

'Dealing with the monster again'



Photos by Juan Figueroa/Staff Photographer

Parkland nurses on the COVID front lines include (top left) Perla Sanchez-Perez, ICU charge nurse, and Anitha George and Jan Noguerra, med-surg unit charge nurses; (center) Angel Marrufo and Jaycie Martinez, med-surg unit charge nurses, and Fara Ajani, medicine services associate manager; and (bottom) Corey Manges, medicine services director of nursing; Judy Herrington, senior VP for medicine services; and Kelly Stevens, medicine services unit manager.

As nurses leave Parkland, those who remain fight PTSD, wonder how long they'll endure

Second of two parts

"We will do whatever we can for as long as we can. But eventually there's not going to be enough of us to do it."

Raw honesty reverberated through Parkland Memorial Hospital executive nurse Judy Herrington's description of the struggle to find enough bedside caregivers and to keep them — even if just barely — on the right side of physical and mental breakdown.



SHARON GRIGSBY
sgrigsby@dallasnews.com

Tuesday, the day before we talked, had been one of Herrington's worst in a long time. As soaring patient numbers overmatched staff and space — forcing Parkland to declare a capacity disaster — Herrington's most creative solutions fell short.

"We were putting plugs in

holes that weren't sufficient," the senior vice president for medicine services told me. "The best I could do was 'give you a half nurse here and a half nurse there.' Everybody was mad."

Like hospitals everywhere, Parkland faces both an unprecedented pandemic and unprecedented nursing shortages.

Too many nurses take early retirement rather than face another COVID-19 variant. Others can't find child care that they trust will keep their kids safe from the virus.

Many are lured away by high-dollar traveler agencies, which offer big bucks to nurses willing to do temporary short-term gigs. "It's a cash cow out there right now to be an RN," Herrington said.

Even more nurses are giving up because they have given all they can. Increasingly, they are battling not just COVID-19 but various degrees of post-traumatic stress disorder.

"We are slowly bleeding away," Herrington said.

See **NURSING** Page 3B

SOUTH DALLAS

City to sell property on Bexar Street

New owner sought to fulfill promise of multi-use building

By **SRIYA REDDY**
Staff Writer
sriya.reddy@dallasnews.com

A property on Bexar Street that the city of Dallas once heavily invested in is up for sale after about a decade of little economic development, the opposite of what the city envisioned.

Applications to purchase 5210 Bexar Street, in the Ideal Neighborhood in South Dallas, opened in early June and closed at the end of that month.

The city acquired the property through foreclosure by the original owner, Kaminski Holdings, according to the Request for Applications from the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization. Its director, David Noguera, said in an email that the city is looking for an organization familiar with affordable housing management to own the property.

"The idea is to transfer the property to an organization

that will use it to continue serving lower-income households and community-based organizations in the retail space on a long-term basis," Noguera said.

His department is still conducting reviews on who will own the property, so it cannot comment on the applicants. It will be giving recommendations to the City Council in September.

Bexar Street was envisioned as an area of bustling economic activity when the city invested millions into Kaminski Holdings and Hailu Ejigu, who owns the building across the street, about a decade ago. However, a couple of years later, it was evident that that promise was not fulfilled. Businesses in the area have been short-lived and some storefronts remain vacant.

The mixed-use building has apartments for lower-income residents on the top floor and four units for businesses on the bottom floor. Right now, three of the four units on the first floor are occupied.

Quotess Stevenson owns

See **CITY** Page 2B

Our state's going to mug all of us

Growing up, I was constantly accosted by bigger kids who wanted my money. I'd tell them I had none (it was hidden in my sneakers), and they'd demand, "OK, anything I find, I keep."

Sure. I'd pull my pants pockets inside out and show there was nothing there.

But that type of demand for money is what's happening now to most electricity and gas users in Texas. ERCOT, the grid operator, is asking the Public Utility Commission — which I call the (p)UC because the "public" part is a joke — for \$800 million to help pay debts of electricity companies and utilities. But that's only a small portion.

Add an additional \$2.1

THE WATCHDOG



DAVE LIEBER
watchdog@dallasnews.com
dallasnews.com/watchdog

billion in electricity bailout bonds.

Then add to that \$3.6 billion in bond money loans that a dozen gas companies are seeking approval for at the Texas Railroad Commission.

The total is a massive \$6.5 billion in borrowing requests. It's the penalty we must pay for four days of household terror

See **WE'LL** Page 2B

DALLAS

Neiman Marcus executive to lead Family Place

Flink, CEO since 1997, finds someone to 'take us to the next level'

By **BELLYN HOLLERS**
Staff Writer
belynn.hollers@dallasnews.com

The Family Place, a nonprofit that works to help victims of domestic violence, has chosen Neiman Marcus executive Mimi Crume Sterling as its new CEO.

Sterling will replace Paige Flink, who has worked for The Family Place for over 30 years and has held the CEO position since 1997. Flink oversaw the nonprofit as it grew into the important resource it is today with a \$13.6 million annual

budget and 196 employees. It operates three emergency shelters as well as counseling centers and a resale store.

Flink announced her retirement last year and has been on the hunt ever since to find a replacement who has the passion and skills necessary to run the complex organization.

The job requires a range of skills including cultivating relationships with donors, community outreach, overseeing programs and managing staff. Flink said the organization was looking for someone who would "take us to the next level, but not necessarily someone who had nonprofit experience."

The challenge of finding



Elias Valverde II/Staff Photographer

The Family Place CEO Paige Flink (left) will retire in September, turning the job over to Mimi Crume Sterling.

someone "outside the box" was that people might not have realized they wanted to work in

this field, Flink said. Sterling, though she doesn't come from a nonprofit background, fit the

bill in many ways, she said.

"This job is not a 9-to-5 job," Flink said. "I can tell that she can also manage multiple situations."

Flink said Sterling has respect for the institution as well as the curiosity to look for ways to improve it.

"She's coming in with a fresh set of eyes, she may see things that we haven't seen and how we address working in this space. It's great to see someone from the outside asking, 'Why are you doing it that way?' Especially since I've been here for that long," Flink said.

Flink stressed the importance of remembering where the organization came from.

"It was a grassroots organi-

zation when it started and it grew because of every need."

Flink, who will continue to serve the organization as an adviser, said she's learned two lessons in her time at The Family Place.

"On one hand, I have learned sad things. People hurt each other," Flink said. "On the flip side of that, people are really resilient. People are really strong, if they can just get some opportunities, a few breaks, a little bit of help, they can really be successful."

Sterling, who is vice president of environmental social governance and belonging at Neiman Marcus Group, said

See **NEW** Page 2B