

# LONG CANYON *Gazette*

JUNE 2016

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE LONG CANYON

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## William Farrell, Dr. David Nelson, Pam Province Join Board of Directors of Hill Country Education Foundation



The Hill Country Education Foundation, Your Viper Nation Academic Booster, recently elected William “Biff” Farrell, Dr. David Nelson and Pam Province to serve on the Foundation’s Board of Directors. “We are delighted to elect these three outstanding community members to our board,” said HCEF’s Executive Director Michelle Beck. “They each bring a distinct background and set of experiences to the organization along with great enthusiasm and energy for supporting education in the Four Points community.”

An active donor to HCEF, Farrell is the PTA president and legislative action chair of River Ridge Elementary. He is also a board member of the Steiner Ranch Neighborhood Association and recently helped launch the Hill Country Special Needs Association, in which he serves as president. Farrell graduated with bachelor’s degree from the University of Texas and holds a juris doctorate degree from South Texas College of Law. After working at Coats, Rose, Yale, Ryman & Lee, PC for five years, Farrell started Cotton Farrell, PC. In 2006, he joined colleagues at Charter Development Co, Inc. Biff and his wife Cris have two children. Hannah is a 2nd grader at River Ridge and

Hank attends The Goddard School. The Farrell’s have resided in the Four Points community since 2013.

“I joined the board to help continue and expand the efforts of HCEF and to provide additional educational opportunities and tools to the students located within the Four Points area with the hopes of giving our kids the best chances of success at the next level,” Farrell said.

Dr. David Nelson opened Four Points Orthodontics in 2010 and has been a HCEF donor and supporter for the past couple of years. He served in the US Army as a helicopter gunship pilot with a tour in Viet Nam where he received several commendations including the Silver Star and 26 Air Medals with Valor. After his military service, he continued flying helicopters as a bush pilot in the Alaskan and Canadian Arctic before entering dental school at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston. Dr. Nelson completed dental school second in his class, earning a prestigious spot in the orthodontic specialty program. After residency, Dr. Nelson moved to Austin to open his first private practice. He and his wife Brenda have two grown daughters.

“I am so excited to work with the Hill Country Education Foundation,” Dr. Nelson said. “This is an opportunity where I can share my experience and make a difference in the lives of students.”

Pam Province and her husband Chris are longtime supporters and donors to HCEF. She currently serves as a HCEF campus representative at Vandegrift High School and at Four Points Middle



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## NEWSLETTER INFO

### NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

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*(Continued from Cover)*

School and on the PTSA at VHS. Pam earned a bachelor's degree in business communications from The University of Texas at Austin and currently is the director of marketing for Robert C. Province, CPA, Tax and Accounting Services. Pam was formerly a retail buyer and store-line executive for Macy's West. Pam and Chris live in Long Canyon along with their sons Rice, who is in 10th grade, and Will, who is in 6th grade.

"I've been a supporter of HCEF because we want our schools to be the best they can be and offer our students every possible opportunity," Province said. "In this increasingly competitive world, our schools and teachers need the tools to train and empower and I look forward to helping the Foundation expand their reach and continue to elevate education in our schools."

About Hill Country Education Foundation

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, HCEF enhances the educational experience of students living in the Four Points community in the areas of leadership, entrepreneurship, science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) with an emphasis on college-readiness. HCEF brings educators and citizens together to excel this educational experience by providing area schools and the community with the additional tools, technology and programs needed to teach and engage students.

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## Summer Library Dates, Programming Announced for River Ridge Elementary

Austin, Texas – May 9, 2016 – Leander ISD and Hill Country Education Foundation are once again teaming up this summer at River Ridge Elementary to provide support and access to books, Makerspace stations and programming. River Ridge Elementary will be open in the morning on Mondays and Wednesdays June, July and August.

“Students who keep reading over the summer avoid losing gains they’ve achieved in reading during the school year,” said Becky Calzada, LISD library coordinator. “By keeping the library open in this part of district where no library is available, we hope to provide opportunities to avoid the summer slide, while also giving students a chance to participate in enrichment activities like Makerspace stations.”

HCEF will host two programs at River Ridge Elementary. On Monday, June 13 at 10:00 am, children’s music recording artist Joe McDermott will get kids jumping and dancing to his award-winning tunes. On Wednesday, August 3 at 10:00 am, Nancy Simpson will showcase Japanese storytelling. Mrs. Simpson is a retired school teacher and local Longhorn Village resident.

Makerspace Workstations allow students to design, build, and create all sorts of different things with different materials. These

activities promote learning through play. Activities will center on Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math skills or STEAM.

“This is our sixth year to work with Leander ISD on keeping the River Ridge library open,” said Michelle Beck, HCEF’s executive director. “Many thanks goes to the librarians who spend part of their summer vacation keeping those doors open for us, as well as the young volunteers we recruit from the community to help them.”

Please note that restrooms are not available at the library, and non-registered LISD students are unable to check out books. Kindergarten students registered for the 2015-2016 school year can check out books. For more information, please contact [info@HillCountryEdFoundation.org](mailto:info@HillCountryEdFoundation.org).

### River Ridge Elementary

Mondays & Wednesdays

9 am to 12 noon

Joe McDermott, June 13, 10 am

Nancy Simpson, August 3, 10 am

### Library Dates

June 13 - June 29

Closed week of July 4

July 11 - Aug 3 (last day)

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# LONG CANYON

## SUMMER FUN WITH YOUR KIDS

Looking for fun things to do with your kids this summer? Check out the following:

### **Austin Zoo ([austinzoo.org](http://austinzoo.org))**

**10807 Rawhide Trail, Austin 78736, 512-288-1490**

Non-profit zoo with over 350 rescued animals - lions, tigers, monkeys, and reptiles. Includes a petting zoo with goats, deer, sheep, and llamas. A 20-minute train ride allows you to see emus, alpacas, and longhorns.

### **Austin Steam Train Association**

**([www.austinsteamtrain.org](http://www.austinsteamtrain.org)) 401 East Whitestone Blvd, Austin 78613 512-477-8468**

Ride a real vintage passenger train. Trip takes about 3 hours. Themed rides offered throughout the year.

### **Blazer Tag Adventure Center ([www.blazertag.com](http://www.blazertag.com))**

**1701 W. Ben White Blvd, Austin, 512-462-0202**

Suitable for kids 7 and up. Largest lazer tag arena in Texas. Three story, 10,000 square foot, with ramps & ropes, indoor rope course, video game arcade, concession stand.

### **Chapparral Ice Center ([www.chaparralice.com](http://www.chaparralice.com))**

**2525 Anderson Lane, Austin, 78757 512-451-5012**

Indoor ice-skating rink. Skate rental available. Free one-time 30-minute introductory class for beginners age 6 & up on Saturdays at noon.

### **Dinosaur Park ([www.thedinopark.com](http://www.thedinopark.com))**

**893 Union Chapel Road, Cedar Creek, TX 78612 512-321-6262**

Realistic life-size dinosaurs in a park setting. The walk through the park takes about 45 minutes. Bring a picnic, as there is not a concession stand.

### **Jourdan-Bachman Pioneer Farms ([www.pioneerfarms.org](http://www.pioneerfarms.org))**

**11418 Sprinkle Cut Off Road, Austin 78754 512-837-1215**

Living history museum that shows what farm life was like in the 1800s.

### **Jump USA Trampoline Park ([www.jumpusapark.com](http://www.jumpusapark.com))**

**10601 N. Lamar Blvd, Austin 78753 512-838-6200**

40,000 square feet indoor sports and recreation center. Large trampoline, dodge ball court, indoor pool with floating hamster balls, bounce houses, and game arcade.

### **Kiddie Acres ([www.kiddieacres.com](http://www.kiddieacres.com))**

**4800 Howard Lane, Austin 78728 512-255-4131**

Old fashioned amusement park on 5 acres. Includes carousel rides, Ferris wheel, pony rides, miniature train, 18-hole miniature golf course. Geared to toddlers and young children.

### **Millennium Youth Entertainment Complex ([www.myec.net](http://www.myec.net))**

**1156 Hargrave St. Austin 78702 512-472-6932**

Owned by City of Austin, 154-seat movie theater, 16 lane glow-in-the-dark bowling alley, video arcade area, food court, 12,500 foot roller skating rink.

### **Mt. Playmore ([mtplaymore.com](http://mtplaymore.com))**

**13609 North IH 35, Austin, 78753, 512-989-8886**

3000 foot playscape, arcade, restaurant with healthy food choices. Large toddler only area with age appropriate toys, activities, and play elements.

### **Playland Skating Center ([playlandskatecenter.net](http://playlandskatecenter.net))**

**8822 McCann Dr., Austin, 78757 512-452-1901**

Largest roller skating rink in Austin. Wooden skating rink with light show, fog machine, disco ball, and sound system. Admission includes skate rental. Includes indoor playground.

### **Thinkery Austin Children's Museum ([thinkeryaustin.org](http://thinkeryaustin.org))**

**1830 Simond Ave., Austin, 78723 512-469-6200**

Museum that helps kids learn with hands-on exhibits. Activities to interest kids from infants to 11 years old. Special play areas for infants and toddlers.

### **Texas Memorial Museum ([tmm.utexas.edu](http://tmm.utexas.edu))**

**2400 Trinity St., Austin, 78705 512-471-1604**

Natural history museum located close to LBJ Library. Includes dinosaurs and fossils, Texas wildlife, and gems and minerals. It has a gift shop with lots of fun and interesting gifts for kids.



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## CEDAR MYTHS DEBUNKED

I am frequently hired to help clients approach development of their raw tract of land they recently purchased. Without exception, I encounter surprise and curiosity when I strongly discourage removal of all the cedar (correctly called Ashe Juniper – it is not in the cedrus family). The most common misconceptions I encounter go as follows:

1. Cedar isn't a native tree right?

Ashe Juniper is actually a Texas native tree, which was found mostly in mountainous rocky areas (i.e.: the common name Mountain Juniper). Also, it was found in locations where natural fires or fires ignited by the Native Americans did not spread to.

2. Cedar is a very invasive tree!

Ashe Juniper is a successful native plant that is unchecked in reproduction, when the natural cycle (which includes fire) is significantly altered by human efforts. The reasoning of this argument would also conclude that Live Oaks are also invasive. Due to the lack of fires and the avoidance of removing any oaks during clearing of land, we now have the catastrophic consequence of interconnected roots across the entire hill country and the capacity of the oak wilt fungal virus wiping out the vast majority of our Live Oak trees. Historically, our oak motts were much fewer and mostly separated from one another preventing the devastation we now experience.

3. Cedar is a water hog and is sucking all the water out of my land.

Ashe Juniper is actually one of the most efficient water users in our entire cadre of native trees. It is usually the last species to die in a drought. It grows very successfully in places like Junction and Rock Springs, where few other species are able to grow. It is true they are evergreen, but the amount of water they require per diameter inch is less than a Live Oak. I say this not to advocate for the removal of all Live Oaks by any means, rather to show the reasoned conclusion of removal of Live Oaks will also decrease significantly the absorption of water from the ground by a tree species! The fundamental fact behind the shade value of trees to land is this: the Sun exponentially more than any amount or type of plant, causes the desiccation of the soil. Use of a tension-meter in an Ashe Juniper copse and then outside in a neighboring field will substantiate this.

4. Cedar will turn my land into arid, infertile land.

Ashe Juniper significantly minimizes erosion of topsoil. Watch a slow motion video of the effects of a full-speed rain drop on soil. By contrast, Ashe Juniper slowly drips the rain onto the ground. It is a fact that the topsoil under a cedar is deeper. Not only that, it is nutrient-rich humus. The dead needles condition the soil where beneficial bacteria and mycorrhizal fungi populations thrive; the berries and needles significantly help lower the alkaline soil ph.

5. All cedars around good trees should be removed though right?

Actually, Ashe Junipers situated around the perimeter of other trees help buffer them from winds minimizing erosion plus cool the micro-environment (soil temperature, cambial tissue in trunk, canopy of tree near Ashe Juniper) significantly around the tree. In addition, it reduces the loss of moisture of that tree as a result of the effects of the sun to its root system outside its own canopy.

Summary

Generally, my initial approach to Ashe Juniper removal on raw land is a 60% removal and 40% retention. With time, more removal is often warranted. Obviously, Ashe Juniper in a field for grazing or for growing coastal hay is a negative value. But even for livestock, a mature Ashe Juniper can offer excellent shade. Also, raising the Ashe Juniper canopy to 3' or 4' can allow for grass to grow underneath it. Furthermore, wildlife absolutely needs Ashe Juniper as well as highly desirable rare natives such as the Texas Madrone.



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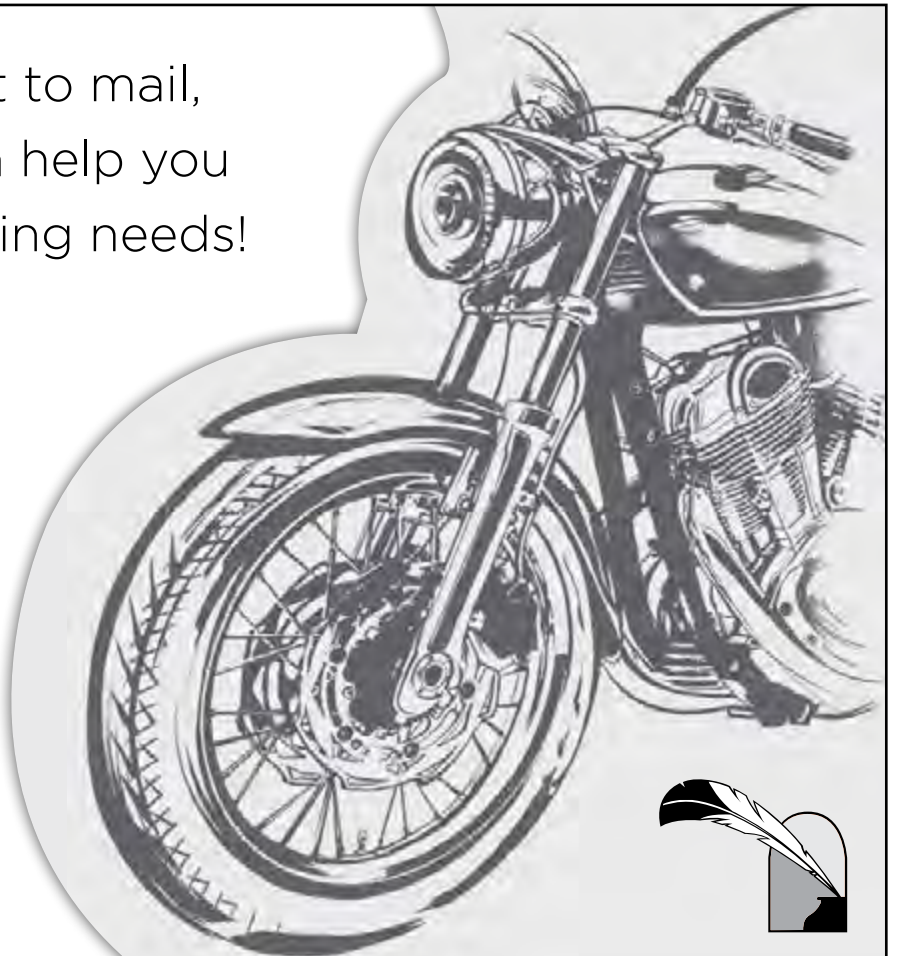
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