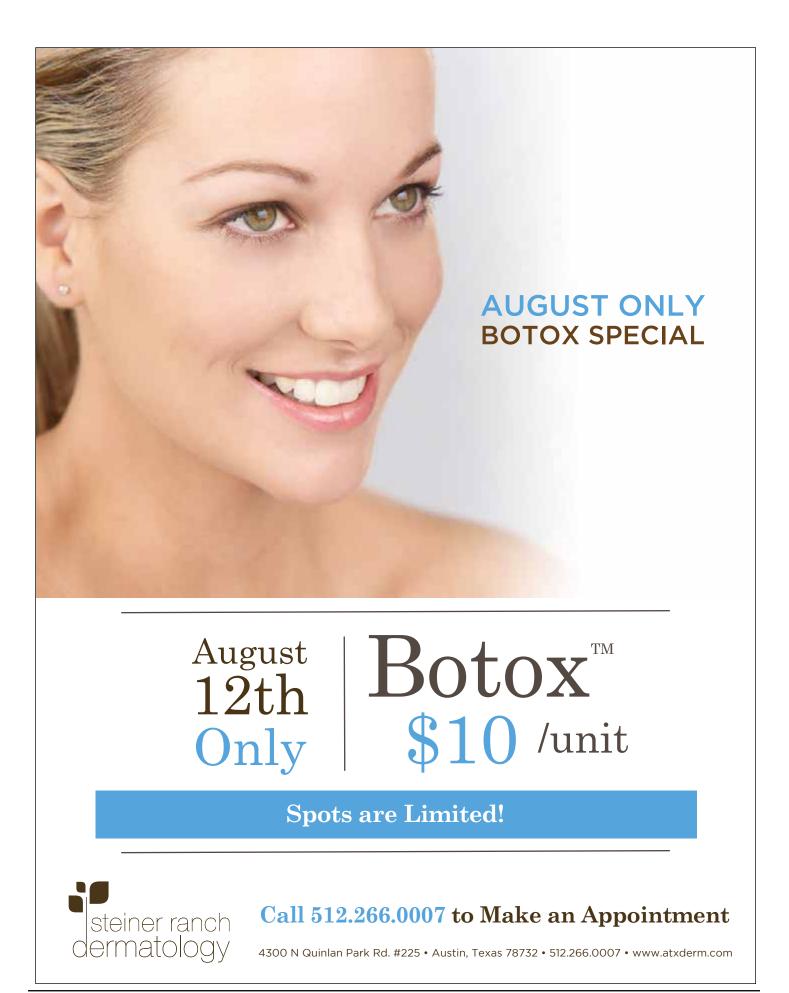
# THE RIVER REVIEW

August 2015

Volume 9, Issue 8

NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF RIVER PLACE



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### **ARTICLE INFO**

The River Review is mailed monthly to all River Place 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 River Review please email it to *riverreview@peelinc.com*. The deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the issue.



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Four Points Middle School	512-570-3700
River Place Elementary	512-570-6900

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HILL COUNTRY Education Foundation

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Book Swap

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# End-of-summer book challenge

Sponsored by the Hill Country Education Foundation and Cups & Cones

Drawing for Barnes & Noble Gift Cards Hill Country Education Foundation (HCEF) and Cups & Cones are sponsoring an Endof-Summer Book Challenge for area students. Students who read six (6) books and turn in a completed reading log by Saturday, August 15, can receive a snow cone. They can also enter their name in a drawing to win one (1) of (6) Barnes & Noble \$25 gift cards.

To participate, bring a gently used book to the Four Points Book Swap at Cups & Cones and exchange the book for another one to read in the growing Book Swap Library. Be sure to pick up a reading log at the same time! Return the completed form no later than Saturday, August 15. The drawing will take place on Monday, August 17, just in time for some last minute reading before school starts on August 24!

Cups & Cones and HCEF launched the Four Points Book Swap during the summer of 2014. Since then, this little library has filled three bookcases and the donations just keep coming in! The range of books includes preschool board books, picture books, chapter books and adult fiction and non-fiction.

"We are excited how the Book Swap has grown over the past year," said Michelle Beck, HCEF's executive director. "As we continue to focus on library options in our community, the Book Swap gives us a nice alternative. We are grateful to Cups & Cones for teaming up with us."



Do you take great photos? Would you like to see your photo published? We are looking for great cover photos for upcoming issues of the River Review. All photos submitted must represent River Place or the surround area. Our deadine for submittals is always the 9th of the month prior to the issue. All photos should be submitted electronically by the deadline date in high resolution (300 dpi) to riverreview@peelinc.com. Portrait (vertical) photos work best.

To view other photos submitted please visit www.PEELinc. com/RiverPlace, and view any of the past newsletters.

By submitting your photo you agree to allow your photo to be published in future issues of the River Review or other Peel, Inc. publications.

If your business is interested in sponsoring the cover call 512-263-9181 to find out how to be featured on the cover of the River Review.







he Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

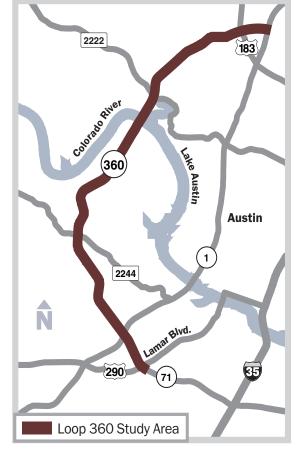
recently launched a new study to identify short- and long-term transportation improvements along Loop 360 from US 290/SH 71 to North MoPac.

TxDOT wants to know your thoughts, concerns, and ideas for the future of Loop 360.

### Visit www.Loop360Study.com to:

- Take a survey on problems, potential solutions, and considerations for future planning on Loop 360.
- Submit a comment.
- Request a meeting with the Loop 360 study team.
- Sign up for the mailing list.









School starts in August, so now is the time for drivers to pay closer attention to the school zones in the neighborhood. We want to remind you that the speed limit in a school zone is 20mph and traffic fines double!

#### Other changes to be aware of include;

- Children behaving unpredictably
- School Bus Stops
- Crossing Guards please obey the guards! Remember, they are there for the safety of you and your children
- New areas of traffic congestion
- Be prepared for delays
- Use of cell phones in schools zones is prohibited!

Please give yourself extra time in the mornings and midafternoons and remember if you are traveling in a school zone to slow down.

### Time To Slow Down



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# **Viper Swim Camp**

(Boys & Girls) Register at www.leanderisd.org Contact – Kimberly Davies Kimberly.davies@leanderisd.org

The Vandegrift Swim Team 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 to attend. This camp will take swimmers through all strokes 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!

Where - Bella Mar in Steiner Ranch Requirements - Bring water, a towel, swimsuit, goggles and a cap. Swim equipment will be provided

\$60

July 20th – 23rd from 8am – 10am Grades: 6th – 9th Grade



### **PET PLACE** DIY TREATS FOR OUR FELINE FRIENDS

#### TUNA CATNIP KITTY TREATS

(Makes about 2 dozen)

- 1 (5 oz.) can tuna, no salt added packed in water, drained
- 1 cup oat flour\* 1 large egg
- 1 heaping Tablespoon dried catnip 1 Tbsp olive oil
- Place a rack in the upper third of the oven and preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper and set aside.
- In the bowl of a food processor fitted with a blade attachment, combine all ingredients. Blend until mixture is smooth. It will be thick, but pliable and not terribly sticky.
- Roll dough into half teaspoon balls and place on prepared cookie sheet. Use a skewer to press an X-shape into each cookie ball.
- Bake cookies 10 to 12 minutes, until they are dried on top and slightly browned. Allow to cool completely.
- Place treats in an airtight container and store in refrigerator for up to seven days.

\*Note: It's easy to make your own oat flour. Simply grind oldfashioned oats in a spice grinder (or a super clean coffee grinder) until it is transformed into a light powder.

#### **CHEWY CAT TREATS**

(Makes about 50 small treats)

 $1 \ (4 \ \text{oz.})$  jar of chicken and brown rice baby food (or something meaty, can use wet cat food)

- 1 large egg 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 2 Tablespoon water <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup parsley, coarsely chopped
- 1 cup brown rice flour <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup cooked white (or brown) rice
- 1. Prepare same as #1 above (Tuna Catnip Kitty Treats).

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together egg, baby food (or wet cat food), parsley, olive

oil and water. Add brown rice flour and cooked rice. Stir to incorporate. Mixture will be thick but spreadable.

- Spread mixture onto prepared baking sheet, creating a rectangle that is about 1/3 inch thick. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes.
- Remove from the oven. Let rest until cool enough to handle, then slice the soft dough into bite-size pieces. Return pieces to the oven to bake for 8 more mins.
- Remove from the oven. Allow to cool completely. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.



TEXAS A&M

GRILIFE

### **TAWNY CRAZY ANTS**

The Tawny crazy ant, formerly known as the Rasberry crazy ant, was originally found in Harris County in 2002. It is currently confirmed in 27 Texas counties.

Tawny crazy ants have a cyclical population level throughout the year with populations peaking in late summer, decreasing in the fall and then beginning to build again in the spring. Tawny crazy ants are capable of biting, but do NOT sting like fire ants. They are mostly nuisance pests, but can reach extraordinary population levels (in the millions) and can become a problem when getting into electrical equipment. Tawny crazy ants do not have nests or mounds like fire ants; they tend to nest under things- rocks, landscape timbers, flowerpots, etc.

For more information on this particular ant species go to http:// urbanentomology.tamu.edu/ants/rasberry.html

Treatment Options

Removing harborage areas- fallen limbs, rocks, leaf litter, etc. These ants will nest under pretty much anything on the ground, so you may want to remove anything that is not necessary.

Alter moisture conditions (crazy ants prefer moist, humid conditions)- reduce watering, repair any leaks, improve drainage

Eliminate honeydew producers from area. Crazy ants tend honeydew producers such as aphids, whiteflies, hoppers, mealybugs and scale insects.

Use pesticide sprays to treat infested areas- under rocks, along landscape edging, etc. Pesticide sprays can also be used to create a barrier around the outside of the home. Piles of dead ants may build up in treated areas, so they must be removed to keep the barrier maintained.

Hire a pest management professional (PMP). PMPs have access to pesticides that are unavailable to homeowners and they also have experience dealing with pest problems regularly.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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### Thoughts on moving to a Senior Residence

Many adults are finding themselves assisting aging parents, and facing questions every day particularly as to what will happen when things get too difficult for a loved one to live independently at home.

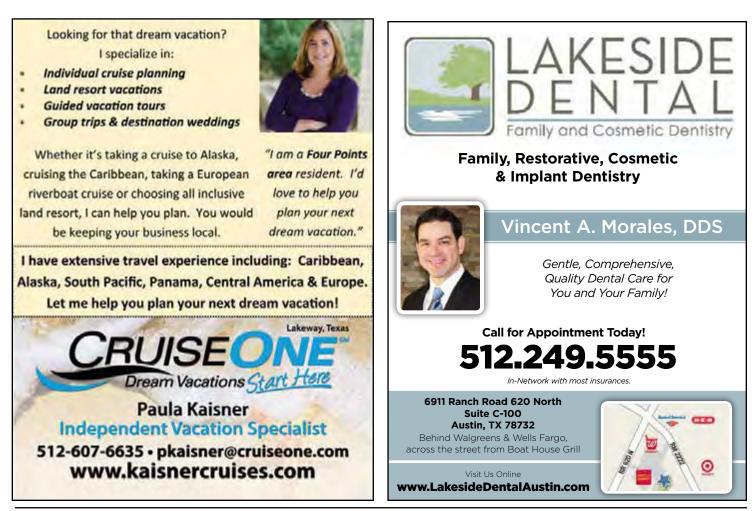
For most seniors the idea of entering a facility is not a welcome pastime, perhaps hoping to be able to live independently for their entire lives. There are many seniors who do manage to live successfully long term in their own homes, but the odds are that this will become too difficult at some point. It is projected that 3.9 million people will be in nursing homes at some time in their lives and an estimated twice that number in a type of senior residence. Overall it's good to have a plan or at least an outline for every eventuality, and starting the conversation early to encourage everyone to consider all possibilities. It's so much better that our loved ones be involved with the decision process from the beginning. If not, it's probable that should an event happen that makes independent living impossible, choices will have to be made quickly, leaving the person little or no choice as to where they will live.

There are many facilities available now with varying levels of independence and care. Location is a premium factor to consider,

whether it be near relatives, friends, children, or maybe not! The financial piece is a key component with most residences now costing upwards of \$3,500 a month with an expected inflation rate of 3% per year. It's important to explore possible benefits such as the Veterans Aid and Attendance award and how these will contribute to the overall cost.

Online searches and senior magazines are a good way to narrow down the search and visits can be arranged to the selected residences. Initially it's important to get a feel of how it would be to live there. For instance how is the décor and friendliness of the staff? Residences have a number of ongoing activities and will invite future residents to participate which helps to make connections. Some residences also have medical services onsite such as physical therapy which are open to outside seniors. Obtaining services at a residence is a great way to get acclimated to the surroundings.

Starting the planning process early is a good way to get options in place and avoid the stress and uncertainty as to what may happen in the future. The plan may not be needed, but at least it's there just in case.



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### TRAVELING TARANTULAS NATUREWATCH

#### by Jim and Lynne Weber

Relatively common throughout Texas, the Tarantula (Aphonopelma sp.) is Texas' heaviest and largest spider. Typically,

the head and legs are dark brown, and the abdomen is brownish-black. Coloration varies between individuals as well as between the 14 different species found in Texas. Identification of individual species is difficult, however, and is often performed only on mature males under a microscope.

Tarantulas are typically found in grasslands and semi-open areas, and use burrows, natural cavities under stones or fallen logs, spaces under loose tree bark, and

even old rodent holes as shelters. They are also capable of digging their own burrows, and often line them with webbing, placing a few strands across the front to help detect passing prey. Laying several hundred eggs in a hammock-like web constructed inside

the burrow, females will guard them until they hatch. Females have lived in captivity for over 25 years, while males rarely live over two or three months after reaching maturity.

Like many animals, tarantulas molt their exoskeletons several times as they grow. The skin on the hard upper shell and abdomen splits, and the tarantula begins the process of squeezing through

the opening. Most of the time, tarantulas molt while positioned on their backs, twitching, stretching, and kicking until the entire exoskeleton has been cast off. After they have wriggled free of their old skin, this discarded exoskeleton is a perfect replica of the spider, minus its head and fangs.

Other insects such as crickets, beetles, grasshoppers, cicadas, and caterpillars form the basic diet of the tarantula. They inject their prey with a poison when they bite, which liquefies the prey's insides, making it easier to ingest. While they can climb, they are usually restricted to the ground, where the majority of their prey is found. The hairiness and large size of tarantulas often evokes concern, but the bites of Texas species are not serious to humans. Tarantulas maneuver quickly to face whatever disturbs them, often raising up on their hind legs and stretching out their front legs in a threatening posture. They have also been observed rapidly brushing the top of their abdomen with their hind legs to dislodge hairs that can be used to irritate the attacker's eyes or skin.



Tarantula

For a few weeks late in the summer or early fall, one of the most spectacular spider events occurs in Texas. Not well understood, this phenomenon is often called a migration, but it may be related more to mating rather

but it may be related more to mating rather than seasonally motivated movement. Males actively wander to seek out females, and can travel 50 miles in search of a mate. Populations seem to follow a boom and bust cycle, depending on weather patterns and the availability of food, but a good year can be a sight to behold if summer rains have been plentiful. While the males are out searching, females wait in their burrows for

a suitor to appear. Larger and more robust, the female does not always accept any male that comes along, and will kill and eat males that are deemed unsuitable.

As formidable as they may seem, tarantulas are not without their

own enemies. In fact, in late spring and early summer they are routinely hunted by female Tarantula Hawks as food for their larvae. Belonging to a group of spider wasps in the genera Pepis and Hemipepsis, tarantula hawks are large, 2-inch long wasps with iridescent blue-black bodies and bright, rust-colored wings. This vivid color combination is a form of aposematism or warning coloration, a

Tarantula Hawk

type of advertising signal to both predator and prey that these species are potentially harmful. These wasps have the ability to deliver a powerful sting, and their long legs have hooked claws for grappling their victims.

Flying low over the ground, the female tarantula hawk will find a tarantula and sting it, which paralyzes the spider but does not kill it. She then drags the inert tarantula into her burrow or transports it to a specially prepared nest, where she lays a single egg on the spider's abdomen, then seals the opening to the burrow as she leaves. When the wasp larva hatches, it creates a small hole and enters the spider's abdomen, where it feeds voraciously, avoiding vital organs to keep the spider alive as long as possible. After several weeks the spider dies, the larva pupates, and then it emerges from the spider's abdomen to continue its lifecycle.

Send your nature-related questions to naturewatch@austin.rr.com and we'll do our best to answer them. Check out our blog at naturewatchaustin. blogspot.com if you enjoy reading these articles!



### "Tennis for Children 11 years and older – Yellow Ball"

This series of Tennis Tips is focused on how to involve children of all ages learning to play tennis and offering tips to the parents on how to assist at home. In the last issue I offered advice for children 9-10 years old and under playing with the softer green ball on a 78' foot court. This issue, will focus on children 11 years and older playing with the yellow ball on a 78' foot regular size court.

The children should be using rackets ranging in length from 25" to 27" long. The size of the racket will depend on how tall and strong the players are. The grip size should now range from 4" to  $4 \frac{1}{2}$ ", again depending on the size of their hands.

Caption 1: Tennis Court: For those players ready to cover the regular size court, they will now be playing on a 78" x 36' tennis court. Lines are now painted regular white making it much easier to see the ball landing, especially while the opponents are serving. Players need to be physically ready to cover the entire court.

Caption 2: Groups: The key to children learning how to play the game of tennis, is to assemble them in group lessons. Most clubs offer them according to age level and ability. The tennis professional

will separate them so each player is comfortable in their respective group. A good ratio is 6 players to 1 pro, and the range going from beginner to advance.

Tennis camps are also an excellent way to give them a concentrated learning experience. The students usually spend two hours working on fundamental strokes and also playing games. At the end of the week, these players should be able to start playing on their own and/or with the help of their parents. Of course, if additional help is needed, they may consider taking tennis lessons from a certified tennis professional.

Children at this age are already playing points and are given tips on how to hit groundstrokes, volleys and serves with control. The USTA provides tournaments and leagues for children 12, 14, 16 and 18 and under using the yellow ball. Matches are normally 8 game pro-sets and they are encouraged to play round robins and/ or consolation rounds.

Look in the next Newsletter for: "Tips for Adult Beginner Lessons – The Forehand". For more information about our programs and club information, you can visit us at www.greyrocktennis.com or call us at 512-301-8685.



### Welcoming the World to our Town

Throughout the month of August, neighbors in our area will be welcoming a new member into their families. They have chosen to open their hearts and their homes to an International Exchange Student. These courageous, dedicated and talented high school students leave their countries and their homes to fulfill one of their lifelong dreams of spending a year as an American teenager.

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- Change the course of a student's life Increase cultural awareness in your community
- Make a Difference

If your family enjoys exploring new cultures and nurturing youth, please contact us to request more information about this amazing opportunity to share your life with a special young person and to learn how you can make a difference. The application process for the 2016/2017 school year will start in October – it is recommended to start now as available schools spots fill up early.

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Ayusa is a non-profit organization founded in 1981 to promote global learning and leadership through foreign exchange, study abroad, and leadership programs for high school students from the U.S. and around the world.

For more information about hosting a high school foreign exchange student, please contact your local representative Vicki Odom at 832.455.7881 or vodom@ayusa.org or Ayusa at 1.888.552.9872 or by visiting the website at www. ayusa.org.



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Please remember to pick up after your pets and "scoop the poop"

### David R. Nelson, D.D.S Specialist in Orthodontics

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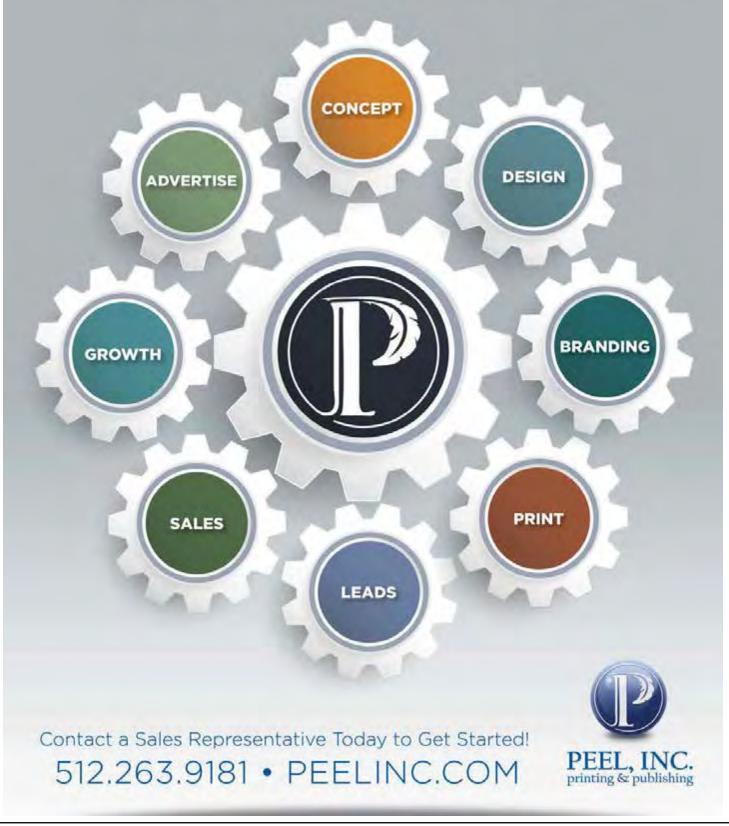
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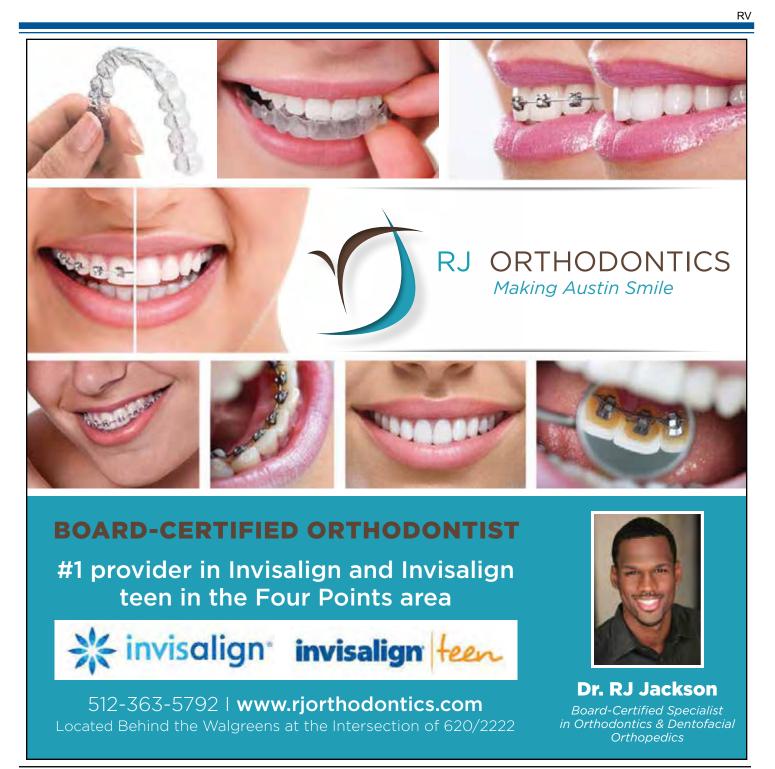
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