Managed lanes proposal approved for Hwy. 290
TxDOT to rehabilitate Hempstead Road as alternate route

By Marie Leonard

One of the first steps involving a proposed $1.3 billion project to install managed lanes on Hwy. 290 from Loop 610 to the Grand Parkway is complete.

An initial agreement for the project was approved in late April between Harris County and the Texas Department of Transportation. The two entities approved the memorandum of understanding to work together on three Houston-area highways, including Hwy. 290 and the Grand Parkway, the latter of which will be a toll road.

“I improved transportation will fit hand and glove with the growth we are experiencing,” said Jack Cagle, Precinct 4 commissioner. “If we were not able to secure the memorandum of understanding with TxDOT for the expansion of 290 and the Grand Parkway, the congestion that we are experiencing in the region would have hindered our growth.”

The project

The proposed project calls for building a two or three-lane reversible managed lane facility for high occupancy vehicles and toll traffic, and includes the addition of one general lane in both directions.

“Houston’s introduction to managed lanes began in April 2009 when the Katy Managed Lanes opened,” said Eric Hanson, media relations coordinator for the Harris County Toll Road Authority. “Managed lanes combine two types of roadways—high occupancy vehicle lanes and toll roads—to more flexibly meet the needs of a wide range of commuters, from mass transit and HOV riders to single occupancy vehicles.”

Managed lanes approved for Hwy. 290

Several projects have been proposed in the past several years to address the traffic congestion on Hwy. 290 and to construct a corridor capable of handling the 250,000 cars that travel the freeway daily, said the president of the West Houston Association discusses how improved transportation will affect Cy-Fair

County expects growth spurt to continue

Cypress booms as country’s other suburbs remain stagnant

By Marie Leonard

More than 75 percent of the growth in Harris County took place in unincorporated areas between 2000 and 2010, according to a 2011 Harris County population study. By 2018, the population in unincorporated areas is expected to rise to more than two million, which would surpass the city of Houston.

“I think [the growth] is a good combination of the schools, the option of master-planned communities with lots of amenities and the value for what you’re purchasing here for a house,” said Jim Mulholland, owner of Mulholland Realty. “In places like Katy, The Woodlands and Sugar Land, home prices are a lot higher. Cypress gives you the best of those three worlds.”

Unincorporated growth

Roads and tollways are being built, strip centers are expanding and several subdivisions are under construction in Cypress—all more than 30 miles from the core of Houston.

From 2000 to 2010, Harris County’s population outside Beltway 8—which includes mostly unincorporated areas—grew by 40 percent, from 1.5 million to about 2 million, according to the county’s 2011 population study. In addition, two of the three fastest-growing areas in the county in the past decade include Cy-Fair, according to the study.

U.S. Census Bureau data released in April suggests that nationally the outer suburban areas grew faster in 2000 than the urban areas. However, by 2010 they were the slowest growing. That is not the case in Cypress, as more than 250,000 new residents moved into the Cy-Fair ISD boundaries from 2000 to 2010, according to census data.

“When you spend $200,000 in Cypress, you’ll get a much larger home than you would in Katy or Sugar Land,” said Kathy Jones, ...
There’s always something spectacular to see at Towne Lake.
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Annual 4th of July Fireworks
Wednesday, July 4th at Dusk
Reader feedback

Grand Parkway construction

“It was a dream to build the Grand Parkway, but I never thought it would be done in my lifetime. I remember watching the construction from a distance, and now it’s a reality. I think the new businesses coming to the area will bring more growth to the Cypress region.”
—Stuart L.

On the town

Unbeatable burgers
Ranging from a snakebite burger to the Mega Mel burger, a list of top 10 spots for burgers in the greater North Houston area.

Wine Fair Cy-Fair
The Cy-Fair Houston Chamber of Commerce hosted the inaugural event outside Cypress Village Station.
Join us Sunday!
SERVICES AT 9 AND 11 AM
BIBLE STUDY AT 10:10.
X-PLODE STUDENT MINISTRY
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MEET WEDNESDAYS AT 7 PM!

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16518 House & Hahl Rd.
Cypress, TX 77433
timelessconsign@gmail.com

Timeless Consignments
Now Open
1. BODYanew MedSpa opened in April at 22444 Hwy. 249. The medical spa offers services such as hair reduction, tattoo removal, skin resurfacing and hydrofacials. 281-251-5520, www.bodyanewmedspa.com
2. Young Brothers Taekwondo opened a new location in Black Horse Ranch at 13203 Fry Road, Ste. 900. The facility offers programs for all ages that cover topics ranging from self-defense to various Taekwondo techniques. 281-256-2345, www.ybtaekwondo.com
3. Check ‘N Go opened in April at 12111 Jones Road. The business provides loans, check cashing and financial planning advice. 281-970-6642, www.checkngo.com
4. Panda Express opened in early May at 26230 Hwy. 290. The fast-food Chinese restaurant serves varied dishes with chicken, beef and shrimp. www.pandaexpress.com
5. Furniture, artwork, collectibles and antiques are a few of the items that can be found at Timeless Consignments, which opened in April at 16518 House Hahl Road, Ste. G. 713-409-7944, www.timelessconsignments.com
6. Clothing boutique My Simply Chic opened its second location May 16 at 11703 Spring Cypress Road, Ste. B. The store sells women’s and children’s clothes, shoes and accessories. mysimplychic.mybigcommerce.com
7. Golden Nails Spa is now open at 8245 Mills Road, Ste. C, inside Lighthouse Plaza. The salon offers manicure, pedicure and facial services. 832-912-1050
8. Dorje Desserts is now open at 17807 Lakecrest View Drive. Owner Sheetal Ratna makes custom cakes, desserts and pastries. She specializes in wedding and birthday cakes. 832-573-7356, www.dorjedesserts.com
9. Rooster’s, a new family sports grill that combines food and golf in Fairfield, will have a soft opening the weekend of May 19–20. Located at 20011 Cypresswood Drive, the business features a full bar, driving range and food items that range from pork chops to hamburgers. www.facebook.com/RoostersCypress
10. Subway restaurant is now open at 17129 FM 529. The store offers six- or 12-inch sandwiches with meats such as turkey, ham, roast beef, chicken and tuna. Customers may also pick their own toppings. www.subway.com

Coming Soon
11. A 100,000-square-foot H-E-B is under construction at Mason Road and Hwy. 290 in Fairfield. Expected to be complete by the end of the year, the size of the store is comparable to the Barker Cypress and Hwy. 290 location. www.heb.com
12. Mexican restaurant Mamacita’s is expected to open its third Houston-area
The Reserve at Jones Road apartment complex is under construction at the corner of Tall Timbers Drive and Jones Road. The project is expected to be finished by the end of the year.
www.mekconstruction.trustab.org

The Salons at RockCreek are under construction at 14914 Spring Cypress Road. Owners Nick and Jackie Alfano will offer beauty, facial, spray tan and massage services at the salon, which will have a variety of different room sizes. The facility is expected to open by late summer.
281-732-9235

A Shell station is under construction at the corner of Queenston Blvd. and Tuckerton Road, inside the community of Stone Gate. The gas station will also have room for fast food space, and is expected to open this summer. www.shell.com

Berri Swirl will open in June at 18351 Hwy. 249, Ste. G. The store will sell a variety of frozen yogurt.

The Harris County Hospital District plans to open a new pediatric health center May 29 at 12340 Jones Road. The facility will provide services such as primary care, psychiatry, weight management and basic health care services. 713-873-5240, www.hchdonline.com

T&C Donuts is under construction at Lighthouse Plaza, which is located at the 8245 Mills Road, Ste. D. The store will serve breakfast items ranging from donuts to kolaches to cinnamon rolls.

Freddy's Frozen Custard and Steakburgers is opening its first Houston location this summer at 15518 FM 529. The restaurant serves hamburgers, hot dogs and patio melts, along with chocolate and vanilla frozen custard. Visitors can ask for a variety of toppings in the custard, ranging from peanuts to cheesecake.
www.freddysusa.com

Cy-Fair Pet Clinic relocated to 12020 FM 1960 W. in early May. Dr. Vickie Lawrence has owned her own business for more than 20 years and treats dogs and cats.
281-732-9235

After more than 20 years at its previous location, Cy-Fair Pet Clinic moved in early May to 12020 FM 1960 W. from 9539 Jones Road. Dr. Vickie Lawrence sees dogs and cats. 281-955-7200

The Daily Brew, a coffee shop, closed one of its two Cy-Fair locations at 11688 Barker Cypress Road, Ste. A2 in April. The shop serves coffee, espresso, frappes, smoothies and frozen tea.
www.mydailybrew.com

In the News

Located at 7979 N. Eldridge Parkway, Trader's Village launched a new entertainment area May 12. The section includes several new rides including an Egyptian-themed pendulum, a 28-foot-tall tower that moves up and down and a train for children. 281-890-5500, www.tradersvillage.com

School Notes:

Cy-Fair ISD received $100,000 for winning the H-E-B Excellence in Education award May 6. The district was selected as the winner from a pool of five large school districts across the state. Additionally, Hamilton Elementary School principal Catherine Bartlett was chosen as the statewide winner of the Principal Award, for which she received $10,000 and $25,000 for Hamilton Elementary. The H-E-B Excellence in Education awards began 10 years ago as a way to support public education throughout Texas.

Four Cy-Fair ISD high schools were ranked in the 2012 U.S. News and World Report Best High Schools rankings, which were released in early May. Cypress Woods High School, Langham Creek High School and Cy-Fair High Schools were ranked 85, 111 and 141 in the state of Texas, respectively. Cypress-Ridge High School earned a bronze medal in the national rankings, which are determined by student performance, college-level achievement and the least-advantaged students' performance.

Relocations

A Touch of Class Teacher Supply relocated in mid-April to 11734 Barker Cypress Road from 8910 Barker Cypress Road. The store sells school and teacher supplies such as classroom decorations, furniture, games and workbooks.
281-256-6886, www.ateachersupply.com

Cy-Fair ISD administrators accept H-E-B's top Excellence in Education award in early May.

News or questions about Northwest Houston? E-mail nwnews@impactnews.com.
When an emergency interrupts your summer plans, trust your local North Cypress Emergency Room. We offer state-of-the-art emergency medical services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week now at three locations.

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**Willowbrook**  
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281.320.8500

**Fry Road**  
Hwy 290 at Fry Road  
281.949.5100


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May

19 Young Inventor’s Showcase
The 24th annual event features inventions from Houston-area children in kindergarten through eighth grade. Past inventions include a hand-cranked iPod charger and a football slingshot. 10 a.m.–3 p.m. Free. Children's Museum of Houston, 1500 Binz, Houston. 713-522-1136, www.cmhouston.org

26-27 Memorial Day in The Woodlands
Memorial Day in The Woodlands features fireworks, live music, vendors, strolling performers and more each night at Waterway Square from 6–9 p.m. On May 26, events include a face painter and balloonist, 6–9 p.m., performance by Sheila Marshall Band, 6–7:20 p.m., performance by Rapture, 7:40–8:35 p.m. and fireworks, 8:55 p.m. On May 27, events include a face painter and balloonist, 6–9 p.m., performance by 11th Hour, 6–7:20 p.m., performance by Park Avenue, 7:40–8:35 p.m., and fireworks, 8:55 p.m. Free. 31 Waterway Square Place, The Woodlands. www.thewoodlandschamber.com

25–June 10 “The Fantasticks”
Houston Family Arts Center performs the musical “The Fantasticks” that focuses on the master-planned community’s lakes. Refreshments and music also take place during the event. Free. 7:30 p.m. Towne Lake Community Center, 9214 W. Bridgeport Pass Circle, Cypress. 281-256-2372. www.townelaketexas.com

June

2-3 Free Press Summer Fest
Houston’s own two-day music festival, this year’s line-up includes a variety of artists ranging from Willie Nelson to the Flaming Lips to the Descendents. This year’s festival also features an art on display and numerous vendors. $75. 11 a.m.–10 p.m. Eleanor Tinsley Park, 500 Allen Parkway, Houston. www.freepresssummerfest.com

9 Wine and Food Week
The fifth annual Wine and Food Week returns to The Woodlands with four days of events including the H-E-B Wine Walk June 7 at Market Street (5:30–8:30 p.m.); the Ladies of the Vine Tasting, Panel and Luncheon June 8 at the Club at Carlton Woods (noon–3 p.m.); Sips, Suds and Sliders June 8 at The Woodlands Waterway Marriott (5:30–9:30 p.m.); the Capital One Bank Platinum Wine Vault Tasting June 9 at The Woodlands Waterway Marriott (4:30–6:30 p.m.); and the Wine Rendezvous Grand Tasting and Chef Showcase June 9 at The Woodlands Waterway Marriott (7–10 p.m.). Prices vary. 713-557-5732. www.wineandfoodweek.com

11 Backyard Grill Bash Golf Tournament
Players compete in the hole in one, long drive and closest to the pin contests, or they may sponsor a hole or donate raffle items. Entry includes access to the tournament, a cart, range balls, lunch, dinner, door prizes and goodie bags. Proceeds from the annual event go to local nonprofit Cy-Hope. 1 p.m.

28 Towne Lake Lantern Launch
Guests dedicate a light to a loved one and launch it on Memorial Day in one of the master-planned community’s lakes. Free. 7:30 p.m. Towne Lake Community Center, 9214 W. Bridgeport Pass Circle, Cypress. 281-256-2372. www.townelaketexas.com

May 25–27

By Marie Leonard

The annual pop culture convention features guests, events and exhibitors from the comic, science fiction, fantasy, video game, music and film realms. This year’s events range from a Jedi Training Seminar to a Houston Roller Derby demonstration to ghost hunting. Admission is purchased separately for the Jedi Training, but participants are taught by “Star Wars” stunt coordinator Nick Gillard. There are several ghost hunting sessions, which go over the equipment, techniques and basic questions. Additionally, the Houston Roller Derby hosts a comic book-themed tournament, races and contest.

Numerous writers, actors, and entertainers attend the third annual event. A few of this year’s notable guests include George Takei from “Star Trek”, Kevin Sorbo from “Hercules” and Kristin Bauer from “True Blood.”

Staying true to its name, the event also features access to comics and games.

Times vary. $12-$150 (prices vary depending on days attended and adult versus child admission). George R. Brown Convention Center, 1001 Avenida De Las Americas, Houston. www.comicpalooza.com

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4-9 LSC-CyFair Summer Children’s Performance
A performance of “Stuart Little” geared toward children is performed at Lone Star College–CyFair. Based on the book, the play tells the story of a mouse that grows up with a New York City family. 10 a.m. (Mon.–Fri.) Noon (Sat.). $5. LSC-CyFair, 9191 Barker Cypress Road, Cypress. 281-920-5201. www.lonestar.edu/box-office-ticket-info.htm

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Players compete in the hole in one, long drive and closest to the pin contests, or they may sponsor a hole or donate raffle items. Entry includes access to the tournament, a cart, range balls, lunch, dinner, door prizes and goodie bags. Proceeds from the annual event go to local nonprofit Cy-Hope. 1 p.m.


Online Calendar
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Backyard Grill Bash Golf Tournament

By Marie Leonard

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For a full list of Northwest Houston events visit www.impactnews.com/houston-metro/calendar.

To have Northwest Houston events considered for the print edition, they must be submitted online by the fifth of the month.
Residents of Lakeland Heights in the master-planned community of Bridgeland will continue to wait for construction to start on the Lakeland Village Center. After residents complained about an aspect of the project, the developers decided to rework the idea.

“As of last summer, plans for the mixed-use center included nine apartment buildings, retail and restaurant space. Now, the apartments will be relocated outside Lakeland Heights. “A site for the apartments hasn’t been identified yet, but it will most likely be south of future Bridgeland Creek Parkway,” said Susan Vreeland-Wendt, director of marketing for The Woodlands Development Company, the developer of Bridgeland.

Although the addition of apartments within Bridgeland has always been part of the community’s conceptual plan, Gaye Barclay and a group of her neighbors felt blindsided when they found out.

“We had a meeting with the developer, and they implied we knew [about the apartments] all along,” Barclay said. “They said the sign out front said there would be residential development. We were told there would be lofts above the stores, but were never told about apartments.”

To be sure other residents in Bridgeland knew, the group wrote numerous letters and placed fliers on everyone’s door. They also created a Facebook page called “Stop Bridgeland BIG House,” in which they shared information about the proposed mixed-use center.

“[Lakeland Heights] is about front porches and knowing your neighbors,” Barclay said. “It’s a lifestyle and traditional neighborhood development that they were selling. We were sold on the fact there would be a great center out front with boutiques and ice cream shops.”

The Lakeland Heights Village Center will continue to be mixed-use development, featuring a combination of town homes for sale, retail, office and medical space, Vreeland-Wendt said.

“We are reassessing the plan, and we don’t know when there will be a rendering,” she said.

When complete, Bridgeland will have several village centers and a larger town center.

Jersey Village to wait for developer interest south of Hwy. 290

The idea that a commuter rail line could run alongside Hwy. 290 garnered support for a future transit-oriented development in Jersey Village, but there has been a challenge in drawing developer interest.

“Lenders are not as free with their money as they might have been five or seven years ago,” said Mike Castro, city manager. “Someone who might have come in here and developed the property is having a hard time finding cash, and that’s beyond the city’s control. We’re in a position where we have a plan, but we have to be patient.”

The idea for Jersey Village Crossing originated about four years ago when Castro attended a presentation on the feasibility of commuter rail lines in Houston. Several routes were studied, but the Hwy. 290 corridor out to Hempstead was one of the final choices.

“Looking at 290, it made sense to me that there was a possibility for something other than your typical Northwest Houston strip center or business center,” Castro said. We had a lot going on in Jersey Village at the time, and all those issues and possibilities came together right there at Jones and 290.”

Over the course of a year and a half, city leaders and council members worked with Kimley–Horn and Associates to develop a master plan for the area south of Hwy. 290 and Jones Road. Last May, City Council voted to change the zoning regulations in the area south of Hwy. 290 to include form-based codes, which allow for a different type of style and development.

Although the idea for the transit-oriented development started because of the potential for commuter rail, the project is feasible without it.

“We came to the conclusion that it still works whether we have commuter rail or not, whatever the 290 traffic situation is, or whether METRO comes in with light rail,” Castro said.

In addition, there has been more traffic than anticipated on Jones Road, Castro said.

“We’re patiently waiting for the environment to change and affect the willingness of builders to build in quality areas,” he said.

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**Project growth around Jersey Village Crossing**

The Jersey Village Crossing transit-oriented development will be constructed in several phases, the first of which is expected to be complete by 2019, if developer interest pans out. The remaining phases are expected to be complete by about 2035. The Houston-Galveston Area Council took into account census data to project future growth in the area around the TOD as work on the project progresses.

**Expected growth around Jersey Village Crossing:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of residential units</th>
<th>2019: 379</th>
<th>2035: 546</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total forecasted population</td>
<td>2019: 892</td>
<td>2035: 1,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail/restaurant/entertainment (in sq. ft.)</td>
<td>2019: 345,000</td>
<td>2035: 237,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forecast service employees</td>
<td>2019: 2,075</td>
<td>2035: 1,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office uses</td>
<td>2019: 188,000</td>
<td>2035: 128,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: City of Jersey Village, Gulf Coast Rail District 2012 Conceptual Engineering Study for Hempstead Corridor Commuter Rail
Portion of FM 529 to be five lanes

By Kevin Koloin

A road-widening project that began in August 2010 and runs through August of this year was designed to reduce congestion and improve safety along FM 529 from Greenhouse Road to west of Fry Road.

The two-phase Texas Department of Transportation project will cost $8.9 million. It will provide additional lanes, a continuous left turn lane, a curb and gutters with an underground storm sewer and sound abatement walls. Initially two lanes, upon completion the stretch of FM 529 will have an additional lane in each direction for a total of five lanes.

The project is in the second phase, which consists of work on the westbound lanes, the continuous left turn lane and the sound walls.

However, during construction, a new traffic problem that affects residents of Copperfield popped up.

“Since the onset of construction on 529, all of the traffic has veered off 529 and has moved west to Longenbaugh [Drive],” said Anthony Cecala, president of the Copperfield Coalition. “The traffic on Longenbaugh more than doubled, and that’s one of the main roads through Copperfield.”

There are more than 70,000 people in the various subdivisions that live in the area, and many of them use Longenbaugh, Cecala said.

“We are getting an abundance of people out in Katy that take 529 all the way out to 290, now they run into that traffic so they cut over at Fry or whatever cross streets to Longenbaugh,” he said. “This creates a big problem for the Copperfield and Copper Lakes communities.”

County statistics suggest that Longenbaugh has increased traffic flow to the point that it has surpassed that of West Road.

“This is something that the Copperfield residents are just going to have to endure until the project is complete,” Cecala said. “Once it is complete, all of the traffic that was originally on 529 will go back to 529 and the people that were going down Longenbaugh from Fry Road may actually decide to take 529, which should move traffic a lot quicker than Longenbaugh ever would.”

Additionally, the businesses on FM 529 that have seen a drop off in customers will welcome the added traffic, Cecala explained.

“One that construction is complete, not only will they get back the original amount of traffic, but I think it will increase because people will prefer to drive down 529 instead of Longenbaugh,” he said.
Each political party holds a primary election to determine who should represent their party in the general election. This applies to local, state, and federal office. During primary elections, the winners of primary elections receive delegates that, once accumulated, help clinch a nomination to the general election.

Frequently asked questions

Q. What is the primary election?
A. This election is held before the general election. Voters of each party nominate candidates for office, party officers, etc.

Q. Can I vote in both the Republican and Democratic primaries?
A. No. In Texas, voters can participate in the primary election by voting Democrat or Republican, but cannot vote in both. Independent candidates are not included on the Texas primary ballot. Once a voter participates in the primary election, he or she is designated a member of the party for which he or she voted for the next two years and is ineligible to participate in the opposing party’s primary election.

Q. Will I vote at the same polling location for the March primary and the November election?
A. Not necessarily. The number of voters is typically lower for the primary election so the elections office consolidates precincts to vote at fewer polling locations.

Q. Who is eligible for a mail-in ballot?
A. You may request a ballot by mail if you will be out of the country on Election Day and during early voting, if you are sick or disabled, or if you are 65 years old or older on Election Day.

Q. Can I vote for Libertarian candidates?
A. No. The Libertarian Party does not have a primary election. The party holds a convention to choose its candidates.

Q. How is the order of candidates on the ballot chosen?
A. The candidate order is determined by a random drawing.
State Election dates for 2012

Until May 25: Early in-person voting period
May 29: Primary election
July 23–27: Early in-person voting period for runoff election
July 31: Runoff election

Compiled by Shawn Arrajj, Marie Leonard and Brian Walzel

Early voting anywhere
Voters can vote at any early polling location. For Harris County polling locations, www.harrisvotes.com.

Voter registration
Voters must be registered 30 days before an election. To register in Harris County, visit www.hctax.net/voter/voterintro.aspx or call 713-274-8683.

Acceptable Voter IDs:
Voter Registration Certificate, driver’s license, other ID with both photo and name, birth certificate, U.S. citizenship papers, U.S. passport or any other form of ID prescribed by the Secretary of State.

Although Community Impact Newspaper attempted to include all races pertinent to Northwest Houston residents, this guide is not intended to be comprehensive. For full lists of races and candidates, visit www.harrisvotes.com.

Republican
Harris County

Republican Party Chair
Jared Woodfill*
www.jaredwoodfill.org
713-751-3080
Paul Simpson
www.simpsonforgopchair.com
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On April 28, the Cy-Fair Houston Chamber of Commerce hosted the inaugural Wine Fair Cy-Fair in partnership with Food and Vine Time Productions. The event took place at Cypress Village Station and featured various types of food and wine samples.

A family that was awarded a Habitat for Humanity home is recognized at the organization’s Tool Box Bash April 28.

Marie Leonard

Visitors to Nature Fest April 28 watch as one of the live demonstrations—a butterfly in a bubble—makes its way across Oak Meadow Park in Bridgeland. The annual event features live shows, camel rides, face painting, a rock wall and paddleboat rides.

Lone Star College–CyFair President Audre Levy cuts a ribbon April 24 during a ceremony celebrating an electric vehicle donation and installation of several solar panels on campus.

Marie Leonard

A firefighter from the Cy-Fair Volunteer Fire Department teaches a child how to use a hose during Nature Fest in Bridgeland April 28.

Marie Leonard

From left to right, Brooke Abshire, Mark Williamson, Brent Abshire and Holden Abshire celebrate the initial $14,000 raised for the Rona Martin Abshire Memorial Scholarship, to be awarded to a student.

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Brooke Abshire, Mark Williamson, Brent Abshire and Holden Abshire celebrate the initial $14,000 raised for the Rona Martin Abshire Memorial Scholarship.
Cy-Fair ISD implements new way of grading at several campuses

By Marie Leonard

Several secondary campuses within Cy-Fair ISD are working with standards-based grading, a newer form of instruction that involves mastery of specific learning objectives.

“It’s a new talk in the classroom, and it’s definitely a different talk, but from what we’re hearing from students and faculty, students have a better understanding of what the standard is and how they’re doing,” said Roy Garcia, associate superintendent for curriculum, instruction and school administration.

Under a traditional grading approach, if a student earns a score of 80 percent on a quiz about fractions, the reasons for the 20-point deduction are not made clear. With standards-based grading, there are several levels of proficiency—ranging from beginner to advanced—that give the student a clearer target as to what they know, what they don’t know, and some ways to show they learned more, or to show a higher level of proficiency,” Jadloski said.

Even though more high schools have implemented standards-based grading than middle or elementary campuses, the process works for any grade, level or subject area. Additionally, the system could help students better prepare for statewide standardized grading.

“A strong knowledge of how a student is progressing along the continuum of learning concepts is good and will help a student do well on STAAR exams, SAT, ACT and all other assessments,” Jadloski said.

Standards-based grading will not be mandated at any of the campuses, she added.

Standards-based grading facts

**The method:**

- Standards-based grading gives students a better sense of what they know, what they do not know and what they need to improve
- The method can be applied at any grade level and in most subject areas
- Students are assessed before starting a new standard, based on what he or she may know or what they bring to the table in terms of prior knowledge
- Cy-Fair ISD is on the path to standards-based grading at one middle school and six high schools, which have various numbers of teams of teachers using the grading method

**Grading:**

- Each student’s performance is measured against the learning objective or standard; students are not compared to one another
- Grades are based on a continuum of understanding that include beginner, partially proficient, proficient and advanced proficient
- Students know what they know about reducing fractions or adding fractions with unlike denominators, instead of what grade they earned on a fraction test
- Grades do not include evidence of work ethic such as lateness, missing assignments or absences

**Implementation:**

- Standards-based grading is not a requirement at any CFisd campus
- Before teachers work with a student on a standard, they have identified the appropriate levels of achievement for each standard
- Mary Jadloski, assistant superintendent for secondary curriculum and instruction, said standards-based grading is a philosophical mindset change for teachers, and not something that can be mandated

Source: Cy-Fair ISD
NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) will conduct public meetings regarding proposed improvements to SH 6/FM 1960 from IH 10 to SH 249. The purpose of the meeting is to gather public input on the proposed construction of raised medians along SH 6/FM 1960 from IH 10 to SH 249. The project improvements are proposed to meet current safety standards. No additional right-of-way would be required for the proposed project, and no displacements would be necessary.

Due to the length of the project, approximately 15 miles, two public meetings will be held at two different locations. The same information will be presented at both meetings. The first meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 29, 2012, at Campbell Middle School, which is located at 11415 Bobcat Road in Houston, Texas 77064. The second meeting will be held on Thursday, May 31, 2012, at Kahla Middle School, which is located at 16212 West Little York in Houston, Texas 77084. Both meetings will be held in an open house format from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Exhibits showing aerial photography and schematic plans of the proposed project will be displayed at the meeting. Representatives from TxDOT and their study team will be available to answer individual questions. Public comments are encouraged. The schematic plan showing the proposed design is on file and available for inspection at the TxDOT Houston District Office at 7600 Washington Avenue, Houston, Texas 77007. The TxDOT office is open Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., excluding state holidays.

Persons interested in attending the public meeting who have special communication or accommodation needs are encouraged to contact TxDOT’s Public Information Office at 713-802-5072 at least two working days prior to the meeting. Since the public meeting will be conducted in English, any requests for language interpreters or other special communication needs should also be made at least two working days prior to the public meeting. TxDOT will make every reasonable effort to accommodate these needs.

All interested persons are invited to attend this public meeting. Written comments relative to the proposed project may be presented at the meeting or submitted to the Director of Project Development, Texas Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 1386, Houston, Texas 77251-1386, at any time on or before June 14, 2012. Comments may also be emailed on or before June 14, 2012 to HOU-PDWEBMail@txdot.gov.
Karen Othon, TxDOT’s Hwy. 290 public information officer.

“Has always been TxDOT’s plan to rebuild 290 from [Loop] 610 to FM 2920,” she said. “This is a monumental step toward us making progress and advancing the vision of the 290 Program.”

A portion of the other improvements planned for Hwy. 290 are in progress or will begin this summer, but before the proposed managed lanes project, there was no funding for any construction west of Beltway 8. The two remaining segments from the Grand Parkway to FM 2920 remain unfunded, Othon said.

“With state and federal funding for transportation becoming more limited, local communities have had to find ways to stretch their dollars,” Hanso said.

As part of the agreement, Harris County waived its rights to construct the Hempstead Toll Road, which would have run parallel to Hwy. 290, a similar concept to that of the Hardy Toll Road near I-45. Instead, TxDOT will rehabilitate Old Hempstead Road from east of Washington Avenue to west of Beltway 8 with an asphalt overlay, so the thoroughfare can serve as an alternate route during the managed lanes installation process.

No design work has been completed for the proposed managed lanes project, but it could look similar to the managed lanes on I-10, west of downtown.

Construction on the project could start early next year, but is expected to take about four years, Othon said.

Funding issues

The state, along with the Houston–Galveston Area Council, will provide $213 million in Proposition 12 bonds—monies set aside to address highway congestion—to construct the project, and about $433 million from the Unified Transportation Program. Harris County agreed to pay $400 million, but it will request a credit for its investment of approximately $80 million for advanced funding for Segment E of the Grand Parkway.

Since tax dollars are used primarily for neighborhood roads, the county is moving toward a user-pay model for several projects in which it uses tolls to help finance major thoroughfares, Cagle said. A slightly different project in the area, the county is trying to move forward to develop Hwy. 249 as a toll road, as opposed to the managed lanes concept on Hwy. 290.

“Seven or eight years ago, people in Tomball were opposed to a toll road going into their area,” Cagle said. “Then they built three feeder lanes. What we now see is the citizens are sitting there in three lanes of heavy traffic. They look to the left where a toll road could be and they say, ‘I would rather pay that $1.30 so I can fly by instead of sitting and spending money on gas.’”

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Growing population. Construction started in April on a new H-E-B at Mason Road and Hwy. 290 in Fairfield, and it is expected to be complete by the end of the year. “Cypress is an ever-growing community,” said Cyndy Garza-Roberts, director of public affairs for H-E-B. “Density there continues to grow, and we thought there was an opportunity to serve customers in that area.”

The store will be about 100,000 square feet, which is comparable to the Cypress Market store at Barker Cypress Road and Hwy. 290. Further east, one of Cypress’ busiest commercial centers is bracing for an expansion. Located between Spring Cypress and Skinker roads off Hwy. 290, plans call for several new stores at Cypress Towne Center. Charming Charlie’s, Michael’s and James Avery are under construction and slated to open there later this year.

Sustaining the growth
Although the projected growth appears positive for Cypress, there are transportation and monetary issues involved in maintaining such a highly populated area that has not been annexed. Unincorporated Harris County is growing at a rate more than six times that of the city of Houston, but the county must rely mainly on property taxes to maintain its services. “Unlike the city, which has a sales tax, we don’t have that mechanism for providing some of our services,” said Jack Cagle, Precinct 4 commissioner. “It’s a challenge to be fiscally responsible and get to provide quality services. But as a general rule, most of the folks prefer to live in the county, even though we don’t have that extra penny to tack onto sales tax.”

When Hwy. 290 is improved, Mulholland said he expects Cypress will grow even faster. “The Grand Parkway will also help a bit for people commuting to the Energy Corridor and eventually The Woodlands when the next segments are complete,” Mulholland said. “Bridgeland’s Towne Center development was conceptualized around the Grand Parkway, so that will only make things bigger out here.”
Blackberries of Houston
Couple grows fruit on 7.5-acre site

By Marie Leonard

Even with bustling Hwy. 290 and the expanding developments of Cypress less than a few miles away, a visit to Blackberries of Houston is like a step back in time to a place out of a chapter from a history textbook.

Both born in 1930 into the agricultural world, Frankie and J.D. McMaster grow blackberries on their 7.5 acres of land off Mueschke Road, a pastime they turned into a successful business.

"[Farming] is bred into you from that period—and it doesn’t go away—so you always like to do it," J.D. McMaster said. "We can and preserve a lot, and we eat just like people did in the 1930s: from the garden, because there were no grocery stores back then."

Visitors come from all over Houston every summer to pick the blackberries during a season that lasts about one month.

This year, the couple expects the blackberries will be ripe for picking starting around the third week of May.

Although they have always enjoyed farming, the McMasters almost accidentally stumbled into the business.

"We used to give vegetables away, and our neighbor told us we were giving too many out, so we put a sign outside," J.D. McMaster said.

The couple traveled to East Texas in 1998 and bought 10 blackberry plants to start. The number increased to nearly 5,000 in the past 14 years.

"This is a family thing," J.D. McMaster said. "People bring their kids and they learn how things are grown."

Customers who come to pick the blackberries are given a one-gallon container to store their berries, which can be made into numerous types of food.

"We make a syrup that could be made into a jam, and I could almost drink it," J.D. McMaster said. "Instead of using milk on my cereal, I pour it on my Frosted Flakes."

To make the crop expand, the couple takes the shoots from around the plants and transplants them.

"During the drought, my wife dug them up and put them in one-gallon pots and watered them by hand to keep them alive," J.D. McMaster said.

"We put in a new well after the drought ended to make sure we could keep watering in December and January. It helped a whole lot."

Since the weather was severe last season, J.D. McMaster expects a good crop this year.

"You can see how pretty and green everything is, and we’ve had a good wet season coming in," he said. "I can’t wait for this season. We get as antsy about it as the people who call in everyday."

Husband and wife Frankie (left) and J.D. McMaster allow people to pick blackberries on their land.

What to know before you go

- The season lasts about one month
- Visitors can call ahead of time to find out the picking forecast
- About 70 people can pick the berries at one time
- Typically open from 7 a.m.–noon
- Everyone is given a one-gallon container to store the berries

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Max Key’s affinity for motorcycles began decades before he opened American Road Hog Cycles in 2001 with co-owner Jason Antonelli. “When I turned 16 my parents gave me the family car because they didn’t want me to have a motorcycle, so I sold it and bought a motorcycle anyway,” Key said. “Now I’ve been riding more than 40 years. You just can’t beat the freedom to ride.”

A motorcycle repair shop, American Road Hog Cycles provides services such as oil and tire changes, brake jobs, custom paint jobs, motor packages, engine work and restorations.

“Customers feel like family when they come in here,” Antonelli said. “We show them what is wrong with their motorcycle and really make them a part of it.”

Key and Antonelli do 100 percent of the work and restorations in-house, with the exception of paint jobs, which they send out to be completed in a few days.

“People know our work and our quality in the biker community,” Key said. “We are known first for our customer service and second because we do things that other shops don’t do, like fix anything that a customer will bring us.”

Ultimately, the expansion gives the men the chance to continue growing their business.

“We take a bike that is real hard for people to fix, and we get it done,” Key said.

By Marie Leonard
Additional reporting by Kevin Koloian

American Road Hog Cycles
Business customizes, builds motorcycles

The business’s shop is usually full with bikes to upgrade or fix.

Typical projects
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• Restorations
• Fix wrecked bikes to like-new condition
• Custom paint

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Locatelli’s Pizza
Owners serve up traditional, signature pizzas

By Marie Leonard
Additional reporting by Kevin Koloian

More than 50 years ago, Adam Womack’s grandmother wrote down a pizza dough recipe that would one day encourage her grandson to open his own restaurant with his wife, Katie Womack.

The couple opened Locatelli’s Pizza in Cypress more than 10 years ago and uses the original recipe as a basis for their food. The restaurant hit its stride after Hurricane Rita hit the Texas coast in 2005, as it was one of the only businesses to re-open the next day.

“It was the best advertising we could have gotten,” Adam Womack said. “Business has really boomed since that happened.”

The pizza at Locatelli’s can be purchased by the slice, or served in 13 or 17-inch pies. The restaurant offers a traditional cheese pizza with numerous topping choices such as bacon, pineapple, sausage, sun-dried tomatoes and mushrooms. More than 10 specialty pizzas made fresh are also available. The HawaiiTelli with Heat ($13.49–$17.49) features ham, pineapple, bacon, red bell pepper and jalapenos. A twist on traditional pizza, the PestaTelli ($13.49–$17.49) has house-made pesto sauce, four types of cheese, tomatoes, sausage and mushrooms. A pizza with sausage, pepperoni, meatballs, mushrooms, red bell peppers and black olives (slice-$5.89, 10"-10.99, 13"-14.49, 17"-18.49)

Ham Bam: A toasted French roll and mayo, stuffed with thinly sliced baked ham, topped with sautéed jalapeño and banana peppers, red onions, red bell peppers and held together with melted provolone cheese ($6.99)

Baked Ziti: Tube shaped pasta blended with homemade marinara sauce and ricotta cheese, topped with mozzarella and provolone cheeses and baked to a golden brown ($8.99)

Owner Recommendations
• Tortellini Pesto: Tri-colored ring shaped pasta, filled with cheese, topped with homemade pesto sauce and freshly grated Romano cheese (9.99)
• StaffaTelli: A pizza with sausage, pepperoni, meatballs, mushrooms, red bell peppers and black olives (slice-$5.89, 10"-10.99, 13"-14.49, 17"-18.49)
• Ham Bam: A toasted French roll and mayo, stuffed with thinly sliced baked ham, topped with sautéed jalapeño and banana peppers, red onions, red bell peppers and held together with melted provolone cheese ($6.99)
• Baked Ziti: Tube shaped pasta blended with homemade marinara sauce and ricotta cheese, topped with mozzarella and provolone cheeses and baked to a golden brown ($8.99)

Specials
• 17-inch one-topping pizza for $10.99 every Tuesday
• Diners can purchase two 13-inch two-topping pizzas for $16.99 every Thursday
• The $7.99 lunch special includes a piece of pizza—a quarter of a 17-inch pizza—with two toppings, salad and a drink

Some of our customers come in literally every single day. People can’t seem to get enough of our food.

—Adam Womack, owner

Locatelli’s Pizza
13215 Grant Road
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www.locatellis.com

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What areas of greater west Houston do you expect to be the fastest growing in the approaching decades?

The core of greater west Houston and the Cypress area sit right in the middle of where the growth is expected to occur. In 2010, that area from Hwy. 6 just beyond the Grand Parkway had a population of 743,000. That’s expected to double by 2050. The northwest quadrant, today, is 29 percent of the total population of greater west Houston, or about half a million. That area is projected to be three times that, or 1.2 million, by 2050. From our forecasts, it’s clear that Cypress is the epicenter of growth.

What are the factors that drive the continued growth in greater west Houston?

The energy industry is at the core of the growth that we have enjoyed since the early ’70s, when Shell and Conoco moved out here, and Exxon later on. We have seen the correlation between infrastructure and job growth on I-10, and I believe the same thing will happen on the Grand Parkway and Hwy. 290. There were very major decisions made by BP and Shell to keep their facilities on I-10 and expand them significantly. They did that because I-10 had been improved to such a degree that it would accommodate the expansion of their employment base.

Describe the organization’s 2050 plan.

One thing we know about growth is that it’s going to happen. You can’t say that in every city, but in Texas — and especially in Houston — we know it’s going to happen. We are using a projected forecasted population growth for 35 years out, which is an unusually long period of time. The question is why would you project out that far? We did that to demonstrate what that growth means for greater west Houston, with the belief that when you see a number like 1 million new residents, that’s not as impactful as when you look at a map and see the footprint of where that population may go. We have to be ready for the growth, and with the knowledge of the amount of people who may be coming and where they might go, the next step is to ask what kind of infrastructure might be needed and where that might be deployed to support growth.

Once improvements to Hwy. 290 are complete, what kind of impact will that have in the area?

Growth is going to happen there — regardless of what happens on 290 — because you’ll still be able to get down that corridor on Beltway 8 and the Grand Parkway. You’re experiencing, year after year, a 40 to 50 percent increase in home sales in the northwest quadrant, and I think that’s a demonstration of the quality that exists in those communities and the related services such as the school system. That will support the continued growth, and it will accelerate when it becomes clear that 290 will be improved. We have that indication right now with this new arrangement between Harris County and TxDOT, and we expect that freeway to be significantly improved.

Where are the biggest transportation problem spots in greater west Houston?

We have the major corridors teed up. With I-10, what we’ll do on 290 and with the [Grand Parkway] coming in place, we have the major grid more than adequate. I can’t see another area around Houston that has such a significant major freeway backbone. I think the key is how we’re going to address the major thoroughfares, which get folks from their residential communities to these major corridors. All of these need not to just be rebuilt, but expanded, and they have to operate efficiently.

Roger Hord
West Houston Association president

By Marie Leonard

The core of greater west Houston can be seen through the windows at the West Houston Association office as Roger Hord discusses the future of the area, which he says has grown up around the energy industry.

The same growth has also driven Hord’s work as president of the association, a role in which he works on various initiatives that range from transportation to flood control. The West Houston Association covers the area from northwest Harris County — which includes Cy-Fair — to northern Fort Bend County.

Although he is not a native Houstonian, Hord moved to the Meyerland area in the late ’50s and considers himself to have grown up with the city. He attended the University of Texas and studied finance, accounting and management, and then worked in the university’s personnel department.

Hord went on to dabble in economic development, infrastructure and public policy at the Greater Houston Partnership before he became president of the West Houston Association in 1999.

The association was formed in the late ’70s by David Wolf and Wolff Industries to assure the right infrastructure and public policies were provided to support the growth that is expected to continue in greater west Houston, Hord said. The biggest initiative Hord works on is transportation, which includes the major thoroughfares and the larger freeways that tie the current and anticipated growth together in west Houston.

Under Hord’s leadership, the association last year also created the West Houston Plan 2050, data that studies the growth west Houston is expected to see in the next several decades.

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Cypress Saloon
Boot scootin’ close to home

By Kevin Koloian

Offering live country music every Friday and Saturday night, Cypress Saloon is one of the few places in the area for good ol’ boys to cut loose.

Open for nearly six years, the saloon has hosted local and national acts such as the Bellamy Brothers, Stoney LaRue, Asleep at the Wheel, Roger Creager and David Allan Coe.

“We have the biggest dance floor in Cypress and the only place out here that has national acts come through to perform,” said James Plog, manager. “It feels awesome that we can offer a great place for people to come and enjoy themselves. People don’t have to drive in to the inner loop or to Spring or to The Woodlands.”

The concert hall grew out of Dahl started the restaurant with his father, P.O., and cousin, Kirby. Dahl's. Owner Philip P.O.’s Burgers, which has been open for 32 years. Owner Philip Dahl started the restaurant with his father, P.O., and cousin, Kirby.

To accommodate various gatherings for little league teams and other organizations, there was a need to expand and build a pavilion.

“We had a couple of concerts and that went well, so we enclosed it and made it a full saloon,” Plog said.

Many big name bands are hesitant to play a new venue, so Cypress Saloon struggled to bring in national acts at first, Dahl said.

“It took us a few years to get a top-flight band to play because they are skeptical about getting paid since they want their money up front,” he said. “We haveotten over that hump because we have been doing this for so long. Now, we have a such a good reputation that Nashville will call us instead of just us calling them.”

Bands like playing at the saloon because of the wide-open set up with the big stage and high ceilings, Dahl said.

“We have acoustical materials sprayed on the ceilings and walls, and the curtains are designed for acoustics as well,” he said. “It’s probably one of the better-sounding buildings in Houston.”

For added entertainment, the saloon has a horseshoe pit and offers a washer tossing game outside as well as beer pong. Customers can also throw darts or shoot a game of pool.

Besides concerts, people rent out the saloon for private parties, weddings and corporate events.

There are weekly happy hour bar specials Tuesday through Sunday and other drink specials throughout the week.

Local musicians show off their talent at the saloon’s open mic night on Thursdays. Future plans include offering more live entertainment throughout the week via karaoke and progressive rock nights, Plog said.
Grand Parkway
Development planned for past 50 years

By Marie Leonard

L

and once considered the fringe areas of Houston will soon appear much different than it did in the 1960s, when the idea for the Grand Parkway was born.

The City of Houston’s planning department determined the need for a third outer loop in the ’60s, while Loop 610 was still under construction and Beltway 8 was in the planning stages. In 1950, almost 600,000 people lived in Houston, which increased to 1.2 million by 1970, according to census data. The population increase was one reason the Grand Parkway was approved by the state in the ’80s. Afterwards, county officials and landowners drew a route for the highway and submitted it to the Texas Highway Commission, according to a 1992 environmental study on the Grand Parkway.

“As development occurs, developers have to build portions of the major roads so there is continuity in the city,” said David Gornet, president of the Grand Parkway Association. “As they get to where future freeways would be, they have to set that land aside. There was pressure to TxDOT in the ’80s from people who said the growth is coming and wanted them to adopt [the Grand Parkway] and bring it to fruition.”

In 1984, the state created the Grand Parkway Association—a nonprofit entity that promotes and oversees the development of the freeway—to help save money for future highway projects. According to the environmental overview, the Grand Parkway would be constructed in nine different segments instead of all at once because of the decrease in available construction money and the environmental areas on which the toll road would be built. Each section needed to stand alone in case only a few portions were completed, which is why plans call for each piece to connect two major thoroughfares or other freeways.

Construction is expected to begin on several segments of the toll road in the next few years, but there was a setback several years ago. When construction began in the early ’90s on Segment D of the Grand Parkway, which runs from northern Fort Bend County to Katy, The Sierra Club filed a lawsuit in an attempt to preserve the Katy Prairie in western Harris County. The organization wanted a court-ordered study for an environmental impact statement on the area’s wildlife.

According to a 1990 Houston Chronicle article, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service claimed the proper environmental studies were not completed for Segment D.

“If everybody decides they want the Katy Prairie to be another series of strip shopping centers and subdivisions, that’s what we should do. But it shouldn’t happen by default,” Alan Mueller, representative with the service, said in the article. “Environmentalists and hunters long familiar with the area say transportation projects will hasten the march of development that is chasing the birds away.”

The same article mentioned the beginning stages of development on Cinco Ranch, a heavily populated master-planned community that bisects Segment D. Additionally, it said construction would start on Segment E, slated to run from I-10 to Hwy. 290, a year later. That did not happen until last fall, more than 20 years later.

“I don’t know that they planned when construction would start, rather that their vision would be more that when this much growth occurs, you would be far enough from other freeways that you would need to provide for mobility,” Gornet said.

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Top Story

Urban living in Town Center

The Woodlands As The Woodlands builds out its final village in Creekside Park, the focus of residential growth and development is beginning to shift from the traditional village center concept to more of an urban living design. The lure of living, working and playing in a defined geographical and cultural district has led to an emerging urban living lifestyle in Town Center.

Developments such as The Boardwalk and The Millennium Waterway apartments, Remington Brownstones, Waterway Lofts and Waterway Village town homes, make Town Center the go-to destination for those seeking a new modern way of living.

“We do business all over the country, and we specifically chose the Town Center because it incorporates the greatest components of new urbanism,” said Brian Dinerstein, president of Dinerstein Properties, developer of The Millennium Waterway.

According to www.newurbanism.org, the concept of new urbanism is the creation of diverse, walkable, vibrant, mixed-use communities comprised of the same components as conventional development, but assembled in a more integrated fashion, in the form of complete communities.

Robert Heineman, vice president of planning for The Woodlands Development Company, said the concept of urban living has been a part of the larger plan for Town Center since the master-planned community’s inception. It was Heineman’s now-famous sketch of Town Center on a napkin in 1972, a sketch that has a striking resemblance to the actual layout today, that laid the groundwork.

“It was the planners’ concept that urban living was part of the urban experience in Town Center,” Heineman said.

But before the lofts along Waterway and town homes on Riva Row could be built and the concept of urban living could succeed, a strong supporting base of amenities needed to be established.

Full story by Brian Walzel

Dining

Forest Cafe & Bakery

The Woodlands Hidden away from one of The Woodlands busiest roadways on Hwy. 242, and among a multitude of gift shops, fast food chains and medical offices, sits a cafe where customers are known by their name rather than by the number they are given after they place their order.

Forest Cafe and Bakery, located at 3091 College Park Drive, Ste. 245, opened six years ago and has since become that rare Woodlands gem: a wildly successful restaurant that, other than those in-the-know, many local residents may not know about.

Full story by Brian Walzel

Business

Legacy Beauty Academy

Tomball Students at Legacy Beauty Academy are guaranteed job placement after completion of their studies at the Tomball school.

“If they get their license, we can get them a job,” owner Gaylene Green said. “We have a lot of students that go straight out from graduation and start their own businesses. We give our students the ability to be self-employed.”

One aspect of her business Green said she takes pride in is her students work with clients, rather than practicing on mannequins.

Full story by Emily Roberts

Impacts

Now Open

Magnolia Family Tree Recipes opened April 9 at 12202 FM 1488, Magnolia. The restaurant is owned by Brent and Terryl Scott and serves burgers, chicken sandwiches and offers daily lunch specials. Everything Family Tree makes is homemade, including the bread, and they also make specialty candies. 281-259-7800

Coming Soon

The Woodlands The Woodlands Soccer City will open its new indoor soccer complex this summer at FM 1488 and Hwy. 242. The facility will house two large air-conditioned indoor fields, offices, party room, meeting room and concessions. The building will also offer two large fields and will have the latest technology in artificial turf plus tempered glass for clear spectator viewing. The Woodlands Soccer City will offer adult leagues for men, women, co-ed and corporate, plus youth leagues for ages 4 and above. In addition, the facility will host indoor soccer camps, adult and youth tournaments, and skills clinics. 281-686-4292, www.woodlandsoccercity.com

Tomball Ron’s Hamburgers and Chili will be opening at 14257 FM 2920, Ste. 210, Tomball in June. The Tulsa-based eatery is known for hamburgers and has been mentioned in the New York Times for its award-winning chili. The Tomball location will be its first in Texas. 832-790-7576, www.ronschili.com

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Towne Lake
Cypress – 77433

Overview

Build-out year: N/A
Number of homes: 500+
Square footage: 1,600–6,000+
Home values: $200,000–$1 million+
HOA dues (estimated): $920/year

Amenities: Lake, welcome and community center, active adult 55+ living, pools, lazy river, splash pad, tennis, fitness center, playgrounds

Property taxes:
- Cypress Fairbanks ISD 1.4300000
- Harris County 0.3912000
- Harris County Dept. of Educ. 0.0066000
- Harris County ESD 9 0.0600000
- Harris County Hospital 0.1922000
- Harris County MUD 172 0.8900000
- Lone Star College System 0.1210000
- Port of Houston Authority 0.0186000

Total (per $100 value) 3.137600

On the market (As of April 30, 2012)

- No. of homes for sale: 27
- No. of homes under contract: 8
- Avg. days on the market: 93
- No. of homes sold in the last year: 76
- Square footage Low/High: 1,553 /5,354
- Selling price Low/High: $175,390 / $636,399

Home sales (April 1, 2011–April 30, 2012)

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Featured homes

- 9106 Brownwood Bend Court $310,000
  - 4 Bedroom / 3 Bath
  - 3,252 sq. ft.
  - Agent: Gayle Ross, Century 21 Ross Group, 281-469-7677

- 9907 Double Bayou Court $429,900
  - 5 Bedroom / 3 Bath
  - 4,649 sq. ft.
  - Agent: Donna Burke, re/MAX Northwest, 281-989-3965

- 19530 Gladewater Court $525,352
  - 4 Bedroom / 3.5 Bath
  - 4,261 sq. ft.
  - Agent: John Bawduniak, Gatehouse Properties, 713-952-6767

- 9310 Casa Blanca Circle $329,990
  - 4 Bedroom / 3 Bath
  - 3,525 sq. ft.
  - Agent: Johnny Schiro, Icon Real Estate, 281-459-0117

Schools:
- Rennet Elementary School
  - 19500 Tuckerton Blvd., Cypress
  - 281-897-4000
- Smith Middle School
  - 19325 Cypress N. Houston, Cypress
  - 281-213-1010
- Cypress Ranch High School
  - 10700 Fry Road, Cypress
  - 281-373-2300

Property

- 9106 Brownwood Bend Court $310,000
  - 4 Bedroom / 3 Bath
  - 3,252 sq. ft.
  - Agent: Gayle Ross, Century 21 Ross Group, 281-469-7677

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Market Data

Northwest Houston

- Price Range
  - Less than $149,999
  - $150,000–$199,999
  - $200,000–$299,999
  - $300,000–$399,999
  - $400,000–$499,999
  - $500,000–$599,999
  - $600,000–$799,999
  - $800,000–$999,999
  - $1 million +

- Number of homes for sale/Average days on the market
  - 77040
  - 77064
  - 77065
  - 77070
  - 77095
  - 77429
  - 77433

- Month
  - April 2011
  - April 2012
  - Mar. 2012
  - Feb. 2012
  - Jan. 2012
  - Dec. 2011
  - Nov. 2011
  - Oct. 2011
  - Sept. 2011

- Number of homes sold/Average Price
  - 77040
  - 77064
  - 77065
  - 77070
  - 77095
  - 77429
  - 77433
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