

Canyon Creek CHRONICLE

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WESTWOOD BAND BOOSTERS SELL MULCH FOR MUSIC EDUCATION

Spring is right around the corner and local residents have the opportunity to support band students while increasing their curb appeal. The Westwood Area Band Boosters are selling Texas Native brand mulch this month.

Both the Texas hardwood and black mulch are sold in two cubic foot bags, priced at \$5 each. Volunteers and students will provide free delivery of the mulch on March 3 to homes and businesses in the Westwood area. Customers do not need to be home for delivery to take place. Order online by February 18 at westwoodband.org with credit or debit card, Paypal or check.

Proceeds from the mulch sales will be used to purchase new band equipment, provide scholarships for private lessons and offset transportation costs.

In 2017, the Westwood Warrior Band performed at 10 football games and competed in five competitions, earning a finalist spot at Bands of America Super Regional in St. Louis. Nearly 300 students participate in band classes at Westwood High School. Additionally, Westwood Area Band Boosters also provides support for the band programs at Canyon Vista and Grisham Middle schools.

“Each year our expenses increase, but the district can’t increase our funding,” said Jack Green, director of the Westwood Band. “Mulch sales help ensure every student who has an interest can be a part of the band.”

In addition to supporting the band, mulch offers multiple benefits to landscapes. It provides a contrast for blooming flowers, adds nutrients to the soil as it decomposes and makes flowerbeds more drought tolerant.

According to horticulturists at Texas A&M University, mulch allows soil to soak up more water and also reduces the rate of water loss through evaporation. A four-inch layer of mulch dries much faster than the soil below, preventing water from moving into the air.

Mulch also helps control weeds. It won’t prevent weed seeds from sprouting, but a thick layer of mulch can stop the weeds from emerging if the mulch blocks out the sunlight. Four inches is the recommended amount of mulch to achieve this effect.

Texas Native mulch is produced by Austin Wood Recycling, a locally-owned business. Ordering mulch from a band student not only helps the band, but also boosts the local economy.



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	911
Fire.....	911
Ambulance	911
Sheriff – Non-Emergency.....	512-974-5556
Hudson Bend Fire and EMS	

SCHOOLS

Canyon Creek Elementary.....	512-428-2800
Grisham Middle School.....	512-428-2650
Westwood High School	512-464-4000

UTILITIES

Pedernales Electric.....	512-219-2602
Texas Gas Service	
Custom Service.....	1-800-700-2443
Emergencies.....	512-370-8609
Call Before You Dig.....	512-472-2822
AT&T	
New Service.....	1-800-464-7928
Repair.....	1-800-246-8464
Billing.....	1-800-858-7928
Time Warner Cable	
Customer Service.....	512-485-5555
Repairs.....	512-485-5080

OTHER NUMBERS

Balcones Postal Office	512-331-9802
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DON'T WANT TO WAIT FOR THE MAIL?

View the current issue of *The Canyon Chronicle* on the 1st day of each month at www.peelinc.com

LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE... BARKING DOGS BE HUSHED!

Canyon Creek has been receiving complaints regarding nuisance dog barking. Dogs bark...this is what they do...this is how they communicate. However, barking dogs encourage other dogs to bark, that might not otherwise do so. Pretty soon there's a cacophony of barking that is not music to your neighbor's ears. Problems arise in a neighborhood when a dog barks incessantly and the constant barking causes a nuisance and inappropriate behavior. If you spend a lot of time away from home working, traveling, etc., you may not realize what the pooches are doing while you're away. In most cases, the 3 main reasons for problem barking are: loneliness/separation anxiety, insufficient training and neglect. If you own a dog please be sure that it does not become a nuisance. Ultimately it is up to the dog owner to accept responsibility and actively pursue a solution to the nuisance barking. There is plenty of advice on the internet to help with reshaping your dog's nuisance behavior via proper training and obedience classes. And...there are humane devices to stop the barking whether it's your dog or the neighbors.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM

If you are on the receiving end of the nuisance barking ask yourself these questions.

1. Am I losing sleep?
2. Is it negatively affecting my health and/or wellbeing?
3. Is it affecting my personal relationships?
4. Can I hear it in my home with or without the windows closed?
5. Does it disrupt the enjoyment of my front and/or back yard?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, you owe it to yourself and

your family to contact the dog owner.

If you have a problem with a neighbor's barking dog(s) and feel comfortable in doing so, you may approach them neighbor to neighbor and say something like: "Your dog has been barking for 2 hours solid and I just wanted to be sure everything is ok". (Dogs have been known to bark incessantly when their owner has been incapacitated and unable to call for help.) It also will help if you can enlist other neighbors that may be "suffering in silence".

If you do not feel comfortable speaking to your neighbor or they are unresponsive, you may contact the HOA manager at Manager@canyoncreek.net

You may view the pet policies for Canyon Creek at the HOA website: <http://www.canyoncreek.net/bark/>

You will find that nuisance barking is a violation of community rules and city ordinance.

SOME POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO DOG BARKING:

(Continued on Page 3)

(Continued from Page 2)

1. ULTRASONIC bark control devices/collars (humane, non-shock)
2. BARK ENDER – is a company that will anonymously contact your neighbor/dog owner by mail, informing them of the problem, solutions and possible legal consequences. Cost: \$14.95 plus S&H at barkender.com
3. Quit it! Instant Pet Trainer can be found at PetsMart for \$10.99. It is a 4 ounce aerosol can that hisses.



SEND US YOUR Event Pictures

Do you have a picture of an event that you would like to run in this newsletter? Send it to us and we will publish it in the next issue. Email the picture to ARTICLES@peelinc.com. Be sure to include the text that you would like to have as the caption. Pictures will appear in color online at www.PEELinc.com.



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TALKING BASEBALZ, FIGHTING MEMORY LOSS

Jim Kenton has been a self-described “baseball geek” since the age of seven. He fondly recalls immersing himself in the world of baseball every summer of his childhood, glued to the radio listening to broadcasts of games, and racing to collect the latest baseball cards and magazines. Over a lifetime, Kenton’s knowledge of baseball has grown so vast that now he is using it to give back through a truly innovative program. Beginning on January 29, Jim and Alzheimer’s Texas will launch an effort to help people living with dementia reconnect with a lifetime of memories through conversations about a shared passion: baseball.

The program will provide a form of what’s called reminiscence therapy. While people with early-stage Alzheimer’s may have difficulty with their short-term memory, their long-term memories remain intact for many years. Through guided, focused reflection on a beloved childhood pastime like baseball, people with Alzheimer’s can explore and enjoy early life memories and reconnect with their essential sense of self. Additionally, the group allows people to connect with supportive peers who share

their interests and can relate to the experience of memory loss.

Research into reminiscence therapy is very promising and indicates that the simple act of sharing memories can have outcomes like improved mood, communication, and even functional ability. The practice can involve not only conversation, but interacting with sounds, smells, and sensory experiences that trigger long dormant memories.

The program will not only help participants reconnect with meaningful memories from childhood, but will also allow them to create new ones. The group is currently recruiting participants in the early stages of dementia with an interest in baseball. Meetings will be held on alternating Mondays starting January 29 from 11:00 am-12:30 pm at the Alzheimer’s Texas Office (3520 Executive Center Dr. #140, 78731). Lunch will be provided. A pre-screening interview is required to participate in the program, please contact 512-241-0420 x10 or vcardenas@txalz.org for more information and to schedule your interview.

REACHING YOUR NEIGHBORS

and many others...

- Avery Ranch
- Bee Cave
- Belterra
- Canyon Creek
- Circle C Ranch
- Courtyard
- Forest Creek
- Highland Park West Balcones
- Jester Estates
- Ladera
- Lakeway
- Legend Oaks II
- Long Canyon
- Meridian
- Northwest Austin Civic Association
- Parkside at Mayfield Ranch
- Plum Creek
- River Place
- Rocky Creek
- Sendera
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NATURE WATCH

RASCALLY RACCOONS

by Jim and Lynne Weber

Although easily recognized by its bandit mask and ringed tail, the Northern Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) is a widespread mammal but not often seen due to its nocturnal habits. It consumes a highly varied diet, is very intelligent and curious, and possesses a far greater manual dexterity and mental ability than cats and dogs, enough to defeat any but the most determined defense of garbage cans or home gardens. Much has been made of the intelligence of raccoons, with recent studies showing they are capable of remembering tasks for up to three years, possessing a mental acuity more closely approximating that of monkeys.

Denning above ground in tree cavities, chimneys and attics, underground in old burrows, storm sewers and crawl spaces, raccoons mate from February to August with 2 to 5 young (or kits) in each litter. Previously thought to be solitary, related females can share a common breeding territory, while unrelated males live together in small groups to guard their mating opportunities against potential rivals. Raccoons have a large array of over 50 vocalizations, including hissing, growling, purring, squealing, and chirping. They can run up to 15 mph, are efficient tree climbers, and can survive unharmed if dropped from heights of up to 40 feet. Raccoons are found throughout all regions in Texas, but they are seldom found far from water, which has an important influence on their distribution and breeding success.

Contrary to popular belief, raccoons do not wash everything they eat, but they do manipulate their food (appearing to wash it when water is available) in order to tactually experience the object rather than actually clean it. In fact, the word 'raccoon' was adopted into English from a now extinct language called Powhatan, which was spoken by the native peoples of Tidewater

Virginia, and translated to mean 'one who rubs, scrubs, and scratches with its hands.'

Raccoons exhibit rascally behavior by stealing food out of pet dishes, eating fish out of backyard ponds, and knocking over trash cans and scattering the contents. Additionally, they can carry and spread disease like rabies and parvovirus. However, since they are scavengers, they play an important role in keeping our ecosystems healthy by cleaning up carrion (keeping our surroundings sanitary), eating other species we humans consider pests (when numbers get out of control), and spreading the seeds of native

plants (by consuming berries and nuts).

You can do your part to keep their destructive behavior at bay by resolving conflicts compassionately. Contain available food sources by putting your trash out in the morning instead of the evening, feeding your pets indoors, and placing netting over ponds containing fish. Close all entry points to your home and other outdoor structures, so they are not used as dens to raise young. If a family of nesting raccoons is found in or around your home, they should not be removed until the end of nesting season in the fall. Separating the young from their mother will mean they will starve to death, and trapping and moving the family will



Northern Raccoon

likely result in death from resident raccoons, and is a Class C misdemeanor in Texas (this applies to transporting or selling live raccoons, coyotes, and foxes from, to, or within the state).

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

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NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE

HITTING THE SLOPES THIS SKI SEASON?

Keep in mind these tips to preventing injuries on the slopes.

By Kelly Cunningham, MD, Sports Medicine specialist

As a former US Olympic Men's Ski Team physician and orthopedist, every year during the winter months I treat many ski & snowboard injuries in Austin recreational athletes of all ages and abilities.

For 15 years, as a traveling doctor for the team, I accompanied the athletes throughout the US, Canada and Europe on the World Cup tour and was responsible for the triage, stabilization, and treatment of injuries in these world-class skiers.

One of the most frequent questions I get this time of year from my patients who ski is

"How can I avoid hurting myself on the ski slopes?"

So what do I tell recreational skiers about staying healthy on the hill?

First and foremost, adjust to the altitude in your first few days. While there are medications that will improve your blood oxygen, they require a prescription and can have side effects. Perhaps the easiest to take along are low-dose aspirin or ginkgo biloba, as both are safe (unless allergic) and easy to take. Low-level exercise and lots of water (especially during the first night) are also key, as is abstinence from alcohol during the first 24 hours at altitude. Early trip moderation equals a better mountain experience!

Modern skis, boots, and bindings are universally safe now, unlike in decades past. Multi-release bindings help you come out of your skis safely in a fall and with less stress on your knees, the most commonly injured joint in a skier. Make sure they are set correctly.

Speaking of knees, in most solid, intermediate skiers, unlike beginners (learning to stop) and racers (ACL injury from shear forces), serious knee injuries are actually quite rare.

The best way to protect yourself from ski injury is:

- Get in good "ski-shape"
- 6 weeks of strength and some aerobic training will suffice
- Ski within your limits
- Stay relaxed, focused & well hydrated
- Watch out for that last, fatigued run of the afternoon
- If you fall, fall forward and throw your hands in front of you
- it's proven that less knee and shoulder injuries occur in the forward lean of a fall.

And always, always, wear a helmet!

Austin, Texas, resident Kelly Cunningham, MD is board certified by the American College of Orthopedic Surgeons, and an active member of the Arthroscopy Association of North America and the International Cartilage Repair Society



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Peel, Inc. - Kids Club

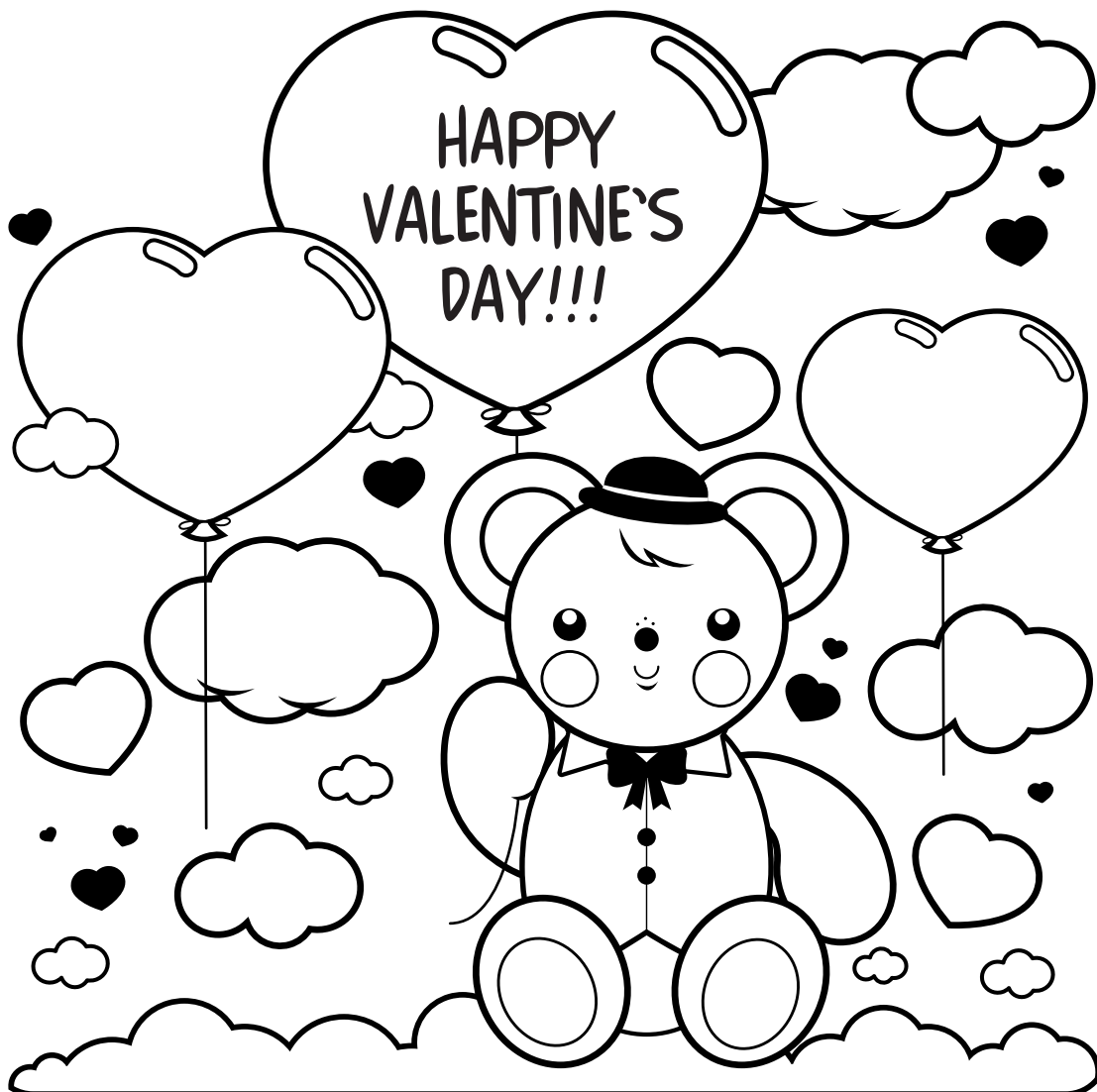
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DUE: January 31st

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