

SPECTATOR

September 2020

NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF CYPRESS CREEK LAKES

Volume 9, Issue 9



*Barred Owl Gets
New Lease on Life*

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Continued from Cover

BARRED OWL GETS NEW LEASE ON LIFE

Storyline contributed by Christina Gaudin-Morgan



A few weeks ago, Christina Gaudin-Morgan, living in Saddle Ridge Estates, let her dogs out to exercise, and they found a young barred owl under the lanai nestled into the firewood area. She immediately took them back inside, thinking the owl felt trapped and would fly away when the coast was clear.

A few hours later, it was apparent that the owl was injured. After searching around for help, she located Friends of Texas Wildlife, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization where 100% of all donations support native Texas wildlife. It's located at 29615 Highland Blvd, in Magnolia.

The next day the Friends of Texas Wildlife called Christina and told her the owl had a wrap on its wing and, when ready, would be put with the other young owls they had in larger flight cages to strengthen the wing.

They also invited her and her family to participate in the release of another barred owl they have at a park in Cypress and her owl when they were both ready to fly.

On Wednesday, July 29th, her daughter, Juliana Morgan, her boyfriend, Robert "Bobby" Gillis, Jr., and Christina met one of the volunteers from Friends of Texas Wildlife, at Cypress Park on Eldridge. They participated in the release of three rehabilitated barred owls, including their rescued owl, Little Hoot.

Friends of Texas Wildlife release rehabilitated barred owls at Cypress Park regularly. We hope that Little Hoot and the two others can locate some of their previously released cage mates. More than likely, they will migrate and home elsewhere but are initially scared on their first day released.

This was an extraordinary experience that helped teach that human purposes vary. On the day that they found Little Hoot, they realized their mission was to aid creatures with whom they were blessed to share this earth. He needed their help. They are thankful for Friends of Texas Wildlife and the volunteers and donors who aid in preserving our Texas wildlife animals.



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The Flight of the Booze Fairy

by Jen Ramirez

At a time when our country seems to be so divided, one Cypress community is working hard to change that. There is a network of selfless women working hard to perform acts of kindness daily to strangers. These women, who have come to be known as the Booze Fairies, are a collection of women pouring their creative side into gift baskets to surprise random neighbors.

The craze started after a Houston affiliated group started the trend, and because of the outpouring of support in Cypress, Christel Garcia founded the Cypress chapter on social media. The random acts were founded on very simple ideas for women of ALL ages and have grown to almost 800 members strong. Member/members of the group put together gift baskets, typically with themes from “Colors of the Rainbow” to “Everything but the Coffee” filled with fun dish towels, cocktail ingredients, sweet treats, fun candies, and uplifting messages.

The creator of the basket then posts a picture of their contributions, and at that point, requests with addresses from other members (usually strangers) come pouring in asking to be “boozed.” Once the Booze Fairy selects a random person, the gift basket is left on that person’s porch for a sweet surprise upon arrival. Then the trend is continued by the recipient and has been going strong ever since!

Having been under stay at home orders associated with the pandemic has brought out the fun and creative side of these women. And more importantly, it has pulled together this community of females with the only mission of making someone’s day. There are daily posts of women who have had a rough day due to job loss, loved ones sick with COVID, moms overwhelmed by children at home for months, and any other possible challenge they face only to be met with a random stranger reaching out with generous gifts specifically for them.

One member of the group “boozed” another member and received the following note from the recipient that read, “Thank you! I have never felt a part of anything. You did that for me!” The amount of uplifting attributed to this one group has surpassed everything anyone could have ever imagined.

These women have served as role models in such a way that younger eyes have been watching and learning. Daughters of members have taken on a life of their own creating “Juice Fairies.” It is the same concept, but their baskets are filled with childhood favorites like Capri Sun, coloring books, small toys, and handmade bracelets. Seeing these incredible acts of kindness are simple reminders that there are people in this world, leaving this little piece of Texas a bit better than they found it.



BRIDGELAND HIGH SCHOOL WELCOMES NEW THEATRE DIRECTOR

By Steven W. Murray

As Bridgeland High School enters its fourth academic year since opening in 2017, Ursa Major Theatrics — the school's award-winning theatre company — welcomes Mr. Adam W. Delka as the new Director of Theatre. Leading the program with him is Mr. Nathan Stanaland who joined the program in the 2018-19 academic year as the Director of Technical Theatre.

Delka first started performing with the Superior Thespians in his hometown of Superior, NE. He is a graduate of the musical theatre program from the American Musical & Dramatic Academy (AMDA) of NYC, and also holds a Bachelor of Arts, music (BA) and a Master of Arts in Education, music (MAT) from Austin College in Sherman, TX.

The 2020-2021 academic year will mark Delka's 15th year in education. As a full-time teacher, director, choreographer, and performer, Delka is involved in a variety of local theatrical endeavors. He teaches private voice lessons, teaches classes at the Stageworks Acting Academy and the Tribble School for the Performing Arts, and maintains a professional performance and directing career in the Houston theatre community.

Delka received the BroadwayWorld Houston award for Best Choreographer in 2013 for his work with Little Shop of Horrors by MJR Theatricals. He directed the Houston Family Arts Center/Stageworks production of Les Misérables, which received the BroadwayWorld Houston award for Best Musical in 2014. In 2015, he again received the BroadwayWorld Houston award for Best Choreographer for his work on Evita at the Houston Family Arts Center. He was nominated in several categories in both 2016 and 2017.

Earlier in 2020 at the Texas Thespians Educator Conference, receiving the first-ever Thespis Award from the Texas Thespians Association for his work as a theatre director and performing artist while educating students at such a high standard honored Delka.

Ursa Major Theatrics has accomplished much in their three years of providing theatrical education and experiences for both students and audiences alike. At the annual Texas Thespians Festival held each fall, they've had dozens of students qualify each year for nationals the following summers in categories such as monologue acting, duet acting, group acting, solo musical, group musical, and costume design. In 2019, the troupe's entry All Rights Reserved was selected from among all entries at the Texas Thespians Festival to represent the state at the national competition.

Supporting Ursa Major Theatrics this year as Bridgeland Theatre Arts Booster Club executive board members are Amy Burns (President), Grace Cabaniss (VP of Operations), Leanna Miday (VP of Productions), Bonnie Cate (Treasurer), and Sandy Walding (Secretary).

Bridgeland High School and Ursa Major Theatrics began in 2017 in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey and with a delayed start to the school year. As CFISD adjusts to the COVID-19 pandemic, Delka, Stanaland, students, and Booster Club members are also ready to adapt to whatever this year brings! Keep up with what's happening within Ursa Major at BridgelandHSTheatre.org and follow them on Facebook (BHSUrsaMajorTheatrics).

RIVER OTTERS

By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center



Most people assume that the animal they are seeing in area lakes and streams is a beaver but it could be a river otter. Most people don't realize that we have otters in our area.

River otters are fascinating little creatures. They are semi-aquatic spending about two-thirds of their time on land and the other third in the water. They live in dens called holts, near water, that have several tunnel openings with at least one leading them directly to a lake, stream, inland wetland or marsh. Their webbed feet and powerful tails make them strong swimmers. When they're in the water, their nostrils and ears close to keep water out. They have a third eyelid, or nictitating membrane, that acts like the goggles we wear when we swim. It protects the eyes and helps them to see underwater. They can dive up to 60 feet and can hold their breath for up to eight minutes.

The diet of the river otter is mainly made up of aquatic organisms including fish, turtles, frogs, crayfish, etc. but since they're semi-aquatic, they've also been known to eat small mammals like squirrels and mice.

River otters are good communicators and have a variety of vocalizations. They yelp, whistle, growl and chirp and when threatened, they emit a scream that can be heard up to a mile and a half away!

Although they live alone or in pairs, river otters are very social and playful—guess you could call them party animals. The playful furballs roll down hills, juggle pebbles, wrestle, frolic in the water and even build themselves slides along the banks of rivers.

If you need assistance with an injured, orphaned or displaced animal, give us a call. In most cases, the animal doesn't need rescuing but we will help you make that determination. If the animal does need help, we will walk you through the process to keep both you and the animal safe. Our phone number is 713.468.TWRC. Our website has helpful information as well.

www.twrcwildlifecenter.org

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Texas ChalleNGe Academy

By Stacey Parke

Texas ChalleNGe Academy is a 5 1/2 month quasi-military residential academy sponsored by the Texas National Guard. It is a tuition free educational program for 16-18 year old teens who are disengaged in school. We offer academic instruction, provide structure, and discipline to help our cadets develop personal accountability and become successful adults.

Mission

The mission of the Texas ChalleNGe Academy is to reclaim the potential of at-risk youth through education, training, mentoring and service to community.

Vision

The vision of the Texas ChalleNGe Academy is to be recognized as the state's premier program for the alternative education of at-risk youth and high school dropouts.

This is a wonderful program that my son attends. While the boys and girls are at the academy they are not allowed to go home or have visitors for 5 1/2 months.

The only interaction they have with the outside world comes from letters that family and friends write them. Some of the students come from backgrounds where they do not have someone to write them. I am asking you today if you would be willing to commit to write a boy or girl a couple times a month. This would be a simple letter of encouragement. They can only receive letters so no tokens of any kind.

Please email me at Stacey.parke@cfisd.net if you are interested and I can connect you with a boy or girl in need. Thank you!

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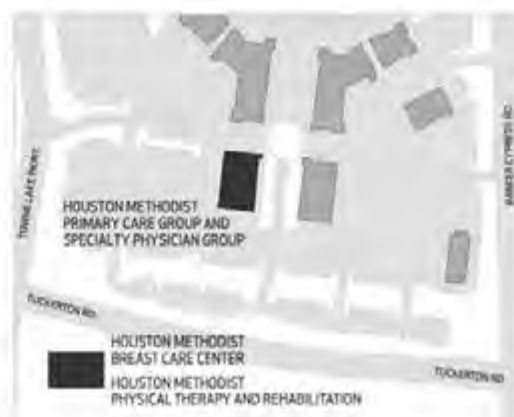


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