

THE STAR

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2008



On Saturday, December 13th local businesses will host another Steiner Concert in the Park. The event runs from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at John Simpson Park off of Steiner Ranch Boulevard. Pictures with Santa will be taken from 2:00-4:00 p.m. while a blood drive hosted by the Central Texas Blood and Tissue Center will go until 5:00. Musical entertainment will be provided by the Canyon Ridge Middle School choir, directed by Courtney Riskind, and the band from Austin Christian Fellowship under the leadership of Tony Colvin and J.R. Taylor. Games and activities for the children will be available throughout the day as will food from area restaurants. The fare includes hot beef sandwiches, soup, chili, upside-down Frito pie, roasted lamb with mint pesto, peppermint hot chocolate, and more! Steiner Cares and the 4Points Business Association will also be collecting toys and non-perishable food for Brown Santa, an effort directed by the Travis County Sheriffs Office to help the underserved in our county. Come out and enjoy the holidays with your friends and neighbors!

Season's Greetings

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and much more!!

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Ambulance	911
Sheriff – Non-Emergency	512-974-0845
Hudson Bend Fire and EMS	
Emergencies	512-266-1775
Information	512-266-2533

SCHOOLS

Leander ISD	512-434-5000
Cedar Park High School	512-435-8300
Canyon Ridge Middle School	512-424-7500
Laura Welch Bush Elementary	512-435-4750
Steiner Ranch Elementary	512-434-7100

UTILITIES

Travis County WCID # 17	512-266-1111
City of Austin Electric	512-494-9400
Texas Gas Service	
Custom Service	1-800-700-2443
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Time Warner Cable	
Customer Service	512-485-5555
Repairs	512-485-5080
IESI (Trash)	512-282-3508

OTHER NUMBERS

Lake Travis Postal Office	512-263-2458
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NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

Peel, Inc.	512-263-9181
Article Submissions	thestar@peelinc.com
Advertising	advertising@peelinc.com

Advertising Information

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 512-263-9181 or advertising@PEELinc.com. The advertising deadline is the 10th of each month for the following issue.

2008 Events in Steiner

December 5th - Holiday Wine Social

December 6th - Large Item Disposal

Dec 13th – Holiday in the Park & Pictures with Santa

Visit the HOA website for more information:

<http://www.steinerranchhoa.org/>

Did You Know?

.... Personal classifieds can be submitted to The Star for FREE by all Steiner Ranch Residents? Email your personal classified to thestar@peelinc.com.

.... Any Steiner Ranch resident or community group can submit an article to The Star? Photos and post-event write ups are welcome. Email your article to thestar@peelinc.com (deadline is the 8th of the month prior to the issue).

.... Kids Club winners are posted online? Visit <http://www.peelinc.com/kidsClub.php> to see the current and past winners.

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Stork Report in Steiner



Baby Boy:

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7 lbs. 4 ounces
20.5 inches long

Born:

September 25, 2008

Proud Parents:

Rebekah and Chris Trevelise

Proud Big Sisters:

Madeleine and Antoinette McCall



Baby Boy:

Noah McDonough
7 lbs. 3 ounces
19.5 inches long

Born:

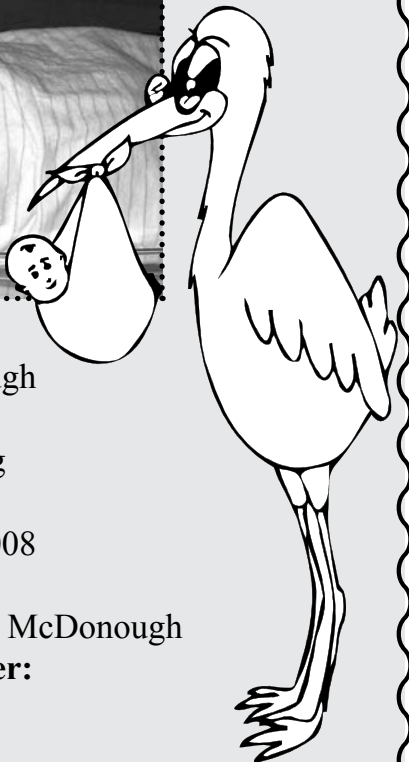
November 7, 2008

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Proud Big Sister:

Andie



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www.steinerranchneighbors.com

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website and feel free to post:

- Your own classified ads
- Lost & found pets
- School events info & Athletic events
- Fundraisers

The website contains lots of other neighborhood and area information. I
hope you enjoy using this website created just for you. Thanks! Diane



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Letters to Santa

Dear Santa,

I want to know why Jesus died? How is your summer going? Thank you for my princess pen. How are you doing? Thank you for this day. How is Mrs. Claus doing? Thank you for this day at the museum. I need to say thank you for the paints. Thank you for this day with placemats. Thank you for all of us. Pray for us to get better. Thank you for the music. How is Jesus doing? Thank you for our eyes, nose, and mouth, and all the stuff on our body. Thank you for the glasses. Thank you for the weather. Thank you for the cups. Thank you for my mommy, and my daddy, and my brother.

Love,

Ryan-Grace Kruger

3 1/2 years old

Dear Santa,

Please send more people and more cars. Please bring mommy a present with a castle in it. Daddy needs more books to read me and a present. More stuffed animals. Thank you for clothes and candy. I would like a real bear. Thank you for Lenny, Tuck and Ming Ming. I like Blue's Clues. I can't wait to go snowing. Eat your cookies.

Kooper Peel

3 1/2 years old

Dear Santa,

My name is Caden and this is my first letter to you. My mom and dad told me that if I am a good boy you will bring me presents on Christmas morning. I would like you to know that I have been exceptionally good this year!

I like to help my mommy with chores around the house. She looks like she ate a basketball and she can't bend over to pick my toys up anymore. I think this is because she found a baby in her tummy.

Daddy lets me wear his baseball hat while we play outside. We have a lot of fun together and when I am really lucky he rides me around on his back. I help him watch football on Sundays and we straighten the house when mommy isn't home to surprise her.

Since this is my first real Santa Christmas I would love it if you brought me a kitchen to cook in. Daddy doesn't really like the idea of me having a kitchen of my own, so if you could maybe bring me a workbench with lots of tools that would be great too!

Mommy says it would be nice to have the baby here for Christmas too. If you can do something about that she might make you an extra plate of cookies.

Please tell Mrs. Clause hello from all of us at the Hogue home. Merry Christmas!

Caden Douglas Hogue

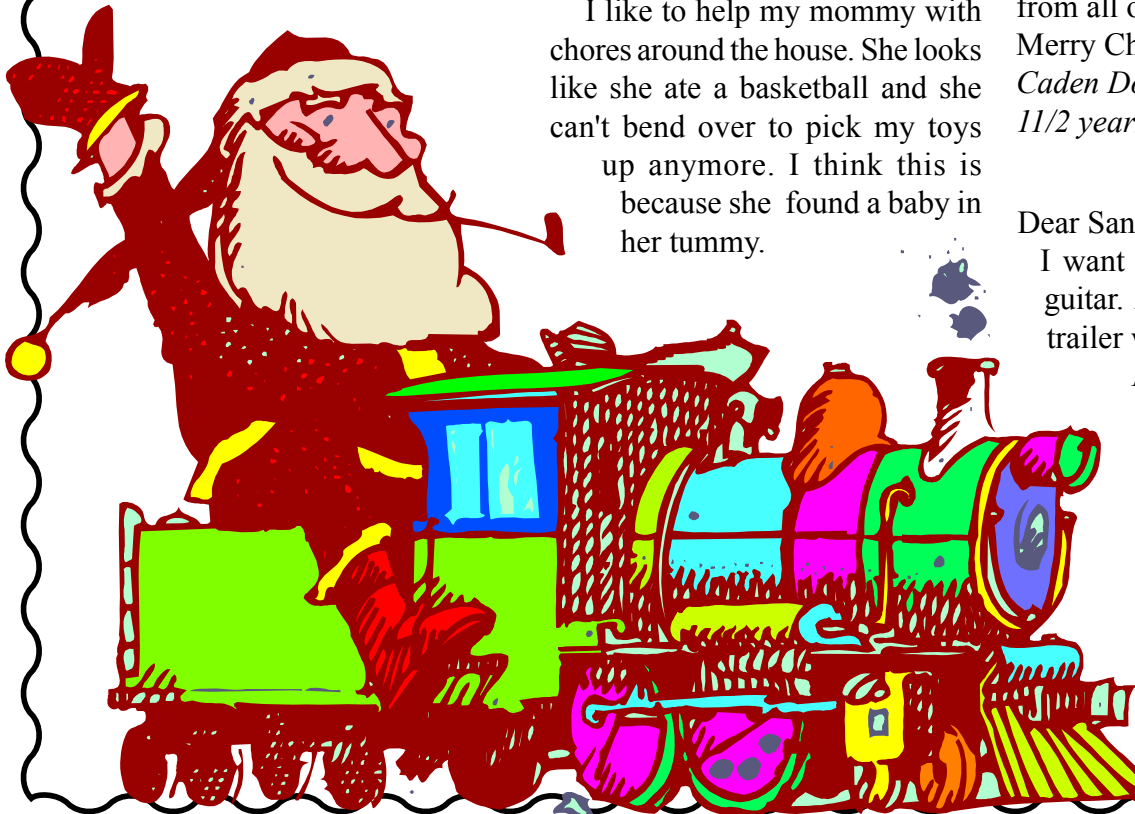
11/2 years old

Dear Santa,

I want a ride on Jeep. A little guitar. A little trash can. Tractor trailer with combine harvester.

Hudson Gerdeman

3 1/2 years old





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THE STAR

Nominate Your Favorite Yard for The Star Yard Of The Month



Congratulations to The Star Yard of The Month for November!

917 GOLDEN PALOMINO COURT

Nader and Lynette at 917 Golden Palomino Ct they have done all the landscaping themselves. They are outside on a daily basis working on their yard. I think they have one of the best curb appeals in our neighborhood. They used Texas native plants so many butterflies visit their yard throughout the day

You can nominate your favorite yard for the month. Please do not nominate your own yard.

Do you know a neighbor who takes excellent care of their property or a neighbor who has added something new to their yard?

- New flowers
- Edging
- New landscaping
- Yard decorations, etc

It could be as simple as a neighbor whose grass is green all year round.

Nominate them emailing the address to thestar@PEELinc.com. Please include a photo if possible.

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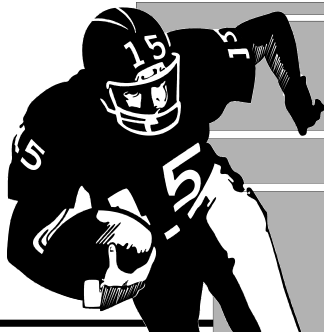
FANTASY FOOTBALL LEAGUE

www.steinerranchfantasyfootball.com

Steiner Ranch Fantasy Football Standings (As of Week 10)

Team	Total Points
Bobblehead Wobblers	1744
Young Guns	1610
McLovin	1600
Fat Toads	1428
The Scramblers	1422
Flux Capacitors	1371
One Asterisk	1335
Barrel of Monkeys	1313
Vikedawgs	1255
Flying Monkeys	1239
Ask Abby and Dennis	1139
Motorboaters	1071

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Public Input Helps Shape LCRA's Long-term Water Supply Planning

By James Kowis, LCRA, manager of water supply planning



Citizens told LCRA these values related to water supply were the most important.

1. Clean water, protection of environment
2. Recreation and lifestyle
3. Availability
4. High quality water supply
5. Management of growth
6. Affordability
7. Jobs and economic growth

On behalf of LCRA, I want to thank everyone who participated in the community conversations about water supply this summer. Your input has helped shape the types of water supplies that LCRA will study in our effort to plan for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

More than 220 people attended three community conversations about water supply held in Burnet, Wharton and Austin. These were unique opportunities for neighbors to sit down together and discuss their values about water supply and wishes for future generations. Also, nearly 500 interested stakeholders participated in the process through our Web site.

In all, participants suggested 189 water supply options and gave more than 150 values that they hold regarding water supply. LCRA staff has compiled and analyzed the public input. The three water supply options mentioned most often were conservation, desalination and reuse. The values that were mentioned most often were clean water, protection of the environment, recreation and lifestyle, and availability.

I gave a report to the LCRA Board of Directors about the public input this month. We reviewed the list of water supply options that LCRA will study in our long-term plan, the Water Supply Resource Plan. To review a copy of this list or to learn more about the

planning process, please visit our Web site at www.lcra.org/watersupply.

LCRA is preparing the Water Supply Resource Plan so we will have a roadmap for how to meet needs for water in the future. The plan will show how much water is available and when and where it can be provided in the future.

Today, LCRA's customers rely on the Highland Lakes and water rights that allow water to be taken from the lower Colorado River. All of LCRA's water supplies

provide ample water for today's needs -- even during times of drought. As our population and businesses grow, we will need to pursue additional water supplies. That's why LCRA is pursuing this planning effort now, so we can support vibrant, healthy and growing communities for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

We truly appreciate everyone's participation and input. Your ideas have contributed greatly to the process. We will have a draft Water Supply Resource Plan prepared by spring 2009 and will ask for your review and feedback.

James Kowis is the manager of water supply planning for LCRA. He has worked on water planning issues throughout the state during his 30-year career in public service.



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THE STAR

Steiner Ranch History Corner

Submitted by Rich Keith

Did you know that Rip Ford Drive and several other streets in Steiner Ranch are named after famous Texas Rangers? Here we look at John Salmon (Rip) Ford, soldier, elected official, and newspaper editor, who was born in South Carolina in 1815. He moved to Texas in 1836 and served in the Texas army until 1838, rising to the rank of first lieutenant under John Coffee (Jack) Hays. Ford settled in San Augustine and practiced medicine there until 1844, when he was elected to the House of the Ninth Congress, where he introduced the resolution to accept the terms of annexation to the United States. In 1845 he moved to Austin and became editor of the Austin Texas Democrat.

During the Mexican War Ford was adjutant of Hays's regiment and in command of a spy company; he was commended for gallant service by Gen. Joseph Lane. While serving as adjutant, Ford acquired the lasting nickname "Rip." When officially sending out notices of deaths he kindly included at the first of the message, "Rest in Peace"; later, under the exigencies of battle conditions, this message was shortened to "R.I.P."

In 1849, with Robert S. Neighbors, Ford made an exploration of the country between San Antonio and El Paso and published a report and map of the route, which came to be known as the Ford and Neighbors

Trail. Later in 1849 he was made captain in the Texas Rangers and was stationed between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, where he had numerous Indian fights during 1850 and 1851.

In 1852 he was elected to the Texas Senate; again he became an editor and established the State Times, which was published in Austin until 1857. Early in 1858 he accepted a commission in the state troops and defeated the Indians in two major battles on the Canadian River. Late in 1859 he was sent to the Rio Grande, where he commanded operations against Juan N. Cortina. In 1861 Ford served as a member of the Secession Convention, commanded an expedition to Brazos Santiago, initiated a trade agreement between Mexico and the Confederacy, and was elected colonel of the Second Texas Cavalry, with a command in the Rio Grande district. Between 1862 and 1865 he was engaged on border operations protecting Confederate-Mexican trade. In May 1865 he led Confederate forces in the battle of Palmito Ranch, the last battle of the Civil War.

In 1868 Ford moved to Brownsville to edit the Brownsville Sentinel. In 1872 he was a delegate to the Democratic convention in Baltimore. He was a special sergeant-at-arms when Richard Coke was inaugurated as governor in 1873 and quelled a riot of Austin citizens who were aroused against the radicals and Edmund J. Davis.

(Continued on Page 11)



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Steiner Ranch History Corner- (Continued from Page 10)

In 1873 Ford served as a cattle and hide inspector of Cameron County, and in 1874 he was mayor of Brownsville. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1875 and served in the Texas Senate from 1876 to 1879, when he was appointed superintendent of the Deaf and Dumb School (later the Texas School for the Deaf). While in the Senate he urged the promotion of immigration to Texas and popular education, supported in part from the sale of public lands.

Ford spent his later years writing reminiscences and historical articles and promoting an interest in Texas history. As a charter member of the Texas State Historical Association, he contributed one of the first articles published in its Quarterly. He died in San Antonio on November 3, 1897. For more information contact RKeith@primerica.com Rich Keith at 266-8498.

Sources: *Biographical Souvenir of the State of Texas (Battey); John S. Ford, Memoirs, John S. Ford, Rip Ford's Texas, Oates; William J. Hughes, Rebellious Ranger: Rip Ford and the Old Southwest (Norman).*

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The Green Corner Green the Holidays, Part Two

Submitted by: Sheri Hicks

Last month, I focused on how to green up the Thanksgiving holiday. This month, in Green the Holidays, Part Two, I will focus on greening up Christmas. Christmas is a wonderful time, full of joy, celebration, remembrance, love and family. But it is also a stressful time full of consumption, overindulging and debt. I have a few suggestions that might take a bit of the stress and, in these hard economic times, debt from your shoulders so you can enjoy the holiday season for what it means to you and your family.

This year, instead of buying any roll of gift wrap, look for reusable bags or paper made from 100% post-consumer recycled products. My own family has passed around the same gift bags for the last five years!

Make your own Christmas Cards by enlisting your kids. Kids create the most

amazing drawings with just a few crayons and card stock.

Make your own holiday ornaments. You can find recipes and instructions online for almost any kind of ornament from homemade cookie ornaments to origami. One of the prettiest trees I have ever seen was decorated almost exclusively with origami cranes.

If you have to buy lights, go LED. LED lights save up to 90% on energy consumption. The colors aren't quite as true as traditional lights, but with that kind of energy savings I am willing to adjust!

Give the gift of experience. Research has shown that people are far happier with experience than an object. In a study conducted by the University of Colorado at Boulder, researchers concluded that people tend to internalize their feelings during an experience and that is just not possible with

an object. That could explain how so much stuff ends up in our garages! If you know a wine lover, give them a gift of wine of the month club or a tour of a local vineyard and winery with a nice bottle of wine. If you know a golfer, give them green fees for a local course. My own family loves to travel and this year, our gift to our nine year old, is to travel to New York City for Christmas. He is excitedly anticipating ice skating in Rockefeller Center, visiting Macy's Santa land, seeing the Rockettes Christmas Spectacular, walking through Central Park, visiting the Natural History Museum and riding the subway. Of course he will get a few small gifts to open on Christmas morning but when those toys are discarded for the next "big" thing, he will still have his memories of his trip to NYC.



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- South Lamar Blvd. at Barton Springs Rd. | 512.442.3416
- McNeil Rd. at Hwy. 183 | 512.258.5588
- Metric Blvd. at Parmer Lane | 512.832.1012



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Saturday, January 17, 2009; 10:00 – 12:30

This workshop is for children 5 – 9 yrs old

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Town Square Community Center in Steiner Ranch

Come build safety skills to last a lifetime.

Contact Laura Waldo for questions and registration.

Phone: 266-6659; lbwaldo@yahoo.com

Greetings FROM GREEN SANTA!

As early as this may seem, plans are already underway for this year's Operation Green Santa. Green Santa is the holiday new toy and food drive sponsored by the ladies auxiliary and will be distributed to families in need within the fire department's service area.

The response last year from Steiner Ranch homeowners was truly impressive and very much appreciated. We hope our endeavor can be put on your calendar and that Steiner Ranch homeowners will again make a difference in this program.

Non-perishable food items and new, unwrapped gifts for children, ages infant to 17, can be dropped off at the fire station in Steiner Ranch. Deadline for all donations is Monday, Dec. 8.

For further information, please call Jeanne at 203-0062 or 266-2602

Thank you for your continue support.

Jeanne Jarvis, President

HB Fire Dept. Ladies Auxiliary



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Geeky Gifts for the Techie in Your Life

Submitted by Laurie Scott

Rather than giving a white shirt and narrow black tie to the geek in your life this Christmas, here are some different ideas for you...

Go online and start with ThinkGeek.com. Here you can find anything from t-shirts to toys to new ways of getting caffeine into your system. Looking for a solar-powered baseball cap? They have it. If you wish you had an anti-gravity globe floating on your office desk, this is the place to find it.

KlearGear.com has a desktop water cooler for under \$18. For you Star Trek fans they have a voice-activated light switch/dimmer that you talk to like the computer on the Enterprise. The official computer voice even talks back to you.

If you're as old as I am you remember vinyl LP's (read your history books kids.) If you have a collection of vinyl that you would like to convert to .mp3's or CD's, Amazon.com has the ION Audio USB turntable for \$100. You don't need any other special equipment; it plugs directly into your computer's USB port and includes recording software so you can create your own CD's. If you still have your old trusty turntable but nothing to plug it into anymore, DAK.com has an adapter you plug your turntable into and it plugs into your computer. It comes with software that is smart enough to split the songs into tracks for you and includes filters for the ticks and pops that go along with vinyl.

Have someone who loves games but you want to stay away from the shooters and other violent games? Check out X-Plane.com for a very realistic flight simulator that give you a wide choice of aircraft you can fly anywhere in the world. You can even try flying and landing the space shuttle if you're brave enough. Available for both the PC and MAC it is \$39.

My personal favorite geeky gifts are USB slippers. That's right, slippers. The slippers plug into your computer's USB ports and in no time your feet are nice and toasty. We don't get a lot of cold mornings here in Texas but you'll love these when we do. They're available at Vavolo.com.

Have a wonderful holiday season! Next month I'll help you with a New Year's resolution you can actually keep.

Classified Ads

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Business classifieds (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$50, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office at 512-263-9181 or advertising@PEELinc.com.



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Tips for Parents of Young Athletes

Ways to Enhance the Child's Experience and Yours!

Submitted by Elizabeth Mirabal

With a new year around the corner, many of us are working on creating our annual list of resolutions as well as preparing for another year of team sports with our children. Aside from less sweets and more exercise, parents may also want to consider a few goals to work toward as they participate in youth sports. Here are a few ideas to consider:

- **Talk to your child about his/her practices and games.** Guide your athlete as he/she discovers personal areas of success and skills that need improvement. You may say, "I'm proud of how fast you ran on the field. What are you most proud of today?"

- **Choose your role and stick to it.** Have you chosen to be a spectator and root for the teams? Did you volunteer to coach? Are you a game official? All are necessary in maintaining a positive environment for children. When compelled to switch roles, remind yourself of the role you've chosen. If you're a spectator, refrain from shouting out a call or play. If you're a coach, take the lead in ensuring young athletes are demonstrating good sportsmanship-like behavior at all times. As an official, recognize that you are the final frontier when it comes to game rules and team conduct. When all groups work together, the results provide for a supportive and educational experience.

- **Be emotional! Laugh! Cheer! Smile!** Fun isn't only for kids! Feel free to holler and liven up the environment! There may be times, however, when you believe an unjust call was made or a rule is not being adhered to. Suddenly, your emotions are all but requiring laughter. Reduce the possibility of an outburst by taking a few deep breaths, counting to ten, or by taking a walk to the parking lot. Then, find an appropriate time and place to address your concerns with

a league official. Statistics show that 28% of young athletes saw their parents yelling at or arguing with coaches and 31% saw parents arguing with officials (Trends & Tundes, HarrisInteractive, Volume 3, Issue 8, August 2004). That is one statistic you want to steer clear from!

- **Focus on FUN and not winning.** Help children develop self-esteem through their personal improvements and not a game win. Rather than asking, "Did your team win?" Why not ask, "Did you do your best? What did you learn today? Did you have fun?" Emphasize that his/her improvement was related to hard work at practice and listening to the coach. Therefore, the child learns to define individual success as a result of his/her own effort. This turns the focus away from an aspect he/she cannot fully control; the entire team's win/loss record.

- **Ensure your fueling your child's engine with the "Good Stuff":** It has happened to many of us. We ask our child to pick a snack to eat before a game and he/she runs out of the house with cookies. While the cookies may provide a quick burst of energy, it'll remain just that: a burst (that fizzles out quickly). Why not make a brief list of nutritional snacks your child can choose from THEN allow him/her to choose from there. Your options may include: a banana and milk, apple slices and cheese, or an ol' fashioned PB & J sandwich on whole-grain bread. This way, you've ensured your athlete chooses wisely and he/she maintains his ability to make the final choice. A win-win situation! Don't forget to rehydrate during practice and games with plenty of water!

Frequent small sips of water are more beneficial than gulping down a bottle of water at half-time which may lead to stomach discomfort.



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sold without a glitch. We were so impressed and confident that we referred Kelly and Lenae to our son and daughter-in-law, who were currently looking for their first home to buy. Kelly and Lenae took them to look at houses and found the perfect home. They closed in two weeks. We were thrilled that they not only sold our home, but helped find a first home for our son and daughter-in-law as well. They are professional, prompt, and always positive! We only wish we had contacted them first. Thank you Kelly and Lenae for everything!

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THE STAR

Wastewater Averaging Period – A Perfect Time to Conserve Water

The Austin Water Utility encourages customers to conserve water during the annual wastewater averaging period, which begins in November and lasts through the March billing cycle.

Nov. 14 marks the beginning of the wastewater averaging period because less outdoor watering is used in the fall and winter months. This allows for more accurate measurement of indoor water usage, which is typically returned to the wastewater system.

Wastewater averaging is calculated using the two lowest customer bills out of the three months of billing cycles, with the bill reflecting the highest daily usage not used in the calculation. This timeframe usually spans from mid-November to mid-March. The customers' new wastewater average will be reflected beginning in the April 2009 statement.

Regardless of customers' water usage throughout the year, the wastewater billing average won't increase, but it could decrease depending on usage. For more information about wastewater averaging in the City of Austin, visit www.cityofaustin.org/water/wwaverage/default.htm.

Oak Tree Trimming Season Is Now To Avoid Oak Wilt

As many of you may recall from the frequent yard signs around NW Austin earlier this year, oak trees should not be trimmed from February through June as this is when the oak wilt carrier beetle is most active. The season to trim oak trees runs from July through January and if your oak trees don't get trimmed between now and the end of January, they should not be trimmed until July, 2009. See tips on trimming and tree care below.

Proper pruning

- Do not prune oaks February through June as this is peak carrier beetle activity season
- Sterilize tools with bleach or alcohol (Lysol is also a solution) before pruning
- Employ certified arborists and their firms (avoid scam artists)

Proper wound treatment

- Immediately paint wounds with pruning paint or latex paint within 15 minutes as carrier beetles may be attracted to untreated cuts or wounds

Proper firewood usage

- Select well seasoned firewood as unseasoned wood might be contaminated
- Select Oak Wilt free firewood that has no fungal mat contamination

Monitor clearing activities

- Inspect actual work for equipment sterilization and wound treatment

Resources

Texas Oak Wilt Information Partnership:

<http://www.texasoakwilt.org/>

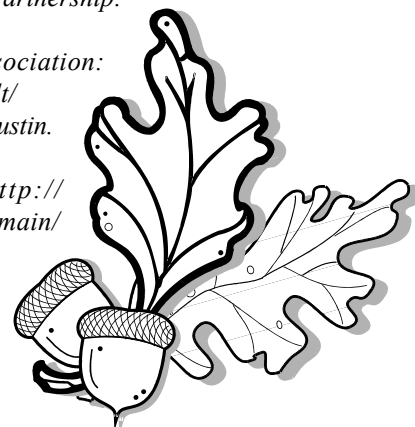
Northwest Austin Civic Association:

<http://www.nwaca.org/oakwilt/>

City of Austin: <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/oakwilt/>

Texas Forest Service: <http://texasforestservice.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?ctrl=6>

U.S. Forest Service: <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/ow/states/tx/tx.shtm>



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Cedar Park Youth League

11U Select Baseball • <http://www.cpyl.org>



We are looking for 11U advanced baseball players for the Saints, a CPYL Select Baseball Team for the Spring of 2009. Our emphasis is on baseball fundamentals, player skills and creating an environment conducive to development. We are adding new players to our roster and will be holding private tryouts on Saturday, December 6th from 9am to 11am at the Cedar Park Youth League baseball fields.

If you are interested in trying out or want more information, please contact Ross Goolsby at 512-947-4785 or e-mail at rossgoolsby@sbcglobal.net.

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THE STAR

Trail of Lights, Environmental Ambassadors

This year the Solid Waste Services Department is partnering with the Parks and Recreation Department to make the 2008 Trail of Lights a 'Zero Waste' (or pretty darn close) event. The trail will run December 14th through December 23rd. As part of the city's effort to reduce the waste at the Trail of Lights, volunteers are needed to serve as "Environmental Ambassadors" at the Trail of Lights. The primary role of the Environmental Ambassadors is to let the Trail of Lights guests know where recycling is available at the event. Volunteers will be stationed throughout the Trail of Lights to assist attendees in recycling.

Date: December 14th – December 23rd

Time: 5:15 pm to 10:15 pm

Location: Zilker Park's Trail of Lights

Registration: Rebecca Hays at rebecca.hays@ci.austin.tx.us or 974-7720 or Zakiya Larry at 512-974-6421 or Zakiya.Larry@ci.austin.tx.us.

Please note that:

*Groups must provide one adult volunteer for every five volunteers ages 15-17.

*Volunteers are hosts for the evening and their organization's name will be displayed at the Trail of Lights from 5:15 to 10:15 p.m.

*Groups need to arrive by 5:15 and leave at 10:15 p.m. on their designated night to work.

*Organizations will provide one liaison to work with Solid Waste Services and Parks and Recreation to assist with any communications.

*Each volunteer will be provided with training and the necessary information to complete their volunteer assignment.

If you think this is something your group might be interested in, please send an email to Zakiya.Larry@ci.austin.tx.us and include the following information:

- Group Name
- Number of Participants
- Age Range of Participants
- Point of Contact for the Group (please include: name, email, and phone number)
- Dates Available- Dates for volunteering will be issued on a first come first serve basis so please respond as soon as possible to get your preferred time slot. **please note that the following time slots have been filled thus far: Thursday, December 18.

To find out more about the Trail of Lights please go to: <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/tol/>. For more information about how the City of Austin is working towards Zero Waste please link to: <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/sws/0waste.htm>



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BUSINESS SECTION

Three Business Networking Groups in the Area

Are you looking to grow your business in 2009? If so, you might be interested in a few of the business networking groups in the area. There are a few to choose from:

Steiner Ranch Referrals BNI Group

Meetings are on Thursday mornings from 8:00 to 9:30 at Cups and Cones in Steiner Ranch. Visitors are welcome! If you are interested in visiting a meeting please contact Elicia Rudberg at Elicia@AustinRelocationResource.com for more information or visit www.BNIAustin.com.

Four Points BNI

Meetings are on Wednesday at lunch from 11:30 to 1:00 at the River Place Country Club. Visitors are welcome! If you are interested in visiting a meeting please contact Amy Oehler at Amy@Lending360.net or visit www.BNIAustin.com.

A Business Referral Group Made Fun

Networking Northwest Austin is expanding its member base of businesses in our area. NWNWA members build close business and personal relationships. We believe in business by referrals and having a limited member base (not duplicating professions), so you will not see your competitors here. We have a caring, positive, involved group of people who not only want to build their business, but also want to build the strength of our networking group. NWNWA meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday at Waterloo Ice House, 360 & FM 2222 from 7:00 am – 8:30. And a fun happy hour once per month at a beautiful location. Come to a breakfast or call Dorothy Scarborough – President dscarborough5@austin.rr.com, 512-589-3678.

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It's a fact of our global economy that consumers are drawn to the internet because of convenience. Why it is important to "Think Local Business First?"

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2. When one dollar is spent at a local business, economists indicate it is circulated four to seven additional times in the local economy.
3. Every dollar spent locally generates up to 75% more tax revenue to our community and State.
4. Local businesses are often the largest financial supporters of neighborhood school programs, local charities and youth sports activities.
5. Strong local businesses help maintain property values and contribute to the character of our community by offering a diverse selection of goods and services.
6. Local businesses are most often the first job for our children and also the first introduction into the "real world" of economics.
7. Small businesses often innovate quicker and thus grow faster and can have a greater impact on our community.

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THE STAR

The Pros of Mounting a TV on a Wall

by Phil Battison

After buying a plasma or Flat screen TV, a person may be faced with whether or not to place their brand spanking new set on a stand or on TV mounts. The choice is really up to the individual; however, there are several advantages to mounting the TV on a wall.

Kids and animals safe

Toddler's curious hands have been known to find and tug on wiring and cause television sets to topple down onto them. Likewise, animals, which have no idea just what the loud talking box is, may accidentally knock the TV set over during a rambunctious sprint around the room.

However, with TV mounts, cords can be safely put away so they can't be grabbed. In this way innocents can't cause harm to them or damage the set. The TV is usually too high up to be manipulated by a child either, so you won't have to worry about beloved game of "Turn the TV off and on" that kids like to play when they can reach the on/off switch.

Viewing experience is enhanced

Because the TV set can be adjusted, the viewing experience is enhanced. Traditional sets can't be moved without a ton of tremendous effort. Most TV mounts however, allow you to move the screen in various angles to get the best picture possible. If you put the unit in a good place, you should be able to view the set from anywhere in the room, which can make viewing an even greater pleasure.

Saves space in the room

When it comes to interior design, the use of space is very important. Because regular televisions tend to take up a lot of surface area, we lose a lot of play in the room itself. With TV Mounts, you have a bit more space to play with. Some people have hung their plasma TV's over the fireplace adding candles just below it for night time ambiance.

Adds to decor

Not only can utilizing a TV mount save space and create a clutter-free look, you can

incorporate the TV into the rooms' decoration scheme. Inventive individuals can even frame their hung plasma television set with artwork, pictures or photos, so that the unit looks like a piece of art. The use of potted plants and even draperies can make a bold, creative statement as well.

Just be careful in placement...

Before placing TV mounts anywhere in your home, be sure to pick an area you'll really enjoy spending a lot of time in. Once you've put the flat screen onto the mount, it will be difficult to place somewhere else without a lot of work. The rule of thumb is to situate the unit where a large group will be able to see it without having to try too hard. You also want to make sure the lighting in the area won't interfere with picture quality.

Indeed, there are many advantages to utilizing TV mounts and with some careful planning; you will be able to get the most out of your brand new plasma or LCD television.



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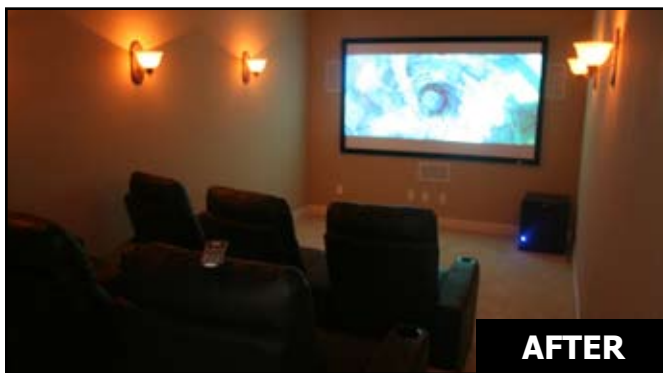
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Going Green Hair Care Tips

Submitted by Michelle Lasher

With the whole world turning to green energy and green products, there is little being said on taking care of one's hair on the green. Many people do not think about what changes can be made to help turn show time into green energy and energy consumption time, although it can be done.

1. Limit the time in the shower- The amount of hot water being used is decreased as well as energy. This helps the environment because water usage is down, gas usage is down, and energy is being conserved.
2. Wash your hair once every other day- If you ask a hair care professional how often to wash one's hair, he or she will often say once every other day or every two days. This gives one's hair more time to recover the natural oils that were stripped away during the washing process. This leads to softer, more manageable hair that has a very soft feel.
3. Rinse with cold water- By rinsing with cold water, the gas consumption is decreased. This in turn decreases the amount of pollution in the air and provides for a greener world. Need another reason to turn off the heat? The cold air helps to close the pores in the skin and the follicles in the hair. This leads to fewer pimples and shinier and softer hair.
4. Buy the bigger bottles- Although large bottles of shampoo tend to have more plastic in them, they also have more shampoo in them and cost less than the smaller bottles. Because the larger bottles have more shampoo in them, it is possible to use less plastic in the end because fewer bottles of shampoo will be purchased.
5. Use products that use recycled bottles!

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2nd Annual Jingle Bell Fun Run to Take Place at Towne Square

Park Dec. 6th

Submitted by Barclay Bauman

A tradition is beginning here in Steiner with the Laura Welch Bush PTA sponsored jingle Bell Fun Run coming back this year on Saturday Dec. 6th. This second annual event will be promoting health and fitness to our kids. Santa Claus will be leading calisthenics from the Solar-powered Stage before the race and snapping holiday pictures from the swim platform of a new Water-ski boat all morning. Imagine that, Pictures with Santa on the ski boat. There will also be a Solar-Powered Stage with Music and lots of local vendors. All of this to promote healthy living here in Steiner Ranch while teaching our kids about exercise, nutrition and a healthy planet with the use of solar power. There will be a nutritionist coming to talk with everyone about eating right and taking care of their bodies while the kids burn energy in the bounce house. The race course will follow along a path that will start and End at Towne Square and strollers will be allowed. The event is open to everyone and there is an online registration through the Laura Welch Bush PTA webpage. Shirts will also be available for the event.

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Submitted by Heather Pennington

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Happy Pets Make For Happy Holidays

Submitte by: Cammie Teliha, DVM

The fall holiday season is a wonderful time for fun, food, family and friends all of which can be overwhelming for you family pets. The extra activities of the season can dramatically change the household routines, sights, and smells around the home. Therefore, it is import to consider these holiday activities from your pet's perspective and safe guard your furry friends to ensure that everyone in your family enjoys a happy and healthy holiday season.

First it is important to understand the hazards that our pets face as the holidays approaches. The following are some basic hazards that each pet can face during the holidays:

- Rich, fatty foods can be very dangerous to both cats and dogs. Many holiday foods such as turkey, smoked ham, garlic, onions and chocolate can cause GI upset, vomiting, diarrhea and even death.
- All bones, especially turkey bones, can cause intestinal tears and obstruct the digestive tract.
- Even grapes and raisins can be dangerous for dogs and can lead to kidney failure.
- Caffeine and alcohol can be toxic and should never be given to our pets, no matter how funny Uncle Pete thinks it might be.
- Cooking aids like aluminum foil, string and holiday decorations can all be very enticing for any pet, but each can be very dangerous and potentially deadly if ingested.

In addition to these specific hazards, the fact that the family routine can change dramatically can be very stressful to any pet. As parties occur, or when family and guests spend the night, pets can be overwhelmed with the noises and interactions which often leads to unwanted behaviors such as aggression, soiling and possibly running away.

With all these hazards to contended with my recommendation is to develop a simple and direct plan that everyone, both young and old, family and guest, can quickly understand and support.

HOLIDAY GAME PLAN:

Post the Rules: How often have you heard your guest say "Oh, just one bite won't hurt"? The problem is if everyone offers your pet a little nibble there is no way to know what might have caused your pet to get sick. Preventative safety measures are the best strategies. By simply letting everyone know the rules your pet well be safer and there won't be any confusion about your expectations from both family and friends.

No Table Scraps: With so many holiday health hazards involving food and diet, this simple recommendation will ensure a healthy and well fed pet throughout the holiday season. Discourage family members and guests from indulging your pets with inappropriate treats.

(Continued on Page 26)





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THE STAR

Happy Pets- (Continued from Page 24)

Food that is high in sodium and fats, such as peanuts, chips, poultry skin and other meats can cause an inflammation of the pancreas which can lead to pancreatitis, a potentially life threatening condition. Always try to maintain the same feeding schedule as the rest of the year and if Uncle Pete just can't resist, have a small amount of veterinary approved pet treats on hand.

Tidy Tidy Tidy: This means everything from food to decorations. I know that this is easier said than done, but if everyone knows the game plan you will be more successful than you might expect. Decorations might not seem like a good meal, but the holiday season can seem like a buffet smorgasbord to some pets. Keeping the house neat with decorations out of reach will discourage bad behavior and help you keep track of the ornaments that go missing. Keep leftover foods out of reach and in tightly closed containers and make sure garbage cans are secure and all trash bags and places in trash can. It only takes a couple of minutes for a pet to tear up a trash bag and devour whatever is inside.

Time Out: When animals are stressed they can often become unpredictable and behave erratically. This is never good for a party. Be mindful of how scared your cat might get with a house full of strangers or how hyper Fido can be when all of the cousins are over. Providing a quiet out of the way spot for your pet to relax and get

away from all of the holiday activities can go a long way to ensuring a comfortable get together for everyone. Consider a pet time out when you sit down to eat. This will serve double duty by limiting the temptations for everyone. Cats are especially well served if they can hideaway in a back bedroom until everyone has gone home.

Be Prepared: This is especially true during the holidays. Always have your pet fully vaccinated and maintain your records for easy access. If your pet bites a guest the first question the ER will ask is "Is the animal vaccinated for rabies." If you can answer yes and provided current documentation you will greatly reduce all medical concerns and your potential financial obligations. Also, keep your veterinary hospital and the emergency veterinary clinic numbers handy. Your veterinarian can provide you with the closest emergency clinic information, this is especially important during the holidays when many animal hospitals are not open.

The holiday season should be fun for everyone, including your family pet. By putting together a Holiday Game Plan you can ensure the health and safety of your pet and your guests. Remember to share your plan with all of your family and friends, maintain your pet's regular diet and schedule, keep hazards away and be prepared and ready to take action if your pet becomes sick. By following these simple guidelines you can ensure that your pet will be healthy and happy for the holidays.



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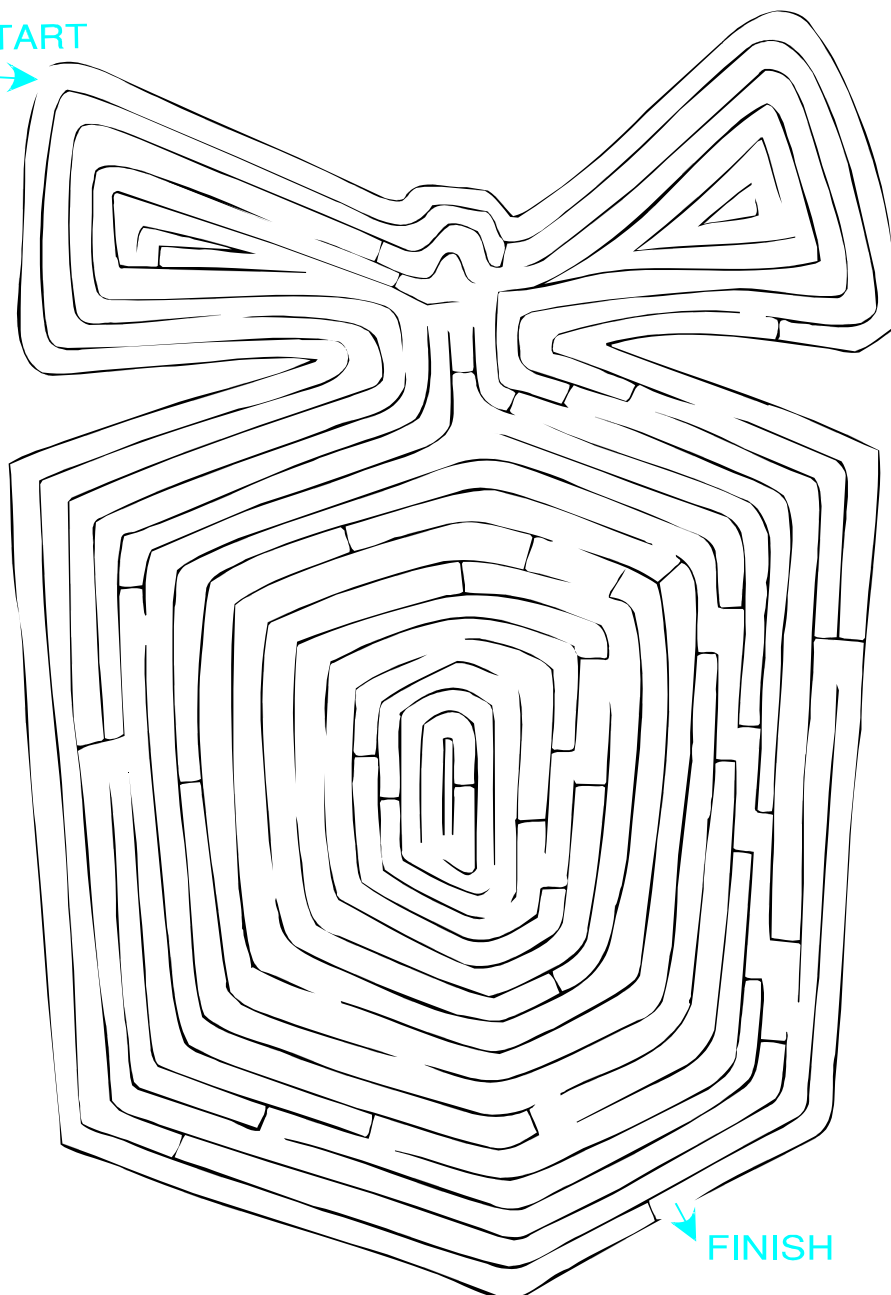
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MAZE CRAZE

START



FINISH

We here at Austin Air Rescue love the holidays. I have found this recipe and everyone just loved it. My wife actually baked it. I thought it would be nice to pass this along to our friends. -Will

Spiced Apple Cake with Eggnog Sauce

It is the Best!

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup raisins or dried cranberries
- 3 tablespoons Applejack, dark or golden rum, or warm water
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (packed) light brown sugar, sifted
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 3 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 Golden Delicious apples, peeled, cored, and cut into 1/2-inch dice (about 4 cups)
- 1 cup (4 ounces) pecans, coarsely chopped
- 1/3 cup crystallized ginger, finely chopped

Special Equipment: 10-inch Bundt pan (3 1/4 inches deep; 3-qt capacity) Garnish: confectioner's sugar for dusting.
Accompaniment: 3 cups eggnog, chilled

Preparation:

In small bowl, combine raisins and rum. Let stand until raisins plump, about 1 hour. Drain (discarding rum) and set aside. Position rack in middle of oven and preheat to 350°F. Lightly butter Bundt pan, then dust with flour-knocking out excess.

In large mixing bowl or bowl of electric mixer, sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, allspice, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, and salt. Add brown and granulated sugars, butter, eggs, and vanilla. Using electric mixer, beat on high speed, scraping down sides of bowl with rubber spatula as needed, until batter is pale and smooth, about 3 minutes for handheld mixer or 2 minutes for standing mixer. Stir in apples, pecans, ginger, and raisins. Spoon into prepared pan and smooth top.

Bake until wooden pick or skewer inserted in center of cake comes out clean and cake just shrinks from sides of pan, about 1 hour. Cool cake in pan on rack 10 minutes, then invert and unmold onto rack and cool completely. (Cake can be made up to 3 days ahead and stored at room temperature, wrapped tightly in plastic wrap.) Just before serving, sift confectioner's sugar over cake. Serve accompanied by eggnog.

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