

Toys for Tots is a wonderful organization that makes sure that many kids who otherwise might not have a Christmas instead find gifts waiting for them on Christmas day. This makes a world of difference in their lives. If you can help Toys for Tots with a donation of any amount, you will know that 100% of your contribution will be used to help Anson County children.

"We are asking all businesses, churches, community leaders, government officials and anyone else who wants to help to please contribute to Toys for Tots," said Director Vancine Sturdivant. "The need is great. The need for toys is greater then ever. We have receive so many applications and I do not want to turn anyone down. How do you tell a child they will not get anything for Christmas? With the great executive board we have, along with terrific community support this will never happen."

To learn more or to contribute, please contact Vancine at 704-848-4412.

Giant Black Friday Sale!

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HOME FURNITURE

Do You Need a Coat or Blanket? Would You Like to Donate?

The Faith-Based Center of Hope has begun their "Warm Coats, Warm Hearts" program. They have distributed coats to several of the churches and schools in Anson County.

Blankets for the elderly are also available.

To donate coats and blankets or to request help, please contact Vancine Sturdivant at 704-848-4412 or Ester Lindsey at 704-848-8452.



The Bedding Center and Thanksgiving, Too!!

Now this one goes back quite a number of years. I designed and lettered this sign - "The Bedding Center" - for Perry Brown in March of 1975. The store was located on South Boulevard in Charlotte. This was back in the day when gas was much less than 50¢ per gallon, and my 1969 yellow Chevrolet Suburban was only \$4,098.55 new, with no air conditioning...but it did have a heater and white sidewall tires!!

And yes, I could drive to Charlotte on the two lane Highway 74 - no four lanes or median - in less time than "today's multi-lane" highway. So much for that...

I couldn't help thinking about Thanksgiving many years back, in the early 1930's. My grandmother Ballard always had a "spread." Turkey was a must (most of the time a turkey - not from the grocery store, but grown on the farm). And, of course, with all the "fixins" like fresh vegetables, dressing and gravy, ambrosia, "sweet 'taters," pies, coconut cake - oh well, that only begins the menu list. There was always plenty to eat. (Always plenty of folks there to eat also!) This is just one memory of many.

To each of you, Happy Thanksgiving and Blessings 2011! Ed

From the Doctors Desk:

10 Questions Commonly Asked About Epilepsy

From Harsha Nagaraja, MD, NorthEast Neurology-Monroe: November is National Epilepsy Awareness Month, and with over 2 million people in the United States currently affected by epilepsy, there is no better time than now to shed light and increase awareness of the disease.

Epilepsy affects over 65 million people around the world and one out of every 26 people will develop epilepsy at some point in their lifetime. But even though a large number of people are affected by the disease, many doctors say there is often confusion about the disease.

Many patients often have a variety of questions for doctors concerning epilepsy. Board-certified neurologist and psychiatrist Harsha Nagaraja, MD, from Northeast Neurology-Monroe, part of Carolinas HealthCare System, provides answers to the 10 most common questions that patients ask doctors about epilepsy.

1) What is epilepsy? Epilepsy is a disease of the central nervous system. It's sometimes called seizure disorder and is the third most-common neurological disorder, after stroke and Alzheimer's disease.

2) What is a seizure? A seizure is a malfunction in the brain. The brain controls how the body moves by sending small electrical signals. During a seizure, an overload of signals surges through the brain, spreading to areas where the signals are not supposed to be. This can lead to convulsions and unconsciousness.

3) If I have a seizure, is that epilepsy? Not necessarily! Typically once a seizure occurs, a thorough neurological exam is needed, which includes an MRI (to look for structural problems of the brain), as well as an electroencephalogram (EEG) that assesses the brain's electrical circuitry. If a patient has 2 or more seizures, generally they are labeled as being epileptic.

4) What are the risk factors? Some risk factors associated with epilepsy include age, family history, family infections, head injuries and stroke. In addition, if you had a febrile seizures, or a seizure caused by high fever during childhood, you are at a slightly increased risk for epilepsy.

5) What should I do if someone is having a seizure? If someone near you is having a seizure, do not try to restrain the person or put something in his or her mouth. You can take steps to help prevent injury. Place a pillow or something soft under the person's head, and move harmful objects out of the way. It's also helpful to time the seizure for emergency personnel. Turn the person on their side which helps reduce the risk of aspiration in case the vomit. If the seizure lasts more than five minutes, call 911.

6) What treatments are available, and what are the risks and benefits? About two-thirds of people with epilepsy are able to control their seizures with medication. When medication can't keep seizures under control, there are alternatives. Some alternatives include surgery, a vagal nerve stimulator (a medical device that reduces the number of seizures by sending electric impulses to the vagal nerve in the neck) or a ketogenic diet.

7) What's a common misconception about epilepsy? Some patients are satisfied if they only have a seizures once every two to three months. In most cases, that's too frequent. There are a variety of ways to control the seizures more effectively, including medication and lifestyle changes.

8) Can someone who has epilepsy drive a car? The laws vary by state. In North Carolina, a person who has epileptic seizures is obligated to report them to the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The DMV's medical review board decides, on a case-by-case basis, whether the driver is able to drive, taking into account a person's health and whether the seizures are being controlled by medication or other treatments.

9) Are there common seizure triggers that can be avoided? Some lifestyle habits can exacerbate seizures. The two most common triggers are alcohol and sleep deprivation. If you have epilepsy, it's important to avoid alcohol and get enough sleep on a regular basis to keep seizures under control. Certain medications can also trigger seizures. If your epilepsy was controlled until you began taking new medication, talk with your doctor.

10) What is an aura? Some people have can sense that they are about to have a seizure. This is called an aura - an unexplained, knowing, feeling or physical sign, like twitching in a hand or foot. The aura may only last a few seconds, which may not offer someone enough time to prepare for the onset of the seizure by bracing him- or herself or lying down. Only a small percentage of people have auras before their seizures.

Harsha Nagaraja, MD, sees patients at NorthEast Neurology-Monroe. For more information, visit CarolinasHealthCare.org/northeast-neurology.

Correction on 4-H Article

In the "4-Hers Hold Favorite Food Show" article that ran in The Express on November 12, one 4-H youth was left out. Justin Duncan placed First in the main dish category in the Junior Division

Again, congratulations to all 4-H youth and volunteers who participated this year!

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