



LAKES

ON ELDRIDGE
NORTH

Volume 5, Issue 9

September 2006
Official Newsletter

Neighborhood News, Issues and Problems

By Lisa Carpenter

After talking with Kate Loeffler at VanMor regarding recent issues that have been reported to them by homeowners, I compiled the following list to share with everyone. If you have any questions regarding the neighborhood rules, deed restrictions or these issues themselves, the VanMor office will be happy to assist. This is not a comprehensive list of all issues reported to VanMor but some common and key issues that we thought should be of interest to everyone.

Numerous complaints came in regarding pet poop being left in homeowner's front yards. Homeowners that walk their dogs need to be responsible and pick up the piles their dogs leave in homeowner's yards and in the common areas. This has been an ongoing issue in the community and can be resolved by the homeowner carrying a little plastic bag to pick it up or use a poop scoop. My husband and I do it and it's really not that big of a deal. Leaving poop behind is unhealthy and promotes flies not to mention that it detracts from a lovely walk or ride through the neighborhood!

Cats and dogs are not allowed to roam the neighborhood freely – remember that we have a leash law. Loose animals can be dangerous for humans and other animals, can use the bathroom in your neighbor's flowerbeds and lawns and can cause property damage. Please be considerate of your neighbors and community and walk the dog with a leash and keep the cat inside.

Numerous complaints are coming in regarding litter in the neighborhood. Please help keep our neighborhood beautiful and safe for our families by not contributing trash to the common areas or on the private property of your neighbors. Please use the trash receptacles provided when using the neighborhood facilities, . Do not throw trash out of the car window or from a bicycle.

We have had to fix toilettes at the fitness center weekly for the last month because kids are stuffing toilette paper rolls into them. One toilette will need a major repair because of this activity. Parents, please be aware that this is happening. The cost for these types of repairs is paid by all of us. I don't think anybody wishes for our maintenance fees to increase or to have to pay for the repairs themselves if their children are caught doing it.

There have been reports of children using the fitness equipment and playing around unattended by a parent. The rule of the facility is that

children under 18 may not use the fitness facility unless accompanied by a parent. Children horse playing around may be injured.

Westco is on the property 3 times per week. If you see that a common area that needs attention, please report it to VanMor. Keep in mind that if we have heavy rain, Westco may not be able to mow as scheduled.

The Catalina Shores pool is a year-round "swim at your own risk" pool. Two life guards will be available through the end of September. The Sonora Canyon pool is a "life guarded" facility and will close after September until next year.

When children jump the fences after the pool is closed, this is trespassing. Please inform your children that they are not permitted to use any of the facilities that are not open or that have locked gates. There have been reports of late night parties at our pools and children swimming after hours. Parents should know where their children are at night.

We have received reports of various mischief in the neighborhood. Please keep your eyes and ears open to what is going on around the neighborhood and report any suspicious activities by calling the Harris County Sheriff's office (713-221-6000) immediately. We highly discourage the use of BB guns in the neighborhood. We realize that the creek attracts this kind of activity but the harm to people and other living creatures is too great a risk to take. Parents, please support the community on this.

Westco trimmed tree limbs on the trails at Catalina Shores lake and the Acacia Arbor bridge after being reported as an issue by a homeowner.

(Continued on Page 2)

**View the Lakes on Eldridge North
Community Newsletter
each month on-line at
[www. PEELinc.com](http://www.PEELinc.com)**

Lakes on Eldridge North

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

VanMor Properties, Inc.	281-493-0668
Fax	281-493-5654
Kate Loeffler, Manager	
Kim Stewart, Administrative Assistant	
Gate Attendant	713-856-6127
Harris Co. Sheriff - (non-emergency)	713-221-6000
Cy-Fair Fire Department - (emergency)	281-466-6161
(non-emergency) ...	281-550-6663
Poison Control	1-800-764-7661
Texas DPS	713-681-1761
Waste Management	713-695-4055
(trash collection Mondays & Thursdays)	
Aqua Services	713-983-3602
(Service or emergencies 24 hrs)	713-983-3604
Harris County Tax Office	713-224-1919
Reliant Energy	713-207-7777
(give pole # of street which is out)	
Entex (gas)	713-659-2111
Time Warner Cable	713-462-9000
Houston Chronicle	713-220-7211
Metro Transit Info	713-635-4000
Kirk Elementary	713-849-8250
Truitt Middle School	281-856-1100
Cy-Falls High School	281-856-1000
Newsletter Publisher	
Peel, Inc.	advertising@PEELinc.com, 888-687-6444

Deadline for submitting articles for the Lakes On Eldridge North Newsletter is the 10th of each month. Submissions are subject to space limitations and editorial approval. Submit at www.PEELinc.com

PERSONAL CLASSIFIED ADS: Deadline for submitting personal classified ads is the 10th of each month for publication in the following month's newsletter. Submit classified ads at www.PEELinc.com.

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Please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office at 888-687-6444 or advertising@PEELinc.com for information on advertising.

Vanmor Properties, Inc. Contacts

Manager - Kate Loeffler
Administrative Assistant - Kim Stewart
1505 Highway 6 South, Suite 110
Houston, Texas 77077
Phone - 281-493-0668
Facsimile - 281-493-5654

LOEN Board Of Directors

Steve Woodall	President
Faheem Khawaja	Vice President
Victor Elgohary	Treasurer
Don Byrnes	Secretary
Lisa Carpenter	Director

Neighborhood News- (Continued from page 1)

Calls continue to come in regarding cars that are continually parked on the street overnight. Parking on the street is normally not an issue if it is occasional. It becomes an issue when a car is parked overnight for an extended period of time and is a more permanent condition. This is not permitted in our community.

I encourage you to fully utilize all of the services VanMor provides us. You can report areas that need mowing, street lights that are out, deed restriction violations, facilities that need repair, etc. If you have specific complaints that are not being addressed by VanMor, please let the HOA Board know by sending an email to board@hoa.com.



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ON ELDRIDGE NORTH

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2006-2007 School Calendar*

August 14	Meet the Teacher night
August 16	First Day of School
Sept. 4	Labor Day Holiday
Sept. 22	End of 1 st 6 weeks
Oct. 9	Professional Day/Parent Conferences
Nov. 3	End of 2 nd 6 weeks
Nov. 20-24	Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec. 20	End of 3 rd 6 weeks
Dec. 21-Jan 3	Student Holiday
January 4, 2006	School Resumes/First Day of 2 nd Semester
February 16	End of 4 th 6 weeks
March 12-16	Spring Break
April 5	End of 5 th 6 weeks
April 6	Student Holiday
April 27	Student Holiday
May 24	Last day of school

** Dates/Times subject to change*

Ann Knoche

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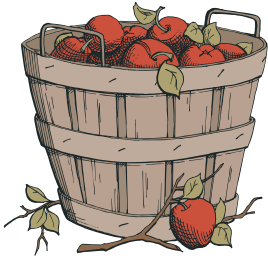
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Lakes on Eldridge North

LOEN Ladies Club



We invite all women of Lakes on Eldridge North to join the LOEN Ladies Club. We would love to see new members join, get involved and bring together the community.

Check us out on the web!
www.loenladiesclub.com
Our latest events include:

Book Club

We are working on our book list for 2007- come join us! We meet the 1st Monday of the month in the evening.

Please contact Anne Glendinning with any questions 832-667-7298 or aglendinning@houston.rr.com



Bridge

Our sessions are formally on the second Wednesday of each month at 1:00 pm. However, due to increasing interest, we are expanding our horizons for more frequent play. This is really a great group—very enthusiastic.

If you would like to join us, or if you desire further information, please call Babs Clingo at 713-983-7345.

Evening Bridge

Our sessions are the first Friday of each month and begin at 7:00 pm. We have a very compatible group of players and invite newcomers to join us.

If you would like to join us, or if you desire further information, please call Babs Clingo at 713-983-7345.



Chickless Hens

Are you “chickless”? Is your nest empty, or “nearly” empty? Join us Chickless Hens for lunch, field trips and lots of laughs. For more information contact Becky Vogel at kvogel2263@aol.com (713-856-6130).

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- Damp wipe cabinet doors
- Clean counters
- Hand wash floor
- Load dishwasher

Bathrooms

- Clean sinks, counters; change towels
- Clean, disinfect toilets, tubs, showers
- Hand wash, disinfect floors

All Rooms

- Pick up and straighten
- Dust sills, ledges, wall hangings
- Remove cobwebs
- Dust/vacuum furniture
- Vacuum floors, carpets
- Vacuum stairs
- Vacuum under beds
- Change linens, make beds
- Empty trash

Windows

- Clean entry window & one set of patio door windows
- Clean window over kitchen sink

832-593-7500

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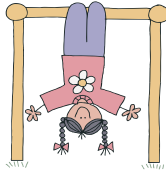
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LOEN Ladies Club

Children's Play Groups

Some of the Moms of LOEN have formed playgroups and regularly get together to support each other and let our children get to know each other through fun group activities. We would love to get know other parents in LOEN and their children. If you are interested in joining us, please email.



Contact the Playgroup Leaders for all the fun events!
Dina Agarwal: Playgroup Coordinator, zgolf@aol.com
Tracy Johnson: Infant (0 – 18 months) Playgroup leader, gippersmommy@houston.rr.com
Kris Vallee: Toddler (19 months to 2 years) Playgroup leader, krisvallee@aol.com
Lisa Killough :3 + Playgroup leader, lr_killough@yahoo.com

General Meeting

September 26th 7 PM, Recreation Center Club House. All LOEN Ladies Welcome!

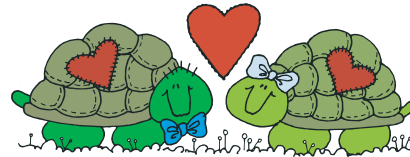
Come for a visit, meet your neighbors and get involved in your community. Come hear about our Vendors Boutique in the Fall and Holiday Party- December 1st.

Girls Night Out

Looking to get out on the town with just "The Girls?" Dying to attend the symphony, the ballet, Shakepeare in the Park, or some other Houston Happening and your spouse just isn't interested? We are the group for you!



Contact Lisa Ritchie for more information on the monthly Nights Out: lisa@pmc-usa.com



LOEN Couples Dinner Club

Join your neighbors and friends for an evening out.

If you are interested in joining the group, call or email us.

Darla Kitchen - 832-243-9871 djkitchen@hotmail.com

Reagan Vickich - 713-896-8133 reaganvickich@hotmail.com

Becky Vogel - 713-856-6130 kvogel2263@aol.com

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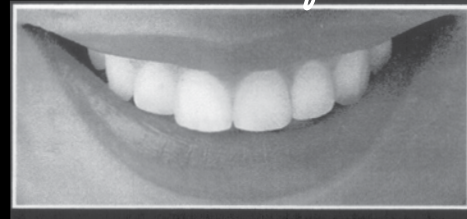
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Lakes on Eldridge North

The HOA 2006 Annual Meeting & Board of Director Elections will be held on Thursday, Sept 21st at the Kirk Elementary School at 7 pm

The notice of the meeting, including the proxy ballot, shall be mailed out at least 10 days but not more than 50 days prior to the meeting. We anticipate mailing the notice about 18 days in advance.

Proxy Form - the proxy form is in accordance with the Texas Non Profit Corp. Act- and allows for proper notice to be sent to all members via U.S. Mail. It has a selection of options for the homeowner to choose from should they plan to not attend the meeting.

The homeowner can:

1. Assign his proxy to the Secretary to vote as he has noted in the ballot section of the proxy (write in or incumbent)
2. Assign his proxy to the Secretary for quorum purposes only.
3. Assign this proxy to _____ (a named resident in good standing) or the Secretary to vote as the Secretary chooses

The night of the meeting:

The sign in table will be manned by Kim Stewart and a Volunteer resident. A prepared sign in sheet will be on hand with delinquent homeowners pre-marked (small highlighted dot by their names) and with proxy labeled on each lot that proxy was submitted for.

A quorum of 10% of the members must be present in person or by proxy - a total of 108 lots to be represented, in order for business to be conducted.

A ballot will be distributed to all homeowners in good standing, one ballot per home, as they sign in.

Write-In Candidates as well as the Incumbents names will be preprinted on the ballots - and nominations from the floor will be added by each member present to their ballot. All nominees will be given 2-3 minutes to speak in front of members, before casting of the votes occur.

A volunteer from the audience will be asked to assist in collecting and tallying the votes - Kim Stewart will also assist.

An Open Forum will be held after the election with an 8:30pm adjournment - The school is rented from 6:30-8:30pm. Sgt. Blenderman will be on hand.

If you are not able to attend the night of the meeting, please return your signed proxy to VanMor Properties.

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Lakes on Eldridge North

LOEN Curb Cut

August 14, 2006

RE: Lakes on Eldridge North CA

Dear Homeowner,

We appreciate the responses from the many residents who took the time to write us last year regarding the unauthorized cutting of the curb for back yard drainage.

After working with M.U.D. #370 Engineers, your Board of Directors is pleased to announce that limited curb cuts, done properly with Board approval and in accordance with engineering drawings, will now be permitted.

Since the streets in the community are part of the LOEN common area and are not public roadways, each homeowner in the community shares the cost of maintaining the streets. Allowing curbs to be cut by individual homeowners and contractors for drainage purposes jeopardizes the integrity of the curbs and roadways, resulting in higher maintenance costs for all homeowners and affects the overall curb appeal of the neighborhood.

A contractor will be working under the direction of the M.U.D #370 Engineers and your Board of Directors to implement the new curb cut design throughout your Community. One of the concerns your Board of Directors faced with this issue was how to appropriately apportion the cost of these repairs. In the LOEN residential design guidelines and approvals for any improvements from the Architectural Control Committee, homeowners are reminded in writing that curbs may not be cut or broken. Since these guidelines were in place since the inception of the neighborhood back in 1999, your Board of Directors felt that the individual homeowners affected should bear the cost of these repairs. Your board understands that there may be cases where the current homeowner did not cause the curb to be cut, however given the small dollar amount of the repair, your Board felt this was the most expeditious and equitable solution.

By repairing all the curb cuts at one time, LOEN is able to secure a very modest price per repaired drain. When this process is complete, homeowners who had curb cuts repaired to conform to the new standard are being asked by this letter to reimburse the Association \$85 for the actual cost of the repair. If you wish to effect the curb repairs yourself in accordance with the enclosed drawing or wish to speak to your Board of Directors regarding this proposed repair of

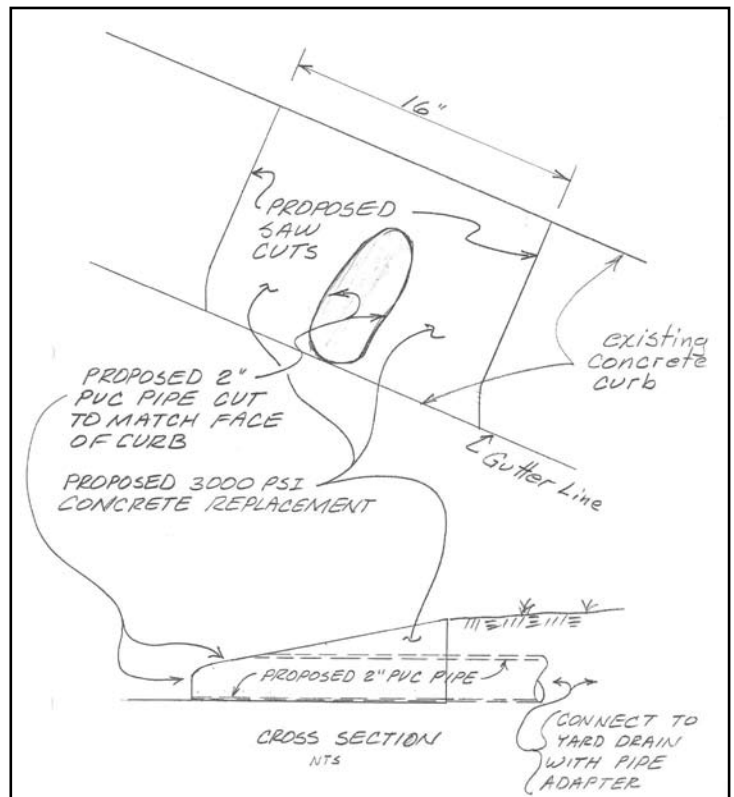
your curb, please notify Kate Loeffler at VanMor of your request by 30 September 2006.

After 30 September 2006, those who have not replied to VanMor in writing (email or postal service) of either their desire to repair the curb themselves or speak to their Board about this issue will be presumed to have assented to having their curb repaired in accordance with the guidelines mentioned above.

We hope that you choose to allow your curb to be repaired along with all the curbs in the neighborhood at one time by the contractor your Board of Directors has selected and will remit the \$85 upon completion of the job.

Sincerely,

Your LOEN Board of Directors



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Lakes on Eldridge North

MotherWise Group to Begin New Bible Study

The Lakes on Eldridge MotherWise group will kick off its fall study program of Denise Glenn's newest bible study entitled "Keeping the Secrets of Jesus" with a brunch on Monday, September 11, 2006, beginning at 10:00 a.m., at the home of Elizabeth Tobin, located at 12206 Summerland Ridge Lane (LOE-Indigo Falls). MotherWise is a non-denominational bible study group and all are welcome and invited to attend.

Denise Glenn is an author and speaker from Houston who founded MotherWise Ministries in 1980 to provide biblical and practical instruction for mothers of all ages. Her studies delve deep into God's word and provide practical advice and encouragement to help mothers and fathers raise godly children and achieve success in marriage.

Denise's newest study, "Keeping the Secrets of Jesus" is a six week course that will lead you to a deeper relationship with Christ based upon the teachings found in Matthew 6 on prayer, giving, and fasting.

The Lakes on Eldridge MotherWise group meets every other Monday in neighborhood homes from 10:00 a.m. to noon. The meetings begin with prayer and the presentation of the study segment, followed by small group prayer time, and will conclude with social time and light refreshments. Children are welcome at the meetings. The MotherWise meetings are a great way to meet other mothers and gain some spiritual enrichment.

The MotherWise group will hold seven meetings this fall on the following dates: September 11th (brunch), September 25th, October 9th, October 23rd, November 6th, November 27th, and December 4th. Complete schedules will be available at the brunch or by calling the leaders listed below.

In addition to the monthly meetings, the MotherWise group participates in a Thanksgiving service project by filling food bags for the Bear Creek Assistance Ministries. The group will also have a cookie exchange and luncheon on December 11, 2006.

The leaders of the MotherWise group are Kathy Prusak (713-937-7707) and Elizabeth Tobin (832-467-1369). Please feel free to contact us for further information about MotherWise. We hope to see you in September!

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

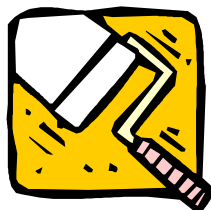
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LOEN resident

Lakes on Eldridge North

Sample Letter for Traffic Light Request

August 1, 2006

Jerry Eversole
Commissioner, Precinct 4
22540 Aldine Westfield Road
Spring, Texas 77373

RE: Traffic Signal at West Little York and Evergreen Trails / Enclave Vista

Dear Commissioner Eversole:

As a resident of Lakes on Eldridge North we are concerned by the difficulty of exiting our subdivision onto West Little York or entering our subdivision from West Little York. Drivers have to cross several lanes of traffic on a curve and there have been several accidents and many near misses due to lack of a traffic signal on West Little York at the intersection with Evergreen Trails on the north and Enclave Vista on the south.

For the safety of all drivers from our subdivision and neighboring subdivisions please consider this letter as our formal request that Harris County install a traffic signal at this intersection. Your consideration is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Name: _____

Address: _____

Houston, Texas 77041



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Lakes on Eldridge North

The Date is Set!

Saturday morning, October 28, 2006 is the date for the 5th Fairfield 5K for Life Fun Run/Walk benefiting the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

Plan on joining us at the Fairfield Athletic Club early Saturday morning for a jaunt through Fairfield's beautiful hike and bike trails. There will be medals and prizes raffled off. Look for details and entry forms in next month's newsletter. For sponsorship information, call Jane Lakatos at 281-373-9767 for the fun run/walk. This event benefits the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society helping to cure all blood-related cancers.

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LOEN Garden & Nature Club News

The LOEN Garden & Nature club is a group of neighborhood residents (guys and gals) who are interested in learning more about landscaping in our community, finding good resources, addressing yard and pest problems, learning new planting techniques, exchanging plants and participating in fun community activities. We would love for you to join us!

We meet every second Tuesday of the month at the clubhouse from 7:00 pm until 9:00 pm. If you are interested in joining, send Lisa Carpenter an email at lisacarpenter@houston.rr.com.

Our guest speaker in September is Anita Nelson from Nelson's Water Gardens. She will be discussing how to "Jazz up your Back Garden". Anita is a very popular speaker around town and we are very lucky to have her accept our invitation to speak to the club. This will be a very popular event so please come early for a good seat! You won't want to miss this one!

Our guest speaker in October is from Cabrera Farms and he will talk to us about growing Bonsai. Bonsai is an art of growing trees and plants in miniature forms. Have you ever wondered how they do that? Well come join us and find out!



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The LOEN Ladies Club is hosting a vendors boutique on October 28th at the Recreation Center Club House. If you have a craft that you'd like to sell, or other merchandise that would work well in a booth-type of market, please consider joining us for our "Market by the Lakes". All proceeds will benefit "Goodfellows", the Houston Chronicle Christmas charity.

Some details for you to consider:

- Booth rental fee is \$50 (earmarked for "Goodfellows") and all booth display materials and equipment must be provided by the vendor
- LOEN Ladies Club will sponsor all pre-event advertising, targeting shoppers within and outside of our neighborhoods
- Festive, pre-Christmas environment with food and fun for our shoppers
- Booth space is limited, so please reserve early by contacting Jude Ann Yehl at jyehl@houston.rr.com



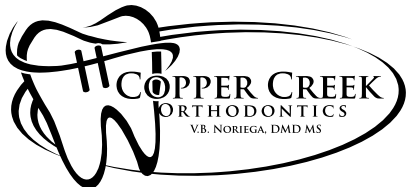
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Harris County Juvenile Curfew Ordinance

Commissioners Court approved the origin of the Juvenile curfew for Harris County on September 19, 1995. The curfew order for the unincorporated areas of the county became effective October 1, 1995.

The curfew includes all areas located in unincorporated Harris County. Juveniles under the age of 17 are subject to the Harris County Juvenile Curfew order.

The Juvenile Curfew is enforced seven days a week. The hour of enforcement is from 12 midnight to 6 a.m. in the morning. The exceptions to the curfew are:

- Accompanied by parent, guardian or custodian
- Engaged in lawful employment or traveling to or from employment
- Participating or traveling to or from school-sponsored or church-affiliated activities, recreational activities supervised by adults and sponsored by a government entity, civic, non-profit organization or similar entity that takes responsibility for the juveniles.

- On sidewalk of Juvenile's residence or sidewalk of next door neighbor, if neighbor does not complain

- Involved in an emergency

- In vehicle or aircraft involved in interstate travel with the consent of a parent, guardian, or custodian

- Married or previously married; or had disabilities of minority removed by a court of competent jurisdiction

Law enforcement officers will carefully assess each situation regarding a possible infraction of the juvenile curfew. If the juvenile is taken into custody, the juvenile may be transported to a processing center.

While at the processing center, the juvenile's parent, guardian or custodian will be contacted and asked to pick up the juvenile. If a parent, guardian or custodian cannot be located or does not pick up the juvenile, the juvenile will be transported to Chimney Rock Center operated by Children's Protective Services.

The juvenile can receive a citation, which is a Class C Misdemeanor up to \$500.00. In addition, the parent, guardian or custodian may also be issued a citation if they knowingly allow juvenile to violate curfew. Owner, operator and other person in control of a public place may be issued a citation if they knowingly permit juvenile to remain on premises during curfew hours.

If you live in one of the many corporate boundaries of a municipality, town and village located within Harris County, be sure and check with the Law Enforcement agency in your area for details of their juvenile curfew laws.

Many juveniles do not recognize the potential dangers they face by being on the streets during these times. The curfew will reduce the chances of these juveniles becoming a victim of crime.

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Sudoku

The goal is to fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. Each digit may appear only once in each row, each column, and each 3x3 box.

8		7			2		4	9
			3			7	1	
				6				
5				1		2		
			5		7			
	6							8
	7						8	
4				3	5			
	2	1			8			

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Lakes on Eldridge North

Genetic Clues To Cardiomyopathy's Origins Revealed In Mice

Baylor College of Medicine

HOUSTON – (Aug. 17, 2006) – A genetic discovery sheds new light on the cause of cardiomyopathy and sudden death in young adults, which originates in the previously overlooked right ventricle of the heart, said a researcher at Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) and Texas Children's Hospital (TCH) in Houston.

In a report that appears online today in the journal *Circulation Research*, Dr. Jeffrey Towbin, professor of pediatrics at BCM and chief of pediatric cardiology at TCH, reports that a study in mice identifies conclusively for the first time genetic origins of cardiomyopathy, one of the leading causes of sudden cardiac death in young adults.

"We are getting to the underlying cause of this disease," said Towbin, principal investigator of the study. "For the first time, we have taken a human disease gene and put it into an animal model so that we can study its mechanisms in greater detail."

Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Cardiomyopathy (ARVC) is a rare, progressive condition that causes diseased heart muscle and impairs cardiac function. In many cases, ARVC leads to fatigue, irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia), and, potentially, heart failure and sudden cardiac death.

In a previous study, Towbin and colleagues first identified mutations in the desmoplakin gene, which encodes a protein in the connecting junction between heart cells. In this study, funded by the National Institutes of Health and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, the authors

implanted a mutant human desmoplakin gene into mice, which resulted in the mice's cardiac integrity being compromised, leading to dilation of the right ventricle, buildup of scar and fatty tissue, and arrhythmia.

Towbin calls ARVC "underrecognized" in the United States primarily because of its relative newness and difficulty evaluating the right ventricle technically, which can lead to misdiagnosis and improper treatment. Statistics of its prevalence in the United States have yet to be determined, but in Italy the disease is known to be the leading cause of sudden cardiac death in otherwise healthy young adults.

"ARVC is underrecognized here in the United States because of the novelty of the disorder and the lack of advances in technology that assess the right ventricle," said Towbin. "But I predict that in the next several years this will be shown to be a key player in sudden cardiac death."

The new findings will help pediatric and adult cardiology experts better understand the root cause of ARVC and advance the care of patients with this specific abnormality, Towbin said.

"We now have the genetic ability – that is, making a diagnosis off of a blood test of the gene – to evaluate these patients from the perspective of the disease's origin," said Towbin. "Hopefully we will be able to engineer new targeted therapies on the basis of these findings."

Towbin's coauthors include first author Dr. Zhao Yang, of BCM, as well as contributors from Johns Hopkins University, University of Arizona, Harvard Medical School, and the University of Padua in Italy.



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Parents, Eat Your Words!

Are you pleased with your progress toward healthful nutrition and fitness habits but frustrated with your children's?

Do you suspect that the lunches you send to school are traded or thrown away? Do you shudder at the sight of your pantry shelves displaying high-fat snacks and sugary cereals that you vowed you would never buy? Can you really win the battle against advertising, peer pressure and kids' love affairs with sugar and fat?

The bad news and the good news

Kids today are fatter and less fit than previous generations. Between the mid-1960s and the late 1970s, obesity increased 54 percent among young children (ages six to 11) and 39 percent among adolescents (ages 12 to 17). Recent studies show that obesity has continued to increase into the '90s.

Food companies spend millions of dollars on television advertising to convince children that high-fat, high-sugar, processed foods are worth eating. Food is consumed because it's cool, fun or comes with a free toy rather than for its impact on health or even for its taste!

So what's a parent to do? Eat your words! The fact is that parents who have adopted a lifestyle that includes healthful foods and regular exercise are living role models for their children.

We know that the behaviors children see most often at home are the ones they will be most likely to adopt for themselves and parents' efforts to promote healthy food habits do make a difference.

The first step is to stop battling with your kids about food. You may need to slow the rate of change in your children's food choices and offer reasonable alternatives as you gradually reduce those high-fat, high-sugar foods. Be sure to include some of their favorite foods in daily meals.

Stack the deck

Family Goal Chart				
	Mom	Dad	Billy	Sally
Exercise				
M	*	*	*	*
T			*	*
W	*	*	*	*
T		*		*
F	*		*	
S	*	*	*	*
S				
Good food				
M	*	*	*	*
T	*	*		
W	*	*	*	
T			*	*
F	*		*	*
S				
S				

Much of nutrition is common sense. For instance, stock the kitchen with a majority of healthy items, keeping in mind that kids want some of their favorite foods, which may be sweet and/or salty.

Buy pretzels, which are low in fat, instead of greasy chips. Keep cut-up vegetables and ready-to-eat mini-carrots in the refrigerator. Sprinkle air-popped popcorn with grated parmesan cheese instead of butter.

A good way to get kids involved and committed to healthy eating habits is to involve them with the food shopping and preparation. There are lots of children's cookbooks on the market; select one that emphasizes ways to modify many favorite foods rather than eliminate them. Children who feel competent to select and prepare food will make more intelligent food choices.

Balance is everything

The key to keeping kids happy and healthy is to strike a balance between foods that are good for you and those that just taste good, between leisure or TV time and physical activity.

Which brings us to the other side of the healthy living equation. The most obvious impact of inactivity on kids is the strong association between the number of hours spent watching TV and the level of obesity among youngsters.

Make physical activity a family affair. Go for walks, fly kites, rollerblade around the neighborhood, play miniature golf or other sports. Anything that gets you moving together will no doubt be good for you, too.



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Lakes on Eldridge North

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The Sesame Street characters Bert and Ernie were named after characters in the film "It's a Wonderful Life."



The name of the principal of Riverdale High, where "Archie" comic book characters Archie, Jughead, Betty and Veronica were students, was Mr. Weatherbee.

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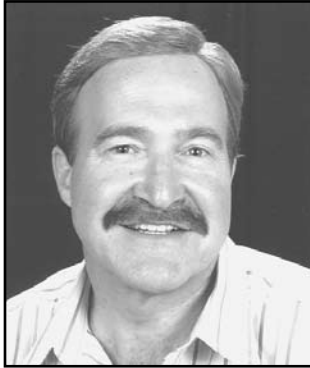
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