

# • Season's Greetings! • • •

Snowflake

By: Sharonna Banks Snowflakes slowly falling. Touching my cheeks. Gently caressing my skin with the bitter bite of frost.

Kissing my pores deeply. With the ache of last night's mistake. A dance in the wind. Controlled by no one. Wanted by all.

The snowflakes dancing gracefully to the ground.

With no care of the misfortune they bring. No thoughts of the crisp slap they leave in their wake.

No remorse as the they ruin yet another productive winter day.



## FINDING HOPE

Sometimes I just feel broken. Broken as in not whole, shattered & not even sure how to begin putting the pieces back together. Are all of the pieces even still there?

I'm not going to lie. Living and dealing with emotional trauma is no cup of tea. You feel lost, beaten, broken, and very much alone. You frequently feel things will never get better. After all, how can they ever be as good as they were (or, at least, as good as you thought they were) when you're this broken shell of a person. Then, you watch and see the rest of the world passing, and think, "Why even try? It's hopeless."

With the passing of spring, I've been thinking about the significance of this particular season at this junction of my life. Spring is the season of rebirth and renewal; the time of fresh starts. So, as I sit & watch the renewal of everything around me, I wonder... What about me? Can I be renewed? Is there enough left of this broken person to put back together, fill the holes, and turn out a new person fresh and whole?

I've found that spending time with friends, both the human and equine variety, is a great healer. They have become my glue that pulls the shattered pieces back together. While spending quiet moments relaxing with my horse I hear God more clearly, telling me that I have purpose in this life. What came before was meant to happen, if only to prepare me for what is to come and to help me become the person He means me to be. Learning God's plans for me not only helps reassemble the scattered pieces, but leads me to discover new pieces, more vibrant than the old ever were. Suddenly, I find myself renewed and, just like that, there it is--- Hope Resurrected



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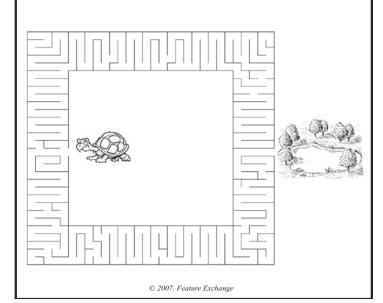
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### Kidz Maze Mania

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Fire	
Ambulance	
Sheriff – Non-Emergency	

#### SCHOOLS

ROUND ROCK ISD	
Patsy Sommer Elementary	
	16200 Avery Ranch Blvd.
Elsa England Elementary School	
	.8801 Pearson Ranch Road
Cedar Valley Middle School	
McNeil High School	
6	

#### LEANDER ISD

Rutledge Elementary	
Stiles Middle School	
	3250 Barley Rd.
Vista Ridge High School	

#### UTILITIES

City of Austin Water	
Perdernales Electric	

#### TEXAS GAS SERVICE

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### RANCH REPORT

### CHRISTMAS ON CONGRESS TO BE HOSTED AT PARAMOUNT THEATRE BENEFITTING ALZHEIMER'S TEXAS AND AUSTIN SUNSHINE CAMPS

Christmas on Congress is set to be an elegant and meaningful night where remarkable musicians and guests come together to support and further the legacies of Alzheimer's Texas and Austin Sunshine Camps. Presented annually by the National non-profit, Music and Memory, this wonderful evening will lead with a goal of making music the gold standard for healing.

Christmas on Congress will take place on Friday, December 15th at the Paramount Theatre and will feature performances by Marc & Ted Broussard, Reed Turner, Jackie Venson & Eve Monsees, along with Roses & Cigarettes with Circling Drones & Jeff Anderson. For over 100 years, the Paramount Theatre has served as an essential venue in Austin, Texas. Paramount Theatre continues to play a significant role in supporting the many causes in the community that continue to make Austin, Texas unique.

Prior to the performance, a featured VIP reception featuring the top ranked chef in the world will be held on the balcony level. Awardwinning chef, Matt Peters led the United States team to their first ever gold in the prestigious cooking competition, Bocuse d'Or. Prior to Peter's appearance, the United States had never placed higher than second place in over thirty years of the world's most elusive cooking competition. To enjoy this rare opportunity, email Matt Stanley for information on VIP ticket options.

Beneficiary, Alzheimer's Texas offers a variety of programs and services for people battling the disease, their families and their friends. These programs and services provide information, education, support and guidance for every stage of their Alzheimer's journey.

Serving the Austin, Texas community's youth through after school programs and summer camps, beneficiary Austin Sunshine Camps is one of the oldest continuously-operating nonprofits in Austin and has empowered generations of youth through education and outdoor experiences.

If you are interested in being a presenting sponsor, there are many levels still available. Please contact Matt Stanley for details. For general admission ticket information, visit: http://bit.ly/2ziRO8m. For more information regarding release material, please contact: Matt Stanley, Founder/CEO of Sundance Memory Care and Hinson-Matthews, at mstanley@hinsonmatthews.com.



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### RANCH REPORT



### SHARE YOUR AMERICA

What if you didn't have chocolate chip cookies, Dr. Pepper, corndogs or \*gasp\* Tex-Mex food or Whataburger? These are just some of the things that we take for granted every day. Imagine having a whole year to experience new foods, a new culture, a whole new life! That's what hosting an exchange student is all about!

STS Foundation is currently looking for families for the 2018/2019 school year. What does it take to be a host family? STS accepts all types of families, be it single parents, young marrieds, empty nesters or same sex couples – we are looking for families that are willing to Share their America with a high school student for the year. All you need to provide is three meals a day and a room for them to sleep in. The student can share a room with a same sex sibling that is within five years of their age. Each student comes with their own spending money and health insurance. Most of all, they come with an excitement to learn all they can about our American way of life.

Hosting is a great way to learn about the student's culture as well, perhaps even learn a few new words in a new language. It's a way of opening a new world to your children as well. Most importantly, it's a way of making the world just a little bit smaller, so that we can all live in peace and harmony together.

If you are ready for this amazing experience, please give me a call, I'd love to talk with you more about it. I am one of the Houston area STS Local Coordinators, I've worked with foreign exchange students for seven years and have also hosted 13 students on my own. I can tell you anything you need to know about hosting. Please contact Vicki Odom at 832-455-7881 or via email at vicki.stsfoundation@ gmail.com.

STS Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization who mission is to facilitate educational opportunities where all participants can break down cultural barriers, and gain respect and understanding of each other's way of life.



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### TEXAS A&M GRILIFE EXTENSION

# **CARPET BEETLES**



Carpet beetles adults can be found outdoors on crape myrtles or other plants where the adults eat pollen and nectar. The adults may also be found in rodent or bird nests. When these adults move into homes, they may lay eggs which can lead to problems.

These beetles can be pests in warehouses, homes, museums and other locations.

Carpet beetle adults are small, round to oval shaped and often brightly colored. Larvae are small, tan, and ringed with bands of long hairs.

Carpet beetle larvae feed on high protein foods, usually animal based, but they can also feed on plant material. They can be found in a variety of locations throughout the home. In the pantry, you may find them in items such as powdered milk, dried meats (jerky), or pet food. Other areas of the home they can be attracted to items made from wool, fur or feathers, areas where dead insects accumulate (i.e. light fixtures), leather book bindings, hair, silk or dried plant products. If the larvae are seen feeding on synthetic fibers, it is because the material is stained with body oils or food.

A program utilizing sanitation, exclusion and insecticides should be able to get a carpet beetle problem under control.

Clean accumulations of hair, dead insects, and bird, rodent

or wasp nests

- Regularly clean rugs, carpets, upholstery, etc.
  o make sure to get along edges, under cushions, and under furniture where debris may collect
- Inspect animal based items (taxidermied animals, leather, wool, silk, etc.) once a year to avoid infestations
- Keep pantry items/ dry goods in sealed, air-tight containers
- Infested items (if possible, depending on the items) can be heated or cooled to kill any beetles
  - o freeze 2 weeks at temperatures below 18°F
  - o heat for at least 30 minutes to temperatures above 120°F
- Insecticides should be used as spot treatments- make sure carpet beetles are listed on the label as well as the area/ item you are treating

omake sure the product will not stain

If you find a few adult carpet beetles in your home, squish them on vacuum them up. A few adults usually do not warrant a full treatment, but you should watch for a developing infestation.

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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