

Wellness Notes

April, May, and June 2009

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

Hill Country Ride for AIDS 10 Year Anniversary

Serious fun for a serious cause.



The Hill Country Ride for AIDS has raised more than 3 million dollars to support thousands of Texans living with HIV and AIDS. Join the tenth-anniversary ride and get ready for a fun, challenging experience full of breathtaking scenery and unforgettable memories. This year's Ride takes place on April 25, 2009.

There are thousands of people who depend on you and this Ride. In one day of your life, you are making a huge difference for someone for the next 365 days.

There's an experience for everyone.

On the Hill Country Ride you choose the distance that best suits you: 10, 45, 65 or 100 miles. The free training rides will help you prepare for any distance. It's a Ride, not a race, and **everyone** is welcome. All routes are fully supported with pit stops, SAG support and helpful volunteers.

Join Team Wright House as we team up and conquer this challenge and keep fighting the battle we face every day to put an end to the HIV/AIDS epidemic and serve those living with HIV/AIDS.

Go to www.thewrighthouse.org and click on the Hill Country Ride logo to support and join The Wright House Team.

Thank you. No, thank you!

Ana Gutierrez

Volunteers aren't paid, not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.—Anonymous

No doubt, volunteers are priceless. They make the impossible, possible. The Wright House wants to thank all our volunteers for all the work they do. And this article is for those wonderful individuals who volunteer with us. You who volunteer at events, or perhaps answer the phones, prepare

In this issue.....

Hill Country Ride for AIDS.....	(pg 1)
Thank You. No, Thank You!.....	(pg 1)
The CulinART Experience.....	(pg 2,6)
World AIDS Report.....	(pg 4)
A Few Questions	(pg 4,5)
Breathing Exercises	(pg 7)
Puzzles.....	(pg 5)
Junk In The Trunk Yard Sale	(pg 3)
Calendar of Events.....	(pg 3)
AIDS Candle Light Memorial.....	(Insert)
Solutions to Puzzles.....	(Insert)
CulinART Sponsors	(Insert)

News & Updates

New Location! - The Wright House Wellness Center's **Disease Prevention Services and Volunteer Programs** will be moving from its Cesar Chavez location to it's new home located at 8101 Cameron Rd. Ste. 104/105 on June 1st, 2009

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner—this year's Volunteer Appreciation Dinner will be catered by Magnolia Café!

The Summer Soiree is coming July 23rd. Look for more information in the next issue of "Wellness Notes".

informational flyers, speak to other people about our services or maybe try to get help from other organizations, contribute money or maybe ride in the Hill Country Ride for AIDS to raise money for our programs mean so much to us. Many of you come to our Monday Night Volunteer Club and have helped pack educational materials, make



Continued next page



decorations, or come up with ideas for events, or have simply come and given encouragement to our clients, staff and fellow volunteers.

No matter how much you give of your time, your money or your skills, your help is always welcome and appreciated. As the famous quote by Aesop says “No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.” That’s why on Thursday, April 16th, **The Wright House Wellness Center will host it’s 3rd Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner.**

This is the time for the Management and Staff to show our appreciation to all of you who have committed your time, skills, money, energy and, more than anything, your generous support to contribute to our mission of giving care and compassion.

As *Martin Luther King Jr.* said “Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love.”

We help in a variety of volunteer opportunities and there are several diverse positions to choose from. Some of the Volunteer Opportunities available are Complementary Therapy Practitioner, Food Pantry Assistant, Intake Assistant, Board of Directors Member, Events Assistant, Administrative Assistant, or Peer Outreach Volunteer.

There are volunteers like Nisha, a college student, who finds volunteering with The Wright House an excellent experience. She decided that instead of wasting her free time, she could do something to help people. Nisha found that The Wright House staff and other volunteers make this a comfortable space to volunteer. And it’s great helping an organization that not only has a very important mission, but they fulfill their mission with passion as well as compassion.

For Chris, The Wright House was initially the place where he could use his morning time while helping others at the same time. Chris moved recently from New York City, and The Wright House, has become his family in some ways. He likes very much being here and the fact that everyone cares and has the same goal. Everybody, despite differences and coming from

different paths of life, can work together, have a good time and find personal fulfillment.

Other volunteers, who may have not arrived on their own initiative, come for different reasons. Madalyn came as a result of a school requirement. She mentioned that initially she came because she had to complete hours for one of her classes in college; but after completing her academic hours, she decided that this was the place she wanted to keep volunteering. “The Wright House feels like a family, and the Volunteer Coordinator, Mark Johansen, is very nice and outgoing.”

Melody, says that she has volunteered before, but “I like it here because, right now, I’m volunteering in the reception, and it is nice to interact with different people. Also I like to volunteer here at The Wright House because everybody, staff and volunteers are very close, supportive and friendly.”

Esther likes the variety and flexibility of volunteer positions available at The Wright House Wellness Center. “I like the fact, that you can volunteer in events and many other activities, and even though you are not directly working with the clients in the organization you are helping them.”

In my personal case, I fully believe in the mission and vision of The Wright House Wellness Center. I believe in the importance of achieving the maximum level of health possible. To obtain this result we need to work together educating and supporting each other. One day, I called The Wright House Wellness Center and a friendly voice was there to invite me to join their forces for this cause. And here I am, it is not only compassion, as The Wright House delivers care; but is also a matter of passion. The passion of helping others to achieve a better quality of life, the passion that the staff has for their work and also the passion that clients have to keep going, to keep fighting for their lives and to make the lives of others better.

*Culin*ART 2009

Chris Peterson

The doors to the UT Alumni Center open. You enter a world of food, art, and fantasy all brought together on behalf of The Wright House Wellness Center.

Welcome to CulinART.

Culinary delight and visual arts met at the 5th Annual CulinART event hosted by ISES. CulinART fuses fine cuisine and fine art all for the benefit of one lucky non-profit organization. For the second year in a row The Wright House Wellness Center has been the beneficiary of this wonderful event.

Continued on page 6



**YARD SALE!!
ONE DAY ONLY!!
HELP NEEDED!!**

Madalyn Hill

Springtime means being outside after four months of dreary winter weather, but it also means time to do some spring cleaning. The Wright House Wellness Center is here to help you get motivated to clean and to give you a place to donate your items.

The "Foundation", a volunteer based fund raising group, is holding their "Junk in the Trunk" yard sale on May 2nd, 2009 that will benefit only the WHWC. Funds collected will go towards activities scheduled for later in the year, but we need your help NOW. We are collecting anything and everything in preparation of the yard sale. As we all know, one man's junk is another man's treasure.

Did you get a new coffeemaker, but keep the old one because it works okay and you just can not throw it in the garbage? What about that old microwave you keep around "just in case" someone else needs one? Or maybe you have an extra DVD player sitting under the TV collecting dust? How about that extra dresser in the hallway that you always stub your toe on? Maybe make some extra closet space by donating clothing items you no longer wear (or never wore to begin with!)? What about that box of toys in the garage that the kids have outgrown? All donations will be greatly appreciated.

Items are being collected and stored at the E. Cesar Chavez location. If you have larger items (furniture, large appliances, automobiles, etc) that you would like to donate, but do not have a way to transport, please call Al Shults @ 236-8901 to schedule for someone to come pick up your donated items.

And then!!! Don't forget to join us at our 2326 E. Cesar Chavez location to shop for new treasures to add to your home. The Sale will run from 7am until 2pm on Saturday, May 2nd.

Suggested Items To Donate:

- Clothing (shirts, jeans, coats, hats, sweaters, shoes)
- Small kitchen appliances
- Children's toys
- Bicycles/Wagons/Scooters
- Baby/Infant clothing/toys
- Books/DVDs/CDs
- Electronics
- Furniture
- ANYTHING!!

Calendar of Events

Ongoing Events:

Mondays 5:30-8pm Volunteer Club meets at ECC.
Food is served!

April

04/15/09 Volunteer Orientation 6-9pm

04/16/09 Volunteer Appreciation Dinner-
Kleberg Hall 6-9pm

04/25/09 Hill Country Ride for AIDS

May

05/02/09 "**Junk in the Trunk**" Yard Sale
2326 E. Cesar Chavez
7am-2pm

05/20/09 Volunteer Orientation 6-9pm
2326 E. Cesar Chavez

June

06/06/09 Pride Festival and Parade

06/17/09 Volunteer Orientation 6-9pm

Check website for address of this event.

July

07/23/09 **Summer Soiree**— Client Social

07/15/09 Volunteer Orientation 6-9pm

Check website for address of this event

-Volunteer Orientation-3rd Wednesday of each month 6-9pm

**Call Mark at 236-8901 or email
mark@thewrighthouse.org to sign up for
Volunteer Orientation.**



World AIDS Report

By Tina Simms

In mid-February, China’s Ministry of Health released some eye-opening news: In 2008, more people in China died from HIV/AIDS compared with other infectious diseases. Three years ago, AIDS was the third leading fatal infection behind tuberculosis and rabies. The latter two are now in the second and third positions.

While this news is troubling, it also shows that China’s government is not sweeping HIV/AIDS under the rug, but rather, acknowledging its presence and seriousness. By doing so, the country can recognize HIV/AIDS as a public health issue and address it, in part, with education campaigns. This is a huge step for a deeply conservative country with tight controls over what information about it is shared with the rest of the world.

China is the world’s most populated country, with about 1.3 billion people (20% of the world’s population). HIV infection emerged in the country in the late 80’s/early 90’s among intravenous drug users. At the time, the government considered HIV to be a “disease of the West,” affecting only a small number of its citizenry or high-risk populations. However, from the mid-90’s to early 2000, HIV began to spread across all Chinese provinces due to unsanitary blood plasma and tainted blood transfusions. (Blood collection centers in China are driven by profit. Although guidelines are in place to assure quality, many of the private centers cut corners in order to increase profits.)

By 2000, the number of HIV cases had increased so dramatically that the Chinese government had to confront the crisis. Since 2003, China has implemented the “Four Frees, One Care” policy for all HIV carriers and AIDS patients in the country. “Four Frees” are 1) free testing and counseling for HIV, 2) free treatment for HIV infected people in financially troubled urban areas and rural areas, 3) free medication for pregnant women with HIV, and 4) free education for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS. “One Care” refers to HIV care and economic assistance for those living with HIV, and the elimination of AIDS related discrimination.

The Four Frees, One Care policy is an admirable initiative, but the effort level the Chinese government puts into HIV prevention remains to be seen. Last year, health authorities

reported that sex had overtaken drug abuse as the main cause of HIV infections; however, prohibitive factors in China discourage practicing safe sex. Women carrying condoms have been arrested under the assumption that they are prostitutes (prostitution is illegal in China). Gay men in China face significant stigma and prejudice (even more than in the US) and are pressured to marry women and suppress their homosexuality. Not having a safe haven to discuss risks and concerns, they continue to have unprotected sex with other men, putting themselves and others at risk.

China deserves credit for tackling aspects of its HIV/AIDS crisis; however, it still has some ways to go, especially in prevention efforts. Hopefully, its government will continue taking steps in the right direction.

A FEW QUESTIONS PLEASE?

- Anthony Jerome Norris

We asked some Wright House staff and volunteers a few questions on what makes them tick. You might be surprised by some of the answers. These questions give us an honest look at what is really going on with the people behind the scenes. Listed are the responses from Asti Fisher Lead RAPP Outreach Specialist; Ruth Franklin, MAI Program Director and Joseph Elder, 3MV Outreach Educator.

What is your mission at The WHWC?

ASTI: My mission is to educate my community about HIV prevention and encourage community members to get involved in the fight against the spread of HIV.

RUTH: To make a difference in the lives of the people we serve by providing HOPE AND CARING

JOSEPH: To assist the fight against the spread of HIV and STD’s, educating others about their risk factors and risk behaviors that go along with sexual health, and to make my community aware that The Wright House Wellness Center is an agency that gives care and compassion to Central Texans living with or at risk of chronic illnesses.

Whom do you help? (Specific target group)

ASTI: The target populations I serve under the Real AIDS Prevention Project are African American women ages 18- 55 who have sex with men and African American Intravenous Drug Users.

RUTH: African American and Hispanics 18 years of age and older

JOSEPH: The specific target for Many Men, Many Voices is African American males between the ages of 18-55 who may or may not consider themselves to be gay or bi-sexual

Why do you do this kind of work?

ASTI: I do this kind of work because it gives me satisfaction when I know that I have encouraged an individual to share what they have learned from an HIV presentation with someone else or they made a conscious decision to talk to their partner about getting tested and using condoms.

RUTH: Because it matters to the lives of all people.

JOSEPH: I do this type of work because it is something that affects my life, my family's life, as well as my peers/friends. Education is to me, the better part of life. It enhances what you should do, and what you shouldn't do, so that one can live a full and congenial life.

How has this job changed you?

ASTI: This job has enhanced my facilitation skills and pushed me to think outside the box when recruiting women for RAPP.

RUTH: I'm very aware that there is an HIV Pandemic, and that numbers keep rising. I never thought much about it until I came to work here

JOSEPH: I don't think the job has changed me, but I changed the job. Before I started this position was more relaxed. My innovativeness and creativity has enabled me to transform the image of gay and bisexual African American males within this program. I have seen older men and younger men walk away with the willingness to take some of these challenges they gained in the workshop and apply them to their lives when they exit the conference room doors.

What words of knowledge or inspiration can you give to people who are challenged with HIV/AIDS?

ASTI: I would tell them to be encouraged and to stay strong. Become a community leader, get involved in their communities, join a support group or even volunteer at an ASO.

RUTH: This is not a death sentence: You've only just begun a new journey where "you" matter. Love yourself by taking care of yourself. Find someone else and encourage them".

JOSEPH: I would tell them that their life is not over. Until you take that last breath they should live life and love life. There is so much one could do and so many people they could help. Dependent upon that person, they could speak publicly in workshops, they could volunteer at other prevention agencies, or they could start their own agency.

P
U
Z
Z
L
E
S

CAN YOU SUDUKO?

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

Mark Your Calendar!

Need a reason to celebrate, reflect on, or honor someone or something? Well, here are some special occasions in the coming months. Find each of the occasions below in the diagram—only look for the words in all capital letters (example: For **FATHER**'s Day, only "FATHER" will be in the puzzle). Words can be up, down, forward, backwards, or diagonal. Good luck!

S	P	M	O	J	L	P	E	C	U	V	S	S	P	R	I	D	E	M	J	F	Y	E
O	A	S	E	D	Z	C	M	A	N	W	R	D	A	Z	A	P	H	V	N	C	D	N
E	S	M	Y	E	W	I	U	L	S	T	U	V	Z	A	B	A	G	V	M	W	O	O
C	S	R	O	I	V	X	N	B	H	T	L	A	E	H	L	A	T	N	E	M	L	I
Q	O	B	E	H	S	P	P	E	F	M	E	D	Z	C	I	M	M	B	Y	K	N	L
I	V	Q	H	H	L	A	D	U	R	P	N	R	O	V	G	Y	W	N	A	M	O	L
I	E	Y	R	L	T	A	C	S	T	C	H	H	T	N	E	E	T	E	N	U	J	E
F	R	Y	C	B	R	O	E	F	N	K	O	Z	Z	D	L	E	A	F	O	M	B	B
V	D	O	I	O	R	H	M	C	A	L	N	I	D	P	L	S	G	O	V	K	C	E
X	E	A	B	V	O	M	I	Z	A	R	L	D	F	Z	O	K	O	M	Y	I	T	R
M	W	S	H	S	Y	D	I	W	B	F	N	D	E	I	A	Y	O	W	A	E	N	L
I	W	S	D	R	A	R	A	L	O	U	Q	L	P	V	Y	D	D	F	A	G	O	L
A	P	L	K	U	M	R	W	A	S	I	A	N	P	A	C	I	F	I	C	U	U	A
G	Z	H	O	V	E	G	I	L	P	D	V	F	G	I	K	N	R	X	I	D	N	W
E	A	I	J	N	D	V	Q	O	C	C	K	C	A	F	C	O	I	Y	B	V	R	E
B	O	L	E	A	O	Y	H	N	E	Y	S	C	O	M	H	P	D	A	W	E	T	N
D	R	S	F	B	C	I	H	C	A	J	I	U	X	T	Y	K	A	O	E	S	Y	O
F	S	Y	O	V	N	E	S	Y	M	P	J	P	R	X	B	U	Y	N	I	A	C	T
G	L	Z	P	E	I	M	E	M	O	R	I	A	L	R	Y	H	A	Y	P	K	M	S
E	R	M	A	A	C	O	O	B	A	R	E	H	T	A	F	I	O	L	F	E	C	C



Leah Graham addresses the guests—

“The Wright House Wellness Center is a big family. We care about each other. We care about our clients.”

- Leah Graham, Executive Director

I expected CulinART to be a wonderful event, but I was taken aback by the lengths ISES went to ensure it was a success. There is no doubt that ISES approached this event as if they were serving their most prestigious client. No detail was spared in conveying the beauty, grace, and elegance were captured throughout the space. It was quite an honor to have helped with this event. Many of us who volunteered remarked that we'd like to be guests next year; however, I'm sure we'll be ready to ensure altruism is rewarded with a great night of food, art, and fun.

As guests arrived they were regally greeted by a team of Wright House volunteers offering an open door and a “Good evening. Welcome to CulinART.” Once inside the guests were directed to the registration table where they were given a bidding number and allowed to pre-register for the silent auction. With that taken care of they moved into the lounge for cocktails and tasty hors d'oeuvres.

The finely dressed patrons mingled amongst the splashes of pink décor and rustic Texas ambiance of the UT Alumni Center lounge. Servers dressed in black, with half-painted faces a la Cirque Du Soleil, catered to the crowd. Floating amongst them was a woman wearing a necklace up for auction offering, “I'm number 10,” letting them know which item to bid on. In the back of the lounge a performance group, dressed as three old men and a nurse, played light jazz using a sax, piano, and a Theremin.

Just outside the lounge a harp and viola danced in harmony providing a subtle euphonious backdrop for viewing the many wonderful works of donated art. Displayed quite fantastically, the artwork created a movement throughout the space demanding attention from the evening's benefactors.

The artwork included photography, painting, jewelry, glass, pottery, and prints. Nestled in this posse of great art was a beautiful print of a mother and child provided by Nicole Hines, a massage therapist for The Wright House Wellness Center. It and all the other works of art were up for grabs for those willing to outbid their gracious peers.

A little past seven the guests were allowed to enter the ballroom where the many beautifully decorated tables awaited. Upon each was a unique center piece created by one of the many members of ISES who participated. The center pieces were a gorgeous explosion of flowers, feathers, lights, and glass. One was shaped like a rocket ship, one topped with a disco ball, and another was a cylinder full of oranges. There was also a vase full of crystals and even a cake fashioned as a scale model of The Wright House. Many pieces were lit with a blue glow adding to the room's electric ambiance and its blue and silver theme.

As the patrons entered the ballroom a DJ provided music from the stage fixed in front of an LED panel with the CulinART logo splashed across it in glowing shades of blue and white. Guests entered chefs in the kitchen worked diligently to prepare meals for over 300 guests.

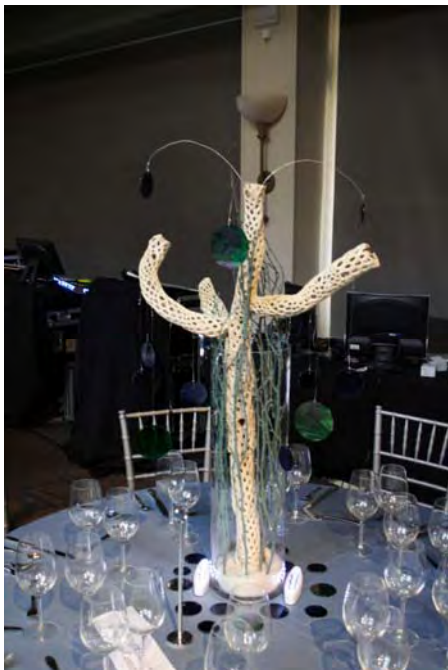
After the emcee introduced the patrons to the event, he introduced Leah Graham, The Wright House Wellness Center's Executive Director. She explained the wonderful things The Wright House does and as patrons the center needs their support. She stated with great pride, “The Wright House Wellness Center is a big family. We care about each other. We care about our clients.” She then thanked all the staff and volunteers asking those in attendance to stand and be recognized.

Next, Leah offered the stage to a Wright House client generous enough to share her story with the audience. She shared that The Wright House helped her overcome her initial depression and confusion. Her case manager helped her with her life plan offering nutritional advice and providing her with all options available to help her on her path. She joked that she “never misses a massage” and shared that she is not only a client, but is also a volunteer. Now she even volunteers her time with other AIDS organizations. In closing she thanked the evening's patrons for their support and in return they applauded her for being brave enough to share her story.

As the evening faded to a close we worked with ISES to retrieve the artwork for those that won each of the auction items. As we emptied out the space the ephemeral beauty of the evening waned and the work to make the evening a memory began. More volunteers from The Wright House arrived to help gather easels, chairs, tables, and any artwork that did not find a home. With a diligent effort the work was

completed in about one hour and we all went home knowing we had been part of something great.

Thanks to everyone generous enough to buy tickets and bid on artwork and other auction items. Also, a big thanks to those volunteers that worked so hard to make the evening a success and the wonderful artists who donated their beautiful art and thank you ISES for partnering with us again. You all are phenomenal!



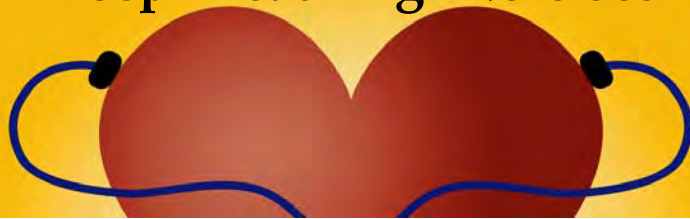
The Wright House's table decoration was created by Courtney Borgman and Al Shults.

Wright House volunteers helped set-up, tear-down, and helped greet and register guests during the event. A few of the many that helped are pictured here. Thanks everyone!!

Al Shults and Leah Graham of The Wright House Wellness Center.



Deep Breathing Exercises



Breathing Awareness and Deep Breathing

- Lie down or sit in a comfortable chair, maintaining good posture. Your body should be as relaxed as possible. Close your eyes. Scan your body for tension.
- Pay attention to your breathing. Place one hand on the part of your chest or abdomen that seems to rise and fall the most with each breath. If this spot is in your chest you are not utilizing the lower part of your lungs.
- Place both hands on your abdomen and follow your breathing, noticing how your abdomen rises and falls.
- Breathe through your nose.
- Notice if your chest is moving in harmony with your abdomen.
- Now place one hand on your abdomen and one on your chest.
- Inhale deeply and slowly through your nose into your abdomen. You should feel your abdomen rise with this inhalation and your chest should move only a little.
- Exhale through your mouth, keeping your mouth, tongue, and jaw relaxed.
- Relax as you focus on the sound and feeling of long, slow, deep breaths.

Complete Natural Breathing

- Sit or stand with good posture.
- Breathe through your nose.
- Inhale, filling first the lower part of your lungs then the middle part, then the upper part.
- Hold your breath for a few seconds.
- Exhale slowly. Relax your abdomen and chest.
- Practice these two exercises, in whatever combination feels best for you, for ten minutes, twice a day.
- (Taken from Davis, Eshelman, and McKay; The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook, 2nd edition; New Harbinger Publications, 1982.)
- ©Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College 2001

CulinART

2009

Many Thanks

...to all of our sponsors for making CulinART such a great success.

Platinum Sponsors



Titanium Level Sponsors

Get The Picture

Quest Drape

Quick Print

Transportation Consultants

The Inviting Pear

White Gold Sponsors

API Productions

BBJ Linens

Bill Bastas, Photographer

Floral Renaissance

LCRA

Silver Level Patrons

Capps Law Firm, PLLC

Exelon Generation

Deborah Green

**The Law Office of Garrett C. Higley,
Family Law Attorney**

Steel Level Patrons

O'Connor-Doherty Group

Frost Bank

Wellness Notes-

Puzzle Answers:

Sudoku Answers:

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

Word Search Answers & Puzzle Solution:

ALCOHOL AWARENESS Month (April)

PASSOVER (April 8)

VESAK (Buddha's birthday, April 8)

GOOD FRIDAY (April 10)

EASTER (April 12)

EARTH Day (April 22)

National **MENTAL HEALTH** Month (May)

ASIAN/PACIFIC American Heritage Month (May)

CINCO DE MAYO (May 5)

MOTHER's Day (May 10)

MEMORIAL Day (May 25)

Gay and Lesbian **PRIDE** Month (June)

FLAG Day (June 14)

JUNETEENTH (June 19)

FATHER's Day (June 21)



Please Join Us!
 Sunday, May 17, 2009
 Republic Square Park
 Located at 5th and Guadalupe
 From 7:30-8:30pm
 HIV Testing available from 6-9

This is a wonderful time of remembrance of those who have succumbed to this disease as well as a time to look forward with hope for those still living and taking a new step forward each and every day.

Bring a Candle!

