

July 2012

www.circlecranch.info



4TH OF JULY PARADE

The Circle C HOA Annual 4TH of July Parade is scheduled for Wednesday July 4th at the new Circle C Community Center. Gathering time is set for 9:30 AM. Come with your bikes, trikes, scooters, wagons, and strollers pre-decorated or decorate in the parking lot when you arrive. The parade will step off at 10AM, led by Travis County Sheriff Officers and Engine 43 of the Austin Fire Department, if our amazing firefighters are not out saving lives and protecting homes. After the parade returns to the CCCC, there will be a 'Best Wheels Contest' and prizes awarded.

We will have face painters and balloon twisters to entertain the kids. Kona Ice will provide mini shaved ice cups to cool you off. The Evil Weiner mobile food truck will be in the parking lot selling lunch, not only to parade participants, but also to the residents enjoying the swim center before and after the parade. They offer unique hotdog combinations that sound so yummy! Check out their deliciously tempting menu on PAGE ???. I definitely want to try La Revolucion...yum!

We are still in desperate need of volunteers; participate in this fun-filled event and give back to your community with just a short commitment of your time. We are looking for volunteers to help set up, help the children decorate, judge the Best Wheels Contest, and clean up. Depending on your volunteer job, we would need you any time from 8:30am-11am. The HOA will provide volunteers with food. Grab your friends, grab your family, grab your neighbor, and come help your neighborhood by volunteering for this fun event! Contact the HOA at 288-8663 if you are interested in helping out.

4TH OF JULY HOLIDAY HOURS

Swim Center Pool	6-10am Lap Swim Only,
	10am-6pm Lap & Recreational Swim
Community Center Pool	
Circle C HOA Offices	Closed
Community Center	Closed & unavailable for reservations

NO FIREWORKS IN CIRCLE C

According to City ordinance, the possession of fireworks is illegal within Austin's city limits. Use of fireworks in Austin (this includes Circle C) could result in a fine of more than \$500. The City of Austin and the Circle C Homeowners Association does not allow fireworks within Circle C Ranch at any time. With the current drought situation and upcoming 4th of July holiday, it is more important than ever to make sure this rule is strictly followed. Please report any fireworks to the police department by calling 911.

Neighborhood Meet & Greets Attention **CC North Residents**

The HOA will host monthly neighborhood meet and greets at our new Community Center (located at 7817 La Crosse Avenue, intersection of La Crosse Ave. and Spruce Canyon). First up are our wonderful residents of Circle C North. Plan on coming out on Thursday, July 19, 6:00-7:30 pm. The event will be sponsored by the amazing team at Austin Real Estate Partners. We were still in the planning stages as this article was released, but we are really hoping to have some fun and exciting things planned for each of our meet and greets. Activities may include important guest speakers, door prizes, yummy food, and more! This is a wonderful opportunity for you to come out and meet some your neighbors. Be on the lookout for your invitation in the mail. See you there!

CCHOA NUMBERS

HOA Mgmt Office info@circlecranch.info or 288-8663 HOA Financial Office
Peel, Inc. Sales Office
Advertisingadvertising@PEELinc.com, 512-263-9181
Circle C Amenities
Circle C Café
Circle C CDC
Circle C Swim Center
Circle C Community Center Pool
Circle C Tennis Club General@CircleCTennis.com, 301-8685
Sub Association Info:
KB Enclave and Fairway Estates HOA
Karen Hibpshman, CMCA, Manager
Parkwest HOA
Goodwin Management
č
Streetman Enclave HOA
Rosalind Peterson
Muirfield HOA
Sara Huff

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Kim Ackermann	Board Member
Rob Johnson	Board Member
Brad Compere	Board Member
Steve Urban	Board Member
Contact the board at	directors@circlecranch.info

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

City of Austin Solid Wasta	07/ 10/5
City of Austin Solid Waste	
Dead Animal Collection	974-2000
Abandoned Vehicle	974-8119
Pothole Complaints	974-8750
Stop Signs	457-4885
Street Light Outage	
Schools	
Clayton Elementary	841-9200
Kiker Elementary	414-2584
Gorzycki Middle School	841-8600
Small Middle School	841-6700
Bowie High School	11/ 50/7
bowle i ligli School	414-524/
SAYSA	

ARTICLE INFO

The Circle C Ranch newsletter is mailed monthly to all Circle C Ranch residents. Residents, community groups, churches, etc. are welcome to submit information about their organizations in the newsletter. Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, recipes, special celebrations, and birthday announcements are also welcome.

If you have an article of interest to the community please submit to <u>ashley@circlecranch.info</u> by the 10th of the month. The newsletter can also be viewed online at www.circlecranch.info.

ADVERTISING INFO

Please support the advertisers that make the Circle C Ranch Newsletter possible. If you are interested in advertising, please contact Peel, Inc. at 512-263-9181 or <u>advertising@peelinc.com</u>. The advertising deadline is the 8th of the month prior to the issue.

MISSION STATEMENT

Peel, Inc. Community Newsletters

Our goal is to provide the Circle C Ranch community with one source of local news content that is provided by Circle C residents. Our goal is to help build Circle C by connecting local businesses with residents and residents with relevant neighborhood information. *"Be the Community."*



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ADVERTISING

Information

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

CLASSIFIED ADS

Personal Classifieds (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Circle C Ranch residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail to <u>ashley@circlecranch.info</u>.

Business Classifieds (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$65, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. at 512-263-9181 or *advertising@PEELinc.com*.



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We look forward to helping you create your perfect home!



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RESIDENTCLASSIFIED

HIGH END AUTHENTIC PURSES (Fendi monogram \$ 100 small, paid \$475, Black Prada \$75,paid \$500; Gucci tan w red/ green stripe vintage look \$250 paid \$700). Burberry W watch \$80. Tiffany's silver bracelet \$60, paid \$130. Cocktail dresses (Cache, BCBG, Jessica McClintock, St. Thomas. Sizes 2-8) \$25-40. Woman's shoes size 8-81/2 BCBG + \$25. Contact mgonzajd@ gmail.com or 512-551-2036.

BABY SALE! All items in excellent used condition, 2010 models. Exersaucer \$25, Pink Nap Nanny \$60, Boppy pillow & cover \$15, Pink Bouncy Seat \$25, Diaper Genie \$20. Pictures available. 214-674-2673

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CCHOA News

CCHOA Announcements- (Continued from Cover Page)

DO YOU OWN A LOCAL BUSINESS? WE NEED SPONSORS!

We know that there are some wonderful local business owners in the neighborhood. If you are one of these people, we want you to sponsor our neighborhood meet and greets! Our budget does not allow us to promote and host the event to the extent that we would like, so we need your help.

We are planning on having 9 neighborhood meet and greet parties. Each party will be comprised of a certain section of the neighborhood. Each section is roughly 500 homes, more or less. You would choose which section you would like to sponsor. And you may of course sponsor more than one section if you'd like, but please not more than two initially. This way we can make sure we give all business owners equal opportunity. If there are open spots left, you may have the option of sponsoring more if you would like. Each party will take place at the Community Center on the third Thursday of each month.

You may be wondering what exactly you need to do to sponsor

the event. Well, we obviously need to send out invitations to our guests. That's where we would need your help. The invitations would be direct mail postcards that we would design. We would include your logo and business name and possibly a slogan or additional information if there is room. Each section will cost roughly \$250 for the postcards with postage on average, some more and some less due to the size of the section you choose. You would also be able to set up a booth at the meet and greet with flyers, business cards, etc. We just ask for no hard selling at the booths. And if you would like to also sponsor the event by providing food and drink, it would be most greatly appreciated by us and the guests! Or if you own or franchise a restaurant or catering company, we would love to have you cater the event! We will include an rsvp email on the postcard to get an estimate of how many people to expect.

Please contact Ashley at ashley@circlecranch.info for further details, to send ideas and suggestions, and to sign up. We would love to work with you on these exciting events!

18 years of dedicated service in Southwest Austin



HOA Announcements

Submitted by Denise Nordstrom, CCHOA Manager

HOA DUES TO BE MAILED IN JULY

The second half of your annual dues assessment will be mailed the first week of July; they will be due August 1st! Please follow the following procedures when sending in your dues:

- Mail to the PO BOX 163541, Austin, TX 78716 (Do NOT drop off at the HOA office)
- Financial Manager's office is not part of the Circle C office , and the CCHOA office is not bonded to accept payments
- Please do NOT postdate your check
- Please do NOT staple your invoice to your check
- Include it in the envelope
- Please make your payment by CHECK ONLY, we do not accept credit cards
- Please call our Financial Office at 451-9901 if you have any questions or if you do not receive a statement by mid-July. Thank you for your cooperation.

VANDALISM

Unfortunately we are still having issues with vandalism throughout the neighborhood. We have had recent reports of a car being spray painted on Tanaqua, a car being egged on Redmond, and graffiti and toilet papering on Tanaqua and at the mail center at Dahlgreen. We have also notice many, many homes have had trees covered in toilet paper in recent weeks. This not only trashes the individual homes, but within days also the neighbors' yards and surrounding street, until the homeowner is able to clean up the mess. If you have any information on these incidents or see anything suspicious throughout the neighborhood, please call 911 immediately and report it to the police.

NOTRASH CANS ATTHE MAIL CENTERS

As you know by now, we have removed all the trash cans at the mail centers and relocated them throughout the neighborhood in places where they will be better suited. We had two reasons behind this decision. 1) Circle C has become such a big neighborhood. We have nearly 5,000 homes and still growing. If every resident throws away their mail in these trash cans, that is a massive amount of paper that is not being recycled. We feel is our responsibility to make an effort to move toward a more ecofriendly neighborhood. 2) It puts you at risk when you throw away your junk mail that has your personal information on it. We have had reports in the past of people's identity, credit card information, etc. being stolen from them throwing away their mail.

We did receive some very positive feedback from those who appreciate our green efforts. Thank you to those residents. Unfortunately, we also received some very negative feedback as well. The most disturbing feedback that we received was people trashing out our mail centers, particularly Circle C North. The mail carrier called to inform us that not only was Circle C North's mail center completely trashed, but also that residents had taken upon themselves to start using the outgoing mailbox as a trash can. Please remember that this was a decision made by the Circle C Homeowners Association that was approved by your Board of Directors. This was not a decision made by the US Postal Service. If you have any questions or comments regarding the trash cans at the mail centers, please contact the HOA at 288-8663.

LOOK OUT FOR PEDESTRIANS WHEN BACKING UP

Please be careful when you are backing up out of your driveway. We have received phone calls about people not paying attention to pedestrians when backing out of their driveways, especially along Redmond Road. There may be people walking or even small children walking or riding their bikes that may be hard to see. Please be careful.

RATTLESNAKES IN THE GREENBELT AREAS

Please be extra careful for snakes when you are walking on the trails and greenbelt areas. Sadly, someone posted a sign that three dogs were killed by rattlesnakes in the Circle C Metropolitan Park. Always keep your dogs on leashes in these areas to prevent them from curiously going up to unknown creatures. This City of Austin park requires dogs to be leashed. It is not an "off leash" park. If you take your dog out on these trails often, you may want to consider talking with your vet about the rattlesnake vaccine.

(Continued on Page 8)



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CCHOA News

HOA Announcements- (Continued from Page 7)

Please review these safety tips for you & your pet provided by the ASPCA:

Avoid chance encounters with snakes...

- Keep your yard tidy by clearing away undergrowth, toys and tools that make great hiding places for snakes.
- Keep walkways clear of brush, flowers and shrubs.
- Clean up any spilled food, fruit or bird seed, which can attract rodents—and therefore snakes—to your yard.
- When walking your pet, keep him on a leash.
- Steer your pet clear of long grasses, bushes and rocks.
- Snakes can strike across a distance equal to about half their body length. If you see a snake, head back the way you came.
- Familiarize yourself with snakes who are common in your area. In the event of a bite, identifying the type of snake may help with your pet's treatment.

Recognize snake bite symptoms...

- Local or general swelling
- Bleeding
- Intense pain
- Low blood pressure
- Dead tissue around the wound
- Shortness of breath
- Weakness
- Renal failure

What to do if you think your pet's been bitten...

- Remember to stay calm.
- Keep your pet calm, too, by limiting his activity.
- If your pet was bitten on the neck, remove his collar.
- If possible, keep the location of the bite below heart level.
- Seek veterinary care for your pet immediately.
- Treatment options such as cold packs, ice, tourniquets, alcohol, bleeding the wound and trying to suck out venom should not be attempted in place of getting your pet to the vet—they may just waste precious time.
- Always keep your personal safety in mind and do not try to catch or kill a snake yourself.
- Even if you think a snake is dead, never handle him. Some dead snakes are capable of inflicting a bite by muscle contractions.

For more details, you may reference this website: http://www.aspca. org/pet-care/poison-control/snake-bite-safety-prevention-tips.aspx.

CATS IN CIRCLE C

If you have a pet cat that roams the neighborhood, please be considerate of your neighbors. We have heard recent reports of many homeowners letting their pet cats roam the streets and even go into homeowner's back yards. Please make sure that your cat remains on your property only. For those that are having cats enter their back yards, there are few methods you can use to make your back yard less appealing to them. Applying a product called Shake-Away, which is made up of urine from foxes, coyotes, or bobcats (cats' natural predators), to your yard is said to help keep cats away. You can also look into adding a motion-activated sprinkler or orange peels to your back yard, which are both said to work wonders for keeping the cats away.

TREE STAKES

If you have trees that have been planted for 12 months, they are now well established, and it is time to remove the stakes and support wires. The support wires may harm your trees and restrict growth.

POOP THE SCOOP

Please remember to always pick up after your dogs when taking them on walks throughout the neighborhood. Use the baggies, take the baggie home with you, and dispose of the waste properly. One family made this sign to remind all residents to scoop the poop.



DEED RESTRICTIONS

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

The **ELDER** Home Group Central Texas Real Estate



7021 Viridian Lane / List Price \$425,000 / Sold Price \$415.000 / POLP 97.65 %



7020 Tanagua Lane / List Price \$389,900 / Sold Price \$384.000 / POLP 98.48 %



10816 Maelin Dr. / List Price \$379,900 / Sold Price \$375,000 / POLP 96.17 %



6837 Auckland / List Price \$224,000 / Sold Price \$220.000 / POLP 98.21 %



6808 Auckland / List Price \$304,500 / Sold Price \$300.000 / POLP 98.52 %

1921 Lohman's Crossing Ste. 100 Austin, TX 78734

Want Results? Here are mine

My Average Days on the Market - 9.5 Days!

10100 Dobbin Drive - 43 days on market - SOLD! 4605 Nevada - 0 days on market- SOLD! 4705 Everglade - 0 days on market - SOLD! 6837 Auckland - 6 days on market- SOLD! 3801 Spyglass Cove – 5 days on the market – SOLD! 7021 Viridian Lane - 7 days on market- SOLD! 6808 Auckland - 0 days on market - SOLD! 1949 Creek Crest Way - 7 days on market - SOLD! 7020 Tanagua - 6 days on market- SOLD! 10816 Maelin Dr - 17 days on market - SOLD!

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wendy@theelderhomegroup.com

Testimonials

"Wendy Elder was our agent representing us with both the purchase of our new home as well as the sale of our former home. Wendy truly listened to our needs as a buyer and selected properties that matched. She has a keen understanding of the markets she represents (in our case Circle C) as well as market timing and identifies opportunities quickly. Wendy was able to provide us an exclusive showing of a home that hadn't yet been placed on the market. Through Wendy's experience and her awesome support team, the process went on cruise control from there and closed in 30 days! As our sellers agent, Wendy actively and aggressively promoted our home through various social and electronic media as well as by word of mouth weeks before we were scheduled to go on the MLS. As a result we received an offer on our home BEFORE it went on the market AND got FULLASKING PRICE! Wendy is unquestionably the BEST agent we've ever worked with and we with confidence would refer her services to our friends and family and contact her again for representation."

Charlton and Chrissie Laird

"I'm not sure where we will go from here, and if our paths will cross again, but I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you one more time for everything you have done for my family. Some people do their jobs well and float thru life content to make a minimum impact on the lives of others. And then there are people like you and your husband who go out of their way to make a difference in this world, and give everything they have in their jobs to make the world a better place. My family believes there will be a greater reward for the kindness, respect, and compassion you show to everyone you meet and do business with. My wish for you is that each and every client you have recognizes your worth."

Our Highest regards and Best wishes for RAIN in Texas." Teresa

Wendy & Chris ELDER



Summer Cinemal DINNER & A MOVIE

FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS AT 6PM

MAY 25-26: MARS NEEDS MOMS JUNE 1-2: THE GOONIES JUNE 8-9: WALL-E JUNE 15-16: KUNG FU PANDA 2 JUNE 22-23: THE KARATE KID JUNE 29-30: UP JULY 6-7: E.T.-THE EXTRA TERRESTRIAL JULY 13-14: THE MUPPETS JULY 20-21: RANGO JULY 27-28: RATATOUILLE AUG 3-4: CARS 2 AUG 10-11: DOLPHIN TALE AUG 17-18: ADVENTURES OF TIN TIN AUG 24-25: PUSS IN BOOTS AUG 31/SEP 1: HAPPY FEET 2

Enjoy a great first-run, family-friendly movie in Southwest Bistro's 'mini theatre' --complete with comfy beanbag chairs and picnic blankets. And what's more, you can order a delicious dinner from the full menu at Southwest Bistro.



Circle C Swim Center

Submitted by Brody McKinley

GROUP SWIM LESSONS

Group Swim Lessons are still going on through August! Don't miss out!

July Sessions: July 10-20 & July 24 – Aug 3 August Session: Aug 7-17

Evaluations will be held every Sunday by Coach Amanda from 4-6 p.m. There is no appointment necessary for evaluations, just show up anytime between 4-6 p.m. on Sundays. Let the front desk know you're here for a swim evaluation, and we'll direct you to the testing area. The swimmer will be in the water for less than five minutes and Coach Amanda will let you know which class will be most beneficial for the swimmer. Full details can be found in the online activity guide, www.ccswim.net. Private swim lessons are also available. Speak with the Front Desk at the Swim Center for instructor availability.

SELECT SWIMTEAM

Registration for the Circle C Select Swim Team 2012-2013 season will begin August 1, 2012 for residents and returning swim team members. Registration for non-residents will begin August 8, 2012. Please feel free to check out the team's website, select.ccswim.net, to learn more. You are also more than welcome to stop by and meet Coach Hayley and check out a practice anytime. Send us email if you are interested in trying out, select@ccswim.net.

The team began the long-course season on April 1, 2012 and it will run through the end of July. All facets of the swim team will remain the same except for Friday afternoon and Saturday morning practices. On these days, the pool will be converted and the lanes will run the length of the pool, making them 50 meters long rather than 25 yards.

CIRCLE SWIMMING AT CIRCLE C

The summer month can bring large crowds at the Swim Center for lap swimming. Lane space will be limited, especially in the afternoon and early evening hours. Remember, lanes marked with orange cones, or without cones, are for resident lap swimming; Lanes marked with any other cone are reserved for special programming and are not available for lap swimming.

When we work together, lap swimming can be a wonderful experience for all levels of need and fitness and enhances the aquatic experience for all patrons. Lane sharing and circle swimming are requirements at Circle C. Always keep to the right side of your lane when swimming laps. Even if you are swimming alone, circle swimming is required to allow someone to join your lane if needed. Swim on the right side and in a counter-clockwise circle through the lane. Always swim complete laps of the pool. Avoid stopping in the middle of the pool for any reason. Stop only at the wall and once stopped, stay in the corner of the lane. Pause at the wall to let a faster swimmer go by.

More information on lane sharing and circle swimming can be found at the Swim Center. Just ask the Front Desk for details.

(Continued on Page 11)

Circle C Swim Center- (Cont. from Page 10)

COMMUNITY POOL NOW OFFERING "BUNKZ"

The Circle C Community Pool now carries "Bunkz" – a plastic cover for metal grommets on bathing suits which is endorsed by the slide manufacturer. Please see the front desk for more information.

SWIM CENTER POOL SUMMER HOURS JUNE 4 - AUGUST 26, 2012

Tuesday - Friday	6-10 a.m. (Lap Swim Only)
	10 a.m 8 p.m.
Saturday	
	10 a.m 8 p.m.
Sunday	10 a.m 8 p.m.
Monday	CLOSED
July 4th, 2012	.6 a.m. – 10 a.m. (Lap Swim Only)
-	
	-

COMMUNITY CENTER POOL SUMMER HOURS JUNE 4 - AUGUST 26, 2012

Monday	11 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Tuesday	
Wednesday – Sunday	
July 4th, 2012	11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

All Swim Center hours and detailed information about the Swim Center can now be found online for easy access.

Website: www.ccswim.net



CCHOA News

Circle C Landscape

Submitted by Susan Hoover

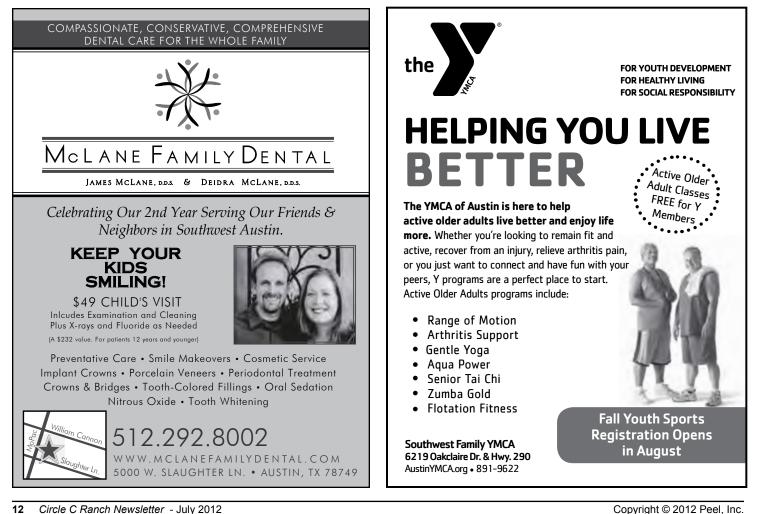
As we were all enjoying a great spring, summer officially started with our first day of 101 degree temperatures on June 11. The hot weather is here again, and we should expect high temperatures for the next three months.

Some of the common sense things you can do in your yard are to be sure your plants and trees are well mulched. The trees, even the mature trees, will need a little extra care this summer as they are more sensitive than usual due to prolonged drought conditions. The City of Austin Grow Green program has a new educational piece on tree care. You can access it on the City of Austin site, www.austintexas.gov or pick it up at any local nursery or store that sells plants. Basically, even the mature trees need water every couple of weeks when the weather is hot. This should be slow watering and if the tree is quite large, you can wrap a soaker hose around the canopy and give it a good soak. New trees will need hand watering about twice a week, slowly filling up the tree well a couple of times. They need to dry out between watering, but not get so dry they start losing leaves or turning brown.

This time of year on the commons areas, we are busy pruning up the shade trees that overhand sidewalks, giving the vines a trim, checking the hedges, and weeding and mowing as usual. We remain under Stage 2 water restrictions, limiting both residential and commercial watering to one time per week. The majority of watering in Circle C happens on Tuesday or Friday according to the water meter address. Some sections, particularly on Escarpment and Slaughter Lane, water on alternate days as we are unable to get through a watering cycle on a single day.

We recently had a number of dead trees removed from the commons areas, and there are a few more to go. Unfortunately, the drought took a tremendous toll on trees. The stressed trees are more susceptible to a fungus called hypoxelyn which causes them to die quickly.

I have to say that after the long dry and super hot of last summer, I secretly dreaded the return of hot weather. However, and fortunately, we are starting later with the 100 degree temperatures, and they will hopefully start to fade away by September 15th. Most of our flowers will not bloom in the high heat, but we did have quite a nice blooming spring. Mainly just about everything on the commons areas recovered nicely from the brutal summer of 2011. Hopefully, this year we will have a shower or two to help us along!



FEATURED Homes



6900 Gaur Circle C North



6110 Rickerhill Circle C Ranch



11617 Georgian Oaks DR Circle C Ranch



6605 Estana Lane Circle C Avana

Circle C Ranch is super HOT right now and inventory is very low!

That makes it the perfect time to sell your home!

Let me, your Circle C Ranch Specialist and neighbor for over a decade, help you get the most for your home.

- Heavy Internet marketing
- Your home's own website
- Electronic showing feedback
- Professionally photographed
- Staging and home preparation assistance
- Marketing on hundreds of websites
- Circle C Open House Tour
- Flexible commissions

"I very rarely write letters of recommendation, but had such an outstanding experience with Chris, that I felt compelled to do so. We are careful consumers, especially when it comes to purchasing a home and selecting a Realtor. We were not disappointed! She treats real estate like a profession. She was completely on top of the entire process! AND, she's highly intelligent. She was "connected" and used up-to-date technologies (like e-signing) and she provided recommendations for high quality industry contacts (handy man, inspector, etc.) She also serves on the Board for a large HOA, giving us some valuable insight. I highly recommend Chris!" Eric Heflin

"Chris is a dream of a realtor! Impressed the first time we met her, we discovered how very competent she is. She didn't miss a beat. We could relax and let her take care of everything. Quick responses to all our questions and requests (and we had a lot!). Chris gave us encouragement the whole time our house was on the market—and then sold it at full price! We are recommending her to all of our friends who might be buying and/or selling a home in the future." Margaret and Richard Nakumura

Chris Poynor, REALTOR®

Circle C Specialist, Resident.

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CCHOA News

CIRCLE C HOA'S ANNUAL

4TH OF JULY PARADE

Wednesday, July 4

Gathering Time 9:30 am • Parade Starts 10:00 am Circle C Community Center - 7817 La Crosse Avenue

Come with your bikes, trikes, scooters, wagons, and strollers pre-decorated or decorate in the parking lot

Best Wheels competition • Fun prizes

Face painters • Balloon twisters

Kona Ice providing mini shaved ice cups to cool you off.

Evil Weiner mobile food truck providing delicious food in the parking lot (see page 15 to check out their yummy menu)



\$3.50 GOOD OLD AMERICANA You Call IT. Mustard, Ketchup, Relish. Onions, or Sauerkraut

\$4.00 LA REVOLUCION

JUST LIKE IN TIJUANA, BACON WRAPPED & GRIDDLED WITH PICO DE GALLO, MUSTARD, KETCHUP, MAYO AND HOT SAUCE

\$5.25 ALAMO

Yummy Queso with Pico de Gallo & Crunchy Tortilla Strips

\$5.25 THE COWGIRL TEXAS STYLE BRISKET WITH BBQ SAUCE, PICKLES, ONIONS & SHREDDED LETTUCE ADD JALAPENO RELISH IF YOU CAN HANDLE IT!

\$5.25 TEX-MEX

(OUR VERSION OF THE CLASSIC CHILI DOG) ROGER'S (ARNE GUISADA, (HEESE, ONIONS, & JALAPEÑO RELISH

Drinks \$1.00 - \$7.00

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\$5.25 CHROLINA HOG DOG Slow-n-low Pulled Pork with a Tangy Carolina Sweet & Sour Slaw

\$6.00 KILLER FRIES

COUR VERSION OF CHILI CHEESE FRIES) TOPPED WITH CARNE GUISADA, CHIPOTLE SOUR (REAM, GUACAMOLE, CHEESE, & JALAPENO RELISH A MEAL IN ITSELF!

\$5.00 QUESO FRIES Ultimate in cheese Fries, Pico de Gallo, and crunchy tortilla Strips

\$2.75 FRENCH FRIES Sensoned with our Truck blend of "Evil Dust"

Park West HOA News

Park West HOA News (Specifically for Park West Residents)

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Park West homes appear to be selling very quickly when they are placed on the market. Welcome to our new residents!

Park West is a community within a community. We must abide by both Circle C and Park West Covenants and Rules. All residents should familiarize themselves with these documents. Copies can be downloaded at the websites for Circle C (http://www.circlecranch.info) and Park West (http://www.hoatown.com/parkwest).

If you wish to change the exterior appearance of your building, fencing or other hardscape in any way, you must first obtain approval from the Circle C Architectural Committee (please send a courtesy copy of the filing to the Park West Board!)

Landscaping changes must be in accord with Circle C guidelines. Any proposed changes to the front yard landscaping must also be reviewed by the Park West Landscape Committee and approved by the Park West board prior to execution. This procedure is required to ensure that Circle C guidelines and Park West Appearance Standards are being observed (the Park West landscape contract is based on the assumption that certain standard conditions and plantings exist on each property.)

The Landscape Committee has reviewed several change requests in the past few months which have been approved by the Board. The committee members have also been a valuable resource to the owners due to their knowledge of Park West rules and central Texas soil conditions and plants.

Please make sure that you are watering your lawn once a week on the correct day per City of Austin guidelines.

Thank you for being a good Park West neighbor and observing our Rules. In particular, please observe the 20 mile per hour speed limit on the streets – we have many families with children and the little ones can often be seen riding their scooters and bikes in the street and on the sidewalks. Submitted by Dorian de Wind

Parents, thank you for watching your children when they are out playing. We must all work together to avoid situations which could allow any accidents and/or serious injuries or worse to occur. If you live next door to children, check your driveway before you pull out!

And of course, if you have a dog, SCOOP THE POOP! Be a good neighbor and do your part to keep Park West looking great!

LANDSCAPER NEWS

We got a nice rain of about two inches on May 8, but it has been dry ever since. The number of sprinkler checks has gone up -we did 20 checks in the month of May. The lawns are looking really good, as they have made major strides filling in blank spaces since last summer's drought.

We put down bedding mulch in the entire neighborhood the week of May 15. We also sprayed all of the weeds in the neighborhood as a singular thorough event rather than spraying them here and there, in addition to putting down another round of high-quality slow-release fertilizer. We also changed out the seasonal color at the mail centers at the beginning of May so that the flowers would be well rooted by the time we get to temperatures of over 95 degrees. The strip of grass at the west mail center to the right has also filled in nicely. There are a few more weeds than we would like but this will be the case until the root system of the grass is completely built out. We will continue to work with Circle C to keep this area well watered.

> Thank you. Scott Smith, Pearson Landscape Service.

A ROCK GROWS IN TEXAS

I knew that our Park West all-around handyman, Steve Farmer, was a hardworking, resourceful and persistent young man. He has done many projects - big and small, simple and complex - for many Park West residents including, for us, constructing a deck, transforming our drab backyard into a nice near-xeriscape and boiling down a potential \$500 hot tub problem to a zero dollar solution consisting of just cleaning a flow sensor and, voilà, we were hot-tubbing again. Buoyed by his recent landscaping accomplishments, Steve next tackled the good-sized backyard of Park West resident Dr. Jacqueline "Jacqui" Davis.

After covering the backyard with goodlooking, river washed gravel and pebbles, Steve began preparations to transform Jacqui's backyard into an oasis of colorful, water-conserving plants and trees carefully selected according to a design by none other than our own Jack Robinson.

I visited Steve at his job site. All the plants, cacti, yucca, sago palms, oleander and other heat and drought tolerant plants were carefully laid out throughout the garden. Bags and bags of planting soil, mulch and other planting necessities and paraphernalia were all there.



Steve and his helper, Mike, were ready, shovels in hand.

All seemed well and under control.

The next time I stopped by, I heard the sounds of a jackhammer, I saw dust and rock chips flying everywhere and the perspiration rolling off the faces of Steve and Mike who were chipping away at the biggest boulder I have ever seen buried in a residential garden.

(Continued on Page 18)



NEIGHBORHOOD MEET & GREET

CIRCLE C NORTH RESIDENTS THURSDAY, JULY 19, 6:00-7:30 PM CIRCLE C COMMUNITY CENTER 7817 LA CROSSE AVE.

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Park West HOA News

Park West HOA News- (Continued from Page 16)

Needless to say, Steve had encountered a veritable underground "rock garden" just about six inches below Jacqui's innocent looking backyard surface.

We all have come across "normal-sized" rocks in our gardening adventures. They can usually be conquered by digging them out, or simply by moving the location of our intended planting hole a foot or so away.

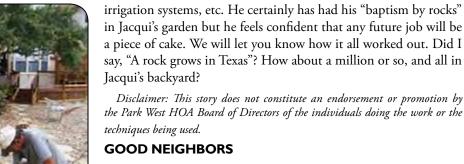
Not in Jacqui's backyard, because next to each huge rock there is an even bigger boulder.

What is normally at most a 30-minute job for digging a decent size planting hole, turned out to be a two-to-three-hour herculean task for Steve and his helper. When I try to commiserate with Steve about the challenge at hand, he politely interrupts me: "When I finish this job -- and I will finish it -- I know that I will be able to take on any other landscaping job," he says with confidence and resolve as he starts busting up another rock that measures three or four feet in diameter and goes down all the way to China, or Australia, it seems.

Two days later, jackhammer still going, Steve is still chipping away. But if you think that Steve would be getting discouraged by now, you would be totally wrong. These challenges only tend to get Steven's engineering and problem solving skills and adrenaline into high gear.

Steve has now ordered a substance for "easy rock breaking" by virtue of its expansion capabilities and strength. "Easy to use, just mix with water, and pour into holes ... rock breaking has never been easier," claims the manufacturer.

As of this writing, Steve continues to transform Jacqui's "rock yard" into quite a beautiful garden, complete with hi-tech drip



GOOD NEIGHBORS Park West resident Don Busby and his "The Neighborhood" charitable organization continue to assist disabled Oak Hill Vietnam

War veteran Allen Hancock with various legal and medical issues. Don presented to the Board of Oak Hill Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 4443 his plans for constructing a wheelchair ramp and a deck at Hancock's house, which is located on the Post. The Board has approved the plans and will pay for the construction materials while The Neighborhood will provide the labor. Don also discussed with the Board a "contest" conducted by a major Texas contractor to construct a metal building suitable for accommodating people in need of housing.

Finally, a thank you to Nancy Dahl for her proposed donation to the veteran and to Alec Dahl for his generous donation -- 100 new t-shirts -- to The Neighborhood.

Remember, if you want to contribute to our "adopted" veteran, please contact your column editor. If you want to contribute to The Neighborhood, please contact Don Busby at dbusby@commercegrp. com. The Neighborhood continues to collect summer men's clothing for the homeless and is especially in need of toiletries and men's shoes.

NOTE FROM YOU EDITOR

This will be my last input as your Park West column editor. It is an honor to have been entrusted with this responsibility, I have enjoyed writing some of the articles and I thank you for allowing me to contribute to our community in this manner.

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Grey Rock Tennis Club Manager & Director of Tennis Gives Advice on How to Play Tennis

Submitted by Fernando M. Velasco

In the previous issues, I answered questions about beginning to play tennis, how to select tennis equipment and clothing, and how to begin playing with friends and family. In this issue, I will offer you some advice on how to start playing competitive tennis.

Q: I have young children who are interested in playing against other players. What is the best way?

A: One way to measure a player's progress is by competing with children of their own age and ability. I suggest that once a player knows how to serve, keep score and the basic tennis rules, he/she is ready to enter special tournaments. Austin offers many opportunities to become involved and has programs for 10 and under and also for children ranging from 12 through 18 years old.

Q: My child is 10 and under and wants to play tournaments. Where can he/she play?

A: The Capital Area Tennis Association (CATA) offers many tournaments for children 10 and under. For children ages 5-8, they offer the 36' court playing with a red felt or foam reduced ball. The score is very simple, playing a 7-point tiebreaker. Players, who are 9 and 10 years old, will be playing on a 60" court with an orange felt reduced bounce. They play one 4-game set using the no-ad scoring system (first to win 4 games). These events are usually round robins, so no players get eliminated. For schedules, fees and sites, please contact CATA at 512-443-1342 or visit their website: www. austintennis.org.

Q: My child is between the ages 12-18 and wants to start competing. Who do I contact?

A: Again, CATA offers events for players 12-18 years old who are ready to compete. These events are for Non-Qualified USTA players, who are beginning their competition toward becoming State Ranked or move to Championship and Super-Championship level. There are two types of events: Open events, where players are grouped according to their age level (12 and under, 14 and under, 16 and under and 18 and under) and gender. They also can compete in singles and doubles. Usually these events are a one day tournament and they play 8 game pro-sets with no-ad scoring system. They also offer round robin events or first match consolation rounds.

The second type is called the "Grand Slam" events in the same age and gender categories. These events play the best of three sets, with no-ad scoring and if tied one set each, they play a "Super-Tiebreaker" (first one to win 10 points by 2). Play may start on Thursday or Friday nights after 6:00 pm for the larger draws, and continue the rest of the matches on Saturday and Sunday. For schedules, fees and sites, also please contact CATA at 512-443-1342 or visit their website: www. austgintennis.org

Q: Do these players get points for playoffs?

A: One incentive to play in these events, are that for every match that is played, they accumulate points. At the end of the season in August, the top players in each division are invited to participate in the "Junior Tour Masters Invitational" with the winners of this event, qualify to participate in the Grand Prix Invitational State Tournament against players from all over the State.

Both private tennis clubs and public facilities host these tournaments all over Austin. Sign up registration can be made either by visiting the USTA website or by visiting the tennis facility. Cost for the 10 and under events is \$18.00 per person; the Grand Prix Open is \$18.00, and for Grand Prix Grand Tour is \$28 per person. Deadlines are usually around 7-10 days prior to the event.

In the next issue, I will answer questions regarding how to encourage players to play the "USTA ZAT" Tournaments and become "Qualified" players. Until then, continue practicing and enjoying the game.

You also may have noticed that we have changed our name from "Circle C Tennis Club" to "Grey Rock Tennis Club". New name, but same service and programs.

Congratulations to our Grey Rock "10 and under Tournament winners"

(Continued on Page 21)



Tennis Club- (Continued from Page 20)

The Grey Rock Tennis Club hosted its first "10 and under" CATA Tournament on May 12. Players from the Club and neighboring Clubs got a chance to start playing tournaments with special size courts and special reduced bounce balls. This will become a yearly event for the Club. The following Grey Rock players fared well in their respective events:



Left to Right: Sydney Marin, Winner Girls' 10 & Under Green Ball; Eleanore Nelson, Winner Girls' 10 & Under Orange Ball; Megan Zeng, Runner up Girls' 10 & Under Orange Ball; Coach Danny Rodriguez with Jaxson Hataway, Runner up, & Brayden Michna, Winner, Boys' 10 & under Green Ball.

Grey Rock Tennis Academy Player Signs Up To Attend College

Adolfo Gonzales (center) is shown here with Director of the Grey Rock Tennis Academy, Darin Pleasant, and his mom, Blanca, during his formal signing to attend Tyler Junior College with a tennis scholarship. Tyler Junior College finished #2 in the country for the 2011-12 season. Adolfo has been training with Darin for the past two years at the Tennis Academy. Darin Pleasant is a resident of Shady Hollow and is in charge of the "Advanced Tennis Players (ATP)" Academy.



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6605 Toolwrich Lane<u>-"JUST</u> <u>SOLD!!"</u> with 2 offers! Gorgeous white-stone with wood floors on huge lot.



7517 Brecourt Manor- <u>"JUST</u> <u>LISTED!"</u> Gorgeous 1-story in gated comm., close to Clayton and new "resort -style pool!

over full price!

9313 Manipari Lane<u>-"JUST</u> SOLD!!" in 2 days with 6 offers

> 6511 Walebridge<u>-</u> "JUST LISTED!" Great 2-story with HUGE workshop in garage or 4 car bays! Possibly build-out for guest suite!



9516 Colebrook-"<u>UNDER CONTRACT"</u> for \$10,000.+/- over asking in one day



11516 Alberta Drive- <u>"UNDER CON-</u> <u>TRACT"</u> in 2 days for \$15,000.+/- over asking price!

SquiresTeam.com

Hey Circle C! The Squires Team likes to give back to the community that has given them so much support over the years. John Squires started "Professional Profiles in Circle C" back in 1999 and is the **free** advertising we donate to small businesses trying to get started in the area. John has known Justin Fox for years now from Lifetime Fitness, where Justin was a personal trainer. Justin has always wanted to have a nice gym to train out of and now he has partnered with Steve and Kelly Dean to open Anytime Fitness. Anytime Fitness is just exactly that! A 24-hour-per-day fitness center that has state-of-the-art equipment and a cardio studio. There is a projector in the cardio studio that is integrated with a computer and fitness software. If you want to come in at 3:00 a.m. and do P90X, it is ready to go! There are dozens of workouts to choose from and the gym, obviously, has all the weights and cardio equipment you would ever need. The friendly staff can help you with your workout routine, diet, fitness goals and just have all the answers to your fitness goal questions. The gym is located right behind Circle C on Hwy. 45 and 1826! Special rates go to the first 300 members! 1 week free trial workouts! Call Justin at (512) 810-2084 or Steve and Kelly at (210) 428-3031.





Click on the QR box below to see all of John's listings! Thanks!



Call John directly at (512) 970-1970 on his "sell" phone any time for an easy appointment!

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- 2) Professionally stage your home for you at no cost.
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- 5) Professional marketing using an \$8,000 digital camera with 4 lenses and software to provide the cleanest sharpest pictures available for internet and flyer advertising.
- 6) Provide a list of different strategies/facets to advertise your home for maximum marketing exposure to the world as quickly and completely as possible.
- 7) Offer generous move-up and move-down plans to fit every families needs.
- 8) <u>One point contact at (512) 970-1970</u> so there is no "big team" confusion, mixed signals or missed deadlines.
- 9) Insure a smooth, successful transaction start to finish.
- 10) Negotiate moving schedules/timing/leasebacks to insure no hassles or disrupted transitions.
- 11) Flexible Commission structures with move-up, move-down plans!



Congratulations to our Clayton Cardinal Math Pentathletes!

Our Clayton Cardinal Math Pentathletes were recently named the 2012 National Team Champions. The team was recognized at an assembly this past Friday. This was the fifth year Clayton students have participated in the tournaments; they last claimed the National Title in 2008, and received the Texas state trophy in 2009.





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Southwest Austin Lacrosse Association

Submitted by Connie Perrine

It is with great excitement that the Southwest Austin Lacrosse Association (SWALA), a non-profit boys lacrosse association, is entering its second season. The SWALA Tigers is open to all male students entering grades 5th - 8th who are either attending Gorzycki or zoned to attend Gorzycki. The SWALA Tigers had a very successful first year. The 5th/6th SWALA Tiger Team finished second in their division with a 6-2 record. The 7th/8th SWALA Tiger

Team finished the season in the middle of a 13 team division. SWALA is the official Bowie lacrosse feeder program as such the team will be coached by the Bowie High School Lacrosse Coaches. The SWALA Tigers compete in the Central Texas Youth Lacrosse Association League. No experience is needed, we are more than eager to spread the game throughout South Austin. Lacrosse is the fastest growing game in the United States, it combines several different sports football, soccer, ice hockey, and basketball into one. If you are interested in joining the SWALA Tigers or if you would like to receive more information please contact Justin Becker, SWALA Direction/Head Coach and the Head Men's Lacrosse Coach at Bowie High School, at: becks1905@





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BEFORE





Clubs & Announcements

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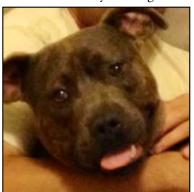
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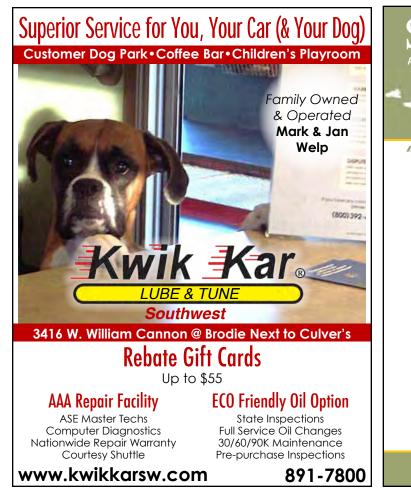
LOOKING FOR A FOREVER HOME

ROCKY: MALE, 3 YRS OLD, BRINDLE, PITTIE MIX

Rock, saved from euthanasia, deserves a second chance. He is very energetic and makes the perfect running buddy. Rocky is good with other dogs and has been great with humans. He will be enrolled in basic training classes at Love-a-bull rescue to get certified as a trained Good Canine. He is very sweet, smart, and house trained (uses doggie door). He can sit and say hi. The only challenge is his energy, but he just wants to be loved. These bully breeds get a bad

rap, but they can be trained. They are great service dogs and are extremely smart. If adopted, he can be enrolled in the pit crew, which is a trained canine who serves as a therapy or service dog at hospitals, nursing homes, or even at home if needed. Contact Mgonzajd@gmail. com or 512- 551-2036.





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Clubs & Announcements

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FOR BALDWIN, BARANOFF, BOONE, CLAYTON, MILLS, KOCUREK, CASEY, COWAN, & PATTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, & CLINT SMALL MIDDLE SCHOOL

The City of Austin is looking for applicants to fill crossing guard positions. We require people who are physically and mentally suited to work with children but also maintain a good relationship with the parents and motorists. These positions require that a person must be able to stand for at least 1 hour and be able to repeatedly cross the street with pedestrians during that time without becoming too fatigued. These persons must be dependable and will be expected to maintain a good attendance record. The applicants must be at least 16 years of age and there is no upper age limit as long as the applicants are physically and mentally able to keep our children safe. This is not a hard job but very important for the safety of our children crossing at these locations. These are City of Austin paid positions. The hourly rate is currently \$10.00. The hours are 7:00 A.M.- 8:00 A.M. and 2:30 P.M.- 3:30 P.M. Monday through Friday and follow the same holiday schedule that AISD does. A Criminal Background Check will be conducted. No experience is required. Training will be provided. In order to have guards hired, trained, and ready for the first day of school, we start the interview process in July.

> Anyone should interested contact: Herschell Esquell, Lead Supervisor Child Safety Program - City of Austin (512) 589-4006 | hesquell@austin.rr.com

Bethany Lutheran Community Health Fair

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- Private, confidential medication assessment
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- Mobile Blood Bank on site

JUST FOR KIDS: Balloon maker, face painting, basketball-shoot around

FOOD: Several choices for healthy samples and recipes **EXERCISE:** Free ZUMBA class 11:30 am



Event Announcement from the Travis County Master Gardeners

DIVIDE & TRANSPLANT PERENNIALS

Thursday, September 20, 2012, 10am-12pm Travis County AgriLife Extension Office 1600 B Smith Rd., Austin TX 78721

Perennials tend to increase in density and size over the years which diminishing the vigor of the plants. Solve this problem by learning to properly divide and transplant these plants. Learn which plants need to be periodically divided and how to correctly preform the task. Discover what is needed to appropriately transplant the plants into new beds. Gain an understanding of how to prepare the plants to pass on to friends. This seminar is free and open to the public.

It is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. www.tcmastergardeners.org | (512) 854-9600.

28 Circle C Ranch Newsletter - July 2012



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BEWARE of Attic Ladders

Submitted by Nancy Elton, a Circle C Resident

Please check your attic ladders! This past year has been a rough one for me. On August 16th, 2011; I was coming down my attic stairs when the entire stair detached from the ceiling. I ended up with a dislocated and fractured shoulder, messed up my knee, my leg became terribly bruised, and my whole body was really sore. The fracture took until December to completely heal. I have been in therapy since October 2011. In February I had knee surgery and in May I had shoulder surgery. Check your ladders. My David Weekly home's ladder was only put together with nails and screws. These just broke off. The box of the new ladder said to install it with bolts. Mine now has 8. There was no symptom that the ladder was becoming loose.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR LADDERS BEFORE YOU OR A REPAIRMAN FALL



FLEAS

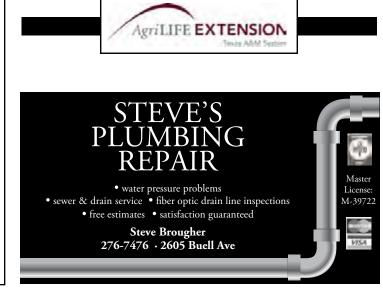
A proper flea management program has two parts- managing fleas on your pet and managing fleas in your environment. You may want to consult a veterinarian about flea control for your pet; there are numerous products on the market that work well. If you find fleas in your home and you do not have a pet, inspect the attic and/ or crawl spaces to see if wildlife has moved into the area, bringing fleas with them. Remove wildlife with traps and then treat the area with an insecticide labeled for fleas. Once the problem is resolved, you may want to seal the area so that wildlife cannot move in again.

If you are a new homeowner with no pets and have fleas, it is possible that the previous owners had pets. Fleas can remain dormant for several months, but become active again when they sense vibrations of new hosts. When you find fleas on a pet, you most likely will need to treat the pet, inside the home and the yard. Treatment should be targeted to areas where your pet likes to hang out.

There are many things you can do to help reduce fleas without the use of chemicals. Vacuum regularly, getting under furniture and along baseboards. Make sure to dispose of the vacuum bag in an outdoor garbage can at least once a week so the fleas do not hatch out and reinfest the home. Wash pet bedding in hot water. Bathe your pets regularly and use a flea comb to remove fleas. Avoid walking pets in known flea infested areas. When treating for fleas, you will usually need to treat at least two times. The second treatment should occur 10-14 days after the initial treatment.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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News You Can Use

Salt of the Earth: Sodium & Your Health

TIPS FOR REDUCING SODIUM FOR BETTER HEALTH

Sodium is everywhere—swirling in the oceans, stored in vast underground crystalline deposits—and contained in just about every food and drink imaginable.

The fact is, sodium is as an essential, life-sustaining ingredient for every known plant and animal on the planet. Without sodium, our bodies would cease to function. Sodium helps our cells draw in nutrients, maintains balanced pH levels, enables nerve function and muscle contraction, helps regulate your heartbeat, and is a key component of your bones, explains Jose Mejia, M.D., a cardiologist for The Austin Diagnostic Clinic (ADC).

Yet too much of this essential element can pose serious health risks in people, including high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, and congestive heart failure. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the average person should only consume 2,300 milligrams (mg)—about one teaspoon full—or less, per day. If you are 51 or older, are black, or already have high blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease, then you should limit your intake to 1,500 mg orless per day, Dr. Mejia adds. "Unfortunately, the average American gets about 3,400 mg of sodium a day, which is far more than is recommended for good health," Dr. Mejia says. "Keeping the amount of sodium you eat under control can be challenging, but understanding the main dietary sources of sodium is one of the best ways to start lowering your intake."

SALT BY ANY OTHER NAME

One of the most troubling parts of monitoring your sodium intake is understanding how extensively the food industry uses sodium as a flavor enhancer and as a preservative in everything from bread to canned soup. And then there's a matter of naming conventions. Common table salt, otherwise known as sodium chloride, is just one form of sodium. There are many other compounds that contain sodium, including monosodium glutamate (MSG), baking soda, baking powder, disodium phosphate, sodium alginate, and sodium nitrite (sometimes just nitrite).

"Most of the sodium we eat comes from processed foods and foods prepared in restaurants. Sodium is already part of processed foods (Continued on Page 35)



Salt of the Earth - (Continued from Page 34)

and cannot be removed. Even fresh fruits, meats, vegetables and dairy products contain sodium," Dr. Mejia notes. "However, food manufacturers and restaurants can produce foods with far less sodium. In addition, you can select lower sodium foods when possible, and you can cook more foods yourself to better control how much sodium you eat."

SHOPPING SMART TO REDUCE SODIUM

The most practical way to reduce your sodium is by altering what you bring home from the grocery store. Many items like baked goods, breakfast cereals, soups, and lunchmeats are very high insodium.

"Pay very close attention to food labels," Dr. Mejia says. "It may add extra time to your shopping trip, but it's important to understand just what the food industry means when it uses sodium-related terms. Portion size is just as important. Frankly, it's the only way to make sure you are not eating too much sodium." Here are some of the most common terms used on food packaging. If it doesn't have a label, your best option may be to avoid buying it.

- "Sodium free" or "Salt free." Each serving of this product contains less than 5 mg of sodium.
- "Very low sodium" Each serving contains 35 mg of sodium or less.
- "Low sodium"- Each serving contains 140 mg of sodium or less.
- "Reduced" or "Less sodium"- The product contains at least 25 percent less sodium than the regular version. Check the label to see how much sodium is in a serving.
- "Lite" or "Light in sodium"- The sodium content has been reduced by at least 50 percent from the regular version.
- "Unsalted" or "No salt added"- Not salt is added during processing of a food that normally contains salt. However, some

foods with these labels may still be high in sodium because some of the ingredients may be high in sodium.

A DASH OF SOMETHING ELSE

The widespread use of sodium means it can be challenging to avoid, especially if you are traveling with limited food options at airports. In that case, bringing low sodium snacks is a good option. At home, consider using alternative seasonings that are sodium free. Eventually, your taste buds will adjust to the lower sodium options.

"It takes some effort, but a low sodium diet can have tremendous health benefits," Dr. Mejia says. "If you are concerned or curious, it may be a good idea with check with your physician about the amount of sodium you are eating."

Jose Mejia, M.D., Cardiologist - The Austin Diagnostic Clinic,

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RESULTS



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News You Can Use

Financial Focus - Student Loans Crushing College Grads

Submitted by Rich Keith

Today's college grads are facing the "real world" with an extra scoop of debt. Two-thirds of students graduating from college or graduate school have student loans – about \$25,000 on average. That's a 25% increase over the past 10 years. In fact, today's twentysomething holds an average debt of \$45,000, including everything from student loans to mortgages and credit cards. Unfortunately, unemployment for those aged 18-29 is 12.4%, well above the national rate of 8.2%.

Don't feel as if you have to be the savior. Six in 10 boomers report giving financial help (outside of college tuition) to a child or grandchild in the past five years. Of those, \$59,000 was the average amount of aid. If this sounds like you, ask yourself: Do I really have the resources? Am I saving enough for retirement? Try to share more financial wisdom and less cash with your adult offspring. The more you save for your own future means less possibility that you'll need their help later on. Without going into too much detail, share the family financial picture with your children once they hit the mid-teen years. They need to know the family income is X and it takes Y amount to cover the mortgage and bills. Once they see X minus Y in action they will be surprised at how

> much it actually costs to run a household. This may have a side benefit of limiting how much and how often your children ask you for money and gifts.

Children who have a basic understanding of money, especially the corrosive effects of debt, have a better chance of becoming financially independent later in life. They will be more resistant to the credit card offers sure to come to them in their freshman year at college. And they will more ready to partner with their parents as the family manages their college finances with them.

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News You Can Use

What to Look for in a Pet Food

Pet nutrition and pet food selection has improved significantly over the last few years, however, there is still a lot of confusion regarding what to feed our four-legged friends.

Following the horrific melamine pet food recalls of 2007, much research has been dedicated to learning more about pet nutrition and how pet food is manufactured and distributed to consumers. This has spawned a greater selection of high-quality, pet super-foods. However, it has also prompted some companies who still make cheap, low-quality pet food to simply change their packaging to dupe consumers into believing that they're buying food filled with wholesome fresh meat, fruits, and vegetables.

Don't be fooled! A pretty bag with pictures of cascading corn and carrots does not a quality pet food make. Read the ingredient label to see what's really in the bag and in your pet's food bowl. Here are some things to look for in the ingredient label and to consider when choosing a food for your furry family members.

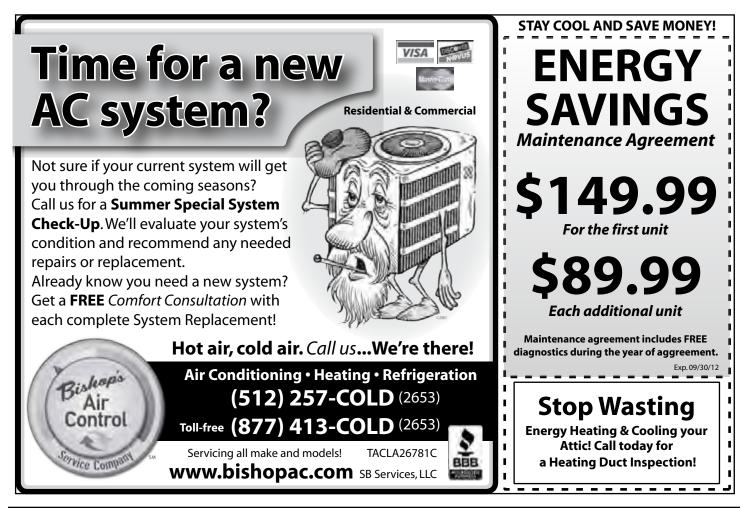
PROTEIN

A named protein and/or protein meal should be first on the ingredient list. For example, if you're buying a chicken formula pet food, look for, "chicken," or, "chicken meal," as the first ingredient, not chicken by-product. Remember: meal is a good thing, by-product is a bad thing. Also, if a protein source is not named - beware. For example, if the ingredient label reads, "meat meal," you have no way of knowing what the protein source is and should be wary. It could be anything from aardvark to zebra. The best pet foods have two or three protein sources in the first five ingredients listed.

Confused about the difference between chicken and chicken meal? Chicken, or any other protein source listed in the ingredient label, means that fresh meat was added to the mix before cooking. This is great! But just like our bodies, animals are about 70% water. So, when the mixture is cooked, the fresh meat in it loses volume, thereby decreasing the amount of protein in the final product. Chicken meal, on the other hand, is chicken meat, bone and some connective tissue that has been cooked, dried and added to the mix before cooking, which ultimately increases the protein level of the food.

VEGGIES, FRUITS & WHOLE GRAINS

Like humans, pets benefit from the vitamins and enzymes in fresh vegetables and fruits. Look for quality produce and complex carbohydrates like carrots, spinach, pumpkin, etc. as well as whole grain rice, oats, and/or barley. These healthy foods have lower glycemic index ranges, which will *(Continued on Page 39)*



What to Look for in a Pet Food - (Continued from Page 38)

keep your pet more satisfied and will help to avoid sudden drops in energy levels. Avoid highly processed grains such as corn, wheat and rice. As with humans, these are empty fillers and fast burning carbohydrates.

US SOURCED

Do a little extra digging to find where the ingredients of a food you'e considering are sourced. Often, you can find this information on the manufacturer's website. If not, call them and ask. Look for foods made with ingredients from the US. This will help you take advantage of the strict, governmental regulations that watch pet food manufacturers and that are there to protect you and your pets from contamination. Furthermore, buying products made in the US is just plain good sense for the local economy and environment.

WHAT TO AVOID

By-products and by-product meals should be avoided for a number of reasons. First, you have no way of knowing exactly what the ingredient is, but you can be sure that it is a low-value portion of the animal. In addition to the ingredient itself being dubious, low-value products are not handled with the same care as highervalue products, so they could become rancid or exposed to harmful

> bacteria. Also avoid sweeteners, which are added to poor quality foods to enhance palatability. Other ingredients to avoid are artificial preservatives such as BHA, BHT, and ethoxyquin, and artificial colors.

> Once you've narrowed your choices down to a few based on quality ingredients, then consider your pet's specific health needs. Is your pet overweight, underweight, young, adult, or senior? Does he/she have allergies or itchy skin? There are high-quality foods that are formulated to address all of these issues and more.

After you've finally chosen a healthy pet food and are ready to purchase, be sure to check the, "Best By," date. In quality, natural foods, this will be about 12 months from the manufacture date. When dishing out the new grub to your pet, start by mixing it with a bit of his last diet to help his tummy transition. Do this for about a week, adding a little more of the new food everyday. By day seven, your pet should be ready for full servings and a fuller life.

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News You Can Use

Tech-Etiquette: Is there an App for Civility?

In today's age of apps and gadgets, it's likely that you or someone you know has benefitted handily from the ubiquitous smartphone in today's digitally-dependent society. If the question were posed to our current generation, "What item would you never want to be without?" it is fair to say that most individuals living in 21st century America would answer: "My phone!" Without our phones, it is certain that many of us would be lost. We would be unable to text, tweet, phone, email, face time, and even friend or like another individual. Would we really? Is American society becoming so dependent upon these technological devices that we are challenged to even recognize our our humanity within? How many young men and women know the value of the age-old adage "Never leave home without a smile?" Is who we were created to be, in such competition with what we hold in our hand, that we have forgotten the simple value of kindness - shared in a smile, of gratification - by greeting another with a genuine handshake? Is it technology that propels our lives, or are we doing our best to prepare our lives to propel the technology that supports them?

Regardless of how many apps and buttons and gadgets, and even insurance, we carry on our smartphones, could it be that we have something even better when it comes to insuring our ability to connect with the people we like? Or to be-Friend those to whom we're attracted, or bring restitution to those un-Friended? Today's digitally-dependent generation has a challenge before them that Submitted by Darcy Folsom

none before have known. That is, being able to successfully pair technology with common courtesy. Remembering what our grandmothers taught us about the civilities of life (carried in our hip pockets) may apply more today, than any app could ever provide. But pairing the art of civility with the current age of technology requires practice. The 21st century can only get better as those old-fashioned manners make their way from our pockets to the person next to us. After all, the words we speak are far more significant than the technology that transmits them. Why not polish a few points of etiquette this summer and complement your savvy skills on your smartphone? By doing so, you and your smartphone may just move from merely getting the message delivered, to doing so with principles that shape our character and improve our attitudes about both our electronic devices. and the lives of those who use them.

TIP #1 - When you take a call in the presence of another person, you are communicating, "You are secondary; the caller is more important than you are." If you are expecting a call, let your companion know in advance, and excuse yourself before taking the call, limiting the call to under one minute. Never use a cell phone on a date, unless there is an emergency.

TIP #2 - If you find it necessary to use your smartphone while driving, make it a habit to get into your car, buckle up, and prepare your hand's free device to activate the call BEFORE starting your engine.

TIP #3 - Allow your personality, not your PDA to impress others. Avoid using novelty

ringtones, and choose the vibrate option as much as possible.

TIP #4 - Remove your earpiece when not on the phone. Always keep your phone in a pocket or a purse, rather than laying it on the table next to you.

TIP# 5 - When in a public place, refrain from using your ear buds to listen to your favorite playlist. Instead, be prepared to greet those who are near you, looking oncoming passersby in the eye, with a smile and "Hello!" This is not only courteous, but it is also a way to remain sure about your surroundings.

As you travel to the lake or the seaside with friends, consider the value that a few manners may add to the dynamics of your summer relationships. Ask the question - is there something more fundamental than a fancy app, or gadget insurance to satisfy our lack? What have we already been given as a way to connect with the people we like, and those we want to be-Friend? Rather than search your smartphone for the latest apps, ask your companion's permission to practice with them, as you begin to apply these principles of Tech-Etiquette. These courtesies will both benefit the words we speak and the actions we offer, as we engage those around us with the very acts of courtesy we desire for others to share with us. Practicing the art of civility alongside the technology that propels our lives, I believe we will see our digitally-dependent generation become the one to re-engage our culture with civility and the accomplished principles of common courtesy.





News You Can Use

NATUREWATCH - CHRISTMAS IN JULY

By mid-summer in Central Texas, most of us dream of some relief from the heat, but did you know that you can find a reminder of the winter holidays thriving in the searing hot temperatures? Two native poinsettias, the Wild Poinsettia (Euphorbia cyathophora) and Mexican Fireplant (Euphorbia heterophylla), are present in our area and are related to the popular Christmas poinsettias (Euphorbia pulcherrima), which has large red, pink, yellow, or white leaves just below the flowering cluster. The showy colored parts of poinsettias that most people think are the flowers are actually colored bracts or modified leaves.

Wild Poinsettia, also called Fire on the Mountain, is a 'dwarf poinsettia' 1 to 2 feet tall with green stems and alternating lobed leaves, with the uppermost leaves having red blotches near the base. The flower clusters are small and yellowish, and bloom from May to November, usually peaking in the height of summer. Its scientific name is composed of the genus Euphorbia, named after the corpulent Greek physician Euphorbus and meaning 'well fed', and the species name of cyanthophora meaning 'cup bearing', which refers to the bowl-shaped structures supporting each flower. While this plant can be invasive, it is a good native filler plant and can be an interesting addition to a sunny flowerbed containing sandy, well-draining soil.

The Mexican Fireplant (Euphorbia heterophylla) is native to Mexico and Central America, as well as across the southern tier of



WILD POINSETTIA photo by Joseph A. Marcus



MEXICAN FIREPLANT photo by Robert L. Stone

the United States from California through Texas to Florida. Blooming from late July to September, this 2 to 3 foot tall plant also has tiny flowers lacking petals within a 5-lobed gland-rimmed cup, all in a cluster on top of a leafy stem and just above partly red, white or yellow leaves. It grows in open or wooded sandy areas, and prefers full sun to partial shade. Often, when left grown wild as a 'weed', this plant loses its striking coloration. Both Wild Poinsettia and Mexican Fireplant are members of the Spurge family, which includes about 7500 species, each having milky sap and found growing in mostly warm or hot regions. Plants in this family have produced valuable products such as rubber, castor & tung oils, and tapioca. Most are poisonous, however, and the sap can mildly irritate the membranes of the eyes and mouth. In the wild, these species are also considered 'ruderal species', or the first to colonize either natural or human disturbed lands. They typically dominate a disturbed area for a few years, gradually losing the competition for resources to other, longerlasting native plant species.

The Christmas Poinsettia is native to Mexico and Central America and is a generally found in the form of a shrub or small tree. Native peoples of Chile and Peru called this plant the 'Crown of the Andes', and the Aztecs, who made a reddish purple dye from its bracts, called it 'Cuetlaxochitl', meaning 'mortal flower that perishes and withers like all that is pure.' This fall, why not plant some of our smaller festive natives in your wildscape, and next summer let them remind you of cooler times when the temperature outside hovers around 100 degrees!

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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