

THE RIVER REVIEW

January 2019

Volume 13, Issue 1

Photo by Mia Sanchez



NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF RIVER PLACE



Fourth of July



Concert in the Park



Trunk or Treat



Run the Ranch

Rising Stars Pediatric Dentistry

Thanks the Community of Steiner Ranch for the wonderful memories we had together in 2018

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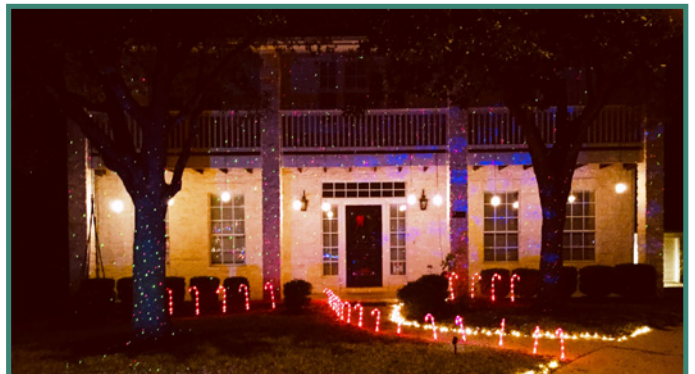


River Place Christmas Décor Was

De-LIGHT-fu!

Residents seem to go all out for this Christmas and on some streets, like Planter's Woods, neighbors seemed to almost be in competition for who can display the most and the brightest lights!

It was beautiful-thanks everyone for the dramatic and entertaining displays of lights, creatures and Christmas characters! It was a wonderful sight to behold!



Photos Continued on Page 4

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	911
Fire	911
Ambulance	911
Sheriff – Non-Emergency	512-974-0845
Hudson Bend Fire and EMS	
Emergencies	512-266-1775
Information	512-266-2533

SCHOOLS

Leander ISD	512-570-0000
Cedar Park High School	512-570-1200
Vandegrift High School	512-570-2300
Four Points Middle School	512-570-3700
River Place Elementary	512-570-6900

UTILITIES

River Place MUD	512-246-0498
City of Austin Electric	512-494-9400
Texas Gas Service	
Custom Service	1-800-700-2443
Emergencies	512-370-8609
Call Before You Dig	512-472-2822
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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
IESI (Trash)	512-282-3508

OTHER NUMBERS

River Place Postal Office	512-345-9739
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NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

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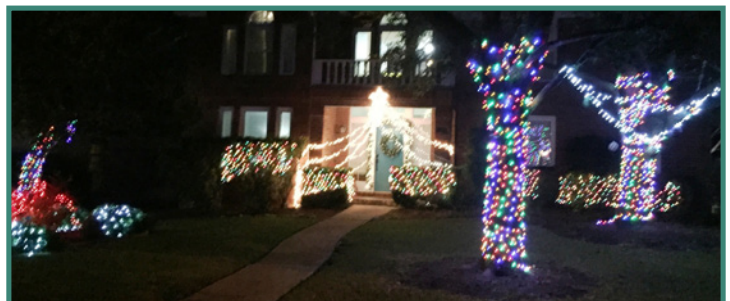
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ARTICLE INFO

The River Review is mailed monthly to all River Place residents. Residents, community groups, churches, etc. are welcome to include information about their organizations in the newsletter. Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, recipes, special celebrations, and birthday announcements are also welcome.

To submit an article for the River Review please email it to riverreview@peelinc.com. The deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the issue.

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Heads Up...From Around the City

FIRE WEATHER SAFETY TIPS

Travis County Fire Marshal urges all residents to take precaution and follow the Fire Weather Safety Tips from National Weather Service. - Do not throw cigarette butts out of your car window. - Be careful to not drag trailer chains that could cause sparks. - Do not park a recently driven car on dry grass. - Avoid outdoor burning and check recently burned piles for flare-ups. - Clear out dead vegetation from around your home. Visit <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/By-topic/Wildfire/Firewise-USA> to learn more!

YEAR-END LETTER FROM COMMISSIONER BRIGID SHEA AND COUNCIL MEMBER LESLIE POOL

Dear neighbor, As 2018 comes to a close, we wanted to share a few of the big stories from this past year related to the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP). For those of you not already familiar with it, the BCP is a 32,285-acre system of preserves in western Travis County that protects endangered and threatened species, some of which are found nowhere else on earth. When we preserve natural lands, we also enjoy cleaner air and water, scenic views, and a lower risk of flooding and erosion.

The creation of this preserve also made much of the development in this area possible. BCP lands were set aside as mitigation and

preserved in exchange for the removal of other endangered species habitat during development. Landowners in western Travis County can get a permit to remove or “take” endangered species habitat through a streamlined process that serves as a faster alternative to the standard permitting system at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. (For more information on this, contact BCCP@traviscountytexas.gov.)

NEW ACQUISITIONS Growth of the BCP continued this year. The largest purchase was 279 acres in the Village of Volente surrounded by existing preserve lands. Learn how to sign up for guided hikes offered on this and other BCP tracts at the end of this letter. As you may know, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) permit for the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan requires a minimum preserve size of 30,428 acres. Although this goal has been met, the BCP managing partners continue to acquire land to meet additional requirements. For example, the preserve must have a configuration that is well-suited to species recovery, having as little “edge” habitat as possible. The protected species do best in habitat that is removed from the noise, pollution, and invasive species that generally come with surrounding development. In addition, the permit requires the protection of 62 specific caves. Efforts to preserve these important features continue.

(Continued on Page 6)

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(Continued from Page 3)

DELISTING THE BLACK-CAPPED VIREO The black-capped vireo, a small migratory songbird, was one of the eight endangered species the BCP was created to protect. When the vireo was removed from the federal Endangered Species List in May, we heard from many of you asking how the delisting would affect the BCP. The preserve will remain intact in perpetuity, and BCP staff will continue to manage habitat for the black-capped vireo. U.S. Fish & Wildlife's decision to delist was made with the assumption that preserves would remain in place in order for the vireo to survive.

TAWNY CRAZY ANTS As you may have heard, or had the bad luck to experience, tawny crazy ants have been wreaking havoc in homes and businesses from here to Houston and along the Texas Gulf Coast. These non-native ants can multiply by the millions, and are a nuisance in yards and homes, especially with electrical systems and devices. They also can do a lot of damage to natural areas, impacting a wide range of wildlife from bird nestlings to native insects. Sensitive cave ecosystems are particularly at risk. Tawny crazy ants were discovered on the BCP for the first time last summer. BCP biologists from Travis County and the City of Austin have been working with Dr. Ed LeBrun, with the University of Texas, to find methods of controlling these ants without harming other species. They've had some promising results using a control specific to tawny crazy ants called microsporidian. Researchers introduced this control to tawny crazy ant colonies on the preserve this summer and are currently monitoring the results. Because tawny crazy ants are often transported in landscaping materials, local residents can help stop their spread by buying mulch and plants only from trusted dealers who inspect their products and treat or destroy any with invasive ants. For more information, check out Texas A&M's handout: <http://www.agrilifebookstore.org/mobile/Product.aspx?id=41577#PhotoSwipe1543958510369>

AUSTIN CAVE FESTIVAL 2019 Join us on Saturday, February 23rd for the annual Austin Cave Festival! The whole family can explore two caves on site, check out a high-tech cave exhibit brought in from Colorado, practice vertical caving skills, and enjoy habitat scavenger hunts, artwork, live music, and scientific talks and exhibits. More than 100 City of Austin staff, community partners, and volunteers work to make this conservation-focused event a success. For information about attending the festival, visit www.wildflower.org/event/austin-cave-fest.

GET TO KNOW YOUR BCP More than 3,500 acres of the preserve are regularly open to the public, including Emma Long Park, Wild Basin Preserve, and Hamilton Pool Preserve. Many other areas can be visited on guided hikes or by volunteering.

We've included more information below about how to get involved. We'd also like to ask for your help protecting the preserve. One way you can do that is to avoid planting non-native, invasive plants in your yards. Please also report trespassing or dumping on the BCP by calling 311 and reporting it to authorities and preserve staff. This helps stop damage to the preserve and can go a long way towards preventing wildfires. Together we can keep Austin and Travis County moving forward while protecting our region's natural resources.

Best regards, Travis County Commissioner Brigid Shea BCCP Coordinating Committee Member

Austin City Council Member Leslie Pool BCCP Coordinating Committee Member

Diet, Health & Wellness

Balancing Your Diet; A Chinese Reference

At this time of year should we be talking about diet? Ha, yes, perhaps now more than any other. The holidays test our self control with so many big meals and desserts. It's hard to resist! But surely everyone understands that it is important to ensure you receive a balance of nutrients. The Chinese, who have had a sophisticated cuisine for many thousands of years, believe it is essential to have a great variety in their food to ensure they receive the proper balance of nutrients.

It is important to realize that the Chinese do not suffer as much from some of our common ailments, such as prostate and other cancers. They are longer lived and better nourished. They are less obese and acquire fewer diseases and often work physically to a higher age than do Americans.

Even though the Chinese diet contains more calories on average, they are less obese than Americans. And their diets contain a much higher percentage of carbohydrates as well. Clearly, calories and carbs alone do not provide a definitive way to judge the benefits of our diets.

With our desk-bound jobs, American jobs are much more sedentary than Chinese jobs, which are more physical in nature. Chinese walk more; we drive our cars. We watch more television while the Chinese are working longer and later.

A close look shows that Chinese get their carbs from boiled rice while we get ours from white bread, cakes, biscuits and refined sugar. Chinese drink a great deal of sugarless green tea while we drink soda with sugar or synthetic sweetener. And please note that green tea has a reputation for blocking the absorption of the starch contained in boiled rice.

Another important aspect of the Chinese diet is that they eat almost double the amount of vegetables than we eat, including more green vegetables whereas we eat more roots and potatoes. In addition, the Chinese eat much of their veggies as stir-fried or raw, preserving much of the nutrients. And their food is mostly organic given that they cannot afford the fertilizers, pesticides and fungicides we use.

While the Chinese like their alcohol, they consume only about 50% of what Americans consume. Alcohol is a carbohydrate that can cause serious damage to the mind and organs such as the pancreas and liver. To avoid being totally negative here, there is some evidence indicating that a small amount of red wine does little harm and may help us relax and calm down.

The Chinese eat much less protein than Americans. Rather than a large steak or other type of meat as a main portion, they add smaller amounts of meat to other types of main portions, primarily vegetables and rice. The importance of this is how protein affects the acidity of the cellular structure of the body. Protein increases acidity while vegetables increase the alkaline content making cells more capable of absorbing oxygen. Cancer does not thrive in oxygen – it develops in an oxygen free environment. (A little lemon juice improves alkalinity as well!)

As a result of these diet ratios, Chinese eat much less fat, especially when we realize they consume very little from dairy sources. So, much of their fat comes from fish, seafood and vegetables.

In summary, if you cannot glean from the above what you can do to improve your health and diet, here is a quick summary:

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River Place (Maybe Not So) Clever Quips of the Month

Is it just me or does no one disappear in the Bermuda Triangle anymore?

Reasons to have a man bun: None. There is literally no reason. Stop it.

Every time I fold laundry I contemplate becoming a nudist. Then I remember what I look naked so I keep folding.

Procrastination is a good thing; you always have something to do tomorrow plus you have nothing to do today.

Raising kids is like a walk in the park. Jurassic Park.

I can't decide what pants to put on today; smarty, fancy or cranky.

I hate spelling errors. You mix up two letters and your whole post is urined.

Me: Choking on a kernel of popcorn. Wife: Turns up the TV.

The best part of getting older is...nothing. Getting older sucks.

When I picked up a hitchhiker, he said, "I'm surprised you picked me up; I could be a serial killer." I told him, "I'm not worried. The odds of two serial killers being in my car at the same time are really slim."

Me: How many people work at your office? Friend: About half of them.

I told a chemistry joke. There was no reaction.

Welcome to adulthood. I hope you like Ibuprofen.

Nothing messes up your Friday like finding out it's only Thursday.

Always be nice to your hair stylist because what's stopping them from plucking one of your hairs and placing it at a crime scene? Nothing.

"Dogs are jerks!" Dog person: You're a jerk! "Cats are jerks!" Cat person: Yeah...I know.

Never despair over getting old; not everyone gets the chance.



SLOAN + PARKER

January Featured Flights

To Oak or Not

Come in each week this month for our featured flight, and learn, by tasting, the affects of oak on wine. Then put all that practice to the test at the end of the month with our blind tasting competition.


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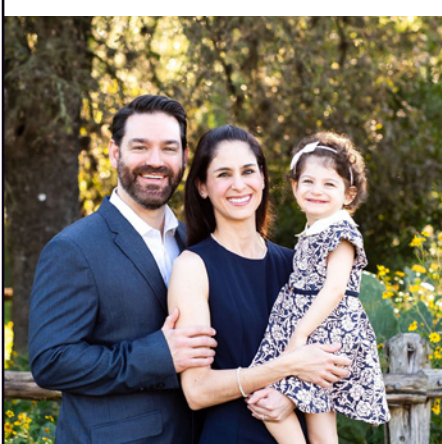
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RIVER REVIEW

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1. Exercise more, eat less meat and eliminate dairy fat
2. Avoid sugar, sweetener, bread, cakes and biscuits
3. Eat more vegetables, some raw, and include beans and lentils
4. Moderate your alcohol intake; substitute red wine
5. Eat less animal protein and avoid grain

If you can work on incorporating these changes to your diet, you might be pleasantly surprised at how much better you feel and how much your health improves. And what a great New Year's resolution that would be!

Besides being a spice used commonly in Indian food, turmeric is a plant scientifically known as *Curcuma longa*. It is part of the ginger family. The roots or "rhizomes" of this plant are used in spice powders and herbal tonics. Curcumin is the active ingredient within the plant's roots that has strong antioxidant properties and can be acquired and taken separately from turmeric.

Obviously, curcumin could provide stronger activity but it will be more expensive and some say, not have some of the ancillary ingredients contained in the roots that are considered beneficial.

In a double blind study at UCLA, it was found that curcumin supplements may have positive effects on the mood, memory and attention of middle-aged and older adults. In other research, turmeric products have been found to possibly help with cardiovascular, digestive and liver and joint health. Turmeric contains potassium, magnesium

and other vitamins and ingredients that can support internal cleansing and combat digestive issues, even helping fight queasiness.

A caveat in taking turmeric for health purposes though is that it is not readily absorbed into the system. This fact is not widely discussed by curcumin suppliers wanting you to pay the higher prices for this health supplement. So what can we do? There is a solution: black pepper, taken along with the supplement, seems to do the trick. (Some providers, like Swanson, do sell a turmeric/black pepper mix.)

So how do we choose between the singular active ingredient curcumin and the ground roots, turmeric? We recommend turmeric mixed with powdered black pepper in a separate container, like an old pepper bottle. This way, you can easily spoon it out to mix with juice and you can also sprinkle it dry on your food, even pizza, to spice it up.

Curcumin supplements, as mentioned before, can be pricey, costing \$20 to \$40 per bottle. Turmeric, on the other hand, can be acquired for as little as \$2.98 for a huge 12 ounce bottle at Costco. It depends on your budget and preferences for simplicity. Our thinking is, since it should be taken with pepper anyway, why not buy in bulk and mix it yourself?

A spoonful in the morning mixed into juice, such as pomegranate and lemon, can get your day started off right. A more esoteric drink might include turmeric, coconut water, lemon juice, lime juice and honey. Turmeric is a great spice for use on many dishes including lentils, vegetables, meats and rice. Used liberally, we can spice up our food and supplement our diet simultaneously. How you use it is up to you!



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In and Around River Place

RM 2222 Improvements Update: This nearly 24 million TxDOT/City of Austin project has finally begun with perimeter barricades set up starting in late November. TxDOT's information officer says that while clearing began in early December, actual construction won't start until sometime in January, depending on the weather.

Within the project limits (Bonaventure Blvd. to Sitio Del Rio,) they will be constructing a through-travel lane eastbound from Bonaventure to Sitio Del Rio Boulevard and westbound from Ribelin Ranch Drive to Sitio Del Rio Boulevard. The project also includes turn lanes and a raised median. The project will take approximately a year and a half to complete. We look forward to these improvements even though we will have some added congestion for a while.

Oz. Tap House in River Place Should Be Open: Originally shooting for a November opening date, the owner/operators are now saying (as of mid-December) they should be opening in mid-January. They will occupy the old Salsas' Restaurant space at the front of River Place. The address is 10601 RR 2222, Suite H. They will dispense beer and win by the ounce.

Featuring 40 beer and wine drafts, entertainment and games, they will offer a food menu as well that includes burgers, salads and other tasty bits. Even though it will be technically a beer garden, this sounds

like a fun family place where our doggies will be welcome (outside) as well. See you there!

Clothing Appeal for Asylum Seekers: Ann Finch of Austin Lake Hills wants to help needy asylum seekers with clothing. She posted her appeal on Nextdoor in December: **Jeans, Coats and Jackets for the Texas Border** I have been volunteering and helping the asylum seekers at the Texas border. Most of the asylum seekers are dropped off at the bus station after they have been detained with only the clothes on their backs. This is often just a t-shirt and a pair of pants. It has turned cold and most of these people will be traveling by bus to other parts of the country. Some will go to the east coast, where it is really cold. I would like to take a load of jeans, coats and jackets to Brownsville so that the volunteers can distribute these items to the asylum seekers.

The items do not need to be new but please limit your donations to jeans, jackets and coats. Most of the asylum seekers are coming from "the northern triangle" (Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras) so they are small. The sizes most in demand are small and medium. We need both men's and women's items. You may drop your items off at the CE Bar fire station at 353 S Commons Ford Rd; Austin, Texas 78733 or call me at 512-263-5185. Thank you.

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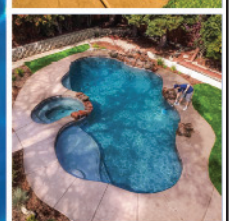
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Juice House Now Open: Eva Wiley announced on Nextdoor:

Juice House: We are happy to announce that the "Juice House" is now open. It is located where the Old Boat House Grill used to be. We will be serving organic, gluten free and healthy juices, smoothies and organic coffee and Tea for more details, please contact Eva 512-363-2700

Motorized Vehicles on Our City Trails?: Carol Philipson of Jester posted on Nextdoor: **Motorized Vehicles on City Trails**

In case you are not aware there is a new pilot program to allow motorized vehicles; i.e, e-bikes and e-scooters to utilize some City Trails. This creates a potentially dangerous situation that may result in people and pets getting hurt, plus potential harm green space around and leading into the trails. Lyft, Urber and other companies have initiated their use throughout Austin. You may have seen these scooters lined up on just about every corner everywhere. It is felt this is another way to help alleviate Austin traffic.

At 20 mph, which some can reach, trying to stop on a trail when a child, adult or dog darts out would be impossible especially on dirt. Dockless scooters are dropped wherever the person reaches their destination and are already littering sidewalks downtown. The City has asked for public input. Call 311 with your input.



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