



# THE STRETCH



Local 746L

VOLUME 35, ISSUE NO.8

TYLER, TEXAS

AUGUST, 2005

## From The President's Desk .....

Last month I talked about getting ready for contract negotiations in 2006. I stated those will be tough negotiations, with difficult issues facing company and union. I also stated we need to look ahead and get our finances in order so we can sustain and support a strike, if necessary, and give the company a clear indication we can and will take them on, if it comes to that. After all, the surest way not to have a strike is for your opponent to know you can and will take them on and win in the end.

We expect to make gains in 2006. We expect to keep the unprecedented job security language we got in 2003, protecting our American plants. We intend for Goodyear to go into the 2006 negotiations as a company that's in better shape than 2003, in part due to our Productivity Plan agreements and we expect to benefit from getting it in better shape. They, of course, will have other ideas about all that. We will be ready and we will prevail, and that's what they need to know going in.

We need to get our house in order before then. In the last few months I've gone out of my way to speak out against those who bad-mouth our union. All too often, people listen to them and just accept their bad mouthing of the very thing that's kept their jobs, the union.

Let me make it plain that I'm not talking about a union member who questions what we're doing or why, or who has a legitimate contractual issue. The bad-mouthers I'm talking about come in two categories.

The first are the non-union members. These seven freeloaders need to be told by the dues paying members to crawl off and shut up when they are doing their mealy-mouthing. They are no different from someone who demands the right to sit at the dinner table with me and my family, bringing their family along to eat the food we've bought and prepared and who then bad-mouths us for not having every single thing to eat they wanted, all the while refusing to pay for any of the groceries or prepare the meal they are eating every day. In Texas that may be legal, but you better believe they won't be mouthing at my table and I'll question them about their behavior each and every time they come around me. And, by the way, the table here at Goodyear has more on it than the table anywhere else. They need to hear from us every day why their behavior is unacceptable, not be treated as someone who deserves our respect and certainly not someone who should be listened to. I have to represent them, I will represent them, I will insure their contractual rights are complied with, that is the law, but I dang sure don't have to listen to their mealy-mouthing. I can tell them they are wrong and I will. I won't consider them honorable, as I do a union member who has a right to criticize. Those who do put the food on the table need to question why the freeloaders don't think they should do their part, not just accept their freeloadings.

The second category are dues paying members who are upset, but don't have a contractual violation for the union to pursue. They say stuff like "the union ain't doing anything for me." They often tell the ones around them something about an issue they are upset over, saying they are wronged, but not telling the whole story. Then it gets repeated for a fact by the others, who take what is said

at face value. They undermine confidence in the union and that tends to weaken us when we need to be united and strong. They use expressions like "it ain't fair" or "it ain't right" to sway people. They overlook the fact that the contract is something we all had an opportunity to vote on and that was ratified by the membership as a whole. They like to say "I didn't vote for it." They usually don't come to union meetings or to the hall to discuss their issues. They just run the union down.

Again, I don't consider a dues paying member who is availing himself or herself of the right to question what's happening in the proper way as either of the above. Any time a grievance is dropped, we always delay notification to the company to allow a member to come address the Grievance Committee and have any questions answered and to insure any legitimate issues are addressed. We're not perfect. We will always listen and investigate when a member complains. If a member has talked to a steward or a division chairman about an issue, and isn't satisfied with the answer or hasn't gotten a response I want to hear about it, through a call or a visit.

We're doing better in Tyler. We aren't where we want to be, but we're getting effective management and that's made a huge difference. We aren't a 40 million dollar a year hole in the company's pocket anymore. The people in Tyler, salary and hourly, have responded to guys like Terry Tennyson and Billy Taylor and shown that they haven't been the problem. I don't miss a single opportunity to shout that out to corporate people. Our recent performance makes that possible and is making them rethink what Tyler's place is in the company's future plans.

On August 11 a meeting will be held in Pittsburgh concerning the Tyler Break Even Plan. We will be pursuing the grievance we filed against the company for failing to put forward a plan for investment and growth for Tyler, and for withholding Letter 53, or fully protected, status for Tyler. Sherrell Brown and I will meet with USWA International people and with Goodyear Corporate people to try and resolve the issue without going to arbitration. Our recent performance gives us tremendous leverage in that argument.

We are progressing with our Political Action Fund (PAC) drive. We are asking that our members give five dollars a week. I am going to area steering committee meetings and anywhere else I can be able to explain why the money is vital to keeping our jobs. Please give to PAC and give five dollars a week. Our past PAC contribution level won't let us do what has to be done. No one working at Kelly Tyler can truthfully say they will miss a five dollar a week deduction and I promise you if these jobs went away you would be more than willing to give fifty dollars a week to have them back.

I appreciate everyone who calls or comes by, or attends the union meetings, or who stands up for the union, even while questioning us or expressing their opinion in the right way. The union is not whoever is at the union hall. It's each and every member that contributes dues, gives of their time and works every day to put the meal on the table for our families. Nothing we have was given us by the company just because they want to give it to us. Remember that.

I also appreciate all the hard work, time and efforts that have been put forth by our members to help secure Tyler's future.

## Local 746L Helps Striking GMP Workers At Tyler Vesuvius Plant

Contract negotiations between Vesuvius and Local 58 of the Glass Molders and Pottery Union, representing the ninety-seven hourly workers at the Tyler plant, broke down and the local went on strike on Tuesday, July 26. Local 58 President James Wilkins put out the call for support from the other local unions that are members of the Smith County Central Labor Council and Local 746L answered the call, providing coolers and ice for those walking picket at the Duncan Street facility. The Executive Board also authorized a donation for GMP Local 58 on Wednesday.

“The issues at Vesuvius are the same ones we’re faced with at Goodyear. Health care, trying to get pay raises to keep pace with rising prices and retirement pay are what GMP Local 58 President James Wilkins cited as reasons for the strike. The GMP International Union is relatively small, with only 68,000 members nationwide. As Local 58 is a member of the Smith County Labor Council our local union moved quickly to help them. Their issues are our issues. They are the same issues that we faced in 2003 at Goodyear, Firestone, Cooper, Uniroyal-Goodrich. They are the same issues that will be facing us in 2006, when we may need their support. Some of us went over on Tuesday and again on Wednesday to visit with the Local 58 members walking picket and to carry them coolers and ice. They are walking picket in near hundred-degree weather, with their wives and kids on the picket line. They are fighting to get a fair contract for their members and families, but are faced with a foreign-owned company that is determined any raises will be offset by making them pay for their health care. That’s a familiar story,” said USWA Local 746L President Jim Wansley.

The Vesuvius plant makes products that are used in steel mills. USWA Local 746L contacted the USWA International to determine what steel mills they supply and to help generate support for the striking local.

“The Vesuvius plant is adjacent to the Carrier plant. When you get off work drive by and honk in support. Stop and walk with them for a while if you can. Those on the picket line will appreciate it very much. They were very appreciative of the coolers and ice we took them and the check from our local union. They appreciate any support they can get,” said Red Blake and Harold Sweat, who took the supplies to the striking workers on Wednesday.



**Local 746L Vice-President Harold Sweat (R) and Trustee Red Blake (L) presents the E-Board authorized \$250.00 check to GMP Local 58 President James Wilkins. Also pictured is (far left) union member Richard Runnels and (far right) Business Committee member Johnny McCoy. Shop Steward Lonnie Budro is standing behind Red.**

## TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE 401(K) PLAN WHO HAVE AN OUTSTANDING LOAN

The IRS, which governs the provisions of qualified plans, has established guidelines regarding the administration of 401 (k) plans, specifically loans. One of the guidelines states that loan repayments shall be determined at the time of the loan application and will be based on the amount of the loan, interest rate, pay frequency and duration of the loan. Loan repayments shall be made through payroll deduction and will remain fixed for the duration of the loan unless the pay frequency changes or the participant’s employment status changes.

While performing an audit of the processes and procedures of the 401(k) Plan it was discovered that this guideline was not being administered according to the IRS guidelines and needed to be changed. The amortization of loans was being calculated on a monthly repayment schedule instead of a per pay schedule. In addition, if a participant changed pay frequencies (example, from weekly to semi-monthly), loans were not always reamortized. Finally, when participants were laid off and loan payments were not made, the repayment amounts should have been reamortized and this was not always done.

In order to bring the 401(k) Plan into compliance with the IRS guidelines, all loans are being reamortized in conjunction with our record keeping change effective August 1, 2005. Please note that when the reamortized amount is calculated the same interest rate and loan duration will be used. The only portion of the calculation that will be changed from the original calculation will be the pay frequency. Instead of being amortized based on a monthly pay frequency, the amount will be calculated based on your actual pay cycle (weekly or semi-monthly). Based on this change you should be aware of the following:

1. Your loan deduction per pay will change as soon as administratively possible after August 1, 2005.
2. The loan deduction will be withheld from all paychecks. If you are paid weekly, you will have 52 deductions taken throughout the year. If you are paid semi-monthly, you will have 24 deductions withheld during the year.

## NOTICE OF MEETINGS

### FOR NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS OF DELEGATE(S) AND ALTERNATE DELEGATE(S) TO THE 2005 USW RUBBER/ PLASTICS INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

Per membership action USW will be sending the President or his designee and four (4) elected delegates to the Rubber/Plastics Industry Conference October 3-5, 2005 in Pittsburgh, Penn. You are hereby notified that nominations and election of delegate(s) and/or alternates delegate(s) will be held as follows:

#### NOMINATION:

Date: Regular Membership Meeting, August 4, 2005

Time: 7:15am, 1:45pm and 3:15pm

Place: The John Nash Activities Building

#### ELECTION:

Date: Regular Membership Meeting, September 1, 2005

Time: 7:15am, 1:45pm and 3:15pm

Place: The John Nash Activities Building

## Retirees Corner

by **Tennie Hulsey and Carol Swanson**

Plans are being made by SOAR member, Shelley King, for the members to travel to Galveston the end of summer or first of September. Further information and sign up sheet will be available at the August 8th meeting, 6:00 p.m., at the John Nash Activity Center. Members are ask to bring finger foods. Retirees are encouraged to join the SOAR Organization. Contact President, Eugene Hulsey, at 903-566-2383 for additional information on the SOAR membership, meetings, trips, and activities. Some of the members will stay and play 42 after the meeting.

By the time Roy Stanley and Dino Robertson quits playing Hazel Stanley and Kay Robertson has breakfast ready the next morning. Those two guys enjoy playing 42". Roy, is it time for another tournament?

The Hot Dog Supper and Auction was a success, and the members raised over \$ 900.00. Thought Jack Swanson was going to have to be carried to the ER due to Carol bidding on so many items. Larry VanDeman did you really take his blood pressure?

Joe Wyatt is doing a great job being the Stretch Editor. The Retirees appreciate all of your hard work. Thanks!

### S.O.A.R. Ladies Auxiliary

The Ladies Auxiliary will meet August 2, 10:30 a.m. at the John Nash Activity Center. Ladies are ask to bring finger food. For information regarding the ladies meetings, activities, and trips, contact President Tommie Francis at 903-593-4982. Tommie is it time for another out of town day trip shopping and lunch?

Remember LaJoy Bailey during her recovery from her past surgeries.

LaJoy we miss you!

Please remember our Country, Troops, and the victims from all of the Hurricanes.

### Caregiver Support Group

Caregiver Support Group meeting is held every Tuesday at 5:15 PM at Pat Oge Building , Hospice of East Texas , 4111 University Blvd. Tyler, 75701 There is no charge but to pre-register please contact Mary Nell at 903-266-3400 by noon Tuesday. This support group goal is to share ideas to be a good caregiver, support each other in decisions we face every day and to relieve the daily stress from our life as caregivers. As a caregiver for my mother, I have benefit from the support group, and I encourage caregivers to attend the meeting.

Submitted by:

Carol Swanson

### Items to Keep in a Safe Place

If an emergency struck, could you or your family members locate important documents? Here is a list of items attorneys suggest keeping in a safe place.

- Wills
- Power of attorney
- Insurance policies
- Deeds, titles, mortgages, documents, leases....
- Savings bonds
- Birth certificates
- Marriage certificates
- Inventory of household items
- Checking, savings and investment accounts numbers
- Credit card account numbers
- Social security cards

## Back Injuries Can Be Prevented

Back injuries account for one-in-four workplace injuries and illnesses. Back pain is the second most common health complaint in the nation. Many back injuries are caused by the strain of lifting incorrectly. Some tips for safer lifting are:

**Size up** the load before you attempt to lift. If you are not sure you can handle it alone, get help from another team member or a lifting device.

**Get as close** to the load as possible. Crouch down, keeping your back straight.

**Get a good grip** on the load. Use gloves to protect your hands and improve your grip.

**Lift** by straightening your legs. The strong muscles in your thighs are much better able to handle the load than your back.

**Plan** where you will set the item down, and do so without twisting or bending your back. Check the route you are using to carry your load to its destination. Clear the path of any obstacles in your way.

**Try to lift** and set down loads at a height between your shoulders and knees. It is harder to lift and control items located higher or lower than that.

### AFL-CIO Golf Tournament

The Texas AFL-CIO will hold its 2nd Annual Golf Tournament, Wednesday, Sept. 28, at the Crystal Falls Golf Course in Leander, near Austin. Proceeds will benefit the Texas AFL-CIO Membership Education Fund, or the Texas AFL-CIO Scholarship Fund, adding to the resources the AFL-CIO has to bring programs to union members throughout Texas.

Besides offering a relaxing fun day of golf, a convivial post-tournament gathering and the chance to compete for a variety of prizes, sponsorships at the silver level and up will be recognized with signs or banners on different course holes.

Golf tournament pre-registration forms can be picked up at the union hall.

### ILCA Convention

By Joe Wyatt

On July 21st, 22nd and 23rd, The International Labor Communications Association held it's 50th Anniversary Convention in Chicago. As Editor of The Stretch, I was invited to attend.

There were 7 workshops on the 21st, of which we could attend only 3 due to the time involved. The workshops I attended were:

\* Layout and Design: Putting the pieces together.

\* Avoiding Legal Landmines.

\* Media Relations: Networking and Spin.

On the 22nd, the keynote address was given by Thomas Frank, author of *What's the Matter With Kansas?*

During the lunch break, a dramatic presentation by Melody Cooper, from her play, *Day of Reckoning* was performed. It was about radical trade unionist Lucy Parsons and Haymarket martyr Albert Parsons.

On Saturday the 23rd, there was a Liebling Lecture with Amy Goodman, host and executive producer of nationally syndicated, award winning radio newscast, *Democracy Now!* Also author (with David Goodman) of *Exception to the Rulers, Exposing Oily Politicians*.

On the first day that I was there, a man that I had ask directions of ask me if my accent was for real or was I just putting on. I told him that I was just putting on, but I had been practicing for 52 years. I thought all of those people up there were talking funny but I guess it must have been me. Anyway after that, I didn't speak unless I had to.

I want to thank the local for sending me to the ILCA conference. I learned a lot about how to put together a quality newspaper.

## Union Steward Training



**Top Left: A-Team Stewards. (not listed in order) Ferrell Hardy, Randy Boswell, Laura McCowin, Derwin Ford, Glen Dowdy, Sandra Harden, Larry Ward, Jerry Lawson Billy Johnson Jerry Tidwell, and Frank Leeson.**

**Top Right: B-Team Stewards. Billy McMillan, Jimmy Abney, Turk Gorkman, David Bartholomew, Raymond Johnson, Mark Saxon and Tracy Roy.**

**Bottom Left: C-Team Stewards. Bill Young, Keith Battles, James McPherson, Jack Duncan and David Hogan.**

**Bottom Right. D-Team Stewards. Chad Owens, Terry Johnson, Fred Marshall, Stephen Goodson, Philip Gordon, Jim Bennett, Brandon Yowell and Olan Loveless**

**Also pictured in the bottom right photo is (center left) Mike Scarver, PAC Coordinator, from the USW Pittsburg office and our very own Chuck Rocha, (center right) who is the National Political Field and Grassroots Coordinator for the International Union.**

On July 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, all of the union stewards throughout the plant attended a lecture given by Mike Scarver, PAC Coordinator, from the USW Pittsburg office, at the union hall.

The lecture was about fundraising for “PAC” or better known as COPE (Committee on Political Education). Our very own Chuck Rocha, who is the National Political Field and Grassroots Coordinator for the International Union, and Scarver gave updates on the candidates who always vote for labor on issues that deal with our jobs here at Kelly Tyler.

Scarver helped organize a campaign PAC drive for us and schooled the stewards on the importance of PAC donations and the knowledge that we need to vote and support the candidates who run for office and support the labor movement.

He spoke of how one vote can influence Washington and went on to tell of the plight of American Industrial Jobs being lost to overseas competition and the fight we have here against our own government to keep jobs onshore.



# New Faces at Kelly/Tyler



## DO YOU KNOW...

the difference between margarine and butter? Read on to the end, it gets very interesting! Both have the same amount of calories. Butter is slightly higher in saturated fats at 8 grams compared to 5 grams.

Eating margarine can increase heart disease in women by 53% over eating the same amount of butter, according to a recent Harvard Medical Study. Eating butter increases the absorption of many other nutrients in other foods. Butter has many nutritional benefits where margarine has a few only because they are added! Butter tastes much better than margarine and it can enhance the flavors of other foods. Butter has been around for centuries where margarine has been around for less than 100 years.

And now, for Margarine... Very high in trans fatty acids, Triple risk of coronary heart disease, Increases total cholesterol and LDL (this is the bad cholesterol) Lowers HDL cholesterol, (the good cholesterol) Increases the risk of cancers by up to five fold... Lowers quality of breast milk, Decreases insulin response...

### **HERE IS THE PART THAT IS VERY INTERESTING!**

Margarine is but ONE MOLECULE away from being PLASTIC. This fact alone should be enough to have you avoiding margarine for life and anything else that is hydrogenated (this means hydrogen is added, changing the molecular structure of the substance). YOU can try this yourself: purchase a tub of margarine and leave it in your garage or shaded area. Within a couple of days you will note a couple of things: no flies, not even those pesky fruit flies will go near it. That should tell you something. It does not rot or smell differently because it has no nutritional value, nothing will grow on it.. Even those teeny weeny microorganisms will not find a home to grow. Why? Because it is nearly plastic.

Would you melt your Tupperware and spread that on your toast? Share This With Your Friends.....(Butter them up!)

## Counterfeit Bills Passed at Kelly Medi-Center

Counterfeit \$20.00 and \$50.00 bills are not uncommon in our local circulating money and everyone is cautioned to be careful when accepting payment or change during business transactions. For a second time, the pharmacy has lost money because they accepted a counterfeit bill. To control any additional loss of income, the clinic and pharmacy will be using a counterfeit bill identification pen on all \$20.00 and \$50.00 bills and other bills will be randomly tested at the time of payment. A mark from the pen will turn black if the bill is counterfeit. While we realize that anyone presenting a counterfeit bill for payment has been an innocent victim, we will be required to:

- \* Confiscate the bill to remove it from circulation
- \* Turn the bill into the bank
- \* Provide the name, address & telephone number of the person presenting the bill.
- \* Obtain a valid payment from the patient.

The bank is responsible for verification that the bill is counterfeit and notifying the Treasury Department. The Treasury Department will contact the person who presented the bill to try to identify the original source of the bill.

We know that everyone will work with us to address this issue within our community.

## Is Michelin's Tweel The Future Of Tires?

Could this be the future of tires? Only time will tell, but if nothing else it is the radical concept devised as an alternative to the pneumatic tire. "Major revolutions in mobility may come along only once in a hundred years," said Terry Gettys, president of Michelin Americas Research and Development Center in Greenville, S.C. "But a new century has dawned and Tweel has proven its potential to transform mobility. Tweel enables us to reach levels of performance that quite simply aren't possible with today's conventional pneumatic technology." Michelin's Tweel is in production and available as an enhancement for future iBOT™ mobility systems. Invented by Dean Kamen, the iBOT™ mobility device has the ability to climb stairs and navigate uneven terrain, offering mobility freedom impossible with traditional wheelchairs. Additionally, Segway LLC's Concept Centaur, a prototype that applies self-balancing technology to a four-wheel device, has also been equipped with Tweel to increase its performance potential.

Beyond these first real-world applications, Michelin has additional projects for Tweel on construction skidsteers and a variety of military vehicles.

The most intriguing application may be Michelin's early prototype Tweel fitment for passenger cars. The mobility company released video of promising Tweel performance on an Audi A4. "The Tweel automotive application, as demonstrated on the Audi, is definitely a concept, a stretch application with strong future potential," said Gettys. "Our concentration is to enter the market with lower-speed, lower-weight Tweel applications. What we learn from our early successes will be applied to Tweel fitments for passenger cars and beyond."



## Titan, USW Begin Local Negotiations

Titan International announced Tuesday July 26th, that it has begun labor negotiations with the United Steelworkers Local 745, which represents the bargaining unit employees at Goodyear's plant in Freeport, Ill.

Goodyear announced in February that it intended to sell its North American farm tire assets, including the Freeport plant, to Titan. The sale is contingent upon Titan negotiating a new labor contract with the union.

## Goodyear to Produce Run-Flat Tires in China

Goodyear will become the first tire company to manufacture run-flat tires in China, directing an \$18 million investment in its Dalian tire plant toward run-flat manufacturing technology.

Investment and subsequent plans would focus on the manufacture of Goodyear RunOnFlat tires for the original equipment and replacement markets.

The run-flat production at Dalian is expected to begin in 2007, with annual sales volume of 200,000 units within five years. The company expects demand for its RunOnFlat technology to increase significantly, reflecting escalating interest from original equipment manufacturers. Goodyear currently has more than 100 active RunOnFlat projects with OEMs.

The European organization has been very aggressive in supplying RunOnFlat to manufacturers like BMW, Mercedes, Audi, Volkswagen and Ferrari. In 2004 Goodyear sold more than 1.3 million run-flat tires. In 2005 that number is expected to be closer to 2 million.

## Goodyear Higher on Global, National Lists

With 2004 revenues up 21.5 percent, Goodyear improved its ranking in *Fortune* magazine's list of the world's 500 largest corporations, moving up 26 slots to number 330.

The ratings are based on total annual revenue, and the threshold for inclusion jumped 15 percent to \$12.4 billion in sales, a record high. According to the report, last year was a good year for earnings overall, showing a 26 percent increase in profit based on revenues that rose 13 percent.

The top 10 companies in order are Wal-Mart, BP, ExxonMobil, Royal Dutch/Shell, General Motors, DaimlerChrysler, Toyota, Ford, General Electric and Total (the French oil concern).

Bridgestone Corp. maintained its position at 250, while Groupe Michelin moved up slightly to 294, Sumitomo Rubber improved to 313 and Continental Tire dropped to 385.

In another magazine ranking based on 2004 revenue, Goodyear placed 51st on *Industry Week's* annual list of the 500 largest U.S. manufacturers.

Ohio companies accounted for 32 spots, placing it in the top five for number of manufacturers included on the list. The other top Ohio companies are Procter & Gamble (14), Eaton Corp. (89), Dana Corp. (99) and Parker Hannifin (121).

# Obituary



Larry Ellis, Dept. 705 Codechanger, passed away on July 18th. He started to work at Kelly on 05-31-74. Larry was 49 and was an active employee at the time of his death.



Dwain Radford passed away on July 9th. He was 69. He was an Area Manager at the time of his retirement.



Owen Priddy passed away on July 12th. He was 73. Owen was a millwright and retired on 05-01-97

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## Retirements



**Sue Burk**  
Dept. 514



**Denman Denton**  
Dept. 515

### **Kelly/Tyler Cancels Christmas Shutdown**

In news released on June 30th, Tyler plant management announced that it will not have a Christmas shutdown for 2005. The plant will run full during that week. The company and union met July 1st and decided to allow employees to either take the shutdown week in day-at-a-time vacation, sell the week back to the company or take the week sometime before the end of the year based on their seniority and their department vacation cap.

# Heart Attack and Stroke Risk Factors

Risk factors are traits and lifestyle habits that increase your risk of disease. The same factors that raise your risk of coronary heart disease, which causes heart attack, also directly or indirectly raise your risk of stroke. Several factors only increase stroke risk.

The more risk factors you have, the higher your chances of having a heart attack or stroke. Some risk factors you can control, treat or prevent. They are:

- High blood pressure, or hypertension
- Smoking
- High blood cholesterol
- Physical inactivity
- Obesity
- Diabetes

Other risk factors you can't control. They are:

- Increasing age
- Sex (gender)
- Race
- Family medical history
- Previous heart attack or stroke

Still other factors may affect your risk of heart attack and stroke. They include unhealthy responses to stress, excessive alcohol and some illegal drugs. To cut your risk, the American Heart

Association suggests the following:

- Don't smoke cigarettes or other tobacco products. Avoiding tobacco smoke is the best thing you can do to maintain your health. In fact, tobacco smoke is the single most preventable cause of death in the United States.

- Have your blood pressure checked regularly. You have high blood pressure if two or more of your readings are 140/90 mm Hg or higher. High blood pressure makes your heart work harder. This puts more strain on the heart and arteries.

- Read labels to make sure you eat foods low in saturated fats and cholesterol. Limit your saturated fat intake to 8 to 10 percent of total calories or less. Get your cholesterol level checked once every five years, starting at age 20.

- Stay physically active. Thirty to 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on most days of the week is all it takes to help your heart.

- Maintain proper weight. If you have too much fat, especially in the waist, you have a higher risk for health problems such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and diabetes.

- Have regular medical check-ups. Follow your doctor's advice to reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Published monthly by  
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Tyler, Texas 75709  
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The Stretch staff or publisher  
does not assume responsibility  
for views expressed in signed-  
articles published in this publi-  
cation.




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