

# THE RIVER REVIEW

January 2012

News For The Residents of River Place

Volume 6, Issue 1

## LAKE TRAVIS READS JEFF ABBOTT

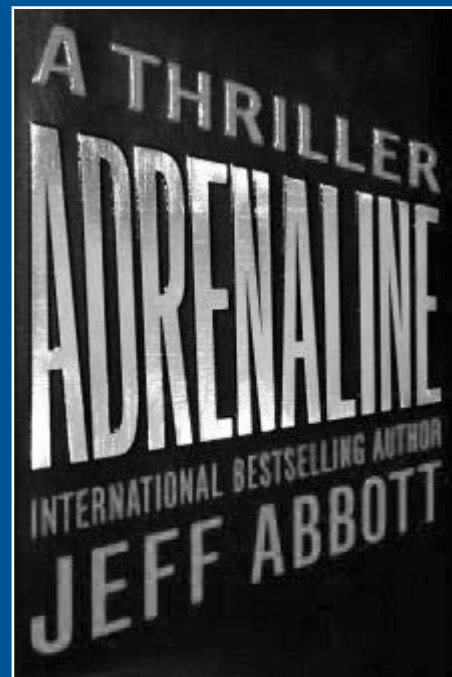
### POPULAR CULTURAL EDUCATION PROGRAM FEATURES NATIONALLY-ACCLAIMED AUSTIN AUTHOR

Best-selling author Jeff Abbott will be the featured author for the 2012 LAKE TRAVIS READS, the “One Book, One Community” program now in its fifth year. Co-sponsored by Bee Cave Public Library, Lake Travis Community Library, and Spicewood Community Library, LAKE TRAVIS READS encourages the community to read from the acclaimed author’s body of work and then meet the author at a special evening event in February.

Abbott is the international-bestselling, award-winning author of thirteen mystery and suspense novels. His most recent thriller, *Adrenaline*, released in July, was picked by *The Today Show* as the “Best Beach Read” when it called him the next Robert Ludlum. His thrillers including *Panic and Fear* are tightly-wound and lightning-paced, and can be read as stand-alone titles. He is also the author of two very popular mystery series: the Whit Mosely series set on the Texas Gulf Coast which author Harlan Coben described as “pure, white-knuckled suspense;” and his Jordan Poteet series set in the fictional, small town of Mirabeau, Texas, where everyone has something to hide.

“One Book, One Community” is a national program created by the Center for the Book in Washington, D.C., and adopted by communities around the nation. As part of LAKE TRAVIS READS JEFF ABBOTT, book clubs at all three libraries will host discussions of his novels. Check with your local library for dates and titles. “An Evening with Jeff Abbott” will conclude the 2012 LAKE TRAVIS READS program with an appearance by the author at Bee Cave Public Library on Thursday, February 23, 2012 at 7 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

For more information, visit [www.laketrisreads.org](http://www.laketrisreads.org), or any of the participating libraries. Or contact Barbara Hathaway at Bee Cave Public Library at (512) 767-6620; Morgan McMillian at Lake Travis Community Library at (512) 263-2885; or Spicewood Community Library at (830) 693-7892.



## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY .....	911
Fire .....	911
Ambulance .....	911
Sheriff – Non-Emergency .....	512-974-0845
Hudson Bend Fire and EMS	
Emergencies .....	512-266-1775
Information .....	512-266-2533

### SCHOOLS

Leander ISD.....	512-570-0000
Cedar Park High School.....	512-570-1200
Vandegrift High School.....	512-570-2300
Four Points Middle School.....	512-570-3700
River Place Elementary.....	512-570-6900

### UTILITIES

River Place MUD.....	512-246-0498
City of Austin Electric .....	512-494-9400
Texas Gas Service	
Custom Service .....	1-800-700-2443
Emergencies .....	512-370-8609
Call Before You Dig .....	512-472-2822

### AT&T

New Service .....	1-800-464-7928
Repair .....	1-800-246-8464
Billing .....	1-800-858-7928

### Time Warner Cable

Customer Service .....	512-485-5555
Repairs.....	512-485-5080
IESI (Trash).....	512-282-3508

### OTHER NUMBERS

River Place Postal Office .....	512-345-9739
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## Start the New Year by Attending AUSTIN NEWCOMERS CLUB JANUARY LUNCHEON

Austin Newcomers Club is a non-profit social and recreational organization of 500 member- households celebrating its 60th year. It is dedicated to introducing residents to the Austin Community and giving them the opportunity to meet and make new friends. Attend the January luncheon to learn about the forty-five Interest Groups, including book clubs, card and board games playing, dining, gardening, kayaking, golfing, hiking, dancing and special events for both couples and singles. The Austin Chronicle has named the club as the "Best Way to Get Acquainted with the Best of Austin."

The January luncheon speaker will be **Mike O'Krent**, founder of *LifeStories Alive, LLC*, specializes in making personal history videos for families that value their heritage. They create family heirlooms in video – digitally mastered records of life stories with personal accounts, photos and mementos of family history.

- **When & Where:** Wednesday, January 18, 2012 at Green Pastures Restaurant, 811 West Live Oak Street, pre-payment \$20.00. Reservations are required by: January 11th.
- **Time:** 11 a.m. Social Hour, Luncheon begins at noon.
- **For Luncheon Reservations: Email:**  
[LuncheonDirector@AustinNewcomers.com](mailto:LuncheonDirector@AustinNewcomers.com)
- **Welcome Coffees:** You are invited to attend a morning or evening Welcome Coffee & Orientation. For more information visit the website at: [www.AustinNewcomers.com](http://www.AustinNewcomers.com)
- **To Join Austin Newcomers Club:** Any person who has a zip code beginning with 787 is eligible for a new membership with the annual dues payment of \$40.00. Membership includes The Welcome Mat, the monthly newsletter, and the annual Members' Directory. Contact Dotti Thoms, New Member Services, at (512)314-5100. For more information visit the website at: [www.AustinNewcomers.com](http://www.AustinNewcomers.com)



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# Homes in River Place Are Selling

## River Place Sees Significant Increase in Home Sales

Finally, some good news for home sales in River Place! After 2009 and 2010, which were slow years for sales in the neighborhood, 2011 has been vastly better. During 2009 and 2010 we were in the middle of a financial crisis and sales in the neighborhood came to a screeching halt.

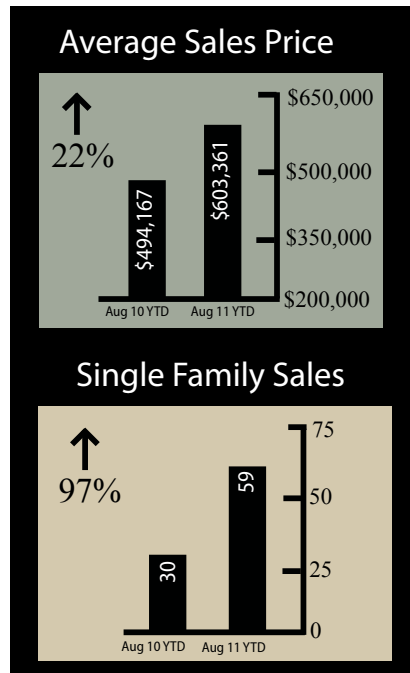
The price points in the neighborhood are relatively high and that segment of the market basically stopped moving unless there was real need. River Place is considered a "move up" neighborhood. Meaning, most people "move up" from either their first or second home into River Place. The move up segment of the market is usually more sensitive to macro economic issues. These moves are more optional than other sorts of moves, such as first time home buyers.

On the higher end of the market in River Place, the buyers are usually already moving from a large home and don't really need to move.

If you have been holding off on the decision to move because you thought the market was soft, you may want to reconsider. Average sales per quarter in 2009 and 2010 were 12.7 homes per quarter. The first 2 quarters of 2011 have averaged 25.5 homes per quarter, more than double of 2009 and 2010's averages.

The average price per square foot has increased from \$136.62 for 2009 and 2010 to \$161 for 2010.

The graphics below illustrate some Real Estate Statistics for River Place.



If you are thinking of selling, this preparation checklist is a great tool to help you get started!

### Interior:

- Have carpets cleaned and re-stretched or replaced if worn or dated.
- Clean or have house cleaned (top to bottom, baseboards and ceiling fans).
- Wash windows inside and out.
- Clean out and arrange all closets.
- Complete all minor repairs, fix nail holes, and apply touch-up paint.
- Replace all burned out light bulbs. Use a higher wattage in rooms with only one light fixture.
- Remove the majority of your personal photos; leave out just a few to represent a loving home.

- Limit toys to one toy box or storage area and pack the rest away.

### Kitchen

- Remove all kitchen appliances from counter tops.
- Keep all food items off the counter.

- Remove all magnets and papers from the front of the refrigerator,

### Exterior

- Remove all window screens and place them in the garage where they are visible to the buyer.
- Plant flowers in pots outside by the front door and along sidewalks and landscaping beds.
- Power wash patios, walkways and driveway.

### Garage

- Clean out the garage and remove all the "extras." Leave only tools, lawn equipment, bikes & cars.
- If both sides of the garage are full, rent mini-storage.

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## Yoga for Weight Loss?

We've all heard the formula for weight loss. Just "burn more calories than you take in." But if weight loss is so simple, how come so many of us have a hard time with it? If we all know what to do, how come we're not doing it? There are many factors to weight loss, and there's a big gap between knowledge and action. It's a lot more than calories in, calories out. In between the "I know what I should be doing," and "how come I'm not doing that?" is a pause (and sometimes frustration). This 'pause' is where yoga can help.

Being aware of your actions - what you're eating, when you're eating it and why, are keys to weight loss success. Tuning in to your inner voice and actually hearing your body's signals is difficult. Diets fail a great deal of the time. What if you were able to smooth out your brain waves, so that you could notice the moment of choice? Yoga for weight loss? Maybe you've thought in the

past that only heavy-duty cardio would do the trick, and the pounds would magically melt away. But if you are successful at this heavy-duty huffing and puffing, how come the pounds come back, and the change isn't permanent? It may surprise you to know that a recent study at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle found that an ongoing yoga practice correlates nicely with a healthy weight - and not only because of the calorie burn. (Excerpts from Natural Health, "The New Weight-Loss Math," by Hillari Dowdle). Yoga practitioners were found to be "more aware of what they were eating and better able to stop when they were full," characteristics that the study attributes to mindfulness.

In yoga, postures are practiced slowly, which is counter-intuitive to what the mind wants. We want to burn calories, and lose weight this instant, so we think we have to move fast. But, by practicing the postures



*(Continued on Page 5)*

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Contact us at 394.7511 to book a party at  
Ski Shores or to have us cater your party.

## Yoga for Weight Loss? - (Continued from Page 4)

slowly, we allow our minds to catch up with our bodies. We use the breath to actually feel what our muscles are doing. And this introspection, this reflection, will bring about an awareness. An awareness of choice. "Smoothing out the brain waves and calming down the nervous system give you an opportunity to notice the moment of choice," explains Ashley Turner, M.A. "You get to ask yourself, 'Do I really want to eat more?' Most of us never even encounter that moment," she adds.

Yoga can help you develop that awareness. And, it can also help you remove toxins from your body. New studies indicate that toxins in the body suppress thyroid function, slowing metabolism. "Scientists now believe that the obesity epidemic is going hand in hand with an increase in environmental toxins," says Gaetano Morello, N.D. from British Columbia. And fasting only slows your metabolism and causes more toxins to be released from your fat stores. Yoga can help remove these toxins.

You will get more benefits from yoga than you could ever imagine. And over time, it gets easier and more fun. No, it will not be a quick "fix" overnight. But what if you could develop the awareness to be more mindful of what you were eating, and better able to stop when you were full? These are all characteristics of mindfulness, which is practiced in every yoga class.

*Hope to see you in class soon! - Submitted by Melinda Jennings*

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## NATURE WATCH



*Rubies & Gold*  
by Jim and Lynne Weber

Take a walk in the bare winter woods and you'll undoubtedly notice kinglets – tiny, highly active songbirds feeding high in the trees. They are in the Regulidae family, which comes from the Greek meaning 'petty king or prince', and refers to their regal, brightly colored crowns. Legend has it that these little kings derived their names from a fable about the election of the king of birds, defined as the bird that could fly the longest distance. In the fable, while the eagle was able to outfly all other birds, he was beaten by a tiny bird, the kinglet, that had hidden itself in his feathers.

Here in Central Texas, you can find both Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets most reliably from November through March. The Ruby-crowned kinglet is about 4 inches long, an olive-gray color overall with darker wings and white wing bars. The males have a ruby crown, which is often barely visible and usually covered by other head feathers, until responding to aggressive encounters by other males or even curious humans. They sometimes forage in mixed flocks of chickadees and titmice, and may also show their crowns when in close proximity to other birds.

Golden-crowned kinglets are similar but

slightly smaller than their ruby-crowned cousins. The males have an orange crown patch bordered in yellow and black, while the females have crowns that are yellow and black. The males also raise their crowns during aggressive encounters. Both species of kinglets sing fairly frequently even in the winter, with the male ruby-crowns having a complex, rich warbling song, and the male golden-crowns having a much higher pitched, shorter song.



Kinglets have a very rapid metabolism and their tiny size means they must constantly forage to keep up with their energy needs. In fact, they are so small that it would take 3 to 5 birds to total a mere ounce!



They are always in motion and continuously flicking their wings. While seen most often gleaning insects and their over-wintering eggs from tree branches, they can forage anywhere from the ground to the treetops, and often catch active prey while hovering or flycatching. If prevented from feeding for even twenty minutes, they may lose a third of their body weight and could starve to death within an hour. Golden-crowns are the smallest birds to routinely survive freezing winter temperatures, and huddle together in protected areas at night. Their populations decrease during severe winters, particularly when ice storms make foraging much more difficult.

In this winter season, take the time to walk through the woods and listen for the gift of song given to us by these littlest of kings. Take your binoculars, and see if you can spot their crowns of rubies and gold!

Send your nature-related questions to [naturewatch@austin.rr.com](mailto:naturewatch@austin.rr.com) and we'll do our best to answer them. If you enjoy reading these articles, look for our book, *Nature Watch Austin*, published by Texas A&M University Press.



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# RIVER REVIEW

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## A Focus on Resolutions

### RESOLVE TO BE A BETTER YOU

*Submitted by Concentra Urgent Care*

The New Year is a great time to make healthy lifestyle changes. According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, the most common resolutions focus on losing weight, getting fit, quitting smoking, and reducing stress. These are important themes that can reduce your risk of disease. Here are ways you can achieve your goals this year.

### LOSING WEIGHT

A weight loss of five to seven percent of your body weight can improve your health and quality of life. It can also help prevent weight-related health problems, like diabetes. Changing your eating habits and increasing your physical activity are keys to successful weight loss and help to maintain optimal weight for the rest of your life. Create a plan for healthy eating and increased physical activity, while taking in fewer calories than you use. Your healthy eating plan should include:

- Taking into account foods you like and dislike
- A focus on fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains
- Consuming fat-free or low-fat dairy products such as yogurt, cheese, and milk
- Protein sources such as lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts
- Avoiding saturated and trans fats such as animal fat, butter, and hydrogenated oils
- Staying away from foods high in sodium and added sugars

For more information on weight management and improving nutritional practices, visit the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases at [www.win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/for\\_life.htm](http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/for_life.htm).

### GETTING FIT

Regular physical activity for at least 30 minutes each day, or broken up into several shorter periods of 20, 15, or 10 minutes, can help you lose weight, keep it off, and stay fit. It can also improve your energy and mood and lower your risk for heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers. Try some of these physical activities:

- Walking (15-minute miles or 4 miles per hour)
- Biking
- Tennis
- Aerobic exercise classes (step aerobics, kickboxing, dancing)
- Yard work or house cleaning (gardening, raking, mopping, vacuuming)

Taking the first step can be the hardest part. Start slowly, at a level that is comfortable for you and add activity as you go along. Sometimes, it helps to have a friend or activity buddy when you start out. It is recommended that adults get at least two and a half hours of moderate physical activity each week. Strengthening activities, such as pushups, sit-ups, or lifting weights, at least two days per week are also encouraged. For more information on getting fit, visit the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports at <http://fitness.gov/>.



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## **LIVING WITNESS: OUTSTANDING TREES OF TEXAS**

**January 7 through March 11**

Ralph Yznaga's photographic odyssey is on display in the McDermott Learning Center.

## **URBAN FOLK**

**January 7 through March 11**

Judy Paul's mixed media exhibit on display in the store.

## **JANUARY EVENTS**

*at the Wildflower Center*

### **TREE TALK, WINTER WALK**

**Saturday, January 28, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.**

If the worst drought in decades damaged your trees, this is your chance to replace them with hardy Texas natives and plant a few more for the future.

Guided walks for all and a Tree Climb for kids from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

### **GO NATIVE U**

This is the year you should learn about native plant gardening. Take a class or a course at Go Native U.

Registration information at [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org)

*Admission is Free in January!*



## Start the year off right!

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## SIGNED, SEALED, & DELIVERED TRAVIS COUNTY TAX BILLS FOR 2011 SHOULD BE IN YOUR HANDS!

If you own property in Travis County, chances are you already received a 2011 property tax bill. And if you are among the 121,880 homeowners who escrow through a mortgage company or lending institution, don't worry, the mortgage company probably received the bill and will pay your property taxes. But you might want to check with them to be sure. "All taxpayers or their mortgage companies should have received their bills," said Travis County Tax Collector Nelda Wells Spears. "Especially for owners of multiple properties, this is the time of year to make sure you have received all bills." Spears said many taxpayers want the advantage of federal tax deductions that require paid taxes by the end of the year.

Any payment postmarked by December 31 will be recorded as a December payment and the receipt issued will show the same. "Some taxpayers believe that if they do not receive a bill, they are not liable for tax payment," Spears said. "Taxpayers are responsible for requesting a tax bill if they do not receive one." Spears said anyone who needs a tax bill can download a copy at [www.traviscountytax.org](http://www.traviscountytax.org)

or call (512) 854-9473 to request a mailed copy. Over the past several weeks, 266,953 bills hit mailboxes, Spears said.

Seniors and disabled taxpayers may take advantage of a special provision in the law that allows for four installment payments with no penalty and interest provided payments are made before February 1, April 1, June 1 and August 1. Last year 3,234 persons participated in the program. Senior and disabled taxpayers interested in the installment payment plan should call (512) 854 9473 for details. One of the most common questions this time of year concerns the ability to pay taxes. "If you can't pay any or all of your tax bill, please call or come in and make arrangements," Spears recommended.

The deadline to pay 2011 property taxes is January 31, 2012. Those who want a tax receipt showing payment in calendar year 2011 must make payment in the current calendar year. Payments postmarked December 31, 2011 will be recorded in 2011 regardless of when the payment arrives by mail.

For those who wish to pay online, the deadline is midnight on December 31. Payment in person should be made Friday, December 30. All county offices will be closed Monday, January 2 in observance of New Year's Day. Finally, payment by check or money order may be deposited in the tax office drop box by midnight, December 31.

The Travis County Tax Office main location is 5501 Airport Boulevard, between Koenig Lane and 5312 Street. The office opens at 7:30 a.m. and closes at 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Drive-through service is available. Satellite offices offer convenience to those in East Austin, Oak Hill, Pflugerville and near Austin-Bergstrom International Airport.

All satellite offices open at 8:00 am and close at 5:00 pm. East Austin-4705 Heflin Lane at Springdale and MLK Blvd (drive through service) Oak Hill Office - 8656 Highway 71W Building B, second floor Pflugerville Office-15822 Foothill Farms Loop (drive through service) Southeast Office -4011 McKinney Falls Parkway (drive through service) Call (512)854-9473 for assistance at all locations.



### NICKERSON LAW GROUP

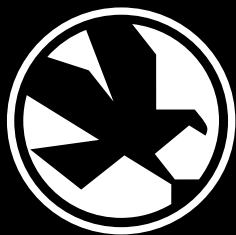
ESTATE PLANNING & BUSINESS LAW

Join us on January 26 at 9:30 a.m. Legal Smarts for Women

Davenport Village Location on 360 in Westlake

For more information, click our Events page at [julianickerson.com](http://julianickerson.com)





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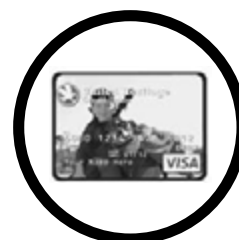
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### IT'S OKAY TO SKIP YOUR WORKOUT, IN SOME CASES

Although exercise should be a part of your daily routine, it's important to know when your body needs a break, according to an expert at Baylor College of Medicine. It's not ideal to work out when you're sick because you're stressing your system out, said Dr. David Green, assistant professor of orthopedic surgery at BCM.

The same thing is true after a recent surgery; your body is trying to recover from the surgery. If you still want to stay active, consider using simple things such as arm bands for gentle exercises, but stay away from heavy aerobic exercises, he said. If you're experiencing some joint or muscle pain, it's your body's way of telling you that you're overdoing it, so you should back off. Try using a heating pad or taking anti-inflammatory medication to help with the pain, said Green.

In general, be sure to have some type of snack about an hour before a workout; do not try to exercise on an empty stomach. If you're over the age of 40 and just starting heavy exercise for the first time, be sure to consult with your physician first. Also consult with a physician if you've had any respiratory, cardiac or joint issues in the past. Look out for hidden calories in holiday drinks.

While many people think twice before taking a second serving of a delicious holiday dessert, they may not do the same when it comes to that holiday beverage. But liquid calories can quickly add up, said a nutrition expert at Baylor College of Medicine.

### SOME TIPS TO REMEMBER INCLUDE:

- Combine alcohol with a diet mixer or low-calorie tonic
- Remember to pace yourself and alternate alcoholic beverages with a glass of water or club soda with lime
- When it comes to popular cocoa and coffee drinks, choose non-fat milk, skip the whipped cream
- Pay attention to portions; different beverages are served in different size glasses and cups so be aware of what you are drinking and how many servings you consume at one time. Remember that after drinking alcohol, the desire for salty foods is also enhanced, said Reeves.

### HECTIC HOLIDAYS CAN RAISE SPIRITS OF A CHRONICALLY ILL CHILD

The typical craziness of the holiday season can offer an emotional boost for a chronically ill child. The holidays usually are very hectic, but the benefit of seeing family and friends outweighs the hassles of travel and preparation, said Dr. Ernest Frugé, associate professor of pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine and director of psychosocial programs at Texas Children's Cancer Center.

It's no different for a child in a chronic illness. Planning ahead is the key to travel success, whether it is allowing for extra breaks on a long road trip or reminding older relatives about childproofing needs. Parents should always consult with their child's physician before the trip, pack all medications in their original prescription containers and bring along a copy of appropriate medical information.

Involving the child in the planning and preparations for trips and gatherings reinforces the importance of reconnecting with family and friends, said Frugé. Keeping children away from the usual holiday traditions because they have been ill would separate them from what is a normal experience for the family, he said.

### GET THROUGH MENOPAUSE BY REEVALUATING YOUR HEALTH CARE NEEDS

Menopause is called "the change" for a reason. As hormone levels begin to change, so do health concerns, such as osteoporosis, said experts at Baylor College of Medicine. Decreasing estrogen levels can affect bone mass, making a woman more susceptible to osteoporosis, said Dr. Elizabeth Nelson, associate professor of medicine and director of the Women's Center for Comprehensive Care at BCM. Osteoporosis is a condition that can develop if bone is not replaced as quickly as it is worn away, leaving behind porous or weak bones.

Many factors can affect this condition such as heredity, age and nutritional intake. Modify your risk factors by limiting alcohol intake and not smoking, which can increase bone loss by 10 percent. Exercising three times a week and increasing calcium and vitamin D intake can also improve bone health. However, since each woman's health care needs differ as they enter menopause, it is important to talk to a doctor to be sure what course of action will be the most beneficial. Screening for osteoporosis should begin at age 65, but many times women will have a screening done at age 50 to use a baseline for future tests.



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## TOP TEN TIPS

### FOR PROTECTING YOUR ENAMEL FROM EROSION

The outer coating of enamel on your teeth may be the hardest substance in your body, but if it erodes, there's no way to get it back. Follow these top ten tips for keeping your enamel — which will help you keep your teeth! Enamel, the outer coating on your teeth, is the hardest substance in your body. But while it's tougher than bones, **enamel has a key weakness: it lacks the ability to regenerate itself** as bones do. If you break a bone, it can grow back together. If your enamel wears away, it's gone and you can't get it back. Since enamel defends your teeth against cavities, **it's extremely important to take care of this protective layer.**

Enamel erosion can occur for a variety of reasons, and the **three major categories are diet, health issues and physical wear and tear.** Many people are unaware of the effect diet has on enamel. Acid sources like carbonated drinks and citrus drinks,

when consumed with regularity, can have a serious effect on your enamel. Health issues including dry mouth, acid reflux disease, gastrointestinal problems and bulimia can also lead to enamel erosion. Wear and tear includes friction from your teeth rubbing against each other, fractures due to stress on the teeth, and damage from outside sources, such as brushing your teeth too vigorously or chewing on hard objects.

*Following are our top ten tips for holding on to your enamel.*

#### WATCH YOUR DIET:

- **1** - Drink fewer carbonated drinks like soda pop and citrus drinks like grapefruit juice, or eliminate them altogether.
- **2** - If you do occasionally indulge in these types of beverages, drink them through a straw, so the liquid goes straight to the back of your mouth instead of surrounding your teeth.
- **3** - Rinse your mouth with water after eating or drinking.

- **4** - Chew sugar-free gum to increase saliva, which helps clean your teeth.

#### ADDRESS HEALTH ISSUES:

- **5** - If you experience dry mouth, let us know; your dentist can help you with this condition.
- **6** - If you suffer from acid reflux, gastrointestinal problems, or bulimia, talk to your family doctor to address the issue; each of these conditions affects more than just your teeth.

#### BE GENTLE WITH YOUR TEETH:

- **7** - Always avoid biting pens and other hard objects, and use your teeth for chewing food only — not as tools to open containers.
- **8** - If you are a habitual tooth-grinder, your dentist can help you address the habit.

#### STAY ON TOP OF ORAL HYGIENE:

- **9** - Brush with fluoride toothpaste to strengthen your teeth.
- **10** - Keep up with your regular oral care, including brushing and flossing daily and getting professional cleanings every six months.

*Submitted by Dr. Flury*

## Spring Baseball and Softball *Register Now!*

Open to ages 5-15 for baseball and grades K-12 for softball, Northwest Little League is accepting online registrations through February 2nd.

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## Setting S.M.A.R.T Fitness Resolutions

By Hjalmar Perez, BS, CPT, LMT and Humberto Estrada, CI-PT, MTI

Oh YES! Another New Year. Time to turn over a new leaf, to start fresh, to renew, to revive! We've heard it all, year after year. How could this year be any different than the others? A study conducted by Franklin Covey concluded about one in three people fail at maintaining their resolutions by the end of January and about four out of five individuals ultimately end up giving up by the end of the year. The top reasons: taking on too much and lack of commitment. So, what can you do to increase your chances of completing your goals for 2012?

The answer, get back to basics and being S.M.A.R.T. Studies have shown goals should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Let's revisit each, so grab a pen and paper and let's prepare you with your own S.M.A.R.T resolutions.

### I. SPECIFIC

First, make goals are clear and unambiguous. Make them specific by clearly stating what you expect to achieve. Think about why your goal is important. How do you plan to accomplish it? For example, setting a goal to get stronger or have more energy is too vague. Instead, come up with a statement that leaves no doubt about what you are trying to accomplish. For example, to get stronger so I can

take my family on a hiking trip to Colorado or to start exercising so I can run my first 5k. Now that has purpose and clarity!

### 2. MEASURABLE

Second, set criteria for measuring progress along the way. This one is all about answering "how much or how many" in order to quantify your results. For example, stating you are going to lift weights and do cardio is not as effective as deciding you are going to lift weights for 40 minutes 3 times a week. The latter one leaves little room for misinterpretation. Therefore, by the end of each week you should be able to easily determine if you are moving towards your goal.

### 3. ATTAINABLE

Third, goals should be realistic and attainable! Come up with goal that is challenging. However, be realistic about factors such as your skills level, your current knowledge and how much time you can reasonably devote. You're looking to be committed to your goal by making it attainable. Allow it to take you slightly pass your comfort zone and have a support system to assist you if you happen to side step it!

(Continued on Page 16)

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# RIVER REVIEW

Setting S.M.A.R.T... - (Continued from Page 15)

## 4. RELEVANT

Next, the goal must be important to you. Furthermore, you must believe you can accomplish it and you must take ownership for completing it. Asking family members or friends for their input is perfectly fine. However, we often put the responsibility of our goals on others. Using phrases as "my wife says I need to exercise" or "my doctor wants me to lose weight" shifts the ownership of the goal away from you. There is good news; studies show those who take an active role in defining and owning their goals are likely to have a higher level of commitment and success!

## 5. TIME-BOUND

Last, set deadlines, keep it moving! Focus in setting daily, weekly and monthly mini-milestones to serve as guideposts for your journey. This strategy provides you with a chance to regularly assess how you are progressing and to adjust if necessary. Here's a quick example: you've decided to lose 10 pounds. So establish a daily goal to decrease your caloric intake by 200-300 calories, a weekly goal to lose one half to one pound & a monthly goal to complete 10 miles of walking. Mini-milestones provide you with guidance on specific actions you can take to move closer to your future goal while decreasing the failure rate!

## Pick up the Pile

Happy New Year to all! As we embark on 2012's journey, some will think of ways to improve upon themselves. I'd like to offer an idea to those that still think dog poop is fertilizer, let's try picking up after our dogs. In case you were not aware, scientists have established the fact that the dog's gut harbors a particular type of bacteria known as the coli form bacteria. This bacterium includes the dreaded E. coli bacteria and also contains strains of salmonella and giardia. Now, since the rains have finally come, all the piles that have been left behind will be washed into our storm drains and contaminate our water supply. Not only is our water supply affected but perhaps even the air we breathe...I came across this article:

### SCIENCEDAILY (AUG. 18, 2011)

"Bacteria from fecal material -- in particular, dog fecal material -- may constitute the dominant source of airborne bacteria in Cleveland's and Detroit's wintertime air, says a new University of Colorado Boulder study."

This was the first test conducted, for air borne disease so far, however, scientist presume other cities, with an abundance of the canine kind, will show similar results. Please be kind, don't leave it behind. To those that pick up....THANK YOU

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## AUSTIN FAMILY FINDS HELP FOR CHILD WITH AUTISM

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*Imagine A Way, an Austin based charity that helps families with children with autism, announces their first award of over 600 hours of therapy.*

"When we established Imagine A Way, we knew we wanted to find those families who fell through the cracks. Children diagnosed with autism whose parents were doing everything possible, and it still wasn't enough," says Joel Price, founder of Imagine A Way. And they have.

This month, four-year-old Joshua Crostley was chosen to receive the charity's first full sponsorship. With Imagine A Way's help, Josh will receive over 600 hours of speech, occupational, and other prescribed therapies.

Joshua was diagnosed with autism at the age of 2. Like most children with autism, Josh was a healthy, happy baby who at first progressed with typical development. At 12 months he had great eye contact, was

babbling, and even waved good-bye. But at 18 months, his development plateaued. By age 2, he was regressing. He lost all eye contact, quit babbling, lost words he was already speaking, and withdrew from virtually all interaction. A withdrawn and silent child with unusual, repetitive behaviors, common to children with autism, replaced the once active and engaging little boy.

Joshua's parents, Jeremy and Adriana, have relentlessly pursued help for their son. Adriana put her career on hold to devote her full attention to Josh's care, which immediately put extra financial strain on the family. They relocated to be closer to family for support, but soon realized their new location was tremendously behind in services and educational opportunities for children on the spectrum. Seeking the best help for Josh, Jeremy took another job and they relocated again, this time to Austin.

Here, the family could have access to quality, progressive care for their son. But paying for the care proved challenging. The demands of raising a child with autism are significant. Jeremy and Adriana, like so many families in this situation, do not qualify for government assistance. And while insurance covers a portion of therapies, it falls far short of the sessions recommended for Josh.

While the cause of Autism is still unknown, early intervention has shown proven success. The window for making the biggest difference is between the ages of 2 and 6, and every day children, like Josh, are entering and leaving this window of time. Limited resources can mean the difference in reaching the child or losing them. The Crostleys were putting everything they had toward getting their son help, but it was not enough. Tight finances were limiting Josh's therapies. And limiting

*(Continued on Page 18)*



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# RIVER REVIEW

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## Imagine A Way - (Continued from Page 17)

therapies to a child like Josh means losing valuable time that cannot be regained. Joel understands. "After our own son's diagnosis we saw the huge progress the therapies brought. The early intervention and therapies gave us our son back. We wanted other families to have that chance". And for this Austin family, Imagine A Way has given them this chance.

The Crostleys are grateful. Joshua's dad shares "When we found out we were receiving this help, we were stunned. I was speechless. My wife had tears of joy. After trying so hard for so long to get our son what he needs, we finally found a way! There's nothing more frustrating, nothing that makes you feel more helpless, than knowing there's something out there to help your child but you can't get to it. We couldn't believe it when Imagine A Way told us! To realize that so many people went to so much effort to do something this kind for someone they didn't even know... the more we think about it, the more unbelievable it is. It's pretty incredible."

### ABOUT IMAGINE A WAY:

Imagine A Way is an Austin based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization bringing support, therapies and hope for the future to Central Texas Area families affected by Autism.

*For more information about Imagine A Way visit their website [www.ImagineAWayFoundation.org](http://www.ImagineAWayFoundation.org) or call (512) 220-4324.*



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## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### EARTHQUAKE CAKE

- 1 cup coconut
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 - 2 layer pkg. German chocolate cake mix
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup melted oleo
- 1 - 1lb. pkg. confectioners sugar

Sprinkle coconut and pecans in greased and floured 8 x 14" cake pan. Prepare cake mix using package directions. Pour into pan. Beat cream cheese and oleo in mixing bowl. Add confectioners sugar; mix well. Pour over batter. Bake at 350° for 45 minutes or until cake tests done. Yield 15 servings.



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