

March/April 2011

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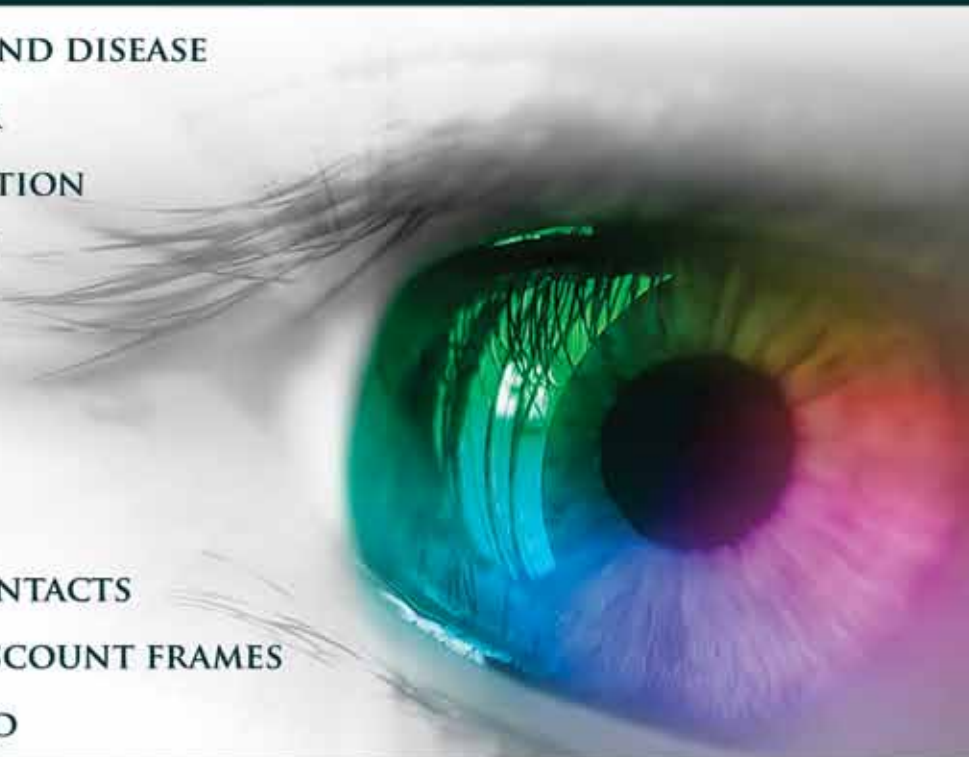
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Wylie Eye Center saw our first patient February 8, 2010. That doesn't seem that long ago, but the transformation of our office is astounding! The need for optometric care in Wylie has spurred significant growth. Shortly after opening, we added a second exam lane to offer care to more patients. More importantly, due to the need of our patients, we were able to add a Cirrus OCT, a highly specialized equipment that allows us to even better monitor our patients with macular degeneration and glaucoma.

We take the greatest pride in helping our patients see better, but it's important to look good as well! Based on our patients' recommendations, we've been able to tailor our optical to the City of Wylie. Over time, we've increased both our designer and budget frame lines by 20%, and fully anticipate that trend to continue into 2011. 2010 saw the addition of Gucci, Juicy Couture, and a dedicated titanium line. This summer we'll be introducing even more products, so consider dropping by the next time you're in the downtown area.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of our growth is in that of

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our staff. As owner, Dr. Beth Anderson, OD, has her hands in every aspect of the practice, but experiences the greatest joy working with patients. If you ever thought you were thankful for the extra time and patience she showed you, know that the feeling is mutual. Mrs. Lisa Benge, an expert ABO certified optician, has been with Dr. Anderson from the beginning. Her experience, skill, and knowledge add greatly to our team. She is now our office insurance specialist, and dedicates herself to maximizing benefits for our patients. Mrs. Kelly Henry joined the team last February. It is very likely you will hear her friendly voice each time you call. She is the main receptionist and scheduler and her warm and friendly disposition is sure to make you smile. Mr. Nic Poston joined the team in May. Being an all-star optician runs in his blood; both his father and mother-in-law are excellent opticians as well. He is responsible for keeping our optical selection up to date with the latest, best-looking, and top-quality frames. Nic is also computer savvy and helps keep our computer systems up and running.

There are some very exciting opportunities for growth in the future, which we will highlight as they come. As such, we are very pleased to announce that Mrs. Sandra Littleton is joining our team. Sandra has experience both in optical and with contact lenses. She will help our office as a medical technician and contact lens specialist. Sandra adds "I am excited to be a part of a group that is involved in helping members of our community see to their best potential. Whether it be glasses or contact lenses everyone deserves to see the world with the best vision possible." We are very excited to have her as a wonderful new addition to our team.



Dr. Anderson with Sandra Littleton, the newest member of the Wylie Eye Center team.

One of the most memorable parts of the year has been participating in Leadership Wylie. The Wylie Chamber of Commerce Leadership Wylie program provides knowledge about, and community involvement opportunities in, the City of Wylie. It has been wonderful learning about Wylie's history, leadership, and school district, and sharing this experience with a great group of people.

Wylie Eye Center has been able to donate to multiple PTA's and service projects, especially the Wylie Christian Care Center. Wylie Eye Center is very thankful to the people of Wylie and committed to keep everyone seeing their best.

Please call us to schedule your appointment at 972-429-9090. We are now open first and third Saturday's of each month. •



On The Cover

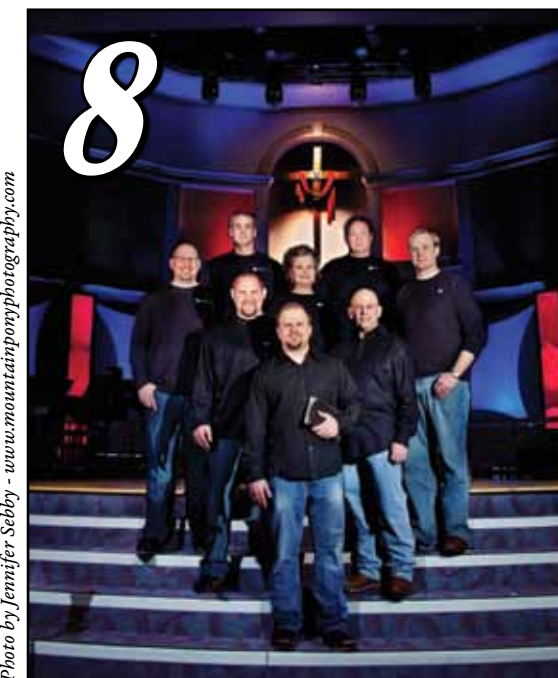


Photo by Jennifer Seby - www.mountainponyphotography.com

FIRST BAPTIST WYLIE CHURCH STAFF

Back row:(L-R) Dr. Derek Draper, Charlie Busby
Middle: Chad Womack, Sandy Stroud, Sam Hallman
Scott Phillips, Allen Stroud
Front: Dr. Kris Segrest (Lead Pastor)

COLUMNS

- 22 | ACHIEVE ACADEMY GARDENS
- 26 | YOUNG WRITERS
- 28 | TRI-CHAMBER GOLF TOURNAMENT
- 30 | COLLIN COLLEGE
- 32 | ALLERGIES ARE NOTHING TO SNEEZE ABOUT
- 34 | AREA CHAMBER NEW MEMBERS
- 36 | NAMING BENEFICIARIES

PROFILE OF SUCCESS

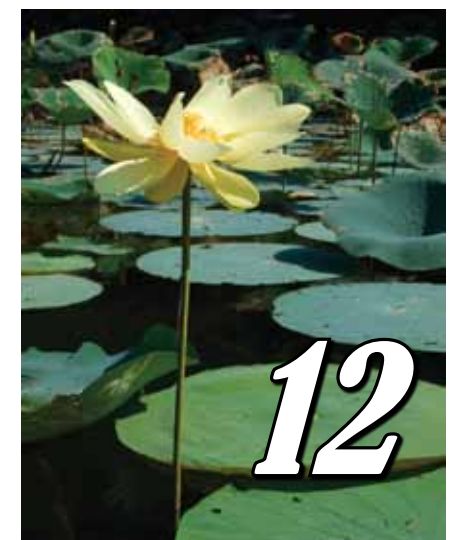
- 8 | FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH - WYLIE

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

- 4 | Wylie Eye Center
TEXAS STATE OPTICAL

FEATURES

- 10 | LANDSCAPING 101
- 12 | A WORLD APART
- 14 | ON THE LAKE WITH KENNY
- 16 | WISE WATER USE
- 20 | CALENDAR



12

From us to you.....

Spring has Finally Sprung!

The early signs of spring have broken through the ice and snow in the area and this issue of The Connection follows suit. We try to get outside often, for as long as we can, as the spring weather will quickly segue way into the “please get me some A/C” heat of summer.

We have our standard sections dealing with Finance (naming beneficiaries), Health (allergies anyone?) and Education (the WISD Achieve Academy gardening program and an innovator extraordinaire at Collin College). In Chamber news, there is a joint golf tournament on the horizon that promises to triple your contacts and increase the farmer’s tan as Murphy, Sachse and Wylie join forces to chase a golf ball around Woodbridge Golf Club in April.

We feature one of the longest-standing pillars of Wylie in our Cover Profile of Success. The First Baptist Church of Wylie celebrated 140 years of service in 2010 and we hear from Dr. Kris Segrest as he looks at the changes and things to come.

Our additional feature stories will highlight the fun to be had, and the work to be done, in the great outdoors. We get a little lesson in Landscaping 101, learn about Smart Water Use, take a look at Lavon Lake through the eyes of diehard fisherman Kenny Bunch (who took a break from his #1 business, your #2 business) to take us out in his boat, and see photos of an area that is out of this world.

As always, our community calendar will give you plenty of information about the upcoming events you can enjoy, both indoors and out.

So kick back on the patio, put your favorite meat, chicken or fish on the grill and take a look at what’s going on in your area. Don’t forget to look for the butterfly and feel free to let us know what you think about this March/April issue of The Connection!

Mike - Becky - Anne

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The “Profile of Success” cover photograph and feature article, as well as the “Business Spotlight”, are paid advertisements.



Just for fun, find the butterfly! Last issue it was hidden in the Recreation Center staff cover photo on page 3.

Occasionally we make a mistake. Let us know if you find one so we can correct it. We love your feedback - send comments to info@wyliechamber.org. Story ideas are always welcome and appreciated. Thanks for “Connecting” with us!

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first baptist|wylie

First Baptist Church of Wylie has a rich history in the community and just celebrated its 140th anniversary in 2010. FBCW has experienced significant growth, doubling in the last five years. In keeping with the ever growing tri-county region, FBCW recently added over 41,500 square feet to its complex. Located in the heart of the city, the church continues to equip people to know and follow Christ. Lead Pastor, Dr. Kris Segrest, feels that FBCW now looks to the future, claiming Isaiah 43:19: "For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland."

Kris, how has the greater Wylie community changed in the last five years?

Despite recent economic events, this tri-county area has continued to grow up to 170% in the past decade. Wylie proper has grown from a community of 35,000 people to nearly 43,000. Most people in this community, like people at FBCW, have been in this region less than five years. I believe this influx of people has brought a beautiful diversity, while maintaining a community feel.

Where do you see the Church today?

I think this is a great question every church must answer. The Church, corporately in America, is floundering and not helping people find authentic faith. Most churches are set-up to be "attractional" destinations. This approach is not working for families. Divorce is still high and students who leave after graduation never to come back through the doors of the Church. All Churches must become missional centers of equipping: helping individuals and families to learn how to walk with Jesus personally.

In simple terms, what should a Church be doing?

The Church must become the radical Body of Believers it was intended to become. My job as pastor is to clearly preach Christ as He is portrayed in the Bible. Three priorities jump out as essentials to leading people biblically. First, we must come to Christ as our Lord and Savior on His terms. Too many try to make Christ into someone he is not. Christ told people it would be difficult to follow Him. Easy 'believe-ism' has given many people a false eternal security and a lack of fulfillment. Next, Christians need to recapture the exclusivity of Christ. Christ said He is the only way people go to Heaven. If this claim is offen-



sive, it's not my claim, it is His. Knowing Christ is the only way to Heaven ought to motivate believers in Christ to share the Gospel with others. Third, the Church must take care of the destitute and marginalized in our world because these are the people Christ identified with personally and in His ministry. Essentially, the church must make disciples. In other words, as we make disciples we are made into disciples.

What are some of the unique challenges for FBC Wylie?

Our greatest challenge is simply overcoming the stereotypes about a "First Baptist Church". Many see our church with its big steeple and traditional facade and have a misconception of what is awaiting them behind the doors. Some think we are an old congregation or really traditional. The truth is FBC Wylie is a young church with the average age of 33; on Sunday, 51% of our congregation is under the age of 18. I like to say, "It's not your grandma's church, unless it is." Unapologetically, we believe in the timeless truths of Christ as revealed by the Bible. However, our methods, like Christ's, are progressive to meet people where they are. We value innovation.

What would you want people to know about FBC Wylie?

FBCW is not a perfect church. No church is. However, you will find authenticity at FBCW. It is made up of people from every age group, walk of life, race, and interest, united through their relationships with Christ and joined to one another as His Body. Come and check out FBCW. You will find a loving, friendly group of people who want you to know God and grow in Him.

Chad Womack (Missions), Sandy Stroud (Preschool) and Scott Phillips (Children's) were asked the question: What innovative methods does FBCW use to reach people for Christ, and how is FBCW working to equip believers today?

Chad quickly mentions a very unique ministry tool: the Polar Express ice cream truck! "When the Polar Express is out in the community, the ice cream is absolutely free. Over the past four years, we have witnessed many people come to Christ at events in which the Polar Express was a part. Another great tool is our inflatable ministry, which we use at block parties and community events. We seek to share Christ through servant evangelism projects: such as Mission Wylie, gas buy downs, stamp give away at tax time and hosting Bible Clubs."

Sandy shared that the Preschool Ministry "equips parents first, then is designed to meet the needs of children ages birth through kindergarten. It is a cooperative effort between the home and church, as parents and staff team up to teach preschoolers about Jesus." A child's preschool years are vital to their "first faith steps".

Scott expresses that the Grade Level Children's Ministry believes in "equipping kids with the confidence and ability to articulately defend their faith, with boldness and courage."

Christianity is a great adventure. If your family is not actively involved in a local faith family, we would like to invite you to join us at First Baptist Church of Wylie! •

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- April 22 @ 7:00 p.m. - Good Friday Service
- April 24 - Easter Services (Normal Worship Times with overflow in the Event Center)

fbw

Landscaping 101

by Rob Cox - owner of Exteriors at Work

Good landscaping is one of the most cost-effective ways to customize a home to meet your needs and tastes, it will also add value to your home and enhance your lifestyle.

First impressions, as anyone in the dating game will tell you, are key. So before you start designing that luxurious backyard koi pond, get the front of your house in order: mowing, weeding, trimming shrubs, and putting in fresh sod if it's needed. If you have a budget, it's important to focus your landscaping around key areas. Something that's going to be viewed a lot, like your front yard. When the "no-brainers" are done, then you can start getting serious. Not only can an overgrown landscape give the impression of an unkempt home, it can also scare away potential buyers should you ever put your home on the market.

The winter months are a good time to plan your spring gardens or landscape. Always select plants that will do well in our climate. Think about ways to combine plants and flowers, be sure to consider plant size, color, and water requirements. You want to place tall plants in the back, mid-size plants in the middle, and trailing plants in the front. When choosing plant material always read the plant label for height, spread, and light requirements. For beginners it is important to draw a garden layout plan, make your mistakes on paper. In your design, choose plants that are suitable for the site (sun vs. shade), arrange plants according to their height, form, color and texture. I highly recommend using native plants & well-adapted plants. These plants are accustomed to our hot, dry summers and unpredictable winters. Native plants can require up to 80% less water than non-adapted plants. This means if local watering restrictions are imposed, there will be less impact on your plants and you will spend less money replacing them.

If you are a beginner or an experienced Do-It-Yourselfer, an excellent reference for plants & trees that work well in our area, and even some that don't or shouldn't even be planted, is John Howard Garret's "Plants of the Metroplex". I'm not trying to sell books for Mr. Garrett, but this is a simply written, alphabetical listing of everything from trees to annual color with a picture of each plant along with a brief and useful bio, it is an excellent source of information and a great place to start for selecting plants.



"A garden should be a reward: the reward of planning, the reward of preparation, the reward of having a beautiful place in which to relax..."

– Alex Burton

When it comes to planting, good soil is the foundation on which you build a good garden. And building good soil involves analyzing what you've got and supplementing what it needs. Along with organic matter, or humus, there are three primary minerals that make up soil: sand, clay, and silt. The right balance of both organic matter and minerals will achieve garden loam, which is the best soil for growing plants. Soil that has too much clay will cause problems by holding water and being too dense and wet to work. Not to mention hard as a rock when it's dry, as most of us have experienced. Too sandy or silty soil will allow water and nutrients to run through the ground too quickly to be absorbed.

How do you know what you have? Pick up a handful and squeeze gently: if it feels sticky and stays in a tight mass, it is likely too high in clay. If it feels harsh or gritty and won't hold any shape, it is likely too high in sand. If it feels smooth or floury and won't hold any shape, it is likely too high in silt. If it molds into your hand yet crumbles when squeezed, it has the perfect texture. It is loam, sweet loam!



The very best you can do for your plants is to build deep, high quality soil. A minimum depth of 6 inches of good soil is desirable, but 12 to 18 inches is preferable. There are many wonderful composts and soil conditioners available. Incorporating generous amounts into planting beds to improve soil quality will reward your landscape with a larger reservoir of moisture-holding, and nutrient rich matter.



Photos provided by Rob Cox.

Once finished with the installation of your new landscape, you must protect it with mulch. Mulch is material placed over the soil surface to maintain moisture and improve soil conditions. Mulching is one of the most beneficial things you can do for the health of your landscape. Mulch will reduce water loss from the soil, minimize weed competition, and improve soil structure. Plus, properly applied, mulch can give your landscape a handsome, well-groomed appearance. A layer at least three to four inches thick should be maintained at all times around plants and trees. Replenish as often as you can, since organic matter decomposes.

If you're still not sure where or how to begin, take a walk. Walk or drive through your neighborhood, or even a different neighborhood, and see what other people have done. Bring your camera along so you can take pictures of things that you like, or that give you the inspiration you are looking for to help get the creative juices flowing. •

Rob can be reached at 972-503-5296 or exteriorsatwork.com.



Anthony Roach and Ford Motor Company CEO Alan Mulally

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A World Apart

by Craig Kelly

Wylie is known for its proximity to the lakes and recreational water activities, but another body of water is quickly being discovered. Winding through the eastern edge of Wylie, a five and half mile stretch of the East Fork of the Trinity River connects Lake Lavon to the north and Lake Ray Hubbard to the south. Hickory, Willow, Sycamore, Juniper, Mesquite, Elm, Ash, Live Oak, and Pecan trees, as well as a wide variety of indigenous ground cover and vegetation flourish in the rich clay and sandy loam soils. A variety of insects and animals take refuge in this lush river bottomland that Caddo Indians once floated on trade routes.

"This section of the trinity watershed is a personal favorite—one of the most scenic rivers in North Texas. At nearly every bend there is something new," says B.J. Taylor, Dallas resident and avid kayaker who has paddled streams and rivers throughout Texas. "The water clarity is the best I've experienced east of Fort Worth.

There's also plenty of wildlife along this stretch--reptiles, amphibians, insects, birds and rumors of beavers. But if you get out there early enough you may even spot a coyote, bobcat or feral pig."

In July, the Yellow Mexican Water Lily bloom to the size of basketballs until the petals fall off near the end of August. Lily pads grow to more than three feet in diameter. In the spring, many different species of wild-flower can be seen from the river. The native hibiscus grows only in the Trinity River Watershed. The river channel is home to many birds such as the Great Blue Heron, Snowy Egret, Cattle Egret, Red Tailed Hawk and Kingfishers. Migrating birds including Cormorants, Coots and Grebes stop over for the winter in the northern part of Lake Ray Hubbard.

The East Fork of the Trinity River appears tranquil and calm, but Wylie Fire Chief Randy Corbin reminds residents that several people have drowned or required rescue while trying to navigate the East Fork, "Even though

it is close to civilization, the area between Lake Lavon and Lake Ray Hubbard is a confusing, vast area of thick vegetation and changing river channels. During periods of rain the river becomes swift, leaving its banks, making it difficult to navigate. Rescues are very challenging and dangerous...it's hard to locate people and rescues can take hours."

A trip to the upper Colorado River near Kremling in May of 2002, with Dallas artist Steven Shores, started B.J.'s obsession with rivers, fly fishing and exploring as many bodies of water as he could. When they weren't

in the Rockies, B.J. and Steven would explore rivers in Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. "A guided trip with Trinity River Expeditions guide Charles Allen down the main stem of the Trinity River through downtown Dallas opened my eyes to the beauty of the Trinity River, debunking local belief that it's full of garbage and waste," says B.J. "But let 'em keep thinking that — more open water for us to enjoy."

Additional pictures of B.J.'s floats on the East Fork of the Trinity River and rivers throughout Texas can be found at www.flickr.com/photos/boltgrove/sets. •

Photos by B.J. Taylor






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Dakota Ryder fishing with Kenny on Lavon Lake.

Photo by Anne Hiney

by Kenny Bunch

On the Lake with Kenny

As the days get longer and the weather begins to warm many of us in Wylie and surrounding areas begin to look for ways to spend more time out of doors. The solution for not replacing the batteries in the remote may be found right in our own backyard in the form of Lavon Lake.

This U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reservoir's primary purpose is to provide water to over 1.5 million people as well as flood control but it also provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities. With sixteen parks, nineteen four lane boat ramps, six thousand five hundred acres of public hunting, camping, two hundred forty four picnic tables, hiking trails, horseback riding trails and of course fishing, boating, and all the water sports this twenty two thousand acre play ground has something for everyone.

Collin Park, one of the three privately operated parks, has a large marina, swimming area, campsites with full hookups, Lavon Water Sports providing boat and jet ski rentals, and The Harbor House which is the only restaurant on the lake.

Brockdale Park is home to the Blackland Prairie Raptor Center dedicated to preservation and conservation of birds of prey. A great way to spend the day is at one of their special events. You can learn more about them at www.bpraptorcenter.org.

If high flying remote control airplanes excite you, check out the Richardson Radio Control Club (www.rrcc.org) at Bratonia Park, located on the north end of the lake in Princeton.

With all the various ways to have fun on Lavon Lake, the main attraction is still the excellent fishing and Spring can be the best time to try your luck.

While very little aquatic vegetation grows in Lavon Lake, when the dam was raised to its current level in 1974 most of the timber was left standing on the north end of both arms of

the lake to create habitat for the many aquatic species. Many of the creeks on the north end of the lake become spawning grounds for white and striped bass and the crappie will be close to standing timber in the shallow coves offering bank fisherman and those willing to get their feet a little wet excellent opportunities.

If competition and a sophisticated boat are more your style, the Christian Anglers Bass Association will be hosting large-mouth bass tournaments every Thursday evening at Avalon Park starting March 17th.

This is a cat fisherman's paradise - with an abundance of blue, channel and flathead catfish, Lavon may be one of the best fishing destinations in the area.

For a fun family outing of fishing you may want to try East Fork park. The east side of the park has a shallow cove that will be a spawning ground for several fish species. Here minnows, small jigs, and road runners (each a type of bait) may get your line stretched. The main lake side has some points with deeper water that may yield catfish, white bass and stripers.

If you really want to see a kid's face light up, buy a small cast net and throw around the boat launches early in the morning then use the shad as bait. As always, make sure you have the proper fishing license even if you are just assisting a minor.

With only one restaurant and two marinas on the water and no major highways close, Lavon is much less crowded than many of the other area urban lakes, making it a great place to get away for only an hour or to even spend a vacation. Many of the parks are accessible at no fee and the others are very low cost making Lavon Lake a great place to relax and enjoy the area while staying close to home. •

Visit www.swf-wc.usace.army.mil/lavon/ for more information about the lake.



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Wise Water Use

By Lori C. Villarreal

The weather has warmed and we are all preparing for spring flowers and lush green lawns. As a homeowner I am excited about planting my spring color but wonder what my role is in conserving water. So, I contact the North Texas Municipal Water District who directs me to www.WaterIQ.org. This water conservation awareness campaign provides helpful information specific to a resident's zip code.

A few tips really jump out at me. Firstly, grass maintained at about three inches holds more water and stays lush. When mowing, leave the clippings to help hold in the water. Plants that require more water, like my spring color, should be watered by hose or watering can where water can be directed to exactly where it is needed. A rain barrel or a cistern, collecting water from gutters, can be a resourceful way to reuse a natural resource. Lastly, don't run a sprinkler system when it is raining. This seems obvious but if the system is set up to automatically run it is easy to forget to switch it off. A rain shutoff device can help keep your automatic system from watering when it's raining.

These tips make me feel pretty good about conserving water in the spring months but I have to admit once the Texas heat takes us into drought I'm not so sure I'm willing to let my lawn dry and my foundation crack. Dan Hargrave of Hargrave Custom Foundation Repair says, "Inconsistency in soil moisture around your home's foundation creates problems. Avoiding extremely wet or dry soil around one's foundation is the key to a stable foundation." He suggests soil around the foundation should be moist enough to clump into a ball but not soggy.

Ted Nichols, of Focal Point Landscaping, agrees that water around one's home needs to be managed and evenly distributed. The biggest mistake he sees is when homes are only 10-12 feet apart, neighbors over-water each other's side yards. The side yards get such little sun and with both neighbors watering the soil stays saturated. The side yards need about half the watering time than the front and back yards. Also, gutters protect the soil surrounding the house from erosion. Gutter water needs to be drained away from the house. Again, side yards tend to collect this water and create an area of big concern.

In all cases, the experts agree that soaker hoses placed a few inches from the foundation are the best way to protect your home's foundation. Sprinkler systems are for lawns and landscape, not to water your foundation. Sprinkler systems distribute various volumes of water. According to www.WaterIQ.com, "One inch of water per week in the summer will keep

most Texas grasses healthy. To determine how long you should run your sprinklers, place straight-edged cans at different distances away from the sprinkler and time how long it takes to fill an average of 1 inch of water in each can. That's a pretty practical tip that I can put into use. Most of us run our sprinklers while we are asleep so we rarely notice if water is going astray. Sprinkler heads are easy to damage or get misaligned so it is important to get them assessed at least once a year.

Sprinkler systems can also be designed with drip irrigation in mind. This method of slow dripping water, directly at the plant's roots, provides a watering option that reduces water evaporation. This highly efficient use of water reduces nutrient loss and erosion, offering an overall healthy option for a home owner's landscape. Systems can be retrofitted to utilize this water saving method but the cost can be the same as a newly installed system. This cost might be a deterrent for some, but with all of us conscious of conserving our water resources, it just might be worth replacing some of the pop-up spray heads with drip irrigation.

With just a little bit of information gathering, I feel better about protecting my home and landscape while actively engaging in water conservation. A few changes, in my watering tools and habits, can help me protect my home's foundation and the spring color I'm eager to install. •



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Spring is here!

Yippee!! Warmer days and flowers are just around the corner. Spring is the best time of the year for curb appeal. Did you know that you only have about 15 seconds to make an impression on buyers? Just this weekend we were working in the yard for a few hours (my back is feeling it) and what a wonderful improvement. If you are thinking about selling your home or if you just want to freshen it up, here are some basic and inexpensive ideas to get started:

- Clean out flower beds and trim up the shrubs (maybe even some light pruning of your trees... leave the heavy pruning to the experts).
- MULCH! It's so inexpensive and it is just amazing what a huge improvement it makes.
- A few strategically placed annuals add lots of color and texture. I plant two flats of annuals (usually something red) near my front door and then plant a large pot at the front door. Red is a stop sign and I want people to stop and look at my listings so I recommend red almost exclusively.
- Mow and edge your lawn ASAP and keep it looking good all season. This almost sounds too basic but I for one hate edging and used to let it go. Ultimately it just looks ragged and gangly if you don't do it every time.
- Get on top and stay on top of your weeds.....I need professional help in this arena.
- Give your sprinklers a check up to make sure everything is in working order (watering the street is just not cool and is costly).
- Repaint or stain your front door.
- Give your hardware and light fixtures a checkup and quick cleaning.
- Power wash, repaint or touch up paint your homes exterior. Watch for rotted wood and replace as needed.

I hope you find this valuable and as always, if you are looking for an expert to help you buy or sell a home, call me anytime.



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MARCH EVENTS

Mar. 12th - Carnival of the STARS (Special Transformed Abilities Revealed through the Spirit) for special needs individuals and their families from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at First Baptist Wylie in the Fellowship Hall. Face Painting, Games, Bounce Houses, an Obstacle Course plus Food & Prizes! Contact FBC Wylie at 972-442-2261 for more info.

Mar. 12th - Members of East Fork Masonic Lodge and Carter Blood Care will be at American National Bank in Wylie on Highway 78 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. All donations will benefit the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children.

Mar. 12th-18th - Heard Museum Spring Break-tacular! Join the Heard Natural Science Museum & Wildlife Sanctuary for fun filled nature activities! Bring the whole family for a canoe trail or an Owl Prowl, get an up-close encounter with bugs and reptiles (free with admission), or sign up for one of our exciting day camps. See our website for complete details: <http://heardmuseum.org/attractions/specialseasonalprograms.asp>.

Mar. 19th - Plano Symphony Performance by the winners of the Collin County Young Artist Competition. Barbara Padilla, 2nd prize winner of "America's Got Talent" in 2009, will share opera arias and popular songs. During the semifinals, Padilla's singing of "Ave Maria" caused one judge to state that this was the best vocal performance in the history of the show. 8:15 p.m. at St. Andrew United Methodist Church at 5801 W. Plano Pkwy., Plano, TX 75093. Advanced tickets start at \$9; add \$2 at the door. To order tickets call 972-473-7262 or visit www.planosymphony.org.

Mar. 25th & 26th - Missions Vendors Fair at First Baptist Wylie. Join us as we host our first vendors fair, Fri. 6-8 p.m. and Sat. 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., with over 50 booths selling arts, gifts, crafts, jewelry, and collectibles. Also, join us Friday night for our Crop Night with Stampin' Up from 5:30 p.m. - 11 p.m. \$30 per person includes supplies. All Proceeds Go Towards Local, Homeland and Global Missions. At the Event Center. For more info. contact Debra at 972-442-2261 or debra@fbcwylie.org.

Mar. 26th - The Wylie ISD Education Foundation's eighth annual Boots 'n Barbeque Gala will be held at Southfork Ranch. Doors open at 6 p.m. and there will be live and silent auctions, with live entertainment by recording artist Jolie Holliday. Sponsorships are still available at all levels. Individual tickets are \$45 each with tables for eight at \$320. Contact Jordan Adams, executive director, at 972-429-3025 for information or to donate an auction item. Southfork Ranch is located at 3700 Hogge Road in Parker.

Mar. 26th - Wylie Women's League benefit Poker Tournament at American National Bank at 6:30 p.m. - all proceeds go toward Wylie school scholarships. Contact Cathy Hanson at 972-442-7495 or wyliewl@gmail.com for more info. www.wyliewl.org

APRIL EVENTS

Apr. 2nd - The Plano Symphony Orchestra's 2010-2011 season comes to a close with Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 at 8:15 p.m. at the Eisemann Center for the Performing Arts. Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 features the famous last movement with chorus in Ode to Joy. The concert begins with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's sparkling Symphony No. 40. Order tickets at 972-473-7262, or visit www.planosymphony.org. Advanced ticket sales start at \$9. Prices will be \$2 more per ticket at the door. Group and student rates available. 2351 Performance Drive, Richardson, TX 75082.

Apr. 2nd - Throwaway Ponies benefit Garage Sale at 2368 E. FM 552, Rockwall, Texas 75087. Contact Karen at karen@throwawayponies.org for more info. www.throwawayponies.org

Apr. 8th - Carter Blood Drive at American National Bank in Wylie. 1-6 p.m.

Apr. 9th - Pirate Cove Community Built Playground maintenance day. 8 a.m.- 3 p.m. Contact Anne Hiney at 972-672-4133 to volunteer or for more info.

Apr. 9th - Sachse's Great American Cleanup/Arbor Day Celebration. Join other volunteers throughout Sachse to help out and give back to our community. Free gift trees will be handed out on a first come first serve basis in celebration of Arbor Day. Call the Parks & Recreation Department to sign up your group to volunteer at 469-429-0275. Volunteers will be provided with lunch afterwards and there will be entertainment to follow. 9 a.m. at Sachse City Hall, 3815 B Sachse Road.

Apr. 15th & 16th - WAG for Children's "A Night with Judy Truesdell". We are pleased and proud to be performing four of her character education mini-plays. These plays are so enjoyable, kids will never know they're learning valuable lessons about love, differences, honesty and commitment. Performances: Apr. 15th at 7 p.m. and Apr. 16th at 3 and 7 p.m. at New Hope Church, 1100 West Brown St., Wylie. Go to www.wagforchildren.org for details.

Apr. 16th - Wylie Women's League Easter Egg Hunt at Olde City Park, in downtown Wylie, at 10 a.m. Open to all children ages 1-6 yrs. old. Contact Cathy Hanson at 972-442-7495 or wyliewl@gmail.com for more info. www.wyliewl.org

Apr. 16th - Sachse's Easter Egg Scramble. Children ages 2-10 come see the Easter Bunny who will hide candy and special "prize" eggs for three age categories: 2 to 4; 5 to 7; and 8 to 10. Begins at 10 a.m. in Heritage Park, 4408 Hudson Dr. If it rains the event will be moved to the Sachse Christian Church Family Life Center, 5005 Ben Davis Road.

Apr. 16th - Sachse's Doggie Bone Hunt. Bring your dog out to the park for doggie treats, prizes, and a great time. Dogs will be divided based on weight and will be required

to be on a leash at all times. Enter your best friend into some of our contests including: best dressed, and cutest. New this year - Bring your camera and take a picture of your pet with the Easter Bunny. At 7:30 p.m. in Heritage Park, 4408 Hudson Dr.

Apr. 16th - Sachse's Flashlight Egg Hunt. You're never too old to hunt for eggs. We've made it challenging by adding a twist. Grab your flashlight, make sure it has fresh batteries, and come join the fun in the dark. Search for eggs stuffed with candy. Find the Golden Egg and win a special prize. Ages 5-13 may hunt eggs at 8:15 p.m. in Heritage Park, 4408 Hudson Dr.

Apr. 16th - The Lone Star Equine Council, a committee of the Collin County AgriLife Extension Service, will be hosting this year's "Horse Industry Tour". 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Stops include Lil' Longears in Whitesboro, Walking Tall Ranch in Aubrey, McQuay Stables in Tioga and Cinder Lake Ranch in Valley View. Lunch is included. Registration fee of \$30 each is due by April 11. Bring by or send cash or check to the Collin County Extension Office, 825 N. McDonald, Suite 150, McKinney, TX 75069. Make checks payable to "Collin Ag Support Fund". To pre-register or for more info., call 972-548-4233. Info. is also available at <http://collin-co.tamu.edu>, the Collin County Government Facebook page and the Lone Star Equine Council's website at www.lsec.homestead.com. Register early - this is a very popular tour that fills up fast.

Apr. 18th - Taste of Wylie benefiting the Wylie Christian Care Center at the First Baptist Wylie Event Center, 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Approx. 24 area restaurants will be featured. Live and silent auction items. The Event Center is located at 200 N. Ballard Ave.

Apr. 23rd - Insync Exotics Big Cat Easter Egg Hunt! Go to www.insyncexotics.org for details.

Apr. 29th - Wylie, Sachse, Murphy - Tri-Chamber Golf Tournament. Woodbridge Golf Club, 1 p.m. Shotgun Start. For more info see page 28, or contact your local Chamber of Commerce.

Apr. 29th - Relay for Life Event supports the American Cancer Society - starts at 7 p.m. at Shaffer Stadium in Wylie. Lasting all night, the Relay for Life ends at 7 a.m. on April 30th, emphasizing that cancer doesn't sleep and we won't either. For more info. visit the website at www.relayforlife.org/wylietx.

Apr. 30th - Sachse's Movie in the Park - IT'S BACK! Come check out the NEW amphitheater and see the premier of Tangled. Popcorn and drinks will be served. Dress up as your favorite prince or princess and enter into the costume contest to win a prize. Movie starts at 7:30 p.m.

Apr. 30th - Green Living Family Festival at the Heard Natural Science Museum & Wildlife Sanctuary. This one-day outdoor festival will continue to feature "green" vendors, presentations, concessions, new kids' activities and live entertainment. Visit www.heard-museum.org for details.

Apr. 30th - Park Lake Church Community Picnic at Salmon Park located at 4302 Williford Road, Sachse, TX. The picnic will be held at the pavilion from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. This event is open to the public and we would hope you would be our special guests for the day. Come on out for a day of food and fun. For more info. contact Pastor Max Kennedy at pastormax@parklakechurch.com or Church Secretary, Jennifer Kennedy at j.kennedy@parklakechurch.com, 972-414-0600 or www.parklakechurch.com.

WYLIE'S RITA AND TRUETT SMITH PUBLIC LIBRARY EVENTS
NEW LIBRARY OPENING ON MARCH 14TH!

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April 2011: Story Time Resumes!

Join us for Babies & Books, Toddler Time, Big Kid Story Time and Family Story Time. Check our website for exact starting dates, new times and themes.

Spring 2011: Wagging Tales is Coming Back!

Check our website for dates and times when you can read to Abby, our Delta Society Trained Pet Partner. Beginning readers can practice their brand new skills in a relaxed environment. Tickets are required and limited. They are given out free on a first come, first serve basis the day of the event.

Friends of the Library Meeting: March 17th & April 21st - 6 p.m.

The Friends of the Smith Public Library are having their monthly meeting in the Library Board Room. To celebrate the opening of the new library, membership fees are currently half price!

Meet the Author: March 23rd - 6 p.m.

The Friends of the Smith Public Library are honored to present Gordon Korman, author of *Swindle*, *One False Note* and *Schooled*. Come listen to this popular children's author speak and have your book signed.

BeTween Book & Movie Club: March 31st & April 28th - 6:30 p.m.

4th & 5th graders are invited to discuss their favorite books and movies. For additional info. check our website www.wylietexas.gov>Departments>Library or call (972) 516-6250.

4th Monday Book Club: April 25th - 6:30 p.m.

The 4th Monday Book Club (ages 18 and up) will meet in the Board Room to discuss *Room* by Emma Donoghue. For additional info. check our website www.wylietexas.gov>Departments>Library or call (972) 516-6250.

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Play Mahjong: 1st & 3rd Wednesday from 1 - 5 p.m.

Story Time: Each Thursday at 11 a.m.

Adult Book Club: 3rd Friday at 10 a.m.

Paws & Read: 2nd Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

Friends of the Sachse Public Library: 4th Tuesday at 7 p.m.

SACHSE SENIOR ACTIVITIES

Laurie Schwenk Senior Activity Center is located at 3815 Sachse Road, Suite B, on the corner of Sachse Rd. & Miles Rd. 972-495-6282.

Exercise: Most Mon., Wed. & Fri. mornings at 9 a.m. - Check Calendar!

Tai Chi: Tuesdays & Thursdays at 9 a.m.

TAXAIDE: Each Tuesday, March 1 - April 12, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Day Trips: *Call the center to confirm dates & times*

March 11: Doll House in Leonard & lunch

March 23: Farmersville shopping & lunch at Sugar Hill

March 25: Wylie Art Gallery & lunch at Taste of Home

March 30: Dallas Arboretum & lunch at Highland Cafeteria

April 6: Terrell Outlet Mall, Russell Stover's & lunch at IHOP

April 27: Clark Gardens in Weatherford - bring a sack lunch!

For more details on outings and seminars please contact Dixie Dickson at the Senior Center at 972-495-6282.

Submit Your Event to the Calendar!

To submit your special event to the **May/June** community calendar send an e-mail to theconnection.anne@mac.com no later than **April 15th**. Please include contact name, date(s), time(s), location, a publishable phone number, e-mail and/or web site for information. Only events that are open to the public (no "members only" events) are eligible, as space permits. THANKS!

SAVE THE DATES!

May 1st - The Wylie Downtown Merchants Annual 500 Pedal Car Race sponsored by Ballard Street Cafe & Grill. Event is packed with fun for families with young children. Minimal registration fee and proceeds benefit the Wylie Area Special Olympics and Downtown Wylie beautification. 1 - 3 p.m.

May 13th - Throwaway Ponies charity Golf Tournament, dinner and auction at Buffalo Creek, Rockwall. For more info. go to http://throwawayponies.org/fund_raisers_22.html or contact Karen Bander at (214) 202-1390 or karen@throwawayponies.org

May 21st - WildRide! WildRun! Against Cancer - Ride, Run or Walk in Richardson at 2400 Glenville Drive. The popular band Trubone will be providing musical entertainment on the main stage, along with other local musical talents. Hundreds of cyclists come back every year to participate. Organizers are very optimistic that the new 5K Timed Run will add to the number of participants. WildRide! & WildRun! Against Cancer benefits the Methodist Richardson Cancer Center, home of the Lance Armstrong Shaped Beam Surgery™ program. Sponsored by Richardson Bike Mart and Fujitsu. For more info., please call Kim Hanna at 972-498-7678 or go to www.wildridebikerally.com

CHAMBER of COMMERCE EVENTS

WYLIE www.wyliechamber.org **972-442-2804**

Monthly Luncheons: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Lunch cost is \$12 if paid in advance, \$15 with reservation paying at door, \$20 without reservation. Online payment is available at the Chamber website.

March 22 - State of the Schools Luncheon at First Baptist Event Center

April 26 - Check the Wylie Chamber website for details.

Every Wednesday Business Card Exchange: Network and promote your business from 8 - 9 a.m. Woodbridge Golf Course club house, 7400 Country Club Dr., Wylie.

SACHSE www.sachsechamber.com **972-496-1212**

Monthly Luncheons: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Northplace Church, 2709 3rd Street, Sachse. \$15 for Members, \$20 for Non-members. Register & pay online.

March 8 - Non-profit Roundtable - Check the Sachse Chamber website for details.

April 12 - Check the Sachse Chamber website for details.

Community Coffee: The last Friday of the month, 8 - 9 a.m., at Sachse Christian Church, 5005 Ben Davis Road, Sachse.

MURPHY murphychamber.org **972-805-3749**

Monthly Luncheons: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Community Room at the Murphy City Hall Complex, 206 N. Murphy Road, Murphy. R.S.V.P. by 11:59 a.m. CST on the Friday before the luncheon to receive discounted prepayment rate of \$15 for members; \$20 for non-members. After Noon and at the door on Tuesday, the charge is \$20 for everyone. Go to www.murphytx.org to prepay or call 972-805-3749.

March 15 - Guest Kevin Olson speaks about 30 Second Networking Commercials.

April 19 - Check the Murphy Chamber website for details.

Quad-Chamber Power Networking at Firewheel Town Center

March 24 - See page 34 for details.

Tri-Chamber Golf Tournament at Woodbridge Golf Course

April 29 - See details on page 28.

Pirate Cove Playground
in Founders Park

Maintenance Day

April 9th: 8AM – 3 PM

Great opportunity for getting service or volunteer hours for scouts, church groups, or school organizations!

All tools provided, bring gloves - we are applying sealer to the wood. Children over the age of 8 welcome to come work with adult supervision.
2 Shifts: 8 - 11 a.m. & 12 - 3 p.m.



Please Contact:
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9)672-4133
to volunteer
or for more
info!



Volunteer online at
www.wylieplaygroundproject.org

The Garden at Achieve Academy

by Susan Dacus

Spring is a time of renewal and rebirth. Gardens across the city will soon be cleaned, tilled and sowed with a wide variety of vegetation in hopes of colorful, fragrant and often, appetizing yields. In Wylie ISD, one special garden provides vegetables for senior citizens and is also a learning tool for students. This ritual of spring is carried out as the students of the Achieve Academy cultivate their own campus garden.

Funded by a Wylie ISD Education Foundation grant, "The Garden", was supplied and built in 2007. It consists of raised garden beds and a greenhouse. Students attending some of the several programs offered at Achieve have tended to the spot at the direction of Special Education Aide Joyce Thursby. When it's time to till, plant, weed, fertilize or water, campus teachers receive an e-mail advising them of the garden's status. They, in turn, incorporate the required activity into the day's instruction.

"Classes usually work the garden as part of a physical education requirement," said Achieve Principal Lynne Tinsley. "Working the garden is an excellent therapy tool as well, and students get a sense of purpose from the gardening activities."

Although, actual planting won't begin until late March, students are currently busy getting the garden area ready. Children from the elementary BAU (Behavioral Adjustment Unit) are nurturing plants including beans, tomatoes, spinach and lettuce in the classrooms. Most of the beds have been turned to mix the dead plant matter into the soil and allow oxygen in.

"The students will wait until after Easter to transfer the nurtured plants along with seed plants," said Ms. Thursby. "We also

have an herb garden with perennials like rosemary, oregano and thyme, well underway."

Early or late occurrences of frost have taken their toll on the school's crop. In previous years, the students planted too soon and lost herbs and produce when the dreaded pre-Easter frost set in.

"We also lost the most amazing crop of tomatoes when we got an early frost this past November," said Principal Tinsley. "So we continue to experiment with when and how to plant, looking for the right combination."

All the hours spent cleaning, tilling, sowing, fertilizing and harvesting don't go to waste. Students are eager to share the "fruits" of their labor. In addition to family and friends, Achieve plans to donate some of its produce and herbs to local senior citizens.

The Achieve Academy garden is a happy, pleasant place where students learn the joy of actually growing and nurturing food items. It provides a sense of responsibility to these learners as they experience how lack of care, time and planning can affect their crop negatively. They also experience the positive sense of doing a great job and yielding bounty for themselves and others. •



Achieve students assemble the greenhouse and prepare the raised beds for planting.



Photos courtesy of WISD.

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Wylie ISD Education Foundation's 8th Annual

BOOTS 'N BARBECUE GALA

The Wylie ISD Education Foundation's eighth annual Boots 'n Barbeque Gala will be held March 26 at Southfork Ranch.


Make plans to attend for a barbeque dinner, entertainment and the opportunity to learn more about some of the outstanding students and teachers in the school district. Proceeds benefit the Wylie ISD Education Foundation's scholarship and grant programs.

Doors open at 6 p.m. and there will be live and silent auctions, with live entertainment by recording artist Jolie Holliday.

Sponsorships are still available at all levels. Individual tickets are \$45 each with tables for eight at \$320.

Contact Jordan Adams, executive director, at 972-429-3025 for information or to donate an auction item.

Southfork Ranch is located at 3700 Hogge Road in Parker.



March 26, 2011 - 6 PM

WYLIE LIONS CLUB EASTER SMOKED HAM SALE



Place your order starting March 10th for your smoked ham from the Wylie Lions Club. Cost per ham is \$45. All proceeds benefit local organizations, scholarships and individuals in need. Hams will be smoked and ready for pick-up the week-end before Easter. To place your order or for more details contact Angel Wygant at angelwygant@aol.com.

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Founders Plaza chefs serving during the 2010 Taste of Wylie.

Taste of Wylie

The Taste of Wylie, benefiting the Wylie Christian Care Center, brings together our community this year on Monday April, 18th, from 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., at the First Baptist Church Event Center in Historic Downtown Wylie. What is the "Taste of Wylie"? you ask... let me paint a picture... Imagine in one large room an array of 24 area restaurants offering a sample portion of nearly anything and everything you could imagine wanting to eat. Throughout this maze of "oh my gosh everything looks sooo good" you also see table after table covered with trinkets and treasures available for purchase, either by silent or live auction.

As the largest fundraising event to support the Wylie Christian Care Center, "The Taste of Wylie" not only solves the age old question of "what's for lunch?" it also gives you an opportunity to lend a hand to those less fortunate. Organized and hosted by an army of volunteers, who have been dubbed "more than awesome", this yearly event continues to grow due to the generosity of the restaurants and the donors who are responsible for the items to be auctioned during lunch.

Founded in 1972, the Wylie Christian Care Center took on the task of helping local families experiencing difficult times. Over the years donations have appeared in many shapes and forms but one thing has remained consistent...every penny that walks in the door goes back out to those in need of help. Mrs. Sandy Nelson, Taste of Wylie Chairperson and long time Christian Care Center volunteer says "when I see where exactly it all goes - that means more than anything"! Last year over 9,600 individuals were assisted.


On Monday, April 18th, you just might want to skip breakfast, because you will probably eat too much lunch! The "Taste of Wylie" is a great way for you to support a terrific cause and enjoy delicious food while you do.

Adult tickets are \$10 in advance or \$12 at the door; children age 5 - 12 are \$5 (under 5 are free). Tickets maybe be purchased at American National, Capital One, Inwood National, Texan's Credit Union, and ViewPoint Banks in Wylie.

For information on sponsorship and donation opportunities contact Chairperson Sandy Nelson at 972-742-8999 or Co-Chairperson Patti Shuler at 214-476-3333. •

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Dr. Devanshi Gupta completed her neurology residency and served as Chief Resident at the University of Tennessee in Memphis. She also completed a fellowship in clinical neurophysiology and neuromuscular disease and researches these diseases actively. Prior to starting her practice in Richardson, Dr. Gupta worked at Northwest Mississippi Regional Medical Center.

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**HOOLEY'S
TAVERN & GRILL**

Young writers tell us why they love their town!

Lavon

by Kamryn Teal, age 12

Honestly, I don't know were to start because there are so many wonderful people in Lavon. I go to Community Middle School and have a ton of great friends and teachers.

The kids are friendly and when I moved here in 2007, I immediately felt like I've known these people my whole life, like they've been my close friends for years. They made me feel welcome, I love my school and the people in it and would never choose to go to another.

When we are out of school everyone is friendly, too. We have a lot of family owned restaurants, so every time you go out you feel like your with family. Every time you go somewhere you are welcomed.

All year around our Club House plans a lot of fun things to do for the whole family. When basketball, football, cheer, softball, and other things come around a lot of people participate in them. Lavon and Nevada really take pride in their sports, and that makes it a lot of fun. I've cheered for Community since I moved here and every year it gets even more fun.

Through the good times, the bad times, and the downright weird times, we are all one big happy family that is there for you no matter what. I am glad I get to write about Lavon. The people here are amazing and I hope you think that too. I'm glad I live in Lavon and am very blessed to be able to grow up around these wonderful people!

Wylie

by Katie-Beth Craig, age 10

First of all, I think Wylie, Texas is the best city in the whole world. Not because of all the "Texas is bigger and better" and that stuff. I like it here the most because everyone (or almost everyone) has a good heart. Everywhere you look, there's someone doing something to help our planet, like picking up trash or helping animals without homes. Wylie is very against drugs. Someday I hope that nobody will drink or smoke. A big reason why I like Wylie is because of the people.

My family is the best you could ask for. I love going to school and seeing my fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Harding. She has helped me all throughout the year. After school, I love coming home to my awesome mom. She means everything to me. Also, at school we do, "Rachel's Challenge". It's about how one person can make a difference in this world. Rachel was a girl with big dreams for the earth, but one day, at her high school, she was shot by two boys and she died. Later, her parents found a lot of good sayings in her diary. They started "Rachel's Challenge" because of her diary. I want to make a difference in the world some day. Like they say, "The eyes of Texas are upon you."

Wylie

By Amanual Teklewald

What I love about my city is that we have a good mayor. His name is Eric Hogue he is the 45th mayor in Wylie. He was elected on May 10, 2008; Hogue proudly served the city of Wylie for over 10 years. Seven years as a member of the City Council, and three years on the Wylie planning and Zoning Commission. And that we have a new city complex its 800 feet long 44 feet wide. 46,000 square feet for city hall the inside of the door step is a chandelier. Do you know that green part on the front side of the building that is actually a meeting room. The recreation center is 47,000 feet long the place has a climbing wall a basket ball court a workout area and a bike video game and some of the machines have a TV screen that you could play on your iPod. And the library is 44,000 square feet, well that was not illegible until March.

Now, here's a nice idea...

Wylie is Wylie

A poem by Kaitlyn Joy Johnson

Wylie is Wylie,
whether you are Pirate or Raider.
Wylie is Wylie,
so please don't be a hater. :)

Two high schools have to co-exist in one place,
making trouble in this tiny space.
People are arguing and fighting,
saying that the old is better than the new one starting.

Both have some great qualities,
whether in football, band, or test scores.
Why can't they both make some great harmonies,
instead of being such lousy sores.

I think that AS A CITY we should be one.
Cheering on both, anyway, sounds like more fun. :)

From the beginning, Wylie has been about sticking together.
So why can't High and East make things between them better?
Because cheering on both schools sounds like "Wylie Weather".

We should make our city proud and join as one big team.
And together we can make our town shine and gleam!

Wylie is Wylie,
whether you fly Blue or Maroon.
Wylie is Wylie,
hoping togetherness catches on soon. :)



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Wylie, Sachse & Murphy Chambers Tee Up for First Ever Tri-Chamber Golf Tournament

Chamber golf tournaments are a pretty standard thing: Wylie, Sachse and Murphy Chambers each have held their independent tournaments year after year.

This year is different.

“We are planning an exciting new golfing event. We will be hosting our first Swing into Spring Tri-Chamber Golf Tournament at Woodbridge Country Club,” Murphy Chamber Chairman Steve Long said. “We plan on having great golfing and building good friendships.”

The last couple of years, individual golf tournament attendance has dropped for each of the Chambers. By pooling resources and creating one larger tournament, the Chambers hope to see numbers increase once again.

“We are always looking for ways to increase our member’s exposure to bigger opportunities or prospects and the Tri-Chamber Golf tournament is just such an event,” Wylie Chamber President, Mike Agnew, said. “If you sponsor or play in the tournament you will not only reach the Wylie Chamber Members, but members in Murphy and Sachse as well. It is three-times the bang-for-your-bucks and an enjoyable day in the sun as well.”

Registration at noon and a 1 p.m. shotgun start kick off the Tri-Chamber Golf Tournament activities at Woodbridge Golf Club in Wylie on Friday, April 29th. Hole-in-one prizes include a car (provided by Reliable Chevrolet) and a cruise (provided by Cruise Planners, Sherry Pace).

“There will be all types of activities for the non-golfing sports fans too,” Long said, “and following the day’s round of golf there will be a dinner. We will have fun for one and all.”

A six-week Tri-City Mini Spring Golf League leads up to the tournament. League play begins Thursday, March 17 and continues weekly through April 21 at Woodbridge Golf Club. Two-man teams will compete weekly, with the winning team getting brag-



Mick Granlund takes a practice swing during Murphy’s 2010 Golf Tournament.

ging rights and a traveling trophy. Scuttlebutt is in each city, Fire, Police, City, Chamber and School teams are forming now.

Each week, play begins with an optional free clinic and range balls at 3:30 p.m. At 4 p.m., the two-person, nine-hole scramble begins, with an informal reception following at about 6 p.m.

Scheduled formats include a two-person scramble, two-person shamble and best ball.

Sponsorship and golfing opportunities are plentiful in the league and the tournament. League hole sponsorships start at \$100, and in a unique twist, may be gifts-in-kind.

“If a company wants to donate a \$100 in-kind gift, we’ll accept that as a hole sponsorship,” Agnew said. “For example, if a State Farm agent wanted to donate four-\$25 gift cards, he would get a hole sponsorship at the Golf League for all six weeks. We will then give away the gift cards in our weekly door prize drawings during the league.”

Agnew is organizing the Tri-City Mini Golf League and is the contact person for both league sponsorship and golfer registration. Contact him at info@wyliechamber.org for details and to get in on the action.

Tournament sponsorship levels start as low as \$150 for a hole sponsorship. Ace sponsorship is \$3,000, Eagle sponsorship is \$1,500 and the Birdie sponsorship is \$500. Other sponsor opportunities include merchandise, lunch, dinner and beverage cart

sponsorships. In addition, companies and restaurants may choose to have a tee box set up.

For Swing into Spring sponsorship details, please contact Barry Young at barry.young@oncor.com or your local Chamber. Golfer registration will be open soon at the Woodbridge Golf Club website. •



Tri-Chamber Golf Tournament
April 29, 2011 - 1 p.m. Shotgun Start

Photo courtesy of the Murphy Chamber of Commerce.

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Mounir Errami Wins Innocentive Top Solver Award

By Justin Jones Of Collin College

Mounir Errami is a problem solver. Only, the problems this Collin College biology and bioinformatics professor solves are large. How big, you ask?

Challenging enough to where he once discovered a method to diagnose infections in a hospital setting without the need to amplify the pathogen agent or to make biochemical tests.

Errami's solution to this problem was acquired by a multi-billion-dollar life science company and will help save healthcare costs because patients will not be kept in the ER until their infection is identified. Instead, the best possible course of treatment will be available within minutes after the sample has been analyzed.

Such an innovation is why Errami won the Innocentive Top Solver award last year and was recently featured in *Nature*, a prestigious scientific journal.

"Being named in what many consider one of the most prestigious scientific journals is quite an achievement in itself," Errami expressed. "For scientists and engineers, this is one of the most important currency to advancing one's career. As a biology and chemistry professor, it brings some recognition among my peers and colleagues. It also gets my name out there, which helps to network and come up with new, innovative ideas and projects to work on."

INNOVATION AT ITS BEST

To receive this honor, Innocentive taps into a pool of more than 200,000 scientists and engineers worldwide who solve various challenges for companies and nonprofit organizations.

Each year, Errami explains, solvers who distinguish themselves on the basis of the difficulty of a problem solved and the number of problems solved are the recipients of the Innocentive Top Solver award.

According to Errami, this award was given in 2009 to only 12 individuals from five different countries.

"This recognition is on an international scale for the spirit of innovation and ingenuity showed to solve problems that some-



Mounir Errami, a Collin College biology and bioinformatics professor, was featured in Nature, a prestigious scientific journal, last year for his ability to solve problems. To receive this honor, Innocentive taps into a pool of more than 200,000 scientists and engineers worldwide who solve various challenges for companies and nonprofit organizations.

times multi-billion dollar companies had difficulties solving," Errami said. "Truly, the big winners are the companies because they have access to a large talent pool, brilliant minds and experts working on the problem for the amount of money it would take to pay a single one of them and they get the best possible solution."

For example, Errami was challenged to discover a new method to localize a drug in the retina.

This is important, he explains, because when it comes to ophthalmologic treatments, there is the need to know if the prescribed drug goes where it is supposed to and if its concentration pattern within the retina is in line with treatment guidelines.

"This kind of technology is lacking and is crucial to every day practice and clinical trial settings," Errami added. "I hope that this technology will help advance treatments related to retina diseases."

PROBLEMS SOLVED HAVE POSITIVE IMPACT

He also hopes that the problems he solves continue to have a positive impact.

"When you get to work on intellectually stimulating and exciting problems that you know were unsolved by the 'seeker,' there is the thrill of winning and the feeling that, at least for that problem, you were the best," Errami said. "There is a feeling of making a difference and bringing a contribution with a direct impact."

This is also why Errami loves teaching at Collin College. "When I get in the classroom, I also always try to broaden the course behind the basic topics taught. I insist on the fact that we provide students knowledge," Errami said. "Science should be aimed at innovation and technological advances. Of course, basic science is the primary drive of innovation, but it is not always directly applicable to a particular issue of our world." •

Photos by Nick Young, Collin College photographer.

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Allergies are Nothing to Sneeze About

By Pam Singh, MD

More than 50 million people suffer from allergies each year, which are among the most common health problems. Sufferers include those with asthma, seasonal hay fever and other allergy-related conditions. Allergies can affect anyone, regardless of age, socio-economic class, race, or gender. Although allergies are more common in children, they can occur at any age and have a tendency to occur in families. Symptoms include sneezing, congestion, runny nose, itchy nose, throat, eyes and ears, nose-bleeds, and clear drainage from the nose. Allergies can be diagnosed through skin testing and blood tests.

Types of Allergies

Some people have outdoor or seasonal allergies, such as hay fever, which exhibit themselves during specific times of the year. Tree, grass and weed pollens are common seasonal allergies. Other people suffer from indoor or perennial allergies which present symptoms throughout the year. These allergies include house dust mites, indoor molds, animal dander and occupational allergies. Children with perennial allergies may also have recurrent ear infections, snoring, mouth breathing, fatigue, and poor performance in school. Other types of allergies include skin allergies, latex allergies, insect allergies, eye allergies, drug allergies, and food allergies.

Nearly 5 percent of children under the age of five years, and 18 percent under the age of 18 years, have food allergies. Eggs, milk and peanuts are the most common causes, but wheat, soy, and tree nuts can also cause allergic reactions. Symptoms of food allergies include vomiting, diarrhea, hives, swelling of the lips, tongue, or mouth, difficulty breathing, wheezing, and lowered blood pressure. Symptoms of milk and soy allergies in infants and young children include colic or fussiness, blood in the stool, or poor growth. Food allergies, unlike food intolerance which may have some of the same symptoms, affect the immune system and can be life threatening.

How to Avoid and Prevent Allergies

One of the best ways to avoid or prevent allergies is to control your environment and reduce exposure to potential allergy-causing substances. This may require you to stay indoors as much as possible during times when the offending allergen is at its seasonal peak. Other measures include enclosing mattresses or pillows with allergen-proof casings, and eliminating carpeting. It might also include avoiding areas where there is heavy dust, mites, and molds, and avoiding pets. For food allergies, the goal is to avoid foods that cause the symptoms and other



©2011 Margarita Borodina. Image from BigStock.com.

similar foods in that food groups. Breastfeeding moms should avoid foods in their diet to which their child is allergic.

When these measures fail, pharmaceutical treatment is appropriate and includes antihistamines, nasal decongestants, intranasal steroids, and cromolyn sulfate, which is used to control the symptoms of asthma by decreasing the narrowing of the lung and the chance of fluid in the lung. Immunotherapy or allergy shots may also be given to control symptoms. •

Pam Singh, MD, is an independently practicing Internal Medicine specialist on the medical staff at Methodist Richardson Medical Center. Dr. Singh received her medical training at New York Medical College, and completed her residency at Long Island Jewish Medical Center. She is board certified in Internal Medicine. To find a physician on the Methodist Richardson medical staff, call (972) 4 DR LINE.



About Methodist Health System

Guided by the founding principles of life, learning, and compassion, Methodist Health System (Methodist) provides quality, integrated care to improve and save the lives of individuals and families throughout North Texas. Methodist Dallas Medical Center, Methodist Charlton Medical Center, Methodist Mansfield Medical Center, Methodist Richardson Medical Center, Methodist Midlothian Health Center, and Methodist Family Health Centers are part of the nonprofit Methodist Health System, which is affiliated by covenant with the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church. Additional information is available at www.methodisthealthsystem.org. Connect with us through Facebook, YouTube and Twitter at www.methodisthealthsystem.org/socialmedia.

Texas law prohibits hospitals from practicing medicine. The physicians on the Methodist Health System medical staff are independent practitioners who are not employees or agents of Methodist Health System.

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Naming Beneficiaries

of Insurance Policies and Retirement Plans

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Whether you're wealthy or earn a modest income, there is one estate planning concern that is shared by people from all walks of life—the decision of who gets what when you're gone. While some individuals logically assume that a will is the only official forum to express such decisions, that's not always the case. Often, an equally important issue in estate planning is who to name as beneficiary on life insurance policies, employer-sponsored retirement plan accounts and IRAs.

Life Insurance

No matter who is designated, the beneficiaries will receive the death benefit proceeds income tax free. Unlike property disposed of in a will, if the beneficiary designation form is properly completed, insurance proceeds do not go through probate.

For many married individuals, a spouse will be the most logical beneficiary. A trust may be a prudent beneficiary choice, however, if a surviving spouse would not have the ability to prudently manage a large sum of money. The trustees (often a legal entity rather than an individual) would then take charge of managing, investing and disbursing the policy proceeds for the benefit of the surviving spouse.

Be sure to name contingent or secondary beneficiaries. This means that if the primary beneficiary has died, the insurance proceeds will go to an individual or trust. If there are no surviving beneficiaries, then your beneficiary is generally the "estate of the insured," which means the death benefits end up being probated and ultimately distributed according to the instructions of the decedent's last will and testament. If an individual dies without a valid will (intestate), then the order of legal beneficiaries to whom assets are distributed is specified by that state's law.

Employer-Sponsored Retirement Plans and IRAs

The law requires that a spouse be the primary beneficiary of a 401(k) or profit sharing account unless he or she waives that right in writing. A waiver may make sense in a second marriage—if a new spouse is already financially set or if children from a first marriage are more likely to need the money.

Single people can name whomever they choose as beneficiary, and nonspouse beneficiaries are now eligible for a tax-free transfer to an Individual Retirement Account. The IRS has also issued regulations that dramatically simplify the way certain

distributions affect IRA owners and their beneficiaries. Consult your tax advisor on how these rule changes may affect your situation.

Naming Children May Not Be Best

Naming children as beneficiaries may cause unforeseen problems. For example, insurance companies, pension plans and retirement accounts may not pay death benefits to minors. The benefits would likely be held until they could be made to a court-approved guardian or trustee of a children's trust. A guardian, trust or trustee should be named beneficiary to ensure competent management of the proceeds for the children. By naming a children's trust as a beneficiary, for example, the proceeds could be invested and managed by a competent trustee (a person or institution) you choose. A revocable living trust could also be named as a beneficiary, which keeps the proceeds out of probate.

Also keep in mind that the IRS allows nonspousal beneficiaries to annuitize retirement plan distributions over the life of the beneficiary. Check with your employer to find out if this is an option under your plan prior to naming a child as a beneficiary. A competent financial professional and tax advisor can also offer guidance as to whether this action may be appropriate for you.

Keep Your Plan Up-to-Date

When completing overall estate plans and wills, it is imperative to readjust all beneficiary designations so that your estate plan accurately reflects your intentions. Remember, outdated beneficiary designations (e.g., older parents or ex-spouses) could misdirect the intended flow

of an entire estate unless changed now.

Also, keep in mind that beneficiaries are paid directly as named. Thus, beneficiary designations are not governed by the wording of wills.

As is always the case with estate planning, consult with qualified professionals concerning your particular situation in order to ensure that your beneficiary designations are in tune with your goals.

When Naming Beneficiaries, Remember to Consider...

- The age of the beneficiary. Many policies and plans will not directly transfer assets to minors until a trustee or guardian is approved by a court.
- The ability of the beneficiary to manage assets. Perhaps a trust set up in the person's name would be better than a direct transfer.
- Employer-sponsored retirement plans. Unless expressly waived by the spouse in writing, the law requires a spouse to be the primary beneficiary of the account.
- Naming contingent beneficiaries. Should something happen to your primary beneficiary, the contingent beneficiary would receive your assets. •



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