

DECEMBER
2020
JANUARY
2021



The
Brenham Blast
NOW AND THEN

MARGARET E. BLIZZARD
SENIOR ACTIVITY CENTER

1301 E. TOM GREEN ~ BRENHAM TX 77833 ~ (979) 836-6552



SENIOR ACTIVITY CENTER

1301 East Tom Green
Brenham TX 77833
(979) 836-6552
SeniorCenterBrenham.org

The Margaret E. Blizzard Senior Activity Center is a project of the Washington County Healthy Living Association, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Toy Kurtz
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, Connie Cadenhead

The Senior Center and Resale Shop are CLOSED until further notice due to COVID-19.

USDA Food Boxes

We were not awarded a contract for the next cycle of Farm-to-Family food boxes that the Center has been distributing during the pandemic. Contracts are currently going to food banks. We don't know if that will change, so stay tuned for further notice!

The Brenham Blast:

NOW AND THEN

Published bi-monthly by Washington County Healthy Living Association

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Cover photo by @joyfulcaptures

THE NEWS FROM TOY'S DESK

Right now, there are so many conflicting viewpoints on topics like COVID-19. Where should we go to get the most accurate information? I have mentioned the Worldometer before, and in my opinion, it is still the best source for accurate, real-time, worldwide data.

Founded in 2004, Worldometer is run by an international team of developers, researchers, and volunteers. Published by a small, independent digital media company based in the US, Worldometer has no political, governmental, or corporate affiliation. It was voted one of the best free reference websites by the American Library Association. The United Kingdom, Johns Hopkins, Financial Times, The New York Times, Oxford University Press, IBM, and the United Nations are just a few of the entities that rely on its statistics.

Go to www.worldometers.info/coronavirus. Scroll down through the countries and click on USA. Then scroll down to the list of states, and click on Texas. Texas counties are listed there; click on Washington and you'll see the current COVID-19 numbers for right here in our own area. Those numbers are updated continually, second by second.

Okay, now that we know where to find the most accurate information concerning COVID, we can plan for this winter and the upcoming holiday season. Consider the number of cases in our area—and, if you are getting company, the case count in the area that your visitors are coming from. If case counts are high, you'll need to take a great many precautions to stay safe and well this winter holiday season.

Stay informed. The good news is that scientists and doctors have discovered more treatments and better ways to treat the virus. The bad news is that the daily infection rate across the country has more than doubled in the last month. Because of this increase in cases, the death toll will also rise.

We are all looking forward to the festivities of this year's winter season. These precious family holidays are especially important this year. We can stay safe and enjoy the season with our families, if we do it right. This virus will not know nor care that it's Christmas, so follow the medical guidelines on masks, social distancing, and hand washing. Try to refrain from the normal hugging and kissing of your loved ones. Just be thankful to have them nearby, and to be able to see each other, talk, and visit. Wear a facemask and encourage members of your family to also do so, especially the young. Their age group is the most likely to carry the COVID virus without symptoms, and unknowingly pass it to you and others. If we all follow the recommended guidelines, we can have an enjoyable Christmas and stay well.

Toy

GOT PET PICS?

Our next issue will feature Center members and their pets.

Do you have a cute photo of you and your dog or cat, horse or hamster? (Or whatever kind of pet you have!)

Email your photo to cdoer@swbell.net or take a selfie with your phone and share it with **979-251-9049**. Deadline for photos is **January 5th**.

Please include your name and your pet's name. We'll publish them as space allows.



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EARLENE HEARD

Earlene Heard, a lifelong resident of Washington County, is the oldest of 13 children born and raised in the Gay Hill area. Like so many of the seniors among us, she used to think life was hard when growing up, but now realizes it was actually very good. She was blessed with parents who loved their children and treated them fairly and equally.

Her father worked at the Beaumier Water Works and later at Magnetic Instruments; her mother had plenty of work at home! All of the family worked the land, and they never went hungry. Her large extended family had plentiful gardens, raised chickens and cows, and made most of their food. Life was filled with lots of family get-togethers and fun times.

Earlene attended the Pickard School from elementary through high school. She was among the last graduating seniors before the school closed in 1969 and students were integrated into the Brenham School District.



After high school she worked at Petticoat Junction Truck Stop for many years. At 20, she married and began her family of 7 children. Sadly, her oldest daughter passed away last year at the age of 52, and she has lost 7 of her siblings. Earlene lives in town now, with her daughter, and most

of the remaining family still live in the area—including 8 grandchildren and several greats!

One of Earlene's greatest pleasures is fishing. Due to a recent surgery for carpal tunnel syndrome she's not been able to lately, but hopes to enjoy it again in the future.

Sixteen years of dialysis has been one of Earlene's medical challenges. Last year brought pneumonia, a heart attack and surgery for blockages in her leg. Despite it all, she remains happy and positive. Her faith in God is strong



and her family are integrally involved in her life. Perhaps because of all she has faced, the pandemic has not caused significant problems for her. She takes all the precautions she should but tries not to let it dominate her life. Family get-togethers still occur, but outside for now. Other than family and medical appointments, she isn't around others very much.

As winter approaches, Earlene is reminded of the fun Christmases of her childhood. The highlight was getting apples, oranges, and a little candy! Simple pleasures—and she was deeply grateful for them.

Earlene has been a member of the Senior Center since it was housed at Brenham Elementary School. She gets her groceries from the Center, and since all her children work during the day, a volunteer—usually Charles Dierking—drives her to the dialysis center and home again three days a week. She says the Center is a tremendous blessing to her.

~ Debbie Mackey

Debbie Mackey is a Senior Center Volunteer. She also owns and operates her own business, Cat Spring Candles.





VANILLA EGG NOG

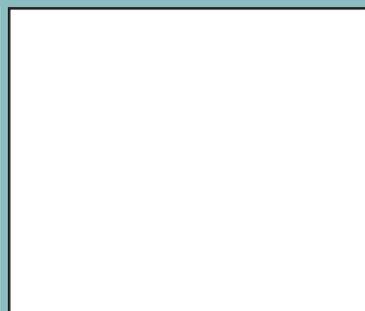
- 3 eggs (or 3/4 cup pasteurized egg product)
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 4 cups low-fat milk
- 1 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- Whole nutmeg, grated

In a blender, mix eggs and sugar. Add milk, yogurt, vanilla and salt; blend until frothy. Pour into serving glasses, and garnish with freshly grated nutmeg.

(Recipe courtesy of NewsUSA) ©LPi

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DOSS PRUITT

This recognition is long overdue. Doss Pruitt has been volunteering for the Senior Center for the past eighteen plus years!

Doss started as a volunteer with a great background in computer skills gained from his employment with IBM in Austin and at Prairie View A&M. The Center's business computers were very old at the time, and it was Doss who updated programs and improved the performance of those computers. He continued volunteering when we moved to the old Brenham

Elementary School campus where we started our first computer lab for seniors.

When we moved into our current facility, Doss continued teaching seniors computer skills in the new computer lab. He also helps Senior Center members understand their mobile phones, home computers, and other tech devices.

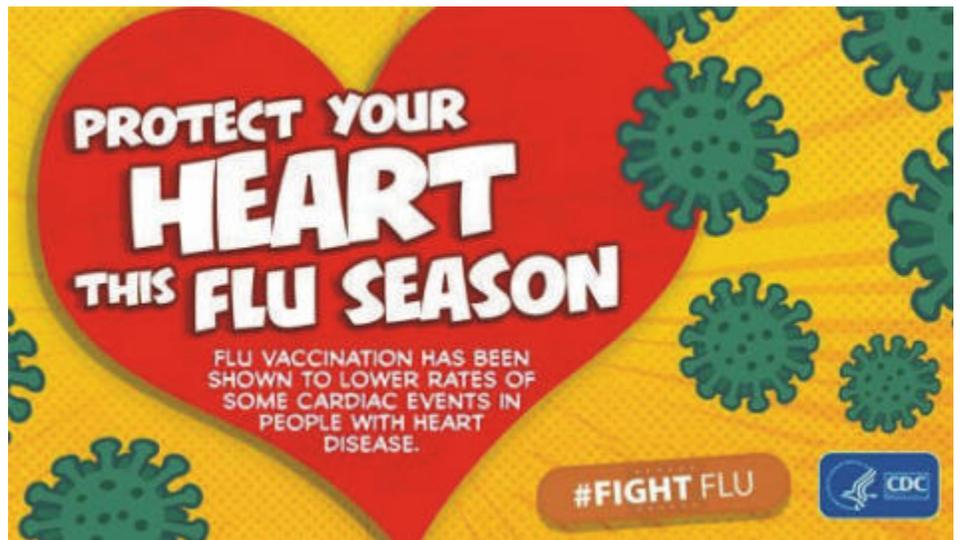
When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Doss quietly changed hats and pitched in, helping with the weekly curbside grocery service that we provide to our seniors. He has been instrumental in our efforts to keep area seniors in their homes and safe from the virus. From unloading and unpacking

orders of food and supplies to handing out frozen meals and groceries, Doss is a hands-on worker.

Doss is also a long time member of the Washington County Citizens on Patrol, and he volunteers as a poll worker whenever there's a Washington County election. He is a veteran, retired from the Army, and is a former WCHLA board member. Doss continues to serve on the board as our IT advisor.

Many thanks to you, Doss! You are a dear friend, and I know from experience that you can be counted on in any situation or emergency.

~ Toy Kurtz





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Giddy Up! One day a woman ran into a friend and asked her if she was still dating the same guy. “No,” the friend replied. “He wasn’t the brightest bulb in the chandelier. Last week he got on a horse for the first time. Without any instruction, he took off at full gallop. Everything was fine for a minute, then he started losing his grip and began sliding down the side of the horse. He was bouncing up and down near the ground with the horse’s hooves just inches from his head. That horse might have killed him if it weren’t for the Wal-Mart greeter who ran over and unplugged the thing!”

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The Shortest Day

*So the shortest day came, and the year died,
And everywhere down the centuries of the
snow-white world
Came people singing, dancing,
To drive the dark away.
They lighted candles in the winter trees;
They hung their homes with evergreen,
They burned beseeching fires all night long
To keep the year alive.
And when the new year's sunshine blazed
awake
They shouted, revelling.*

*Through all the frosty ages you can hear them
Echoing, behind us — listen!
All the long echoes sing the same delight
This shortest day
As promise wakens in the sleeping land.
They carol, feast, give thanks,
And dearly love their friends, and hope for
peace.
And so do we, here, now,
This year, and every year.
Welcome Yule!*

~ Susan Cooper

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