

THE STAR

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 5

MAY 2009

STEINER'S 2009 Eggstravaganza EASTER HUNT



Once again there was a huge turnout at the annual Steiner Ranch Easter Egg Hunt. The morning was full of events for the little ones including the Easter egg hunt, pictures with the Easter Bunny, Face Painting, and Petting Zoo! View more photos on page 24.

All photos can be viewed in color online at www.PEELinc.com.

Thank you to the residents who submitted photos!

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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

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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

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Emergencies.....	512-370-8609
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Repairs.....	512-485-5080
IESI (Trash & Recycle).....	512-282-3508
Austin/Travis County Hazardous Waste	512-974-4343

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

MISSION STATEMENT

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."

ADVERTISING INFO

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. The advertising deadline is the 10th of the month prior to the issue.

ARTICLE INFO

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. The deadline is the 9th of the month prior to the issue.

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Steiner Ranch History Corner

Submitted by Rich Keith



What about Volente?

Volente is on Lake Travis and Farm Road 2769. Volente is from the Latin word meaning "to be willing." A post office was established at Volente in 1886 with Andrew J. Stanford as postmaster. The area was partially submerged by Lake Travis in the 1930s, and residents had to relocate on higher ground. In the 1940s and early 1950s the community was called Dodd City, for a local realtor and restaurant owner, but later in the 1950s the name was changed back to Volente. The community population was estimated at 250 in 1959 and at 400 in 1989. By 1990 Volente had a church, a combination fire hall-community center, several businesses, and the Anderson Mill Museum.

Is there a mill at Anderson Mill?

Anderson Mill was located on Cypress Creek in northwestern Travis County. It was named for Thomas Anderson, who came to Texas from Virginia in the late 1850s. In the early 1860s he built a mill to make gunpowder for the Confederacy. When the war was over he converted the operation to a gristmill. Farmers came from miles away to have their corn ground, sometimes having to camp

near the mill for several days to wait their turn. In the early 1870s Anderson added a cotton gin to his operation. A post office opened at Anderson Mill in 1876 with Anderson as postmaster. In 1884 the community had a population of thirty. The development of steam-powered mills and gins gradually forced Anderson out of business. After his death in 1894 his family sold the equipment and moved to Austin. A historical marker was placed near the mill site in 1936.

Cedar choppers & deer skinners

Journalist Winston Bode described some of the early settlers in the Hill Country as "a proud, independent, robust tribe of transplanted Southerners who came here to flat-cut cedar and burn charcoal." Locals referred to them as "cedar choppers." J. Frank Dobie wrote that when he came to Austin in 1914, "the hills were populated by cedar choppers who hauled charcoal to town by wagons. In addition to cooking over live coals, most ironing was done by flatirons heated over charcoal burners." Burning cedar while green avoids reducing the ash to fine powder and produces a hard char. Men placed several cords of cedar in a kiln or pit, covered it with dirt to shut out air and burned it for two or three days until the coal was ready.

(Continued on Page 5)

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SR History - (Continued from Page 4)

The choppers also hauled large cypress logs from the Pedernales River to a sawmill site called Shingle Hill, so named because of the many cedar shingles made there. Hunting in the early days was more a means of survival than a sport. People hunted to put food on the table as well as for income. The deer were plentiful and hunters killed them for hams and saddles and sold the hides as buckskin for clothing and decoration. Sources: B. Varner, Lakeway, the First 25 Years; V. Smyrl, The Handbook of Texas Online; E. Seals, ed., A Legend Collection: Fact and Fantasy. For more information contact Rich Keith at 266-8498 or email RKeith@primerica.com.



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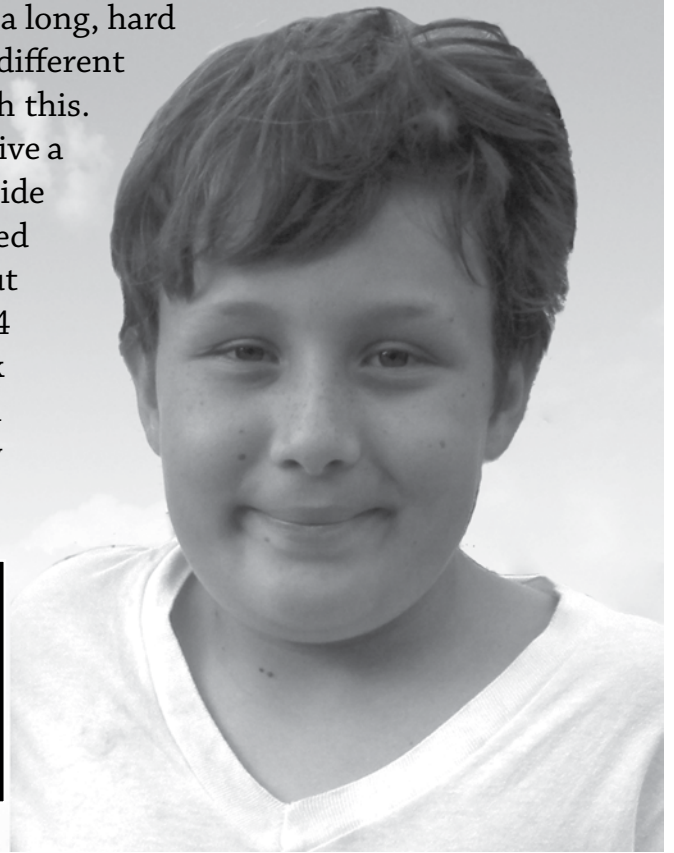
Helping a local.... Steiner Ranch Family

Nicholas Morales, a 5th grader, who attends LWBE here in Steiner Ranch, recently was hospitalized due to multiple epileptic seizures. While in hospital he suffered a rare allergic reaction, was in a coma for nearly a week, and in ICU at Dell Children's Hospital for nearly 3 weeks. The community came together to help the family with their extensive medical bills - which will be on-going for some time to come - by donating and taking part in a community-wide garage sale on April 18th on the grounds of LWBE. Over \$2,000 was raised. The school is also doing a coin drive of their own.

Although Nicholas is now home, the family has a long, hard road ahead of them; as Nicholas will need many different kinds of therapy in order for him to get through this.

If you missed the garage sale, but would like to give a monetary donation to help this family - who reside in our own community and are very much in need of our support - you can send a check made out to Richard Morales; c/o Tamara Crooks, 12724 Appaloosa Chase Drive, Austin 78732. Thank you for helping one of our own very special families, who is going through an unbelievably tough time.

*Please, let's join together
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Steiner Stars Swim Team Schedule

2009 Red Team Swim Schedule

May

- 15th - Red/Blue Season Kick-Off Party and Silent Auction from 5-8 p.m.
- 19th - First day of afternoon practice
- 27th - Popcorn and Posters
- 30th - **AWAY** Swim Meet with Hurricanes at Hurricanes Pool

June

- 6th - **HOME** Swim Meet with Forest North Stingrays at Bella Mar Pool
- 9th - First day of morning practice
- 10th - Mini Golf at Daybreak
- 13th - **AWAY** Swim Meet with Round Rock Dolphins at Round Rock Pool
- 13th - Adult Social at Bella Mar Overlook - BYOB, no glass please
- 17th - Cookie Decorating
- 20th - **HOME** Swim Meet with Georgetown Aquadillos at Bella Mar Pool
- 22nd - Tubing in San Marcos

- 27th - **HOME** Swim Meet with Cedar Park Typhoons at Bella Mar Pool

- 29th - Round Rock Express Game - Swim Team Night

July

- 1st - Main Event Bowling
- 4th - **AWAY** Last Swim Meet with Anderson Mill Barracudas at Anderson Mill
- 8th - Alamo Draft House Afternoon Movie
- 11th - **HOME** Divisionals at Bella Mar Pool
- 12th - Invitationals at the UT Campus Pool
- 13th - Red/Blue End-of-Season Celebration from 5-8 p.m.

2009 Blue Team Swim Schedule

May

- 15th - Red/Blue Season Kick-Off Party and Silent Auction from 5-8 p.m.

June

- 8th - First day of practice
- 9th - Mini Golf at Day Break
- 13th - Adult Social at Bella Mar Overlook - BYOB, no glass please
- 16th - Time Trial Meet
- 16th - Cookie Decorating
- 25th - Swim Meet
- 26th - Tubing in San Marcos
- 29th - Round Rock Express Game - Swim Team Night
- 30th - Main Event Bowling

July

- 2nd - Swim Meet
- 7th - Alamo Draft House Afternoon Movie
- 9th - Swim Meet
- 13th - Red/Blue End-of-Season Celebration from 5-8 p.m.

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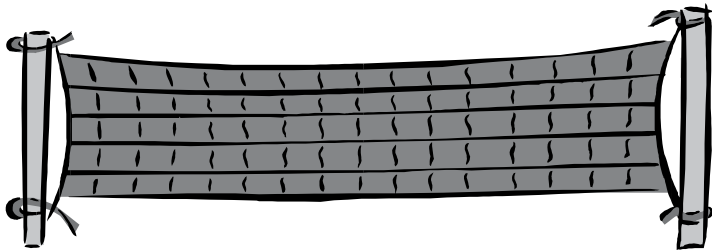
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Steiner Ranch Tennis Association (SRTA)

Did you know Steiner Ranch has a Tennis Association? Steiner Ranch has three sets of tennis courts. There are two courts at the John Simpson Community Center, two courts at the Bella Mar Community Center, and four courts at the Towne Square Community Center.

Courts can be reserved online here:

<http://www.reserve.kgbinternet.com/reserve/login.jsp>



Steiner Birthdays

May 3rd – Chase Patrick Vezina
May 8th - Zander Luza
May 13th - Ethan Luza
May 26th – Mark McNeal Jr.

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Vandergrift High School

Opening Fall, 2009



Dear Viper Students and Parents,

This is truly an exciting and busy time for Vandergrift High School. We are currently on schedule to open our 9th/10th campus at the Four Points Middle School this fall. In an effort to keep our future students and parents up-to-date, I am providing you with information about some recent developments in our UIL district and new staff announcements.

UIL Update: For 2009-2010, Vandergrift High School will participate in all Varsity, JV, and freshman athletics, with the exception of football. The following information details the UIL districts for Vandergrift by sport. I think you will agree that the competition will be of high quality and challenging for our students. For more information, please go to the UIL Website: <http://www.uil.utexas.edu>

District 8AAA

(Basketball, X-Country, Volleyball, Baseball, Softball, Golf, Tennis)

Austin Vandegrift	Liberty Hill
Burnet	Llano
Leander Rouse	

District 26AAAA

(for Swimming and Diving Only)

Austin Crockett	Austin McCallum
Austin Eastside	Austin Vandegrift
Memorial	Dripping Springs
Austin Johnson	Leander Rouse

District 26 (Wrestling Only)

Austin Vandegrift	Leander Rouse
Austin Westlake	Pflugerville
Cedar Park	Pflugerville Connally
Cedar Park Vista Ridge	Pflugerville
Georgetown +	Hendrickson
Leander	

Soccer District TBD
Academic/Spring Meet-8AAA
Marching Band-4A

Football: Sub varsity Schedule

North Forney	Anderson
(SCRIMMAGE)	Rouse*
Del Valle	Hutto
Boerne	Lake Travis
S.A. Hawkins	Rouse
Stony Point	

Viper Football-Freshman

Opponents:	Lago Vista
North Forney	Stony Point
(SCRIMMAGE)	Rouse
Del Valle	Crockett
Boerne	Rouse

NEW STAFF: One of the unique and exiting challenges of opening a new school is having the opportunity to hire the new teachers, head-coaches and directors (band, theater, choir, etc.) for the new campus. Hiring excellent classroom teachers is always my priority, but much of the immediate student interest concerns the extracurricular programs that make up such a big part of their overall school experience. Extracurricular courses play a vital role in making school relevant to students, and it is important that we find the right people for these positions. LISD has a reputation for academic excellence and a strong history of supporting athletics and fine arts. By starting early, we have been able to recruit a truly world-class staff for Vandergrift.

When we hire a head-coach or program director, we will provide you with information concerning a future opportunity to meet with the new coach/director to discuss their vision for the program. Typically, the new coach will

meet with the players during the day at their home campus, and follow up with a parent meet-and-greet that evening. Even though many of these coaches won't officially start working until July, there are many important decisions that need to be made. Summer camps, uniforms, schedules, off-season training, tryouts, and establishing booster organizations are all examples of details that need to be considered before the end of the year.

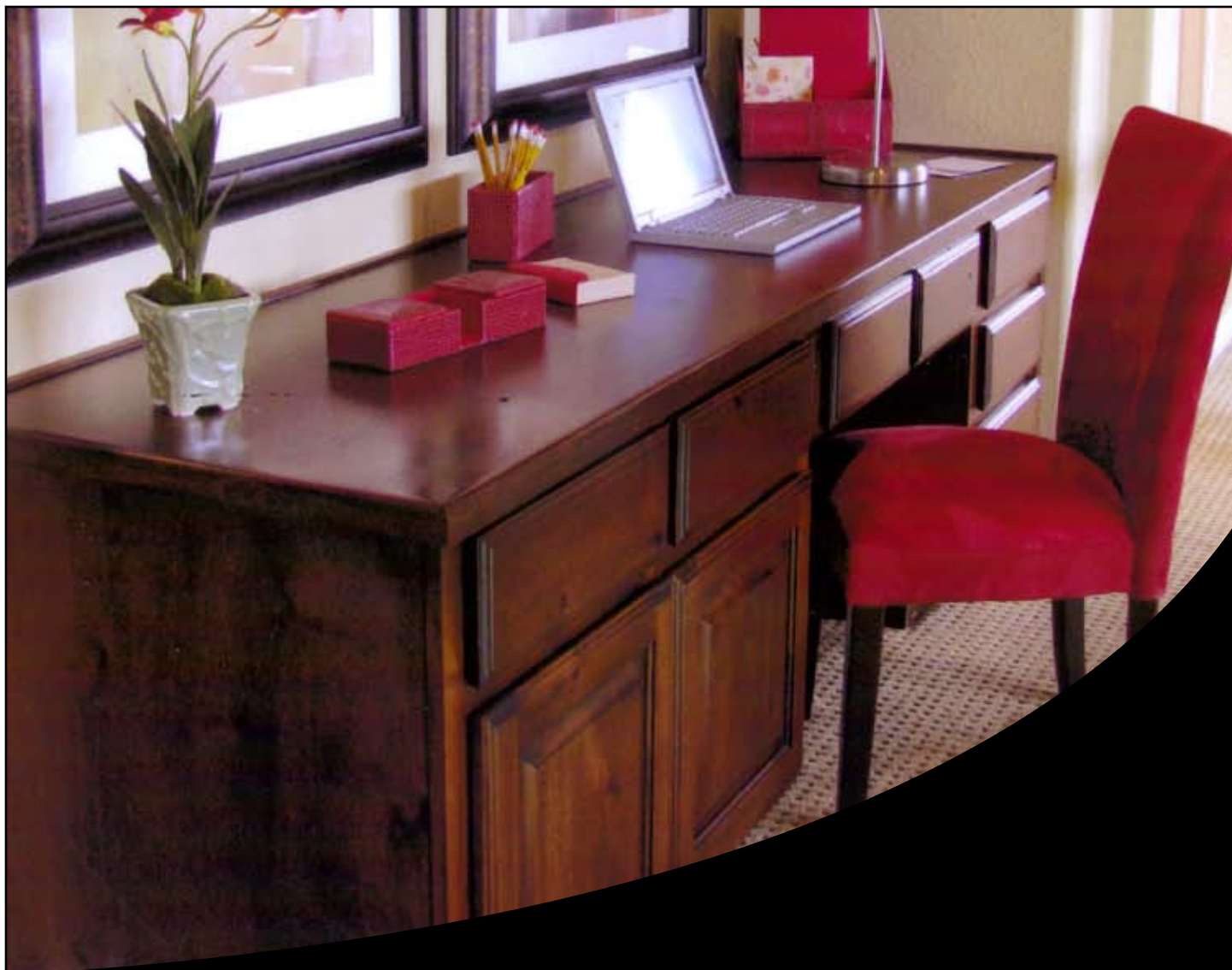
Where possible, I have provided the individual information concerning our new staff. In some cases, we need to wait to release this information until the coach is officially hired, or until they finish their current season and have an opportunity to talk to their players. Over the next few months, additional teachers and coaches will be added, and we will share this information with you as it become available.

For now, it is my pleasure to introduce the following new Vandergrift staff members:

GREG COOPER: Head wrestling coach/ Football Offensive Coordinator

Greg Cooper was hired in a dual role in Thursday's Board meeting as the Head Wrestling Coach and Offensive Coordinator for the Vandergrift Vipers. Previous to being hired in LISD, Greg was the Head Wrestling Coach for Austin Travis. He resurrected a nearly non-existent program taking them from next to last in district to District 28 Runner-up for 2007 and 2008, losing only to Austin Bowie. During those two years, he also qualified 17 wrestlers for the Regional Wrestling Meet held in San Antonio, TX. Greg also was an avid wrestler as a young athlete in Michigan City, Indiana from the 6th-12th grade.

(Continued on Page 14)



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Around Steiner

Vandergrift High School- (Continued from Page 12)

As a 23 year veteran of coaching, Greg has been part of many championship teams including the AAAAA Football State Finalist in 2001 and Quarterfinalist in 2004. Also in the track arena has coached a State Champion 200M runner and many State qualifiers. Greg was also awarded the C.T.F.C.A. Offensive Asst. Coach of the Year in 2007 for his offense at Travis High School. His offense set several school records and averaged 31 points per game. He has also coached two 2,000 yard rushers in his career. Greg is married to Norma Cooper and has one daughter, Dakota.

TRENT GREGORY: Football Asst/ Head Boy's Track

Coach Gregory will be joined by his wife Juliana, who has been teaching for eighteen years and is currently teaching sixth grade math at Eisenhower Intermediate School in Mansfield ISD. Their son Garrison is currently a freshman at Timberview HS and participates in football and baseball and daughter, Madison recently got married and lives in the Houston area.

2007-present : Offensive Coordinator and quarterbacks coach at Timberview H.S. (Mansfield ISD). Team advanced to the 5-A Regional Quarter Finals in 2007 and 4-A Area round of the playoffs in 2008. Assistant track coach on team that won 5-A District Championship in 2007, and advanced twenty athletes to the Regional meet.

1996-2007 : Head Football Coach / Athletic Coordinator at Anderson H.S. Team advanced to the State football playoffs in 2000, 2002 and 2003. At Anderson, they won the first District Championship in the history of the school in 2003. Anderson was the recipient of A.I.S.D. "All Sports Award" for six years.

1994-1996 : Offensive Coordinator and Offensive line coach at Anderson H.S. Assistant track coach at Anderson H.S.

1992-1995 : Assistant football coach (offensive line & defensive ends) at Bartlett H.S. Teams advanced to Bi-District in 1994, to the Quarter Finals in 1993, and won the State Championship in 1992 with a record of 14-0-1. Coached three All-State players at Bartlett.

1985-1992 : Assistant football coach at Leander H.S. and Leander M.S. Varsity football assistant coach and kicking game coordinator.

As a college athlete at Texas State, his team won the National Championship.

KEITH PIERCE: Head Cross Country/ Head Girls' Track

Keith Pierce comes to us from Krum High School where he began his coaching career in the Fall of 2003. In his time at Krum, Coach Pierce served as both an assistant and head cross country coach, the head boys track & field coach, and assistant basketball coach. Coach Pierce helped lead the Bobcats to the 2003 Class 2A Cross Country State Championship and the bronze medal in 2004 and 2005. In 2008, he led the team to a district championship and 4th

(Continued on Page 15)

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Vandergrift High School- (Continued from Page 14)

place regional finish as the team's head coach. Under his leadership, the Boys Track & Field team has produced two state qualifiers and multiple regional qualifiers.

Coach Pierce is a graduate of Rice University where he was a four year letter winner for the Rice Owls' cross country and track teams. As an Owl, he was a member of the 1999 and 2001 WAC Championship cross country teams. He was a cross country team captain and 1st team all-conference in 2001. On the track, Pierce was a two-time indoor NCAA provisional qualifier in the Distance Medley Relay. In 2003, Pierce was honored with Rice University's Emmet Brunson Award for Excellence in Track.

Pierce has continued his competitive running on the road. He is the only runner to have won three consecutive Fort Worth Cowtown Marathons, taking 1st place honors in 2007, 2008, and 2009. He finished 36th at the 2006 Boston Marathon, which boasts a field of over 22,000 runners. Coach Pierce has aspirations of qualifying for the 2012 Olympic Marathon Trials.

Keith graduated from Childress High School where he was class Valedictorian and the 1998 Class 3A State Champion in the 800 meter dash. Keith is married to Stephanie, a kindergarten teacher. Keith and Stephanie are very excited about the opportunity to be Vandegrift Vipers!

CLIFF ELLIS: Head Boys' Basketball

Coach Cliff Ellis was born and raised in Plano, TX and graduated from Plano East Senior High School where he played basketball and baseball. Coach Ellis graduated from Texas A&M University in 2000 and completed his Master's from Texas State in 2008. As an asst.

coach, his teams have qualified for the post-season every season and this past season as 1st Asst. at Lake Travis, qualified for the Regional Finals. Coach Ellis has also coached golf, cross country, football and has several athletes qualify for the post-season. In 2007, Ellis was honored as the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches' Assistant Coach of the Year. He has also assisted in several Basketball All-Star games. Currently living in the Four Points area, Cliff is married to Alisa Ellis and they are expecting their first child in October.

LARRY CZESZEWSKI: Head Baseball

Larry Czeszewski comes to Vandegrift with a wealth of baseball knowledge and experience. He has been the Head Baseball Coach at Pleasanton, S.A. Churchill, S.A. Holmes, and S.A. Taft. In his head coaching career he has won over 360 games and has coached numerous college athletes. Larry has had several teams qualify for the post-season and has won many coaching awards. He is two-time S.A. Express Baseball Coach of the Year. During his time in Northside I.S.D. in San Antonio, only three teams in the storied history of the league have gone undefeated in district play, Coach Czeszewski has coached two of those teams. He brings a wealth of knowledge and winning experience to Vandegrift High School. He has also been a football assistant his entire career with his football teams qualifying for the post-season 14 times. He has a 25 year old daughter, Jennifer, who graduated from Taft High School.

Please join me in welcoming our new staff to our community!



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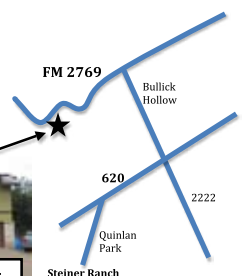


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Leander ISD 2009-2010 School Year Registration

Leander ISD's Pre-Kindergarten registration for the 2009 - 2010 school year will be held on Wednesday, May 6, 2009, from 7:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. at all LISD elementary campuses. Students zoned to attend the new Ronald Reagan Elementary (#22) will register at CoxElementary, while students slated for the new River Ridge Elementary (#23) should register at Laura Bush Elementary.

To be eligible for the half-day Pre-K program children must:

1. Be 4 years of age on or before September 1, 2009; AND
 2. Be a resident of Leander Independent School District; AND
 3. Meet immunization requirements; AND
 4. Meet at least one of the following conditions:
 - Child is unable to speak and comprehend the English language; OR
 - Child is homeless; OR
 - Child has a parent or official guardian who is an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who is ordered to active duty by proper authority; OR
 - Child has a parent or official guardian who is a member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who was injured or killed while serving on active duty; OR
 - Child has ever been in foster care; OR
 - Child is eligible to participate in the national free or reduced-price lunch program due to limited family income.
- NOTE: Due to federal guidelines, income status must be verified on or after June 24, 2009. Until that time, a space will be reserved for the child.

Transportation is provided for the Pre-K program in accordance with district guidelines.

Parents wishing to register their child for Pre-K must bring the child's birth certificate, social security card, immunization records, a photo ID of parent/guardian, and proof of residency, (i.e. an electric bill, water bill, etc...).

Please note: Pre-K registration is ongoing in Leander ISD. If you are unable to make the above date, please register your student(s) at your earliest convenience prior to August 1.

LISD Kindergarten Registration

Leander ISD's Kindergarten registration for the 2009 - 2010 school year will be held on Wednesday, May 6, 2009, from 7:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. at all LISD elementary campuses. Students zoned to attend the new Ronald Reagan Elementary (#22) will register at CoxElementary, while students slated for the new River Ridge Elementary (#23) should register at Laura Bush Elementary. To be eligible for Kindergarten children must:

1. Be 5 years of age on or before September 1, 2009; AND
2. Be a resident of Leander Independent School District; AND
3. Meet immunization requirements.

Parents wishing to register their child for Kindergarten must bring the child's birth certificate, social security card, immunization records, a photo ID of parent/guardian, and proof of residency, (i.e. an electric bill, water bill, etc...).

Please note: Kindergarten registration is ongoing in Leander ISD. If you are unable to make the above date, please register your student(s) at your earliest convenience prior to the June 1.



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Leander ISD Camps

STEM Camp is a cutting-edge program addressing the interest and energy of middle school students, while incorporating national standards in math, science and technology. The program is activity oriented to show students how technology is used in engineering to solve everyday problems.

Cartoon Camp is a cutting-edge program addressing the interest and energy of middle school students, while incorporating national standards in digital technology. The program is activity oriented to show students how digital technology is used in their home, school and community.

Who: Current 6th & 7th Graders (Entering 7th and 8th next year)

Where: Vista Ridge High School
200 S. Vista Ridge Blvd,
Cedar Park, TX 78613

When: June 15-19, 2009
9:00 am 3:30 PM, Monday – Thursday
9:00 am 12:00 PM, Friday

Cost: \$150 Registration must be received by June 1st.

Young Writer's Camp is a safe, encouraging, and fun summer program where young writers work on strategies to stretch themselves and their craft. Camp instructors will provide small group instruction

and one-on-one conferring to take writers where they are and build skills relevant to their writing proficiency in and outside of school. This camp is designed for writers of ALL abilities!

Who: Current 5th graders (entering 6th grade 09/10)
through current 8th graders (entering 9th grade 09/10)

Where: Vista Ridge High School
200 S. Vista Ridge Blvd.
Cedar Park, TX 78613

When: Monday, June 22, 2009 - Friday, June 26, 2009
8:00 AM- 12:30 PM

Cost: \$80.00 Registration must be received by June 1st, 2009
Includes transportation and materials

Registration is online this year! Go to www.leanderisd.org and under Quick Links, click on "Summer School and Camp Registration", then click "Register for Summer School", then click "Summer Registration". The camp is listed under "Other Summer Academic Camps". You may pay with your credit card at this site. We will also accept cash and money orders at the district administration building. **NO CHECKS ACCEPTED.**

To view the flyers for each of these camps, please go to www.leanderisd.org and under Quick Links, click on "Community Flyers". The flyers will be listed under Summer Programs/Camps.



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- **Spring sprinkler inspection and reprogramming for only \$29** (with advice on how to decrease your water bill).



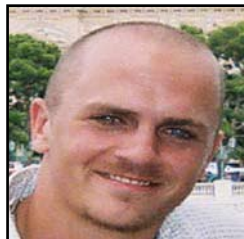
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LEANDER ISD

**UIL Concert/Sight-Reading
Competition**

Middle School Bands

Leander ISD's six middle school varsity bands competed in UIL Concert/Sight-Reading Competition in Georgetown in April, and all six brought home first division ratings! Running Brushy MS earned a first division (Superior) rating in Sight-Reading, while Canyon Ridge MS, Cedar Park MS, Henry MS, Leander MS, and Wiley MS earned first division ratings in both Concert and Sight-Reading and received a Sweepstakes trophy! Congratulations to these outstanding students and their fine directors:

- Canyon Ridge MS - Amy Allison
- Cedar Park MS - Manuel San Luis
- Henry MS - Robert Herrings
- Leander MS - Cathy Teltschik
- Running Brushy MS - Ed Pagliai
- Wiley MS - Garland Chiasson

High School Bands

Students from all four Leander ISD high schools participated in UIL High School non-varsity Band Concert/Sight-Reading Contest last week in Georgetown, including the first ever UIL performance by the Rouse Raider Band!

The Rouse Band, competing as a non-varsity band due to the recent opening of the school, missed a Sweepstakes rating by one Concert judge and earned a First Division (Superior) Rating in Sight-Reading. This is a terrific showing for this hard-working group of students and their directors, Lee Crochet and Art Jimenez.

Six non-varsity bands from Cedar Park HS, Leander HS, and Vista Ridge HS also participated in the competition, and in an unprecedented achievement, all six bands earned First Division Ratings from all six judges! This is an outstanding accomplishment and is representative of the hard work put forth by the students and directors. Congratulations to these outstanding bands and their directors!

- Cedar Park HS Cadet Band - Bob Chreste and Steve Wessels
- Cedar Park HS Concert Band - Bob Chreste
- Cedar Park HS Symphonic Band - Jeremy Spicer
- Leander HS Concert Band - Robert Selaiden
- Leander HS Symphonic Band - Laura Cross
- Vista Ridge HS Symphonic Band - Kyle Ruschhaupt and Andrew Straight

High School Choirs

Students from all six Leander ISD middle schools participated in the UIL Middle School Choir Concert/Sight-Reading Competition last week in Georgetown. Of the 23 middle schools that sent choirs, only 5 schools had Sweepstakes winning choirs - 3 of which are Leander ISD choirs! Congratulations to these outstanding students and their directors:

(Continued on Page 19)

UIL - (Continued from Page 18)

- Canyon Ridge MS Varsity Treble Chorus - Courtney Riskind
- Cedar Park MS Varsity Treble Chorus - Monica Huber
- Cedar Park MS non-Varsity Treble Chorus - Monica Huber and Rachelle Elliott
- Wiley MS Varsity Treble Chorus - Rebecca Azard

In addition, three other Leander ISD MS choirs received a First Division (Superior) Rating in one of the two events:

- Henry MS non-Varsity Treble Chorus - Michelle Hank (Sight-Reading)
- Henry MS Varsity Treble Chorus - Michelle Hank (Sight-Reading)
- Wiley MS non-Varsity Tenor/Bass Chorus - Rebecca Azard (Concert)

Notice to Leander I.S.D. Parents & Students

Examination for Acceleration, Grades 1-12

Examination for Acceleration allows students, who without direct instruction have already mastered all content and skills in a particular grade level or course, to advance to the next level or course. These exams are available at no cost to eligible students who test during the district's testing periods.

Students are expected to complete each exam they have registered for. Families are requested to plan accordingly during the summer to ensure students complete each exam. Note: The District does not receive reimbursement for tests not taken.

2009 testing dates are as follows:

Testing Period	Testing Dates	Time	Application Due Date
I	June 9-11, 2009	8:30 am – 3:30 pm	April 17, 2009
II	July 7-9, 2009	8:30 am – 3:30 pm	June 1, 2009

Students will complete an application form and take a designated criterion referenced test which covers the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and major learning for the course for which they wish credit. For all of its Examination for Acceleration, the district uses tests developed by the University of Texas Extension, Instruction, and Materials Center. Students should contact the campus counselor for applications and additional information.

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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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NatureWatch

by Jim and Lynne Weber

The Lure & Lore of Lizards

Various beliefs, myths, and legends have been inspired by the behavioral patterns of lizards. In ancient Egypt and Greece the lizard represented divine wisdom and good fortune, in Roman mythology their hibernation symbolized death and resurrection, and in Australia the aboriginal believed that the sky would fall if you killed one. Today, these ideas largely do not hold true, but lizards seem to fascinate us nonetheless! While Central Texas is home to several species of lizards, geckos, anoles, skinks, and whiptails, those most likely (and interesting) to be seen are the Fence Lizard, the Green or Carolina Anole, and the Texas Alligator Lizard.

Preferring rocky areas that provide shelter and basking surfaces such as privacy fences and rock walls, the aptly named Fence Lizard is quite common in all but the eastern third of Texas. A light brown lizard ranging from 3.5 to 7 inches in length, they have a light stripe down each side from the neck to the lower back, with dark spots or bands in between,



Fence lizard

which gives them a very scaly appearance. Males have two bright blue patches rimmed in black on the belly and throat, and while the females generally lack these colorings, they are slightly larger than the males. A diurnal lizard, they feed on a variety of insects found on the ground in open areas or up in trees in wooded areas. Breeding occurs in the spring and summer, and mature females may lay several egg clutches per year.

Ranging from bright green to dark brown, the Green Anole possesses the ability to change color due to temperature and light.

A small lizard, it has a pale colored underbelly, long claws, and a thin tail. The males have what is called a 'dewlap', a bright pink flap of skin that can be extended and retracted for purposes of intimidating rivals and attracting females during the mating season. These anoles are arboreal, spending most of their time in trees, shrubs, and vines, feeding on insects and spiders. While they have a small territory, the males will aggressively defend it, starting with

(Continued on Page 23)



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Green anole

extending their dewlap, bobbing their head, performing pushups, and ultimately ending in a chase or a wrestling match. All this posturing and patrolling can make the males much easier targets for predators, however, and they tend to have higher mortality rates than the much more discreet females. If it is late spring and the right to mate is at stake, the winner will once again employ headbobbing and dewlap extension to entice

the female, who lays a single, softshell egg among the leaf litter.

Coming in at an impressive 10 to 24 inches long, the Texas Alligator Lizard is a stiff lizard with large, plate-like scales and a long, somewhat prehensile tail. It is the largest lizard in Texas and the one of largest alligator lizards in the world. Varying from ruddy yellow to reddish brown, it has dark crosshatches on its back with a lighter head and small, weak legs that are unmarked. Found on rocky hillsides, it has slow, calculated moves, feeding on insects, spiders, and small invertebrates. When alarmed, it may inflate itself in defense – and like other lizards even lose its tail to distract a potential predator - but more typically it will fold in its legs and slither away like a snake. Unlike many other lizards, breeding can occur year-round, and multiple clutches of eggs can be laid. Females often stay near the nest site to

protect it, but once the young hatch they receive no parental care.

Lizards have been around for 100 million years longer than humans, and descended from the same family tree that gave rise to the dinosaurs. The next time you're lucky enough to have one cross your path, show it some well-deserved respect!

Send your nature-related questions to naturewatch@austin.rr.com and we'll do our best to answer them.



Texas Alligator Lizard



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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.

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

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 david@austin-technet.com and join LinkedIn Groups Steiner TechNet.

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 and it will be included in each issue. Feel free to submit post event write-ups and photos.

Announcing New Job-Seekers Group

Submitted by Nancy Phillips

Are you out of work, indefinitely furloughed, or perhaps you have a neighbor or friend that is? If so, please read on...

St Luke's on the Lake Episcopal Church, www.stlukesonthelake.org, is forming a new small group focused on job-seekers. "New Horizons" is a weekly gathering of job-seekers and new career-changers.

Time: Wednesdays at 8:30a

Location: St. Luke's on the Lake Episcopal Church, 5600 RR 620N, 266.2455, "The Annex"

The goals of the group go beyond the obvious job-search aspects to also include mental and spiritual needs and challenges. Much will be defined as the group defines itself but considerations include:

- Prayer, devotional readings, and discussion to strengthen perspectives and resolve
- Job search tools, networking, job fair promotions, resume writing, interviewing, etc.
- Discussions around books and resources like "The Purpose-Driven Life", "Seven Habits of Highly Successful People", "What Color is Your Parachute", etc. to help discern life's priorities.
- Focus groups formed to help address specific growth areas:
 - Locate/ invite motivational speakers
 - Develop constructive ideas for using new found-time for volunteer groups, charities, etc. o
 - Discuss possible how-to's for starting a new business or career
 - ID low-cost family entertainment, living suggestions, and group social activities
 - Corporate self-help: identify needs vs. skills and what can we do for each other
 - Maintain archive of material references compiled for new arrivals o
 - Arrange networking meetings with other community job-seeker groups

Totally open to the community at large, this is a Christian-based support group with all members sharing the reality of being unemployed. We will be regularly calling on God for guidance and support as well as helping hold each other accountable for using the time God is giving to discern life's priorities and next career moves. Those interested can contact Gary Cook at 751.5478 or gcook4@austin.rr.com for more information.

COMMUNITY GROUPS CONTINUED

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

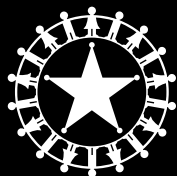


Girl Scout Registration is Open

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 or (512) 490-2360. Discover Girl Scouts online at www.gscctx.org.



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Business Section

Free Seminars in Personal Finance

May 14, New Retirement Strategies, 7 PM, Bella Mar

We examine your "retirement environment" in light of today's realities. Learn how to grow your assets, reduce taxes and protect your family's income. How to build your nest egg with no more risk than is necessary, and shield your assets from the forces of inflation and unexpected future events. Free, offered as a public service. To reserve your seats call Rich Keith at (512) 632-0162 or send email to RKeith@primerica.com .

May 21 Estate Planning and Long Term Care, 7 PM, Bella Mar

Long term care may be one of the largest and most expensive issues on the horizon for American families. The financial impact of a long term care need increases every year, and may affect families with lost income or lost opportunity for income. We show you how to plan effectively for the unforeseen healthcare event. And estate planning is essential to assure that your wishes are carried out now and in the future. Local estate planning attorney John Van de Graaf explores your options and shows you how to avoid common mistakes in estate planning, wills and probate. Free, offered as a public service. To reserve your seats call Rich Keith at (512) 632-0162 or send email to RKeith@primerica.com .

June 11, Education Funding, Bella Mar 7 PM, Bella Mar

We will explore your options to fund your children's education. It's

not difficult once you know the ropes. Learn about tax-advantaged programs that you and others can contribute to on an ongoing basis. Some programs are directed at education and some are for the benefit of the child and are not tied to education. Learn the advantages and disadvantages of each approach. Free, offered as a public service. To reserve your seats call Rich Keith at (512) 632-0162 or send email to RKeith@primerica.com .

June 23, ABCs of Making Money for Teens, 7 PM, Bella Mar

In this free workshop for teens we explore Attitudes, Behaviors and Creativity surrounding money. Parents are welcome to attend part or all. Plus, every teen who attends the workshop will receive a complementary copy of the ABCs of Making Money 4 Teens book. Some of the key elements of the book:

- 96 pages of full color
- Inspirational stories of teens that have made a difference
- Lots of hands on exercises, and creative money solutions
- A section on the dangers of carrying credit card balances
- How to approach employers for jobs
- The power of compound interest, the Rule of 72, and more.

This seminar is free, and is offered as a public service. To reserve your seats call Rich Keith at (512) 632-0162 or send email to RKeith@primerica.com



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Austin Adds Jobs for 2nd Straight Month

AUSTIN – The Austin-Round Rock MSA* added 5,100 jobs in March, following a 6,000 position increase in February, according to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). Unemployment for the area decreased slightly to 6.2%. Much of the increase was due to temporary hiring to support annual spring events such as Spring Break, the South by Southwest film and music festival, and the Star of Texas Fair and Rodeo.

“The Austin metro area received some good news with March employment statistics, with local unemployment dropping slightly from 6.3% in February to 6.2% in March,” explained Alan Miller, Workforce Solutions’ Executive Director.

Leisure & Hospitality continued its strong growth, adding 2,700 jobs in March after adding 1,500 in February. Government (+1,600) and Education & Health Services (+800) continued to show consistent growth while the combination of Manufacturing and Trade, Transportation, & Utilities lost 1,800 jobs combined.

“The good news is that we seem to be holding steady in terms of employment and unemployment with no large swings. The economy still has a ways to go but there are positive signs,” added Miller.

In the past 12 months, the Austin area has added 3,300 jobs, for an annual growth rate of 0.4%. Austin hasn’t experienced a negative annual job growth rate since January 2004. Sectors showing strong annual growth are Professional & Business Services and Government.

According to the TWC, the unemployment rate for the Austin-Round Rock MSA in March 2009 dropped by 0.1% to 6.2%. The rate was 3.8% one year ago.

The March 2009 unemployment rate for Texas rose slightly to 6.7% percent, while the U.S. rate climbed to 8.5%.

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June 28

Children's Fine Art Workshop | **July 6-10**

Veggie Tales Day Camp | **July 27-31**

Middle / High School Camps at
Baylor University | **July 27-31**

Celebrate Recovery | **Mondays, 7 pm,
2nd floor of building A**

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Bible Life Groups for all ages

9:30 am

Celebration - Connection
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11:00 am

Life - Connection
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Financial Corner

Submitted by Rich Keith

Let's look at a new law enacted in late 2008: the Pension Act's RMD Waiver for Calendar Year 2009. Many retirees have had to sell retirement plan account or traditional IRA assets at distressed values in order to generate the cash needed to make required minimum distributions (RMDs). Beneficiaries of retirement plan accounts or traditional IRAs have faced similar problems. The Pension Act enacted late last year provided relief by waiving the RMD for calendar year 2009 only. It also relieved designated beneficiaries of the need to make minimum distributions for 2009. Had the waiver not been granted, many individuals with retirement accounts invested in beaten-down assets such as stocks or mutual funds would have had to sell assets at a loss to generate RMDs for 2009. But the new law change helps even those people who would otherwise have to make RMDs from retirement plan accounts and traditional IRAs invested in "bulletproof" assets such as government-insured CDs. If you can afford to skip this year's RMD, you can lower your tax bill for 2009.

The overall purpose of the RMD rule is to make sure retirement accounts and IRAs are used primarily for the owner's retirement, rather than as a tax-sheltered nest egg for the family; a prohibitively expensive IRS penalty rule applies if an RMD isn't made. Distributions from retirement plans or IRAs are fully taxed as ordinary income (unless you made nondeductible contributions). The new law allows older individuals to skip the RMD that would otherwise be required for calendar year 2009.

The new law has an impact on three distinct groups of people—here's how you or a family member may be affected.

(1) Older individuals who are retirement plan account and traditional IRA owners. Generally, required payouts from IRAs must begin when you attain age 70 1/2. Once they begin, RMDs must be made following an IRS schedule over your life or over the lives

of you and the person you designate as beneficiary of the retirement account or IRA.

(2) Beneficiaries of retirement plan accounts or traditional IRAs. If a person dies before exhausting the funds in his or her employer retirement plan account or IRA, the balance may be left to an individual designated as a beneficiary (there may be a group of beneficiaries). If you are a designated beneficiary, you also must make minimum annual withdrawals (which generally are fully taxable) from your inherited retirement plan account or IRA. The new law allows designated beneficiaries of retirement plans or IRAs to skip the annual payout that would otherwise be required for calendar year 2009.

(3) Beneficiaries of Roth IRAs. The new law doesn't affect owners of Roth IRA accounts for the simple reason that they do not have to make lifetime RMDs from these accounts. However, it does affect beneficiaries of Roth IRAs, who must make minimum annual withdrawals after the account owner dies. Thanks to the new law change, RMDs are waived for 2009 from their inherited Roth IRAs. This won't affect their income tax, since distributions to designated beneficiaries of Roth IRAs are tax-free. However, it will avoid having to sell reduced-in-value assets to make the otherwise-required distributions, and it will make it possible for designated beneficiaries to leave more money at work within the tax-shelter of the Roth IRA. Source: adapted from L.Plescia, BWTP, PC, 2009. Please call Rich Keith if you have questions or concerns on how the new law change waiving RMDs for 2009 may affect you or a family member.

Next step: Learn more by attending your Steiner HOA-approved free seminars in personal finance. New Retirement Strategies on Thursday May 14, and Estate Planning and Long Term Care on Thursday May 21, both at 7 PM at Bella Mar. To reserve seats please contact RKeith@Primerica.com Rich Keith, (512) 266-8498.



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Steiner Ranch Market Statistics			
Price Range	As of Apr 6, 2009		Jan-Mar '09
	# For Sale Avg L\$/sf Avg DOM	# Pending Avg L\$/sf Avg DOM	# Sold Avg \$\$/sf Avg DOM
\$200K-\$300K	49/\$118/67	7/\$104/54	9/\$101/140
\$300K-\$400K	49/\$123/71	6/\$120/92	3/\$102/155
\$400K-\$500K	27/\$139/70	2/\$132/89	4/\$127/100
\$500K-\$600K	25/\$141/116	1/\$139/47	2/\$134/42
\$600K-\$700K	15/\$161/125	3/\$149/28	5/\$141/134
\$700K-\$800K	14/\$184/185	2/\$171/12	4/\$147/155
\$800K-\$900K	9/\$192/179	0	2/\$145/201
\$900K-\$1M	3/\$212/89	0	0
\$1M-\$2M	3/\$304/160	1/\$180/189	0
\$2M and up	1/\$429/172	0	0

*statistics based on the Austin MLS



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Best Practices in Community Association Governance

Half-day Seminar with Lectures on Community Management, Association Law and Risk Management

Austin, Texas – April 20, 2009 – “The Essentials of Community Association Volunteer Leadership”, a half-day seminar, provides solutions to problems keeping homeowners and their community association board directors awake at night. The seminar, a series of lectures with Q&A sessions, hosts local industry experts in the fields of community management, association law and risk management. Attendees receive a 150-page seminar reference handbook. Similar seminars are conducted annually at our 58 chapters nationwide.

This annual educational event is produced by the Austin chapter of the Community Associations Institute, America’s advocate for responsible communities providing education, tools and resources to people who govern and manage homeowners associations, condominiums and other planned communities. Our mission is to help you make your community a better—even preferred—place to call home.

Joe Dunst, CAI Austin’s Chapter Executive Director relates, “The job of managing a group of homeowners can be daunting for the volunteer leaders, because few have experienced running a community association.” Dunst also believes “collecting delinquent fees, upholding covenants and restrictions, resolving disputes,

establishing reserve funds can all be a challenge for an association. But there are solutions – best practices that directors of other community associations have successfully employed. And that’s what CAI is all about – helping community association governing boards as well as the professional community managers and business partners who support them and their communities.”

CAI Austin has been helping communities in the greater Austin area govern responsibly since the mid-1980’s. This year the seminar is part

Pricing and Registration	CAI Members	Non-Members
Seminar: 9:00am – 11:30am (pre-registration required)	\$40.00	\$50.00
Luncheon Lecture: 11:30am – 1:30pm	\$25.00 pre-paid,	\$35.00 pre-paid,
	\$30.00 at the door	\$40.00 at the door
Both Luncheon Lecture and Seminar (pre-payment required)	\$55.00 pre-paid	\$ 75.00 pre-paid

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of our 25th Anniversary Celebration which also features a buffet luncheon program with nationally recognized guest speaker Angelos Angelou, founder and Principal Executive Director of AngelouEconomics. The events will take place at Barton Creek Resort & Spa, 8212 Barton Club Dr. in Austin on Thursday, May 28th.

For event details and online registration go to www.caiaustinevents.org/index.htm.

For additional information about CAI go to www.caionline.org and www.caiaustin.org.

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.

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.

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 Thai Harmony in Steiner Ranch. Visitors are welcome! If you are interested in visiting a meeting please contact Mark Taylor at marktaylor@actioncoach.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 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, 512-589-3678.



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Calendar of Events

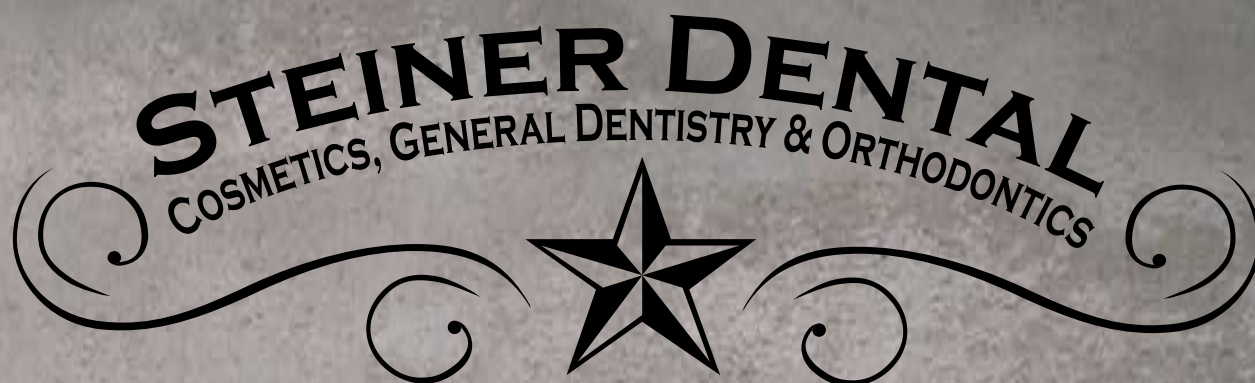
MAY 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 Free Yoga	5	6	7 ♻️	8	9
10	11 Free Yoga	12 Social Committee Meeting	13	14 New Retirement Strategies ♻️	15	16
17	18 Free Yoga	19 Estate Planning & Long Term Care	20	21 ♻️	22	23
24 31	25 Free Yoga	26	27	28 SRROA Board Meeting ♻️	29	30

JUNE 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Free Yoga	2	3	4 ♻️	5	6
7	8 Free Yoga	9 Social Committee Meeting	10	11 Education Funding ♻️	12	13
14	15 Free Yoga	16	17	18 ♻️	19	20
21	22 Free Yoga	23 ABC's of Making Money for Teens	24	25 ♻️	26	27
28	29 Free Yoga	30 SRROA Board Meeting	ANNOUNCE YOUR EVENT <i>Are you a member of a community group or organization here in Steiner?</i> <i>Email the information about your group's event to</i> <i>thestar@peelinc.com and it will be included on the calendar.</i> <i>For more information and locations visit the HOA website at www.steinerranchhoa.org.</i>			

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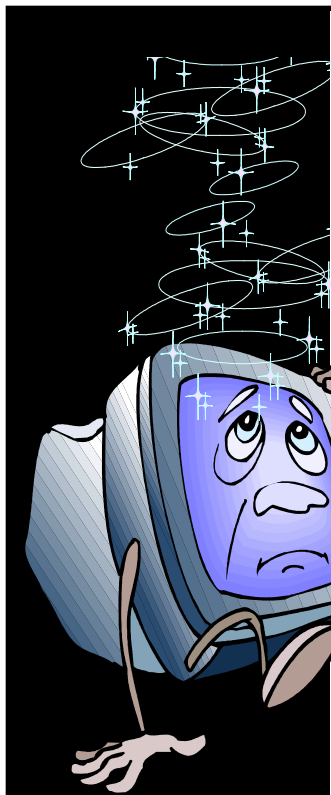
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What to do About My Tired PC? Part I

Submitted by Laurie Scott

Ultimately it gets down to what is probably my most used answer – “it depends”.

Can I upgrade inexpensively without having to buy a new computer? Quite possibly. We're fortunate that software hasn't quite kept up with the power of the hardware the last few years. Do you need more storage? Hard drives are very

cheap: as low as \$55 for a 500 Gigabyte drive!

That's a lot of pictures! Computers in what I call the “sweet spot” (2- 5 years old) generally benefit greatly from additional memory.

Windows XP today really needs at least 512MB (Megabytes) and Vista needs

1 ½ GB minimum. The great news is that memory is dirt cheap.

Depending on your particular system, a full 1GB of additional memory can be as cheap as \$15. Slow systems often have other problems, but additional memory is an

inexpensive way to eliminate one possibility as the problem.

Computers that are in that sweet spot benefit greatly from what I call a “rebuild”. This means first backing up your documents, pictures, etc. and then wiping the hard drive clean and reinstalling Windows and your programs. This will often double your speed and will cost you nothing but time. It will put your computer into a like-new or better condition. Imagine a car in which you never change the oil, just top it off as it gets low. After a few years, it's pretty gunky in there. Well, Windows is very similar after a few years. A fresh start can do wonders. And if you add memory and a larger hard drive – woo hoo!!!

Next month I'll continue with part II, and will talk about whether it's better (and cheaper) to build your own computer rather than buying one in a store, and which is better for you, a PC or a Mac?



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Lunch: 12:00 PM

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For information see our website: www.AustinNewcomers.com

Or call us 512-314-5100

Lights, music, action! The show is about to begin. Come join us to see the Zachary Scott young performing troupe Showstoppers. We will get a glimpse into their upcoming summer production. This pre professional youth group puts on a completely staged musical each year.

We will also hear about the outstanding opportunities that this award winning theater offers to children ages 5 through teen years with camps named Pirates Pizazz, Rockin' High School Musical, Rockstar IV, Wizard of Oz and many more. Now don't you wish you could join in the fun. Come hear and see future stars in the making.

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SUMMER NANNY OR MOTHER'S HELPER: 19 year old college student available for summer nanny or mother's helper. Available May 18 to August 14. Part time or full time. Own car to drive kids to activities or for running errands. Loves to play games and sports. Long-time Steiner Ranch resident. Contact Allie Gursoy at allison.gursoy94@buc.blinn.edu or call 512-552-4242.

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May Landscaping

By Ron Kerwin

May is a great month to get full usage of our outdoor areas. The morning temps are nice and it has not yet become really hot in the afternoons. Continue to freely plant shrubs, trees, flowers and vegetables. Remember to put down a minimum of 2 inches of new mulch in all your beds. A good layer of mulch keeps the plant roots cooler, helps with weed control, and helps slow the water you apply from evaporating from the root zone.

Water your lawns less frequently and more deeply. Frequent short duration watering leads to shallow root systems. Less frequent longer duration watering leads to deeper root systems. Deeper root systems are more healthy and better for your lawns. They will hold up better in the extreme heat. Our lawns need one inch of water per week. Put out a container with straight sides and catch the water as you irrigate, you can easily measure the result. Two watering times at ½ inch each are better than 4 times at ¼ inch, the water penetrates further and this will force the roots down



to find it. Regular mowing is critical for good lawn health. Mow only the top 1/3 of the total length. Letting the grass grow long and then cutting off more than the 1/3 is damaging to the grass, and makes the mulching process less efficient and less attractive.

There is a new soil disease coming into our area that I was made aware of late last year. It reveals itself in St Augustine grasses. It is not cinch bugs, it is not grubs although it does resemble their grass damages. The grass blades die and fall off the runners. The

runners remain in place, but somewhat resemble a cobweb. It is NOT a grass disease, it IS a soil disease. The big chemical companies do have chemicals to treat it. This is a Gulf Coast epidemic that is moving North. Homeowners with no foot traffic and do their own yard work still get it. Its origins are a guess at this point. I am trying to be pro-active and let you know your turf may get the problem & to watch out for it.



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Gardens on Tour

May Events at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

Gardens on Tour - Saturday, May 9.

See five beautiful private and public gardens plus the Wildflower Center. Wristbands on sale now. Susan Wittig Albert signs her new novel, *Wormwood*, at the store, noon to 3 p.m. \$25 ticket for all gardens; \$6 for each individual garden. Children under five free. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Wildflower Center Gala - Friday, May 1

The Wildflower Center is closed at 3 p.m. to prepare for the Gala which begins at 6:30 p.m.

National Wildflower Week Photo Exhibit Tuesday, May 4 through Sunday, May 10

Rick Tolar's stunning wildflower portfolio, "Flowers of Observation" on display in the Visitors Gallery. This is a partnership with Texas Highways magazine.

Memorial Day Sidewalk Sale

Saturday, Sunday and Monday, May 23-25

David Kattes signs the newly released *Insects of Texas* from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday.

Nature Nights: Hiding In Plain Sight: Animal Tracking.

Friday, May 29

Hit the trails and discover animals that live in Central Texas. We will explore tracks and scats. \$1 admission. \$1 admission. 6 to 9 p.m.

Information on all events at www.wildflower.org

*River Place Country Club
4207 River Place Boulevard
Austin, Texas 78730*

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COUNTRY CLUB

*Phone: 512.346.1114
Fax: 512.346.0527
www.riverplaceclub.com*

You Are Invited To Our Open House Event Sunday, June 7th from Noon to 4pm

Join us for a Complimentary Lunch buffet at Noon followed by 9-Holes of Fabulous Golf. Also enjoy Tennis activities, poolside games with a DJ, and **we will have a special performance at 1pm by children's entertainer "Staci Gray"!**

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2009 SUMMER JUNIOR PROGRAMS

Pre-School Programs (Ages 2 - 4)

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Elementary School Programs (Ages 5 - 12)

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Tennis, Abakadoodle Art Classes, Magio Camp, Computer Explorer Camps,
Rock Camp, Swimming, Camp River Place Sports Camp

Teen Programs (Ages 12 and up)

Karate, Golf, Swimming, and Tennis

Please call Raquel Hebben, the Membership Director if you would like to receive information regarding Membership, Summer Programs, or to RSVP to our Open House Event!

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Creating a Wildlife Garden

Submitted by Bonnie Martin

May 2, 2009

10am-Noon

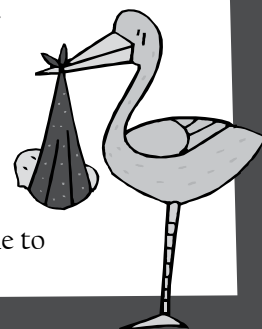
Hampton Branch, Austin Puublic Library

5125 Convict Hill Rd.

This seminar will teach you how to build a habitat that is more attractive to beautiful songbirds, butterflies, frogs, and other beneficial wildlife. Using native wildflowers, shrubs, and trees will increase the beauty of your property, protect the environment, and provide a nurturing refuge for all types of animals. Requirements for building a certified wildlife habitat will also be covered.

This seminar is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners Association, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. For more details, see <http://www.tcmastergardeners.org> or call the Travis County Master Gardener's help desk at (512) 854-9600.

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Britt's Book Buzz: Twilight

I Couldn't Resist the Temptation

Twilight is the first novel in a series by author Stephenie Meyer. I picked up it solely because of the buzz around it. The book is a fun read. Not the best written book, but who cares? It kept me reading and reading and captures the conflict of a vampire who wants to be with his true love (who happens to be human), but is constantly at odds with his primal need, his thirst. He resists the temptation...so far.

Even with the author's exhaustive mentions of how beautiful Edward the vampire is, I personally can't imagine myself falling in love with a vampire no matter how perfect. The way the author describes their cold, stone-like skin itself just makes me cringe. I do enjoy the way Meyer demonstrates mood and emotions by focusing on the vampires' eyes.

The story is very imaginative and gives a new perspective on a different breed of vampires—those who have chosen alternative diets so they can be a part of human society.

I keep thinking that this girl, Bella, has gotten herself into a messy situation—her beau can appear anywhere, can run at lightning speeds and can hear thoughts (except for hers). There's no way to escape. This is especially true when Bella, the main character, is hunted down by a dangerous vampire.

Is this a big put-on? Is Edward's ultimate plan to drink her blood? Will Bella join the Cullen family for eternity?

I'll read the whole series...I just can't resist the temptation! 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.

Summer Miracles

Every summer Kidsave brings older orphaned children to Austin, and other U.S. cities, to participate in our 5-week Summer Miracles program. Summer Miracles "shines a light" on children the world has forgotten.

The children stay with volunteer host families, experience family life, attend day camp, and meet families who may want to adopt them. Over 90% of the children now have families, hope and love because of Summer Miracles.

Approximately ten orphaned children will be coming to the Austin area to participate in Summer Miracles 2009. For more information about how you can help or host one of these children, please call Stephanie Karasick at 512-415-7082, or email stephanie@austinkidsave.org.

Be a voice for change for children who need families. Volunteer to help a child this summer!

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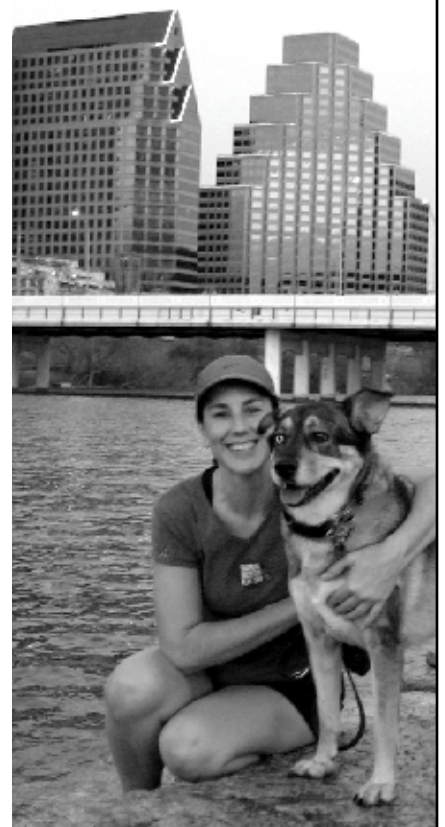
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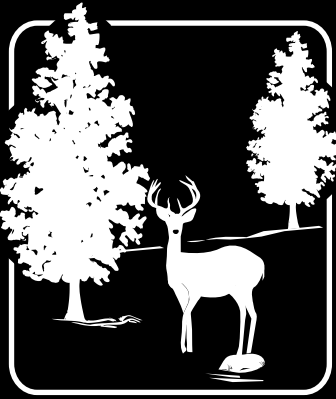


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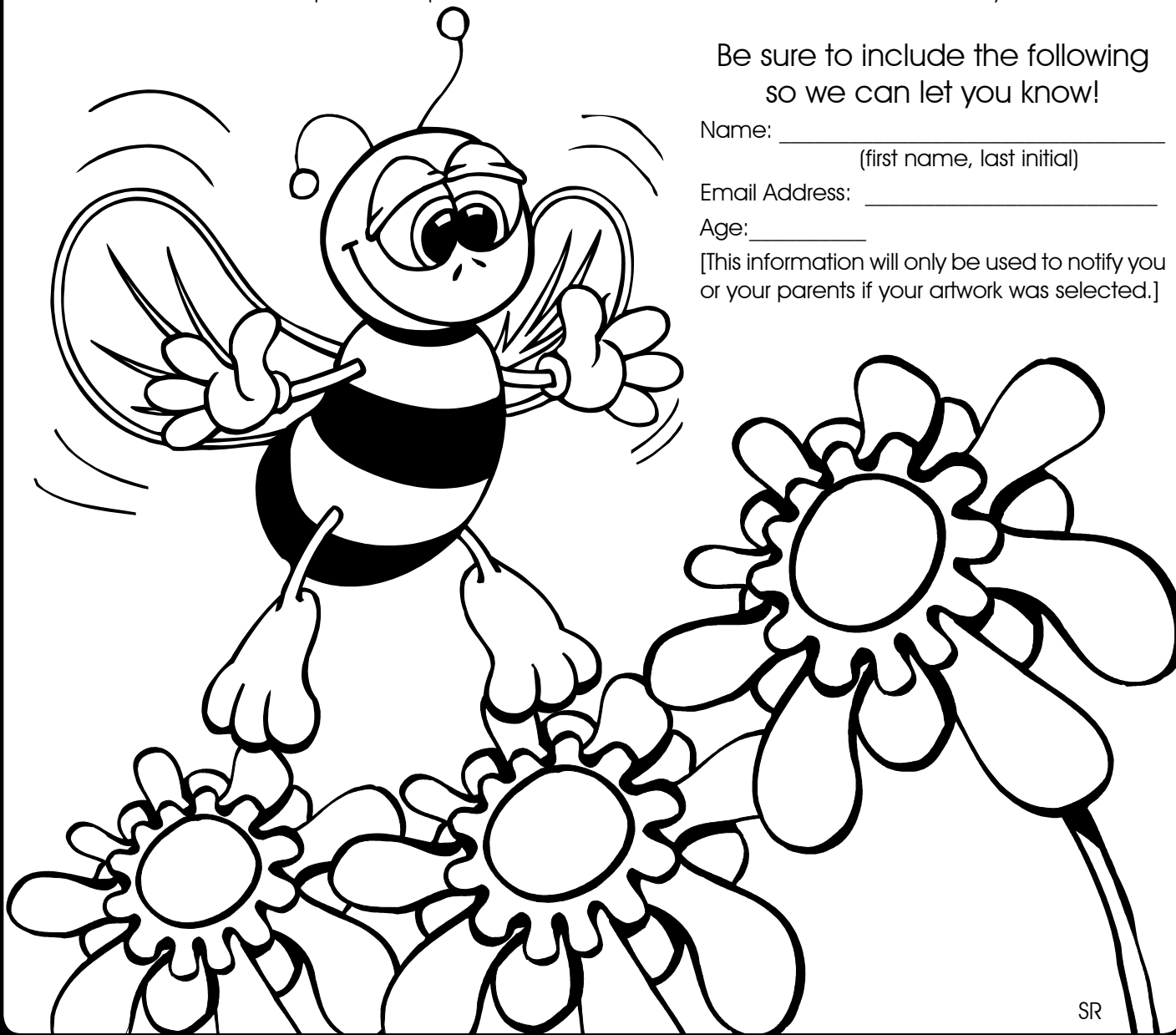
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Effective May 11th

On May 11 the price for a 1-ounce First-Class Mail stamp will increase from 42¢ to 44¢. Prices for other mailing services will also change. The average increase by class of mail is at or below the rate of inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

Customers can use their Forever Stamps after the price change, without the need for additional postage. Forever Stamps are widely available through Post Offices, grocery stores, and online.

Prices for mailing services will continue to adjust each May. Prices for most shipping services, including Express Mail and Priority Mail, were adjusted in January and will not change in May.

Visit www.usps.com for complete details.

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