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# THE COURIER

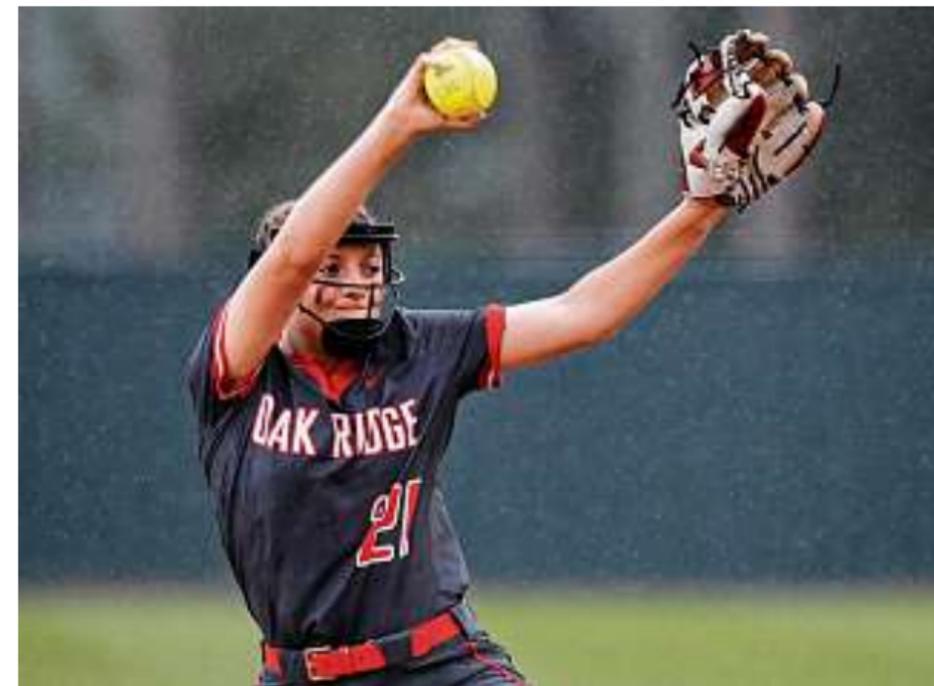
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# Trends

Sunday, January 23, 2022

Section B

MARK HAYTER  
Guest columnist



## A family of country western songwriters

This evening, immediately after supper, I was sitting in my favorite chair staring at the wall across the room. A lot of thoughts can surface while staring at nothing. Kay was reading a novel while in her comfy chair when I remarked, "I didn't think about Mom or Dad today, and I'm not sure I did yesterday."

Kay must not have been enjoying her book, because she responded. "I'll go days without thinking of my folks." Her response caused me to feel better about myself. I said, "Good grief, we don't even have kids. When we're gone nobody will think of us." Kay replied, "Sweetie, I hate to tell you this, but nobody's thinking about us right now." - Obviously, you are thinking about us at this very moment, and I appreciate that.

Anyway, after Kay's remark, my mind captured the thought of all the copies I saved from "Our Family Newsletter" written and published by my kid sister, Jill. That girl saved a bunch of history for our family. I've got the 1990 folder right here. This stuff is 32 years old. I've looked at the January through March newsletters, but, oddly enough, the first thing I saw was a letter that Al wrote Jill back on Dec. 6, 1983. I had forgotten that Jill saved all her letters throughout the years and included one in each newsletter.

There are two spooky things about this particular letter she got from youngest, Big Al. For one thing, Big Al rarely writes letters. And, his phone texts usually contain no more than three words. The second oddity is that the first article I looked at was one about Al letting Jill know something he remembered about the both of them. Al's letter reads:

"Jill, You know when we were little stupid kids. I mean when you were a little stupid kid and I was just a little kid? We never dreamed that all those bad moments, days, weeks and months that we had together would ever be good times. Back then they were only bad times. But now they're good times forever. Because now we have those good times to look back on and say we were together a long time. We were brother and sister. We have those old memories and pleasant thoughts forever. Love you."



Photos courtesy of The Conroe Community Cemetery Restoration Project

**The Sam Houston State University College of Osteopathic Medicine brought over 50 students and professors to the Conroe Community Cemetery to participate in a day of service for Martin Luther King Day. LEFT: From left are John Meredith with the Conroe Community Cemetery Restoration Project; Mecia Lockwood, SHSU Student Affairs Specialist; Kate M. Lesciotta, JD, PhD Professor of Anatomical Sciences; and Eddie Pierce with the CCCRP. RIGHT: Student volunteers from the SHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine rake and cleaned 2/3 of an acre as part of a service project on Martin Luther King Day.**

## SHSU students partner with cemetery group for MLK Day of Service



**Students and professors from the SHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine rake and clean the grounds beside the graves of Martin and Agness Dibbles.**



**Students from the SHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine rake the grounds of the Conroe Community Cemetery as part of a day of service on MLK Day.**

### From the Community

The Sam Houston State University College of Osteopathic Medicine brought over 50 students and professors to the Conroe Community Cemetery to participate in a day of service for Martin Luther King Day on Monday.

Mecia Lockwood, Student Affairs Specialist, organized the day. She had contacted the CCCRP after Thanksgiving to see if the CCCRP could partner with SHSU to give back as a group on Martin Luther King Day.

The SHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine was founded in 2019 and their campus was recently opened in Conroe at

Grand Central Park.

The volunteers raked and cleaned over half an acre and nearly filled a 40-cubic-yard dumpster. The groups hope to make the MLK Day of Service an annual event.

The Conroe Community Cemetery is currently in the process of restoration.

This process started for historian and researcher Jon Edens in the fall of 2016. The cemetery exists between the Oakwood Cemetery and Old Normal College property.

It is said to be one of the oldest burial grounds in Montgomery County serving as a final resting place for dozens of blacks who settled here during the post Civil War era.

Edens was transcribing graves at the adjacent Oakwood Cemetery in the fall of 2011 when he saw a grave on the north side of the fence of the property. He climbed the fence and discovered several graves among the overgrown property.

The Conroe Community Cemetery Restoration Project was launched and a group of volunteers banded together to clean the property and identify as many graves as possible there.

Mittie J. Campbell, an early educator of Black students, is buried there. As is Montgomery County's only known Buffalo soldier Luther J. Dorsey.

The cemetery restoration

group has found much success in recent years. Boy Scout groups and community groups have spent many hours clearing the property and helping to identify graves.

In May 2020, for the first time in its more than 100-year history, a cemetery sign was installed to designate the entrance to the cemetery.

In the summer of 2021, the historic cemetery on 10th Street in Conroe was designated a Historic Texas Cemetery by the Texas Historical Commission.

If you are interested in volunteering contact the CCCRP at [cccrp.org@gmail.com](mailto:cccrp.org@gmail.com) or through the website at <https://cccrp.org>.