



FEBRUARY 2018 VOLUME II, ISSUE 2

A Newsletter for the Residents of Legend Oaks II

ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

In Texas alone, roughly 1,270,000 caregivers provide an average of 20 hours a week of unpaid care for friends and loved ones. Caregiving is a demanding undertaking and results in high levels of stress. One core service of Alzheimer's Texas is to provide support to caregivers through volunteer facilitated support groups.

"These groups educate and inform participants about dementia and help caregivers develop methods and skills to solve problems," says Christian Wells, President of Alzheimer's Texas. "They encourage caregivers to maintain their own personal, physical and emotional health as well as providing peer guidance on how to care for the person with dementia."

At 7:00 pm on the third Tuesday of every month, caregivers in the Austin area can gather at Tarrytown Methodist to share their experiences in a safe, supportive environment. Meetings last about an hour and there is no charge to attend.

"We provide a safe, confidential space for caregivers to share what only other caregivers might understand," says Barbara Wiederaenders, facilitator at Tarrytown Methodist. "The mutual trust is precious and supportive."

Event Details:

When: 3rd Tuesday of Every Month, at 7:00 pm

Where: Tarrytown Methodist, 2601 Exposition, Room 227, Austin, TX 78703

Contact: Barbara Wiederaenders, (512) 451-0684 or (512) 845-6117

To find out more information about this program, Alzheimer's disease or Alzheimer's Texas, email vcardenas@TXAlz.org or call (512) 241-0420.

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.

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HITTING THE SLOPES THIS SKI SEASON?

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

SPECIAL NEEDS FORUM PRESENTS

SSI: You've Got Questions, We've Got Answers

The Special Needs Forum continues its free workshop series designed to educate families who have a loved one with special needs.

The next Special Needs Forum live event of the 2017-2018 school year will be held on Thursday February 8, 2018 and on the topic; SSI: You've Got Questions, We've Got Answers. We'll discuss how to get started with your Supplemental Security Income application and review the steps along the process. Understand the vital importance of why this needs to be done as soon as your child obtains age 18. We are very fortunate to have a coordinator from the Central Texas Social Security office lead this presentation.

Location: 6200 Bridgepoint Parkway
Building IV, 2nd floor (take right off the
elevator and main room will be immediately on
the left)
Austin, TX 78730
Date: Thursday February 8, 2018
Time: 11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Fees: Complimentary

The Special Needs Forum is an educational resource for families who have a loved one with special needs. During the workshops you will socialize with other families, get to know businesses who specialize in helping the special needs community and learn valuable information.

This year's lineup includes a Panel of special education experts, admissions directors from various residential communities and a specialist from the Social Security Administration.

Parents and guardians of children with special needs as well as those who teach and work in the special needs care industry are invited to attend. Each Special Needs Forum workshop includes an informative presentation by a keynote speaker and a question and answer segment.

To register and to view upcoming sessions, visit specialneedsforum.org.



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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.

CIRQUE ITALIA

CIRQUE ITALIA IS THRILLED TO PRESENT THEIR NEWEST AND GREATEST CREATION - AQUATIC SPECTACULAR. YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS ITS DEBUT IN AUSTIN, TX!!

What comes to mind when you hear the phrase "Aquatic Spectacular"? Water, entertainment, excitement.....? You can expect all these things and so much more from the brand new themed Cirque Italia production with its perfectly fitting new title. After six years of enhancements, a rigorous casting selection, and countless performances nationwide, this newest form of Cirque Italia's innovative and unique "traveling circus" spectacular production is set to be its finest to date.

Aquatic Spectacular came to life all thanks to its imaginative creator Manuel Rebecchi, along with invaluable direction and production management by Chanté DeMoustes. Cirque Italia's brand-new theme show is an artistic blend of human abilities, technology and the element of water. This one-of-a-kind production combines water fountains, jet-skis, pirates, and more in a fun filled atmosphere all ages are sure to enjoy.

Performers from all over the world have been brought together under the enchanted spiral of the white and blue big top. The merging of their astonishing skills with the poetic element of water has led to the creation of a truly unforgettable experience. Cirque Italia has managed to create a beautifully unique theatrical production by combining the gracefulness of the human body with the calming fluidity of water, along with bursts of power and excitement as well.

Aquatic Spectacular offers two hours of high-end entertainment. Beautiful aerialists dazzle and shimmer on a chandelier high above the ground, but they aren't the only ones that will draw your eyes toward the sky. You can expect to see contortion in a bubble, a Venetian aerial duo, and even someone hula hooping while in the air. Don't worry about getting your eyes checked, you aren't seeing double; there are TWO lasermen. Duo jugglers, duo roller-skaters, the always breathtaking wheel of death.....the list goes on and on. It is even possible for a pre-historic dinosaur to make an appearance. Let your imagination wander, because anything is possible in this new whimsical production.

One might be concerned that such a spectacular entertainment opportunity is out of his/her price range, but Cirque Italia is committed to bringing a Las Vegas quality production to your hometown at an affordable price. They also feature many special offers and promotions.

Cirque Italia continues to contribute to the modernization of the performing arts and the circus industry by abiding by a strict animal free policy.

For more information visit www.cirqueitalia.com and make sure to check all our social media accounts.

When: February 2-5 & 8-11

Where: 2901 S Capital of Texas Hwy, Austin, TX 78746

At: Barton Creek Square

Located: In the parking lot near Dillard's

Under the grand, swirling White and Blue tent!

- February 2 Friday: 7:30pm
- February 3 Saturday: 1:30pm, 4:30pm, & 7:30pm
- February 4 Sunday: 1:30pm, 4:30pm, & 7:30pm
- February 5 Monday: 7:30pm
- February 8 Thursday: 7:30pm
- February 9 Friday: 7:30pm
- February 10 Saturday: 1:30pm, 4:30pm, & 7:30pm
- February 11 Sunday: 1:30pm, 4:30pm, & 7:30pm

Box office hours:

The box office opens on-site on Tuesday, the week of the show.

Non-show days: 10am – 6pm

On show days: 10am – 9pm

You can purchase tickets through our website (cirqueitalia.com/tickets) or by phone: (941) 704-8572. We also respond to text message.



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after your pets and
"scoop the poop"**

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