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Serving the citizens of:

Armstrong, Carson,
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Deaf Smith, Donley, Gray,
Hall, Hansford, Hartley,
Hemphill, Hutchinson,
Lipscomb, Moore,
Ochiltree, Oldham, Potter,
Randall, Roberts, Sherman,
and Wheeler counties

TPC STARS

Amy Garcia, Director, Autism Program

Congratulations to the TPC Stars basketball team! They did very well at the Special Olympics Area Region 16 Basketball Competition on March 3 & 4 in Amarillo.

- ◆ Stars basketball team 1 took 1st place (undefeated)
- ◆ Stars team 2 took 3rd place
- ◆ Stars Team 3 took 2nd place
- ◆ Stars team 4 took 3rd place.

- ◆ Tim Hunter
- ◆ Steve Lasher
- ◆ Bonnie Lasher
- ◆ Joe Simpson
- ◆ Alvin Martinez
- ◆ Kevin Peachy



These individuals have full time jobs and dedicate their time on weekends and some on weekdays to help us with our team. We are always looking for additional volunteers. The more the better! To volunteer, please contact Amy Garcia at 351.3378.



An extra special thank you to the volunteers that give of their time and talents.



Did You Know?

A "Did You Know" section will be featured regularly in an effort to inform and educate employees of policies, procedures or news of importance.

Texas Panhandle Centers may grant up to twelve (12) weeks, or one (1) academic semester of unpaid leave of absence during any twelve (12) month (one year) period to eligible employees in accordance with TPC Personnel Policies and Procedures and the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. If ever a conflict in interpretation should occur between these policies and the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, the Act shall prevail.

Employees shall not be eligible to accrue PTO during the period the employee is on full-time leave or part-time leave of absence.



Employees shall not accrue any PTO during a pay period if they worked less than eighty hours in the pay period.

Employees who take a leave of absence without pay for educational purposes must agree to continue their employment with TPC for a period of at least two (2) years, or repay TPC the cost of all premiums for health and dental coverage provided during their leave of absence without pay.

For a full explanation of TPC's Leave of Absence Policy, visit TPC's intranet page.

Congratulations!

The following employees were recognized through the Performance Enhancement Program for one or more of the following: Core Competencies, Safety, Critical Thinking, Communication, Client Rights, Continuous Quality Improvement, Professional Behavior, Customer Service:

Sarah Randolph, IDD Service Coordination
Elvire Sanders-Blakemore, IDD Service Coordination

Janie Cobb, Alternate Living, answered last month's questions correctly and was randomly selected to win a \$25 gift card from Amarillo National Bank.



To claim your card, contact Joyce Lopez at 806.351.3308 or email: joyce.lopez@txpan.org.

Congratulations!

WHY GREEN?

During the month of March, nearly 40 million Americans who trace their roots back to Ireland will celebrate their history and the contributions of their immigrant ancestors through, dancing, songs, humor and especially with parades. St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, died on March 17, 491 A.D. The Irish commemorate his day with festivities.

St. Patrick's Day is not a national holiday but green was the symbolic color traditionally worn by everyone who didn't want to be "pinched."

Why green? The Irish call heaven "Green Erin" and their country the "Emerald Island,"

This year marks New York's 251st St. Patrick's Day Parade. It will be marched in honor of all American Veterans from every branch of service and every war conflict.

*March is Irish American
Heritage Month*

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month thanks to a 1987 Presidential Proclamation from Ronald Reagan. A lot has changed since then. More people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) are living and thriving in their communities rather than institutions, there are more opportunities, more protections and more respect for and inclusion of people with IDD.

Body Data

- ◆ Your nose can remember 50,000 scents.
- ◆ Like fingerprints, tongue prints are unique
- ◆ A new baby has 350 bones. Because bones fuse together during growth an adult has only 206 bones
- ◆ A pair of feet has 500,000 sweat glands. They could produce more than a pint of sweat a day.



"Daddy and I had to use your college fund. But on a positive note, you won't have to worry about good grades anymore."

Medicaid Managed Care

Sandy Skelton, Chief Operating Officer

Effective March 1, Medicaid managed care expanded across Texas in an attempt to control Medicaid expenses for approximately 3 million current Texans. Texas is growing very rapidly (now 27 million residents), and with that growth comes additional Medicaid recipients. The Texas Legislature is requiring the Texas Health & Human Services Commission to contract with private managed care companies on a capitated basis, which means that those companies will contract for a set amount of money each year and their Medicaid expenses must be less than the contracted amount for them to make a profit.

The STAR managed care initiative began in five Panhandle counties (Potter, Randall, Deaf Smith, Carson and Hutchinson) in September, 2011 and it is those same counties that converted to STAR+PLUS in March, a similar initiative but with a larger group of Medicaid recipients. Also in March, Medicaid recipients residing in our other 16 counties were required to participate in STAR.

Spring Cleaning



Good Housekeeping provides a quick and easy tip for cleaning household ceiling fans.

Tools: Old table cloth or sheet, extendable duster or step stool, Micro-fiber cloth

To get rid of the grime that all ceiling fans seem to collect (created by dust clinging to greasy airborne particles), place an old fabric tablecloth or sheet underneath the fan; a shower cap to protect your hair from debris

also isn't a bad idea. With an extendable duster, go over the tops and bottoms of the blades to capture loose dust. Or just grab a step stool, and dust with a dry micro-fiber cloth on both sides of blades. Shake out the cloth, lightly dampen it; wipe blades again, this time picking up any oily film. Give glass fixtures a pass with a clean section of cloth while you're up there.



Tax Filing Deadline: April 17

The Internal Revenue Service opened the 2012 tax filing season by announcing that taxpayers have until **APRIL 17** to file their tax returns. The IRS encourages taxpayers to e-file as it is the best way to ensure accurate tax returns and get faster refunds. For more information visit IRS.gov.

White Hat Award



The IDD Service Coordination department would like to present this month's White Hat Award to **Wilma Valdez with IDD Nursing**. During a crisis with one of our clients, she showed compassion and patience. She took the time to do what she could to help the client in distress.

It is evident to our department that Wilma is a kind-hearted person and this shows when she is dealing with our clients. Thank you Wilma for all you do.

Sharon Guinn for IDD Service Coordination

March is National Social Worker's Month

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) celebrates National Professional Social Work Month in March. NASW recognizes and honors social workers in communities everywhere for their dedication and passion in improving people's lives.



HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

IRISH CREAM CHEESE SUGAR COOKIES



Ingredients:
1 cup white sugar
1 cup butter, softened
1 (3 oz.) package cream cheese, softened
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 egg yolk

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour

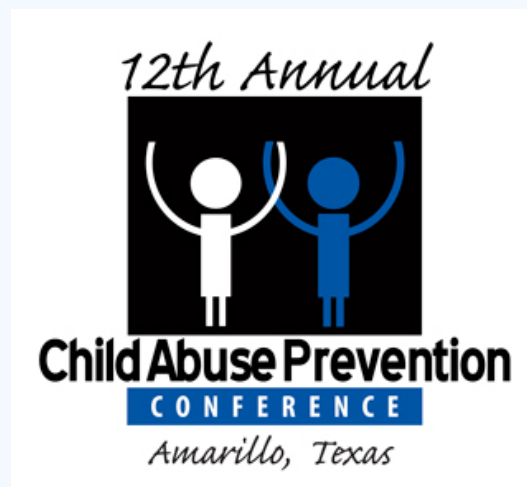
Directions:

1. In a large bowl, combine the sugar, butter, cream cheese, salt, almond and vanilla extracts and egg yolk. Beat until smooth. Stir

in flour until well blended. Chill the dough for 8 hours or overnight.

2. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
3. On a lightly floured surface roll dough 1/3 at a time to 1/8 inch thickness, refrigerating remaining dough until ready to use. Cut into desired shapes with lightly floured cookie cutters. Place 1 inch apart on ungreased cookie sheets.
4. Bake 7 to 10 minutes or until light golden brown. Cool completely before frosting.

Nutritional Information: Per serving: Calories: 53, Fat 3.1g, Cholesterol: 11mg



**Wounded Spirits & Healing Paths:
Untreated Traumatized Children & the Scary Adults They Become**
with Dr. James Garbarino

Thursday, March 29, 2012
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Amarillo College West Campus Lecture Hall

Cost: \$20.00 (lunch provided)
PRPC Sponsored

Visit: www.actx.edu/cj for registration information

Welcome these New Employees...

Yazmin Ortiz	Community Living
Brittany Riles	Devon Group Home
Mary Villarreal	Utilization Management (PRN)
Shonda Cummins	Utilization Management (PRN)
Shandricka Bunton	Respite Services
Kathy Lundegreen	IDD Nursing
Hollie Oelkers-Brown	BH Homeless Services
Destiny Smith	Canode Group Home
Phillip Vasquez	Data Management



Keep Critical Documents Safe and Accessible

In case of fire or an immediate evacuation order, could you quickly find all of your important documents? If you're like most people, your birth certificate, marriage license, insurance papers, mortgage and retirement fund information are in several different places.

Not only could this cause problems for you in an emergency, if they are needed by your family at a difficult time, their search could be difficult and frustrating. The best way to store critical documents is to keep them in a fire proof cabinet or safe.

Divide them into categories and mark each one clearly in case your family has to locate them on your behalf. Include:

- **Key contacts:** phone numbers, addresses for family members, banks, life, home and auto insurance providers.
- **Identification documents:** birth certificate, adoption papers, a copy of your drivers license, Social Security card, marriage li-

cense or civil union certificates.

- **Emergency information:** whatever would be needed if you became seriously ill or injured, such as living wills, care proxies, beneficiary forms, IRAs, 401(k)s, last will and testament, burial instructions, cemetery plot and deeds or prepaid cremation documents, and military discharge papers.

• **Insurance policies:** life insurance policies and documents, health and accident ID cards and claim records, mortgage insurance policies, annuity statements, beneficiary forms and any long term care policies.

- **Financial paperwork:** checks, bank statements, mortgages, auto and other loan information, credit card statements, appraisals of valuable items, rental or lease agreements, investments, real estate deeds or titles of ownership and last year's tax returns.

It is a good idea to review the information with those who would need to access to it.



Irish Hospitality:

*“There are no strangers here,
only friends that have not yet
met.”*

*William Butler Yeats,
Author and Nobel Prize Winner*



Articles, or suggestions for this publication may be submitted by the 1st of each month to:

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Phone: (806) 351-3308 Fax: (806) 351-3345 Email: joyce.lopez@txpan.org

Moneywise...

CREDIT SCORE BENEFITS

The maximum FICO credit score is 850, but only 18 percent of FICO's 200 million consumers were rated 800 or higher in 2011. People with a score of 780 may search for ways to get a higher number. It's the new status symbol.



If you have a credit score between 620 and 690, there are big benefits in doing all you can to increase it, such as paying bills on time and reducing debt to keep your ratio of debt-to-credit limit at 30 percent or less. Anything under 30 percent is a very good debt-to-credit limit ratio.

With each 10 points your FICO score increases between 620 and 690, you get better loan and mortgage interest rates,

and lower car insurance premiums.

When your credit score reaches 750 to 760, there are fewer benefits to making it any higher, because you are assumed to be a good credit risk. The national median credit score is 711.

To obtain a **FREE** credit report visit: www.annualcreditreport.com

The Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) requires credit bureaus to provide you with a free copy of your credit report, at your request, once every 12 months. There are three nationwide consumer reporting companies: Equifax, Experian, and Trans Union.

Answer the questions correctly and your name will be entered in a random drawing to be eligible to win a \$25 gift card.

- I. When is the next Child Abuse Prevention Conference?
- II. Where can you obtain a free copy of your credit report?
- III. It is best to store critical documents in a _____.



Submit your answers to joyce.lopez@txpan.org. Deadline for responses is the 5th of the following month. You must type "Monthly Drawing" in the email subject line to be eligible. For those that do not have a computer, entries may be submitted via interoffice mail. The same requirements apply for hard copy submissions.