

Brazos Valley

April 2012

INSITE

EATS & TREATS: A GUIDE TO FOOD & FUN

Like most mornings, Larry Hodges was at his desk early. He planned to hit the gym before returning to Copy Corner, his normal routine.

Instead, he had a stroke.

THIS IS
**LARRY'S
STORY**

by Angelique Gammon



plus

HOME & GARDEN TOUR

Everything Old is New Again

LIFESTYLE

Brazos Valley Earth Day



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ONE OF MY @InsiteBV TWEETS

got five immediate RTs the other day and a snarky chuckle had escaped before I realized I was gloating over an imperceptible victory in an imaginary arena. While I will forever cling to the **FEEL OF PAPER** and appreciate the rustle of pages in Insite version 1.0, our Twitter account, Facebook page, InsiteBrazosValley.com website and especially our Wednesday Wake Up to the Weekend Possibilities e-blast have freed us from the absolute tyranny of the **MONTHLY PRINT DEADLINE**. Just got a notice about a free French movie at the College Station library? Perfect for **TWITTER** where @InsiteBV has a Klout score that ranks us as influential as a **SOCIALIZER** about Texas and about business.

Just got an email about a 9-year-old who has raised \$3K with a lemonade stand and takes credit cards setting up next to Chef Tai's Mobile Gourmet food truck? Guaranteed to be **LIKED** on Facebook.

A notice that Messina Hof's Wine & Roses festival on April 28 will support the American Heart Association? Perfect for the Wednesday April 25 **E-BLAST**.

Remember there was something in Insite you wanted to do, but you're in the car and Insite isn't? InsiteBrazosValley.com is **SMARTPHONE FRIENDLY**.

For a person with no television, no personal Facebook page and a carefully cultivated immunity from popular culture, I probably should be a little concerned with my **SOCIAL MEDIA** enthusiasm. Perhaps I'll blog about it.

— Angelique Gammon

Brazos Valley



Sign Up! Wednesday's Wake Up to the Weekend Possibilities e-Newsletter

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If You Go

THE WOMEN'S CLUB will host its annual **House & Garden Tour** on Wednesday, April 11, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The House and Garden Tour is the major fundraiser for The Woman's Club of Bryan and profits are used to provide outreach to local charities.

TICKETS for touring all three houses are **\$15** and can be purchased from a member of The Woman's Club; at one of the homes on April 11; or by calling The Woman's Club at (979) 822-5019 Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

A LUNCHEON at **The Woman's Club, 1200 Carter Creek Parkway, Bryan, will be** held on the day of the tour with continuous seating from 11 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. Luncheon tickets are \$15 each and must be purchased in advance at the Club by calling (979) 822-5019 or Sandra Petty at (979) 775-2449 before April 4. For more information, email thewomansclubbcs@verizon.net or call (979) 822-5019.

The Dudley Home 8 Lori Lane, College Station

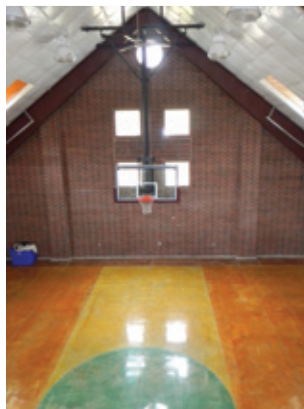
The Dudley Home is a blend Georgian and Cape Cod styles. Built in 1987, this is the first home of Mark, owner of Dudley Construction, and Deanie, assistant dean of finance and administration for the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences at Texas A&M.

The gross square footage of the home is approximately 10,000 sq.ft., including significant porches and breezeways. The conditioned spaces are approximately 5,000 sq.ft. The back porch blocks the morning sun and provides great shade and relief from the extreme heat in the afternoon and the front porch shields the western side of the house from the extreme heat in the summer. Additionally, the largely unconditioned carriage house blocks the north wind from the main house.

The Carriage House is the most unique structure. It has a superstructure of rigid frames and secondary framing members derived from the pre-engineered metal building industry. A tremendously energy efficient structure, the carriage house has a glass basketball backboard suspended from the steel superstructure. The floor is stained in the shape of a basketball key.

The Dudleys love entertaining, the outdoors and athletics and as such they built their home to accommodate those lifestyles. The back porch/pool area is ideal for entertaining, whether it's a few folks over for a swim to beat the heat, to watch a game at the outdoor bar and grille, a domino tournament, a family gathering or something as formal as a wedding, it is an easy area for large groups to comingle and enjoy one another.

Artwork by Mark's mom, June Dudley, hang throughout the house. Her artwork is in galleries throughout the southwest and she paints their favorite subjects: their children and their ranch.



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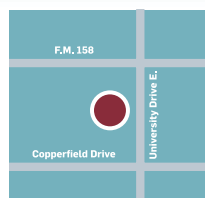
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Astin Mansion

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The Astin Mansion was built in 1924 for Roger Astin and is on the National Register of Historic Homes. The Antebellum architecture was designed for entertaining and continues to serve that purpose, managed as a special events venue by Chelsi Coldiron, niece of Astin Mansion's owners who live in Houston. Astin Mansion can accommodate 400 guests, and is available to the public to rent for receptions or other social affairs.

The original carriage house and the children's playhouse remain behind the mansion. The children's playhouse is an exact replica of the home, which was a private residence for almost 80 years.

Entering the foyer, visitors are transported to the 1920s by the grand staircase, intricate ironwork and the original 1920's light fixtures. The Mansbendel Room, highlighted by a marble fireplace, is embellished with original moldings and carvings by noted Swiss-born Texas carver Peter Mansbendel. The Conservatory



is limestone, with its original marble floor and round Tudor Gothic fireplace; it opens to the colonnaded front portico.

Mrs. Astin's bedroom and sitting room, complete with marble fireplace, bathroom with original tiling and a knocker on her door, are upstairs. The Blue Room was Mr. Astin's bedroom; visitor's will note there is not a knocker on his door. The children enjoyed a large

playroom that overlooks the front of the house. This room includes original hardwood floors and a working fireplace. The home is adorned with 27 paint colors, all from the 1920s, original sconces, fixtures and flooring.



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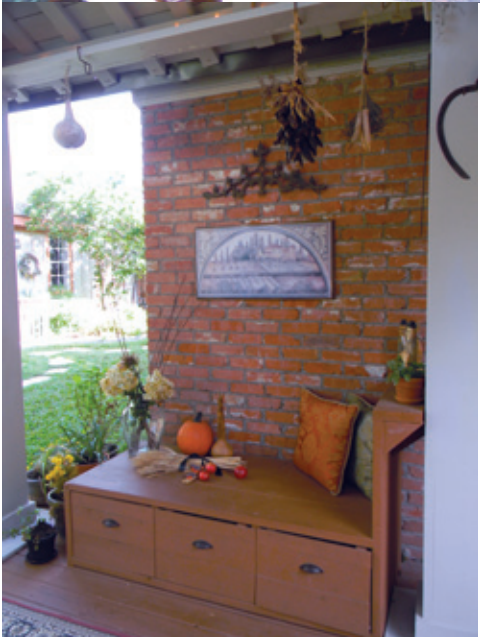
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Simmons-Smith House
614 East 32nd Street, Bryan

Built in 1935 in the area known today as the East Side Historic District, extensive renovation has been done by current owners Ulrike and Dr. Jonathan Smith. Dr. Smith is a professor of historical geography at Texas A&M and Mrs. Smith is a native of Austria.

The house is a Cape Cod cottage by architect Edgar W Glenn. Some bricks on the home have the signatures of children who attended

the demolished Villa Maria Academy (1901-1929). The living room features a fireplace that has a Federal style surround without a mantle as was the style in the 1760's. Like all colonial revival houses from the 1920s and 1930s, the living room has simple but elegant wooden detailing.

The sunroom was originally an outside porch. Dr. Smith designed and built the porch swing. Dr. Smith was the designer and builder/carpenter of many of the built-in's in the home. A highlight of this room is an antique railroad map depicting the route of the Texas Central Railroad, which ran through Bryan and ended in a place formerly known as "Nevesota."

The master bedroom with attached bathroom is an uncommon feature of the home for its time. The cast iron bathtub is original. The three Smith children enjoy a child's paradise outdoors where the Smiths have created steps on a tree trunk lead up to a roosting spot for reading; a sand box fort and a fish pond. **i**

April 14 from 9 a.m. until 11:30 a.m., **Keep Brazos Beautiful**, in partnership with **Don't Mess With Texas, TXDOT** and **Keep Texas Beautiful**, will host the **12th Annual Area Texas Trash Off**.

Local volunteers from all walks of life, and ages, come out for this fun-filled event to pick up trash from local neighborhoods, parks and roadways. The first 500 individuals to register will receive a free event t-shirt, and the day includes a free appreciation lunch, awards and door prizes. Visit www.KeepBrazosBeautiful.org to sign up as a volunteer. If you would like to be a team captain, email Amy at amyreed@KeepBrazosBeautiful.org.

April 13 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Brazos County Expo, **Health For All** will host the 3rd annual **Dancing For The Health Of It**. This one-of-a-kind event features celebrity dance teams from across the community who



April 28, the **Prenatal Clinic's** 18th Annual **"You're the Tops" Luncheon** will honor 12 local women who have made our community a better place to live by their efforts to help others.

This year's honorees are (back row, l-r) Candace Leslie, Patricia Burchfield, Jane Van Valkenburg, Colleen Holmes, Jennifer Friedman, Kim Miller (front row, l-r) Alsie Bond, Gwen Webb-Hasan, Janelle Ramirez, (not appearing in photo) Carol Biggs, Diane Jones Meier, and Karan Watson.

The annual luncheon is the Prenatal Clinic's primary fundraiser helping to support the Clinic's goal that no baby is born in Brazos County without proper prenatal care ensuring a healthy start to life. Tickets are \$40 and reservations may be made by calling Lynn Yeager at (979) 595-1783 before April 18.

The Prenatal Clinic has served thousands of mothers and unborn babies since 1985. For more information about the Clinic, call (979) 595-1780, or visit online at www.bcsprenatal.org.

compete for bragging rights and to raise funds that allow the Health For All clinic to provide basic healthcare for low income, uninsured residents of the Brazos Valley.

Tickets are \$50 per person or \$500 for a table of 10. Sponsorships and reservations are available online at www.hlth4all.org or by calling (979) 575-4496.

Health For All is a nonprofit free health care clinic that was founded in 1987. Virtually all of the clinic's funding comes from local donors who live and/or do business in the Brazos Valley, and no state or federal funding is received. For more information about Health For All, call Derek Dictson at (979) 575-4496 or e-mail ED@hlth4all.org.

April 21-22, the **Friends of the Library** will host the annual **Spring Book Sale** at the Clara B. Mounce Public Library, 201 E. 26th St. in Bryan. On Saturday, Friends of the Library members may enter at 9 a.m.; non-members may enter at 10 a.m. Sales will continue until 1 p.m.; books are \$20 per bag. On Sunday from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., customers may purchase two bags of books for \$10. Funds raised help the Friends of the Library provide resources for the three local libraries.

April 14 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., the **St. Thomas Early Learning Center**, 906 George Bush Drive, will host the **"Children Mean the World to Me International Festival."** Featuring games, an international food court and a

silent auction, admission is free with tickets for food and games available for purchase at the event.



April 28 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the College Station Hilton, families can enjoy great food, a fun children's area, a silent auction and the best live entertainment imaginable performed by area children. The theme is **"The Wild West"** and will showcase the talents of an array of children and youth groups performing in support of other children through the Early Childhood Intervention Program of MHMR.

Sponsorships, tickets and more information on how to get involved in this unique event are available by calling Lisa Burton, (979) 821-9402.

May 4 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Best Western Atrea in Bryan, the **Brazos Valley Rehabilitation Center** will host the 3rd annual **Power of the Purse** event, an evening of fine food and wine, fun fellowship, a silent auction and a designer handbag auction. Through the funds raised at Power of the Purse, BVRC will be able to provide more care to patients in need; every dollar of the money raised through this event will be designated for charitable care. BVRC is the only charity in Bryan that provides therapy services to families in need. Power of

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the Purse tickets are \$25 each and are available at www.east-texas.EasterSeals.com. For more information, contact Keri Krueger, (979) 776-2872.

May 12 beginning at 11 a.m., **Family Fest 2012** will transform Wolf Pen Creek in College Station into a daylong family attraction that will be capped off with a



performance by Country Music star Rodney Atkins.

AggieLand Pregnancy Outreach is hosting "Family Fest" as the major fundraiser that allows the organization to work to prevent child abuse and neglect in the Brazos Valley by working with women with unplanned pregnancies through education, outreach and also as a licensed adoption agency. The all-day event at Wolf Pen Creek will include local musical groups, soloists, school groups, singers, actors, comedians, dance groups as well as a carnival area with food vendors, merchants, kid's activities, karaoke and more.

Atkins will perform after Greg Bates provides the warm-up at 5:30 p.m.

Ticket purchases will go toward preventing child abuse and neglect and are available at www.APOFamFest.org. For more information about APO or to help sponsor or volunteer, contact Kim Schams, RN, executive director of AggieLand Pregnancy Outreach, Inc., 2501 Texas Ave. South, Suite C-105, College Station, www.PregnancyOutreach.org.

MUSIC/THEATRE

April 17-18 at 7:30 p.m. in Rudder Theatre, **MSC OPAS**

Intimate Gatherings presents Deborah Jean Templin in **Unsinkable**

Women: Stories and Songs from The Titanic. Tickets are available at mscopas.org or by calling (979) 845-1234.

April 20 through **May 6**, **Theatre Company of Bryan/College Station** presents **Doctor Dolittle** based on the 1967 film musical which



won Best Song and Best Picture Academy Awards. This production is sure to be a winner with theatregoers of all ages as it takes the stage for the first time in Brazos Valley. Performances are 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For tickets and more information, visit www.theatrecompany.com or call (979) 779-1302.

GET HEALTHY!

April 15, St. Michael's Episcopal School will host the **Scholar's Cup 5K and 10K.** Both races will be professionally timed and will begin at 8 a.m. from the St. Michael's campus, 2500 S. College Avenue in Bryan. Runners looking to set a new personal best time as well as those who just want to enjoy a fun-filled event will enjoy this unique event. View the route and register online at www.stmes.net. All funds raised benefit the St. Michael's Scholarship fund.


April 21, the **Sexual Assault Resource Center** is hosting its annual **Teal Ribbon Run 5K** in Downtown Bryan in recognition of April as National Sexual

Assault Awareness Month. Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. and the race begins at 9 a.m. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in the adult and children categories as well as the runner who comes dressed in the most teal.

"We host this 5K during Sexual Assault Awareness Month in support of prevention, education and counseling, and in celebration of the healing of those who have survived sexual violence in our community," says SARC Executive Director Anna Chowdhury, executive director of the Sexual Assault Resource Center, a nonprofit organization that provides a 24-hour hotline and accompaniment (i.e. to hospital) for survivors; free and confidential counseling for survivors and family of sexual assault survivors; prevention education presentations and trainings; community awareness campaigns (i.e. Watch Your Drink); and accompaniment to court or law enforcement agencies.

To register, log on to www.sarcbv.org/the-teal-ribbon-run or www.facebook.com/sarcbv. Registration can also be

submitted offline by sending an email to events@sarcbv.org or calling (979) 731-1000

May 4 beginning at 7 p.m., participating team members will take turns walking around a track at the Coulter Airfield in Bryan until dawn to raise funds to fight cancer at the annual **Relay for Life.** The first lap around the track, known as the "survivor lap" is a commemoration of heroic survivors who have battled against the disease. At 10 p.m., a **Luminaria Ceremony** will take place, with hundreds of lighted bags representing the name of someone who has battled cancer. Festivities from karaoke to tag-team to live music will be provided throughout the night to keep participants and their families lively and entertained. To register a team or to find a team in your area, contact the local American Cancer Society office at (979) 776-1464, or go to the website at www.relayforlife.org/brazoscotx. 



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Strength in Numbers

Seminars & Support Groups Offer Resources & Understanding

Texas Autism Collaborative Offers Free Parent/Teacher Training in April

A free seminar on April 10 will provide help and resources to families of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Stress and grief, seeking and applying for resources and/or aid, navigating the special education system, insurance, therapeutic treatments, social isolation, transition and future planning are just a few of the challenges these families face.

The Texas Autism Collaborative (TAC) and Easter Seals East Texas/Brazos Valley Rehabilitation Center have partnered with FACETS (Families of Autistic Children Engaged Together for Support), Bryan ISD, College Station ISD, Texas A&M University and the Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living to produce "Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Family's Journey." The free seminar will be held April 10 at 6:30 p.m. at the Brazos Valley Rehabilitation Center, 1318 Memorial Drive in Bryan. Childcare will be provided by Project Sunshine;

attendees must RSVP to reserve a place for their child(ren) by emailing Rose Mason at rosemason519@neo.tamu.edu or by calling (979) 776-2872.

The Texas Autism Collaborative (TAC) is a team of professionals, including a licensed psychologist with LSSP credentials and advanced doctoral students, that provides

comprehensive diagnostic evaluation, autism diagnostic evaluation and screening. TAC also offers intensive early childhood intervention clinics during the year for children ages 2-5 diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

For more information about the Texas Autism Collaborative and the services offered, visit <http://txautism.tamu.edu/>

Brazos Valley CHADD Hosts Monthly Support Meetings for ADHD Children & Adults

The Brazos Valley Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (Brazos Valley CHADD) organization is a local support group committed to effectively addressing the needs of those diagnosed with and affected by AD/HD, a condition that affects between 3-7% of school-age children and between 2-4% of adults.

BV CHADD's vision is to provide a safe, non-judgmental and confidential outlet for sharing with peers who have gone through similar experiences and to offer resources, speakers and literature that is otherwise not readily available. Members are able to regain some control over their lives through the group's shared understanding and by assuring those supporting the AD/HD child or adult that they are not alone.

Separate monthly meetings are held for parents and adults with AD/HD. The Parent Support Group meets on the second Thursday of every month at 7 p.m.; the Adult AD/HD Support Group meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month. All meetings are held in Room 111 of the annex building of Christ United Methodist Church, 4201 State Highway 6 South

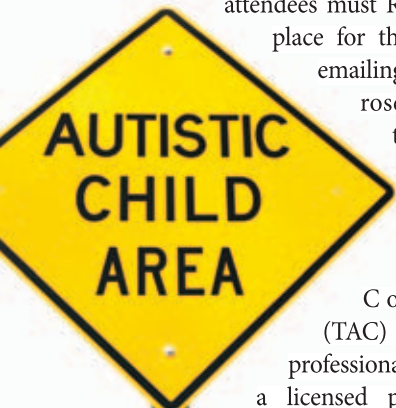
in College Station. For more information and to register for free childcare, contact BV CHADD at brazosvalleychadd@gmail.com or (979) 209-0421.

Pink Alliance Breast Cancer Support Group Meets Twice Monthly on Tuesdays

Pink Alliance meetings offer a safe, inviting environment that allows breast cancer patients to share feelings and concerns and to receive emotional support through small group discussion. Meetings feature guest speakers on special-interest topics for breast cancer patients while providing practical advice, information, supplies and publications. Meetings are free and open to all breast cancer patients or survivors within the Brazos Valley, regardless of where they are receiving or have received treatment. No pre-registration is required.

Breast cancer survivors Patricia Gerling and Linda Cerami serve as program planners and co-facilitators, with support from board members of the Pink Alliance. Meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Light refreshments and informal social time is followed by a guest speaker and group discussion. Meetings are held in the Travis B. Bryan Community Room of The Bank & Trust, 2900 S. Texas Avenue in Bryan near the Tejas Center.

For more information: pinkalliancegroup@gmail.com; Patricia Gerling, (979) 224-3813; Linda Cerami (979) 690-2592; www.PinkAlliance.org. **i**



Larry Hodges, age

SHAPE *of his a*

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45 and in the **BEST**

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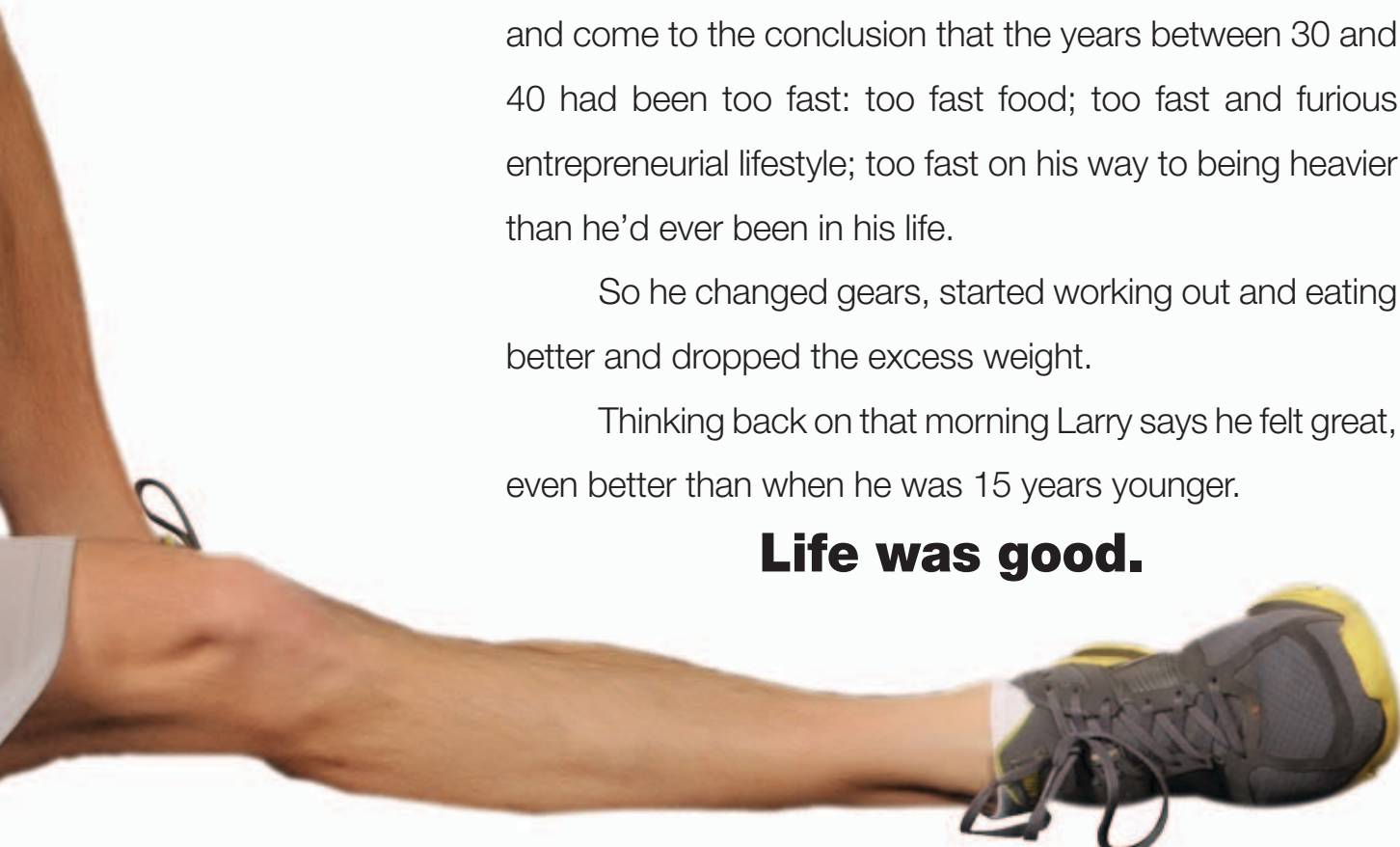
It was Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Not unusually, Larry was at his desk at Copy Corner early. Dressed in sweats, his plan was to finish at his office for the morning and head to the gym for a workout before showering and getting dressed for an evening engagement.

Gym time figured large in Larry's routine. About five years before he'd had one of those age-related reappraisals and come to the conclusion that the years between 30 and 40 had been too fast: too fast food; too fast and furious entrepreneurial lifestyle; too fast on his way to being heavier than he'd ever been in his life.

So he changed gears, started working out and eating better and dropped the excess weight.

Thinking back on that morning Larry says he felt great, even better than when he was 15 years younger.

Life was good.



"I was about ready to go work out. Then I felt lightheaded," Larry recalls, "but I'd had that before." He wasn't really worried, thinking maybe it was leftover from a winter cold. "I didn't feel bad really," he explains, "just odd."

Then his left foot went numb.

Thirteen months later as Larry recounts the moment when the numbness shot from his left foot all the way up his leg, the left side of his body and his face, it is with a touch of incredulity.

"But I knew," he adds, answering the question as much to himself as anyone.

LIFE LESSONS

The story of Larry's business startup is a bit of its own incredible tale. He launched Copy Corner his senior year at Texas A&M University, too impatient on his way to success to finish his finance degree before renting the mothballed post office on the corner of Texas Avenue and Jersey Street (now George Bush Drive) and opening a copy shop. Copy Corner opened in November 1988; Larry graduated in August 1989, and he never looked back. The business moved into a huge custom space on Texas

Avenue in 2004 expanding Copy Corner's desktop publishing and on-demand printing capabilities.

Copy Corner defined Larry's professional life; it would also save his life.

"Years ago I was at the front counter and a guy came in wanting copies of 'Signs of Stroke,'" says Larry, who read the sheet as he made the 20 copies the customer planned to send to friends.

The sudden left-side numbness and feeling lightheaded on that MLK Monday fit the stroke signs he recalled reading years ago. "But you wonder. I got up and looked in the mirror; my smile wasn't crooked. I had decent muscle control. But it wasn't right. It was too weird," he says.

Instead of calling 911 as the "Signs of Stroke" sheet recommended, Larry called downstairs to Vicki, his office manager and trusted friend of the past 18 years.

"I asked her to bring her truck to the door. I didn't want to sound the alarm at the shop," says Larry by way of explanation. "I could walk. I took the elevator downstairs."

Larry called his personal physician, internal medicine doctor Philip Alexander, as Vicki drove him to the emergency room at the College Station Medical Center. He also

called his neighbor, Dr. Ricardo Guterrez, a cardiologist with Central Texas Heart Center.

Dr. Alexander was waiting for Larry at the ER, and Larry remembers the ensuing events clearly: being taken back immediately; the nurses starting an IV; having a seizure. What eludes him is any concept of time over the next 48 hours. "Zero," he says, holding up a circled thumb and forefinger.

THE MEDICAL MAW

A CT scan of his head would show nothing amiss, but an MRI later that evening confirmed that Larry had suffered an ischemic stroke, the type of stroke caused by a blockage in an artery to the brain. The MRI results also indicated that Larry had likely had another stroke sometime in the past.

From those and other test results, Dr. Guterrez wanted to check Larry's heart for the presence of a Patent Foramen Ovale or PFO, a tiny hole in the wall that separates the two upper chambers of the heart. In the womb, the foramen ovale allows oxygen-rich blood from the mother to circulate from the umbilical cord

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to the fetus. This hole naturally closes at birth. Except when it doesn't, which happens in about 25 percent of the population and creates a PFO.

Larry fit the profile of a PFO patient: someone who has a cryptogenic stroke – a stroke of unknown cause – particularly if they are younger than age 55 when they have a stroke. Forty percent of patients who present with these symptoms have a PFO.

Larry was awake during the diagnostic procedure and recalls watching the screen as Dr. Guterrez tried to

confirm a PFO with a scope inserted into his heart. They didn't see a hole, but they did see bubbles leak through the upper chambers after air was injected. Bubbles didn't guarantee a PFO, but made it "statistically likely," says Larry. Those same statistics pointed to Larry's higher risk for future strokes.

A SECOND OPTION

Treatment for PFO isn't cut and dried. The medical literature says that if a PFO is diagnosed through some routine test and the patient doesn't have any other symptoms or hasn't had a stroke, they don't need treatment.

When a patient like Larry has both a PFO and a confirmed stroke the treatment is usually blood-thinning medication such as aspirin, Plavix or Coumadin to prevent another stroke.

From the outside, being put on Coumadin and sent home to resume your "normal" life only 48 hours after a stroke sounds pretty good. To look at Larry, you wouldn't know anything had ever happened.

Larry knew. He was easily fatigued. He had to plan out once normal activities or risk feeling

exhausted and befuddled. Coumadin requires regular blood tests for monitoring levels. It gave him nosebleeds, but because of the stroke, Larry would be on it, or another blood thinner, for the rest of his life.

It was Dr. Guterrez who told Larry about a second option: a tiny wire mesh disc that could be inserted into the hole to close it. While a "percutaneous closure device" is routinely used for some cardiac abnormalities, the devices aren't yet FDA approved for PFO repair. Larry had to have two doctors recommend him as a candidate for the procedure. He studied the literature online and then decided to talk to the surgeons at St. Luke's Methodist Hospital in Houston who were routinely repairing PFOs with this type of device.

"They told me I could die," he says. But to Larry, the better odds were on fixing the PFO and being spared 30 years on blood thinners and possibly another stroke. He scheduled the procedure.

LOOKING OVER THE EDGE

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Larry says he was in a good place emotionally. The first dose of the reality of his situation had been the look on his parents' faces when they walked into his hospital room on the afternoon he suffered the stroke. "It was sobering," says Larry. "For the first time in 45 years I couldn't tell them, 'I'll be OK.'"

EVER AFTER ... HAPPILY

Awaiting the procedure to fix the hole, Larry says, "I was good. I was OK with whatever God's plan was for me." He admits it was harder on the trust factor to believe in God's plan for his then 12-year-old son and 15-year-old daughter to be OK if Larry wasn't around. Then the happy drugs kicked in.

Larry describes St. Luke's "factory-like" approach to cardiac procedures as oddly comforting - it's just all in a long, very busy day's work. Also on the OR schedule that day was an 18-year-old high school football player, a Division I college prospect who had elected the PFO repair procedure in the hope of returning to the gridiron. Before hearing the teenager's story, Larry admits to some "Why me?" moments.

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Months after his procedure to close the PFO, Larry is ... well ... Larry. Easy to talk to, quick to laugh, ready to share his experience in the hope of teaching someone how to recognize when they're having a stroke but also apprehensive about how his story will be received.

Physically, he's still as numb on his left side as he was seconds after the stroke. He's strong. When he closes his numb left hand around a weight during his workouts he's as strong as he ever was. He's less sanguine about his coordination. Gesturing to the full cup of coffee on the table, he remarks he wouldn't pick it up left-handed for fear he might spill it. The fatigue is better than in the first months after the stroke, but he still plans his activities for a milder pace than he would have five years ago. Larry describes his expectation that everything would return to "normal" after the procedure as his "mental mistake."

DO OVERS

There are upsides. "It made me a better dad," he says immediately, mostly by not taking for granted that there will always be time to spend one-on-one with his kids. These days he comes down in favor of more family time over than more business time. He's into flax seed for Omega 3s and heart health and exercise for life.

If you ask Dr. Alexander what cautionary tale Larry Hodges' stroke at age 45 offers, it isn't that you ought to run to your doctor to check for a congenital heart defect like a PFO. Larry's case is unique for both its rarity in the general population and in that he has made such a remarkable recovery.

FEAR THE RIGHT THING

Dr. Alexander enumerates the reasons behind that remarkable recover: 1. Larry was in excellent shape when he had the stroke; 2. Larry has worked very hard doing rehab to regain his physical strength and coordination; and 3. Larry was lucky: his stroke was in a "good location" in the back of the brain.

Two out of three of those factors – the environmental factors of diet and exercise – were in Larry's control. For the rest of us, that's where both the fear factor and comfort come into play for every health risk from stroke, heart attack and most cancers to osteoporosis,



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“You can’t super focus on one [disease], because they all go together,” says Dr. Alexander. Lifestyle – what you eat and how you exercise – affect every one of those disease categories, primarily through chronic cell inflammation and the buildup of plaques, both inside arteries in the heart and in the brain.

The solution, says Dr. Alexander, is to educate yourself about the role of Omega 3s and Omega 6s in the diet and to choose foods that will maintain a healthy balance.

That, notes Dr. Alexander, is something the typical American diet – overloaded with processed grains, meat, dairy and vegetable oils – fails at spectacularly. So out of balance is both our diet and our food chain with inflammation-producing foods it explains the explosion of all the disease categories we fear. That, suggests Dr. Alexander, is what reasonable people ought to worry about: lifestyle can balance disease risk.

COPY THIS MESSAGE

For Larry, now 46, balance is the take-home message, too: work and play; diet and exercise; optimism without taking things for granted.



One thing Larry will never take for granted is the love and support from his family, friends and Copy Corner Crew who saw him through.

He might add: sharing with family and friends the “Signs of Stroke,” because the life they save could be yours. **i**

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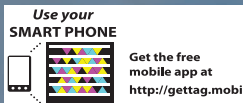
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STROKE?

Think FAST!

- F**ace: Ask the person to smile. Does one side of their face droop?
- A**rm: Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
- S**peech: Ask the person to say, "The sky is blue." Does their speech sound slurred or strange?
- T**ime: Time is IMPORTANT. Stroke is an EMERGENCY!

TOP 5 SYMPTOMS OF A STROKE

1. Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg (especially on one side of the body)
2. Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding speech
3. Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
4. Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
5. Sudden severe headache with no known cause

If you experience any of these symptoms, call 9-1-1 immediately.

What is a stroke?

A stroke is what happens when blood flow to the brain is interrupted. Brain cells in the immediate area begin to die because of a lack of oxygen. The two most common types of strokes are ischemic stroke and hemorrhagic stroke.

The more common ischemic stroke is caused by blockage in a blood vessel leading to the brain, either fatty deposits from the walls of arteries or blood clots that travel to the brain.

A hemorrhagic stroke is when a blood vessel in the brain bursts destroying the brain tissue around it. Hemorrhagic strokes are more

common in patients with high blood pressure or an aneurysm, a weakness in the wall of a blood vessel.

With Stroke, Time Kills

Unlike on the highway where speed kills, with a stroke, speed is the key to life and recovery. The greatest damage from a stroke often occurs within the first few hours. The faster correct treatment is given the greater chance the damage can be prevented or reversed.

Dr. Bradley White is co-medical director of St. Joseph's Stroke Program and the only

neuro-interventionalist in the area. St. Joseph is the only Primary Stroke Center in the region, as designated by the Joint Commission for the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. In 2011, St. Joseph received the American Stroke Association's (ASA) Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award in recognition of implementing excellent care for stroke patients according to evidence-based guidelines.

Dr. White explains that the gold standard for stroke treatment includes two options: "clot-busting" medication such as tPA, and Mechanical Thrombectomy, the mechanical

On average, someone suffers a stroke every 40 seconds, dies of stroke every four minutes and 795,000 people will suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year in the U.S.

Source: www.st-joseph.org/strokecare


removal of a stroke-causing clot.

When tPA (tissue Plasminogen Activator) is delivered into a blood vessel, the goal is to dissolve the clot and halt the stroke by restoring blood flow to the brain. This and other drug treatments must be given at the hospital within three hours of the onset of stroke symptoms.

With Mechanical Thrombectomy, patients are taken to the cath lab at St. Joseph where Dr. White can perform the Merci device procedure physically going inside the brain to mechanically remove the clot and restore blood flow. While these treatments can be miraculous in reducing the effects of a stroke, it takes recognizing the symptoms of a stroke, calling 9-1-1, and getting to the hospital immediately to make these effective treatments possible.

Know Your Stroke Risk Factors

While anyone can have a stroke there are risk factors that increase the chance it will happen to you. According to Dr. White, "The top risk factors for stroke include smoking, high blood pressure, diabetes and an abnormal heart rhythm." Rather than worry, Dr. White offers this as a stroke prevention goal: 80% of strokes are preventable if the associated risk factors are reduced.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle will almost completely eliminate your chance of having a stroke. Registered Nurse Amy Plotts is coordinator of the Stroke/Chest Pain Services for St. Joseph and says the answer to lowering your risk of stroke is to get healthy: "Stop smoking; see a doctor about your blood pressure and cholesterol; be sure to follow your medication correctly; and get active!" 

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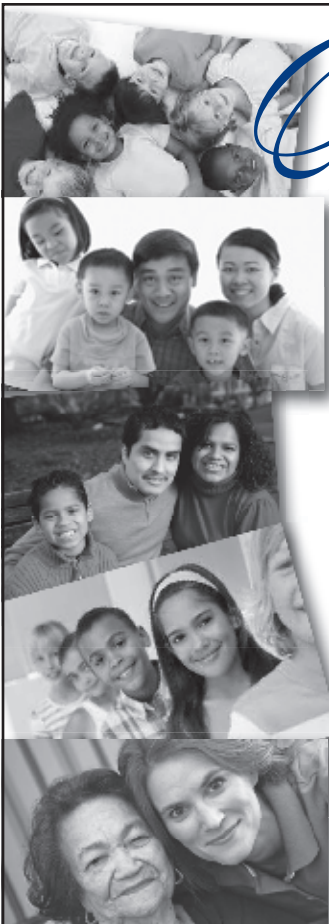
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Child Abuse Prevention Month

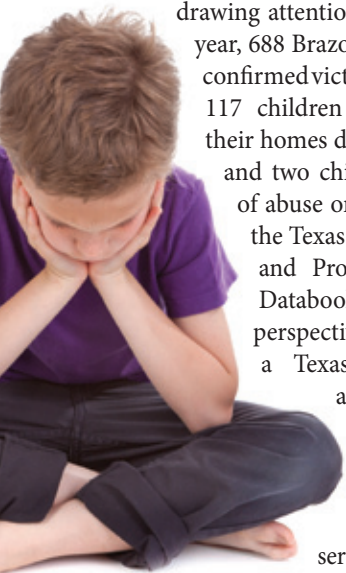
Child abuse is a scourge in any community. During Child Abuse Prevention month in April, a coalition of agencies will be drawing attention to the sad facts: last year, 688 Brazos Valley children were confirmed victims of abuse or neglect; 117 children were removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect; and two children died as a result of abuse or neglect, according to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services 2011 Databook. From a broader perspective, every eight minutes a Texas child becomes an abuse victim and one child will die every 36 hours because of abuse or neglect.

Kate Mason, who serves as recruitment and education coordinator for Voices For Children – Court Appointed Special Advocates of Brazos Valley, along with other local agencies, has developed a child abuse awareness alliance in the hope of increasing awareness and leading

our community to a safer and healthier place for children.

The Child Abuse Awareness Alliance Brazos Valley (CAAABV) is comprised of more than a dozen local nonprofit and victim services agencies. These agencies include representatives from the Sexual Assault Resource Center, Brazos County Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Brazos County Health Department, Crime Victim Conference Alliance, Voices for Children, Scotty's House, Brazos County Child Welfare Board, Prenatal Clinic, Child Care Licensing, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services-Foster Care/Adopt Program, and Kappa Delta, and Texas Department of Family and Protective Services-Child Protective Services, and Texas A&M University Police Department.

"We have planned a month filled with opportunities for community members to become more informed about the ways to protect and support our children and strengthen our families," says Mason. If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, please call 1-800-252-5400. We can all be a voice for a child when he or she doesn't have one. *i*



What: Voices For Children – CASA of Brazos Valley is hosting an open house as part of First Fridays in Downtown Bryan in honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month. **When:** Friday, April 6, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at 115 N. Main Street in Bryan.

What: Omega Phi Alpha (OPA) will hold a benefit dinner benefitting Voices For Children and Scotty's House. **When:** Friday, April 20, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Briarcrest Country Club.

What: The Sexual Assault Resource Center, which serves survivors of sexual abuse/violence of all ages in the Brazos Valley, is hosting its Teal Ribbon Run 5K. **When:** Saturday, April 21 at 9 a.m. in Downtown Bryan www.sarcbv.org.

What: Every Victim, Every Time Crime Victim Conference. This annual conference provides effective, quality and affordable training for those in victim services, the medical field, law enforcement and the community-at-large. **When:** April 24-25 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at A&M Church of Christ, College Station www.evetbv.org.

What: A Legacy Dinner will be held after the Every Victim, Every Time Conference. **When:** Wednesday, April 25 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Pebble Creek Country Club in College Station www.evetbv.org.

What: The Blue Sunday Faith Initiative is held every year on the last Sunday of April, with places of worship taking time in their morning services to pray for the victims of child abuse and for those who rescue them. **When:** Sunday, April 29.

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Brazos Valley Earth Day

FUN FOR THE WHOLE PLANET

'Vocal Trash,' Kid's Zone, Educational Booths & More

Celebrate our natural and cultural environments during the 17th annual Brazos Valley Earth Day celebration at College Station's Wolf Pen Creek April 21 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Educational booths will include rainwater harvesting, backyard composting, green lawn care techniques and alternative transportation. The Kid's Zone will include an inflatable bounce and obstacle course and environmental story times.

Band Vocal Trash will perform from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., making "music in harmony with the

environment by fusing world-class singing, industrial style drumming, award winning break-dancing and comedy antics into a unique and uplifting experience."

Hosted by the cities of Bryan and College Station, Texas A&M University, Brazos Valley Council of Governments, Brazos Valley Solid Waste Management Agency, Inc., and Keep Brazos Beautiful. Visit brazosvalleyearthday.com for a complete schedule of events or contact Recycling Coordinator Heather Qualls at hqualls@cstx.gov or (979) 764-6229. *i*

WanderID to Hold Registration at Earth Day

When young children or people with cognitive difficulties such as Alzheimer's, dementia, brain injury or Down syndrome wander off into unfamiliar surroundings they often are not able to identify themselves putting themselves in dangerous situations. Imagine someone you know with cognitive difficulties trying to explain to a stranger who they are or where they live.

With the WanderID, families can take comfort in knowing that if a loved one were to wander, this new technology would lead them one step closer to getting the missing person quickly home. During the Earth Day celebration at Wolf Pen Creek on April 21, WanderID will have a booth to register those interested in the service. A photographer will be on location to take photos needed to register someone.

Mary Haskett, co-founder of WanderID, says an epiphany after reading articles about the growing epidemic of wandering adults and the coming silver tsunami of the baby boomer generation lead to the creation of the service. With a M.Ed. in Educational Technology, Haskett partnered with fellow Texas A&M graduate Dr. Alex Kilpatrick who has a Ph.D. in Computer Engineering to launch WanderID after two years of development. Their vision was to use biometric technology to create a database that will allow a broad audience cheap, easy access to a safe system that yields quick results if a loved one goes missing.

"Our ultimate goal is to provide 'In Case of Emergency' contact information for everyone in need," says Haskett.

A simple "passport style" photo, online registration to complete a profile, and uploading emergency contact information are all that is required to create a WanderID account. If a loved one does wander, a police officer, EMS, or concerned citizen can snap a photo of the missing person and send it using the free smart-phone app or via email to WanderID where the state-of-the-art facial recognition technology promptly finds a match of the photographs. Once a match is found, the emergency contact info will be available and a call can be placed to the missing person's caregiver. Bryan/ College Station and Texas A&M police departments have been trained to use WanderID, and about 50 locals have registered so far.

WanderID charges a membership fee of \$9.95 per month, \$99.95 per year or \$250 for a lifetime membership. WanderID is currently offering six months of free enrollment with a coupon code 6FREE when setting up a WanderID account.

"We wanted to create an ID service that was as inexpensive as an ID bracelet, but as efficient as a tracking device," says Haskett. All plans include unlimited updates, free 24/7 support as well as a money-back guarantee within seven days of your sign up for a full refund. More information about the service is available at online at WanderID.com.

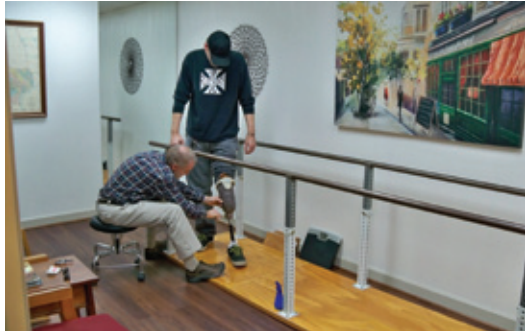
Our ultimate goal is to provide 'In Case of Emergency' contact information for everyone in need.

- Mary Haskett, founder, WanderID



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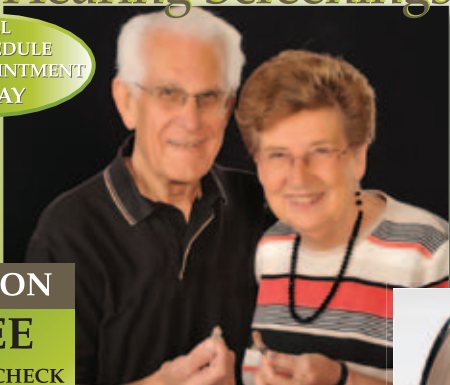
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50th Birthday Lets Denise Fries Give Back

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Denise Fries has a history of giving back to this community in a big way. On the 20th anniversary of her business, Fries Financial Services, she donated \$20,000 and a sports car to a matching grant program that ended up generating more than \$160,000 for 17 local charities. In celebration of her 50th birthday later this year, Fries plans to top those results with a \$50,000 matching grant that will be carried out in conjunction with the Community Foundation of the Brazos Valley.

To take part in the matching grant program, any charitable organization in the community can apply for one of 15 matching grants, ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000. The organizations that are selected will plan and carry out their own fundraisers to generate money equal to or greater than their grant. This way at least \$100,000 will be generated to support the organizations. The groups will be free to use the funds generated from their own fundraisers in any way they see fit, and the matching grant from Fries Financial Services will be placed into an endowment fund at the

Community Foundation benefiting the selected organizations.

HOW TO APPLY

For more information, or an application, visit www.cfbv.org or contact Derek Dictson at derek@cfbv.org or (979) 575-4496. Applications must be received by April 13.

Fries Financial Services has a tradition of placing their clients' needs first, and Fries was recently honored for that commitment by being selected for *Research Magazine's* Hall of Fame published in the December issue. Fries was selected for the magazine's 21st annual recognition of leaders in the financial services industry who demonstrate superior client service and community involvement. Fries Financial Services manages more than \$200 million for their clients and have been providing financial services since 1984. Visit www.friesfinancial.com for more information.

The Community Foundation of the Brazos Valley is a public charity created by and for the people of the Brazos Valley to promote long-term philanthropic giving through the establishment and management of charitable endowment funds. The foundation currently manages more than 50 charitable endowment funds with assets of over \$2 million, which generate over \$80,000 of grants benefiting local nonprofits each year. *i*



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BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION**DINING / CATERING**

BLUE BAKER, www.bluebaker.com, 800 University Dr, CS (979) 268-3096; 201 Dominik, CS (979) 696-5055, Blue Baker is an artisan bakery and café featuring breads baked from scratch, pastries, sandwiches, soup, fresh tossed salads and brick-oven pizzas. Try some cookies for the perfect finish! Open daily 7am-10pm.

CAFÉ ECCELL, www.cafeeccell.com, 101 Church Ave., CS (979) 846-7908. Café Eccell is a pizza and wine bistro located in College Station's Old City Hall that offers wood fired pizza, fresh seafood and more! Lunch M-Th 11am-2pm; F & Su 11am-5pm; Sa 12pm-5pm; Dinner M-Su 5pm-10pm

CAFFE' CAPRI ITALIAN RESTAURANT, www.theplaceforitalian.com, 222 N. Main St., Bryan (979) 822-2675. This award winning downtown restaurant has been serving creative and reasonably priced Italian dishes for 15 years. Enjoy their art deco interior, local art display and upbeat atmosphere. Lunch M-F 11am-2pm; Dinner M-Th 6pm-9pm; F-Sa 5pm-9pm

CARNEY'S PUB, www.carneyspubandgrill.com, 3410 S College Ave, Bryan (979) 823-1294. Now offering a full menu along with daily drink specials. Ask about our catering and private parties. With more than 100 beers, pool, darts and shuffle board, you can enjoy smoke-free dining and fun, minutes from Texas A&M. 3pm-2am, Mon-Sat

CASA RODRIGUEZ, www.casarod.com, 300 N. Bryan Ave., Bryan (979) 779-0916. Casa Rodriguez has been serving Bryan and College Station for more than 30 years. Their menu consists of traditional Mexican food recipes that have kept the locals and visitors coming back for more. M 11am-2pm; Tu-Th 7am-9pm; F 7am-9:30pm; Sa 8am-9:30pm; Su 8am-8pm

CHRISTOPHER'S WORLD GRILLE, www.christophersworldgrille.com, 5001 Boonville Rd., Bryan (979) 776-2181. A trip to Christopher's World Grille, in the historic Andrews House in Bryan, is a fine dining experience that can best be described as food with Mediterranean, Italian, coastal French, and South Pacific influences with a touch of Louisiana thrown in. Lunch M-Su 11am-2pm; Dinner Su-Th 5pm-9pm; F-Sa 5pm-10pm

CENARE RESTAURANT, www.gotocenare.com, 404 University Dr E, CS (979) 696-7311. Cenare offers a variety of authentic Italian cuisine and beautifully presented dishes. Whether you are looking for an intimate evening, a nice place for the entire family or a place to host your next event, Cenare is a great choice. M-F 11am-2pm, M-Th 5-9:30pm, F-Sa 5-10pm

LA BODEGA, www.bodegatacos.com, 102 Church Ave., CS (979) 691-8226. La Bodega is a Baja taco bar located on Northgate. Choose from their wide selection of tacos made from the freshest ingredients alongside specialty drinks and other great menu options. Live music can be heard W-Su nights. M-Su 11am-10pm

LUIGI'S PATIO RISTORANTI, www.luigispatoristorante.com (979) 693-2742 Aggieldand's cozy little corner of Italy serving authentic Italian style dining. Located at the northeast corner

of the intersection of Hwy. 6 and Rock Prairie Road. Live background music every night. Happy Hour 5:30-6:30pm. Reservations accepted.

SHIPWRECK BAR & GRILL, (979) 823-SHIP, www.shipwreckbcs.com, 206 E Villa Maria, Bryan in 'The Boat.' Bringing you scary big crawfish, oysters, shrimp, catfish, plus grilled Mahi Mahi and Tailapia with plenty of chicken and burger and fries options, too. Lunch specials, specialty drinks and desserts round out the Shipwreck experience. Private parties on the deck & off-site catering. Mon-Sat 11am-10pm, Sun 11am-9pm

THE CORNER BAR & GRILL, (979) 268-1406, www.thecornerbcs.com, 401 University Dr. Northgate, CS. Come for the rooftop ambience and stay for the weekly food and drink specials. Ask about catering for corporate events, meetings, weddings & private parties. Daily Bar 11am-2am Kitchen 11am-9pm

THE REPUBLIC, www.therepublic1836.com, 701 University Dr. E., 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. M-Sa 5pm-10pm

THE TAP, www.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, and a piano bar. Their menu consists of lunch specials, burgers, sandwiches, and free peanuts. M-Sa 11am-2pm

THE UNIVERSITY CLUB, www.universityclub.tamu.edu 11th Floor Rudder Tower, Texas A&M University (979) 845-CLUB. Outstanding dining with a view, featuring the cuisine of Chef Allan DeViney. Park across the street in the campus garage and bring your ticket for validation and enjoy daily lunch buffet from 11am to 2pm or Social Hour Wed-Fri 4pm-7pm. Ask for catering menus and pricing.

VERITAS, 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. Highly-trained associates and wine stewards can guide you through an award-winning wine list, which has garnered Wine Spectator's Award of Excellence (2007-2010). Lunch M-Sa 11am-2pm; Dinner Su-Th 5:30-9:30pm; F-Sa 2-11pm

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TRUMAN CHOCOLATES, www.trumanchocolates.com, 4407 South Texas Ave., Bryan (979) 260-4519. Truman Chocolates is your source for exquisitely handcrafted gourmet chocolates. Each chocolate is made of only the finest ingredients and carefully designed to maximize your sensory experience. M-F 9am-6pm; Sa 10am-3pm

ENTERTAINMENT & ATTRACTIONS

BRAZOS BINGO, www.BrazosBingo.com, 1805 Briarcrest Drive across from Bryan High, Bryan (979)

776-0999. For Charity Bingo at its best, Brazos Bingo has Family Nights, Aggie Nights and an enclosed, non-smoking section. Enjoy great food at great prices at the Brazos City Grill or call about the Party Room – great for private business events. Brazos Bingo supports the following charities: Elks Lodge #859, Brazos Valley Council on Alcohol and Substance Abuse, St. Joseph Church, and Bubba Moore Memorial Group, Inc. Open 7 days a week

DINING REWARD PROGRAM

THE TASTE OF B/CS, www.tasteofBCS.com. Now you can join the original, independent Rewards Program that earns points at every participating locally owned restaurant. Earn \$10 back for every \$150 points and use your reward at any of the 26 participating restaurants. Text 'JOIN' to (979) 227-4455 or sign up at any participating restaurant & Facebook

BURLESON COUNTY**DINING / SHOPPING**

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MAD HATTER'S TEA ROOM, www.madhatterstearoom.com, 210 S. Echols, Caldwell (979) 567-3504. The Mad Hatter's cozy eatery provides tantalizing treats and generous portions bursting with flavor, a unique selection of gift items, gourmet coffees, and specialty teas. Open for breakfast and lunch and special events by appointment. W-Sa 8am-5pm

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SOUTHERN FLYER, www.brenhammunicipalairport.com, 3001 Aviation Way, Brenham (979) 836-5462. Whether flying in or driving up, Southern Flyer is a great place to land with great eats! The 50s-style diner is a blast from the past with waitresses who serve up your food in poodle skirts. Bringing together fun and food at a relaxing and enjoyable destination! Su-Th 11am-3pm, F-Sa 11am-9pm

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