

#15,450

Spreading some Christmas magic

The magic of Christmas was in Commerce Saturday, as Santa Claus made an appearance at the annual "Brunch with Santa" event at the Northeast Texas Children's Museum. Santa came to town to spread lots of good cheer and Gabbie Dugger got in a big hug with old Saint Nick.



Faces of the Day: All smiles in Hunt County



Dr. Joshua Grantham, DMD, of Family Smiles presents a check for the sponsorship of the Children's Museum's dental area to Sharline Freeman, Executive Director of the Children's Museum.

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JENNIFER LINDENZWEIG
County Clerk, Hunt County, TX
By *Jennifer Lindenzweig*

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A DAY OF PLAY AT THE MUSEUM



RYAN SCOTT / COMMERCE JOURNAL

It was a busy day at the Northeast Texas Children's Museum last Friday, as hundreds of children and their families filled the building for an afternoon of fun. In the left photo, Jake (left) and Drew Bell call in a rocket launch from mission control with their grandmother Cheryl Watson. In the right photo, Georgia Mork rides the train at

111 - Children's Museum patients at the station for his turn.

Children's museum staying in Commerce

BY RYAN SCOTT
HERALD-BANNER STAFF

COMMERCE — After fears of it leaving town or closing up for good, the Northeast Texas Children's Museum announced a commitment to stay open in Commerce in a new building.

It was revealed that the museum will be moving from Highway 24 to Highway 11 at a special ceremony Monday at the former Polara building in the eastern part of Commerce. Representatives from the Children's Museum Board, the



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Representatives from the Northeast Texas Children's Museum Board, Commerce Economic Development Corporation Board, Texas A&M University-Commerce and the community gathered Monday to announce the new building for the museum in Commerce.

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Commerce Economic Development Corporation Board, Texas A&M University-Commerce and from around the community gathered to announce the move:

The future of the children's museum has been uncertain ever since it was discovered in the summer of 2017 that the museum's lease with Texas A&M University-Commerce would not be renewed after it expired in Sept. of 2018. Plans were drawn up, including one to include the museum in a university project to build an "Agricultural Expo" area on the land where the former President's Home sits, but a year and a half on from that time, the necessary funding hasn't been found for the project.

Museum Director Sharline Freeman put it bluntly on Monday.

"We cannot wait five years for that," Freeman said.

Since the lease expired last fall, the university worked out an agreement to keep

the museum in its current building on a month-by-month basis, but a solution was still needed.

So instead, the museum plans to move from its current

building, a 54-year-old former cafeteria, into the building that was formerly occupied by Polara until September of last year.

Commerce EDC Executive Director Bonnie Hunter says that the building was constructed in the late 1980s to be the home of Montgomery Elevator. The building was purchased by the EDC in 2013.

The purchase by the museum is still not final, and no figures on the cost were disclosed, but Hunter said that a letter of commitment has already been signed and she expects the museum to close on the purchase some time in the next month. In a press release from the museum, the planned move date to the new location is Sept. 1.

"There were not many places in Commerce for us to go, but we are confident that there are good things ahead in this building," Freeman said. "I can't wait to get started."

According to the release, the new building will increase the size of the museum to 26,500 square feet, and the purchase also includes the 7.9 acres of land near the building for outdoor play areas.

"Quality of life is important when working to attract new busi-

nesses, and the Northeast Texas Children's Museum has become a landmark for Commerce," Hunter said in a statement. "This is a win/win for both entities. The size and layout of the building will provide ample space for existing and new exhibits and offers plenty of space for the outdoor play area."

Fundraising will be the biggest concern for the museum going forward, with plenty of renovation needed to meet the museum's needs. The next big

according to museum Board of Directors President Donna Tavenner in the press release.

The new building is located at 100 Maple Street, just off of Highway 11 heading east out of Commerce. A sign announcing the move was placed outside of the building Monday.

Fundraising effort for the museum will be the annual silent auction, scheduled for April 29 at A&M-Commerce,

Northeast Texas Children's Museum

presents

WEIRD SCIENCE

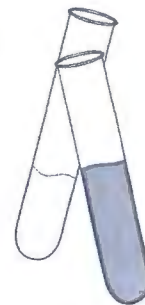
JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2019

Give fifth grade students a fun, hands-on science experience!

Students rotate through 3 labs set up in the museum:

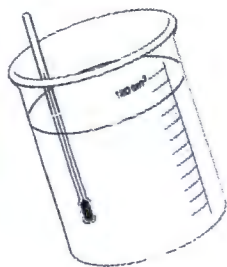
Measuring Liquid Volume

Students use graduated cylinders and test tubes to measure liquid volume in "Crazy Creature Blood".



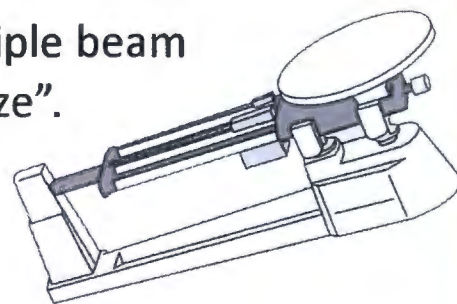
Temperature

Students examine temperature change using thermometers in "Icy Hot Swamp".



Plasticity

Students explore plasticity using triple beam balances to create "Earth Ooze".



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Price:

\$7 per student
(Additional \$20 for lunch space)

Time:

9:30 - 11:30 AM

(No classes available on Mondays or Wednesdays)



Contact for more info:

Sharline Freeman, Director

director@netxcm.com

(903) 886-6055

www.netxcm.com