

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF SLIDELL

Slidell magazine

Vol. 83 June 2017



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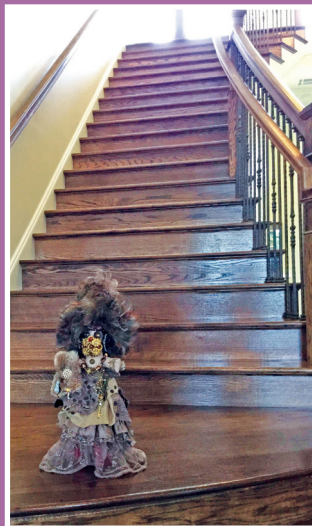
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EDITOR'S LETTER

KENDRA MANESS EDITOR/PUBLISHER SLIDELL MAGAZINE



This past May, I coordinated the 2017 "Rosies" Women Build for Habitat for Humanity. You'll read all about Habitat and the Rosies on pages 18-20. I'm so proud to be part of this program and humbled that so many female Slidell leaders have taken their time and initiative to insure its success.

Being a Rosie doesn't come easy. The women that participate have to garner donations and sponsorships of \$500, miss a day from their jobs, and work their tails off to build a home for a Slidell family. They work hard to earn their Rosie designation and make our community a better place.

A by-product of the Rosie program has been the friendships that are created within the group. We're a sisterhood.

Last year, the Rowdy Rosies secretly buried a time capsule deep under the porch of the

home we were building. In it were small gifts from each of the team members, a bottle of champagne, two glasses, a copy of *Slidell Magazine* with the Rosie cover (May 2016), and a red bandana, the symbol of the Rosies. On top was a letter to the homeowners. It read in part:

Dearest Homeowner:

This letter was written on May 3, 2016, the day our team of "Rowdy Rosies" worked to build the home you are now living in.

Your home was built on a foundation of love – love for our Slidell community, love for Habitat for Humanity and the amazing work they are doing in our world, and especially, the love that has grown within our Rowdy Rosie family.

Our image is that of Rosie the Riveter, the symbol of female strength and pride during World War II. We are beautiful in our spirit – we have fun, work hard, and have an indomitable determination that has led to the building of the home you are living in and this time capsule you are opening today.

Although all of us were active in the community in one way or another, some of us had never met before. Through this experience, the 10 of us have learned about each other and formed a bond and friendship that will last forever. So, it turns out, this letter is to say THANK YOU.

Thank you for living in this home; the home we so passionately raised money for and lovingly helped to build. We have visions of fun family nights for you, dinners filled with lively conversations of the day's events, and peaceful sleepy nights wrapped in the secure blanket of the grace of our Lord who protects and guides us all. Our efforts have been rewarded with these beautiful thoughts and dreams.

You, dearest homeowners, are the living legacy of the Rowdy Rosies.

GO GIRLS GO! GOD BLESS THE ROSIES!

COVER ARTIST



DONNA BUSH

Inspired by life!
Curiosity seeker!
And able to talk her
Editor into ANYTHING!

The phrase above is what appears on the back of Donna Bush's business card. Donna received the cards as a gift from *Slidell Magazine* Editor Kendra Maness as a playful compliment to the diversity, creativity and adventure that Donna brings to every one of her stories.

Donna Bush is a local nature photographer and writer living in Pearl River, LA. She became interested in nature photography in the early 1990's while working as a Telecommunications Specialist for the USDA National Finance Center. Photography provided a break from computers and gave her alone time in the outdoors with wildlife, nature and her camera. Donna has pursued her passions of photography, nature and writing and is a contributing writer and photographer for *Slidell Magazine*.

Donna is also a certified yoga instructor, helping many friends and students explore their own inner passions through group and private yoga sessions. Donna's photography in *Slidell Magazine* (and beyond) has won numerous prestigious awards from SEOPA (South Eastern Outdoor Press Association), LOWA (Louisiana Outdoor Writers Association) and photography shows across the region. You can visit her on Facebook at Donna Bush Photography, Natural Reflections Yoga, LLC, or contact her by email at donna.bush@yahoo.com.

Slidell magazine

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view more of us at: www.slidellmag.com

JUNE 2017



by Kathleen Rose DesHotel



Harry Chico Fraticelli

As the family goes, so goes the nation and so goes the whole world in which we live.

~ Pope John Paul II

Wherever people land in this vast world is sometimes based in need or curiosity or coincidence. For instance, when Christopher Columbus, under the support of Queen Isabella I, left Spain he was seeking a trade route to enter the gold, pearls, and spice trade with Asia. Instead, he landed in the New World. On his second trip, he discovered Puerto Rico which was inhabited by Taíno Native Americans which he called

Indians. In letters, he described them as handsome people who walk about "naked as the day they were born", but that he believed they would be easily converted to Christianity because they were so helpful.

US Customs and Border Protection Officer, Harry "Chico" Fraticelli hails from the 3515 square mile island. Born and raised in San Juan, he describes

his family as passionate, devoted to each other, hardworking, and loving life. All of these characteristics show in his personality. His daughter Harriette describes him, "In one word, he is selfless, someone who would give the shirt off his back to help someone in need. And the most beautiful part is that he wouldn't expect anything in return. He taught me to have compassion for



El Morro - One of the landmark Puerto Rico tourist spots is the historic fort San Felipe del Morro.



Yauco Rain Forest - Chico says that his birth island has so much beauty including white beaches and rain forests.



Champs 1984 - In Puerto Rico, baseball is almost a religious dedication for young boys according to Chico, #55. His team won second place in the 1984 National Championship in the Mickey Mantle League.

others, to always be kind, but at the same time to stick up for myself if someone tries me. He shows the same amount of respect for the custodian as he does the CEO of a company. He's just all around the perfect role model for any friend, spouse, child, etc. He is incredibly loved by many and the second you begin to speak with him, you'll notice the Puerto Rican passion that's in his blood."

As a young boy, the part of his life that he remembers distinctly is baseball where he played short stop, second, or third base. "It was an almost religious activity for young Puerto Rican boys. My father worked as a guitarist with a band which required long night hours. Nonetheless, he was there at every practice and every game to support me. I remember looking up in the stands and seeing his face. That's how we are, loving and supportive of one another."

His mother, Carmen, told Chico that when he grew up and had children, he would be a great father just as his dad was, to which he reacted, "If I am half the father he was, I'll be alright."

According to his son, Harry, he has done well measuring up as a father in keeping him in touch with his family and background. He said, "When I visit Puerto Rico, it always has a family vibe. My dad is the type of person everyone wants to be around because he will go out of his way to make someone's day better. He has the biggest of hearts, and he taught me throughout the years how to be a kind person."

When Chico graduated from high school, he had the opportunity to go to college at Ohio Dominican University where he studied Criminal Justice. The sudden freedom and distance from home led to a little too much partying, which led him back home. But Chico always finds a positive in every negative and explains, "If this hadn't happened, I would never have met my beautiful Mayrim Gonzalez, the synchronized

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swimmer. No one ever captured my heart like she did. We got married and quickly had our first baby Genesis. There were three phases to making me into who I am: First I met Mayrim, then there was our beautiful wedding, and then there was Genesis, so named because she was the beginning of something emotionally great for us."

He was working at a casino on the island and not making much money when his second child, Harriette, was born. He realized that he was going to have to do better for his future. His wife and daughters stayed with his parents while he went to find a better paying job. Since Puerto Ricans are American citizens, he headed to the mainland. "I left with six \$20 bills in my pocket and a tiny suitcase full of dreams. I followed a path to wherever a job opportunity presented itself for six long months. From Texas, to Kentucky, to Missouri, and then to Mississippi, and finally to Kenner, Louisiana at the Treasure Chest Casino, first as a dealer and then as a floor supervisor. I made more money than I had ever made."

"That was when my family joined me. The first things we bought were beds for our daughters and a metal wall hanging of a sun, which still hangs in my dining room. My lovely wife and I slept on the floor for a couple of months. In the living room our furniture was a few bean bag chairs and a small television on a stand. Times were rough, but my children didn't even notice because we had each other and became a close knit family."

They lived in Kenner for six years. Unlike Columbus who discovered the New World by accident, the Fraticellis sought just where they wanted to buy a home and raise their young family during that time. "Back in Puerto Rico, the houses' windows had burglar guards, and we didn't want to live behind window bars. Ultimately, we discovered Slidell and thought it was a good place to raise kids with good schools



Mayrim and Chico - According to their middle daughter, Harriett "Cookie" Fraticelli, "My parents are what I aspire to be in my life."

*I wish I had
started saving
when I was
younger.*

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and people who wanted to keep the city beautiful and without crime. Even though the city is growing, it still feels like a small town that is close to everything."

Mayrim adds, "We love it here in our Slidell home. We have made good friends and our neighbors are kind and helpful, and we have been very happy since we moved here in 2000." They are satisfied with their move to the mainland and with finding a niche in Slidell for many reasons. Among those reasons is the school system which is so much better here. All three children graduated from Slidell High.

Both parents appreciate the low crime rate as compared to Puerto Rico. They agree that their children's safety was a major concern. "Plus, the slower pace of life is better for us, as well as having a nice and affordable home. Houses are much more expensive on the island," commented Mayrim.

"The main reason for the continuing exodus from Puerto Rico is the same as our reason was, job opportunities," Chico summarizes.

Sometimes they miss their birthplace because there was so much beauty there. White beaches, landmarks, rain forests, historic forts like San Felipe del Morro, customs like celebrating Kings' Day, and even the sounds of the coqui (tiny tree frogs that sing at night and are the symbol of the island) mean much to them. He and Mayrim collaborated to add food to the list, "arroz con gandules (holiday food of yellow rice and pigeon peas) served with roasted pork, tostones (fried plantains), mofongo (fried green plantains mashed with salt, garlic and oil), pasteles (similar to tamales), and coquito (our version of egg nog). When we do go home, we eat too much!"

Chico Fraticelli describes the Boricua (people of his birth country) as being proud people who show this on everything that they do, including tattoos, license plates, t-shirts, and stickers. "We wear our hearts on our sleeves and are often loud to which my neighbors can attest when I moan and yell during Saints' games. We like to help others and to be happy with our families."



The family - According to Puerto Rican custom, "La familia, lo es todo." The family is everything. I-r: Harriett, Chico, Mayrim, Harry, and Genesis.



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In the beginning there was Genesis his daughter, whose birth made him know that 'La familia, lo es todo.' Now, a grown woman with a child of her own, she says, "My father is the most genuine, caring, and loving person I know. He impacts people's lives just by being himself. His love is contagious, and he makes everyone want to be better because he has a smile and personality that can light up a room. I am proud to be his daughter."

He explains his feeling for his children, "I want my children to be happy, safe, and good humans. I want for them not to forget where they come from, to remember their roots, and to have lives even better than their mom and dad's." Once they were settled in Slidell, Chico realized that working in a casino required being there for their busiest times, which included all holidays. With the children being young at that time, he sought other employment and was ultimately hired for US Customs and Border Protection.



Chico at work at the US Customs and Border Protection Agency



Kings' Day Tradition - The Fraticelli family tries to keep the Kings' Day tradition of gathering grass for the camels alive with their grandson, Lathan, assisted by his grandma Mayrim Gonzalez.

As an officer with the US Customs and Border Protection, his personality seems like a perfect fit as being protective, honest, and dedicated to a good life. He has had good times and tough times, but he accepts all of it as being part of the process. "Even the bad times are good because they make me appreciate the good times even more."

At 5'10", Chico, which means little one, earned his name because his brother is 6'7", but there is nothing small about his philosophical views. He says that his life in Puerto Rico was adventurous, and the same applies to his life here in Slidell. "There is always another adventure around the corner."

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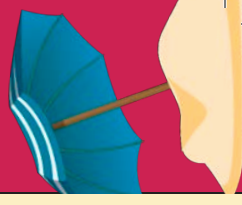
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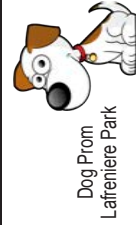
29

30 Dine & Discover Workshop
Social Media
Chamber • 11:30am-1pm
GRAND OPENING
Frenaux Dental • 3:30-4:30pm

31

1 JUNE
Tech Smart
Nick's Sports Bar & Grill
9am-1pm
Reservations: 985-643-5678

2



3

Camellia City
Farmer's Market
Chamber • 8am-noon
Slidell Movie Night
Heritage Park
8:30pm

4



Cruisin' for a Cause
Harbor Center • 8am-5pm

5

6 ChamberOne
Quarterly Luncheon
Nick's Sports Bar & Grill • 11:30am
GRAND OPENING
Dentists of Slidell • 3:30-4:30pm

7

EVERYONE COME VISIT US!

8 Business After Hours
SLIDELL MAGAZINE
Chamber • 5-7PM

9 Public Policy Meeting
Chamber Boardroom • 8am

10

Camellia City
Farmer's Market
Chamber • 8am-noon
Jazz'n the Vines
Los Po-Boy-Citos
Ponchartraine Vineyards • 6:30-9pm

11

12

13 Slidell Photo Club Exhibit • May 12 - June 23 • Slidell Cultural Center

14 Safe Kids 101
SMH Wellness Pavilion
11:30am

15

16 Children's Wish Endowment
Golf Tournament
Oak Harbor Golf Club

17

Camellia City
Farmer's Market
Chamber • 8am-noon
Slidell Movie Night
Heritage Park
8:30pm

18



19

20 American Eagle
Day

21

22 Business After Hours
STARC
Patton's • 5-7PM

23

Camellia City
Farmer's Market
Chamber • 8am-noon
Twisted Beer Fest
Castine Center • 4-8pm

25

Peter Pan
Cutting Edge Theatre • 2pm

26 Ambassador Meeting
Counter Culture • Noon

27

Dine & Discover
Online Retailing
Chamber • 9:30-11:30am
GRAND OPENING
Fatty's Seafood • 3:30-4:30pm

28

Chamber 101
Chamber • 9:30am
EYP Luncheon
Cold Calling for Scaredy Cats
Fatty's Seafood • 11:30am-1pm

30

1 JULY
Lunch & Learn
Immune Deficiency
SMH • 11:30am
OTAC Summer Exhibition
Slidell Cultural Center
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1

JULY 4TH
HERITAGE
FESTIVAL
4-11pm

1

Peter Pan • Cutting Edge Theatre • 7pm



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THE DIP NET

To a large degree, gone are the close family units that rural living at one time provided. Then, grandparents may have lived across the road; uncles and cousins, within a very few miles; and Sunday's noon meal was still a reason for all to come back to the old home place.

Uncles had a very prominent place in a young boy's life, just as aunts had a similar position in the life of the young girls. I was influenced by my uncles in deep and lasting ways. Each one had a little different input that gave direction to my life, and each stands out in his own way.

I have recently had repeated thoughts about one specific uncle. His name was Robert. We called him Bob. He was my mother's oldest brother, and the fact that he was not the most financially



affluent of my uncles is part of the story that makes him stand out.

I was raised in what topographically would be called a valley or a basin. At its lowest point ran the Bogue Chitto River. Yes, that is what it was called, but it should have been called the Bogue Chitto Creek. It was not very big. We were proud of it though, and

argued if our village was named after it, or it was named after our village.

The Bogue Chitto River's headwaters were about 18 miles north. From there, it rambled southward, behind our home, and down into Louisiana, where its waters were eventually diluted by the salt of the Gulf of Mexico.

There was no development, only woods or farm land, between where we lived and the river. Adding to the small volume of water that flowed between its banks were numerous branches that networked across the land, eventually snaking their way to the river. Some of these you could step across; others were slightly larger. The mental mystery that the river and these tributaries created was a major source of entertainment for ten-year-old kids whose only method of independent transportation was foot power.

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My uncle Bob had a daughter that he dearly loved. I do think, however, that he also wanted the companionship of a son, and I know he courted me in that aspect and, I suspect, other nephews the same way. He searched for ways to befriend me, but his budget was limited and what he could offer came from the heart rather than the price tag on the object.

One of my chores, when young, was to cut the grass every two weeks during the summer months. I hated it. I could put this dreadful task off for a while, but sooner or later Dad's "cut it today, or else" mandate would be stated.

Our lawn was over two acres, and we had a push mower. It had an engine, but it was not self-propelled. I would spread the agony over two or three days, but this just made the two-week cutting cycle come around more often.

Uncle Bob loved to cut grass. He always had the most sophisticated lawn equipment of anyone in our whole county, a Gravely Lawn Tractor with all the attachments. It was the Cadillac of the grass cutting business. Not only was it self-propelled, you could ride it. I suspect he spent most of his income on that piece of equipment, and he was very proud of it.

Bob was a very charitable man, and cut the lawns of several elderly or disabled people, including my grandparents. Of course, he never charged. I suppose he was en route to my grandparents when he passed our house and saw me toiling in the noonday sun. I saw him too.

I prayed that he would stop, come back, and rescue me from my Lincoln County Hell. As soon as I wished it, I saw his truck turn into our driveway. That was enough. If nothing else happened, I could tell Dad I stopped cutting grass because Bob came by to visit. Dad placed hospitality above all else.

There was more. He lowered the tailgate on his truck and unloaded the machine of my dreams. He hooked a little cart behind it and said, "Get on."

In an hour and a half, the yard was pristine, or as pristine as it would get. We did not weed eat in those days. Needless to say, in ninety minutes, he had gone from an uncle I liked to the top of my list.

A relationship grew. He loved to fish and knew almost every farmer in the county that owned a well-stocked cattle pond with large fish in it. He taught me to fish. He taught me that you can excel in a hobby without being wealthy. He raised his own earthworms, but that is another story.

Kids look for the excitement in life. We spent our days digging for buried treasure; trying to find the body of Deke Moore, who disappeared coming home from a whiskey joint in Louisiana; or playing in the shallow streams that permeated our surroundings,

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This Olde Towne Slidell Main Street and Louisiana Cultural District event is supported by a grant from the Louisiana Division of the Arts as administered by the St. Tammany Commission on Cultural Affairs.

as I have previously described. Playing in small streams was among our most favorite past times. It was as if we could turn back the surface water and see all types of mysteries contained under that liquid cover.

Playing in the creeks and streams was a summertime game, and I guess we dammed up every small branch within a mile of our house. Wanting to be engineers, we even created spillways out of castaway pipe. Once we made a large dam. It was so large it created a small wading pool we played in until a summer storm washed it away.

I would just bet Bob, being raised less than a half mile from where I lived, did the same thing when he was a kid. He must have.

I will never forget when his truck turned into our driveway. It was early summer, probably June. I was initially disappointed that the Gravelly was not in the truck bed, but soon I could tell he was eager to show me something.

He reached into the bed of his truck and pulled out what he called a dip net. It was a fishnet, similar to a butterfly net, on a long handle. He gave it to me.

I am sure my expression said to him, "What do I do with this?"

We walked to a stream, a highway ditch a few yards away, where he examined the still water carefully. Then he dipped the net in the water and pulled out a small perch about the size of a goldfish. He dipped again, nothing. Then he dipped and brought up two crawfish. I was fascinated.

This dip net, as simple as it was, opened a new unexplored world to me. The mysteries of inner space would not be revealed to me until many years later when I began to scuba dive.

I had another uncle, Bob's brother. He was the engineer type, and he got interested in the dip net. In those days, we did not have nylon string or netting, and he knew the cotton net would soon rot. He acquired a green liquid called Coppertox, and coated my dip net with it. It worked. The cotton string lasted that summer, the next, and many more.

I pulled from the bottom of those small ditches enough crawfish and stump perch to sell to fisherman as fish bait and make fifty cents or so on Sunday mornings. Of course, that was before church, which prompted some scorn from self-righteous church members.

I once pulled up a rusty pistol from a ditch beside the highway. I wondered if it had anything to do with Deke Moore's disappearance, but I never told anyone. As far as I know, the pistol is still where I found it.

We also had a lagoon that we pretended was the Black Lagoon, and we looked for the Creature. We found it with the dip net. It was an ugly eel looking thing that lived in the mud and water of the lagoon. It had four very tiny, useless legs. It was slimy and looked snaky, so we never touched it with our hands. We just examined it in the dip net. We called them Lamprey Eels.

Many years later, my sons found the same creature in the ditch in front of our Louisiana home. They had the same excitement we had about finding them.

Just by coincidence, I had a client that was a marine biologist. She said they are actually called amphiuma, a relative of the salamander family, and they can inflict a vicious bite. She said they were a relatively new discovery, but she must have been speaking historically, because due to my dip net, I had discovered them in 1956.

Like all toys, I outgrew the dip net. Eventually, I no longer sought my entertainment from the river and streams. I was interested in more complicated things. I hung the net, still not rotten, on a nail in the barn.

The last time I was in that barn was early in the summer of 1966. The net still was on the nail, the Coppertox still doing its job. We sold the house that summer. The net was included in the sale. Like most kids, I never thanked Bob for the net. If it is not too late, thanks, Bob.



John Case
June 2017

Susan Pappalardo Named LALA 2017 Outstanding Executive Director



Susan Pappalardo, Executive Director of Park Provence Senior Living (formerly known as Camellia Gardens) for over fourteen years, was selected as the 2017 Outstanding Executive Director at this year's annual Louisiana Assisted Living Association conference. The conference is a major regional industry gathering for assisted living & memory care professionals from all over Louisiana. Susan was recognized at a special ceremony during the conference for her tireless dedication to ensuring that Park Provence provides the most exceptional assisted living & memory care in the area.

Susan was nominated for the award by Audrey Baker, the Director of Marketing and Business Development at Park Provence. "The sense of family that Susan has developed among the residents and team members is something all assisted living communities aspire to create," states Baker. "Park Provence's unique success could not be achieved without the selfless giving of Susan's time, commitment and unmatched passion for those she serves."

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2017 Women Build

The 2017 Women Build for East St. Tammany Habitat for Humanity was another HUGE success this May, thanks to the hard work of the "Rosies." Habitat's vision is a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Their mission is to put God's love into action by bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope.

The Rosie program is led by EST Habitat's Women Build spokesperson, *Slidell Magazine* Editor & Publisher, Kendra Maness. Each year, Habitat selects five Women of Distinction to lead teams of Rosies on a one-week build project in Slidell. Being a Rosie requires more than just posing for the amazing photo (donated by Paul Wood Photography). All 50 Rosies must raise \$500 each in sponsorships, and donate their time and sweat to build a decent, stable home for a Slidell family.

The 2017 Women of Distinction are:
Glenda Drennan, Dania Fandal, Dawn Sharpe, Adele Bruce-Smith and Senator Sharon Hewitt



Kendra Maness
Spokesperson
2017 Women Build



Debbie Crouch
Executive Director
EST Habitat For Humanity



Rene Arcemont
Incoming Exec. Director
EST Habitat For Humanity



Kentrell Jones
Asst. Director
EST Habitat For Humanity



Julie & Paul Wood
Rosie Campaign Photo Gurus
Paul Wood Photography



In total, the goal is to have 50 women raise \$25,000. With additional donations and fundraising activities, this years' Rosie teams have raised over \$35,000... and counting!

Women Build was created by Habitat International to promote and help women learn the skill sets needed for repairs and projects in their own homes. Working together and under the guidance of the awesome Habitat staff, Construction Director Rock Lastrapes and Site Supervisor, Preston Williams, the Rosies completed the soffit, fascia, siding, insulation, and drywall in a Habitat home.

Thank you to our 2017 Rosies!

On April 26, 2017, Ronnie & Sylvia Reine graciously opened their hearts and home when they hosted the Rowdy Rosie Round Two party. The Reine family's incredible donation included catering from NOLA Grill, lots of libations, music by Witness, and even free massages and a fortune teller! The photo booth donated by Rep. Greg Cromer was a hit with the hundreds of guests. Donations were raised from admission to the event, raffle tickets, decorated champagne flutes for sale, and celebrity bartenders competing for tips (go team Dave Kaufmann, winner two years in a row). In total, the party donated OVER \$16,000 TO HABITAT'S 2017 WOMEN BUILD!! Thank you Ronnie and Sylvia, the Rowdy Rosies, and everyone who volunteered and attended such a great event!



Rowdy Rosies

WOMAN OF DISTINCTION

Glenda Drennan

Build Date

May 9, 2017

TEAM SPONSORED BY:

Ronnie & Sylvia Reine & the Rowdy Rosies



Laura Kaufmann



JoBeth Kavanaugh



Jan Stumpf



Kelly Meilleur



Lisa Clement



Rhonda Pike



Susie Finley



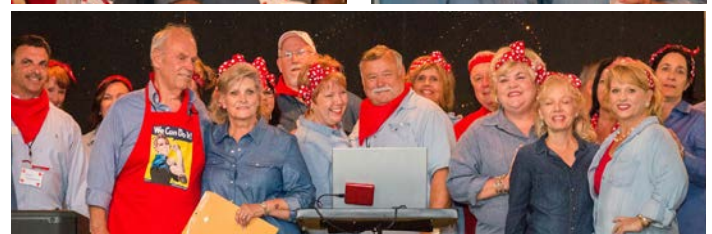
Tanya Witchen



Deanna Reine



Mary Swann



Photos by Mark Smith



Remarkable Rosies

WOMAN OF DISTINCTION
 Senator Sharon Hewitt
 Build Date
 May 6, 2017

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Giovanna Nishimura
HONORARY ROSIE

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 Kendra Maness
 Parish Councilwoman, S. Michele Blanchard
 (and daughter, Belle Airey)

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Riveting Rosies

WOMAN OF DISTINCTION
 Dania Fandal
 Build Date
 May 10, 2017

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 RIVETING ROSIE:**

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Melissa Henry,
 St. Tammany Clerk of Court





Royal Rosies

WOMAN OF DISTINCTION
Adele Bruce-Smith
Build Date
May 18, 2017

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Resourceful Rosies

WOMAN OF DISTINCTION
Dawn Sharpe
Build Date
May 19, 2017

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When it comes to your financial life, time can be on your side.



I've been a member of the Rotary Club of Slidell Northshore since 1999. In fact, my 18th anniversary with the club was last month. It has been a wonderful experience for me. Rotary's motto is "Service Above Self" and it drives everything we do as Rotarians. My club has raised a lot of money during the past 18 years (and long before I became a member), and we've distributed much of that money to worthy local charities and important social service organizations in our community. The remainder has gone to The Rotary Foundation, which is

the world-wide charitable-giving arm of Rotary, and to a fund my club has established that will eventually endow our own foundation for future giving. It's satisfying to know that the money we have raised – and the money my fellow Rotarians themselves have given – goes for good causes.

By the way, my club's biggest fundraiser every year is the Slidell Heritage Festival. This year, it's on Saturday, July 1st, and it kicks off the following week's 4th of July festivities. Please come, join us in Heritage Park for food, music, fireworks, and more, and help us raise money for local charities.

The reason I bring up Rotary is not so much for the good work my club does, but because I'm amazed that 18 years have passed so quickly. I've made many wonderful friends, served in several leadership roles (including President during our post-Katrina recovery), and enjoyed much fellowship during the roughly 850 weekly breakfast meetings I have attended. The time has flown by. I guess I shouldn't be amazed by this, because it seems that whenever one is doing something fun or important – going to school, raising a family, or working to make life better for others in one's community – the years seem to fly by.

Time flies in other ways, too, but it's not always good. Back in 2013, I wrote an article for *Slidell Magazine* in which I pointed out that our national debt stood at more than \$16.6 trillion dollars. Now, four years later as I sit down to write my article for this month, the National Debt Clock¹ in Manhattan's Times Square shows that our country owes \$19,889,958,565,941. The federal budget deficit is \$592,275,743,659. Time sure does fly when you're spending someone else's money. If you or I ran our household finances like that, the sheriff would be showing up at our doorsteps.

You might not be able to do much about the national debt and our government's spending habits, but you can take advantage of time to prepare for your own financial future. Frankly, most of us don't have a choice. Given the perilous state of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public pension plans, and other programs people are counting on – not to mention all of that debt – if we don't do something for ourselves, we're likely to end up with serious money troubles. So, consider these three planning ideas for yourself and your family:

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2. SAVE AND INVEST AS MUCH AS YOU CAN, AND START EARLY.

It's difficult to overstate the power of time when it comes to investing and growing wealth. Even I – a seasoned investment professional – continue to marvel at the power of compounding. Here's how time can be on your side. A 25-year old who invests \$142 a month at an average 8% rate of return can amass about \$500,000 in 40 years. That's real money, and \$284 a month could make her a millionaire.² It doesn't happen overnight, you have to be consistent, and it helps a lot if you have an advisor to help you manage risk and keep you from bailing out during market downturns. If you don't have \$142 to invest every month, start with \$100, or \$50, or \$25. Almost any amount will get you way beyond those folks who choose to leave

their financial plans to chance. I'll help you get started. **By the way, even if you are about to wind down at work, remember that your retirement could last 25, 30, or more years, and your money will have to last that long, as well.** It's never too late to try to beef up your retirement account. If you'd like to learn more about taking advantage of time – whether you have a lot of it, or a little – call me.

3) BUILD AN INCOME PLAN.

The Employee Benefit Research Institute reported this year³ that just 37% of workers questioned for the 2017 Retirement Confidence Survey say they are "very or somewhat confident" that the Social Security system will continue to provide benefits of at least equal value to the benefits current retirees are receiving today. Given that outlook, it might be a good idea to build a plan to supplement Social Security and work to provide income to cover your "must have" expenses in retirement, especially if you don't have an employer pension. There are several ways to do this, and I can show you how. **In my opinion, this is one of THE most effective things you can do for your retirement plan, and one of the keys to success is to start as early as you can.**

So, there you have it. Three things you might want to think about doing to enhance your retirement outlook. By the way, during the time it has taken me to write this article, the national debt increased by a mere \$16,435,764. If you want to see in real time how deep the hole is getting, go to www.usdebtclock.org. Be careful, however. The numbers on the screen move so fast, your computer might catch on fire. Just sayin'.

It's impossible for you to fix any part of our government's spending problem, but it's **very** possible to put a plan in place that might provide more financial independence for you and your family. Call me to make an appointment to come in and get started on yours.

So, use your **time** wisely. Put it to work for you today.

¹<http://www.usdebtclock.org>

²This is a hypothetical example and is not representative of any specific situation. Your results will vary. The hypothetical rate of return used does not reflect the deduction of fees and charges inherent to investing. Investing involves risk, including loss of principal.

³www.ebri.org

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Story and Photos by Donna Bush

CLYDESDALES





“If there is such a thing as
reincarnation,
**I want to come
back as a Budweiser
Clydesdale!**”

When you think of Super Bowl commercials, what comes to mind? For me, it's the Budweiser Clydesdales. I've long been smitten with these gentle giants. I love the 2013 ad, "Brotherhood," which showcased the enduring bond between a horse and its trainer. It starred a 3-day-old filly, which was later named Hope in a contest sponsored by Budweiser. I feel an emotional tug each time I watch the horse run down the road to its trainer. I also tear up during the 2012 commercial, titled "Respect," a 9/11 tribute aired only once. This commercial required numerous special permissions. It was filmed in New York mere months after 9/11 and required approval from members of Congress and Mayor Rudy Giuliani! The fact that they received approval to fly their

helicopter into New York airspace so soon after 9/11 is nothing short of remarkable. The Clydesdale team came into Battery Park and offered an emotional, unforgettable bow to honor the memory of the fallen. The horses worked with their trainer for 45 days to get the bow perfect. No matter which commercial is your favorite, everyone loves them. After all, the Clydesdales have been appearing in Super Bowl commercials since 1986! Recently I was sent a link with about 25 minutes of Clydesdale commercials strung together. I was mesmerized by these majestic beauties. An idea struck me - what about a story about the Budweiser Clydesdales?

It was the start of carnival season. According to my friend, Monette, whose husband, Gary, retired from NOPD, the Clydesdales board at the NOPD stables during Mardi Gras. With



the help of my friends, I accessed the NOPD Public Information Office with my request to write about and photograph the horses. Within a half hour, Jennifer Kelley, producer of *Louisiana Horses, Hops and Cops* fundraiser, called to see what I needed and how she could assist. I was invited to attend the grand arrival of the Clydesdales at the NOPD stables for their 52nd Mardi Gras season.

Indeed, GRAND it was! Three 50-foot tractor-trailers rolled into the stable parking lot. What a streamlined operation! The seven-handler team leaped into action, unloading the Budweiser golf cart, moving shavings into 10 stalls of the newest NOPD stable that these handsome boys would call home for the next two weeks. The doors of the trailers were opened, the ramps lowered, and then they appeared! The Budweiser Clydesdales in their magnificent glory!

There are three teams, called hitches, each with its own Dalmatian mascot. The hitches are housed on the East Coast in Merrimack, New Hampshire, the West Coast in Fort Collins, Colorado and the Midwest in St. Louis, Missouri. Anyone can request the Budweiser Clydesdales to appear at their event...and it's free! Simply submit your request via your local Budweiser distributor (Southern Eagle in New Orleans parishes or Champagne Beverage in Washington, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, St. Helena, and Livingston parishes.



Award-winning outdoors photographer & writer, Donna Bush, worked for months to bring this story to our *Slidell Magazine* readers. She traveled across the country and gained unprecedented access to the Budweiser Clydesdale trainers and breeders. We are honored to showcase her two-part story about her adventures with these beloved symbols of American entrepreneurship.

Even the transport vehicles for the horses are majestic! The 18-wheeler trailers have a specially designed hydraulic system to provide an extra comfortable and cushioned ride for the horses, even smoother than the cab. One trailer houses 6 horses, while a second carries the other 4 horses. The third carries the wagon, golf cart, harnesses, portable stall and other equipment. The third rig travels last to protect the horses' trailers in the event of a rear-end collision. Cameras are mounted in the trailers with monitors in the cab of each truck, allowing the drivers to keep an eye on their precious cargo. Although there is a kennel for two-year old Barley, the Dalmatian, he prefers to ride in the cab with the handlers. The team stops every two hours to check on the horses and stays overnight at local stables along the way to their destination.

Budweiser beer is brewed by Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company, co-founded by Eberhard Anheuser and his son-in-law, Adolphus Busch, Sr. Anheuser moved to America in 1842 and was a major creditor of the Bavarian Brewing Company. He took over ownership in 1860, renaming it to Eberhard Anheuser and Company. In 1857, Adolphus immigrated to St. Louis from Germany at the age of 18. He partnered in a brewing supply company that distributed to Anheuser and ultimately married Eberhard's daughter, Lily. Adolphus entered his wife's family's brewery business upon his return from the Civil War. He bought into the business which was renamed Anheuser-Busch in 1879 and played an integral part in the success of the company. His son, August A. Busch, Sr. took over after his death in 1913.

Prohibition lasted from 1920 to 1933 and Anheuser-Busch was one of the few breweries that were able to weather the drought. They did so by modern ingenuity and creative thinking, marketing individual ingredients used to make beer; such as malt extract, barley and yeast. Their yeast profits alone saved the company. A non-alcoholic breakfast drink, Bevo, along with ice cream and sodas, were sold. Refrigerated railcars, previously used to transport beer, now transported perishables.

Adolphus was always an avid equestrian – polo, whip competitor, jumper, steeplechase. He cared deeply about the care and comfort of his horses. He passed this love on to his sons. In fact, Adolphus' theory was, "There was no good reason why an animal as clean, as orderly and as free from destructive disposition as a horse, with as much regard for sightliness as a human being, should not be housed as comfortably and with as much regard for sightliness as a human being."

Did you know?

The Merrimack, New Hampshire Clydesdale hitch was in New Orleans to participate in various Mardi Gras parades, along with several one-horse appearances and support of the *Louisiana Horses, Hops and Cops* fundraiser. The fundraiser of eight years helps raise money for the NOPD Mounted Division. This year the money is specifically earmarked for NOPD's new horse-breeding program, which kicked off in 2017. Two foals were born this year and there are plans for breeding the mares in the fall with two more foals appearing in late 2018. Watch for a future *Slidell Magazine* story on the horse and human heroes of the NOPD Mounted Division!

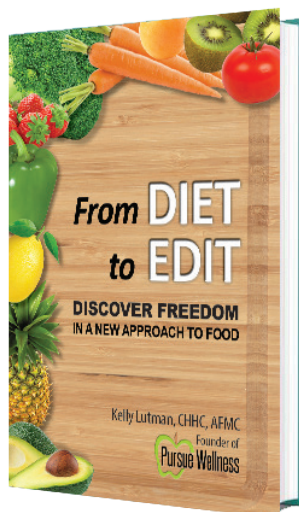
The Clydesdale breed is a powerful symbol of strength and perseverance. The original Budweiser Clydesdales were a gift from sons, August Jr. and Adolphus III to their dad (August A. Busch, Sr.), upon the repeal of Prohibition on April 7, 1933. The sons purchased 8 horses from the Union Stockyards of Chicago and a wagon, which they hid in the St. Louis brewery stables. At a prearranged time, a 6-horse Clydesdale team appeared. The gift was so touching that the entire family was moved to tears, hence the phrase, "crying in your beer." This 6-horse hitch delivered the first post-Prohibition case of beer to former New York governor, Al Smith, and the second case to President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the White House as a thank you for their part in the repeal.

The Clydesdale breed originated in Lanarkshire, Scotland along the banks of the River Clyde where they were bred for their massive pulling capacity. In the early days, before the advent of railroads and automobiles, beer was delivered by teams of draft horses with a driver and a Dalmatian. The Dalmatian's job was to protect the beer and the horses while the driver made deliveries. Why Dalmatians? They were considered a coach dog and were easy to spot in any lighting condition due to their white-on-black appearance. The spotted dogs were associated with guiding old-fashioned fire wagons through smoky and low light conditions, while keeping the horses calm.

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Life as a Clydesdale Handler

Dave Thomas, supervisor of the New Hampshire hitch that visited New Orleans this past Mardi Gras, has been working with the Budweiser Clydesdales for 13 years and loves it. What are the requirements to be a handler?

"Love horses; extensive horse background; commercial driver's license (the handlers drive the three 18-wheelers); willing to travel; and lots of luck." Seven handlers travel with the 10-horse team. It is an 8-horse hitch, but two extra horses are spares to allow for a day off. They travel 10 months out of the year and make about 300 appearances annually, some even internationally.

A handler's job is to care for the horses daily - feeding, bathing, grooming, and exercising. Before each event, the mane and tail are braided with red and white ribbons, along with red and white roses braided into the mane. Handlers also polish all of the brass on the harnesses and the wagon. It takes a crew of 6-7 handlers approximately five hours to prepare the hitch for just one appearance! The white on the Clydesdales' legs, called feathers, is washed almost every day.

Driving the wagon is not a task to be taken lightly. It is a very physical job. The reins are 60 feet long and weigh about 40 pounds. Each horse's collar and harness weighs 130 pounds. This adds up to about 75 pounds of pressure on the drivers' hands. There are always 2 drivers on each wagon, allowing them to switch up and take breaks. This hitch has 3 drivers: Dave - supervisor, Chris - assistant supervisor, and Will.

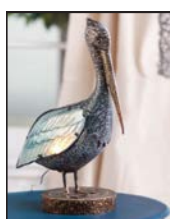
What does it take to be a Budweiser Clydesdale?

The horse must be a 4-year-old gelding, which is a castrated male, and stand a minimum of 18 hands tall (a hand = 4 inches, measured from ground to the top of his withers - the ridge between the shoulder blades). Their weight is 2000 pounds and up with a white forehead blaze, and four white stockings (feathers). They must be bay in color, with a black mane and tail. The horse's size and temperament play a big part in making them a Budweiser Clydesdale. The position closest to the wagon, known as the "wheelhorse," requires the largest, strongest pair to initiate the wagon's movement

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and to slow or stop movement. Next is the “body,” or second position, followed by the “swing,” or third position. Each pair steps down slightly in size. The leaders must be the fastest, most agile pair, and most charismatic – flashy and high stepping, with complete trust in their driver. They are the face of the Budweiser team and must boast their pride stating, “I Am A Budweiser Clydesdale!”

Each Clydesdale can pull up to 4000 pounds. That’s 32,000 pounds of pulling capacity! The 1903 Studebaker wagon weighs 8000 pounds alone and was the original wagon used to deliver beer. Each harness and collar weighs about 130 pounds, is handcrafted of solid brass and leather, and is stitched with linen thread. Although the harness is designed to fit any Clydesdale, the collars, available in various sizes, must be individually fitted, like a custom-tailored suit. A Clydesdale horseshoe weighs five pounds and measures more than 20 inches end to end, which makes them more than twice as long and five times as heavy as an average horse’s shoe. A day in the life of a Budweiser Clydesdale consists of consuming 20-25 quarts of whole grains, minerals and vitamins, 50-60 pounds of hay and 30 gallons of water.

Warm Springs Ranch – Anheuser-Busch’s Clydesdale Breeding Farm

A baby Budweiser Clydesdale begins its life at Warm Springs Ranch in Boonville, Missouri under the close eye of manager, John Soto. John grew up working with racehorses with his dad in Phoenix and met the Budweiser Clydesdales and their handlers when they would stay at a nearby stable for appearances. The handlers told him he should apply for a job and gave him an application. Anheuser-Busch called, but John was only 18. They told him to call back when he turned 21. He did. “I wasn’t sure I wanted to leave the racetrack, but I figured I’d give it 6 months and I could always come back. That didn’t happen. I was hooked!” John traveled with the West Coast hitch while he was young and single. Burt Westbrook with the New Hampshire hitch started just months after John. John has 37 years and Burt has 36 years. They are the senior employees with the Clydesdales and have traveled together numerous times. It’s easy to see that the handlers are family to each other and the camaraderie is apparent.

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Did you know?

Here's a little known fact for you: There is a Clydesdale hitch right here in Pearl River! No, they aren't Budweiser Clydesdales, but they are full-blooded Clydesdale lineage, complete with a wagon. Not just any wagon, but the largest hitch wagon in America!

Clay Harper, who owns the 4-horse hitch and wagon, appears in Mardi Gras parades in Pearl River, Slidell and New Orleans. When parade goers ask if he's with Budweiser, he laughs and tells them, "No, we are Bud Light," since he has four horses instead of Bud's eight. He also performs at weddings and special events. He has even appeared in a 2017 Budweiser Super Bowl Commercial! He was approached about using two of his Clydesdales for the "Born the Hard Way" commercial recreating Adolphus Busch, Sr's immigration to the United States from Germany, which was filmed in New Orleans. Originally, only Clay's horses were to appear, but the director decided to cast Clay in a part as well. He appears about 37 seconds into the commercial with his back to the camera, bending over to pick up a sack of feed. Clay jokes, "I never in a million years would have thought that I would be in a Budweiser Super Bowl Commercial. Didn't even have that one on my bucket list, but now I can check it off." Clay enjoys sharing the Clydesdale experience with children of all ages along the parade routes.

John left the hitch life when he started raising a family. "I needed to be closer to home. I started work with the breeding program on the West Coast and moved with it to the 350-acre Warm Springs Ranch in Boonville, where it's been since 2008."

The ranch is an amazing operation with a spacious barn featuring separate areas for mares and stallions, a foaling barn with large 16x20 stalls giving Mom plenty of room to give birth, and a veterinary lab with their own ultrasound machine. John and his staff have worked with horses their entire life and are completely capable of managing routine medications, illnesses, inspections and deliveries. They work with a local vet if something arises that they can't handle. Their farriers (specialists in equine foot care) are flown in from Wisconsin, because it is hard to find a farrier that specializes in draft horses. Both of their farriers raise and show their own.

Ninety percent of their breeding is live cover (natural mating), although they have used artificial insemination occasionally. They are always exploring different avenues to see what makes the best babies.

When it is time to breed a mare with a stallion, they are brought to the barn, cleaned up and placed together in the breeding room. Interestingly, the breeding room is also where the bar and the wagon are set up for samples and photos during the tour! At breeding time, everything is moved to the edges of the room and nature takes its course for the happy couple. (Perhaps the lights are dimmed with a little soft music?) The day after breeding, an ultrasound of the mare is performed to see if she has ovulated; and again, two weeks later, to see if she's pregnant.

When a mare is within 30 days of delivery, she'll be brought to the barn. Each day, she'll go outside to one of the exercise rings and

back in the barn each evening. When the mare is close to birthing, a foal-alert monitor is sutured at the mare's birth canal in case she goes into labor during the night. As the foal begins to emerge, the alarm is tripped, and an auto-dialer calls John, who lives onsite, along with two other handlers who live nearby. John is like a fireman! The night before, the equipment is laid out in the lab. He backs his truck in at his house and lays out his clothes beside the bed. His record time is 52 seconds from alarm to barn! Coincidentally, his ring tone for the birth alarm is "Call to Post," the widely used song to call horses to the start of a race. Rarely does something go wrong with a delivery; but, if necessary, they have the vet only 30 minutes away. John's passion is obvious. "This is the exciting time of the year! What we all are looking for! We can't wait to see the new foals!"

After birth, Mom and baby are kept in the foaling stalls for approximately 8-10 days for observation, with daily turnouts to one of the exercise rings. The foaling stalls are equipped with monitors, which feed to the office and John's house. John names each foal, generally by taking the first letter of the Mother's name as the first letter of the foal's name. There are always exceptions. For instance, when Bell had her baby, John named him Taco. Rachel's baby was born on Ash Wednesday and became Ashley. John named the baby born on President's Day Madison, and Henry is named after a former tour guide.

John and his co-workers are constantly looking at bloodlines, exploring options and watching the babies bred from each stallion and each mare. We've already discussed the Budweiser Clydesdale gelding requirements for size and coloring. What about requirements for the mares? "Of course, we are looking at their coloring, markings, size and personality. If you see a



mare and think, 'Wow! She'd make a great hitch horse!' Then we will want to breed her for sure. Also, arrogance and attitude that says, 'I'm A Budweiser Clydesdale!'"

When born, a foal stands about 3 feet tall and weighs 125-150 pounds. It will gain 2 pounds per day. Foals will stay with their moms until they are 6 months old. A higher success rate comes from keeping Mom and baby together, plus there is nothing to be gained from rushing the weaning process. At three months, the foal might be eating some grass, but he/she is not digesting it. Their prime nutrition source is Mom.

When I visited, there were 11 foals, with 4 additional expected by June, and more in the fall. Gestation is 11 months. Warm Springs houses 80-100 horses at any given time. All of the mares are utilized in their breeding program, but only males that meet the Budweiser Clydesdale requirements are kept. The others may become "hero horses" and used in commercials. Those Clydesdales will work with a trainer out west to learn special tricks. Some will be used in meet and greet programs at various locations and the remaining horses are sold to other breeders or to individuals. But, rest assured, everyone goes to a good home.

As young as 4-5 months, the foals are handled, bathed, groomed and worked with their feet. A yearling Clydesdale easily weighs between 800-1000 pounds. You must work extensively with them while they are young to teach them to obey commands and become accustomed to handling.



The horses are pampered beyond belief! Donna told Dave, "If there is such a thing as reincarnation, I want to come back as a Budweiser Clydesdale!" Per Dave, "No, you want the dog's job. The horses still have to work. Barley doesn't do anything but look pretty!" And pretty he is! Barley took Donna for a spin in the Budweiser golf cart. One little command of "Hands Up" from Chris, and Barley perks to attention, front paws on the steering wheel, eyes and ears alert.

During my visit, John took me to each of the pastures to meet the horses, which are separated by age and sex. Each pasture has a shelter with feeding and watering stations. My first pasture contained 6 two-year-old mares. I walked out to take some photos of them grazing with the beautiful red barn and white-fencing in the background. Within minutes, I was completely surrounded, and in absolute heaven! My only dilemma was which one to pet first! (Maybe it was because we came into the pasture on the same vehicle that delivers their feed, but I'd like to think they really just wanted to greet me!)

My trip to the three-year-old pasture held similar curiosity and friendliness. Now, on to the babies. There were five mares with foals 4-6 weeks old. They are precious! Even though they already weighed 150-200 pounds, I just wanted to cuddle with them. I asked John - how do you tell them apart? "You get used to picking out little markings here and there. The mares are easy. When you have this many foals together, sometimes you just wait to see whom they nurse on." LOL.

Next, I met TV star Hope and her 6-week-old baby, Halie. Oh my! It's hard to believe the 4-year-old Hope I see today at 18.2 hands was the 3-day-old in the 2013 Super Bowl commercial, "Brotherhood," that I mentioned in the beginning.

John reminisces, "We had several mares close to foal so I knew we'd have a baby for the shoot. The first one born was Stan. He was big and rugged; a little muscular



Did you know?

Clydesdales Nomo and Rico are known as the "O Brothers" among handlers because both names end in "O," although they are not brothers. Nomo got his name because his brother Mo was really ugly, with a crooked leg, not a Budweiser Clydesdale for sure. A year or so later, his younger brother came along. He was beautiful and the handlers exclaimed, "He's No Mo!" And that's how Nomo got his name. Meanwhile, Mo went to a lovely home as a beloved pet.

for what they wanted to portray in the commercial. Plus his mom was pretty picky about her baby. Then, three days before we were scheduled to shoot, Darla laid down and gave birth to tiny, petite Hope. She was perfect!" This was the only commercial shot at Warm Springs, and it is John's favorite. "The rest of the commercial had been shot in Thousand Oaks, California prior to Hope's portion. I would carry her and lay her in a bed of shavings, rub her belly and cover her eyes. She'd go right to sleep. When they were ready to shoot, I'd pat my legs and she'd roll up on her chest, look around and get up. After 4-5 takes, I told them that's enough. She didn't want any part of the bottle. She was nursing with her Mom. That's all she wanted. They got a quick shot of her being bottle fed and made it work." John says this is his favorite commercial because it portrays what handlers do with each horse. There is such a strong bond. "You let them go young, but then you see them out on the road and 'that's my baby!'"

"We rarely get to see them after they leave Warm Springs unless they overnight here on their way to an appearance. Sometimes the handlers will call up and say, 'That horse, so-and-so, made a perfect hitch horse!' Then you're all proud! We only have them until they are 6 months old. Luckily, my youngest son works at the training ranch and keeps me filled in on what's going on, and how they are doing."

Stay tuned to next month's story to find out what happens to a Budweiser Clydesdale after he graduates from Kindergarten at Warm Springs Ranch.



Parkour

Upon first glance, you'd never think it, but I love parkour and freerunning. Well, the concept of it, and watching it, that is. It's something I would NEVER do myself, but it's so rad. Yeah, I said it, RAD. Initially it might appear a bit childish. Essentially, it looks like running around on a playground. But this past-time is no joke. It's so much more than jumping up and down on a bunch of different obstacles (if you didn't know what parkour was - this is the gist of it, but on steroids). It takes skill, planning, quick-thinking, and a whole lot of physical training. Parkour has been around for a few years now, so it's nothing new, but you may not have realized that it has found its own niche home inside of

New Orleans. In fact, there are plenty of places that freerunners and parkour enthusiasts love to participate that only New Orleans can provide. While parkour can be extremely dangerous (and let's be honest, is not always legal), this artistic expression is a movement that intends to stick around.

Parkour is a training discipline that evolved from military obstacle course training. People who practice parkour aim to get from one point to another in a complex environment, without any assistance or tools and in the fastest and most efficient way possible. The concept can be traced back as far as Georges Hébert, but the creation of "parkour" as

we know it today is because of Raymond Belle and his son David Belle. Raymond was relentless in his training as a child so that he could survive in Vietnam during the First Indochina War. Born of a French physician and a Vietnamese mother, his obstacle course skills came in handy after his return to France in 1954. During his time as a member of the Paris Fire Brigade, he astounded peers and onlookers in his acrobatic acts. He trained fellow brigade members as well as military personnel. When his son David began to learn of his father's legendary exploits, it inspired him to train the same way. He founded a group, then a movement, and the sport of Parkour

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came to be. You may also see freerunning mentioned in the same area as parkour. The main difference, according to American Parkour, is that the movements are the same, but the mindsets are different. Parkour is focused on discipline, and challenging yourself for growth. Traceurs focus on training, conditioning, and the most efficient ways forward. Freerunning is focused on expressing yourself. It's more about creativity, exploring, and playing around. For the purpose of this article, and simplicity, I will group them together.

Parkour has inspired and runs in conjunction with multiple similar entertainment formats and exercise and physical training. Of course, movies are the most obvious examples where parkour thrives. More specifically, much of the stunt work in current movies involves parkour or freerunning of some kind. David Belle himself is an actor and has been in films that highlight the use of the movement in stunt work. Outside of film, video game enthusiasts recognize traceur movements in popular games like Mirror's Edge and the Assassin's Creed Franchise. The military is also looking for ways to incorporate the discipline into their training regiment. There are even gyms dedicated to parkour, such as NOLA Muscle Park locally, and the Tempest Academy in Los Angeles.

Parkour utilizes mostly public, urban areas. While originally developed to take advantage of the most efficient way to get from A to B, the movements of traceurs, or people who practice parkour, is artistic expression. Wall flipping, jumping, vaulting, rolling, are all in the repertoire of a parkour traceur, but the use of acrobatic movements is what gives this expression its artistic flair. So, after years of enjoying this art, I never thought much about local parkour enthusiasts. Until I remembered the old abandoned Six Flags Theme Park. And after several videos, I realized that New Orleans is ripe with possibilities. There have been many different groups that have utilized areas such as Six Flags, the abandoned Grand Theatre, and the Plaza Tower.

This sport/art form is not without its dangers. Many say that performing in any place built for the purpose of parkour is against the grain of what parkour truly represents; that of adaptation, creativity, and freedom. As a result, most of the settings include abandoned areas, where trespassing is typical; or public places, where property damage and use of inappropriate areas (like cemeteries) is possible. Many follow the practice of "Leave No Trace Behind", where traceurs clean the areas they practice in, sometimes leaving them in better shape than how they found them. Another more obvious danger of parkour is injury or death. Most parkour enthusiasts don't report injuries. But even if they did, the general philosophy behind parkour, which is to find the most efficient way from one point to the next, usually dictates that a traceur commit an act that

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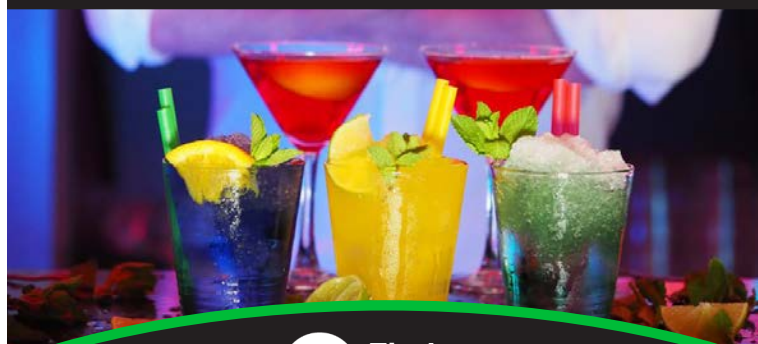


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he is confident he can do. Additionally, training in this discipline usually yields a better understanding of how to fall or land without injury. Even with training, people can get themselves into trouble they can't get out of. Unfortunately, deaths have happened. I won't write about statistics or what happened, because the bottom line is that safety should always reign. No one should jump from roofs (some as high as 17 stories) to express themselves. Deaths in pursuit of sports or art forms feels like such a waste.

One of the best aspects of parkour as a discipline is the community of traceurs. I have not seen one person practice by themselves, because the art desires to be seen and appreciated. Friends record their runs, stunt men have crews around them, and even single artists have their camera crews. These people have fun, because not only are they expressing themselves, they are, for a lack of a better term, "playing". It is a phenomenon akin to most sports, activity bolstered by social interaction. To most traceurs, parkour and

freerunning are better than sports because there are no actual competitions. Parkour helps teach self-respect, confidence, and community. Most groups are welcoming of newcomers and finding groups can be as simple as a Google search or a Facebook posting.

Parkour has a bigger and more impactful history than many realize. It can be easy to point to the fun moments and forget some of the dangers. But they do exist. And sometimes people can be careless or thoughtless with the spaces they use. But the movement is meant for so much better. Communities have risen around the discipline. And the practice promotes personal growth as well as physical activity. I always love to watch how creative these acrobatic runners can be when faced with the physical puzzles they find. Now, will you ever find me throwing myself around, trying to climb rails, and jumping over obstacles? Not unless I was offered a part in the next Avengers movie. That I might consider. "Corey the Tank"... "The Cortermaster"... maybe I should just stick to writing.

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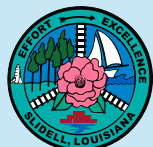


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SUPER DAD

By Sam Caruso

I enjoyed the experience of writing about what Thanksgiving meant to me (see the November 2016 issue), so when Kendra asked me to do this again, and to repeat the “family-style” theme, I was happy to oblige. Soon we will celebrate Father’s Day. According to Wikipedia, Father’s Day is a celebration honoring fathers and celebrating fatherhood, paternal bonds, and the influence of fathers in society. In Catholic Europe, it has been celebrated on March 19 (St. Joseph’s Day) since the Middle Ages. This celebration was brought by the Spanish and Portuguese to Latin America, where March 19 is often still

used, though many countries in Europe and the Americas have adopted the U.S. date, which is the third Sunday of June.

I like the part about celebrating the influence of fathers in society. Fathers inspire some interesting feelings in the lives of young children. When we are young, we see our own father as a superhero, larger-than-life and capable of running faster, lifting more and being smarter than anyone else’s father. They are also respected or, some may say, feared. Who doesn’t remember the sheer terror of hearing those words, “Wait till your father gets home...”?

Every young child thinks their father possesses infinite wisdom, fun, and silliness, but also the ultimate in discipline and order. They are like the world itself - all knowing, filled with good and bad, and at times completely unpredictable. This is what makes fathers so special. It is why fathers are so important. Just by being themselves, fathers can teach their children how to prepare for the larger versions of "dad" they will find out in the world.

Nothing brings me more joy than my children running up to me for a big hug, or just having them ask me a question with that tone that says, "I don't know this answer, but I am absolutely certain you do." Their confidence in me sometimes is just the reminder I need that, in the immortal words of Christopher Robin, "You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think."

I thought I'd share a few of my Father's Day wishes with all of you:

May my own father know that he influenced me well ...and continues to do so. He is a giant among men. He is a leader of many. While being in the profession he is in, politics, naturally means that not all people will approve of things he says or does, one thing is clear - he is as honest, sincere and well-meaning for the people he serves as anyone you will ever meet. I witnessed attempts to sway him to the dark side when I was a child. People offer politicians all sorts of things to get them to do what they want. He never wavered in his belief that he was there to do the right thing for the common good. He did not need, nor did he ever get, that mansion on a hill. He did not need, nor did he ever seek, higher offices just to feed an ego. He did and continues to do what he believes he is called to do, help make his piece of the world a better place. What if we could all live our lives like that? He is a man who still teaches me and my own kids to live life by making the choice to do good for others. From our regular visits to bring food and gifts to people less fortunate than us, to guiding me through my own ethical dilemmas in life, and most importantly, teaching me to think critically and not follow a crowd, my dad is still somebody I look up to more than anyone else.

May my own children learn from my actions more than my words, and may those actions continue to improve every day of my life. I pray with my children on a regular basis, and one of the things I began to pray with them every night was, "May you be better tomorrow than you were today." No matter how good we are, we can always find a way to improve.

May those who do not have their real father find comfort in the fact that there are many great examples of fatherhood in this world, and they do not have to be your blood relation for you to receive the grace and goodness that a father can bestow. Find your own hero. Look for fatherly advice and goodness in everyone you meet. I have a "son" that began visiting me when he was 12 years old. He is of a different race and background than me, but he came to my home in 1997 looking to do a little yard work for money. I think he

was really looking for a father. He never knew his own. His home life was a wreck. I guided him the best I could, through schools and counseling. He ended up in foster homes and later living on his own with a little help from my extended family and friends. Unfortunately, he was probably born of a drug addicted mother, and he never matured enough to make the right choices when he became an adult. He began hanging out with a bad crowd and was too immature to know how to break away. A few weeks ago, my wife and I visited him in prison, where he had just earned his G.E.D. We were the only people who went to see him graduate. We are the only family he really has. It breaks my heart to see him going through this sentence, but I find solace in the fact that, but for me being a father figure to this young man, things could have been much worse. I love him like my own, and he loves me as a father. The joy I get from this relationship is indescribable, even though I know most people will not understand it. To you men out there looking for more purpose in your life, I say find yourself a young man like this and make a difference. You can change the world through one life saved. Go be a real father to your own and to others.

The world needs fathers more than ever. We need good men who will stand up for doing the right thing, teach youth to respect each other, have courage to try new things and be strong enough to tune out the negativity in this world and make this a better place for all of us to enjoy. It really doesn't take a super hero. Fathers have the power to do this.

Happy Father's Day!

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"Your Estate Matters"

by Ronda M. Gabb, JD, RFC

Legal-ease 

LOUISIANA SECURITY FREEZE

Do you worry that someone may "steal your identity" and open new credit lines if they obtain your Social Security Number (SSN)? If so, there is a way to "freeze" your credit file so that no one (not even you) may access it without your unique personal identification number (PIN) issued by each credit bureau. The good news is once your credit is frozen you could put your SSN on a billboard without a worry in the world. The bad news is that you better not lose your PIN number!

Louisiana was actually one of the very first states to implement this "security freeze" law back in July of 2005. The actual law is found at La. R.S. 9:3571.1, but for a layperson, the best information can be found if you simply do an internet search (like Google) for "Louisiana Security Freeze". The Experian website has some very good information.

You must contact each credit bureau individually. The big three are the most important: 1) Experian (1-888-397-3742), 2) Equifax (1-800-685-1111), and 3) Transunion (1-888-909-8872). However, there is a new bureau making some strides called Innovis (1-800-540-2505) that you may wish to freeze as well. This can be done by telephone or in writing and some of the bureaus will let you freeze online. The fee to freeze is \$10 for each bureau. However, if you are age 62 or older, or a victim of identity theft, it is free.

Once your SSN is frozen, no one may access your credit information without knowing your unique PIN, not even you. If anyone tries to access your credit file through your SSN it will come back as being "blocked" or "frozen". When someone needs to access your credit (to open a new bank account, credit card, or get a credit score or loan, etc.), you must plan in advance and "lift" the freeze for the amount of time needed to run your credit report. I recommend that you call ahead and ask the bank (or lender) exactly which bureau they use to pull credit reports so that you only need to lift the freeze from that particular bureau. The fee for this lift is \$8 (or free if age 62 and over) and the lifts do not



always occur immediately, but usually by the next day. Be aware that many mortgage lenders require a "triangulated" credit report so that all three major bureaus must be lifted at the same time.

You can also have a security freeze placed on the credit file of "protected persons". This would be anyone under 16 years of age or someone who has been interdicted by the Court (placed under a legal guardianship). If the protected consumer is under age 16, and a credit file already exists, there is no fee. If the protected consumer is 16 or older, or no file already exists, there is a \$10 fee.

The benefits of having a security freeze far outweigh the only downside of merely having to plan a little bit ahead. I no longer pay for any credit monitoring services, but you still need to keep a good eye on your existing credit accounts.

A security freeze also solves a problem that is becoming increasingly rampant...new credit lines being opened literally a day or two after someone's death. When the SSN is on "lock down", no new credit may be opened, even post-death. If this freeze was not in place at the time of death, the credit bureaus will not "lock" a deceased's SSN until they are in receipt of the death certificate. Another disturbing trend is that death certificates can take weeks (or even months depending on the manner of death) before they are issued.

It is worth the effort to give yourself peace of mind and prevent the huge hassle caused by identity theft.



About the Author:

Ronda M. Gabb is a Board Certified Estate Planning and Administration Specialist certified by the Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization. She is a member of the American Academy of Estate Planning Attorneys, National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and the Governor's Elder Law Task Force.

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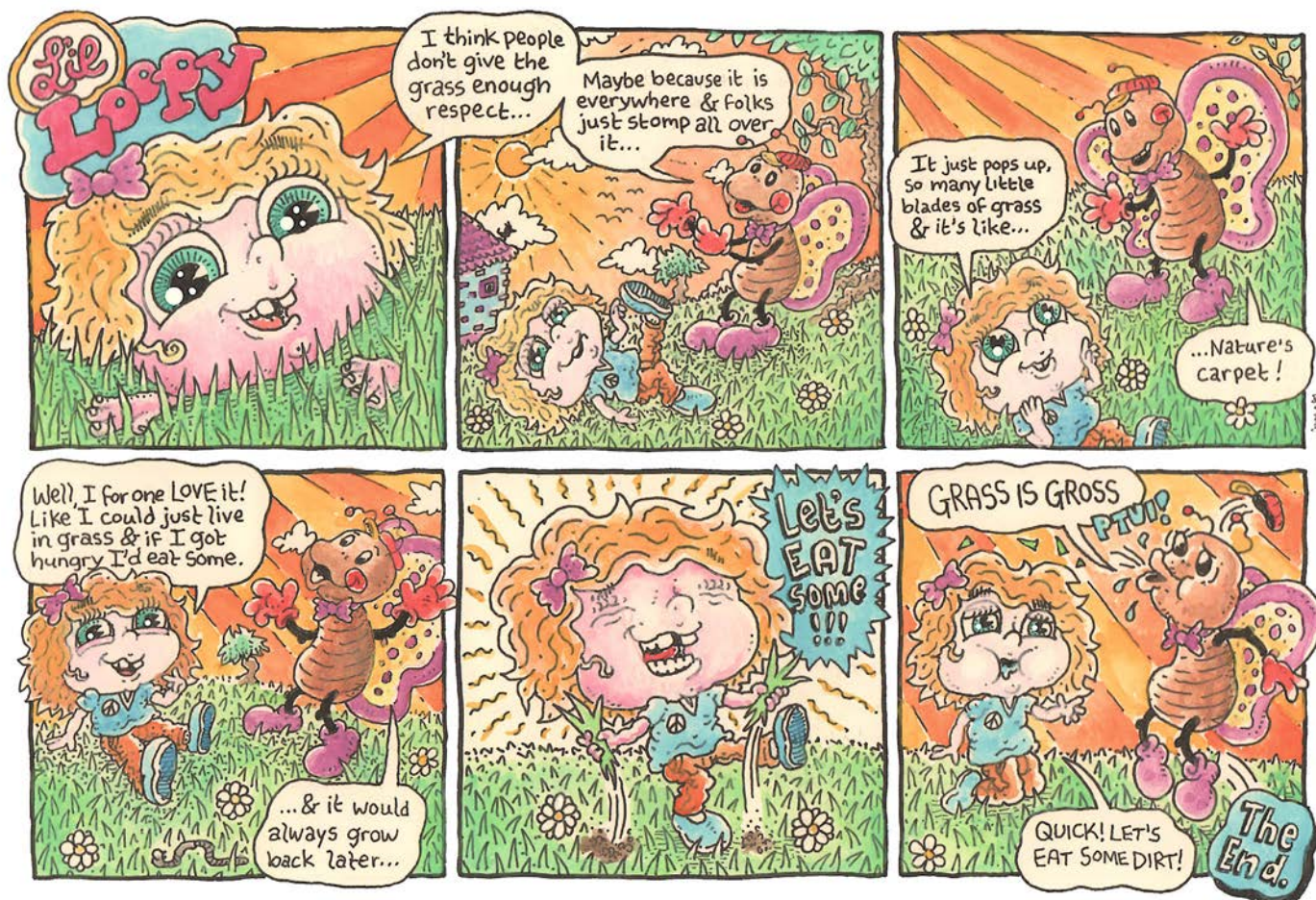


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PET POINTS

by Jeff Perret, DVM



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What's In a Name?

I don't believe in jinxes. My staff constantly warns me about saying things that may come back to haunt me - things like, "This has really been a calm, uneventful day so far," or "That huge new dog patient appears quite friendly, and certainly doesn't look as if he'll give us any trouble at all." Having said this, however, I still know better than to name a pet "Lucky." Just don't do it! Even I, the least superstitious person you'll ever meet, must admit that most Luckys (Luckies?) are anything but. The canine versions have a knack for sniffing out skunks and car bumpers; feline Luckys... well, when has a cat ever done anything it's supposed to?



My own critters' names have ranged from the uninspired (Lady, the lovable, goofy female Beagle) to the coldly descriptive (Trey, the 3-legged Doberman). My oldest son's girlfriend has a new Pug named Willow, which I think is original, and elegant.

I'm probably not alone among my colleagues in having better recall for animal names than for those of their owners. I'm story-oriented, and animal names frequently have stories behind them. A veterinary ER colleague of mine has cats named after their medical diagnoses. Although Sterno was the first runner-up moniker, the name Crispy won out for his burned cat. Cupid was

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not a chubby cherub, but rather the victim of an archer's bad (or good) aim.

Spud belonged to one of my favorite clients who had an amazing skill for coming up with simple but memorable names for his pets. Spud was from Idaho, where they grow potatoes. Spud's owner also had a mare named H.B. She was his only horse, and she had, shall we say, a bit of an attitude. H.B. stood for Hell Witch. Actually, the name H.B. only rhymed with Hell Witch. Get the picture? I admit that I always enjoyed saying that mare's full name, or writing it on official paperwork.

I find it comforting when animals have people names. I can recall past patients named Dennis, Betty and Lucille. On more than one occasion I've mixed up the names of patient and owner. That can be unsettling when you're asking the family to watch Jane's bowel movements over the next few days, and it turns out that Jane is not the name of the dog.

I may not always remember the owners' names, but I tend to remember when their animals' names say something significant about them. One English professor had a cat named Dickens, and a dog called the Artful Dodger. My ER colleague's pets' names above speak volumes about his work life. And one of my best-looking, fittest male clients has a dog named Rico Suave!

Pop culture names are always popular. Any vet can tell you about the wave of Lion King, or Harry Potter, or Frozen-derived pet names that peaked and then faded. If I had a dollar for every Nala and Hagrid, etc that came through my clinic, I'd be retired by now!

My favorite pet name of all time is actually a hybrid celebrity name knock-off sort of thing. "Eartha Kitty" is no longer with us, but I'll never forget her. If you're too young to remember the real, human Eartha Kitt's heyday as a singer, you may know her from "The Emperor's New Groove." She also played the very first (and definitely the most memorable) Cat Woman, not to mention singing the iconic "Santa Baby".

Pet names can hint at a pet's personality, but may say more about those who name them!



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Rough Waters

My Dad passed away recently.
He meant the world to me.

One day you feel like a rock, and before you know it, that rock is broken. You become vulnerable and cracked and wonder if you can ever be strong again. But somehow, you have to keep going. Friends of mine all seem to be going through their own difficult times as well. I usually know how to help, but now, I just pray that someone else can be their rock, because I can't right now.

My Mom and siblings are dealing with grief, losing a link from our original family of five, the man that defined a huge part of who we all are. My husband and children are feeling the hurt, through me, and in their own special memories of him. And damnit, it just doesn't seem fair to have to miss someone so much, even though you know they are in a better place.

But somehow, we have to keep going. Life must be lived.

This may not be the best way to start a writing that is supposed to be positive

for the community, but don't we all deal with grief and hardships? Weren't we all that rock at one point but then found ourselves unwillingly rolling down a fast river, tossed around with the rest of the rocks? Cracked. Damaged. Lost along the shore.

That's how it feels when you fall off that foundation. When hard times become too much. When the grief has you questioning how you will hold it all together for yourself and your family.

Sometimes hardships are sporadic, like a quick splash of water in the



face, giving us a little air to breathe in between, yet, eventually letting up so we can swim on.

Other times, we feel like we have reached the edge of a waterfall, desperately paddling up stream to keep from falling. If the force of the water becomes too strong, we have no choice but to let go, falling over the edge, hoping we survive. If we do, we are under the strong pressure of the waterfall, wondering what hit us, leaving us to fend for ourselves, as we bob and weave for just one breath.

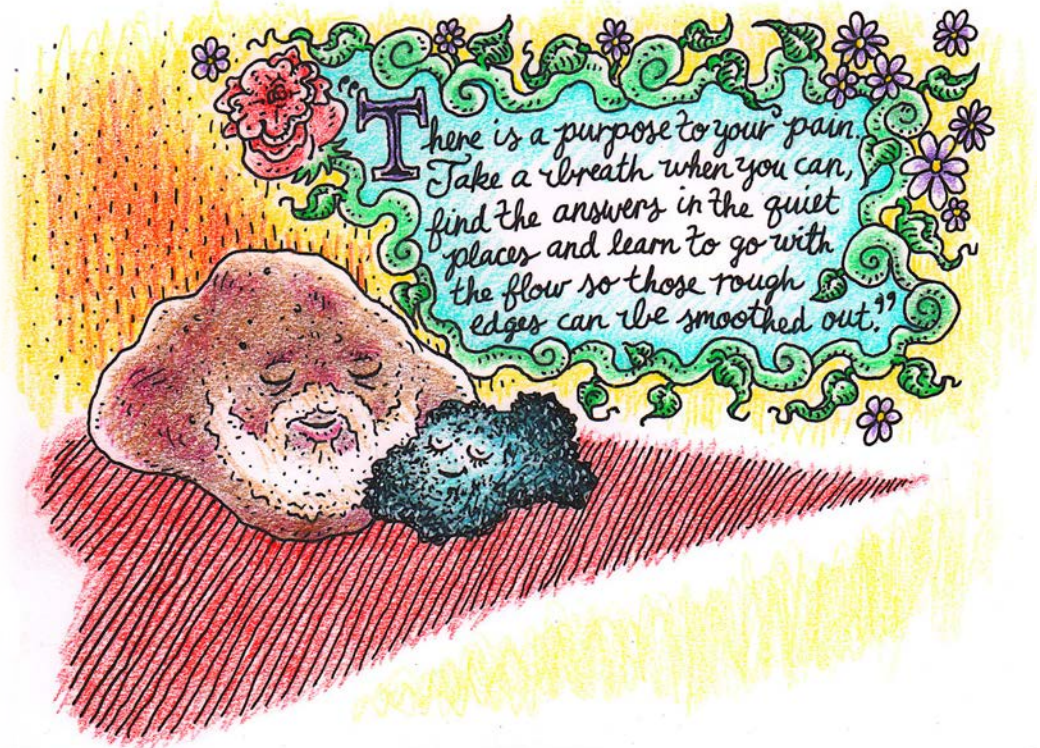
Building the strength to realize we can just step out from under that massive waterfall doesn't always come easy. We stay in that weakness for a little while, or a long while, letting it beat us up, afraid to swim into that next stream of life because we aren't sure if we can handle where it may take us next.

This is how I have been feeling. And there is no life vest that anyone can throw me... I have to swim this one on my own.

Keeping your head above water, while expecting to throw floaties to everyone around you, is nearly impossible. If they can swim on their own, then let them. Find your own buoyancy first.

Everyone survives hard times in different ways. Personally, I need to do it alone. Probably not the case for everyone.

If you have no clue where to start, then start by hopping in your car by yourself and find a quiet place out in nature. Nature has a way of giving us answers that people cannot.



For me, I searched for "hiking trails near me" on Google maps, then randomly chose Bogue Chitto State Park. I had never been there.

On the way, I bought a fishing pole, some bait, and a tackle box that I filled with whatever looked interesting.

Once at the park, I discovered a little dirt trail, and backed my truck up in it, to the edge of a pond. There was NOBODY there.

I grabbed my pole and tied on bobbers and weights all the wrong way. My fishing line broke many times and I caught absolutely nothing, being that the pole I bought was missing the handle to reel it in... BUT... I was out from under that waterfall.

I cried, I got mad at God, I talked to my Dad (even though he wouldn't help me catch a fish), and the weight that had been sitting on my shoulders, slowly drowning me, became a little lighter.

I went back two more times that week. It helped me breathe.

At the end of a long trail, there was the river.

Along the river were SO many rocks. All very different from one another.

I found pleasure in walking along the river to collect them. Whichever ones spoke to me, I picked up and put in my backpack. Big, small, smooth, rough. A lot of them... broken.

But each were unique, shaped by the rough waters of the river.





I felt that if I sat IN the river and dug underneath the water, into the sand, I would find gold or a dinosaur fossil, maybe something that nobody else had ever discovered. So, I tried that for a while.

The river kept wanting to push me downstream as I moved closer to the center, but I buried my butt into the sand, not letting it move me, as I continued to dig deeper with my hands.

I did this for hours, with my phone off, oblivious to time and unaware of any problems around me. Nothing I dug up beneath the river brought me fame or fortune but I did notice something helpful... an unexpected answer from the quiet voice that only nature can bring.

The deeper I would dig, the more interesting the rocks became. Some were fossilized, others had a cool swirling shape, I even found one with a hole right through the middle of it. And all of them were SUPER smooth.

Year after year, the powerful force of the water made each rock one of a kind. And the longer it endured being

tossed about, shaped and molded, the smoother it was. The shinier it became. Cracks and all.

The earth is filled with messages that help us understand the purpose in our lives. Even the purpose in our pain.

We are all at different stages of being molded into the unique person God created us to be. And I think if we can realize at some point that each hardship we experience is shaping us into a smoother, shinier form of ourselves for others to discover and learn from, then maybe we can endure whatever path the stream takes us, no matter how difficult or painful.

There IS a purpose in your pain. Take a breath when you can, find the answers in the quiet places and learn to go with the flow so those rough edges can be smoothed out.

And when it is your time to rest deep under the sand of the river, away from the harsh flow, then that rock you have always been... the strong part of your soul... will tell its story and shine brighter for the rest of the world to see.

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Common Variable Immune Deficiency

Common Variable Immune Deficiency (CVID) is one of the most frequently diagnosed primary immunodeficiencies, especially in adults. CVID is an antibody deficiency that leaves the immune system unable to defend against bacteria and viruses, resulting in repeated and often severe infections primarily affecting the ears, sinuses and respiratory tract. While CVID is thought to be due to genetic defects, the exact cause of the disorder is unknown in the large majority of cases.

CVID is found in about 1 in 25,000 persons; this is the reason it is called “common.” The degree and type of deficiency of serum immunoglobulins, and the clinical course, varies from patient to patient, hence, the word “variable.”

An immunoglobulin test measures the level of certain immunoglobulins, or antibodies, in the blood. Antibodies are proteins made by the immune system to fight antigens, such as bacteria, viruses and toxins. There are five subclasses of antibodies, three of which are:

Immunoglobulin A (IgA):

found in high concentrations in the mucous membranes, particularly those lining the respiratory passages and gastrointestinal tract, as well as in saliva and tears.

Immunoglobulin G (IgG):

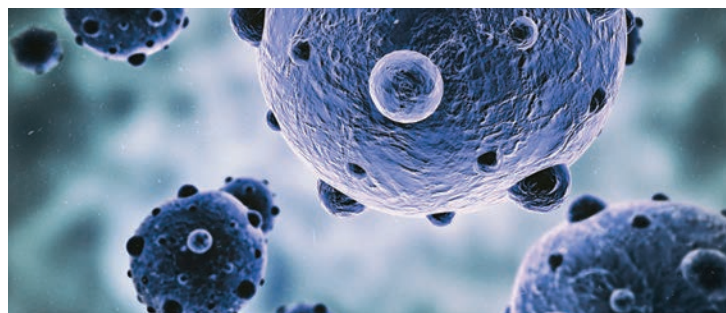
the most abundant type of antibody, found in all body fluids and protects against bacterial and viral infections.

Immunoglobulin M (IgM):

found mainly in the blood and lymph fluid, the first antibody to be made by the body to fight a new infection.

IgA, IgG, and IgM are often measured together. That way, they can give doctors important information about immune system functioning, especially relating to infection or autoimmune disease.

As with other antibody deficiencies, the most common types of recurrent infections involve the ears, sinuses, nose, bronchi and lungs. These include:



- **More than two pneumonias in a year.**
- **More than four sinus infections in a year.**
- **More than eight ear infections in a year (children), and even fewer in adults.**
- **Gastrointestinal infections**

If you are frequently ill with bacterial infections, you should be evaluated. Recurrent pneumonia and chronic infections in the lungs can lead to lung damage called bronchiectasis, which can complicate treatment.

Those with immune deficiencies are at higher risk for cancer (primarily lymphoid and gastrointestinal), autoimmune diseases, declining respiratory function, and allergy development.

CVID can be diagnosed anytime from childhood through adulthood. CVID may be suspected in children or adults with a history of recurrent infections involving the lungs, bronchi, ears or sinuses.

An accurate diagnosis can be made through screening tests that measure immunoglobulin levels or the number of B cells in the blood.

CVID is treated with immunoglobulin replacement therapy (IRT), which most often relieves symptoms. IRT treatments must be given regularly and are life-long. Antibiotics are used to treat most infections that result from CVID, though patients may need treatment for a longer duration than healthy individuals.

OUT TAKES

Slidell Magazine was EVERYWHERE this month!
Here are just a few of our adventures!

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RIVETING ROSIES Habitat build team installs soffit on a home. Working hard are l-r: Traci Plaisance, Carrie Calvin & Lindsay Reine



WHAT A RESEMBLANCE! We had no clue that our awesome May cover looked just like our friend, R.B. Williams. That makes our cover **EVEN MORE AWESOME!** Here are the twins posing at the Chamber Expo.



BEST PIC OF THE MONTH! Habitat volunteer Gary Crouch gives a hand packing up the Harbor Center after the Louisiana Veteran's Festival



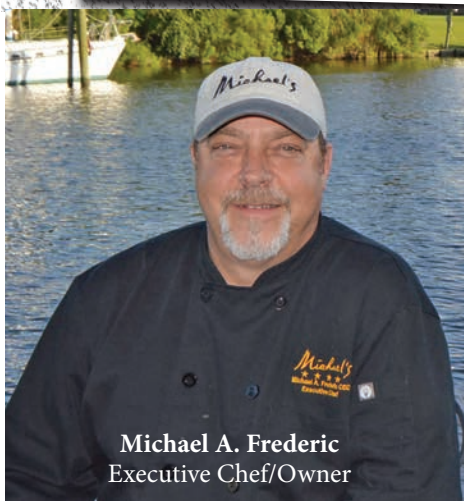
Ronnie & Sylvia Reine graciously donated a huge party in their home to raise money for Habitat! Kendra with Rosies, Sharon DeLong, Dania Fandal, and Sharron Newton



Rene Arcemont, Habitat's incoming Executive Director, just LOVES his picture in support of the Rosies.



Chef Michael hosted Mayor Freddy Drennan and his beautiful wife Glenda (Habitat's Rowdy Rosie team queen) for Mother's Day



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