County Fair Queen candidates are: Skylar Higginbotham, a Freshman at George Ranch High School; Jenna Marler, a Senior at Tompkins High School; Tori Reeh, a Senior at Needville High School; Marissa Salazar, a Senior at Austin High School; Samantha Mae, a Senior at Lamar Consolidated High School; Bethany Garcia, a Senior at Clements High School; Marissa Charcas, a Senior at Lamar Consolidated High School; Shauna Pack, a Junior at George Ranch High School; Krystal Negrete, a Senior at Needville High School; Kelsey Lattin, a Junior at Hightower High School; and Kennedy Johnson, a Senior at Ridgepoint High School.

Winners receive scholarships and prizes for their efforts, as well as the opportunity to serve as a community ambassador for the Fort Bend County Fair for the coming year.
The Fair Queen Coronation, in which the 2017 Fair Queen will be crowned, takes place at 6 p.m. Sept. 29.

THE COMPETITIVE EVENTS

SATURDAY, SEPT. 23
Jr. Fair Royalty Pageants
Fair Prince & Princess Contest, 10 a.m.; Fair Duke & Duchess Contest, 1 p.m.; and Jr. Fair Queen Contest, 3 p.m.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 29
Coloring Contest
One outstanding rosette and $35 and one honorable mention rosette and $15 will be awarded in each grade. Awards will be presented from noon - 1 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 30
Talent Contest
The contest will be held at 11 a.m. on the Texas Stage. Divisions include: Elementary (ages 4-6), Junior (ages 7-10), Intermediate (ages 11-14), Senior (ages 15-18) and Adult (ages 19 and older)

School Art Auction
The art auction features art from Fort Bend County students in grades 8th through 12th. Auctioning begins at 5 p.m. in Building B.

SUNDAY, OCT. 1
Outlaw Lawn Mower Races
Races begin at 2 p.m. in the O.D. Tucker Arena. Participants will race around the arena in their souped up Lawn Mowers.

FRIDAY, OCT. 6
Championship BBQ Cookoff
Great competition is a cookin’ at the fairgrounds. Don’t miss

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SATURDAY, OCT. 7
Lil’ Wranglers BBQ Cookoff
The 6th Annual Lil’ Wranglers BBQ Cookoff will feature children ages 7 through 16 years old showing off their cooking skills from 8:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. The winners in each category will be announced around noon at the Texas Stage.

Diaper Derby
Starting at 10:30 a.m. be a part of the crowd cheering on the toddlers racing (crawling) in the 4th Annual Diaper Derby. Who will bring home the gold?

Pet Show
Students up to age 14 years old will show off their favorite pet in the annual Pet Show. These pets will be strutting their stuff on stage as they entertain the spectators with their costumes and tricks at 11 a.m.

Children’s Tractor Pull
Contestants will be peddling a tractor with a sled as bricks are added to the sled during the course. The winner will be determined by who peddles the tractor the longest distance. The fun starts at 3 p.m.

ADDITIONAL COMPETITIVE EVENTS
4-H Department
4-H, FFA & FCCLA Students will be exhibiting their handiwork in Exhibit Building D. They will be competing for the Grand Champion ribbon in the various categories.

Adult Creative Arts Department
Fort Bend County residents who are 18 years of age and older will compete and exhibit their handiwork in Exhibit Building B. Exhibitors will be competing for top honors in the various categories.

Open Youth Creative Arts Department
The Open Youth Department competition features Fort Bend County students ages 5-18 years old competing and exhibiting their work in Exhibit Building D. Students will be divided in four age categories.

School Youth Department
The School Youth Department features Fort Bend County students ages 5-18 years old competing and exhibiting their work in Exhibit Building D. The entries were made individually in the classroom and entered as a representative collection of work by the teacher. Students will be divided in four age categories.

Exhibit Building B & D Hall Hours
10 am - 9 pm Friday, Sept. 29
10 am - 9 pm Saturday, Sept. 30
Noon - 9 pm Sunday, Oct. 1
5 pm - 9 pm Monday, Oct. 2
5 pm - 9 pm Tuesday, Oct. 3
5 pm - 9 pm Wednesday, Oct. 4
5 pm - 9 pm Thursday, Oct. 5
5 pm - 9 pm Friday, Oct. 6
10 am - 9 pm Saturday, Oct. 7

For a complete details of the competitive events visit fortbend-countyfair.com/events/competitive-events
**Entertainment**

Friday, Sept. 29  
**Kevin Fowler**  
10 p.m. on the Brazos Stage

Saturday, Sept. 30  
**Kyle Park**  
11 p.m. on the Brazos Stage

Sunday, Oct. 1  
**Go Tejano Day**  
on the Brazos Stage

Friday, Oct. 6  
**Rick Trevino**  
10 p.m. on the Brazos Stage

Saturday, Oct. 7  
**Mary Sarah**  
11 p.m. on the Brazos Stage

Sunday, Oct. 8  
**Johnny Bush**  
5 p.m. on the Brazos Stage

Visit forthbendcountyfair.com for updates in musical entertainment this year.

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**The Livestock Events**

**THURSDAY, SEPT. 28**  
**Turkey Show**  
The show starts at 7 p.m. in the George Barn.

**FRIDAY, SEPT. 29**  
**Rabbit Show**  
The show starts at 8 a.m. in the George Barn.

**Commercial Heifer Show & Sale**  
The show and sale will take place Sept. 29 & 30 in Barn H starting at 11 a.m. The Commercial Heifer Auction will be held at 1 p.m.

**Goat Show**  
The show starts at 6 p.m. in the George Barn.

**SATURDAY, SEPT. 30**  
**Broiler Show**  
The show starts at 9 a.m. in the George Barn.

**Steer Show**  
The show starts at 6:30 p.m. in the George Barn.

**SUNDAY, OCT. 1**  
**Swine Show**  
The show starts at 4 p.m. in the George Barn.

**MONDAY, OCT. 2**  
**Ag Mechanics Project Show**  
The 2017 Agricultural Mechanics Project Show will provide an opportunity for 4-H and FFA members to display projects constructed/refurbished in Agricultural Mechanics Laboratories at 5 p.m.

**Roaster Show**  
The show starts at 8 p.m. in the George Barn.

**TUESDAY, OCT. 3**  
**Lamb Show**  
The show starts at 6:30 p.m. in the George Barn.

Continued on page 18
Come see the New 2017 Ford Expedition.
Greatwood Veterinary Hospital

At Greatwood Veterinary Hospital, we are dedicated to providing excellent and compassionate care for your furry, family friends. We offer full veterinary services in our new, spacious 6,500 square foot facility. Our experienced and caring veterinarians and staff strive to provide the best quality care available for your pets, with an emphasis on client education and an understanding of your pet’s specific needs. We would like to be partners with you in ensuring your pet’s good health and well-being. In addition to full medical, surgical, and dental veterinary care, we also offer boarding, grooming, and cremation services. Greatwood Veterinary Hospital has been providing affordable and quality veterinary care to the Fort Bend area for over 15 years. It is our hope that we can meet all your animal’s health care needs with our warm, friendly, and knowledgeable services.

To make an appointment for your pet or for more information, please call us at (281) 342-7770 or visit us at 401 Crabb River Road in Richmond.

Raskas Named the 2017 Fort Bend County Fair Honorees

Terry and Lisa Raska, longtime supporters of the fair, are this year’s honorees.

Terry and his wife Lisa have been sponsors, buyers and fair-goers for decades.

The Raskas own and operate Coastal Butane Service.

The family-owned business has been active in giving back to the youth of Fort Bend County for years.

“I have been involved in the County Fair for over 50 years — all my life,” said Terry Raska. “I watched my parents support the community and the kids in 4-H. Our family business sponsored the Calf Scramble as well as the Auction. Dad always believed you should give back, so we did.”

Coastal Butane continues to sponsor the Calf Scramble year after year.

“My parents sat in the arena watching every child show their animal. When I married Lisa, I quickly bought her a Fort Bend County Fair Life-membership, and we’ve continued making the Fair a family tradition as it was shown to us. Our boys are grown, and they still come back each year.”

When it is the Fair time in Fort Bend County, Terry and Lisa are ready to enjoy everything the fair has to offer.

“It seems the air has a different feel when the County Fair rolls around. We enjoy driving over Highway 59 and watching the Ferris wheel light up and begin to turn,” said Raska. “I recall the year I lost my Dad I was able to see my son ride in the Grand Entry with the ride-less horse in honor of Dad’s dedication to the Fair. That was tough. But we’ve also seen our son propose to his bride in the middle of that same arena. Each year when it returns we get excited to see our friends and you know just where they’ll be sitting. It’s the ol’ timers you enjoy seeing because you know you are here for the same reason — supporting the youth and tradition. Terry was an active member of the FFA in high school. He showed lambs and turkeys at the Fort Bend County Fair.

“After all these years, I can still tell you who bought them [his livestock projects]. It was then I knew the importance of support that comes from within a community,” Raska said.

The couple participates as a buyer in the live auction as well as in the freezer sale.

“We continue to do it for the reward of seeing the expression on each youngster’s face. When the auctioneer says, ‘we’ve sold it…’

Continued from page 16

Wednesday, Oct. 4 Scramble Heifer Show

The show starts at 7 p.m. in Barn H.

Thursday, Oct. 5 Jr. Livestock Auction

The top 188 livestock projects by 4-H and FFA students of Fort Bend County will be auctioned off at 7 p.m. in the George Barn. If you are interested in becoming a buyer, contact the Fair Office to register at 281-342-6171, or you may register as a buyer the day of the auction.

Friday, Oct. 6 Calf Scramble

FFA & 4-H Students will be scrambling to catch a calf during the PRCA Rodeo on Oct. 6 and Oct. 7 in the O.D. Tucker Arena at 7 p.m. The first to catch each night will be awarded a certificate to purchase their own heifer to raise for the 2018 Fort Bend County Fair.

Bucket Calf

Showmen ages 5-7 years old work hard to raise a calf by feeding and caring for it, teaching them responsibility and giving them a firsthand experience in the world of raising livestock. The Bucket Calf Show will be held at 7 p.m. in the George Barn.

Saturday, Oct. 7 Jr. Livestock Judging

The Jr. Livestock Judging Contest will be held at 8 a.m. in the O.D. Tucker Arena. This contest is open to any FFA Chapter or 4-H Club. The awards presentation takes place at noon.

TCCA Heifer Show

Judging will begin at noon in the Barn H. Order of judging will be American, British and Exotic by breed order and to follow current TCCA breed format starting with show ring “A.”

Freezer Sale

4-H and FFA students who didn’t make the Jr. Livestock Auction will be selling their livestock projects at the Freezer Sale at 12:30 p.m. in Building B.

For a complete details, visit forthbendcountyfair.com/events/livestock
Continued from page 18

you can see the relief in their eyes,” Rask said, adding, “I recall when I was talking with a customer, and he said you don’t remember me, but I remember you, you bought my steer when I was a kid.

“It just doesn’t get any better than that,” Rask added.

According to Raska, he feels as Fort Bend County continues to grow, the Fort Bend County Fair grows.

“I remember when the facility wasn’t as fancy as it is today,” Raska said. “The Rodeo has as many professional athletes as what you see at the Houston Rodeo. The music entertainment is a great attraction for all ages and taste. It’s an honor when people from all over Texas come see what Fort Bend has to offer.”

“The fair organization is more complex now, but the one thing that hasn’t changed is the dedication of the volunteers.”

The couple looks forward to the fair every year.

“Although we look forward to turkey legs and a funnel cake, the Fair still makes us feel like we are going on a ‘date’ after all these years,” Terry and Lisa said.

Terry summed his feelings with an annual and expected experience: “When you enter the Auction Barn and hear the voice of Randy Holford [the auctioneer] you know it’s time to come together as a community.”

---

**Mo Betta Rodeo heading into town**

The Fort Bend County Fair will be hosting a PRCA Rodeo Oct. 5 through Oct. 8 in the O.D.Tucker Arena. The show begins at 7 p.m. Oct. 5 through Oct. 7 and at 2 p.m. on Oct. 8.

Returning as stock contractor is Mo Betta Rodeo. Professional Cowboys and Cowgirls will be competing in seven breath-taking events — Bull Riding, Bareback Riding, Saddle Bronc Riding, Steer Wrestling, Calf Roping, Team Roping and Barrel Racing.

For details on the Rodeo Events visit fortbendcountyfair.com/events/rodeo.
GREATWOOD KIDS WORKING HARD AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD

By Sue Austin

Summer jobs like babysitting, mowing lawns and life guarding might be the obvious choice for most local teens, but a few of Greatwood’s brightest and most creative kids found their niche as young business entrepreneurs. From a mobile car washing service to homemade dog treats, they are living the American dream and Greatwood residents (and their four-legged friends) are reaping the benefits.

ANTHONY IANNELLO

Dickinson fourth grader Anthony Iannello is only nine years old but he washes cars like a pro!

Anthony’s idea for a mobile car washing business first revved up when he started helping his dad, Nino, wash cars at home. With assistance from his parents, he handed out flyers at Greatwood’s Food Truck Friday event and advertised on Facebook.

His business quickly gained momentum and requests started coming in for mobile car washes. Anthony’s mom, Connie, helps him learn how to invest his money wisely and save for college. When he isn’t washing cars, Anthony lives life in the fast lane.

He enjoys swimming, playing basketball and going to car shows with his dad. His favorite show is Keels and Wheels where he sees “really cool cars and sits in some really big boats!” Go, Anthony, go!

ALEXIS PREVETTE

Alexis Prevette, a 13-year-old seventh grader at Reading Junior High, went the whole nine yards when she established “Greatwood Curb Appeal” in May 2017. Alexis paints house numbers on curbs to help neighborhood visitors and first responders find addresses. After completing her first project, Alexis recalls asking her dad, John, to check out her handy work. He noticed something didn’t look quite right. Upon closer inspection, they discovered a bird had done a “number” on her curb! Aside from keeping a good sense of humor, being the CEO of her own business has taught her important skills like money management, marketing and customer service. Alexis is on cloud nine as she saves up for her future while enjoying the current success of “Greatwood Curb Appeal!”

MASON KENNEDY

Mason Kennedy, a 17-year-old George Ranch senior, originated his power washing and expansion joint replacement business a few years ago while he was in junior high. Inspired by his dad Brian, also business entrepreneur, Mason’s work in Greatwood is a clean sweep. He’s improving the look of the community while saving up for a car. He’s learned invaluable lessons like how to be flexible when weather conditions impact his business plans. He hopes to attend Texas A&M to study Construction Science and he dreams of starting a home building company. His experience as a young entrepreneur in Greatwood has gotten him off to an excellent start!

LAUREN THOMPSON

Lauren Thompson, a 16-year-old junior at George Ranch High School, recently cooked up an idea to start “Lauren’s Pop-Up Bakery.” She sells breads, cookies and bars once a month and during special holidays. She’s been baking for a few years and decided it was time to mix things up and whip her talents into some extra cash. When she was little, she would pretend to own her own hotels and restaurants and her family members would attend as customers. She now hopes to pursue a career in hospitality and tourism. Her new “Pop-Up” bakery looks like a recipe for success!

ETHAN AND HALEY POUNDERS

Siblings Ethan and Haley Pounders have also found creative ways to earn money in the community. Ethan, a 17-year-old junior at George Ranch High School, cleans up Greatwood by power washing driveways, sidewalks and patios. His parents, Colin and Brittany Pounders, loaned him the money to buy a commercial grade pressure washer when he was in ninth grade and the rest is history.

After paying his parents back, he purchased a Chevy Silverado truck, which he now uses to drive himself to power washing appointments. He plans on majoring in political science and minoring in business. “I’ve had the chance to meet a lot of people in my neighborhood that I wouldn’t have met before. I’m very thankful for their support. Starting a business has shown me how capitalism works and has taught me that great reward can come from hard work and consistency.”

Haley Pounders, his 11-year-old sister, recently joined in the family fun and stirred up a business of her own. Haley is a sixth grader at Polly Ryon and is the founder of “Haley’s Doggy Delights.” She sells dog treats, combining her passion for baking with her love for animals. Her dog, Libby, is always a willing taste tester. (It’s a “ruff” job but someone has to do it!) When Haley has leftovers, she sets up a booth and sells them at a local dog park. She is dogmatic in her approach to spending. She tithes ten percent to her church, puts some aside for her first car and spends a little on herself. Tails wag when she makes deliveries each week and her favorite part of the job is seeing the reactions of her canine customers. “They will do all kinds of tricks to get their doggy treats. Those always make me laugh!”

Greatwood residents, keep an eye on the names mentioned in this story. The next article you read about these kids might be in Forbes!

Contact information for Greatwood’s young entrepreneurs:

Anthony Iannello (mobile car washes): 832-816-0398
Alexis Prevette (Greatwood Curb Appeal): 832-571-5478
Mason Kennedy (power washing/expansion joints): 713-899-4494

Lauren Thompson (Lauren’s Pop-Up Bakery): laurenspopupbakery@gmail.com

Ethan and Haley Pounders (power washing and Doggie Delights): 713-703-9792
Stacy Bourgeois: Stepping into the Right Role for Her Community

Greatwood resident Stacy Bourgeois knows what it’s like to put herself in someone else’s shoes.

For years she’s been collecting new and gently used shoes from neighbors, friends and family to give to the homeless through her nonprofit Sole Loved. Her mission was inspired when she delivered clothes, toiletries, and snacks to the homeless through a nonprofit organization called Kylie’s Prayer.

During the deliveries, she noticed that the homeless were wearing flip flops, socks with no shoes, or even worse, they were barefoot.

In a moment meant for a Hallmark movie, she met a woman that touched her heart and fueled her passion.

Nearing the end of her delivery session with nothing left to give but a bottle of water and a couple of snacks, a barefoot homeless woman approached her.

“I looked down and asked about her shoe size. ‘Big’ she said...nothing more,” said Bourgeois. “I answered ‘Me too!’ and whipped off my shoes for her to try. It was a total Cinderella or God moment, whichever you prefer. They fit.

“It was in that moment that I decided to make shoes my mission. Forever.”

Bourgeois had found her calling. Step by step, she began searching for shoe donations.

She became lovingly known as the “shoe lady” by those who heard of her plight. Word spread quickly and bags of shoes appeared on her porch and messages from generous strangers wanting to donate shoes filled her inbox.

She received garbage bags and boxes full of shoes and her garage (and heart) were overflowing.

In May of 2016, after encouragement from her close friends and family, Bourgeois decided to give a name to her nonprofit baby and “Sole Loved” was born.

The organization had its modest beginnings with advertisements on Facebook, Instagram and a website.

Bourgeois reached out to anyone she could think of to donate shoes which were turned over to nonprofits like LCISD Common Threads and Friends of North Richmond to distribute to those in need.

Continued on page 22
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This July, Sole Loved officially became a 501c3 nonprofit organization which allows Bourgeois to accept corporate donations and apply for grants to purchase new shoes. Though she considers gently used shoes to be the “backbone” of Sole Loved, she feels everyone deserves a new pair of shoes.

Since its inception over a year ago, Sole Loved has participated in numerous shoe drives and fundraisers, collecting and distributing over 1,000 pairs of new and gently used shoes to local children, families and homeless friends in need.

Most recently, Bourgeois collected shoes at Greatwood’s second annual Fourth of July parade.

The Sole Loved organization also just completed its “One-for-One” bracelet campaign. For each bracelet sold, a new pair of shoes was purchased.

It was a huge success, with over 350 pairs of new shoes given to children in need. Bourgeois plans on doing more shoe campaigns soon but for the moment, she relies on the generosity of the community for donations.

She was excited to team up with the annual LCISD “Hope on the Brazos Back-to-School Fair” in July because as many as 1,200 families in need were expected to attend.

In particular, donations of boys and girls shoes, sizes 12—5, are requested. Volunteers are also needed to help the event run smoothly.

For more information about how you can get involved or donate shoes, please visit the Sole Loved website at http://mysoleloved.wixsite.com/gotshoes or contact Stacy Bourgeois at 281-844-7735.

Got news? Email it to saustin@fbherald.com.
Fort Bend Cares Grants over $194,000 to Area Non-Profits

Fort Bend Cares supporters have celebrated the awarding of grants to 31 nonprofits committed to improving the lives of disadvantaged children in Fort Bend County.

Through the generosity of event sponsors and other donors, Fort Bend Cares distributed over $176,000 to these hardworking community organizations.

Awards ranged from $2,000 to $10,560. An additional $28,000, $18,000 raised through Paddles Up at Fort Bend Cares annual Road Trip event and $10,000 generously matched by Fairmount Santrol, was given to Texana Center for an infant and special needs playground.

More than 40 Fort Bend Cares Grants Committee volunteers performed a thorough review of grant applications from 42 local nonprofits before making their recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

Reviews included site visits, meeting with staff, determining the number of children impacted, and identifying whether the organization meets a physical, emotional, or educational need.

“Fort Bend Cares supporters entrust us to evaluate grant applicants to ensure the money they have helped us raise has the biggest and most positive impact on disadvantaged children in Fort Bend county as possible,” said Grants Committee Chairperson Patty Ward.

“Those serving on the Grants Committee take this responsibility very seriously.”

Grant recipients this year include Rosenberg Richmond Helping Hands, to purchase milk during the summer months for families in financial crisis and new socks, underwear, and diapers for disadvantaged children in west Fort Bend county, and T.W. Davis YMCA, to support Camp Cloud for underprivileged children aged 5-17 where they learn to fish and canoe, shoot bows and arrows, use GPS devices, use metal detectors, follow cardinal directions, and learn water safety.

Fort Bend Cares Co-Founders, Dr. Bob McClendon and Jim Rice, awarded East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry (EFPBHNM) the Founders Grant. The ministry provides nutritious food items to families in temporary financial crises.

Fort Bend Cares raises funds for grants through a variety of events and individual donations.

Its primary fundraising event, “Road Trip,” is scheduled for Saturday, February 3, 2018 at Fluor in Sugar Land.

To sponsor this event or to volunteer with Fort Bend Cares, contact Executive Director, Angel Tapia, at angel@fortbendcares.org or 832-819-2005.

For a complete list of 2017 grant recipients and for more information on Fort Bend Cares visit www.fortbendcares.org.
COMING TO THE SMART FINANCIAL CENTRE AT SUGAR LAND

The 26th season on the American Experience

The Fort Bend Symphony and Chorus are designing the 26th season around the richness of the American experience, celebrating American composers of all ages and backgrounds.

This is the Chorus’s second season, following an exuberant reception in their inaugural year. The FBSO and FBSOC are building on the success of last year’s 25th anniversary season, where they played to near-capacity audiences.

The 2017-18 season is entitled “Of Liberty and Justice for All.”

This patriotic theme will carry through each performance, showcasing the majesty and diversity of our great nation.

The first concert, “America the Beautiful,” is Oct. 8, at 2 pm in the Stafford Centre.

It will feature works from American composers of many different backgrounds, including Jesse Ayer’s “Stirrin”, an inspiring new arrangement of spirituals for orchestra and chorus.

The audience experience will include both familiar patriotic themes from Copland, Bernstein and Stravinsky, combined with a broad selection of new works such as Tan Dun’s “Internet Symphony” that was commissioned for Google. The FBSO Chorus is an integral part of this entertaining performance that celebrates America, Americans and the rich diversity of our land.
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SEPTMBER PROGRAMS
Fort Bend County Libraries' University Branch Library, 14010 University Blvd in Sugar Land, on the UH campus, presents a variety of free children’s programs, adult computer classes, book clubs, and special programs for people of all ages each month. All programs are free and open to the public. For more information, call the University Branch Library (281-633-5100) or the library system's Public Information Office (281-633-4734).

SPECIAL EVENTS
Photo Contest: “Capture Fort Bend County”: Sept. 4-29; all FBCL locations.
The theme of the contest is “Capture Fort Bend County.” Amateur photographers of all skill levels are invited to enter original photographs that portray the culture, nature, people, and places of Fort Bend County - from hidden gems in our communities to favorite places and scenes around town.

Entries can be submitted at any of the libraries in the Fort Bend County library system beginning Sept. 4; the deadline for entries is Sept. 29, at 5 pm.

Prizes will be awarded for 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-place entries. Winners will be announced at a special reception and awards ceremony on Saturday, October 28, at George Memorial Library in Richmond. All photographs will be displayed in the Bohachevsky Gallery at George Memorial Library from Oct. 28 through Dec. 1.

Winning photographs will be determined by a panel of judges, who will make their determinations based on the following criteria: relationship to contest theme, composition, focus, lighting, emotional impact, and creativity. Photographs will be anonymous until after the judging is complete.

All entries must be original, unpublished, and the work of the person submitting it. Only one photo may be entered per person. Photographs should be printed on photo-quality paper, and must be no smaller than 8”x10” and no larger than 11”x17”. Photos may be in color or black-and-white.

FBCL reserves the right to print or display any entry to this contest indefinitely. Entries will be exhibited for the general public to see, so they should be appropriate for all ages to view. The photographer is responsible for obtaining verbal or written release for public use of the photo from all identifiable individuals in the photograph submitted; the photographer accepts all liability from the use of a photo where this release has not been obtained.

The contest is open to amateur photographers only. Pro-

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IRON CROSS

• Gymnastics
• Tumbling
• Dance
Continued from page 26

fessional photographers, who earn a living by selling their photographs, are not eligible to participate. There is no fee for entering the contest. Library employees and their immediate families are not eligible to win.

“Moving Mom & Dad”: Sept. 18, 7 pm, Meeting Room 1.
Liz McNeel, a senior real-estate specialist with Keller Williams Realty Metropolitan, will talk about common mistakes that adult children make with their aging parents’ care and living arrangements, and how to avoid making those mistakes. Learn about housing and care alternatives, accessibility considerations, supportive-care options, estate liquidation, and legal documentation.

“Culinary Book Club”: Sept. 20; 1:30 pm, Meeting Room 2.
This month, the theme is “Cupcake Wars.” Cooking enthusiasts of all ages and experience levels – from beginners to advanced – are invited to join. Those attending are welcome to bring their own cookbooks and recipes, or they may browse the library’s collection of cookbooks. Share tips, get ideas, and enjoy the camaraderie of other individuals who have an interest in cooking and good cuisine! Meets on the third Wednesday of every month; different cooking genres are explored each month.

“Creativity with Photos”: Sept. 23, 2 pm, Meeting Room 1.
Members of the Fort Bend Photography Club will share creative ideas for incorporating photos into fun arts and crafts projects. Those attending the program will also hear about macro photography (extreme close-up photography).

“Introduction to Amazon Marketplace”: Sept. 27, 2:00 pm, Computer Lab.
Amazon Marketplace is an e-commerce platform owned and operated by Amazon that enables third-party sellers to sell fixed-price new or used items alongside Amazon’s regular offerings on their website for a percentage of the sale. In this class, learn how to set up an online store with Amazon Marketplace, how to list products, and how to handle shipping. Customer feedback and other important issues will also be discussed. Registration required.

BOOK CLUB: Sept. 11, 7 pm, Conference Room 1.
The book to be discussed is The Aviator’s Wife, written by Melanie Benjamin. New members invited to attend!

YOUNG ADULT PROGRAMS

“Young Adult Advisory Council”: Sept. 14, 5 pm, Conference Room 1.
Teens in grades 9-12 who are interested in an exciting new leadership opportunity and volunteer-service hours are invited to attend. 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. Meets on the 2nd Thursday of every month.

“YA Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)”: Sept. 21, 5 pm, Meeting Room 2.
In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, discover fun ways to get ready for Halloween and Dia de los Muertos! In this high-tech craft session for teens entering grades 9-12, learn how to make felt sugar skulls with working LED eyes! Registration required. Materials for this program are made possible by the generous support of the Friends of the University Branch Library.

Research Skills Series: Thursdays, 2pm, Computer Lab
This series will help students learn how to identify authoritative resources from the Internet, access journal articles from the library’s databases, and create bibliographies and citations for their research papers. The classes are free, and participants may attend individual sessions or the whole series. Registrations required.

Internet Resources: Sept. 14; Databases: Sept. 21; APA-Style Citations: Sept. 28
CHILDREN’S PROGRAMS

Mother Goose Time - Mondays at 10:30 am - provides caregiver/infant multisensory circle-time activities – including simple sign language, folksongs and lullabies, and finger plays – that are especially designed to stimulate babies’ social, emotional, and physical development through rhythm and music. Mother Goose Time is intended for infants from age 1 month to 12 months. This activity will NOT take place on September 4; the library will be closed for the holiday.

Toddler Time - Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10:30 am - offers caregiver/child activities, stories and songs for older babies, from 12 to 36 months of age.

Preschool Story Time - Thursdays at 10:30 am - presents stories, movies, and age-appropriate craft activities for children 3 to 6 years of age.

Pajama Night Story Time - Tuesdays at 7 pm - gives families an evening option for some activities presented during the day time.

Rise & Shine Family Story Time - Saturdays at 10:30 am. Families with children of all ages are invited to come and enjoy stories, movies, and crafts together.

Kinder Korner - Tuesdays at 4 pm - is a time for kindergartners to enjoy stories, movies, crafts, and other activities.

After-School Breaks - 2nd and 4th Wednesday beginning at 4 pm. Crafts, movies, stories, and more for school-aged children in grades 1 through 3. The schedule for September is as follows:

• September 13 - LEGO® Day. Children will utilize S.T.E.A.M. skills by playing and building with their favorite construction toy.
• September 27 - If You Give an Author a Party! Children will celebrate Laura Lumeroff and her contributions to children’s literature. Enjoy stories from Lumeroff’s popular “If You Give…” series, along with a snack.

Creative Connection - 1st and 3rd Saturday at 2:30 pm. Activities for youth in grades 4 through 8. Materials for these programs were made possible by the generous support of the Friends of the University Branch Library. The schedule for September is as follows:

• September 2 - Game Day. Enjoy a variety of Wii™, Play-Station®, and board games.
• September 16 - Crazy Cosmic Creations. Students will employ S.T.E.A.M. skills in a variety of astronomy-based activities. Prizes will be awarded to those deemed to be the best astronaut of the day.

SPECIAL FAMILY EVENT

“Free-Play LEGO® Day”: Sept. 23, 2:30-3:30 pm, Meeting Room 2. Families with children of all ages are invited to explore their creativity with LEGO building blocks. Different-sized LEGO pieces will be provided for the varying ages in attendance.

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GEORGE RANCH HIGH SCHOOL
Welcome Back Longhorns
By Brenda Thompson

PTO Board Members For The 2017-2018 School Year
Please welcome the incoming PTO Board Members for the 2017-2018 School Year:

Thank you for stepping up and volunteering your time to continue to serve the GRHS teachers, students and staff.

President – Sofia Sheikh, Membership-Carrie Trevino, Treasurer, Maria Metoyer, Secretary - Lisa Morrison, Volunteer Coordinator – Cindy Wurzburger, Hospitality - Deatra Matthews, Publicity/Website - Brenda Thompson and Email Newsletter Editor - Reem Khayal.

Back To School Luncheon A Success
Many thanks to all the parents who helped make our Back-To-School Luncheon for teachers and staff a success by providing desserts and gift cards for the drawing! A huge thank you also to Russo’s NY Pizzeria in Greatwood for catering the event. It was a great way to kick off the new school year!

Join The George Ranch PTO Today - Your Support Matters
In 2016-2017, the GRHS PTO was able to provide nearly $5,000 to teachers and staff for their wish list needs to help support their instruction in the classroom. You can help when you support your student’s school and join the PTO!

Why join the GRHS PTO?
- Receive communication about campus and PTO activities by email blast
- Helps with startup funding for student clubs
- Helps provide for Teacher/Staff events - Special meals or wish list requests to express our gratitude
- Learn about the many volunteer opportunities
- Make a difference in a student’s life
- Promote and support local businesses
- Support your school!

All George Ranch families and teachers are invited to join and become active members of the PTO. Join and pay by credit card all at one time on our website. You may also pay by check.

Visit Our Website For Up To Date Information
Visit our website to contact Carrie Trevino, Membership Chairperson all at one time on our website. You may also pay by check. Visit our website to contact Carrie Trevino, Membership Chairperson for more details on how to pay by check.

Visit Our Website For Up To Date Information
You will receive an email asking you to confirm your account. Simply click on the link to confirm your account log in information and you’ll be able to explore the new system. You will LOVE it and all of its amenities!

Campbell is going paperless
Check out our new Campbell PTO website and communication site. You don’t have to be a PTO member to view the site, but membership will give you a lot of additional benefits that are only available once you log into the system with your personal PTO account. Register for your account at www.campbellpto.org. You will receive an email asking you to confirm your account.

Important Dates To Remember

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<th>Dates</th>
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<td>9/4/2017</td>
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<td>9/11/2017</td>
<td>Parent Orientation Grades 1-5</td>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
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<td>9/11/2017</td>
<td>Back To School Luncheon</td>
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<td>9/12/2017</td>
<td>PTO Board Meeting</td>
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Campbell is going paperless

Welcome Back Longhorns

By Brenda Thompson

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PTO Board Message
Welcome Back to School! We are SO excited to have our dolphin families back and ready for a fantastic year! The beginning of any new adventure- in our case a new school year- can be both exciting and a little intimidating. It takes a few weeks for everyone to adjust and settle into the new routine. Hang in there these first few weeks and please reach out if the school can do anything to help smooth the transition.

Announcements
Beginning of Year Forms- Don’t forget to complete your student’s required LCISD Beginning of Year Forms! Forms must be completed online through the Skyward Family Access Center. All forms are due no later than September 15.

School Pictures: Students will have their yearbook picture taken on Thursday, September 14th, during school hours. Regular school uniform dress code is required on this day.

Parent Night: Parents (no students) are invited to join us on Tuesday, September 19th, 6:00-7:30 pm, for Parent Night. Parents will meet in the gym for a few announcements and then go to their student’s classrooms to meet and discuss the upcoming school year with the teachers.

Volunteers: The PTO needs you! We are a 100% volunteer organization and need many helping hands to accomplish all of the fun events we have planned for our kids. There are so many different opportunities to get involved, most with little time commitment, but all with big appreciation!

Check out our website at www.dickinsonpto.com for a listing of all volunteer opportunities.

Spirit Wear: Did you miss your chance to purchase our Spirit Wear shirts during Meet the Teacher? No problem! Spirit Wear can be purchased year-round on the Dickinson PTO website. Grab a shirt for you and your kiddo! Students are allowed to wear Spirit Wear shirts and Classroom shirts every Friday!

Join PTO: Dickinson Elementary PTO exists to bring parents and teachers together With our powers combined, we work to make school a great place for all students. Each year when you support PTO financially, we are able to enrich classrooms, bring educational resources to the school and help fund projects to better the campus. Joining does not mean you are required to volunteer or attend meetings, although we would love for you to do both!

Trunk or Treat: We’re still looking for help on the Trunk or Treat Planning Committee. We will need help in planning and execution of the event. The event is Saturday October 28th, 3:00-6:00 pm. Check our website for event updates and contact president@dickinsonpto.com if interested in helping out.

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Greatwood Gators attack at local swim meet

The Greatwood Gators swim team kicked off their 25th season with wins against the Katy Grand Lakes Gators on June 3, Nottingham Country on June 10 and Cross Creek Krakens on June 17, where Gracie Liang set a Gators record in the 50 Back. Led by head coaches Andrew Greene and Evan Murray, the Gators are members of the West Houston Aquatics League.

Week 1: Gators of the Week
Mary Kate Krupa, Ryan Ford, Wren Philips, Adley Ewers, Vivan Krupa, Olivia Stelling, Jacob Petmecky, Brayden Tibbetts, Lindsey LeGrand, Michel Alkan, Justin Lai, Alex Vesely, Kira Rollinson, Carson Smith, Megan Chen and Lucas Rodrigues. Week 1 “Gators of the Meet” were Peyton Tibbetts, Tripp Theirl, Braden Tibbetts, Megan LeGrand, Maddox Costa, Lily Harriss, Tori Ketrick, Danny Hutzley, Tori Ketrick, Danny Hutzley, Allison Schoditsch, Clay Crawford, Jacob Liang and Leann Anderson.

Week 2: Gators of the Week
were Ashley Fuller, Kampbell Muska, Case Ewers, Sawyer Ford, Reagan Meuth, Caylin Smith, Matias Mandolesi, Emilio Armijo, Emily Ford, Mikayla Broussard, AJ Newton, Zach Dieu, Kelly Powell, John Mitchell, Mari Liang and Jed Moore. Week 2 “Gators of the Meet” were Logan Ford, Collette Harrell, Emerson Moore, Rowan Moore, Addison Bussey, Connor Newton, Alyssa Willis, Carson Smith, Madison Costa, Austin Stubbs, Riley Murray and David Kvinta.
Greatwood Geysers race to the finish beating Sweetwater and New Territory

On June 26 the Greatwood Geysers swim team lapped their opponents to score a win and wipe out the Sweetwater Surfers. On July 3 they blasted through the New Territory Torpedoes for another win this season.

The Greatwood Geysers are a volunteer organization serving the Greatwood community but they do more than teach kids to swim. They encourage a love of the sport and instill teamwork in and out of the pool. They recently held a pizza party fundraiser in support of Geysers swimmer and third grader Andrew Ross who is fighting cancer. The fundraiser earned over $3,000 and demonstrates how the Greatwood Geysers back up their swimmers and families in times of need.

Photo 1 Caption:
Girls six and under: Chloe Poss, Tessa Clague, Ava Carpenter, Hailey Blocker, Emma Verhalen, Molly Tanner, Paige Echols, Tilla Clague, Berlyn Snyder, Presley Cipolla, Ella Hamilton, Lucy Campbell, Aarna Shukla.

Photo 2 Caption:

Photo 3 Caption:
Girls 13 and 14: Alison Brown, Marisa Mueller, Savannah Flores, Brooke Byers, Emma Flor, Elyssa Giries, Nina Reid, Mia Edwards, Morgy Rae Sheridan, Amanda Bowen, Kate Culpepper, Maddie Fridge, Jessica Paquette.

Photo 4 Caption:
Grace, David, Kristi, Abby and Andrew Ross exude gratitude and joy for the support they have received from the Greatwood Geysers.

Photo 5 Caption:
Swimming for the Geysers is a family affair for Myatt Richards, Stacey Richards and Carter Richards.

Photo 6 Caption:
Geysers’ Kate Culpepper and Maddie Fridge have important matters to discuss.

Photo 7:
Teagan Fraser is on the block and ready to rock!

PHOTOS LEFT PAGE:

Photo 1 Caption:
Buddies Tripp Thiel and Grant Redding adore swimming with the Gators.

Photo 2 Caption:
Gators Kampbell Muska, Kenley Goodwin and Adley Ewers love to swim!

Photo 3 Caption:
Swimmers Jessica Petmecky, Kirsten Muska, Avery Penix, Emerson Chester, Vivian Krupa, Meagan LeGrand get ready to jump into another great race.

Photo 4 Caption:
Coaches Andrew Greene and David Kvinta plan their winning strategies.

Photo 5 Caption:
Black LeGrand and Elyse and Landon Penix proudly display their “Gator of the Week” towels.

Photo 6 Caption:
Coach Evan Murray cheers on swimmers Kinley Yanta, Avery Webb and Suzie Cook.

Photo 7 Caption:
Meagan LeGrand and Avery Penix celebrate a first place ribbon.

Photo 8 Caption:
Swimmer Kampbell Muska is supported by Volunteer Coach Caroline Harriss.
The Golden Brick Road to Clayton Oaks

By MARQUITA GRIFFIN

If you look hard enough, if you let your imagination free, you will undoubtedly see the golden brick road leading to the front doors of Clayton Oaks, an inviting senior assisted living community in Richmond.

“At Clayton Oaks, life is not stagnant,” said Jessica Alaniz, the director of sales and marketing.

The assisted living community made clear recently with its unique production of The Wizard of Oz, a timeless story which included the involvement of 10 Clayton Oak seniors.

These active seniors read the play in character parts and Clayton Oaks staff members sang two musical selections from the popular play while a guest pianist played musical themes selections during each change of scene.

And just like any production, much work was poured into this play.

Vibrant Life, Director Diane Manieri, along with her assistant Stesha Chandler, held play practices once a week for four months in preparation for the production.

Recruited to help with the show was volunteer Deen Jones from the Del Webb community, who played the piano as well as the scarecrow in the play.

The costumes for the show — oh yes, these seniors went all out — were created by Manieri and family members, and Mary Mulvihill from Sugar Land Art Center drew the backdrop design which was then painted by Mulvihill, Manieri, Chandler and resident Vernele Bachenheimer.

Clayton Oaks driver Cleveland Brown, assisted with the set construction and Clayton Oaks owner Kipp Dornhorst acquired the sound system.

“And a beautiful reception of goodies was provided by our creative Chef Marwan and his team,” Alaniz added.

All in all, the Wizard of Oz production was more than a play; it is a testament to the quality of life seniors have at Clayton Oaks — while the road to Oz may be known as the famous yellow brick one, the road to Clayton Oaks is a golden one.

Clayton Oaks is dedicated to keeping residents engaged, active and enjoying life in their Golden Years, Alaniz said.

“It was long-term personal commitment that each resident made to play the role they were assigned,” Manieri said. “Participating in this play engaged each one of them in a purposeful, creative and adventurous activity.

“Their experience deepened the relationships interpersonally with their fellow cast members as well as their families. The message of play itself of good overcomes evil and friendship support that overcomes all obstacles was a message everyone took with them.”

Building community, sustaining joy

Clayton Oaks is where seniors can live and enjoy their Golden Years. This community is not about the ending of a book, Alaniz stressed, but rather the beginning of a special and well-deserved chapter for these men and women.

And this is why activities, like The Wizard of Oz production, are so important to the Clayton Oaks family.

“It builds a sense of community camaraderie and joy among all who live and work in the community,” Manieri said.

Clayton Oaks does not limit itself to plays, though. The facility hosts the Chicken Food Dominoes Marathon, physical fitness and community outings to the University Branch Library in Sugar Library were residents participate in the Culinary Club.

“An engaging atmosphere which includes learning new information as well as playing new games and having new experiences has been proven to be the No.1 way to improve memory and overall brain function,” Manieri stressed.

Thirty-seven percent of the facility is dedicated to a common area that features activities like art classes, sewing groups, putt-putt and offers the opportunity for residents to enjoy tea and movies.

Resident Elaine Falleroni, who played Dorothy from The Wizard of Oz, said she enjoys all of these activities and loves the food.

Falleroni added that she specifically loves the dog park because she has a dog named “Molly.”

“The staff is friendly and I like the design of the whole community,” she added.

Offering Individualized Care

Alaniz said every member of the Clayton Oaks family is focused on giving residents a reason to wake every morning, excited about what the day will bring.

“This is their home, so activities should be worked around their likes,” Alaniz said.

Clayton Oaks offers a neighborhood of private studios designed to create a peaceful environment and Alaniz said residents enjoy life in an atmosphere of individualized support that fosters creativity, independence and fulfillment.

And in Clayton Oak’s Memory Care Community, everyone rallies to offers residents individualized support.

Resident Sally Cullom can testify that.

Cullom had one birthday wish last year, something she savored in her childhood, and that was to roller skate like she did when she was a little girl. All she wanted was to slip into a pair of skates one more time.

Her wish was granted.

With two Clayton Oaks nurses beside her and her walker in front, Cullom and her friends from the assisted living facility skated the day away while she celebrated her 93rd birthday.

“We aren’t corporate owned, and that’s important to know,” Alaniz said. “Our owner, Kip, has his own family member in an assisted living home, so we’re looking through the family members’ eyes, not through a corporate eye.”

Writer Averil Gleason contributed to this story.

Contact Clayton Oaks Living NOW!

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