

THE BULLETIN

Belterra Community News

March 2016 Volume 10, Issue 4

News for the Residents of Belterra

WELCOME TO BELTERRA BULLETIN

A Newsletter for the Belterra Community

The Bulletin is a monthly newsletter mailed to all Belterra residents. Each newsletter will be 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!

Pruning Guidelines for Prevention of Oak Wilt in Texas

Oak wilt, caused by the fungus *Ceratocystis fagacearum*, is the most destructive disease affecting live oaks and red oaks in Central Texas. Most of the tree mortality results from tree-to-tree spread of the pathogen through interconnected or grafted root systems, once an oak wilt center becomes established. New infection centers begin when beetles carry oak wilt fungal spores from infected red oaks to fresh, open wounds on healthy oaks. Wounds include any damage caused by wind, hail, vehicles, construction, squirrels, birds or pruning. Research has shown that both oak wilt fungal mats on infected red oaks and insects that carry oak wilt spores are most prevalent in the spring. Below is a brief description of how you can reduce the risk of fungal spread when pruning.

- Always paint fresh wounds on oaks, including pruning cuts and stumps, with wound dressing or latex paint immediately after pruning or live tree removal at all times of the year.

- Clean all pruning tools with 10% bleach solution or Lysol™ between sites and/or trees.

- If possible avoid pruning or wounding of oaks during the spring (currently defined as February 1 through June 30). Reasons to prune in the spring include:

- To accommodate public safety concerns such as hazardous limbs, traffic visibility or emergency utility line clearance.

- To repair damaged limbs (from storms or other anomalies)

- To remove limbs rubbing on a building or rubbing on other branches, and to raise low limbs over a street.

- On sites where construction schedules take precedence, pruning any live tissue should only be done to accommodate required clearance.

- Dead branch removal where live tissue is not exposed.

- Pruning for other reasons (general tree health, non-safety related clearance or thinning, etc.) should be conducted before February 1 or after June 30.

- Debris from diseased red oaks should be immediately chipped, burned or buried.

Regardless of the reasons or time of year, proper pruning techniques should be used. These techniques include making proper pruning cuts and avoiding injurious practices such as topping or excessive crown thinning. If you are uncertain about any of this information, you should consult with a Texas Oak Wilt Certified arborist, ISA Certified Arborist, or an oak wilt specialist from a city, county or state government agency such as the Texas Forest Service or Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY911
Ambulance / Fire.....911

SCHOOLS

Dripping Springs ISD 512-858-3000
Dripping Springs Elementary..... 512-858-3700
Walnut Springs Elementary..... 512-858-3800
Rooster Springs Elementary..... 512-465-6200
Dripping Springs Middle School..... 512-858-3400
Dripping Springs High School 512-858-3100

UTILITIES

Water – WCID # 1 & 2 512-246-0498
Trash – Texas Disposal..... 512-246-0498
Gas – Texas Community Propane..... 512-272-5503
Electricity – Pedernales Electric 512-858-5611

OTHER

Oak Hill Post Office 512-892-2794
Animal Control..... 512-393-7896

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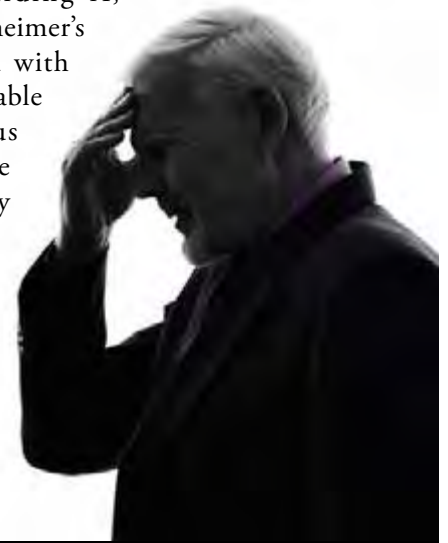
**NOT AVAILABLE
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Alzheimer's Respite Center in Austin

In today's world almost every family is touched by Alzheimer's. Someone in the family falls prey to this dreaded disease and it eventually impacts immediate and often extended family. The person with the greatest responsibility is the primary caregiver. Alzheimer sufferers often reach a stage of the disease that demands that someone be with them twenty-four hours every day. This places the caregiver in an extremely stressful position. If family does not live in the same city or if family is unavailable to help, the burden on the caregiver can become overwhelming. Accomplishing the simplest tasks becomes sometimes impossible because of the pressing needs of the person they are caring for.

A public, on-campus Alzheimer's respite center was established in Austin, TX several years ago. The center provides four hours of weekly care for people with Alzheimer's so that their caregivers can have a few hours of respite to do whatever they need to do. Great Hills follows the guidelines of the Alzheimer's Association Capital of Texas Chapter, and works closely with their Executive VP and Program Director to be sure that their Alzheimer's respite center meets all required standards.

The Great Hills Baptist Church Radiant Friends Alzheimer's Respite Center is located at 10500 Jollyville Road, Building A, Austin, TX 78759. Alzheimer's patients are welcomed with skilled caregivers, enjoyable activities, a nutritious meal, and safe exercise free of charge every Tuesday from 9:30 am until 1:30 pm. If you have a need in this area, contact Barbara Cross at 512-250-0826 for more information, and/or to apply for services.



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**Based on 2014 residential home sales through Austin Board of REALTORS.*

THE BULLETIN

ANNUAL LAKEWAY TEA BENEFITING HELP OUR WOUNDED NETS RECORD \$4,800



Stunning centerpieces, gorgeous hats and special costumes filled the Hills Country Club for the Annual Lakeway Tea benefiting Help Our Wounded on Saturday, March 5, 2016. The amount raised from tea ticket sales and donations is a record setting \$4,800. This money will benefit so many wounded veterans, who have valiantly served our country.

Almost 200 women attended the high tea with proceeds benefitting Help Our Wounded. Many participants competed for prizes by decorating tables with many different and creative concepts. After every guest had voted for their favorite tables, high tea was served.

Help Our Wounded (HOW) was founded in 2009 by Rosie Babin after their son was severely injured. The mission of HOW is to help wounded veterans and their families with necessary financial assistance to ensure the assistance is a hand-up not a hand out. HOW is unique in its ability to respond quickly to the veterans' needs. "What a stunning group of ladies, surrounded by beautiful table settings and all for a worthy cause to help our wounded veterans and their caregivers. Thank you for being a part of healing American heroes," said Rosie Babin. To learn more about HOW go to helpourwounded.org.

Nancy Clayton and Ann Neighbors, tea co-chairs, thanked everyone for their contributions to HOW and for making the tea such a success. The table designers were recognized, door prizes given out after which Clayton and Neighbors announced the table prize winners.

First Place – On Broadway designed by Linda Kephart
Second Place – Peacock Paradise designed by Leanne DuPay
Third Place – American Strong



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NatureWatch: Mud Hens

by Jim and Lynne Weber

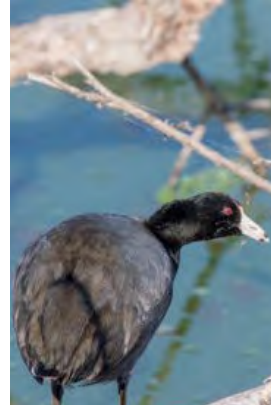
Spend any amount of time observing wildlife around freshwater wetlands, swamps, marshes, suburban lakes, and sewage ponds, and you'll no doubt see a Mud Hen or American Coot (*Fulica americana*). Commonly mistaken to be ducks, coots belong to a distinct scientific order and differ significantly from other species of marsh birds.

An overall blackish, plump, chicken-like bird with a rounded head, red eyes, a sloping whitish bill with a dark band near the tip, and a small reddish brown forehead shield, coots swim like ducks but do not have webbed feet



American Coots are commonly called 'Mud Hens'.

like ducks. Their yellow-green legs end in long toes with broad lobes of skin on either side that help them kick through the water. Each time the bird lifts its feet, the lobes fold back to facilitate walking on dry land. Their tiny tails and short wings make them awkward and clumsy fliers, and they often require many wing beats and long running takeoffs to get airborne. Coots mainly eat aquatic plants and can dive in search of food, but they can also forage and scavenge on land for terrestrial plants, arthropods, fish, insects, and mollusks. Mating season occurs in May and June, with coots requiring heavy stands of aquatic vegetation along a shoreline with some standing water within those stands. It is here that they make their nests, which consist of multiple structures used as display platforms, egg nests, and brood nests. Egg nest material is woven into a shallow basket and lined with finer grasses to hold the eggs. The entire nest is anchored to upright plant stalks and is generally



An American Coot showing its lobed feet.

a floating structure. Females deposit eggs between sunset and midnight, one per day, until the average clutch of 9 eggs is complete. Both males and females share the 21-day incubation responsibility. Being persistent re-nesters, coots will replace lost clutches within 2 days during the deposition period. Additionally, once hatching begins and a certain number of chicks are present, coots will abandon the remaining eggs. Unlike the drab color of the adults, coot chicks are quite colorful, having conspicuous, orange-tipped, ornamental plumes covering the front half of their bodies, often referred to as 'chick ornaments.' While these plumes get bleached out after about 6 days, experiments have shown that chicks with more of this ornamentation are given preferential treatment by their parents. The oldest known coot lived to be more than 22 years old.

In winter, coots can be found in large groups or 'rafts' of mixed waterfowl and in groups numbering thousands of individuals. They can consume very large amounts of aquatic vegetation, but because they live in wetlands, they can accumulate toxins from pollution sources including agricultural runoff, industrial waste, and nuclear facilities. As such, scientists monitor coots as a way of measuring the effect these toxins have on the health of the environment at large.

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!



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April GARDENING TIPS

Offered by WeekendGardener.Net

Use this list to help you figure out what gardening tasks you want to accomplish this month.

Planning

When purchasing bedding annuals this spring, choose properly grown plants with good color. Buy plants with well-developed root systems that are vigorous, but not too large for their pots. Plants that bloom in the pack are often root bound and can be set back for several weeks after being transplanted. Plants not yet in bloom will actually bloom sooner, be better established and grow faster.

For hot-weather color, select one of the following: Gloriosa Daisy, Madagascar Periwinkle, Ornamental Peppers, Mexican Zinnia or Amaranthus 'Joseph's Coat. Plan to attract hummingbirds to your garden this year by planting red or orange flowers. Monarda (common names: beebalm, horsemint, Oswego tea, and bergamot) is a good perennial plant that thrives in sun and provides nectar for these small birds.

Planting

Begin to plant seedlings of warm-season vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants. You can also start your pumpkin seeds now.

Sow beets, beans, cucumbers, carrots, lettuce, sweet corn and radishes

Plant herbs such as thyme, sage, parsley, chives and basil

Sod or sow new lawns, and over seed damaged older lawns

Start planting out warm season annuals such as impatiens, marigolds, petunias, sunflowers, zinnia, lobelia, alyssum

Finish planting summer-flowering bulbs like tuberose, gladiolus, dahlias, and callas

Plant chervil, coriander, dill, rosemary, and summer savory outside after the last spring frost date for your area. Your Extension agent should be able to give you the date.

Maintenance

Mulch soil to save water, smother weeds, keeps soil cooler. Spread 1-3 inches (2.5-7cm) of bark chips, compost, wood shavings, or other organic material under shrubs trees, annuals and vegetables. Thin vegetables that were sown too thickly, like basil, carrots, green onions, or lettuce. Prune spring-flowering shrubs and trees after bloom is over.

Fertilize everything right now, but do not feed spring-flowering shrubs like azaleas, camellias, and rhododendrons until after they have finished flowering. Use an acid based fertilizer. They also should be pruned after blooming.

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STAIN SOLUTIONS

Try as you might to prevent them, spills, drips and splatters in your house are inevitable. Whether you, your family or your guests are the culprits, stains happen. Most, if not all, are treatable, especially if you act quickly and use the right stain-removing technique.

If there's an accident on your carpet or a rug, start by scooping up any solids and soaking up any unabsorbed liquids. Then, blot the stain with a white cloth or paper towel. You should work from the outside in so you don't spread the spill, and dab at it instead of rubbing or pressing hard.

You also can try spot cleaning with a soapy water mix. Dilute a ¼ teaspoon of clear hand-dishwashing soap with 1 cup of lukewarm water. Spray the solution on the stain, and mist the area with clean water or blot with a wet towel. Then blot the area with a dry towel. Repeat this process until you get as much residue out as possible.

Follow these specific instructions for cleaning up the more stubborn stains and sticky spots on your floors:

- Red wine: Begin with the same three steps—blot, apply soapy water and rinse. Then, dribble very hot water from a sponge onto the spill. Continue to blot with a clean towel, and repeat until the carpet no longer shows any red.

- Soft drinks and coffee: Begin with the same three steps—blot, apply soapy water and rinse. Then dab on hydrogen peroxide. Wait one hour before repeating the process. Hydrogen peroxide bleaches a stain without breaking down carpet dyes. Use a 3 percent solution, which can be found at a drugstore, and apply at full strength.

- Candle wax and chewing gum: These are easiest to remove when hot or cold. For the cold method, harden the spot by rubbing it with an ice cube inside a plastic bag. Then, carefully scrape off the residue with a dull knife or a plastic card, such as an expired credit card. For the hot method, apply paper towels over the waxy area, and then use a clothes iron on low heat to soak up the wax. Replace the paper towels until all the wax is removed. Use a hair dryer to heat gum. Then with a plastic bag over your fingers, pull the goo off.

So the next time your carpeting endures a nasty spill, rest assured that it doesn't have to become a permanent stain. With these simple tips, you can keep your carpets and rugs looking great for years to come.



JOIN US FOR GOLF AND A GREAT CAUSE!

DATE: Wednesday, April 27th

11:00 am Registration - 1:00 pm Start

LOCATION: Flintrock Falls Country Club

FORMAT: 4-person scramble

COST: \$165 per golfer*

*Includes lunch, dinner and lots of swag

Register online at:

www.colinshope.org

Questions about the event?

Contact Kim Flasch

or Wendi Baldwin

(512) 750-8161 or (512) 657-3067

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