

## The Power of Volunteerism

*By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center*

I often say that I'm working harder now as a volunteer president of a board of directors than I ever did as a paid employee. The hours are long, the work can be frustrating, and worrying about keeping our doors open is very stressful. But all it takes is for me to hold a tiny, helpless little opossum in my hand or witness the release of an animal back to the wild and I know why I do it. A sense of calm and purpose takes over and I feel great about what I'm doing.

People volunteer for a number of reasons. Some are retired and are looking for something meaningful to do. Some are students wanting to learn more about their chosen field of study. Some feel it's a way to pay it forward and some don't have a choice. They have to complete court-ordered community service.

I think we would all agree that helping others makes a person feel good but did you know that studies show there are health benefits from volunteering? According to Rodlescia Sneed, a public health research associate at Michigan State University who has studied the impacts of volunteering, "In my own work I've shown it's linked to improvements in factors like depressive symptoms, purpose in life, and feelings of optimism." It's also been shown to lower blood pressure and reduces the feelings of depression.

Here's a list of all the benefits of volunteering according to Non-Profit Hub:

- Boosts self-esteem
- Expands your connections - some people are just born with the "gift of gab" and have no trouble talking to others. For those that tend to be shy, it's the perfect opportunity to make new friends with people who share the same interests.
- Makes you feel good
- Contributes to a longer life - volunteers encounter greater longevity and less frequency of heart disease. It can also slow the progress of Alzheimer's and other memory loss diseases.



- Gives purpose – as we age, we sometimes feel isolated but no matter who we are or what our age is, volunteering can give our lives new meaning.

- Combats stress – studies actually show the more you volunteer, the happier you become. Your body releases dopamine in the brain when you help others. This has a positive effect on how you feel.

- Sets a good example – as parents, our greatest hope is that our children grow up to be caring, giving adults. What better way to make that happen than to set a good example?

- Teaches new skills – we see it all the time. Volunteers are afraid to pick up a bird, a squirrel or opossum. With encouragement and instruction, they gain confidence and learn not only to pick them up but to feed them. You can see the pride on their faces!

Don't let fear stop you from volunteering. It's very much like starting a new job and for those of you who work, you know how stressful that can be. Every non-profit knows how valuable volunteers are. Volunteers provide their time, energies and talents to help non-profits fulfill their missions. Most non-profits have limited budgets and volunteers are the reason many non-profits are able to operate and keep the bills paid.

The most important thing to remember is to do what interests you. Do you like working with senior citizens? The homeless? Dogs and cats? If you volunteer somewhere and find it's not for you, keep looking until you find your passion.

If caring for injured, orphaned or displaced wildlife is of interest to you, please contact us. Maybe you don't want to handle animals but would like to recruit fellow volunteers, work in fundraising or design brochures. We have many different areas where you can offer your time and talents. Give Berri a call at 713.468.8972.

Make a New Year's resolution to volunteer. You'll be pleasantly surprised how this will add to your life!

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY .....	911
Fire/Ambulance.....	911
Officer.....	911
Poison Control.....	800-222-1222
Cy-Fair Medical Clinic (24 Hour).....	281-890-4285
Sheriff Non-emergency.....	281-463-2648

### NON-EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Emergency Roadside Assistance.....	800-525-5555
Fire/Ambulance.....	713-466-4073
Harris County Precinct 4 .....	281-376-3472
Texas No Call List Registration .....	866-TXN-OCAL
Vacation Watch .....	281-401-6200

### SCHOOLS

Bus Information.....	281-897-4380
Ault Elementary School.....	281-373-2800
Keith Elementary School.....	281-213-1744
Swenke Elementary School.....	281-213-1200
Rosehill Christian School .....	281-351-8114
Cy-Fair Administration .....	281-897-4000
Cy-Ranch High School .....	281-373-2300
Cy-Woods High School.....	281-213-1800
Salyards Middle School.....	281-373-2400
Spillane Middle School.....	281-213-1645

### UTILITY NUMBERS

Eagle Water Management, Inc.....	281-373-8989
Centerpoint (Gas) .....	713-659-2111
Reliant Energy (Electricity).....	713-207-7777

### OTHER NUMBERS

AT&T Repair Center .....	800-246-8464
Street Light Outages (Need to provide the 6 digit pole number).....	713-207-2222
Harris County Animal Control .....	832-999-3191
Best Trash (They provide free trashcan for recyclables) .....	281-313-2378
Harris County Public Library.....	281-290-3210
Post Office.....	281-858-9021

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### ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

Do you have an idea or suggestion for the newsletter? Want to submit a photo, article, or both? It's easy!! Email your articles to [cypresspark@peelinc.com](mailto:cypresspark@peelinc.com) by the 10th of the preceding month. So if you get your ideas in before the deadline, you should see them in the very next month's newsletter.

We are glad to hear all of the positive feedback and we intend to continue to improving the look and feel of the newsletter according to what you tell us. So get as involved as you like! We look forward to hearing from you.

## AHFC Junior Hurricanes Soccer Registration for the Spring 2020 Now Open

The Junior Hurricanes Soccer League (JH) is led by professional United States Soccer Federation (USSF) licensed staff and is designed for boys & girls who want to play and have fun in a safe and developmentally appropriate environment. The JHSL program is being offered at multiple locations and in conjunction with CFSA at the Schiel Road Complex. To learn more about each location and to register please visit [www.albionhurricanes.org](http://www.albionhurricanes.org). Season begins in February!

For those wishing only to train, join us in Katy for AHFC Friday Night Academy. Visit Katy Youth Soccer to register for this Friday Fun Program.

AHFC is proud to partner with New Territory and offer New Territory Thursday Night Academy, a 5-week Skills Program.

Email us at [jhsl@albionhurricanes.org](mailto:jhsl@albionhurricanes.org) for more information or questions. Office Phone: 713-939-7473

Want a more competitive program? Join AHFC! Call us and we can find you a team: 713-939-7473. Website: [www.albionhurricanes.org](http://www.albionhurricanes.org)



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## Cypress Christian School

### SENIOR SWIMMER QUALIFIES FOR OLYMPIC TRIALS

Elliott Jones is already committed to Auburn University as he looks to defend his TAPPS state titles from the last two seasons. This summer, he qualified for the Olympic Trials being held in Omaha, Nebraska in June of 2020 with a qualifying time of 2:02.88 in the 200-meter backstroke. At the end of the summer, he reached the finals in the Speedo Summer Junior Nationals in both the 100 and 200-meter backstroke. He made the top eight in the 200-meter, which earned him a medal and spot on the podium.



### EIGHTH-GRADERS SERVE AT HOUSTON FOOD BANK

The eighth-grade class went to the Houston Food Bank in early December. One group of students worked in the refrigerated section sorting fruit while another group sorted and boxed up dry products. It was a great day spent working together to help provide food for families in need!

### OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



Elementary and middle school students donated items, wrote letters and packed 90 Christmas boxes for the Samaritan's Purse "Operation Christmas Child" project. The organization works together with schools to assemble shoe boxes filled with various gift items and messages

of God's love. The Christmas boxes will be delivered to children in countries all around the world.

## Why Join the Cypress Hot Talker Toastmasters (TM) Club?



Ask Roy Monarch, who belongs to Cypress Hot Talkers Toastmasters, who just completed Level Four Presentation Mastery. Many Congratulations to Roy!

The Hot Talkers TM club provides a great opportunity for meeting new residents within the Cypress community, while building confidence, developing communication, and leadership skills.

Our meetings afford everyone an opportunity to:

- Facilitate Meetings (leadership track)
- Deliver prepared speeches (communication track)
- Members present one-to two-minute impromptu speeches on assigned topics
- Offering constructive evaluation

### When does the Cypress Hot Talkers Toastmasters club meet?

Our club meets Tuesday January 14 of from 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at the Bridgeland Fire Station #13, 10222 Westgreen Blvd Cypress, Tx 77433. Visitors are very welcome.

### Join Us for a Special Business Networking Event

On Tuesday, January 14th at 6:30 pm just before the Toastmasters Meeting, please join us for a half n hour social networking event for business owners in the Cypress area. Business owners are invited as well as folks interested in learning about Toastmasters.

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## Cypress-Tomball Democrats

**LILLIE SCHECHTER, HCDP CHAIR WILL SPEAK**



The Cypress-Tomball Democrats will hold its next monthly meeting Tuesday, January 21, 2020, at Rudy's Grill and Cantina, 11760 Grant Road, Houston. There is a meet and greet at 6:30 p.m., and the general meeting begins at 7:00 p.m.

Lillie Schechter, Harris County Democratic Party Chair, will be the speaker for the January meeting of the Cypress-Tomball Democrats. Lillie is proud to have recently presided over the Party's most historic county-wide sweep in a single election, thanks to the work she and so many others did during the 2018 midterm election cycle. She is a political strategist and fundraiser who has been advising local and national Democratic candidates and organizations for over a decade. Come out to meet Lillie & help us welcome her to Northwest Houston.

All are welcome to attend and to join this growing club, which meets on the third Tuesday of every month.

For more information, contact Undrai Fizer at [cytomdemocrats@gmail.com](mailto:cytomdemocrats@gmail.com), or visit the club's Facebook page.

## Tomball Art League



The Tomball Art League welcomes guest demo artist Susan Giannantonio who loves to paint! She likes, as often as possible, to surround herself with creative people who are comfortable with an occasional bout of fun,

who don't mind getting messy with paint and who consider it a point of pride to wear staining colors under their fingernails. Susan never attended kindergarten and is on a lifelong remedial journey toward achieving that skill set.

"To play is to discover."—SG

Our meetings are held in the LSC-Tomball Community Library meeting room, 30555 Tomball Pkwy, 77375. Join us at 10:30 (doors open at 10:00) for a brief business meeting followed by socializing/networking and finish with an inspiring demo artist.

Are you an artist? Do you work in watercolor, acrylics or oils? Do you work in clay? Pastels? Are you a photographer? If you enjoy fine art we invite you to join the Tomball Art League and see what we are all about. Memberships are a nominal annual due of \$25/single or \$35/family. We gather together to promote Art Appreciation in Tomball and the surrounding communities and are always striving to meet new artists in the area! Meeting and demo is free and open to the public! Check us out, you'll be surprised!

Visit our website for more information.

[www.thetomballartleague.com](http://www.thetomballartleague.com)

## Are You New to Houston or Gardening?

**Join Us at Messiah Lutheran Church for Free Winter Gardening Classes!**

**February 4-18, 2020**

New to Houston or to gardening? Messiah is offering free gardening classes to the community this winter. Join us at Messiah Lutheran Church to learn best practices in organic gardening.

The free gardening classes will consist of three one-hour sessions happening on Tuesday, September 10, 17 and 24 at 7 pm in the Messiah's Community Room. In addition to the gardening classes we will also be offering a free session on Bee Pollination on Saturday, September 21 at 10 am given by Matt Brantley of BZ Honey in our Fellowship Hall.

Evening Gardening Class @ 7 pm

September 10: Planning a Successful Garden

September 17: Soil Management and Plant Selection

September 24: Time to Plant Selection and Resources to Use

If you are interested in learning more about organic gardening, please sign up at <http://www.messiahlc.org/current-events>

Messiah Lutheran Church is a Lutheran Faith Community, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Messiah is located at 11522 Telge Road, ½ mile north of Highway 290. Regular Sunday worship times are: 8 am—Traditions; 9:30 am—The Gathering; and 10:45 am—The Crossing. The Discovery (education) Hour is 9:15-10:15 AM on Sundays. For more information, 281-890-3013 or [www.messiahlc.org](http://www.messiahlc.org). All people are welcome at Messiah.

## Register for the Northwest Flyers Kids Track Club

Ready, Set, Go! Calling all youth ages 6 - 18! Join the Northwest Flyers Youth Track Club for its 33rd Anniversary season by attending a free team Registration/Orientation Breakfast on Saturday, February 1st, 2020. The Breakfast starts promptly at 8:30 AM at the Cypress Creek Christian Community Center Forum, 6823 Cypresswood Dr., Spring, TX, 77379.

This event is an opportunity for you to learn about the team, and to meet the Northwest Flyers coaches, staff, and other new and returning athletes. The event will be highlighted by a special presentation from a member of the USA Track & Field Olympic organization (USATF). All athletes and parents who wish to join the Northwest Flyers must attend the orientation before registering.

The Northwest Flyers Track Club is a member of USA Track & Field (USATF) and offers a full program of sanctioned "track" events such as sprints, hurdles, middle distance, distance and relays, and "field" events such as long jump, triple jump, high jump, pole vault, shot put, discus and javelin.

For additional information on the Northwest Flyers Track Club, please visit the team website at <http://www.northwestflyers.org>, contact [linette.roach@sbcglobal.net](mailto:linette.roach@sbcglobal.net), or "Like" the club on Facebook.



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