



The Insider

Back to School Bash



Volunteers from Lone Star College - Kingwood handed out free backpacks to hundreds of students at the Back to School Bash in 2014. Local businesses also provided school supplies.

Hundreds of area children and their parents are once again expected to take advantage of EMCID's annual Back to School Bash. The free event will be held Thursday, September 10 from 5 - 8 p.m. at the EMCID Complex.

"We're excited that we'll have more of everything this year," said Frank McCrady, President/CEO. That includes twice as many backpacks to hand out to students who are in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Volunteers last year issued around 400 backpacks stuffed with school supplies to a line of waiting students.

If you've never been to EMCID's Back to School Bash, you're in for a treat. Community non-profit organizations and local businesses line the parking lot with their booths full of additional crayons, pencils, notebook paper, folders and more. Of course no festival would be complete without some fun! A camel, ponies, donkeys and other various animals wait for giddy children to ride or pet them. Visitors can also enjoy rock wall climbing, face painting, rides, bounce houses and dance performances.

If you'd like to volunteer at the event, register at www.emctx.com/festivals.

Valley Ranch Town Center Construction Progresses

Construction is progressing at the Valley Ranch Town Center, located at the Grand Parkway and U.S. Highway 59 and announcements about future stores, restaurants and entertainment venues are coming!

Developer Danny Signorelli says all of the infrastructure, including the water, sewer, drainage and detention, have been completed ahead of schedule. 3B Construction should have all interior roads paved within the next 120 days, if not sooner. Phase 1 construction — the Town Center's first anchor stores, including Sam's Club and Kroger Marketplace — should be underway during the latter stages of road paving. Signorelli says store openings are on track for the third quarter of 2016.

Phase 2 of the Town Center, which consists of retail, dining and entertainment options, is ahead of schedule with leasing; construction on this phase will begin immediately on the heels of Phase 1. Signorelli says that all key anchors have received final committee approvals and, upon lease completion expected over the next 30 days, they will announce another round of tenants.

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A Message from our President & CEO

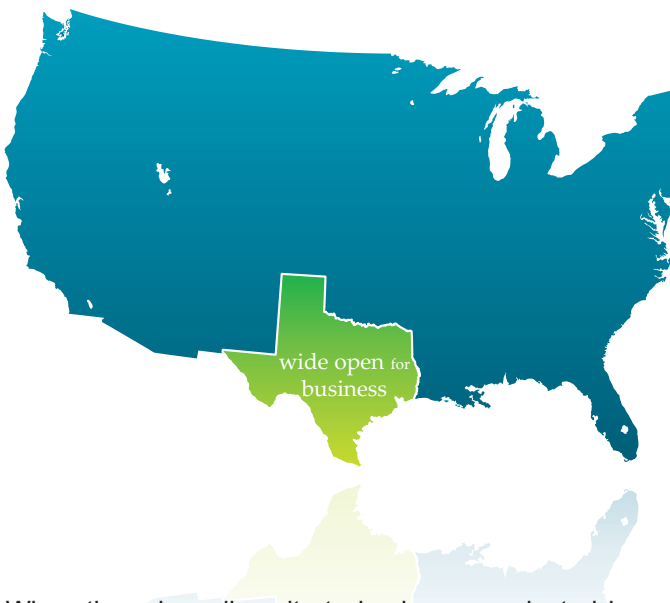


*Frank McCrady
President/CEO*

Friendly Neighbors Helping the Growth of Texas

Sometimes in an evenly matched competitive environment, if you stay in the game long enough your competitor will make enough mistakes that you will prevail. Our area cannot become complacent and simply wait and hope for the things we want to come to our area. Determining the direction for our area's growth must be a proactive approach, and we must continually seek out the competitive advantages of doing business in Texas.

One item you may or may not be aware of is the national trend in state government to increase the minimum wage and its impact on business expansion and development. The chart below includes a few examples of the states that are increasing their minimum wage and hindering small business development. Small business is responsible for 80 percent of all new jobs created; therefore, we need to encourage and develop programs that inspire and assist small business expansion. States dictating wage levels beyond the federal requirement with multi-year increases provides opportunities for East Montgomery County, which has a less restrictive and less government intrusive environment for business. Interestingly enough, you will see the majority of these states are having difficulty generating the appropriate revenue levels for their own state budgets, and yet their efforts will hinder business expansion efforts.



State	Current Wage	Future Wage
Arkansas	\$7.50	\$ 8.00 (2016) \$ 8.50 (2017)
California	\$9.00	\$10.00 (2016)
Massachusetts	\$9.00	\$10.00 (2016) \$11.00 (2017)
Michigan	\$8.15	\$ 8.50 (2016) \$ 8.90 (2017) \$ 9.25 (2018)
Minnesota	\$9.00 (lg. employers) \$7.25 (sm. employers)	\$ 9.50 (2016) \$ 7.75 (2016)
Nebraska	\$8.00	\$ 9.00 (2016)
West Virginia	\$8.00	\$ 8.75 (12/2015)

When there is a disparity to business conducted in one state, EMCID points out the advantages of moving to a more business friendly environment like East Montgomery County. Being a right to work state also helps in making this an easier decision for a business looking to move.

Several news articles have discussed Seattle's minimum wage increase to \$15 per hour and the subsequent increased operating costs. The trend has been to pass that increase on to the consumer, resulting in increased restaurant prices, for example. The restaurants have seen fewer customers, and several restaurants have since closed. These types of actions by other states clearly demonstrate that the state of Texas has it right in letting the capital market determine the appropriate level for wages. We continue to look for other state weaknesses and leverage those unfriendly business practices to welcome additional job opportunities for their relocation to Texas and East Montgomery County.

Want to be more informed about what's happening in East Montgomery County?

Attend one of EMCID's Community Meetings.

September 8, 6:30 p.m. @ City of Roman Forest, 2430 Roman Forest Blvd., Roman Forest, TX

Please visit www.emctx.com for a complete and up-to-date schedule.

Q&A

Q: Is EMCID funded through property taxes?

A: No, but this is a common misperception. Property taxes are collected by Emergency Services Districts (ESDs), the Lone Star College District, Montgomery County, Montgomery County Hospital District, Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs), and New Caney and Splendora ISDs. EMCID, on the other hand, is funded by a legislatively approved 1 - 1.5 cent sales tax on all goods and services purchased within the District's boundaries, which encompass 158 square miles. **EMCID does not collect property taxes.** During the 2015 fiscal year, which ended June 30, EMCID collected an estimated \$7.7 million of the approximated \$513 million in sales tax revenue generated by residents and visitors who dined at our restaurants and spent money at shopping centers, convenience stores, and other retail establishments in East Montgomery County. The tax revenue that EMCID collects is used to provide services that benefit East Montgomery County through economic, community and educational development.

EMCID gave \$1,581,000 in fiscal year 2015 to the local fire departments in order for you and your families to be better protected, have lower insurance premiums and a greater sense of security. EMCID also gave a portion of sales tax revenue back to the community in the form of grants to various non-profit organizations that help feed and clothe the less fortunate, provide jobs to special needs adults, offer summer camp opportunities for our youth, provide needed classroom tools for teachers, and to governmental agencies so that they may offer additional services and protection for residents.

EMCID, through its non-profit subsidiary the East Montgomery County Scholarship Foundation (EMCSF), also made available \$1,000 to every high school graduate and GED recipient. The scholarship program was expanded to include up to 20 - \$500 merit-based scholarships for current college students who want to continue their post-secondary education.



EMCID provided 50 turkeys and 20 hams last December to the Mission Northeast.



Financial incentives through EMCID's Economic Development Corporation helped Kennedy Fabrication/Kennedy Rig Services in Splendora expand. The companies provide jobs to more than 450 people.

EMCID also agreed to provide future financial incentives to various developers and businesses that want to construct, expand or relocate services within the District. These kinds of incentives helped expand the Valley Ranch Town Center development, attract BreWingZ, Pollo Tropical, Taco Cabana and McDonalds to the Village at Northpark center, grow the East Montgomery County Industrial Park and create jobs for our residents.

Aside from sales taxes, EMCID also collects a 7 percent hotel/motel tax, which in 2015 amounted to about \$154,000. The money, however, can only be used for travel and tourism projects. As East Montgomery County grows, so will the number of visitors and, subsequently, the demand for additional amenities; EMCID will look at ways to ensure the highest and best use opportunities for our area.

Have a question? Send it to us by going to www.emctx.com/contact-us.

Economy

Valley Ranch continued

The full lineup of retail restaurants and entertainment venues has expanded in scale substantially, however Signorelli was not able to announce names until terms are finalized on the various leases. To date, he says more than 35 tenants are in some stage of negotiation.



Economy



Expansion Made Possible Through EMCID

Royal Purple

The Board of Directors at its July 9 regular meeting approved \$70,000 in incentive funds to Royal Purple, provided that the company hire 20 new employees — half of which reside in East Montgomery County — and contribute \$5,000 per year to the East Montgomery County Scholarship Foundation (EMCSF) for four years. Royal Purple, which manufactures high performance lubricants for most automotive, industrial, marine, motorcycle and racing applications, plans to add 100,000 sq ft to its facility at 1 Royal Purple Ln. in Porter. The company currently has about 120 employees, about 20 percent of those were hired in the last 18 months.



Porter Kwik Kar

The Board of Directors also approved giving financial incentives to Porter Kwik Kar Car Wash LLC/Porter Kwik Kar LLC so that it could expand its car wash service. The company is located at 24536 FM 1314. EMCID will provide a \$25,000 grant to the business in exchange for a \$5,000 contribution to the EMCSF for five years, a signed loan agreement with the East Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (EMCEDC), and the requirement to hire eight additional employees.



Martin Marietta Materials

It may be obscured from sight because of the pine trees, but Martin Marietta Materials is busy clearing land on a 133 acre site along the Union Pacific Railroad, Loop 494 and Thelma Ln. in New Caney. Martin Marietta, with its recent acquisition of Texas Industries, is the largest aggregate supplier of rock, gravel and other construction materials in the United States, with eight rail-served material yards in the Houston area. EMCID agreed to provide \$30,000 in financial incentives at its August 2014 regular meeting to finalize the company's decision to expand its operations to New Caney.

BUSINESS EXPANDING? NEED MONEY?

We Offer:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Lease/purchase options | Debt financing structures |
| Tax abatement | Cash injection |
| Land donation | Equity participation |
| Site and utility development assistance | |
| Assistance in bonding capability | |

Fall 2015 Community Development



Applications Due by September 28

Community

Board Increases Community Funding, Adds New Festival

The Board of Directors approved its 2016 budget to include nearly \$3.1 million for community development funding. That's an increase of \$280,000 from 2015, or nearly 10 percent more.

"The Board really wanted the funding in this area to serve more people than it has in the past," said Frank McCrady, President/CEO. "So what you've got is a budget that is larger and accomplishes the Board's goals."

For instance, the budget includes \$300,000 for community development projects, a category that hasn't been a part of prior budgets. This money will go to fund two to three splash pad parks within the District that will provide hours of entertainment to thousands of children for years to come.

Funding for special events increased from \$225,000 to \$300,000, expanding the number of annual festivals from three to four. Aside from the Back to School Bash, Spring and Fall Extravaganzas, the additional festival would likely occur following New Year's. "We're currently in the planning



stages, and the Board's vision is to have a fireworks show mixed in with some other entertainment options," said McCrady.

The budget includes \$50,000 for the Safe Shopper Program, a joint effort with the Montgomery County Precinct 4 Constable's Office to patrol high traffic shopping areas during the Christmas shopping season, \$150,000 for the Community Development Grant program, typically awarded to local non-profit organizations, and \$450,000 for educational scholarships.

More than \$1.8 million is set aside for anticipated contractually obligated payments to Emergency Services Districts 6 and 7.

Board Presents Grant Checks Totaling \$123,572.50

The Board of Directors presented checks at its June 24 and July 9 regular meetings to those organizations that were approved for Community Development Grants. Grants are funded twice a year to governmental entities, non-profit corporations and other organizations for projects that improve the quality of life for residents in East Montgomery County.



East Montgomery County Historical Society, \$11,000

Funds will pay Entergy for the cost of moving the power line easement from the center of the EMCHS's property to the south property line. The movement of the easement will make room for the EMCHS to move the old Porter community building to its final location so that it may operate as a museum. It's currently located adjacent to the Porter Fire Station on Loop 494 and Farris Green.



City of Roman Forest, \$9,000

Funds will purchase new and replacement equipment for the city park.



City of Roman Forest PD, \$4,350

Funds will purchase 10 Axon Body cameras to be worn by each on duty officer.



East Montgomery County YMCA of Greater Houston, \$3,500

Funds helped reduce the cost of an 11-week summer day camp in Splendora for at least 116 youth from East Montgomery County. The camp ran from June 8 - August 21.



Mission Northeast, \$49,010.50

Funds will pay for a freezer/cooler combination unit along with safety items so that the Mission Northeast can accept additional donations to continue to provide social services.



Montgomery Co. Youth Services, \$6,000

Grant funds sponsored a minimum of 27 kids, ages 7-17 from East Montgomery County, for the 2015 Camp Watsitumi, a therapeutic camp held August 4-7 in Conroe.



New Caney New Horizons, Inc., \$28,712

Funds will replace the organization's van that was bought in 1999 with an EMCID Community Development Grant. The original van will continue to be used to transport goods and supplies.



Splendora Junior High School AV Club, \$8,000

Funds will be used to start an AV club for the Fall 2015 semester and to purchase audio/visual equipment.



Splendora Junior High School Science Club, \$4,000

Funds will help support the club's goal of raising student engagement during their learning experience.



\$1,000^{FOR}SCHOOL

**GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL OR
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Available up to two years after graduation.

MERIT SCHOLARSHIP \$500

CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION

- A 2.75 GPA or higher
- 48 or more college credit hours
- Received previous EMCID/EMCSF funding
- Demonstrated leadership & service
- Demonstrated financial need

Apply at www.emctx.com/scholarships/applications.

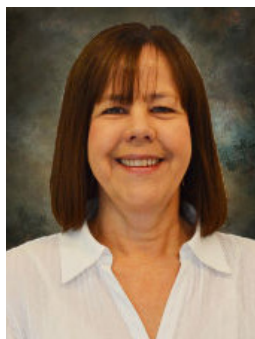
*An educational development initiative of the East Montgomery County Improvement District
& the East Montgomery County Scholarship Foundation.*

EMCID Professionals to Educate Local Students Through Paid Internship

Three high school seniors from New Caney, Porter and Splendora will receive hands-on experience in business, communications and event planning through a paid work study program sponsored by the East Montgomery County Scholarship Foundation (EMCSF), a non-profit subsidiary of EMCID, beginning this month. Upon successful completion of the program, the student will earn \$750.

Selected students will work under either Tara Martin, Office Administrator, Kelley Mattlage, Director of Communications or Sandy Seelye, Special Events Coordinator.

Martin, hired by EMCID in February 2015, has 18 years experience in economic development and accounting, providing loans for small



Tara Martin



Kelley Mattlage



Sandy Seelye

businesses. She grew the portfolio of the Tulsa Economic Development Corporation from \$200,000 to \$50 million.

Mattlage has a combined 18 years experience in communications. She spent 12 years in television news before heading behind the camera to tackle public relations. She's been with EMCID since August 2014.

Seelye has worked at EMCID for the past 15 years. She oversees the District's festivals, including the Back to School Bash and Fall and Spring Extravanzas.

Inside the East Montgomery County Improvement District

Meet the Board

The East Montgomery County Improvement District is led by eight elected Directors who serve four-year terms on the Board.

Brenda Webb is the owner of Gold Rush Tax Service in New Caney and retired from her Legal Assistant position after 36 years. She recently graduated from the Citizens Constable Academy Class 001, and currently serves as the Vice President of the East Montgomery County Republican Women's PAC. Brenda is married with three children and has six grand children. She was elected to Position 1 in 2012. Her term expires in 2016.

As a lifelong educator, Dale Martin has served the students of Splendora for the last 17 years as a teacher and an administrator. Dale is married and has three children. He was elected to Position 3 in 2012.

Scott Hesson has worked for the United Parcel Service for 25 years in East Montgomery County. Scott is married with four children and has two grandsons. Scott was elected to Position 5 in 2014.

Martin Zepeda is the owner of Cel-Cris Enterprises and serves on various committees within the community. He is married and has two children and five grandchildren. He was elected to Position 7 in 2014.

Stephen Carlisle is the police chief of Roman Forest and president of the local Shriner's Club. He is married and has a son who is in the U.S. Army. Stephen was elected to Position 6 in 2014.

Katherine Persson is the President of Lone Star College - Kingwood. She and her husband have three grown children and two grandchildren. She was appointed as Director, Position 4 in July 2013 to serve out the remaining term of a seat that had been vacated.

Leonard Rogers is owner of Let's Mechanical. He is married with two grown children, has four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He was elected to the Position 8 seat in 2014. Rogers also served as Director, Position 1 from 2004-2012.

Isidor Ybarra retired after an active career in business. He owned Ricardo's Mexican Restaurant for 39 years. He remains involved in the community through service on numerous



Brenda Webb
Chairman



Dale Martin
Vice Chairman



Scott Hesson
Treasurer



Martin Zepeda
Asst. Treasurer



Stephen Carlisle
Secretary



Katherine Persson
Asst. Secretary



Leonard Rogers
Director



Isidor Ybarra
Director

Join Us

The Board of Directors holds meetings the second Thursday of the month, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the EMCID Complex. Agendas are posted online at www.emctx.com 72 hours before meetings.



committees and boards. Isidor has held the Position 2 seat since 2000. 7



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



Important Dates

September - November 2015

September 7	Labor Day/EMCID Closed
September 10	Back to School Bash
*September 10	EMCID Regular Meeting
*September 10	EMCSF Meeting
*September 10	EMCEDC Meeting
September 28	Deadline for Community Development Grant Applications
*October 8	EMCID Regular Meeting
October 27	Free Immunizations Clinic
October 29	Fall Extravaganza
November 11	Veterans Day/EMCID Closed
*November 12	EMCID Regular Meeting
November 26	Thanksgiving/EMCID Closed
November 27	EMCID Closed

*Dates subject to change
More events at www.emctx.com/calendar.



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