



The Jester Warbler

Official Publication of Jester Homeowners Association, Inc.

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Volume 14, Issue 11

Ho! Ho! Ho!



*Santa is coming to Jester
aboard a Fire Truck!*

**SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 7TH
9:00AM - JESTER CLUB**

(You do not have to be a member to participate)

The Austin Fire Department has graciously agreed to send Santa aboard a fire truck to visit with our Jester children & grandchildren.

**ACTIVITIES, CAROLING
& MORE! BRING YOUR
CAMERAS!**



Jester Holiday Lights Contest

Time to unbox your holiday lights and decorations; the annual Holiday Lights Contest is nearly here! Judging of this beloved neighborhood tradition will take place on December 9-12. We have 5 different categories and wonderful prizes for each of them! To nominate a house, please email meganduffin@gmail.com with the subject "Holiday Lights Contest".

Good luck!

CLEAR THE WAY!

Green Tips for Jester Residents

Your cooperation is needed! Streets, sidewalks, and other public rights of way are for everyone's use. Property owners are responsible for their private trees and all other vegetation in the public right-of-way next to their property. Overgrown vegetation is a safety hazard and limits the use of sidewalks, trails, streets and alleys. It further threatens public safety when vegetation blocks the view of traffic signs, signals, vehicles,

Read more on Page 3!

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Interested in submitting an article? You can do so by emailing
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*All news must be received by the 12th
of the month prior to the issue.*

Green Tips... (Continued from Cover Page)

or cyclists. Trimming vegetation and caring for your trees are effective ways residents can enhance neighborhood safety.

Prune your trees and trim or remove any vegetation that obstructs or grows into sidewalks, streets or alleys. Use the following quick guidelines to help keep the right-of-way clear:

- **Sidewalks:** Limbs and vegetation must be trimmed back from the edge of and at least 8 feet above sidewalk.

- **Streets/Alleys:** Limbs and vegetation must be trimmed back from the curblin (edge of street or alley) and at least 14 feet above street or alley.

- **Multi-use Trails:** Limbs and vegetation must be trimmed back from the edge of and at least 10 feet above multi-use trails.

- **Grass and Weeds:** Maintain grass and weeds at a maximum height of 12 inches throughout property to the edge of the street or alley.

- **Corners:** Maintain vegetation at a maximum of 2 feet above ground within a 10 foot setback from the curblin (edge of street) and 40 feet along the curblin from the street intersection.

- **Fire Hydrants:** Remove trees or plants within 5 feet of fire hydrants.



GO GREEN

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and click the RESIDENTS tab



NATURE WATCH

WHORLED WONDERS

by Jim and Lynne Weber

The spiral, which is a fundamental form in nature, is most splendidly illustrated in a genus of wild, native orchids called *Spiranthes*. Commonly known as ladies tresses, the genus name comes from the Greek *speira* meaning ‘coil’ and *anthos* meaning ‘flower’, and refers to each species spirally arranged inflorescence. The most predominant species of orchid found in Texas prairies, several members of this genus are colonizers of sparsely vegetated areas, appearing on newly disturbed sites such as roadsides and cleared fields, increasing in number until outcompeted by other vegetation.

Of the 15 native *Spiranthes* species in Texas, several are so similar in appearance that either a hand lens or microscope is often needed to distinguish one from another. To add to the confusion, many closely related species are also known to hybridize. However, Central Texas, the most common include the Great Plains Ladies Tresses (*S. magnicamporum*) and the Nodding Ladies Tresses (*S. cernua*).

Great Plains Ladies Tresses has 2 to 4 narrow, grass-like basal leaves, up to 6 inches long, that are usually absent or withering during the flowering period. The flower spike can range from 4 to 24 inches tall, and is made up of 12 to 54 small white tubular fragrant flowers, tightly or loosely spiraled, that nod abruptly from the base. Blooming from September to November, it prefers calcareous grassland habitat, often growing in association with our native Seep Muhly. In wet years, this orchid may appear in robust spikes numbering in the hundreds, and in dry years it may not flower at all.

Nodding Ladies Tresses has 3 to 5 narrow, grass-like, basal leaves, 8 to 10 inches long, and are typically present at flowering. It has a flower spike that can grow from 4 to 19 inches tall, and consists of 10 to 50 small white tubular flowers, tightly or loosely whorled in 2 to 4 rows along the upper portion of the stem. Blooming from late September through November (and sometimes even into December), it can grow on wet or dry sites, but prefers more acidic, sandy soils.

Like most orchids, the flowers of these *Spiranthes* species are resupinate, or twisting during development into an upside-down position. In fact, the tendency of the flowers to droop slightly gives the Nodding Ladies Tresses both its common and species name, for *cernua* comes from the Latin and means ‘drooping.’ Unlike other closely related species, the flowers of the Nodding Ladies Tresses have little or no fragrance, but like other closely related species, the flowers are pollinated by bumblebees. As with most *Spiranthes*, bumblebees start at the bottom and move upward on the inflorescence in search of nectar. Older flowers at

the base of the flower stalk have more nectar, which makes them an efficient first stop for the foraging bumblebees.

As mentioned above, many *Spiranthes* are difficult to identify to species, and both the Great Plains Ladies Tresses and the Nodding Ladies Tresses are no exceptions. In fact, Nodding Ladies Tresses is known as a *compilospecies*, which is defined as a genetically aggressive species that incorporates the heredities of a closely related species by hybridization through unidirectional gene flow, and may even completely subsume that species over time. Now that’s a whorled wonder!

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* (all published by Texas A&M University Press), and our blog at naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com.



‘Great Plains Ladies Tresses’

Wildlife Habitat



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Grasscycling

Green Tips for Jester Residents

Please "grasscycle" by leaving grass clippings on your lawn after mowing.

Grass clippings are approximately 80 per cent water and will decompose quickly, releasing valuable nutrients back into the soil.

Grasscycling is an environmentally and financially friendly option for your lawn care.

For more information: <http://austintexas.gov/what-do-i-do>



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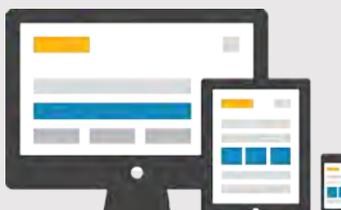
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3 Holiday Activities to Engage with Loved Ones

Any time can be the right time to enjoy memorable moments with family members, but the holidays present a special opportunity to have meaningful conversations and interactions with loved ones.

One of the best ways to spark creativity and generate memories is through activities that get the conversation started, whether it's remembering favorite moments from the past or simply sharing notes of appreciation. This holiday season, consider these activity ideas from the Funeral and Memorial Information Council, which created the "Have the Talk of a Lifetime" initiative to encourage families to facilitate conversations that become invaluable when the time comes to honor a loved one.

While these conversations can be difficult to engage in and even harder to begin, the natural bonding moments that stem from activities like these can help make the process easier.

Gratitude Tree

Start a new tradition by creating a gratitude tree, a simple decoration you can look forward to using each year as a reminder of what you and your family are thankful for.

To make a gratitude tree, collect twigs or branches, dry them out and cut them to the desired lengths. Put the branches in a vase or decorative container. Punch holes at the tops of fall-colored paper to be used as tags then instruct guests to write what they're grateful for on each tag.

Take turns reading the tags and tie them to the branches then keep the handwritten tags in a safe place until they can be read again each holiday season. Over the years, as the tree fills up, you'll have a lifetime of memories to share.

Time Capsule

Making a holiday-inspired time capsule can help strengthen family bonds while preserving treasured memories and creating opportunities for future holidays when it's time to reopen the contents.

Use a sealed container or plastic bag to protect items from moisture and mold then place the container in a box that can be decorated and stored in a safe place with related holiday decorations. Mark on the container the date it was created for future reference, and pack it with items like family-favorite recipes; notes about significant



events from that year like births, weddings, graduations and more; copies of newspapers detailing high-profile happenings; and pictures, drawings and notes from the year.

If you're patient enough to wait, try leaving the contents undisturbed at least five years to give the memories even more meaning when the time comes to relive those special moments.

Memories Tablecloth

To help keep important family footnotes front and center during future celebrations, a memorial tablecloth provides each person an opportunity to personalize a piece of popular decor. As you gather around the table for holiday meals, ask each family member to jot down a favorite memory or something he or she is thankful for along with a signature and date.

You can make it an annual event by using the same tablecloth each year and, before long, it will be filled with personal memories as a way to cherish relationships as time goes on. Just use an appropriately sized, inexpensive white canvas drop cloth. Place fabric markers in the center of the table before inviting guests to participate, and to help distinguish each year, try using different colored markers.

Find more ways to celebrate the holidays with your loved ones at talkofalifetime.org.

Photo courtesy of Getty Images #14949

Source: Funeral and Memorial Information Council

Content downloaded from familyfeatures.com.



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THANK YOU!

As I pause to count my blessings during this Thanksgiving Holiday, I give thanks for my many Jester neighbors that I've come to know. I am so grateful for your friendship, your business, and the confidence you have placed in me.



Teresa

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November Events



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Nov. 8 - 10	Wizard World Comic Con - Pop culture comes to life	wizardworld.com
Nov. 9	Ray Wylie Hubbard's Birthday Bash	austintheatre.org
Nov. 11	Lights On! A Holiday Celebration in Lakeway <i>Free event...Enjoy the lighting of the trail of lights</i>	lakeway-tx.gov
Nov. 16	Kid's Night Out: Explorers - Why leave your kids with a babysitter when they can go to camp and make new friends?	kidadventure.com
Nov. 16 - 17,	East Austin Studio Tour	east.bigmedium.org
Nov. 23 - 24	Explore artist studios and take part in diverse art events	
Nov. / Dec.	North Pole Flyer - Nov 16, 17, 23, 24, 30 & Dec 1, 7 <i>2-hr excursion on a real train - featuring Santa</i>	austinsteamtrain.org
Nov. 17	Dane Cook - Famous comedian takes the stage	acl-live.com
Nov. 20 - 24	A Christmas Affair - 200+ national merchants sell original art, jewelry and crafts	jlaustin.org
Nov. 22 - 24	Blue Man Group - Get a taste of the famous Vegas Show	thelongcenter.org
Nov. 23	Rockford IceHogs at Texas Stars - Hockey game	hebcenter.com
Nov. 23	Empty Bowl Project - Purchase locally hand-crafted bowls filled with food donated by local chefs for charity	austinemptybowl.org
Nov. 25	The Texas Chili Queens - A new play	thelongcenter.org
Nov. 28	Thundercloud Turkey Trot - 1 or 5 mile run/walk	thundercloud.com
Nov. 29	Josh Abbott Band	acl-live.com
Nov. 30	Chuy's Christmas Parade <i>Bring a new, unwrapped toy to donate. Giant balloons, marching bands, floats and more!</i>	chuysparade.com

serving JESTER ... Just a Little Closer to Heaven!