

LONG CANYON Gazette

April 2011

Volume 4, Issue 4

A Newsletter for the Residents of the Long Canyon

LEANDER ISD SUPERINTENDENT, DR. BRET A. CHAMPION IS GUEST SPEAKER

At Four Points Chamber of Commerce April Luncheon

Four Points Chamber of Commerce is delighted to have Leander Independent School District Superintendent, Dr. Bret Champion as the guest speaker for the Four Points Chamber's April Luncheon. Dr. Champion will share the latest information on how Texas Public Schools are facing an unprecedented financial crisis, and how LISD is navigating through this crisis to remain one of the premier school districts in the state. Four Points Chamber luncheons provide stimulating discussions for local individuals, businesses and organizations to gain new insights and foster business growth. Membership is not a requirement to come to the luncheon but you'll want to register online to ensure your seat and receive early-bird discount pricing.

Thursday, April 21, 2011 at 11:30AM to 1PM
River Place Country Club, 4207 River Place Boulevard

You can find all the details and register on the Four Points Chamber of Commerce Web site www.fourpointschamber.com. While you are at the Chamber's Web site be sure to check out the other networking activities offered by the chamber, including the monthly Happy Hour and bi-monthly Connectors networking meetings at Concordia University.

The Four Points Chamber of Commerce provides networking opportunities through social gatherings, luncheons and business network meetings. Now well over 100 members strong and growing, the Four Points Chamber of Commerce brings businesses together along Highway 620 from Hudson Bend and Mansfield Dam to Anderson Mill, and along Ranch Road 2222 from Jester to Volente, to support business growth in the community. For more information about upcoming events contact us at FourPointsChamber@gmail.com, visit www.fourpointschamber.com or call (512) 551-0390. Membership inquiries may also be sent directly to membership@FourPointsChamber.com.

SEND US *Your Event Pictures!*

Do you have a picture of an event that you would like to run in the Lakewood Leader? Send it to us and we will publish it in the next issue. Email the picture to lakewood@peelinc.com. Be sure to include the text that you would like to have as the caption. Pictures will appear in color online at www.PEELinc.com.

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NEWSLETTER INFO

NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

Peel, Inc. www.PEELinc.com, 512-263-9181
Article Submissions..... longcanyon@peelinc.com
Advertising..... advertising@PEELinc.com, 512-263-9181

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Recipe of the Month Bread Pudding

- 5 baked biscuits, crumbled
- 1 C. sugar
- 2 C. milk
- ¼ C. margarine, melted
- 2 eggs, well beaten
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Combine all ingredients, stir well. Pour in 1½ quart casserole. Pour ½-inch water in baking pan and place casserole in pan. Bake at 350° for 1 hour, or until knife inserted in center comes out clean.

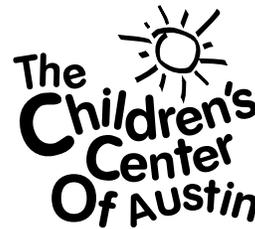
TOPPING

- ¼ C. sugar
- 1½ T. cornstarch
- ¼ C. milk

Cook on low heat until thick, stirring constantly. After removing from heat, add ½ tsp. vanilla. Pour over pudding. May sprinkle nutmeg on top.

*Send in your
recipe to
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Free Registration until April 15th!



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FINANCIAL FOCUS

Sandwich Generation Needs “Stress Busters”

You may be too busy to realize it, but April is Stress Awareness Month. Sponsored by the Health Resource Network, a non-profit health education group, Stress Awareness Month is designed to promote awareness about ways to reduce stress in our lives. And if you're a member of the so-called “Sandwich Generation,” you may well have plenty of stress to deal with — especially financial stress. And that's why you may want to look at this month as an opportunity to explore ways of “de-stressing” yourself.

To understand the scope of the problem facing people in your situation, consider this: One out of every eight Americans aged 40 to 60 is both raising a child and caring for an aging parent, according to the Pew Research Center. The definition of “caring” for an elderly parent can range from actually having the parent living in one's home to helping pay for the parent's stay in an assisted living or nursing home facility. When you consider the costs involved in this type of care, added to the expenses of raising your children, and possibly even providing some financial support to them as young adults, it's easy to see that you could potentially face enormous strains, both emotionally and financially.

To help ease this burden, consider these suggestions:

- **Save.** As a Sandwich Generation member, you're probably within shouting distance of your own retirement — so you need to be saving for it. This may not be easy. You don't know how much financial support you may someday have to provide your elderly parents — and even after your children are grown, they may need some help from you. Unfortunately, in helping these “boomerang” children, many people have to disrupt their day-to-day cash flow and raid their savings. That's why it's important to try to “pay yourself first” by deferring part of each paycheck into your 401(k) and by automatically moving money, each month, from your checking or savings account into your IRA.
- **Talk.** Many people in the “Greatest Generation” (over age 80) have not even

prepared a will, so, if your parents are in that group, you may want to talk to them about taking action. Also, find out whom, if anyone, is handling their investments. And ask if your parents understand how Medicare works and if they need to add supplemental health insurance, such as Medigap. Plus, you need to find out if your parents have created a power of attorney or health care directive. It's best to have these conversations sooner, rather than later.

- **Delegate.** You eventually may have to take some responsibility for your parents' care — but you don't have to do it alone. You could, for example, work with a financial services provider that offers trust services, which can be invaluable if your parents are incapacitated, but which are useful even if they aren't. A professional trust officer can, among other duties, help manage your parents' investments, pay their bills, keep their records and supervise distribution of their assets to beneficiaries. In short, a qualified trust officer can make life a lot easier for you.

Stress Awareness Month only lasts 30 days, but by taking the right steps, you can de-stress yourself for many years to come. After all, just because you're in the Sandwich Generation, it doesn't mean you have to be “squished.”



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AUTISM ROBS YOU OF YOUR CHILD!

By Connie Ripley



Light It Up Blue in April. April is Autism Awareness Month. Autism Speaks is asking buildings around the world to turn their lights blue and people to wear blue on April 1 & 2.

One out of 110 children is diagnosed with autism (1 out of 70 boys). More children will be diagnosed with autism this year than with AIDS, diabetes and cancer combined.

Autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that impacts communication, behavior and social relationships. Currently no effective means to prevent autism, no fully effective treatments and no cure exists for this disorder that robs families and children of

smiles, eye contact, communication, hugs and even the ability to eat in a restaurant.

Know the Signs. These “absolute indicators” or “red flags” indicate your child should be evaluated.

- No big smiles or other warm, joyful expressions by 6 months.
- No back-and-forth sharing of sounds, smiles, or other facial expressions by 9 months.
- No babbling by 12 months.
- No back-and-forth gestures, such as pointing, showing, reaching or waving by 12 months.
- No words by 16 months.
- No two-word meaningful phrases (without imitating or repeating) by 24 months.
- Any loss of speech or babbling or social skills at any age.

Does your child make eye contact with you? Does he/she enter into meaningful exchanges? Does he/she “tantrum” in the grocery store or when transitioning from one thing to another? Instead of “racing” toy cars, does your child flip them over and roll the wheels

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Autism Robs You of Your Child! - (Continued from Page 4)

or stack them in a line? If any of these things exist, insist on an immediate evaluation. Early intervention may be your child's best hope. Since this disease has accelerated so much recently, many pediatricians just do not recognize the signs.

The prevalence of the disorder rose 57% between 2002 and 2005. In 1975, autism effected 1 in 5,000. Today it affects 1 in 110 children. Autism is the fastest-growing serious development disability in the U.S. It costs the nation \$35 billion a year, and that figure is sure to rise.

In order to raise awareness of this escalating disorder, landmarks, iconic buildings, schools, universities, hospitals, airports, businesses and people in Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Cypress, Denmark, France, Hungary, Ireland, Kenya, Netherlands, New Zealand, Romania, Sri Lanka and the United States from Los Angeles to Savannah and from Minneapolis to Houston will be changing their light bulbs, clothing themselves, and eating and drinking blue for the month of April.

Texas State Senator Florence Shapiro will read a proclamation of Autism Awareness Month on the Texas State Senate floor on April 4th.

To commemorate the fourth annual United Nations World Autism Awareness Day and Autism Awareness Month, change your light bulbs to blue and wear blue on April 1 and 2.

It's easy! Just change your light bulbs from white to blue! To make things even easier, Home Depot will carry a complete supply of blue blubs for the event.

Toys R Us has a month long Autism Speaks campaign. Pump It Up has scheduled The Great Jump for April 7.

Even as autism escalates at alarming rates, it receives only 0.5% of the National Institutes of Health funding. Autism Speaks is North America's largest autism science and advocacy organization.

Autism Speaks is funded primarily by local walks. The Greater Austin Walk Now for Autism Speaks committees are being formed for the fall walk. Your help is needed! Please contact Walk Manager Traci Whitney at traci.whitney@autismspeaks.org

Watch for the 12 diagnostic markers and the possible causes of autism in the following issues of your neighborhood newsletter.

What's on your to-do list this month?



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NATUREWATCH - ARBOREAL ARDOR

by Jim and Lynne Weber

From late winter into late spring, many of the night sounds you hear are not insects at all, but members of the wide-ranging Hylidae family, a group of cricket, tree, and chorus frogs. This group of true treefrogs and their allies have adaptations that reveal their mostly arboreal lifestyle, such as forward-facing eyes for binocular-like vision, adhesive pads on their fingers and toes, and a fondness for eating insects. Often not seen due to their diminutive size, these frogs are commonly mistaken for insects, due to their ability to produce loud and varied mating calls. Known as 'advertisement calls', these calls are produced by the males to attract females and warn other rival males during the breeding season.

The Green Treefrog (*Hyla cinerea*) is a common, 1-2 inch frog with a slender, bright green body, cream-colored belly, and white lips that extend into lateral stripes along the sides of its body. Found in the eastern third of our state, this frog walks rather than jumps when on the ground. It is nocturnal, and prefers wet areas such as swamps, edges of lakes, and streamsides. During its breeding season from March to October, the males start calling just before dark, and sound like groups of tiny ducks quacking. Females, which are slightly larger than the males and lack the wrinkled vocal pouch, lay their fertilized eggs enclosed in a jelly envelope attached to floating

vegetation. Influenced by the weather, breeding often takes place during or after a rain.

At ½ to 1 ½ inches, the Northern Cricket Frog (*Acris crepitans*) is found throughout most of the state, except for the Panhandle and West Texas. Gray to green-brown, this frog has a long rounded snout, dark bands behind its limbs, and a distinguishing triangular patch behind the eyes that points down its back. Diurnal and active all year, these frogs prefer shallow but permanent ponds with vegetation and full sun. Often seen basking during the daytime, they will jump quickly into the water or away when disturbed, and are capable of covering 6 feet in one leap! Although they are part of the treefrog family, they are much more terrestrial and are excellent swimmers. When chorusing, especially at night, the male's call sounds like clicking small rocks or pebbles together. Mating occurs in late spring, with the female laying one egg at a time on submerged vegetation.

Strecker's Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris streckeri*) is a less common 1 – 1 ½ inch nocturnal frog that inhabits moist, wooded canyons and rocky ravines in the eastern half of the state. Its color can vary from gray to brown to olive, with a thick, dark stripe through and a dark spot under each eye, with longitudinal spots on its back. Often, this

(Continued on Page 7)

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Nature Watch - (Continued from Page 6)

Often, this frog can show a deep orange or yellow coloration around the groin. While it prefers loose soil where it can burrow to protect itself from predators, drought, and daytime heat, it is also a strong climber. Unlike many other frog species, this frog breeds from November to April or May, when you may hear a single male's call of one bell-like note, repeated rapidly, or a chorus of asynchronous calls that sound like a squeaky wheel.

When you're out on a quiet night from winter to late spring or early summer and near one of our natural areas, see if you can hear and identify the sounds of arboreal ardor!

Send your nature-related questions to naturewatch@austin.rr.com and we'll do our best to answer them. If you enjoy reading these articles, look for our book, NatureWatch Austin, to be published soon by Texas A&M University Press.



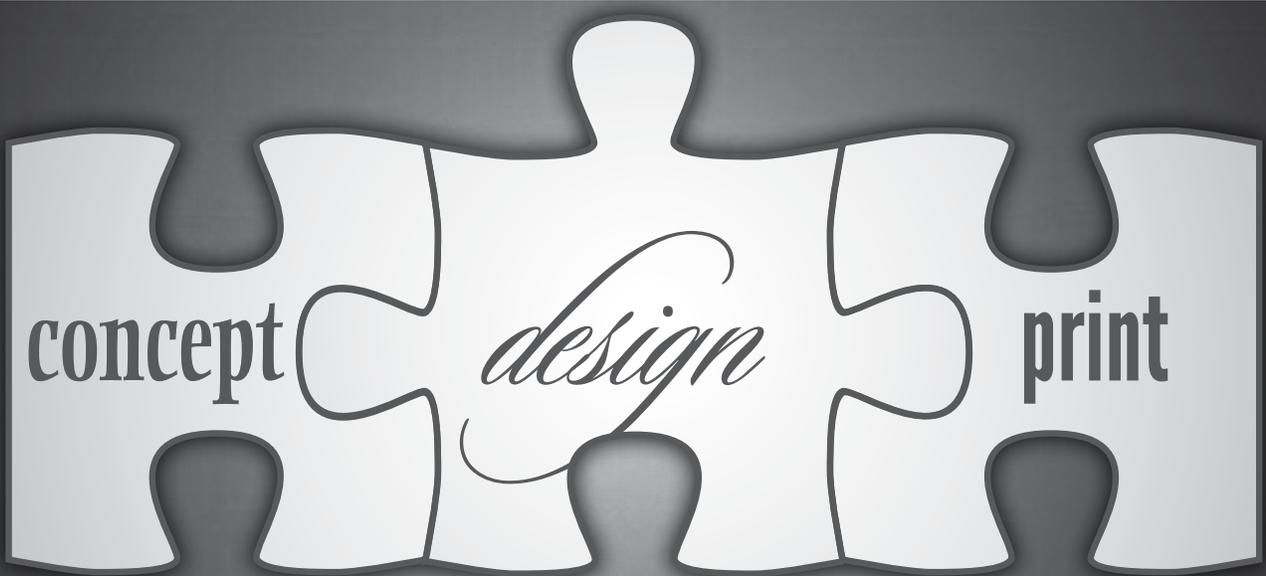
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**Colin's Hope Community Water Safety Splash and Walk
 Saturday, April 30th 10AM-3PM**

The whole family can splash into our Water Safety Challenge and Life jacket Swim or try out a Stand Up Paddle Board at The Expedition School Lagoon (On Lady Bird Lake in East Austin next to Fiesta Gardens.) Volunteers are also needed to pick up and distribute water safety packets to homes in zip codes that have high incidences of drowning. This is a great family or group volunteer activity. Email alissa.magrum@colinshope.org to volunteer. Together, we can prevent drowning and save lives.

**Colin's Hope Night at Eastside Movies in the Park
 Tuesday, May 3rd, Doors open at 6PM, Movie at sundown**

Join us at The Expedition School Lagoon (On Lady Bird Lake in East Austin next to Fiesta Gardens) for a screening of Whale Rider. Bring your family and friends to enjoy the movie under the stars.

**Colin's Hope Day at Schlitterbahn-New Braunfels
 Saturday, May 21st**

Join us for a day to promote Water Safety and Drowning Prevention at Schlitterbahn-New Braunfels! Special tickets are available from Colin's Hope. Email alissa.magrum@colinshope.org for more information.

For more information, visit our website at www.colinshope.org