

## Lodge 200 Bruceville-Eddy says, “Happy Birthday”

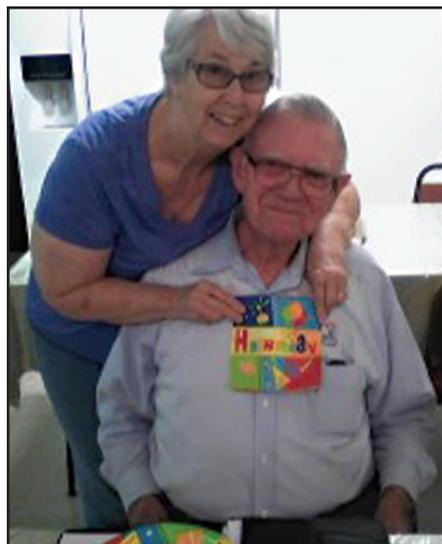
Happy birthday wishes are extended to these Lodge 200, Bruceville-Eddy members - Jennifer Frerick, Sandra Garrett, Penny Gonzalez, Darren Jupe, Ray Langenegger, Gene McBride, Joshua Robicheaux, Christina Schramm, Michael Turner, and Deanna Warren.

Fraternally,  
Michael D. Hosch  
Vice President  
—SPJST—

## Lodge 232 Houston Midtown meets on third Thursdays

Lodge 232, Mid-Houston will meet on the third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Czech Center Museum Houston, located at 4920 San Jacinto at Wichita in Houston, Texas 77004.

Clay Zapalac, President  
—SPJST—



## Happy Birthday, Gene McBride!

Lodge 200, Bruceville-Eddy members recognized Honorary Supreme Lodge Vice President Gene McBride at the January 4, 2017, meeting held at Taylor Senior Center in Eddy, Texas. Brother McBride celebrated his birthday on January 6. He is pictured with his wife Frances.

—Submitted by  
Michael D. Hosch, Reporter

## Ladies Circle of Lodge 92 Fort Worth

As I sit here on New Year's Eve reflecting on the passing of an incredible year, wondering if 2017 will be as good to us as was this year, I'm reminded of the people we've lost, and the many adventures we've been on. We are so blessed to be a part of the Ladies Circle of SPJST Lodge 92, Fort Worth. Each month we welcome new members and continue to share love with each other. Our meetings are a peek at how generations can get together and enjoy each other's company.

I must apologize at my lack of reporting from the November meeting. I overcommitted myself and couldn't tell

if I was coming or going. It was really bad. So while I am very late, please forgive me. Following is a brief synopsis of our activities for the meeting.

We had more than 40 ladies attend in November, and we welcomed several visitors. Our meeting started with a moment of silence in honor of Willie Mae Becan who went to her heavenly home. Vice President Janet Basham gave advice on the use of free-standing postal boxes. Don't use them as her suggestion. Quite often, they are broken into and your mail may not reach its destination. Next, in tribute of Thanksgiving, members submitted "notes of thanks" to be read. The general consensus was we're all thankful for God, family, health, and the ladies of the Circle. Without a doubt, each one contained at least one of those bless-

ings.

After minutes were read and the financial report was given, officers were elected. Cathy Simmank will continue as president, Janet Basham as vice president, Margaret Laymance as treasurer, and yours truly as secretary and reporter. You'd think they would be tired of me by now: apparently not. Last of all, while we are not a service organization, we do try to extend kindness to those less fortunate. We offer food and money, school supplies, can tabs, and labels in honor of our late Gloria Farek. We miss her as she always kept us on track of issues that need to be addressed. We have also been collecting pennies for the SPJST 100 Pennies Scholarship Fund Drive, and come January, we will decide to support a couple of other organizations

## Santa Visits S.P.J.S.T. Assisted Living in Taylor



LEFT PHOTO: Matt "St. Nick" Baran of Taylor sits with the audience at S.P.J.S.T. Assisted Living in Taylor during the Knights of Texas Swing's Christmas show on December 18, 2016. RIGHT PHOTO: St. Nick joins the Knights of Texas Swing's Christ-



mas show at S.P.J.S.T. Assisted Living. From left are Ray Tesmer, Matt "Santa" Baran, Paul Schlesinger, Dennis Schroeder, and Tara Schlesinger.

—Photos by  
Donna Schlesinger

The residents of S.P.J.S.T. Assisted Living facility in Taylor, Texas, got a special treat when Santa Claus decided to make a surprise appearance during Paul Schlesinger's Knights of Texas Swing Christmas music show. Santa, aka Matt Baran of Taylor, bounded into the room during the band's rendition of "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town." Santa not only greeted each one of the residents, but also joined the combo for a group sing-along version of "Jingle Bells."

Santa then took his place in the audience for the remainder of the program. He told the audience his reindeer team was taking a break next door at Sonic Drive-In.

Matt Baran, the man behind the real, snow-white beard, has been pleasing folks with his interpretation of Santa for a decade. "Ten years ago, an idea came to me to begin offering to play the role of St. Nick," he says. "I enlisted the help of one of my sisters to create an outfit that portrayed a time of long ago, that began what has become a very rewarding undertaking. A change occurs in me as young and old alike begin to see the spirit of Christmas that I represent. It has become a real and fascinating time filled with hugs and whispered lists of what is wanted. I feel blessed to carry on this tradition."

Judging by the smiles on the residents' faces, Matt's dream is a blessing indeed.

The Knights of Texas Swing typically perform once a month at Taylor's S.P.J.S.T. Assisted Living facility and are led by fiddler Paul Schlesinger of Taylor. Paul is a member of SPJST Lodge 29, Taylor, and has regularly brought music to S.P.J.S.T. Assisted Living for many years. The group includes his wife Tara on piano, Ray Tesmer of Round Rock on lead guitar, and Dennis Schroeder of Thorndale on rhythm guitar.

The Schlesingers were recently named Entertainers of the Year by the Country Music Hall of Fame of Gatesville, and play as a couple at the Lee and Milam County Cowboy Churches, and with the Comal Country Music Show in New Braunfels, and as members of the Stardusters band in Austin.

Ray Tesmer is a member of the Texas Western Swing Hall of Fame and has played with many area bands from the 1950s to the present, including Howard Wusterhausen and the Lone Star Ramblers, the Jody Jay Band, the King of Swing, the Stardusters, and the Knights of Texas Swing.

Dennis Schroeder is also a well-known area entertainer who specializes in western music and cowboy lore. He leads a group called Cowboys For Hire. His family owns Schroeder's Place in Thorndale, home of great, old-fashioned burgers and more.

—SPJST—