



As Superintendent, one of Cody Newcomb's missions is to strengthen ties between the school district and the community of Center Point. He opened the library to the community and introduced an innovative wellness program, and tapped Shirley Wright to put together lifelong learning classes. Started in the fall of 2009, the program has been embraced by local residents.

New "Center" of learning

In the fall of 2009, Center Point Independent School District became the newest Texas school to start a community education program. Here is the article by Phil Houseal that appeared in the Community Journal (Kerrville, TX). Center Point ISD earned a 2010 TAP Award in the amount of \$1000 from the Texas Community Education Foundation.

When you are looking for lifelong learning, there are many places to go, large and small.

Of course the Club Ed program covers Kerrville and Boerne, offering hundreds of classes. Go down IH-10 to the east and you will find hundreds more classes hosted by Northside ISD. But don't forget to dig in unlikely places, like deep in the hills in the small town of Center Point.

Local lore has it that Center Point got its name from being at the "center point" of Texas when measured from east to west. More probable is that the name came from its central location in relation to the neighboring towns of Kerrville, Comfort, Bandera, and Fredericksburg. Now, thanks

to Shirley Wright, the unincorporated town is becoming a nexus of lifelong learning with a new program of classes that the locals are embracing with enthusiasm.

When it comes to enthusiasm, Wright has an abundance. "I am having a ball," she said of setting up and running her program. "My wheels are always turning, trying to think of different things to offer."

Just started last fall, Center Point put out an ambitious catalog of 30 classes. The 3750 residents of the district could pick from such offerings as computers, martial arts, Spanish, quilting, cooking, and photography, along with some more unexpected topics such as yoga, acting, cake decorating, and bread dough basket weaving. All are held in the buildings of Center Point ISD, a Class 1-A school.

Wright also is relying on her current Center Point teachers and administrators as instructors. For example, the bio for the Pet Parade instructor reads: Center Point Elementary First Grade Teacher and dog breeder.

One innovative project is the new fitness center. Housed in the Center Point schools, the center is open to residents of the district and sports 10 new workout machines. It is available each school day from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Wright - who also wears the hats of librarian and cheerleading coach - enjoys

the support of her board and Superintendent Cody Newcomb,

"Mr. Newcomb had the vision, and he spoke to me about it after attending a mid-winter conference," Wright said. "He thought I would be a great coordinator and offered me the challenge. His vision in turn gave me the vision. So I took the ball and ran with it!"

In between her duties as librarian and cheerleading coach, Wright sent out a community survey. She spent the summer brainstorming, making calls, and setting up classes in time to offer her first 30 classes in September.

She even took her community education folders with her on vacation in case someone contacted needed to contact her while out-of-town (does that sound familiar?).

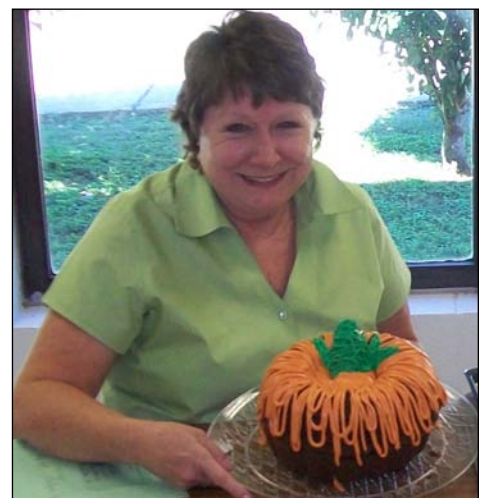
Wright's planning and work paid off, as right from the start she enjoyed the support of the community. Most of her first classes "made" and she is eager to expand the program.

"Even if some of our classes don't make, at least we are taking steps and offering you the chance to come learn something new," she said. "I am very excited."

If you would like to learn more about the Center Point ISD community education program, contact them online at www.cpsid.net or call 830-634-6124.

Lifelong learning has something for everybody, and it should be everywhere. There is lots to learn around every corner.

Any school district interested in adding a community education program of its own can find out more at www.tcea.com.



Local residents are enjoying their new program, including this cake decorating class.