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# FULSHEAR LIVING

monthly™

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# Downtown Fulshear gears up to host crowd favorite, 'Holly Jolly Christmas'

By Valerie Sweeten

Delivering a memorable Christmas event has become Fulshear's specialty with a huge community effort from the Fulshear Area Chamber of Commerce and City of Fulshear.

Within three years, A Holly Jolly Christmas has evolved into a crowd favorite attracting people from as far away as The Woodlands to be part of it. Maybe it's the live Nativity, fake snow, professional Santa, food trucks and the walking parade of lights, but attendance has grown from 1,000 visitors to a whopping 3,500 attendees.

This year's event promises to deliver yet another unforgettable experience.

Originally set for Saturday, Dec. 3, in downtown Fulshear, the holiday extravaganza was rescheduled for Saturday, Dec. 17, due to the possibility of inclement weather.

Attendees should be ready for an ice skating rink, the Frozen sisters-Anna & Elsa, Santa, a live Nativity and all the extras including a Children's area, vendor booths, the gorgeous



Local Scouts will take part in the walking parade.

walking parade (entry is free) as well as live music by Thrive Church and White Stone Band. A Holly Jolly Christmas will begin promptly at 5:30 p.m.

Seeing the progress of not only the city's growth, but overall community-wide events such as St. Patrick's Day Parade, Fourth of July celebration and A Holly Jolly Christmas is inspiring to Don McCoy, executive director of the Fulshear Area Chamber of Commerce.

The FACC enjoys their active role in these events where the goal is always to improve and impress. It begins with a different theme and builds from there. This year's title sponsor is First Choice Emergency Room.

"Our events are really fun," said McCoy, who has experience in stage production and events. "We want to have more spectacular kinds of events. Our last Fourth of July was unbelievable. One of the hardest things to do is to try and do as good if not better each time."

Continuing with that small-town feel is an added bonus, McCoy said.

"We hope it's an exciting time. We put a lot of effort and work into pulling things together behind the scenes. We try to create a family-friendly environment. People will drive miles for a good event. Word has spread. We try to create a Class A



Old Saint Nick himself will be front and center when the Fulshear community celebrates a 'Holly Jolly Christmas.'

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Don McCoy, executive director of the Fulshear Area Chamber of Commerce, will be on hand to coordinate the festivities during the celebration.

caliber event in a small-town environment. It's so gratifying to give back. We've got to put our best foot forward," he added.

Rachel Durham, FACC member and realtor for Keller Williams Premier, explained that A Holly Jolly Christmas exudes the spirit of the sea-



Youngsters will enjoy the special children's area, featuring all kinds of holiday goodies.

son and she looks forward to volunteering every year at all Chamber events.

"Our Christmas event is very successful," said Durham. "Everyone is so excited for the holidays. You can visit with your neighbor and have a good time. It brings the community together."

Temporary road closures

for the event are as follows: All lanes of FM 359 will be closed between Front Street and Second Street between 11 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 17 and 1 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 18. Front Street will be closed between Wilson Street and Harris Street for the duration of the event.

For information, call the

Fulshear Area Chamber of Commerce at 832-600-3221 or e-mail [anorvell@fulshearareachamber.com](mailto:anorvell@fulshearareachamber.com).

In addition, detour routes and parking information can be found on the City of Fulshear website at [www.fulsheartexas.gov](http://www.fulsheartexas.gov).



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# Child Advocates recognizes volunteers

Shirley Brown and Mary Allen were recognized last month at the Child Advocates of Fort Bend's Case Closing Celebration for serving as CASA Volunteers to seven children who had been in the foster care system for 11 years, the second longest case in Child Advocates of Fort Bend's 25 year history serving children.

Allen stated that her husband would often comment during those years, "You may not know today what impact you are making, but be certain that as these children grow up and move on, they will remember you and the difference you made in their lives. It might have been one thing ... or many, but these children would not

be where they are today if not for you serving as their CASA Volunteer."

Brown added, "When I retired from teaching, I wanted to stay involved with children so I became a CASA Volunteer. Little did I know that I would be involved in these children's lives for so many years. Mary and I have been there with them through their challenges and celebrating their triumphs. My work as a CASA Volunteer has been one of the most rewarding experiences I have had."

Darling Homes hosted the dinner reception in one of its Avalon at Riverstone model homes. The Case Closing Celebrations are



Child Advocates of Fort Bend recognized CASA volunteers whose cases closed at a Case Closing Celebration held at the Darling Model home in Avalon at Riverstone. Pictured from left are Shirley Brown, Allison Edwards and Mary Allen. Brown and Allen were recognized at the event for serving as CASA Volunteers to seven children who had been in the foster care system for 11 years, the second longest case in Child Advocates of Fort Bend's 25 year history of serving children. They were introduced by former Child Advocates of Fort Bend CASA Program Director Allison Edwards

held each Spring and Fall to recognize CASA volunteers whose cases closed during that period.

Other CASA Volunteers who were honored at the event included Karen Adams, Michelle Atkinson, Charlyn Auzenne, Keith Bauman, Joan Davidson, Lou Ann Davis, Ginny Ellsworth, Vanessa Forse, Kasaundra Hall, Pat Hogue, Karen Jordin, Denise Kellogg, Casey Kipp, Rhonda Kuykendall, Melanie Mai, Erika McKay, Letha Hensley, Sue Lockwood, Sandra Pradia, Susana Salazar, Lee Semones, Pat Somers, Jackie Townsend, Beth Ann Wanosik and Charley Weiss.

Child Advocates of Fort Bend is a non-profit agency that has been making a difference in the lives of abused and neglected children for 25 years. Its mission is to provide a voice, heal the hurt, and break

the cycle of child abuse in Fort Bend County. Through its Court Appointed Special Advocates Program (CASATM), Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) and more than 200 trained community volunteer advocates, Child Advocates of Fort Bend improves the lives of more than 400 children each month and has served more than 14,000 children since opening its doors in 1991.

Volunteers are needed to help in the agency's Children's Advocacy Center and in the Court Appointed Special Advocates Program. The next Volunteer Training class begins on Jan. 30, 2017.

For more information on Child Advocates of Fort Bend or to become a volunteer, go to [www.cafb.org](http://www.cafb.org) or contact Lauren Jordin at [ljordin@cafb.org](mailto:ljordin@cafb.org) or 281-344-5258.

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## Fort Bend Junior Service League accepting scholarship applications

The Fort Bend Junior Service League (FBJS�) is offering two scholarship programs to assist women in Fort Bend County who desire to further their education. The two scholarships are:

- The FBJS� Volunteer Scholarship – The FBJS� Volunteer Scholarship applicant must be an outstanding Fort Bend female high school senior who has completed at least 100 hours of high school community service, has a minimum GPA of 2.5 and desires to pursue higher education in the 2017-2018 school year.
- The FBJS� New Beginnings Scholarship – The FBJS� New Beginnings Scholarship applicant must be a Fort Bend woman who has a specific degree or career advancement goal in mind and who has had a significant break in her education following high school graduation, completion of her GED, or last full-time semester at an accredited college, vocational school or university.

The FBJS� awards up to four Volunteer Scholarships at a value of \$1,000 each and up to one New Beginnings Scholarship will be awarded at a value of \$2,000. Qualified schol-



Pictured from left are recent scholarships winners and FBJS� members: Michelle Beeson, BRC member; Kavita Self, BRC member; Laura Taylor, President-Elect; Dana Clement, President; Courtney Kilfoy, Scholarship recipient; Karen Young, Scholarship recipient; Avanthika Mahendrababu, Scholarship recipient; Markisha Venzant-Sampson, BRC member; Kalpana Vaidya, Scholarship recipient; Becky Zachary, BRC member; Audra O'Neal, BRC member.

arship applicants can learn more about these programs and obtain a copy of the application by visiting FBJS�'s website at [www.fbjsl.org/scholarship-programs](http://www.fbjsl.org/scholarship-programs).

All applications and supporting documents must be sent via email to [brccom@fbjsl.com](mailto:brccom@fbjsl.com). The deadline to submit applications is Feb. 1, 2017.

The Fort Bend Junior Service League is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization of women committed to promoting volunteerism, to developing the potential of women and to improving the Fort Bend County community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.

## Lt. Majors appointed Pct. 2 constable

The Fort Bend County Commissioners Court recently appointed Lieutenant Gary Majors as Constable, Precinct 2, for the remaining term of office previously held by recently-deceased Constable Ruben Davis.

Constable Majors has been a deputy in the Fort Bend County Precinct 2 Constable's Office for 22 years, working his way up through the ranks of Corporal, Sergeant and Lieutenant. Constable Majors is married to Dawn, his wife of 12 years, and they have a daughter, Gabrielle. He and his family reside in Missouri City.

"Constable Majors is both qualified and experienced. He worked with Ruben Davis for twenty years. He will do a great job as Precinct 2 Constable," said Judge Hebert.



Fort Bend County Judge Bob Hebert swears in newly-appointed Pct. 2 Constable Gary Majors.

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## Local poet wins prestigious awards

Fort Bend County poet Terry Jude Miller recently won the prestigious 2016 Mahan Award for his poem, "How It's Done", and the equally distinguished "Winklebleck Choice Award" for his poem, "Perfect Retort."

These contests are sponsored by two Texas poets, Budd Powell Mahan and Barbara Blanks, as a part of the Poetry Society of Texas annual poetry competition.

Miller is a retired professor of digital marketing and a former fellow of Kaplan University. His books of poetry are titled "The Day I Killed Superman", "What If I Find Only Moonlight", and "The Butterfly Canonical." Miller is widely anthologized in many Texas, national and international poetry journals. He is the recipient of many Poetry Society of Texas poetry awards, a Juried Poet for the 2011 & 2012 Houston Poetry Festivals and winner of the Global Peace Poem competition of the 2012 Tyler Peace Festival.

Miller's work has been published in scores of publications, including anthologies of the Austin International Poetry Festival and the Rio Grande Valley International Poetry Festival, the Texas Poetry Calendar, Harbinger Asylum, Postcard Poems and Prose Magazine, Everyday Poets, the University of Houston's Bayou Review, Ancient Paths, Orbis, Stepping Stones Magazine, Furnace Review, Shine Journal, Blue



Richmond resident Terry Miller.

Skies Poetry, Survivor's Review, Live Oak Review, Lamplighter Review, Bijou Poetry Review, Chaffey Review, Foundling Review, Houston Literary Review, Boston Literary Magazine, the Edison Literary Review, and the Birmingham Arts Journal.

Miller's books of poetry, are titled: "The Day I Killed Superman", "What If I Find Only Moonlight?" and "The Butterfly Canonical" and can be purchased at [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com) and [amazon.com](http://amazon.com). He is a member of the Academy of American Poets, the Poetry Society of Texas, the Gulf Coast Poets Society, and Poets Northwest (Houston). He is the creator of the Texas Poets Podcast. Terry is a retired professor of eMarketing and held an Innovation Fellowship at Kaplan University.

A resident of Richmond, Miller and his wife, Gloria, live in Pecan Grove. Miller's children are Amber Showalter, a licensed psychology therapist in Denton, and Heather Spahr, a teacher for Katy ISD. More information about Miller is available at [www.PoetTerryMiller.com](http://www.PoetTerryMiller.com).

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# 24-Hour Fitness celebrates opening of club in growing Firethorne community

24 Hour Fitness is joining the flourishing Firethorne community with the new 40-acre Shops at Katy Reserve, located at 1719 Spring Green Boulevard.

Boasting a robust retail, food and entertainment lineup, the new club adds a much-desired fitness lifestyle component to the shopping complex.

A grand opening event was held on Saturday, Dec. 3, which featured club tours, prize drawings, group training demonstrations, innovative group exercise studio classes and more.

The new club is one-part of the fitness and lifestyle-minded shopping mall, which will also offer a 17,000-square-foot green space, furthering Firethorne's already active commitment to fitness. The Firethorne community continues to grow with 1,000 new homes projected to close in the next year, making the need for fitness options imperative.

"Firethorne residents place high-value on community and fitness in their daily lives and we are thrilled



The new club is one-part of the fitness and lifestyle-minded shopping mall, which will also offer a 17,000-square-foot green space.

to offer both at our new club," said Brent Hanson, general manager. "The club is just one part of leading a healthy lifestyle. Our talented fitness professionals provide the inspiration and tools that will help members achieve their fitness goals both inside and outside of our club."

The new, 37,000+ square foot club features a modern design and open-floor plan. Amenities include:

- Cardio, strength and functional training equipment
- Large rooms for a full schedule of Cycle and Group X® classes, including new formats including POP Pilates, Treat While You Train™ and bootybarre®
- The Turf Zone: a trainer-led 30-minute 10-station high energy circuit that changes daily
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# Gus George Law Enforcement Academy Honors recent graduates of 33rd class

The 10 graduates of the 33rd Class of the Gus George Law Enforcement Academy were honored during graduation ceremonies held Nov. 9 at the academy. More than 200 people attended the event.

The class began March 16 and concluded with the Nov. 9 graduation.

The 10 cadets who successfully completed the program received 784 hours of training. Subjects included the Penal Code, Arrest Search and Seizure, Code of Criminal Procedure, Police Driving, Firearms Training, Traffic Stops, Criminal Investigations and much more.

The culmination of their



The 32nd Class of the Gus George Law Enforcement Academy graduated Nov. 9. Pictured from left are members of the class, along with their instructors and other sheriff's office personnel: (front row) Rubens D'Empaire, Stephanie Garcia, James Fowler, Marissa Camacho and Timothy Zavala; (back row) Sgt. Carlos Castillo, Major Chad Norvell, Capt. James Burger, Christopher Owens, William Kelly, Daniel Schleppey, Thomas Hibbs, Darius Taylor, Saul Hernandez, Lt. Jim Pokluda, Sgt. Judy Cervenka, Sgt. Casey Schmidt and Sheriff Troy E. Nehls.

training was two weeks of scenario-based training using simunitions (pistols with

live paint rounds), where the cadets were put in situations and they have to react and make decisions based on their knowledge and training from the academy.

Captain James Burger, director of the academy, was the emcee for the graduation ceremonies.

Daniel Schleppey was the Ac-

ademic Achievement Award winner and also the winner in Precision Driving. Chris Owens was the Physical Fitness Award winner of the class and Thomas Hibbs claimed the "David Braunholz Top Gun" Award. The award is named for the late Sheriff's Office Deputy David Braunholz, who died in the line of duty.

Class members include: Rubens D'Empaire, Stephanie Garcia, James Fowler, Marissa Camacho, Timothy Zavala, Christopher Owens, Daniel Schleppey, Thomas Hibbs, Darius Taylor, William Kelly and Saul Hernandez.

Staff members at the academy include Academy Director James Burger, Assistant Academy Director Lt. James Pokluda, Sgt. Carlos Castillo, Sgt. Judy Cervenka and Sgt. Casey Schmidt. Academy support staff members include Dottie Allen-Zumwalt and Cyndi Villemaire.

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## Sheriff's Association awards scholarships

Melissa B. Ridling, center, daughter of Sgt. Stephan Ridling, left, receives a Sheriff's Association of Texas Scholarship for \$500 from Fort Bend County Sheriff Troy Nehls, right. Police officer Elizabeth Scardino Ridling (not pictured) also received \$500 scholarship. Melissa is a Nursing major at Stephen F. Austin State University.

# Three nurses from Houston Methodist Sugar Land honored with Gold Awards

Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital nurses Allison Damron, MSN, RN, ACNP-BC, Elizabeth Gonzales, DNP, RN, ACNP-BC, CCRN, and Amy Sebastian-Deutsch, DNP, RN, CNS, AOCNS, have been named Gold Award winners in the 12th Annual Good Samaritan Foundation's Excellence in Nursing Awards.

Damron was honored in the category of Clinical Practice in a Small Hospital. Inspired to become a nurse by encouragement from her mother, she was nominated by her director after working to ensure that a patient's husband was able to receive medical care and remain by his dying wife's side.

"To me, that felt simple and just part of my job," Damron said. "As nurse practitioners, we have a really big impact on families and patients every single day even if it's in small ways that may we not notice."

Gonzales was nominated in the category of Nursing Administration and Leadership. Her colleagues recognized her not only for her dedication to the administrative aspect of her role and to the leadership and development of her team members, but also for her passion for going above and beyond to develop relationships with patients and families.

"I'm still a clinician at heart," she said. "I love taking care of patients. Yet, I understand and appreciate the administrative role; I feel that we need to have very strong leadership in

the health care arena and the only way to do that is to dive in and take on some of the issues that are in health care today."

Sebastian-Deutsch was awarded in the category of Non-Hospital Based Care. Honored for her expertise and her passion to make a difference for oncology patients, she seizes the opportunity to be a mentor to other nurses and to create new tools to share her knowledge with patients.

"I am humbled to receive an award for doing something I am so passionate about," she said. "God has been very good to me in allowing me to couple my clinical expertise with my administrative interests."

"I want to congratulate each of these excellent nurses," said Janet Leatherwood, chief nursing officer. "These women exemplify the quality care and expertise that Houston Methodist Sugar Land is known for, and they are incredibly deserving of this recognition and appreciation."

The Good Samaritan Foundation Excellence in Nursing Awards recognizes nurse leaders offering extraordinary and compassionate care and service, who are nominated by their peers for their passion, leadership, mentorship and service to the Houston community. The Good Samaritan Foundation encourages nursing excellence through a variety of supported programs from education to practice.



## GoodSamaritanAwards.com

Pictured from left, Gold Award winners Allison Damron, MSN, RN, ACNP-BC, Elizabeth Gonzales, DNP, RN, ACNP-BC, CCRN, and Amy Sebastian-Deutsch, DNP, RN, CNS, AOCNS.

For more information about Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital, visit [houstonmethodist.org/sugarland](http://houstonmethodist.org/sugarland) or call 281.274.7500

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# Holiday Home Tour set for Dec. 9-10

## Benefitting 25th Annual Child Advocates of Fort Bend

Tickets to the 25th Child Advocates of Fort Bend Christmas Home Tour, scheduled for Dec. 9-10, are now available online at [www.cafb.org](http://www.cafb.org) and at the Sienna Plantation HomeFinder Center, Riverstone Information Center and Fort Bend County Randall stores. Tickets are \$25. There is no better way to get into the holiday spirit than attending the Tour which has become a Fort Bend holiday tradition.

The 2016 Tour will feature five distinctive homes in Sugar Creek, Telfair, Riverstone and the Belknap Brookside neighborhood beautifully decorated for the holidays with the help of professional decorators and designers. This is the first time homes in Telfair and Belknap Brookside have been on the Home Tour. Guests will be treated to a rare glimpse of these lovely homes, and will enjoy festive entertainment, beautiful holiday decorations, tasty home-made cookies and refreshments. The event runs Friday and Saturday from 10am until 4pm with a special candlelight tour on Friday night from 6pm to 9pm. One ticket provides admission to all five homes and can be used at any time during the tour. Directions to the homes are on the



Pictured from left, checking out one of the wreaths and gearing up for the 2016 Christmas Home Tour are: Jim McClellan of Fred and Mabel R. Parks Foundation and Child Advocates of Fort Bend CEO Ruthanne Mefford. Underwriter for the 2016 Christmas Home Tour is Fred and Mabel R. Parks Foundation.

back of the ticket.

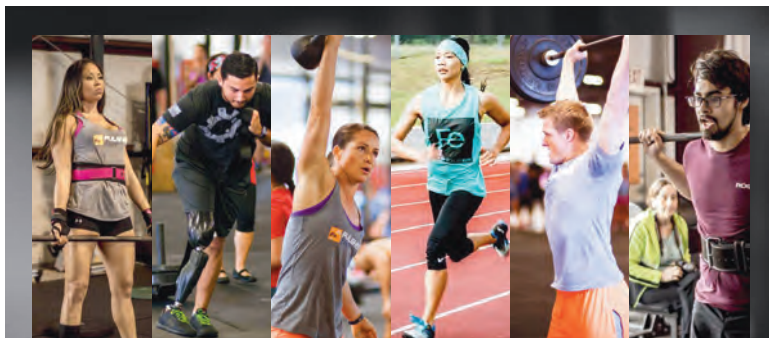
“We added a wreath raffle to the Tour two years ago and we teamed with Johnson Development last year to expand it at their December Frost Fest. Our partnership with Johnson Development was so successful that we’ve decided to work together again this year,” stated Lisa Moore, Marketing Specialist for Child Advocates of Fort Bend (CAFB).

A number of creative and talented individuals have generously created beautiful wreaths to be raffled. The wreaths can be viewed at the Sienna Plantation HomeFinder Center and online at [www.cafb.org](http://www.cafb.org) beginning in early November. The wreaths will also be featured in several model homes during Sienna Plantation’s Frost Fest on December 3. Guests will be able to purchase raffle tickets for a chance to win the wreath of their choice.

The Christmas Home Tour is one of Child Advocates of Fort Bend’s largest fundraisers. There is no easier way to help abused and neglected children than by purchasing a home tour ticket. Tickets make great gifts for family, friends and co-workers.

For more information on the Tour or to purchase a ticket, log onto [www.cafb.org](http://www.cafb.org) or contact Lisa Moore at 281-344-5108.

The Tour Underwriter is Fred and Mabel R. Parks Foundation. Pamela Printing has joined as the Program Sponsor. OCuSOFT, Inc. is a Children’s Godparent. Sponsorship opportunities from \$100 - \$10,000 are still available. All \$350+ level sponsors are invited to the special 25th Anniversary Sponsor Party the weekend before the tour. For more information on sponsorship contact Lisa Moore at [lmoore@cafb.org](mailto:lmoore@cafb.org) or 281-344-5108.



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# Central Fort Bend Chamber hosts its annual gala, 'a Winter Soiree'

The Central Fort Bend Chamber's 2016 Annual Gala, a Winter Soiree, was held Friday, December, 2 at the Safari Texas Ranch's Texas Ballroom, located at 11627 FM 1464 in Richmond.

The gala featured a seated dinner, dueling pianos as the entertainment, photos with Santa, live and silent auctions and much more. The event also highlighted the Chamber's loyal members for their efforts throughout the years. Additionally, longtime Chamber supporters Jeff and Ann Council, were recognized for their service in the Chamber and within the business community.

The Central Fort Bend Chamber is the oldest Chamber in Fort Bend County with a rich history of strong leaders, two of them being its Chair Honorees, Jeff and Ann Council. Both have had an active involvement in the community, playing major roles in the threads that make this community a place to call home.

The Annual Gala is one of the Chamber's many events that allows the organization to continue furthering its many programs that help businesses grow on a daily basis, providing access to further education with the Working Lunch Series and Education and Workforce Committee, developing leadership within the community with the Leadership Fort Bend Program, and providing advocacy through its Governmental Affairs and Infrastructure Committees.

Funds generated at the gala will assist the Chamber in continuing to host successful monthly networking events such as the Breakfast in the Bend. With these programs, the Chamber can continue to promote economic growth, constructive change and superior quality of life for Fort Bend County.

Gala Chair was Holly Kaminga with Sterling McCall Lexus who oversees the Gala Committee made up of Lawren Eckhardt, Community Impact Newspaper; Marla Jurek, Brazos Valley Schools Credit Union; Lisa Matthews, Servpro of West Fort Bend; Amber McDonald, Texas Insurance & Financial Services; Noell Myska, Stancil Properties Tax LLC; Cynthia Reaves, AccessHealth and Alicen Swift, OakBend Medical Center.



Among those celebrating at the Winter Soiree were Gala Committee members Noell Myska, Stancil Property Tax, LLC; Lawren Eckhardt, Community Impact Newspaper; Lisa Matthew, Servpro of West Fort Bend; Cynthia Reaves, AccessHealth; Holly Kaminga, Sterling McCall Lexus; Jeff Council, Chair Honoree; Ann Council, Chair Honoree; Marla Jurek, Brazos Valley Schools Credit Union; Regina Morales, Central Fort Bend Chamber; Adrienne Manrique, Central Fort Bend Chamber; Alicen Swift, OakBend Medical Center; Amber McDonald, Texas Insurance & Financial Services Inc.

Sponsors for the Gala were: Legacy Ford as the Jingle Bell Rock Sponsor, Finnegan Auto Group as the Deck the Halls Sponsor, Johnson Development as the Here Comes Santa Claus Sponsor, and Safari Texas Ranch as the Joy to the World Sponsor.

Premium sponsors included: AccessHealth; CenterPoint Energy, McDonald & Wessendorff Insurance, OakBend Medical Center; Si Environmental, LLC, Texas State Technical College and Wharton County Junior College.

The Home for the Holidays Sponsors were: Dillon CPA's PLLC, Classic Chevrolet, EHRA Engineering, Fort Bend Herald; Garcia-Martin & Martin P.C;

Greater Fort Bend Economic Development Council, GreenScape Associates, LLC; Gurecky Manufacturing Services; Norma Montalvo Petrosewicz P.C; Republic Services, Inc.; Sterling McCall Lexus, Thomas J. Crayton, CPA, LLC; and Vincent Morales County Commissioner-Elect Precinct 1.

For more information about registration or sponsorship, call the Chamber at 281-342-5464 or e-mail amanrique@cfb-ca.org.



# String Theory String Orchestra to perform holiday music at Bob Lutts Fulshear Library

Live holiday music by talented local musicians in the “String Theory String Orchestra” will be featured when Fort Bend County Libraries presents “Holiday Music with String Theory” on Monday, Dec. 12, beginning at 6:30 p.m., in the Meeting Room of the Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library, located at 8100 FM 359 South in Fulshear.

An all-string ensemble of violins, violas, cellos, and a bass violin, String Theory String Orchestra will be joined by vocalist Amanda Hart Bassett in performing a variety of seasonal music, from pops to classical.

A Houston-based singer, Bassett received operatic training at Southern Methodist University, where she received her undergraduate music degree in vocal performance. She continued her musical training at the Boston Conservatory, where she received her graduate degree in musical theatre. She has performed in numerous musical-theater productions since her return to Houston in January 2016.

String Theory String Orchestra was founded in the summer of 2012 by a group of individuals who love to play chamber music and who wanted to explore the abundance of great string music this is often missed if one performs solely with a symphony orchestra.



Members of the entertaining String Theory String Orchestra are gearing up for their Dec. 12 concert at Bob Lutts Library.

This performance is made possible through the generous support of the Friends of the Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library. Proceeds from the Friends of the Library book sales and annual membership dues help to underwrite the costs of special programming and various cultural events at the library.

The performance is free and open to the public. For more information, call the Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library at 281-633-4675 or the library system’s Public Information Office at 281-633-4734.

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# TSTC invests in high-tech equipment

Texas State Technical College (TSTC) in Fort Bend County and its newest industry partners are bringing the latest technology to student classrooms and labs on campus.

Recently, TSTC partnered with Kyrish Truck Center, DMG Mori and Miller Electric, all which have supplied items for Diesel Equipment Technology, Precision Machining Technology and Welding Technology, respectively.

“They have invested in TSTC’s mission of providing a highly trained, skilled workforce in the state of Texas,” said John Kennedy, TSTC field development officer.

“This allows us to use the dollars we would have spent on this equipment, on the students’ learning experiences, which allows our college, to better train our students,” he said.

Owner of Kyrish Truck Center, Duane Kyrish, supplied the students in Diesel Equipment Technology with four diesel trucks and one refrigeration truck that can be used for hands-on training.

“We always look at the type of techs we would hire and we want them to be knowledgeable in the latest technology,” said Kyrish. “Every truck we supplied is a new generation truck.”

Kyrish said he was blown away by the TSTC Industrial Technology campus in Fort Bend and the training it provides. He hopes to not only maintain his relationship with the college, but he wants it to grow.

“Trucks and the need for diesel techs is never going to go away,” said Kyrish. “We would love the opportunity of hiring TSTC students when they graduate. Therefore, we want to give them the items they need to get the max amount of training necessary to be successful.”

Students in Precision Machining Technology were also gifted with 13 state-of-the-art Computer Numeric Control machines.

Bret Settle, regional director for DMG Mori, said TSTC has been a customer for a number years, so when they were approached about machines for the new campus, they knew they had to contribute somehow.

“The machines we set up for them give students a higher level of hands-on training and education in machinery,” said Settle. “They will receive the type of training on machinery that will eventually see in the industry and workplace.”

The opening of TSTC’s Fort Bend County campus not only gained attention from Kyrish Truck Center and DMG Mori, but also from world-renown welding company Miller Electric.

Regional Sales Manager for South Central Texas Miguel Fernandez said he is proud to be partnered with TSTC and felt compelled to help because he was impressed with the college’s new facility in Rosenberg and because of the long-standing relationship between the company and the college.

Miller Electric has helped TSTC with 40 new welding systems in addition to the software needed to run each machine.

“We (Miller Electric) just started a program to support educational systems and its students,” said Fernandez. “And we believe we have a long-term partnership with TSTC and that it will help students train with the most advanced technologies and be competitive out in the field.”

TSTC’s Field Development Officer John Kennedy said that together, the in-kind gifts from all three partners totals nearly \$1.6 million.

“These in-kind gifts are state-of-the-art and all allow our students to be better equipped for high-paying jobs,” said Kennedy. “Each partnership has supplied us with the most relevant products that each company offers better preparing our students



TSTC in Fort Bend County Diesel Equipment Technology instructors and students stand with the four diesel trucks provided by Kyrish Truck Center for their class lab.

for what they can expect in the industry.”

In addition to Precision Machining Technology, Welding Technology and Diesel Equipment Technology, TSTC’s Fort Bend Campus also offers Cyber Security Technology, HVAC Technology, In-

dustrial Maintenance Technology and Telecommunications Convergence Technology.

Registration for Spring 2017 is in progress. For more information, call 346-239-3413, or register and apply anytime at [www.tstc.edu](http://www.tstc.edu).



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# Oakbend named charitable service finalist

OakBend Medical Center has been named one of 26 finalists across the country for the Hospital Charitable Service Awards. OakBend, the only Texas hospital to be named a finalist, was nominated for the hospital's Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program.

In 2012, OakBend Medical Center began participating in an incentive program referred to as the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP). Within the program OakBend has nine projects which include: Chronic Disease Registry, Increase Access to PCPs, Expand Specialty Care Access, Patient Experience, Patient Navigation, Breast-Feeding, Wellness, Medication Management, and Behavioral Health Patient Navigation. Each of these programs has a specific tar

**Chronic Disease Registry:** The purpose of this project is to identify and target the at-risk chronic disease(s) population and to move towards decreasing their inappropriate utilization patterns. Once identified, we educate and encourage them to self-manage their healthcare, thus improving their quality of life as well as their inappropriate utilization of healthcare services.

**Increase Access to PCPs:** Currently OakBend provides high-quality, affordable care to residents of Fort Bend County regardless of their ability to pay. However, access to primary care appointments is limited. As a result, many patients are cared for exclusively in the Emergency De-

*"We are excited to have been named a finalist for this Award. Our DSRIP program is an ongoing work in progress and continues to look for ways to expand our services to the community. This nomination affirms we are heading in the right direction."*

— **Joe Freudenberger**  
CEO of OakBend Medical Center

partment. This setting is not designed to provide comprehensive assessment, disease-specific education, preventative care and coordination.

**Expand Specialty Care Access:** The increase in access to specialty physician services across a wide range of clinical specialties will result in a decrease in preventable readmissions because effective disease management and access to care reduce the incidence of acute conditions. The purpose of this project is to increase availability of specialty care physicians to improve quality of life as well as decrease inappropriate utilization of healthcare services.

**Patient Experience:** OakBend is establishing a patient experience program where patients feel safe, have their voices heard and are empowered.

This concept would involve staff education on communication skills and will be in line with the other initiatives that are designed to create an environment that promotes excellence, operational efficiency and quality patient-centered care.

**Patient Navigation:** Traditionally, a hospital's care of patients ends the instant the patient is discharged. This project will offer targeted patient populations assistance in coordinating their care. In addition to helping individual patients, this project will allow all providers across the spectrum of care to utilize their resources more efficiently, delivering care to patients in the most appropriate setting.

**Breast-Feeding:** OakBend will educate and train patients and staff on the health benefits of breastfeeding, as well as evidence-based strategies to enhance breastfeeding. The training will incorporate the development of educational materials in both Spanish and English.

**Wellness:** This project involves hiring and training of wellness staff, care coordination, development of educational materials, outreach to community of services offered in bilingual availability, access to or expanded transportation services as well as coordination for transportation, reminder calls to recipients regarding appointment times, eventually a help line for access of services offered, and printed educational materials in multiple languages. This project also has a focus on lowering inappropriate emergency department utilization.

**Medication Management:** OakBend implemented a formal Medication Management Program that serves patients from admission to discharge and expands the use of electronic medication reconciliation and computer physician order entry. OakBend is continuing to expand utilization of electronic medication reconciliation among providers, 100% of front line staff members now utilize electronic medication administration and other medication related documentation. OakBend also continues to expand the education provide on medications to the patient upon admission and across the continuum of care.

**Behavioral Health Patient Navigation:** OakBend's Behavioral Health Patient Navigation program was established to provide care management and navigation services for at-risk patients in need of crisis stabilization services, behavioral health services, and substance abuse services. OakBend's behavioral health navigator continues to identify behavioral health and substance abuse patients in the inpatient and emergency setting. The navigator links the patient to resources to treat and manage their condition or behavioral health crisis.

According to Joe Freudenberger, CEO of OakBend Medical Center, "We are excited to have been named a finalist for this Award. Our DSRIP program is an ongoing work in progress and continues to look for ways to expand our services to the community. This nomination affirms we are heading in the right direction."

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# Oakbend Medical Center repeats as Gold Plus Award winner for its stroke guidelines

OakBend Medical Center has once again been honored with the Gold Plus Performance Award for its “Get With The Guidelines®” program, which promotes consistent adherence to the latest scientific treatment guidelines for stroke victims.

The American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association’s award, presented at the hospital’s Jackson Street campus, marks the eighth consecutive year the hospital has been given Gold award and seventh consecutive year to receive the Plus award.

According to the American Stroke Association, stroke is the fifth largest cause of death, and the leading cause of adult disability in the United States. A stroke affects the arteries leading to and within the brain. When a stroke occurs, the blood vessels that carry oxygen and nutrients to the brain either become blocked by a clot or by ruptures. When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood and oxygen it needs so it and brain cells die.

By participating in the “Get With the Guidelines®” program, OakBend Medical Center is reviewed for twelve consecutive months and must have maintained a performance level of following key measures in treatment guidelines for at least 85 percent of the time.

According to Rachel Castillo, Development Specialist with the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association, “We all know that OakBend is a great stroke hospital to have, especially in the growing community of Fort Bend. Jeff and Ann Council are not only involved with OakBend, they are involved with the American Heart Association’s Fort Bend Executive Committee and we want to get the word out not only about strokes but heart disease. We greatly appreciate Fort Bend and OakBend’s help with educating the community.”

Jeff Council, President of the OakBend Medical Center’s Board of Directors, was present for the award ceremony.

“This is certainly a great honor for our hospital, eight years of receiving this award from the American Heart Association. It reflects on the good things that we have going on here at our hospital. The excellent medical staff, the excellent nursing staff and the employees in general, show what OakBend Medical Center is doing and what we will continue to do and we are very humbled and proud to accept this award,” he stated.

To find out more about OakBend Medical Center’s Award Winning Stroke Program log onto [www.oakbendmedcenter.org](http://www.oakbendmedcenter.org).



Staff at Oakbend Medical Center poses with the Gold Plus Award for its program that promotes adherence to the latest scientific treatment guidelines for stroke victims.

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# Rosenberg Development Corporation hosts Its annual Business Appreciation Luncheon

Celebrating 21 years of economic development success, The Rosenberg Development Corporation (RDC) hosted its annual Business Appreciation Luncheon, November 15, at the Rosenberg Civic Center. The celebration was held in honor of Rosenberg businesses for their economic contribution in the community.

Randall Malik, Economic Development Director, City of Rosenberg, recognized the honored guests by saying, "This annual [luncheon] is an event hosted by the Rosenberg Development Corporation with the purpose being to simply thank our local businesses for

continuing to do business in Rosenberg and for the jobs they are creating and the investment they are making in the community."

Of the 120 people in attendance were several Rosenberg City Councilors and other members of the City of Rosenberg who helped celebrate the tribute to the honored guests. Rosenberg Mayor Cynthia A. McConathy joined Malik in recognizing five milestone award winners during the ceremony. The business winners for their years of service in the community were Mellon Real Estate (45 years), OCuSOFT, Inc. (30 years), Health Delite (20 years),



Pictured from left are honorees Randall Malik, Economic Development Director, City of Rosenberg; Ron Ewer, Legacy Ford; Nubia Casler, CRG Texas Environmental Services, Inc.; Kevin Casler, CRG Texas Environmental Services, Inc.; Cecelia Urbaneck, Health Delite; Ronald Urbaneck, Health Delite; Thomas Mason, OCuSOFT, Inc.; Mayor Cynthia McConathy, City of Rosenberg; George Haines, OCuSOFT, Inc.; Sydney Mellon, Mellon Real Estate, Inc.; and Harry Mellon, Mellon Real Estate, Inc.

CRG Texas Environmental Services, Inc. (10 years), and Legacy Ford (10 years).

Ted C. Jones, Ph.D., Chief Economist—Senior Vice President, Stewart Title Guaranty Company, was the guest speaker providing an economic forecast for the region, and particularly in Fort Bend County, saying, "You are in good shape. You should be proud."

The preparation of the event was in partnership with the

Central Fort Bend Chamber. Barry Henry, Friends of North Rosenberg, gave the invocation. Guests also enjoyed food catered by Ol' Railroad Café.

Photos from the event can be found on Rosenberg's City website at [www.rosenbergtx.gov](http://www.rosenbergtx.gov) if you click the RDC Business Luncheon banner on the front page. For more information about the Rosenberg Development Corporation, visit <http://www.rosenbergcodev.com/> or call 832-595-3330.

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The festival features carolers, a bounce house, music, holiday treats and a snow slide featuring 40,000 pounds of snow. Seasonal activities will take place in each of Jordan Ranch's model homes and Santa will make a guest appearance. Snow Fest is free and open to the public.

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## 85th LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW hosted by the Fulshear Area Chamber of Commerce (FACC) on Dec. 2



Texas Representative John Zerwas M.D. (Speaker), Keith Garvin (KPRC 2 News) and Moderator, Terry Crockett (Presenting Sponsor NewFirst National Bank) and FACC Board Treasurer, Texas Senator Lois Kolkhorst (Speaker), Tom Shirley (NewFirst National Bank).



Texas Representative John Zerwas M.D.(Speaker), Keith Garvin (KPRC 2 News) and Moderator, Amy Norvell (FACC Executive Assistant), Hugh Durlam (FACC Board), Rachel Durham (FACC Board), Terry Crockett (Presenting Sponsor NewFirst National Bank) and FACC Board Treasurer, Randy Stacy (FACC Board Chairman), Rebecca Hafner (FACC Vice Chairman), Don McCoy (FACC Executive Director), Texas Senator Lois Kolkhorst (Speaker), Tricia Wright (FACC Secretary).



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Randy Stacy (FACC Board Chairman), Mike McCoy (Captain Fulshear Police), Kenny Seymour (Chief Fulshear Police), Texas Senator Lois Kolkhorst (Speaker), Texas Representative John Zerwas M.D.(Speaker), Don McCoy (FACC Executive Director).



Barry Beard (Commissioner City of Richmond), Terry Crockett (Presenting Sponsor NewFirst National Bank) and FACC Board Treasurer, Cheryl Stalinsky, Texas Representative John Zerwas M.D. (Speaker), Texas Senator Lois Kolkhorst (Speaker), Tommy Kuykendall, Larissa Plunto (Fort Bend County District Director Lois Kolkhorst), Linda Adkins (District Director John Zerwas).



**LEFT:** Fulshear Area Chamber of Commerce (FACC) Board of Directors - Rebecca Hafner (Vice Chairman), Hugh Durlam, Mary Meier, Terry Crockett (Treasurer), Rachel Durham, Randy Stacy (Chairman), Tricia Wright (Secretary).



Don McCoy (FACC Executive Director), Rebecca Hafner (FACC Vice Chairman), Keith Garvin (KPRC 2 News) and Moderator, Tricia Wright (FACC Secretary), Scott Belin (Associate Pastor Second Baptist Church).

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