

THE BULLETIN

Belterra Community News

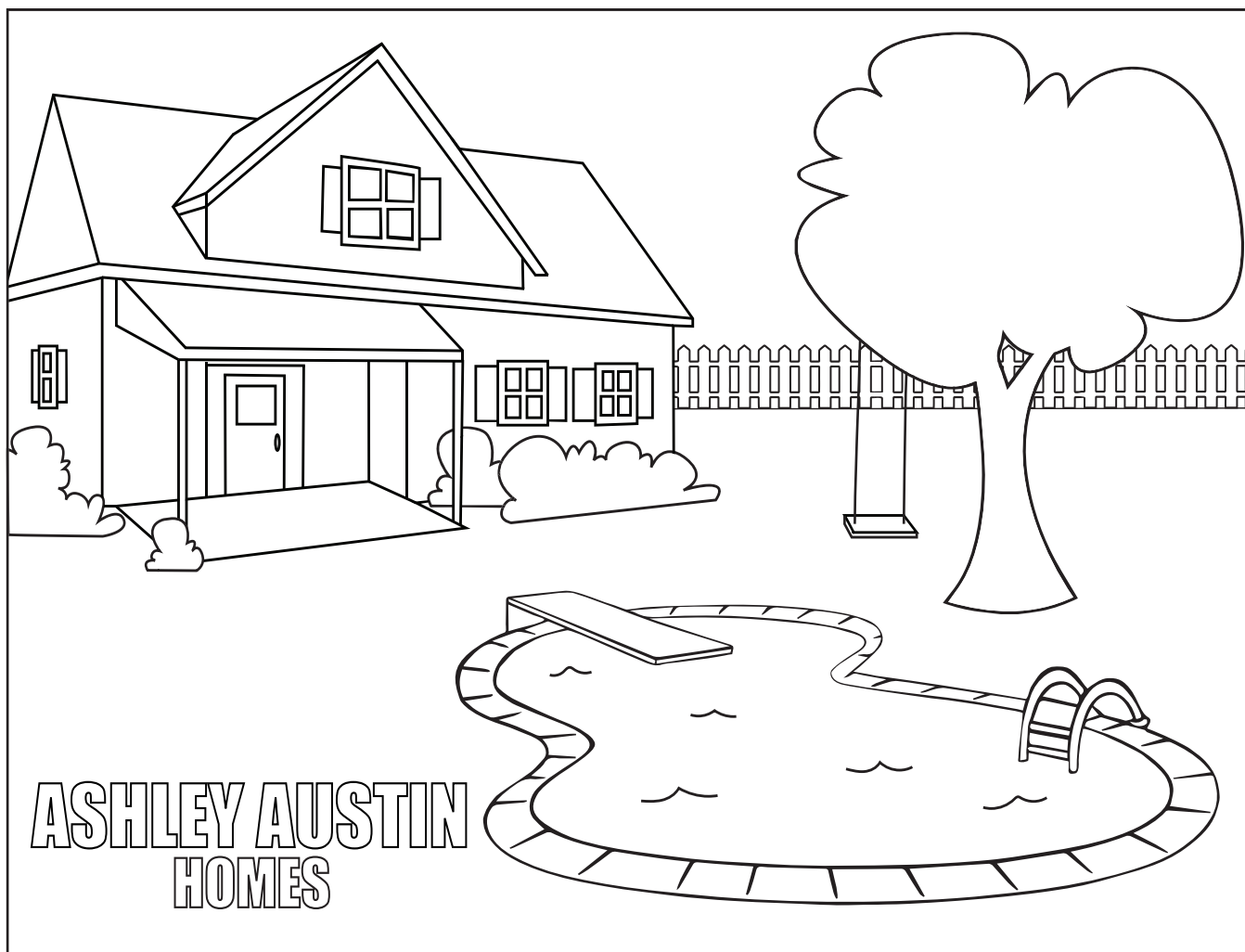
April 2018 Volume 12, Issue 4

News for the Residents of Belterra

APRIL IS PARKINSON'S AWARENESS MONTH

If you or a loved one has recently been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease, please check out our free, daily exercise classes. From South Austin to Central Austin and Round Rock to Lakeway, we offer a wide variety of exercise classes that are designed to help you manage the effects of Parkinson's. Studies show that daily exercise helps waylay the effects of this disease. Care partners welcome (also for free!). For more information visit www.powerforparkinsons.org.





KIDS COLORING CONTEST, WIN A \$50 GIFT CARD TO TARGET!



1. Have your child submit their best artwork by 5/1/18!

PARENTS NAME

2. Fill out the information to the right.

CHILDS NAME

3. Mail your artwork to:
Ashley Austin Homes
9600 Escarpment Blvd
Ste 745 #235
Austin, TX 78749

CHILDS AGE

ADDRESS

STATE & ZIP CODE

4. Winner will be announced on our Facebook page on 5/9/18!

PARENTS EMAIL

WWW.ASHLEYHOMEVALUATION.COM

Wildland Fire Precautions

With warmer temperatures and drying vegetation, residents need to be reminded of the need for wildfire/brush fire safety awareness and preparedness.

Do not park vehicles on the dry grass. The heat from the vehicle's exhaust system can cause the grass to catch fire.

Remove combustible materials from around your home. Keep grass mowed short.

Pack critical medicines, important documents, and family heirlooms to be ready to leave at a moment's notice.

Agree on an evacuation plan that includes what to do if you get separated and where you'll go in case of evacuation.

TEN SIMPLE STEPS TO PROTECT YOUR HOME FROM WILDLAND FIRE

Wildfire can strike home if you have not taken some steps to protect your house and property. The actions and precautions listed below are designed to help you prepare your home and lessen the threat of wildland fire damage to you and your property.

1. LPG/propane tanks should be far enough away from buildings for valves to be shut off in case of fire. Keep area around the tank clear of flammable vegetation.
2. Store gasoline in an approved safety can away from occupied buildings.
3. All combustibles such as firewood, wooden picnic tables, boats and stacked lumber should be kept away from structures.
4. Clear roof surfaces and gutters regularly to avoid build-up of flammable materials such as leaves and other debris.
5. Remove branches from trees to a height of 15 feet or more.
6. In rural areas, clear a fuel break of at least three times the fuel length around all structures.
7. Have fire tools handy such as: ladder long enough to reach your roof, shovel, rake and a bucket or two for water.
8. Place connected garden hoses at all sides of your home for emergency use.
9. Assure that you and your family know all emergency exits from your home.
10. Assure that you and your family know all emergency exits from your neighborhood.

Each family should be proactive to prepare for emergencies: Prepare a Basic Emergency Supply Kit; Make a Plan for Safety and Communicating with Family; Be Informed; and Get Involved in Preparing the Community.

A wealth of information to help you is available at:

<http://www.ready.gov/wildfires>

<http://txforests.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=8512>

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY 911
Ambulance / Fire..... 911

SCHOOLS

Dripping Springs ISD 512-858-3000
Dripping Springs Elementary 512-858-3700
Walnut Springs Elementary 512-858-3800
Rooster Springs Elementary..... 512-465-6200
Dripping Springs Middle School 512-858-3400
Dripping Springs High School 512-858-3100

UTILITIES

Water – WCID # 1 & 2 512-246-0498
Trash – Texas Disposal..... 512-246-0498
Gas – Texas Community Propane..... 512-272-5503
Electricity – Pedernales Electric 512-858-5611

OTHER

Oak Hill Post Office 512-892-2794
Animal Control..... 512-393-7896

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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.

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- The Texas Tribune

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NATURE WATCH

LITTLE ARMORED ONE

by Jim and Lynne Weber

Spanish for 'little armored one', the armadillo is one of the most interesting mammals in North America. All but one of the 20 different species of armadillo live in Latin America, but the Nine-banded Armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*) makes its home as far north as Texas (except for the western Trans-Pecos), Oklahoma, and Louisiana. In fact, this armadillo is the official state small mammal of Texas!



Nine-banded Armadillo

A cat-sized, insect-eating mammal, armadillos have bony plates that cover their back, head, legs, and tail, protecting them from predators. No other living mammal wears such a shell, but contrary to popular belief, the Nine-banded Armadillo cannot roll into a ball and encase itself with its shell. Only the Three-banded

Armadillo can accomplish this, by curling its head and back feet inward and contorting its shell as protection. No amount of armor can protect them from the cold, however, and because of their low metabolic rate and lack of fur and body fat stores, cold weather can wipe out whole populations of these little creatures.

Armadillos have a pointy snout and small eyes, and are prolific diggers. They dig for food and dig many burrows, mostly along creekbeds in Central Texas, and they do not survive in areas where the soil is too hard to dig. Armadillos spend up to 16 hours a day digging, mainly active in the dawn and dusk hours, looking for beetles, ants, termites, and other insects. Their eyesight is quite poor, but they use their keen sense of smell to locate food, and utilize their long, sticky tongues to grasp berries, caterpillars, grubs, fungi, and sometimes even carrion.

Armadillos are quite fond of water, visiting water holes and streams to drink, feed, and even take mud baths. Their specific gravity is high, which means they normally ride low in the water when swimming. For short water crossings, they often just walk underwater across the bottom, but for deeper and longer crossings they voluntarily ingest air to inflate themselves and increase their buoyancy by retaining the air in their digestive tract!

Armadillos are thought to be a pair during the breeding season, sharing the same burrow. Due to their bony shells and the underside location of their genitalia, copulation occurs with the female lying on her back. While breeding occurs in July, the embryo remains in a dormant state until November. Always of the same sex, identical quadruplets develop from the single egg, and four young are born in a grass-lined burrow in March.

While the Nine-banded Armadillo is a unique mammal whose range is expanding northward, there is reason to be concerned about their conservation status in Texas. Encroaching human civilization, overgrazing, and progressive climatic change may be keeping them on the move, and many mammalogists agree that armadillos are rare at best when compared to populations of a few years ago. This decline also appears to be correlated with increasing populations of feral hogs, as well as the propensity for people to make trinkets from armadillo shells. Perhaps our state motto should read 'Don't Mess with Texas Armadillos!'

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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