

LONG CANYON *Gazette*

JUNE 2018

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE LONG CANYON

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National Charity League, Inc. Lake Austin Chapter Hosts Annual Mother Daughter Tea

The Lake Austin Chapter of National Charity League, Inc. hosted its annual Mother Daughter Tea at the Austin Country Club on Sunday, April 29. This event was held by the Chapter as a celebration of the members' year of philanthropy. During the 2017-18 seasons the Lake Austin chapter members donated 6,506.5 hours to the various philanthropy partners.

Additionally, the Tea offers an annual opportunity to honor the Senior Class members. Mother and daughter teams join NCL in the daughter's seventh grade year and meet philanthropy and leadership requirements each year to remain in good standing. This year's Senior Class has donated 3,866 hours to local non-profits since joining NCL, Inc. in their seventh grade year!

National Charity League, Inc. also has an Awards Program to recognize the accomplishments of the students with outstanding service. The Lake Austin Chapter presents these awards annually at the Chapter Tea. This year's Outstanding Senior Award was presented to Catherine Shaunessy who has contributed more than 305 hours of community service during her time with NCL, Inc.

"Not only has this been a wonderful opportunity to spend time with my mom and strengthen our relationship, but it also feels good to be able to give back to the community in such a big way," says Shaunessy. "I'm honored to receive this award, and I'd highly encourage other local mothers and daughters to join a local chapter of NCL, Inc. and start bettering themselves and their community."

About National Charity League, Inc.

Established in Los Angeles, California in 1925, and incorporated in 1958, National Charity League, Inc. is the premier mother-daughter organization of women and their daughters in grades 7-12. The mission of NCL, Inc. is to foster mother-daughter relationships in a philanthropic organization committed to community service, leadership development and cultural experiences. For more information or to find a chapter in your area, visit the website at www.nationalcharityleague.org.



Viper Nation Education Foundation \$14,500 awarded in 2018 Senior Scholarships and Inaugural Concordia "Aspiring Leaders" Scholarship

Austin, Texas – Viper Nation Education Foundation is pleased to announce this year's annual scholarship award recipients during Vandegrift High School's Senior Awards presentation on May 23, 2018. The amount awarded rose to a new high of \$14,500 with the addition of two new scholarships: one for a Viper Nation teacher enrolling in the LISD/Concordia University Aspiring Leaders Program and the other for the Iris Wong Memorial for the Creative Arts.

Vandegrift Latin teacher Kristin Slonsky received the Inaugural \$2,500 VNEF scholarship for the LISD/Concordia University's graduate program. She will join 13 other Leander ISD school teachers who seek to earn a Master of Education degree with a specialization in Education Administration through this unique partnership with Concordia University Texas. Unlike other programs, the LISD Aspiring Leader curriculum offers district-specific coursework, grooming students to progress in

their careers with a distinctly LISD-oriented approach.

For the first time, VNEF awarded a scholarship to a student pursuing a degree in the performing arts. The Iris Wong Memorial Scholarship for the Creative Arts, sponsored by the Chan Family, is inspired by the late Iris Wong, a beloved Four Points community leader. This inaugural award was presented to Ashlyn Whiteside who will attend Rider University and pursue a degree in musical theater.

"We are profoundly honored to administer this generous scholarship in memory of Iris for the Chan family," said VNEF President William Farrell. "Iris had so many friends here in Four Points and she was a great supporter of our children and our schools. This scholarship is a beautiful tribute to a kind and giving member of our community."

During the 2018 Senior Awards, VNEF also awarded scholarships to 11 hardworking seniors.

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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>



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Heart Gallery Texas



Meet Exzavyor (12)! He is a fun kiddo, who works hard in school and always strives to do his best. If you enjoy a quick pickup game or throwing the football around or kicking a soccer ball, Exzavyor just might be the perfect fit for your family. He would be waiting for a family to call his own!

Interested in adoption or foster care? There are no fees to adopt from the foster care system regardless of which agency you work with. The first step is to choose a child placing agency to begin your journey. Learn more about starting the adoption process and the children waiting for forever families at www.heartgallerytexas.com.

Girls Empowerment Network's campGEN Summer Camps Inspire Central Texas Girls in Grades 3 - 8 to Own and Use Their Power

This summer the Girls Empowerment Network will host a two-part campGEN Summer Camp Series with weeklong summer camp sessions for girls entering grades 3-8.

campGEN girls participate in interactive workshops that are designed to help girls feel more confident as they navigate girlhood. The program engages Girls Empowerment Network's girl experts and female role models as camp counselors. The two-part Summer Camp Series for girls entering grades 3-8 includes:

- campGEN – Part 1, held June 18-22, kicks off with “Own My Power.” This camp focuses on building confidence and self-love. Girls will explore stress management, identity, self-compassion and body positivity. Activities include yoga, art and craft projects, writing, talent shows and games.

- campGEN – Part 2, held July 16-20, continues the conversation with “Use My Power.” Girls will focus on using their confidence to advocate for themselves and others. Girls will explore and practice confident communication, advocacy, healthy friendships and values. Activities include role playing, skits, a fun community advocacy project, and games.

“Our entire team is excited to invest our time and energy into programming that makes campGEN summer camp fun and an experience to remember,” says Caroline Crawford, program director. “This year our summer camps build on one another, and we see girls signing up for both sessions soon once they learn to OWN their power, then they can put it into practice and USE their power. We know they’ll walk away with a strong sense of self and be ready for another school year.”

Network (GEN) helps girls discover they are powerful people. Through school-based programs and community events for girls, parents and schools, GEN ignites power in girls ages 8 – 18 by teaching them skills to thrive and believe in their ability to be unstoppable. campGEN was created to expand Girls Empowerment Network's services that empower girls to navigate the challenges of girlhood.

Both campGEN summer camp sessions will be held in Downtown Austin at First Baptist Church, located at 901 Trinity Street, Austin, TX 78701, Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Drop off begins at 8:00 a.m. and aftercare is available until 5 p.m. for \$50. Each five-day session costs \$330.

Austin Center For Grief & Loss Offers Summer Camps For Children Experiencing Loss

Camp Red Bird provides a safe place for children to face grief and have fun with peers

The Austin Center for Grief & Loss is hosting Camp Red Bird, a summer day camp for kids ages 6 through 12 who that have experienced a loss. Campers participate in a week of therapeutic games and activities, arts and crafts, while also sharing with peers who have similar experiences.

What: Camp Red Bird, an Austin Center for Grief & Loss day camp for children going through loss. Crafts, activities and time to share.

Visuals and spokespeople:

- Children/parents from last year's camp
- Children interacting, participating in activities, crafts
- Counselors
- Center for Grief and Loss Executive Director

When: Monday-Friday, June 11-15, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Monday-Friday, Aug. 6-10, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Where: The Austin Center for Grief & Loss, 2413 Greenlawn Pkwy., Austin, TX 78757

Who: Children who are experiencing loss are attending Camp Red Bird, led by licensed therapists as well as camp counselors.

Why: The goal of the camp is to have these children address their grief and loss while also experiencing a sense of normalcy.

About The Austin Center for Grief & Loss (formerly My Healing Place)

Celebrating its 11th year in Austin, The Austin Center for Grief & Loss is a non-profit organization focused on grief and trauma, assisting children and adults. The Center offers therapy, support, education, training and consultation. The Center serves those who have experienced a loss due to the death of a loved one from illness, miscarriage, accident, suicide, or violence. There are also programs to assist those who have experienced loss due to divorce or separation. The Center specializes in trauma as well, and its therapists are trained in EMDR as well as other cognitive interventions. Note: Holders of Hope Annual Gala, Thursday, October 18 at The Umlauf Sculpture Garden. www.austingrief.org

NATURE WATCH

A HORSE OF A DIFFERENT COLOR

by Jim and Lynne Weber

Few plant species that grow naturally today have been around for over 100 million years, but one of the best known are plants in the genus *Equisetum*, which is the only living genus of the entire family of Equisetopsida, most commonly known as horsetails. They are recognized as close relatives of ferns, typically growing in wetter areas with whorls of needle-like branches radiating at regular intervals from each single vertical stem.

The common name of horsetail is used for the entire group of plants, since the branched species resemble a horse's tail. In fact, the genus *Equisetum* comes from the Latin *equus* or 'horse' and *seta* or 'bristle.' Another common name is scouring rush, referring to the upright rush-like appearance of the plants, and the fact that the longitudinal ridges of the stems are coated with abrasive silicates, making them useful for scouring or cleaning metal items. It is still used today as a traditional polishing material in Japan.

The primary species of horsetail that occurs natively in wet or moist areas of Texas, most commonly on the Edwards Plateau and in Blackland Prairie, as well as most of the non-tropical northern hemisphere, is *Equisetum hyemale*. A spreading, reed-like perennial growing to 3 feet tall, each stem is evergreen, cylindrical, jointed, hollow, and about 1/4 of an inch in diameter. In this species, the needle-like branches appear non-existent, but are actually small and fused around the stem at each joint or node, forming a blackish-green band or sheath. Interestingly, the



Horsetail or Scouring Rush

pattern of spacing of the nodes in these plants, which grow increasingly close together toward the apex, is precisely what inspired Scottish mathematician John Napier to discover logarithms in the late 16th century.

Horsetail prefers open or wooded areas along streams, moist flats, and wet ledges. Like ferns and other related species, horsetails reproduce by spores rather than through seed-producing flowers. These spores are borne in cone-like structures at the tips of



Dragonflies, like this Neon Skimmer, love to perch on the cones of the horsetail's upright stems

some stems, and are mostly homosporous, meaning of the same size and type. The tiny spores have four elaters or structures that alter shape in response to changes in moisture, effectively acting as moisture-sensitive springs that assist spore dispersal through crawling and hopping motions once released from the cone.

The upright, evergreen, segmented foliage of horsetail is an appropriate plant for a rain garden, pond edge, water feature, or area with moist soil, and is an excellent perching plant for dragonflies. While it can spread quickly by underground or underwater runners, it is easily kept in check by periodic pulling or by planting it in a container. Few plants add as much interest or vertical structure to a wildscape as this living fossil, which is clearly a 'horse of a different color'!

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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A FOCUS ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Pathway to Improved Health

By Concentra Urgent Care

Being physically active is one of the most important steps you can take to maintain or improve your health. When combined with eating a healthy diet, regular exercise can substantially reduce your risk of chronic disease, prevent weight gain, and improve your overall level of physical and emotional fitness.

HOW MUCH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DO I NEED?

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) has recently published several recommendations related to exercise:

1. Any physical activity is better than no physical activity
- Includes people with disabilities
 - Far outweighs the possibility of risk of injury or illness
2. Most health benefits occur with at least 150 minutes a week
- Both aerobic and muscle-strengthening are beneficial
3. For most people, additional benefits occur when
- You increase the intensity of your physical activity
 - You increase the frequency of your physical activity
 - You increase the duration of your physical activity

SHOULD OLDER ADULTS EXERCISE, TOO?

The same HHS guidelines apply, but older adults need to make sure that their fitness level and any chronic conditions allow them to safely perform physical activity. For example, if an older adult is at risk of falling, he should do exercises that maintain or improve his balance.

WHAT IF I HAVE A CHRONIC MEDICAL CONDITION?

If you have a chronic medical condition, you should be under the care of a health care provider. It is important to consult your physician about the type and amount of physical activity appropriate for you.

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

The health benefits of physical activity far outweigh the risks and some activity is better than none. Persons who have not been diagnosed with a chronic condition (such as diabetes, heart disease, or osteoarthritis) and do not have symptoms (e.g., chest pain or pressure, dizziness, or joint pain) do not need to consult with a health care provider prior to starting an exercise program.



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