

West Lake Hills ECHO

Volume 4, Issue 9

September 2015

THE WEST LAKE HILLS ECHO

*A Newsletter
for the Residents of
West Lake Hills*

The West Lake Hills Echo is a monthly newsletter mailed to all West Lake Hills residents. Each newsletter is filled with valuable information about the community, local area activities, school information, and more.

If you are involved with a school group, play group, scouts, sports team, social group, etc., and would like to submit an article for the newsletter, you can do so online at www.PEELinc.com. Personal news (announcements, accolades/honors/celebrations, etc.) are also welcome as long as they are from area residents.

GO GREEN! Subscribe via Peelinc.com to have an email sent to you with a link to a PDF of the newsletter, or have an email sent to you instead of having a newsletter mailed to you!

Items Wanted

for Charity Garage & Estate Sale

The unloved, outgrown items in your house and garage can help children have a better life.

The Settlement Home for Children, an Austin nonprofit that has been helping individuals with histories of severe trauma, abuse or neglect for 99 years, is ramping up efforts for the 40th Annual Charity Garage & Estate Sale. We are looking for new or gently used items to sell at our charity sale. We accept furniture, art, rugs, jewelry, sporting goods, home decor, holiday decorations and more. Donations can be dropped off at the warehouse at 1600 Payton Gin Road on Mondays from 9 a.m. to noon or contact the free Pickup Hotline at 512-448-5302.

The Settlement Home's famous Preview Party is Thursday, November 5 at Palmer Events Center. Tickets are on sale at www.settlementhome.org. General sale days are Friday, November 6 – Sunday, November 8. All proceeds benefit The Settlement Home. This year's event chairs are Nancy Wade, Debbie Simons and Betty Jo Harris.



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	911
Fire.....	911
Ambulance.....	911
Police Department	512-327-1195
Sheriff – Non-Emergency.....	512-974-0845
Fire Department Administration	512-539-3400
Travis County Animal Control.....	512-972-6060

SCHOOLS

Eanes ISD	512-732-9000
Westlake High School.....	512-732-9280
Ninth Grade Center	512-732-9260
West Ridge Middle School	512-732-9240
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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Wastewater	
Crossroads Utility Service 24 Hour Number....	512-246-1400
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Austin Energy	512-322-9100
Texas Gas Service	
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Customer Service.....	512-485-5555
Repairs.....	512-485-5080
Austin/Travis County Hazardous Waste	512-974-4343

OTHER NUMBERS

City Administration	512-327-3628
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

NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

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ADVERTISING INFO

Please support the advertisers that make the West Lake Hills Echo possible. If you are interested in advertising, please contact our sales office at 512-263-9181 or advertising@peelinc.com. The advertising deadline is the 8th of the month prior to the issue.

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. The deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the issue.

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TOMATOES

Love tomatoes? We're lucky here in Texas because in late summer we get a chance to grow tomatoes again. We can grow them first in the spring and plant again in late August and early September to get tomatoes until Old Man Frost comes to visit.

Tomatoes planted now should be planted deeply and kept well mulched and watered. They can even tolerate a little shade from that scorching afternoon sun. Tomatoes do love the heat.

Fall tomato gardeners are known to pull up entire plants full of tomatoes when a frost does come in the fall. They move 'em into the garage or screened in porch and pick tomatoes as they ripen. A tip of Patsy Bescho, Smith County Master Gardener when frost is threatening, is to pick all of the immature tomatoes and place them in a newspaper lined and covered box in a cool place. She advises to check on these tomatoes daily. A lucky gardener will have fresh tomatoes until late December.

If you look forward to your own fresh tomatoes you need to follow some guidelines: Plant about 2 feet apart and bury the plant stem, leaving only the top 3-4 true leaves above the ground to promote greater root structure. You can give your little plants extra energy by using 1 pint of diluted fish emulsion occasionally on each plant.

Your tomatoes need support, just like your best friend does. Stake your tomato plant with a stick and string or a strong metal circle cage of fence material. When your tomato plants are growing vertically they will give your more edible fruit. As your plants start to bloom begin to pinch out the extra "sucker shoots" and the top shoot. This will help the tomatoes ripen and will add fruit and help limit the height of your plant.

Water the plants early in the day and keep the mulch thick to help hold in the moisture. You can add fertilizer with high nitrogen (ammonium sulfate 21-0-0) when the tomatoes look like golf balls. Bill adds that 1 tablespoon of Epsom salt dissolved into a gallon of water and used three days in a row at this same time will help prevent blossom end rot.

Nasturtiums and poppies are great companion plants for your delicious tomatoes. Can't wait for those tomatoes to turn red? Here's a simple but delicious recipe for green tomatoes:

Green Tomato Salsa

Broil 1 pound of green tomatoes on a baking sheet for 2-5 minutes until charred. Flip and char the other side of tomatoes. Remove char when cooled, core tomatoes and place in blender or food processor. Add 2-3 Serrano peppers, 1/2 chopped onion, 1 tsp. salt, 1/2 cup roughly chopped cilantro. Blend to a coarse puree. Transfer to serving bowl and allow to stand 30 minutes to develop flavors. Add 1-2 T water if you want the salsa thinner. This salsa will keep for a couple of days in the refrigerator and can be used to top broiled chicken or fish or served with chips.



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TREE RETREATS

by Jim and Lynne Weber

NATUREWATCH

One of the most common lizards in the Austin area is the Texas Spiny Lizard (*Sceloporus olivaceus*). It is also one of the largest, averaging 7.5 to 11 inches in length, with the females being larger than the males.

A Texas spiny lizard is often hard to spot, as its dorsal pattern can vary by locality, serving as adequate camouflage in its chosen habitat. Typically grey in color with black, white, or reddish-brown blotches or crossbands down its back, it blends in perfectly against the bark of resident trees. Its underside is usually uniformly light grey, and males commonly have bright blue patches on either side of the belly. The scales appear particularly pointed and spiny, and it has long toes and sharp claws suitable for climbing.

All of these features serve this lizard well, as it is diurnal and arboreal, spending much of its time in trees. While it prefers larger tree species with a significant amount of leaf litter below, such as live oaks, post oaks, red oaks, pecans, hackberries, and elms, it may also be found in brushy trees such as mesquites and junipers. This lizard can also be seen climbing on man-made structures such as fence posts, walls, and telephone poles, especially when the base of these objects is covered in brush.

Typically shy and wary, this lizard quickly retreats to the opposite side of a tree trunk in the presence of a predator or human observer. If startled when approached closely, it will suddenly jump from a tree trunk and flee

noisily into the leaf litter below, making it almost impossible to locate. Trees not only provide protection for this lizard, but they also provide for its food. Being insectivorous, it can find cicadas, crickets, grasshoppers, beetles, ants, butterflies, and caterpillars in the leafy canopy.

Male Texas spiny lizards are territorial, often defending a single tree from encroachment by other males. When challenged, the two males will have what appears to be a push up contest, until one is intimidated enough to give up and scurry away. Active on the surface from March to November, these lizards are reproductively active throughout the warmer months of the year. Females lay up to four clutches of eggs in a shallow depression in leaf litter, with hatchlings emerging 45-60 days later. In the cooler months of the year, they take cover for weeks at a time under rocks, logs, and in deep leaf litter, and are occasionally seen basking in the sun on warmer, sunnier days.

So when you're out and about in your yard or at a park, and you hear something skittering in the leaf litter or retreating up a tree, it most likely is a Texas Spiny Lizard!

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, check out our book, *Nature Watch Austin* (published by Texas A&M University Press), and our blog at naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com.



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HOPE4MINDS OFFERS HOPE AND SUPPORT

Hope4Minds' Second "Battle of the Youth Bands" Lets Kids Sling Their Six-Strings and Raise Money for Hope4Minds, Offering Hope and Support to Kids with an Acquired Brain Injury

Rock on and play hard for a good cause this fall at the second Battle of the Youth Bands and Family Fun Fest on Sat., Oct. 17, 2015 from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. at The Rusty Mule, 9201 Hwy 290 in Austin. Produced by Hope4Minds with Strait Music and Austin School of Music, the Battle of the Youth Bands and Family Fun Fest is a high octane day of live music, a silent auction and activities including gyroscope, rock wall, food trucks, face painting, redneck games knockdown, carnival games and much more. Proceeds benefit Hope4Minds, a 501 3(c) public charity that's fostering hope and enriching the lives of Texas children with an acquired brain injury.

Bands are competing both on and off stage by raising money for Hope4Minds, with two winners earning a gig at Stubb's Bar-B-Q on Dec. 6, 2015. In addition to their Stubb's show, the first place winner will receive six hours of recording time at Austin School of Music. As of August 15, eight bands plan to take the stage for this good cause including Beautiful Minds from Curious Chords; Dillon Havins Band; Empire from Don't Stop Rockin'; Hannah & Isabelle from Musicians Woodshed; Issy & Ellie; Jordyn & Zach from Musicians Woodshed; Pacific Ninjas from Rock Lab School of Music; and The Wayfarer's Way. Author and singer/songwriter Brooklyn James will emcee the event. All band members must

be younger than 21. View their band videos and support your favorite at www.hope4minds.org.

Brianna, the 8 year old singer in Beautiful Minds, suffered a traumatic brain injury when she was 12 months old and has physical disabilities as a result of her injury. Brianna said, "I want to help other kids get help like I did so they can get better."

Ronda Johnson, executive director for Hope4Minds, is especially impressed by the bands' enthusiasm to support other kids. "These young musicians from all over Austin are coming together to support our kids and families, and there's something really special about that."

Admission is \$5 a person with free admission for children under 3. Tickets are available online at Hope4Minds.org and at the event. Guests are encouraged to bring chairs due to limited seating.

2015 Battle of the Youth Bands sponsors represent community-minded businesses from across Austin including On Call Emergency Center; Premier Family Physicians; Community Impact; Covert Buick; Peel Inc. ; Big Sky Pediatric Therapy; AR Signs; Kim Burke of Sotheby's International Realty; Peter King Design; Massage Envy; European Wax Center; Moreland Properties; Sonrisas Therapies; Christopher Commercial-Escarpment Village; Stubb's Bar B Q; Maggie Ruiz of Realty Austin; V & V Liquors; Therapy Center of Buda; Neuro Performance Austin; Anytime Fitness; Momentum Public Relations; and Texas Music Water. Sponsorships are still available at www.hope4minds.org.



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FIRE ANT TREATMENTS

There are numerous ways to manage fire ants, but they are often broken into two categories- broadcast treatments and individual mound treatments. Individual mound treatments are used to treat one mound at a time and can be labor intensive and may result in more pesticide being spread into the environment. Broadcast treatments will spread product (granular or bait) over a large area.

Individual mound treatments include pouring boiling water onto the mound, using insecticide mound drenches, spreading insecticide granules onto the mound and watering them in, sprinkling insecticidal dusts on top of the mound or using bait-formulated insecticides around the perimeter of the mound. There are also many "home remedies", but be advised that many of these do not kill fire ants. Many home remedies make the fire ants move to a new location (often 1-2 feet away), but do not kill the ants.

Bait-formulated insecticides most often consist of a defatted corn cob grit coated with soybean oil; the soybean oil is where the active ingredient (what kills the pest) is dissolved. Worker ants collect bait as a food source and take it back to the colony to share with other ants, including the queen. Depending on the active ingredient, the bait may cause the queen to die or be unable to produce viable eggs, which gradually kills off

the colony. When using baits, results are often slower to observe when compared to individual mound treatments, but can provide 80-90% suppression for 12-18 months. A bonus to broadcasting baits is that the amount of active ingredient is generally very small, which places less chemical into the environment.

With any pesticide treatment, read and follow all label instructions. Make sure to water in the pesticide if the label instructs to do so. Failure to water in chemicals when recommended by the label does an inadequate job of killing the ants. Baits should not be watered in or used before a rainfall event; baits will not be picked up by ants if they get wet.

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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The goal is to fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. Each digit may appear only once in each row, each column, and each 3x3 box.

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