

## Travel the World without Leaving Your Hometown

*By Hosting a Foreign Exchange Student*

*By Heather Wells*

Who hasn't dreamed about walking among the Egyptian pyramids, or soaking in the sun on a beach in Spain, or wandering along the Great Wall of China? Every parent wants to give their children a taste of the world, but the economic reality of international air travel for a family, not to mention hotels, passports and food, makes it tough for most of us to consider except in our daydreams.

There is a way to give your children the world – without leaving your living room. How? Host a foreign exchange student from a country you've always admired! Fascinated by France? Curious about China? Intrigued by India? By welcoming an international student from one of these countries into your home, you instantly open a portal to a far off land.

"My husband and I have been hosting for the past three years and have enjoyed every minute of it!" said Vicki Odom, an Ayusa host mom from Pearland, Texas. "The various students we've had in our home have taught us a great deal about their home countries. The students also love learning about life in Texas and participate in a good deal on community service. Their latest service projects was volunteering to be Super Scoopers at the San Antonio Battle of Flowers Parade."

Foreign exchange students come from all over the world. Ayusa matches host families with students from more than 60 different countries including Argentina, China, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Japan, Lebanon, Norway, Pakistan, Sweden, Thailand, Tunisia and Turkey. All high school foreign exchange students are fully insured, bring their own spending money, and are proficient in English – and all high school exchange programs are regulated by the U.S. Department of State.

"We welcome host families of all shapes and sizes – families with young children, families with no children, empty nesters

whose children have left home, single parents and non-traditional families," says Connie Coutu, Regional Manager of Ayusa, a non-profit that promoting global learning and leadership through foreign exchange and study abroad opportunities for high school students. "The key requirements for a host family are to provide a safe and nurturing home environment, genuinely love children, and have a desire to learn more about a different culture."

Volunteer host families provide foreign exchange students a nurturing environment, three meals a day and a bedroom (either private or shared with a host sibling of the same gender). Each host family and student is supported by a professionally trained community representative who works with the family and student for the entire program. All interested host families must pass a criminal background check and a home visit by an exchange organization.

Interested host families are required to fill out an application, pass a background check and interview with a local exchange program representative in their homes. Once accepted to a program, host families can view profiles of students to find the right match for their family.

"Hosting an exchange student is a life-changing experience – for the student, the host family, and the host community," says Coutu. "There is no better way to teach your children about the world around them than through welcoming an international high school student into your home."

Ayusa is currently accepting applications for families to host an exchange student for the 2012 – 2013 school year. For more information about hosting a high school foreign exchange student, please contact Ayusa at 1.888.552.9872 or by visiting the website :

**[www.ayusa.org](http://www.ayusa.org)**

## 4th of July Event

*By: James Gilmer, Board Member*

It's the Fourth of July, Flags are Flying High, & Fireworks Light up the Sky! It's that time again for the Briarhills community 4th of July event. We will be providing food, entertainment and our parade for the kids. We are looking for all of our neighbors to participate this year. Please plan to allow the kids to participate in the parade and design their bikes, wagons and pets to illustrate their 4th of July spirit. After the parade, we will have Food and beverages for everyone. Also, this year we will have games and entertainment for the kids. We look forward to seeing you this 4th of July to celebrate our independence and our community.



## Cypress-Tomball Democrats Meeting

*Features Harris County Chairman*



The next Cypress-Tomball Democrats monthly meeting will be on Tuesday, June 18th, 2013. It will be held at Rudy's Grill & Cantina, 11760 Grant Rd., Cypress, TX 77429, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

June's guest speaker will be Lane Lewis, who is the chairman of the Harris County Democratic Party. He will discuss "Engage 365" which is the Harris County Democratic Party's new non-election season, civic engagement program, designed to keep Democrats active and engaged in the community by taking part in civic-oriented, community service projects in communities and neighborhoods.

All are welcome to attend and to join this growing club, which meets on the third Tuesday of every month. For more information, visit the website at [www.cytomdems.com](http://www.cytomdems.com) or contact Glenn Etienne at [cytomdems@yahoo.com](mailto:cytomdems@yahoo.com).

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## Health Briefs

### *Older adults express anxiety in different ways*

While there are several factors that can cause anxiety in older adults, it can be difficult to identify because they express anxiety in unique ways, according to an expert at Baylor College of Medicine.

According to Dr. Melinda Stanley, professor in the Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at BCM, common types of anxiety disorders in adults include:

- Generalized anxiety
- Specific fears and phobias
- Social phobias
- Post-traumatic stress disorder

Anxiety symptoms that older adults and their family members should watch for include:

- Shortness of breath
- Increased heart rate
- Dizziness
- Difficulty sleeping
- Muscle aches and pains

Anxiety is not a normal part of aging and can be treated. The first important step is to have a physical exam.

Cognitive behavioral therapy is a treatment option that teaches learning skills to manage anxiety. Skills that can help reduce anxiety include relaxation, changing thoughts, facing fears, learning how to solve problems and learning behaviors to improve sleep.



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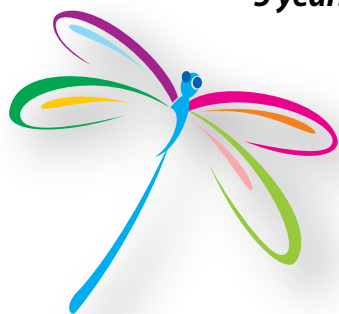


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**July 21:** Colin's Hope Kids Got2Swim Pure Austin Quarry Lake <http://www.tinych.org/got2swimkids>

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## Allergy Prevention & Management Tips

It is important for parents to remember the basics about prevention and management of allergies, said a pediatrician from Baylor College of Medicine.

Dr. Armando Correa, an assistant professor of pediatrics at BCM and a pediatrician at Texas Children's Hospital, offered the following tips:

- Seek immediate medical attention for difficulty breathing, swelling of the face, tongue or other extremities.
- Consider short-term medication for symptoms such a runny nose, itchy eyes or sneezing.
- If symptoms persist, contact your pediatrician.
- For children under the age of 2 experiencing allergies, always seek medical attention.
- Help manage environmental allergies by avoiding places that have just been cleaned or places where pets frequent.

Correa also offered tips on food allergies:

- If your child has multiple or severe allergies, they should always carry an injectable medication.
- Always read the food labels and be aware of where foods are manufactured.

-Consider allergy testing for children with severe or multiple allergies.

Always consult a pediatrician on questions related to allergy prevention and management.

A large advertisement banner. The top half features a photograph of a smiling woman with dark hair and a young girl with braids, both smiling. To the right of the photo, the text "PUT A NEW SPRING IN YOUR STEP" is written in large, white, serif capital letters. Below this text is a square QR code. Underneath the QR code, in small text, it says "Scan and sell us your car or search our inventory". The bottom half of the banner has a blue background with the text "SELL US YOUR CAR!" in large, white, serif capital letters. Below that is a yellow background with the text "TEXASDIRECTAUTO.COM" in large, black, serif capital letters, and "We make buying and selling fun!" in a smaller, italicized, black serif font. A small Texas state flag logo is to the left of the website name.

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Briarhills.org is the official web site for the Briarhills Property Owners Association (POA) and the Briarhills Home Owners Association (HOA). The POA page provides loads of information specific to our Association. The Local Info page provides information for everyone in the Briarhills community, including our common Facilities on four acres of land. Some of that, plus more changeable information, is highlighted on the Home page. If something is missing or incorrect, use the Contact Us page to tell us. To see which businesses support your community, visit our Sponsors page or the rotating ads at the bottom of the Home page.

Everyone in the Briarhills community should visit Briarhills.org and Register. When you Login you have access to various elements on the web site that are not public, such as surveys, questionnaires, commenting on articles, posting on the Photos page, and important official information. The Site Policies page shows our strict privacy protections.

We welcome ads from our neighbors, our contractors, and local businesses. Our web site serves 860 homes in the POA and HOA areas of Briarhills, including Oaks of Parkway and Meadowbriar. In the first quarter of 2013 we averaged 465 unique visitors each month. The list of registered users is growing, and we communicate with them by email.

To inquire about advertising on Briarhills.org, you can use the Contact Us page on Briarhills.org, or phone the POA Office 281-558-7422. Revenue from these ads helps defray our cost of communicating with Association members and the neighborhood.



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