

# West Lake Hills ECHO

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May 2015

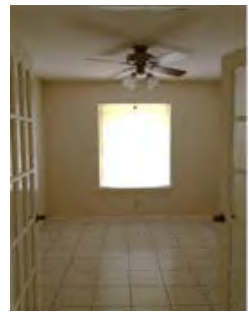
## Are Our Choices Based on Logic or on Emotion?

The short answer is: they are based on both. While we generally think we make our decisions based on facts, our decision making process is very much based on emotions. In fact, several studies conclude that up to 90% of the decisions we make are based on our emotions. We then use logic to justify these decisions to ourselves and others.

Antonio Damasio, a Portuguese-American neuroscientist/neurobiologist, studied people with brain injuries that affected the part of the brain where emotions are generated. The individuals Damasio studied had lost the ability to feel emotions. The interesting thing Damasio found was that his test subjects' ability to make decisions was seriously impaired. While the individuals were able to logically describe what they should be doing, they found it very difficult to make simple decisions such as where to eat or what to wear. Our decision making process affects the way we buy, which leads us to real estate.

As a buyers and sellers agent, we repeatedly see one pattern over and over again: a well-appointed home sells better, faster and/or commands a higher sales price. Below are two particularly compelling case studies of Austin homes we I prepared, marketed and sold effectively.

Southwest Austin Residence (\$300k price point): This home was in great condition, however, with all original late 80s features including a very taste-specific tile floor and wallpaper décor that could have really turned away buyers. The objective here was to highlight the potential of the home while drawing the eye away from the more dated characteristics of the home. Thankfully, the client was open to suggestions and we staged the home before going on the market. The home sold in multiple offers above asking price.



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*(Continued on Page 3)*

# IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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Ambulance .....	911
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Sheriff – Non-Emergency .....	512-974-0845
Fire Department Administration .....	512-539-3400
Travis County Animal Control.....	512-972-6060

## SCHOOLS

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Hill Country Middle School .....	512-732-9220
Valley View Elementary.....	512-732-9140
Forest Trail Elementary.....	512-732-9160
Eanes Elementary.....	512-732-9100
Cedar Creek Elementary .....	512-732-9120
Bridge Point Elementary .....	512-732-9200
Barton Creek Elementary .....	512-732-9100

## UTILITIES

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Crossroads Utility Service 24 Hour Number....	512-246-1400
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Austin Energy .....	512-322-9100
Texas Gas Service	
Custom Service.....	1-800-700-2443
Emergencies.....	512-370-8609
Call Before You Dig.....	512-472-2822
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Billing.....	1-800-858-7928
Time Warner Cable	
Customer Service.....	512-485-5555
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Austin/Travis County Hazardous Waste .....	512-974-4343

## OTHER NUMBERS

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Municipal Court .....	512-327-1863
Property Tax .....	512-854-9473
Appraisal District .....	512-834-9317
Chamber of Commerce.....	512-306-0023
City of West Lake Hills .....	www.westlakehills.org

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# ARTICLE INFO

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

To submit an article for the West Lake Hills Echo please email it to [westlakehills@peelinc.com](mailto:westlakehills@peelinc.com). The deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the issue.



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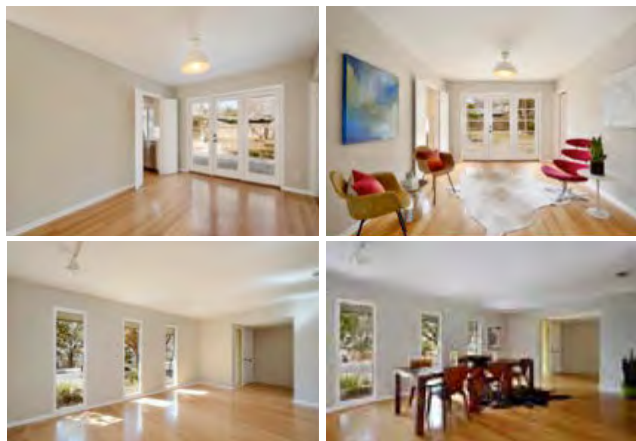
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(Continued from Cover)



Northwest Hills Residence (\$700k price point): The sellers of this home were relocating, leaving a vacant home. The home felt very cold and empty. It was a larger than average home in a very nice, established neighborhood. It was mostly in original condition but perfectly livable. We discussed the option to stage the home prior to listing it in MLS with the sellers, who opted to wait and test the market. After two weeks of showings and no offers, we revisited staging and price point options at which point the sellers agreed to have us coordinate the staging of the property. (Staging the property was a far less expensive option than a price reduction, but more importantly, it changed the entire feel inside the home.) The first day after staging resulted in an executed contract.

A nicely staged home creates a vision or roadmap for the new owners and allows their emotions to guide their decisions in the place of reason. When emotions are involved, sellers net more at the closing table. Contact me if you are considering updating or selling a home and have questions about the value-add of updates. I'd be happy to give you feedback. One thing is certain, emotion most always wins over logic...and a "home" always sells better than a "house".

Cheers

Claudia Scott and Sean Kubicek



## HOPE4MINDS EXPANDS ITS MISSION

### TO SUPPORT MORE TEXAS CHILDREN WITH SEVERE BRAIN INJURIES

Austin, Texas — April 8, 2015 – Less than four years after it was founded, a Southwest Austin nonprofit organization has decided that it's got more than enough hope to go around.

That's the thinking behind a new mission and a name change for the Southwest Austin nonprofit organization known as HOPE4JD, which was founded in 2011 to support families whose children suffered brain injuries due to nonfatal drownings. As of April, the organization will be known as Hope4Minds whose mission is to foster hope and enrich the lives of children with an acquired brain injury by providing support and education.

With a new name and more families to serve, Hope4Minds also will expand its community outreach services to include parent support groups and concussion baseline screenings, in addition to the services it already offers such as CPR/First Aid training and family care packages.

"Our board of directors and supporters see the opportunity to do more and help more Texas families," says Ronda Johnson, executive director, Hope4Minds. "Our community rose to the challenge over the last few years, helping us make a difference in the lives of families in Austin, San Antonio and Dallas. Our work has showed us the needs of more children who are living with an acquired brain injury and whose families need our support."

According to the Texas Brain Injury Alliance, fewer than 1 in 20 children with acquired brain injury will get the rehabilitation they need for recovery. Injury may occur during events such as non-fatal drownings, choking, car accidents, sports and recreational activities, falls, lightning strikes and even abuse.

Since 2012, the organization has provided more than \$211,248 in services to families, 841 hours of recovery therapy services, nearly 100 family care packages to Texas hospitals and rehab centers, and free CPR training for 216 adults.



## COLIN'S HOPE

by Dorian de Wind

When I was six or seven years old, I witnessed the ocean drowning of a dear aunt. Although too young for the full scope of the tragedy to sink in, the thoughts and the images of that event have remained with me for almost 70 years.

No wonder that, when our young grandson started splashing in our swimming pool a dozen or so years ago, the thought of such an unfathomable occurrence never left our mind. We took every precaution possible, as I am sure the vast majority of parents, grandparents, relatives, caretakers and friends of so many young children do when they let their young ones swim in pools, lakes, rivers, water parks and more.

But the unimaginable does occur -- more often than we think.

Now that another swimming season approaches it may be the time to give "the unimaginable" some thought because if statistics tell the truth, drowning is all too imaginable.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention publishes the following grim statistic: From 1999 through 2010, a total of 46,419 deaths from unintentional drowning (including boating) occurred in the United States, an average of 3,868 deaths per year. That is an average of more than 10 drowning deaths each and every day of the year.

But what is even more disturbing, unintentional drowning has become the leading cause of death from unintentional injury among children aged 1-4 years. It replaces deaths resulting from motor vehicle accidents as the leading cause of death from unintentional injury for boys aged 1-4 years. These child-drowning deaths occurred most often in a bathtub for children under one year of age and, in a swimming pool, for children aged 1-4 years. The latter location -- swimming pools -- accounts for more than 50% of all unintentional drowning deaths in that age group, according to the CDC.

At this point, the reader may ask, why the focus on younger children and swimming pools? While, of course, every drowning is an immeasurable tragedy, the loss of a toddler under such horrific circumstances in one's neighborhood pool, is bound to leave an indelible impression. That is what happened on a beautiful June day almost seven years ago at a nearby swimming pool. To be precise, on June 13, 2008, Colin Holst, a proud and happy four-and-a-half-year-old little boy went to "the big" pool -- a swimming pool close to Circle C Ranch -- just one day after graduating from swimming

lessons and receiving his medal. Little Colin, age 4, enjoying a family weekend by the water. Colin was having a ball playing in the fountains and sprinklers with his friends, all moving around the pool together in a clump, playing and splashing and ducking in and out of the water.

Suddenly, in an instant, Colin wasn't with them. Time stood still as all eyes swept the pool looking for him, and then, only moments later, Colin was pulled from the shallow water unconscious and not breathing. Efforts to revive him at the pool were unsuccessful. Colin, the baby boy born "with a mop of dark hair that looked just like his mother," died at the hospital the next day, having never opened his eyes again after his swim.

Out of this unimaginable tragedy, sprang a glimmer of hope -- even of good. Grief-stricken by their loss and shocked to learn the cruel toll drowning takes on children of Colin's age, Colin's family founded an organization dedicated to preventing such tragedies from befalling other families: Colin's Hope. Simply, "Colin's Hope envisions a world where children do not drown. Colin's Hope raises water safety awareness to prevent children from drowning."

As our weather warms up, as families once again head for our pools, lakes and beaches, please take time to familiarize yourself with water safety rules -- they might make the difference between a happy summer and the unimaginable. An excellent place to do such is [ColinsHope.org](http://ColinsHope.org). At Colin's Hope, learn about this wonderful organization's many water safety awareness programs, events, campaigns and resources. They all have one vision in mind: "A world where children do not drown. While at Colin's Hope, take a look at their on-line Water Safety Resources Hub," take the "Water Safety Quiz" and please consider volunteering for one of their many activities and programs and making a contribution so that the "glimmer of hope" may become a bright light -- a reality, as much as possible -- for our children and grandchildren.

Acknowledgement: Some of the information and wording in this article comes -- with permission -- from "Colin's Story," at Colin's Hope. Colin's photo and lead image, courtesy Colin's Hope.

Colin's Hope has a mission to raise water safety awareness to prevent children from drowning. They envision a world where children do not drown. To learn more, please visit [www.colinshope.org](http://www.colinshope.org)







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**Lance Loveless, DDS  
General Dentist**

**FAGD (Fellow Academy of General Dentistry)  
LVIF (Las Vegas Institute Fellow)**

## *Featured Smile Makeover of the Month*

*by Dr. Lance Loveless*



*Before*



*After*



*Before*



*After*



*Before*



*After*

\*Actual patient of Dr. Loveless

Being a General Dentist, I have many tools in my "tool box". Having training and experience in multiple areas of dentistry gives me the unique ability to combine different aspects of Dentistry to accomplish my patients' smile makeovers. Some of the more common "tools" we use include: Invisalign, whitening, laser gum lift, implants, crowns, bridges, and veneers. Some of our more challenging makeovers have included all of the above; most can be done in office so that we can limit the need to go all over town seeing multiple doctors. For example, this patient had a tooth size discrepancy, narrow upper arch, yellow misshaped teeth and an uneven gumline. He didn't know exactly what he wanted, just the fact that he wanted a better looking smile. I had to evaluate everything and come up with a plan to address all his issues. His plan included Invisalign, whitening, laser gum lift and all porcelain restorations. Without the ability to combine all those "tools" and techniques, we would not have been able to achieve the fantastic results that we did!

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# TENNIS TIPS

By USPTA/PTR Master Professional  
**Fernando Velasco**



**Caption 1**



**Caption 2**



**Caption 3**

## “Tennis for Children 9-10 years old and under - Orange Ball”

This series of Tennis Tips are focused on how to involve children of all ages to learn to play tennis and offer tips to the parents on how to help at home. In the last issue I offered advice for children 8 years old and under. This issue, will address children 9 and 10 years old and under playing with the orange low bouncing ball.

**Caption 1: Tennis Racket and balls:** The children should be using rackets ranging in length from 23” to 25” long and the orange ball. These short, lighter rackets and lower-bouncing balls will make it easier for the child to control the swing and the point of contact. The racket to use will depend on the height of the child and the age. Balls will bounce from 41” to 47”, which is within the comfort zone for most children of that age.

**Caption 2: Tennis Court:** Most tennis facilities have added lines to measure 60’ x 21’ for singles and 60’ x 27’ for doubles within the confines of a regular tennis court. If lines have been added, they will be painted with a darker color than the tennis court. If lines are not painted, Clubs will use rope and/or starter tennis court lines on the courts.

**Caption 3: Join a Group:** Tennis, like other sports, is learned

better in a group. Children like to imitate other children and learn from their successful hits and also avoid their missed shots. I believe in allowing them to “shadow” the person executing the shot, so they become used to the swing and timing of the point of contact.

Children at this age are already “rallying back and forth” and are given tips on how to hit volleys (ball hit on the fly), and also serve underhand or overhead. The USTA provides tournaments and leagues for children 10 and under using the orange ball and 60’ courts. They normally play 4 game sets and are encouraged to play round robins and/or consolation rounds.

Tips to parents:

- Have child tap the orange ball up and down on the ground in a safe area, like a garage.
- Do the same with ball being hit on the fly without bouncing.
- Encourage them to hit in a safe area with them dropping the ball and hitting it against a wall or a garage door. Always be there to supervise.

*Look in the next Newsletter for: “Tips for children 9-10 years old – Green Ball”. For more information about our programs and club information, you can visit us at [www.greyyrocktennis.com](http://www.greyyrocktennis.com) or call us at 512-301-8685.*





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## MOSQUITOES



Mosquitoes can be very irritating and disrupt outdoor activities. They also are able to transmit various diseases to humans and animals. Mosquitoes are known to transmit heartworm in dogs and cats, and they can spread encephalitis (including West Nile Virus), Chikungunya, dengue, yellow fever, malaria and filariasis among humans.

Most female mosquitoes require a blood meal for egg production whereas males feed on nectar and do not bite. Eggs can be laid on the surface of water or in dry locations that are occasionally flooded by water. Some eggs are able to remain dormant under dry conditions for several months. Eggs hatch into larvae, or wigglers. Mosquito larvae live in water and feed on organic debris or microscopic plants and animals. Larvae molt into pupae which do not feed. Mosquito pupae spend the majority of their time at the surface of the water, only moving when disturbed.

Female mosquito.

Many things can help to reduce mosquito problems

*Continued on Page 9*

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Continued from Page 8

around the home. Eliminate all sources of standing water. Containers such as watering cans, buckets and bottles can turn into mosquito breeding grounds. Water should be drained from birdbaths, gutters, flowerpots and pet dishes at least once a week. Children's wading pools should be emptied of water at least once a week and stored so they cannot collect water when not in use. Tree holes should be filled in with sand or mortar, or drained after each rain. Leaky faucets and pipes located outside should be repaired.

Areas that cannot be drained, such as ponds or large rain collection systems, can be stocked with mosquito fish that eat mosquito larvae. Dunks can also be used in these areas. Dunks are a small, donut-shaped product that contains *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *israeliensis*. The donut disrupts the life cycle of the mosquito and

is non-toxic to humans, amphibians and fish.

Avoiding peak hours when mosquitoes are active is probably the best method to avoid being bitten. When outside, wear loose-fitting, light colored clothing with long sleeves & long pants. Repellants containing active ingredients such as DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus can be effective to keep mosquitoes from biting when evening activities cannot be rescheduled. Other products such as citronella candles will also repel mosquitoes, but work best in enclosed areas.

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## NOBODY IS DROWNPROOF

## WATCH & KEEP KIDS IN ARM'S REACH



### THESE TIPS CAN SAVE LIVES



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LEARN  
TO SWIM



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LIFE JACKETS



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AROUND WATER



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CHECK WATER  
SOURCES FIRST



STAY  
AWAY



PRACTICE DRAIN  
SAFETY



BE SAFER IN  
OPEN WATER



LEARN  
CPR

LEARN MORE: [www.colinshope.org/RESOURCES](http://www.colinshope.org/RESOURCES)

TAKE the Water Guardian Pledge

I  
  
WILL

Constantly watch children around water.  
**NOT** become distracted.

Learn CPR and the signs of drowning.

Be **ON DUTY** until relieved by another adult.

## DROWNING IS PREVENTABLE

## KEEP AUSTIN WILD

*by Jim and Lynne Weber*

# NATUREWATCH

As Austin and surrounding areas grow and expand, encounters with urban wildlife become increasingly frequent, especially during the spring and summer breeding seasons.

Wild animals often make their homes in or around our homes, and they can be unwelcome and even destructive. Be aware that trapping is not always the answer, and should only be used as a last resort. Unless the source of the problem is eliminated (uncapped chimneys, holes in decks or attics, pet food left outside), another animal will likely move into the same spot. Additionally, during spring and summer, you may trap a mother whose babies will be left orphaned if she is removed.

Trapping is also quite stressful for animals, and they often injure themselves when trying to escape. They can be exposed to the elements and left trapped for an unknown number of hours or days, without food or water. If they are relocated, they may have trouble finding food, water, or shelter, as they will be disoriented in their new environment. They can also be considered intruders by the resident animal population, and be driven away or attacked, with a very uncertain outcome.

To avoid all of these situations, there are humane solutions to prevent common wildlife problems before they occur. These include installing L-shaped mesh barriers under decks, sheds, and around gardens, adding bungee cords to trash can lids or keeping the cans inside the garage until collection day, capping the top of the chimney, installing mesh covered attic vents, taking pet food indoors overnight, and adding squirrel-proof baffles to bird feeders.

If you do run across wildlife babies, remember that they cannot digest cow's milk properly, so they should be brought to Wildlife Rescue as soon as possible. Fawns are often left alone and curled up in the grass for up to 10-12 hours while their mothers forage, so if their mouth is warm, bottom is clean, and they are not being overrun by fire ants, leave them alone. Young feathered birds are frequently found on the ground and belong there, as it is natural for them to fledge the nest and learn to fly, feed, and avoid predators, all under the watchful eyes of their parents, who are likely nearby. Unfeathered baby birds can be safely united with

their parents by creating a makeshift nest, nailing a small plastic bowl as high as you can reach onto a tree, first poking a few small drain holes in the bottom, adding some dry grass or leaves, and placing the nestlings in it. Within a few hours, the parents should return to resume feeding them.

Recently, the National Wildlife Federation ranked America's largest cities based on three criteria for wildlife: percentage of parkland, citizen action to create wildlife habitat, and school adoption of outdoor learning in wildlife gardens. Austin, Texas was named as "the clear-cut (#1) choice as America's best city for wildlife, boasting the most Certified Wildlife Habitats (2,154),

most certified Wildlife Habitats per capita, and most Schoolyard Habitats (67). Famous for its Congress Avenue Bridge that's home to 1.5 million bats, the City of Austin is certified as a Community Wildlife Habitat. Its residents not only want to Keep Austin Weird – they're the best in America at keeping their city wild."

However, as more and more of our landscape is bulldozed and developed, we leave less and less for the native animals that call it home. The least we can do is be

cognizant of these changes, prevent conflicts when possible, and learn to treat our native wildlife as humanely as possible!

**HUMANE RESOURCES** for wildlife conflicts:

Austin Wildlife Rescue: 512-472-9453 or [www.austinwildliferescue.org](http://www.austinwildliferescue.org)

Austin Area Wildlife Rehabilitation: 512-709-6335 or [www.austinareawildlifer rehab.org](http://www.austinareawildlifer rehab.org)

Tips & Advice: [www.humanesociety.org/wildneighbors](http://www.humanesociety.org/wildneighbors)

State Laws: [www.tpwd.texas.gov](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov)

Please also note that Austin Wildlife Rescue benefits from the Randall's Good Neighbor Program. Present your Remarkable Card with the Wildlife Rescue Organization Number (#2780) and a percentage of your purchase will be donated back to this wonderful non-profit organization!

*Send your nature-related questions to [naturewatch@austin.rr.com](mailto:naturewatch@austin.rr.com) and we'll do our best to answer them. Check out our blog at [naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com](http://naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com) if you enjoy reading these articles!*





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*Austin Business Journal Top 25 Producing Agent 2013, 2014, 2015*

*Times Weekly Five Star Agent 2013, 2014, 2015*

*Austin's Platinum Top 50 Award Winner 2015*

