

LONG CANYON

Gazette

APRIL 2017

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE LONG CANYON

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We Run Because They Walk

For up to five hours each day, women and children across rural Africa walk to fetch dirty water for their families - because that's the only choice they have if they want to survive.

This is at the heart of why Water to Thrive exists, to work towards ending the water crisis in order to stop situations like this from happening. And THIS is why we run on April 8th. Because they walk.

Our annual Pump Run 5K and Kids' K is quickly approaching, and we hope you'll join us for this family-friendly and fun event on April 8th. Hosted at Concordia University Texas, the Pump Run brings together people (and dogs!) of all ages from the Austin community to race for a cause. We will have free food, finish line vendors, and lots of kids activities for the whole family to enjoy - including a "walk for water". We have incredible sponsors who have graciously committed to supporting this event, because they believe in what we do at W2T. Take a look at our list of sponsors at thepumprun.org/sponsors.

Haven't registered yet? There's still time! Head to our race website – thepumprun.org – for more information and to sign up. Registration is \$30 for the 5K and Virtual 5K, and \$15 for the Kids' 1K. Your registration comes with a free t-shirt as well! RSVP on our Facebook event page to let us know you'll be there and to get updates in the weeks leading up to the race. Invite your friends and family, and come out to run hard, build wells, and change lives.



Inside Austin Gardens Tour Set for May 6, 2017

By Travis County Master Gardeners Association

The Travis County Master Gardeners Association has set Saturday, May 6, 2017, 9:00am-4:00pm, for their popular Inside Austin Gardens Tour (IAGT). The tour provides a rare look inside five private gardens and one public experimental garden that demonstrate realistic, sustainable gardening practices for Central Texas that will inform and inspire.

The tour's theme remains: "For Gardeners. By Gardeners", focusing on the vast variety and practical beauty of native and well-adapted plants in the garden. In turn, each garden has a theme that highlights a particular set of characteristics Central Texas gardeners are likely to encounter in their own gardens. Those themes are:

Earth-Kind Landscaping – environmentally friendly principles and a secret garden

Wildlife Restoration, Preservation – 23 acres of fruits, veggies, beehives and miniature horses

Birds, Butterflies, and Zen – natives, natural attractors along with meditation space

Sun & Shade – sunny daylilies to die for; shady umbrellas and gingers to soothe the soul

A Journey Through Fairyland – whimsical design, a plethora of plants and a garden piano

AgriLife Testing Ground – rainwater collection, new varieties and proven winners

Wendy Buck, the 2017 IAGT Chair, described the unique nature of the tour this way: "This really is a garden tour for gardeners, by gardeners. These distinctive private gardens have never been open to the general public before. Our aim is to educate and enthuse. Interested gardeners can experience a wide array of ideas, learn the details from the Master Gardeners that created the gardens, and know how to execute those ideas successfully in their own gardens."

Native and well-adapted plants require less water and less maintenance. They survive the Central Texas environment which

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(Continued from Cover)



includes erratic swings in temperatures, high summer heat both day and night, drought, flood, clay soil, and rocky soil. And, they are remarkably varied in style and structure. Natives provide food for animals and insects while establishing a beautiful, unique sense of place. They are

the foundation of all the sites on the Inside Austin Gardens Tour.

About Inside Austin Gardens Tour

Originating in 2005, the IAGT is held every 18 months by the Travis County Master Gardeners Association and Travis County AgriLife Extension Service. The one-day event features behind-the-scenes looks at gardens of Travis County Master Gardeners. As many as 2,500 people typically attend. A pass to all six gardens is \$20 in advance or \$25 on the day of the tour. Individual gardens are \$5. The event is held rain or shine from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Only service dogs are allowed. Complete information and tickets at www.INSideAustinGardens.org.

Spring Cleaning Get It Done!

It's that time of the year again when we set out to do spring cleaning. To declutter and get rid of things that we don't use. I think this is the best time of year to consider donating. Get rid of all the clothes that don't fit, toys that the kids don't play with, and household goods that you just don't use or need anymore. These things can be someone else's treasures. I encourage you to look at donating your items to the local homeless shelter, a local church, or a nursing facility. Many of these facilities can utilize having the quality the items. I would call ahead of time to make sure that your chosen facility is open to taking your donations. If you are unable to find anywhere to donate your items, you can always take them to the Goodwill. You can also sign up for the Simply Recycling program here in Austin. This program is through the Austin Resource Recovery. They will send out green bags to your home. You fill the bags and you place them outside near your recycling cart for collection. If you have any questions about this program or need more information on what can be donated feel free to give them a call at 1-866-835-5068 or email them at info@simplyrecycling.com.

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NATURE WATCH

THREE TERRIFIC TREES

by Jim and Lynne Weber

Trees are often planted for their ornamental value, or to provide shade, but there are many other reasons to plant them. They improve air quality by producing oxygen and storing carbon, which offsets the harmful byproducts of burning fossil fuels. They can moderate the effects of sun and wind, reduce air conditioning costs, and clean the air by trapping dust and pollen. Trees can also be credited with increasing property values, lowering our heart rates and reducing stress, and providing shelter and food for many types of wildlife.

In Central Texas, three terrific trees that are native to our area include Escarpment Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina* var. *eximia*), Mexican Plum (*Prunus mexicana*), and Carolina Buckthorn (*Frangula* or *Rhamnus caroliniana*). All three of these trees are medium-sized, deciduous, display fall color, and benefit wildlife by producing fruit.

Escarpment Black Cherry is a distinct variety of Black Cherry, found only on the calcareous soils in our wooded hill country canyons, slopes, and floodplains. Up to 50 feet tall, this tree is prized for its attractive silvery trunk and branches, five-inch long clusters of showy white blooms that occur in March and April, juicy summer fruits, and vivid yellow to red fall foliage. While the small dark red to purple-black cherries it produces are edible, the rest of the plant is not, and the cherries are often eaten first by birds. Several butterflies, including Viceroy, Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, Two-tailed Swallowtail, Red-spotted Purple, and Striped Hairstreak use this tree as their host plant.

Often called the 'star of our native plums', Mexican Plum is easily recognizable in spring, as it is an early bloomer. Before the leaves appear, white to pale pink, five-petaled flowers cover the 15 to 35 foot tall tree from February to April, and they are extremely fragrant, attracting several species of native bees and butterflies. Plums up to one-inch wide turn from yellow to mauve to purple as they ripen July through September, and they are edible for humans and wildlife alike. Thick, five-inch long leaves provide food for the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail and Cecropia Silkmoth, and turn a showy shade of orange in autumn. Mature trunks are a beautiful satiny blue-gray with horizontal striations, typical of most fruit trees.

Lesser known is the Carolina Buckthorn, an understory tree 12 to 15 feet tall, with oval, shiny green leaves and small yellow clusters of blooms produced near the leaf stems in May and June. It prefers bottomlands, canyons, and streamsides, and in light shade it is airy and tiered. Bright red fruits turn to black when ripe, and are relished by many birds and mammals. The leaves stay green into late fall, turning various colors from yellow-gold to bronze-sienna as the weather cools. Carolina Buckthorn is also the host plant for Spring Azure, Gray Hairstreak, and Painted Lady butterflies.

Consider adding one or all of these terrific trees to your property. While the best time to plant trees in Central Texas is in the fall, it's never too late to plan for future enhancements to your native landscape!

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 two books, *Nature Watch Austin & Nature Watch Big Bend*, both published by Texas A&M University Press, and our blog at: naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com.



Escarpment Black Cherry (blooms & fruit)



Mexican Plum (blooms & fruit)



Carolina Buckthorn (blooms & fruit)

How to Raise a Confident Child

Neena Hamamcy, MA, LPC, LMFT

A child's self-worth is the gateway to social success and sound mental health. Developing healthy self-esteem is the building blocks of child development and affects us at every age of our lives, determining how we act, not just in childhood, but also as adults. Having low self-esteem drives behavior problems, troubles in relationships and school performance, to name a few. As parents, we are greatly influential in how our children perceive themselves, thus ensuring that we raise our children to grow to have confidence and positive self-worth is essential for their success as adults. Here are some ways to help improve your child's self-esteem:

Help Your Child Express and Embrace their Feelings

When your child looks in the mirror and sees themselves, you want to make sure that they like who they see. One way to ensure this is to cultivate a relationship where you encourage your children to express their feelings openly. When you take the time to listen and accept their feelings, you are sending a message that they matter and how they feel is important. A child's feelings are part of who they are as individuals, thus embracing their feelings is in effect embracing them. When a parent listens and validates their child's feelings, it makes a child feel valued and worthy. If a parent repeatedly responds to their child's feelings with hurt, anger, shame or judgment, the child receives a message from a parent that their feelings are wrong and that their parents are not emotionally available. This can lead a child to shut off their emotions, which in turn can lead to behavior problems down the road. The way a child feels about themselves reflects in their behaviors. By listening and accepting your child's emotions, your child will feel loved, valued and reassured that you are capable of meeting their needs emotionally.

Teach Ownership

It is important to distinguish between a child's feelings and their actions. You want ensure that your child feels loved, but you also want to hold your child accountable for undesirable actions. Setting clear expectations and having consequences is essential for teaching accountability and promoting self-esteem. Helping your child take ownership for their actions helps them learn that their actions have consequences and that they can control the outcome based on their choices. "If I make good choices, then good things follow, if I make bad choices, then bad things follow." Just as kids learn to be accountable for their mistakes, they also learn to own their achievements and success. Without this accountability, children miss the opportunity to experience the joy and satisfaction that comes from mastering their efforts. It is important to allow children to learn from their missteps and develop the resiliency to deal with their failures and the difficult feelings that accompany. We have morphed into a society that struggles with negative emotions and what we often see are parents trying to protect their children from

unpleasant feelings. Where everyone is a winner and there are no losers; where in an effort to preserve self-esteem, we try to protect our children from feeling bad about themselves. This approach actually produces the opposite outcome; it creates children that are spoiled, entitled and view themselves as victims. A parent who intervenes and tries to protect their children from difficult feelings and situations, inadvertently interferes in learning lessons that build self-esteem and resiliency that set the path for success in adulthood. Parenting with accountability allows children to own their failures as well as their achievements and empowers kids to see they have control over the outcome of their lives.

Create Experiences to Help Your Child Feel Successful

Help your child find their strengths and acquire skills, whether it be academically, socially or in extracurricular activities. One way children measure their self-worth is by how others perceive them, and in our society that is full of measuring and comparing, children can be vulnerable to heightened criticism and comparison. Emphasize to your child that you accept and love them regardless of their performance. Create opportunities for them at home and outside the home, where they can accomplish goals and feel the satisfaction of completing a task. Experiences of success create confidence and foster self-esteem. Experiences that can foster self-esteem include having chores and responsibilities at home, participating in athletics, or other areas of social or extracurricular interest. Encouraging their independence and helping your children be responsible will encourage positive self-worth.

Try to Understand and Heal your own Self-Worth Issues

Parenting can be emotionally intoxicating as well as draining. Becoming a parent tends to bring out the best and worst of ourselves. As we navigate through such an intensely emotional relationship with our children, we are often confronted with our own insecurities and fears. Becoming a parent has a way of bringing to the surface our own unresolved emotional issues stemming from our relationships with our own family or origin. Our children's self-worth is not genetic, but rather learned and especially in early childhood, is a reflection of the parent's sense of self, particularly the mother. A parent's unhappiness is passed down to a child, and children view your unhappiness as unhappiness with them. It is important to address your own insecurities and fears because no matter how many parenting books you read, if you don't address your own self-worth issues, you are bound to pass them to your kids. Looking at your own wounds from your early childhood and trying to understand the positive and negative ways your parents influenced your self-esteem can help you identify ways to break the cycle in your own relationships with your children and help promote your own self-worth as well as your children's.

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DellChildrens.net/EmergencyCare

The Lost and Found Lollapalooza

Calling all families! Join the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, The Refuge Ranch and beLydia for a day of music, markets, food and carnival games...all to benefit the fight to keep children safe. On June 4, 2017 from 2pm until 7pm, Pecan Springs Ranch will become the Lost and Found Lollapalooza. All proceeds from the event help provide prevention education as well as rescue and restoration of victims of child trafficking. This G-rated event promises to be a safe, fun day for guests of all ages. Whether you want to create your own home cleaner, decorate a tee pee, play carnival games or just listen to live music and eat from the cool food trucks, the Lost and Found Lollapalooza has it all. You can even have your family's picture made, pull out your own fishing poles and fish the stocked pond or relax with a locally sourced refreshment. The marketplace will feature jewelry, children's books, freshly baked goodies, a coffee bar, festival gear and more. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children will be on hand to help parents install mobile safety apps, and The Refuge Ranch will have tiles for painting that will eventually decorate the shelter being built. beLydia young entrepreneurs will be hosting their microbusinesses all day, too! Maybe a lemonade stand, maybe a sandal-making shop, perhaps wands and capes, these young fundraisers are working to raise money to keep their peers safe. Please join us for a wonderful, happy day that will benefit not only your family, but children throughout Central Texas and beyond. Tickets available online at Eventbrite. Contact events@beLydia.org for more information or to become a donor or event sponsor.

SAVE THE DATE
TO KEEP KIDS SAFE!



Sunday, June 4, 2017 | 2:00-7:00 PM

Pecan Springs Ranch

\$35 for 12+

\$20 for 3-11 years of age



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