

# Wellness Notes

January, February, March 2010

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR CLIENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE WRIGHT HOUSE WELLNESS CENTER



The Austin Chapter of The International Special Events Society (ISES) will hold *CulinART: A Fantasy of the Healing Arts* benefitting The Wright House Wellness Center..

“The theme for the evening is “Nature’s Labyrinth” and will feature aspects of our planet’s four natural elements – earth, air, fire and water. Guests may also look forward to cocktails, hors d’oeuvres, a four course plated dinner and a silent, live and fine art auction. There will also be a live band, interactive chef demonstrations and surprise performances throughout the evening.”

CulinART combines culinary delights with artwork in an elaborate evening of altruistic fun. The food is prepared by top chefs and is accompanied by a live, silent and art auction in the main entry room. Guests will have the opportunity to bid on many different items of art such as painting, sculpture, jewelry, gift certificates, services, etc.... Please go to [www.thewrighthouse.org](http://www.thewrighthouse.org) for more info or how to purchase tickets and sponsorships.

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## Upcoming Events....

<b>CulinART</b>	<b>March 11, 2010</b>
<b>Hill Country Ride for AIDS</b>	<b>April 24, 2010</b>

## Hill Country Ride for AIDS—April 24th 2010

It’s that time of year to start preparing for the Hill Country Ride for AIDS. For those who don’t know, this is a fundraiser which benefits 10 local HIV/AIDS non-profit organizations in the Austin area including your own Wright House Wellness Center. The Wright House would like to extend an invitation for you to support Team Wright House in any capacity you can. Whether it is volunteering at the event, biking through the beautiful Hill Country of Central Texas, or donating funds to Team Wright House, your support would be more than welcome and greatly appreciated. Check out Team Wright House at [www.hillcountryride.org](http://www.hillcountryride.org) and search under “find a rider, crew or team”.



As a rider, you can choose the distance you see fit to ride (10, 45, 65 or 100 miles). If you feel like you need training in order to ride, there is a training program available. For general information, go to [www.hillcountryride.org](http://www.hillcountryride.org) for more information on other ways you can help this great cause. Help us reach our goal of \$700,000 at this year’s ride. We look forward to seeing you there!



## How Women Cope With HIV/AIDS

By Amanda Morris, Northwestern University in RedOrbit.com

### Northwestern University associate professor Celeste Watkins-Hayes studies women with HIV/AIDS and the economic resources that help them effectively manage their health

When people picture the faces of famous Americans who are personally affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, they tend to see Magic Johnson, Ryan White, Rock Hudson or Greg Louganis, to name a few. Seldom, if ever, is the deadly virus associated with the face of a woman.

Now, in a new study that's the first of its kind, Celeste Watkins-Hayes is examining how women cope economically with the disease, and her findings could influence today's health care debate.

"For a long time, women with HIV were somewhat invisible in the research field and in our common knowledge," said Watkins-Hayes, associate professor of African American studies and sociology at Northwestern University. "AIDS and HIV got tagged as a 'man's disease' early on in the epidemic, even though there were women being infected as well."

In her study, Watkins-Hayes is exploring the economic experiences and related social processes of women living with HIV/AIDS in Chicago. By following a group of women over the course of two years, she plans to uncover which economic situations allow infected women to manage their health most effectively and continue to contribute to society.

Watkins-Hayes' previous research showed that women living with the virus were able to find resilience despite their situations, but having economic stability was a key ingredient to doing so. Most of the women in the study received health care, medication and social services through the Ryan White Care Act, which is the largest provider of assistance for people with HIV/AIDS in the United States. With funds intact, women were better able to care for their children and prevent HIV from developing into full-blown AIDS.

"In the absence of those resources, the lives of these women would have been devastated," said Watkins-Hayes. "When they didn't have to worry about where their medications and other basic needs were coming from, they could focus on their families and personal wellness. But that is not the case for everybody living with HIV in the U.S."

The new study will look beyond access to medications to explore other economic resources that help women effectively manage their health. When women do not have stable incomes large enough to cover expenses, their focus can move from protecting their health to gathering resources to survive. They may be more likely to live in impoverished neighborhoods where crime and drugs are prominent, and also rely on intimate partners for their basic financial needs. This puts them in situations where they may be exposed to non-monogamous partners or sex work to meet their financial needs, which can further spread the virus.

"Much of the work we're doing across the country and globally shows there is a relationship between poverty and HIV in terms of economic disadvantage creating a social context of risk," Watkins-Hayes said.

Watkins-Hayes will follow women from all demographic backgrounds and compare their economic profiles. Among the groups she will study are women who take care of themselves with government funds or disability benefits from social security, women who participate in the labor market, women who receive help from non-profit organizations and women who rely on a variety of sources to make ends meet.

"When we know what works, then we can figure out how to intervene with policy and programs to keep this epidemic from exploding completely," she said.

As the research is conducted, Watkins-Hayes will disseminate the findings through meetings, conferences and a series of papers. She also plans to create a Web site and policy briefs where people can follow the progress of her work.

"A whole arm of this study is dedicated to communicating to the public about what we're doing and how we're doing it," she said. "I don't want the community to feel like this research happened in an ivory tower and ended up in a journal that is only read by academics."

Funded by an Early Career Development (CAREER) award from the National Science Foundation (NSF), Watkins-Hayes will begin interviewing research subjects this winter.

## Puzzles

### Sudoku

Each row, column, and 3 x3 block must contain one of the numbers from 1 to 9. No number may appear more than once in any row, column, or 3 x3 block. When you've filled the entire grid, the puzzle is solved.

### Wonderful Winter

Winter is officially here! Find each of the wintry words below in the diagram. Words can be up, down, forward, backward, or diagonal. Good luck!

C	O	C	O	C	R	C	O	L	L	S	L	S	E	W
F	A	C	O	L	C	S	E	P	F	G	L	C	I	G
E	R	H	O	C	O	R	C	C	N	O	O	C	O	T
A	E	O	M	F	C	O	A	I	R	O	W	S	P	F
N	R	L	S	C	C	O	L	D	P	E	C	S	F	I
E	L	I	W	T	C	G	P	S	A	M	C	S	D	C
E	L	D	P	O	G	R	E	I	N	M	Y	O	N	O
O	O	A	C	U	N	V	R	E	M	C	F	L	N	I
P	R	Y	N	E	O	S	I	O	D	L	G	S	O	R
O	E	S	W	L	S	S	F	W	E	A	Y	E	E	F
L	O	O	G	C	N	R	Y	I	C	H	C	I	O	D
T	L	I	G	I	A	I	L	Y	S	C	O	F	L	L
L	S	C	G	C	C	O	C	P	N	Y	O	O	S	
O	L	O	S	I	I	I	I	E	S	Y	T	M	P	S
C	S	D	R	N	I	O	S	P	C	S	M	U	O	T

Cocoa  
Cold  
Fireplace  
Frost

Gloves  
Holidays  
Icicle  
Olympics

Scarf  
Snow  
Snuggling  
Soup

## HIV Activist, UNAIDS Staffer Eric Sawyer Carries the Olympic Torch

from Poz.com

Eric Sawyer, a founding member of activist group ACT UP New York and the civil society partnerships advisor with UNAIDS, carried the Olympic flame in Calgary, Canada, on January 20 as part of the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay. The Winter Olympic Games will be held February 12 to 28.

"I am a long-term survivor of HIV and have been fortunate to have been able to buy almost 30 years of life after becoming symptomatic with HIV in 1981, because I have had access to the latest medical treatment and care," Sawyer said. "The fact I am still able to run a segment of the relay is a clear example of the need to provide everyone living with HIV with the information, treatment, care and support."

For the Vancouver games, UNAIDS will distribute HIV education, prevention and awareness packages to volunteers, workers and athletes. The packages will also contain male and female condoms.

## US fully lifts HIV travel ban



Bay Area Reporter—Published 01/07/2010  
by Bob Roehr

*Clemens Ruland, right, and Hugo Bausch are expected to land at JFK airport Thursday.*

The U.S. HIV travel and immigration ban was officially lifted Monday, January 4, 22 years after first going into effect. South Korea also lifted its HIV ban on the same day, leaving only a handful of authoritarian countries that still use HIV status as a factor in controlling who crosses their borders.

Jesse Helms, the late reactionary senator from North Carolina, had championed the ban. In 1987 he pushed for a regulation imposing the ban, then in 1993 convinced Congress to codify it into law. HIV was the only disease specifically named within the immigration statute as reason for denial of entry.

HIV-positive individuals could obtain a special waiver to visit the United States and many did. But others declined to do so out of fear of discrimination within their own country if their status became known.

The successful push to eliminate the travel ban was part of reauthorization of PEPFAR, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, which Congress passed in the summer of 2008. The Bush administration supported that removal.

That administration began the lengthy and tedious process to change regulations required under the ban. The Obama administration continued steps in that process, though sometimes not as rapidly as supporters of lifting the travel ban would have liked.

Last month the International AIDS Society announced that it would bring the XIX International AIDS Conference to Washington, D.C. in July 2012. It had last held the biennial meeting in the U.S. in San Francisco in 1990 but subsequently boycotted a return to the U.S. because of the travel ban.

Immigration Equality spokesman Steve Ralls said they anticipate that the first HIV-positive person to enter the U.S. after the ban has been lifted will be one-half of a Dutch couple. Clemens Ruland, 45, who is HIV-positive, and Hugo Bausch, 50, who is HIV-negative, are scheduled to land at JFK airport in New York on the afternoon of January 7.

Ruland won an essay contest sponsored by an AIDS organization in the Netherlands for their clients, with a trip to New York as the prize. Ralls acknowledged that selection of Ruland as "the first" is "pretty arbitrary," but he said hundreds of people had contacted Immigration Equality about the pending changes in U.S. policy and Ruland and Bausch are the first of that group to hit

## Word Search Answers



## 4th Annual Jingle Bell Jubilee

By Kathleen McCann

Bright lights. Tall hair. Ham. These were just some of the things to see at The Wright House Wellness Center's Fourth Annual Jingle Bell Jubilee, a rousing night of music, dance and delicious food held on December 17th. Before the Big Show clients were invited as guests to dinner with plates of turkey, ham and desserts donated by Magnolia Cafe. By eight o'clock, friends and WHWC supporters filed in to enjoy the show hosted by the very funny Rob Faubion and JoeLane Schumann, clad in festive green and red suits.

The first act of the evening was the Capital City Men's Chorus, who beautifully sang a few well loved Christmas carols. Next, SoFonda St. John performed "Happy," and then joined Rob and JoeLane at the mic to emcee. The Wright House Wellness Center's very own Magnolia Thunder performed "I Am Changing" to a rapt crowd. The audience clapped and hollered to every hand gesture and high note as Magnolia brought down the house.

The mood quieted down as Brett Bachus played beautiful Christmas melodies on the piano, and then rose again as The Holy Cross Liturgical Dancers spun and twirled on the stage and then danced into the crowd. The evening also featured some of the United Court of Austin's finest, such as Jaycie Beringer, Simone Riviera, Deedee Davis, Empress Rona Bare-It and Emperor Eric Beringer. The River City Pops closed the show, singing and dancing to two numbers from their upcoming spring show.

The evening was organized by volunteers, who decorated the hall, served food, and acted as stage crew. Volunteer and Office Manager Mark Johansen was very pleased with the event's outcome. "Many thanks to all the volunteers and performers who made the night a huge success," he said. "And also to Magnolia Cafe, who donated a delicious holiday dinner for all of our clients."

We hope to see you there next year, to kick off the holidays in style!



## Calendar of Events

Volunteer Club 6-8pm, every Monday  
8101 Cameron Road, Suite 105  
If you are interested volunteering at the Wright House, call Mark Johansen at (512)236-8901 or e-mail [mark@thewrighthouse.org](mailto:mark@thewrighthouse.org). One-time attendance at a volunteer orientation is required. Please check our calendar for dates and times.

**January – International Quality of Life Month**  
30th—Hill Country Ride for AIDS—Cocoa Social

**February – National Condom Month/American Heart Month**

5<sup>th</sup> – The Care Communities “Care Partner Art Show”  
6-9pm  
5<sup>th</sup>— National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day will be held from 9 AM till 3 PM at the Montopolis Recreation Center located at 1200 Montopolis Drive  
Go to [www.blackaidsgiving.org](http://www.blackaidsgiving.org) for information about various events in and around Austin)  
13<sup>th</sup>—United Court of Austin's Valentine's Day Show with Magnolia Thunder at Charlies. Show starts at 8pm  
14<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> – National Condom Week  
14<sup>th</sup> – Chinese New Year – Year of the Tiger  
14<sup>th</sup>—Valentine's Day  
17<sup>th</sup> - Volunteer Orientation - 6-9pm  
20<sup>th</sup>—ASA Viva Las Vegas

**March – National Nutrition Month/Spiritual Wellness Month**

12<sup>th</sup> - National Women's and Girls' HIV/AIDS Awareness Day  
11<sup>th</sup> - CulinART [www.thewrighthouse.org](http://www.thewrighthouse.org)  
14<sup>th</sup> – Daylight Savings Time ends – Spring forward  
15<sup>th</sup> – National Napping Day (to recoup from Daylight Savings Time ending)  
17<sup>th</sup> - Volunteer Orientation – 6-9pm  
21<sup>st</sup> – International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination  
27<sup>th</sup> – Earth Hour occurs this day

**April**

24<sup>th</sup> - Hill Country Ride For AIDS

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## Volunteer Spotlight: Kathleen McCann

By Kristen McDuffie

Kathleen McCann, a native of Maine, moved to Austin in 2006 after graduating from the University of Massachusetts. While working in Austin, she felt that she needed more of an opportunity to get involved in the community and really make a difference. So her search began to find a meaningful and fun organization at which she could combine her interests for women's rights, gay rights, and HIV/AIDS awareness. After some searching on the internet, she found The Wright House Wellness Center and began volunteering in March of 2009. "There was a volunteer orientation coming up, so I was able to get involved right away."

For the past ten months, Kathleen has been an active member of the volunteer program, attending weekly volunteer club meetings and helping to coordinate many special events and fundraisers. One of Kathleen's very first assignments as a WHWC volunteer was to help build the award-winning float for the Austin Pride Parade in 2008. After walking in the parade and watching the float win the Grand Marshall Award, Kathleen knew the fun was just beginning.

She's since been involved in several events including the Summer Soiree, The Wright House Wellness Center's annual summer gathering for clients, staff, volunteers, and board members, where she helped scoop ice cream and load up the toppings at the ice cream sundae bar. Kathleen also played an active role in last year's Jingle Bell Jubilee, helping to plan for the event, hanging posters around town, and running the spotlight during the show.

In addition to helping with special events, Kathleen can often be found assembling condom packets or folding newsletters during Monday night volunteer club meetings. "I think that Monday night volunteer club makes it easy for newcomers, because it's guaranteed that if you show up that night, you'll have something to do." When she's not volunteering at the Wright House, Kathleen enjoys writing, playing tennis, dancing, and hitting the town to soak up Austin's nightlife!

Kathleen is a dedicated volunteer who has become an incredible asset to the volunteer team. "I love being a volunteer at The Wright House, because it's introduced me to so many great people and it's gotten me in touch with a part of the Austin community that I never knew existed." Thanks Kathleen for all your hard work!!

## HATHA YOGA BEGINNERS' SERIES

James Saenz—Instructor

**Hatha Yoga** is the most widely practiced form of yoga in the world. Hatha Yoga uses postures (asana) and conscious breathing (pranayama) in combination with mental focus to develop awareness, strength and flexibility, and relaxation. Through proper alignment and mindful actions of the body, Hatha Yoga brings balance, strength, and a sense of well-being to the practitioner.

It is my privilege to offer this opportunity to participate in a Hatha Yoga Beginners' Workshop aimed at providing you with a safe and supportive environment to learn the basics of Hatha Yoga. During our time together, we will break down some of the more common postures so that you may develop a personal practice that is specifically suited to your body's structural needs.

This workshop will consist of six classes meeting once a week and is completely **FREE** to The Wright House Wellness Center clients, volunteers, and staff members. Workshop location and schedule are as follows:

**Wright House Wellness Center  
Disease Prevention and Volunteer Offices**  
8101 Cameron Rd. Ste. 105  
Austin, Texas 78754

**Classes will meet each Wednesday!**  
February 3, 2010 through March 10, 2010  
6:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Please call the Wright House at 512-236-8901 for additional information. Or, you may also directly contact your instructor James Saenz at 512-771-2484 or via email at [jbsasenz512@yahoo.com](mailto:jbsasenz512@yahoo.com).

### Benefits of Hatha Yoga

- Builds Strength
- Increases flexibility and muscle tone
- Brings focus to the mind
- Encourages physical and mental balance
- Develops proper body alignment
- Reduces stress
- Encourages a sense of calm and peace
- Increases lung capacity for better breathing

## Living Healthy in 2010

By: Maudie Roberts

What is your New Year's resolution? Are you hoping to shed some extra pounds picked up at the dessert table over the holidays? Maybe you have realized that it would feel great to get in shape by starting an exercise plan. Have you decided that 2010 is the year to stop smoking once and for all? It is never too late to decide to live healthier. You can begin with very simple lifestyle changes that will improve your health and help you feel great (whether you happen to drop the extra pounds or not).

### Exercise

The American Heart Association recommends 2 ½ hours of moderate physical activity. Getting active doesn't have to involve a gym. Walking is perhaps the simplest and cheapest form of exercise. In order to guarantee that you are receiving the maximum benefits, walk at a pace where you slightly winded but are able to carry on a short conversation. Walking 30 minutes each day most days of the week can help lower your risk of diabetes, improve your mood, and even decrease your appetite. (If you have any serious medical issues its always best to check with your doctor before beginning an exercise plan.)



### Eating Well

The average American packs on five extra pounds over the holidays. You can still eat delicious foods without too many sacrifices. Trade in the pound cake for a piece of fresh fruit. Substitute sugar-free hot chocolate for the regular stuff. Getting appropriate amounts of food from each food group – fruits, vegetables, dairy, grains, and beans or meats – is key to a balanced diet. Make sure you eat at least five or more servings of fruits and vegetables, and drink plenty of water each day. Fruit s and veggies not only contain lots of important vitamins but also have fiber that can help you feel fuller longer.

Watch out for portion distortion! We live in a super-sized world that has changed our thinking about the right amounts of food to eat. When eating, keep the following portion sizes in mind:

Meat – 3 oz. = size of a deck of cards

Pasta – ½ cup = size of a tennis ball

Cheese – 1 oz.= size of 4 dice

Fruit – medium apple or orange = size of tennis

¼ cup dried fruit = a small handful

Vegetables – 1 cup chopped raw vegetables = size of baseball



### Managing Stress

Stress is a normal reaction of the body to threatening situations that allows us to react quickly. However, if stress is major (such as the death of a loved one or losing a job) or frequent (like traffic), it can have unhealthy consequences. Unrelieved stress has been associated with heart disease, depression, and weight gain. Unfortunately, stress is a fact of life, but how you deal with

it can greatly improve your health.

Simple ways to relieve stress:

**Deep breathing or meditation:** Slowing down your breathing can quickly reduce anxiety. If you have time to find a quiet space, close your eyes and take deep breaths. Even as little as 30 seconds can help.



**Exercise or take a walk:** Physical activity causes your brain to release chemicals that help you feel better.

**Phone a friend:** People with a lot of social support actually tend to live longer.

**Make of list of things that you enjoy to do and do them:** Whether warm baths or watching a good movie, do something that helps you relax.

### Quitting Smoking

Most of us know that cigarette smoke has several harmful chemicals and that it's the leading cause of lung cancer. However, quitting smoking isn't easy. The addiction to smoking is both psychological and physical so it is very important to have support in both of these areas as you quit smoking.

The American Cancer Society has a telephone-based smoking cessation program that is available on nights and weekends, 1(800)-ACS-2345. They can also refer you to other support groups in your area. Many people choose to use an over-the-counter nicotine replacement, s u c h a s n i c o t i n e gums, patches, or lozenges, to relieve the physical symptoms of addiction while dealing with the emotional concerns. You can also talk to your doctor about medications, such as Zyban and Chantix, to deal with the psychological concerns that arise when quitting.

Once you decide to quit, make and plan and set a quit date. Remove reminders of smoking like ashtrays around the house and cigarette lighters. Reward your successes. The most important thing is to keep trying! Most people attempt to quit several times before they are successful, but it is possible and it can save your life.

Resources:

The American Cancer Society: <http://www.cancer.org>

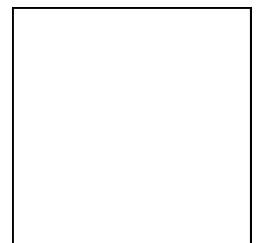
The American Heart Association:

<http://www.americanheart.org>

The Mayo Clinic: <http://www.mayoclinic.com>

U.S. Department of Agriculture:

<http://www.mypyramid.gov>



Thank you to all Supporters, Donors, and  
Volunteers for 20 years of Service!