

West Lake Hills ECHO

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PREVENT OAK WILT Stop Pruning Oaks Feb 1st



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 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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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

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Texas Gas Service	
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OTHER NUMBERS

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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

Peel, Inc.	512-263-9181
Editor.....	westlakehills@peelinc.com
Advertising.....	advertising@peelinc.com

ADVERTISING INFO

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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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LAS CUATRO ESTACIONES: A STORY OF HUMAN TREES

Las Cuatro Estaciones: A Story of Human Trees is a contemporary dance work premiering March 24-26, 2017 at the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center, 600 River St, Austin, TX 78701.

Part of the Mexican American Cultural Center's Latino Arts Residency Project, these performances are a collaboration between award-winning choreographer Sharon Marroquín and international video artist Ana Baer. Inspired by uncertainty, mortality, and nature, this work explores transformation and our attempts to surrender gracefully to inevitable change. The cast features 8 dancers and several children.

Marroquín says, "A life-altering cancer diagnosis six years ago changed me as an artist. My work is now focused on ideas of impermanence and transition. Las Cuatro Estaciones is about the cycles in nature, and the beginnings and endings in our lives."

For Calendar Listing

Who: Sharon Marroquín, director and choreographer

What: Las Cuatro Estaciones: A Story of Human Trees

When: March 24 at 8:00pm; March 25 at 2:00pm and 8:00pm; and March 26 at 2:00pm

Where: Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center

600 River St. Austin, TX 78701

Tickets: \$15 at the door or at:

<http://sharonmarroquin.wixsite.com/dance>

Contact: 512.740.9130

About Sharon Marroquín

Born in Mexico City, Sharon Marroquín has been listed numerous times as one of the top ten dance events of the year by the Austin Chronicle, and is a three-time winner of the Austin Critics Table Award for Outstanding Choreographer.

To learn more visit <http://sharonmarroquin.wixsite.com/dance>



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Common Structural Termites

There are three main types of termites that can cause problems for homeowners in Texas- native subterranean termites, formosan subterranean termites and drywood termites.

Native subterranean termites have nests in the soil and must maintain contact with soil or an above-ground moisture source to survive. If native subterranean termites move to areas above ground they make shelter (mud) tubes of fecal material, saliva and soil to protect themselves.



Native subterranean termite workers and soldiers.

Formosan termites are a more voracious type of subterranean termite. These termites have been spread throughout Texas through transport of infested material or soil. Formosan termites build carton nests that allow them to survive above ground without contact with the soil. Nests are often located in hollow spaces, such as wall voids.



Formosan subterranean termite workers and soldiers.

Formosan termites feed on a wider variety of cellulose than other subterranean termites, including live plants (and can be found living and feeding on trees), consuming both spring and summer growth wood whereas native subterranean termites feed only on spring growth. Formosan termites have also been known to chew through non-cellulose materials such as soft metals, plaster or plastic.

Drywood termites do not need contact with soil and reside in sound, dry wood. These termites obtain moisture from the wood they digest. Drywood termites create a dry fecal pellet that can be used as an identifying characteristic. They have smaller colonies- around 1,000 termites- than subterranean termites; they also do not build shelter tubes.



Drywood termite fecal pellets.

If you are concerned that you may have termites, call a pest management professional to inspect your home for termites.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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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

(Continued on Page 8)



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The Echo

(Continued from Page 7)

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

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 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.

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