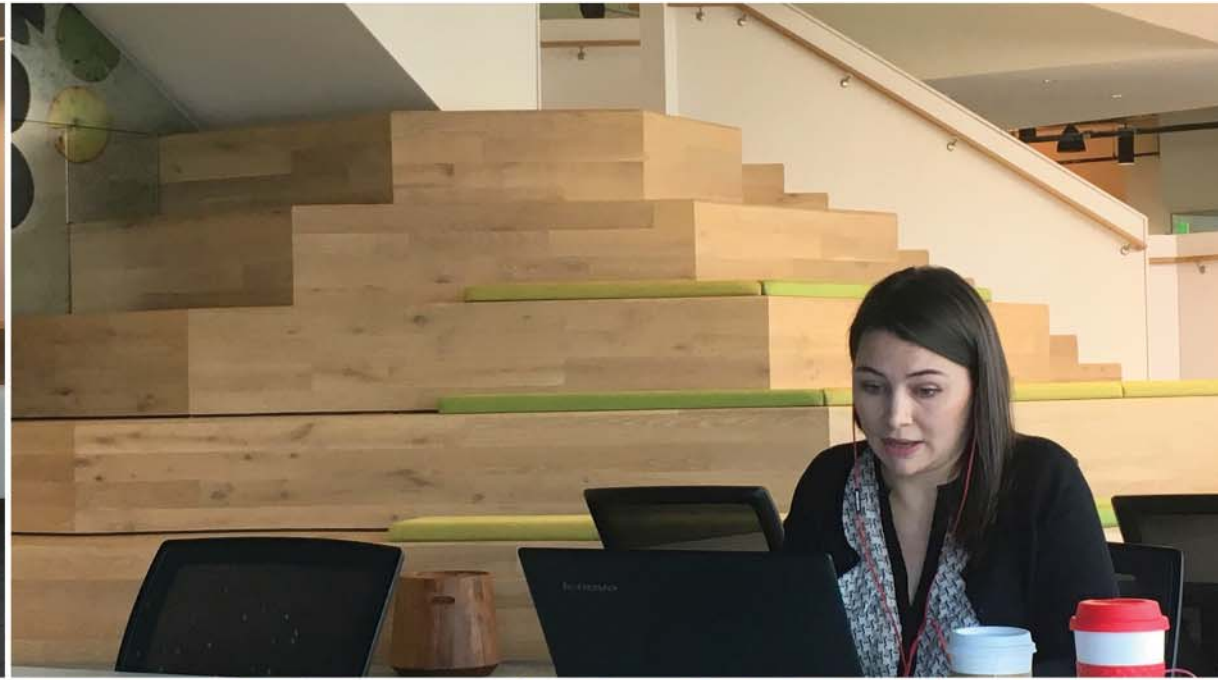


White-Glove Service for Office

TechSpace defines coworking in Houston for startups, satellites and small businesses



Bayou Some Office Space: Well, lease some anyway for as little as three months at TechSpace, Westchase District's newest coworking space located at CityWestPlace.

Say you own a small business that's ready to graduate from your garage to a big boy office but you can't quite commit to a multi-year commercial lease. Or, say you work for a large company that wants to shrink its footprint, set up a branch office, test a solution or develop a secret project. What to do? Enter TechSpace.

Catering to entrepreneurs and small businesses from one to 30 people with flexible, on-demand office facilities, TechSpace recently opened its doors in Westchase District in Building 1 of CityWestPlace. With two floors of fully-equipped conference rooms and 95 private office suites totaling 450 workstations, TechSpace offers its clients three-month to 12-month leases.

While they might be the new kids in town, TechSpace has been working the shared space coworking business since 1997. A national provider of office space with locations in New York, San Francisco, Orange County and Austin, TechSpace's 46,000 square-foot location at 2101 CityWest Boulevard marks its first foray into the Houston market.

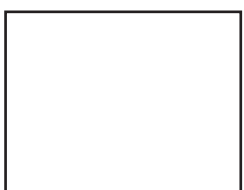
Hotel experience

While sublease space can be found in West Houston, Vic Memenas, CEO of TechSpace, said it can't compare with the culture, community and amenities

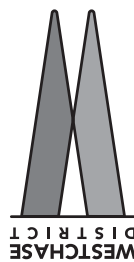
his company offers. "People have thriving businesses that need to grow and they want a dynamic work environment," he said. "We provide them that environment with best-in-class service and a community in which to meet other like-minded individuals so that their experiences can be the best possible."

Brendan McGee, the company's vice president of operations, likened TechSpace to a first-class hotel. "We take care of everything for you, so that you don't have to deal with the day-to-day challenges of running an office - freeing up your workers to focus and get work done," he said. "We meet and greet all your visitors,

(Continued on Page 8)



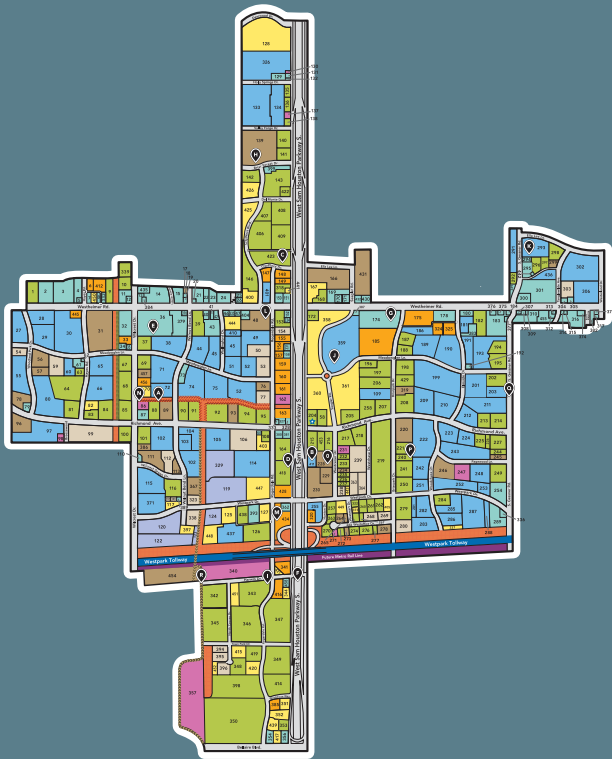
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IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2 Corporate Challenge Recap
- 3 Farmers Market News
- 4 Trails Near Completion
- 5 Designer Divas
- 6 Marini's Empanada House
- 6 Moving into Folio West
- 7 Meaningful Change
- 7 Meet Officer Noe Alvarado

WESTCHASE TODAY is published quarterly by Westchase District, a municipal management district funded by local property owners in a 4.2 square-mile area centered on the Sam Houston Tollway between I-10 and US-59 on the west side of Houston, Texas. We promote economic growth by enhancing mobility, beautification, public safety, planning and development of the District.



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Building Momentum

We highly recommend reading *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...And Others Don't* by Jim Collins. It is an enlightening study of what companies have done to perform at a higher level over extended periods of time.

One of the concepts developed is that of the flywheel. In short, it expresses the effect of numerous small improvements leading to sustained high performance.

This edition of *Westchase Today* has four different stories about elements that are precisely what constitute those flywheel-type elements. Each of these has a positive impact by itself, but taken together they are in fact complementary and interrelated. But the point of this article is that the whole is indeed far greater than the sum of the parts.

The opening of TechSpace is a lead article by virtue of their having selected Westchase District for their first site in Houston. It is a major lease, and will bring in jobs and attract additional companies. And, over time, will result in the formation of new companies here.

However, what makes it a flywheel development is that it is the cutting edge concept for office space for small companies. The benefits of collaboration and innovation among these new companies take it far beyond the level of any executive suite. Attracting high tech, innovative, and spin off companies is a key part of the District's growth strategy. So we need more options for their offices.

We also need leading-edge rental housing for the people that work in these companies and see that in the completion of Folio West (see Page 6). These upscale, mid-rise apartments are part of the new trend of higher density, amenity rich



Westchase District General Manager Jim Murphy (left) and Board Chair Philip Schneidau.

properties that focus on the "renter by choice" demographic. The story on this property's opening presents the next flywheel innovation for the District.

The next element is of course the extension and expansion of the hike and bike trail network (see Page 4). These linear parks provide infill recreational opportunities. They are also another option in our transportation network and a new element of connectivity in our community. If you haven't already made use of this network, the time is now.

Having unique stores like Designer Diva (Page 5) and restaurants like Marini's Empanda House (Page 6) are also part of this package of elements to attract and serve residents seeking a more urban lifestyle.

The cumulative positive effect of each of these projects will contribute to a continued high quality of life in Westchase District. They will help maintain its strong position in terms of its ability to service residents, businesses, and employees. The momentum increases.

Costello, Inc., Tailored Brands, Revere Middle School winners at Corporate Challenge

20th annual event generates fun for participants, cash for charities

For the seventh year in a row, a team from Costello Engineering, Inc. claimed the coveted traveling trophy (well, truthfully, it hasn't traveled in quite a while) as overall winner of Westchase District's 20th annual Corporate Challenge. The "blue" team, led by Brent Palermo earned top honors, while Tailored Brands' "Buy 1, Get 4 Free" team, led by Stacy Malin, came in second. Third place in the six-event competition went to the Paul Revere Patriots, led by Johnny Davis.

Forty-five teams competed this year, including new participants from: Camp Gladiator; D.E. Harvey Builders; the office of Dorothy Paul, DDS; EHealth Data Systems; MCMC; and Premier America Credit Union. Each team participated in six different athletic events - NBA 2-ball, briefcase relay, hungry hippo, soccer kick, pickleball and dodgeball.

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Farm-tastic Activities All Summer Long

District presents seasonal fun series to introduce kids to farmers market

This summer, put down the electronics, pack up the family and plow on over to Westchase District Farmers Market where the second Thursday of each month will feature FREE, farm-tastic, family-friendly activities for kids ages 12 and under. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

- **Thursday June 8**
Taste test contest (kids sample different fresh fruits then vote on their favorites), plus an inflatable barnyard!
- **Thursday, July 13**
Harris County Master Gardener, beekeeping demonstrations and face painting
- **Thursday, August 10**
Barnyard petting zoo (pet them, pick them up, take pictures with them!)



Vegetables and Nuts: Look for some nutty staffers in costume this summer during our Farm-tastic Summer Series for Kids.

Plus, enjoy activity sheets and photos with our costumed vegetables! Each child receives a reusable shopping bag and \$2.00 of “Market Moolah” to spend at the market (while supplies last).

Grant recipient

The series is underwritten in part by a \$1,000 grant from Capital Farm Credit, who awarded 29 grants in 2017 totaling \$31,500 to farmers markets across the state.

“Many consumers today have little appreciation for the hard work it takes to put food on our tables,” said Jay Stewart, chief lending officer for

Capital Farm Credit. “Local farmers markets provide an opportunity to connect and help tell that story. We established the farmers’ market grant program to provide these local markets with additional resources they need to support local farmers.”



Taken for Grant, But Not for Granted: Westchase District Farmers Market Manager John Carey (center) accepts a \$1,000 grant check from Capital Farm Credit.

“We hope the promotion will attract children and their families to the market, exposing them to new foods they might not have heard of, explaining to them how fruits and vegetables grow and are harvested, and educating them about money management,” said John Carey, Westchase District Farmers Market manager. “Plus, the series keeps things fresh and interesting at the market. Who knows? Maybe I’ll get my face painted, too,” he added, laughing.

New vendors

Carey said he’s excited about three new producers who have recently joined the market:

1. Christina Gutel with **Fine Art Farms** in LaPorte sells sustainably grown fruits and vegetables
2. Melanie McQuinn with **New Harvester Farm** in Hockley has fresh-picked dewberries, herbs and plant starts as well as fresh flowers
3. Jill Cox with **Jolly Farms** in Alvin deals in whole chickens

“Each of these new vendors brings something different to the market and we’re thrilled to be able to offer our customers more products,” Carey said. “We’re consistently averaging about 25 vendors each week.”



New Vendors: (from left) Christina Gutel with Fine Art Farms in LaPorte; Melanie McQuinn with New Harvester Farm in Hockley; and Jill Cox with Jolly Farms in Alvin

Westchase District Farmers Market

Year-round, rain or shine, Thursdays @ 3 p.m.

St. Cyril of Alexandria Catholic Church
10503 Westheimer Road
(at Rogerdale Road, one block west of Beltway 8)

www.westchasedistrictfarmersmarket.com

The winners in the individual events were:

- NBA 2-ball:** Tailored Brands
- Briefcase Relay:** Revere Middle School
- Hungry Hippo:** Costello, Inc.
- Soccer Kick:** LJA Engineering
- Pickleball:** Costello, Inc.
- Dodgeball:** McCall, Gibson, Swedlund & Barfoot

Summer camp and charitable support

The awards were presented at an April 24 luncheon, which also recognized title sponsor Amegy Bank as well as major sponsors of the 20th annual event: Camden; Camp Gladiator; D.E. Harvey Builders; First Methodist Houston; Frost Bank; Houston Marriott Westchase; IronEdge Group; Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam, Inc.; Olympus Property; Palazzo’s Trattoria; Pape-Dawson Engineers; Parkway, Inc.; Premier America Credit Union; PS LIGHTWAVE; Quillian Center; and Zachry Engineering.

Since 1998, the Westchase District’s Corporate Challenge has raised more than \$243,000 for area charities, including Quillian Center’s summer day camps. The money is distributed by the Westchase District Community fund, the nonprofit arm

of the District. WDCF Chairman Tim Johnson presented a \$10,055 check to Quillian Center at the award lunch. The money is used by Quillian to provide need-based scholarships for area children to attend Quillian Center’s summer day camps.

“We’re grateful for our long-time relationship with Westchase District and the Corporate Challenge,” said Tom Gaden, Quillian Center Director. “And we appreciate all the area businesses that participate in this event and help generate the contributions that will convey directly to area kids.”



The Wild Ones: The Costello, Inc. “Blue” Team won First Place Overall in the 20th Annual Westchase District Corporate Challenge.

New Trails Nearing Completion

Brays Bayou Connector Trail, HCC Campus Trail set to open this summer

All roads might not lead to Westchase District, but two new amenity-laden trails are debuting this summer that will lead users through the District while steering clear of roads filled with motorists.

The Brays Bayou Connector Trail (BBCT) will run south from Richmond Avenue to Bellaire Boulevard with underpasses at Richmond, Westpark Drive, Westpark Tollway, Harwin Drive and Bellaire, connecting to Harwin Park, Art Storey Park and the Westchase METRO Park & Ride, as well as with Harris County's planned Brays Bayou Trail system.

The HCC Campus Trail will run south from Westheimer near Houston Community College's Hayes Road campus along a CenterPoint Energy powerline corridor. With a mid-street crossing at Meadowglen Lane, the trail will continue south to Richmond where users can take the existing sidewalk east to the District's Library Loop Trail and connect to the BBCT.

"It's all about building connections," said Irma Sanchez, Westchase District's vice president of projects. "To travel from Westheimer to Art Storey Park was unthinkable just a few years ago. With these off-road trails, people will be able to enjoy an outdoor walk, run or bike ride without having to dodge car traffic."

Tree groves

Enhancing the off-road beauty of the trails, Westchase District is generously landscaping the Brays Bayou Connector Trail. Workers will plant some 238 trees along the 1.92-mile trail, including three 200-gallon Mexican Sycamores between the Westpark Tollway and Harwin Drive near the trail's METRO Park & Ride connection.

"We've selected drought-tolerant trees with large shade canopies and seasonal colors such as Swamp Red Maples, Mexican White Oaks and Bald Cypress," Sanchez said. "We've had a lot of experience discovering what thrives in the soil around Westchase District, so our choices reflect what we believe will be low-maintenance yet attractive landscaping."



Tricked out with Trees: More than 200 trees are being planted on the Brays Bayou Connector Trail. Workers are planting several varieties that perform well in this environment, including Magnolias, Redbuds, Bald Cypress, Monterrey Oak, Mexican Sycamore and Red Maple.



Headed for the Kiln: This mosaic design will be fashioned into a ceramic tile to decorate a seat wall along the BBCT.

Mosaic tiles

Art students from Elsie High School have been studying the concept of sacred geometry and are turning their own geometry designs into ceramic mosaic tiles that will be incorporated into concrete seat walls along the Brays Bayou Connector Trail.

The tiles are another example of Westchase District incorporating art into the public spaces along its trails. Murals already adorn the Library Loop Trail and new signs soon will guide and inform trail users.

Portals, maps and spikes

Decorative and useful signage will be positioned at 18 entry and exit points along the trail network. Each portal sign will feature a map of the trails, helping visitors navigate the growing trail system. In addition, 21 metal trail spikes will be placed along the trails at key decision points as well as at areas of interest. They will include information about the history and ecology of the area, as well as the role of transportation as a key theme to Westchase District.

"We want to share with the public information about the Westchase area we've collected from previous historical research," said projects director Louis Jullien. He added that trail users can expect to learn about everything from the trees to the birds to the aquatic life found along the District's trail network.



Looking Buff: Sign fabricators are welding and polishing the metal signs that will be located at trail entry and exit points.

Trails without trash

As a way to introduce the public to Westchase District's trail network and encourage community involvement, the District will host a "Trails without Trash" event on Saturday, July 22 from 8 to 10 a.m., starting at the trail's connection to the Westchase METRO Park & Ride, 11050 Harwin Drive.

You can join employees from some of West Houston's top companies while picking up debris along one of the District's three trails. "It's designed to be a brief cleanup effort," Jullien said. "Actual time spent picking up trash will only be about 45 minutes. We'll have breakfast and drinks for everyone and possibly some free Westchase District swag for participants." To sign up individually or as a company, contact Jullien at 713-780-9434.



Pairing Fashion with Philanthropy

Couture and the disadvantaged are given new life at Designer Diva

Tucked in the corner of a Westchase District strip center sits Designer Diva, the largest designer resale shop in Texas. With more than 20,000 square feet filled with deeply discounted famous maker gowns, furs, handbags, shoes, accessories and more, it's a hidden gem filled with hidden gems.

Inventory and intuition

One factor to owner Michelle Puckett's success is a vast network of consigners who bring in their designer clothing, handbags, jewelry and shoes in return for 40 percent of the selling price. "We have more than 7,200 consigners who come from as far as The Woodlands and Galveston and some who even mail things in to the store," she said. "Many of our items have never been worn or only worn once. A lot of women don't have the money to spend on designer names, but they still want nice things. So why pay retail when you can save with resale? Also, we keep everything on the sales floor, so you can shop for all seasons all year long."

Another factor contributing to the store's success is Puckett's staff, who bring more than three decades of collective experience to her business. "I'm fortunate to have a highly talented team of ladies who instinctively know what will look good on particular customers as soon as they walk through our doors," she said. "I don't have to micromanage them - I just turn them loose and let them do what they do best."

For store manager Carole Barela, that means relying on her fashion intuition to suggest the right item to the right customer. "I can tell what size someone is as soon she enters the store, as well as what styles and colors would look best on her," she said. "But from there, it's about making sure the customer has a fun shopping experience. It's more than just about a great price on the merchandise, it's about putting it all together so that people leave not only with a look they like, but that they had a good time with us."

Customer liaison Trina Morgan said whether someone is spending \$10 or thousands of dollars, she listens to her customers and gives each one the same attention to detail. "By being attentive, I can learn what style a customer is comfortable with and suggest companion pieces or accessories. Plus, I'm a Chatty Cathy so I can hit it off with just about anyone," she said, laughing. "All of us want to save money without sacrificing fashion."

Puckett also employs a Parisian seamstress on-site for alterations or custom pieces. Barela customizes jewelry, such as converting traditional earrings into clip-ons. Several times a year, Designer Diva hosts fashion shows using a lighted, 90-foot runway that runs through the center of the store. "We've had music acts, authors, and fashion design students who have used the runway," Puckett said. "It's a great asset to the store and is unique to us."

Blooming Butterflies

Ten percent of all Designer Diva sales supports Blooming Butterflies, Inc., a nonprofit Puckett created in 2010 that helps disadvantaged families, battered women, the elderly and other nonprofits, as well as conservation of endangered Monarch butterflies. "I think butterflies are a great metaphor for transformation and I hope that my efforts can help to transform the lives of others," she said.

About 2,000 square feet of backroom space at Designer Diva is dedicated to Blooming Butterflies, which provides donated clothing and basic necessities to those in need. Puckett even has built her own outdoor butterfly garden behind her store. "I've planted butterfly weed, milkweed and nectar plants to attract and cultivate them," she said. "I've counted 72 butterflies in my garden so far this year. My next step is to build a netted cage to protect them from predators. Now THAT will make for a unique shopping experience!"

Designer Diva
11324 Westheimer
281-497-6991
designerdivallc.com

Blooming Butterflies
bloomingbeautifulbutterflies.org



Meet the Divas: (from left) Customer liaison Trina Morgan, store owner Michelle Puckett and store manager Carole Barela specialize in high fashion at lower prices at Designer Diva.



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Booking New Leases for Luxury Living

Tenants begin filling Folio West apartment community

Folio is a book or pamphlet made from folded sheets of paper. By coincidence, the newest luxury apartments to be folded into Westchase District – bookending a trio of newly constructed communities – has a fitting name: Folio West. It is the 54th apartment community to be a part of the District and its opening is on the heels of The Heights at Westchase and the second phase of Portico at West 8. Together, the three communities have added more than 800 luxury units to the area in the past two years.



An Uncommonly Hip Common Area: Lots of natural light and modern finishes are hallmarks of the new Folio West luxury apartments.

Developing a draw

Folio West, a 266-unit community located at 2525 CityWest Boulevard, is a development of Patrinely Group and USAA Real Estate Company. The developers were first drawn to the District in 2011, when they acquired 2500 CityWest, a Class A office Building, purchasing the building along with two adjacent parcels totaling six acres.

“We felt the Westchase submarket was prime for developing multifamily,” said Robert Fields, president and CEO of Patrinely Group. “It’s a great employment center which continues to draw a young, highly educated workforce to nearby companies such as Phillips 66 and BMC Software. Also, it offers a desirable and dynamic lifestyle market, which attracts renters. Ultimately, we kept one parcel to develop Folio West, and sold the other parcel to a retail developer.”

The retail parcel next to the apartments is under construction and to date have secured several eateries, including MOD Pizza, Panera Bread, Yogurtland and Zöe’s Kitchen. “We view these tenants as an amenity to the renters of Folio West as well as the tenants in our office building,” Fields said.

Location and amenities

Fields is pleased that Folio West sits on a superb location. “Our property is located right off of the West Sam Houston Tollway and Westheimer Road, providing easy access to the rest of Houston,” he said. “We feel that Westchase is the center of West Houston.”

Folio West features two courtyards – one with a pool with an outdoor kitchen, spa and cabanas, and a second private courtyard with fire pit, bocce ball court and water feature. Other amenities include an entertainment room with a media wall, billiards and gaming tables, a fitness center, bike storage and repair, and a pet grooming station.

The target market for the leasing office is professionals working in the surrounding area of Westchase District. “Our current residents love the modern, hip, and sleek features and amenities that Folio West has to offer,” said Aldrin Young, property manager with ZRS Management.

The first residents began moving into Folio West May 1, and leasing activity has been strong. “We feel our apartments are the highest quality in the area and our rents are competitive. We’re currently 10 percent leased and most of this was accomplished prior to opening the building in May. Good traffic is expected to continue in the coming months as we get into summer.” And that, is a story worth putting in a folio.

A Decade-Plus of Delicious Doughy Delicacies

The Original Marini’s Empanada House celebrates 11 years in Westchase District

For 15 years, the Original Marini’s Empanada House was a Houston landmark in Montrose, but went dormant after a 1985 fire destroyed the business. Then in 2007, the Marini family opened another store in the Carillon Shopping Center. “The landlords were not convinced that we would last,” said Marcello Marini, the 78-year-old Marini family patriarch. “But 11 years later, we’re still here.” Today, Marini’s is a Westchase District landmark, world-renowned for its authentic, hand-held pastries made daily from scratch, along with Argentine sandwiches, desserts and wines.



In the Hands of a Master: Marcello Marini demonstrates how to fold and crimp a thin circle of dough into an empanada. Marini has been making empanadas for more than 50 years.

Immigration and innovation

Growing up in Argentina, making empanadas was a family tradition for Marini. “I learned from my grandmother who learned from her grandmother,” he said. “I came to the United States knowing how to make five different kinds of empanadas. Now we have more than 80 different varieties on our menu, both savory and sweet. And we can custom make anything you want, from Texas-style barbecue to a pot pie filling to a Reuben sandwich. You name it, we can put it in there.”

Marini immigrated to the United States in 1968 to continue his career in broadcast journalism, detouring into the restaurant business in the early 1970s. “I’m Italian by blood, Argentine by birth and a United States citizen by choice,” he said. “I believe that constantly innovating and thinking globally are two secrets to success. We’ve sent our

empanadas frozen or packed in dry ice to locations as far away as Saudi Arabia. We get a lot of requests to ship empanadas, especially after a big convention or an event like the Super Bowl. Once people have tasted them, they’re hooked.”

Fieri and family

Marini’s empanadas hooked some national attention this spring when the Westchase District location was featured on the Food Network’s popular reality

show, *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives*. Celebrity host Guy Fieri helped Marini prepare beef gaucho empanadas from scratch and described them as “stuffed food paradise.”

“The segment aired on Friday, March 31,” Marini said. “On Saturday, April 1, we had the highest sales we’ve ever had in the store and sales have been up ever since.”

Marini is no stranger to television, having served on-air as a news anchor for KTMD Telemundo 47 for decades before retiring in 2012. “I’m a newsman by trade; this whole empanada thing is just my hobby,” he said jokingly. “Actually, it is my passion. I make each empanada with love and my employees all know to honor the food we make for others.”

However, Marini’s greatest love is for his family. “For all my awards and accomplishments, I’m proudest of my five kids, 16 grandchildren and four great grandchildren,” he said, his eyes welling up with tears. “They are my true legacy.”



Reality Stars: Marcello and Pelusa Marini (left) were visited by restaurateur and television personality Guy Fieri for a recent feature on the popular *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives* show on the Food Network.

The Original Marini’s Empanada House

10001 Westheimer Road, Suite 2570

713-266-2729

theoriginalmarinis.com

City-wide Initiative Aims to Curb Panhandling and Homelessness

Meaningfulchange.org offers better alternative to street solicitation

As the economy has faltered, more individuals stake out street corners, grab their cups and cardboard signs and solicit money from strangers. Their signs are plaintive: “lost job,” “single mom,” “unemployed veteran,” or “have cancer/no insurance.”

Some motorists are motivated to help these individuals, handing out whatever spare change they have in their possession or distributing carefully-assembled plastic bags with toiletries and snacks. But how do you know that your donation is really helping someone in need?

Panhandling does not equal homelessness

That’s why the City of Houston, spearheaded by Mayor Sylvester Turner, has developed a new program aimed at bringing help to those who really want to get off the streets. The campaign, which is supported by numerous faith leaders, non-profit organizations, civic association and management districts, encourages Houstonians to give to organizations working to end homelessness rather than give to panhandlers on the street.

More than 100 organizations work through the Houston Coalition for the Homeless to offer assistance to individuals and help them get off the streets. Most advocates for the homeless are in agreement that giving to panhandlers keeps needy people from seeking long-term solutions like housing, health care or employment. “You’re not really helping someone by giving them money,” said Sonya Scott, chief operating officer of West Houston Assistance Ministries. “It just allows them to continue living in their current circumstances. Please direct them to WHAM where we can offer a path out of homelessness.”



WHAM offers help in West Houston

WHAM, located at 10501 Meadowglen Lane, provides a variety of services to help individuals and families in need, “We’ll offer food from our pantry, plus food and clothes,” said Scott. “We’ll even help them find a job if they’re ready for that. There are many barriers to helping a person out of homelessness. Sometimes it’s mental illness or lack of any identification. It can take up to a year to get them situated, but we can help them get into temporary housing and off the streets.”

Mayor Turner encourages individuals to contribute to the The Way Home fund through www.meaningfulchange.org. All of the contributions received will go toward helping a homeless person settle into permanent housing. The campaign is being promoted throughout Houston with billboards, bus stop signage, social media and radio ads

Panhandlers draw complaints

“Complaints against street solicitation and aggressive panhandling are the top complaints that come in to the Westchase District offices from our stakeholders,” said Mark Hubenak, public safety director. “We hope this program will result in getting the proper resources to help individuals escape homelessness and fewer police resources being used to respond to complaints of panhandling.”

For Houston’s homeless, there really is a “way home,” if they’ll just take advantage of it.

For more information and resources on addressing homelessness, visit www.meaningfulchange.org, www.thewayhomehouston.org and www.homelesshouston.org.

HPD Officer Unlocks Robbery Investigations

Ofc. Alvarado’s Westchase Patrol shift is more routine

Like most police officers, HPD Officer Noe Alvarado has been involved in dangerous vehicle chases, foot pursuits of suspected criminals and epic drug busts. But his Tuesday and Wednesday shifts in Westchase District bear little resemblance to his daily work for HPD.

While on-duty in the Westchase District Patrol vehicle, Alvarado circulates through hotel and retail parking lots. His mere presence dissuades any would-be criminals and his keen eye notices the slightest out-of-place scenario that demands a little extra attention. Observing a man leaning against the side of an exterior wall at a hotel, he stops to ensure the man is okay and is a registered guest at the hotel, before going on his way.

Knowing that BMVs (burglary of a motor vehicle) are still a top crime throughout Houston, he’s on the lookout for individuals who might be sitting in their cars observing the comings and goings of others and looking for opportunities to strike. And he does all this with his ears tuned to the police radio, listening for any priority calls to be announced.

Lights and sirens

Recently, his casual patrol of Westchase District was interrupted by a radio call of a shooting just outside Westchase District. Alvarado responded to the crime scene to assist his fellow officers. He spent less than half hour at the shooting scene, as other on-duty HPD officers arrived to continue the work of checking for surveillance tapes and interviewing witnesses. It was a rare bump in adrenaline on his Westchase shift.

Alvarado began his career with HPD in 2006 as a night shift patrol officer with the Westside command. He has worked shifts for the Westchase District Patrol since 2013. During that time, his day job with HPD has moved him from the Gang Crime Reduction Unit to Robbery Investigation. He enjoys

the challenge of investigating robberies. “It’s like a puzzle and you have to put the pieces together,” he said. “Just one little clue can really change the investigation. You have to think like a criminal.”

This veteran police officer also credits his instincts with aiding in his crime fighting abilities, “That feeling in your gut is usually pretty good,” he said.

Alvarado has experienced the highs and lows of being a police officer as the national attitude toward law enforcement evolves with current events. “We don’t get too many thank yous, but I think I’ve touched some people in a good way,” he said. “I enjoy meeting new people and saying hello. You don’t know what impact that will have over the long term.”



You’ll rarely see the lights or hear sirens on a Westchase District Patrol vehicle. But Ofc. Noe Alvarado jumped into action recently to help out fellow officers responding to a shooting on Wilcrest, north of Westchase District’s boundaries.

(Continued from Page 1)

answer your main phone number for you, and deliver an experience that gels fun hospitality with a communal, interactive vibe. We're called TechSpace for a reason. As a small user off the street, you're getting a Fortune 100 user experience with our technology infrastructure platform at a tremendous value."



Halo-ed Ground: No they're not glowing angels (it's just the lighting), but Vic Memenas (left) and Brendan McGee think TechSpace's new facility at CityWestPlace might just be heaven for small and large business owners.

McGee said tenants stay on average about three years. "However, we've had clients for 10, even 15 years who appreciate our white glove customer service. We've had companies like Priceline, Pandora, Spotify, LinkedIn, Intel, eBay and Nike in our spaces as well as smaller local businesses."

One TechSpace client moving in at CityWestPlace is Connect Media, a Los Angeles-based commercial real estate marketing and communications company. Sales director Joni

Margotta is located in Dallas, but Connect recently opened a branch in Houston. "We have a TechSpace workstation in New York and we've really appreciated the ability to just pop in and plug in," she said. "As we've expanded into the Texas market, it made sense to us to have a workstation in Houston, plus when we have clients in town, it's nice to have a home-base. We love the location and TechSpace gives us the convenience and flexibility we need."

Alternative opportunity

Previously, TechSpace collaborated with Parkway, Inc., owners of CityWestPlace, on its Austin location. Mike Fransen, managing director with Parkway, said he's witnessed young entrepreneurs throughout Texas that were renting apartments for their makeshift offices because they needed short-term leases.

"As of 2014, there really wasn't coworking as we know it in Texas," he said. "I travelled the country researching the concept and determined there exists a huge opportunity to serve not just kid startups but blue chip companies as well. This CityWestPlace campus is on par with new construction by companies like Shell, BP and Phillips 66. TechSpace has the scale that can handle large energy company projects, providing the security, firewalls and the IT support that the big businesses expect."

Fransen added that it makes sense for some consolidated companies to have satellites throughout the city to keep in close proximity to clients. "I see this as the first of many locations where a strong membership base can drop in to a TechSpace and work with confidence in a curated experience," he said. "There's a much more open feel and a sense of community with TechSpace compared to other executive suites. You're not isolated - you'll get to know everyone as if you're with the same company. That opens doors for collaboration among businesses."

Room for collision

Designed by Houston-based PDR Corporation, the space features architectural elements intended to foster interactions among office workers. "We've included a terraced 'social staircase' between the first and second floors, which allows people to sit and have conversations over coffee," said Marc Bellamy, associate principal with PDR. "We've also installed some restaurant-style booths with power outlets underneath the tables where people either can have lunch or a meeting."

Bellamy said that in today's high-tech world when telecommuting is widespread, workers need a compelling reason to come to offices. "At PDR we feel that reason is 'collisions,'" he said. "Innovation rarely happens in isolation; it happens when people and ideas collide with one another. We've tried to enhance the community feeling of this space so that those collisions are more likely to occur."

TechSpace

2101 CityWest Boulevard
832-710-3003
techspace.com



On the cutting edge of coworking: From left: Jeannie Bollinger, Houston West Chamber of Commerce; Brendan McGee, TechSpace; Mike Fransen, Parkway Properties; Vic Memenas, TechSpace; and Amy Collins and Marc Bellamy, PDR Corporation

Neighborhood News

Chain retailers are finding Westchase District a desirable location to set up operations. Here's a roundup of the latest activity: **Torchy's Tacos**, home to popular Tex-Mex breakfast, lunch and dinner items, opened in May at 2675 Wilcrest Drive in the Westchase Shopping Center. The grand opening was marked by long lines, a taco cannon and free tacos.

Also now open in the Westchase Shopping Center is **Golf Galaxy** at 10855 Westheimer (between Palais Royal and Mattress One). The store, a division of Dick's Sporting Goods, occupies the location of the former Golfsmith and management is now hiring.



The Torchy's Tacos taco cannon

More restaurants are in the works at the northwest corner of Westheimer Road and CityWest Boulevard. Transwestern is developing a 12,000 sq. ft. center featuring **MOD Pizza**, **Zoe's Kitchen** and **Yogurtland**, as well

as a 10,800 sq. ft. adjacent building that will house a **Panera Bread** among other unannounced tenants. Expect to see the larger building open to the public this fall; the smaller building is expected to be delivered around next February.

Congratulations to the Westchase District Farmers Market on being named **one of the 10 Best Farmers Markets in Texas** by OnlyInYourState.com. The market ranked number 7 on the list. "It's hard to imagine anything growing in the fourth largest city in America, but you'd be surprised," writes Katie Lawrence.

"We're thrilled to make the list," said market manager John Carey. "It's a testament to our vendors and their steady presences at the market that help to make us deserving of such accolades."

If you didn't get in on our Corporate Challenge action this spring, you might want to consider signing up for the **World Corporate Games**, taking place all over Houston November 16 - 19. Billed as the largest corporate, multi-sport festival on



the globe, it's open to all businesses and organizations, regardless of their size and teams may include employees, colleagues, clients, family and friends. Everyone is encouraged to participate no matter the age or talent level. Sports include everything from badminton to beach volleyball, dodgeball to dragon boats and table tennis to a triathlon. To register, or for more information, visit www.wcghouston.com.

Westchase District now has a new **online "Find It" map** designed to help users find what they're looking for with just a few clicks or taps. The map includes: METRO bus routes and park and ride stations; trails; restaurants; hotels; banks; schools; and churches. "It's layered over Google Maps, so we're able to show not only an outline of the District, but we can show the surrounding area as well," said projects manager Louis Jullien. You can test out the map yourself at westchasedistrict.com/findit.