

Cocktails in the Creek

By Amy Noel



Who doesn't love a great cocktail? I know we sure do, as do most of our RC neighbors. We lucked out when Proof & Cooper moved in because they make some amazing drinks and are so close. But if you're like us, going out to get a drink either comes with a side of two kids begging to go home the entire time or you get to play the "text every baby sitter we know and pray that one is available" game. Then there's the drive home...which is just not a good idea unless someone has agreed not to drink. Either way, going out for drinks always sounds like a great idea but never works out for us.

I'm convinced that being able to make an amazing cocktail at home just might be the key to happiness. Put the kiddos to bed, throw on some comfy clothes, and enjoy a drink on your sofa, back porch, front porch, neighbor's front porch, neighbor's back porch... you get the idea. No kids grabbing at you, no need to shell out \$\$\$ for a sitter, and no drive home. It's a win all around.

The RC cocktail of the month for December is the Manhattan. This is the signature cocktail of the Noel house. If you've ever been in our home for more than 10 minutes, no doubt my husband, Blaine, has broken out his trusty shaker and made one for you. It also happens to be one of our family traditions that we drink a Manhattan while decorating our Christmas tree, so it's a perfect way to kick off the holiday season.

Blaine has spent the last 7 years perfecting this recipe and it's the standard by which we measure all other Manhattans. If you're looking for a new drink to spice up your night, this is it!



The Maker's Manhattan

By Blaine Noel



Tools for the job:

Martini glasses, Cocktail shaker, small 5oz measuring glass (standard bar jigger will work, but prepare to be disappointed)

Makes two servings:

5oz Maker's Mark 46 Bourbon
0.75oz Carpano Antica Formula Sweet Vermouth
2 Dashes Angostura Bitters

2 Luxardo Maraschino Cherry (no stem)
5 Drops Luxardo Maraschino Juice

*Backup Choices: Marker's Mark or Bourbon of choice, Vya Sweet Vermouth (Avoid Martini Brand), Standard Red Maraschino Cherries

(All ingredients can be found at SPECS or Twin Liquors)

- Place martini glasses in freezer (10-15 mins ahead of prep)
- Fill cocktail shaker half way with ice
- Add Bourbon, Sweet Vermouth, Bitters, Maraschino Juice
- (be very precise...Vermouth and Maraschino juice have a HUGE impact on taste)
- Remove martini glasses from freezer
- Add 1 cherry (no juice!) per martini glass
- Shake cocktail shaker vigorously for 15 seconds
- Pour immediately and enjoy!

End result should be an amber/gold color with a slight froth that will settle after a few minutes.

If you want to kick it up a bit, it pairs perfectly with a couple squares of dark chocolate.

If you do find yourself downtown wanting a Manhattan, then try Bar Congress, Peche', or Flemming's. They all make a great one.

Happy holidays and cheers!

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Fire.....	911
Ambulance.....	911
Police Department	512-314-7590
Sheriff – Non-Emergency.....	512-974-0845
Travis County ESD No.6/Lake Travis Fire Rescue	
Administration Office.....	512-266-2533
Travis County Animal Control.....	512-972-6060

SCHOOLS

Lake Travis ISD.....	512-533-6000
Lake Travis High School.....	512-533-6100
Lake Travis Middle School.....	512-533-6200
Bee Cave Elementary.....	512-533-6250

UTILITIES

West Travis County PUA (Water).....	512-246-0498
Pedernales Electric.....	512-219-2602
Alliant Gas (Propane).....	866-764-0283
AT&T	
New Service.....	1-800-464-7928
Repair.....	1-800-246-8464
Billing.....	1-800-858-7928
IESI (Garbage & Recycling).....	512-282-3508
Travis County Hazardous Waste.....	512-974-4343

OTHER NUMBERS

Bee Cave City Hall.....	512-767-6600
Bee Cave Library.....	512-767-6620
Municipal Court	512-767-6630
Lake Travis Postal Office.....	512-263-2458
City of Bee Cave	www.beecavetexas.com

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ARTICLE INFO

The Rocky Creek Connection is mailed monthly to all Rocky Creek residents. Residents, community groups, churches, etc. are welcome to submit 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.

If you have an article of interest to the community please submit to rockycreek@peelinc.com by the 15th of the month. The newsletter can also be viewed online at www.PEELinc.com.

Growing Up with The Nutcracker

This December, the TexARTS Youth Ballet Theatre presents its 8th annual production of the holiday favorite “The Nutcracker.” Directed by Darren Gibson, the TexARTS Youth Ballet Theatre is comprised of over 30 young artists ranging from ages 7-18; some are a part of TexARTS pre-professional dance program, and some are novice performers in their first fully staged ballet.

Leading the cast in the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy is Vandegrift High School sophomore Ashlyn Whiteside. This is Whiteside’s third year performing the role and her fifth year in “The Nutcracker” with TexARTS. As Whiteside grows as a dancer, she finds ways to improve on her performance and keep the dance fresh and exciting.

“The first year was shock,” Whiteside said. “Like, ‘I’m the Sugar Plum Fairy!’ and getting to know the dance. The next year was a lot of fine-tuning, and this year has been getting back into it after a little setback.”

Whiteside refers to a knee injury she sustained earlier this year. For eight weeks in the summer she was completely off her leg and unable to dance.

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Women's Advisory Council Organizes in Support of Lakeway Regional Medical Center

Early this Fall, women from Lakeway and surrounding communities gathered at Lakeway Regional Medical Center to create a new Women's Advisory Council (WAC) in support of the hospital. The all-volunteer group suggests ways that WAC members could help the hospital better serve the community's needs.

Rochelle Storin, an area resident and member of the Lake Travis Board of Directors, heads up the newly formed WAC. Professionally, Storin is an affiliate of Your New Neighborhood. About 25 women are members of WAC to date. The group is comprised of community leaders, business owners, volunteers and physicians' wives, including Rohini Bochaton, wife of Philippe Bochaton, hospital CEO.

The WAC's main goal is to help spread the word that the hospital has new leadership and a new plan of action. They will provide updates to the community about the state-of-the-art facility and new services ready to address the area's medical needs – including coverage for Stroke, cardiac care and a thriving emergency department. WAC members will help communicate information about the hospital's services, educational seminars and volunteer opportunities through their HOAs, social clubs, churches and networking groups.

The group already has several committees, including:

- Community Outreach
- Strategic Steering
- Hospital Services Volunteers
- Community Events/Fundraisers

Lake Travis-area women who would like to become involved in the Women's Advisory Council should contact Rochelle Storin at rstorin@gmail.com or 512-971-4676.



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“The dance feels totally different this year,” Whiteside said. “Since my injury I am approaching it differently, more safely.”

Whiteside considers her injury to be a strengthening experience, both physically and emotionally.

“I’ve felt the worst pains and cried the worst tears,” Whiteside said. “I feel 300 times stronger even though the process was miserable.”

In addition to performing a leading role onstage, Whiteside is a leader off stage, serving as a dance captain in several TexARTS productions, including the professional series production “Guys & Dolls.”

“I love being a dance captain,” Whiteside said. “It’s a lot of work, but is really fun to be the person who helps someone get a step or makes the dance look clean.”

Outside of TexARTS, Whiteside has participated in the American Ballet Theatre Summer Intensive Program, a 4-week ballet technique intensive at the University of Texas campus. She hopes to attend the program in New York City in 2016.

When asked about her future plans, Whiteside is still undecided. While she would love to dance professionally, she understands that it is a very short-lived career. For now she is considering a career in film and going to college to study biology along with a professional dance career.

Other company members who have trained with pre-professional dance programs outside of TexARTS are Maya Hillman with the American Ballet Theatre Summer Intensive, and Madeleine McKowen, Kaitlin Street and Gracee Street with the Broadway Theatre Project Summer Institute.

TexARTS’ 8th annual production of “The Nutcracker” is presented on December 5-6 at St. Michael’s Academy Gloria Delgado Performing Arts Center located at 3000 Barton Creek Blvd. Tickets are \$15 for all ages and available online at www.tex-arts.org or by calling the box office at 512-852-9079 ext 101. Parking at the venue is free. TexARTS invites the community to experience this holiday tradition in a setting that is family-oriented and ideal for first-time ballet attendees.



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NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA

On December 31, 2015, there will be a New Year's Eve Gala, themed An Affair to Remember, benefiting Help Our Wounded. The Gala will be hosted at the Sonesta Bee Cave Hotel. Cocktails will begin at 7:00 p.m. on the Rooftop Terrace, followed by dinner at 8:00 p.m. in the Colony Ballroom. We will dance to the music of the band Groove Knight, and at midnight, we will have a champagne toast to welcome 2016.

Tickets are \$100 per person. VIP tickets are \$150 per person, which includes an invitation to a cocktail party on December 30, 2015. To make reservations, make your check payable to Help Our Wounded, and mail it to Joan Astorino at 206 Palos Verdes Drive, Lakeway, TX 78734. Tickets may also be purchased online at www.helpourwounded.org/gala. Tables for 10 guests, partial tables, or individual reservations are available. The first \$50 of each ticket covers the cost of the event; everything over that amount is a tax deductible contribution. The deadline for making reservations is November 23, 2015.

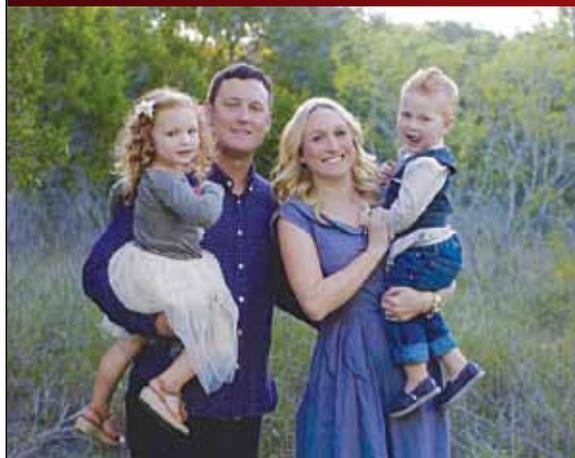
Help our Wounded was founded by Rosie Babin in 2009 after her son, Corporal Alan Babin, was severely wounded in Iraq in 2003. His recovery required extraordinary courage, dedication, and perseverance. Rosie has worked hard to better understand treatment options, hospital choices, and government regulations. As a result of Rosie and

Alan's medical journey, Rosie is better able to assist other families in the same situation. The mission of HOW is "to help our wounded service members, and those who care for them, by providing direct aid, resources and support, unique to their needs."

There are many great nonprofit organizations assisting combat veterans. What makes HOW unique is that once a veteran is vetted, HOW moves quickly to provide the necessary financial assistance, and whenever possible, HOW works directly with creditors to ensure that the assistance is a hand-up not a handout. Because of this ability to respond quickly to unique needs, other nonprofits turn to HOW to provide needed help to our veterans.

Last year was the second New Year's Eve Gala benefiting HOW. It was a huge success, raising over \$126,000. That money was used to help wounded veterans and their families with mortgage assistance, medical supplies, transportation for medical appointments, utilities assistance, and rent eviction prevention. With the success of last year's event, The Third Annual Gala is poised to be an even more successful affair.

For more information, contact Dottie Stevenson at 512 266-6460 or Brooke Toeller at 512 808-7115. Other committee members are Donna Lochow, Diane Jackson, Joan Astorino, Ann Neighbors, Gretchen Nearburg, and Paula Tye.



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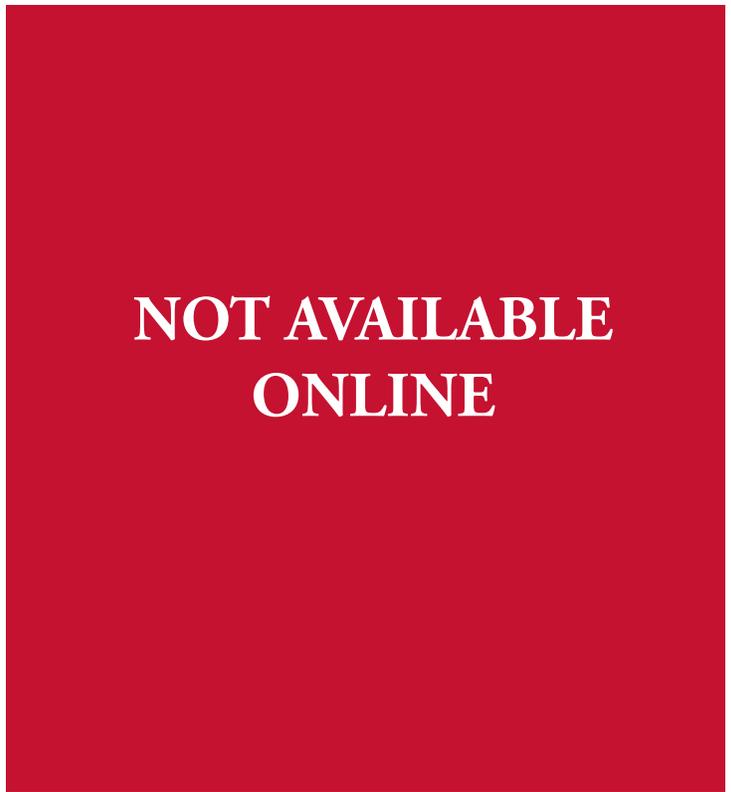
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RETIRE BETTER

LOW HANGING FRUIT

WITH JOSH STIVERS

As we approach the end of the year, I want to divert the attention of this article to a subject most of us do not wish to think about during the holiday season...TAXES!!!

When it comes to investing we all know that there are many things outside of our control. Over the years these articles focused on helping you get a grasp on the areas of investing in which you do have some control, in order to tilt the odds in your favor.

With that said, two of the easiest ways to see your investment accounts grow and keep more of your hard earned dollars are to reduce the fees and taxes you are paying. Both of these items are completely in your control, and you also have the ability to determine the timing of when you pay.

For today's discussion, we are going to focus on a specific tax planning strategy. Fees are for another discussion; it is imperative that you never lose sight of knowing exactly what fees you are paying in your investment accounts.

Through proactive tax planning, you have the ability to put more money in your pocket. As we are in the middle of the Christmas shopping season, we could all use a little more green in the wallet.

At this time of year, many people who have some excess cash flow for the year have the flexibility to determine whether they would like to be taxed on that money this year, next year, sometime in the future, or never.

One of the easiest ways to reduce your taxable income

for 2015 would be to make charitable contributions. Many non-profit and religious organizations receive the majority of their contributions in the month of December for this reason. But what if you want to give to a charity in the future?

One strategy would be to use a donor advised fund. This is an account that allows you to contribute as much as you would like for the current tax year. In turn, you receive a deduction for the entire amount. You then have the ability to control how the funds are invested and use them to make charitable contributions in the future. The catch is that you cannot change your mind and withdraw the funds for yourself down the road.

If you earned substantially more income this year than you will next year, this is a great way to reduce your current income while still being able to support the causes you care about. Not only will this great opportunity make your tax picture more efficient, but it will also give you a channel through which to make a greater impact in the world around you.

If you would like further information on this topic or to receive a copy of our report on retirement investment planning, please send your requests to the email below. As always, we are here to answer your pressing questions and concerns regarding retirement investment planning.

Send your questions and information requests to retirebetter@platinumwealthadvisory.com

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