

THE RIVER REVIEW

February 2012

News For The Residents of River Place

Volume 6, Issue 2

Announcing the River Place Garden Club's **Beautification Celebration!**

Mark your calendars! The River Place Garden Club invites residents to set aside Thursday, April 19, and make it a date to attend the River Place Garden Club's Beautification Celebration. This event, which will mark the culmination of the of the Neighborhood Beautification Project and serve as the club's premier fund-raising event of the year, will be held at the new Treasure Island park located at the corner of Treasure Island Drive and River Place Blvd. from 5:00 to 8:00 pm. Planned activities include the laying of dedication stones, a wine and cheese tasting, and a raffle of goods and services donated by local merchants. Keep posted over the coming weeks for the details!

This event also celebrates the spirit of cooperation between the River Place MUD, the neighborhood HOA, and the Garden Club whose members and committees looked at the vast expanse of soiled, blank plank fencing along River Place Blvd. in the fall of 2010 and envisioned a more colorful and abundant landscape along with the addition of more inviting and enhanced common spaces. The results have been truly spectacular!

If you are interested in helping make River Place a more beautiful community, or just looking to learn more about gardening here in our little piece of central Texas with the intent, perhaps, of passing on that knowledge and excitement to your children or grandchildren, then please feel free to join us for any one of our 2012 meetings. We meet the second Thursday of each month, September through May. Most meetings host expert guest speakers who give talks on a wide variety of gardening and yard maintenance topics. For more information, please contact club president Becky Wolfe at rwolfe210@austin.rr.com.

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

www.pickupthepile.com

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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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	
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Emergencies	512-370-8609
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Time Warner Cable

Customer Service	512-485-5555
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OTHER NUMBERS

River Place Postal Office	512-345-9739
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NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

Peel, Inc.	512-263-9181
Article Submissions	riverreview@peelinc.com
Advertising	advertising@peelinc.com

TEENAGE JOB SEEKERS

Name	Age	Baby Sit	Pet Sit	House Sit	Yard Work	Phone
Amburn, Madison*+	14.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	965-8484
Anz, Hayden	14.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	436-9607
Berkel, Cammie	13.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	343-7994
Berkel, Emma	14.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	343-7994
Corser, Kimberly	15.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	795-8350
Goetz, Kelly	15.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	502-8856
Hanna, Emma	16.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	961-2031
Kanak, Jordyn*+	13.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	502-0905
McCarly, Colin	11.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	231-0066
Morehart, Lindsey	17.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	799-0802
Morehart, Nathan	12.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	418-0057
Murry, McKenna	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	496-0266
Porter, Cami	14.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	968-8027
Potter, Emmy	14.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	342-1052
Potter, Khaki	16.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	342-1052
Roberts, Blake	13.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	653-1313
Solano, Madison	16.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	971-5135
Snodell, Meagan	16.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	343-0987
Streber, Ben	15.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	968-3704
Teague, Haley	13.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	•.....	345-1781

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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.

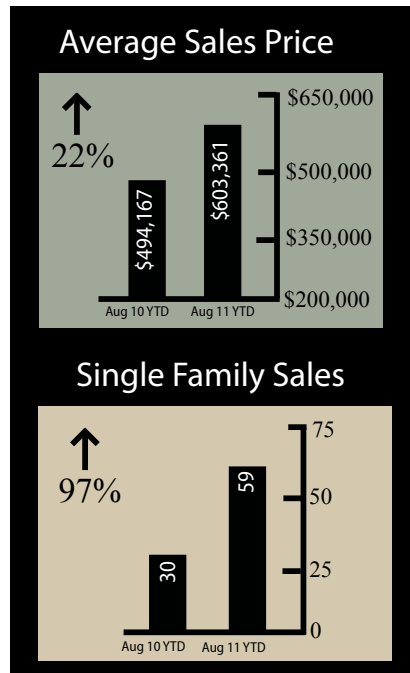
The price points in the neighborhood are relatively high and that segment of the market basically stopped moving unless there was real need. River Place is considered a "move up" neighborhood. Meaning, most people "move up" from either their first or second home into River Place. The move up segment 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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Viper Band Member is First All-State at VHS

Submitted By Rich Keith

For the first time in the history of Vandegrift High School, a Viper Band member has achieved the distinction of reaching All-State with the TMEA (Texas Music Educators Association). Matt Szostak, who plays tuba and Sousaphone, advanced after the auditions in December 2011. Jeremy Spicer, VHS Band Director says, "This honor recognizes Matt as one of the top 21 tuba players in the entire state of Texas. This is the highest award a high school band student can receive. Great job Matt – we are very proud of you!"

All-State, as students call it, is the final step of a five-month journey that begins in September, when 55,000 students audition at regional tryouts; the 1,500 of them who descend on the River Walk for the four-day event represent the mere 2 percent "who survived," as TMEA folks like to say. At the convention, they audition once more, for

chairs in the thirteen All-State ensembles, and then plunge into rehearsals for the weekend's final concerts.

Matt's mother Teresa Szostak said, "Making the All State Band has been a goal of Matthew's since he started high school. Through hard work and focus, outstanding direction and instruction from the Vandegrift HS band staff, and the support of his fellow band members, it's no surprise that he's made it a reality. We're very proud of him for this and all of his accomplishments."

The All-State audition process for high school winds and percussion students leads ultimately to qualification in one of seven All-State Bands that perform at the annual TMEA Clinic/Convention:

ATSSB Jazz Ensemble, ATSSB Concert Band, ATSSB Symphonic Band, TMEA Jazz Ensemble, 4A Symphonic Band, 5A Concert Band, and 5A Symphonic Band. With this honored distinction, Matt will participate with other "All-State" musicians from across the state at the TMEA All-State Clinic and Convention to be held in San Antonio, February 8-11, 2012.



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Need Mulch?

Get it Delivered Free - Submitted By Rich Keith

Love how your yard looks after it's mulched but hate picking up dozens of bags? Now residents of Four Points and the surrounding area can buy all the landscaping mulch they need at the same price as local home-improvement stores, and Vandegrift Viper band members will deliver it to your home free of charge. The mulch comes in 2 cubic foot bags. The price is \$3.50 a bag with discounts beginning with orders of 20 bags or more. Kirk Gravely, the coordinator of the annual fundraiser, indicated that most homeowners need between 20 and 80 bags of mulch for all their beds. Larger lots require more mulch. Delivery of mulch will be Saturday, February 18, 2012. Homeowners do not have to be home to take delivery.

Residents can choose between two types of premium quality mulch from Landscapers Pride, a company in New Waverly, Texas. The Black Velvet Hardwood Mulch is composted on site in New Waverly using a natural colorant, producing a rich



black colored mulch. Use it as you would any other top dressing. The Hardwood Bark Mulch is ideal for areas subject to wind or water erosion. Use on flower beds, walkways, play areas, or running tracts as a general ground cover. Not recommended, however, for tilling into the soil.

The band is taking orders now through February 9, 2012. Mr. Gravely suggests that residents get their orders in early, before the LISD winter break. To order mulch with free home delivery, call your friendly neighborhood VHS band student or visit www.vhsband.com/mulch.

The VHS Band Booster Club is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization and helps support the band program by providing funds to offset expenses and keep student fees as low as possible. They also offer "effortless giving" through shopping at Amazon and Randall's, and by getting haircuts and ordering pizza locally. Visit www.vhsband.com/fundraising/effortless-giving for details.

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Local Readers Eagerly Anticipate Author's Visit

A bestselling, nationally recognized author known for his suspenseful thrillers and mysteries has been selected for the 2012 Lake Travis Reads program.

"Jeff Abbott has agreed to be our featured author this year, and we're very excited," said Morgan McMillian, Director of the Lake Travis Community Library. "His suspenseful thrillers are guaranteed to keep you reading way into the night."

Abbott will make an appearance at the Bee Cave library on Thursday, February 23, 2012 where he will discuss his work, share some experiences, and answer questions.

Booklist praises Abbott for his riveting action sequences and plot twists. "Fans of Harlan Coben, Lee Child, Joseph Finder, or John Grisham – anyone who enjoys a wild ride on a bumpy road – can cheer the arrival of our latest master of the fine art of page-turner. Highly recommended."

Abbott has published thirteen mystery and suspense novels in the past twenty years. His first series, featuring librarian Jordan Poteet, takes place in the mythical small town of Mirabeau, Texas and balances traditional mystery plots with folksy homespun humor. In *Do Unto Others*, protagonist Poteet's quiet domesticity is shattered when he locks horns with Beta Harcher, the town's prize religious fanatic, in a knock-down drag-out battle over censorship. Beta is soon found dead and the mystery begins!

Texas judge Whit Mosley is featured in Abbott's second mystery series, starting with *A Kiss Gone Bad*. When the black-sheep son of a senator lies dead, Mosley fights political pressure while contending with drug lords, con artists, and power-hungry sharks. Author Harlan Coben says that the book "rocks big time. It's an adrenaline-fueled, twist-filled thrill ride of pure, white-knuckled suspense. I read it in one sitting. I couldn't put it

down. I skipped meals. Jeff Abbott is a master, and *A Kiss Gone Bad* is a marvelous page-turner."

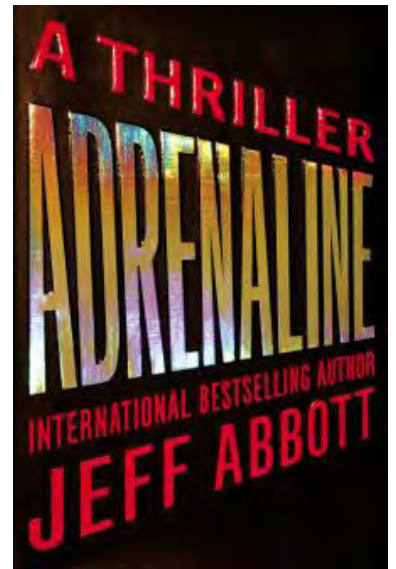
Abbott's latest novels are stand alone thrillers and full of unforgettable characters and jolting plot twists. His most recent novel, *Adrenaline*, features CIA agent Sam Capra who loses everything that matters to him in one horrifying moment in London. He is soon criss-crossing the globe to find his possible double agent wife and newborn son. Publisher's Weekly gave the novel a starred review and calls the book, "outstanding and genuinely moving. Readers who thrive on relentless narrative pace and a straight line to the finish won't be disappointed."

"We are thrilled to have a writer of Jeff's caliber as our featured author," said Bee Cave Public Library Director Barbara Hathaway. "From his earlier mysteries set in Texas to his current heart-pounding thrillers, his work offers something for everyone."

Abbott graduated from Rice University with a degree in History and English, and worked as a creative director at an advertising agency before writing full-time. He now lives in Austin with his wife and two sons. He is published in many languages and has been a bestseller in the US, the UK, Ireland, France, Germany, Australia, Portugal, and other countries. His novels *Panic* and *Collision* have been optioned for film and are in script development.

"Abbott's books are always page turners with interesting characters and many questions to solve," said Lake Travis Community Library

(Continued on page 8)



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RIVER REVIEW

Author's Visit... - (Continued from Page 7)

employee Earlene Loflin. "His plots are great puzzles for sleuths!"

Lake Travis Reads is a "One Book, One Community" program designed to bring the community together to read and discuss a single book or author. This year's version, featuring the works of local suspense writer Jeff Abbott, is the 5th annual version of the program co-sponsored by the libraries and Friends groups of Bee Cave, Lake Travis and Spicewood. Previous years featured *This Voice in My Heart: A Runner's Memoir of Genocide, Faith and Forgiveness* by Gilbert Tuhabonye and *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School at a Time* by Greg Mortenson. The program has also featured the novels of Sarah Bird and Ben Rehder.

Multiple copies of Jeff Abbott's books are available at the Bee Cave, Lake Travis, and Spicewood libraries. The "Evening with the Author" on Thursday, February 23 will be at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at Bee Cave City Hall, and is open to the public and free of charge. For more information, visit www.laketravisreads.org or contact any of the participating libraries.

For Release January 13, 2012

For more information, please 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.

Breast Cancer Awareness

Breast Cancer Awareness and Tennis Event, Rally For The Cure, benefiting Susan G Komen non- profit will take place on Saturday February 4 from 9-Noon at the Barton Creek Country Club. Andy Roddick and the University of Texas Girls Tennis Team will be providing exhibition matches and teaching clinics for the whole family. Light breakfast and prizes for all who attend!! 25\$. To RSVP, please call 512/329-4008 by February 3, 2012.



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- Twin Creeks Country Club
- Benefits Dell Children's Medical Center

Northwest Austin Circle of Friends presents our 13th Annual CHEERS for Children event benefiting Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas. This exciting event, a premier wine, scotch, and food tasting, will be held Thursday, February 23, 2012, 6:30 to 9:00 pm at Twin Creeks Country Club (3201 Twin Creeks Club Drive, Cedar Park, 78613), nestled in the lovely hill country setting between northwest Austin and Cedar Park.

Your are invited to join us for a fun and exciting Mardi Gras celebration filled with premier wines, single



malt scotches, delicious cuisine from local restaurants, funky jazz music on the veranda and complimentary Mardi Gras beads - all included in the ticket price - as well as live and silent auctions with unique and tempting items. Don your masks and costumes (if you dare), and join the fun – all for a good cause!

Tickets are \$55 in advance (\$65 at the door). 100% of funds raised benefit Dell Children's Medical Center and are directed to The Texas Child Study Center, the mental health program at DCMC.

For more information or to purchase tickets online go to DellChildrensCircleofFriends.org (listed under "upcoming events") or contact Elliott Weir, Chairman NWA COF, at eweir@austin.rr.com or 922-2231.

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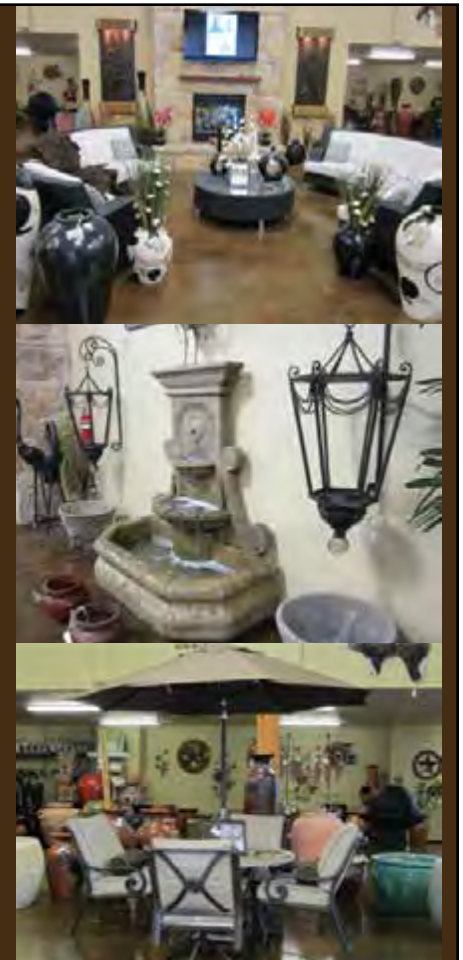
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American Diabetes Association

ANNOUNCES INAUGURAL AUSTIN-BASED CENTRAL TEXAS TOUR DE CURE CYCLING EVENT IN 2012

Planning committee seeks sponsors, riders and volunteers

Now in its eleventh year, the American Diabetes Association Tour de Cure has been a fundraising cycling ride from San Antonio to Austin, Texas. For the first time, in 2012, the event's fundraising efforts will be focused on twenty-six (26) Central Texas counties, and the ride will start and end in Austin at the Travis County Expo Center on May 5, 2012.

"The ADA has decided that it needs to turn up the volume on its efforts to heighten our nation's sense of urgency about the disease, and to move beyond just awareness to encourage people to engaging with the Association in meaningful ways and become a part of the movement to Stop Diabetes®. The Tour de Cure takes place in 43 cities nationwide, and the Central Texas one has been so successful that the national organization encouraged Austin-area leaders to forge its own ride and focus on getting local word out about the cause," says Mercedes Feris, Tour Manager of the Austin-based chapter.

The new one-day, family-focused event, sponsored by lead sponsors Austin Energy and Seton Healthcare Family, will feature various cycling routes for all skill levels (from 15 to 100 miles in length). No matter which distance riders choose, they will be fully supported with route marshals, SAG vehicles, mechanical support, and rest stops stocked with hydration and a variety of snacks. At the finish, there will be an Austin-style



celebratory theme at the Travis County Expo Center with cheering volunteers, live music, great food and much more.

"Though we have made substantial progress in combating diabetes, the number of Americans burdened by this disease continues to grow at a rapid pace," says Jane Koble, Executive Director of the association's Central Texas chapter. "Approximately 8.3 percent of Americans have diabetes. In Central Texas, we're looking at 10% of our population. It's an urgent health issue that touches Texans at a much higher percentage than the general population of the United States and the number of adult Texans with diabetes is expected to quadruple over the next three decades if the current trend continues."

Diabetes can have a devastating impact on the health and well-being of those it affects. People with diabetes are more likely to suffer from complications such as heart attacks, strokes, high blood pressure, or kidney failure.

Type 1 diabetes inhibits the body's ability to produce insulin and can be managed with

insulin injections, diet, and exercise.

Type 2 diabetes accounts for 90 percent of diabetes cases in the U.S. and for those with this type, either their body does not produce enough insulin or the cells ignore the insulin. Individuals can reduce their risk of developing Type 2 by adopting a healthy diet, exercising regularly, and consulting a medical professional about their individual needs and risk factors. The increase in Type 2 diabetes among the Nation's children is linked to the rise of childhood obesity.

Traditionally, Tour de Cure has been the Central Texas chapter's largest annual fundraiser. The planning committee for the 2012 Austin Central Texas Tour de Cure hopes to attract 550 riders to the inaugural event, who will each raise a minimum of \$200 to help prevent, treat, and manage the disease.

For more information, to volunteer or to sign up, go to <http://www.diabetes.org/austintourdecure> or call 1-888-DIABETES. Ongoing updates are also available on Twitter at @DiabetesAustin or the event's Facebook page: "Austin Central Texas Tour de Cure."

The American Diabetes Association is leading the fight against the deadly consequences of diabetes and fighting for those affected by diabetes. The Association funds research to prevent, cure and manage diabetes; delivers services to hundreds of communities; provides objective and credible information; and gives voice to those denied their rights because of diabetes.



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Austin Newcomers Club February Luncheon

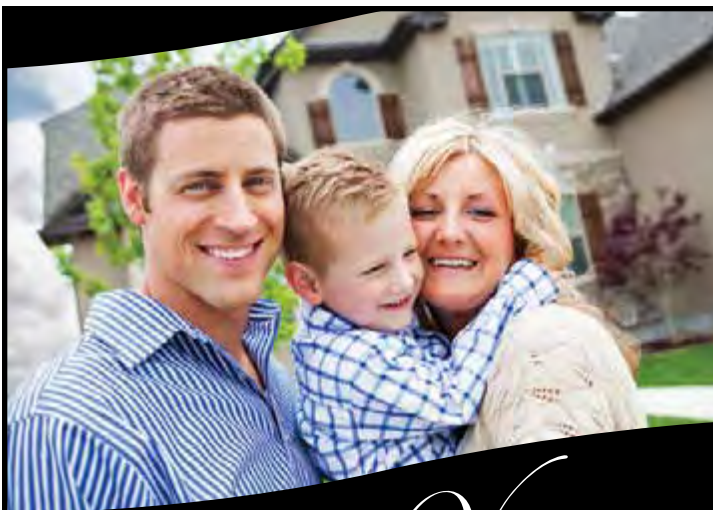
Austin Newcomers Club is a non-profit social and recreational organization of 500 member- households celebrating its 60th year. It is dedicated to introducing residents to the Austin Community and giving them the opportunity to meet and make new friends.

The February luncheon speaker will be Daris Word Hale, who was a lecturer and researcher in Tanzania as a Fulbright Scholar from the United States for the 2010-2011 academic year. She taught music at Makumira University in Arusha, and collaborated with East African composers to create new music for western orchestral instruments. Just freshly repatriated, Daris teaches music at Texas State University, and is a bassoonist in the Austin Symphony Orchestra and Austin Lyric Opera Orchestra. She is a founding member of the international touring groups Wild Basin Winds and Trio 488 which have released four albums.

- **When and Where:** Wednesday, February 22, 2012 at Green Pastures Restaurant, 811 West Live Oak Street, pre-payment \$20.00. Reservations are required.

- **Time:** 11 a.m. Social Hour, Luncheon begins at noon.
- For Luncheon Reservations Email: LuncheonDirector@AustinNewcomers.com
- **WELCOME BACK!** To the 67 members who enjoyed the ANC Western Caribbean Cruise in January.
- **MARK YOUR CALENDAR** for our March 22nd Luncheon Speaker, Austin Police Chief Art Asavado

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. You are invited to attend a morning or evening Welcome Coffee and Orientation. For more information visit the website at: www.AustinNewcomers.com.



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New Year and Resolutions

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

So a New Year and again resolutions! Do we know the definition of a resolution? What lifestyle changes do I have to commit too? What are obstacles we have to work around that will challenge us to commit? These are probably questions that come across our mind, the day of the first of the year. Honestly, do we have to be rigid or just create enough awareness to give yourself the energy to move to the next step? We all want our resolutions to be manageable and easy to complete. Well, we are here to assist you one more time. Last time we talked about S.M.A.R.T, how this acronym should be your golden rule to completing your goals, in this case your resolutions.

So let's begin with the definition of the word: resolution. The American Heritage Dictionary has 14 statements to define resolution. I will only state 3; **1.** Firm determination. **2.** The act of resolving to do something. **3.** A course of action determined or decided upon. It seems, in our case, the 3rd is the most feasible. Let's face it; this is the toughest step in the process. Most of us need to sit and be methodical about taking action. This fulfills the how, what, when questions. What are yours?

With the start of any new endeavor, it's quite common to look at our lifestyle and look for areas we can improve on. One change I made several yrs ago was to not make a resolution. Yes, not to make a resolution. I decided to make a list of 6-12

things I wanted to complete or change throughout the year. All had to deal with a nutritional goal, a fitness goal and a spiritual goal. I even went as far as, adding some volunteer, community, self care goals...just in those you have six ideas. Now you can work on a list for the whole year. Take some time throughout the month to glance and stay on track...don't allow yourself to take two steps back. Now and again you might side steps but move forward. Take some quite time to glance at your list, to reflect on your journey and work towards fruition.

What obstacles will challenge you and how will you overcome them? Let's face it, there are going to be times when our Will will be challenged. Such things as our commitments to our family, our friends and our community will be barriers to overcome. The good news is, you have 365 days, 168 hrs per week and you only need a minimum of 30 to 45 minutes per week to 4 hrs per month to commit to one goal. Keep in mind, our resolutions should remain attainable and realistic. If you find there are too many goals, then scale back; reorganize and prioritize. No one likes feeling defeated. We do have the option to not put ourselves in the opportunity of failure.

This 2012, let's begin with a desire to set our course of action, to enjoy our journey to learn, to train, to maintain, to change; at all levels at all degrees. Also take time to reflect on positive changes; those that come from

our desire to change but also by the outcomes of our actions. As always, my business partner and I wish you balance, harmony, and good health. Be well be blessed.



The block contains a logo for 'LAZAR LAW' with the words 'Collaborative', 'Family', and 'Divorce' below it. To the right of the logo is a black and white portrait of a woman with short dark hair and glasses, smiling. The entire block is set against a dark background.

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Roving Ringtails

NATURE *by Jim & Lynne Weber* WATCH

The common but elusive Ringtail or Ringtail Cat (*Bassariscus astutus*) is not a cat at all, but a member of the Procyonidae family and a close relative of the Northern Raccoon. The origins of its scientific name comes from bassar or fox, isc or little, and astute or cunning. In Texas, it is found mostly in the Trans-Pecos, the Edwards Plateau, and the Cross Timbers regions.

While ringtails are cat-sized mammals, their face is fox-like with a pointed snout, their body is elongated, and their tail resembles a raccoon. The ears are large, and their big, dark eyes are each surrounded by a patch of light-colored fur. The fur on their body is buff to brown-colored above and whitish below, with a spectacularly bushy, ringed tail. This tail is often longer than their body, and is marked by a series of 14 to

16 alternating black and white rings (black rings incomplete on the underside) with a black tip.

Mainly nocturnal but sometimes seen at dawn and dusk (crepuscular), ringtails are roving, solitary mammals that come together only to mate. Their breeding season starts in late February and continues to mid-April, and females are in heat for only one 24-hour period during this time. In early May to mid-June 2 to 4 cubs are born fuzzy, white-haired, and with a tail that is not yet colored with the distinctive black and white bands. The cubs open their eyes at one month, and at four months begin hunting for rodents, insects, lizards, birds, and berries. Ringtails are quite vocal, especially the young, and will make a variety of sounds including squeaks, chatters, grunts, growls, and hisses, with the typical

call being a loud, plaintive bark. In the wild, ringtails live an average of seven years.

Ringtails can be found in our oak-juniper woodlands that have rocky areas associated with water, including riparian canyons and caves, limestone cliffs, and sometimes in man-made structures like mine shafts. They can den in tree hollows, rock crevices, other animals' abandoned burrows, and even seldom-used spaces in buildings. They roam frequently, rarely spending more than three straight nights in one den. Interestingly, the ankle joint of the Ringtail is very flexible and is able to rotate over 180 degrees, which makes them very agile climbers. By pressing their feet against one wall and their back against the opposite wall, or by pressing both right feet against one wall and

(Continued on Page 16)



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RIVER REVIEW

Nature Watch - (Continued from Page 15)

both left feet against the opposite wall, they are able to 'stem' or ascend/descend narrow passageways and wide cracks in the rock. Their strong tail can provide balance for negotiating narrow ledges and limbs, and even allows them to reverse direction by performing a cartwheel!

Ringtails have many other common names, including Miner's Cat, as they were often kept by miners and settlers as pets, to keep their cabin free of mice. A hole was cut in a small box that was placed near a stove or fireplace, which acted as a dark, warm place for them to sleep during the day, and they returned the favor at night, hunting mice and keeping them and other rodents at bay. In



the native language of the Nahuatl Indians of Mexico, ringtails were called 'cacomistle', which is derived from the word tlahcomiztli meaning 'half mountain lion.' Whatever you call

them, consider yourself lucky should you spot one of these beautiful, timid, and rarely seen nocturnal mammals!

*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, *Nature Watch Austin*, published by Texas A&M University Press.*

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(Continued on Page 16) DELIVERY OF PIZZA & WINGS TO
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& Pinktober365

Team Tiara is a 501(c)(3) dedicated to raising money to fund research and education for breast cancer as well as provide outreach services to those affected by it. 2012 will mark our 7th year in this fight against breast cancer. To date, we have raised over \$600,000 for breast cancer awareness, research and direct support for survivors. In 2012, Team Tiara will begin directly funding research into metastatic breast cancer. This is an under-funded area of research where we need to have a lasting impact. Men and women do not die when their cancer is confined to their breasts. We lose them when that cancer spreads to their bones, liver, lungs, brain and other organs -- robbing them of time with their families and friends. This is the heart-breaking side of breast cancer, and an area of research we need to be a part of.

Our goal is to raise \$100,000 in 2012, specifically targeted to metastatic breast cancer research. SO WE are excited to announce that www.pinktober365.com launched January 1. This new website will profile 365 pink warriors -- survivors, walkers, researchers, and advocates. We want to hear your story, whether you are a fighter, survivor, family or friend affected by breast cancer. Go to www.pinktober365.com to share your story or obtain more information. Team Tiara would be honored to hear from you.

SUDOKU

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View answers online at www.peelinc.com

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The goal is to fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. Each digit may appear only once in each row, each column, and each 3x3 box.

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Girl Scouts Celebrate their Centennial with the Year of the Girl

Juliette “Daisy” Gordon Low assembled 18 girls from Savannah, Georgia, on March 12, 1912, for a local Girl Scout meeting. She believed that all girls should be given the opportunity to develop physically, mentally, and spiritually. With the goal of bringing girls out of isolated home environments and into community service and the open air, Girl Scouts hiked, played basketball, went on camping trips, learned how to tell time by the stars, and studied first aid.

Within a few years, Daisy’s dream for a girl-centered organization was realized. Today, Girl Scouts marks its 100 year Anniversary and has declared 2012 the Year of the Girl: a celebration of girls, recognition of their leadership potential, and a commitment to creating a coalition of like-minded organizations and individuals in support of balanced leadership in the workplace and in communities across the country. For the past century, Girl Scouts has been the premier leadership organization for girls. With more than 50 million alumnae, the impact and role of Girl Scouts in this country and Texas is undeniable and far reaching.

DID YOU KNOW?

- 80% of women business owners were Girl Scouts
- 68% of female U.S. Members of Congress are Girl Scouts
- Virtually every female astronaut who has ever flown in space was a Girl Scout
- 80% of volunteerism in America comes from the efforts & inspiration of 50 million Grown-up Girl Scouts

Imagine a new generation of leaders who lead in an innovative way, stepping across barriers of class and ethnicity, guiding out of principle rather than pride, actively seeking out the work that needs to be done in the world and bringing boundless energy and enthusiasm to each challenge.

Girl Scouts of Central Texas strives to create an environment where girls can discover themselves and their values; a place where they can connect with others, push boundaries and test limits; a place where they can develop their leadership potential and take action; a place

that will serve as the launch pad for a successful life.

Girl Scouts of Central Texas provides girls a myriad of programs—from Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) based learning experiences to educational travel programs (Destinations) for teen girls who might not otherwise experience life in other cultures. These opportunities are available to all girls, from all socio-economic backgrounds, including girls living in shelters, in housing projects, girls who have been incarcerated and girls whose mothers are incarcerated.

During the centennial year there will be a myriad of activities. Beginning with Cookie sales in January, these activities include a Capitol Sing-along (March 12th), a Camporee (April), a Leadership Conference (August), an interactive exhibit at the Texas State Fair (September-October) and culminates in a candlelit vigil in December to mark the beginning of the next 100 years. All present and former Girls Scouts are invited to attend.

The Girl Scout mission continues to be: build girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place. It is a movement that has been developing leaders for 100 years and will continue for 100 more.

*For more information visit
www.gsctx.org*



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Paris Potatoes

5 cups potatoes, diced in ½" cubes
1 C sour cream
2 C creamed cottage cheese
1 C green onions & tops, finely chopped
½ tsp. garlic salt, optional
salt & pepper to taste
1 C shredded cheddar cheese

Parcook diced potatoes in boiling water until crispy tender. Drain, and combine potatoes with all ingredients except cheese. Baked in buttered 13 x 9" baking dish at 350° for 30 minutes or until sauce is bubbly. Sprinkle with cheese during last 10 minutes of baking time.

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