

Brazos Valley

April 2010

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Correction In "Real Estate by the Numbers" in the March issue, chairman and CEO of The Oldham Goodwin Group Casey M. Oldham's name was misspelled. Insite regrets the error.

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PUBLISHER'S DESK

Eavesdropping on some college students standing in line behind me at a University Drive eatery, I couldn't help but be amused as they dissed and dished on the lack of "stuff to do" in town. **ARE THEY KIDDING?** This month's What's Happening is choc full of stuff to do, from the black tie Heart Association gala to the free Peruvian Horse exhibition at the Expo arena. For budgets modest to massive and everything in between, there is a group or activity waiting for you to **SPRING INTO ACTION.**

A host of worthy non-profit organizations will entertain in a myriad of creative ways while raising funds to continue their mission to keep us all healthy. You can dance, golf, rock out and dine at more than a dozen events this month designed to raise funds for the benefit of our collective **GOOD HEALTH.**

Worried that the scourge of spring – **SEASONAL ALLERGIES** – will keep you from enjoying the fun? Fear not. Two eminent immunologists will advise you on how to keep your nose from running away with your good times as part of Insite's **ANNUAL HEALTH EDITION.**

Good health and good times. What more could you ask for this spring? – **Angelique Gammon**

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Celebration Dinner and Silent Auction presented by MacResource

When: Thursday, May 6, 6 p.m. until 9 p.m.

Where: The Tap, 815 Harvey Road, College Station

Who: All Celebrity Golf Tournament golfers and one guest are invited. Donation of \$10 requested at door. Drinks and dinner are included and sponsors will be recognized.

Why: This is your chance to help Coach Blair Charities support our community. A wide variety of silent auction items will be displayed at the Celebration Dinner and Silent Auction presented by MacResource at The Tap in College Station.

Help Coach Blair coach some very special athletes

The 7th Annual Coach Blair Charities Celebrity Golf Classic benefiting Special Olympics Texas and other charities will take place May 7 at Traditions Golf Club in Bryan. Texas A&M's women's basketball head coach Gary Blair began the Golf Tournament 17 years ago and brought it to Aggieland seven years ago. Coach Schaefer, associate head coach to Blair, has helped Blair every step of the way. Blair says, "What is so great about this community is that it is a very giving community, particularly a lot of the locally owned businesses. The community wants to give back because they feel it is their civic duty and there is a need to."

There is also a chance for those not playing in the golf tournament to make

donations and bid for items online. Some of the celebrity coaches will include former players, Aggie celebrities, current and former coaches from all over the nation, athletic directors and more.

"Once you put a medal around their necks, it doesn't matter if it's for first or sixth place, they will have a smile on their face no matter what," says Blair of the athletes who participate in Special Olympics. Blair says many adults could learn from these very special athletes and he encourages more people in our community to become involved. For more information, visit CoachBlairCharities.org or email Erich Birch at ebirch@athletics.tamu.edu or call (979) 862-1636. *i*

7th Annual Coach Blair Charities Classic Celebrity Golf Tournament benefiting Special Olympics Texas

When: May 7

Cost: \$225 per player or \$900 per team of four

Flight Times: 8 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Format: Scramble featuring four players and a celebrity; each will tee off and select the best shot location to play. All five players then take the next shot from that position and continue until the hole is completed.

Prizes and Hole-In-One-Contest: Prizes will be awarded for the morning and afternoon flights. On-course contests include a hole-in-one, casino hole and closest to the pin.



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Cat's motto:

No matter what you've done wrong,
always try to make it look like the dog did it.

Author Unknown

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American Heart Association Gala Returns

Brazos Valley residents who remember the excitement of the Heart Rock Café fund-raiser events held in years past will be pleased to know that organizers have been planning an all-new look for the 2010 Gala. Called “April in Paris: An Evening to Remember,” the American Heart Association hopes to welcome between 400 and 500 patrons for a formal evening of French ambience, food, and entertainment in the beautiful setting of Miramont Country Club.

No evening in Paris would be complete without music; Karan Chavis will add her exceptional vocal stylings to piano accompaniment for those who prefer the intimate club setting for the evening. For patrons who enjoy dancing to classic rock from the 60s, 70s, and 80s, The Rockafellas will have the audience up and dancing. That’s just some of the fun planned for the black-tie event.

A highlight of the evening will occur when American Heart Association representatives honor Dr. Jim Rohack, who is presently serving this year as President of the American Medical Association. Longtime patrons have fond memories of Dr. Rohack as a distinguished Scott & White cardiologist and faculty member at Texas A&M Health Science Center, duties he continues to fulfill while serving as AMA President.

Rohack has faithfully served the mission of American Heart in the Brazos Valley, in both College Station and Temple locations of Scott & White, Presenting Sponsor for the 2010 Gala.

Capping the festivities is a live auction of select items, including a South Texas hunt, a trip for two to Paris (the hotel/casino) in Las Vegas, an exquisite custom design from Montelongo’s Fine Jewelry, a vacation to Ruidoso, NM, with a stay in a serene, rustic cabin, and a stay in an elegant home in the Hamptons. A special gift by David Gardner’s will also be offered that evening.

For just \$100 per raffle ticket, the community is being offered a raffle for a trip for two from Houston to Paris, France (business class), with two nights in Paris, and five nights in a lovely French Villa, Manoir du Poul in Brittany, France (manor stay donated by Susan and Flip Flippen). The winner does not need to be present to win.

Thanks to enthusiastic response, a sellout crowd is expected. A limited number of individual tickets (\$100 per person) remain for the black-tie gala. Event tickets and raffle tickets can be charged by phone. Contact Melissa Liddicoat, AHA Corporate Marketing Director, at the American Heart office at (979) 268-0068. *i*

American Heart Association Gala

What: 2010 Brazos Valley Heart Gala

Where: Miramont Country Club, Bryan

When: Friday, April 23, 8 p.m. to 12 midnight

Attire: Black tie

How: Individual tickets \$100 per person, limited seating. Call Melissa Liddicoat, Corporate Market Director for American Heart Association at (979) 268-0068

Entertainment: Vocalist Karan Chavis with piano accompaniment

Dancing to the music of The Rockafellas

Dancing ... For the Health of It!

Health For All wants you to cheer on your favorite celebrity dance couples April 30 at the Brazos County Expo. As a non-profit, volunteer-based health care clinic, Health For All has been providing free primary and preventative health care for low income adults in the Brazos Valley since 1987. Funded almost entirely by private donations, Health For All provides some 4,000 patient visits each year and offers an alternative to expensive emergency room visits for those who have no health insurance and do not qualify for government programs. Health For All saves area hospitals, and taxpayers, more than \$6 million every year.

Dancing for the Health of it will bring 26 celebrity dance teams from eight different professional groups together to compete for bragging rights while raising more than \$50,000 of critically needed operating funds for the clinic. Reservations are now available for community members to enjoy dinner and the dance competition. Confirmed celebrity dancers include Texas A&M quarterback Jerrod Johnson, CSISD Superintendent Eddie Coulson, business owners Gene and Kathy Joyce and Eagle Editor Donnis Baggett.

Sponsorships are available from \$100 to \$5,000. Dinner tickets are \$50 each; spectator tickets are \$20. For more information, call (979) 774-4272 or email ED@hlth4all.org or visit www.hlth4all.org.

What: Dancing for the Health of it

When: April 30, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Where: Brazos County Expo

How: Call (979) 774-4272 or email ED@hlth4all.org for ticket and sponsorship information.

Why: To raise operating funds for the non-profit, volunteer-based community health clinic Health For All.

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"Today I will pause at the crossroads and listen for the sounds of Hope."
Author Unknown

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APRIL EVENTS

Through April 23, register for **Tsunamis, CS Aquatics' recreational summer league team**, for boys and girls ages 5-18. Cost is \$110 per swimmer. Practice begins May 3 and there will be six swim meets May 15 through June 19. A link to the downloadable form can be found at eteamz.com/cspard. For more information, call (979) 764-3486 or visit eteamz.com/collegestationstsunamis

from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Admission is free. For more information, contact the Arts Council at (979) 696-2787. Beginning April 1 and continuing throughout the month, join the **Children's Museum of the Brazos Valley** for a variety of special programming and activities for children. Highlights this

April 1 through June 30, the Gallery@Dartmouth will display art from the **Student Scholarship** recipients of both the **Arts Council** and **Art League's** annual competition. The Gallery@Dartmouth is located inside the Arts Center, 2275 Dartmouth St., College Station.

April 2 from 5:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m., the **Frame Gallery** hosts **First Friday**. Join the Frame Gallery in Downtown Bryan on the first Friday of every month for local art, live music, horse drawn carriage rides and fun. Jazz band starts at 6:30 p.m. For more information, contact Greta Watkins at (979) 822-0496 or visit www.downtownbryan.com.

April 5 at 7 p.m., **Texas A&M Dance Program** and **GLBT Resource Center** present **Evening of the Arts** in the Reed building room 263 featuring dance, visual arts, music, and theatre. Admission is free and seating is limited. Performance may not be suitable for children. For more information, contact Christine Bergeron at Cbergeron@hlkn.



April 6 at 7:30 p.m., **MSC OPAS** presents **Frederica von Stade** and **Samuel Ramey** at Rudder Theatre. For tickets and more information, call (979) 845-1234 or visit www.msccopas.org.

Through April 30, the **Arts Council of the Brazos Valley** and the **Brazos Valley Art League** will host **Extracurricular III – Art Teachers of the Brazos Valley**. The Texas Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m., Friday

month include **Healthy Kids Puppet Show, A Night at the Children's Museum, Recycle Days, ChildreNinos**, and more. For specific program dates, times and more information, contact The Children's Museum at (979) 779-KIDS (5437) or visit www.mymuseum.com.

The Peruvian Horse – A Cadillac Ride

April 23-25, make plans to attend the 30th Annual Southwest Peruvian Horse Show. Enthusiasts say that after 450 years of selective breeding, today's Peruvian Paso Horse is the ultimate pleasure horse. With its four-beat lateral gait, the Peruvian horse gives the rider the smoothest ride in the world. The Southwest Peruvian Horse Club has used the Brazos County Expo Arena for the past two years and returns again because of the Central Texas location plus a great facility and community. There will be more than 100 classes for spectators to enjoy as well as junior classes for kids 13 and younger and teens 14 and older.

Three-time U.S. Equestrian Gaited Drill Team champions, Texas Ladies Aside, will perform during the event. The group has performed at the National Peruvian Horse Show in Peru, the Rose Bowl Parade and many other events.

What: 30th Annual Southwest Peruvian Horse Show

When: April 23-25

Where: Brazos County Expo Arena

How: Free entry for spectators. Call (817) 594-1597 or (214) 728-1887 for more information about the event or visit www.brazoscountyexpo.com or www.NAPHA.com.

Why: This unique showcase of Peruvian horses and showmanship promises to entertain spectators with a wide array of classes including gait, luxury, pleasure, performance, stallion, gelding, mare and junior rider classes. Beverages available for purchase including coffee, beer, wine or tea.





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tamu.edu or call (979) 845-5025.

Beginning April 8 and continuing throughout the month, **The Institute of Texan Cultures** in San Antonio, TX, will host a series of free lectures related to the exhibit **Race: Are We So Different?** Cost is \$8 for adults (12-64); \$7 for seniors (65+); \$6 for children (3-11); free with membership, UTSA or Alamo Colleges identification. For more information, call (210) 458-2300 or visit TexanCultures.com.

April 8, 15, 22, 29 and May 6

from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m., **The Bryan/ College Station Community Health Center** hosts diabetes classes for adults with type 2 diabetes. Lessons include four nutrition topics and five self-care topics to help you manage your diabetes. Registration cost is \$15 per person. Need-based scholarships are available. Pre-register by calling the Texas AgriLife Extension Service at (979) 823-0129 by April 1.

April 8 at 7 p.m., the **George Bush Presidential Library and Museum** presents

Singing in the Rain. Free admission includes beverages and popcorn. For more information, call (979) 691-4000.

April 9 at 7 p.m., the **Lone Star Honor Flight Benefit Concert** will be held at the Bryan Civic Auditorium. Tickets are \$10 each and may be purchased at Kroger, Sam's Club, College Station Conference Center, Prosperity Bank, Village Foods or Carriage Inn. For more information, call (979) 779-2856 or email bandjmcgown@suddenlink.net.

April 9-11, **Texas A&M Horseman's Association & Brazos County Extension Horse Committee** hosts **Aggie Super Circuit.** Show begins at 7 a.m. Friday and 8 a.m. Saturday and Sunday. It is open to the public and activities will be happening all day. Visit BrazosCountyExpo.com for more information.

Beginning April 10 and continuing throughout the month, the **Brazos Valley Stitchers** will hold different programs such as **Stitch-in** and **Crochet Ornament Cover.** Guests are welcome. Visit www.brazosvalleystitchers.org for more information.

April 10 at 4:30 p.m., **Texas A&M Vet School** hosts **Gentle Doctor Benefit.** Doors open for silent auction at 4:30 p.m., buffet dinner at 5:30 p.m., live auction begins at 7 p.m., dancing after auction closes. Dress is casual. Admission is \$50 per person in advance, \$20 for veterinary students and student spouses in advance and \$60 per person at the



Get Green on Earth Day

Saturday April 17, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Wolf Pen Creek Amphitheatre, Brazos Valley residents can find the latest in eco-friendly living at the 15th annual Brazos Valley Earth Day. Admission is free to enjoy the environmental exhibits and displays, kids' crafts and activities, live music, food, local vendors, rainwater harvesting and composting demos, eco street fairs, hybrid, ethonal and electric vehicles, and free face painting. Bring your own t-shirt for a \$10 tie-dye experience. Earth Day is hosted by the cities of Bryan and College Station, Texas A&M, BVSWMMA, Brazos Valley Council of Governments, Keep Brazos Beautiful and Children's Museum. Earth Day is sponsored by Candy 95.1, The Planet 107.3, Brazos Valley Recycling, Texas Commercial Waste and Village Foods. Visit www.BRAZOSVALLEYEARTHDAY.COM for more information.

What: Brazos Valley Earth Day

When: April 17, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Where: Wolf Pen Creek Amphitheatre

How: Free admission

Why: Discover the latest in local eco living resources

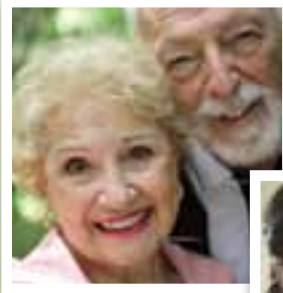


April 25-26, **Kristen Distributing Company** and **Miramont Country Club** present the **20th Anniversary Celebrity Golf Classic** benefiting the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Brazos Valley. The **Steak & Shake Dinner and Dance** will be held on Sunday April 25 at Hurricane Harry's and the tournament will be held Monday April 26 at Miramont Country Club. Celebrity hosts include John David Crow, Mark Dennard, and Hunter Goodwin. For more information on being a sponsor and for a listing of additional celebrities, contact Tami Swigert at (979)778-2903 or visit www.celebritygolfevent.com.

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Helping Others Thrive



May 22 from 9 a.m. until 12 noon, the **Brazos County Office of Texas AgriLife Extension Master Gardeners** will present **"The Good Garden Therapy: Earth Kind Methods for Gardening,"** at the Brazos Center in Bryan.

Get answers to your spring-summer vegetable gardening questions and prepare now for a successful fall garden with **Tom LeRoy**, Montgomery County Extension Agent and author of the Southern Kitchen Garden. Learn about "The Soil Food Web", a new model of soil fertility and management, from John Ferguson, owner of Nature's Way Resources. This model explains how biological methods (and organic methods) work to save time and money and give better gardening results without toxic chemicals. Cost is \$20. Visit <http://www.brazosmg.com>; email brazosmg@ag.tamu.edu or phone (979) 823-0129 for information.

door. Contact Sherry Adams (979) 845-9102 or visit BrazosCountyExpo.com for more information.

April 11 at 5 p.m., the **Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra** presents **Romantic Masterpieces** at Christ United Methodist Church. For tickets and more information, call (979) 845-1234 or visit boxoffice.tamu.edu.

April 11 and 24, **S.O.S Awareness Month** presents its two main events, the **Annual Holy Smoke Barbeque** on April 11 from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. at Bryan High School Silver Campus and the **Joe Conway Memorial 5K Run/Walk** on April 24 with registration beginning at 8 a.m. at the Traditions Club in Bryan. Bryan and College Station have declared April S.O.S. Awareness Month for the 5th year. Plates are served on a donation basis at the door. 5K is \$20 with pre-registration and \$30 the

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day of. Register at <http://www.active.com/donate/sosministries>. For more information, contact Mary Frances Norris at (979) 775-5357 or email norrismf@saveourstreetsministries.org.

April 15-17, 22-24, 29, and May 1 at 7:30 p.m., **StageCenter** presents **Topdog/Underdog**. Tickets are available at the door or at the Arts Center, 2275 Dartmouth St., College Station. For more information, call (979) 823-4297 or visit www.stagecenter.net.

April 16-18 from 7 p.m. until 10 p.m., the **Texas A&M Rodeo team** hosts the **Texas A&M Rodeo**. Admission is \$10 at the gate, \$8 in advance at Cavender's and \$6 with student ID. Visit BrazosCountyExpo.com for more information.

April 18 at 7:30 p.m., **Community Chamber Concerts** presents pianist **La Follia** at First Presbyterian Church in Bryan. Admission is free and open to the public. For more information, call (979) 696-7410 or visit www.communitychamberconcerts.org.

April 21 from 10:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m., join the **George Bush Presidential Library and Museum** for the **Adventures of Peter Rabbit** told by "**Miss Teresa**" Maurer for children grades K-3. Bring your camera and take your picture with Peter Rabbit. For more information, call (979) 691-4014 or visit www.bushlibrary.tamu.edu.

April 21 from 12 noon to 1 p.m., join the **George Bush Presidential Library and Museum** for **Musical Storytelling Hour**, an interactive program with songs and stories for children grades K-3. For more information, call (979) 691-4014 or visit www.bushlibrary.tamu.edu.

April 23-25, **IEM Shows** hosts **Peddler Show**. Shows are from 3 p.m. until 8 p.m. Friday, 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. until 6 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$5 at the door. Visit the little street full of shops for home décor, clothes and yellow box shoes. Enter admission ticket for a chance to win a few items from some of the vendors. For more information, contact Jessie Bergman at (800) 775-2774 or visit BrazosCountyExpo.com.

April 24, join the **George Bush Presidential Library and Museum** for their **Chilean Winemaker Weekend**. A morning seminar by a representative from Wines of Chile and an afternoon presentation by Pablo Morandé of Viña Morandé will cover the unique

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April 24 at 7 p.m. at the **Palace Theatre** in Downtown Bryan, **Shimmy! Spring 2010** will perform a dance production showcasing the art of belly dance and classical Indian dancing. The show includes performances by local and regional dancers. For more information, visit www.victoriabellydance.com.

bouquets and flavors of Chilean wines. Following a private tour of The Culture of Wine exhibit, guests will sit down to a Winemaker's Dinner. For more information, contact Tracy Paine at (979) 691-4014 or tracy.paine@nara.gov.

April 27 at 7 p.m., **The Brazos County office of Texas AgriLife Extension Master Gardeners** hosts **Great Gardening Ideas** at the Brazos Center. Steven Chamblee, Chief Horticulturist for Chandor Gardens in Weatherford, will be sharing Great Gardening Ideas. Learn about form, texture, contrast, framing, details and whimsy. This program is free and open to the public. For more information, contact brazosmg@ag.tamu.edu or call (979) 823-0129.

April 27, **Hope Pregnancy Center** hosts the **Hope Pregnancy Spring Banquet**. For more information, visit BrazosCountyExpo.com.

April 28 at 10 a.m. at **Barnes & Noble**, the **SCBWI** will hold their monthly **Schmooze**. This month's topic is Conveying Authentic Emotion in Your Writing. For more information, call (979) 696-8158 or visit www.scbwi-brazosvalley.org.

April 30 through May 2, the **Theatre Company** presents **Willie Wonka**. Performances are Friday and Saturday nights at 7 p.m., and Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. Tickets are available online at www.theatrecompany.com, at the Arts Council, 2275 Dartmouth St., College Station, or at the box office. For more information, call the Arts Council at (979) 696-2787.

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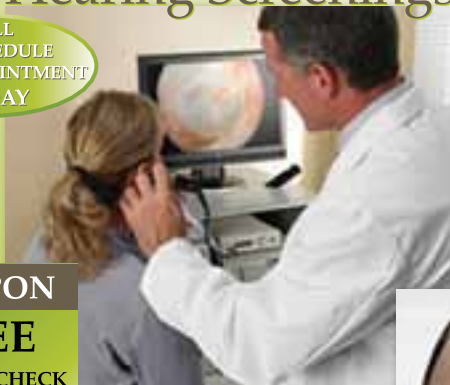
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April 30 through May 2, **Gulf Coast Miniature Horse Club** hosts **Gulf Coast Miniature Horse Club Spring Spectacular**. Show begins at 8 a.m. each day. For more information, visit BrazosCountyExpo.com.

PLAN AHEAD

May 1 at 4 p.m., the **Brazos Valley Symphony** hosts the annual **Kentucky Derby Day** party at the College Station Hilton ballroom. Watch the race, join the hat parade and bid on auction items. Dance to the music of the Brazos Valley Symphony and stay for the after-dinner show, featuring guest artist and Broadway star Craig Schulman. For

information, call (979) 696-6100 or visit the symphony's website www.bvso.org.

May 1, **The Brazos Valley Bank** invites you to join their team in the **March for Babies** at the Wolf Penn Amphitheater benefiting the March of Dimes. If you are interested in joining the team, contact Lindsay Green at LGreen@BVBank.com or at (979) 690-2265. Visit <http://www.marchforbabies.org/LindsayGreen> for more information and to see how you can help.

June 11-12, **El Camino Real Master Naturalist Chapter** hosts its first annual **Nature Festival** at the historic Wilson-Ledbetter Park in Cameron. Keynote speaker, **Andrew Sansom**, executive director of the River System Institute,



will speak about Water Conservation. Other speakers will cover wildflower legends, native plants of Texas, how to build a bluebird trail and more. Presentations and exhibits will include pollinators, birds, bats, frogs and toads, dragonflies, butterflies, archeology, children's programs and more. For hotel accommodations visit www.rockdalechamber.com and www.cameron-tx.com. For

more information, contact Ann Collins at marthamilano@aol.com or call (254) 697-6674.

CONTINUING EVENTS

Through June 2, the **Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History** presents **Enduring Transformation: The Kazakh**

April 26, **Congregation Beth Shalom** will be holding its annual **Deli on the Brazos Boxed Lunch Fundraiser**. Cost is \$10 which includes a corned beef or turkey sandwich, pickles, chips and a cookie. Delivery is available for orders of 10 or more. Pick-up is also available at the Synagogue, 101 N. Coulter Drive in Bryan from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. To place an order or to request additional information, call (979) 690-1036.

People in a Changing World. For more information, call (979) 2195 or visit www.brazosvalleymuseum.org.

Through August 2010, the **George Bush Presidential Library and Museum** presents **The Culture of Wine**, which will unravel the mystery, magic and making of wine. For more information, call (979) 691-4000 or visit bushlibrary.tamu.edu. *i*



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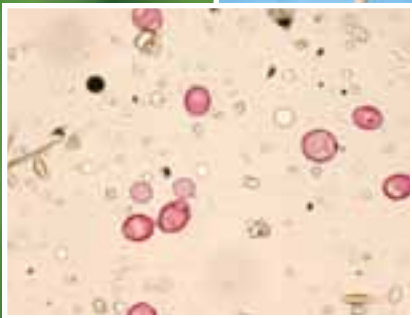
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Seasonal Allergies



If only we could control the weather, vanish traffic on game day, choose our parents more carefully or control our gene pool before we were born, then we would be able to live an allergy free life. These are primary factors that determine who does and who doesn't suffer daily from allergies in the Brazos Valley. There is hope for the sneezing and sniffing among us. Medical science has developed both over-the-counter medications and physician prescribed allergy immunizations that can help rid us of seasonal allergy symptoms for life.

It is no coincidence our allergy symptoms worsen when the Aggies play at home at Reed Arena or Kyle Field, says Dr. David Weldon, director of Allergy and Pulmonary Lab Services for Scott & White College Station and associate professor of Internal Medicine at the Texas A&M Health Science Center College of Medicine. Weldon, who does the daily pollen counts for Bryan/

With sunny, windy weather in March, ash and oak pollen go up, another allergy/weather connection we've experienced locally this year.

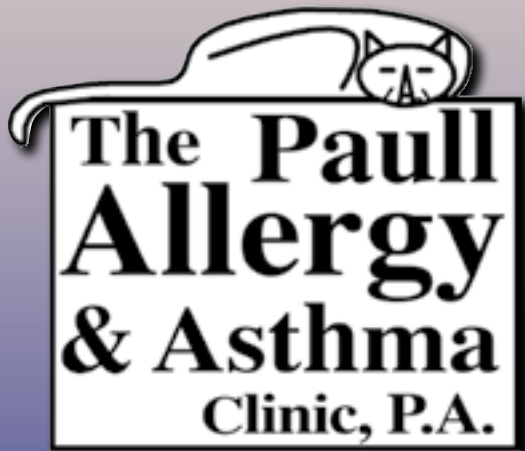
College Station, says the effects of pollen are significantly increased with pollution during heavy game day traffic.

Weather is another significant factor. "Pollen levels go down with rain," says Weldon, making rainfall good news for seasonal allergy sufferers. "In October 2009, the ragweed count was 1/8 of normal due to rain."

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While rain can be beneficial, it also has its down side. Preceding years' moisture can influence the following year's pollination, according to Weldon. With moisture comes high humidity and higher levels of mold and dust mites. Weldon explains that in sunny, windy weather in March, ash and oak pollen go up, another allergy/weather connection we've experienced locally this year.

Different weather and plant growth

know where they have been and where they are going," Weldon says, before determining a treatment plan that the patient agrees with.

"It is critical for testing to be done right," says Weldon, adding that the best way to treat for allergies is with an experienced allergist to avoid over testing and to reduce the risk of errors.

For many of us, it is hard to tell the difference between allergy symptoms and

you are allergic to grass, don't mow the grass. The second way is by using over-the-counter medications such as nasal sprays and eye drops. The third way is with allergy shots. Paull says many times over-the-counter medications can get expensive when used over a long period of time and allergy shots have proven to be 85% effective. "When allergy shots are done correctly, over a three- to five-year period, it can get rid of allergies forever,"



If you want to check the pollen levels in the area for clues to what might be causing your symptoms today, visit www.aaaai.org to check the daily counts. Dr. David Weldon at Scott & White College Station measures and posts the pollen counts.

means different reactions for every allergy patient. Weldon is a firm believer in, "Treat the patient, not the test." Many people undergo allergy testing and show positive allergic reactions even though they are really only mildly allergic. In some cases they can manage symptoms well with over-the-counter drugs to relieve allergy discomfort. Other times, Weldon says patients will show negative allergy test results, challenging their past medical history. Weldon says patients must be treated uniquely and their medical history rules until proven wrong. "I need to

viral infections. Weldon breaks it down by saying, "If you have itchy eyes, nose and roof of your mouth, then it is caused by allergies. If you have a sore and scratchy throat, then it is a viral infection."

When should a patient consider treatment with an allergist? "When the quality of life has been severely affected," says Weldon. Many health insurance companies cover allergy testing and treatment.

Local allergist and immunologist Dr. Keith Paull says there are three ways to treat allergies. One way is to avoid exposure: if

say Paull. It's an experience he has had both as a doctor and as an allergy patient himself.

However, like with any medical treatment, there are always risks. With allergy shots the patient is given very small doses of what he or she is allergic to. Paull, like Weldon, advises patients to not administer allergy shots at home due to the risks. Paull says potency of allergy shots has gone up dramatically since the mid Eighties, resulting in a 3 percent to 10 percent increase in the likelihood of having an adverse reaction.

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treatment and are moving you may wonder how to continue your treatment. Paull advises “there are 1,700 board certified allergists in the nation and many of us know each other or have worked closely with each other.” He recommends asking your allergist for a referral to one of these board certified allergists since most of them practice very similarly because they have trained together. Paull says about half of his patients are

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- **Summer (high humidity)**
Mold and Dust Mites
- **Mid September – Mid November**
Weeds

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referred by general practitioners with the other half being people who have visited allergists in the past or people who know they need help with allergies.

“Choose your parents carefully,” Paull says jokingly. “It is hard to prevent allergies just like it is hard to prevent heart disease and diabetes because many times it is an inherited gene.” Paull also wants to educate people about what allergy triggers are strong throughout the seasons.

Different seasonal allergies can also affect the plants we eat. Paull says oral allergy syndrome happens when vegetation mixes causing a person to have an allergic reaction to a food they are not allergic to. For example, a person who is not allergic to avocados can still have an allergic reaction to eating one. Oral allergy syndrome can happen when the avocado grows on the same plant as a ragweed lemon, which is what the person is actually allergic to.

Paull describes the allergy field as a diverse

one noting that allergists are also known as “immunologists” because they deal with the immune systems and other types of immune dysfunction. “Allergies are more than just respiratory allergies,” says Paull, “they are also eczema skin allergies and allergy induced hives; they are more than just the sniffles.”

Both Weldon and Paull agree that visiting



“Allergies are more than just respiratory allergies. They are also eczema skin allergies and allergy induced hives; they are more than just the sniffles.”

– Dr. Keith Paull

with an expert is advisable even if you are not sure if your symptoms are caused by allergies. If you wish to check the pollen levels in the area for clues to what might be causing your symptoms today, visit aaaai.org to check the daily counts. *i*

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Food Allergies and a Healthy Diet

Six to eight minutes is the window to find an EpiPen and survive if you are exposed to or eat something you are highly allergic to. After about five minutes, your body goes into anaphylactic shock, which can lead to brain damage. Do you know if you should have an EpiPen handy? Have you or your kids been allergy tested?

Dr. Linda Talley, lecturer and director of the Dietetic Internship Program at Texas A&M University, says the first allergic food reaction is not usually as bad as the ones that come after repeated exposure. Talley notes that only a doctor can prescribe an EpiPen; that is why it is important to get allergy tested after your first allergic reaction. The second time around could be fatal.

“Food allergies involve a problem in the food that causes a reaction in the allergic individual’s immune system,” explains Talley. Though proteins cause the problem,

it is a different protein for different foods such as peanuts, wheat and soy. Lactose intolerance, often referred to as a “milk allergy” is actually caused by a the lack of a necessary digestive enzyme.

“Prevalence in allergies to peanuts, wheat, soy and milk is 6 % to 8% for children and 2% to 4% for adults,” according to Talley.

Talley says there are six ways to diagnose a food allergy:

1. **Description of symptoms**
2. **Keep a food diary**
3. **Try an elimination diet of suspected offending food**
4. **Have a physical examination to exclude other medical problems**
5. **Have a skin prick test of suspected offending foods in a**

doctor’s office

6. **Have a blood test to check for specific antibodies.**

Talley says that, in general, food allergies are forever. Sometimes a person’s immune system can outgrow a food allergy, especially one developed as a young child. Babies, says Talley, are not normally lactose intolerant, but it is common for people age 65 or older to develop an intolerance due to the body’s failure to produce an enzyme.

The most common food allergy symptoms are: “Tingling of the mouth, hives, swelling of mouth, face and other body parts, trouble breathing, GI tract disturbances and lightheadedness,” says Talley. More severe symptoms are: “Swollen throat and airways, rapid pulse, drop in blood pressure, shock, loss of consciousness and/or death,” she says. These are signs to go to the hospital or use

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“Since January 2006, the FDA has mandated allergen labeling of the eight most common offenders, which include peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, fish, eggs, milk, soy and wheat,” says Talley.

While peanut allergy and the others listed above are the most common and prevalent, gluten allergy is on the rise. “One in 135 people is gluten sensitive,” says Talley. So what exactly does being gluten sensitive do to you? “Gluten sensitivity damages the villi of the small intestine frequently leading to malabsorption of needed nutrients,” says

Talley. She adds, “Avoiding gluten-containing products is the main treatment leading to restoration of health to the small intestine.”

The main grains to avoid are wheat, barley, oats and rye. Talley says many of our local grocery stores carry accessible specialty gluten free foods. Special rice flour can be used to make pancakes and sandwich bread, says Talley.

The Brazos Valley is home to the Brazos Valley Gluten Intolerance Group, a support group for those with wheat and gluten allergies. Visit www.bvgig.org for meeting times and a wealth of information about both gluten intolerance and local restaurants and stores that make eating and dining out easier for those who need to be gluten free.

While food allergies can certainly impact our daily diet, a healthy lifestyle is equally important to prevent heart disease, cancer and gastrointestinal distress. Talley recommends, “A normal healthy diet detailed at www.mypyramid.gov.”

She notes that everyone’s pyramid will be different and unless there are specific reasons to follow a restricted diet, the pyramid works pretty well for everyone. Talley says the key to diet

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and disease prevention is “smaller quantities, portion control and increase exercise.”

“We have a good food supply in this country, we just don’t utilize it,” says Talley, and we must absolutely make time for exercise because it makes a huge difference in our wellbeing.

Years ago, people died at an early age from allergies, Type 2 diabetes and heart disease. As a result of new medical treatments people not only live longer, they often pass medical conditions on to their children. That is one more reason to test for suspected food or other allergies and to know what kind of diet will strengthen your immune system. *i*

“orange” in pyramid: Grains

Make half your grains whole. Eat at least 3 oz. of whole grain bread, cereal, crackers, rice, or pasta every day. Look for “whole” before the grain name on the list of ingredients.

“green” Vegetables

Vary your veggies. Eat more dark green veggies. Eat more orange veggies. Eat more dry beans and peas.

“red” Fruits

Focus on Fruits. Eat a variety of fruit. Choose fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruit. Go easy on fruit juices.

“yellow” Oils

Know your fats. Make most of your fat sources from fish, nuts, and vegetable oils. Limit solid fats like butter, stick margarine, shortening and lard.

“blue” Milk

Get your calcium-rich foods. Go low-fat or fat-free. If you don’t or can’t consume milk, choose lactose-free products or other calcium sources.

“purple” Meat & Beans

Go lean on protein. Choose low-fat or lean meats and poultry. Bake it, broil it, or grill it.

Vary your choice with more fish, beans, peas, nuts and seeds.

Source: www.MyPyramid.gov

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Who to Call When You Need Assistance



While 2-1-1 and 9-1-1 operators train together yearly, it is important to understand the differences between the two resources before you dial. Call 9-1-1 operators only for emergencies. Call 2-1-1 specialists for information and referral services for a wide array of social services.

9-1-1 For Emergency Response

What can 9-1-1 do for you that no one else can? “9-1-1 provides rapid and accurate emergency response from public safety responders for applicable situations,” says Betsy Godwin, executive director for the Brazos County Emergency Communications District. “All staff members are professionals – dedicated and trained members who work long hours with tireless energy.

“Both 2-1-1 and 9-1-1 provide a valuable necessary resource to our community,” says Godwin. But it is vital to know the difference between the two services, particularly in emergencies when every minute counts.

“The 9-1-1 service in Brazos County Emergency Communications District is funded by a 9-1-1 service fee assessed on all local exchange access lines in the network’s territory,” says Godwin. “The Board of Managers sets the fee level as required by the Health and Safety Code. In Texas, a wireless 9-1-1 service fee is also assessed at \$.50 per subscriber number per month. These fees are transmitted to the State Comptrollers’

Office monthly and are distributed to the 9-1-1 entities based on population.”

When to call 9-1-1

Call 9-1-1 if there is a dangerous situation, a medical emergency or a serious crime. Some examples include:

- Power line down
- Gas leak
- Severe weather such as a tornado
- Chocking on food
- Serious bleeding
- Drowning
- Trouble breathing
- Burglary in progress
- Assault
- Fight in progress

2-1-1 For Information & Referrals

If you have a question about a wide range of social needs or health services and are not sure where to go, 2-1-1 is a good place to get started. Many people know they can dial 9-1-1 for emergencies, but fewer know about the resources available by dialing 2-1-1, says Alison Smith, director of information and referral services at United Way of Brazos Valley. “You don’t want [9-1-1] to be busy talking to someone about their bills” if you’re having a true emergency, says Smith. So for information and referrals, dial 2-1-1 instead 24 hours a day.

What can 2-1-1 do for you?

Dial 2-1-1 and you are instantly connected to a free, 24-hour information and referral service, which will connect you to health or human service resources. Because 2-1-1 specialists refer callers to many organizations in the community, 2-1-1 has

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forged great relationships with many local agencies. However, 2-1-1 specialists make sure to never make promises because they never know if the agencies will have funding at the time of the referral. If one agency is unable to help, 2-1-1 encourages the caller to call back to see if 2-1-1 can refer them to a different agency.

What happens when a caller dials 2-1-1 but should have called 9-1-1 instead? If a caller mistakenly dials 2-1-1 in the event of a true emergency, the caller will promptly be connected with 9-1-1 services. A 2-1-1 specialist will follow-up with all crisis calls within 24 hours of the initial call.

What does 2-1-1 do if callers are very upset or having suicide-related thoughts? The trained 2-1-1 specialists go through a checklist to evaluate the best resource to help the caller, and Smith says 2-1-1 will refer the caller to suicide and crisis intervention hotlines.

One of the most important purposes of 2-1-1 is to eliminate unnecessary calls to 9-1-1, says Smith.

When to call 2-1-1

Dial 2-1-1 with questions about where to go for help with a broad range of health and social services. Some examples include:

- Questions about resources to help an aging parent.
- If you are having trouble paying your bills and need to talk to someone about alternatives or the right agency for advice and help.
- You have questions such as finding safe and reliable childcare, food pantries, volunteer opportunities and clothing. *i*



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PLAN AHEAD

The **Bryan/College Station Charter Chapter of ABWA** will be installing new officers at the May 4 meeting at the Hilton Hotel. Meeting time is 5:45 p.m.; cost is \$20 for dinner and meeting. RSVP to hospitality@abwabcs.org.

Women of Excellence ABWA Chapter is a non-profit group devoted to business networking and education that contributes to the community through community projects. At the June 21 meeting, guest speaker **Darla Powell Phillips** will present **"What's Next? Life and Leadership Coaching."** The meeting is at La Riviera Restaurant the third Monday of each month. For more information, contact Tammy Aaron at (979) 696-8546.

NOTABLE NEWS



At the March meeting of the **ABWA BCS Charter Chapter**, **Rilene McCord** was awarded the **Chapter Woman of the Year**. Rilene joined the B/CS Charter Chapter as a primary member in May 2002 and has served on several committees

and in many offices with ABWA. During 2009-2010, Rilene has served as President of the B/CS Charter Chapter and was instrumental in the B/CS Charter Chapter's receipt of the Business Practices Level III Award at the National Conference in 2009. In addition, Rilene assisted the B/CS Charter Chapter in achieving the Houston Area Council Achievement Award. Rilene has worked for Dr. Barry Veazey at Orthopaedic Associates since 1982 as a certified Medical Radiologic Technologist and Nurse. Debbie Holladay, Nora Schumacher and Geanna Kincannon were also considered for the position.



Red Mango, an all-natural frozen yogurt retailer, is opening in Wolf Pen Plaza, 614 Holleman Drive East, in College Station. Red Mango offers core flavors (Original, Tangomonium™, Pomegranate by POM Wonderful® and the seasonal flavor, currently Cocoa) as well as six additional all-natural nonfat flavors that rotate on a regular basis. All flavors have around 100 calories per serving. "We are very excited to introduce Red Mango and its first self-serve store to College Station," says Bill Chinn, College Station franchisee. Customers can garnish their yogurt with natural

toppings including fresh fruit, nuts and granola; and toppings like Fruity Pebbles® and Cap'n Crunch®. Red Mango contains no fat or artificial ingredients and is certified gluten-free and kosher. Additionally, Red Mango introduced the first iced teas fortified with probiotics and recently introduced lunchtime meal options that include made-to-order fresh fruit parfaits and probiotic smoothies. For more information about Red Mango, visit www.redmangousa.com, www.facebook.com/redmango or Twitter by following @RedMango. (below) **Dan Kim, president and CEO of Red Mango.**

An Economic Development Agreement between **The Research Valley Partnership, Inc. (RVP)** and **G-Con, LLC (G-Con)** will develop and operate a state-of-the-art biopharmaceutical manufacturing facility utilizing novel technologies for vaccine production. Under the terms of the agreement, G-Con's facility is defined as one or more buildings having a minimum initial size of 100,000 sq. ft. to support its research, development and commercialization of technologies, as well as the production of vaccines. Officials project a minimum of 100 employees by 2013 generating a payroll of \$6 million. "The economic impact that this project will have as a catalyst in The Research Valley is hard to imagine not just for our community, but for our state," says **Todd E. McDaniel, president/CEO of The RVP**. For more information, visit www.researchvalley.org or contact Todd E. McDaniel at (979) 260-1755 or tmcdaniel@researchvalley.org.

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United Way of the Brazos Valley's Young Leaders Society, a group of young professionals, donated items collected from eight drop-off locations during the month of February for APO'S Mama's Club. "It is such a great honor to sponsor a donation drive for Aggieland Pregnancy Outreach's Mama's Club," says **Katie Neason**, president founding member of the United Way of the Brazos Valley's Young Leaders Society. "They provide such a valuable service in our community to a population that needs much encouragement and education. It was our goal to give back to our community by collecting as many items as possible for APO to help young mothers in need." Gently used donated items are made available to the participating teens and their children as stabilizing and supportive measures through the Mama Closet. When a teen is worried about how to diaper or clothe her child she is less able to concentrate on her schoolwork or being productive at her job. Since the local Food Bank is low in diaper stock now, the diapers

donated through the drive are especially vital to supporting the teen's efforts to meet their children's needs in healthy ways. The new clothing or baby equipment items donated are placed into the Mama Store where the teens exchange Mama Bucks they have earned participating in assigned activities throughout each week of the Mama Club semester. **Young Leaders Society (YLS)** offers a unique program designed to appeal to emerging leaders in our community who choose to LIVE UNITED. **(I-r) YLS members Alison Smith and Jessica Ettinger.** For more information about how to get involved in YLS, call Katie Neason at (979) 450-9969 or email youngleaders@uwbv.org.



The Leading Women Express Network of the American Business Women's Association honored eight ladies who were nominated by members of the group as candidates for **Express Network Woman of the Year**. Each year LWEN recognizes members who have made notable contributions to the American Business Women's Association, their community and their careers. From this group of outstanding women, one is selected as Express Network Woman of the Year. This year the Express Network Woman of the Year Committee, which consisted of Sharon McLewis, Miriam Rieck, and Debbie Waskow; honored eight nominees: **(I-r) Tina Gandy, Pam Green, Geanna Kincanon, Cindy May, Debbie Holladay, Greta Messarra, Denise Joiner, and Jodi Loveall.** May (holding award) was named the Leading Women Express Network Woman of the Year for 2010. She is the Office Manager for West, Webb, Allbritton & Gentry and is a charter member of LWEN. *i*

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! M-F 7am-10pm, Sa-Su 8am-10pm

C&J BBQ, www.cjbbq.com, 105 Southwest Pkwy, CS (979) 696-7900; 1010 South Texas Ave., Bryan (979) 822-6033; 4304 Harvey Rd., CS (979) 776-8969. Voted Best BBQ in the Brazos Valley, C&J offers all your favorite Texas barbecue such as sliced beef, jalapeno sausage, pork loin, turkey, chicken, or ribs. Catering and banquet rooms are available. M-Th 10:30am-8:30pm; F-Sa 10:30am-9pm; Su 11am-3pm, Hours may vary among locations.

CAFÉ ECCELL, www.cafeeccell.com, 101 Church Ave., CS (979) 846-7908. Café Eccell really is a true grill and fresh seafood bistro. Located in College Station's Old City Hall, the café offers fresh seafood daily and a kitchen that fires up with food that excites the senses. 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

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. Serving breakfast on weekends. M 11am-2pm; T-Th 11am-9pm; F 11am-9:30pm; Sa 8am-9:30pm; Su 8am-8pm

CHICKEN OIL CO., www.dixiechicken.com/chickenoil, 3600 S. College Ave., Bryan (979) 846-3306. Chicken Oil Co. opened in Bryan, Texas as a gas station and burger shop in 1977. Since then it has become one of the most unique restaurants in the world. It is most recognized for its delicious hamburgers, one uniquely called the Death Burger. Su-Th 11am-9pm; F-Sa 11am-10pm

CHRISTOPHER'S WORLD GRILLE, www.christopherworldgrille.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

DIXIE CHICKEN, www.dixiechicken.com, 307 University Dr., CS (979) 846-2322. Thirsty beer drinkers regularly flock to the Dixie Chicken to play bones, shoot pool, listen to their favorite Texas music and be with good friends. Choose from a variety of menu options including made to order burgers, hang down sausage, and cheddar cheese on the wheel. M-Su 10am-2am

DOUBLE DAVE'S, www.doubledaves.com. Your neighborhood pizza works with 3 area locations: Boonville Rd., B; Texas Ave., CS; Longmire, CS, Try original items from Double Dave's legendary menu including Peproni rolls, stromboli, stuffers and handmade specialty pizzas. Su-Th 11am-10pm, F-S 11am-11pm, Buffet available at select times: 11am-2pm daily, M & W 5:30pm-9pm

ECCCELL STEAKHOUSE, www.eccellsteakhouse.com, 980 University Dr. E., CS (979) 268-4104. Eccell Steakhouse is meant to excite the diner's senses and entertain the lounge patron. With an excellent selection of steaks and other favorites such as seafood and burgers, this College Station gourmet restaurant is already becoming a favorite in town. Brunch Sa-Su 10am-2:30pm; Dinner M-Sa 4:30pm-10pm

EPICURES CATERING, www.epicurescatering.net, 2319 Texas Ave. S., CS (979) 695-0985. As a full service catering company, Epicures specializes in weddings, receptions, business functions, conventions, reunions, celebrations, bridal showers, company luncheons and more. Epicures also offers private dining facilities for parties from 20 to 200. Epicures is also equipped to handle last minute plans with our new line of Epicurean Packs, a complete meal featuring favorite dishes prepackaged and ready-to-go.

JOSE'S RESTAURANT, www.joses-zaraperestaurants.com, 3824 S. Texas Ave., Bryan (979) 268-0036; 308 North Main, Bryan (979) 779-8702. Discover the taste of Old Mexico at Jose's Restaurant. Choose from traditional dishes such as enchiladas and quesadillas, or savor specialties like pollo a la parrilla, steak ranchero, or carne asada a la tampiquena. Mixed drinks are also available. T-Su 11am-9:45pm

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 RISTORANTE, www.luigispatoristorante.com, Rock Prairie Rd. and Hwy. 6, CS (979) 693-2742. Luigi's is an Italian patio restaurant experience that transports you to Italy. You may choose to dine in a beautiful, cozy Italian villa-style home interior or eat "outside" on the patio where all the piazza town center activity happens—but it's all indoors! Tu-F 11:30am-2pm; Tu-Su open nightly at 5:30 pm; Brunch Su 11:30am-2pm

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

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

VILLAGE CAFÉ, www.thevillagedowntown.com, 210 W. 26th St., Bryan (979) 703-8514. The Village is a wonderful cafe by day featuring local and organic foods and fabulous locally roasted "What's the Buzz" coffee. Art979 is an art gallery by night featuring local art, art events and Texas wine and beer. M 8am-5pm, T-W 8am-10pm, Th-F 8am-12am, Sa 8am-2am, Su 8am-8pm

SWEET TREATS

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 AND ATTRACTIONS

BRAZOS COTTON EXCHANGE, www.brazoscottonexchange.com, Howell Building, 200 South Main, Third Floor Bryan (979) 575-4181. A venue of timeless beauty with picturesque views of historic downtown and the Bryan skyline, the Cotton Exchange is the perfect place for any occasion. Simplify your event planning by choosing the facility that has all amenities needed for your next function.

B-CS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, www.bcschamber.org, 4001 E. 29th St., Ste. 175, Bryan (979) 260-5200. "We can accomplish collectively what no one business can do alone." Spring and summer events include Epicurean Extravaganza, Chamber Day, Job Fair, Celebrity Softball Classic and Ladies Nite. Call for more event details or to request membership information.

THE THEATRE COMPANY, www.theatrecompany.com, Corner of Villa Maria and Texas Ave., Bryan (979) 779-1302. The Theatre Company is a community theater performance group dedicated to the presentation of high quality productions suitable for family audiences at an affordable price. The group strives to provide community enrichment for all ages. Call for production dates and times.

U PAINT-IT, www.upaintit.com, 900 Harvey Road, Ste. 5A, CS (979) 695-1500. U Paint-It is a contemporary paint-it yourself pottery studio. They provide the materials for you to design and paint your chosen ceramic piece. Then they glaze and fire your piece and in 5-7 days you'll have a personal masterpiece and keepsake! T 11am-8pm; W 10am-10pm Th-Sa 11am-8pm; Su 2pm-6pm

BURLESON COUNTY

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MAD HATTER'S TEA ROOM, www.madhatterstea.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

MASFAJITAS, www.masfajitas.com, 305 Highway 36 S., Caldwell (979) 567-4007. Masfajitas' Tex-Mex menu consists of all your favorites including a variety of fajita options, enchiladas, tacos, and nachos. Seafood entrees are also available for a taste tempting combination of flavors. Call Masfajitas for your next party or event. Su-M 11am-9pm

SHOPPING

MAD HATTER'S TEA ROOM, www.madhatterstea.com, 210 S. Echols, Caldwell (979) 567-3504. The Mad Hatter's offers a unique selection of gift items, gourmet coffees, and specialty teas. Ladies' apparel, jewelry and accessories make for a pleasant shopping excursion. W-Sa 8am-5pm

SLOVACEK'S, www.slovacek.com, 9423 Highway 60 W., Snook (979) 272-3333. In 1957, Uncle John Slovac, a friendly guy from Snook, dropped his amateur status and

turned professional sausage maker. Today, Slovac's offers their great sausage in retail locations around the Brazos Valley, including their retail store in Snook. You'll find it alongside fresh meats and gourmet gift ideas. M-F 6-8; Sa 7-8; Su 10-8

ENTERTAINMENT AND ATTRACTIONS

ROYALTY PECANS, www.royaltypescans.com, 10600 SH 21 E., Caldwell (8 Miles West of Bryan) (979) 272-3904. A brand new look for a Brazos Valley tradition. A new facility open to the public year-round offering items such as Texas fancy pecan halves and a line of gifts, gourmet breads and mouth watering flavored pecans. Excellent day trip from anywhere in the Brazos Valley. M-F 10am-4pm, Sa 10am-2pm. Cafe available for events only.

THEATRE GUILD OF BURLESON COUNTY, (979) 567-2308. The Theatre Guild of Burleson County is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to enrich, educate and entertain as well as create opportunities for community participation in a broad range of quality and affordable theatrical productions. For information about productions or auditions, please contact Texas Agrilife Extension Service, Burleson County.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

DINING / CATERING

FUNKY ART CAFÉ, 202 W. Commerce St., Brenham (979) 836-5220. Delicious and different, Funky Art Café in Brenham offers enticing entrees to please the palate. Or choose a sandwich or savory soup before shopping in its companion retail shop The Pomegranate to find trinkets, gift ideas and kitchen gadgets. M-F 11am-2pm; Sa 11am-3pm

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 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

ENTERTAINMENT AND ATTRACTIONS

WASHINGTON COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, www.brenhamtexas.com (979)836-3695. Take a deep breath...and picture yourself driving winding country roads and visiting quiet villages — all in Washington County, located between Houston and Austin on Hwy. 290. Brenham, the county seat and home of Blue Bell ice cream, is a bustling small town of about 14,000 friendly folks with an historic downtown filled with shops and dining options. Many attractions for the entire family—come play with us!

AREA EXCURSIONS

OIL RANCH, www.oilranch.com, 23501 Macedonia, Hockley (281) 859-1616. A short trip from the Brazos Valley, Oil Ranch offers family fun, corporate events and school field trips. Conveniently located between Waller and Magnolia, it's the perfect place for birthday parties, family reunions and company picnics. Fun activities for kids include a pool, train rides, putt-putt golf, a petting zoo, hay rides and much more. Please call for group rates or corporate event planning.

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