NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF STEINER RANCH



VOLUME 1 ISSUE 2

APRIL 2007

Another bout of drought in 2007?

The rains in January were nice, but for most of the lower Colorado River basin, the drought's not over.

While this was one of the wettest Januarys on record in the Austin area, most of the rains fell downstream of the Highland Lakes, offering little help to the levels of lakes Travis and Buchanan, LCRA's water-supply reservoirs.

Long-term forecasts aren't very encouraging. The U.S. Climate Prediction Center believes the "El Niño" wet weather pattern, which brought the January rains, will be gone by the end of March. The center predicts a trend toward drierthan-normal conditions this coming April through June, which is typically the basin's period of greatest rainfall, and hotter-than-normal temperatures this summer.

That forecast, if true, would deepen the rainfall deficit incurred during 2005 and 2006, which for much of Texas was the lowest two-year period of rains since the mid-1960s.

Lots of rain is needed especially in the Highland Lakes region, where lakes Travis and Buchanan capture rain and runoff that falls over a 15,000-square mile area in Central and West Texas. Inflows into the lakes in 2006 were at their lowest since 1942, the first year that lakes Travis and Buchanan were both in operation. As of early February, the two lakes were a little more than half full.

Even if the region receives its annual average rainfall, LCRA expects the lakes



Mansfield Park in 2003. Photo courtesy of LCRA



Mansfield Park on February 9, 2007. Repeated storms over lakes Travis and Buchanan are needed to make a difference. Photo courtesy of LCRA.

to rise slightly in spring, then drop by the end of summer. A continuation of last year's severe drought conditions could drop the two lakes to levels not seen since the 1960s.

So how much rain would it take to refill lakes Travis and Buchanan and end the drought? LCRA hydrologists estimate several months of regularly repeated storms, or a widespread storm of 10-12 (Continued on page 2)



Community Garage Sale April 21st

Calling All Steiner Ranch Couples With out Kids

Are you looking to meet other couples who live in Steiner Ranch that don't have kids at home? The Steiner Ranch Couples With out Kids social group has been established since January of 2006. We have over 20 couples who meet once a month at someone's Steiner Ranch home for food, drinks and social time. Whether you are new to Steiner Ranch or have lived here for a while we welcome new friends to join us. For more information please contact Paula Kaisner at paula@kaisner.org.

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IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	
Fire	
Ambulance	
Sheriff – Non-Emergency	512-974-0845
Hudson Bend Fire and EMS	
Emergencies	512-266-1775
Information	512-266-2533

SCHOOLS

Leander ISD	
Cedar Park High School	
Canyon Ridge Middle School	
Laura Welch Bush Elementary	
Steiner Ranch Elementary	

UTILITIES

Travis County WCID # 17	
City of Austin Electric	
Texas Gas Service	
Custom Service	
Emergencies	
Call Before You Dig	
AT&T	
New Service	
Repair	
Billing	
Time Warner Cable	
Customer Service	
Repairs	
IESI (Trash)	

OTHER NUMBERS

Lake Travis Postal Office......512-263-2458

NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

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Please support the businesses that advertise in The Star. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact our sales office at 512-989-8905 or <u>advertising@PEELinc.</u> <u>com.</u> The advertising deadline is the 10th of each month for the following issue.

Another Bout of Drout- (Continued from Cover page)

inches. The storms need to blanket the Hill Country, rather than occur as scattered showers.

Keep up to date on drought conditions and water-related issues at these Web sites:

• Updates on drought conditions in the lower Colorado River basin: http://www.lcra.org/water/drought.html

• Water-saving tips from LCRA's Water IQ Web site: www.wateriq. org

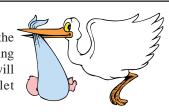
• LCRA's plan to develop additional water resources: http://www.lcra.org/lswp/index.html

• LCRA's water and drought management plans : http://www.lcra. org/water/wmp.html

The Lower Colorado River Authority protects people, property and the environment in Central Texas. Subscribe to Currents, the LCRA newsletter, at www.lcra.org/subscribetocurrents.

Stork Report

If you have a new addition to the family please let us know by emailing <u>thestar@PEELinc.com</u> and we will include an announcement to let everyone know!





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April Events

Compliments of	. Teresa Gouldie	751-8000	Coldwell Banker, United	d
April 7	Spamarama		Waterloo Park	
	A one-of-a-kind festival w	ith a celebrity	834-1960	
	cook-off, outrageous food	, and live music.	spamarama.org	
April 13 – 15	Heritage Society 2007 A	ntique Show	Austin Convention Cente	er
	This non-profit show featu	ires nationally	474-5198	
	renowned dealers of irrep	laceable treasures	s. heritagesocietyaustin.	org
April 14 – 15	Austin Fine Arts Festiva	1	5th and Guadalupe	
	200 artists, local musician	s, and hands on	458-6073	
	art activities for children.		austinfineartsfestival.c	org
April 14 – 15	Spring Plant Sale		LBJ Wildflower Center	
	Almost 280 species of nat	tive plants!	292-4100 wildflower.or	g
April 19	Aretha Franklin		Bass Concert Hall	
	"Lady Soul" sings her strin	ng of hits!	477-6060 utpac.org	
April 20	An Evening with CHICA	GO	Bass Concert Hall	
	These classic rockers are	on the heels	477-6060	
	of their 2006 release, CH	ICAGO XXX.	utpac.org	
April 21 – 22	Bob Marley Festival		Auditorium Shores	
	Pay tribute to the king of I	Reggae with music	c, 773-5177	
	arts & crafts, and Jamaica	an foods!	austinmarleyfest.com	
April 21 – 22	City Wide Garage Sale		Palmer Events Center	
	Austin's largest antique, o	ollectable, and	441-2828	
	vintage marketplace.		cwgs.com	
April 22	Austin's Earth Day Fest	ival	Auditorium Shores	
	This family-oriented festiv	al features display	/s 322-0000	
	and demos on many envi	ronmental issues.	ecology-action.org	
April 24 – 29	Mamma Mia!		Bass Concert Hall	
	Enchanting tale of love, la	nughter and friends	ship – 477-6060	
	the ultimate feel-good sho	ow!	utpac.org	
April 28	Eeyore's Birthday		Pease Park	
	Children's events, face pa			
	costumes, live music and	more!	sexton.com/eeyores	
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Teresa Gouldie

Broker

751-8000

tgouldie@gmail.com



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Hope Spokes Bicycle Club

Hope Spokes Bicycle Club sponsors lunchtime rides from the Steiner Ranch Welcome Center to Bee Caves and back on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 11:30 AM, weather permitting. The ride takes about 90 minutes and covers about 22 miles. Please join us! The ride coordinator is Mark Butterfield and he can be reached at 266-9066 or mbutterfield2@austin.rr.com. The club also sponsors team rides, bicycling workshops, and Family Field Trip rides to places like McKinney Falls State Park, Brushy Creek Park, and

Zilker Park, more information can be found at: http:// www.hopespokes. net.

Spring is in Full Swing at The UT Golf Club

Submitted by Dana DeLorenzo

Winter has passed and now spring is in "full swing" at The UT Golf Club. With this year's spring comes new course additions, bunkers, practice facility upgrades and the construction of Phase II-The Clubhouse!

We have selected Harvey-Cleary as the contractor for our clubhouse. The construction fence has been installed and they are now mobilizing on site. As for course additions, we have uploaded new images onto our website at www.utgolfclub.com for your review. Each hole includes a "Before and "After" image of what we will be changing and/or adding. Also, during the course improvements and clubhouse construction, we will be updating the website with pictures, so please check back on our progress.

The improvements and additions to the golf course are two-fold; first, our intent is to land the 2012 NCAA Championship and do so we will plan to have the 2008 NCAA Women's Regional and the 2009 NCAA Men's Regional. The NCAA committee has asked for some additional length that we will be supplying through tee box additions on holes 2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 15 and 18. Course yardage will be increased to over 7,400 yards. Secondly, after playing the course for 3+ years, we will be also introducing several upgrades to the playing characteristics, which ultimately benefits playability for the membership.

Finally—with these additions and the commencement of clubhouse construction, memberships have been going fast! There are 2 types of memberships available—one is our Local Longhorn Membership which allows a family full access to golf and all of the club activities and the second one is our Burnt Orange Social membership which is perfect for those who want to be involved on a social and fitness level only. These memberships are sure to increase in price and sell out the closer we get to the completion of the clubhouse! Be sure to come out and visit The UT Golf Club—a true, legendary, Texas Golf Experience! Drive, Slice, Hook 'em!



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LISD/Steiner Ranch Elementary

Pre-K and Kinder REGISTRATION:

LISD/Steiner Ranch Elementary Pre-K and Kinder Registration Monday, April 9, 2007

7:30am-11:00am

1:00pm-6:30pm

The following documents are required to register your child:

- Birth Certificate
- Social Security Card

• Proof of Residency (current utility bill, lease agreement, or sales contract)

- Current Immunization Records
- Photo ID of person registering child
- Complete Legal Documents (Restraining Orders, Divorce Decrees, Guardianship, Adoption, etc., only if applies)

UPCOMING TAKS TESTING DATES:

- April 3rd: 5th Grade Math TAKS
- April 17th: 3rd & 4th Math TAKS
- April 18th: 4th Grade Reading TAKS
- April 18th: 3rd & 5th Reading TAKS retakes
- April 19th: 5th Grade Science TAKS

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK:

April 30th - May 3rd



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Feeling Beautiful?

By Joan Marshall

You know that feeling! Healthy. Fit. Pampered. Pretty. Handsome. Confident. On top of the world. Positive. Up beat. Nothing can stop you! Here are some simple basic steps to bring out the beauty in you.

- 1. Begin each day with a nutritional breakfast. Follow up throughout the day with several meals/snacks that are nutritionally balanced as well.
- 2. Stay hydrated. Drink at least 8 glasses of water a day to keep your system fluid.
- 3. Get moving! Do at least some form of exercise each day. Exercise increases energy and metabolism.
- 4. Get plenty of rest. You will feel and look better after a good night's sleep.
- Keep your skin and hair clean and healthy. For best results use botanically based, quality products. Yes there is a difference!
- 6. Brush your teeth daily, hopefully more than once. Remember to floss the teeth you want to keep.
- 7. Protect yourself from the damaging, aging effects of the sun. Use sunscreen and shade yourself.
- 8. Take time to pamper your body. Try a spa treatment... facial, manicure, pedicure, massage, etc. You won't regret it!
- 9. Enjoy each day. Focus on the positive. Spend time with family, friends and pets.
- 10. Smile! Keep a smile in your heart and a smile on your face. It is your most beautiful asset. Watch the world smile back!



What Is Massage Therapy? Submitted by Alica Harrison

Massage is one of the oldest, simplest forms of therapy and is a system of stroking, pressing and kneading different areas of the body to relieve pain, relax, stimulate, and tone the body. Massage does much more than create a pleasant sensation on the skin, it works on the soft tissues (the muscles, tendons, and ligaments) to improve muscle tone and help to repair any damage from overuse and physical stress. Although it largely affects those muscles just under the skin, its benefits may also reach the deeper layers of muscle and possibly even the organs themselves. Massage also stimulates blood circulation and assists the lymphatic system (which runs parallel to the circulatory system), improving the elimination of waste throughout the body.

Some Benefits Of Massage:

- 1. Relaxing.
- 2. Soothing.
- 3. Healing.
- 4. Reassuring.
- 5. Eases tension, stiffness, and pain.
- 6. Improves breathing.
- 7. Improves circulation.
- 8. Enhances well-being.

The Effects Of Massage:

Although a single massage will be enjoyable, the effects of massage are cumulative and a course of massage treatments will bring the most benefits. Regular massage (monthly at the least) can have the effect of strengthening and toning the entire body mechanism, and so help to prevent unnecessary strains and injuries that might otherwise occur due to excess tension and any resulting structural weaknesses. Massage can stimulate or calm the nervous system and thus help reduce fatigue, leaving the receiver with a feeling of replenished energy. At its best, massage has the potential to restore the individual physically, mentally and spiritually.

Using Massage as Maintenance:

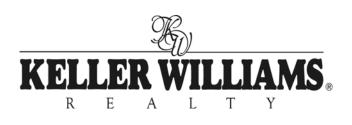
Massage therapy can be an excellent way to help maintain a low level of stress both physically and mentally. For athletes or regular exercisers, massage can keep soreness from setting in and alleviate any strains or fatigue from strenuous workouts. Everyone deals with mental and emotional stress from daily circumstances; massage can be a time for the mind and emotions to rest and release tension from a tough day at the office or with the kids. Begin to take advantage of massage as a way of life and not just a luxury for your body.



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Before You Start an Exercise Program

there are a few questions to ask yourself to determine whether you should see your doctor first.

QUESTION YOURSELF

Your first step is to ask yourself how active you want to be. This may sound like a silly question - you're probably planning on doing whatever you're capable of, whether that's a slow walk around the block or a vigorous step class. But if you're of a certain age or have certain cardiovascular risk factors, you may need to see your physician before beginning a program that involves vigorous (as opposed to moderate) aerobic activity.

Here's how exercise intensities are typically defined:

Low-to-Moderate - This is an intensity that can be sustained relatively comfortably for a long period of time (about 60 minutes). This type of exercise typically begins slowly, progresses gradually and usually isn't competitive in nature.

Vigorous - This is an intensity that is high enough to significantly raise both your heart and breathing rates, and is usually performed for about 20 minutes before fatigue sets in.

Are you planning to participate in vigorous activities and are a man over 40 or a woman over 50? You should receive a medical exam first. The same is true for individuals of any age with two or more coronary artery disease risk factors. If you're unsure if this applies to you, check with your physician.

MORE QUESTIONS

Now that you've made it through the first questions, there are a few more to answer. A YES to any ONE of the following questions means you should talk with your doctor, by phone or in person, BEFORE you start an exercise program. Explain which questions you answered "yes" to and the activities you are planning to pursue.

1. Have you been told you have a heart condition and should only participate



in physical activity recommended by a doctor?

- 2. Do you feel pain (or discomfort) in your chest when you do physical activity? When you are not participating in physical activity? While at rest, do you frequently experience fast, irregular heartbeats or very slow beats?
- 3. Do you ever become dizzy and lose your balance, or lose consciousness? Have you fallen more than twice in the past year (no matter what the reason)?
- 4. Do you have a bone or joint problem that could worsen as a result of physical activity? Do you have pain in your legs or buttocks when you walk?
- 5. Do you take blood pressure or heart medications?
- 6. Do you have any cuts or wounds on your feet that don't seem to heal?
- 7. Have you experienced unexplained weight

loss in the past six months?

8. Are you aware of any reason why you should not participate in physical activity?

If you answered "no" to all of these questions, and you passed the first round of questions, you can be reasonably sure that you can safely take part in at least a moderate physical activity program.

But again, if you are a man over 40 or a woman over 50 and want to exercise more vigorously, you should check with your physician before getting started.

So, are you ready? If you are, but are unsure how to get started, consider contacting an ACE-certified Personal Trainer or joining a reputable fitness facility.

For more information on finding a trainer, or for fitness information in general, visit the ACE Web site at www.acefitness.org.

Coronary Artery Disease Risk Factors

Age (men > 45, women > 55) Family history of heart attack or sudden death Current cigarette smoking High blood pressure High cholesterol Diabetes Physical inactivity



You need a MASSAGE



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charge to all Steiner Ranch teenagers seeking work. Submit your name and information to *thestar@PEELinc.com* by the 9th of the month!

Looking Ahead Austin Events in April and May

- Austin Farmers Market Every Saturday
- Trowel and Error, Mayfield Park Gardening Symposium – April 7th
- Urban Music Festival April 7th
- Wine and Wildflower Trail 2007 April 13th 22nd
- Austin Fine Arts Festival April 14th 15th
- Schlotzsky's Bun Run April 15th
- Founder's Day Festival April 20th 22nd
- Austin Reggae Festival April 21st 22nd
- Old Gruene Market Days April 21st 22nd
- Balcones Songbird Festival April 27th 30th
- Eevore's 44th Annual Birthday Park April 28th
- **29th annual Pecan Street Spring Arts Festival** May 5th – 6th
 - Congress Avenue Mile May 19th For more information on each of these events visit www.PEELinc.com.



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Wildflower Days 2007

The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center is open every day 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. through April 30. **Spring Plant Sale & Gardening Festival**

Get a refill for your garden. The best selection of native plants you'll findalmost 300 species. Artists and authors sign their works in the store both days. Plant list is online at www. wildflower.org. Members' Only Preview Sale--1 to 7 p.m. Friday, April 13. Public Sale -- 9 a.m. to 5

p.m. Saturday and Sunday, April 14 and 15

A.R. Valentien Botanicals Exhibit

Paintings of California wildflowers by one of the finest botanical painters. On loan



from the San Diego Natural History Museum. Check out products inspired by his work at the store. April 1 to June 30

Nature Nights: Carnivorous Plants

Learn about these fascinating flora. \$1 admission, 6 to 9 p.m. Friday, April 6

Book signing in the store Laurence Parent signs his book, "Big Bend National Park", noon to 3 p.m. Open Easter Sunday April

8 Arbor Day Weekend

All tree-related books on sale all weekend. Novelist Susan Wittig Albert signs her newest work, Spanish Dagger, from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 28.

Newsletter Article Submissions

Interested in submitting an article? You can do so by emailing <u>thestar@</u> <u>PEELinc.com</u> or by going to http:// www.peelinc.com/articleSubmit. php. All news must be received by the 9th of the month prior to the issue. So if you are involved with a school group, scouts, sports etc – please submit your articles for The Star. Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, special celebrations and military service are also welcome.

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LOST CAT



March 9, 2007 Dear Neighbors.

We desperately need your help! My name is Lisa Zucker. My family and I are residents in the Hancock Hill subdivision of Steiner, near the fire house. Our cat Domino, aka Doms, accidentally got outside Sunday, 2/25/07. We've had several sightings of him as recently as 3/8/07. Domino is past his comfort zone and so he's displaced and could be "hiding in silence". We've been researching how to find lost cats and from everything we've read and been told, it's important to look in yards, under decks, up in trees, in heavy bushes, in sheds, garages, under cars etc. anywhere a cat might go for shelter to feel safe. That's why we need your help. If you could please take a look on and around your property (even if you don't think he's there). You never know where a scared and confused animal might choose to hide. Using a flashlight may be the only way to catch a cat's eye in some places - they generally don't come out when called or coaxed by food. Cats have been known to stay in hiding for a very long time, and since he has been spotted recently he might be more willing to come out now. Domino is normally a very friendly, very mellow, black and white, 2 year old, domestic long hair. He has a slight limp from an injury to one of his hind legs. He doesn't have a collar, but he does have an ownership ID chip in his shoulder and he's current on all his shots. There is no way to fully express our gratitude for any help you can give us; acting now can bring our sweet Doms home. So please call (any time of day or night) or email us if you have any information about Domino. We are offering a reward.

Contact John or Lisa Zucker at 512-750-7350 or mczuckers@aol. com. And thank you for taking the time to read our flyer and for searching your property. We are not only indebted to you, but we are so thankful and proud to live in such a giving community. Its neighbors and friends like you that make this a unique and great place to live.

With your help, we can have a successful reunion with our beloved pet.

Sincerely,

John, Lisa, Amber and Brandon Zucker

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Eating organic: Does it really matter?

Submitted by Mason Arnold

In a new study by The Organic Center, researchers found that that organic fruits and vegetables contain nearly 1/3 more antioxidants than those grown by the conventional methods. Antioxidants are naturally occurring substances in food that can help your body fight inflammation, reduce your risk of heart disease and cancer, and more.

Why do organic fruits and veggies have more antioxidants? There are two possible reasons — first, plants grown under organic methods tend to grow more slowly. Second, because organic farmers don't use the usual pesticides, their crops have to develop their own natural defense mechanisms, which include antioxidants.

Actually, this is just the latest in a long line of reasons why eating more organic foods makes good sense for your family, including:

- Exposure to pesticides and other toxins isn't good for your kids. For example, in November 2006, the official journal of The American Academy of Pediatrics published a study showing that high prenatal exposure to one of the most commonly used pesticides can cause significant mental and motor skill developmental delays.2 And that's just one of the more recent studies.

- It's hard to get rid of pesticides and other toxins used in conventionally grown plants. For example, consider a pear: even after you rinse it off, the non-organic pear may still have up to 30 poisonous chemicals ingrained in its skin.

- The fast, "pumped up" growth of conventionally grown foods may mean they're not very good for you. According to Donald R. Davis, a Research Associate the at U.T.'s Biochemical Institute, "...modern crops that grow larger and faster are not necessarily able to acquire nutrients at the same, faster rate, whether by synthesis or by acquisition from the soil." 3

- Organics are probably even safer than conventionally grown foods. For one, there's no worries about irradiation or genetic engineering with organics. Organic farmers and processors are required to comply with extremely rigorous USDA requirements. Plus, when you support organic farmers, you're helping support sustainable, healthy environments.

Here in Austin, organic produce is easy to find. Stores such as Central Market and Whole Foods that carry a good variety of organics, and even more traditional stores like HEB and Target have a decent supply. The Downtown and Sunset Valley Farmer's Markets feature a wide selection of organic farmers (however not all vendors are organic providers).

Local farm stands such as the one at Boggy Creek Farm are a good option and a lot of fun to visit. If you can't get away from your work

(Continued on page 15)



Eating Organic- (Continued from page 14)

or family to make it out to the farm stand another option is Greenling Organic Delivery service. They work with local farms and deliver organic food to homes and offices.

1 "ELEVATING ANTIOXIDANT INTAKES: Highlights of a State of Science Review," released by The Organic Center, February 2007 2 "Impact of Prenatal Chlorpyrifos Exposure on Neurodevelopment in the First 3 Years of Life Among Inner-City Children." Authors: Virginia Rauh, Robin Garfinkel, Frederica Perera, Howard Andrews, Lori Hoepner, Dana Barr, Ralph Whitehead, Deliang Tang, and Robin Whyatt, Pediatrics, Vol. 188, No. 61845-1859. Published online November 20, 2006.

3 "Trade-Offs in Agriculture and Nutrition," by Donald R. Davis, FoodTechnology, Vol. 59, No.3, March 2005.

Classified Ads

Personal classifieds (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Steiner Ranch residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail <u>thestar@PEELinc.com.</u>

Business classifieds (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$45, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office at 512-989-8905 or *advertising@PEELinc.com.*





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Not Available On-line

Little League Health Risks Anything But Minor

Baylor College of Medicine

HOUSTON – (Feb. 26, 2007) – Before letting young athletes play like the pros, know the risks – both physical and mental – of putting undeveloped muscles and bones to the test.

Dr. Joseph Chorley, assistant professor of pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, suggests parents wait for indicators of physical maturity before allowing their children to engage in intense, physically demanding activities and year-round sports. Indicators for boys include needing to shave and for girls, the beginning of menstruation, said Chorley, who is also a sports medicine specialist at Texas Children's Hospital.

"It is difficult to set an age at which kids should be allowed to throw a curveball (which puts undue stress on the shoulder and elbow) or play their sport of choice year-round," he said. "At 14, kids are at such different developmental stages than one another that the decision needs to be individualized."

Exposing a body too soon to intense physical strains can lead to serious injury. Chorley regularly sees adolescents and children with shin splints, stress fractures and knee pain from running cross country; ankle sprains and low back pain from soccer; shoulder strains and bursitis in swimmers; jumper's knee and shoulder pain from volleyball and little league elbow and shoulder pain from pitching in baseball. As for playing sports year-round, children and adolescents should not only be developed and physically ready for the pressures but also emotionally prepared.

"Sports are a great way to enhance childhood, but they shouldn't take away from it," said Chorley. "Often parents lose perspective; only one in 10,000 high school varsity players will ever make money in pro-sports. We shouldn't have an all-or-nothing attitude of either belonging to the physically elite or being a couch potato."

Chorley says adolescents who are serious about year-round sports can do so if they can maintain appropriate weight and growth, perform without pain and injury and meet their unique nutrition needs. He does, however, caution against psychological burnout, which can take the form of flu-like symptoms and less enjoyment of the activity.

"Whatever a young athlete's choice of sport, whether contact is involved or not, it can be detrimental if the child is not physically, developmentally and emotionally ready," said Chorley. "Both parents and pediatricians need to be aware of the risks."

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Benefits of Mulch

Submitted by Jerry Krabe, President Mesa Landscaping

Mulch is defined as a protective covering placed around plants. Mulching is one of the most important ways to maintain strong, vigorous plants in your landscape beds. The method of mulching is actually nature's idea. Nature produces large quantities of mulch every day with fallen leaves, twigs, needles, pieces of bark, fallen flower blossoms, fallen fruit and other organic material.

There are many benefits to using mulch when applied correctly. Below are just some of the benefits:

• Mulches help prevent loss of water from the soil by evaporation.

• Mulches reduce the growth of weeds- when the mulch material itself is weed-free and adequately applied to prevent weed germination or to smother existing weeds.

• Mulches keep the soil cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter, thus maintaining a more even soil temperature. This reduces the amount of stress your plants will go through.

• Mulches prevent soil splashing, which not only stops erosion but keeps soil-borne diseases from splashing up onto the plants.

• Organic mulches can improve the soil structure. As the mulch decays, the material becomes topsoil. Decaying mulch also adds nutrients to the soil.

• Mulches prevent crusting of the soil surface, thus improving the absorption and movement of water into the soil.

• Mulches prevent the trunks of trees and shrubs from damage by lawn equipment.

• Mulches help prevent soil compaction.

• Mulches can add to the beauty of the landscape by providing a cover of uniform color and interesting texture to the surface.

• Mulched plants have more roots than plants that are not mulched, because mulched plants will produce additional roots in the mulch that surrounds them.

Mulches come in many different varieties. Organic mulches are those that used to be living material, such as bark, straw, leaves, grass clippings and ground up tree limbs. These organic mulches improve the soil by adding nutrients as they decompose. Popular varieties of the organic mulch include Cedar mulch, Pine mulch, and the ever popular Texas Native Hardwood. All of which are good choices when selecting a mulch. These mulches are available for purchase by the bag or by the bulk.

BAGGED MULCH

3 cubic feet of bagged mulch will cover:

-36 square feet to a depth of 1 inch

- -18 square feet to a depth of 2 inches
- -9 square feet to a depth of 4 inches

MUCH IN BULK FORM

1 cubic yard will cover:

-162 square feet to a depth of 2 inches

-9 square feet to a depth of 4 inches

Synthetic mulches are also available. You will likely find mulch in your local gardening store that is made from recycled rubber tires. These mulches typically will be in either cubed or shredded form. There are a few advantages of using these synthetic mulches. They are longer lasting since they do not decompose. There is typically a variety of color selections to choose from and they will not attract unwanted bugs or insects that may otherwise be attracted to some of the organic mulches. However, the disadvantages are many. Since the material (often rubber) is not pliable or very soft, the pieces do not lay together tightly. Therefore, it is difficult to prevent weeds from growing due to the infiltration of sun light and oxygen (two key components for weeds to grow). Moisture will also evaporate from the soil much faster then when using organic mulch. Rubber mulches are also flammable. If a cigarette is accidentally tossed into a bed of rubber mulch, it can catch fire, potentially catching your house on fire. Also, the dye that is used in the mulch can become toxic if used year after year. One should use caution when applying dyed, synthetic mulches.

Regardless of the type of mulch used, adding fresh mulch to your flower beds will help your plants thrive and will provide a fresh new look to your landscaping.



Get Smart About Protecting Your Heart



By taking a few simple steps, women can reduce their risk for heart disease and heart attack.

(NAPSA)-More women are learning about heart disease-the No. 1 killer of women in the U.S.-and learning how to reduce their risk. "When women realize that cardiovascular disease kills an estimated 461,000 women each year and that the average number of years lost to heart attack is 15, they sit up and take notice," said Dr. Annabelle Volgman, a cardiologist at Rush-Presbyterian Medical Center.

Volgman recommends signing the Love Your Heart Pledge as a great motivational step in reducing your risk.

The pledge was launched by Kellogg's Smart Start Healthy Heart cereal, which contains ingredients that may help lower both cholesterol and blood pressure. It is hoped that 1 million women will sign it and promise to do what's necessary to promote a healthy heart. The company will donate a dime (up to \$100,000) to the American Heart Association's Go Red For Women movement for every woman who goes online at www.smartstart.com and completes the pledge in 2007.

To lower the risk of heart disease, women should:

• Aim for a healthy weight. Too much fat, especially in your waist area, means you're at a higher risk for health problems, including heart disease. A high-risk waistline is 35 inches or more for women and 40 inches for men.

• Work at lowering your cholesterol. Too much cholesterol can clog arteries, causing heart disease and even heart attack. Daily aerobic

activity and eating healthy may help lower your cholesterol. Begin your day with a heart-healthy breakfast such as Smart Start Healthy Heart cereal, which contains oat bran and potassium and is low in sodium.

• Watch your blood pressure. If you take birth control pills, are pregnant or overweight, or if you have entered menopause, ask your doctor how often your blood pressure should be checked. Daily aerobic physical activity and eating healthy may help lower your blood pressure.

• Stop smoking. Smokers are two to four times more likely to develop coronary heart disease than nonsmokers.

• Forget fads when trying to lose weight. A sensible weight plan includes developingand maintaining-a healthy diet and an active lifestyle.

For more information about the pledge, visit www.smartstart.com.

For more information about heart disease and what women can do to reduce their risk, visit www.americanheart.org.



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Sudoku

The challenge is to fill every row across, every column down, and every 3x3 box with the digits 1 through 9. Each 1 through 9 digit must appear only once in each row across, each column down, and each 3x3 box.

8		5				9	4		com
9								2	Linc.
1				7		5			v.PEH
7					1		5		ut ww
5		4							nline a
	2		3						to put
	1			9	8	2		7	be for
		8			2				s can
				4		8		9	Solutions can be found online at www.PEELinc.com
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The live wire

April 6, 2007 Leeann Atherton
Maria's Taco Express – 7:00PM
April 7, 2007 Will Taylor & Strings Attached
(Encore Led Zepplin Show)
Nutty Brown Cafe – 8:00PM
April 7, 2007 Kelly Willis
Gruene Hall – 9:00PM
April 12, 2007Ruthie Foster
Shady Grove
April 13, 2007Bruce Robison
Broken Spoke
April 19, 2007 Grupo Fantasma
Amplify Credit Union – Pond Springs Branch
April 19-22, 2007Old Settler's Music Festival
Salt Lick BBQ Pavilion/Camp Ben McCullough
http://www.oldsettlersmusicfest.org/
April 20, 2007 Carolyn Wonderland
Austin City Hall Plaza
April 21, 2007 Assorted Performers
Republic Square - Austin Green Arts Earthday
April 27, 2007 Guy Forsyth
Austin City Hall Plaza
April 27, 2007 Will Taylor & Strings Attached
(Peter Gabriel Show)
St. David's Episcopal – two shows 7:30PM / 10:00PM
The "Live Wire" is not a paid advertisement or endorsed by the

The "Live Wire" is not a paid advertisement or endorsed by the performers or venues. The list of suggested events is provided as a convenience in support of Austin's status as the "Live Music Capital of the World"; it is compiled from information available at the time of submittal, and may change. Readers are encouraged to validate accuracy with the performer or the venue.

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