



# DICK NICHOLS SUMMER SWIM TEAMS

The City of Austin's recreational swim team program is organized to develop the potential and serve the recreational needs of boys and girls who are interested in learning about competitive swimming. In addition to emphasizing good sportsmanship, team spirit and lifelong fitness, the program aims to build swimmers' self-esteem through the enhancement of physical competence and mental fitness.

## Prerequisites

Must be 5 to 17 years old.

Swim 25 yards continuous freestyle (front crawl), exhibiting proficient breathing patterns.

Swim 25 yards continuous backstroke (back crawl) or 25 yards continuous breaststroke, exhibiting proficient kick & body position.

## Fees

Resident Fees: \$75.00 (\$70.00 swim team + \$5.00 TAAF fee)  
\$10.00 for team T-shirt (optional)

## Dates

June 9 – July 12

TAAF Regional Swim Meet July 19

State Games of Texas July 31 – August 3

## Dick Nichols Devil Rays Black

Practice Times: 7:00am - 9:30am

## Dick Nichols Devil Rays Red

Practice Times: 9:30am - 12:00pm

**For more information or to register, visit [www.austintexas.org/swimming](http://www.austintexas.org/swimming)**



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## Recapture

As the new assessed values were received in the mail, the topic of Austin's rising property taxes has been almost every homeowners' mind this past month. Many neighbors have expressed that they have a vague understanding that a significant portion of their property tax dollars is sent out of the Austin area, but that they don't know much about the details. This letter of explanation from Paul Cruz, AISD's superintendent, is sure to shed some light on the process.

Dear Taxpayers,

You may have noticed that your recent tax bill included a line item attributed to the Austin Independent School District. I would like to explain what happens to over a third of the school property tax dollars you may believe are being used to support our own Austin students.



Currently, more than 35 cents of every AISD (M&O) tax dollar collected is kept by the state because AISD is considered property-wealthy under the state's recapture law, which is also known as Robin Hood. In other words, the district has been told it MUST pay in fiscal year 2017 an estimated \$406 million of your property tax dollars to the state of Texas. The number of districts that are paying Robin Hood is higher than ever, and recapture has grown to a \$2 billion revenue stream for the state.

Effectively, the legislature uses your tax dollars to reduce the amount it would otherwise contribute to public education from other sources. And, while local taxpayers will pay more than \$1 billion to AISD this year, AISD keeps less than \$700 million and receives only \$37 million in state funding.

Yes, you read that correctly – in essence, AISD will send over 10 times more funds to the state this year (\$406 million) than it will receive in state funding (\$37 million). There are more than 1,200 school districts in Texas, and AISD is the single largest payer into recapture, representing nearly 12 percent of the total recapture revenue that the state collects.

During the next five years, we estimate the state will take almost \$2.6 billion in recapture payments from AISD. By 2019, we expect more than half of every AISD dollar Austinites pay in taxes will be sent to the state if something does not change.

*(Continued on Page 5)*

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Ambulance .....	911
Sheriff – Non-Emergency .....	512-974-0845

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Clayton .....	512-841-9200
Kiker.....	512-414-2584
Mills .....	512-841-2400
Patton .....	512-414-1780
Middle	
Bailey.....	512-414-4990
Small.....	512-841-6700
Gorzycki .....	512-841-8600
High School	
Austin .....	512-414-2505
Bowie.....	512-414-5247

### UTILITIES

Water/Wastewater	
City of Austin.....	512-972-0101
City of Austin (billing) .....	512-494-9400
Emergency .....	512-972-1000
Texas State Gas	
Customer Service .....	1-800-700-2443
Gas related emergency .....	1-800-959-5325
Pedernales Electric Cooperative	
New service, billing .....	512-219-2602
Problems .....	512-219-2628
ATT/SBC Telephone	
New Service .....	1-800-288-2020
Repair .....	1-800-246-8464
Billing .....	1-800-288-2020
Allied Waste .....	512-247-5647
Time Warner Cable.....	512-485-5555

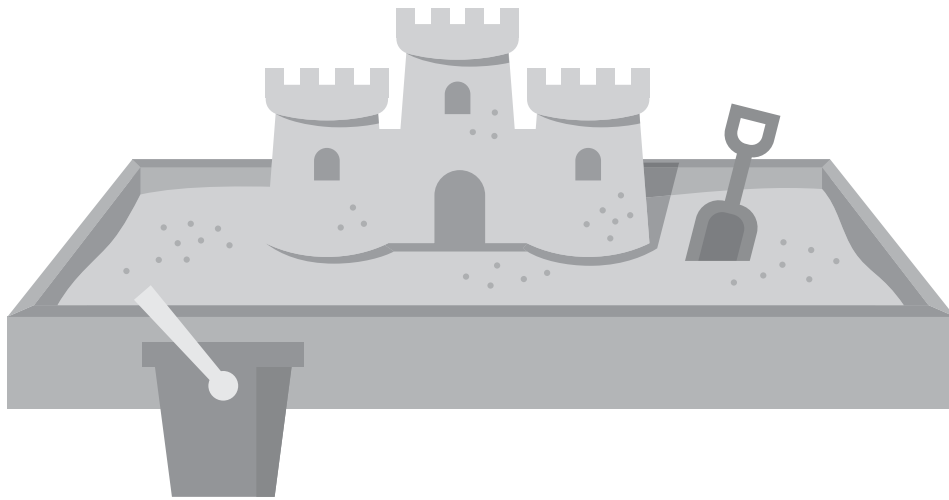
### OTHER NUMBERS

Oak Hill Postal Station.....	1-800-275-8777
City of Austin	
Dead Animal Collection.....	512-494-9400
Abandoned/Disabled Vehicles .....	512-974-8119
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Street Light Outage (report pole#).....	512-505-7617

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[DellChildrens.net/Specialties](http://DellChildrens.net/Specialties)

(Continued from Page 3)

At Austin ISD, we face many growing challenges in serving our students and families, including:

- \* Over 50% of our students live in poverty; 28% are English language learners; and more than half are considered to be at risk of dropping out or not meeting the state's academic standards.

- \* The cost of operating schools increases just as the cost of living in Austin does.

- \* Teachers are leaving AISD for more competitive pay in other districts.

Simply put: We need more of our local dollars to stay in our local schools.

Unfortunately, the state's over-reliance on recapture is leading to an unintended, inequitable burden. Austin taxpayers and taxpayers in other communities are forced to shoulder a growing amount of the cost of public education in Texas.

We know there are districts throughout the state that need additional funds to educate their students, but it is the duty of the state—not local taxpayers—to provide those funds.

We ask for your support as we approach the legislative session and implore Texas lawmakers to keep local dollars in local schools. You can

follow our efforts and learn more by visiting [www.austinisd.org/legislature](http://www.austinisd.org/legislature).

Again, thank you for your continued support of Austin public schools.

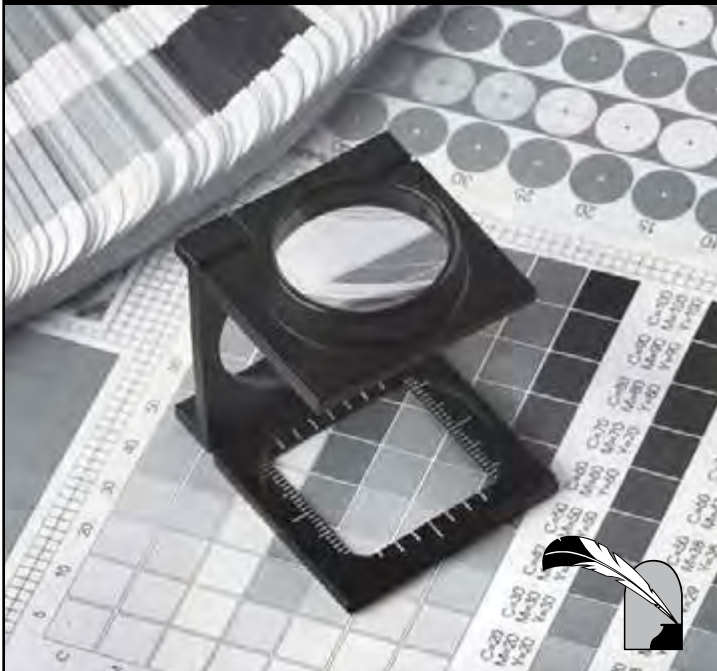
Paul Cruz, Ph.D.

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## PUZZLE EXCHANGE

Did you know that we have a puzzle exchange group in our neighborhood? That's right! Here's how it works:

1. On the designated exchange days, drive to the exchange location
2. Bring a puzzle
3. Take a puzzle from the bin by the curb.  
Leave your puzzle in the bin
4. Sign the log before returning your puzzle
5. Enjoy new puzzles without the cost!

Current Exchange Location:

6206 Salcon Cliff Austin, TX 78749

Upcoming Dates:

Sat. May 6 from 9am – 7pm

Sat. May 13 from 9am-7pm

Basic Rules:

- Please do not take a puzzle without leaving a puzzle. You can keep the puzzle for as long as you need to get it completed (you don't have to come each week), but be nice to neighbors - if you don't have time in the near future, bring it back for others to use.
- New puzzles: Include a copy of the puzzle log with your puzzle so we can have fun tracking where it's been! There are printed copies in the bin.

- Puzzles should have all the pieces. If a piece is missing, please note it on the log and notify the original owner so they can take it out of circulation.

- The bin is located by the curb on the designated days. Just come by whenever it is convenient for you! The bin is brought in other times to protect the puzzles from weather and vandalism.

More information at <http://puzzle.hootfly.com/>



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## MOSQUITO REPELLENTS

As mosquito season is ramping up, everyone is (hopefully) aware of possible disease transmission by mosquitoes. It is important that you protect yourself when spending time outside.

Activity times for mosquitoes can vary. Most people are familiar with the four D's- DRAIN (standing water), DEET (wear some repellent), DUSK & DAWN (stay indoors during dusk and dawn to avoid peak populations) and DRESS (wear long sleeves and long pants). While this is still good advice, it may be a good idea to spread the dress and repellent advice for anytime you spend time outdoors.

When outside, wear long pants and a long sleeved shirt in light colors to reduce the number of mosquitoes that can reach your skin. Repellent should only be applied to clothing and exposed skin. Do not apply repellent underneath clothing! If you want to apply repellent to your face, spray your hands with repellent and rub it onto your face. Do not spray repellent directly into your face or near eyes or mouth. Make sure to apply repellent outdoors. Do not allow children to handle repellents. Wash hands before eating, smoking or using the restroom.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends using a product registered with the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) containing one of the following active ingredients: DEET, picaridin, IR3535 and some of the products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus.

DEET, also known N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide or N,N-diethylbenzamide, was developed by the U.S. Army in 1946 to protect soldiers in insect-infested areas. Pesticides containing DEET have been used by the general public since 1957. Products containing DEET should not be used on children younger than 2 months of age (read the label and check with your pediatrician if you have questions). DEET has a slight odor and may have a greasy feel to some people. It may damage plastic, rubber, vinyl or synthetic fabrics. DEET may be irritating to the eyes and skin for some people. DEET comes in a wide variety of concentrations, so choose the one that will work best for your situation.

Picaridin was first made in the 1980's and resembles a natural compound called piperine (which is found in plants used to produce black pepper). Picaridin has been used in Europe and Australia for many years, but has only been in the U.S. since 2005. Picaridin is non-greasy and is odorless.

IR-3535, or 3-[N-Butyl-N- acetyl]-aminopropionic acid, ethyl ester, was developed in the mid- 1970's and became registered for use in the U.S. in 1999. It is registered as a biopesticide by the EPA because it is functionally identical to a naturally occurring substance (an amino-acid). It may dissolve or damage plastics and may be irritating to the eyes.

Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or PMD (para-menthane-3,8-diol)

are essentially the same thing; PMD is the synthesized (lab created) version of oil of lemon eucalyptus. "Pure" or "essential" oil of lemon eucalyptus is not labeled as a repellent and has not undergone testing and should not be used as a repellent product. OLE/PMD has been on the market in the U.S. since 2002. OLE/PMD should not be used on children younger than 3 years of age. The natural product (OLE) has known allergens within it while the synthetic version (PMD) has less of a risk to allergens. This product is classified as a biopesticide. OLE/PMD has a varying range of residual, some offering about 20 minutes of protection while other products may last up to two hours.

Many factors play into how long a repellent will last for a person.

### Some of these are:

- The concentration (or percent of active ingredient) of the product. You can find the percentage on the product label.
- Person's attractiveness. Some people are more attractive to mosquitoes than others (and no scientific research has proven that it is because of eating garlic, taking vitamin B, using tobacco products, etc.). A person's genetic code plays a large part on what makes a person so attractive to mosquitoes.
- Frequency and uniformity of application. In other words, how often is the repellent applied and how good of coverage did you get?
- Activity level of the person. The more active the person is, the more sweat they produce which can cause the repellent to wash off the surface of the skin.

As a word of caution, there are products that combine sunscreen and insect repellent. The CDC recommends that if you need sunscreen and repellent, that you choose two separate products. Sunscreen should be applied more often than repellents.

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](http://www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com)

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## FIRECRACKER RUBBED PORK LOIN

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp. fresh sage leaves, finely chopped
- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 2 tsp. onion powder
- 2 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. ground black pepper
- 2 tsp. dry mustard
- 2 tsp. paprika
- 1/2 tsp. ground red pepper
- 1 (4 to 5 lb) boneless pork loin, not rolled or tied

### DIRECTIONS

1. Mix herbs and spices in small bowl; rub over all surfaces of pork. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight (can be stored up to 2 days).
2. Prepare grill with a banked medium-hot fire. Unwrap pork and place over indirect heat. Grill for 1 to 1-1/2 hours or until thermometer registers 150F to 155F. Remove from grill; let rest 10 minutes before slicing.

Serves 8 to 12



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## NATURE WATCH

### THE ZEN OF WRENS

by Jim and Lynne Weber

Wrens are small to medium-sized birds, generally drab in color, typically grayish-brown with barring in the wings and tail. But oh, when they sing, they have loud, melodious, and often complex songs! Active and vocal, they frequently carry their tails in an upright position, and have adapted well to the presence of humans. Some of the species of wrens that can be found in our area include Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*), Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*), and Canyon Wren (*Catherpes mexicanus*).

Deep cinnamon brown above and warm buff below, with a white throat and prominent white stripe above the eye, the Carolina Wren is a vivacious bird common in moist woodlands and wooded suburbs. Males sing year round and are known to have a repertoire of about 32 songs, the most common being 'cheery cheery cheery!' and 'teakettle-teakettle!' This bird is routinely seen around yards, garages, porches, and woodpiles, often nesting in those same places. Pairs stay bonded year around, and often raise multiple broods a year.

A subdued brown and gray bird with a white eye stripe, gray-white underparts, and a long tail barred with black and tipped with white spots describes the Bewick's Wren. It typically flicks its tail from side to side or fans it as it skulks through tangles of branches and leaves, searching for food. Nimble and acrobatic, it often hangs upside down from tree branches and leaves. While it favors dry, brushy areas, it is often found inhabiting gardens, residential areas, and parks. The male has a repertoire of up to 22 songs, usually beginning with two or more high, quick notes, dropping into a lower, buzzy phrase, and ending on a high trill. Courting birds normally form monogamous pairs.

The Canyon Wren has a white throat and breast, chestnut belly, brown back flecked in black, and a bright rufous, barred tail. It prefers areas with rocky cliffs, canyons, outcrops, and boulder piles but it will often build its nest in stone buildings or chimneys. This wren has a slightly flattened skull and a vertebral column attached higher on the skull, and these adaptations allow it to thrust its bill forward into tight cracks without bumping its head. While its repertoire consists of only 3 songs, its most common is an exquisitely beautiful descending cascade of liquid notes.

Wrens are mainly insectivores and are often found hopping about, climbing short walls and tree trunks, or making brief flights to search out and glean insects from crevices and cracks. In fact, their family name Troglodytidae is derived from troglodyte, meaning 'cave-dweller', generally referring to the places in which they forage. Their fairly long and slender, straight to slightly decurved bills assist them in exploring every nook and cranny for insects and spiders.

This spring, take the time to listen to the highly variable, sweet

sounding, rollicking songs of these little birds. Get in tune with amusing antics, and discover for yourself the zen of wrens!

*Send your nature-related questions to [naturewatch@austin.rr.com](mailto: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](http://naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com).*



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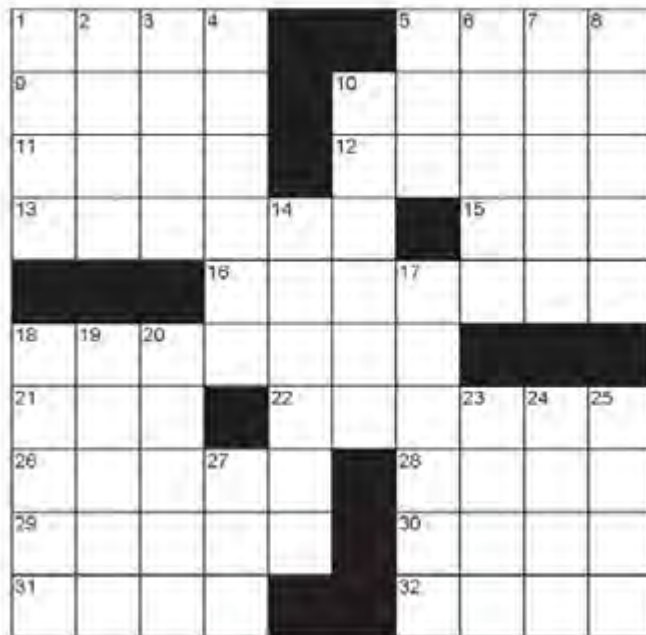
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### ACROSS

1. Catch in nylons
5. Speed
9. Station
10. Scoop out
11. Healing plant
12. Colder
13. Geneve
15. Consume
16. Collective Israeli farm
18. Chewbacca's partner (2 wds.)
21. Card game
22. Legume
26. Coding system
28. Portend
29. Induct
30. Look
31. Loch \_\_ monster
32. Opp. of yeses

### DOWN

1. Male deer
2. Large African river
3. Long time
4. Mediterranean island dwellers
5. IBM Competitor
6. Adios
7. Sports shoe projection
8. Hz
10. Apt
14. Purplish color
17. Candy
18. Woman
19. Negative battery terminal
20. Averages
23. African nation
24. Bored
25. Dregs
27. Bro.'s sibling

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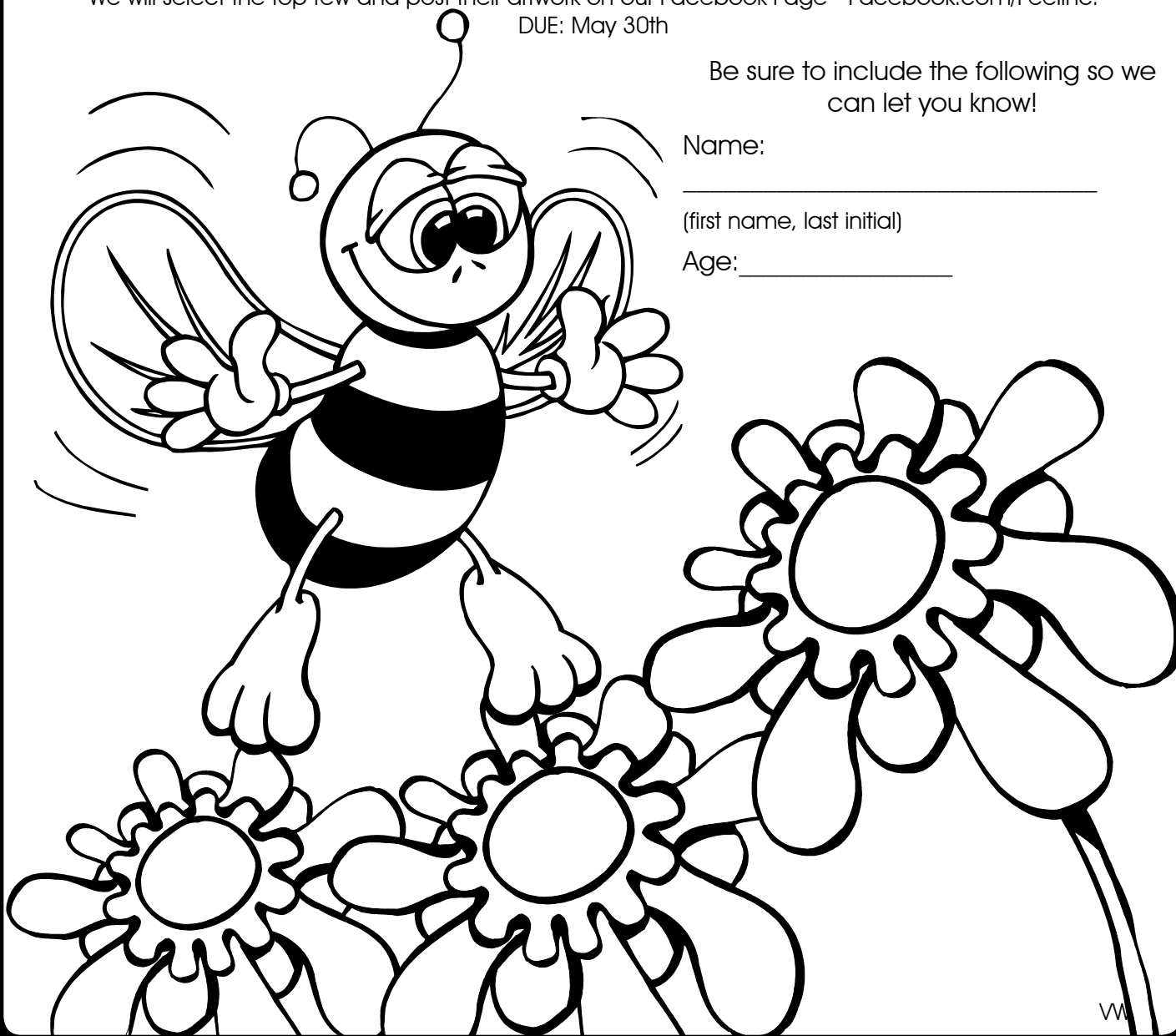
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(first name, last initial)

Age: \_\_\_\_\_



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