

# RANCH RECORD

*News For The Residents of  
Blackhorse Ranch*

## UNDERSTANDING WATER QUALITY FOUR AREAS OF FOCUS WHERE YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

*Submitted by David Renniger*

**Question:** What is the most common pollutant in the urban waterways of Harris County, Texas? (Answer below)

### **WATERSHEDS AND WATER QUALITY**

Water quality describes physical and chemical parameters of surface water that impact both human and ecological health within a given watershed. A watershed is a geographic area where flowing water (and everything we put in it) drains into a larger common body of water. It can be the gutter system around your house that flows to the storm sewer, or an entire river basin that collects runoff from surrounding towns, roadways, and green spaces. Everyone lives in watershed. In Texas alone, there are 23 major river basin watersheds, each ultimately flowing into the Gulf of Mexico.

Understanding the relationship between water quality and human activity is the cornerstone of my own transformative experience in becoming NatureSmart. You see, I spent the majority of my career liberally applying pesticides and chemical control products to keep my demanding landscape clients happy and their gardens as green and pest-free as possible. Little did I know that most of these chemicals would eventually find their way into watersheds where they negatively affect everything from contact recreation and fishing areas, stream ecology, human health, and the safety of our drinking water.

### **IMPROVING WATER QUALITY**

Water quality is determined by comparing levels of pollutants like sediment, nutrients, bacteria, and man-made chemicals against baseline levels in a watershed. While this monitoring activity is performed by regulatory agencies and trained experts, here are four areas where you can make a significant contribution to improving water quality in your watershed:

#### **1. Landscapes**

- Choose sustainable landscape practices

- Minimize exposed soil with vegetative cover
- Plant vegetative barriers to filter runoff and trap sediments
- Mulch lawn clippings
- Stop using pesticides and chemical fertilizers

#### **2. Car Care**

- Regularly check for fluid leaks
- Recycle used motor oil
- Wash vehicles at the car wash and not in the driveway

#### **3. Paved Surfaces**

- Sweep/blow driveways, sidewalks and roads
- Don't sweep/blow debris into storm drains
- Direct downspouts away from paved surfaces

#### **4. Home Care**

- Never pour anything down storm drains
- Carefully store and dispose of cleaners, chemicals, and oil
- Pick up pet waste
- Pump and inspect septic systems regularly

Unfortunately, most major streams in Harris County, Texas are listed on the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's 303(d) list, which identifies impaired waters with higher than acceptable values for pollutants. The good news is that implementing the recommendations in these four areas of focus can make a difference and cost nothing more than a simple change in behavior.

**The answer to our question:** E.coli bacteria from fecal contamination is the number one cause of impaired waterways in Harris County, Texas. The bacteria is carried by stormwater runoff that flows into our creeks and streams. You can make an immediate impact by cleaning up pet waste and not allowing them to defecate near stormwater drainage areas.

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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Fire .....	911
Ambulance .....	911
Harris County Sheriff .....	713-221-6000
Cy-Fair Volunteer Fire Dept. Bus. Office .....	281-550-6663

### AREA HOSPITALS

Cy-Fair Medical Center .....	281-897-3300
North Cypress Medical Center .....	281-477-0830
Willowbrook Methodist .....	281-477-1000

### SCHOOLS

Cy-Fair ISD .....	281-897-4000
Warner Elementary School .....	281-213-1645
Spillane Middle School .....	281-213-1645
Cy Woods High School .....	281-213-1727
Cy Fair High School .....	281-897-4600
Cypress Ranch High School .....	281-373-2300

### PUBLIC SERVICES

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Harris County Tax .....	713-224-1919

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Albion Hurricanes FC (AHFC), established in 1989, is leading the way in South Texas youth soccer by inspiring and developing young men and women through world class coaching and innovative techniques, as well as instilling the proper framework, self-esteem, confidence and sportsmanship within our athletes.

Players will be evaluated to determine their technical and tactical abilities by the highly-qualified staff at AHFC. AHFC is proud to offer you various locations in the greater Houston area. Please visit [www.albionhurricanes.org](http://www.albionhurricanes.org) for specific times and dates and to pre-register for our Evaluations & Tryouts.

AHFC office: 713-939-7473

Website: [www.albionhurricanes.org](http://www.albionhurricanes.org)

Questions? Boys: Mark Rufo at [mrufo@albionhurricanes.org](mailto:mrufo@albionhurricanes.org)  
or call 979-453-1933

Girls: Danny Hill at [dhill@albionhurricanes.org](mailto:dhill@albionhurricanes.org)  
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## Cypress-Tomball Democrats April Meeting

The next Cypress-Tomball Democrats monthly meeting will be on Tuesday, April 21, 2015. It will be held at Rudy's Grill & Cantina, 11760 Grant Rd., Cypress, TX 77429, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

All are welcome to attend the meeting and to join this growing club, which meets on the third Tuesday of every month. The meetings are open to all, and always feature great fellowship and informative guest speakers. For more information, visit the website at [www.cytomdems.com](http://www.cytomdems.com); contact Glenn Etienne at [cytomdems@yahoo.com](mailto:cytomdems@yahoo.com); or "Like" the club on Facebook.



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## ACTS of Wisdom

Join Us for a day of FUN, FOOD, and GOLF benefiting ACTS of Wisdom, a faith-based, non-profit organization that seeks to provide quality education to children in rural Africa. A drawing for prizes will be held, as well as a silent auction, and raffle for a hand made Ethiopian piece of artwork!!

**FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2015**

11:00 am Registration Opens • 1:30 pm Shotgun Start

**Cost:** \$110 Per Person

(If you do not have a foursome, we will pair you with others)

**Includes:** Dinner, Green Fees, Cart, and Range Balls

**Mulligans:** \$5 each or 10 for \$40 (10 max per team)

Raffle Tickets \$10 each or 3 for \$25

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**Cypress Lakes Golf Club**

18700 Cypresswood Drive

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Please Register Online at [www.actsofwisdom.com](http://www.actsofwisdom.com) under the "Get Involved" Link on home page by April 24th! To learn more about our mission and ministry visit us at [www.actsofwisdom.com](http://www.actsofwisdom.com).

ACTS of Wisdom grew out of founder Pastor Brad Otto's experiences in Ethiopia and the Book of Acts where an Ethiopian Eunuch asks the Apostle Philip about Jesus. Philip is stunned that he doesn't know, to which the eunuch replies, "No one has ever taught me." Part of the cycle of poverty is not having access to quality education, or having inadequate supplies for education. 145 million children in the world do not have access to education, yet children still dream of becoming doctors, lawyers, and teachers.

At ACTS of Wisdom we believe every child, everywhere, should have access to education and to teachers willing to take time to teach them. Our hope is that through bettering the education opportunities of children, we might be able to help end the cycle of poverty, and begin to have peace in our world.





## The Cypress Symphony

The Cypress Symphony hosts its 3rd Annual Fundraising Gala and Season Announcement Dinner presented by Clearwater Utilities at 5pm on April 26, 2015 at the Norris Conference Centers at CityCentre. The evening will include revealing all major works for the 2015/2016 season with introductions by season conductor Jerry Hou, returning after his enthralling performance in January.

Richard Dowling will perform an exclusive recital for gala attendees that will elegantly (or subtly) match the theme of the evening "Stardust" with an emphasis on evening jazz. A Texas native, Dowling is known best for his recordings of American Music and has won the hearts and recognition of many for his performances, including the Houston Tuesday Musical Club Competition and a sold out debut at Carnegie Hall in New York City. Dowling was the first soloist to appear with the Cypress Symphony in September 2013 at the inaugural concert.

Founder Caroline Ewan comments that "I am thrilled that the symphony is about to embark on its third season. Our mission to enrich and educate the community has the support it needs to expand not only the size of our orchestra, but also the number of communities that we are reaching. Our third season will be our first entre into these two areas. It is a historic and exciting time at the Cypress Symphony."

The Cypress Symphony, founded by 26-year-old Caroline Ewan, is receiving great support from the northwest Houston community for its energetic performances. The next concert is May 9th at 7PM at the Centrum under the baton of Bohuslav Rattay, Conductor of the El Paso Symphony. Kathy Winkler, violin professor from Rice University, will perform the wonderful "Lark Ascending" by Vaughan-Williams as well as "Appalachian Spring."

During the fundraising gala, there will be a silent auction presenting items from some of Houston's best cultural institutions and local artisans. Ms. Ewan and the administrative team will highlight the current status of the Cypress Symphony and present exciting new developments for the 2015/2016 season.

The gala will be held at Norris Conference Centers at CityCentre at 826 Town & Country Blvd, Suite 210, Houston, Texas 77024. Tickets for the gala can be purchased online at [www.CypressSymphony.org](http://www.CypressSymphony.org) or by calling (832) 766-0529. Individual seats for this exclusive event are \$60 with discounts for table purchases or priority seating. Additional tickets and upcoming concert information can be found online at:

**[www.CypressSymphony.org](http://www.CypressSymphony.org)**

The Cypress Symphony is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization and member of the League of American Orchestras.



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## Northwest Harris County Aggie Moms to Award Scholarships

Please join us for the Northwest Harris County Aggie Mom's Club monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 14, 2015, beginning with refreshments and social time at 6:30 followed by meeting at 7:15 p.m. The meeting is held at the Houston Distributing Company, 7100 High Life Drive, conveniently located near Willowbrook Mall at the intersection of High Life Drive and Cutten Road. You will want to find out which deserving students will be awarded the 2015 scholarship awards and learn how these scholarships impact the Aggie experience. NWHC Aggie Moms Club members will also vote on which Texas A&M student organizations they would like the club to support. All meetings are open to the public and prospective students; current students and Aggie families are always welcome!

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Parents Weekend- April 17-18th-Parents' Weekend is a cherished Aggie tradition honoring Aggie moms and dads since 1919. Among the many weekend activities is the popular Aggie Moms' Boutique, a gift and craft fair held on April 17 and 18 in the Memorial Student Center at Texas A&M. Check out our booth! We will be selling our Tradition beads! For more information on the scheduled parents weekend events go to <http://parentsweekend.tamu.edu/node/38>.

Aggie Muster-April 21st- Aggies around the world will join together for Muster, held at Reed Arena beginning at 7PM to honor Aggies who are no longer among us. Muster is a day celebrating the camaraderie and the friendships, the triumphs and the defeats, the legacies and the impact that Texas A&M University has made, and continues to make, in all of our lives.

The Northwest Harris County Aggie Mom's Club meets August thru May on the second Tuesday of every month at 7:15 pm at 7100 High Life Drive. For more information on monthly speakers or upcoming events visit our website at [www.nwhcaggie moms.org](http://www.nwhcaggie moms.org) or contact Connie Pritchard, Club President at [pritchardg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pritchardg@sbcglobal.net)

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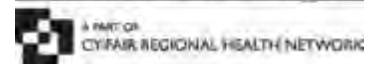
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