



Grief Support Group Beginning In February

Sundays, beginning February 21st -May 15th, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. Manchaca United Methodist Church, 1011 FM 1626, Room 8

Cost: \$15 for workbook (scholarships available) Childcare, up to 5th grade, available upon request

GriefShare is a faith-based video seminar and support group that provides help and encouragement after the death of a loved one. It's a place where you can be around people who understand the feelings and pain associated with your loss. You may begin GriefShare at any point during the 13 week time frame. Call Deanna at 512-917-1909 for further information.

THEY LIVE WITH THAT CONSTANT REMINDER...THE EMPTY CHAIR. campaign Overview

Our platform seeks to engage and inform the citizens of this country of our solidarity movement to honor our brave. This campaigns mission and purpose, is to show our gratitude to troops, veterans, law enforcement and their families, that we understand and appreciate the sacrifices they've made for the freedoms we're privileged to enjoy.

A representation of your heartfelt THANK YOU will be on display when wearing the Token of Appreciation pin. It's an impactful salient message that demonstrates our understanding of the difficulties and dangers those who protect and serve experience while keeping us safe. It allows for opportunities to show our gratitude to the unidentifiable (those not in uniform). We hope you'll join in this effort.

To kick start this campaign, we're orchestrating a Fund Raising Drive during the month of February. Share the Will is a nonprofit and recipient of 5,000 Tokens donated by Chasco Constructors. Our goal is to see Tokens of Appreciation on the shirts, coats and caps of many and raise upwards of \$25,000. Thank you Chasco, for making it possible in that 100% of every dollar received, will go towards the immediate needs of our military and or law enforcement members in our community.

We encourage you to give pause more than just a few days a year... our brave are on duty 24/7/365.

We ultimately hope to bolster our military and law enforcement members confidence in how they're perceived by the people. Lastly, let us not forget the sacrifices of the loved ones...for they live with their constant reminder...the empty chair.

Wear your pin, show your appreciation and let it serve as YOUR constant reminder...FREEDOM IS NOT FREE.

If this resonates with you and you'd like to participate in this fund raiser, we are seeking Ambassadors. A representative for each neighborhood would certainly optimize our organizational strategy and be instrumental in the success of achieving our goal.

Contact emails: Vikinggirl1010@gmail.com

Or Sharethewill@gmail.com Will Williams retired Sergeant was deployed 6 times, is retired, yet still serves...his community. Visit www.tokensfortroops.com for a list of local charities.

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IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS	044
EMERGENCY	
Fire	
Ambulance	
Sheriff – Non-Emergency	512-9/4-0845
SCHOOLS	
Elementary	
Clayton	
Kiker	
Mills	
Patton	512-414-1780
Middle	
Bailey	
Small	
Gorzycki	512-841-8600
High School	
Austin	
Bowie	512-414-5247
UTILITIES	
Water/Wastewater	
City of Austin	512-972-0101
City of Austin (billing)	512-494-9400
Emergency	512-972-1000
Texas State Gas	
Customer Service	1-800-700-2443
Gas related emergency	1-800-959-5325
Pedernales Electric Cooperative	
New service, billing	512-219-2602
Problems	512-219-2628
ATT/SBC Telephone	
New Service	1-800-288-2020
Repair	1-800-246-8464
Billing	1-800-288-2020
Allied Waste	
Time Warner Cable	512-485-5555
OTHER NUMBERS	
Oak Hill Postal Station	1-800-275-8777
City of Austin	
Dead Animal Collection	512-494-9400
Abandoned/Disabled Vehicles	
Stop Sign Missing/Damaged	
Street Light Outage (report pole#)	
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Interested in adoption for your family? The Adoption Collaborative of Central Texas is made up of organizations that are adoption focused and committed to raising awareness about the children in our communities that are awaiting families. The collaborative is driven by the mission of sharing the responsibility to strengthen the adoption community and build forever families. You can work with these agencies to become licensed to foster and/or certified to adopt. There are no fees to adopt from the foster care system regardless of which agency you work with. There is only one pool of children, and they are all in care of the state, every licensed agency has the ability to assist in adoption of any foster child in Texas. Child placing agencies are also foster care providers. The first step is to choose a child placing agency to begin your journey.

Learn more about starting the adoption process and the children waiting for forever families at www.heartgallerytexas.com.



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*Based on 2011-2015 home sales through Austin Board of Realtors

NATUREWATCH: WINTRY WONDERS

by Jim and Lynne Weber

While our winter weather is milder than most, our thoughts often turn to visions of ice and snow. From first frost to ice storms to snow storms, these frozen precipitation events are sporadic in Central Texas,

but when they occur, they can also be spectacular!

How does frost, this sparkling layer that sometimes covers the landscape, form? When the temperature of the air reaches a point where the water vapor in it can condense out into water, it is called the dew point. The frost point is when the dew point falls below freezing, and rather than producing dew, it creates frost. Consisting of tiny, spike-like crystal structures called 'spicules' that grow out from a solid surface, frost generally forms on surfaces that are colder than the surrounding air. Even the size of the crystals



Hoar frost on barbed wire

can vary, depending upon the amount of time they took to grow, the relative changes in temperature, and the amount of water vapor available.

Cold air is denser than warm air, so quite often when night skies are clear and calm, lower areas become colder due to differences in elevation. Known as surface temperature inversion, this phenomenon forms 'frost pockets' or areas where frost forms first, due to cold air trapped against the ground. On such days, there can be a 40 to 50 degree difference in air temperature between dawn and early afternoon. Getting out early can reward you with a rare and wonderful spectacle of nature when something called 'hoar frost' is formed.

Referring to white ice crystals that are deposited on the ground or loosely attached to exposed objects such as leaves and branches, hoar frost forms on cold, clear nights when heat radiates out to the open sky faster than it can be replaced by nearby sources such as wind. This allows objects in the landscape to cool below the frost point of the surrounding air, and well below the freezing point of water. Hoar frost can form in low-lying cold air even when the air temperature a few feet above ground is well above freezing. The name 'hoar' comes from an Old English adjective meaning 'showing signs of old age', and refers to the frost making the vegetation look like it has grown white hair. When hoar frost forms on objects above the

surface, like branches and leaves, it has a feathery-like appearance and is specifically called air hoar.

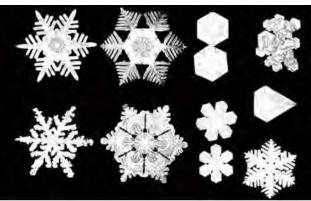
Snow, on the other hand, is an entirely different matter. When

a cold water droplet freezes onto a pollen or dust particle high in the sky, it creates an ice crystal. As this primary crystal falls toward the ground, more water vapor freezes on it, building new crystals that form the six characteristic arms of a snowflake. This process of crystallization builds in a symmetrical or patterned way, because it reflects the internal order of the water molecules as they arrange themselves in predetermined spaces to form the six-sided snowflake.

The most significant factor that determines the basic shape of the ice crystal is the temperature at

which it forms, and to a lesser degree humidity. The intricate shape of a single arm of a snowflake is determined by these atmospheric conditions as the entire crystal falls. As slight changes in temperature

and humidity occur minutes or even seconds later, a crystal that begin to grow in one way might then change and branch off in a new direction. Since all six arms of a snowflake experience the same changes in atmospheric conditions, they all grow identically. And since individual snowflakes encounter slightly different atmospheric conditions as they take different paths to the ground, they all tend to look unique, resembling everything from simple prisms and needles to intricately faceted plates and stellar dendrites.

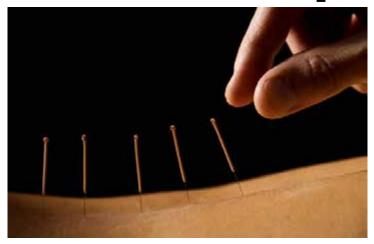


Snow crystal forms

On the surface, winter may seem as if nature is shutting down all around us, but take the time for a second look. Aside from the visual beauty they provide, the frozen forms of precipitation during the season are just another part of the ongoing cycle of life and renewal for our native plants and animals.

Send your nature-related questions to naturewatch@austin.rr.com and we'll do our best to answer them. Check out our book, Nature Watch Austin, published by Texas A&M University Press, and our blog at naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com if you enjoy reading these articles!

Acupuncture



Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) are safe, effective and drug-free options for the treatment of most non-emergency medical conditions. Whether you're new to acupuncture or have years of experience, acupuncture can help your general health.

What is acupuncture?

Acupuncture is a form of treatment involving the use of very fine filiform needles that are inserted into certain specific points of the body. This stimulates the body to increase circulation and activate the body's own natural healing process. Acupuncture can be used to treat a wide range of conditions and illnesses and is a wonderful option when western medication does not work or is not tolerated.

What to expect?

Acupuncturists often use additional techniques, such as tui-na, cupping and moxibustion, in conjunction with acupuncture. Tui-na is a form of Chinese manipulative therapy, consisting of massage, acupressure and other forms of body manipulation. It works by applying pressure to acupoints, meridians and muscles or nerves to remove blockages that prevent free flow of Qi (energy) through the body. Cupping involves the use of glass globes placed on the body to create a suction effect. The vacuum effect that draws up the skin is believed to open up the skin's pores to stimulate the blood flow to

the muscles, balance and realign the flow of Qi. Cupping may result in small, circular bruises in the area where the cups were applied, but these bruises are usually painless and disappear within a few days after the treatment. You may have seen these cupping marks on the back of the Chinese Olympic swimmer Wang Qun at the Beijing Olympics in 2008! Finally, moxibustion is a traditional therapy that involves the burning of moxa made from dried mugwort, a soft and wooly herb, to penetrate to a deeper level of the body. Moxibustion has been used throughout Asia for thousands of years; in fact, the actual Chinese character for acupuncture, translated literally, means "acupuncture-moxibustion".

What about herbal medicine?

Chinese herbal medicine refers to the use of a plant's seeds, berries, roots, leaves, bark or flowers for medicinal purposes. Traditionally, this involves formulating a mixture of various herbs to create a formula based on a patient's specific needs. These herbs can be taken in the form of herbal tea after boiling the herbs in hot water to extract the active ingredients. Although herbal medicine is still widely used and available, formulations in the form of tablets or capsules are more convenient and have become more popular these days.

What conditions can be treated?

Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is most commonly used to treat pain caused by various illnesses such as arthritis, bursitis, fibromyalgia and PMS. It can be very effective for treating migraine, back pain, neck pain, frozen shoulder and sciatica. Acupuncture can also achieve good results when treating stress related problems such as insomnia, anxiety and depression. It is an effective way to treat substance abuse, reduce substance dependencies (e.g. pain killers) or help you to quit smoking or reduce weight. Acupuncture may also be used as an adjunct to physical rehabilitation or surgical intervention to hasten functional recovery. Talk to your licensed Acupuncturist about what acupuncture and TCM can do for you.

By: Yunguang Yang (Lily), Licensed Acupuncturist & Herbalist, MAOM, Dipl. O.M. (NCCAOM)





TENNIS TIPS

By USPTA/PTR Master Professional, Fernando Velasco Owner, Manager and Director of Tennis Grey Rock Tennis Club, Austin, TX



"The Serve"

In previous newsletters, I offered tips on how to hit a forehand groundstroke, a two-handed backhand, one-handed backhand, forehand volley, and the two handed backhand volley. In this issue, I will give you instructions on how to execute the serve, considered as the most important stroke, since the player has complete control of the game at this time. In these pictures, Adolfo Gonzalez, one of the tennis pros at the Grey Rock

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Tennis Club, demonstrates the proper form and technique for a right-handed player. For a left-handed player, the instructions will be the opposite hands.

Step 1: Ready Position: The body is sideways with the right hand holding the end of the racket in a forehand grip position and the left hand is holding the ball under the throat of the racket. The left arm is slightly straight and the ball is held with the thumb, index finger and middle finger. This allows for a consistent toss without using the wrist and/or elbow. Feet are a shoulder width apart and the body is in equal balance. For beginners, it is okay to change the grip slightly toward the forehand grip. As the player gets more advanced, the continental grip will be a better one to give more spin on the ball.

Step 2: Back Swing: The left arm comes down and the right arm follows it. It is vital to slow down the motions to allow for both of the arms to have good balance in the front and behind the body. Notice that the hand is in the process of tossing the ball in front of the body and the left wrist is bent down. It is imperative to have a good consistent toss since it will dictate the success or failure of the serve.

Step 3: Point of contact: Once the player is ready to hit the ball, the right arm will force the racket toward the point of contact, while the left hand will come down toward the body. This allows for the "snap" of the wrist to accelerate and bring the ball down. Notice that the point of contact is slightly higher than then center of the

racket. Eyes are still focused on the point of the contact and will be ready to look down as soon as the ball leaves the frame. The right hip is extended to allow the body to extend up.

Step 4: Follow Through: The racket speed will extend to the left side of the body. The right foot is coming forward and is pointing toward the net. The trunk is straight and eyes are focused on the direction of the ball. At this point the player will take the split step and will jump either behind the base line to rally with the opponent or will move toward the net to serve and volley.

Look for in the next Newsletter: The Half V0lley







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How to Correct Your "Computer Posture"

Sitting with poor posture in front of the computer or at a desk for prolonged periods can cause what's called "computer neck" and "computer posture". As you sit and gradually allow your head to lean forward, your neck and upper back will suffer from joint stress and muscle imbalance. When we sit upright with our head carried in neutral position in line with our shoulders, very little muscle effort is required to carry our head. Conversely, sitting with an anterior head carriage causes strain of the muscles in the back of the neck. This can produce symptoms such as neck pain, upper back pain, and headaches. A person's head weighs about 10-12 pounds. For every inch that the head is carried in front of the neutral midline, the lower neck feels twice the weight of the head. This causes joint stress over time and can lead to degenerative joint disease in the neck.

Computer Posture not only affects the neck, but it can also involve the upper back and shoulders. Often, the upper back and shoulders round forward. This would essentially create two additional imbalances in posture. 1) One is the front to back imbalance. The shoulders rounding forward simultaneously causes tight pectoral muscles and weak rhomboid muscles, the muscles between the shoulder blades. 2) Secondly, there is an upper and lower imbalance. The upper trapezius muscles become tight, while the lower trapezius

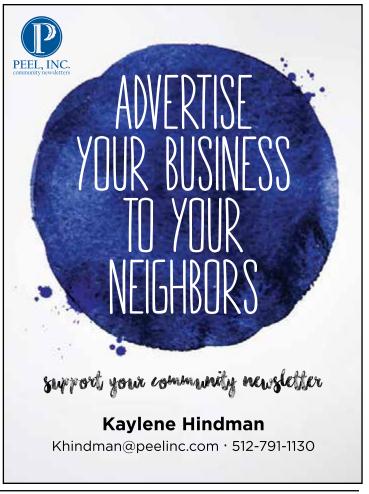
muscles become weak.

Here are 3 daily exercises acquired from Pilates principles that can help correct Computer Posture.

- 1) Stretch your pecs. Lie on a foam roller lengthwise with the back of your head and entire back on the roller. Keep your knees bent with your feet planted on the floor. Outstretch your arms by your side with palms up, and let gravity stretch the pectoral muscles across the chest and shoulders. Your elbows can be slightly bent. Hold for about 30 seconds to one minute.
- 2) Strengthen your rhomboids and lower trapezius muscles with rowing exercises. Sit in neutral spine, and keep your shoulders down. Holding the resistance bands with palms down, start with your arms outstretched in front of you at shoulder height. Pull back, bending at the elbows and keeping your arms at shoulder height. You should feel the shoulder blades "kissing". Do 10 repetitions at a comfortable weight. Now do the rowing starting in the same position but by bending the elbows past your sides to feel the lower trapezius muscles contract in the mid back.
- 3) Strengthen your neck muscles by translational movement. Sitting or standing, actively push your head back to neutral position.

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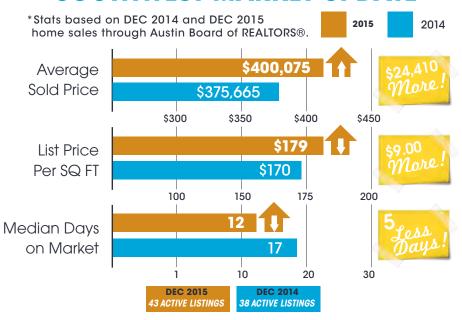


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Hold for a second and relax. Do 10 repetitions. You can do these while sitting at a stop light or at your desk.

It would be beneficial to have a licensed chiropractor evaluate your spine and take Pilates classes from a certified instructor who can customize to your condition and goals. Stretching and meditation like in yoga can also help facilitate better range of motion and muscle toning. Moreover, being mindful of your posture and incorporating these exercises into your daily routine will help correct your Computer Posture and help prevent related muscle and joint disorders.





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GRILIFE LEAF CUTTING ANTS

Leaf cutting ants are reddish-brown with three pairs of spines on the thorax and one pair of spines on the back of the head. Workers come in various sizes, but can be up to ½ an inch long. Mounds can become large and are sometimes mistaken for fire ant mounds. Leaf cutter ant mounds have a central opening and often a crater shape at the top.

Leaf cutting ants typically forage when the temperatures are cooler, such as at night or in the morning. They can sometimes cause complete defoliation of plants or small trees overnight. These ants remove leaves and buds from plants in the landscape. The ants do not eat the plant pieces, but take the pieces back to their colony and feed them to a fungus garden. They tend a particular species of fungus and weed out any other fungus from the garden.

Colonies may exist for years and can exceed over two million ants. It is not unusual for a single colony to cover an acre of land. Colonies are usually found in well drained, sandy or loamy soils.

Plants can be temporarily protected by using spray adhesives around the base of the plant. The adhesive would need to be refreshed often when dirt or debris accumulates. Temporary protection can also be provided with contact insecticidal spray or dusts labeled for "ants". If mounds are located in an area, the bait product labeled for leaf cutter ants, Amdro Ant Block, can be broadcast with a handheld spreader around the mound area. If no mounds are seen, then residual sprays and dusts labeled for "ants" can be used along foraging trails and around openings.

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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