



APRIL 2019 VOLUME 12, ISSUE 4

A Newsletter for the Residents of Legend Oaks II

Attention Parents of **Graduating Seniors!**

We would like to recognize our graduating seniors by including a small picture and a few lines about where your child will be attending college. Please send your information to **articles@peelinc.com** (include the newsletter you would like to recognize them in, photo, name, etc).



NEWSLETTER INFO

NEWSLETTER

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Easter at Oak Hill

Sunday, April 21

7 a.m. Sunrise

8:45 a.m. Traditional

10 a.m. Contemporary

11:15 a.m. Traditional



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Top Questions to Ask when Assessing Assisted Living

By Jason Brenizer, Silverleaf Eldercare

1) How many residents is one caregiver responsible for?

This is arguably the most important question you can ask when searching for a community for your mom, dad, aunt, or grandparent who needs assistance with daily living. Their rooms could be huge or they could watch old shows on the “biggest movie screen in Austin senior living”, but without a person who can take the time to attend to your loved one’s needs WHEN he or she needs it, those amenities begin to lose their shine.

First and foremost, you are looking for an assisted living site because your older family member needs help. Maybe mom can’t drive anymore, so how does she shop for food? Chances are, someone in the family has taken on that responsibility. Possibly she’s had a fall, had hip surgery, and isn’t as mobile as before. In that scenario, it is next to impossible for her to take care of her house. And she deserves to live in a clean, bright home and get the best nutrition possible.

But how is a community where one caregiver is responsible for fifteen or more residents any better than having your mom at home all alone at her house? It might even be worse, because the level of attentiveness at one of these care facilities ends up being less than what you and your family were doing for her by shopping, cleaning, doing her bills, and generally checking in.

A minimum starting point would be reducing that caregiver’s responsibility to ten residents. But if you can get closer to a six-resident to one-caregiver ratio (6 to 1), then not only will your elder’s basic needs be met, there will be more time for true connection. Assisted Living can and should be like a home away from home, with a new circle of close friends, both residents and caregivers. Your mom craves social connection, even if she won’t admit it. At a community where the caregivers aren’t stretched too thin, they will have time to really listen to your mom about her needs AND her wishes. Something as small as learning she prefers sourdough bread for her morning toast can make a huge difference in her quality of life.

2) What kinds of activities are offered and at what frequency?

This question naturally follows the first. Once basic needs of daily living are met, do the staff have time to lead or help with activities? Is the community creative, or is one of the most regular daily “activities” TV time? Parking our elders in front of a screen for hours a day isn’t the most enriching experience.

Are there more communal activities that help everyone who can participate get involved? An example would be listening to live or recorded music from their heyday, where the residents get to pick their favorites. Depending on mobility (and the weather), does the community offer gardening or time outside? Even for those who can’t physically participate, is there a way for them to watch and engage with others so they feel included rather than excluded? Look for a place where the outdoors has been integrated into the living experience.

3) What types of ingredients are used for your meal plans and how often are recipes repeated?

If nutrition is important to you, make sure to dive deeper into this topic. You are the advocate for your family. Are the meals prepared using pre-packaged food or from scratch? Pancakes made from Bisquick are different from home-made. Are the vegetables fresh or factory-canned?

How were they grown? Are the meats free of hormones and antibiotics? For some people, these details are less important. It comes down to personal preference.

At some small communities, the staff cover multiple duties. This might include preparing meals. This is not a bad thing. Chances are there are a few staff members who really know their way around a kitchen. Other places will employ a dedicated cook or chef. Either way, it is good to know what to expect.

At the very least, request a copy of the most recent meal plan. There might be a week’s worth of meals listed for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. This is a good place to start. One simple way to get a sense of the food behind the food is to look at the shelves in the cabinets or pantry and open the refrigerator. The worst they can do is say, “No”, but it might leave you wondering what they might be hiding.

4) BONUS Questions:

- a) Do you have a range of room sizes and price options?
- b) Can residents control their own room temperature?
- c) Are bathrooms designed for inspiration as well as safety?
- d) What kind of turnover do you experience with staffing?



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LEGEND OAKS

Alzheimer's Texas Hosts Parties to Kickoff 28th Annual Walk



Austin, TX – Coming up in April, Alzheimer's Texas will host three gatherings to kick off the 28th Annual Alzheimer's Texas Walk happening later in the fall.

These events serve as a 'thank you' to those who have supported the cause over the last 28 years, and a welcome to those who'd like to get involved.

Guests of this year's Kickoff Party will enjoy free food and drinks while they speak with others who share their passion for this important cause. In addition, guests will have a chance to sign up their team, and to learn more about the great services their fundraising will support such as support groups, education programs, respite networks, a 24-hour helpline, care consultations, and also pick up fundraising supplies! The Alzheimer's Texas Walk is the only fundraiser of its kind that retains 100% of proceeds for

use in Central Texas.

Each of the following events are come and go from 4:30- 6:30 PM.

Tuesday, April 9

Cover 3 (1717 W 6th St, Austin, TX 78703)

Wednesday, April 10

Eldorado Café (3300 W Anderson Ln #303, Austin, TX 78757)

Thursday, April 11

County Line BBQ (6500 Bee Cave Rd, Austin, TX 78746)

These parties will kick off the 28th annual Alzheimer's Walk at Camp Mabry on October 5, 2019. To learn more and to RSVP for the Kickoff Party, visit Alzheimer's Texas at <http://www.txalz.org/walk> or call (512) 241-0420.

About Alzheimer's Texas

Alzheimer's Texas is dedicated to eliminating Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research and to enhance care and support for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders, their families, and caregivers. The organization provides care consultations, 24-hour help line, support groups, respite care, educational and social engagement programs, and professional training. Alzheimer's Texas was founded in 1982 and serves Central Texas. For more information, visit www.txalz.org.



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NATURE WATCH

PLANT NATIVES!

by Jim and Lynne Weber

Spring is the ideal time to think about planting, and how you manage your garden or landscape can have an effect on the overall health of the soil, air, water and habitat for native wildlife as well as our human community. Help conserve and improve the quality of these resources by using sustainable gardening practices such as mulching and composting, reducing or eliminating lawn areas, xeriscaping (planting native, drought-tolerant plants), installing rain barrels, and removing non-native invasive plants and restoring native ones.

The U.S. government defines an invasive plant species as one “that is not native to the ecosystem under consideration and whose introduction is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.” These species grow outside desired boundaries, out-competing native species, and spread by seeds, berries, spores, runners, rhizomes, and stems. Some can be easily transported long distances, and every year millions of our tax dollars and thousands of volunteer hours are spent trying to eradicate them.

Many of these plants have already invaded our preserves and greenbelts in Austin, originating in our landscapes, escaping cultivation and spreading into the wild. Invasive species may grow faster, taller, or wider and shade out native species. Many stay green later into the season or leaf out earlier, giving them an advantage over natives. They can change the vertical and horizontal structure of ecosystems, alter hydrology, and disrupt nutrient cycles, all of which can have devastating effects on native plants and animals.

Although invasive exotics may offer birds fruit, squirrels nuts, and hummingbirds and butterflies nectar, they do not provide the entire range of seasonal habitat benefits that an appropriate locally native species will provide. If we want not only to satisfy our desires to attract wildlife, but also to restore the critical, often unseen, small pieces in our ecosystems, we need to bring back our locally native plants. These plants are not only attractive to humans, they also meet the food and cover needs of all wildlife species: bees, wasps, butterflies, grasshoppers, bugs, beetles, spiders, and thousands of others that sustain and support food webs which songbirds, salamanders, bats, toads, and box turtles more visibly demonstrate.

Aside from attracting a diversity of wildlife, the use of native plants minimizes the impact our landscapes have on the natural environment around us. They reduce water consumption, eliminate the need for chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and limit the competition from invasive exotics. This results in a much healthier habitat—water, soil, and air—for humans and animals alike, and is less costly, too. Invite wildlife to put on a show in your backyard by replacing the invasives in your landscape, and encourage your neighbors to do the same.

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*, *Nature Watch Big Bend*, and *Native Host Plants for Texas Butterflies* (published by Texas A&M University Press), and our blog at naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com.

Non-Native/Invasive Plant(s)	Some Native & Adapted Alternative(s)
Bamboo	Wax Myrtle (<i>Morella cerifera</i>) Yaupon Holly (<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>) Bamboo Muhly (<i>Muhlenbergia dumosa</i>)
Chinaberry	Chinquapin Oak (<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i>) Texas Red Oak (<i>Quercus buckleyi</i>)
Chinese Tallow Tree	Bigtooth Maple (<i>Acer grandidentatum</i>) Lacey Oak (<i>Quercus laceyi</i>)
Elephant Ear	Arrowhead (<i>Sagittaria latifolia</i>) Crinum Lily (<i>Crinum americanum</i>) Pigeonberry (<i>Rivina humilis</i>) Frogfruit (<i>Phylla nodiflora</i>) Horseherb (<i>Calypocarpus vialis</i>)
Giant Cane	Roughleaf Dogwood (<i>Cornus drummondii</i>) Yaupon Holly (<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>)
Japanese Honeysuckle	Coral Honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>) Passion Vine (<i>Passiflora foetida</i> or <i>incarnata</i> or <i>lutea</i> or <i>tenuiloba</i>) Rock Rose (<i>Pavonia lasiopetala</i>)
Holly Fern	River Fern (<i>Thelypteris kunthii</i>)
Kudzu, English Ivy, Vinca	Virginia Creeper (<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>) Trumpet Vine (<i>Campsis radicans</i>) Coral Vine (<i>Antigonon leptopus</i>)
Ligustrum (all species) or Common Privet	Evergreen Sumac (<i>Rhus virens</i>) Barbados Cherry (<i>Malpighia glabra</i>) Yaupon Holly (<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>) Possumhaw Holly (<i>Ilex decidua</i>) Texas Sage (<i>Leucophyllum frutescens</i>) Cherry Laurel (<i>Prunus caroliniana</i>)
Mimosa	Desert Willow (<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>) Texas Redbud (<i>Cercis canadensis</i> var. <i>texensis</i>) Elbowbush (<i>Forestiera pubescens</i>)
Nandina or Heavenly Bamboo	Texas Lantana (<i>Lantana urticoides</i>) Bush Germander (<i>Teucrium fruticans</i>) Texas Sage (<i>Leucophyllum frutescens</i>)
Paper or White Mulberry	Red Mulberry (<i>Morus rubra</i>) Texas Persimmon (<i>Diospyros texana</i>) Possumhaw Holly (<i>Ilex decidua</i>) Cherry Laurel (<i>Prunus caroliniana</i>)
Pyracantha	Yaupon Holly (<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>) Possumhaw Holly (<i>Ilex decidua</i>) Evergreen Sumac (<i>Rhus virens</i>)
Red-tipped or Chinese Photinia	Evergreen Sumac (<i>Rhus virens</i>) Carolina Buckthorn (<i>Frangula caroliniana</i>) Yaupon Holly (<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>)
Russian Olive	Texas Persimmon (<i>Diospyros texana</i>)
St. Augustine Grass	Buffalo Grass (<i>Bouteloua dactyloides</i>)
Tamarisk or Salt Cedar	Bald Cypress (<i>Taxodium distichum</i>) Arizona Cypress (<i>Cupressus arizonica</i>)
Tree of Heaven	Chinquapin Oak (<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i>) Lacey Oak (<i>Quercus laceyi</i>)
Vitex or Chastetree	Texas Pistachio (<i>Pistacia mexicana</i>) Mexican Buckeye (<i>Ungnadia speciosa</i>)
Wisteria	Passion Vine (<i>Passiflora foetida</i> or <i>incarnata</i> or <i>lutea</i> or <i>tenuiloba</i>)

LEGEND OAKS

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Acrobat Ants

Acrobat ants usually nest outdoors under stones or in dead wood such as firewood, tree stumps, dead tree branches, or hollow tree cavities. Because they are found in similar habitats, acrobat ants are sometimes confused with carpenter ants. Indoors they can nest in foam insulating board or water damaged wood. Acrobat ants get their name from the act of raising their abdomen over their thorax when in defensive posture which makes the ants look similar to circus acrobats.

Acrobat ants have a reddish-brown head and thorax with a dark blue-black abdomen. The abdomen is a distinctive heart-shape. Acrobat ants primarily feed on honeydew produced by aphids and can often be seen tending honeydew producers on plants. They will sometimes use overhanging tree branches or power lines to enter homes in search of food.

Outdoors, acrobat ants are usually not a problem directly. They can be seen as a problem in that they protect honeydew producers from predators and parasites. You can use this to your advantage by using acrobat ants as a monitoring tool to watch if you have honeydew producers on your plants.

To avoid a home invasion by acrobats follow these tips:

- Remove tree stumps & dead limbs from trees
- Trim back branches overhanging or touching the roof
- Fill tree cavities with sand
- Do not store firewood in or near the home
- Keep weather stripping around doors & windows in good repair
- Seal around pipe penetrations with caulk or expanding foam
- Fix any water leaks
- Replace water damaged wood on the structure
- Spray around the foundation of the home- select a product labeled for ants

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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