

Dancing the night away

More than 200 guests enjoyed a Winter Wonderland Friday night thanks to the Georgetown Parks & Recreation department. Parks & Rec hosted the event for adults with disabilities in the Georgetown Community Center in San Gabriel Park. The next dance for adults with special needs will have a County Fair theme at the Community Center April 3.

—Photos by Andy Sharp



Lauren Morris had a happy night at the adults with disabilities dance Friday at the Georgetown Community Center.



Far left, Amy Marney, left, and Gigi Bourgeois have a grand time at the Winter Wonderland dance.

Top left, Leslie Klingenberg enjoys the music and fun at Friday night's dance.

Bottom left, Jessica Fletcher enjoys the music and fun at the Community Center Friday night.

Above, Tammy Carroll and Bradley Leming share a dance.

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Stuffed animals sleepover

Do you remember the first time you slept away from home as a child? Or the first time your children did? For some children it's an easy new experience but for others it's difficult. More than one parent (myself included) has memories of late-night drives to pick up a sleepy, homesick child who was initially excited about a sleepover but later changed their mind.

Well, once each year the Georgetown Public Library's energetic and creative children's services team takes on a very important responsibility: They host local children's stuffed animals in an overnight visit to the library — without the children. The “stuffedies” have a different adventure each year, and photos of all the animals involved in evening activities, a meal and bedtime are shared on Facebook and Twitter so children at home can see what their beloved stuffedies are up to during their sleepover.

Then the next morning the children and families come pick up their stuffed animals, enjoy a light breakfast and a happy re-

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union with their stuffie friends while they watch a slideshow of all the photos from the adventures of the night before.

On the surface, it's a light-hearted adventure. But like many childhood experiences it's also an opportunity to think about independence and temporary separation from home and family, as young children can leave a stuffie friend in a safe place — the library's children's room — and then bring them back home again. Bethi King, children's services librarian, says, “Stuffed Animal Sleepover shows young children that the library is a fun and welcoming place with programs, a specific space and materials just for our young friends and their families. The adventures the stuffedies engage in throughout the night promote reading, imagination, exploration and introduce them to aspects of the library they don't normally

get to see. Plus, it's fun!

There have been times in the past when children have entrusted their really very most favorite stuffed animal friends to this adventure, but then around bedtime they regret the decision, resulting in a bad night for the entire family. For that reason, the library's children's services team strongly recommends not bringing a child's absolute favorite stuffed animal friend — not one they sleep with every night, certainly — but another nice stuffed animal friend the child can comfortably be without overnight.

This year's stuffed animal sleepover will be the evening of Friday, January 31. Stuffed animal friends can be dropped off anytime before 5 p.m. and picked up the next morning at 10. If children are in your life, consider inviting them to bring a stuffie friend for a sleepover in the fun company of the library's children's staff.

See you in the library!

Dana Hendrix is the Fine Arts Librarian at the Georgetown Public Library.

Upcoming library events

- Through February 22, Helena Conti-Hatch's *Art with Enthusiasm* exhibit, artist reception January 26, 2-4 p.m.
- January 27, 5:30-8 p.m., Elements of Art Workshop with Helena Conti-Hatch (Pre-registration required at librarygeorgetown.org/)
- January 15-February 22, Craig Meurer's *Dynamic Birds of Prey: Photography from Multiple Continents* exhibit, artist reception January 26, 2-4 p.m.
- January 24, 7 p.m., Adultish Game Night
- January 31, Stuffed Animal Sleepover (Drop off stuffed animals anytime this day before 5 p.m., then picked up the next day at 10 a.m.)
- February 2, 2 p.m., Screening of *Best of Enemies* film, with discussion afterward led by Courageous Conversations
- February 3, 10 a.m., Bilingual Storytime (Spanish and English, ages 0-7)
- February 5, 2 p.m., Author Elizabeth Crook (Hill Country Authors Series fund-raiser; tickets are available in Second-Hand Prose bookstore or online at folgeorgetown.org)