

The **RANCH REVIEW**

January 2018 Volume 12, Issue 1

News for the Residents of Legends Ranch

*Happy
New Year
Legends
Ranch!*



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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Montgomery County Tax 936-539-7897
Conroe ISD 936-709-7751
Montgomery MUD #89 713-932-9011

Police & Fire

Emergency 911
Montgomery Sheriff 936-760-5800
Pct. 3 Constable Office 281-364-4211
S. Montgomery Co. Fire Dept. Non-Emergency 281-363-3473
Montgomery County EMS Non-Emergency 936-441-6243
Crime Stoppers 713-222-TIPS
Poison Control 800-222-1222
Texas DPS 713-681-1761

Utilities

Electricity (TXU) 800-368-1398
Electricity (TXU New Service) 281-441-3928
Electricity (Centerpoint) 713-207-2222
Gas (Centerpoint) 713-659-2111
Water/Municipal Oper. & Consulting 281-367-5511
Best Trash 281-313-2378
Street Light Outages 713-207-2222
Cable/Internet/Phone...COMCAST 713-341-1000

Public Services

Local US Post Office 281-419-7948
Toll Road EZ Tag 281-875-3279
Voters Registration 936-539-7843
Vehicle Registration 281-292-3325
Drivers License Information 936-442-2810
Montgomery County Animal Control 936-442-7738
Montgomery Chamber 281-367-5777

Conroe ISD 936-709-7751
Birnam Woods Elementary 281-863-4200
Cox Intermediate 281-465-3200
York Junior High 832-592-8600
Oak Ridge High 832-592-5300

NEWSLETTER INFO

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General Manager - Cicely Towers-Harris
281-419-2539, Cicely.harris@fsresidential.com

Community Administrator – Jessica Wende
281-681-9750, Jessica.wende@fsresidential.com

Feedback: Lranchfeedback@gmail.com



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WHY YOU SHOULD HOST AN EXCHANGE STUDENT – YES, YOU!

“International exchanges are not a great tide to sweep away all differences, but they will slowly wear away at the obstacles to peace as surely as water wears away a hard stone.”

– Former President George H.W. Bush

This time of year, the 100 or so high school exchange student programs in the U.S. are beginning to seek host families for the coming academic year for both one semester and full academic year students.

About 28,000 students come to the U.S. each year for youth exchange programs of varying lengths. Not surprisingly, their motivations vary. They want to improve their English-speaking skills. They want to establish their independence from their parents. They want to see the America of Hollywood and the streets of New York. If they don't have siblings, they would like one. They want to share the beauty and complexity of Japanese or Italian cooking. They want to play American football and be on the cheerleading team. They want to travel and see new places.

They want to live life as an American teenager.

Families who welcome these exchange students into their homes and hearts not only enrich the life of an exceptional young person, they help build people-to-people connections that span the globe and last of a lifetime.

– Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Summer 2010

I think cultural exchanges, including hosting high school exchange students, offer benefits far beyond being “a good citizen.” Beyond actually learning about another culture and how things might be done differently on a daily basis, it challenges one's assumptions about other cultures, teaches communication skills, and helps develop patience and flexibility.

Few experiences can teach you – and your children — the small but critical differences between cultures as living with someone from another country.

The benefits to America children – both our own children and others who are attending school with exchange students – are significant in ways that are difficult (if not impossible) to quantify. It's not something adults often think about. Even school administrators don't always think through how exposure to other cultures can benefit students in their districts. Think about communication for just a moment. Although your children will, of course, speak English to their exchange student, the potential for miscommunication is huge when you are talking to non-native English speakers. The processes of learning how to re-shape your thoughts, speak more clearly, and make sure what you intend to say is what is heard are important skills. Think about your assumptions about other cultures – your assumptions,

and those of your children and their friends, about another country's foods, habits, or attitudes. Think about relationships, and learning how to adapt, become more cooperative, and developing an ability to be flexible.

You *do* have something to offer.

Many families tell me they can't host because “we aren't a good host family.” People assume they must be outgoing, that they need to be a family that travels a lot, or that they must be a family that goes to museums, events, and activities all the time. People assume that it is critical for a host family to live in a big city so it will be “fun” for a teen, that it is important to provide a student with his or her own bedroom, or that they must live near the high school. Many people assume you must have a high school student in your home in order to host a high school exchange student. The list of “why we're not a good family” goes on, but most of these pre-conceptions simply aren't accurate. Is it nice to travel with your student? Of course, because it's fun to share your city, your state, or your country's beautiful places. But not everyone travels much. Is it nice to live next to the high school? Of course. But let's face it, most people don't. Is it “fun” for a teen to live in the city? Sure. But nice people who have the desire, capability, and emotional intelligence to be a host family live everywhere.

The truth is, there is no typical American host family, because there is no single “typical” American family. American host families have teens and don't have teens. They have young children and toddlers. They have children who are now grown and living elsewhere, or no children at all. They have dogs or not, large homes or small ones. Single parents are families, as are grandparents. American families live in large cities, suburban areas, and in small communities. The students are not here to travel, have a tour guide, just have “fun,” or to have an easy life with a five-minute school commute. They're here to go to school, learn about our country, live with a family, and to learn what life is like for an American teen. They can play on the soccer team or have a role in the school play no matter where they live and no matter what the composition of their host family.

The key to hosting a student is not in who is in your family, but who you are as people. Good host families are people who want to share their own culture and community, and learn about someone else's. Good host parents look to give their families a glimpse of the world and introduce them to new customs and cultures.

STS Foundation is currently looking for host families in our area. If you are interested in hosting a student and enjoying this enriching experience, please contact Vicki Odom at 832-455-7881 or email me at vicki.stsfoundation@gmail.com for more information.



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MEET IRIS

By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center



Let me introduce you to Iris, our 9-year-old Eastern Screech Owl. She makes her home at TWRC Wildlife Center and is a “gal about town”. As one of our Animal Ambassadors, she can often be seen at schools, churches and community events throughout the Houston area.

Iris was just a few days old when a rescuer found her on the ground. Our vet staff could see that one of

her eyes wasn't developing properly. After being examined by a specialist, it was discovered that she was blind in that eye. Knowing that owls can still survive in the wild with only one eye, a dedicated rehabilitator worked with her to prepare her for release. With her eye problem and some other issues that developed, it was decided that it was in the best interest of Iris not to release her and instead “promote” her to an Animal Ambassador.

Iris lives a pretty good life. She is served with frozen mice that have been warmed. She goes to the “beauty shop” every couple of months to get her nails done (actually they're called talons) and get her beak trimmed and shaped. She is also given a thorough examination to make sure she is healthy. We are grateful to Dr. White at Briarcrest Veterinary Clinic who donates his time to the Center to care for Iris and our other Animal Ambassadors. In the wild, Screech Owls live an average of 12 years but because Iris doesn't have to face the challenges of life in the wild, she is expected to live well beyond 12 years of age.

Screech owls have a unique call. One source described it as a horse on helium. They let out a descending whinny capped off with a trill. If you come to our Center to visit, she may even “talk” to you. One of her favorite things is to do is to respond to sirens she hears. As soon as she hears a siren, she starts in. Wish we could read her mind to find out why she does that.

Iris and her handlers are available to come and talk to your group, your school, your church or other gatherings. If you would like pricing information, send an email to education@twrcwildlifecenter.org.

TWRC Wildlife Center is a 501(c)(3) organization.
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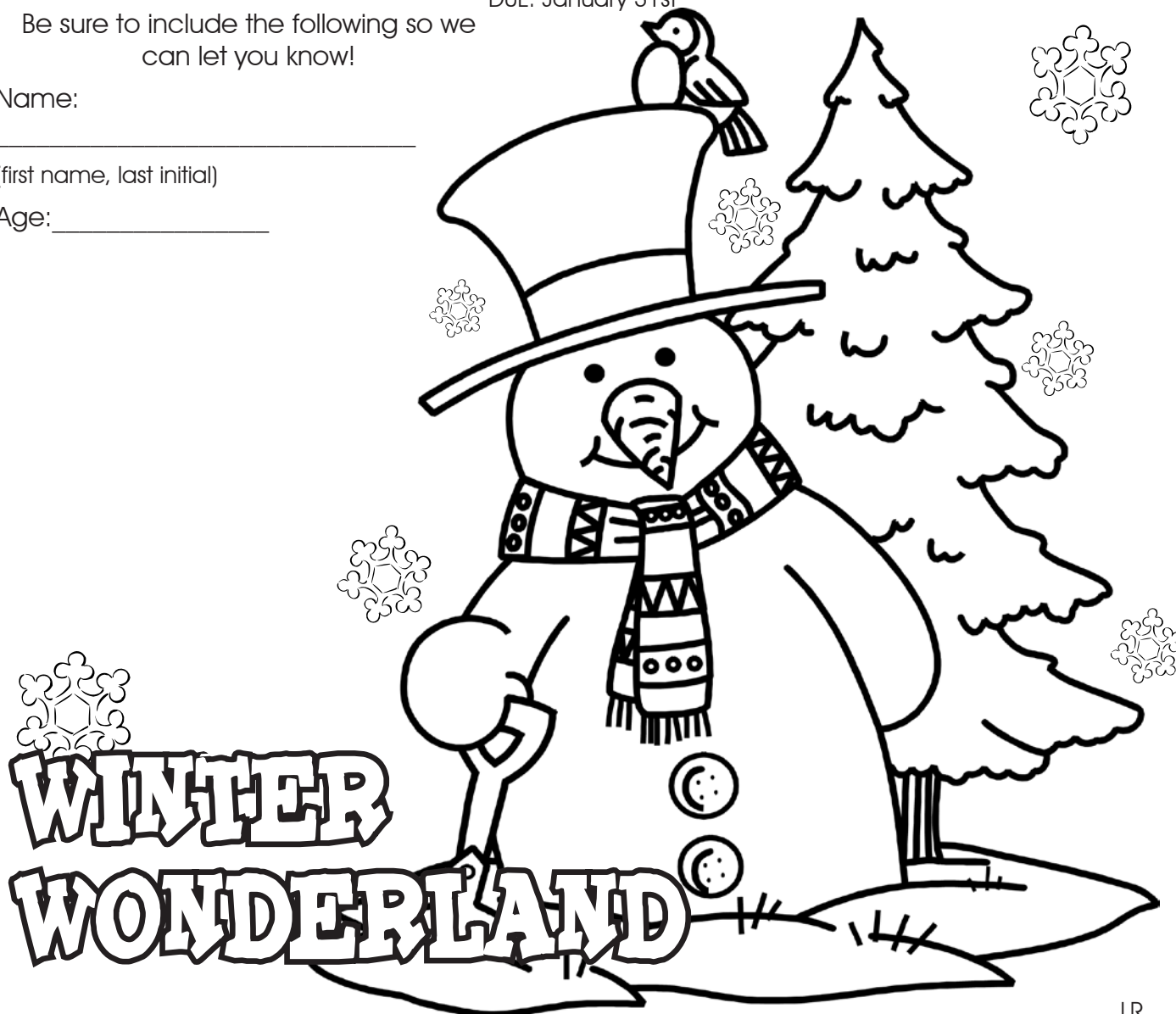
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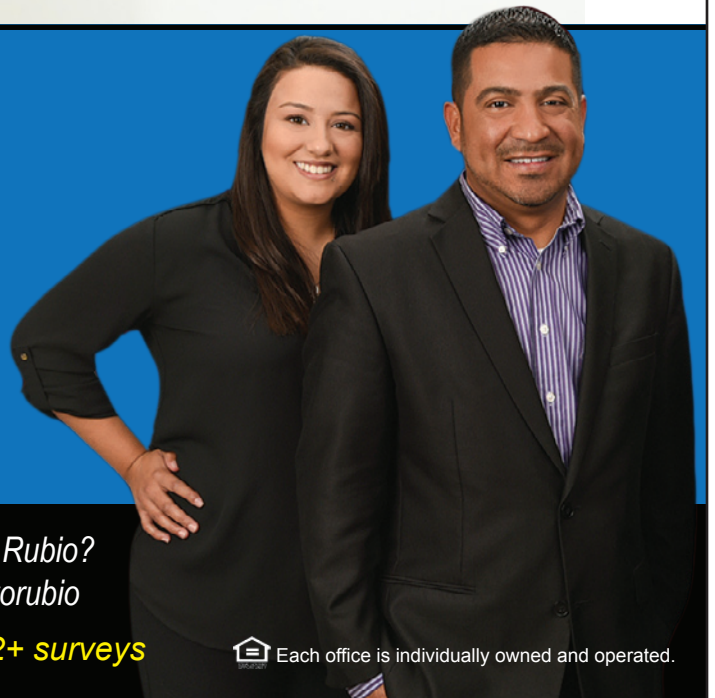
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