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**Youth Leadership Council Hosts Speaker Series Featuring Cecilia Abbott**

High school students from the Austin area attended the Women’s Symphony League Youth Leadership Council (YLC) speaker series on October 19, at Allie’s on the Lake. Each year, YLC members enjoy the opportunity to attend four one-hour meetings, featuring speakers drawn from a variety of fields. These local luminaries discuss their paths to success as leaders and their personal inspirations.

YLC members welcomed Cecilia Abbott, First Lady of Texas, for their second speaker series of the season. Abbott shared her experiences from a life devoted to volunteerism throughout Texas. “Texans are generous by nature. Wings and Meals will provide organization, clearing, and removal of meals for veterans or their family members,” said Assistance League Austin president Judy Kennedy. Four Austin Assistance League board members serve on the National Assistance League Leadership Council, including Kennedy, Sherry Vans, Sue Vasser, and Jamie Gannell.

Past presidents of Austin Assistance League helped cut the birthday cake: Sandy Marshall, Nancy Pena, Margaret Stafford, Mary Silver, Sue Temperley, Stephanie Whitehurst, Sharon Vans, Gal Ritt, Phyllis Whitehurst, Mary Elledge, Carol Smith, and Mary Ann Parker.

“All of those women are active in Assistance League Austin,” said Margaret Stafford, “some are super active, still putting in significant hours so our organization continues to be as good as it was when each one was president.” In 2017, we celebrated our fortieth year of being charmed by Assistance League’s national organization,” said Kennedy. “But we’ve had 40 years of serving Austin since it took us four years to get our charter. Starting January 1, we will begin celebrating 45 years of serving Austin!”

Assistance League Austin is an all-volunteer organization, providing services to Austin-area families through Thrift House sales of donated items and financial donations and grants. Thrift House is open at Burnet Road and 49th Street for shopping Wednesday through Saturday and takes donations Monday through Saturday.

**Assistance League, serving Austin for 45 years**

By Alona Moshing Mallard

Assistance League of Austin celebrated its big birthday in 2017 – its 40th year as part of the nationwide Assistance League. Members, including many past presidents, gathered for lunch, birthday cake, and a blend of “state of the union” report on Assistance League projects nationwide and in Austin. Assistance League Austin runs its Operation School Bell project of clothing school children with proceeds from its popular Thrift House, an upscale resale shop at Burnet Road and 49th Street. “All of our members attended the National Assistance League meeting in San Antonio, so this meeting at chapter house is a discussion with members of that meeting and one of our own,” said Assistance League Austin president Judy Kennedy. Four Austin Assistance League board members serve on the National Assistance League Leadership Council, including Kennedy, Sherry Vans, Sue Vasser, and Jamie Gannell.

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Programs provided by Assistance League Austin include school wish list supports, toys and books for children at Dell Children’s Hospital, a new wardrobe of clothes, shoes, and hygiene kit for needy school children; outings for elderly; response to emergency needs; Austin Community College scholarships, support for young adults leaving foster care.

**About Youth Leadership Council**

The mission of the Austin Symphony Youth Leadership Council is to engage Austin-area high school students in the development of leadership skills, to provide service opportunities to high school students seeking to make a positive impact on their community, to provide crucial financial support for the ASO’s youth education programs, and to encourage a lifelong commitment to supporting the performing arts.

YLC chair, Laurren Moffatt and Cecilia Abbott

**Dana Dennett and Sterling Hills Silver**

In 1995, Dana Dennett moved to Austin’s Old Enfield neighborhood to care for her late father, retired Col. James R. Dennett. Soon after returning to Austin, she started Sterling Hills Silver Company that polishes and restores fine silver.

“Silver is my lifelong interest, I just adore working with silver,” Dana says. She has honed her craft by studying silver at various locations all over the world, such as London Silver Vaults and the Perlman School in North Carolina. Sterling Hills Silver is currently in the process of creating a nonprofit entity, Sterling and SilverBeaks, named in her father’s honor. Wings and Meals will provide organization, clearing, and removal of meals for veterans or their family members.

Dana’s father, father-in-law and husband were Air Force colonel and pilots. In 2005, Dana got involved with the Austin College Style. She adopted her college, Moore, and trained him as a service dog for Divne Comeaux, an Austin-based therapy dog agency. Divine Comeaux provides therapy dog services to over 20 facilities, including The Settlement Home, Brooksdale and Westminster living facilities, and helping hand Home for Children.

Dana is currently employed part time as a docent for the State-Preservation Board, providing care and tours for the State Capitol, Government (Monument, Coach-Victory), Cemeteries and State Cemetery.

She is a member of Good Shepherd Episcopal Church and she gives light-hearted silver care workshops such as “What are you saving it for?”, at the Austin College where she is a member. In her spare time Dana travels with her collies around the world to various museums, eating historical homes in search of unique and beautiful silver, watching soccer, and enjoying wine cup of tea.

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YLC chair, Laurren Moffatt and Cecilia Abbott
By Paityn Prince

That Transition? (With a Help from Thomas)

The New year of 2018 starting running while I was still stuck in 2017. Our family was trying to adjust to the change in the calendar. We had to adapt to the new year...but the impact was felt in every single day. Many of our routines were changed and we had to adjust to the new year. However, it is important to reflect on what happened in 2017 and what changes we need to make in order to be ready for the new year. To help with this transition, I want to share a few tips that can help you:

1. Set Goals: Setting goals can help you stay organized and focused. It can also help you stay motivated and on track. Setting goals can be as simple as deciding to read a certain number of books or to exercise a certain number of times per week.

2. Take Inventory: Take inventory of what worked and what didn’t work in the previous year. This will help you make changes in the New Year.

3. Celebrate: Celebrate the end of the previous year. This can be done by having a party or by simply taking some time to reflect on the good things that happened in the previous year.

I hope these tips help you transition into the New Year. Happy New Year!

By Katlynn Butler

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Anderson Madrigals Caroled the Caverns and More

The Anderson Madrigals had a busy fall semester. In November, they competed in the Texas Renaissance Festival competition and raised third place in the Madrigal category. On Saturday, December 9, they performed as part of the “Carolers at the Caverns” at the Natural Bridge Caverns. They also performed a concert recently as part of the Stull Concert Series. The Madrigals are expertly lead by Assistant Choir Director Kari Cruz.

Some of the Madrigals also competed in the Pre-Area round to All-State. Ryan Ethington, Daeshan Jung, Tab McCarty, Rachel Rowe and Alex Pettman, were selected to compete at the TRA Area competition in San Antonio. Also making it to the final round of competition were Lauren AI, Tristan Dull, Miles Nguyen, and Brooks Taylor. If selected, choir members will attend the prestigious TMEA All-State Choir Convention in February. Students selected as alternates are Delaney Glosser, Bryce Grady, Tess McCarty (former All-State), Ben Skaggs, Mali Steinhauer and Nolan Thompson. The Anderson Choir is led by Region 18 President David Beumann.

Highland Park Elementary Fun Run raises $50,000

By Alana Moshing Mallard

Highland Park Elementary celebrated before the holidays with a Scottie Fun Run in the quarry to that raised money to support PTA projects and food for Central Texas Food Bank.

In the quarry on an overcast morning with parents gathered to cheer the kids on, PE Coach Jim Delare led the festivities with a turkey gobbler knitted cap on his head and a microphone in his hand. “Dab and run,” he hollered out to fifth grade runners as he raised money to support PTA projects and food for Central Texas Food Bank.

Scottie Fun Run in the quarry to that raised money to support PTA projects and food for Central Texas Food Bank.

California Dreamin’ Rocks the House at St. Michael’s

It was standing room only at St. Michael’s fall concert, “California Dreamin’,” a journey through the state of California and the role that its musicians had on American culture. In preparation for the concert, music students learned about a range of music spanning the tropics through the early 2000s.

The concert included many genres of music that found their roots in the orignals of California, such as Surf music, Chicano Rock, Country Rock, Folk, Glam Metal, Thrash Metal, and the famous “Golden Era.” That only the Beach Boys can do. Along the way, the listener visited famous cities, such as Los Angeles, Bakersfield and San Francisco, in addition to meeting famous bands like The Eagles and Janis Ian. It was something for audiences of all ages at this family-friendly show.

Madeleine McCracken among winners of Ole Miss honors scholarships

University of Mississippi President Studs Terkel, a graduate of Veritas Academy in Austin, has been awarded a Distinguished Honors Scholarship at the University of Mississippi’s Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College. She is majoring in classical studies. McCracken was a member of the Veritas Academy honor society at the University of Mississippi where she earned awards in the English Latin exam, magna cum laude honors in the national Latin exam, and was selected as an AP Scholar, a member of the Verizon Academy Speech and Debate Team and played on varsity soccer and tennis teams. The University of Mississippi’s Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College in Oxford, Mississippi, offers a blend of academic rigor, experiential learning, and opportunities for community action for 1,300 undergraduates from the university’s schools and colleges. More than 14,000 students attend the University of Mississippi. Veritas Academy is a private classical college-prep school in Austin.

California Dreamin’, Highland Park, Scottie Strong


Jim Delare, Highland Park, Scottie Strong

Grace Usleman, junior

Danny Bushland, senior

Alyssa Garlepp, freshman, Vanessa Garlepp, junior, Josie Turlington, senior, Thomas Suffoletta, senior

Breakthrough’s Beat the Odds Benefit Featured Pat Green

On November 9, more than 1,200 Austinites came out in support of Breakthrough for an incredible evening of music under the stars with "Texas Country Favorite Pat Green at Stubb’s BBQ. The benefit is a celebration of students beating the odds to become the first in their families to graduate from college.

The event included a special performance by Grammy-nominated, singer-songwriter and Texas favorite, Pat Green. The concert was preceded by a VIP cocktail reception and program. Major contributors for the evening were AMD and Bank of America/U.S. Trust. Event chairs, Amber Carden, Mary Garwood Yancy and Howard Yancy, the host committee, emcee, Board Member Hector Ruiz, and everyone who attended, donated, and shared in the celebration of Breakthrough’s mission and trailblazing students and families. Breakthrough families were given an opportunity to give a testimony on how greatly the organization has impacted their lives for the better.

"To everyone out there with dreams, here’s what I have to say: keep that fire burning. And because of YOU that Breakthrough has been able to serve so many students," said Hector Ruiz, Board member. "Our Breakthrough board members have come together to invest generously so that programs like Breakthrough’s have taken that risk and that impact to the families that are working. In recent years, Austin’s philanthropic community has taken notice of Breakthrough’s impact and have come together to invest generously so that now more than 1,450 students are benefiting from Breakthrough’s 13-year commitment that will change the trajectory of their lives and their family’s economic well-being. Many of those supporters are here tonight. Thank you. It is because of YOU that Breakthrough has been able to serve so many students," said Ruiz.

For more information on Breakthrough of Central Texas and to learn more on how to volunteer, visit: breakthroughctx.org.
Chris and Gina Hughes, Sergio and Louise Rodriguez, Mark and Faye Hilpert

Brian and Carolyn DeRoeck

Pat Green and Grecia Lopez

Repping Texas Tech

Board Member and Event Emcee Hector Ruiz

Breakthrough Family - Tony, Danae, Rossy and Ramiro Vazquez

Kaitlin Swartz, Mike Aviles, Johnny Mauro

Lucy Price and Bo Baskin

Why Choose St. Theresa’s CATHOLIC SCHOOL?

90% of our students SCORE ABOVE the national average

TOP HONORS Diocesan Science Fair

GROWTH Spiritually, Academically, Physically

Partnership with Duke University Talent Identification Program

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SAFÉ Alliance hosted their annual gala, “A Night in Havana,” on November 4 at the Hyatt Regency Austin. The annual gala benefited the children at SAFÉ’s Austin Children’s Shelter Campus (ACS). Guests enjoyed a night of music, dancing, and giving. Thanks to the generosity of the Austin community, the event raised over a million dollars in one night, making it one of SAFÉ’s most successful fundraising events to date.

Guests enjoyed a cocktail reception, live and silent auction, and a lively catered dinner. Suzanne Newhouse and Christy Strub were co-chairs for this year’s event. Angela Gliore and Michael Simmons served as emcees for the evening and highlighted some of the powerful work SAFÉ Alliance has done for children who have endured sexual assault and exploitation, child abuse, and domestic violence.

Ann Benolken was awarded the 2017 Guardian Award for her work as a founding member of the Women of Hope and her continued support of both the Austin Children’s Shelter and SAFÉ.

“In all honesty, the shelter is the first place I felt like I wasn’t a paycheck,” said Carroll. With their unwavering support and encouragement, I finally saw the purpose in my life and I felt like I might actually have a future.”

Today, Angel is a Junior at Texas Tech University and is working toward a degree in social work.

“The celebration continued as guests danced to the musical stylings of Lex Land and Timberos del Norte with a very special performance by Austin Community Steel Band, a non-profit organization that gives kids access to music lessons.

The proceeds from the event will go to continue their mission of giving a future to Austin Youth who have suffered abuse.

About SAFÉ Alliance

SAFÉ Alliance is a non-profit organization that provides services for children, young adults, and families affected by abuse, exploitation, and neglect. We believe that every child, youth, and young adult deserves to feel safe, to receive nurturing care, and the opportunity to grow into happy, responsible, and fulfilled adults. ACS is a safe space to begin to heal and learn to thrive.