

Houston Deaf Senior Citizens

Volume 3

May, 2002

Issue 5

May 12th

Have a Great & Happy Mother's Day!



Memorial Day

In Memory of our Honored Dead

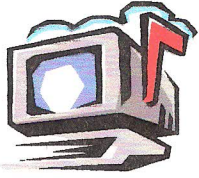


May 27th (Observed) in
tradition of May 30th

Memory Day Poem →
By Del "Abe" Jones, (Copyright 1991)
From his book of poetry,
"The World, War, Freedom, and More."

Freedom's Memorial

This day is set aside
to honor those
who took the chance to die.
But they have died in vain
if we ever forget
the reason why.
Freedom can be like time
slipped away
before we even know.
But we all have the choice
more, a duty
to battle freedom's foe.
Let us give thanks this day
to all those brave
who paid the highest cost.
Not take it for granted
and realize
it easily could be lost.



From the Editor:

Houston Deaf
Senior Citizen
Newsletter

Editor

Frank Shaw



Staff



Karen Clifton



Mary Jo
Stevens



Audrey
Leger-Wright

It is a tragic news to learn that Brian Craig, the son of Rev. Arthur and Barbara Craig, got killed in Afghanistan by the explosion recently. Houston Senior Citizens and I are sending our sympathy to Arthur and his family. See the story about Brian who was in the military on page 9 of **NEWS**.

OOOooops! We, the staff, want to apologize for giving wrong daylight saving date on March issues as March 31st, which should be April 7th. Quoted from Yahoo Internet "Daylight Saving Dates" that give the dates. It was confused, but finally found out that it's for foreign, not for U.S. Most of foreign areas end their EST (Eastern Standard Time) on March 31st, and in U.S. we still forward our clock on first Sunday of April. Again we apologize for the confusion.

We also apologize for the printing on the Senior Citizen Newsletter. We have a new person doing the printing. We hope you will excuse the poor-quality during this transitional period.

Please send any news, information, picture or recipe that you wish to share with other Senior Citizens. **We would appreciate if you could write no more than 250 words of any news due to limited space on the newsletter.** Please note that the editor may at his discretion edit articles or news items for brevity and to correct errors. Mail to: Houston Deaf Senior Citizens, 9954 Kirkshire Drive, Houston, TX 77089, email to hdsnews@yahoo.com, or fax to (281) 416-0799 or (713) 781-4576. The deadline is on 15th of each month.

Note: If your subscription is not paid within three months from the due date, your name will be removed from our mailing list.

Thank you,

Frank Shaw

**Flash News for next field trip
Caldwell – May 17, 2002**

Houston Senior Citizens will meet at Woodhaven Baptist Deaf Church, 9920 Long Point at 8:00 AM. The bus will leave no later than 8:30 AM. The group will visit the Burleson County Czech Heritage and Historical Museums.

Be sure to bring some extra money for lunch. Come and let us have fun together. See you on 17th.

Goliad Field Trip

April 12, 2002

Mission Espiritu Santo de Zuniga

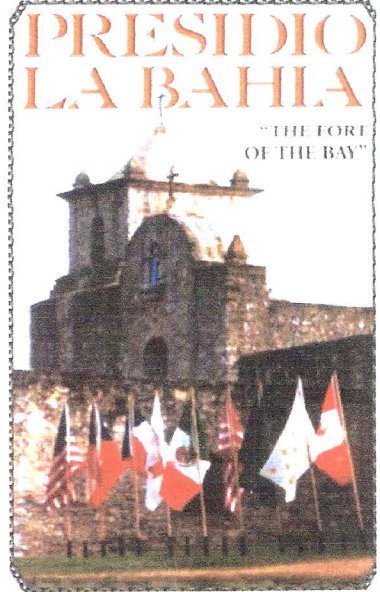


The mission complex generally included a church, a residence for the priests, living quarters for the America Indians, workshops, and storehouses.



In the Mission Church. A statue of Jesus with the thorn crown on his head and hands bounded, wearing a real, beautiful purple/blue velvet cloth robe.

What a beautiful!



The Presidio was a fort garrisoned by Spanish soldiers for the protection of the missions and nearby



← Left to right: Sherri Frost, an internship, Beth Ellis, a tour guide, and Kathay Putnam, an interpreter.



Gravesite Monument of Colonel James W. Fannin & his (over 300) troops. They were burned beyond the monument. Located near Presidio La Bahia fort. (Pictured at far top)



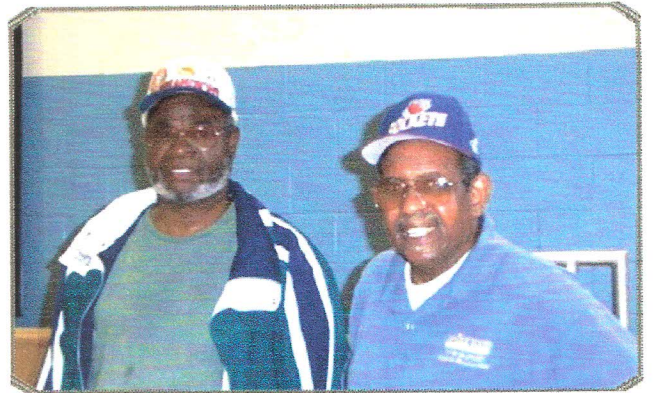
← Front row left to right: Early McVey, Nellie Bishop, Pernella Smith, Hazel Richard, Christine McKinnon, Avie Alaniz, Kathay Putnam, an interpreter, and Beth Ellis, a tour guide.
Back row left to right: Travis Sessions, William Lambert, James Fair, Elnora Morgan, Arlene Benham, Lavern Fair, Audrey Leger-Wright, Floyd Wicker, Tom Wells, Boyce Jones, Gertie Sessions, Jenice Wells, Sherri Frost, an internship, and Billy Buza.

EVENTS

MARCH - APRIL, 2002



←
EASTER
 Jenice Wells had a good Easter spirit to wear the costume. She made it by herself. What a cute costume!

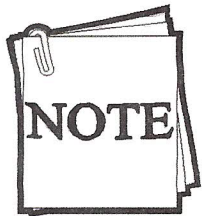


↑
APRIL BIRTHDAY
 Robert Small and Floyd Wicker

Left to right: Audrey Leger-Wright, Nellie Bishop, Zelma Curbello, and Jenice Wells. →
 They got Easter figurines for their hard work.
 Audrey – Working for S. C. Newsletter
 Nellie – Making coffee
 Zelma – Collecting money for Love Fund
 Jenice – Made Easter costume.



← Left to right:
 Officer Randy Melton and Office David Acre
 Officer Randy Melton, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and City Wide PIP Coordinator, will be stepping down from his positions the first week of June. His replacement will be Office David Acre. We will miss Office Melton. We also want to welcome our new coordinator, Officer David Acre. For the next couple of years, the Officer Melton, however, will continue teaching at the Police Academy. He will also be giving lectures to various Police Depts. around the country accessibility for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
 Office Melton wrote his lecture on page 5. →



Very important for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, please read

A Traffic Violation Can Be High Anxiety For Some Deaf/Hard of Hearing By Officer Randy Melton

You are driving along at night and one of your worst fears comes true. You look in your rear-view mirror and see there is a law enforcement officer behind you. His emergency lights are turned on and *you* are the one he wants to pull over. Now your anxiety level kicks into high gear. You wonder - how long has he been behind you trying to get you to pull over, will he be angry and how will I let him know that I am deaf/hard of hearing?

You pull to the right side of the road bringing your vehicle to a stop. Your heart is pounding; your anxiety level goes even higher. Will he shine his flashlight directly in your eyes making it impossible for you to see his face? Your palms begin to sweat; your breathing is shallow and fast. As he approaches your door you try desperately to think of how will he react to you not hearing him?

Your worst fears are met when he does shine his flashlight in your eyes and he begins to speak. He stands a bit behind your door so you have to turn all the way around to even see him. At this point you start to cry from the overload of anxiety. The officer seems stunned as he steps back and is still talking to you – he doesn't have a clue what the problem is.

If you are deaf, you point to your ears, shake your head from side to side and you *hope* he sees the anxiety in your face. If you are hard of hearing, you tell him you are hard of hearing as you point to your ears and shake your head. You try desperately to communicate, to see any reaction in the officer's manner. Your anxiety is now at its peak. The next move by the officer is dreaded because he could become angry that you are not doing what he has instructed you to do. Or will he recognize the sign or words that you have a hearing problem?

Does this sound familiar to you? This real-life situation was told to me by a hard of hearing lady I have known for several years. As she was telling me what happened she again began to cry because the telling brought the anxiety flooding back . . .all over again.

Over and over, this and similar scenarios have been described to me by many deaf/hard of hearing people. As a law enforcement officer for over thirty years, fifteen of which I have been the deaf/hard of hearing liaison for the Houston Police Department, I understand the anxiety a deaf/hard of hearing person has when being pulled over for a traffic violation. For this reason I developed a "Deaf/Hard of Hearing Visor Card" for deaf/hard of hearing citizens to carry in their vehicles. I am not the only law enforcement officer that has seen this need. The Michigan State Police and the Chicago Police Department also have visor cards for their deaf/hard of hearing citizens.

These visor cards all work the same way: the deaf/hard of hearing citizen places the card on top of the drivers' sun-visor. If a law enforcement officer stops you, stay calm and put both hands on the steering wheel. When the officer gets to your door, point to your sun visor. When the officer moves to look at the visor you gently pull the visor down, showing the visor card. The card simply states "I Am Deaf/Hard of Hearing".

Congratulations! You have just conveyed your message in a simple movement and your anxiety level has lessened. Now alternative forms of communications can begin . . . lip-reading, pad and pen, or speaking slowly. This is just one of the examples I use in my eight-hour presentation to law enforcement officers.

I firmly believe that officers truly want to help people and be fair to all citizens but they just do not receive the necessary training on the deaf/hard of hearing cultures. When requested by a law enforcement agency I travel to that city to deliver an eight-hour presentation entitled "Bridging the Gap Between Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Law Enforcement Cultures". I explain many other cultural differences to the officers in this presentation.

(Contact Officer Melton at policedhofh@ev1.net or go to his web site www.policeanddeafness.com to learn more about his seminars and how your city's law enforcement agencies can benefit from his training classes.)



Calendar of Events



May 3, 2002 (Friday)



ASL Social at Prince's Hamburgers Restaurant at 3899 Southwest Freeway, Houston, TX 77027 from 5 PM to 9 PM. Come and join us to meet old and new friends! Please contact Earl Johnson at (281) 487-2921 TTY / Relay TX (voice), either 711 or (800) 735-2988; Roger Spivey (email) spivey39@ev1.net before 25th of April, so they can inform the restaurant the number of people.



May 3 – 9, 2002 (a week)

Open captioned movie, **"Time Machine"**, Rated: PG-13, at AMC Studio 30 on Dunvale & Westheimer.



May 7, 2002 (Tuesday)

Positive Interaction Program (PIP) will be held on Tuesday, April 2nd at **Woodhaven Church for the Deaf** at 9920 Long Point at 7 PM. The refreshments will be served. Interpreter & captioning will be provided.

May 8, 2002 (Wednesday)



Houston Senior Citizens will have a general meeting at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center at 1475 West Gray, Houston, TX from 9 AM to 1 PM. Closed Captioning will be provided. Come and enjoy chatting with friends!



May 10 - 16, 2002 (a week)

Open captioned movie, **"Changing Lanes"**, Rated: R, at AMC Studio 30 on Dunvale & Westheimer. Starring: Ben Affleck, Samuel L. Jackson, Toni Collette, Amanda Peet, Sydney Pollack, Richard Jenkins, and William Hurt.



May 12, 2002 (Sunday)

Happy Mother's Day and have a great day!



May 16, 2002 (Thursday)



Houston Deaf Senior Citizens will meet at **Woodhaven Baptist Church** at 9920 Long Point from 9 AM to 1 PM. There will be potluck lunch. If you wish to bring a covered dish, please contact **Evelyn Autry** at (713) 984-8186 TTY or **Gertrude Sessions** at (281) 447-7575 TTY and let them know what you will bring.

May 17, 2002 (Friday)



Houston Deaf Senior Citizens will have a field trip to **Caldwell, TX** to tour the fort and mission church. Please be at **Woodhaven Deaf Church**, 9920 Long Point, Houston, TX between 7:15 & 7:30 AM. The bus will pick people up by 8 AM. Let's join us and enjoy ourselves. (See editor page 2, for more information)



May 17 - 23, 2002 (a week)



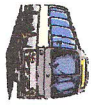



Open captioned movie, **"High Crimes"**, Rated: PG-13, at AMC Studio 30 on Dunvale & Westheimer.

May 22, 2002 (Wednesday)



Houston Senior Citizens will have a meeting at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center at 1475 West Gray, Houston, TX from 9 AM to 1 PM. Volunteers are needed to help with folding Senior Citizens newsletters. Your help is greatly appreciated.

May 2002

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3 ASL Social Prince's Hamburger Restaurant 	4 Arthur & Barbara Craig—1969 
5 Nadine Moore 	6	7 PIP Meeting 	8 S.M.M.S.C. 	9 Lorenea Blomdahl 	10 	11 Louise McCantley 
12 Mother's Day 	13	14	15	16 S.C. Social Woodhaven 	17 Field Trip "Caldwell, Tx" 	18 Homer West 
19	20	21	22 S.M.M.S.C. Jean Harkness 	23 James & Lavern Fair—1953 	24 Hazel Richard 	25
26	27 Memorial's Day	28 Richard & Esther Brownalenoir - 1957 	29	30	31	

 Social Meeting

 PIP Meeting

 S.M.M.S.C.

 S.C. Social

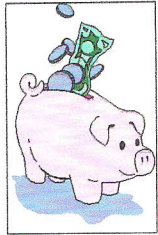
 Field Trip

 Anniversary



THANK YOU NOTE from Mary Jo Stevens:

Dear Houston Senior Citizens,
Thank you for the lovely 'Get Well' card. I miss you all and hope to see you all soon. I am doing fine, but a little sore. Take care! Love, *Mary Jo.*



From Zelma Curbello of LOVE FUND:

We wish to thank you for your generous donations to **LOVE FUND:** *Arlene Benham, Karen Clifton, Zelma & Gus Curbello, Thelma Jo Hays, Audrey Leger-Wright, Elnora Morgan, Frank Shaw, Jenice & Tommy Wells, and I.D. & Floyd Wicker.*

Tennie V. Sessions, thank you very much for your donation to **LOVE FUND: IN MEMORY OF Kathy Rutledge.**

Anyone who wishes to donate \$\$\$ to **LOVE FUND** should please make check or money order payable to Houston Deaf Senior Citizens-Love Fund. Please mail to: **Mrs. Zelma Curbello, 9623 Tiltree, Houston, TX 77075-4042**

NEW SUBSCRIBERS:

Welcome to our new subscribers: Dorothy Krystyniak, Lynda E. Page, and Madeline Watkins.

RENEWALS:

Thank you for your renewal: Carole Allen, Hazel Benefield, Ricie & Dianne Boutte, Favette Crocker, Julia Karam, Mildred LeBlanc, Mary & Keith Longmore, Fern Mears, Adrenna Montez, E. Howard Morgeson, John & Evelyn Norman, Vernon & Joan Pate, Martha Phillips, Anna Reese, Sydna Smith, Lewis & V. Joan Stovall, Lorene Strothers, Bonnie Tribble, E. R. & Edna Ugarte, Jennie & Weldon Westmoreland, and Alton Young.



OBITUARIES



Gus White Jr, 85, died Sunday March 24, 2002. He was a native of Maud, TX. He had lived in Lake Charles, Louisiana for 58 years. He attended the Texas School for the Deaf, and worked at Pete's Gift Shop in Lake Charles, LA. His wife, Geneva Calderera White of Lake Charles, a daughter, Rose White Barbin and son-in-law, Huey Barbin of Baton Rouge, LA, three grandchildren, and a sister, Evelyn White Foster of Maud, TX survives him. The Funeral Service was held at Hixson Funeral Home at 10 AM, Wednesday, March 27th. He was buried in Orange Grove Cemetery.

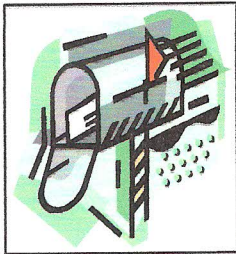
Chloe Winifred Hawkins Murdock was born January 31, 1911 in Milsap, Texas and passed away April 2, 2002 in Dallas Texas. She is survived by her sister-in-law, Terrye Evans Hawkins of Colleyville, Texas; nephews, Steven B. Hawkins of Dallas, Chris E. Hawkins of Colleyville, Alan D. Hawkins of Dallas, Michael Hawkins of Sapulpa, Ok and several great nieces, and nephews. Services were held at 11:00 A.M., Friday, April 5, 2002 at Restland Abbey Chapel. Internment to follow at Bluebonnet Hills Memorial Park in Colleyville, Texas. Memorials may be made to **Deaf Action Center, Attn: Susan Kirk, 3115 Crestview Drive, Dallas, TX. 75235.**

SSG. Brian Craig, 27, born April 2, 1975 in Greenville County, South Carolina. He was killed April 15, 2002, during hostile military action in Kandahar, Afghanistan. His parents, Rev. Arthur and Barbara Craig of Houston, TX, a sister, a brother-in-law, a brother, two nephews, a niece, and grandparents survive him. Memorial Service was held at Houston's First Baptist Church, 7401 Katy Freeway, Houston, TX officiated by Rev. Duane Miller on Friday, April 19 at 2 PM. The service was also planned in Inman, South Carolina at a later date. SSG. Craig was buried with military honors at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA and was recognized for his selfless service to God and country by the Secretary of the Army. SSG. Craig received numerous military awards and honors throughout his career in the Army.

News

WOODHAVEN BAPTIST MINISTER'S SON DIES IN AFGHANISTAN

Houston area soldier dies in Afghanistan
Young man scheduled to return next month
04/16/2002



A Houston-area soldier is among the four servicemen who died after a munitions explosion in Afghanistan.

Brian Craig, 27, was scheduled to return to the United States next month. He had telephoned his northwest Harris County family on Saturday, two days before the deadly

blast.

His family saw television accounts of the explosion yesterday morning. By early afternoon, they had received confirmation that Craig died in the accident.

Craig comes from a devout Christian family. His father, Arthur Craig, serves as minister of a church for the deaf. The young man's parents have received phone calls from soldiers, stationed as far away as Alaska, telling them how their son had influenced other servicemen's spiritual lives.

Brian never married so he had no children or spouse. Arthur was about to leave the country for two weeks for a mission trip when he was notified of his son's death. He was at the airport when Barbara, his wife, was informed at home and she had to call him to come back home.

TO SENIOR CITIZENS: submitted by Esther Brownalenoir

How does FRAT insurance give you some comfort? If you are a member, renew some really nice friendship. If you would like to become a member, you can find out more at the Golden Corral Luncheon on May 3rd. *Where's that?* Just follow 290 North, take Hollister exit, and make a U-turn. See Golden Corral on your Right. Besides getting all you want from the buffet, you can also find out who is getting the discount! See you there!

Brief News from Tennie Sessions

Kathy Rutledge, an interpreter for the deaf students at San Marcos High School, was killed in a car accident in Wimberley, TX on March 26, 2002. We were shocked, because **Liz Sprouse**, an interpreter, who was worked in the same place as Kathy, also was killed in a car accident in July 2001. That's very sad! We surely miss them.

News from Early R. McVey

On April 4th I took my daughter, Patsy Walker with me, and flew to Indianapolis, Indiana to attend the National Deaf Basketball Championship Tourney, which was held from April 3rd to 6th. There was also a welcome for the 50th Year Hall of Famers with a big gala Friday night, the 5th of April at Marriott Hotel. Many were honored and given some gifts. We had met many old famers of players, coaches, and officers and had a "Bang" time! There was a big video showing each person of "Hall of Fame" being honored over the past years, and there were 5 Texans: Jerry Dertez, Ruth Seeger, Sammy Oates, one other, and myself. It was crowded--1,500 people attended. The weather was so cold and there was even light snow! There are some casinos around. Chicago team defeated Maryland 96 to 85 in the final games and championship again this year. Arizona team took 3rd place over New Jersey. For women teams: Minnesota upset Arizona for championship by one point. What great games! The National Deaf Basketball Championship Tourney will be in Atlantic City, New Jersey next year, March 26 - 29, 2003.

Patsy's good lady friend who lives in Indy took us to tour in town since we had enough daylight because our flight to Houston was not until Sunday evening at 5:25 PM. We went to Indy Deaf Club, which looks nice and has a big parking lot, established in 1940, and also went to Indiana School for the Deaf to tour all over. Really a big campus around there, and a few buildings have been closed. Across the street from the school campus

are the big State Fair grounds. And the last one we went to was the Indy 500 Speedway, which has such large racetracks. We entered Hall of Fame building, and looked around. There were so many race cars: old and latest models. Every year on the weekend of Memorial Day, there will be race cars on the Indy 500 Speedway. We arrived at the airport and flew homeward to Houston. *What a wonderful time in Indy!!*

Thomas Withrow, SR: email by son, Dale Withrow

Okay folks, my Dad (**Thomas Withrow, SR.**) is making news all over the Deaf community and throughout the family. So here's what happened...

As some of you may know, Dad's nickname most of his school days was "**IRON MAN**"...He's done it again! I was in Houston, attending the Texas Society of Interpreters for the Deaf Conference, taking Foundations of Legal and Court Interpreting with Carla Mathers of Maryland. Friday evening (April 5) I got a page from Mom stating Dad was in an accident with a train, but that he was okay. Needless to say, I was stunned. How does someone come out of being hit by a train...with no broken bones or scratches! I almost left the conference early, but upon calling Mom...she assured me that Dad was okay...so I finished out the conference Sunday morning, then drove to their home in San Marcos to see for myself what happened!

Basically, Dad had approached a railroad track that split into two separate tracks. He was approaching the first split, which did not have crossbars, but did have blinking lights and bells (bells are of no use to Dad, smile). Anyway, he noticed a truck had stopped on his left...thinking maybe the truck had stalled and needed help...so he looked out his window while the car was still rolling. He decided the truck didn't need help...turned to look forward and drove on...next thing he knew he was broadsided on the passenger side by a train. The impact thrust his car into the oncoming lanes. As far as I know no cars hit him in the oncoming lanes. When the car came to a stop, and he got a hold of himself, he noticed steam coming out of the car, turned it off. **AND JUST LIKE MY DAD**...got out of the car...people told him to sit down! A nice gentleman picked up his valued Dallas Cowboys cap and returned it to him (he was **VERY RELIEVED!!**). The ambulance came by...looked him over...he seemed okay but asked if he wanted to go to the hospital...he decided yes (thank goodness!!). So he was transported to a larger hospital in Austin. They did the **WORKS** on him...found nothing more than sore muscles! The hospital called Mom through Relay. Told her that Dad had been in an accident. Mom insisted they tell her what happened. Of course they tried to avoid the question. Mom made it **CLEAR** she wanted an answer...that's my Mom...so they told her...she was rather stunned but took it well. Called her Deaf neighbor at their senior citizen apartments for Deaf folks. Her friend frantically got ready and transported Mom to Austin (about 30 min away). So all that to say Dad came home...with some pain pills, muscle relaxant pills...so basically he was just sore! About three days (Sunday morning) the bruises from the seatbelt appeared so now he's looking pretty bear up across the chest.

It's nothing short of a miracle of God! As we all know, people just don't survive train wrecks! OH the blessing is that the train was moving slow about 25 miles an hour...that was why it wasn't any worse than that. He made it in the San Marcos Gazette! No name, but the paper reported it. They have a good support group in San Marcos who will help them with the calling insurance, doctors, etc. I'll be checking on them as well. Once again, my Dad has proved himself as the true "**IRON MAN!**"... (see the clipping below)

Clipping: Vehicle hit at railroad crossing: submitted by Gertie Sessions

'A San Marcos man was taken to Brackenridge Hospital Friday after his car was hit by an Amtrak Train, but police said his injuries weren't believed to be serious. Sgt. Randy Holmes of the San Marcos Police Department said the 73-year-old man was transported mainly to be checked out because of his age. The accident occurred at 9:18 a.m. at the railroad crossing near the big HEB. Holmes said the man's car was on the tracks when hit by the Amtrak train. "He was going east bound and it knocked him over the other side of the tracks," Holmes said. He added that the situation would have been more serious except for the fact that the train was only going about 25 mph and was pulling only 15 cars. Holmes said the man apparently has a hearing impairment and did not hear the bells warning of an approaching train. Traffic had to be diverted for about 25 minutes.' (Clipping from the San Marcos Gazette)

Tom Withrow is doing so good, only bruises on his chest, stomach and under arms. No broken bones...**MIRACLE!** *Gertie Sessions*

Clipping from Maurice Ford

Hello my friends and Senior Citizens. I'm sending this clipping (below) about a deaf girl who was first runner-up in Miss Deaf Ohio, and thought you would like to read. She is a niece of the owner of the house where I live. She is a very nice and friendly person. Love, *Maurice*.



SHANNON L. ENGELHART
First runner-up

Fallsite first runner-up in Miss Deaf Ohio

Cuyahoga Falls News-Press – September 2, 2001 By Lisa Sicilian, Reporter

CUYAHOGA FALLS – Shannon Lynn Engelhart didn't need to hear applause when she was announced first runner-up of the Miss Deaf Ohio pageant she participated in Aug. 10 in Youngstown to feel the audience's support.

Engelhart, 21, of Cuyahoga Falls, who was diagnosed with profound hearing loss at 11 months old, is deaf. Yet this Kent State University Student and employee of Family Services, CSD-Community Services for the Deaf, knew that she had done her best in competing against four other contestants for the title of Miss Deaf Ohio. Upon learning that she was the runner-up in a competition, which included a private and onstage interview, talent, and eveningwear portions, Engelhart said she was relieved. "I realized that I couldn't add any more activities on my plate right now. My plate is really full and if I added that onto it, I'd never sleep," she said.

Engelhart is no stranger to the limelight, although she did admit a part of her was scared before the competition. As a child, Engelhart spent plenty of time learning how to be poised and polished by taking ten years of dance classes including tap, ballet, jazz, hip hop and pointe. Engelhart danced by learning to count and feel the sounds vibrating on the floor. At age seven, Engelhart was chosen for the first Regional Speech and Hearing Month poster child. She also completed modeling classes when she was twelve. Even though these experiences might have contributed to her overall character, they were nothing compared to the competition, she said. "I've never done anything like this before," she added.

At the competition, Engelhart said the talent event was a highlight. "We had to overcome our fears of facing an audience with the spotlight blinding our eyes. All the girls were very nervous, but we were very supportive of each other." She said. Engelhart's talent was performing a poem she wrote entitled, "Never Look Back." Her positive message, one of hope and achievement, differed from some of the messages the other pageant contestants portrayed. "The other talents were viewed as "I'm a victim," she said.

Engelhart said she was very emotional while performing her poem in sign language. She paid special attention to her facial expressions and body movements, which are very important in deaf culture, Engelhart said. "I didn't cry," said Engelhart of performing her poem, "but the audience did."

The insight and wisdom Engelhart portrays belies her age. When talking about her hearing loss, Engelhart said that she has always had "support from my friends and family. They never made me feel any different." Sometimes, Engelhart added, the hardest part about being deaf is "trying to prove that I can do things. Sometimes, people think I'm incapable." Engelhart said that her deafness is a disability, but the people who look down on her are just being negative. "They have a worse disability than me."

Engelhart believes that she has been given a gift. "*I think there's a reason why I'm deaf. I can tell others I can do anything and be an example,*" she said. Currently Engelhart is an example to others in her position at the Community Services for the Deaf. She said she deals with people every day whose low income doesn't allow them to afford a special phone or interpreter for the deaf. "We try to help these people," said Engelhart, "by teaching them sign language and communication skills."

In the near future, Engelhart plans to graduate from Kent with a degree in psychology next August. She then plans to head off to Gallaudet University in Washington DC to obtain her master's in family counseling.

Engelhart said she was glad she participated in the pageant, but doesn't plan to enter it again next year. "One of the best things about being deaf," said Engelhart, "is having the opportunity to learn the beauty of American Sign Language. I'm very proud of what I have done."

Houston Deaf Senior Citizens
9954 Kirkshire Dr.
Houston, TX 77089-2207



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



5802 Holly
Houston, TX 77074

Mary Redman
(713) 981-1543 Voice/TTY

You may call them by RELAY TEXAS #711 OR #1-800-735-2989

Funded in part by (TCDHH) Texas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

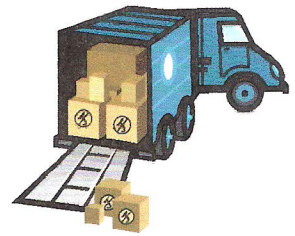
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