

Tips For Keeping Kids Safe

With the hustle and bustle of the holidays, it's easy for children to become separated from their parents or guardians during family outings, class trips or shopping excursions.

Before heading out this holiday season, be sure to review some basic safety tips with young children and teens, to prepare them in case they are separated from their family or find themselves in an uncomfortable situation.

It is important to teach kids the skills and confidence to be knowledgeable about how to handle the situation, instead of avoidance and fear.

With this in mind, Honeywell and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children have created "Got 2B Safe!" - a child safety program that stresses four easy-to-remember rules for kids:

- * Check First -- Children should always check with parents and guardians before accepting gifts, rides or invitations from anyone, including friends, acquaintances and people they don't know.
- * Go With a Friend -- Simple and straightforward -- never go anywhere alone. Being with another person in public is safer and more fun.
- * It's My Body -- Teach your children they have the right to say NO to any unwelcome, uncomfortable, or confusing touch or actions by others.
- * Tell a Trusted Adult -- Teach your children to TELL a trusted adult -- parent, guardian, teacher, etc. -- if anyone or anything makes them feel scared, uncomfortable or confused.

"It is crucial to arm our children with positive and empowering safety skills," said Tom Buckmaster, President, Honeywell Hometown Solutions. "Honeywell is committed to providing students and teachers with programs and experiences designed to keep America's children safer."

To further address the issue of child safety, Got 2B Safe! provides teachers, parents and guardians with tools to help keep children safer. Activities, games and guides are available for free online at www.Honeywell.com/Got2BSafe.com.

The program is designed to educate 8- to 10-year-olds and their parents and guardians on how to help prevent abduction and sexual exploitation.

And helping kids to be safe can be doubly rewarding for schools, as teachers who make child abduction prevention a priority in their classrooms are eligible to win a classroom makeover worth \$10,000 or \$500 in classroom supplies as part of a Got 2B Safe! Awards Program.

The Got 2B Safe! Awards Program will begin on November 1, 2006 and end on January 31, 2007. Participants can log on to www.got2bsafe.com for more information about the contest.

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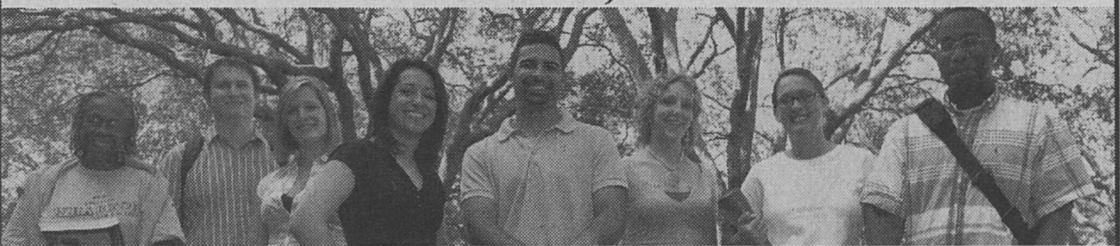
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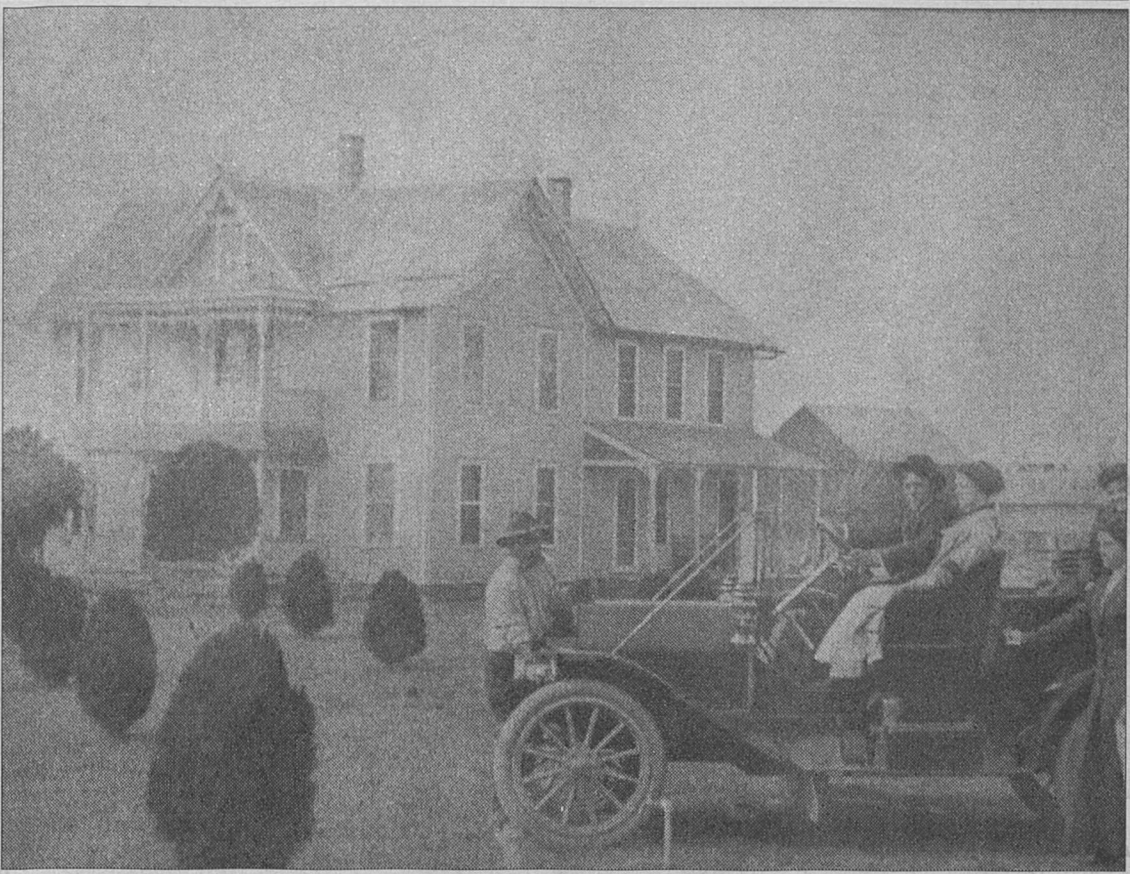


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Pictured above is the Thomas Home on FM 2464, now the M.J. Herman Farm, before restoration occurred.

G. E. Thomas Family Celebrates 110 Years

The Griffith Edward Thomas Family gathered on October 14-15 for a family celebration of 110 years in Texas. The reunion began on Saturday at the beautifully restored Thomas Family home place near Lissie, on County Line Road, FM 2764, now the M.J. Herman Farm.

Over 200 family members and friends convened for a weekend of family homecoming activities. The weekend began with registration at the home place at 10:15 a.m., and continued throughout the day, with tours of the home place given by Lois Herman and Margo Harrison, and tours of the grounds and historic barns and buildings led by Martin Herman.

It was a beautiful, sunny Texas setting under the large live oak trees at the Thomas family home place, with autumn decorations of pumpkins, hay bales, corn stalks, and colorful blue and white table cloths.

A delicious Texas barbecue lunch was served at noon on the lawn to the strains of familiar Texas music. Beforehand, a color guard of the Thomas great-great-grandchildren processed, carrying the U.S. flag, followed by the Texas, Pennsylvania, and Iowa State flags, the Welsh national flag, and the Thomas coat-of-arms flag.

The children on both sides of the platform, after which all-family members who had been in service to the country were recognized, posted the colors. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by West Point graduates Barrett and Erin Thomas, who recently served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Welsh national anthem was sung by Lana Thomas, 16, daughter of Drs. Griff and Sandra

S. Thomas of Buchanan Dam, Texas. Rev. Phil Steinbach of Mertzon, Texas, gave the invocation.

State legislator Robby Cook read a proclamation and tribute to the G.E. Thomas Family from the Texas State Legislature. Tom Kelley served as Master of Ceremonies.

Martin and Lois Herman were recognized by the family for their work in preserving the home place, and in hosting the event, and the Thomas Family presented them a special painting of the early G.E. Thomas home painted by local artist Clayton Bowen, and a certificate of appreciation.

At the event, Martin and Lois Herman were recognized for their historic home.

The Herman home was cited by the Eagle Lake Preservation Alliance, and the Herman's were presented an historic landmark plaque with the date of 1897, and an inscription indicating that the house had belonged to G.E. Thomas and M.E. Isenhower. Mary Ann Kaluza, Sylvia Contreras, Dorothy Kohleffel, and Pat Matula made the presentation.

sented by Ann Pavliska. A photo CD and DVD of family history were made available.

In the afternoon, four wagons were assembled to take the guests on a history tour through the Lissie prairie, visiting the areas of the Thomas School, and the Armit, Mose, and Griff Thomas family home places, the Boot Hill Cemetery site, and the Lissie Church, where Ed Causey, Jr. and Arthur Anderson spoke of the Thomas family involvement in the church's founding and history.

The children enjoyed activities with Julia Thomas Pardue and Vickie Kelley, and a hayride through the countryside.

In the evening there were open houses for the Thomas family. On Sunday morning, brunch at the Farris Hotel was followed by a Thomas Family Church service at the United Methodist Church, led by Rev. Phil Steinbach.

Special guests for the weekend were members of the Armit Thomas family, G.E.'s brother from Pennsylvania; and members of the Annie Thomas family from Iowa.

G.E. Thomas and his brother, Armit, came to America from Wales in 1862 at ages 6 and 4. They lived in Seranton, Pennsylvania, and worked in the coal mines until ages 29 and 25. G.E. went to Iowa, at 29, to become a farmer, married Annie Thomas, also from Wales, and had seven children in Iowa.

Awards were given to the Kaulitz family from Washington State for having traveled the farthest distance, to Ruth Ernestine Godsey of Greenville, Texas as the most senior family member present, and to Jet Evoritt Thomas, son of Ryan and Jenny Thomas of Fredericksburg, as the youngest Thomas.

Later, another historic landmark plaque was unveiled at the site of the Thomas School, formerly the McCormick School, at the crossroads of McCormick and McDonald Roads near the old home place.

Seven of the nine G.E. and Annie Thomas children attended the school. It was the Thomas School from 1905-1923.

In the historic Quonset barn at the farm were displays of Thomas family memories, furniture, artifacts, and Grandpa Thomas' accordion and personal items.

There were ongoing film presentations of early movies and early family photos on two screens throughout the day. In the afternoon a Walk Through History presentation was made by Drs. David Cook and Sandra C. Thomas.

Two books on G.E. Thomas family history were presented at the event, entitled A Prairie Girl Remembers: Growing Up in Texas by Ruth Thomas Seaholm, and From the Plains to the Prairie - A Century in Texas- The G.E. Thomas Family, A History, by Sandra C. Thomas. A Thomas Family Tree booklet was pre-

In 1897, Griffith explored land possibilities in Texas, and brought his family and his farm animals from Iowa to the Lissie--Chester-ville areas by train. Bill Thomas and Minnie Thomas Isenhower were born at the Thomas home place on FM 2764.

G.E. was among the pioneer rice growers in the Eagle Lake area. In 1899, he put in the first water irrigation well on the Lissie Prairie. G.E. and Annie moved to Eagle Lake in 1919, built their new home, and remained there for the duration, with their families nearby.

Annie was a champion butter maker, and revered mother, and G.E. was affectionately remembered for his accordion playing and his beloved Model T Ford. Annie died in 1938, and Griff, Grandpa Thomas, died in 1955 at 97.

They left a legacy of 9 children, 27 grandchildren, 54 great grandchildren, 115 great-great grandchildren, 81 great-great-great grandchildren, and 2 great-great-great-great grandchildren, or 288 family members, and six generations.

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Unemployment Rate 4.1 Percent In County

The unemployment rate for Colorado County for September 2006 was 4.1 percent, figures from Texas Workforce Commission show.

For September in Colorado County, 10,089 persons were employed and 429 seeking work.

The figure compares to statewide unemployment in September, 4.7.

For Fayette County, unemployment was 3.3 percent, with 11,727 persons employed and 401 looking for jobs.

For Lavaca County, unemployment was 3.3 percent, with 10,393 persons employed and 359 looking for jobs.

For Wharton County, unemployment was 4.7 percent, with 20,211 persons employed and 997 looking for jobs.

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