



SWEETWATER™

L I F E

FEBRUARY 2017
VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 1ST & 15TH SWEETWATER STORYTIME

9:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Moms, dads, and tots come join us for another fun month of storytime!

***Don't forget, when SWW storytime is happening, the LT Book Mobile Unit is here! Check out books, get a library card, request books, or check out DVD's, audiobooks, and more!

FEBRUARY 1ST BOOK CLUB

7-8 PM

Please join the Sweetwater Book Club to discuss the January book club selection. Feel free to come early to mingle and meet the other club members. POC: Judith Young, Milliespark123@verizon.net

FEBRUARY 8TH FAMILIES IN NATURE LITERATURE IN THE GARDEN

3:30-4:30 PM

Come join the Sweetwater Families in Nature club at the park for a special celebration of Groundhog day, activity, playtime, and craft. Did he see his shadow?

FEBRUARY 10TH CUPID'S COUPLES NIGHT 7-10 PM

Get all dolled up for that special someone and come join us for Cupid's Couples Night. Dinner will be catered, cocktail attire is suggested, and please feel free to bring your own beverage. Hope to see you there!

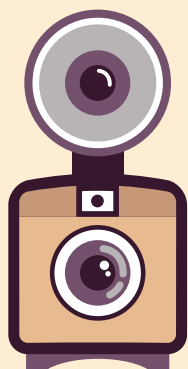
FEBRUARY 18TH FAMILIES IN NATURE BIRDS OF PREY SPECTACULAR! 3-5 PM

Please come join your fellow neighbors for a truly spectacular event in the Pool Pavilion and Clubhouse. Specialists are bringing birds of prey to Sweetwater for a SWEET educational show and experience, you don't want to miss it!

*Happy
Valentine's Day*

COVER PHOTO

Do you take amazing photos?



Do you take great photos? Would you like to see your photo published? We are looking for great cover photos for upcoming issues of the *Sweetwater Life*. Our deadline for submittals is always the 9th of the month prior to the issue. All photos should be submitted electronically by the deadline date in high resolution (300 dpi) to sweetwater@peelinc.com. Portrait (vertical) photos work best.

To view other photos submitted please visit www.PEELinc.com/Sweetwater, and

view any of the past newsletters.

By submitting your photo you agree to allow your photo to be published in future issues of the *Sweetwater Life* or other Peel, Inc. publications. Call 512-263-9181 to find out how to have your business featured on the cover of the *Sweetwater Life*.

ADVERTISING INFO

Please support the advertisers that make the *Sweetwater Life* newsletter possible. The Sweetwater HOA receives this newsletter free of charge provided by the advertisers within. 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 *Sweetwater Life* is mailed monthly to all Sweetwater 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 *Sweetwater Life* please email it to sweetwater@peelinc.com. The deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the issue.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	911
Fire.....	911
Ambulance.....	911
Sheriff – Non-Emergency.....	512-974-0845
Travis County ESD No.6/Lake Travis Fire Rescue	
Administration Office.....	512-266-2533
Travis County Animal Control.....	512-972-6060

SCHOOLS

Lake Travis ISD.....	512-533-6000
Lake Travis High School.....	512-533-6100
Lake Travis Middle School.....	512-533-6200
West Cypress Elementary	512-533-7500

GOODWIN MANAGEMENT

Property Manager.....	512-502-2116
.....	SweetwaterManager@goodwintx.com
Customer Service	512-502-7515
Accounting.....	info@assnsvcs.com
Architectural Review	SWWArchitectural@goodwintx.com

UTILITIES

Pedernales Electric.....	888-554-4732
Crossroads Utilities (Water, Sewer, Trash).....	512-246-1400
Texas Gas Service	
Customer Service.....	1-800-700-2443
Emergencies.....	512-370-8609
Call Before You Dig.....	512-472-2822
AT&T.....	1-800-288-2020
Time Warner Cable.....	512-485-5555
Austin/Travis County Hazardous Waste	512-974-4343

OTHER NUMBERS

Bee Cave City Hall.....	512-767-6600
Bee Cave Library	512-767-6620
Bee Cave Municipal Court.....	512-767-6630
Lake Travis Post Office	512-263-2458
Baylor Scott & White Medical Center.....	512-571-5000
City of Bee Cave	www.beecavetexas.com
Travis County (General No.).....	512-854-9020
.....	www.traviscountytx.gov

NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

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Advertising.....	advertising@peelinc.com

On the Cover

Sweetwater preserves 800-year-old Texas Madrone tree

This month's cover photo spotlights one of Sweetwater's most treasured natural features, the 800-year-old Texas Madrone tree along the trail system on Pedernales Summit Parkway. To go with the photo, we're including one of our most popular blog posts in this issue, telling the story about how this landmark tree was "rediscovered" and preserved for new generations to enjoy.

Sweetwater is home to residents of all ages, including one that's estimated to be 800 years old.

The oldest living being in Sweetwater is a rare Texas Madrone tree, located along the trail that follows Pedernales Summit Parkway, the community's main thoroughfare.

As you drive – or hike – into Sweetwater, just look to the right after crossing the second bridge to see this spectacular tree, with its striking reddish-brown bark and ancient gnarled branches. The tree is especially impressive at night, when it is illuminated by dramatic uplighting.

The Madrone is about 30 feet tall, which might not seem particularly impressive by tree standards, but that height makes it a giant specimen for this extremely slow-growing species.

The exact age of Sweetwater's Madrone tree has not been confirmed, but 800 years is a very solid estimate. One of Sweetwater's landscape architects had recently worked for another Hill Country community with a large Madrone tree, and its age was scientifically proven to be 600 years.

The architect said that because the Sweetwater Madrone was significantly larger than the 600-year-old tree, he was confident with the 800-year estimate.

Discovering the tree was completely accidental, as it had remained hidden among a thick growth of cedar trees, even after Pedernales Summit Parkway and much of the community's infrastructure was completed.

One day, the landscape architect saw a single branch with bright red berries sticking out from the cedars. Right away, he suspected it was a Madrone. Because the branch was at least 15 feet off the



The oldest living being in Sweetwater, The Texas Madrone Tree

ground, he knew it was probably a large one, but had no idea just how old and grand it was.

In the next few weeks, the cedar trees were carefully cleared away to reveal the Madrone in its full glory, but most importantly to prevent the cedars from depriving the ancient tree of water and light.

Apart from pruning dead and damaged branches from the Madrone, the tree thrives with virtually no maintenance.

The Texas Madrone is so well adapted to the rocky, limestone slopes of the Hill Country that it is virtually impossible to propagate. That characteristic, along with its slow growth rate and beautiful red bark, make it such a rare and stunning tree.

Spring and fall are two of the best times of the year to see Sweetwater's ancient Madrone tree, which is also beneficial for the community's wildlife. The bright red fall berries are a favorite food of birds, and the colorful, fragrant spring flower offer nectar for Sweetwater's resident honeybees.

Sweetwater is home to more Texas Madrone trees, although we have not yet seen any others nearly as old and large as the iconic specimen along Pedernales Summit Parkway. Given enough time, however, they will grow right along with Sweetwater.

Reminders from the Property Management Office

Keep the following things in mind in the upcoming weeks:

- Vehicles may not be parked in the street longer than 4 hours at a time. No vehicle may be permanently parked on any road or street within the community unless in the event of an emergency. "Emergency" means an event which jeopardizes life or property.
- Please make sure you are mowing and weeding your yard on a regular basis. A clean and healthy yard helps maintain the beauty of the community.

SWEETWATER LIFE – NEW WEBSITE

Be sure to register on our new HOA website www.SweetwaterLife.com! This is the official communication vehicle for residents of Sweetwater. Visit the site often for events, activities, news, updates and information about living in and around Sweetwater.

Residents of Sweetwater are encouraged to register, by clicking on the Registration button in the Log In box, located in the right hand corner of the homepage. During the registration process, you will have the choice to opt in to our mailing list, and to our Resident Directory.

Login to your account at www.SweetwaterLife.com to view important HOA documents, upcoming events as well as view your account. Need assistance logging in? Contact Customer Service at 512-502-7515 or info@goodwintx.com.

On-Site Property Manager Office Hours:

Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday - 10am – 5 pm

Office Phone: (512) 502-2116

Cell Phone: (512) 850-9097

Email: SweetwaterManager@goodwintx.com



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A LITTLE BIT OF VITAMIN N

"If kids are young and anxious about going outside, bring along something or someone familiar and comforting. Host Teddy Bear Adventures: each child brings a favorite stuffed animal for a shared experience in nature. Or encourage children to invite friends or families to help boost confidence and build social skills. Families can start hiking clubs to increase social opportunities. Without these shared experiences, how will they build important social relationships?"
-- Richard Louv, *Vitamin N: 500 Ways to Enrich the Health & Happiness of Your Family & Community*



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School Board Approves 2017-18 Instructional Calendar

Dear Lake Travis ISD Parents and Guardians,

Our school board approved the 2017-2018 instructional calendar at its regular meeting Tuesday night, January 17th. The calendar was developed in coordination with the District's Advisory Committee on Education (ACE), the District of Innovation (DOI) committee, and input from district and campus staff. The development of our instructional calendar is a critical task that affects our students, staff and community. It is important to applaud these committees and staff for their hard work and commitment.

Please note, the school board approved two (2) versions of the 2017-2018 instructional calendar, one with Expedited Waivers and one without. Expedited Waivers are available through the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and allow districts to incorporate additional days for Professional Development and Early Release. Should TEA rescind its waiver policy—or should any changes be made by the state legislature, the district will use the Optional version of the calendar with fewer Professional Development days and changes in Early Release days.

During Tuesday night's school board meeting, a revision pertaining to Professional Development days in December 2017 and January 2018 was made to the calendar posted in BoardBook. Therefore, please disregard the calendar contained in the January 17, 2017 BoardBook.

According to both versions of the new calendar, the first day of instruction will be Wednesday, August 16, 2017 and the last day of instruction will be Friday, May 25, 2018. Ending the year in May allows more time for planning for summer school and college enrollment for the summer sessions. Additionally, grading periods and semesters are more equally distributed with professional development occurring at the beginning, middle, and end of the year.


Finally, we have added 'LT Family Night' as a district event to be observed Wednesday, October 11. 'LT Family Night' was proposed by the Hudson Bend Middle School student council to the district's ACE committee last year. The intent of this designation is to spotlight the importance of family time for our students, parents and staff. As a result, the district has made a commitment that there will be no homework on 'LT Family Night.'

The school board-approved 2017-2018 instructional calendar and Optional calendar have been posted on each school website (under 'About Us' and 'QuickFind').

Through the work of our committees and input to principals from campus staff, we are confident the 2017-2018 calendar provides the framework for us to best meet the instructional requirements for our students as well as the professional development needs of our teachers and staff. We appreciate your patience through the calendar development and adoption process.

Sincerely,

Brad Lancaster, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools



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Gains
(NOUN)

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IT CAN ALSO REFER TO SOMETHING THAT BRINGS ONE GREAT PLEASURE AND BE USED TO DESCRIBE THINGS OR PEOPLE.

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LT Lov

LTlov's Grants Funding Program provides financial support to other non-profit organizations aligned with our mission statement to support neighbors helping neighbors to overcome limiting circumstances. The money used to grant funds is collected from a diverse list of individuals, corporations, and foundations who believe in the mission of LTlov and trust our organizational efficiency and knowledge of local needs to be good stewards of their donations. In 2016, we funded 12 organizations with a total of \$37,994 dollars through our Annual Grants Funding program. If you're a non-profit and align with our mission, we invite you to fill out an application and submit it to grants@ltlov.org for review and further instructions. The deadline for applications for 2017 Annual Grants is Tuesday, March 21, 2017. Applications are available at www.ltlov.org. Pictured, local students received scholarships to attend the Austin School for the Performing & Visual Arts' World Drumming Camp week. Austin School for the Performing & Visual Arts is a four-time LTlov Annual Grant recipient.



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The Bee Cave Police Benevolent Foundation is holding it's annual fundraising gala at the Sonesta Hotel on the evening of Saturday, February 25th. The Foundation supports the Bee Cave Police Department with unexpected losses as well as promoting public safety for the community. More information including ticket purchases and sponsorship opportunities, please contact Teresa Campbell at 512-925-9139; teresa@bcpbf.org

CROCK POT CHICKEN CHILI DIP

Ingredients

3 - 4 Chicken Breasts
1 can Cream of Mushroom soup
1 can Cream of Celery soup
1 can Cream of Chicken soup
1 can of green salsa
1 16-oz can of chili (without beans)
1 small can of green chilies
4-6 nine-inch flour (or corn) tortilla, cut to 1" square strips
1 ½ cups grated American, Cheddar, & Gouda cheeses

Directions

Boil chicken breasts in boiling water for 25-30 minutes, or until done; let cool. Tear chicken off the bones (unless boneless) into strips, or bite-size pieces. Place into crock pot. Add all other ingredients until blended. Place crock pot on low for 1 hour to heat thoroughly.

Can be enjoyed by itself as an appetizer, or use hearty tortilla chips for a dip.

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Prevent Oak Wilt - Don't Prune Oaks Feb 1st - June 30th

Submitted by Johanna Arendt, Community Liason, Travis County Transportation & Natural Resources

Oak wilt has claimed the lives of thousands of trees in Central Texas and beyond. Majestic oaks play a large role in this region's beauty and identity; it would be hard to imagine the Hill Country without them. They are an iconic part of many local businesses and neighborhoods, providing shade, beauty, and higher property values. Following simple preventive measures can go a long way towards stopping the spread of this destructive disease.

From February through June, avoid all pruning or cutting of oaks – this is the high season for oak wilt transmission. Any wounds that occur from construction, vehicles, wind, etc., should be painted as soon as they're discovered – ideally within ½ hour of being cut – with commercial tree wound dressing or latex paint. That includes freshly cut stumps and surface roots.

Pruning is least risky during the coldest winter days and extended hot periods in mid to late summer. Any time you prune though, the Texas Forest Service recommends painting all wounds and sanitizing pruning equipment between trees using denatured methyl alcohol (shellac thinner), isopropyl alcohol, or a general purpose household disinfectant such as Lysol, Listerine or Pine-Sol. Household bleach is not recommended.

Red oaks, including Spanish (now Buckley) oak, Shumard oak and blackjack oak, are very susceptible to oak wilt and play a key role in the disease's transmission. Oak wilt is caused by the fungus *Ceratocystis fagacearum*, which spreads its spores from "fungal mats" that form under the tree's bark. These mats have a sweet, fruity smell that attracts insects, especially the sap-sucking nitidulid beetle. After feeding and breeding on the fungal mats, these beetles fly away covered in fungal spores. As they visit other oaks, they spread the fungus through open wounds in the bark. The nitidulid beetle is only about the size of a pinhead, but is capable of flying as far as a mile away. While red oaks are the most susceptible to oak wilt, all oaks can become infected.

Fungal mats usually form on standing trees, but can also develop on logs, stumps and fresh firewood cut from infected oaks. Make sure to remove and either burn or bury infected oaks to prevent mats



Leaves from a live oak showing signs of oak wilt. Photo provided by the Texas A&M Forest Service.

from forming, and never store unseasoned wood from infected trees near healthy oaks.

The second way oak wilt can be transmitted is through the roots. Live oaks tend to grow together in dense mottes with interconnected roots, so the fungus can be transmitted easily among them. Oak wilt is occasionally transmitted through red oak roots as well, but the movement is slower and occurs over shorter distances than with live oaks. Root transmission can be prevented by cutting trenches four feet deep between infected and healthy trees, but by far the best option is to prevent infection in the first place.

So make sure NOT to prune oaks between February 1 and July 1, and ALWAYS paint wounds on oaks no matter what time of year it is. For more information on preventing and treating oak wilt, please visit texasoakwilt.org, the website of The Oak Wilt Information Partnership, a project of the Texas A&M Forest Service, the Forest Health Protection branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin.

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Age: _____



**WILL YOU
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VALENTINE?**



Bring the World to Your Child By Hosting a Foreign Exchange Student

By Vicki Odom

If you've read the newspaper lately, you know that the world can be a scary place: wars, economic crisis, revolutions, climate change, border disputes, refugees, and protests. So, how do we teach our children about the world, and the variety of people in it, when most of the examples we read about in the press are so negative?

One life changing way to broaden your child's world view is to volunteer to host a high school foreign exchange student. Foreign exchange programs have been around for almost 100 years, and their mission has always been the same – to educate people about different cultures through person-to-person exchange. What better message to pass on to your children?

There are quite a few misconceptions about foreign exchange programs – especially around who can host. The biggest misconception is that you must have high school aged children when you host a high school exchange student. Nothing could be further from the truth.

"We welcome host families of all shapes and sizes – families with young children, families with no children, empty nesters whose children have left home, single parents and non-traditional families," says Connie Coutu, Regional Manager for Ayusa, a non-profit promoting global learning and leadership through foreign exchange and study abroad opportunities for high school students. "The key requirements for a host family are to provide a safe and nurturing home environment, genuinely love children, and have a desire to learn more about a different culture."

Families with young children find that hosting an exchange student provides their children with an especially unique educational experience in the form of an international big brother or sister. Without even realizing it, children learn about different types of people and different cultural traditions.

"My daughter Kelsie feels as if Isabelle, our exchange student from Germany, is an older sister to her," said Melissa Hughes, an Ayusa host mom from Ashville, North Carolina. "They have confided in each other, have had movie nights together, and have gone to the mall together - much like natural sisters would do. Kelsie will never forget Isabelle and they have already planned future get-togethers when they are older."

Volunteer host families provide foreign exchange students a nurturing environment, three meals a day and a bedroom (either private or shared with a host sibling of the same gender). Each host family and student is supported by a professionally trained community representative who works with the family and student for the entire program. All interested host families must pass a criminal background check and a home visit by an exchange organization.

"In Tunisia, we always hear about Americans and American life style, in movies, media, songs, everything, and I know it is different, and I wanted to figure out this difference myself," said Asma, a bubbly high school student from Tunisia who spent a school year living with the O'Donnell family in Anchorage, Alaska.

Foreign exchange students come from all over the world. Ayusa matches host families with students from more than 60 different countries including Argentina, China, Ecuador, Egypt, France,

Germany, Japan, Lebanon, Norway, Pakistan, Sweden, Thailand, Tunisia and Turkey. All high school foreign exchange students are fully insured, bring their own spending money, and are proficient in English – and all high school exchange programs are regulated by the U.S. Department of State.

Interested host families are required to fill out an application, pass a background check and interview with a local exchange program representative in their homes. Once accepted to a program, host families can view profiles of students to find the right match for their family.

"Hosting an exchange student is a life-changing experience – for the student, the host family, and the host community," says Coutu. "There is no better way to teach your children about the world around them than through welcoming an international high school student into your home."

Ayusa is currently accepting applications for families to host an exchange student for the 2017-2018 school year. For more information about hosting a high school foreign exchange student, please contact Ayusa at 1.888.552.9872 or by visiting the website at:

WWW.AYUSA.ORG



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Warren Chirhart

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We both have lived and worked in the Lake Travis area for many years.

Warren is now a Sweetwater resident too!

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Sweetwater Life

Winter Alert! Protect Your Plants and Irrigation Systems

PROTECT YOUR PLANTS:

Water your plants thoroughly ahead of time. You need to be sure the roots are wet, not just the leaves. Much of freeze damage is from dehydration. Watering before a freeze could make a big difference in your tropics and tender perennials.

Cover your delicate plants. Remember, you want to be sure the roots are protected, covered, or mulched well. Even if you lose the top growth of these tender plants, if the roots are alive the plants will come back in the spring. Do not cover them with plastic touching the leaves of your plants. If possible, use woven frost protection sheets such as N-Sulate (which can be folded, stored, and reused for many years) or sheets and blankets. In a mild freeze or frost, one blanket will probably do for most plants. In a hard freeze (below 30 degrees for any period of time), use a heavy blanket or several layers of sheets. You can even add a plastic over that if you want, since it won't be touching the foliage. Also, don't forget to put rocks or something heavy on the edges of your N-Sulate or blanket to be sure the wind doesn't blow it away, exposing the roots of your plants.

Don't do any heavy pruning on freeze-damaged plants until late winter, when you think all chance of frost is over.

Remove all protective covering if the sun comes out and the temperature goes up, because it can be 32 degrees today and 70 degrees tomorrow.

Along with protecting your tender plants during the winter, remember it's not a good idea to fertilize tender tropics that are exposed to outside temperatures during these cold months. Fertilizing encourages new growth, and that new growth is more vulnerable to freezing and near-freezing conditions than old growth is. It's OK to fertilize and encourage growth with indoor or green-housed tropics, although shorter days usually slow down growth no matter how much you fertilize.

PROTECT YOUR IRRIGATION SYSTEM:

Your backflow-prevention device is the most important part of your irrigation system. It's also the most vulnerable part of your system if there is a freeze. It may be located somewhere right outside the garage and next to the foundation. Cover the top by wrapping the part that is above ground with a towel. It is also best to turn off your valve.

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