



A LOOK AT GOOD CAUSES TO SUPPORT AND THE VOLUNTEERS WHO MAKE THEM WORK



Our surroundings

SAN ANTONIO
BOTANICAL GARDEN
GREEN SPACES ALLIANCE
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
AND MORE...

Our children

CHILD ADVOCATES
SAN ANTONIO
CHILDREN'S
BEREAVEMENT CENTER
CHILDSAFE
AND MORE...

Our community

SAN ANTONIO FOOD BANK
SAN ANTONIO SPORTS
ANIMAL DEFENSE LEAGUE
AND MORE...

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

Local nonprofits work tirelessly to support our communities

Groups deliver much-needed services throughout San Antonio area



The Good Samaritan Community Services Center, one of many nonprofit organizations profiled in this section, hosts a veterans celebration on Nov. 9.

By Terry Scott Bertling
STAFF WRITER

Our personal priorities this time of year often start with a long list of things to do. Shop for gifts for loved ones, plan holiday gatherings, deck the halls. But the giving spirit that fills the air also warms many hearts, reminding us that many in the community need a helping hand throughout the year. Supporting local charitable organizations that deliver much-needed services deserves a spot on each of our lists.

Today's San Antonio Gives section puts the spotlight on some of the volunteers and local organizations that get things done to support those in need. We hope you find their passion, commitment, vision and unselfish giving of their time and/or money inspiring.

The wide variety of local nonprofits in this section are doing impor-



The drama studio at the Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas houses plenty of stuffed animals, a puppet theater space and a time machine area.

tant work in the community that could use your support in any way you can give it. That could include attending their fundraising events, donating time to help work on important causes or making a financial contribution.

One at a time, we each can have a positive impact on issues that are important to us. It doesn't matter how big our bank accounts are or whether we have open spots in our calendar ready for new appointments. Financial and

manpower contributions in all sizes help make a difference.

Whether it's helping families secure food, protecting and helping children with uncertain futures or working to help keep Americans healthy, there are plenti-



John Davenport / San Antonio Express-News

Volunteers from USAA pack boxes of food for seniors at the San Antonio Food Bank. The Food Bank serves 16 counties in the San Antonio area.

ful options for us to touch someone's life in a positive way.

We've just scraped the surface with our big special section today. As you count your many blessings this Thanksgiving, please think of ways you can spread that

joy to others. If we didn't spotlight an organization here that feels like a match for your passions, check the United Way website (unitedwaysatx.org) for more volunteer opportunities.

Happy holidays!

UPCOMING CHARITY EVENTS

DECEMBER

AAHCC Christmas Party & Fundraiser: Elian Hotel & Spa, 18603 La Cantera Terrace, eventbrite.com. A charity gala to thank the community and to raise funds for veteran-focused nonprofit Adapt A Vet. \$50-\$1,500. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Dec. 1.

Construct-A-Kid's Christmas Gala: Freeman Coliseum Expo Hall C, 3201 E. Houston St., asasanantonio.org. Includes casino games, auctions, dancing, dinner and drinks to raise funds for Construct A Kid's Christmas. \$75. 5:30-11 p.m. Dec. 7.

Deschutes Pintwood Derby: Flying Saucer Draught Emporium, 11255 Huebner Road, 210-696-5080, beerknurd.com. A bracket-style derby tournament benefitting San Antonio Pets Alive. \$20 per car, includes one Deschutes beer. 2-7 p.m. Dec. 9.

Jingle Bell Run: Valero Energy Headquarters, 1 Valero Way, jbr.org. Complete a 5K run or walk with your team members to raise funds for the Arthritis Foundation. Festive attire is encouraged; event is dog-friendly. See website for ticket information. 3 p.m. Dec. 9.

Poinsettia Ball: Grand Hyatt Hotel, 600 E. Market St., friendsofhospicesa.org. Gala black-tie ball with dinner and



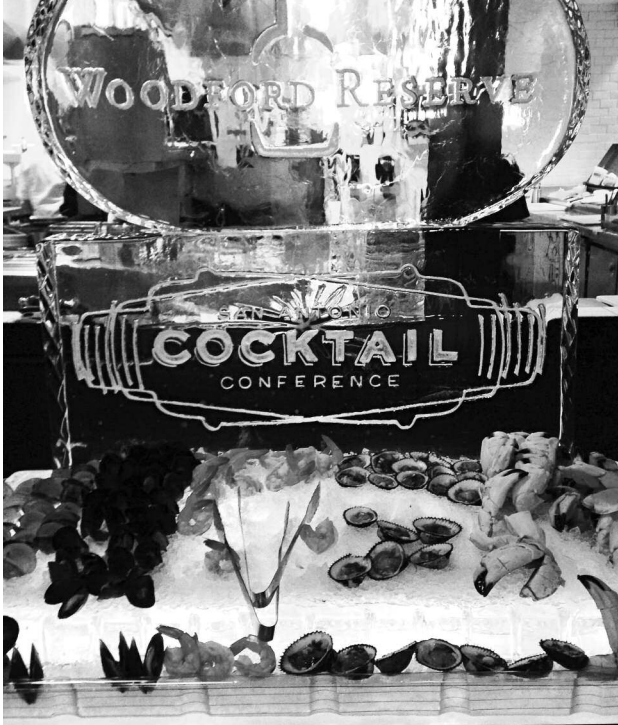
John Davenport / Express-News

Deschutes Pintwood Derby on Dec. 9 benefits San Antonio Pets Alive, which relieves pressure on animal shelters.

dancing. Benefits Friends of Hospice for uninsured hospice patients. \$225. 7-11:30 p.m. Dec. 14.

JANUARY

San Antonio Cocktail Conference: Multiple locations, sanantoniococktail.conference.com. This annual conference brings bartenders, cocktail enthusiasts and connoisseurs together to take part in workshops, seminars, tastings and parties. The confer-



Express-News file photo

The San Antonio Cocktail Conference, scheduled for Jan. 10-14 in various venues around town, donates 100 percent of its proceeds to children's charities.

ence will donate 100 percent of its proceeds to children's charities. See website for complete list of events and ticket prices.

Jan. 10-14.

Taste the Dream Gala: The Mays Family Center at the Witte Museum, 3801 Broadway,

210-248-9178. Sample cuisines from around the world prepared by local chefs. The event kicks off with an open bar reception followed by free-flowing tastings via food stations. Benefits businesses in San Antonio's historic East Side. \$150. 6:30 p.m. Jan. 13.

Pink Martini Benefit Concert: Majestic Theatre, 224 E. Houston St., sariverfoundation.org. Pink Martini will perform with lead singer China Forbes in celebration of the opening of Confluence Park and in support of Las Casas' Performing Arts Education Programs. \$45-\$150. 7-10 p.m. Jan. 17.

MARCH

Culinaria's Annual 5K Beer & Wine Run: The Shops at La Cantera, 15900 La Cantera Parkway, active.com. Participants will run through the Shops at La Cantera for 3.1 miles and celebrate afterwards at a wine and beer reception. Benefits Culinaria's farm program. \$30-\$45. 8 a.m. March 18.

Race for the Cure: Alamodome, 100 Montana St., komen.org. A 5K run or walk to raise money for breast cancer research and celebrate survivors. 6-11 a.m. May 5.

Publisher
Susan Page

Editor
Mike Leary

Managing Editor
Janie Stockwell

Features Editor
Emily Spicer

Director of News Production
Dean Lockwood

Art Director
Adrián Alvarez

Designers
Emilio Rabago
Bruno García
Carrie Stiles

Producer
Kristina Paledes

Executive Vice President of Advertising and Marketing
Ray McCutcheon

Executive Director - New Business Development
Lisa Gillespie

Marketing Manager
Tracy Ponder

SUBSCRIBER EXCLUSIVE

vote.



San Antonio Express-News
Million Dollar Charity Giveaway

Vote now and we will give free advertising
to your favorite charity!



Last year our loyal subscribers helped charities receive more than one million dollars in print and digital advertising space to spread the word about their charitable organization.

Once again the San Antonio Express-News is providing subscribers the opportunity to vote for a charity that has qualified for this program.

Vote online at ExpressNews.com/Vote
or select your charity below and mail in the form.

This exciting opportunity to vote for your charity is for a limited time only.

31404

List of participating charities (Please check one):

- ☐ Aid the Silent
- ☐ Alzheimer's Association San Antonio and South Texas
- ☐ American Cancer Society
- ☐ Animal Defense League
- ☐ BEAT AIDS Foundation
- ☐ BioBridge Global
- ☐ Catholic Charities of San Antonio
- ☐ Center for Refugee Services
- ☐ CentroMed
- ☐ Down Syndrome Association of South Texas
- ☐ Dress for Success San Antonio
- ☐ Family Service Association of San Antonio, Inc.
- ☐ Family Violence Prevention Services, Inc.
- ☐ Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas
- ☐ Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio
- ☐ Harper's Embrace Lifesavers Program
- ☐ Haven For Hope
- ☐ Hope for the Future
- ☐ Magik Theatre
- ☐ Morgan's Wonderland
- ☐ Mount Sacred Heart
- ☐ Our Lady of the Lake University
- ☐ Providence Catholic School
- ☐ Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Antonio
- ☐ SAMMinistries
- ☐ San Antonio Food Bank
- ☐ San Antonio Humane Society
- ☐ San Antonio Museum of Art
- ☐ San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo
- ☐ San Antonio Symphony
- ☐ Society of St. Vincent de Paul
- ☐ St. Peter - St. Joseph Children's Home
- ☐ Texas Diaper Bank
- ☐ The Rape Crisis Center
- ☐ The Salvation Army
- ☐ THRU Project
- ☐ Vet TRIIP



Clip, fill out and mail to:
San Antonio Express-News
Million Dollar Charity Giveaway
PO Box 2585 • San Antonio TX 78299

Name: _____

Subscriber Acct. No. (Optional): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Day Phone: _____



This Christmas, Join Our Army

VOLUNTEER to Ring a Bell

ADOPT AN ANGEL at one of our
Angel Tree Locations

DONATE at our Red Kettles or Online

**BECOME A RED KETTLE
MATCHING PARTNER**

Ranges from \$250 - \$5,000



DOING THE
MOST GOODSM
SERVING TEXANS IN NEED SINCE 1889

For more information, please visit
www.salvationarmysatx.org or
call **210-352-2000**
521 W. Elmira

SALVATIONARMYSATX.ORG

 @SalvationArmySATX

 @salarmysatx

 @salvationarmysatx

A Warm Winter Special!



COMPLETE Water System



as low as...

\$29
per month*

Get a **Free**
**WATER
HEATER**
with the purchase of a
**WATER
SOFTENER**



Get **\$500 OFF**
when you
UPGRADE
to Tankless



or Visit Us At JonWayneAir.com

Call TODAY For Your Free Water Analysis

210-293-5501

Don't Wait, This Offer Ends Soon!

*Call for details, financing with approved credit. | © Jon Wayne Service Company | HVAC License: TACLA1785C - Electrical Contractor License: TECL#218654 - Licensed By: TX Dept. of License & Regulation - PO BOX 12157 Austin, TX 78711 - Ph 800-803-9202 - Fax 512-463-6599 - www.tdlr.texas.gov | Responsible Master Plumber: Mark Farley - License #M-39682. Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners; PO BOX 4200 Austin, TX 78765-4200; 800-845-6584.

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

Connecting with nature at S.A. Botanical Garden

Variety of relaxing programs suited for both kids and adults



Guests sample “fruit ceviche” during the opening day of the \$22 million expansion last month. In March, the 2.5-acre Family Adventure Park debuts. Kin Man Hui / San Antonio Express-News

By Steve Bennett
STAFF WRITER

With flourishing flora ranging from Texas mountain laurel to exotic desert cacti and rainforest rubber trees, the San Antonio Botanical Garden lives up to its designation as “a museum of plants.”

But that description seems too static, too passive, for a living classroom, a research and conservation facility, a natural amusement park that offers everything from birding tours to orchestra concerts — along with plenty of opportunities to get dirt under your fingernails.

“There’s always something interesting going on around here,” Karen Kimbell, development director, said during a recent conversation in her office in the garden’s 1896 Sullivan Carriage House, one of several architectural marvels on campus.

And with the October ribbon-cutting of an 8-acre, \$22.3 million expansion featuring a new welcome and discovery center — looking forward to the March opening of the 2.5-acre Family Adventure Park — the botanical garden is one of the most dynamic nature facilities in the country.

It was recently listed as a Top Garden Worth Traveling For by TripAdvisor, and Southern Living magazine named it one of the South’s Best Botanical Gardens in its March 2017 issue.

“I think we’re setting a standard as a 21st-century interactive garden,” said John Troy, president of the San Antonio Botanical Garden Society, the nonprofit organization that manages the city-owned property. “We will always be a place where nature can be looked at and admired, but we’re also a nature place where people can play. We’re not just a swing in a park.”

Annual attendance hovers around 150,000, with about a third of

“We want to show people what they’ve not seen in San Antonio before.”

Bob Brackman, executive director

those visitors children, and officials expect attendance to increase by 35 percent — or about \$2,000 — with the opening of the expansion.

“We want to show people what they’ve not seen in San Antonio before — even at our own garden,” said Executive Director Bob Brackman.

Founded in 1980, the San Antonio Botanical Garden is set on land that was a 19th-century limestone quarry and later contained a reservoir for San Antonio’s original water system.

The idea for a public garden was conceived in the 1940s, and voters approved \$265,000 in city bonds for the garden in 1970. Ground was broken in 1976, and the garden opened to the public May 3, 1980.

The garden society also was chartered in 1980, and the public/private partnership has brought major capital improvements to the botanical garden over the years, including the 1987 addition of the Lucile Halsell Conservatory, with its geometric glass buildings designed by renowned Argentinian architect Emilio Ambasz.

Special events and exhibits that have become San Antonio traditions include Art in the Garden, Gardens by Moonlight, Dog Days, Viva Botanical!, BOOtanica, Family Flashlight Night, and Brews and Blooms, as well as movie nights and outdoor symphony concerts.

But the garden’s main mission remains, as Brackman puts it, “to inspire people to connect with the plant world and understand the importance of plants in our lives.”



Alexis Guerrero, 11, smells a plant in the H-E-B Discovery Center at the San Antonio Botanical Garden. About a third of the garden’s visitors are youngsters. Kin Man Hui / San Antonio Express-News



Armulfo Gomez waters plants in the Children’s Vegetable Garden. Robin Jerstad / For the Express-News

With a \$1.6 million annual budget, the botanical garden funds its mission through a variety of revenue sources, including donations from individuals and foundations, corporate sponsorships, admissions and memberships.

“We stress memberships because not only are you supporting the garden, you get to see it in all four seasons and real-

ly learn from it through all four seasons,” Kimbell said.

Memberships range from the \$50 individual level to family for \$75 to director’s circle for \$1,000, and include free daily admission (the garden is open every day except Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year’s Day) and discounts on special events and programs.

“And since we’re going

into the holiday season, I will say that memberships make great gifts!” Kimbell said.

Here’s another good gift idea: Living Beds. You can honor a friend or family member with a yearlong dedication of a living garden in his or her honor. A 4-by-6-foot sign with your loved one’s name is placed in one of eight areas of the garden for \$150 to \$600.

(Members, of course, get a discount. For something a little more permanent, commemorative benches cost a \$10,000 donation.)

Educational programs are the bedrock of the botanical garden’s community outreach. Classes and programs have various focuses, including gardening and water-wise, arts and culture, health and wellness, and culinary. The botanical garden offers everything from tai chi exercise to classes on growing edible mushrooms.

Kids summer camps at the garden are a tradition touching several generations of San Antonians, and there is also the Children’s Vegetable Garden Program and Little Sprouts, for kids 3 to 5 years old that includes storytelling, crafts and hands-on exploration of the garden.

“One of the most im-

SAN ANTONIO BOTANICAL GARDEN

Where: 555 Funston Place

Hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. every day but Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year’s Day.

Admission: \$10-\$12, members free.

Memberships: Cost from \$50 individual to director’s circle for \$1,000. All member levels enjoy free daily admission for one year and early admission (8 a.m.) on Friday; complimentary admission to Family Flashlight Nights and Flowers & Fireworks; discounted tickets for designated evening events; and discounts on classes, camps, birthday parties and gift shop purchases.

Information and volunteer opportunities: Call 210-536-1400 or visit sabot.org

portant aspects of our mission is children,” Kimbell said. “It’s all about re-establishing that link with nature that is essential to kids’ cognitive, physical and emotional well-being.”

With just 51 full- and part-time employees, the botanical garden relies on a lot of volunteers, some 500 of them putting in more than 25,000 hours a year doing everything from watering plants to leading school tours.

“Our volunteers are a very close-knit group,” Kimbell said. “Many of them have been with us for years.”

The botanical garden is an important horticultural, social and cultural resource for the city, Kimbell said.

“Getting people to think about the environment is the core of what we do,” she said. “Plant life really does affect life every day, whether we realize it or not. With our recent expansion, the garden has definitely become more interactive. We just want people to get deeper into the plant world.”

sbennett@express-news.net




Together, We ARE Making a Difference!






Thanks to your support, non-profit Morgan's Wonderland and new Morgan's Inspiration Island have earned worldwide acclaim as unique parks designed with special-needs individuals in mind and built for everyone's enjoyment.

In the spirit of inclusion, we wish you a joyous Christmas and a new year filled with countless blessings!



December 1, 2, 8, 9, 15 - 23
4:00 - 9:00pm

Christmas Lights Galore • Morgan's Wonderland Rides & Attractions
Petting Zoo • Skating on a Simulated Ice Rink • Pictures with Santa
Different Shows Each Evening • Cookies, Hot Chocolate and More!

Adults - \$17
Kids (ages 3-17)/Seniors/Military - \$11
Special Needs/Kids 2 & under - FREE

5223 David Edwards Drive • San Antonio, TX 78233
210-495-5888 • MorgansWonderland.com



The Center for Refugee Services is a 100% volunteer, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our mission is to promote the wellness, self-sufficiency, and successful community integration of legally resettled refugees and their families.

Services include:

- Culturally sensitive individual and family counseling.
- Job search assistance.
- English for Speakers of other Languages instruction.
- Referrals to health, employment, education, and other services as needed.
- Assistance with SNAP Food Program and Medicaid applications.
- Citizenship classes.
- Maternity assistance for new mothers.






Center for Refugee Services
8703 Wurzbach Rd.
San Antonio, TX 78240
Visit us online at www.sarefugees.org



35 YEARS.

TEN MILLION NIGHTS OF CARE.

COUNTLESS LIVES TRANSFORMED.

BE A PART OF THE LEGACY.



OVERCOMING HOMELESSNESS

SAMMinistries has programs across the spectrum of homelessness, enabling us to meet each person where they are. Whether they need help with a past-due rent or utility bill to avoid falling into the cycle of homelessness, or they need a longer-term housing program, SAMMinistries provides the support they need to overcome homelessness and become self-sufficient.

www.samm.org • hope@samm.org

Our gratitude to South Texas Money Management, Ltd. and Sirius Computer Solutions Inc. for ad sponsorship.

copenhagen
no sales tax*
— or —
24 months
0% interest*
no money down • 24 equal payments
limited time offer!

**now through monday,
november 27th ONLY!**



copenhagen
contemporary
furniture & accessories

SAN ANTONIO 18603 Blanco Road 210-545-4366 • AUSTIN 2236 West Braker (East of The Domain) 512-451-1233
Monday through Thursday 10am - 7pm, Friday and Saturday 10am - 6pm, Sunday Noon to 5 pm

www.CopenhagenLiving.com

*An amount equal to your sales tax will be deducted from your invoice. Not valid with any other discounts or promotions, Clearance Center sales or previous purchases. Some merchandise may be excluded per manufacturers' requirements.

*Special terms apply to qualifying purchases charged with approved credit issued by Wells Fargo Financial National Bank. The special terms APR will continue to apply until all qualifying purchases are paid in full. The minimum monthly payment will be the amount that will pay for the purchase in full in equal monthly payments during the special terms period. The regular APR for purchases will apply to certain fees such as late payment fee or if you use the card for other transactions. For newly opened accounts, the APR for purchases is 27.99%. This APR may vary with the market based on U.S. Prime rate and is given as of 11/1/2017. If you are charged interest in any billing cycle, the minimum interest charge will be \$1.00. Offer expires 11/27/2017. Special orders and layaways require a 25% deposit. Not valid with any other discounts or promotions, Clearance Center sales or previous purchases.

Now through January 15th! It feels good to give.



Stressless® is proudly endorsed by the American Chiropractic Association.

RECEIVE \$200 OFF* any Stressless® seating or **\$400 OFF** select Stressless® seating when you donate \$50 to one of our charities. Help us make the holidays just a little brighter while rewarding yourself with the ultimate in comfort. Come experience our Stressless® Comfort Zone.

*see store for details



Hoptimist
by ERHENDEN DENMARK

Feel the Joy!
Hoptimists
from Denmark.
Now also
available for
the holidays.
Santa Bimbles
starting at
\$ 22

Double.
Mikaela
Dörfel's
sculpture
is crafted
in highly
polished
stainless
steel and
sends a
message
of hope,
friendship
and love.
Let it shine.
12 1/2" tall.
\$ 179

ROSENDAHL
COPENHAGEN
The Wine Ball. Rubber
sphere that houses all the tools
you need to get at your favorite
vintage. Unique gift idea and
available locally only
at Copenhagen **\$89**
each

Olle, Lady Sigrid and
the rest of the Swedish
family are now ready
for the holidays, causing
cheer and smiles at
Copenhagen.
Up to 32" tall.
\$33 to \$155

cool accessories and great gift ideas

copenhagen

contemporary
furniture & accessories

SAN ANTONIO 18603 Blanco Road 210-545-4366
Monday through Thursday 10am - 7pm, Friday and Saturday 10am - 6pm, Sunday Noon to 5 pm

www.CopenhagenLiving.com

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

Children’s Bereavement Center helps youth deal with loss

Nonprofit provides free services for grieving children, their families



Photos courtesy Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas

The Children’s Bereavement Center of South Texas specializes in free grief support for children and young adults ages 3 through 24.

By René A. Guzman
STAFF WRITER

For all the confusion, anger and sadness Katie Ruder felt over the death of her mother, Becky, the high school senior will never forget the more light-hearted moment when her father, Curtis, first decided they should seek help with their grief. It had been nearly a year after Becky Ruder’s cancer had taken a devastating turn for the worst, and a nearly 4-year-old Katie was in a Target checkout line with her dad. That’s when she asked yet another random woman in public, “Hey, would you like to marry my dad? My mommy just died.” “That was sort of a nudge to me that I don’t know how to handle this,” said Curtis, chief financial officer for Meals on Wheels San Antonio. Now 17, Katie recounts the story with the kind of warmth, understanding and emotional fortitude she, Curtis, and so many others have found at the Children’s Bereavement Center of South Texas, which guides grieving youth and their families through the loss of a loved one.

“The biggest thing that I got out of it was understanding that I am not alone,” said Katie, who, along with her father, transitioned from bereavement center clients to volunteers several years ago. Curtis facilitated center groups and is now a board member, while Katie has helped out as a camp counselor. “Every time I go back, I tell these kids, ‘It sucks, but one day you will be happy,’” Katie said. “Just seeing that someone else has made it through the loss of their parent or the grief that they’ve been through just makes it possible.”

The nonprofit started in 1997 with a single support group helping 19 families. This year, the

“You don’t get over grief, you get through it.”

Children’s Bereavement Center executive director Marian Sokol

center will help some 1,400 children in San Antonio and the surrounding area, plus another 200 children and their caregivers through its Rio Grande Valley location in Harlingen, which opened in February. That’s in addition to outreach to those contending with the horrific shooting in Sutherland Springs. The Children’s Bereavement Center specializes in free grief support for ages 3 through 24, with services that cover just about all forms of loss, whether because of chronic illness or a sudden death due to violence or suicide. The center hosts group support programs as well as confidential individual counseling, plus kids’ camps and school-based outreach — all specifically geared for children, teenagers and young adults. Licensed professional counselors direct individual sessions, while trained volunteers facilitate the more open-ended peer support groups, which meet twice a month. All that support empowers young people who are grieving with therapeutic coping strategies and creative means of expressing their feelings via art, music or other avenues, the better to strengthen themselves and their relationships going forward. Because, as Katie and so many others stress at the Children’s Bereavement Center, life does not end when someone else’s does. “You don’t get over grief, you get through it,” said executive director Marian Sokol. “And our mission is to help in the healing of the child, the



The creative spaces at the center include a sand tray room full of figures, where children can create a story or re-enact the loss of their loved one.

families, and in some instances, even in the community.” That healing begins in a bright and tranquil environment designed to look and feel just like home. Inside, the center’s ground floor beams with colorful paintings on cream-colored walls, which overlook rich hardwood floors and furnishings across a cozy kitchen, long dining room and glass-walled living room. Outside, wood playground equipment overlooks a peaceful yard with decor that includes a porch swing constructed by an Eagle Scout and a butterfly-shaped bench donated by Zak Williams, son of the late comedian Robin Williams. The back of the yard hints at what healing awaits. The words “Before I die...” are written across the top of a giant chalkboard there, with the extended refrain repeated in English and Spanish with a blank space for grieving youth to write in their goals. “Children write what they want to accomplish,” Sokol said. “We want to help heal, but we also want to help provide hope for the future.” Katie found that hope at the start of her kindergarten year, when she

and her father first went to the bereavement center’s former location on Craig Street. She remembers walking in to find an unused fireplace filled with teddy bears. Then her father joined some other adults, while she joined other 5-year-olds who also had lost a parent to a long-term illness. After the third visit, Katie told her dad she now had “a soft tummy,” a sign the stress she carried was finally starting to ease. “I think that expressed to me what the center does in such a strong way,” Curtis Ruder said. A typical evening at the Children’s Bereavement Center starts with a dinner courtesy the center’s volunteer Potluck Partners. Then the adults retire to the living room, while the children go upstairs to their respective age-appropriate groups. The night concludes with everyone gathering in the living room to sing the center’s support song. The center’s top floor houses various activity and counseling spaces, from understated counseling rooms and a teen hangout room, to more colorful and child-friendly settings teeming with toys, art supplies and other activity items. Most of those more

kid-friendly spaces branch out from the aptly-named Expressive Arts Hallway, whose painted walls transition from a dark night to a bright blue day to symbolize what Sokol called a young one’s emotional journey “from darkness to light.” Those spaces seamlessly fuse play with therapy. For instance, Sokol said children have used the music room’s African drums to tap out the heartbeat of a lost loved one, then talk about their feelings when the drumming stops. A glass art room highlights the analogy of melded glass shards as a symbol of making oneself feel whole again. And Katie’s favorite, a drama studio, houses a replica tree trunk, various costumes, puppets and a time machine area for kids to role-play happier times as well as when they lost their loved one. The center also offers on-site camps in March and November for children ages 7 to 11 who have experienced the death of a family member in the last two years, and a larger summer camp out in the Hill Country for older children and teens. In addition to community outreach at schools, the Center’s website of-

fers online resources and links for other helpful organizations and literature, including a free download of the center’s own book by its therapists called “Out Came the Sun.” And Sokol said the center recently launched the Wonders & Worries program at the START Center for Cancer Care to help children whose families have received devastating diagnoses. All that work takes money as well as time. Since almost all Children’s Bereavement Center services are free to families, just 1 percent of the center’s annual \$2 million budget comes from program fees, Sokol said. The center relies heavily on grants, fundraising and individual and corporate contributions. Last year, Spurs star Kawhi Leonard donated the center’s company van, which has been instrumental in helping staff reach out to Sutherland Springs. “He understands what we do and empathizes with the kids,” said Sokol, who noted Leonard was in high school when his father was murdered. The Children’s Bereavement Center of South Texas welcomes monetary donations as well as art supplies, snacks, gift cards and preferably new teddy bears for the children and their families. And it’s always in need of volunteers to help with Potluck Partner dinners and facilitate groups. Katie Ruder plans to major in child psychology after she graduates from high school. Her loss has taught her how to better understand children’s emotions, which she said so often can get overlooked because children often lack the means of expressing them. And as her experience at the Children’s Bereavement Center has shown her, paying extra attention to a child’s feelings can do wonders.

rguzman@express-news.net | Twitter: @reneguz

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

VOLUNTEER

Children's Bereavement Center has 'volunteer of a lifetime'

Linda Fugit raises awareness; found, decorated center's new home



Photos by Robin Jerstad / For the Express News

Linda Fugit stands in the backyard of the Children's Bereavement Center in Olmos Park. She helped the center sell its old building, buy this one and decorate it.

By Deborah Martin
STAFF WRITER

Virtually everyone who crosses Linda Fugit's path learns about the Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas.

Fugit talks up the center wherever she goes, partly because the organization is fairly low-profile and she wants to make sure that anyone who might need its services is aware of it. She also sees spreading the word as part of her duties as a volunteer, which has included time on the board.

"Part of your responsibility as a board member for any nonprofit is to raise money," said Fugit, 71. "But then you need to also be a diplomat. Be out in the community. Through my church, through my neighborhood, all the people I come in contact with — I'm always talking about the bereavement center."

"When you get involved in what what I call an under-the-radar nonprofit, then they need more from you. They need your time, they need your money, they need you to go out into the community and really work for them."

Fugit has been involved with the organization for about 14 years. She was first asked to help out with a support group raising money for it. She had sustained many losses in her own life — including the death of her best friend when she was in high school — and knew first-hand the value of a support system to work through that kind of experience.

"It was a good fit for me," she said. "I had a heart for it."

The center, which is marking its 20th anniversary, provides support for children and families dealing with grief.

"This is a place where families come to get whole again," Fugit said.

She is one of about 1,500 volunteers committed to that mission. Some



One of the walls in the Children's Bereavement Center features photographs of loved ones lost.

train to become group facilitators; some serve potluck dinners; some focus on raising money.

Fugit is special, said Julia Anderson, director of volunteer services.

"Linda is truly a volunteer of a lifetime," said Anderson, who has been with the center for about eight years. "If every nonprofit had someone like Linda, it would be truly amazing, because she's working hard, she's creating awareness for the center. On every level, she's giving."

Fugit has served on boards and committees, and has raised money for the center. Her biggest contribution, Anderson said, came when the organization outgrew its original home in the Monte Vista historic district. As it happens, her professional life had given her precisely the skills required to help resolve things.

"I've had two professions — one was design and the other was private banking," Fugit said. "So both of them enabled me to look at what they were doing and where they were in this stage of de-

“This is a place where families come to get whole again.**”**

Linda Fugit, about the Children's Bereavement Center

velopment and know that it wasn't financially prudent for them to put more money into the building that they had. They wouldn't be able to modify it enough to get enough space, and it's the most expensive kind of change you can make."

She helped arrange for the sale of the original building, and also helped find a new building in Olmos Park. It had a lot of potential, but meeting that potential took a lot of effort: "It was awful," Anderson said. "They pretty much took it down to the studs."

That's where Fugit's design skills came into play. In collaboration with the architect, she poured a lot of energy

into transforming the building into a warm, welcoming space. She talked to staff members, asking what they needed. And when it came time to furnish the rooms, she scoured estate sales and consignment shops, hunting down deals on everything from the tile in a downstairs restroom to the paintings hanging on the walls.

"She really worked early, early in the morning and late at night, weekends, just around the clock," Anderson said. "When you experience a death, you're rushing and you're never at peace. Her whole goal was to create a space that felt like a home, that families could come in and rest for a minute. Every single person that comes into the center for the first time comments on how beautiful and peaceful and home-like it is. She's done that."

The first floor of the center is, indeed, set up like a home. Visitors ring a doorbell and are admitted into a space that doesn't feel remotely clinical. Instead of a re-

ception desk, there is a cheery entryway. A gracious living room — with comfy seating, a low table outfitted with kid-friendly art supplies and big windows looking out over the backyard garden — is off to the right. There's also a dining room with long tables where family-style meals are served — "For some families, this is the best warm meal they get all week," Fugit said.

Fugit worked similar magic when the organization decided to open a second location in Harlingen.

"That was in the second floor of a diagnostic clinic," said Marion Sokol, who has served as executive director of the center for about five years. "We knew it had beautiful hardwood floors and large windows. But there was no way I could have imagined what she created. She is just amazing."

Since the San Antonio center moved into the Olmos Park home, it has expanded. More than 1,400 children and their caregivers call upon its services every year.

"We're here seven days

a week now," said Fugit. "There are nights when we have 100 children. It's sad that your community needs that kind of support; it's wonderful that there is an organization that's there to provide that kind of support."

She has a sense of what some of the youngsters and their families are going through. When she was a senior in high school, her best friend was killed in a head-on car crash. The girl's parents were so stunned by the loss that they weren't able to make any of the arrangements. So Fugit stepped in.

"I planned her funeral. I bought a casket, picked out the clothes, bought the cemetery plot — of course, my parents helped me do that," she said. "Some of us have a support system, but most of our families (at the center) don't."

She leaned on her personal support network — including her family and her fellow parishioners at Christ Episcopal Church — to help her through when her husband became ill. He died two years ago after a long battle with a degenerative illness. Her volunteer work at the center helped, as did the people who work there alongside her.

Her continuing work there is a way of repaying that help.

"I do think that in life, if you want to get anything out of it, you've got to participate. If you don't sign your name to something and say, 'I raised my hand and I helped,' you just sort of drift," she said. "So I found a place that I had a great connection to. And I think I've been very fortunate in that the friendships I've made through here will be lifelong. But I also look at the children who've come through here, the families that have come through here, and I think, we've really done something good for the community. And at the end of the day, what's better than that?"

dlmartin@express-news.net
| @DeborahMartinEN



IT'S MORE THAN
AN 8 SECOND RIDE.

IT'S COMMUNITY.
IT'S EDUCATION.
IT'S GIVING.

When you come to the
San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo,
you're aiding in our mission to
educate the youth of Texas.

With your help,
and over 6,000 committed
volunteers, we've raised over \$186
million to date. Please help us
continue this proud tradition and
make plans to attend this February.

FEBRUARY 8 ^{TO} 25, 2018



SARODEO.COM

f t y p i s #SARODEO

DOWNLOAD THE SA RODEO APP

To see the entertainment
lineup and to get your tickets,
go to sarodeo.com.

Caring for someone
with Alzheimer's
isn't easy.
Reaching us is.



If you care for someone with Alzheimer's disease,
memory loss or dementia, you are not alone.
We're here day or night whenever you need us
offering reliable information and support.

Free 24/7 Helpline:
800.272.3900

Alzheimer's and Dementia Caregiver Center:
alz.org/care

alzheimer's  association®



Saturday, February 3, 2018
6:00 pm 'til your slippers wear thin
Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center

Please join Executive Chairs Diana Barrios Trevino
& Roland Trevino and Honorary Chairs
Tony Plana & Ada Maris and our Royal Court
for a magical evening of dining, dancing,
live & silent auctions.



Please RSVP at (210) 734-1963
or HopeforFuture.org



Khaki & Plaid is Hope for the Future's primary annual fund-
raiser, helping families to obtain the academic and spiritual
benefits of a Catholic education through need-based tuition
assistance. Hope for the Future assists more than 2,000
students annually. Visit us at HopeforFuture.org



BANKING FOR SAN ANTONIO'S FUTURE



PlainsCapital Bank is invested in a sure thing...the people and growth of San Antonio. It is no surprise to us to see this vibrant city mentioned throughout news headlines as a mecca for business development and job opportunity.

PlainsCapital Bank is committed to bringing you the best people to assist you with your accounts. Mike and DeVan are known for strong client relationships and exceptional service. They are dedicated to making sure our customers are on the cutting edge of the city's growth potential and aware of every financial opportunity.

Please call us today and discover why PlainsCapital Bank has become one of Texas' largest community banks.



Plains Capital Bank Renaissance Plaza
70 N.E. LOOP 410, SUITE 100
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78216
210.541.8228

Plains Capital Bank Stone Oak
150 E. SONTERRA BLVD, SUITE 150
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78258
210.321.3352

Plains Capital Bank Medical Center
8200 IH10 WEST, SUITE 120
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78230
210.321.3332

Plains Capital Bank Alamo Heights
7925 N. NEW BRAUNFELS AVE.
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78209
210.804.7603

PlainsCapital.com 2015 PlainsCapital Bank Equal Housing Lender Member FDIC



PLEASE SAVE THE DATE

Red Shoes quinceañera

Friday May 4, 2018 6:00 p.m

GRAND HYATT SAN ANTONIO
600 E. MARKET ST. • SAN ANTONIO, TX 78205

For ticket reservations or sponsorship information,
please contact Angie Hernandez at ahernandez@ccaosa.org
or visit our website www.stpjhome.org

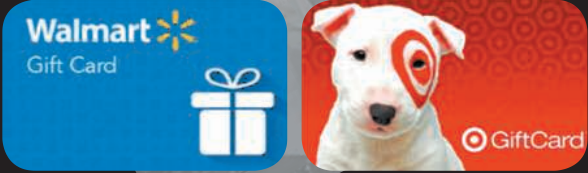
Old soles walk in, healed souls walk out.



THE RAPE CRISIS CENTER GIFT CARD DRIVE

HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY

24-HOUR HOTLINE
210.349.7273



Throughout the months of November and December we will be collecting gift cards of any type, in any amount to assist survivors and their families who need help this holiday season. You can mail in cards or drop them off to:

4606 CENTERVIEW DR, SUITE 200, SAN ANTONIO, TX 78228
We are a 501(C)3 organization and your donation is tax deductible.

MOUNT SACRED HEART SCHOOL
OFFERING ENRICHED PREK-8TH GRADE
& SAN ANTONIO'S ONLY CATHOLIC
MONTESSORI PROGRAM
(2 1/2 - 5 YEARS)

www.mountsacredheart.org



619 MT. SACRED HEART RD.,
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78216 • 210-342-6711

vote.



Vote online at ExpressNews.com/Vote

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

American Diabetes Association hopes to expand local youth camp

PowerUp program welcomes 50 at-risk San Antonio kids each year



Photos courtesy American Diabetes Association

A group of children participate in basketball activities at Camp PowerUp. The American Diabetes Association hosts the camp in San Antonio each summer.

By Peggy O'Hare
STAFF WRITER

The American Diabetes Association fights to not only cure diabetes, but also prevent it. The national nonprofit is the only one that focuses on all types of diabetes — Type 1, Type 2 and gestational, officials with the group proudly report. The nonprofit has offices in South and Central Texas, where the chronic condition is particularly prevalent. That includes San Antonio, where the group funds millions of dollars in diabetes-related research, hosts summer camps for children at risk of developing the disease, holds diabetes education programs and raises funds to support its efforts.

The organization's revenue stream in San Antonio relies solely on the spirit of giving — donations from individuals and financial support from corporations and foundations, said Melissa Edwards, executive director of the American Diabetes Association's South and Central Texas operations. The nonprofit aims to raise \$1.7 million in San Antonio each year, Edwards said. Across the South and Central Texas region as a whole, the fundraising goal is \$3.7 million annually.

Because the rates of diabetes are so significant in San Antonio, it's critical that the American Diabetes Association have a presence here, Edwards said.

"We feel that there is also great research coming out of San Antonio — and especially, as we take a look at pre-diabetes onset in younger populations, that San Antonio has a lot to teach us and share with us," she noted.

In 2014, more than 14 percent of Bexar County adults were living with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes — a figure higher than the statewide average of almost 11 percent and exceeding the national average of more than 9 percent, according to San



Deirdre Murphy (from left), U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett and Caroline Blanco help with diabetes awareness.



Rayna Wootan (from left), Vijaya Botla and Rose Ann Barajas participate in the ADA's Hurricane Harvey relief efforts at the San Antonio Food Bank.

Antonio's Metropolitan Health District. And the rates of diabetes have increased in South and Central Texas in recent years, said Caroline Blanco, regional director of community health strategies in the American Diabetes Association's San Antonio office. "We have, unfortunate-

ly, seen a steady rise in diabetes. That's something that we're looking to address as we work with our community partners," Blanco said. In San Antonio each summer, the nonprofit joins the Westside Family YMCA to host Camp PowerUp, a weeklong Type 2 diabetes prevention youth camp for chil-

dren 10 to 14 years old who are at risk of developing the disease, Blanco said. "Some of the stories these kids tell are just heart-wrenching," Blanco said. "They've seen their grandparents be affected by diabetes with a toe amputation and then a leg amputation and unfortunately develop heart

disease and have a heart attack and pass away in their 60s. To hear the child say 'I don't want that to happen to me,' it's such a powerful thing." Established in 2015, Camp PowerUp welcomes 50 San Antonio children each year and has a sizable waiting list of other youths hoping to attend, Edwards noted. The program has been so successful that it has been replicated in New Orleans, Chicago and Los Angeles. The American Diabetes Association is hoping to raise more money so that larger numbers of children can attend the San Antonio camp in years to come and so the program can be expanded to other major cities in Texas, Edwards said. "We need more funding so that we can have multiple Camp PowerUps," she said. "Right now, because of the way that it's set up, we can only serve 50 children. And of course we would like to have more (children) in San Antonio." The nonprofit also hosts Camp Sandcastle, a weeklong camp in the Corpus Christi area, and

“Some of the stories these kids tell are just heart-wrenching.”

Caroline Blanco, regional director of community health strategies

Camp Rainbow, a similar program in the Houston area. Both of these programs are for children with Type 1 diabetes, Edwards said. The staffing for these camps is more robust because they include medical personnel, she said. "A lot of times Type 1 children are not able to participate in a camp for kids that do not have diabetes," Edwards said. Camp Sandcastle and Camp Rainbow allow them to experience the fun.

Camp Rainbow not only welcomes children with Type 1 diabetes, but also their siblings, Edwards added. "For the very first time, the entire family is allowed to go to camp together. And they need that. Their parents need to be able to see their kids do a very normal childhood activity." The nonprofit's Central and South Texas arm also raises funds through its Tour de Cure cycling and 5K event. The most recent one was held in San Marcos in late October. The next Tour de Cure event will take place April 14, also in San Marcos, Blanco said.

The American Diabetes Association also is providing a total of \$1.8 million over a three-year period to help fund diabetes-related research in San Antonio. Four of the five recipients are researchers at the UT Health San Antonio, while the other is based at the University of Texas at San Antonio. The nonprofit also received funding from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to bring National Diabetes Prevention Programs to South Texas for the first time in 2018, Blanco said.

pohare@express-news.net

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

VOLUNTEER

Diabetes awareness, education fuel longtime volunteer

Advocate sets vivid example of how to live and manage the disease



Photos by Robin Jerstad / San Antonio Express News

Deirdre Murphy (from left), Krystal Strong and Melinda Cerda get in some running downtown. Murphy is a volunteer with the American Diabetes Association and has Type 1 diabetes, which she manages with an insulin pump that delivers insulin to her bloodstream every three minutes.

By Elaine Ayala
STAFF WRITER

Deirdre Murphy had been living with Type 2 diabetes for five years, diligently taking her medication, altering her eating habits, even losing close to 100 pounds.

Her doctor didn't offer or stress diabetes education, and she didn't seek it out on her own. She looks back now and acknowledges the denial.

Still, she didn't recognize warning signs or understand the disease and its impact on the body, and what can be complicated medical management.

Which may be why the 45-year-old advocate for the American Diabetes Association became a volunteer and now a fervent spokeswoman for diabetes education.

She's also a vivid example of how to live — and not live — with a disease that's an epidemic in South Texas.

Murphy, who manages the city of San Antonio-operated senior centers, has reached a good point in her diabetes management.

"I've learned a lot," she says, and understands why some diabetics find patient education and treatment overwhelming, even in a city where rates of the disease are twice the national average.

Going without education and treatment is dangerous, though, which is why Murphy lives her life with an insulin pump at her side and lots of information in her head. She shares the latter freely, as she does her personal story.

Murphy is among a small population that has been diagnosed with both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes, though she'll never know if the first diagnosis was entirely accurate.

She was first diagnosed with Type 2, a common form of the disease in which the pancreas produces insulin but can't use it

"I really believe in the cause and what the organization is doing."

ADA volunteer Deirdre Murphy

properly.

The American Diabetes Association defines Type 2 as insulin resistance that's preventable and manageable. It says treatment includes lifestyle changes, medications and insulin.

Murphy incorrectly linked her earliest symptoms at age 29 to thyroid disease, because several family members have it. She was feeling lethargic. She also weighed 300 pounds.

When her primary care physician said, "Take these meds, lose weight and you'll be fine," she complied. She joined a gym, signed up for a series of 5K runs and reached her weight-loss goals.

But over several years, Murphy found it easy to deny symptoms such as excessive thirst, frequent urination and incontinence. She didn't consistently monitor her blood sugar.

Five years later at East-er, she couldn't shake a cold and cough. After Mass, the lifetime Catholic with a Quaker education and public service sensibility went home and got into bed. By the time her roommate drove her to the ER, Murphy couldn't walk short distances without struggling for breath.

She doesn't remember the first two days in the hospital, but knows her blood sugar reading reached 300 (it should be 70 to 99) and her A1C, which tests average blood sugar levels over a two-to-three-month period, was an alarming 15.6. A number below 6.0 is considered normal.

Murphy was also diag-



Murphy (left) and her running mates chat while taking a break. Murphy serves as the advocacy chairwoman for the American Diabetes Association's community and leadership board.



Since learning she has diabetes, Murphy has lost almost 100 pounds, joined a gym and signs up for a 5K walk/run each month.

nosed with diabetic keto acidosis, meaning her blood was severely infected with sustained high blood sugars. It took a six-day hospital stay to regulate them.

Today she manages her Type 1 diabetes — she no longer has Type 2, she says — with an insulin pump that delivers insulin to her bloodstream every three minutes.

The Easter episode

proved to her that, "I had to figure this out and investigate this disease."

It was overwhelming at first. "So many science factors come into play," she said. She has used an insulin pump for a decade, and it's pre-set. But she gives herself more insulin when her levels demand it. The pump also monitors blood sugar.

No one day is the same

as the next, even after eating the same meal, she said, which makes monitoring essential.

Murphy understands why so many diabetics find such habits hard to maintain but says the alternatives are far worse. She has talked with people who've suffered amputations, major eyesight damage and more.

So, she has tapered

down her sweet tooth and exercises regularly. She walks during lunch time and signs up for a 5K walk/run every month. She has joined a group that meets at Main Plaza after work for a run or walk.

Her biggest challenge isn't what she eats, it's portion control. She tries to consume only about a third of what's served on a restaurant plate.

It's a constant struggle. She serves as the advocacy chairwoman for the ADA's community and leadership board. She's focused on awareness and helps represent the ADA on legislative issues.

"I really believe in the cause and what the organization is doing, prevention especially," she says.

Murphy has had no complications to date. Her A1C reading is 5.7. But she's realistic, she says, all the complications are inevitable.

"For now," she adds. "I'm still doing OK."

eayala@express-news.net |
Twitter: @ElaineAyala



More than four decades after the South Texas Blood & Tissue Center was founded, the organization has grown into the BioBridge Global family – STBTC, GenCure, QualTex Laboratories and The Blood & Tissue Center Foundation. Together, we help save and enhance millions of lives every year.



Naomi needs dozens of blood transfusions every year – and every one of them is safe, thanks to testing by QualTex Laboratories.



Patients along the Coastal Bend continued to receive vital transfusions in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, thanks to the South Texas Blood & Tissue Center. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Ashley J. Johnson



Blood and platelet donations from the South Texas Blood & Tissue Center helped Jaxson beat neuroblastoma and live a normal life.



Matthew's posthumous tissue donation with GenCure helped dozens of patients with everything from knee operations to oral surgery to bone grafts.



Thanks to blood transfusions supplied by the South Texas Blood & Tissue Center, Jillian beat a rare bone cancer that took part of her leg, but not her spirit.



For 40 years, Marcos has been giving thanks for a lifesaving gift he received as a baby, donating more than 100 gallons at the South Texas Blood & Tissue Center.



A cord blood transplant like those coordinated by GenCure helped Valentina overcome a rare but serious immunodeficiency condition.



Financial donations through The Blood & Tissue Center Foundation made it possible for GenCure stem cell donors like Kathryn to save a life.



Signing up to be a donor through the GenCure marrow donor program helped Samuel save Sarah's life.

Give the Gift of life

When you vote for the South Texas Blood & Tissue Center, you are helping the BioBridge Global family of nonprofit organizations give the gift of life.

Designate your voucher in this special section of the Express-News, or online, to the South Texas Blood & Tissue Center.

To learn more, visit BioBridgeGlobal.org.

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

Good Samaritan still offering health and education to West Side

In its 66th year, center has programs for toddlers, teens and seniors



Photos by Alma E. Hernandez / For the Express-News

Marissa Torres, 1, looks around while Sandra Gonzalez (left) helps classmate Zane Garcia clean up after lunch at Good Samaritan Community Services Center on Nov. 9. The center offers services to all ages, from babies to seniors.

By Bruce Selcraig
STAFF WRITER

A West Side institution has been such a constant in the community since 1951 that many of its staff, including the current CEO, first came there as children.

Good Samaritan Community Services, on a tidy 4-acre campus at Saltillo and SW 19th streets was bustling one recent morning with the sounds of seniors playing Loteria and day-care toddlers squealing in their sand-box.

After school, its two basketball courts fill up with older kids, some of whom experienced their first Hill Country camping trip last summer at Good Sam facilities in Leakey and Waring.

"That was me, playing basketball here back in the 70s," observed CEO Simon Salas, a Columbia Law School grad who grew up just blocks away.

"My six cousins and I would come here all the time. It could be a dangerous neighborhood," he said. "But we always felt safe here playing basketball."

Salas conceded that many things have not changed about the hard-life community since he was a boy. The center's ZIP code of 78207 has historically had one of the highest rates of infant mortality in the city, and the U.S. Census shows about 41 percent of its residents live below the poverty line.

"We've not been able to turn the corner on poverty," he said. "And it will be a long time before we can. The promise has always been here on the West Side, but not always the opportunity."

He thinks today's kids might have it tougher than he and his cousins did in the 1970s, due in part to the growing dissolution of families and dwindling inner city jobs for the unskilled.

"We had more stability back then. When Kelly

"It's wild how many people came here as kids and are now part of the staff."

Anna Sanchez, director of advancement

Air Force Base closed (in 2001), that brought so much uncertainty," Salas said. "We still have so many families living on the edge, and consequently, I think the kids are under much more stress than we were."

Yet, rather than see Good Sam as some kind of "finger in the dike" against a deluge of societal crises, Salas considers it "a windmill generating power" for the West Side.

"I see a lot of good parenting around this community," he said. "I see parents reading to their kids and feeding them better, and I know we've played some part in that."

In 1951, with a budget of less than \$12,000, Good Sam was a downtown mission of St. Mark's Episcopal Church. It moved to its current location soon after.

"Here's what we looked like in 1955," said Good Sam's director of advancement, Anna Sanchez, pointing to some aerial black-and-white photos that show an almost rural-seeming neighborhood with small frame homes, some of which remain today.

"They still had watermelon farms, many had no plumbing, somewhat Depression-era," said Sanchez, who grew up five blocks away. Looking closer at one photo, she noted her uncle's grocery, with Sanchez barely visible on the front, was right across the street.

"It's wild how many people came here as kids and are now part of the



Good Samaritan offers all-day child care for children 18 months to 5 years old.



Photos of veterans are on display Nov. 9 at the center, which has been serving the West Side community since 1951.

staff," Sanchez said. "But we've always known you'd be safe here."

Kids can "be themselves, whatever that may be," she said.

Today, Good Sam's offerings are abundant:

For children 18 months to 5 years, there's all-day child care and an Early Headstart program for those 6 weeks to 3 years old.

Older kids have a 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. after-

school program, with academic enrichment; the six-week Camp Good Sam summer academic program; college and career readiness (including help with financial aid forms), life skills classes, and individual case counseling.

Families with urgent basic needs for food, shelter and clothing can be helped with Good Sam's immediate assistance program; and

there's help available with GEDs and English as a second language.

But seniors have all the fun. Way beyond just bingo, they grow jalapeños and serranos for their salsa cook-offs, participate in yoga and Zumba fitness classes, crocheting and a nutrition program that offers fresh food in the cafeteria (yes, kale) plus testing for diabetes and high blood pressure.

There's even a pen pal program where the center's teenagers and seniors write to and talk with each other about life.

"I absolutely come for the camaraderie," said Rose Rodriguez, 74, twice-widowed and great-grandmother of three. A graduate of Lanier High School, she said her friends at Good Sam feel more like neighbors and relatives.

"I talk to a ... lady here who I see more often than my sister," Rodriguez said with a laugh. "We go to movies, the SAS shoe factory, we've got this veterans celebration."

Good Sam is funded with private contributions and local, state and federal grants. But its budget has dropped dramatically, from \$6 million in 2011 to less than \$4 million in 2015.

"Grants are much tougher to get now, and the city has cut back on its funding as well," Sanchez said. "We've been here 66 years, yet many people in San Antonio don't know about us and the breadth of work we do. It is not easy work, either."

bselcraig@express-news.net

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

SA Life Academy encourages, teaches adults with special needs

Program needs funding to start a second class, serve more students



Photos by Billy Calzada / San Antonio Express-News

Lindsey Gilver writes the date on the board under the watchful eye of SA Life Academy instructor Samantha Pety-Grey on Nov. 3.

By Lauren Caruba
STAFF WRITER

When Cindy Boynton's son aged out of the public school system in Alamo Heights, she was at a loss.

Drew, who was born with Down syndrome and autism, had been supported and looked after in school. Now Boynton and her husband, Bryan, had to find a place where Drew could go every day that would not only meet his needs, but give him a sense of purpose and joy.

That kind of dilemma spurred the creation of the SA Life Academy, a day program for adults with disabilities. It opened in July with the goal of providing fulfillment to disabled adults through continuing education and community service. The Boyntons modeled their program on My Possibilities, a nonprofit in Plano that provides vocational education to adults with disabilities.

Supported through their school years, what happens to special-needs individuals entering adulthood is often an afterthought, said Cindy Boynton, now SA Life Academy's executive director. But they often still require a safe environment and a structured curriculum to meet their needs, she said.

"Adults with special needs have the capability of learning. They need that opportunity," she said. "They have so much potential to unlock. I don't think we should give up on them."

As part of the program, students participate in a variety of activities, everything from visiting the San Antonio Botanical Garden to baking cookies for city firefighters. The students have visited museums, seen movies, gone bowling, watched the ballet perform, boarded the boats on the River Walk,

“They’re growing. They’re learning. They’re giving back.”

Cindy Boynton, SA Life Academy's executive director

pitched in at the San Antonio Food Bank and helped prepare food for Meals on Wheels.

SA Life Academy is housed in St. Andrew's United Methodist Church in Alamo Heights. There, two classrooms equipped with interactive white boards host other aspects of the curriculum, including weekly visits from art therapists and music teachers.

Each month, a yoga instructor comes to see the students. They learn how to prepare nutritious meals in the church's kitchens and play basketball in the church's large gymnasium. In exchange, SA Life Academy helps cook for church events and partners with the congregation as much as possible.

The program's curriculum is structured around five main areas: academics, building relationships, community service, creative expression and teaching healthy habits. Through routines and role playing, the students learn social skills and other life lessons. In order to provide a quality program, SA Life Academy has three teachers on staff who have backgrounds in special education.

"You have to do lessons right," said Susan McDonald, an instructor with the program who previously taught at Alamo Heights Independent School District for almost 30 years. "You can't sit down and do that on paper."

In the mornings, before the group heads out,



Mallory Cohn (center) and Gilver embrace as they start their day at SA Life Academy. The organization provides a day curriculum and field trips for adults with disabilities.



Alamo Heights Fire Department Capt. Jay Foster receives cookies and a picture from Anthony Carnes and other SA Life Academy students.

they get a lesson on the activity of the day. Then, when they get in the van, the staff will say the same thing: "We're doing life together."

The activities, especially the ones involving community service, often give the students a sense of pride and purpose, staff say.

"They're growing. They're learning. They're giving back," Boynton said.

Samantha Pety, a special education teacher who serves as the program's lead instructor, has watched students who were once timid and nonverbal become comfortable and confident around others. She said she enjoys seeing the students happy and interacting with each other.

"A lot of their personalities are coming out, and they're feeling com-

fortable," said Pety, who previously taught preschoolers with special needs at North East Independent School District. "Like they have a place to express themselves."

The organization, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, relies on grants, private donations and fundraising in addition to program tuition. The organization welcomes donations of H-E-B gift cards, too,

because the students go grocery shopping there as they prepare their own meals.

But as SA Life Academy plans out its future expansion, the organization is most in need of cash donations, which can be made on its website, salifeacademy.org.

Currently, SA Life Academy's program serves a maximum of 12 students each day. Once students enter the program, they are welcome to stay indefinitely. There is a waiting list that Boynton hopes can soon be turned into a second class.

Doing so would require hiring additional special education teacher to oversee the class and purchasing a second van.

Eventually, the staff would like to move SA Life Academy into a physical space of its own, likely within the next two to three years. That would allow the program to accept even more students.

lcaruba@express-news.net
| Twitter: @LaurenCaruba

Get more
with
unlimited
digital
access!



- ExpressNews.com
- e-edition for internet browser
- e-edition for iPad® app
- iPhone® and iPad® app

Call (210) 250-2000 or
ExpressNews.com/Subscribe

San Antonio Express-News

ExpressNews.com | e-edition | iPad® iPhone® App



10 Favorite Reasons to Visit the SAN ANTONIO MUSEUM of ART

1 Art makes
you smart.

6

You can
see the world
without leaving
the city.

2

So many
conversation
starters.

7

If you're **feeling** old,
we've got older
(5,000 years older).

3

We put the **art**
in **PARTY** every
2nd Friday.

8

It's like hitting
the **refresh**
button.

4

A Botero Venus,
a Korean Buddha,
an Indian Yogini...
we've got it all!

9

FREE days!
November 24
December 2: 4-8 p.m.
December 26

5

This is **your**
art collection,
San Antonio.

10

Where else are
you going to take
your in-laws?



samuseum.org

SAN ANTONIO MUSEUM of ART

San Antonio, Texas 78215 | 200 West Jones Avenue | 210.978.8100



MEGA FURNITURE



HILTON LIVING ROOM SET
Includes Dual Reclining Sofa, Dual Reclining Love Seat
and FREE Reclining Chair

\$777



**DEBREAUX QUEEN
BEDROOM SET**
Includes Queen Bed, Dresser, Mirror and One Nightstand

\$699



**ALEYNA UPHOLSTERED
QUEEN BED**

\$369



**MAIER 2 PC CHARCOAL
SECTIONAL**
Includes LAF Chaise and RAF Sofa

\$649



Fighting Hunger and Feeding Hope in San Antonio and Southwest Texas

The San Antonio Food Bank takes pride in fighting hunger, feeding hope in our 16 county service area.

Receive **5% OFF of any purchase** when you bring a
non-perishable food item to any Mega Furniture Store location!

LAPLAZA NORTE
125 NW LOOP 410 #250
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78216
210-340-0006

DEZAVALA / I-10
12720 WEST INTERSTATE 10
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78230
210-558-3544

FORUM/I-35
3150 PAT BOOKER,
UNIVERSAL CITY, TX 78148
210-999-5630

SW MILITARY DR
2301 SW MILITARY DR,
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78224
210-637-9876

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

American Cancer Society, with nationwide reach, relies on locals

Office helps coordinate rides for patients to treatments or lodging



Kin Man Hui / San Antonio Express-News

Micah Flores, 5, shares a laugh with St. Mary's Issa Huerta (left) as he gets his face painted at the Alpha Sigma Tau face-painting station as St. Mary's University hosts Boo Bash for the 30th year on Oct. 24. Last year, about 1,000 kids and parents from the community attended the event for pediatric cancer patients.

By Alia Malik
STAFF WRITER

Rose Orsborn was only 39 when she was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1989, before the internet was available for quick, credible information about her disease.

"You didn't read much about breast cancer, the pink ribbon and all that," said Orsborn, now 67, of San Antonio. "It just was scary not knowing."

A young cancer survivor or volunteering for the American Cancer Society visited Orsborn in the hospital where she underwent chemotherapy. The volunteer provided her with pamphlets about breast cancer and the range of possible treatments.

"The most important thing, the thing I remember, is she provided me with hope," Orsborn said.

A nationwide organization, the American Cancer Society provides services for cancer patients while working toward the goal of a cancer-free world. Since 1946, the organization has raised and invested \$4.6 billion in cancer research. The organization also operates a national toll-free hotline, manned around the clock by representatives who answer questions about diagnoses and provide insurance advice and other information.

The Society has a San Antonio office on Datapoint Drive on the Northwest Side. It opened in 1987 and between 16 and 20 workers staff it, said Lindsay McElwee, executive director of community development for South Texas.

Like other local offices around the country, it



Kin Man Hui / San Antonio Express-News

Nahveen Barrera, 8, races along on obstacle to get candy while dressed as the Corpse Bride at Boo Bash. Treats were handed out to costumed kids, and tours were given at St. Mary's University.

helps coordinate rides for patients to their treatments and free or reduced-price lodging for patients who live far from those facilities, said David Kolovson, the American Cancer Society's communications director in San Antonio. Locally, the organization has handled phone, email and online chat questions from 1,600 people, provided 6,900 rides to treatments for 600 patients, coordinated 469 nights of free or reduced-price lodging and helped 223 people manage side effects by providing wigs or other materials, Kolovson said.

The society is a collaborator in the Look Good Feel Better program, which enlists trained cosmetologists to offer cancer patients help with cosmetic side effects. In San Antonio, the Cancer Society sponsors events for pediatric cancer patients including the Boo Bash, a Halloween party; Flight to the North Pole in December in partnership with United Airlines; and Wrangler Day



Courtesy photo

The gold ribbon is the official ribbon of children with cancer worldwide. Moms on a Mission not only want to raise money for the American Cancer Society, but raise awareness of childhood cancer.

on a ranch in the summer.

The events help children enjoy being kids, Kolovson said, adding, "That sometimes gets lost when they're treated as a cancer patient."

In partnership with Methodist Healthcare Ministries, the organization in San Antonio is running the Worth a Shot campaign to dispense vaccines for human papillomavirus that could also prevent nine types of

cancer, McElwee said.

"It's an awareness issue, not a money issue, because there are programs and services to help offset the cost," she said.

The organization is also supporting a proposed city ordinance that would raise the legal age for tobacco to 21, McElwee said.

The Cancer Society's local efforts are supported by grants and funding from the national organi-

"We're really first and foremost a volunteer-based organization."

David Kolovson, local spokesman, American Cancer Society

zation, as well as fundraisers that include galas and the Relay for Life. The greatest need nationally is for research funding, McElwee said, but donations are also needed to support patient services such as the Road to Recovery program that provides rides to treatment centers.

"Our goal is one day to have a world without cancer, but there are patients that we have to serve today, and the way that we can best do that is just through donors that help make our mission possible," McElwee said.

The American Cancer

Society also relies on local volunteers to help with events, drive patients to their treatments, do administrative work or perform other tasks that suit their expertise.

"We're really first and foremost a volunteer-based organization," Kolovson said.

People who want to donate or volunteer can call the National Cancer Information Center hotline at 1-800-227-2345, to find the appropriate local offices. A team directs prospective volunteers to opportunities after conversations about their talents, interests and the amount of time they have to give, McElwee said. A live chat feature is also available on the organization's website, cancer.org, and the San Antonio office can be contacted directly at 210-614-4211.

Orsborn, the sister-in-law of Express-News sports reporter Tom Orsborn, started volunteering soon after her treatment ended in the early 1990s. Rose Orsborn is bilingual and can talk to Spanish-speaking patients or their loved ones in need of advice. Many of them are in other cities or states where the organization does not have enough bilingual volunteers, Orsborn said.

Unlike when Orsborn was diagnosed, anyone can find information about cancer on the internet, but much of it is not accurate. The American Cancer Society is still needed to provide valid, timely information, Orsborn said.

"They really were a lifeline for me," Orsborn said. "They lifted me from fear and hopelessness to being hopeful for a healthy future ahead of me."

amalik@express-news.net

It's EASY

to *activate*
your
digital
account



1. Go to **ExpressNews.com/Access**
2. Enter the last name on your account.
3. Validate your account with your house number, phone number, or account number.
4. Enter a valid email address to be used as your login.
5. Create an alphanumeric password with at least 7 characters (passwords are case-sensitive and cannot have special characters).
6. You may now use the login and password for both **ExpressNews.com** and the **e-edition** (visit ExpressNews.com/e-edition).

San Antonio Express-News
ExpressNews.com | e-edition | iPad® iPhone® App

BECOME A SUBSCRIBER
ExpressNews.com/Start

31150

Our pets know
there's no place like home
for the holidays

but they also know not everyone can
add a new member to the family.

While adopting a pet may not be an
option for you this holiday season, there
are still several ways you can help a pet
in need, like donating or volunteering!

Items our pets need:

towels • blankets • flea combs • baby wipes
potty pads • nursing kits • soft training treats
Ziploc bags (all sizes) • newspaper
stainless steel water/food bowls




SAhumane.org/donate



Sponsored by



We have low prices and big hearts! 



**GREEN
SPACES
ALLIANCE**
OF SOUTH TEXAS

**Our mission is to preserve the natural environment
and enhance urban spaces through land conservation,
community engagement, and education.**

Visit or call us to learn more and get involved today!

www.greensatx.org (210)222-8430



Land Conservation Program:

- Has helped protect over 146,000 acres of our cherished unique South Texas land for scenic vistas, clean air, wildlife habitat, and more
- Helps ensure the quantity and quality of San Antonio's fresh water supply from the Edwards Aquifer
- Gives property owners the opportunity to preserve their family lands



Picture Your World Program:

- Provides nature experiences for youth through hands-on outdoor photography workshops--over 4,000 students since 2002
- Supplement reductions in arts and field trip funding in schools
- Helps youth develop their creative expression and connection with the natural environment



Urban Land and Water Program:

- Connects San Antonio residents with their natural environment
- Cultivates community and revitalizes neighborhoods
- Provides resources, workshops, mentoring, volunteers, hosts community events, and much more
- Supports over 50 gardens and urban green spaces

ACGA



**AMERICAN
COMMUNITY
GARDENING
ASSOCIATION**

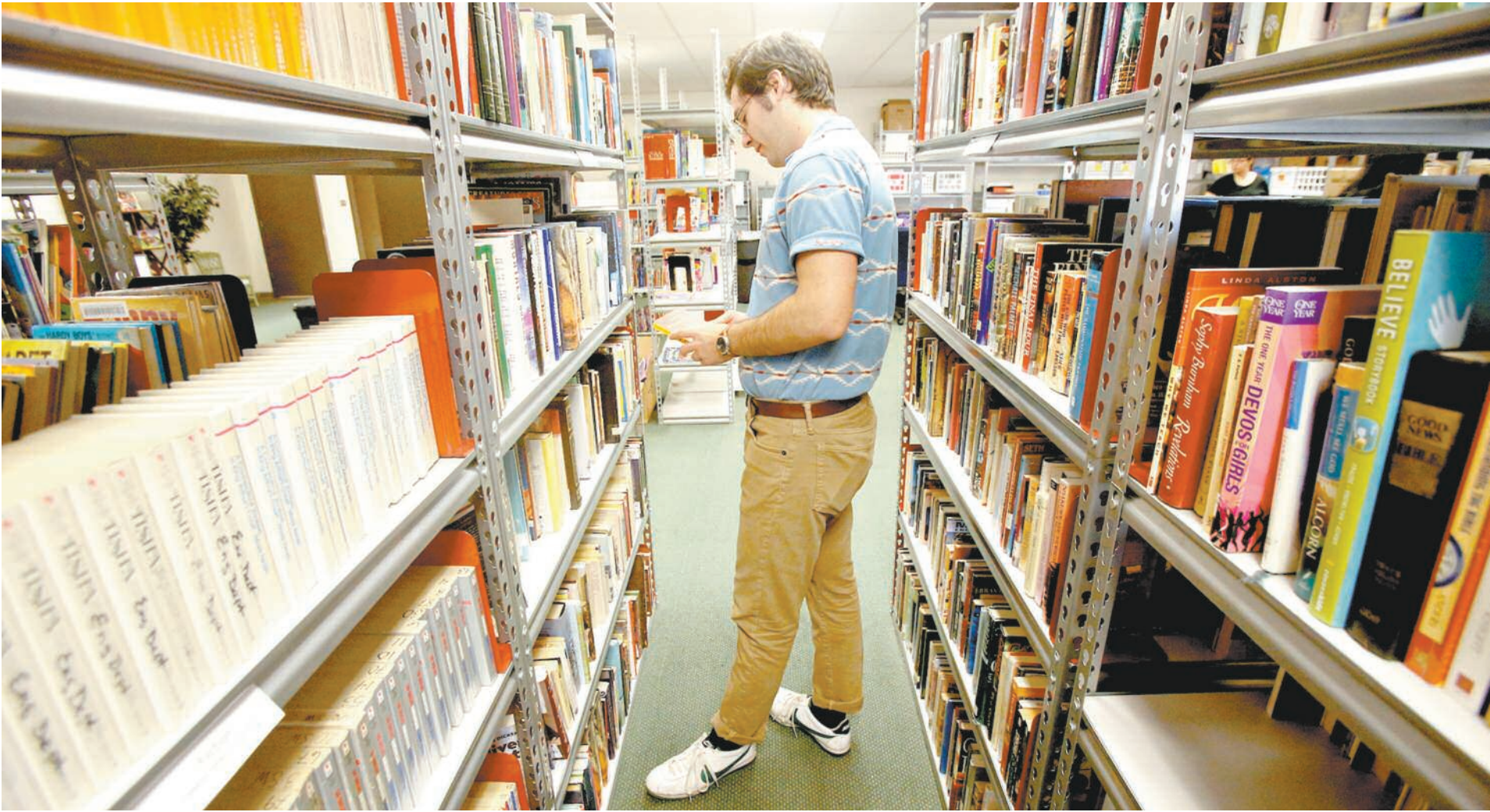


SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

Literacy San Antonio promotes best practices in teaching reading

Teacher training, making books available help combat illiteracy



Photos by John Davenport / San Antonio Express-News

Jack Mitts looks through books at SAReads, a project of Literacy San Antonio, which targets San Antonio's staggering lack of reading proficiency.

By Samantha Ehlinger
STAFF WRITER

Pamela Toman says she really didn't know teaching kids how to read would be so hard.

But the co-founder and executive director of Literacy San Antonio Inc. says she's learned over the years that teaching children to read is a serious, complex business.

SAReads matches elementary school kids with wannabe teachers, using data to develop customized reading programs for each student, Toman said. The organization also helps teachers and other nonprofits get books through its SAReads Book Bank and partners with Barnes & Noble on holiday book drives to give their students book bundles that help build their home libraries, she said.

And while it's early days into the effort, the nonprofit also is training some experienced teachers to incorporate the five essential elements of science-based reading instruction, Toman said. The prototype campus for that effort is Spicewood Park Elementary, Toman said.

"It's really not a non-profit concept. There is no profit, but we're not a



Shakyra Haas (left), an SAReads program coordinator, and Literacy San Antonio founder Pamela Toman look through books at SAReads/LiteracySA.

charity," Toman said. "We're building a business. Teaching reading is serious business, and SAReads takes it seriously. And when we figure out how to make this thing work, we can show a lot of people how to do it."

Toman didn't start in education, as she's quick to note. She backed into it after returning home to San Antonio 12 years ago from Silicon Valley.

She also transferred to the Junior League of San Antonio, whose members decided they wanted to tackle literacy. The chap-

ter launched Literacy San Antonio in 2006 as a signature project.

The organization operated as a Junior League project for four years, Toman said, until it was spun out as an independent nonprofit in 2010. "There was a lot of focus on adult literacy" in its first four years, Toman said.

"That was before I really understood that the school system was producing adults that were illiterate," she said.

Students, she said, aren't learning how to read in elementary

school. Each year, they fall further and further behind.

The numbers are staggering. Only 31 percent of Texas fourth graders read at or above "proficient," according to the 2015 Nation's Report Card.

That same report says that only 28 percent of Texas eighth graders are considered proficient at reading.

In 2010, the organization started working with U.S. Rep. Joaquín Castro, who handed them his book drive. That year they held the first SAReads summer book drive.

They had so many books, Toman said, that they needed a space for them. Firstmark Credit Union gave them one free of charge.

"And we were off," Toman said. "But really quickly we realized that ... giving kids books wasn't the same as teaching them to read."

It took a while, Toman says, to get to what she says is the root of the problem: many teachers aren't taught the proven elements of reading instruction.

The National Council on Teacher Quality evaluated in a 2016 report 820 undergraduate elementary programs to see if they taught five "essential components" of early reading instruction.

"To earn an A on this standard, programs must adequately address all of the five essential components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension)," according to the report.

Only 39 percent of programs provided instruction in all five components.

"Another two in five programs (44 percent earning a D or F) teach at most two components of reading instruction, ignoring much of the evidence on how children learn to read," according to the report.

The report notes that more programs compared to the council's 2014 report include all five elements.

Luckily, at Texas A&M University-San Antonio, pre-service teachers enrolled in literacy instruction courses can get exposure to science-based reading instruction methods through the SAReads tutoring program, Toman said.

"We go in and train pre-service teachers who are enrolled in these courses to tutor children," Toman said.

And the tutors, who are enrolled in literacy courses at A&M San Antonio's College of Education and Human Development earn 15 percent of their course grade from their work with SAReads.

Part of SAReads' work is helping to put together the curriculum and resources for the tutors to organize their sessions. Shakyra Haas, an SAReads program coordinator, said they take the data they get from the district to see where students need the most help. They get relevant curriculum and materials from the Florida Center for Reading Research, she said.

"Then we have our volunteers come and help

“Giving kids books wasn't the same as teaching them to read.”

Pamela Toman, Literacy San Antonio Inc.

us cut and package it," Haas said.

The exercises tutors do with the students help in the five essential areas of reading instruction, by improving phonics, for example, or vocabulary.

SAReads also has a customized portal where tutors can enter all of their session information, and where coordinators can get data on each child being tutored, Toman said.

"We also get reading assessment data from the district about each child, so that the pre-service teachers can create a customized lesson plan for their children," Toman said. "So they're using the methods of science-based reading instruction, and they're using the specific data for their children, they're building a lesson plan and then they're tutoring."

Students have the opportunity to stay in tutoring from kindergarten through fourth grade, Toman said. Fourth grade is new this year, and they plan to add fifth grade next year, she said.

The program runs in Southwest ISD for now, and tutors go into all 11 schools, she said. The goal in the next five years is to cover the district with teacher training, which Toman says would be "a phenomenal result."

She guessed that within the next three-to-four years they would be in conversation with other districts and another university who might want to do this.

"We have to believe in something we can't see. We have to believe that this can happen, and will happen and must happen," Toman said. "It's a social justice issue. I make no money ... I've been doing it as a volunteer the entire time. The only payoff is it has to work."

sehlinger@express-news.net
| Twitter: @samehlinger



DRESS FOR SUCCESS®
SAN ANTONIO

How her story ends begins with you.

Dress for Success San Antonio gives women the chance to write a new chapter with tools for success.

Your gift of \$50 or more will help provide a suit and career services for a woman in need.

"Success is about hard work and perseverance... Be creative and don't ever quit."
— Jessica, DFS San Antonio Client, successfully served

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of Dress for Success is to empower women to achieve economic independence by providing a network of support, professional attire and the development tools to help women thrive in work and in life.

600 N. Frio St.
San Antonio, TX 78207
www.successfulconnections.org

210-737-1515



SAN ANTONIO GIVES

VOLUNTEER

Tutoring reading like a job for A&M-SA teaching candidates

Literacy SA's partnership with university has two-way benefit



Photos by John Davenport / San Antonio Express-News

Literacy San Antonio volunteer Broghan Moy holds a reading session with fourth-graders Atom Bobadilla (left) and Karina Gallegos, both 9, at Southwest Elementary School. Moy, a senior at Texas A&M-San Antonio, volunteers with the SAREads program to teach fourth- through eighth-grade reading.

By Joshua Fechter
STAFF WRITER

A San Antonio charity found the perfect candidates to teach kids how to read: students whose grades depend on it.

More than 1,400 students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio have tutored elementary school students using Literacy San Antonio's science-based reading programs since the non-profit partnered with faculty in the university in the fall of 2010, said Pamela Toman, co-founder and executive director of Literacy San Antonio Inc.

"This benefits both the children who are learning to read and their tutors who are learning to become teachers," Toman said.

Under the SAREads program, students seeking their teaching certification and enrolled in literacy instruction courses can receive college credit for tutoring elementary school students at 11 campuses in Southwest ISD in reading comprehension, vocabulary, spelling and text fluency over a nine-week period.

The program organizes elementary school students into three tiers: those who read at grade level, those who read slightly below grade level and need intervention and those who are drastically underperforming for their grade level.

Broghan Moy, 27, is one of 223 tutors currently enrolled in the program. Moy, who graduated from Kennedy High School in 2008, said she initially wanted to become a radiation therapist and "cure cancer." But a few rough years and one change of major at Texas State University in San Marcos left her unsure what career she wanted to pursue.

"I wasn't doing well in San Marcos," Moy said.

Moy moved to Falls City, more than 40 miles southeast of San Antonio in Karnes County, when



Fourth-graders Atom and Karina get help from Moy as they prepare to take the state's STAAR writing test for the first time.

“You pick from the curriculum and you apply it to see what works best for them.”

Reading tutor Broghan Moy

her then-boyfriend graduated from Texas State in 2012 and married him in 2013. She enrolled in education classes at Palo Alto College and took a job as a paraprofessional at Falls City ISD.

In that role, she worked with many special education students, which she said prompted her to quit in August and pursue a dual teaching certification in special education up to 12th grade and general education up to sixth grade.

"Those (special education students) are your students that need the most help in learning in a very different way," Moy said.



Atom works on his reading and writing skills under the Literacy San Antonio/SAREads program.

"As tutors we get to pick and choose from that curriculum which is like what a teacher does," Moy said. "You pick from the curriculum and you apply it to see what works best for them."

Moy is tutoring two fourth graders at Southwest Elementary School

who are preparing to take the state's standardized STAAR writing test for the first time. That means students have to successfully write a paper, state a central topic, separate compound sentences and do so within a time limit, Moy said.

Because different stu-

dents have different needs, Moy said she has to tailor teaching tactics and reading topics for each lesson. One assignment tripped up one of her students.

"I wasn't convinced she was really comprehending what she was reading because she wasn't able to

put it to paper," Moy said. So Moy opted to adopt an interview style where the student would read multiple choice questions aloud and Moy would read the options back to her, she said.

"We're doing all of this out loud and that way I know she's reading it and I know she can comprehend it," Moy said. "And that worked out. She was able to write more, more than she's done thus far."

Using full-time college students as tutors means the program has to match elementary school students to tutors' busy schedules. Lessons, which take place once a week for nine weeks, last at least 30 minutes. It's a short amount of time, Moy acknowledged, but the students are engaged.

"I missed last week and they said, 'where were you?' " Moy said, adding that she missed the lesson because she was sick. "They ask, so that means they care."

jfechter@express-news.net |
Twitter: @JFreports



Share Your Love & Share a Night

Your contribution of **\$25.00** will give the gift of togetherness and hope to families staying at one of our three San Antonio Ronald McDonald Houses.

For over 32 years, Ronald McDonald House of San Antonio has provided a home for children and their families to stay while receiving medical treatment at one of our local medical facilities.

www.rmhc-sanantonio.org
4803 Sid Katz
San Antonio, Texas 78229
(210) 614-2554



A special thank you to San Antonio Auto Dealers Association for making a difference in the lives of critically ill children.



Share A Night

Give the gift of togetherness
by supporting your local





The SA Auto Dealers Association **extends** our deepest appreciation to the **Ronald McDonald House Charities** for their tremendous efforts in strengthening our community



SA Auto Dealers and its members are dedicated to supporting organizations such as the Ronald McDonald House Charities and working together to strengthen the community where we live and work.

SA Auto Dealers Members

Alamo City Chevrolet
Alamo Toyota
Ancira Buick-GMC
Ancira Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge-Ram
Ancira Kia
Ancira Nissan
Ancira Volkswagen
Ancira Winton Chevrolet
Atascosa Dodge
Barrett Jaguar/Maserati of San Antonio
BMW of San Antonio/Mini of San Antonio
Brown Chevrolet Company, Inc.
Brown Dodge-Chrysler-Jeep-Ram
North Park Chevrolet Castroville
Cavender Audi
Cavender Buick-GMC, North
Cavender Buick-GMC, West
Cavender Cadillac Company
Cavender Chevrolet
Cavender Toyota
Fernandez Honda
Fiesta Honda
Freedom Chevrolet
Gillman Honda
Gillman Mitsubishi
Gillman Subaru
Grande Truck Center
Gunn Acura
Gunn Buick-GMC
Gunn Chevrolet
Gunn Honda
Gunn Infiniti
Gunn Nissan
Ingram Park Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge
Ingram Park Mazda
Ingram Park Nissan
Jennings Anderson Ford
Jordon Ford, LTD.
Ken Batchelor Cadillac
Land Rover San Antonio
Late European
Lone Star Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep-Ram
Lone Star Mitsubishi
Mac Haik's Southway Ford, Inc.
McCombs Ford West
Mercedes Benz of Boerne
Mercedes Benz of San Antonio
Mission Mitsubishi
Nissan of Boerne
North Park Audi
North Park Lexus
North Park Lexus at Dominion
North Park Lincoln
North Park Mazda
North Park Subaru
North Park Subaru Dominion
North Park Toyota of San Antonio
North Park Volkswagen of Dominion
North Star Dodge-Chrysler-Jeep
Northside Ford
Porsche of San Antonio
Principle Alfa Romeo-Fiat
Principle Infiniti of Boerne
Principle Volvo of San Antonio
Red McCombs Ford
Red McCombs Hyundai, NW
Red McCombs Superior Hyundai
Red McCombs Toyota
Toyota of Boerne
Universal Toyota
Vara Chevrolet
Volkswagen of Alamo Heights
West Loop Mitsubishi
World Car Nissan
World Car Mazda-Kia
World Car Mazda/North/World Car Kia North
World Car Hyundai -Kia South



Ronald McDonald House Charities®
San Antonio

saautodealers.com

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

Green Spaces Alliance works to protect urban environment

New location reflects group’s approach to conserving land and water



Volunteers Christina Palafox (left) and Bea Caraway work on the compost heap at the Olmos Park Terrace community garden, which was started with grant money through Green Spaces Alliance. Courtesy photo

By **Brendan Gibbons**
STAFF WRITER

On a recent morning, Green Spaces Alliance executive director Gail Gallegos showed off all the whimsical features of the non-profit’s new Monte Vista offices in a former art gallery on Mistletoe Avenue.

Tall, cactus-looking clay sculptures spring up in the backyard. A row of alien figures from the movie “Toy Story” lines a hanging kitchen rack, and there’s a metal bust of a leering pope figure in the bathroom — a piece titled “Holier Than Thou” by the sculptor, Jerry Boyle.

“I just don’t think it could be more perfect,” said a beaming Gallegos, who doesn’t miss the cramped offices that GSA left behind a month and a half ago.

GSA’s new location reflects the organization’s broad-brush approach to conserving land and water in San Antonio. Its staff has found ways to inject environmental awareness into the community while keeping fun a key part of its mission.

Launched as Bexar Land Trust in 1998, GSA has expanded its focus from preserving land to teaching nature photography and starting community gardens. Much of its work involves teaming up with others interested in similar issues.

“That’s the strength in all our projects — the interrelatedness to other people, whether it’s the military, the (Edwards Aquifer Protection Program) or other environmental organizations,” said Gallegos, who came to GSA in 2016 from San Antonio’s Parks and Recreation Department.

In the city, perhaps the group’s most visible work is the network of food, pollinator and communi-



Jeff Crane, a former member of the Green Spaces Alliance board, shows students how to harvest cucumbers growing in the youth garden at the Ella Austin Community Center in 2014. Express-News file photo

ty gardens it has launched throughout San Antonio — now more than 50, said Jerry Hess, urban land and water manager.

The program started in 2006 with a pilot of three community gardens north of downtown — River Road, Beacon Hill and Olmos Park Terrace. Funding was flowing in and GSA was soon opening around 10 gardens a year, Gallegos said.

“No one at that time was doing anything similar,” she said. “The local food movement hadn’t really started up.”

All three gardens have since blossomed with a community of volunteers. People interested in launching new gardens can apply to join GSA’s network, where they can get access to tools, seeds, expertise and funding for larger projects.

With private grants for community gardens having virtually disappeared in the past 10 years, individual donations and memberships are crucial to supporting GSA’s garden work, Gallegos said.

“It’s not just a garden,”



Express-News file photo

For 15 years, Green Spaces Alliance has conducted a nature photography program called Picture Your World for youths from 8 to 18.

Hess said. “It’s permaculture, it’s community. ... It’s reconnected people with food and where it comes from.”

For 15 years, GSA has also conducted a nature photography program called Picture Your World meant for kids from 8 to 18, said photographer Carra Garza, who manages the program. GSA is making a year-end push for \$15,000 in donations to continue supporting the program through next year.

Equipped with a box of point-and-shoot digital cameras, Garza hosts a

class of about 30 youth and their families at a public or private nature sanctuary in the area. The cost to participate is \$40, though there’s a discount for GSA members. She estimates more than 880 people have gone through the program since it was launched in 2002.

At the workshops, she and other instructors encourage participants to visually explore their surroundings — getting on hands and knees to chase spiders or finding patterns in sunlight filtering through leaves.

“Photography is kind of the hook,” Garza said. “What we’re really trying to do is get kids out there and have them have that ‘Aha!’ moment.”

GSA also offers week-day photography sessions for elementary students. Picture Your World culminates in a professionally judged nature photography contest every May, with winners earning \$300 prizes.

Though GSA has multiple branches, it still maintains roots in preserving the fast-disappearing open spaces giving way to San Antonio’s suburban sprawl.

Over the years, GSA has worked as a land agent for the Edwards Aquifer Protection Program to preserve 55,000 acres of land on and near the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone.

Though GSA is reimbursed for its work on parcels that get accepted into the program, those reimbursements don’t fully cover the costs of meeting with rural landowners, doing research on the properties and

“It’s not just a garden ... it’s community.”

Jerry Hess about the community gardens project

submitting them for approval, Gallegos said.

“The only way we are able to stay afloat is through individual donations and memberships,” she said.

The group also holds conservation easements on three parcels totaling 460 acres in Bexar and Kendall counties.

In 2010, GSA got title to its first wholly owned nature preserve after a donation of 31 acres at Judson Road and Loop 1604 from Capital Foresight LP.

GSA named the preserve Bulverde Oaks and has worked with groups like Texas Master Naturalists and the Boy Scouts to cut back invasive plants, build trails and set up a blind for bird-watchers.

Though access won’t be completely open to the public, the group uses Bulverde Oaks as a space for training, volunteer work and events, including a monthly guided tour, said Tyler Sanderson, who manages GSA’s land conservation programs.

These days, GSA has another new ambition: Connecting residents to the source of all life through a new program called Discover Your Water.

“Water is the limiting factor for San Antonio,” Gallegos said, adding that its program could potentially teach people to test water for pollution, identify riparian habitats and learn how water recharges the Edwards Aquifer, San Antonio’s main drinking water supply.

bgibbons@express-news.net, Twitter: @bgibbs



SHOP LOCAL

FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Museum Shop Holiday Fair + Clay & Arts Festival

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2
10:00 A.M.–5:00 P.M.

Local artisans of jewelry, folk art, and fabrics.
Free admission to Holiday Fair.

FREE Museum Admission
4:00–8:00 P.M.

SAN ANTONIO MUSEUM of ART
200 W. Jones Avenue | San Antonio, TX 78215
210.978.8100 | samuseum.org

Our pets know
*there's no place like home
for the holidays*
but they also know not everyone can
add a new member to the family.

While adopting a pet may not be an
option for you this holiday season, there
are still several ways you can help a pet
in need, like donating or volunteering!

Items our pets need:
towels • blankets • flea combs • baby wipes
potty pads • nursing kits • soft training treats
Ziploc bags (all sizes) • newspaper
stainless steel water/food bowls



SAhumane.org/donate



Sponsored by 

We have low prices and big hearts! 



NUTCRACKER Sweets

December 4, 2017,
Witte Museum, 6pm-8pm

Benefitting: The Battered Women and Children's Shelter.
Honorary Chairs Erika Prosper Nirenberg
& Master Jonah Nirenberg

Presented By: 



Witte Museum - Mays Family Center - 3801 Broadway St. San Antonio, TX 78209

Come experience an extravaganza of holiday desserts and savory items prepared by some of San Antonio's most celebrated chefs, caterers and artisans.

CHEFS

<p>Chefs Bruce Auden & Amy Delbridge <i>Biga on the Banks</i></p> <p>Chef Nox Ybarra <i>Boudro's</i></p> <p>Chef Johnny Hernández <i>Burgerteca and La Gloria</i></p> <p>Mixologist Jeret Peña <i>Brooklynite</i></p> <p>Chef Howie Velie <i>Culinary Institute of America San Antonio</i></p> <p>Chef Anthony Mesa <i>Dorrego's at Hotel Valencia Riverwalk</i></p>	<p>Chef Stefan Bowers <i>Feast & Rebelle</i></p> <p>Susan Jamie <i>Ferra Coffee Roaster</i></p> <p>Chefs Iverson Brownell & Christina Everett <i>Fork and Garden, Creations Catering</i></p> <p>Chef Scott Tompkins <i>H-E-B Culinary</i></p> <p>Chef John O'Larnic <i>H-E-B Plus</i></p> <p>Toby Soto <i>Humo</i></p> <p>Diana Barrios Treviño <i>Los Barrios Family Restaurants</i></p>	<p>Pitmaster Kathy Pullin <i>Pullin Premium BBQ</i></p> <p>Chris Conger <i>The Smoke Shack</i></p> <p>Gelatiere Josh Biffle <i>South Alamo Panini & Gelato</i></p> <p>Chef John Brand <i>Supper at Hotel Emma</i></p> <p>Chefs Don Carr & Dustin Alexander <i>Sysco</i></p> <p>Tim McDiarmid <i>Tim the Girl, The Good Kind</i></p> <p>Chef Mayela Ramos <i>Vida Mia Mexican Cuisine</i></p>
--	--	---

ENTERTAINMENT

Performances by The Children's Ballet of San Antonio, San Antonio Youth Ballet,
live music from George and Aaron Prado, Santa, a raffle, and silent auction

Your contribution to Nutcracker Sweets will enable The Battered Women and Children's Shelter
to provide safety, hope, and possibilities for adult and children victims of domestic violence.

For tickets and sponsorship opportunities, please visit nutcrackersweetssa.org or contact Linda Canizales at 210-930-3669 ext. 2219 or send email to Linda.canizales@fvps.org





BEST SECTION CONSECUTIVE YEARS IN THE NATION!


— As awarded by Association of Food Journalists for newspapers with a circulation of under 200,000


For the seventh year in a row, the Express-News Taste section has been named best newspaper food section in its division by the Association of Food Journalists.



Taste

Sunday, September 24, 2017 | SECTION H | SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS





Hill Country Sausage Queso comes from "Queso! Regional Recipes for the World's Favorite Chile-Cheese Dip" by Lisa Fain. Serve it with thick pretzels and beer.

A bowl of Texas gold

Queso's many variations likely began with chiles, cheese near El Paso


By Paul Stephen
STAFF WRITER

Sure, the heat index may still be hot enough to keep a pot of queso silky smooth at high noon. But fall is coming, and there's no better time to break out the bricks of Velveeta. Whether it's a tailgating party or otherwise, nothing warms (enlarges?) the heart of Texas like a bowl of gold.

San Antonio may not have invented the stuff. That honor, in all likelihood, belongs to El Paso. But that hasn't stopped the Lone Star State's neighbors from trying to grab our glory.

For several years, Arkansas has tried planting its flag in our rightful chunk of cheddar Queso — they don't even have the decency to call it by name, opting instead for "cheese dip" — was introduced to the world, those rascally razorbacks argue, in 1935 in a North Little Rock restaurant named Mexico Chiquito.

The claim, ridiculous as it may be, has even garnered a



Fain's book celebrating queso publishes Tuesday. She said she became obsessed with queso's history.

degree of national press coverage. Late last year, the Wall Street Journal printed a story titled "Don't Tell Texas, But Arkansas Is Loving Queso." Shortly after, Texas senators John Corry and Ted Cruz went to bat for their constituents and staged a queso-off in Washington, D.C. The panel of lily-livered legislators couldn't handle the heat, and voted instead for the dip dropped by Arkansas senators John Boozman and Tom Cotton.

It was enough to grate the rind of Texans everywhere. Lisa Fain, a Houston native who's lived in New York City for decades, was cheesed off enough to do something about it. Not one to sit around being blue, she embarked on a culinary journey along the Texas-Mexico border that resulted in an homage to fromage.

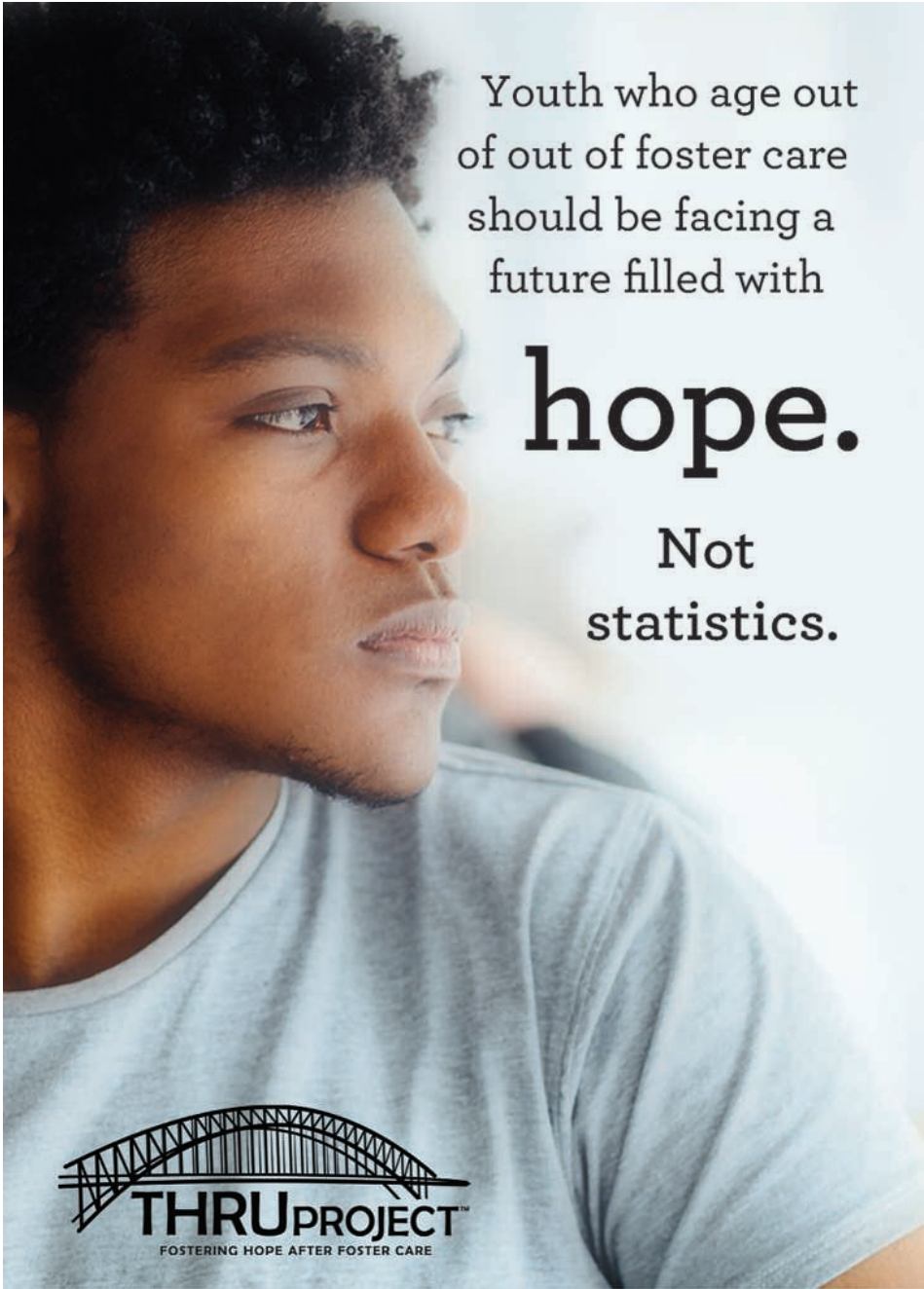
"I just became obsessed with the history," said Fain, the force behind the popular blog Homebick Texas.

Author continues on pg. 15

Taste

something delicious is always cooking

To subscribe call 250-2000 or go to mySA.com



Youth who age out
of out of foster care
should be facing a
future filled with

hope.

Not
statistics.



It's not too late.

You can change a life today.

Foster children are still at risk after
they turn 18. Learn how you can help
them cross the bridge to adulthood.

DONATE | MENTOR A YOUTH
WWW.THRUPROJECT.ORG



WE BELIEVE YOUR
DAUGHTER CAN
CHANGE THE WORLD.

Choosing the ideal school for your daughter takes time
and deliberation. Providence Catholic School,
San Antonio's Only Catholic all-girl college prep school
for grades 6-12, provides a program of academic
excellence and prepares young women for the world
while encouraging them to develop intellectual curiosity,
deepen their faith, practice integrity, and seek justice.
If you believe your daughter could benefit from such an
experience or would like more information, go to
discoverpcs.me or call 210-880-1677



PROVIDENCE
THE COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS GRADES 6-12

*Empowering women
through faith and intellect.*

A commitment to Catholic education by the Sisters of Divine Providence since 1951



Keep your little one
HEALTHY
this cold and flu season.



YOUR CENTER FOR PEDIATRICS.

CentroMed has a team of pediatricians, pediatric nurse practitioners and dentists trained
to take care of children's healthcare needs. To accommodate our working families, we
welcome evening and weekend appointments. CentroMed is a 501 c 3 Non-Profit
Community Health Center that has been serving the San Antonio community since 1973.



Schedule your appointment today!
210-922-7000 | centromedsa.com

NOEMI GALVAN ELING CLINIC
5542 Walzem Road
San Antonio, TX

PALO ALTO clinic
9011 Poteet Jourdanton Fwy
San Antonio, TX

SOUTH PARK MEDICAL CLINIC
6315 South Zarzamora
San Antonio, TX

SOUTHSIDE MEDICAL CLINIC
3750 Commercial Avenue
San Antonio, TX

COUNTY LINE CLINIC
1034 W. County Line Rd
New Braunfels, TX

SOUTH PARK DENTAL
910 Wagner Street
San Antonio, TX

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

For the Food Bank, season of giving is year-round

But the pace ramps up for the holidays, says CEO Eric Cooper



John Davenport / San Antonio Express-News

Eric Cooper (second from right), CEO of the San Antonio Food Bank, packs boxes of food for seniors with volunteers from USAA at the Food Bank campus.

By Lynn Brezosky
STAFF WRITER

The mammoth campus of the San Antonio Food Bank feels every bit like the distribution hub it is, buzzing with activity both on the inside and out.

Workers each hour bring in semi-truck loads of unsold groceries along with deliveries of produce from area farms and shipments of unserved meals from restaurants and corporate banquets. About the same pace is kept with what goes out to senior centers, food pantries and after-school programs for children whose parents may be working multiple low-paying jobs.

“There’s never a slow time for us,” said CEO Eric Cooper, the man at the helm of a nonprofit that takes in about \$124.7 million in annual revenue.

Like any CEO, Cooper is tasked with keeping the money flowing. But running a charity also means being able to withstand public scrutiny. It’s a big deal for him to be able to report that administrative overhead is kept to 2 percent of the budget, he said. That means 98 cents out of every dollar goes to feeding people who would otherwise go hungry. And each dollar is leveraged into \$13 of food, which equates to seven meals or about 10 pounds of food, he said.

“We’re the most efficient nonprofit in our community, and so that gives us a bit of an edge when it comes to donors that really want to leverage their investment in the best way,” Cooper said. “The fact that it’s meeting a basic need is another big part of it. It’s not controversial.”

The weeks leading up to Thanksgiving Day are frenetic ones for the Food Bank.

“It’s really the season of response and giving and sharing, and so that keeps us busy in a really good way,” he said. “And the need rises a little bit during the holidays. When you think of families in times of struggle, the holidays can be a tough time.”

During a recent meeting, he charged staff with



John Davenport / San Antonio Express-News

Volunteers pack boxes of food for seniors at the San Antonio Food Bank. According to Cooper, the San Antonio Food Bank serves 16 counties in the San Antonio area.



Edward A. Ornelas / San Antonio Express-News

Justin Sparkman, Food Bank chef/nutrition education coordinator, shows spices for turkey tacos to children as part of the Refugee School Impact Program with Catholic Charities of San Antonio that was held this summer.

imagining how they’d feel if they couldn’t provide the day’s tradition “of turkey and mashed potatoes and gravy and stuffing and maybe some pumpkin pie.”

“If you’re a parent with kids as I’ve talked to, there’s a sense of failure.”

The mission of providing turkeys for every needy family translates to one of the few items the Food Bank will pay market price for. But even that is done with an eye on scale and the bottom line. The best prices for turkeys are going to be the days immediately after Thanksgiving, and that’s when the Food Bank puts in its orders, in

a sense playing a turkey futures market for the next year’s need.

Every little bit of income helps, such as the registration fees for Thanksgiving morning’s annual 5k Turkey Trot downtown, where one can either surge with the swiftest or keep a more leisurely pace with all the pets and baby strollers that have become part of the preemptive calorie-burning tradition.

But the holidays aren’t the only busy time, and there’s opportunities for groups or individuals to donate time year-round. Need for example surges during the summer, when schools shutter and chil-

dren lose access to free or reduced-price breakfasts and lunches. The same happens during holiday breaks.

“We’ve got a big opportunity before the Christmas break to do 20,000 food boxes for school children,” he said. “That will keep us busy.”

The scale of the operation may be surprising, especially to those who don’t think of hunger as a reality in San Antonio and its surrounding counties. It’s main 210,000-square-foot facility sits on a 40-acre campus, of which 25 acres is dedicated to growing food and raising goats, sheep and chickens. The bank

distributes \$125 million a year in food and grocery products weighing in at about 65 million pounds a year. It all flows through 550 nonprofits in a 16-county area that feed about 58,000 people each week.

There are about 200 employees across multiple locations, to include a smaller Food Bank in New Braunfels and a packing shed in Pearsall that distributes produce and venison via a program called “Hunters for the Hungry.”

That doesn’t count the 40 men in white who on a recent November morning were seen hoisting loads with forklifts as dozens of volunteers from USAA packed boxes of food for the elderly. The men were nonviolent inmates from state correctional facilities, Cooper said, able to gain certificates in warehouse operations or in culinary arts by helping prepare hot meals in the Food Bank kitchen. Those certificates have translated to second-chance job opportunities on the outside.

“That ties back to our ability to run 2 percent (overhead),” Cooper said. “There’s literally 40 guys that are here every day that between our culinary training and our warehouse training are basically like full-time employees.”

Personal donations really do matter, with individual contributions

“When you think of families in times of struggle, the holidays can be a tough time.”

Food Bank CEO Eric Cooper

making up 50 percent of its proceeds. Of the remainder, 36 percent came from corporations and organizations, and 14 percent came from foundations.

While donations of food come from all over, there are operational costs for, say, getting a tractor trailer load of cereal from Kellogg’s in Battle Creek, Michigan, or picking up holiday gift turkeys from employees who are vegetarian or will be traveling to be with family and can’t use them. There also are costs to market the programs, whether to would-be donors and volunteers or to families who are facing hard times and may be eligible for not only a box of food but also government assistance programs.

There are programs such as Project H.O.P.E for senior citizens and the Food Bank’s kitchens at Haven for Hope, a shelter for the homeless, and Providence Place, which works with young adults with disabilities. But 54 percent of aid recipients are working people who don’t make enough money to both pay basic bills and buy enough food.

“We think of ourselves as kind of food recyclers,” Cooper said. “You have all this food waste, and then you have hungry families; it doesn’t make sense.”

As for the donor corporations, there are tax write-offs and decreased disposal costs, but there’s also a sense of altruism.

“At the end of the day, I think it’s a social wrong to throw away food. We all feel that, and so the solution is partnering with the food banks so that edible food can get to families in need.”

lbrezosky@express-news.net

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

VOLUNTEER

At Food Bank, volunteer finds sense of purpose, camaraderie

Her spirit of giving thrives in the friendly, flexible environment



Photos by William Luther / San Antonio Express-News

Janet McDaniel, a member of the Apple Corps volunteer group at the San Antonio Food Bank, sorts donated food. She said the work is about more than giving back.

By Rye Druzin
STAFF WRITER

Janet McDaniel pulled handfuls of cans and food out of big green bins at the San Antonio Food Bank. Surrounded by a flurry of activity, the 70-year-old San Antonio resident moved deftly through the bustling mass of USAA volunteers to the sorting tables in the middle.

One volunteer held up a bottle of vegetable oil and asked for help; another asked where the coffee went. Each time McDaniel was there to lend her knowledge, helping keep the volunteers and their flurry of activity on track.

McDaniel raised two children with husband Bill, who led the move to San Antonio while in the Air Force. McDaniel began doing volunteer work after she retired in 2005 and found that the 40-acre farm she and her husband had bought didn't give her enough to do.

One nonprofit that she aided became too reliant on the volunteers; McDaniel said that if she missed a week, the work would pile up, and she didn't like the lack of flexibility.

McDaniel came to the Food Bank in 2010. She happened to show up on a Tuesday, the same day the Food Bank's Apple Corps., a dedicated group of volunteers, were there. Soon she joined their ranks.

"You're not only giving back to the community," she said, "but you form friendships with the people that you work with."

"I think the thing that appealed to me the most was the flexibility," she said. "We are here every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, but if you go on vacation or you don't feel well or you have a commitment out of town



McDaniel helps another volunteer. She says the flexibility makes volunteering at the Food Bank easy.

... you just don't come, but you know that there's going to be other people to pick up the slack, and I always appreciate that. One less person won't mess things up."

Some days, McDaniel says, the Apple Corps. volunteers will walk in and be the only ones there; other days there

could be 125 volunteers filling the atrium and preparing to go into the sorting room.

On days when large groups of volunteers are helping and the Apple Corps. volunteers are there, the experienced group is able to take on some of the processing and instructing of the

new volunteers, McDaniel said, giving administrators time for paper-work and other duties.

A spirit of giving permeates McDaniel's family. She said that during Christmas, rather than giving gifts to each other, family members combine money into a single amount to donate to an

organization.

The volunteer work that McDaniel does at the Food Bank gives her a sense of purpose, she says, even though the organization doesn't generally hand out food where she volunteers on the Southeast Side.

While she doesn't usually see the direct impact

“It impacts the little ones, and those are the ones ... you think about the most because child hunger is a big, big issue.”

Janet McDaniel, San Antonio Food Bank volunteer

— those in need receiving food — the stories volunteers can hear when going through orientation can be heartbreaking, she says.

"One of the stories they share is children wondering, 'We had to give up the family pet; am I next?'" she said. "A child will say this, so what is going to happen to the rest of the family? So it impacts the little ones, and those are the ones I think you think about the most because child hunger is a big, big issue."

McDaniel says that some of the biggest issues the Food Bank can face are lower stocks of food in the months after major food drives in May and November, and a lack of a steady stream of volunteers.

She encouraged anyone who has thought about volunteering to give it a shot, stressing that the organization offers flexibility.

"Signing up for a volunteer shift at the Food Bank is painless," McDaniel said. "I urge people to come out and give it a try. It's not a long-term commitment — if you don't like it after one or two tries, if you don't like the schedule ... there's no commitment."

rdruzin@express-news.net | Twitter: @druz_journo



St. Peter-St. Joseph Children’s Home, affectionately referred to as St. PJ’s, has been helping children and their families for more than a century. St. PJ’s is a temporary home to children who have suffered abuse and neglect.

For information, please visit www.stpjhome.org

- We do this through:**
- Emergency Shelter Program
 - International Emergency Shelter & Transitional Foster Care Program
 - Counseling Center Program

WE SAN ANTONIO!

Proud to Support Our Community



TOP LEFT: Silver Eagle Distributors Scholarship Fund Award Reception, TOP RIGHT: Military Bus Trip to Texans' Salute to Service game, BOTTOM LEFT: SA River Foundation Basura Bash, BOTTOM RIGHT: Folds of Honor Student Scholarship Check Presentation at the Paseo del Rio Armed Forces River Parade.



Silver Eagle Distributors is proud to be San Antonio’s local Anheuser-Busch distributor. The company enjoys giving to a variety of non-profit organizations that support the arts, education, environmental stewardship, health-related initiatives, and our country’s military and their families. To learn more, visit us at silvereagle.com.



SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

State's oldest no-kill shelter stays true to its mission

Continued growth helps Animal Defense League protect, serve strays



Edward A. Ornelas / San Antonio Express-News

Cats hang out in a kennel at the Animal Defense League of Texas. In the past several years, the campus has seen new buildings rise to better serve its occupants.

By Vincent T. Davis
STAFF WRITER

Since 1923, the goal of the Animal Defense League of Texas has been protecting the animals of San Antonio. The nonprofit organization sprang from the Child Protective and Humane Society, led by Herman H. Ochs and

“We’re kind of like the bridge between from where (the animals) came from to where they’re going.”

ADL dog trainer Jamie Gibson

Mrs. Scott C. Applewhite. According to an Express-News story, the mission was to prevent “ignorance, pauperism, immorality and crime” among children and “cruel beating, harnessing, starving, overloading

and other brutal use” of animals. The group of animal advocates built a series of makeshift, open cages that served as home for the stray and injured cats and dogs roaming San Antonio. The ramshackle

shelter was little more than lengths of chicken wire, nailed to scraps and planks of wood, plunked down on a stretch of prairie that would become the Austin Highway. By the early 1960s,

ADL had relocated to the Northeast side, expanding its mission from supplying basic shelter to securing homes for the scores of dogs, puppies, cats and kittens they cared for each year. The main campus,

located at 11300 Nacogdoches Road, spreads across more than 12 acres that includes an adoption center, a cattery complex, an education center and a separate clinic for ADL medical care and animal surgeries on site. In 2016, the ADL took on a second location, the Paul Jolly Center for Pet Adoptions in Brackenridge Park, where poten-

ADL continues on T34



BEAT AIDS
IS GRATEFUL THAT
THE END OF HIV IS NEAR!
Serving you for nearly 30 years!

**TOGETHER,
WE CAN BEAT AIDS!**

Know your status with a FREE
and confidential HIV test.
Support Groups & Case
Management also available.
We mirror our community.
We ARE the community.



1017 N. Main Ave. • (210) 212-2266
www.beataids.org



Benefiting
and produced by:

BEATAIDS
Over 30 years serving the community

**Saturday
February
3rd**
On-Site
Registration at 8am
Race begins at 9am

**3rd Annual
5K Run/Walk**
HIV/AIDS Awareness
PUT PrEP in your step!

Mission County Park
6030 Padre Drive, San Antonio, Texas 78214

For more information: 210.212.2266
Food, Drinks and Live Music!
\$20 Pre-Registration until January 15th
www.beataids.org

SAN ANTONIO GIVES



Photos by Edward A. Ornelas / San Antonio Express-News

Animal Defense League of Texas lead kennel tech Katie Mozisek moves Frogger to a play yard on Nov. 2.

“The thought that the love of an animal makes us more human, humane and compassionate and being part of a community of people who care is inspiring.”

ADL executive director Janice Darling

ADL

From page T33

tial adopters could see prospective pets through glass enclosures.

From the early hard-scrabble days to the advancements of the present, ADL has always been a true, no-kill shelter.

According to an ADL operating statement, no animal will be euthanized if it can be cared for and returned to health. And if they reach the maximum capacity of 400 animals, no more animals would be taken in, nor euthanized to make room for other dogs and cats.

An example of the ADL creed for the past 94 years can be seen in the story of Melon, a black Labrador Retriever mix, who arrived at the shelter as a pup and died at ADL at the age of 12. In 2009, he held the title of the stray that had lived the longest at the shelter.

According to ADL, the shelter is funded through adoption fees, bequests from individuals, donations, special events and grants.

In a letter to the community, executive director Janice Darling, thanked the public for its help through “gifts of time, money, resources and advocacy.”

“The thought that the love of an animal makes us more human, humane and compassionate and being part of a community of people who care is inspiring,” Darling said. “Some year, maybe in the not-too-distant future, our work may no longer be needed.”

But that time has yet to come, and Darling thanked San Antonio for supporting the “difficult but gratifying work.”

ADL spokesman Matt Elmore said the ADL is the state's oldest, continually running animal shelter. Walking the grounds, Elmore said they often change the building spaces to meet their needs. He pointed out a building that was configured to take in animals rescued from Houston shelters after Hurricane Harvey.

In the past several years, the campus has seen new buildings rise to better serve its occupants. In September



The Animal Defense League is funded through adoption fees, bequests from individuals, donations, special events and grants.



Veterinarian Robyn Barton gives Lola a dental cleaning at the ADL's state-of-the-art clinic.



Kaitlynn Pike plays with Poptart (top) and Anastasia in the cat room at the Animal Defense League of Texas.

2014, the nonprofit opened a 1,600-square-foot hospital addition that included 31 kennels, larger runs and more capacity to care for more ill and injured animals. Veterinarians at the state-of-the-art clinic perform an average of 40 surgeries each day and more than 100 sterilizations in a five-day week. That same year, two new kennels opened as the result of a partnership between ADL and the city. The \$2.2 million

facilities included a room with 18 kennels for up to 72 puppies.

Elmore said at the core of their work is an effort to solidify best practices and work in the best interest of their orphaned pets.

He said the shelter is one of Animal Care Services' rescue partners that pulls stray dogs from ACS six times a week to make more room in the city shelter and help decrease the stray dog population.

“Along with the other large animal organizations in the city, we're all working toward the same goal,” Elmore said, “to make San Antonio the largest no-kill city in the United States, and we are right there.”

ADL dog trainer Jamie Gibson said their focus is trying to re-home animals in the best homes possible.

“We're kind of like the bridge,” Gibson, 33, said, “between from where they came from to where they're going. While they're in our care, we're trying to make sure they're getting all of their needs met, physical, mental and emotional. Our main goal is to make sure we're the best caretakers while we find them their forever homes, and our volunteers are a big part of that.”

vtDavis@express-news.net

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

VOLUNTEER

Volunteer embraces mission of Animal Defense League of Texas

Susan Damos monitors, cares for dogs coming out of anesthesia



Photos by Edward A. Ornelas / San Antonio Express-News

A view of the Animal Defense League of Texas, where volunteers last year logged 15,629 hours helping with everything from fostering animals to walking dogs.

By Vincent T. Davis
STAFF WRITER

Every Tuesday and Thursday, across from a tangle of breathing tubes and heart monitors, dogs wake up from the deep sleep of anesthesia in the arms of Susan Damos.

Just inside the operating room at the Animal Defense League of Texas clinic, Damos monitors furry patients for signs of distress as a volunteer on the recovery room assistant team. Along with her friend Nancy Goodman, she comforts and checks the dogs after operations that include spay/neuter surgeries and dental work.

Sitting on a blue rug, she checks their heart beats, smoothing their fur with blue-gloved hands to help them wake from their groggy slumber. When their eyelids flutter open, her face is often the first thing they see before a veterinarian technician whisks them away to a kennel in the recovery room.

"I love the hospital," Damos, 63, said. "It's very rewarding if you like animals and want to volunteer. We're kind of the eyes for the techs."

Damos is one of more than 700 volunteers who work at ADL in a variety of jobs that include adoption center support, fosters, dog walkers, cat socialization, off-site adoption events and kennel support.

Last year, helpers logged 15,629 volunteer hours and 5,075 hours fostering animals. Information about volunteering at the shelter, located at 11300 Nacodoches Road, can be found at adltexas.org/volunteer/. ADL spokesman Matt Elmore said Damos and her fellow team members service allows the vet techs to perform other duties.

"It's great comfort for the dogs to wake up with someone by their side,"



Animal Defense League of Texas volunteer Susan Damos helps Muffin and Patrick recover after surgery.

he said. "It's amazing the things that they do and can do."

The no-kill shelter also has volunteer opportunities for a wide range of groups. In the service group program, businesses, clubs, students and youth organizations can help out with cleaning kennels, landscaping, painting and washing windows. Participants for this program must be 18 years of age or older. Children, who are 10 to 17 years of age can volunteer with an adult, guardian or teacher.

Youngsters can do their part and lend a hand with their parents through the Pet Champions program. Young volunteers of all ages can take part in educational programs and select programs.

Damos grew up in Houston where cats were always in the house. Currently, dogs are the pets at her home, including Willie, a Shar-Pei mix and



ADL's Matt Elmore says volunteers such as Susan Damos frees vet techs.

three Shepherds, Ryker, Gretchen and Charlie, adopted from a rescue shelter.

She began volunteering at the ADL clinic four and a half years ago. Her association with the shelter began in 2003, after her family adopted two cats, Luke and Princess, from the shelter. She

“It’s very rewarding if you like animals and want to volunteer.”

Volunteer Susan Damos

started at the front desk processing adoption applications.

Then she received an email for a class to train volunteers as recovery surgery assistants. She was in the first class of volunteers, 18 and older, who learned medical-related tasks such as how to check temperatures and monitor a dog's heart beat. Recovery room assistants also help prep and clean surgery instruments.

Her volunteer efforts extend beyond ADL and Texas. Each year, in February and October, she spends two weeks at the Best Friends Animal Society in Utah.

"It's either for you," she said, "or it's not."

Goodwin, a retired educator, has worked beside Damos in the clinic for the past few years. She said she's enjoyed volunteering with her friend at ADL that's always had a warm place in her heart.

"She's the greatest," Goodwin, 68, said. "We are perfect partners. Everyone here works real hard and it's all for the animals."

Near the end of a recent shift, Damos held Mancala, a chihuahua with light blond fur, as she recovered from a dental operation. She pulled a blanket over the small dog, snug in her lap. Damos crooked her head, with a contented look when she saw Mancala's eyes begin to flicker.

She rubbed the dog as it woke, beneath the shelter's logo, "We take them in — you take them home."

vtDavis@express-news.net

FALL INTO SAVINGS

LIMITED TIME!

18 MONTHS 0% INTEREST (WAC)

14 SEER - 16 SEER
complete equipment change out

STARTING AS LOW AS
\$2,998!



15 AND 16 SEER SYSTEMS QUALIFY FOR UP TO **\$800** CPS CREDIT

210-658-0440

COMPLETE HEATING & A/C SYSTEMS



TACLB00041917E
RMP38618

www.saspecialties.com

Offering 0% Interest Financing (WAC).



OFFER GOOD THRU 12/1/17


Proud to support the
Animal Defense League of San Antonio.

 ANIMAL DEFENSE LEAGUE
of TEXAS



FIND YOUR WALKING BUDDY,
CUDDLE BUG, AND BEST FRIEND AT
ONE OF OUR TWO LOCATIONS!



MAIN CAMPUS OF THE
ANIMAL DEFENSE LEAGUE
11300 Nacogdoches Rd.,
San Antonio, TX 78217

PAUL JOLLY CENTER
FOR PET ADOPTIONS
210 Tuleta Drive,
San Antonio, TX 78212

OPEN DAILY FROM 11AM - 7PM



SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

San Antonio Sports working to ‘tranform the community’

Making a difference in children’s lives part of organization’s mission



San Antonio Sports President and CEO Russ Bookbinder announces in November 2014 that San Antonio will host the 2018 NCAA Men’s Final Four.

“The backbone of large events are volunteers. Without that loyal group of people, we don’t exist.”
Russ Bookbinder, San Antonio Sports president and CEO

By Cody McCrary
STAFF WRITER

In March, the Alamo City will host its sixth men’s or women’s NCAA basketball Final Four at the Alamodome. The city, in large part, has San Antonio Sports to thank.

San Antonio Sports is a nonprofit organization working to “transform the community through the power of sport.”

In 1984, the organization was conceived by six men, including former San Antonio mayor Henry Cisneros, who saw how the Olympics had transformed Los Angeles.

The group, which met weekly over fried chicken, saw a similar possibility for the city of San Antonio.

And under the right guidance, it continued to blossom.

“It’s a really great story and I think one of the strengths of the organization has been the consistency of leadership over the years,” said Mary Ullman Japhet, the organization’s senior vice president of communications and community engagement.

The group’s first attempt to bring a large sporting event to San Antonio failed. A bid for the 1991 U.S. Olympic Festival was rejected due to the city’s lack of facilities.

That led Cisneros and his cohorts to devise the idea a domed stadium.

After much debate, a temporary sales-tax increase was approved in January 1989, making the construction of the Alamodome possible.

It also helped make San Antonio Sports’ plans become reality. The city was awarded the festival bid for 1993.

“That was a turning point for sport in San



Mary Ullmann Japhet, senior vice president of San Antonio Sports, talks to elementary students about the 2015 University Health System Go!Kids Challenge.



Henry Cisneros, then San Antonio mayor, was one of the six men who conceived San Antonio Sports in 1984.

Antonio,” Japhet said. “The entire community volunteered. It really put us on the map because all the national governing bodies knew about San Antonio and knew there was a really diligent, hard working group of people trying to bring stuff to (the city).”

Since the opening of the stadium in 1993, the city has hosted a variety of high-profile events, ranging from the annual Alamo Bowl, to high-interest boxing cards, NBA games and looking ahead to early next year, the Mexican National Soccer team.

San Antonio Sports also encourages part-

nerships that benefit the community, such as the opening of the Palo Alto College Natatorium and Wolff Stadium, home of the Double A San Antonio Missions.

Japhet said making a difference in children’s lives was also always a key component of the organization.

“Youth programming was always a part of the mission,” Japhet said. “It was not always a part of the reality, but those founders really wanted to make sure that while we attract big sporting events to the city for all of the benefits, such as economic development, media awareness and prestige in general, they wanted it to spill over to the kids in the community.”

Today, San Antonio Sports’ vision focuses on having healthy kids, places to play and events that have an impact.

At events such as the Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon, Fit Family Challenge and the Final Four, volunteers play an integral role.

“Our volunteers (are) essential to the core of our organization,” Japhet said. “It’s essential to the success of our youth programs, to the events that we host and honestly it’s one of our great strengths when we are competing nationally and internationally for events.”

Japhet said they will need 3,000 volunteers for both the Final Four and the marathon in December.

Russ Bookbinder, San Antonio Sports President and CEO, said the volunteers are everything.

“The backbone of large events are volunteers. Without that loyal group of people, we don’t exist,” he said.

cmccrary@express-news.
tmet
Twitter: @cody_mccrary

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

VOLUNTEER

S.A. Sports volunteer of the year stays active with organization

Motz, 75, has been lending assistance since 1995



Albert Motz, 75, loves to volunteer for San Antonio Sports. He stays in shape by running marathons.



Motz was recently named the 2017 San Antonio Sports Volunteer of the Year.

Courtesy photo

“When you are talking about good volunteers, you are talking about people that get it, they get responsibility, they get showing up on time and helping in any way they can. They are there to help and serve, and that’s Albert. He knows it all.”

Tony Benke, San Antonio Sports’ volunteer director

By Cody McCrary
STAFF WRITER

At 75, Albert Motz likes to stay active. He promotes a healthy lifestyle and is running a full marathon next month.

He also likes to volunteer for San Antonio Sports, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to “transform the community through the power of sport.”

Motz began volunteering for the organization in 1995 and said he does not know where the Alamo City athletic scene would be without it.

“(San Antonio Sports) has been instrumental in keeping San Antonio on the sports map, that’s for sure,” he said.

In fact, when it came to retaining the San Antonio Missions minor league baseball team, Motz said San Antonio Sports is to thank.

“We are fixing to have a Triple-A team and it’s all because of (San Antonio Sports),” Motz said. “They all just pitched together and got it done.”

In 1994, San Antonio Sports raised and contributed \$250,000 to help fund the city’s new minor-league ball park, Wolff Stadium, so the team could compete and meet modern standards.

“If it hadn’t been for (San Antonio Sports), I don’t know where we would be baseball-wise,” Motz said.

Motz said he volunteers with several organizations in the city, but plays a particularly large role for San Antonio Sports. He was recently named the 2017 San Antonio Sports Volunteer of the Year.

“I am just enjoying being a volunteer. I just sort of became a master volunteer,” he said.

During the Valero Alamo Bowl, Motz runs



Ron Cortes / For the Express-News

People get in line behind the San Antonio Spurs Coyote, who was the first volunteer to sign up for the Final Four at a rally Nov. 8. San Antonio Sports held the event on Main Plaza.



Darren Abate / For the Express-News

the media center. He said the organization will need significant help for the upcoming Rock ‘n’

Roll Marathon in December and again when the NCAA Men’s Final Four comes to town in March.

“I encourage people to volunteer and we are going to need all the volunteers we can get,”

he said.

Motz said he enjoys working with his fellow volunteers and that

The Corpus Christi Hooks and the San Antonio Missions play a Texas League Baseball game. San Antonio Sports raised and contributed \$250,000 to help fund the city’s minor-league ball park, Wolff Stadium, so the team could compete and meet modern standards.

keeping a positive attitude helps to inspire those he meets and works with along the way.

His work ethic doesn’t go unnoticed and leaves those in charge at San Antonio Sports begging for more.

“When you are talking about good volunteers, you are talking about people that get it, they get responsibility, they get showing up on time and helping in any way they can,” said Tony Benke, San Antonio Sports’ volunteer director.

“They are there to help and serve, and that’s Albert. He knows it all. They beg for him to come back every year.”

cmccrary@express-news.net
Twitter: @cody_mccrary

SAN ANTONIO
SYMPHONY

SEBASTIAN LANG-LESSING
TOBIN ENDOWMENT MUSIC DIRECTOR CHAIR

SAN ANTONIO SYMPHONY
IS YOUR SYMPHONY!

DONATE TODAY AT
SASYMPHONY.ORG

300
SAN ANTONIO

TRICENTENNIAL FESTIVAL

The Tricentennial Festival will feature Beethoven's Eroica, Ellington's The Three Black Kings, Elgar's Enigma Variations, and so much more.

ALL TRICENTENNIAL FESTIVAL
SHOWS ARE ON SALE NOW

TRICENTENNIAL
CELEBRATION
JANUARY 5 & 6, 2018

BEETHOVEN'S
EROICA
JANUARY 12, 13 & 14, 2018

ELGAR: ENIGMA
VARIATIONS
FEBRUARY 2 & 3, 2018

FAMILY
4-PACK

SAVE 25%
when you buy
4 tickets

SAN ANTONIO SYMPHONY
PRESENTS

Holiday
Pops

DECEMBER 15-17
FRI & SAT @ 8PM
SUN @ 2PM

ON SALE NOW

H-E-B

H-E-B POP SERIES 2017

Concert Sponsor Co-Sponsor

The St. Anthony Hotel Macy's

AKIKO FUJIMOTO, CONDUCTOR
ERIC SCHMIDT, TENOR
CHILDREN'S CHORUS OF SAN ANTONIO | RYAN GARRISON, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
TRINITY UNIVERSITY HANDBELL ENSEMBLE | DIANE PERSELLIN, DIRECTOR

SAN ANTONIO
SYMPHONY
SEBASTIAN LANG-LESSING
TOBIN ENDOWMENT MUSIC DIRECTOR CHAIR

Presented By
Frost

H-E-B PERFORMANCE HALL
AT THE TOBIN CENTER
100 AUDITORIUM CIRCLE
210.223.8624 | TOBINCENTER.ORG

Disney
TIM BURTON'S
THE
NIGHTMARE
BEFORE
CHRISTMAS

SAN ANTONIO SYMPHONY
DECEMBER 22 & 23, 2017

ON SALE NOW

SCORE PERFORMED LIVE-TO-FILM
AT THE MAJESTIC THEATRE
FRI. @ 7:30PM | SAT. @ 2:00PM & 7:30PM

PRESENTATION
LICENSED BY
Disney
CONCERTS

SASYMPHONY.ORG | 800.745.3000 | TICKETMASTER.COM

SAN ANTONIO
SYMPHONY
SEBASTIAN LANG-LESSING
TOBIN ENDOWMENT MUSIC DIRECTOR CHAIR

Presented By
Frost



Giving back to the places we call home is helping here.

That’s why we partner with over 6,500 local organizations to help make a difference.

For H-E-B, Helping Here is more than a statement. It’s a spirit of giving that goes all the way back to the day we opened our first store over 110 years ago.

Today, we’re proud to support initiatives like the H-E-B Food Bank Assistance Program, our annual Feast of Sharing holiday dinners and the H-E-B Mobile Kitchen that provides on-site relief in areas devastated by natural disasters.

Whether we’re honoring outstanding public school professionals or conserving our natural resources, we’re helping here to make a difference. It’s our way of saying thanks for allowing us to be your neighbor.

HUNGER RELIEF

EDUCATION

MILITARY APPRECIATION

DISASTER RELIEF

ENVIRONMENTAL

DIVERSITY

HEALTH & WELLNESS



SAN ANTONIO GIVES
CHARITY

Heart association works hard to improve health awareness

Educational programs encourage active lifestyles, better eating



Photos courtesy American Heart Association

Dolores Garcia, an American Heart Association health strategies associate, gives a talk during an elementary school career day event.

By Janelle Polcyn
STAFF WRITER

The American Heart Association is advocating a healthy city and healthy residents through their educational programs encouraging people to be physically active and eat healthy.

Patricia Atiee has been volunteering since 2007, primarily with an event aimed at educating women, but she steps in wherever help is needed. She started having heart issues when she was 24 years old.

“It could happen to anyone,” Atiee said. “It happened to me. Because of the (heart) surgery, I was able to lead more of a normal lifestyle. I consider it my second birthday. It gave me new life.”

Atiee said the connection to heart disease or strokes is a common vein with volunteers and staff — and a driving force in their passion. Now she is nearing retirement and thinking about volunteering full time with the association.

“We like each other, and we like what we are doing,” Atiee said. “If we can save even one person from heart disease or stroke, that’s another motivation. Maybe it hasn’t impacted you yet, but maybe it will, so we have to keep it fresh and keep it out there — current in the community.”

Atiee said the Viva Roja event educates women who might not otherwise be aware of the symptoms and risk of heart disease.

One reason that education is so important, Atiee says, is that “with women, the symptoms are different and manifest themselves in different ways.”

Women who have participated “realize how

“If we can save even one person from heart disease or stroke, that’s another motivation.”

Patricia Atiee, volunteer

important this is — how important they are.” Atiee said. “They realize they have to take care of themselves so they can take care of their families. A lot of mothers will take care of their families first.”

Heart disease is the No. 1 killer in the United States and strokes are No. 5, according to Medical News Today. But thanks to the heart association’s efforts locally and nationally, strokes have come down in recent years from No. 4, said Joseph Marks, the local communications director.

“The goal is to make heart disease not No. 1,” Marks said. “What people don’t realize is heart disease and stroke cause more deaths together than all cancers.”

Marks said the association does two big things for the community: fundraising and community outreach. That makes donations and volunteers two of the association’s biggest needs.

“That’s not fundraising for the sake of fundraising,” Marks said. “We raise money to fund research in the community.”

The money raised goes into a pool of money nationally then is redistributed to the local entities. San Antonio heart health research received \$2 million last



American Heart Association

Marsha, Tanner, and Jackson Mudge are shown in this undated photo provided by the American Heart Association. Mudge’s husband, John, had a heart attack and died at New Braunfels High School where he was a coach. The American Heart Association said it has donated equipment to the high school in his memory.

year that went to research universities including the UT Health at San Antonio.

“It makes a direct impact on the people who live here,” Marks said. “The research done here is used basically immediately.”

This spring, for example, a heart disease survivor in San Antonio received a stent that was developed in San Antonio two years ago.

The association does

community outreach events every week — from the While Living program geared to the senior population to wellness programs for companies to providing CPR education materials and equipment in high schools.

“Education is the focus,” Marks said. “We have a team that is out there every day. The organization relies very heavily on volunteer input. It’s not just people

in an office making decisions; it’s voices from the community.”

But it takes manpower. Marks said there is a place for anyone who wants to volunteer, from doing day-to-day tasks in the office to helping with big one-time events or smaller weekly events.

“While the mission has never changed, the tactics have changed and focus changes,” Marks said. “The goal of this organization is to reduce

cardiovascular disease and stroke in the community. It’s very simple, but it’s huge.”

Sarah Mohmedali is the community impact director at the association. She spends most of her time in the community at events large and small. When she first started, she was working with a program focused on checking blood pressure.

“Most people don’t know they have high blood pressure until they start the program,” Mohmedali said. “We are educating as many people as possible about checking blood pressure. Be proactive — don’t wait for a doctor’s visit. I don’t want to sound generic, and yet the goal is education, awareness and knowing the symptoms.”

It’s a program that helped her mother.

While working on the program, Mohmedali would bring her equipment home — and found out her mother had high blood pressure, a discovery that may have saved her mother’s life.

“We are creating an awareness for people who have no idea this impacts the community,” Mohmedali said.

Association staff and volunteers take an issue that people don’t necessarily feel comfortable with and get them to talk about it and take action to improve their heart health.

“I see it in their faces and their smiles at the event that this is maybe something that people don’t want to talk about, but they realize it’s important,” Atiee said. “Maybe one thing they heard may save themselves or their family member.” It’s about “just knowing that I’m helping.”

Jpolcyn@express-news.net





Having partners like Mannington Mills, that produce flooring that is both beautiful and durable, is just one of the reasons Atlas Floors Carpet One has been making homes beautiful since 1948!

MANNINGTON
RESIDENTIAL
mannington.com | 1.800.356.6787
©Floor Designs Copyrighted by Mannington Mills, Inc. ©©Mannington Mills, Inc. 2014

ATLAS FLOORS  CARPET ONE
10242 W. Loop 1604 N., San Antonio, TX 78254 - (210) 298-5006
17100 San Pedro Ave., San Antonio, TX 78232 - (210) 496-5006
www.atlasfloors.com

IN SUPPORT OF

OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY





OUR GRADUATES LEAD

SAN ANTONIO • HOUSTON • RIO GRANDE VALLEY
EVENINGS • WEEKENDS • ONLINE

OLLU offers graduate degrees that prepare you to lead in your organization, career field and community.

MASTER’S PROGRAMS

Accounting
Business – MBA
Communication and Learning
Disorders
Education
English - MA/MFA

Information Systems and
Security
Organizational Leadership
Nonprofit Management
Psychology
Social Work
Sociology

DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

Counseling Psychology
Leadership Studies



**OUR LADY OF THE LAKE
UNIVERSITY**

HIGHER EDUCATION. HIGHER PURPOSE.

SAN ANTONIO – 210-431-3995 • graduateadmissions@ollusa.edu | HOUSTON – 936-273-7628 • houston@ollusa.edu
RIO GRANDE VALLEY – 956-277-0146 • rgv@ollusa.edu

SAN ANTONIO GIVES
VOLUNTEER

CPA shares her expertise with Habitat, its families

Her financial, organizational skills help put families in homes



Photos by Alma E. Hernandez / For the Express-News

The homes that Habitat for Humanity builds — such as these — help improve San Antonio’s neighborhoods, says Teresa James, vice chair of the local charity.

By Richard Webner
STAFF WRITER

Teresa James has always been interested in helping people, and she found a way to do so eight years ago when she started volunteering for Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio.

James, who serves as vice chair on the charity’s board of directors, uses her skills as a certified public accountant to help manage its books.

She also serves as a cheerleader for the charity, touting its accomplishments at events and connecting it with volunteers, said Stephanie Wiese, vice president for Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio.

“Teresa is always available,” Wiese said. “She has been an ever-present as part of our organization.”

Last month, James helped find about 200 members of her church, the Community Bible Church on the Northeast Side, who want to volunteer for Habitat.

The church often sends its members on charity trips overseas, James said, leading her to ask herself why they couldn’t do more work in their hometown.

During her time with the charity, James also has helped arrange events in which her co-workers volunteer for Habitat — she is a senior vice president and controller at the RL Worth & Associates commercial real estate firm.

James said she enjoys the satisfaction of seeing a family move into their first home, setting them on a path of financial stability.

“I get to see the home, I get to see the homeowner, I get to see the children, I get to see the dogs coming into the yard and know that they’re moving out of a bad situation, and they’re moving into homeownership. That’s why I help Habitat,” she said.

“I’m also financially minded, and they’re not throwing money away in rent anymore. ... They’re building their own equity into a house.”

The homes that Habitat builds help improve



James helps build homes a few times a year, and she is on Habitat for Humanity’s finance committee. She also connects the group with volunteers.



Vice President Stephanie Wiese shows a Humanity San Antonio model home. All money donated to the charity is used for homebuilding, she says.

San Antonio’s neighborhoods, James and Wiese said. Sometimes, Habitat tears down va-

cant, deteriorating apartment complexes to replace them with homes, they said.

Another accomplishment for James is helping to arrange what the charity calls “Joshua

“I get to see the home, I get to see the homeowner, I get to see the children, I get to see the dogs coming into the yard and know that they’re moving out of a bad situation, and they’re moving into homeownership.”

Teresa James, volunteer

Builds” — events in which groups get together to build the walls of a new home, which are then shipped to a construction site. The events serve as a fundraising opportunity for the charity.

James comes out to help build homes a few times a year, she and Wiese said. She is on the charity’s finance committee and in the past she has served as its treasurer.

The cost of housing is a growing issue in San Antonio — about 153,000 families in the local area are in need of affordable housing, Wiese said.

Earlier this year, Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio completed its 1,000th home, Wiese said.

Since it was founded in 1976, the local Habitat for Humanity has built enough dwellings to house at least 3,578 individuals, according to documents from the charity.

It now has 97 full-time, part-time and seasonal employees. The charity is expected to build 47 homes this year.

All money donated is used for homebuilding, Wiese said. The charity covers its operating expenses by selling merchandise through the three Habitat Home Center stores it operates in San Antonio. It keeps the costs of its home down by using volunteers — about 13,500 people volunteered for the organization last year.

Habitat’s homes, which cost about \$80,000 to construct, are built according to LEED standards, which means they are at least 15 percent more energy efficient than the average new home, according to documents from the charity. The homes also are designed to be acces-

sible for people with disabilities.

The charity provides housing to low-income families who make between 20 percent and 70 percent of the local media income.

The families don’t get the home for free — they pay a roughly \$1,300 down payment and an average of \$550 a month for their mortgage, which carries zero interest and typically takes 20 to 25 years to pay off, according to the charity.

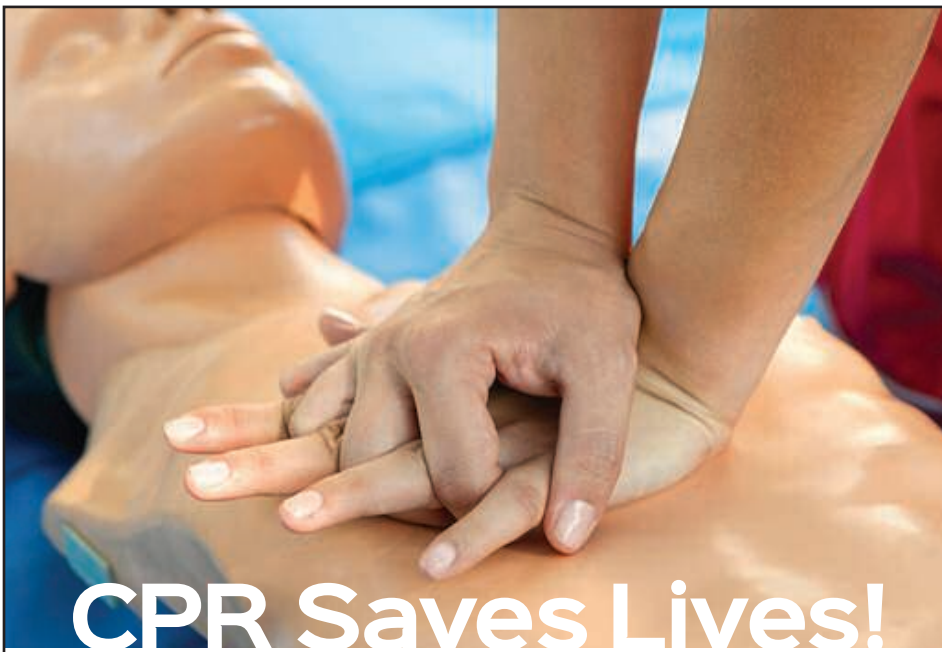
In addition, the families are required to spend 300 hours volunteering for the charity, helping build their home or the homes of others; the charity calls this “sweat equity.” They also spend between 15 and 22 hours in classes learning how to maintain a home and manage their money.

James, who lives on the North Side with her husband of 26 years, has been a San Antonio resident for nearly three decades after spending most of her childhood in Houston. Her hobbies are spending time outdoors — she likes to go on hikes in the Ozarks — and going to University of Texas at San Antonio football games. She has a 22-year-old daughter who is attending college in Dallas.

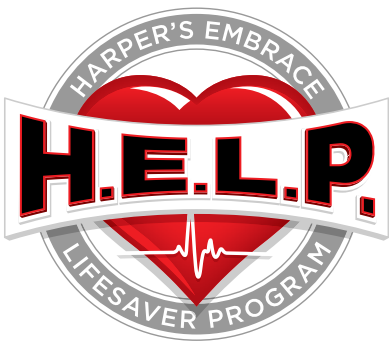
James recalled one of the most heartwarming experiences of her time as a volunteer. A man who would soon be getting a new home from Habitat showed her photographs of his boys. She assured him that his family would be in the home by Christmas.

“That was a beautiful thing, for me to realize that was what was going to happen,” she said. “He was going to get his own place with his boys.”

rwebner@express-news.net
@rwebner



CPR Saves Lives!



Since 2003, Harper's Embrace Lifesaver Program (HELP) has offered FREE CPR CLASSES to adults and children throughout South Texas. With the generous support of donors, staff and community volunteers, hundreds of people

have learned critical, educational and life-saving techniques. **And they need your support!**

Did you know?

- Over 1.5 million heart attacks occur each year.
- Drowning and choking are some of the leading causes of death in children.
- 88% of the nearly 383,000 out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrests that happen each year, take place at home.*
- CPR is not just for heart attacks – each year, over 7 million adults and children suffer disabling injuries as a result of accidents that may require CPR.*

* American Heart Association

Get involved!

HarpersEmbrace.org • 210-804-4357



Outstanding Service, Every Patient, Every Time.

- 17 Locations — San Antonio, Boerne & New Braunfels
- Premier, Board-Certified Primary Care Physicians
- Personalized Patient Portal Access
- Saturday Appointments Available
- Most Insurance Plans Accepted
- Texas Super Doctors!



HealthTexas.org • 210-731-4864



Your gift allows families to see a bright future.



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul of San Antonio, established locally in 1871, works collaboratively in the community to provide assistance and hope to those in need.

As a Catholic lay organization, SVDP:

Offers financial assistance for utility bills, rent and medication to low-income individuals – and support for long-term stability

Offers person-to-person services to lead people to grow spiritually

Since 1974, has addressed the light of San Antonio's homeless and working poor – originally at SAMM Ministries, now in the Courtyard at Haven for Hope

60 Catholic parish-based locations to provide assistance and hope to those in need

Learn how you can help SVDP bring hope to the needy and suffering in our community!
<https://www.svdpsa.org> • (210) 225-7837






WORKING TOWARD A
Brighter Tomorrow!

NuStar has worldwide operations, but we're proud to call San Antonio home! As part of our commitment to giving back, we're proud to support local organizations making a difference for others.



www.nustarenergy.com






HOMELESS

Help Us Continue Breaking The Cycle of Homelessness for Men, Women and Children!

Haven for Hope is a place of hope and new beginnings and we are at the forefront of providing transformational, life-saving services to the homeless. Every day, Haven for Hope serves over 1,500 individuals who are experiencing homelessness for many different reasons. Despite their circumstances, we see in them the hope of transforming their lives from homelessness to one of stability and self-sufficiency. And thanks to the amazing efforts of our staff, our 143 partner agencies, and our generous donors, we've helped over 10,000 individuals move from homelessness to permanent or supportive housing since we began operations in 2010!

To donate, visit havenforhope.org/give



A Place of Hope and New Beginnings





VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Ages 14 & Up Welcome!

Help Us
#BuildforBetter
No Experience or
Tools Necessary

Contact us today
to sign up!

www.HabitatSA.org
(210) 223-5203



SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

CASA offers continuity to kids

Abused/neglected children gain an advocate through program

By Jasper Scherer
STAFF WRITER

When advocate Robin Howard took the two oldest of her three boys, ages 2, 5 and 9, to get ice cream at the Rivercenter mall, one of the children's eyes grew wide.

"Ms. Robin?" he said. "Is this a mall?"

The boys aren't Robin's biological children; she's one of more than 800 volunteers at Child Advocates San Antonio, or CASA, an organization that looks after kids who have been temporarily removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect — or both.

"We exist to be their guide through that whole system, whether it's with (Child Protective Services), their school or their public defender," said Kevin Moore, president of CASA's board of governors.

The volunteers' range of functions fall under a single mandate: Provide a source of constancy to Bexar County kids whose lives are full of moving parts, from changing homes to alternating CPS workers assigned to their cases.

Howard has looked after the three boys, whose names were kept confidential under CASA policy, for almost two years.

During that time, she's discovered how many ordinary activities the kids had never experienced. When she first took them to Pizza Hut



Jerry Lara / San Antonio Express-News

CASA President and CEO Marina J. Gonzales answers questions recently during a staff meeting.

last year, it was the first time in their life they'd eaten out. Even activities like their recent night of trick-or-treating can feel monumental.

The volunteers at CASA spend time with children about once a week, taking them to places like parks and restaurants, while getting to know the kids across a span of a year or more. Every few months, they provide detailed reports to the Bexar County Children's Court, helping judges decide who should permanently care for the kids.

"We're objective information gatherers, with an emphasis on getting to know the child to recommend the best needs," said Marina Gonzales, CASA president and chief executive.

The volunteers tend to notice things others don't

“We’re objective information gatherers, with an emphasis on getting to know the child.”

Marina Gonzales, CASA president and chief executive

— unmet health care needs, for instance — because they're the only people who stick with the kids throughout the CPS process, Howard said.

"It's a terrible situation for anyone involved when a child is removed from their family," Moore said. "I think about it from the child's perspective: They're confused, they're shuffled from foster home to foster home. They may have to move schools and end up in court — all these things a child should never have to experience."

Overseeing the volunteers are a team of advocate supervisors, full-time employees at CASA's

office on San Pedro Avenue north of downtown. The supervisors help volunteers write court reports, which supervisor Nikole Spencer said can be "overwhelming and intimidating" for the volunteers.

The advocate supervisor's role boils down to supporting the volunteers in any way they need, Spencer said.

At the top, Gonzales oversees a staff of roughly 40. A 16-person board of governors helps with the organization's strategy and fundraising, while a separate advisory board of directors works to raise CASA's profile in the community at large.

CASA's San Antonio chapter operates under the state organization, which is part of a broader national CASA organization that started in 1977. San Antonio's child advocacy chapter was founded seven years later.

The profile of the organization's employees and volunteers is vast and diverse, Gonzales said. Some have links to child abuse or neglect themselves, either personally or through friends and family. Others are former teachers or social workers, people who didn't want to stop working with kids when they retired.

Meanwhile, the organi-

zation stays afloat through multiple funding streams, from corporate sponsors and private foundations to individual donors. CASA's expenses for the 2016 fiscal year totaled about \$3.4 million, most of which went toward paying for its programs. Other funding paid for community outreach and various support services.

The organization has grown rapidly during the past decade or so, with a more than threefold increase in active volunteers since 2006. Its growth has far outpaced the national and state rates, according to data from the 2016 annual report.

But CASA still serves less than 60 percent of eligible cases in Bexar County that go before a judge, Gonzales said.

To reach 100 percent, CASA would need about 1,500 volunteers, Gonzales said, nearly double the current total. Moore estimates CASA would need to roughly double its operating revenue to get there.

Even if the organization could find 700 more advocates, it would have to spend about \$1,000 to train each volunteer, Moore said. CASA would also have to hire additional supervisors to oversee the volunteers.

This year, the organization set a goal of serving 2,900 kids and increasing to 900 active volunteers. They reached 2,500 kids last year.

"It's hard to imagine a more powerful impact on a child's life," Moore said.

jscherer@express-news.net

VOLUNTEER

CASA volunteer saw a need

Retiree calls current job as an advocate most important

By Elizabeth Zavala
STAFF WRITER

Leslie Abbott is retired, but the Texas transplant makes no qualms about her current job, which she says is one of the most important things she's ever done. Abbott, 64, is a volunteer, a child advocate for CASA.

Child Advocates San Antonio was founded in 1984 to serve children in Bexar County. It is one of more than 900 local programs in 50 states connected with the national association, Court Appointed Special Advocates, which was founded in Seattle in 1977, according to CASA's website.

Although the names of each local program can vary, the mission is the same: to recruit, train and supervise court-appointed volunteer advocates who provide constancy for abused and neglected children and youth while advocating for services and placement in safe and permanent homes.

Abbott said she grew up "in the military," and lived in several places. She worked for the U.S. Air Force and spent 33 years as a program manager. She said it was "great" to come back to San Antonio when she returned.

Once she retired, she said she wanted to look for something to do as a volunteer, but not just anything. She wanted to make a difference, doing something that helped others.

She thought of work-



Alma E. Hernandez / For the Express-News

Interim Program Director Allison Martinez (left) joins seven-year CASA volunteer Leslie Abbott at the CASA offices.

ing with children.

In October, Abbott began her seventh year as a "CASA," as agency officials call their advocates.

"I wanted to look into volunteer work to give back to the community, and when I did research on CASA, it appeared, among all the other organizations (researched), that the need was so great for volunteers to be assigned" for the children, she said. So she chose CASA.

Seven years ago, when Abbott made her commitment to the agency, the number of volunteers — or advocates — was around 400. That number has grown, as the agency counted 826 active volunteers in 2016. And they want more, said interim program director Allison Martinez.

"That's the most we've ever served in nearly 34 years," said Martinez.

"Our goal is to grow each year and serve every child."

Martinez and Abbott agree that goal is daunting, but worthy, because of the people served — children.

"We are chasing a statistic that continues to grow," said Martinez, of the increasing number of children who are thrust into the Child Protective Services system because of abuse and neglect.

In her role as an advocate for each case she represents, Abbott provides a familiar face and emotional support for children who have been through the trauma of being taken away from their home.

"As bad as it's been for the kids, they have been removed from their parents, and sometimes they have been split from their siblings," she said.

As an advocate, Abbott works with CPS case-

workers and reaches out to a family member who is part of the child's support system. Once she gets a case, she will visit the child or children assigned, either in a shelter or with a foster family, once a month. Abbott also keeps up with the parents and the particular services they are required to complete.

"We stay in contact with parents who are on a service plan, such as drug, alcohol counseling," she said.

Because consistency is key to working with children, CASA asks advocates to commit to a minimum of one year and complete new volunteer training.

Once accepted and trained, advocates are required to learn all about the particular case and circumstances, visit children at least monthly and maintain confidentiality on what they learn

CASA by the numbers

8: Children with a CASA volunteer find a safe, permanent home eight months faster than children without advocates.

95: Percentage of children specifically impacted by their CASA advocate above and beyond what their attorney or caseworker is able to provide.

32,859: The number of hours donated last year by dedicated CASA volunteers to improve the lives of abused and neglected children in the Bexar County community.

78: In a random sampling of 50 children with CASA advocates, 78 percent measured improvement in their grades.

Child Advocates of San Antonio

about the child and family.

"I try to give it a month (for the child) in therapy, and I contact schools, teachers and counselors to understand the issues, and keep track of them," Abbott said.

Once the time is right, Abbott said she will take the child or children to meet with their parents to see how they respond to each other, and watch the relationship evolve.

The organization requires potential volunteer advocates to be at least 21, have a valid Texas drivers license, a vehicle and be able to provide proof of insurance; and pass complete criminal and CPS background checks.

CASA does not require previous experience or particular educational requirements. They provide all the training an

advocate could need.

State District Judge Peter Sakai, who presides over the 225th state District Court and is in charge of the Bexar County Children's Court division and programs, works closely with CASA advocates.

"I consider them to be angels of God that help bless these children and keep them safe and secure," he said.

Sakai said the role of a CASA advocate is to be the "eyes and ears" of the court, but they provide "much more" than that.

"They can serve as a mentor, big brother, big sister," he said.

Sometimes, Sakai said, advocates must give their opinion to the court as to what should happen to the children in their care.

"Judges appreciate their candor and their professionalism, and their personal evaluations of the case."

Abbott has unofficially continued to watch over her first case, a young man who now has aged out of the system. She is trying to reunite him with his father, who lives in another state.

"This young man has been in the system for 10 years," she said. Slowly, though, she is working with him to make sure he can see his dad.

When asked what she would tell others contemplating becoming a child advocate, Abbott's answer was swift.

"You start thinking about your own kids," she said. "Then, you think, 'If not me, who?' That's what keeps me in it."

ezavala@express-news.net

SERVING OUR MEMBERS. SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY. IT'S WHAT WE BRING TO THE TABLE.

For 65 years, Air Force Federal Credit Union has taken great pride in being a valuable resource for our members and to our community. Whether we are providing educational resources, financial support or giving a helping hand to non-profit organizations like the San Antonio Food Bank—we are here to help.



The San Antonio Food Bank helps people not only with food assistance, but with job placement, benefits assistance, nutrition wellness, health wellness and other programs.



support the San Antonio Food Bank so that they can continue to be the positive impact this community needs.
Be the vote that matters. www.expressnews.com/vote



H PE FOR THE HUNGRY

**Inspire hope in the hearts of the hungry.
Help us set the holiday table for our neighbors in need.**

In our community where one in four children and one in five adults struggle with hunger, many families simply do not have the resources to provide a holiday meal for their loved ones.



Designate your Express-News Million Dollar Charity Giveaway Voucher to the San Antonio Food Bank.

Your holiday gift will make an impact in the lives of more than 58,000 individuals we serve each week.



FILL THE PLATE. GIVE HOPE!

**Your food and monetary donations make a difference.
Visit www.safoodbank.org to learn more.**



SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

Assistance League programs impact felt throughout city

Low-income students helped with clothes, safety, activity fees



Alma E. Hernandez / For the Express News

The Assistance League of San Antonio Thrift House on West Avenue where low-income Title 1 schools are bused to shop for two complete outfits.

By **Guillermo Contreras**
STAFF WRITER

A building with a sign “AL Thrift House” sits tucked between a strip mall and an auto shop along West

“We really try to make a positive impact in San Antonio.”
Kay Murrell, volunteer

Avenue, but it’s not just a shopper’s emporium.

Like the sign says, there is a thrift store, but it’s also the headquarters

of the nonprofit Assistance League of San Antonio, where roughly 440 volunteers help administer 10 philanthropic pro-

grams that work with schools, governmental agencies and nongovernmental groups to help children and adults in

San Antonio, according to Catherine Campion, vice president of marketing communications for the Assistance League of San

Antonio.

The 30-year-old Assistance League of San Antonio is one of more than 120 nationwide and one of 10 in Texas. It is 100-percent volunteer-based, which keeps overhead down, Campion said.

League continues on T50



ROOFING | LeafGuard® | WINDOWS | INSULATION | SIDING



ROOFING EXPERTS!

TILE Roofs | **SHINGLE** Roofs | **METAL** Roofs | **FLAT** Roofs

Attic Insulation & Radiant Heat Barrier

FOUR GENERATION FAMILY BUSINESS

Call Today for a FREE Estimate!

beldon.com (210) 640-3140



To Learn More Visit:
RebuildingSutherlandSprings.com

Hi, my name is José.
I am 6 years old. I am your neighbor. **I am deaf.**

I can't hear my family, friends or teachers.

I want to communicate with people.

Help me feel included.

aidthesilent

Aid the Silent is a local nonprofit that helps deaf and hard-of-hearing children and teens receive equal access to opportunity by providing financial assistance to enhance communication methods; gain access to education resources; and to grow socially, educationally and spiritually.

With your help we can **make a difference in Jose's life** by providing hearing aids. To help go to **aidthesilent.com**

aidthesilent

helps deaf & hard-of-hearing children, their families and their educators receive financial assistance **by funding:**

Deaf Resources

- Hearing aids
- Assistive hearing devices (FM systems)
- American Sign Language lessons
- Speech therapy

Deaf Education

- Fieldtrips and accommodations for Deaf/HOH accessibility
- Assist educators with classroom accommodations, supplies, technology
- Assist educators with costs to enrichment conferences, training and workshops
- One-on-one tutoring for kids in after-school care

Deaf Ministry

- Bring awareness of Deaf/HOH accommodation needs to churches/ministries
- Application fees for children to attend Deaf/HOH accessible faith-based camps
- Deaf/HOH accessibility for a camp
- Support outreach initiatives to bring the Bible to the Deaf Community
- Provide mentors to Deaf/HOH students

[aidthesilent](http://aidthesilent.com) [@aidthesilent](https://www.facebook.com/aidthesilent) [aidthesilent](https://www.instagram.com/aidthesilent)

apply today! aidthesilent.com

SHOOT FOR THE STARS AND BECOME FIESTA ROYALTY

Fundraising ends
February 22, 2018

Put your paws in to raise funds and become an ambassador for the San Antonio Humane Society's pets!
SAhumane.org/ERF



Olivia Stein
2017 El Rey Fido
Official El Rey Fido portraits by
Renee Spade Photography

Sponsored by **beldon**
SINCE 1946

SAN ANTONIO GIVES



Photos by Alma E. Hernandez / For the Express News

Margaret Atkinson (left) and Susan Smith sew clothing for infants as part of the Togs for Tots program at The Assistance League of San Antonio.

LEAGUE

From page T49

From June 2016 through May 2017, the Assistance League and its auxiliary, Bexar Hugs, had a positive effect on the lives of more than 61,000 children and adults in San Antonio, according to Campion.

The Assistance League's flagship program is Operation School Bell, which helps kindergarten through fifth-grade students from low-income Title 1 schools. The students are bused to the building, at 2611 West Ave., to "shop" for two new, complete head-to-toe outfits. Last year, the program provided 4,548 children with new clothes or school uniforms, shoe vouchers, books and a personal safety booklet.

Campion said another 5,672 children were served through Togs for Tots, a program that clothes newborns to children 4 years of age. Members also sewed more than 600 gowns for the newborns.

Through Watch Me Grow, the Assistance League had a positive effect on 33,709 children and adults with a booklet in English and Spanish designed to help parents understand children's developmental stages.

Members also delivered a personal safety program called I'm In Charge to 10,177 children from kindergarten through fifth grade. It provides information on things such as dealing with cyberbullying, according to Campion and Murrell.

The Assistance League provided scholarships to five junior and senior college students in Bexar County last year. Members decorated 2,056 fishing and ball caps for acutely ill patients — children and adults — through its CAPS program. Adopt A Resident served 124 senior citizens at a local nursing home. And, through the Bexar Hugs Auxiliary, the Alamo Bears program provided 500 stuffed bears to children in the court system and Alamo Totes provided 480 duffel bags filled with personal care items and toys to children in shelters.

The Assistance League also has the Enhanced Learning Awards, which provide supplements to local teachers to help cover the costs of activities and projects — such as a large whiteboard for the classroom, an educational field trip or a sci-



Assistance League volunteer Kathleen Pigott helps a child find the right sizing for pants as part of Operation School Bell.



Assistance League volunteer Sally Tietz helps a child pick out clothes as part of Operation School Bell.



Mary Jane Weiss holds up an outfit made for Togs for Tots, which provides clothes for newborns to children 4 years of age.

“We have a program that impacts almost every area in the San Antonio community.”

Kay Murrell, volunteer

ence fair, for example.

“We have a program that impacts almost every area in the San Antonio community,” said Kay Murrell, one of the volunteers. “We really try to make a positive impact in San Antonio.”

About half of the Assistance League's funding comes from sales at its Thrift House, at 2611 West Ave., Campion said. The Thrift House takes donations of clothes, house-

hold items, books, jewelry and artwork.

The organization also gets grants and contributions from businesses, foundations, and benefactors. The Assistance League also conducts fundraisers and takes monetary donations from the public.

The Assistance League's primary fundraiser is its annual Lit 'n Lunch, which is also an SA300 event and will be

held Jan. 31, 2018, at the Witte Museum Mays Family Center. The keynote speaker is June Scobee Rodgers, widow of Challenger Commander Dick Scobee and founder of the Challenger Centers — one which is located at San Antonio College. At this event, the Assistance League will also recognize a Harlandale ISD high school student with the Rising Star Award for

literary achievement.

“Assistance League of San Antonio members proudly serve the San Antonio area community with enthusiasm, commitment, and a loving spirit,” Campion said. “In addition to volunteering for the philanthropic programs, which is really the heart of our organization, our members volunteer in the Thrift Store — packing up estate sales,

taking in donations, sorting and marking items for sale, stocking the shelves, and serving store customers. Our members also volunteer their time and talents to making each of our fundraisers successful events. They do these things because they know that it is through this work that Assistance League of San Antonio is truly transforming lives and strengthening community.”

For more information, visit www.assistanceleague.org/san-antonio or call 210-732-1200.

gcontreras@express-news.net
| Twitter: @gmaninfedland

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

Meals on Wheels arrive with a smile and a hug

Nonprofit founded 40 years ago helps keep elderly out of institutions



Photos by Bob Owen / San Antonio Express-News

Brad Buchhorn, a Valero employee who volunteers for Meals on Wheels, places a meal on the table for Louisa Pledger, 90, in her home..

By Carmina Danini
FOR THE EXPRESS-NEWS

A staff sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps Women's Reserve during World War II, Louisa Pledger was known as "Sgt. Sunshine" because she's the one who distributed the pay envelopes to Marines who were patients at the Naval Hospital San Diego in Balboa Park.

Widowed after nearly 50 years of marriage, she fell and broke a shoulder and a hip 10 years ago. She uses a walker to get around but at age 90, Pledger retains a sharp mind, great memory and a chipper attitude.

A client of Meals on Wheels, she likes the food and enjoys visits from the volunteers, most of them employees of Valero Energy Corporation.

Before they leave, Pledger, a native of Ohio, gives the men a hug; the women receive a peck on the cheek.

"I really am very blessed because they (volunteers) have become like family," she said. "One of the volunteers even brought his wife to meet me."

Pledger, who was with the Ohio Wing of the Civil Air Patrol in the early days of World War II before joining the Women's Reserve, is the typical client of Meals on Wheels — homebound, elderly and with no family nearby.

Like her, many live alone, are either widowed, divorced or single. Some have family or friends nearby; others have no one. The majority are women; fewer recipients are couples.

In Texas, 20 percent of all seniors are at risk of hunger, notes the advocacy group Meals on Wheels Texas, making this the "sixth highest rate of senior hunger in the nation."

Another sobering statistic is that compared to



Buchhorn visits with Pledger after delivering her meal. Pledger was a staff sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps Women's Reserve during World War II and worked at Naval Hospital San Diego.

only 6 percent of the total population in the United States, nearly 40 percent of Meals on Wheels recipients in Texas need assistance with one or more of the activities of normal daily living, "making them more at risk for institutionalization."

Receiving a meal they don't have to prepare and seeing people every day helps keep seniors independent and living in their own homes, said Vinsin Faris, chief executive officer of Meals on Wheels San Antonio.

"We always say we're part of the solution, not part of the problem, because Meals on Wheels reduces malnutrition, hospital stays and a person's feelings of loneliness and isolation," said Faris, who came to San Antonio last year after 28 years as executive director of Meals on Wheels of Johnson and Ellis Coun-

"I really am very blessed because they (volunteers) have become like family."

Louisa Pledger, Meals on Wheels client

ties in North Central Texas.

Meals on Wheels San Antonio is one of several programs operated by Christian Senior Services, a nonprofit organization founded in 1977 as a joint project between St. John's Lutheran Church and Grace Lutheran Church, both located downtown.

In those days, meals were delivered daily to eight homebound seniors. A small adult day care center, Grace Place, was established for five seniors.

Home meal delivery to seniors began in 1980 with only 40 volunteers. That year, 3,664 meals prepared in the kitchen at

St. John's Lutheran Church were delivered, according to CSS history.

By 1996, Meals on Wheels was preparing 1,200 meals daily but the kitchen at St. John's, founded in 1857 and at one time the largest Lutheran church in Texas, was too small for the task.

Needing to move, CSS purchased a former Wyatt's cafeteria at Loop 410 and Babcock Road. It is now home to the nonprofit's headquarters as well as a kitchen where all the Meals on Wheels meals are prepared by a small, dedicated staff.

Four decades later, in addition to Meals on

Wheels, CSS continues to serve people older than 55 with several Grace Place Alzheimer's Activity Centers, a Senior Companion Program and an Elder Friends Program.

It also operates Ani-Meals, which provides pet food to seniors who receive Meals on Wheels and own pets.

Pet food is delivered once a month, usually on a Saturday or Sunday by people who cannot volunteer during the week.

"This has been great in that we have been able to not only expand our Meals on Wheels volunteer family, but also give our clients another opportunity to have someone check in on them," Faris said in an email.

Faris said in the past three months, they've seen an increase in the number of people applying to Meals on Wheels. Residents on the city's South and West sides

Facts and figures

Number of people served daily in Bexar: Nearly 4,000

Number of meals served in 2017: More than 1 million

Number of volunteers who deliver meals: Between 160 and 200

Cost per meal: \$5.25

Areas with greatest need: South and West sides

Source: Meals on Wheels San Antonio

have the greatest need, according to the agency.

Referrals are received from doctors' offices, from churches, from hospitals when a patient is discharged, and from friends or neighbors.

At times there is a waiting list, but it doesn't take long to join the Meals on Wheels client list after a person is seen and assessed.

Recipients are not charged for meals, which each cost about \$5. Some clients, though, donate to Meals on Wheels what they can afford.

"It could be a token donation of \$5 a month," said Faris. "People feel like they're doing their part."

The program receives funds from the federal government, state aid and private donations.

Because 40 years after its inception, many people still don't know what Meals on Wheels does, elected officials, including the mayors of smaller communities, have been invited to join volunteers in dropping off food on Thanksgiving Day.

Only about 3,000 meals will be delivered on the holiday because many other clients will spend the day with family or friends.

Christmas Day is the only holiday where no deliveries are made. The program works with H-E-B so that the Christmas meal is delivered to clients a few days before the holiday.



**Ronald McDonald
House Charities®**
San Antonio

Keeping families close™

We provide a safe and caring environment where families of critically and injured children and their families reside while receiving treatment at nearby medical facilities. Additionally, our Family Rooms in Laredo, Texas provide a respite for families of hospitalized children.



Ronald McDonald House is a not-for-profit supported through generous donations. Your gift is 100% tax deductible.

How you can help:

- Monetary donations
- In-kind contributions
- Volunteer opportunities

Contact us at (210) 614-2554 or visit us at
www.rmhcsanantonio.org

Dillard's



GIVE HOPE FOR JUST \$10.

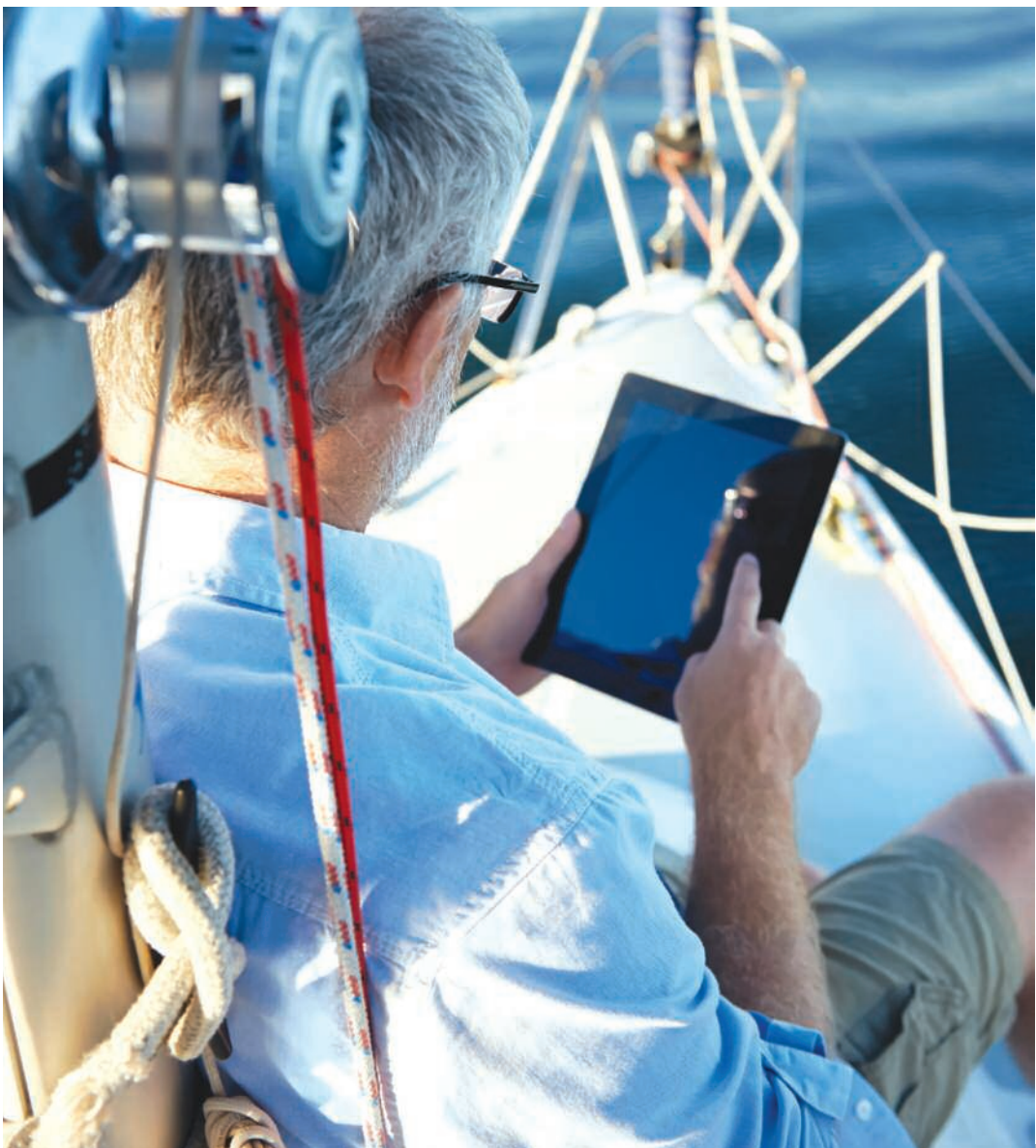
The Southern Living® Christmas cookbook benefits local chapters of the Ronald McDonald House Charities® (RMHC®). The cookbook features recipes, exclusive Southern Living merchandise, entertaining menus and ideas, decorating tips and beautiful color photos.

Exclusively at Dillard's.

Dillard's
REWARDS

Earn points toward your choice of rewards when you use your **Dillard's Card.**
Visit dillards.com/payonline for more details. *Subject to credit approval.
See store associate for details.

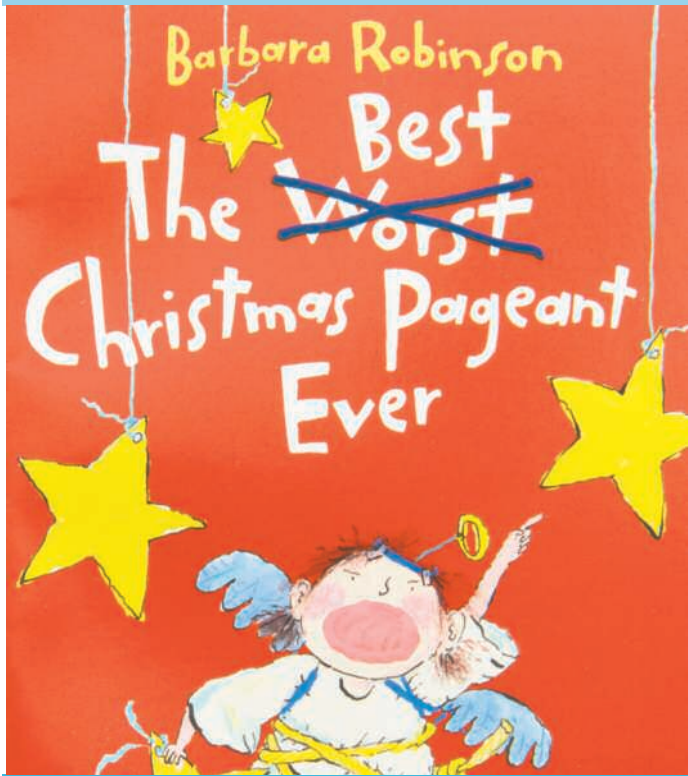




It's
EASY

on
any
device,
at
any
time
or
anywhere

Spend the holidays with Magik!



November 21
through
December 30

The Magik Theatre
420 South Alamo Street
San Antonio, TX 78205



Season tickets
and passbooks make
great gifts!

Bring this ad to *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* to receive
a **FREE popcorn and soda**
(a \$5 value)

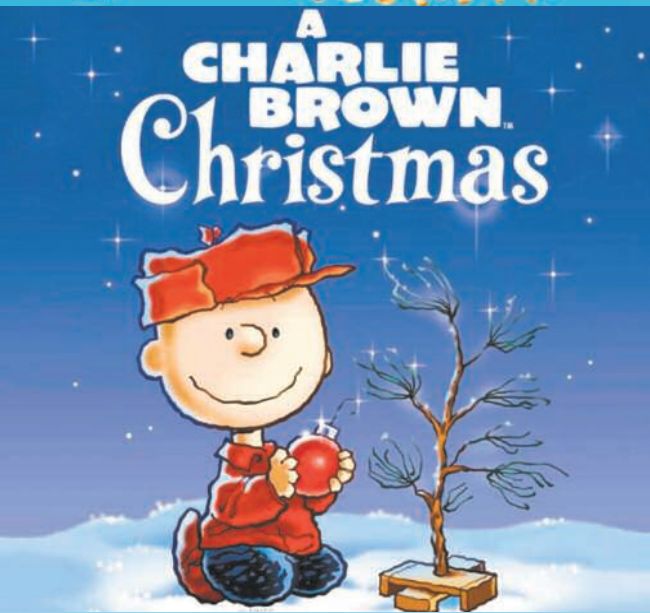


The mission of The Magik Theatre is to nurture a love and understanding of theatre and literature by providing extraordinary, affordable, professional theatre and education experiences.

Please remember to support
The Magik Theatre during
San Antonio Gives to help us
receive funding for additional
advertising!

December 21
through
December 30

The Charline McCombs
Empire Theatre
226 N. St. Mary's
San Antonio, TX 78205
For tickets: Ticketmaster.com



Our season sponsor



Helping Here:

For more information:

MagikTheatre.org | 210.227.2751



Vet TRIIP honors and empowers veterans, service members and their families living with Post-Traumatic Stress and chronic pain to create healthy, happy and productive lives.



AT VET TRIIP WE REMEMBER... WE CARE.

FOR EVERY \$1 YOU DONATE, VET TRIIP PROVIDES \$4 IN SERVICES. HOW DO WE DO THIS?

Since 2012, VetTRIIP's dedicated professional staff and veteran peers have donated over 65,000 hours to provide massage, chiropractic care and acupuncture as well as healthy lifestyle training at no charge.

That's \$2.3 MILLION in holistic healthcare services supported by \$500,000 in cash donations.

You can join us in helping tens of thousands of San Antonio veterans who struggle with Post-Traumatic Stress and chronic pain resulting from their military service.

Our greatest success is our greatest challenge: a 5-month waitlist.
It's tough for veterans to wait 5 months to get relief.
Your donations are critical for expanding our services to meet the demand.



Please make a donation now: www.vettriip.org

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

Zambia program Children in Need began in San Antonio

Donations keep town hospital open, classrooms staffed with teachers



Photos courtesy Tina Kahlig

Children In Need was founded 15 years ago to help children and families living in extreme poverty in Mazabuka, Zambia, in southern Africa.

By Emilie Eaton
STAFF WRITER

Nestled in the Oblate Renewal Center on Blanco Road is a small grotto where visitors can pause or pray.

It was there, 15 years ago, that Sister Celestine Daly, a nun from Ireland, and George Gisin, a San Antonio resident, were reflecting when they struck up a conversation.

That discussion was the genesis of a friendship that would span years and continents, and establish an organization that would soon help hundreds of children and families in Zambia, a landlocked country in southern Africa.

Daly, of the Sisters of Mercy, told Gisin she was working in Mazabuka, Zambia, a town southwest of the country's capital where poverty is rampant and the life expectancy age is about 35, according to the organization.

She had been working there for 14 years already, forming a deep relationship with the villagers. But still, she struggled to meet their basic needs — food, medicine, clothes and education.

Gisin told Daly that he long had wanted to do philanthropy work in a third-world country. He decided to form a non-profit, named Children In Need, that would assist in the sister's work.

Gisin recruited some of his friends to help with the charity, including Tina Kahlig, who now serves as vice president of the board. She's visited the country three times — in 2011, 2013 and earlier this year.

"I was in awe," Kahlig said of her first visit. "When you go, you tour all the places that you help. ... I have seen the difference that we've made."

Since 2002, the board has raised more than \$1 million that goes directly to the children and families in Zambia, Kahlig said. The group prides itself in the fact it operates with no overhead. All



Children In Need has raised more than \$1 million to help build schools, pay salaries, and renovate a hospital.



Among its projects, Children In Need serves daily meals to 1,500 to 2,000 schoolchildren.

operating costs, including shipping, website costs and printed materials, come from donations by volunteers within Children In Need.

Kahlig knows that \$1 million isn't a lot for many charities, but Kahlig and her colleagues are happy with the small difference they've made.

Early on, the organization decided it wanted to focus on helping local schools and the Mazabuka Hospital, which provides emergency care and treatment for the many

diseases that are prevalent there, including malaria, tuberculosis, HIV and AIDS.

The hospital, which serves 250,000 people in the region, struggled with a shortage of basic tools, machines, medications and surgical materials.

The town's electrical system commonly shuts off for hours at a time, and residents never know for how long, Kahlig said. When Children In Need was founded, the hospital had only one oxygen machine and no generator, so

when the power was off, they couldn't use the machine.

"Many people would die because the electricity would go off," Kahlig said.

Children In Need raised money to buy a generator, among the significant improvements that Kahlig says the organization has provided to Mazabuka. Since then, it has bought oxygen machines that are housed in every ward of the hospital.

Children In Need also has provided money to buy resuscitation ma-

chines for newborns, three incubators, stretchers, wheelchairs and linens. They helped renovate the surgical suite and currently provide salaries for six nurses.

Volunteers have focused their efforts on education, as roughly half of Zambians have no formal schooling, according to the organization. Children In Need has built classrooms and houses for teachers and currently provides salaries for 40 teachers and daily meals for 1,500 to 2,000 school children.

Kahlig has seen firsthand the organization's impact. In June, when Kahlig and her husband, Clarence, visited Zambia, they met a young man who the Sisters had helped. He told them his story.

Years earlier, Daly had met a young boy as he was standing on the side of the road selling soap. Daly asked him why he wasn't in school, and he explained his parents had died when he was young. He lived with his aunt now, but she didn't have enough money to feed him, so he sold soap.

Daly asked the boy if he wanted to attend school, and he said yes. The following day she took him

"I was in awe. I have seen the difference that we've made."

Tina Kahlig, Children In Need vice president

to school. He's now an official with the Zambia Police Service.

"There are so many great stories," Kahlig said. "And many young people will come back to help others."

Children In Need primarily accepts monetary donations, as it costs more money to ship donated items to Zambia than buying them there.

Kahlig said the organization also needs items — worth over \$100 — for a live and silent auction during the 2018 Kings & Queens of Good Hearts Fun-Raiser — an annual event benefiting nonprofits in San Antonio. Children In Need was one of 12 organizations chosen for the event.

The organization has been chosen to be a recipient for the "Birdies for Charity" fundraiser at the Valero Texas Open in April. Those interested can enter a pledge for every birdie made at the golf tournament, similar to a walk-a-thon, to benefit a charity of their choice.

For example, if an individual pledges 1 cent, and there are 1,975 birdies made, the organization of choice would receive \$19.75.

Kahlig said the Zambian people are incredibly grateful for the assistance they receive from Daly and Children In Need.

"When you go there, it would just be as if I went to your house," Kahlig said. "They do not even know that there is another way of life. This is the cards they've been dealt, and this is their life, and they make the best of it. They are happy and joyful."

eeaton@express-news.net | Twitter: @emiliceaton

SUBSCRIBER EXCLUSIVE

vote.



San Antonio Express-News
Million Dollar Charity Giveaway

Vote now and we will give free advertising
to your favorite charity!



Last year our loyal subscribers helped charities receive more than one million dollars in print and digital advertising space to spread the word about their charitable organization.

Once again the San Antonio Express-News is providing subscribers the opportunity to vote for a charity that has qualified for this program.

Vote online at [ExpressNews.com/Vote](https://www.expressnews.com/vote)
or select your charity below and mail in the form.

This exciting opportunity to vote for your charity is for a limited time only.

31404

List of participating charities (Please check one):

☐ Aid the Silent

☐ Alzheimer's Association San Antonio and South Texas

☐ American Cancer Society

☐ Animal Defense League

☐ BEAT AIDS Foundation

☐ BioBridge Global

☐ Catholic Charities of San Antonio

☐ Center for Refugee Services

☐ CentroMed

☐ Down Syndrome Association of South Texas

☐ Dress for Success San Antonio

☐ Family Service Association of San Antonio, Inc.

☐ Family Violence Prevention Services, Inc.

☐ Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas

☐ Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio

☐ Harper's Embrace Lifesavers Program

☐ Haven For Hope

☐ Hope for the Future

☐ Magik Theatre

☐ Morgan's Wonderland

☐ Mount Sacred Heart

☐ Our Lady of the Lake University

☐ Providence Catholic School

☐ Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Antonio

☐ SAMMinistries

☐ San Antonio Food Bank

☐ San Antonio Humane Society

☐ San Antonio Museum of Art

☐ San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo

☐ San Antonio Symphony

☐ Society of St. Vincent de Paul

☐ St. Peter - St. Joseph Children's Home

☐ Texas Diaper Bank

☐ The Rape Crisis Center

☐ The Salvation Army

☐ THRU Project

☐ Vet TRIIP

Clip, fill out and mail to:
San Antonio Express-News
Million Dollar Charity Giveaway
PO Box 2585 • San Antonio TX 78299

Name: _____

Subscriber Acct. No. (Optional): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Day Phone: _____

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

San Antonio Area Foundation helps ‘give back’ to community

Organization distributes millions in grants and scholarships locally

By Patrick Danner
STAFF WRITER

The San Antonio Area Foundation has a simple mission, according to CEO Dennis Noll.

“We’re really here to help San Antonio give back to San Antonio in a meaningful way,” he explained.

Just how the foundation does that is more complex. It has about a dozen different ways it assists in the giving, from the formation of endowments to donor-advised funds to training workshops for local nonprofits to the Big Give, the annual 24-hour event of giving to area charities and nonprofits.

The organization makes grants from funds established by individuals, families and businesses to support charitable causes. It distributed more than \$53 million in grants and scholarships last year.

The giving focuses on nine areas, including children, seniors, health and wellness, medical research and animal services, Noll said.

“A community foundation is a unique type of institution,” Noll said. “It is a place where people leave money through endowments for the long-term benefit of a community.” He joined the foundation in 2011 and will retire at the end of the year.



Under the leadership of CEO Dennis Noll and President and COO Rebecca Brune, the San Antonio Area Foundation distributed more than \$53 million in grants and scholarships last year.

Attorney Richard Goldsmith established the foundation in 1964 as a way to honor the memory of his father Nat, who died the previous year. The foundation launched with \$100,000 (paid in 10 annual installments of \$10,000) from Nat’s brother, Mannie Goldsmith.

“Because my father’s interests and activities were so varied, it occurred to me that a United Way of permanent endowment funds to serve a variety of philanthropies might be worthwhile for San Antonio,” Goldsmith says in a fact sheet on the foundation’s history.

As of the end of last year, the foundation had about \$900 million in assets. The size of its balance sheet swelled a couple of years ago when the estate of late movie theater magnate John L. Santikos donated more than \$605 million in assets to the foundation. It marked the single largest charitable gift in the nation in 2015.

The donated assets included the Santikos Theatres, 1 million square feet of shopping center space and 320 undeveloped acres. Profits after expenses and capital expenditures go to the foundation, and the chain expects to contribute \$26 million this year, Santikos Enterprises CEO David Holmes told the San Antonio Express-News earlier this month.

Noll called the donation a “transformational gift” when he revealed the amount in late 2015, nearly a year after Santikos died. “We have the opportunity to significantly impact the lives of our fellow San Antonians,”

Noll said at the time. The foundation has “vigorously attempted to make the business reflect John’s desires,” said James Aycock, Santikos’ estate-planning lawyer. “I think he would be pleased with the amount of gifts that have been made, which have been substantial. Where they have gone is where he wanted them to go.”

For the foundation’s first 16 or so years, gifts came in exclusively from estates. In the early 1980s, though, it started donor-advised funds with contributions from still-living donors, Noll said. Such funds allow the donors to direct their charitable giving.

Local philanthropist Harvey Najim in 2015 put \$20 million in a donor-advised fund with the foundation, the largest such fund. He has given out about \$13 million

“We’re really here to help San Antonio give back to San Antonio in a meaningful way.”

San Antonio Area Foundation CEO Dennis Noll

Giving continues on T59



Shavano Family Practice, PA

is proud to support Catholic Charities of San Antonio in their mission to provide for the needs of our community through selfless service under the sign of love.

Shavano Family Practice, PA

WELCOMES

ITS NEWEST PROVIDER,
JORDON JACOBS, PA-C

Health Professionals:

- Mitchell F. Finnie, MD
- Ken Locke, PA-C
- Stacy Gallo, PA-C

12000 Huebner Suite 104
San Antonio, TX 78230-1204

Phone: (210) 561-2422 • Fax: (210) 561-2466

www.shavanofamilypractice.com

5 Organizations. 1 Mission. Transforming Communities

“Selfless Service Under the Sign of Love”



202 W. French Place, San Antonio, Texas 78212
210-222-1294 • www.ccaosa.org

SAN ANTONIO GIVES



Carolyn Van Houten / San Antonio Express-News

Families explore the “Whales: Giants of the Deep” exhibit at the Witte Museum in May. The Witte received \$1.3 million for its capital campaign from the San Antonio Area Foundation, the foundation’s 2015 tax return shows.

GIVING

From page T58

through the fund.

“It’s mostly done for tax reasons,” he said, referring to the tax deduction he received for starting the fund. “I don’t see any negative to it because I have requested that 25 grants since January of 2016 be paid. All 25 have been approved by the board.”

Starting next month, Najim said he’s partnering with the foundation to provide scholarships for low-income students to attend any two- or four-year college in the state. He also has his own family foundation for charitable endeavors.



Courtesy Morgan's Wonderland

Morgan’s Wonderland received about \$15 million in grants from the San Antonio Area Foundation in 2015, the foundation’s tax records for that year show.

The foundation has its own initiatives, what Noll calls the “third leg of the community foundation stool.” The first was the Animal No-Kill Initiative, started in 2007 at a time when 50,000 animals were euthanized annually.

The city’s adoption rate has climbed from 11 percent to 91 percent over the last decade because of the effort, Noll said.

Its other three initiatives are targeted at increasing high school graduation rates, improving nonprofits’ ability to fulfill their mission and helping seniors thrive.

The foundation also supports and sustains local nonprofits by providing workshops on such topics as leadership, grant writing, fundraising and marketing.

Girls Inc. of San Antonio, which works to “inspire girls to be strong, smart and bold,” has been able to expand to serve more girls with the foundation’s support, said

San Antonio Area Foundation

The foundation made eight grants of \$1 million or more to local nonprofits in 2015. The recipients and the amounts they received are (all figures are in millions):

- » San Antonio Botanical Garden Society Inc., \$2.7
- » The YMCA of Greater San Antonio, \$2.2
- » Southwest School of Art, \$1.6
- » Any Baby Can, \$1.6
- » Morgan’s Wonderland, \$1.5
- » Witte Museum, \$1.3
- » UTSA College of Sciences, \$1.1
- » San Antonio Museum of Art, \$1

Source: The foundation’s 2015 tax return, the most recent publicly available.

CEO and President Lea Rosenauer. It now serves more than 5,000 girls, up from about 3,200 last year.

Foundation staff have provided their expertise “to help guide us through expansion,” she said, in addition to the grants it has made to Girls Inc.

The foundation also was a co-founder of the Big Give, an annual 24-hour online giving campaign that brings in dollars for nonprofits. This year’s drive raised more than \$4.6 million for 648 groups in San Antonio and surrounding counties.

“The Area Foundation not only gives charitable organizations a vehicle to solicit contributions, (it) also helps train the San Antonio community about the importance of giving and the impact we can have if we all work together,” said Katherine “Katy” David, a San Antonio attorney who advises nonprofits and tax-exempt organizations.”

pdanner@express-news.net
Staff writer Lynn Brezosky contributed to this report.

Each year, Sirius volunteers with the San Antonio Food Bank, SAMMinistries, and Communities in Schools’ annual Stuff the Bus School Supply Drive.

Sirius Cares

SIRIUS
The Brightest Minds in the Business

Headquartered in San Antonio for over 35 years, Sirius is a national integrator of technology-based business solutions.

siriuscom.com | 800-460-1237

35 YEARS.

TEN MILLION NIGHTS OF CARE.
COUNTLESS LIVES TRANSFORMED.

BE A PART OF THE LEGACY.

SAMMinistries
OVERCOMING HOMELESSNESS

SAMMinistries has programs across the spectrum of homelessness, enabling us to meet each person where they are. Whether they need help with a past-due rent or utility bill to avoid falling into the cycle of homelessness, or they need a longer-term housing program, SAMMinistries provides the support they need to overcome homelessness and become self-sufficient.

www.samm.org • hope@samm.org

Our gratitude to South Texas Money Management, Ltd. for ad sponsorship.

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

ChildSafe campus to become sanctuary for children, families

New Salado Creek center will offer the healing power of nature



John Davenport / San Antonio Express-News

ChildSafe CEO and President Kim Abernethy stands at the site where the new ChildSafe Salado Creek Campus will be built. ChildSafe is a trauma-focused care center for child victims and child survivors of abuse and neglect and their nonoffending family members.

By Melissa Fletcher Stoeltje
STAFF WRITER

When CEO Kim Abernethy looks out over the 36 acres of wooded sanctuary on the East Side, the future site of the new ChildSafe center, what she really sees is healing. “We know nature is calming,” she said. “We designed the building with that in mind, not just for our clients but for the staff that will work here.”

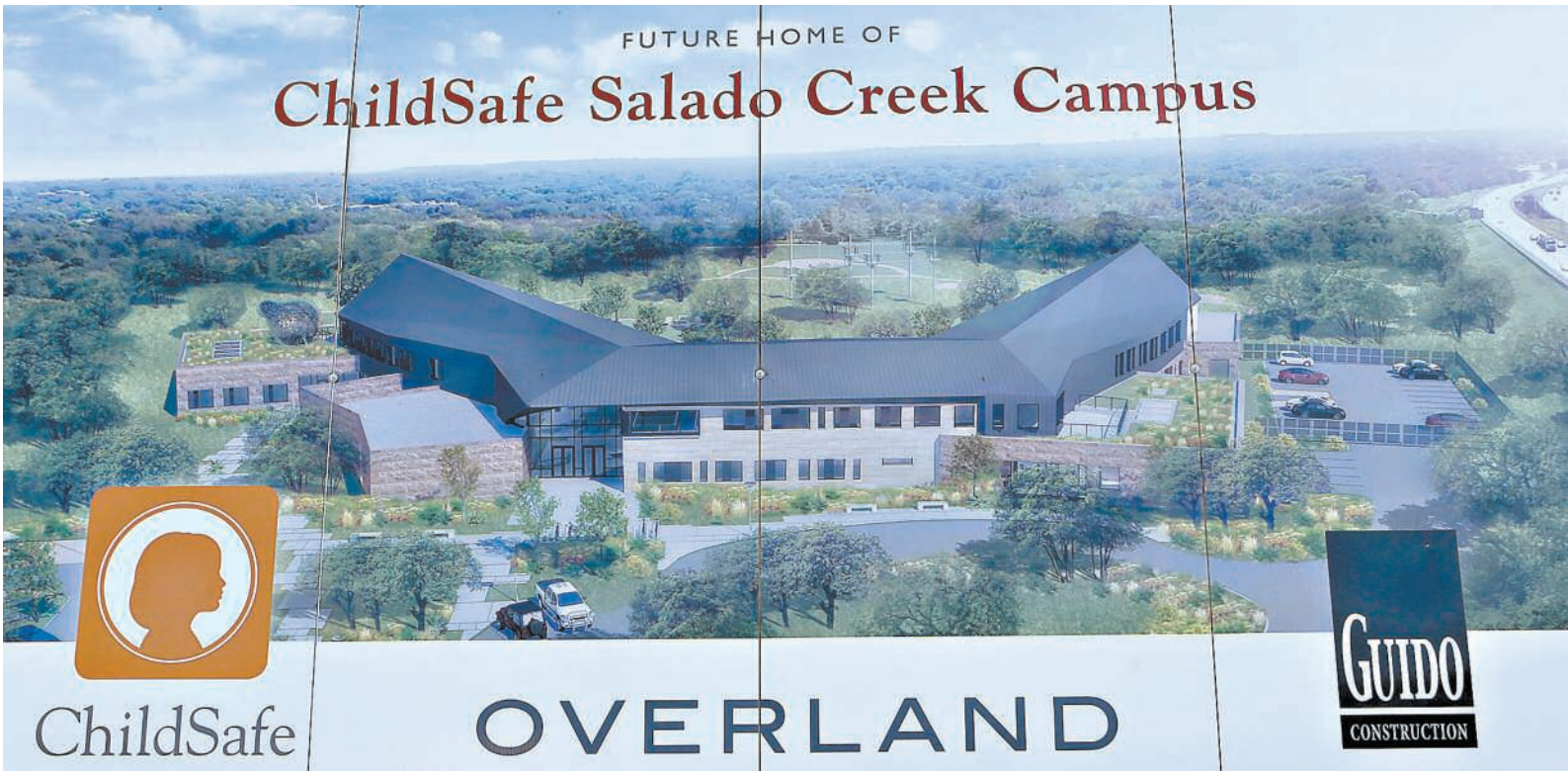
For 25 years, ChildSafe has delivered specialized services to children and teens who have experienced sexual or physical abuse or neglect. The child-advocacy center provides crisis intervention, case management services, counseling and advanced therapy, to help families heal and move forward.

The nonprofit also partners with a range of agencies — local law enforcement, Child Protective Services, the district attorney’s office — whose job it is to go after those who harm children and hold them accountable for their crimes.

The new 65,000-square-foot Salado Creek campus, located at Interstate 10 and East Houston Street and scheduled to open in May 2019, was needed to account for exponential growth in the number of children and families served, Abernethy said.

In recent years, the number of new clients has increased by 27 percent; the number of counseling sessions increased by 90 percent. Staff size has increased by over 50 percent.

“Unfortunately, Bexar County continually ranks among the highest in child physical and sexual abuse and neglect cases in the state,” Abernethy said. “We as a community must rally together and contribute our re-



John Davenport / San Antonio Express-News

A ChildSafe sign stands at site where the new ChildSafe Salado Creek Campus will be built. The nonprofit, which works with law enforcement and Child Protective Services, is outgrowing its present location.



Lisa Krantz / San Antonio Express-News

sources to combat maltreatment against children.”

In another sense, the increase means reports of child abuse and neglect are going up, which indicates a growing public awareness about the need to intervene, she said.

The new complex will feature green spaces, rooftop gardens, courtyards, outdoor therapy and activity areas, all to bring peace and tranquility close to clients, as well as to staff members, who may experience secondary trauma from the dark and often heart-breaking cases they must handle.

The facility will include permanent office space for CPS, the San Antonio Police Department, Bexar County Sheriff’s Office, Bexar County District Attorney’s Office and Bexar Juvenile Probation, a proximity that enables the diverse group of partners to better work together and coordinate services.

“We’re unique in that we’re the only group in town mandated by law to partner with law enforcement” and the other agencies, Abernethy said. “We all work in conjunction to get the cases pushed forward, to get perpetrators prosecuted and put

in jail.”

ChildSafe’s annual budget is about \$4 million, most of it raised from private and corporate donors and foundations, with about \$1.5 million coming from city, county and federal governments. The nonprofit raised more than \$22 million for the building and the surrounding campus, but it’s still \$6 million shy of the \$28 million price tag.

The full cost will be \$33 million, when operations and maintenance costs are added in, Abernethy said.

Philanthropist Harvey E. Najim donated \$5 mil-

lion, which will go toward the construction of the main building, the Harvey E. Najim Children and Family Center. ChildSafe has long been a nonprofit close to his heart, said Najim, whose giving tends to focus on children’s issues.

“When you talk about the problems we see in Bexar County, I would say No. 1 is probably child abuse and neglect,” he said. “I’d say the No. 2 problem is (issues with) the foster care system.”

Najim recalled touring the present ChildSafe at 7130 U.S. 90 several years ago. He was walking down a hall in the exam and counseling building when a door opened. A mother and her 6-year-old daughter emerged. Both were crying.

“That really hit me hard,” said Najim. “I made a commitment to myself that day that if I was ever in a position to help ChildSafe in a big way, I would do it. I would do it to help that little girl.”

Abernethy said the more help an abused or neglected child receives, the better his or her chances are to recover

and lead a normal, healthy life.

In fiscal year 2017, ChildSafe served 3,845 individuals, conducted 1,485 forensic interviews, and provided 4,948 counseling sessions. In addition, last year, ChildSafe trained 14,179 people in the community in how to recognize and report child abuse, keep children safe and empower those in need.

Since ChildSafe’s start 25 years ago, an estimated 75,000 children have received treatment for childhood trauma, which allowed them to develop healthy coping skills and break the cycle of abuse, Abernethy said.

“The new Salado Creek campus will become a sanctuary for children, their families, and the professionals who care for and protect them,” she said. “It will be a beacon of hope and an asset for the entire community.”

To learn more about ChildSafe and the Salado Creek Campus, visit childsafesa.org/build-with-us/ or call 210-675-9000.

mstoeltje@express-news.net

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

Say Sí develops creative talents of young San Antonians

Program has served inner-city youth for nearly a quarter of a century



Darren Abate / For the San Antonio Express-News

Catherine Quinn (left) and Teresa Concha work in the art studio at Say Sí on Nov. 13. SAY Sí is open year-round and serves urban economically disadvantaged youth.

By Carmina Danini
FOR THE EXPRESS-NEWS

When he was in middle school, Elionas Puente heard about SAY Sí from his sister Asaiah and decided to see for himself what it was all about.

Nearly four years later, Elionas, 15, speaks highly of the multidisciplinary arts training program that enables kids from middle school and high school to unleash and develop their inner artist. “School programs are not as hands-on as SAY Sí is,” said Puente, a Central Catholic High School sophomore. “It’s been a great starting point for artists who don’t know what they want to pursue.”

Catherine “Cat” Quinn, 17, a junior at Communications Arts High School, a magnet school of the Northside Independent School District, is also keen on SAY Sí.

Quinn has been taking classes there since she was in the sixth grade. She’s tried all kinds of media but in recent years has developed an interest in textile work.

“I had done weaving and even made my own loom,” she said. “Right now, I’m more interested in textile art and the different textile processes.”

Puente and Quinn are just two of the students who currently participate in the creative youth development program.

The best thing, the two said, is that there is no tuition.

“Ours is a completely free program, with no fees charged,” said Jon Hinojosa, SAY Sí’s artistic/executive director.

Open year-round, SAY Sí serves urban inner city economically-disadvantaged youth.

In addition to the after-school classes at its building at 1518 S. Alamo, SAY

“School programs are not as hands-on as SAY Sí is.”

Elionas Puente, Central Catholic High School sophomore

Sí has an outreach program, Artists Building Communities, or ABC.

“We wanted to expand to the community not getting artistic opportunities such as hospitals, Title I public schools, community centers,” Hinojosa said. “The biggest frustration for us is that many times, there are places that want us to come but they don’t have the support or funds to pay for our teaching artists and for materials.”

Recently completed was an eight-week project with children who are patients at University Hospital, Hinojosa said.

SAY Sí alumni who are attending college in San Antonio are recruited as teaching artists for the ABC program.

“We’ve found that because of their youth, our alumni who work as teaching artists build quick relationships and rapport with the children,” Hinojosa said.

Thanks to continued funding from the Rackspace Foundation, SAY Sí has been working with students at Windcrest Elementary for several years, added Hinojosa.

“If we had funding, we would like to take our ABC program to other Title I schools,” he said.

According to its website, the Rackspace Foundation is funded by payroll contributions from employees of the San Antonio-based managed cloud computing company. The foundation’s philanthropic focus is on science, arts, math, education, technology and



Darren Abate / For the San Antonio Express-News

Students circle up to participate in the Monday Meeting at Say Sí on Nov. 13.



Courtesy photo

Jon Hinojosa is executive director of SAY Sí. “Ours is a completely free program,” he said.

engineering.

For nearly a quarter of a century, SAY Sí has been nurturing young people interested in the arts. Started under the aegis of the King William Neighborhood Association, SAY Sí began offering classes in February 1994 at the Blue Star Arts Complex.

Woven into the arts programs are components that teach participants, many of whom are third- and fourth-generation Mexican-American, about their culture.

Prior to the inauguration of SAY Sí Muertitos

Fest 2017 earlier this month, a professor of Mexican-American studies at the University of Texas at San Antonio spoke to students about culture and tradition in Mexico.

SAY Sí’s first students — just 12 — were from Brackenridge High School. Studio sessions were limited to eight hours a week at Blue Star, located across the San Antonio River from the King William Neighborhood.

In 2000, SAY Sí moved to larger space at the Blue Star Arts Complex and

began its Media Arts Studio, designed to provide students marketable skills that would lead to careers in areas such as advertising, graphic design, commercial art and printing.

One year later, a Saturday program held year-round for middle school students began. It offered classes in visual and media arts with high school students as instructors.

With expanded programs and need for more space, in 2007 SAY Sí moved into its own building, a 26,000-square foot warehouse on South Alamo Street that once housed a beer distributor.

That same year, the theater arts program was added. There is even a black box theater.

Through the years, programs have been expanded. In 2015, the HIVE Studio (Home for Innovation and Video Ecology), a game design studio, was added.

Today, its alumni who began the program as children number more than 2,000.

Currently, four alumni work on the SAY Sí staff. Many return to the organization during the sum-

By the numbers

Students on-site: 150 to 200

Students served annually through Artists Building Communities: 3,000

Cost: Programs are tuition-free.

Graduation rate: 100 percent graduate from high school and go to college.

Retention rate: 95 percent of middle school students have gone into high school programs offered by SAY Sí.

Graduates since 1994: More than 2,000

Source: SAY Sí

mer.

“We’ve got alumni doing great work in other cities,” Hinojosa said.

One former student is a tenured art professor at a small suburban college outside Chicago.

Another alum, Gerardo Oyervides Garza, uses art to teach high school physics at Poteet High School.

“I’m trying to incorporate art into the curriculum,” said Oyervides, 24, a first-year teacher and UTSA graduate. “I want students to be engaged in the work.”

He added, “I’m inspired by my high school physics teacher but also the people at SAY Sí, who are very supportive and positive. I owe a lot to them.”

Meanwhile, expansion of programs is never far from Hinojosa’s mind.

“What we don’t have is a literary arts component, or journalistic and culinary arts,” he said. “Music is also being looked at.”

But even with current programs, space and a lean budget limit what the organization can offer.

“It’s disappointing to us that because of lack of adequate capacity and space, we have to turn away students when our goal is to reach more and more,” said Hinojosa.

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

CHARITY

S.A. Cocktail Conference funds boost children’s organizations

Houston Street Charities distributes nearly \$500,000 to help kids



Cathy Siegel of Houston Street Charities and chef Mark Bohanan sit at the bar at Peggy’s on the Green in Boerne.

John Davenport / San Antonio Express-News

By Chuck Blount
STAFF WRITER

Mark Bohanan didn’t know what else to do.

It was 2008, and he and his wife Marie desperately wanted a child, but they were beset by three miscarriages. Bohanan was also worried that he was also about to lose the downtown San Antonio steakhouse on Houston Street that bears his name.

“I went into the Baptist preacher’s office and told him, ‘We’re going to make a deal with God, and you aren’t leaving until we do this,’” Bohanan said. “The deal was, allow this place to make it, and then show me how to give back.”

Not only did Bohanan’s Prime Steaks and Seafood make it, it continues to be one of the most acclaimed restaurants in the city, with regular placement on national “best of” lists as well as recognition by the Express-News as one of the 10 best the past three years in its “Top 100 Dining & Drinks” guide.

Marie also surprised Mark after a shift at the restaurant by showing him an ultrasound, telling him that they were expecting. Their daughter, Alexis, is now 8.

That led to the other part of the deal that Bohanan wasn’t about to forget. So he created Houston Street Charities in 2012, a few months after the first San Antonio Cocktail Conference, which he created to raise money for the charity. Since its inception, SACC has raised enough money for Houston Street Charities to have distributed about \$500,000 to local children’s charities.

“Giving back was always going to be about the kids, and that started the idea for the cocktail conference,” said Bohanan, who also owns Peggy’s on the Green in Boerne. “There is nothing you can



Express-News file photo

Physical therapy assistant Melinda Gomez encourages Caleb Leonard, 10, to pedal an adapted tricycle at TEAMability in San Antonio in 2015. The organization, which works with severely disabled children, is one of the recipients of funding from Houston Street Charities.

“Giving back was always going to be about the kids.”

Mark Bohanan, creator of Houston Street Charities

give financially from a restaurant perspective; you gotta have something to generate income to give back, so cocktails was a natural thing.

“My original thought was, will people think this is a scam and think the bar isn’t making it? I had to convince people that this was a legit mechanism to deliver these organizations money.”

The conference made its debut on Jan. 26, 2012

inside the Bohanan’s bar and outside courtyard. New York cocktail experts Sasha Petraske and Matty Gee were brought in from the Milk & Honey, kicking off a series of 27 classes, 31 presentations, five parties and a contest scattered throughout the Houston Street area that touched on all of the new innovations in the bar and cocktail business. Revenues were taken in via a ticket system.

“The early focus was pre-Prohibition cocktails,” Bohanan said. “We opened a lot of peoples’ eyes, because at the time, there was nothing.”

A kickoff party was held at the Majestic Theatre the following year, as the conference expanded to 31 classes, 35 presentations, nine parties and two contests.

“For the first two years, I underwrote the whole thing, and our people did all the work,” Bohanan said. “We were getting so big, we were in danger of it all imploding on us.”

That was when Cathy Siegel entered the picture. She used to direct one of the charities that received proceeds from the SACC before she was brought in by Bohanan to act as the executive director of Houston Street Charities.

She estimates that the cocktail conference grows at an annual rate of about 10 percent, and last year, 10,000 ticketed patrons took part in events.

“For the consumer buying a ticket, they are doing it because it’s something that’s fun. We are providing an experience,” Siegel said. “If you were to go back and track what’s

happened in cocktails the past seven years, the growth pattern is similar to what we are doing, which is creating a more competent consumer.”

There is also a culinary element to the SACC, as area chefs create foods to pair well with the cocktails at the various events.

Proceeds from the official January conference, as well as from a variety of other SACC-related events scheduled throughout the year, are donated to Houston Street Charities, which then distributes funds to children’s charitable organizations that touch on an many needs as possible.

“We believe we are saving lives,” Siegel said.

Siegel works out of a downtown office next to Travis Park with a staff of three, and aside from a

two-week break at the end of each conference, her team is in a constant state of event planning.

“I need an 18-month calendar to sort through it all,” Siegel said. “We also try to provide help by handling the cocktail elements to other charitable drives, which we will try to do about once per month.”

Organizations that seek funding from Houston St. Charities go through an application process, and the ones that are chosen annually range from large operations to the smallest of causes. Siegel said that about a dozen different organizations have received funds throughout the years.

“They are such a legit group,” said Michael Guerra, chief development

Houston continues on T63

SAN ANTONIO GIVES

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers find a match with Houston Street Charities

Nonprofit organizer of Cocktail Conference benefits groups for kids



Robin Jerstad / For the Express-News

Jesse Torres and Claudia Rubio enjoy volunteering for Houston Street Charities because of the nonprofit's emphasis on supporting children's charities.

By Richard A. Marini
STAFF WRITER

Jesse Torres and Claudia Rubio didn't meet at a San Antonio Cocktail Conference event. But they might as well have. Both are longtime volunteers with Houston Street Charities, the nonprofit that runs the annual adult-beverage-and-seminars conference each January, as well as several other fundraisers throughout the year. The couple concede to having previously "seen and heard about" one another while helping to raise money for various children's charities. But it wasn't until they both attended a Christmas Eve party at The Brooklynite bar — a party not sponsored by Houston Street

“My parents always encouraged me to volunteer for things.”

Claudia Rubio

— that they finally met and got to know one another. They've been dating since January and say they definitely plan to volunteer during next year's Cocktail Conference, scheduled for Jan. 10 through Jan. 14. The nonprofit's Executive Director Cathy Siegel sang the couple's praises, saying they're the kind of people who never say no when asked to do something. “Claudia is one of my

favorite people to have at the front door of an event,” she said. “Her smile lights up the room. And with Jesse, you don't even have to ask him to do something. He calls us and asks, ‘How can I help?’ ” For both Rubio and Torres, volunteering comes naturally. “Growing up, my parents always encouraged me to volunteer for things,” said Rubio, 40, who graduated from Brackenridge High School and is a community services specialist with the city's Parks & Recreation Department. “I heard about the Cocktail Conference on Facebook. It sounded like fun, so I signed up.” She's done everything from checking people in to events, to busing tables, to assisting bartenders by cutting fruit, fetching ice

and so forth. “The only time I touch alcohol is when I dump half-empty glasses into the bucket,” she said with a laugh. Torres, 34, started working with Houston Street Charities soon after moving to San Antonio from Philadelphia several years ago. Licensed with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, he most recently volunteered as a bartender during a downtown architectural tour sponsored by Houston Street Charities. When not pouring craft cocktails, he's general manager at the newly opened Rosella at the Rand downtown. Both praise Houston Street for its emphasis on raising money exclusively for children's charities such as ChildSafe, The Children's Shelter, Clarity Child Guidance Center,

HeartGift San Antonio, TEAMability and Transplants for Children. Siegel claims that the SACC is the only cocktail festival in the nation that donates 100 percent of its profits — raised through ticket sales to parties, tastings and educational seminars — to charity. They're able to do that, she explained, because so many of their partners donate their products and services. This includes bartenders from as far away as Hong Kong, Canada and Mexico who come to San Antonio to participate. “I think people like that the events helps kids, you know?” said Rubio. Both also gush about how Houston Street Charities treats its volunteers. “They let you select the number of hours and the events you want to work, they provide parking and

there's even a volunteer appreciation party,” Rubio said. “They hold ticket-release parties, poster-release parties. Any excuse for a party, they take it.” “And they hold an information event so volunteers know what's going on and can help people who attend the events,” Torres added. “That makes it more interesting for everybody.” Both Torres and Rubio say they've not only learned a lot about the world of craft cocktails while volunteering, they've also met and become friends with a number of their fellow volunteers — even if they had to go to an event not sponsored by the conference in order to meet one another.

rmarini@express-news.net |
Twitter: @RichardMarini

HOUSTON

From page T62

officer for the San Antonio Food Bank. “We work with them a lot with our private events, which we will traditionally do two per year.” Guerra said that funds from Houston Street Charities are used for the Food Bank's summer meal program for children, where an estimated 200,000 children living in low-income households that qualify for free or reduced lunches throughout the school year are fed during the 11 to 12 weeks of summer break. “The S.A. Food Bank ramps up production and delivers as many as 10,000 meals per day out of our facility,” Guerra said. “Houston Street was an early adopter of the program.” TEAMability was created 14 years ago and works with children with such severe disabilities, they occupy less than 1 percent of the spectrum. Every week, 40 children make two, one-hour visits to the campus at 1711 North Trinity where a network of



Emily Spicer / San Antonio Express-News

The Tío Mío is the signature cocktail of the 2018 conference. The charity event is Jan. 10-14.

teachers and therapists work with them to discover their potential. None of the children are able to communicate verbally, and only two are ambulatory, but they are all still capable of learning and experiencing joy in motion and other forms of stimulation. Executive director Barbara Goldman said the exposure given to the organization the past two years, as a result of being tied to the SACC, has been every bit as important as the funding. “Without Houston Street Charities, we would not be able to provide the variety of activities to the children that we do,” Goldman said. “One of the

things we appreciate the most is the visibility it gives us.” Goldman operates on a shoestring budget with no room for advertising, and needs about \$1 million in annual contributions to keep the operation running smoothly, although federal budget cuts make that more difficult every year. Through its association with Houston Street Charities, TEAMability has been featured in television spots and is getting exposure to people who didn't even know it existed. “The money is great, but the ability to be around people and telling them who we are and what we do at the events is even more important,” Goldman said. Added Bohanan, “I didn't know about a lot of these organizations until we got started. So hopefully, what we are doing is adding to their recognition throughout the community.” The SACC is traditionally scheduled in mid-January, a time when downtown hotels and restaurants typically get slow business after the

excitement of New Year's Eve. “I would have people calling me and thanking me that I didn't even know about,” Bohanan said. “The hotels were at 95 percent occupancy, and the old guard downtown knew how bad that week was for business. The hotels and restaurants fill up (during the conference) ... it's something we like to call a collateral positive.” Christopher Ware is a former Bohanan's bartender and is now the Texas manager for Azar Distilling, local makers of Cinco Vodka and Seersucker Southern Style Gin. He said the SACC is one of the best ways to get the word out about your products. “From a brand perspective, you can get amazing exposure, or you can get lost,” Ware said. “They are bringing 10,000 into one city for a spirit-based event. In a perfect world, everyone would try your product. They give brands a huge amount of leeway that other conferences don't give. You can be fun and imaginative.” Ware said Seersucker went from selling a few

cases per week to now more than 100 throughout the country after making its splash at the SACC. The 2018 San Antonio Cocktail Conference is set to run from Jan. 10 through Jan. 14. Tickets range from \$45 for a 75-minute class or presentation to \$100 for entry into the signature “Waldorf on the Prairie” party Jan. 12. Or patrons can get a “Tío Mío pass,” named after the official cocktail of the SACC, with access to everything for \$350. “If I can do this, anybody can,” Bohanan said. “We'll never be at that Gordon Hartman level of giving or the United Way. That's not who we are. I'm just one guy that was working and owed a debt and made good on it.” Houston Street Charities is always looking for volunteers during both the SACC and at its other events throughout the year. For more information, call 210-472-2211 or visit its website at sanantoniococktailconference.com/participate.

cbblount@express-news.net |
[@chuck_blount](https://twitter.com/chuck_blount)



Attacking cancer
from every angle
to help save lives
in San Antonio

The American Cancer Society leads the way in breakthrough research and offers free rides to treatments, free lodging near hospitals, and 24/7 live helpline. We're a volunteer and community driven organization dedicated to saving lives, celebrating lives, and leading the fight for a world without cancer. With care, empathy, courage, determination and innovation, there is hardly a person or family that hasn't benefited directly or indirectly from our work.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE WAYS OUR
DOLLARS ARE PUT TO WORK IN TEXAS:



Helping Cancer Patients Access Care

We provided **more than 28,800** rides to treatment and appointments through our Road To Recovery® program. Also, we provided **more than 8,500 free nights** at our Hope Lodge® communities, and **6,500 free or reduced nights** with our hotel partners, **saving more than \$2,250,000.**



Finding Cancer's Causes and Cures

As of March 2017, we are currently **funding cancer research grants** totaling **\$30,266,000.**



Supporting Cancer Survivors

We helped **more than 1,500 women** manage appearance-related side effects of treatment and provided **more than 2,200 wigs** to cancer patients in Texas.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE WAYS
WE RAISED THE MONEY:



PLEASE DESIGNATE THE LOCAL **AMERICAN
CANCER SOCIETY** AS YOUR CHARITY OF CHOICE



With your help, we aren't just fighting one type of cancer. We're fighting for every life threatened by every cancer in every community.

For more information, please contact your local **American Cancer Society** at **210.614.4211.**

Having cancer is hard ... Finding help shouldn't be.