

LONG CANYON *Gazette*

NOVEMBER 2014

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE LONG CANYON

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TRAVIS COUNTY SETS UP REVERSE 911 FOR CELL PHONES

Travis County Emergency Services is making reverse 911 services available to residents' cell phones. The county already offers this service to residents' landlines. Reverse 911 is used in emergencies where there is a threat to public safety. The message gives warnings and instructions.

People can register their cell phones for up to five geographical locations and if there is an emergency in one of those areas, they will get a call. To find out more info about the program, you can go to <http://www.capcog.org/divisions/homeland-security/ens/>

To register, people are asked to go to the Capital Area Council of Governments' website at <http://wireless.capcog.org>.

Four Points Community Fine Art Show and Sale at the Oasis Restaurant

The 3rd Austin Four Points Community Fine Art Show takes place on Saturday, November 29th, from noon - 5p.m. at the Oasis Restaurant in NW Austin. The show and sale include original paintings, drawings and sculpture and hand made, exquisite fine jewelry. Local Austin artists will be present to discuss their experience and skills, answer questions and explain their process and inspiration. The show is juried to showcase and share the artistic talents of our most skilled and creative local artists.

Please join us at the Oasis Restaurant on November 29th, from noon-5p.m. The Oasis is located at 6550 Comanche Trail in NW Austin.

For more information, please contact Suzette at liveanotherlifeart@yahoo.com.



Partnerships for Children

Paul is a sweet, loving boy—and he almost always has a smile on face! While he is extremely active and loves to play sports and be outside, Paul does well academically and is a polite young man.

Paul is 7 years old and is confident in his abilities to entertain others with his dance moves, creativity, and jokes. An abundance of support and patience will help Paul achieve success in his promising young life.

To find out more about Paul, please contact Grace Lindgren, LMSW, Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter, at (512) 810-0813 or glindgren@helpinghandhome.org.

Adopting a child from the foster care system requires little or no cost to the adoptive family and funding may be available to help the adoptive family support the child or sibling group.

The Heart Gallery of Central Texas is a program of Partnerships for Children. To learn more about the adoption or fostering process, please call the Heart Gallery of Central Texas at (512) 834-3102, email heartgallery@partnershipsforchildren.org or visit our website at www.partnershipsforchildren.org.

NEWSLETTER INFO

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CLASSIFIED ADS

Personal classifieds (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Long Canyon residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail longcanyon@peelinc.com

Business classifieds (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$50, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office @ 512-263-9181 or advertising@PEELinc.com.

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Four Points Homework Help

Could your child benefit from one-on-one homework assistance?

Four Points Homework Help is a volunteer-based organization that offers free tutoring on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5-7 pm at Cups & Cones in Steiner Ranch.

Sign up for tutoring times, find more information, or get in touch with us at: www.fourpointshomeworkhelp.org or 4ptshmwkhelp@gmail.com

Tutoring begins on Tuesday, October 7 sign up now for a 30 or 60 minute session!

FPHH is staffed by NHS & PALS students from Vandegrift High School.

2014 Fall Giving Campaign

PURPOSE

Support our Four Points-area schools and teachers with grants to:

- **Prepare** our children for college
- **Inspire** them to discover their future career passion
- **Engage** them in the learning process through tools, technologies, and programs

GOAL

Raise \$20,000 from the community between October 1 and November 15

SUPPORTING

Vandegrift High School, Canyon Ridge and Four Points Middle Schools, Grandview Hills, Laura Welch Bush, River Place, River Ridge and Steiner Ranch Elementary Schools.



For details visit

www.HillCountryEdFoundation.org

VHS show, "Joy of Life," dedicated to Cale and Peggy Howard

VHS band is Grand Champion of Vista Ridge Marching Festival, competes at Bands of America November 1

Submitted by Rich Keith



Our state-champion marching band's show, "Joy of Life" is dedicated to the memory of high school student Cale Howard and his mother Peggy Howard of Steiner Ranch, who were tragically killed by a drunk driver over Christmas break in December 2013.

The band directors for the Vandegrift High School marching band and Vision Dance Company began designing this year's show last fall. Originally the show was to be a dramatic, almost dark and edgy production with music and costuming to match.

But after the terrible accident which took the life of one of the band's most loved members, the directors began to wonder how the show could be modified. Ultimately they scrapped the entire score and visuals completely and went in a direction of light and color, featuring sunrises, sunsets and even butterflies.

"The four parts of our show represent Beauty, Excitement, Love and Peace," said Mike Howard, director of bands.

The band's program, "Joy of Life," features the music of Aaron Copeland including "Promise of Living," Symphony No. 3, "Dance Panels," "Down a Country Road" and "Happy Ending" from the Red Pony.

Based upon competition results, the judges agree with the change. In October Vandegrift finished in first place at the Vista Ridge Marching Festival. VHS has won the contest every year since it was launched in 2010.

Vandegrift was named Best in Class in 6A, and "we were named Grand Champion of the entire contest for the fourth straight year," said Howard. In fact they swept the field by taking all category awards for best music, visual performance, general effect and percussion. The Vision Dance Co. was named best auxiliary.

The grand champion trophy represents the best marching band regardless of class of school. Vandegrift is rated a class 5A school but competed up in class 6A this year, which included impressive bands from the larger 6A schools.

Larger marching bands often attract the judges' attention; but just as in 2013, the Vipers outworked everyone else to get their show perfect. In second and third place were Cedar Park High School and Georgetown High School respectively.

On Sat. Nov. 1 the band will compete in the prestigious Bands of America Super-Regionals marching contest in the Alamodome in San Antonio. There they will go up against 57 bands from all over Texas and nearby states. They recently took 5th place in the Regionals during October.

"This will be a tough competition against several Grand National Finalists and Super Regional Finalists from past years," Howard said. He noted the band has made it to finals performance each of the last 2 years.

As a consideration to out-of-area schools, Central Texas schools perform on Friday. For Bands of America the Vandegrift students will get out of school on Halloween day and ride buses to the Alamodome and march in the preliminary contest. They then come back to Austin, unload, and play during the home football game against Marble Falls. The band will then get some needed sleep.

Then late Saturday afternoon they will know if they made it to finals. If so, the band loads up the equipment and the buses will roll to the Alamodome for the evening finals performance.

The Viper band and Vision Dance Company is currently ranked Texas state champion out of 250 UIL Class 4A band programs following the last competition held in 2013. There are 247 students in the program, making it by far the largest program on campus.

The community can enjoy Vandegrift's marching videos at <http://vhsband.com/audio-images/> Enter the password: "vipers" to see images and videos.

Nature Watch

by Jim and
Lynne Weber

WHAT GALL!

In nature, galls refer not to brazen behavior but to abnormal outgrowths on the surface of certain life forms. Plant galls, or cecidia, can be caused by various parasites from fungi to bacteria as well as by insects and mites. In the United States there are over 2000 species of gall-inducing insects, and the majority are reported to form galls on oak trees.

The formation of a gall begins with the hatching of the eggs of certain wasp species laid on the plant. It progresses when the larvae (or the adult female) injects chemicals into the plant, and the tissue swells in reaction, forming a spherical microhabitat around the larvae. The gall's purpose is twofold, providing the larvae with nutrients and protecting them from predators. Once fully grown, the all-female, adult insects bore an exit hole out to the surface of the gall and disperse.

While usually forming in the spring when the most rapid plant cell division occurs, galls initially appear light green in color but become even more noticeable in the fall when oak trees drop their leaves. Dull, dry, and brown, the spent galls are often scavenged by mammals searching for leftover food as winter approaches.

Gall-inducing insects are usually species-specific and sometimes even tissue-specific (branches, leaves, buds, roots) in the plants they select. In central Texas, most of the gall-inducing insects are gall wasps, and while they are closely associated with several species of our native oaks, they can also be identified by the types of galls they produce.

In general, you may find leaf galls with orangish 'hair' formed by the Hedgehog gall wasp, and sticky, spongy galls on twigs with seed-like structures inside formed by the Wool sower gall wasp. On live oaks, you can find woody twig and stem galls formed by the Mealy oak gall wasp, and leaf galls formed by the Woolly leaf gall wasp. The oak apple wasp, however, prefers our red oaks and forms spherical, spongy-filled galls.

Gall-making insects are generally not considered pests, and some galls are even considered attractive and are used in flower



arrangements and other crafts. While certain species may cause some aesthetic damage to a plant such as leaf discoloration or early defoliation, most of these insects do not permanently damage the host plant, but just use them to further their own purpose. What gall!

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.

LONG CANYON

CARPENTER ANTS



Carpenter ants nest outdoors in dead wood (tree stumps or dead limbs, fences, firewood, etc.). They may also be found in wood siding,

beams, joists, fascia boards or trim on structures. Damage is usually limited since carpenter ants tunnel and nest within wood; they do not eat wood. However, wood can become weakened by carpenter ant excavation.

Carpenter ants are large ants that can vary in color from all black to reddish to yellowish or a combination of colors. These ants have one node, no stinger and a circle of hairs at the tip of their abdomen.

Galleries in the nest are excavated following the grain of the wood and have clean, smooth walls. Nest locations may be discovered by searching for piles of sawdust-looking material under exit holes. Sawdust is coarse and may also contain soil or sand, uneaten insects as well as dead ants from the colony.

Carpenter ants are able to enter homes from tree branches or utility lines touching the home, through cracks and crevices around

windows and doors, cracks in foundation walls, ventilation openings or heating and air conditioning ducts.

Here are some tips for a carpenter ant infestation:

- Remove dead trees and/ or limbs and remove tree stumps from the landscape. Many times you can remove the (possible) nesting sites and get rid of the ants without using pesticides.
- Prune trees and shrubs that touch the home. Carpenter ants will often use these areas as a bridge to enter the home.
- Replace wood that is water damaged. Carpenter ants are drawn to moisture damaged wood, so make sure to repair any water leaks and replace damaged wood.
- Remove wood debris and firewood that is near the home. Carpenter ants may nest in firewood and when it is stacked right next to the home, it allows the ants to enter more easily.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600.

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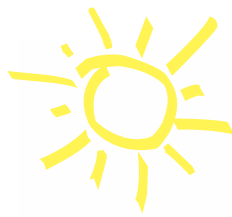
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Dr. Loveless is a General Dentist with extensive training in cosmetic and restorative dentistry. As a testament to his ongoing commitment to learning, Dr. Loveless was awarded his fellowship in The Academy of General Dentistry - a distinction that only 587 other Texas dentists hold. With approximately 15,000 dentists in Texas, that's pretty impressive!

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