



CIRCLE C RANCH

The Official Publication of the
Circle C Homeowner's Association

Newsletter

Volume 7, Number 1

January 2010

www.circlecranch.info

CIRCLE C HOA ANNUAL MEETING

and Board Election

The Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for the three open board seats (election to be held March 11, 2009 at the Annual Meeting) through January 15, 2009. You can download a Candidate Questionnaire from the News Section of the Circle C Website (http://www.circlecranch.info/news/AnnounceGet.asp?asn_id=14837&link_id=147064)

The Annual Meeting and Election will be held on Thursday, March 11, 2009 at 6:30pm in the Kiker Elementary cafeteria. Your ballot and proxy will be printed on the back side of the first 2010 CCHOA dues assessment invoice (which is mailed Feb 1 and due Mar 1).

You should have received a first class letter from the HOA the first week of January detailing the annual meeting changes.

The Nominating Committee will host a Candidate Forum on Thursday, February 18, 2009, 6:30pm in the Kiker library.

*Please Take a Moment to Vote
This Year in the CCHOA
Board of Directors Election.*

*We Need a 10% Quorum in Order
to Host the Annual Meeting
on March 11th.*

2009 ANNUAL *Holiday Party*



The annual CCHOA Holiday Party held on December 5th was a great success! We estimated over 800 attendees. We would like to extend our thanks to the Circle C Child Development Center for allowing the HOA to host this celebration at their facility. They also provided many of the volunteers on

the day of the event – Thank You!

New toys were collected on behalf of the Adoption Coalition of Texas. When all the toys were delivered to the warehouse, many of the volunteers were brought to tears with the amount of toys donated by Circle C Ranch. These toys are given to children in the foster care system. Thank you to everyone who donated towards this worthy cause.



CCHOA NUMBERS

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

Circle C Amenities

Circle C Café 288-6058
 Circle C CDC 288-9792
 Circle C Swim Center 288-6057
 Circle C Tennis Club General@CircleCTennis.com, 301-8685

Sub Association Info:

KB Enclave and Fairway Estates HOA
 Karen Hibpshman, CMCA, Manager 347-2891
 Parkwest HOA
 Goodwin Management 502-7509
 Streetman Enclave HOA
 K.O. Orsak 646-6739
 Muirfield HOA
 Sara Huff 219-1927

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

City of Austin Solid Waste 974.1945
 Dead Animal Collection 974.2000
 Abandoned Vehicle 974.8119
 Pothole Complaints 974.8750
 Stop Signs 457.4885
 Street Light Outage 505.7617
 Schools
 Clayton Elementary 841.9200
 Kiker Elementary 414.2584
 Mills Elementary 841.2400
 Bailey Middle School 414.4990
 Gorzycki Middle School 841-8600
 Small Middle School 841.6700
 Bowie High School 414.5247
 SAYSA 899.1049

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Jan 15 – Board Candidate Nomination Deadline

Feb 18 – Board Candidate Forum

Mar 11 – Annual Meeting

CIRCLE C OPEN HOUSE

Circle C Open House is a neighborhood-wide tour of open houses. Any realtor or FSBO may register their home within Circle C. Tours are held every other Sunday from 1pm to 4pm in Circle C. Submit your listings by 12pm (noon) on Friday to have your property on the next tour. Questions? info@circlecopenhouse.com or www.circlecopenhouse.com

ADVERTISING INFO

Please support the advertisers that make the Circle C Ranch Newsletter 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 8th of the month prior to the issue.



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Not intended to solicit properties currently for sale.

Calendar of Events

January 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
HAPPY NEW YEAR!					1	2
Vasquez Benefit ³ 4-9:00 PM Open House Tours 1-4 pm	4	5	6	7	8 Newsletter Advertising Deadline	9
10 Newsletter Article Deadline	11	12	13	14	15 CCHOA BOD Nominations Deadline	16
17 Circle C Open House Tours 1-4 pm	18	19	20 CCHOA BOD Monthly Meeting	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30 31

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Thank You!

The children of the Ronald McDonald House and their families would like to Thank You for your kind donations!

Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who is in the habit of collecting their aluminum soda can tabs! The HOA is continuing to collect aluminum soda can tabs in the management office so please **DO NOT** throw your cans away without taking off the tabs. The tabs will be donated to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Austin and Central Texas. To read more about the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Austin and Central Texas, you can visit <http://www.rmhc-austin.org/>. Thank you to resident Bob Hendee for volunteering his time to this effort.



Holiday Lights

Circle C is one of the best places to be during the holidays largely because of all the wonderful lights. The common areas are lit up and many homeowners participate by decorating their own homes. However, we ask that everyone comply with the deed restrictions and remove their lights by January 15th.



HOUSE ADDRESS

Markings

It has been brought to our attention that during this past holiday season, packages and deliveries were delayed due to drivers being slowed down while searching for a specific house number. If these drivers were having difficulty, you should assume that EMS, fire, and police will also have difficulty should you need them in an emergency situation. Please make sure that your home address is clearly visible from the street.



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Be A Good Neighbor

We receive many calls and emails at the HoA office concerning neighbors storing their trash and recycle carts in view from the street. Please be a good neighbor and store your trash and recycle carts out of view (ideally in the garage or behind your fence).



PLEASE RECYCLE

Your Junk Mail

Please recycle your junk mail by taking home and shredding and placing in your recycle bin rather than throwing away at the mail center. This is safer for you and the environment.



HAVE YOU RECEIVED

a Deed Restriction Notice?

As reported in each month's newsletter, the HOA staff drives at least two sections of the neighborhood per month to note violations of the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions. These commonly include: front yard landscape maintenance (mowing, edging, free of weeds), home maintenance (paint, screens, siding) and recreational vehicles (boats, RV's, trailers) parked in the driveway. The HOA is required by state law to notify owners in writing via certified mail and allow for the homeowner to request a hearing before the board of directors. If you receive a letter, please contact us at the HOA office and let us know your individual situation. We would like to work with you to bring your home into compliance. If you would like to report a violation, you can do so via our website at www.circlecranch.info



Time for a new AC system?

Not sure if your current system will get you through the coming seasons? Call us for a **Winter Special System Check-Up**. We'll evaluate your system's condition and recommend any needed repairs or replacement. Already know you need a new system? Get a **FREE Comfort Consultation** with each complete System Replacement!



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CIRCLE C LANDSCAPE

Submitted by Susan Hoover

Watering your landscape during the winter can sometimes be puzzling. This winter in particular, our vegetation should obtain a good state of dormancy due to some early freezes in December. Everything looks browned out, and most often the treatment is to let it sit there until Spring.

Also, the winter months are devoted to wastewater averaging by the City of Austin. For the exact details on this you can go to the City of Austin website at www.ci.austin.tx.us and access the water utility page to see how it works. Basically, you want to conserve as much water as possible over the wastewater averaging period as this is the determining factor for how the City estimates your wastewater bill for the remainder of the year.

So, most of you should have turned off those irrigation systems. However, there are a few exceptions to this rule. If you have new trees, they still need water. Depending on temperatures and rainfall, you want to make sure they don't completely dry out. Check them at least every ten days, and hand water if necessary. Same for the rest of your lawn and beds—if we get no rain, you might want to run that irrigation system one or two times a month, briefly. In the winter with average temperatures in Austin, you need about .5 inches of rainfall or water to keep everything in good shape.

The next topic for the winter is to resist fertilizing your lawn too early. Right after the first of the year, the big box stores start selling lots of fertilizer. We recommend that you resist the temptation to get the fertilizing out of the way. It needs to be put on when the grass is actively growing or it will do nothing and run off before it is useful. Plan to fertilize when the night time temperature is consistently above 60-65 degrees at night. Generally we fertilize the commons areas between the last two weeks of March and the first two weeks of April. Over-fertilizing causes weakened turf and disease, particularly on St. Augustine grass.

In January on the commons areas we will be performing the following tasks: perennial pruning (generally at the end of January); weed treatment and pre-emergent weed treatment, as well as crepe myrtle pruning. The winter months are also a recommended time to prune your live oak trees.

As we get into 2010, Circle C Landscape will be working on additional capital improvements to the commons areas. All improvements comply with the Green Community Model, and emphasize water conservation, low negative environmental impact, drought tolerant plantings and diversity of vegetation. We will be concentrating on irrigation improvements such as adding drip irrigation in some areas, fine tuning areas to eliminate run off, running bubblers to trees to assist with drought management, and replacing outdated equipment with more water efficient systems. There are funds allocated for selected turf replacement, as well as restorations where needed throughout Circle C Ranch.



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BUY OR SELL IN 2010?



	Yes	No
1. Is your home too small?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does your home need updating?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you want better schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Do you want a shorter commute?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Do you want a better neighborhood?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Do you have job security?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Would you like nicer neighbors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Have you put off doing maintenance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Is your yard too small for entertaining, recreation, or pets?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Have you been thinking of moving, but uncertain about the market?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>




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Clubs & Announcements

CIRCLE C
Swim Center
News



WINTER HOURS
October 26th-March 14th
Circle C Swim Center

MONDAY THRU FRIDAY
Mornings - 6am-10am
Evenings - 4pm-7:30pm
Closed: Weekends

HOLIDAY CLOSURES
December 21st-January 1st

Submitted by Brandon Ducote

RECYCLE YOUR XMAS TREE

With Bowie HS Tennis Team!

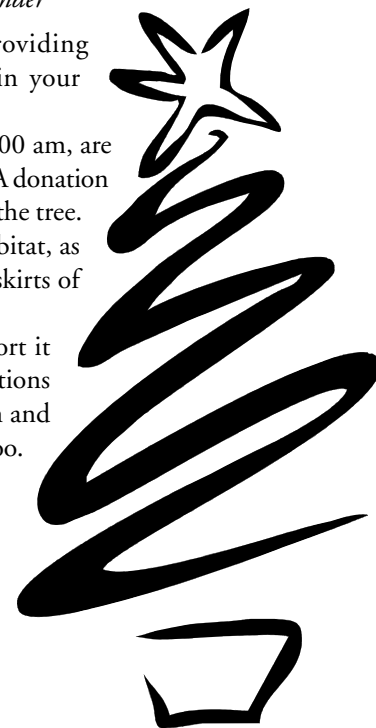
Submitted by Angela Alexander

The Bowie High School Tennis Team will be providing their yearly fundraiser, the Christmas tree pick-up, in your neighborhood once again.

The dates to leave your clean trees on the curb, by 9:00 am, are Wednesday, December 30th and Saturday, January 2nd. A donation check payable to "Bowie Tennis" can be left attached to the tree. The trees will be going to the Austin Zoo for animal habitat, as well as going to an organic recycling facility on the outskirts of Austin.

The Bowie Tennis Team greatly appreciates the support it gets from the Circle C neighborhood. Your kind donations allow us to purchase much needed supplies for the team and attend tournaments. Please email bowietennisrules@yahoo.com with your address and intended pick-up date.

Many thanks, Bowie Tennis



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Central Texas Gardening 101

Submitted by Bonnie Martin

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 2010
10AM-NOON
ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN

Austin offers a unique mixture of weather, soil, and environment and the rules of gardening here are likely different from other areas you might have gardened before. This seminar is great for those establishing new roots in our area and trying to figure out how to encourage their plants to do the same or for those who need a refresher on the gardening basics of our area.

Join Daphne Richards, Horticulture Agent at the Texas Agrilife Extension Service for Travis County, to cover what you need to know to be a successful central Texas gardener. Included in the discussion will be our seasonal growing calendar, how to work with challenging soils, maintenance schedules for pruning and planting, tips on giving your plants the best start in your garden, and more.

This seminar is free, open to the public and requires no reservations. It 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.

PARK WEST HOA NEWS

(Specifically for
Park West Residents)

Submitted by Jackie Rollins

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS

The Park West HOA Board of Directors extends a happy, healthy and prosperous new year to all Park West residents and their families and thanks everyone for their support in the past year.

PARK WEST ANNUAL MEETING

Mark your calendars to attend the annual meeting at Kiker Elementary School on Tuesday, February 2, at 7 p.m. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Voting will be conducted to fill the seats of three Directors. If any homeowner is interested in running for the Board, please contact the Nominating Committee by calling Board President Frances Bush at 394-9539.

'TIS THE SEASON

Per the Park West Rules, Holiday lights are permitted from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day. They must be removed no later than January 15.

(Continued on Page 12)

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Clubs & Announcements

Park West HOA News - (Continued from Page 11)

PLEASE DON'T FEED THE ANIMALS

This message is a rerun. Why? Because some of our very kind-hearted and caring residents are doing the one thing that you should never do – putting food out for furry critters like raccoons, possums, squirrels, et al. They are wild animals after all and by nature learn to fend for themselves. If we “mess with mother nature,” they will return time after time for an easy meal, oftentimes remaining in the vicinity and thus creating an invitation for potentially destructive behavior. Here are some examples:

- Hiring of pest control companies by multiple neighbors at substantial cost to remove critters from their attics, not to mention the cost of repairing damages caused by raccoons to roofs and heating and air conditioning systems.
- Loss of a section of an alarm system due to squirrels chewing through the wiring.
- Risk of fire from critters chewing through wires.
- Danger to pets; transmittal of diseases.
- Increase in rodent population triggering a food source invitation to snakes and coyotes.

Please don't feed the animals.

REMINDER

If you're having any kind of landscaping or redesign work done (it goes without saying that you've requested approval for the work through the appropriate channels) and it involves rock, stone, gravel or the like, PLEASE ensure that you or your contractor don't just dump the load directly onto the street at curbside but first place some sort of covering on the ground to protect the sealcoat and the street from unnecessary wear and tear. Likewise, if anything is unloaded on your driveway, steps should be taken to protect its surface as well.

GOOD NEIGHBORS OF THE MONTH

Thanks and appreciation go to Wayne Gonzalez, who, while walking his two dogs past a house whose owners were away, noticed a flood of water from a broken irrigation pipe. He averted a potential disaster by shutting the water off in the nick of time. And then there are our unsung good neighbors: the one who brings in your paper/garbage and recycle carts when you are away....the one who feeds your cat/dog/fish while you relax at the beach....the one who runs to H-E-B and picks up a few things you need when you're under the weather....the one who takes an elderly neighbor to the emergency room when asked....the neighbor who picks up their dog's poop

(Continued on Page 13)



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Park West HOA News - (Continued from Page 12)

and any other poop found along the way...the neighbor who offers other neighbors unused tickets to an event....the neighbor who helps another neighbor with their taxes. There are lots of "silent" good neighbors in Park West seeking no recognition and doing what good neighbors have always done. Hats off to each and every one of you!

HELPING HANDS

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

THANK YOU

To everyone who carries a plastic bag to scoop the poop while walking their pet: you're helping to keep Park West's streets and curb grass clean and environmentally safe, while also following City of Austin, Circle C and Park West rules. And another thank you to everyone who shows consideration for the appearance of the neighborhood on Sundays when there are visitors for open houses and family gatherings by waiting until after 5 p.m. to place their garbage and recycle carts at the curb.

UNTIL NEXT TIME

This is your column and your input is important. Without it, there wouldn't be a column. So, please contact Jackie Rollins at 301-1839 or JackieRollins02@aol.com with your suggestions and items of interest.

JANUARY EVENTS

at the Wildflower Center

ADMISSION IS FREE ENTIRE MONTH OF JANUARY

WINTER CLEARANCE IN THE STORE

Saturday, January 9

Save up to 50 percent on apparel and gift items, reduced to clear!

BOOK CLEARANCE IN THE STORE

Saturday, January 16

Save 30 to 40 percent on selected titles.

TREE TALK & WINTER WALK

9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday, January 23

Learn about Texas trees and tree maintenance. A select group of hard-to-find trees and shrubs for sale along with guided walks and talks. Free Admission.



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CIRCLE C TENNIS NEWS

*Provided by Fernando Velasco,
General Manager and Director of Tennis, Circle C Tennis Club*

How to Avoid Injuries Playing Tennis in Cold Weather

Tennis is a sport that can be played under the most challenging conditions, except for rain. Mild wind and reasonable cold temperature are not factors for not playing. Some league matches will not be played if the temperature is below 40 degrees with a wind chill factor of 35 degrees. Otherwise, if not raining, players will be determined to get "their fix" of playing tennis.

Unfortunately, if players are not well prepared to play under "challenging cold" conditions, injuries may occur. Here are some tips on how to avoid getting hurt:

1. Dress warmly – a good warm up or good set of sweat pants and shirt will keep you warm.
2. Wear several layers of clothing.
3. Use a hat or a cap to keep your head warm.
4. Wear ear muffs to keep ears warm.
5. Wear gloves to keep hands warm. There are special tennis gloves one can purchase. If not driving gloves or golf gloves will do.
6. Run in place for about 2 minutes to get muscles warmed up.
7. Stretch at least 10 minutes from largest muscles (legs) to smaller muscles (hands, neck and shoulders).
8. Without a ball, swing the tennis racket pretending to hit forehands, backhands and serves.
9. Once warmed up, play "mini-tennis" with opponent using only the service boxes as your limits
10. As one feels ready to hit harder balls, retrieve back to baselines and rally for at least five minutes.
11. Warm up volleys, overheads and serves.
12. Now you are ready to begin to play your match.
13. Keep layers of clothes on until you feel that your body is now "ready" to play hard tennis.
14. After playing, change wet clothes with dry ones, and re-do your stretching exercises.

Most tennis trainers encourage good stretching, not only PRIOR to playing but also POST playing for best avoidance of injuries.

KIKER CAMP READ

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join Camp Read! Camp Read is a volunteer-run reading program offered at Kiker Elementary, and it's designed to help students strengthen their reading fluency and comprehension. Our volunteers work one-on-one with students while following an easy but effective curriculum. They make a difference in the children's lives by helping them grow into more confident readers! We welcome parents, grandparents, retirees, older students needing to earn volunteer hours, or anyone who loves to work with children.

Camp Read offers 30-minute time slots throughout the day during school hours. Volunteers sign up for as little or as many time slots as they wish. A brief training session and background check will be required. Please contact Christie Whittington at 301-0930 or christie@whitting.org if you're interested in volunteering, or visit our "mysignup" page and check out the available time slots: <http://www.mysignup.com/kikercampread>

- Submitted by Christie Whittington



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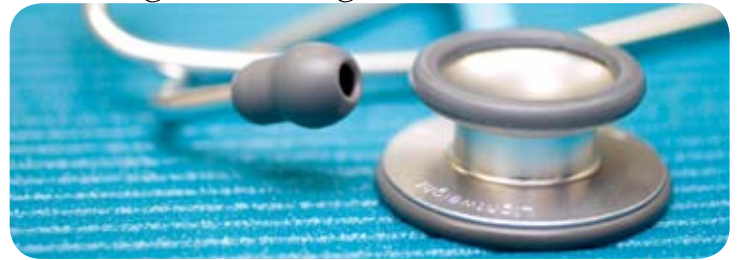
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HEALTH BRIEFS

Baylor College of Medicine



DON'T LOSE SLEEP OVER NIGHTTIME BED WETTING

Giving children control over bed wetting helps them overcome not only the nighttime nuisance but also the stigma of it, say doctors at Baylor College of Medicine.

"Because studies have yet to identify the cause of nighttime bed wetting, no one treatment is guaranteed to work for everyone. Nevertheless, the course of action with which the child is most comfortable tends to produce the best outcome," said Dr. Edmond T. Gonzales, Jr., professor of urology at BCM. "With parents' support, giving children an active role in treatment builds confidence."

Some of the treatment options include prescription medications. One commonly used medicine makes the body react as if dehydrated so the kidneys retain liquids overnight. Another treatment involves an alarm system worn in pajamas that sounds when it becomes wet.

More commonly, doctors suggest parents limit the amount of liquids children drink in the evening and schedule a bathroom break before bed.

Gonzales said family doctors can help rule out any major health problems that could be contributing to bed wetting before discussing the many options.

CELL PHONE USAGE MAY SEND WRONG MESSAGE

If you roll your eyes when people are chatting away on their cell phones in a public place, you're not alone. According to an expert at Baylor College of Medicine, public cell phone use may show disrespect and impede social interaction.

"Depending on the situation, cell phone use can be problematic," said Dr. Catherine Barber, assistant professor in the Menninger department of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at BCM.

Talking on your cell phone at social events conveys that other people's time is not as important as yours. Loud cell phone talk can intrude on others' privacy and need for quiet, and it can even make people feel uncomfortable.

Romero suggests talking quietly if you must use the phone, or excusing yourself to take a call and making it brief. She suggests not accepting non-urgent calls. It's important to be mindful and respectful of others around you, said Romero.

If someone around you is disturbing you with their cell phone conversation, Romero suggests gently approaching them and asking them to reduce their volume. It's important to convey that you are not angry. If they refuse, remove yourself from the situation.

AUSTIN NEWCOMERS CLUB

January Luncheon

Austin Newcomers is a social organization dedicated to introducing residents to the Austin Community and giving them the opportunity to meet and make new friends. Join us at our monthly luncheon as well as take the opportunity to learn about and become involved in many fun Interest groups.

TIME: 11:00 AM Social - 12 Noon Luncheon

DATE: January 20, 2010

(Reservations required by Thursday, January 14th)

LOCATION: Green Pastures Restaurant

811 W. Live Oak Street, Austin, 78704

LUNCHEON COST: \$20 per person

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

www.austinnewcomers.com or call 512-314-5100

JANUARY PROGRAM: Wild Women of the Old West

The Old West was difficult for women. Not all had brave husbands who provided for them and made the family living. Frontier women

without the protection of a husband or parents were left to do whatever they could to survive.

Many of the men who were outlaws have become legends with heroic stature. The women outlaws are not well known, but many had fascinating lives. These are not the pioneer women with the sunbonnets who organized our churches, but women who made up their own rules and did what they had to do to live in a tough and lonely world.

Martha McLain will tell us the stories of these women. Marti's family has ranched in Sutton County, Texas for over 100 years. She is a graduate of the University of Texas, did her graduate work in American Studies at the University of Texas Permian Basin, and studied Spanish and archeology in Mexico City and Guadalajara. She has held various offices in the Daughters of the Republic of Texas and was named a Honorary Regent for Life in the Daughters of the American Revolution. She is the author of *Love Letter of the Old West* and April 1, 1902, a columnist, play director (won Best Direction of a Drama award), and speaker.

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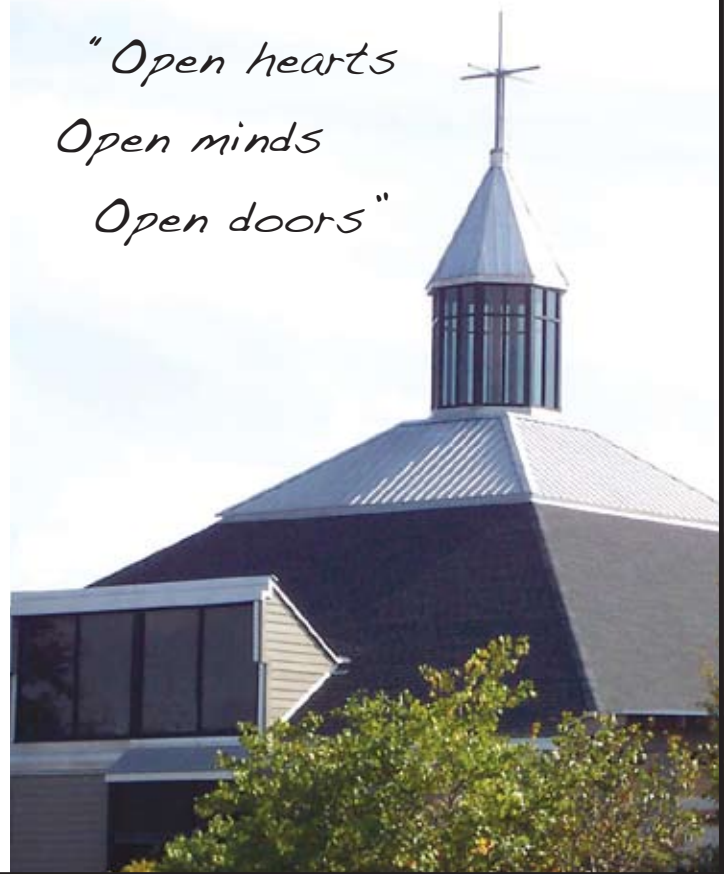
11:15 A.M. Traditional Worship Service & Sunday School

(Sunday School includes classes for Children and Adults.)

Please call the church office at 288-3836 or visit our website
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for additional information.



Oak Hill United Methodist Church is located on Hwy. 290, just west of the Hwy. 290/Hwy. 71 split ("the Y") in Oak Hill. We are directly across from the ACC Pinnacle Building.



News You Can Use

Have You Googled Lately?

Submitted by Laurie Scott

Google is best known of course for its search engine (with 65% of the market no one is even close), and perhaps you're also a user of gmail, Google's free email service, but did you know that Google also offers everything from photo editing to telephone services for free? *The list is too long to cover everything here, but here are a few highlights you might be interested in:*



- PICASA - This is a very easy to use photo editing program that can do everything from correcting color, contrast and saturation with a single click to automatically finding the "red" in the red-eye in your photos.
- GMAIL - With gigabytes of free storage that grows everyday, gmail is a great email alternative. With an excellent junk mail filter and superfast searches of all your messages, it is worth taking a look at.
- GOOGLE DOCS - Looking for a free alternative to a locally installed office productivity suite, Google Docs offers what most

people need through your web browser, including a word processor, spreadsheet and presentation manager.

- GOOG-411 - Hate paying a dollar or more just to dial 411 from your cell phone? Next time dial 1-800-GOOG-411 (800-466-4411) and forget those high cell-phone fees.
- CALENDAR - Google Calendar makes it easy to sync all your calendars together and share events with your friends. It can work alone or with most mail clients on your computer and cell phones.
- GOOGLE VOICE - How about one phone number for the rest of your life? With Google Voice you can get a free phone number that when called, will ring one or several phones of your choice at the same time, take messages and then forward a transcript via SMS to your cell phone. You can listen to your messages on the web, and even place calls from your browser. You can also have customized voice mail greetings depending on who is calling you.

(Continued on Page 19)

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Have You Googled Lately? - (Continued from Page 18)

- Blogging - Have something to say and want your own place to say it, then you want Blogger. If it's interesting to you, then publish yourself for nothing more than the time it takes you to write.
- GOOGLE HEALTH - Store your family's medical records securely online, making it easy to share with your doctor or other physician when necessary
- GOOGLE EARTH - Take a look at the neighborhood where you grew up, or maybe the home where friends overseas live. With Google Earth you can tour the world from your computer.

Google encourages its employees to take a certain amount of time to work on projects they find interesting, which is where a lot of Google's products come from. You can bet there will be more to come in the next year.

Advertising Information

Please support the businesses that advertise in the Circle C Ranch Newsletter. Their advertising dollars make it possible for all residents to receive a newsletter at no charge. No homeowners association funds are used to produce or mail the newsletters. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office at 512-263-9181 or advertising@PEELinc.com for ad information and pricing.

Recipe of the Month

Cheese Ball

Ingredients


- 2 - 8 oz. pkgs. cream cheese
- 1 small can crushed pineapple, drained well
- ¼ C green onion, chopped
- ¼ C green pepper, chopped
- 1½ tsp. seasoned salt
- 1 C nuts, finely chopped

Directions

Mix well. Form a ball and roll in chopped nuts.



If you would like to submit YOUR recipe email it to articles@peelinc.com.



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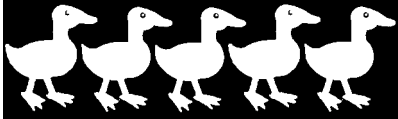


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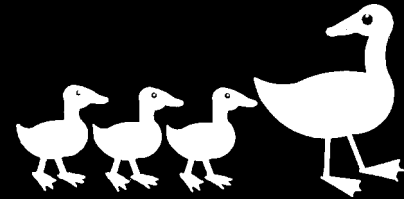
Located at the corner of West Slaughter and Mopac, behind the Wendy's in the Shops at Slaughter Creek

News You Can Use



NATURE WATCH

Dabblers and Divers



Wintertime is the perfect time to look for ducks in Central Texas. Several species that breed far north of our state's border return to Texas in the colder months to feed in our unfrozen freshwater lakes and rivers. From the Old English 'duce', the word duck is a derivative of the verb meaning to duck or dive, or bend down low as if to get under something. It best describes the way many ducks feed, by upending or diving under the water in search of a wide variety of food sources, such as small aquatic plants, grasses, fish, insects, amphibians, worms and mollusks. Most ducks fall into either the dabbler or diver category. Dabblers feed on the surface of the water, and sometimes on land, while divers disappear completely beneath the surface and forage deep underwater. In general, divers are heavier than dabblers, which gives them the ability to submerge more easily, but they often pay the price by having more difficulty when taking off to fly.

The most distinctive dabbling duck is the Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeada*). True to its name, it possesses a two and a half inch long bill, which is spoon-shaped and has a comb-like structure called a pecten at the edge of its beak. The pecten is used to filter food from the water and to aid in preening its feathers. A medium-sized duck, the adult male (or drake) has an iridescent green head, rusty sides, and a white chest. When flushed from her nest, the adult female (or hen) will often defecate on the eggs, presumably to deter predators from eating them. This species of duck is monogamous, and stays together longer than any other known pairs of dabbling duck species.

Another common dabbler is the American wigeon (*Anas americana*), whose population is increasing throughout its range. The male has a white crown, green face patch, large white patches in its wings, and a black rear end bordered by white. At one time this

(Continued on Page 23)



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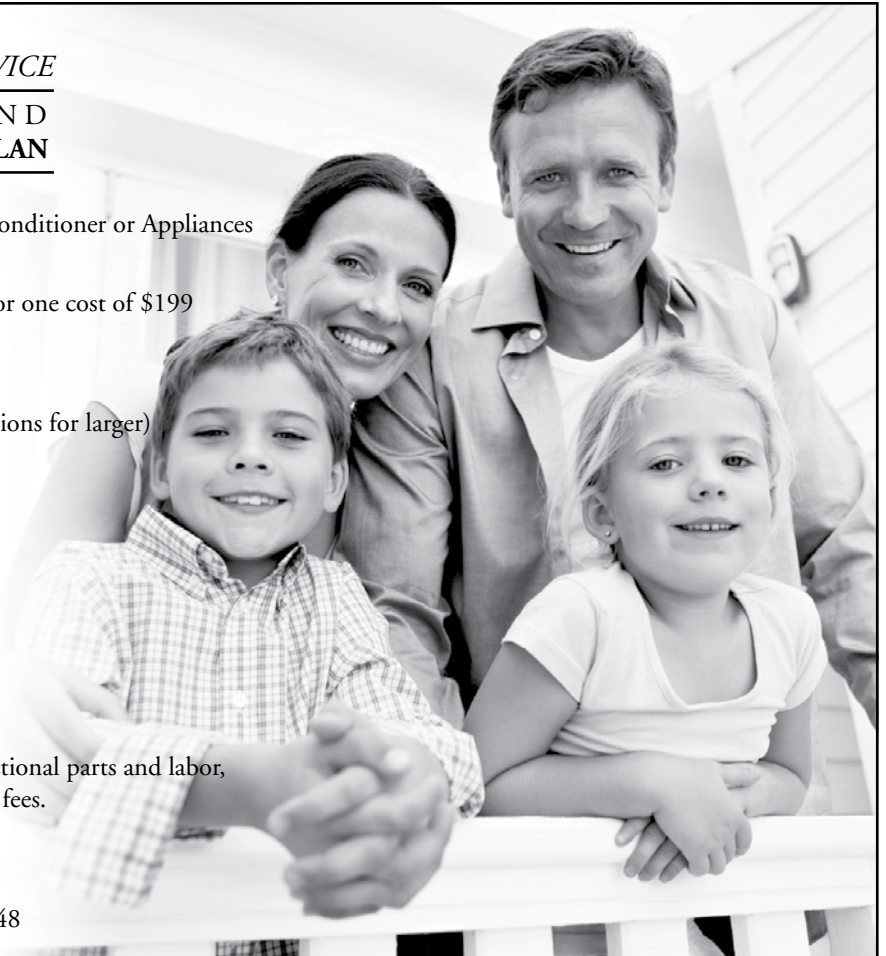
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Northern Shoveler



American Wigeon



Lesser Scaup



Ring-necked Duck

Nature Watch - (Continued from Page 22)

duck was known as 'baldpate' due to the white crown resembling a man's bald head. Its feeding behavior is distinctive among the dabbling ducks, as its short bill allows it to be much more efficient at plucking vegetation from both the water and sometimes even agricultural fields. The diet of this duck has been shown to include a much higher proportion of plant matter than any other dabbling species.

Among the most abundant and widespread freshwater diving ducks is the Lesser scaup (Aythya affinis). The male has a slight bump or peak on the back of the head, a bluish bill with a small black tip, grey sides (black on the ends with white in the middle), and a black head, chest, and rear end. When grasped by a predator like a grey fox, an adult Lesser scaup may play dead, rendering itself immobile with its head extended, eyes open, and wings floded close to its body. They are capable of diving underwater the day they are hatched, but

are too buoyant to stay under for long, until maturity gives them the body composition and strength they need to stay underwater for longer periods of time.

Usually found on smaller, calmer bodies of water like ponds, Ring-necked ducks (Aythya collaris) are more readily identified by the bold white ring around their bill that the subtle purplish band around their necks for which they are named. A medium-sized diving duck, they also have a small bump or peak on the back of their black heads, with the male having a black chest, back, and rear end, with grey sides and a white stripe up the shoulder.

The next time you visit a lake, river, or pond this winter, venture out to the quiet corners to see if you can spot one of our best known dabblers or divers!

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

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A SENSIBLE PLAN FOR COLLEGE FUNDING

How you fund college expenses is divided naturally between using your money, and by using other peoples' money. This sounds simple but each scenario requires understanding of the long-term impacts. In this article we are going to focus on free money, and on "Tax Scholarships," where the Federal Government helps you send your child to college through tax savings and other methods.

Recently the federal government boosted financial aid for higher education, including various tax breaks. An expanded version of the Hope Scholarship tax credit appeared called the American Opportunity tax credit. The new credit can save taxpayers as much as \$2,500 in tax, or \$5,000 for two collegians, and a refund of \$1,000, if you satisfy certain rules.

Remember that you can't claim the American Opportunity credit for expenses paid with withdrawals from a 529 plan. So you may wish to limit 529 withdrawals so some college expenses are paid with other money, to allow the use of the new tax credit. Some students won't qualify for the American Opportunity credit. Fortunately, a Lifetime Learning tax credit provides a maximum annual credit of \$2,000 for tuition and fees, subject to rules.

The tax advantages of 529 plans are many. A down year for stock funds, combined with a poor year for many bond funds, has driven

down the value of many folks' 529 accounts. People with younger children can keep contributing and look to a rebound. Parents of college and pre-college students, though, may have few options other than using 529 plan withdrawals to pay for higher education. Having said that, it may be better to pay for college from cash flow or from cash reserves. This delays liquidation of 529 assets as long as possible, allowing for a recovery. Remember to reimburse yourself from your 529 plan before the end of the calendar year in which the expenses were incurred.

If the market does not come back in time for your needs, you still have options. If you have other funds that can cover college bills without disrupting your financial plan, keep the money in the 529 as long as feasible, in hopes of future tax-free growth. Of course, if a child is finishing school and there is no younger sibling who could use the funds in the future, then you should spend down your 529 funds. Tax tip: parents of college-bound children should realize net losses in their taxable accounts to lock in tax benefits. The proceeds can be reinvested in 529 accounts so that any future gains from today's low levels can be withdrawn, tax-free, to pay for college later on; perhaps in graduate school. Check with your financial coach and tax advisor for full details.



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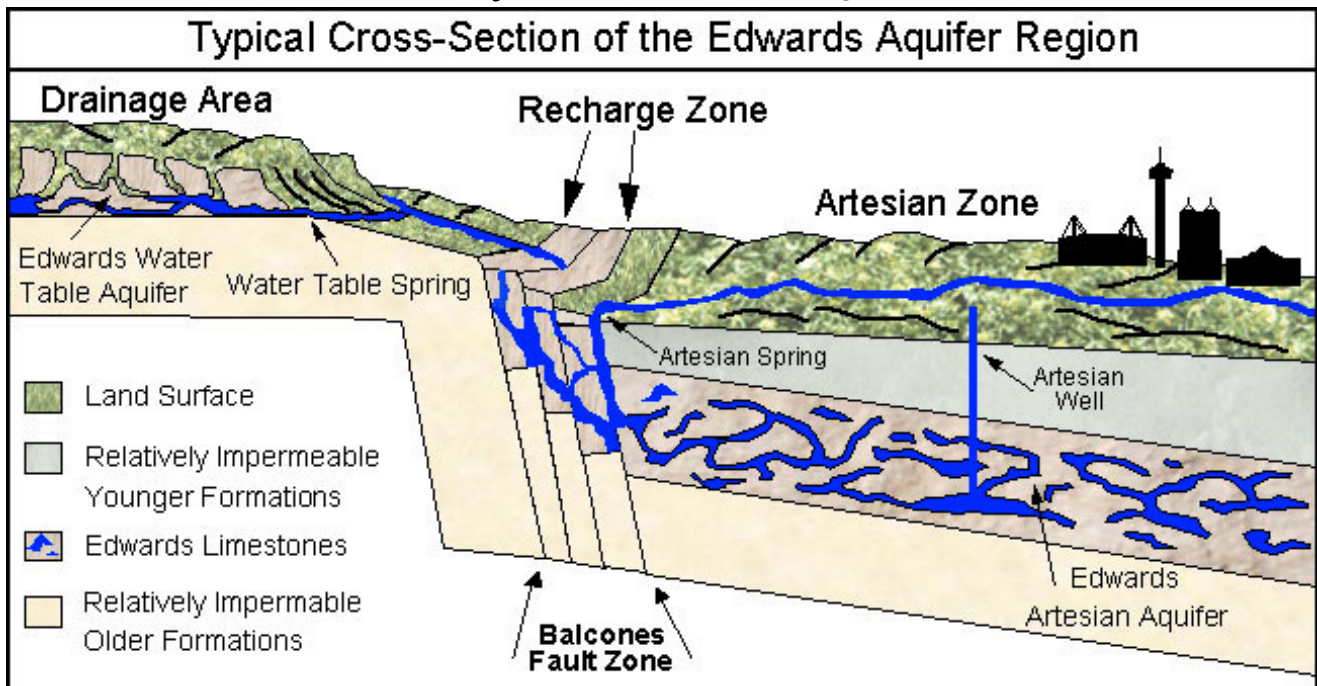
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The Aquifer's Contributing Zone



Did you know that our Edwards Aquifer is divided into three main zones: the contributing zone, the recharge zone, and the artesian zone? The road signs tell us we are entering or leaving the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. Very important to our water supply, these 1,250 square miles are where highly faulted and fractured Edwards limestones outcrop at the land surface, allowing large quantities of water to flow into the Aquifer. But the Contributing Zone is much bigger. Spread over the Edwards Plateau, also called the Texas Hill Country, the contributing zone is about 5,400 square miles, and elevations range between 1,000 and 2,300 feet above sea level. The rugged, rolling topography is covered with thick woodlands of oak and cedar. Today, the Edwards Plateau bears little resemblance to the prairies the pioneers to the area saw, but it is home to several endangered species and is itself the subject of increasing environmental concerns.

The contributing zone is also called the drainage area or the catchment area. Here the land surface “catches” water from rainfall that averages about 30” per year, and water runs off into streams or infiltrates into the water table aquifer of the plateau. Runoff from the land surface and natural springs then both feed streams that flow over relatively impermeable limestones until they reach the recharge zone.

As streams cross the recharge zone it is not uncommon for the local creeks which flow 30 feet wide and a foot deep, in the space of a quarter mile, to disappear completely into the Edwards formation. They often re-appear downhill after running underground for some distance inside the recharge zone. - **Rich Keith**



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News You Can Use

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.

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

*Solution at www.PEELinc.com

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Meet Lisa

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

Lisa is a 13-year-old girly girl. She loves to be pampered and is a people person. She is very outgoing, energetic, loving, and kind. She counts singing and dancing among her favorite things and loves to keep busy. Lisa looks to learn from all her experiences and move forward with her life. She is a joy to be around, is funny, sweet, and grateful for all that she's been given.

She's hoping there will be more things to be thankful for, like being adopted into a loving family. More than anything, she's ready to stop hoping for a family and to start loving one. For more information about adoption, please call Adoption Coalition of Texas at 512-301-2825. For more information about Lisa, email gracelindgren@adopttexas.org

The Adoption Coalition of Texas is a nonprofit organization (operating under the Austin Community Foundation), created in 2003 to focus on finding forever families for children languishing in the foster care system. Adoption Coalition of Texas partner agencies include Arrow Child and Family Ministries, Child Protective Services, Lutheran Social Services of the South, Marywood Children and Family Services, and Pathways Youth and Family Services.



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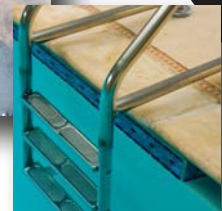
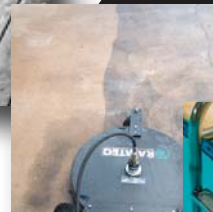
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Austin Real Estate Partners' Market Report								
Circle C Ranch by Neighborhood	6 Months Sold History (Jun '09 - Nov '09)						CURRENT MARKET	
	TOTAL	AVERAGE					TOTAL	
	Homes Sold	Square Feet	Price / Sq. Foot	Sold Price \$K	Year Built	Days On Market	Available	Pending Sale
Circle C Central	44	2,900	\$ 104	\$ 301	1993	79	12	5
North	15	2,077	\$ 127	\$ 263	1996	78	5	0
Wildflower	7	2,164	\$ 123	\$ 267	2001	80	12	3
On The Park	7	3,481	\$ 111	\$ 385	1996	126	2	0
Vintage Place	4	3,273	\$ 102	\$ 334	2002	78	2	1
Hielscher	18	3,120	\$ 114	\$ 357	2003	106	4	3
West	23	3,440	\$ 113	\$ 390	2005	95	4	1
Park West	8	2,261	\$ 140	\$ 317	2001	102	6	5
Park Place	6	2,479	\$ 122	\$ 304	2005	110	3	2
Muirfield	8	3,358	\$ 121	\$ 407	2006	80	2	0
Enclave/Stone Creek	15	2,843	\$ 110	\$ 314	2007	101	1	3
Alta Mira	13	3,064	\$ 119	\$ 365	2008	53	8	2
Fairway Estates	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	0
Circle C Ranch Total	168	2,910	\$ 114	\$ 333	2000	88	62	25
% Change Mo/Mo	-5%	0%	0%	1%	0%	-5%	-9%	-26%



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