



Fall 1991

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A Houston Breakthrough in Preventing Addiction and Cancer

Eric Solberg, Executive Director DOC

(Doctors Ought to Care)

Recently, Dr. Alan Blum, a Houston family physician and founder of DOC (Doctors Ought to Care) a national health advocacy group, urged the Houston City Council to publicly make the connection between the rising cost of health care and the ubiquitous promotion of alcohol, cigarettes and spitting tobacco targeted at young people. It is seldom emphasized, he pointed out, that a minimum of one out of every ten health care dollars goes to care for persons with tobacco-induced diseases such as emphysema, stroke, heart disease, burns from cigarette-caused fires, and cancer of the lung, mouth, esophagus, and pancreas. Dr. Blum continued by pointing out that last year more than \$3 billion was spent for the 23,000 Texans who died due to tobacco products, nearly 100 times as many individuals as died because of illegal drugs.

"With illegal drugs, we all fiercely fight the pushers," Blum said in his remarks to Council, "Yet when it comes to so-called legal drugs like cigarettes, we not only ignore the pushers, we blame the users."

Indeed, in Houston we even help celebrate the pushers. At the annual children's Halloween Haunted House sponsored by the Houston Jaycees, advertisements for Budweiser Beer featuring bats, pumpkins, and vampires ("I want to drink your Bud") have been displayed throughout the attraction. KHOU-TV (Channel 11) co-sponsors a float with Miller Lite Beer in the annual Rodeo Parade, as well as a concert at the rodeo. The leading sponsor of the Texas Special Olympics, involving many children who are developmentally disabled due to family alcohol abuse, is Miller Lite.

Not a week goes by in Houston without a tobacco-sponsored event at which thousands of packs of cigarettes are given away. Many of these events are held on taxpayer-supported city property, such as the Benson and Hedges Blues Festival, where free

packs were given to young Black and Latino families. Dr. Blum has asked that City Council stop sanctioning tobacco-sponsored events on taxpayer-supported property. Councilman Dale Gorczyński wholeheartedly agrees.

"We have to think whether we want the city of Houston's seal of approval on activities that are sponsored by these companies," Councilman Gorczyński told the Houston Post. "Cigarette smoking is the largest single source of preventable death and disease in our nation today. We need to do everything in our power to keep young people from ever becoming addicted."

By coincidence, in June, a few days after Dr. Blum made his request to City Council, DOC learned that the Houston Public Library refused to permit concerts and a photo exhibit for the Benson and Hedges event on its property as well as a tour of the Bill of Rights sponsored by the same tobacco company. The library director cited city ordinance 28-38, which forbids commercial promotion on city property.

DOC monitors cigarette promotions nationwide and in our city. During the first six months of 1991, more than 20 cigarette promotions came to Houston disguised as sports event and cultural

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1991 Texas Red Ribbon Campaign

Proud To Be...Drug Free

October 19-27, 1991

"Present a unified and visible commitment toward a drug-free Texas!"



Roz Hill, SWCS Parent Co-Ordinator, receives recognition from Governor Ann Richards on May 2, 1991. Janet Juban, Regional Coordinator of Texans' War on Drugs, presents the framed certificate honoring Roz for her outstanding volunteer service in the war against drugs.

1991-1992
Southwest Interaction Council (SIC)

Co-Leaders: Melissa Strake (St. Agnes)
Bret Frankovich (St. Thomas)

Secretary: Amy Tauber (St. Agnes)

Key Representatives:

Duchesne Academy: Tinera Francois
Angie Zapata

Episcopal High School: Chadrick Cross
Polliana Peterson

Kinkaid School: Suzanna Bonham
Aaron Geller

Lamar High School: Phoenix Baca
Charlie Hartline

Lee High School: Molly McCarty
Alice Price

Memorial High School: Maggie Ogilvie
Ben Urquhart

St. Agnes Academy: Chilly Barlow
Julie Sacco

St. John's School: Eleanor Hero
Evelyn Su

St. Thomas High School: Jeff Hill
Brian Prentice

Strake Jesuit
College Prep: Brandon Swoboda

Co Sponsors: Ms. Susan Epps (*Duchesne Academy*)
Mr. Jerry Harper (*St. John's School*)

Spring Headmasters' and Principals' Luncheon Highlights SWCS/SIC's Efforts

On April 9, 1991, representatives from the ten member schools gathered for lunch hosted by Father Albert Gaelens, St. Thomas High School.

March 1991 SIC members attend PRIDE World Drug
Conference (Nashville, Tenn.)
SWCS/SIC Newsletter

April 1991 SIC attends Circus
SIC Bar-B-Q/DJ/Sports Day

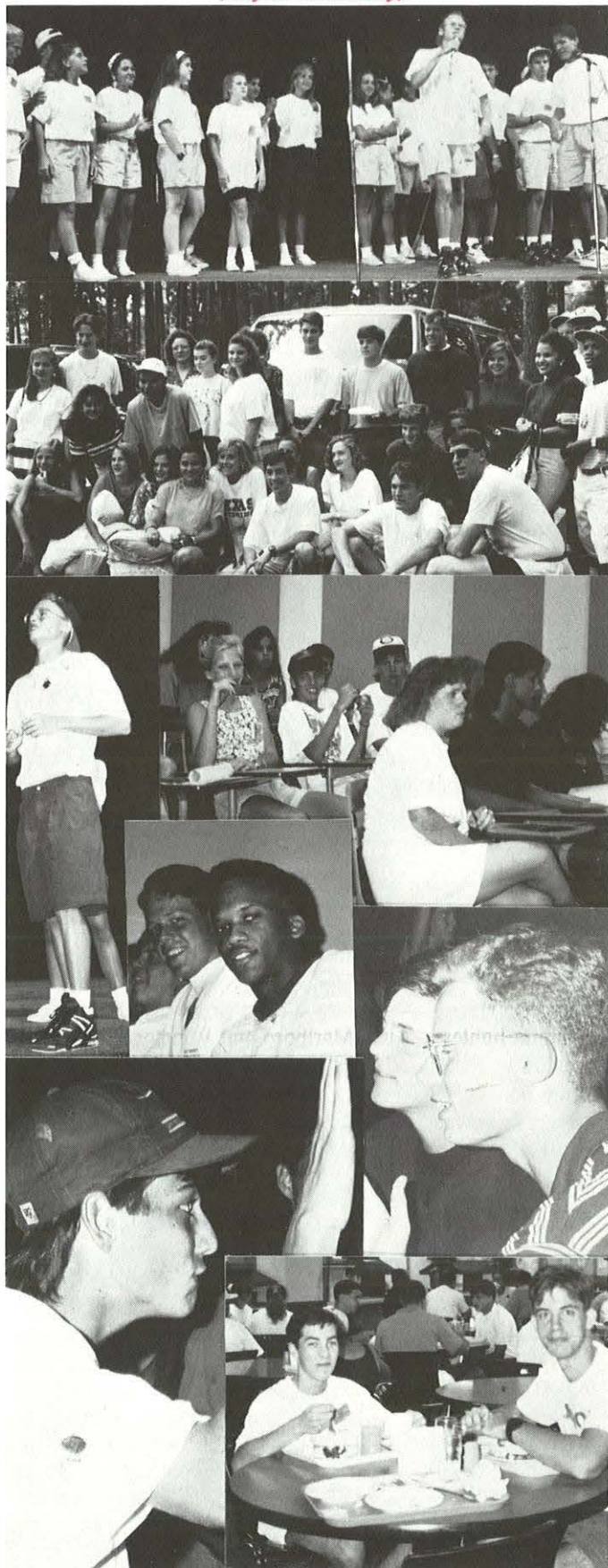
May 1991 SIC Galveston Beach Party

June 1991 SWCS/SIC Presentations to HISD Counselors

July 1991 SIC members attend Texans' War on Drugs Youth In Action Leadership Conference (Waco)

August 1991 SIC Swim Party

**SIC Participates in 7th Annual Texans' War on
Drugs Youth in Action Leadership Conference
July 17-20, 1991
(Baylor University)**



Doctors Ought to Care ... (Continued from page 1)

festivals, appealing to youth and ethnic communities. The following is a partial list of tobacco-sponsored events that have appeared in Houston between January and June.

January 1991

Camel Mudd and Monster Series
Lucky Strike Filters 1991 Darts Series
Camel Supercross

February 1991

Red Man Chew All American Pulling Series
Winston Drag Racing
1991 Houston Rodeo and Livestock Show
(advertising for Marlboro, Skoal and Red Man)

March 1991

Philip Morris Bill of Rights Tour
Ebony Fashion Fair
Skoal/Copenhagen World of Outlaws Sprint Car Racing

April 1991

Hubbard Street Dance Company (Philip Morris Reception)
Virginia Slims of Houston
Vantage Cup/Senior PGA Tour (Doug Sanders Golf Classic)
Houston International Festival
(Newport cigarette games and giveaways)

May 1991

Black EXPO USA Houston
(cigarette giveaways by four different tobacco companies)
Cinco de Mayo Festival (Skoal Tobacco giveaways)
Cajun/Zydeco Rodeo (Salem)

June 1991

Benson and Hedges Blues Festival
Camel 1991 Tejano Summer Concert Tour
Miss Black Houston Metroplex Scholarship Pageant (Salem)

In addition to these events, many of which were held on taxpayer-supported property, tobacco companies are actively recruiting young people in Houston neighborhoods with "video vans" which feature loud music videos playing from a public address system, and giveaways of cigarettes, t-shirts, caps, and cigarette lighters. Also, Marlboro and Winston cigarettes continue to be advertised in Houston's sports stadiums, the Astrodome and the Summit. Ironically, countless HISD students receive their high school diplomas in the Summit, where Winston cigarette signs are prominently displayed.

As the data from HISD's 1990 drug, alcohol, and tobacco survey shows, by grade seven nearly 16 per cent of our students use tobacco products regularly. By grade twelve the number of students using tobacco is nearly 30 per cent. The fact that tobacco and alcohol have become the major drug problem among adolescents is a direct result of the advertising and marketing promotions directed at youth by manufacturers of these products. Yet the majority of drug education and prevention curricula designed for school-age youth focus on self-esteem, decision-making, and peer pressure. There is no doubt that these play a role in adolescent-onset tobacco and alcohol use, but to much lesser degree than advertising and promotion.

What can parents do? Join DOC to help monitor and counteract tobacco and alcohol use and its promotion.

Taking Action

1. Contact the City Council member for your district and express your concern regarding the tobacco promotions and free cigarette giveaways which continue at an average of one per week in Houston.
2. Ask that the City of Houston enforce ordinance 28-38 forbidding commercial promotions on city property.
3. Take photographs of tobacco advertisements and promotions you spot in Houston and send them to DOC: 5510 Greenbriar, Houston, TX 77005.
4. Request information from your school regarding its drug education and prevention teaching materials. Ask that tobacco and alcohol be made a priority in your child's drug education program.

DOC Health Reminder; 434,000 Americans died last year due to tobacco-caused diseases. 80% of those who died started smoking before the age of eighteen.

1991-1992

SWCS Steering Committee

Duchesne Academy

Linda Anderson
Connie Manal

Memorial High School

Virginia Jamison
Bobbie Kristinik

Episcopal High School

Elizabeth Wareing
Cynthia Nelson

St. Agnes Academy

Sally Barlow
Ginger Upton

Kinkaid School

Gail Creech
Sarah Thompson

St. John's School

Carter Lee
Mary Nelson

Lamar High School

*Cinda Matthews
Ginny Seale

St. Thomas High School

Lexie Frankovich
*Roz Hill

Lee High School

Sue Price
Bitsy Stuart

Strake Jesuit College Preparatory

Margaret Sharp
Donna Sweat

*1991-1992 Coordinators

Fall 1992 Kick-Off Calendar

September 4	1:00 p.m.	SWCS Trainees/Houston Child Guidance
September 5	10:30 a.m. 12:00 Noon	SWCS Steering Comm. Meeting Luncheon/Headmaster's House
September 9	7:00 p.m.	Fall Kick-Off SIC Meeting/St. John's (Senior Country)
September 11	12:00 Noon	Headmasters'-Principals' Luncheon (St. Agnes Academy)

Partners in Prevention

Tuesday, October 15, 1991
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
George R. Brown Convention Center

Sponsored by Houston Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in partnership with Houston Crackdown's Prevention Network, Southwest Regional Center for Drug Free Schools and Communities, Harris County Medical Society Auxiliary, Junior League of Houston, Region IV Education Service Center, Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation and Texans' War on Drugs.

"The Worlds Biggest Anti-Drug Conference goes to Houston in '92!"

"1992 will be an election year, and HOUSTON will welcome the Republican National Convention. Before the GOP has its turn, the PRIDE World Drug Conference will fill Houston's George Brown Convention Center."

Mark Your Calendars: April 30- May 2, 1992

Bret and Melissa Led SIC Members in 1991 Second Semester Activities

