



Lakeway

VOICE

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November 2019



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Photo by Brian Latimer



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EXCLUDING PESTS



When the weather turns towards autumn and leads into winter, many pests start looking for a cozy place which can often lead them inside your home. By performing a thorough inspection, you can locate areas where these pests may enter and stop them before they become a problem.

Inside the home, look around doors and windows and if you see light around them it's a sign there isn't a good seal and weather stripping should be replaced. Inspect the attic for holes or entry points for small mammals such as rats, mice, and squirrels. Attic vents should be covered with stainless steel screening to block animals from entering. Outside, inspect the perimeter of the home for cracks and crevices in the foundation that should be sealed. Locate pipe and wire penetrations that enter the structure and seal areas that allow pests to enter.

Ideas on how to exclude pests from your home:

- Trim back or prune any trees and shrubs that touch or overhang the home
- Seal pipe & wire penetrations with copper mesh, sealant, or expanding foam
- Replace weather stripping around doors and windows if there is not a good seal
- Repair or replace window screens with holes
- For homes with brick or stone facades, stuff weep holes with copper mesh
- Clean debris from gutters to reduce harborage areas for pests
- Inspect all furniture, boxes, and bags for pests before carrying them into the home
- Inspect all plants for insect pests before bringing them into the home
- Do not store firewood inside the home, against outside walls, or near doors
- Use sheet metal, hardware cloth, or steel wool to seal any areas where animals have chewed to enter the home**

**make sure animal is not in the home or you'll seal it inside!

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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IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	911
Fire.....	911
Ambulance.....	911
Lakeway Police Department	512-314-7590
Sheriff – Non-Emergency.....	512-974-0845
Travis County ESD No.6/Lake Travis Fire Rescue	
Administration Office.....	512-266-2533
Travis County Animal Control	512-972-6060

SCHOOLS

Lake Travis ISD.....	512-533-6000
Lake Travis High School.....	512-533-6100
Lake Travis Middle School.....	512-533-6200
Lake Travis Elementary.....	512-533-6300
Hudson Bend Middle School	512-533-6400
Lake Pointe Elementary.....	512-533-6500
Lakeway Elementary	512-533-6350
Serene Hills Elementary	512-533-7400
Bee Cave Elementary.....	512-533-6250
West Cypress Elementary	512-533-7500

UTILITIES

Travis County WCID # 17.....	512-266-1111
Lakeway MUD	512-261-6222
Hurst Creek MUD.....	512-261-6281
Austin Energy	512-322-9100
Pedernales Electric.....	888-554-4732
Texas Gas Service	
Custom Service.....	1-800-700-2443
Emergencies.....	512-370-8609
Call Before You Dig.....	512-472-2822
AT&T	
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
Progressive Waste Solutions (Trash & Recycle)	512-282-3508
Austin/Travis County Hazardous Waste	512-974-4343

OTHER NUMBERS

Baylor Scott & White Medical Center.....	512-571-5000
VIK Complete Care	512-527-6247
Lake Travis Community Library.....	512-263-2885
Lake Travis Postal Office.....	512-263-2458
Lakeway City Hall.....	512-314-7500
City of Lakeway	www.lakeway-tx.gov

NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

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Around Lakeway

GIRLS EMPOWERMENT NETWORK PRESENTS WE ARE GIRLS AUSTIN 2019

WHERE CENTRAL TEXAS GIRLS CAN "BELIEVE IT & BE IT"



12th Annual Event brings girls in grades 3-8 and adults who care about them together for more than 60 different activities that ignite the power in girls

Girls Empowerment Network welcomes its 2019 featured speakers Aisha Thomas of San Antonio and April Bowman of Dallas to reinforce a powerful message for girls, BELIEVE IT & BE IT, at its twelfth annual WE ARE GIRLS AUSTIN on Sat., Nov. 16, 2019 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (doors open 8 a.m.) at Anderson High School, 8403 Mesa Dr., in Austin, Texas. This year's honorary chair is Dr. Collette Pierce Burnette.

"We Are Girls is an incredible day of education and self-discovery for girls," says Julia Cuba Lewis, MSW, executive director, Girls Empowerment Network. "Girls walk through the doors and they learn that they are in charge of their day, choosing sessions where they can learn how to believe in their ability to succeed. We see many girls who open up their hearts to their moms who attended with them, transforming themselves and expanding their own views of what they believe is possible for themselves and for their relationships."

WE ARE GIRLS is designed especially for girls in grades 3 through 8 and the adults who care about them. Its 2019 theme is BELIEVE IT & BE IT with inspiring speakers and dozens of activities and workshops covering everything from creativity and entrepreneurship to body image, bullying, and healthy relationships.

Aisha Thomas – Confidence Creator and Mental Health Advocate

Aisha Thomas aims to embed inclusion, self-love and motivation into the culture of each young person she encounters, resulting in healthier homes, schools and community climates. With an unstoppable mindset, Aisha overcame challenges including dating violence and sexual assault, to become an honor roll student at her high school. She graduated in the first computer networking program in her district, completed college, and joined the United States Air Force (USAF), where she has served for more than 14 years. She is a member of RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network), the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization, and speaks at universities, community organizations and churches. She is also a lead Facilitator for the Department of Defense, educating civilian and military members

on suicide and interpersonal violence.

April Bowman – Founder & Chief Executive Officer of Bold Believers United

Empowering people to reach their full potential is at the core of everything that April Bowman, M.S. does. She has worked in education for over 15 years, impacting more than 20,000 young people across the country. Her experience includes leading afterschool programs and summer camps with Parks and Recreation; coaching and consulting with non-profits, schools and foundations; college and career guidance counseling; working in student affairs at Northwestern University; serving as the inaugural Director of Alumni Programs for Uplift Education – the largest charter school in North Texas; and, facilitating trainings on how to talk to about race, racism and equity through the Center for Racial Justice in Education. She currently leads Bold Believers United.

April is a recipient of the 2019 Dallas Business Journal Top 40 Under 40 award. She was also a 2018 finalist for the Dallas Startup Evangelist of the Year Award. In 2018, her client, Church Farm School, was awarded funding by the Oprah Winfrey Foundation for work April led with a 9th-12th grade boarding school to develop a successful college completion program.

As the first person in her family to graduate from college, April earned a Master of Science degree from Northwestern University in Learning and Organizational Change and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Washington in Sociology and Geography. She is currently pursuing a Master of Divinity from the King's University, where she also serves as President of the Graduate Student Council.

In addition to its featured speaker, We Are Girls Austin offers girls and adults a wide range of presentations, workshops and hands-on activities designed to promote well-being, creativity, goal-setting and more. Conference organizers recruit experts from areas including arts, education, social/emotional learning, health and wellness, dance, parenting, counseling, technology and entrepreneurship.

Tickets to We Are Girls Austin are \$30 and are available for purchase at the event and online at www.wearegirlsAustin.eventbrite.com. Scholarships are available. Admission includes lunch, GIRLSFair, supplies, goodie bag, access to all Featured Conference Speaker's presentations, breakout workshops and resource fair.

About Girls Empowerment Network and We Are Girls - Girls Empowerment Network knows girls are powerful, and it's their mission to help girls know it too. Through schools, camps and conferences, girls experience a self-efficacy curriculum that teaches them how to believe in their ability to succeed. WE ARE GIRLS was created in 2008 as a one-day event for girls to expand their view of what's possible alongside experts and the people who care about them.



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Around Lakeway

LAKE TRAVIS FILM FESTIVAL PUSHES FOR LAKEWAY AND BEE CAVE TO BECOME TEXAS FILM FRIENDLY CITIES



"The Lake Travis area has a long history of being a key shooting location in the movies, from Bill Widliff's RED HEADED STRANGER to Robert Rodriguez's SPY KIDS to Terence Malick's TREE OF LIFE - and many more. The scenic vistas and beautiful water features of this rugged area provide the kind of unique locations that bring productions to Texas," says Mike Blizzard, producer and creator of the recent documentary, "Now Starring Austin."

In front of a packed crowd last October, Kim LeBlanc, the Production & Community Relations Specialist at Texas Film Commission, Office of the Governor, stood in front of filmmakers and members of the community to tout the benefits of bringing film productions into the area.

It was also a kick-off for the Lake Travis Film Festival (LTFF).

Now, one year into planning its inaugural debut, February 27 – March 1, LTFF is well on its way to doing just that—pushing to promote a film-friendly community for the cities of Lakeway and Bee Cave and greater Lake Travis. LTFF plans to promote the area to producers and encourage them to set-up shop in the area. LTFF is working with the Texas Film Commission to establish the Film Friendly Certification for Lake Travis and will be the liaison for film and media.

Film communities consider themselves family, connected nationally and internationally over the love of film, the ability to tell stories that need to be told, and the sharing of resources. The local response to the upcoming launch of the Lake Travis Film Festival has been tremendous, which indicates there is strong community support and a desire to have more films and franchises in the area. Under the leadership of Executive Director Kat Albert, LTFF will guide the Texas Film Commission through the path for filming in the local area and encourage them to bring their businesses here.

On Sunday, March 1, the LTFF will invite participants with VIP Badges, as well as producers and directors, to join us at Star Hill Ranch, 15000 Hamilton Pool Road, just South of Hwy 71. Star Hill is a re-creation of a Texas Hill Country community typical of the early 1900s. All of the buildings have been relocated from around the state

and carefully restored. Star Hill began as a childhood dream of owner/creator Adam Woolley.

Star Hill has been the setting for a variety of photo shoots, corporate videos, documentaries, and feature films. The main street of Star Hill was laid out under the guidance of an award-winning motion picture production designer. All of the buildings were constructed between 1850 and 1935 and have been relocated from around central Texas. The building compound is oriented in the center of a 31-acre tract surrounded by a wooded buffer and overlooking a scenic valley. A surrounding 9000-acre nature preserve protects the view.

The LTFF is excited to have the opportunity to bring producers, directors, and the community to Star Hill Ranch to show how the Texas Hill Country can be an excellent backdrop for major motion pictures.



Texas Film Commission rep. Kim LeBlanc and Locations Scout, Ken Lewin present to the Lake Travis Film Festivals' kick-off event.



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Around Lakeway

*Cat Larsen dazzles in 2018
Christmas Show's "Shoulda Been A
North Pole Elf"*



LAKEWAY SING ALONG 20TH ANNIVERSARY CHRISTMAS SHOW

It's About "Remembering Decembers"



*Frosty the Snowman (Dottie Stevenson) and Traffic
Cop (Margie Neuenschwander) confrontation in 2018
Christmas Show*

Lakeway Sing Along celebrates their 20th anniversary of entertaining area crowds again on Sunday, December 8th, with a special family Christmas Show featuring many favorite holiday songs from past years. There isn't a better way to get

into the holiday spirit than with a Christmas music show, especially one benefiting low-income children of our community through LTlov's Green Santa Program.

As Show Producer Sheryl Shuster explains, "To commemorate 20 years of serenading Lakeway during the holidays, we are looking back on some past Christmas shows, recalling the joy and warmth of the December season and remembering special times spent with loved ones and friends. In essence, we will be 'Remembering Decembers'. We are proud we can do this and support Green Santa at the same time."

The Sing Alongs comprise a group of 90+ music lovers from the Lakeway area who have been performing together for local audiences since 1999. This year's program, "Remembering Decembers", produced by Sheryl Shuster and directed by Susan Oaks, combines Sing Along

favorites with some new music and several fun Christmas songs guaranteed to entertain. Yes, there will be ample opportunity for audience participation – and a really good chance Santa and Mrs. Claus will drop in!

Back-to-back performances will be held at 2 PM and 4:30 PM at the Lakeway Activity Center, 105 Cross Creek, on Sunday, December 8th. No need for reservations, but come early to get a good seat. Price of admission is an unwrapped gift – especially sports equipment and dolls - for a child up to age 17. These gifts will be distributed to qualified area families at Christmastime by Green Santa Program volunteers.

For those unable to attend the show, gifts may be dropped off at the Activity Center anytime before the show. There will also be a donation jar at the door.

For more information, contact the Lakeway Activity Center at 512-261-1010.

FOR LOCAL EVENTS CALENDARS:

Sunday, December 8

Lakeway Sing Along Family Christmas Show Lakeway Activity Center (512) 261-1010

Get tuned up for the Christmas season. Bring your family and join the fun with a cast of 80 local music lovers at Lakeway Sing Along's annual family Christmas Show benefiting LTlov's Green Santa Program. Maybe even a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus! Price of admission is an unwrapped gift for a child 17 or under. Two performances: 2PM and 4:30PM.

Volksmarch in Canyonlands of Lakeway Saturday Nov 16th, 12-4:30 PM Free, Live Music, Free Snack at Finish



Lakeway Parks and Recreation and Lakeway Friends of the Parks of Lakeway (FOP) are hosting a free volksmarch in the Canyonlands Greenbelt in Lakeway on Saturday, November 16th from 12-4:30 PM. Volksmarch, or peoples walk, is a non-timed, non-competitive walk. The concept originated in Germany in the early 1960's and emphasizes exercise, enjoyment of the outdoors and a friendly social atmosphere rather than athletic competition. All

Lake Travis and Austin area residents are welcome.

Two courses on Canyonlands Greenbelt primitive trails, a 3-mile walk within Canyonlands that is easy to moderately difficult and a 6-mile roundtrip to the top of "Mount Lakeway," the highest point in Lakeway. The hike to the top is moderately difficult and consists of an uphill climb on a primitive trail for the last three quarters of a mile.

Volksmarch, registration, start and finish point will be in the

small field west of the Lakeway Swim Center at the intersection of Highlands Boulevard and Trophy Drive. Parking is available in the Lakeway Swim Center parking lot. Start your walk at any time. If you wish to do three miles, allow at least an hour. If you wish to walk to the top of Mount Lakeway, allow at least three hours for the 6-mile round trip. Walk on your own, or FOP will offer guided walks up Mount Lakeway at 12:30 and 1 PM. There is no stroller access for either walk, and the walk to Mount Lakeway is not recommended for children younger than six. The oldest walker to summit Mount Lakeway to date is 90 years old.

Wear hiking or comfortable walking shoes, bring sufficient water, walking or trekking sticks as desired. Dogs are welcome. Come with family and friends, walk leisurely through Canyonlands, explore the primitive trails, hear bubbling streams, or climb Mount Lakeway to see Lake Travis and maybe some fall color.

From 2 PM until 3:30 PM The Just for Fun Bunch will provide live music with German, rock and country tunes. Bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy the music after the walk. Non walkers are welcome just for the music!

(Continued on Page 10)



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"Volksmarch in Canyonlands..." (Continued from Page 9)

A volksmarch tradition is to have refreshments after the walk. A small snack will be provided as you finish. Fat Belly Pretzels, Spindrift Sparkling Water and for adults 21 and older a free beer from Infamous Brewing Company will be available. A small participation recognition also will be given to all walkers at the finish. This is not an official American Volkspoint Association (AVA) event, so no stamps for IVV credit will be available.

For further information or questions contact Dar Moneyhon at dmoneyhon@gmail.com or 512 261-3691. FOP is a 501(c)(3) volunteer organization focused on promoting, maintaining and improving the parks and green spaces in Lakeway.



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of their way to make life
beautiful for others.



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mattbp61@gmail.com to get involved

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Volksmarch

Nov 16, Lakeway Canyonlands Greenbelt

12:00-4:30 PM

FREE

Hosted by Lakeway Parks and Recreation
Friends of the Parks of Lakeway

Starts at Lakeway Swim Center

Non-competitive, untimed, walk at your pace
3 miles in Canyonlands – allow minimum 1 hour
6 miles roundtrip to top of Mount Lakeway –
allow minimum 3 hours

Escorted walks to Mount Lakeway at 12:30 and 1:00
Bring the family, dogs welcome

Bring water, wear hiking or comfortable walking shoes

Live Music 2-3:30

Free Snack at Finish

Fat Belly Pretzels, Spindrift Sparkling Water,
Infamous Brewing Company Beer for those 21

Questions?

dmoneyhon@gmail.com (512 261-3691)

Around Lakeway

SAVE YEAR ROUND ON YOUR WATER BILLS: WATER CONSERVATION TIPS FROM LMUD

In September, we had an opportunity to attend a presentation by Bob Rose, LCRA's chief meteorologist, hosted by Central Texas Water Efficiency Network. According to Rose, although we had a late start to summer, it ended up being one of the hottest on record! Twenty-seven days in August were over 100 degrees, which led to the second hottest start to September on record. This is after a wet start to the year, followed by the current severe drought conditions. We are now moving into warmer- and drier-than-normal fall and winter seasons. These hot, dry conditions not only lead to extended irrigation usage, but increased water usage inside the house as well.

"We've had a number of calls lately from customers concerned about the amount on their water bill," said Joyce Henderson, LMUD's office supervisor. "We understand their concern so we will help however we can, but when the weather is hot, people just naturally use more water. Even if they aren't concerned with keeping their lawns green, we all are taking showers more often, plus washing clothes, staying hydrated, etc. It all adds up."

"Winter averaging starts in November and goes through February," said Earl Foster, LMUD's general manager. "If people can make an effort to conserve water, particularly during these months, they can save a lot throughout the rest of the year." "Winter averaging" – also known as "average winter consumption" among other names – is utilized by many water utilities to assess the average outflow of water from homes to account for capacity needs at the local water recycling plant. The average usage is used to calculate the wastewater charge for that property throughout the fiscal year.

"To be clear, winter averaging does not affect potable water charges," said Loyd Smith, LMUD's finance/administration manager. Potable water charges are calculated by the amount of water flowing into a home or place of business through the water meter assigned to each property. Water meters are typically located in the front yard, near the street in a box buried in the lawn. There is a utility side to the meter (side closest to the street) and a customer side (closest to the house). "High water usage is typically the result of changes occurring on the customer's side of the meter," Smith continued. These changes can be caused by a variety of issues, such as increased

usage, a leak, a running toilet, an unnoticed scheduling change with an automatic irrigation system, among other things.

"When a customer calls us with high consumption concerns, we try to run through a variety of changes that may have occurred over the past billing cycle. If none sound plausible, we can schedule our service technician to come do a meter profile to check for possible leaks," Henderson said. For consumption above 30,000 gallons from the previous year, if a leak is detected, customers can submit proof of repair from a licensed plumber to apply for a leak adjustment.

"Water tiers also affect the amount that appears on customers' bills. The more water you use, the higher your volume rate is per 1,000 gallons used," Smith said. For example, LMUD customers who use 15,000 gallons or less during one billing cycle (two month period) are paying the lowest tier of \$2.50 per 1,000 gallons; those who increase their usage beyond 15,000 gallons are paying anywhere from \$3.25 to \$7.94 per 1,000 gallons as they move up the tiers, dependent on usage.

Water conservation is about more than just saving money. "All of the raw water used for potable water in Lakeway – not just by LMUD customers, but all of the surrounding water utilities – is pulled from Lake Travis. By law, we are not allowed to return treated water to the lake, so what we pull out, is not replenished unless it rains. Even if we can keep up with treating the water as quickly as our customers want to use it, there is only so much water in the lake for us to take," said Foster.

Water conservation and preservation is a job for each of us. "Be mindful of and follow your irrigation schedule; check for leaks throughout your home and with your irrigation system; turn off the water while brushing teeth and between washing dishes; utilize water saving devices; stop most irrigation in the winter. And please, dispose of all products properly – the drains are not a trash can and know that whatever seeps into the ground can end up in a drinking water supply," Foster cautioned. "A little effort can make a big difference."

Written by Stephanie Threinen, Public Information Liaison, LMUD. Earl Foster is the General Manager of LMUD.

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LTLOVE IS GEARING UP FOR GREEN SANTA!



LTlov is proud to announce 2019 Project Supply Pack totals. This year, LTlov delivered prepackaged school supplies directly to more than 250 LTISD students from 125 families coded Economically Disadvantaged, on their desks at campus Back to School Night events. In addition to the prepackaged kits, our School Supplies Program committee set to work with the goal of providing ALL financially limited students with the supplies by filling backpacks with their required supplies. We were able to provide pre-filled backpacks to an additional 100 students. Community donations of requested school supplies, cash and gift cards made this goal attainable and all students who requested assistance received the help they needed!

Now, it's time to kick off our next program. GREEN SANTA is in full force! Collection bins are out in LTISD schools in early November and out in our community starting November 18 through December 9. Please drop by and donate a toy to share the joy of the season!

Join us at one of the local events benefiting Green Santa: Point of Origin Holiday Preview on November 7th, Holiday at the Oaks on November 20th, or the Lakeway Sing Along on November 8th!

LTlov is now accepting Green Santa applications for economically disadvantaged families and students within LTISD. Please see our website for the application and more details www.ltlov.org

COMMANDER FOR VIETNAM WAR RECOVERY TEAM TO LEAD LAKEWAY'S VETERAN'S DAY CEREMONY

Veterans, their families and the public are invited to come together to honor those who served our country at the City of Lakeway's annual Veterans Day Ceremony. LTC Johnie E. Webb, Jr. (Ret.) will be the guest speaker at the event running from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on November 11 at the Lake Travis Performing Arts Center (3324 RM 620 South). The Lake Travis Standing Military Committee will host the event along with the City of Lakeway, Lake Travis ISD, members of the Lohmann's Ford Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and the Parks & Recreation Department. DAR will present a memorial wreath and USAF Maj. Gen. Rod Kelly (Ret.) will emcee the event.

"Veterans Day is a time to remember important sacrifices service members made to protect our freedom. While this is a day to pay tribute to those who served our country, we should continue to honor our veterans every day of the year," Lakeway Mayor Sandy Cox said.

The City of Lakeway will pay tribute to nine veterans whose names were recently added to the Spirit of Freedom Monument. The Lakeway Police Department Color Guard will present the colors and the Lake Travis High School Band and Choir will perform patriotic music.

The honorary speaker for the evening's event, LTC Webb, is currently serving as Deputy Director for Outreach and Communications for the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. He is a Vietnam Veteran, serving in the late '60s. He was assigned to the 64th Quartermaster Battalion, 532nd Transportation Company located at Long Binh for most of his time there.

After Vietnam, he was Commander for the Central Identification Laboratory-Hawaii (CILHI). CLHI was responsible for the recovery and identification of Americans lost during the Vietnam War. He was first assigned as Search and Recovery Team Leader in 1975 when the organization was located at Camp Samae in Thailand.

LTC Webb led many "firsts" in the mission to account for missing service members. In 1985, he led the first mission into Vietnam to excavate a B-52 site. In 1996, he led the CILHI delegation during the first negotiations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea). These negotiations resulted in operations to recover unaccounted for Korean War service members. Most recently, this past year he was involved in negotiations with DPRK to return the remains of dozens of service members. LTC Webb also led delegations into the People's Republic of China, Myanmar and Papua New Guinea to discuss conducting World War II search and recovery operations.

LTC Webb retired from active duty in 1994 after serving 26 years in the U.S. Army. His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit (2 Oak Leaf Clusters), The Bronze Star Medal, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Meritorious Service Medal (2 Oak Leaf Clusters) and the Army Commendation Medal (Oak Leaf Cluster)

For information on Lakeway's Veterans Day ceremony, contact archivist Mike Boston at history@lakeway-tx.gov.

Around Lakeway

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NATURE WATCH

by Jim and Lynne Weber

WHORLED WONDERS

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 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'



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