



Volume 5, Issue 1 January 2019

The Insider

Gator Bayou Adventure Park Opens

Residents enjoy free day of activities



New Year New Changes

2019. Political change. Economic change. And numerous other changes play a role in how East Montgomery County develops.

Sustainability and environmental considerations are playing a larger role in business decisions every day.

An extremely large supplier of parts for wind turbines is making a substantial investment in our area — the “Energy (oil and gas) Capital of the World.”

Changes in traffic patterns and demographics as more families choose our area to move to and raise their families. Changes once Big Rivers Waterpark opens and travel and tourism create other business opportunities.

Changes in shopping patterns where more than 50 percent of consumers have searched online using words like “where can I buy” or “near me” when looking for products. And on the horizon on a global scale, more tariffs for imported goods from overseas, which typically means higher prices for consumers.

The point to derive from all these distractions in business is for businesses to be flexible and adaptable to different environmental factors or shopping patterns as they arise. Adaptability and flexibility is the cornerstone of why our small business community in EMC has performed so well.

Our small businesses we interact with have economies of scale, where being smaller makes them much more competitive with larger companies, which have to have the concurrence of several departments just to make a decision.

80 percent of all new jobs are created by small businesses. Small business success stories are all around our community.

2 I want to encourage residents to shop locally and remember

that our locally-owned businesses have made our community what it is and what it will be in the future.

For those small business owners struggling, I want to wholeheartedly recommend the Small Business Development Center for advice.

The SBDC’s services are free; they can provide financial, marketing, and strategic management consulting for your business. They are located in our building, 21575 U.S. Highway 59 in New Caney. The SBDC can be reached at 832-813-6674.

One final thought: if your business has specific employment needs, please look around our community for those resources first. I think you will find that our area has a very rich and diverse workforce. And residents, please support our local business owners and say hello and get to know them each time you visit.

Happy New Year, and I hope 2019 is one in which we will see our area continue to blossom into a rich and vibrant economy, and our small businesses thrive with expansion opportunities.



*Frank McCrady
President & CEO*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank McCrady". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "M" and "C".

EMCID Hosts Sneak Peek at Gator Bayou



Approximately 5,220 guests had the chance to fly through the trees, over a small gator pit and atop visitors filling the park during the Sneak Peek at Gator Bayou on Saturday, Nov. 3.

The gates officially opened at 10 a.m. to an eager crowd, excited to see how the park has developed since breaking ground in December 2017.

EMCID rented out the park for the day to give residents a free “sneak peek” at the park.

During the event, guests had the chance to try several activities for free like the Hawk’s Glide and Falcon Flight zip line, the Vulture’s Dive seven-story free-fall, the Mystic Maze, the floating Wild Isle atop a spring-fed lake, the Cougar Climb rock climbing wall, the petting zoo and visit with a few of the park’s small alligators.

Gator Bayou’s counterpart, Big Rivers Water Park, is anticipated to open this spring.

New Businesses Call EMC Home



There was a flurry of activities in the strip center along the U.S. Highway 59 feeder road in the Valley Ranch Town Center as several companies installed the signs for Buffalo Wild Wings, Airi Poke & Ramen and Sub Zero Nitrogen Ice Cream at the beginning of November.

These companies joined the strip center where the Verizon opened in mid-2018.

Other places that opened this fall/winter or are on the way to East Montgomery County:

Airi Poke & Ramen, November
J&R’s Ace Hardware, November
Buffalo Wild Wings, December
Hallmark, December
Sub Zero Ice Cream, December
Yummy Tummy Pastries, December
Freddy’s Frozen Custard & Steakburgers, Feb. 2019
James Avery Jewelry, February 2019
DaVita Dialysis, 2019
Olive Garden, 2019
Regions Bank, 2019
Valvoline Oil Change, 2019
Tune Up - A Manly Salon, April 2019

**Dates are accurate prior to printing of publication. Dates may change.*

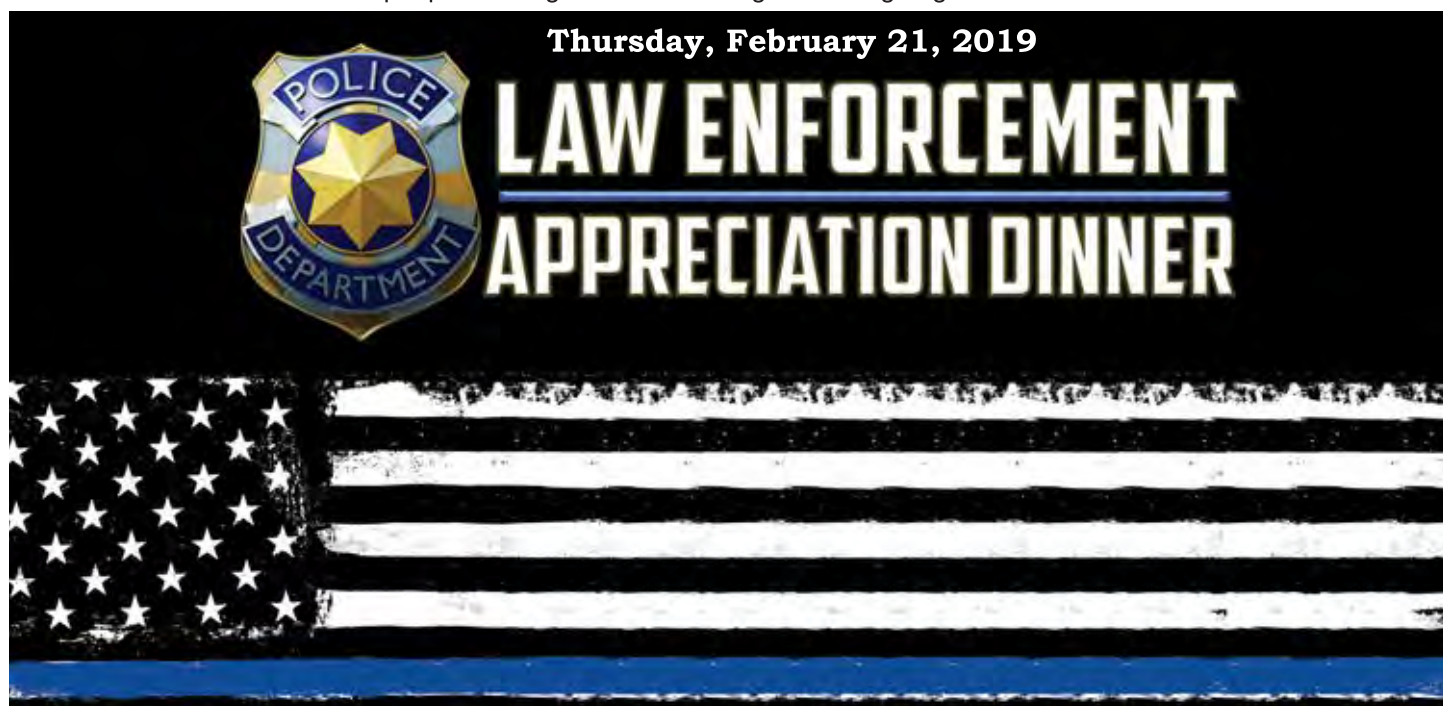
Officers of the Year to be honored Feb. 21

Every year, EMCID accepts nominations for Officer of the Year from local school districts and college, city police departments, the Montgomery County Precinct 4 Constable's Office, Montgomery County Sheriff's Office and the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Those who are selected as the Officer of the Year by their superiors are honored during the Law Enforcement Appreciation Dinner to be held on Feb. 21, 2019.

The EMCID Law Enforcement Appreciation Dinner was first started as a way to honor and recognize law enforcement officers who work to protect and keep residents safe in East Montgomery County communities.

The officers are honored with a plaque bearing their name along with a bag of gifts from local businesses.



Merit-based Scholarship Applications Due

Continuing education is a reality for many students in the East Montgomery County area thanks to the East Montgomery County Scholarship Foundation (EMCSF.)

The deadline is approaching for the merit-based scholarships. All scholarship applications are due by March 1, 2019.

While every high school senior in New Caney and Splendora ISDs is eligible for a \$1,600 scholarship to be used for tuition and fees at any college or university, the foundation also provides 20 \$500 merit-based college scholarships every year.

This merit-based scholarship is available to students who demonstrate academic excellence, leadership and service, and financial need and plan to continue their college education.

Applicants for the merit-based scholarship must:

- * have a cumulative college-level GPA of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale for all coursework completed, regardless of institution attended. GPA is evaluated at the point of application.

- * have had a minimum of 48 semester college-level credits completed by December 31, 2018.

- * be a previous recipient of East Montgomery County Scholarship Foundation funding.

- * demonstrate leadership and service.

- * demonstrate financial need.

- * submit the application by March 1, 2019.

Applications for the Merit Scholarship are only accepted between February 1 and March 1 each year.

Those interested in applying for the merit-based scholarship must complete the application form, provided on the website listed below, provide an official copy of the student's most recent college transcript and submit a 400-to-500 word typed essay on the topic as described on the website.

For more information, visit www.emctx.com/scholarships/ applications or call 281-354-4419 with any questions.

Scenes From Sneak Peek at Gator Bayou



Fall Community Development Grants Awarded

EMCID's Board of Directors approved several grants benefiting nonprofit organizations and city and county entities serving East Montgomery County communities.

EMCID accepts funding requests for community development grants from nonprofits and city and county government offices twice a year. The deadline was the last Monday in September which was followed up with a grant workshop where the organization's representative explained to the Board what their grant entailed.

Applications are then reviewed and voted on by board members.

Governmental entities or nonprofit organizations can apply for grants up to \$30,000. Taxing entities are required to have a 50 percent match. All others are required to have a 33 percent match. A second option is to apply for a mini-grant of up to \$5,000. Matching funds are not required.

The following organizations or entities were awarded grant monies:

Boy Scout Troop 1011: The grant filed requested monies to assist with travel expenses as the troop continues to expand and take troop members to summer camps every year. This grant will help keep costs low for the parents of boy scout troop members and allow for the organization to rent vans in the future to carry the troop members as well as their equipment to camp each year.

Catholic Daughters of America: The grant submitted was to provide three AED machines at St. John of the Cross Catholic Church and the parish. Along with AED machines, they also requested funding for trauma/first aid kits. These AED machines will also have a pediatric component since they have a lot of kids at their campus for school every day.

Cub Scout Pack 39: The grant submitted requested funding for a new trailer. They currently have 40 pack members and participate in family camping, which means the whole family will go on the trips. They are often hauling equipment and food where the trailer would come in handy.

East Montgomery County Sports Association: EMCSA requested funding for improvements at the Ed Rinehart Park which includes raising the fencing by 10-feet or at an angle on all eight fields to prevent injury to spectators at the games by a foul or loose ball. The county would provide the scissor lifts to assist with the construction of the additional fencing.

East Montgomery County Swim Team: The grant submitted requested funding to purchase diving blocks for the smaller children participating on the swim team.

Friends of R.B. Tullis Library: This organization submitted a grant requesting funding to purchase from a list of books requested by the library for residents to have new reading material not purchased by the county.

Mission Northeast – Mission Northeast submitted a grant for funding to renovate a portion of their building where people come in to get food and load baskets into their car. Because of an increase in demand of their services and being strapped for space, the renovations would replace the front door with a larger door and remove the women's bathroom to create a larger entryway. They would also purchase new doors for the new entryway.

Montgomery County Precinct 4 Constable's Office: The grant request funding for five new body cameras to replace the previous cameras they were utilizing.

Montgomery County Youth Services: On the heels of celebrating their 40th anniversary, MCYS submitted a grant to provide funding for 20 kids from East Montgomery County to attend their summer camp, Camp Watsitumi.

New Caney High School Spirit Band Club: The grant submitted would provide lighting for the equipment trailer used to transport equipment and instruments to concerts and games. This lighting would be especially helpful when they return to the school in the dark and unload equipment.

New Horizons: The grant funds requested would help update their telephone and internet services to support the use of security cameras. The second portion of the grant would fund a metal awning or storage container near the rear of the building where they could store donated items.

Splendora High School Project Graduation: The grant submitted would provide funding for the 2019 graduates of Splendora High School to have their Project Graduation celebration at Incredible Pizza in Conroe.

The Heartworm Foundation: The New Caney area is one of the highest for heartworm positive dogs submitted to the Montgomery County Animal Shelter. This funding will help target hot spots and reduce the number of dogs testing positive for heartworms.

VFW Post 4816: The VFW Post located in Porter submitted a grant for funding to build a pavilion outside of their building as they work to make their main building smoke-free. They also plan to use the pavilion to attract younger veterans, to increase their membership and allow the community to rent out the pavilion for special events.



EMCID Works to Bring Kelsey-Seybold to EMC

Kelsey-Seybold will soon call the Porter area home with the opening of a three-story, multispecialty clinic along U.S. Highway 59, replacing the Kingwood clinic damaged by flooding during Hurricane Harvey in August 2017.

With the help of EMCID, the company announced in November, it had officially closed on 5.5 acres of land in unincorporated Montgomery County on the northbound side of Hwy. 59, north of Northpark Drive. The facility is expected to open in 2020.

EMCID President and CEO Frank McCrady along with board members Brenda Webb, Stephen Carlisle, Fred Wetz and Martin Zepeda spent several days, walking door-to-door along Memorial Drive to talk with residents about the impending facility and asked them to sign a petition changing the deed restrictions levied on the property, which had put the project in jeopardy.

McCrady also traveled to San Antonio to locate additional property owners and gather signatures. Additionally, Precinct 4 Commissioner Jim Clark, Porter MUD and Cathy Bate went to great lengths to aid in facilitating the project.

"First and foremost, we want to thank those who signed the petition to change the deed restrictions on the property that allowed Kelsey-Seybold to acquire this parcel of land," said McCrady. "We had an overwhelming response from homeowners and property owners who were excited to have a premier healthcare facility closer to home."

Once completed, Kelsey-Seybold Clinic – Kingwood will be located at 25553 U.S. Highway 59 near E. Memorial Drive in Porter.

McCrady also added that the clinic will bring more jobs to the community and that the new facility will serve as an instrumental tool for students in healthcare-related studies at Lone Star College-Kingwood to transition into the workforce.

"We want to further thank the residents and EMCID board members for working together to get this new facility here in East Montgomery County," added McCrady. "And thank you to Kelsey-Seybold for choosing EMC for its newest location."

"We chose this site mainly because of accessibility and visibility," said Nicholas Ro, Chief Legal and Strategic Planning Officer for Kelsey-Seybold. "It is centrally located to Kingwood and the many growing communities of East Montgomery County."

Ro continued, "Being right off the freeway, the new clinic will be visible and convenient for patients. And our employees will enjoy the easy access to shopping and restaurants."

The Kelsey-Seybold Clinic – Kingwood will increase in size from 20,000 square-feet to nearly 55,000 square-feet, where patients have access to expanded services in primary care including internal medicine, family medicine, pediatrics and obstetrics/gynecology.



Sneak Peek photos continued from Page 5





*****ECRWSS****

Local
Postal Customer

PRST STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM Retail

East Montgomery County Improvement District 21575 U.S. Highway 59, Ste. 200, New Caney, TX 77357 281.354.4419



Important Dates

January - February 2019

New Year's Day Holiday

A Holiday to Remember Ice Rink

EMCID Regular Meeting

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Complex Closed)

Greater EMC Chamber Luncheon

EMCID Regular Meeting

Presidents Day (Complex Closed)

EMCID's Law Enforcement Appreciation Dinner

January 1

January 1 - 6

*January 10

January 21

February 6

*February 14

February 18

February 21

12 - 8 pm

5:30 pm

11:30 - 1 pm

5:30 pm

7 pm

Valley Ranch Town Center

EMCID Complex Board Rm.

EMCID Complex Atrium

EMCID Complex Board Rm.

EMCID Complex Atrium

**Dates subject to change*

Please visit www.emctx.com/calendar for an up-to-date listing of events.

The Insider is a quarterly newsletter produced by the East Montgomery County Improvement District. Please direct questions or comments to: Kelley Mattlage, Chief Communications Officer, kmattlage@emctx.com.