



# CYPRESS MILL *Chronicle*

NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF CYPRESS MILL

August 2018

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## THE MEANING OF LIFE

*by Stacey Gresell*

When my daughter was just a tiny thing, barely walking, we were out in the yard exploring... at least that's the way it is remembered in my perfect parent mind. Truth is I was weeding and glancing every so often to make sure she didn't eat a bug. That's when a perfectly innocent toad hopped by.

I'll never forget her expression.

She laughed and laughed as if it was the funniest thing a human being had ever laid witness to; one of those baby belly guffaws that makes your own eyes water. She waddled behind that poor frog forever just busting a gut every time he hopped. Still makes me smile because of her pure joy, her discovery and wonder.

We probably all have stories like that, but if your kids are entering high school those stories are getting dusty. If your children are small still, then dustier folk like me are telling you to cherish those moments. You say "Of course!" but you won't really understand until they happen to you again.

Those moments of wonder and discovery happened to us again last fall in a fairly unique way. We got a new daughter. We picked ours up from the airport with signs and fanfare. I still remember her polite smiles in the backseat as she got bombarded with ridiculous questions- "You're from Italy? Did you live in the heel or the toe? Do you eat pasta every day? Do you have a car?"

You may wonder as I did once, why would anyone do this? Why would anyone add to the chaos of their life by adopting a foreign exchange student for a year?

There are a lot of lofty answers like...you can learn another language. We didn't. You will gain an expanded view on international perspectives. Nope. You will have a greater focus on life and academics.

I had 3 kids. I was drowning in life and academics already. So why?

My answer might surprise you. I wanted to be a good mom again.

We always put on the very best sides of ourselves for... others. Not our family. We are the kindest, most patient, most gracious and giving

for friends and acquaintances and save the tale of our bad day, our cruddy mood and exhaustion for the people who supposedly mean the most to us. In front of our own mother we are super mom but the minute she leaves we are begging a dirty child to take a bath and bribing them with candy if they'll do it without crying—you know you've done it.

Every parent worries about their kids and about being a good parent but it's hard. It's even harder when you both work. It's even harder when you have no family nearby. It's even harder when... I could continue but I'm sure you know as well as I do that the excuse train could ride the rails for a while.

I needed to resurrect the patient, funny and sweet mom who was always willing to hold your toad while you went potty. I wanted some version of that mom to come back.

Chiara brought her back. Chiara made me snuggly on the couch again. Chiara made me review English papers again. Chiara made me laugh and roll my eyes with a smile on my face. She made me think about my rules and the rationale for them; and reminded me of the importance of explaining them. Chiara was the kind of kid who would come downstairs, see me making dinner and just slide in gently beside me and start chopping garlic. She'd tell me about her day and ask about mine with genuine interest. It was only then that I realized I hadn't been doing these kinds of things with my own kids very often, not really.

I had gotten tired and allowed myself to check out way too often. But with unfamiliar eyes on me, I dug a little deeper to the better mom that was always still there but had become complacent.

Having a foreign exchange student living in your home will certainly mean a lot of those lofty things. You will learn more about incredible places, taste wonderful food, and witness discovery and wonder again through a child's eyes. But you might also find that dusty side of yourself, try it back on and live it again.

I have 4 kids: 3 that I made and 1 who remade me.

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The deadline for the newsletters is the 9<sup>th</sup> of each month.  
Please email articles to: [cypressmill@peelinc.com](mailto:cypressmill@peelinc.com)

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## VBS at Good Shepherd

Good Shepherd United Methodist Church hosted it's annual summer Vacation Bible School and had 1,235 children and 475 volunteers participate. This year's theme was "Shipwrecked, Rescued by Jesus."

Each year, the kids and workers raise funds for a mission project. This year's gift benefited Africa New Life, which supplies food to children in Rwanda, Africa. The total amount given was enough to provide 4,243 meals.

On Sunday, August 26, Good Shepherd will present Rally Day to kick off the fall and welcome the new school year. Join Good Shepherd for 9:15 am traditional worship or 10:45 contemporary worship on this festive, high energy day.







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## Recapping a BIG July at Second Baptist Church!

### All American Sunday – July 1st

Second Baptist Church had over 2,500+ attend their All American Sunday event held in the back yard of their church. The outdoor event started at 6 p.m. with families enjoying the patriotic music, food, and desserts. Throughout the event, fun characters including Captain America, Uncle Sam, and Wonder Woman entertained the children and everyone enjoyed free attractions including inflatables, a dunk tank, face painting, and a mechanical bull. The event also featured several family friendly back yard tournaments that included dodge ball, corn hole, nine square, washers, dominoes, and wiffleball baseball. An outdoor stage spotlighted special programming including church's student dance teams, door prizes for attendees, fun competitions, and it concluded with a brief word from Pastor Stephen Bailiff and the crowd singing God Bless America. To top the night off, Second Baptist Church finished the evening with a 15-minute professional firework show that ended the event with an All American Smile!

### Vacation Bible School - July 16 - 19

Ahoy Matey! Second welcomed 2000+ children for their annual Vacation Bible School program! This free event was open to the entire community, and kids hoisted their sails for an amazing adventure

traveling the high seas as they sought to find the REAL treasure! Attendees enjoyed fun games, crafts, mission activities, engaging Bible lessons, and Second's incredible "Big Show" production at the end of each day. Throughout the week, children learned about one of the greatest biblical adventurers of all time, and they discovered through the life of David that God is the greatest treasure of all time. VBS concluded with a big family event on Thursday evening and a private party at Typhoon Texas waterpark for all the children and their parents. The Second Family invites you to jump aboard and be a part of this incredible program once again next summer!



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## Classic Adults Welcome Judge Ed Emmett

by Joan Hagan



Good Shepherd UMC Classic Adults welcomes any person 50+ to gather with us for Christian fellowship, entertainment, adventure, and light-hearted and inspirational programs! We meet the first Monday of the month in the Youth Room of the church, located at 20155 Cypresswood Drive. We gather at 11:45 a.m., enjoy lunch from about 12:00-12:45 p.m., and then sit back and enjoy the program.

In the five years we've been meeting, we've heard from local and national celebrities, authors, master gardeners, and even been entertained by a magician!

In September, we'll meet on September 10th.....(one of the few times we move off of the first Monday to the second Monday

due to a holiday---Labor Day Sept 3rd!)

Classic Adults is excited to welcome County Judge Ed Emmett as our guest speaker in September. Judge Emmett is the presiding officer of Harris County Commissioners Court. In his position, he serves as the director of the Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and represents the county on numerous boards, committees, and regional councils of governments.

Harris County, with a population of 4.7 million, is the third most populous county in the United States. Judge Emmett is a busy man! Join us as we learn more about our county government, what a county judge does, and how it affects us way out here in Cypress, Texas!

You do not have to be a member of Good Shepherd UMC to join Classic Adults. For more information and to register for the lunch go to the Good Shepherd website [www.goodchurch.us](http://www.goodchurch.us) and click on registrations. Or, you may call the church at 281-373-2273.

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