The Jester Warbler

Official Publication of Jester Homeowners Association, Inc.

#### December 2016





Volume 11, Issue 12

Spread holiday cheer by lighting up our neighborhood! This year's judging will take place between December 10th and 13th, so make sure your homes are dazzling and bright!

To ensure our judges drive by ALL homes with lights/ decorations in Jester, please register your address, or nominate your neighbor's house, by emailing Rossi at rossibyrne@gmail. com or calling 512-382-6201.

## Jester and Lakewood Hold Joint Firewise Event

by Jeffrey Shapiro

The Jester Firewise Committee and Austin Fire Department hosted an information table at the Lakewood Clubhouse on November 12th that included Smokey the Bear and a fire truck for the kids to check out. Lots of folks passing in and out of the neighborhood stopped by to get information about protecting homes from wildfires and registering for "reverse 911" service and to see the display. "Reverse 911" is a method used by local emergency agencies to mass notify residents of hazardous conditions that affect specific neighborhoods or the entire region. If you haven't yet registered your cell phone and/ or VOIP (such as Time Warner, Vonage, etc.) phone for "reverse 911," it's easy to do online at http://www.warncentraltexas.org/ . It's important to note that, just because you may have registered a 911 address with your phone provider, you ARE NOT set up for "reverse 911." Registering your address with the phone provider only gives the 911 operator your address if you initiate a 911 call. It does not enable your phone to receive reverse notifications from emergency dispatchers.

Stay tuned for another "30 Feet for Firesafety" event in early 2017 to help reduce wildfire risk by creating defensible space around your home. We are currently working with the City of Austin to arrange a special bulk yard waste (a.k.a. "biomass") pickup for this event, and once we have a date, we'll also offer the opportunity for residents to receive a free consultation on reducing your home's wildfire exposure risk. Don't let recent rains fool you into thinking that we're out of harm's way when it comes to wildfire risk. Rain makes plants grow, and when those plants dry out in the summer, the risk of a wildfire risk actually increases.



AFD representatives Josh Portie, Mary Ann Hubbard and Joe Laughran joined by Jester Firewise Committee members Emily and Jeff Shapiro at the Jester/Lakewood Firewise Event.

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#### **ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS**

Interested in submitting an article? You can do so by emailing diana0777@att.net or by going to:

www.peelinc.com/articleSubmit.php. All news must be received by the 12th of the month prior to the issue.

## JESTER HALLOWEEN PARADE

by Teresa Gouldie, Social Chairman

Our Halloween Parade drew a big crowd this year as our neighborhood children gathered at Jester Club dressed in some incredibly imaginative costumes. Led by a decorated golf cart, the children and their parents provided a sea of color as they marched up Jester, around Basil and back to the club. Upon their return, the children were treated to refreshments and an assortment of games and activities, including the ever-popular "prize walk". Two amazing balloon artists (sponsored by Jester Business Alliance, a group of businesses "down the hill" – see ad) created some incredible balloon art for our kiddos. A great time was had by all!

A special thank you, as always, goes out to Terri Milan and Jester Club for providing the location. Thanks also to the amazing teenagers who got up early and helped with the event: Annabel Martin, Kevin Sipple, Leya Khan, Mackenzie O'Connell, Olivia Gonzales, Tyler Sudderth, Kevin Moore, Kaitlin Moore, Sean Moore and Caroline Moore. Our adult volunteers included Eva Wisser, Karl Van Reusen, Matt Allen, Tessie Allen, Kathy Barmettler, Elyse Barmettler, Jennifer Colos and Keith O'Brien. Thanks to all of these great people for creating memories for our Jester children!

We are in need of volunteers for our "Santa on a Fire Truck" event on December 3rd. Please contact me at tgouldie@gmail.com or call me at 512-751-8000 if you can participate.



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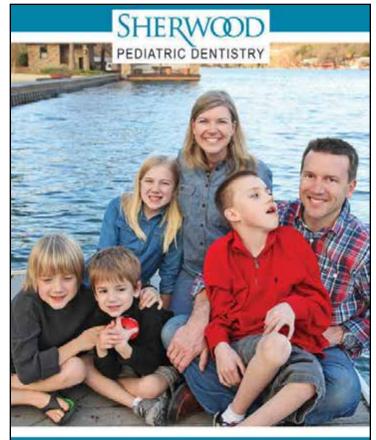








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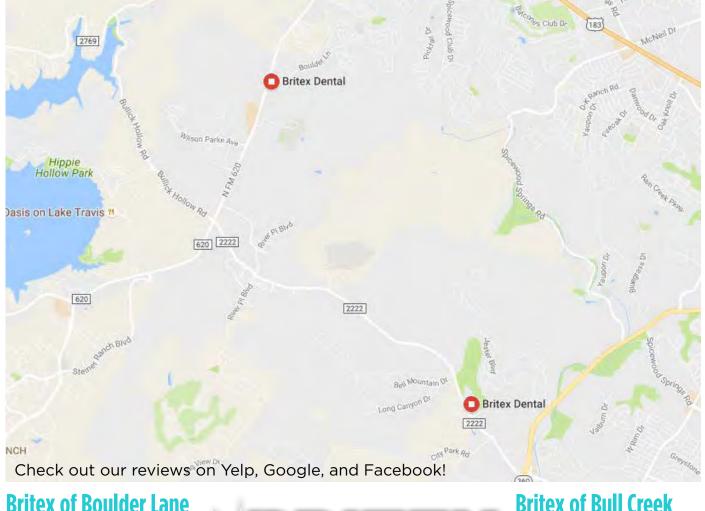
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elcome

### **COMMITTEE NEWS**

The Welcome Committee managed to deliver 7 welcome bags this month, even though it's getting dark early. We don't like showing up unannounced after dark, but fortunately the new residents haven't hesitated to open the doors for us! We actually caught up, delivering bags to everyone we knew had moved in.

#### WE DELIVERED BAGS TO:

1) Stuart and Mary, now residing on the 8100 block of Jester. They moved from Seattle, but were in Charleston the 4 years preceding that. They have a great view and love it! Plus they're happy to have met many of their neighbors already.

2) Poorima and Raghu, with their 2 boys, moved to Elander Drive. They just moved from Steiner Ranch, in order to get a little closer to town.

3) Jean and Clint moved from East Austin to the 7100 block of Anaqua.

4) Sara, Eric, and their daughter Lily moved from the Forest Creek area of Round Rock to the 8000 block of Jester.

5) Dan and Rachel, with Kirra, Rivers, and Saxon moved from the Great Hills area to the 8100 block of Bottlebrush.

6) Amanda and Daniel, with their children Talia, Jonah and Ari, moved from a rental in Jester to their own home on the 8000 block of Bottlebrush.

7) Tim and Lorena moved to the 6700 block of Beauford Drive in September. Their previous home was in Avery Ranch, so they really do feel closer to town!

If you live near any new residents, please stop by and introduce yourself! Also, please contact JoAnn Welles at (512) 484-7588 or joann-welles@sbcglobal.net if you've moved to Jester lately and we haven't welcomed you officially. We may have tried to deliver a bag to you but not found you home.



Amanda and children on Bottlebrush



Eric, Sara and Lily on Jester



Mary and Stuart on Jester Blvd



Tim and Lorena on Beauford

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#### CHEMICAL PEELS

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## **Christmas Cactus** by Jim and Lynne Weber

While most people are familiar with the tropical, non-native species of Christmas Cactus (Schlumbergera sp.) often sold as houseplants, not all are aware that we have a native Christmas Cactus (Cylindropuntia leptocaulis) here in Texas. Our Christmas Cactus, also called Tasajillo, Pencil Cactus, Christmas Cholla, and Desert Christmas Cactus, is a true cactus much more adapted to our types of soils and climate. Common in the central and western parts of Texas, this plant's species name, leptocaulis, means 'slender-stemmed', and it is a very good descriptor of its form.

Upright, shrub-like, with many branches made up of slender, cylindrical jointed segments, this 2 to 5 foot tall plant is most often found growing in sandy or bottomland soils, having a trunk or main stem up to 4 inches in diameter with thicket-forming stems that exhibit various shades of green and feature a solid, woody internal core. While occasionally spineless, it typically has very slender, 1 to 2 inch grayish-white spines grouped with much tinier spines, along each stem. Botanists now think that two forms grow in Texas, a 'long-spine' form and a 'short-spine' form. Its leaves are very small, often not even noticed before they fall early in the growing season. Small, pale, yellow-green flowers appear at irregular intervals in April/May and July/August, opening in late afternoon or evening. But the true color display occurs in December, when its fruits turn conspicuously bright red and seemingly cover the plant like it has been festooned for the holiday season.

Christmas Cactus can grow from seed, but it is much more likely to spread by cloning. The jointed stems can easily detach without harming the rest of the plant, and they are dotted with areoles, a structural feature of cacti that contain buds. All a stem needs to do is come in contact with the right soil, and it can take root and grow a whole new plant.

While the Christmas Cactus can be a nuisance if it develops in the wrong areas, it can also provide desirable value to wildlife and to humans. Growing best under the protection of other vegetation, it offers dense cover for a variety of nesting birds and provides a good food source for white-tailed deer, bobwhite, wild turkey, most bird species, and many small mammals. From a human perspective, Christmas Cactus has a good ornamental value in a mostly xeric landscape, as it stands out in the bleak winter landscape, adorned with red fruit when most other vegetation is bare.

Several sources describe the fruits of the Christmas Cactus as edible, even intoxicating. But they are so small, and the spines so troublesome, that the plant usually yields only a sporadic nibble to the curious human. Nevertheless, native tribes made it part of their traditional diet, noting that the fruits, also called tunas, are vaguely sweet with a taste similar to the fruit of a prickly pear cactus.

Take the time to get to know our native Christmas Cactus and consider adding it to your wildscape. You will easily learn to fall in love with its prickly nature, especially at Christmas time! Send your nature-related questions to naturewatch@austin.rr.com and we'll do our best to answer them. If you enjoy reading these articles, check out our book, Nature Watch Austin (published by Texas A&M University Press), and our blog at naturewatchaustin. blogspot.com.



Tasajillo bloom



Tasajillo fruit

### JESTER HOA HAS A NEW WEBSITE!

The HOA has a new updated, website. Besides HOA documents and contact information, it will keep you informed on the social events throughout the year.

#### WWW.JESTERHOA.COM



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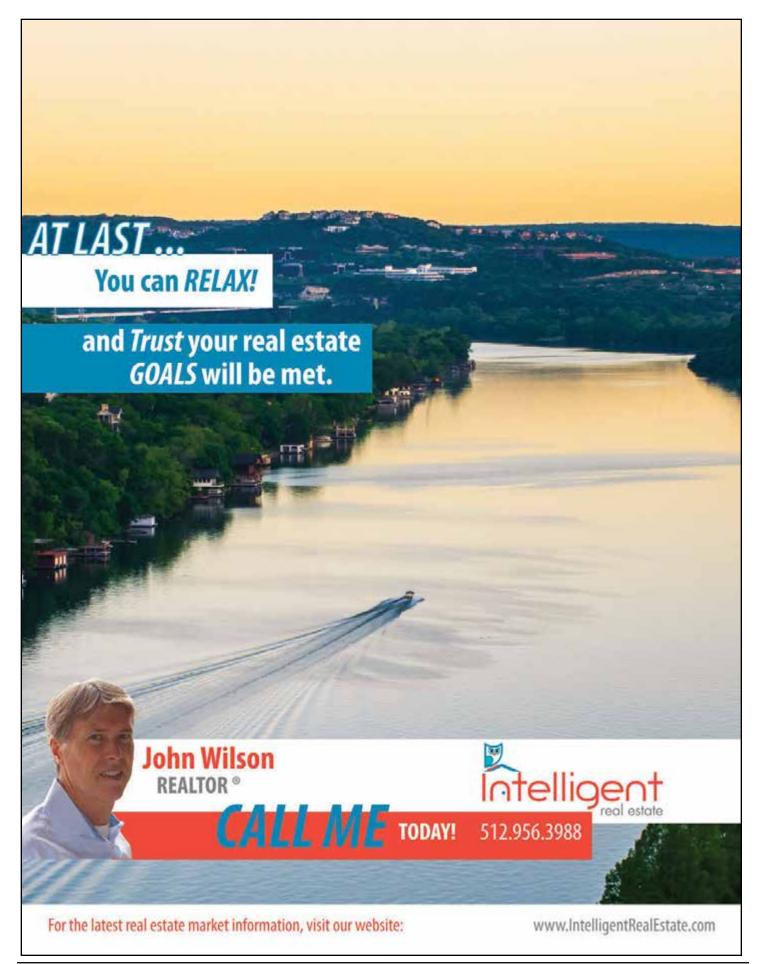
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