

THE RIVER REVIEW

July 2012

News For The Residents of River Place

Volume 6, Issue 7



Yard of the Month

Congratulations to Luann and George Holmes of 10416 Milky Way Dr. for being selected as the River Place Garden Club's "Yard of the Month" for June.

Luann and George moved to Texas approximately one year ago, and began work on their new home and landscape.

Luann enjoys gardening with her family and is adjusting well to the new climate in Central Texas. They recently added a circular driveway with a new flower bed and lawn. They also added several native perennial plants, rock and stone work in the front and back yard.

Their attractive and colorful display of native and drought tolerant plantings made them the choice for June's yard of the month.

Mary Rachkind, Realtor and garden club member, awards Yard of the Month winners with a gift certificate for \$50.00. If you are interested in joining the River Place Garden Club, please contact Angela Plunkett @ 673 9477. Meetings are held the second Thursday of the month, from September through May.

Submitted by Angela Plunkett



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

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

SCHOOLS

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

UTILITIES

River City of 512-494- Texas Gas Custom	Place MUD512-246-0498 Austin Electric..... 9400 Service Service. 1-800-700-2443 Emergencies
512-370-8609 Call Before AT&T	You Dig ...512-472-2822 Service. 1-800-464-7928
New Repair	1-800-246-8464
Billing.....	1-800-858-7928
Time Warner Cable Customer Service	512-485-5555
Repairs.....	512-485-5080
IESI (Trash).....	512-282-3508

OTHER NUMBERS

River Place Postal Office	512-345-9739
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NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

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

VIPER SWIM CAMP (BOYS & GIRLS)

Register at www.leanderisd.org
Contact Holly Raffaelli at 512-944-5531
or holly.raffaelli@leanderisd.org

The Vandegrift Swim Team already has numerous traditions and success, so come get to know the Vandegrift Swim coaches while gaining more swimming experience. All swimmers must already know all 4 strokes legally to attend. This camp will take each swimmer through each stroke and finesse their technique. At the same time, the swimmer will get to experience why swimming for Vandegrift is fun, motivating and filled with pride. Spots are limited so act fast to be a part of a great VIPER experience!

- **Bella Mar in Steiner Ranch**
- **Requirements - Bring water, a towel, swimsuit, goggles and a cap. Swim equipment will be provided**
- **\$90**
- **July 9-12 from 8am-10am**
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SAT/ACT Academic Camp . July 23 - 26
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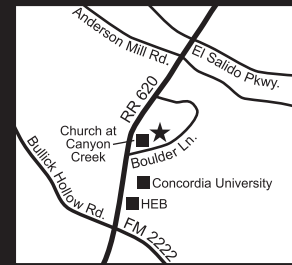
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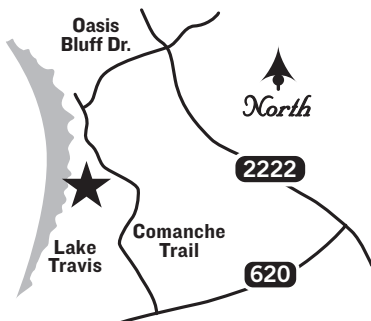
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SUN, 7/8 T-Bird & The Breaks

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SAT, 7/21 Del Castillo

SUN, 7/22 James McMurtry

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Catch the Reading Bug this Summer

at River Ridge Elementary and Four Points Middle School

LISD and Hill Country Education Foundation have teamed up again this summer at Four Points area school libraries – River Ridge Elementary and Four Points Middle School – to provide support and access to library books and to bring programming to students. Thanks to LISD school librarians these schools will be open on several days in June and July.

“Statistics have shown that students that don’t read actively over the summer lose instructional gains made during the previous school year,” said Becky Calzada, LISD library coordinator. “Our goal is to provide neighborhood library access to prevent this “summer slide” in reading loss and get students ready for the next grade level.”

LISD is offering the service because some parts of the district do not have easy access to public libraries and due to the record-number of participants at the library last summer. The Hill Country Education Foundation has been working towards establishing a community library in the Four Points area.

“Libraries provide an integral component for education in our communities,” said Kai

Lamb, president of HCEF. “While we don’t have the luxury of a nearby library in Four Points, teaming up with LISD provides us the opportunity to begin making an impact.”

Kicking off the summer program at River Ridge on June 11, HCEF will host Joe McDermott, one of the nation’s top children’s music recording artists. McDermott will perform at 10:00 am. Staff from Bartlett Realty will give out delicious ice cream treats for library goers. On July 26, Bernadette Nason will bring excitement, enthusiasm and energy to her storytelling performance. Nason is a familiar presence in Central Texas theatre and among elementary and middle schools as an English born and bred storyteller extraordinaire.

On July 17, HCEF will bring Mark Mitchell, author-illustrator, to Four Points Middle School at 1:00 pm. Mitchell’s book for young people, “Raising La Belle: The Story of the La Salle Shipwreck” is about an early colonial ship found at the bottom of a Texas bay.

Please note that there will be no restrooms available at the library. Non-registered LISD students may not check out books.

For more information about summer reading, see information below:



River Ridge Elementary

<http://ldl.leanderisd.libguides.com/summerlibrary>

SUMMER LIBRARY HOURS

Mondays and Thursdays 9 am to 12 noon

Mon, July 9

Thurs., July 12

Mon., July 16

Thurs., July 19

Mon., July 23

Thurs., July 26: Bernadette Nason, storyteller, at 10am.

All Books Due

Four Points Middle School

<http://fpms.leanderisd.libguides.com/content.php?pid=33235>

SUMMER LIBRARY HOURS

Tuesdays 12 noon to 3 pm

July 10

July 17: Mark G. Mitchell, author-illustrator, at 1pm

July 24

July 31: All Books Due

Pruning Guidelines

for Prevention of Oak Wilt in Texas

Oak wilt, caused by the fungus *Ceratocystis fagacearum*, is the most destructive disease affecting live oaks and red oaks in Central Texas. Most of the tree mortality results from tree-to-tree spread of the pathogen through interconnected or grafted root systems, once an oak wilt center becomes established. New infection centers begin when beetles carry oak wilt fungal spores from infected red oaks to fresh, open wounds on healthy oaks. Wounds include any damage caused by wind, hail, vehicles, construction, squirrels, birds or pruning. Research has shown that both oak wilt fungal mats on infected red oaks and insects that carry oak wilt spores are most prevalent in the spring. Below is a brief description of how you can reduce the risk of fungal spread when pruning.

- Always paint fresh wounds on oaks, including pruning cuts and stumps, with wound dressing or latex paint immediately after pruning or live tree removal at all times of the year.
- Clean all pruning tools with 10% bleach solution or Lysol™ between sites and/or trees.
- If possible avoid pruning or wounding of oaks during the spring (currently defined as February 1 through June 30). Reasons to prune in the spring include:
 - To accommodate public safety concerns such as hazardous limbs, traffic visibility or emergency utility line clearance.
 - To repair damaged limbs (from storms or other anomalies)
 - To remove limbs rubbing on a building or rubbing on other branches, and to raise low limbs over a street.
- On sites where construction schedules take precedence, pruning any live tissue should only be done to accommodate required clearance.
- Dead branch removal where live tissue is not exposed.

Pruning for other reasons (general tree health, non-safety related clearance or thinning, etc.) should be conducted before February

1 or after June 30.

Debris from diseased red oaks should be immediately chipped, burned or buried. Regardless of the reasons or time of year, proper pruning techniques should be used. These techniques include making proper pruning cuts and avoiding injurious practices such as topping or excessive crown thinning. If you are uncertain about any of this information, you should consult with a Texas Oak Wilt Certified arborist, ISA Certified Arborist, or an oak wilt specialist from a city, county or state government agency such as the Texas Forest Service or Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

References (available at <http://www.TexasOakWilt.org>):

Appel, D.N., and R.F. Billings (eds.). 1995. Oak wilt perspectives: Proceedings of the Nation Oak Wilt Symposium, June 22-25, 1992. Austin, TX. Information Development, Houston, TX. 217 p.

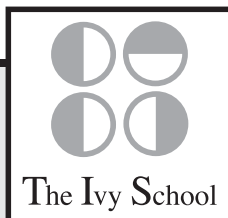
Billings, R.F., and D.N. Appel (eds.). 2009. Proceedings of the National Oak Wilt Symposium. June 4-7, 2007, Austin, TX. Texas Forest Service Publication 166. 267p.

Prepared January 12th, 2011 in cooperation between Texas Forest Service, Texas AgriLife Extension Service and International Society of Arboriculture Texas Chapter.

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THE DEDICATED RUNNER

Submitted by Steve Bernhardt

The heat is officially on in Central Texas, for the foreseeable future no matter the time of day it will be hot and often humid during our runs. Does this mean it's time to slow down, not run as often, or simply head indoors to the gym to run? If you are a dedicated runner none of these options sounds appealing. Fortunately none of them are necessary either if we take our time to understand how to acclimatize to the higher temperatures and take the necessary measures to run safely and comfortably under the bright Texas sun.

First, it takes our bodies about 7-10 days to begin to make the physiological adjustments needed to adapt to strenuous activity in the heat. Research has shown we can become fully acclimatized in 14-days based on spending at least one hour a day in the heat. During this time our blood plasma volume increases, sodium levels concentrate, and our core body temperature decreases. Keep in mind fitter runners usually adapt quicker, as well as younger runners often do better in the heat than older runners.

Next, dress properly to maximize evaporative heat loss. Wear clothing designed for running that does not hold moisture in the fabric (hydrophobic) and encourages evaporation. Our bodies cool as the heat is pulled away from us in our evaporating sweat. Avoid running in cotton as it holds the moisture in the fabric and makes wide scale evaporation nearly impossible. Running in a soaking wet cotton t-shirt is not cooling, it's basting. Also, don't forget a breathable hat to keep the sun off your head

and sunglasses to fight off the negative effects of UV sunlight on your eyes.

Lastly, our sweat rate increases as our bodies adapt to the stress of running in higher temperatures, because of this we need to replenish our fluids in order to maintain our effort and vital bodily functions. Water is ok for shorter duration runs (30 minutes or less) but for longer efforts we need to add some electrolytes like sodium chloride, magnesium, and potassium. There are many well designed hydration products available that are tasty and effective, as well as several different ways to carry fluids while on your runs like a hand-held water bottle or waist belt. If you are worried about the comfort of carrying a bottle while running, trust me after a few days you'll hardly notice it and grow thankful for having it with you.

Just because it's hot and humid doesn't mean we have to stop doing what we love to do, run. Being patient and giving our bodies time to acclimatize is critical. Wearing the right clothing to protect ourselves for the sun and encourage evaporative cooling is a must. Fluid replacement in order to maintain proper hydration is necessary to avoid heat related illness due to overheating and dehydration. With care and attention to each of these areas you'll be on your way to accomplishing your running goals no matter what the Texas summer decides to throw at us.

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RIVER REVIEW

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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SHOW OFF YOUR SUPER HERO



Parents this is your chance to brag on your kiddos. We want pictures of your kids doing everyday things, school events, plays, sports, etc.

Send in your pictures to be featured in the River Review. E-mail your pictures to riverreview@peelinc.com by the 9th of the month.



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SUMMER CAMPS

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ROCK CAMP

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July 16 - July 28

10:00 - 2:00 pm

(no Rock Camp July 21, 22, 27)

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July 9 - 13 10:00 - Noon

PERCUSSION CAMP

No experience needed.

Beginners welcome!

July 30 - Aug 3 10:00 - Noon

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RIVER REVIEW

Lake Travis Community Library July Events

Submitted by Lake Travis Community Library Director, Morgan McMillian

Lake Travis Community Library's Summer Reading Program is in full swing and there are plenty of things to do at LTCL! Do you have a high school student who is thinking about college? Do you feel like singing and dancing? Do you like animals and songs about animals? Do you know how to use our digital library to borrow free eBooks and downloadable audiobooks? Would you like to go on a Zoofari? Abracadabra! Is magic something that interests you? Read on below to learn more about these events!

Attend a College Planning workshop at the library on Tuesday, July 10th from 6 to 7:30pm. Learn what it takes to find the right college fit for your student, at the lowest cost! Get the inside scoop on how to beat today's college costs, what colleges are looking for, and three simple rules for college admissions. RSVP to College InRoads at (512) 200-3626.

College Planning

Sing & Dance

Hey kids, do you like to sing and dance? If so, then Mr. Johnny & Friends is the event for you! Sing and dance along with Mr. Johnny & Friends on Thursday, July 12th at 10:30am at the Briarcliff Community Center or 1:30pm at TexARTS. We hope to see you there!

Lucas Miller, the singing zoologist, is back again this summer! Lucas Miller connects kids and nature with scientifically accurate songs, stories and videos! With music, comedy, puppetry, stories, and stunning photography, Lucas Miller delivers multi-media programs that make kids and parents go wild! Sound like fun? Then join us on Monday, July 16th at 3pm at TexARTS!

Zoology Fun

Zoofari

What's a Zoofari? A Zoofari is a chance to learn all about wild animals in a petting zoo environment! Join us on Thursday, July 19th at 10:30am at the Briarcliff Community Center or 1:30pm at the Lakeway Activity Center for your chance to get up close and personal with lemurs and more!!

Download eBooks, audiobooks, music, and video anytime, anywhere - for free! You can access the LTCL's Digital Library to download media to a PC, Mac, and most mobile devices. At the end of the lending period your media checkouts expire so there are no late fees - ever! For an introduction to the Digital Library or help troubleshooting with your device, come to the library on Tuesday, July 17th at 7pm.

Digital Library

Magic

Join us on Friday, July 27th at 2pm for a magical experience with Magician Black Bert at our Summer Reading Program Finale! Black Bert will teach us about the magic of reading and show some pretty neat magic tricks, too!

As always, please contact the library for more information about any of these events at (512) 263-2885 or www.laketralibrary.org. We look forward to seeing you at the library!



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Ski Shores Café Welcomes Summer with Dockside Pick-Up Service, Live Music and Family-Friendly Movie Nights All Summer Long



Fun in the sun and relaxed lakeside dining are on the menu this summer at **Ski Shores Café**, the 57-year-old iconic Lake Austin family restaurant and bar. The restaurant is ushering in Central Texas' summer evenings with spectacular sunset views and a menu packed with tempting burgers, tacos, pizza and much more! In addition, Ski Shores is now offering **dockside pick-up**, a service that allows restaurant patrons to call in their food orders to-go, cruise on over to one of Ski Shores' designated boat slips and pick up their meals by a friendly member of the Ski Shores wait staff.

Ski Shores Café is also offering an array of fun seasonal activities, including **live musical entertainment** and **family-friendly movie nights**. Throughout the summer, Ski Shores will welcome a variety of Austin musicians who will perform live music Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons on the café's newly improved outdoor stage. The recently added deck seating and covered palapa are

ideal for casual lakeside evenings spent kicking back, sipping on a cool beverage from the full bar and taking in a live show.

While Mom and Dad enjoy the live entertainment, the kids will be enthralled by the giant playscape, which will have extended evening hours during the summer. At sundown on **Friday Family Fun Nights** all spring and summer, families can gather around the Ski Shores fire pit, enjoy some free gooey s'mores and take in a family-friendly movie.

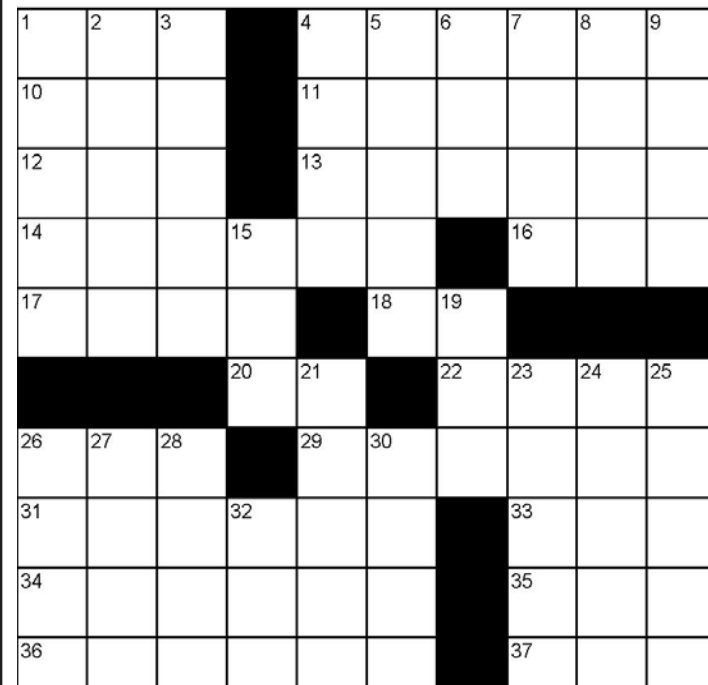
Located just off City Park Road south of Austin's 360 Bridge, Ski Shores Café is a full-service restaurant that boasts plenty of indoor and outdoor space for laid-back lakeside events. Guests can even park their boats in one of the many boat slips, and step off the lake and into the restaurant for a quick afternoon bite or an entire evening of dining while enjoying the lake atmosphere. With indoor and outdoor TVs, and lots of arcade games for the kids, Ski Shores ensures the whole family will be entertained in this cozy, beach-style environment.

The menu at Ski Shores Café is just as iconic as this captivating establishment. From appetizers and burgers, to tacos, pizzas and dessert, Ski Shores' recently updated menu has something to please every taste. The menu features longtime favorites like the Border Burger, the infamous Scooter Burger, and Ski Shores' legendary 14- and 16-inch pizzas. Some new classics and Austin staples include the Fish Tacos, Catfish and Shrimp Baskets, and the Garden Fresh Salad with Grilled Chicken, a "fave on the lake." The kids' menu features all-time classics like Chicken Tenders, Grilled Cheese, Corndog Bites, and Cheese Quesadillas, all served with a drink and a choice of fries, coleslaw, chips or applesauce.



For more information about the iconic Ski Shores Café, visit www.SkiShoresAustin.com.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

1. Pen brand
4. Oriental tower
10. Self-esteem
11. Excuses
12. Shade tree
13. Napkins
14. Filament
16. Shekel
17. Hula __
18. Iowa (abbr.)
20. Man's title
22. Type of dressing
26. Short-term memory
29. Exodus
31. Hype
33. Airport abbr.
34. Glistening
35. Cask
36. Star system
37. South southeast

DOWN

1. Wood
2. Ice house
3. Fast food meal
4. Ashen
5. Excuse
6. Cocktail drink
7. Follow
8. Eaten
9. Association (abbr.)
15. Words per minute
19. Abridged (abbr.)
21. Become less tight
23. Onion like vegetables
24. Painter Richard
25. Utilization
26. Thick carpet
27. Roman cloaks
28. Gangster's girlfriend
30. Musky
32. Pod vegetable

View answers online at www.peelinc.com

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RIVER REVIEW

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

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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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It's not the end of the world: Raising Resilient Children

By Sugandha Jain

"It is far more important to know how to deal with the negative than to be positive"

---Martin Seligman, Author of the book *Learned Optimism*

Do you want your children to grow up to be fragile as a flower or tough as Teflon? If you want your children to be strong, then, you need to fuel them with power to face every adversity that comes their way. According to Paul Stoltz, Adversity Quotient (AQ) is the ability of individuals to withstand adversity and surmount it. Resilient children with a high AQ turn obstacles into opportunities.

Resiliency is the ability to not only survive, but thrive. In order to remain strong, we must stretch ourselves and spring forward. In life, things happen that knock us back for awhile. We just don't want to get stuck there. We may fall back, but then look out- we're moving forward, stronger than ever!

A rubber band can be used to explain the concept of resilience in children. A rubber band can be stressed and stretched, but it quickly

returns to its regular shape when the stressor is gone. Similarly the resilient child quickly «bounces back» from stress or trauma. This ability to recover quickly from a stressful experience is important to brain development. When a child is stressed the brain is bathed in a stress hormone called cortisol. If cortisol levels remain high, the hormone starts to interfere with the development of connections within the brain.

A 2012 study by Stanford University School of Medicine team used MRI scans to identify how humor affects children's minds. The research proves that a strong sense of humor is an important part of positive emotion and may help children to be more resilient. Being able to see the humor in stressful situations, or to be able to laugh at difficult things can make children successful in life.

Parents have to find ways to laugh more and find humor in everyday life. Laugh at yourself and FOR your children. As parents we have many opportunities to show our children when things don't go as planned, that we can fret, pout, wish for different circumstances OR we can bounce back and make fun!

Sugandha Jain is Master Registered Texas Trainer and Director of Accreditation at a local preschool.

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A Focus on Heat Emergencies

HEALTHY TIPS TO STAY COOL IN EXTREMELY HOT WEATHER

By: Concentra Urgent Care

Heat emergencies fall into three categories of increasing severity: Heat Cramps, Heat Exhaustion & Heatstroke.

Heat illnesses are easily preventable by taking precautions in hot weather. Children, elderly, and obese people have a higher risk of developing heat illness. People taking certain medications or drinking alcohol also have a higher risk. However, even a top athlete in superb condition can succumb to heat illness if he or she ignores the warning signs.

If the problem isn't addressed, heat cramps (caused by loss of salt from heavy sweating) can lead to heat exhaustion (caused by dehydration), which can progress to heatstroke. Heatstroke, the most serious of the three, can cause shock, brain damage, organ failure, and even death.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

— Heat Cramps —

- Sweating
- Pain in arms, legs, and abdomen

— Heat Exhaustion —

- Moist, pale skin

- Fatigue and fainting
- Dizziness and lightheadedness
- Headache and confusion
- Nausea and vomiting
- Rapid pulse and breathing

— Heat Stroke —

- No sweating
- Dry, hot, red skin
- Confusion and loss of consciousness
- Rapid pulse
- Temperature over 103° F
- Seizures

CAUSES:

The following are common causes of heat emergencies:

- High temperatures or humidity
- Dehydration
- Prolonged or excessive exercise
- Excess clothing
- Alcohol use

(Continued on Page 17)

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A Focus on Heat Emergencies- (Continued from Page 16)

- Medications, such as diuretics, neuroleptics, phenothiazines, and anticholinergics
- Cardiovascular disease

What to do in heat emergencies..

FIRST AID

1. Have the person lie down in a cool place. Elevate the person's feet about 12 inches.
2. Apply cool, wet cloths (or cool water directly) to the person's skin and use a fan to lower body temperature. Place cold compresses on the person's neck, groin, and armpits.
3. If the person is alert, give cool water or sports beverages. It's advisable to drink slowly and steadily, particularly if they are experiencing nausea.
4. For muscle cramps, give beverages as above, and massage and stretch affected muscles gently, but firmly, until they relax.
5. If the person shows signs of shock (bluish lips and fingernails, and decreased alertness), starts having seizures, or loses consciousness, call 911 and continue cooling procedures, as described above.

DO NOT:

- DO NOT underestimate the seriousness of heat illness, especially if the person is a child, elderly, or injured.
- DO NOT give the person medications that are used to treat fever

(such as aspirin or acetaminophen). They will not help, and they may be harmful.

- DO NOT give the person salt tablets.
- DO NOT give the person liquids that contain alcohol or caffeine. They will interfere with the body's ability to control its internal temperature.
- DO NOT use alcohol rubs on the person's skin.
- DO NOT give the person anything by mouth (not even salted drinks) if the person is vomiting or unconscious.

PREVENTION:

- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight clothing in hot weather.
- Rest regularly in a cool area; seek shade when possible.
- Avoid strenuous physical activity in hot or humid conditions.
- Drink plenty of fluids every day. Drink more fluids before, during, and after physical activity.
- Be especially careful to avoid overheating if you are taking drugs that impair heat regulation, or if you are overweight or elderly.
- Be careful of hot cars in the summer. Allow the car to cool off before getting in.
- Avoid heavy meals and hot foods.

For more information on how to cope with the heat, ask your Concentra health professional, or visit the CDC's Web site at: www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/



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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 & WHOLEGRAINS

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 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're 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 higher-value 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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Tech-Etiquette: Is there an App for Civility?

Submitted by Darcy Folsom

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 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 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.

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Chocolate Cab Cupcakes

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By The Four Points Foodie

Cupcake Ingredients

- 1 1/2 C all purpose flour
- 3/4 C sugar
- 1 t baking powder
- 1 t baking soda
- 1 t sea salt
- 1 C special dark cocoa
- 1/2 C canola oil
- 2 large eggs
- 1 t Ancho Chili Powder
- 1 C Cabernet Sauvignon
- 1 special dark chocolate bar



Frosting Ingredients

- 1/2 C vegetable shortening
- 6 oz unsalted butter, softened
- 1 C confectioners' sugar
- 1 C special dark cocoa
- 2 T Cab Reduction {see note below}

Directions: Preheat your oven to 350 degrees and line a cupcake pan with papers. Sift the dry ingredients together in a large bowl. Add the oil, eggs, chili powder and cab and blend with a mixer. Using a 1 inch ice cream scoop, place 1 scoop in each paper. Add 1 piece of dark chocolate, and then add another scoop of batter. Place in oven and bake for 18 minutes. Remove from oven and cool.

Directions: Blend shortening and butter together until fluffy and add confectioners' sugar and cocoa. Mix to combine then add the Cab Reduction and blend well. If the frosting is too thick, add a hint of vanilla or cream to thin it out. Place in pastry bag and pipe onto cooled cupcakes and serve.

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