

# THE SPECTATOR

NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF  
CYPRESS CREEK LAKES

NOVEMBER 2012

ISSUE I VOLUME II

## POWERED BY THE SUN

*"If I Installed Solar, How Much Electricity Would It Generate and How Much Would I Save?"*

*By Chris Lee*

For those of us living here in Houston, we're all acutely aware that the sun is a plentiful, if not unrelenting, source of heat and sunlight (okay, the heat is really a byproduct of the intense sunlight). And for many of us I bet that we've thought, "Gosh, if I could harness just some of that free sunlight...." The harder part is trying to answer the obvious questions about installing a solar array or solar panel system on the roof of your home - "How much electricity would it generate and how much money could I save on my electric bills?"

Without having to know much about solar or needing to contact a solar installer or solar company, you can easily get those estimates at your fingertips. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), which is operated by the US Department of Energy, has created a website allowing anyone to calculate the amount of electricity a PV (photovoltaic) system (aka: solar panel array system) would generate. Here's the website (notice that it already takes into account that you're in Houston): <http://redc.nrel.gov/solar/calculators/PVWATTS/version1/US/Texas/Houston.html>

Here's a shortened link: <http://goo.gl/bRurv>

Once on the website, for your initial estimate, you can use the default information presented and just click on "calculate" at the bottom. On the results page you will see that in Austin, a South facing solar panel array (which means the Array Azimuth = 180 degrees) that's built for 4 kW of electricity generation, would generate 4879 kWh in a year and save you \$473.26. To give you a better estimate, there are 3 settings you can go back and change:

1. **Array Azimuth in degrees.**
2. **DC Rating in kW.**
3. **Cost of Electricity in cents.**

### ARRAY AZIMUTH:

If you're considering placing your solar array on the side of your roof that gets the most sunlight and that part of the roof faces due South, then the Array Azimuth would be 180 degrees. If your proposed solar array will be facing Southwest, the azimuth would be 225 degrees. Southeast would be 135 degrees. And so forth. The more accurate your submission, the more accurate your estimate.

### DC RATING:

The DC Rating (in kW) default is 4 kW in the calculator. This would be the "size" of electricity generation by your solar array - basically, by adding (or subtracting) more solar panels to your proposed system, the DC Rating would increase (or decrease). Makes sense - if you add more solar panels to your array, you'll increase the amount of electricity generated and therefore increase the amount of money saved.

### COST OF ELECTRICITY:

The default is the Texas state average of 9.7 cents per kWh. For those of you with an electricity provider with higher (or soon to be higher) rates, you should change the rate accordingly to get a more realistic estimate.

So that's it, an easy way to determine what you would be generating with a solar array on the roof of your home. This is a simple but fairly accurate way to determine the benefit of installing solar on your home. Of course, YMMV (your mileage may vary) but by getting a fairly accurate estimate of the amount of electricity generated and the money saved, you can better determine whether or not installing a solar array on your roof would make financial sense for you and your family. If you have any questions, please ping me at [leec89@gmail.com](mailto:leec89@gmail.com).

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## ARTICLE INFO

The *Tribune* is mailed monthly to all Cypress Creek Lake residents. Residents, community groups, churches, etc. are welcome to submit information about their organizations in the newsletter. Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, recipes, special celebrations, and birthday announcements are also welcome.

To submit an article for consideration please email it to [cypresscreeklakes@peelinc.com](mailto:cypresscreeklakes@peelinc.com). The deadline is the 9th of the month prior to the issue.




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## Learn to Increase Business Success with Speed Networking

*Linda Stiles shares a 7-Touches List technique at the Nov. 15 CYFEN meeting*

What are the relationship and business networking skills needed to increase business success? Join Linda Stiles to find out as she presents "Seven Steps to Speed Networking" at the Cy-Fair Express Network (CYFEN) luncheon Nov. 15. President and CEO of Stiles & Associates Leadership Consultants, as well as a dynamic speaker and author of "Team Leaders' Toolkit," Stiles is dedicated to turning today's high-potential employees into the next generation of leaders. After 25 years in the corporate world, Stiles has spent the last decade focused on team building.

All are welcome to attend the monthly meetings of CYFEN, which are held at the Sterling Country Club, 16500 Houston National Blvd. This month's meeting features an extended program so networking will begin at 10:30 a.m. followed with a prompt 11 a.m. start of the program.

Bring business cards for networking. The meeting cost is \$25 with advanced

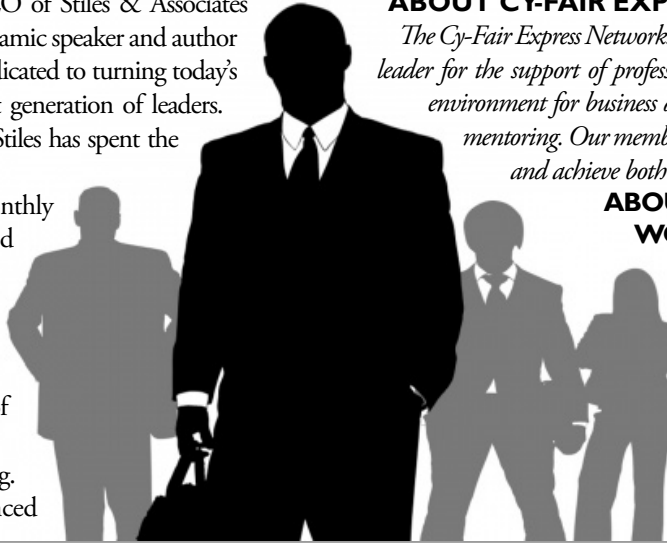
reservations made by the Friday prior to the meeting and \$30 at the door. For information on CYFEN, which is part of the American Business Women's Association, go to [www.CYFEN.org](http://www.CYFEN.org).

### **ABOUT CY-FAIR EXPRESS NETWORK (CYFEN)**

*The Cy-Fair Express Network's vision is to be a community and national leader for the support of professional women by providing a nurturing environment for business development, networking, education and mentoring. Our members have opportunities to pursue excellence and achieve both local and national recognition.*

### **ABOUT AMERICAN BUSINESS WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION**

*ABWA's mission is to bring together businesswomen of diverse occupations and to provide opportunities for them to help themselves and others grow personally and professionally through leadership, education, networking support and national recognition.*



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## Cy-Fair Residents to Spend Less Time on US 290 as Key Construction Completion Dates Move Up

*Chamber to look at future mobility for Cy-Fair at Annual Mobility Forum on Nov. 1*

Cy-Fair residents and businesses can expect to get some much-needed traffic relief on one of the top 25 congested roads in Texas. Thanks to \$168 million in funding provided by state legislators and part of the additional \$2 billion TxDOT identified earlier this year, some key construction projects along US 290 in Houston will be completed up to two decades earlier than originally scheduled. The completion of critical projects also means travelers will see a 40 percent decrease in time spent in traffic along US 290.

"This is a huge win for Texas drivers," said Phil Wilson, TxDOT Executive Director. "Not only will sections of this road be ready 20 years ahead of schedule, they could save drivers 20 minutes in commute time during peak hours on US 290 from IH 610 to SH 99."

TxDOT and the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA) are working to finalize an agreement to provide the needed funding allocated by the Legislature. Under the agreement, TxDOT will contribute \$787 million and HCTRA \$400 million putting all US 290 projects between IH 610 and SH 99 (Grand Parkway) under construction by the middle of 2014.

### PROJECT PLANS INCLUDE:

- Reconstruction and widening of US 290
- Four general purpose lanes for in- and outbound traffic
- Two to three reversible managed lanes in the middle to carry HOV and tolled traffic Future construction of the parallel Hempstead Tollway
- A bike trail and right-of-way preservation for a high-capacity transit system
- Additional safety improvements that should reduce the number of accidents that typically cause big delays.

"Our economy and our quality of life depend on our transportation system and our ability to efficiently move people, goods and services throughout the state," Lt. Governor Dewhurst said. "We all want to see more roads built so that hardworking Texans can spend less time in traffic and more time at home with their families, but we must resist the natural urge to spend money on easy projects and instead spend our hardworking taxpayers' dollars on projects that will have the greatest impact on our

economy and quality of life -- like the US 290 project."

Leslie Martone, President of the Cy-Fair Houston Chamber of Commerce, said "The US 290 project is a great example of how strong partnerships between the chamber, state and local legislators, transportation entities and the community can produce results." Martone added, "With this infrastructure in place the Cy-Fair area will be better prepared to accommodate the population growth projected for our region; however, there is still a lot of work to be done and we need to stay vigilant in our planning for future mobility in Cy-Fair."

The Cy-Fair Houston Chamber's 5th Annual Mobility Forum will be held on November 1 at the Berry Center. The event is underwritten by Methodist Willowbrook Hospital and will allow guests the opportunity to look at future mobility options. "This year's theme is 'Trains, Planes and Automobiles'". Martone said. "We want to make sure we stay ahead of the game to meet the needs of businesses and residents in Cy-Fair."

### 'TRAINS, PLANES AND AUTOMOBILES'

*Berry Center, 8877 Barker Cypress Rd, Cypress, TX 77433*

**Thursday, November 1, 10:30 am – 1:30 pm**

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

- Phil Wilson, TxDOT Executive Director

### FORUM PANEL:

- Seth Moulton, Managing Director of Texas Central Railway
- David Fulton, Director of the Aviation Division for Texas Department of Transportation
- George Greanias, Chief Executive Officer, Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County

*Cost: \$60 per person; tables and sponsorships are available*

The Cy-Fair Houston Chamber of Commerce ([www.cyfairchamber.com](http://www.cyfairchamber.com)) has provided leadership and direction to the Cy-Fair area since 1986. Now over 600 members strong, the Board of Directors and numerous committees interact on state and local levels to help build a strong economy and improve the quality of life within the Cy-Fair area.

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## Cypress-Tomball Democrats Host Election Night Watch Party Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>

The Cypress-Tomball Democrats' next monthly meeting on Tuesday, November 6th, will be an election night watch party. It will be held at Rudy's Grill & Cantina, 11760 Grant Rd., Cypress, TX 77429, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

All are welcome to attend and to join this growing club. For more information, contact Olga Moya at [cytomdems@yahoo.com](mailto:cytomdems@yahoo.com).



## Elisha Roberts Chapter, NSDAR

The wonderful ladies of the Elisha Roberts Chapter, NSDAR, extend an invitation to any female, 18 years or older, who can prove lineal descent from a patriot of the American Revolution.

We are a family oriented, non-profit, non-political volunteer women's service organization dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history and securing America's future through better education. Our motto is God, Home and Country. If this sounds like you, please come and join us for a meeting.

We meet the third Thursday of each month, September through May, at the Backyard Grill, located at 9453 Jones Road. Our next meeting will be on November 15, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

For more information, please contact the chapter Regent, Cheryl Partney, at [cpart86@comcast.net](mailto:cpart86@comcast.net) or by phone at 832-654-0306.

We look forward to meeting you.

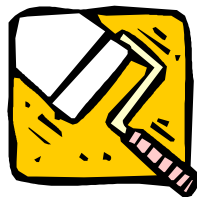
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E-mail your pictures to [cypresscreeklakes@peelinc.com](mailto:cypresscreeklakes@peelinc.com) by the 8th of the month.



## Cy-Fair ISD & Volunteers In Public Schools (VIPS)

*Where "Volunteers are Treasures!"*

*"Heroes take journeys, confront dragons, and discover the treasure of their true selves."*

*-- Carol Lynn Pearson*

All of our volunteers are true treasured heroes. They help in the library, sell school spirit items, organize fundraisers, read to a classroom, make costumes and test vision & hearing. The list is endless and their experience is vast. If you listen to their stories though, you will find that in all the things volunteers do, there is an element of discovery. They find not only what a child can do, but what their own treasured gift might be. And yes, there has probably even been an encounter with a dragon or two along the way.

Cypress-Fairbanks ISD is so fortunate to be able to draw from such a great diversity of skills and knowledge in our community. VIPS (Volunteers in Public Schools) in Cy-Fair ISD center the attention of their service on supporting students and staff and making a significant contribution to the education of children. These jewels in our district give freely of their time and resources and have an impact on the academic and personal development of Cy-Fair ISD students.

If you are interested in being involved in Cy-Fair schools as a volunteer and making a difference, or would like more information, please contact Pam Scott, Partners in Education Director at 281-894-3950.

### **CY-FAIR ISD & VOLUNTEERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*November & December 2012 Events*

**November 8: VIPS General Meeting – 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., Berry Center:** Open to all CFISD volunteers, parents, staff and community members. Get the latest information on CFISD volunteering and learn ways to improve your volunteer program through networking with other volunteers in our district!

**November 27: PIE Mentor Training – 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Berry Center:** Training for individuals committed to serve as a role model and friend to CFISD students. There are no VIPS events scheduled for the month of December at this time. Be sure to check us out in January when the opportunities for volunteering are in full swing again.

### **HOW TO REGISTER FOR TRAINING**

Register for training by emailing the PIE office at [viprsvp@cfisd.net](mailto:viprsvp@cfisd.net). Provide your name and the name and date of the training you wish to attend. Registration is required to guarantee a seat and training materials. Adults only please.





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## CY-FAIR KIWANIS CLUB

Louis Iselin was installed at the October 2 Cy-Fair Kiwanis Club meeting, along with Paula Hoffman, vice-president and president-elect; George Crowl, Secretary; Jim Meadows, treasurer and immediate past president, Andy Lawrence. Newly elected Directors include Steve Gleinser, Aaron Mackey, John Carroll, Edward Ford, and Mike Larivee.

District Lieutenant Governor David Brewer performed the installed rites. These officers and directors will serve from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013.

The Cy-Fair Kiwanis Club is actively seeking new members who are interested in giving service to improve our community and our world.

Visit the Cy-Fair Kiwanis Club and learn about the projects in which its members participate to enrich and improve life for citizens in our community.

We sponsor the Key Clubs in the Cy-Fair, Jersey Village, and Katy communities and work with them in service to the Cy-Fair area. Internationally, both Kiwanis and Key Club are participating in the ELIMINATE PROJECT aimed at the eradication of maternal/neonatal tetanus.

Businesses of the community are encouraged to support a representative for membership in Kiwanis. If you work for a business that is oriented toward involvement in community improvement and leadership, suggest to them that you would like to represent that business through

membership and work with Kiwanis. We welcome business and organization representatives as well as individual memberships.

The Cy-Fair Kiwanis Club meets at Hearthstone Country Club on the first, second, and third Tuesday of each month at 12:15 for lunch and informative programs.

For more information, call John Carroll at 281-463-0373, George Crowl at 832-467-1998 or Peggy Presnell at 281-304-7127.

We invite you to be our guest at one of the meetings and enjoy the fellowship of Kiwanians from your community as you learn about our organization.

CHILDREN PRIORITY ONE is the motto of Kiwanis Clubs worldwide. The Cy-Fair Kiwanis Club sponsors nine Key Clubs and two Builders' Club in the Cy-Fair School District. If you would like to work with teens and preteens, join us and work with the outstanding youth in these organizations.

We sponsor the Kids Triathlon; Girl Scout, Boy Scout, and Sea Scout troops and activities; award scholarships to outstanding Key Club members in our district; provide assistance to Cypress Assistance Ministries and Bear Creek Ministries; the Houston Food Bank; and many other nonprofit organizations.

We welcome your visit at our Club meeting and your consideration of membership in our service organization. Have lunch with us and learn about Kiwanis.



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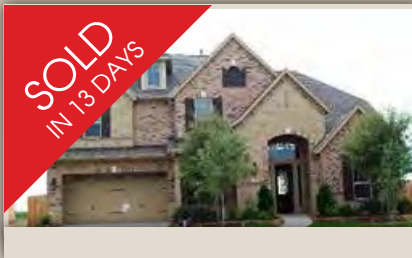
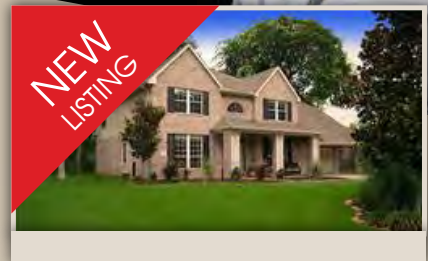
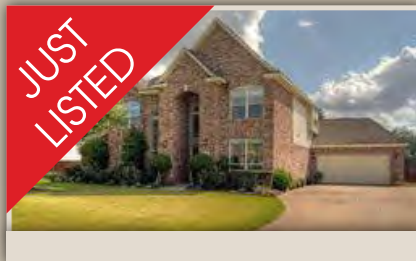
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