

# Caller Times

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## INFLUENTIAL WOMEN OF SOUTH TEXAS

### Pioneering Secret Service job just 1st step for Childers

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As 23-year-old Kathryn Clark readied to embark on her new career as a Secret Service agent in October 1970, she and her family sat down for an interview with the Caller-Times.

This was a groundbreaking achievement, as she was one of the first female agents hired in 1970. As her family talked about the coming change, her sister Anna Reemsnyder shared this insight.

"We always knew she would end up doing something interesting. She never has been orthodox."

Raised in Colorado, the unorthodox Kathryn — never Kathy — had a variety of interests, from participating on a championship rifle team to performing as the solo violinist at her high school's graduation. She began traveling to Corpus Christi when her older sister moved to the area in 1965, spending summers and vacations with the family.

After graduating from the University of Colorado she heard about the Secret Service hiring women for the first time, so she applied. She didn't hear anything for eight months, then got the surprising call to show up for training. During her time she provided protection for dignitaries such as Caroline and John F. Kennedy Jr., Julie and Tricia Nixon, Indira Gandhi and Golda Meir.

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Kathryn Childers has been involved in broadcasting and humanitarian work in Corpus Christi since moving to the area in 1973 with her husband. She became one of the first five female Secret Service agents when she was hired in 1970. CALLER-TIMES FILE

# Childers

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She left the Secret Service in 1973 to marry psychiatrist Dr. Cecil A. Childers, and moved to Corpus Christi. While on the Corpus Christi Arts Council, Childers started asking, "How will we celebrate the Bicentennial?"

The Junior League of Corpus Christi had been asking the same question, and together the two groups created Bayfest with Childers as the organizer. The event was a hit and the annual celebration ran for more than 30 years.

After an unsuccessful city council run, Childers moved on to her next project, "Morning Magazine" on KIII-TV. From 1978 to 1992, she interviewed scores of people, from locals to high-profile celebrities. She then hosted

"South Texas People" on the station until 1995. After 17 years she decided it was time for a change.

Childers started a public relations and media company, RedCab Productions, and became involved in a number of charities.

She's a cofounder of the Clowns Who Care, a troupe of clowns who visit sick children at Driscoll Children's Hospital. She also began the First Friday program, a breast cancer screening program that helps provide free mammograms for women in the Coastal Bend.

In addition to her busy speaking schedule, she also helped commemorate the unprecedented South Texas Christmas snow event in 2004, publishing three volumes of the popular picture book.

All immensely interesting pursuits, just as her family predicted.