

VICTORIA

Texas

A photograph of two young girls in rodeo attire. They are wearing red long-sleeved shirts, white collars, and black cowboy hats. They are waving their hands. The girl on the left is wearing a sash that says "MISS RODEO VICTORIA". The girl on the right is wearing a sash that says "2011 VICTORIA". They are standing behind a wooden fence.

A BLUE-RIBBON ATTRACTION

WORK HARD, PLAY HARD AT THE
VICTORIA LIVESTOCK SHOW

A PUBLICATION OF THE VICTORIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE





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VICTORIA LIVESTOCK SHOW

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MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS



within the community while encouraging and supporting new business development."

—Connie Hermes, Executive Vice President, Cal-Com Federal Credit Union

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS



"Is there a value in belonging to the Chamber? Absolutely! We have been members of the Chamber for our 32+ years as a business and believe it to be a great way to identify ourselves with our peers and our community. The Chamber provides many opportunities for networking, sharing information, making new friends and exposing our VCS teams in this market. We have a very active presence in the Chamber Ambassadors with our own Lynda Parma, and often fill a table at the luncheon opportunities to learn more about other businesses, important issues at hand, legislative news and more. I believe membership in the Chamber is a part of being in business. We are blessed to be lifetime members of this great community, and our Chamber is an integral part of that."

—Jennifer Rode Hartman, Owner, VCS Companies



WELCOME TO VICTORIA

The 2019 Chamber Board of Directors is excited to welcome its members into a new year.

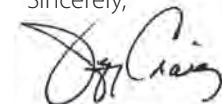
If you are not currently a member of the Victoria Chamber of Commerce please consider this an invitation to expand your network. The Victoria Chamber's mission is to lead, empower and unite our business community. And, we'd like for you to be a part of it.

The Victoria Chamber promotes business by providing a variety of events, conferences, training opportunities, luncheons and the advocacy that businesses need to succeed. We coordinate networking events, ribbon cuttings, social mixers and newcomers' gatherings, along with professional development activities. Some of our flagship opportunities include: Victoria Certified Friendly

Program, South Texas Transportation Conference and Leadership Victoria.

We continue to strive to expand our membership and its programs to better serve them. Randy Vivian, the president, and the staff have many years of experience and knowledge. Call or stop by the Chamber office at the Victoria College Emerging Technology Center, or visit our website at www.victoriachamber.org for more information. Welcome to Victoria!

Sincerely,



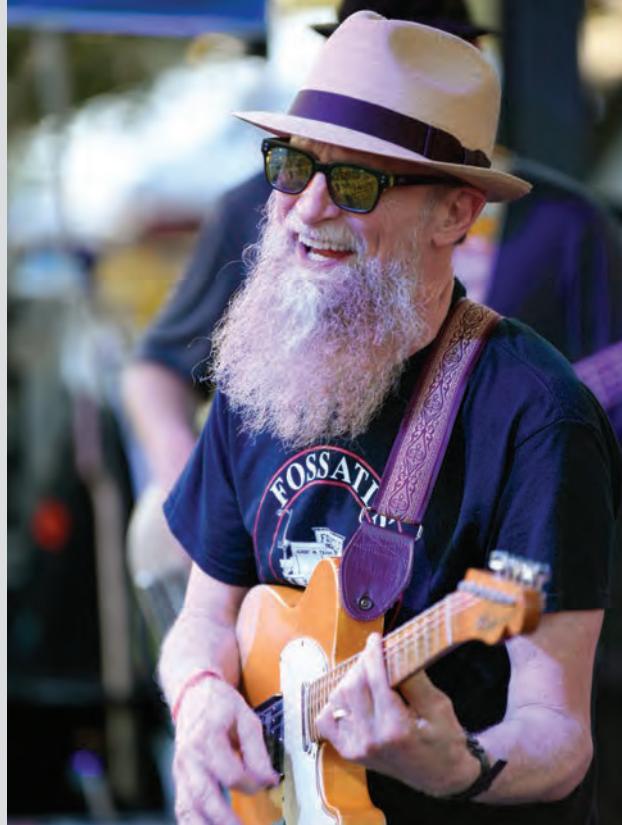
Chief Jeff Craig

2019 Chairman of the Board

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The Victoria Chamber of Commerce staff, pictured here, works with members to ensure that all have access to community resources. Standing from left are Sylver Serrato, office manager; Randy Vivian, president/CEO; and Christine Blain, vice president.



A FRIENDLY DISPOSITION

Delivering Exceptional Customer Service

When it comes to serving the needs of the community, there is not a greater resource than the Victoria Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber's mission is to lead, empower and unite the business community, and they do that every day through programs and events. So, when they heard that Victoria businesses needed customer service training, they stepped up and made it a reality.

"It's Victoria Friendly, a certified customer service training program for front-line employees that is enhancing business and building customer relations all across the city," says Greg Bonewald, assistant superintendent of human resources at Victoria Independent School District (VISD). "We're very proud of this effort. It's just begun, but already, it's having a big impact on the business climate."

Successful business relies on fair and accurate pricing, competitive practices and good products, but nothing matters more than excellent customer service. Chamber leaders understand that nothing builds business faster and better than making customers feel valued and appreciated. That's the goal of Victoria Friendly.

"We knew that we had a need for better customer service, and Victoria Friendly is helping to close that gap," says Bonewald. "Businesses can train their staff—office and sales personnel, counter staff, the first person someone meets when they walk into a business—to provide more positive and friendly experiences, and in turn, generate repeat business and new business. After the training, a business or



Small Business Partner of the Year, Housworth Enterprises: from left; Chief Jeff Craig, Chamber Chairman of the Board; Craig Housworth; Casey Housworth; Randy Vivian, Chamber President/CEO

organization earns certification as a Victoria Friendly business. They'll receive a logo decal that they can use on the door to indicate their customer-friendly status."

With input from partners like the VISD, the curriculum is managed and developed by experts.

"One of our partners, the University of Houston-Victoria Small Business Development Center, are really the ones providing the curriculum and the professionals who do the training," says

Bonewald. "Training hinges on three most important principles of customer service. The Golden Rule: Treat others as you want to be treated; The Platinum Rule: Treat others the way they want to be treated; And third, the Double Platinum Rule. I'm not sure I want to hint at the meaning of that one too much, but after employees go through the training, knowing about this third rule and practicing it will do amazing things for a business. They need to sign up and learn what it means."

Attention is given to building awareness of the ways staff interacts with customers too.

"There is a lot of focus on the five positive habits of customer service," says Bonewald. "When a customer walks in the front door, what's the first thing he sees? What messages are we presenting? And there is training for phone etiquette and discussion of active listening and rules for email. Another important component is learning how to de-escalate an unhappy customer."

By the end of December 2018, there were already more than 35 businesses and over 600 employees trained certified as Victoria Friendly.

"The feedback has been extremely positive and sessions are filling up rapidly as it takes off and builds momentum," says Bonewald. "The program brings great value to Victoria and has great potential. The future is indeed looking very bright." ■

By Cathy Cuthbertson



Ambassador of the Year: Chief Jeff Craig, Chamber Chairman of the Board; Christy Henry; Randy Vivian, Chamber President/CEO



Corporate Business of the Year, DeTar Healthcare System: Chief Jeff Craig, Chamber Chairman of the Board; Gary Malaer, CEO DeTar Healthcare System; Randy Vivian, Chamber President CEO

WELL-DESERVED RECOGNITION

Congratulate These Outstanding Members

Empowering and uniting the business community, the Victoria Chamber of Commerce takes time at its annual awards luncheon to honor members that have gone above and beyond to serve Victoria.

"It's always very important to recognize those who have done great work for our community," says Randy Vivian, Chamber president/CEO. "We take this opportunity to present awards to Member of the Year, Small Business Partner of the Year and Corporate Partner(s) of the Year, for those who have stepped up and done not just good work, but amazing work."

The 2019 Victoria Chamber Ambassador of the Year is Christy Henry. Henry was born in Victoria and is a graduate of Goliad High School and Texas A&M University. Her work experience includes years at Hilton Worldwide Sales in Dallas and the Homewood Suites Hotel in Victoria. In 2018, she began working in marketing and consumer relations for Housworth Brothers. Henry joined the Victoria Chamber Ambassadors in 2013 and has served on the board and been extremely active with ribbon-cuttings and other chamber events.

The chamber's Small Business Partner of the Year is Housworth Brothers Enterprises. Owners Casey and Craig Housworth are brothers originally from Port Lavaca, and both are graduates of Texas A&M. After gaining experience at several other companies, the two opened their first location, Budget Blinds on North Navarro in 2005. Through the years, the brothers and other

members of their family built their business network to include both Victoria locations of the UPS Store and a Rapid Printing location. Their support of the chamber is unquestioned, and they have helped with nearly every event, from designing logos and printing services to providing support and leadership.

DeTar Healthcare System is the Chamber Corporate Business Partner of the Year. Since the company opened in a two-story home in Victoria in 1924, its mission has been to provide quality healthcare to the community. With a patient-centered team composed of more than 1,500 professionals, DeTar Healthcare has been indispensable to the chamber. It has sponsored events, provided volunteers and has helped serve in chamber leadership. With its support of local arts, health and businesses, DeTar believes that the true health of a community is in its ability to serve the public as a whole. Its commitment to Victoria is second to none.

Last but not least, the Chamber Citizen of the Year is Ben Galvan, owner of CivilCorp, a civil engineering and land surveying company with offices in Victoria, Houston, Fulshear, Corpus Christi and Round Rock. Galvan is a graduate of Texas A&I University and the University of Houston-Victoria. He began his career in 1986 with the Texas Department of Transportation, and he later managed the Victoria offices of Houston-based Landtech Consultants. Today, his company Civil Corp has over 100 employees and provides engineering and land surveying consultant services throughout the state. Galvan serves a board member for several local foundations and is a member and past president of the Victoria Kiwanis Club. For the Victoria Chamber, he has been a past member of the board of directors and chair of the transportation committee, inspiring the creation of South Texas Transportation Conference, one of the signature events for the chamber.

These outstanding leaders are involved in Chamber activities and the community, positively impacting where they live, work and play. Be sure to give them a round of applause. ■



Outstanding Member of the Year, Ben Galvan CivilCorp LLC: Chief Jeff Craig, Chamber Chairman of the Board; Ben Galvan, President; Randy Vivian, Chamber President/CEO

The 411

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Average Annual Rainfall 41.22 inches
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U.S. Representatives

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www.kolkhorst.senate.state.tx.us

Representatives

District 30
Geanie Morrison 512-463-0456
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www.geaniemorrison.com

LOCAL

Mayor

Rawley McCoy 361-485-3030
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City Council

Mayor Pro-Tem/District 3
Jeff Bauknight
jbauknight@victoriatx.org

District 1

Rafael DeLaGarza, III
rdelagarza@victoriatx.org

District 2

Josephine E. Soliz
jsoliz@victoriatx.org

District 4

Jan Scott
jscott@victoriatx.org

Super District 5
Dr. Andrew Young
ayoung@victoriatx.org
Super District 6
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Victoria City
Municipal Court.....361-485-3050
107 W. Juan Linn St., Victoria, TX 77901
www.victoriatx.org

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Nazareth Academy
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www.nazarethacademy.org

Trinity Episcopal School361-573-3220
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www.tesvictoria.org

St. Joseph High School361-573-2446
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www.stjvictoria.com

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www.uhv.edu

Victoria College361-573-3291
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Waste Management of
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www.wm.com

WATER AND SEWAGE

City of Victoria361-485-3400
www.victoriatx.org

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS



"Membership of the Victoria Chamber of Commerce has benefited Associated Builders & Contractors, Inc. (ABC), Texas Mid Coast Chapter by offering opportunities to build business relationships. The emails and monthly lunch meetings are educational and keep members informed about what is going on in our community. The professional development programs, mixers and events are fantastic for networking and establishing new relationships. Getting involved and being an active member of the Victoria Chamber offers credibility to ABC and marketing opportunities that are hard to beat."

— **Kristi Stevenson, President/CEO, Associated Builders & Contractors, Inc.,
Texas Mid Coast Chapter**



The University of Houston-Victoria has proudly served the Victoria community since 1973.



BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Spotlight on Education

From kindergarten to college, students of all ages and abilities find that Victoria has all the resources they need for success.

VICTORIA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

With more than 14,000 students, the Victoria Independent School District (VISD) boasts 17 elementary and nine secondary campuses. VISD offers advanced academics to its scholars, including pre-advanced placement courses, dual credit classes, gifted and talented classes, AVID and more.

Recently, VISD became one of the first school districts in the state to be designated as a "District of Innovation." This distinction allows VISD to build on community partnerships in order to educate students for the 21st century workforce. Victoria's dedication to making these opportunities available to every VISD student is illustrated through community partnerships that span business, higher education, civic organizations, parents and individuals.

Upper level students are positioned for entering the workforce or college, thanks to career and college centers located at Victoria East and Victoria West high schools. Each center has an adviser available to help students with preparing for their careers after graduation.

VISD's collaboration with Victoria College, the University of Houston-Victoria and other higher education institutions allows high school students to earn college credits while also pursuing their diploma.

Balancing a rigorous class schedule, students also have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities, such as basketball, golf, volleyball, football, power lifting, wrestling and cheerleading, to name a few. Likewise, pupils can nurture their creativity through the fine arts, which includes theater, orchestra, choir, band, dance, mariachi, ballet, art and guitar. Each school also offers a variety of clubs and organizations that encourage student involvement.

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-VICTORIA

The University of Houston-Victoria continues to grow with construction underway on University Commons, the university's first student center, set to open in summer 2019. The building also will include a learning commons, or modern library, that UHV and Victoria College students will share.

"It's exciting as we continue to grow to meet the needs of our students," UHV President Bob Glenn said. "We look forward to seeing UHV's plans come to fruition."

University visitors and students soon will notice an attractive entryway to the university after Victoria City Council members unanimously voted to move forward on a project to allow UHV to enhance Ben Wilson Street in front of the campus. The project will allow students, faculty, staff and visitors to safely cross



UHV offers a variety of science, technology, engineering and mathematics-related degree programs for undergraduate and graduate students.

the street to get to University Commons, a new residence hall and other future buildings on the east side of Ben Wilson Street.

In addition, UHV owns 132,000 square feet of the former Town Plaza Mall in Victoria and received a \$1 million matching federal grant that will be used this summer to renovate the area of the building that will house regional and community business development activities. These will include the UHV Small Business Development Center and the university's new Partnership for Regional Economic Prosperity. The building also will house classrooms; faculty and administrative offices; labs; and storage of some of the library's books and materials.

Construction also is underway on UHV's new Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics building and a fourth residence hall for the growing on-campus student population. The 58,464-square-foot, three-story STEM building will house a 120-seat classroom; motion capture, robotics and gaming labs; and an immersive 210-degree screen lab. The 272-bed Don & Mona Smith Hall will be for upperclassmen. Both buildings are set to open in 2020.

UHV also offers 70 degree programs and concentrations in three schools for students to have a wide variety of choices.

The School of Arts & Sciences is home to a Master of Science in Publishing, which focuses on the history, development and current practice of publishing. The school also has a Specialist in School Psychology degree, the first specialist degree in the university's 44-year history and the highest degree now offered by UHV. An honors track in the school allows high-performing students an opportunity to work one-on-one with professors and take on special projects.

Students in the School of Business Administration can take bachelor's and master's degrees with concentrations in accounting, finance, marketing, management, human resource management, healthcare administration and other areas. The school is accredited by AACSB International, The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, which gives this mark of excellence to less than 5 percent of business schools worldwide.

Students also can take a new degree concentration in the School of Education, Health Professions & Human Development. Physical education now is offered as part of the Bachelor of Science in kinesiology. New graduate concentrations include the Master of Education in special education with a dyslexia concentration; administration and supervision with an emphasis in organizational leadership or nonpublic school administration; literacy studies with an emphasis on structured literacy and dyslexia; and elementary science and math education. The school also offers a new dyslexia education certificate for future educators who want to better serve the needs of students with dyslexia. The master's programs in school counseling and clinical mental health counseling are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. ■

LEARNING FOR LIFE

Classes and Extracurriculars

Appeal to Students

With a goal to develop students as leaders, faith-minded individuals and scholars, opportunities for alternative learning abound in Victoria.

"We want students to discover their talents and value, and the plans they have for their lives," says Larry Long, superintendent of Faith Academy. "We want to disciple and help them understand they are both the light and salt of the earth."

Faith Academy builds exceptionally strong bonds and student relationships that last a lifetime.

"It's a seamless program, preschool through 12th grade," says Long. "Our teachers stay for a long time and they're all degreed teachers. We're also a dually accredited institution, recognized by two different organizations that are qualified according to the guidelines acknowledged and recognized by the Texas Education Agency (TEA)."

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School instills enthusiasm for lifelong learning and promotes student growth in the commitment to serve God, one another, the Catholic Church and the community. On the academic side, students in pre-K through eighth grade take classes in English, math, science, history, handwriting, spelling and more. Electives are also part of seventh- and eighth-grade instruction.

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School also offers extracurriculars, encouraging students' physical and social well-being through choir and sports, such as volleyball, football and basketball.

Nazareth Academy is the fourth oldest Catholic school in the state and the oldest educational institution in Victoria. Serving pre-K through eighth grades, the academy prepares students for future careers in many ways, including a focus on technology. Courses include religion, math, language arts, science, health,

social studies, physical education, music, computer literacy and Spanish, with electives offered to upper grade levels.

With the benefit of a 25-station computer lab in the K4 to eighth grade classrooms, students use the labs year-round, learning keyboarding skills, Microsoft Office applications, internet safety and how to conduct academic research and compose papers using proper MLA formatting. Smartboards are also used in class.

Serving Victoria since 1868, St. Joseph High School is a Catholic high school that is Victoria's only nationally accredited, exemplary high school. Cultivating a peaceful, challenging and loving atmosphere that fosters spiritual growth, the school is known for academic excellence and its focus on building the Catholic educational community.

Rigorous classes are designed to prepare St. Joseph students for admission into the best colleges and universities in the nation, as well as develop them into well-rounded citizens. On top of that, pupils have a variety of athletic pursuits in which to participate.

Founded in 1954, Trinity Episcopal School's mission is to introduce students to innovative, creative and time honored teaching methods while realizing there is an intellectually curious learner within every child. Trinity encourages students to discover



UHV students have the opportunity to make their mark on their futures by earning a degree. In addition, they can make their mark on campus by joining more than 40 student organizations on campus.

the power of their own minds to think critically, seek answers and solve problems.

The school maintains several campuses, including the Early Learning Center (K3-K4), Lower School (K5-fifth grade) and Middle School (sixth through eighth grades). ■

VICTORIA COLLEGE



Since 1925, Victoria College has provided an affordable and high-quality education, as well as career and technical training, to Victoria and the surrounding communities. Students can pursue associate degrees, certificates, and industry-recognized credentials, or transfer to a four-year institution to continue their educational endeavors.

Local employees can also receive the workforce training they need to stay atop trends in the marketplace or to brush up on an already well-established skillset. Thanks to VC's dedication to working with community partners, training programs meet the specific needs of the local workforce.



Danny Vivian Photography

Each year, Victoria College serves approximately 8,500 students through education and training in Victoria, Calhoun, DeWitt, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca, and Refugio counties. For those who are looking to earn their GED or are preparing for college, VC's Adult

Victoria College partners with numerous industries and companies in the Crossroads area to train students for the workforce.

Education Center provides the resources needed to meet their goals. The college also offers services for nonnative speakers, who can learn to speak English more effectively. Another vital tool for up-and-coming college students is VC's dual enrollment offerings. Here, high school students can begin earning college credits while working toward their diplomas.

Victoria College students have numerous opportunities to engage with others through student clubs, sports, volunteer and service activities. In 2019, Victoria College began competing in the highest level of the National Junior College Athletic Association in women's volleyball and men's basketball.

Victoria College also offers cultural engagement opportunities with its Museum of the Coastal Bend and Leo J. Welder Center for the Performing Arts. And rounding out the breadth of programs and services is VC's Academy of Lifelong Learning, which offers its members opportunities to participate in study, discussions, travel, and social interaction with those of common interests.

While nearing its 100-year celebration of offering quality education and training, Victoria College will continue to have a major impact on Victoria and the surrounding communities as its leaders strive to achieve VC's vision: "Our Community, Our College: Improving Lives, Strengthening Communities." ■



UHV SBDC business advisor Donald Jirkovsky, right, reviews marketing documents with one of the center's clients, Van "Kevin" Lam, founder and CEO of Rank Above Others LLC, a website design and digital marketing agency.



ONE BUSINESS AT A TIME

Local Small Business Development Center serves community

Whether area residents are seeking to start a new business, grow an existing one or transition their business, the University of Houston-Victoria Small Business Development Center is available to help them navigate the entrepreneurial process.

The UHV SBDC is a federally and state-funded program that offers no-cost counseling, training and technical assistance and workshops to business owners and managers involved in starting and running a business. The center's mission is to "help the Texas economy grow, one business at a time."

"Our goal is to create long-term, trusting relationships with our clients by providing information and advice that serves their best interests," UHV SBDC Director Lindsay Young said. "It's important for them to know that they will get much more than advice when they begin their relationship with the UHV SBDC. Our clients gain a wealth of knowledge, research, opportunities and support."

A range of assistance is offered in areas such as business and marketing plans, financial analysis, inventory control, business research, international trade, government contracting and loan proposals. UHV SBDC certified business advisors also help clients stay current on ways to develop and expand their businesses with workshops and leadership-based summits.

Leadercast, the world's largest one-day leadership conference broadcast live from Atlanta to hundred locations around the world, has been hosted by the UHV SBDC in Victoria for eight years and has grown to become a popular training event in the community. Leadercast Women, a similar format tailored to female leaders, was added in 2017 in Victoria and also addresses the needs of business managers and owners. Additional trainings offered through the UHV SBDC include a QuickBooks series, Monday Morning Leadership Training Program and seasonal workshops and seminars.



Staff members of the UHV SBDC are ready to help small businesses in Victoria and the surrounding counties plan for success. Pictured from left are Donald Jirkovsky, business advisor; Lindsay Young, director; Whitney Schroeder, training coordinator; Shirley Sommer, business advisor; and Mark Martinez, certified business advisor.

The center's advisors work confidentially one-on-one with business owners and managers to help with training needs and follow up with clients and workshop attendees to ensure they are implementing the training into their business practices. Their expertise and real-life business ownership and management experiences are essential to provide assistance to clients when creating business plans; setting growth and marketing strategies; and generating attainable goals.

Sara Vela, owner of Vela Farms, worked with the UHV SBDC throughout the process of starting and expanding her business, and since 2015, some of her products have been featured in H-E-B stores. She received an award from H-E-B's corporate office in March for reaching \$1 million in sales in H-E-B grocery stores.

"The UHV SBDC advisors have been instrumental in helping me grow my business by being a voice of reason that asks those tough questions I wouldn't have otherwise considered," Vela said. "As entrepreneurs, we tend to concentrate on the forward motion, so it's been extremely beneficial to have solid accountability

"As entrepreneurs, we tend to concentrate on the forward motion, so it's been extremely beneficial to have solid accountability partners like the SBDC that will work with me to pause and take the time to answer those tough questions and establish a plan."

partners like the SBDC that will work with me to pause and take the time to answer those tough questions and establish a plan."

Partnerships with community organizations in the region also have developed from working with the UHV SBDC. The organization has provided

training opportunities, roundtable sessions and course instruction for the Victoria Independent School District, Victoria Chamber of Commerce and Mid Coast Construction Academy. SBDC staff members also are actively involved in local organizations and clubs in the Crossroads.

"Our staff members are dedicated to community involvement, advocacy and outreach," Young said. "We want to create valuable resources to help small business owners and entrepreneurs in the communities we serve."

The UHV SBDC is part of a nationwide management assistance program serving the small business community and is a cooperative effort of the U.S. Small Business Administration, private sector, educational community, and federal, state and local governments. It serves small businesses in an 11-county area, including Aransas, Bee, Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Karnes, Lavaca, Refugio and Victoria counties.

For more information, visit [www.uhvsbdc.com](http://uhvsbdc.com). To talk to a business advisor or attend a workshop, contact the UHV SBDC at 361-485-4485 or sbdc@uhv.edu.





The UHV SBDC offers free and affordable training sessions about many business-related topics, from how to start a new business to human resource topics, social media marketing, finance and loan information, QuickBooks and more.



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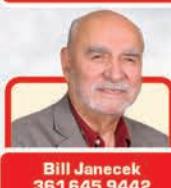
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A blue-ribbed attraction



ribbon section



A junior exhibitor beams with pride over her steer.



Work hard, play hard at the Victoria Livestock Show

Folks say that to really know a person, you should walk a mile in their shoes.

But to really know Victoria, Texas, all you gotta do is pull on some boots and walk into the Victoria Livestock Show.

Held at the Victoria Community Center Fairgrounds, the event exudes a spirit of pride and a sense of camaraderie that the city embodies. It's the largest annual gathering in Victoria and the surrounding region, drawing an estimated 14,000 visitors to the area. It's also one of the few remaining livestock shows where 100% of the proceeds from each animal sold at the auction is paid to the 4-H/FFA junior exhibitors.

This show marked its 73rd year during events and competitions held Feb. 15-March 4. Its theme — Oh! The Places You Can Go ... Being at the Show! — perfectly represented the excitement you could find in a full roster of competition and entertainment.



Victoria Livestock Show royalty award prizes at one of the many competitions. The show marked its 73rd year in 2019.

"There truly is something for everyone at the livestock show," said Robin Janecka, show marketing chairwoman.

For 2019, the event kicked off with several days of events leading up to the main attraction of livestock judging — and more — later in the month. Preshow events started Feb. 15 with a barbecue cook-off and goat-roping contest, in that order. In its third year, the goat-roping contest awarded belt buckles to the best hands with a lasso. Cook-off categories included meats, margaritas, bloody Marys, beans, desserts and even a division for kids to test their culinary chops.

"Lots of amazing prizes are awarded to the winners," Janecka said, "and, of course, every one of them go home with bragging rights!"

The preshow fun continued Feb. 16 with more barbecue judging and a horseshoes and washer tournament, sponsored by the Victoria Area Go-Texas Committee. Contestants there fought for the chance to throw down at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. A parade down Victoria's Main Street also helped fire up the whole community for the rest of the fairground events to follow.

The nearly full month of fun continued with the colorful lights of the carnival, which opened Feb. 23. Squeals of delight from the midway rides and the flavors of fair foods both mixed in the air.

Proceeds from admission to the carnival benefitted the livestock show's scholarship program.

The carnival was just part of events bringing the show into full swing that weekend. Feb. 23 also featured a pony show and the Queen Victoria Pageant. A mix of sparkle and sportsmanship, the pageant gives youngsters in several age groups a chance to show off their charisma and style through categories such as personal interviews, Western wear, formal wear and more.

"These young ladies and cowboy tots will represent the Victoria Livestock Show during their reign by actively being involved in the community," Janecka said. "They are awarded with prizes, belt buckles and scholarships."

Another hot event that day was the 10th annual wiener dog races, sponsored by The Pet Resort on Main. Though it may have the shortest contestants, there's no shortage of competition. Trophies were presented in race divisions for puppies, dogs 1 to 5 years old, dogs 5 to 9 years old and senior dogs.

"You have not lived until you have seen these little doggies race their tiny paws to the finish line," Janecka said. "It is great fun as a spectator. And, if you have a dachshund, you may consider entering."

The final weekend of the show kicked off Feb. 28. The grand opening ceremony made it official, while animal judging, exhibit

halls, a petting zoo and fair booths all welcomed in spectators. In fact, it was the first of several days of animal competitions, where livestock are judged on a myriad of factors. Janecka explained that the magnificent livestock animals have been nurtured and grown by their young exhibitors who are mostly members of the Future Farmers of America and 4-H organizations.

And while the youngsters were working hard to show off their stock, adults could kick back and relax at the show's beer garden. Live entertainment each night Feb. 28-March 2 included several bands and the finals of the karaoke contest. Kids got to kick up their heels at a youth dance on March 2 as well.

Last but not least, one of the final events of the show is one of its most popular: mutton busting! The event, which has age limits, is like a miniature rodeo with kiddos getting to test their ability to stay on some rambunctious sheep.

Janecka explained that while the public events closed March 3, the show did not end quite then. Auction night was March 4, with the grand champion winners starting what is often several hours of cheering and celebrating as more than 200 animals are sold to the highest bidder. This was the finale for the youth exhibitors who had raised the animals.

"Along the way, that child has learned responsibility and in-depth care for their animal species," she said. "That young man or young lady will go home with more than a check from their buyer. They will have a treasure trove of experiences that last a lifetime."

And for anyone attending, the show is a reminder of some of the best qualities Victoria, Texas has to offer — a dedication to hard work and a celebration of community. ■ *By Jamie Rogers*



Winners pose with their banners for excellence in the carcass lamb category.



Brightly colored rodeo clowns help keep kids safe during the mutton-busting competition at the Victoria Livestock Show.



**Putting the heart
into health care.**

HOMETOWN HEALTH



Local providers have finger on the pulse of latest treatments

From routine checkups to the most-advanced treatments, family services to fitness programs, health care providers in Victoria expertly tend to the needs residents at all stages of life.

Citizens Medical Center

This not-for-profit healthcare provider is guided by a simple mission: "To provide quality medical services at a reasonable cost to the citizens of the region." And that's exactly what Citizens Medical Center has been doing since 1956.

Today, an acute-care facility with 338 beds and more than 1,000 employees is known for its compassionate patient care, clinical expertise and bringing advanced medical services to the South Texas region. The center is recognized for its exemplary cardiology services, which include an accredited Chest Pain Center and an approved STEMI receiving center for patients suffering from a heart attack.

In addition, Citizens features a comprehensive community cancer program accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer. Its Kathryn O'Connor Regional Cancer Center treats a variety of cancer types, such as breast, cervical, colorectal, pancreatic, ovarian, skin, thyroid and testicular.

Citizens also features a Level II stroke center, imaging and surgery centers, a sleep study center, bariatric surgery, a healthplex and a women's pavilion with labor and delivery services. The center also boasts a 24/7 emergency department with an advanced Level III trauma facility and medical helicopter on-site if transportation is needed.

DeTar Healthcare System

DeTar Healthcare System is composed of two full-service, acute-care hospitals in Victoria: DeTar Hospital Navarro and DeTar Hospital North. Both have been recognized for providing quality care by the Joint Commission and offer services residents might expect to travel miles to receive.



Patients of all ages are in good hands with Victoria's caring health care pros.

Among those services are a comprehensive cardiac program, an accredited Chest Pain Center, an inpatient rehabilitation facility, Level III and Level IV trauma centers, a designated Primary Stroke Center, a Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and more. With its more than 300 total licensed beds, 174 active physicians and 120 volunteers, the DeTar system and its staff have been dedicated to creating great care since 1924.

In addition to its full spectrum of medical services, DeTar Healthcare System has a medical residency program through Texas A&M Health Science Center's (TAMHSC) College of Medicine. Future medical professionals can now get training in Victoria. Through the DeTar Family Medicine Center, these family medicine residents and TAMHSC faculty members to treat patients in a comfortable setting. ■ *By Sarah Lancaster*



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From book clubs to card games and so much in between, seniors stay active mentally and physically.

THE GOLDEN AGE REVELING IN RETIREMENT

It's important to take care of the physical body, but good health encompasses more, especially for senior citizens. In Victoria, there are plenty of ways for seniors to find intellectual stimulation and to address their spiritual health as well. Relaxation and active fun in Victoria even draws snowbirds to the area during the winter months.

Victoria's location, near the Gulf of Mexico and between four major metro areas, makes it ideal for easily accessing entertainment and cultural events. The town's colorful history, many parks and community events make it a perfect place to enjoy retirement to the fullest.

Whether on a visit from out of town or just getting away from the day-to-day grind, Dad's RV Park offers plenty of amenities for comfort and opportunities to socialize for fun. Rates are available for daily, weekly or monthly stays, and Wi-Fi, cable and full hook-ups are included. In addition to the beautiful shady lots, Dad's RV Park also features a clubhouse with a barbecue pit, treadmill, television, commercial kitchen and wrap-around porches that are perfect for relaxing.

For those who are ready for a more permanent move, Vitality Court, part of the Vitality Senior Living family, provides a retirement community, assisted living services and specialized memory care services. In addition to a wellness center and excellent dining, Vitality Court also offers spa services, creative expression activities, recreational events and cultural outings. To make the transition easier, the Vitality Court staff offers the Easy-Move Program, which eases

some of the stress associated with moving.

Elmcroft of Victoria provides comfortable, private and shared assisted living facilities. There are common areas for meeting with friends, dining or entertaining. In addition to beautiful facilities, Elmcroft has signature programming designed to help residents stay fit, active and engaged.

Brookdale Copperfield Village offers a full slate of events and excellent dining with meals made from scratch. With a resort atmosphere and numerous amenities, Brookdale Copperfield Village residents enjoy a luxurious retirement lifestyle. With specialized fitness programs, group activities, culinary programs and educational opportunities, Brookdale Copperfield Village boasts many ways to stay in good health. The community also offers one- and two-bedroom floor plans that are light-filled and spacious.

The Victoria County Senior Association provides support services for seniors in the county. The organization has offered health screenings, recreational events and social meals at two sites since 1979. They also provide meals for homebound seniors and transportation services. The two senior centers schedule a wide variety of activities, including quilting and crafting, numerous games and more.

Retirement can be a time of enjoyment, socializing and learning in a place like Victoria. No matter the interests, there is something for everyone. Book clubs, board games, bingo, card games and movies all allow seniors to congregate and socialize, which is a critical part of good health. Staying active, physically, socially and mentally helps make the senior years a truly golden age. ■ *By Dava Stewart*



**The Texas Zoo is home
to 100 animal species.**

WILD ABOUT ANIMALS

a major focus. In fact, the zoo's ocelots — small, wild cats native to the southwestern U.S. — are some of the most popular animals among visitors and zoo staff alike. However, these animals' natural habitat, especially near the international border, faces an uncertain future. Pollution, habitat loss and hunting have contributed to the situation.

"Because ocelots are so threatened here in Texas and our focus primarily is Texas wildlife, this is really a priority for the zoo," Jensen said.

Connect. Learn. Protect.

These aren't just words at The Texas Zoo in Victoria; it's the motto at this educational and entertaining institution. By making that personal connection between the public and the wildlife, The Texas Zoo helps visitors learn the animals' importance to the environment and humans alike. Executive director Liz Jensen and the entire zoo staff are passionate about inspiring those connections between the guests and animals and spurring a desire to protect their habitats.

Now in its 62nd year, the nonprofit zoo is more dedicated to that mission — and the 100 species of animals it houses — than ever before. Though jaguars, black bears, alligators and other creatures are often seen as the stars of the zoo, Jensen has helped the institution strengthen the connection between wildlife native to Texas and residents in the community. That mission is an even greater priority as the zoo is still rebuilding — almost rebranding — since being heavily damaged by Hurricane Harvey's floodwaters in 2017.

"Since Harvey, the zoo was devastated," Jensen said. "But in a strange twist, it allowed us to start from a clean slate, so it's actually been really fun to create new programming and basically reinvent the zoo."

Interaction with animals through educational programs has been





The ocelots — beautiful and exotic-looking — are some of the zoo's most visible animal ambassadors. By building a connection between visitors and the wildlife such as this, the zoo aims to teach guests how they can help the animals not only thrive in a managed environment but in their natural habitat as well.

For example, the zoo also recently opened an interactive shorebird exhibit that features pelicans and seagulls that have been injured and rehabilitated but can't be released into the wild. Guests can learn about the birds' behaviors — even feed them — but also learn how to limit human behavior that can harm the birds.

"There's a lot of fishing activity here," Jensen said, "so a lot of these birds end up with hooks in their stomachs or monofilament wrapped around their wing. We want to highlight that but also give people the opportunity to feed them fish to make a connection to the birds."

Other animal ambassadors — including Diego the skunk, Nova the Eurasian lynx, Tate the white-nosed coati and Bright Eyes the

red ruffed lemur — have their own special wildlife interactions, which guests can experience for additional admission.

"We're going to start donating some of the proceeds from those programs to conservation work," Jensen said, "so that if you interact with an animal, not only are you supporting the zoo but you're also helping to support conservation efforts, whether it's our conservation efforts or we donate money to other organizations that are actively working to save that particular species."

From family field trips to workshops for aspiring teen zookeepers, from birthday parties to spooky holiday events, the zoo's offerings aim to bring guests back all throughout the year. These offerings, plus revitalized and improved staffing, are all part of the plan to keep the zoo healthy

"Since Harvey, the zoo was devastated," Jensen said. "But in a strange twist, it allowed us to start from a clean slate, so it's actually been really fun to create new programming and basically reinvent the zoo."

and evolving. Though damage to the zoo in 2017 was eased by insurance, the facility was closed for two months to clean and restore some of the animal habitats. Jensen also lamented that the many educational materials were lost in the storm.



©Stockphoto.com/Becky Rich

"Even though it appears that we're all doing well, we're still not totally out of the woods yet," she said. "Any kind of help, whether it's just coming to the zoo with attendance, that really helps us — donations, equipment, anything."

The zoo is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, with special evening hours during the Haunted Zoo events in October. It is closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Visit the website at www.texaszoo.org for more information about admission costs (and discounts for seniors, children and active and retired military), annual passes, outreach programs, animal encounters and more. ■

By Jamie Rogers

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS



"The Chamber is an invaluable resource. They let us know what's going on, when new businesses are opening up, and are great stewards of the community. They are a great team to work with."

— David Arnold, President &
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Music director Darryl One will lead the Victoria Symphony as it presents its 46th season — a mix of classical repertoire and popular selections with the bonus of world-renowned guest artists, including pipa player Changlu Wu, the Celtic Tenors, accordionist Hanzhi Wang and tribute group Super Diamond.





MUSICAL TREATS

Victoria Symphony serves up concerts for every taste and budget

From lighter concerts to shows you can sink your teeth into, the Victoria Symphony is set to present a virtual smorgasbord of performances for its 2019-2020 season.

Headed into its 46th season in September, the renowned symphony has already started whipping up some spectacular offerings to be presented at the Victoria Fine Arts Center. One of the season's main attractions will cap off a five-year series of working with winners from the prestigious Cliburn Competition, an annual, international contest for pianists held in Fort Worth. Victoria Symphony executive director Michelle Hall is excited to share that this year the 2017 Cliburn gold medalist, Yekwon Sunwoo, will perform with the symphony for its final concert of the season. Audiences can expect a substantial and satisfying piano performance.

Throughout the rest of the season, music director Darryl One and the symphony will be spicing up its series with special guests, including Changlu Wu, who plays the pipa, a traditional Chinese stringed instrument; the Celtic Tenors; professional accordion player Hanzhi Wang; and classical crossover talent Caroline Campbell, a "violinist to the stars" who has performed with major symphonies and pop artists alike, including Sting, Adam Levine, Rod Stewart and more.

"She's this violinist who is equally as talented as she is beautiful," Hall said. "(Campbell) regularly tours with (jazz trumpeter) Chris Botti and (Italian singer) Andrea Bocelli. She has agreed to come to Victoria and play pieces that are known to the audience but with her unique twist on the solo parts for violin."

Crossover classical artist Caroline Campbell will wow audiences with her virtuoso violin skills during the Victoria Symphony's season opener in September.

Photo by Suzanne Terese, courtesy Victoria Symphony



The symphony puts lighter fare in the spotlight during its Pops performances. Recent seasons have seen an ABBA tribute concert and country music star Neal McCoy joining the symphony to jam. This season, the schedule will feature Super Diamond, a Neil Diamond tribute group. It's not uncommon to see folks dancing in their seats at these shows, Hall said, in fact it's a little expected. Can you blame anyone who even feels urged to sing along?

"When he does 'Sweet Caroline,' I imagine that will happen," she said.

One of the most beloved events each season is the Downtown Rhythms performance at O'Connor Plaza. In contrast to performances inside symphony hall, this outdoor concert features a more relaxed atmosphere. For anyone who's curious about what the symphony is all about — or anyone looking for a low-cost opportunity to enjoy music — this performance in April is perfect.

"Kids can run around, you can stand in line at the food trucks, they can get their face painted," Hall explained. "You can bring a picnic or a blanket or a chair and just enjoy the beautiful music washing over you without the structure of the concert experience inside a performing venue. And it's free!"

The downtown event also features student ensembles, giving them a chance to perform for a larger audience. While many concertgoers enjoy hearing family and friends perform, Hall said there's another way audiences can get personally involved in the show.

"We always bring our traveling music petting zoo," she said. "Sometimes people think you're going to have animals, but no you can actually try the instruments that you see in the orchestra — the violin, the trumpet, the cello, percussion. Students can try out those



During the Downtown Rhythms event, children enjoy getting to try their hand at instruments at the musical petting zoo.

40 VICTORIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Photo courtesy Victoria Symphony

The symphony's free Downtown Rhythms concert features a relaxed atmosphere, student ensembles, food trucks and more.

instruments. What's funny to me is the adults who come to the petting zoo who played an instrument when they were in school but haven't touched it since and they'll pick up an instrument and see if they still got it. It really is a lot of fun."

That taste of the music might even inspire one to get involved in the Crossroads Strings community concerts. The symphony's director of education, Debbie Durham, also works with local schools and non-professional musicians in Victoria who play as a community orchestra. In February, the symphony

will present a time-tested favorite — Tchaikovsky's "Peter and the Wolf" — to schoolchildren, giving them an introduction to specific instruments through an enchanting story.

So whether audiences are chilling at the Symphonic Spooktacular concert or warming up to more traditional classical pieces, the Victoria Symphony has just the right mix of entertainment, education and excitement for everyone. Visit the website at www.victoriasymphony.com for up-to-date concert info, special events, ticket options and more. ■ *By Jamie Rogers*



Photo by Jeremy Enlow, courtesy Victoria Symphony

Award-winning pianist Yekwon Sunwoo will perform during the Victoria Symphony's season closer in April 2020.



There is no need to leave Victoria for fun and entertainment. There is a little of everything for everyone.

Tempting THINGS TO SEE & DO

Gallivant Through the Golden Crescent

By Rachel Nall

No matter the season, there is always something going on in Victoria.

From community events to bustling attractions, there are numerous ways to play along the Golden Crescent.

Annual Lighted Christmas Parade

www.victoriatx.org

Making spirits bright, the city of Victoria's Annual Lighted Christmas Parade is the perfect way to start the holiday season. Taking place in downtown, friends and families gather for festive merriment in early December including more than 100 twinkling floats, vehicles and marching bands.

Art Car Parade

www.explorevictoriatexas.com

Featuring over 50 magnificent, moving works of art, the annual Art Car Parade in April, presented by the Five Points Museum of Contemporary Art, is entirely unique. After the parade, spectators can check out the vehicles at the museum. Bold or whimsical, the artwork and designs are creative originals.

Bootfest

www.bootfest.org

In early October, guests put on their boots and head out to Victoria's largest, free music festival. The annual Bootfest presents a musical line up of stellar talent, featuring new and old-styled country western, Flamenco, Latin, rock and blues, colorful, traditional Hispanic dance and more. A Kids Corral for ages 3 to 12 is filled with fun inflatable rides for hours of entertainment.

Cemetery Tours

www.historicvictoriatexas.com

Re-enactors play out colorful and lively vignettes as visitors meet the ghostly residents of Evergreen Cemetery. Offered in late October, the torch-lit tour travels back in time through the perspectives of historic figures who all played a pivotal role in Victoria's rich history.

Children's Discovery Museum of the Golden Crescent

www.cdmgoldencrescent.com

This state-of-the-art museum experience is perfect for families to explore. With over 10,000 square feet of indoor space and over 20 exhibits, it can help you stay dry or beat the heat while your little ones design and create in a wonderfully hands-on environment. Regardless of how you spend your time, you're sure to discover something new!

Citizens Medical Center Run Against Cancer

<http://citizensrunagainstcancer.org>

In February 2019, Citizens Medical Center hosted the 3rd Annual Citizens Run Against Cancer Half-Marathon and 5K in Victoria, Texas, to raise money to help patients in our community who are fighting cancer. Check the website for 2020 information.

Crossroads Heart & Stroke Walk

www2.heart.org

Participate in the Heart Walk, locally sponsored by DeTar Healthcare System, to join a million Heart Walk Heroes from across the nation in raising funds for lifesaving science. Help keep hearts everywhere



Photo courtesy of Danny Vivian

Bootfest brings singers like Kyle Park to town each October.

beating and join the American Heart Association to take steps together to cure heart disease and stroke.

Disc Golf at Riverside Park

www.victoriatx.org

One of Texas' most challenging courses bordering the Guadalupe River, Disc Golf at Riverside Park is a blast. Afterward, explore the grounds, featuring more than 600 acres, 200 picnic areas, a zoo, duck pond and more.

Five Points Museum of Contemporary Art

www.fivepointsmuseum.com

Five Points Museum of Contemporary Art draws on the cultural diversity of South Texas, featuring broad access to works by regional and national artists and creators. Local and national artists are showcased, celebrating the community's Mexican and European foundations. Admission is free.

Historic Homes Tour

www.victoriapreservation.com/events

Purchase tickets to the Historic Homes Tour and Gala from Victoria Preservation Inc.'s website. Victoria's historical fabric, both physical and cultural, continues to live through the vision and efforts of VPI, its membership and supporters.

Howl-O-Ween Block Party and Haunted Zoo

www.texaszoo.org

The Howl-O-Ween Block Party and Haunted Zoo is a top-notch fright fest with jaw-dropping excitement. Visitors are invited to wear costumes and participate in games, treats and activities as they stroll the Texas Zoo.



The Jack Whitmire Memorial Charity Clay Shoot includes a full slate of 150 shooters.

Jack Whitmire Memorial Charity Clay Shoot

<http://clayshoot.victoriarotary.org>

Join the Victoria Rotary Club for a great day of gun safety, fine shooting, good food and fantastic fellowship. The shoot features a catered steak dinner, silent and live auctions as well as the Calcutta.

JAM Fest

<https://explorevictoriatexas.com/content.php?i84=22>

JAM Fest, a free music festival, takes place downtown, featuring tunes, food and shopping. It's a great way to spend an April day. Along with diverse bands and multiple genres of music, JAM Fest features a little something for everyone.

Leo J. Welder Center for the Performing Arts

www.weldercenter.org

The Leo J. Welder Center for the Performing Arts hosts year-round performances, including theater, dance and concerts, just to name a few. Owned and managed by Victoria College, the center caters to business events, too, and is home to resident company Theatre Victoria.

Museum of the Coastal Bend

www.museumofthecoastalbend.org

The Museum of the Coastal Bend showcases the rich multi-cultural heritage of Texas' mid-coastal region.

Through a robust slate of permanent and temporary exhibits, educational programming, public lectures and conservation efforts, the museum enhances the appreciation and enjoyment of the region's heritage.

Nave Museum

www.navemuseum.com

The oldest art museum in the Crossroads area, The Nave Museum features six to eight diverse and compelling exhibits each year, both classical and modern, ranging in styles from portraiture and landscapes by celebrated Texas artist Royston Nave.

The Nutcracker

www.victoriaballet.org

It's one of the most festive nights of the year, the Victoria Ballet Theatre's production of "The Nutcracker" has been wowing crowds since 1985. Come enjoy the sound and colors of the holidays for five public performances.

Parade of Homes

<http://crossroadsba.com/parade>

The Parade of Homes is a showcase of Victoria's newest and most exquisite homes. Sponsored by the Crossroads Builders Association and corporate anchors, homes are open to the public to tour and view the latest in kitchens, baths, interior decor, craftsmanship, furnishings and so much more. The parade takes place each May.



Enjoy classic tunes during the weeklong Victoria Bach Festival.

Polo at McFaddin Ranch

www.navemuseum.com/polo-at-mcfaddin

Steeped in tradition, polo at McFaddin Ranch is the quintessential event of the year. Enjoy tailgating, wine and beer, a live silent auction, live music and the Kid's Corral. The polo match is held in early April as a benefit for the Nave Museum.

Riverside Ride

www.riversideride.com

The Annual Riverside Ride, presented by the Kiwanis Club of Victoria, consists of four routes, including a challenging 100-mile route through the rolling hills of northwest Victoria County.

South Texas Transportation Conference

www.victoriachamber.org

The South Texas Transportation Conference takes place each September and is a premier educational forum for planners, government officials and economic development representatives. Held at Victoria College Conference and Education Center, the event provides updates and details on transportation projects important to maintaining an excellent quality of life in South Texas.

Victoria Bach Festival

www.victoriabachfestival.org

Performing masterworks of classical repertoire

and new music, the weeklong Victoria Bach Festival celebrates the beloved work of J.S. Bach and composers of the ages. Audiences find delight in orchestral, choral and chamber works performed by local and nationally acclaimed artists in various venues around Victoria and South Texas. The event is held in early June and enters its 44th year in 2019.

Victoria Farmers Market

www.facebook.com/VictoriaFarmersMarket

Grab the grocery list and head to the Pattie Dodson Health Center to find fresh and seasonal items at the open-air farmers market. Tantalizing home-baked goods, local honey, free-range eggs and fresh produce abound. There are also fresh meats, herbs and pickles to take home. Enjoy live music and food trucks as well. The market is open on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Victoria Generals

www.victoriagenerals.com

The Victoria Generals, members of the Texas Collegiate League, play at the historic Riverside Stadium. Come cheer on some of the best professional prospects from colleges around the country.

Victoria Livestock Show

www.victorialivestockshow.com

Attracting more than 10,000 visitors each year, the Victoria Livestock Show—in its 73rd year—is one of



Junior exhibitors line their animals up during a heifer judging at the Victoria Livestock Show.

the few remaining livestock shows where 100 percent of the proceeds from each animal sold at the auction is paid to the 4-H/FFA Junior Exhibitors. Pre-show events include a BBQ cookoff, parade, carnival, a beauty pageant and more.

Victoria Open

www.victoriachamber.org/page?p=golf-tournament

We would like you to show your support for YOUR Chamber of Commerce by joining us as the Victoria Chamber of Commerce presents the Victoria Open. This tournament is for the serious golfer and the light-hearted. You are exhibiting tremendous support of your Chamber when sponsoring this event.

Season tickets available now!

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2019-2020
46th Season

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All programs and dates subject to change.

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Victoria TX Indie Film Fest

www.vtxiff.com

The annual VTXIFF is designed to inspire and champion independent artists while introducing the community to the passionate work being done in independent cinema. Visiting filmmakers screen their films, collaborate on new films and sometimes return to Victoria to shoot their next film.

Warrior's Weekend

www.warriorsweekend.org

Supporting U.S. veterans with an emphasis on those wounded in the Global War on Terrorism, Warrior's Weekend celebrates vets with an annual fishing event. Grab a line and a pole and come on down to Port O'Connor each May.

Wild About Wine

www.texaszoo.org

Wine tasting, food pairing, entertainment and music make for a night of fun at the annual Wild About Wine fundraiser for the Texas Zoo in March. The grounds are transformed into a magical venue emphasizing a special theme. A wide variety of select wines are, of course, part of the evening. ■ *Rachael Fisher, Brook Nelson and Cathy Cuthbertson contributed to this article.*

Building or Buying? Meet Victoria's Home Lending Dream Team.

First Community Bank has helped thousands of people build their first home, move to a larger house, or buy their long-awaited dream home. We can take you step-by-step through the building and mortgage processes, and can even prequalify you before you begin your home search.

When it comes to banking and home loans, you have a choice. Let Cindy and Monica help you get the home of your dreams.



Cindy McDonald
Mortgage Originator
NMLS #429563

Monica Rodriguez
Vice President/Branch Manager
NMLS #1164397



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A portrait of Ben Galvan, a man with a mustache and glasses, wearing a light blue shirt.

Community
college was
part of *my*
journey

“While attending Texas
A&I University, I took
summer classes at
Victoria College that
were affordable, met
my degree plan,
and helped me
graduate on time.”

Ben Galvan
CivilCorp
VC Foundation Board

The logo for Victoria College, featuring a stylized 'VC' in white on a red swoosh, with the words 'VICTORIA COLLEGE' in a bold, serif font below it, and 'Est. 1925' in a smaller font at the bottom right.

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