

TEXAS LICENSE PLATE SET TO HIT ROADWAYS

Eight-year-old John Thomsett of Gilmer, Tx. joined Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) officials on Tuesday to announce that the colorful new general-issue license plate, Lone Star Texas, is about to hit Texas' roadways.

"My fellow Texans, I am pleased to announce that the new license plates have left the factory," John said during a TxDOT press conference at the Travis County tax office in Austin. "You will be seeing it on a car or truck near you real soon."

TxDOT began shipping the new general-issue plates to the 254 county tax offices statewide on Monday. County tax offices should have the Lone Star Texas plate in stock by no later than June 12.

"Because our state is real big, it will take about two weeks for the plates to arrive in all the county tax offices," John explained. County tax offices will need to exhaust their current plate inventory before issuing the Lone Star Texas plates.

In February 2008, John and his classmates at Gilmer Elementary School helped to choose the Lone Star Texas design as part of TxDOT's first online vote for a new general-issue license plate. John's teacher, Kerry Hradecky, cast the vote for the class.

"I was very excited that my students could be involved and have a voice in voting for such a prevalent symbol - our state license plate," said Hradecky, who teaches first grade at the Gilmer Elementary School. "We discussed that different states have different license plates based upon state characteristics and our privilege as Americans to vote."



Cindy Jones, who can trace her Texas roots back to an ancestor in the Republic of Texas Navy, said she cast her vote for the Lone Star Texas plate because it shows off the state's majesty and pride.

"The license plate was an inspiration - and I never thought I'd say that!," said Jones, who lives in Mason. "Allowing everyone to vote was a great idea."

Ed Serna, TxDOT assistant executive director for operations, said at the press conference the new general-issue plate goes by a special name at the agency. "At TxDOT we affectionately call it 'The People's Plate,'" Serna said.

Texans chose the Lone Star Texas plate from five different designs. The plate design received 455,878 of the more than 1.1 million Texans votes. The Texas Transportation Commission, which by law must approve the state's general-issue plate, unanimously agreed with online voters and approved the plate on Feb. 28, 2008.

The opportunity for a new general-issue license presented itself when the agency realized it was going to run out of the six-character plate patterns. The new general-issue plate features seven-character license plate numbers.

(Continued on Page 4)

Healthier Homes

Easy Ways to Improve Household Air Quality

By: Michelle & Charlie Bubnis

Home cleaning products contain an array of harmful chemicals that are not required by law to be listed on the products' label. These chemicals have a toxic effect on indoor air quality. The best way to avoid this unknown risk to your family is to create your own cleaning products which is much easier than one may think. **Here are some suggestions:**

- Almond Oil: Furniture polish
- Baking Soda: Cleans, deodorizes, removes stains and softens fabrics
- BonAmi: Functions as an abrasive cleanser
- Borax: Natural mineral that can be used to bleach, deodorize, remove stains, and boost soap. It also kills bacteria and mold. It can also be used in your dishwasher as 1 part borax and 1 part washing soda. Add ¼ cup to dishwasher load
- Castile Soaps: All purpose cleaner
- Citrus peels: Deodorize garbage disposal
- Cornstarch: Absorb oil and grease, starches clothes
- Club Soda: Pre-wash and stain remover
- Hydrogen Peroxide: Germicidal. Hydrogen Peroxide and cream of tartar paste make a good cleaner for sinks and bathtubs

(Continued on Page 5)

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Health & Safety

In the not-so-distant past, all dietary fats were declared to be unhealthy contributors to cardiovascular disease. However, we now distinguish between the different types of fat when deciding which to banish from our diets and which to embrace.



The Good: Unsaturated Fats

Unsaturated fats – almost always plant-based fats – are divided into monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats, and have beneficial effects on cholesterol levels.

The Bad: Saturated Fats

Next are the saturated fats, which come primarily from dairy and meats. These fats raise cholesterol levels, clog our arteries, and should be avoided.

The Ugly: Trans Fats

Lastly, there are trans fats, which are also called hydrogenated fats. They raise total and LDL (bad) cholesterol, and lower HDL (good) cholesterol. Once described as "hidden fats," a new law effective in January of 2006 requires that they now be listed on all food labels.

Consider these tips for choosing the best types of fat for your diet:

- Choose fish as a main course at mealtime at least twice a week.
- Use olive oil for sautéing, and in recipes for salad dressings and marinades.
- Avoid processed snacks. Choose a healthy snack of a small handful of nuts instead.
- Create healthy salads toppers of nuts or sunflower seeds rather than bacon bits.

Helpful Hints

The design of washing machines makes them intrinsically simple appliances to maintain. Here are some tips that will prolong the life of the machine and keep it operating at peak performance:

- Regularly inspect the hoses to ensure that they aren't bulging or cracked, and that the fittings aren't corroded. Hoses and fittings should be replaced every 3 to 4 years, regardless of visible condition.
- Cut the recommended amount of detergent and fabric softener in half (your clothes will come out just as clean). As a general rule, liquid detergent is better for the washing machine than powder.
- Use a carpenter's level to ensure the machine is stable. A washing machine that isn't level moves around, creating stress within the machine.
- Every 2 weeks, run a cycle of hot water with 2 cups of chlorine bleach or white vinegar and 1/2 cup of detergent through the washer. This will remove detergent buildup and help abate germ growth.



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License Plate - (Continued from Cover Page)

It also is the state's first digitally-produced and full color general-issue license plate. The Lone Star Texas design features clouds in a blue Texas sky and brushes of red and blue with the familiar Lone Star in white. The plate also features the Davis mountain range.

The digital process creates a more environmentally-friendly plate, eliminating the need for 484 gallons of paint thinners and 396 gallons of ink annually, and the energy needed to power huge ovens that dried the plate ink. The factory at the state prison in Huntsville, where the license plates are manufactured, was retooled and outfitted with new equipment for digital production.

"We are asking Texans to join us in our concern for the environment by not rushing down to their local county tax office to purchase this plate," said Rebecca Davio, director of TxDOT's Vehicle Titles and Registration Division, which oversees the manufacturing of the state's plates. "Our plates are made of recyclable aluminum but if everyone decides to run out for the new plate then good plates will be wasted."

Texans eligible for the new license plate will be those that purchase a new vehicle, and those whose license plates are seven years old, the mandatory time when plates are replaced because they lose their safety reflectivity.

Nelda Wells Spears, the Travis County tax assessor-collector,

reminded Texans that the reflective sheeting on license plates helps rescuers and citizens spot vehicles at night that have run off the road or are pulled off on the shoulder. License plates also help to save lives and catch criminals, Spears said.

"One of the primary tools for police when they are looking for a suspect, whether it be someone who abducted a child or robbed a bank, is to ask citizens to be on the look out for a certain vehicle model with a specific license plate number," Spears said. "While there may be thousands of the same type of vehicles on our roadways there will be only one with that unique license plate number."

There are more than 21 million registered vehicles in Texas and the majority of them have general-issue license plates. License plates are a part of "Put Texas in your corner," the vehicle registration process that includes annual renewal of the registration sticker.

Since 1917, the Texas Department of Transportation has been responsible for the state's license plates. This new general-issue license plate may be the agency's last. In the Texas legislative session that ended on Monday, June 1, lawmakers passed a bill to create the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles, which would take over responsibility for the state's license plates. The bill is awaiting Gov. Rick Perry's signature.

For more information contact:

Kim Sue Lia Perkes, Public Information Officer
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Healthy Homes- (Continued from Cover Page)

- Lemon Juice: Bleach alternative, grease cutter, stain and perspiration remover for clothing. Lemon juice and salad oil as a furniture polish. Lemon juice on a cloth cleans aluminum
- Table Salt: Abrasive cleaner
- Vinegar : Water softener, cuts grease, removes stains; strips lime deposits from showers, removes white haze on glassware
- Washing Soda :Cleans clothes, boosts soap's cleaning power, softens water, cuts grease and disinfects

Consider always avoiding fragranced cleaning or fragranced laundry products as 95% of chemicals used in fragrances are synthetic and derived from petroleum. These chemicals are combined in untested combinations. They are capable of causing cancer, birth defects, central nervous system disorders and allergic reactions.

So pick up a few of the suggested items listed above at the grocery store and the air quality in the home will improve along with the health of your family.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

1. Less Toxic Alternatives by Carolyn Gorman, 2004
2. The Most Common Chemicals Found in Thirty-One Fragrance Products by a 1991 EPA Study by Julia Kendall www.immuneweb.org/articles/perfume.html

Recipe of the Month

Ice Cream



Milk
4 eggs, beaten
2 C sugar
2 T cornstarch

1 can Eagle Brand
1 carton whipping cream
1 T vanilla



Combine sugar and cornstarch. In heavy saucepan combine about 2 cups milk, sugar/cornstarch mixture and beaten eggs. Cook until thick, stirring constantly. Pour into freezer can. Add Eagle Brand, whipping cream, vanilla, and enough milk to fill.



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Falls, entrapments, and injuries lead to drowning regardless of swimming level.

A majority of people overestimate their own and their child's ability to swim, especially in a panic event.

DROWNING IS QUICK AND SILENT



Drowning occurs in as little as 2 minutes.



Irreversible brain damage occurs in as little as 4 minutes.

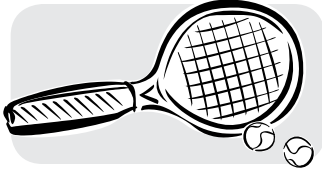


Most children are out of sight or missing for less than 5 minutes and usually in the presence of 1 or both parents.



Most children die who are submerged for as little as 6-10 minutes.

Children who drown do not **scream, splash, or struggle**. They silently slip beneath the water, even with adults & lifeguards present.



Four Stages Of Improving Your Game

Submitted by: Fernando M. Velasco

In past issues, we have covered how to get proper equipment and how to practice. In this issue, we will give you some advice on how to progress on your game following the CCDP stages:

STAGE ONE: CONSISTENCY

Our muscles react to repetition of something that feels good and natural. If a player needs work on a particular stroke, hundreds of balls need to be given so the production of their stroke looks the same regardless of where the ball is located. Consistency of grips, foot work, anticipation, point of contact and follow-through, need to be almost "carbon" copy of each other.

STAGE TWO: CONTROL

Do you know that there are only eight shots that can be executed when you hit a groundstroke? They are: cross court, down the line, flat, top spin, slice, drop shot, lob and "miss-hits" Once a player reaches the consistency of getting the ball over the net and into the court, the player needs to start working on controlling the "where" and "how" type of shot. As players advance on control, they will combine these shots, such as "top spin cross court, slice down the line, top spin lobs, etc.


STAGE THREE: DEPTH

Most players want to hit the ball an inch above the net height. If players look at most of the great players, they will realize that most of the shots they hit are at least three feet over the net and land between the service line and base line of their opponents. The balls that are "skimmed" over the net, are usually passing shots when the players come up to the net, or great winners that only a Roger Federer or an Andy Roddick can do with great control and consistency.

STAGE FOUR: POWER

Once a player feels comfortable with the first three stages, then it is time to create Power. Unfortunately, most tennis players become injured by going to the Fourth Stage too quick into the game and become frustrated, thus ruining their weekend games and being sore for an entire week due to torn muscles. Power is generated mostly by good timing, good foot work, reading early where the ball will land, and by planning the shot even before the player gets to the ball.

Most players in League level 2.5 to 4.0 will end up winning their matches by mastering the first three stages, while the ones going to stage Four too quick, will be spending their time with ice packs and taking Ibuprofen pills until the next match and start the "vicious" circle again....



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With its easy-to-read narrative style, **Wear Clean Underwear!** will lead you along an interactive path to explore some “what if” scenarios and how planning could affect the outcome for your family. It’s informative, but entertaining and anything but heavy reading. You’ll learn, for example, what could happen to your kids if you were in an accident and **why a Will provides a false sense of security.**

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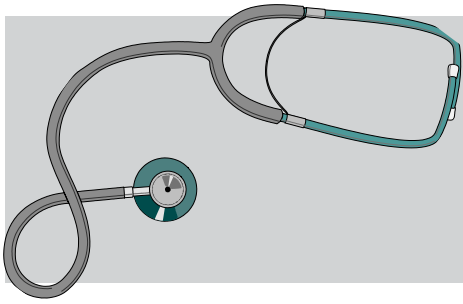
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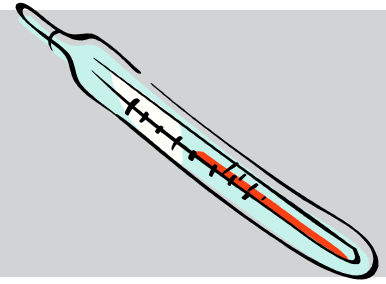
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MINOR STROKES HARDLY HARMLESS

No one is at zero risk for stroke, which explains why it is vital to know the signs and understand how to decrease the chance of experiencing one.

Warning signs include:

- Sudden numbness or weakness affecting the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden difficulty in speaking or understanding speech
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination

It's important to seek immediate emergency care if a person experiences these symptoms because current therapies for stroke must be applied within a few hours, according to neurologists at Baylor College of Medicine.

Good cardiovascular health habits greatly reduce the risk of stroke. Hypertension and diabetes must be recognized and treated. Smoking, obesity and lack of exercise all increase the risk of stroke, but that risk is reduced when a person modifies those habits.

GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP IMPORTANT TO WOMEN'S HEART HEALTH

Getting a good night's rest may help women minimize their risk of developing heart disease.

"Research has shown a link between sleep disturbances and the risk of developing heart disease," said Dr. Bhuvana Muthuswamy, assistant professor of medicine at BCM. \

Women need about eight hours of sleep a night, said Muthuswamy. That's easier said than done and may require key behavioral changes, including:

- Maintain a regular sleep/wake time
- Exercise regularly, but avoid exercising three hours prior to bedtime
- Finish eating two to three hours prior to bedtime
- Avoid caffeine and chocolate about six to eight hours prior to bedtime
- Restrict fluids, especially alcohol, close to bedtime

But most important is eliminating stress, according to Muthuswamy. "Approximately half of all sleep problems are attributed to stress," she said. "Relax with a good book, music or a bath before bedtime."

DON'T LET SWIMMER'S EAR RUIN YOUR SUMMER

If you've ever had swimmer's ear, chances are you've wanted to pull the plug on the pain.

Swimmer's ear is an inflammation of the outer ear that is most often caused by the accumulation of excess moisture from swimming or daily showering, explained Dr. Jeffrey Vrabec, associate professor of otorhinolaryngology at Baylor College of Medicine.

Symptoms include swelling, redness, itching, muffled hearing and/or discharge from the ear. Antibiotic drops are used to treat the condition, and pain can be lessened by applying a warm cloth to the ear or by using a heating pad.

Prevention is possible. Vrabec recommends the following:

- Wear earplugs and a cap when swimming.
- Use alcohol-based drops before and after swimming and showering.
- Use a hairdryer to dry the ear canal to prevent water build-up and infection.
- After getting out of the shower or pool, lie down on the affected ear to help remove excess water.
- Do not use cotton swabs to remove excess water from the ear.

REGAINING A HEALTHY LIVER, ONE POUND AT A TIME

For those suffering from cirrhosis of the liver resulting from nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, each pound lost is a step toward regaining your health, say doctors at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

"It's important for people to understand that cirrhosis can be caused by obesity in adults and children," said Dr. John Vierling, professor of medicine and surgery at BCM and director of Baylor Liver Health. "Very often people think it is only associated with over consumption of alcohol or viral hepatitis."

Reaching a healthy weight is one way to reverse damage to the liver. For many people the thought of having to lose 100 to 200 pounds is daunting, but Vierling said even losing 10 percent of your body weight can help the liver begin to heal.

Cirrhosis is a condition associated with dense scarring and regenerating nodules on the liver. It can result from a number of illnesses, including alcoholic and viral hepatitis, autoimmune and metabolic liver diseases. Nonalcoholic fatty liver disease causes cirrhosis when a large amount of fat accumulates in the liver in the presence of damaging inflammation.

How to Google Smarter

Submitted by Rich Keith

In my work as a financial service professional I often help my clients find information which will guide their understanding. But with my background in computer science I'm just geeky enough to enjoy the finer points of searching online. Here then, are ways to improve your Google experience.

- **Check your stocks.** Take a deep breath, and then enter a ticker symbol to see a real-time quote. Try ORCL or LUV.
- **Include the word you need.** Google ignores common words and characters such as where, the, how, and other digits and letters which slow down your search without improving the results. (Google will indicate if a word has been excluded by displaying details on the results page below the search box.)
- **If a common word is essential** to getting the results you want, you can include it by putting a "+" sign in front of it. (Be sure to include a space before the "+" sign.) For example, here's how to ensure that Google includes the "IV" in a search for Star Wars, Episode IV: Star Wars Episode +IV
- **Convert currency and units.** Easy examples: "12 euros in dollars" or "12 tsp in tbsp" or "12 % of 93,755" for example.
- Get the synonyms too with synonym search. If you want to

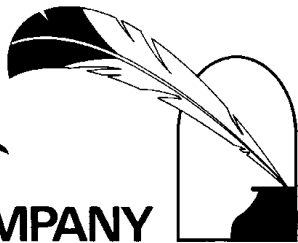
search not only for your search term but also for its synonyms, place the tilde sign (~) immediately in front of your search term. For example, suppose you want to search for food facts. Here's how to search for food facts and also get similar information on nutrition and cooking information: ~food ~facts.

- **Narrow by file type.** To find PowerPoints, Excel spreadsheets, or books scanned into PDFs, add "filetype:ppt" (or any other extension) to your query.
- **Search ranges.** Use two periods between two numbers, like "Wii \$200..\$300." Even dates work. Try "Earl Campbell 1970..1990"
- **Be prepared for flight delays.** Type in the airline, then your flight number, like "AA 1237."
- **Easy definitions.** To get the definition for a word, just type the word define: followed by the word. Include the colon and space, such as "define: annuity"
- **Find the right sources:** Add "site:edu" or "site:gov" to limit your search to school, org, or government domains. For example, "529 plan site:org." To target a specific web site, type, say, "annuity site: primerica.com."

(Continued on Page 14)

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SUMMERWOOD

How to Google Smarter - (Continued from Page 13)

- **Little known search operators.** This is neat: the asterisk (*) can be used if you don't know exactly how to spell a word. For instance, "contagiu*" will match all articles containing words that start in "contagiu." Give it a try, it's contagious. Other operators include the pipe code (|) which acts as the word "OR." For example, a search for "large cap|mid cap" will return search results for "large cap" OR "mid cap." You can also use the uppercase word OR. For example, here's how to search for a vacation in either Sedona or Flagstaff: "vacation Sedona OR Flagstaff"
- **Want a picture or a map?** Google can search for different media such as websites, images, videos, maps etc. Select the option above the input box. An easy way to refine your search is to select the "advanced search" option next to the input box.
- **Exact Phrases.** By default, Google searches for any of the terms you enter. To find a specific phrase, use double quotes (""). You will get different results for invest dollar cost average than you will for invest "dollar cost average".

Combine and see what happens. Now you have what you need to mix it up! I combined the stock search with the date range and it worked. To see information on Intel from 1968 (founding year) to 1978, type in "INTC 1968..1978". Now go and play with Google and see what you can find! Sources: Google, Wired.

Sudoku

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

2		6	3			1	7	
					2	3		
	1				8		4	
4		3		7	6	5		
			8	5				
6	9			2				
								6
		1			4	7		
	7			8				

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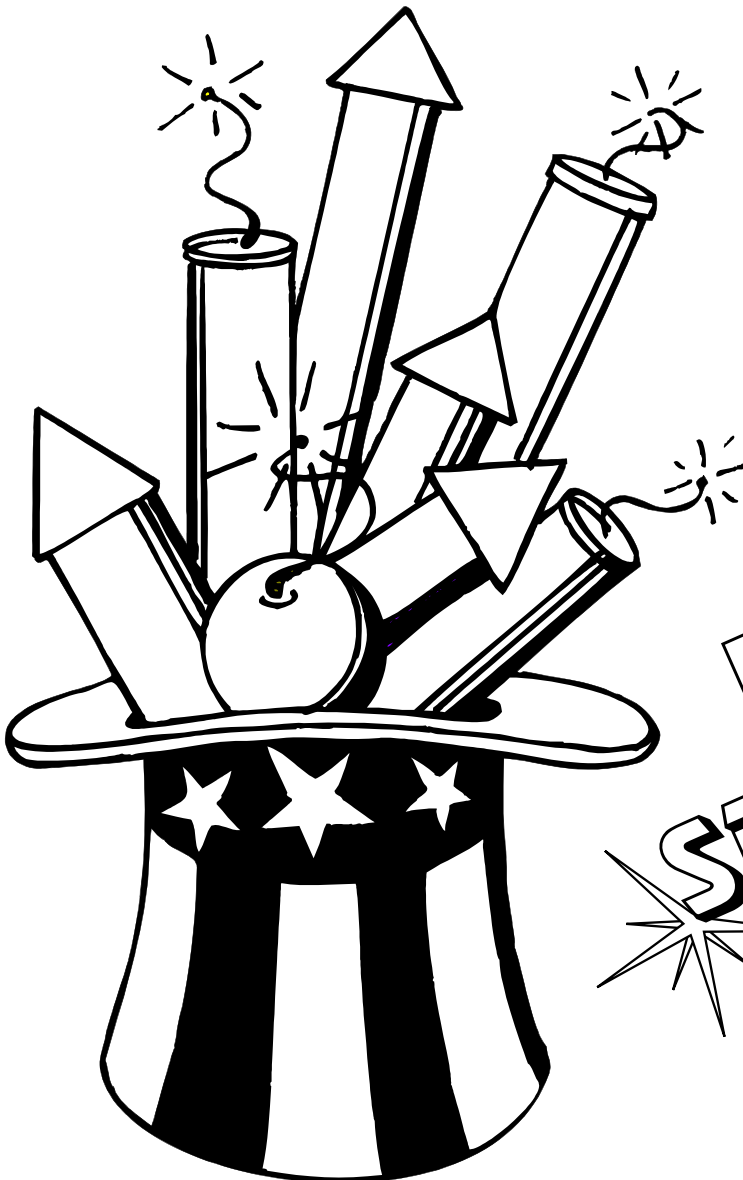
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SPARKLING
4th!**

SW

Who knows the neighborhood better than a NEIGHBOR?



	Dec 08	Jan 09	Feb 09	Mar 09	Apr 09	May 09
\$300,000+	3	1	5	4	5	0
\$250 - 299,999	1	0	0	1	1	1
\$200 - 249,999	7	2	2	1	4	4
\$170 - 199,999	2	1	2	3	5	4
Under \$170,000	3	5	3	1	0	3
TOTAL	16	9	12	10	15	12
New Construction	7	8	3	5	6	2
Resales	9	1	9	5	9	10
Avg \$/Sq Ft	78.06	60.42	76.40	80.46	78.32	78.81
Avg Days on Mkt	143	162	139	158	116	68



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Summerwood Resident
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Summerwood is the Greater Houston Builder's Association Community of the Year for 2006. **

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