

West Lake Hills ECHO

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April 2016

The Walk to Cure Arthritis Austin Celebrates 10 Years

The Walk to Cure Arthritis Austin is celebrating 10 years of helping find a cure, raising awareness and supporting those suffering from arthritis.

Arthritis is a serious health crisis. America's number one cause of disability, it strikes one in every five adults and about 300,000 children — and it's growing. By the year 2030, an estimated 67 million Americans—that's one in four—will be diagnosed with some form of arthritis. Add family members and other caregivers, and the impact skyrockets.

Those who suffer from arthritis find everyday activities like climbing a few stairs, bathing, getting dressed or cooking a painful battle. They are accustomed to saying no to so many of the things that bring them joy. The Arthritis Foundation's purpose is loud and clear: to conquer arthritis and be the Champion of Yes for all those who suffer from it.

The Walk to Cure Arthritis Austin is Saturday, April 23 at Concordia University. Registration begins at 8 a.m. and the walk will start at 9:30 a.m. The event will feature one-mile and three-mile courses as well as activities for the whole family, including the family dog! This year's walk will feature a Senior Zone, a Kid Zone,

a Dog Zone, music from the Bruce Smith Band and breakfast tacos from Maudie's!

Whether you have a connection to arthritis or are just looking for a great community even to support, please join the hundreds of walkers fighting arthritis! Attendees will include our special 10th anniversary walk honoree Kaylan Berry who was the very first walk honoree ten years ago when she was just six years old. The walk will also recognize child honoree Jacob Lively, adult honoree Jane Ayala and medical honoree Dr. Hilton Gottschalk.

For more information or to form a team, visit www.walktocurearthritis.org/austin or contact Helen Ross Petty at 512.800.4060.

The Arthritis Foundation is the Champion of Yes. We lead the fight for the arthritis community and help conquer everyday battles through life-changing information and resources, access to optimal care, advancements in science and community connections. Our goal is to chart a winning course, guiding families in developing personalized plans for living a full life—and making each day another stride towards a cure. For free arthritis information, visit www.arthritis.org.



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

Water District 10	512-327-2230
Wastewater	
Crossroads Utility Service 24 Hour Number....	512-246-1400
New Accounts	512-402-1990
Austin Energy	512-322-9100
Texas Gas Service	
Custom Service.....	1-800-700-2443
Emergencies.....	512-370-8609
Call Before You Dig.....	512-472-2822
AT&T	
New Service.....	1-800-464-7928
Repair.....	1-800-246-8464
Billing.....	1-800-858-7928
Time Warner Cable	
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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Real Estate Update

Submitted by Vickie Tanner, Realtor Coldwell Banker United

I recently had the opportunity to hear two different Austin area experts speak about 2015 results and 2016 economic and real estate forecasts. While national economic growth is still challenged, 2015 was a good year for Austin and Texas both and 2016 is forecasted to be more of the same. The highlights imply what some have referred to as the good news and the not so good news.

THE GOOD NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FOR AUSTIN AND TEXAS:

- 2015 job growth made Austin the 12th best performing among the 50 largest metro areas
 - 2015 Austin unemployment fell to 3.3%, a rate not seen since before the “dot-com” recession
 - Austin job market is creating professional high-paying jobs in an affordable metro market
 - Demographics are positive for Austin: young, educated, motivated workforce
 - “Keep Austin Weird” culture continues to attract the right workforce and the right employers
 - Music festivals and arts help build Austin culture and contribute \$5 billion to Austin economy
 - Medical School, Teaching Hospital, Biotech/Venture Capital investment creates Austin synergy
 - 60,000+/- people moving to Austin annually
 - Majority of jobs created in last 5+ years have been in Texas
 - More Fortune 500 corporate headquarters located in Texas than in any other state
 - Texas has one of the lowest tax burdens in the country (46th)
 - Limited supply + higher demand = continued value improvement
- Not so good highlights for Austin:
- Austin’s resale home inventory only 2.5+/- months, home prices expected to continue to rise
 - Lot shortage – not enough new homes built
 - Price point shortage – limited supply of right priced homes

- Rental’s 95+/-% occupancy / less than 8000 units left in 5 county areas
- Home ownership shifting to more renters
- Traffic is bad and will get worse – 70 new cars to the streets every day

You were probably already aware of how challenging the Austin area housing market has become. There is a deficit of houses to purchase and likewise houses available for rent are becoming harder and harder to find, especially in our area.

Due to Austin being one of the most thriving housing markets in the United States – Home Partners of America - has expanded into the Austin area and its Coldwell Banker partnership to reach their niche market. Home Partners of America’s mission is to make home ownership a reality for more people. Especially for people who may not desire to, or be in a position to, buy a home at this time.

Homes purchased by Home Partners of America and leased to qualified participants must meet certain requirements including: location in approved communities (based on school districts), list price (between \$100,000 and \$550,000), and property type (single-family).

Residents who qualify and participate will have a broader selection of houses to choose from with a financial obligation limited to 1 year of rent. Approved residents can move out after each 1 year of lease term without penalty, elect to rent for up to 5 years (based on rent increases of 3.75% per year), or purchase the home they are renting at any time during tenancy (based on a pre-determined price increase of 3.5 to 5% each year).

Residents qualify based on rent-to-income and debt-to-income ratios, rental and housing history, employment history, criminal history, FICO scores, and other elements of an application. Basic requirements include:

- Annual household income of at least \$50,000
- Stable employment
- No history of eviction and no pending bankruptcy



Vickie Tanner

REALTOR

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MUD HENS

NATUREWATCH

by Jim and Lynne Weber

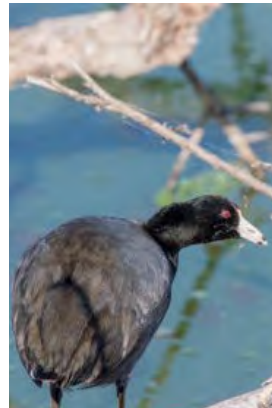
Spend any amount of time observing wildlife around freshwater wetlands, swamps, marshes, suburban lakes, and sewage ponds, and you'll no doubt see a Mud Hen or American Coot (*Fulica americana*). Commonly mistaken to be ducks, coots belong to a distinct scientific order and differ significantly from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

SUMMER at ST. ANDREW'S
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Youth from across Austin: Join us at St. Andrew's for a summer of adventure, innovation and friendship!

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CHRISTOPHER



Partnership for Children

Christopher (Chris) is an energetic and friendly boy who is looking for a forever family. He is bright, creative, and curious about the world around him. He does exceptionally well in school and loves to learn. He is especially interested in art but also does well in science, math, and reading. He has a good sense of humor and enjoys telling stories. He enjoys electronics such as computer and DS games. His favorite games are ones about super heroes and about wild life. He is very interested in learning about animals and their habitats. Christopher also loves building things with Legos, and aspires to someday being a football or soccer player. Learn more about Christopher and other children waiting to be adopted here: www.heartgallerytexas.com.

Adopting a child from the foster care system requires little or no cost to the adoptive family and funding may be available to help the adoptive family support the child or sibling group. The Heart Gallery of Central Texas is a program of Partnerships for Children. To learn more about the adoption or fostering process, please call the Heart Gallery of Central Texas at (512) 834-3102, email heartgallery@partnershipsforchildren.org or visit our website at www.partnershipsforchildren.org.

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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

info@colinshope.org

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DO NOT DROWN

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Austin Fire Department Wildfire Symposium Saturday, May 7, 2016

WILDFIRE COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS DAY

Topics covered will include:

- Evacuation Readiness: Key to Surviving Wildfire
Protect your home So it can protect you
- Insuring for wildfire: Knowing what's at stake
- Fire-Adapted Families: Protecting what matters most

Wildfires are a fact of life in Central Texas. But that doesn't mean we are powerless against them.

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

4801 La Crosse Avenue

Austin, TX 78739

9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Lunch and beverages provided

This event is free, but seating is limited!

Contact Justice Jones at: 512.974.0199 or justice.jones@austintexas.gov



The
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Of Austin



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"Working with Sean and Claudia was a WONDERFUL experience from the start. We started with Claudia on our rental search when we relocated to Austin in 3/2014 and she was full of information and a great help. She taught us about the neighborhoods, etc. once we were ready for the housing search. Due to her being out of the country when we were ready, Sean took over and we couldn't have been happier."

– Jameson and Christina Shaw, 2015 Buyer



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