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## A NEWSLETTER FOR TOWNE LAKE RESIDENTS

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FEBRUARY 2018

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 2

# 10th Anniversary Salute to Our Heroes Gala

On February 3, 2018, the Cy-Fair Educational Foundation (CFEF) will celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Salute to Our Heroes Gala at the Omni Hotel Houston Westside. North Cypress Medical Center Hospital is the Missing Man Underwriter for this gala honoring the brave men and women who have served to protect our freedom and liberty. The evening includes a Missing Man Table and Honors Ceremony to honor our missing loved ones [or missing comrades in arms, for veterans].

Station & Ayers Insurance Services & Consulting is the Edward Station Memorial Photography Sponsor. Memorial Hermann Cypress is a Brigadier General Sponsor. VIP Reception Sponsors include ACU of Texas and Houston Methodist, and Hightower Electric Company is the Floral Sponsor.

Salvatore "Sal" Giunta, former U.S. Army Staff Sergeant, is the evenings guest speaker. Giunta was presented with our nation's highest military decoration—the Medal of Honor—for his heroic actions during combat in the Korengal Valley of Afghanistan on October 25, 2007. His courage and leadership while under extreme enemy fire were integral to his team's survival and led to his selection as the first living recipient of the Medal of Honor since the Vietnam War and the eighth service member to receive the nation's highest military decoration for valor in Iraq and Afghanistan.

CFEF was established in 1970 as a non-profit to raise money to fund a scholarship for high school graduates in the area. Over the past 47 years, the Foundation has grown tremendously through the efforts of the Board of Trustees and the generosity of the Cy-Fair Community. The Foundation has awarded over \$7.5 million in scholarships to 1600 graduating seniors. CFEF is a 501(c)3 non-

profit organization, all contributions are tax deductible, as allowed by the law.

Sponsorships and tickets are available for Salute to Our Heroes. Tickets Must Be Purchased in Advance: \$125 individual; \$75 veterans

For more information please contact [marie@thecfef.org](mailto:marie@thecfef.org) or visit our website at [www.theCFEF.org](http://www.theCFEF.org).



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North Cypress Medical Center.....	832-912-3500

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### ARTICLE INFO

The *Tribune* is mailed monthly to all Towne 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 [townelake@peelinc.com](mailto:townelake@peelinc.com). The deadline is the 9th of the month prior to the issue.



## CYPRESS AREA FOOD PANTRY

Do you know of someone who has trouble putting food on the table? Maybe their employment was suddenly terminated; maybe it's a choice between medications or food; for whatever reason a family can find themselves in a situation where they need a little help.

Fountain of Life Church of God on Mueschke Road runs a food pantry on Mondays from 3:30 pm to 6:00 pm and the only requirement is that the client should live in zip code 77433 and west of Skinner 77429. For more information, contact 281-373-9337. Food donations and volunteers are also greatly appreciated.

Computerized job search and resume preparation and printing are also available.



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# Special Needs Expo Right in Our Own Backyard!

*By Jackie Devine*

**THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH 2ND ANNUAL SPECIAL NEEDS EXPO WILL TAKE PLACE FEBRUARY 23, 2018 FROM 6 P.M. TO 9 P.M.**

Everyone knows that parenting is a difficult job, even in the best of times and under the most favorable circumstances. But, moms and dads with children of special needs face an entirely different set of challenges that often redefine the meanings of parenthood, stress, anxiety, and isolation. In fact, it has been said that their life is very similar to the pressures felt by soldiers in combat.

Knowing that, and responding to a desire to address the situation in 2016, Cassie Kraus, the current Special Needs Director at Community of Faith, sought out Mark Shook, Senior Pastor, and Bradley Thomas, Connections Pastor of Community of Faith, and posed her idea. Cassie wanted to provide some much-needed assistance to families yearning to attend worship services or other church functions but were unable to do so because their children required special considerations.

Cassie received overwhelming support to create a program that not only addressed the needs of parishioners, but has grown to offer collaborative, family-centered assistance to caregivers in other parts of Texas and as far as Louisiana.

Sharing her personal understanding of the issues, Cassie said, "As the parent of a child with autism and a former special education professional in Cy-Fair, I was well-versed in the challenges parents face trying to make their way through the special needs maze.

"We were delighted when we found Community of Faith. Their warm welcome and willingness to work with us to address some of our unique challenges offered us an environment of understanding and respect—one in which we thrived." Continuing, she said, "The special needs community, as a whole, is very small, and when you find a church that is willing to work with you and that looks at each child as their own, that's huge. As the parent of a child with different abilities, it was comforting to find people willing to walk that journey with you who are striving to find the best outcome for your child and to see him or her as a unique individual."

Bradley chimed in, "Our special needs ministry has been operating full tilt for about a year and a half now. Cassie brought expertise, heart, and connections to the team, which has added the necessary foundation to create a welcoming, dynamic, family-centered environment.

"We sponsored our first 'Special Needs Expo' last year and over 200 families participated. With Cassie's unbelievable network of organizations willing to step in and provide the needed framework of access, information, and resources, 50 vendors worked diligently to help families get connected and feel supported.

"This year, we're hoping the Expo is attended by anyone that has a need or a desire to help." He emphasized, "They don't need to go to

our church. Our goal is that our Special Needs Ministry continues to build a reputation as a key contact when families need help with parenting, family interaction, physical or emotional well-being, or disability-related support.

"As advocates for children and adults with special needs, whether it's autism, Downs Syndrome, MS, behavioral challenges or anything in between, we want Community of Faith to be their 'go to' for support and acceptance—the organization that brokers partnerships and relationships for families.

"Community of Faith is unique in that we have made a substantial investment in personnel, equipment, rooms, volunteers and other resources to meet the growing need.

"We recognize that the parenting of a special needs child is 24/7. There is no downtime. Not only do we provide opportunities to get them connected to resources, but we also offer opportunities to walk in friendship with them.

"For example, once a quarter, Cassie facilitates a 'Special Needs Family Night Out.' She and her team come up with a unique event where they create a safe and stimulating atmosphere with fun activities, like story time, games, bounce houses, and relationship-building activities for the children and their siblings.

"Parents can confidently leave and enjoy a few hours of freedom to do whatever they want. If they're going to go home and take a nap, that's great! If they're going to go shopping, out to eat, or to a movie they are free to choose.

**The Community of Faith 2nd Annual Special Needs Expo will take place February 23, 2018, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.**

"The way it works is families will check in at the lobby and filter through the multipurpose room where they will have the opportunity to visit with an assortment of vendors, such as therapies, estate planning, school districts, transition services, and adaptive sports (such as cheerleading and gymnastics).

"Attendees will find a variety of resources for families just starting out as well as families entering those adult years. The culmination will be speeches from field experts."

In closing, I asked Bradley, "Plain and simple, what is the ultimate purpose of the Expo?"

Without missing a beat, he said, "Our goal is for hundreds of families living in and around Cypress—members of Community of Faith or not—to know they have a friend. We want every family living with a special needs child to know that they are not alone, and they have someone who will walk with them every step of the way in raising their children all the way up to adulthood."



## CYPRESS TEXAS TEA PARTY

The next meetings of the Cypress Texas Tea Party will be on:

**Saturday, February 3, 2018 NOON - 2:00 PM**

- Aaron Burdette, Candidate for Criminal Court at Law #11
  - Lori Botello, Candidate for County Criminal Court #11
  - Jessica Padilla, Candidate for Criminal Court at Law #13
  - Judge Alyssa Lemkuil, Candidate for 257th District Court
  - Judge Denise Collins, 208th District Court
  - Geric Tipsword, Candidate for 180th District Court
  - Judge Christine Riddle Butts, Harris County Probate Court #4
  - Judge Debra Ibarra Mayfield, 190th District Court
- Saturday, February 24, 2018 NOON - 2:00 PM
- Dan Crenshaw, Candidate for US Representative, Congressional District 2
  - Kathaleen Wall, Candidate for US Representative, Congressional District 2

- Gary Elkins, Texas State Representative, District 135
- Judge Angelina Gooden, 280th Family Protective Order Court
- George Clevenger, Candidate for 280th District Court
- Judge Bill Harmon, Criminal Court at Law #2
- Judge Rory Olsen, Harris County Probate Court #3
- Judge Paula Goodhart, Criminal Court at Law #1

**The Cypress Texas Tea Party meets  
every three weeks on Saturday**

Noon until 2:00 PM at:

Spring Creek BBQ  
25831 Northwest Freeway  
Cypress, Texas 77429

Map: <http://goo.gl/maps/OoNjY>

*A schedule of the meetings and confirmed speakers can be found  
on their website, [www.cypresstexasteaparty.org](http://www.cypresstexasteaparty.org)*



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# RUNNING FOR HEARTS

## 5K FAMILY FUN RUN AND WALK

**SAT. APRIL 7, 2018**

**7 AM - 11 AM**

Windwood Presbyterian Church  
10555 Spring Cypress Rd.  
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Registration and Fundraising at:

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## MAKING SENSE OF THE NUMBERS



### **Luncheon Details**

*Thursday, February 22, 2018*

*Networking 11a.m.;*

*Luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m.*

*Sterling Country Club, 16500*

*Houston National Blvd.,*

*Houston, TX 77095*

*Costs \$25 with advanced reservations;*

*\$30 at the door*

Karen Sharp started her career in systems analysis at Shell Oil and Tenneco Oil E&P where she programmed, maintained, and managed the Personnel /HR systems. She later moved into information technology marketing and sales in companies including BMC Software and Ansa Software, a highly successful tech startup. Karen earned a BS in Applied Science, Systems Analysis from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio and an MBA from University of Houston.

Karen founded her branding solutions business in 1997 in which she provides digital, print, and promotional marketing and branding solution to mid-large firms in the private and public sectors. Her clients include Harris County Public Health, Harris County Community Health Choice, and various oil and gas service firms. She joined Lone Star College as adjunct business faculty in 2007, where she taught marketing and business management courses. In 2009, she joined America's SBDC at Lone Star College as a senior business advisor where she provides business advising services to businesses in the CyFair, and Northwest Houston areas. Karen developed the Business Success Seminar series which offers powerful information seminars at no charge for business owners in the CyFair area with the CyFair Houston Chamber and the Harris County Public Library. Karen's specialties are marketing, information technology, supplier diversity, and franchising.

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# Help Your Marriage and Others During National Marriage Week

Local non-profit Shield Bearer is hosting several marriage building activities during National Marriage Week February 7-14, 2018. Shield Bearer has been on the front lines strengthening marriages through counseling, marriage saving intensive experiences, and workshops since 2007. Executive Director Roy Wooten states, "Strengthening marriages is at the core of our mission and National Marriage Week is a great time to focus on the benefits of a strong marriage. We have seen these benefits first hand, from helping couples live longer and happier lives, to increased economic stability, to positive and lifelong impacts on the health and wellbeing of children. We know it takes focus and determination to maintain a strong marriage and are committed to getting resources and support to as many couples as possible."

Shield Bearer will host a special Life Together Forever Couples Workshop on February 10th from 9AM-3PM at their central counseling office (12340 Jones Rd Suite 290) in Houston. "This workshop is a fun and meaningful way to strengthen your relationship, reconnect with your spouse, and rekindle your romance," states Clinical Coordinator Allie Scott. "Couples explore topics that affect every marriage including speaking and hearing the truth, having courageous conversations, forgiveness, romance, healthy expectations, and more. It's a great way for healthy couples to refocus and celebrate what is truly important in their relationship."

On February 9th from 11:30-1PM, Shield Bearer will present a special Marriage Edition of their Hope After Harvey Workshop. "Since the storm, we have provided Hope After Harvey workshops free of charge to anyone struggling from the trauma of the storm, including being displaced, losing loved ones, losing possessions, jobs, and stability, and then also to the first responders, caregivers, and volunteers helping Harvey survivors rebuild their lives. These workshops focus on the ups and downs of trauma recovery and provide resources for coping and thriving. During National Marriage Week, we will also dive deeper into how marriages are affected by trauma and ways to come together during a crisis."

Shield Bearer also offers a unique counseling experience for couples that think there is no hope for their marriage. "Shield Bearer's Marriage Saving Intensive experience is a unique approach to couples counseling. Couples on the brink of divorce spend an entire day with two of our counselors. We are able to accelerate the process of the more traditional, weekly couples sessions and have seen great success. This model has saved hundreds of marriages that would not have endured with a more traditional process," states Ms. Scott.

Shield Bearer will also provide a free online marriage resource

each day of National Marriage Week to followers of their online community page at [facebook.com/shieldbearer.counseling](https://facebook.com/shieldbearer.counseling). Mr. Wooten adds, "Even just a few minutes focusing on your relationship each day can make a big impact. We encourage all married couples to participate in some type of marriage strengthening activity during National Marriage Week and to remind your friends and family to do the same. Strong marriages create a stronger community for everyone."

For additional details and registration for National Marriage Week activities, call (281) 894-7222. For more information about Shield Bearer, a Houston based 501c3 nonprofit counseling and community resource center that serves individuals, couples, and families including those recovering from the trauma of human trafficking, domestic violence, crime, abuse, war, and Hurricane Harvey, visit [shieldbearer.org](http://shieldbearer.org) or call (281) 894-7222.



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