



BOYS & GIRLS  
COUNTRY

50  
YEARS

OF GOD'S PROVISION



BOYS & GIRLS COUNTRY

# news

spring 2021

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## VINCE'S VIEW

### Message from the Chief Executive Officer

In 2021, we are celebrating our 50th year of serving children at Boys and Girls Country of Houston. The humble beginnings started with a prayer and a vision to help delinquent boys find a Christian home. The closing bank balance for May 1971 was \$678.96, which sustained the operation located in the little town of Hockley, Texas. God's provision started with ten acres of donated land and three portable buildings. The story of five loaves and two fish serves as a reminder of how God can take very little and create a miracle to serve the multitude (Matthew 14:13-21).

The world has been shaken by a financial crisis and pandemic over the past twelve months. Nothing has been easy for schools, companies and churches. I never doubted that God would provide and meet our needs at BGC, but His blessings have been overflowing with groceries and donated goods. The BGC storehouse is full because of your generosity. God's provision should not surprise us but inspire us to trust in His divine plan. God is never in a hurry or ever late, but He shows up right on time.

BGC leadership has embraced the discipline of stewardship as a pillar for our organization. Every dollar and donated item is managed with caring responsibility. Your investment is making an immediate impact for the children we care for every day. Many children have come into our care from dark places,

but after college graduation, they leave with a dream and a vision for their lives. The Apostle Paul reminds us that the promises of God are "Yes and Amen." (2 Corinthians 1:20) Our children are taught to always stand on God's promise.

**BGC is not just changing lives but also leaving a legacy that will impact generations.**

Our mission has not changed despite the uncertainty of the economic climate. We are still privately funded with values that will not be compromised. BGC is not just changing lives but also leaving a legacy that will impact generations. Half a century is in the history books, but the excitement we have about our mission feels like we are just beginning.

**Vincent Duran**  
Chief Executive Officer



## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

### Becoming an Ambassador for Children

When Audrey Arroyave was 10, she helped deliver cookies with her Brownie troop to Boys and Girls Country. This short visit impacted Audrey deeply and inspired her passion to help children.

“Even as a little girl, I couldn’t get over how sad it was to know that they didn’t have a family like I did.”

Audrey is a 17-year-old at Cy-Fair High School, active in the band, key club and the Science National Honor Society. As if that doesn’t keep her busy enough, Audrey volunteered to launch her own peer-to-peer campaign for BGC. She created her own fundraising page and sent the link to her friends and family to support the kids who call BGC home. “I asked friends to donate instead of giving me gifts for my birthday,

sent the link to my band’s ‘Group Me’ list, and even posted it on the Nextdoor app. I was amazed by the response,” she said. “I couldn’t believe something so easy to create could make such a difference.” In less than a month, Audrey raised \$1,200 for BGC.

Audrey says her spirit and passion for others comes from her mother. “My mom is amazing,” she shared. “She has always given me so much of her wisdom, has always been there and taught me how important it is to help others. She’s a great mom, and I just love her so much.”

The love Audrey was shown growing up has come full circle in her desire to help others. If you have love to share with kids in need, please sign up to be an ambassador just like Audrey. Together we can ensure that every child has a place to grow up in a loving and nurturing home.

Visit [www.bit.ly/audreybgc](http://www.bit.ly/audreybgc) for more information.



“Young people have a lot more influence than they realize. We are more connected than ever before. It’s important to help the community, and the ‘connectedness’ we share today gives us an influence that other groups have never had,” Audrey shared.

## PEDAL FOR A PURPOSE

April 10, 2021

Visit [www.bit.ly/p4pbgc](http://www.bit.ly/p4pbgc) for more details and safety guidelines.





## BGC ANNIVERSARY

# Celebrating 50 Years of God's Provision

Friends, this year Boys and Girls Country is celebrating 50 years! It is an unbelievable blessing to be able to serve children from families in crisis for half a century. With your faithful support, lives have been changed, educational barriers have been demolished and cycles of trauma have ended. God has provided Boys and Girls Country with everything to grow from a small patch of land into an amazing facility supporting the lives of our cottage families, College & Career program and staff. This year, we look back with fondness on the history of this mission and how it came to bless the lives of more than 1,600 children over the years.

**“And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”**

*Philippians 4:19*

The idea to create a residential program to help young boys on juvenile probation originated in the 1960s by Wardell Leisk. He later approached T. A. "Tom" Robinson, Jr., owner of First Mortgage Co. of Texas, who became the guiding force behind the organization. At a time when most men are looking forward to retirement, Mr. Robinson devoted the next 20 years of his life to this cause. He initially donated 10 acres of land in the Hockley area where the facilities stand today. Over the years,

more acreage was donated by Mr. Robinson and additional acreage was purchased, bringing the campus to 216 acres. Tom Robinson and his wife, Jean, didn't want to raise the boys in a barren land. Every Sunday after church, they would go down to Buffalo Bayou, get on their hands and knees and gather saplings in their hands. Then, they would drive out to Boys Country, get back on their hands and knees and bury the saplings on their land.

The name "Boys Country" was chosen by Mrs. Robinson. Mr. Robinson, in addition to making the majority of the capital contributions and underwriting operating expenses, personally guaranteed many loans so the building program could continue. Mr. Robinson's visionary contribution was matched by that of another leader he recruited, Jack Brewer, a Youth Director at Tallowood Baptist Church, whose guidance and expertise proved invaluable over the years.



In 1971, Boys Country began with three mobile buildings, a metallic building and its first dormitory under construction. Progress developed rapidly with 24 boys enrolled by the end of the first year, as well as four heads of Santa Gertrudis cattle in the livestock operation and a one-teacher school to assist the boys with their studies.



The closing bank balance in May 1971 was a miraculous \$678.96. Within six months, however, Boys Country secured \$50,000 in grants to build one staff house and begin a vocational program while expanding enrollment to 35 boys. A master campus construction plan for the next ten years was presented. It was the vision of these fearless leaders to turn confused, abandoned and hopeless youth into productive, responsible citizens by providing a loving, Christian environment, an education, a vocational training program and a shared sense of responsibility.



# HISTORIC EVENT



Spring Festival began 43 years ago as a steer auction hosted by the Boys Country Ladies Auxiliary. That first event raised \$500! In subsequent years, the event added a barbecue, plant sale and games to raise funds for the program. Today Spring Festival is a major fundraising event that brings more than 3,000 guests from the Greater Houston area to enjoy live entertainment, games and rides for the kids, award-winning barbecue and a large basket sale. The proceeds from the event are vital to providing a safe, loving home for children who come from families in crisis.

Our kids, staff, alumni and community look forward to every first Saturday in May to celebrate the lives changed through the Boys and Girls Country mission. **Unfortunately, we are unable to gather for Spring Festival this year.** The health and safety of our Boys and Girls Country family, sponsors, volunteers and attendees is our top priority. We are hopeful we can invite our devoted supporters to campus for a fall picnic, commemorating traditions of early Spring Festivals and celebrating

the 50th anniversary of Boys and Girls Country.

Although we cannot celebrate Spring Festival together at this time, our commitment to children in need is stronger than ever. Every day, our kids take steps to break the cycles of poverty, abuse and trauma. They are thriving in a Christian home environment surrounded by people who love and support them. Our mission has not changed, and God continues to be our refuge and our fortress.

As you know, BGC relies on our supporters to ensure that the basic needs of our children are met, and their walk with God is continuous. We are praying for our community and for God's provision for the children of the Greater Houston area.

## WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

- Become a campaign sponsor.
- Make an individual donation on our website, choose "Spring Festival" in the dropdown.
- Pray for our mission.



To support Spring Festival Campaign, visit [www.bit.ly/springfestival2021](http://www.bit.ly/springfestival2021)



# OCTOBER 1 - JANUARY 31, 2021

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We regret any errors or omissions and would appreciate notifications at corrections.

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## MISSION

To change the lives of children from families in crisis by loving and nurturing them in a Christian home environment, raising them to become self-sustaining and contributing adults.

## VISION

That every child has a place to grow up and a sense of being home.

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## PRAY WITH US

Friends, as we walk into the new season, we ask that you continue praying for Boys and Girls Country. We cannot fulfill our mission alone, and we rely on God to guide us through the darkest times. We ask you to please pray for BGC in the following ways:

- For the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of our kids to be met;
- For our students to persevere in their education and rely on God in every situation;
- For the continued health and safety of our cottage families and staff;
- For provision of revenues lost due to event cancelation and economic conditions;
- For more children to find safety and stability at BGC.

## WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- ♥ To donate by mail, please use the envelope enclosed.
- ♥ To give securely online visit [www.boysandgirlscountry.org/donate](http://www.boysandgirlscountry.org/donate)
- ♥ Text "BGC" to 22999 to donate and receive exciting updates about our kids.
- ♥ Purchasing supplies from our BGC Amazon list: [www.bit.ly/wishlistbgc](http://www.bit.ly/wishlistbgc)
- ♥ Choose "Boys and Girls Country of Houston" as the charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases through Amazon Smile.

Your gift today will ensure children from families in crisis have a safe home, a loving family, and a future as successful and contributing adults. Thank you for loving our kids!

## FIND US ONLINE



@boysandgirlscountry

For questions or address changes, contact us at:  
[supportkids@boysandgirlscountry.org](mailto:supportkids@boysandgirlscountry.org) | Phone: 281.351.4976

*Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of our children and their families.*