



A NEWSLETTER FOR TOWNE LAKE RESIDENTS

FEBRUARY 2019

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Join The Circus And The World Is Your Oyster



Have you ever thought about running away and joining the circus? The truth is, becoming a circus acrobat is not as easy as you think. But if you could accomplish it, your life would be changed by epic proportions.

"As a street kid growing up in a St. Louis inner-city Black neighborhood, never venturing

from the two-block area where I lived, the only thing I knew about life was what I saw around me" commented Sidney Bateman, Hoop Diving and Chinese Poles acrobat.

"Left motherless at three; I was raised by my grandmother and never knew my dad. I had seven siblings and with little supervision, it was more or less every man for himself. I don't know that I ever felt a real sense of family. To make matters worse, I was a hyper kid, craved attention, and frequently sought approval and acceptance from the gang. Looking back on it, you might say I grew up in a combat zone. The sound of gunshots, sirens blaring, and having friends and family members shot or killed were all regular occurrences."

Toys, bikes, and athletic equipment were a scarce commodity for Sidney. For recreation, the kids in the Walnut Park community where he lived, would gather on vacant barren lots and have flip-offs competing against one another by flipping, spinning, and doing acrobatics.

"I joined Circus Harmony when I was eleven, even though I had one foot in the door of joining the gang. I honestly can't tell you when I joined the gang," he confessed. "My brothers and uncles were gang members. I thought that was in my future as well. But miraculously, Circus kept nudging me. For a time, I was pulled in both directions, Circus and the gang. I was always trying to balance out the two."

For those that have never heard of St. Louis-based Circus Harmony, it is a social circus-based program that uses circus arts to motivate social change. They do it by building character in individuals and building bridges between communities. Titles and labels are

nonexistent. The only thing that matters is what they (the individual) bring to the ring.

From the beginning, learning to trust and be part of a team were hard lessons for Sidney to grasp. Working with others was a struggle. Having someone telling him what to do and dealing with accountability felt like insurmountable challenges. He suffered from bouts where he just gave up and dropped out.

"But, somehow, even though young and naïve, I began to develop a degree of trust and make sense of acrobatics. The sport became my magnet drawing me back into the program. Somehow, I recognized that my talent could take me somewhere. Circus classes became my escape from the harsh reality I was dealing with at home and in the neighborhood. Unknowingly, using circus arts with a definite intention, I began my journey.

"In my junior year of high school, I got into a huge gang fight at school and was expelled. Then my friend got shot and killed. That was my turning point. I knew I didn't want to be another statistic." Musing on the problems he faced, he said, "There had to be a different path for me."

Shortly after committing to training more seriously, Sidney joined the Elite Troupe of Circus Harmony; a pre-professional program that was focusing on mastering specific circus disciplines. And, at the end of high school, Sidney decided to make a career out of the circus. Believing in his talent, the manager of Circus Harmony helped him to get to Montreal, Canada to audition for the National Circus School. To his surprise, Sidney got accepted in the College Program with a specialization in Hoop Diving.

École Nationale de Cirque (ENC) gave him a purpose and hope of international in scope. The ENC is a higher-education institution dedicated to the education and training of professional circus artists, as well as to research and innovation in circus arts and academic curriculum.

Sidney proudly emphasized, "Not only could I relate, but I was also willing to give it my all. I trained my butt off. I became a much better human being. After acceptance, I entered into a week-long acrobatic

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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. The deadline is the 9th of the month prior to the issue.

CFISD Chamber Choir Concert

Featuring Cypress Ranch High School, Cypress Woods High School, Cy Fair High School, Langham Creek High School as well as other CFISD Choirs.

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(Continued from Cover Page)

audition process that I've been told was harder to accomplish than getting into Harvard or Yale. On April 1, 2011, I got the news: "I HAD MADE IT." And that felt like I had arrived home because I knew that was the beginning of something amazing."

Studying at ENC for three years, Sidney was introduced to the world of contemporary circus. He even conquered the French language and became fluent in it. He successfully graduated in 2014 alongside his St. Louis friend Melvin Diggs (also a Circus Harmony alumnus) as a Hoop Diving duo.

For two and a half years, the pair took part in the creation and international tour of *Cuisines & Confessions*, a production of the Montreal-based circus company 7 Fingers. Other career highlights include a summer with the Chicago Midnight Circus, a fashion show for Hermès in Hong Kong, and a collection launch for Bench in Manila.

In 2017, Cirque du Soleil got in touch with Sidney and Melvin and invited them to join the cast of *LUZIA* on tour. Cirque du Soleil, headquartered in Montreal, Quebec, Canada is a Canadian entertainment company and the largest theatrical producer in the world.

Reflecting, Sidney smiled, saying, "Now I am finally part of a family where I've found a place of love, accountability, and commitment."

Sidney is thrilled to have jumped into this adventure and to have been given the opportunity to share his passion with thousands of people every night through his two favorite circus disciplines: Hoop Diving & Chinese Poles.

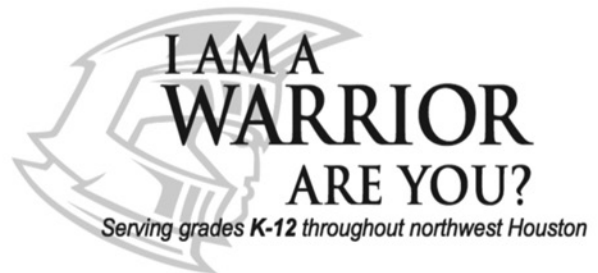
Not only does he feel that his ultimate childhood dream has come true, but he has also found his life's purpose: to share his story with youth around the world and to help the "kids" who need help by inspiring them to work hard toward achieving their goals.

When you have the opportunity to see Cirque du Soleil's *LUZIA* at the Sam Houston Race Park, be sure to pay special attention when Sidney performs his Hoop Diving and Chinese Poles acrobatics.

LUZIA opened in Houston on January 10th, 2019 for a limited engagement through February 24th, 2019.



CYPRESS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



11123 Cypress N. Houston Road, Houston, TX 77065 | 281.469.8829 | CypressChristian.org

Elisha Roberts Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution wants you!

Greetings from the ladies and young women of the Elisha Roberts Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution! Our motto is God, Home, and Country.

We are inviting any female, age 18 and over who can provide direct lineal descent from someone who either fought in or provided aid during the American Revolution.

We are a family-oriented, national organization that promotes patriotism, education, and historic preservation.

If this sounds like you, please join us at our next meeting on third Thursday of each month at the Cypress Historical Society Building behind Jurgens Hall (26026 Hempstead Road Cypress, Texas 77429). Our monthly meetings begin at 7 p.m.

For more information, contact Elisha Roberts Chapter Regent Mary Lynn Goins at mlgoins1@att.net.

We look forward to meeting you!

Keeping Active, Involved, and Informed

by William Wilson

Wednesday, February 13 2019, Municipal Utility District (MUD) #396. The MUD #396 meetings are usually the second Wednesday of every month. Sometimes, the date is changed. If you are planning on going or live in a different MUD in Fairfield, you can call 713-651-5345 to confirm the dates. The MUD #396 meeting begins at 12 Noon and usually lasts about an hour or less. The location is downtown, fairly close to the George R. Brown Convention Center at our attorney's office. The address is Norton, Rose, Fullbright US LLP, 1301 McKinney, Suite 5100, Houston, TX 77010-3095. Very few residents attend this meeting. If you would like a free ride to the MUD #396 meeting, contact Bill Wilson at 832-653-5146.

Saturday, February 16, 2019, Cypress Texas Tea Party (CTTP). This is the next every 3 weeks meeting for CTTP. The meeting is from 12 noon until 2:00 PM. Meeting location is: Spring Creek BBQ, 25831 Northwest Fwy, Cypress, TX 77429 (phone) 281-758-1450. CTTP does not charge a fee to attend the meeting and does not have membership dues. Also, you do not have to purchase a meal to attend although most do.

Tuesday, February 26, 2019 Yellow Rose of Texas Republican Women. This is a monthly meeting on the fourth Tuesday of every month at Harris County Smokehouse, 14243 FM 2920, Tomball, TX 77377 (phone) 281-351-4060. The meetings begin at 7:00 PM. You are not required to be a member to attend nor are you required to purchase a meal. Arrive earlier if you plan to have a meal.

Fairfield Village Community Homeowner Association (HOA). The January 28 meeting at 6:00 PM was at the Lakeside Trails clubhouse. The February meeting has not been scheduled but will be a morning meeting. Call First Service Residential at 713-332-4763 or drop by the office attached to the Fairfield Athletic Club for additional information about this meeting or any of the Fairfield Villages meetings.

Fairfield Village South Neighborhood Association. This is a meeting of the just the neighborhood association. It is held at the Central Park Club House near Salyards Middle School. The next meeting has not been scheduled. However, you can check with First Service Residential (FSR) about the next meeting as detailed above. Also, FSR will have information about meetings of the other neighborhood associations such as Central, Lakes of Fairfield, and Trails of Fairfield.

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Shield Bearer Running for Hearts 5K Family Fun Run and Walk

The Shield Bearer Running for Hearts 5K Family Fun Run and Walk will take place on March 30, 2019, from 7:00AM to 11:00AM, at Windwood Church at 10555 Spring Cypress Road in Houston, Texas. This family friendly event will feature a 5K timed, trail style run, a 1-mile family walk, games for the kids, t-shirts, food, prizes, and lots of fun for all ages. Race registration is \$25 for adults (ages 14 and up) and \$10 for children (ages 13 and under) before March 15, 2019. Registration, sponsorship, vendor, fundraising, and volunteer information is available at shieldbearer.org/5K.

Proceeds for the event will fund services and programs at Shield Bearer, a Houston based 501c3 nonprofit counseling and community resource center that provides services on a sliding scale. Shield Bearer has six locations in Houston and serves individuals, couples, and families including those recovering from the trauma of human trafficking, domestic violence, crime, abuse, war, and natural disasters. Additional information about services and programs can be found online at shieldbearer.org or by calling (281) 894-7222.

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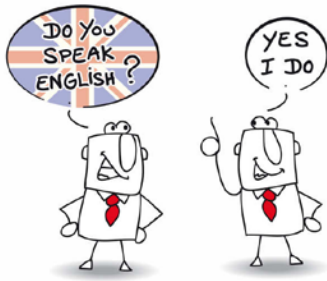
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Proceeds benefit Shield Bearer, a local nonprofit that provides hope and healing for survivors of abuse, crime, war, human trafficking, natural disasters, and more.

Find out more at shieldbearer.org or (281) 894-7222

Adult English Classes At English Gateway



English Gateway is a program designed to teach conversational English. The vision and desire of English Gateway is to assist international families in learning and improving English skills to help them live and be successful here in the United States. We offer 6 different levels and have open registration throughout the

CFISD school year. Childcare is available for free for pre-school children as long as they are registered beforehand.

- Where does English Gateway meet? We meet at Bayou City Fellowship, 12715 Telge Rd., Cypress, TX 77429.

- When does English Gateway meet? We offer two options: Thursday mornings, 9:30-11:30 am; Thursday evenings, 6:30-8:30 pm.

- What is the school calendar?

English Gateway classes coincide with CFISD school calendar

- When can I register and start class?

There is open registration so you can come any Thursday, take a placement test, and go immediately to class.

How much does it cost? There is a one-time fee of \$20 for the books; classes are free.

For more information, please contact the English Gateway Program Coordinator: esl@bayoucityfellowship.com.



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