

THE INSIDER

EMCTX.COM

EAST MONTGOMERY COUNTY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Got Paper?
We do, with
GCP Paper USA, Inc.
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Tricks n' Treats
Fall Fair &
Haunted House
p. 6





Welcome GCP Paper USA, Inc.

With an increased demand for toilet paper and a steadily growing customer base, GCP Paper USA, Inc. will build a new \$400 million facility in the East Montgomery County Industrial Park.

By Jennifer Green



EMCID Chairman, Brenda Webb and GCP representative, Eduardo Soto both sign a proclamation acknowledging the GCP Paper USA, Inc. project being fully approved.



A great day for East Montgomery County and GCP Paper USA, Inc. as EMCID Board Members, local officials and GCP representatives pose for a fantastic group photo on July 26, 2023.

The East Montgomery Improvement District (EMCID) and GCP signed an agreement July 26 for the company to purchase 32 acres in the EMC Industrial Park. GCP is recognized as a leading producer of private-label tissue products, like toilet paper, paper towels, and napkins for Sam's Club, Walmart, HEB, Costco and Aldi. GCP Paper agreed to hire 51 percent of its employees from within EMCID boundaries and contribute \$100,000 to the EMC Scholarship Foundation, which provides \$1,600 scholarships to all students within EMCID boundaries. The company will also provide \$15,000 of paper goods each year for 10 years for EMCID's future convention center.

The project will be completed in three phases — a 190,000-squarefoot warehouse, a packing center and a conversion facility — to be completed within five years. GCP's new facility is expected to bring approximately 200 jobs to the area.

Representatives with GCP, locally elected officials and many others attended the July event. Attendees included GCP Paper representatives Ricardo Soto, Eduardo Soto, Luis Fernandez, Luis Fernandez, Jr. and Heydi Casteneda; the EMCID Board of Directors; Frank McCrady, EMCID President/CEO; Pam Plagens, Global Advanced Manufacturing Team Leader with the U.S. Department of Commerce; Paulette Rubio, Officer for Politics and Protocol Affairs with the Mexican Consulate; Shiva Baradaran, Deputy District Director & Scheduler with State Sen. Brandon Creighton's Office; Matt Gray, Montgomery County Commissioner, Precinct 4; and Brian Garcia and Jose Sanchez with Entergy Texas.



Business

BRIEFS & HAPPENINGS

What's going on in and around our community.



Las Fuentes Catering

Las Fuentes Catering specializes in gourmet food for specialty events as well as corporate/academic events. The catering business first started in Los Angeles, but now they reside and work in the Porter area. Blanca Fuentes, owner of Las Fuentes catering said, "We are excited to continue growing. We would love to connect with the community."

They also have a food truck located on FM 1314 and Gene Campbell that offers a Salvadoran staple, pupusas as well as other delicious food located at 17449 Indian Trail S, in Porter.



Nick the Greek

Nick The Greek filed permits to open a location in EMC at 25806 Loop 494, the former location of El Pollo Loco. Cooking up fresh Greek food including gyro bowls, beef and lamb pitas, Greek salads, Baklava and falafel to name a few menu items. They are expected to begin construction in September.



Waxing the City

Waxing the City will be the newest business to join the lineup at Valley Ranch Town Center. Set to be located at 21856 Market Place Dr., Suite, 500, near the future Salata, Waxing the City provides waxing services, skincare, and specialty treatments for brows and lashes. They are expected to open in December.



Center on Gene Campbell

Pablo's Mexican Restaurant, the Gyro Guys, Alphabet Zone Daycare and a Salon/MedSpa will join the Center on Gene Campbell at 18934 E. Industrial Pkwy. in New Caney at Gene Campbell Blvd. Located near the EMC Industrial Park, this will provide much-needed dining options for businesses and new residential communities nearby. No opening dates have been released.



EMCID TEAM

Joe O'Connell, Chief Financial Officer



by Kelley Mattlage,
Chief
Communications
Officer

When I think of a CFO — a Chief Financial Officer — Don Corleone of *The Godfather* comes to mind to me for some reason. Someone who's tough and always serious (without violence and corruption associated with the character.) That, however, would not describe our loveable Joe O'Connell.

With his distinctive midwestern dialect, you immediately know Joe is not of Italian mafia descent or from Texas. In fact, he grew up in Evanston, IL, a suburb of Chicago, and graduated from Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI. He's not at all bashful making fun of his former college roommates and neighbors, going into full cheesehead mode with words like "bubbler" and phrases like "ya der hey," "you betcha," and "dontcha know." It's all in fun — of course, he doesn't talk like that regularly — only when we need a laugh. But it gives you an idea that this numbers guy is anything but serious or boring, personality-wise.

Perhaps that's due in part to his unique background. After graduating from Marquette with a Bachelors in Criminology and Law Studies, Joe became a jailer in Waukesha County, WI. He later returned to Evanston, where he worked midnights on the tactical unit. As you can imagine, working overnight shifts for 15 years can take a toll; Joe wanted to learn new skills, and he began to plan for a career after law enforcement. This single dad to two small children enrolled in accounting classes and discovered a new passion. He would even study while in his squad car on lunch break, with spreadsheets and calculators spread across the dashboard.

Joe passed the exam to be licensed as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and held accounting and finance jobs in Illinois for 14 years before moving to Texas when his wife's job required a transfer to the Houston area.



After three years of working in accounting for municipal utility districts, Joe was hired by EMCID in 2018. As the Chief Financial Officer, he has initiated a deeper financial analysis of the district and its non-profit subsidiaries, the East Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation and the East Montgomery County Scholarship Foundation. He streamlined financial transactions to allow for better cash flow for the district. He secured \$1.6 million in grant funds from the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Agency to construct a new industrial building. And he implemented a loan tracking program for more than 62 loans made to businesses in the district.

Numbers truly do excite Joe. Yes, he's *that* nerd, and he's very serious about money and the district's financial health. You will always find him very knowledgeable about current events, and I'll say *passionate* about politics. But his true talents definitely lie in comedy. Someone should give this man a microphone and a stage. Joe keeps us laughing, sometimes uncontrollably. Once he gets on a roll, you can't stop him. He's truly just one of those guys you're glad to have as a coworker!



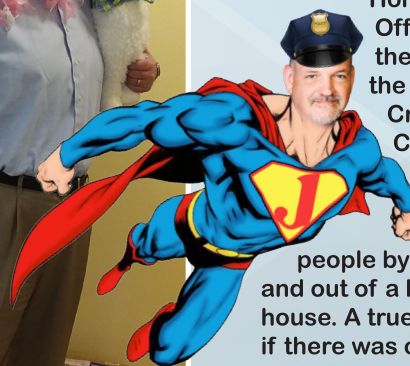
Above: Ransom note left for Joe's Alpaca and skeleton friends.



Joe paid the office kidnappers' ransom to get his friends back.



Left: Joe is Alabaster's hero after saving him from evil office kidnappers.



Honored as Officer of the Year by the Chicago Crime Commission for saving the lives of 14 people by going in and out of a burning house. A true Superman if there was one!

SPOTLIGHT

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT JOE

Joe O'Connell

Title: Chief Financial Officer

Hired: September 2018

Degrees: BS Criminology and Law Studies, Marquette University

Certifications: Certified Public Accountant

Awards: 4 Decorations of Valor from Evanston PD, honored by Chicago Crimw Commission as one of the top officers of the year for saving the lives of 14 people by going in and out of a burning house

Born: 1966

Children: Katie, Cormick, Maggie, and Jack

Hobbies: jogging, weightlifting, and reading

Favorite Sports Teams: Chicago Cubs, Las Vegas Raiders, and cage fighting

Fun Facts: nicknamed "Geek Boy" by fellow police officers when they discovered he was studying accounting

Most Proud Of: "Passing the CPA exam while working midnights as a police officer and taking care of my kids during the day."



SIGN UP

The Insider

InSights

Be the first to know
about breaking news
on businesses, events,
and other community
news with EMCID's
newest eNewsletter,
InSights!

Before it's online or on social media,
InSights will hit your inbox, so make
sure you sign up to receive the
newsletter.





Fall Fair

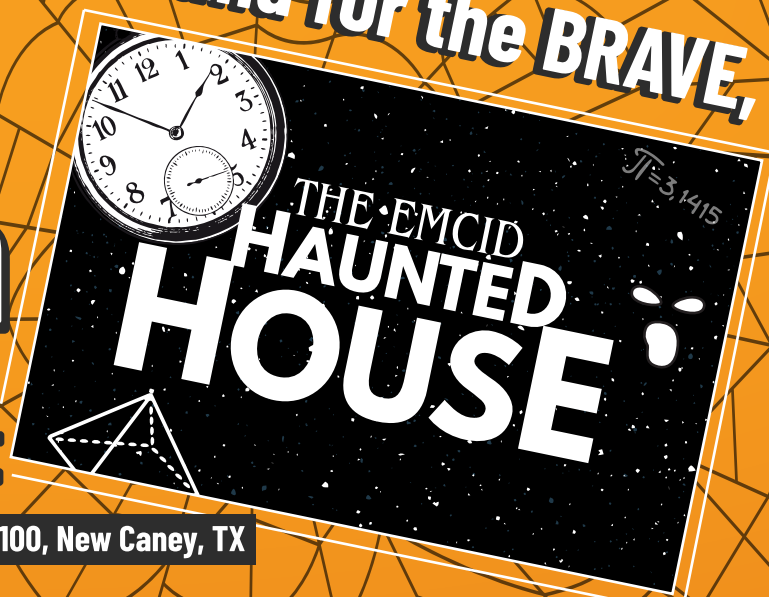
Enjoy family fun!
Pie Eating Contest,
Fall Market, Family
Entertainment...

...and for the BRAVE,

10am-4pm

Saturday, October 21st

Valley Ranch Town Center | 22296 Market Place Drive, STE. 100, New Caney, TX



Remember, December!

12/15 - 12/24

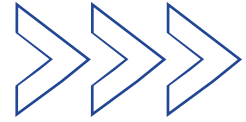


Valley Ranch Town Center
22296 Market Place Drive, STE. 100
New Caney, TX



FROM THE COMMISSIONER'S DESK

First 7 Months in Review



STAY IN
TOUCH
WITH US!



936-597-4444

contactp4@mctx.org

www.mctxpct4.org

23628 Roberts Rd
New Caney, 77357

Since taking office in January, Commissioner Gray and the Precinct 4 team have been working to ensure our community is a great place to live, work, and play. Over \$2.5 million in savings and funds have been brought back to Precinct 4, including successful grants, operational cost savings and equipment and vehicles returned that the Precinct had originally purchased.

As Precinct 4 continues to make strides in flood mitigation, a large part of that includes digging drainage ditches along county roads. Over 140,000 feet of ditches have been dug throughout the Precinct since January. That's the equivalent of 460 football fields!

Illegal dumping and bandit signs are not only an eyesore in the community, but can also be a hazard. Commissioner Gray worked with the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office on the approval of the Inmate Litter Program, bringing roadside cleanup by inmates back to help clean the community.

In addition to removing debris from the county right of way, over 6,000 bandit signs have been removed from county roads since May.

Precinct 4 has completed 16 road improvement projects in the last 7 months. These overlay projects were done on high-traffic roads such as Tram Road, McCleskey Road, and Roman Forest Boulevard. Other road improvement projects remain ongoing such as Ford Road and Sorters Road.

While many improvements and progress have been made over the last 7 months, there is still a lot to be done. Commissioner Gray is continuing to streamline county processes and increase efficiency while collaborating with local leaders to improve our East Montgomery County community.

1,423

**SERVICE REQUESTS
COMPLETED**

140,000

**FEET OF DRAINAGE
DITCHES DUG**

6,000

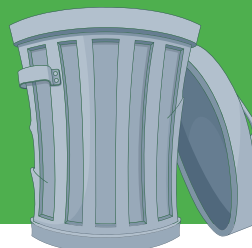
**ILLEGAL BANDIT SIGNS
REMOVED FROM
RIGHT OF WAY**

16

**ROAD IMPROVEMENT
PROJECTS COMPLETED**

HEAVY TRASH DAY

**SATURDAY,
OCTOBER 7TH, 2023
8:00 AM - 2:00 PM**



**AV BULL SALLAS PARK
21675 MCCLESKEY RD
NEW CANEY, TX 77357**

VISIT MCTXPCT.ORG FOR MORE DETAILS!



Commissioner Matt Gray



*****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



ELECTRONICS — RECYCLING EVENT —



ACCEPTING: Computers, Desktops, Laptops, Monitors, and more!

Saturday, September 23 | 21575 US 59, New Caney

8AM-2PM