

# THE STAR

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 3

MARCH 2009

## Looking for a Way to Spend Your "Best Day Ever"?

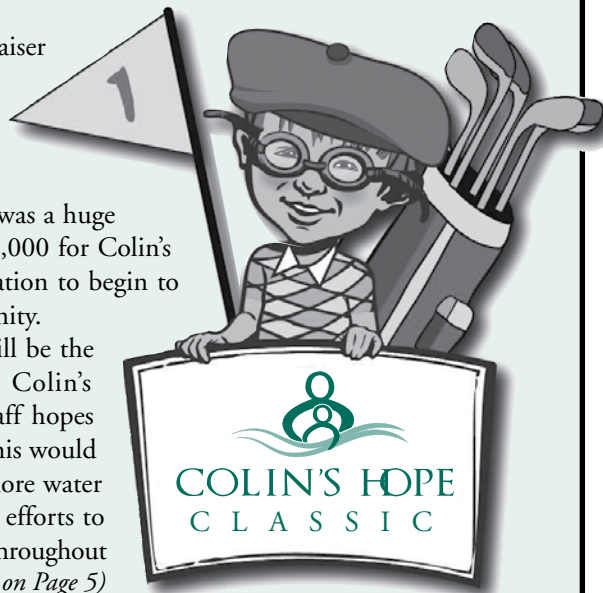
*Register to play in the Colin's Hope Classic golf tournament on Thurs, April 23!*

The tournament is a fundraiser for a new local charity, Colin's Hope, which was founded in August 2008 in honor of Colin Krogh Holst. Colin was only 4 years old when he drowned in a local public pool last June. Sadly, after struggling to understand how this could happen, his family and friends learned that his death is only one of so many like it, as drowning is the second leading cause of death in children under the age of 14. Armed with this knowledge, Colin's family decided to find a way to turn their unimaginable loss into an organization driven to save children from drowning, and Colin's Hope was born. The charity is a nonprofit foundation which creates and supports programs to aid in the prevention of childhood drowning. Colin's Hope has had the privilege to work alongside other nonprofits such as The Junior League of Austin, YMCA and Partnerships for Children to implement initiatives such as sponsoring swim lessons for underprivileged children and educating parents, children, and lifeguards on water safety. You can learn more about Colin's Hope at [www.colinshope.org](http://www.colinshope.org).

The foundation's first fundraiser was the sale of Colin's Cookbook in the fall. The cookbook, which began with recipes from all the meals provided to the family after Colin's death, was a huge success, raising more than \$10,000 for Colin's Hope and allowing the foundation to begin to have a presence in our community.

The Colin's Hope Classic will be the second major fundraiser for Colin's Hope, and its all-volunteer staff hopes to raise more than \$40,000. This would allow them to initiate many more water safety awareness programs and efforts to improve water safety standards throughout

*(Continued on Page 5)*



## Run the Ranch 5K, Kids K, and Health Fair

Come walk, jog, or run with us through the neighborhood and after you cross the finish line, but don't run off! Please plan on hanging around for music, food, health fair freebies, and fun activities for the kids. We will have bounce houses and train rides.

**When:** 8:30am Saturday, March 7, 2009

**Where:** Start/Finish - Towne Square Community Center

**What:** Kids K (1 mile), 5K race (3.2 miles), and Health Fair

**Registration:** Online through March 5th - [www.RuntheRanch.org](http://www.RuntheRanch.org)

**Parking:** Parking is limited. Please park in the Canyon Ridge Middle School and Laura Bush Elementary School parking lots. Parking in the Community Center parking lot will NOT be available. Please walk to the Community Center if possible.

*(Continued on Page 11)*

## Go Paperless

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## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY .....	911
Fire.....	911
Ambulance .....	911
Sheriff – Non-Emergency.....	512-974-0845
Travis County ESD No.6/Lake Travis Fire Rescue Administration Office.....	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
Emergencies.....	512-370-8609
Call Before You Dig.....	512-472-2822
AT&T New Service.....	1-800-464-7928
Repair.....	1-800-246-8464
Billing.....	1-800-858-7928
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
Editor - Kelly Peel .....	thestar@peelinc.com
Advertising.....	advertising@peelinc.com

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## MISSION STATEMENT

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### The Star, For Steiner Ranch

The mission of The Star is to provide the Steiner Ranch community with one source of local news content that is provided by Steiner Ranch residents. Our goal is to help build Steiner Ranch by connecting local businesses with residents and residents with relevant neighborhood information.

*"Be the Community."*

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## ADVERTISING INFO

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Please support the advertisers that make The Star possible. If you are interested in advertising, please contact our sales office at 512-263-9181 or [advertising@PEELinc.com](mailto:advertising@PEELinc.com). The advertising deadline is the 10th of the month prior to the issue.

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## ARTICLE INFO

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The Star is mailed monthly to all Steiner Ranch residents. Residents, community groups, churches, etc. are welcome to include information about their organizations in the newsletter. Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, recipes, special celebrations, and birthday announcements are also welcome.

To submit an article for The Star please email it to [thestar@peelinc.com](mailto:thestar@peelinc.com). The deadline is the 9th of the month prior to the issue.

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# Future Stars of the





## March & April Home Games

Mar. 10	Toros vs. Ft. Wayne	7:30pm
Apr. 01	Toros vs. Tulsa	7:30pm
Apr. 04	Toros vs. Iowa	7:30pm
Apr. 07	Toros vs. Reno	7:30pm
Apr. 08	Toros vs. Rio Grande Valley	7:30pm
Apr. 10	Toros vs. Rio Grande Valley	8:30pm

All home games played at the Austin Convention Center at 4th and Red River.



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## Nominate Your Favorite Yard for The Star Yard Of The Month



*Congratulations to  
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Yard of The Month  
for February!*

3120 RIPPLING CREEK COURT

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

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

Nominate them emailing the address to [thestar@PEELinc.com](mailto:thestar@PEELinc.com). Please include a photo if possible.

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*Looking for a Way - (Continued from Cover Page)*

the community as the summer swim season approaches! Colin's Hope is privileged to have Garrett Weber-Gale, a Gold Medal Olympian at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and Texas Longhorn alum, as the Honorary Chair for the tournament. Garrett Weber-Gale has generated his own buzz lately by winning his first of two Olympic gold medals as part of the U.S. 4x100 relay team in the race that is now widely considered to be the best relay swimming race of all time!

The tournament will be held at The Hills of Lakeway, Yaupon course, on April 23, 2009 at 1:00pm. Registration fees are \$150 per person, which gives the golfer a spot in the 4-person scramble, lunch, dinner and numerous generously donated prizes. You can register to play in this inaugural tournament securely online at [www.colinshope.org](http://www.colinshope.org). Once registered, participants have the opportunity to help support Colin's Hope through raising pledges. However, if golf is not your game but you are interested in helping this amazing group in honoring Colin and helping prevent childhood drowning, the tournament is still looking for sponsors, prize donations or simply good, old-fashioned volunteers! All questions or interested parties should be sent to [info@colinshope.org](mailto:info@colinshope.org). However you choose to participate, we do know, as 4-year old Colin loved to say, that it will be one of your "best days ever."

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# Steiner Birthdays

March 1st - Kooper Peel

March 5th - Nicole Peel

Send your Birthday  
announcements to  
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# Around Steiner

## Steiner Ranch Annual Spring Clothing Drive To Benefit Dress for Success - Austin and The Arc of the Capital Area

Submitted by Tom Henry

During the weeks of April 6 - 19, Steiner Ranch will be holding it's annual spring charity clothing drive to benefit the Austin Chapter of Dress for Success. <http://dressforsuccess.org> and The Arc of the Capital Area <http://www.arcofthecapitalarea.org>

Dress for Success Austin (DFSA) is a nonprofit organization that provides interview suits, confidence boosts and career development to low-income women seeking employment who are referred by other nonprofits, and government agencies.

The Arc of the Capital Area, a non-profit organization, is committed to promoting independence and choice by providing individualized services to adults and children with developmental disabilities

### WHAT WE NEED:

#### For Dress For Success:

- new or gently-worn ladies' professional suits or separates (dry-cleaned)

- blouses and shells (dry-cleaned or laundered)
- jewelry and other accessories
- new pantyhose
- scarves
- handbags
- new or gently-worn, close-toed professional shoes

#### For Arc of the Capital Area:

- Gently used Children, Women, and Men's clothing of all sizes

### WHERE TO DONATE:

Your donations can be dropped off during normal business hours at the **Steiner Ranch Welcome Center; Steiner Ranch Community Association offices; 4 Sons' Quality Cleaners** at 4300 N. Quinlan Park; or at **Cups and Cones**.

Please clearly mark which charity your items are designated for.

Please ensure that your donations for Dress For Success have been dry-cleaned and any repairs have been made prior to drop-off.

**4 Sons' Quality Cleaners is offering a special price for cleaning services of \$2 per suit or item received for donation at their Quinlan Park location.**

If you require assistance or pick up please contact us, and we will do our best to accommodate your needs.

We are also working with Arc of the Capital to co-ordinate a neighborhood-wide curbside pick-up and onsite Donation Truck to follow the Steiner Ranch Garage Sale on April 18th.

For more information or assistance please contact: Tom or Cathy Henry at [tomcathenry@gmail.com](mailto:tomcathenry@gmail.com) OR Jennifer Swenson at [jenniferswen@netscape.net](mailto:jenniferswen@netscape.net)

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Steiner Ranch HOA Expires 9/30/09



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**OIL CHANGE FILTER & LUBE**

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Steiner Ranch HOA

Expires 9/30/09



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Steiner Ranch HOA

Expires 9/30/09



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Steiner Ranch HOA Expires 9/30/09



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Steiner Ranch HOA Expires 9/30/09

# Stork Report **in** Steiner



baby girl

Elizabeth Cecilia

Arrived:  
January 27, 2009  
12:26 p.m.  
7 lb. 7 oz.  
19 3/4 inches

Proud parents:  
Nathaniel and Ulrike Mayfield

baby boy

Brian James

Arrived:  
January 7, 2009  
at 10:32 p.m.  
7 lb. 12 oz.  
21 inches

Proud parents:  
Shair And Robert Butler



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# Around Steiner

## Steiner Ranch Flag Football

*Photos Courtesy of Stacy Granger*



Occasionally you see a group of Steiner Ranch residents playing flag football at Canyon Ridge Middle School. The most recent game took place on Super Bowl Sunday. We had a great turnout and played with three teams of seven. Steiner Ranch resident Adrian LeBlanc organizes the games on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Super Bowl Sunday, as well as other weekends throughout the year.





# Steiner Ranch Orthodontics

4302 Quinlan Park Road

(Across from the Welcome Center in the Vista Ridge Center)

**266 8585**

Come see the difference a Board Certified Orthodontist can provide. Dr. James Waters graduated at the top of his class from the University of Texas Dental School in San Antonio in 1996. He served a one year residency at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and practiced for two years as a General Dentist in Oregon. Realizing the complexities of Orthodontics, he sought to pursue ADA accredited advanced specialty education prior to offering this service to the public. As all specialists are required, Dr. Waters left his General Dentistry practice to attend a 30 month Post-Doctorate University. After graduating Valedictorian from the prestigious Saint Louis University Orthodontic Program with a Master's degree in Orthodontics, Dr. Waters moved to Austin in 2001 and joined the nationally recognized practice of orthodontist Dr. Robert Kaviëff who pioneered many early treatment techniques and appliances over his 40+ years in practice. Dr. Waters worked side by side with Dr. Kaviëff over the next year as he gained further invaluable experience from reviewing hundreds of cases and he learned techniques known only to those who have been in the specialty field for a lifetime. After retirement, Dr. Kaviëff passed the torch to Dr. Waters who is pleased to open his new office to his neighbors in Steiner Ranch.

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# Around Steiner

## Lake Travis Community Library

*Submitted by Sandy Price, PR Chair for Friends of the Lake Travis Community Library*

On Saturday, March 7 from 8am – 1pm The Friends of the Lake Travis Community Library will have their used book sale at the Lakeway Activity Center. Fill a plastic grocery bag with non-fiction, how-to-books, cookbooks, childrens books, along with a wide selection of fiction for only \$7.00. All proceeds go to the Friends of the Lake Travis Community Library.

The Lakeway Activity Center is located at 105 Cross Creek in Lakeway.

### NEW BOOK CLUBS AT THE LAKE TRAVIS COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Looking for a new and fun way to start 2009? Join us for one of our two new Book Clubs or Play Reading group now forming at Lake Travis Community Library.

1. The Classics Book Club will meet during the day, details forthcoming.
2. "Glass of Wine" Book Club. This group will meet once a month at Wine Traders from 7pm-9pm, on a Monday yet to be determined. At the first meeting we will choose books for the rest of 2009. Bring your selections at the first meeting.
3. The Play Reading group will choose plays, assign roles and then "read" the plays. Place, times and frequency of meetings are yet to be determined.

Sign up Lists are at the Circulation Desk in the Library and you will be notified of the first meeting in March. The Lake Travis Community Library is located at 2300 Lohman's Spur, Suite 100, Lakeway, 78734. Visit our website at [www.laketravislibrary.org](http://www.laketravislibrary.org).

## Newsletter Article Submissions

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

### Classified Ads

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

**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](mailto:advertising@PEELinc.com).

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**Run the Ranch-** (Continued from Cover Page)

**Beneficiary:** This event is NOT a fundraiser. If however, at the end of the event money is realized, we will donate the proceeds to Camp Nikos, a part of Mission Possible! Austin.

Camp Nikos Info - Recognizing the need for a Christian based camp uniquely directed toward at-risk youth, Mission:Possible! created the Nikos camping ministry. Here, inner-city children who rarely have the opportunity to experience the beauty of God's creation in a natural setting are able to focus on His love for them.

**Health Fair:** A visit to the Health Fair, located in the Community Center, will get you valuable information from a variety of healthcare professionals, fun freebies and a Rudy's breakfast taco. Don't miss it!

**Packet Pick-up:** Packet Pick-up and Late Registration will be located at the Steiner Ranch Town Square Community Center at the following times:

Friday, 3/6 5:00pm to 8:00pm

Saturday, 3/7 7:00am to 8:00am

**Thanks to our Sponsors:** Hill Country Bible Church

**Contact:** Race and Sponsorship: Heather Van Stavern at [runtheranch@austin.rr.com](mailto:runtheranch@austin.rr.com)  
Health Fair: Suzanne Buchner at [suzannebuchner@yahoo.com](mailto:suzannebuchner@yahoo.com).



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## Vandergrift High School

Opening Fall, 2009



### Jeremy Spicer Announced as Vandergrift High School Band Director

Dear Vandergrift Parents and Students,

I am pleased to announce that Mr. Jeremy Spicer has accepted the Vandergrift High School Head Band Director position. Mr. Spicer is the current Symphonic Band, Jazz Ensemble and Marching Director and the Associate Director of Bands at Cedar Park (Texas) High School. He is also the Conductor of the Symphonic Band and the Director of both the Marching and Jazz Ensembles. During his tenure at Cedar Park he has helped lead the Timberwolf Marching band to much success, including placing 4th in the 2008 5A Texas State Marching Band Contest held last November. Additional honors include being recognized as a consistent top 10 finalist at every Bands of America event attended and numerous invitational championships. In 2004, the band was recognized with the Silver Medal at the 5A-State Marching Band Contest. The Symphonic band has been a consistent sweepstakes recipient. Jeremy has been very active in DCI. He began his drum corps career playing mellophone in the Santa Clara Vanguard.

Since his age out year, Mr. Spicer has been a member of the brass staffs of the Santa Clara Vanguard, Boston Crusaders, Southwind, and the Carolina Crown, where he has served in various capacities ranging from Brass Instructor to Assistant Brass Caption Head. Mr. Spicer is active in the United States as a clinician and adjudicator. His professional affiliations include Texas Music Educators Association, Texas Bandmasters Association, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. He lives in Leander with his wife Elizabeth, daughter Coral, and their son, Aiden. Mr. Spicer made the announcement to his CPHS students Friday morning, and later visited the Canyon Ridge Middle School 8th graders. Mr. Spicer will be sending out additional information to the band parents in the next few weeks.

Please join me in congratulating him on joining the Vandergrift family!

### Vandergrift Vipers!

Dear Vandergrift Community,

I am pleased to announce that the future Vandergrift High School students overwhelmingly selected the "Vipers" as the new school mascot. Of the 408 student votes cast during registration, "Vipers" received 50% of the vote. The "Vikings" was a distant second with 96 votes. The "Grizzlies" and "Patriots" split the remaining votes.

Thank you,

Charlie Little, Principal Vandergrift High School

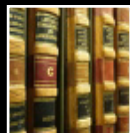


*Vandergrift High School Site Work*

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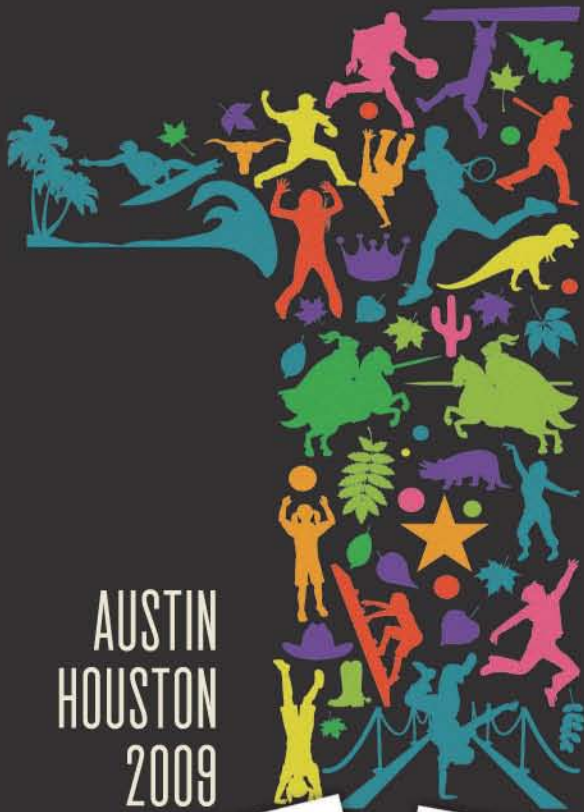
# CAMP STEINER IS COMING

## KIDVENTURE

Kidventure Camps is Coming to Steiner Ranch  
For Five Weeks of Summer Fun and Memories

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## Steiner Ranch History Corner

*Submitted by Rich Keith*



Cowden Drive in Steiner Ranch is named after William Henry Cowden (1853-1933), a famous cattleman. He was the oldest son and second of twelve children. He grew up in Palo Pinto County, where his parents moved in 1855 to establish a ranch. He helped look after the domestic stock from the time he was a small boy and later assisted his father as a cowboy on the range and trail. His formal education was limited to attending a rural school during the winter months of his early youth. By 1875 he had started his own operation on Walnut Creek in Palo Pinto County with a herd of between seventy-five and 100 head. In 1879 he took 700 cattle belonging to him and his father to Paint Creek in Haskell County for a year.

In 1880 he married Mary Salvage, daughter of Benjamin Salvage, a newspaper printer

from Rome, Georgia. After Ben Salvage's death his widow married Alonzo Edwards. The Cowdens purchased 100 head and the JAL-brand from him in 1882. Will and Mary Cowden had eleven children, two of whom died in infancy. Cowden and his brothers, George Edgar and John Motherwell Cowden, ranged their cattle on the Double Mountain Fork of the Brazos in Kent County for a year and then trailed them through Midland to the White Sand Hills, NM range. By 1885 they had established their JAL ranch, with headquarters in NM and business offices in Midland. There they selected a more suitable site on Monument Draw, where grass was more abundant, and dug wells, over which they placed windmills. By then they had between 6,000 and 7,000 cattle. They built a three-room adobe ranch house on the draw by the end of 1886 and set up business headquarters in Midland, then

the nearest shipping point on the Texas and Pacific line.

For 25 years the Cowden Cattle Company operated the JAL ranch, which at its peak covered one-fourth of Lea County, New Mexico, and portions of adjacent Texas counties. At first, only the three elder Cowden brothers and two brothers-in-law made up the firm, but in time it came to include the younger brothers, Liddon, Rorie, and Eugene Cowden. Not until 1895 did the Cowdens utilize barbed wire; then they fenced over 300 sections. They kept no line camps at first, paid no lease on their grass, and owned none of their JAL range, although they later bought forty acres around their wells. Over the years the JAL herd multiplied to some 40,000 head and eventually necessitated line camps at various watering places.

*(Continued on Page 15)*

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# WHITEGLOVE HOUSE CALL HEALTH

### Steiner Ranch History Corner- (Continued from Page 14)

After the turn of the century the influx of homesteaders into Lea County resulted in the rapid reduction of the JAL range. In 1912, after New Mexico became a state, John M. Cowden bought the interests of his brothers and continued to operate the ranch from the headquarters in Midland until all of the land was sold. The town of Jal, New Mexico, was named for the Cowdens' brand. The other Cowden brothers became independent ranchers and businessmen; William H. Cowden, in particular, owned ranchland in Crane County and later in Frio County.

In 1890 Will Cowden helped found the First National Bank of Midland and was installed as its president, a position he retained for thirty-six years. He remained involved in the JAL venture until 1892, when he sold his interest to his brothers. The following year, he stocked a ranch with 2,000 steers in the Creek Nation of the Indian Territory. He also bought forty sections in Andrews County, which he fenced and stocked with 400 steers, and 60,000 acres of property in Crane County, which he operated with his sons. In 1904 he bought another ranch in Frio County.

Throughout his active years as a banker and independent rancher, Cowden maintained his family home in Midland, where he resided until his retirement from the bank in 1926. At that time he and his wife moved to San Antonio, where he resided until his death, on July 20, 1933.

*Sources: Cox, Historical Record of the Cattle Industry, 1959; Ford, ed., Texas Cattle Brands (1936); Hinshaw, Lea, New Mexico's Last Frontier (1976); TSHA Online.*

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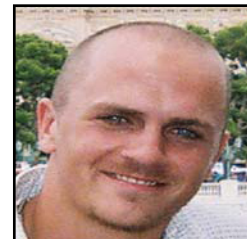
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## HILL COUNTRY RIDE FOR AIDS

WHAT MOVES YOU? • REGISTER NOW • [HILLCOUNTRYRIDE.ORG](http://HILLCOUNTRYRIDE.ORG)

### Hill Country Ride:

*Get out, get fit  
and make a difference!*

*By Lori Barrett*

Ever thought about riding your bicycle to get rolling on those New Year's Resolutions? Considered doing a charity ride to give yourself a goal, and a group of people to ride with? The Hill Country Ride for AIDS, coming up April 25th, was listed one of the 10 best rides in Texas by Austin Monthly, and is registering riders and teams for the 2009 ride!

With routes of 10, 45, 65 and 100 miles, staging just outside of Austin, the Hill Country Ride has a route for everyone. Get the whole family involved! Kids age 8 and up can ride with a parent or guardian who is also registered to ride, and children of all ages are welcome at the Kids' Adventure, a festive and activity-filled area. Expanding for 2009, the Kids' Adventure will have a bouncy house, obstacle courses and a variety of activity areas, including hat-making and bike part art stations.

Many riders join the Hill Country Ride because they've heard about the great people involved, and the crucial services it supports. Some riders join because they want their charitable donations to stay local to Texas. Still others join because, hey, it's cheaper than a gym membership, and what better way to get fit, than rolling through the beautiful Texas Hill Country? Throw in free, fully-supported training rides, and you even have a workout plan for the first few months of the year.

*(Continued on Page 19)*



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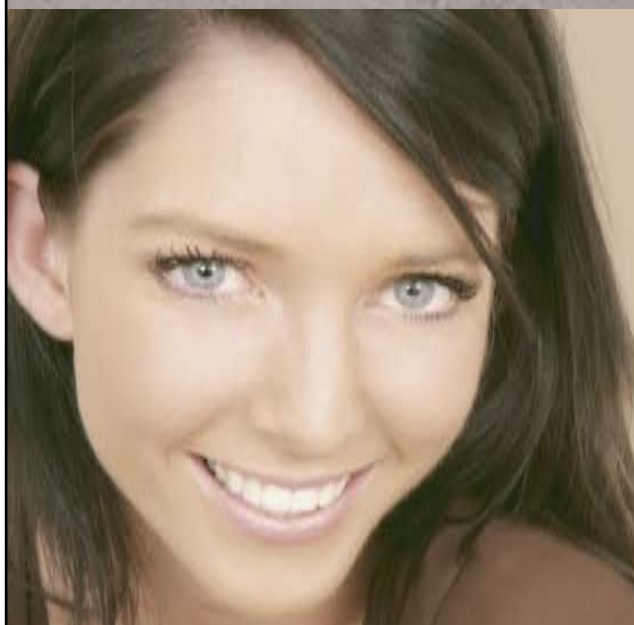
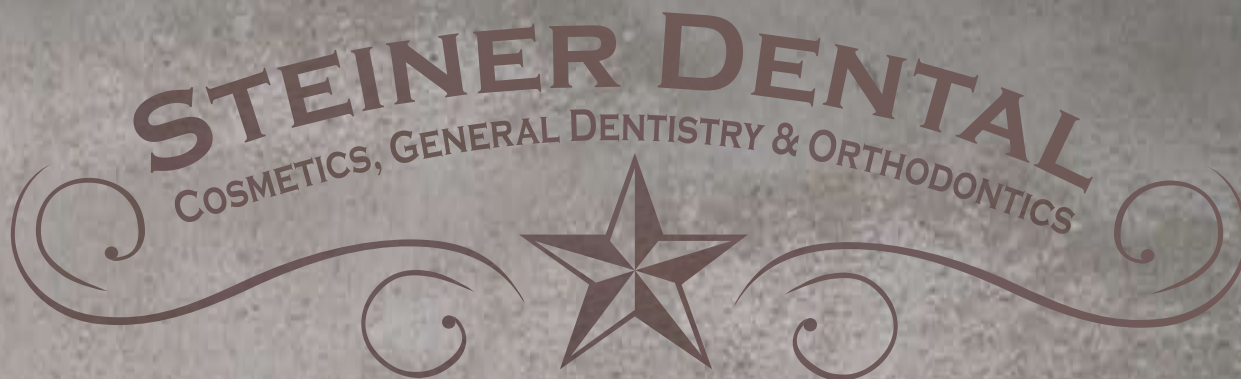
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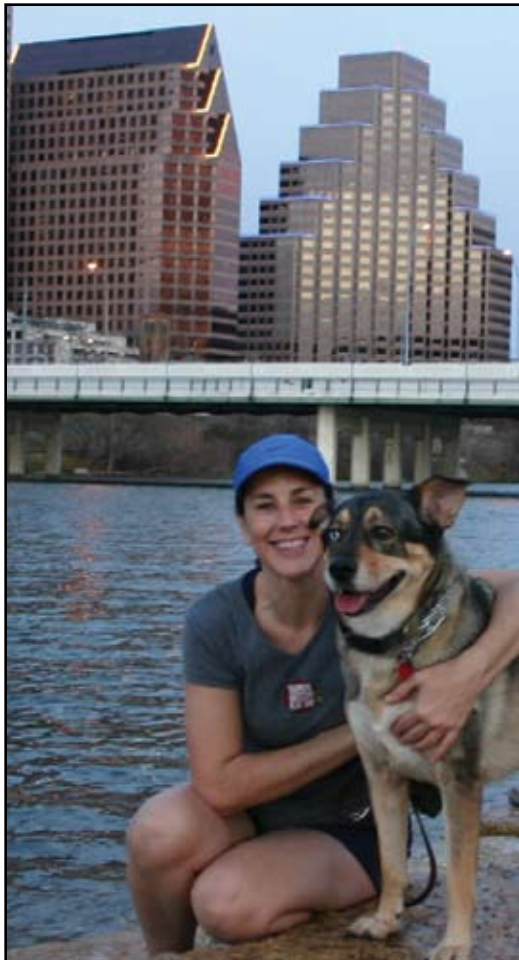
*Children are our greatest treasures, and we're creating a threat to their safety by parking on the streets and by speeding through Steiner Ranch.*

## **SPEEDING IN STEINER RANCH PARKING ON THE STREET**

Most homeowners have some space in their garage reserved for storage – in some cases most of the garage, thereby not leaving enough room for their vehicles. Consequently, many owners park their vehicles on the street making it difficult for others to pass and creating hazardous conditions for the children.

Although we're all anxious to get home to be with our families, speeding and reckless driving is against the law and endangers everyone. Steiner Ranch is a family oriented community with many children; for that reason before you speed or park on the street, please consider their well-being. Also, children playing in the street can unknowingly create a dangerous situation, especially on heavily traveled streets; the driver may not see the child, especially in the evening or after dark.

We all know that children have a tendency to move about impulsively and may inadvertently run into the street. Please don't let a tragedy happen before parking your vehicle off the street or obeying the speed limit. For the benefit of all the residents and children, and the overall appearance of your neighborhood, please do not park on the street. Make accommodations in your garage or driveway for your vehicles and keep your streets clear and safe for all and please, **DO NOT SPEED IN STEINER RANCH.**



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## 7th Annual Cedar Park Kids Triathlon

*Submitted by Rob Alspaugh, 1st VP/Race Director*

### Event Information

This triathlon is a USAT sanctioned event. The purpose of the Cedar Park Kid's Triathlon is to offer kids between the ages of 7 and 15 the opportunity to experience a multi-sport event in a safe and positive environment. The age you turn during the calendar year of 2009 is the age group in which you will compete in. While competition is always part of any race, it is not the primary focus of this race. The main focus of this event is for the kids, their families and the community to have FUN! The event will take place at the Elizabeth Milburn Park in the City of Cedar Park, located at 1901 Sunchase on Sunday, April 26th, starting at 8:00 AM.

### Distance

Juniors (7-10): 100m - Swim / 3 mile - Bike / 1k (.6 miles) - Run  
Seniors (11-15): 200m - Swim / 6 mile - Bike / 2k (1.2 miles) - Run

### Age Groups

Individuals: 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

Relays: Juniors (7-10), Seniors (11-15)

Relays can be all male, all female, or co-ed.

### Awards

Every athlete will receive a finisher medal. Early registration participants will receive a FREE T-shirt. Trophies will be given for 1st through 3rd places per age group for boys and girls. Medals will be given for 1st through 3rd places for junior and senior relays.

- Web Site for Triathlon:
- [www.leaguelineup.com/cptri](http://www.leaguelineup.com/cptri)
- Race Director: Rob Alspaugh ([robalspaugh@yahoo.com](mailto:robalspaugh@yahoo.com))
- 512-733-2490
- [www.cedarparkswimming.org](http://www.cedarparkswimming.org)

### Hill Country Ride (Continued from Page 16)

Add all these up, and you have a strong argument that the Hill Country Ride for AIDS is one of the best charity bike rides around! With a moderate-sized group of 500 or so participants, ride organizers are able to treat riders like their guests, offering complimentary massage and chiropractic work after the ride is finished. Also compelling is the beautiful start/finish site of Krause's Springs, listed as one of the most beautiful swimming holes in the state by TexasOutside.com. Finish enjoying the sprawling vistas of the ride, take a dip and relax spring-side before enjoying a quick massage, while supper is being laid out for all of the riders.

Now in its 10th year, the Hill Country Ride has raised over 3 million dollars for HIV/AIDS service organizations in central Texas, providing life-saving support to our central Texas neighbors. Beyond that, the Hill Country Ride is a remarkable event that offers participants an opportunity to challenge themselves, make a difference in our community and experience some of the most beautiful countryside in Texas. Contact the ride office with any questions: 512.371.RIDE (7433) or [info@HillCountryRide.org](mailto:info@HillCountryRide.org). Register yourself, your family or your Neighborhood Association Team now: [HillCountryRide.org](http://HillCountryRide.org). See you at the Start line!

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## Water Usage Drop Shows Plant Not Needed

*Submitted by Connie Ripley*

The chain-link fence slowly encircles the proposed site of Austin's new water treatment plant (WTP#4) completely oblivious to how well the city's conservation program is working.

The year-old conservation program, as an infant, produced better than desired results for the city last year. The city needs to give conservation a chance before saddling the Austin rate payers with much higher rates during tough economic times and forever changing the face of the lake area with two deep water intakes (Austin's and BCRUA's) and a water treatment plant.

2008 was the first year Austin made significant steps toward water conservation, reuse and eliminating water waste. Austin citizens responded by reducing peak summer water use by more than 20 million gallons per day (MGD) over our all time record peak day use of 240.3 MGD in the summer of 2001. This far exceeded the Council approved goal of reducing peak day demands by one percent per year.

The entire situation is even more remarkable because the 2008 summer was one of the hottest, driest on record and the Austin population increased about 100,000 from 2001 to 2008. More people plus hotter, drier weather resulted in less peak day demand???

The chain-link fence is only the beginning of an enormous \$500 million project to install a deep water intake near the bottom of Lake Travis, tunnel it through a pump station, and then tunnel it again to the 92 acre site at Bullick Hollow and RR 620 that is currently being fenced. Austin water rate payers will foot the bill in higher water bills.

In a recent letter sent to the Austin City Council by numerous concerned area non-profits, "by the Austin Water Utility's own estimate we save \$14.3 million dollars every year WTP4 is postponed."

Conservation is working. The city can save \$14.3 million a year by postponing the proposed project. The citizens of Austin are already suffering tough economic times.

And there's more...

The entire structure will forever change the face of that area of Lake Travis. Enormous engines, flood lights, chemical buildings, a large electrical complex with huge electric poles and much, much more will completely transform the 92 acre site at RR 620 and Bullick Hollow/2222 into what some might consider a huge "industrial" complex. Add the pump stations each about the size of Walgreens on Bullick Hollow with their engines, flood lights and other security measures and you have will have noise and buildings where serene views—and Golden-Cheeked Warblers—used to be.

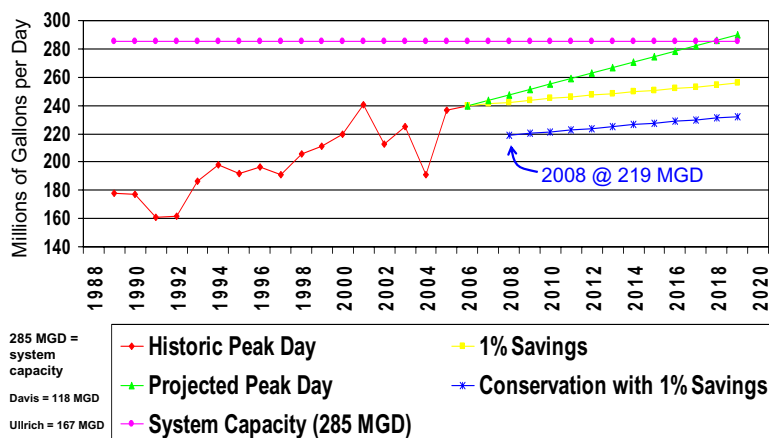
And more still...

Spending \$500 million, defacing the scenic Lake Travis views and still the City of Austin will have only one source of water—the drought/flood-prone Colorado. Central Texas is in an Exceptional Drought. If this weather pattern continues, Lake Travis could plunge to historically low levels.

The city needs to give conservation a chance. Postponing site preparations both at the proposed treatment plant site and at the proposed pump station site will not only save rate payers a lot of money. It will also save our water and lifestyle.

### Peak-Day Demand Projections with Task Force Goal 1% (~2.5 MGD) Per Year Savings

Reducing Peak Day Demand by 1%





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***Use a Full Service Wash***

**Yearly:**

***Detail Your Vehicle***



## Local Program Can Help If Your Child's Development is Behind

By Jennifer Vu

If you are a parent of an infant or toddler, birth to 36 months, and have questions about how your child is growing or developing, why wait? ECI (Early Childhood Intervention) is here to help!

ECI is a statewide program that has helped Texas babies and toddlers for more than 25 years. We partner with families to work together as a team and offer services where your child lives, learns and plays. Early is best when you have concerns about your child's development and income does not determine eligibility for services. ECI professionals have expertise in working with babies, toddlers and their families. Licensed and/or credentialed specialties include: Early Intervention Specialists, Speech and Language Pathologists, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Registered Dietitians, Hearing and Vision Specialists and Social Workers.

### Red Flags

Red flags are a way to track your infant or toddler's development and help identify if he is unable to do something most children already can. Below is a list of behaviors or red flags that can keep your child from learning. Appearance of red flags is not a cause for alarm, but a call to action. If they happen often, call your local ECI program or your child's pediatrician.



### Baby

- Cannot bend arms or legs
- Does not smile, move or look at you when you talk or play with her
- Does not want to be held
- Does not make sounds by 3 months
- Does not babble by 6-9 months

### Toddler

- Has tantrums that last 20 minutes or longer
- Breaks things on purpose
- Hurts or bites other people
- Does respond to her name by 12 months
- Does not play appropriately with toys

- Flaps hands, rocks or sways over and over
- Does not point at objects he wants or use gestures by 12 months
- Has no words by 18 months
- Does not follow simple or familiar directions by 18 months
- Does not engage in pretend play by 24 months

### Any Age

- Is fussy or cries a lot, even when not tired or hungry
- Has trouble falling asleep or staying asleep
- Does not notice people
- Is unhappy most of the time
- Any loss of speech, babbling, or social skills (i.e., eye contact)
- Becomes easily and consistently upset with change in routine or when moving from one activity to another

ECI offers free developmental screenings and evaluations. Call your local program, Infant Parent Program ECI, at (512) 472-3142 to request more information or to refer your child for a screening or evaluation.

To search online, visit DARS/ECI website at [www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis](http://www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis).



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*C.A.S.T. for Kids  
needs boats, captains  
for disabled, disadvantaged  
youth fishing day April 25*

The fourth annual Catch a Special Thrill (C.A.S.T.) needs captains and boats to help create a once-in-a-lifetime fishing event for disabled and disadvantaged children on Saturday, April 25, at Lake Bastrop's North Shore Park from 7 a.m. until 1 p.m.

In addition to the rewarding experience of giving special-needs children the chance to enjoy the sport of fishing and the outdoors, volunteers will receive a free breakfast and lunch.

LCRA, Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation are jointly sponsoring the event, which was created 17 years ago by the national C.A.S.T. for Kids Foundation.

The C.A.S.T. for Kids Foundation was formed to join volunteers who love to fish with disabled and disadvantaged children for a day of fishing in the outdoors. The C.A.S.T. for Kids event was designed to create an environment whereby both children and adults could benefit, each taking from the day their own lessons. Children and adults could leave their problems on shore and share a day of fun on the water.

Today, the C.A.S.T. for Kids Foundation hosts about 50 such events in 22 states to help increase awareness of disabled and disadvantaged children in our communities. It also teaches appreciation for natural resources. To learn more about the foundation and its programs, go to [www.castforkids.org](http://www.castforkids.org).

To volunteer your fishing, pontoon, bass or ski boat for the event, call Laurel Srp at (512) 303-5073, Ext. 8037, or send e-mail to [laurel.srp@lcra.org](mailto:laurel.srp@lcra.org).

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## COMMUNITY GROUPS

### WAYS TO BECOME INVOLVED IN STEINER RANCH

#### Steiner With Out Kids Social Group (SWOK)

*Submitted by Paula Kaisner*

Did you know there is a social group in Steiner called Steiner w/o Kids (SWOK). We have been established since January 2006 and have had many couples join who've made new friendships. Whether you've never had kids or you have grown children you are welcome to join this fun social group. We get together once a month at someone's home in Steiner for food and drinks along with making new friends and/or enjoying old friends! It's a great way to meet other couples and form new relationships with people who also don't have children at home. For more information please email Paula Kaisner at [paula@kaisner.org](mailto:paula@kaisner.org)

#### Girl Scout Registration is Open

*Submitted by Carmen Tucker*

Girl Scouts of Central Texas registration is open year-round to girls in grades K-12. Now is the perfect time to register in order to take advantage of summer experiences like overnight camp, robotics day camp, backpacking trips and more. Registration is \$10 per year and girls can choose to join a troop or participate as individuals.

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place. Through fun, informal and educational experiences girls can discover their potential, connect with others and take action to make the world a better place. Girl Scouts provides a wide variety of experiences for interests such as the arts, science, technology, nature, athletics, community service, health, leadership and more. To learn more or to register, contact Carmen Tucker at [CarmenT@gscctx.org](mailto:CarmenT@gscctx.org) or (512) 490-2360. Discover Girl Scouts online at [www.gscctx.org](http://www.gscctx.org).



#### Steiner Ranch Community Groups & Organizations

*Are you a member of a community group or organization here in Steiner? Email the information about your group to [thestar@peelinc.com](mailto:thestar@peelinc.com) and it will be included in each issue. Feel free to submit post event write-ups and photos.*

#### Pack 203

*Welcome all Steiner Ranch Boys!!  
Grades 1st-5th*

Do you know what Cub Scouts and Scouting is all about? Pack 203 at LWBE does fun things with fellow scouting friends every month? We get together as a PACK to wear our cool uniforms, show off our scout spirit, and participate in exciting scouting activities. As a cub scout, you will get to go camping with your family, shoot BB guns, sleep over on a real Naval Aircraft Carrier and do archery! We play all kinds of sports and build cool race cars and spaceships to race. Do you want to learn the secret scouting code and earn really cool patches? Do you want to learn more about nature and your community? Then, come find out how enriching being a Cub Scout can be!

Contact Kim Skelton for more information at [nelson2930@austin.rr.com](mailto:nelson2930@austin.rr.com)



#### Steiner TechNet Wants You!

*Submitted by David Dyke*

If you work in technology and live in Steiner Ranch, we have a new community for you. This includes a quarterly social mixer in Steiner with opportunities to meet new neighbors, discuss business issues, find job opportunities and share best practice ideas, etc.

For more information, email David Dyke at [ddyke@i-hire.com](mailto:ddyke@i-hire.com) and join LinkedIn Groups Steiner TechNet.

#### New Mothers' Support Group

Come join other new moms (and babies) at the new Mothers' Support Group! It's a time to share the joys and frustrations of being a new mother and a good reason for getting out of the house.

Motherhood is a tough job but we know you can do it! If you need a little advice, an ear to vent to, or a little friendly conversation then this group is the perfect place for you.

The new mothers' support group is open to all new moms with babies up to 1 year old. There is no sign up or registration required and the group is free to attend.

We meet weekly from 9:30am - 11:00am Mondays beginning January 12th at the Towne Square Community Center, 12550 Country Trails Lane.



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## Financial Corner

*Submitted by Rich Keith*

### Rollover your 401(k)?

You have several choices when you retire or change jobs. You can move your assets into an IRA, roll your assets to a plan with your current employer, keep your assets in your former employer's plan, or take your distribution in cash (withdrawal penalties may apply).

Simplifying your finances is an important part of a sound financial strategy. By bringing your old 401(k)s and IRAs together, you can manage your retirement savings more efficiently. You can first decide if a rollover is right for you by determining if consolidating your retirement savings into an IRA or 401(k) makes sense, in light of your specific needs and situation.

### Consolidate in an IRA if you want:<sup>1</sup>

- A more complete view of your financial picture, making it easier to maintain appropriate asset allocation
- Freedom from restrictions that may be present in your workplace savings plan
- Access to a full range of mutual funds, stocks, bonds, CDs, and other investments
- The ability to withdraw penalty-free for a first-time home purchase or qualified education expenses
- More flexible distribution options for beneficiaries

### Consolidate in a workplace savings plan (e.g., 401(k) plan) with your current employer if you:<sup>1</sup>

- Need additional asset protection from creditors
- Will need to take a loan from this plan (if allowed by your employer)
- Are over age 70½ and want to defer your required distributions
- Invest in specially-priced or custom investment options or use managed money services in your plan (and the benefits of these options outweigh those of an IRA)

### Leave your assets in your former employer's plan if you:<sup>1</sup>

- Stopped working for that employer by at least age 55 and are not yet 59½, need to withdraw funds for an immediate need, and don't want to incur an early withdrawal penalty
- Take advantage of specially-priced or custom investment options or managed money services in your plan (and the benefits of these options outweigh those of an IRA)

### "Cashing Out" of a 401(k)

Depending on your plan and your situation, you may choose to

*(Continued on Page 27)*

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**Financial Corner-** (Continued from Pg 26)

take the money out of your 401(k) plan. If you cash out, you will gain immediate access to your money, which may suit your needs if you face an unexpected hardship. However, before age 59½, a 10% withdrawal penalty may apply, and your cash distribution will be subject to state and federal taxes. Of course, your money will also no longer have the potential to continue to grow tax-deferred.

Next step: Check with your financial professional to help you make the right choices for your specific situation. Sources: Fidelity Investments, Financial Industry Regulatory Authority. Note 1: You should also consider the impact of Net Unrealized Appreciation (NUA) if you hold company stock in your workplace savings account.

## 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](mailto:Elicia@AustinRelocationResource.com) for more information or visit [www.BNIAustin.com](http://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](mailto:Amy@Lending360.net) or visit [www.BNIAustin.com](http://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 wish 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 – 8:30am. 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](mailto:dscarborough5@austin.rr.com), 512-589-3678.



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## Alternatives to Microsoft Office

Submitted by Laurie Scott

Anyone who works in an office and with a computer probably has Microsoft Office installed on it. Word, PowerPoint and Excel are found in almost every corporate environment. But when it comes time to buy software for your home computer, most people don't realize there are free and low-cost alternatives.

To start, Microsoft does offer an Office 2007 "Home and Student" edition that I've seen online for as low as \$80. This edition includes Word, PowerPoint, Excel and OneNote, but not Outlook, which is what many Office users expect with their "office" suite.

The most popular free option is probably Sun's Open Office 3 (available at [www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org)). It has powerful word processing, presentation and spreadsheet programs that are compatible with Microsoft Office, and also includes a graphics program and database (but again, no e-mail program.)

Another free alternative is a surprising name from the past. Lotus (owned by IBM) has resurrected its Symphony suite and is closer to Open Office than Microsoft Office. Its programs are IBM Lotus Symphony Documents, IBM Lotus Symphony Presentations and IBM Lotus Symphony Spreadsheets and also offer Microsoft Office compatibility.

Google has recently entered the office application fray with their own product (which are still in "beta" – a Google trademark), Google Docs. It offers Microsoft Office compatibility for Word and Excel with a twist, everything is stored online. You can access and share your files with anyone from anywhere. Some consider this the future, known as "cloud computing" (the internet is the cloud in computer network diagrams.)

Corel offers an \$89 alternative that is compatible with Office Word, PowerPoint and Excel, but includes VideoStudio LE for editing your home videos, and MediaOne SE for enhancing and organizing your photos.

At the time of this writing, the most popular (non-Microsoft) email client, Eudora is undergoing a rewrite but the older versions are still available at [www.eudora.com](http://www.eudora.com). If you're already using hotmail, yahoo mail, Gmail, or your Internet Service Provider's (ISP) web-based mail, then you don't need an e-mail client to run on your computer anyway.

So don't automatically feel like you have to fork out a couple hundred dollars just to have Office functionality at home. There are affordable and even FREE alternatives out there for you.

*Happy Computing!*



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<b>AUTO LOANS</b> <b>4.75%</b> <b>5.25%</b> <small>UP TO 66 MONTHS      72 MONTHS</small>		<b>MONEY MARKET</b> <b>2.12%</b> <b>2.38%</b> <b>2.58%</b> <small>\$25,000 to \$74,999      \$75,000 to \$124,999      \$125,000 and ABOVE</small>	
<b>CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT Regular<sup>1</sup></b> <b>2.73%</b> <b>2.93%</b> <b>3.19%</b> <small>6 MONTHS      12 MONTHS      24 MONTHS</small>		<b>CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT Jumbo<sup>2</sup></b> <b>2.83%</b> <b>3.03%</b> <b>3.34%</b> <small>6 MONTHS      12 MONTHS      24 MONTHS</small>	

**ATFCU 68th Annual Meeting**

**Tuesday, March 24, 2009**

**The Crockett Center**

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<sup>1</sup>Annual Percentage Rate. All rates are expressed "as low as". Actual rate may vary depending on credit qualifications. <sup>2</sup>Austin Telco will pay all standard closing costs on Home Equity loans below \$100k. Additional non-standard fees will be the responsibility of the member. <sup>3</sup>Rate applies to 1st lien commercial real estate loans with a loan to value of 80% or less; construction/development loan rates/terms may be different. No Pre-payment penalty. <sup>4</sup>Annual Percentage Yield. Penalties for early withdrawal may apply. <sup>5</sup>Regular - A minimum deposit of \$1000 is required. <sup>6</sup>Jumbo - A minimum deposit of \$95000 is required. All APRs, APVs and terms are subject to change without notice. Please call for details. This credit union is federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration.



## Tax Tips

Submitted by John Harris

Its tax time and there are many new tax provisions relating to your 2008 return. Let me go over just a few of these.

1. For the first time, you can deduct up to \$1000.00 of your real estate taxes even if you do not itemize your deductions.
2. There is another huge change in casualty losses. Having come from Florida, I am very familiar with hurricane losses. For the first time, you can deduct a casualty loss in federally declared disaster areas, even if you do not itemize, and if you do, it is not subject to the previous 10% of adjusted gross income threshold. In other words, if you had damage from hurricane Ike, and most people had some damage or loss, you may get a tax deduction for your loss. These losses may include anything from roof and fence damage to loss of food in your freezer.
3. You may also qualify for last year's stimulus rebate check this year, even if you did not qualify last year. (A note on this, last year's check is NOT taxable this year, contrary to some rumors I have heard.)
4. They also raised the IRA contribution limit to \$5000.00, \$6000.00 if you are 50 years of age or older. I know many people lost much of their retirement values in 2008, but it is still a good idea to invest in your retirement accounts. You may want to consider investing in a more conservative investment, but you still should invest! Talk to your financial advisor.
5. If you own your own business, it is still not too late to set up a SEP retirement plan for your business and get a deduction up to \$46,000.00 for 2008.
6. Lastly, the standard mileage rate for 2008 is broken down into two parts. From January 1 to June 30, it is 50.5 cents per mile and 58.5 cents per mile driven during the rest of 2008.

## BUSINESS CLASSIFIEDS

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## Free Educational Seminars in Personal Finance

Submitted by Rich Keith

- ABCs of Talking to Your Kids About Money, March 12 (for parents) Free book.
- ABCs of Making Money for Teens, March 25 (for teens) Free book.
- Money 101 for your 401(k), March 26
- Women and Finance, April 2
- College Education Funding, April 16
- New Retirement Strategies, May 14
- Estate Planning and Long Term Care - May 21

All seminars are free, educational and with no obligation. Seminars are held in Steiner Ranch. To RSVP contact [rkeith@primerica.com](mailto:rkeith@primerica.com) Rich Keith (512) 266-8498.

### Classified Ads

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

**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](mailto:advertising@PEELinc.com).

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# Calendar of Events

## MARCH 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Star's Returning Families Registration (Mar 1 - 14)	2 Free Yoga Girl's Night Out	3 Facility Committee Meeting	4	5 VIN Etching	6	7 Run the Ranch
8	9 Free Yoga	10 Social Committee Meeting	11 FREE Mary Kay Facials	12 ABC's of Kids and Money	13 Cool Computing Tips & Tricks	14 How to Green a Garden
15	16 Free Yoga Spring Break Sportball Camp	17 Spring Break Sportball Camp	18 Spring Break Sportball Camp	19 Adult Acne Spring Break Sportball Camp	20 Spring Break Sportball Camp	21
22	23 Free Yoga	24 Identity Theft Prevention	25	26 SRROA Board Meeting Money 101	27 Free Scrapbooking	28 Pets Day in the Park
29	30 Career Transitions Free Yoga	31 SRMA Board Meeting Ideal Weight	<b>ANNOUNCE YOUR EVENT</b> <i>Are you a member of a community group or organization here in Steiner? Email the information about your group's event to thestar@peelinc.com and it will be included on the calendar.</i>			

## APRIL 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Free Yoga	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 Free Yoga Social Committee Meeting	14	15	16	17	18 Spring Garage Sale
19	20 Free Yoga	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 Free Yoga	28 SRMA Board Meeting	29	30 SRROA Board Meeting		

# Cool Computing Tips & Tricks

A FREE and fun event by Laurie Scott of Tek-Chic Systems

**Friday March 13<sup>th</sup>**

## Topics Include:

- Email Scams
- Protecting Yourself From Virus-Ridden Web Sites
- Upgrade or Replace? Build or Buy? Mac or PC?
- Dangers of Wireless Networking
- Online Shopping and Doing it Safely
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- Windows Tricks and Shortcuts
- Steiner Ranch Web Resources



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# News You Can Use

## Need More Space? Reclaim the Space You Already Own

Submitted by Heather Bland-Ho

Many of us might be feeling the urge for more space. In the current economy, however, moving out or “up” might not be an option. But waiting out the housing downturn doesn’t mean you need to put up with spaces that are stressing you out or bringing you down... RECLAIM THE SPACE YOU ALREADY HAVE AND FALL IN LOVE AGAIN with the home you already own!

Follow these simple steps to make your home work harder to meet your needs:

1. **Prioritize:** What areas bug you the most? What are your trouble spots? From that list, which area, when improved, would have the biggest impact on your life?
2. **Look with an Outsider’s Eyes:** Pretend you’re a stranger coming into the house- what do you notice? You can even ask a friend to help with this part... they will notice piles or unnecessary objects better and faster than you will.
3. **Systematize:** What works and what doesn’t work in the space? Create systems to help alleviate problems, such as putting baskets to corral errant shoes near a doorway or designating a home for newspapers and magazines that are always lying around.
4. **Organize:** Get rid of things that you no longer need, are broken or don’t serve a purpose. Keep only what you need, think to be

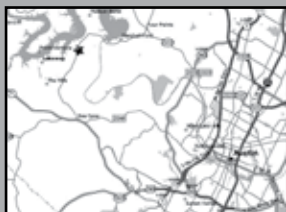
beautiful or love. Sort and purge to lighten up and focus on what’s really important in life. Do you want to constantly pick hundreds of toys around the house? Or would you rather spend that time playing with your children?

5. **Recognize when you need help:** Often we need another person to give opinions or to help keep the project moving along; enlist a friend or call a professional organizer. For a fraction of the cost of a new home, a professional organizer can help you transform your space and inspire you to do amazing things. I have worked with families to reclaim toyrooms, gamerooms, bedrooms, garages and many other spaces. Recently, one mom was overjoyed to see that her six-year-old daughter sat for two hours playing happily on her own because now she had the space to set up her Littlest Pet Shop “village.” That same sweet girl also told her mom how happy she was to be able to do a cartwheel in her room again without hurting herself!
6. **Realize the gain:** Congratulations- you’ve just made a major improvement to your home! You’ve reclaimed space you already own, without the cost and hassle of relocating. You’ve fallen back in love with your home, saving yourself thousands of dollars.

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## March Events at the Wildflower Center

**Artists & Artisans Festival:** 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 21 and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday, March 22 Favorite artists return and new ones appear to exhibit their work in watercolors, metal, wood, ceramics and many other materials. Dalhart Windberg, introduces his annual print benefiting the Wildflower Center, noon to 5 p.m. Saturday. Shou Ping shows her watercolor sculptures and Mary Catherine Gardner, official Wildflower Days™ 2009 artist, signs her print, 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday.

**Sign up for Go Native U:** This is our popular series of how-to gardening classes plus—new this year -- five sustainability classes focused on ways to manage soil, water, plants and materials to improve sustainability. Register at [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org)

**Texas Society of Sculptors Exhibit:** Mar. 3 through May 31. Outdoor works by Texas sculptors on display throughout our gardens.

**Nature Nights, Look to the Stars:** 6 to 9 p.m. Friday, Mar. 6. Join Kyle Fricke of McDonald Observatory for an engaging look into the cosmos. Field telescope viewing. \$1 admission.

**Wildflower Days™ Begin:** The Center is open every day 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. until March 16 until May 31.

**Artists Reception:** 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Mar. 15. Join us to meet the sculptors and members of the Texas Society of Sculptors.

**Shou Ping Exhibit:** March 14 through May 31 This renowned artist creates watercolor paintings of and cuts them to form three-dimensional sculptures. At the McDermott Center.

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## Voter Registration Roll Purged

At the end of January Travis County Voter Registrar removed approximately 35,000 names of voters from the roll of Travis County registered voters in accordance with Texas law. The purge takes place every two years, however the names removed have been in suspense four years – over the course of two federal elections.

The purpose of the purge is to maintain accurate voter records. The names purged today reflect those voters who did not respond to mailed inquiries and whose mailed voter certificates and other correspondence have been returned as undeliverable by the postal service.

If a voter was purged, it does not mean they cannot vote. A voter registration application completed and submitted by the next deadline ensures voting eligibility. The next regularly scheduled election conducted by Travis County is the May 9, 2009 Joint and Special Election. The deadline to register is Thursday, April 9, 2009.

Voters may download a voter registration application and check their voting status at anytime online at [www.traviscountytax.org](http://www.traviscountytax.org). For telephone assistance, contact the tax office at (512) 854 9473. Office hours are 7:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

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## Britt's Book Buzz *A Creative Encounter*

A co-worker told me about *The Shack* (by W.M. Paul Young) as it made such an impression on her father that he bought 10 copies to give to those closest to him. At the time that I wrote this review, my dad would have just turned 65. It has been a little over three months since his death and I believe that he sends messages to me in subtle ways, so I thought I would give this book a read.

In *The Shack*, a father is dealing with the tragic and unresolved death of his daughter and comes face-to-face (literally) with God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit in a non-traditional way. He has the opportunity to question God for the terrible pain he is experiencing. The author's detailed account of the character's encounter is comforting, gentle, loving and refreshing. The book is a welcoming reminder for us individuals, parents, children, husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, friends, neighbors, teachers, and even strangers. As stated in the book, life is "...about relationship and simply sharing life...being open and available to others around us."

The author personalizes God in a way that strips away conventional thought and encourages a deeper faith in a shared relationship with God, who is portrayed in the book as inherently good and loving without expectations. Some key points in the book remind us: You are never alone; You are loved; Life is a journey shared with God; You are wonderful beyond imagination; God communicates with us in many ways.

The book is a quick read and is well written. It tackles many topics, including forgiveness, service to one another, faith and understanding of God. The discussion on forgiveness was particularly enlightening. There are parts of the book that were hard to me to swallow—like why bad things such as this can happen and why God didn't prevent it, but overall it is a rewarding and spiritual experience. And, there is closure and resolve at the end. Amen.

Feel free to comment on this review or your thoughts on the book or suggest a book for me to review at [brittanyjed@hotmail.com](mailto:brittanyjed@hotmail.com).

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# - Kids Stuff-

Section for Kids with news, puzzles, games and more!



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Price Range	As of Feb 9, 2009		Jan 2009
	# For Sale	# Pending	# Sold
	Avg LS / sf Avg DOM	Avg LS / sf Avg DOM	Avg SS / sf Avg DOM
\$200K-\$300K	26 /\$121/47	6/\$108/159	2/\$104/157
\$300K-\$400K	35/\$124/93	2/\$109/17	3/\$102/155
\$400K-\$500K	21/\$143/88	4/\$130/100	0
\$500K-\$600K	17/\$146/131	2/\$137/48	0
\$600K-\$700K	13/\$151/69	1/\$153/26	3/\$142/141
\$700K-\$800K	8/\$167/104	1/\$173/367	2/\$153/101
\$800K-\$900K	7/\$190/69	1/\$159/333	0
\$900K-\$1M	1/\$202/719	0	0
\$1M-\$2M	3/\$241/85	0	0
\$2M and up	2/\$390/161	0	0

\*statistics based on the Austin MLS



**12916 Appaloosa Chase, \$270,000, 1-story**  
2005 Open floor plan, tons of upgrades,  
chef's kitchen, 4 bdrm, 2 bath, large master



**12525 Central Park, \$284,900, Greenbelt**  
Rare 1-story with 3 bdrm, 2 bath,  
playroom downstairs, bonus game room  
and half bath upstairs



**13125 Zen Garden, \$262,000, Greenbelt Lot**  
1.18 acres, uninterrupted panoramic  
Lake Austin views,  
fabulous custom building site



**13113 Delphinus Walk, \$450,000, Greenbelt**  
Like new, over \$72K in upgrades,  
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