

A PUBLICATION OF VISIT THE WOODLANDS

#SoWOODLANDS

THIS IS THE LIFE



PAVILION
FRIENDS OF
HUNTSMAN

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SUMMER 2023
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Neighbors and Friends...

Ever since the ribbon cutting for the grand opening on October 19, 1974, The Woodlands has had a strong sense of community. Nearly 50 years later, we continue to see residents coming together at local events, business-owners becoming friends with customers, and passionate members of the community working with one another to create a better future for The Woodlands.

In this issue of #SoWoodlands, we'll see our community truly at work: building and supporting local businesses, bringing people together through a shared love for the arts, and enhancing The Woodlands experience for residents and visitors. This community is what makes The Woodlands a real hometown. Thank you for being a part of it.



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 Chairman of Visit the Woodlands

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Why The Woodlands?



Photos Courtesy
 Postino

The Woodlands embodies everything that excites us – a relaxed vibe connected to the beauty of the outdoors, the familial energy, its burgeoning food scene and the cultural vibrancy of an international population.

Lauren Bailey
 Co-founder, Postino

The Woodlands is home and has been since 2005 for me. It's a beautiful community with so much to offer its residents. We strive to create a welcoming space where you can gather, relax, press pause on the busyness of life, and enjoy coffee from the finest local roasters.

Monica Gauntt
 Owner, Blue Door Coffee Company



Photo Courtesy
 Blue Door Coffee Company

This growing community captures a new and innovative generation of young families that desire a dining destination that focuses on local produce and freshness – the main idea behind our neighborhood concept. We can't wait to meet our new neighbors in The Woodlands!

Shervin Sharifi
 Co-Owner, Local Table

Photo Courtesy
 Local Table



Articles in this issue have been condensed.
 Find the full articles and more online at visithewoodlands.com/sowoodlands

Tumbleweeds & Notions

Home to Gifts, Decor, and Community

In 2015, Caroline Powell took a leap of faith. She'd grown up in The Woodlands, graduated from Texas Tech, and spent three years commuting from The Woodlands to Katy for a corporate job. With a background in retail and a love for small businesses, she found herself at a crossroads: either move to Katy and stay in corporate-land, or do something different entirely. She chose the latter.

"It was like a push from the Lord that said, 'go and try, just go and do it,'" said Caroline, owner of Tumbleweeds & Notions. "We were really blessed with how things lined up in the timeline to open the shop. I left my job on June 1st, and we opened in August."

The young entrepreneur stocked the store with brands she loved and began sharing gifts, décor, and whimsy with The Woodlands. Her mom, Christy Powell, joined in to help. They're still working together eight years later, helping shoppers find the perfect gifts for their loved ones.

Tumbleweeds & Notions offers a wide array of gift options: greeting cards, art print, candles, clothing, accessories, kids' toys, and more. Caroline keeps the tried-and-true favorites in stock, but she's always on the lookout for new items to bring into the store.



“The community has kept us going and have carried us through on the days we’ve been tempted to give up.”

Caroline admits that there were times she wasn't sure if her shop would make it to eight years. Let's make it to three, she'd say to herself. And then, can we make it to five? The store faced potential closure after the first year, but an angel donor came in to keep them afloat. They haven't looked back since.

"We've definitely weathered some storms," said Caroline, "but our community in Alden Bridge and The Woodlands has been incredible. They've kept us going and have carried us through on the days we've been tempted to give up."

Over the years, customers have become friends and family to Caroline and Christy. People often swing by to shop and chat about life events with the mother-daughter duo. Some even bring treats for "Shop Dog Stella", Caroline's rescue maltipoo that comes to the store several days a week.

For the two ladies behind Tumbleweeds & Notions, these relationships are the highlight of it all. "It's fun to find your place within the community," said Caroline. "The community is what makes The Woodlands feel like home."



Pictured left to right: Christy Powell, Stella, and Caroline Powell



Azzurro

Italian Coastal Cuisine

There's nothing quite like sitting on a patio, overlooking Lake Woodlands with a glass of wine in hand and food on the way....especially when you're about to try something new from Azzurro's mouth-watering menu.

Italian seafood specialties, hand-crafted pastas, braised meats, house-made desserts. There's plenty to choose from, including unique dishes like the Truffle Ravioli (with scratch-made squid ink pasta) and the Branzino Bagna Cauda (featuring a whole branzino served with black rice, exclusively produced in Piedmont, Italy). Oh, and of course, a temperature-controlled wine cellar with over 300 wine selections to enjoy.

Much like the dishes they serve, Azzurro's elegant interior design draws in inspiration from the coastal regions of Italy. The restaurant is one of several opened by the Orioli Restaurant Group, created by a local family whose roots go back to an Italian town in the region of Emilia-Romagna.

Originally from Ravenna, Italy, ORG founders Elda and Domenico Orioli have shared generational recipes with their guests since the 1970s, first in Venezuela, and now The Woodlands. Enrique Orioli, Co-Owner of Orioli Restaurant Group, remembers growing up on the coast of Venezuela where his family owned and operated an Italian restaurant.

“When we serve our guests, we are not only serving them a meal; we are sharing our family story through our cuisine.”



“We would cook freshly caught seafood using my grandparents' recipes from their hometowns in Italy,” Enrique said. “Those memories hold such a special place in my heart. We hope the community enjoys the uniqueness of the cuisine as much as we do.”

Azzurro Italian Coastal Cuisine is the Orioli family's fourth restaurant in The Woodlands, and they have two more slated to open this year: Costa Fina Latin Coastal Kitchen and Orioli's Cucina Italiana. Their other concepts include Terra Vino Italian Kitchen & Wine Bar and their flagship restaurant, Via Emilia.

“Food is much more than nourishment,” said Enrique. “It is a way we come together to connect and create memories. When we serve our guests, we are not only serving them a meal; we are sharing our family story through our cuisine.”

Pictured left to right: Enrique Orioli, Elda Orioli (Nonna Elda), Carlos Orioli, and Lileika Orioli.



 Azzurro Italian Coastal Cuisine
1950 Hughes Landing Blvd.

Q&A

“ We have a lot of talent in this area that needs to be seen. ”



Julie Verville

Owner and Gallery Director, Ardest Gallery

Local art collector and long-time resident of The Woodlands, Julie Verville, is bringing art and community together at Ardest Gallery. The newly reopened gallery in Grogan's Park will showcase talented Texas artists and engage art enthusiasts with monthly events and workshops.

Q: What art can people expect to see at Ardest Gallery?

A: We offer a full range, from contemporary to traditional landscapes and realism. We really want to cover as many bases as possible for art lovers. We specialize in emerging to mid-level career artists, and showcase Texas artists only, mostly local. We also offer art consulting, where we help people find art for their homes.

Q: What events do you have planned?

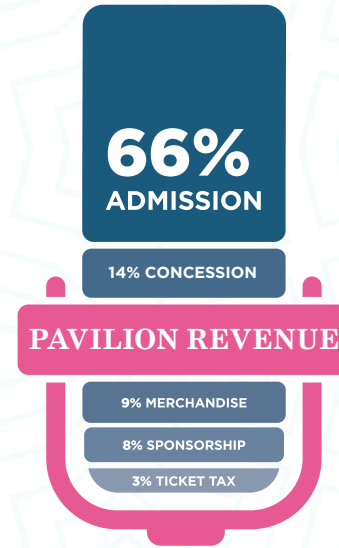
A: We'll have at least 15 to 20 ongoing events a month: various classes and workshops, poetry readings, artist coffee talks with the local coffee shop next door, Third Gen Coffee. We're also launching an "Art and Lunch" program with Amerigo's Grille. Thanks to a grant we received from The Woodlands Arts Council and our partnership with Village Books, we are able to offer an Art and Lit program for kids. We're trying to do as many outreach programs as possible to bring the community in.

Q: Why is it important for the community to support local artists?

A: We have an enormous talent pool of artists in this area, in all disciplines, who make their living this way. You can purchase a painting from a local artist, oftentimes for less than you can from a big box retailer – and when you do, you support someone that you can meet in person and talk to directly, rather than buying art off a shelf.

THE IMPACT:

A Few Facts About The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion



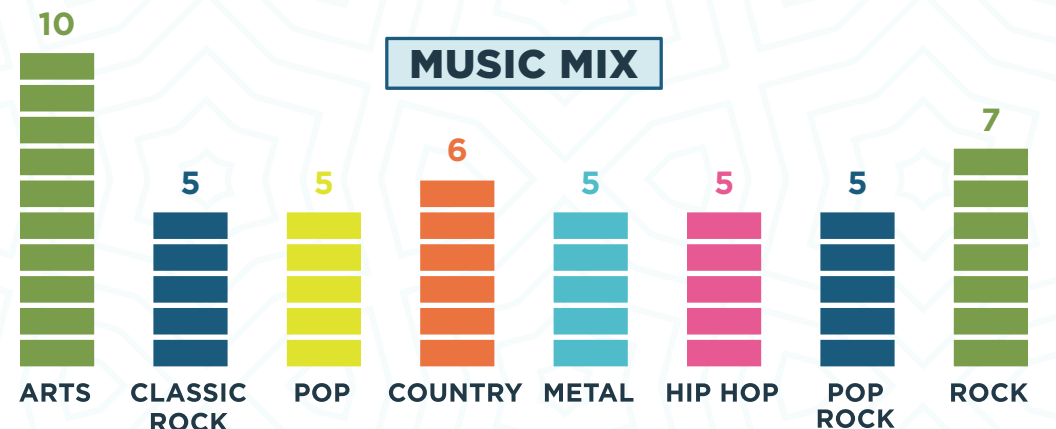
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MILLION
ATTENDEES SINCE 1990

4X
MORE THAN FOUR TIMES THE
POPULATION OF TEXAS

THE MAJORITY OF THE PAVILION VISITORS TRAVEL FROM THESE STATES!



40+ LIVE NATION EVENTS PER YEAR **20+** EDUCATION AND PERFORMING ARTS EVENTS



Source: The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion



This is The Life

When my husband and I were dating in the early 2000s, we attended a concert at The Pavilion. I remember parking our car in a field of dirt and trees – everything seemed so remote! A few years later, that same field is where Market Street came to life. I joined the team in 2005 and have watched it grow since then. I remember when the parking garage was built and when both North and South Market Streets were two-way roads versus the one-way circle we have today.

When I look back, I think about how many people’s lives have been touched by Market Street, and it’s incredible. Whether it’s a first date at Tommy Bahama, a first job at one of the retailers, or a Change for Charity recipient...I feel like we’ve affected a lot of people. At least, I really hope we have. Because it all goes back to the people. At the end of the day, we’re just stewards of this place, and it’s such a privilege to be a part of the growth and change of this community.

We are all pieces of fabric that make The Woodlands, “The Woodlands”. Market Street is one of them, alongside The Woodlands Mall, the businesses on The Woodlands Waterway, in Hughes Landing, The Village Centers, The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, and so many others. All of this is what makes it work. We lift each other up, and we, collectively, really have a sense of community here that I haven’t seen anywhere else.

Sometimes I feel like I’m living in a Norman Rockwell painting, or a Hallmark movie – especially during Market Street’s Annual Tree Lighting. Even when I’m not at work, overseeing the ins and outs of Market Street, I spend a lot of my free time enjoying the Town Center area. I can’t tell you how many staycations my family has had! We love it here. I mean, where else are you going to see public art outside of your HEB, or hear about visitors becoming residents because they want this to be part of their daily life?

This place is special, especially because of the people who choose to live here. I’ll never forget the food drive in the HEB parking lot after Hurricane Katrina. Everyone pitched in and did what was right, and you can’t say that happens everywhere. People here are nice, they want to do the right thing, and they’re driven by a deep sense of community. It doesn’t matter where you came from, because almost everyone who lives here moved here from somewhere else. The Woodlands is a melting pot of really good people, and I wouldn’t want to be anywhere else.



Jenny Taylor
Director of Visit the Woodlands
General Manager at Market Street



A lot can happen in 20 years! The above photo is from 2003, when **Market Street** was at its beginning stages. Now, the open-air shopping district is home to over 80 shops and restaurants, including Gucci, Kendra Scott Sips & Sweets and (coming this summer) Reel Luxury Cinemas and The Audrey Restaurant & Bar. It’s also been named the Best Shopping District in Texas by the Texas Travel Awards.



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