



# CIRCLE C RANCH

The Official Publication of the  
Circle C Homeowner's Association

## Newsletter

Volume 5, Number 11

November 2008

[www.circlecranch.info](http://www.circlecranch.info)

### Farewell and Welcome Back!

The Circle C Board of Directors would like to say farewell to resident board member, Sam Irwin, who resigned at the end of September. Sam served for two years on the board of directors and we would like to thank him for his service to the neighborhood.

The board is happy to announce that previous board member and Circle C resident, Mary Goehring, has graciously accepted the board's appointment to Sam's seat for the rest of his term (March 2009). We welcome Mary back to the board of directors.

### Monthly Board Meetings

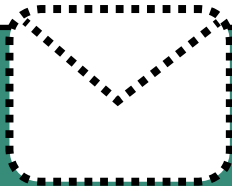
The Board of Directors meets monthly on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7pm at the Circle C Child Development Center. Meetings are open to residents and those who wish to address the board can do so by signing up for the Homeowners Forum by calling the HOA office at 288-8663 or emailing at [info@circlecranch.info](mailto:info@circlecranch.info)

### CCHOA OFFICE

The CCHOA office will be closed on Thu and Fri, November 27 and 28 in observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday.

### Go Green Go Paperless

Sign up to receive *The Circle C Ranch Newsletter* in your inbox.  
Visit [PEELinc.com](http://PEELinc.com) for details.



### Adult Holiday Party Tickets on Sale NOW!

Don't miss the CCHOA Adult Holiday Party on Dec. 20 at 7pm at the Wildflower Ctr. You can purchase tickets at the HOA office M-F between 10am and 3pm; tickets are \$10 per person.

### Happy Thanksgiving

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## CCHOA Numbers

HOA Mgmt Office .....info@circlecranch.info or 288-8663  
 Financial Office..... 451-9901  
 Aquatics Director..... 288-4239  
 Newsletter Publisher  
 Peel, Inc. Sales Office.....512-263-9181  
 Adv./Kelly Peel ..advertising@PEELinc.com, 512-263-9181

### Circle C Amenities

Circle C Café..... 288-6058  
 Circle C CDC..... 288-9792  
 Circle C Swim Center ..... 288-6057  
 Circle C Tennis Club.....Circle\_CTennis@msn.com, 301-8685

## 2008 Board of Directors

Rob Johnson.....President  
 Steve Urban..... Vice President  
 Cynthia Moreland ..... Secretary  
 Russ Hodes..... Treasurer  
 Jason Bram.....Development Officer  
 Cindy Groves ..... Board Member  
 Mary Goehring..... Board Member  
 Contact Information ..... Email: directors@circlecranch.info

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

City of Austin Solid Waste..... 974.1945  
 Dead Animal Collection..... 974.2000  
 Abandoned Vehicle ..... 974.8119  
 Pothole Complaints..... 974.8750  
 Stop Signs ..... 457.4885  
 Street Light Outage ..... 505.7617  
 Schools  
 Clayton Elementary ..... 841.9200  
 Kiker Elementary..... 414.2584  
 Mills Elementary ..... 841.2400  
 Bailey Middle School ..... 414.4990  
 Small Middle School ..... 841.6700  
 Bowie High School..... 414.5247  
 SAYSA..... 899.1049

## Illegal Dumping at the Swim Center Parking Lot

As many of you know there are 3 dumpsters located in the swim center plaza parking lot; 2 of the dumpsters are from Balcones Recycling and are for “anything that tears” and may be used by residents. The other dumpster is for garbage only and IS NOT intended for residents to use. This dumpster is for all the garbage that is picked up on a daily basis from the mail centers, swim center, HOA office and common areas.

Recently we have witnessed many residents dumping their own PERSONAL garbage into this dumpster and even leaving their garbage piled up on the ground when the dumpster is full. PLEASE do not bring your garbage to this dumpster. The landscape crew must pick up all of your personal garbage that is left on the ground before the garbage company will empty the dumpster. This is a safety and health hazard.

Each resident has their own personal garbage and recycling container for their own personal use and if you have a bulky item you can call the City of Austin Solid Waste Department at 974-1945.

We hope we have cleared up any confusion on this matter and as an extra safeguard we now have security cameras on site.

Thank you for your cooperation!

## Swim Center Winter Hours (Oct 6 - Dec 22)

### Lap Swim

Mon-Fri 6am - 10am and 4pm - 7pm  
 Saturday 7:30am - 8pm  
 Sunday 10am - 7pm

### Rec Swim

Mon - Fri 9am - 10am and 4pm - 7pm  
 Saturday 12pm - 6pm  
 Sunday 12pm - 6pm

The pool will be closed on the weekends after October 26th.

The pool will also be closed in observance of Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years on the following dates:

Nov 24 - 28, Dec 22 - 26, Dec 29 - Jan 2

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## CCHOA News

### Deed Restriction Update

*Submitted by Denise Nordstrom*

We will continue driving two sections of Circle C per month to note any violations of the deed restrictions. Violations may include, but are not limited to: excessive weeds, areas of no turf, dead shrubs and/or trees, yard art, grass that is not edged or mowed, areas of dead grass, boats, RV's, trailers and general home maintenance issues. We are required to send notification of deed restriction violations via certified mail and we also send regular mail. If you receive a deed restriction violation notice PLEASE CALL the HOA office at 288-8663. It's impossible to know everyone's individual situation, so we appreciate communication from you.

If you have a deed restriction to report, you may submit the specific address

at [info@circlecranch.info](mailto:info@circlecranch.info) or give us a call at 288-8663. Violations that are reported are generally checked with 3 business days and if we are able to confirm a violation, we will begin the deed restriction process (which you can access on the website at <http://www.circlecranch.info/documents/AssociationDocuments/DeedRestrictions/CCHOA-DeedRestrictionPolicy2003.pdf>



### The Blood Center of Central Texas hosts a Circle C Blood Drive

We encourage everyone to help stock the shelves at The Blood Center of Central Texas. The lives of accident victims, premature babies, cancer patients are in our hands. The Blood Center of Central Texas is the exclusive supplier of transfusable blood components to more than 38 hospitals and health care facilities in a 10-county region. Basic requirements for donating are: be at least 17 years old, weigh at least 110 lbs and be in general good health. Please bring a photo ID and know your social security number.

To make an appointment, please sign up online at [www.inyourhands.org](http://www.inyourhands.org) and enter in sponsor code "circlec" or you can contact the HOA office at 288-8663.

## With holiday savings this big, what's left to wish for?



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## CCHOA News Continued

### Education Committee Update

The AISD Facilities Use and Boundary Task Force (FUBTF) is in the middle of the process to arrive at the attendance zone for the new Southwest Middle School. As of September 10th, the FUBTF has held 7 previous meetings. The following is a schedule of the remaining meetings:

- September 16, 2008
- September 30, 2008 at either Small or Bailey Middle School
- October 7, 2008 (if needed) to be determined
- October 28, 2008
- November 11, 2008
- November 25, 2008 (if needed)

These meetings are scheduled from 5:30 PM - 8:30 PM in the AISD Board Auditorium of the Carruth Administration Center unless specified otherwise. Dinner is served to the FUBTF members from 5:30 to 6:00; therefore

the discussions usually do not begin until 6:00. Facility Use and Boundary Task Force meetings are open to the public; however, a typical agenda would not include public comment or questions.

At this time, 5 proposals are being analyzed by the FUBTF. By October 8th, the FUBTF will arrive at one proposal to be presented at the October CAC meetings for the various schools, i.e. Kiker, Mills, Clayton, Bailey, Bowie, Austin, Covington, Paredes, O. Henry, Small, Oak Hill, and Baranoff.

The October 28th FUBTF meeting will review the comments from the CAC meetings and, if appropriate, revise the proposal. A public hearing is scheduled for November 6th at 6:00. Another public hearing will be scheduled but the date is not known at this time. The November meetings for the FUBTF are to consider the comments from

the public hearings and, if appropriate, revise the proposal. In late November or early December, the FUBTF should present the final proposal to the AISD Superintendent and Board of Trustees for their approval.

- A map of the Proposal B, which includes all of Circle C attending the new middle school, can be found at the following web address: [http://www.austin.isd.tenet.edu/inside/docs/bond2004\\_SWMS\\_PlanB\\_2008012.pdf](http://www.austin.isd.tenet.edu/inside/docs/bond2004_SWMS_PlanB_2008012.pdf)
- The web address of the new SW Middle School FUBTF can be found at: <http://www.austin.isd.tenet.edu/inside/2004bond/boundaries/swmiddleschool.phtml>
- Four additional proposals, two of which exclude a portion of Circle C, have been submitted and links to maps are available near the bottom of the SW Middle School FUBTF web page provided above.



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## CCHOA News Continued

## Circle C Landscape

*Submitted by Susan Hoover*

Circle C Landscape has been busy installing the fall improvements and repairs approved by the Circle C Homeowners Association Board of Directors for 2008.

They include turf replacement and additional beds at the Slaughter/Escarpment intersection. This area has long been in need of renovation as the grass has been primarily St. Augustine that infiltrated from other sources. In the super hot weather, there is simply not enough water to maintain this type of turf. The turf area has been replaced with Pallisades zoysia, and some of the area has been converted to native landscape beds.

We also have begun adding beds to Escarpment. This large right of way area is undergoing a phased planned renovation to get the area more comparable to the newer areas of Circle C West by using native beds along the sides. This will be a long range project and the area from Needham to LaCrosse is the current area that is underway.

For maintenance in November, we are replenishing the mulch, trimming back some of the beds, continuing the mowing and, of course, putting up the holiday lighting. Look for it to be on by Wednesday, November 26!!



## Keep Bringing Us Your Aluminum Soda Can Pop Tabs!

Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who has begun the habit of collecting their aluminum soda can tabs! The HOA is continuing to collect aluminum soda can tabs in the management office so please DO NOT throw your cans away without taking off the tabs. The tabs will be donated to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Austin and Central

Texas. To read more about the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Austin and Central Texas, you can visit <http://www.rmhc-austin.org/>

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## CCHOA News Continued

### Circle C Supports the Capital Area Food Bank

December 1-December 15, 2008

In a unique opportunity to work together as a community, the Circle C Homeowners Association Special Events Committee, Circle C Landscape, and the Escarpment Village vendors coordinated by Austin Real Estate Partners will be sponsoring a major food and donation drive to benefit the Capital Area Food Bank during the holiday season.

We encourage everyone to participate.

#### FOOD FACTS FOR CENTRAL TEXAS

- The Capital Area Food Bank partners with 370 social service agencies to distribute food to 21 counties in Central Texas. They also provide additional assistance in times of need for hurricane and other disaster relief.
- In Central Texas, 1 in 4 children and 1 in 5 adults need assistance with obtaining food. Of these, 82% are food insecure, and 49% have outright hunger.
- In tough economic times, and with the cost of food rising, senior citizens, and low income families simply have to make choices between the basics, and often eliminate food to buy medicine, or pay for housing and gas.


#### HOW TO DONATE

- We will be placing food collection bins at prominent locations throughout the neighborhood. Look for the blue barrels at the post offices, swim center, child development center, Escarpment Village, and elementary schools December 1-December 15. See the list below for most requested items. For every 1 lb of food donated, the Food Bank can provide .8 meals.
- Consider making a financial donation online. Go to the Circle C website at [www.circlecranch.info](http://www.circlecranch.info) and look for the link to make an online donation as part of the Circle C food drive. This is a great way to participate because for every \$1.00 given, the Food Bank can provide 5 meals to a hungry child, adult or senior.

#### OUR GOAL: Provide 15,000 meals for Central Texans

We would like the Circle C community as a whole to provide 15,000 meals for Central Texans during the food drive. Given the 4,000 plus homes in the community, this is certainly achievable. So, take a little time to either donate online or bring any of the following items to one of the food barrels in December.


(Continued on Page 9)




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		36 mo.	
		48 mo.	

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## CCHOA News Continued

*CC Supports - (Continued from Page 8)*

### **MOST REQUESTED ITEMS:**

- Canned meat like tuna, stew and chili with pop tops
- Canned vegetables
- Pasta and Pasta Sauce
- Beans
- Rice
- Healthy cereals
- Peanut butter
- Baby food and Baby formula

**We hope that every family in Circle C will take a little time to remember others in need during the holiday season and we look forward to a great food drive.**

### **Circle C Newsletter**

The Circle C Newsletter is a monthly publication mailed to all Circle C residents. If you have an article of interest to the community please submit to [info@circlecranch.info](mailto:info@circlecranch.info) by the 12th of the month. The newsletter can also be viewed online at [www.circlecranch.info](http://www.circlecranch.info)



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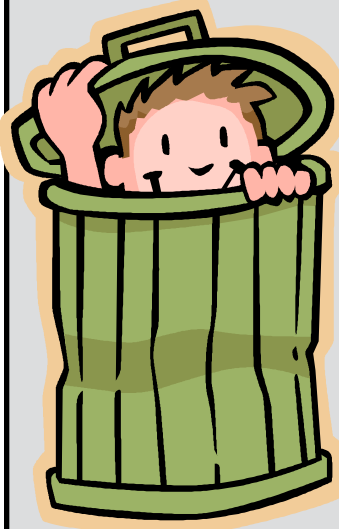
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## CCHOA News Continued

### Hide Your Garbage Can & Recycle Bin!



We are continuing to receive many complaints from residents about owners who are storing their garbage can and recycle bin in view from the street. Garbage cans and recycle bins should be hidden from view – either behind your fence, in your garage or behind shrubbery. The vast majority of homeowners are able to hide their cans out of view, please do YOUR part to keep Circle C a beautiful place to live.

### Texas National Guard Family Support Foundation

*Submitted by Jay Dolfuss*

Did you know Circle C has the 2nd largest population of retired Veterans in the Austin area? On Veteran's Day, Monday, Nov 10th, the Austin Westlake Rotary Club will hold a benefit supporting the Texas National Guard Family Support Foundation at the Texas Disposal Systems Exotic Game Ranch. For fun, food and "exotic entertainment" go to: [www.westlakerotary.org](http://www.westlakerotary.org) to order tickets on line; [www.texasdisposal.com](http://www.texasdisposal.com) for information on Texas Disposal Systems Exotic Game Ranch including directions. Also, [www.txngfoundation.org](http://www.txngfoundation.org) for information on TXNGFSF. Any other questions regarding the event please e-mail: [jaydolfuss@austin.rr.com](mailto:jaydolfuss@austin.rr.com)

### PERSONAL CLASSIFIED

**WANTED:** Babysitter wanted for Thursdays (1pm-5pm) for infant and on occasion for my three year old. Opportunity to increase hours. Position starts ASAP. Please contact Alison at 535-3113 or [alisonpelz@hotmail.com](mailto:alisonpelz@hotmail.com).

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## CCHOA Clubs & Announcements

### Park West HOA News

(Specifically for Park West Residents) - Submitted by Jackie Rollins

#### Political Correctness

In case you were wondering but hadn't read the response on a mail center bulletin board, it's okay to place a small sign for a political candidate in your front yard. In 2005, the Texas Legislature approved a bill that overrides homeowner associations' covenants prohibiting signage. One sign per candidate is allowed and may be displayed up to 90 days before the election and 10 days afterward. A word to the wise: in order not to interfere with mowing, the front plant bed is the most likely location for a sign.

#### Recycle Cart Hokey Pokey

Do you feel like you're doing the Hokey Pokey when it comes to getting your old recycle cart picked up (the tan one with the black lid)? Do you put it out, then put it in, then put it out again, all to no avail? Several residents were not around or just didn't put the old cart at the curb on Monday, September 15, the day the exchange was made for the new, blue (with black lid) recycle cart. There was no advance alert from City of Austin Solid Waste about the swap, so it's really not your fault if it happened to you. However, there is a system in place for getting the old cart picked up and taken away—once and

for all—including the new, blue cart if you're not planning to recycle. You can't just leave the cart at the curb, as you've discovered, and expect it to be taken away. First, you MUST call the city at 311 and tell the operator you want the cart picked up. You will then receive a confirmation number and an approximate date for pickup. (Without a confirmation number, plan on doing the Hokey Pokey indefinitely.) The pickup date will be the next recycling Monday. For example, if you called on October 9, the following Monday, October 13, was a garbage pickup day only, so the unwanted cart would not have been picked up. But it would have been scheduled for pickup on Monday, October 20, a recycling Monday. The operator will tell you to leave the cart at the curb until 6 p.m. If it's not picked up, store it away and call 311 the next morning to find out what happened and get another pickup date. You will be asked for your confirmation number. This can sometimes go on for several recycling Mondays. Be patient—and good luck! (Note: If you're downsizing or upsizing to a different garbage container, the procedure is different. Call 311 for instructions.)

(Continued on Page 13)

## YOU CAN'T CONTROL THE WORLD, BUT YOU CAN CONTROL YOUR DECISIONS.



Sometimes the market reacts poorly to world events, but just because the market reacts doesn't mean you should. Still, if current events are making you feel uncertain about your finances, you should schedule a complimentary portfolio review. That way, you can make sure you're in control of where you want to go and how you get there.

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Divorce Options is an informational session about various divorce process alternatives available in Texas, followed by question and answer time. No individual advice will be given.

For more information: [www.texasdivorceoptions.com](http://www.texasdivorceoptions.com)

Limited space available; reserve your spot by calling  
Erika at 512.477.5448

## CCHOA Clubs & Announcements Continued

**Park West HOA-** (Continued from Page 12)

### Landscaper News

Patience is key when dealing with the weeds in our front lawns. The landscaper and crew have been hard at work recently, laying pre-emergent in two stages several weeks apart which will attack the root cause and help to eliminate them by spring growth. It should be noted as well that the weather and the temperature are important factors in successfully eliminating weeds. The landscape surveys were sent out in early October with a requested return date of October 31. If you haven't filled yours out yet and deposited it in one of the lock boxes on the back wall of each mail center, please do so now. The results will be shared with you as soon as they are tabulated.

### Broken Record Department

- Place your garbage and recycling containers out of view from the street, either in the garage or behind the fence.

Do not leave them curbside longer than a total of 12 hours from before and after pickup. If you are gone on pickup day, arrange for a neighbor or friend to place them at the curb and return them to their resting place within the 12 hour time frame. Never put them out a day (or earlier) in advance or leave them out for a day or longer after pickup.

- Carry a plastic bag for the scooped poop when walking your dog.
- The speed limit on all Park West streets is 20 mph. Please slow down.
- No overnight parking is allowed on the street. Move your vehicle onto the driveway or into the garage.

### Don't Shoot the Messenger

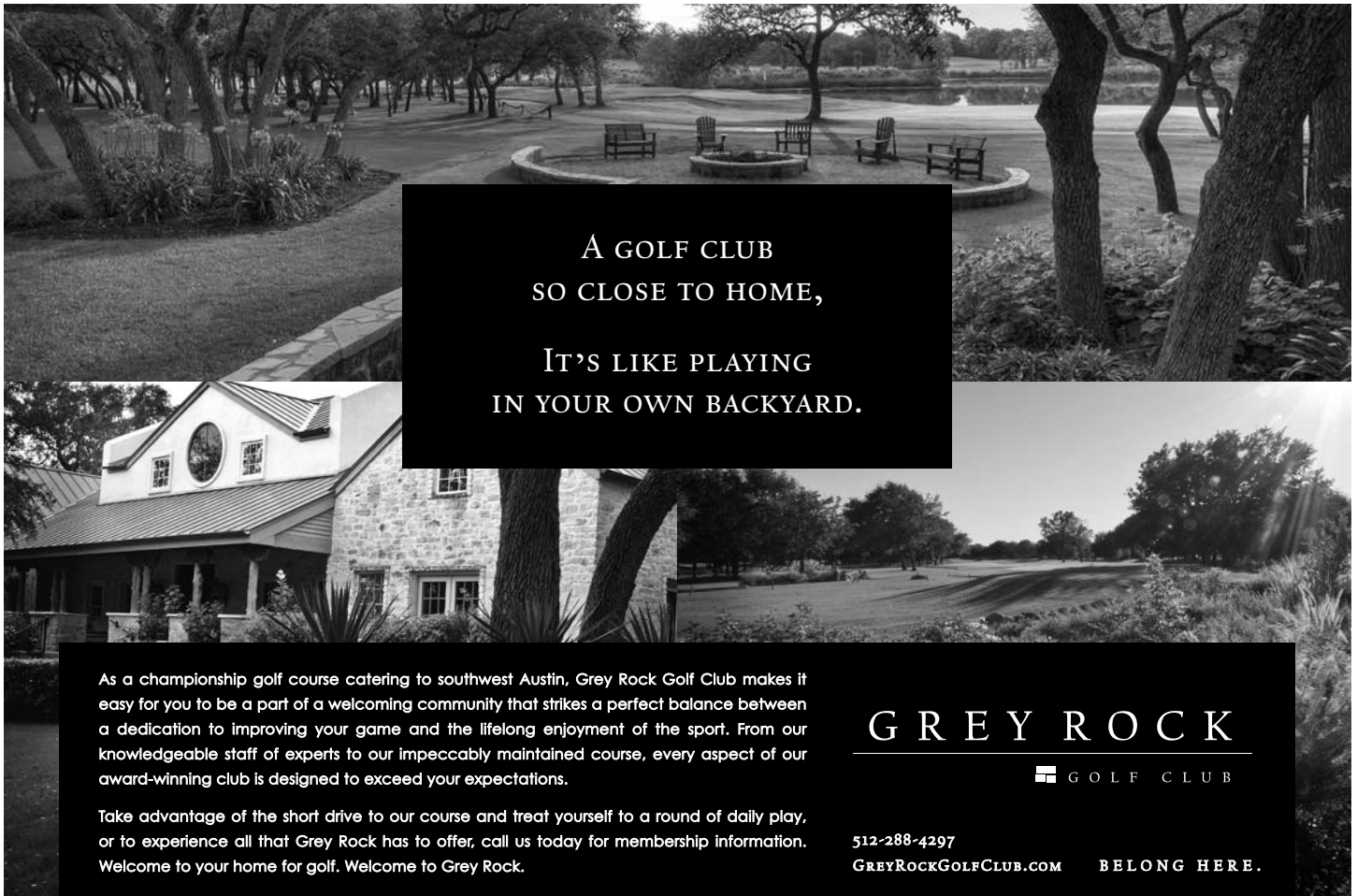
Sometimes it's necessary for a PWHOA Board member to speak to a resident about a rule or covenant violation. It could be something that appears in the Broken Record Department of this column, something as

minor as an exposed garbage container, or something as major as unapproved landscaping and structural alterations. Park West, as a gated community, has specific rules conducive to the care and maintenance of its unique appearance. As residents of Park West, each of us has a responsibility to ensure the continuance of the beauty and special appeal that convinced scores of us to make our homes here. If you are unsure about a rule, or need to refresh your memory regarding a Circle C or Park West covenant, you will find them all posted on our community website under Community Documents. If you haven't obtained a password to enter the website, e-mail JackieRollins02@aol.com and she'll be happy to walk you through the process.

### Circle C Senior Men's Group

About twenty-five percent of this group is comprised of Park West residents who

*(Continued on Page 14)*



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GREYROCKGOLFCLUB.COM BELONG HERE.



## CCHOA Clubs & Announcements *Continued*

### **Park West HOA-** *(Continued from Page 13)*

carpool to Waterloo Ice House on Escarpment every Wednesday morning for a 9 a.m. breakfast or just coffee and lots of talk on important senior guy stuff....like home repairs, politics, doctors, grandchildren, wives who snore, cars and every other possible subject. They also take field trips to places like the Nimitz Museum in Fredericksburg, with a German lunch on the river and the CenTex Antique Auto Museum south of Bastrop, with lunch at the new Hyatt Lost Pines Resort. Future trips may include the Shiner Brewery, the Texas Ranger Museum, the Hill Country Flyer steam train and the UT Computer Center. Circle C and Park West men over the age of 50 are welcome.

### **Been There, Done That**

Tom Jedrzejewicz reports that last year he had the opportunity to travel to Paris and Leipzig, a business trip for him.... but apparently not for his luggage, which seemed to vanish without a trace. The airline personnel simply told him that they had no idea where it was. Tom quickly learned that in order to avoid buying new business clothing in expensive cities, to always travel with carry-on luggage stored in the plane's overhead compartment. Since then, he's traveled to Austria, Italy, Jamaica, Argentina (twice), Sweden, Switzerland and (less exotic) California.... all business trips. He says it was a

tough job but somebody had to do it! In addition to giving lectures and performing other business duties, Tom states that he's learned a lot about different cultures, good wines and outstanding cooking and has met lots of interesting people. By the way, four weeks after that trip to Paris, Tom's lost luggage was delivered – unopened - to his front door here in Park West!

### **Helping Hands**

Tell us about your favorite charity or volunteer efforts. E-mail a few lines to JackieRollins02@aol.com.

### **Good Neighbors of the Month**

Carol Buls would like to thank Sally Darbyshire, the “best neighbor anyone could have,” for taking her to the doctor for a scheduled appointment and all the other thoughtful things she regularly does. Ruthie and Keith Bolsen extend thanks to Jean and Chuck Griffith, who were away at the time, for letting the Bolsens' daughter and son-in-law, Hurricane Ike evacuees, move into the Griffiths' house in Park West as if it were their own. With hotels being very scarce in Austin and the Bolsens' house not having a spare bedroom, the Griffiths' gesture was greatly appreciated. In addition, they would like to acknowledge Barbara and Justin Cooper, who also offered their home to any of the Bolsens' family members needing to evacuate the

*(Continued on Page 15)*

## Oak Hill United Methodist Church

# Christmas Music Spectacular!

### **A Wonderful Evening of Your Favorite Christmas Music**

**December 5, 6  
7:30 P.M.**

**Oak Hill UMC Sanctuary  
Featuring the OHUMC Choir,  
with a live orchestra**

**Tickets: Adults - \$15, \$12, \$10  
depending on seat location**

**Children and young adults (up to  
18) - \$7 all seat locations**

**Call the church office at 288-3836  
or see the OHUMC web site for  
ticket purchase instructions:  
[oakhillunitedmethodistchurch.org](http://oakhillunitedmethodistchurch.org)**

**Proceeds benefit the Marine Toys  
for Tots Foundation.**

## CCHOA Clubs & Announcements *Continued*

*Park West HOA- (Continued from Page 14)*

Houston area. As it turned out, only one house was needed.

If you know someone who should be given credit for being a good neighbor, please e-mail their name(s) and a brief description of what good deed they've done to JackieRollins02@aol.com for inclusion in next month's column. Until then, your suggestions and ideas for topics are appreciated. And please consider submitting a "trip report" for Been There, Done That and an item for the Helping Hands section.

## Blue Santa Needs Our Help!

*Submitted by Shirley Faske*

Blue Santa needs our help again to help over 4000 families have a Christmas this year. Watch out for your door hanger flyers to be delivered by our neighborhood Cub Scouts Packs 535 and 505 and Girl Scouts 787 and 1692 on Saturday December 6. Toys, Can goods/food items, or money donations will be picked up the following Saturday, December 13, starting at 9 AM. Please have the donation sticker on your bag or call Shirley at 789-3975 to pickup if missed that day.



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[Rental@Kamascompany.com](mailto:Rental@Kamascompany.com)

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Austin Detailers --part of the Better Business Bureau since 2003, without a complaint! When you hire our professional lawn care team, you'll be assigned your own personal lawn care account manager; someone dedicated to your neighborhood; someone you'll know on a first-name basis; and someone you can trust to take care of your lawncare and landscaping needs, 100% guaranteed.

We're a year round professional landscape management company, not just a "lawn service" or part time "lawn guy." We offer a full range of lawncare and landscape management services, and we deliver with integrity and competence. We proactively manage your lawn, landscape, and sprinkler system so you can avoid unsightly or expensive problems down the road.

### **Seasonal Specials:**

- **Fall sprinkler inspection and reprogramming for only \$29** (with advice on how to decrease your water bill).
- **Aerate and compost specials**, to improve the health of your lawn.
- **Detailed Tree trimming**, pruning and leaf clean ups.
- **Custom Christmas Lighting for your holiday parties**, we put up an take down, hassle free... Highlight your sidewalk, driveway, outline your house and your landscape.

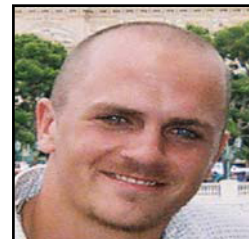
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David Hunsaker,  
Owner

## CCHOA Clubs & Announcements *Continued*

### Adoption Coalition

*Submitted by Tracy Eilers, Executive Director Adoption Coalition of Texas*

I know you have seen Jarod's picture before, but since he is still waiting for a permanent home – a Forever Family – it is important to once again share his story.

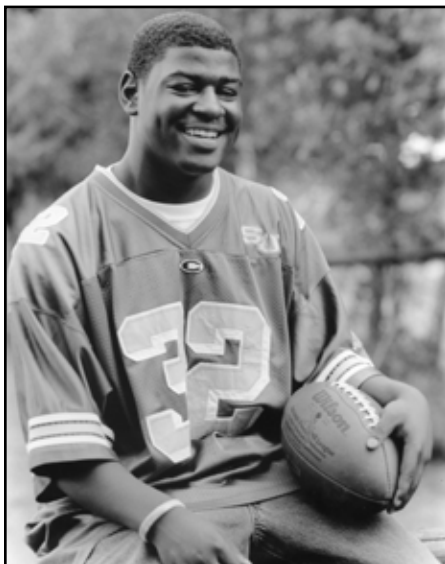
Jarod will turn 18 in December. While you may think 18 is the time when kids leave home and are on their own, it sometimes doesn't work that way for children raised in the foster care system. In fact, it usually never works that way. Although these kids may be on their own, there are ill prepared to live 100% self sufficient, as most kids are.

For Jarod, we would love to have a family in the Austin area. He is in school, enjoying the work and playing football, and wants to continue with his education and eventually, go to college or in the Marines.

If you are willing to learn more about adopting a teenager, or Jarod specifically, please call Tracy Eilers at 512-301-2825 or email the Adoption Coalition of Texas at [info@adopttexas.org](mailto:info@adopttexas.org) and put "Jarod" in the subject line.

A little more about Jarod...

Imagine growing up in an unstable environment. Imagine having to be responsible for yourself at a very young age. Then, imagine, at 10 years old someone removing you from the only environment you have known and putting you in foster care with strangers. While this is done for the safety and well-being of the child, it is often difficult for children to understand. Sometimes they are sad, hurt, frustrated and angry. They are angry for being in this situation in the first place, angry for being in a strange place, angry because the world has let them down, angry because they now have no control over their future. You see, kids connect to things rather easily, even if it is a bad situation...when that is all you know, that is all you know.



**Meet Jarod**

Fast forward seven years and several foster homes later and you are still in foster care, you are angrier than ever because of the lack of control and because you simply do not know how to handle things. You mistrust the system, have difficulty getting along with foster siblings who too come and go and you face a very uncertain future.

So, you have Jarod who is now 17. He is a good kid with a good heart who needs direction and desperately needs someone to love him. Loving him will help give him a foundation for developing self worth – you see, he figures that if no one loves him, what is there to love about himself. Jarod needs someone who is going to help him process his anger and feel stable. He needs a strong forever family with a strong male figure. He needs a family with patience who is going to allow him to work through school at

his pace, learn to trust at his pace. The family needs to be okay with baby-steps. Maybe there is a family out there with the mentoring spirit – willing to adopt Jarod and give him a permanent home with no timelines...someone willing to help him finish school and develop plans for the future... most importantly, someone who will allow him to back up and grow up in the right developmental manner, instead of being forced to grow up. You see, for many kids the lack of stability and a family is the foundation on which everything else is built. If you have that mentor spirit and the willingness to take baby steps, please consider Jarod. Adopting a teenager is not easy and you cannot expect him to even resemble 17 years old, he has missed a lot and needs the opportunity to be a youth longer. And, teenagers in general are not easy to parent/mentor. This will take a special family. Did you know you can be single and adopt? Did you know there are no fees to adopt from the foster care system?

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Circle C Homeowner's Association

# *adult holiday party*

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center  
**Saturday, December 20th**

from 7 till 11 o' clock in the evening  
\$10 per person

Currently accepting donations for casino prizes. This is a great opportunity to advertise your business, product or service.  
Donations must be tangible or represent a desirable product or service.  
To donate, or for more information, contact Melinda McKenna at [melinda@AUSTINREPS.com](mailto:melinda@AUSTINREPS.com)

Ticket information online at [www.CircleCRanch.info](http://www.CircleCRanch.info) or call the CCHOA at 288-8663



## Circle C Amenities

### November Events at the Wildflower Center

*Submitted by Saralee Tiede*

#### Gourd Art by Frances Cushing

Saturday and Sunday, November 1 and 2

Gourds decorated with pine needles, feathers and beads.

#### Nature Nights—Astronomy

6 to 9 p.m. Friday, November 7

Let us take your family on a tour of the evening skies and teach some lessons about the universe. \$1 admission,

#### Poster Preview

Saturday and Sunday, November 15 and 16

See the winning art for Wildflower Days™ 2009 at the store.

The center is closed for Thanksgiving, Thursday, November 27

#### Save the Date--Wild Ideas Shopping Event

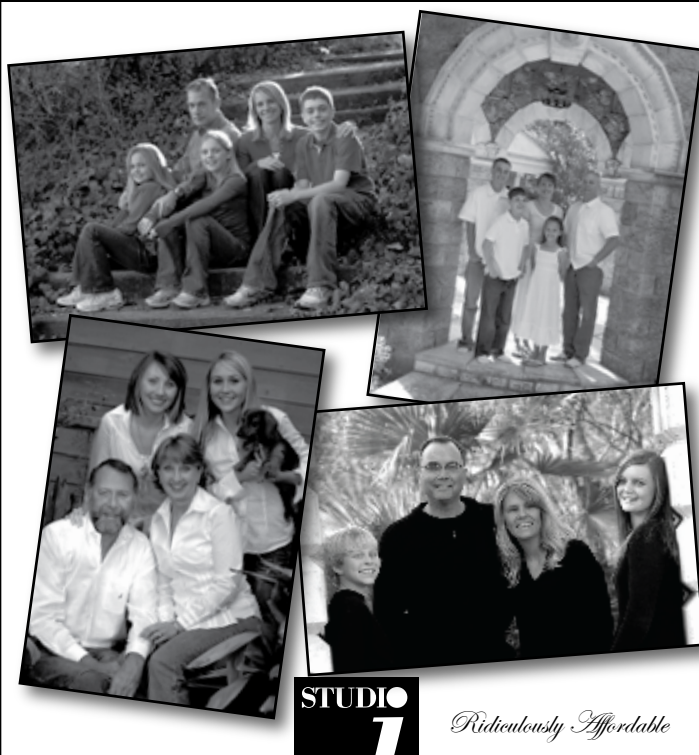
Friday, Saturday and Sunday, December 5, 6 and 7

Ornament signing and paper sculpture in the store starting at 11 a.m. Friday.

Artists and artisans sell their work in the Visitors' Gallery Saturday and Sunday.

## Family Portraits

Right here in your Circle C Neighborhood



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## Circle C Tennis Club

*Submitted by Fernando Velasco*

The Circle C Tennis Club is the most "affordable" private Club in Austin. The dues paid to the Circle C Home Owners Association do not give automatic usage of the courts. Residents and non-residents of Circle C Ranch are welcome to join. There is an affordable one time non-refundable Initiation Fee for the different types of Membership. Monthly dues paid allow Members to use the Tennis Courts on an unlimited basis, plus be able participate in all the programs that the Tennis Club offers. As part of your membership, you can take advantage of the complimentary clinic given each week for women players.

At the Tennis Club, you will find valuable, friendly first-class beginner lessons and opportunities to attend our cardio tennis workouts. Our tennis teams, for both men and women, play in the WTTA and USTA/ATL Leagues throughout the year in all levels of play, starting from advanced beginners through tournament players. Our Junior programs are very active and offers lessons for all age and play levels, starting with our Pee-Wee classes to college bound tennis players.

Social Mixers are scheduled once a month, and our Men's and Ladies' weekly nights are well attended.

For membership information, please contact us at 301-8685 or visit us at the tennis facility located across the Grey Rock Golf Club's parking lot.

For more information, you may contact us at 301-8685 or visit our Web-site: [www.circlectennis.com](http://www.circlectennis.com)

### Learn To Play Tennis at the Circle C Tennis Club

#### Adults' and Children's Programs

- Week-Day and Week-Long Sessions for Children
- Open to Members and Non-Members
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## Circle C Amenities Continued

### **Chef Jaime Arevalo** **www.circleccatering.com**

*Check out our new & improved web site.*

#### **Cafe @ Swim Center #288-6058**

**5919 LaCrosse Ave**

NEW Hours: Monday-Saturday  
3pm-8pm, Closed Sunday

Serving hamburgers, salads, pizzas  
and nightly gourmet specials.

**Deliver is always FREE in Circle C!**

#### **Wildflower Cafe #232-0154**

**4801 LaCrosse Ave**

Hours: Monday-Saturday 10am-4pm;  
Sunday 12-4pm

Serving salads, soups,  
sandwiches, and desserts.

#### **Catering #301-7235**

We cater all events large and small at the Wildflower Center  
or the venue of your choice. Please email for a  
personalized proposal and catering menus.

***We appreciate your business!!!***

**View the  
Circle C Ranch  
Newsletter  
each month  
online at  
[www.PEELinc.com](http://www.PEELinc.com)**

#### ***Classified Ads***

**Personal classifieds** (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Circle C Ranch residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail to [info@circlecranch.info](mailto:info@circlecranch.info).

**Business classifieds** (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$65, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office at 512-263-9181 or [advertising@PEELinc.com](mailto:advertising@PEELinc.com).

***"...sold my property in record time"***  
***"...worked harder for me than anybody"***  
***"...a pleasure to work with"***  
***"... didn't compromise when it came to looking out for our best interests"***  
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I'm a long-time Circle C resident who has helped hundreds of people throughout Austin buy and sell their homes. In this competitive market you need an experienced professional who can help you sell your home in minimum time for the best price. Contact me for a market analysis and my strategy to sell your home quickly.

CIRCLE C HOA  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6<sup>th</sup>  
@ THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER  
2 'TILL 5 PM

# Kids' holiday party

\*kiker keynotes & clayton cardinal choirs to perform  
food  
games  
train ride  
pony rides  
balloon twist  
face painting  
carnival booths  
visit with santa



Cost: Donation of 1 unwrapped NEW toy for children in foster care.



# November Fun Facts

Dear friends, once again here are some useful and not so useful facts.

- Thanksgiving was first celebrated in the U.S. in 1789.
- The birthstone for November is the topaz.
- John F. Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963.
- Lincoln's Gettysburg address was given in November 1863.
- The ancient Roman calendar listed November as the ninth month.
- The US and Canada celebrate the end of WWI on November 11.
- Presidents Harding and Polk differed in age by 70 years, but they were both born on November 2.
- Winter once began on November 11, according to the calendar of ancient Rome.

What is a turkey's favorite song? Ans. I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas.

Day after Thanksgiving is known as Black Friday. Let me tell you why...

Black Friday or Retail Black Friday is the day after Thanksgiving. It is one of the two busiest shopping days of the year. In case you didn't know, the other busiest shopping day is the day after Christmas, when throngs of shoppers, on holiday vacation, mob the stores to use gift certificates they received, and to exchange merchandise.

Why Black?? In the world of accountants, red signifies a loss, and black signifies a profit. For many retailers, the Christmas holiday sales season represents one half to three quarters of their annual sales. Often, retailers are losing money, until holiday sales begin. Holiday sales formally begin on the day after Thanksgiving. So, Black Friday represents that turning point, from a loss towards big profits!

This is from your friends who do your neighbors Heating and Cooling and hopefully yours soon!

*We are "thankful" for your business.*

Sincerely,

*Will Hawkins, King of Comfort*

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is running safely, before all  
those guests come in,  
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## School News

### Kiker Update: Look What's Happening!

*Submitted by Karen Syzdek*

#### Annual Market Day - Shoppers Wanted!

Friday, December 5, 2008

11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Kiker Gymnasium

Start (or finish!) your holiday shopping! More than twenty-five vendors will offer must have products during Market Day. Admission is free but everyone must sign in at Kiker's front office and wear a "Guest" sticker. Although space is limited, it may not be too late – contact Dee Dee Green, [ddgreen@austin.rr.com](mailto:ddgreen@austin.rr.com), or Christy Zimmerman, [czimmerman@austin.rr.com](mailto:czimmerman@austin.rr.com), if you are interested in participating as a vendor.



fifth graders sorted and counted the donated items as part of their annual community service project, A Legacy of Giving. Thank you to everyone in Circle C Ranch and the surrounding areas who supported this helping hand effort!

#### Kiker Annual Fall Festival – A Huge Success!


Kiker's Annual Fall Festival on October 4th, was attended by more than 1,100 people who feasted on concessions offered by the Student Council and Bahama Freeze snow cones, played games, and enjoyed live music and the camaraderie of the community. The community was treated to a performance of the Kiker Second Grade Singers led by Mr. Daryl Jones. Kids of all ages were amazed by interactive robotic and computer demonstrations offered by Bits, Bytes & Bots. Participants met real rescue heroes and toured rescue vehicles with the Austin Fire Department and the Austin Police Department Air Enforcement Unit Aircraft (helicopter) pilots. Staci Gray, Austin's own family fun musician, wrapped up the event with a variety of lively children's tunes. The help of everyone

*(Continued on Page 25)*

#### Kiker Helping Hands

Kiker Elementary partnered with Wells Fargo to provide financial assistance and much needed items to San Leon Elementary located in devastated Galveston County. The community collected 4,656 items including clothing, food, and personal items. Kiker's Student Council, who sold concessions during the school's Annual Fall Festival, raised almost \$1,500.00 for hurricane relief. Kiker fourth and

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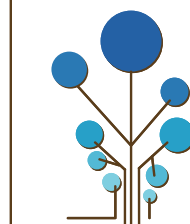
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one mom at a time

**Total Mommy Fitness**



## School News Continued

### Kike Update - (Continued from Page 24)

who contributed to the success of the event is greatly appreciated! Special thanks to A+ Federal Credit Union, Wells Fargo, Academic Superstore, Austin Fire Department, Austin Police Department Air Enforcement Unit, Bahama Freeze, Costco Wholesale, Bits, Bytes & Bots, HEB Oak Hill, Jan's Jumpers, New Era Moving, Postmark'd Postal Store, Randall's Brodie Ln., Randall's Wm. Cannon, Roadrunner Paint & Body, Staci Gray and Staples.

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## School News Continued

### News from Mills Elementary

*Submitted by Kristen Card*

#### Mills Elementary Reading Program Gets \$2,000 Grant from Target®

Joe Dan Mills, Jr. Elementary School recently received a generous grant from Target® recognizing the school's work to help primary students who are struggling with reading basics.

Regina Staffa, mom to three Mills students with dyslexia, is also head coach of the elementary's Roaring Reading Teams. Staffa created the Roaring Reading program to help struggling K – 2 readers.

"My oldest son was diagnosed with dyslexia in first grade," Staffa remembers. "But when I went to the school to see what help was available for him, there wasn't any. Texas' school system doesn't offer support for kids who have trouble reading until they've already failed at it a couple of times. I just thought, 'That's too late.'"

Staffa sought training in Read Naturally curriculum, and is now studying with the Scottish Rite Learning Center to become a Certified Academic Language Specialist. In-between, she launched and leads Roaring Reading, an all-volunteer program that matches adult coaches with struggling young readers to provide a system for

students to practice reading and pre-reading skills. Last school-year, Roaring Reading teams reached 70 Mills students and, over the summer, sponsored Summer Reading Rocks, which opened up the school library for children twice a week, and held storytimes and workshops for kids.

Two Mills kindergarten teachers alerted Staffa about the Target® grants last spring. Staffa decided to pursue a grant, and spent many painstaking hours doing detailed demographic research on Mills and Roaring Reading in order to submit the application last May. It was almost October when she received Target®'s reply.

"I thought it was going to be a rejection slip," recalls Staffa. "But it was a congratulatory letter of acceptance, along with the \$2,000 check. I was – I am – thrilled."

The grant is part of Target®'s ongoing efforts to strengthen families and communities across America. Since opening its doors in 1962, Target® has given five percent of its income to organizations supporting education, the arts, social services and volunteerism. Today, that equates to a nationwide contribution of \$3 million every week.

*(Continued on Page 27)*



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## School News Continued

### News from Mills Elementary- (Continued from Page 26)

"Target's local grants are making a difference within the communities we serve," says Laysha Ward, Target's Vice President of Community Relations. "We're proud to partner with Mills Elementary and Roaring Reading as part of our continuing commitment to give back to the communities where our guests and team members live and work."

Staffa plans to use the Target® grant money to buy more curriculum materials, new tape machines and headphones, necessary office supplies, and incentives and rewards for the kids, as well as use some for seed money for next summer's reading program.

"We're amazingly grateful to Target for this showing of support for our youngest readers," says Staffa. "It's this type of commitment, contribution and investment in our children that really makes a difference for all of our futures."

### Mills Teachers Awarded Grants

Two Mills Elementary teachers received grants from the Junior League of Austin's 2008-2009 ABC Grants program. Kindergarten teachers, Lisa Leigh and Deb Hurst were each awarded \$500 for their projects; Nature Hike Backpacks and CSI: Austin – Kindergartners Discover the Weather.

ABC Grants is a program of the Junior League of Austin in partnership with 3M and AMD. Twenty-three grants totaling \$11,000 will be awarded to 20 teachers from 20 different schools in seven districts. These two teachers were selected from a pool of approximately 85 applications. These teachers are truly amazing and are making a difference in our community each and every day!

### Voting at Mills? Bring us your Box Tops.

If you will be voting at Mills Elementary, please drop off your Box Tops and Campbell's Labels for Education during your visit.

The pink Box Top official coupons can be found on many items, including General Mills cereals, Nature Valley granola bars, and Kleenex tissues. The Campbell's Labels for Education can be found on Campbell's soups, Pepperidge Farm Goldfish, and other products. (The UPC code with the Labels for Education logo is the part we need.)

A Box Tops collection bin will be waiting for you in the lobby at the main Mills entrance. Just toss in your collection on the way to or from the polls. And thanks for supporting Mills!



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## Achoo!!!!

Submitted by Dr. Tenesha Weine

If you live in Austin and other allergen-laden locales, you are certainly familiar with the outward symptoms of airborne allergies. And if you've ever rushed to the bathroom after lunch, you may also be familiar with some food allergies and what they do to you. But did you know that depression can actually be a symptom of an allergy at work in your body? So can muscle aches, joint pain, anger and irritability, even an inability to think clearly. The list of allergy symptoms goes on and on.

The exact cause of allergies isn't known. Western science defines an allergic reaction as the body's defense mechanism against an allergen or foreign substance. The body's immune system takes over in an attempt to protect it. Ironically, your body is making you uncomfortable by fighting what are often benign substances.

Allergies to airborne substances, ragweed, mold, dust, mountain juniper, are often indicative of inflammation somewhere in the GI tract. They are typically secondary to a food allergy that is creating the inflammation.

Some allergens are actually inherited, but these are few. In fact, allergic reactions to soy, peanuts, dairy products, and wheat appear to be the only genetic allergies. Changing the pH and calming the

inflammation of the bowels is the key to reducing or eliminating allergies. While it isn't an overnight process, the results are worth it—living without sinusitis, itchy watery eyes, headaches, pressure, fatigue, drainage, sinus infections, irritable bowels, spastic colon, diarrhea, and constipation.

You may be shocked to discover how many of your seemingly unrelated symptoms are actually allergies.

Other symptoms of allergies include migraines, heartburn, fainting, blood-sugar problems, indigestion, and even mood disorders. Often, depression is actually a result of commonly ingested allergens, and many people find they can reduce or eliminate their need for psychotropic medications by modifying their food intake.



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3/20	Cruising		
3/21	Fort Lauderdale	7:00 AM	

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## 33rd Annual Junior League A Christmas Affair: "Noel de Paris"

The Junior League of Austin is proud to announce details for the annual event, A Christmas Affair. The 2008 A Christmas Affair, "Noel de Paris" will be held at the Palmer Events Center from Wednesday, November 19th through Sunday November 23rd, 2008. Over 200 merchants from across the country have been hand selected to participate in this five day holiday market which is the most successful of its kind produced by any Junior League in the country.

A Christmas Affair opens with the gala, "Moulin Rouge" Wednesday, November 19th. This formal preview party will allow attendees to enjoy private shopping, amazing food, a live and silent auction and live entertainment under the Eiffel Tower. Tickets are \$150 per person.

Market day hours open to the public and guests are free to shop up and down the streets of Paris for five consecutive days. The shopping hours are Thursday 12noon-9pm, Friday 10am-9pm, Saturday 10am-8pm, and Sunday 11am-5pm. Tickets are \$12 at the door. Children ages 5 and under are free and strollers, pull carts, and rolling bags are not allowed in an effort to keep guests safe.

First held in 1976 at the Driskill Hotel, this is the 33rd year A Christmas Affair has been a vital part of fundraising in the Austin community. More than 20,000 people are expected to attend A Christmas Affair 2008, allowing The Junior League of Austin to invest over \$1,000,000 annually in the community.

About The Junior League of Austin: Each year, The Junior League of Austin donates over a million dollars to the community and Junior League members devote over 100,000 volunteer hours to over 50 nonprofit agencies. This year The Junior League of Austin is proud to be celebrating 75 years of giving to the Austin community.

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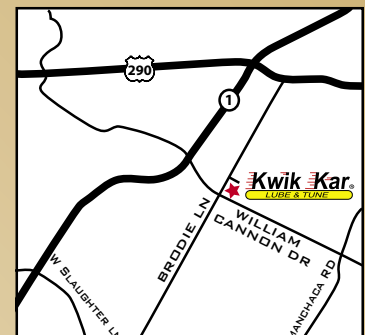
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## The Green Corner - Green the Holidays

By: Sheri Hicks

Thanksgiving will be here in a few weeks and following hard on its heels is the mecca of consumption – Christmas. I have a few tips that can help you feel easier about your carbon footprint during the holidays. This month I will focus on holiday food and Thanksgiving. In December, I will give you tips and ideas on how to green up your gift giving and holiday decorating.

**The Thanksgiving Table:** Before you shop, think sustainability. Both Whole Foods and Central Market sell organically grown, free range turkeys. Untreated with hormones, antibiotics and fed on whole grain feed, these turkeys can be purchased whole or partial (I buy a breast for my small family) for a meal designed specifically for your family. Add organically grown vegetables, and if possible heirloom varieties to increase nutritional value and green quotient.

I know, positively everyone says to go organic. But they rarely tell you why it



is important. It isn't just that it is cool or fashionable to be organic (although it is chic to be green) but that organic food is grown and/or raised with sustainability in mind, something that is not taken into account by conventional farming methods. Every time

we do something against nature, there is a ripple effect that is felt much farther than our back yard but ultimately comes back to bite us.

Conventionally raised turkeys (and any poultry, beef and most farmed fish) are kept in tight quarters, fed a diet of grains and discarded animal products – usually from animals too sick to be used in human consumption- and fattened until slaughtered. The cramped quarters, lack of exercise, and poor quality food create a breeding ground for disease requiring the animals to be treated with prophylactic antibiotics. Hormones are used to increase the growth and yield of the meat. How is this unsustainable and downright harmful to us though? Over use of antibiotics have led to antibiotic resistant diseases like MRSA, a particularly nasty and deadly antibiotic resistant staph bacterium, and hormones are absorbed into the meat and ingested by humans or find themselves

*(Continued on Page 31)*



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## *The Green Corner- (Continued from Page 30)*

in our drinking water, creating all sorts of havoc in our bodies from suspected early onset puberty in girls to hormone induced cancers such as estrogen or progesterone positive breast cancer. If all this isn't enough, the runoff from poultry farms is toxic and pollutes water ways destroying entire ecosystems and tainting drinking water with poisons, antibiotics, fecal matter and hormones.

Organic vegetables prohibit the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. These products are known to cause cancer and neurological disorders in both humans and lab animals. Many vegetables carry toxic residue to your table and into your body. The toxic runoff from conventional farms pollute rivers, drinking water and create dangerous dead zones in the ocean where high levels of nitrogen kill beneficial algae and bacteria causing dangerous algae blooms like red tide that deplete oxygen levels and kill fish. Our own Gulf of Mexico suffers from a dead zone from the base of the Mississippi river all the way to Galveston that is approximately the size of Rhode Island. Dead zones disrupt oceanic hunting and feeding grounds bringing fish closer to shore which in turn brings ocean predators, such as sharks, closer to shore endangering ocean swimmers (not to mention makes the water just plain nasty).

Heirloom vegetables are great because not only are they fun (purple tomatoes anyone?) but they promote biodiversity which protects our food sources. Did you know the Irish Potato Famine occurred because the Irish relied on only a few species of potato plant as

the basis of their food supply? All of which was susceptible to the fungus that attacked the plant and destroyed the food crop. The United States and modern conventional farming has gone the way of Ireland, relying on fewer and fewer species of plants planted in large monocultures to create the basis of our market vegetable selections and eliminating approximately 90% of plant genetic material that was available in 1900. Like Ireland, a simple disease could wipe out a large portion of our food supply and leave us on the brink of starvation. Heirloom vegetables keep genetic plant material alive and in the food source.

I know that organics are initially more expensive. But remember, with conventional products we have to pay to clean up the water to make it safe and drinkable again, to clean up the ocean for access to safe fish, to provide more and more research on how to keep our few remaining plant species from succumbing to disease and pests, medical bills when our bodies react to the environmental toxins, and disaster relief when gigantic storms caused from environmental disruption destroy communities. In the long run, organics are the cheaper way to go.

Avoid the consumption trap by avoiding Black Friday. Instead of shopping use it to decorate for Christmas. If you want to save decorating until December (and wait for my tips!), use the time take a nice hike through one of the Austin area's nature trails or area state parks such as Bastrop State Park or Enchanted Rock State Park – Thanksgiving leftovers make a nice picnic!

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## Want To Take Years Off Your Age, Try Changing Your Hair....

*Submitted by Michelle Lasher*

If there is one thing people see every day when they look at our faces, it is our hair. The color, shine and texture of the hair can be a great gauge of how old a person is. As we age, our hair tends to lose that natural shine and flowing texturing. The natural hair body falls limp and we are left with a mess of unmanageable hair. But, that does not have to be the case...

Here are the top 3 changes that can take years off your real age:  
**Highlights = Younger Locks**

When highlights are placed in just the right spots on the head, they will frame the face and drop the years from how old you look. The key is to not overdue the highlights. The color should be just a few shades off the base and the highlights, soft and sun kissed. There is a difference between highlighting and chunking and your salon needs to know the difference.

### **Layer For A Younger Look**

When hair is heavy and falls around the face, it makes us look older. The lighter our hair feels, the lighter our spirits and the less drowning our hair will be. The salon should cut face framing layers into the style you have chosen. Even if the "picture" you are going for does not have layers, the addition of a few around the face will lighten the do and your age.  
**Shine, shine, shine**

Young hair is shiny hair. That luster is one of the first things to disappear with age. But, you can regain that shine and naturally. A sweet smelling natural oil can be placed on the head for a few hours a week to moisture and revitalize. On a daily basis, stack the shine products for the best results. The shampoo, conditioner, gel, mousse and hairspray you use should all say they increase shine.

*Happy Uplifting Youthfulness!*

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## HOLIDAY PET TIPS

*Submitted by Melissa Todd*

As you celebrate the season, it's important to keep your furry friends safe and stress-free.

Household changes and activity can be very hard on pets.

- Be careful with holiday decorations. Many plants and berries (poinsettias, mistletoe, ivy and holly to name a few) can be toxic to pets. Also be careful where you hang ornaments and decorations...the higher the better!
- Gatherings of people and holiday parties can frighten animals. Plan a safe place for them to retreat too when company arrives or when Halloween doorbells are ringing.
- Holiday leftovers can wreak havoc with your pet's digestive system. This is especially true with older pets. Turkey drippings, poultry bones and chocolate can all result in a trip to the emergency vet.



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## Saving For College: The 529 Plan

By Rich Keith

The 529 Plan is named after the section of the federal tax code that governs them. These plans are tax-advantaged programs that help families save for college. Selecting a plan requires homework. Every state offers at least one 529 plan and now a consortium of private colleges also offers a 529 plan. The tax advantages, investment options, restrictions and fees can vary a great deal.

There are two types of 529 plans—prepaid tuition plans and college savings plans. Every state offers at least one of these types of plans. Some states offer both, and now a consortium of private colleges also offers a prepaid tuition plan.

Prepaid tuition plans allow parents, grandparents and others to prepay tuition at today's tuition rates at eligible public and private colleges or universities so that they don't have to worry about future tuition increases.

Contribution limits: You pay for amounts of tuition (years, credits or units) in one lump sum or through installment payments. There are a number of options. Some prepaid tuition plans offer contracts for a two-year community college or a four-year undergraduate program, or a combination of the two, and can cover one to five years of tuition. Some plans even allow the contract to be applied to graduate school tuition.

Covered educational expenses: With only a few exceptions, however, most prepaid tuition plans do not cover other expenses, such as room and board. So you may want to consider other college savings options to cover these costs.

Guarantees and safety features: Most states guarantee that the funds you put into a prepaid plan will keep pace with tuition. Some, but not all states back their prepaid tuition plans by the full faith and credit of the state, meaning that if the program should find itself in financial difficulty, the state will step in to provide the necessary funding.

Residency requirements and other limitations: Most state prepaid tuition plans require either you or your child to be a resident of the state offering the plan when you apply. Some limit enrollment to a certain period each year. Many prepaid tuition plans also have age or grade limits for beneficiaries (i.e., future college students).

Portability: If your child chooses not to attend a college covered by the prepaid tuition plan, all is not lost. Although you will not get the benefit of guaranteed tuition, all prepaid tuition plans allow you to use plan money to pay tuition at other colleges and universities. Many state prepaid tuition plans will pay out an amount equal to the weighted average tuition and mandatory fees at your state's public

(Continued on Page 35)

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## ***Saving for College- (Continued from Page 34)***

institutions, not to exceed the actual tuition and fees you incur. Most prepaid plans also let you transfer the plan to a child's brother or sister (although age restrictions may prevent transfers to an older sibling). Unfortunately, if your child chooses not to go to college and a sibling doesn't use the plan, or you need to cancel the prepaid plan, most plans will only give you back what you originally contributed with a reduction or elimination of any interest earned. Some plans also charge a cancellation fee.

Before buying a 529 plan, you should find out about the particular plan you are considering, and be sure you understand the plan's description of fees and expenses. Work with your financial professional to help you make the right choices.

Sources: Trends in College Pricing 2007, The College Board®, Trends in Student Aid 2007, The College Board®, Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc.

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## NatureWatch

by Jim and Lynne Weber

### Native Fruits & Berries

Among the key components of any healthy, natural habitat are the native plants that provide sustenance for wildlife. In Central Texas, there are several species that provide abundant fruits and berries during the warmer months, most are edible for humans as well as wildlife, and now is the perfect time to plant them!

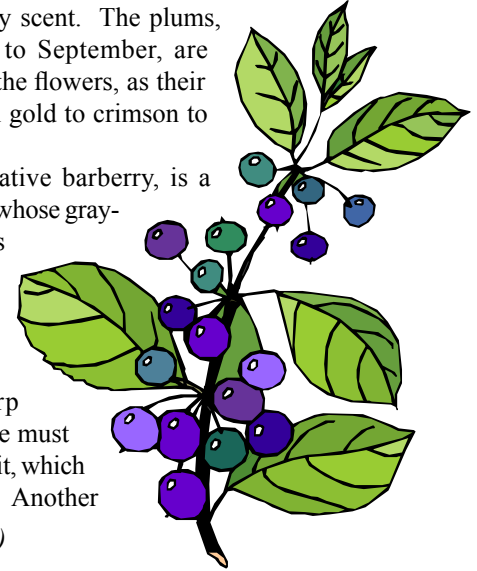
Common in brushy areas, open woodlands, and stony hillsides, the Texas Persimmon is a small tree (8-12 feet) that is moderately deer resistant. Flowering in March/April, this tree has little green leaves and attractive smooth pale reddish-gray bark that peels off to reveal a whiter trunk. The female trees bear 1-inch fruits that turn from green to black as they ripen in late July to September. Texas or Littleleaf Mulberry, also a large shrub or small tree, produces an edible fruit that is small, fleshy, and berry-like. It varies from red to black and ripens in May, although in ideal conditions this tree is known to produce a large quantity of fruits over a longer period of time, providing much needed food for migrating and nesting birds.

Our native Escarpment Black Cherry is a fast-growing, straight-trunked tree with long clusters of white flowers in April/May, followed by small purple-black cherries ripening in August through October. Although impractical for fresh eating, the cherries are used in juices

and wines, and the bark was once used in making cough syrup. This deciduous tree is also unique in that it offers stunning yellow fall color. Another attractive tree is the Mexican Plum, whose dense white flowers appear before the leaves in early spring, and offer a very sweet, heady scent. The plums, which ripen from July to September, are nearly as ornamental as the flowers, as their color varies widely from gold to crimson to purple-black.

Agarita, a common native barberry, is a medium evergreen shrub whose gray-green holly-like leaflets are joined by yellow flowers in February/March and small red fruit in May through July. The leaflets have sharp points at the ends, so care must be taken to harvest the fruit, which makes an excellent jelly. Another

(Continued on Page 37)



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**Nature Watch** - (Continued from page 36)

sprawling shrub with thorny, woody stems is Southern Dewberry. A bramble common to sunny meadows and open fields, its white flowers bloom in March/April, followed by berries that resemble blackberries but have a more sweet/tart flavor. Usually found climbing along fencerows and high over other plants in woodland edges and stream sides is the Mustang Grape. Best used for wines and jellies, these vines can grow up to 40 feet long, and produce small clusters of acidic berries that ripen in August and September.

Take some time this fall planting season to seek out and add some of these native fruit and berry plants to your landscape. Not only will you be providing food for several species of birds and mammals, but you'll have the chance to savor a natural treat for yourself, too!

Send your nature-related questions to [naturewatch@austin.rr.com](mailto:naturewatch@austin.rr.com) and we'll do our best to answer them.

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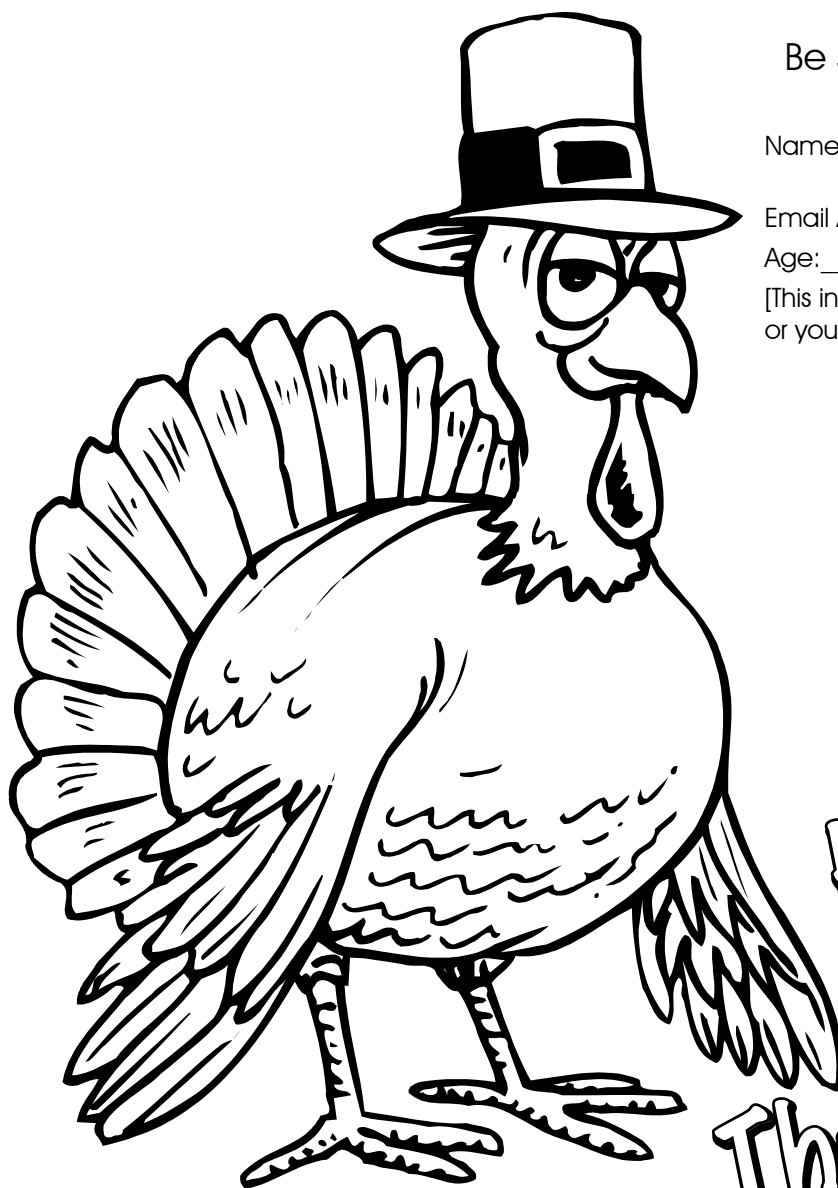
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### Austin Real Estate Partners' Market Report

Circle C Ranch by Neighborhood	6 Months Sold History (Apr '08 - Sep '08)						CURRENT MARKET	
	TOTAL	AVERAGE					TOTAL	
	Homes Sold	Square Feet	Price / Sq. Foot	Price \$K	Year Built	Days On Market	Available	Pending Sale
Circle C Central	46	2,700	\$ 113	\$ 305	1993	47	30	6
North	13	2,111	\$ 124	\$ 263	1996	33	5	3
Wildflower	14	2,264	\$ 125	\$ 283	2001	46	5	2
On The Park	4	3,810	\$ 120	\$ 456	1996	39	4	2
Vintage Place	4	3,067	\$ 108	\$ 332	2003	72	5	0
Hielscher	19	3,066	\$ 120	\$ 369	2003	52	13	2
West	22	3,341	\$ 120	\$ 401	2004	47	12	2
Park West	7	2,366	\$ 138	\$ 326	2001	70	7	1
Park Place	4	2,507	\$ 129	\$ 324	2004	54	0	2
Muirfield	6	3,858	\$ 128	\$ 494	2006	83	2	0
Enclave/Stone Creek	6	2,682	\$ 124	\$ 332	2006	63	10	1
Alta Mira	8	2,882	\$ 130	\$ 374	2007	58	4	1
<b>Circle C Ranch Total</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>2,820</b>	<b>\$ 121</b>	<b>\$ 340</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>% Change Mo/Mo</b>	<b>-6%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>-4%</b>	<b>-10%</b>	<b>69%</b>

Market Report data was obtained from the Austin-Multiple Listing Service (MLS) on 10/06/2008. In some cases new construction and FSBO homes are not included in the MLS data and therefore are not represented. Data is deemed accurate but not guaranteed.

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