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Letter From the Editor

Dear **INSITE** Readers,

March is one of my favorite months because it ushers in so many of my favorite things. We've got the start of baseball season, both professional and college; great spring weather; and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, among so many other great local events.

I grew up in Houston, so the rodeo was always a busy time of year for my family. We would almost always go to a few shows (or more) each year. I may not live in Houston anymore, but around this time of year my wanna-be-a-cowgirl nature starts to bubble up over the surface. Of course, it's perfect timing since March is our *Cowboy Up!* issue. Inside these pages you'll find a delectable recipe to try out, new ways to get outside and be active, and a unique class right here in Bryan to teach you how to make the perfect brisket.

I love living in this community because there is always so much going on. I'm constantly discovering new things to do, new organizations, and fascinating stories to tell. The heart of this magazine is to get you connected to those people, places, and things! We are always looking for new stories to put in your hands every month, and this month, one of those stories started in my own backyard.

I came home one day in January and as soon as I opened the door, my roommate Laura was standing there with a devilish grin. I knew right away she was up to something... "I'm working on a project out back," she says. You see, we are always looking for ways to "go green" — a theme you'll see in this issue, too. Whether it's recycling everything we can or using reusable bags at the grocery store (assuming we remember to take them out of the car), Laura and I strive to reduce our carbon footprint as much as possible. I knew it was only a matter of time before she took it to the next level. We now have our own composting bin in our backyard, and I just knew this would be a great project for the readers of **INSITE** as well.

Is there a story you would like to see in **INSITE**? I would love to hear from you and continue to make this magazine one you love to read every month. Go ahead and email me at shelbi@insitebrazosvalley.com with any ideas you have! And of course, thank you for reading **INSITE**!

— **Shelbi LeMeilleur**

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COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Tribute Luncheon Honors Those Who Give Back

By KATIE JAMES



Join the Community Foundation of the Brazos Valley in celebrating the contributions of three generous citizens at the 16th annual Tribute Luncheon Celebration of Philanthropy on Tuesday, April 28, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the College Station Hilton and Conference Center. The luncheon honors three community members who have gone above and beyond in their service and giving. This year, the honorees are Sue M. Lee, Denise Fries, and Timothy N. Bryan.

"This is an annual celebration of philanthropy that really lifts up and celebrates the good deeds of individuals who've shared their time, their talents, and their resources with our nonprofit community, all with the goal of ensuring a better quality of life," says Patricia Gerling, president of the Community Foundation.

Honorees are picked by the Community Foundation Board of Trustees, with input from previous honorees. Lee, Fries, and Bryan will be celebrated at the luncheon with video vignettes produced by KBTX featuring interviews from community members speaking about their contributions and impact.

"It's all in a very celebratory [feel] to celebrate their good deeds and good works," says Gerling. "Many honorees find it difficult to accept being honored. They're humble. They don't do anything for recognition. An hour and a half is a short period of time for lunch and to celebrate: that's why we do the videos. It's a forever gift that they get to leave with. It's a poignant celebration of a person's impact on our community."

The luncheon is celebratory, but it is also inspirational. While enjoying a meal and learning about the work the honorees have done, attendees will hopefully be inspired to be generous themselves as well, says Gerling.

"Giving begets giving," says Gerling. "When one person gives, a friend or a neighbor or a colleague will say, 'Oh my gosh, I didn't know they did that. We need to get involved.' It helps elevate that spirit of giving back. We've been blessed with such a wonderful quality of life, and we want to make sure the quality of life that we enjoy today is here for generations to come. It's that giving-back spirit that the Tribute Luncheon celebrates."

In addition to celebrating the three honorees, the Tribute Luncheon serves as a celebration of all the Community Foundation has accomplished in the last year and a fundraiser to cover operating expenses.


"We celebrate the impact of the Community Foundation and what we do here to help ensure a sustainable nonprofit community in various different ways," explains Gerling. "We use it as an opportunity to create a keener awareness of the fact that the Foundation manages a \$9.1 million portfolio that belongs to the community; we're a steward of these community resources as a result of the generosity of many individuals who have made a gift to benefit something they're very passionate about."

The Community Foundation is a nonprofit that helps charitably minded individuals, businesses, and nonprofits establish donor-advised funds and

charitable endowments that support quality-of-life needs in the community long term. They expanded their scope last year with the inaugural Brazos Valley Gives, 18 hours of online giving that raised more than \$360,000 for 103 local nonprofits.

"The Community Foundation is a fabulous resource for the seven-county region of the Brazos Valley, whether that's a resource for an individual to make a gift to benefit their favorite organization, for a business that wants to establish a fund to further their charitable giving, or for nonprofit organizations to establish an endowment to help sustain their future," says Gerling. "It's the best toolkit that a nonprofit can have, but we want to make sure that it's not the best-kept secret in town."

Reservations for the Tribute Luncheon are \$60, available by visiting cfbv.org/Events/TributeLuncheon or by calling (979) 589-4305. Various levels of sponsorship are also available for businesses or couples, ranging from \$350 to \$2,500.

"The joy of living in this community is experienced threefold when you attend the Tribute Luncheon because it's a celebration of philanthropy," says Gerling. "We're blessed to live in such a giving community, and you get to celebrate and thank people for their level of giving and the impact they've made through a particular gesture or by working with a nonprofit. We encourage people to come to celebrate the good works that are going on here in our community as personified by the good deeds and contributions of our three Tribute Luncheon honorees." 

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Meet the Honorees

Biographies courtesy of **THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**; Photos by **IGOR KRAGULJAC**



Denise Fries

Denise Fries lives a purposeful life — creating businesses from the ground-up and breaking barriers for women. Her personal devotion to charitable giving and fresh ideas for community impact are the reasons Denise Fries is a 2020 Community Foundation Tribute Luncheon honoree.

Fries graduated from Texas A&M University in 1984. By that time, she had already served two years in the JAG Corps of the U.S. Army Reserves where she was one of the first female members of the 420th Engineer Brigade.

After graduation, Fries searched for her first job in financial planning, but there wasn't a company who would hire a female — so Fries started her own. She built a firm where people of all income levels have access to top-notch financial advice, strong customer service, and solid investing. Fries Financial Services is celebrating its 36th year, currently managing more than \$285 million for its clients in 30 states. She has received three Bryan Rotary/Newman 10 awards and the Anco Lifetime Achievement Award.

Fries is known for celebrating milestones by creating matching grant events where charities are selected to carry out their own fundraisers and then the gifts are matched. For her 20th business anniversary, Fries offered \$20,000 in matching grants to 17 charities. For her 25th business anniversary, Fries raised food, funds, and awareness for the Brazos Valley Food Bank and the Brazos Valley Gluten Intolerance Group. For her 50th birthday she gave \$50,000 to 21 local charities. These matching gift programs have raised more than \$1 million benefitting more than 60 local nonprofits.

Fries is the epitome of one who gives back to the community through time, talent, and resources. This spirit of community giving mirrors the mission of the Community Foundation of the Brazos Valley.

Fries is married to Milam County cattle rancher, Robert Jensen. Their daughter, Taylor, and son-in-law, Zach Johnson, live in College Station, with Fries' first grandchild, Kyle Robert Johnson, and they are expecting a girl in August.

Sue Lee

Sue Lee is filled with passion for giving back to her community. She describes her own father as one who lived a life of giving — and Lee has carried on the family tradition with a commitment to thoughtful initiatives and a love for intentional philanthropy.

Born in a small town in Taiwan, Lee received a pharmacy degree from the prestigious National Taiwan University. Lee and her future husband, J.C. Lee, M.D., traveled to America for her pursuit of a master's degree in biochemistry and his completion of an internship in pathology and a Ph.D. in genetics. In 1976, the two moved to Bryan College Station where Dr. J.C. Lee served as the chief pathologist for the two local hospitals for 23 years. Sue Lee worked as a registered medical technologist and lab director for multiple outpatient laboratories. The couple raised three children in this community — Alfred, Belinda, and Chris.

In 2002, Dr. J.C. Lee died from cancer, and Sue Lee recognized the need for a state-of-the-art cancer center for the Brazos Valley. Lee made the cornerstone donation to the St. Joseph Regional Cancer Center.

At the core of Sue Lee's heart for giving are the initiatives that enhance and change people's lives. Her philanthropy has brought life to the medical community and supported Habitat for Humanity. Lee has shared the valuable resource of her time with the Fun for All Playground, the Ronald McDonald House, Brazos Valley Bombers Booster Club, the Arts Council, Special Olympics, and the Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History, to name a few.

Lee's passionate leadership earned her the D.A. "Andy" Anderson award from the Arts Council in 2013. Lee's pursuit of community impact, charitable giving, and leadership has benefited numerous organizations and individuals across the Brazos Valley. The impact of Sue Lee makes the community a better place to live.



Timothy N. Bryan

Tim Bryan grew up in Bryan College Station and has invested in this namesake community through a love and passion for its rich history, the family business, and a commitment to service. His community roots are as deep as the Brazos River and his dedication to improving the Brazos Valley is even deeper. This dedication is what makes Tim Bryan a Community Foundation Tribute Luncheon honoree.

Tim Bryan graduated with a bachelor's degree in finance from Texas A&M University in 1974. He quickly entered the family business of banking, beginning his career in Houston. William Joel Bryan was Tim's great-great-grandfather and Stephen F. Austin was William Joel's uncle. William Joel Bryan was part of establishing the city's first lending institution. William Joel Bryan's son, Guy M. Bryan, Jr., co-founded Clarke, Bryan & Howell, a private lending enterprise, which became the region's first chartered bank — The First National Bank of Bryan. The bank continued in the family with Tim named CEO in 2001. After First National sold in 2007, Bryan jumped back into leading a community bank with The Bank and Trust of Bryan/College Station. Currently, he serves as chairman of the B/CS Regional Board of First Financial Bank.

Over the years, Bryan has served on countless boards, including the Bryan Development Foundation, Boys and Girls Club, Brazos County United Way, Salvation Army, Arts Council of the Brazos Valley, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Texas A&M Health Science Center Foundation, and he was a member of the original board of the Community Foundation.

Bryan's commitment earned him the Man & Youth Award of the Year from the Boys and Girls Club and the Leadership Award from the Brazos Valley Economic Development Corporation. Bryan's strategic leadership in community development and nonprofit support exemplifies service to others and makes the Brazos Valley a better place to live.

Tim Bryan and his wife, Lee Ann, enjoy golf and traveling together. He has two daughters, Emily Bullion and Beth Landgraf, of Magnolia and The Woodlands, and six grandchildren.



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BRISKETU

Perfecting the Art of Texas Barbeque

By KATIE JAMES



Barbeque is a staple of Texas culture, but it can be notoriously difficult for the amateur chef to perfect, especially when it comes to cooking a good brisket. Barbeque lovers Mike Albrecht and Jon Kane saw the need for an accessible class to teach people how to properly smoke a brisket in their own backyard, and BrisketU was born.

"We teach the ins and outs of smoking, one of the hardest things to master, so people can make something they're proud to serve family and friends," says Albrecht, one of the owners of BrisketU. "Over 8,000 people have been through the class since it started [in 2016]."

BrisketU holds classes on the weekends in breweries in Houston, Austin, and Bryan. Blackwater Draw in downtown

Bryan hosts the local classes, and each attendee gets their first beer free. The \$74 cost also gets you professional instruction; Texas course-ground sausage to snack on; hands-on experience; a taste of the end product; and a Pit Side Pocket Guide with charts, relevant information, and space for notes.

"It's for beginners to restaurateurs," says Albrecht. "It's a laid-back class that lasts two and a half to three hours with lots of room for questions. All of us that put it on are Kansas City Barbeque Society certified competition judges, so we know the competition circuit, but that's not at all the tone of the class. When you graduate [from BrisketU], you get a diploma — suitable for framing for your man cave — that shows you're a Certified Backyard Pitmaster."

The class covers all the major topics of smoking: what tools you'll need, what types of wood are best for smoking, how to trim the meat, how to shop for the best meat, how to apply rubs, how to maintain the proper cooking temperature, how long to cook it, and how to slice it. At the end of the class, you'll get to taste both the point (moist) and flat (lean) cuts of a brisket they cooked through the night.

"At the end of the class, they should be able to know how to buy the right kind of brisket and to prepare and cook it at a level where they would look experienced and not have any issues," says Albrecht. "They'll know everything they need to do to smoke the perfect Texas brisket."

Though brisket was the first class they perfected, BrisketU has expanded

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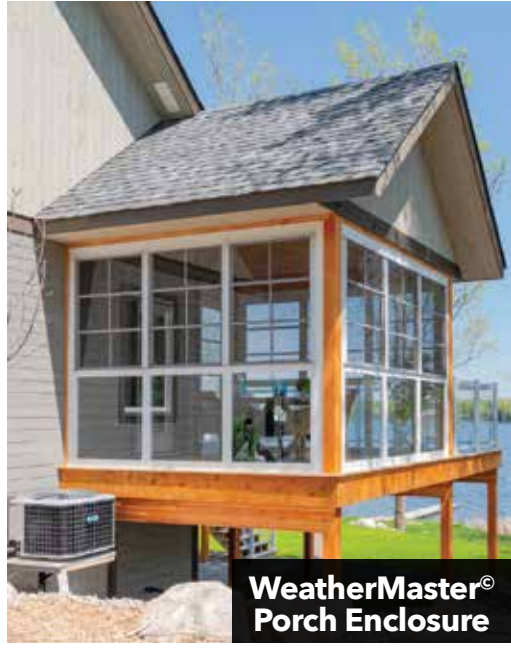
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to include RibsU, ChickensU, TurkeyU, WildgameU, and, coming soon, SeafoodU. All have a cooking-school feel, alternating informative slides with a live camera feed centered on the pitmaster demonstrating skills like cutting or trimming and visits outside to the pit.

“We have around 30 in a class usually, but sometimes as many as 40,” says Abrecht. “We have a lot of fun in class: like as an Aggie, I like to make Longhorns get to the end of the line. I meet so many unique people, so I really enjoy that part of it. We’ve taught chefs and restaurateurs from all over the world who have flown in to take a one-on-one class.”

Since BrisketU is sponsored by Academy Sports and Outdoors, students also get a \$10 Academy gift card and the chance to win prize packs of Academy products. The sponsorship has enabled BrisketU to travel all around the country, bringing proper Texas barbecue to the grand openings of new Academy stores. They’ve also gained national recognition through features on Netflix and goop.com and in Food Network Magazine. One of their pitmasters was selected to be on the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo barbecue judging panel this month.

“If you want to be able to cook in your backyard without your brother-in-law or neighbor looking over your shoulder and correcting you, if you want to know what to do and do it right, if you want to learn the basics then experiment to find your own way of doing it, this is the class for you,” says Abrecht.

The next class at Blackwater Draw is on April 4 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information on BrisketU and to see a schedule of upcoming classes, visit brisketu.com. [i](#)





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Ingredients

- 1 pound ground beef, (90% lean)
- 1 ½ pounds russet potatoes (two large potatoes), peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons butter, cut into chunks
- 1/4 - 1/3 cup milk
- 1 can (4 ounces) diced mild green chiles, drained
- 1 cup shredded, reduced-fat cheddar cheese, divided use
- Garlic salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 package (1 ¼ ounces) taco seasoning
- 1 ½ cups salsa (hot, medium, or mild depending on preference)
- 1 can (15 ½ ounces) black beans, drained and rinsed

Avocado and Tomato Topping

- 2 Roma tomatoes, diced
- 1 large avocado, diced
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- Juice of half of a lime
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.

2. Place potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with 1 inch of water. Stir in 1 teaspoon salt and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to a simmer; cover and cook until potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork.
3. While potatoes are cooking, heat a separate large nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot. Add ground beef and cook 8 to 10 minutes, breaking beef into small crumbles and stirring occasionally. Add garlic and continue cooking for 1 minute. Drain, sprinkle in the taco seasoning, add salsa, and stir to combine. Cook for a few minutes, stirring frequently, until the mixture comes to a simmer and thickens. Remove from heat and gently stir in black beans.
4. Drain potatoes and return to the pot. Mash potatoes until smooth. Add butter, milk, green chiles, and 2/3 cup of cheese. Stir until well combined, cover, and set aside.
5. Transfer meat mixture to a 2-quart baking dish and spread out evenly. Top with the mashed potatoes, spreading to an even layer all the way to the edges; sprinkle with the remaining cheese and bake for 30-40 minutes until it begins to turn brown.
6. While pie is baking, place the diced tomatoes, avocado, cilantro, and lime juice in a medium bowl; season with salt and pepper; and stir to combine. Top each serving with a big scoop of avocado and tomato mixture. [i](#)

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SISTERS ON THE FLY

Shared Experiences Between Women of All Ages

By NICOLE SHAIR



What first began as the desire to go fly-fishing with a few friends has since turned into one of the largest and most wide-spread women's organizations in the United States with a focus on outdoor recreation.

Sisters on the Fly is a women's organization founded by real-life sisters, Becky Clarke and Maurrie Sussman. Back in 1999, the two sisters and their mother were taught how to fly-fish with the help of Sussman's son, Austin Lowder, in the Montana mountains. After realizing how much fun fishing was, the girls wanted to invite their friends to come along and share in the fun. This idea of getting friends together to try new outdoor activities has shaped what the organization is today.

"My son taught my sister and I and my mom how to fly fish and so we started inviting other girls, but then they didn't really want to fish," Sussman says. "We started picking up other activities, every conceivable thing you could do outside."

The mission of Sisters on the Fly is to encourage women who might not have been able to experience as much earlier in their lives to try new things and do activities they never had the chance to do before, Sussman says.

"For example, a lot of girls have never been horseback riding or they've never been fly fishing or hiking or they have never driven a trailer across country," Sussman says. "So, we go in groups and teach them along the way."

From learning how to fly a plane to movie dates, there is no limit on the possibilities of things that can be done with Sisters on the Fly. Members of the group are even encouraged to make their own plans and events with members who are in their area.

"If you want to put on an event for something you like doing, you post it on social media and get everyone together and it's so much fun," Sussman says. "We have no secrets; we want everyone to be able to do whatever they want."

Throughout the years, Sussman has had girls join the group who either don't make friends easily or aren't sure if they can keep up with the various outdoor activities the group takes part in. To that, Sussman insists that anyone and

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Joining Sisters on the Fly is simple — all interested members need to do is sign up on sistersonthefly.com and pay \$70 annually in dues. Once someone has joined, there are more than 1,000 activities posted all around the country members can take part in, Sussman says.

“You find something you really want to do, or we go out to lunch with the girls or we will go to the movies,” Sussman says. “No matter what we do, it’s always a good time.” *i*

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GO GREEN!

Composting in the Brazos Valley

By NICOLE SHAIR



As spring starts to bring more sun and rain to the Brazos Valley, gardeners and recyclers alike are preparing to use winter's dead leaves to create compost for spring's fresh flowers and beautiful gardens — and you can, too.

Composting is a great recycling method because it benefits the recycler just as much as it benefits the environment, says AgriLife Extension Agent for Horticulture in Brazos County Robert "Skip" Richter.

"[Composting] can help create something that will improve your soil so that your gardens and landscapes are enhanced," Richter says. "It's also a way to recycle a part of our waste stream so that we are not paying additionally to have trash hauled away to landfills."

No matter what kind of soil a person has, composting has benefits to offer homeowners, including healthier and more beautiful landscapes.

"The number one use from a home standpoint is to help improve your soil," Richter says. "If your soil is sandy, it will help it hold water and nutrients, and if your soil is very clay-like, it helps it form a structure that helps the soil drain well."

One of the best things about composting is that few resources and preparation are needed to make a well-functioning compost bin. The easiness of composting is also aided by the two different types of composting available:

traditional compost, compost mixed in a bin and left to decompose; and vermicompost, composting using worms.

"There's different ways that we compost: one is the traditional compost bin, but we can also, if you have a garden, mix leaves into the garden and let them decompose naturally," Richter says.

In order to do traditional composting, Richter suggests a bin about three to four feet in diameter in order to maintain the right levels of moisture and amount of compost taken care of, though bins can also be plastic, wire, or homemade. Next, gather the waste materials which will go in the compost; Richter recommends things that are higher in nitrogen like grass clippings, banana peels, and potato skins, combined with carbon-based materials like dry leaves or old hay. When both materials mix, the compost gets the right blend so composting happens fast and thoroughly, Richter says.


"There's nothing magical about it," Richter says. "The little microbes that do the work don't care what they're living in."

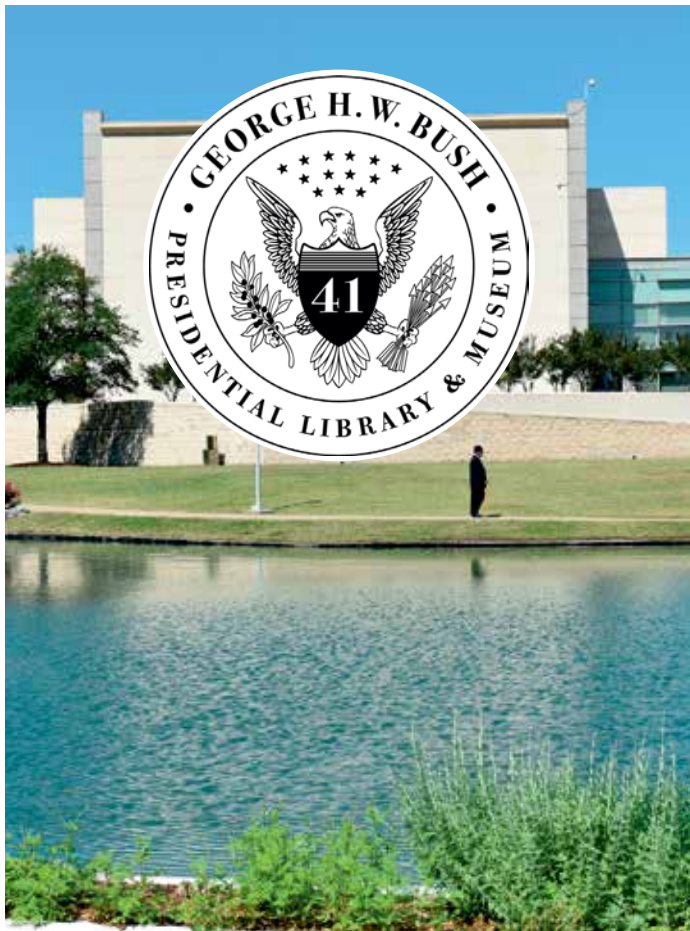
For vermicomposting, the initial set-up and materials needed are a Rubbermaid-type bin about two to three feet long and newspaper. Where vermicomposting diverges from traditional compost is with the addition of moistened, shredded newspaper and red wiggler worms.

"You take newspaper and tear it into strips and then wet it with water and tumble it [loosely] in your hands until it is moist, but not sopping wet," says Richter. He continues by saying if you add red wiggler worms, and then you bury food scraps in your newspaper, the worms will eat it and create worm castings, which are very rich and are good for your houseplants.

Vermicomposting is a viable alternative for those who don't have large gardens or landscapes. The materials needed for vermicomposting are more readily available to those in apartments and dorms rather than the large amount of grass clippings and leaves needed for traditional composting. Almost any type of paper product or organic food waste can be used in vermicomposting.

"We did a trial once where we used junk mail like magazines and took scissors and cut them up and we even cut up some old computer CDs and just threw it all in there," Richter says. "The plastic doesn't get decomposed but none of it hurt the worms."

For more information on what materials can be used for composting, how to put together a compost bin, and what to do with the compost after it has been decomposed properly, visit aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu. 



College Station 2020
Easter Celebration

April 4 at 9:30 a.m.

Activities at the free event will be available for children aged 7 and under, and will include an Easter egg hunt, carnival games, photos with the Easter Bunny, bounce houses, face painting, door prizes, etc.



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VISION 2020

Bryan College Station Woman's Club House & Garden Tour

By **KATE THOMAS**



From a completely renovated 1970s era house to one built in a hacienda style, this year's House & Garden Tour features homes that are divergent in style but reflect their owners' individual needs and personalities. Each has a story to tell at The Woman's Club 52nd annual tour Wednesday, April 8, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For more than 50 years, the Woman's Club, working with a multitude of gracious homeowners, has showcased the best Bryan College Station has to offer. This year is no different as the club celebrates its 125th anniversary.

Reflecting the theme, Vision 2020, the homes offer a glimpse into the future. In addition to comfort and appearance, the owners have incorporated some of the latest technological advances utilized in smart home construction to help automate many features. They are both high-design and high-tech.

More Information about the Tour and Luncheon

Tickets to tour all three homes are \$15. Tickets can be purchased on the day of the event at any of the homes. Tickets may also be purchased in advanced from any club member or by calling the club director at (979) 822-5019.

Additionally, a delicious lunch prepared by members will be served in the elegant surroundings of The Woman's Club (1200 Carter Creek Parkway) that day. Luncheon tickets, sold separately, are \$15 and may be obtained by calling the club director.

The luncheon is open to members and non-members and will be served continuously from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. April 1 is the last day to make luncheon reservations.

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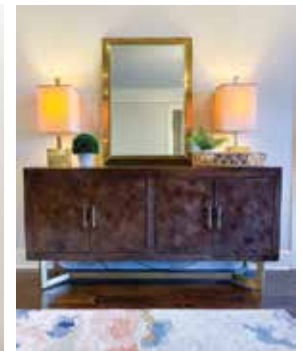
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This project made possible in part through Hotel Tax Revenue funded from the City of College Station and the City of Bryan through The Arts Council and also in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.



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The Home of Drew and Anna Dudley

8 Vista Lane, College Station

Photos by Bob and Becky Hall

Illustrations by Joshua Ortiz, Ambrose Furniture Works

Drew and Anna Dudley live in a newly restored 1970 California ranch-style home in a neighborhood tucked away in College Station. The 2,071 square-foot house overlooks an enticing pond, large cypress trees, and two creeks.

Among the goals of the remodeling projects were to open up spaces and flood them with natural light, and to use bold colors and playful patterns to balance the peaceful surroundings, says designer Joshua Ortiz of Ambrose Furniture Works.

The furniture selections are in keeping with the 1970-era house. A multipurpose hall standing mirror and coat rack reflects light from the flush-mount chandelier. Completing the vignette are a midcentury desk and accent chair.

The entry to the family room is via wood stairs around a glass fireplace. Here an abstract wool rug and large teak glass-top coffee table ground the room. Bold geometric pillows, artistic tables, abstract paintings, and a recliner are used throughout the room.

The new kitchen and dining area showcase custom cabinetry in a blue finish. The large family island is lit with black hanging pendants and an accent wall is covered in bowtie dimensional wall tiles. In the dining area, a black-, white-, and gold-accented wallpaper serves as a sophisticated backdrop to a round dining table surrounded by tweed crème chairs.

In the master suite, a custom bed in deep blue velvet flanks the main wall. At the foot is a sculptured bench upholstered in a rust suede. The bathroom showcases floating black walnut custom cabinets and a free-standing tub.

In one of the guest bedrooms, the designer repeated the teal color in an accent chair and used a black and white palm queen upholstered bed as the focal point. The second bedroom features a two-in-one headboard stretching across two matching twin beds with llama accent pillows.

Multiple outdoor living spaces enhance the appeal of the backyard. A flagstone path leads down to a pond-side firepit with four swivel chairs. Ortiz chose natural teak accents and cast concrete to balance nature with modern elements.



EDITOR'S NOTE: THE DUDLEY HOME WAS UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT THE TIME OF PUBLICATION, SO THESE PHOTOS ARE RENDERINGS OF THE FURNITURE TO BE USED IN THE HOME

SuperSlow Zone Healthy Slimming Program



For those who want to lose weight, dieting and exercising is presented as the most effective way to do so. Even with a diet planned, it can be hard to see results.

Katherine Toback experienced this process firsthand. After going on a medically approved diet, Toback says she struggled with not being able to physically see a difference in how she looked.

"When I looked down I could still see my legs were touching," Toback says. "That wasn't what I wanted, I wanted to see that my thighs weren't touching each other anymore, and I couldn't see that even though I had lost weight."

Toback says that seeing a flyer for the Healthy Slimming program, and seeing how it is FDA approved, convinced her to try out the program. Now several sessions in, Toback says she is overly satisfied with the results.

"I've done 12 individual sessions and between having the sessions and following the rules on what you do after you're done with the session, I have ended up losing multiple inches on the leg," says Toback. "Additionally, my belly is now flatter than it was and fat on the back is gone."

Toback says the program, which uses red light to eliminate fat cells in the body, has created a fun relaxing way to make herself noticeably thinner.

"For me, the red light is very relaxing, so I end up just laying there for about an hour," says Toback. "It's almost like having a nap because when I'm done I feel rejuvenated."

With the results she has seen, Toback says she may continue to use the program in combination with her diet to allow her to look her best.

**For more information about SuperSlowZone Healthy Slimming Program,
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The Home of Yezbel and Patrick Garcia
17357 Le Sharo Cove, College Station
Photos by Bob and Becky Hall

Yezbel and Patrick Garcia's home pays homage to traditional hacienda-style Mexican design. With a full-size basketball court, pool, gym, theater, and game room, it's no surprise that this is a home with four bedrooms and four and a half baths which accommodates the interests of their five sons.

Many of the house's distinctive architectural elements were imported directly from Mexico. For example, just inside the entry are floor-to-ceiling Cantera stone columns. Carved and decorative doors were made from Parota wood. Yezbel designed all the ironwork light fixtures, and each was handmade by a Mexican artisan.

Dominating the living room is a stone fireplace softened by an antique Persian rug, a gift from Yezbel's late father-in-law. It also features a wet bar and comfortable seating.

Located just off the living room, the kitchen is noteworthy for an island measuring 16 feet, topped with quartzite. The stove hood made of wood has been distressed to resemble patinated copper. This unique feature was the work of designer Becky Luther.

Down a hall from the kitchen is the theater, which has seating for seven in large leather chairs and boasts a popcorn machine. Just a few steps away, family members can exercise in a gym equipped with weights and a Peloton bike.

The boys' and guest rooms, gym, and game room are located in one wing of the house. Each bedroom has its own bath and large walk-in closet. Dominating the game room is a large television screen, plus two desks for doing homework and a sofa bed.

The master bedroom and bath take up the other wing of the house. The master bath has an oversized, freestanding bathtub and a make-up counter. In the master closet, Yezbel's purse collection is displayed in a lighted case, and Patrick has his own cap closet.

The outdoor kitchen has a built-in charcoal grill, an egg-shaped ceramic grill, and a refrigerator. A bathhouse with a washer and dryer near the pool keeps swimmers from having to go inside to change.



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The Home of Glenda Chauvin Mariott

3320 Legacy Court, Bryan

Photos by Bob and Becky Hall

Nothing says entertainment like Glenda Chauvin Mariott's new home overlooking the third hole of the Miramont Country Club Golf Course. From the massive open living and kitchen areas to the wet bar, outdoor living space, and many televisions, it's a house designed to welcome visitors.

The single-story house measures 3,525 square feet and is constructed primarily of stone and stucco with a wrought iron front door. Porcelain tile and wood flooring are used throughout the four-bedroom, four-and-a-half-bath house.

A cathedral ceiling in the family room balances the stone fireplace and large kitchen island. Remote controls can be used to operate the fireplace in the family room and master suite.

The guest rooms are located in one wing and master suite in another. Glenda has named three of the bedrooms based on their decorative scheme: the deer room, the princess room, and the bunk room. Featured in the deer room are a beautiful mirror and the deer motif carried out with artwork and pillows on the bed.

The princess room is dominated by a bed with an elaborate French-style tufted, gilded, and mirrored headboard. While the princess room design is high-style, the bunk room, used by Glenda's twin grandsons, is rustic thanks to the cedar post bunk beds.

High design is the hallmark of the master suite's bedroom, bath, and closet. The walk-in master shower includes a handheld shower head and two shower heads. The floating cabinetry completes the picture. Remote controls allow Glenda to operate the window shades in the master suite, family, and game rooms. Energy-saving LED lights used throughout the house are particularly effective in the master closet where they highlight cabinets displaying her shoe and purse collections. *i*

SuperSlow Zone Strength and Conditioning



After lifting weights for several years, Janice Thomas began to struggle with movement in her joints. Looking to continue exercising, Thomas looked for other avenues to work out without joint pain. After hearing on the radio an advertisement for the SuperSlow Zone program, Thomas first tried the program in 2003. Sixteen years later, the 83-year-old Thomas continues to enjoy the benefits of the program. Heading to the same trainer she has used for the last 16 years, Thomas says SuperSlow Zone has made her more energetic and active, increasing her core strength, and enhancing her ability to drive.

“Before the program, I couldn’t drive but about two hours at a time before my back just went out,” says Thomas. “Now, I can do it for eight hours without stopping.”

After dealing with cancer-preventing measures for the last year, including surgery, chemotherapy, and rehab, Thomas says SuperSlow Zone has become the one constant in her life she is happy to go to.

“Before the surgery and rehab, I had been going twice a week,” says Thomas. “[Doctors] told me I could maintain it once a week, but I wanted to go twice. The program works; I’ll be going as long as I can.”

Planning a trip to Europe, Thomas says she recommends the program to anyone who wishes to remain more active.

“Anybody, especially somebody who’s 40 and above, should look into this program,” says Thomas. “It keeps your muscles going and keeps you moving, keeps you able to go places.”

**For more information about SuperSlow Zone,
visit superslowzone.com/collegestation or call (979) 693-6100**



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SUTPHIN HARDWOOD DESIGN

Local Custom Furniture to Last Generations

By **BRANDI M. GOMEZ**



Ryan Sutphin, creator and owner of Sutphin Hardwood Design, has created custom furniture for Texas residents since 2017. His custom, modern, and minimalistic styles have caught local interest, and the secret behind his growing business is staying small.

Sutphin's father sparked his interests in wood creations, but it wasn't until joining a framing crew for his dad and experiencing this niche trade in the Army that he found a slab of wood in Hawaii, where he made his first dining room table.

From there, Sutphin knew it was what he wanted to do, so after serving in the Army for eight years, Sutphin moved to College Station where he established Sutphin Hardwood Design and started ramping up his trade out of his own garage.

"My goal is to make furniture that will last generations," says Sutphin. "Furniture that grandkids will fight over."

With a "you don't change the piece, you change around the piece" mentality, Sutphin describes his work as heirloom furniture.

Most of Sutphin's clients reach out through social media with an idea of what they are looking for and from there Sutphin is with them all the way, until their desired product is complete.

From putting together sample boards, to narrowing down designs, this back-and-forth contact keeps him and his client on the same page throughout the building process. Once the piece is done, Sutphin is more than happy to deliver and set it up, eager to keep this customer relationship an important element to his business.

"My business is for people that like really nice furniture and who are willing to put time into something instead of going to the store to buy it," says Sutphin.

Sutphin is willing to do any design desired by his clients, but his favorite sort of work is custom builds. He can build dining room tables and chair sets to everything in between.

One of Sutphin's current projects is in collaboration with Texas A&M University, constructing The Grove Wall at the 21st

Century Classroom Building. This project is one of the biggest Sutphin has ever had, taking down wood from trees that were around The Grove, what used to be a concert venue, and building them up and turning them into a wood-panel wall.

While big projects are coming his way, in 10 years, Sutphin sees his business staying small. This is because he wants to stay close to his clients, where his hands are always in the process.

"I see other people want to grow, grow, and grow, and get the big tools and the big facilities, but I have all the tools I need," says Sutphin. "I just want to keep it where I am the one talking to the client, delivering, and making it. I don't want to get away from that, because I feel like it takes away the quality."

Sutphin would just like to keep his business going, getting nice projects, and getting awesome clients, he says.

"I used to be ashamed of the shop because it is my garage at my house but now, I really embrace it," says Sutphin. "It



works out for me and I get a lot of good products out of it. You can go to hundreds of stores to get a dining room table but when you walk in and see something like this, that is the biggest award."

For business inquiries follow [@sutphinhardwooddesign](https://www.instagram.com/sutphinhardwooddesign) on Instagram, visit sutphinurniture.com, or call (979) 219-3403. [i](#)



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MONEY MATTERS

Tips and Tricks to Help Negotiate a Better Salary

By JACKSON KING



As they enter the workforce, people realize that while money doesn't equate to happiness, a higher salary allows for a better quality of life. Looking to improve their career, those in the workforce often desire the ability to negotiate a higher salary, believing they are worth more than what is offered. Anyone can learn how to best negotiate their salary with advice from the Texas A&M University Career Center, courtesy of Executive Director Samantha Wilson.

Research Before You Interview

For those who want to maximize their salary, especially students entering the workforce, an important tool people can use is to research what people typically make in a similar major or job, says Wilson.

"When you are interviewing with a company, you should have done your research on the organization to understand their industry and their business," says Wilson.

Using resources, such as the Texas A&M Career Center's salary data, that show what an average graduate makes can help people understand the range of what they are worth and what they should expect to be offered going into the workforce, says Wilson. Additional online databases like [payscale.com](https://www.payscale.com) can also be very helpful.

Learn to Articulate Your Value

The key to any negotiation is understanding your value, including

how your skills, abilities, and knowledge contribute to you carrying out the duties of that position beyond expectations, says Wilson. Whether trying to improve an initial offer or asking for a raise, it's important to articulate the reason behind a higher salary.

"Anytime that you are seeking advancement, there are several things that become important in that process," says Wilson. "Number one is understanding the why behind why you're asking. Being able to demonstrate and articulate your value to show those measurable outcomes is the most important thing. Have you gone above and beyond expectations in that job? Are you adding value to the organization?"

Building Marketable Skills and Experience

Building experience, both in terms of internships as well as individualized skills, is one of the best ways to help increase your salary no matter what your age or career.

"Building marketable skills is an important part of increasing your initial value," says Wilson. This can be dependent on level of experience. Having an internship with the same skills, the ability to speak a foreign language, or experience with specific technology are just some of the skills to increase your market value, she says.

Justify Your Reasoning Behind A Raise

When entering a salary negotiation, it is important to help illustrate the additional benefit you provide. Successful salary negotiations typically include discussions of

data, such as industry trends, value-added skills, and relevant experience, that justify the increased salary or additional benefits.

"If you have done something that has increased the value of your division or increased production, being able to show that will help justify why you deserve a raise," says Wilson. "What is the standard in your company or in your industry for those kinds of increases? Can you demonstrate metrics and outcomes for what you have done? Do you have measurable outcomes that demonstrate your success in the position? Being able to articulate your accomplishments is an important part of the process."

Discuss Career Options Early

For parents of college-ready children, getting a head start on their child's career aspiration is a great resource for their future. Discussing career-based decisions with them early on will greatly benefit them when they enter the workplace, says Wilson.

"I think as students enter college, those discussions about personal development, career exploration, and career development should start early on," says Wilson. "At the Career Center, we try to get students thinking about that as early as their first year in college. Building those [skills], including looking for organizations and activities on campus where you can build an understanding of certain industries and then looking at opportunities to start expanding your professional network." [i](#)



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SHE, A CHOREOPLAY

Thursday, March 26 | 7:00 PM | Rudder Auditorium

SHE, a Choreoplay, is the vision of dancer, choreographer, and playwright Jinah Parker. THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES meets FOR COLORED GIRLS. SHE is about sexual violence against women and girls, it is about what happens to women like Sandra Bland, it is about all women and girls, and it is about empowerment and healing. It is about our mothers, grandmothers, daughters, sisters. There is dance, and there are monologues and dialogue between the women, there is music, there is film, there is truth-telling in ways we feel break new ground in theater.



Photo by: Mickey Hoelscher

\$5 Students | \$7 General Admission

Tickets are available in person at the MSC Box Office at Rudder Tower,
401 Joe Routh Blvd, College Station, TX or boxoffice.tamu.edu | 979-845-1234

Gates open at 6:30 p.m., Show starts at 7 p.m.

(Must have ticket to attend.)

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PREVENTATIVE HEALTH

Colorectal Cancer Awareness

By MARY LEIGH MEYER



Colorectal cancer, also known as bowel cancer, colon cancer, or rectal cancer, is any cancer found in the large intestine and rectum. According to the American Cancer Society, it is the second-leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States. However, this potentially deadly cancer is also considered one of the most preventable types of cancer. With routine screenings, polyps — unwanted growths in the colon that can develop into cancer — can be detected and removed before they turn cancerous. So why does the American Cancer Society report more than 53,200 people are expected to die from colorectal cancer in 2020? The answer is simple: people aren't getting screened.

Jason McKnight, M.D., clinical assistant professor of primary care and population health at the Texas A&M College of Medicine and principal investigator of a colorectal cancer screening grant through the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, discusses the basics of colorectal screening and prevention.

Signs and Symptoms of Colorectal Cancer

During screening tests, such as a colonoscopy, physicians look for polyps or other abnormalities, and, if any are found, they may remove them. Once these potentially pre-cancerous polyps are removed, the likelihood of developing colorectal cancer is significantly reduced. However, even if you receive regular screenings, it is important to know the common cancer symptoms and warning signs.

- Change in bowel habits that lasts for more than a few days
- Rectal bleeding
- Bloody stool
- Cramping or abdominal pain
- Weakness and fatigue
- Unintended weight loss

Who Should be Screened and How Often?

Often, the idea of having a colonoscopy fills people with an understandable amount of apprehension. However, everyone over the age of 45 should get regularly screened, based on the newest recommendations from the American Cancer Society.

McKnight urges anyone with an average risk for colorectal cancer to have a colonoscopy every 10 years. For those with a family history of colorectal cancer, McKnight says to talk with your physician about screenings even earlier than age 45, usually 10 years before the youngest case of polyps or colorectal cancer in your family. Also, if you have had a previous colonoscopy where polyps were removed, you may need another colonoscopy in fewer than 10 years.

There may be resources available in your community if cost is a barrier to getting screened. For example, thanks to a grant from CPRIT, Texas A&M Health Family Care in Bryan provides free colorectal cancer screenings to qualifying individuals. The program serves low-income people who are not insured and

those who have insurance but cannot afford their deductible or co-pay.

Colonoscopy Preparation

A colonoscopy is usually done in a clinic or hospital setting by a physician with specialized training in the procedure. The afternoon before the procedure, patients will ingest a laxative prep drink. The drinks are designed to clear out your digestive tract to empty the colon. Additionally, patients will be asked to avoid eating solid foods a day before the procedure.

A clean digestive tract allows the physician to get a better view of the entire colon, so even the smallest polyp can be detected. After all, it only takes one polyp to develop cancer.

What to Expect During a Colonoscopy

The colonoscopy itself should take less than an hour, during which time the patient is sedated with conscious sedation. The patient may feel the need to have a bowel movement or some cramping, but many people feel nothing and remember nothing from the procedure.

“Colorectal cancer can largely be prevented by maintaining a healthy lifestyle and having preventive screenings,” McKnight says. “In fact, with regular screenings, the American Cancer Society reports that deaths from colorectal cancer could be reduced by 50 percent. If you have any questions, ask your health care provider.”

Visit [texasstep.org/en/home-2/](https://www.texasstep.org/en/home-2/), for more information on free screenings. [i](#)

BRAZOS READS

By **SHELBI LEMEILLEUR**



Secrets of Time By Michael Bennett Wilson

In a small seaside village, secrets of the past intersect and lives in the present intertwine. In Michael Bennett Wilson's debut novel *Secrets of Time*, high schooler Jerome slowly unravels the secrets this small town has been hiding for many years.

A former basketball coach now a closed-off shop teacher; a family that runs the bank and seems to run the town; young love threatened by the past; the star athlete turned soldier; a nurse trying to keep her life together through medication; the fisherman with a little insight into the past. These are just a few of the lives *Secrets of Time* explores and uncovers deeper truths within. Wilson intimately explores each character as they struggle with pain in their own ways. Sometimes the story unfolds like a mystery, leaving the reader to wonder what is going on behind each character's mask. Other parts of the book are reminders of everyday life and the people around us — and how we affect those people each and every day without realizing it. *i*

Secrets of Time is available in paperback or as an e-book.

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BRIDGING THE COMMUNITY

Maroon and White Night

By JACKSON KING



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DOWNTOWN BRYAN ASSOCIATION

The week after spring break, locals and college students, including Texas A&M University and Blinn College, are invited to downtown Bryan for a free night of music and entertainment that celebrates the Bryan College Station community.

In partnership with the Aggie Vanguard, the Downtown Bryan Association, and the city of Bryan, Maroon and White Night invites businesses and organizations into downtown Bryan with the hope of enticing students to head downtown. Happening on March 20, the event copies several elements from the DBA's First Friday event model to create a distinct community event focusing on college students' desires.

For Aggie Vanguard, a student organization with the goal of fostering connections to the community, the event is a great way to grow the bond between students and the community, says Ryan King, president of Aggie Vanguard.

"If you've been down there, you know that downtown's very pretty with a lot to do, but a lot of students don't even know about it," says King. "Ultimately the goal is to keep education here and further develop this area, bringing in startups who have positions open for students to let them know that there are jobs here."

King, a senior supply chain management major, says part of the inspiration for the event came from a discussion with venture capitalist Mike Troy, where King realized how directing college students' attention towards local businesses can help develop local economic growth.

"One of the big things [Troy] mentioned is that the talented students with education want to live where they live," says King. "Having students down here, seeing that this is a good place to live and that it has a lot to offer and a lot to do out here, that'll get the 'talent' excited to live in this area. Because of that, those

businesses will see that, too, bring more jobs, invest in more businesses, and build the community."

Entertainment for Maroon and White Night starts at 7 p.m. with the Texas A&M Yell Leaders leading a yell practice. Then on the main stage, fan-favorite local band The Texas Unlimited Band performs alongside local artist Russell Boyd. Student organizations and local musicians will provide music and entertainment throughout downtown Bryan, performing at venues like the Palace Theater and the Grand Stafford Theater.

While the event focuses on college students, Maroon and White night has something for all members of the community. In addition to providing entertainment options, Texas A&M and Blinn student organizations will be downtown to showcase what makes their organization unique to members of the community. This opportunity for the B/CS community and student organizations to



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interact with each other will connect the community together, says Katelyn Brown, events coordinator for the Downtown Bryan Association.

“For the community members and local Aggies that come to this event, they might not realize that there’s so many student organizations,” says Brown. “It will be educational for the community to learn more about what the students are being involved in during their time here, but it will also be an opportunity for those student organizations to get the word out about what they’re all about and how the community can support them.”

Similar to First Friday, businesses in downtown Bryan will remain open through the length of the event, including offering special discounts to college students. Students who bring their Texas A&M or Blinn student ID will receive 12 percent discounts at participating businesses, says Brown.

One feature unique to this event, especially compared to First Friday, will be a shuttle service delivering people from various areas around town to downtown Bryan, says King. Working in partnership with Texas A&M’s Transportation Services, buses will pick up at the Memorial Student Center between 5:30 and 7 p.m., and make return trips after the event’s conclusion.

Providing free transportation for students to head to downtown Bryan was essential, says Brown.

“Transportation is a huge issue for a lot of students,” says Brown. “Some people don’t have cars, just relying on the bus system. It’s been our long-term goal to have the Aggie spirit buses make a stop in downtown Bryan, so having free shuttles ... will be an added help to get those students down here, because transportation can be a barrier.”

More information about Maroon and White Night can be found online at downtownbryan.com/maroon-and-white-night. [i](#)



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A CELEBRATION

Fifth Annual Gran Fondo

By SHELBI LEMEILLEUR



Gran Fondo: a long-distance cycling ride that originated in Italy that has a celebration-like atmosphere. CHI St. Joseph Health hosts the fifth annual Gran Fondo in the Brazos Valley on March 22, celebrating life, wellness, and accomplishment.

“We try to create the atmosphere when they get back to the [finish point, they are greeted by] music, food, merriment, and celebration that they accomplished their goal, first, and secondly that we celebrate our life and wellness and all that being active and exercising does for us,” says Tammy Way, logistics chair of the Gran Fondo.

The Gran Fondo is a 20-, 40-, 70-, or 100-mile bike ride starting at The Stella Hotel in Bryan and traveling throughout the Brazos Valley.

“I think the nicest part of our route is our 70- and 100-mile routes goes across Lake Somerville,” says Way. “It’s a nice scenic area to ride in — beautiful hills going up to Burton. That’s definitely the challenging end of the ride. Our 20- and 40-mile routes are fairly flat. More of your basic riders can ride it.”

While the ride has steadily grown over the past five years, one of the most exciting aspects of this year’s ride is the designation as a recommended ride for training for events like the Texas MS150.

Recommended rides gain that label by adhering to strict safety and rider support guidelines, based on an agreement with the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, explains Way. Recommended rides are the best way to help cyclists prepare for rides such as the Texas MS150.

Way says this is especially exciting since for the first time, the MS150 not only rides through much of the Brazos Valley, but finishes at Kyle Field.

“With the Texas MS150 coming to Kyle Field May 2 and 3, part of our route is on the Texas MS150 route, so we hope that appeals to people to come out and ride and get some experience on those roads before they do the big ride,” Way says. The Gran Fondo is the only training ride she is aware of that will cover a nice portion of the same route from day two of the Texas MS150.

The proceeds from the Gran Fondo ride go directly to the CHI St. Joseph Cancer Center for patient care services. However, Way says the event is also an opportunity to promote wellness and connect with the community.



"We do see this as a fundraiser for [Cancer Center Services], but ... we haven't continued to do it because it brings in a lot of financial resources," says Way. "We continue to do it because of the community involvement and the ability for us to promote wellness, our mission, our community outreach, and that sort of thing."

At each break point along the ride, representatives from different departments at CHI St. Joseph Health will interact with the riders. "Our hope is that those areas can help people learn about CHI St. Joseph Health and what we do and all the different areas that we work in to promote our ministry to those in need," she says.

Register to participate in the ride or volunteer at granfondobcs.com. Day-of registration at the start of the race will be available as well. Additionally, ambitious cyclists can participate in the Gran Gravel 500 — a 500-mile ultra-distance, self-supported, off-road race beginning Thursday, March 19. On March 21, The Stella Hotel will host a free pre-ride concert at Lake Walk that will be open to the community.

When riders cross the finish line on March 22, the party begins. Food, music, merriment, and celebration — a celebration of life, wellness, and accomplishment.

"With this being our fifth year, we hope the community can continue to support the event," says Way. "We hope our next five years will prove to be just as exciting." [i](#)



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THE WHEELS KEEP ROLLING

Asleep at the Wheel to Perform with BVSO

By NICOLE SHAIR



Country music has strong roots in Texas and has birthed some of the most-loved singers and musicians of our time. This is no different when it comes to American country music classic Asleep at the Wheel.

Celebrating their 50th anniversary, Texas-born band Asleep at the Wheel performs in partnership with the Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra on March 22 at 5 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium. With 10 Grammy Awards, 20 albums, and 20 singles on the Billboard country charts, AATW has a country-pop sound, known as “western swing,” which has enthralled fans across the board.

If there is a pop band that can bridge the gap between pop and classical concerts, it is AATW, says Marcelo Bussiki, music director and conductor of BVSO.

“They have the following of a very selective and engaged audience that I am sure will be open to an experience with a symphony orchestra,” Bussiki says. “For the ‘classical,’ so to speak, concert goer, this will be a good entry into a diverse world of Asleep at the Wheel.”

AATW was established when Ray Benson, Floyd Domino, and Lucky Oceans, along with Leroy Preston, Chris O’Connell, and Gene Dobkin joined forces. They started with a simple goal: to play and help revive American-roots music.

What began as an opening gig for Alice Cooper and Hot Tuna in Washington, D.C., in 1970 led to a mention by Van Morrison during a Rolling Stones interview, which gained the band record offers and soon fame.

Recent additions Katie Shore, Dennis Ludiker, Connor Forsyth, and Josh Hoag have brought a new sound and style to the band’s Western twang, joining Benson and David Sanger for the now six-piece band. What better way to introduce this new sound than to bring their music to a new generation with the help of BVSO?

The idea behind having AATW perform with BVSO came about during a live performance. The uniqueness of the band, the richness of their arrangements, and the versatility of their style would make a

great combination for a joint concert with the symphony and would provide a fresh sound to the community, Bussiki says.

“I approached the band and proposed a performance with the BVSO, which they agreed to, and, a couple of years later, here we are at their 50th anniversary tour,” Bussiki says. “At the time, I was unaware that they had symphony charts ready, which made for a much simpler undertaking.”

The BVSO has made a strong effort in the last few years to expand their season and music genres by including a few more “pop” programs to help bring the concert in line with the steps to explore this path of music, Bussiki says.

“This show can open new doors for our Bryan College Station music community and symphony goers,” Bussiki says. “The main purpose of this show is to offer a unique, fun live musical experience.”

For more information on Asleep at the Wheel and to purchase tickets for the show, visit boxoffice.tamu.edu. *i*

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POWER OF THE PURSE

Bid, Win, and Instill Hope

By **BRANDI M. GOMEZ**



The Brazos Valley Rehabilitation Center hosts its 11th annual Power of the Purse fundraising event on Saturday, April 4, at 6 p.m. at the Texas A&M University Hotel and Conference Center.

Power of the Purse is an event where the community can come together to raise money for BVRC's charitable programs through a live and silent auction of a variety of designer purses generously sponsored by businesses and people of the community.

Power of the Purse benefits both the center and the people who attend, but the auction is not quite like others. Instead of a simple bid, win, and go home with the prize process, there will be a catwalk with the event's sponsors strutting their donated products on a runway, says Crystal Garcia-Williams, co-chair of Power of the Purse.

Winners of the auction will walk away proudly saying, "I got my bag from Power of the Purse," but it also allows people to

walk away from an event knowing they have instilled hope in the lives of patients BVRC helps every day.

"The event is for the community to come together to support the longest free-standing nonprofit [therapy provider] within the Brazos Valley," says Williams.

This is what makes Power of the Purse worth attending, as it has ultimately been created to help support the community through the much-needed services the BVRC provides.

"We are grateful to our loyal participants and welcome newcomers every year," says Williams.

Power of the Purse is for anyone, from families to businesses, to come together and participate in a philanthropic event that has helped many individuals and families.

The raffle item is a pair of gorgeous two-carat diamond earrings valued at \$7,000, sponsored by Montelongo's Fine Jewelry.

This year's event title sponsor is Stylecraft Builders. Other event sponsors include Montelongo's Fine Jewelry, Briaud Financial Advisors, the Bubba Moore Memorial Group, Superior Healthplan, Sue Ellen & Fred Davis with Davis and Davis Lawyers, Hawkwood Energy, C.E. Borman & Associates, and Commerce National Bank.

"The purse is the symbolic theme of the event; it is the figurative power of your purse, of your donation, that can change somebody's life tomorrow," says Alina Fifer, chief executive officer of Power of the Purse. "As a token of your generosity, you leave the event with a fantastic purse that you can talk about for years to come, as you get compliments in the [Brazos Valley] community."

To participate in this event as a sponsor, visit brazostherapy.org or email Crystal Garcia-Williams at popbcstx@gmail.com.

To buy tickets, visit brazostherapy.org and click on Power of the Purse 2020. [i](#)



About the Brazos Valley Rehabilitation Center

The Brazos Valley Rehabilitation Center is a comprehensive therapy facility open to patients of all ages and diagnoses. From patients as young as month-old babies to seniors, this large building has the energy and licensure to bring an unforgettable and comfortable experience to anyone in need of various types of therapy.

"It was a grassroots effort of bake sales and cattle sales, church fundraising and engaging your immediate friends and family members to get this service," says Alina Fifer, chief executive officer of BVRC.

In the '50s, two local families in the Brazos Valley had children who needed therapy services and drove to Austin and to Waco to get them. They looked around and engaged the community, church groups, and other leaders in discovering they were not the only ones who needed therapy services.

The families brought the first physical therapist to the community and started a local "society for crippled children," says Fifer. "So, this is not a story of a chain or corporation that [was] opening an office in Bryan College Station, this is the community identifying a need and pursuing a solution for that need," she continues. "It is our honor to carry the baton of now 63 years of service in the community, and we are really proud to be carrying that legacy."

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The fundraiser, Dancing For the Health of It! Back to the 80s, is at the Hilton on Saturday, April 4, starting at 6 p.m. This event is modeled after the hit TV show, *Dancing with the Stars*. Local celebrities and community leaders hit the dance floor with professionals from three local studios (Brazos Ballroom, Susan's Ballroom, and The Dance Barre) to compete for the coveted mirror ball trophy and bragging rights and to raise funds for Health For All's free clinic. Attendees are encouraged to embrace the theme from wardrobe to transportation. It is a fully immersive experience for all in attendance. Last year one guest said, "This is the most fun I've ever had at one of these events."

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Tickets are \$50 or you can sponsor a table of eight for \$500 at hlth4all.org. Dust off your leg warmers and tease up your hair — Health for All can't wait to see you there! [i](#)

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items such as the George Bush BLT Dog. 11am-2am.

FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON

fourpointscollegestation.com, 1503 Texas Avenue South College Station, TX 77840. (979) 693-1741. A mile away from Texas A&M University, Four Points by Sheraton College Station is in the heart of town. Four Points is great for overnight stays, receptions and meetings, and more!

THE HONEYBAKED HAM CO. & CAFÉ

Order catering online at MyHoneyBakedStore.com, 3975 Hwy 6 S and Rock Prairie Road, CS (979) 314-1229. Visit for specialty foods, catering, and café. One size gifts all! HoneyBaked gift cards available in any denomination. M-F 11am-6pm, Sa 11am-5pm.

LUIGI'S PATIO RISTORANTE

luigispatoristorante.com, 3975 SH-6 S, CS (979) 693-2742. Luigi's Patio Ristorante offers genuine Italian cuisine in a cozy atmosphere that transports you straight to the heart of Italy. Live music, check website for schedule. Open for lunch Tu-Fri 11:30am-2pm. Open for dinner Tu-Su 5:30pm, call for closing times. Brunch Su 11:30am-2pm.

MESSINA HOF WINERY

messinahof.com, 4545 Old Reliance Rd, Bryan (979) 778-9463. Founded on the cornerstones of family, tradition, and romance, Messina Hof Winery & Resort has held its place as a Brazos Valley staple since 1977. Open M-Th 10am-7pm, F-Sa 10am-8pm, Su 11am-6pm.

MADDEN'S CASUAL GOURMET

maddencasualgourmet.com, 202 S Bryan Ave, Bryan (979) 779-2558. For catering and private party planning, call (979) 450-5334. Madden's Casual Gourmet is the perfect place for lunch or dinner, celebrations, and catering any event! Open M-W 11am-2pm, Th-F 11am-3pm, S 10am-4pm, Th-S 5pm-9pm.

MR. G'S PIZZERIA

gotomrGs.com, 201 W 26th St, Bryan (979) 822-6747. At Mr. G's, every slice is served with family pride, the freshest ingredients, original recipes, and only the finest imported Italian cheeses. Now serving gluten free pizza. Bryan location: M-F 11am-2pm & 5pm-9pm, Sa 5pm-9pm.

MUST BE HEAVEN

mustbeheaven.com, 1700 Rock Prairie Rd, CS (979) 764-9222. Reminisce the good ol' days of ice cream shoppes and hand-crafted sandwiches at Must Be Heaven. Bryan locations' hours: M-F 8am-6pm, Sa 8am-3pm. College Station hours: M-F 8am-6pm, Sa 8am-3pm.

NAPA FLATS WOOD-FIRED KITCHEN

napaflats.com, 1727 Texas Ave. S. College Station (979) 383-2500. Dining out never tasted so good. Enjoy California inspired cuisine made over a wood fired grill at Napa Flats. Open M-Th 11am-10pm, F-Sa 11am-11pm, Su 11am-9:30pm.

PAOLO'S ITALIAN KITCHEN

PaolosItalianKitchen.com, 809

University Dr #100, CS (979) 485-2704. Life is too short not to eat well. Signature dishes include Veal Marsala and Nonna's Lasagna. Paolo's also has catering options, as well as two banquet rooms to host private events! Lunch M-Sa 11am-2pm, Dinner M-Sa 5pm-9:30pm.

PEACH CREEK VINEYARDS

PeachCreekVineyards.com, 2029 Peach Creek Rd, CS (936) 825-3669. There's plenty of parking at this picturesque operation nestled in the beautiful countryside near College Station. Visit this winery and novelty gift shop in the heart of a Texas vineyard. While there, be sure to view the antique grape press from the late 1800s and ask about the Adopt-A-Vine program. Open Tu-F 3-6pm, Sa 12-6pm, Su by appointment.

READFIELD MEATS & DELI

readfieldmeats.com, 2701 S Texas Ave, Bryan (979) 822-1594. Your summer solution to meal planning and great BBQs, choose USDA Choice & Prime beef, Midwest Grain-fed Pork, Fresh Poultry, Lamb, Smoked Sausage, Cajun Boudin, and Honey Glazed Hams. Open M-F 8am-6pm, Sa 8am-4pm.

THE REPUBLIC

therepublic1836.com, 701 University Dr. E #406, CS (979) 260-4120. Recently receiving the designation of AAA four diamond steak house, The Republic offers a variety of gourmet steak options, seafood, wine, and whiskey. Their focus is on the use of fine, locally grown foods and simple Texas cooking in an elegant setting. Open M-Sa 5-10pm.

THE TAP

tapbcs.com, 815 Harvey Rd, CS (979) 696-5570. The Tap is a former train depot transformed into a sports bar and restaurant. This local favorite has more than 30 TVs, darts, pool tables, NTN trivia, dominoes, two huge porches, occasional live music specials, burgers, sandwiches, and free peanuts. M-Sa 11am-2pm.

TRUMAN CHOCOLATES

trumanchocolates.com, 4407 S Texas Ave, Bryan (979) 260-4519. Choose from signature series boxes or customize your own. Numerous flavors to choose from. Made on site by well-trained staff. Perfect to leave a lasting impression for any event! Open M-F 10am-6pm; Sa 10am-3pm; Closed on Sunday.

VERITAS WINE & BISTRO

www.veritaswineandbistro.com, 830 University Dr. E, Ste 400, CS (979) 268-3251. Classically trained chefs offer creative cuisine in a casual, contemporary setting. Veritas embraces usage of organic and local produce, wild caught seafood flown in directly from the source, as well as poultry and meat raised naturally. Lunch M-Sa 11am-2pm; Dinner Sun-Th 5:30pm-9:30pm, F-Sa 5:30pm-10pm.

WAYBACK BURGERS

waybackburgers.com, 3001 Wild Flower Drive, Bryan (979) 703-6623.

Made-to-order burgers & milkshakes fill out the menu at this family friendly chain. Open M-Sa 10:30am-10pm, and Su 10:30am-9pm.

ENTERTAINMENT & ATTRACTION**SCHLITTERBAHN**

schlitterbahn.com, (409) 770-WAVE, (830) 625-2351. With waterparks in Corpus Christi, Galveston, New Braunfels, and South Padre Island, Schlitterbahn is the perfect destination for your family vacation. Make a splash this summer and enjoy free parking, free tubes, and picnicking by the pool!

GRIMES COUNTY**CLASSIC ROCK COFFEE CO.**

facebook.com/crcnavasotatx, 129 E. Washington Ave., Navasota, (936) 727-5613. Great coffee, great music! Stop by to hear some classic rock and try coffee from around the world. M-Th 7am-6pm, F 7am-7pm, Sa-Su 8am-7pm.

MARTHA'S BLOOMERS

MarthasBloomers.com 8101 Hwy 6, Navasota (936) 825-7400. Open Mon-Sat 9am-6pm, Sun 11am-5pm. Step back in time to discover unique home décor, distinctive gifts & exceptional shopping finds. Enjoy a relaxing lunch at Café M Bloomer's, a serene garden café offering scrumptious flavor, one delightful bite at a time. Choose from delicious soups, delectable sandwiches, fresh garden salads, tempting desserts, specialty teas, and more. Open Tu-Su, serving lunch 11am-3pm and desserts until 4pm (Café closed Mondays). Cafe@MarthasBloomers.com

WASHINGTON COUNTY**FUNKY ART CAFÉ & COFFEE BAR**

202 W Commerce St, Brenham (979) 836-5220. Delicious and different, Funky Art Café in Brenham offers enticing entrees to please the palate before shopping in its companion retail shop, The Pomegranate. M-Fr 11am-2pm; Sa 11am-3pm.



Check out *The Guide to Eats, Treats & Getaways* at InsiteBrazosValley.com. Listings provided as a service. Insite is not responsible for errors or omissions.

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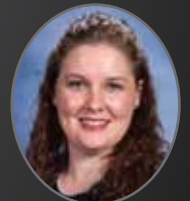
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