

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE



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Abstract: **Sandra Startz**

Ms. Startz was the Director of the American Red Cross in Fort Bend County from 1980-2011. Her ancestors emigrated to Fort Bend from Germany through Galveston in the early 1900s. Sandra talks about growing up in the farming community of Beasley where her parents farmed and owned a gas station/beer joint. Her dad was the 2nd Fire Chief in the town.

Sandra obtained her LVN nursing license in the 1970s and worked at Richmond State Supported Living Center until she was hired as Director at the Red Cross in Fort Bend. Sandra's first day on the job was dealing with almost 700 people being sheltered due to a hurricane. She was able to obtain enough food to feed them three meals. They were released the next day. Somehow she survived the ordeal and remained on the job for 31 years covering 5 counties – Austin, Fort Bend, Waller, Washington, and Wharton.

18 Pages

⇓ *Scroll down for Key Words from the Interview.* ⇓

Interview Summary

People (in order mentioned in interview)

Roger Adamson – Fourth & fifth grade teacher
 Claudia Anderson – Third & fourth grade teacher
 Melba Ashley – Red Cross secretary
 Dr. Deward Bok – Psychiatrist
 Dick Bolyard – Red Cross hiring authority
 Sherman Fant – Red Cross hiring authority
 Alice Kocurek – sold her building to Red Cross
 Jim Krueger – Red Cross hiring authority
 Dale Lindemann – Beasley Fire Chief
 Merle Litvik – employee at Miller’s Pharmacy
 Jessie Matthews – Red Cross volunteer
 Sandra Snell McGee – employee at Miller’s Pharmacy
 August Meyer – local activist & volunteer
 Brenda & Kathy Michaelis – friends
 Mrs. Orrick – Second grade teacher
 Elsbeth Loesch Preuss – maternal grandmother
 Martin Preuss – maternal grandfather
 Cecil Rourke – Oklahoma Red Cross director
 Collete Startz – Dax’s wife
 Darcy Startz – Reed’s wife
 Davon Startz – granddaughter
 Dax Startz – son
 Gracie Startz – granddaughter
 Kaylee Startz – granddaughter
 Keegan Startz – grandson

Lewis Startz – spouse
 Logan Startz – grandson
 Reed Startz – son
 Ross Startz – son
 Jodie Stavinoha – county judge
 Lila Thompson – local activist & volunteer
 Dr. Stanley Thompson – local Physician
 Alice Preuss Tielke – mother
 Caroline Thielman Tielke – paternal great grandmother
 Gary Tielke – brother
 Jeanette Tielke – sister
 Leroy William Tielke – father
 Minnie Miller Tielke – paternal grandmother
 Troy Tielke – brother
 William Tielke – paternal great grandfather
 William Tielke – paternal grandfather

Places / Businesses

Beasley Catholic Church
 Brenham-Prairie Hill
 Emmanuel United Church of Christ – Needville
 Germany
 Houston, Texas
 Needville, Texas
 Richmond State School

Events

Sandra's ancestors arrived in Fort Bend County from Germany in the early 1900s to the farming communities of Beasley and Needville.

Her parents farmed and owned a gas station/beer joint. On their tombstone it states that they "danced through life with love."

Sandra tells about her first day on the job with the Red Cross was finding enough food to feed almost 700 people sheltered due to a hurricane.

She remained with the Red Cross for 31 years overseeing 13 counties during her employment.

Sandra shares many stories about the function of the Red Cross including dealing with disasters, notifying families of a military person's death, and training in CPR, swimming and other life skills.