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Editor's Note: Editor receives updates on past stories



Staff photo by HEATHER NOEL/neighborsgo

Parents, students and others in the community gathered Tuesday for a ceremony to dedicate a memorial garden built in honor of Bradfield student Johnny O'Leary, who died earlier this year from a rare form of cancer. The ceremony concluded with a balloon release.

By HEATHER NOEL

Neighborsgo

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It's always great to hear follow-ups or get an update on the people or organizations that we have featured in the pages of *neighborsgo*.

Last week, I received information in the mail about Richardson resident and Albanian-American author

Related

Heather Noel is the editor of the Richardson-Far North Dallas-Lake Highlands edition of neighborsgo.

Video

Gjekë Marinaj. Some of you might remember him from the story written last May by former *neighborsgo* reporter **Lindsey Bever.**

In the story, Bever described how Marinaj's anti-government poem called "Horses," helped inspire the uprising that brought down communism in Albania.

Since the story was published Marinaj received his doctorate from the University of Texas at Dallas. Recently, Marinaj traveled to Bucharest for an event to launch his new volume of poetry called *The Prisoner of Absence.*

To learn more about Marinaj and see a list of his works visit his website at marinaj.info.

In July, when I was still covering Park Cities-North Dallas, I wrote about the memorial garden being created for **Bradfield Elementary** student **Johnny O'Leary**, who died earlier this year from a rare form of cancer called pericardial synovial sarcoma.

Earlier this week, I was able to see the complete memorial garden during a [dedication ceremony](#) that was held on what would have been Johnny's ninth birthday.

From the garden's centerpiece tree that will bloom in Johnny's favorite purple hue, to its heart-shaped orientation meant to symbolize his generous heart, the garden's design is meant to remind visitors of Johnny.

In this week's edition

For this week's cover story I traveled to the **Vent-A-Hood** factory on North Greenville Avenue in Richardson.

The third-generation, family-owned company is marking 80 years this year, including more than 50 years at its current location in Richardson.

Blake Woodall, vice president, took me on a tour and talked with me about the business and the changes his family has seen in the city.

Learn more about the company's history in this week's [cover story](#).

Looking ahead

On Saturday, I plan on attending **Footwasher Ministries' Pete Burks Day of Service.** The community-wide service day started in Richardson last year and was named in honor of Trinity Christian Academy graduate and North Texas soldier **Peter Burks**, who was killed in Iraq in 2007.

Questions and Feedback **Kanneman**, who was also friends with Burks, said he was pleasantly inaugurated at the event, which brought out hundreds of volunteers. He said this year groups will return to the **Richardson Family YMCA** as well as other various spots around the city and Dallas area.

Read more about the event in next week's edition of *neighborsgo*.

Remember if you know of people, organizations or issues you would like to see covered in an upcoming edition of *neighborsgo*, don't hesitate to send me an email at hnoel@neighborsgo.com or give me a call at 214-977-8715.



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Things To Do

19 Sat	20 Sun	21 Mon	22 Tue	23 Wed	24 Thu	25 Fri	All events
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Richardson - Lake Highlands Stories



Editor's Note: Editor receives updates on past stories



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Sound Off

The NTSB recommends lowering the blood-alcohol level allowed by law from .08 to .05. Do you think the legal limit should be lowered for DWI?

Yes. Lives are at stake.

No. This targets casual drinkers who aren't a real threat.

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