

SUMMERWOOD

live friendly.



Volume 8, Issue 3

Summerwood Community Association

www.summerwood.org

March 2006

Flexible Benefits

We take part in aerobic activity to improve our cardiovascular endurance and burn fat. We weight-train to maintain lean muscle tissue and build strength. Those are the two most important elements of a fitness program, right?

Actually, there are three important elements. Often neglected is flexibility training. That neglect is regrettable, because flexibility training:

- Allows greater freedom of movement and improved posture
- Increases physical and mental relaxation
- Releases muscle tension and soreness
- Reduces risk of injury

Some people are naturally more flexible. Flexibility is primarily due to one's genetics, gender, age and level of physical activity. As we grow older, we tend to lose flexibility, usually as a result of inactivity rather than the aging process itself.

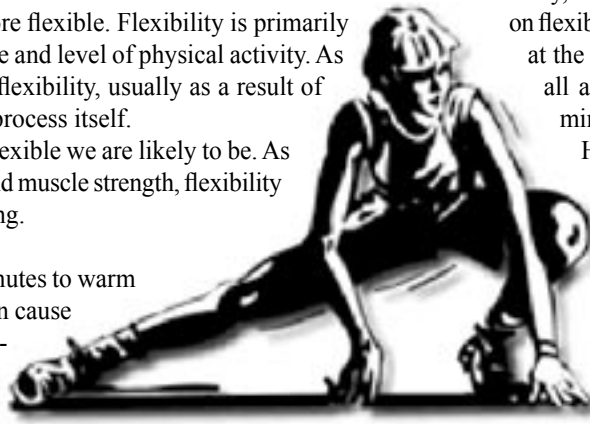
The less active we are, the less flexible we are likely to be. As with cardiovascular endurance and muscle strength, flexibility will improve with regular training.

Stretch for success

Before stretching, take a few minutes to warm up as stretching cold muscles can cause injury. Begin with a simple, low-intensity warm-up, such as easy walking while swinging the arms in a wide circle. Spend at least 5 to 10 minutes warming up prior to stretching.

When performing any stretch:

- Start each stretch slowly, exhaling as you gently stretch the muscle.
- Try to hold each stretch for at least 10 to 30 seconds.



Avoid these stretching mistakes:

- Don't bounce a stretch. Holding a stretch is more effective and there is less risk of injury.
- Don't stretch a muscle that is not warmed up.
- Don't strain or push a muscle too far. If a stretch hurts, ease up.
- Don't hold your breath.

Fitting stretching into a compressed schedule

Time constraints keep many people from stretching. Some complain they just don't have time to stretch; others hurry out of their fitness classes before the cool-down exercises are completed.

Ideally, at least 30 minutes, three times per week, should be spent on flexibility training. But even a mere five minutes of stretching at the end of an exercise session is better than nothing. And all aerobic activity should be followed by at least a few minutes of stretching.

Here are some tips for fitting stretching into an overstuffed schedule:

1. If you don't have time to sufficiently warm up before stretching, try doing a few stretches immediately after a shower or while soaking in a hot tub. The hot water elevates muscle temperature enough to make them more pliable and receptive to stretching.
2. Try a few simple stretches before getting out of bed in the morning. Wake yourself up with a few full-body stretches by pointing the toes and reaching the arms above your head. This can clear your mind and help jump-start your morning.
3. Take a stretching class such as yoga or tai chi. Scheduling a class will help you to stick with a regular stretching program.



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View the
Summerwood Community Association newsletter
each month on-line at www.PEELinc.com

SUMMERWOOD

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Emergency Situations	911
Harris County Sheriff's Dept. (Dispatch)	713-221-6000
Constable - Precinct 3	281-427-4791
Sheldon Road VFD (Dispatch)	281-847-3300
South Lake Houston EMS (Dispatch)	281-459-1277
Dead Animal Pick-Up (Precinct 1)	281-820-5151
Animal Control	281-999-3191
After Hours	281-221-5000

UTILITY SERVICE NUMBERS

Public Utility Commission Consumer Hotline	888-782-8477
Summerwood Technologies	281-225-1000
(Telephone, Cable, Alarm Monitoring)	
Southwestern Bell Telephone	800-464-7928
Entex Gas	713-659-2111
Houston Lighting & Power (HL&P)	713-207-7777
Municipal Utility District (MUD #342)	713-983-3602
24 Hour Service Number	713-983-3604
Garbage Pick-Up (Republic Waste)	281-446-2030
(Pick up on Mon. & Thurs - Garbage must be out by 7 a.m.)	

SUMMERWOOD MARKETING

Summerwood New Home Center	281-225-1111
14111 Summerwood Lakes Drive; Houston, TX 77044	

MANAGEMENT NUMBERS

On-Site Management	281-225-2786
Association Management, Inc.	281-358-9090
(Homeowners Association)	
700 Rockmead, #205; Kingwood, TX 77339	
After Hour Emergency	713-932-1122

SCHOOLS

Summerwood Elementary	281-641-3000
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POST OFFICE

Post Office	713-631-2098
9604 Mesa Drive; Houston, TX 77078	

NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

Peel, Inc.	512-989-8905
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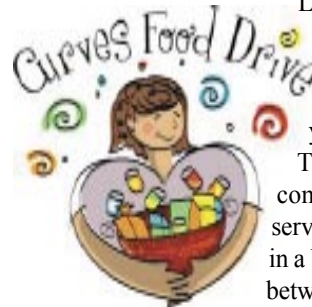
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Curves Supports Communities Nationwide With 10th Annual Food Drive

Curves of *Summerwood* will be participating in the Curves Food Drive to benefit local food banks.



Last year, the Curves Food Drive collected 10.6 million pounds of food for local communities all over the world. That's almost 3 million more pounds than the year before!

To celebrate the generosity of the community, Curves is waiving its normal service fee for any new member who brings in a bag of non-perishable groceries and joins between February 27 and March 11. Last year, more than 251,000 new members joined Curves

during the Food Drive.

Others wishing to donate may drop off non-perishable food items at Curves Monday through Friday during business hours through the month of March. The Local Curves address is Summerwood Plaza; 13141 W. Lake Houston Pkwy

"The Curves Food Drive promotion is always exciting," said *Shelia Hall*, the owner of the *Summerwood* club. "We have a chance to help so many people at a time when the food banks are lowest. It's a win-win situation for everyone, and we're very proud to participate."

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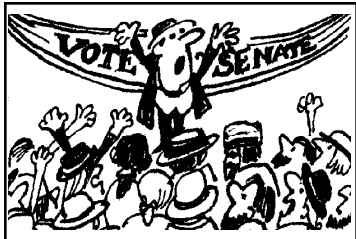
SUMMERWOOD

Spring Fun Festival In Summerwood!

This Saturday, March 4th, is the date for the Spring Fun Festival in Summerwood. This event is free for all who come and is sponsored by FaithQuest Church - the only church located within the Summerwood Master Plan Community. This will be a great opportunity to connect and meet your Summerwood neighbors.

The Spring Fun Festival will be from 3PM to 6PM and will be complete with Family Games, Food & Drinks, Moon Bouncer, Balloons, Music, and much more! Come on out and have a great time with the rest of your neighbors.

The Fun Festival will be held on the FaithQuest property in Summerwood, at the corner of West Lake Houston Parkway and Broncroft Court (at the north entrance to Summerwood). For more information, call (281) 636-5647.



The first political convention held for the purpose of nominating candidates was held in New York City in 1812.



5TH ANNUAL FOOD DRIVE

Curves Food Drive

Join Now \$0* Service Fee

One 3AN location available.

Bring a bag of non-perishable food items between February 27th and March 11th to your local Curves and join with no service fee. All groceries will be donated to local food banks.

Curves

The power to attract yourself™

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Houston, TX 77044

*Only food is donated to local food banks. No cash, paper, or food will be accepted. All items are subject to inspection.

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Children's Ministries: 10:00 a.m. (Nursery available)

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just south of FM 1960

e-mail: KennMunn@aol.com

Kenn Munn Pastor • (281) 636-5647

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Texas Events - March

1-19—HOUSTON: Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo Combines world-class livestock and horse shows with action-packed rodeo and star-studded entertainment. Kicks off with the rodeo parade. All 20 championship rodeo competitions are concluded with entertainment by music superstars. Reliant Park. www.rodeohouston.com 832/667-1000 or 713/629-3700

1-19—PORT ARTHUR: Pat Kyser Quilt Exhibition Museum of the Gulf Coast. www.museumofthegulfcoast.org 409/982-7000

1-26—HOUSTON: Cowboy, Craft of the American West Exhibition at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft. www.crafthouston.org 713/529-4848

1-Apr. 23—HOUSTON: *Eva Hesse Drawing* The exhibition features about 100 of the artist's finished drawings, as well as examples of her early drawings, major examples of Hesse's reliefs of 1965, a group of sculptural works and several "test pieces." The Menil Collection. www.menil.org 713/525-9400

1-May 7—CLEAR LAKE AREA: *Robots & Us* Meet the lifelike, intelligent machines known as robots — passionately created to maintain and extend human capabilities. Space Center Houston, 1601 NASA Road. www.spacecenter.org 281/244-2100

1-May 21—CORPUS CHRISTI: Sacred Landscapes: Collins/Woodson/Dixon Exhibit of works by these Texas-based artists addresses humankind's relationship with place and the spiritual, psychological

nature of landscape. South Texas Institute for the Arts.

4, 7, 10, 12, 16, 18, 24, 26—HOUSTON: *Send (Who are you? I love you)* & *La Voix Humaine (The Human Voice)* Houston Grand Opera showcases the operatic and Houston debut of four-time Tony winner Audra McDonald. Wortham Theater Center's Cullen Theater. www.houstongrandopera.org 713/228-6737 or 800/626-7372

10-12—HOUSTON: River Oaks Garden Club Azalea Trail Features four private homes and gardens, as well as Bayou Bend, Rienzi and the River Oaks Garden Club Forum of Civics Building and Gardens. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. www.riveroaksgardenclub.org 713/523-2483

10-Apr. 23—HOUSTON: FotoFest 2006 Includes photography exhibitions, art installations, film and video, portfolio reviews for artists, fine print auction, workshops and forums. E-mail: info@fotofest.org • www.fotofest.org 713/223-5522 ext. 19

10-May 7—HOUSTON: *David Levinthal: Blackface* Taking hundreds of photographs of objects, Levinthal has explored the many facades and characteristics of black memorabilia, creating a useful tool for researching, composing and rethinking the image of blacks in America. The Menil Collection. www.menil.org 713/525-9400

12—CORPUS CHRISTI: *Mame* Broadway musical comes to Selena Auditorium, Bayfront Plaza Convention Center. 361/980-1949

12—HOUSTON: Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra Begins at 2 p.m. Jones Hall. www.spahouston.org 713/227-4SPA

13—HARLINGEN: *Mame* Tells the story of a flamboyant 1920s flapper who lives life to the fullest. Harlingen Municipal Auditorium. www.harlingenarts.com 956/430-6690

14-26—HOUSTON: Disney's *Beauty & the Beast* Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby. www.tuts.com 713/558-TUTS or 888/558-3882

15—SAN BENITO: Luau The Crusers perform. Hours are 5 to 10 p.m. Fun N' Sun RV Resort, 1400 Zillock Road. 956/399-5800

16—HARLINGEN: American Big Band This group includes eight incredible singers and dancers with unforgettable hit songs. Begins at 7:30 p.m. Harlingen Municipal Auditorium, 1204 Fair Park Blvd. 956/748-3020

17—CLEAR LAKE AREA: Gulf Greyhound Park — Irish Stakes Race The best "Irish" greyhounds in Texas race during a daylong St. Patrick's celebration. www.gulfgreyhound.com 800/275-2946

17—GALVESTON: Tim Conway & Harvey Korman — *Together Again* Best know for their crazy skits from the Carol Burnett show, Conway and Korman share a rare comedic rapport. The Grand 1894 Opera House. www.thegrand.com 800/821-1894

18—CLUTE: Brazosport Art League Gallery Opening: People's Choice Center for the Arts & Sciences. 979/265-7971

18—FULTON: Harriet's Trash to Treasure Bazaar Enjoy baked goods, variety of white elephants, arts & crafts, antiques and collectibles. Hours are 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fulton Mansion State Historic Site. 361/729-0386

18—GALVESTON: *Die Fledermaus* — Helikon Opera Light-hearted story of revenge taken for a practical joke played years before. Begins at 8 p.m. The Grand 1894 Opera House. www.thegrand.com

18—GALVESTON: St. Patrick's Day Bike Parade With parent's help,

(Continued on page 5)

Please Join Us For Our Spring Activity Hour!

Each Tuesday at 10:00 am during the months of February, March and April parents and their children are invited to participate in this interactive hour filled with stories, games, and hands-on activities!

Free to all participants!
R.S.V.P.'s encouraged!
Children ages 2-4

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Texas Events - (Continued from page 4)

kids, age 12 and younger, decorate the bikes then parade through the campgrounds. Begins at 10 p.m. Galveston Island State Park. 409/737-1222

18—PORT ARTHUR: Taste of Gumbo Bob Bowers Civic Center. 409/727-3392 or 409/982-7716

18—PORT NECHES: Trade Day on the Avenue Port Neches Avenue. 409/722-4023

18-19—CORPUS CHRISTI: Seashore Marketplace Includes arts & crafts vendors from around Texas, specialty displays, live bands and more. On Padre Island. www.seashoremarketplace.com 361/779-6989

18-19—FREEPORT: Texas Joy Ride Rod Run Freeport Municipal Park. 281/444-8680

18-19—HOUSTON: 17th Annual Auto Swap Meet Features more than 800 dealers with more than 1 million car parts and accessories, plus all types of classic and antique cars and trucks on display. Traders Village. www.tradersvillage.com 281/890-5500

18-19—SPRING: SpringFest 2006 Stroll along the streets, sample Texas wines and foods and shop the "art walk," featuring Texas artists. Old Town Spring. www.oldtownspringtx.com 281/288-2355 or 800/653-8696

24—ALVIN: Seventh Annual Men Who Cook Begins at 6 p.m. Joe's Banquet Center. 281/331-5559

24-26—HOUSTON: Bayou City Art Festival This juried fine art event

transforms Memorial Park into a magical gallery of 300 acclaimed artists from around the world. Enjoy music, entertainment and a variety of artistic media. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Memorial Park. E-mail: bayoucityartfest@aol.com • www.bayoucityartfestival.com 713/521-0133

25—CORPUS CHRISTI: Corpus Christi MS Walk www.nationalmssociety.org/txh/home 800/344-4867

25-26—GALVESTON: *Thoroughly Modern Millie* The Grand 1894 Opera House. www.thegrand.com 409/765-1894

25-26—HOUSTON: Woodland Heights Home Tour Woodland Heights is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Houston, and it celebrates its 99th birthday in March 2006. The home tour focuses on the original bungalow-type homes and remodeling efforts. 832/814-9808

31-Apr. 1—GALVESTON: Missoula Children's Theatre — *Robin Hood* Casting 50-60 local area youth, MCT shapes the young talent into an original musical adaptation sure to please kids of all ages. The Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice St. www.thegrand.com 409/765-1894

31-Apr. 2—BAYTOWN: *Sordid Lives* Baytown Little Theater. E-mail: ellenbradj@aol.com 281/424-7617

Texas Events has been published with the permission of the Texas Department of Transportation. All events are taken in part from the Texas Events Calendar. All dates for events were correct at the time of publication and are subject to change.



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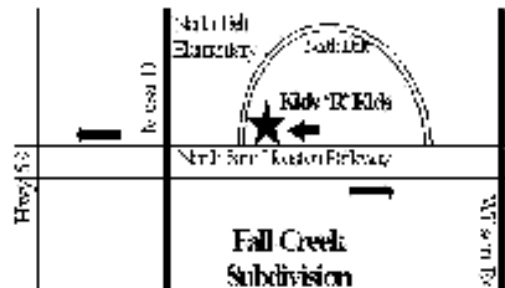
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SUMMERWOOD

History of St. Patrick's Day

The person who was to become St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, was born in Wales about AD 385. His given name was Maewyn.

When he was 16, he was sold into slavery to Ireland where he was a shepherd for 6 years. While in captivity he studied and turned to religion. He escaped slavery and later returned to Ireland as a missionary, determined to convert Ireland to Christianity. He used the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity.

Patrick was quite successful at winning converts. And this fact upset the Celtic Druids. Patrick was arrested several times, but escaped each time. He traveled throughout Ireland, establishing monasteries across the country. He also set up schools and churches which would aid him in his conversion of the Irish country to Christianity.

His mission in Ireland lasted for thirty years. After that time, Patrick retired to County Down. He died on March 17 in AD 461. That day has been commemorated as St. Patrick's Day ever since.

Much Irish folklore surrounds St. Patrick's Day. Not much of it is actually substantiated. Some of this lore includes the belief that Patrick raised people from the dead. He also is said to have given a sermon from a hilltop that drove all the snakes from Ireland. Though originally a Catholic holy day, St. Patrick's Day has evolved into more of a secular holiday.

One traditional symbol of the day is the shamrock. And this stems

from a more bona fide Irish tale that tells how Patrick used the three-leafed shamrock to explain the Trinity. He used it in his sermons to represent how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit could all exist as separate elements of the same entity. His followers adopted the custom of wearing a shamrock on his feast day.

The holiday, March 17th, is marked by parades in cities across the United States. The largest of these, held since 1762, is in New York City, and draws more than one million spectators each year. In Ireland, it is a religious holiday similar to Christmas and Easter.

Where is St. Patrick Buried? One legend has it that he was buried in the same grave as St. Bridget and St. Columba, at Downpatrick, County Down. The jawbone of St. Patrick was believed to be preserved in a silver shrine and was often requested in times of childbirth, epileptic fits and as a preservative against the evil eye. Another

legend says St. Patrick ended his days at Glastonbury and was buried there. The Chapel of St. Patrick still exists as part of Glastonbury Abbey. There is evidence of an Irish pilgrimage to his tomb during the reign of the Saxon King Ine in A.D. 688, when a group of pilgrims headed by St. Indractus were murdered. The great anxiety displayed in the middle ages to possess the bodies, or at least the relics of saints, accounts for the many discrepant traditions as to the burial places of St. Patrick and others.



The Ideas of March

E	P	G	O	U	T	N	Y	S	K	I	K	G	F	Q	M	M	B	E	X
I	T	K	O	O	D	V	Y	A	N	R	C	N	R	B	W	O	R	R	W
F	H	A	Q	A	Y	P	L	I	V	E	O	I	G	E	V	R	O	D	K
K	A	U	R	K	V	W	E	N	B	L	R	R	P	R	V	N	L	J	S
S	I	P	P	B	Q	Z	Q	T	O	A	M	P	O	I	F	O	E	P	P
N	U	A	H	C	E	R	P	E	L	N	A	S	E	E	N	G	L	P	E
A	K	L	Z	P	T	L	A	E	A	D	H	D	E	P	C	C	X	C	A
W	I	Z	A	X	A	T	E	M	R	L	S	B	U	A	R	J	H	R	O
T	B	R	S	K	C	L	G	C	W	V	N	J	B	N	D	S	R	E	A
P	T	R	E	L	N	Z	D	E	Q	R	Z	B	I	D	Q	K	Q	E	O
Y	A	O	T	A	T	O	P	N	O	R	A	I	N	B	O	W	C	B	Y
Q	N	T	R	Q	T	X	E	C	I	G	N	X	D	D	Y	J	Y	U	I
O	B	L	R	I	L	E	W	X	E	F	A	F	L	I	F	I	G	U	L
M	Z	L	B	I	R	M	U	T	D	B	H	L	S	Z	C	G	U	D	G
Y	N	T	Q	G	C	R	A	K	U	G	F	O	W	B	M	T	L	B	L
J	D	M	Z	J	M	K	Q	P	D	L	O	G	G	Y	F	L	A	A	S
T	T	C	B	N	I	Y	A	L	M	A	M	V	D	Y	G	N	M	Y	Q
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I	R	I	S	H	V	O	I	A	D	J	T	L	B	O	M	J	A	Q	S
R	Q	O	C	M	N	F	K	X	J	J	B	Z	I	L	F	M	A	U	G

BEER
CLOVER
GREEN
LEPRECHAUN

PATRICK
PUB
SHAMROCK
PINCH

RAINBOW
SPRING
POTATO
SAINT

CABBAGE
CORNBEEF
IRELAND
LUCK

CELEBRATE
GOLD
IRISH
PARTY



Tracy Montgomery
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Between FRIENDS

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Spring is approaching and that is an excellent time to have your back pump or air conditioning fixed before the summer weather arrives. And this is an important maintenance job to take if you are planning on selling your home. Have your system checked and tips to help you prepare your home for sale put you on a roll!

Home security protection is very important and depending on whether you are buying or selling, home insurance policies protecting from the loss and theft of system and appliances represent a large portion of your equity. It is important to get this right!

But when this must have protection appears to be similar but the differences are found in the cover. The home warranty company I belong to that I highly recommend they also provided cover of my doors with the security feature of retractable bars. For more information about this complete protection please give me a call!

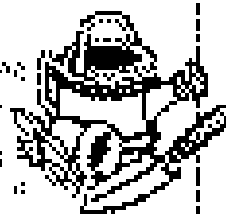
You certainly want the water to me & water treated and so in the past you were disappointed the dishwasher and refrigerator becoming your home partner that almost and positive reviews I found to provide this water treatment to you have to your family health and enjoyment. Please call me anytime!



Household Tips Garden Tips

The winter war vegetable and flower garden has been a good one when you put your garden here around the end of the week, don't mention when it will come at the end of the year. If you have the large garden, you will have all these things in your garden during the year. Now when you put your garden it will be along the same ground of things in your garden!

What to expect: How long to keep the garden in your garden? There is a way to do the right thing. When you get the garden, it will be in the garden.



Health & Safety Hotel Safety

Several national organizations including the American Hotel & Lodging Association, the American Automobile Association and the National Fire Protection Association joined together in a campaign to take public awareness about hotel safety. Here are the measures they recommend:

- Make every effort to stay only in fire hotels and ensure that hotel staff have proper fire drills, as well as a fire alarm in the hotel.
- Make sure that all windows and doors are properly locked, including emergency fire doors, before leaving the hotel. Make sure that the fire alarm is not pulled in the hotel. Make sure that the fire alarm is not pulled in the hotel.



- The hotel should have a fire alarm system in place and a fire alarm system in place.
- Make sure that the fire alarm system is not pulled in the hotel. Make sure that the fire alarm system is not pulled in the hotel.
- Make sure that the fire alarm system is not pulled in the hotel. Make sure that the fire alarm system is not pulled in the hotel.
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www.aia.org/hotel-safety

SUMMERWOOD

Submit Information for Publication in the Newsletter

Please help fill the Summerwood Community Association newsletter with news of interest to Summerwood residents. If you have some information that you would like to have published in the newsletter, please visit our web-site: www.PEELinc.com. Articles and/or photos must be received by the 15th of the month for the following month's issue. (Advertising deadline is the 10th of the month.)

At no time will any source be allowed to use the Summerwood Community Association Newsletter contents, or loan said contents, to others in anyway, shape or form, nor in any media, website, print, film, e-mail, electrostatic copy, fax, or etc. for the purpose of solicitation, commercial use, or any use for profit, political campaigns, or other self amplification, under penalty of law without written or expressed permission from the Summerwood Community Association and Peel, Inc. The information in the Summerwood Community Association Newsletter is exclusively for the private use of Summerwood residents only.

LAKEWOOD CRUSADERS

New Beginnings

Bible Study

Friday - March 17, 2006

7:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.

Summerwood Community Center

ALL ARE WELCOME

INCLUDING CHILDREN

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS SERVED

Contact:

Pastor Floyd and Alva Perry

gdnw@swbell.net

281-436-0779

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FAMILY OF JOY!

If you're looking for a fresh start, we invite you to check us out! We live in confusing times, but God brings us clarity, acceptance, and meaning and purpose for our lives. Make a NEW BEGINNING with our Family of JOY!

In fact, we're having a COMMUNITY WIDE CONCERT by Nashville singer and song writer, Don Wharton on Saturday, April 1 at 7:00pm. Join us then or any Sunday at our Worship location at Holy Trinity Episcopal School, located on the Beltway just south of Summerwood at Lake Houston Parkway and Lockwood.

Sunday Worship: 10:30am

Sunday School: 9:15

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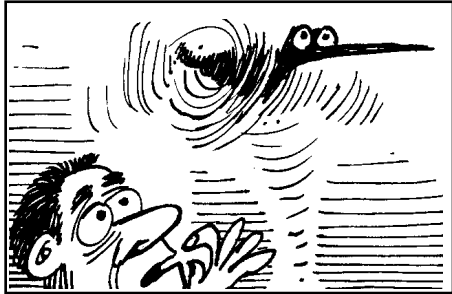
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SUMMERWOOD

Tomball Has Taste

Tomball Kicks Off 100 Year Birthday with the Taste of Tomball



Tomball, Texas - The growing community of Tomball, Texas, located in the northwest corridor that consists of northwest Harris and Montgomery counties and surrounding areas, and only 28 miles from downtown Houston, celebrates birthdays with style. One of the fastest growing areas in the greater Houston metroplex and another of Texas' best kept secrets, Tomball is turning 100 and plans to make history too.

Roll-out your taste buds, grab the antacids, and mark your calendars for March 25th from 1:00pm - 4:00pm. Join the Tomball Centennial Cookbook Committee and the Tomball German Heritage Festival as they kick-off 100 years of Tomball history in the first ever Taste of Tomball. Go down in history with an all-star panel of celebrity judges and taste your way through a cooking extravaganza.

We'd love to tell you a couple of the judges' names, but that is a huge surprise. We can disclose that a little politics might be discussed over the canapés. "We've been so pleased with how many of our judges invitations were accepted," said Naomi Kleb of Amegy Bank and Taste of Tomball chairwoman.

The Taste of Tomball features the most outstanding amateur and professional chefs in the area competing in eight different categories to determine the best of the best. There might even be a kiss or two for the cooks. The winning chefs will be featured in the Tomball Heritage Cookbook, celebrating 100 years of cooking history, due for release in the Fall of 2006.

You may even decide to compete yourself. Entry in the contest is open to all greater Tomball residents. Provide a double recipe of your chosen dish, then sit back and prepare to be tested and challenged. There is no entrance fee and recipe deadlines are March 15th. Application forms are available at local banks and city buildings in Tomball. Consider this an open call for "Iron Chefs" of every caliber and specialty.

Admission to the Taste of Tomball is free but a voluntary \$2.00 contribution to the tasting will be appreciated. People from all parts of Texas are expected for this fun festival of great taste and German heritage. Don't forget to visit March 25, 2006 from 1:00pm - 4:00 pm.

Advertising Information

Please support the businesses that advertise in the Summerwood Community Association Newsletter. Their advertising dollars make it possible for all Summerwood residents to receive the monthly newsletter at no charge. No homeowners association funds are used to produce or mail the newsletters. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office at 512-989-8905; advertising@PEELinc.com. **The deadline for ads is the 10th of each month.**

Normal acetaminophen dosage can trigger liver failure in alcoholics

from Baylor College of Medicine

HOUSTON — (Feb. 10, 2006) – It only takes a few pain pills to do life-threatening damage to your liver if you drink too much alcohol, say liver experts at Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) in Houston.

The equivalent of two or more alcoholic beverages daily, coupled with poor eating habits that reduce nutrition, greatly increases the risk of liver failure when the common pain reliever acetaminophen is used, according to Baylor Liver Health director Dr. John Vierling.

"These people may have lesser ability to detoxify acetaminophen and a greater likelihood of producing toxic byproducts even if they take acetaminophen for the right indications and do not exceed the maximum recommended doses," said Vierling, also professor of medicine and surgery at BCM.

Acetaminophen, the active ingredient in hundreds of over-the-counter pain relief medications and fever reducers, can cause liver toxicity when daily doses exceed the maximum recommended four grams, or the equivalent of eight extra-strength Tylenol® tablets. Those who regularly consume alcohol or have a poor diet, however, should limit their acetaminophen intake to two-and-a-half grams per day, says Vierling.

According to Vierling, the best solution is prevention, which starts with improved public education about acetaminophen. Roughly half of all acute liver failure cases in the United States are now caused by acetaminophen overdoses, accounting for an alarming increase over the frequency a few years ago. Children are especially vulnerable to acetaminophen overdose.

"One form of pediatric formulation may contain much higher amounts of acetaminophen than the next," said Vierling. "People must read the labels carefully to be sure the dose being given is safe. Adults also must be more aware that acetaminophen is often found in prescription pain killers and over-the-counter cold remedies, which can lead to unintentional consumption of excessive amounts."

In severe cases of liver failure caused by acetaminophen, liver transplantation may be the only life-saving hope, but even urgent transplantation is not always possible because the availability of donor livers is limited and some patients may become too ill to undergo transplantation.

Nevertheless, recent advances in intensive care of patients with acetaminophen liver failure have improved outcomes without transplantation by stabilizing the patient long enough for the liver to regenerate itself.

Vierling says that many patients with acetaminophen-related liver failure who might have required transplantation in the past are now surviving without the operation because of these advances in care.

"Acetaminophen can kill a large portion of liver and place a patient on death's door, but with advanced intensive care, many, but not all, can be stabilized long enough to rebuild their liver without a transplant," said Vierling. "We hope that future advances will make it possible for all patients with acetaminophen liver failure to survive with transplantation."



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