

# HOUSTON DEAF SENIORS OF TEXAS NEWSLETTER

This is funded by DARS-DHHS

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Volume 10

March 2009

Issue 03



## ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

Don't forget to move your clocks and watches one hour forward on Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to check batteries if they need to be replaced at that time.



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### The Interview That Changed My Life

By Barbara Walters (Taken from PLUS, The Power of Faith Feb/Mar 2009)

There are some interviews that have affected my life and perhaps even changed me. If I'm thinking on a human level, about the ability to take a tragic situation and turn it into optimism and purpose, there's no better example than a man you've probably never heard of. His name is Robert Smithdas, and I first interviewed him more than 30 years ago on the TODAY show and again, in 1998, for 20/20. Robert Smithdas is a teacher and a poet. He is also totally blind and profoundly deaf. I remember his putting his thumb on my lips and his fingers over my vocal cords during our first interview. Lord knows how, but he was able to understand what I was saying. I was absolutely flabbergasted.

Smithdas had graduated from college at the top of his class, the first deaf and blind person to do so since Helen Keller. He then earned a master's degree from New York University, the first graduate degree ever for a deaf and blind student. In the years since I first interviewed him, he had married and was teaching other blind and deaf people at the Helen Keller National Center on Long Island. At his side, also teaching, was his wife, Michelle. She, too, was blind and deaf.

If ever a person gets beset by frustration or self-pity, one day, even one hour, with Robert and Michelle Smithdas will cure all. In the course of our profile of the couple for 20/20, we first went with them to church. Michelle had just had electrodes implanted in her inner ear and was thrilled to finally have some limited hearing. Bob felt the vibration of the choir simple by touching the pew. Later, I went to their apartment, where Bob made us chicken cacciatore, even slicing the onions. He cooked on a gas stove, gauging the heat of the flame as expertly as any chef. He and Michelle could see nothing and hear little, but how rich their lives were and how independently they lived!

They communicated by "finger-spelling" into the palms of each other's hands. Michelle, who also holds a master's degree (Columbia University's Teachers College), could tell if her husband was angry or upset if "he finger-spells too fast." An interpreter from the Helen Keller Center finger-spelled my questions to the couple, and they answered me in their own voices. At home, they each wore vibrating pagers to signal that the doorbell was ringing or to "find" each other in their apartment.

When I left their house, I was humbled at what an open and optimistic mind can achieve, and brimming with admiration for them. I determined to remember, every day, how blessed I am.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## March 3, 2009 (Tuesday)



**Positive Interaction Program (PIP)** will present their topic about Internet Identity Theft. Officer Dennis Domagas will inform our group on some important tips to prevent this newer type of crime. The meeting is held at Woodhaven Baptist Church for the Deaf, 9920 Long Point, Houston, TX at 7:30 PM. Door prizes! Interpreter and captioning are provided.

## March 7, 2009 (Saturday)



**Nation Expo** will be held at Austin Convention Center, Exhibit Hall 2, 500 East Cesar Chavez St., Austin, TX 78701. It will begin at 9 AM till 6 PM. Check out their Website at [expo.deafnation.com/](http://expo.deafnation.com/). You can register on-line as admission is free.

## March 10, 2009 (Tuesday)



**Chief's Citywide PIP** will be held at 1600 State St., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Houston, TX at 7:00 PM. Interpreter and captioning will be provided. Please contact Officer James Sobota for more information at [james.sobota@cityofhouston.net](mailto:james.sobota@cityofhouston.net). His phone numbers are: (V) 713-308-9079, (Fax) 713-308-9073, and (TDD) 713-308-9071.

## March 11, 2009 (Wednesday)



**Houston Deaf Seniors of Texas** will have their business meeting at West Gray Adaptive Recreation Center, 1475 West Gray, Houston, TX 77019 at 9:00 am till 1:00 pm. Please come and share your ideas with us. You have to be present to vote on the motions.

## March 13, 2009 (Friday)



**Houston Deaf Seniors of Texas** will take a trip to Chase Towers and then, stop at Texas Heritage Museum. The cost will be \$4. Everyone needs to be at Woodhaven Baptist Deaf Church, 9920 Long Point Rd., Houston, TX by 9:00 AM as the Bus will leave at 9:30 AM. Please contact Gertie Sessions by VP 281-447-7575 or Julie Spaulding by VP 281-249-5276 to sign up to go.

## March 13, 2009 (Friday)



**Houston Hand Talk Social** will be at Pappas BBQ Restaurant, 7007 Hwy. 59 South at Bellaire, Houston, TX 77074 from 5 PM till 9 PM. Let's meet and enjoy chatting with your old and new friends. Any questions, please e-mail Roger Spivey at [spivey39@yahoo.com](mailto:spivey39@yahoo.com)

## March 14, 2009 (Saturday)



**ASL Social** will be at La Madeleine Bakery Café Bistro, 4700 Beechnut St., Suite 620, Houston, TX 77096 from 4 till 9 PM. Check out the website at [lamadeleine.com](http://lamadeleine.com). Let's meet and enjoy chatting with your old and new friends. Any questions, please e-mail to Earl Johnson at [ejohnson127@comcast.net](mailto:ejohnson127@comcast.net).

## March 19, 2009 (Thursday)



**Houston Deaf Senior Citizens** will have a fellowship and potluck at Woodhaven Baptist Deaf Church at 9920 Long Point Rd. from 9 am till 1 pm. If you wish to bring a covered dish, contact Evelyn Autry at 713-984-8186 TTY or Jenice Wells 281-442-8015 TTY or 281-442-8016 VP and let them know what you plan to bring.

## March 20, 2009 (Friday)



**ASL Social** will be at Memorial City Mall, 900 Gessner Rd., Houston, TX 77024 from 3 till 9 PM. Let's meet and enjoy chatting with your old and new friends. Any questions, please e-mail to Earl Johnson at [ejohnson127@comcast.net](mailto:ejohnson127@comcast.net).



**March 21, 2009 (Saturday)**



**Deaf Houston Latino** will meet at Larry's Bar-B-Que, 14191 N. W. Freeway, Houston, TX 77040 from 6 pm to 9 pm. Please contact LaLacake25@yahoo.com or VP: 832-413-4947 for more information. Come and chat with old and new friends.

**March 25, 2009 (Wednesday)**



**Houston Deaf Seniors of Texas** will have a Speaker talk to us about "Nutrition and Your Health" at West Gray Adaptive Recreation Center, 1475 West Gray, Houston, TX 77019 at 9:00 am till 1:00 pm. The Speaker will begin talking to us at 10 AM. Please be on time to hear how to take better care of yourself.

**March 30, 2009 (Monday)**



**Joe's Banquet Center**, 1300 East Hwy. 6, Alvin, TX 77511 will provide free meal for Seniors from 6 AM till 9 PM. It is free on the last Monday of each month.

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**LOVE FUND**

William Hebert and Betty Telfer, thank you for your general donation to LOVE FUND.

Nancy Morris, thank you for your thoughtful donation to LOVE FUND in memory of Yvonne Butler's father, Uvon Skipper.

Don & Fung Hahn and Pernella Smith, thank you for your thoughtful donation to LOVE FUND in memory of Z X Curry.



Anyone who wishes to donate money to **HDSC Love Fund, Inc. (a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation)** or HDST Newsletter should please make check or money order payable to either **Houston Deaf Senior Citizens - Love Fund** or **HDST Newsletter Fund**. And mail to:

HDSC Love Fund, Inc.  
c/o Mrs. Zelma Curbello  
9623 Tiltree  
Houston, TX 77075-4042

OR

HDST Newsletter  
c/o Audrey Leger  
P. O. Box 664  
Missouri City, TX 77459

**HDST NEWSLETTER FUND**

William Hebert and Doris Nell Williams, thank you for your general donation to NEWSLETTER FUND.

**RENEWAL SUBSCRIBERS**

Thank you for your renewal: Eula A. Adams, Larry & Yvonne Butler, Sam Derstine, Edie G. Feliciano, Bobby Joe Griggs, Clifford Menard, David Naumann, Thomas Wade Penny, Douglas Phillips, Angel Smith, Weldon P. Westmoreland, and Sue Wilkerson.

Angel Smith's gift subscription is given by her brother, Roger Spivey. Thank you, Roger.

**NEW SUBSCRIBER:**

Joyce Mills, her subscription gift is given by Virginia Diana Duncan. Virginia, thank you for your general gift!

# NEWS

## William Lambert



Houston Deaf Seniors of Texas selected William Lambert as "Senior Citizen of the Year". It was passed at our meeting on January 14<sup>th</sup>. He is always taking care of the coffee and getting it ready for our meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of each month. Afterwards, he makes sure the place is clean before leaving. Congrats, Lambert!

## Clogged Arteries (Blocked heart)

Submitted by Gertrude Sessions

Signs of Risk: (1) Do your fingers or toes often feel cold? (2) Are you experiencing loss of Libido or impotence? (3) Do your arms or legs often go to sleep? (4) Do you experience numbness in arms or legs? (5) Does your hand often cramp when writing a letter? (6) Is there a sharp, diagonal crease in your earlobe? (7) Do your lips or fingers have a tingling sensation? (8) On short walks, do your legs get aches or pains? (9) Is your memory worse than it used to be? (10) Do your ankles swell late in the day? (11) Do you get breathless on slight exertion? (12) Is there a whitish ring under the outer part of the cornea in your eye?

## WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS FORMER NOTETAKER FOR THE DEAF

Submitted by Rochelle Simpson

A question is for all of you: Who is the world's most famous former note taker for the deaf? It is Michelle Obama. As a high school student, she wrote classroom notes for the benefit of her deaf and hard of hearing classmates. This piece of information was revealed on the Entertainment Tonight TV show that was aired few days ago.

## Valentine's Party

Our party was a huge success due to Patsy Walker's planning. She did a great job in getting decorations and Valentine plates and napkins. A lovely time was enjoyed by all. The following people won the door prizes: 1. Michael Scribner-certificate for 2 years free of HDST newsletter subscription; 2. Roger Spivey-Valentine box of candy; 3. Tommy Wells-Rose Bud Scent Social Light; 4. Rochelle Simpson-jar of Valentine Scent candle; 5. Thelma Jo Hays-certificate of 1 year free HDST Newsletter subscription; 6. Marjorie Monson-jar of candy; 7. Delma Long-"Rose" glass figurine; and 8. Linda Page-Glitter Red Candle. The cake walk we had was enjoyed by everyone. Sandra Manley won Strawberry cake, Thelma Jo Hays won Dump Cake, Tommy Wells won Brownies, Betty Telfer won Pecans Dump Cake, and Betty Falke won Macadamia Nuts Brownies. The Luncheon was delicious along with the desserts.

## Southwest Deaf Bowling Association, Inc.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Mixed Bowling Tournament

Sponsored by Dallas Association fo the Deaf, Inc.

Tournament will be held on Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. SWDBA/DAD 2009 Headquarter is at LaQuinta Inns & Suites, 12721 LBJ Freeway, Garland, TX 75041. Please call 97-271-7581 or email at [lq0546gm@laquinta.com](mailto:lq0546gm@laquinta.com) to make reservations. Be sure to ask for SWDBA Bowling group which cost \$62.10 plus tax per night. Men's and Bowmen's bowling will be held at AMF Garland (Formerly Showplace Lanes), 1950 Plaza Drive, Garland, TX 75041. Fan's pre-registration for COMBO PRICE is \$25 per fan (Age 18 or up) with an option of \$10 to play CINGO on Saturday Night at Dallas Association of the Deaf, Inc. Cashier check or Money Order should be payable to "SWDBA 2009/DAD" and mailed to c/o Dallas Association of the Deaf, 4215 Maple Ave., Dallas, TX 75219. Need to specific if you want \$25 for Combo only or Combo with \$10 to play Cingo for total of \$35 each ticket. Joe Ed Thopson is SWDBA's Secretary/Treasurer and his address is 8004 Isaac Pryor Drive, Austin, TX 78749 and email is [JoeEDT@aol.com](mailto:JoeEDT@aol.com). For more information, contact: Luther D. Davis & Ken Seabolt (Co-Chairpersons) by VP 214-522-0380 or email at [SWDBA.DAD2009@gmail.com](mailto:SWDBA.DAD2009@gmail.com).



**+++++ IMPORTANT NOTICE +++++**

**Houston Deaf Seniors of Texas's trip on April 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Submitted by Gertie Sessions and Julie Spaulding

If you are planning to take the trip on Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, please give \$8 to Julie Spaulding at the March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting or mail the payment to Audrey Leger, c/o HDST Field Trip, P. O. Box 664, Missouri City, TX 77459. Payment must be received by **March 15<sup>th</sup>**. Gertie Sessions needs to send the money in to reserve our place. If you cancel, there will be no refunds. Gertie Sessions is planning the trip to Orange, TX.

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**The Passion of St. Mark's Gospel and Our Lives!**

Submitted from St. Dominic Deaf Center

Fr. Joseph Mulcrone of Chicago, IL will be leading a Retreat held at St. Dominic Deaf Center, 2403 Holcombe Blvd., Houston, TX 77021 beginning on Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM to 9 PM in a classroom in Residence Hall. There will be a social after that talk. Then, on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, he will be speaking from 4 PM to 6 PM in the Auditorium. Pot luck is the meal after he finishes his talk. Everyone is welcome to stay and socialize. On Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, we will meet in Warren Chapel at 11:15 AM for Mass. Before that, Fr. Mulcrone will be visiting each Religion Class beginning at 9:30 AM. Sandwiches and side dishes will be served in the Auditorium after Mass. Everyone is welcome to attend this Retreat.

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**ANOTHER OBITUARY**

**Barbara Woodward** passed away on Thursday, February 19th at 5 PM. Last weekend, Barbara was hospitalized with congestive heart failure. On Wednesday she had a stroke at the brain stem which left her unresponsive. Her daughters Beverly and Dona want everyone to know that she died peacefully and without any pain and suffering.

As you know, Barbara has struggled with various health issues for several years now. Last year, her family made the difficult decision to place her in a nursing facility in Ft. Worth, TX with hopes she would improve and eventually move to Westchester Plaza Assisted Living. Westchester Plaza has a specialty unit run by Deaf, Inc. which serves 50-60 deaf individuals to live as independently as possible with all services and programs being provided in sign language. Barbara also had family in Ft. Worth. She and her sister Wanda Patton were very close and happy to spend more time together. The goal was for Barbara to continue health improvements to the point where she could return to her family and friends in Austin. Unfortunately, Barbara never made to move to Westchester Plaza.

Her daughters would like to acknowledge their cousin Joseph Giacona for his many years of dedication and devotion to his Aunt Barbara. Barbara and Joe were very close and her identity as a Deaf person first and foremost made her very happy to live with his family. Joe and his family made her very comfortable and provided a wonderful home for her for these last many years. We shall always remember Barbara as the fun-loving, big-hearted person that she was. We celebrated her life with a Memorial Service at 3pm Saturday February 21st at: Open Arms Church, 3901 Merritt, Fort Worth, TX 76135. In remembrance, The family of Barbara Woodward. Prayers and comments regarding Barbara may be posted at [www.caringbridge.org/visit/barbarawoodward](http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/barbarawoodward).



# More News:

## HDST's trip to Galveston

Pictures submitted by Audrey Leger

Our trip to Galveston on the 13<sup>th</sup> was an enjoyable time. We took the Ferry across Bolivar Peninsula. Even though it still had a lot of cleaning up to do, we were surprised at the damage done by Hurricane Ike, last year. What a sad sight to see. Some homes were repaired while others still need to be repaired. Some businesses were damaged. However, Galveston looked much better than we expected. Some businesses were still opened even though they were still in the process of remodeling and cleaning up. Some Hotels were closed while others were opened. We stopped by the Historical Marker explaining about Leroy Columbo.



## DUMP CAKE

Submitted by Nancy Morris

- 1 (20 ounce) can crushed pineapple with juice, undrained
- 1 (21 ounce) can cherry pie filling
- 1 package Duncan Hines Moist Deluxe Yellow Cake Mix
- 1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts (I used about 1-1/2 cups)
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter or margarine cut into thin slices

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease 13 X 9-inch pan. Dump pineapple with juice into pan. Spread evenly. Dump pie filling. Spread evenly. Sprinkle cake mix evenly over cherry layer. Sprinkle pecans over the job. Dot with butter. Bake 50 minutes or until top is lightly browned. Serve warm or at room temperature. Makes 12 to 16 servings.



# REST IN PEACE

## OBITUARY



**Randall Terry Wood**, 47, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Wood, Sr. of Dallas, passed away on January 9, 2009 in London, Canada after losing his long and courageous battle with scleroderma and cancer. His body was flown to Dallas where he was born on September 6, 1961 and was buried on January 16. He graduated from Highland Park High School and went on to attend Richland College of Dallas and then graduated from the University of Texas at Arlington. He was an avidly fan of Dallas Cowboys, Dallas Mavericks, and Dallas Stars. He was rejoining and rejoicing with his brother Richard Gomer Wood in the Lord's Mansion. Randy is survived by his wife, Sue Vollmer of London, Canada, and her 2 lovely boys, Dylan and Devon; parents, Bob and Jane Wood, Sr.; a brother, Robert J. Wood, Jr. and his wife Allie T. Wood; a niece, Chelle Y. Wood and nephew, Bob Wood, III. Submitted by Herb Picou



**Velma Penny**, 65, of Lubbock, TX passed away Monday, January 26, 2009. Celebration of life services were held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, January 31, 2009 in Resthaven's Abbey Chapel. Burial was followed at Resthaven Memorial Park. Visitation was held from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, January 30, 2009. Velma was born on October 23, 1943 to Joseph and Eunice Gordon in McAllen. She married Thomas Penny on October 25, 1991. Velma enjoyed playing bingo. Those left to cherish her memories are her husband, Thomas Penny of Lubbock; mother, Eunice Deluca of Weatherford; sister, Frankie Castle of Weatherford; brother, Jerry Hawkins of Hollister, CA; aunts; uncles; nieces; nephews; and cousins. Please join us in celebrating Velma's life by visiting her memorial at [www.mem.com](http://www.mem.com).



**Z. X. CURRY**, 92, passed away on the evening of January 27th. He will be missed by his wife of sixty-eight years, Dorothy Curry and his daughter, Kemo Curry. Services were held at Woodlawn Cemetery at Old Katy Rd. and Antoine at 1 p.m. on Saturday, January 31st. In lieu of flowers, please plant a tree where it can live as fully as X did. He was one of the few people that helped get Houston Deaf Senior Citizens started. Houston Deaf Seniors of Texas will miss him as he and his wife were very active members for years.

**Irma Kleeb Young** was born in Ingleside, TX 83 years ago. She walked into the loving arms of the Lord on February 13th after a long illness. From humble beginnings in a rural Texas town as the child of Deaf parents, Irma experienced the challenges faced by the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, everyday. After years spent as an empowering advocate for the Deaf Community—serving as a community interpreter, lobbying Congress to improve rights for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired as well as helping set up the Knoxville Center of the Deaf—Irma pioneered the world's first four year degree program for professional sign language interpreters at Maryville College serving as Assistant Professor of Sign Language Interpreting for a number of years beginning in 1974. She considered her service to the Deaf and Hearing Impaired as a calling and lived to praise God with everything she did.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Dewey W. Young; her parents, Maurice and Minnie Secoy; and sister, Flora Moody. Irma will also be missed by Sons, Rev. Donald Kleeb (wife Paula) of Brandon, MS and Larry Kleeb (wife Rosalie) of Tucson, AZ; Daughters, Janet Cheney (husband Pete) and Vicki Nored of Knoxville, TN; and Step-Daughters, Linda Rhea, Barbara Sherrod (husband Bud), and Jo Roy (husband Kelly) of Knoxville, TN as well as Teresa Bunjan (husband Bob) of St. Louis, MO; in addition to numerous nieces and nephews, 14 Grandchildren, 11 Great-Grandchildren, and her devoted dog Charlie. Services were taken place on Friday February 20th at First Baptist Concord with the receiving of friends from 5-7pm and a "Celebration of Life" service following. In lieu of flowers, please make contributions to The Knoxville Center of the Deaf (3731 Martin Mill Pike Knoxville, TN 37920), First Baptist Concord (11704 Kingston Pike Knoxville, TN 37934), and the Sign Language Interpreter Degree Program at Maryville College (Office of Advancement 502 E. Lamar Alexander Pkwy Maryville, TN 37804, designate donations specifically for the "Sign Language Interpreter Degree Program").



**EDITOR'S MESSAGE**

Have a happy St. Patrick's Day on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to wear GREEN if you don't want anyone to pinch you! Smiling.....I forget all the time each year. Enjoy the Spring time that is coming. Will be time to begin planting flowers and bushes. Working in the yard is good exercise and good for the heart. Enjoy the weather!

If you have any information, jokes, recipes, event, pictures, sports, or news that you want me to publish, please send them to me by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Please keep articles to less than 300 words, due to limited space on the newsletter. My E-mail address is [nmorris726@gmail.com](mailto:nmorris726@gmail.com) or you can mail to me at 15335 Falmouth Ave., Houston, TX 77084-1412.

Please note that Editor may, at her discretion, edit articles or news items for brevity and to correct errors. When sending pictures to me, please make sure you use a larger envelope. When the pictures are fold, it is very difficult to scan them without showing those folded lines. Audrey does the scanning for me so she will appreciate it, too. Thanks!



*Nancy Morris*

**HOUSTON DEAF SENIORS of TEXAS**

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