



The Insider

Academy Sports & Outdoors Breaks Ground, Additional Tenants Announced



Officials provide a symbolic start to the construction of the Valley Ranch Town Center's third anchor store with a groundbreaking ceremony. From left to right: Brady Wilkins (The Signorelli Company), Mark McConnell (Arch-Con), EMCID Director Isidor Ybarra, Danny Signorelli (The Signorelli Company), EMCID Chairman of the Board Brenda Webb, Michael Scheurich (Arch-Con), EMCID President and CEO Frank McCrady, and EMCID Directors Scott Hesson and Martin Zepeda.

Construction is now vertical at the Valley Ranch Town Center in Porter. Officials with the East Montgomery County Improvement District and The Signorelli Company held a groundbreaking ceremony for Academy Sports + Outdoors Tuesday, April 5. Construction on the sports, outdoor and lifestyle center began, however, in March. It joins the Kroger Marketplace and Sam's Club as anchor stores for the 1.8 million square foot mixed-use development at the Grand Parkway and Interstate 69.

Additional tenants, including Chick-fil-A, Chili's, El Pollo Loco, Freebirds, GNC, Nails of America, SportClips, Subway, Supercuts, and T. Jin's Asian Café, have been secured for the 240-acre property, with additional shopping, dining and entertainment venues to be announced in the next few months.

In a move designed to encourage additional job opportunities for residents in East Montgomery County, EMCID's Board of Directors agreed to provide space for interviews and applicant screening for Academy's growth.

"As other tenants secure retail space, our Board will ensure that employment/interview facilities are available within the district's boundaries to ensure the greatest utilization of local residents for these employment opportunities," said Frank McCrady, President and CEO.

For updates on development at the Valley Ranch Town Center and in East Montgomery County, visit www.emctx.com.



A Message from our President & CEO



*Frank McCrady
President & CEO*

Growing Our Own

Completing 28 years in the Army Reserve and retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel has provided keen insight into the importance of leadership development. The Command General Staff College and Army War College courses pointed out valuable lessons to me which apply to today's workforce and even our areas of development. Key leader competencies include self awareness, adaptability, being a broad spectrum expert,

and strong interpersonal skills.

As East Montgomery County grows, it is important we identify the future leaders from our current pools of employees and ensure they are given the proper opportunities to learn, adapt and grow. Allowing these employees to understand the complexities of our economy and the operational environment — which includes globalization and 24-hour news and information flows — will help them become better leaders when it is time for them to move into leadership roles. Though it may be a bit uncomfortable and not always efficient, we have to step aside and allow these middle managers the opportunity to excel and yet, understand that they will fail at the assigned task from time to time. This is

part of the growing process. The key tenet here is give your middle/junior managers the keys occasionally, and in the long run they will gain knowledge and confidence so that they can step into the roles required of them at a later date. For most of us type A++ owners and managers it is a very difficult task, but we owe it to our employees and, to a larger extent, the development of our area.

East Montgomery County will provide extensive opportunities in the near future for these middle managers and we must ensure the bench is always full of local individuals who have been appropriately trained and developed to fill these new leadership opportunities as they arise. If we do not take the initiative, and our middle managers are not prepared, these leadership roles will fall to someone who is not residing within our area and not familiar with the community's needs and the desires of our residents who have made our area into what it is today and what it will be in the future.

I want to encourage you as much as possible to strengthen and prepare our future leaders from East Montgomery County to be aware of the importance of education, training, and, most importantly, initiative on their part in readying themselves for future opportunities. And finally, business owners: please cultivate a welcoming environment for learning and development for our future leaders so that they may excel when presented with the right opportunity.



The East Montgomery County Improvement District welcomed a delegation of about 50 dignitaries from Cambodia to the area for a traditional Cambodian breakfast and exchanged information about each other's economies and developments. EMCID hosted the event April 14. Guests included H.E. Mr. Chum Bun Rong, Cambodian Ambassador to the United States and Mexico, Dr. Tan Monivann, Vice President of the Cambodia Chamber of Commerce, H.E. Dr. Hun Manet, Head of the Cambodian Delegation and business and city leaders from East Montgomery County.

Economy

EMCID Recruits Ammunition Manufacturer to Industrial Park in Joint Economic, Community Development Venture

General Ballistics, a California-based ammunition manufacturer founded by Vance Massih, will expand into the Texas market in a deal crafted by the East Montgomery County Improvement District that will also benefit local law enforcement. The Board of Directors agreed to build a 10,000-square foot production facility and qualification range at the East Montgomery County Industrial Park and lease it to General Ballistics. The company will produce 9 mm, .40-caliber, .45-caliber and 5.56/.223-caliber cartridges. Initially, the company will employ two to three people upon opening in January of 2017.

Frank McCrady, President and CEO of EMCID, spent the past year talking with local law enforcement agencies about the need for a qualification range in East Montgomery County that they can utilize for training purposes.

"Through our conversations with the agencies, the general consensus was that there's a potential for cost savings for the agencies in the areas of manpower and fuel, and a reduction in the time officers spend away from work," said McCrady. "In constructing a dual purpose facility which can be used by the company and for local law enforcement needs really fits the model for an economic development/ community development project."

SpeedSportz Racing Gears Up for Action



The co-owner of SpeedSportz Racing Park gave an update in March to local business leaders regarding construction of the European-style kart racing attraction along State Highway 242 and U.S. Highway 59.

Alan Rudolph told the crowd at the Greater East Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce's The Loop that completion is scheduled for Labor Day weekend. The park will feature two tracks, one for professionals and one for guests who want to zip along at speeds of 40- to 60-mph. The property will also feature video games in an arcade, meeting spaces for corporate events, and a pro-shop retail center.

For more information, go to www.speedsportzracing.com.

Presidential Billiards Breaks Ground on Expansion Project



Pictured left to right: Director Stephen Carlisle, Chairman of the Board Brenda Webb, Presidential Billiards President Elaine Gerber, Layne Morris, Presidential Billiards Project Consultant, and Director Martin Zepeda.

Presidential Billiards and EMCID broke ground April 15 on a new 10,000-square foot warehouse as part of an expansion project at the East Montgomery County Industrial Park. The company currently has a 35,225-square foot building, which includes office and warehouse space, at the industrial park. Presidential Billiards offers a variety of fine products including a large selection of pool tables and game room furniture.

Wellspring Birthing Center Receives Check



Pictured left to right: Directors Stephen Carlisle, Leonard Rogers and Isidor Ybarra, Ashley Musil, Licensed Midwife/owner, Karla Mercieca, business administrator, Chairman of the Board Brenda Webb, EMCID President/ CEO Frank McCrady and Director Martin Zepeda.

EMCID presented a check to the Wellspring Midwifery Care & Birthing Center in March for \$13,000. The check was for infrastructure improvement and buildout expenses to facilitate the center's opening in East Montgomery County. The center, which offers prenatal care and natural birthing options, such as water deliveries, opened on Russell Palmer Drive in Kingwood in January.

Economy



Sharing Development News With Our Neighbors

The Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce invited EMCID President and CEO Frank McCrady to speak at its Kingwood BizCom April 7 at Kingwood Park High School. The packed room listened enthusiastically about the developments occurring in East Montgomery County that will have an impact on surrounding communities. McCrady also informed the crowd of business leaders about financial incentives available for expansion and relocation into East Montgomery County.



Community

EMCID Makes a **SPLASH** in Roman Forest, Splendor



EMCID is delivering some outdoor fun for children in East Montgomery County with the addition of splash pad parks in the cities of Roman Forest and Splendor! The Board of Directors agreed during last year's strategic planning session to be involved in a large community project that would benefit thousands of children within the district. A comprehensive study determined the best locations for the parks. The Board then chose Kraftsman Playground and Park Equipment out of Spring, TX to build and install the splash pads.

"The Board is really excited about this project," said Frank McCrady, EMCID President and CEO. "Researching other sites in the Houston area and evaluating their positive and negative attributes helped our Board in its decision-making process."

Construction on Splendor's park should be completed this summer. Roman Forest's splash pad park will be constructed in mid- to late summer. EMCID is spending approximately \$450,000 on each splash pad. The cities have agreed to maintain and operate the parks.

Community

EMCID Board Approves Additional \$1.5 Million in Grants For East Montgomery County Fire Department, Improvements to Fire Station

The Board of Directors of the East Montgomery County Improvement District authorized in March the issuance of \$300,000 annually, retroactive to 2015 and through 2019, to the Montgomery County Emergency Services District #7 (MCESD #7), also known as the East Montgomery County Fire Department, which serves New Caney and Splendora. The measure stipulates that the fire department utilize the first payment to upgrade to code Fire Station #156 on Morgan Cemetery Road in Splendora — which is not currently providing 24-hour service or staffing — to make it ready for full-time staffing, at a cost of about \$56,000. Approximately \$125,000 would pay for about 15 self-contained breathing apparatus systems for firefighters, and the balance of the funds would be utilized to buy other necessary equipment and improvements to the station to ensure it is operational 24 hours a day.

“The Board feels very strongly about doing what it can to ensure the safety of the residents and firefighters in East Montgomery County,” said Brenda Webb, Chairman of the Board. “We admire the dedication our firefighters have to this community, and we want them to have the tools necessary to do their jobs.”

EMCID President and CEO Frank McCrady said having the fire station on Morgan Cemetery operational was of utmost



ESD 7 accepts a grant check for \$100,000 at the April 14 board meeting. The check is part of a previous agreement with ESD 11, which merged with 7 in 2015.

importance to everyone. “Quicker response times saves lives. We’re happy to help get this facility open and fully staffed,” he said. “Our funding priorities have always been in line with providing this community what it needs to improve the quality of life here in East Montgomery County.”

Additionally, the funding measure would require MCESD #7 to reimburse EMCID the cost of the upgrades to Fire Station #156, or about \$56,000, in the event the City of Cleveland annexed the property, bringing this funding back into the EMCID territory to be utilized by the East Montgomery County community.

Mission Northeast’s Capacity to Serve Others Grows

Mission Northeast celebrated the opening of its new 5,000-square foot storage warehouse in New Caney at a ribbon cutting ceremony March 22. The building, which includes a 16-by-20 foot walk-in freezer and a 16-by-20 foot walk-in cooler, replaces the previous warehouse, which only had a 5-by-8 feet freezer. That building will now be used for other services and office space. EMCID provided a grant for \$49,010.50 to go toward construction costs.

Pam Dickson, Director of Mission Northeast, said the organization will be able to better serve its clients throughout the year and the 500 families during Thanksgiving and Christmas who depend on the Mission for assistance.

Each year EMCID has donated turkeys and hams to the Mission a week or so before Christmas. Those items could barely fit into the smaller freezer. Now, Dickson says, those items could be donated several weeks in advance, and there would still be available freezer space for other donated food items.

Mission Northeast provides a wide variety of services to more than 150 families per week from 11 zip codes.



Right: Chairman of the Board Brenda Webb, Director Martin Zepeda and Mission Northeast Director Pam Dickson.

Receive \$750 for College by Interning for EMCID!

This paid internship consists of a 10-week work study program, beginning on or about September 1, 2016 that is available to three students — one each from New Caney, Porter and Splendora high schools — who are interested in learning how EMCID's economic, community and educational development programs impact the community and want to advance their knowledge and skills in business, communications or event planning.

Criteria:

- Completed application received by August 1, 2016.
- Must have passed the 11th grade but not graduated prior to September 1, 2016.
- Previous knowledge of and desire to advance skills in accounting, business, communications, festival and event planning, general office, journalism, photography, public relations or travel and tourism.
- Must have reliable transportation.

Visit www.emctx.com/scholarships/work-study-program to download an application.

Education

Scholarship Foundation Awards 13 Merit Scholarships

The East Montgomery County Scholarship Foundation awarded \$500 merit-based scholarships to 13 college students. The scholarship is awarded to students who have at least 48 college credits and have demonstrated academic excellence, leadership and service, and financial need. Students must also have received previous scholarship funding from the Foundation. Applications are available online at www.emctx.com/scholarships/applications and may be submitted between February 1 and March 1 each year.

Elizabeth Barrera, Porter High School 2014
Lone Star College - Kingwood

Brian Garcia, Porter High School 2014
Lone Star College - Kingwood

Suhaily Garcia, Porter High School 2013
Lone Star College - Kingwood

Jacob Gollihar, Splendora Early College High School 2013
Lamar University

Rachel Gonzales, New Caney High School 2013
Texas A&M University

Meagan Silva Hartwick, New Caney High School 2010
Lamar University

Egon Lyttle, New Caney High School 2013
University of Texas at Austin

Phillip McCrady, Porter High School 2012
University of Arkansas

Leo Meshell, New Caney High School 2014
Sam Houston State University

Kylee Milton, Porter High School 2012
University of Houston

Catherine Naquin, Splendora High School 2014
Sam Houston State University

Imran Qureshi, Porter High School 2012
University of Houston

Nia Ramirez, Splendora High School 2012
Sam Houston State University

The poster for the 'East Texas Fire & Ice Video Contest Festival' features a blue background with white and red text. At the top, 'east texas' is in red script, followed by 'Fire & ICE' in large, bold, white letters with a flame effect, and 'festival' in red script. Below this, 'VIDEO CONTEST' is written in red. Three photographs show winners receiving scholarships. The first photo is labeled '1st Place' and shows Kaylee Bailey receiving a '\$500 Scholarship' from 'New Caney High School Junior'. The second photo is labeled '2nd Place' and shows Nurul Rafi receiving a '\$250 Scholarship'. The third photo is labeled '3rd Place' and shows Kaymon Freeman receiving a '\$100 Scholarship'.

1st Place
Kaylee Bailey
\$500 Scholarship
New Caney High School Junior

2nd Place
Nurul Rafi
\$250 Scholarship

3rd Place
Kaymon Freeman
\$100 Scholarship

Inside the East Montgomery County Improvement District

EMCID's Newest Faces



*Michaela Schaubert
Administrative Assistant*

Michaela Schaubert, a 2015 business administration graduate of Sam Houston State University, joined EMCID this past February as an administrative assistant. Her duties include handling accounts payable and community development grant applications, preparing packets for board meetings, and answering phones. Schaubert, originally from Conroe, worked in real estate prior to coming to EMCID.

Delilah Lewis joined the EMCID staff in July 2015. She is currently reaching out to local businesses to educate them about programs EMCID and its non-profit subsidiary the East Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation can offer. Lewis also assists with special events. She is well known in the community after spending 13 years with the Greater East Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce as membership director.



*Delilah Lewis
Business Development*

Ybarra, Longest-serving Director Retires

After serving four terms on the EMCID Board of Directors, Isidor Ybarra announced earlier this year that he would not seek re-election.

Ybarra was first elected to the Board in 2000, just three years after he and a group of community members championed the creation of EMCID through the Texas Legislature.

He is a native Houstonian but has lived in Montgomery County for three decades, acting as a staunch advocate for business, economic development and community improvements in East Montgomery County.

Ybarra served in the United States Army from 1957 to 1961. He opened his first Ricardo's Mexican Restaurant in north Harris County in 1967. In 1983, he opened a location in Porter on FM 1314. He retired in 2006.

Ybarra has actively served on numerous boards and committees — definitely too many to list.

"Isidor dedicated a tremendous amount of personal time to the District. He brought a wealth of knowledge to the Board and a deep desire to serve the community," said Frank McCrady, President and CEO. "I appreciate his vision and know that he'll be around to continue to serve this community in whatever way it needs him."



*Isidor Ybarra
EMCID Director*

..... Caywood, EMCID's Jack-of-All-Trades Retires

After five and a half years, EMCID's sometimes cantankerous but always lovable handyman is retiring. At a spry 75 years, Larry Caywood says he's ready to travel with his wife Carol and see the country and their grandkids.

Caywood took care of everything from specialized lawn needs to carpentry and tile work at EMCID's properties.

"It's been a pleasure having Larry work for us, but we understand there comes a time when you're ready for something else," said Frank McCrady, President and CEO. "We wish Larry the best in his retirement."

The building will definitely notice his absence.

"I will especially miss him scaring the living daylights out of me and giving me a laugh," said Kelley Mattlage, Director of Communications. "Pretty much every day I could count on him to sneak up to my office — as I had my back to the door, of course — and, with a booming voice, he'd yell, boo!"

We'll miss you. Happy travels, Larry!



Above, the Board of Directors presented Larry Caywood an engraved pocket knife for his service. From left to right: Director Dale Martin, President/CEO Frank McCrady, Chairman of the Board Brenda Webb, Larry Caywood, Directors Martin Zepeda, Isidor Ybarra, Leonard Rogers and Stephen Carlisle.



Right, Larry and his wife Carol.



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Important Dates

June 2016 - August 2016

Greater EMC Chamber Luncheon	June 1	11:30 a.m.	EMCID Complex
EMC Scholarship Foundation Meeting	*June 9	12 p.m.	EMCID Complex
EMC Economic Development Corporation Meeting	*June 9	1:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex
EMCID Regular Meeting	*June 9	6:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex
Free Children's Immunizations Clinic	June 28	9:30 - 1:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex
Independence Day Holiday	July 4	Closed	EMCID Complex
Greater EMC Chamber Luncheon	July 6	11:30 a.m.	EMCID Complex
EMCID Regular Meeting	*July 14	6:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex
Greater EMC Chamber Luncheon	August 3	11:30 a.m.	EMCID Complex
EMCID Regular Meeting	*August 11	6:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex
Free Children's Immunizations Clinic	August 16	9:30 - 1:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex
First Day of School	August 22		NCISD/SISD
Free Children's Immunizations Clinic	August 30	9:30 - 1:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex

**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, Director of Communications, kmattlage@emctx.com.

