



**Outpost Houston**  
Making the unknown...Home

**MOSCOW... AND BEYOND**  
*By Evgenia Rozenfeld*

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*Fireworks at Moscow, Kremlin and Red Square*

**Myths versus Truth about Russia**

I am sure everyone has preconceptions about Russia: some think it is always winter; some think bears walk along the Red Square; others believe Russians only drink vodka and eat red caviar. There are many more preconceived ideas, and all of them are partially true.

Up to 9 months a year it's cold (as low as -30 degrees Celsius) and rainy. But it is warm and sunny from June through August.

There are no wild bears on the Red Square but you may bump into a Lenin or Stalin who, for a couple of dollars, will gladly pose with you for a picture. Other than in the city zoo, you won't find many animals in the city. You have to go further a field to the forests where Russians, who love to hunt, go.

As for vodka, this is unfortunately one of Russia's diseases and sometimes a bottle of vodka costs less than a bottle of water. But the government is taking certain measures to prevent alcoholism and it works in big cities. Nowadays it is illegal to buy black caviar for the most part and red caviar is very expensive. It is usually eaten on the Russian holiday "Maslenica" with pancakes, but it is not a traditional food.

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## *Russia... continued*

### **Why is Russia so special?**

Maybe because of its ancient history; maybe because of the natural beauty of the land and its rich natural resources (that are not always used in a proper way); maybe because Russians always hope for the best and don't think too much about tomorrow, but live in the moment; maybe because of corruption that is covered on the surface, but is very visible to anyone who wants to see it; or maybe because of all of this together.

I have lived in Russia almost all my life and love this beautiful country very much, but I understand that Russia has a lot of problems that need to be solved in order to build a fair political and financial system. Russia's problems shouldn't scare off tourists from visiting as there is so much to experience. If you ever get an assignment in Russia, you will enjoy every minute of it as it is an unforgettable experience.



### **What makes Russians different?**

Russians are very hospitable to people they know, but can be hostile to those they don't trust. Sometimes foreigners are treated poorly as Russians think of them as competitors, so make sure your intentions are understood from the very beginning. However, if you work for a foreign company, almost all Russian employees are very friendly and helpful, so the corporate environment is usually welcoming in big companies.

Russian women are very beautiful, have a strong spirit and are very independent. Many girls dream about getting married to a foreigner and strongly believe that it will make them happy, so that is why the percentage of males who come to Russia single and then return home married, increases every year.

Russian men are often very macho and were raised to believe that they must be responsible for the family. This societal expectation, combined with lack of decent jobs for the majority of the population, links into the mentioned alcoholism and family troubles many Russians experience.

The younger, post Soviet generation, has - in most cases - managed so far to bypass many of the societal ailments. They are educated, career driven, very ambitious and have a capitalist mind-set. It is not uncommon for most senior management (up to the CEO) in Russian companies to be below the age of 35, and for 26 year olds to be managing departments with 100s of people and doing so successfully.

### **What to see in Russia?**

There is so much to see in Russia... but perhaps the 2 cities that should be visited are Moscow and St. Petersburg.

#### **Moscow**

Moscow is the capital of Russia, it's political, scientific, historical, architectural and a business centre, from which power and might of the Russian state developed. Moscow is like a separate independent country and if you visited Moscow, you would understand that it is a very beautiful and international city that never sleeps.

Moscow is famous for its Red Square, Kremlin with its beautiful cathedrals that store invaluable treasures including state regalia and ancient icons. The Kremlin's most known temple is the Uspensky Cathedral that features one of the largest collections of Russian icons in the world. Moscow's most interesting museums are: Tretyakov Gallery and Pushkin Museum. And of course, don't miss the Bolshoi Theatre that has been under reconstruction for several years and now offers a variety of magnificent performances. While staying in Moscow, you will quickly come to understand the central role Moscow has always played in the long history of Russia.

**Russia...continued**

**Saint Petersburg**

Saint Petersburg is Russia's greatest historical and cultural treasure, it is Russia's "Northern Capital" - the famous "Venice of the North". Whether you are walking along its many picturesque canals or the wide Neva River during a dreamy white night, whether you are taking in the world-renowned ballet at the Mariinsky Theater on a magical winter evening, enjoying an early autumn afternoon in one of the city's outstanding suburban parks, or delighting in the world-class art collection at the Hermitage Museum, you are sure to appreciate the unique beauty and rich culture of the city on the Neva.

**And finally...how to survive in Moscow if you are an expat?**

Although there are challenges, overall the expat environment is very developed and it is quite easy to hide in one of the expat communities. Many people, however, take a more adventurous route and live in the city centre, which allows for easy access to the cultural and entertainment offerings of the city. As traffic can be gridlocked all night long, the city vs suburb decision becomes quite important in determining your lifestyle. To make the most of your experience, learning (basic) Russian is critical, as this will allow you a much greater measure of independence and will open the door to potential friendships. Either way, you can get help from Outpost to get settled in, and there are many other organizations where you can meet helpful and interesting individuals who share common interests. Last, be aware that Russia is very different from anything you may have experienced before, so be open to different ways of doing things, different attitudes and cultural values, and eventually you will find your place, your friends and your Russia.



*Famous Issacs Cathedral in St Petersburg*



*Famous Palace Peterhof in St Petersburg*



*Streets of Moscow, Gagarin Square*

## Past Presentations

### HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

In April, our "Coffee with a Twist" was a great learning event about Hurricane Preparedness. The session started with a remarkable and visually stunning photographic account of IKE which gave a realistic feel of how devastating a storm can affect our life. Our team member, Miranda, shared her personal experience on her encounter with IKE.

Jill F Hasling, President of the Weather Research Museum, a certified Meteorologist started the session by giving us a crash course on the science of weather and the knowledge of the weather's impact on the global community before advancing the topic of hurricane and sharing the latest forecast. According to Jill, they are forecasting a 90% chance of a tropical storm or hurricane landfall along the west coast of Florida. Texas has a 60% chance of the same.

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of our workshop, Mark Annas from the Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management equipped us with the tools to get informed, get prepared, and get involved. Knowing what to do is the best protection and a personal responsibility. Some quick takeaways on evacuation tips:

- If you evacuate, remember to take your \*disaster supply kit with you on the road.
- During Hurricane Season (1 June – 30 Nov), keep at least ½ a tank of gas in your car at all times.
- Rethink your needs ever year and update your kit as your household changes.

*\* Water (1 gallon/person/day), Food, First Aid Kit, Flashlight, Battery-Radio, Medications, Tools and Supplies, Cash, Important documents, pet supplies, Sanitation items, special items like diaper, etc.*



For more information, please visit the following websites:  
<http://www.hcoem.org/>  
<http://www.wxresearch.com/>



### DID YOU KNOW?

- Hurricane IKE's damages estimates are placed at \$18 billion, 3<sup>rd</sup> most expensive disaster in FEMA history, behind Katrina and Andrew.
- SPCA rescued > 1800 "Storm Pets" displaced by Ike and reunited > 500 pets with their owners.



## Past Presentations...continued

### NETWORKING KNOCKOUTS AND NETWORKING NO-NO'S

BY LAURA MORALES

As a grand finale to the first half of formal activities for this year, the May 2010 Coffee with a Twist consisted of a 2-hour session on "Networking" with Laura Morales, a highly sought after Communications Coach and Speaker from "Energize Your Look."

Through a lively and highly interactive discussion, Laura shared universal networking tips that cut across all forms of social interaction--from Boardroom meetings, to Christmas dinners, to School soccer practice!!! After going through networking "fundamentals" covering areas such as appearance, attitude and body language--with some great illustrative stories--Laura left us with four main points as the take away. "Since you NEVER know what might happen.....be a CALF--be Curious, pay Attention, Listen and Follow-up."

The session was well attended, and OH received several complementary comments and the attendees were completely energized by Laura!

For more information, please visit <http://www.energizeyouroutlook.com/>



### EDITOR'S NOTE

Hello from Outpost Houston! Can you believe it's summertime? Well, time flies when you're having fun and this is so true when you're involved with the Outpost activities organised just for you and your family. Here at Outpost Houston, we keep an exciting calendar of events throughout most of the year for the expat community with a wide variety of services. For those who were with us at HH Ranch Family day, I trust you had a Ball of Fun and check out the special photo collage on Page 10, you may find yourself featured!

During the Summer months, while we don't hold Open Houses, we continue to onboard and welcome new arrivals (the number increases significantly during the summer months), continue the Classifieds publication, work on special projects and prepare for our very busy Fall schedule. Coming up, we will be having wine tasting events and interesting workshops.

Lastly, we would love to hear from you. Let us know if you have information that would be useful for the expatriate community, as well as ideas and suggestions on improving our services. If you would like to write an article or have a burning desire to share an interesting subject, we welcome you to contribute to our Newsletter. Have a great summer!

Warmest Regards,  
Patricia Tan





## History at Our Door Step

By Hema Kamath



Within a twenty minute drive from Downtown Houston is a 604-foot tall monument, which has a pride of place in the Guinness Book of Records as the tallest monument tower in the World. This imposing structure, the **San Jacinto Monument**, stands at the site where the Battle of San Jacinto was fought on April 21, 1836. It was this famous battle that bought Texas its independence from Mexico. The 604-foot-tall monument, which is home to the San Jacinto Museum of History, looks over the battlefield. It commemorates the last battle that was fought, where General Sam Houston led the Texans to victory. At the Museum you can read about the battle itself, the commanders of the field, time line of events, the uniforms, the weapons and a lot more. The Albert and Ethel Herzstein Library in the museum houses documents, manuscripts, and books chronicling four centuries of Texas history.

### The Battle of San Jacinto

Here is a bit of background information on the battle itself. "The Battle of San Jacinto was fought at this site on April 21, 1836. The Texan army consisted of approximately 900 men under the command of General Sam Houston. The Mexican army consisted of approximately 1,300 men under the command of Mexican President Antonio López de Santa Anna. The Battle began at approximately 4:30 p.m. when the Texans, advancing under cries of "Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad!" attacked the Mexican encampment. The Battle lasted just 18 minutes, although the slaughter continued for hours. Only nine Texans were killed or mortally wounded. Mexican soldiers killed numbered 630. More than 700 Mexican soldiers were taken prisoner. The Battle of San Jacinto avenged the massacre of Texan soldiers at the Alamo (March 6, 1836) and Goliad (March 27, 1836), and gave Texas its independence from Mexico. The Battle also opened the door for the westward expansion of the United States.



### Battleship Texas State Historic Site

To turn your daytrip into a trip back in time, you should also visit the Battleship Texas that is just across from the San Jacinto Monument. It is the last of the battleships that participated in both World War I and II. Having been decommissioned in 1948, it is now anchored in the San Jacinto State Memorial Park, on the Buffalo Bayou, at 3523 Highway 134, (if your GPS does not accept this, try 3527 Battleground Road) LaPorte TX 77571. This magnificent Dreadnought has been patiently restored by volunteers and paid staff and the work was still continuing as we explored all the decks and galleys; saw the bonded stores, the doctor's and dentist's rooms and more. Many of the cabins, compartments and work areas have been refurbished to give us a glimpse of the life of a seaman on a warship.

Seeing the hammocks hung close to each other and imagining the cramped life style that the 1820 crewmembers would have had to endure, reminded me of my father who used to be in the merchant navy. He used to have a very nice cabin. But being at sea for months on end must have been difficult. It would take a special kind of person to enjoy such a life!

The *Texas* has various antiaircraft guns, armor piercing projectiles, torpedoes etc. One is actually able to sit at the artillery guns and move them to determine which direction and at which angle one would fire. It did bring out the child in all of us. Entry to most of the museum is free with a small charge to go to the observation floor and to watch the multi-image presentation.

We rounded up our day out with a beautifully cooked meal at the Monument Inn Restaurant (4406 Battleground Road). It was a well-earned treat as we were ravenous after all the climbing and exploring that we did on that cold windy Saturday in January.

### NOTE:

*Entry to most of the museum is free with a small charge to go to the observation floor and to watch the multi-image presentations. Please be reminded that the restroom on the ship is not for public use. However, there is a souvenir shop, a small cabin where you can get hot drinks, soda etc and restrooms before you climb on board. For more information on Battleship Texas, phone: 281-479-2431.*



## Teenage Drivers License, what you need to know

By Angelika Demski



As you all know there have been some changes in the Texas driving laws recently. Many of us may not be aware that there were changes regarding issuing and renewing a driver license too. Before the change non- Americans living in Texas on a visa received a driver license valid for 6 years. Since October 1, 2008 they will receive a driver license with a Temporary Visitor designation and status date on the face of the card. That date determines how long the license will be valid, usually the same as the visa expiration date. You will only be able to renew the license if you are able to provide proof that your lawful status has been updated or extended. If this period is less than 6 month no new driver license will be issued. In order to renew the license you need the following documentation:

- Social Security Card or SSN Affidavit, Passport, Visa, I -94, Written verification showing proof of Employment, copy of the passport of the primary visa holder (if you are a dependant).

The I-94 must be valid with a defined expiration date: It must have been issued for a period of at least one year and have at least six months validity remaining. If you leave before or with the visa expiration date all above will not result in any problems.

However it is a different story when you have a Teenage Driver in your family. Teenage drivers have to renew their license every year with the following documentation:

- Passport, Copy of passport of the primary visa holder, Visa, I -94, Written verification showing proof of Employment of the primary visa holder, Written verification showing proof of enrolment in school.

Again, the conditions for the I-94 are the same: It must have been issued for a period of at least one year and have at least six months validity remaining. That is the part where you can run into problems with a teenager. Here is a little example: the visa expiration date is in June 2010, the last entry into the US was in July 2009 and the birthday of your teenager is January 2010 – do the Math: only 11 month for the issuing period and only 5 month of it left. Unfortunately they make no exceptions at the DPS offices – if the I-94 doesn't meet the requirements (see above) no new license will be issued.

However, there is a way when you are eligible to renew your visa. When the paperwork for the visa renewal is done you will receive a new Approval Notice with a new I-94 attached, valid till the expiration date of the future extended visa. With this you are legally allowed to stay in the US until that date and you will be able to renew the driver license. Only if you leave the country after the expiration date of the first visa you need the new visa to enter the US again. Be aware that this process can last up to two month – or if you are willing to invest 1000 US\$ it is possible to get it done in two weeks. Should you require any clarifications, please contact Angelika from Outpost Houston.



## New Arrivals

Let us welcome to new families to our Houston community!

Achim Schempp and Iris  
Bashir Mirza and Raheela  
Bernardo Aranda Jimenez  
Carlos Aya  
Christopher Leaf and Lindsey Catherine  
Darren Kilbride and Thamine Matte  
Edwin Quint and Helga  
Ernesto Sanchez  
Felix Akeret  
Jean-Baptiste Juery and S.J. Vaganay  
Jeroen Vink and Semira  
John Dimech and Esther

Leonardo Rivas and Silvana Aurieme  
Marc Alberts and Vanita Kishinchand  
Prashant Chaturvedi and Rupam  
Rui Da Gama  
Shona Mathie  
Stephan Weber  
Syed Ahsan Ali  
Thomas Gan and Wan Chew  
Vanessa Goh and Choon Ming  
Wendy Wilson and Gary  
Wilfredo Blas and Ruby





## Dragon Boating along Buffalo Bayou

By Patricia Tan



Dragon boat racing is a flat-water, sprint paddling sport, with a paddling style similar to those in sprint canoe using single-blade paddles. It is the world's fastest growing water sport and is enjoyed by people of all ages in over 50 countries around the world.

Typically made up of 20 paddlers in pairs facing toward the bow of the boat, 1 drummer and 1 tiller, the challenge of dragon boat racing lies not in the paddling technique but rather in synchronizing with 19 other paddlers on the boat through all phases of the stroke and through the entire race course. The challenge is even greater for a mixed team of paddlers of different sizes and strength levels. Dragon boat races are typically 500 meters, but occasionally there are 250m, 1000m, 2000m and marathon races.

Originating in Southern China over 2000 years ago, dragon boat racing started gathering interest in the western world in the 1970s. Today, it is both a recreational and a highly competitive sport enjoyed by people of all ages. I was thrilled to witness a dragon boating event in Houston and concluded that it was truly a 'fusion' experience. While the rice dumplings, the traditional delicacy, were not served, the focus on the spirit of camaraderie and sportsmanship were intense throughout the whole event!

### History of Dragon Boat Festival

*In China, the Dragon Boat Festival is one of the most spectacular traditions and an exciting period for rowing competitions marked by the eating of rice dumpling called "Ma Chang". The Legend behind the Dragon Boat Festival embodies the story of love and service for one's country.*

*About 2300 years ago, a well-respected poet and statesmen named "Qu Yuan" lived in the Chinese Kingdom of Chu and served the government with integrity as Minister of State. He was disturbed by the corruption and court intrigues of many courtiers who resented his talent, popularity and sense of righteousness. It was said that other officials convinced the Emperor that he was corrupt and that his plea for reforms be ignored and had him banished from the Kingdom. For years, he wandered the countryside composing poems expressing his patriotism and love for the people. Either as an act of despair or a protest against the corrupt government, Qu Yuan threw himself into the Mei Lo river. Grief-stricken villagers who witnessed Qu Yuan's desperate act, tried to save the patriotic man. They sailed up and down the river to look for him and desperately thrashed the water with their oars and paddles to scare off the hungry fishes which might eat his body. To commemorate his patriotism, the fishermen and villagers threw cooked rice dumplings wrapped in silk or banana leaves, into the water in order to appease the spirits of the river on his death anniversary. These rice dumplings are called "Ma Chang".*





## BALL OF FUN! – HH RANCH, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2010



Brought to you and your families by Outpost Houston, we have our first outdoor picnic in history! Replacing the traditional Globetrotter Ball, this event brings together expatriates and their family members for a full day of activities for all ages. Participants enjoy a variety of activities in the private green park such as the inflatable obstacle course, merry-go-round, playground, boat carousel, paddle boats, lazy river, wading pool, sand volleyball, softball and list goes on! The wading and swimming pool was a real hit and many were chilling out in the pools.

The weather held out for us and the park was the perfect place as many expatriates have responded in our surveys that they wanted a 'green park' event for a change from the Black Tie Ball. Greeted with a generous spread of delicious brisket and sausage BBQ meal with unlimited soft drinks in our very own pavilion, everyone gets a OH Beer Mug as a door gift and kids start the 'Ball' rolling from a big selection of colorful balls of their choice!

Everyone gets a take home memento with their Family Portrait taken at our own Digital Station Start with their choice of the specialty scene! The Food Bank Charity was a success as our expatriates brought along generous supplies of non perishable items, ranging from rice to can soups, cereals, granula bars and lots more! There is nothing more heartwarming than helping the less fortunate, to give them the fuel they need to survive and even thrive. We are glad and proud to be part of this.

For those have rsvp for the event, you would have receive a survey link from us. Let us know what you think so that we can cater to your preferences more intimately! So do take a few minutes to tell us your thoughts.

Lastly, check out the special picture collage on the next page, your candid moments may be featured!

Our team sweat through the event but it was so gratifying to look around and see happy faces! And before I forget..... Plans for the year end Bash 2010 are underway so stay tuned!





## SPECIAL ..... FAMILY DAY PICTURE COLLAGE





## Preparing for a Baby in Houston

*By Shenequa Aranda  
Founder of [premierbabyplanning.com](http://premierbabyplanning.com)*



Preparing for a baby can be overwhelming for anyone and especially for expatriates. With proper planning for the birth and postnatal support, you can make it more manageable. Here are a few areas to consider.

First, do you want to have your baby here or in your home country? Make the necessary preparations at home if you decide to go back. Even if you choose to give birth at home, you need a contingency plan for giving birth here. This includes contacting your consulate to understand your country's citizenship rules and determine whether they may affect your child.

Whether you will deliver at home or here, you will need an obstetrician. Think about whether the doctor is affiliated with your hospital? Does the ob/gyn perform cesarean sections or will that be another doctor? Can the doctor give you the right amount of time? Convenient location? You should create a birth plan and interview at least three obstetricians that meet your criteria.

You will need to rely on your partner and include him or her in your planning. This ensures you are aligned and that you have an advocate during birth. Together, determine how much support will be needed after the baby arrives. One option is to hire a baby nurse or doula. If you are fortunate enough to have family come to provide support, you can still hire short-term help to cover gaps.

There are many baby products and services available. Focus on what you need first. An example is your car seat. In order to leave the hospital, he or she must be in a car seat. Get the best one for your lifestyle with a high safety rating that fits well in your vehicle. Once you've selected one, find out where you can go to get your car seat installed or checked. 4 out of 5 car seats in the United States are not properly installed.

You will need a pediatrician to evaluate your baby, before leaving the hospital. Like ob/gyns interview at least three pediatricians since he or she will be an important partner when making decisions regarding your baby. Ask as many questions as you need. Find out if the practice accepts your insurance. How does the doctor feel about vaccinations? What are the office hours? Convenient location? What happens if the doctor is on vacation? During the interview observe the office staff. Are they friendly? Do they seem competent?

A great resource is a mom's group. They provide community support and are familiar with resources providing referrals for great maternity shops, lactation consultants, childcare options, playgroups, and so much more.

There is a lot to consider, but by identifying the many support networks and focusing on the core needs, you can mitigate the stress and instead enjoy your pregnancy as the wonderful journey it is.





## Glimpse of Past Event



### NEW ARRIVALS MIX N MINGLE

On Wednesday, March 24, we were very pleased to have our first New Arrivals Mix N Mingle for the year hosted by Mariloli (spouse of Marvin Odum, President Shell Oil) at their lovely home in Memorial. The session was very well attended and was a great networking opportunity and warm welcome for everyone.

We were also very delighted to have Frazier Wilson, Director of Social Investments for Shell to share with us on volunteering opportunities. Shell takes great pride in the communities where we live and work, from volunteerism to sponsorship opportunities. We fund a broad array of community outreach projects, particularly in areas where our employees work and live. These projects range from small, local neighborhood improvements, to large donations and fundraising events for regional non-profit organizations. If you would like to find out more on volunteering opportunities, please contact Frazier at [frazier.wilson@shell.com](mailto:frazier.wilson@shell.com) or visit the website at [www.shell.com/us/energizyourfuture](http://www.shell.com/us/energizyourfuture).

Lastly, a big thank you to Mariloli for her continued support of Outpost Houston and her undying generosity.



## 4<sup>th</sup> JULY, INDEPENDENCE DAY



An Independence Day is an annual celebration commemorating the anniversary of a nation's assumption of independent statehood, usually after ceasing to be a colony or part of another state. It is also commonly known as National Day. On July 4, 1776, United States declare independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain. It is a national holiday marked by patriotic displays and all non-essential federal institutions (i.e. postal service and federal courts) are closed on that day. Celebrations often take place outdoors. Many politicians appear at a public event to praise the nation's heritage, laws, history, society, and people. Families often celebrate Independence Day by hosting or attending a picnic or barbecue and take advantage of the day off to gather with relatives. Decorations (e.g., streamers, balloons, and clothing) are generally colored red, white, and blue, the colors of the American flag. Parades often are in the morning, while fireworks displays occur in the evening at such places as parks, fairgrounds, or town squares.

In 2009, New York City had the largest fireworks display in the country, with over 22 tons of pyrotechnics exploded. Other major displays are in Chicago on Lake Michigan; in San Diego over Mission Bay; in Boston on the Charles River; in St. Louis on the Mississippi River; and on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

This year, 4<sup>th</sup> July falls on Sunday. Houston will set the stage for an extraordinary patriotic celebration – **“Freedom Over Texas”** @ Eleanor Tinsley Park at Buffalo Bayou (along Allen Parkway just outside downtown). Texas singer-songwriter Pat Green will headline the annual event held from 4 to 10 p.m. with the nation’s largest land-based fireworks show, presented by Shell 🇺🇸. Don't miss the spectacular show and fun!

For more information on the activities and celebration, please refer to <http://www.houstontx.gov/july4/factsheet.html>

## Outpost Staff Movements



**Outpost Houston is delighted to introduce our new team members. You will be meeting them in person at the upcoming events. We have asked the new members to introduce themselves:**

### **New Communications Editor, Evgenia Rozenfeld**

We are happy to introduce our new Team Member, Evgenia Rozenfeld who came all the way from Russia, Moscow.

*Evgenia:* In September my family moved to Houston from Moscow, where my husband was working on a long-term assignment as Head of Planning for the CIS. I have a Human Resources background and was working as Compensations and Benefits Manager for PwC in Moscow. After moving to Houston I obtained American Professional HR Certification, took courses at Rice University and began adapting to local life. I am very happy to join the Outpost Team and to have an opportunity to help families assimilate in Houston. I am personally going through those cultural assimilation challenges and understand the value of support from friends and organizations like Outpost. I find Houston very different from Moscow in everything: people, food, traditions, relationships, work/life balance.... but we are enjoying every day of our new assignment here and hope to have a lot of new exciting experiences living in a new country."



### **New Librarian Volunteer, Margot Verheijen**

Margot, a familiar face at OH and one of our welcoming volunteers will be our very own OH Librarian. We are delighted to have Margot to succeed Angelika who has fully assimilated into her new Welcomer role!

*Margot:* Hi, I'm Margot Verheijen, Dutch and teacher by education. We live abroad since 1999. We left the Netherlands to move to Oman with my family (husband and 3 children). Soon after we arrived in Oman I started voluntary work for the Oman Dutch Committee. Together with a friend I arranged all kinds of social events, like art exhibitions, Dutch cultural evenings, and many parties for the Dutch and Omani Expat society. A few years later I joined the Meet and Greet team and shortly thereafter became Meet and Greet coordinator.



We moved to Houston in 2005 where I joined the Houston Meet and Greet team. So, we are here now for almost 5 years, our first child is soon leaving the house to study in the Netherlands. The girls have their own car and drive to school by themselves. Hence, I have more time available to do more than playing tennis (which is one of my 'passions!'). Therefore I offered my help to Outpost to take up the role of librarian. I'm looking forward to working together with this dedicated team.



**OTHER HOUSTON EVENTS & ACTIVITIES**



**ON STAGE**

**OTHERS**

**KIDS' CORNER**

**June 9 – 27, Alley Theatre**  
**Preview starts June 4**

**Boeing Boeing**



A successful American architect living in Paris has been deftly juggling three fiancées who are all flight attendants. It's easy, with good timing and a bit of assistance from his reluctant housekeeper who plays romantic air-traffic controller. But, this supersonic lifestyle hits turbulence when his old college friend visits and each of his three fiancées change their flight schedule. **Boeing-Boeing** is called "the funniest play to hit Broadway in ages" (*Wall Street Journal*), "pure pleasure and unconditional bliss" (*New York Times*). Fasten your seat belt for a roaring ride that will take you up, up and away.

[http://www.alleytheatre.org/Alley/Boeing-Boeing\\_EN.asp?SnID=676418743](http://www.alleytheatre.org/Alley/Boeing-Boeing_EN.asp?SnID=676418743)

**June 4, Miller Outdoor Theatre,**  
**Sizzling Summer Dance**



Pack your cooler and bring your family and friends to delight in a selection of dance favorites from the past season and the premiere of two new works. Houston Met Dance brings their technical virtuosity combined with their athletic prowess and passion for a night of non-stop entertainment.

Enjoy boundary breaking dances including: *Bound* by Joe Celej, *Unsung Moment* by Kiesha Lalama-White and lots more!

**July 4, Eleanor Tinsley Park / Buffalo Bayou**

**Freedom Over Texas**

Houston's Texas-sized Fourth of July celebration will feature a national music act, the largest land-based fireworks show in the nation, several musical stages, and much more.

<http://www.houstontx.gov/july4/>

**Mid July, Convention Center**

**Art Houston**

If you're an art enthusiast, Arthouston is a must-see. This is a Summer event of Gallery Receptions and Open Houses organized by the Houston Art Dealers Association. You get to peruse about 30 participating galleries during a day-long walk, with some evening receptions, around mid-July.

[www.arthouston.com](http://www.arthouston.com)

**July 14 – 25, Reliant Park**

**Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus**

Ringling Bros. will take you on a journey filled with imagination, dreams come true and circus-sized spectacles. Packed full of surprises, this all-new Ringling Bros. breaks circus tradition with high-speed action, cutting-edge technology, and an interactive adventure that is sure to keep you talking for generations.

[www.ringling.com](http://www.ringling.com)

Looking for a way to beat the heat in Houston this summer? Keep your kids entertained with these fun summer activities at water parks or indoor pottery studio.

**Splashtown**

Located in far Northwest Houston, Splashtown houses acres of water slides, tube rides, wave pools and interactive children's play areas. Summer events and activities organized. Check it out!

<http://www.splashtownpark.com/>

**Quillian Center Noah's Ark and Pool**

Noah's Ark Voted Best Pool by Great Day Houston, the Noah's Ark is an ideal attraction for families with small children. Shallow water and a variety of toddler-friendly slides and waterfalls make this a safe and enjoyable way for families to escape the heat. The Quillian Center also includes 2 full size swimming pools, a basketball pavilion and an indoor climbing wall for older children. Facilities are available to rent for parties or other large group gatherings.

<http://www.quilliancenter.org/>

**Mad Potter Studio**

Customers select from over 400 pottery pieces available and design and paint them as they choose. There are no age minimums or limits to participate. Summer day camps are also available.

<http://www.themadpotter.com/>



Library Updates

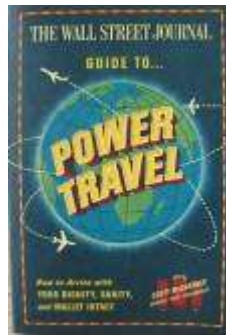
# New Books @ Outpost



**Free Texas**  
by Tab Lloyd

**Guide to Power Travel**  
by Scott McCartney

**Global Grandparent**  
by Peter Gosling  
& Anne Huscroft



**FREE THINGS TO SEE AND DO IN THE "LONE STAR STATE"**

Even in the booming for-profit tourism industry there are many opportunities for free entertainment.

*Free Texas* will guide you to the best no cost attractions. It also tells the history and story behind some of the most interesting attractions Texas has to offer. Geared towards families, this book will also serve as a good resource for anyone who simply wishes to know more about the rich history and heritage of Texas and its proud citizens.

**ORDINARY TRAVEL IS AN EXTRAORDINARY ORDEAL, YET ESSENTIAL.**

Imagine a world without late planes, missed connections, lost luggage, bumped passengers, cramped seating, high fees and higher fares, surly employees, and security lines....

This book is an entertaining road trip and explains why bad things happen to good travelers and what you can do to improve your lot.

You get expert advice and tips include:

- How to avoid delays?
- What to do if you get stuck,
- Minimize chances of lost luggage?
- How to complain to an airline and get some attention and compensation?
- How to get cheap airmiles, first-class upgrades and better seats?

**LEARN WHAT BEING A GLOBAL GRANDPARENT IS ALL ABOUT!**

Becoming part of a global family can feel like totally unfamiliar territory when you are left behind in your home country.

Enhance your relationship with your grandchild by utilizing just the simple tips detailed in this book.

You get real life stories from people just like you and share the concerns you will be feeling as you enter this new phase of your life. This practical book will also walk you through learning making the best possible use of the fantastic technology now available to stay connected with your loved ones. Communicating with your Grandchild will be easier than ever, wherever they may be.



## Outpost Houston News



### Emergency?

Dial **911** & give

- Your name
- Your street, number and zip
- Your phone number
- And Get Help!



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**Opening Tours:**

Monday – Thursday: 10am – 2 pm

Tel : 281 544 4600  
 Fax : 281 544 4159



The information given by Outpost-Houston is based upon the gathered personal experiences of expatriate families. Therefore, you will appreciate that Outpost Houston cannot accept any liability for damages directly or indirectly resulting from the services rendered or information given.

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Police, Fire Department, Ambulance	911
City of Houston Services Helpline	311
Houston Police Department	713 222 3131
Harris County Sheriff’s Office	713 221 6000
Reliant Energy (power outage)	1 800 332 7143
Telephone Directory Assistance	1 411
Bush Int. Airport Information	281 230 3100
Postal Service	1 800 275 8777
AAA	713 284 6523
Stranded Motorists	1 800 525 5555
Toll Road Assistance (working hrs)	713 222 7328
GEMS Benefits (BUPA)	281 376 3472
United HealthCare	<a href="mailto:shellus@bupa-intl.com">shellus@bupa-intl.com</a>
Expatriate Services	1 800 554 9299
Toll Road Assistance (24 hrs)	713 245 4800

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

June 10, Thursday	An Evening of ‘Cheers’ with Outpost A Wine Tasting and Beer Mug Event Time: 5 – 8 pm @ Rattan
July - August	Mix and Mingle
September, TBA	Wine Tasting Session 2
October, TBA	Estate Planning