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November 2012

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AVERY RANCH HOA

Volume 6, Issue 11

ACC Jazz Ensemble Band performs at the MAC

SAVE THE DATE! NOVEMBER 3RD, FROM 5 PM - 7 PM

The Avery Ranch Social Committee would like to invite everyone out to enjoy an evening of family fun at the MAC Amphitheater November 3rd, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Dance to the delightfully sweet sounds and timeless music of the American swing era preformed by the Austin Community College Jazz Ensemble Band featuring one of our Avery residents, Jose Reyes. Hughes BBQ – owned and operated by Avery residents Kraig & Whitney Hughes - will be providing BBQ plates for sale and Kona Ice will be out selling their delicious snow cones. Be sure to bring some lawn chairs, as this event is sure to attract a big crowd.

To stay up-to-date on events happening within Avery Ranch please check out our Facebook page: **Avery Ranch Neighborhood Events.**



Movie in the Park



The Avery Ranch Social Committee will sponsor a free Movie in the Park at the amphitheater of the Main Activity Center on Saturday, November 17th, beginning at 7 p.m.

Co-hosting this event will be the Rutledge School PTA who will provide popcorn and other refreshments for sale. This is the first weekend after the change to standard time.

In the event of rain, this activity will be rescheduled for a Spring showing. The movie to be viewed is *The Lorax*, a family friendly movie for all ages. Come enjoy an evening outdoors, meet your neighbors, and watch a great movie.

The LORAX is an animated adventure that follows the journey of a boy as he searches for the one thing that will enable him to win the affection of the girl of his dreams. To find it he must discover the story of the Lorax, the grumpy yet charming creature who fights to protect his world.

HOME ON THE RANCH

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY 911
Fire..... 911
Ambulance..... 911
Sheriff – Non-Emergency 512-943-1300

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..... 16200 Avery Ranch Blvd.
Elsa England Elementary School 704-1200
..... 8801 Pearson Ranch Road
Cedar Valley Middle School..... 428-2300
..... 8139 Racine Trail
McNeil High School..... 464-6300
..... 5720 McNeil Dr.

LEANDER ISD

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..... 11501 Staked Plains Dr.
Henry Middle School 570-3400
..... 100 N. Vista Ridge Dr.
Vista Ridge High School..... 570-1800
..... 200 S. Vista Ridge Dr.

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Repairs..... 512-485-5080
Solid Waste Servies..... 512-494-9400

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AVERY RANCH HOA WEBSITE

Visit the Avery Ranch HOA website at AveryRanchHOA.com

FOR QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

For questions or concerns in your neighborhood contact
our Property Manager and HOA Board at GetHelp@
AveryRanchHOA.com.



HOME ON THE RANCH

COMING IN JANUARY 2013:

The Inaugural Avery Ranch Ladies Group/Women's Committee

The group will plan events to encourage relationship building and getting to know your neighbors, and of course, having fun!! We will host events such as happy hours, Night Outs, play groups, Dinners, charity events, Couples Nights, etc.

If you would like to help with planning or nominate someone to be on the Steering Committee, please contact Jenny Campbell at jennyncampbell@yahoo.com or Jan Lunday-Roebeck at janetal@swbell.net. The Steering Committee would like to have a representative from each Section of Avery Ranch and will meet 1-2 times before the January meeting to plan.

AVERY RANCH HO-HO-HOLIDAY FUN!

Submitted by Karen Nief, Event Committee Chair

Happy Holidays Avery Ranch! Ready for the holiday season yet? No? What about some cooler weather?

Save the Date for this year's Holiday Sleigh Ride Saturday December 15th. From 6 p.m. til 8p.m. at the Main Amenities Center. We'll be providing rides on 2 horse drawn wagons (sleighs), serving hot chocolate & cookies and best of all – a visit from SANTA CLAUS! He's been writing us because he had such a great time last year he wanted to be sure to make time to come back. I'm happy to report he's been confirmed and will once again be available to visit with each child to get their wish list. He'll be in the pavilion by the pool in front of the fireplace. Mark your calendars! Maybe it'll snow, but even if it's 60 degrees, we'll still have a great time - Avery Ranch style!



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JOHN D. [unclear]

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a blue NAPA uniform, is smiling and holding a blue NAPA EasyPay credit card. The background shows a car in a repair shop.

HOME ON THE RANCH

CALENDAR

HOA MONTHLY BOARD MEETING

Next meeting - Monday, November 12th: Board Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7pm, except for holidays. Board members will meet on these dates to discuss issues related to Avery Ranch. Agenda can be found on the Avery Ranch Website in the discussion forums section no later than Friday prior to the meeting. If you have an item you would like discussed during one of these meetings, please contact Alliance Association Management, Inc. at 347-2888. The location for meetings is at the Morningside Amenity Center.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ACC STAGE ENSEMBLE BAND PERFORMS AT THE MAC

Saturday, November 3rd from 5-7 p.m.: Dance to the delightfully sweet sounds and timeless music of the American swing era preformed by the Austin Community College Stage Ensemble Band featuring one of our Avery residents, Jose Reyes. Hughes BBQ – owned and operated by Avery residents Kraig & Whitney Hughes - will be providing BBQ plates for sale and Kona Ice will be out selling their delicious snow cones. Be sure to bring some lawn chairs, as this event is sure to attract a big crowd. Enjoy an evening of family fun at the MAC Amphitheater

AVERY RANCH YARD & GARDEN CLINIC

Thursday, November 15th at 7 p.m. Meeting Room, Main Amenity Center: Topic: Preparing our landscapes and gardens for Spring. Master Gardener Bob Beyer and landscape professional Lisa LaPaso offer free landscape advice.

MOVIES IN THE PARK IS BACK!

Saturday, November 17th at 6:30 p.m./dusk: Amphitheater of the Main Amenity Center. Details on the front page.

HOLIDAY SLEIGH RIDE

Saturday, December 15th from 6-8 p.m., Main Amenities Center: Save the date! Watch out for details in the December newsletter issue.



Garden Tips for October

By Patty Hoenigman, Master Gardener

Autumn begins the best planting season for Austin. Many people mistakenly think that Spring is the better of our two planting seasons, when in fact it's the Fall that's ideal because it's the heat that kills more plants than the cold. Tender roots of the plants you put in the ground now will have 8 months in front of them to get established before another round of heat sets in come mid June.

Choose small scale native plants for your curbside gardens to keep maintenance and watering needs to a minimum. Silver Ponyfoot or Woolly Stemodia are low growing groundcovers that take the place of grass; they take sun or part shade. You'll only need a few plants that will multiply to fill your space in no time!

This is a great time to be pruning Oak trees. The beetle that carries the Oak Wilt Disease won't be as active until February 1st. Always paint your pruned branches within 10 minutes of making the cut to protect your tree from this awful disease that can kill an Oak tree in 4 weeks.

Plant your vegetable garden with cold winter crops like chard, carrots, broccoli and cauliflower. Kids will really enjoy watching how Brussels sprouts grow on a tall stalk. The root crops, like carrots and potatoes, require deep soil that's been loosened with a lot of compost.

Fertilize your lawn Spring and Fall with 20-0-5 fertilizer. The zero in the middle is for phosphorous which is abundant in our soil, so you don't want to add any more. Be sure to get the kind that is slow release for the longest benefit. It's ideal if it comes with a boost of iron to help with mineral absorption.

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Thank You

The Avery Ranch Homeowners Association are giving a shout out to the Avery Ranch Social Committee and to our community event sponsors Rudy's Country Store, Randolph Brooks Federal Credit Union and Mighty Fine Burgers!!

They continue to make our neighborhood activities possible!

SEND US YOUR Event Pictures!!

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



7 Ways to Be Financially Savvy

1. Make a "rainy day fund" for miscellaneous expenses
2. Plan for retirement now by setting aside money each month
3. Resist "window shopping," which could lead to impulse buying
4. Spend less than you make
5. Talk with your spouse and family about budgeting
6. Set aside six months of your living expenses in an account separate from your savings for emergencies
7. Pay more money than the minimum payment each month towards any outstanding debts

Take time to plan a budget that you can fit your lifestyle around, and enjoy the security of knowing exactly where your money is going!

This content is for informational purposes only and may not be wholly or at all applicable to every situation or jurisdiction. We strongly urge you to consult your professional advisor prior to acting upon the information contained herein. Not a commitment to lend. Borrower must meet qualification criteria.



Melanie Hadley

Vice President | NMLS 208645

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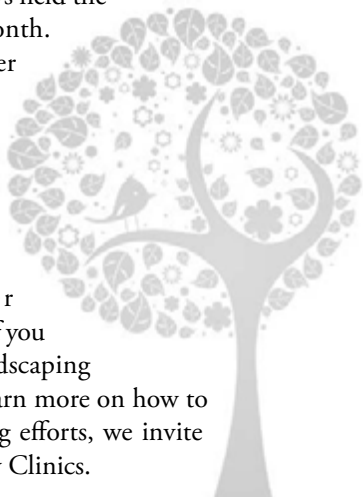
HOME ON THE RANCH

AVERY RANCH Landscape & Garden Clinics

The Fall series of Avery Ranch Landscape and Garden Clinics continue November 15th, with the presentation topic of "Getting the garden ready for spring" followed by open discussion, Q&A, and sharing. They are always held the third Thursday of each month.

There will be no December clinic due to the holidays.

We were pleased to have 15 residents attend in September to hear Lisa LaPaso's presentation on Fall Gardening. October's program was "Winter Gardening" by Bob Beyer. If you have any gardening or landscaping questions, or just wish to learn more on how to succeed with your gardening efforts, we invite you to attend these monthly Clinics.



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— Jude & Ethan's Mom, Primrose Parent

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Get Involved in Your Community

We have community events because AR Residents make it happen!

Join the Avery Ranch Social Committee! Help out your community by getting involved, even in just one event. If you have a passion for a certain activity, come out to our monthly social committee meeting and let us know. You don't have to attend every meeting all year long. Contact our Avery Ranch Social Committee Chairperson Jean Mayo at jmayo002@austin.rr.com.

The Social Committee meets every 1st Thursday at 7p.m. at the Meeting Room located by the pool of the Main Activity Center (Morningside).

The Event Calendar is posted on the HOA website under the Social Committee Forum and at the Avery Ranch Neighborhood Events Page on FaceBook.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Austin-TX/Avery-Ranch-Neighborhood-Events/132212366794767>

Playtime for kids ... Adult time for parents! Become a part of the Avery Ranch Playgroup! To know more about it, contact April Aguren at april.aguren@averyranchhoa.com.



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Welcome Fall!



Avery Ranch continues to be the largest New Home community with the most New Home Starts in the City of Austin. I continue to see a large amount of activity in the New Home Sales averaging 4-5 homes per month.

We are seeing clients from Austin that are tired of renting and with interest rates under 3%, it is an amazing time to BUY!

This time of year especially, we are seeing an increase in relocation buyers that are moving from all over the country to Austin for JOBS!

Raquel Atwell

**D.R. Horton New Home Sales Consultant
Glenfield at Avery Ranch**

Even here in Austin Texas we get a big change in weather this time of year. Along with the weather change we get a list of things we have to do to get our homes ready for the cooler season. These are a few suggestions you may want to look in to before the weather gets cooler. It is important to prepare for the winter months to prevent costly damage. Below are the fall preventative home maintenance steps that every homeowner should follow:

If you have Gutters or any Downspouts

- Gutters may have built up leaves and debris, so clean them out regularly. This will help you avoid wood rot problems and pest infestation as well.
- Make sure water is not coming down behind your gutters and that all brackets are on securely.
- Avoid water from pooling, make sure it drains properly away from your foundation. Maybe you planted some new flower beds? Watch that these drain properly also.

Windows and Doors

- Make sure that all door and window frames are in working order and if not, repair them to avoid heat loss in your home.
- Install weather stripping or caulking around windows and doors to prevent drafts and to lower heating bills.

Heating System

- Replace the filter in your furnace.
- Consider having a heating professional check your heating system to ensure optimal performance and discover minor problems before they run into costly major and inconvenient repairs.
- It is not a bad idea to clean your ducts to better your heating system's efficiency as well as to reduce household dust and to provide relief to those with respiratory problems.

Plumbing

- Insulate your pipes to prevent pipes from bursting at the first freeze.
- In case pipes do freeze, locate your home's water shutoff valve in advance.

Chimney and Fireplace

- It is best to call a professional in to inspect and clean your chimney and fireplace. These should be cleaned annually to prevent dangerous chimney fires.
- Test your fireplace flue for a tight seal when closed.

Attic Ventilation

- Be sure attic insulation doesn't cover vents in the eaves to prevent winter ice dams on the roof.
- Be sure ridge vents and vents at eaves are free of plants and debris.

Landscaping and Yardwork

- Grass does appear to stop growing in the fall but the roots are actually growing deeper to prepare for winter. Now is the best time to fertilize and reseed your lawn.
- Prune your trees and shrubs after the leaves turn to encourage healthy growth.

I'm sure that most of you have a list of your own but I wanted to give you a fall maintenance reminder so you can get back to enjoying your football games! Wishing you the best!

Most recent closings:

The Drake Plan 1790 sq. ft. – closed 10/12 • \$230,000

The Preston Plan 1863 sq. ft. – closed 9/29 • \$245,000

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STAY *Sun* SMART

Skin Cancer Screenings, Prevention Tips

By Adam J. Mamelak MD, FRCPC, FAAD

Skin cancer is on the rise, affecting more Americans over the past three decades than all other cancers combined, according to the Skin Cancer Foundation. The good news is that you can do much to prevent it. "The danger in skin cancer is gravest when it goes undetected," says Dr. Adam Mamelak of Sanova Dermatology in Austin. "It is extremely treatable, and in a large sense preventable when caught early."

To help reduce your risk, follow these sun-smart practices.

7 WAYS TO REDUCE SKIN CANCER RISK:

1. See your physician every year for a professional skin exam. Regular total-body checkups are the best way to make sure your skin is healthy and stays that way. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends annual skin exams. You can receive a FREE skin cancer screening through 2012 at Sanova Dermatology, 12319 N. Mopac in Austin. To schedule your free screening, call (512) 837-3376; no purchase or insurance coverage is necessary.

2. Avoid tanning and UV tanning booths. Even occasional sunbed use almost triples your chances of developing melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer. Young people – including teenagers – are especially sensitive to the ultraviolet radiation from tanning booths.

3. Seek the shade and do not burn. Stay in the shade especially between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun's rays are often strongest. Avoid getting burned; even a single sunburn increases your risk of developing melanoma.

4. Cover up with clothing and UV-blocking sunglasses. Protect your skin with densely woven and bright- or dark- colored fabrics, which offer the best defense. Wear a hat with a brim of 3" or greater to protect the face. Use wraparound sunglasses that block 99-100% of the sun's UV rays, which helps prevent cataracts and melanomas of the eye.

5. Use a broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen. Every day, year-round, use broad spectrum sunscreen with UVA and UVB protection and an SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of 15 or higher. For extended outdoor activity, use a water-resistant broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or more. Apply 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) of sunscreen to your entire body 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every 40-80 minutes or immediately after swimming or excessive sweating.

6. Help protect children from sun damage. Keep newborns out of the sun, since their skin possesses little melanin, the pigment that provides some sun protection. Sunscreen should be used on babies over the age of six months. Make sure your children are well-protected with clothing, hats, sunscreen and sunglasses. Ask the pediatrician to examine your child's skin thoroughly as part of a yearly check-up – especially important for those with fair skin, light eyes and hair, and those with a family history of skin cancer.

7. Examine your skin head-to-toe each month. Look for skin changes and let your doctor know about any sore that does not heal or spot that changes in size, texture or color.

Adapted from the Skin Cancer Foundation

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HOME ON THE RANCH

COMMUNITY NEWS

Mommy Sense Parenting workshop: Thursday, November 8 at Kids 'R' Kids, 15111 Avery Ranch Blvd. from 6:45 pm to 7:45 pm. Join Cristy Nix for an insightful parenting workshop to learn how to access your own mommy-sense on purpose, to trust it, and to become more lovingly connected to your kids (making life easier for everyone)! The workshop is free and open to all parents and the community. Please email sugandha007@yahoo.com if you are interested in registering for the workshop.

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Home Upgrade Returns

Submitted by Eric Hegwer

Your home is most likely your most valuable investment, and like all investments you want the best rate of return possible. When making upgrades to your house, some projects have a bigger "bang for the buck." Here's a list of the most common home repair projects and their estimated cost and how much you can expect to receive back when you decide to sell.

| Project | Estimated Cost | %Recoverable |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Add a Full Bathroom | \$5,000 - \$10,000 | 50% - 80% |
| Add a Half Bathroom | \$2,000 - \$3,000 | 60% |
| Add a Bedroom | \$6,000 - \$15,000 | 65% - 85% |
| Enclose a Porch | \$5,000 - \$6,000 | 50% - 60% |
| Repaint | \$3,000 - \$10,000 | 30% - 80% |
| Install new Ext. Siding | \$3,000 - \$8,000 | 75% |
| Landscape | \$500 - \$2,000+ | 40% - 60% |
| Add a Pool | \$10,000+ | 0% - 40% |
| Add a Patio | \$2,000 - \$4,000 | 35% - 60% |
| Replace A/C (per unit) | \$5,000 - \$10,000 | 75% |

The Estimated cost and % Recoverable varies based on the quality of work done, and the materials used. Generally mid to upper range finishes, and high quality craftsmanship will cost more, but also give a higher percent return.

(Source: Institute of Real Estate Appraisers)



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Why Knowing About Kilowatt-Hours Can Help You Save Money

By Chris Lee

Let's all admit it - we've all taken electricity for granted. As soon as we were young enough to reach the light switch to turn on the lights, we've never thought about electricity since it's been integrated into our lives as a basic necessity. By understanding a little bit about a Kilowatt-Hour (kWh) of electricity use, you'll more easily measure and compare the costs to operate your appliances in order to figure out how you can save some money.

The concept of kWh is difficult to visualize since most of us have forgotten the details of our high-school physics class (for those of us that actually took high school physics). Power, energy, time?...how can we define kWh? If you turned on twenty 100-watt lightbulbs in your house and left them on for 1 hour, you would have used 2 kWh (20 lightbulbs x 100w x 1 hour = 2000 watt-hours). And if you used your clothes dryer for an hour and your dryer is rated at 5000 watts, then you used 5 kWh (5000w x 1 hour). While each family uses electricity differently based on their living habits, here's a website that will give you an idea on

energy use of common household appliances. Caution: the dollar figures used in this chart are based on \$.07 per kWh instead of they typical \$.10 per kWh in Texas:

www.glendalewaterandpower.com/rates/appliance_operating_costs.aspx (Shortened: <http://goo.gl/kCeLA>)

So if you looked at your energy bill, you'll see that you're paying for the amount of Kwh's that you and your family use. By knowing the concept of kWh you'll be able to more easily correlate your energy use to your energy bill and therefore be able to do more to save money. To help you save energy and therefore more money, here are some resources with helpful energy saving tips:

www.takealoadofftexas.com/index.aspx?id=energy-efficiency-tips
(<http://goo.gl/meydE>)

http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/energy_savers.pdf (<http://goo.gl/u3fuE>)

I hope you've understood the basics of a Kilowatt-Hour and how it's measured to help you see your energy usage. If you have any questions about this, please ping me at leec89@gmail.com.

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When it comes to errand runs, afternoon lunch with friends or the occasional romantic evening out, finding a clean, safe and fun place for you children to stay can be difficult. With that in mind, Kid Spa Austin's Drop-In Care Program was formed as "A Getaway For Your Kids So You Can Get Away". Check us out and register online today at
www.KidSpaAustin.com



Austin's #1 home search website and fastest growing real estate company, Realty Austin, is looking forward to opening its Northwest Austin location in the Shops at Avery Ranch. Realty Austin's team consists of 140 full-time, high-producing agents who were hand-selected for their real estate experience, market knowledge and career accomplishments. For more information, visit realtyaustin.com or call
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New & Improved Irrigation Rebate Makes Debut

by Jacob Johnson, LI 17528 | Austin Water Conservation Program Specialist

Austin Water recently revised the irrigation upgrade rebate program to make participation easier than ever. Residential Austin Water and eligible wholesale customers no longer need an irrigation evaluation by Austin Water prior to beginning any rebated work. So instead of just fixing your irrigation system, upgrade it! The rebate program is for existing irrigation systems only; rebates will not be given for new systems and/or expansions. A licensed irrigator or the homeowner must complete the work that will be rebated. Once the work is complete, submit the completed application and itemized receipt within 30 days. Staff may perform a post-project inspection to verify the completed work. The application can be found online and will always contain up-to-date information about the program: www.austintexas.gov/departments/water-conservation-residents

Items eligible for rebate:

1. Rain sensor or soil moisture sensor (up to \$50): rain sensors and soil moisture sensors detect moisture and will shut off the irrigation system until the sensor dries out.

2. Pressure Regulating Valve—"PRV" (up to \$100): Misting or fogging in an irrigation system is often a sign of excessive operating pressure. A pressure regulator on the irrigation mainline helps decrease misting, makes spray patterns easier to control and extends the life of your irrigation components.

3. Pressure Regulating Components other than a PRV (up to \$100): A pressure regulating valve on the irrigation mainline is a way to control system-wide high pressure. However, not all stations are created equal. If only some stations are operating at excessive pressure, you may choose to install pressure regulation components at the individual station valve or even change out

those heads to pressure compensating heads. If using pressure compensating heads, the entire station must be converted.

4. Conversion from spray to multi-stream multi trajectory nozzles (\$4 per nozzle, up to \$100; entire station must be converted): Multi-stream, multi-trajectory nozzles have a spray pattern that looks like rotating spider legs. This spray pattern results in higher distribution uniformity and is less susceptible to wind drift. This rebate is perfect for mid to large turf stations.

5. Conversion of station to drip (up to \$50; must include filtration and pressure regulation): Well designed and installed drip systems are extremely efficient. Drip applies water directly to the soil at a very low rate. However, to operate correctly, drip stations need filtration to prevent clogs and a form of pressure regulation to bring operating pressure into range for the drip emitters. The current code exempts drip from watering restrictions which will allow drip users to create their own schedule.

6. Capping a station (\$50; station valve must be removed): You may have an area of your yard that you don't need to water or where you may be making some big landscape changes. If you decide you don't need a certain station anymore, remove the station valve and you'll be eligible for a \$50 rebate. Keep the cap visible and hang on to the valve for the possible post-work inspection.

But remember, even high quality irrigation systems can use a lot of water so pay careful attention to scheduling. Austin Water and eligible wholesale customers who use more than 15,000 gallons per month may benefit from a free irrigation evaluation performed by a licensed irrigator. Call 974-2199 or email watercon@austintexas.gov for more information or to schedule an evaluation.





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We are proud to announce that Kids R Kids has received another prestigious certification! Your child's school has been recognized by the Texas State Center for Early Childhood Development as a Texas School Ready!™ program. What does this certification mean to you as a parent? Simply put, it's proof that the Kids R Kids' educational practices and environment are effectively preparing your child for Kindergarten.

Texas School Ready!™ is a certification program, commissioned by the Texas legislature under Senate Bill 23, which certifies preschool classrooms that effectively prepared their students for Kindergarten. This certification is based on **actual linking** between quality instructional practices and children actually achieving scores showing they were on track in the areas of reading and social skills when they went to Kindergarten. This "linking" is established by tracking the reading and social screener scores, as evaluated by Kindergarten teachers in Round Rock and Leander ISD, of children who previously attended our preschool program.



The Texas School Ready!™ certification provides important benchmarks for parents who want to make informed decisions on where to place their child for preschool. Certified classrooms exhibit the three strongest preschool indicators found to predict kindergarten school readiness: teacher professional development, teacher instructional practices and early literacy activities. The model shows that children who graduated from these classrooms entered kindergarten with both the reading and social behavior skills needed to be successful.

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HIGH-STAKES TESTING: *Gaming the System or Getting It Right?*

By Sugandha Jain, Master Registered Texas Trainer and Director of Accreditation at a local preschool

Proponents of standardized tests recognize that testing can be nerve-racking for kids, but they say the traumatic effects have been overblown.

“Sure, high stakes tests can be stressful,” acknowledges Dr. Richard Phelps, author of the book *Correcting Fallacies About Educational and Psychological Testing*. But, he points out, a completely stress-life is a pretty dull life. Besides, for decades student surveys have shown little or no evidence of student stress — indeed, boredom and a lack of challenge have been more frequent complaints, he contends. Moreover, the high stakes tests we give in North America tend to be low level, he says, so low that virtually any student who makes an effort can eventually pass.

Perhaps the problem the public has with high-stakes testing is one of public relations. Standardized testing has become so politicized that research on its negative effects is 30 times more likely than research on its positive effects, says Dr. Gregory Cizek, a professor of educational measurement and evaluation at the University of North Carolina. Worse, he says, much of the research into the negative effects of

testing doesn't adhere to the scientific method and is riddled with flawed data and analysis — something the public isn't necessarily aware of. He and other proponents of standardized testing worry that this skewed viewpoint could result in educational policy that isn't good for kids.

DEFENDING STANDARDIZED TESTS

“Standardized tests promote fairness by providing a level playing field regarding what is tested and the conditions under which the test is administered,” says Dr. Stephen G. Sireci, director of the Center for Educational Assessment at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst “In fact, having these tests in place helps us ensure the teachers will be teaching the material they are supposed to.”

This is good news for parents, he says, not only because it ensures that schools do their jobs, but also because the test can function as a strong advocate for parents to demand better for their children. While a teacher may say a child is doing well in school, a standardized test provides “independent and unbiased information about their child's achievement,” Dr. Sireci says.

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name of that...



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Fire Roasted Hatch Green Chile & Jalapeno Pulled Pork Sliders



by the Four Points Foodie

FIRE ROASTED CHILE AND JALAPENO INGREDIENTS:

- 5 Hatch Chiles
- 5 Jalapenos
- 1 paper sack

Directions: Over a high flame on the grill, char and blister the skin of the chiles and jalapenos. Place in the sack to steam. Once cool, peel the charred skin. Split open, remove seeds and chop.

PULLED PORK INGREDIENTS:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • 2 lb boneless pork shoulder roast, trimmed | • 1 T olive oil |
| • 1 t paprika | • 1 C apple juice |
| • 1 t ground cumin | • 1 C Woody's Sweet BBQ Sauce |
| • 1/2 t ground cinnamon | • 1 T finely chopped chipotle peppers in adobo sauce |
| • 2 T salt | |
| • 1 T cracked black pepper | |

Directions: Combine dry ingredients and rub over trimmed pork should roast until ready to cook, a day in advance. In a large crock pot insert or regular pan, heat olive oil and sear roast on all sides. Add apple juice and simmer, again in either the crock pot or on the stove top, until the pork is very tender. Drain as much fat off the top as possible, then remove and shred or "pull". Return to the crock and finish with the Woody's Sweet BBQ Sauce, chipotle in adobo sauce and keep warm until ready to serve.

To assemble: Toast slider buns on a hot griddle with a bit of butter. Add the pulled pork and top with a mixture of the fire roasted chiles and jalapenos. Slap the top on it and devour! Perhaps you could add a slice of jalapeno jack cheese, but it's not necessary!



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