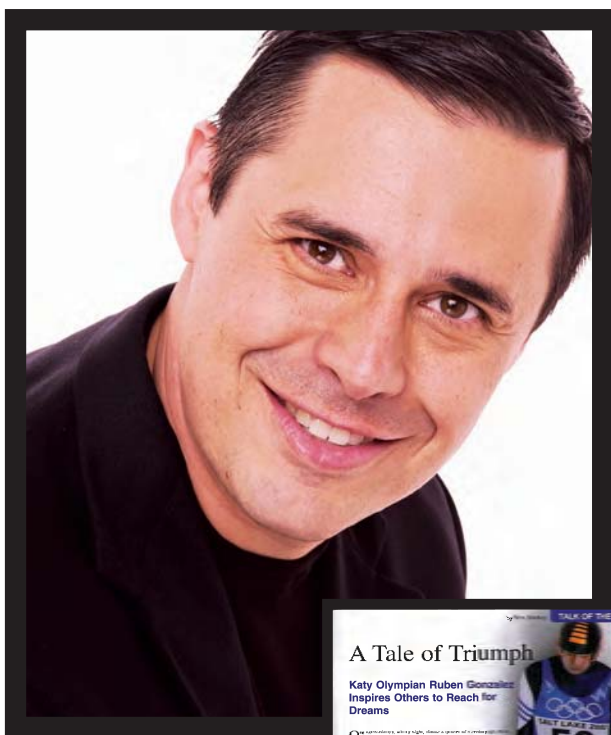


# Catching Up with Katy

For our 10th anniversary, *Katy Magazine* caught up with a few inspiring Katy people we've spotlighted over the years. Today, these individuals are living their dreams all while inspiring and empowering thousands worldwide to do the same.

Written by Kennan Buckner



Since 2004, Olympian Ruben Gonzalez has been able to speak in Canada, Columbia, Dubai, Mexico, North Vietnam, Panama, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, and many other places.

## 2004

### Olympian Ruben Gonzalez

*Katy Magazine* first brought you the victorious true tale of luge Olympian Ruben Gonzalez in 2004. His advice to readers nine years ago was, "You can meet your goals 95% of the time if you don't quit."

It proved to be good advice for himself. Then a three-time Olympian, he decided to aim for the Olympics one more time in 2010. After six years away from the sport, Gonzalez was determined.

"I wanted to become the first person to ever compete in four Winter Olympic games - each in a different decade. I wanted to prove to people that you can achieve big goals at any age."

### Never Too Old

He ranked 38 in the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, a feat for any aspiring athlete, especially one at the age of 47. "I was so much older than everyone else," he shares. "Everyone thought I was a coach."

Gonzalez, now living in Colorado Springs, CO, still inspires audiences - with echos of putting hands and feet to his Olympic dreams.

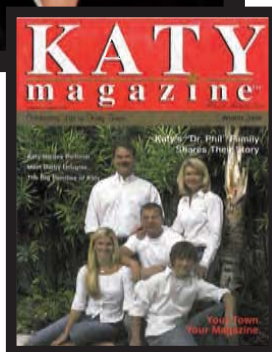
### Around the World

With newfound financial freedom after taking the advice of financial guru Dave Ramsey, Gonzalez speaks to Fortune 500 companies around the globe.

"I feel very blessed," says Gonzalez. "Speaking professionally allows me to travel around the world and to meet great people everywhere." To find more inspiration visit [olympicmotivation.com](http://olympicmotivation.com).



The Knauss family, Bobby, Christina, Brandon, Doug, and Debbie, encourage others facing addictions to seek help. Debbie says her family is a testimony to the fact that good can ultimately triumph after really tough circumstances.



**2004**

## The Dr. Phil Family

The Knauss family has come a long way since *Katy Magazine* met with them in 2004. Known as Katy's "Dr. Phil family," Doug and Debbie made the decision of a lifetime when they brought their oldest son Brandon, then 21, to the *Dr. Phil Show* to get help for his addiction. As the first-ever televised intervention, the Knausses were suddenly under extreme public scrutiny. "When we went public, I stopped caring about what others thought about us and our decisions," Debbie says. "I accessed a deep spiritual place that gave me comfort and confidence to do whatever it took to save Brandon."

## VIP Recovery

Because of the show, the Knausses were contacted by numerous other families in the throes of addiction and felt a yearning to help. Debbie, a registered nurse, returned to college to become a licensed chemical dependency counselor. Together with her husband Doug and son Brandon, they launched VIP Recovery, where they conduct regular interventions across the nation.

## Rescuing Others

"Each case is individualized to meet the needs of the family. We spend many hours consulting with the family before the intervention ever begins," says Debbie. "It is labor intensive on the front end, collecting and assessing information, determining the appropriate level of treatment, and finding a treatment facility that aligns with the financial resources that are or are not available."

## National Support

Debbie feels blessed by having the support of many professionals in the industry, including Dr. Phil McGraw. Through the years, the family has remained close to Dr. Phil and his staff and has participated in numerous follow-up shows where they now help other addicts and families in crisis. "They treat us like family, and I love them," Debbie says. Brandon and Debbie also starred in *Cracking Addiction*, a TLC special showcasing actual interventions. The mother-son duo was also featured on the TV show, *The Doctors*.

## A Family Endeavor

Since they first shared with *Katy Magazine*, the Knauss family relocated to the Dallas area. Debbie, Doug, and Brandon are the founders of VIP Recovery. Their daughter Christina is now married with two children and works in finance. Their youngest son Bobby is an accountant. Debbie, Doug, and Brandon return to Katy occasionally for interventions or important events. "I love being in the trenches working with the families," says Debbie. "This is what I was created to do." For more information, visit [viprecovery.com](http://viprecovery.com) or call 1-888-536-7847.





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The Poysky family seeks to help others facing Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD). Poysky tells other families facing a hard diagnosis to not give up hope, seek support from others, and have a positive impact on the future.

**2008**

## Joel Poysky's Miracle

When *Katy Magazine* last visited with the Poysky family in 2008, their son Joel was 5 years old. He was diagnosed with a fatal genetic disorder called Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) at age 3. In spite of the odds, the Poysky family is hopeful.

Now in the fifth grade, Joel is doing great. He's excited about getting a canine assistant soon and loves to swim, travel, and try new foods.

"We were told when he was 3 and first diagnosed that he would be in a wheelchair by now," Rachel says. "We are grateful the disease is progressing slower than expected."

## Searching for the Cure

Along with another Katy mom, Rachel leads a support group for parents of Duchenne in the Houston area. James Poysky, Joel's father, serves on the board of Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy.

"While there is still no cure or long-term treatment for DMD, we are hopeful that something will come along in the next few years," she adds. "It is our hope and dream that DMD will no longer be a fatal disease."





Jay P. Richardson, also known as the Big Bopper, Jr., passed away at the age of 54 on August 21, 2013. Fans can share their fond memories with the family at [bigbopper.com](http://bigbopper.com).

**2012**

## Christian Alfonso's Victory

Back in 2010, *Katy Magazine* visited 12-year-old Christian Alfonso, who was in the fight of his life - facing leukemia. Now, he is a healthy and happy sophomore at Taylor High School.

Looking back from where they've come, his mom Claudia says, "We were told he only had two weeks to live. To think that he has made a full recovery is such a blessing." Christian has had great check-up visits and goes to the cancer center every six months for follow-ups. Claudia adds, "It shows what a fighter he is."

## Tenacious Teenager

Seeing Christian start football in seventh grade and try out for the swim team at Taylor, are just a few of the many everyday moments that are even more special in light of his journey.

"My 'wow moment' was to see him win class president and to watch him play football for the first time," says Claudia.

"Watching all his milestones - that normally we took for granted in the past - has been such a blessing," she says. "From his first date, to his first dance, to his first girlfriend - I still get teary-eyed just watching him turn into a sweet and kind young man."

## The Big Bopper, Jr.'s Legacy

Jay P. Richardson, son of "the Big Bopper," worked to keep his father's music legacy alive, and up until the year of his own passing on August 21, 2013. He was on tour singing his dad's hit songs when *Katy Magazine* caught up with Jay in the summer 2006 issue and again in the fall of 2012.

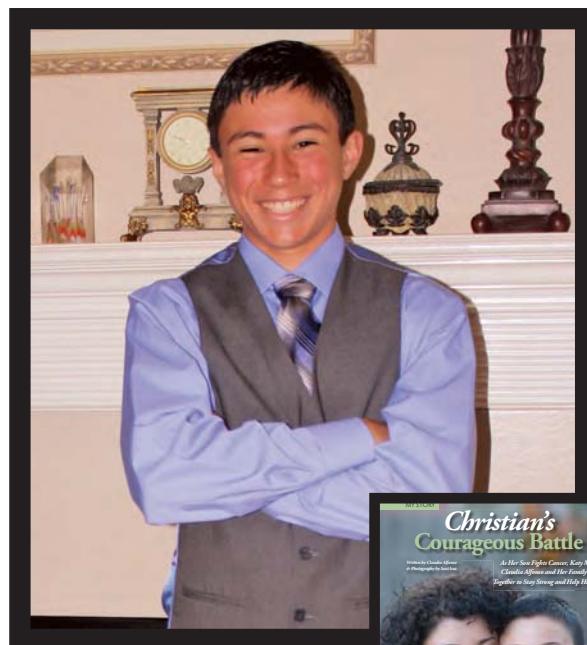
His father made a name for himself in rock 'n' roll with hits like "Chantilly Lace" and "Big Bopper's Wedding," before he was tragically killed in a plane crash at the age of 28 - just months before Jay's birth.

## For the Love of Music

In 1991, Jay opened a nightclub in the Katy area called "The Little Bopper," where he booked '50s and '60s era artists. It was there, singing along to the juke box that performer Frankie Ford heard Jay and recommended he consider a tribute tour.

What followed was his own music career. Jay enjoyed entertaining audiences worldwide. Throughout his life, Jay collected his father's personal belongings and donated them to museums.

At the time of publication, Richardson's death was noted as the result of a "long illness." Richardson was 54 years old and leaves behind his wife, Patty, three children, and grandchildren.



Christian Alfonso is a sophomore at Taylor High School and recently got his driver's license. The Alfonso family is very involved with Sunshine Kids, the Periwinkle Foundation, and the Texas Children's Cancer Center.

**2010**

## Former Mayor Doyle Callender

Ten years ago, then Mayor Doyle Callender was the very first interview ever conducted by *Katy Magazine* in 2003. "I cannot believe it has been 10 years," says Callender. "I remember the article well, and when Katrina and Matt Katsarelis started *Katy Magazine*."

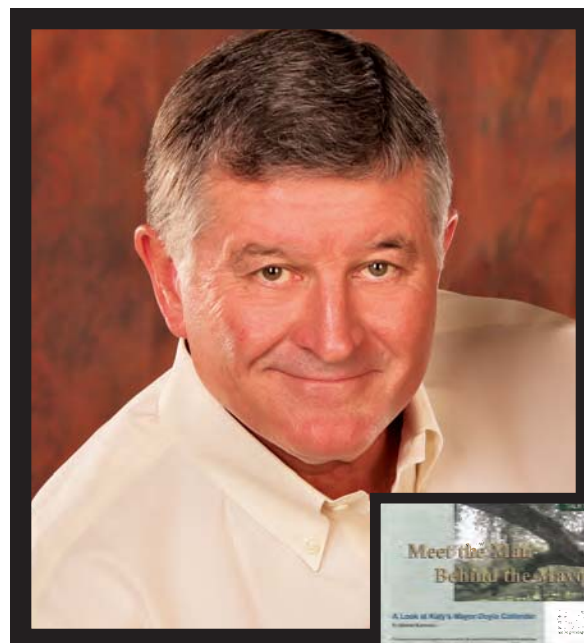
In 2007, he retired as mayor of Katy and was honored by State Representative Bill Callegari for his service. *Katy Magazine* also caught up with Doyle and his wife Kay, in 2011 as they celebrated 40 years of marriage.

## Katy Proud

Currently, Callender is vice president of business development at Amegy Bank, while Kay continues to volunteer with Keep Katy Beautiful. He still enjoys raising longhorns and is ever-active in the Katy community.

Longtime Katy resident and leader Carol Adams says, "We wouldn't have Katy Heritage Park if not for Doyle." His efforts in helping establish the park which were once dreams and ideas, are now reality for future generations.

"I love all the development and growth that has taken place over the last 10 years, and yet Katy still has the feel of a real hometown." As long-time members of a great community, the Callenders are sure newcomers and old-timers alike can agree: "Like our slogan says, 'You'll love Katy for work, for play, for life.'"



Former mayor Doyle Callender enjoys being a grandparent to his two grandchildren. He always makes time to watch the Katy Tigers.



# 2003



Darby Douglas and his family have lived in Katy for over 20 years. They enjoy hanging out at LaCenterra. Tune in to Douglas' morning traffic reports on stations like Sunny 99.1 FM and many more.



# 2004

## Traffic Reporter Darby Douglas

In 2004, *Katy Magazine* visited with well-known traffic aficionado and Katyite Darby Douglas. And while he no longer does the traffic on TV, he says, "I am alive and well on the radio."

Douglas currently works as the assistant director of operations in Houston for Total Traffic Network. "I'm also the morning traffic anchor for nine radio stations, as well as the Houston traffic anchor for iHeart Radio," he adds. "So, you could say, I stay busy!"

## Longtime Residents

His family has lived in the Katy area for over 20 years and enjoys local eateries and attractions often. "We love to go to LaCenterra to do some shopping, eating, or for a glass of wine."

For those looking for a career in mainstream media, he says, "I don't recommend doing anything that you are not passionate about, period." It's clear to his audience, Douglas loves what he does. "It's a very high-pressure, results-oriented business. If you like that, you'll love TV and radio."





Andrea Watkins stresses the importance of yearly mammograms and says that her job as a KRIV Fox 26 anchor is a privilege she doesn't want to take for granted. Her favorite place to hang out is the baseball fields at Katy National Little League.



**2012**

## Reporter Andrea Watkins

Last fall, KRIV Fox 26 reporter Andrea Watkins shared with *Katy Magazine* her journey through cancer. Being a busy Katy mom, she thought it would be okay to skip a year between mammograms. The following check-up revealed a shocking diagnosis - calcifications in clusters all over her left breast. Watkins received eight months of treatment at MD Anderson, later opting to have a double mastectomy, and enduring chemo.

Her bravery through it all was shown on-the-air for viewers at Fox and she continued to support women in the community. "Since last visiting with *Katy Magazine*, I've worked with The Rose on multiple occasions including the day of the Stand up to Cancer national fundraiser last September."

## Back to Normal

She returned to work full time in January and shares, "My favorite part about being a reporter is being informed and helping others to do the same."

She continues to offer encouragement to cancer fighters and their families. "No one dealing with a major health crisis should feel alone," Watkins adds. "Many women showed me there was great quality of life on the other side of the surgeries and chemo, and I'm tickled pink - if you will - to demonstrate that to others needing support."

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Katy trailblazer, Roberta Rylander, was honored as senior citizen of the year in 2003 in recognition of her contributions to the city of Katy.



**2010**

## Remembering Roberta Rylander

In 2003 and 2010, *Katy Magazine* featured Katyite Roberta Rylander. She passed away in May 2013 at the age of 93.

She was part of the 29-member class of graduates of Katy High School in 1936. Her work in helping establish the Katy Heritage Society and her donations of her parents' home and post office to the society are just a few of many contributions she made to the community.

## Heartfelt Involvement

She was a member of First United Methodist Church, the City of Katy board, and the Katy Literary Club. In 2003, she was honored for her community service by being named senior citizen of the year. Rylander was also a devoted educator and volunteer with Katy ISD, and in 2004, Rylander Elementary School was named in her honor.

The Katy community meant the world to Rylander. It was truly home. She was delighted to contribute to Katy citizens' enjoyment of the area's rich history. As Rylander told *Katy Magazine* in 2010, "Now, my family's legacy is forever seen and enjoyed in historic Katy. It makes me very proud." **KM**



KENNAN BUCKNER enjoyed searching through old issues of *Katy Magazine* and catching up with such inspiring, world-changing people.

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# Fond Farewells

In the past 10 years, we've said goodbye to so many citizens who have left an impact on Katy. Here are just a few of them.

**Daniel Avant** was a beloved coach, father, and Katy realtor. Dan was one of Katy Magazine's first advertisers and passed away in a car accident in 2012 at the age of 51.

**Gayle and Charles Boggess** were honored as the Katy Area Chamber of Commerce Volunteers of the Year in 2009. Gayle was instrumental in making the Cinco Ranch Library a reality, and has three lakes in the Cinco Ranch area named after her. Charles and Gayle passed away in 2010 and 2011 respectively.

**Benjamin Bradford** was the son of Katy ISD teacher Carol Bradford and Bruce Bradford, owners of Golf USA. The community watched Ben grow up in photos taken each year for Katy Magazine. Ben died of aortic dissection in 2012 at the age of 24.

**Quonziah Ford** "Ziah the Victorious," a Bonnie Holland student, fought a long battle with a rare form of soft tissue cancer. The community rallied in support of Ziah until his passing in 2012 at age 10.

**Chad Jones** was a Cinco Ranch High School graduate who was killed in a motorcycle accident in 2009 at age 21. He became a celebrated organ donor and the inspiration for Donate 4 Life, a non-profit organization founded in Katy.

**David Mattiza** was a renowned Katy artist whose bronze sculptures were displayed in the Pentagon and George H.W. Bush Library. David also sculpted the Cinco Ranch High School cougar displayed in their rotunda. He passed away from a brain hemorrhage in 2012 at the age of 61.

**Edward Vickery** was a beloved philanthropist, lawyer, and banker who served as founder and chairman of Tradition Bank. Ed passed away peacefully in 2010 at the age of 87.

**Cindy Zerwas**, wife of state representative Dr. John Zerwas, fought a courageous battle with brain cancer. Cindy loved her family above all else and was a positive influence to so many people struggling with cancer. Cindy passed away in August of 2013 at the age of 59.

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